Mystery Cults Of The Ancient World

**Ancient Mystery Cults**-Walter Burkert 1989-10-15 The foremost historian of Greek religion provides the first comprehensive, comparative study of a little-known aspect of ancient religious beliefs and practices. Secret mystery cults flourished within the larger culture of the public religion of Greece and Rome for roughly a thousand years. This book is neither a history nor a survey but a comparative phenomenology, concentrating on five major cults. In defining the mysteries and describing their rituals, membership, organization, and dissemination, Walter Burkert displays the remarkable erudition we have come to expect of him; he also shows great sensitivity and sympathy in interpreting the experiences and motivations of the devotees.

**Mystery Cults of the Ancient World**-Hugh Bowden 2010 Explores mysterious religious cults of ancient Greece and Rome, discussing the deity that each group worshiped, the initiation ceremonies, and how the cults' practices influenced early Christianity.
Greek Mysteries-Michael B. Cosmopoulos 2005-08-18
Written by an international team of acknowledged experts, this excellent book studies a wide range of contributions and showcases new research on the archaeology, ritual and history of Greek mystery cults. With a lack of written evidence that exists for the mysteries, archaeology has proved central to explaining their significance and this volume is key to understanding a phenomenon central to Greek religion and society.

Greek Philosophy and Mystery Cults-María José García Blanco 2016-02-29 The contributions to this book offer a broad vision of the relationships that were established between Greek Philosophy and the Mystery Cults. The authors centre their attention on such thinkers as Plato, Aristotle, and the Stoic and the Neoplatonist philosophers, who used – and in some cases criticised – doctrinal elements from Mystery Cults, adapting them to their own thinking. Thus, the volume provides a new approach to some of the most renowned Greek philosophers, highlighting the influence that Mystery Cults, such as Orphism, Dionysianism, or the Eleusinian rites, had on the formation of fundamental aspects of their thinking. Given its interdisciplinary character, this book will appeal to a broad academic readership interested in the origin of Hellenic thinking and culture. It will be especially useful for those eager for a deeper approach to two fundamental domains that attract the attention of many Antiquity scholars: Greek philosophy and religion.
Mystic Cults in Magna Graecia-Giovanni Casadio
2013-08-15 In Vergil's Aeneid, the poet implies that those who have been initiated into mystery cults enjoy a blessed situation both in life and after death. This collection of essays brings new insight to the study of mystic cults in the ancient world, particularly those that flourished in Magna Graecia (essentially the area of present-day Southern Italy and Sicily). Implementing a variety of methodologies, the contributors to Mystic Cults in Magna Graecia examine an array of features associated with such "mystery religions" that were concerned with individual salvation through initiation and hidden knowledge rather than civic cults directed toward Olympian deities usually associated with Greek religion. Contributors present contemporary theories of ancient religion, field reports from recent archaeological work, and other frameworks for exploring mystic cults in general and individual deities specifically, with observations about cultural interactions throughout. Topics include Dionysos and Orpheus, the Goddess Cults, Isis in Italy, and Roman Mithras, explored by an international array of scholars including Giulia Sfameni Gasparro ("Aspects of the Cult of Demeter in Magna Graecia") and Alberto Bernabé ("Imago Inferorum Orphica"). The resulting volume illuminates this often misunderstood range of religious phenomena.

Mystery Cults in Visual Representation in Graeco-Roman Antiquity- 2020-10-26 This book fills a gap in the study of mystery cults in Graeco-Roman Antiquity. Focusing on the visual language surrounding these cults, it aims to
understand how images depict mysteries in different cults: Dionysus, Mithras, Mother of the Gods, and Isiac cults.

**Initiation into the Mysteries of the Ancient World** - Jan N. Bremmer 2014-07-28 The ancient Mysteries have long attracted the interest of scholars, an interest that goes back at least to the time of the Reformation. After a period of interest around the turn of the twentieth century, recent decades have seen an important study of Walter Burkert (1987). Yet his thematic approach makes it hard to see how the actual initiation into the Mysteries took place. To do precisely that is the aim of this book. It gives a ‘thick description’ of the major Mysteries, not only of the famous Eleusinian Mysteries, but also those located at the interface of Greece and Anatolia: the Mysteries of Samothrace, Imbros and Lemnos as well as those of the Corybants. It then proceeds to look at the Orphic-Bacchic Mysteries, which have become increasingly better understood due to the many discoveries of new texts in the recent times. Having looked at classical Greece we move on to the Roman Empire, where we study not only the lesser Mysteries, which we know especially from Pausanias, but also the new ones of Isis and Mithras. We conclude our book with a discussion of the possible influence of the Mysteries on emerging Christianity. Its detailed references and up-to-date bibliography will make this book indispensable for any scholar interested in the Mysteries and ancient religion, but also for those scholars who work on initiation or esoteric rituals, which were often inspired by the ancient Mysteries.
Mystery Religions in the Ancient World-Joscelyn Godwin 1981 Describes five ancient approaches to life, shows artifacts for a variety of early religions, and discusses each one's beliefs and rituals

The Ancient Mysteries-Marvin W. Meyer 1999-05-07 "A very balanced selection of sources for the study of the ancient so-called mystery religions, starting with Eleusis and ending with mysteries in Judaism and Christianity. . . . No other modern sourcebook exists in this field."—Kurt Rudolph

Greek Mysteries-Michael B. Cosmopoulos 2005-08-18 Written by an international team of acknowledged experts, this excellent book studies a wide range of contributions and showcases new research on the archaeology, ritual and history of Greek mystery cults. With a lack of written evidence that exists for the mysteries, archaeology has proved central to explaining their significance and this volume is key to understanding a phenomenon central to Greek religion and society.

Hellenistic Mystery-Religions-Richard Reitzenstein 1978-01-01

The Mysteries of Artemis of Ephesos-Guy MacLean Rogers 2012-11-27 DIV Artemis of Ephesos was one of the
most widely worshiped deities of the Graeco-Roman World. Her temple, the Artemision, was one of the seven wonders of the ancient world, and for more than half a millennium people flocked to Ephesos to learn the great secret of the mysteries and sacrifices that were celebrated every year on her birthday. In this work Guy MacLean Rogers sets out the evidence for the celebration of Artemis's mysteries against the background of the remarkable urban development of the city during the Roman Empire and then proposes an entirely new theory about the great secret that was revealed to initiates into Artemis's mysteries. The revelation of that secret helps to explain not only the success of Artemis's cult and polytheism itself but, more surprisingly, the demise of both and the success of Christianity. Contrary to many anthropological and scientific theories, the history of polytheism, including the celebration of Artemis's mysteries, is best understood as a Darwinian tale of adaptation, competition, and change. /div

**Romanising Oriental Gods**-Jaime Alvar 2008-09-17 The relative sophistication of the three major 'Oriental cults' of the Roman Empire, combining unfamiliar myth with distinctive ritual, enabled them, like Early Christianity, to offer a properly ethical salvation in the Weberian sense.

**The Mystery-Religions**-S. Angus 2012-04-30 Classic study explores the Eleusinian mysteries of ancient Greece; Asiatic cults of Cybele, the Magna Mater, and Attis; Dionysian groups; Orphics; Egyptian devotees of Isis and Osiris;
Mithraism; and others.

**Ancient Religions**- 2009-06-30 Religious beliefs and practices, which permeated all aspects of life in antiquity, traveled well-worn routes throughout the Mediterranean: itinerant charismatic practitioners peddled their skills as healers, purifiers, cursers, and initiators; and vessels decorated with illustrations of myths traveled with them. This collection of essays, drawn from the groundbreaking reference work Religion in the Ancient World, offers an expansive, comparative perspective on this complex spiritual world.

**The Sacred Law of Andania**-Laura Gawlinski 2012-01-01 The inscribed text referred to as the sacred law of Andania contains almost 200 lines of regulations about a mystery festival and the sanctuary in which it took place. This book presents a new edition of the inscription and examines its rules in the wider context of Greek religious law and the management of sacred space. The regulations touch on a range of issues including finance, pollution, and the role of women, so that this study can be used as a handbook on the daily life of Greek religion.

**The Cult of Divine Birth in Ancient Greece**-M. Rigoglioso 2009-04-26 Greek religion is filled with strange sexual artifacts - stories of mortal women's couplings with gods; rituals like the basilinna's "marriage" to Dionysus;
beliefs in the impregnating power of snakes and deities; the unusual birth stories of Pythagoras, Plato, and Alexander; and more. In this provocative study, Marguerite Rigoglioso suggests such details are remnants of an early Greek cult of divine birth, not unlike that of Egypt. Scouring myth, legend, and history from a female-oriented perspective, she argues that many in the highest echelons of Greek civilization believed non-ordinary conception was the only means possible of bringing forth individuals who could serve as leaders, and that special cadres of virgin priestesses were dedicated to this practice. Her book adds a unique perspective to our understanding of antiquity, and has significant implications for the study of Christianity and other religions in which divine birth claims are central. The book's stunning insights provide fascinating reading for those interested in female-inclusive approaches to ancient religion.

The Cults of the Roman Empire - Robert Turcan
1997-01-23 This book is about the multiplicity of gods and religions that characterized the Roman world before Constantine. It was not the noble gods such as Jove, Apollo and Diana, who were crucial to the lives of the common people in the empire, but gods of an altogether more earthly, earth level, whose rituals and observances may now seem bizarre. As well as being of wide general interest, this book will appeal to students of the Roman Empire and of the history of religion.
The Secret History of Rock 'n' Roll - Christopher Knowles 2010-10-05 "...tells the story of the Mysteries [e.g. Mystery religions]--their rise, fall and eventual rebirth in the New World, where rhythms and melodies from the West African and the Celtic diasporas collided with the sound of popular music forever."--P. 4 of cover.

Temple of the World - Miroslav Verner 2013 Despite the prominence of ancient temples in the landscape of Egypt, books about them are surprisingly rare; this new and essential publication from a prominent Czech scholar answers the need for a study that goes beyond temple architecture to examine the spiritual, economic and political aspects of these specific institutions and the dominant roles they played. Miroslav Verner presents a deeper and more complex study of major ancient Egyptian religious centers, their principal temples, their rise and decline, their religious doctrines, cults, rituals, feasts, and mysteries. Also discussed are the various categories of priests, the organization of the priesthood, and its daily services and customs. Each chapter offers the reader essential and up-to-date information about temple complexes and the history of their archaeological exploration, in the context of the spiritual dimension and cultural legacy of ancient Egypt.

The Religion of the Mithras Cult in the Roman Empire - Roger Beck 2006-01-12 A study of the religious system of Mithraism, one of the 'mystery cults' popular in the Roman Empire contemporary with early Christianity. Roger Beck
describes Mithraism from the point of view of the initiate engaging with the religion and its rich symbolic system in thought, word, ritual action, and cult life. He employs the methods of anthropology of religion and the new cognitive science of religion to explore in detail the semiotics of the Mysteries' astral symbolism, which has been the principal subject of his many previous publications on the cult.

The Atlas of Lost Cults and Mystery Religions - David Douglas 2009-02-01 The Atlas of Lost Cults and Mystery Religions examines extraordinary cults and spiritual practices, some lost in the mists of time, others having transformed and evolved to form the basis of mystical practices still current today. A wide range of traditions are explored, from the mysterious snake worshipping goddesses of the ancient Minoans to the Cathars of medieval France, believed by some to be the protectors of the Holy Grail. The book will examine the practices of the Celtic Druids which have inspired present day Pagan and Wiccan traditions, and the wild Dionysian rites of ancient Greece. Lavish artwork reconstructions will show the temple precincts and mystical practices of selected cults and religions.

Shamanism and the Mysteries - Dan Attrell 2016-12-04 The administration of initiation rites by an ecstatic specialist, now known to western scholarship by the general designation of 'shaman', has proven to be one of humanity's oldest, most widespread, and continuous magico-religious traditions. At the heart of their initiatory rituals lay an
ordeal - a metaphysical journey - almost ubiquitously brought on by the effects of a life-changing hallucinogenic drug experience. To guide their initiates, these shaman worked with a repertoire of locally acquired instruments, costumes, dances, and ecstasy-inducing substances. Among past Mediterranean cultures, Semitic and Indo-European, these sorts of initiation rites were vital to society's spiritual well-being. It was, however, the mystery schools of antiquity - organizations founded upon conserving the secrets of plant-lore, astrology, theurgy and mystical philosophy - which satisfied the role of the shaman in Greco-Roman society. The rites they delivered to the common man were a form of ritualized ecstasy and they provided an orderly context for religiously-oriented intoxication. In the eastern Mediterranean, these ecstatic cults were most often held in honour of a great mother goddess and her perennially dying-and-rising consort. The goddess' religious dramas enacted in cultic ritual stressed the importance of fasting, drumming, trance-inducing music, self-mutilation, and a non-alcoholic ritual intoxication. Far and wide the dying consort worshiped by these cults was a god of vegetation, ecstasy, revelation, and salvation; by ingesting his body initiates underwent a profound mystical experience. From what limited information has survived from antiquity, it appears that the rites practiced in the eastern mystery cults were in essence traditional shamanic ordeals remodeled to suit the psychological needs of Mediterranean civilization's marginalized people. This book argues then that the myths of this vegetable god, so-called 'the Divine Bridegroom,' particularly in manifestation of the so-called "Phrygian" Attis and the "Greek" Dionysus, is deeply rooted in the life-
cycle, cultivation, treatment, consumption of a tree-born hallucinogenic mushroom, Amanita muscaria. The use of this mushroom is alive and well today among Finno-Ugric shaman and this paper explores their practices as one branch of Eurasian shamanism running parallel to, albeit in a different time, the rites of the Phrygian goddess. Using extant literary and linguistic evidence, these initiatory cults long-assimilated into post-agricultural Mediterranean civilization are compared with the hallucinogen-wielding shaman of the Russian steppe, emphasizing them both as facets of a single prehistoric and pan-human magico-religious archetype.

**The Origins of the Mithraic Mysteries**-David Ulansey 1991 This volume sets forth a new explanation of the meaning of the cult of Mithraism, tracing its origins not, as commonly held, to the ancient Persian religion, but to ancient astronomy and cosmology.

**Religions of the Hellenistic-Roman Age**-Antonia Tripolitis 2002 This insightful read traces the development of the principal Western religions and their philosophical counterparts from the beginnings of Alexander the Great's empire in 331 B.C.E. to the emergence of the Christian world in the fourth century C.E.

**The Mysteries**-Joseph Campbell 1978 Essays by Julius Baum, C. G. Jung, C. Kerényi, Hans Leisegang, Paul Masson-
Mystery Cults Of The Ancient World


Mystery Religions in the Ancient World - Joscelyn Godwin 1981

The Chaldean Oracles of Zoroaster - 2019-11-02 The Chaldean Oracles are a set of spiritual and philosophical texts widely used by Neoplatonist philosophers from the 3rd to the 6th century C.E. While the original texts have been lost, they have survived in the form of fragments consisting mainly of quotes and commentary by Neoplatonist writers.

Mother of the Gods - Philippe Borgeaud 2004-11-12 Worshiped throughout the ancient Mediterranean world, the "Mother of the Gods" was known by a variety of names. Among peoples of Asia Minor, where her cult first began, she often shared the names of local mountains. The Greeks commonly called her Cybele, the name given to her by the Phrygians of Asia Minor, and identified her with their own mother goddesses Rhea, Gaia, and Demeter. The Romans adopted her worship at the end of the Second Punic War and called her Mater Magna, Great Mother. Her cult became one of the three most important mystery cults in the Roman Empire, along with those of Mithras and Isis. And as Christianity took hold in the Roman world, ritual elements of her cult were incorporated into the burgeoning cult of the
Virgin Mary. In Mother of the Gods, Philippe Borgeaud traces the journey of this divine figure through Asia Minor, Greece, and Rome between the sixth century B.C. and the fourth century A.D. He examines how the Mother of the Gods was integrated into specific cultures, what she represented to those who worshiped her, and how she was used as a symbol in art, myth, and even politics. The Mother of the Gods was often seen as a dualistic figure: ancestral and foreign, aristocratic and disreputable, nurturing and dangerous. Borgeaud's challenging and nuanced portrait opens new windows on the ancient world's sophisticated religious beliefs and shifting cultural identities.

The Cosmos in Ancient Greek Religious Experience - Efrosyni Boutsikas 2020-09-30 Reconstructs ancient rituals in their day/night/season combining them with relevant mythology and astronomical observations to understand the ritual's cosmological links.

The Mysteries of Mithras - Payam Nabarz 2005-06-09 The Mysteries of Mithras presents a revival of this ancient Roman mystery religion, popular from the late second century B.C. Payam Nabarz reveals the history and tenets of Mithraism, its connections to Christianity, Islam, and Freemasonry, and the modern neo-pagan practice of Mithraism today. Included are seven of its initiatory rituals.

Theoi Megaloi - Guettel Cole 1984-12-01
Sacred Mushrooms-Carl A. P. Ruck 2016-01-18 In the ancient world, men and women joined cults known as Mysteries to unite with the deities of the otherworld and achieve eternal life. The most important of the Mysteries existed for two millennia at the village of Eleusis. Its deities were Demeter and Persephone, interchangeable in their roles as mother and daughter. The initiations and other rituals of this goddess-based cult were a profound secret: divulging information was punishable by death. For centuries, scholars have probed the secrets of the Eleusinian Mysteries and kykeon, its sacramental Eucharist — a sacred drink containing psychoactive chemicals similar to those in LSD. Their discoveries have been buried in the arcane language of alchemy, the occult sciences, and secret societies. Here, in prose accessible to all readers, Carl Ruck unravels the Mysteries, revealing the awesome powers of the goddesses, as well as the pagan underpinnings of Western culture.

Religions of the Ancient World-Sarah Iles Johnston 2004-11-30 Presents the beliefs, cults, gods, and ritual practices that developed in Mediterranean region countries such as Egypt, Anatolia, Mesopotamia, Iran, Greece, and Rome from the the third millenium B.C. up to the fourth century A.D.

The Ancient Mysteries-Marvin W. Meyer 1987 Gathers selections from Greek and Roman history, plays, and poetry that refer to the mystery religions, and briefly explains what
is known about how these religions got their start

**Boiotia in Antiquity**-Albert Schachter 2016-04-30 A collection of papers - revised or previously unpublished - about the history, institutions, and literature of Boiotia, by a leading expert on the region.

**Individuals and Materials in the Greco-Roman Cults of Isis**-Valentino Gasparini 2019-11-07 In Individuals and Materials in the Greco-Roman Cults of Isis Valentino Gasparini and Richard Veymiers present 26 studies with a focus on the individuals and groups which animated the diffusion and reception of the cults of Isis and other Egyptian gods throughout the Hellenistic and Roman worlds.

**The Mystery Religions**-Samuel Angus 2011-11 This classic study offers an understanding of the ancient religious cults, exploring their appeal and eventual failure in the face of Christianity. Topics include the Eleusinian mysteries of ancient Greece; Asiatic cults of Cybele, the Magna Mater, and Attis; Dionysian groups; Orphics; Egyptian devotees of Isis and Osiris; Mithraism; and others.

**The Religion of the Mithras Cult in the Roman Empire**-Roger Beck 2006-01-12 A study of the religious system of Mithraism, one of the 'mystery cults' popular in the Roman
Empire contemporary with early Christianity. Mithraism is described from the point of view of the initiate engaging with its rich repertoire of symbols and practices.

**Understanding Greek Religion**-Jennifer Larson
2016-03-10 Understanding Greek Religion is one of the first attempts to fully examine any religion from a cognitivist perspective, applying methods and findings from the cognitive science of religion to the ancient Greek world. In this book, Jennifer Larson shows that many of the fundamentals of Greek religion, such as anthropomorphmic gods, divinatory procedures, purity beliefs, reciprocity, and sympathetic magic arise naturally as by-products of normal human cognition. Drawing on evidence from across the ancient Greek world, Larson provides detailed coverage of Greek theology and local pantheons, rituals including processions, animal sacrifice and choral dance, and afterlife beliefs as they were expressed through hero worship and mystery cults. Eighteen in-depth essays illustrate the theoretical discussion with primary sources and include case studies of key cult inscriptions from Kyrene, Kos, and Miletos. This volume features maps, tables, and over twenty images to support and expand on the text, and will provide conceptual tools for understanding the actions and beliefs that constitute a religion. Additionally, Larson offers the first detailed discussion of cognition and memory in the transmission of Greek religious beliefs and rituals, as well as a glossary of terms and a bibliographical essay on the cognitive science of religion. Understanding Greek Religion is an essential resource for both undergraduate and
postgraduate students of Greek culture and ancient Mediterranean religions.
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