

Adonis

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Asttract:

It seems that the roots of the legend of Adonis refers to the Lavantine provenance, and also it seems that it was a female celebration under the name of "The Gardens of Adonis"¹. There is another festival very close to the festival of Adonis it is called Adonia at Byblos, but the difference it was celebrated by both males and females in the temple of the divine lover, while the Greek Adonis was pure in the women hands².

The story of Adonis was very close to the Mesopotamian myth of Ishtar and Tammuz³, as according to the ancient myth of Ishtar this festival was like a female rite which was transmitted from a woman to another woman as the festival was only to a single gender⁴.

The destiny of Adonis was death as he was killed by a wild boar, the same destiny faced Attis⁵ who had a story similar to Adonis.

Key words: Adonis, Adonis`s death, Adonis gardens

The story:

" *Ears deep sweet music, and heart`s deep sore wounding*", describing the voice of Adonis for the 1st time⁶.

"The one sullies whatever it touches; the other honors and makes it beautiful"⁷. The story started may be in Attica, as the scholars tried to figure out the rites of the festival of Adonis and clarify the role of the classical females perspective in male centered Classical Athenes⁸.

¹J. D. REED, *Ibid.*, p. 318.

²J. D. REED, *Ibid.*, p. 318-319.

³ J. D. REED, "The Sexuality of Adonis", in *Classical Antiquity*, Vol. 14 no. 2, p. 2, California Press, 1995.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p.318.

⁵ For more information about this god see

<https://www.greekmythology.com/Myths/Mortals/Attis/attis.html>

⁶ A. C. HAMILTON, "Venus and Adonis", in *SEL (Studies in English Literature)*, Vol, 1, n. 1, p. 35, 1961, Rice University.

⁷A. C. HAMILTON, "Venus and Adonis", in *SEL (Studies in English Literature)*, Vol, 1, n. 1, p. 31, 1961, Rice University.

⁸J. D. REED, "The Sexuality of Adonis", in *Classical Antiquity*, Vol. 14 no. 2, p. 317, California Press, 1995.

All the poets agreed that earth as the mother goddess was created and after that the plants with its different kinds, then, the rest of the creatures were created, according to the idea of Spenser he dealt with Adonis as a model of the true man and he built his opinion upon two main points, the form of the body and the essence of the feelings⁹.

According to Panyassis he stated that one day the ruler of Assyria called Theias who had a daughter called Smyrna, she decided to conspire against her father as she agreed with her maid to sleep with her father without his knowledge, as she slept with him for twelve days without stopping.

Theias discovered that he was deceived so he took his sword and chased his daughter whom she begged to the gods and they transferred her to a myrrh tree¹, after a while (about¹) the trunk of the tree exploded and Adonis was born¹.

According to the story it was stated that the pregnant mother myrrh was transferred into a scented tree, and the birth process was done through the trunk of the tree as Adonis considered to be the fruits of this perfumed tree¹.³

Other mythographer stated that Adonis was hidden by two goddesses Aphrodite and Persephone¹, as Aphrodite hide the baby in a lettuce patch inside a chest and she dedicated him to the gods to serve in their cult because of his beauty, after that she decided to left the baby with Persephone because of his beauty but it seems that Persephone refused to give him back to Aphrodite which make the second one to go to Zeus for help who decided that the months of the year should be divided equally between the two goddesses¹.⁵

During the period of the Middle Ages and according to the customs the masculine love was represented in anger form, and the feminine love was expressed in a soft way, but in the myth of Adonis and Venus the issue was completely different as the man love (Adonis) was a matter of lust, while the woman love (Venus) was expressed in an irate form¹.⁶

Some scholars suggested that the attitude of Venus in this myth referred to her effect from her previous marriage from god Mars god of war¹. Goddess Venus

⁹ Br., STIRLING, "The Philosophy of Spenser's Garden of Adonis", in *PMLA*, vol 49, no., 2, 1934, p. 504.

¹ They choose this tree as the Greeks purchased it from the Phenician merchants as they thought that its native is Levant. Other sources stated that the myrrh is an exotic plant its scent never change any perfumes if they add it.

¹ The majority of the scholars agreed that the time before the explosion of the trunk of the tree was 10 months.

¹ J. D. REED, "The Sexuality of Adonis", in *JSTOR*, Classical Antiquity, Vol. 14 no. 2, p. 328, California Press, 1995.

¹ J. D. REED, "The Sexuality of Adonis", in *JSTOR*, Classical Antiquity, Vol. 14 no. 2, p. 321, California Press, 1995.

¹ She was the goddess of the underworld and the wife of Hades, she was the goddess of spring, her mother goddess Demeter who was the goddess of agriculture.

¹ J. D. REED, "The Sexuality of Adonis", in *JSTOR*, Classical Antiquity, Vol. 14 no. 2, p. 330, California Press, 1995.

¹ D., G., WATSON, "The Contraries of Venus and Adonis", *Studies in Philology*, vol 75, n. 1, 1987, North Carolina Press, p. 37.

¹ For more information see, The Story of Love Affair Venus and Mars by A. KORDS.

expressed her sorry and denied the death of Adonis and accused the blind attacker boar who killed him and ignored his value and beauty¹ .⁸

According to this story other myths were applied and took Adonis as a model to their story like¹ (The baby in the box-⁹The judgment of Zeus). Some sources documented that goddess Venus had great role in the story as she cut her leg expressing her mourning on Adonis² .⁰

Other sources stated that Adonis represented the comic inductor and the immoral womanizer² .¹

According to Pseudo- Apollodorus, *The Catalogue of Women*, it was stated that Adonis was the son of Alphesoibeia and Phoneix.

Some sources documented that the story of Adonis or the poem it was like a tragedy warning of the erotic love² .²

The Adonia Festival:

The festival was celebrated on the roofs of their own homes in the summer, its length was uncertain as it wasn't regular it depends on the women or in specific words the female participants and their friends who brought a tree like that of the Christmas² .³

While the Byblos Adonia was like a mix celebration of two gender males and females, as the ritual started with the death of the god and reviving him again in the temple² .⁴

It seems that the Attic festival was held without any kind of organization and without any supervision plus the priests never participated in this occasion, only women gathered upon a flat roof and put the seeds in pots but a special kind of very fast sprouting seeds.

The festival may be held in the summer without fixed numbers of days for celebrations, as it seemed that it a mixed party between dancing, singing and making funerary issues in the same time² .⁵

The ladies start the festival with a great imagination of goddess Aphrodite but her form was quite different as they imagined her very fat with a lot of accessories. Some sources stated that the pots with seeds were not an ancient tradition from the Mesopotamian rites, it seems that it was a new rite or Attic rite only was

¹ A. C. HAMILTON, "Venus and Adonis", in *SEL* (Studies in English Literature), Vol, 1, n. 1, p. 35, 1961, Rice University.

¹ B. C. DIETRICH "The Judgment of Zeus", in *JSTOR*, 1964, pp. 97-125.

² S., CL., HULSE, "Shakspear`s Myth of Venus and Adonis", Vol 93, N. 1, 1978, Cambridge, p. 96.

² S., CL., HULSE., "Shakspear`s Myth of Venus and Adonis", Vol 93, N. 1, 1978, Cambridge, p. 95.

² D., G., WATSON, "The Contrarieties of Venus and Adonis", *Studies in Philology*, vol 75,n. 1, 1987, North Carolina Press, p.33.

² *Ibid.*, p. 319. ³

² J. D. REED, "The Sexuality of Adonis", in *JSTOR*, Classical Antiquity, Vol. 14 no. 2, p. 318, California Press, 1995.

² *Ibid.*, p. 319-20. ⁵

participated in Greece², in addition that it was noticed that the streetwalkers had participated in this festival.

But it was stated that each group of the participants had their own way in expressing their feelings towards the festival even if they were streetwalkers or the virgins on the roof of their houses without any rules as it was stated before.

According to Professor Joseph D. Reed, Adonis was specialized in sugary perfumes for seduction and infinity happiness, as his function was matches with the autumn celebration of fertility and throwing seeds in pots².

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Other scholars tried to connect between the growth of the seeds and the destiny of men according to the story of Adonis, as the seeds grow and die according to the ways of irrigation and proper ventilation, exactly like men as their destiny depended on their way of life².

Some scholars like Marino highlighted the destiny of Adonis as he stated that Adonis represented the excessive happiness with suffering, Moreover others like Hercules see that the story it had to be put in a good humor frame to be suitable for the readers².

Discussion

Adonis mother was transferred to myrrh tree as this kind of trees without scent as it was simply add on any perfumes without affection.

It seems that Adonis was the child hero of the very famous myths of Zeus and Ganymede³.

Other stories were parallel to the story of Aphrodite and Adonis which proved the female role in stability and authority like Selene and Endymion, Eos and Tithonus.

The story of Adonis described the hilarious attitude of the women towards the men and in the same time focus on the worry of men of neglect. Some writers tried to describe or narrate the episodes of the story in a paradoxical way to attract the attention of the reader and as a kind of suspense³.

Adonis was prevented from talking along the story, the only permitted place for talking was in the underworld³.

² J. D. REED, "The Sexuality of Adonis", in *JSTOR*, Classical Antiquity, Vol. 14 no. 2, p. 320, California Press, 1995.

² J. D. REED, "The Sexuality of Adonis", in *Classical Antiquity*, Vol. 14 no. 2, p. 321, California Press, 1995.

² Br., STIRLING, "The Philosophy of Spenser's Garden of Adonis", in *PMLA*, vol 49, no., 2, 1934, p. 504.

² S., KLUGE, Adonis at the Crossroads: Two (Three) Early Modern Versions of the Venus and Adonis Myth., *MLN*, vol 129, n. 5, John Hopkins University Press, p. 1150.

³ A divine hero whose home land was Troy, Ganymede was described by Homer as the most beautiful of mortals as because of his beauty he became immortal.

³ A., GEORGIEVSKA, "Titan and the Paradoxes of Love and Art in Venus and Adonis, in *Artibus et Historiae*, vol 33, n. 65, 2012, p. 97.

³ D. REED, "The Sexuality of Adonis", in *Classical Antiquity*, Vol. 14 no. 2, p. 334, California Press, 1995.

The conclusion is the role of Adonis and his definition changed according to the frame of the story. The writers of the story of Adonis left the readers in a big problem, undecided if the hero of the story a good person or bad one, as the writer first talked about the value of love and feelings and ended the story in an ironical frame that Adonis's end was death either by killing by a boar or poisoned by a golden apple bite³ .

The story of Adonis makes big problem in the Christian poems as the story was put in a romantic frame, but according to the pagan myth, so the reader became very confused about this god, either to feel sympathy with him or cruelty to him because he is guilty⁴ .

The scholars tried to focus on a specific point which is the difference between the long term and the short term of happiness, as they stated that the fast sowing seeds which grow in the heat of the summer in 8 days, express the less of happiness than the slow sowing seeds which take its normal time in 80 months³ .

From the previous information we had the right to be confused about Adonis if he is a good one or a guilty man. But I see that the whole story was very hard to be accepted in our society as the three kinds of religion refused any relation between a girl and her father, as it is considered a major sins which is hardly to be accepted in any religion.

Adonis story could be just lines in a comic frame or dramatic frame because of his final destiny to be killed by a boar and at the same time it was like a message to the people that clarified the punishment of the sins.

Conclusions

From the several myths and stories that narrated the origin of Adonis according to its own point of view, and also from the rites which were held during the several celebrations of Adonis, several conclusions could be noted the followings³ :

Adonis was a symbol in several stories. He in lamentations when they took about death. Adonis as speedy wiltht fruit when they stated the youth. He was symbol of sacrifice when the virgins cried their miserable love. He was symbol of treachery when Aphrodite failed to protect him.



Fig (1) Flowers and Adonis Gardens

³ S., KLUGE , Adonis at the Crossroads: Two (Three) Early Modern Versions of the Venus and Adonis Myth., MLN, vol 129, n. 5, John Hopkins University Press, p. 1151.

³ S., KLUGE , Adonis at the Crossroads: Two (Three) Early Modern Versions of the Venus and Adonis Myth., MLN, vol 129, n. 5, John Hopkins University Press, p. 1152.

³ D. REED, *Ibid.*, p. 338.

³ . D. REED, "The Sexuality of Adonis", in *Classical Antiquity*, Vol. 14 no. 2, p. 323-4, California Press, 1995.

https://www.gardenvisit.com/uploads/image/image/223/2235/tem8074seg181_original.jpg
accessed in 2nd of March



Fig (2) Marble Statue of Adonis in Phonicia

https://ar.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D8%A3%D8%AF%D9%88%D9%86%D9%8A%D8%B3#/media/%D9%85%D9%84%D9%81:Adonis_Mazarin_Louvre_MR239.jpg accessed in 2nd of Mars 2023.



Fig (3) Venus and Adonis (1792) by [François Lemoyne](#) accessed in 2nd of March



Fig (4) The sad of Myrrha's punishment by Aphrodite

<https://www.rct.uk/sites/default/files/styles/rctr-scale-1300-500/public/collection-online/5/c/124294-1292716289.jpg?itok=rbRSb-tb>, accessed in 2nd of March.



Fig (5) Adonis and the Wild Boar

<https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/7/77/Giuseppe-Mazzuoli-The-Death-of-Adonis-hermitag.jpg/800px-Giuseppe-Mazzuoli-The-Death-of-Adonis-hermitag.jpg> accessed in 2nd of March



Fig (5) Adonis Story in Greek Mythology

Attic [red-figure aryballo](#) painting by Aison (c. 410 BC) showing Adonis consorting with [Aphrodite](#) accessed in 2nd of March



Fig (6) The birth of Adonis from myrrh tree.

<https://www.rct.uk/sites/default/files/styles/rctr-scale-1300-500/public/collection-online/5/c/124294-1292716289.jpg?itok=rbRSb-tb> accessed in 2nd of March



Fig (7) The punishment as myrrh tree

<https://www.alamy.com/adonis-being-born-from-myrtha-image352798755.html?imageid=0B2EE92A-3F55-4FA7-94EA-9C5C737D7468&p=471895&pn=1&searchId=cadf441e32d7c5a8ffdc90608df99cfa&searchtype=0> accessed in 2nd of March

الاله ادونيس

دردينة محمد شديد

ملخص عربي:

الاله ادونيس او المعبود ادونيس هو نتاج علاقة غير شرعية بين الملك الاب وابنته والتي استغلّت غياب ابيها عن الوعي بسبب النيبذ لمدة ١٢ يوم بمناسبة الاعياد المقامة في تلك الفترة والتي يحتفل فيها الاناث الغير مرتبطين بطريقة مختلفة تعبيراً عن حزنهم على وحدثهم . استغلّت الفتاة ذلك ونتج عن هذه الليالي هذا المعبود والذي احتار العديد من الاشخاص في كونه عقاب ام لا وخصوصاً بعد ما طرد الاب ابنته وقامت الالهة بتحويلها لشجرة المر وذلك لتكون عبرة لمن لا يعتبر. يتناول البحث الطرق المختلفة التي يحتفل بها الاشخاص باعياد ادونيس والاماكن التي تقام فيها هذه الاحتفالات, بالإضافة الى النباتات السريعة في النمو والتي زرعت خصيصاً للاحتفال بهذا اليوم. وتضاربت ردود افعال الاله والالهات ما بين مؤيدين ومعارضين لهذا المعبود وبالاخص بين الاله افروديت وبيرسيفون والاتي كانوا دائمي الصراع على هذا الشاب لوسامته الزائدة ورقية في التعامل. ولكن كان مقدر لهذا المعبود بانه يموت موتة بشعة وذلك باختراق بطنه بواسطة قرني الخنزير البري لينتهي ادونيس تماماً ولتبدأ الاعياد والاحتفالات والحدائق لمؤيدي هذا المعبود.

كلمات دالة: الاسم الحقيقي- الاساطير المختلفة- حدائق ادونيس- وفاته