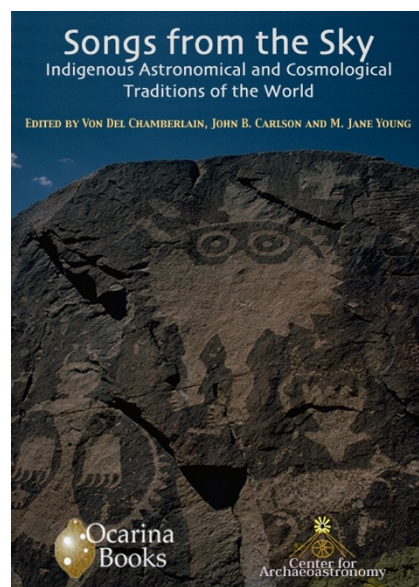


Songs from the Sky: Indigenous Astronomical and Cosmological Traditions of the World

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This substantial collection of papers on indigenous astronomical knowledge remains unequalled in its scope and extent. The authors are drawn from a variety of academic disciplines, including anthropology, archaeology, astronomy, engineering, art history, history of science, history of religion, folklore, and mythology, and bring a variety of academic perspectives to bear upon aspects of celestial knowledge and perception in diverse social contexts from many different parts of the globe. Native voices speak alongside these academic ones, as indigenous art and folklore are presented for their own intrinsic value, as well as for the insights they offer into the cosmological traditions of their creators.

The Americas provide the main geographical focus, with 20 of the 32 papers concerning indigenous north American groups such as the Navajo, Lakota, Zuni and Blackfoot, the Mixe and Tzotzil Maya of southern Mexico, the Andean highlands and the Amazonian region of Peru, and southern coastal Brazil.

The remaining 12 articles extend to the Arab world, sub-Saharan Africa, southern India, Java, Melanesia, Australia and Polynesia, with a few addressing broader synthetic themes. For a number of the culture areas dealt with in some detail here, other published information about sky knowledge is extremely scant.

The volume represents the long-delayed proceedings of the First International Conference on Ethnoastronomy, held at the Smithsonian Institution, Washington DC, in 1983.

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