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Nota di contenuto	Front matter -- Contents -- Preface. An Uncomfortable Influence -- Chapter 1. Bachofen in the Nineteenth Century: Myth, Gender, Modernity -- Chapter 2. The Nature of Authority and the Authority of Nature: Anthropology, Marxism and Germanic Mysticism -- Chapter 3. Mother Right and the Women's Movement -- Chapter 4. Matriarchy and the Literature of the Fin-de-siècle -- Chapter 5. 'Psychoanalyste avant la lettre?' Bachofen, Mythic Motherhood, and Psychoanalysis -- Chapter 6. Prophets of Matriarchal Revolution: Otto Gross and Expressionism -- Chapter 7. 'The Struggle for Johann Jakob Bachofen' Philology and Politics in the 1920's -- Chapter 8. Myth, Symbol, Modernity: Bachofen in Literary Works of the 1920's -- Chapter 9. Feminine Myth and Masculine Politics: National Socialism and Matriarchy -- Chapter 10. Antifascist Bodies and Dialectical Mythologies: Bachofen in the anti-Nazi Struggle -- Backmatter
Sommario/riassunto	This study explores the prevalence in German culture of myths about ancient matriarchal societies, discussing their presence in left and right wing politics, feminist and antifeminist writing, sociology, psychoanalysis and literary production. By tracing the influence of the

works of the Swiss jurist and theorist of matriarchy, Johann Jakob Bachofen (1815-1887), and the controversies about the reception and interpretation of his work, this study shows how debate about the matriarchal origins of culture was inextricably linked with anxieties about modernity and gender identities at the turn of the twentieth century. By moving beyond the discussion of canonical authors and taking seriously the scope of the discussion, it becomes clear that it is not possible to reduce matriarchal theories to any particular political ideology; instead, they function as a mythic counter discourse to a modernity conceived as oppressive, rational and masculine. Writers considered include Ludwig Klages, Hofmannsthal, Kafka, Hauptmann, Lou Andreas-Salomé, Sir Galahad, Clara Viebig, Mathilde Vaerting, Thomas Mann, Elisabeth Langgässer, Ilse Langner, Otto Gross, Franz Werfel, and many others.
