

This collection of essays is about theories of myth, or generalizations about myth.

Chapter one contrasts E.B. Tylor's quintessentially nineteenth-century of myth—that myth serves to explain the physical world—to Hans Blumenberg's equally quintessentially twentieth-century one—that myth serves to do anything but explain the physical world. Chapter two contrasts F. Max Müller's theory of myth to Tylor's. Where Tylor sees myth as an aspect of religion, at least of primitive religion, Müller pits myth against religion. Chapters three and four present J. G. Frazer's interpretation of Adonis and Osiris as the god of vegetation or vegetation itself.

Chapter five compares the theories of two of the most popular writers on myth: Frazer and Joseph Campbell. Frazer epitomizes the nineteenth-century view of myth—that myth is a primitive, pre-scientific account of the physical world. Campbell epitomizes the twentieth-century view—that myth is panhuman. Chapter six argues that Campbell, despite the commonly applied characterization, is almost anything but a Jungian.

Chapter seven asks whether Eliade's theory actually allows for modern myths, even in light of his fundamental claim that all humans have myth. Chapter eight considers Eliade on myth and science and compares his view with that of Bronislaw Malinowski. Chapter nine sums up the book *Twentieth Century Mythologies: Dumézil, Lévi-Strauss, Eliade* (2006) by Daniel Dubuisson.

Chapter ten presents the array of views on the relationship between myth and literature. One relationship is the tracing of mythic themes in literature. Another is the origin of literature from myth. Chapter eleven compares various theorists on the nature of hell and heaven. Chapter twelve asks whether heroes of myth must be male.

Chapter thirteen considers the concept, developed by Jung and the physicist Wolfgang Pauli, of synchronicity, or a noncausal relationship between humans and the external world. The fourteenth and final chapter presents the varying positions of theorists on the relationship among four categories: myth, science, religion, and philosophy. Each theory is applied to the myth of Noah (Genesis 6–9).

No other scholar in the study of religion has so single-mindedly devoted himself to the study of myth, and especially theories of myth, as Robert Segal. Segal here directs his attention to the theories and the theorists, rather than to myths themselves. A lifetime of such dedication to the study of myth bears fruit in an accessible and useful collection of essays laying out the structure of a nearly complete list of theories of myth. Anyone seeking guidance, at whatever level, to theories of myth would be well-advised to consult Segal's oeuvre.

Ivan Strenski, Distinguished Professor (Emeritus),
Religious Studies, University of California, Riverside

Myth Theorized is another example of Segal's mastery of theories of myth. For anyone interested in the study of myth, this is a must read.

Nickolas P. Roubekas, editor-in-chief of *NUMEN* and
Assistant Professor of Religious Studies, University of Vienna

A wide-ranging collection of essays from a comparativist perspective on myth theory and myth theorists, written with insight and clarity by one of the world's foremost mythologists.

William Hansen, Professor Emeritus of Classical Studies
and Folklore, Indiana University, Bloomington

In this third collection on myth by one of the deans of Myth Studies in the Anglophone world, Robert Segal continues to demonstrate his magisterial command of the field. This book is a must read for scholars and graduate students in Religious Studies.

Thomas Ryba, Director of Religious Studies, Purdue University

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