



# **The Three Theban Plays: Antigone; Oedipus the King; Oedipus at Colonus**

*Sophocles*

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*Sophocles*

## **The Three Theban Plays: Antigone; Oedipus the King; Oedipus at Colonus** Sophocles

Towering over the rest of Greek tragedy, Sophocles' The Three Theban Plays are among the most enduring and timeless dramas ever written. This Penguin Classics edition is translated by Robert Fagles with introductions and notes by Bernard Knox. Collected here are Antigone, Oedipus the King and Oedipus at Colonus, in a translation by Robert Fagles which retains all of Sophocles' lucidity and power: the cut and thrust of his dialogue, his ironic edge, the surge and majesty of his choruses and, above all, the agonies and triumphs of his characters. Oedipus in exile, searching for his identity, desperately trying to avoid his fate, seeking the truth of his origins and achieving immortality; his daughter, Antigone, defending her integrity and ideals to the death - these heroic, tragic figures have captivated theatregoers and readers since the fifth century BC. It is Sophocles' characterisation of Oedipus that would, in the nineteenth century, inspire Sigmund Freud to a revolutionary conception of the human mind, and the tragedies in this volume continue to move and inspire us to this day. Sophocles (496-405 BC) was born at Colonus, just outside Athens. His long life spanned the rise and decline of the Athenian Empire; he was a friend of Pericles, and though not an active politician he held several public offices, both military and civil. The leader of a literary circle and friend of Herodotus, Sophocles wrote over a hundred plays, drawing on a wide and varied range of themes, and winning the City Dionysia eighteen times; though only seven of his tragedies have survived, among them Antigone, Oedipus Rex, Ajax and Oedipus at Colonus. If you enjoyed The Three Theban Plays, you might like Aeschylus' The Oresteia, also available in Penguin Classics. 'I know of no better English version' Sir Hugh Lloyd-Jones, Oxford University 'The most impressive verse translations of Sophocles that have been made' Stephen Spende

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