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Religious Narrative, Cognition and Culture

Image and Word in the Mind of Narrative

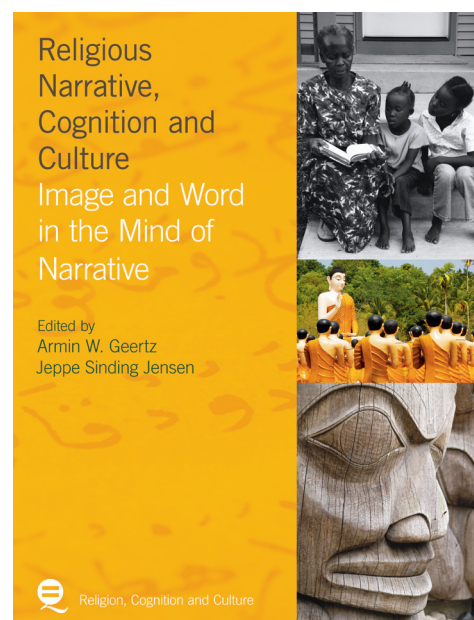
Edited by Armin W. Geertz and Jeppe Sinding Jensen

- a collection of essays from some of the world's leading scholars in the fields of cognitive science, narratology and comparative religion

At the heart of the volume are five papers which serve as sequels to each other. The first paper by the American biologist and semiotician Terrence W. Deacon explores the neurological processes and possible genetic foundations of how language emerged in *Homo sapiens*. This is followed nicely by the Canadian evolutionary psychologist Merlin Donald's contribution which describes the possible phylogenetic routes in the development of language and culture. His biocultural approach is a major theme in the book. The third paper by the British psychologist Chris Sinha brings us to the bridge between neurological and communicative levels. In it he describes the complex interrelations between the ontogenesis and the sociogenesis of cognitive processes and demonstrates how they relate to reason, representation, figuration and imagination. The fourth contribution brings us to the level of narrative. It is by the Indian narratologist Rukmini Bhaya Nair in which she argues for a combination of neurology, narratology and a reworked speech-act approach that focuses on narrative rather than simply sentences. The final keynote is by the Finnish cognitive scientist of religion Ilkka Pyysiäinen, who brings us full circle to religious behaviour by showing how the psychology of ritual helps make narrative beliefs possible.

The Editors

Armin W. Geertz is Professor of the History of Religions and Director of the Religion, Cognition and Culture Research Unit at Aarhus University, Denmark. **Jeppe Sinding Jensen** is Associate Professor of the History of Religions and Coordinator of the Religion, Cognition and Culture Research Unit at Aarhus University, Denmark. His publications include *Myths and Mythologies: A Reader* (Equinox, 2009).



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