



Earthly Paradises: Ancient Gardens in History and Archaeology

Maureen Carroll

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In this beautifully illustrated book, Maureen Carroll examines the most recent evidence of the existence of ancient gardens, the horticultural practices used to plant and maintain them, and the many forms and functions they assumed. Surveying the ancient Near East, Egypt, Greece, Italy, and the provinces of the Roman Empire from the second millennium B.C. to the middle of the first millennium A.D., Carroll finds that whether grown as sources of food, symbols of wealth and prestige, or dwellings for the gods, the cultivation of gardens played an integral role in both the public and private spheres of the ancient world. She concludes with a chapter on the survival of ancient gardening traditions in the Islamic and Byzantine worlds and the ways in which gardens have figured in these cultures' perceptions and depictions of paradise. Culling evidence from a wide variety of archaeological, textual, and pictorial sources, and illustrated with delightful images from tomb and wall paintings, sculptural reliefs, manuscripts, and reconstructions, Carroll provides fascinating insights into the earthly paradises of antiquity.

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