Soon, the blinded Oedipus appears. A horrified chorus gaze on their fallen king as he gropes to find his way. The chorus and Oedipus lament his fate and express the wish that Oedipus had died in infancy. The chorus state that he would have been better off dead than living and blind, but Oedipus says that when he reached the underworld he would not want to see Laius or Jocasta, so he blinded himself. Because he remains alive, he also does not want to be able to see his children (who are also his brothers and sisters), his city, or the city's people.

As Oedipus begs the chorus to cast him from their land, Creon, who will take Oedipus' place as king, enters and orders a servant to take Oedipus inside the palace so that the Sun will not be defiled by gazing on Oedipus. Oedipus begs Creon to cast him from Thebes and to bury Jocasta; he begs Creon to allow him to be with his daughters for a few moments, and the young women, Antigone and Ismene, soon arrive from the palace and weep over their father. Oedipus expresses sorrow for his daughters because he expects no one will marry them, given their father's crimes. After this, Creon orders Oedipus to let go of his daughters and return the palace. After Creon, Oedipus, and his daughters return to the palace, the chorus call upon the people of Thebes to gaze on Oedipus, who once was looked on with envy and is now looked on with horror.

OEDIPUS TYRANNOS SOPHOCLES (CA. 430–425 B.C.E.) The date of the play is not certain but is thought to be between the years 430 and 425 B.C.E. the plague that affects THEBES in SOPHOCLES' play is often thought to be the plague in Athens that occurred soon after the beginning of the PELOPONNESIAN WAR in 431. Sophocles' play is set at Thebes at the palace of Oedipus and Jocasta. As the play opens, Oedipus hears the pleas about the plague of the Theban elders, who compose the chorus. Oedipus promises to do everything he can to help his people and notes that he has sent his brother-in-law, Creon, to the Delphic oracle to learn how to remedy the plague.

Soon Creon returns from Delphi and informs Oedipus that Thebes suffers from the plague because the killer of their previous king, Laius, remains within the town's borders. The plague can only be remedied if

Oedipus, begs the king not to ask him more questions about the child that he was given. Despite the warnings, Oedipus continues to seek the truth about questions that people have sought and will always seek: Who am I? Unlike most people, however, Oedipus discovers in his own lifetime the truth about himself in the eyes of God. This is a self that Oedipus cannot bear to see.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

OENEUS The son of Porthaon (or Portheus) and Euryte, Oeneus, the husband of Althea, was the king of Calydon. By Althea Oeneus became the father of four sons, Clymenus, Thyreus, Toxeus (whom Oeneus himself killed because he jumped over a certain ditch), and Meleager (although some say his father was Ares). Oeneus also had two daughters, Gorge and Deianeira. When Oeneus forgot to sacrifice to Artemis, the angered goddess sent a boar to ravage his land. Oeneus' son Meleager not only killed the boar, but killed his maternal uncle, Toxeus and Plexippus, when they tried to prevent him from awarding the boar's hide to Atalanta. In retaliation, Meleager's mother, Althea, killed him and then committed suicide. After Althea's death, Oeneus married Periboia, and by her he fathered Tydeus.

Although Oeneus does not appear as a character in any extant dramas, among the Greek dramatists Sophocles may have written an Oeneus, but evidence for such a drama is not firm. Euripides staged an Oeneus that was produced by 426 B.C.E. at the latest. The tragedian Chaeremon also wrote an Oeneus, whose