Oedipus’ tragedy is revealed by Apollo, Pentheus’ by Dionysius. In what ways are these two tragedies similar, and in what ways different?

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The most important matter~~s that~~mentioned in Greek tragic literature are ~~about~~ heroes and their relationship to the gods. In this era, there are two famous plays, *Oedipus Tyrannous* by Sophocles, and *Bacchae* by Euripides. The Greek people believed that gods controlled what happened to them and that if they went against the gods they would fall to their ~~perish~~ doom. (peril)

The reason that these plays have lasted until today is the central idea that tragic events happen when humans try to change their destiny. This essay will explain the similarities and differences between these tragedies.

*Oedipus Tyrannus* is a drama of self-discovery, the story is about of a taboo sin. In terms of the play, Oedipus is a man who trapped by a cruel and evil fate that he cannot escape ~~of it~~. He is a hero, a courageous man who chooses to seek out the truth about himself no matter the consequences. Oedipus knows the prophecy that Tiresias, the blind prophet, has told him, this painful secret makes him to search for the truth in order to change his fate. In this play, Sophocles indicates the importance of the will of the gods. There is an element of freedom for human beings who has the ability to choose without thinking where that choice will take them. Oedipus’s fate makes the point that he is fully responsible for what he does, no matter what happens, even if he loses everything. **What is his fate and how is he responsible for what he does?**

Sophocles, in his tragedy, illustrates Oedipus as a good man who becomes a king and is loved by his people. He ignored his limitations as a human, and as a great king, he became so arrogant because of his power. His hubris is a crucial point that led him to a painful tragedy, he leaves his home to change his fate because of Tiresias’ prophecy that he kills his father and marries his mother. Ironically, his past is revealed to him by people and gods who trust them more than the others, as Oedipus says, “Apollo is fully justified to remind us of our obligations to the dead. Apollo be with us, he will reveal our fortune- or our fall” (I.135-146, p.6).

In this tragedy, Apollo has an important role that causes a terrible fate, “Apollo! It was Apollo, my friends. Agony after agony, he brought them on. But I did this… by my own hand. Why should I have eyes, when there is nothing sweet to see?”. (I.1330, p.56). As mentioned in this quote, Oedipus blames Apollo for his two shameful crimes that caused his sufferings, but he also quickly accepts his responsible for his sin. Oedipus’s fate is in both his own hands and those of Apollo. Oedipus acknowledges that he is the cause of his fate even though many things have also contributed to his fate coming about. He laments that the Apollo allowed this to happen, but he does not avoid claiming responsibility. The gods, especially Apollo, in this tragedy are seen to be contributing to evil because they did not tell the truth to Oedipus. Because of this painful sin, Oedipus blinds himself over the dead body of Jocasta, his wife and his mother. It is a painful part of this tragedy, even in description, but Oedipus decided to justify himself and accept the total responsibility for what he did and he determined to take the punishment of exile as well. He blinds himself, because he feels that he does not deserve to have eyesight, since he did not use it when he had it because of his hubris. “Oh! Oh! It all comes clear! Light, let me look at you one last time. I am exposed- born to forbidden parents, joined in forbidden marriage, I brought forbidden death.” (I.1185, p.51).

On the other side, the tragedy by Euripides *Bacchae*, reader encounter with the legend of Pentheus who was the king of Thebes, Euripides sets the scene for the relationship between Pentheus and Dionysus as one of contest. In this legend, Pentheus, the king of Thebes and Dionysus are both grandsons of Cadmus. Pentheus became the king of Thebes, and this election is the start of the conflict between him and Dionysus. Pentheus wants to establish a rational system in his kingdom, and refuses to allow anyone to worship Dionysus because he wants to limit the power of Dionysus. Dionysus is the god of sensual pleasures, and is so eager to let women roam freely in the wild. Pentheus prefers to control women and has a legal order for all of them. He obliges people to follow his rules strictly, in contrast, Dionysius warns people that strict rules can be harmful for the society. The legend clarifies that Pentheus refuses to accept Dionysus as a god, also his arrogance and suspicious cause a painful fate for him. Tiresias the blind prophet made him aware of his fate, but his hubris makes him ignores the power of gods. As Tiresias says,

Now as for this new god whom your laughter mocks, I couldn’t describe his greatness and how powerful he'll be throughout Greece. For there are two things, young man, that are the primary elements among humans. First there's the goddess Demeter. She's the earth but you can call her by whatever name you wish. She nourishes mortals with dry foods. But he who came afterward, Semele's offspring, invented the wet drink of the grapes a counter-balance to Demeter's bread. he introduced it to mortals to stop their sorrow and pain. (*I. 272-280, p.215*)

**Explain how this shows why Pentheus wants to limit the power of Dionysus, and how this indicates, possibly, his jealousy of the god.**

In both of the tragedies, Oedipus and Pentheus do not care about the power of gods, they are warned by the prophet Tiresias, but ignore their limitation as a human and attempt to change their fates by their own power. **Talk about Pentheus here. Talk about his mother. Talk about the influence that Tiresias has on Pentheus.**According to Greek Mythology, Tiresias was a prophet at Thebes, Tiresias had a dynamic influence in the unfortunate occasions including Laius, the lord of Thebes, and his child Oedipus. Later legend told that he lived for seven (or nine) eras, biting the dust after the campaign of the Seven against Thebes. Other than life span, another of Tiresias' components includes his having lived as a man, then as a lady, and after that as a man once more. Supposedly, he had been transformed into a lady as the consequence of having struck and injured mating snakes. At the point when Tiresias came back to the site of the change seven years after the fact to check whether the "spell" could be turned around, Tiresias did in fact observe similar snakes coupling and was changed once more into a man. She prophesied that due to Pentheus' tough headedness he would die a tree by the hand of a woman who had born her. (par.5)

In *Bacchae*, Pentheus’ hubris is his tragic flaw, which leads him to be killed by his mother Agave. Pentheus does not believe that Dionysus is a god, so in revenge Dionysus changes the face of Pentheus to a wild animal and in the eyes of his mother who in the end kills his son without knowing who he is. **Tell me that his hubris drove him to a madness which eventually led to his downfall.** As Agave says, “Dionysus has destroyed us. Only now do I realize this.” (*I.1295, p.261*)

In both tragedies, Oedipus and Pentheus have tragic endings, but there are some kinds differences between Oedipus’ and Pentheus’ tragic ending, in *Oedipus Tyrannus*, Oedipus forces other characters to tell him the truth of matters thereby creating his tragic ending, while in *Bacchae*, Pentheus knows the truth but ignores it. Oedipus trusts gods, especially Apollo, but Pentheus was against Dionysius. Apollo was not involved with Oedipus, and refused to answer his questions at all. Oedipus says, “I went to Delphi. But there, Apollo shunned me, denied my questions and sent me away, but not before he revealed what was to come.” (I.788-789, p.33) Finally, Apollo reveals the truth to Oedipus, but puts him in the wrong way and never reveals the whole truth and leads him in the opposite direction. In comparison, Dionysius tells the whole truth to Pentheus but he refuses to accept that. Sophocles and Euripides at this point try to demonstrate the role of the gods in man’s life and clarify a warning to mankind to avoid becoming too hubris and too godlike. Also, they make the readers aware that gods are not essentially good, sometimes they become evil and destroy human life. The other difference that can be mentioned is about the power of Oedipus is that he was a popular king, while Pentheus was arrogant and not in great authority. Also, the wisdom and reservation of Oedipus cannot be compared to Pentheus’ lack of reason and insight. **Put this paragraph about the previous two.**

To conclude, both tragedies illustrate the power of gods and human limitation, they describe that the prophecy does not only predict the future, but also makes the future happen in that way. A tragic hero is essentially a character who is responsible for his fate and does not listen to prophecy and wants to know the full truth. Humans, with their limitation, cannot change fate, and also cannot bear whole truth. These limitations can lead to a tragic ending. In Both tragedies, Oedipus and Pentheus have hubristic characters and this feature causes a painful realization of the inescapability of their fate.

* **Write your thesis and put it at the end of your into paragraph (whole and partial truth).**
* **Explain the quotations and examples using the language of whole and partial truth.**

There are many grammatical errors in this paper. Please see my corrections in the first two paragraphs, especially those of subject and verb agreement. As far as the content is concerned, I don’t hear a meaningful comparison of the two situations until the end of the paper. That commentary should appear much earlier, and inform your commentary throughout. Your expository content is lost without much meaning without this structure.

65/100

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