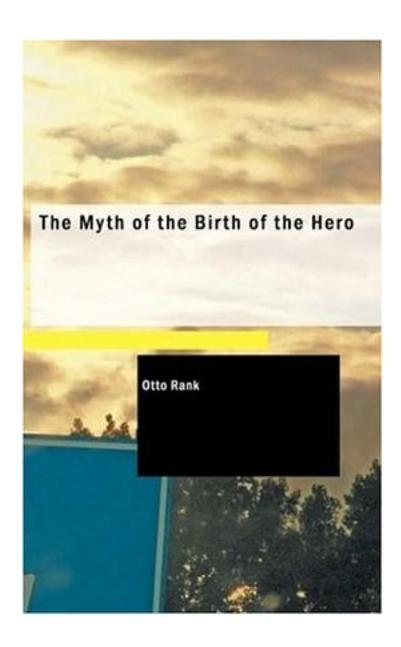
The Myth of the Birth of the Hero



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Originally published in German in 1909, Otto Rank's The Myth of the Birth of the Hero offered psychoanalytical interpretations of mythological stories as a means of understanding the human psyche. Like his mentor Freud, Rank compared the myths of such figures as Oedipus, Moses, and Sargon with common dreams, seeing in both a symbolic fulfillment of repressed desire. Thirteen years later, Rank substantially revised this seminal work, incorporating new discoveries in psychoanalysis, mythology, and ethnology, doubling the size of the book. This expanded second edition has never before been available in English. For the second edition, Rank added anthropological considerations of primitive and civilized peoples to those of mythology; extensive discussions of birth dreams, flood legends, and rescue fantasies; and new mythological examples -- among them Dionysus, Kullervo (a precursor of Hamlet), Trakhan, and Tristan -- as well as fuller treatments of Sargon and Moses. Eloquently translated by Gregory C. Richter and E. James Lieberman, this volume also includes an introductory essay by Robert A. Segal and Rank's 1914 essay, "The Play in Hamlet."

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