Student's Name

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Course Name and Number

Assignment Due Date

Oedipus Rex

*Oedipus Rex* is a play authored by Sophocles, an ancient Greek playwright. Oedipus is the king and hero of the play's tragedy. Sophocles uses the play to convey cultural identity and historical continuity. The play was first performed in 429 BC (Moreno 1093). *Oedipus Rex* is among three plays by Sophocles. The other two plays are *Antigone* and *Oedipus at Colonus*. *Oedipus Rex* was written second; however, it is the first in terms of the series of events described in the plays. *Oedipus Rex* was originally named *Oedipus*; however, it was renamed *Oedipus Rex* to set it apart from *Oedipus at Colonus*.

The play starts just after Oedipus becomes the King of Thebes. It had been prophesied that Oedipus would kill Laius (his father and the preceding king of Thebes) and marry his own mother, Jocasta. King Oedipus then recognizes a dreadful curse placed on Thebes and pushes his brother-in-law, Creon, to get assistance from Apollo, the Greek god of the sun, to end the curse. Oedipus' aim was to identify his father's killer as a means to salvage Thebes from a plague. Ironically, Oedipus was his father's killer, something he is unaware of. Creon notifies Oedipus that the blasphemy shall be raised if Laius' killer is known and arraigned. Tiresias, who is a blind prophet, tells Oedipus that he is the one who killed Laius (Moreno 1104). Oedipus is shocked, and upon telling Jocasta, she claims that the prophet might be wrong. Oedipus listens to stories from his foster parents and his partner, among others. All the tales seem to concur with the forecaster, who told him that he would not like what he would hear if he kept pursuing it. Jocasta and Oedipus

later recognize that they have a mother-son blood relation; thus, Jocasta commits suicide, banishing Oedipus from Thebes. Upon seeing Jocasta's corpse, Oedipus gouges out his eyes in despair. He then goes into exile, accompanied by his half-sisters Ismene and Antigone.

Power is one of the themes in *Oedipus Rex*, and King Oedipus is unkind, unperceptive, and proud. In Oedipus' process to search for the truth, he ignores words of wisdom from the people around him since he is worried they may snip his authority or coup him from the administration (Moreno 1096). Oedipus' confrontations show control over individuals like Creon, and he uses his supremacy to force Tiresias to tell the truth about the kid he threw on the mountains. Another resounding theme in *Oedipus Rex* is fate. The author suggests that people do not have absolute control over their lives and desires. Free will and fate are in constant opposition, with the latter often foiling the former. Oedipus' decision to follow the information of his identity is an example of a free spirit. However, fate has it that he discovers the worst news, that he is his father's killer, and that the plague in Thebes would end once he is arraigned. Prior to this, Oedipus was destined by fate to kill his father (1180). At one point, Tiresias asks Oedipus to bear his fate since he also had his to bear (1263). Tiresias often told Oedipus that he was responsible for Thebes' plague (1265). Fate also plays a crucial role in Oedipus being answerable to incest and other disastrous activities performed by the characters in the play. Thebes have general ignorance; thus, it is awkward to fault one character on all the devastating movements.

The characters include Oedipus, Jocasta, Antigone, Creon, and Tiresias. Oedipus is the protagonist and hero of this play. His fortune and determination to know the truth leads to his ruin after realizing that he is Laius' murderer. Besides, Jocasta is Oedipus' mother and wife. After learning that she has been sleeping with her son, she commits suicide (Moreno 1096). On the other hand, Tiresias is a blind diviner who reveals the truth about Oedipus' story. Teiresias and Jocasta

are mentors since they beg Oedipus to stop searching for information about his identity, but unfortunately, their efforts are all in vain. Creon is Jocasta's sibling, who brings an oracle that Laius' killer should be banished. Creon is calm and sophisticated because he responds to the king's instructions with franticness and urgency. Antigone and Ismene are Oedipus' half-sisters. They offer to go with Oedipus wherever he goes since he is blind. Antigone and Ismene come out as compassionate and caring.

In the play, the Second Messenger states, "The greatest suffering is the one we cause by ourselves" (Moreno 1107). The messenger is talking about Oedipus and the misfortune that has occurred to him. Oedipus gets struck by grief after killing his father and marrying his mother. "You are the insane one amongst us, who shall not curse you now, since you blasphemy me" (448). Tiresias speaks these words, and her point is that everybody will curse Oedipus soon. "You call me unsympathetic. If you could see the origin of your own emotions" (420-460). Tiresias utters these words when Oedipus says he is emotionless and wicked. He asks Oedipus to check on his emotions instead of condemning him.

In conclusion, the play has incidents that may be useful in real-life circumstances where recklessness is apparent. This play displays other events of blindness, such as those prompted by fear. The forecasters were afraid to tell Oedipus the truth, and after they did, it brought worry to the entire Kingdom. In my opinion, *Oedipus Rex* is a fantastic play because it warns readers of the dangers of not heeding advice. Destructive behaviors like pride and arrogance are discouraged. This play will undoubtedly captivate any reader since it is easy to read and comprehend. Youths should be encouraged to read this play since they will gain a lot. I would rate this book 3.5 out of 5.

**Works Cited**

Moreno Pestaña, José Luis. "Oedipus Rex as a Philosophical and Political Strategy." *The*

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