

Tawfiq Al-Hakim's *King Oedipus* and Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex*: A
Comparative Study

مسرحية توفيق الحكيم الملك أوديب ومسرحية سوفكليس أوديب ملكا: دراسة مقارنة

Prepared by:

Israa Jamil Mohammed

Supervised by:

Professor Tawfiq Yousef

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Master's Degree in English Language and Literature

Faculty of Arts and Science

Department of English Language and Literature

Middle East University

August 2015

Authorization

I, Israa Jamil Mohammed, hereby authorize Middle East University to provide libraries, organizations and even individuals with copies of my thesis upon request.

Name: Israa Jamil Mohammed

Signature: 

Date: 2nd / September / 2015

Thesis committee decision

This thesis “Tawfiq Al-Hakim’s *King Oedipus* and Sophocles’
Oedipus Rex: A Comparative Study” was discussed and certified on
September 2nd, 2015.

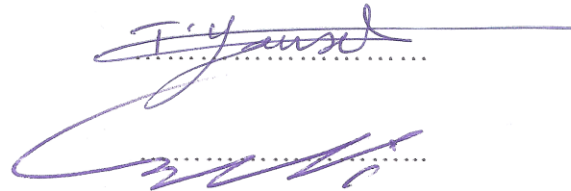
Thesis committee

signature

Prof. Tawfiq Yousef



Prof. Sabbar AL-Saddoun



Prof. Nedal Musa Al-Musa



Acknowledgment

My deepest thanks and gratitude are to Allah, the Greatest, who gave me the patience and strength to do this research.

My special appreciation and thanks are to my supervisor Professor Tawfiq Yousef who has been a tremendous mentor for me. I would like to thank him for supervising my research and for allowing me to grow as a researcher. His comments, guidance, and advice on my research have been very helpful.

Special thanks also are given to my parents. Words cannot express how grateful I am to my father and my mother for all of the sacrifices that have made on my behalf. Their prayers and their support for me were what sustained me thus far.

Finally, I would like to thank my brothers and sisters who stood by my side during the period of preparing the thesis.

Dedication

I would like to dedicate this research to my parents, who were my strongest supporters throughout this whole experience. I also would like to dedicate it to my brothers and sisters who also supported me. Finally, I dedicate it to my uncles, aunts and friends.

Table of Contents

Subject	Page
Thesis Title	I
Authorization	II
Thesis committee decision	III
Acknowledgment	IV
Dedication	V
Table of Contents	VI
English Abstract	VIII
Arabic Abstract	IX
Chapter One	
1.0 Introduction	1
1.1 Background Information	1
1.2 Problem statement	4
1.3 Objectives of the Study	4
1.4 Questions of the Study	4
1.5 Significance of the Study	5
1.6 Limits of the Study	5
1.7 Limitations of the Study	6
1.8 Definitions of key terms	6
1.9 Al-Hakim's Theatre of Ideas	7
1.10 Fate and Free Choice	8
Chapter Two	
2.0 Introduction	9
2.1 Theoretical Studies	9
2.2 Empirical Studies	16
Chapter Three	
3.0 Methods	21
3.1 Procedures	21

3.2 Ancient Greek Culture/Gods	22
3.3 Greek Women and Marriage	23
3.4 Greek Mythology	24
3.5 The Concept of God in Islam	24
3.5 Women and Marriage in Arab-Islamic Culture	25
Chapter Four	
Discussion and Explanation	
4.0 Introduction	27
4.1 Answer of Question One	27
4.2 Answer of Question Two	62
4.3 Answer of Question Three	67
Chapter Five	
5.1 Conclusion	70
5.2 Recommendation	73
6. References	74

**Tawfiq Al-Hakim's *King Oedipus* and Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex*: A
Comparative Study**

By: Israa Jamil Mohammed

Supervised by: Prof. Tawfiq Yousef

Abstract

This thesis introduces a comparative study between Tawfiq Al-Hakim's *King Oedipus* and Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex*. It examines the similarities and the differences between the two plays with a view to finding out how the Arab playwright was influenced by the ancient Greek dramatist Sophocles and the extent to which Al-Hakim was able to reproduce the classical play in a new version that reflects Arab-Muslim culture.

Adopting the techniques and methods of comparative literature and the cultural studies approach, the study explores the two works from the perspectives of plot, character, theme, structure, culture, and worldview. The study has shown the basic differences between the two writers' depiction of their major and minor characters as well as their scenic divisions of the plot, the major conflicts and general outlook. . Though Sophocles' hero is primarily concerned with public issues, Al-Hakim's hero seems to be more interested in familial and personal matters. Al-Hakim portrays a different Tiresias and reduces the role of the chorus. Although the conflict in the original play centers on the conflict between Man and the gods, the conflict in the new play is focused on the clash between Truth and Reality. Furthermore, the treatment of God and the gods is markedly different to fit Al-Hakim's attempt to abide by Arab-Muslim traditions.

Keywords: comparative study, Myth, Oedipus, Al-Hakim, Sophocles.

مسرحية توفيق الحكيم الملك أوديب ومسرحية سوفوكليس أوديب ملكا: دراسة مقارنة

إعداد الطالبة : إسرائ جميل محمد

إشراف الأستاذ الدكتور: توفيق يوسف

الملخص

تقدم هذه الرسالة دراسة مقارنة بين مسرحية توفيق الحكيم الملك أوديب ومسرحية سوفوكليس أوديب ملكا ، حيث تبحث في أوجه التشابه والاختلاف بين المسرحيتين في محاولة لتحديد مدى تأثير الكاتب العربي توفيق الحكيم بالكاتب المسرحي الإغريقي سوفوكليس ومدى النجاح الذي حققه في إعادة كتابة العمل المسرحي القديم بصورة جديّة تعكس الثقافة العربية الإسلامية.

اعتمدت هذه الدراسة على مناهج وأساليب الأدب المقارن ومنهج الدراسات الثقافية لدراسة وتحليل المسرحيتين المذكورتين من نواحي الحكمة القصصية والشخوص الدرامية والأغراض الموضوعية والتركيب الفني والبعد الثقافي والنظرة العامة للحياة. وقد بينت الدراسة الفروق الأساسية بين طريقتي الكاتبين في تصوير الشخوص الرئيسية والثانوية وتقسيمهما لفصول ومشاهد المسرحية إضافة إلى طريقة تناولهما للصراع ورؤيتهما للحياة. ومع أن اهتمام البطل في مسرحية سوفوكليس منصب على الصالح العام إلا أن البطل في مسرحية الحكيم معني بالمشاكل العائلية والشخصية إلى حد أكبر كما أن الحكيم يعطي دورا أهم لتأثير سياس ويقلل من أهمية دور الجوقة. ورغم أن مسرحية سوفوكليس تركز على الصراع بين الإنسان والآلهة إلا أن مسرحية الحكيم تهتم بالصدام بين الحقيقة والواقع. وعلاوة على ما تقدم فإن طريقة معالجة موضوع الإله والآلهة في المسرحيتين مختلفة إلى حد كبير خاصة في ضوء محاولة الحكيم المبدئية الإلتزام بمبادئ الثقافة العربية الإسلامية قدر الإمكان.

الكلمات المفتاحية: دراسة مقارنة ، الأسطورة، أوديب، الحكيم ، سوفوكليس

Chapter One

1.0 Introduction

This chapter covers a general introduction about Sophocles' and Tawfiq al-Hakim's biographies and the relationship between the two figures in terms of how Al-Hakim was influenced by Sophocles. It also includes general background information about the thesis.

1.1 Background Information

Sophocles

Sophocles was born about 496 BC in Athens, ancient Greece. Being the son of a wealthy merchant, he enjoyed all the comforts of a thriving Greek empire. Sophocles was provided with the best traditional aristocratic education. He studied all of the arts. By the age of sixteen, he was chosen to lead a choir of boys at a celebration of the victory of Salamis in 480 BC. In 468 BC, at the age of 28, he defeated Aeschylus, whose pre-eminence as a tragic poet had long been undisputed, in a dramatic competition.

Sophocles won first prize about 20 times and many second prizes in annual Athenian dramatic competitions. His life, which ended in 406 BC at about the age of 90, coincided with the period of Athenian greatness. He was not politically active or militarily inclined, but the Athenians twice elected him to high military office.

Sophocles wrote more than 100 plays of which seven complete tragedies and fragments of 80 or 90 others are preserved. He was the first to add a third actor. He also abolished the trilogic form. Sophocles chose to make each tragedy a complete entity in itself. As a result, he had to pack all of his action into the shorter form, and this clearly offered greater dramatic possibilities. Sophocles

also effected a transformation in the spirit and significance of a tragedy. Thereafter, although religion and morality were still major dramatic themes, the plights, decisions and fates of individuals became the chief interest of Greek tragedy. (*International Business Publication, 2013*).

Tawfiq Al-Hakim

Tawfiq al-Hakim (1898 –1987) was a prominent Egyptian writer. He is one of the pioneers of the Arabic novel and drama. He was born in Alexandria, Egypt, the son of an Egyptian wealthy judge and a Turkish mother. After studying in Cairo, he moved to Paris, where he graduated in law and began preparing a PhD thesis at the Sorbonne. However, his attention turned increasingly to the Paris theatres and the Opera and, after three years in Paris, he abandoned his studies and returned to Egypt in 1928, full of ideas for transforming the Egyptian theatre.

Al-Hakim is one of the major figures in modern Arabic literature. He established Arabic drama as a literary genre with its distinct techniques, language and stage effects and the achievement of a central role in contemporary Egyptian political and social life (Allen, 2000). Despite his full-time career, Hakim was a prolific author. He wrote more than seventy plays, five novels, and numerous articles and short stories, as well as books on political and intellectual topics. His plays range from religious pageantry to adaptations of classical stories, social-problem plays, and Absurdist Theater. His play *Muhammad, The Prophet* (1936) presents the main events in Muhammad's life in a spectacular theater. Hakim drew on classical Arabic sources as well as symbolist techniques to create his drama. He also adapted Western stories such as *Pygmalion* (1942) and *King Oedipus* (1949), attempting to combine Western and Arab perspectives. After a visit to Paris (1959-60), many of Hakim's plays came to be influenced by the theater of the absurd. Because Egypt had few

theaters and experienced actors during the early part of Hakim's career, many of his plays were published but not produced, earning him the nickname "playwright of ideas".

Tawfiq Al-Hakim and Sophocles

In his preface to the play *King Oedipus*, Hakim admits that he spent a tremendous time studying Sophocles and ended up choosing Sophocles' *Oedipus* as a primary work for his future adaptations. He also makes a clear statement that he was really frightened to realize that poets and playwrights before him failed in their attempts when adapting the theme of Oedipus. Later, he decided to take advantage of the previous failures and if he failed as well, then at least he tried.

Al- Hakim mentions three contemporary French authors who adapted the theme of Oedipus. S.G. Dibohlih divided his play into many scenes just like Shakespeare's style. Of course, he was criticized to do so. Al-Hakim admits that he was thinking to do the same but he really took advantage of this mistake and changed this idea. He mentions Jean Cocteau who also divided his play into scenes and the overall play was similar to Shakespeare's play *Hamlet* in its technical form as Cocteau uses the character of a ghost to appear in the play just as it appears in *Hamlet*. Al-Hakim was surprised to see authors affected by Shakespeare more than they are affected by Sophocles whom he describes as the source of tragedy. Finally, he mentions André Gide who painted the image of Man as the only creature in this universe, and without Man, this universe is worthless. Al-Hakim says that Gide summarizes the European religion in his play and he is not to blame as this idea was spread a century ago.

Al- Hakim decided to adapt the theme/s of *Oedipus Rex* but in an Islamic way, as the mentality of Muslims or Arabs rejects some beliefs within the Greek culture. At the end of his preface, Hakim

wonders if he has succeeded or failed in presenting this tragedy and ends up saying: “I tried..... and that’s all I have!” (Al-Hakim, 1991, p.53)

1.2 problem statement

This study investigates Sophocles’ play *Oedipus Rex* and Tawfiq Al Hakim’s play *King Oedipus*. The differences and similarities between the two plays will be discussed and the researcher will try to find out how Al-Hakim was influenced by Sophocles and the extent to which he was able to represent Arab-Islamic culture.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The study aims at achieving the following objectives:

1. Investigating the differences and similarities between Sophocles’ *Oedipus Rex* and the new version of it by Tawfiq Al Hakim in *King Oedipus*.
2. Identifying the kind of influence that the Greek playwright had on the Arab dramatist.
3. Determining how far Al-Hakim represented Arab-Islamic culture in a play that is primarily grounded in Greek culture and mythology.

1.4 Questions of the Study

The main questions of this study are:

1. What are the main differences and similarities between Sophocles’ *Oedipus Rex* and Tawfiq Al Hakim’s *King Oedipus* in terms of character, plot, theme, structure and culture?
- 2- What kind of worldview do the two plays present?
- 3- How far does the new version by Tawfiq Al Hakim succeed in representing the Islamic culture?

1.5 Significance of the Study

Due to the reputation of *Oedipus Rex*, many writers have attempted to rewrite the classical version and through it express their own ideas and visions. It is worth noting that this play in particular has been adapted by several writers around the world and has been studied by a host of scholars and critics. Four Arab writers have adapted the play including Ali Ahmed Bakathir's *The Tragedy of Oedipus*, Ali Salim's *The Comedy of Oedipus* and Walid Ikhlas's *Oedipus* as well as Tawfiq Al-Hakim's *King Oedipus*. Many critics claim that most of the adaptations were a horrible failure, especially those which were written by the French dramatists.

Though many studies have been done on this subject, they have dealt with the general differences between the two plays without paying enough attention to the importance of the representation of the Arab- Islamic culture in Tawfiq Al Hakim's version. Because little has been said about the reflection of Greek and Arab-Islamic cultures in the two plays, the researcher will try to emphasize this side of the two plays and give it the attention and importance it deserves especially because the writer himself had said that in his writing of the play he attempted to reflect the Islamic teachings and beliefs.

1.6 Limits of the study

The study will be concerned with the analysis and discussion of two plays by Tawfiq-al Hakim and Sophocles. In addition, it will use the comparative and the cultural approaches as a springboard for its discussion.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

As this study is restricted to the two plays of *Oedipus Rex* and *King Oedipus*, the results cannot be generalized to include all of al-Hakim's adaptations of classical plays.

1.8 Definition of Key Terms

Cultural studies: "Is a cluster of ideas, images and practices, which provide ways of talking about, forms of knowledge and conduct associated with, a particular topic, social activity or institutional site in society" (Hall, 1997, p.6).

"Cultural studies is concerned with all those practices, institutions and systems of classification through which there are inculcated in a population particular values, beliefs, competencies, routines of life and habitual forms of conduct" (Bennett, 1998, p. 28).

Cultural criticism: "Is a critical approach whose main objective is to understand the social, political, historical, and artistic contexts in which a given text was written. Additionally, one examines the conditions under which the work was produced, circulated and subsequently responded to. In other words, cultural criticism is the study of literature at work in its social context, the study of what Stephen Heath calls "literature in use" (Templeton, 1992, p. 19).

Comparative literature: "The study of literature beyond the confines of one particular country, and the study of the relationships between literature on one hand and other areas of knowledge and belief, such as the arts (e.g., painting, sculpture, and music), philosophy and history" (Remak, 1906, p. 1).

1. 9 Al-Hakim's Theatre of Ideas

Perhaps Al-Hakim's major contribution to the Egyptian theater and to the Arab theater as a whole was his introduction to Arabic literature of the type of drama that has come to be called "theater of ideas". Of course, this new type of drama was had already been popularized by the British dramatist George Bernard Shaw, who wrote a series of plays devoted to the discussion of social problems. Shaw's "discussion plays" influenced many writers at the beginning of the twentieth century including Tawfiq Al-Hakim. Al-Hakim's series of intellectual plays began with his play *Ahl Al_Kahf* (published in 1933) followed by *Shahrazad* (1934) and several other plays. Most of the themes discussed in these plays were concerned with the duality of human existence such as the opposition between fantasy and reality, the mind and the heart, art and life, knowledge and instinct, etc.

Though Al-Hakim's *King Oedipus* does not strictly belong to this type of drama, it still contains a central idea that persists through the whole play. This idea can be seen in this question: Is man controlled by fate or by his free will? As the discussion in Chapter Four will clarify, in Al-Hakim's play man, represented by Oedipus, endeavors to strike a balance between these two polarities. The result is actually reflected on Al-Hakim's final vision of the conflict in the play. Torn between his free will to choose life rather than punishment and/or banishment, Oedipus tries to forego the difficulties he is facing by urging his wife Jocasta to continue to live. This attitude is contrary to Oedipus's choice in Sophocles' play *Oedipus Rex*.

1.10 Fate and Free Choice

In Sophocles' masterpiece, man is depicted as a victim of his fate or destiny. Oedipus cannot escape the destiny that the gods (Apollo in particular) have chosen for him. He is willy-nilly forced to kill his father and marry his mother as the oracles have foretold. In the context of this play, Oedipus cannot be blamed for his action. It is something predetermined and cannot be avoided or ignored. In this way, Sophocles was reflecting a general attitude that dominated Greek thought during the period he was writing his plays. Other Greek critics and playwrights such as Aristotle, Plato, Aeschylus, Euripides and several others expressed a similar attitude and chose to abide by the accepted and prevalent religious attitude. The only notable exception to this attitude was Socrates whose strong and frank views about the unacceptable role of the gods in human affairs was considered a serious act of blasphemy or heresy which finally led to his trial and ultimate execution.

Writing about two thousand years later, Al-Hakim was of course in a position to defy this attitude and to question, critique or deconstruct it. Inspired by his Arabic-Islamic background, Al-Hakim came up with the role of free choice to counteract the idea of fate or the prevalent power of the Gods. His vision, therefore, is more humanistic and more liberal than that of Sophocles. Thus Oedipus is given more freedom to think about his life, his future and his final destiny. Although he fails in the end, nevertheless he tries to choose life rather than death and happiness instead of misery.

Chapter Two

Review of Related Literature

2.0 Introduction

This chapter deals with books, journals, academic dissertations and theses that have been written so far about either the related literature or the subject of *Oedipus Rex* and *King Oedipus*.

2.1 Theoretical Background

Comparative literature

Comparative literature implies the knowledge and use of more than one national language and literature, and it means the knowledge and application of other disciplines in and for the study of literature. That is how Zepetnek (1851) explains comparative literature and further explains that comparative literature demonstrated a focus on European literatures and later on European and American literature. At the same time, the discipline pays more attention to other literatures than to any of the national literatures. He then discusses some of the disciplines that comparative literature consists of suggesting that the first general principle of comparative literature is the postulation that in of the study and research of literature it is not the “what” but rather the “how” that is of importance. The second principle is that comparative literature concentrates on the dialogue between cultures, languages, literatures and disciplines. The third principle is the necessity for the comparatist to acquire an in-depth grounding in several languages and literatures as well as other disciplines before embarking on any in-depth study of theory and methodology. The fourth principle of comparative literature is its attempt to study literature in relation to other forms of artistic expression (the visual arts, music, film, etc.). The fifth principle is its parallel

recognition and study of single languages and literatures in the context of the comparative conceptual approach and function. Finally, comparative Literature focuses on the study of literature within the context of culture. This focus on literature - highbrow, popular, or any other type of literature - is far from being self-evident. Rather, it is of importance with regard to the current prominence of cultural/culture studies which, on the institutional level, more often than not, focus on aspects of cultural rather than the formal aspects of literature where literature is not a primary factor.

Jost (1974) discusses that the term comparative literature is based on a reflection that it is necessary to conclude and to study several national literatures in order to become aware of the splendid multiformity of European and even universal letters and at the same time to see their oneness and unity beyond all appearances. Moreover, comparatists can proceed from an agentic or polygenetic method, from one that does or does not refer to cause and effect. The comparatist have connections of literature and other disciplines, notably with the fine arts, philosophy, religion, psychology, sociology, history and political sciences, through his efforts are centered on literary works.

Lenout (2006) criticizes the theory of dealing with only one text as a separate unity and argues that the text in addition to the context form one unity. Moreover, to understand the other cultural and literary texts, it is necessary to gain knowledge about the context in which they are acquainted. He further adds that the linguistic competence is vital and important for the success of comparative literature.

Comparative Literature includes two main schools which are the American school and the French school. Shamsuddin & Abd Rahman (2012) explain that since the Americans entered the world of Comparative Literature they had shown great interest in expanding the areas that

comparative literature can explore. Trend in Comparative Studies in America is probably due to a serious desire of the scholars in American universities to open the American windows for the contribution to this discipline of global literatures. The credit in the development of American theory in Comparative Literature goes particularly to René Wellek and Henry H. Remak. Remak defines American theory in Comparative Literature saying that comparative literature is the study of literature beyond the boundaries of a particular country and it is the study of relations among the literatures and other scientific areas of knowledge and belief.

Moreover, Wellek represents the American trend, which does not see any border for the comparative study and includes the open comparison and the relationship between the arts and the various branches of other sciences.

The French School

F. Jost (1974) mentions three major schools of comparatists which are the French, the American and the Russian school. He explains that French comparatists were integrated into the academic life, merely following the trend common among the scholars in their country. They combined historicism and positivism with strong national feelings. In their opinion, it was the backbone of the universal literary system. Later, in the middle of the twentieth century, they were mostly concerned with externals, with sources and influences, chronological developments and evolutions. Moreover, comparative literature for them was an ancillary discipline instead of being international.

Remak (1906) discusses the various schools of comparative literature. He explains that one of the major schools of comparative literature is the French school. The French school is inclined to favor questions which can be solved on the basis of factual evidence. It often involves personal documents and tends to exclude literary criticism from the domain of comparative literature. They look askance at studies which merely compare and point out analogies and contrasts. Some critics warn against influence studies as being too hazy, too uncertain and it have us focus on questions of reception, intermediaries, foreign travel, and attitudes toward a given country during a certain period. Moreover, in a good many influence studies, the location of sources has been given too much attention, rather than such questions as: what was retained and what was rejected and why. If conducted in this way, influence studies contribute not only to our knowledge of literary history but to our understanding of the creative process and of the literary work of art.

Shamsuddin (2012) argues that the French School flourished in the late nineteenth century. The scholar Paul Van Tieghem explained the French concept of comparative Literature saying: "Comparative Literature has been used practically in France for a century almost, as a well-known standard term". Moreover, this term began to spread more and more until it became today a clear and easier term for use.

Shamsuddin&Abd Rahman (2012) record the concept of comparative study at the French school stating that the French school studies places of meeting among the different literatures in their different languages and the potential links in their present or past. The scholars of comparative Literature in the French school believe that any literature cannot live alone in isolation from the pack of other literatures, without being weak and fading. They believe that the most beautiful aspects of the national literature may be those which are adopted in its sources from foreign literatures so as to maintain the prosperity of those areas in the national literature. This branch of

comparative literature helps the nation to better understand itself and see its image more clearly in the mirror of other literatures.

Cultural Studies

Nehring (1990, p.232) points out that, “ as opposed to traditional text-bound scholarships, cultural studies recognizes the simple fact that audiences make their own, sometimes subversive meanings out of literature, music, television, and commodities in general.”

Grossberg, Nelson, Treichler, Baughman, & Wise (1992, p. 1) illustrate the term and explain how someone can understand and employ it:

One way to understand cultural studies is to employ the traditional strategies by which disciplines stake out their territories and theoretical paradigms mark their difference: by claiming a particular domain of objects, by developing a unique set of methodological practices, and by carrying forward a founding tradition and lexicon. Yet none of these elements makes cultural studies into a traditional discipline. Indeed, cultural studies is not merely interdisciplinary; it is often, as others have written, actively and aggressively anti-disciplinary, a characteristic that more or less ensures a permanently uncomfortable relation to academic disciplines.

They further explain that cultural studies can be useful in many aspects: to do research on working-class or youth culture, to examine the role of media, to reflect on issues of class, gender in relation to popular culture, to deploy bodies of theory like Marxism, feminism, poststructuralism, or psychoanalysis.

The methodology of cultural studies was enhanced by the work of such prominent cultural theorists as Tony Bennett, Homi Bhabha, and others. The contributions of these eminent critics and several others are included in a book edited by Lawrence Grossberg and others (*Cultural Studies*

1992). Generally speaking, they indicated that cultural studies has no specific methodology or textual analysis of its own; rather it is multidisciplinary and self-reflective.

Miller (2001) clarifies that cultural studies is animated by subjectivity and power; in other words he explained how humans are formed and how they experience cultural and social space. He adds that cultural studies takes its agenda and mode of analysis from economics, politics, the media and communication studies, sociology, literature, education, law, science and technology studies, anthropology, and history with particular focus on gender, race, class, and sexuality in everyday life, combining textual and social theory under the sign of a commitment to progressive social change.

Williams (2002, p.92) divides culture into two aspects and explains both by stating that:

Culture has two aspects: the known meanings and directions, which its members are trained to; the new observations and meanings, which are offered and tested. These are the ordinary processes of human societies and human minds, and we see through them the nature of a culture: that it is always both traditional and creative; that it is both the most ordinary common meanings and the finest individual meanings. We use the word culture in these two senses: to mean a whole way of life--the common meanings; to mean the arts and learning--the special processes of discovery and creative effort.

Johnson, Chambers, Raghuran, & Tincknell view cultural studies as being an approach utilized in the study of literary artifacts. For them, it is a flexible theory of literature capable of growing and developing as it encompasses various disciplines:

Cultural studies has been more like the humanities, where method is carried in practical skills, ways of reading, for instance, that remain unacknowledged – except perhaps as theory. Yet, by remaining implicit, methods of cultural study can

function as a form of intellectual privilege or cultural capital, making the difference between being inside and outside a cultural studies club. Critical self-awareness about cultural studies as a practice is, therefore, part of the struggle to keep it open, democratic and capable of development. (2004, p.3)

The main domains of cultural studies are discussed by Parker (2008). He argues that the most influential theories within cultural studies have been: Marxism, culturalism, structuralism, post-structuralism, psychoanalysis and the politics of difference in which he included: feminism, theories of race, ethnicity and post-colonialism. He believes that the purpose of sketching the basic tenets of these theoretical domains is to provide signpost to thinking in the field.

Cultural Criticism

Developing in the 18th - 19th centuries among writers such as Jonathan Swift, John Ruskin, and Matthew Arnold, cultural criticism as it is practiced today has significantly complicated older notions of culture, tradition and value. Cultural criticism follows many of the same principles as new historicism, but it tends to be geared more towards political issues and popular culture than to new historicism. Cultural criticism draws quite a bit from other forms of criticism such as Marxism, feminism, African-American criticism, etc. Basically, any type of criticism that examines the culture in which the work was written could be defined as cultural criticism.

Templeton (1992) argues that cultural critics make no distinction between high and low culture. For the cultural critic, literature conveys culture in two senses. Literature expresses cultural values and carries them over into a new context where they can be understood and evaluated differently. Moreover, cultural criticism can be found in some texts and it is described as one of the disciplines that don't distinguish between different cultures whether high or low.

One feature of cultural criticism is that it does not see a distinction between different forms of culture. For example, "high" culture, things such as the theatre, opera, art, the symphony, aren't considered any more or less important than "low" culture items, such as television, pop music, or stand-up comedians. To a cultural critic, all these forms of culture are equally important. As Tyson (1999) explains:

For cultural critics, however, there is no meaningful distinction between so-called "high" and "low" forms of culture. For all cultural productions can be analyzed to reveal the cultural work they perform. That is, the ways in which they shape our experience by transmitting or transforming ideologies, which means, of course, the role of cultural productions in the circulation of power.

2.2 Empirical studies

Sophocles' play *Oedipus Rex* has been a popular subject for critical studies over the ages. Lots of works and articles have dealt with this play from various perspectives, including the cultural dimension of the play. By the same token, Tawfiq al-Hakim's play *King Oedipus* الملك أوديب has also been discussed and analyzed by various scholars. Most of these studies have been written in Arabic, but several of them have also appeared in English. Below is a survey of the most important studies in this area. The following studies and several others will be surveyed to find out the major subjects or themes they covered, with a view to determining their relevance and potential usefulness for this study. My main concentration will be on the studies that have dealt with these two plays from predominantly comparative and cultural perspectives.

Roisman (2003) analyzes and examines the different treatments of Teiresias in Sophocles' and Seneca's *Oedipus the King*. She concluded that Sophocles fashioned his Teiresias as a man who was reluctant to share his knowledge. His unseerlike behavior serves two key functions. On the

dramatic plane, it creates and sustains the dramatic conflict in a plot in which nothing much happens until the very end. Thematically, it highlights the limitations of human knowledge, which cannot alleviate suffering in a world in which destiny is in the hands of the gods. Seneca's Teiresias on the other hand is a much reduced figure, without a 'character', in the sense of a consistent set of traits or behaviors. Rather he appears in three unconnected depictions, in each of which he is differently presented. In his main depiction, in the divination scene, he is a mild-mannered, unimposing seer, eager to do his job but lacking the full knowledge attributed to his Sophoclean precursor. His function is to serve as master of the rite, who directs the divination and makes it dramatically compelling. In both plays, Teiresias may be seen as a representative of the gods. Sophocles' depiction highlights and protests the cruelty of the gods, Seneca's projects a more resigned and accepting attitude.

Etman (2004) explains in his article how to deal with an Islamic Oedipus. He suggests that the dramatist Tawfiq al-Hakim devoted himself to drama and went to France to study law, and from his readings of French literature, he concluded that success can be achieved by going to the beginnings. The result was that he wrote three plays with Greek themes, namely *Pygmalion*, *King Oedipus*, and *Praxa*. He further draws attention to what Al-Hakim said in his introduction to *King Oedipus*, namely that he wanted to adopt Arab traditional culture in rewriting a well-known Greek tragedy. Al-Hakim said: "When I began to write *Oedipus* I read four years about the myth, but also I read some books of Muslim scholars on fate and destiny as explained by Abu Hanifah and Ibn Rushd and others. These readings convinced me that my interpretation of *Oedipus* should be in harmony with Islam". The researcher also adds that Al-Hakim did his best to remove the mythic elements which Islam refuses. Furthermore, the researcher mentions a few other Arab writers who dealt with the Oedipus myth like Ali Ahmed Bakatheer and Fawzi Fahmi.

Kolk (2004) focuses on the differences between the two versions of Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex* written by Tawfiq al-Hakim (*King Oedipus*, 1949) and Helene Cixous (*The Name Of Oedipus, Songs Of The Forbidden Body*, 1977). There is a lapse of thirty years between the two plays, and the two works present the main difference between Easterners and Westerners. The researcher concludes that the two plays have similarities and differences. The sameness is presented in taboo, God, and maleness. In both texts, neither Cixous nor Al-Hakim accepted the guilt or responsibility for their Oedipus. Both characters accepted the relationships with the mother/wife. Both texts also shared the undoing of the metaphysical elements in the story. However, the study does not cover all the basic cultural differences between the two dramatic versions of this Greek play.

As I shall explain later in the discussion, Cixous and Al-Hakim criticize male rationalization in Oedipus. Al-Hakim asserts that he cannot accept the Greek tragic hero's status as a man who existed in the world without God. On the other hand, differences such as fate, tragedy and genre exist between the two works. The researcher also notices that the Egyptian writer adopted the western drama model that contains three acts in different scenes, while Cixous chose a total open text form. Finally, the researcher mentions the tragic flaw of the hero in Al-Hakim's play. He considers Oedipus in this play as a corrupt and a business-like person who created a big lie along with Tiresias.

Al-Deib (2009) discusses in his Arabic thesis many plays which adapted the theme of Oedipus in addition to the direct and indirect influence of Oedipus in the theatre. The researcher analyzes the play of Ali Ahmed Bakathir's *The Tragedy of Oedipus*, Ali Salim's *The Comedy of Oedipus* in addition to Tawfiq al-Hakim's *King Oedipus* and other plays which were indirectly influenced by Oedipus. As for the play of Al-Hakim, Al-Deib says that Al-Hakim was the first to adapt the theme of Oedipus through an Arab-Islamic vision. He was able to convert the conflict from man vs. fate to truth vs. reality. The researcher adds that Al-Hakim did not copy the myth. On the contrary, he invents a new conflict between the reality of him being his mother's husband and the truth of being her son, the reality of being a murderer of a man and the truth of being his father's murderer and at the end, his reality of being a father of his sons and daughters and the truth of being their brother.

Abu-Asali (2014) gives further interpretation of Sophocles' play *Oedipus Rex*. He writes:

وشيء آخر يريد سوفكليس أن يوصله هو أن على الإنسان أن يستشير أصحاب الرأي والخبرة في الحياة ، وخاصة في الأزمات الصعبة، فمهما كان الإنسان حكيما و عارفا، فإنه لن يستطيع بمفرده وبخبرته مهما كانت أن يعالج أمرا من أمور الحياة الصعبة. فإذا استغنى عن الآخرين هلك ، وإن اقترب منهم سلم (أبو عسلي ، 2014، ص 54)

Another thing which Sophocles wanted to communicate is that one has to consult wise and experienced people especially in hard times. No matter how wise and knowledgeable one can be, he cannot resolve a problem on his own. If he dispenses with others, he will perish; and If he approaches them seeking their help, he will be safe (Researcher's translation; Abu-Asali, 2014, p.54)

As the above excerpt demonstrates, Abu-Asali (2014) tries to give a new interpretation to Sophocles' play *Oedipus Rex*. He believes that this play in particular can give a new understanding or meaning each time you read it. Sometimes you feel the force is between man and God,

sometimes between truth and reality and sometimes between the present and the past. Abu-Asali argues that every one of the writers who have dealt with this play tried to represent it according to his ideas, culture and understanding. In his opinion, none of them really reached the greatness of the original work because of many reasons. One of those reasons is because writers mixed between the script and the myth, cared about the culture and the local environment that they wrote for, adding and changing too much and dealing with the play according to the writer's culture and religion.

Chapter Three

Methods and Procedures

3.1 Methods

The approach that will be used in this study will be the content analysis. This method will allow the researcher to discuss the differences between Sophocles' play *Oedipus Rex* and Tawfiq Al Hakim's *King Oedipus* as well as highlighting the patterns of behavior enforced in the two plays. In addition, the researcher will utilize this method to determine the extent to which Al-Hakim succeeded in presenting his play in the Islamic cultural way. All in all, the cultural and the comparative approaches will be of paramount importance. Moreover, this study will be based on an explanatory discussion of cultural studies and cultural criticism as mentioned in the theoretical background with special emphasis on Greek and Arab-Islamic cultures as explained below. These approaches will be first explained in a theoretical manner so as to be later applied in the next chapter dealing with a detailed discussion of the two plays along the lines outlined below.

Procedures

Procedures of the Study will take the following steps:

1. Reading the two selected plays to understand them.
3. Analyzing the similarities and the differences between the two plays
4. Citing critical opinion about the two plays to enlighten the discussion.

5. Discussing the findings with a view to finding out whether Al-Hakim play meets the norms and values of Arab-Islamic culture and how much the playwright adhered to or departed from his source material.

3.1 Ancient Greek Culture/ Gods

Ancient Greece was a civilization belonging to a period of Greek history that lasted from the Archaic period 800 BC to the beginning of the Roman period around 50 BC. Included in ancient Greece is the period of Classical Greece, which flourished during the 5th to 4th centuries BC. Athens was the capital and largest city of Greece.

Cavendish (2011) elaborates that in ancient Greece, Mount Olympus was home of 12 of the most important gods, who all belong to the same family. As king of the gods, Zeus, the lord of justice and a peacemaker. Other gods are Poseidon, the lord of the waters and Hades, the lord of the underworld. Hera was the goddess of women and marriage. Ares, the god of war and Hephaestus who was the smith-god and the patron of all craftsmen. Athena was the patron goddess of Athens, the protector of women's handicraft, and the goddess of war. Apollo, was the god of music, poetry and medicine. Artemis, ruled over hunting, wilderness and wild animals. Hermes, the messenger of gods, the protector of shepherds, travelers, heralds and responsible of guiding the souls of the dead to the underworld. Aphrodite, was the goddess of love and sexuality. Demeter, was the goddess of agriculture and fertility. Another very important god was Dionysus, who was the god of wine, ecstasy, madness and death.

He also illustrates that each god has his/her own temple and sometimes one god can have more than one. In the center of the temple, is a small chamber. The temple also had an altar, usually used for sacrifices. The god was honored with prayers, sacrifices, and festivals of songs, dance, poetry,

drama and athletics. Furthermore, in order to gain answers, the Greek consulted oracles. It was a medium between people and gods. Each oracle had priests who offered interpretation of the oracle or prophecy. The most famous oracle of the ancient Greek world was the one at Delphi, on top of Mount Parnassus.

3.2 Greek Women and Marriage

The status of women in Athens in literature comes from the writings of males. For the most part, women were excluded from participating in politics or in intellectual life. In general, women did not go to school and did not know how to read and write. The two primary roles of Athenian women were those of wives and of mothers. Among the other roles were those of lovers, rebels, and witches. The ideal wife can be shown not in real life but in literature. For example: in Homer's *Odyssey*, Penelope was viewed as the perfect wife. She was accompanied by servants, weeping continuously because of the loss of her husband. She was also considered faithful and obedient to her husband and unfortunately a prisoner in her own house. In *Oeconomicus*, Xenophon expresses how to train a new bride. According to him, the best age of the bride is to be 15 or less, to know and speak as little as possible, and the ability to control her appetite. Again, Xenophon saw women to be in the house and her duties are limited only to house duties and bearing children. The second role of woman was that of a mother. Athenians believed that a mother's role is to bear children and take care of them. The worst mother of all was introduced in *Medea*. She murdered her children because of her husband's rejection. She preferred herself to her husband and children. Hipponax of Ephesus (sixth century B.C.) wrote that the best two days in a women's life are when someone marries her and when he carries her dead body to the grave. (O'Neal, Summer 1993)

Marriage in ancient Greece was seen as a practical rather than a romantic arrangement. The main purpose of marriage was to produce children. An Athenian citizen had to marry another

Athenian citizen; otherwise, the children can't be deemed citizens. Some marriages in Athens were ended by divorce. For the husband, it was a simple matter. He can easily divorce his wife or banish her. The wife can also ask for divorce but she has to go to courts which like any other thing in Greece was dominated by men and would be unlikely to stand with her. (Cavendish, 2011)

3.3 Greek Mythology

In earlier times, humans needed to explain and figure out the origins and wonders of the world. In every culture that existed on earth, early humans made up stories about how they were created and the origin of the world. They invented gods and supernatural beings to give them comfort and instruction. Sometimes, people like the Greeks invented stories for entertainment. As these stories were passed on, they changed with languages, climate, and local folklore. In the end, people built temples and shrines of their heroes, gods and goddesses. They prayed to them asking for help, they made sacrifices to them, and celebrated them in festivals. In Greece, for example, we find temples in honor of Zeus, Athena, Aphrodite, and others. The Greek mythology is very old. In fact, Greeks were the first people to create gods and goddesses looking like humans. Greek intelligence went much further as they had clear-eye curiosity about themselves and all creation. The playwright Sophocles said "Wonders are many and none is more wonderful than man". (Daly, 2009)

The Arabic Islamic Culture

3.4 The Concept of God in Islam

Knowing Allah is very important in Islam. The shahada is the Muslim profession of faith and the first of the 'Five Pillars' of Islam. The word shahada in Arabic means 'testimony'. The shahada is to testify to two things. First, nothing deserves worship except God (Allah) and secondly, Muhammad is the Messenger of God (Allah). It is a custom for Muslims to invoke the name of Allah whenever they do anything important, or when they seek His protection against His arch-

enemy Satan the accursed. Because Muslims believe that all praise to Allah, the one and only, His being eternal is compounded by His being divine. He is proud in His own right and in His Greatness. He creates whatever He wills and initiates the creation without having to have a model for any of what He creates. Thus, through His Might He created all creation. Of course, there is no way to know Him by defining what He is. Rather, one can get to know the proofs of His existence, Might, Knowledge, Wisdom, Mercy and his being the Creator of everything. “*When He decrees anything, He only says to it: Be, and it is*” (Quran 40-68). He is Allah, besides whom there is no other god. Therefore, Muslims believe in the oneness of Allah. For the Muslims, Allah is the only one who legislates every rule of their lives.

3.5 Women and Marriage in Arab Islamic Culture

Islam was the first religion to grant women their rights. The Holy Quran has teachings which apply to both men and women. The moral, spiritual and economic equality of men and women were introduced in Islam. Islam introduced women as equal to men. It proposed that men and women complemented each other and were a means of mutual fulfillment. In Islam women and men are equally the recipients of God, but their functions are different. For example, women are prepared and created to bear children, whereas man is fitted to work in the field and elsewhere. This is not a matter of superiority or inferiority; it is a question of natural capacity and proper function. Women are vulnerable and in need for man’s protection.

Marriage is mentioned in the Quran and was given a high attention. The purpose of marriage in Islam is to win Allah’s satisfaction and to complete the second half of one’s religion. Chastity in marriage is highly important and that’s why it is one of the characteristics of the true Believers. Unfortunately, the West no longer believes in that. The experiencing of living together and promiscuity have become the norm. Moreover, the rights of women are guaranteed in marriage.

By assigning men to provide the needs of the house, women have to take care of the children and the house, but they are not compulsorily restricted to stay in it as prisoners. Women have the right to work as men. In contrast, divorce is not looked upon with favor. The Prophet Mohammed said: *“Of that which is permitted, the most obnoxious, in the estimation of Allah, is divorce”*.

Another aspect which was highly emphasized is motherhood. Islam gave great honor to mothers. The love, devotion, and tenderness due to parents and especially to the mother are stressed in the Holy Quran. The Holy Prophet said: *“Paradise lies at the feet of your mothers”*. Moreover, Islam gave women economic independence. Men have to provide a settlement. If at any time the husband died without completing the dower, it is considered as a debt and should be paid out of his legacy. Furthermore, any property a woman acquires by her effort is hers and belongs to her only. (Khan, 2008)

Chapter Four

Discussion and Analysis

4.1 Differences and Similarities between Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex* and Tawfiq al-Hakim's *King Oedipus*

In this chapter, the researcher will discuss the main differences and similarities between Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex* and Tawfiq Al-Hakim's *King Oedipus*. Because there is a space of time between the original play and the rewritten version of it, then there must be some significant differences between the two plays especially that the new version of Al-Hakim was written in the twentieth century. This difference in time will result in having some changes within Al-Hakim's *King Oedipus*. Such changes might be in the cultural element that Al-Hakim already mentioned. Another element could be seen in the role of some characters adopted by Al-Hakim. To find out more about this subject, the researcher will concentrate on main points such as the characters, theme, plot, structure and culture. In the ensuing discussion the researcher shall argue that Al-Hakim departed much from his source and introduced new notions that were not there in the source, especially the notion of free will which he seems to have derived from Arab-Islamic tradition and culture.

Several studies in both Arabic and English scholarship have referred in one way or another to the main features of Sophocles' and Al-Hakim's two versions of Oedipus. However, few studies have dealt with a serious comparison between the two playwrights and their two plays. Al-Deib (2009, p. 54) states that the story of Oedipus has been reproduced by more than 29 different French

writers, some of them close to and others departing from the original. In his introduction to the play, Al-Hakim (1990, p.33) mentions that while in Paris he watched Sophocles' play performed on French theatres. He also mentions that he studied Greek drama and particularly the plays of Sophocles and that he became interested in Sophocles particularly his masterpiece *Oedipus Rex* (1990, p. 41) . He also states that in most of the European versions of the play, there was a struggle between man and gods, with man defying the gods. In his opinion, this French attitude was different from what Sophocles did in his play, a vast departure from the original which al-Hakim did not like. This led him to think of rewriting the play with a different worldview and from a different perspective, a play that would be close the original and at the same time in harmony with the Arab-Muslim culture. (Al-Hakim,1990 , pp.49-52).

F. Jost (1974) clarifies that a single author may have exercised an influence on one or more authors of a literature foreign to his own, or upon the totality of that literature. A scholar or a researcher as a result may adopt different points of view. Rather than discussing the influence exerted by a signal writer, he can analyze a whole group or school of several authors. In addition, whatever stand he adopts, he may still stress, or at least take into account, specific aspects of the problem: one critic examines the relations between styles or themes, genres or ideas, while another specializes in resemblances in language or structure (Jost, 1974, p.34). We shall therefore deal with some of the most important aspects that the two plays have in common such as character, plot, theme, structure, culture and worldview.

I. Characters

Sophocles' play *Oedipus Rex* includes a wide range of characters representing a large spectrum of Greek society. Characters such as Oedipus, Jocasta, Creon, the Priest, Tiresias, the Messenger,

the Second Messenger, the Shepherd as well as the Chorus are portrayed from a perspective that reflects Greek culture at the time the play was written. Nevertheless, these characters reflect a clear touch of universality whether in their morals, motives, or general behavior. In this representation of the characters of the play, Tawfiq Al-Hakim includes almost all the characters that exist in the original play. Each character in both plays has his/her own characteristics, sometimes sharing some similarities and sometimes differing from each other. It is worth mentioning that previous studies concentrated on the main characters such as Oedipus, Tiresias and the Chorus, with minor characters receiving little attention.

1. Oedipus

In both plays, King Oedipus is the protagonist or the “tragic hero”, to use an Aristotelian term. He is the King of Thebes and the man who once solved the riddle of the Sphinx and was rewarded by being made the King of Thebes and marrying him to the widowed queen Jocasta. Despite obvious similarities, there are some differences between the two playwrights’ representation of the hero. The Oedipus of Sophocles is a king who believes in the gods and resorts to them when he needs to figure out what he ought to do. He is also keen to know the truth no matter what it costs and whatever the outcomes. He is considered to be the savior of the city. People resort to him for help to see what can be done regarding the disease that has overwhelmed the city. He is a caring ruler who is interested in the welfare of his citizens. For instance, right at the beginning we know that he has already sent Creon to the Oracle to find out what can be done to save the city. He is also a moral person because he initially fled from Corinth to avoid a prophecy that indicated that he would kill his father and marry his mother. Yet Oedipus is stubbornly blind to the truth about himself. Although he appears very confident and proud at the beginning, later he shows anxiety and hesitation as he suspects himself to be involved in the murderer of Laius, the former King of

the city. Oedipus is also willing to take responsibility in accepting his punishment by plunging his own eyes in order not to see his parents in the other life, or his kids or the people of the city in this life. He also asks Creon to exile him from the country.

SECOND MESSENGER

“You will no longer see
all those atrocious things I suffered,
the dreadful things I did! No. You have seen
what you never should have looked upon,
and what I wished to know you did not see.
So now and for all future time be dark!”
With these words he raised his hand and struck,
not once, but many times, right in the sockets. (1516-1523)

Some studies have dwelt on the main character-traits of Oedipus. For instance, Mulready (2004) states that “Sophocles establishes Oedipus as an example of humanism at the beginning of the text. He is proud of his reliance on his own intellect. The solving of the Sphinx’s riddle has brought him both self-confidence and popular acclaim from the people of Thebes”. Abu-Asali (2014, 57) further explains the character Oedipus by saying:

فأوديب يرمز إلى العقل والمعرفة، وهما أمران جليان في الحياة، يتناقضان مع الجهل والتخلف، ولا يرضى بهما الكهنة والعرافون.....حتى إن فكره كان مشوشاً مضطرباً، نراه في لحظاتٍ حكيماً عاقلاً، وفي أحيانٍ كغيره من ناس مجتمعه، ويسلك سلوكهم في الحياة. لقد كان يجاهد نفسه والآخرين، ولكنه أخيراً انتصر على ضعفه وجهله الذي يعيقه، وتحدى نفسه والآخرين، وانتصر كذلك حين اكتشف الحقيقة، حين اكتشف القاتل، حين اكتشف قوته وقدرته وعقله.

“Oedipus is symbol of mind and knowledge which are two high standards in life. They are opposite to ignorance and backwardness which are not accepted by priests and seers. Oedipus’ mind was disoriented and confused. We see him at times wise and sane and at other times like anyone in his society taking their attitude in life. He was struggling and challenging himself and others until he conquered his weakness and ignorance when he found the murderer. By this, he discovered his strength, his ability and his mind”

On the other hand, Tawfiq al-Hakim’s tries to present Oedipus as a human being without the mythological aura that surrounds him either in Sophocles’ text or in the large number of the subsequent representations of the story. Right at the beginning of the play Al-Hakim portrays Oedipus as a family man who is talking to his wife and children in a very intimate manner. He tells them about himself and answers their questions in a transparent and direct manner.

أنتجونه: من البداية يا ابتاه! قص علينا البداية.

أوديب: ليس لهذا صلة بحادث الوحش ومع ذلك فليكن ما تريدون.

أنتم تعلمون أنني نشأت في قصر ملكي..... (ص 58)

Antigone: From the beginning father. Tell us from the beginning.

Oedipus: It’s not related to the monster’s incident but so it be. You know that I have raised in a royal palace... (p 58)

In this way, Al-Hakim adds another dimension to his hero’s character, thus making him more complex than Sophocles’ Oedipus. Furthermore, Al-Hakim’s Oedipus is more torn by conflict than Sophocles’ Oedipus and is more concerned with a continuous search for the truth. Unlike Sophocles’ hero who believes in the integral relationship between man and the gods, Al-Hakim’s hero is skeptical about the Oracle and the power of the priests and even the gods. However, Al-Hakim makes the blinding of Oedipus a secondary reason for his punishment. He is blinded not only for the sins he has committed but also for disrespecting the gods and fellow human beings as

well. He becomes so skeptic that he casts in doubt almost everybody in the play including Creon, Tiresias and others.

While Al-Hakim's hero is an ordinary man with no supernatural side to his human nature, Sophocles portrays him as a demigod who has supernatural powers that entitle him to be a ruler of his people whether in his capacity to solve the Sphinx riddle or in his superhuman honesty and sense of morality to seek the truth and act upon it by imposing heavy punishment upon himself according to what he promised: physical punishment and /or banishment from the land. In sharp contrast with Sophocles' tragic hero, al-Hakim's hero looks like a mundane hero in the modern sense of the term. This is clearly shown in his attempt at the end of the play to avoid a tragic ending by suggesting to his wife that they can forego the past and start a new beginning that would give them the opportunity to live together.

أوديب : لا تقولي ذلك يا جوكاستا ، في وسعنا أن نقوم ، انهضي معي ولنضع أصابعنا في آذاننا ولنعش في الواقع ، في الحياة التي تنبض بها قلوبنا الفياضة بالمحبة والرحمة! (الحكيم ، 1990 ، 139)

Oedipus: don't say that Jocasta! We can stand this. Stand with me and let us put our fingers in the ears and live in reality, in the ordinary life where our hearts beat with love and mercy. (Al-Hakim, 1990, 139).

However, it is only after the suicidal death of Jocasta that he determines to choose a suitable punishment for himself. Thus, there is a clear difference between the positions of Oedipus in the two plays under discussion. In the original play, the hero is very close to the Aristotelian formula of the tragic hero while in the new play Oedipus is very close to a modern hero who is more interested in life than in a tragic but deserved death. In the new version, the hero almost discards

the role of the gods in human affairs contrary his acceptance of them in human life regardless of the extent of their fairness or unfairness.

2. Tiresias

Tiresias is a blind prophet but is known for his insight into things. In both *Oedipus Rex* and *King Oedipus*, Tiresias is defined by his relationship to the truth. In Sophocles' play, he is shown as a real prophet and in Tawfiq al-Hakim's he appears as the source of evil. Sophocles' Tiresias is a reluctant courier. He can see the message from gods but has no power over it. Oedipus accuses Tiresias of withholding important information. He makes a decision to attempt not to reveal what he knows and tries to withdraw from this difficult situation. Although at first he hesitates in fulfilling his role as a soothsayer, he knows very well he is trapped in a situation where he must speak out. Roisman (2003, 1) explains that this behavior "on dramatic plan, it creates and sustains the dramatic conflict in a plot in which nothing much happens until the very end. Thematically, it highlights the limitations of human knowledge, which cannot alleviate suffering in a world in which destiny is in the hands of the gods".

Alas! How terrible is wisdom when

It brings no profit to the man that's wise!

This I know well, but had forgotten it,

Else I would not have come here. (Sophocles, 1954, 316-319, 23)

She further discusses the characteristics of Sophocles' Tiresias. She points out that Tiresias makes it clear that he came against his will and better judgment. Initially, he refuses outright to divulge what he knows and after that he reveals the truth little by little in an opaque manner. He first tells Oedipus that he is the one who is behind the pollution of the city, then some nine lines

later that he tell him he is the murderer, and another four lines later he informs him he is living in shame with those he most loves. To the audience, unfamiliar with the myth, these disclosures, extracted from Tiresias against his will, are so unintelligible that they leave the Chorus bewildered, and their telling is so protracted and lacking in supportive evidence that they leave Oedipus disbelieving and increasingly angry.

Although Tiresias was physically blind, he was able to see the truth created by the gods. In contrast, Al-Hakim's Tiresias is blind both literally and metaphorically. "Truth" is created by him. He is the author of the message and the messenger. He was behind creating and shaping the first prophecy that Laius would be killed by his son and later marry his mother and also behind creating the lie of the Sphinx. He wanted to let the people choose their king by their own free will. He didn't know that his false prophecy would come true and the same child who was to be killed would live and claim what has already been his in the first place. Somehow, his fate is closely connected to Oedipus'. They both share the same lie and for some reason in the middle of the play an argument between them starts. They both knew the truth of each other and if one is exposed by the other, the other would expose him in return. Unfortunately, Oedipus' bad luck cost him to suffer alone and the real mastermind after the false prophecies would flee unpunished. In addition, Tiresias does not have any intention of helping Oedipus to figure out how to save the city from the plague. He only wants to watch and see what Oedipus can do and he knows very well that the Priests does not like his way of thinking and prefers Creon over him. He also knows that the circumstances are suitable for a change because the situation when Oedipus won the throne is similar to the condition of the city today. He also warns Oedipus not to challenge the truth and reveal it because he realizes that the truth he has created has taken on a life of its own.

حذار يا أوديب! حذار! ما أشد خوفي أن تعبت أصابعك الطائشة بقناع الحقيقة! (ص75)

لا تنس أنك بطل هذه المدينة! .. لأن طيبة في حاجة إلى بطل .. وهي التي آمنت بأسطورة أبي الهول! فحذار أن تفجع الشعب في عقيدته! (ص74)

Be aware Oedipus! How fearful I am if you ever played with the truth! (p. 75)

Don't forget that you are this city's hero! Thebes needs a hero. It believed in the myth of the Sphinx. Be aware not to deceive the people in their beliefs. (p. 74)

Al-Hajaji (1984) explains the character Tiresias further more by adding:

غير الحكيم في شخصية تيريسياس ، فلم يعد ذلك تلك الشخصية التي تتحدث عنها الأساطير اليونانية ومع أن تيريسياس شاهد لعبته تتحقق إلا أنه واجه هذا الموقف بضحكته الساخرة. وإن أراد الحكيم أن يجعل من سخرية تيريسياس و عدم إيمانه دليلا على وجود الإله، إلا أن ذلك الرجل القوي يحدث غلامه بأن يذهب به إلى الإله ليسأله متى أعد سخريته ودبرها ، وأعلن بأنه إذا وجد الإله يضحك سيضحك هو أيضا في حضرته. كان ذلك يعني أن تيريسياس لم يتراجع عن موقفه وهو الإيمان بأن الأكذوبة هي الجو الطبيعي لكل البشر. (ص. 127)

Al-Hakim changed the character Tiresias. He was no longer that decent man Greeks used to talk about. Although he saw that his scheme came true, but he laughed ironically. If Al-Hakim wanted to make Tiresias' irony and his lack of faith a proof of the god's existence, he is still talking to his guide and asks him to be brought in front of the god to ask him when did he plan his irony? He also made it clear that if he saw him laughing he would laugh too. This means that he did not back down on his opinion that lies are the common situation of all humans. (p. 127)

3. The chorus

Weiner (1980) states that the chorus was numbered fifty at the beginning of the 5th century B.C. It was probably Aeschylus who lowered that number of the chorus to twelve, and it was probably Sophocles who raised that number to fifteen. Poets considered the chorus extremely important.

Many theories have taken on the qualities and function of the chorus. One theory believes that the chorus exists to elevate commonplace details into universal verities. Another one indicates that it acts as a buffer between actors and audience or to transform the passions of the characters, which are necessarily diffused, into sharp focus. But this is surely wrong, for frequently choruses misunderstand what is happening in the tragedy while the audience understands, and frequently choruses make comments on the action which seem positively stupid or inappropriate. Weiner further thinks that the poet should compose his choruses with the same care and attention that he devotes to his actor. He admits that the Sophoclean chorus does not differ from the Euripidean chorus.

The chorus in Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex* plays the role of a group of Thebans to comment on the play's action and to foreshadow future events. The chorus then, is a part of the play. In the beginning, they tell the audience about the circumstances that overcame the city. They are the reason why Oedipus wants to solve the mystery of Laius' death. They played an important role in advising Oedipus not to kill or exile his brother-in-law. They also show support in the beginning, hesitation in the middle, and in the end, they stand by his side and lament his horrible fate.

Chaudhary (2013) believes that the choruses are fellow citizens desperately concerned about the awful events taking place in the city. They are closely tied to the action and their moods move swiftly with the march of events. Bewildered and apprehensive, they have little respite for calm reflection or reasoned judgment, and even their final words seem only to deepen the hopeless gloom. The role of the chorus in her opinion is remarkable in this play. The songs of the chorus are regarded as representation of the reactions of the audience to the play as it unfolds. Its function is to comment on the major incidents as they occur. In this way, the chorus not only represents the

feelings of the audience but also reinforces them, and sometimes providing a kind of guidance to them.

The chorus of *King Oedipus*, on the other hand, does not show all the characteristics of the Sophoclean chorus. This may be due to the huge difference between the Greek theatre and the modern Egyptian theatre. The chorus in the twentieth century does not have that important role it used to have in Greek drama. What differentiates Al-Hakim's chorus is that they support Oedipus from the beginning right until the end. They do not have a role in the songs. The chorus only comment on the events and ask questions.

الجوقة: (ناظرة إلى باب القصر) ها هو ذا أوديب قد ظهر! (ص149)

الجوقة: ما هذه الأصوات المفزعة،الصاعدة من جوف هذا القصر؟! (ص158)

Chorus: (looking upon the palace's door) Oedipus has come! (p 149)

Chorus: What are these scary voices which are coming from inside the palace? (p 158)

Minor Characters

It is worth noting that minor characters such as Jocasta, Creon, the priest, the First and Second Messenger, the Shepherd and Antigone have not received any significant critical attention in most of the researches on the play. This research will try to explain the roles of these characters with special focus on their representation in the two plays under discussion.

1. Jocasta

Abdullah (1983) gives a short explanation of the role of Jocasta. He writes

شخصية جوكاستا هي الشخصية الضدية الستارية التي تبرز شخصية أوديب وتوضحها. لم تكن جوكاستا تحب لايوس وقد أظهرت لنا عما بداخلها من مشاعر اتجاه ذلك الشخص الذي كتب له أن يعتلي العرش.... لم يهتما من الفائز بالعرش بل من الفائز بالقلب؟ إنه قلب المرأة وليس قلب الملكة. أنه قلب المرأة التي لم تعرف الحب بزواجها المبكر من لايوس وبعد موته أخذت تبحث عنه. كل ما سبق وضح لنا سبب هذا الحب القوي بين أوديب وجوكاستا الذي دام سبع عشرة سنة. ذلك الحب الذي دفع بأوديب إلى رفض الحقيقة والإرتداء في أحضان الواقع والإستمرار فيه مع جوكاستا رغم معرفته بأنها أمه. لقد كان الحب قويا ، أقوى من اي شيء سواه. (ص. 93-94)

Jocasta is a foil character that explains and shows the character of Oedipus. She did not love Laius and she showed us that by revealing her true feelings toward that person who was destined to claim the throne She did not care about who would claim the throne but who would claim the heart? It is the woman's heart, not the queen's heart. It is that woman's heart which hasn't known love because of her early marriage. After his death she kept looking for it. The previous reason explains the cause of this strong love between Oedipus and her which lasted for seventeen years. That love which made Oedipus refuse the truth and continue to live with Jocasta despite his knowledge that she is his mother. It was a strong love, stronger than anything else. (p. 93)

Jocasta in both plays is the Queen of Thebes, the wife of the former king Laius and the current wife/mother of the new King Oedipus. In Sophocles' play, Jocasta appeared when Oedipus and Creon were having a heated argument and continued to appear on the scene until she found out the truth that Oedipus was her husband/son. She is the first character to realize the horrible truth and begs Oedipus to stop digging much further into it. After the refusal of Oedipus to stop, she runs into the palace until it's found that she committed suicide in her room by hanging herself with the bed sheets. Al-Hakim's Jocasta shares almost all the characteristics of the original character despite having some other attitudes. She represents the woman who has faith in God as she always

reminds us how lucky she is to have Oedipus as her husband and how thankful she is to God. She appears early in the play, i.e. from the first scene and her role is longer than the original character. She does not love the former king and this gives the audience the impression of her being unfaithful as she always wondered who would steal her heart and win her and whether she would like the new king or not. She is also the first to know about the truth of Oedipus and her status of being married to her son. She fainted after hearing the truth that Oedipus is the son of Laius. The moral side of her personality appears when she refuses to continue on living and refuses Oedipus's offer to leave the city with their children and continue to live with him. She commits suicide in order to free herself from this shame.

2. Creon

Creon is Jocasta's brother and Oedipus' brother-in-law. He was the one who was to inherit the throne after the murder of King Laius. From the beginning, Creon shows incredible passion toward his people as he offered the throne to the one who could save the city from the Sphinx who was frightening people and killing them. He is by no means selfish as he puts the interests of the people before his own. He is the most trusted man in the royal family. Oedipus has already sent him to the oracle to find out what ought to be done concerning the plague. In both plays, his loyalty is questioned by Oedipus due to his announcement that the real murderer of Laius is Oedipus himself. He is accused of conspiring against Oedipus to gain the throne. None of the two characters in the two plays has an intention of overthrowing Oedipus. In al-Hakim's play, he is sentenced either to be banished from the land or to be exiled along with the Priest as well. In Sophocles' play Oedipus wants to kill him, thinking he is plotting with Tiresias against him. This argument ends up when Creon leaves the place angrily. However, in Al-Hakim's, Creon and the Priest are brought in front

of the people to be sentenced until it is finally revealed that Oedipus himself is the murderer of Laius. In both plays, Creon decides to cast Oedipus away from the land.

Oedipus: Drive me from here with all the speed you can

To where I may not hear a human voice

Somewhere I can avoid all moral speech.

Creon: Be sure I would have done this had not I

Wished first of all to learn from the God the course

Of action I should follow. (Sophocles, 1954, 1436-40, 72)

On the other hand, Creon of *King Oedipus* has no interest whatsoever in the throne. He is given this privilege by the Priest who sees the situation suitable for Creon to assume authority instead of Oedipus. Even when the Priest suggests this, Creon is still worried about his image. Creon cares very much about how he is going to be judged and received by the people since he has been accused of trying to seize the throne. However, the Priest convinces him that he is innocent and that all these accusations are void. As in Sophocles' play, Creon in Al-Hakim's finally accedes to the throne after the departure of Oedipus.

كريون: ومن يمنحني هذه السلطة؟

الكاهن: الظروف المحيطة... والحوادث الطاغية تمنحني من حق القيام على مصلحة الشعب.....

كريون: أما رأيت كيف اتهمت بالطمع في العرش؟

الكاهن: قد سقط عنك ذلك الاتهام. (ص158)

Creon: Who gave me this power?

Priest: The circumstances and the incidents which give me the right to do what is best for people

Creon: Did you not see how I was accused of greed?

Priest: This accusation is void. (p 158)

Al-Hajaji (1984) elaborates on the character Creon. He writes:

كان دوره في مسرحية الحكيم هو نفس الدور الذي لعبه في مسرحية سوفكليس ، دور الرجل العاقل الرزين، الذي يقبل عن طواعية بأن يمثل دور الرجل الثاني، الذي يدافع عن نفسه عند اتهامه بالتواطؤ مع تريسياس. فهو يرى أن هذا شأن الناس جميعا وكان كريون يرد عليه بأنه لا يمكن أن يؤذيه هو وجوكاستا لأن السultan كان بيده قبل أن يجيء أوديب وهو الذي نزل عنه طائعا لمنفعة الشعب وطاعة لأهل القداسة والإلهام.(ص.124)

Creon's role in Sophocles' play was exactly the same as in Al-Hakim's. He was the sane and the demure man, the one who represented the second man, the man who defended himself against the accusations of plotting with Tiresias. He is the one who saw that this issue was the people's business alone. He replied that he would harm neither Jocasta nor Oedipus because the throne was his and he gave it away willingly for the benefit of the people and to obey the people of holiness and inspiration. (p.124)

5. The Priest

In the original play, the priest of Zeus represents the voice of the people when they come to Oedipus to complain about the disasters that are befalling them and the city. His role is much shorter than the Priest of *King Oedipus*. Al-Hakim's Priest is given much more attention and plays a greater role in the plot. He is accused of conspiring with Creon to overthrow Oedipus from the throne. It seems that the Priest prefers Creon to Oedipus. The reader can see how he the Priest takes advantage of Oedipus' situation when the truth is revealed about Oedipus' origin. He suggests that the leadership should go to Creon and bans him from going with the other characters into the palace.

6. The Messenger

The messengers in both *Oedipus Rex* and *King Oedipus* share the same characteristics. They are minor characters and they come with good intentions to bring good and bad news. They come to offer Oedipus Corinth's throne and to bring the news that King Laius has passed away. Both of them also bring the news that Oedipus was found by them and was given to King Polypus as a gift. The two messengers are the key to solving the uneasy riddle of Oedipus' origin. They both inform him that he was given by one of Laius' men and later identified this man as the one who gave Oedipus away.

7. The Shepherd

The shepherds of *Oedipus Rex* and *King Oedipus* are minor characters. Sophocles' Shepherd is brought to be asked by Oedipus about the child he once gave to the messenger. When he is informed that the child is Oedipus himself, he goes mad and curses the messenger for such words. At the beginning, he refuses to speak out but gradually was forced to do so or death would be his fate. Forced and confused, he finally admits that the child was Laius' son, leaving everyone astonished. These incidents and attitudes regarding the Shepherd in Sophocles' play are similar to those in the Shepherd of Al-Hakim's.

8. The Second Messenger

The Second Messenger or the servant is the character who brings the news of Jocasta's death. Both characters bring the sad news of the queen's death and the horrible reaction of Oedipus when he attempted to blind himself. The role of the Second Messenger in Al-Hakim's play is much shorter than that in the original play. While the role of the Second Messenger in *King Oedipus* is restricted to telling the death of Jocasta, his role Al-Hakim's is larger and includes his knowledge

of the reason behind Jocasta's death. He seems to have witnessed the events that followed the rushing of Jocasta into the palace after her hearing of the maddening news of the true relationship between her and Oedipus. The Second Messenger also witnesses Oedipus' speech when he clarifies that he no longer wishes to see the people in this life and decides to be allowed to wander in the land until he meets his death alone.

10. Antigone

Antigone does not have a role in *Oedipus Rex* but she appears as the heroine of the second play *Antigone* in the Theban trilogy. On the other hand, Tawfiq al-Hakim gives her a somewhat modest role in the play probably because he wanted to underscore the role of family life in his new version of the story. In the play, al-Hakim shows the great love Oedipus holds for her in particular, and his family in general. Antigone is the daughter of Oedipus and the most attached to him. She sees her father as her role model. She memorizes his story of the sphinx by heart. She always thinks that her father is a hero even until the end. She represents the innocence of all children who often see their parents the bravest people on earth. She also plays a key role in calming him down. Her mother suggests that she go and calm him down, knowing that she can bring joy to his heart.

إذهبي إليه أنت يا أنتجونه وسري عنه فهو يصغي إليك دائما! (ص 55)

Go and comfort him Antigone .He always listens to you! (p 55)

II. The plot

In *Poetics* (1902, Trans.Butcher), Aristotle states that the plot consists of three parts, the beginning, the middle and the end. Aristotle defines and explains each part. "A beginning is that which does not itself follow anything by casual necessity, but after which something naturally is

or comes to be. An end, on the contrary, is that which itself naturally follows some other thing, either by necessity, or as a rule, but has nothing follow it. A Middle is that which follows something as some other thing follows it". Furthermore, Aristotle divides the plot into two main types. Simple plot when the change of fortune takes place without reversal or by recognition. A complex plot when there is a change by reversal or recognition or both. He further explains that the reversal of intention "is a change by which the action veers round to its opposite, subject always to our rule of probability or necessity". This can be seen for example when the messenger comes to free Oedipus from his alarms about his mother and reveals who he truly is, but by that an opposite effect is produced. Recognition, on the other hand, is "a change from ignorance to knowledge, producing love or hate between the persons". Furthermore if the two of these elements are found, they would create pity and fear (Butchertrans.1902,pp. 31, 39, 41).

Hawthorn (1985, p. 53) discusses the definition of a plot and explains how it is an ordered, organized sequence of events and actions. He draws attention to the purpose of using the complex plot. To him, it draws "attention to certain things which might otherwise escape notice, and to produce a different effect upon the reader".

Chaudhary (2013) states that the whole play of *Oedipus Rex* is an investigation into past events rather than a straight forward plot structure. This is because Sophocles wants to reflect the theme of excessive pride and together with the theme of fate in human life. Chaudhary points out that most Greek plays observe all the three unities: unity of time, unity of place and unity of events. A play should not have sub-plots or more than one plot. The observance of the unities is not always a great merit in a play. Shakespeare violated all unities and yet produced great heights in the writing of drama. However, we cannot deny the fact that the unities make a play close-knit and produce

concentration of effect, even though they sometimes restrict the freedom of the dramatist in some ways.

In *Oedipus Rex*, most of the events take place outside the palace. The whole events do not take more than 24 hours and they are focused on one main theme. Two thirds of the events have already happened and they are mentioned or reported throughout the plot. The real events started with the prophecy that a child born to Laius would kill him and marry his mother. The child was exposed to the dangerous elements, but was rescued by a shepherd. Then he was adopted by the king and queen of Corinth and grew old to become Oedipus. Oedipus knows from a drunken man that he was not the king and queen's child and went to the oracle to consult the gods. A prophecy told him that he would kill his father and marry his mother and as a result he flees from Corinth. On the way he kills his father, king Laius, and solves the riddle of the sphinx. Then he becomes the king of Thebes and marries his mother Jocasta. Time passes by until there is a plague in the city and then the whole truth was revealed due to the Oedipus's serious quest of finding the real murderer of Laius. Past events are narrated in the form of recollection or a flashback to maintain unites of time and action.

The events in the play start with the request of people to Oedipus to try to save the city from the plague. Through the dialogue we can understand that Oedipus has already once saved the city from the Sphinx. Oedipus answers that he has already sent Creon, his brother-in-law, to the oracle to consult the gods. Creon comes back with a prophecy that the murderer of Laius is inside Thebes and must be punished or exiled from the city. When Oedipus and Creon quarrel, Jocasta intervenes and comforts Oedipus by telling him that she and the late king Laius had a prophecy in return. As a result, they abandoned their child and sent him to be disposed of in the wilderness. A dramatic irony occurs when the audience already knows that the child is Oedipus himself, but the characters,

especially Oedipus, don't. Something in Jocasta's speech makes Oedipus suspicious and so he tells her about the man who told him that he was not Polypus' son. As a result, he went to the Oracle and heard the prophecy that he would kill his father and marry his mother. He then fled from Corinth and killed some men on the way. A messenger later comes into the palace with the news of Polypus' death. Though the news is helpful, Oedipus is still concerned about his mother and refuses to return fearing the prophecy would still come true. The messenger tells him he is not their real son and he was adopted. The man whom the messenger says was the person who gave Oedipus to him is brought and forced to tell how he rescued the child from death and finally, the whole truth is revealed.

The above summary of the main events was meant to provide a springboard against which the two plots of the two plays can be compared. As for al-Hakim's *King Oedipus*, it is clear that he does not stick to the unities. In fact, in his preface, Al-Hakim (1991) admits that he did not adhere to the unities of time and place observed in the original version. Although he wanted to follow them, he saw the element of family as something which cannot be ignored. The family atmosphere is one of the main ideas that the play revolves around and if this side was to be used, it could not be done outside the palace. Indeed, it is clear from the beginning of the play that Oedipus' family has an important role in the play. We can understand that right from the first moments. It all begins in the palace where Oedipus, Jocasta and the children appear chatting in a friendly and intimate manner. The short conversation centers on the plague and the past events when Oedipus was treated as a rescuer of Thebes and was consequently appointed as its king. After that, a group of people come to ask for the king's help. While they are speaking, the Priest comes and tells Oedipus that they have sent Creon to the oracle to consult the gods and requested him to obey whatever prophecy he would come with. When Tiresias comes, a serious quarrel starts between them

because the prophet does not want to help Oedipus and the two are threatening each other. After a while, Creon and the Priest come back with the news that the murderer of Laius must be punished and that Oedipus himself is the killer. Oedipus accuses both Creon and the priest of plotting against him and asks them to choose whether to be exiled or executed. These events end the first scene.

The second scene starts with the appearance of Oedipus, Creon, and the Priest in front of the people to be judged. At that moment, Jocasta appears to tell Oedipus not to believe in everything the prophecies say because she and the late king had a prophecy once that a child born to them would kill his father and marry his mother and king Laius was killed by bandits. Within the speech Jocasta gives a description of the place where Laius was killed, which made Oedipus worry and ask to see the only survivor to make sure whether it was one man who killed the king or bandits because he once killed some men in the same place. The man is brought and confirms that only one man did the murder. Oedipus realizes that he is responsible for the murder and decides to leave to throne and the city. A messenger suddenly comes to tell Oedipus that the people of Corinth want him to be their king because his father Polypus has died. Oedipus asks further about his origin. All what the messenger knows is that he was given to him by one of Laius' men when he was a child and the signs of the cuffs on his legs are a proof. At this point Jocasta realizes the horrible truth and asks Oedipus not to go further into his investigations. Oedipus refuses and asks for this man to be questioned. He is brought to him and the messenger identifies him as the man who once gave Oedipus to him. The man tells the truth that Oedipus is Laius's and Jocasta's son after being forced and threatened. The second scene ends with Jocasta fainting and Oedipus being shocked.

Act three is about the attempt of Oedipus to run away with his family and convince his wife to stay alive. It also shows Oedipus hesitant about his fate to be killed and asks to be exiled with his family. The news of Jocasta's death strikes Oedipus and makes him hurry into the castle. Horrified

by her death, he blinds himself. The play ends with his decision to be exiled alone and with Creon crowned the new king.

Having reviewed the representation of the plot in both plays, the following points can be made. With regard to act and scene division, Al-Hakim departs from the original form which includes a prologue, scene I, scene II, scene III, scene IV, and exodus. As Yousef points out, this five- scene division is the form adopted in most translations of the play (Yousef, 1996, p. 47). By contrast, Al-Hakim's play comes in three divisions/chapters or acts which he calls "fasl" (literally chapter or the equivalent of act in modern dramaturgy). In the stage direction, he reveals that Oedipus is standing in the midst of his family which comprise, in addition to him, his wife Jocasta and his four children, presumably two sons and two daughters. However, only the two daughters are involved in the action with no actual role for the two boys. Instead of opening the play with a public scene, Al-Hakim opens it with a scene set in the terrace of Oedipus's palace obviously to underscore the domestic nature of his play. In other words, he is moving away from the original in which the public dimension is emphasized in order to stress the importance of the humanitarian and social aspects of the play. In fact, Al-Hakim's play opens on what looks like a comfortable mood which allows Oedipus to narrate an interesting story to his children, something that is not found in the original though told in a different way as part of the inquisition and the investigation that follow afterwards.

After the brief domestic scene, Al-Hakim's play begins almost from the point where the original version begins, the city after it has been struck by a plague and the people surrounding the palace to ask for help. The difference, however, is that in Al-Hakim's these incidents are preceded by a narration of events that happened more than fifteen years ago recounting how Oedipus first came to Thebes and assumed the throne following his resolving a riddle. It is interesting to note that Al-

Hakim transforms the supernatural Sphinx into a lion-like creature with two wings. In addition, Jocasta also tells the story of the murder of Laius early in the first scene of the play. Having made this brief exposition, the appearance of the crowd is made later on, contrary to what we find in the original play. Most of the events that follow are largely in line with those of the original.

It is also noticeable that Oedipus cares more about his family than about the priests though of course he shows clear concern about public affairs. He is also concerned about his origin and has of late become very skeptical. In contrast, Oedipus is shown self-assured and confident in Sophocles' play and has no doubts about his origin or where he comes from. In fact, portraying him in this manner makes it easier to explain Oedipus's interest in thorough investigation to arrive at the truth regarding the cause of the plague (the murderer) and the subsequent probe regarding his real identity and origin. Enraged at Tiresias's accusations, Oedipus claims that the Sphinx he killed was only an ordinary lion (p. 72). Oedipus is also shown as a man who does not love the truth. This is clearly evident in his accusations of Tiresias as a liar (p.73) and in claiming that Tiresias' story about the Sphinx was fabricated to justify the appointment of Oedipus as king. (p. 72). Obviously, Oedipus in Al-Hakim's play does not respect the gods and Greek myths or religious beliefs as he does in Sophocles' play. His defiance of Tiresias is a good testimony to this view of the gods, priests, and seers or prophets.

It is also noticeable that Al-Hakim reduces the role of the chorus compared with its role in *Oedipus Rex*. This may be attributed to a difference in culture but it also shows another structural departure from the original. As mentioned earlier, the role of the chorus is to comment on the events, to educate the audience, to warn them of potential dangers and even to advance the action. Al-Hakim reduces the role of the chorus and in this way leaves room for the audience to judge for themselves.

Al-Hakim also divides the last act into two scenes, an obvious departure from the original scenic structure of a Greek tragedy in general and of *Oedipus Rex* in particular. He also does away with other dramatic divisions such as the “Ode” and the “Exodous”, let alone the “Prologue” at the beginning of the play. Furthermore, he expands the setting though to a limited extent by making it around, outside, and inside the place. In fact, Al-Hakim ends his play almost in the same way he began it: a family gathering that brings all members of the Oedipus family together though for different purposes and on different notes. The joyful and intimate atmosphere that marks the opening scene is replaced by the tragic and passionate concluding scene of the play. In this way there is a kind of circular structure that makes the events revert to where they began. In contrast, Sophocles’ play has a predominantly linear and chronological structure that makes the play move from a certain point and develop progressively until the end where the structure is intersperses with some reversals or turning-points and some flashbacks through the dramatic representation.

أوديب: قابلت رجل في مركبة يحرسها خمسة رجال فأنا إذ ضاربه وقتلته! (ص114)

Oedipus: I met a man in a carriage guarded by five men..... Eventually I killed him! (p114)

Finally, mention should be made of the language of the two plays. While Sophocles’ play is written in verse and sometimes in elaborate poetry, Al-Hakim’s play is written in prose with prosaic passages whose style looks more similar to colloquial language than to formal and standard language. This may well be taken to argue that each of the two plays has a different art and style of writing. It also becomes clear to us that Al-Hakim is trying to make the play more amenable to modern audience by modernizing it in its form and language and by addressing a modern audience keen on the importance of man in this world.

III. Themes

1. Sight vs. Blindness

One of the major themes in both *Oedipus Rex* and *King Oedipus* is the idea of sight and blindness. As used in the two plays, of the two terms have literal and metaphorical meanings. Oedipus in *Oedipus Rex* as Mulready (2004) explained, is known for his clear-sightedness and quick comprehension because he is the only man to solve the riddle of the sphinx which “brought him both self-confidence and popularity”. Nevertheless, he was blind to the truth for many years. Although he was informed of it by Tiresias, he did not believe it or try to see truly what he has done. Finally, when he discovers the truth, he blinds himself literally to avoid seeing his children and the people of Thebes as well as his parents in the other life. On the other hand, although Tiresias, the prophet, was literally blind, he managed to see the whole truth of Oedipus.

In *King Oedipus*, the protagonist, Oedipus, does not have the same degree of insight into things. He often brags about an incident that has no relevance in reality. He did not solve a riddle through his own ingenuity; he probably was taught to solve it by Tiresias. He was also blind to the truth for many years. Ultimately, he blinds himself literally not out of guilt but out of love, his love for Jocasta. He is generally self-centered and all he thinks of and cares about is his own self-interest regardless of what harm it does to the others.

2. Truth vs. Reality

The theme of the conflict between truth and reality in the play was first conceived of by Tawfiq Al-Hakim himself. In his preface, Al-Hakim (1991) discloses that he had been studying Sophocles for many years before he started writing his play. However, his understanding of the main conflict

in the play was not the same as that in *Oedipus Rex* where it was a conflict between man and fate/destiny. For Al-Hakim the conflict was between truth and reality.

"لماذا اخترت أوديب بالذات؟ لأمر قد يبدو عجيبا.. ذلك بأنني قد تأملتُها طويلا ، فأبصرت فيها شيئا لم يخطر على بال سوفوكل. أبصرت فيها صراعا ليس بين الإنسان والقدر كما رأى الإغريق ومن جاء بعدهم إلى يومنا هذا، بل أبصرت عين الصراع الخفي الذي قام في مسرحية "أهل الكهف". هذا الصراع لم يكن بين الإنسان والزمن كما اعتاد قراؤها أن يروا، بل هي حرب أخرى، حرب بين الواقع والحقيقة". (الحكيم ، 1991 ، 41-42)

"Why I have chosen Oedipus in particular? For something that may look strange. I have been contemplating it for so long. I thought of something that had never occurred to Sophocles. I saw a struggle not between Man and Destiny as the Greeks and those who followed them saw it. I saw the same hidden struggle which was in my play *The People of the Cave (Ahl al-Kahf)*. This struggle was not between Man and Time as readers used to view it. It is another struggle, a struggle between truth and reality". (Al-Hakim, 1991, 41-42).

Al-Deib (2009) comments on Al-Hakim's choice and his own understanding of the play by stating:

إن هذه المقولة تؤكد بأن الحكيم لم يتعامل مع الأسطورة الإغريقية بشكل سلبي قائم على الإستنساخ والمحاكاة دون تغيير، بل تعامل بصورة إيجابية ، فقد ولد من صراع الإنسان والقدر الذي بنى عليه سوفوكليس مسرحيته (أوديب ملكا) صراعا جديدا عده الحكيم مستحدثا وصنيفة خاطره وتأمله، فإذا هو صراع بين الحقيقة والواقع. (ص.78)

"This statement confirms that Al-Hakim did not deal with the Greek myth in a slavish manner depending on mere imitation and simulation without change. On the contrary, it was positive treatment because he produced from the conflict of Man and Destiny in Sophocles' play a new one

which to Al-Hakim was a new creation and the product of his own ingenuity and imagination. It was the conflict between Reality and Truth. (p.78)

Moreover Al-Deib affirms that this conflict is between the reality and the truth in Oedipus' life. Simply stated, the conflict is between the realities that Oedipus is Jocasta's husband and the truth that he is her son. It is also the conflict between the reality that he killed a man and the truth that he is his father's murderer. And finally it is a conflict between the reality that he is the father of his children and the truth that he is their brother too. On this basis, we can see that the main difference between the Greek Oedipus and the Arabian Oedipus is in the tragic conflict. In the Greek play, the conflict centers on the antagonistic relationship between man and his destiny, between human beings and the gods, while in Al-Hakim's play it is a struggle between truth and reality, life as it really is and life as we would like it to be .

IV. Structure

The common Greek plot-structure was explained by Aristotle in his *Poetics*, Aristotle divided the structure of tragedy structure into five parts. Prologue, parados, episode, stasimon and exodus. The prologue is the opening scene of the play which precedes the parados of the chorus. Parados is the entrance of the chorus chanting a lyric that relates to the main theme of the play. Episode is the act or scene-plot developed through action and dialogue between actors. Stasimon is the chorus' appearance in the end of each episode. Finally, exodus is the final action of the play after the last choral ode and ended by the ceremonial exit of all the actors. As mentioned earlier, a basic structural model of a Greek play in general and of *Oedipus Rex* in particular would include the following elements: "prologue, three scenes, and an exodus" (Yousef, p. 47).

To explain this structure a bit further, it is appropriate to refer to Jebb (1885) who discussed in a detailed manner the structure of the play. He explains that the prologue is shown from lines (1-150). The prologue is introduced through a conversation between three actors who are Oedipus, the priest and Creon. The parados begins from lines (151-215). This unit contains the chorus's lyric that summarizes the plight of Thebes. The first Episode stretches over lines (216-462) and contains the quarrel between Oedipus and Tiresias. The first stasimon (463- 512) includes two strophes and the responsive antistrophes. The second episode (513-862) includes the argument between Oedipus and Creon and Jocasta's intervention to understand the reason of the argument. The third stasimon (863- 910) shows the singing chorus who indicates that that oracles must come true or they will never be believed again. The fourth episode (911-1085) includes Jocasta, the messenger from Corinth and Oedipus. The messenger comes to offer Oedipus the throne of Corinth and to deliver sad news of Laius's death. The third stasimon (1086-1109) is short and tells that Oedipus will acknowledge Thebes as his home. The fourth episode (1110- 1185) includes Oedipus, the Corinthian shepherd and the former Theban shepherd. The Theban shepherd is forced to confess the origin of Oedipus. The fourth stasimon (1186- 1222) teaches that no man can be counted blessed because bad fortune is always around the corner. Exodus (1223- 1530) is the final part of the structure. It includes Oedipus, the second messenger and Creon. In this part Jocasta's death is revealed as well as the incident of Oedipus blinding himself. Creon enters not to scold Oedipus but to take him out of sight. Oedipus asks to be cast away to Mt. Cithaeron where he was supposed to be in the first place. Finally, he asks Creon to take care of his children, specially his daughters, since they are kins and the chorus reiterates that no man should be counted happy until the end of his life.

On the other hand, the play *King Oedipus* is a twentieth-century play. The division of the Greek structure does not apply to this modern play. In contrast, there is a modern division of the plays. Freytag (1894) argues that a modern play has a pyramidal structure. It rises from the *Exposition* with the entrance of the exciting forces to the *climax*, and falls from here to the *catastrophe*. Between these three parts lie the parts of *rise* and *fall*. The Exposition is an introduction to the characters and the dramatic situation. The rising action is when the chief character begins pursuing his objectives. The climax is the exact point at which the hero's fortune turns from good to bad in tragedy and from bad to good in comedy. The falling action is the decline of action in which the main character falls from strength. The catastrophe symbolized the final fate of the main character.

Hawthorn (1985) writes that structure involves the plot, theatrics and form. It refers to our sense of a novel's overall organization and patterning, the way in which its component parts fit together to produce a totality. He also explains that the structure of a work can be divided into chapters and sections made by the author. These chapters or sections provide a useful function of telling the reader when he or she can pause and put the book away.

Al-Hakim's play is divided into three acts. In the first chapter, we are introduced to the main character Oedipus who has left his home Corinth after knowing that King Polypus and Queen Merope are not his real parents. Oedipus tells this story at the demand of his daughter Antigone. Moreover, we know from the priest that the people of Thebes are suffering from the disease that has spread among them. Then the *Exposition* or the introduction is introduced in the first chapter. In addition, some information is given about the origin of Oedipus. We know that Oedipus hadn't killed any monster or Sphinx. It was after all an ordinary lion and all Thebes believed that he is a hero.

أوديب: إني لست بطلا ولم ألق وحشا له جسم أسد وجناح نسر ووجه امرأة يطرح أغازا. هذا خيالكم الساذج، أحب تلك الصورة وأذاع ذلك الوهم! ولكن الذي لقبته حقا هو أسد عادي كان يفترس المتخلفين خلف أسواركم، استطعت أنا أن أفنتله بهراوتي وأن ألقى جثته في البحر. (الحكيم ، 1990 ، 72)

Oedipus: I'm not a hero and I have not met a monster with the body of a lion and with the wings of an eagle and the face of a woman who asks puzzles. It was your naive imagination which fancied this image and spread that illusion. All I came across was an ordinary lion who preys on ignorant people outside your walls. I was able to kill him with my bludgeon and throw his corpse in the sea. (Al-Hakim, 1990, 72)

We also understand that Tiresias has a role in the first prophecy that indicated that Queen Jocasta and King Laius will have a child that will eventually kill his parents. Tiresias' intention was to let Thebans choose their own leader and to have freedom of choice. Later, Creon and the priest meet Oedipus after consulting the god about the problem. They tell Oedipus that the murderer of Laius must be punished and that he is inside the city of Thebes. Oedipus thinks that the murderer was Tiresias and answers that he will be brought to justice. Creon and the priest were surprised to see how Oedipus was so insistent on finding out and punishing the person responsible for the murder. When Oedipus walks out to look for the murderer, they stop him telling him that he is nearby and not far away from this room. They tell him that he himself is the killer and that's what the prophecy is all about. Oedipus grows angry and accuses them of betrayal and asks them to choose whether to be killed or exiled.

The second act opens up in front of the people of Thebes. Oedipus brings them up to be judged in front of the people. Jocasta and Tiresias attend to see what Creon and the priest have done. Creon and the priest admit that they went to the oracle to consult the gods about the plague. They learned that the murderer of Laius must be punished and they also were told that it was Oedipus.

The rising action starts after Jocasta clarifies that she does not doubt her brother's report but she also does not believe in the prophecies because she and her late husband received a prophecy that their son will kill his father and marry his mother. Later on the king was killed by bandits at a place where three roads meet. The description of the place where the king died worries Oedipus and asks her to confirm what she has said. After her confirmation of the place he worries more and asks about the number of men that accompanied him. She tells him that they were five. Oedipus suspects that he is the killer and tells Jocasta that he once killed a group of men at that place but she replies they were a group and he was alone. Jocasta tells him that the only witness is now a shepherd. Oedipus asks to see him. Later it was proved that the killer was him. Oedipus then decides to leave the throne and starts to mumble about lying to the people. Suddenly an old man comes to ask for Oedipus to offer him the throne of Corinth because the king has died. Oedipus wonders how he was found. The messenger replies that he thought to start searching from his hometown because Oedipus was given to him when he was a baby by one of Laius's men. Oedipus then asks Jocasta about the matter but she seems frightened. Suddenly a man who had earlier left the palace is brought again to Oedipus. The messenger quickly identifies him as the man who once gave Oedipus away. Oedipus forces the man to speak the truth. The poor man tells him that it was Laius's son. This revelation represents the *climax* of the play. All of the people are shocked including Oedipus and Jocasta.

The final chapter of the play starts in the palace where Jocasta was lying to rest. It is worth mentioning that the third chapter is divided into two scenes. The first scene shows Oedipus and Jocasta arguing about the truth. She wants to be dead but Oedipus wants to take her away from Thebes so as to live away from the rest of the world. By the end of the scene, Jocasta refuses to listen and asks Oedipus to leave her alone. Oedipus tells his daughter Antigone to take care of her

mother. The second scene of the play shows the falling action, in which Oedipus refuses to be killed and decides to be exiled with his family. Creon refuses this decision and asks to consult the gods. A scream from inside of the palace comes and Oedipus discovers that his mother/wife is dead. A second messenger comes out to tell the people about the death of the queen and the fate of Oedipus. In the end, Oedipus chooses to be exiled alone to die in the wild and tells Creon to take care of his children.

V. culture

From Greek drama, we can deduce some of the cultural elements in ancient Greece. The multiplicity of gods is just one of them. Houle (2001) illustrates that ancient Greeks were polytheistic for they believed in the existence of many gods and goddesses. The leader of the Greek pantheon was Zeus, the king of the gods and ruler of the sky. The gods were often worshipped in temples erected in their honor. Most cities had a particular god or goddess whom they considered as their special protector. The cities also held festivals in honor of individual gods at various times of the year.

The events of the play *Oedipus Rex* were established in Athens whose protector was Apollo. Daly (2009) explains that Apollo “had many functions: He was the god of poetry, music, archery, prophecy, and the art of healing. He was a sun god of great antiquity, just and wise and of great beauty”. As seen in the play, when Oedipus blinded himself and was asked about the reason he replied that it was Apollo who did this to him.

OEDIPUS:

It was Apollo, friends, Apollo,

That brought this bitter bitterness, my sorrows to completion

But the hand that struck me
Was none but my own
Why should I see
Whose vision showed me nothing sweet to see? (1330-1335, 68-69)

A second cultural element in the play is the Oracles. The most important oracle that existed in Greece was the Delphic oracle. In *Oedipus Rex*, Creon went there to Delphi to consult the gods to know what ought to be done to overcome the plague that spread over the city and the people. Spiller, Hale, and De Boer (2002) argue that oracles were used in the ancient world to gain insight into the future and were believed to have unique access to the gods of a particular religion and through this access were often able to see into the future. They add that the most revered oracle in ancient Greece was located at the town of Delphi in the temple of Apollo, the god of prophecy. As a result, this oracle made Delphi the most important, influential, and wealthy sacred place in the entire Greek world. This sacred place offered divine guidance on issues ranging from the founding of colonies to declarations of war, as well as advice on personal issues.

Cavendish (2011, 83) explains that “in order to gain answers to specific questions, the Greeks consulted oracles. An oracle was a medium who could make a response on behalf of a god. Priests, who were sometimes local officials, were present at each of these sites to offer an interpretation of the oracle or prophecy. However, the priests did not have any particular training and were not considered to have any unusual powers”.

A third cultural element was the seers/priests or wise elders who played an important role in Greek society. Flower (2008, 7) talks about the role and function of seers in Greek society. He says that “during the archaic and classical periods most Greeks believed that the gods would speak directly through the mouth of a priest or priestess, or else that a religious specialist, who was able

to detect and interpret the signs that the gods sent, could ascertain their intentions”. He further adds that the seers were not marginal characters on the fringe of Greek society. They were not like the mediums and palm readers in modern Western cities. Rather, they were educated members of the elite, who were highly paid and well respected. There were, to be sure, practitioners of a lower order. They were at the center of Greek society. Nevertheless, it is significant that the seers of high literature (epic and tragedy), such as Amphiaraus and Teiresias are always proven right, while the seers of comedy are always wrong. In the *Oedipus Rex* tragedy, Tiresias gives Oedipus the prophecy he saw about the reason of the plague. Unfortunately, Oedipus did not believe him and accused him of blindness. In the end, the prophecy of Tiresias was proven right.

By contrast, in his play *King Oedipus*, Al-Hakim does not stick to all the elements of the Greek culture. He tries to deal with the events, the characters and the themes from a Muslim perspective in addition to the Greek angle of vision. In his “Introduction” to the play he clarifies that he moves between two worlds, the culture of ancient Greece and Islamic culture, hoping to create a kind of dualistic vision in the end. According to this philosophy, Al-Hakim does not think that Man is alone in this universe. He believes in the humanity of humans and sees their greatness as people who have their own weaknesses in addition to their strengths. Moreover, he tries to add elements from Arab-Islamic culture to the pagan culture of ancient Greece so as to represent his play from a new and different perspective.

The most important addition he did to the original work was to change the focal point of the conflict. In the original play, the conflict was between the gods and man. In his play the main conflict is between man and man or between the priests and Oedipus. The Arab-Muslim reader cannot accept that God is the primary cause of evil. To Muslims, evil is within people’s soul or from the primary source of evil source, Satan. In addition, Muslims believe that there is only one

God to praise. They do not believe in a multiplicity of gods as the ancient Greeks did. In the play, Al-Hakim does not hint that evil was planned by God or even by the gods. On the contrary, it was planned by Tiresias, the priest. As the playwright uses the word “God” in his play, it is worth pointing out how God is conceived of in Muslim culture.

Haneef (1996, p. 16) explains what is meant by God in Islam:

“For Almighty God, our Lord, is not some superhuman, bearded father-figure, a glorified man who sits on the clouds and orders creation by a wave of his physical hand. Rather, He is a totally unique, partnerless, transcendent Being who is not bound by any of the limitations of created beings. He does not possess a physical form or physical characteristics. He had no beginning and will have no end, nor does He have a father, mother, wife or children, or any other kind of 'kinship' with the beings He has created”.

Ibrahim (1997, pp. 45-46) adds more about what is God and what power He possesses?

Muslims believe in one, unique, incomparable God Who has no son nor partner, He is the true God, and every other deity is false. God alone is the Almighty, the Creator, the Sovereign, and the Sustainer of everything in the whole universe. In a perfect manner, His knowledge encompasses all things, the open and the secret, and the public and the private. He knows what has happened, what will happen, and how it will happen.

It is for this different conception of God that Al-Hakim gives a different view of the gods in his play. But as usual, Al-Hakim tries to strike a balance between the two views of the divine. Although he refers to God, he also includes reference to the old view of the deity in the ancient world.

جوكاستا : إعلم أنني مدينة بسعادتي للإله (ص 78)

الكاهن: هذا كريون قد عاد من معبد دلف بقول عظيم ، آثرت أن يقضي به إليك في خلوة يا أوديب (ص82)

Jocasta: Know that I owe my happiness to the God. (p 78)

Oedipus: It's Creon. He returned back from Delphi with important news. I preferred that he tells you that in private Oedipus. (p82)

Family, on the other hand, possesses an important role in Arabic culture. The bonds between the members of the Arabic family are strong. This feeling of closeness or intimacy is not restricted to the members of nuclear family but also includes the members of the extended family. (Al-Hakim, 1991) as mentioned before realized the importance of family in the play. He decided to avoid the unities in order to add the element of family in the play. Rizv (1980) explains the importance of family by expressing that a sensible and well-balanced family system is the very foundation of a happy life. He further argues that the Arabic family is a closely-knit unit of human society. As explained above, Al-Hakim didn't choose to change all elements of Greek culture including the gods, oracles, priests etc. Had he done so, he would have destroyed the element of myth and created a work that is different from the original one.

4.2 The Worldwide View the Two Plays Enforce

Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex*

Mandour (1960) states that since Aristotle's times, Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex* had been considered the most magnificent production among all plays and the strongest in its dramatic features. Aristotle considered it the best tragedy ever composed. He analyzed it and made it a model for his

discussion of drama in his *Poetics*. There is almost a general consensus of opinion that the play ranks amongst the best plays the world has witnessed. In terms of its worldview, the play centers on the conflict between man and the gods, human beings and Fate/Destiny. Oedipus did everything to avoid his fate but to no avail.

Dodds (1966) tested a group of people who studied classical literature to find out what they thought about the idea that Sophocles' presented. According to the group, the main idea the play presented was the relationship between Oedipus and the gods. So, the question that was asked was: Does *Oedipus Rex* attempt to justify the ways of God to Man? The result of the test showed three answers. The first and the biggest group held that the play justifies the gods by showing that we get what we deserve. A second group held that *Oedipus Rex* is a tragedy of fate. It means that Man has no free will but is as a toy in the hands of the gods. A final group said that Sophocles is a pure artist and has no interest in justifying gods. He only took the story and used it to create an interesting play. Dodds was shocked to hear such answers for such a great work. He connected the common answers to Aristotle's view of tragic hero. The best sort of tragic hero is a man highly esteemed and prosperous who falls into misfortune because of some serious incidents beyond his control. He adds that most people misunderstand this play including Sigmund Freud. The modern reader slips into it easily because we think in two clear-cut alternative views. Either we believe in free will or else, but in the fifth-century BC, Greeks did not think in these terms in anyway. He gave as an example the notion that Homeric heroes had their predetermined portion of life; they must die on their appointed day, but it never occurred to the audience that they are not free agents. Nor did Sophocles intend that it should occur to readers of *Oedipus Rex*.

Barstow (1912, p.2) reminds us how *Oedipus Rex* fulfils the function of a tragedy in arousing fear and pity in the highest degree. Perhaps we trouble ourselves too much concerning the Greek

notions of fate in human life. After all, the fundamental aim of the poet is not to teach us about these matters, but to construct a tragedy which shall completely fulfil its proper function. How does Oedipus himself comply with the Aristotelian requirements for a tragic hero? There is a simple answer in the ethical teaching of the great philosopher in whose eyes *Oedipus Rex* appears to have been well-nigh a perfect tragedy. Aristotle finds the end of human endeavor to be happiness, that is, an unhampered activity of the soul in accordance with true reason, throughout a complete lifetime. This happiness, as Aristotle discovered by careful observation during the length of his thoughtful life, does not result principally from the gifts of fortune, but rather from a steady and comprehensive intellectual vision which views life steadily and distinguishes in every action the result to be attained. On the other hand, the tragic hero is a man who fails to attain happiness, and fails in such a way that his career excites, not blame, but fear and pity in the highest degree. In his *Poetics*, Aristotle identifies the tragic hero as not eminently good and just, nor completely under the guidance of true reason, but as falling through some great error or flaw of character, rather than through vice or depravity. Moreover, in order that his downfall may be as striking as possible, he must be, as was Oedipus, of an illustrious family, highly renowned, and prosperous.

To support this argument, Aristotle wrote in the *Poetics* (1902, Trans. Butcher, p.25), that tragedy is an imitation of action which implies “personal agents who possess certain distinctive qualities both of character and thought”. A perfect tragedy to him is that one which is arranged on a complex plan and should imitate actions which excite pity and fear. Also, the character as Aristotle explains must be “one who is highly renowned and prosperous personage like Oedipus and Thyestes”. (p. 46-47) according to him, the best tragedies are found in Oedipus, Orestes, Meleager, Thyestes, Telephus, and those others who had suffered severely.

Apparently, not all writers think that Oedipus is a perfect tragedy. In fact, Nikolarea (1994) discussed some of the interpretations that dealt with the theme of Oedipus. He mentioned first that Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex* had been translated and re-interpreted over and over again. He also mentioned the opinion of some playwright about the play. He writes:

Playwrights like Corneille and Voltaire in France and to a lesser degree Dryden in England, approached Oedipus with a critical eye and considered that there were too many flaws in Oedipus' character and improbabilities in his discovery of the truth. (p.224)

The researcher also stated that these writers attempted to attract their contemporary audience because they found the plot meagre and insufficient to furnish them with enough substance for their versions. Therefore, Corneille, Dryden and Voltaire introduced a sub-plot of secondary persons in their versions, with the consequences that some of these secondary characters became as important as Oedipus. One example is the dramatist Corneille. Corneille had already realized that the topic, perfect for 5th-century Athens, had many aspects that would not be accepted by his 17th-century French audience. Thus he decided not to bring his hero on stage after his mutilation. Corneille introduced a subplot, the love of Dirce and Theseus, to distract his audience's mind from the atrocities of the legend. In doing so, nevertheless, Corneille removed Oedipus from his position of preeminence, and Oedipus' quest for knowledge and truth became nothing more than the starting point and background for the love intrigue that dominates this version.

Tawfiq al-Hakim's King Oedipus

Nosrati & Bagherzadeh (2015) illustrate that Tawfiq Al-Hakim, the father of modern Arabic drama, endeavors to foster an understanding of human existence. For them, he utilizes the theory of humanism in his representation of the play. Generally speaking, humanism is a philosophy or a worldview that pays more attention to man than to the supernatural forces of any kind. In other

words, it is concerned with a secular rather than a religious view of life. Indeed, this contrast between a humanistic and a religious perspective marks the difference between the two worldviews represented in Al-Hakim's and Sophocles' contrasting plays respectively. As Sophocles tries to give room for the role of the gods in human life, al-Hakim tries to assign an important role for man through his freedom of choice and through his reasoning. Characters in his play are not the victims of the gods but are the reapers of their actions. Man is in a balanced position.

Pormann (2006) maintains that Al-Hakim reconciles between the Greek and the Arab culture. He further argues that this mere transmission of Greek dramatic literature to the Arabic language does not achieve for us the establishment of a dramatic literature in Arabic. Similarly, the mere transmission of Greek philosophy did not create an Arabic or Islamic philosophy. In order to achieve this objective we must proceed in the same way with Greek tragedy and dedicate ourselves to study it with patience and endurance and then look at it afterwards with Arab eyes. In his introduction to the play, Al-Hakim argues that a marriage between these two literatures must occur with respect to tragedy comparable to that marriage that took place between Greek philosophy and Arab thought. In the case of *King Oedipus*, Al-Hakim does this in a successful way. He kept his own Islamic beliefs and drew on the Greek sources of the myth, notably Sophocles' play, but transformed the plot to make it relevant to his audience and to bring it in harmony with his own philosophy. Al-Hakim also dispenses with some of the more pagan aspects of the myth. For instance, he replaces the Sphinx with a fierce lion, since he himself says that he must strip the story from some of its superstitious beliefs that the Arab or Islamic mentality would not accept.

4.3 How Successful was Al-Hakim in Representing the Islamic Culture?

Most evaluations of al-Hakim's reworking of the original Oedipus tragedy have come from Arab sources and Arab critics and scholars. Mandour (1960) argues that the interpretation of Al-Hakim of the Greek tragedy was very clever and quite adequate. But he also observes that Al-Hakim made a slight mistake in making Oedipus leave Corinth so as to find about the truth of his birth. In Sophocles' play, Oedipus leaves Corinth to avoid the prophecy that indicated he will kill his father and marry his mother. By that, the reader is moved and has a lot of sympathy for him. In the end when he was overwhelmed by the truth, he gave up and atoned for his mistakes by blinding his eyes. Moreover, Al-Hakim did not tie up the loose ends of the events of his play and did not develop it to reach the summit of the crisis. As a result, there was no way for Al-Hakim to end up his story but to do what Sophocles did. The conclusions of the two plays are the same though Al-hakim tried to produce a different work with a different outlook and perhaps a different ending. He envisioned a weird conflict which he calls the conflict between truth and reality. In his introduction to the play Al-Hakim (1990) mentions that he based this idea on another play that he wrote which was *Ahl Al-Kahf* (The Cave People) (p.42) Additionally, Al-Hakim made Oedipus try continuously to convince Jocasta to remain alive and run away with him but when Jocasta ended her life by committing suicide, Oedipus blinded his eyes not to atone for his mistakes but rather to cry blood over her. This conclusion is contrary to the expectations of audience or readers who are familiar with Sophocles' play which has a more natural and more "probable" ending.

It seems that most of the researchers agree on the improbable conversation that went between Oedipus and Jocasta as well as on the contradictions in the character Oedipus in the play. Hijaji (1984) asserts that the character Oedipus slipped between the hands of Al-Hakim. He didn't succeed in avoiding the contradictions of the character. Abdullah (1983) also argues that Al-Hakim

wasn't able to end his play at that appropriate moment, the moment when he was trying to convince his mother/wife to ignore the truth and continue to live with him, but he fell under the myth spell and the beauty of Sophocles' play and made the ending identical to that in the original. As a result, that end did not come as a convincing "probability" and can therefore be considered as one of the play's weaknesses.

Eid (1992) seems to agree with Mandourin regard to his criticism of Al-Hakim's inadequate ending of the tragedy. She thinks that Oedipus did not take responsibility for his actions and continued to behave in an immoral way. Oedipus was meant to continue his self-deception until the truth was revealed and there was no way of ever evading it. Such an ambiguous attitude proves that Oedipus has no strong moral scruples. Consequently, the reader would ask if Oedipus remains a real tragic hero who deserves our sympathy. For some time, Oedipus deceives himself and tries to mislead Jocasta into accepting his morally wrong persuasion. By contrast, Oedipus' Sophocles has much greater nobility that makes Oedipus' Al-Hakim seem a liar and a cheat in comparison. The play ends up by Antigone saying "Father! You are not a hero like you are today". (p.201). This statement sums up the whole situation suggesting that Oedipus may not be the tragic hero that Sophocles originally created in his play and which Al-hakim initially aimed at but did not completely achieve at the end. He tried and scored some success, but his success was by no means without some weakness especially in his representation of the wavering and uncertain Oedipus at the end of the play.

Although most Arab scholars find fault with Al-Hakim's representation of Oedipus, Western critics seem to have a more positive view of his play. Some Western critics seem to have been fascinated by Al-Hakim's interpretation of the original play. As Mahfouz (2012) mentions, the author Marvin Carlson singles the Egyptian interpretations as the greatest adaptations of the legend

worldwide. In his article “The Arab Oedipus: Oriental Perspectives on the Myth”, Mahfouz (2012) argues:

In praising the Arab adaptation of the Oedipus legend, Marvin Carlson singles them out as the greatest adaptations of the legend worldwide. The Egyptian versions, in particular, Carlos points out, have an intensity, a richness and a resonance in the life of society. (p.171)

In short, there are conflicting views about the degree of success that Al-Hakim achieved in rewriting Sophocles’ original tragedy in a new form to suit Al-Hakim’s own interpretation of the play and go along with his general philosophy of duality in life and art. Al-Hakim has succeeded where many other dramatists have failed; nevertheless his success was negatively affected by his own interpretation and representation of this great Greek tragedy. Undoubtedly, he did his best to produce a new version of the play by researching Greek drama and reading and watching many of the representations of Sophocles’ play but his work is by no means immaculate or complete after all.

Chapter Five

Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusion

After exploring some issues in Tawfiq al-Hakim's *King Oedipus* and Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex*, in this chapter we concentrate on the results of the study. Although the two plays were written at different times and many centuries separate, some similarities and differences between the two works have been found.

A clear difference between the two play is noticeable in their representation of characters. As we have seen, there are obvious differences between the two playwrights' representation of the characters of Oedipus, Tiresias and the Chorus. Sophocles' Oedipus is a noble man; a good ruler who cares about the interests of his people. He addresses people politely and is keen on finding out the truth. On the other hand, Al-Hakims' Oedipus is ambivalent in his general attitude. He seems to be more concerned with his own personal and familial problems than with public issues. To some extent, he is an opportunist who tries to take advantage of any opportunity so long as it serves his ends and purposes. Both of the two protagonists leave Corinth for different reasons. In Sophocles, he leaves to evade a destined tragedy; in Al-Hakim he leaves to learn the truth of his origin. The most obvious difference between the two heroes appears at the end of the play. Though Sophocles' hero chooses to punish himself as was laid down in his threats and promises at the beginning of the investigation, Al-Hakim's hero first chooses to live and to pursue a happy life with his "consort" who is actually his wife-mother. Each of them treats himself differently after

recognizing the truth. One punishes himself severely and the other hurts himself to cry blood over the loved one. Sophocles' Oedipus was considered one of the greatest tragic heroes in world drama but Al-Hakim's Oedipus has not received a wide acclaim even among Arab scholars and drama critics.

Sophocles' Tiresias is known as a reliable seer who is not afraid to speak the truth despite all the odds while Al-Hakim's Tiresias is portrayed as the main source of evil in the play and the main reason of Oedipus' horrible fate. Apart from the different portrayals of Tiresias, we notice yet another marked difference in the representation of the Chorus. In Greek tragedy in general, the Chorus was given an important role in the tragic plays in which it invariably appeared. In Sophocles' play in particular, the Chorus becomes an integral part of the action and the plot and assumes various functions and duties as we have previously explained. In contrast, Al-Hakim reduces the role of the Chorus giving it only a minor role. Consequently, its function is peripheral rather than central.

Some similarities between the two plays can be seen in their treatment of the minor characters such as the first Messenger, Jocasta, Creon, the Shepherd and the Second Messenger. They share almost the same characteristics besides some slight differences which do not change the nature and the function of the characters in general. Some differences can be seen in Jocasta's relationship with Oedipus when she discloses she hasn't known love before Oedipus. A further difference can be seen in the representation of the Shepherd. In Sophocles' version he was brought from the place to which he had chosen to escape but in Al-Hakim's play he was caught running and trying to escape.

Other differences can be seen in the two plays' plot, themes, structure and cultural background or worldview. Although Sophocles' play contains roughly five scenic divisions, Al-Hakim's play consists of three main acts or "chapters". Moreover, Al-Hakim gives himself more freedom in changing the setting, thus rewriting this classical play without necessarily abiding by the ancient dramatic convention of the unities of time, place and action. In al-Hakim's play, this convention is changed in order to add the element of family within the play.

Culture is an important part of the two plays. Each play reflects some of the cultural aspects of the society about which it was written. Although some of the ancient Greek cultural elements were shown in al-Hakim's play, some others were either removed or modified to suit the Arab audience. Thus, the treatment of God and the gods is not always the same. As Al-Hakim himself admits in his other expository writings, he had to deal with an ancient subject in a modern way to adapt to the new realities whether in terms of religious belief or societal culture.

Finally, the two plays differ in their degree of universality and popularity; Written about more than two thousand and five hundred years ago, Oedipus Rex has been translated into a host of languages and has been well received in many different cultures. Being only a relatively recent work, Al-Hakim's play has received only a limited critical opinion and has not been translated into a similar number of the worlds' languages. Its final success still awaits several more ages to come in order to see if it is a real match to the original on which it was based and which it tried to rewrite in a more modern way to suit a different audience and different times.

5.2 Recommendations:

One of the main recommendations that can be made in this study is the need for a good translation of Al-Hakim's plays into some of the world's best known and most influential languages. Although the play has been translated into French and English, the English translation seems to be out of print without being available for researchers to use in conducting their research. It is suggested, therefore, to make the play accessible in amenable translations that can be easily tracked and used.

Another recommendation to make is that more research needs to be done on the comparison of the two plays of Sophocles and Al-Hakim whether in Arabic or in English. As a matter of fact, Al-Hakim's play has not as yet received the critical attention it deserves whether in English or Arabic scholarship. Some studies are still needed to shed more light on the similarities and the differences between the two plays and between Western and Arab-Muslim cultures.

References

- Abu-Asali, B. (2014). Sophocles' King Oedipus: A New Reading. *Damascus University Journal*, 30 (1+2), 33-69.
- Allen, R. (2000). *The achievement of Tawfiq al-Hakim*. London: Cambridge University press
- Aristotle. (1902). *The Poetics of Aristotle* (third ed.). (S.H.Butcher, Trans.) London: Macmillan and Co.
- Barker, C. (2012). *Cultural Studies: Theory & Practice* (Third ed.). London: SAGE publications.
- Barringer, J. M. (2010). Zeus of Olympia. In J. N. Bremmer, & A. Erskine (Eds). *The Gods Of Ancient Greece: Identities and Transformations* (pp. 155-177). Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Barstow, M. (1912). Oedipus Rex as the Ideal Tragic Hero of Aristotle. *Classical Association of the Atlantic States*, 6(1), 2-4.
- Bennett, T. (1998). *Culture: A Reformer's Science*. London: SAGE publications.
- Chaudhary, K. (2013). THE DEVELOPMENT OF PLOT IN THE FAMOUS GREEK TRAGEDY "OEDIPUS REX" OR "OEDIPUS THE KING" BY SOPHOCLES. *Research journal of English language and literature*, 1(4), 242-244. Retrieved from <http://www.rjelal.com>
- Dodds, E. R. (1966). On Misunderstanding the Oedipus Rex. *Greece & Rome, Second Series*, 37-49. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/642354> .
- Etman, A. (2004). The Greek Concept Of Tragedy In The Arab Culture. How To Deal With An Islamic Oedipus? In F. Decreus, & M. Kolk (Eds). *Documenta* , 22 (4), 281-299.
- Flower, M. A. (2008). *The seer in ancient Greece*. London,: University of California Press.
- Freytag, G. (1894). *Technique of the Drama-An exposition of dramatic composition and art* (third Ed. ed.). (J. ELIAS, & M. A. MacEWAN, Trans.) Chicago: The Henry O. shepard Co. press.
- Gillett, G., & Hankey, R. (2005). Oedipus the King: Temperament, Characters, and Virtue. *Philosophy and Literature* , 29 (2), 269-285.
- Grossberg, L., Nelson, C., Treichler, P. A., Baughman, L., & Wise, J. M. (1992). *Cultural studies*. In L. Grossberg, C. Nelson, & P. A. Treichler (Eds). New York: Routledge.

- Haneef, S. (1996). *Islam-The Path of God*. Chicago: Library of Islam.
- Hawthorn, J. (1985). *Studying the Novel*. London: Edward Arnold publishers.
- Houle, M. M. (2001). *Gods and Goddesses IN Greek Mythology*. U.S.A: Enslow publishers.
- Ibrahim, I. A. (1997). *A Brief Illustrated Guide To Understanding Islam* (second edition ed.). Texas: Darussalam publishers and distributors.
- International Business publication (2013). Greece-country study guide. Washington DC: International Business Publication.
- jebb, R. C. (1885). *The Oedipus Tyrannus*. Cambridge: Cambridge university press.
- Johnson, R. (1986-1987). What is cultural studies anyway? *Social text* (16), 38-80.
- Johnson, R., Chambers, D., Raghuran, P., & Tincknell, E. (2004). *The practice of cultural studies*. London: SAGE publications .
- Jost, F. (1974). *Introduction to Comparative Literature*. New York: The bobbs-Merril company, Inc.
- Kolk, M. (2004). Tragedy And The Hero In Intercultural Perspective. King Oedipus Rewritten By Tawfiq Al-Hakim (Egypt, 1949) And Helene Cixous (France, 1977). (F. Decreus, & M. Kolk, Eds.) *Documenta* , 22 (4), 387-398.
- Lenout, G. (2006). Comparative literature in the low contries. *Comparative Critical Studies*, 3(1), 37-46.
- Lewin, J. (1997). Drama for students. *Literature Resource Center*.
- Mahfouz, S. M. (2012). The Arab Oedipus: Oriental Perspectives on the Myth. *Modern Drama*, 55(2), 171-196.
- Miller, T. (2001). *A companion to cultural studies* . (T. Miller, Ed.) Malden, Massachusetts, USA: Blackwell publishing Ltd.
- Mulready, S. (2004). Oedipus the king—imagery and humanism. *Journal of the Classical Association of Victoria n.s.*, 16(17), 40-45.
- Nehring, N. (1990). what should the politics of cultural studies be? *LIT: Literature Interpretation Theory* , 1 (3), 229-237.
- Nikolarea, E. (1994). Oedipus the King: A Greek Tragedy, Philosophy, Politics and Philology. *traduction, terminologie, rédaction,*, 7(1), 219-267.

- Nosrati, F., & Bagherzadeh, J. (2015). Trace the Effects of Humanism School in the Writing Tovfigh Alhakim. *Bagherzadeh et al., Int. J. Rev. Life. Sci.*, 5(1), 43-47. Retrieved from www.ijrls.pharmascope.org
- Parker, R. D. (2008). *How to Interpret Literature: Critical theory for literay and cultural studies*. New York: Oxford university press.
- Pormann, P. E. (2006). The Arab 'Cultural Awakening (Nahda)', 1870-1950, and the classical tradition. *International Journal of the Classical Tradition*, 13(1), 3-20. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/30222102>
- Remak, H. H. (1906). Comparative literature. Its definition and function. In N. P. Stalknecht, & H. Frenz, *Comparative literature. Method and perspective* (pp. 1-24). London & Amsterdam: Southern Illinois University Press.
- Rizv, S. S. (1980). *The Family Life Of Islam*. Tehran: world organization for Islamic survices.
- Roisman, H. M. (2003). Teiresias, the seer of Oedipus the King: Sophocles' and Seneca's versions. *Leeds International Classical Studies*, 2(5), 1-20. Retrieved from (<http://www.leeds.ac.uk/classics/lics/>)
- Romano, I. B. (spring 1982). Early Greek Idols: Their Appearance and Significance in the geomatric, orientalizing and arcaicperiods. *Expedition*, 24 (3), 3-13.
- Shamsuddin, S. M. (2012). Originality of French School in "Comparative Literature". *British Journal of Arts and Social Sciences*, 6 (2), 210-217.
- Shamsuddin, S. M., & Abd Rahman, M. z. (2012). A Note on French and American Theories in Comparative Literature. *International Science and Investigation Journal*, 1-10.
- Sophocles. (1954). *Oedipus Rex*. (D. Grene, R. Lattimore, Eds., & D. Grene, Trans.) Chicago: The university of Chicago press.
- Spiller, H. A., Hale, J. R., & De Boer, J. Z. (2002). The Delphic Oracle: A Multidisciplinary Defense of the Gaseous Vent Theory. *Clinical Toxicology*, 40(2), 189–196.
- Templeton, A. (1992). Sociology and literature: Theories for cultural criticism. *College literature*, 19 (2), 19-30.
- Tyson, L. (1999). *Critical theory today: A user-friendly guide*. New York: Garland publishing Inc.
- Weiner, A. (1980). The Function of the Tragic Greek Chorus. *Theatre Journal*, 32(2), 205-212. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3207113>.

- Williams, R. (2002). Culture Is Ordinary. In B. Highmore (Ed.), The Everyday Life Reader (pp. 91- 100). London : Routledge.
- Yousef, Tawfiq. (1996). *Drama*. Amman: Al-Quds Open university Publications.
- Zepetnek, S. T. (1851). *Comparative literature: Theory, Method and Application*. Amsterdam.

Arabic references مصادر

عربية

- أبو عسلي، برهان (2014) أوديب ملكا لسوفوكليس. مجلة جامعة دمشق ، 30 (2) ، 33-69
- حجاجي ، أحمد ، شمس الدين (1984) الأسطورة في المسرح المصري المعاصر. القاهرة: دار المعارف
- حكيم ، توفيق (1990) مسرحية الملك أوديب. القاهرة: دار الشروق
- ديب، حمزة، عبد الرحمن (2009) أوديب وتجلياته في المسرح العربي. (رسالة ماجستير غير منشورة) جامعة البعث: سوريا
- عبد الله، مصطفى (1983) أسطورة أوديب في المسرح المعاصر عند: أندريه جيد، جان كوكتو، توفيق الحكيم، علي أحمد باكثير، علي سالم. القاهرة: الهيئة المصرية العامة للكتاب
- عيد ، رجاء (1992) دراسة في أدب توفيق الحكيم- تحليل ونقد. الإسكندرية: منشأة المعارف للنشر
- مندور، محمد (1960) مسرح توفيق الحكيم. القاهرة: دار نهضة مصر للطباعة والنشر