

Literary Studies

# Antigone's Phallus Envy and Its Comparison to Indonesian Dramas' Characters: A Freudian Perspective

Dina Amelia<sup>1</sup><sup>1</sup>Universitas Teknokrat Indonesia, Labuhan Ratu, Bandar Lampung, 35142, Indonesia

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## CORRESPONDENCE

E-mail: [amelia.dina@teknokrat.ac.id](mailto:amelia.dina@teknokrat.ac.id)

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## A B S T R A C T

Antigone's character has developed phallus envy. Phallus envy seems to also appear in the Indonesian dramas *Djinak-Djinak Merpati* and *Kami, Perempuan* which were written during the Japanese colonialization in Indonesia. Freudian perspective, in this case, Freudian psychoanalysis helps to scrutinize the characters in the dramas. This research is to present and elucidate Antigone's phallus envy and its comparison to Indonesian dramas by applying Freud's Id, Ego, and Superego. The qualitative method is applied based on the theory used. Antigone's phallus envy is the result of her traumatic past experiences as well as the stereotype and position of women in the ancient Greek era. Similar to the characters from the Indonesian dramas, Moerni, Sri, and Aminah. The causes of their phallus envy are emphasized on the stereotype of women in Indonesia during Japanese colonization that influences the way they think and behaves toward the people around them, especially men.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Antigone by Sophocles is a part of the most acknowledged Theban Trilogy which includes Oedipus the King and Oedipus at Colonus. Antigone has been performed in many theatres around the world including the National theatre in 2012, the Wilma Theatre, and Theater Heilbronn in 2015. The character also has been discussed from various perspectives, especially feminism and gender stereotype.

Antigone in the drama has given an example of a strong and brave woman who dares to challenge the King of Thebes, but her strengths and bravery could also mean that she is completely envious of Creon with the desire to empower him and to prove him wrong (Khan, 2018). What Antigone has been experiencing is known as phallus envy or also known as penis envy. Phallus comes from a Greek word, phallus or penis refers to a craving or image of an erect penis. The phallus is the symbol of generative power and control in nature. Freud states that phallus envy should be re-evaluated

as a product of infantile satisfaction in the cases of maturity and responsibility. Phallus envy also considers as a symbol of protest or denial of women toward their feminine prerogatives. In other words, phallus envy is a condition usually experienced by women where they feel powerless due to male domination and the stereotypes given by society. The condition also leads women to experience anxiety.

Phallus envy has also been found in Indonesian dramas, especially the ones that were written and performed during the Japanese colonization, such as, *Djinak Djinak Merpati* by Armijn Pane and *Kami, Perempuan* by Asia Poetra. Moerniati or Moerni, the main character of the first drama, has been experiencing the consequence of being a single woman who becomes the object of affection of married men and their notorious wives. One of the wives, Nj. Djaja, named her "Hantoe Perempuan" because she allows married men to come and visits her, even though Moerni treats and welcomes them merely as acquaintances and friends. Both Moerni and Nj. Djaja characters picture women with no

power to speak up for themselves. Although Moerni defends herself in the story, she never seems to vividly blame or question the male characters in the story for visiting her. Simply she blames the wives for not taking care of their husbands and that is why they are seeking other woman's attention. Meanwhile, Nj. Djadja character spends most of her time mingling with everyone's business and ignoring the fact that her husband is also visiting Moerni.

The later drama, *Kami, Perempoean* which was written in 1943, is a story of two sisters, Aminah and Sri. Aminah is married to Mahmoed, and Sri is engaged to Soepono. The story starts when Mahmoed and Soepono refuse to join Pasukan Pembela Tanah Air (PETA) which is initiated by the Japanese. Both Aminah and Sri think that the male characters are weak and coward. Sri is more vocal than Aminah, she even decides to break the engagement with Soepono. The two characters' actions are bound by the society's constructed Idea of "Ideal" woman and "Ideal" man, furthermore, the "Ideal" picture triggers their insecurity and anxiety for not having masculine partners. In the story, Aminah and Sri have to face their parent and in-law's disappointment which leads to conflict and arguments. They do not appear to be women

with power, they are simply described as anxious women who are constantly want to be heard and understood. Similar to Antigone, the main female characters that appear in the two Indonesian dramas, experience the dilemma of being a woman in the patriarchal society.

The story of the drama indicates that they are envious and longing for the power which is possessed by the male characters (Roth & Lemma, 2008). They are unable to convince people around them about the importance of their existence and point of view as a woman. There are numerous discussions on Antigone, especially from the perspective of Feminist Psychoanalysis. But this present study attempts to present and elucidate Antigone's phallus envy and its relation to Indonesian dramas from the Freudian perspective: The Id, Ego, and Superego.

### *Comparative Literature*

Comparative Literature is an interdisciplinary study that enables the study of texts across cultures (Bassnett, 1993). The focus and aim of the comparative literature include the relation of literary works across time and space, as well as to discover patterns of literary works from around the world, and reveal the reasons why the patterns

### Freud's model of personality structure

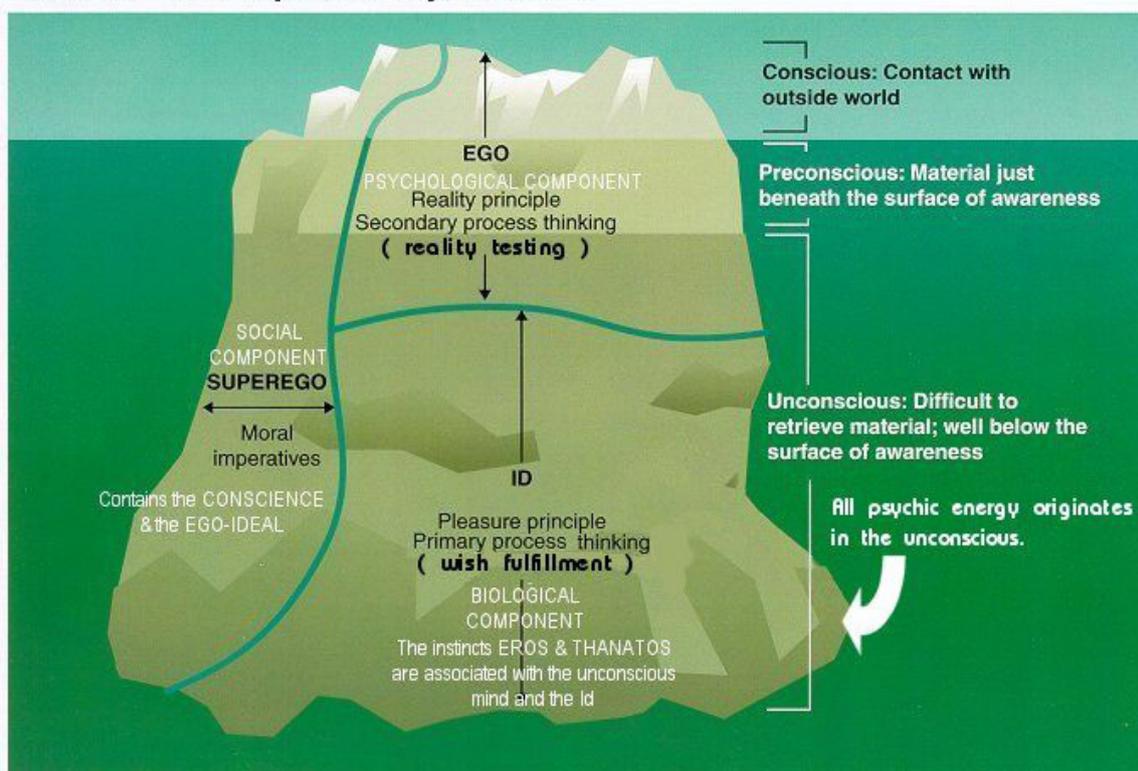


Figure 1. The Freudian Perspective: Psychoanalysis

are shaped and formed as it is. The comparison of Sophocles' *Antigone* and *Djinak Djinak Merpati* by Armijn Pane and *Kami, Perempoean* by Asia Poetra presents the patterns of phallus envy in the female characters and the reasons the way the characters are portrayed in certain ways.

The Freudian perspective describes phallus envy by applying the psychoanalysis technique and it is introduced by Freud around the 1890s. Originally the psychoanalysis is a therapy to cure patients with mental disorders (Das, 2014). His theory seems to prioritize the sexual matter. Freud believes that the human mind is influenced by the unconsciousness rather than the conscious. Furthermore, Freud describes that the mind is like an iceberg that one's life is full of pressures and conflicts that when one's experiences an unwanted trauma, unresolved conflicts, or even desires, one tends to 'forgetting' or 'ignoring' it by repressing all of the experiences and keep it in their unconsciousness. For that reason, Freud states that the human mind is the key to understand one's behavior because the unconscious tries to push into the conscious, therefore, it affects how one's reacts and interacts unconsciously (Devardhi, 2009). Freud continues by developing the structure of the human psyche which is known as the Id, Ego, and Super-Ego.

The id is the reservoir of all pulse. The ego is placed between the conscious and unconscious which functions to conciliate the Id and Super-Ego. Meanwhile, a part of the Super-Ego is in the unconscious part and the other part is in the conscious. The super-Ego is a result of religious education, belief, norms, and values, which work as the filter to oversee and block the pulse. Freud explains Id as the King or the Queen that constantly forces humans to fulfill their basic needs and desires such as eating, sex, pain, and so forth. Freud also adds that Id is in the unconscious part which has no contact with reality. The id is always seeking pleasure and avoiding discomfort. The ego is trapped between the opposing forces and fixated on the principal reality. In other words, it allows one to experience pleasures that are limited by reality. Ego keeps the sanity that allows one to re-consider any kind of decision or action that could lead to trouble. The Super-Ego refers to morality in a personality. The super-Ego is the 'conscience' that recognizes the right and the wrong. Similar to Id, Super-Ego does not correspond with realistic matters unless

when Id's sexual impulse and aggressiveness are satisfied based on moral consideration.

Freudian Psychoanalysis and Greek Drama have been recorded in the series of researches. Psychoanalytic Study of Sophocles *Antigone*, the unconscious motivation of *Antigone* is scrutinized. *Antigone* has gone through the sorrowful loss of her beloved brother Polyneices that this loss has affected her rather than a masculine character. Her attachment to her brother somehow indicates that she has depth feeling towards her brother even more than the brother-sister relationship that she could not confine, but also unable to express. The dilemma she keeps for herself lies in her unconscious memory which then affects the way she insists Creon on burying Polyneices's body. She lingers on her parent incestuous relation that causes bitterness in her character and she is so much influenced by her understanding of her destiny that she could not escape from (Almansi, 2012).

*Antigone's* mother, *Jocasta*, commits suicide after she discovers that she has been married to her son and has three children from this marriage. Her children, therefore, are left without the figure of the mother. *Antigone*, after the tragic death of her mother and after her father blinds himself, supports *Oedipus* to the end of his life. As a daughter, she has a close relationship with her father and has been struggling with her desire for him. *Antigone's* relation to *Oedipus* parallels the relationship between Freud and his younger daughter *Anna*. Just like *Antigone*, *Anna* has been the constant caregiver of her father when he suffers from cancer. The grief shows by *Anna* when her father died is also remarkably similar to *Antigone's* grief after she loses *Oedipus* (Galatzer-Levy, 2008).

## II. METHOD

Freud compares literature with dreams, fantasy, or play to understand creative work (Hossain, 2017). In an attempt to present and elucidate *Antigone's* phallus envy and its relation to Indonesian dramas from the Freudian perspective, this research applies a qualitative method that focuses on the qualitative phenomenon of the works. The method enables to explore dialogues and narrations in the works and gain meaning, feeling, or to describe certain situations based on the psychoanalysis: Id, Ego,

and Super-Ego (Barry, 2009).

### III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

From the Freudian psychoanalysis: Id, Ego, and Super-Ego, Antigone has been suffering from phallus envy. Her actions in the drama are the results of her traumatic experiences, shameful family background, and also the ancient Greek society's view on women. The conditions lead to her being a woman who envies power and constantly expects to overpower a man. Her committing suicide is her only way to show that she is not willing to be controlled by the system, Creon the King and that she wants to emphasize as a woman she can make her own decision. Antigone's phallus envy in the Theban Trilogy is in line with the phallus envy suffered by Moerni, Sri, and Aminah in the Indonesian dramas during the Japanese era. The envy they have been experiencing toward men is the symbol of their protest and denial against their feminine prerogatives which form and influence their human psyche. Different from Antigone, their phallus envy is the result of the stereotype that influenced the way they think and behave.

The Id stores all of their desires to control and overpower men who dominate them. But the Ego and Super-Ego have proven to them that they are powerless since they realize that they could never break down the male domination. For those reasons, many of their actions and statements emphasize their unconscious mind that represents their basic needs as a woman to be heard, to be love, and respect.

#### Antigone and Phallus Envy: The ID

The Id is the unconscious part of the psyche where all the unwanted traumas, memories, and life experiences are stored (Devardhi, 2009). From the Freudian psychoanalysis, Antigone seems to have repressed desires and anxiety. Antigone has a traumatic and shameful background. It is all started when she learns of her father and mother's background after Oedipus's Identity is revealed, he sets a journey to leave Thebes. Antigone accompanies her father throughout the journey for years. The drama shows Antigone's relationship with Oedipus, during the journey she never leaves his side and always persuades her brothers to make peace with him. Antigone's actions in the play are not just an act of devotion and loyalty, but also an

act of admiration towards her father. However, her father perceives her only as a devoted daughter, not as a woman.

Sophocles does not describe Antigone's childhood in his Theban Trilogy; however, we can assume what happened to Antigone during her childhood. In *Oedipus, the King*, Jocasta, Oedipus' mother, and wife, adores Oedipus and so does him (Megah & Daniati, 2018). Antigone has no chance of replacing her mother's figure. Jocasta chooses to commit suicide after she finds out that Oedipus is her son and Oedipus blinds himself. Antigone remains fixated on her desire for her father. Only after her mother's death her father's blindness, Antigone has a chance to show her father that she deserves to be loved more than a daughter. She becomes his protector throughout his journey, as she says to her father.

OEDIPUS

Help me sit down.

And keep watch, as I can't do.

ANTIGONE

Yes, I know. I know.

After all this time, you don't have to tell me.

[She seats OEDIPUS on the rock at center stage.] (The Theban Plays, 2007: 139)

She accompanies him until his death; however, she remains behind the shadow of her mother and Oedipus merely loves her as a daughter.

OEDIPUS

Child! Both of you? Safe?

ANTIGONE

Both of us! Safe! Theseus and his soldiers rescued us.

OEDIPUS

Come, let me hug you close. I hardly hoped you'd ever return to me so that I could hold you.

ANTIGONE

That hug you want is what we both have longed for.

OEDIPUS

Where are you? Come to me? (The Theban Plays, 2007: 196)

Antigone is unable to gain her father's love which she develops because she is born in an abnormal family and develops abnormal admiration towards her father. She is raised among the people who perceive women as unequal to men. She suffers from envy for not having her father's affection the way she wants it and as a result, she also suffers from anxiety and inferiority. She remains fixated to this stage, therefore; she suffers from phallus envy.

After her parent's and her brother's deaths, Antigone continues to suffer from anxiety, envy, vanity, inadequacy, inferiority, and self-obsession; however, those feelings develop toward the people who are against her and her family. Her Id deals with hidden disguise and plays a major role in her situations since Id is the storage of all memories, desires, and traumas. It is only natural, based on Freudian psychoanalysis, that Id cannot be contained forever that there would be the "return of the repressed" (Kumari, 2016).

Another incident that leads to phallus envy is when Creon decides that Eteocles is buried with honor, meanwhile, Polyneices is left in the fields. Both are Antigone's brothers; they have killed each other because Eteocles refuses to share the throne with Polyneices. The whole family has suffered from great shame; therefore, Antigone does not want anyone from her family to be treated shamefully after their death.

From these parts of the drama, Antigone's Id circles around her traumas and shame. Antigone is the third child of Oedipus, she is supposed to be the next ruler of Thebes, not Creon. But the law says only men could lead the kingdom. Phallus envy is the condition when a woman's desire is overpowered simply because she is a woman. The Id plays the part to keep Antigone's desire for power, however, as Freud said, the more you repressed the Id the bigger the desire. When Creon decides to abandon one of her brother's bodies, Polyneices, her lifetime resentment pushes her to act impulsively and asks Ismene to help her to devote herself during her father's exile and to bury her brother's body even though she knows that is against the law. She implies that her crime is holy because she infers that she prefers the law of the Gods to men.

## ANTIGONE

Yes, for it was not Zeus who made that law, nor Justice who dwells with the gods below and rules in the world of men and women. Your edict was clear and strong, but not enough to suspend the unwritten, unfailing laws of the gods who live forever and whose rule, revealed to us so long ago, is not for here and now but, like the gods, forever. (The Theban Plays, 2007: 20)

Antigone uses her faith to show Creon that men are much more inferior compare to Gods. She refuses to show her inferiority towards Creon. She insists other men would say they agree on what she has done if it is not because of their fear towards him. From her statements and the narration, Antigone needs to be recognized and acknowledged as a person who defies the law of the men. Her constant resistance to Creon's decision shows how much she envies his power to rule and to be able to make her own decision.

### **Antigone and Phallus Envy: The Ego, and Super-Ego**

The Ego always corresponds with reality; therefore, it allows Antigone to have needs and desires as well as to fulfill those needs and desires. The ego enables her to acknowledges reality and decide without ignoring reality (Hossain, 2017). In the first case where Antigone develops love and affection toward her father, the Id forces her to be the figure of a woman who could replace her mother's position, however, Antigone realizes that she could never replace her mother not just because she knows that Oedipus loves Jocasta dearly, but because she realizes that there are boundaries and limitations which she could not fight.

Antigone is fully aware of her shameful past regarding her father and mother. She knows that if she is to follow her needs and desires, she would repeat the history and would eventually relive the horrible pain that her parent and she have gone through. For those reasons, she acts accordingly towards her father and maintains her pride.

In the second case, Antigone Her decision to bury Polyneices becomes her biggest and strongest approval of her repressed desire for power. Nevertheless, she realizes that she has broken

Creon's law and for that, she would be punished, further, she also realizes her position as a woman in ancient Greek at that time. After Antigone buries her brother Polyneices, Creon is disappointed, when Antigone come to see him, she does not only admit her fault but also claims that she has done the "right thing". She tries to convince Creon and Ismene that she believes her action is approved by the Gods. She is not afraid of the law and punishment created by men, because she believes that Gods are with her. Throughout the rest of the play, Antigone seems to emphasize this Idea; however, the Ego bridges her id and Super-Ego, at this point she knows that she would never be more superior to Creon and she despises it. Antigone has developed phallus envy throughout her life that even her Ego could not cover. She could not find a better way to justify her action, but to say that God and Goddesses are with her.

Meanwhile, Antigone's Super-Ego is assumed to be formed because she has been raised in Thebes and as the daughter of a King. As the Theban princess, there must be rules and norms that she must obey. These rules and norms might influence her perspective on a certain level that makes her unconsciously, no matter how she reacts towards it, believes that she is not superior to any man. She is also a religious woman who believes in the existence of God and Goddess, her statement implies that she is devoted to her belief. Freud states that Superego develops through socialization and deals with morals, norms, and faith. Therefore, Antigone begs Creon to kill her and if he does kill her because deep down, she knows that she has committed a crime against the King of Thebes. She also realizes that it is not only against the law of men to court her father, above all it against God and Goddesses.

### Antigone and its Relation to Indonesian Dramas

As a Theban woman who lives in the ancient Greek society, Antigone develops phallus envy and leads to her many actions that indicate she needs to dominate and overpower men's position in her society. The same acts could also be seen in the Indonesian dramas' *Djinak Djinak Merpati* by Armijn Pane and *Kami, Perempuan* by Asia Poetra. Both dramas are written and performed during the Japanese colonialization era, the depiction of women during this era is quite similar to the depiction of women in ancient Greek society.

*Djinak-Djinak Merpati* refers to the main character in the story, Moerni, and receives tremendous attention from married men, thus makes the wives worry that they would lose their husbands. All the other women in the story form a horrible opinion towards her and call her "Hantoe Perempuan". In the drama, Moerni seems to enjoy all of the attention from the men. As a single woman, she has her needs and desires, she needs to be taken care of and she longs for someone to love her. Thus, her Id forces her to accept all the attention she could get from men. When she is confronted by Nj. Djadja she says that '*itoe boekan perkarakoe, tapi perkaranja dan perkara isterinja. Kalua dia datang lagi kesini, tIdak akan saja oesir. Biar isterinja baik-baik mendjaga dia!*'. Her statement refers to the scene when Nj. Djadja comes to confront her in regards to Nj Satrio's concern because her husband comes and visits Moerni occasionally even though Nj. Djadja' husband, Tn. Djadja, also uses to meet Moerni at her house. Nevertheless, the two women do not seem to care much about the attitude of the men. they blame each other's actions instead of looking at the root of the problem. The men are not in the picture to receive the social consequences.

Moerni and Nj. Djadja's action indicates that both characters are not aware that they do not have the power to decide whether the men should continue their inappropriate actions or not. In the dialogue, Tn. Satrio states that '*hal itoe tIdak mendjadi perkarakoe. Isterinja pasti akan mendjaganja baik-baik sekarang. Jang keopikirkan isterikoe. Kalua aku tahoe engkau soedah soeka, tIdak peduli katanja, kalua berani dia mengomel, sepotong kertas tentoe masih ada boeat dia.*' From his statement, the women seem to have no right to state their opinion. Their actions toward each other are another form of phallus envy. But different from Antigone, because she can project it directly to Creon, while these women could only project their unconscious desires of power to deliver their arguments and disagreements among them. Nevertheless, in the drama, Moerni seems to be able to restrain her desire towards men, even though she opens her door for the men, she treats them nothing but as a friendly listener. Her Super-Ego can be seen when she defends herself from Soebroto who loves Moerni, '*djangan akoe dinasehati, akoe boekan anak ketjil, jang tIdak tahoe, senjoem bibir laki-laki tjoema ibarat lajar sandiwara sadja; kalua lajar sudah naik, moengkin terbawa lakon*

*sandiwara jang mesooem...'*. The quote has shown that Moerni's Super-Ego has been able to remind her of what the men are truly looking for from her and that she is not as foolish they think she is.

In the drama *Kami, Perempoean* by Asia Poetra, the two main characters, Aminah and Sri, think that their partners are weak and coward because they are afraid to join *Pasukan Pembela Tanah Air* (PETA) at the time of the Japanese era in Indonesia. Sri is the one who shows more of her disagreement towards Soepono, her fiancé, she takes it too hard that she eventually breaks the engagements, '*ja, maoekoe pa. karena akoe tldak maoe kawin dengan penakoet. Penakoet.*' Furthermore, Aminah, Sri's sister, has also been feeling disappointment towards her husband, but she is not as blunt as Sri, '*kalau dia ichlas, koerasa tldak oesah koewatir. Tapi rupanja dia boloem ichlas. Boekan karena memikirkan akoe tapi karena masih takoet memegang senapan. Itoe sebabnja dia masih ragoe-ragoe.*' At glance, the two women seem to have more power over the men, but it turns out that what they do when they are forcing their partner to join PETA and think that they are cowards because they refuse to do it has indicated that they have desires to have power so their voices could be heard. They develop phallus envy because of the stereotypes on women which they have been experiencing, a strong demand in the society towards men and women at the era that a man should be brave and strong, meanwhile, a woman should be gentle and elegant. The drama points to the condition that women cannot join the war and it makes them vulnerable. Later in the drama, the two characters also struggle to be heard by their parent, Aminah states '*saja joega, kalau saja laki-laki, teroes saja masoek barisan soeka rela,*' further Sri adds by saying '*ja, boe kalau boekan kami begitoe, siapa lagi? Mohmoed tldak. Pono djoega tldak! Soenggoeh tjelaka iboe bapak mendapat menantoe semacam itoe.*' The two statements add to the indication that Sri and Aminah know that somehow it is impossible for them to overpower men at the time. They are just women, and women shall not go to war. They are

feeling more inferior to the men in the story. They realize that they could not overpower men and their privilege. The Id influences the women's desires to be more powerful than the men that it leads to their anger and disappointment which they have projected through their constant disagreements. But since Ego concerns reality, Sri and Aminah realize that it is considered inappropriate for women to join PETA because that is not what is based on the society's standard at the time ((Niaz, 2019)). Their Super-Ego reminds them of the values and norms that a woman must have and uphold during the Japanese colonialization era, where women should be quiet and demure, therefore, their place is not in the warzone, but at home with the children and in the kitchen, cooking for the whole family.

#### IV. CONCLUSIONS

Through the Freudian perspective, the ID, Ego, and Super-Ego, Antigone's character are scrutinized, and that she envies men's power to change the situation or people's opinion around her. She develops this phallus envy due to her traumatic life experiences that have led her to suffer from phallus envy, a condition when a woman feels that she has been subdued by men and also the stereotype of women in the ancient Greek society. But Antigone is not the only female character who suffers from phallus envy, the other female characters from Indonesian dramas, Moerni, Sri, and Aminah, in the Japanese colonialization era, *Djinak-Djinak Merpati* and *Kami, Perempoean* have also experienced similar issues that growing up as women with the stereotype attach on them. Their desires seem to be subdued by the men's power and the stereotype that binds them. However, the difference is Antigone is escaping from her envy through committing suicide as the act of taking control of her life and not willing to submit to her Ego and Super-Ego. The other female characters choose to face their problems, eventually, they submit to the reality which they cannot control although they do not appear to have been accepted it.

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