

# Iranian Leviathan A Monumental History Of Mithra

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attilio mastrocine explains the mysteries of mithras in a new way as a transformation of mazdean elements into an ideological and religious reading of augustus story the author shows that the character of mithras played the role of apollo in favoring augustus victory and the birth of the roman empire

includes pictures includes ancient accounts describing mithras includes online resources and a bibliography for further reading includes a table of contents it is as though the living tradition and written records of christianity had disappeared from the world for fifteen hundred years and there remained to us only a few hundred monuments and the ruins of some three score churches what could we glean from these of the doctrines of the faith how from such meagre remains could we reconstruct the story of the god the saving doctrines the rituals the liturgies g r s mead the mysteries of mithra in the early roman empire as christianity struggled to gain a foothold and survive in the polytheistic pool of roman theology its greatest rivals weren t the caesars or the roman aristocracy but rather the faith and devotion of the common roman legionary the faith of these men was centered on the god mithras who they believed led them to victory upon the field of battle and had done so for nearly four centuries despite this widespread belief among soldiers the cult of mithras was not a creation of the romans although they would eventually add their own rituals and mysteries to the ancient religion in fact the mithraic religion was an indo persian creation a theology which managed to travel from india and back into the hellenic and roman world by way of alexander the great s conquest of the persian empire eventually the cult of mithras would spread across the ancient world and mithras would be worshiped from the mountains of india to the coasts of spain as a result the cult of mithras could ultimately be found in every corner of the roman empire the mithras cult was one of the many mystery religions that the romans adopted several of which came from cultures outside of rome isis an egyptian goddess and cybele an anatolian goddess were both popular with roman women while mithras which was a variation of the name of the zoroastrian

demigod mithra was popular with roman soldiers and the political elite for over 400 years since the mithras cult like all of the roman mystery cults was esoteric in nature the exact nature of the influence other cultures had on the cult remains unknown but some archaeological evidence has led modern scholars to make educated deductions some believe that the conscription of persian soldiers into the roman army and continued contact between the parthians and romans led to some members of the ever eclectic roman society adopting the cult directly from the parthian zoroastrian religion clark 2001 157 this seems like the most plausible explanation but others have argued that the mithras cult was actually a roman religion that was given a parthian faade to make it appear more exotic in order to attract romans who were enthralled with eastern spirituality clark 2001 157 the best evidence to determine the origins of the mithras cult can be found in the many temples throughout europe that the romans erected to the god these temples known as mithraea were subterranean chambers where the secret rituals of the cult took place the best evidence from extant mithraea are the reliefs on the altars which depict a graphic mythological story the altar reliefs usually depict the god slaughtering a bull and often accompanied by a leaping dog clark 2001 158 the references to zoroastrian theology are unmistakable the bull slaughter is similar to an account from a zoroastrian text the bundahishen while dogs were viewed as asha animals in zoroastrian theology and an important part of the funerary ritual clark 2001 158 the detailed iconography on the mithras altars suggests that the inventors of the mithras cult had more than just a superficial knowledge of zoroastrianism which in turn indicates a provenance of the religion somewhere in persian or parthia

with over 50 large to full page illustrations the mysteries of mithra examines the history and origin of the mithraic religion it covers the dissemination of mithraism into the roman empire the doctrine of the mithraic mysteries the liturgy clergy and devotees and the art of the mithraic religion the romans attributed their mithraic mysteries the mystery religion known as mithraism to persian i e zoroastrian sources relating to mithra

first published in 1956 this seminal study by the great belgian scholar franz cumont remains the definitive coverage of a great ideological struggle between the west and the orient in the first centuries of the christian era mithraism a mystery religion originating in persia spread rapidly through the roman empire and achieved such strength that europe almost became mithraic dr cumont the world s greatest authority on aspects of classical religions here discusses the origins of this colourful oriental religion and its association with the roman army then utilizing fragmentary monuments and texts in one of the greatest feats of scholarly detection he reconstructs the mystery teachings and secret doctrines the hidden organization and cult of mithra this volume includes 70 illustrations

a journey to the hypercosmic side of the sun by prof ezio albrile internet the resurrection of a god the neo mithraic communities by israel campos aristotle the natural slave the athenian relationship with india by robert f mullen the dawn of religions in afghanistan seistan gandhara the personal seals of gotama buddha zoroaster by ranajit pal dacia the cult of mithras by csaba szabo sun tzu the achaemenid grand strategy by sheda vasseghi zen buddhism mithraism by masato t j a new archaeological research of the sassanian fire temple of rivand in sabzevar by hassan hashemi zarjabad the zoroastrian holyland of haetumant by reza mehrafarin kephra by akashanath into the looking glass tragic reflections of life by lesley madytinou solomon in olympus the enduring connection between king solomon greek magic by david rankine orphic hymn to aphrodite trans by harita meenee the athenian festivals of demeter by melissa gold the lioness by jane raeburn plus many more articles

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