

MIHR ~ ANGEL OF FRIENDSHIP

DOMINION: Mihr is chosen to serve humanity by granting platonic love, friendship and companionship. He encourages us to heal friendships that have gone astray. He is also responsible for bringing people together who have similar life aspirations.

GUIDANCE: Angel of Friendship

http://www.drstandley.com/angels_mihr.shtml

Μίθρας

Definition from Wiktionary, the free dictionary

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Ancient Greek

Alternative forms

- Μίθρης (Míthrēs)

Etymology

From Old Iranian *Miθra. Compare Avestan 𐬨𐬀𐬭𐬀 (*miθra*)𐬨𐬀𐬭𐬀𐬭𐬀 (*miθrō*) (Miθra/Miθrō) and Late Old Persian 𐎠𐎼𐎷𐎡𐎴 (Miθ^ra/Mitra).

Pronunciation

- (5th BC Attic): IPA: /mít^hraas/
- (1st BC Egyptian): IPA: /mít^hraːs/
- (4th AD Koine): IPA: /míθras/
- (10th AD Byzantine): IPA: /míθras/
- (15th AD Constantinopolitan): IPA: /míθras/

Proper noun

Μίθρας • (Míthras) (*genitive* **Μίθρου**) *m*, *first declension*

- Greek form of Iranian Mithra (e.g. Herodotus *Histories* I,131; Plutarch, *Isis and Osiris* 46.7)
- Greek name of the figures of various syncretic Helleno-Zoroastrian cults of Asia Minor (100 BC-200 AD)
- Greek form of Latin Mithras, cult figure of the Roman mystery religion that flourished between 100 and 400 AD.

Inflection

First declension of Μίθρᾱς, Μίθρον

[show ▼]

Derived terms

- Μιθραῖον (Mithraîon)
- Μιθράκανα (Mithrákana)
- Μιθριακός (Mithriakós)

Descendants

- English: Mithras

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- LSJ
- Woodhouse's English-Greek Dictionary page 1017 (http://artflx.uchicago.edu/cgi-bin/efts/dicos/woodhouse_test.pl?pageturn=1&pagenumber=1017)


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Categories: Ancient Greek proper nouns | Ancient Greek first declension proper nouns

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Mithra

This article is about the Zoroastrian yazata. For other uses, see Mitra.

Part of a series on
Zoroastrianism
<div></div> <p>The <i>Faravahar</i>, believed to be a depiction of a <i>fravashi</i></p>
Primary topics
<div><ul style="list-style-type: none">Ahura MazdaZarathustra<i>aša</i> (asha) / <i>arta</i>Babylonia</div>
Angels and demons
<div><ul style="list-style-type: none">Amesha Spentas · YazatasAhuras · DaevasAngra Mainyu</div>
Scripture and worship
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Mithra (Avestan: 𐬨𐬀𐬯𐬭𐬀 *Miθra*, Old Persian: 𐎢𐎠𐎧𐎫𐎡𐎹 *Miça*) is the Zoroastrian angelic divinity (*yazata*) of covenant and oath. In addition to being the divinity of contracts, Mithra is also a judicial figure, an all-seeing protector of Truth, and the guardian of cattle, the harvest and of The Waters.

The term *Mithra* is from the Avestan language. In Middle Iranian languages (Middle Persian, Parthian etc.), *Mithra* became *Mihr*, from which Modern Persian مهر *Mihr*, Northern Pashto لمر *Nwar*, Waziri Pashto مېلر *Myer* and Armenian *Mihr/Mher* ultimately derive.

The Romans attributed their Mithraic Mysteries (the mystery religion known as Mithraism) to Persian or Zoroastrian sources relating to Mithra. However, since the early 1970s, the dominant scholarship has noted dissimilarities, and those mysteries are now qualified as a distinct Roman product, possibly dating to the Indo-European invasion.^[2]

Etymology

Together with the Vedic common noun *mitra*, the Avestan common noun *miθra* derives from proto-Indo-Iranian **mitra*, from the root *mi-* "to bind", with the "tool suffix" *-tra-* "causing to." Thus, etymologically *mitra/miθra* means "that which causes binding", preserved in the Avestan word for "covenant, contract, oath".^{Wikipedia:Citation needed}

On Elamite tablets of the time of Darius, offerings are recorded five times for Mica-Baga — where Mica was Old Persian for Mithras — and, on one occasion, these offerings coincided with offerings to Ahuramazda. Later, Artaxerxes III, invoked “Ahuramazda and Mithras Baga”. In the compound, Mithras-Baga, Varuna, under the title Baga, began as an equal partner, but because Baga was understood to mean simply God, and was not used liturgically, Varuna was forgotten as a separate entity, and the compound was understood as Mithras-God.

In scripture

Mithra is described in the Zoroastrian Avesta scriptures as "Mithra of wide pastures, of the thousand ears, and of the myriad eyes,"(Yasna 1:3),^[3] "the lofty, and the everlasting...the province ruler,"(Yasna 1:11), "the Yazad (divinity) of the spoken name"(Yasna 3:5), and "the holy,"(Yasna 3:13)

The Khorda Avesta (Book of Common Prayer) also refer to Mithra in the Litany to the Sun, "Homage to Mithra of wide cattle pastures,"(Khwarshed Niyayesh 5),^[4] "Whose word is true, who is of the assembly, Who has a thousand ears, the well-shaped one, Who has ten thousand eyes, the exalted one, Who has wide knowledge, the helpful one, Who sleeps not, the ever wakeful. We sacrifice to Mithra, The lord of all countries, Whom Ahura Mazda created the most glorious, Of the supernatural yazads. So may there come to us for aid, Both Mithra and Ahura, the two exalted ones,"(Khwarshed Niyayesh 6-7), "I shall sacrifice to his mace, well aimed against the skulls of the Daevas,"(Khwarshed Niyayesh 15). Some recent theories have claimed Mithra represents the sun itself, but the Khorda Avesta refers to the sun as a separate entity - as it does with the moon, with which the sun has "the best of friendships,"(Khwarshed Niyayesh 15)

Like most other divinities, Mithra is not mentioned by name in the Gathas, the oldest texts of Zoroastrianism and generally attributed to Zoroaster himself. Mithra also does not appear by name in the *Yasna Haptanghaiti*, a seven-verse section of the Yasna liturgy that is linguistically as old as the Gathas. The lack of Mithra's presence in these texts was once a cause of some consternation amongst Iranists. An often repeated speculation of the first half of the 20th century was that the lack of any mention (i.e., Zoroaster's silence) of Mithra in these texts implied that Zoroaster had rejected Mithra. This *ex silentio* speculation is no longer followed. Building on that speculation was another series of speculations, which postulated that the reason why Zoroaster did not mention Mithra was because

the latter was the supreme god of a bloodthirsty group of *daevas*-worshippers that Zoroaster condemned. However, "no satisfactory evidence has yet been adduced to show that, before Zoroaster, the concept of a supreme god existed among the Iranians, or that among them Mithra – or any other divinity – ever enjoyed a separate cult of his or her own outside either their ancient or their Zoroastrian pantheons."

As a member of the ahuric triad, a feature that only Ahura Mazda and Ahura Berezaiti (Apam Napat) also have, Mithra is an exalted figure. As the divinity of contract, Mithra is undecivable, infallible, eternally watchful, and never-resting. Mithra is additionally the protector of cattle, and his stock epithet is "of wide pastures." He is guardian of the waters and ensures that those pastures receive enough of it.

Together with Rashnu "Justice" and Sraosha "Obedience", Mithra is one of the three judges at the Chinvat bridge, the "bridge of separation" that all souls must cross. Unlike Sraosha, Mithra is not however a psychopomp. Should the good thoughts, words and deeds outweigh the bad, Sraosha alone conveys the soul across the bridge.

The Avestan hymn to Mithra (*Yasht* 10) is the longest, and one of the best preserved, of the *Yashts*.

Roman Mithraism



Mithra sacrificing the Bull (100-200 after J-C) collection BorghéseLouvre-Lens

Mithras or Mica, a Persian then Roman sun god.

Mithras is a Greek form of the name of an Indo-European god, Mithra or Mitra (Old Persian, Mica). Roman writers believed that Mithraism came from Persia and that Mithraic iconography represented Persian mythology. Mithraism was once called the **Mysteries of Mithras** or **Mysteries of the Persians**.^[5]

In Rome, Mithras was a sun god, and, in Persia, he was a god of the morning sun. The Roman Mithras killed the Primeval Bull, mirroring the death of a Primeval Bull in the Persian religion.

The Roman Mithras wore a Phrygian cap. Phrygia was in the Persian empire for 200 years. Modern scholars have traced Mithras in Persian, Mittanian and Indian mythology. The Mitanni gave us the first written reference to Mithras in a treaty with the Hittites. These and much more suggest a continuity of

belief from India to Rome in a myth of a sun god killing a bull.

In tradition

In the Zoroastrian calendar, the sixteenth day of the month and the seventh month of the year are dedicated to, and under the protection of, Mithra. (The Iranian civil calendar of 1925 adopted Zoroastrian month-names, and as such also has the seventh month of the year named 'Mīhr'). The position of the sixteenth day and seventh month reflects Mithra's rank in the hierarchy of the divinities; the sixteenth day and seventh month are respectively the first day of the second half of the month and the first month of the second half of the year. The day on which the day-name and month-name dedications intersect is (like all other such intersections) dedicated to the divinity of that day/month, and is celebrated with a *Jashan* (from Avestan *Yasna*, "worship") in honor of that divinity. In the case of Mithra, this was *Jashan-e Mihragan*, or just *Mihragan* in short.



Investiture of Sassanid emperor Ardashir I or II (3rd century CE bas-relief at Taq-e Bostan, Iran. On the left stands the yazata Mithra with raised *barsom*, sanctifying the investiture.

While Mithra is not the divinity of the Sun in Zoroastrian scripture (or in Indian scripture either), this being the role of Hvare.khshaeta (literally "radiant Sun", whence also Middle Persian *Khorshed* for the Sun), in Zoroastrian/Iranian tradition, Mithra became the divinity of the Sun. How, when or why this occurred is uncertain, but it is commonly attributed to a conflation with the Babylonian Shamash, who – in addition to being a Sun god – was a judicial figure like Mithra. In the Hellenistic era (i.e., in Seleucid and Parthian times), Mithra also seems to have been conflated with Apollo, who – like Mithra – was an all-seeing divinity of the truth.

Royal names incorporating Mithra's (e.g., "Mithradates") appear in the dynasties of Parthia, Armenia, and in Anatolia, in Pontus and Cappadocia.

In Manichaeism

Persian and Parthian-speaking Manichaeans used the name of Mithra current in their time (*Mihryazd*, q.e. Mithra-yazata) for two different Manichaean angels.

1. The first, called *Mihryazd* by the Persians, was the "The Living Spirit" (Aramaic *rūḥā ḥayyā*), a savior-figure who rescues the "First Man" from the demonic Darkness into which he had plunged.
2. The second, known as *Mihr* or *Mihr yazd* among the Parthians, is "The Messenger" (Aramaic *īzgaddā*), likewise a savior figure, but one concerned with setting up the structures to liberate the Light lost when the First Man had been defeated.

German academic Werner Sundermann has asserted that the Manicheans adopted the name Mithra to designate one of their own deities. Sundermann determined that the Zoroastrian Mithra, which in Middle Persian is *Mihr* (in Russian "Mir" = world), is not a variant of the Parthian and Sogdian *Mytr* or *Mytrg*; though sharing linguistic roots with the name Mithra, those names denote Maitreya.

In Parthian and Sogdian, however, Mihr was taken as the sun and consequently identified as the Third Messenger. This Third Messenger was the helper and redeemer of mankind, and identified with another Zoroastrian divinity, *Narisaf* (derived from Pahlavi *Narsēh* from Avestan *Nairyō.sanhō*, meaning 'potent utterance', the name of a yazata). Citing Boyce,^[6] Sundermann remarks, "It was among the Parthian Manicheans that Mithra as a sun god surpassed the importance of Narisaf as the common Iranian image of the Third Messenger; among the Parthians the dominance of Mithra was such that his identification with the Third Messenger led to cultic emphasis on the Mithraic traits in the Manichaean god."

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- [2] Beck, Roger (2002- 7 -20). " Mithraism (<http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/mithraism>)". Encyclopaedia Iranica, Online Edition. Retrieved 2012-09-07.
- [3] <http://www.avesta.org/yasna/y0to8s.htm>
- [4] <http://www.avesta.org/ka/niyayesh.htm>
- [5] Origen, Contra Celsus, Book 6 (<http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/04166.htm>), Chapter 22. "After this, Celsus, desiring to exhibit his learning in his treatise against us, quotes also certain Persian mysteries, where he says: 'These things are obscurely hinted at in the accounts of the Persians, and especially in the mysteries of Mithras, which are celebrated among them...' " Chapter 24 "After the instance borrowed from the Mithraic mysteries, Celsus declares that he who would investigate the Christian mysteries, along with the aforesaid Persian, will, on comparing the two together, and on unveiling the rites of the Christians, see in this way the difference between them."
- [6] Boyce, Mary. (1962) *On Mithra in the Manichaean Pantheon*. In

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Although in his own cult Mithras does not fully conform to the image of 'angel' that we are particularly interested in here, nevertheless Mithraism was the most prevalent religion in Persia when Zoroaster (qv section below) was alive, and in Zoroastrianism *Mithras was considered to be an angel* who mediated between heaven and earth, later becoming judge and preserver of the created world.

http://www.bibliotecapleyades.net/vida_alien/alien_watchers14.htm