

Example of essay on comparison of oedipus the king and antigone

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Oedipus the King and Antigone are great plays written by Sophocles. They give an account of the tragedies which befell Thebes. Whereas Oedipus the King chronicles the story of Oedipus, a mysterious man who suffers during childhood before eventually murdering his biological father, marrying mother and becoming a king, Antigone continues the chronicle by giving the story of King Creon who established his reign before eventually falling due to fate and his own arrogance.

Both plays have heroes. Although they establish their leadership regimes in this kingdom, they really suffer. However, this suffering is not only attributed to fate, but also to their own wickedness. The most notable rulers in Oedipus the King and Antigone are Oedipus and Creon respectively. Although they are both rulers of Thebes, they have different leadership styles which determine their prosperity. In order to succeed, these leaders had to liaise with the supernatural beings and other intermediaries. Thus, there were gods, the oracle and prophets. These were very important people who had crucial contributions to make to the kingdom. For instance, Prophet Tiresias, though blind, was a very prominent figure in both the plays. As a seer, he was to foresee the future and advise the king on exactly what to do for in order to promote unity, order and prosperity in the kingdom. However, as the author explains, he was not given the same treatment by all the kings. In Oedipus the King, he was not respected as a divine official. His prophecies were not well received. In fact, he was rejected in several occasions. For instance, when he told Oedipus that he had is the one who had killed King Laius, he rejects him. Although this is the truth, he is refuted for his physical blindness.

Despite starting as a promising leader, King Oedipus later found himself in trouble especially after being rebellious. His downfall came as a result of his pride. Instead of listening to the shepherd and the prophet, he opted to ignore their pieces of advice. At one time, the prophet told him not to mock his blindness, because he (Oedipus) was blinder than him. Although the prophet was physically blind, the king was intelligently blind. That is why he could not comprehend the real truth about his background. This directly contributed to his tragic downfall when he later loses his wife, attempts murder, becomes blind and begs to be taken to exile. Despite that his fate had been predestined; he was actually a victim of his own actions.

King Creon also started as a promising ruler. However, he later decides to establish a dictatorial regime in Thebes. As a leader, he does not relent to anyone who opposes him. Thus, he harshly punishes Polyneices and Antigone. In fact, he gives them some of the harshest punishments of the time. Later, he rebels with Prophet Tiresias. Instead of listening to his cautionary words, he decided to ignore and call him a corrupt leader. He failed to understand the author's assertion that he was supposed to respect authority. Through this, he did some of the worst offences which brought a great curse to the land. Thus, he was severely punished to demonstrate that no one should claim to be mightier than the gods. Surely, his experiences show that god punishes the proud. In deed, pride comes before fall. Had he not been proudly wicked, he would not have suffered. In this regard, I attribute his downfall to his own actions.