



# Theorizing Myth: Narrative, Ideology, and Scholarship

By Bruce Lincoln

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## Theorizing Myth: Narrative, Ideology, and Scholarship By Bruce Lincoln

In *Theorizing Myth*, Bruce Lincoln traces the way scholars and others have used the category of "myth" to fetishize or deride certain kinds of stories, usually those told by others.

He begins by showing that *mythos* yielded to *logos* not as part of a (mythic) "Greek miracle," but as part of struggles over political, linguistic, and epistemological authority occasioned by expanded use of writing and the practice of Athenian democracy. Lincoln then turns his attention to the period when myth was recuperated as a privileged type of narrative, a process he locates in the political and cultural ferment of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Here, he connects renewed enthusiasm for myth to the nexus of Romanticism, nationalism, and Aryan triumphalism, particularly the quest for a language and set of stories on which nation-states could be founded.

In the final section of this wide-ranging book, Lincoln advocates a fresh approach to the study of myth, providing varied case studies to support his view of myth—and scholarship on myth—as ideology in narrative form.

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### Editorial Review

#### About the Author

**Bruce Lincoln** is the Caroline E. Haskell Distinguished Service Professor of the History of Religions at the University of Chicago, where he is also affiliated with the Departments of Anthropology, Classics, Medieval Studies, and Middle Eastern Studies.

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