

The Roots of Mithraism in Romanian Mythology: A Causal Layered Analysis of Zalmoxis

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ABSTRACT

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Problem Statement: The Roman myth of Zalmoxis is one of the most enigmatic myths in the world, with little specific research on its origins in divine/historical literature. This riddle became the focus of our work, and with Soheil Enayatollah's layered causality analysis, we have delved into the texts of Mircea Eliade and personal experiences. We aimed to unveil a different manifestation for this name that should have had another outcome: Mithra/Mithraism.

Objective: We also explored the cultural interactions between Iran and Romania from an encouraging rather than promotional perspective.

Research Method: The research methodology employed is qualitative and applied, descriptive-analytical, and data collection is both library-based and field-based experimental.

Conclusion: We had no direct precedent for this; however, due to the multi-dimensional nature of our work, it addresses the separation and cultural interactions with the language of the soul of art. We introduced the notion that the path of the Mithraic army from Iran to the world has become crucial and ambiguous for the first time in world history.

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Introduction

The myth of Zalmoxis, an enigmatic figure in Romanian mythology, remains one of the most obscure narratives in comparative religion. Despite his significance, Zalmoxis has rarely been analyzed regarding his deeper etymological and archetypal origins. This research posits that Zalmoxis is intrinsically linked to the Persian deity Mithra (Mehr), and that the “Romanian” myth is a manifestation of a much broader, deep-seated cultural migration originating from the Iranian plateau. By utilizing Sohail Inayatullah’s Causal Layered Analysis (CLA)—a framework that delves beneath surface-level descriptions to reach archetypal roots—this study seeks to uncover the hidden connections between these mythological systems. The research further explores the “Spirit of Art” (*Rooh-e Honar*) as a medium for cultural continuity, arguing that artistic symbols, ancient attire, and rituals serve as evidence of a historical “Mithraic movement” from the East to the West.

Method

This study employs a qualitative, descriptive-analytical, and interdisciplinary methodology, combining library research with logical reasoning and empirical observation. The primary theoretical framework is Causal Layered Analysis (CLA), which systematically deconstructs the subject through four layers:

١. **Litany:** The superficial, current perception of Zalmoxis as a mysterious Getae/Dacian god.
٢. **Social/Systemic:** The exploration of cultural movements, historical associations, and societal structures.
٣. **Worldview/Discourse:** The investigation into the ideological and philosophical contexts (e.g., the influence of Pythagoras and ancient Greek vs. Eastern perspectives).
٤. **Myth/Metaphor:** The deep archetypal search for the “Vanishing God” and his link to the core Mithraic archetype.

The authors examine linguistic etymology, archaeological symbols (such as the wolf, the *Pilos* hat, and cave-based temples), and textual parallels between Iranian and Romanian traditions to validate their hypothesis.

Results

The analysis reveals several critical findings:

- **The Archetypal Link:** Zalmoxis and Mithra share an identical archetype. Both are “Vanishing Gods”—deities associated with the cycle of life, death, and resurrection, often symbolized by silence or disappearance.
- **Symbolic Continuity:** The symbols associated with Zalmoxis, such as the wolf (a key figure in both Dacian and Iranian/Parthian cultures), the specific conical hat (*Pilos*), and the cave as a sacred site, mirror the iconography found in Mithraic and ancient Iranian religious practices.
- **Etymological Convergence:** The term “Dacia” (often linked to the wolf/frieze/Dahae) shares roots with Iranian concepts of “Dahae/Dah,” suggesting that the Getae people may have carried these Eastern traditions into the Balkan region.
- **Historical Movement:** For the first time, this study argues for a historical “Mithraic expansion” from Iran to Europe, where Mithraic ideals were translated into the local Romanian context, preserving Persian cultural markers under the name Zalmoxis.
- **The Spirit of Art:** The research concludes that these cultural truths are best preserved not through linear history, but through the “Spirit of Art”—where ritual, music, and imagery act as conduits for preserving identity across millennia.

Conclusion

The study concludes that Zalmoxis is not an isolated, uniquely European creation, but rather a manifestation of Mithraic wisdom within Romanian mythology. By applying Causal Layered Analysis, the authors successfully move beyond the “Litany” of historical ambiguity to reveal an underlying archetypal unity. The movement of Mithraism from the Iranian plateau to the territory of present-day Romania demonstrates a sophisticated process

of cultural translation. The authors emphasize that recognizing these shared roots is essential for national identity and cultural preservation. Ultimately, the “Vanishing God” (Zalmoxis) is found to be a mirror of the eternal Mithra, proving that even as surface narratives evolve, the deeper, archetypal structures of human belief remain connected by the enduring power of the “Spirit of Art.”