

# "oedipus the king" by sophocle and "the bacchae" by euripide

[Literature](#), [Play](#)



Both Sophocles' ' Oedipus the King' and Euripides', ' The Bacchae,' present the tragic outcomes of deities challenging the lives of two Kings. While Oedipus's rational God, Apollo is a more indirect and latent predetermined force, the fickle, unpredictable deity Dionysus holds a much more dominant and ongoing role in ' The Bacchae. ' The tale of ' Oedipus the King,' by Sophocles is more about the strength and tragedy of fate than anything else. The oracle, which is the oracle of Apollo, determines Oedipus's destiny of committing patricide and incest.

The power that Apollo has is shown only through the words of the mortal characters; the reader never comes in contact with the God himself. In fact, the inhabitants of Thebes look to Oedipus as almost the sole savior of the city. They recognize that he is not a god, but they do refer to him as the ' first of men' (40) and plead with him to ' raise up [the city]' (57) as though he would be.

Creon, sent by Oedipus to discover the truth from Apollo, repeats the orders from the god by saying ' Apollo commands us - he was quite clear-/ ' Drive the corruption from the land," (109).

These words are immediately taken into consideration and turned into action - Oedipus exclaims that he will ' bring it all to light' (150) because Apollo's prophecies are undoubtedly correct. No matter the wit or strength Oedipus has over other men, he is still not as powerful as the god Apollo, and recognizes that in his initial search for the truth. From then on the focus of the king is not only to avenge Laius, but to defend himself from the reality of the prophecy. Apollo's influence is limited to the determination of Oedipus's

fate at the start of the play. For the rest of his journey, the gods are only spoken of indirectly.

Oedipus does cry at the end of the play that Apollo 'ordained [his] agonies' (1468) however the person that caused his misery was Oedipus alone.

Dionysus in the Bacchae makes sure to establish his status as a 'god icongnito' (Euripides 4) from the first stanza of the play. Unlike Apollo's lack of domineering presence in Sophocles' work, Dionysus is the protagonist of the play as both a deity and a stranger in disguise. His journey is that of revenge; he purposefully seeks punishment for the city of Thebes " a stark contrast to Apollo's role in ridding the city of its sickness.