

## THE ELEUSINIAN MYSTERIES

### DEMETER, ANUBIS & THE ELEUSINIAN MYSTERIES

by

Terence DuQuesne



It is often not appreciated that the Eleusinian Mysteries, which were probably instituted around 1,300 BCE<sup>1</sup>, were celebrated for almost two thousand years, and all clean-handed Greek-speakers, including women, slaves, and emperors, were eligible. The last Roman emperor to be initiated at Eleusis was Gallienus, who ruled in the middle of the third century of the Common Era.<sup>2</sup> Gallienus was a friend of the brilliant pagan philosopher Plotinus, the initiate of Isis who had rejected Gnosticism and Christianity in favour of the intellectual and spiritual depth of high magic.<sup>3</sup>

Scholars are still debating not only what took place at these Rites but what they meant to those who participated in them.<sup>4</sup> The significance of Demeter's Mysteries for us today is again a question which has hardly begun to be addressed.

By far the earliest literary source, and the most important single relevant document, is a beautiful Hymn to the goddess Demeter which probably dates from the eighth or seventh centuries BCE and which was incorrectly ascribed to Homer. The *Hymn to Demeter* recounts in detail the myth of Persephone (or Core) and her abduction by Hades to the netherworld, and it also describes how her mother Demeter instituted the Mysteries at Eleusis. This is how the poem begins (as newly translated):

*I begin my song of lovely-haired Demeter the majestic goddess  
And her slender-ankled daughter whom Hades carried off  
As the gift of Zeus the far-seeing Thunderer  
Away from gold-sworded Demeter bestower of grains*

*This was while Persephone played a game with the deep-breasted  
Daughters of Ocean and picked flowers from the soft meadow  
Roses and saffron and elegant violets*

<sup>1</sup>O Kern, *Mysterien (Die eleusinischen Weihen)*, Pauly-Wissowatz Realencyklopädie 16 (1935) 1212-1223; GE Mylonas, *Eleusis* (Princeton 1962) 40-42.

<sup>2</sup>*Scriptores Hist. Augustae* XI 3; 4; cf Mylonas op. cit. 165. As late as the Byzantine period, Michael Psellus was writing about the Eleusinian Mysteries in the present tense *De Daemonibus* §3 Migne; cf J Harrison, *Prolegomena* (Cambridge 1903) 569n, who scruples to translate Psellus's prurient comments.

<sup>3</sup>Porphyry, *Vita Plotini* 10. There have been ineffective attempts to dispunge Plotinus's magic, such as the articles by P Merlan, *Itz* 44 (1953) 341-348; AH Armstrong, *Pharos* 1 (1955) 73-79; J Griffiths, *Last Days of Greco-Roman Paganism*, trans. (s's-Gravenhage) 1976: 53-55; cf T DuQuesne, *Celtic Dawn* 3 (1989) 15-18.

<sup>4</sup>See the present writer's critical reading-list in this volume, p 301-303.

*Irises and hyacinth and also the narcissus  
Which Earth made to grow at the will of Zeus  
As a lure for the girl with rosebud eyes  
And a favour for the one who receives many souls*

*The flower's remarkable sheen put all who saw it in wonder  
Immortal deities and mortal humankind alike  
And from its root a hundred blossoms shot forth  
And the scent from its pod delighted the whole broad  
Vault of the sky all the earth and the briny swell of the sea  
In amazement Persephone opened both her hands together  
To take the lovely object of pleasure*

*And the wide-wayed ground gaped open  
Through the Nysian plain and here Hades rose up  
The Ruler and receiver of many souls  
The many-named son of Cronos with his immortal horses*

*He seized her against her will on his golden chariot  
Leading her as she wept and yelled in a loud voice  
Invoking her father Zeus the most noble and high  
But nobody either immortal or human or the olive-trees  
Heard her voice but only the daughter of Perseus  
The playful-spirited Hecate she of the bright headband  
Paid any attention from her cavern  
And king Helios the famous son of Hyperion  
Heard the girl calling upon her father Zeus*

*But Zeus was away apart from the gods and sat  
In his prayer-filled temple to receive  
Pleasant and sacred gifts from mortal men.<sup>5</sup>*

The story continues with Demeter visiting the earth disguised as an old woman. When she arrives at the town of Eleusis, she tells the local royal family that she has escaped from pirates. She is offered the job of nurse to one of the rulers' children. At one point Demeter refuses wine but, after being made to laugh, accepts a drink composed of grains, honey, and herbs. She begins to nurse the child, secretly placing him in the fire at night to make him immortal. She is seen and she removes the child, soon

afterwards cursing human folly and revealing herself as an incarnate goddess. The princes of Eleusis erect a temple to propitiate her.

Demeter continues mourning for Persephone and causes a severe famine. Zeus and the goddess Iris are the first to beg her to call it off, but to no avail. Eventually the king of the gods sends Hermes to the netherworld to return the girl. Hades agrees to let her go, but secretly makes her eat a pomegranate seed which will guarantee that she must spend three months of the year in the netherworld. For the rest of the year she is released to live among the Olympian gods. In gratitude Demeter restores fertility to the land and initiates the Eleusinian princes into her Mysteries, teaching her rites for future generations. The hymn ends:

*Quickly Demeter raised up grains from the rich soil  
And the whole broad earth was laden with foliage and flowers  
Straight away she addressed the princes who administer justice  
Triptolemos and Diocles the tamer of horses  
Strong Eumolpos and Celeus the people's leader*

*She revealed the enactment of her rituals  
And devised sacred workings for everyone  
Which no-one may violate or enquire about or utter  
Since great reverence for the gods dries up the voice*

*Fortunate is the one among earthbound people  
Who has witnessed these mysteries  
And he who has not been initiated into the rituals  
And has not participated will never share in such things  
Even when lying dead under darkness and decay*

*Then when the heavenly goddess had laid down all her rites  
They returned to Olympus and the other gods' company  
Revered and holy they have their habitation there  
In the presence of Zeus who delights in thundering  
The one of mortal humankind whom they love earnestly  
Is greatly blessed and it is to his grand hall that they send  
Plutos who gives abundance to the human race*

*Now come you inhabitants of incense-bearing Eleusis  
And the island of Paros and rocky Antron*

<sup>5</sup>Homeric Hymn to Demeter 1-29. I follow the text of NJ Richardson (Oxford 1974), except that in line 13 I accept the emendation, faute de mieux, of Humbert: *kôdeias d'adêmê pîs i'* for the corrupt *kôdîas' adêmê pîs d'*.

*O Queen my lady Deo bestower of good gifts bringer of fruits in season  
You and your very lovely daughter Persephone  
Be gracious and in return for my hymn  
Grant me a life that delights the spirit  
And I shall recall you and make you another sacred song.<sup>6</sup>*

Now, reading works of description and interpretation of the Eleusinian Mysteries is not a wasted effort, but should be no substitute for examination of the primary sources. The *Hymn to Demeter* documents both the myth and the ritual, and one may help to explain the other. Other ancient sources of information are fragmentary; there are a few relevant inscriptions, a handful of monuments such as reliefs and vase-paintings, scattered allusions in the works of classical travel-writers and philosophers, and polemical accounts in the books of early Christian Fathers. The latter certainly had an axe to grind, and it is interesting how strenuous were their efforts to discredit the pagan Mysteries.<sup>7</sup>

The Eleusinian cult was adopted by the Athenian state some time before 600 BCE, and a number of the rituals cited in the *Hymn to Demeter* were certainly enacted. Large numbers of people attended the processions between Athens and Eleusis in classical times. These were held in early October at the season of sowing. How many participated in the most esoteric rites, which were categorized as 'things revealed', 'things recited', and 'things seen', is unclear. Some of the celebrants would doubtless drink a special sacramental mixture, in memory of Demeter, from a particular vessel called the *kykeōn*. As always, as a poet put it, there were many wand-wavers but few true initiates.<sup>8</sup>

There were various oaths or passwords<sup>9</sup> which initiates had to utter. One read: "The lady Brimo has borne the holy child Brimos."<sup>10</sup> This is obscure, but the word *brimos* means 'the awesome one', and the allusion may be to a magical child, since the birth of a physical son is not recorded in the myth. More sense may be obtained from another Eleusinian oath which included the words "Rain! Conceive!"<sup>11</sup> The conception may again refer to a spiritual child, perhaps that part of the self which in Egypt was reborn

magically as Horus the Child.<sup>12</sup> If we are thinking of Egyptian analogies (not origins), we might recall that, in discussing the jackal-faced god Anubis, Plutarch connects the word 'dog' (*kuōn*) with 'conceive' (*kuō*).<sup>13</sup> The etymology seems dubious to the modern mind, but Plutarch understood symbolism, and Anubis has a strong if little-known connexion with the birth of the divine king.<sup>14</sup> If we required corroboration, Herodotus reports that "the priest has his eyes blindfolded and is led to the temple of Demeter by two wolves."<sup>15</sup> The two wolves or wild dogs are forms of Anubis and his magical twin Upwawet, the Opener of the Ways.<sup>16</sup> Anubis is the shamanic deity who facilitates the processes of magical rebirth and initiation: he is *hery-seshta*, 'He Who is Over the Mysteries'. In Hellenistic times he was assimilated to the psychopomp Hermes, a closely related archetype, and was called Hermanubis (the name of a priest in Crowley's *Rites*).<sup>17</sup> At this period there is evidence for an association between Anubis and Demeter and Persephone,<sup>18</sup> and an "Anubidian ear of corn" is referred to in the Greco-Egyptian magical papyri.<sup>19</sup>

Hermes has an important role in the *Hymn to Demeter*. It is his job to visit Hades to ask the god of the netherworld to release Persephone and to guide her on her return. Similarly, Anubis guides the justified soul through the limbo from death to life and between the worlds. The archetype is easily recognizable in the *Divine Comedy* of Dante, where Vergil guides the poet through the circles of Hades. No naïve diffusionism is suggested to explain connexions between Anubis and Hermes: the archetype emerges in many different cultures, sprung from the Collective Unconscious, with only the local names changing.

The *Hymn to Demeter* has a number of other motifs which help to elucidate the Mysteries. Persephone smelled the flower and became intoxicated: the earth then opened to enable her to shift level and travel from one world to the other. Her 'rape' (really a further initiation) is needed to guarantee her ability to travel back again. The chasm in the earth, which

<sup>6</sup>*Homeric Hymn to Demeter* 471-495. Cf. previous note.

<sup>7</sup>Most of the literary and epigraphic documentation is conveniently listed in N. Turchi, *Fontes Mysteriorum Aevi Hellenistici* (Rome 1930). Literary and epigraphic sources are quoted in extenso in L.R. Farnell, *Cult of the Greek States III* (Oxford 1907) 311-376.

<sup>8</sup>*Ἰππολύτου ἀντίκλῳροισι, παύροις δὲ τε βαχκόσι*: Zenobius 5: 77.

<sup>9</sup>See particularly A. Dieterich, *Elise Mithrasliturgie* (Berlin 1923) 213-214 and *passim*.

<sup>10</sup>Hippolytus, *Ref. V* 8 p. 146; cf. Jane Harrison, *Prolegomena* (1903) 552-557; Mylonas op. cit. 306-310.

<sup>11</sup>Hippolytus, *Ref. V* 7 p. 146; Proclus ad *Platonis Tim.* p. 293.

<sup>12</sup>Cf. particularly H. Brunner, *Die Geburt des Götterkinds: Studien zur Überlieferung einer altägyptischen Mythos* (Wiesbaden 1984); E. Norden, *Die Geburt des Kindes: Geschichte einer religiösen Idee* (Leipzig 1934).

<sup>13</sup>Plutarch, *De Iside et Osiride* 44 (368E); cf. T. Hopfner, *Plutarch über Isis und Osiris II* (Pug 1941) 197-199; J.G. Griffiths, *Plutarch on Isis and Osiris* (Cambridge 1970) 467-468.

<sup>14</sup>Cf. T. DuQuesne, *Anubis and the Spirit of the West* (Thames 1990); KK Rimer, *JEI* 71 (1985) 149-155.

<sup>15</sup>Herodotus II 122.

<sup>16</sup>Cf. Diodorus I 18; Clement Alex., *Strom.* V 7: 42.

<sup>17</sup>See especially J. Leclant, *Anubis, LMC I* (1981) 862-873 (text), 688-696 (plates); J.-C. Grenier, *Anubis alexandrin et romain* (Léden 1977).

<sup>18</sup>*HG XI* 4, 1235 (Delos, before 166 BCE); Artemidorus, *Oneirocrit. II* 34.

<sup>19</sup>*PGM IV* 900 (note also that *zachus* may mean 'gnatlike': *LSJ*). Connections between Anubis and the grain are indicated in other Egyptian and classical sources: see, for instance, *Coffin Texts V* 99-100; Papyrus Jumilhac XVII 17-18; EH Kantorowicz, *Proc. Amer. Philos. Soc.* 106 (1961) 374 fig. 15 [368-393].

was represented by an actual site at Eleusis,<sup>20</sup> is the 'shaman's gate' (Da'at) which is only visible for a second and through which the initiate must pass on his journey to enlightenment.<sup>21</sup>

The gate of the netherworld is in various cultures guarded by a dog or dogs.<sup>22</sup> Anubis is specifically the deity who has access to the 'narrow passage' to this gate.<sup>23</sup> In classical mythology, Cerberus protects the portal, and this beast has close associations with Hecate, whose appearance in the *Hymn to Demeter* is not coincidental. She is the lunar aspect of the goddess and she, like the Celtic Morrigan, is accompanied by a netherworldly hound or hounds.<sup>24</sup>

In the *Hymn to Demeter*, it is Hecate (the Moon) and Helios (the Sun) who hear Persephone's crying. The alchemical Conjunction of Opposites involves the marriage of Sun and Moon.<sup>25</sup> As Dwina Murphy-Gibb shows in her fine contemporary drawings on the theme, the taking of Persephone is inevitable and ritual, the beginning of immortality, quite literally an initiation. It is not that Persephone is offered evil mind-bending drugs or that she is literally raped. She certainly has to lose her virginity, literally, and her life, metaphorically, in order to become a spiritual being. Her smelling of the consciousness-raising scent of the magic flower was probably enacted in some form at Eleusis, perhaps by the ingestion of opium.<sup>26</sup> Such growth, involving risky activities, is bound to be painful.

Poppies grow in cornfields, so they symbolize Demeter effectively. According to the *Hymn*, she had fasted for nine days, which recalls the initiatory hanging of Odin so that he could obtain the runes.<sup>27</sup> At Eleusis the goddess refused wine but, after being made to laugh, accepted a potion of "grain and water mixed with tender pennyroyal."<sup>28</sup> As anyone who has undertaken a healing rice fast will testify, the chewed grain alone will

eventually exert mood-modifying effects. Such fasts can help to raise *kundalini*, the dual 'serpent power' which courses through the spine and perception of which enhances consciousness significantly.<sup>29</sup> Demeter accepted grain, and the revelation of an 'ear of cut wheat' was apparently one of the most important events of her Mysteries.<sup>30</sup> This is highly reminiscent of the five elements of the Tantric *pañcatattva* ritual, which includes *maithuna* (sexual intercourse) and *mudrā*, a word with various meanings which in this context signifies parched or roasted grain.<sup>31</sup>

The Eleusinian Mysteries culminated in a hierogamy, or 'sacred marriage'. We do not know for certain who participated (priest and priestess, or two or more initiands), or what form the rites took. The Christian Fathers, who are almost our only source on this subject, showed deep embarrassment at the fact that the pagan Mysteries would not simply disappear. Then, as now, the moralists attacked with sexual innuendo. (Clement of Alexandria even called Christ the 'true hierophant', a distinctly Eleusinian term.)<sup>32</sup> In a series of sacred dramas such as occurred at Eleusis, perhaps an act of coitus took place. We do know that, according to one version of the Myth, Demeter agrees to take the drink of grain only after Baubo exposes her genitals.<sup>33</sup> Certainly the breaking of *tabu* is involved. For example, in a number of classical Mystery religions the initiate had to wear the clothing of the opposite gender to symbolize the psychic completeness of androgyny.<sup>34</sup> The culmination of sexual excitement causes a kind of death, a shift of psychic level. It is the raising of plane which matters, not the technique whereby this is attained.

The secrets of Eleusis have been kept. Perhaps, like the Tarot cards, they were open secrets, in the sense that passing on the details would have no meaning to people who did not understand the vocabulary or the dialectic.<sup>35</sup> The Eleusinian Rites facilitate the making of a bridge between earth and sky and earth and the netherworld, to underscore the point that humans are also, or can become, deities. The Roman astrological poet Manilius expressed it vividly: *iam facit ipse deos mittitque ad sidera numen*. "Now humankind creates gods and raises divinity to the stars."<sup>36</sup>

<sup>20</sup>Clement Alex., *Protr.* 2: 17; schol. *Lucian Dial. Mercur.* 2: 1; Rabe (= *Turchi Fontes* [1930] nos 69 & 70); Mylonas, *op. cit.* 100; Richardson, *op. cit.* 147-148; cf. R. Ganszyskie, *Kambrisz, Pasy-Wiszowaz Realencyklopidie* 10 (1919) 2359-2449.

<sup>21</sup>See, for example, M. Eliade, *Shamanism* (Chicago 1964) 482-486; C. J. Bleeker, *The Sacred Bridge* (Lund 1963) 180-189.

<sup>22</sup>The Shaman's Gate is actually featured in Dante, *Inferno* XXXIV 127-139.

<sup>23</sup>For Kretschmar, *Hundertwasser und Kerberos* II (Stuttgart 1938) 222-224; M. Bloomfield, *Cerberus: the dog of Hades* (Chicago 1905).

<sup>24</sup>DeQuenne, *Anubis* (1990) 10-11 and references.

<sup>25</sup>For Cern, *Hand, Pasy Wiszowaz Realencyklopidie* 8 (1913) 2573-2581 [2540-2582]; B. Schlerath, *Paidonoma* 6(1) (1954) 25-40; H. Scholz, *Der Hund in der griechisch-römischen Magie und Religion* (Berlin 1937); B. H. Stricker, *Östliche und westliche Mededelingen* 49 (1968) 52-56 [40-56].

<sup>26</sup>C. Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, trans. (London 1963). Jung perceptively notes (*op. cit.* 146-160) that the dog has solar and lunar attributes.

<sup>27</sup>The opium poppy is definitely connected with the Eleusinian cult: Mylonas, *op. cit.* 52, 53, 159, 205 & 216. Although it is the symbol rather than the actual substance which is important, opium is a much more likely candidate than, for example, Amanita mushrooms.

<sup>28</sup>Hesiod III 136; cf. Eliade, *op. cit.* 380.

<sup>29</sup>*Homeric Hymn to Demeter* 208-209; cf. Richardson, *op. cit.* 225, 344-348.

<sup>29</sup>C. Sir J. Woodville [Arthur Avalon], *The Serpent Power (Saktatantraippana and Pāṇḍitāpāṇḍitā)* (Madras 1931).

<sup>30</sup>Hippolytus, *Ref. V* 8: 30 (*Turchi Fontes* no 160).

<sup>31</sup>M. Eliade, *Yogi: immortality and freedom* (Chicago 1958) 405-407 with literature.

<sup>32</sup>Clement Alex., *Protr.* XII 92. The Christians appropriated much of the vocabulary of the Mystery religions; see particularly Morton Smith, *Clement of Alexandria and a Secret Gospel of Mark* (Cambridge Mass. 1973) 178-183.

<sup>33</sup>Clement Alex., *Protr.* II 20 (*Turchi Fontes* no 122).

<sup>34</sup>M. Delcourt, *Hermaphrodite: mythe et rites of the bisexual figure*, trans. (London 1961) 1-17; cf. H. Baumann, *Das dogmatische Gnostische* (Berlin 1955) 14-80. Note the ritual transvestition of Pentheus in Euripides, *Bacchae* 827-844.

<sup>35</sup>See W. Burkert, *Homos Noster: Überprägungen allegorischer Opferzeiten und Mythen* (Berlin 1972) 274-283, for a

perceptive discussion of this point.

<sup>36</sup>Manilius, *Astron.* IV 934.

# The Eleusinian Mysteries — a critical reading-list

Terence DuQuesne

There are many hundreds of books and articles which describe or interpret the archaeology, history, and function of the Mysteries. Profound disagreements have long existed among scholars on the nature of the rituals enacted and how these should be interpreted. The works listed below will provide a representative selection of the opinions of some of the most distinguished scholars. Bibliographies containing fuller references are noted. It should be stressed that there is no single book on the Eleusinian Mysteries which can be regarded as definitive, and all the studies cited here should be read with a keen critical eye. By no means all of the most important contributions to this subject are available in English.

Walter Burkert, *Homo Necans. Interpretationen altgriechischer Opferriten und Mythen*. Berlin 1972 (= Religionsgeschichtliche Versuche und Vorarbeiten XXXII), pp 274-327 (= pp 248-297 of the English translation [Berkeley 1983])

Walter Burkert is an outstanding authority on classical religion. This is an impressive book, but not all will agree with his Lévi-Straussian emphasis on the sacrificial aspects of the Mysteries or with his structuralist approach. Burkert's insights are always worth careful examination. The English translation of the German original is adequate.

Walter Burkert, *Ancient Mystery Cults*. Cambridge, Mass. 1987

An easily digestible account of the Mystery religions of the classical world, based on Burkert's lectures. Burkert, unlike most classicists, has read the works of Mircea Eliade (cf below) and is aware of psychedelic culture (at least through Carlos Castañeda, on whom opinions will differ). The author downplays the spiritual aspects of Eleusis and other Mystery cults.

Albrecht Dieterich, *Eine Mithrasliturgie*, third edition. Leipzig 1923 (reprinted Darmstadt 1966)

Albrecht Dieterich was one of the most incisive thinkers in the field of Mystery religions. His book *Mutter Erde* (third edition, Berlin 1925) was one of the first detailed classical studies to accord to the Goddess her proper status. Dieterich's *Mithrasliturgie* contains a commentary on a magical papyrus in which a Mithraic initiation ritual is concealed, but also deals more widely with matters such as the Sacred Marriage at Eleusis (pp 121-134) and with the initiatory oaths of the Mysteries (pp 213-218).

Mircea Eliade, *A History of Religious Ideas vol. I: From the Stone Age to the Eleusinian Mysteries*. Chicago 1978, pp 290-301 & bibliography pp 458-463

Mircea Eliade, who died recently, had an unequalled grasp of symbolism and the meaning of religion, which was married to a scholarship of great breadth

and depth. His writing shows a poet's sensitivity. The book above-quoted summarizes his thoughts on the Eleusinia in the context of a broad account of the early history of religions, and his critical bibliographies are most helpful. Eliade's early book *The Myth of the Eternal Return* (1954, various reprints) is a towering intellectual achievement which will stimulate those who are concerned with the meaning of magic and religion. For Mother cults and agricultural festivals in various cultures, Eliade's *Patterns in Comparative Religion* (1959, reprinted) is invaluable.

LR Farnell, *The Cults of the Greek States* vol. III. Oxford 1907, pp 29-213 & references pp 311-376

A well-researched account, readable and scholarly, of the place of the Eleusinian Mysteries in Greek religion, from Farnell's standard, five-volume work on local cults. Full quotations in the original languages are conveniently printed at the end of the book.

Paul Foucart, *Les Mystères d'Eleusis*. Paris 1914

Paul Foucart attracted a quite undeserved measure of disagreement, followed by neglect, because of his belief that the Eleusinian Mysteries came originally from Egypt. He did not appear to understand that the Egyptian and Greek influences were two-way, for example in the case of the Greek-derived Eleusinium temple at Alexandria. Foucart's handling of sources is humane and his scholarship, on such matters as the Eleusinian priesthood, is unquestionable.

Joselyn Godwin, *Mystery Religions in the Ancient World*. London 1981

A highly readable, popular and splendidly-illustrated account of the Mystery religions in their context.

Jane Harrison, *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion*. Cambridge 1903, pp 535-572

This book deals extensively with Greek Mysteries and quotes translations of many important documents. An interesting study, to be used with caution.

CG Jung & C Kerényi, *Science of Mythology. Essays on the myth of the divine child and the Mysteries of Eleusis*. New York 1949 [paperback repr. London 1985]

This is a book of essays by Jung and Kerényi, who influenced each other's thinking, from the perspective of Jung's psychology of archetypes. As a fine classical scholar and an initiate of Hermes, Kerényi was better placed than most to understand the significance of the Mysteries.

C Kerényi, *Eleusis. Archetypal image of mother and daughter*. New York 1967

An extended, somewhat idiosyncratic account of the author's interpretations.

Otto Kern, *Mysterien* (Die eleusinischen Weihen), in Pauly-Wissowa, *Realenzyklopädie der klassischen Altertumswissenschaft* 16 (1935) 1209-1263

*For the reader who has German, a highly compressed and fully referenced summary. Still valuable.*

George E Mylonas, *Eleusis and the Eleusinian Mysteries*. Princeton 1961 [1962]

*On the archaeological aspects, Mylonas's work is sound, and his book includes useful documentation of iconographic and literary sources. Mylonas has, however, little understanding of symbolism, and he tends to confuse Eleusinian with other cults. His account of the Rites of Demeter is marred by strenuous moralistic attempts to desexualize the Mysteries. There is an interesting Appendix on references to the Rites in the texts of the Church Fathers, and a helpful glossary of technical terms relating to the Mysteries.*

Raffaele Pettazzoni, *I Misteri*. Bologna 1923, pp 41-101

*The great historian of religions Mircea Eliade reports in his diaries that he did not understand the significance of the Mysteries until he had read Pettazzoni's book. Pettazzoni writes with great elegance and scholarship and understands mysticism and ecstatic states. This book is perhaps the best single work on the Mystery religions, and will repay study.*

NJ Richardson, *The Homeric Hymn to Demeter* (edition and commentary). Oxford 1974 (note bibliography pp 88-92)

*The Hymn to Demeter is a most beautiful and moving poem, one of the earliest surviving examples of Greek literature. It describes in detail the myth of Demeter, Persephone, and Hades and the foundation of the Mysteries at Eleusis. It is therefore a primary and crucial source for any serious student. NJ Richardson's introduction contains some helpful additions to the insights of previous scholars. He has provided a new edition of the Greek text and a commentary which will assist people interested in the detail of the Mysteries. Unfortunately he does not include an English translation of the Hymn. Among the English translations, neither of which does justice to the Greek, are those of John Edgar (The Homeric Hymns, Edinburgh 1891) and HG Evelyn White (Hesiod, The Homeric Hymns, and Homerica. London 1936, in the Loeb Classical Library series).*

Nicolaus Turchi, *Fontes Historiae Mysteriorum Aevi Hellenistici*. Roma 1930, pp 43-99

*This books contains almost all the Greek and Latin texts and inscriptions which bear on the Mystery cults, including that of Eleusis. Valuable for those who read classical languages.*



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