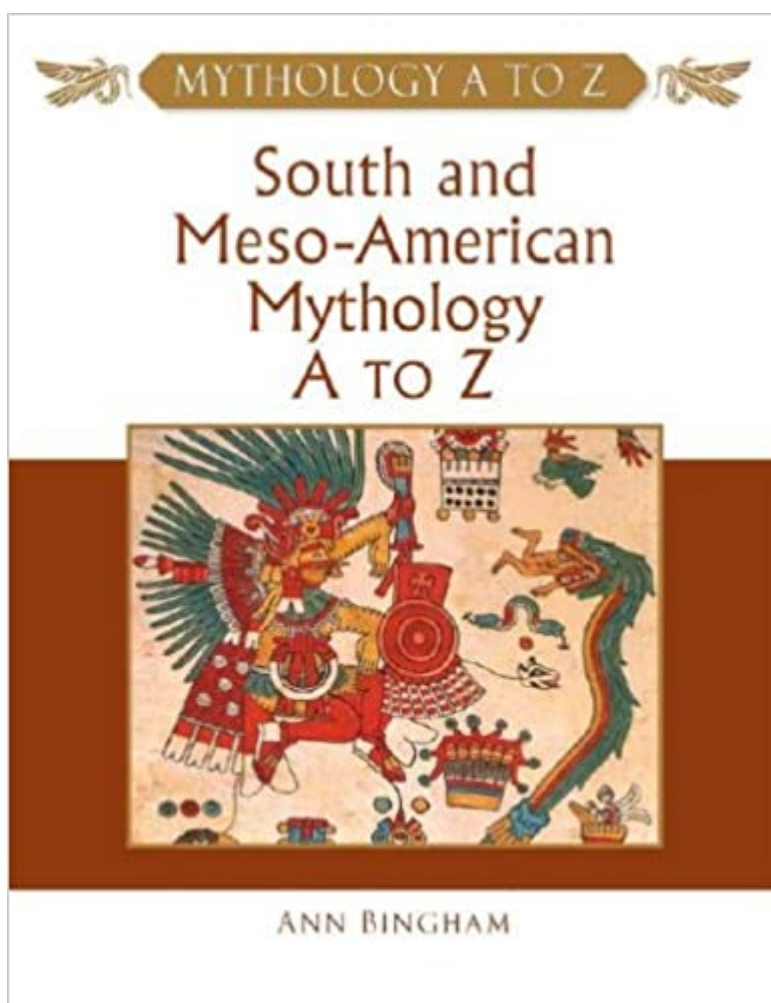


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South And Meso-American Mythology A To Z (Mythology A To Z Series)



Synopsis

this volume covers the myths of the great Inca, Maya, and Aztec empires, as well as the stories of other, lesser-known but equally important cultures, such as the Olmec. A brief introductory chapter gives readers an overview of the history of South and Meso-American peoples. Entries describe and explain the significance of each subject and, for characters, tell the stories surrounding them. Fully cross-referenced, the volume provides fascinating insight into the cultures that inhabited South and Meso-America.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Grade 6 Up - Handsome, colorful exteriors combine with an appealingly spacious layout to produce inviting surveys of complex subjects. Simple language and modest-length entries introduce the customs, beliefs, legends, ceremonies, and knowledge of many ancient peoples. Entries often include translations of names, alternate spellings, and cross-references to other articles. Each volume offers a historical introduction, a time line, simple maps, a generous bibliography of recent books and reliable Web sites, and a substantial index. However, a map of the area under discussion in South and Meso-America does not specify which areas comprise Meso-America and which make up South America. In both books, average-quality, black-and-white photographs appear throughout. Colin Taylor's *Native American Myths and Legends* (Smithmark, 1995; o.p.) is more dynamically illustrated with many bright color photographs. Two accessible and brilliantly illustrated titles that would complement Bingham's volume are Tony Allan's *Lost Realms of Gold* (Time-Life,

2000) and Timothy R. Roberts's *Gods of the Maya, Aztecs, and Incas* (Metro, 1996). - Ann G. Brouse, Steele Memorial Library, Elmira, NY Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

These volumes are part of the *Mythology A to Z* series from *Facts On File*. Each volume has a similar format: an introduction includes a history of the culture(s), an explanation of the book, and a pronunciation guide, followed by a time line and a map. The main text is an alphabetical listing of names, places, and ideas important to the mythology of the culture. The definitions are mostly brief--a single paragraph--although some are as lengthy as a page. Many black-and-white illustrations, mostly of artifacts, enhance the text. Each volume includes a good bibliography with Internet addresses. The series is designed for young people in junior high and high school, and it is appropriate for younger children who are better readers or interested in mythology. Except in the Celtic volume there is not much storytelling since the volumes are intended to be encyclopedias rather than collections of stories. They will help students to make connections between mythological characters and images and compare similarities between cultures. The indexes are constructed to help make those connections, too. Multiculturalism and world history are an integral part of most school curricula, and this series fits both of these themes. Although the pronunciation guides in the introductions are excellent, a young audience also needs pronunciations at appropriate entry headings. It is difficult to remember strange pronunciations or to flip to the front of the book to figure out how to say foreign names. It seems a disservice to the Native American, Meso-American, and African cultures to lump so many of their mythologies into such a few pages. Another disservice is the use of some English translations as main entries in the Native American volume, with see references from the Native American terms. Although this is explained in the introduction, it reinforces attitudes of cultural superiority. That being said, these titles are an excellent introduction to the mythologies of these cultures and should be in most public and school libraries. Robin Hoelle Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved

I had a look at several books from this series in the reference section of my library. The information from all meshed with that I found in other sources. It's all introductory material, as would be expected from such a series, but includes beliefs of many groups rather than focusing only on the most well-known ones. As such I've new things to look into that I hadn't yet come across in several weeks of research. The cross-referencing in entries was useful as well, pointing at even more new things.

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