

World Mythology



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The great myths of the world create meaning out of the fundamental events of human existence: birth, death, conflict, loss, reconciliation, the cycle of the seasons. They speak to us of life itself in voices still intelligible, yet compellingly strange and distant. World Mythology offers readers an authoritative and wide-ranging guide to these enduring mythological traditions, combining the pure narrative of the myths themselves with the background necessary for more complete understanding. Here, noted mythology expert Roy Willis, brings together a team of nineteen leading scholars navigate a clear path through the complexities of myth as they distill the essence of each regional tradition and focus on the most significant figures and the most enthralling stories. All aspects of the world's key mythologies are covered, from tales of warring deities and demons to stories of revenge and metamorphosis; from accounts of lustful gods and star-crossed human lovers to journeys in the underworld. All are told at length and are accompanied by illuminating and readable introductory text. Also included are summaries of important theories about the origins and meaning of myth, and an examination of themes that recur across a range of civilizations. Beautifully illustrated with more than 500 color photographs, works of art, charts, and maps, World Mythology offers readers the most accessible guide yet to the heritage of the world's imagination.

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