

# Oedipus & the Self-fulfilling Prophecy.

As usual, Freud was wrong!

Dr Luca Epis

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## Abstract

This article argues that the *myth of Oedipus* expresses and/or represents the *Self-fulfilling Prophecy* (*exempli gratia*, described by the Social Psychology). At the same time, this article states that the *myth of Oedipus* is not allegory and/or representation of the Freudian psychosexual development!!

The *myth of Oedipus* becomes an opportunity to show the kind of *mis-interpretations* made by *psychoanalyses* and *psychoanalysts*. The latter, in fact, tends: to create *false beliefs*; and, to attribute *false meanings* to “events”.

In accordance with a *logical and epistemological reflection/analysis*, *psychoanalytic theories* can gain only two *states of truth*. They can be: *valid* and/or *invalid*.

If they are *invalid*, they can not be applied anywhere.

If they are *valid*, they must be applied to *psychoanalyses* itself.

This, however, determines the *invalidity* of the *psychoanalytic Paradigm*, which would inevitably turn to *implode* on itself.

*Exempli gratia*, *psychoanalytic theories* turn out to be:

- 1) on the one hand, the “fruit” of *primary defensive processes* (characterized by a state of confusion between the *inside* and the *outside world*, leading to a distorted view of reality, which is typical of psychosis) acted and/or done by the *same*

*creators and supporters of psychoanalyses*. Examples of these *primary defensive processes* are: *projection; primitive idealization; omnipotent control; etc ...*;

- 2) on the other hand, the “fruit” of *projective identification* made by patients who, living a state of “psychic vulnerability”, identify themselves in those *constructs* due the high level of impressionableness / suggestibleness.

In other words, *psychoanalytic theories* would create *ex post* confirmation of themselves, creating “reality”, which would never have been if they had never existed!!

In conclusion, *psychoanalytic constructs* are *new idols*, which exist only for the *faith* that their “priests” place in them.

They are not *idols* of stone, but they are *idols* of *void words* and/or *void interpretation*. *Idols* that, however, require *dogmas* to survive. *Dogmas* that *psychoanalysts* have defended with the *mis-use* and *abuse* of *psychiatry* since the beginning of psychoanalyses with Freud.

At the end, they are only a “new form” of *Superstition*.

## **Rationale**

Epis L. (2012/2015), in the book *De Nova Superstitione*, wrote about the “difficulties” that the *Psychological Sciences* have to comply with the *criteria* of the *Scientific Paradigm*.

The *Psychological Sciences*, in fact, are a set of disciplines: which have an *heterogeneous epistemological status*; and, which are characterized by a *low logical-epistemological reflection and awareness* (Epis L. 2012/2015). The latter takes different aspects and forms, due: how these disciplines are able to meet the *criteria* of the *Scientific Paradigm*; and, the type of *biases*, which characterize that particular disciplinary area.

If we consider these two *criteria* (that I wrote *supra/above*), *Psychological Sciences* can be divided into *four main areas*.

**The first macro-area** includes: *Physiological Psychology*; *Cognitive Psychology*; *Experimental Psychology*. Despite the limitations of its methodology and its own kind of *biases*, this area has “full citizenship” inside the *Scientific Paradigm*. Indeed, it is able to comply with: the *experimental scientific method (pro tempore)*; the *test of Validity* (Logical Positivism); and, the *principle of falsification* (Popper).

**The second macro-area** is the *Soft Psychology*. This area is a “limbo” of ambiguity, confusion and uncertainty. The *constructs* are based on, and created with, a wide use of *correlation*. The latter, due the fact of the *crud factor*, makes these constructs be a mere *social creation* that, at the end, is based only on “*political*” choices, which have their reasons in matters of *opportunity* and/or *interest*.

Some of them are connected with the relationship that exists between *Power* and *Knowledge*. A relationship, which inside the *Social Sciences*, is stronger than everywhere else.

Indeed, inside this *Limbo*, opposite theories and constructs coexist. All of them are **both** never entirely refuted **and** never fully corroborated. So, the success and/or application of one of these theories instead of another one, depends only for “*political choice*” (with the widest extension of the term).

Not only. These *constructs* become *glasses* that are able to change the perception of *Reality* in the direction of those *theories*. Hence, they are able to create *ex post* a pseudo-corroboration, which is, nothing more and nothing less, a “*conjuring trick*” that is used to “deride” the gullible people.

**The third macro-area** is the *psychopathology*. This area has nothing to do with Science. Science, in fact, is a *descriptive language*. Science has the aim to describe the reality without telling what is “normal” and what is “abnormal”. On the contrary, *psychopathology* is a *normative language*, as well as *Law* and *Moral Sciences*. But, everything uses *normative language* is just a “*political*” *manifestation* and/or *choice*.

Every time someone approaches this discipline, indeed, he/she should remember that *psychopathology* is in permanent violation of *Hume’s Law*.

**The fourth macro-area** is constituted by *psychoanalyses*. The latter is **not: either Science**, as it does not use *descriptive language*; **or Normative Discipline**, as it does not use *normative language*.

Psychoanalyses is only a set of “confabulations” that are expressed with *expressive language*. Therefore, psychoanalyses has nothing to do with: *truth* and/or *validity*.

All its theories and constructs are only the “fruit” of the *projections* that are made by the *psychoanalysts*. These *projections*, then, are transformed by psychoanalysts, due the fact of their own *delirium of omnipotence*, in “universal” constructs and theories that pretend to explain the thoughts of others !!!!!

In other words, psychoanalyses is the product of the *primary processes* and *primary defences* of the psychoanalysts. Psychoanalyses is the *psychotic side* of Psychology.

An evidence of this is given by the interpretation, which was made by Freud, of the Oedipus myth.

### **The Myth of Oedipus and the Self-Fulfilling Prophecy**

The *physical laws* rule the *structure* of the universe and everything happens inside it. The *psycho-social laws* rule the *structure* and *dynamics* of the groups of any kind and formation.

The “social beings” follow the *psycho-social laws* as the atoms and/or “celestial bodies” follow the *laws of physics*.

The ancient people knew this Truth. They illustrated it with the *language of myth*.

One of these laws establishes that:

- 1) Every society is based on an *Order* that is ruled by an *Authority*;
- 2) every *Social Order* and every *Authority* are doomed to change over time;
- 3) “the change” is generated by the same actions, which the *pro tempore Authority* does for attempting to: preserve the *status quo* and its *Power*; prevent the “change”; prevent the *prophecy* from becoming truth.

The Greek myths repeat this law countless times.

The Kingdom of Uranus is overturned by the Kingdom of Cronus. The Kingdom of Cronus is overflowed by the Kingdom of Zeus. Prometheus, then, prophesies that the Kingdom of Zeus will be overturned by a *New Order*.

“*Zeus himself will prepare his own adversary ... so Zeus will learn that one thing is to serve and another thing is to reign ... . By Zeus, I care less than nothing. He can rule this kingdom as he wishes. His reign is not long*” (Aeschylus, *Prometheus Bound*).

This concept is illustrated for the *macro-cosmos* with the stories of gods. For the *micro-social-cosmos*, the same concept is illustrated with the legends of *cultural heroes*.  
*Exempli gratia*: Perseus and Oedipus.



Acrisius (king of Corinth) received a prophecy. He would be killed by his nephew. So, he tried to prevent the realization of the prophecy. But, this made the prophecy become truth.

In the myth of Oedipus, this concept is repeated twice. The first time, Laius (king of Thebes; Oedipus natural father) received the prophecy that his son would have killed him. To prevent the prophecy from becoming true, Laius made several actions. Subsequently, Oedipus received the prophecy that he would have killed his father (which he thought to be the king of Corinth). To prevent the prophecy from becoming true, Oedipus made several actions. Well, at the end, the sum of all those actions, which were made by Laius and Oedipus to prevent their prophecies from becoming true, made their prophecies become true.

In other words, the myth of Oedipus (far and far away ... from representing the *phallic stage* of the *psychosexual development* of Freud) is, more than anyone else, the representation of the *self-fulfilling prophecy*, which is the king of all the *psycho-social mechanisms* and underlie the *social structure* and *dynamics* of every kind of groups.

The concept, which the Greek myth expresses, is the *inability* and *impossibility* of men and gods to fight and to rebel against *Fate*. Once, *Fate* decides the destiny of men and gods, nothing can prevent it.

On the contrary, everything is done to prevent the prophecy from becoming true will inevitably lead the prophecy at its realization.

This concept was repeated from the Greek myth to our days.

Tolkien, for example, makes Galadriel say about her mirror: “*Remember that the Mirror shows many things, and not all have yet come to pass. Some never come to be, the unless those that behold the visions turn aside from their path to prevent them*” (Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings*).

Before him, William Shakespeare represents this concept in most of his works. *Exempli gratia*, Macbeth is a tragedy based entirely on *self-fulfilling prophecy*. The tragedy starts with a prophecy that three witches give to the protagonist. According to this prophecy, Macbeth will become king, but he will need to be careful to Macduff. So, it is only due the prophecy that Macbeth: kills the king to replace him; and, wipe out the family of Macduff. The latter fact caused the revenge of Macduff , which doomed Macbeth to die.

Also the children-literature illustrates this concept.

The saga of Harry Potter is an example. The whole saga, indeed, is based on a *self-fulfilling prophecy*. The prophecy was not made to the protagonist, but to the anti-hero: Voldemort. The latter, in attempting to prevent the prophecy from becoming true, makes the prophecy become true.

Kung Fu Panda is another example. The first movie starts with a vision that is received by Master Oogway. Master Oogway sees that Tai Lung escapes from the prison where

he is detained. Shipo, to prevent the vision from becoming true, starts all the coincidences that will make the vision be true. A concept that was summed up by Master Oogway: “*sometimes certain events are caused with the actions that are done to prevent them*”.

The same protagonist of the story, the bumbling panda Po, who was not good at kung-fu more than everyone else, is a result of the *self-fulfilling prophecy*. He becomes the *Legendary Dragon Warrior* only due the fact that Master Oogway made this “prophecy”.

Plenty of movies, then, expresses with concept.

The *Secret Kingdom* is one of them.

The saga of *Star Wars* is another one.

*Star Wars*’ saga is entirely based on *self-fulfilling prophecies*.

The prophecies are visions that the protagonists are able to get through the *Force*.

Anakin becomes a Jedi in the first episode (*The Phantom Menace*) only due a prophecy.

Padme dies in the third episode (*The Revenge of Siths*) only due a prophecy.

Anakin chooses to pass to the *dark side* of the *Force* (in the third episode) only due the actions that are done by his Jedi-Masters. The Jedi-Masters, indeed, attempt to prevent “their fears” from becoming true. So, “their fears” become a “new prophecy” about

Anakin, a prophecy that takes the place of the previous one. At the end, the actions, which are done by the Jedi-Masters to prevent their fears from becoming true, make their fears become true.

In the six episode, Anakin (now, Lord Vader) kills the Emperor and the kingdom of the Siths (as the first prophecy told) only because the Emperor attempted to prevent: that prophecy from becoming true; and, the loss of his Power.

Etc ... Etc ... .

### **The Self-Fulfilling Prophecy**

So, what is the *self-fulfilling prophecy*?

The *self-fulfilling prophecy* is the king of all *psycho-social mechanisms*. There are no *psychosocial dynamics* that do not express it.

The *self-fulfilling prophecy* rules: the *role* played by individuals within groups; the *social identity* formation.

It is a “belief” that makes itself be true, due the fact that it is believed.

In other words, there is a *recursive dialogical relationship* between a “belief” and its “realization“. One creates the other one and vice versa.

To give you a pictorial image, you can think to the painting of Escher: “*drawing hands*”.

This *recursive dialogical relationship* exists: **both**, at the level of “beliefs”; **and**, at the level of “actions”.

In other words, the *events* are created by the *actions*, which are made to prevent “those events” from becoming true. Instead of preventing the events from becoming true, those actions will evocate them.

This is an aspect of *self-fulfilling prophecy*.

Why?

The answer is simple. This is just an application of the *Lex Naturalis*. It is the *third law of motion* that is applied to *social life*. If a *body A* acts with a *force F* on a *body B*, then the *body B* will act towards the *body A* with a *force F* of equal intensity and direction, but of opposite direction.

In Philosophy and History of Religions, this concept has been represented, *exempli gratia*, with the Tao / Dao.

On the contrary, inside the academic literature of Social Sciences, this construct was expressed in 1948 with Merton. According to the author: “... *a prophecy ... for the sole reason of having been pronounced, manufactures the alleged incident, expected or predicted, confirming thus its veracity*“. *Beliefs* determinate *Actions*; *Actions* create *ex post* “confirmation” of *initial Beliefs* (even if they are false). There is no separation between the “dimension of the actions” and the “dimension of beliefs”. They are linked

in a strong: bond; connection; union; ... and/or, as I prefer to say, *dialogical recursive relationship*. So according to Merton: “*The self-fulfilling prophecy is, in the beginning, a false definition of the situation evoking a new behavior which makes the original false conception come **true**. This specious validity of the self-fulfilling prophecy perpetuates a reign of error. For the prophet will cite the actual course of events as proof that he was right from the very beginning*” (Merton R. K., 1948, *The Self Fulfilling Prophecy*, in *Antioch Review*, Vol. 8, No. 2, pp. 193 – 210).

Merton took his inspiration from the *Thomas' Theorem* which states: “*If men define certain situations as real, they are real in their consequences*“.

In fact, *Beliefs* determine *Attitudes*. *Attitudes* produce *Behaviors*. *Behaviors* cause *Responses* (*confirmation bias*). *Responses* lead *ex post* “pseudo-corroboration” to the initial *belief*, creating an *infinite* “*vicious cycle*“.

The *self-fulfilling prophecy*, therefore, is the “genetic sub-layer” of any *phenomena* of the *Psychological* and *Social Sciences*. Nothing happens, unless there is a *self-fulfilling prophecy*.

The *Labeling Theory* recognizes it inside the *Social Sciences*, since the *Labeling Theory* expresses, at the end, nothing more than the *self-fulfilling prophecy*.

Popper, on the contrary, recognized it inside the *Philosophy of Sciences* and/or *Epistemology*. According to Popper, *self-fulfilling prophecy* is the *criterium* (criterion) that is able to make a distinction **between Social Sciences and Natural Sciences**.

You will not believe Me, if I tell you that Popper called the *self-fulfilling prophecy* the *Oedipus effect*.

*Exempli gratia*, Popper wrote: “One of the ideas I had discussed in **The Poverty of Historicism** was the influence of a prediction upon the event predicted. I had called this the “**Oedipus effect**“, because the oracle played a most important role in the sequence of events which led to the fulfilment of its prophecy. ... For a time I thought that the existence of the Oedipus effect distinguished the social from the natural sciences. But in biology, too—even in molecular biology—expectations often play a role in bringing about what has been expected” (Popper, *Unended Quest: An Intellectual Autobiography*).

### **Why was Freud wrong?**

The mistake of Freud is self-evident. The myth of Oedipus does not express any *stage* of the *psychosexual development*.

So, why does Freud see in the myth of Oedipus the most important representation of the *phallic stage*?

After the death of his father (1896), Freud (who was self-analyzing his dreams) came to the conclusion that: he wished sexually his mother; and he considered his father like a dangerous rival. This happened in the absence of real seduction episodes.

In other words, Freud was a victim of its *primary processes* and its *primary defenses*. He *projected* his *retrospective interpretations* (which he made self-analyzing his own dreams) in the *outside world*. So, he came to see them everywhere: in the stories of his patients; in Greek myths; etc ... .

Once, his own (*mis*)interpretations were *projected* to the *outside world*, due his own *delirium of omnipotence*, Freud argued his theories were able to explain the “normal development” of all human beings!!

So, it is clear that psychoanalyses, at the end, is nothing more and nothing less that a set of *psychotic delusions* that are made by psychoanalysts.

Psychoanalytic theories say nothing about: the World; and, the Human Thought. They speak only about the psychiatric problems of the psychoanalysts who created them.

### **The deception of psychoanalyses**

Psychoanalyses is only a *Discursive Practice* that is based on *retrospective interpretations a là Weik*, which are created with interpretative games.

These interpretations have nothing to do with *truth* and the *knowledge* of the Self.



The *meanings* are induced by: the same psychoanalytic theories, which become *glasses* that are able to deform the whole Reality; and, the same expectations of psychoanalysts, who push to create *confirmation* of their *beliefs*.

In other words, psychoanalyses becomes a sort of “brainwashing” that is done on people, who are in a “vulnerable psychic” state.

The patients internalize: theories; psychoanalytic models; expectations of their psychoanalysts; etc.... At the end, they play those internalized roles for *projective identification*.

In other words, psychoanalyses itself does nothing. It is a way to deride people. If something happens, it is only for the action of the *psychosocial mechanism of self-fulfilling prophecy*.

Unfortunately, the prophecies that are done by psychoanalyses do not lead to anything good. Like the witches of Macbeth, they push people into a Shakespearean tragedy.

Those people, who “save” themselves, are “characters” of a *self-fulfilling prophecy* that was made by “someone else”, who (surely) was not a psychoanalysts.