

Your third paper will be a literary explication of 3-5 typewritten pages, some sort of pre-writing (rough draft, outline, dialectical exploration) of approximately two handwritten pages is due Thursday, March 1st. I will read and make comments on these. The final version of the paper is due Thursday, March 8th at the beginning of class.

Topics (choose one or see me if you wish to develop a topic of your own):

1. Discuss the figurative uses of "light" (and related images) in Plato's Phaedrus and Sophocles' King Oedipus. Look carefully for shades of difference in the kinds of light used metaphorically and in the meanings suggested by them in the two works. You may wish to use information you collected in your OED exercise.
2. Consider the UT Drama Department's production of Oedipus in relation to Nietzsche's (or Aristotle's) ideas about the nature of tragedy. In what ways was the production Nietzschean (or Aristotelian)? How did it vary from or fall short of the theoretical model? Was the success (or failure) of the production related to these elements?
3. Treat Oedipus as a Platonic dialogue with Oedipus himself as a seeker after truth. Identify his various interlocutors and the "truth" resulting from his dialectical encounter with each. What are the differences in the effects and outcome of the two genres (dialogue and tragedy)? You may want to consider Nietzsche's discussion of Socrates and the Platonic dialogue (last page of handout).
4. Contrast the idea of king presented in King Oedipus and that of Henry IV, Part I. Include dialogue, character, and action in your analysis: that is, what do characters say about kings, what are the kings (or potential kings) like in each play, and how do they act?
5. Choose a passage from King Oedipus which you think is crucial to understanding the play (Oedipus' curse, Teiresias' prophecy, one of the chorus "songs"). Then go to the library and look up the same passage in another translation of the play. How do they differ? How do the differences affect a reading of the play? You might think about key terms, sentence structure, order of ideas, figurative expressions, the level of diction (formal to colloquial).
6. Consider Falstaff from Henry IV, Part I as a dialectician. How does he use language in his arguments with Hal? (Look especially at the following passages: I, ii, 1-148; II, iv, 94-267; III, iii, 85-197.) What is the status of "truth" in these scenes?