



# MYSTERY CULTS IN ANCIENT EGYPT

Fascination with the ancient Egyptian mysteries were so widespread in antiquity that cults devoted to Isis and Osiris could be found as far west as Spain. Frescoes from a temple of Isis in Pompei, Italy, show some of these mysterious rites in progress and The Metamorphoses of Apuleius provide a vivid narrative of one character's relationship with the cult of Isis. What was the ancient Egyptian experience of divinity like and how were initiates inducted into cultic worship? During this talk, we will discuss what is known about ancient Egyptian mysticism and initiation throughout its history, focusing on exciting revelations from newly published texts like the Hermetic work known as the Book of Thoth and the priestly manual referred to as the Book of the Temple, as well as recent research on the Book of the Dead. Finally, we will turn to the startling new discoveries off the coast of Alexandria that have revealed the material culture fueling the mysteries of Osiris.

