



Plato the Myth Maker

Luc Brisson

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The word myth is commonly thought to mean a fictional story, but few know that Plato was the first to use the term *muthos* in that sense. He also used *muthos* to describe the practice of making and telling stories, the oral transmission of all that a community keeps in its collective memory. In the first part of *Plato the Myth Maker*, Luc Brisson reconstructs Plato's multifaceted description of *muthos* in light of the latter's Atlantis story. The second part of the book contrasts this sense of myth with another form of speech that Plato believed was far superior: the *logos* of philosophy.

Gerard Naddaf's substantial introduction shows the originality and importance both of Brisson's method and of Plato's analysis and places it in the context of contemporary debates over the origin and evolution of the oral tradition.

"[Brisson] contrasts *muthos* with the *logos* found at the heart of the philosophical reading. [He] does an excellent job of analyzing Plato's use of the two speech forms, and the translator's introduction does considerable service in setting the tone."—*Library Journal*

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