

74. Deconstruction of *Oedipus the King* in myth due to the naming of the Oedipus complex

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Abstract

With the acceleration of interdisciplinary studies, naming discoveries inspired by different fields has become widespread at the same speed. In this study, it is emphasized that the diseases or syndromes defined in psychology are named after the myths in the circle of literature and history, but this naming causes those who do not know the myths to misunderstand and misinterpret the character in the myth. In addition, it has been emphasized that the inspired myth may actually have been misinterpreted based on the life story of the name maker. Sophocles' *Oedipus the King* is one of the myths in which his character is misdiagnosed. Freud chose Oedipus as the name of the syndrome he discovered because it reflects his own life story, but there is a big difference between what Freud felt consciously and the fate that Oedipus lived without even being aware of it. To be able to eliminate this misfortune that has happened to other myths like this, requires mastering the whole story before choosing the myths that are the source of inspiration in naming diseases.

Keywords: Oedipus Complex, Oedipus the King, Sophocles, Freud, mythology, psychiatry, psychoanalysis

Oidipus kompleksinin adlandırılmasından dolayı mitte Kral Oidipus'un dekonstrüksiyonu

Öz

Disiplinler arası çalışmaların hızlanması ile farklı alanlardan ilham alarak buluşları isimlendirmek aynı hızla yaygınlaşmıştır. Bu çalışmada, psikolojide tanımlanan hastalık ya da sendromların edebiyat ve tarih çemberindeki mitlerden esinlenilerek isimlendirildiği ancak bu isimlendirmenin, mitleri bilmeyenlerin mitteki karakteri yanlış anlamalarına ve yanlış yorumlamalarına neden olduğu vurgulanmaktadır. Buna ek olarak, isimlendiren kişinin hayat hikayesinden yola çıkılarak esinlenen mitin aslında yanlış yorumlanmış olabileceği vurgulandı. Sofokles'in Kral Oidipus'u, karakterine yanlış teşhis konulan mitlerden biridir. Freud, kendi hayat hikayesini yansıttığı için keşfettiği sendromun adı olarak Oidipus'u seçmiştir, ancak Freud'un bilinçli olarak hissettikleri ile Oidipus'un farkında bile olmadan yaşadığı kader arasında büyük bir fark vardır. Bunun gibi, diğer mitlerin başına gelen bu talihsizliği ortadan kaldırabilmek, hastalıkların isimlendirilmesinde ilham kaynağı olan mitleri seçmeden önce tüm hikayeye hakim olmayı gerektirir.

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Anahtar kelimeler: Oidipus Kompleksi, Kral Oidipus, Sofokles, Freud, Mitoloji, Psikiyatri, Psikanaliz

It has often been observed that some inventions are named after the inventor; Louis Braille developed the Braille alphabet for the visually impaired (Roth & Fee, 2011), many by the real name of what it works for; the word 'sclerosis' from Greek meaning hardness and 'derma' meaning skin (Petty, 2019) becoming both a rheumatic and connective tissue disease which is Scleroderma, and lastly some by the name of things they recall from ancient times; the planet Uranus named after the Greek sky god Ouranos, the oldest of the lords of the heavens (Choi, 2019). In this context, the origins of some psychological concepts are mythologies such as Atreus Complex, Iocasta Complex, Mythomania, Orestes Syndrome (Gürel & Muter, 2007). Although people live in a period where interdisciplinary research and studies can be carried out in a healthy and efficient way, it does not seem possible for experts to have full knowledge of the other fields in question, even if they have researched and practiced a few fields outside of their own as it requires their profession. When evaluated empirically, it is predicted that this issue may lead to a misunderstanding and a misinterpretation of mythological stories. Researchers unfamiliar with mythologies will only know what is defined within their field. The Oedipus Complex is one of the most known of misunderstanding and a misinterpretation which is named after the tragedy of King Oedipus (Freud, 2010:278) and allegedly suffering from it. The purpose of this article is not to discuss whether there is a complex whose existence and validity has not even been proven (Kupfersmid,1995:546), but to save the honor of King Oedipus.

The Oedipus Complex (hereinafter OC) is one of the fundamental concepts of Freudian theories. The tragedy of *Oedipus the King* is Sigmund Freud's practically most well-known discovery as well as his primary reference for his self-assessment in *The Interpretation of Dreams* (Freud, 2010:xxvi). However, when the existence of the OC is subtracted from the equation, questions arise such as: why OC cannot be considered a disease, what Freud's problems are, why King Oedipus is shown as evidence for OC, what is the real problem of King Oedipus. Because if there is no OC, there will be no answer to these questions. If answers to these questions can be found, then these answers will show the invalidity of OC. So, in order to solve a non-OC equation, why *Oedipus the King* is the primary source for OC but also why it cannot be the source, and what problems Freud and King Oedipus have if there is no OC will be disclosed.

Freud ascribes his psychological discovery to King Oedipus in *The Interpretation of Dreams*. Even though legends' authenticity is dubious, he says this finding is corroborated by a narrative that dates back to ancient antiquity; this legend's deep and all-pervasive ability to move people can only be perceived if the theory he has advanced on the psychology of children is also true across the board. Due to the characteristics of the legend, Freud has been affected by Sophocles' drama and declared the name of the complex as OC (Freud, 2010:278).

Freud's indisputable discovery is conventionally supported by Iocasta's speech when Oedipus feels uncomfortable about oracle's foresight. Iocasta says "But do not fear touching wedlock with your mother. Many men before now have so fared in dreams also; but he to whom these things are as nothing bears his life most easily" (Sophocles, 2006:106). According to Freud the text of Sophocles' play has a clear evidence that the tale of Oedipus originated from some prehistoric dream content that dealt with the upsetting disruption of a child's relationship to his parents caused by the emergence of sexuality. When Oedipus, who has not yet attained enlightenment, starts to feel worried by his memory of the oracle, Iocasta comforts him by alluding to a common dream that, in her opinion, has no significance

(Freud, 2010:281). On the other hand, when Freud explains the importance of dreams, he refers to psychosexual development stages when everyone fulfils it in five stages. He emphasizes that OC occurs in the phallic stage, which starts at late three and finishes at the end of age five. This stage is determined by caring too much about sexuality and sexual fantasies regarding the opposite-sex parent, mostly unconsciously, evolves (Gençtan, 2002:36). To Freud, these sexual fantasies are the references to the dreams which Iocasta utters to Oedipus, and also, wishes. In *The Ego and the Id* Freud explains the origins of OC by describing a case of a male youngster. The small boy develops an object-cathexis for his mother at a very young age, which initially corresponds “to the mother's breast and is the prototype of an object-choice on the anaclitic model”; the kid interacts with his father by associating himself with him. For a while, these two connections coexist until the boy's sexual desires for his mother grow more powerful and his father is viewed as an impediment to them; here is where the OC emerges (Freud, 1969:27). As Freud indicates, nowadays and in the past, many men fantasize about having sex with their moms and express their outrage and amazement when they learn this. It is without a doubt the solution to the tragedy and the fulfillment of the dreamer's father's death. These two common dreams serve as the inspiration for the Oedipus tragedy (Freud, 2010:281). Therefore, to prove the existence of OC, Sophocles' *Oedipus the King* has been analyzed interdisciplinary for decades line by line. *Oedipus The King had to conclusively prove* the existence of OC because Freud claimed the OC is originated from this legend.

In fact, enough evidence can be found in the tragedy of King Oedipus to possibly prove OC within the framework drawn by Freud, if read superficially. Since the tragedy is quite clear:

After learning from an oracle that he, King Laius of Thebes, would die at the hands of his own son soon after Oedipus was born, Laius gave his wife Jocasta the order to murder the child. He was left to the forest since neither she nor her servant had the strength to kill him. Before being adopted and grown up at the court of the childless King Polybus of Corinth as if he were his own son, he was discovered there and nurtured by a shepherd. Oedipus sought advice from an oracle after learning that he wasn't the king's biological son, and the oracle predicted that he would wed his own mother and murder his own father. Oedipus fled Corinth because he was desperate to escape this prophesied destiny and thought Polybus and Merope were his real parents. On the way to Thebes, he encountered Laius, his actual father. Because they were ignorant of one another's true identities, they got into a fight, and Oedipus' arrogance drove him to kill Laius, partially fulfilling the oracle's prophesy. Later, he deciphered the Sphinx's riddle, and the crown of Thebes and the hand of Queen Jocasta—his biological mother—were his rewards for rescuing the Theban country from the Sphinx's curse. Despite the fact that none of the primary characters were aware of it at the time, the prophesy was thus realized (Roomland, 2022).

Sophocles' *Oedipus the King*, summarized above in sixteen lines, is actually the sole source of Freud's concept of Oedipus Complex.

Stephan Reid has a list of “improbable mental processes” that covers all of the issues that have been put forward or answered by different researchers and authors to date and is helpful to see the reason why Freud(ians) surmise that King Oedipus has OC. Reid probes that it is exceedingly implausible that Oedipus departs Corinth, his hometown, after hearing the Oracle's assertion without consulting his parents, Polybus and Merope once more; that he never once in his whole later life remembers what prompted him to seek the Oracle's advice—the assertion that he is not Polybus and Merope's natural son; that he has slain a man old enough to be his father and he is marrying a woman who is old enough to be his mother; and that he never queries why Laius, the previous monarch, died (Reid, 1968:616). Not only these, but also more negotiable questions are asked at the end of Reid's article. He asks first, why did the shepherd tell a falsehood about seeing a murder? The shepherd was aware of the prophesy. The shepherd made up the tale about the gang of highwaymen and he later requested to be taken as far away

from the city as possible after learning that the person who murdered Laius had been elevated to the position of king and spouse. Second, why did Iocasta marry Oedipus with no hesitations? She wanted to fulfill her incestuous desires once again (metaphorically speaking), therefore she kept her ignorance about Oedipus' identity as long as she could (Reid, 1968:619). These questions are confusing and enough to prove Freud's rightness about the existence of OC in *Oedipus the King*. Reid asks these questions, which are claimed to be the evidence to ensure that the tragedy of King Oedipus show how right Sigmund Freud was about the OC. Ironically, Reid comes to the conclusion after he did Freudian reading.

Chase points out that according to Freud's interpretation of Oedipus, the Oedipus complex derives its uniqueness from the Sophoclean tragedy rather than solely from the legend's purported semantic meaning. In order to reexamine Freud's theory, the reader need not only read it again, specifically his assertion in *The Interpretation of Dreams* that the development of Oedipus may be related to the work of a psychoanalyst, but also its original source, Sophocles' tragedy (Chase, 1979:54). Naturally, it is necessary to do a much deeper reading to see why *Oedipus the King*, the tragedy of King Oedipus, cannot be a source for OC and the story it contains has nothing to do with OC. When read from a more rational perspective, it will be noted that each of the previously mentioned questions has a logical answer. However, instead of answering the questions one by one in the order in which they were asked, the story will be re-examined and a reasonable logic framework will be presented.

Rather than the nine-line passage summarizing the tragedy of King Oedipus above, it will now be dealt with in more detail. According to the legend King and Queen of Corinth were living happily with their adopted son. When Oedipus is approximately eighteen years old, a nasty comment about not being a true Corinthian but rather an adopted one is made by one of his pals at a dinner party (Adams, n.d.). So, he accidentally learnt from a drunken man that he was not his parents' biological child. The next day he went back home and inquired the validity of his background but both his father and mother denied and even, they were angry with the man who came up with this claim (Sophocles, 2006:83). Oedipus said to Iocasta "So, on their part I had comfort, but the thing was ever rankling in my heart" (Sophocles, 2006:101). With suspicion on his mind, Oedipus went to Delphi to see the oracle. When he arrived, oracle got rid of him but made prophecies that he would murder his father and marry his mother. Horrified, Oedipus left Delphi but never went back to Corinth. He determined not to go, and with his own words he expressed, "to some spot where I should never see fulfillment of the infamies foretold in my evil doom" (Sophocles, 2006:101). This decision shows that Oedipus both had confused mind and tried to escape from the prophecy.

After Oedipus left the country, at first, he did not think not to come back. He was just not sure about his parents and he had just a suspicion. However, nor had the oracle said anything about the rumors that his family had already denied, the oracle told him just the prophecy. So, he could not take the chance: what if they were not adoptive but his biological parents. Therefore, he decided to go away without seeing his parents for the last time. He was very likely to be upset, frightened, and confused. While he was walking with these terrible feelings, a group insulted him on the way: an old man at a crossroads who was with his five servants. They provoked Oedipus so he killed him along with five of his servants (Sophocles, 2006:102). As Sigmund Freud avows, in such stressful and difficult times as in Oedipus, people use their defense mechanisms. One of these is displacement: transferring one's emotional load or emotional response from one entity to another. For instance, someone who has a difficult day at work and then snaps at their family at home can have this protective mechanism (Bailey & Pico, 2022³). With

³ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK559106/#article-20306.r10>

very straightforward logic, after the unbelievably bitter fate that awaited him, which he had learned from the oracle, Oedipus was already experiencing a violent mood. Under normal circumstances, he was in a position to react with anger to everything as soon as it happened. Besides, the people he met on the way insulted him. It can be asserted that it is highly probable that Oedipus used *displacement* as a defense mechanism during this time. His emotions turned to be unstoppable anger and he killed everyone who insulted him.

Oedipus doesn't even remember once what prompted him to seek the oracle's advice in his later life, since his family had already denied that claim, and the oracle had prophesied to Oedipus about something far worse than being adopted. As he has just left Delphi and continued on his way, he encountered Laius and his men while grappling with the evil prophecies swirling in his mind. It was not yet time to digest the prophecy. Therefore, the possibility of the person in front of him being the "father to kill" figure mentioned in the prophecy never crossed his mind. Until the last moment of the legend, he did not realize that the person he killed was neither his father nor the husband of Iocasta, the former king (Sophocles, 2006:112). Besides, it must be remembered that at the crossroads, Oedipus did not only murder the king but his servants, as well. He did not intend to kill his father; he murdered some people who insulted him. Foley affirms that "Laius intentionally insulted Oedipus at the crossroads" (Foley, 1985:116) and Girard notes that Laius "first raised his hand against his son" (Rudnytsky, 1982:466). Post asserts the same thing and lets on that Oedipus "was, to be sure, unconscious of his father's identity and had himself been first provoked" (Post, 1912:106). Nevertheless, this does not mean that Oedipus is right to kill an old man and his servants. If so, why did this massacre take place?

Although it was inevitable that he would kill his father, the murder was also a result of his impulsivity. He was, of course, unaware of his father's identity and had provoked himself first, but given that heaven had previously forewarned him of a potential patricide, he shouldn't have allowed his impulsive nature to drive him and instead should have paused to think. He admits to himself that his actions were motivated by rage (Post, 1912:106). As Post draws attention, King Oedipus should have been more careful because he was informed about the prophecy. However, he was not psychologically stable. It should be taken into consideration that King Oedipus had different and more realistic psychological issues than OC. He learned that he was adopted, and this news was denied when he consulted with his family. When he did not feel comfortable about this news and the denial, he went to the oracle and learned a much more terrible prophecy which made him to leave his hometown Corinth, where he grew up, never to return. He had experienced all these tragedies in such a short time that Oedipus could not be expected to think clearly under these circumstances. In fact, all Oedipus needed in this situation was a competent psychologist. However, he had to move on, so he did. Oedipus walked to Thebes and on the way, he met Sphinx and gave the correct answer to the riddle, maybe with his luck or because of his royal family background in Corinth, and this caused the destruction of Sphinx. As Poseq interprets, the monster was so humiliated by Oedipus's effective solution to the riddle that it committed suicide by jumping over a cliff, freeing Oedipus to continue on the path that led to his "tragic destiny" (Poseq, 2001:27) which was in fact the destiny of Laius. The importance of Sphinx in a place that focuses on the OC is that the Sphinx is an evil monster that has plagued Thebes for years, asking riddles and taking the lives of those who can't answer (Sophocles, 2006:34) that's why Oedipus is asked to be king of the country, as he brought the death of Sphinx.

The Thebans fed up with the Sphinx wanted to reward Oedipus with an offer: marriage to Queen Iocasta (Estin & Laporte, 2004:186). Oedipus was alone, and just lost his parents and his hometown. He did not search for love, he needed compassion. Glenn points out that "the incest motif in the myth" is actually

not “the primary sex-impulse which drives [Oedipus] towards his mother, but his longing for shelter and protection which directs his sex impulse” (Glenn, 1977:232). No one needs to be a seer to make a logical guess as to whether he's traumatized or depressed after everything he's been through. When Oedipus eventually agreed to marry the queen, no one took it strangely, badly, or outrageously. On the contrary, as Foley comments that Oedipus has already garnered some compassion from the spectators for the predicament he finds himself in (Foley, 1985:110). This is because, after all that has happened, even the audience sees a young man whose life has been turned upside down instead of a young man marrying his mother. In other words, even the audience either forgot the prophecy for a moment or met the fulfillment of this prophecy with a deep sadness they felt for Oedipus. Still, the issue about how or why Oedipus marries a woman who is old enough to be his mother should be perused. In ancient Greece, girls could have been married off from the age of fifteen (Estin & Laporte, 2004:57). If this information is considered for Iocasta, she married to Laius when she was about fifteen, and Oedipus was the first and the only child for her (Sophocles, 2006:87). This means, after Laius, with just a hint of grey in his hair (Sophocles, 2006:100), died, she was still young enough to remarry and give birth. In addition, Oedipus heard the rumors about his adoption when he was about eighteen. Therefore, in a seemingly political marriage between a king and a queen, the age gap between Iocasta and Oedipus seems tolerable.

The issue of OC was brought up on the occasion of the marriage of Oedipus and Iocasta. Freud asserts that the only reason Oedipus's fate affects *us* is because it might have been *ours* as well—the oracle may have placed the same curse on *us* before *our* birth as it did on him. Perhaps, it is all of *our* destiny to have *our* first sexual inclinations toward *our* mothers and *our* initial animosities and homicidal fantasies against *our* fathers. *We* are convinced of this through *our* dreams. The story of King Oedipus, who murdered his father Laius and wed his mother Iocasta, only illustrates how *our* own childhood dreams can come true (Freud, 2010:280). He even asserted that oedipal sentiments are universal and that everyone experiences them (Dalloff, 2006⁴). Aside from the fact that it is universal or that everyone has this complex, King Oedipus, whom Freud accepted as the source, could not have this complex, if it is considered logically. If King Oedipus had the complex, he should have a desire not for Iocasta, but for his stepmother Merope since he was with her when he was in his phallic stage. However, he married to a woman whom he had never seen before, besides, this marriage was a political one owing to his success, rescuing the city from Sphinx; Queen Iocasta was presented as a sign of respect to Oedipus. When Freud's claims about psychosexual stages are considered, Freud confutes his OC himself because Oedipus did not see his *birth* mother in his phallic stage. Having considered Oedipus may have sexual repressed desires to his mother, but he does definitely not, these desires must be for Merope whom he knew as his *birth* mother. Even, those kinds of thoughts were so gruesome for Oedipus that he left his hometown as soon as he was informed about the prophecy.

Although Sophocles named his tragedy *Oedipus the King*, the story actually tells about the prophecy told to Oedipus' father, Laius, and how this prophecy eventually came true. It should be remembered that Laius had been warned about having a murderer child. Iocasta remarks this when Oedipus was inquiring Laius' death. She notifies “An oracle came to Laius once-I will not say from Phoebus himself, but from his ministers-that the doom should overtake him to die by the hand of his child, who should spring from him and me” (Sophocles, 2006:99). Although Laius knew the prophecy, he had the courage to have a son. Then he gave that baby to get killed (Estin & Laporte, 2004:187). In that manner, the curse or the fate that has been argued on is not the destiny of Oedipus but the one for Laius. Therefore, the message of the tragedy is that whatever is written in your destiny, no matter how much you run away or even if

⁴ <https://www.uvm.edu/~jbailly/courses/tragedy/student%20second%20documents/Oedipus%20Complex.html>

you die, it will eventually happen, rather than the possibility that every man wants to have sex with his mother. As Poland denotes Sophocles' play depicts the tragedy of human powerlessness in the face of the invincible strength of the gods. Oedipus behaved with good faith, attempting to avoid a prophesied doom. Nevertheless, he was born to suffering. "It was Apollo, friends, Apollo that brought this bitter bitterness, my sorrows to completion. But the hand that struck me, was none but my own" the self-blinded Oedipus laments at the end of *Oedipus the King*. Oedipus narrates his own conduct, but perceives it as an execution of Apollo's might. That powerlessness drives the Chorus to call out to the blinded Oedipus, "I pity you". Even while spectators are appalled, they are heartbroken for an Oedipus who, at core, is innocent (Poland, 2007:563). While Oedipus's innocence is so obvious, it is usually Iocasta's speech that is given evidence for OC. As it is jotted down before especially Iocasta's speech is the *key evidence* for OC fans. However, both the speech and Oedipus' behaviors ought to be regarded as the defense mechanisms, which are the unconscious coping skills people use when confronted with upsetting, unwelcome thoughts or emotions (McLeod, 2020). Without them, the conscious mind would be considerably more susceptible to the influence of emotionally charged information that was negatively charged (Bowins, 2004:1).

In Sophocles' *Oedipus the King*, King Oedipus' abrupt anger towards the people, who insulted him at the crossroads, and caused him murder them, can be explained by *displacement*, one of the defense mechanisms. Displacement is basically dealing with emotional stressor by redirecting emotion to something else: satisfying an impulse like anger, aggression or sadness with another object. Iocasta's speech can be explained by another defense mechanism that is *denial*, which means when faced with an overwhelming circumstance, some people shut down and refuse to acknowledge its existence. The denial may function alone or, more often, in tandem with other, more nuanced systems (McLeod, 2020). Another defense mechanism which is *rationalization* can explain Iocasta's speech, as well. A human may cope with emotional problems or pressures by creating sooth or self-serving but inaccurate justifications for their own or others' ideas, behaviors, or emotions that hide ulterior motivations (Knoll et al., 2020), therefore, the things Iocasta said do not have to be true but comforting. Last not least, Oedipus' accusation can be regarded as an example of *projection* which is another defense mechanism. The act of attributing undesirable psychological drives and traits from oneself to others is known as projection. When projection happens, unwanted impulses that generate psychological conflict are handled by assigning (projecting) those same impulses to someone else (Costa, 2017). When Teiresias divulges who the Laius' killer is, Oedipus blames Creon: he claims that Creon forced Teiresias to speak as he did. However, it is clear that Oedipus was extremely nervous about the prophecy and was acting this way because of this situation.

In his article, Post states that Oedipus the King unwittingly avoid the truth while he was searching for the truth because it was so unacceptable. At first, Oedipus keeps away "the dark hints of the seer, Tiresias", then he continues his search by inquiring Iocasta "although every word of hers tends to confirm his suspicion", after that, even though he notices that "the oracle which foretold that he should slay his father and espouse his mother may yet be fulfilled, and despite the entreaties of Jocasta", who is aware of the fact, Oedipus continues his "investigation to bitter end", and at last, he persists in his interrogation of the key person, the Theban herdsman, "until, uninfluenced by the conviction that he is shattering his own happiness", he reveals the dreadful truth (Post, 1912:83). At the end of the play, Oedipus punishes himself, and as soon as Iocasta notices the ghastly truth, she hangs herself. As Perrin notes, Oedipus and Iocasta change "from ignorance to knowledge" (Perrin, 1909:403) with this terrifying recognition.

Someone could have defended King Oedipus by using Freud's defense mechanisms against Sigmund Freud; however, as it is now, he was canonized by psychiatric society in those times. Freud's understanding of Oedipus was partial and, to some degree, incorrect; however, because of the extensive impact of Freudian philosophy, the substance of many myths and tales has been misconstrued in oedipal terms (Sheleff, 1976:7). Robert Rogers inquired Freud's cases and he points out some letters. Rogers says, in 1893 Freud wrote a letter to Wilhelm Fliess and in that letter, Freud denotes, "Meanwhile things have grown livelier. The sexual business attracts people; they all go away impressed and convinced, after exclaiming, No one has ever asked me that before". So, basically, King Oedipus was sacrificed for a *sexual business that attracts people* (Rogers, 1991:49). Unless the interpretation of Freud's life was done properly, *Oedipus the King* would continue to be interpreted as King Oedipus has OC. On account of all contrary evidence, *Oedipus the King* should be reconsidered and while there were other psychologists or psychiatrists why just Freud discovered OC have to be asked. When it is mused, the most possible answer is Freud's *selective perception*. It must be remembered that *it takes one to know one*. Freud confesses, "I found, a portion of my own self-analysis, my reaction to my father's death" (Freud, 2010:xxvi). Chase explains this by indicating, "Freud's own most manifest 'Oedipus complex' is the drive to interpretation and 'self-analysis' dramatized by Sophocles' hero, which is initially at least, in the tragedy as in *The Interpretation*, a more prominent 'complex' (an excessively insistent and self-exceeding intention) than any parricidal or incestuous tendency" (Chase, 1979:55). Freud's selective perception is not an accusation but his self-statement.

Freud's selective vision was the key to his finding, and his experiences should be investigated to realize this. For instance, Sigmund Freud's jealousy towards his brother is known at all. When Julius, Freud's brother, was born, Sigmund was two years old and he admitted his hostility; yet, Julius died eight months later so Freud felt guilty. When he became ten, Alexander was born and he caused the same hostility in Freud (Steinberger,1997:74). To Freud, Alexander was the reason for decreasing his mother's love: he had to share his mother with this newborn brother anymore. However, his brother was not the only source for his disturbance: his archrival was his father. Solomon reminds that "Freud's 'desire to take father's place with mother to achieve 'an incestuous reunion with the mother' and to eliminate the rival brother and father" (Solomon, 1973:144). When Freud sent a letter to Fliess, he wrote that he found the love of the mother and jealousy of the father in his own case. Stewart observes how Freud was close to Oedipus "when he mentioned the use of the parents in sexual fantasy" (Stewart, 1976:227). Freud's problem, with his own words, was OC albeit he declared this, it is necessary to look at it from a different perspective. In 1897, Sigmund Freud recognized his father's innocence. With Solomon's words, when Freud remembered having sex desires for his mother after seeing her undressed, he realized how devoted he was to her and how envious he was of his father. So, the OC was revealed, "as a defensive construct against the theory of traumatic seduction" (Solomon, 1973:149). Freud saw his father as a *fate-father* and because his father was the controller of their lives, he felt powerless and hatred, maybe because of his father's silence against social ostracism but behaving defiantly to his own family (Solomon, 1973:152).

Freud analyzed himself, named what he saw and a complex became an invention, which is still apocryphal. Chase acknowledges that the essence of *The Interpretation of Dreams* is Freud's self-analysis that "is composed as a triangle made up by the analyzing subject ('Freud'), the analyzed subject ('Freud'), and the text with which the analysis takes place, the text of Freud" (Chase, 1979:64). Due to its subjectivity, OC has been supposed not to be accepted universally; however, Freud's belief in "the universality of the Oedipus complex" was so strong that he was inclined to dismiss clients' claims that they had been genuinely sexually abused as children as fantasy under the pretence that they were lying

in order to hide their “guilty” desires (Spencer, 2020:5). Yet, it is clear that, the Oedipus theme is not as widespread as is generally thought (Sheleff, 1976:7). Freud just wanted to find evidence for his invention to make it universal. Rogers notes that there is a gap “between sexual experiences *attributed* by Freud to his patients and the memories of actual feelings and events *elicited* by Freud during the analytic process” (Rogers, 1994:54). Solomon agrees by saying “we may have a wish-fantasy projected by Freud onto his patient” (Solomon, 1973:148). Freud often repeats that in every analysis of hysteria, sexual traumas can be observed. Even, he assures that the essential cause of hysteria is sexual seduction and he adds that innocent children who were sexually seduced by some grown-up people are his majority of patients (Solomon,1973:148). So, maybe, while Freud was talking about OC, he wanted to cover his biggest traumas. Since, in 1935, when he was asked to write an autobiography, he said no one had no claim to learn his struggles or disappointments. Sprengnether highlights that when Freud was young, he fantasized his life story “in somewhat mythic terms as ‘The Development of the Hero’, but then, he was afraid of an absolute “misrepresentations” and destruction of “false flattery”, he also avoided “critical judgment” about the discovery of his personal life “circumstances might bring” (Sprengnether, 1995:12). Therefore, it can be assumed that there is something that he is afraid to bring up or if it is discovered, there is something that he will not like.

To exemplify what bothered him, one can mention what Freud wrote in a letter he once sent. Rolland received a letter from Freud, known as “A Disturbance of Memory on the Acropolis” and Freud mentions his admiration to Athens where *Oedipus at Colonus* takes place. As Freud notes, especially Acropolis is exciting because it represents “a childhood desire for union with the mother” and “a symbolic murder of the father” (Steinberger, 1997:71). Despite Freud enthusiastically talks about Acropolis and Athens, he also indicates in his letter that both Freud and his brother had strong guilty feelings that attached to the trip. In 1936, Freud mentioned those memories as “an uncanny experience which was later been hunting him” (Steinberger, 1997:69).

If someone made a list of Freud’s issues, his *grotesque* list of issues would be very long and show the possibility of Freud had a trauma. At first, in their trip to Athens “Freud's brother becomes his homosexual partner”, to them, it was “a voyage into homosexuality which they could enter upon only within a dream-like trance wherein neither would admit the object of the quest” (Solomon, 1973:151). Secondly, Freud had an affair with Frau Fluss who was as old as his mother. Holt speculates that Frau Fluss, unlike Freud's mother, was not narcissistic. She had the potential to be openly and intensely affectionate, to use psychoanalytic terminology, in order to develop attachment-type object connections. It seems unlikely that this 16-year-old boy would have developed such a passion on a friend's mother if his own mother had been able to love so completely (Sprengnether, 1995:51). ‘Cordelia’ metaphor is another point in this grotesque list. Freud was “dependent on his daughter” and could not stand to think her leaving. To him, she was his “Anna-Antigone and his coded allusion to her in “The Theme of the Three Caskets” as Cordelia” (Sprengnether 23). Because the myths surrounding Antigone and Cordelia are about faithful daughters, it appears natural when Freud refers to his daughter by those names. However, the scenario is muddled by his decision to refer to his fiancée, Martha, by her nickname. While he is writing letters to Martha, he notes as ‘My Cordelia-Marty’ (Sprengnether, 1995:37). Minna Bernays is the last conspicuous issue of the list. She was Martha’s sister and had already engaged with Freud’s friend. Bernays and Freud stayed in the same hotel in Maloja in 1898 (Lothane, 2007:129), but Freud’s “tender” letters to her started in 1882. Freud “felt attracted” to Minna and continually offered a relationship. Maciejewski explains the relationship between Minna and Sigmund in a psychoanalytic way. To Maciejewski, Freud had a childhood trauma about “the loss of the breast and the love of his mother Amalie” just after Julius birth “which opened the way for the engagement of a nurse. Thus, the

'two-mothers constellation' of the Freiberg period should be considered the deep structure of the later 'two-wives complex,' with the Bernays sisters as revenants" (Maciejewski, 2008:5). After Minna's fiancée died, she stayed with Freuds' house because of Sigmund's insistence. One night Freud had a dream and according to Maciejewski, this dream "expresses a highly specific erotic desire and simultaneously its suppression: Freud's wish to sleep with Minna, and his inhibitions about doing so" (Maciejewski, 2008:15).

In the light of the interpretation of Freud's life, it can be avowed that his experiences pushed him to invent something to explain the things in his head. This turns to a desire, an obsession for him. Poland points out, the result of this desire becomes a radical "self-analysis" to "clinical psychoanalytic experience" and Freud takes OC the "central to human life" (Poland, 2007:561). Jacobsen agrees and indicates that Freud's OC is "far from being a universal mechanism" and adds "as Lacan will later suggest, the Freudian Oedipus complex is a neurotic Oedipus instead of the normalizing one that Freud had wanted" (Borch-Jacobsen & Brick, 1994:277). In addition to this, he always wanted to be famous (Solomon, 1973:143). So, if he could invent something, which covers his inner feelings, he could have both relief and fame. From this point of view, it cannot be a coincidence that Freud came to the fore with OC and *Oedipus Tyrannus*'s was played as the first Greek play in the USA and was applauded eagerly even when amateurs played it. Hains utters that he would "always remember the closing scene of the *Oedipus*" while the audience was sitting in strained atmosphere silently, "every eye fixed on the stage, as the blind king, weighed down by the burden of the terrible revelation that had just come to him" (Hains, 1914:191).

Freud's first biggest goal was to be awarded; secondly, he wanted to solve his issues that were bothering him greatly. Solomon claims that while Freud had a strong desire for and overestimated the worth of this award—a gift from the fathers—he was skeptical that the many efforts made on his behalf to get it would be effective. Solomon explains this with Freud's letter to Rolland in which he admits that winning a prize would be pleasing but "too good to be true". To Solomon, it is possible to interpret "Freud's desire for the Nobel Award" as a reference to obtaining a "prize" in the Letter (Solomon, 1973:143). So, reading or watching *Oedipus the King* did not reveal or represent the deepest truth about human desires but disclose and represent Freud's desires, since everyone sees the world from his/her own perspective. It must be accepted that Freud himself wanted to be King Oedipus and doing the things consciously, which Oedipus did unconsciously. When Freud felt enlightened after watching *Oedipus*, he used this legend for both of his goals; he became famous and invented a *purified* complex to explain his *erratic* thoughts which he claimed were universal and found in every individual. Perhaps a new term should be coined to describe Freud's situation, for example *Freudic Complex* can be used to describe Freud's situation precisely. It actually seems quite fair to concoct a complex name that doesn't exist in the literature to save the honor of King Oedipus. It is also necessary to explain this invented new term. *A Freudic Complex* can be characterized by a person's tendency to have sexual impulses, particularly for members of his family, and to defend the legitimacy of these emotions by rationally justifying them rather than hiding them or feeling guilty. While doing that the individual is totally consciously chooses to go against social conventions, natural laws and the culture in which he lives. He even thinks he should become renowned for his views and wants to make them more widely known. Without therapy, the patient will grow fixated on establishing his ideas' validity, therefore this should be treated as a major complex. In light of Freud's autobiography and letters, it is possible that Sigmund Freud required a protracted psychoanalysis since both his childhood and adulthood are full of climacteric experiences that would have contributed to *Freudic Complex*.

As mentioned earlier, there are many psychomythological terms in psychological literature, and OC is just one of them. Perhaps, it is necessary to examine each one separately and save the honor of each character, because it cannot be expected that everyone has read all the mythologies or literary works, so s/he makes the mistake of identifying the character in the work with the illness s/he is named after. For example, Oresteia complex refers to a son's desire to kill his mother unconsciously (Gürel & Muter, 2007:548), but it should be known that Oresteia in mythology actually killed his mother not because of his desire to kill his mother, but because his mother and his mother's lover became one and killed his father. Moreover, the god Apollo gave the order to Oresteia to kill his mother. Another example is from *Oedipus the King*. Jocasta Complex refers to a mother's pathological indulgence/ addiction to her son. Concerning this, she is jealous of other women and desires to subject her son to only herself. In the extremist version, the mother shows aberrant behaviors as receiving sexual pleasure from her son both psychologically and physically (Gürel & Muter, 2007:548). It should be reminded again that Iocasta in mythology did not feel the slightest sexual impulse towards her son. As far as she knows, her son, who was born years ago, was left to die on a mountain top. Therefore, the person she married is a valiant man who saved her city and people from the monster. When she learned that the man she married was her son, she could not stand her grief and hanged herself at that very moment.

Anyone who hasn't read the legend of *Oedipus the King* today thinks that King Oedipus is a *bastard* who slept with his mother and murdered his father. Because these people do not know the details of the tragedy of Oedipus in the legend of *Oedipus the King*, nor what the OC is. If the name of a mythological legend is to be given to a disease or if creating an illness based on a literary work is a must, at least, some care should be taken not to create a wrong impression about the characters in that legend. As an example, since there is a parallel connection between the term and the inspired myth, it would be much more appropriate to state that the person who believes in the power of precious stones and claims that he can see the future with the help of those stones has *Theia syndrome*; people who enunciate that they feel safe only in the dark and can express themselves best in the dark has *Erebus syndrome*; the individual who believes that all of his wrongdoings and falsehoods were committed for a greater good and that he is not responsible for any of the negative things that have occurred to him suffers from the *Agamemnon complex*. It is important to keep in mind that none of the syndromes or complexes indicated above have been documented in the literature. The point that should be emphasized is that mythology or literary works should have their roots properly investigated before being utilized to describe a condition or complex, or, to put it another way, an illness.

As Aristotle avows in *Poetics* "A perfect tragedy should, as we have seen, be arranged not on the simple but the complex plan" (Aristotle, 2005:36). *Medea* (431 BC) by Euripides, *The Oresteia* (458 BC) by Aeschylus, *Oedipus the King* (c. 429 BC) by Sophocles, etc. can be conceded as well known, impeccable tragedies with highly complex, intertwined structures. It is an objectionable mistake that no one would want to make by considering only one layer of these tragedies or myths made up of interconnected layers and make inferences based on that layer. The interpretation of a tragedy without examining the period in which it was written, the possible purpose of writing, the cultural background and character of the author, and the political and sociological structure of the place where it was written is not a preferred or satisfying way in terms of literature. In this context, it is an unpleasant situation that needs to be changed that literary works considered indispensable in almost all curricula in literature, especially by psychiatrists, are used without proper examination to name various diseases.

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