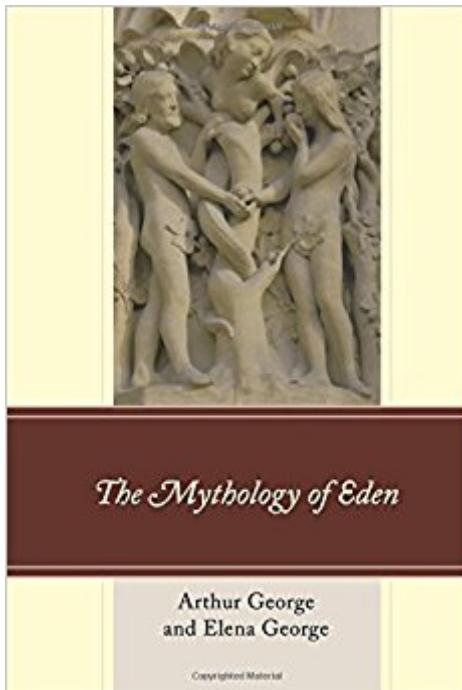


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# The Mythology Of Eden



## **Synopsis**

The biblical story of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden is a cornerstone of Western civilization, yet there are still many mysteries concerning its origins and meaning. In *The Mythology of Eden*, Arthur and Elena George utilize new historical and archaeological discoveries to reveal how the story's author uses veiled symbolism and mythological storytelling to convey his message about the most profound questions of human existence regarding the divine, life, death, and immortality. This innovative book offers an interdisciplinary interpretation of the Eden story that delves into incorrect assumptions and brings to light details that have previously gone unnoticed. *The Mythology of Eden* provides a new understanding of the story of Adam and Eve and illuminates the story's role and meaning in our modern world.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

It is one of the most familiar stories in the human canon: Adam and Eve, the Garden of Eden, the tree of knowledge of good and evil, the forbidden fruit, and the serpent. We know the story, but how many of us have really thought about what it means? I've always admired the focus and rigor of scholars who take a subject and examine it exhaustively, first from one perspective, then another, turning it like a prism in sunlight. This is what Arthur George and his wife, Elena George, have done with *The Mythology of Eden*. Examining the Eden tale in minute detail and with numerous footnotes the Georges employ their combined and considerable knowledge of mythology, archaeology, history, psychology, and religion to parse new meanings from a story that is fundamental in the Christian world. (Santa Barbara Independent) What a fascinating book! Though it

starts with and returns to an analysis of the second creation story in Genesis, The Mythology of Eden is about far more than that particular myth. It includes material on the backgrounds of the likely authors of the two Genesis creation stories and two other likely authors of the rest of the Hebrew Scriptures, the history of the Ancient Near East (ANE) before and during biblical times as well as information that has been gathered in recent years from archeology and anthropology. And yes, there is material on the role of polytheism, including Goddess worship, especially of Asherah and Astarte. The book places the development of religion, religious beliefs, and practices in the context of the sociopolitical development of the ANE, including Egypt, Canaan, Palestine, and other cultures. . . . I consider The Mythology of Eden to be overall a very valuable book and expect it to be especially useful to people researching or teaching the Bible, the history of the Ancient Near East, Goddess history, and to the intellectually curious and many others. (Medusa Coils)A rich and well-illustrated work viewing the Eden story in its own natural genre as myth against the background of ancient Near Eastern mythology from which the mythological symbols in the story came. The book successfully clarifies many important aspects of the story that have eluded earlier interpreters, including the full meaning of the symbols used in the story, the goddess lurking in the background, and the cosmic nature of evil and sin. (William G. Doty, emeritus professor and chair of religious studies, University of Alabama, author of *Mythography: The Study of Myths and Myth: A Handbook*)A work of impeccable scholarship and interdisciplinary expertise that unfolds like a gripping detective story, affording us one illuminating insight after another. It is essential reading for anyone wanting to gain a clearer understanding of the mythic and psychological dynamics that have shaped Western civilization. (Keiron Le Grice, professor of depth psychology in the Jungian and Archetypal Studies Program, Pacifica Graduate Institute, Santa Barbara, and author of *The Archetypal Cosmos* and *The Rebirth of the Hero*)A comprehensive, illuminating, and profound study of the primary myth of Western civilization that elucidates its far-reaching effects on our culture and the great questions of our time. (Anne Baring, Jungian analyst; author of *The Dream of the Cosmos: a Quest for the Soul*, co-author of *The Myth of the Goddess*)The Mythology of Eden is important to the mythology sector in many ways. As a well-researched and illustrated treatise on the history of the Garden of Eden, it is well worth the read. But as a source and segue to more contemporary issue concerning the old vs. new myth argument now percolating, it may prove even more important. (Willi Paul, writer and publisher at [NewMythologist.com](http://NewMythologist.com) and [PlanetShifter.com](http://PlanetShifter.com))

Arthur George is a prizewinning author, historian, and independent scholar with a background in mythology and the history and culture of the ancient Near East. He frequently lectures at scholarly

conferences on these subjects. Elena George is a prizewinning author and screenwriter with a background in mythology, linguistics, religion, and spirituality.

If you are interested in the origins of the Eden story and the motivations of the Jahwist author who wrote Genesis 2-3 all those years ago, this book is a must-read. I devoured it in a matter of days, engrossed in all the information the authors were providing and entertained by their excellent writing. The text is sprinkled with abundant footnotes with citations to respected writers. This book is not some religiously motivated, devotional work that advocates an oversimplified literalist or inerrantist view of the Bible. But it is not some angry atheist screed denouncing the Bible, either. It is a work of level-headed scholarship, and a fascinating one at that. Highly recommended for intellectually curious Bible believers and non-believers alike.

This is an excellent review and analysis of the Garden myth. It begins with a review of the geopolitical status of the era within this region of the world, and then discusses the structure of the myth, the influences had upon it by earlier creation myths as well as the religious history pertaining to the times and how they all came together to present one of the most enduring and influential myths of our times. The authors present a discussion of the author of this Biblical story and the religious environment at the time of writing of this scripture and how it probably influenced him in his structuring of the story. It presents an in-depth explanation of the symbols involved in the Garden of Eden and how they were utilized to achieve the suspected goals of the author. This is a must read for anyone seeking a clearer understanding of this Biblical scripture and the related times.

Excellent. Puts it in perspective; and explains how "stories" are used to explain and make sense of the world - even if the stories are myth.

Arthur and Elena George attempt a far-reaching, almost herculean, task in their book: to re-visit the Biblical story of Adam and Eve in order to clarify ongoing misunderstandings, to uncover its original meanings, and to demonstrate its ongoing import in our contemporary culture. The authors accomplish this masterfully. It would be quite understandable if *The Mythology of Eden* were a purely scholarly, academic, dissertation-like text—the topic and scope of the book merit it. The authors retain these elements yet manage to also provide a very engaging and accessible reading experience. Said differently, it is as enjoyable as it is informative. This is a book not only for those interested in mythology, history, and religious studies, but also for anyone

interested in the ongoing human struggle to illuminate the phenomena of death, immortality, finitude, the divine and humanity's place in the cosmos. By the end of the book, the reader walks away with a clear understanding of the story of the Garden of Eden in historical and mythological contexts, gaining new insights about this ancient story that are presented for the first time in this work, and a new appreciation for the meaning of the story in our contemporary world.

This book is my most valued discovery in the last year as I have researched the story of Eden in preparation for writing a story of my own about the much maligned serpent in western culture. The interdisciplinary research that the authors bring sheds light from multiple perspectives, especially their insightful understanding of modern archeology and Jungian psychology. This book has called into question many of my assumptions that I have naively held about the historical accuracy of the Biblical record. I count *Mythology of Eden* as one of the more meaningful books in my library.

I am not a casual reader, I am a warrior, a mythologist. I am an accomplished poet (for God wrote the dream of creation into being as a poem; it is senseless otherwise), I am a Jungian psychotherapist. I have no time for religion, for the delusions of belief. I am fascinated, however, by suchness, by the deep world, by truth which can only be grasped with an open hand. I am enchanted by story, by legend, by myth, by archetype. I cannot look away from a whirling, flaming sword, from the unblinking gaze of a serpent, from unclothed innocence. I am degreeed and birthed into the academic world by midwives Joseph Cambell and James Hillman. I am an absolute sucker for intelligence and scholarship. Enter *The Mythology Of Eden* by Arthur and Elena George. I read this masterwork alone at 9000 feet in the Eastern Sierras and when I had turned the last page shouted, "That's it!" so loudly the local bluebirds, my personal cherubim, scattered in surprise. I had been handed the keys to a foundation myth of Western civilization. One key was authorship, one key was geography, one key was politics, one was woman as Hidden Goddess, another language, and so on. The mythic vehicle was not the cartoon jalopy of childhood or fundamentalist fantasy, rather, a Bugatti Veyron of enlightenment. I knew from the first few pages I had better strap in and hold on for I would be taken where only artists and shamans can go, beyond the veils of a magician's complexity to a simple unified wisdom of applied knowledge, the epilogue, 'Taking The Eden Story Personally, Its meaning For Us Today'. A story without a lesson is no story at all and the George's distillation of lesson is an elixer of physical, intellectual and spiritual life. The elixer reveals the truth of the coniunctio, that we are that which is, that divinity is our birthright, that we literally create our world, that we are and have always

been seamless and perfect, and that the happy marriage of our inner God and Goddess proceeds eternally in our unfolding private Eden. That's it.

This book is a thoughtful and thorough treatment of the Judeo-Christian story of Eden. It reaches from the dawn of civilization, nicely explaining the links and gaps, thereby allowing for multiple layers of understanding of the Eden story.

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