The role of The Oracle of Apollo in Greek Mythology and its relevance to Sophocles' Oedipus The King.

Name:

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Abstract

Apollo is seen to actively intervene in Oedipus destiny fulfillment through oracles and significantly in onstage action. Rather than actually punishing him for any kind of offense committed, the god's main purpose appears to impress upon king Oedipus his natural existential insignificance. In such context of absurd but ordered universe, Sophocles, in turn, emphasizes the issue of the paradox of a man's moral greatness whose existence value is more of zero. Apollo's oracular form of declaration in these circumstances actually entails such effective intervention seen that oracles act more as contributing causes of destiny they in turn predict. Because human reactions are infallibly foreseen by these gods hence can be factored into such divine purpose.

The ancient Greeks acknowledge the presence of gods will inform of fate which is a unappeasable form of reality revealed by the oracle at such places as Delphi who in turn spoke for the Apollo in mysterious pronouncements. The promise of their prophecy draws many but only such messages offered the questionnaire as incomplete which maddens evasive kind of answers which illuminate one’s darkened life. By 15th century B.C, Athenians started questioning the power vested I the oracles by conveying gods will (G, 1989).

The production of such tragedy in ancient cities of Greece was the greatest pursuit attempted by most people but achieved or accomplished by some. Oedipus Rex is today considered as the greatest tragedies developed by Sophocles during his time. Carefully developed motifs with poignant irony combined with character developing monologues create a tragedy which leaves audiences or readers grieved and stunned for poor Oedipus. Throughout this play, the motif of sight and blindness emphasizes the struggles seen between the power of gods and the power of free will evident in king's interactions with Tiresias, development of his own character and Jakarta's attempts to actually assuage the king's fear of crime (Gregory, 1995).

Judging from this play, Sophocles took such a conservative kind of view on prophecy and augury; the oracles in king Oedipus Trilogy are seen to speak truly even though obliquely as such unassailable authority. The voice of gods is in the expression of such divine will a representation of unseen force in Oedipus Trilogy. Teiresias uses such psychic abilities in foreshadowing the destruction and anguish that Oedipus encounters after he develops and learns the truths of his own life. Teiresias is also responsible for dramatic irony imposed because of such great knowledge of Oedipus (Griffith, 1992). He uses his own physical blindness in making Oedipus conscious or aware of his own mental form of blindness toward life lessons and truths.

Oedipus play takes place inside a palace in Thebes-the ancient Greek city, performed in 430 B.C. The story or play opens with Oedipus being the king of Thebes responds to some citizens in regards to the tragic such as stillbirths, dying crops and ongoing plague. Having initially solved the Sphinx riddle on the road to the city of Thebes, Oedipus is seen as a sent savior of Thebes city and in turn tells the priest he had initially sent his wife’s brother, Kreon and lokaste to Apollo’s oracle in search of answers (Gellie, 1972). Kreon, in turn, returns back saying that the reasons for this plague are because the old King's murderer still lives in Thebes and to actually end the menace of plague, the king ought to be punished. After the king sweared to exile or kill this murderer, Oedipus, in turn, summons the blind soothsayer and after a heated argument, he tells the king that is his the murderer he actually seeks. Oedipus, in turn, accuses Tiresias and Kreon of conspiracy labeled against him and schemes how he will, in turn, get rid of Kreon.

The chorus object and lakaste discredits the findings of the prophet depicting that he once gave a prophecy that her own son would eventually murder his dad and marry her but this actually never happened. She finally left her own baby with the ankles tied at the mountainside but Lokaste' description worries Oedipus since the description of the three-road junction was where he had killed a traveler and coincidentally Laius was also killed. Oedipus left Corinth since he was initially told he would eventually kill is ma and pa. Unwilling to actually believe this substantial evidence, Oedipus is also told by a shepherd and a messenger that Merope of Corinth and Polybius were basically not his real parents (Dodds, 1966).

Oedipus is a tragic hero and as a king of Thebes who in turn fall from pedestal more as benevolent while respected kings to such depths of despair as a horrified and disgraced victim of incest. At initial stages, Oedipus is revealed as a paragon of his monarch, a rare leader who is actually able to respect his people and maintain power yet remain much solicitous towards their own well-being. At the start of this play, citizens are seen to implore Oedipus to adopt the use of his powers granted from deities towards ending the suffering of his Thebiian citizens while restoring prosperity and health to the city at large (Griffith R., 1996). During his ascent to power, Oedipus helped Thebes through vanquishing the sphinx by answering her riddle. Oedipus, in turn, continues to be responsible and powerful ruler even when Kreon, in turn, informs him of such oracle's proclamation he vows to actually track down the serial killer.

In order to actually understand such gods will, the Greeks consulted oracles at Delphi. These were specifically such holy places to a specific deity probably Apollo. Humans, in turn, pose questions and this god would respond by answering their prayers through an intermediary. One of the most converted and important oracles in Greeks history was then Apollo's Temple which is in Delphi (Kitto, 1961). The place is actually synonymous to Pytho where it was founded after Apollo killed a giant snake, previous resident, and a python. Here the god-Apollo answers questions mostly through his own priestess such as pythia who babbled out responses and entered such ecstatic state while in turn they are delivered and interpreted in verse mostly by priests. It was always customary for the cities and kings to consult the oracle of Delphi actually before making a big decision.

The most significant god for Oedipus Rex is actually Apollo whose main oracle is at Delphi gives such important prophecies to Creon and Oedipus. Apollo’s knowledge is actually absolute since when Apollo says something it in turn happens. His prophecies in this act, nonetheless are not warnings. He, in turn, does not actually tell Laius not to sire children, since his own child would kill him. He does not tell the king-Oedipus to actually kill his father but merely that he will in turn murder his father. When the king sends Creon to in turn find out how to stop the plague, Apollo, however, tells them to in turn drive the killer of Laus out of the city of Thebes (Knox, 1957).

We have in turn seen that Apollo works towards the fulfillment of the Oedipus destiny via communications of oracles that need a human response for their imminently and fulfillment through events such as coincidence. It's more reasonable for them to infer that gods are responsible for many coincidences and ironies which inform events as well as works through Oedipus minds. Apollo's commitment seems to be a quite reasonable inference from his major traditional roles more as the god of self-knowledge, healing, and plague (G, 1989).

In Oedipus the king play, Sophocles defamed and lowered gods status by destroying their reputation and making them look evil and harmful. It's clearly known that gods should be infallible and perfect as well as represent equity and justice but with king Oedipus, these gods, in turn, decided to destroy his family and him for no good reason. The Apollo who is seen as an evil by the audience since they destroyed such an innocent man’s family and life. They actually destroyed Oedipus through controlling his own fate while granting people such power of prophecy, telling the king about his fate via the oracle of Apollo and afflicting the inhabitants of Thebes with such dreadful plague. By utilizing prophecies, fate, the plague, the oracle of Apollo, the gods, in turn, played such a significant role in destroying Oedipus as well as his family.

Possibly by controlling fate, gods, in turn, carry out responsibilities of King Oedipus in killing the father and forcing him to marry his mother (Griffith R., 1992). Since they control all these happenings, they should be the ones to blame for the misfortunes of Oedipus. They could actually have made king Oedipus life quite less miserable but they resolved to destroy his life and his family's with a terrible fate without the king having committed any sin. It was seen as Apollo, friends who actually brought to such fulfillments all these sufferings. The king blames Apollo for the two misfortunes which caused him suffering but however he admits that these gods actually had nothing to do with his own blindness, Oedipus initially tries to actually diminish his shame through convincing the people that it's not all is a fault but of Apollo's (Gellie, 1972).

Oedipus is unsatisfied with this situation and ashamed of himself although it's not actually his fault. The god's prophecies would not have been true without such kind of help from an oracle who in turn delivered this prophecies to the king's parents. It's seen as obvious that the gods had planned this fate prior to Oedipus' birth since through oracle; they actually announced the two prophecies as Jocasta was still pregnant (Dodds, 1966). Nonetheless, the gods did not mention king Oedipus blindness in some of their prophecies but mention only the kings' shameful crimes which involved both the mother and father.

In part of this play, Oedipus Rex, religion and Gods influence the social structure that in turn possess such profound effect on how events actually unfold. There is such a direct parallel which connects the demise of the city and his household that eventually comes to such full circle. Teiresias-who was the messenger of such floods, in turn, tells Oedipus that he was the main reason why his state was in ruins. The inhabitants of this place are religious hence live according to what the oracles and messengers tell them. For king Oedipus, religion is thus pushed aside and then he believes in himself much more. Thebes city is considered a scientifically advanced kind of city where science rejects the traditional beliefs and religion which contributed to the city’s downfall (Grubb, 2015). All these factors led the king's households and state into contamination that will be only cleansed by fate and gods.

To actually destroy king Oedipus, the gods, in turn, granted such power of prophecy to the oracles which delivered most of these prophecies to Jocasta and Laius. As result, they are forced to kill and get rid of their own child in order to avoid the terrible prophecies. Unfortunately, the prophecies came out as true since Oedipus did not know his real parents.

In conclusion, the Apollo and gods played a significant part in the predicaments which engulfed Oedipus. King Oedipus destruction influenced entire family and the gods actually took part in demolishing them. Due to this terrible form of destruction of man's family and life, the audience would, in turn, consider the gods evil and guilty. The gods initiated these destructions on Oedipus by first; controlling his own fate leading him to kill his father and later marry is mother (Gregory, 1995). They then provided people with such power of prophecy to make Jocasta and Laius give away their own child. Apollo also told Oedipus about the terrible fate that involved his own parents and needs to move to Thebes. Finally, the Apollo's oracle sends the plague to Thebes punishing the city people.

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