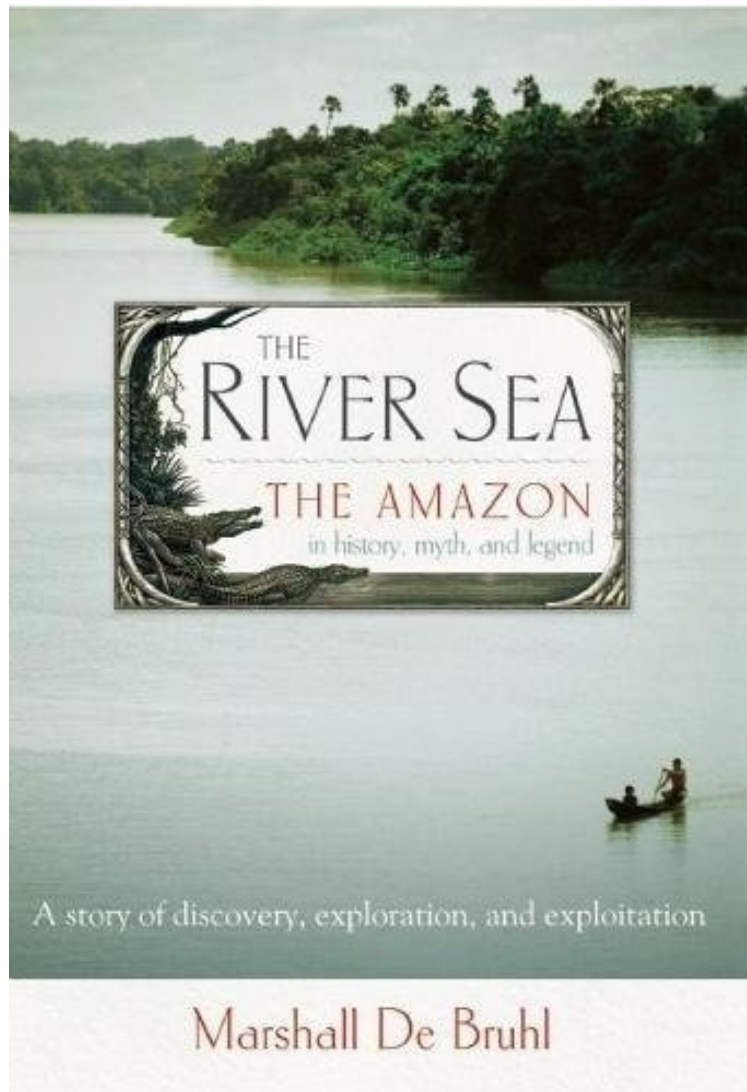


The River Sea: The Amazon in History, Myth, and Legend

Marshall De Bruhl

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Marshall De Bruhl : The River Sea: The Amazon in History, Myth, and Legend before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The River Sea: The Amazon in History, Myth, and Legend:

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Terrific Book on the History of the RiverBy Sally CruikshankThis book is beautifully written and carefully researched. It manages to bring the complex history of the River into a cohesive and fascinating volume. I plan to read it again soon, and I don't usually reread books. I cannot recommend it more strongly- a great book.

Since its discovery by Europeans in 1500, explorers, visionaries, soldiers of fortune, men of God, scientists, and slavers have been drawn to the legendary Amazon. *The River Sea* is a sweeping chronicle of those brave souls, ranging from the Spanish seafarer Vicente Pinzón, who discovered the river, to contemporary heroes and heroines, like Sister Dorothy Stang and Chico Mendes, whose efforts to save the rain forest cost them their lives. Among others in this vast cast of characters who people the drama of the Amazon is Francisco de Orellana, the first European to traverse the river from the Andes to the sea; the fiery priest Bartolomé de las Casas, defender of the indigenous peoples; the great scientist explorers Alexander von Humboldt and Alfred Russel Wallace; the madmen and psychopath Lope de Aguirre; and the Peruvian Evangeline, Isabel Godin, who in 1769 crossed the continent, braving the terrors of the jungles to reunite with her husband, whom she had not seen in twenty years. *The River Sea* is a compelling account of five centuries of the history, the myths, and the legends of the Amazon, the most exotic and fascinating locale on Earth.

From *Booklist* Derived from firsthand accounts and secondary histories about Amazon exploration, and informed by an authorial journey to South America, this work embraces discoverers, conquistadors, missionaries, naturalists, and environmentalists who have been mesmerized by the world's most stupendous river. Throughout, De Bruhl injects landscape and geographical description into a narrative anchored to historical personages. This usefully depicts the imposing scale of the river, from its width and length to its source in the craggy recesses of the Andes Mountains, as the daunting stage for the ambitions of those who would exploit it. After recounting the fall of the Inca in the era of Spanish and Portuguese conquest, for example, De Bruhl introduces various desperadoes who sought riches in the rain forest; he then describes the scientific expeditions, Alexander von Humboldt's being the best remembered, that yielded their shares of discovery and drama. Sequencing from botanists such as Alfred Russel Wallace to Amazonian economic conflicts over rubber and deforestation, De Bruhl empathetically regales readers with an account that is alluring, intimidating, and ecologically fragile. --Gilbert Taylor