



Unraveling the Riddle of Oedipus



Study Guide

PITTSBURGH PUBLIC THEATER'S STUDY GUIDE

Oedipus the King

by Sophocles

Translated by William Butler Yeats

September 28 – October 29, 2006

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ANCIENT GREECE

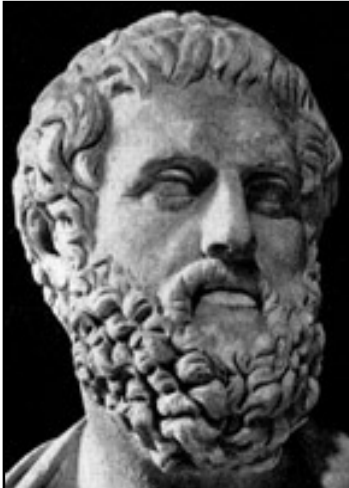
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SOPHOCLES

Sophocles (495-405 B.C) was one of the great playwrights of the golden age of Greek Drama.



Sophocles, as depicted in a Roman portrait bust

The son of a wealthy merchant, he enjoyed all the comforts of a thriving Greek empire. He studied all of the arts. By the age of sixteen, he was already known for his beauty and grace and was chosen to lead a choir of boys at a celebration of the victory of Salamis. Twelve years later, his studies complete, he was ready to compete in the City Dionysia--a festival held every year at the Theatre of Dionysus in which new plays were presented.

In his first competition, in 468 B.C, Sophocles took first prize. More than 120 plays were to follow. He would go on to win at least eighteen first prizes. An accomplished actor, Sophocles performed in many of his own plays. However, his voice was comparatively weak, and eventually he would give up his acting career to pursue other ventures.

In addition to his theatrical duties, Sophocles served for many years as an ordained priest of Alcon and Asclepius, the god of medicine. He also served on the Board of Generals, a committee that administered civil and military affairs in Athens, and for a time he was director of the Treasury, controlling the funds of the association of states known as the Delian Confederacy.

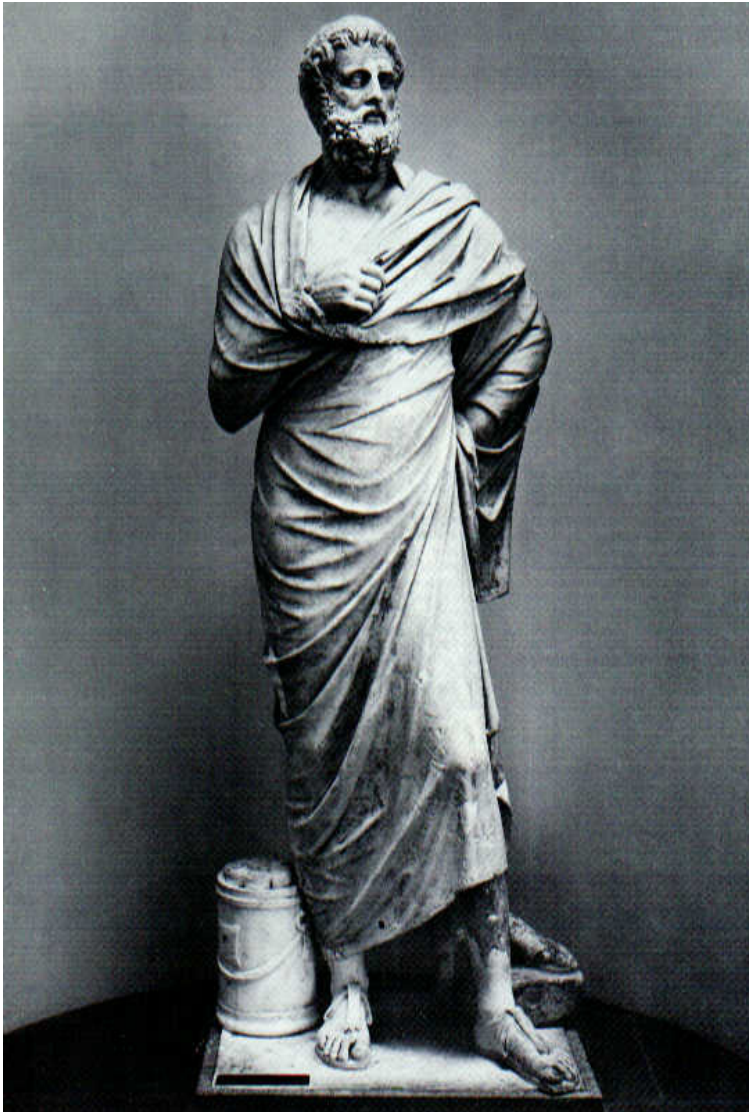
One of the great innovators of the theatre, he was the first to add a third actor, which offered greater dramatic possibilities.

Of Sophocles' more than 120 plays, only seven have survived in their entirety. Of these, ***Oedipus the King*** is generally considered his greatest work...often heralded as a "perfectly structured" play.

Σοφοκλής

Like many Ancient Greek names, that of Sophocles (Σοφοκλής) has a meaning. A compound of σοφός (sophos) "wise" and κλέος (kleos) "glory", Sophocles' name translates to "famous for wisdom."

WORKS BY SOPHOCLES



Statue of Sophokles from Museo Gregoriano Profano

- *Ajax*
(between 450 and 440 B.C.)
- *Antigone*
(c. 441 B.C.)
- *Oedipus the King*
(c. 430 to 425 B.C.)
- *Electra*
(c. 418 to 410 B.C.)
- *Trachiniae*
(c. 413 B.C.)
- *Philoctetes*
(409 B.C.)
- *Oedipus at Colonus*
(406 B.C.)
- *The Trackers*
(date unknown)



THOUGHTS FROM THE DIRECTOR

Ted Pappas on staging a Greek Classic:

"I first read Euripides' Medea and Sophocles' Oedipus the King in English as part of a high school world literature course. But my exposure to the Greek myths and Greek history began much earlier. I spent many summers and several years as a child in Greece. It was not unusual to pass the ruins of an ancient temple on the way to school or the grocery store. Greeks live in casual comfort with their history. We still give our children names like Electra or Agamemnon. Just ask my cousin Antigone or my Uncle Socrates.

"Greek plays are difficult to cast and even harder to stage...[but] for me one of the joys of directing the classics is the research involved. I feel as if I'm transported to another time and place. Understanding the playwright's audience helps me to understand the themes and meanings of the play. Studying the architecture, scenic devises, and traditions of the classical Greek theater helps me in staging the show in the O'Reilly.

"The plays of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides were the Star Wars adventures of their time – full of heroes, villains, magic and power. At the Public we pride ourselves on the vast array of stories we bring to our audiences and the variety of techniques we use to tell them. The Greek classics are simply great theater – powerful stories presented in an extravagant and highly theatrical style. No theatergoing journey is complete without them."

OEDIPUS THE KING

SYNOPSIS

Some twelve years before the action of the play begins, Oedipus has been made King of Thebes in gratitude for his freeing the people from the pestilence brought on them by the riddling Sphinx. Since Laius, the former king, has been killed, Oedipus has been further honored by the hand of Queen Jocasta.

Now another deadly pestilence is raging and the people have come to ask Oedipus to rescue them as before. The King has anticipated their need, however. Creon, Jocasta's brother, returns at the very moment from Apollo's oracle with the announcement that all will be well if Laius' murderer is found and cast from the city.

In an effort to discover the murderer, Oedipus sends for the blind seer, Tiresias. Under protest the prophet names Oedipus himself as the criminal. Oedipus, outraged at the accusation, denounces it as a plot of Creon to gain the throne. Jocasta appears just in time to avoid a battle between the two men. Seers, she assures Oedipus, are not infallible. In proof, she cites the old prophecy that her son should kill his father and have children by his mother. She prevented its fulfillment, she confesses, by abandoning their infant son in the mountains. As for Laius, he had been killed by robbers years later at the junction of three roads on the route to Delphi.



Oedipus and the Sphinx
Attic Red-figure kylix by Douris,
Vatican Museums.

This information makes Oedipus uneasy. He recalls having killed a man with Laius' description at this very spot when he was fleeing from his home in Corinth to avoid fulfillment of a similar prophecy. An aged messenger arrives from Corinth, at this point, to announce the death of King Polybus, supposed father of Oedipus, and the election of Oedipus as king in his stead. On account of the old prophecy Oedipus refuses to return to Corinth until his mother, too, is dead. To calm his fears the messenger assures him that he is not the blood son of Polybus and Merope, but a foundling from the house of Laius deserted in the mountains. This statement is confirmed by the old shepherd whom Jocasta had charged with the task of exposing her babe. Thus the ancient prophecy has been fulfilled in each dreadful detail. Jocasta in her horror hangs herself and Oedipus stabs out his eyes. Then he imposes on himself the penalty of exile that he had promised for the murderer of Laius.

CHARACTERS

Oedipus	King of Thebes. As a young man, he saved the city of Thebes by solving the riddle of the Sphinx and destroying the monster. He now sets about finding the murderer of the former king Laius to save Thebes from plague.
Jocasta	Queen of Thebes, wife of Oedipus. She was the widow of Thebes' former king, Laius, and married Oedipus when he saved the city from the Sphinx.
Creon	The second-in-command in Thebes, brother-in-law of Oedipus. He is Oedipus' trusted advisor, selected to go to the oracle at Delphi to seek the Apollo's advice in saving the city from plague.
Tiresias	A blind prophet who has guided the kings of Thebes with his advice and counsel.
1st Messenger	A man bringing news of the royal family to Oedipus.
A Herdsman	A shepherd from the nearby mountains, who once served in the house of Laius.
2nd Messenger	A man who comes from the palace to announce the death of the queen and the blinding of Oedipus.
Antigone	Oedipus' young daughter.
Ismene	Oedipus' young daughter.
Chorus	A group of Theban elders, and their Leader, who comment on the events of the drama and react to its tragic progression

GLOSSARY OF NAMES AND PLACES

Cadmus	Founder of the city of Thebes
Zeus	supreme ruler of the Olympian gods
Apollo	god of the sun, poetry, music and truth
Delphi	shrine of Apollo, considered the holiest place in ancient Greece, and the center of the world
Sphinx	monster with the head and breasts of a woman and the body of a lion that terrorized Thebes with her deadly riddle
Delos	island in the Aegean and birthplace of Apollo and Artemis
Artemis	twin sister of Apollo, goddess of the moon and the hunt
Athena	goddess of wisdom and battle, born in full armor
Bacchus	also called Dionysus; god of fertility, wine and ecstatic joy. His followers were a group of frenzied women called the Bacchantes
Parnassus	mountain hovering above the shrine of Delphi
Dorian	meaning of noble birth and claiming descent from Dorus, one of the three sons of Helen, the traditional ancestor of all Greeks
Sybil	divine prophetess of the oracle of Delphi
Lysian Apollo	both god of light and wolf-killer; from the Greek word “lykos” (wolf)
Pythian	meaning “of Delphi,” where Apollo killed the monstrous snake pytho
Cythaeron	mountain on which Oedipus was left to die as an infant
Helicon	sacred mountain in central Greece favored by the gods, goddesses, and the nine muses
Pan	god of shepherds and their flocks, with the body of a man and the horns and hooves of a goat. He made music by playing on pipes made of reeds

YEATS – THE TRANSLATOR

William Butler Yeats (1865-1939) was born in Dublin. His father was a lawyer and a well-known portrait painter. Yeats was educated in London and in Dublin, but he spent his summers in the west of Ireland in the family's summer house at Connaught. His first volume of verse appeared in 1887, but in his earlier period his dramatic production outweighed his poetry both in bulk and in import. Together with Lady Gregory he founded the Irish Theatre, which was to become the Abbey Theatre, and served as its chief playwright until the movement was joined by John Synge. His plays reflect his fascination with mysticism and spiritualism. *The Countess Cathleen* (1892), *The Land of Heart's Desire* (1894), *Cathleen ni Houlihan* (1902), *The King's Threshold* (1904), and *Deirdre* (1907) are among the best known.



After 1910, Yeats's dramatic art took a sharp turn toward a highly poetical, static, and esoteric style. His later plays were written for small audiences; they experiment with masks, dance, and music, and were profoundly influenced by the Japanese Noh plays. Although a convinced patriot, Yeats deplored the hatred and the bigotry of the Nationalist movement, and his poetry is full of moving protests against it. He was appointed to the Irish Senate in 1922.



Yeats is one of the few writers whose greatest works were written after the award of the Nobel Prize. Whereas he received the Prize chiefly for his dramatic works, his significance today rests on his lyric achievement. He was one of the outstanding and most influential twentieth-century poets writing in English. His recurrent themes are the contrast of art and life, masks, cyclical theories of life (the symbol of the winding stairs), and the ideal of beauty and ceremony contrasting with the hubbub of modern life.

THEMES IN *OEDIPUS THE KING*

The Limits of Free Will

Prophecy is a central part of *Oedipus the King*. The play begins with Creon's return from the oracle at Delphi, where he has learned that the plague will be lifted if Thebes banishes the man who killed Laius. Tiresias prophesies the capture of one who is both father and brother to his own children. Oedipus tells Jocasta of a prophecy he heard as a youth, that he would kill his father and sleep with his mother, and Jocasta tells Oedipus of a similar prophecy given to Laius, that her son would grow up to kill his father. Oedipus and Jocasta debate the extent to which prophecies should be trusted at all, and when all of the prophecies come true, it appears that one of Sophocles' aims is to justify the powers of the gods and prophets, which had recently come under attack in fifth-century B.C. Athens.

Sophocles' audience would, of course, have known the story of Oedipus, which only increases the sense of complete inevitability about how the play would end. It is difficult to say how justly one can accuse Oedipus of being "blind" or foolish when he seems to have no choice about fulfilling the prophecy: he is sent away from Thebes as a baby and by a remarkable coincidence saved and raised as a prince in Corinth. Hearing that he is fated to kill his father, he flees Corinth and, by a still more remarkable coincidence, ends up back in Thebes, now king and husband in his actual father's place. Oedipus seems only to desire to flee his fate, but his fate continually catches up with him. Many people have tried to argue that Oedipus brings about his catastrophe because of a "tragic flaw," but nobody has managed to create a consensus about what Oedipus's flaw actually is. Perhaps his story is meant to show that error and disaster can happen to anyone, that human beings are relatively powerless before fate or the gods, and that a cautious humility is the best attitude toward life.



Charles Francois Jalabert (1819-1901), no date.
Antigone leads Oedipus out of Thebes.
Musée des Beaux Arts, Marseille

Willingness to Ignore the Truth:

When Oedipus and Jocasta begin to get close to the truth about Laius's murder, in *Oedipus the King*, Oedipus fastens onto a detail in the hope of exonerating himself. Jocasta says that she was told that Laius was killed by "strangers," whereas Oedipus knows that he acted alone when he killed a man in similar circumstances. This is an extraordinary moment because it calls into question the entire truth-seeking process Oedipus believes himself to be undertaking. Both Oedipus and Jocasta act as though the servant's story, once spoken, is irrefutable history. Neither can face the possibility of what it would mean if the servant were wrong. This is perhaps why Jocasta feels she can tell Oedipus of the prophecy that her son would kill his father, and Oedipus can tell her about the similar prophecy given him by an oracle (867–875), and neither feels compelled to remark on the coincidence; or why Oedipus can hear the story of Jocasta binding her child's ankles (780–781) and not think of his own swollen feet. While the information in these speeches is largely intended to make the audience painfully aware of the tragic irony, it also emphasizes just how desperately Oedipus and Jocasta do not want to speak the obvious truth: they look at the circumstances and details of everyday life and pretend not to see them.

THE RIDDLE OF THE SPHINX



Oedipus and the Sphinx, on a Hellenistic sarcophagus

One of the most famous riddles in history is the Riddle of the Sphinx.

In Greek legend, the Sphinx devoured all travelers who could not answer the riddle she posed: "What is the creature that walks on four legs in the morning, two legs at noon and three in the evening?" The hero Oedipus gave the answer, "Man," causing the Sphinx's death.

Some other riddles:

I can run but never walk
I have a mouth but never talk
I have a bed but never sleep
I have a head but never weep.
What am I?
(Answer: A river.)

This thing all things devours:
Birds, beasts, trees, flowers;
Gnaws iron, bites steel;
Grinds hard stones to meal;
Slays king, ruins town,
And beats high mountain down.
What is this thing?
(Answer: Time.)

A cloud was my mother,
the wind is my father,
my son is the cool stream,
and my daughter is the fruit of
the land.

A rainbow is my bed,
the earth my final resting place,
and I'm the torment of man.

What am I?
(Answer: Rain.)



Oedipus and the Sphinx, 1864
Gustave Moreau (French, 1826–1898)

DAILY LIFE IN ANCIENT GREECE

SOCIAL DIVISION: The Greeks had a general tendency to divide the world into pairs of things, one opposed to the other. They saw everything as divided into two parts, which fought with each other all the time. So they tended to divide people into two groups too.

There are a lot of different ways to divide people. One important way is to divide people from gods. People eat food, and gods do not. People die, but gods do not.

Greek people divided themselves from barbarians, or people who are not Greek. The Greeks called all foreigners barbarians, even if they were very civilized like the Egyptians or the Persians.

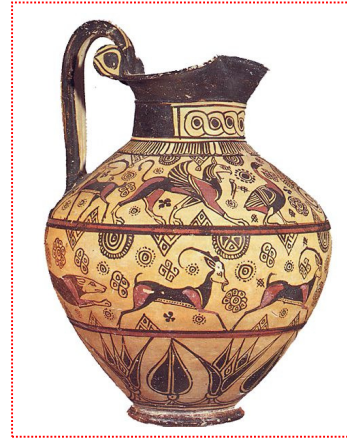
Greeks also divided slave and free people. The Greeks made this distinction less than the others, because a slave can become free, and a free person can become a slave. So it is not as basic a difference as the difference between a man and a woman, or a Greek and a foreigner. But certainly there were slaves and free people in all the Greek city-states, and the Greeks felt that the difference was an important one.

EDUCATION: In Athens citizens had to be educated to take part in voting in the Assembly. Athenian boys also went to 'wrestling school' each day, to learn many sports, not just wrestling. They had to be fit, to fight in the army.

Education was different for boys and girls. Boys were educated to become good citizens and take part in the public life of the city-state. Girls were educated in housekeeping and how to look after the family.

The children did not need much school equipment, as they had to learn everything off by heart. When they needed to, they wrote on wooden boards covered with layers of wax.

The boys started school at 7 years old, and stayed until they were about 14. In the mornings they learned to read, write and do simple math. They worked in one room, which had stools or benches, but no desks. Pupils read aloud and learned poetry by heart. Rich boys also learned about philosophy. At the age of 14, children of tradesmen began to learn a trade. The children of rich Athenians went to the Assembly, the market place and the gymnasium to watch, listen to and learn from the older men.



Wine Pitcher from Rhodes, 650-625 BC
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

WORK: The majority of Greeks worked in agriculture. The soil in Greece is poor and rainfall is very unpredictable, so frequent weeding and turning of soil was needed. Oxen might have helped with plowing, however most tasks would have been done by hand. The Greek farmer would ideally plan for a surplus of crops to contribute to feasts and to buy pottery, fish, salt and metals.

GREEK ARCHITECTURE: Architecture, unlike painting and sculpture, was not seen as an "art" in the modern sense for most of the Ancient Greek period. The architect was a craftsman, employed by the state or a wealthy private client. There was no distinction between the architect and the building contractor. The architect designed the building, hired the people who built it, and was responsible for both its budget and timely completion. He did not enjoy any of the lofty status accorded to modern architects of public buildings. Even the names of architects are not known before the 5th century. An architect like Iktinos, who designed the Parthenon, who would today be seen as a genius, was treated in his lifetime as no more than a very valuable master tradesman.

ANCIENT GREECE

WHY IT MATTERS TODAY

The earliest Greek civilizations thrived nearly 4,000 years ago. Yet, their culture still impacts our lives today, in the arts, in philosophy, and in science, math, literature and politics.



Although the Greeks were conquered by the Romans, there are many influences from Greece that can still be found in our lives today:

Democracy - The word 'democracy' is Greek. It means 'government by the people.' Our government is a legacy of the Athenians and their assemblies and councils.

Theater - The word 'theatre' is Greek. Most modern theatres follow the Greek plan.

The Olympics - The first Olympic Games were held in 776 BC at the Greek city of Olympia.

Marathon - Pheidippides ran from Athens to Sparta to ask for help against the Persians just before the Battle of the Marathon (490 BC).

The first alphabet with vowels - The Ancient Greeks played an important part in the development of the alphabet. The first two letters of the Greek alphabet - alpha and beta - have given us the word 'alphabet'.

TIMELINE

B.C.

499-478 War between Greeks and Persians

c 495 Sophocles born

490 Battle of Marathon

485 Euripides born

484 Aeschylus wins his first dramatic victory

480 Greeks defeat Xerxes at Salamis

468 Sophocles defeats Aeschylus in tragedy competition

460-430 Rule of Pericles, known as Greece's "golden age"

456 Aeschylus dies in Sicily

447 Parthenon begun

431 Start of second Peloponnesian War

430 Oedipus the King

429 Pericles dies

406 Sophocles dies

404 Athens defeated by Sparta

GREEK THEATER

Thespis, thought to be the father of drama, introduced the first actor, called a protagonist. The actor performed with a chorus of people who helped him to tell the story. However, throughout the 5th century BC playwrights continued to innovate.

The playwright Aeschylus added a second speaking role, called the antagonist, and reduced the chorus from 50 to 12. His play 'The Persians', first performed in 472 BC, is the oldest surviving of all Greek plays.

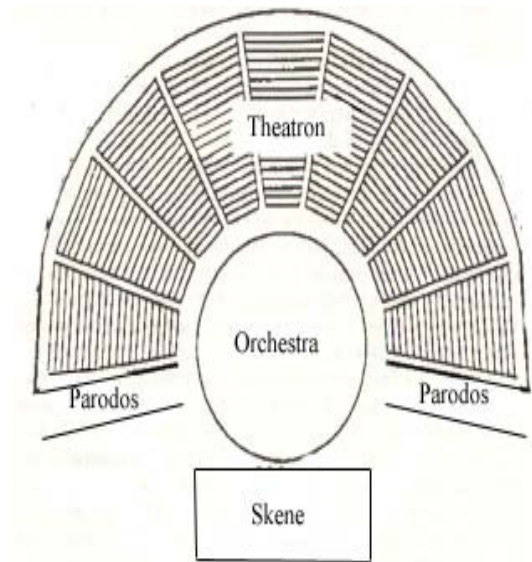
His pupil, Sophocles went on to add a third actor, while Euripides added both a prologue, introducing the subject of the play, and the *deus ex machina*, a divine figure who wrapped up any loose ends at the close.

Wealthy citizens would sponsor plays by paying a tax called the choregia. Many of these wealthy patrons hoped the success of the play they sponsored would provide them with a way into politics.

The first plays were performed in the Theater of Dionysus, built in the shadow of the Acropolis in Athens at the beginning of the 5th century, but theaters proved to be so popular they soon spread all over Greece.



The theater of Delphi is built further up the hill from the temple of Apollo in the 4th c. BC. It has 35 rows and can accommodate about 5000 spectators.



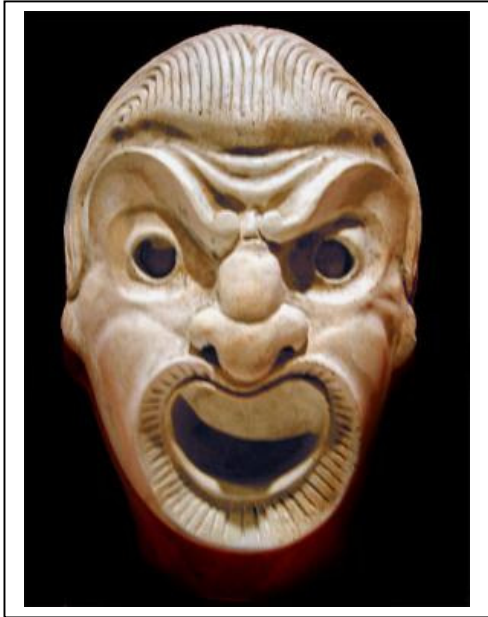
Parts of a Greek Theater

OEDIPUS THE KING IS A TRAGEDY

Tragedy dealt with the big themes of love, loss, pride, the abuse of power and the fraught relationships between men and gods. Typically the main protagonist of a tragedy commits some terrible crime without realizing how foolish and arrogant he has been. Then, as he slowly realizes his error, the world crumbles around him. The three great playwrights of tragedy were Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides.

The great philosopher Aristotle argued that tragedy cleansed the heart through pity and terror, purging us of our petty concerns and worries by making us aware that there can be nobility in suffering. He called this experience 'catharsis'. In his treatise, *The Poetics*, Aristotle refers to *Oedipus the King* as the perfect tragedy.

ANCIENT GREEK ACTORS



Greek drama, from which all western drama derives, has its origin in religion: more specifically, in the worship of Dionysus, god of fertility, in whose honor the people held festivals during which they put on masks and danced and sang.

The most important of the Athenian festivals in honor of Dionysus were the Grand Dionysia in the spring and the Lenaea in the winter. The competition in tragic drama established late in the sixth century B.C. by Peisistratus, Tyrant of Athens, took place at the Grand Dionysia, in the theater of Dionysus located at the base of the Acropolis.

ACTORS:

The actors in Sophocles' time (all were men) were highly professional and were paid by the State.

THE GREEK CHORUS:

The Greek Chorus became the voice of humanity, providing a general, and sometimes rather commonplace, commentary on the action of the play. At other times it was almost a co-actor in the drama, making the same discoveries and suffering the same agonies as the hero.

In Sophocles' time, each playwright had assigned to him a choregos, a wealthy citizen who bore the financial responsibility of training the Chorus, which was still composed of amateurs.

MASKS:

The actors and the chorus wore masks. Masks had originally had a religious significance, but in the theater they served a practical function. They depicted the sex, age, class, and temperament of the characters, and so made it possible for an actor to play more than one role and for male actors to portray female characters. Furthermore, the masks were larger than life-size and so could be seen more easily across the great distances of the theaters.

THE STORY OF OEDIPUS

The story of Oedipus was well known to Sophocles' audience. The play's most powerful effects depend on the fact that the audience already knows the story. Since the first performance of *Oedipus Rex*, the story has fascinated critics just as it fascinated Sophocles. Sigmund Freud famously based his theory of the "Oedipal Complex" on this story, claiming that every boy has a latent desire to kill his father and sleep with his mother.



MODERN GREECE



COUNTRY FACTS:

Population
(July 2006 est.)
10,688,058

Comparative size
slightly smaller
than Alabama

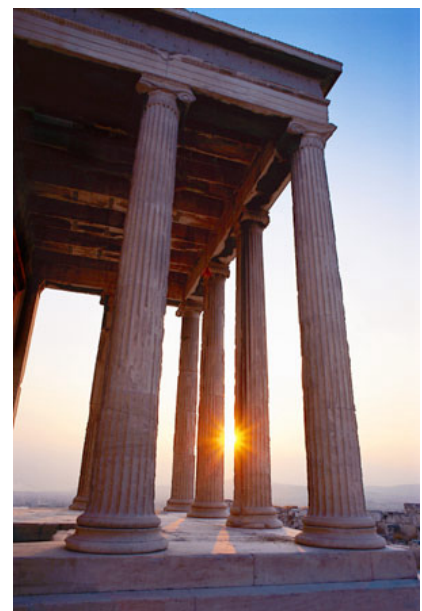
Climate
temperate; mild,
wet winters; hot,
dry summers

GREECE TODAY:

Greece is located at the southernmost tip of Europe and has one of the most unique geographic formations of any country in Europe. Including the islands, it has an area of 50,959 square miles and a population of 10.2 million (1991 census). An estimated five million Greeks live abroad.

Greece is washed on three sides by seas: by the Ionian Sea to the west, the Aegean Sea to the east and the Mediterranean Sea to the south. To the north lie Albania, Macedonia and Bulgaria. To the northeast is Turkey.

At the crossroads of three continents, Greece is a stepping-stone to Asia and Africa. Some four-fifths of Greece's land territory is mountainous. Its coastline, with its many gulfs and inlets, is one of the longest of any country in Europe.



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

LESSON PLAN HELP:

<http://www.pbs.org/empires/thegreeks/educational/lesson4.html>

<http://www.pastatestandards.org/curriculum/arts/grade7/727c.htm>

<http://www.historyforkids.org/learn/greeks/index.htm>

<http://www.users.globalnet.co.uk/~loxias/myth.htm>

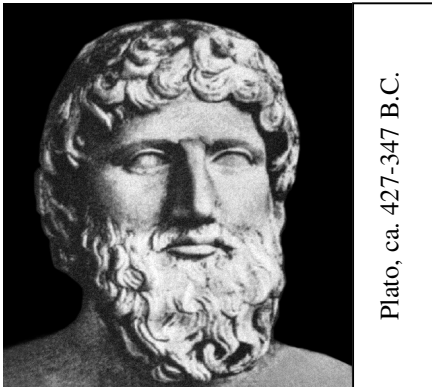
ON PLATO:

<http://plato-dialogues.org/plato.htm>

ACTIVITIES:

<http://www.monmouth.com/~literature/>

<http://42explore.com/mask.htm>



CREDITS

The preceding *Oedipus the King* materials were researched and compiled by Sarah Carlton, Kelly Mednis and Rob Zellers. They were assembled from various publications about the play and its time, including the sources listed below:

<http://www.pbs.org/empires/thegreeks>

<http://www.masconomet.org/teachers/trevenen/grkdrama.html>

<http://www.users.globalnet.co.uk/~loxias/myth.htm>

<http://homepage.mac.com/cparada/GML/Oedipus.html>

<http://ablemedia.com/ctcweb/netshots/oedipus.htm>

<http://www.watson.org/%7Eleigh/drama.html>

<http://cummingssstudyguides.net/antigone.html#Theban>

<http://www.ancientgreece.com/>

<http://academic.reed.edu/humanities/110Tech/Theater.html>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/bbcfour/audiointerviews/profilepages/yeatsw1.shtml>

<http://www.users.globalnet.co.uk/~loxias/sphinx.htm>

<http://www.guthrietheater.org/pdf/oedipus.pdf>

http://www.denvercenter.org/pdf/Oedipus_Rex_Study_Guide.PDF



The Shepherd Euphobus with the Child Oedipus, Attic Red-figure amphora by the

PA ACADEMIC STANDARDS:

READING, WRITING, SPEAKING AND LISTENING

- 1.1: Students identify, describe, evaluate, and synthesize the essential ideas of the text.
- 1.3: Students analyze and interpret the play based on literary elements and devices, dramatic themes, and the use of language.
- 1.4: In post-show activities students can compose dramatic scenes where they work to construct dialogue, develop character, and outline plot.
- 1.6: Students listen and watch a selection of dramatic literature, analyze and synthesize the many elements of the drama, and respond in post-show talkbacks and discussions with Public Theater staff, teachers, classmates, and students from other school districts.

CIVICS AND GOVERNMENT

- 5.1: Students analyze the sources, purposes and function of law, and the importance of the principles and ideals of civic life in Classical Greece.
- 5.2: Students will observe and evaluate the differences in the essential rights and responsibilities of citizens within various systems of government. Students also encounter the issues of conflict of interest between citizen and government, cooperation or resistance to the law, and participation in government activities. Students interpret the causes of conflict in the society and analyze its resolution.

GEOGRAPHY

- 7.1: Students relate physical locations to events in the play.
- 7.3: Students examine the human characteristics of geography, especially as they relate to population, demographics, political, economic, and cultural characteristics in Classical Greece.

HISTORY

- 8.1: Students understand and analyze chronological thinking and historical interpretation by placing the era of Classical Greece in the context of human history.
- 8.4: Students assess the political, cultural, ethnic, religious, and philosophical impact of individuals and groups to world history.

ARTS AND HUMANITIES

- 9.1-9.4: Students experience the production and performance techniques of professional theater.

Students consider the cultural and historical context of the play. In post-show talkbacks, discussions, and writing assignments students are encouraged to describe the various elements of the work, evaluate the play critically and aesthetically, and consider the social impact of the work.