

Tribhuvan University

**Role of Fate in Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex* and Shakespeare's
*Macbeth***

**A thesis Submitted to Central Department of English
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Degree of
Master of Arts in English**

by

Madhav Prasad Gautam

Central Department of English

Kirtipur, Kathmandu

July 7, 2007

Tribhuvan University
Faculties of Humanities and Social Sciences

This thesis titled “Role of Fate in Sophocles’ *Oedipus Rex* and Shakespeare’s *Macbeth*,” submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, by Madhav Prasad Gautam, has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee.

Members of the Research Committee

Internal Examiner

External Examiner

Head
Central Department of English

Date: _____

Acknowledgements

Inspiration always plays a vital role in every progress in human life.

I am greatly indebted to my respected teacher Sajag Rana whose inspiring suggestion and guidance helped me prepare this thesis. Likewise, I express my deep sense of respect to Dr. Krishna Chandra Sharma, Head of the Central Department of English, for his inspiring suggestion to complete this task. I heartily express my sincere gratitude to Prof. Abhi Subedi who persistently encouraged me providing the genuine ideas and suggestions. I am also thankful to my respected teachers in the Central Department of English, who directly or indirectly helped in course of my writing.

I want to acknowledge my colleague Pradip Giri's valuable ideas and techniques. At last, I sincerely thank my wife Monika Gautam (Karki), brothers Shiva Karki and Kishor Thapa for their encouragement and Bishnu Sharma for computer typing and printing.

Madhav Prasad Gautam

July 7, 2007

Abstracts

This dissertation basically makes a comparative study of Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex* and Shakespeare's *Macbeth* in terms of the concept of fatalism. Tragic consequences that the protagonists of both plays confront are the result of their fate. Both plays are concerned with the theme of fate, inevitability, and the characters are helpless in front of their fate.

The protagonists of *Oedipus Rex* and *Macbeth* are victimized by fate. These plays have the story of the noble men who seek knowledge and power that in the end destroy them. Their actions are measured and prophesied by their fate. Oedipus' fate compels him to discover the truth and Macbeth's fate order him to evoke his ambition. Oedipus tries to avoid the possibility of killing his father and marrying his mother, but he cannot. Similarly, Macbeth also tries to escape his ambitions but he also cannot because of the prophecies of the tree witches. Thus, protagonists' wisdom, power and confidence can't help them to escape their fate.

This thesis makes through study of the influence of Greek themes of fate and inevitability in Shakespeare's *Macbeth* which demonstration the universality of Greek themes in European experience.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgments iii

Abstract iv

CHAPTER I

Introduction 1

Background 1

Sophocles and His Works 4

Shakespeare and His Works 6

Greek Concept of fate in Different Writers 10

CHAPTER II

Fate 17

CHAPTER III

Fate in *Oedipus Rex* and *Macbeth* 34

CHAPTER IV

Conclusion 80

Works Cited 86

Role of Fate in Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex* and Shakespeare's *Macbeth*

By - Madhav Prasad Gautam

Role of Fate in Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex* and Shakespeare's *Macbeth*

By - Madhav Prasad Gautam

Role of Fate in Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex* and Shakespeare's *Macbeth*

By - Madhav Prasad Gautam