



The Politics of Myth (Suny Series, Issues in the Study of Religion): A Study of C. G. Jung, Mircea Eliade, and Joseph Campbell

By Robert Ellwood

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The Politics of Myth examines the political views implicit in the mythological theories of three of the most widely read popularizers of myth in the twentieth century, C. G. Jung, Mircea Eliade, and Joseph Campbell. All three had intellectual roots in the anti-modern pessimism and romanticism that also helped give rise to European fascism, and all three have been accused of fascist and anti-Semitic sentiments. At the same time, they themselves tended toward individualistic views of the power of myth, believing that the world of ancient myth contained resources that could be of immense help to people baffled by the ambiguities and superficiality of modern life. Robert Ellwood details the life and thought of each mythologist and the intellectual and spiritual world within which they worked. He reviews the damaging charges that have been made about their politics, taking them seriously while endeavoring to put them in the context of the individual's entire career and lifetime contribution. Above all, he seeks to extract from their published work the view of the political world that seems most congruent with it.

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Editorial Review

Review

This book represents an insightful, balanced, historical, and critical assessment of the right-wing politics of three figures important specifically for the study of mythology and for religious studies in general. Ellwood does an excellent job of placing Jung, Eliade, and Campbell within their historical context and intellectual heritage, and he is not afraid to be critical of his subjects, although he is never unfair. It is a pleasure to read a work that does not trash figures for not being politically correct their entire careers and attempts to come to grips with the spiritual aspect of fascism without forgetting about the horrible suffering it caused. Moreover, Ellwood helps us to understand why someone might be attracted to fascism, and how it can be interpreted as a spiritual revolution. Carl Olson, Allegheny College"

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About the Author

Robert Ellwood is Professor of Religion Emeritus at the University of Southern California, and the author of numerous books including *The History and Future of Faith*, *The Sixties Spiritual Awakening*, and *The Fifties Spiritual Marketplace*.

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