



The Mystic Fable, Volume Two: The Sixteenth And Seventeenth Centuries (Religion and Postmodernism)

By Michel de Certeau

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More than two decades have passed since Chicago published the first volume of this groundbreaking work in the Religion and Postmodernism series. It quickly became influential across a wide range of disciplines and helped to make the tools of poststructuralist thought available to religious studies and theology, especially in the areas of late medieval and early modern mysticism.

Though the second volume remained in fragments at the time of his death, Michel de Certeau had the foresight to leave his literary executor detailed instructions for its completion, which formed the basis for the present work. Together, both volumes solidify Certeau's place as a touchstone of twentieth-century literature and philosophy, and continue his exploration of the paradoxes of historiography; the construction of social reality through practice, testimony, and belief; the theorization of speech in angelology and glossolalia; and the interplay of prose and poetry in discourses of the ineffable. This book will be of vital interest to scholars in religious studies, theology, philosophy, history, and literature.

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Editorial Review

Review

"*The Mystic Fable* is a work of the first importance in its examination of early modern mystics. It continues and expands upon Certeau's life-long project of understanding how we define ourselves in relation to others. The present, second volume provides an argument for which readers of Certeau have been waiting a long time—and they will not be disappointed. Certeau himself explained that the first volume of *Mystic Fable* traces the constitution of a "new science" (mystical speech) and its enunciation in the speaking subject. The second volume, continued Certeau, is the presentation of the contents of this science. Brilliantly and intelligently edited and introduced by the scholar Luce Giard, *Mystic Fable II* is the product of a singularly gifted and innovative philosopher."

(*Françoise Meltzer, University of Chicago*)

"It is rare, and dazzling, to encounter in one scholar and thinker the erudition, historical range, and theoretical scope, rigor, and creativity, that are Michel de Certeau's. His *Mystic Fable I*, published in Chicago's Religion and Postmodernism Series in English translation in 1992, stood out at the time, and stands today, as one of our most learned and theoretically significant engagements with late medieval and early modern mysticism. The translation and publication of this second volume will not simply revisit a singular voice and moment in the history of twentieth century French thought; it will also renew and expand that voice for English readers along lines that remain as relevant today as ever. This exceptional and long awaited work will be received enthusiastically, and put to productive scholarly and pedagogical use, in contexts including religious studies and theology, philosophy, medieval and early modern history, and literary studies."

(*Thomas Carlson, UC Santa Barbara*)

About the Author

Michel de Certeau (1925–86) was a philosopher, historian, and Jesuit. He is the author of *The Practice of Everyday Life*, *Heterologies: Discourse on the Other*, and *The Writing of History*, in addition to *The Mystic Fable, Volume One* and *The Possession at Loudun*, both published by the University of Chicago Press.

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