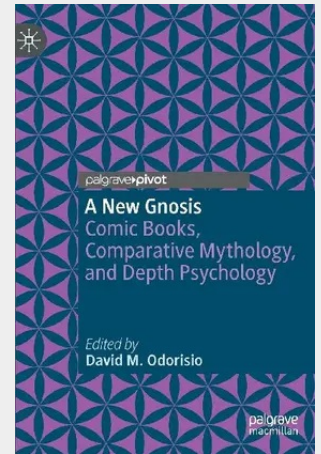


A New Gnosis

Comic Books, Comparative Mythology, and Depth Psychology

Superhero phenomena exploded into 20th- and 21st-century popular culture by way of the visual medium of comic books. In an increasingly secular (yet spiritual) culture that has largely renounced "the gods" (and even religion), what does the return of the superhero through our own pop cultural mythologies say to us—or even about us? This collection of essays from leading and up-and-coming scholars in the fields of comparative mythology and depth psychology considers the return of the superhero as representative of our own unique emergent modern mythology: a wildly diverse pantheon that reflects back to us our most far-reaching hopes and (im)possible (super)human desires. In placing the interpretive tools of comparative mythology and depth psychology alongside the comic book phenomenon, a super-powered palette emerges that unveils the hidden potential of modern readers' own heightened imaginations. The essays in this anthology examine select comic book and superhero characters from the "Silver Age" 1960s through contemporary 21st-century adaptations and innovations, as readers are invited to discover and uncover what the (re)emergence of these perennial gods and goddesses have to say about our own secret super selves today.

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