

Review of: "The Eden Complex: Transgression and Transformation in the Bible, Freud and Jung"

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I thoroughly enjoyed reading this thought-provoking and insightful paper. The author adeptly highlights the significance of transgression within broad social and psychological phenomena and its role in the psychotherapeutic process. Additionally, the paper provides a detailed analysis of the psychoanalytic origins of this concept by delving into the myth of Eden.

I would like to contribute two critical observations for further consideration. The author draws a comparison between the Oedipal myth and the myth of Eden, with a particular emphasis on the latter's importance. While the paper posits that the Oedipal myth primarily addresses sexual and aggressive drives, and the myth of Eden centers on transgression against authority, I believe this distinction might oversimplify the complexity of these two myths.

Firstly, it's important to note that the Oedipal myth also contains elements of transgression, a point that scholars like Loewald and Ogden (see (Loewald, 2000; Ogden, 2006) have emphasized. Of notice, the theme of the younger generation rebelling against parental authority recurs in Greek mythology, as evident in instances such as the castration of Uranus by his son Cronus, who was subsequently overthrown by his own son, Zeus.

Secondly, the myth of Eden encompasses various sexual motifs, including the serpent, seduction, the enticing fruit described as "pleasing to the eye" and "desiring for gaining wisdom" (which could be associated with an epistemophilic drive), and the shame of being naked. Furthermore, the myth delves into different gender roles as they were conceived in ancient Mediterranean cultures. Adam and Eve, as prototypes of man and woman, assume distinct roles in their transgressions and subsequent punishments. Notably, the author references Genesis 16-17, which outlines the punishment of the woman but omits the sentence: "Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you." This sentence arguably reflects the patriarchal culture of ancient times. It would be intriguing to explore the psychoanalytic underpinnings of these motifs, as they may align with Freud's and Lacan's ideas concerning the primal father, though certainty remains elusive.

In any case, it appears that both the Oedipal myth and the Eden myth share common themes of transgression, or at the very least, conflicts with paternal authority, as well as sexual content intertwined with gender asymmetries typical of ancient patriarchal societies.

Top of Form

References

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