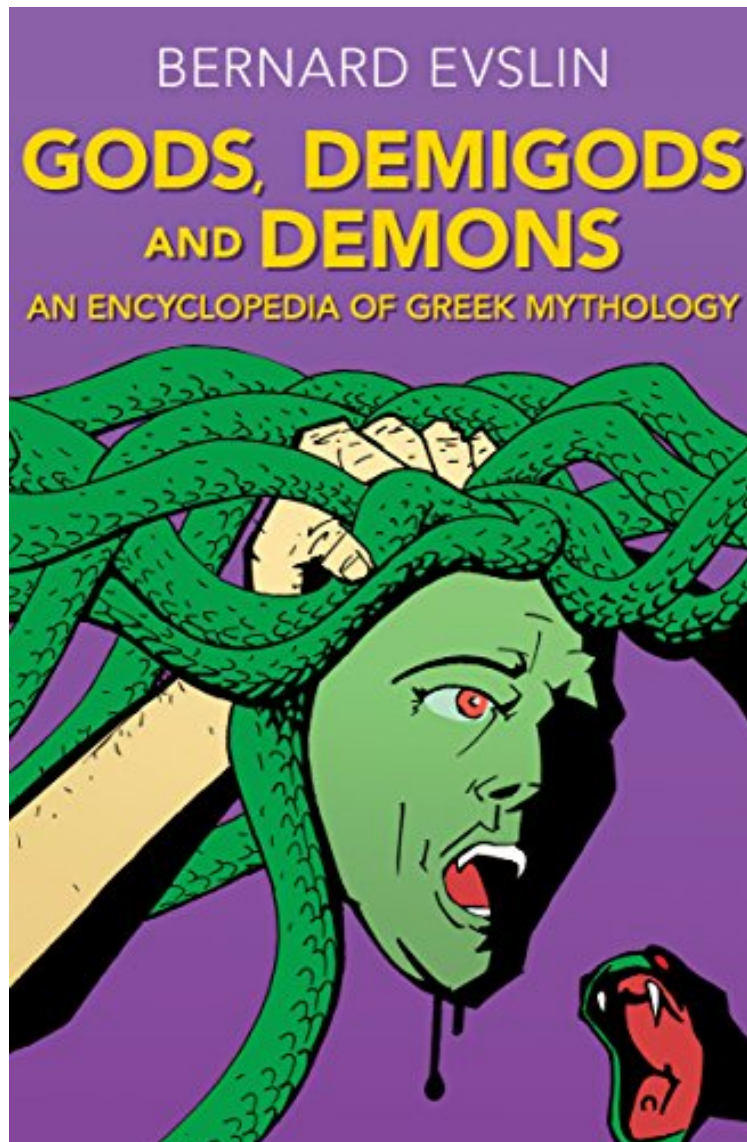


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Gods, Demigods and Demons: An Encyclopedia of Greek Mythology

Bernard Evslin

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0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. The treasures of Greek mythology By Rama Rao This book is introductory in nature that describes Greek gods, goddesses and heroes that have inspired human creativity in Western civilization. It delineates Greek myths and their relevance to Greek religion and nature worship, which was also

prevalent in ancient Israel and ancient India. The gods and goddesses are described alphabetically and the myths include stories about the gods and the role they played in human emancipation. Ancient Greek, Egypt and Roman religions had numerous gods and goddesses. They were worshipped similar to gods of Rigveda in ancient India. But these religions did not survive after the advent of Christianity because there were no sacred scriptures and religious literature that could have supported their beliefs and practices. In contrast to this, Rgveda evolved as a major sacred scripture of early Hinduism that paved the way for other Vedic literature like Aranyakas, Brahmanas, Upanishads, epics (Itihasa), Bhagavadgita, and Puranas. The six schools of Hindu Philosophy that includes Vedanta were built on strong foundations of Vedic literature. This partly explains the survival of Hinduism over Greek, Egyptian and Roman religions. In addition, the Roman Empires embrace of Christianity accelerated the dominance of Roman Catholic faith. The Greek religion believed that the pantheon of deities lived on Mount Olympus, the highest mountain in Greece. From their perch, they ruled every aspect of human life. Olympian gods and goddesses looked like men and women, but they could change themselves into animals and other things. Homers epics of the Iliad and the Odyssey described the mythical story of Trojan War as a divine conflict as well as a human one. But he did not name the gods and goddesses who are probably his main characters. But about one hundred years later, Hesiods Theogony offered the first written origin story of Greek mythology. It said that the universe came from nothingness (Chaos, a primeval void) to being, and a family tree of elements, gods and goddesses evolved. They descended from all over; Gaia (Earth), Ouranos (Sky), Pontos (Sea) and Tartaros (the Underworld). Serval gods of Greek and Roman religions bear resemblance to gods of Rgveda of Hinduism. They all have originated from a proto Indo-European inhabitants (Yamnaya culture). For example, gods names had similar origin; Zeus (Greek) and Dyaus Pitar (Hindu); Hades (Greek), Yama (Hindu) and Yima (Persian mythology); Uranus (Greek) and Varuna (Hindu); Mars (Greek) and Maruts (Hindu); Daphne (Greek) Dahana (Hindu); and Paris (Greek) Panis (Hindu). Zeus (Greek), the king of gods is affirmed with thunder and lightning, the lightning bolt as his primary weapon. Similarly Vedic god Indra is king of the gods and heavens. One of his trademarks is the Vajras or lightning bolt, representing immense power and influence. Saraswati (Hindu goddess) is a cosmic musician, embodying perfection, knowledge, and wisdom, and Athena (Greek goddess) is very intelligent (Regula) and heroic. The Vedic trinity in ancient Hinduism was Indra, Varuna and Mitra, whose Greek counterparts were Zeus, Poseidon and Hades. The supreme ruler of the Proto-Indo-European pantheon was the god *Dyus Patr, whose name literally means "Sky Father". He was believed to have been worshipped as the god of the day-lit skies. Linguists reconstruct the names of some deities in the Proto-Indo-European language. The term for "God" was deiwos; this is reflected in Hittite as sius; Latin as Deus or divus; Sanskrit as deva; and Persian as daeva or div. This is a good book for quick reference. But the author does not provide any illustrations, photographs, drawings or genealogical tables. In fact there is no introduction to this volume. Recommended to readers interested in ancient history, Greek history and Greek religion. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Was so happy to find out there was even a goddess in ... By Kindle Customer Read this until it was memorized while I was a kid, so had to buy a replacement copy when the first one got trashed. Was so happy to find out there was even a goddess in there that shared my name and made me that much more happy to have it. 5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. I Learnt All the Greek Mythology from the Book! By Ryucei I was a typical Japanese until I chanced to find this book (the Japanese Edition) when I was around 15 or so, since then, every time I encountered unfamiliar names from the myth, the very first thing I've done is to refer this book. The book is, too, out of print here in Japan which, I think, is a big loss for Japanese people to expand their knowledge in an interesting way. I'm 44 now, about 30 years have gone by since I read this book for the first time, and yet, still I have the book as a treasure of my life. Anyway, I am going to get this English edition, too, so that I can study English with much more motivation. (My English is just limited, be patient with it please)

The essential companion guide for all readers of Greek mythology

Ross Thomas is without peer in American suspense. Los Angeles Times