Why is Antigone a good representative of the dissident writer?

Brink argues that when offered seductions by the state, like the condemned writer was offered by the tyrant a reprieve if he recants, the writer must respond with a self-affiriming No. In that context, Antigone is a good representative of the dissident writer because ‘her keyword is No!’. Antigone is also fearless and a rebel. That is precisely what Brink expects from a dissident writer- to not succumb to the mighty power of the state.

What is free speech fundamentalism?

Free speech fundamentalism refers to the belief that free speech, in whatever form or content, must be accepted and allowed unrestrained (some fundamentalists however, make the exception of the First Amendment). It also, according to free speech fundamentalists, includes the right to offend religious sentiments of a particular community. When the Charlie Hebdo cartoonists were murdered, a number of free speech fundamentalists called them martyrs of free speech. When Rose published the cartoons in Jyllands-Posten, he was seen by the Muslims as a “free speech fundamentalist.” In contrast, the opposers of free-speech fundamentalism call for constrain on speech so as to be cognizant of plurality and the offense that it may cause to any community.

Explain the symbol of the quilt.

The quilt symbolises the concealment and secrecy of a woman’s sexuality and desires. The sexual desires and sexuality of a woman are not talked about, but hidden under the ‘quilt.’ Secondly, it also represents the comprehension of a taboo that is sex by an innocent girl who isn’t sure how to interpret the shapes that the quilt takes. Thirdly, it serves as a trope for the narrative and provides a leeway into memories and flashback. As in the beginning of the story, when the narrator puts a quilt on herself in the winter, she is reminded of Begum Jaan. Lastly, the elephant made by the quilt could also symbolise the ‘elephant in the room’ – that is the fact that everyone in the household knew about the sexual relationship of Begum Jaan and Rabu but no one talked about it.