

Modern Mythologies: Translating French Cultural Constructions

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Mythologies, a book written by Roland Barthes and published in 1957 presenting essays on cultural concepts that he believed reach the level of “myths” through their social relevance, was received by an enormous amount of success in the years following its release. It remains frequently discussed and cited today, even after a large portion of these myths have been replaced by new ideas and principles. Fifty years after *Mythologies*, a work that is less well known despite its cultural importance was published under the direction of Jérôme Garcin: *Nouvelles mythologies*, or *New Mythologies*. Unlike the original book, this publication incorporated the voices of 57 Francophone authors and thinkers, each

election, in Ó 0 France’s 2002 presidential

also traversed the pages of *Nouvelles mythologies*, both through chapters explicitly handling these subjects and those with more covert implications. There are frequent references to the artistic or media dominance of the United States of America or of the English language in general, which some believe is replacing France’s culture both within the country and on a globally influential scale.

These patterns are particularly important given their relevance in the modern political climate. Far right movements have not died out, and in 2024 France nearly saw the victory of an extremely conservative party in parliament. The key to understanding the present may lie in the past, and this book is an excellent method of investigation. Additionally, the practice of translating excerpts of this book raises interesting questions regarding the ease of expressing such culturally entrenched texts. Casual references to

, and I look forward to continuing to dig into this research in the future.

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Funded by the Surdna Foundation Undergraduate Research Fellowship