

Mystery Cults Of The Ancient World

"...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.

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

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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.

Religious beliefs and practices, which permeated all aspects of

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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.

Classic study explores the Eleusinian mysteries of ancient Greece; Asiatic cults of Cybele, the Magna Mater, and Attis;

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Dionysian groups; Orphics; Egyptian devotees of Isis and Osiris; Mithraism; and others. The Secret History of Rock 'n' Roll

The Architectural Context of Mystery Groups and Religious Associations in the Ancient World
Temple of the World
Music and the Muses
Religions of the Hellenistic-Roman Age

The Sacred Law of Andania
Using archaeological, epigraphic, and literary sources; and incorporating current scholarly theories, this volume will serve as an excellent

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companion to any introduction to Greek mythology, showing a side of the Greek gods to which most students are rarely exposed. Detailed enough to be used as a quick reference tool or text, and providing a readable account focusing on the oldest, most widespread, and most interesting religious practices of the ancient Greek world in the Archaic and Classical periods, Ancient Greek Cults surveys ancient Greek religion through the cults of its gods and goddesses, heroes and

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heroines. Jennifer Larson conveniently summarizes a vast amount of material in many languages, normally inaccessible to undergrad students, and explores, in detail, the variety of cults celebrated by the Greeks, how these cults differed geographically, and how each deity was conceptualized in local cult titles and rituals. Including an introductory chapter on sources and methods, and suggestions for further reading this book will allow readers to gain a fresh perspective on Greek religion.

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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.

2021 Reprint of the 1925 Edition. Facsimile of the original edition and not reproduced with Optical Recognition Software. This book is generally considered the most useful single work in English on the subject and provides a solid background in the various forms of religious

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experience that are grouped together under the term Mystery-Religious. Mystery religion were any of various secret cults of the Greco-Roman world that offered to individuals religious experiences not provided by the official public religions. They originated in tribal ceremonies that were performed by peoples in many parts of the world. Whereas in these tribal communities almost every member of the clan or the village was initiated, initiation in Greece became a matter of

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personal choice. The mystery religions reached their peak of popularity in the first three centuries a.d. Their origin, however, goes back to the earlier centuries of Greek history. The main characterization of these religions is the secrecy associated with the particulars of the initiation and the ritual practice, which was never revealed to outsiders. The most famous mysteries of Greco-Roman antiquity were the Eleusinian Mysteries, which were of considerable antiquity and predated the

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Greek Dark Ages. The mystery schools flourished in Late Antiquity.

Contents: Orientation: the historical crises of the Graeco-Roman world in their bearing upon the mystery-religions and Christianity -- What is a mystery-religion? -- The three stages of a mystery -- The appeal of the mystery-religions (a) -- The appeal of the mystery-religions (b) -- The defects of the mysteries and their ultimate failure -- The victory of Christianity.

Explores mysterious

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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.

*The Pagan Belief That Shaped the Christian World
The Mysteries of Mithras
Cosmology and Salvation in the Ancient World*

The Cult of the Great Gods at Samothrace

Mysteries of the Unconquered Sun

*Mystery Cults (Ars Magica)
Reconstructs ancient rituals in their day/night/season*

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combining them with relevant mythology and astronomical observations to understand the ritual's cosmological links.

The architecture of ancient religious spaces has the potential to offer a deeper understanding of the religious groups who used the spaces and the activities they performed there. However, the large corpus of recent scholarship has for the most part overlooked architecture. This book investigates the spatial and architectural settings of mystery cults and religious assemblies from the eighth century bc to the fourth century ad and

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shows how architecture can illuminate the contents and societal functions of ancient religions. It examines deities whose cults included mysteries and/or were served by religious associations in the ancient world. Chapters treat the old Greek mystery cults of Demeter in Eleusis and the Great Gods in Samothrace as well as those of Dionysos, and the 'foreign' deities Isis/Serapis, Cybele/Attis, and Mithras. The book also treats religions and cults that did not include mysteries but were served by special religious groups, such as those belonging to the Syrio-Phoenician gods,

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the Jewish god in the diaspora, and the Christian god. The last section of the book combines the typological results from the first section on architecture with the presentation of the cultic functions of religious groups in the second section. This comparative analysis seeks to understand the social and spatial context for the activities of cults with a main focus on the Hellenistic and Roman periods, in particular through distinguishing the differences and similarities in the use of specific room-types.

Essays by Julius Baum, C. G.

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Jung, C. Kerényi, Hans Leisegang, Paul Masson-Oursel, Fritz Meier, Jean de Menasce, Georges Nagel, Walter F. Otto, Max Pulver, Hugo Rahner, Paul Schmitt, and Walter Wili.

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

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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.

From Cybele to the Virgin Mary

*Sanctuaries, Cults, and Mysteries of Ancient Egypt
Rediscover Extraordinary Traditions from the Dawn of Time*

The Archaeology of Ancient Greek Secret Cults

Theoi Megaloi

The Eleusinian Mysteries and Rites

This insightful read traces the development of the principal Western religions and their philosophical

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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.

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

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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

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and shifting cultural identities.

Covering a wide range of issues which have been overlooked in the past, including mystery, cult and philosophy, Richard Seaford explores Dionysos – one of the most studied figures of the ancient Greek gods. Popularly known as the god of wine and frenzied abandon, and an influential figure for theatre where drama originated as part of the cult of Dionysos, Seaford goes beyond the mundane and usual to explore the history and influence of this god as never before. As a volume in the popular Gods and Heroes series, this is an indispensable introduction to the subject, and an excellent reference point for higher-level study.

Despite the prominence of ancient temples in the landscape of Egypt, books about them are surprisingly

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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

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of ancient Egypt.

Initiation into the Mysteries of the Ancient World

Romanising Oriental Gods

The Cosmos in Ancient Greek

Religious Experience

The Chaldean Oracles of Zoroaster

Ancient Christian Worship

Roman Religion

There are those within the Order of Hermes who transmit secrets of magic incomprehensible to outsiders. Pre-eminent among them are the four Mystery Cult Houses, gatherings of magi Initiated into the same Mysteries. This book details the Mystery Cults, including full details of

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their Inner Mysteries. House Bjornaer venerates animal ancestors, and strives to perfect the form. Their Mysteries enhance the heartbeast, ultimately allowing the magus to unlock mythic forms. House Criamon follow ancient teachings and seek escape from time itself. The many paths that they walk to this end grant powers that can include immortality. House Merinita move among the faeries, ultimately joining them. Their spells can draw on faerie glamour, awaken the fay

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slumbering around them, or inflict curses on those who break their promises. House Verditius crafts the greatest items, putting a little of themselves into their finest creations. Pride in their creations is often their downfall, and these magi are terribly prone to the most deadly sin.

Examining sites that are familiar to many modern tourists, Valerie Warrior avoids imposing a modern perspective on the topic by using the testimony of the ancient Romans to describe traditional Roman

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religion. The ancient testimony recreates the social and historical contexts in which Roman religion was practised. It shows, for example, how, when confronted with a foreign cult, official traditional religion accepted the new cult with suitable modifications. Basic difficulties, however, arose with regard to the monotheism of the Jews and Christianity. Carefully integrated with the text are visual representations of divination, prayer, and sacrifice as depicted on

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monuments, coins, and inscriptions from public buildings and homes throughout the Roman world. Also included are epitaphs and humble votive offerings that illustrate the piety of individuals, and that reveal the prevalence of magic and the occult in the spiritual lives of the ancient Romans.

Describes five ancient approaches to life, shows artifacts for a variety of early religions, and discusses each one's beliefs and rituals
More wide-ranging in its

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implications than the English 'music', mousike lay at the heart of Greek culture, and was often indeed synonymous with culture. These essays analyse the theory and practice of musical performance in a variety of social contexts demonstrating the centrality of mousike.

Mystic Cults in Magna
Graecia

Mother of the Gods
Understanding Greek
Religion

A Guide

Mystery Religions in the
Ancient World

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The Mystery-Religions
The traditional grand narrative correlating the decline of Graeco-Roman religion with the rise of Christianity has been under pressure for three decades. This book argues that the alternative accounts now emerging significantly underestimate the role of three major cults, of Cybele and Attis, Isis and Serapis, and Mithras. Although their differences are plain, these cults present sufficient common features to justify their being taken typologically

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as a group. All were selective adaptations of much older cults of the Fertile Crescent. It was their relative sophistication, their combination of the imaginative power of unfamiliar myth with distinctive ritual performance and ethical seriousness, that enabled them both to focus and to articulate a sense of the autonomy of religion from the socio-political order, a sense they shared with Early Christianity. The notion of 'mystery' was central to their ability

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to navigate the Weberian shift from ritualist to ethical salvation. 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

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the role of women, so that this study can be used as a handbook on the daily life of Greek religion. 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

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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

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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

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religious phenomena.

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.

Ancient Mystery Cults

Houses of Hermes

The Cults of the Roman Empire

Early Church Practices in

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Social, Historical, and Theological Perspective Ancient Religions

The Religion of the Mithras Cult in the Roman Empire

*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*

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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

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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

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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.

This new comparative reading of Euripides' Bacchae and Aristophanes' Frogs sets the two plays squarely

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in their contemporary social and political context and explores their impact on the audiences of the time. Both were composed during a crucial period of Athenian political life following the oligarchic seizure of power in 411 BC and the restoration of democracy in 410 BC, and were in all likelihood produced nearly simultaneously a few months before the rise of the Thirty Tyrants and the ensuing civil war. They also

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demonstrate significant similarities that are particularly notable among extant Attic theatre productions, including the role of the god Dionysos as protagonist and architect of religious and political action, and the presence of Demetrian and Dionysiac mystic choruses as proponents of the appeasement of civil discord as the cure for Athens' ills. Focusing on the mystic, civic and political content of

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both Bacchae and Frogs, this volume offers not only a new reading of the plays, but also an interdisciplinary perspective on the special characteristics of mystery cults in Athens in their political context and the nature of theatrical audiences and their reaction to mystic themes. Its illumination of the function of each play at a pivotal moment in fifth-century Athenian politics will be of value to scholars

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and students of ancient Greek drama, religion and history.

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

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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,

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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

The contributions to this book offer a broad vision of the relationships that were established between

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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

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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

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*many Antiquity scholars:
Greek philosophy and
religion.*

*A Study In The Religious
Background of Early
Christianity*

*Their Basic Ideas and
Significance*

*The Mystery-Religions
and Christianity*

*The Mysteries of Artemis
of Ephesos*

*Mystery Cults of the
Ancient World*

*A Reading of Euripides'
Bacchae and*

Aristophanes' Frogs

This book fills a gap in the study of
mystery cults in Graeco-Roman

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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.

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.

Understanding Greek Religion is one of the first attempts to fully examine any religion from a cognitivist perspective, applying methods and findings from the

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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 anthropomorphic 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

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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.

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

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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.

Ancient Greek Cults

Sacred Space, Memory, and Cognition

A New Text with Commentary

The Mysteries

Greek Philosophy and Mystery Cults

The Culture of 'mousikē' in the

Classical Athenian City

The Chaldean Oracles are a set of spiritual and philosophical texts widely used by Neoplatonist philosophers

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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.

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.

An Important Study on the Worship of

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the Early Church This introduction to the origins of Christian worship illuminates the importance of ancient liturgical patterns for contemporary Christian practice. Andrew McGowan takes a fresh approach to understanding how Christians came to worship in the distinctive forms still familiar today. Deftly and expertly processing the bewildering complexity of the ancient sources into lucid, fluent exposition, he sets aside common misperceptions to explore the roots of Christian ritual practices--including the Eucharist, baptism, communal prayer, preaching, Scripture reading, and music--in their earliest recoverable settings. Now in paper.

This book provides a synthesis of the archaeology of Eleusis during the

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Bronze Age, reconstructing the origins and early development of the Eleusinian Mysteries.

Dionysos

Mystery Cults, Theatre and Athenian Politics

Bronze Age Eleusis and the Origins of the Eleusinian Mysteries

Mystery Cults in Visual Representation in Graeco-Roman Antiquity

Hellenistic Mystery-Religions

Housing the Chosen

This brochure by Brother Wright, a Masonic scholar of Oxford, England, contains the ripest scholarship on Eleusis, its rites, symbols, and legends. This study of the Grecian mysteries shows the ties between the rituals celebrated in the 7th

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century BC and the 19th cent
Freemasonry tradition. As the
author noted, there is a striking
resemblance in many points to
the Operative and Speculative
Freemasonry practices, which
laid the basis of this work.

The Origins of the Mithraic
Mysteries

Myth, Salvation, and Ethics in the
Cults of Cybele, Isis, and Mithras

The Atlas of Lost Cults and
Mystery Religions

Greek Mysteries