

Student Essay on Fate of Oedipus

Fate of Oedipus by Sophocles

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Essay

Fate is a common theme that generates through the progression of the play. Fate first occurs with the birth of the main character Oedipus, after he was cursed by Apollo coming out of his mother's womb. In addition to Apollo's prophecy, two oracles, one of Thebes and Corinth both predicted the same tragedy. Oedipus was said to as a baby, kill his father and then marry his mother. This fate was inevitable from the start, and once a god predicts something, it will happen. Fate is mentioned later in the novel, in a scene where dramatic irony is displayed. He says on page 32, "Receive the guilty man, upon my head/ Lie all the curses I have laid down on others." In this quote, Oedipus addresses to the public that he will find the man that committed this horrid act, and will perform the same act to any citizen as he would do himself. This is a classical case of fate in which the audience sees before the action actually occurs. It is a foreshadowing of what will happen later in the play. However, because he told the public this statement, he created a burden for himself because now he must keep his word about what he promised to the people. This promise in the end is what will blind him from witnessing his own damnation. As Teiresia says on page 38, "this day brings you birth; and brings you death," the quote explains the severe situation Oedipus is in. All of the accomplishments that he has achieved in the past such as saving Thebes from Sphinx do not matter any longer for the fate that he has ultimately brought the city is far worse than anything that has ever happened before.