

What qualities and features in your opinion make Oedipus Rex an example of Greek tragedy at its best?

Oedipus Rex is a classic example of Greek tragedy mainly because it does exactly what it is meant to do. It follows the correct patterns of a classic Greek tragedy and deals with major issues. In terms of Oedipus being a Greek tragedy at its best is a matter of opinion but if this the case the reason for this would be because of the issues that it deals with. Reversal and recognition are the main areas to look at which make the tragedy so dramatic and thus give the greatest effect as being a classic example of Greek tragedy at its best. The issues that it concentrates on vary from knowledge to religion, thus it covers a wide spectrum of important key areas in the ancient Greek way of life, and this is what may make it so effective, as classic Greek tragedy at its best.

The two things that..... said made a Greek tragedy, produce its most effective impact on the crowd or the reader were Reversal and Recognition. These two things are used very well during the course of the play with great effect. To put it simply Oedipus starts out at the beginning of the play as the great man that defeated the sphinx, who knows and sees all, ironically at the end the reversal comes when he ends up being the humiliated blind man, the king turned to exile. In terms of recognition there is the classic example of this in Oedipus rex. A majority of the book focuses on the fact that he can not see that he is the problem, refuses to believe. Then there is the most climatic end when releases the truth especially because the truth is so horrific. Thus we can see the main two things that Says makes a play are present in the Tragedy, but there are other reasons for the success and qualities of this play. The success in a Greek Tragedy must come in the crowd's reaction and feeling towards the play. Thus the emotions stressed in the play must be bought out in the crowd whilst they are watching the play. This is where the issues that the play deals with are bought in so as to produce this feeling among the crowd.

The important factor in looking at the issues in Oedipus Rex is that they are very relevant issues in ancient Greek times and thus they will have a much larger impact on the crowd since they can relate to the issues and how they effect a person. The issues that Oedipus Rex deals with are numerous. Firstly knowledge and ignorance. Oedipus who is meant to be very knowledgeable is also considerably ignorant because of his knowledge. Oedipus solved the riddle of the sphinx and therefore saved the city and now he must do, but as he tries to find out the problem, his ignorance lets him down, he cannot believe the truth, thus there must be another answer and this is what avoids him. Also tied in to this sequence is the concept of pride. Oedipus' pride is hurt on several occasions in different ways. Firstly he realizes his ignorance in not seeing that he was the problem. He then has to deal with the fact that he has slept with his mother and has to go to exile. More importantly perhaps we see pride as a undermining factor especially in the scene of Tiresias as Oedipus. Oedipus' pride is so, that he refuses to believe the prophet and thus misses the answer and is blind to the truth. Welfare of the people is an important issue as well. Of course the people watching the play would be normal people ruled by a king and thus it would have been very proper for a dramatist to include the welfare of the people, or the relationship between people and ruler, to try and show a relation in the ancient Greece at that time. Sight and blindness is an issue as Oedipus blinds himself to finally see. This

is an important message that what you see is not always the truth. Trust another important issue is shown between creon and Oedipus. The trust wavers but as at the beginning the trust that Oedipus had in creon to go to Delphi returns to him at the end when he asks him to look after his children.

At the core of every tragedy is pain and suffering and this is what the crowds want to see. Oedipus rex has prime examples of this in the learning of the crime that he has committed, the incestual element, and the blindness and realization of what he has become. Thus Oedipus rex contains all that is need to make a classic example of Greek tragedy.