

ISTANBUL BILGI UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE PROGRAMS
CULTURAL STUDIES MASTER'S DEGREE PROGRAM

RETHINKING ANTIGONE AS A SINGULAR BEING: THE POSSIBILITY OF
COMMUNITY

Ezgi TAVAS
117611033

Assoc. Prof. Ferda KESKIN

ISTANBUL

2020

**RETHINKING ANTIGONE AS A SINGULAR BEING: THE POSSIBILITY
OF COMMUNITY**

**ANTİGONE'Yİ TEKİL BİR VARLIK OLARAK YENİDEN DÜŞÜNMEK:
CEMAATİN MÜMKÜNLÜĞÜ**

Ezgi Tavas
117611033

Thesis Advisor: Assoc. Prof. Ferda Keskin :.....
Istanbul Bilgi University

Jury Member: Assist. Prof. Zeynep Talay Turner :.....
Istanbul Bilgi University

Jury Member: Prof. Dr. Zeynep Direk :.....
Koç University

Date of Thesis Approval : 27.06.2020

Number of Pages : 82

Anahtar Kelimeler (Türkçe)

Key Words (English)

- 1) Cemaat/Ortaklık
- 2) Antigone
- 3) Tekillik
- 4) Ölüm
- 5) Aşk
- 6) Etik

- 1) Community
- 2) Antigone
- 3) Singularity
- 4) Death
- 5) Love
- 6) Ethics

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First of all, I would like to thank my supervisor Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ferda Keskin for his guidance and his inspiring course in Singularity. Next, I would like to thank my thesis jury members, Prof. Dr. Zeynep Direk and Assist. Prof. Zeynep Talay Turner, for their advices. Also, my sincerest thanks go to Assoc. Prof. Dr. ıgdem Yazıcı for introducing me *Antigone* with her course at Bilgi University.

I would like to thank my dear friends Kbra Tuęe Daę and Kumru Gk for their motivation and encouragement during my most difficult times.

I am also grateful to my family for their support and tolerating me throughout the development of this study. My mother, Nilgn Tavas; my father, Nurettin Tavas and my sister, Beren Tavas, thank you for endless love.

I want to dedicate this thesis to my family.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	iv
ABSTRACT	vi
ÖZET.....	vii
INTRODUCTION.....	1
CHAPTER 1	5
THE COMMUNITY OF SINGULAR BEING	5
1.1. Death.....	11
1.2. Antigone	14
1.3. Ethics and The Ethics of Death	18
1.4. Communication.....	23
CHAPTER 2	27
ANTIGONE AND BEING SINGULAR	27
2.1. Antigone’s Love	30
2.2. Antigone’s Singularity, Plurality and Her Ambiguity	38
2.3. Antigone’s Threshold	43

CHAPTER 3	50
THE LIFE ON THE THRESHOLD: HOMO SACER VS SINGULAR BEING.....	50
3.1. Creon As Sovereign.....	53
3.2. Antigone As <i>Homo Sacer</i>	55
3.3. <i>Homo Sacer</i>: On the Threshold.....	58
3.4. What Is Life?	62
3.4.1. Ungrievable Life, Intelligible Life, Precarious Life: What is Life?	62
3.4.2. Vulnerability: Pain, Suffering, Death.....	64
3.4.3. Where Is Antigone Within Questions of Life?	70
CONCLUSION.....	76
REFERENCES.....	79

ABSTRACT

The starting point of this thesis is one of the basic questions of political philosophy: “How to get together?”. The possibility of the co-existence, which is not founded upon common identities, values or norms, will be discussed through reading of Nancy, Agamben and Butler.

The thesis aims to rethink *the* community in which singular *being(s)*-[are]-*in-common*, along with a critical reading of Sophocles’ *Antigone*. In this context, I will show how *the* community, which is not conditioned by any belonging, moves from theory into practice by interpreting Antigone’s acts and experiences.

In the first chapter, I analyse *the* community in which singularities co-exist, and I also examine Antigone’s finding herself in this community through the death of her brother. In the second chapter, I focus on her being singular by disposing of her identities attributed by the sovereign power or the state. Finally, I investigate her being reduce to “bare life” on the *threshold* between life and death by the sovereign but at the same time I seek to demonstrate that on the *threshold*, Antigone offers an ethics and togetherness which have shown our commonality of being mortal / finite and vulnerable with all beings.

ÖZET

Bu tezin çıkış noktası politik felsefenin temel sorularından biri olan “Nasıl bir arada olunur?” sorusudur. Ortak kimlikler, değerler ya da normların üzerine kurulmayan bir “birlikteliğin” mümkünlüğü Nancy, Agamben ve Butler okumaları aracılığıyla tartışılacaktır.

Bu tez, Sophocles’in *Antigone*’sinin eleştirel okuması ile birlikte tekilliklerin “ortaklıkta var olduğu” cemaati, yeniden düşünmeyi amaçlıyor. Bu bağlamda, Antigone’nin eylemleri ve deneyimlerini yorumlayarak hiçbir aidiyet ile koşullandırılmayan cemaatin nasıl teoriden pratiğe dönüştüğünü göstereceğim.

Birinci bölümde, tekilliklerin bir arada var olduğu cemaat ve Antigone’nin kardeşinin ölümü ile bu cemaatte kendini bulması; ikinci bölümde, ona atfedilen kimliklerinden sıyrılarak tekilleşmesi; son olarak ise, Antigone’nin egemen tarafından ölüm ve hayat arasındaki *eşik*te “çıplak yaşama” indirgenmesi ama aynı zamanda bu *eşik*te bize tüm canlılara ait olan ölümlü / sonlu ve yaralanabilir olma ortaklıklarımızı gösteren bir etik ve birliktelik sunmasını inceleyeceğim.

INTRODUCTION

There has been an expanding worldwide interest in Sophocles' *Antigone* since 1970s due to the impact of Lacan's seminar on it and the feminist theory. This drawn of interest of studies on *Antigone* has primarily conceptualized Antigone as a post-Enlightenment figure who represents "humanism of lament and finitude in contrast to Oedipus as a figure of Enlightenment, "self-knowing, puzzle solving sovereign of Thebes".¹ In this context, works on *Antigone* have aimed to "replace humanism's focus on knowing with dying, reason with lamentation, sovereignty with finitude".² Indeed, the major reason behind her popularity is that Antigone dares to oppose sovereigns' arbitrary and violent force. Antigone does not give up her act despite of being killed by Creon. That is why she is still alive by "transmitting (herself) from age to age, from continent to continent, from one political struggle to another".³

Furthermore, another widespread aspect has based on the duality of Antigone and Creon such dichotomies: friend-enemy, female-male, *oikos-polis*, private-public. However, in this study, I am primarily dealing with Antigone as outside of this antagonism. Instead, I would like to discuss her position on the *threshold* between all dichotomies as a historically singular figure, who has not been conditioned by any identities or properties. In this sense, in order to demonstrate her being singular, I examine what Antigone's love for Polynices, and her act of burying him despite Creon's edict. Moreover, I investigate Antigone's affection in case of being beside the one who is dying. Through close reading of the works of Jean-Luc Nancy, Giorgio Agamben and Judith Butler and rereading of Sophocles' *Antigone*; the study seeks to answer the questions that: is it possible the

¹ Bonnie Honig, *Antigone, Interrupted* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 23.

² Ibid.

³ Tina Chanter, "Antigone's Excessive Relationship to Fetishism: The Performative Politics and Rebirth of Eros and Philia from Ancient Greece to Modern South Africa," *Symposium* 2, no. 11 (2007): 231.

community which consists of singular beings? What is the role of Antigone in that sense? What does Antigone tell us as a historical singular figure?

The study will be pursued in third chapters. In the first chapter, I begin by Nancy's *The Inoperative Community* in order to analyze *the* community which is different from a society founded upon common properties such as identities, values or norms. In this context, I would like to try to understand his conceptualization of *being-in-common* and *being-with*. Furthermore, it is significant to note that the singularities as members of *the* community do not conditioned by any identities. They are always out of themselves as *being-ecstatic*. In that sense, I explain their relation as per Nancian elaboration of the concept of *clinamen*—inclination to 'other' singular being which is contradiction to liberal understanding of [immanent and absolute] individual.

Death or being mortal / finite has significant role for Nancy to explain being-in-common in the community. The reason is that all beings are finite, and death is a transcendent and *ecstatic* experience for both the one who is dying and the one who witnesses such death beside him/her. Hence, they meet and communicate in the commonality of being finite. In this sense, I would like to apply to *Antigone* because it provides a ground for discussions concerning community, commonality, our shared mortality and mourning. To do so, I suggest that Polynices' death leads to Antigone's ex-position of herself, her subjectivity. Indeed, death reminds her of *being-in-common* in the community without any belonging. Thus, Antigone opposes the sovereign's command that nobody buries and mourns for him.

The second chapter is focused on clarifying how Antigone refuses identities and properties imposed by the state and what makes her a singular being through an analysis of Butler's *Antigone's Claim: Kinship Between Life and Death*.

Furthermore, I would like to focus on Nancy's association of love with similar *ecstatic* experience of death, which indicates our *being-with* in the community. Like death, love also dispossesses and ex-poses one from itself, and puts one beside 'other'. In that sense, I reread *Antigone* through Butler's reading of

Antigone's incestuous love for her brother and I associate her reading with Agamben's notion of "whatever being" —related to love one "*with all of its predicates*, its being such as it"⁴ — in *The Coming Community*.

Then, in following pages, I argue that thanks to the experience of love and death, Antigone flees from her identities attributed to her by the state and that she ex-poses herself to the community with her *being such as it is*. Moreover, I suggest that burying her brother as opposed to Creon's command is an act of being singular. The reason why I propose to think Antigone as a singular being is that she risks death by burying him, so she refuses to be a mother and a wife, and to stay at home which are conditions of being women in Ancient Greek. Antigone's publicly mourning also means that she ex-poses herself from the private sphere, which belongs to women, to the public sphere, which belongs only to men. Through Butler's discussion of Antigone as a liminal and unintelligible figure, and the conceptualization of singularity by Agamben and Nancy; I shall assert that Antigone's act is a *threshold* experience which provides her being singular or "whatever being".

In the third chapter, drawing from Agamben's *Homo Sacer*, I clarify how the sovereign declares singularities as *homo sacer*, which is being on the threshold between death and life, human and animal, *zoé* and *bios*, by reducing them to "bare life" because of its hostility towards singular beings. Then, I read Antigone's being confined into the cave by Creon associating her with *homo sacer*. Indeed, in order to understand the situation of *homo sacer* — it is the suspension of life through *inclusive exclusion/exclusive inclusion*, which has been the core stone of Western politics for Agamben—, I discuss Butler's focus on the "frames of recognition and intelligibility" for the apprehension of life *as life* along with Antigone.

I turn to Nancy, Agamben and Butler's theories to interpret the community that has already befallen us by virtue of our commonality of being mortal,

⁴ Giorgio Agamben, *The Coming Community* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), 2.

vulnerable and exposed to violence, bodies or 'other'; in contrast to the politics reducing life into "bare life" since Ancient Greek. Finally, I argue that Antigone's process of being singular by means of her threshold experience presents us an ethics for understanding our commonalities. She also opens a new horizon for *the* possibility of a community which has been not conditioned by any identity or properties, as a historical singular figure.

Siddhartha had one single goal—to become empty, to become empty of thirsty, desire, dreams, pleasure and sorrow—to let the Self die. No longer to be Self, to experience the peace of an emptied heart, to experience pure thought—that was his goal. When all the Self was conquered and dead, when all passions and desires were silent, the last must awaken, the innermost of Being that is no longer Self—the great secret!

—Hermann Hesse, *Siddhartha*

CHAPTER 1

THE COMMUNITY OF SINGULAR BEING

In *The Inoperative Community*, Nancy re-thinks the community in contradistinction to conventional notions of community (*Gemeinschaft*) and modern society (*Gesellschaft*), which are both based on identity and on common traits, values, or norms shared by their constituents.

To begin with, a society is *founded* upon exigent conditions—be it power relations or people’s needs—and, in order to *subsist*, it needs to produce and ensure social bonds among its subjects which are regulated through common essences in the form of identities. By comparison, *the* community, according to Nancy, is that which already *happens* to us. Since we are not absolutely separate from each other in the first place, we do not need to devise such essences or identities for being together. Precisely because of the impossibility of absoluteness, our beings depend on relations with others.

In this sense, it is of no avail to go after any form of community or society that rests upon this or that particular *common*-ality, as those do away with our *uncommon* and singular characteristics, eventually culminating in totalitarianism—as was in the case of Nazi Germany and Stalinist USSR. Finding commonalities in order to take place in being or in the society causes the presupposition that there

might be “others” with whom we do not have any commonalities. Thus, a separation between “I” and “other” occurs and it is the basis idea behind immanent and totalitarian society. Belonging to the substance of larger entity and to those essences and identities that come with it (gender, religion, nationality, etc.) is the dawn of any such totalitarianism. For Nancy, this mode of thinking designates community as a *common being*.⁵ Developing a counterview, Nancy reasserts that the community happens to us, singular beings, as we are already *being-in-common*. Indeed, being cannot be thought of without the “other.” He calls such community “inoperative”: the community that is not produced through work, that is not the work (*désœuvrée*) of anything. “Community is not something that may be produced and instituted or whose essence could be expressed in a work of any kind (including a polis or state): it cannot be the object or the telos of a politics”.⁶

Christopher Fynsk, in his foreword to *The Inoperative Community*, elucidates that Nancy’s conception of the community does not refer to “a subsistent ground or a common measure” for being-in-common. If anything, it points to the relation with others.⁷ For Nancy, the community is the state of “being-in-common,” not a union under a particular identity or belonging. In other words, there is no *sublation*: “being-in-common” does not denote being smaller part of a larger entity. As per Nancy’s elaboration, “it is [existence] *in common*, but without letting itself be absorbed into a common substance”.⁸ Otherwise communion or fusion means melting in a common substance.

Nancy argues that although communism attempted at an alternative for living together and a community beyond subjugation, domination, and division; the real communism resulted in totalitarianism. For him, the problem was that the

⁵ Jean-Luc Nancy, *The Inoperative Community* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1991), xxxviii.

⁶ Christopher Fynsk, "Foreword: Experiences of Finitude," in Nancy, Jean-Luc, *The Inoperative Community* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1991), x.

⁷ *Ibid*, x.

⁸ Nancy, *The Inoperative Community*, xxxviii.

communist ideal defined the human beings as producers, that is, the producers of their essence through their work and labour. This is the immanent man, the work of himself.⁹ In the same vein, Blanchot, in *The Unavowable Community*, maintains that “this immanence of man to man also points to man as the absolutely immanent being because he is or has to become such that he might entirely be a work, his work, and, in the end, the work of *everything*” and that this is the very “origin of the sickest totalitarianism”¹⁰, in a word, the immanent community. On that account, Nancy argues that the first condition of thinking about community is to abandon all conceptions conceiving human beings as producers of their essence, or that they are works of themselves and the community is the producer of their essence.

Moreover, the notion of “individual” is also a precondition of immanence and the immanent community. Just like an atom, an individual is, too, indivisible. Indeed: “it is another, and symmetrical, figure of immanence: the absolutely detached for-itself, taken as origin and as certainty”.¹¹ Individual thus indicates absoluteness and being without relation—being absolute for itself. Yet being absolute is unthinkable, for, in order to be absolute, there has to be no one and nothing else. Nancy explains that:

Which is to say that the separation itself must be enclosed, that the closure must not only close around a territory (while still remaining exposed, at its outer edge, to another territory, with which it thereby communicates), but also, in order to complete the absoluteness of its separation, around the enclosure itself. The absolute must be the absolute of its own absoluteness, or not be at all. In other words: to be absolutely alone, it is not enough that I be so; I must also be alone being alone—and this of course is contradictory.¹²

Or, in short, “the logic of the absolute violates the absolute.”¹³

⁹ Ibid, 1-3.

¹⁰ Maurice Blanchot, *The Unavowable Community* (New York, NY: Station Hill, 1988), 2.

¹¹ Nancy, *The Inoperative Community*, 3.

¹² Ibid, 4.

¹³ Ibid.

According to Nancy, every statement which is asserted for thinking togetherness with ‘another’, has preceded the Being. In contrast to this way of thinking, Nancy proposes that there is not “single substantial essence of Being itself”.¹⁴ Departing from Heidegger’s concept of being-toward-the-death, *Dasein*, and being-with, *Mitsein*; he asserts that the only possible mode of existence is “being-with.”. However, this does not mean that “with” is something that comes to complete the being. Rather, “being-with” implies that existence is co-existence¹⁵: “the co-implication of existing is the sharing of the world. A world is not something external to existence; it is not an extrinsic addition to other existences; the world is the coexistence that puts these existences together”.¹⁶ Actually, the sharing of the world refers to existence’s plurality. It is “being singular plural” for Nancy. Although two words seem contradictory to each other, it means that there is no essence of Being other than “coessence or being-with (being-with-many).”¹⁷

Due to the impossibility of absoluteness and being alone, Nancy asserts that the relation among singulars, like atoms’ *clinamen*, their inclination to others, is a precondition of being/being-with. Accordingly, “one cannot make a world with simple atoms. There has to be *clinamen*. There has to be an inclination or inclining from one toward the other, of one by the other, or from one to the other. Community is at least the *clinamen* of the ‘individual’”^{18 19} and such *clinamen* engenders being-in-common. *Clinamen* is not a hypernym that includes any essence or identity. It is

¹⁴ Jean-Luc Nancy, *Being Singular Plural*, (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2000), 29. Cited in Welch and Panelli, “Questioning Community as a Collective Antidote to Fear: Jean-Luc Nancy’s ‘Singularity’ and ‘Being Singular Plural,’” *Area*, 2007, 39:3, 350.

¹⁵ *Ibid*, 29-30.

¹⁶ *Ibid*, 29.

¹⁷ *Ibid*, 31.

¹⁸ *Ibid*, 3-4.

¹⁹ The term refers to atom’s movement. It is described as the “swerve of atoms” by Lucretius. Such a swerve implies connection among atoms because only old motion allows emergence of new motion. See Andrew LaZella, “The Clinamen of Community: Dun Scotus’s Political Ontology,” in *The Journal of Speculative Philosophy*, Vol. 30, No. 3, 2016, 320.

nothing but an intimacy and tendency between singulars; it merely shows that being takes place in such relation. In other words, my relationship with others makes my being possible. Because of the impossibility and contradiction of my absoluteness, of my being detached, I am only a “being-in-with-one-another”. *Clinamen* refers to the logic of “with”.²⁰ In this sense, being singular implies being non-absolute and non-immanent.

In this context, Nancy rejects the metaphysics of the subject, which, since Descartes, has been the keystone of modern Western thought, and which, having brought along the notions of individual and society, has brought about immanentism by its premise that everything else is a product of the intellect and cognition of the self. Nancy suggests going beyond this understanding because it gives rise to the sovereignty of the self upon the other and creates a boundary between them, entailing totalitarianism, the immanent community. Within this framework, being-in-common and *clinamen* is unthinkable. By comparison, *being-ecstatic* goes beyond the immanent subject and responds to being-in-common in the community. For, in *ecstasy*, there is no subject.²¹ Indeed:

Singularity never takes place at the level of atoms, those identifiable if not identical identities; rather it takes place at the level of the *clinamen*, which is unidentifiable. It is linked to ecstasy: one could not properly say that the singular being is the subject of ecstasy, for ecstasy has no 'subject'—but one must say that ecstasy (community) happens *to* the singular being.²²

Nancy proposes the notion of *ecstasy* for “the impossibility of absoluteness of the absolute, or to the 'absolute' impossibility of complete of immanence”.²³ Ecstasy is to ex-pose oneself out of the point that one is standing (*ex-stasis*): it is an exposition, a rejection of being absolute. He points ecstasy in similar context to *clinamen*. Like *clinamen*—“swerve” of atoms, ecstasy provides to tendency to

²⁰ Jean-Luc Nancy, *Being Singular Plural*, xvi.

²¹ Nancy, *The Inoperative Community*, 6-8.

²² *Ibid*, 6-7.

²³ *Ibid*, 6-7.

‘other’ in the sense that it poses singular being to outside itself, to the limit. In contrast with the conscious subject of the modern thought, ecstasy is beyond the domain of consciousness: it neither is an experience of the subject and nor does it require one. Community is the space where a being ex-poses itself with ecstasy and ecstatic-beings come together through their *clinamen*. Community is thus the place of “sharing the ecstasy” as resisting to all forms of sublation, immanence,²⁴ and communal fusion.

Unlike society, community is not a project or policy to unify people with social ties.²⁵ It is also not a solution to the question of how we can co-exist while we are separate. Within the framework of the metaphysics of the subject, we cannot constitute communities of co-existence because the Cartesian subject, in order to exist, does not need anyone or anything apart from itself: *il est, il existe*. However, being is already being-in-common because it takes place through its relationship with others. As it was emphasized, being absolute is impossible and contradictory. Saying that, Nancy concludes that the community has already befallen us, as singular beings, thanks to *clinamen* of one to other and our being-in-common.

Community also finds another ground in the principle of insufficiency. Referring to Bataille, Blanchot notes the principle of insufficiency as the answer to the question "why community?".²⁶ No being can be without other beings, absoluteness is impossible. Being thus suffers from insufficiency. In this respect, being has a desire to be con-tested,²⁷ that is, being tested by another being, and at the same time, being tested by itself. By this means, each being experiences the exteriority by opening up and placing itself out (*ex-stasis*),²⁸ in other words, it comes to be-ing-ecstatic. Insufficiency of the being does not entail being completed

²⁴ Peter Gratton and Marie-Eve Morin, *The Nancy Dictionary*. Edinburgh (UK: Edinburgh University Press, 2015), 22.

²⁵ Nancy, *The Inoperative Community*, 11.

²⁶ Blanchot, *The Unavowable Community*, 5.

²⁷ *Ibid*, 6.

²⁸ *Ibid*, 6.

by other beings. Rather, it reveals and "exposes [being] to some other".²⁹ Likewise, Nancy thinks the principle of incompleteness for the community because being-in-common and being-with in the community is the activity of sharing. He means that "sharing is always incomplete, or it is beyond completion and incompleteness. For a complete sharing implies the disappearance of what is shared"³⁰. It is obviously the end of *the* community and the start of immanent community. In parallel with Nancy, Blanchot asserts that "the existence of every being thus summons the other or a plurality of others. It, therefore, summons a community".³¹ It is for this reason Nancy claims that the community happens to us as each being reveals itself to the other. So, we are already being-with in the community. Sayın recognizes this community thus in the following lines:

It is the mythos of a community of those who don't fail to recognize that those who recognize their own presence, insufficiency, mortality, corporeality, finitude; those who, in order to *be* who they are, need the other without attempting to substitute this need with themselves or with the other; and those who know that nothing can match this principle of insufficiency within, do not or will not have any person or any community to submit or hang to (...).³²

1.1. Death

Nancy figures that what exceeds the Cartesian subject is death, for dying is beyond [its] cognition.³³ For Blanchot, death is what belongs to me the most and I cannot share it with anyone.³⁴ Heidegger, too, conceptualizes being as between birth and death and as "being-for-death".³⁵ It is birth and death that are truly common to all

²⁹ Ibid, 8.

³⁰ Nancy, *The Inoperative Community*, 35.

³¹ Blanchot, *The Unavowable Community*, 6.

³² Zeynep Sayın, *Ölüm Terbiyesi*, (İstanbul, TR: Metis Yayınları, 2018), 32.

³³ Nancy, *The Inoperative Community*, 14.

³⁴ Blanchot, *The Unavowable Community*, 9.

³⁵ Nancy, *The Inoperative Community*, 14.

creatures. In this regard, Nancy treats death as a point of togetherness, *i.e.*, being-with. However, this does not refer to those forms of communal fusion such as being together around the loss of someone or sublation into the dead body, *e.g.*, as in martyrdom.³⁶ Such, Nancy calls, “the community of human immanence”³⁷ as they entail giving up singularities by coming into being in a superior body.

Nancy argues that death cannot be sublated,³⁸ nor can it be consigned to any immanence. Fynsk adds that death cannot be the work of any collectivity. It is a transcending experience and reveals a meaninglessness that cannot be subsumed.³⁹ Nancy, referring to Bataille’s thoughts on sovereignty, explains that death cannot be reduced to immanence and that an immanent community consisting of those who have sacrificed themselves in the name of community is not possible. For Bataille, death is not merely that which is common among creatures, but also that which cannot be shared with another.⁴⁰ Again, death cannot be reduced to anything, especially to any subjective experience, because it is transcendent, it cannot be cognized, nor can it be possessed by anyone—it is an excess. This excess of finitude cannot be mastered,⁴¹ absorbed, or contained by anything. It only allows a relation: we are exposed, to “which [our] being is abandoned”.⁴² Because of its transcendence and irreducibility, death is the only sovereign, but due to its absence and elusiveness, this “sovereignty is nothing”.⁴³ If it is nothing, how can we think of community? “In the nothing, being is *'outside itself'*” where it “cannot relate to

³⁶ Ibid, 12-14.

³⁷ Ibid, 13.

³⁸ Ibid, 14.

³⁹ Fynsk, "Foreword: Experiences of Finitude," xvi.

⁴⁰ Nancy, *The Inoperative Community*, 18.

⁴¹ Ibid, 13.

⁴² Ibid, 18.

⁴³ Ibid, 18.

itself, but with which it entertains an essential and incommensurable relation. This relation prescribes the place of the singular being".⁴⁴

Only death induces one to ex-pose and reveal oneself to the other, hence brings about the "opening to community." So, community transpires through the death of the other. In this community, there are no subjects, no *egos*. Everyone exposes themselves out of their point of standing and their *ego*. "It is the community of others"⁴⁵ to which I have inclination. Further, it is the community which shows to its members the mortal truth, *i.e.*, their finitude. In this vein, community is not this greatest or eternal structure constituted by blood ties or common identities between subjects. Rather, it manifests upon the death of the other.⁴⁶ However, this does not mean that community is the work of death. It is also not the community which anoints its dead as heroes or transcendental figures and fuses its members into that ⁴⁷, death is common to all, but it cannot be transformed into an identity or essence, so death cannot be made the work of anything.

The community arises both from and for others.⁴⁸ Therefore, it is made up neither of any subject nor by any subject. The community which happens to us can be conceived witnessing the death of the other, for it reminds us our mortal truth common with others in the community. Here, Blanchot notes that it is not by questioning that our being we relate to our finite being. But it is upon *someone else's death* that we radically question our being because witnessing him vanish, die, brings me us to our exteriority and thus brings about the possibility of community. Not only death is an un-shareable possession of the dead, but it also dispossesses one of this un-shareable possession. Blanchot calls Bataille to portray this situation: "a man alive, who sees a fellow man die, can survive only *beside himself*".⁴⁹

⁴⁴ Ibid, 18.

⁴⁵ Ibid, 15.

⁴⁶ Ibid, 14-15.

⁴⁷ Ibid, 14-15.

⁴⁸ Ibid, 15.

⁴⁹ Blanchot, *The Unavowable Community*, 9.

1.2. Antigone

In this section, the Nancian notion of *being-with* will be examined along with the experience of death. Furthermore, Antigone's singularity is a fundamental assertion of this thesis and the possibility of community which is demonstrated by Antigone through her singularity will be introduced. In this sense, Sophocles' *Antigone* will be reviewed and discussed within the framework developed by Nancy, Blanchot, and Butler. In terms of death, I will also analyze the effect of Polynices' death on Antigone and her being singular.

In Sophocles' tragedy *Antigone*, Oedipus unwittingly kills his father Laius, and he gets married to his mother, Jocasta, so that Oedipus is crowned king of Thebes. Two boys (Eteocles and Polynices) and two girls (Antigone and Ismene) are born from his marriage with his mother, Jocasta. After Oedipus's real identity is revealed, Jocasta hangs herself and Oedipus blinds himself. His sons, Eteocles and Polynices, make an agreement to share the throne alternately. However, when Polynices's turn comes to exercise power, Eteocles refuses giving the throne to his brother Polynices. Polynices, who is exiled from Thebes, gets married to Argea, the daughter of Adrastus, the king of Argos. After that, Polynices attacks the city of Thebes with the help of Adrastus' army. So, Polynices and Eteocles fight, and at the end of the war, both kill each other.

Then, their uncle, Creon, ascends to the throne. While Eteocles' dead body is buried like a Greek citizen, Polynices is declared as a traitor by being unburied because of his cooperation with the enemy, the king of Argos. Moreover, mourning for Polynices is prohibited by Creon. However, Antigone, the sister of both Polynices and Eteocles, acts against Creon's authority by burying Polynices' dead body twice.

Along the lines described by Nancy, "generations of citizens and militants, of workers and servants of the States, have imagined their death reabsorbed or sublated in a community, yet to come, that would attain immanence".⁵⁰ The fact

⁵⁰ Nancy, *The Inoperative Community*, 13.

that Polynices is declared traitor by Creon while Eteocles is made a martyr for the sake of his battle for “his homeland” serves as an example of this immanent community members of which fuse into the dead body of Eteocles. Eteocles’ death and his martyrdom are the constituent elements of Creon’s sovereignty. Thanks to this, Creon demarcates his sovereignty by excluding Antigone and Polynices from his community and alienating them now as the other, the enemy. However, for Nancy, the immanent community which fuses itself into the dead body of its member, ends in “suicide of community” as it was seen in Nazi Germany. The extermination of other than “Aryans” led to the suicide of the German nation because they never satisfied “the criteria of *pure* immanence—it being impossible to set a limit on such criteria.”^{51 52} It is also because of the impossibility of being absolute, and Being itself is being-with. Like the tragic end of Nazi Germany, the final scene of tragedy ends up “suicide” of all characters. Creon’s immanent community and his decision to punish Antigone results in death of Antigone, Haemon, Antigone’s fiancée and son of Creon, and Creon’s wife Eurydice.

However, as was argued about death by both Nancy and Blanchot, the death of Polynices leads Antigone to opening to *the* community and understanding her mortal truth. Polynices’ death is common to both; Antigone, too, may experience death. However, they cannot share it because death is that which belongs most to the one who is dying, to repeat Blanchot.⁵³ Therefore, Polynices’ death exposes Antigone to the community and makes her to understand that the community is

⁵¹ Ibid, 12.

⁵² According to Nancy, the idea of communal fusion is derived from Christian thought of fusing into the mystical body of Christ. He appeals to the term of “communion” as immanence. In the Christian practice of communion, bread is eaten, and wine is drunk in a way that it symbolizes Christ’s body and blood. It has contributed the idea of totalitarianism in which members of the communion fuse into a shared ultimate identity. Furthermore, it is longing for the community that has been lost or Nancy describes it as “a nostalgia for a lost community”. He exemplifies it: “the natural family, the Athenian city, the Roman republic, the first Christian community, corporations, communes, or brotherhoods” (Nancy, *The Inoperative Community*, 9).

⁵³ Blanchot, *The Unavowable Community*, 9.

already happening. No death is superior to any other and is the excess of finitude common to all creatures.

In parallel with Bataille's remarks that the one who witnesses the death of living creatures, poses itself outside,⁵⁴ Antigone, too, is ex-posed and beyond herself as a non-subject. From then on, she is not the bearer of any essence or identity affiliated with the state. She is not the work of herself or the producer of her essence. With reference to Nancy's claim, the death of Polynices brings about releasing (*ex-position*) Antigone to the outside of where she once had stood with all her identities and instigates her journey towards nothingness. Antigone stands on the border, *ex-static*: she is a singular being.

Antigone's experience upon the death of Polynices is grief and Butler address mourning as an ex-position oneself and losing oneself.⁵⁵ At the same time, there is no relation with itself in mourning. Instead of thinking "a mourning that turns to a kind of self-recovery in which the subjects "communes" with its loss," it is "a kind of joy and to more affirmative or more abandoned experience of dispossession."⁵⁶ In other words, it is an *ex-static* moment:

To be ec-static means, literally, to be outside oneself, and thus can have several meanings: to be transported beyond oneself by a passion, but also to be *beside oneself* with rage or grief. I think that if I can still address a "we", or include myself within its terms, I am speaking to those of us who are living in certain ways *beside ourselves*, whether in sexual passion, or emotional grief, or political rage.⁵⁷

Butler tries to think on it along with Freud's ideas on grief. According to Freud, "when we lose someone, we do not always know what it is *in* that person that has been lost"⁵⁸. In this case, when "I" lose "you", I lose myself

⁵⁴ Nancy, *The Inoperative Community*, 15.

⁵⁵ Butler, *Precarious Life*, (Verso, New York, 2004), p. 28.

⁵⁶ Fynsk, "Foreword: Experiences of Finitude," xv.

⁵⁷ Butler, *Precarious Life*, p. 24.

⁵⁸ *Ibid*, p. 21.

because the relation between “I” and “you” makes me “I”. If the relationship ruptures, “I” become a stranger for itself.⁵⁹ According to Blanchot, *someone else’s death* “calls me into question most radically”⁶⁰. Likewise, Butler claims that: thanks to grief, “the very “I” is called into question by its relation to the Other, a relation that does not precisely reduce me to speechlessness but does nevertheless clutter my speech with signs of its undoing”.⁶¹ In this respect, in *Precarious Life*, Butler underlies “our vulnerability to loss and the task of mourning that follows” for the possibility of community.⁶² Like Nancy, she describes being member of the community as “the ecstatic nature subjectivity” instead of “autonomous subjectivity”.⁶³ Moreover, loss and the following grief have dispossessed oneself from subjectivity because ‘if I do not know what I lose, then, I might lose myself’.⁶⁴ Mourning and grief “interrupt the self-conscious account of ourselves... in ways that challenge the very notion of ourselves as autonomous and in control”⁶⁵.

In this context, Butler explains mourning as an example of the impossibility of being absolute in a similar gesture to what Nancy puts as the notion of *being with*. Grief makes possible to understand that we cannot be without ‘other’.

Returning to Antigone’s grief, she finds herself in the communality by means of Polynices’ death. This communality has not been founded upon common essence, identity or religion because Polynices’ death and the sense of insufficiency that follows leads her to lose herself and to dispossess her. That is why her

⁵⁹ Ibid, p. 22.

⁶⁰ Blanchot, *The Unavowable Community*, 9.

⁶¹ Butler, *Precarious Life*, p. 23.

⁶² Ibid, p.19.

⁶³ Hannah Stark, “Judith Butler’s Post-Hegelian Ethic and the Problem with Recognition”, *Feminist Theory*, 2014, 15:1, pp. 92, 98.

⁶⁴ Judith Butler, *Precarious Life*, p. 28.

⁶⁵ Ibid, p. 23.

association with the ‘other’ makes her “Antigone”. In this sense, Antigone is contested by loss; she does not know what she loses because she loses herself⁶⁶ and she understands that being is possible only as being-in-common-with-one-another.

The death of Polynices ends up contesting Antigone’s being, and again, this experience makes her understand that being is not absolute. She knows that, because of this incompleteness, community happens to us. Blanchot notes:

A being does not want to be recognized, it wants to be contested: in order to exist it goes towards the other, which contests and at times negates it, so as to start being only in that privation that makes it conscious (here lies the origin of its consciousness) of the impossibility of being itself, of subsisting as its *ipse* or, if you will, as itself as a separate individual: this way it will perhaps exist, experiencing itself as an always prior exteriority, or as an existence shattered through and through, composing itself only as it decomposes itself constantly, violently and in silence. The existence of every being thus summons the other or a plurality of others.⁶⁷ (Blanchot 6)

Every being is con-tested by another being so that they realize the impossibility of *ipseity*. Each being needs another, because being is already being-with, being-with-other. Polynices’ death is absence for Antigone. Her lack cannot be fulfilled by anyone and anything. She recognizes her need for him as one being’s need for the other. Polynices’ absence exposes her and she comes into being towards the other. His death calls Antigone to community.

1.3. Ethics and The Ethics of Death

Our mortality, corporeal vulnerability, and insufficiency bring us together. The community engendered thus is composed of those who feel compassion and reverence for their fellows on the account of their singular, finite, and mortal beings.⁶⁸ This community, Sayın calls, the community of those who observe *the*

⁶⁶ Ibid, p. 28.

⁶⁷ Blanchot, *The Unavowable Community*, 6.

⁶⁸ Sayın, *Ölüm Terbiyesi*, 56.

ethics of death. In this regard, this section will discuss the experience Antigone goes through upon Polynices' death in reference to Sayın's notion of *the ethics of death* and examine Agamben's take on singularity through the connection between ethics and ontology.

Antigone's feelings towards Polynices can be likened to what Sayın regards as the compassion felt for mortals for the eventuality of their death.⁶⁹ The only commonality, whereby we can share each other and the limits of our exteriority as we are ex-posed out of our immanence, is the commonality of death. This commonality grants us the compassion as the uttermost sentiment that can be felt towards the other. We thus look for their mortality and credit that their beauty springs not from a sovereign permanence but from ephemerality.⁷⁰ Therefore, Sayın asserts that members of the community of those who have nothing in common have *the ethics of death* and that is precisely what brings about the community.

Ölüm Terbiyesi, she notes, is written for reminding those who deprive the dead of their grave, those who desecrate their graves, and those who politicize the death, of *the ethics of death*.⁷¹ The ethics of death originates from *aidos*, the feeling of reverence, and it springs from an acknowledgement that no one can appropriate or dispose of death, be that it may even be its own. This ethics is beyond subjectivity.⁷²

Agamben, in *The Coming Community*, develops a relation between ontology and ethics by discussing a now-obsolete term from Medieval logic, *maneries*, *i.e.*, the "manner." It had been utilized then as a third figure in addition to genus and species. "Species is called manner, as when one says: grass of this species, that is, manner, grows in my garden".⁷³ Manner is not generic or individual. It is "whatever

⁶⁹ Ibid, 85.

⁷⁰ Ibid, 67.

⁷¹ Ibid, 14-15.

⁷² Ibid, 67-68.

⁷³ Ugucione de Pisa quoted in Giorgio Agamben, *The Coming Community*, 26.

singularity.” This “whatever singularity” does not refer to any condition, identity, or belonging. It is “being such as it is” and “being such that it always matters”.⁷⁴ ⁷⁵“Whatever singularity” does not contain any common essence or property like being Muslim, French, or red. Rather, it belongs only to itself.⁷⁶ Accordingly, manner refers to a being in its *rising forth*, it is a being that is its mode of being. For Agamben, this modality of rising forth signals a link between ontology and ethics.⁷⁷ That is to say, being does not posit itself as an essence, but rather exposes itself as such with its all qualities; it is its being *thus*, as “engendered from its own manner”.⁷⁸ At that, freedom of one can best be understood by conceiving it not as a property, but as an *ethos*, a *habitus*: that is, as-“being engendered from one's own manner”.⁷⁹ Agamben therefore concludes: “that manner is ethical that does not befall us and does not found us but engenders us”.⁸⁰

The fact that must constitute the point of departure for any discourse on ethics is that there is no essence, no historical or spiritual vocation, no biological destiny that humans must enact or realize. This is the only reason why something like an ethics can exist, because it is clear that if humans were or had to be this or that substance, this or that destiny, no ethical experience would be possible—there would be only tasks to be done.⁸¹

Polynices’ death brings about Antigone’s *rising forth*, her manner, her *thus*. Begotten from her own manner, she discards her identities and her essence which are rooted in her social and biological determinations, and ex-poses herself as such and such. Since ethics allows no essence, as Agamben argued, Antigone, who emerges out of herself upon the death of Polynices, thus goes through an ethical

⁷⁴ Ibid, 1.

⁷⁵ Nancy emphasizes the term of “whatever” as one of the features of singular being apart from its “being exposed” and “unique”. See, Nancy, *The Sense of the World*, 68-75.

⁷⁶ Agamben, *The Coming Community*, 1-2.

⁷⁷ Ibid, 26-27.

⁷⁸ Ibid, 26-27.

⁷⁹ Ibid, 28.

⁸⁰ Ibid, 28.

⁸¹ Ibid, 42.

experience. Antigone adheres to the ethics of death and has compassion, as a *clinamen*, for the other, as con-tested by Polynices' death. She knows that the only thing she has in common with her brother is their excess of finitude, that is, death, and the only duty for one who understands this is to observe the ethics of death. Although the sovereign forbids the burial of Polynices, she goes on to bury him twice. Antigone knows no duty arising from [her] communal essence or identity, because, already risen forth, she is ethical and observes the ethics of death. Had she not buried the dead, she would have performed the duty decreed by the sovereign and fused in that immanent community as a part thereof, being sublated into its essence and being its work: there, ethics would not be possible. Moreover, the community would not be possible because "community is (...) resistance to immanence."⁸² Notwithstanding the consequences, she risks the punishment by Creon's immanent community, because she is neither her-self anymore nor the part of that community which produces and imposes various identities on her.

Antigone's deed is also in contrast with Ismene's. In the opening scene, Antigone enounces her desire to bury Polynices despite Creon's edict and she asks Ismene for help. However, Ismene does not want to be involved with Antigone. She replies: "oh my poor sister if that's what's happening, what can I say that would be any help to ease the situation or resolve it?"⁸³ and she tries to dissuade Antigone. Her statements display her cowardice. She is afraid of dying and sharing the fate of her brothers, mother, and father. For her, their fates were the aftermath of disregarding Creon's commands. Thus, she advises Antigone:

Think how we'll die far worse than all the rest,
if we defy the law and move against
the king's decree, against his royal power.
We must remember that by birth we're women,
and, as such, we shouldn't fight with men.
Since those who rule are much more powerful,
we must obey in this and in events
which bring us even harsher agonies.

⁸² Nancy, *The Inoperative Community*, 35.

⁸³ Sophocles, *Antigone*, (Richer Resources Publications, 2015), 48-50.

So, I'll ask those underground for pardon—
since I'm being compelled, I will obey
those in control. That's what I'm forced to do.
It makes no sense to try to do too much.⁸⁴

She believes that women should be obedient to men because they are more powerful, and, women and men, they are inherently unequal.⁸⁵ So, she says that she cannot help Antigone. The main reason behind Ismene's withdrawal is that, unlike Antigone, she is not ethical. Her conduct is regulated on blindly conforming to duties and rules prescribed by the authority. However, Antigone takes every risk and risk even her death. This is reflected in Antigone's response to Ismene: "but you chose life—it was my choice to die".⁸⁶

When Creon finds out about Antigone's disobedience and confronts her, Antigone tells Creon that it was her greatest honor to bury his brother's corpse, and that everybody would have approved her action had they not been afraid of him.

ANTIGONE In all of Thebes, you're the only one
who looks at things that way.
They share my views,
but they keep their mouths shut just for you.
CREON These views of yours—so different from the rest—
don't they bring you any sense of shame?
ANTIGONE No—there's nothing shameful in honouring
my mother's children.⁸⁷

Creon claims that there is no one who thinks and acts like Antigone, and that she should comply just like the others in Thebes. Still, she is different, because she is singular. She does not conform to identities that are imposed on her; so, she does not obey the sovereign who exercises his power on his citizens. Her difference points to her *manner of rising forth*, and thanks to it she practices her own ethics,

⁸⁴ Ibid, 74-85.

⁸⁵ Further on the distinction between Antigone and Ismene: Please see, Kirkpatrick, J. (2011) "The Prudent Dissident: Unheroic Resistance in Sophocles' Antigone", in *The Review of Politics*, Vol. 73, No. 13, pp. 401-424.

⁸⁶ Sophocles, *Antigone*, 634.

⁸⁷ Ibid, 576-582.

which is not comprised of obligations stipulated by the authority or based on any communal essence. This is why she acts, unlike Ismene, and buries her brother's corpse, in spite of the forbidding sovereign.

1.4. Communication

As has been shown, Antigone's *rising forth* as her own manner provides her communication with Polynices. She is not immanent anymore or a self-enclosed subject. What is called "inner experience" by Bataille: "the spacing of the experience of the outside, of the outside-of-self" ⁸⁸, which is a place of communication. Similarly, Agamben asserts only "the empty space" provides communication between singularities because it is a threshold where singularities meet without common identities. ⁸⁹

What is more, communication releases the consciousness from oneself, namely, *ecstasy*. It negates the "subject" as a precondition of the community and, instead, reveals that being comes from the community. ⁹⁰ In the community, singular beings have communication. Their communication is sharing. According to Nancy:

But these singular beings are themselves constituted by sharing, they are distributed and placed, or rather *spaced*, by the sharing that makes them *others*: other for one another, and other, infinitely other for the Subject of their fusion, which is engulfed in the sharing, in the ecstasy of the sharing: 'communicating' by not 'communing.' These 'places of communication' are no longer places of fusion, even though in them one *passes* from one to the other; they are defined and exposed by their dislocation. Thus, the communication of sharing would be this very dis-location. ⁹¹

⁸⁸ Nancy, *The Inoperative Community*, 19.

⁸⁹ Agamben, *The Coming Community*, 10.

⁹⁰ Nancy, *The Inoperative Community*, 19.

⁹¹ *Ibid*, 25.

Nancy's argument about sharing [of] community is similar to his notion of *clinamen*. He claims that if being is already being-with and being absolute is impossible, then there is sharing, relation, and communication with one another. Being singular entails sharing the space, standing in finitude side by side with other singulars. It is "the sharing of community: the mortal truth that we share and that shares us".⁹² For Blanchot, the community is sharing of birth and death. They are the first and last incidents that happen to everyone.⁹³ In this space (community), everyone *arealizes* one's identity, coming out of oneself as to ex-pose oneself on-to the community.⁹⁴ Furthermore, to expose oneself to the finitude is to be present to the other as a singular being, which is communication. *Ecstasy* is nothing more than [this] communication.⁹⁵

Agamben refers to Spinoza in claiming that the common cannot generate the essence of the singular. What is critical here is the commonality without any essence: "taking-place, [that is,] the communication of singularities in the attribute of extension, does not unite them in essence, but scatters them in existence".⁹⁶ For Spinoza, it is only the attribute of extension that all bodies have in common. Such is being-in-common in space, sharing it and communicating with each other. In other words, to take *place* is the *manner of rising forth*.⁹⁷ The manner is *ethos*⁹⁸ that requires a free use of the self⁹⁹ without abiding by any given identity or essence or duties arising therefrom. Ethics, then, is the condition of communication.

Furthermore, to borrow Bataille's designations, community happens around "unleashing of passions," which manifests as a "contagion" from one to other, like

⁹² Ibid, 26.

⁹³ Blanchot, *The Unavowable Community*, 9.

⁹⁴ Nancy, *The Inoperative Community*, 19-20.

⁹⁵ Ferda Keskin, "Singularity," PHIL 523, 26 March 2018. Istanbul Bilgi University. Lecture.

⁹⁶ Nancy, *The Inoperative Community*, 18-19.

⁹⁷ Ibid, 27.

⁹⁸ Ibid, 19.

⁹⁹ Ibid, 28.

communication. Singular being is "in the passion (...) of sharing its singularity" and "what is communicated, what is contagious, and what (...) is unleashed is the *passion* of singularity." Singular being is *passive* in being as such, and not active as to be the author of himself, or his work. It is being as such, ex-posed and *ecstatic*, that allows the sharing of the space, the place of exteriority, by communicating the contagious with the other. "The presence of the other does not constitute a boundary that would limit the unleashing of 'my' passions: on the contrary, only exposition to the other unleashes my passions".¹⁰⁰

The death of Polynices ex-poses Antigone out of her subjectivity. Antigone's act of burying Polynices exposes her in unleashing her passions—whether in the face of risk of death or at the expense of her duties in Greek society. Polynices' death enables them to share their finitude and to understand their mortal truth. Her motive arises from her responsibility for him (the other) because they share the space in their condition of being-with and because she is observing the ethics of death. She recognizes her insufficiency and that it can never be completed because, simply, being is shared. In her practice of the ethics of death and in her awareness of being-in-common, she buries her brother. What she does exposes her as a singular being. For had she not done so, she would have become the work of Creon's immanent community. Nevertheless, she acknowledges that the true community is only that of singular beings.

Community cannot be the work of anything or anyone, even that of a singular being. In community, singular beings, in their finitude, stand on the limits of their selves. Thereupon, they are not subjects of, or *to*, any identity or essence, that is, they are neither the authors nor the work. In community, nobody can be excluded; exclusion is not possible for it entails two, whereas being is one. Beyond being is, again, another being. In order to exclude, there needs to be an outside. However, such an outside, like a vacuum, would absorb and destroy who is thrown into there as well as itself.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid, 32-33.

All of us are born to and die in this community. There is nothing beyond it. Only in the immanent community, an outside is presumed as the sovereign produces its community as a work through certain identities. Thus, the sovereign simultaneously posits the outside for those who do not conform to these identities and who are accordingly perceived as a threat to its work. Community as the work of the sovereign, the immanent community, makes its sovereign the author, so he, as vigilant as he is, dotes on his work, driven to defend it from any harm whatsoever. Therefore, while some can be the members of the immanent community, “others” are declared traitors. Those others are not treated as “human.” Likewise, Creon forbids the burying of Polynices and banishes Antigone from his community and incarcerates her. Both Antigone and Polynices are singular. They dispose of their identities as conferred by Creon the sovereign. Both open themselves to community. They know that community befalls the singular being. All beings, even “traitors, animals, the precarious, the worthless” are included in this community. Everyone is in communication with and inclination to the other. No one is defined by an identity or bound in an essence. They belong to themselves. They are aware of their mortal truth, so they feel compassion for each other, and they are responsible for the other. They do not otherize but accept each other as such and such. This is why Antigone recognizes her mortal truth as the only common thing she has with Polynices, so she acts against Creon’s immanent community and his sovereignty by her deed of singularity.

Any fault is not worse than having a property. One's head and identity also include in this property.

—Zeynep Sayın, *Ölüm Terbiyesi*

CHAPTER 2

ANTIGONE AND BEING SINGULAR

In the previous chapter, I discussed Nancy's notion of community in which singularities are being-in-common as opposed to the societies originated by common beings. I also introduced Antigone as a singular figure. In parallel with Nancy and Blanchot, I underlined Polynices' death as a point of departure for Antigone's singularity, ethics and communication in the community. In this chapter, I clarify Antigone's singularity that arises from her undone identities, which are given by the immanent community, due to the effect of her brother's death. Butler's representation of Antigone in her work, entitled *Antigone's Claim: Kinship Between Life and Death*, is beyond intelligibility as a figure who pushes and tests the social norms. This will be discussed with respect to singularity and, accordingly, Antigone's singularity and her rising forth in the community will be explained in relation with Butler's notion of unintelligibility and Agamben's "whatever singularity" and the *threshold*.

In *Antigone's Claim*, Butler discusses interpretations of Antigone by Hegel, Irigaray, and Lacan in terms of kinship. According to Hegel, the spirit, as consciousness, is the essence of the ethical order (*Sittlichkeit*) and divided into the human law and the divine law. While the former represents universality and the law of the state, the law of the citizen; the latter represents individuality and the law of

the family, of blood relations. Thus, they are antithetical.¹⁰¹ Furthermore, the human law is thought of as of men's law while the divine law is considered as women's law.¹⁰² According to Hegel's interpretation, the death of her brother causes in Antigone "the highest *intuitive* awareness" so she does not act consciously, and due to women's association with the household gods, Antigone takes on the duty of burying her brother's dead body.¹⁰³ In other words, Antigone defies Creon's authority, *i.e.*, the law of the state, the human law, by embracing the law of the family, the divine law. Thus, for Hegel, Antigone occupies a pre-political position by representing the family law and blood relations, because, according to Hegel, blood relations must submit to the state authority for entering the ethical world, the sphere of political participation.¹⁰⁴ However, Antigone chooses the family law by burying her brother's dead body.¹⁰⁵

Lacan reads Antigone as bordering the symbolic and the imaginary. At the threshold of the symbolic, that is, "the sphere of laws and norms that govern the accession to speech," she is to figure its inauguration. This happens "through instantiating kinship relations as symbolic norms".¹⁰⁶

According to Irigaray, Antigone represents the kinship relations and the transition from the maternal law to paternal law.¹⁰⁷ Irigaray notes that Antigone and Polynices have the same blood, and that since their mother is the mother of their

¹⁰¹ G. W. Friedrich Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1977), 265-269.

¹⁰² Zeynep Direk, *Cinsel Farkın İnşası*, (İstanbul, TR: Metis Yayınları, 2018), 141.

¹⁰³ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, 274.

¹⁰⁴ Judith Butler, *Antigone's Claim: Kinship Between Life and Death*, (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2000), 3.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid*, 3-5.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid*, 3.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid*, 4.

father and his wife, their blood is twice re-marked by the mother.¹⁰⁸ Antigone defies the law of the state for the sake of her brother and not for a child nor for a husband. This particular relationship to her brother reflects the aspiration as to the continuity of maternal blood. By burying the "son of the mother," Antigone shows her loyalty to the matrilineal pedigree. She thus takes the side of the divine law against the human law, the law of the state, and its sovereign, the man of the family, her uncle. The law Antigone upholds is the maternal law of the chthonic deities.¹⁰⁹

According to Butler, none of these accounts by Hegel, Lacan, or Irigaray interpret Antigone as a political figure. Instead, she is regarded as professing a pre-political opposition to politics.¹¹⁰ For them, she represents "kinship as the sphere that conditions the possibility of politics without ever entering into it".¹¹¹ However, Butler asserts that Antigone's situation is ambiguous in terms of its representation of both kinship relations and gender identities. First, she cannot represent kinship norms because she carries an incest legacy. Her representativeness is already in crisis:¹¹² her mother Jocasta is also her grandmother, her father Oedipus is also her brother, and her siblings are her nephews and nieces, or they are her aunt and uncle. Second, Antigone's incestuous love for her brother, Polynices, presents another ambiguity in the society in respect of "natural" and "cultural" norms that prohibit incest. Antigone's third crisis in the society is her undetermined identities, especially, her gender identities, and her refusal to become a mother and a wife. In this regard, what follows will clarify and resolve Antigone's ambiguity, or her unintelligibility, as her singularity.

¹⁰⁸ Luce Irigaray, *Speculum of the Other Woman*, (New York, NY: Cornell University Press, 1985), 216.

¹⁰⁹ Direk, *Cinsel Farkın İnşası*, 170-171.

¹¹⁰ Butler, *Antigone's Claim: Kinship Between Life and Death*, 2.

¹¹¹ *Ibid*, 3.

¹¹² *Ibid*, 3.

2.1. Antigone's Love

In this section, Antigone's love for Polynices will be discussed in the sense of his death and its effect on Antigone as an ecstatic experience which exposes her self-enclosed subjectivity to a community where she is *being-in-common* and *being-with-another*. Butler claims that Antigone harbors an incestuous love for Polynices, because her deed is exclusively for him.

I'd never have done it
for children of my own, not as their mother,
nor for a dead husband lying in decay—
no, not in defiance of the citizens.
If my husband died, there'd be another one,
and if I were to lose a child of mine
I'd have another with some other man.
But since my father and my mother, too,
are hidden away in Hades' house,
I'll never have another living brother.
That was the law I used to honour you. ¹¹³

Butler notes that Antigone, as she makes explicit in her speech, violates the law only for her brother as she would not have done for any other member of her family. Therefore, contrary to Hegel and Irigaray, Butler argues that Antigone does not symbolize family relations.¹¹⁴ Instead, she is related to her brother Polynices with incestuous love.¹¹⁵

Furthermore, Butler claims that Antigone fulfills Oedipus' curse which reads: "from none did you have love more than from this man, without whom you will now spend the remainder of your life".¹¹⁶ Thereunder Antigone is to love no one but the man who is dead, her father. She both disobeys and obeys her father's

¹¹³ Sophocles, *Antigone*, 1010-1020.

¹¹⁴ Butler, *Antigone's Claim: Kinship Between Life and Death*, 22-23.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid*, 6.

¹¹⁶ Quoted in Judith Butler, *Antigone's Claim*, 60.

curse by displacing her love onto his brother Polynices, a dead man in lieu of her father.^{117 118}

In furtherance of the impact of Polynices' death on Antigone's singularity as put forward in the first chapter, Antigone's love for her brother will be analyzed in this chapter as her exposition to the "other" and her transcendence. In this vein, Butler's reading that Antigone's incestuous love for her brother brings about her unintelligibility in the society on the grounds of incest prohibition, will be examined in terms of her singularity (her *being as such*) within the context developed by Nancy and Agamben. It is by the virtue of her love for Polynices that Antigone goes on to bury his dead body despite Creon's edict. Antigone's defiance renders her singularity by stripping her out of her identities and places her outside the conditions of intelligibility imposed by the society.

In his interesting article, "The Ruin of Song," Damian Stocking advances a similarity between Antigone and Creon in terms of being sovereign, immanent, and *autonomous*,¹¹⁹ contrary to the general opinion that assumes a contrast between

¹¹⁷ Ibid, 60.

¹¹⁸ In contrast to Butler's thought, according to Chanter and Mader, Antigone's act of burying her brother means that she demolishes her incest legacy and makes clear her ambiguous family relations. Mader also asserts that Antigone emphasizes that Polynices is her brother with her act instead of lover. Thus, she re-establishes her aberrational family tree. See Tina Chanter, "Antigone's Political Legacies: Abjection in Defiance of Mourning," in *Interrogating Antigone in Postmodern Philosophy and Criticism*, ed. Wilmer, S.E. and A. Zukauskaitė (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2010), 28 and Tina Chanter, "Agamben, Antigone, Irigaray: The Fetishistic Ruses of Sovereignty in Contemporary Politics," in *Whose Antigone? The Tragic Marginalization of Slavery* (Albany Sunny Press, 2011), 127. See also, Mary Beth Mader, "Antigone's Line," in *Bulletin de la Société Américaine de Philophie de Langue Française* 14, no. 2 (Fall, 2005) : 13-16.

¹¹⁹ Damian Stocking, "The Ruin of Song: Community and Autoimmunity in Sophocles' Antigone," *The Returns of Antigone: Interdisciplinary Essays*, ed. Chanter, T. and S. D. Kirkland (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2014), 75-76. Also see, Damian Stocking, "Antigone, "désœuvrée": Tragedy, Finitude, and Community," *Mosaic: An Interdisciplinary Critical Journal* 41, no. 3 (September, 2008): 153-168.

them either “as the family to the state, rebellion to power, singular to universal, [or] feminine to masculine”.¹²⁰ Moreover, Stocking claims, with reference to Nancy, that our relational ontology and our *being-in-common* make us preys. Because of our nature, we cannot predict others’ actions, so the limit is put against the “other” for the purposes of security. This is implemented in two ways: first, to assume ourselves “absolute” and to exclude the “other”; second, to absorb the “other” into the “communion,” so that all differences of the “other” are fused into our sameness.¹²¹ Both these are states of “immanence”—a condition in which our being is no longer exposed to an outside but remains fully and safely ‘within itself’.¹²² However, immanence annuls itself because being absolute is impossible if there is an “other”. Thus, it is only in my absence, namely, my death, I would have no relation to the “other”, and only this would make me “absolute” and unconnected. In this sense, the state of being “absolute” and “immanent” is its own extermination, *self-ruin*.¹²³ Furthermore, the irony is that the ecstatic relation with the “other” (being ex-posed beyond the self) is only possible through the “unworking” of the self. Referring to Derrida, Stocking asserts, “a politics of *community* could only really ever be a politics of *autoimmunity*. (...) Just as autoimmunization consists for a living organism (...) of protecting itself against its self-protection”.¹²⁴ That is to say, “any community (...) would interrupt and suspend its citizens’ usual immanence-seeking practices”¹²⁵ through autoimmunity. Thus, he claims that *Antigone* displays the *autoimmunity* through the *self-ruin* of immanent characters. The tragedy ends with the self-ruins of both Antigone and Creon, in other words, by “interrupting and suspending” immanent citizens and undoing them.

¹²⁰ Ibid, 69.

¹²¹ Ibid, 71.

¹²² Ibid, 72.

¹²³ Ibid, 72.

¹²⁴ Quoted in Damian Stocking, "The Ruin of Song: Community and Autoimmunity in Sophocles' *Antigone*," 73.

¹²⁵ Ibid, 73.

As Stocking notes, both Antigone and Creon have “immanence-seeking practices”.¹²⁶ He further asserts that Creon and Antigone have different techniques of immanence: while Antigone’s technique is being absolutely separate from the “other,” internally; Creon’s is ‘totalizing’ through absorbing the “other” into unity by eliminating differences and fusing the particular in a universalized sameness, externally.¹²⁷ Creon’s immanence is confirmed by his declaring Polynices a traitor and Eteocles a hero. He thus excludes Polynices (and accordingly Antigone) from his immanent community.

Antigone's asking for help from Ismene for burying Polynices' corpse in the first scene is an example of her endeavor to bring her into a “communion”. However, after Ismene’s denial, she rejects every other living being and accepts her “absoluteness”. At that, Stocking claims that “what she desires is only a perfect self-communion with her own thoughts and plans”.¹²⁸ Her expression "I am already dead" is another example of her absoluteness, her total separation from the "other".¹²⁹

Nevertheless, although Creon’s immanence and absoluteness are obvious, Antigone cannot be seen so. She emerges as a singular being through her acts of transcendence such as her love, her burying Polynices, her resistance to the sovereign, and her ambiguity amid determined identities in the society. Contrary to Stocking's claims, the reason for Ismene’s refusal to help out Antigone is not Antigone’s desire to be “absolute,” but it is that Ismene does not adhere to the *ethics of death*. Ismene relates Creon’s sovereignty to her given identity as a woman that determines her to be weak and to remain within the confines of the private sphere, that is, home, in Greek society. Accordingly, it is clear that what she does is to remind Antigone, too, of her identities, essentially, as a woman, and of that, as such, she is subject to Creon’s authority. Simply, Ismene is not able to elude her identities,

¹²⁶ Ibid, 76.

¹²⁷ Ibid, 76-77.

¹²⁸ Ibid, 76.

¹²⁹ Ibid, 77.

as a singular being. This is why Antigone does not accept Ismene's help at the end of the play and takes the deed upon herself. However, this does not mean that Antigone is willing to be "absolute". On the contrary, her deed bears love, friendship, and sharing.

According to Chanter, the contrast between Antigone and Creon also brings out the concepts of *philia* (friendship or love) and *echthros* (hostility). While Antigone insistently calls Polynices a friend, Creon regards Polynices as an enemy.¹³⁰ She tracks down this conflict in the dialogue between Creon and Antigone. When Creon tells Antigone that "an enemy can never be a friend, not even in death", Antigone responds to him by saying "but my nature is to love. I cannot hate".¹³¹ Chanter suggests that, in spite of her "unnatural" family bond, Antigone's emphasis on being "naturally born with love" can be interpreted as her "calling for a polity that is based on bonds of friendship, not one in which the family (...) serves unproblematically as a metaphor for the *polis*."¹³² Her insistence in viewing Polynices as a friend (or lover) instead of a foe indicates her objection to Creon's politics of inclusion, his immanentist politics based on a certain identity. Eventually, their conflict arises when Creon declares Polynices a traitor and enemy, while Antigone describes him as a loved one and a friend.¹³³ On that note, while Chanter interprets Antigone's affiliation with Polynices as friendship, it is seen as love (*eros*) from Butler's point of view. Moreover, her affiliation is regarded by Chanter as a new politics which is not related to identity.¹³⁴ In any case, as contrary to Stocking's claims, Antigone's love for Polynices will be expounded as singularity.

¹³⁰ Tina Chanter, "Antigone's Excessive Relationship to Fetishism," 236-237.

¹³¹ Sophocles, *Antigone*, 597-599.

¹³² Chanter, "Antigone's Excessive Relationship to Fetishism," 236.

¹³³ *Ibid*, 236-237.

¹³⁴ *Ibid*, 244.

Both Nancy and Blanchot assert that it is death and love which makes it possible to think of the community and of the being as being-with and put the subject beyond itself, its limits.¹³⁵ It is only death and love which singular beings have in common. Love is exclusive to the beloved and each love is unique. Love and death dispossess one of any possession.

According to Nancy, the Western tradition sees love as completion of the incomplete being. This arises from the idea of being absolute, apropos of the fusion in the Christian love of God.¹³⁶ So, love is an immanent experience in Western thought. However, for Nancy, there is no absoluteness or completion because there is no ego in love: no one says, “I love.” The expression is rather “I love you,” meaning “a declaration where ‘I’ is posed only by being exposed to ‘you’.” In other words, “I” do not exist without “you.” Being is only being-with. Here is no subject: “the heart is not a subject, even if it is the heart of a subject”.¹³⁷ Just like death, it is beyond the metaphysics of Cartesian subject. In love, the subject is neither sublated nor sublimated, but only exposed by the heart.¹³⁸ Thus, for Nancy, love is a transcendental experience.

Love is sharing, a *clinamen*, an inclination to the other. “Love arrives, it comes, or else it is not love. But it is thus that it endlessly goes elsewhere than to ‘me’ who would receive it: its coming is only a departure for the other, its departure only the coming of other”.¹³⁹ Love does not belong to anyone.

Lovers expose above all the unworking of community. Unworking is what they show in their communal aspect and intimacy. But they expose it *to* the community, which already *shares their intimacy*. For the community, lovers are on its limit, they are outside and inside, and at this limit, they have no meaning without the community (...) ¹⁴⁰

¹³⁵ Blanchot, *The Unavowable Community*, 16.

¹³⁶ Nancy, *The Inoperative Community*, 87.

¹³⁷ Ibid, 89.

¹³⁸ Ibid, 90.

¹³⁹ Ibid, 98.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid, 40.

For Nancy, love cannot be the work, even of the lover. Love brings about the unworking. The lover does not have any identity. It is ex-posed in love, taking place in ecstasy. For Agamben, lovable is “whatever singularity”. “Whatever” being, that is, *quodlibet* [*ens*]: “being such that it always matters”.¹⁴¹ The phrase already refers to the will (*libet*): so, it is love. Lover does not love this or that particular property of the beloved.¹⁴² On the contrary, lover loves one “*such as it is*” with all its properties, that is, whatever it is.

In this respect, is it not the case that being “whatever” also bring along [its] being desired? Likewise, desire brings along *clinamen*, because we are not indifferent but inclining to the other.¹⁴³ In this inclination, in this *clinamen*, we relate to the whatever-ness of the other, “such that it always matters”¹⁴⁴ for us. This desire relation takes place by two parties exposing each other; two parties thereby meet and incline to each other at the threshold of their singularities. They are, now, “whatever” to each other. To quote Nancy: “community is at least the *clinamen* of the individual”.¹⁴⁵ Indeed, “the yearning in the singular being for the other is what makes community, is what exposes the singular being to that which constitutes himself, for, according to Nancy, he is in fact constituted by the other. And it is this exposition, this intimacy that is discovered at the very limit of the outside (...)”.¹⁴⁶

To witness, Antigone would “never have done it for children of [her] own (...) nor for a dead husband (...)”.¹⁴⁷ Her deed is exclusively for her brother. A husband or a child is replaceable, what is irreplaceable is Polynices. Love is concerned with the singularity of the beloved. Beloved might be this one—or that.

¹⁴¹ Agamben, *The Coming Community*, 1.

¹⁴² Ibid, 2.

¹⁴³ Ferda Keskin, “Singularity,” PHIL 523, 16 April 2018. Istanbul Bilgi University. Lecture.

¹⁴⁴ Agamben, *The Coming Community*, 1.

¹⁴⁵ Nancy, *The Inoperative Community*, 4.

¹⁴⁶ Safari Ross, “Community and Ecstasy: (Re)defining the Ode,” *ECLS Student Scholarship*, (2009), 3. <https://scholar.oxy.edu/ecls_student/8>.

¹⁴⁷ Sophocles, *Antigone*, 1010-1012.

Yet each love, as well as each beloved, is unique, singular.¹⁴⁸ Antigone does what she does because she loves him. For her, Polynices is singular, whatever, as such that it always matters. Antigone, in love, exposes herself to Polynices. She is inclined towards him, there is *clinamen* between them. Moreover, her inclination does not have to contain necessarily an erotic relation with Polynices. Rather, it might contain an ethical tendency because Polynices is always matters for Antigone. He is *quodlibetic*.

Antigone is also a “whatever singularity.” Statkiewicz and Reed connect her singularity with her declaration of loving nature against Creon’s immanent sovereignty based on the dichotomy of friend versus enemy, and with her incestuous love. As Statkiewicz and Reed put it: “Antigone herself can, perhaps must, also be seen as a “whatever singularity,” “whatever being.” (...) when Antigone attempts explicitly to “define” her nature she places herself outside of the order of kinship, outside *oikos* or home, and outside of the order of ordinary moral standards of opposition between friends and enemies.”¹⁴⁹ In love, lovers unleash themselves with everything and nothing. Antigone’s love, ex-poses her out of the identities given by society. Her ex-position happens upon love and death. It is love and death that opens her to the possibility of community. Owing to them, she disposes of her identities as a woman, mother, wife, sister, or any other conferred by society. At that, she is unworking and she is not an ‘immanent being’, a work of herself. Stripped away from her identities, she becomes a singular being like Polynices’ dead body. She thus points to a new way of politics that is not based on any identity or essence whatsoever.

¹⁴⁸ See, Max Statkiewicz and Valerie Reed, “Antigone’s (Re)Turn: The *Ethos* of the “Coming Community”,” in *The Enigma of Good and Evil: The Moral Sentiment in Literature*, ed. Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka (Netherlands: Springer, 2005), 801.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 803.

2.2. Antigone's Singularity, Plurality and Her Ambiguity

As previously noted, Antigone's undetermined identities make up of her singularity. She is "whatever singularity" because she does not belong to this or that identity but belongs to belonging itself with all her properties.¹⁵⁰ Her ambiguous identities prove an instance thereof. This is also her 'being singular plural, 'within the terminology developed by Nancy. Accordingly, in what follows, these will be discussed as her singularity. Emphasis will be on her gender identities because women were mainly identified as wives and mothers in Greek society of the period.

According to Butler's interpretation, Antigone causes a crisis of undetermined gender identity in public. The first example is that, throughout the play, any opposition against the state or Creon's authority is described as not "[wo]manly".¹⁵¹ Ismene's words, after Antigone explains her that she will bury Polynices, present an instance of this:

We must remember that by birth we're women,
and, as such, we shouldn't fight with men.
Since those who rule are much more powerful,
we must obey in this and in events
which bring us even harsher agonies.
So I'll ask those underground for pardon—
since I'm being compelled, I will obey
those in control. That's what I'm forced to do.
It makes no sense to try to do too much.¹⁵²

Here, Ismene brings up that women must obey the rule of men because women are inferior. In another example, Creon speaks, to his distress, of a defeat by Antigone because, like Ismene, Creon, too, sees women as inferior to men:

When men succeed, what keeps their lives secure
in almost every case is their obedience.
That's why they must support those in control,
and never let some woman beat us down.

¹⁵⁰ Agamben, *The Coming Community*, 1.

¹⁵¹ Butler, *Antigone's Claim*, 6.

¹⁵² Sophocles, *Antigone*, 60-70.

If we must fall from power, let that come
at some man's hand—at least, we won't be called
inferior to any woman.¹⁵³

Antigone's deed is seen "manly" by both Creon and the chorus, *i.e.*, *polis*: "here she again displays her proud contempt—having done the act, she now boasts of it. She laughs at what she's done. Well, in this case, if she gets her way and goes unpunished, then she's the man here, not me".¹⁵⁴ Butler points out that Antigone seems to take on masculine sovereignty which casts the other as both inferior and feminine,¹⁵⁵ depriving Creon of his masculinity.¹⁵⁶ Antigone does not apologize. On the contrary, she says "I will not deny my deed."¹⁵⁷ She thus verbally defies, for a second time, Creon's authority.¹⁵⁸ Had she felt guilty, had she begged for forgiveness, then Creon's sovereignty and masculine superiority would have been approved by Antigone. However, with her verbal act, Antigone takes Creon's masculine sovereignty on herself.¹⁵⁹ Butler identifies Antigone's verbal act as "the completion of the act, the moment as well that implicates her in the masculine excess called hubris. And so, as she begins to act in language, she also departs from herself".¹⁶⁰

Antigone is called a "man" (*aner*) also by Oedipus for her loyalty for and caring of her father in exile. For Oedipus, her daughters take place of his sons.¹⁶¹ In this respect, Antigone's conflict with Ismene mirrors that between Polynices and

¹⁵³ Ibid, 767-773.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid, 480-550.

¹⁵⁵ Butler, *Antigone's Claim*, 9.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid, 6.

¹⁵⁷ Sophocles, *Antigone*, 500.

¹⁵⁸ Butler, *Antigone's Claim*, 8.

¹⁵⁹ At that, Antigone does not symbolize a feminist defiance, because she adopts both the language and actions of sovereign authority. (Butler, *Antigone's Claim*, 9.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid, 10.

¹⁶¹ Ibid, 62.

Eteocles. In a way, while daughters of Oedipus are his sisters, they are now also his sons. Sophocles lays out a kinship complex.¹⁶²

Moreover, by opposing to Creon, Antigone moves from the private sphere, in which women are confined to exclusively as wives and mothers, to the public sphere, which is of men. Her refusal to become a mother and wife not only is another example of the abolition of gender roles but also is a refusal of doing what is necessary to stay alive and being visible in Greek society.¹⁶³ Although she knows that her deed would result in her death, she deliberately acts, refusing to be a wife and mother:

Now, he seizes me by forces and leads me here—
no wedding and no bridal song, no share
in married life or raising children.
Instead I go in sorrow to grave,
without my friends, to die while still alive.¹⁶⁴

Antigone embraces the death and, instead of her bridal chamber, identifies her tomb as home.¹⁶⁵ This metaphor indicates that she would rather die than to assume normative gender roles. Butler refers to Gourgouris' point that Antigone's name consists of two words: *anti* means "in opposition to," while *gonē*, from *genos* falls in the vicinity of "offspring, generation, womb, seed, birth".¹⁶⁶ From this perspective, Antigone denotes "anti-generation".¹⁶⁷ However, it is clear that she does not just symbolize kinship and its norms, so she is not pre-political, contrary to the claims of Hegel, Irigaray, and Lacan. In this regard, this thesis will attempt to expound Antigone also as a political figure who forces the conditions of possibility of a community comprised of singulars.

¹⁶² Ibid, 62.

¹⁶³ Ibid, 76.

¹⁶⁴ Sophocles, *Antigone*, 910-920.

¹⁶⁵ "Oh my tomb and bridal chamber—my eternal hollow dwelling place" (Sophocles, 890–900).

¹⁶⁶ Butler, *Antigone's Claim*, 88.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid, 22.

According to Butler, Antigone's refusal to conform to gender roles and her incestuous love for her brother cause a public crisis of heterosexuality and family norms.¹⁶⁸ Although she is not queer, her deed symbolizes heterosexual fatality.¹⁶⁹ In that sense, Antigone is unintelligible because she resists the incest taboo which regulates kinship relations and establishes those that are only "intelligible and livable ones" in society.¹⁷⁰ Referring to Levi Strauss on the incest taboo, Butler suggests that it is a precondition for transitioning from nature to culture. Incest taboo is also a universal rule for society¹⁷¹ because it has "been mobilized to establish certain forms of kinship as the only intelligible ones".¹⁷² For instance, the Vatican's view of homosexuality as an attack not only on the family but also on the notion of human, "where to become human (...) requires participation in the family in its normative sense," sets an example of such norm for being intelligible in the society.¹⁷³ The sovereign draws certain limits, be it nationality, blood, gender, or family, that determine and serve as norms to confine, shape, and regulate his society and what is what in there. Antigone's transgression of all these thus renders her unintelligible in the society. Her singularity is a breach of normative gender roles and kinship bonds. In fact, these norms are the constituent elements of immanent society, where she cannot be identified under any identity.

Direk refers to Hegel in noting that the normative family provides soldiers and citizens for the state and this function depends on women and her fertility. Women must give birth to boys who will become citizens and soldiers. Boys do eventually leave their families to become soldiers and citizens. Therefore, citizenship demands the refusal of family bonds to a certain extent.¹⁷⁴ However,

¹⁶⁸ Ibid, 72.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid, 72.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid, 70.

¹⁷¹ Ibid, 15-17.

¹⁷² Ibid, 70.

¹⁷³ Ibid, 22.

¹⁷⁴ Direk, *Cinsel Farkın İnşası*, 153.

according to Hegel, Antigone observes the law of the family by burying Polynices and thus violates that of the state. Her deed contravenes the state's interests. Therefore, Hegel calls Antigone and women in general "an internal enemy" of the state and "the everlasting irony of community"¹⁷⁵ for refusing the universality of the rules of the state and prioritizing the family. In Hegel's words: "womankind (...) changes by intrigue the universal end of the government into a private end, transforms its universal activity into a work of some particular individual, and perverts the universal property of the state into a possession and ornament for the family."¹⁷⁶ ¹⁷⁷ I agree with Hegel on Antigone being "the eternal irony of the community"— she *is*, alas, not because of her representing the family law, but because of her singularity, her indeterminacy, and because of the crisis she precipitated in normative family relations and gender roles. That is to say, it is precisely Antigone's singularity that renders her as "the everlasting irony of the [immanent] community."

Moreover, it is obvious that Antigone manifests herself as "being singular plural" "within the terminology developed by Nancy and Agamben's notions of "whatever being," and "whatever singularity". Her undetermined identities show that she does not have any significant essence and she is not a work of herself as an immanent being. She shares "coessences" with "others" through "being-with-many" and her state of "being-with-many" summons her to the community of being-in-common.

¹⁷⁵ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, 288.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid*, 288.

¹⁷⁷ Butler quotes this passage, asserting that Hegel does not directly refer to Antigone, instead, he emphasizes the womankind. In that case, Hegel confers universality, to which Antigone opposed, on her. (*Antigone's Claim*, 36).

2.3. Antigone's Threshold

Although Butler claims Antigone's representation is not clear, my argument is that her representation is explicitly distinct as a political figure. Similarly, for Chanter, Antigone is a radical political figure who resists absolute authority and a source of "inspiration for freedom fighters".¹⁷⁸ In addition to claiming that Antigone acts in order for burying aberration, her incest legacy,¹⁷⁹ and for a new political order that is not based on inclusion practices,¹⁸⁰ she also suggests that Antigone's refusal of being a mother and wife is to interrupt her incest family line and to make clear her ambiguous genealogy.¹⁸¹ My claim is that her unintelligibility means singularity because she exposes herself with all her possibilities—being a wife, a mother, a daughter, a son, a sister, a brother, an uncle, an aunt, a woman, a man, or a homosexual or a heterosexual—and exposes herself also with nothingness: she may not have any of these identities because she is both alive and dead. She ex-poses herself onto the *threshold* on which all singularities stand.

Whatever is the figure of pure singularity. Whatever singular has no identity, it is not determinate with respect to a concept, but neither is it simply indeterminate; rather it is determined only through its relation to an *idea*, that is, to the totality of its possibilities. Through this relation, as Kant said, singularity borders all possibility and thus receives its *omnimoda determinatio* not from its participation in a determinate concept or some actual property (being red, Italian, Communist), but *only by means of this bordering*. It belongs to a whole, but without this belonging's being able to be represented by a real condition: Belonging, being-*such*, is here only the relation to an empty and indeterminate totality.¹⁸²

¹⁷⁸ Tina Chanter, "Antigone's Political Legacies: Abjection in Defiance of Mourning," in *Interrogating Antigone in Postmodern Philosophy and Criticism*, ed. Wilmer, S.E. and A. Zukauskaitė (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2010), 22.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 43.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 26.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 44.

¹⁸² Agamben, *The Coming Community*, 66.

In Agamben's terms, Antigone is a figure of singularity who stands on the border with all possibilities and properties she has. For Agamben, such border is not a limit (*Schranke*), but a threshold (*Grenze*).¹⁸³ This threshold sets everyone to ex-pose themselves with their everything. It is also a place of nothingness—"empty space" where everyone meets without any condition or any identities, as "*being whatever*." "The threshold is (...) the experience of the limit itself, the experience of *being-within* an *outside*. This *ek-stasis* is the gift that singularity gathers from the empty hands of humanity".¹⁸⁴

Contrary to the general opinion on *Antigone* that it presents the dichotomies between man and woman, the state and the family, the private and the public, *oikos* and *polis*, friend and enemy and so on; Antigone is on the threshold between being woman and man, son and daughter, uncle and aunt, kinship and state, *polis* and *oikos*, death and life, private and public, homosexual and heterosexual, outside and inside. However, this does not mean that she is a pre-political figure or that her representation is unclear. She is political, because she is *ecstatic*: she is calling for the possibility of community. As I discussed in the previous chapter, she can communicate "other" singularities and she can *rise forth* as her own manner, *ethos* on the threshold that she stands with being singular and plural. It prompts her to act with *the ethics of death* by opposing Creon's command. Thus, she finds herself in the community as *being-with*. Agamben's following words provide to understand her singularity and her *being-with* in the community:

[If] instead of continuing to search for a proper identity in the already improper and senseless form of individuality, humans were to succeed in belonging to this impropriety as such, in making of the proper being-thus not an identity and an individual property but a singularity without identity, a common and absolutely exposed singularity—if humans could, that is, not be-thus in this or that particular biography, but be only *the* thus, their singular exteriority and their face, then they would for the first time enter

¹⁸³ Ibid, 67.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid, 67.

into a community without presuppositions and without subjects, into a communication without the incommunicable.¹⁸⁵

Antigone is confronted by identities throughout the play, like when she is reminded of being a woman by Ismene and Creon in an endeavor to dispatch her "where women belong," the home.¹⁸⁶ Despite all the efforts, Antigone pulls everything to the limit. She stands on the threshold with all identities—a woman, a man, a mother, not being a mother, a sister, and so on. In fact, she stands *with* all identities and *beyond* them. Thereby, she contests and ridicules all these identities and summons them into a crisis. This is also why she is not been recognized: she has all these identities and does not have them. She is emblematic of what happens if identities conferred by the society are questioned and if one stands on the threshold in its singularity.

To elaborate on her threshold, Antigone will be compared to “the standing man” of Gezi Park protests in 2013 in İstanbul. Erdem Gündüz, a performance artist, became known during Gezi Park protests for his "standing" performance—a performance which many people later joined in. He completely stood still: no violence, no specific demands.^{187 188}

An act like this cannot be readily identified or categorized. The standing man merely “comes to presence in the public space, exposing himself as this singularity that he is, and his presentation remains without transcendent

¹⁸⁵ Ibid, 64.

¹⁸⁶ Peter, J. Euben, *Corrupting Youth: Political Education, Democratic Culture and Political Theory*, (New Jersey, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997), 158.

¹⁸⁷ Marie-Eve Morin, "Being Social Democratically with Jean-Luc Nancy at the Gezi Park Protests," in *Being Social: Ontology, Law, Politics*, ed. Mulqueen, T. and D. Matthews (Oxford, UK: Counterpress, 2015), 73.

¹⁸⁸ His protest was described as “civilized” and “pleasing to the eye” by then–Deputy Prime Minister Bülent Arınç. It is interesting to note that the Minister also expressed his concerns about potential health problems of standing due to long periods of inactivity and unproductivity and suggested that [people] should stand only for five minutes in order not to hinder their school or work.

signification”.¹⁸⁹ Even those who subsequently joined in and began *just* standing, they did not have, too, a particularly determined common objective. Everyone stood facing different directions. They stood as “whatever singularities,” not identified under any certainty. Nonetheless, they were not totally indeterminate: “whatever singularity” is “the totality of its possibilities”.¹⁹⁰ They stood on the threshold that exposed them to the “other.” As Blanchot describes protestors in May’68 as “presence of people”, they stood “in their limitless power which, in order not limit itself, accepts *doing nothing*.” It is a *being together*, manifests itself a “spontaneous” communication.¹⁹¹ Gathering in the same place, keeping distance, “they [came] and [stood] only to present themselves there, too: *with* him, but also beside and apart from him. What [was] being enacted is the presentation of their naked being-in-common”.¹⁹² In reference to Nancy, they do not share any essence or identity in that place; rather, they summon the possibility of the community constituted by ‘whatever singularities’ who ex-pose themselves as ecstatic beings.

Erdem Gündüz’s demonstration also revealed the absurdity of the police violence on protestors who had literally gathered for the trees in Gezi Park, opposing the government’s decision to transform the park into a shopping complex. Singularities of the protestors came out of preserving trees¹⁹³ in Gezi Park. Just as with the demonstrations of the Chinese May, their demands did not gather them

¹⁸⁹ Morin, "Being Social Democratically with Jean-Luc Nancy at the Gezi Park Protests," 74.

¹⁹⁰ Agamben, *The Coming Community*, 66.

¹⁹¹ Blanchot, *The Unavowable Community*, 30-32.

¹⁹² Morin, "Being Social Democratically with Jean-Luc Nancy at the Gezi Park Protests," 74.

¹⁹³ When Agamben explains “whatever singularity,” he turns to the notion of example. Example is neither universal nor particular. “The example is characterized (...) that holds for all cases of the same type, and, at the same time, is included among these” (*The Coming Community*, 9). Likewise, “the word ‘tree’ designates all trees indifferently, insofar as it posits the proper universal significance in place of singular ineffable trees” (8). Ironically, protestors gathered for nothing except for the singularity of tree in Gezi. Thus, what makes them “being singular” was their demand for preserving trees because this demand could not be identified by any specific identity.

under a certain identity; still, both these *events* were subjected to the same violence: the state violence.

Antigone's unintelligibility and singularity resemble those of the demonstrators in Chinese May and Gezi Park. Although her only desire is to bury her brother's dead body and to mourn him, which is obviously a most basic demand, she is punished and imprisoned in a cave by Creon, the state. Similarly, the protestors in Chinese May did not have any specific demand except for those too generic, like freedom and democracy. Their demands were supposed not to cause any conflict in society. Although the state's violent response seemed unwarranted in this situation, it was still a struggle between the "state and the non-state".¹⁹⁴

According to Agamben, "*whatever singularities*" cannot establish a *societas* because they do not have any identity or belonging for the sake of recognition. The state might accept all identities and, at times, even to change its own identity. However, the one thing that has never been accepted is that singularities without identity constituting a community.¹⁹⁵ In Agamben's words "whatever singularity, which (...) rejects all identity and every condition of belonging, is the principal enemy of the state. Wherever these singularities peacefully demonstrate their being in common there will be a Tiananmen, and, sooner or later, the tanks will appear".¹⁹⁶ That is why the state engaged in such violence during the Gezi Park protests, or Chinese May, or in the case of Antigone.

In this sense, Antigone's deed opposes both the sovereign's authority and the identity imposed on her by the sovereign. Moreover, as Butler asserts, she represents neither heterosexual nor homosexual sexuality, neither masculinity nor femininity, neither state nor family, neither living nor death. Because of her incest legacy, she is punished to live between death and life. Before Creon confines her

¹⁹⁴ Agamben, *The Coming Community*, 85.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid*, 85.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid*, 86.

into the cave, she already lives in the tomb.¹⁹⁷ In Antigone's words to Ismene: "You choose life—it was my choice to die (...) Be brave. You are alive. But my spirit died some time ago so I might help the dead".¹⁹⁸ At that, Butler notes: "her punishment precedes her crime, and her crime becomes the occasion for its literalization".¹⁹⁹ In this respect, Butler raises a question:

How do we understand this strange place of being between life and death, of speaking precisely from that vacillating boundary? If she is dead in some sense and yet speaks, she is precisely the one with no place who nevertheless seeks to claim one within speech, the unintelligible as it emerges within the intelligible, a position within kinship that is no position.²⁰⁰

My answer to Butler is that Antigone is on the threshold with her singularity, between life and death and unintelligible within intelligibility. In other words, as mentioned above, she stands on the threshold with all her identities and with nothing. In contrast to the immanent being—a work of herself, she is "*whatever*," "being singular plural," "*being-as-such-and-such*," "unintelligible" with and without all identities, holding "a position within kinship and no position in it".²⁰¹

Additionally, Antigone's burying Polinices does not have to do with any identity or belonging. She defies the exclusion of her brother from the society and his being cast as *apolis* by Creon.²⁰² So, when she opposes Creon, their struggle is between *polis* and *apolis*, that is between the state and the non-state. By her deed, she dedicates herself to her brother's dead body with love and separates herself from the other members of society, immanent community. Henceforth, she continues her

¹⁹⁷ Butler, *Antigone's Claim*, 77.

¹⁹⁸ Sophocles, *Antigone*, 634–640.

¹⁹⁹ Butler, *Antigone's Claim*, 77.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid*, 78.

²⁰¹ *Ibid*, 78.

²⁰² *Ibid*, 79.

life in the state of death.²⁰³ This separation results from; firstly, her actions against the sovereign; secondly, her incest legacy and incestuous love for her brother (crisis in the intelligibility of cultural norms in society); and, thirdly, her ambiguous gender roles which correspond to neither femininity nor masculinity (crisis in the gender roles as unintelligibility). All these point out to that she is indeterminate, or that, in Agamben's terms, she "belongs to the belonging itself".²⁰⁴ Because of her unintelligibility, in other words, her singularity, she is condemned to live between death and life. She stands on the threshold between inside and outside and in a place where she is everything and nothing.

²⁰³Jyotirmaya Tripathy, "Biopolitics in Sophocles' Antigone" in *The Explicator* 71, no. 1 (March, 2013): 28.

²⁰⁴ Agamben, *The Coming Community*, 1.

CHAPTER 3

THE LIFE ON THE THRESHOLD: HOMO SACER VS SINGULAR

BEING

After I discussed Antigone's singularity by taking consideration into Butler's idea of her unintelligibility in the society and I linked her analysis with the Nancian notion of singularity and Agamben's "whatever singularity"; now, I will focus on Creon's punishment that confines her into the cave as *homo sacer* or "bare life" because of her being singular. It is important to note that not only her singularity leads her to stand upon the threshold but also her punishment suspends her between death and life, animal and human on the threshold.

In his work of *Homo Sacer*, Agamben traces the sovereign power, that is constituted upon human's life, especially human's biological life, since Ancient Greece. In doing so, he analyses Arendt's and Foucault's ideas by presenting different and similar points of them.

According to Foucault, the sovereign power has regulated biological life of the human by including it in calculations of state power since the 17th century. Until the 18th century disciplinary techniques were employed for increasing abilities of bodies and creating docile bodies. After that, more regulatory techniques based on surveillance have appeared to observe and control fertility, death/birth rate related to population. For Foucault, it has been a new power model called bio-power that led to start the modern era in which biological life to be counted in state power's calculations and regulations. Henceforth, instead of the sovereign power having the right to decide death and life, there has been the new power, bio-power that allows one to live by controlling and regulating the citizen's life.²⁰⁵ Agamben claims that

²⁰⁵ Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality Vol.1: An Introduction* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978), 135-140.

before Foucault, Arendt analysed the inclusion of natural life into modern politics. However, according to Agamben, both Foucault and Arendt did not consider the concentration camps as a contemporary place of the totalitarian power and modern bio-politics.²⁰⁶

As opposed to Foucault, Agamben asserts that bio-power which is exercised on natural life and the human body, did not arise with modernity. Instead, it was present since Ancient Greece.

In this sense, Agamben explains two Greek terms, *zōé* and *bios*, to clarify his idea that natural life is the basic element for constituting sovereign power. “*Zōé*, which expressed the simple fact of living common to all living beings (animals, men, or gods), and *bios*, which indicated the form or way of living proper to an individual or a group”.²⁰⁷ Moreover, while *zōé* (natural life or bare life) is related to home, *oikos*; *bios* is related to *polis*, in which political activity is executed.²⁰⁸

Agamben points that the first activity of the sovereign is to include the “bare life” into the sphere of politics in order to declare itself as a power. It is the politization of “bare life”/ biological life. Whereas Foucault claims that regulation of “bare life”/natural life by states’ organizations is the transition to the modern era; Agamben asserts that the regulation of natural life by modern state reveals the already existing link between “bare life” and sovereign power.²⁰⁹ Capturing “bare life” is only possible through an inclusion and at the same time, exclusion of it within the political realm.²¹⁰ Namely, this life is included in the juridical and

²⁰⁶ Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life* (California: Stanford University Press, 1998), 3-4.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid*, 1.

²⁰⁸ Leland De La Durantaye, *Giorgio Agamben: A Critical Introduction* (California: Stanford University Press, 2009), 205.

²⁰⁹ Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, 6.

²¹⁰ *Ibid*, 9.

political rule through an *inclusive exclusion / exclusive inclusion*.²¹¹ Agamben analyzes this life starting from the figure of *homo sacer* : “the life of *homo sacer* (sacred man) who may be killed and yet not sacrificed (...). An obscure figure of archaic Roman law, in which human life is included in the juridical order (...) solely in the form of its exclusion (that is, of its capacity to be killed).”²¹²

Agamben mentions *homo sacer* for the first time in the last section of *The Coming Community* by associating “whatever singularity” with *homo sacer*. According to Agamben, state’s action against “whatever beings” is either to give identities to singularities or exclude them from the human world.²¹³ In other words, sovereign power either reduces singularities to “bare life” under the name of *homo sacer* or it constitutes its power by identifying them with identities. In this respect, Agamben gives the following definition for the life of *homo sacer*:

This is what, in our culture, the hypocritical dogma of the sacredness of human life and the vacuous declaration of human rights are meant to hide. *Sacred* here can only mean what the term meant in Roman law: *Sacer* was the one who had been excluded from the human world and who, even though she or he could not be sacrificed, could be killed without committing homicide.²¹⁴

In this context, I will discuss Agamben’s notion of *homo sacer* in terms of Antigone’s manner *rising forth*, her “whatever singularity” thanks to her act of burying Polynices and Creon’s punishment as a result of her act upon. At the same time, I will analyze how Creon exercises his power upon “bare life” of both Polynices and Antigone. After that, I will analyze Butler’s questions of “what makes for a grievable life?”, “whose life count as lives?”²¹⁵ and the more ontological question of “what is life?” with regard to the so-called sacredness of

²¹¹ Ibid, 21.

²¹² Ibid, 8

²¹³ Agamben, *The Coming Community*, 85-86.

²¹⁴ Ibid, 86-87.

²¹⁵ Butler, *Prekarious Life*, 20.

life by rereading *Antigone* and linking it with Nancian, Butlerian and Agambenian understandings of community.

3.1. Creon As Sovereign

After the death of Oedipus, his sons, Eteocles and Polynices fight for access to the throne. However, as they kill each other, their uncle, Creon, succeeds to the throne. The first activity of Creon as soon as he comes to power is command that nobody will mourn Polynices' death:

CREON For him, the proclamation in the state declares
he'll have no burial mound, no funeral rites,
and no lament. He'll be left unburied,
his body there for birds and dogs to eat,
a clear reminder of his shameful fate.
That's my decision. For I'll never act
to respect an evil man with honours
in preference to a man who's acted well.
Anyone who's well disposed towards our state,
alive or dead, that man I will respect.²¹⁶

Polynices' death body is left unburied outside city, *polis*. Polynices' death is neither seen as a sacrifice nor homicide.

CHOROUS LEADER Son of Menoikeos, if that's your will
for this city's friends and enemies,
it seems to me you now control all laws
concerning those who've died and us as well—
the ones who are still living.²¹⁷

The sovereign can enforce the law for both the dead and the living and life can be suspended between life and death—bare life and political life— by the sovereign power. According to Agamben, this “-*exception* is a kind of exclusion and what is

²¹⁶ Sophocles, *Antigone*, 231-241.

²¹⁷ *Ibid*, 242-246.

excluded from the general rule is an individual case.”²¹⁸ Furthermore, one who is excluded is also included not only by being prohibited or confined, but rather in such a way that the law is suspended by the sovereign. Thus, it is included by becoming the exception in the law.²¹⁹

In this juridical order, what is the position of Creon? Is this law valid for Creon? The sovereign is inside and outside of the legal system. The sovereign can suspend the judicial system by being inside the juridical system. Yet, the sovereign can also be exempted from the effects of the judicial system by being outside the judicial system.²²⁰ For Agamben, it is “the paradox of sovereignty consists in the fact the sovereign is, at the same time, outside and inside the juridical order.”²²¹

Another paradox is that the sovereign authority consists of two contrary concepts: violence and justice. As Chorus states above: — “you can control all laws concerning those who’ve died and us as well —the ones who are still living”²²²—, Agamben quotes from Pindar: “the *nomos*, sovereign for all, of mortals and immortals, leads with the strongest hand, justifying the most violent. I judge this from the works of Hercules”.²²³ In this vein, Agamben emphasizes the sovereign’s right to violence. For him, it is an “enigmatic” situation within which justice and violence jumble.²²⁴

²¹⁸ Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, 17.

²¹⁹ *Ibid*, 18.

²²⁰ *Ibid*, 15.

²²¹ *Ibid*, 15.

²²² Sophocles, *Antigone*, 244-246.

²²³ Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, 30.

²²⁴ *Ibid*, 30-31.

3.2. Antigone As *Homo Sacer*

After Polynices' mourning is punished by Creon, Antigone opposes the sovereign's arbitrary decision in conjunction with violence and justice.²²⁵ Moreover, she opposes Creon's action of leaving Polynices between death and life for birds and dogs to eat. Thereof, she disambiguates his distinction from animal by burying his death body, which is left between human and animal.

As I tried to show in the previous chapter, Polynices' death brings about Antigone's singularity and it exposes herself to the community by disposing of her identities. Hence, with her singular being, Antigone objects to the sovereign's arbitrary decision. Her deed is a disobedience to authority, so she is confined into a cave outside the city by Creon:

CREON I'll take her on a path no people use,
 and hide her in a cavern in the rocks,
 while still alive. I'll set out provisions,
 as much as piety requires, to make sure
 the city is not totally corrupted.²²⁶

From then on, Antigone's body is like Polynices'; she *may be killed and yet not sacrificed*.²²⁷ With Agamben's following words, both Polynices and Antigone "are confronted with a residual and irreducible bare life, which must be excluded and exposed to a death that no rite and no sacrifice can redeem."²²⁸ Antigone who waits

²²⁵ Antigone's words to Ismene: Look—what's Creon doing with our two brothers? He's honouring one with a full funeral and treating the other one disgracefully! Eteocles, they say, has had his burial according to our customary rites, to win him honour with the dead below. But as for Polyneices, who perished so miserably, an order has gone out throughout the city—that's what people say. He's to have no funeral or lament, but to be left unburied and unwept, a sweet treasure for the birds to look at, for them to feed on to their heart's content (Sophocles, *Antigone*, 25-37).

²²⁶ Sophocles, *Antigone*, 885-887.

²²⁷ Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, 8.

²²⁸ *Ibid*, 100.

for her death by being confined alive in the cave, is *homo sacer*.²²⁹ Henceforth, Antigone's life is reduced to "bare life" by the sovereign power. In this sense, her position is between *zoé* and *bios*; however, it is neither. Not only her right to life, which is possessed by all living being, is taken away; and but also, she is deprived of *bios* which is the proper way of life possessed by citizens in the city, *polis*. In a word, she is between life and death. Although she has a human body, her punishment makes her an animal. She is banned and excluded from *polis*, the place of human world. At the same time, she is included by means of confinement into the cave. She is on the threshold between life and death. It is a "zone of indistinction" with Agamben's terminology.²³⁰ Thus, Antigone's life is suspended by the sovereign power and her life's *inclusive exclusion / exclusive inclusion* means the state of exception.²³¹

Agamben asserts that one who is banned, is an exception (thinking one as Antigone) based on the Nancian notion of *ban*.²³² This person is not excluded from the juridical order, but he/she is abandoned by it. In this case, one is exposed to the sovereign's violence and its threat by standing on the threshold between life and law, inside and outside. It is difficult to distinguish whether the person is inside the law or outside it. Once again, Agamben describes it as "the zone of indistinction".²³³

²²⁹ There are many interpretations to discuss Antigone in terms of biopolitics and the notion of homo-sacer. See, Butler (2000), Leeb (2017), Norris (2000), Robert (2009), Tripathy (2013), Weiner (2015), and Zukauskaitė (2010).

²³⁰ See, Andrew Norris, "Giorgio Agamben and the Politics of the Living Dead," *Diacritics* 30, no. 4 (Winter, 2000): 50.

²³¹ According to Chanter, Antigone has already been in the state of exception thanks to be a woman. In Ancient Greek, women were confined into *oikos*, home and they were excluded from the political sphere. Women did not have *bio* that is proper way of life performed in *polis*, city. That is why she claims that Agamben ignores the gendered dynamics when he explains the state of exception. See, Chanter, "Agamben, Antigone, Irigaray," 121-126.

²³² It is the "old Germanic term that designates both exclusion from the community and the command and insignia of the sovereign" (Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, 28).

²³³ *Ibid*, 28.

In this case, the sphere of sovereignty is determined by being used to legitimize violence because “(...) *it is permitted to kill without committing homicide and without celebrating a sacrifice, and sacred life—that is, life that may be killed but not sacrificed—is the life that has been captured in this sphere.*”²³⁴

The life, which is captured by Creon, the sovereign is both Antigone’s “bare life” and Polynices’ dead body. Creon declares his sovereignty by reducing Polynices and Antigone to *homo sacer*. Both are abandoned by life by means of being thrown out of the *polis*, where human life is sustained and, both are abandoned by the juridical order by means of being excluded out of the law, which is regulated the city. In a world, they are suspended on the threshold as being exception.

(...) once brought back to his proper place beyond both penal law and sacrifice, *homo sacer* presents the originary figure of life taken into the sovereign ban and preserves the memory of the originary exclusion through which the political dimension was first constituted. The political sphere of sovereignty was thus constituted through a double exclusion, as an excrescence of the profane in the religious and of the religious in the profane, which takes the form of a zone of indistinction between sacrifice and homicide.²³⁵

If the originary figure of the sovereign ban is *homo sacer* and the life of *homo sacer* is on the threshold between life and death; we can assert that *polis*, a place where the human being is sovereign and policymaker, is instituted through this ban. For instance, human-animal, cruel-Olympian, filthy-worthy creatures which are hybrid beings (woman-animal- barbarian), are banned and excluded from *polis* by the rational human (not being woman-animal-barbaric) who has *logos*.²³⁶ However, while the human being distinguishes itself from the “bare life” of hybrid beings and locates itself outside of them, it has an *inclusive /exclusive* relationship

²³⁴ Ibid, 83.

²³⁵ Ibid, 83.

²³⁶ Nazile Kalaycı, “Hayvan: Bir Sınır Aşma İmkânı”, *E-Skop* (June, 2016), <https://www.e-skop.com/skopbulten/hayvan-bir-sinir-asma-imbk%20ni/2975>).

with its own “bare life”. That is to say, the human excludes its “bare life” from *polis* and confines it into the sphere of home, *oikos*.²³⁷ Although Aristotle distinguished the head of the family (*despotes*) and the head of the estate (*oikonomos*), who are responsible for regulating family life and reproduction and the head of the estate, from the politician,²³⁸ Agamben asserts that this has been the “politization” of bare life, which has been maintained from Ancient Greece till today.²³⁹ Thus, according to Agamben, the dichotomy of enemy and friend is not the fundamental concern of Western politics. On the contrary, it is based on pair of “bare life / political existence, *zōé* / *bios*, exclusion / inclusion.”²⁴⁰

3.3. *Homo Sacer*: On the Threshold

Like the figure of *homo sacer* in archaic Roman law, Agamben finds out similar figures such as the *wargus* (the bandit and the outlaw) and the wolf-man in Scandinavia and Germanic antiquity. In Ancient Germanic law, the person who violates the law, could be killed without committing homicide. Similarly, the bandit was excluded from the city and presumed dead in Medieval age.²⁴¹ Moreover, the bandit was described as a wolf-man. The significant point is that the figure was a hybrid of animal and human. Therefore, the figure has the status of being on the threshold for Agamben.²⁴² Likewise, alongside tragedy, Antigone is identified as a hybrid of human animal by Creon, Guard and Chorus. The guard who arrests her when she buries Polynices, describes Antigone as:

A long time passed. The storm came to an end.
That’s when we saw the girl. She was shrieking—

²³⁷ Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, 2.

²³⁸ *Ibid*, 2.

²³⁹ *Ibid*, 7-8.

²⁴⁰ *Ibid*, 8.

²⁴¹ *Ibid*, 104-105.

²⁴² *Ibid*, 105.

a distressing painful cry, just like a bird
who's seen an empty nest, its fledglings gone.²⁴³

Moreover, Creon confines her into the cave, and he says: "I'll set out provisions, as much as piety requires, to make sure the city is not totally corrupted". He treats Antigone as if she were an animal. In this sense, Antigone is on "a threshold of indistinction and of passage between animal and man, *physis* and *nomos*, exclusion and inclusion."²⁴⁴ ²⁴⁵ Because of being prisoned into the cave, Antigone is outside the law, but inside nature that belongs to animal life. On the other hand, because of being human, she is included in the law by means of her punishment.

The law which renders Antigone *homo sacer*, leads her to stand on another threshold between death and life in addition to the threshold between human and animal. In her following words:

(...) you see the laws
which lead me to my rock-bound prison,
a tomb made just for me. Alas!
In my wretchedness I have no home,
not with human beings or corpses,
not with the living or the dead.²⁴⁶

She continues that: "oh my tomb and bridal chamber—my eternal hollow dwelling place, (...) no wedding and no bridal song, no share in married life or raising children. Instead I go in sorrow to my grave, without my friends, to die while still

²⁴³ Sophocles, *Antigone*, 477-480.

²⁴⁴ Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, 105.

²⁴⁵ In one scene, Antigone's grief is linked to the bird-mother who loses her nestling, by Chorus. According to Leeb, the reason is that "women's capacity to give birth and become mothers as well as her feminine body that bleeds every month reminds of the repressed animal origins of humans, which had to be banished, together with women, from the *polis*". Considering Antigone, it is interesting that Leeb redefines Agamben's figure of "wolf-man" as "wolf-woman" who is banned from *polis*. See, Leeb, "Female Resistance or the Politics of Death? Rethinking Antigone," 237.

²⁴⁶ Sophocles, *Antigone*, 998-999.

alive”.²⁴⁷ As in Lacan’s description, her punishment leads to her suspension between life and death and although she is not dead, she is precluded from living: (...) “from Antigone’s point of view life can only be approached, can only be lived or thought about, from the place of that limit where her life is already lost, where she is already on the other side. But from that place she can see it and live it in the form of something already lost.”²⁴⁸

According to Agamben, the figure of *homo sacer* from Ancient Greece has been the cornerstone of contemporary modern biopolitics. He asserts that one of the fundamental characteristics of modern politics is to frame inside and outside, and at the same time, to redefine “the threshold in life” again and again that provides to separate inside from outside. This duty of the sovereign has been maintained ever since *oikos* was included in *polis*.²⁴⁹ In fact, Agamben’s examples from modern biopolitics are not different from Antigone’s situation. For instance, Jews were recently confined in the concentration camps by being declared “as lice” and exterminated on the threshold between animal and human as being “bare life”.²⁵⁰ Moreover, refugees dwelled in camps because of the crisis in the nation-state order,²⁵¹ people who are in a coma in hospitals,²⁵² missing people—*desaparecidos*—, who were confined in detention camps by Argentine government between 1976-1983,²⁵³ the

²⁴⁷ Ibid, 998-999, 1029-1032.

²⁴⁸ Audrone Zukauskaitė, “Biopolitics: Antigone’s Claim,” in *Interrogating Antigone in Postmodern Philosophy and Criticism*, ed. Wilmer, S.E. and A. Zukauskaite (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), p. 79. See also Jesse Weiner, “Between Bios and Zoé: Sophocles’ Antigone and Agamben’s Biopolitics,” *A Journal of Ancient Theater* 5 (2015): 70. Quoting Jacques Lacan, *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan: The Ethics of Psychoanalysis Book VII, 1959-1969*, (New York: Norton, 1992), 280

²⁴⁹ Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, 131.

²⁵⁰ Ibid, 114.

²⁵¹ Ibid, 131.

²⁵² Ibid, 160-165.

²⁵³ See, Maria Florencia Nelli, “From Ancient Greek Drama to Argentina’s ‘Dirty War’; *Antigona Furiosa*: On Bodies and the State,” in *Interrogating Antigone in Postmodern Philosophy and*

detainees in Guantanamo ²⁵⁴ and VPs (*Versuchspersonen*, human guinea pigs) ²⁵⁵ who were subjected to various experiments are examples of contemporary *homo sacer* of modern biopolitics. Agamben's words about VPs reveals the circumstances of all *homo sacer* including Antigone:

The particular status of the VPs was decisive; they were persons sentenced to death or detained in a camp, the entry into which meant the definitive exclusion from the political community. Precisely because they were lacking almost all the rights and expectations that we customarily attribute to human existence, and yet were still biologically alive, they came to be situated in a limit zone between life and death, inside and outside, in which they were no longer anything but bare life. Those who are sentenced to death and those who dwelt in the camps are thus in some way unconsciously assimilated to *homines sacres*, to a life that may be killed without the commission of homicide. Like the fence of the camp, the interval between death sentence and execution delimits an extratemporal and extraterritorial threshold in which the human body is separated from its normal political status and abandoned, in a state of exception, to the most extreme misfortunes.²⁵⁶

Furthermore, Agamben adds that the only difference of modern biopolitics from Ancient Greece is that scientists and doctors have gotten involved in the sphere of exception.²⁵⁷

In addition, Zukauskaitė also associates Antigone with contemporary *homo sacer*: “bodies, which are not dead, which are not dying, but are not alive either, or, more precisely, which are not worth living (this is exactly what Lacan says about Antigone). These are the bodies of prisoners, political and economical refugees, asylum seekers, tortured bodies, unrecognized bodies.”²⁵⁸

Criticism, eds. Wilmer, S.E. and A., Zukauskaitė (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 353-365.

²⁵⁴ Butler, *Precarious Life*, 50-100.

²⁵⁵ Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, 154-159.

²⁵⁶ *Ibid*, 159.

²⁵⁷ *Ibid*, 159.

²⁵⁸ Zukauskaitė, “Biopolitics: Antigone’s Claim,” 141.

In this context, Agamben asks a question: “What (...) is the life of *homo sacer*, if it is situated at the intersection of capacity to be killed and not sacrifice, outside both human and divine law?”²⁵⁹ In this way, I will be focusing on Butler’s similar questions about life in the next section, in thinking them with *Antigone*.

3.4. What Is Life?

3.4.1. Ungrievable Life, Intelligible Life, Precarious Life: What is Life?

Butler seeks answers to her questions in *Precarious Life*: “Who counts as human?” “Whose lives count as lives? “What *makes for a grievable life*?”²⁶⁰ and “Whose lives are real?”²⁶¹ in a similar gesture to what Agamben did in *Homo Sacer*. She discusses why lives, especially those who passed away in the 9/11 attack, were mentioned in US media; while some was not. She continues to seek answers to those questions in *Frames of War* and she analyses frames that determinate to norms related to grievable / ungrievable lifes.

For Butler, frames are determined by state power. A life has to be to be recognized *as a life*, as a real life.²⁶² “(...) Intelligibility, understood as the general historical schema or schemas that establish domains of knowable (...) so schemas of intelligibility condition and produce norms of recognizability”.²⁶³ However, there is also “suspended and spectral” life which is outside “the life”, which is produced by normativity, and which negates normativity²⁶⁴ like Antigone’s life as *homo sacer* confined into the cave, “that is, living in a state of suspension between

²⁵⁹ Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, 73.

²⁶⁰ Butler, *Precarious Life*, 20.

²⁶¹ *Ibid*, 33.

²⁶² Judith Butler, *Frames of War* (New York: Verso, 2009), 7.

²⁶³ *Ibid*, 6-7.

²⁶⁴ *Ibid*, 7.

life and death.”²⁶⁵ According to Butler, this life casts a shadow on normativity: “a living figure outside the norms of life (...): it is living, but not a life”²⁶⁶ because it is outside of frames of recognition or intelligibility which are designated by the state power. In fact, for Butler, Antigone has already been *homo sacer* before the punishment. Although Butler does not use the word of “*homo sacer*”, she asserts that Antigone has already been condemned to live between death and life because she is polluted by the curse that struck Oedipus and she has the incestuous legacy.²⁶⁷ She was born through the violation of the incestuous prohibition which provides the transition from nature to culture for Levi Strauss, and which is the condition of intelligibility for the sphere of social.²⁶⁸ What’s more, because of her incest love for her brother, Antigone is excluded from kinship norms; and she is also outside of the frames that would allow her to be recognized as a woman in Ancient Greek because she refuses to be mother, wife and to obey the state [men’s] authority. With her act of burying Polynices, she dares to go out of the private sphere, in which women is located, to the public sphere belonging to only men. In addition, Antigone is framed as a “man” by the characters of the tragedy because of her public action (mourning and burying her brother).²⁶⁹ As a result, Antigone is out of the frames that identify kinship and gender norms.

However, “suspended and spectral” life is not recognized *as a life* by those frames, which identify a life *as a life* and establish the conditions of survival. This life is not regarded as a *real* loss in the case of loss and their grief is not allowed to be mourned²⁷⁰ because Butler asserts that: “the differential distribution of public grieving is a political issue (...). It has been since at least the time of Antigone, when she chose openly to mourn the death of one of her brothers even though it

²⁶⁵ Butler, *Precarious Life*, 36.

²⁶⁶ Butler, *Frames of War*, 8.

²⁶⁷ Butler, *Antigone’s Claim*, 77.

²⁶⁸ *Ibid*, 15-16.

²⁶⁹ *Ibid*, 6-9.

²⁷⁰ Butler, *Frames of War*, 23-25.

went against the sovereign law to do so.”²⁷¹ In this context, Butler puts queers who lost their life on September 11, and Palestinians who were killed by the US soldiers, as examples of ungrievable life because at that time, their obituaries were not printed in US newspapers.²⁷² Furthermore, Butler emphasizes that the reason behind their ungrievable life is that this life is out of the frames determined by state power and also, it is not proper for established and framed national identity. Likewise, Polynices and Antigone are regarded as enemies because of being out of state’s frames, while Eteocles is declared a hero as a founder of national identity.

3.4.2. Vulnerability: Pain, Suffering, Death

In contrast to these frames, Butler’s proposal is to recognize / apprehend life as life. In this context, she asks an ontological question: “*what is a life?*”²⁷³ With this question, she comes up with the claim that life is precarious because all of us are vulnerable as bodily beings. For Butler, the body might be exposed to “other’s” glance, touching and violence.²⁷⁴ This only is because our body locates outside ourselves. Because of their ex-position, our bodies are being exposed to ‘other’ bodies, and at the same time, ‘other’ bodies are being exposed to our bodies. Butler notes that: “(...) by virtue of being a bodily being, already given over, beyond ourselves, implicated in lives that are not our own”.²⁷⁵

As a result, Butler asserts that a new bodily ontology should be sought.²⁷⁶ Similarly, Nancy suggests that “the ontology of being-with is an ontology of bodies” because “‘body’ really means what is outside” and it is an arriving from

²⁷¹ Ibid, 38.

²⁷² Butler, *Precarious Life*, 35-37.

²⁷³ Butler, *Frames of War*, 1.

²⁷⁴ Butler, *Precarious Life*, 26-27.

²⁷⁵ Ibid, 28.

²⁷⁶ Butler, *Frames of War*, 2.

“one ‘self’ to an ‘other’”²⁷⁷, namely, it allows communication between singularities. What is more, communication implies being-with-one-another in community. A body undertakes the third attribution of a singularity which is being exposed.²⁷⁸ For Nancy, being a bodily being implies exposure to existence, in other words, it is “appearing of being finitude itself”²⁷⁹ in community or Being. Existence is co-appearance or taking place in the world.

According to Butler, the commonality of being vulnerable and precarious is not a particular ontological attribute of human being. In contrast, it allows to go out of humanistic frame and anthropocentrism. Precariousness is what makes us in-common with animals and environment.²⁸⁰ As per Butler’s elaboration:

There ought to be recognition of precariousness as a shared condition of human life (indeed, as a condition that links human and non-human animals), but we ought not to think that the recognition of precariousness masters or captures or even fully cognizes what it recognizes. (...) To say that a life is injurable, for instance, or that it can be lost, destroyed, or systematically neglected to the point of death, is to underscore not only the finitude of a life (that death is certain) but also its precariousness (that life requires various social and economic conditions to be met in order to be sustained as a life). Precariousness implies living socially, that is, the fact that one’s life is always in some sense in the hands of the other. It implies exposure both to those we know and to those we do not know; a dependency on people we know, or barely know, or know not at all.²⁸¹

Butler’s idea of being-in-common-in-our-precariousness is rethinking the community in terms of a relational ontology. Thinking community with liberal, universal principles or multiculturalism has resulted in a community, which is established by the subjects who are already recognized *as Subject*.²⁸² In order to go

²⁷⁷ Nancy, *Being Singular Plural*, 84.

²⁷⁸ According to Nancy, a singularity has three characteristics: “unique”, “whatever” and “exposed” (Nancy, *The Sense of The World*, 71).

²⁷⁹ Nancy, *The Inoperative Community*, 28.

²⁸⁰ Antonello and Farneti, “Antigone’s Claim: A Conversation with Judith Butler.”

²⁸¹ Butler, *Frames of War*, 13-14.

²⁸² *Ibid*, 32.

out of those frames where we are confined by the state power, Butler emphasizes that being vulnerable and precarious is our common properties as bodily beings and these commonalities summon us to *the* community in contrast to all these ontologies of individualism. Because body is always out of itself; it might suffer, enjoy and be wounded.²⁸³

According to Wall, Nancy, too, considers pain as a significant factor for an embodied ontology when he thinks ‘the sense of the world’. For Nancy, the meaning of World is nothing more than itself or Being.²⁸⁴ Meaning happens with Being. “The World neither makes sense nor has a meaning, rather ‘it only exists *as* sense’.”²⁸⁵ This sense cannot be reduced to anything because it always exceeds the given meaning. It is like rereading a text. As a result, sense is always open: “it is always movement of being-toward or being as coming into presence. (...) sense is always arriving.”²⁸⁶ Likewise, Nancy opposes idea that the subject is determined by any given meaning. For Nancy, “there is no self-enclosed subject or individual with an interiority to which the World would have to added, rather there is a *da-sein*, a singularity, a body. The body is the opening space: ‘A body is a site which opens, which separates, which space’.”²⁸⁷

Embodiment is related to existence. Thus, what is common affection for every being in the case of existence and death? Nancy claims that “pain and suffering begin with existence and end when it ends, and this end gives pain and suffering to those who survive. (...) the world appears, insofar as it is world and precisely *this* world, as an exposition of suffering.”²⁸⁸ Butler also underlines that

²⁸³ Butler, *Frames of War*, 33-34.

²⁸⁴ Illan rua Wall, “On Pain and the Sense of Human Rights,” *Australian Feminist Law Journal*, 2008, 29:1, 56.

²⁸⁵ *Ibid*, 57.

²⁸⁶ *Ibid*, 57-58.

²⁸⁷ *Ibid*, 58.

²⁸⁸ Jean-Luc Nancy, *The Sense of the World*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), 143-144.

birth includes exposure to everything; pain, suffering or violence. Birth means being precarious. Hence, infant depends another for survival.²⁸⁹ ²⁹⁰ In short, being vulnerable precedes being subject, and “the formation of I”.²⁹¹

Bodies are always open, vulnerable and because of being located out of themselves, they might be exposed. Being exposed and being vulnerable as a result of it might include the sense of pain. However, this is not only physical. We might face loss of a loved one because of its being vulnerable and it brings the duty of mourning that involves pain.²⁹² In other words, apart from our commonality of being vulnerable, ‘other’s’ vulnerability affects us and leads to affection. In this sense, the grief and the pain arising from mourning show our relationality with one who dies.²⁹³ According to Butler, *the* community can be thought with this relationality: it is the community of those who are separate but common in vulnerability of death, pain and suffering. In this community, one is outside of itself but for ‘other’.²⁹⁴

In other words, pain is not something that we can eliminate or solve. Rather, it is common for all as an existential experience.²⁹⁵ Thus, according to Butler, there is no need to worry about our corporeal vulnerability. On the contrary, the major issue is the system of immunity²⁹⁶ that has been developed against our

²⁸⁹ Butler, *Frames of War*, 14.

²⁹⁰ Butler, *Prekarious Life*. 43.

²⁹¹ *Ibid.* 31.

²⁹² Butler, *Prekarious Life*.

²⁹³ *Ibid.*, 23.

²⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 27.

²⁹⁵ Wall, “On Pain and the Sense of Human Rights,” 61-63.

²⁹⁶ The theory of immunization is developed by Roberto Esposito. For him, our shared vulnerability, similarly Butler’s point, is based on the fact that “anyone can be killed by anyone else”. In this sense, the response is to protect life. However, protecting life is only possible by removing any threat. See, Janell Watson, “Butler’s Biopolitics: Precarious Community,” *Theory and Event* 15, no.2 (2012): 2.

vulnerability.²⁹⁷ Protecting oneself from suffering or being wounded have led to nothing more than damaging the ‘other’ and violence. It is like contemporary nation states’ battles against enemy in order to protect their citizens from the enemy who is regarded as ‘other’. In other words, “Immunity is always a function of disavowal, of a refusal to confront our shared embodies finitude.”²⁹⁸

In this context, if the community is founded upon invented notions like common language, religion or nation etc., and if nobody goes out of the norms framed by the state power; the distinction of grievable life and un-grievable life or Agamben’s idea of *homo sacer* will always hold. However, mourning the ‘other’, suffering, and being vulnerable, finite and mortal have already brought us in the community because “loss becomes condition and necessity for a certain sense of community, where community does not overcome the loss, where community *cannot* overcome the loss without losing the very sense of itself as community.”²⁹⁹ However, it is important to note that this loss does not include any immanence like the idea of martyrdom that causes the emergence of the immanent community. Instead, it is a transcending experience and reveals a meaninglessness that cannot be subsumed.³⁰⁰ This community is not the work of anything. It ex-poses ourselves out of totalitarian, essentialist society which has been founded upon “the idealized fantasy of common-being” and it summons us to the community of being-in-common which has already befallen us. It is a “community as an imprecise collective of beings who have in common the experience of singular finitude;

²⁹⁷ James Stanescu, “Judith Butler, Mourning, and the Precarious Lives of Animal,” *Hypatia* 27, no.3 (2012): 576.

²⁹⁸ *Ibid*, 576.

²⁹⁹ Judith Butler, “Afterword: After Loss, What Then?” in *Loss: The Politics of Mourning*, eds. David L. Eng and David Kazanjian, (London: University of California Press, 2003), 468.

³⁰⁰ Fynsk, "Foreword: Experiences of Finitude," xvi.

singular beings who variously understand the exigencies of living as beings-in-common.”³⁰¹

For Nancy, being finite / mortal is the basic existential precariousness for being-in-common and it brings singularities in the community: “singular being appears, as finitude itself: at the end (or at the beginning), with the contact of the skin (or the heart) of another singular being, at the confines of the same singularity that is, as such, always other, always shared, always exposed”.³⁰² ³⁰³ Nancy points out that community consists of singularities who are “appearing of being finite itself”.³⁰⁴ Here again “appearing as being finitude” indicates vulnerability of all beings. However, it is not considered as a ground, a substance or an essence for community. It is only an appearance of singularities. That is why he uses the term of *compear* or *co-appear* (*com-parait*). It means taking place together by virtue of exposing to an outside and to another singular being.³⁰⁵ Compearance / coappearing implies sharing the Being.

In this sense, body has always been connected with singular beings. However, the connection or Nancy’s terms of co-appearance does not refer to a “social bond” which links given subjects to one another. Instead of a “social bond” between subjects, it is an appearance of *betweenness*, “between you and I”.³⁰⁶ For Butler, there has always been necessity for ‘other’ to survive. In a word, my being

³⁰¹ Richard V. Welch and Ruth Panelli, “Questioning Community as a Collective Antidote to Fear: Jean-Luc Nancy’s ‘Singularity’ and ‘Being Singular Plural,’” 350.

³⁰² Jean-Luc Nancy, *The Inoperative Community*, 28.

³⁰³ Clara Escodo, “Ethics, Precariousness and the ‘Inclination’ towards the Other in debbie tucker green’s dirty butterfly, Laure Wade’s Posh and Martin Crimp’s in the Republic of Happiness,” in *Of Precariousness*, eds. Mireia Aragay and Martin Middeke (Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter, 2019), 199.

³⁰⁴ Jean-Luc Nancy, *The Inoperative Community*, 28.

³⁰⁵ *Ibid*, 28-29.

³⁰⁶ *Ibid*, 29.

has not belonged to only me. Rather, it has always exceeded my being.³⁰⁷ In her own words: “(...) without whom I cannot exist, then my existence is not mine alone, but is to be found outside myself, in this set of relations that precede and exceed the boundaries of who I am.”³⁰⁸ In this sense, do I have any limit? If I have, “it is only because I have become separated from others, and it is only on condition of this separation that I can relate to them at all.”³⁰⁹ In this sense, the limit has protected my being singular and plural by separating me from ‘other’ and it has reminded me that I am bound up with ‘other’. My singular plurality has provided me to relate ‘other’ and, I have also accepted them as being singular plural because “one cannot make a world with simple atom. There has to be a *clinamen* (...) an inclination or an inclining from one toward the other. Community is at least the *clinamen* of the “individual”.”³¹⁰ In this community, co-existence of singularities does not mean the totality of sameness. Rather, it is the co-existence within singularities –*clinamen* and a distance.³¹¹ In this sense, *clinamen* is a sort of being-with or coappearing – *compear* and once again, the community has already befallen us.

3.4.3. Where Is Antigone Within Questions of Life?

Butler claims that Antigone is unintelligible. For Butler, what Antigone represents is not clear. Does she represent kinship norms, gender norms or love? If she represents love, what kind of love is it? According to Butler, Antigone is a liminal figure because she is at the limit of intelligibility and recognition: “in the sphere of the excluded, not negated, not dead, perhaps slowly dying, yes, surely dying from

³⁰⁷ Judith Butler, *Frames of War*, 44.

³⁰⁸ *Ibid*, 44.

³⁰⁹ *Ibid*, 44.

³¹⁰ Jean-Luc Nancy, *The Inoperative Community*, 3-4.

³¹¹ Jean-Luc Nancy, *Being Singular Plural*, 33.

a lack of recognition, indeed, (...) a recognition without which the human cannot come into being”.³¹²

Hence, Butler states that Antigone is also beyond intelligibility.³¹³ Her exposure to sovereign violence, being reduced to “bare life” and being *homo sacer* are the results of her being beyond intelligibility. Antigone is outside of the frames of recognition determined by the state or the imminent community of Creon. In other words, she is singular, “whatever being”. She is not a work of herself and not a producer of her essence. As I have asserted in the previous chapters, Antigone refuses all identities which are attributed to her by sovereign power and thanks to Polynices’ death, she understands that the only commonality with ‘other’ is being mortal and vulnerable. However, from then on, she is located between life and death because there is no shelter for the unintelligible. Antigone or “whatever singularities” are “the principal enemy of the State”³¹⁴ to put it in Agamben’s words. The State either removes their ambiguity by giving them a set of identities or regards them as *homo sacer*. In this sense, if one is unintelligible or singular within the nation state, its life is not recognized *as a life* and its grief is banned.

In this respect, is Antigone’s life considered as “unreal”³¹⁵ because of her opposition to sovereign power through her singularity and her “life of *homo sacer* (...) at the intersection of a capacity to be killed and yet not sacrificed, outside both human and divine law?”³¹⁶ In that sense, Butler asserts that if sovereign violence is for those “unreal” lives, then, it means that the sovereign could not ignore them, and they remain alive. Thus, they “must be negated again (and again) (...)”, since “they seem to live on, stubbornly, in this state of deadness. Violence renews itself in the face of the apparent inexhaustibility of its object. The derealization of the

³¹² Butler, *Antigone’s Claim*, 81.

³¹³ Ibid, 80-81.

³¹⁴ Agamben, *The Coming Community*, 86.

³¹⁵ Judith Butler, *Precarious Life*, 33.

³¹⁶ Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, 73.

"Other" means that it is neither alive nor dead, but interminably spectral."³¹⁷ Like Polynices and Antigone, they cannot be mourned because they have never existed, and they ought to be dead. This "spectral life" indicates that they are suspended between life and death. Despite of this, Antigone acts. Despite of Creon's command, she buries her brother twice. Not only that, she speaks. Even though she is debarred from the right to speak, she states that "I admit I did it. I won't deny that".³¹⁸ Not only she exceeds sovereign's juridical order by means of her acts but also exceeds herself, kinship norms, gender norms, in short, all identities bestowed on her by the state. Hence, she belongs to "belonging itself".³¹⁹ This is her resistance to the immanent community, which have tried to annihilate *the* community. Nancy suggest that community cannot be lost, or it cannot be work of anything because it is already given as Being. Only fascist communions have led to destroy community. What is more, a concentration camp is an essence of it for Nancy³²⁰ like a cave within Antigone is confined. However, Nancy asserts that there has been a resistance even in concentration camps because "community is, in a sense, resistance itself: namely, resistance to immanence."³²¹ Thus, Antigone's act is a resistance for the community, and she is not a work of herself anymore as an immanent being. The focal point is that she ex-poses herself by means of Polynices' death because loss is an ecstatic and threshold experience. This is once again: "the experience of the limit itself, the experience of being-*within* an *outside*. This *ek-stasis* is the gift that singularity gathers from the empty hands of humanity."³²²

³¹⁷ Judith Butler, *Precarious Life*, 33-34.

³¹⁸ Sophocles, *Antigone*, 500.

³¹⁹ Agamben, *The Coming Community*, 86.

³²⁰ Nancy, *The Inoperative Community*, 35.

³²¹ *Ibid*, 35.

³²² *Ibid*, 67. See also Martin Middeke, "The Art of Compearance: Ethics, (Reading) Literature, and the Coming Community," in *Theory Matters*, eds. Martin Middeke and Christoph Reinfandt, (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 253.

What does Antigone tell us where she is ex-posed on the threshold of being inside and outside? Agamben describes being on the threshold in two ways. As I tried to show in the previous chapter, the first is not being conditioned by any given identities. It is belonging to “belonging itself” called “whatever singularity”. For Agamben, “whatever singularity” is the figure of “the coming community”. It is the threshold on which a being ex-poses itself, it also is *being-ecstatic* from the Nancian perspective. Secondly, Agamben links the notion of threshold to *homo sacer*. It is the threshold on which *homo sacer*’s life is suspended between life and death. It is the “zone of indistinction” between human and animal, death and life, law and nature, *zoé* and *bios*, outside and inside. Furthermore, according to Agamben, this threshold is the basis of contemporary biopolitics, and it reminds us that everyone might find oneself on the threshold (the zone of indistinction) at any moment because the state has *inclusively excluded / exclusively included* every threat against its identity or nationality.

From Agamben’s point of view, the situation might seem pessimistic. However, there is a solution and it might break off the identity politics. According to Boss, this is only possible with being on the *threshold* as shown by Agamben. Because knowing that there is no safe place for anyone due to the possibility of being exposed to sovereign violence is what provides us with the ethics of being-in-common-with-another. In Boss’ following words:

The concept of the ‘threshold’ is central to Agamben’s project and he uses it to make clear that nobody is safe from the other side of order and civilization and that we may therefore have to face it right away. This implies not only an ethics about the other but also an ethics about the self, for it is the self that might easily pass the threshold and turn into the other. In this respect, it is noteworthy that Agamben has written extensively on werewolves, centaurs, ape-men, and other creatures that seem to blur the distinction between the human and the animal. Questioning this distinction implies a questioning of a number of other distinctions as well: culture and nature, city and country, public and private, *and*, indeed, organization and disorganization. (...) Only when we understand that we can become like them (animal, inmates, less-than-humans) as well, that is to say, only when we understand that politics should be about a communality with the other

side, are we able to envisage that this threshold is not only a danger but perhaps also, against all odds, an opportunity.³²³

In this context, what the *threshold* ensures is an opportunity of being “whatever singularity” or being singular and plural. Thanks to the threshold, we can incline to ‘another’ without any given common properties. If the basis of modern biopolitics is to identify “the threshold in life”³²⁴ —its function is similar to the frames of recognition—, the first thing that has to be done is to stand on the threshold rather than being a part of any common identity or property. And, it is important to gather “‘other’” singularities on the threshold.

Our commonality is being finite / mortal for Nancy and being vulnerable / precarious for Butler. Turning to Antigone, her threshold experience summons her to *the coming community* and to being singular. Thus, she can gather in the threshold with ‘other’ singular beings and all of them present themselves by keeping their distance on it. Their gathering is not conditioned by anything. They are only common because of being finite / mortal and being vulnerable / precarious. With Polynices’ death and mourning as its result, Antigone ex-poses herself. On the other hand, Polynices’ mourning is banned, and he is declared as *homo sacer*. Thus, both gather with their singularities at the threshold between life and death.

As per Roney’s elaboration of Nancian thought of the community; Antigone is beyond herself in the limit/threshold as *being ecstatic*. In this way, the threshold shows her: nothing that she takes upon herself, does belong to “her” subjectivity. Indeed, by virtues of being bound up with another, the threshold provides her being plural.³²⁵ Hence, at the threshold, Antigone is out of given identities which separate her from ‘other’, in short, she is “whatever being”. At the same time, she is inside of the plurality in which she is being-in-common with her being *as such*. In this

³²³ René ten Boss, “Giorgio Agamben and The Community Without Identity,” *The Sociological Review* 53, no.1 (October 2005): 19.

³²⁴ Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, 131.

³²⁵ Patrick Roney, “Sonlu Özgürlük, Sonlu Topluluk: Jean-Luc Nancy’nin Düşüncesine Bir Giriş.” in *Cogito* 85, trans. Ömer Albayrak (Winter, 2016): 135.

context, the threshold reminds Antigone her mortal truth and corporeal vulnerability. It also reminds her being bound up with another by virtue of the sense of grief that is felt in the case of *someone else's death*. Thus, she gathers with another singularity in the commonality of being mortal and vulnerable and she exposes her identities which have prevented this gathering. Because, henceforth, she knows that the community which founded upon identities, has always bordered and declared who is behind the border as *homo sacer* or un-grievable.

CONCLUSION

Judith Butler brings George Steiner's question: "What would happen if psychoanalysis were to have taken Antigone rather than Oedipus as its points of departure?"³²⁶ forward again in *Antigone's Claim*. Like Butler, I discussed the question "What would happen if politics were to have taken Antigone rather than Oedipus as its points of departure?"

After Oedipus solves the riddle of Sphinx, who is waiting on the threshold of the city, *polis*: "What goes on four feet in the morning, two feet at noon, and three feet in the evening?" by answering: "A man", he enters the city and becomes the king of Thebes. In short, while *polis* belongs to men; *pyhsis*, nature, belongs to animals. Thus, animals are externalized by a man because he is "self-knowing and problem-solving"³²⁷, in short, he has *logos*. In that sense, the animal are *alogos* and *apolis*. It is a tragical beginning³²⁸ considering Agamben's claim: "the fundamental categorial pair of Western politics is not that of friend / enemy but that of bare life / political existence, *zoé* / *bios*, exclusion / inclusion"³²⁹ since Ancient Greece. As exemplified Oedipus's case, the tragic beginning of politics is to exclude animals from *polis* through *inclusive exclusion* / *exclusive inclusion* and reduce them to "bare life". Returning to my question, in this study, I tried to discuss Antigone's proposal of togetherness through her singularity as opposed to the immanent community of Oedipus and Creon in which there are always excluded 'others'.

Starting from Nancy's philosophy, I clarified *the* community that has befallen us in contrast to liberal and totalitarian community. His starting point is to reject the metaphysics of the subject which, since Descartes, has been the core of

³²⁶ Butler, *Antigone's Claim*, 57.

³²⁷ Honig, *Antigone, Interrupted*, 23.

³²⁸ Kalaycı, "Hayvan: Bir Sınır Aşma İmkânı".

³²⁹ Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, 8.

modern Western thought, and which, led to the notions of individual and society. Instead of the idea that everything else is a product of the intellect and cognition of the self, Nancy asserts that we are already being-in-common. Hence, there is no need to search for any common ground like nationalities, religions, norms or values in order to found collectivity. We are always being-with and bound up with. It is impossible to think of being absolute. He considers death as a point of togetherness because it is common for every being and it exceeds the Cartesian subject because of being beyond the cognition. Moreover, it cannot be reduced to any subjective experience. Only death induces one to ex-pose and reveal oneself to the other, hence brings about the "opening to community." Thus, I tried to trace Antigone's affection in case of Polynices' death. Both ex-pose themselves to absence. For Antigone, the absence is to not be conditioned by anything. In a world, by virtue of absence, she gets rid of her identities which are imposed by the state thanks to Polynices' death and Antigone's love for him, and affection of these on her. She understands that there is no condition for being together because being is always being-with. Hence, she reveals herself to the 'other' and the community with communication.

Eventually, Antigone is out of all conditioned recognitions of the state. In that sense, what Butler sees in the figure of Antigone is her being unintelligible because of her incest legacy, her incest love for her brother and her mixed gender roles. According to Butler, Antigone is on the limit of kinship and gender norms which are the keystone for the foundation of the state. From Butler's point of view, I tried to show Antigone's unintelligibility as a singularity with an analysis of the *threshold* experience introduced by Agamben and with Nancian idea of love. I discussed that Antigone is a figure of singularity who stands on the threshold with all the possibilities and properties she has. Although she is a woman, she refuses to be mother and wife, and stay at the home, the private sphere, which are conditions of being women in Ancient Greek society. Therefore, Antigone is likened to a man by Ismene and Creon. Antigone is not *that* or *this*. Instead, I argued that she "belongs to belonging itself" with all her properties through Agamben's analysis of "whatever singularity". Thus, she buries her brother and publicly mourns in

defiance of Creon's command without being conditioned by anything, especially being member of his immanent community. She concretely shows us the possibility of co-existence with our unconditioned belongings, instead of the collectivity, which is founded upon identities. Thus, her action is political. Because of her political act and her "whatever singularity", the state reduces Antigone to *homo sacer* as "bare life", on the threshold between life and death, animal and human, *zoé* and *bios*.

In last chapter, I turned to Butler's question of "what is life?" because life is valuable as long as it is intelligible and recognized by the state. Otherwise, it is nothing more than *homo sacer* or "bare life" for the state. Thus, I tried to show the idea of togetherness with a conceptualization of commonalities such as being mortal / finite, being vulnerable and being exposed for being recognized within the framework of life *as life*. Although Antigone's *threshold* experience is comprised of two situations, being *homo sacer* and being singular, Antigone calls the ethics of being-in-common-with-another in order to be recognized within the framework of life *as life* and

Her ethics prompts her to stand against Creon through her persistence on public grievability. Thus, she is "a war critic who opposes the arbitrary and violent force of sovereignty".³³⁰ Indeed, Antigone is the 'member' of *The Inoperative Community* or *The Coming Community* in which she comes together with contemporary "precarious lives, including new immigrants, the *sans-papiers*, those who are without health insurance, those who are differentially affected by the global economy, questions of poverty, of illiteracy, religious minorities, and the physically challenged",³³¹ in short, those who are contemporary the *homo sacer*.

³³⁰ Antonello and Farneti, "Antigone's Claim: A Conversation with Judith Butler."

³³¹ Ibid.

REFERENCES

- Agamben, Giorgio. *The Coming Community*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1993.
- . *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*. California: Stanford University Press, 1998.
- Antonello, Pierpaolo and Roberto Farneti. "Antigone's Claim: A Conversation with Judith Butler." *Theory & Event* 12, no. 1 (2009). <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/263144>.
- Blanchot, Maurice. *The Unavowable Community*. New York, NY: Station Hill, 1988.
- Butler, Judith. *Antigone's Claim: Kinship Between Life and Death*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2000.
- . *Precarious Life: The Power of Mourning and Violence*. New York, NY: Verso, 2004.
- . *Frames of War: When Is Life Grievable*. New York, NY: Verso, 2009.
- . "Afterword: After Loss, What Then?" In *Loss: The Politics of Mourning*, edited by David L. Eng and David Kazanjian. 467-474. London : University of California Press, 2003.
- Boss, René ten. "Giorgio Agamben and The Community Without Identity." *The Sociological Review* 53. no.1 (October 2005): 16-29.
- Chanter, Tina. "Antigone's Excessive Relationship to Fetishism: The Performative Politics and Rebirth of Eros and Philia from Ancient Greece to Modern South Africa." *Syposium* 2. no. 11 (2007): 231-260.

- Chanter, Tina. "Antigone's Political Legacies: Abjection in Defiance of Mourning." *Interrogating Antigone in Postmodern Philosophy and Criticism*, edited by S.E. Wilmer and Audroné Zukauskaité, 19-47. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2010.
- Chanter, Tina. *Whose Antigone? The Tragic Marginalization of Slavery*. Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2011.
- Direk, Zeynep. *Cinsel Farkın İnşası*. İstanbul, TR: Metis Yayınları, 2018.
- Durante, Leland De La. *Giorgio Agamben: A Critical Introduction*. California: Stanford University Press, 2009.
- Euben, J. Peter. *Corrupting Youth: Political Education, Democratic Culture and Political Theory*. New Jersey, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997.
- Escodo, Clara. "Ethics, Precariousness and the 'Inclination' towards the Other in Debbie Tucker Green's *Dirty Butterfly*, Laure Wade's *Posh* and Martin Crimp's *In the Republic of Happiness*." In *Of Precariousness*, edited by Mireia Aragay and Martin Middeke, 187-201. Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter, 2019.
- Fynsk, Christopher. "Foreword: Experiences of Finitude." Nancy, Jean-Luc. *The Inoperative Community*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1991.
- Foucault, Michel. *The History of Sexuality Vol.1: An Introduction*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1978.
- Gratton, Peter. and Marie-Eve Morin. *The Nancy Dictionary*. Edinburgh, UK: Edinburgh University Press, 2015.
- Hegel, G. W. Friedrich. *Phenomenology of Spirit*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1977.

- Hesse, Hermann. *Siddhartha*. New York, NY: Penguin Group, 2008.
- Honig, Bonnie. *Antigone, Interrupted*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013.
- Irigaray, Luce. *Speculum of the Other Woman*. New York, NY: Cornell University Press, 1985.
- Kalaycı, Nazile. "Hayvan: Bir Sınır Aşma İmkânı", *E-Skop* (June, 2016)
[https://www.eskop.com/skopbulten/hayvan-bir-sinir-asma-
imk%c3%a2ni/2975](https://www.eskop.com/skopbulten/hayvan-bir-sinir-asma-
imk%c3%a2ni/2975)
- Kirkpatrick, Jenet. "The Prudent Dissident: Unheroic Resistance in Sophocles' Antigone." *The Review of Politics* 73. no. 13 (2011): 401-424.
- LaZella, Andrew. "The Clinamen of Community: Duns Scotus's Political Ontology." *The Journal of Speculative Philosophy* 30. no. 3 (2016): 316-317.
- Leeb, Claudia. "Female Resistance or the Politics of Death? Rethinking Antigone". *The Persistence of Critical Theory Culture&Civilization* 8 (2017): 223-240.
- Mader, Mary Beth. "Antigone's Line." *Bulletin de la Société Américaine de Philophie de Langue Française* 14. no. 2 (Fall, 2005) : 1-32.
- Middake, Martin. "The Art of Compearance: Ethics, (Reading) Literature, and the Coming Community." In *Theory Matters*, edited by Martin Middake and Christoph Reinfandt, 247-264. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016.
- Morin, Marie-Eve. "Being Social Democratically with Jean-Luc Nancy at the Gezi Park Protests." In *Being Social: Ontology, Law, Politics* edited by Mulqueen, T. and D. Matthews, 61-75. Oxford, UK: Counterpress, 2015.

- Nancy, Jean-Luc. *Being Singular Plural*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2000.
- . *The Inoperative Community*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1991.
- . *The Sense of the World*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1997).
- Nelli, Maria Florencia. "From Ancient Greek Drama to Argentina's 'Dirty War'; *Antigona Furiosa: On Bodies and the State*." In *Interrogating Antigone in Postmodern Philosophy and Criticism* edited by Wilmer, S.E. and Audroné Zukauskaité, 353-365. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2010.
- Norris, Andrew. "Giorgio Agamben and the Politics of the Living Dead." *Diacritics* 30. no. 4 (2000): 38- 58.
- Robert, William. "Human, Life, and Other Sacred Stuff." *Journal for Cultural and Religious Theory* 10. no. 1 (2009): 7-23.
- Roney, Patrick. "Sonlu Özgürlük, Sonlu Topluluk: Jean-Luc Nancy'nin Düşüncesine Bir Giriş." *Cogito* 85, Translated by Ömer Albayrak (Winter, 2016): 124-142.
- Ross, Safari. "Community and Ecstasy: (Re)defining the Ode." 2009. *ECLS Student Scholarship*. <https://scholar.oxy.edu/ecls_student/8>.
- Sayın, Zeynep. *Ölüm Terbiyesi*. İstanbul, TR: Metis Yayınları, 2018.
- Sophocles. *Antigone*. Richer Resources Publications, 2015.
- Stanescu, James. "Judith Butler, Mourning, and the Precarious Lives of Animals." *Hypatia* 27. no. 3 (2012): 567-582.

- Stark, Hannah. "Judith Butler's Post-Hegelian Ethic and the Problem with Recognition." *Feminist Theory* 15. no. 1 (2014): 92-98.
- Stocking, Damian. "Antigone, "désœuvrée": Tragedy, Finitude, and Community." *Mosaic: An Interdisciplinary Critical Journal* 41, no. 3 (September, 2008): 153-168.
- Stocking, Damian. "The Ruin of Song: Community and Autoimmunity in Sophocles' Antigone." In *The Returns of Antigone: Interdisciplinary Essays* edited by Chanter, T. and S. D. Kirkland. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2014.
- Statkiewicz, Max and Valerie Reed. "Antigone's (Re)Turn: The *Ethos* of the "Coming Community"." In *The Enigma of Good and Evil: The Moral Sentiment in Literature* edited by Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka. Netherlands: Springer, 2005.
- Tripathy, Jyotirmaya. "Biopolitics in Sophocles' Antigone." *The Explicator* 71. no. 1 (2013): 26-30.
- Wall, Illan. "On Pain and the Sense of Human Rights," *Australian Feminist Law Journal* 29, no. 1. (July, 2008), 53-76.
- Watson, Janell. "Butler's Biopolitics: Precarious Community" ,” *Theory and Event* 15, no.2 (2012).
- Weiner, Jess. "Between Bios and Zoé: Sophocles' Antigone and Agamben's Biopolitics." *A Journal of Ancient Theater* 5 (2015): 139-160.
- Welch, Richard V. and Ruth Panelli. "Questioning Community as a Collective Antidote to Fear: Jean Luc Nancy's 'Singularity'and 'Being Singular Plural'." *Area* 39.3 (2007): 349-356.
- Zukauskaitė, Audrone. "Biopolitics: Antigone's Claim." In *Interrogating Antigone in Postmodern Philosophy and Criticism* edited by Wilmer, S.E. and

Audroné Zukauskaitė, 67-81. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2010.