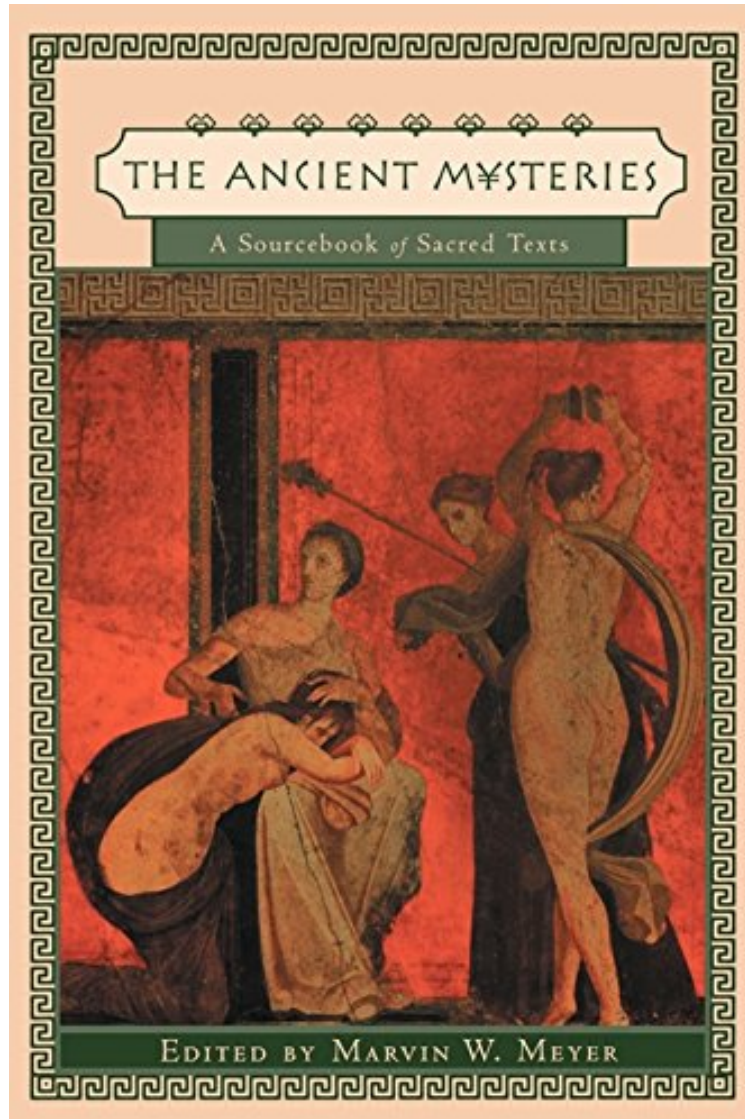


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The Ancient Mysteries: A Sourcebook of Sacred Texts

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From University of Pennsylvania Press : The Ancient Mysteries: A Sourcebook of Sacred Texts before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Ancient Mysteries: A Sourcebook of Sacred Texts:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. An immense resource for students of ancient pagan cults By Doug Welch Best one stop shop for texts, incantations, songs and other primary sources relating to the actual liturgies of ancient initiated cults. During the disastrous period of the Roman Crisis of the Third Century the official cult of

traditional Olympian gods had fallen out of popularity and was widely augmented with if not replaced by the charismatic Mystery Schools, cults where members would be initiated through participating in a variety of rituals in order to feel like they were in the presence of the gods. Mithras, Isis and Osiris, the Orphic Cult, the Eleusinian Mysteries, it is all in here! The sources for this work include inscriptions, old papyri, ancient codices, rediscovered palimpsests and other odd out of the way sources of ancient knowledge. A word of warning! Novices in ancient paganism should not attempt to physically recreate the rituals in this book, the tauroboleum is particularly messy! Plus I don't know where you can get a bull. But seriously, this book is the best place to get your hands on the actual texts the ancients utilized in their quest to meet the divine. If you are really interested, this book will only make for more, deeper and better questions as to the nature of the cults that were obliterated by the adoption of Christianity and its own wave of vengeful intolerance as it permanently became the official state religion of Rome in the 380s. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A good collection of ancient mystery-wisdom writings. By zencatIt is good to read and look back and see how the ancients were searching and discovering the archetypes that never stop emerging from our own depths-- from the psyche, the unconscious. By reading source material such as this we can easily trace the development of customs and ideas which in modern times some people claim are miraculous supernatural 'revelations'. This is good universal stuff. It happens everywhere for every racial and cultural group. The mysterious, sensed in our depths, glimpsed in our dreams, experienced in intuitive flashes and meditative visions, comes forth--appearing as rites and rituals and myths and symbols. And here in this fine book is a very good collection of some of the earliest writings attempting explanations and cultural fulfillments of the 'mysteries.' Not that much has changed. We humans are still quick to be fascinated by the 'miraculous', the 'supernatural', the 'right belief.' It's not right or wrong in my view, it's just who and what we are-- biological beings with ever evolving consciousness and a never ending fascination with the raptures of the deep. 4 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Good History Lesson By Astara Very well presented. The seeds of many of today's practicing religions can be found in the precepts of these early religions, but like another reviewer surmised, you won't find THESE stories taught in church! However, at that time in history, these tales and beliefs were just as engrained in the populace as are the "religions" practiced today. The things we call myths today weren't considered myths at all in antiquity, and I wonder if the things we are being taught today in churches won't be viewed as myths in the future. Warning! This book is only for the intelligent, open minded person.

Zeus and the other gods of shining Olympus were in reality divine only by popular consent. Over the course of time Olympian luster diminished in favor of religious experiences more immediate to the concerns of people living in an increasingly cosmopolitan ancient world. These experiences were provided by the mysteries, religions that flourished particularly during the Hellenistic period and were secretly practiced by groups of adherents who decided, through personal choice, to be initiated into the profound realities of one deity or another. Unlike the official state religions, in which people were expected to make an outward show of allegiance to the local gods, the mysteries emphasized an inwardness and privacy of worship within a closed band of initiates. In this book, Marvin W. Meyer explores the sacrifices and prayers, the public celebrations and secret ceremonies, the theatrical performances and literary works, the gods and goddesses that were a part of the mystery religions of Greece in the seventh century B.C. to the Judaism and Christianity of the Roman world of the seventh century A.D.

"Unlike most books on 'ancient mysteries,' this one is based on careful reading of the original texts in their original languages. It is a competent, intelligent, and sympathetic study of which the original conclusions deserve careful consideration." Morton Smith, author of *Jesus the Magician* and *The Secret Gospel* "The Ancient Mysteries contains 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. Therefore this book fills a gap not only in the area of late antiquity and early Christianity, but also in the field of history of religions in general." Kurt Rudolph, Philipps-Universitat Marburg, Germany "The ancient mysteries have remained all too mysterious because of the lack of ready access to them. . . . Now we have in one volume a fine collection of the sources that have survived. . . . This will be for many students the lifting of the veil for which they have been looking." James Robinson, Institute of Antiquity and Christianity, The Claremont Graduate School
About the Author Marvin W. Meyer is Professor of Religious Studies at Chapman University. He has written and edited several books, including *The Unknown Sayings of Jesus* and *Ancient Magic and Ritual Power*. He is a research project director at the Institute for Antiquity and Christianity, Claremont Graduate School, and codirector of the Albert Schweitzer Institute.