

Oedipus Rex--Oedipus Tyrannus (Ancient Greek)--Oedipus the King

- Athenian tragedy
- Sophocles that was first performed around 429 BC.
- Renamed Oedipus Tyrannus to distinguish it from another of Sophocles's plays, Oedipus at Colonus.
- Three Theban plays deal with the story of Oedipus, Oedipus Rex was the second to be written: chronology of events that the plays describe, it comes first, followed by **Oedipus at Colonus** and then **Antigone**

Story in Short

- Oedipus has become the king of Thebes while unwittingly fulfilling a **prophecy** that he would kill his father, **Laius** (the previous king):and marry his mother, **Jocasta**-(whom Oedipus took as his queen after solving the **riddle** of the Sphinx).
- The **action** of Sophocles' play concerns Oedipus's search for the murderer of Laius in order to end a plague ravaging Thebes, unaware that the killer he is looking for is none other than himself.
- At the end of the play, after the truth finally comes to light, Jocasta hangs herself while Oedipus, horrified at his patricide and incest, proceeds to gouge out his own eyes in despair

- **Laius** was the guest of Pelops (Pelops /' pi:lɒps /was king of Pisa in the Peloponnesus is a peninsula and geographic region in southern Greece.), the king of Elis, and he became the tutor of Chrysippus, the king's youngest son, in chariot racing. Laius seduced or abducted and raped Chrysippus, who according to some versions, killed himself in shame
- The misfortunes of his house are the result of a curse laid upon his father for violating the sacred laws of hospitality
- When his **son** is born, the king consults an oracle as to his fortune. To his horror, the oracle reveals that Laius "is doomed to perish by the hand of his own son". Laius binds the infant's feet together with a pin, and orders Jocasta to kill him. Unable to kill her own son, Jocasta orders a servant to slay the infant for her The shepherd names the child Oedipus, "swollen feet", as his feet had been tightly bound by Laius. The shepherd brings the infant to Corinth, and presents him to the childless **king Polybus**, who raises Oedipus as his own son.

- As Oedipus grows to manhood, Oedipus hears a rumour that he is not truly the son of Polybus and his wife, Merope. He asks the Delphic Oracle who his parents really are. The Oracle seems to ignore this question, telling him instead that he is destined to "mate with [his] own mother, and shed/With [his] own hands the blood of [his] own sire". Desperate to avoid this terrible fate, Oedipus, who still believes that Polybus and Merope are his true parents, leaves Corinth for the city of Thebes
- On the road to Thebes, Oedipus encounters Laius and his retainers, and the two quarrel over whose chariot has the right of way. The Theban king moves to strike the insolent youth with his sceptre, but Oedipus, unaware that Laius is his true father, throws the old man down from his chariot, killing him. Thus, Laius is slain by his own son, and the prophecy that the king had sought to avoid by exposing Oedipus at birth is fulfilled.
- Before arriving at Thebes, Oedipus encounters the Sphinx, a legendary beast with the head and breast of a woman, the body of a lioness, and the wings of an eagle. The Sphinx was sent to the road approaching Thebes as a punishment from the gods, and would strangle any traveler who failed to answer a certain riddle.

- Oedipus' reward for freeing Thebes from the Sphinx is its kingship, and the hand of the dowager queen, Jocasta; none then realize that Jocasta is Oedipus' true mother.[9] Thus, unknown to all of the characters, the prophecy has been fulfilled.

- **riddle of the Sphinx** "what is the creature that walks on four legs in the morning, two legs at noon, and three in the evening?" Oedipus correctly guesses, "man", who crawls on all fours as an infant, walks upright in maturity, and leans on a stick in old age.
- **prophecy by Delphic Oracle** "mate with [his] own mother, and shed/With [his] own hands the blood of [his] own sire".

CHARACTERS

- Laius and Jocasta (king ND Queen of Thebes)
Oedipus is their Son
- **Chrysippus** was the bastard son of Pelops, king of Pisa in the Peloponnesus, and the nymph Danais. was kidnapped by the Theban Laius, his tutor, who was escorting him to the Nemean Games, where the boy planned to compete. Instead, Laius ran away with him to Thebes and raped him, a crime for which he, his city, and his family were later punished by the gods.
- **Polybus**: was the king of Corinth and husband of either Periboea or Merope, a Dorian Or Medusa. Polybus reigned over the city like a gentle man and loved his wife, but unfortunately their marriage remained childless for many years.
- **Creon** brother-in-law of Oedipus, King of Thebes,

PLACES

- **Peloponnesus** is a peninsula and geographic region in southern Greece
- **PISA:-**
- **Elis** is in southern Greece on the Peloponnese
- **Corinth** is an ancient city and former municipality in Corinthia, Peloponnese, which is located in south-central Greece
- **Mount Kithairon**, where child Oedipus was rescued