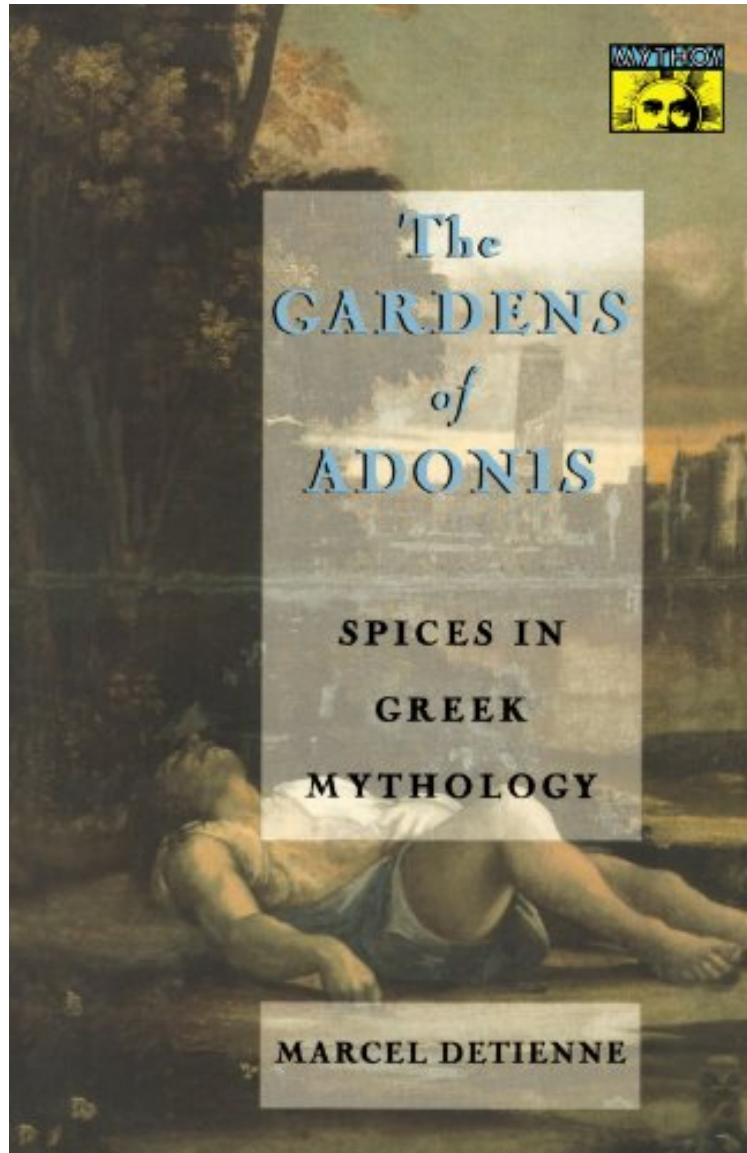


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The Gardens of Adonis

Marcel Detienne

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Marcel Detienne : The Gardens of Adonis before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Gardens of Adonis:

11 of 12 people found the following review helpful. A great book to readBy eitan bachmatDetienne's book is a wonderfull and thought provoking book.he presents a structuralist analysis of the myth of Adonis.It is very hard to provide convincing structuralist interpretations to myths and it seems that in structuralismthe journey is at least as important as the end result(see most of the work of Levi Strauss). However, in this case Detienne's analysis is rather

compelling and provides the reader with amazing insights into greek thought about food, perfumes,sex and all the other good things in life. If you wish to read just one structuralist work to get a feeling for this fascinating and highly non trivial mode of analysis of human thought, I would recommend this book

Rich with implications for the history of sexuality, gender issues, and patterns of Hellenic literary imagining, Marcel Detienne's landmark book recasts long-standing ideas about the fertility myth of Adonis. The author challenges Sir James Frazer's thesis that the vegetation god Adonis-- whose premature death was mourned by women and whose resurrection marked a joyous occasion--represented the annual cycle of growth and decay in agriculture. Using the analytic tools of structuralism, Detienne shows instead that the festivals of Adonis depict a seductive but impotent and fruitless deity--whose physical ineptitude led to his death in a boar hunt, after which his body was found in a lettuce patch. Contrasting the festivals of Adonis with the solemn ones dedicated to Demeter, the goddess of grain, he reveals the former as a parody and negation of the institution of marriage. Detienne considers the short-lived gardens that Athenian women planted in mockery for Adonis's festival, and explores the function of such vegetal matter as spices, mint, myrrh, cereal, and wet plants in religious practice and in a wide selection of myths. His inquiry exposes, among many things, attitudes toward sexual activities ranging from "perverse" acts to marital relations.

Language NotesText: English (translation) Original Language: FrenchFrom the Back CoverRich with implications for the history of sexuality, gender issues, and patterns of hellenic literary imagining, Marcel Detienne's landmark book, first published in 1972, recast long-standing ideas about the fertility myth of Adonis. The author challenges Sir James Frazer's thesis that the vegetation god Adonis - whose premature death was mourned by women and whose resurrection marked a joyous occasion - represented the annual cycle of growth and decay in agriculture. Using the analytic tools of structuralism, Detienne shows instead that the festivals of Adonis depict a seductive but impotent and fruitless deity - whose physical ineptitude led to his death in a boar hunt, after which his body was found in a lettuce patch. Contrasting the festivals of Adonis with the solemn ones dedicated to Demeter, the goddess of grain, he reveals the former as a parody and negation of the institution of marriage. Detienne considers the short-lived gardens that Athenian women planted in mockery for Adonis's festival, and explores the function of such vegetal matter as spices, mint, myrrh, cereal, and wet plants in religious practice and in a wide selection of myths. His inquiry exposes, among many things, the way sin which women of various martial statuses were regarded and attitudes toward sexual activity ranging from "perverse" acts to marital relations.About the AuthorMarcel Detienne is Gildersleeve Professor of Classics at Johns Hopkins University.