

## **The Myth of Oedipus: a New Interpretation**

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(Summary)

In his book “The Myth of the Birth of the Hero” (1909), the psychoanalyst Otto Rank identified in various cultures numerous versions of the same narrative which was very close in content to the Oedipus myth. The structure of this repetitive plot is the following: a son of a king, sentenced to death by his father, survives miraculously and grows up far away from his family; when grown-up, he returns to his hometown, murders his father and inherits the throne. The paper argues that this plot has come into being as a narrative aimed at legitimizing the right of existence of a newly formed community by presenting its leader as the legitimate successor of the ruler of the group from which the new community has separated. After its dramaturgical rendition by the ancient Greek tragedians, the Oedipus plot has acquired a new meaning – it started functioning as a story of the great sinner.

**Keywords:** Oedipus myth; abandoned child motif; myths of origin; legitimizing narratives; ancestor; great sinner

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