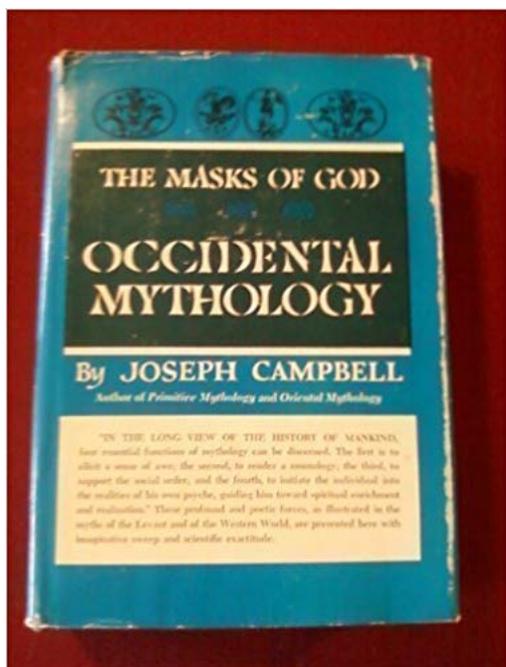


## The Masks of God: Occidental Mythology, Vol. 3 by Joseph Campbell



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Volume 3 of the Masks of God series.



## Reviews of the The Masks of God: Occidental Mythology, Vol. 3 by Joseph Campbell

Tojahn

This wonderful book is among the great treasures the master mythologist, Joseph Campbell, published in his lifetime.

For the fan or believer or explorer of any of the 3 great Abrahamic religions, here's your history and source book. Of course, it includes more than just the 'big three' but I expect it is primarily an interest in these that proves of most value and interest. Here are the stories you never heard before and many that you have heard before, too. Starting from the most ancient and widespread influences

that we can know about, the book tells the tale of how these religions evolved and got to, finally today, where we are now. If any Jewish person, or Christian, or Moslem, thinks their own particular religion [being the one true one] emerged developed and intact from the very lips of the eternal god of the universe, think again. Read and learn and see. All the beginnings involve the slowly emerging myths which are later falsely believed by the true-believers to be actual literal history. The miracle stories and 'divine revelations' are not history. Far from it. They all involve primitive scraps of legends and miracle stories and borrowings from neighboring tribes and other cultures over centuries of time. They all involve great heroes, men that heard 'directly from god' the one and only ultimate truths that the hearer 'must believe' to avoid perdition. And human beings, ever alert for magical aid and favors from 'God' will jump on board and believe. That is history. That is the way these things, the religions, develop over long centuries. Each new generation then is expected to believe that, well, all right, finally we've got the story straight and we are the ones who know the real truth. It is sad in a way. But that is what happens. That is who and what we humans are-- the species of naïve belief.

The long evolving trails are clearly laid out in this amazing book. Read and see. It is fascinating stuff.

As Campbell puts it himself at the beginning of the summing up near the end of the book:

"It is one of the great lessons of our study that for the vulgar, ill, or uninstructed mind, myths tend to become history...that, on the one hand, binds so-called believers into contending groups and...deprives them all of the substance of the message each believes itself alone to have received...whereas when any of the great mythic imageries comes to be read as poetry, as art, as experience...we find a message of accord, which, in brief, is that of the living God, who is not apart, but within all and of no definition."

Fani

I bought all four books in the "Masks of God" Series and started reading them out of order (with Volume 3) because I wanted to delve right into Biblical Mythology. I'm not far into it yet but as usual, Joseph Campbell is blowing my mind! My previous exposure to him was through the Bill Moyers interviews. I listened to them with rapt attention and felt that I was hearing the profound knowledge of pure genius. This book is no less profound. And I think it goes even deeper than the interviews because the ideas, comparisons, and historical perspective are laid out in a logical, sequential way that makes it a delight to follow. Every page I turn reveals a new discovery for my mind to relish. It leaves me in wonder, fascination, and enjoyment. And gives me so many "ah-ha's" of acknowledgment along the way. Every word written by the author elicits deep resonance within me. I don't know how anyone can see history, humanity, or spirituality quite the same after being exposed to "The Masks of God." I will admit, this is not necessarily the easiest thing to read. The content is deep, distilled and concentrated. There are no wasted words. Every sentence is imbued with so much meaning to take in, that I often have to read sentences or paragraphs multiple times in order to fully wrap my mind around it. And the language J.C. uses is sometimes flowery in a way that is beautifully poetic. So actually, his poetic way of speaking requires you to adapt to the poetry of it. You have to flow with it like a river that takes you even deeper in your own understanding. He is not only talking about symbols, he is sometimes speaking directly in symbols as well. You have to let your mind burst open and expand for this. If you want your consciousness to be uplifted and expanded, and you are willing to work for it a little, then Joseph Campbell is for you. His body of work is so huge that I can only dream of being able to read it all..... but it's on my bucket list for sure.

Eigeni

This a wonderful book! After reading anything by Joseph Campbell, I begin to see the world around, history, and religion in a whole new way. A fascinating read.

Doomblade

This book is an impressive accomplishment. It examines the history of the various cultures of the

western world through their myths, as expressed in their art, worship, and literature. The significance of the similarities between these myths, as well as the functions they served, are examined. The author concludes that underlying these myths is a basic humanity that binds us all together. I would recommend this book to anyone interested in the subject, as well as anyone who has read any of Joseph Campbell's other books.

BlackHaze

The book was not quite what I expected. To me it was more a book on anthropology than anything else. Not to detract from it though, it still had a lot of fascinating information in it. To me it is a shame that more "religious" people don't understand the history of their religions, how they are all tied together in ancient mythology. More people should read and understand this.

Phalaken

Campbell never disappoints. After a read your world suddenly becomes more understandable, more meaningful.

Jarortr

If you are interested in the history of religion, the four volume series, the Masks of God, is an excellent choice. Joseph Campbell views all religion as mythology, a somewhat agnostic view for anyone who is a true believer. He also provides overwhelming evidence that all religion derives from the most ancient of mythologies, going back to those of the neolithic cultural era. My only reservation about his writing is that it is both excessively verbose, lacks clarity, and is full of what to me are redundancies. That said, I still found this volume three of the tetralogy both an interesting and a rewarding read.

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