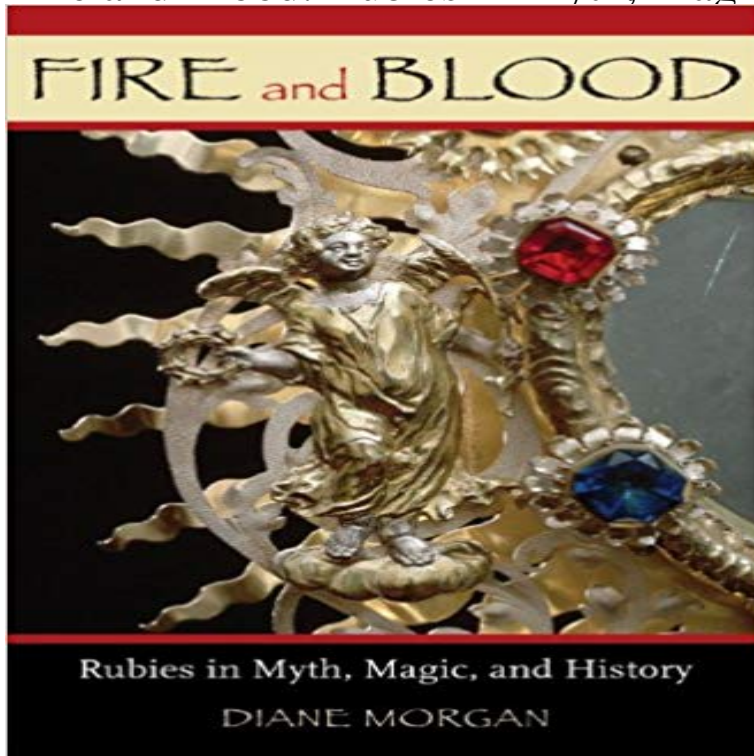


Fire and Blood: Rubies in Myth, Magic, and History



The ruby is the world's most precious and rare stone. For the ancient Hindus, the ruby was Rajapura: the Gem of Gems, at whose heart surges an eternal, unquenchable flame. Yet, for all its rarity and beauty, the ruby has always been a slightly sinister stone. Indian legend says the ruby was born from the blood of a demon. Indeed, the ruby is very close to a wild, living being: fiery, passionate, and dangerous. It has been at the center of love and wars, a symbol of passion, greed, and strong magic. Ancient sages and modern crystal healers have credited it with strange powers—from the granting of prophetic insight to protecting one from bullets. It has long been part of the human journey: coveted, fought over, and feared. Morgan considers all the beautiful and terrifying facets of this magnificent stone: scientific, economic, mythological, and spiritual. She discusses the great stones and great heists of the ruby world—and the famous fakes, too—the great Black Prince and renowned Timur. She closes with a discussion of the making of synthetic rubies and the laser beam.

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