

Thirst for Knowledge : A Study of Ambitious Oedipus and Sinhabahu

Muditha Dharmasiri^{1(*)}

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¹*Department of Classical Languages, Faculty of Arts, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

(*) E.mail: mudithad_5@yahoo.com

Living a lie for a long time is similar to living in a matrix where ignorance and false realities coexist. To escape this false reality would be the same as it was for Plato's cave-prisoner leaving the cave. Everything he thought real was only an illusion. The way one reacts to the new-found knowledge depends on the individual. This quest in search of truth is visible in Sophocles' King Oedipus and Sarachchandra's Sinhabahu. The comparative method is used to examine the protagonists and it offers cross-cultural perspectives regarding this issue. Both of them question about who they are and their thirst for knowledge makes them ambitious and leads to turmoil. From the moment Oedipus and Sinhabahu enter Thebes and Vanga, chaos befalls. Oedipus being the impious criminal brings a plague to the city, and Sinhabahu for running away from the cave brings the wrath of the Lion to the city. They are quick to decide and act. Oedipus accuses Tiresias and Creon for conspiring to dethrone him. Sinhabahu at first aspires to be the king of the jungle and later on ruling the people of Vanga. These hasty decisions show their greediness to gain and retain power. They seek knowledge for their personal benefit. Neither one of them is altruistic about their goals as saviours of their cities. They embody the idea of a ruler who pursues power and lives with much insecurity. Thus, this thirst for knowledge is to retain their authority or for their own security.

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