

## I - Cultural «hypostasia»

Antonio Cioffi

As a prologue to the analysis of trans-functionalization of myth in contemporary fantastic cinema, we believe it is necessary to place our discourse in a wider context, though we shall make many considerations later on, as we proceed with our investigation; especially, we intend here to deal briefly with the re-emergence, in our social and cultural context, of forms of practice which originally belonged to civilizations which laid their foundations on myth, and - for the moment - we shall ignore the many kinds of quotations of strictly mythological contents which often accompany such practice.

In other words, we are not so interested here in more or less legitimate re-visitations of traditional mythology which appear everywhere (and which we shall analyze fully in the second part of this study), as in the not so veiled tendency of culture, especially of mass culture, to proceed in what we may call a "mythological" manner. Although a certain kind of «hypostasia» has long become part of "secular and progressive" theories of knowledge, epistemology - which has the task of separating the wheat from the chaff - seems not to have paid due attention to this fact, something especially serious for those who, like us, are not leading the umpteenth "crusade" in defence of strict scientific method, but try to separate the legitimate mythological "wheat" from the "chaff" which is often presented as epistemologically correct.