



Dionysus: Myth and Cult

Walter F. Otto , Robert B. Palmer (Translator)

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In this classic study of the myth and cult of Dionysus, Walter F. Otto recreates the theological world of ancient Greek religion. Otto's provocative starting point is to accept the immanent reality of the gods. To understand the cult of Dionysus, it is necessary to reimagine the original vision of the god. Otto challenges us to understand the power of this vision not as a bloodless abstraction but as a force animating belief, to see the myth and art of Dionysus as a passionate search to regain the power of the lost god.

Dionysus: Myth and Cult Details

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From Reader Review Dionysus: Myth and Cult for online ebook

Bruce Morton says

Walter Otto's study has weathered well. It remains more than forty years later a certain place to start in understanding the ancient Dionysus Cult. Important reading for someone wanting to better grasp what early Christians faced in Roman Asia.

Poppy says

This was a very enjoyable and informative book. It is broken up into easy to deal with chapters and fully cited. There is passion here behind the words written. This is not dry academic writing at all even though it is a scholarly work. I really liked this book and learned a lot from it. I highly recommend reading this if you are interested at all in Dionysus.

Laurie says

The gold-standard work for understanding the origin of Dionysus and the permutations of his myth and cult of worship. Much referenced in mythopoetic fiction, Dionysus is a complex, evolving god; one of the very first of the persecuted, suffering and dying gods of the ancient near east. Seeking a deeper background for understanding ancient near east thought which underlies some of the historical fiction and comparative mythology I enjoy, I found it here.

Darío says

At his conception the earthly was touched by the splendor of divine heaven. But in this union of the heavenly with the earthly, which is expressed in the myth of the double birth, man's tear-filled lot was not dissolved but preserved, rather, in sharp contrast to superhuman majesty. He who was born in this way is not only the exultant god, the god who brings man joy. He is the suffering and dying god, the god of tragic contrast. And the inner force of this dual reality is so great that he appears among men like a storm, he staggers them, and he tames their opposition with the whip of madness. All tradition, all order must be shattered. Life becomes suddenly an ecstasy—.

I LOVE MY MAN EATING SON.

Samuel says

Excellent introduction to Dionysus and the complexities of his cultus. If you've already read Euripides' "Bacchae," some of Otto's research and findings will be familiar to you, albeit much more contextualized and grounded in academia. If not, than read Euripides afterwards for an excellent tragedy that perfectly

encapsulates the full range of the Dionysian. It's quite a treat for 21st century readers of the play to be able to study the complex and interesting background of a greek god and then read a play wherein the full spectrum of that god's characteristics are manifested in an intriguing plot and a horrifying conclusion. It's like reading a psych book on dreams before watching "Inception," or researching Eastern religion before watching "The Matrix." It just makes the dramatic treatment much more sublime.

Rachel says

I enjoyed this book a great deal but it is not light reading. It also helps if you know something about Dionysus before you read it, as this is a scholarly work on the god and assumes you have some knowledge of him already. I learned a lot but stayed a bit confused throughout. Now that I've finished it, however, I feel I have a good context for further reading about Dionysus. If you love Greek mythology, check this one out. Dionysus is a rather unusual character, being a god of dual natures and also the god of ecstasy and madness. His female attendants are also incredibly interesting.

Nathan says

So far (a few chapters in), it seems very dense, difficult to read, and academic -- though it does contain interesting concepts, I get the feeling that I would benefit from those concepts infinitely more if I had the context of an elaborate and extensive Greek History education to connect it with. Shibboleths and topically-specific terminology are used extensively. I'll keep plugging through and see how it goes.

M.L. Rio says

An interesting read--the translation is clumsy in the places but the ideas are, for the most part, clear (except in the introductory theorizing on the ideas of myth and *cultus*, which was so confusing I don't even know what else to say about it). It's refreshing so see someone take Dionysus so seriously, as he's often dismissed as a drunken reveler and simple rustic god of wine and orgies. Otto's dissection of the deity is sometimes repetitive, but provides a solid foundation for further study. The lack of real detail is slightly disappointing, as is the lack of truly helpful footnotes. Clearly not intended for amateur classicists but still good reading for anyone with an abiding interest in the cult of Dionysus.

Terence Gallagher says

This is an extraordinary book. Prof. Otto attempts to look at Dionysus as the object of Greek religious devotion rather than simply as a functional "vegetation god" or "god of wine." He avoided the reductionist approach of many other classicists and tried to tease out the "personality" of the god and show how it manifested itself in all his attributes. The book is not without flaws, (sometimes the reader is not sure whether Prof. Otto is describing genuine ancient Greek beliefs or his own!), but the attempt is so audacious and enlightening I had to give it five stars.

Wilson Décembre says

A "must read" for people interested in the subject.

Callie says

Well, you see.... puthhhhhhhhhh, grecian mythology has always been my cup of tea. In fact I had a good friend named Gretchen who I was rather fond of, and Gretchen and grecian are reather close in sound, but thats beside the rather obvious stupendously stupid point. This book is clearly only read by people who were once smart people, and may perhaps retain some of their previous knowledge, but are now currently alcoholics.

As such:

[click here](#) for enlightenment on why I see things the way I do . You see, smeagol has really changed the way I live my life. Now, why would I bring smeagol into this? Well, you see, smeagol was in fact a heavy drinker, and had quite the relationship with dionysus, but in the end, smeagol was able to escape the evil clutches of that horrid "god" or "oafman" that meeee had bad thoughts of dionysus. I heard it through the grape vine that dionysus, who had a beard, that he was talking innapropriately asbout my freinds and it really hurt me deep down in my soul core because he was really j`usta total jerk ande he made me soo mad! cna i just dscream right now! I am siucik of typeing and not re3alizing it i am not even lookiung at what i M typing so who knowswhat the heck I am wrightng!

LOVE WITH HATE!

CALAMANDA
