

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

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I enjoyed reading the article. It is thought-provoking and delightfully written. The juxtaposition of the "Eden complex" with the "Oedipal complex" is fascinating. In each of the complexes, the "law of the father" (which, according to Freud, becomes the superego) takes on a different meaning. Indeed, it has implications for the formation of values and moral perspectives.

I believe that the contribution of this article can be divided into different research areas:

- a. The development of Jung's own psychoanalytic theory, both biographically and in light of the relationship with Freud.
- b. The multitude of psychoanalytic approaches and schools regarding 'human nature', as can be learned from Jung's "Eden complex".
- c. It offers an example of how early psychoanalysts turned to the Holy Scriptures, religious thought, and mythology in general to glean insights about human nature and society.

A few notes:

Once more, I would like to thank Sanford Drob for his excellent article, which also highlights the connection between psychological interpretation and ethics. Philosophically, his main claim is that resistance to irrational authority (the irrational demand not to eat the forbidden fruit) establishes individuation and autonomy. As Drob writes, "Indeed, it is through their transgression that Adam and Eve became human."

This conclusion is consistent with the autonomy principle that emerged at the outset of the Enlightenment and centers the individual over God or any other heteronomic authority. Philosophically, Drob's stance is consistent with Nietzsche's critique of Kant (which is indeed essential to comprehending Freud's psychological ideas. Nietzsche believed that the human being should not be characterized as a moral rational agent, but rather as a *Übermensch* (Overman, superman) who possesses the ability to create himself (see footnote 40), and that one must focus on [unconscious] motives, especially impulses, etc. However, despite their great differences, both Kant and Nietzsche place a strong emphasis on the individual who is able to "liberate" himself (whether by the power of reason in Kant or by the power of will according to Nietzsche).

I would like to philosophically challenge this assumption (in light of a rabbinical and Jewish philosophical tradition, mostly

of Martin Buber, but also in light of the basic principle of the Freudian psychoanalysis of the therapist-patient relationship, in which the assumption is that the person depends on another person for his 'liberation'). A careful examination of the biblical text reveals that not only transgression and disobedience should be seen as the formation of humans as such.

A number of biblical scholars and philosophers highlight the interpersonal dynamic between Adam and Eve. In the face of an angry God, they do not take responsibility but distance themselves from the blame. Genesis 3:12: "The man said, "The woman You put at my side—she gave me of the tree, and I ate." This illustrates a crucial feature of their partnership. They don't protect and care for each other, and perhaps they don't even really talk to each other. That is, the lack of empathy, listening, and dialogue can be seen as the original sin. Hence, the "fall" is due to a lack of love. The idea that transgression is the foundation of freedom is somewhat contested by this. According to this interpretation, freedom precisely rests on one's moral responsibility toward the other. Thus, becoming human means taking on the responsibility to 'listen' and responding to 'the other' (Buber, Levinas). The Jewish interpretive tradition (and this shows a difference between Jung and Freud) emphasizes murder within the family, that is, Abel's murder by his brother Cain, as the "original sin" (based on the idea that damaging a human being is damaging the image of God). On this, see, e.g., Hermann Cohen, *The Religion of Reason*.

The article presents Jung's approach very well. However, there are some matters that have not received attention (naturally and due to the scope of the article) in the context of Freud:

Freud wrote *Totem and Taboo* against the background of the debate with Jung regarding how psychoanalysis "should" understand religion and religious scriptures (Freud did not accept a mystical interpretation of the Holy Scriptures if it came as a substitute for the "core of the neurosis"). In other words, Jung's (Christian) inclination towards mysticism was seen by Freud as a threat to what he saw as the scientific foundations of psychoanalysis.

Freud turned to Greek mythology and not to the biblical story, among other reasons, because he feared that psychoanalysis would be considered "a Jewish science." As already emphasized by many researchers, as early as the beginning of the last century, the Oedipal complex could have been more clearly demonstrated in the binding of Isaac than in the mythological story of Oedipus. With the rise of the Nazis, Freud allowed himself to deviate from this (and even felt obliged to do so) in his last book on Moses.

To understand the relationship between Freud and Jung in the context of religion, I would recommend: Erich Fromm, *Psychoanalysis and Religion*, Chapter 2: "Freud and Jung". For a relevant psychoanalytic interpretation of the story of Eden, see Erich Fromm, *You Shall Be as Gods*, Chapter 3: "The Concept of Man". Ken Wilber, *Up from Eden: A Transpersonal View of Human Evolution*.