NOTE: The following comments hardly represent an encyclopedic or otherwise comprehensive consideration of tragic elements in Oedipus the King, much less in any or all the other plays we have studied. Merely a guided starting point—you will need to study the texts and think them through on your own.

“Aeschylean”
1. Tragic formula...
   a. koros. — bad excess!!! Creon? Power, but not the glory of king. Oedipus gets the same perks. Does being the king lessen this, or make it even more an example of koros? Oedipus is a hero, star, glorified. [ln37-41]
   b. hubris. [ln245 - Oedipus likens himself to a god] hubris breeds the tyrant.
   c. ate. ruin/madness. Oedipus discovering he killed his father and married his mother. Jocasta hangs self, Oedipus blinds self.
   d. dike. —justice
2. Cycle of violence. — is this present? Laius exposes baby Oedipus. Murder of Laius leads to all other violence? (screwed up family relations over/undervalued. long established in the family)
3. pathei mathos (“through suffering, knowledge”).

Hegelian
1. “Simple consciousness” (role of chorus). — Hegel says the chorus has a special perspective on action (though not necessarily omniscient), but doesn't act. Non-direct involvement of chorus in action. Stage-audience. Intermediary for the audience, say things the audience would want to say. "Villagers." Chorus has knowledge characters lack. Is this our chorus? Chorus lacks "dark" knowledge. They don't know who Oedipus is. Involved in discovery process. (Question of whose side they're on?) DO bring up Laius's death. Drive the conversations. Modulate dramatic tension? DO know more than Oedipus does?
2. “Individual pathos” (role of characters) ... characters are embodiments of imperatives at odds with each other. Hegel reading acknowledges the Oedipus. Oedipus is an internal dialectic.

[Instructor’s note, Hegel on Oedipus: seeming internal contradiction of justice based on un-chosen circumstances versus personal responsibility. Oedipus must reconcile self to his fate - accept who he is. This will carry over into Oedipus at Colonus - sort of "delayed synthesis"??]


c. synthesis. -- SEE HEGEL READING pp. 71 ff. "Synthesis" = a resolution of contradictions (thesis versus antithesis) such that a higher understanding is reached. synthesis does not mean "compromise" or "common ground." it means a harmonious combination of the two ideas, a way of seeing whereby opposed imperatives, when placed in perspective, cease to conflict - a world accommodating both an Antigone and a Creon (i.e., a realization that society cannot function unless the imperatives of both household and state are honored).

To quote http://www.connect.net/ron/hegel.html:

"The thesis ... might be an idea or a historical movement. Such an idea or movement contains within itself incompleteness that gives rise to opposition, or an antithesis, a conflicting idea or movement. As a result of the conflict a third point of view arises, a synthesis, which overcomes the conflict by reconciling at a higher level the truth contained in both the thesis and antithesis."

synthesis in OK is a bit of a puzzle, even after you've read Hegel. it seems to revolve around the conflict between willed action and unwilled action - the fact that we are held accountable for both. As
an internal conflict, we can see the drama of it played out in the transformation of Oedipus on stage: it seems to have to with his attitude vis-à-vis his own actions. There is, then, as with the Antigone, much overlap between this internal dialectic and the play's main conflicts, which, to one degree or another, play out in the psyche of the main character. But resolution is not, acc. to Hegel, reached on OK but in Oedipus at Colonus, which we shall soon read.

**Aristotelian**

1. *muthos*-plot...

a. simple versus complex -- simple plot has NEITHER recognition NOR reversal. Complex has one or the other or both. Complex is "better." Oedipus is... complex. Recognition - Oedipus recognizes himself as the killer. People recognize the holes in Oedipus's feet = Oedipus was the son of Laius. Jocasta recognizes that she's married to her son (does she know?). [A WHOLE BUNCH OF THESE] Reversal - Oedipus goes from searcher to "search-ee." -- In Oedipus King, to recognize is to make a reversal, in this play.

b. episodic

2. *ethos*-inner nature.

3. Complication, resolution.

4. *hamartia*-error. -- error in the way Oedipus handles himself as ruler? False move as a result of character (ethos). Just exile vs. heaps curses upon the murderer of Laius. free will act? (Even in a universe where things are fated?)

5. *anagnorisis*-recognition. [see 1a]

6. *peripeteia*-reversal. [see 1a]

7. Catharsis.

8. General, "poetic" truths (superior to particular truths of historical narrative, section 9 page 11).