Ernesto de Martino on Religion
The Crisis and the Presence

FABRIZIO M. FERRARI

“In this excellent book Ferrari provides a thorough examination of de Martino’s work.” – Gustavo Benavides, Villanova University

Ernesto de Martino (1908–65) made a seminal contribution to the study of vernacular religions, producing innovative analyses of key concepts such as folklore, magic and ritual. His methodology stemmed from his training under the Italian philosopher Benedetto Croce whilst his philosophical approach to anthropology borrowed from Marx and Gramsci.

Widely celebrated in continental Europe, de Martino’s contribution to the study of religion has not been fully understood in the Anglophone world though some of his works – Primitive Magic: the Psychic Powers of Shamans and Sorcerers and The Land of Remorse: a Study of Southern Italian Tarantism – have been translated.

This book presents a comprehensive overview of de Martino’s work and the thinkers and theories which informed his writings. It assesses his contribution to the study of religions and the potential of his methodology for contemporary scholarship.

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