

**Hera's Lettuce**  
**Women and the Peculiar Uses of Flowers,**  
**Fruit and Vegetables in Ancient Greek**  
**Festivals for Women**

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*For Rob and his companion, Kym.*

## **Declaration and signed statement**

I, ....., certify that this thesis has not been submitted for a higher degree to any other university or institution.

Date: 10th October, 2014



## **Thesis summary**

This research project investigates the uses of particular agricultural and floral products in three women-only festivals of ancient Greece. These festivals are the Adonia, the Thesmophoria and the Anthesphoria. From the practice of these festivals, this thesis ascertains that knowledge can be drawn together about ancient herbal medicine for women, society and religion that directly relates to the lives of ancient Greek women. This study draws upon ancient understandings of ancient physiology predominantly within ancient textual evidence and discusses these understandings in the context of the religious roles that women held. These roles evidence female agency within their social and religious contexts.



## Table of Contents

Declaration and signed statement .....	iii
Thesis summary .....	v
Table of Contents .....	vii
List of Abbreviations .....	ix
Acknowledgements .....	xiii
<b>Chapter 1. Introduction .....</b>	<b>1</b>
Where art thou, lettuce? .....	1
The search and study of women in antiquity .....	2
Part A: The literature .....	5
Part B: Methodology .....	11
Data Collection .....	11
Conceptual Framework .....	12
Thesis overview .....	16
<b>Chapter 2. The pot-herbs of the Adonia .....</b>	<b>19</b>
Introduction .....	19
Aphrodite and Adonis: love, life and death .....	23
The ‘Gardens of Adonis’ .....	26
Lettuce (θρίδαξ/lactuca) .....	27
Fennel (μάραθὸν/ ἱππομάραθον / μάραθον/ feniculum/ marathum) .....	31
Aphrodite, Adonis, lettuce and fennel: an alternative to sex, death and the male viewpoint .....	32
<b>Chapter 3. Nature’s remedies in the Thesmophoria .....</b>	<b>37</b>
Introduction .....	37
Demeter’s itinerary: the natural products of the Thesmophoria .....	41
Wheat (πυρὸς / σῖτος / frumentum / triticum) .....	42
Barley (κριθή/ hordeum) .....	43
Sesame (σήσαμον/ σησάμη/ σησαμῖς/ sesamum) .....	44
Garlic (σκόροδον/ ἑλαφόσκορδον/ ἀφρόσκορδον/ alium) .....	45
Figs (σύκον/σύκη/ ficus) .....	46
Poppy and poppy seeds (μήκων/ μήκων ἡμερος/ μήκων ἀγρία/ papaver/ papaver rhoeas) .....	47
Honey (μέλι/ mel) and wine (οἶνος/ vinum) .....	49
Vitex (ἄγνος/λύγος/ἄγιος/ ἄγονον/agnus-castus/ ‘chaste tree’) .....	51
οἱ θεσμοί: the instructions of Demeter to her wives .....	52
<b>Chapter 4. Flower power in the Anthesphoria .....</b>	<b>59</b>
Introduction .....	59
The flowery goddesses: Kore, Aphrodite, Demeter and Hera .....	61
The medicinal and herbal uses of flowers .....	64
Crocus (κρόκος/crocus gargaricus/crocus sativus/ crocus cartwrightianus) .....	65
Iris (Ἴρις/ iris/ gladiolus) .....	66
Hyacinth (ὕακινθος/ hyacinthus) .....	66
Rose (ρόδον/ rosa) .....	67
Lily (λείριον/ κρίνον/ lilium) .....	68
Narcissus (Νάρκισσος/ narcissus) .....	69

Women, their bodies and the symbolism of flowers.....	70
<b>Chapter 5. Conclusions.....</b>	<b>77</b>
<b>Bibliography .....</b>	<b>81</b>
SOL references.....	81
Ancient (literary).....	81
Ancient (non-literary) .....	88
Modern .....	89



## List of Abbreviations

All translations are from the Loeb Classical Library identified by a publication date. The texts not of the Loeb collection are otherwise stated. Most abbreviations are those of Liddell and Scott-Jones (2009), except for Theano, Theognis and Soranus. Those that are not listed in Liddell and Scott-Jones I have designed. The full bibliographical details of each work can be found in the bibliography.

Ael.= Aelian	<i>NA. (De Natura Animalium)</i> (1959)
Aeschin.= Aeschines	<i>(De Falsa Legatione)</i> (1919).
Aeschylus	<i>Pr. (Prometheus Vincitus)</i> (1926).
Aët.= Aëtios	<i>Gyn. (The Gynaecology and Obstetrics of the VIth Century, A.D.), Ricci, 1950.</i>
Ana.= Anacreon	<i>Anacroeontea</i> (1988).
Apollod. = Apollodorus	<i>Bibliotheca</i> (1921).
Ar.= Aristophanes	<i>Av. (Aves)</i> (1938).
	<i>Ec. (Ecclesiazusae,)</i> (1938).
	<i>Lys. (Lysistrata)</i> (2000).
	<i>Th. (Thesmophoriazusae)</i> (1938).
A.R.= Apollonius Rhodius	<i>Argonautica</i> (1912).
Aret. = Aretaeus	<i>CD. (De Curatione Diuturnorum Morborum, χρονίων νούσων θεραπευτικόν)</i> (1972).
Arist.= Aristotle	<i>HA. (Historia Animalium), Gould, 2008.</i>
Ath. = Athenaeus	<i>Deipnosophistae</i> (1854).
B. = Bacchylides	<i>Dith. (Dithrambs, Dithramb 3, Ode 17)</i> (1991).
Bion= Bion	<i>Idyll I (The Greek Bucolic Poets)</i> (1912).
Call. = Callimachus	<i>Cer. (Hymnus in Cererem)</i> (1968).
Catull.= Catullus	<i>Carmina</i> (1894).
Cic.= Cicero	<i>Ver. (Orationes Verrinae)</i> (1903).
Clem.Al.= Clemens Alexandrinus	<i>Protr. (Protrepticus)</i> (1919).
Conti= Natale Conti (Natale Comes)	<i>Mythologiae, Mulryan and Brown, 2006.</i>
Cypr.= Cypria	<i>Hesiod: The Homeric Hymns and Homeric</i> (1959)
D. = Demosthenes	<i>Cor. (De Corona)</i> (1926).
	<i>Neaer. (In Neaeram)</i> (1949).
D.L.= Diogenes Laertius	<i>Vitae et sententiae eorum qui in philosophia probati fuerun</i> (1972).

D.S. = Diodorus Siculus	<i>Bibliothecae Historicae</i> (1939).
Diosc. = Dioscorides (Epigrammaticus)	<i>Anthologia Graeca</i> (1920).
Dsc. = Dioscorides (Pendanius)	<i>De Materia Medica</i> , Osbaldeston, 2000.
E. = Euripides	<i>Ion</i> (1938).
	<i>Melanipp. Capt. (Melanippe Captiva)</i> (1959).
Gal. = Galen	<i>Nat.Fac. (De Naturalibus Facultatibus, περὶ φυσικῶν δυνάμεων)</i> (1916).
	<i>UP (De Usu Partium)</i> Lefkowitz and Fant, 1982.
Hdt. = Herodotus	<i>Historie</i> (1920).
	<i>Histories</i> , Rawlinson, 1996.
Hes. = Hesiod	<i>Op. (Opera et Dies)</i> (1959).
	<i>Th. (Theogonia)</i> (1959).
Hesych.= Hesychius	s.v. ( <i>Lexicon</i> ), Schmidt, 1965 reprint of 1858 edition.
Hp. = Hippocrates	<i>Ep. (Epidemiae, ἐπιδημῖαι)</i> (1994).
	<i>Mul. (De Mulierum Affectibus, γυναικεῖα)</i> , in Whiteley, 2003.
	<i>Nat.Puer. (De Natura Pueri, περὶ φύσιος παιδίου)</i> Lefkowitz and Fant, 2005.
	<i>Vet.med. (De Vetere Medicina)</i> (1957).
Hom.= Homer	<i>Il. (Ilias)</i> (1924).
	<i>Od. (Odyssea)</i> (1919).
h.Hom. = Hymni Homerici	2 ( <i>hymnus ad Cererem</i> ) (1914); Cashford, 2003.
	5, 6 ( <i>hymnus ad Venerem</i> 5 and 6) (1914); Cashford, 2003.
Is. = Isaeus	<i>Philo. (Philoctemon)</i> (1962).
	<i>Pyr. (Pyrrhus)</i> (1962).
Isoc. = Isocrates	<i>Pan. (Panegyricus)</i> , Warrior, 2009.
Lys. = Lysias	<i>On the Murder of Erastosthenes (ὕπὲρ τοῦ Ἐρατοσθένους φόνου ἀπολογία)</i> (1930).
Mel. = Meleager	<i>Anthologia Graeca</i> (1920).
Men. = Menander	<i>Dys. (Δύσκολος)</i> Ireland, 1995.
	<i>Sam. (Σαμία, The Girl from Samos)</i> , Sommerstein, 2013.
Mythog. Vat. = Vatican Mythographers	Latin: Mai, 1831.
	English translation: Pepin, 2008.

Noss. = Nossis	<i>Poems</i> , Plant, 2004.
Orphic fr. 52 Kern	MacLachlan, 2012.
Ov. = Ovid	<i>Fast.</i> ( <i>Fasti</i> ) (1933).
	<i>Met.</i> ( <i>Metamorphoses</i> ) (1922).
Paus. = Pausanias	<i>Graeciae Descriptio</i> (1918).
Phot. = Photius	<i>Lexicon</i> , Theodoridis (ed.), 1982.
Pi. = Pindar	<i>N.</i> ( <i>Nemean Odes</i> ) (1947).
Pl. = Plato	<i>Phdr.</i> ( <i>Phaedrus</i> ) (1925).
Plaut. = Plautus	<i>Pseudolous</i> , O'Bryhim, 2007.
Plin.= Pliny	<i>HN</i> ( <i>Historia Naturalis</i> )
Plu. = Plutarch	<i>Alc.</i> ( <i>Alcibiades</i> ) (1875).
	<i>Cat.Mi.</i> ( <i>Cato Minor</i> ) (1919).
	<i>De Iside</i> ( <i>De Iside et Osiride</i> ) (1874).
	<i>De.Soll.</i> ( <i>De Sollertia Animalium</i> ) (1957).
	<i>Quaes.Gr.</i> ( <i>Quaestiones Graecae</i> ) (1936).
Poll.= Julius Pollux	<i>Onomasticon, Thesaurus Linguae Graecae</i> , 2001.
	1 ( <i>Hymn to Adonis</i> ), Plant, 2004.
Praxill. = Praxilla	<i>Astronomica</i> , Condos, 1997.
Pseudo-Hyginus	<i>Fragments</i> , Plant, 2004.
Sapph. = Sappho	<i>Th.</i> ( <i>Thesmophoriazusae</i> ), Dillon, 2002.
Schol.Ar.= Scholion on Aristophanes	<i>Dialogi Meretricii</i> ii.1, Lowe, 2005.
Schol.Luc. = Scholion on Lucian	<i>Gyn.</i> ( <i>Gynaecia, Gynaecology</i> ), Temkin, 1956.
Sor. = Soranus	<i>Geographica</i> (1924).
Str.= Strabo	SOL ( <i>Suda On Line</i> ): <i>alpha</i> ,517, Benedict, 2012; <i>alpha</i> ,2504, Benedict, 2000; <i>alpha</i> ,2513, Benedict, 2000; <i>alpha</i> 2518, Benedict, 2000; <i>delta</i> ,448, Widstrand; <i>lambda</i> ,364, Whitehead, 2009; <i>mu</i> ,1172, Helms, 2009; <i>pi</i> 1934, Whitehead, 2003; <i>theta</i> ,272, Doukas, 2007; <i>zeta</i> ,12, Wilshire, 2003.
<i>Suda</i> = <i>Suidas</i>	<i>Ep.ad.Call.</i> ( <i>Letter to Callisto</i> 12), Plant, 2004.
Thea. = Theano	2, 15 ( <i>Idyll 2 and 15 in The Greek Bucolic Poets</i> ) (1912).
Theoc. = Theocritus	<i>Fragment 1.1381</i> (in <i>Greek Elegiac Poetry: From the Seventh to the Fifth Centuries B.C.</i> ) (1999).
Thgn.= Theognis	

Thphr. = Theophrastus

Verg.= Vergil

Xen.= Xenophon

*HP (Historia Planatarum)* (1916).

*Ecl. (Ecologues)* (1895).

*Cyr. (Cyropaedia)* (1914).

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# **Chapter 1.**

## **Introduction**

### **Where art thou, lettuce?**

The parthenogenesis of Hebe was one of the most interesting and difficult searches involved in the research of this topic and is reflected in the title. The jumbled myth remembers that goddess Hera conceived her daughter, Hebe, through either the contact or consumption of lettuce, without sexual intercourse with her husband, Zeus. Modern scholars, Byzantine and Renaissance historians alike have retold this fantastic tale. One tradition of the mythological tale echoed many times is that Hebe is the daughter of both Zeus and Hera – Jupiter and Juno in Roman myth; while the other, ever-elusive, account states that Hera conceived Hebe through the consumption of a lettuce leaf. Marcel Detienne has confidently argued that Hera achieved this with the help of Flora<sup>1</sup> and had to only touch the lettuce, a reference he apparently found in Ovid.<sup>2</sup> Following my careful reading, no such reference occurs in Ovid. Likewise, Sally Humphreys states that Hera bore Hebe without sexual intercourse with Zeus, with the help of lettuce and Flora.<sup>3</sup> This statement of Humphrey's remains unreferenced and unsupported in the ancient evidence.

There are two later mythographers who point to the lettuce-aided conception of Hebe, namely Natale Conti and the First Vatican Mythographer. Natale Conti, a mythographer who lived in fifteenth to sixteenth centuries A.D., states that: "Others recalled a more bizarre account of Hebe's birth, which occurred when Apollo invited Juno [Hera] to a banquet at Jupiter's house". The miraculous conception occurred when Juno ate field lettuce, the child she would eventually give birth to was Hebe.<sup>4</sup> There is no indication in Conti of who these "others" might be.

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<sup>1</sup> Flora is also called Chloris in Ovid.

<sup>2</sup> Marcel Detienne acknowledges that the tale of Hebe's lettuce conception has been transmitted via "the genealogical jumble of the mythographers", though his footnote to this statement is a dead-end because his reference leads to Ov. *Fast.* I. 204, which says nothing of mythographers, Hebe, or lettuce. See Detienne, 2003, 52, 168, footnote 9. In the French edition, the footnote for this point instead references Mythog. Vat. 1.204.

<sup>3</sup> Humphreys, 1993, 44.

<sup>4</sup> Conti, 121. Another unknown or unheard of fact that Conti conveys is that, prior to Hebe's conception, Hera had "always been barren".

The First Vatican Mythographer could have been an unnamed source for Conti's entry, though there is much discussion surrounding the period in which this mythographer wrote and lived. Pepin, in agreement with Elliott and Elder, and Zorzetti, hypothesises that the first mythographer's record can be widely dated between the ninth and eleventh centuries A.D. suggested by a traceable source dated to this same period.<sup>5</sup> The work of this author has survived in only one manuscript. The point of interest in this author's work is located in book three: "Juno gave birth to Hebe from Jupiter; some have as an alternative from a lettuce".<sup>6</sup> The sources on which this author relied are unreferenced, and remain unknown.

Detienne's reference in Ovid cannot be found and Conti's and the First mythographer's sources remain un-named. The account of Hebe's lettuce conception can only be traced to the ninth to eleventh centuries A.D. The significance of the distant echoes of Hebe's miraculous birth is tripartite: firstly it draws a connection between goddess Hera and vegetation; secondly it reveals an ancient belief in the positive, regenerative qualities of lettuce associated with women, which is similar to the ancient Egyptian view of lettuce in connection with the Egyptian god Min;<sup>7</sup> thirdly it communicates tangible links between the qualities of lettuce attested in ancient medical texts and ancient Greek festivals for women. Although the original source remains undiscovered, the fact that this fantastic tale was repeated in later mythographies demonstrates the continuation of various ideologies connected with lettuce and natural products more widely.

### **The search and study of women in antiquity**

Historians with an interest in the women of antiquity have questioned the whereabouts of women in world histories and the kinds of lives and experiences that these past women have lived. Historians have also scrutinised the evidence for possible traces of the women from the

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<sup>5</sup> Pepin, 2008, 6. The hypothesised date is between 875-1075 A.D.

<sup>6</sup> Pepin, 2008, 87. The Latin is Mai's edition: Mai, 1831, and reads: "*Eben genuit Iuno de Ioue, secundum quosdam de lactuca*".

<sup>7</sup> Moens, 1985, 67. It is interesting to note that in a New Kingdom text the god Seth eats some lettuce that Horus has ejaculated on and becomes pregnant (p.69). The use of the natural products and the importance of these products for mankind is highlighted in the below citation of Pliny, who is reflecting upon one of his chapters in *Naturalis Historia*: "Nature and our earth might have filled the measure of our wonder at them in anyone who reviews even the preceding volume only, with all Nature's gifts in it, and all the kinds of plants created for the needs or pleasures of mankind." Plin. *HN* 22.1.



remains of ancient societies. Inspired by such questions and investigations, my study investigates an aspect of Greek religion, namely festivals, and brings the women's studies into a particular historical context. The aims of this study that identify with women's studies include: to investigate female experience; to understand the complex positions women held within ancient Greek society as conveyed in the ancient evidence; to further current understandings of ancient perceptions about women and female physiology; to draw definitive conclusions about female agency in Greek religion. The angle that this project takes is to investigate women as agents for themselves, whose actions reflect thought and knowledge.

Women's agency, as stated above, is one of the central areas of this study. As will be discussed in the following chapters, ancient women's agency is demonstrated in the ways that women are learning and instructing one another in the ways of '*oikonomia*', female physiology and the treatment of ailments believed to be specific to the female body. By way of introduction, the following three examples from Theano, Euripides and Aristophanes illustrate three of the major points regarding this research: the text attributed to Theano communicates the importance of education and instruction passed on from woman to woman; Euripides' statement can be taken as evidence for the significance of female religious service; Aristophanes' example relates to challenging the images of the secluded Greek woman. The writings of Theano are texts attributed to a woman of the sixth century B.C., some of which survive from the fourth to third centuries B.C. Even though they are pseudonymous, these texts reflect the sentiments and attitudes that women were expected to hold:<sup>8</sup>

Authority to rule the household is granted by the law to you younger women as soon as you are married, but instruction is needed in everything about household management from older women, who always offer advice.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>The texts are attributed to Theano, though there is much discussion about the authenticity of these letters. Despite this issue of authorship the text still conveys an important message about women's responsibilities and agency. See Plant, 2004, for an interesting discussion of the authenticity of these letters.

<sup>9</sup> Thea. *Ep.ad.Call.*

In Euripides' *Melanippe Captive*, though the playwright is delivering this statement with humour, through the management and purification of the household women are justified and capable in their religious actions and service:

...they [women] are better than men, and I will prove it. . . . They manage the home and guard within the house the sea-borne wares. No household is clean or prosperous if the wife is absent. And in religion- highest I judge this claim- we play the greatest part. In the oracles of Phoebus, women expound Apollo's will; and at the holy seat of Dodona, beside the sacred oak, woman conveys the will of Zeus to all Greeks who may desire it. As for the holy rites performed for the Fates and the Nameless Goddesses- they are not holy in the hands of men; among women they flourish all. So righteous is woman's part in holy service.<sup>10</sup>

A character in Aristophanes' *Thesmophoriazusae* refers to her need to return to the market to continue weaving her chaplets, having "twenty to deliver yet".<sup>11</sup> Whilst this character is likely fictional, her work situation is likely authentic, and evidences women working in a public space. As she must also deliver her products, presumably to customers, this is proof that women's work existed outside of the home.<sup>12</sup>

Far removed from the oppressed and secluded dependants that some ancient and modern arguments would claim, these three examples present images of capable, leading and decisive women, entrusted with the complete management of the household and pious service of the gods. The third example refers to women who earn an income through work that occurs outside of the home. Specifically, it is the area of religious service that this thesis will expand upon. As these women are entrusted completely, once they are married, with the management of their husbands' households and with earning an income for other women, this thesis will argue that this is reason enough to suggest that this management and leadership capacity extended to their religious lives, especially within women-only festivals.

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<sup>10</sup> E. *Melanipp. Capt.* 13a.

<sup>11</sup> Ar. *Th.* 443.

<sup>12</sup> See chapter four of this thesis for the significance of woven floral chaplets and wreaths.

## Part A: The literature

The study of Greek religion in the past century alone reveals a number of trends. These include: the level and medium of participation of certain groups of people from a society, city or deme in religion; the kinds of rituals and/or festivals within Greek religion; the relationship between religion and mythology. With the influence of feminist and gendered theories and frameworks, as well as the growing interest in the women of ancient Greece, the examination of ancient Greek religion has led to an emphasis on women's experience, participation, and the influence of the female in religious practice, the economy and society. The focal areas of this thesis's research align with a number of general areas evident in the study of ancient cultures, specifically that of ancient Greece: religious practice, society and culture, women and ancient herbal medicine.

Religion and the methodologies of its practice and regulations reinforce our perception of important information including the structures of a society, as well as the cultural stereotypes and images of gender.<sup>13</sup> Many of the festivals discussed in modern scholarship reveal the patriarchal system and organisation of Ancient Greece. In some ways, ancient Greek religious celebrations present the socially constructed differences between the men and women and the expectations of that society for them. Religious practice reveals these constructions, but also evidences the participants interacting with and discussing the roles that these differences entail.<sup>14</sup> Festivals present a valuable opportunity to scrutinise complex social interactions and structures. There are a number of festivals that involve women and girls specifically, including the Chthonia, Brauronia, Panathenaia, Thesmophoria, Adonia, Anthesphoria and Skira or Skiraphoria. The festivals that will be addressed in this study are the Thesmophoria, the Adonia and the Anthesphoria. Within the studies of the Thesmophoria and Adonia especially, a number of scholarly trends are evident: an emphasis on female experience and participation; the often constructed links between the prosperity of the *polis*, women's fertility and women's religious festivals; the interest in ancient herbal medicine; the interdependent relationship between myth and religious practice as current in the evidence of the festivals. The interactions between these different areas of interest have been expressed in a variety of interpretations.

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<sup>13</sup> See for example MacLachlan, 2011, 176-186.

<sup>14</sup> Foxhall, 1995, 102.

Scholarly interest in women's festivals has experienced a boom in the last thirty to forty years, with the Thesmophoria and the Adonia among the most popular subjects. The interest in these festivals centres on: their female-only participation; their widespread, annual practice; the relationship between myth and ritual.<sup>15</sup> Within women's religious history, women are situated in interesting positions. In some ways the religious sphere demonstrates the agency of ancient women and the influence they have as a group within a society. In other ways festivals are also interpreted as a society's attempts to control or mitigate women. For example, Marcel Detienne argues that such a position evidences a contradiction. Detienne cannot understand how a particular group in society are marginalised within a culture and are simultaneously charged with the "determining role in the reproduction of the entire system".<sup>16</sup> However, this contradiction may not have been perceived in the ancient culture.

Similarly, Barbara Goff finds women's ritual performance as exceptional, as their normal and "desirable" place of seclusion is somehow modified or adapted in the ritual context.<sup>17</sup> To accept Goff's view would be damaging to the study of women, particularly to those who stood outside the idealised and secluded norm. It would ignore women such as prostitutes, slaves and metics who participated in festivals such as the Adonia. This would then result in devaluing important evidence regarding their religious participation. Accepting Goff's argument would also further enforce the stereotype of the secluded, oppressed and agentless Greek woman, which then ignores other important evidence suggesting otherwise. This thesis will argue that women's participation and leadership in religious festivals should not be understood as an exception or a momentarily changed state. Rather, these instances should illustrate that women did have positions of authority that were important for the polis, particularly within the ritual sphere, and the female community which in no way transgressed socially accepted rules for women. As Sally Humphreys argues, "they [women] had their own parallel positions".<sup>18</sup>

Women's behaviour in religion and ritual has also been of particular interest to scholarship. The societal expectations of how women are meant to behave and how they actually behaved

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<sup>15</sup> A number of works that evidence this interest include: Dillon, 2002; Goff, 2004; Nilsson, 1998; Simon, 1983; Suter, 2002.

<sup>16</sup> Detienne, 1989, 129.

<sup>17</sup> Goff, 2004, 48.

<sup>18</sup> Humphreys, 1993, xxiii.

are hotly debated subjects. For example, were women allowed to perform sacrifices in their own festivals? Or, were they meant to employ a male who could temporarily enter their sacred space? For scholars including Marcel Detienne, Jean-Pierre Vernant and Walter Burkert, women were not meant to wield sacrificial knives and weapons according to society's customs, even though they did. The women who perform blood sacrifices in the Thesmophoria have been labelled as "occupied with blood" and are seen as dangerous women acting out their frustrations against society by slaughtering the men who approach them during the festival. According scholars who take this line, the wielding of sacrificial weapons by women demonstrates as an inversion of the social and religious roles of men and women, the results of this inversion are overwhelming negative.<sup>19</sup>

In comparison to the views of Detienne, Vernant and Burkert, Dillon views the women's performance of the blood sacrifice in the Thesmophoria as an important facet to women's ritual participation. Although it was not a common action for women and the ancient opinions of these women are not favourable, these points should not rule out the fact that women did perform the sacrifice in their festival.<sup>20</sup> The actions of these women demonstrate an understanding that the needs of the festival relating to sacrifice are superior to the opinions of their culture. Women's agency and action are not necessarily impossible within a more secluded position of a patriarchal society. As David Kinsley makes clear in his publication about ancient goddesses, the existence of powerful goddesses does not necessitate a matriarchal, or female-dominated, culture. Rather, from the extant ancient sources, powerful goddesses were still central to the religious practices of certain patriarchal cultures.<sup>21</sup> Similarly, this thesis argues that even within the patriarchal culture of Classical Greece female agency and action are evident. Particularly, this topic is interested in the ways in which women develop and demonstrate agency within the religious context that relates to other important areas of their lives.

One of the most popular and common interpretations in modern scholarship has been the perceived correlation between the Thesmophoria and the success and prosperity of the state in

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<sup>19</sup> Detienne and Vernant, 1989; Burkert, 1985.

<sup>20</sup> Dillon illustrates this point precisely, wherein he argues that women slayers of animals in sacrifice for the Thesmophoria should not be regarded as exceptions or aberrations. Rather, they are slayers in their own rights during this women-only festival. See Dillon, 2002, 115.

<sup>21</sup> Kinsley, 1989, xi-xii.

agricultural production and human reproduction. Women's fertility has been argued to mirror agricultural and seasonal fertility; certain women's festivals are understood to ensure the success of women's fertility through which seasonal and agricultural prosperity are also delivered. Lin Foxhall has convincingly argued that the agriculture/women's fertility/seasonal fertility "matrix" is problematic. It has stood as "The Explanation" for the practice of these women's festivals,<sup>22</sup> which has limited the reception of other interpretations of the significance of women's festivals. It is interesting to note that Robert Parker adapts this matrix in his interpretation of the Thesmophoria in Athens.<sup>23</sup>

As Eva Stehle notes, Robert Parker and Barbara Goff assume the 'female fertility-agricultural prosperity' angle in order that their interpretations bear weight. This is problematic because this view is relatively unsupported in the ancient evidence.<sup>24</sup> In order to avoid further infringement of this "matrix" in the research regarding the Thesmophoria, this project will rather present the Thesmophoria as a process through which women gained knowledge regarding their own bodies and how natural products were believed to aid this process. Through this process, women were empowered and equipped with knowledge that would encourage female agency and self-help.<sup>25</sup>

There is also scholarly interest evident within modern studies of ancient festivals towards the uses and meaning of the herbs, plants and natural products used within these festivals. Marcel Detienne's research pertains to this area of study within ancient religious festivals. Although Detienne's interpretations are problematic for a number of reasons, his theses of the 1970's and 1980's sparked a revived interest in the study of vegetables, plants and spices in the ancient world,<sup>26</sup> and pay particular attention to their uses and appearance in cult, myth and

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<sup>22</sup> Foxhall, 1995, 97.

<sup>23</sup> Parker argues that the festival can be interpreted into three propositions regarding its practise and importance: firstly agricultural fertility; secondly female fertility; thirdly that this festival aided citizen women to substantiate their social status. In his analysis, the first proposition relies on the second, and the third explains the festival's exclusive nature of participation. As summarised in Stehle, 2012, 193.

<sup>24</sup> Stehle, 2012, 196.

<sup>25</sup> It should be noted that, as is evident in Stehle's discussion, this project also does not entirely dispute the view that women's lives were more constrained than men's in Classical Greece. See Stehle, 2012, 196.

<sup>26</sup> Detienne, 1977.

religious practice.<sup>27</sup> As festivals are part of religious practice as well, his research has had serious implications for historians studying festivals, including the Adonia and Thesmophoria. Particularly, Detienne's androcentric attitudes expressed in his publication *The Gardens of Adonis* surrounding the understanding of the Adonia have permeated through much of the recent scholarship to the detriment of uncovering the relationship between plants and their uses by women within Greek festivals.<sup>28</sup> Detienne's interpretation concerning the use and significance of lettuce for women does not account for the positive associations of this vegetable in relation to women. His interpretation reflects the negative perceptions of lettuce for men's health, which have been assumed to apply equally to women. Detienne's prevailing interpretation of the roles and uses of lettuce in the Adonia has not yet been countered in modern scholarship; rather, the publications of John J. Winkler and Robert Parker in the following decades have, to some degree, adopted Detienne's interpretations.<sup>29</sup>

Other scholars who have made important contributions to the study of flowers and plant lore include the general reader by H. Baumann *Greek Wild Flowers and Plant Lore*.<sup>30</sup> Though Baumann has received criticism for the limited knowledge his book imparts about antiquity, as it is very general,<sup>31</sup> the book does encourage those interested in the ancient natural world to read further. It is also presented in an interesting way using the Greek mythology and colourful illustrations and images to attract the reader. Peter Bernhardt's *Gods and Goddesses* provides an interesting method of analysis for plant species and their classification. Through Bernhardt's work, it is fascinating to perceive the continuity of mankind's intrigue and interaction with the natural world. Bernhardt demonstrates that previous biologists and botanists were inspired by the Graeco-Roman world as the scientific names for plants are often derived from ancient mythological characters.<sup>32</sup>

The research of Lucia Nixon has improved matters substantially for historians interested in plants and their uses in ancient festivals. Nixon's contribution is a thorough re-analysis of the Thesmophoria that re-focuses on women's issues and speaks of female power over their

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<sup>27</sup> Detienne, and Vernant, 1989; Detienne, 2003.

<sup>28</sup> Detienne, 1977.

<sup>29</sup> Winkler, 1990; Parker, 2005.

<sup>30</sup> Baumann, 1993.

<sup>31</sup> Henderson, 1993, 241-242.

<sup>32</sup> Bernhardt, 2008.

bodies. Nixon's analysis comprises the scrutiny of archaeological and literary evidence that has preserved information about the Thesmophoria, women and the plants used in the festival.<sup>33</sup> The most relevant aspect of her analysis for this project is her challenging and revolutionary suggestion regarding the purpose of the festival and the uses of the plants. Much previous scholarship has argued that the purpose of the Thesmophoria was to ensure women's fertility, which would then influence agricultural fertility and the state's prosperity and continuation. Nixon, in comparison, has argued that the natural products used by women in this festival were believed to be contraceptives. These products would allow women to control their reproduction, rather than promote fertility.<sup>34</sup> Not only does Nixon's research encourage the re-analysis of women's festivals, but also her research helps uncover women's agency, developed through festival performance.

Whilst the Thesmophoria and Adonia have been well studied in scholarship, the Anthesphoria has been neglected. From the limited evidence available, the Anthesphoria festival is understood as a women's flower festival that was held in spring and was particularly connected with practice in Sicily. Since the dictionary entries of Harry Thurston Peck<sup>35</sup> and William Smith,<sup>36</sup> which have restricted the festival's practice and importance, the few recent mentions have done little to build upon the original interpretation. L. B. Lawler has tentatively suggested that there may have been women's dance in the performance of this festival. However, Lawler does not expand further on the idea.<sup>37</sup> It is also interesting to note that the entry in *Brill's New Pauly: Encyclopaedia of the Ancient World* does not even explain the very basic, but instead reads, "See DEMETER".<sup>38</sup> Other modern references to the information about the festival link the festival to Demeter, Kore, Aphrodite and Hera and the

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<sup>33</sup> Nixon, 1995, 75-96.

<sup>34</sup> Nixon, 1995, 87-88. It is interesting to note Parker's disagreement with Nixon's interpretation. In Parker, 2005, 274, n. 16, he argues, "But I think Lucia Nixon goes too far... in inferring a rival, female understanding of such plants, which would make the festival a celebration of women's control over their own fertility". See chapter three for more about this discussion.

<sup>35</sup> Thurston, 1897, 82-83.

<sup>36</sup> Smith, Wayte, and Marindin 1878, 63.

<sup>37</sup> Lawler, 1944, 76.

<sup>38</sup> Cancik, Schneider, and Landfester, 1993. When I consulted their entry on Demeter, there was no mention of the Anthesphoria.



epithet *Antheia*.<sup>39</sup> This epithet is suggestive of other significant characteristics associated with these goddesses and the festival.

Considering that there is very little modern or ancient discussion surrounding the Anthesphoria, this research project will make a positive contribution towards furthering current understandings of this women's festival. With the research that will be conducted on the Thesmophoria and Adonia, this thesis will further enhance current knowledge about women's religious experience and involvement, as well as the significant links perceived between natural products and women's bodies.

## **Part B: Methodology**

The following sections outline the methods and approaches that will be used to investigate the uses of particular agricultural and floral products in three women-only festivals of ancient Greece. The selected frameworks and methods will aid in interpreting ancient knowledge and perceptions about ancient herbal medicine, social and religious beliefs of ancient Greek society. These ancient perceptions also reveal conceptions of female physiology and the primary roles charged to women. Within the selected festivals discussed below, certain experiences and physiological perceptions are manifest and evidence women's agency.

### **Data Collection**

The methods for data collection varied for this project, and were dependent on the nature of the sources used. For the ceramic evidence, searches were undertaken using the Classical Art Research Centre/Beazley Archive (University of Oxford) and the LIMC (Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae). Key terms including 'Antheia', 'Demeter', 'Aphrodite', 'Adonis', 'Persephone', 'Adonia', 'Thesmophoria', 'flowers', 'agriculture' and 'vegetables' were searched. For other ceramic and sculptural evidence, several manual searches of the Musée de Louvre catalogue were undertaken, as well as the perusal of items at the Museum of Ancient Cultures (Macquarie University, North Ryde). A number of online searches were performed using the Brill's New Pauly Online (BNPO), Perseus, the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* and the Suda Online (via Stoa.org). Via these online resources, word and name searches were undertaken and the several of ancient sources were located. For the collection of modern scholarship online, the databases JSTOR, Project Muse and L'Année Philologique proved useful in obtaining relevant literature.

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<sup>39</sup> Manganaro, 2004, 115-122.

## Conceptual Framework

### Post-structuralism

The theories of post-structuralism and structuralism are commonly applied to ancient historical studies. Structuralism asserts that there is an underlying set of structures or processes behind human thought, experience, culture and action. These inherent structures remain constant across cultures, and are evidenced through binaries, such male/female, young/old, hot/cold, active/passive and positive/negative. Post-structuralism emerged as criticisms of structuralism that argued for plurality of meanings and interpretations. Given the view of plurality in human experience and thought, post-structuralism rejects or, at least, questions the binaries presented in structuralist arguments. Structuralist theory is particularly evident in Marcel Detienne's analyses of the Thesmophoria and Adonia festivals.<sup>40</sup> The Thesmophoria and Adonia, following Detienne's structuralist model, have been studied together as a contrast between two religious festivals: the formal, established and the communally benefiting Thesmophoria and the superficial, informal and entertainment-based Adonia. Such opinions are arguably gender prejudiced, based on the critical sources written by ancient males and ignore other evidence. In order to appreciate the significance of each festival in its own right, this project will not place the Adonia and Thesmophoria on competing scales, thus taking a post-structuralist approach.

This project will challenge the assignment of passivity, complete oppression and non-agency to the identities of ancient Greek women. This challenge will be communicated through the investigations and representations of women as agents and participants in the three festivals selected for this study. As a result, the assumed historicised view of the secluded Greek woman who is without any degree of agency will be challenged, as the identities of ancient women will be shown as more multifaceted and interactive with their culture. To be a woman in ancient Greek society does not automatically assume that one is without the opportunity or capacity to act and to determine the possible repercussions of those actions. Furthermore, to assume that women in instances of leadership and those who evidence female agency are exceptions to a normative structure for women misrepresents the varied positions of women in Greek society. Exploring women through a post-structuralist framework enables more

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<sup>40</sup> Detienne, 1977; Detienne, and Vernant, 1989.

thorough and multifaceted representations, in which women are not positioned in opposition to men. Rather, they often occupy positions of parallel.<sup>41</sup>

Following this post-structuralist approach, essentialism as an analysis tool will also be rejected. In much modern scholarship, the Thesmophoria has been represented as having one essential reason or purpose for performance, that being reproduction/fertility.<sup>42</sup> By adapting a post-structuralist framework, this project will present an interpretation that challenges the essentialist and structuralist interpretations previously offered. This study's approach will not seek to explain women's participation in the Thesmophoria in regards to agricultural fertility or the reproduction of citizens, but will explore other ways of interpreting the festival.<sup>43</sup>

### **Contextual approach**

The contextual approach utilises all or most evidence that is focused to a particular historical period. In the case of this project, it is also related to specific religious instances. This project utilises a contextual approach wherein it relies on various forms of evidence to understand and interpret three ancient Greek festivals, and the associated research interests discussed above. These forms of evidence include, but are not limited to, literary records and archaeological remains that are dated from Archaic and Classical Greece to later sources of the Roman and Byzantine periods where appropriate. The focus of this thesis is upon women in religion during the late Archaic/Classical period wherein certain difficulties arise. One such difficulty is that there is a limited amount of ancient evidence in which the lives of women are described. The lack of evidence is a major issue relating to the study of the Anthesphoria, as well as the other festivals.

Another problem that is encountered relates to a general lack of evidence for women's participation in religious festivals. It is common practice amongst some modern historians to use later sources to help understand the performance of earlier occasions and customs, termed

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<sup>41</sup> Humphreys, 1993, xxiii.

<sup>42</sup> See this article for a deconstruction and re-interpretation of women in the Thesmophoria and the festival's relations to men and women's roles. Foxhall, 1995, 97-110.

<sup>43</sup> In keeping with post-structuralism, this project does not claim to present "The Explanation" and the interpretations offered in this research are not without their limits. This study will focus on women in a religious context. While it uses evidence that speaks about women's roles in other areas of life, the main area of interest is religion. As such, the exploration of women in other positions in society will be minimal, and related to this religious context.

as ‘retrojection’.<sup>44</sup> Anne Suter has drawn attention to the problematic nature of retrojection as a methodology in her discussion of the *Hymn to Demeter*. This *Hymn* has become a confused and difficult study in regards to the goddesses Demeter and Persephone in some modern scholarship.<sup>45</sup> For example, there are sources, literary and material, contemporaneous with the Adonia’s practice in the fifth and fourth centuries B.C. However, later, Hellenistic sources, including Theocritus, have been used to expand Classical understandings of the earlier Greek festival. Although the Adonia was still performed annually under Ptolemaic rule, I would agree with Joseph Reed’s argument that the festival described in Theocritus reflects Ptolemaic ideologies and had become far more political than its earlier practice.<sup>46</sup>

The use of later sources is unavoidable within this study. I have consulted a variety of texts and sources that range from Archaic Greece to later Byzantine periods in order to provide qualitative discussions about the festivals. Although the forthcoming chapters utilise the works of Pliny, Dioscorides, Athenaeus and other later sources to reflect the medicinal uses of plants for women, earlier Greek sources are utilised by these writers and are occasionally referenced. These sources are used cautiously and it is important to be aware of the changes and pathways that the ancient information has been transmitted through the various Greek, Roman and subsequent historical periods. For the medicinal properties of and treatments incorporating the many natural products described in the upcoming chapters, the main sources used are Pliny the Elder’s *Historia Naturalis*, Galen’s *De Naturalibus Facultatibus*, Hippocrates’ *De Mulierum Morbis I*,<sup>47</sup> Aetios of Amida’s *The Gynaecology and Obstetrics of the VIth Century A.D.* and Dioscorides’ *De Materia Medica*. Soranus’ *Gynaecology* has also been cited for in a few cases and it seems he relied heavily upon the works attributed to Hippocrates.

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<sup>44</sup> Suter, 2002, 9.

<sup>45</sup> Suter, 2002, 9. Her issue surrounding retrojection and the *Hymn* is to do with the dual narrative structure within the ancient source. She argues that some modern scholarship has assumed that the hymn refers to the joint worship of Kore/Persephone and Demeter, as later sources suggest a joint worship. However, the hymn, dated to some point in the seventh century B.C. should not necessarily be used as evidence of their early joint worship, as Suter interprets two different narratives preserved within the one source. See Suter, 2002, for a full discussion regarding this issue.

<sup>46</sup> Reed, 2000, 319-351.

<sup>47</sup> Although it has been suggested that this work was pseudonymously written and may in fact be a collection from the Gnidian School. See Redman Cox, 1846, 291-92.

### **Natural products-women's bodies relationship**

There is a definite link between ancient perceptions of the use of certain natural products and the implications for their users. I will focus upon the natural products found within the select three festivals and how their uses relate to ancient perceptions about ancient herbal medicine, society and women's bodies. For this focus, Lucia Nixon's discussion of the Thesmophoria is important. Nixon's analysis compares literary references in ancient medical and botanist records with those in other sources related to the festivals and focuses on those that discuss plants whose uses related to women's fertility. Nixon's approach demonstrates ways in which women's involvement in the Thesmophoria relates to both fertility and contraception, as demonstrated by the plants used in the festival practice.

Nixon's approach will be adapted in this project to investigate the plants and natural products used in the other festivals. Lettuce will be among the most important vegetables that will be discussed, as the implications of its consumption were perceived differently for men and women.<sup>48</sup> In all previous research concerning the Adonia and lettuce to date, only the perceived negative effects of the vegetable for men have been explored. These have then incorrectly been applied to the female participants. The medicinal use and implications of the natural products in the Adonia, Thesmophoria and Anthesphoria will be compared and contrasted with the ancient literary accounts that describe these festivals.

### **The meadow model**

Feminism in ancient historical studies of the 1970s generally viewed women as sexually, socially and legally oppressed to men, and the question of agency was not commonly asked. However, historical research within second-wave feminism became more focused on evidencing the existence and experiences of women in the ancient world. This thesis seeks to build upon the research of second-wave historians, such as Sarah Pomeroy, wherein, thus far, ancient Greek women have been segregated to the private sphere<sup>49</sup> and are still in need of recovery for the general historical audience.

This thesis builds upon feminist historical studies undertaken by scholars including Marguerite Johnson and Susan Deacy as it assumes the existence and experiences of women

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<sup>48</sup> Men believed lettuce would inhibit their sexual performance, cause sterility and saw lettuce generally as a malevolent vegetable. For women, it was thought that lettuce would encourage their menstruation and increase lactation. See the following chapter and Dsc. 2.165, 2.166.

<sup>49</sup> Pomeroy, 1975, 57.

and will investigate these experiences in the evidence. The ‘flowery meadow’ is a scene in ancient Greek poetry that provides glimpses of female sexuality and agency, as well as women exploring their sexuality before the intrusion of men.<sup>50</sup> This thesis demonstrates the development and application of a model termed the meadow model as a result of the study of Deacy and Johnson’s assertions. Deacy in particular communicates that women and goddesses pictured in various meadows in poetry are confident, act for themselves and are sexually curious and exploratory.<sup>51</sup> The festivals of this study exist as metaphorical meadows, wherein women have confidence, are emotionally charged and act for themselves. The Thesmophoria and Adonia are specifically analytical in the sense of a ‘meadow’. The performance of the Anthesphoria, according to the ancient sources, occurred in a meadow. Thus the latter exists as a meadow literally and analytically.

### **Thesis overview**

The following three chapters address the themes and interests outlined above in varying ways in the contexts of the three select festivals. In all three festival chapters, the focus is upon the uses of natural products by women and how these uses are evidenced in a religious and social festival context. In chapter two, I will investigate the Adonia festival. In this chapter, I will draw on ancient understandings of Aphrodite, Adonis and their characterisations and involvements in the festival and in myth. It will become relevant to the chapter’s argument to understand Aphrodite’s characterisation as authoritative and instrumental in relation to the festival and the pot-herbs (lettuce and fennel), thus transferring some of the scholarly focus from Adonis back towards the goddess and her female participants. In chapter three, I examine the Thesmophoria in relation to the appearance and uses of the natural products recorded in the Cholargos Decree that are required for the festival. The perspective I assume towards the women of the Thesmophoria is one of female agency and the expectations held surrounding women’s knowledge and their bodies. The instructive persona of Demeter *Thesmophoros* towards the female participants is a determining factor in the analysis of this festival and the significance of the uses of natural products in women’s hands. Chapter four addresses the Anthesphoria, a festival that has received very little scholarly attention. In this chapter, I will focus upon the section of the *Hymn to Demeter* that Suter refers to as the “core” story because it is the part during which the girls are active, in control and are

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<sup>50</sup> Deacy, 2013, 395-413. An example Deacy uses is Persephone gathering flowers with her female friends before her abduction and rape in the Hymn to Demeter (Deacy, p.397)

<sup>51</sup> Deacy, 2013, 408.

confident.<sup>52</sup> They are in a state of playfulness and hints of female sexuality and eroticism are discernable. From this subtly sexual environment between women, the discussion of the medicinal uses of certain flowers will demonstrate the dual purposes of this festival and its importance in the lives young girls nearing maturity and women that relate to female sexuality.

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<sup>52</sup> Suter, 2002, 10.





## **Chapter 2.**

### **The pot-herbs of the Adonia<sup>1</sup>**

καθνα<ί>σκει, Κυθήρη', ἄβρος Ἄδωνις· τί κε θεῖμεν;  
καττύπτεσθε, κόραι, καὶ κατερείκεσθε κίθωνας.

“Cytherea, pretty Adonis is dying. What are we to do?”

“ ‘Girls, beat your breasts and tear your dresses’”.

- Sappho, *fragment 71*

κάλλιστον μὲν ἐγὼ λείπω φάος ἡέλιοιο  
δευτερον ἄστρα φαεινὰ σεληναίης τε πρόσωπον  
ἡδὲ καὶ ὠραίους σικύους καὶ μῆλα καὶ ὄχνας;

“The most beautiful thing I leave here is the light of the sun,

second are the shining stars and the face of the moon,

and cucumbers, and apples and pears too”.

- Praxilla, *Hymn to Adonis*

### **Introduction**

The Adonia is a remarkable subject for the study of the interaction and joint activity of women from different areas, statuses, and economic backgrounds of Ancient Greece. The Adonia is connected with death and enables women to mourn their contact with death through the mythical relationship between Aphrodite and Adonis. Although there is evidence for a separate Adonia of male participants,<sup>2</sup> the focus of this study will be the significance of the Adonia for women participants. This chapter aims to counter the negative views in the significance of this festival expressed in modern scholarship. In lieu of counter-arguments, the negative scholarly understanding of lettuce will be countered and will be re-examined in relation to the ancient beliefs of the perceived positive effects for women. A re-examination is vital because previous studies have incorrectly applied the believed physiological effects for men on women, thus ignoring information provided in the ancient evidence. In the following sections, particularly in regards to the discussions of lettuce and fennel, the medicinal uses are

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<sup>1</sup> Theophrastus categorises lettuce and fennel as pot-herbs (το λαχανηρόν) and following his lead I have also. Thphr. *HP*. 7.1

<sup>2</sup> Dillon, 2002, 4.

portrayed as factual because I attempt to assume an ancient perspective. It should be emphasised that the medicinal uses are *perceptions* and *beliefs* communicated in the ancient evidence and are not necessarily proven or recommended in the treatment of modern day ailments. Considering this focus on the natural products of the festival, I have not exhausted the sources available for the study of the Adonia. Instead, there are few sources selected which relate to general information surrounding the festival because the main focus is upon the pot-herbs.

The Adonia was a festival celebrated in Athens, as well in other areas of the Greek world.<sup>3</sup> The fact that Aristophanes mentions it alongside other festivals including the Panathenaia also indicates that it was well known in “the religious landscape”.<sup>4</sup> The festival’s participants were women from different social, marital and economic backgrounds. The numerous types of participants demonstrate the significance of this festival in the lives of Greek women generally. It also reveals that the festival is social and is about sharing the activity with other women from different backgrounds, which differed from other women-only festivals such as the Thesmophoria that only allowed married citizen women.<sup>5</sup> The Adonia is an opportunity for the community of women that is not focused on the wider community that other festivals are.<sup>6</sup> The worship of Aphrodite and the more informal setting of the Adonia may also partly explain the inclusion of prostitutes, slaves and metics. Aphrodite was known as a patron goddess for prostitutes and slaves. There are a number of temples of Aphrodite described by Strabo as having male and female slaves and temple attendants, some of which are also

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<sup>3</sup> These provenances are based on material evidence found at these sites, which have depictions related to the Adonia. See Oakley and Reitzammer, 2005, 142-144; red-figure lekythos, 425-375 B.C. Italy, Ruvo, Karlsruhe, Badisches Landesmuseum: B39, 278; red-figure hydria, 400-300 B.C., Libya, Cyrenaica, London, British Museum: E241. Though the majority of the ancient literary evidence is delivered to us from Athenians, the works of Sappho, Theocritus, Pherecrates and Cratinus demonstrate the knowledge of the festival outside of Athens. The comic plays of Aristophanes also indicate the popularity and knowledge of the Adonia festival. R. Simms also references at least five comic poets who wrote plays about Adonis: Nikophon, Plato, Araros, Antiphanes and Philiskos. See Simms 1997 /1998, 123, footnote 12. Paus.2.20.6. For areas other than those of Greece: Luc. *Syr.D.* 6-7.

<sup>4</sup> Ar. *Pax* 418-20, as suggested in Reitzammer, 2008, 285.

<sup>5</sup> Men. *Sam.* 35-50; D.S. suggests the same importance of festivals for women in general. See D.S. 12.11. Please see the following chapter for the exclusivity of the Thesmophoria amongst women.

<sup>6</sup> Again, the Thesmophoria is an example of this kind of festival: it does not allow all community members to participate but it does require the financial support of the community. See the following chapter.

courtesans.<sup>7</sup> Although the reference in Herodotus referring to sacred prostitution to Babylonian Aphrodite is much debated in the scholarship, it still illustrates the connection between Aphrodite and prostitutes.<sup>8</sup> Aphrodite is also the goddess who instructs women in their sexual encounters, including sexual postures and movements<sup>9</sup> and is a goddess to whom maidens and widows sacrifice if they are about to marry or re-marry.<sup>10</sup> As part of her role as a goddess presiding over sexual encounters and sexuality relates to mankind in general, this does not exclude women from demographics outside of the citizen or wealthy women. The Adonia provides an opportunity for women outside of the citizen class to be present at a festival of worship for a goddess they are connected with.

In the Adonia, the women bring along a small potted ‘garden’ each, as well as small images of Adonis,<sup>11</sup> climbing up ladders onto the rooftops of the host’s house.<sup>12</sup> The festival was held during the evening and was accompanied by a feast, as an entry in the *Greek Anthology* and Theocritus suggest.<sup>13</sup> The time of the year during which this festival was held is much debated in the modern scholarship. Scholars generally align themselves to either summer or spring as the evidence suggests. Plato referred to “...the heat of summer in some garden of Adonis...”,<sup>14</sup> Theophrastus referred to the gardens of Adonis in summertime,<sup>15</sup> Plutarch wrote of the Adonia rites occurring as war was being prepared,<sup>16</sup> and Aristophanes might have referred to some point during springtime.<sup>17</sup> Hesychius described the festival during which summer fruits were present as well as fennel and lettuce seedlings grown in pots.<sup>18</sup> Plautus

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<sup>7</sup> Str. 6.2, 8.6, 12.3.

<sup>8</sup> Hdt. 1.199. For examples of scholarship that contribute to this debate, see Budin, 2008; Sourvinou-Inwood, 1974, 186-198; Van Der Toorn, 1989, 193-205; Brooks, 1941, 227-253; Faraone and McClure, 2006.

<sup>9</sup> Ar. *Ec.* 1.9.

<sup>10</sup> Paus. 2.34.

<sup>11</sup> Phot. s.v. 400.

<sup>12</sup> Detienne, 1977, 66; Parker, 2005, 284; O’Bryhim, 2007, 305; Dillon, 2002, 163; red-figure squat lekythos, c. 420 B.C.- 410 B.C., *CVA*, Karlsruhe 278 (1, p. 27.1-4) (Beazley no. 361).

<sup>13</sup> Diosc. 5.193: “Tender Cleo took me captive, Adonis, as she beat her breasts white as milk at thy night funeral feast”; Ar. *Lys.* 387; Theoc. 110-18.

<sup>14</sup> Pl. *Phdr.* 276B.

<sup>15</sup> Thphr. 6.7.3.

<sup>16</sup> Plu. *Alc.* 18.1-2.

<sup>17</sup> Ar. *Lys.* 387-398.

<sup>18</sup> Hsch. 1200.30. See below for the extract from the text.

draws the analogy of Adonis as a summer plant that quickly emerged and quickly died.<sup>19</sup> A woman in Theocritus' *Idyll* 15 refers to her summer coat almost being "torn right in two".<sup>20</sup> Although the weight of the evidence thought of the Adonia as a summer festival, Dillon's reading of the scene in *Lysistrata* could suggest spring.<sup>21</sup> However, I would be hesitate to use this piece of evidence for the springtime argument because the scene could be read as two different events happening simultaneously or as two events that have been linked together for comedic purposes.<sup>22</sup> Furthermore, the evidence suggests that the Adonia was celebrated during the evening; whereas, Aristophanes describes the woman interrupting the assembly meeting that would have been held during the day.<sup>23</sup> I would argue that as the festival was organised by women and that there was no formal state organisation, these references could refer to the festival's occurrence during either summer or spring depending on when it was organised that year and the location of the festival. It does not seem central to the proceedings of the festival or necessary to determine whether or not the festival was held during a specific season aside from the fact that it would be sensible to hold the festival during the warmer months because it occurred outside in the evening.<sup>24</sup>

The sowing of lettuce must also point towards the availability of its seeds for such a festival. Theophrastus tells us that lettuce is sown in the month of Metageitnion in winter and takes four or five days to germinate.<sup>25</sup> If this were the case, the seeds would be readily available in winter and could be saved for spring or summer. The lettuce and fennel seeds could also be available from the kitchen gardens in many homes at different points throughout the year.<sup>26</sup> Certainly by Roman times, lettuce was made available during most of the year because of its

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<sup>19</sup> Plaut. 38-39.

<sup>20</sup> Theoc. 15, 68-69.

<sup>21</sup> Dillon, 2003, 1-16 for his interpretation of the Adonia in springtime, as based upon the reference of the proposal of the Sicilian expedition during spring 415.

<sup>22</sup> For instance, Reitzammer believes the reference in Aristophanes' *Lysistrata* is an impromptu performance of the Adonia festival. See Reitzammer, 2008, 282-333.

<sup>23</sup> For evidence that assembly meetings occurred during the day, see: D. *Cor.* 18.169; Aeschin. 2.53; Ar. *Ec.* 81-85.

<sup>24</sup> For examples of those who have contributed to the debate: Detienne, 1977; Parker, 2005; Dillon, 2002, 2003; Simms, 1997/1998, 127. For a fuller overview of the debate and an argument in support of early summer see Simms, 1997, 45-53.

<sup>25</sup> Thphr. 7.1.1-3.

<sup>26</sup> Leach, 1982, 2-7.

popularity.<sup>27</sup> The collection of seeds specific for the use at this festival suggests planning and preparation, which implies that the festival was more important than Winkler's comparison to a modern day "Christmas tree trimming".<sup>28</sup> Furthermore, as the growths in the potsherd gardens are described as seedlings and Theophrastus says that the seeds take just a few days to germinate, this also demonstrates thought and preparation.

### **Aphrodite and Adonis: love, life and death**

The dual worship of Aphrodite and one of her lovers is a common trait within other festivals and cults associated with this goddess. Her place of worship in Paphos (Cyprus) recognises a male divinity alongside Aphrodite. Young hypothesises that in a male-female coupling Aphrodite represents life and regeneration and the male lover as death.<sup>29</sup> Specifically, Young names Adonis for the male representative of death, a role that I purport is similar to his characterisation in the Adonia. Larson also recognises the dual worship of Aphrodite and other male divinities including Hephaestus,<sup>30</sup> Ares and Hermes.<sup>31</sup> The scholarly study of the position of Adonis in this festival has been comprehensive;<sup>32</sup> I will be focusing on the women's actions and responses to the festival context and Aphrodite's characterisation and the perceptions about women's bodies and the natural products.

Adonis is an important character involved in this religious celebration, but he does not prepare or perform the festival. Segal has interpreted the myths of Adonis as conveying a dramatization of requirements for membership in the polis, placing Adonis as that which sits

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<sup>27</sup> Plin. *HN* 19.38.

<sup>28</sup> Winkler compared the significance and organisation of the Adonia festival to the same level of importance attached to a modern day Christmas tree trimming. See Winkler, 1990, 193. He does miss the overall significance of the festival: it is both a social activity and an important religious celebration in the lives of women. For example, in the artistic evidence there is often incense being burned. In the depiction on B39.278 Karlsruhe example there is also a high-footed water vessel. These elements of the depiction indicate important religious rituals that are common in many other religious ceremonies, such as Hes. *Op.* 336-341; Men. *Dys.* 447-453.

<sup>29</sup> Young, 2005, 28.

<sup>30</sup> A.R. 1.850 ff.

<sup>31</sup> Larson, 2007, 114-116.

<sup>32</sup> Some examples include: Detienne, 1977; Pilitsis, 1985; Winkler, 1990; Segal, 1991; Reed, 1995; Parker, 2005; Barclay Burns, 2008;

outside of this membership.<sup>33</sup> The interpretation offered by Frazer, and supported by Parker,<sup>34</sup> suggested that Adonis represented the cycle of death and renewal of vegetation.<sup>35</sup> Frazer also hypothesised that the gardens of the Adonia were an attempt at “sympathetic magic” in order to promote vegetation growth.<sup>36</sup> Yet the idea that the Adonis myth represents a cycle of death and renewal can not be accurate because Adonis, after his death, does not physically return from the underworld. During his lifetime, Persephone and Aphrodite both wanted Adonis for themselves. According to our later writers,<sup>37</sup> Zeus intervened and decreed that Adonis would spend one third of the year with Persephone in the Underworld, one third with Aphrodite in the land above and another third wherever her chose. Once he had died the evidence is clear that he did remain in the Underworld.<sup>38</sup>

“In cult (and myth) Adonis had no identity separate from Aphrodite”.<sup>39</sup> Aphrodite is the instructive character in the Adonia, because she dictates the ways women are intended to act at this festival: they are to beat their breasts, and tear their dresses, behaviour typical of women at funerals.<sup>40</sup> The women in this festival follow Aphrodite’s lead, as is communicated consistently in literary evidence from the seventh century B.C. to the first century A.D. For in the Adonia, women imitated funeral or burial rites; as they grieved for Adonis, his character represented those whom the women had lost to death or otherwise.<sup>41</sup> This sentiment is

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<sup>33</sup> Segal, 1991, 64.

<sup>34</sup> Parker, 2005, 287.

<sup>35</sup> This interpretation is echoed in Pilitsis’ paper wherein he investigates the continuity of elements of the Adonia within the Greek Orthodox Church. See Pilitsis, 1985, 145-166.

<sup>36</sup> Frazer, 1961, 237, cited in Simms, 1997/1998, 128.

<sup>37</sup> Apollod. 3.183; Pseudo-Hyginus 2.7; Ael. *NA*. 9.36.

<sup>38</sup> Although Parker assumes that this travel between the earth and the underworld occurred “post-mortem”. Parker, 2005, 286. Also, the woman who says “Goodbye Adonis darling; and I only trust you may find us all thriving when you come next year” (lines 148-49), I do not think we can take that to mean Adonis returns annually from the underworld. Rather, it more likely a reference to the little Adonis *eidola* or the beautiful image of Adonis accompanied by the Adonia celebration in Alexandria in Theoc. 15.82-83. The exclamations of Adonis’ annual return to the world above in the festival should not be taken literally. Rather it is arguably a reference to the Adonia’s annual performance and the memorial of Adonis’s death.

<sup>39</sup> Simms, 1997/1998, 124.

<sup>40</sup> Sapph. 71.

<sup>41</sup> Plutarch wrote that women “mimicked burial rites, beat their breasts, and sang dirges”. Plu., *Alc*. 18.1-2. See also Simms, 1997/1998, 134-137 for a detailed discussion of the similarities between the Adonia and ancient Greek funerary rites.

reflected in Ovid, wherein Aphrodite (Venus) cries: “each passing year the memory of his death shall cause an imitation of my grief”.<sup>42</sup> Thus, Adonis represents death and the women imitate the sorrow of Aphrodite. Following the sorrowful behaviour of Aphrodite, rather than installing a sense of frivolity or licentiousness, it encourages a sense of seriousness about the proceedings of the festival. Similar to the Thesmophoria, wherein there are elements of seriousness and contemplation that co-exist with the more light-hearted and jovial behaviour,<sup>43</sup> the Adonia also welcomes this multifaceted self-expression and performance.<sup>44</sup>

Aphrodite’s connection with the natural world is also significant to this thesis’ interpretation of the Adonia. In ancient references to the birth and power of Aphrodite, her ability to produce sweet and painful in all things, her fertility and her special role for women are paramount. In Hesiod’s *Theogony*, “grass grew about her shapely feet”,<sup>45</sup> and after one sexual encounter with Anchises Aphrodite falls pregnant with their son, Aeneas.<sup>46</sup> There is a distinct power in her command of sexuality and desire, which should not be underestimated. Theognis writes, “... but the gift [love or longing desire] of the violet-crowned Kyprogeneia becomes a most painful burden for men to bear, if she does not grant release from the pain”:<sup>47</sup> this refers to the all-consuming power of Aphrodite. Plato speaks of “the madness of love” inspired by Aphrodite and Eros,<sup>48</sup> which encourages images of frenzy and uncontrollable obsession. Her association with uncontrolled and all-consuming emotion is also related to the behaviour exhibited by women in a funerary context.

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<sup>42</sup> Ov. *Met.* 10.652. It is likely that Aphrodite’s words reflect Ovid’s knowledge of the Adonia’s annual performance.

<sup>43</sup> Please see the following chapter for a detailed discussion of barley and wheat in regards to the Thesmophoria.

<sup>44</sup> It is interesting to note that other sources recognise other goddesses in place of Aphrodite. Callimachus references the lament of Adonis by a woman “tossing my hair, to honour Cybebe [Cybele]... to mourn Adonis, the slave of the goddess”. Call. *Iamb.* 193.

<sup>45</sup> Hes. *Th.* 1.195.

<sup>46</sup> h.Hom 5.145-200.

<sup>47</sup> Thgn. 1.1381. A similar sentiment is found in Sappho 1.1.21-24.

<sup>48</sup> Pl. *Phdr.* 265b. In the artistic representations of the Adonia, the winged figure of Eros is often present. For example: the red-figure squat lekythos, c. 420 B.C.- 410 B.C., CVA, Karlsruhe 278 (1, p. 27.1-4) (Beazley no. 361); red-figure squat lekythos, c. 400-300 B.C., Bulgaria, Apollonia, St. Petersburg, State Hermitage Museum 928, 2024; red-figure hydria, c. 400-300 B.C., Lybia, Cyrenaica, London, British Museum, E241; Johnson, 2007, 49.

## The ‘Gardens of Adonis’

The gardens of Adonis are a major interest to this thesis. The seedlings grown in whole and fragmentary terracotta vessels are as important to this investigation as the roles of Aphrodite and Adonis are in the Adonia. In the tenth century A.D. *Suda*, an entry describes the plant seedlings:

Ἀδώνιδος κῆποι: ἐκ θριδάκων καὶ μαράθρων, ἅπερ κατέσπειρον ἐν  
ὀστράκοις.

Gardens of Adonis: [Made] out of lettuce and fennel, which they  
used to sow in earthenware pots (pots dashed to pieces).<sup>49</sup>

Hesychius identifies the seedlings as fennel and lettuce, but also states that there are “all types of vegetation” grown in these potted gardens.<sup>50</sup> The third and fourth century B.C. ceramic evidence is not as clear about the seedling types, as the images and other archaeological evidence show only small growths.<sup>51</sup> However, if the later sources are used in conjunction with Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* and the Classical ceramic evidence it could be feasible to identify these seedlings with lettuce and the other vegetables and herbs described by the later writers. The process of disposal is not described in the ancient evidence prior to the third century B.C. Evidence from third century B.C. Alexandria shows that the method of disposal entailed the potted gardens and images of Adonis being thrown into the sea the following day. This evidence also suggests the festival lasted at least two days in Alexandria.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Full *Suda* alpha,517 entry reads: Ἀδώνιδος κῆποι: ἐκ θριδάκων καὶ μαράθρων, ἅπερ κατέσπειρον ἐν ὀστράκοις. χρῶνται δ' ἐπὶ τῶν ἐπιπολαίων καὶ κούφων τῇ παροιμίᾳ. Ἀδώνιδος κῆποι: ἐπὶ τῶν ἁώρων καὶ ὀλιγοχρονίων καὶ μὴ ἐρριζωμένων. The red-figure squat lekythos, c. 420 B.C.- 410 B.C., CVA, Karlsruhe 278 (1, p. 27.1-4) (Beazley no. 361) evidences gardens planted in both fragmentary and whole vessels.

<sup>50</sup> Hesych. s.v. \*Ἀδώνιδος κῆποι.

<sup>51</sup> Myr.233, Paris, Louvre, as argued in Oakley and Reitzammer, 2005, 142-144; red-figure squat lekythos, c. 420 B.C.- 410 B.C., CVA, Karlsruhe 278 (1, p. 27.1-4) (Beazley no. 361); red-figure squat lekythos, c. 400-300 B.C., Bulgaria, Apollonia, St. Petersburg, State Hermitage Museum 928, 2024; red-figure hydria, c. 400-300 B.C., Lybia, Cyrenaica, London, British Museum, E241.

<sup>52</sup> Theoc. 15.134-136.



## Lettuce (θρίδαξ / *lactuca*)

In the scholarship discussing the Adonia,<sup>53</sup> lettuce has been addressed only in reference to its perceived effects for men, despite the multiplicity of its uses by men and women. It has been identified as a vegetable that has malevolent implications for the men who touch and consume it; this has been applied to explanations of its role in the myths surrounding Adonis and in the Adonia.<sup>54</sup> These negative effects have become associated with the female participants of the Adonia, even though the ancient evidence describes the uses for women as beneficial. This thesis aims to address the perceived implications for women. Furthermore, as Aphrodite is a determining characterisation in this festival, it seems justifiable to provide a counter-argument for lettuce and its uses for women in the Adonia.<sup>55</sup>

The perceived implications for the contact and consumption of lettuce for men in ancient mythological narratives are often dire.<sup>56</sup> Within most accounts, the death of Adonis is connected with his concealment or position towards the lettuce after the wounding from the boar's tusks.<sup>57</sup> Athenaeus, citing a lost source of Callimachus, states that Venus (Aphrodite) hid Adonis under a lettuce.<sup>58</sup> Hesychius also states that:

...καὶ γὰρ ἐν θριδακίναϊς αὐτὸν κατακλινθῆναι ὑπὸ Ἀφροδίτης  
φασίν

...And some have said that Aphrodite laid out Adonis in lettuce.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> For example, Detienne, 1977, 76-8; Winkler, 1990, 203-4.

<sup>54</sup> Dillon, 2002, 4.

<sup>55</sup> It is interesting that Aphrodite is described as “roaming over the waves like sea-lettuce” in Ana. 57.

<sup>56</sup> There is one instance of the death of a woman associated with lettuce. The single account of a negative association of women and lettuce specifically is an anecdote preserved in Hdt. 3.32.3-4 surrounding the tale of the death of Cambyses' wife. The woman used a piece of lettuce removed of its leaves to illustrate a point regarding Cambyses' destruction of Cyrus' house. Following this, Cambyses is said to have attacked his wife out of anger and she miscarried their child and died herself.

<sup>57</sup> A late fifth century/early third century B.C. lekythos depicts the surprise attack of the boar upon Adonis, who is accompanied by Eros and a female character. See red-figure Athenian lekythos, 425-375 B.C., Corinth, Kassel, Staatliche Museen Kassel, Antikensammlung: T389, accessed via the Beazley Online Archive.

<sup>58</sup> Ath. 2.80.

<sup>59</sup> Hesych. s.v. \*Ἀδώνιδος κῆποι.

Athenaeus reflects the negatively charged views of lettuce as he insinuates that those who consume much lettuce “are very little adapted for pleasures of love”.<sup>60</sup> This same anaphrodisiac quality is also attested in Pliny and Dioscorides.<sup>61</sup> Amphis cited in Athenaeus, exclaims: “curse upon all these lettuces!”<sup>62</sup> It is no wonder that ancient Greek males viewed lettuce in such a negative way: it supposedly threatened their ability to act in their self-perceived and culturally perpetuated ‘male’ sexualised behaviour. In contrast to these malevolent implications for lettuce use, Plutarch writes that Cato gave to the Greeks inexpensive gifts of “beets, lettuce, radishes, and pears”.<sup>63</sup> How could Greek men be so afraid for their virility and yet receive such a gift? For the Romans lettuce became valued after Emperor Augustus was saved from sickness by eating lettuces. Lettuce became so popular that the Romans devised a way to make them available even when out of season.<sup>64</sup>

The specific lettuce variety that concealed Adonis could be the type described in Pliny as having “stalks so large, that small garden gates, it is said, have been made of it...”<sup>65</sup>. Whilst the translator of this section of Pliny is disbelieving, I would argue that it is closer to fact than fiction. This type of lettuce is arguably the same variety represented in Egyptian art accompanying the god, Min, because the depictions show that Min and the lettuce are the same height.<sup>66</sup> The sap of this lettuce variety is milk-like.<sup>67</sup>

It is also possible that the variety of lettuce that Adonis hid in could be the third type described in Pliny, as it grows in the woods, and is used to help cure wounds. If Aphrodite hid Adonis or placed him in this type of lettuce, it is likely that she had hoped it could help heal

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<sup>60</sup> Ath. 2.80. The same reasoning could explain the germination of barley seedlings for the potted gardens, as Athenaeus also cites a lost source of Cratinus that recalls Aphrodite’s attempt to conceal another lover, Phaon, “amid the grass of barley”.<sup>60</sup>

<sup>61</sup> Plin. *HN* 19.38; Dsc. 2.165; 2.166.

<sup>62</sup> Ath. 2.80.

<sup>63</sup> Plu. *Cat. Mi.* 46.

<sup>64</sup> Plin. *HN* 19.38.

<sup>65</sup> Plin. *HN* 19.38. Leach notes that by the time of Pliny, there are about eleven different types of lettuce known and grown by the Romans. Leach, 1982, 2.

<sup>66</sup> See figures 5 and 6 in Moens, 1985, 69.

<sup>67</sup> Thphr. *HP.* 7.4.5; Plin. *HN* 19.38; Dsc. 2.166. The sap or juice is collected from the stalk of the plant: Thphr. *HP.* 9.8.2;

Adonis's wounds. Some scholars have identified this type, referred to as "isatis", as woad, which is in fact a type of cabbage and not lettuce.<sup>68</sup>

Aside from its ascribed anaphrodisiac uses, lettuce was believed to aid sores including bites and stings from spiders and scorpions,<sup>69</sup> sleeplessness, stomach issues,<sup>70</sup> these benefits available to men and women.<sup>71</sup> Ill-effects of lettuce include extreme irritability, which developed after consumption and was more common in summer.<sup>72</sup> Women specifically could associate the use of lettuce with positive, beneficial outcomes. Such positive uses are described in Dioscorides wherein both cultivated lettuce (θρίδαξ ἥμερος) and wild lettuce (ἄγρία θρίδαξ) encouraged lactation. Wild lettuce is an anti-inflammatory for women who are breastfeeding, a belief likely connected with the milky sap that could be collected from the leaves.<sup>73</sup>

Dioscorides also details that ἄγρία θρίδαξ will also 'draw out the menstrual flow'.<sup>74</sup> Pliny states that: "it is generally supposed, also, that lettuces have the effect of making blood".<sup>75</sup> Galen, possibly citing Pliny, wrote of a process through which blood could be transformed into different substances and materials including bone, flesh, semen and lettuce.<sup>76</sup> Aristotle states that women cannot complete the final stage of transforming blood into semen because

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<sup>68</sup> This is an interesting point concerning woad as a type of cabbage because Athenaeus reveals that a woman who has just given birth would eat cabbage as an *antipharmikon* (an antidote) perhaps used to protect the woman from infection. If this relates to the 'isatis' lettuce or cabbage variety then we could interpret Aphrodite's placement of Adonis on or in the lettuce as an attempt to help protect his wound from infection. See Ath. 9.370 for the use of cabbage by women after giving birth. The use of cabbage in this way is also mentioned in Hp. *Mul.* I.45. See also Parker, 2006, 629, footnote 37.

<sup>69</sup> Dsc. 2.165.

<sup>70</sup> Arist. *HA.* 9.7.4: the dracon has apparently been seen to eat bitter lettuce when it has eaten "much fruit", and presumably has a stomachache. Pliny also describes the dragon consuming lettuce juices to relieve its nausea. Pliny may have consulted or known of Aristotle's entry. Plin. *HN* 8.41.

<sup>71</sup> These benefits also described in Thphr. *HP.* Vii.vi.2-3.

<sup>72</sup> Hp. *Ep.* VII.7. 82. However, those with "hotter temperaments" are believed to have an increased libido. If lettuce was believed to encourage a more agitated state this might also be linked with those with higher sexual desire. See Aët. LI.

<sup>73</sup> Dsc. 2.165; 2.166.

<sup>74</sup> Dsc. 2.165; 2.166.

<sup>75</sup> Plin. *HN* 19.38.

<sup>76</sup> Gal. *Nat. Fac.* 1.10.

their bodies are too cold. However, the menstrual blood is “semen”, though not in its pure form, and once united with the male seed “effects generation”.<sup>77</sup> Through the connection lettuce has to the production of blood and blood to the makings of a foetus, lettuce could then be connected with life and the reproduction. Thus, for women lettuce does not necessarily represent the sexual death that their men-folk claim but is far more related to the creation of life.

However, lettuce could present dangers to a pregnant woman despite its usefulness for other ailments. Lettuce is supposed to be a promoter of menstrual blood from which, as Pliny tell us, “the infant is formed” once united with male seed.<sup>78</sup> As lettuce is also believed to encourage women’s bodies to remain moist to increase their chances of conceiving, lettuce is also an aid in conception.<sup>79</sup> It was also believed that sexual intercourse aided in maintaining the moisture of a woman’s uterus and encouraged the heating of blood. For that reason, it seems contradictory to assume that lettuce was an anaphrodisiac for women whilst they were encouraged to consume such vegetables to aid in the maintenance of vaginal health and increase their chances of conception and pregnancy.

As lettuce was believed to encourage menstruation and moisture, and that this menstrual blood is the substance that Pliny believes a baby is made of, it can be presumed that women would have avoided eating it in most cases during pregnancy from the fear that a child might be weak or stillborn. In support of this argument, a text attributed to Aspasia warns pregnant women to avoid foods that ‘predispose to flatulence’ and any that may have encouraged the loss of blood.<sup>80</sup> Though this text does not explicitly name lettuce, I would argue that as lettuce encourages such processes it could have been one of the foods meant. However, women in their eighth month of pregnancy who were experiencing constipation caused by the pressure from the uterus could take a drink incorporating lettuce that would relieve them of this discomfort.<sup>81</sup> One would assume that it is only a small amount of lettuce juice prescribed, so as to avoid harm to the unborn baby. After childbirth if a woman was suffering ‘around the anus’, she was prescribed a drink mixed of boiled juniper berries and flax root, and was

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<sup>77</sup> Arist. *GA*. 727b18.

<sup>78</sup> Plin. *HN* 7.13.

<sup>79</sup> Aët. LIII.

<sup>80</sup> Aët. XII. A similar view is expressed in Sor. 1.46.

<sup>81</sup> Aët. XII.

instructed to eat lettuce seeds in goose fat.<sup>82</sup> If a woman finds herself pregnant and wishes to abort the pregnancy, she should “continuously use decoctions which will induce the flow of the menses, and urination, and induce bowel movements...”<sup>83</sup>, effects for which lettuce was known.

### **Fennel (μάραθὸν / ἵππομάραθον / μάραθον / *feniculum* / *marathum*)**

Most discussions of the Adonia do not address the topic of fennel per se. The inclusion of fennel in the Gardens of Adonis is less easily explained in terms of myths connected with Adonis or Aphrodite, though it does appear in other Graeco-Roman myths. For example, Hesiod recalls that it was inside a fennel stalk that Prometheus hid the stolen fire, which then enabled the civilisation of mankind.<sup>84</sup> This particular variety of fennel could be identified as ἵππομάραθον, meaning horse fennel, that is tall and wild,<sup>85</sup> of which there are two varieties.<sup>86</sup> The scent of fennel is attested in reference to a Naiad.<sup>87</sup> Fennel was also known to have grown in a large quantity in the plain of Marathon, which was named for this reason.<sup>88</sup>

In book one of Hippocrates’ *Mulierum Affectibus* there is a description of a number of uses of fennel to treat gynaecological processes and problems such as menstruation, infertility, conception and pregnancy. For example, fennel (μάραθον) and horse-fennel are aids in the production and maintenance of breast milk.<sup>89</sup> Fennel was also used in a steam bath to purge the uterus of ailments made known through unusual menstrual discharge.<sup>90</sup> To correct the placement of the uterus, there was an instruction to fumigate the womb with fennel and absinthe.<sup>91</sup> To treat ulcerations in the womb that result in problematic vaginal discharge, one of the treatments prescribed was a douche made from boiling grease, dill, fennel, honey-coloured wine, water while drinking much milk and sweet wine.<sup>92</sup> Similar to cabbage, fennel

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<sup>82</sup> Hp. *Mul.* 1. 78.

<sup>83</sup> Aët. XVIII.

<sup>84</sup> Hes. *Th.* 565; Hes. *Op.* 50; Apollod. 1.7; A. *Pr.* 105-110;

<sup>85</sup> Dsc. 3.71.

<sup>86</sup> Plin. *HN* 20.96.

<sup>87</sup> Verg. *Ecol.* 2.

<sup>88</sup> Str. 3.4.9.

<sup>89</sup> Hp. *Mul.* 1.44, 45.

<sup>90</sup> Hp. *Mul.* 1.11.

<sup>91</sup> Hp. *Mul.* 8.3.

<sup>92</sup> Hp. *Mul.* 1. 66.

purges the uterus after a woman has given birth. Fennel root boiled in wine, oil and honey expels the placenta.<sup>93</sup>

The medicinal uses of fennel are numerous in the works of later writers. Plutarch wrote that the snake used fennel to restore and then improve its eyesight.<sup>94</sup> Pliny notes that fennel could also be used for: dropsy (edema); kidney health; dulling the heat of burning tumours; bladder and bowel health; lungs, stomach and liver problems. Other uses relate specifically to women and it is fascinating that the medical uses of fennel are similar to those of lettuce. For women, cultivated fennel was believed to restore the flow of milk, lessen fever and nausea, and act as an aphrodisiac. The wild variety of fennel, ‘more efficacious in every respect than cultivated fennel’, could encourage regular menstruation and aided in bladder health. Pliny also mentions that fennel aids in the “secretion of seminal fluids”, a use particular to men.<sup>95</sup>

### **Aphrodite, Adonis, lettuce and fennel: an alternative to sex, death and the male viewpoint**

Aphrodite as a goddess and major character in the performance of this festival dictates the performance of the festival’s rites but also provides the important link between the herbs and vegetables in the Gardens of Adonis and the women participants. Her position towards the Gardens of Adonis also further deconstructs Adonis’s involvement.

After having discussed the use of lettuce by women, the reasoning behind Aphrodite’s concealment or placement of Adonis in the lettuce still needs clarification. If lettuce was believed to be so harmful for men sexually, why would Aphrodite have placed Adonis in the lettuce to begin with, and why would the women include it in the potted gardens? Perhaps the answers have very little to do with the sexual implications for men and more to do with the perceived health benefits for men and women.<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> Hp. *Mul.* 1.78; Dsc. 3.81.

<sup>94</sup> Plu. *De. Soll.* 20.

<sup>95</sup> Plin. *HN* 20.96.

<sup>96</sup> This assertion is contradictory to the interpretation offered by Parker, wherein his of the short-lived gardens as representative for the “mocking female attitude to male sexual prowess”. Parker, 2005, 286. It is also in opposition to the arguments of: Detienne, 1997, 68; Winkler, 1990, 204-5, particularly Winkler’s argument as his emphasis is upon sex, the sexual implications for men resulting from the use lettuce and a dominant female in the sexual relationship between Adonis and Aphrodite.

It is repeated in later literary sources that Aphrodite either hid or placed Adonis in lettuce after his fatal injury from the boar's attack. Aphrodite did not do this to cause Adonis further harm. Bion's *Idyllium I* and Sappho's lament convey clearly Aphrodite's despair upon the loss of her lover.<sup>97</sup> Within this scene it is possible to glimpse the interaction between the different uses of lettuce for women and men. I would argue that her placement of Adonis in the lettuce is an implicit reference to the attempt to save him, as lettuce was believed to aid sores and wounds and was a natural painkiller. Furthermore, women associated the use of lettuce with the cleaning and care of their bodies after the bloody and painful experience of childbirth. Thus the use of lettuce for pain and healing could relate to the use of lettuce for Adonis's wounds. This sorrowful scenario is made worse through the disbelief that Adonis could not be saved, despite Aphrodite's efforts.

Detienne identified lettuce as "food for corpses" in two ways: the wetness of lettuce supposedly aligned with "that which is bound to die and rot"; it inhibited a man's sexual performance. Detienne's assertion that the moisture of lettuce is associated with death and decay ignores the belief that it is exactly this moist quality that benefits and improves women's health.<sup>98</sup> The moisture of lettuce is connected with ideas of life, reproduction and good bodily health for women, as the female body is often believed to be that which is moist and cold.<sup>99</sup> The use of lettuce to aid wounds applies to both men and women and had more to do with dulling the pain of the wound than sexual performance in this interaction between Aphrodite and the wounded Adonis. It is not applicable to involve the anaphrodisiac associations in this scenario, because this scene has no direct links to sexual intercourse or sexual performance. Whilst the boar's tusks are said to have punctured Adonis in the groin according to Ovid, any links between the area wounded and sexual performance are slight and tenuous and may be an invention of Ovid.<sup>100</sup> The lettuce has more to do with wounds and the pain of injury. Ancient and modern male authors alike, such as Detienne, Winkler, Parker, Athenaeus and Amphis, have arguably misunderstood the use of lettuce in this scene and assumed that the anaphrodisiac quality of lettuce overrides its other uses. The narrow focus

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<sup>97</sup> Bion, I. 30-35, 60-75 in particular illustrate Venus's (Aphrodite's) own grief. Sapph. 71.

<sup>98</sup> Detienne, 1977, 68.

<sup>99</sup> Gal. *UP*. 14.6-7.

<sup>100</sup> Ov. *Met.* 10.522, 705ff.

upon sex and the significance of sex has meant that all other uses of lettuce have been disregarded in the interpretations of this scene and the Adonia festival.

It is surprising that despite the aphrodisiac effect of fennel, the use and appearance of this herb in the Adonia has not been included in other scholarly discussions. As it has not been represented in any mythical associations with Aphrodite and Adonis it is difficult to deconstruct its inclusion in the Adonia. Perhaps its inclusion relates to a belief that is now lost. We can still appreciate the use of fennel in other mythical accounts. For example, the role that fennel played in the myth of Prometheus and fire demonstrated its power and connection with the improvement of human life. Similarly, if fennel was consumed, the side effects of improved menstruation for women and sexual desire for both men and women relate to life and the enjoyment of life's pleasures. The fennel seedlings in the Adonia likely relate to the hope of improved or new life with Aphrodite and the living female participants, despite the loss of Adonis's life.<sup>101</sup> Although the women mourn the death of Adonis, there is still the promise of new and enjoyable life through their worship and appeasement of Aphrodite.<sup>102</sup>

While exploring the associations between the myths of Aphrodite and Adonis and lettuce, it is also apparent the ways in which these myths feed into and arise from ritual practice. The myths of Aphrodite's despair anticipate the behaviour exhibited by the female participants and the ritual carries with it the retelling of the myths. In the third century B.C., there is no mention of the lettuce in Bion's poetry. By the third century A.D. with Athenaeus citing earlier Greek writers, and Ovid's description of the hunting scene, these writers attempt to explain the presence of lettuce in the festival. This development does not imply that the lettuce and fennel seedlings were not included in earlier Greek ritual. It does highlight a changing emphasis from Aphrodite and her laments to a focus on Adonis and his gardens and

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<sup>101</sup> The idea of improvement of life and the community of women could be evidenced on a fragment of a red-figure lebes (Louvre CA 1679). The ladder featured in the scene has led to the belief that it depicts the Adonia festival, though we should be cautious as not all scenes with ladders and women necessarily reference the Adonia and also consider the fragmentary nature of the evidence.

<sup>102</sup> I would also note Simm's interpretation of the presence of the lettuce and fennel in the gardens, as she presents them as an extension of the funerary rites wherein women would lay out the deceased on herbs and plants. As Euboulus (cited in Athenaeus) describes that Aphrodite laid Adonis upon lettuce, Simms believes there is a parallel here, with which I would also agree. Simms, 1997/1998, 133.



their continued presence in the festival, as well as the attempts to explain the aetiology of the gardens and pot-herbs in the ritual. This emphasis on Adonis likely explains the focus on the medicinal uses of lettuce and fennel for men at the expense of their uses by women.

There is much speculation as to why women practised the Adonia. Goff suggests an interpretation that speaks more of a gynaecological focus.<sup>103</sup> Goff suggests that the Adonia is an opportunity for women to express their frustrations, desire for destruction at the inadequacies of patriarchal culture and their positions and roles in society, without inflicting harm upon others in the community.<sup>104</sup> I do not completely prescribe to this view, though I can see the merits it creates in presenting a view contrary to that of the docile Greek woman. Goff also purports that women's festivals such as the Adonia offer women a moment of respite from the "domestic life" that could reinvigorate them for their responsibilities.<sup>105</sup> The issue with this analysis assumes that women must have relied on the female-only festivals to recuperate, and assumes that women never left the domestic space except during these festival periods. I would argue that such a view further restricts modern understandings of ancient women's presence in spaces other than the private sphere.

I do agree that the social elements are important because the festival enables women to enjoy themselves in the company of other women.<sup>106</sup> Once this festival was well established in Greece, I would add that the women used the Adonia as an opportunity to mourn the losses they had experienced, as well as the loss experienced by their goddess.<sup>107</sup> Judging by the

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<sup>103</sup> "The Adonia speaks to the contradiction inherent in patriarchal organisation, whereby women, entrusted with the responsibility for life, are necessarily also equipped with the power to bring death". Goff, 2004, 143. This statement is similar to the perceived contradiction of the women of the Thesmophoria as discussed in Detienne, 1989, 129.

<sup>104</sup> Simms also presents to us an underlying political motive in the festival, as they gave voice to their frustrations, concerns and disputes towards the limits placed upon them in traditional funerary contexts. R. Simms, 1997/1998, 137. A political motive is also explored in Fredal, 2002, 590-612.

<sup>105</sup> Goff, 2004, 144.

<sup>106</sup> Dillon, 2002, 166. Dillon suggests that we should in fact be asking why wouldn't women want to participate in the Adonia!

<sup>107</sup> Dillon would disagree with me, as he argues that the women only mourn because Aphrodite does. Dillon, 2002, 167. Even though it is more speculative, I could imagine that in the year of the famous Funerary Oration attributed to Perikles and the loss of life in the Athenians' war with the Spartans the women would have felt particularly connected with the feelings of loss and grief performed during the Adonia. Simms, however,

ancient sources that attest to the loud and energetic behaviour of women, the participants also celebrated the time they had in the company of other women, which reveals a social function as well as a religious one. The social perspective of the Adonia is an important area of study for the religious experiences of ancient women.<sup>108</sup> Aside from this social element, this festival is a valuable study because it enables us to view the interaction between the different medical uses of natural product and demonstrates that the user determines the difference. Through this research and its focus, Aphrodite and the female participants in the Adonia encourage us to improve our understanding of the natural products that were available in the ancient world, and the multiple uses and results that these natural products were believed to cause. They also implore us to look further and to explore interpretations outside of the andro-centric views expressed in both ancient and modern sources.

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presents a similar hypothesis as my argument, wherein she argues that the Adonia was attractive to women because it allowed them a place of familiarity and comfort that they could share with other women and was a “natural expansion of their traditional funerary role”. Simms, 1997/1998, 130.

<sup>108</sup> Dillon, 2002, 166.

## **Chapter 3.**

### **Nature's remedies in the Thesmophoria**

...ἄνωγε δ' ἄρ' ἄλφι καὶ ὕδωρ

δοῦναι μίξασαν πῖεμεν γλήχωνι τερεῖνῃ.

ἣ δὲ κυκεῶν τεύξασα θεῶι πόρεν, ὥς ἐκέλευε:

δεξαμένη δ' ὀσίης ἔνεκεν πολυπότνια Δῆώ.

“...She asked them to mix barley meal and water with soft mint [pennyroyal] and giver her that instead. So Metaneira mixed the kykeon, as she was told, and offered the cup to the goddess. And the great queen Deo accepted it for the sake of the rite”.

- Homeric *Hymn to Demeter* 208-211

εὐφημία 'στω, εὐφημία 'στω. εὐχεσθε τοῖν

Θεσμοφόροι,

τῇ Δήμητρι καὶ τῇ Κόρη

καὶ τῷ Πλούτῳ καὶ τῇ Καλλιγενείᾳ καὶ τῇ Κουροτρόφῳ τῇ Γῇ

καὶ τῷ Ἑρμῇ καὶ Χάρισιν, ἐκκλησίαν τήνδε

καὶ σύνοδον τὴν νῦν

κάλλιστα καὶ ἄριστα

ποιῆσαι, πολυωφελῶς μὲν

πόλει τῇ Ἀθηναίων

τυχερῶς δ' ἡμῖν αὐταῖς.

“Silence! Silence! Pray to the Thesmophorae, Demeter and Kore; pray to Plutus, Calligenia, Curotrophus, the Earth, Hermes and the Graces, that all may happen for the best at this gathering, both for the greatest advantage of Athens and for our own personal happiness!”

- Aristophanes, *Thesmophoriazusae* 295-304

### **Introduction**

The Thesmophoria is a popular topic for study in modern scholarship for the religiosity of women in ancient Greece.<sup>1</sup> This festival is of special note because it is one of the few festivals

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<sup>1</sup> See for example: Nilsson, 1998; Simon, 1983; Goff, 2004; Suter, 2002; Dillon, 2002; Parker, 2005; Foxhall, 1993; Detienne, 1989; Burkert, 1985, 242-46; Winkler, 1990.

in which the rites and procedures are entrusted solely to women and men are expressly excluded. For this thesis, the interest this festival holds is in used of natural products during the festival and how these uses relate to ancient Greek perceptions of women's bodies and their societal roles. There is also strong evidence of women's agency within the proceedings and from the uses of the plant products in this festival.

From the ancient sources available the basic elements of this festival are discernable, the exact details of the festival remaining secret. In most Demetrian festivals, secrecy is vital.<sup>2</sup> Herodotus says that the Thesmophoria was brought to the Greeks via the daughters of Danaus from Egypt.<sup>3</sup> Held during the month of Pyanopsion, the married citizen women leave their husbands and households for a three-day period in Athens (tens days in Syracuse)<sup>4</sup>, these three days known as: ἀνάδοϑ, νηϑτεία and καλλιγένηια.<sup>5</sup> Two women are chosen to direct the proceedings and the husbands of the participants are expected to finance the festival.<sup>6</sup> The state must also aid in the financing of this women-run festival, as the decree of Cholargos indicates.<sup>7</sup> During the first day, after they had made their way up to the festival site, the women set up their temporary encampment of tents with vitex mats.<sup>8</sup> The second day was a day of fasting and solemn temperament contrasted with sexualised jokes, possibly in imitation of the scene in the *Hymn to Demeter*.<sup>9</sup> During this fast, it is possible that the women consumed a *kykeon* (barley meal, pennyroyal and water), which is a common drink taken

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<sup>2</sup> Is. *Philo.* 6.49-50; Call. *Aet.* 3.1; Hdt. 2.171.2.

<sup>3</sup> Hdt. 2.171.

<sup>4</sup> Three day period: *Suda* s.v. delta,448 (adler); D.S. 5.4.7: Syracuse: the Thesmophoria lasted for ten days there. Interestingly, Demeter's fast in the *Hymn* lasted for nine days and ended on the tenth day when Hecate found her. *h.Hom.* 2. 45-50.

<sup>5</sup> Schol. Ar. *Th.* 80.

<sup>6</sup> Is. *Pyr.* 3.80.

<sup>7</sup> *IG* 2<sup>2</sup> II84.

<sup>8</sup> Ar. *Th.* 1045; Hesych. s.v. ἄνοδοϑ.

<sup>9</sup> Ar. *Av.* 1519: "... no, without burnt offerings we're as good as fasting at the Thesmophoria"; *h.Hom.* 2.196-204; Apollod. 1.5. Apollodorus writes: "...Some women were in the house, and when they bade her [Demeter] sit down beside them, a certain old crone, Iambe, joked the goddess and made her smile. For that reason they say that the women break jests at the Thesmophoria". Ath. 7.80: "My friends, are we, too, keeping a fast, as if this were the middle day of the Thesmophoria...".

during a fast for medicinal or other reasons and spent this day seated on the ground.<sup>10</sup> The third day was a day of celebration and feasting, the women performing the sacrifice for the feast themselves.<sup>11</sup> One of the rituals attributed to the Thesmophoria entails the women collecting the rotten pig remains and decomposing dough cakes from the *megara* and placing these remains upon an altar. This mixture would then be spread upon the crops to ensure a good harvest.<sup>12</sup> I do not agree with Parker and Dillon that this occurred during the time of the Thesmophoria.<sup>13</sup> After a thorough reading of the scholion, it would be feasible to suggest it occurred after the Thesmophoria because the ‘dredgers’ who descended down into the pits could only do so after “three days of ritual purity”.<sup>14</sup> I do not deny the rite’s connection to the Thesmophoria; rather it stands as a festival that honours the gift of civilisation from Demeter in another physical way that is related to the purposes and significance of Demeter *Thesmophoros*.<sup>15</sup> Only married women were permitted to celebrate the Thesmophoria, with the exclusion of unmarried girls, recently married young women and slaves.<sup>16</sup> This selection was further centred on married women who had already given birth to children.<sup>17</sup> I

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<sup>10</sup> h.Hom. 2.202; Hippocrates describes a few barley groat drinks which women should take while they are fasting for reasons including illness and pain (1.35, 1.50, 1.52) and promoting or encouraging conception (1.11); Plu. *De Iside* 69.

<sup>11</sup> SEG 28.30; Paus.10.33; Plu. *Quaes. Gr.* 298b: “why is it that at the Thesmophoria the Eretrian women cook their meat, not by fire, but by the rays of the sun; and why do they not call upon Kalligeneia?”; Hesych. also indicates the involvement of Kalligeneia: Hesych. s.v. Καλλιγένειαν.

<sup>12</sup> Schol.Luc. ii.1 in Parker, 2005, 273; Paus. 9.8.1; Parker, 2005, 273; Dillon, 2002, 114: Dillon suggests that the pig sacrifice occurred during the first day. Evans, 2010, 13 suggests that the *megara* rite occurred on the third day. However, the interpretation that the mix would be used to better the harvest is, according to Lowe, what the scholion *does not say*. According to Lowe, the scholion believes that the mixture is an offering to Demeter and that the prior interpretation mentioned is a result of Frazer’s generational reading of the source. For a thorough and critical analysis of the extant evidence for this rite see Lowe, 2005, 120-146.

<sup>13</sup> Clement of Alexandria is confused about this point: in one sentence he attributes the *Megara* rite to the Thesmophoria and in the next states that the women celebrated it “in different cities in the festivals called Thesmophoria and Scirophoria [Skira]”. Clem.Al. *Protr.* 2.17.1 For example, Versnel suggests that the pig festival occurred possibly during the Skira. Versnel, 1992, 34. For other scholars who suggest alternate days, see Dillon, 2002, 326, n. 33;

<sup>14</sup> Schol. Luc. 2.1.

<sup>15</sup> SEG 28.30 25-27. I believe this sacrifice is separate to the pig sacrifice ritual in Schol.Luc.ii.1 because the SEG mentions sacrificial knives and the Scholiast does not. Interestingly, Pausanias mentions also another ritual wherein people throw burning torches into a pit in honour of “the Maid”, Persephone. See Paus. 2.22.3.

<sup>16</sup> Is. *Philo.* 6.49-50; Ar. *Th.* 294.

<sup>17</sup> Call. *Cer.* 6.119-33; Dillon, 2002, 112.

hypothesise that this requirement of motherhood for the female participants relates to the knowledge imparted during this festival.

Walter Burkert and Marcel Detienne have noted in particular the apparent actions of violence against men in the sacrificial slaughter involved in this women's festival.<sup>18</sup> These scholars have interpreted this violence as: an expression and manifestation of women's frustration against the barriers placed on them by the patriarchy;<sup>19</sup> that it is a justification of Greek society's views against women performing blood sacrifices or yielding knives; an inversion of masculine and feminine societal roles.<sup>20</sup> They also argue that these women are completely "occupied with blood and death";<sup>21</sup> the blood that flows represents both the blood flowing from the slaughtered animals and that of the menses.<sup>22</sup> Detienne's discussion of the plant matter used in the Thesmophoria relates only to this blood-focused point.<sup>23</sup> However, I am in agreement with Dillon wherein the festival is not in fact about ritual inversion of roles or genders; the violence against men occurs when men trespass into areas expressly prohibited to them.<sup>24</sup> Thus the violence is not a reason to argue that women should not perform blood sacrifices during their own festivals.<sup>25</sup> As the sacrifice is believed to be that which contributes to the feast held on the third day, the purpose of the sacrifice is not about death but is of

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<sup>18</sup> Battus in *Suda* s.v. theta, 272 (adler).

<sup>19</sup> Burkert, 1985, 244.

<sup>20</sup> Detienne, 1989, 144-5. In opposition to this point is the account in D. *Neaer*. 59.116 wherein a man, Archias, is being charged for a number of things. One of these things is the offense he committed by "offering a sacrifice contrary to the rites... he sacrificed on the altar in the court at Eleusis a victim brought by the courtesan Sinop, although it was not lawful to offer victims on that day, *and the sacrifice was not his to perform, but the priestess's*" (my emphasis added).

<sup>21</sup> For example, myth of the Danaïds in Hdt. 2.171.3. and Apollod. 2.1.5. Apollod. describes a fuller account of the slaying of the husbands of Danaus' daughters by the knives Danaus gifted them: This account does not illustrate why women should not be given or yield knives or weapons but is an example of an orchestration of a decision made between a father and his daughters. The daughter who did not slay her husband is punished and locked away, demonstrating that not all women who yield a knife will kill another. Burkert calls the Danaïds as "those notorious men-murderers", reflecting his stance against women performing sacrifice.

<sup>22</sup> Burkert, 1985, 244; Detienne, 1989, 147.

<sup>23</sup> Detienne, 1989, 147.

<sup>24</sup> Paus. 4.17.1 is explicit: "the women were inspired by the goddess to defend themselves" using the sacrificial knives and spits. The men should not have been there and the women felt empowered to defend themselves against the men's trespassing.

<sup>25</sup> Dillon, 2002, 115-16.

religious significance and is about feasting and the consumption of the sacrifice.<sup>26</sup> I would argue that it is Detienne and Burkert who are “occupied with blood and death”.<sup>27</sup>

### **Demeter’s itinerary: the natural products of the Thesmophoria**

The Cholargos Decree provides information regarding the measurements and amounts of items required for the festival.<sup>28</sup> There is no indication of meat in this itinerary though that does not mean that animals were not taken, as the other available evidence refers to sacrifice.<sup>29</sup> The natural products of notice include: wheat, barley, groats (crushed or rolled oats), meal, dried figs, honey, white sesame, black sesame, poppy seeds, garlic. For matters of convenience and space, I will address the following in this chapter: barley, figs, wheat, poppy seeds, garlic and sesame. I will also address the plant vitex because of its relevance to this thesis’s topic, though it is not listed in the Cholargos decree. Honey and wine will also be explored. In regards to the *kykeon* that Demeter drinks in the Homeric poem, Lucia Nixon has already thoroughly discussed one of the ingredients (pennyroyal), which needs no further explanation.<sup>30</sup> For this reason, I will not be discussing this ingredient in detail, but will instead expand upon the medicinal uses of the other active ingredients of the *kykeon*, wheat and barley. Hippocrates mentions that wheat is used to make bread, and barley is used to make cakes. As bread often symbolises the civilisation of the Greeks, barley cakes might be representative of the religious understandings or positions of the ancient Greek culture.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Sacrifices and feasts are common rituals in festivals and religious ceremonies. The sacrifices of the Thesmophoria should not be viewed differently simply because they were performed by women.

<sup>27</sup> A point to this case is Burkert’s reading of Clem.Al. *Protrept.* 2.19 note about pomegranates and the Thesmophoria. Burkert wrote “In reality the women at the Thesmophoria eat pomegranate pips whose deep red juice is always associated with blood; if a pip falls on the ground it belongs to the dead. Thus the women are occupied with blood and death”. Burkert, 1985, 244. Clement of Alexandria wrote that “the women celebrating the Thesmophoria abstain from eating the seeds of the pomegranate which have fallen on the ground, from the idea that pomegranates sprang from the drops of the blood of Dionysus”. Clem.Al. *Protrept.* 2.19. I do not see how this anecdote reflects the women’s occupation with blood- if they were so occupied with blood and death, would then not have eaten even the pips that fell?

<sup>28</sup> *IG* 2<sup>2</sup> II84.

<sup>29</sup> *SEG* 28.30 25-27; Schol.Luc. ii.1 in Parker, 2005, 273, Lowe, 2005, 133-37 ; Dillon, 2002, 115; Burkert, 1989, 134.

<sup>30</sup> Nixon, 1995, 85-86.

<sup>31</sup> Hp. *Vet.Med.* 3.

Herodotus refers to wheat, barley, millet and sesame as the fruit of Demeter,<sup>32</sup> which demonstrates the special significance of barley, wheat and sesame at the festival of Demeter, the Thesmophoria.

### **Wheat (πυρός / σῖτος / *frumentum* / *triticum*)**

Wheat belongs to the principal class of grain in which barley is also situated. These cereals are further divided according to sowing time, and wheat belongs to those sown in winter “about the setting of the Vergiliae”.<sup>33</sup> The seedlings begin to show around the seventh day after sowing, though the times vary.<sup>34</sup> In Egypt, wheat can be cut at the end of seven months after it was sown. Wheat has a number of different names dependent upon its use. For example, the variety used as cattle fodder is known as “farrago” or mixed grain.<sup>35</sup>

The uses of wheat are numerous in ancient literary texts. For both men and women, wheat meal could be used to sooth the discomfort of: suppuration (festers); pains and problems of ligaments; as a cure of freckles when combined with honey and vinegar; the treatment of venomous animal bites; treatment for coughs.<sup>36</sup> Hippocrates writes of the use of wheat in: emmenagogic purgatives;<sup>37</sup> rinses to encourage conception;<sup>38</sup> purgatives for the uterus to treat discharges; the cleansing of the uterus after a woman has given birth; the expulsion of a dead or aborted foetus.<sup>39</sup> Dioscorides also notes its use for treatment of swollen and painful breasts, which is suggestive of an anti-inflammatory purpose.<sup>40</sup> It is interesting to note that wheat was

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<sup>32</sup> Hdt. 1.193: the translator has “Demeter’s grain” for Δήμητρος καρπὸν, though καρπὸν is more commonly translated to “fruit”. Wheat is often known as “fruit of the earth”; see Paus. 8.42.2. In this instance I would argue the translator has unnecessarily substituted “grain” due to the reference to Demeter and her usual association with grain. It is interesting to note that Rawlinson’s translation omits completely any reference to Demeter. See Hdt. 1.193 in Rawlinson, 1996, 87.

<sup>33</sup> Plin. *HN* 18.9-10.

<sup>34</sup> Thphr. *HP*. 8.1. 4.

<sup>35</sup> Plin. *HN* 18.10. For book eighteen, Pliny states his authorities for the information he provides and lists several Greek authors including Theophrastus, Hesiod, Aristotle, Democritus, Xenophon, Aristophanes and Bion. This demonstrates a continuity of knowledge originating from earlier Greek practices and the importance of Pliny as a source for Greek belief and practice.

<sup>36</sup> Plin. *HN* 22.58; Dsc. 2.107.

<sup>37</sup> Hp. *Mul*. 1. 74.

<sup>38</sup> Hp. *Mul*. 1.75.

<sup>39</sup> Hp. *Mul*. 1. 74; 78.

<sup>40</sup> Dsc. 2.107.



an ingredient in mixtures designed to aid in conception and in abortion, which is indicative of the significance of the other ingredients included in these recipes.<sup>41</sup>

### **Barley (κριθή / *hordeum*)**

Pliny tells us that barley is a cereal belonging to the winter sowing variety, along side wheat and spelt.<sup>42</sup> Barley blossoms “at the end of seven days at the very latest” after the ear has shown signs of its formation. In Egypt, barley seedlings appear after three or four days and it is ripe for cutting six months after the sowing period.<sup>43</sup>

The use of barley appears in a variety of herbal treatments for many different ailments. For example, barley meal is useful for aiding: tumours; liver pains; tendonitis; suppurations; snake and insect bites and stings; fevers; intestinal and abdominal pains; male genital pain.<sup>44</sup> Barley pulp lozenges are used to help intestinal and uterine ulcerations, whilst the ash of barley is applied to burns, compound (open) bone fractures, rodent bites, gout, breath-freshener and teeth whitening. Barley meal was included in a concoction thought to cure gonorrhoea,<sup>45</sup> as well as in mixtures for alleviating the discomfort of arthritis.<sup>46</sup> There is even a third century B.C. love potion from Alexandria that utilises barley, bran and bay-leaves.<sup>47</sup>

For women, barley was an ingredient in drinks that would help restore breast milk in order to continue breast-feeding.<sup>48</sup> Also, barley water “causes an abundance of milk [when] boiled together with *marathum* [fennel] seeds”.<sup>49</sup> For a woman whose uterus has become infected and ulcerated, one of the treatments is a drink containing barley meal, goat’s cheese, white poppy and whey in bitter wine, which is to be consumed in the morning before food.<sup>50</sup> To promote healthy lochial discharges, a woman should consume a concoction of barley groats

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<sup>41</sup> Sor. also mentions cereals generally as a food that can be eaten in the early days of pregnancy because they will not cause her to miscarry. Sor. 1.46.

<sup>42</sup> Plin. *HN* 18.10.

<sup>43</sup> Thphr. *HP*. 8.1.4-7; Plin. *HN* 18.10.

<sup>44</sup> Plin. *HN* 22.58; Sor. 1.50

<sup>45</sup> Aret. *CD*. 2.3.

<sup>46</sup> Aret. *CD*. 2.6.

<sup>47</sup> Theoc. 2.

<sup>48</sup> Hp. *Mul.* 1.44; Dsc. 3.81.

<sup>49</sup> Dsc. 2.108.

<sup>50</sup> Hp. *Mul.* 1. 64.

(porridge) boiled with hedge-mustard and poured into oil.<sup>51</sup> Pliny notes also a type of barley, known as ‘mouse-barley’ (*hordeum murinum*), pounded and taken in wine as an emmenagogue.<sup>52</sup> Aëtios prescribes barley water to help women who are finding it difficult to conceive as a result of excessive (high) body heat.<sup>53</sup> Another aid in conception is described in Hippocrates wherein a woman, once she had slept with her husband, should fast for a day or two. During her fast she should drink unsalted barley groats in water at least twice a day for six or seven days.<sup>54</sup> During pregnancy if a woman suffers from bile, a decoction of barley gruel and red sumach (sumac) will help alleviate the discomfort.<sup>55</sup> To help restore energy during labour, a woman can eat barley groats.<sup>56</sup>

### **Sesame (σήσαμον / σησάμη / σησαμῖς / *sesamum*)**

The sowing of sesame occurs in summer before the rising of the Vergiliae, though in Greece the sowing of all grains occurs just after the setting of the Vergiliae.<sup>57</sup> Theophrastus also makes note of the summer sowing of sesame,<sup>58</sup> and Aristophanes makes a reference to the growing of sesame in Greek household gardens.<sup>59</sup> Sesame is ripe for the picking approximately forty days after the plant has finished flowering.<sup>60</sup> There are two kinds of sesame included in the Cholargos decree, black and white.

Sesame seeds ingested alone were believed to cause stomach aches and unpleasant breath.<sup>61</sup> However, sesame is helpful for fractures and burns, as well as an anti-inflammatory for the eyes, colon, ears and snakebites, and can be used for certain skin diseases.<sup>62</sup> The seeds of black sesame encourage the removal of bile and phlegm and dissolves swellings.<sup>63</sup> The removal of phlegm can be helpful to women and their reproductive systems, as women

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<sup>51</sup> Hp. *Mul.* I.78.

<sup>52</sup> Plin. *HN* 22.65.

<sup>53</sup> Aët. LIII.

<sup>54</sup> Hp. *Mul.* I.11.

<sup>55</sup> Hp. *Mul.* I.31.

<sup>56</sup> Sor. 2.67.

<sup>57</sup> Plin. *HN* 18.10.

<sup>58</sup> Thphr. *HP.* 8.1.1.

<sup>59</sup> Ar. *Av.* 159.

<sup>60</sup> Plin. *HN* 18.10.

<sup>61</sup> Dsc. 2.121; Plin. *HN.* 22.64.

<sup>62</sup> Dsc. 2.121; Plin. *HN* 22.64.

<sup>63</sup> Dsc. 4.153; Plin. *HN* 22.64.

suffering as a result of a phlegm build-up in their heads or abdomens will have phlegm in their menstrual blood.<sup>64</sup> Pessaries (medical devices inserted into the vagina alike to a tampon) are utilised to purge out excess phlegm, and it is likely that an ingredient used in these pessaries would have been sesame.

Other prescriptions including a mix containing sesame and white hellebore are believed to help with psychological problems and epilepsy.<sup>65</sup> A drink containing hellebore, barley water and sesame is recommended during a fast, which could allude to its use at the Thesmophoria.<sup>66</sup> If a woman is vomiting blood after childbirth, she should drink ass's milk for a week, followed by milk from a black cow for forty days with little to no food intake. Following this, Hippocrates recommends giving her a ground sesame drink to aid the woman further.<sup>67</sup> Sesame, mixed in barley and beet juice with honey or medlar juice, aids in breast milk production.<sup>68</sup>

### **Garlic (σκόροδον / ἐλαφόσκορδον / ἀφρόσκορδον / *alium*)**

Theophrastus states that garlic is planted around the time of the solstice, winter and summer. There are different varieties, one of which matures in sixty days, and the others before or after this time period. The variety that consists of cloves matures over a three-year period.<sup>69</sup> Pliny's description of the garlic matches closely to the garlic available today.<sup>70</sup> If left in the ground, garlic behaves like onions and continues to multiply.<sup>71</sup> The type ἀφρόσκορδον ('Ulpicum' in Pliny) was given this name by the Greeks because it produces foam when beaten up with oil and vinegar.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> Hp. *Mul.* 1.9.

<sup>65</sup> Plin. *HN* 22.64.

<sup>66</sup> Dsc. 4.150; Plin. *HN* 22.64.

<sup>67</sup> Hp. *Mul.* 1.43.

<sup>68</sup> Hp. *Mul.* 1.44.

<sup>69</sup> Thphr. *HP.* 7.4.10-12. Pliny confirms this growth period for garlic that is grown from seeds. Plin. *HN* 19.34.

<sup>70</sup> Plin. *HN* 19.34: "The external coat consists of membranes of remarkable fineness, which are universally discarded when the vegetable is used; the inner part being formed by the union of several cloves, each of which has also a separate coat of its own".

<sup>71</sup> Thphr. *HP.* 7.4.10-12.

<sup>72</sup> Plin. *HN* 19.34. It is interesting that it is identified in this way with ἀφρό- as Aphrodite of Cyprus is also identified similarly.

There are a number of remedies prescribed to the use of garlic in the ancient world. Pliny attributes garlic in treatments for animal bites, specifically those from snakes and scorpions. For the wounds of dog bites, garlic is mixed in honey and applied directly to the wound.<sup>73</sup> Dioscorides also describes its successful use in treating: problems of the eyes and throat; head lice; bruises; hair loss. Garlic is also effective in treating issues of the skin such as pimples, dandruff, psoriasis and other skin diseases. When boiled with pitch pine and frankincense, garlic soothes toothaches.<sup>74</sup> Pliny is the only one to state that garlic is an aphrodisiac when mixed with coriander and taken in pure wine.<sup>75</sup> Garlic was taken with neat wine and hellebore for energy, as an entry in Theophrastus indicates.<sup>76</sup>

Aristophanes in *Thesmophoriazusa* mocks women for their consumption of garlic as a means of concealing their “wantonness” of the previous night from their husbands.<sup>77</sup> Aristophanes does not recognise the health benefits associated with the consumption of garlic for women, and comments only on the pungent smell. For women, the use of garlic is common in treatments to purge and clean the uterus,<sup>78</sup> as well as to correct or open the uterus.<sup>79</sup> Related to this use is a test involving garlic to determine if a suppository has been effective in an abortion.<sup>80</sup> Garlic is an ingredient in emmenagogic decoctions, delivered in steam baths or through controlled smoke inhalation.<sup>81</sup>

### **Figs (σῦκον / σύκη / *figus*)**

The propagation of figs is best done using an already sprouted shoot driven into the ground like a wooden stake.<sup>82</sup> Figs are used in their ripe and unripe states for a number of different remedies and are generally thought to be useful for the young and the elderly alike.<sup>83</sup> The unripe figs are used to treat skin issues such as warts, growths and swellings of the glands and

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<sup>73</sup> Plin. *HN* 20.23.

<sup>74</sup> Dsc. *Med. Mat.* 2.182.

<sup>75</sup> Plin. *HN* 20.23.

<sup>76</sup> Thphr. *HP.* 9.8.5-6.

<sup>77</sup> Ar., *Th.* 490-95.

<sup>78</sup> Hp. *Mul.* 1.37, 81, 83; Dsc. 2.182.

<sup>79</sup> Dsc. 3.54.

<sup>80</sup> Hp. *Mul.* 1.78.

<sup>81</sup> Dsc. 2.182.

<sup>82</sup> Thphr. *HP.* 2.5.4.

<sup>83</sup> Plin. *HN* 23.63.

tumours. They also help remove ulcers, dandruff, scabs as a result of a type of leprosy and treat infections from dog bites. Mixed with the leaves of wild poppy, unripe figs soothe broken bones and other inflammations.<sup>84</sup> Wild figs are useful in the treatment of health issues generally because they clean the flesh and are believed to be more effective.<sup>85</sup> In such instances of open flesh wounds wild figs aid in the sealing and binding of the flesh. The ash of burnt fig-tree branches is used when treating gangrene, as well as ulcerations and dysentery.<sup>86</sup> Figs are also used to help women with nausea, excess phlegm, bile and blood-filled discharges.<sup>87</sup> A woman who is wishing to conceive can use fig juice to ensure the cervix is open.<sup>88</sup>

Fig is commonly used in purgative pessaries for the uterus, and particular sections of the fruit are more effective. For example, the inside of the fig mixed with buprestis (an insect) will purge the uterus, but also using the fruit's flesh will double the amount used in the pessary (a tampon specific to medical use).<sup>89</sup> Figs are also used in abortifacients.<sup>90</sup> Dioscorides holds a positive view towards dried figs instead of raw, as the dried are nourishing, warming, cause thirst and are good for the bowels. For women, figs are added to poultices with barley meal, fenugreek or barley water for "women's warm packs". They are an emmenagogue when applied with an egg yolk or Etruscan wax.<sup>91</sup>

### **Poppy and poppy seeds (μήκων / μήκων ἡμερος / μήκων ἀγρία / *papaver* / *papaver rhoeas*)**

There are a couple of different varieties of poppies, two of which are described in Theophrastus. The *rhoias* (also *rhoeas*) grows well in cultivated fields, particularly those of barley. It seems to be the same red variety still popular in modern times, as Theophrastus's description illustrates and is gathered before the barley is harvested when it is still green. This variety is useful for purging "downwards". The other kind described in Theophrastus is

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<sup>84</sup> Dsc. *Med. Mat.* 1.185; Plin. *HN* 23.63; Hp. *Mul.* 1.78;

<sup>85</sup> Plin. *HN* 23.64.

<sup>86</sup> Dsc. 1.186; Plin. *HN* 23.63-64.

<sup>87</sup> Hp. *Mul.* 1.58, 79, 80, 84.

<sup>88</sup> Hp. *Mul.* 1.89.

<sup>89</sup> Hp. *Mul.* 1.74; Plin. *HN* 23.63.

<sup>90</sup> Hp. *Mul.* 1.78; Sor. 1.62.

<sup>91</sup> Dsc. 1.183; Plin. *HN* 23.64.

identified as the *Herakleia* variety. The *Herakleia* is used to bleach linen, but can also be used to purge “upwards” and for epilepsy.<sup>92</sup>

Pliny identifies three types of the cultivated poppy, which are the white, the black and the wild *rhoias/rhoeas*. The first kind grows well with cabbage, rocket and lettuce. This type is used for culinary purposes, as it is often used in bread and in a honey dish. The black poppy contains a milky juice derived from the stalk and is referred to as the opium poppy. The third is the wild kind, which grows well with barley and produces the red flower.<sup>93</sup> Poppies are also among the plants that are believed to attract bees.<sup>94</sup>

In order to prepare the ground for the poppy, it is recommended that the area should be burnt using twigs and branches where corn has grown. Pliny also distinguishes between the wild and cultivated varieties of poppy by their medical uses: the cultivated is a strong narcotic; the wild boiled in honey is a remedy for throat ailments.<sup>95</sup> Used sometimes instead of sesame, poppy seeds are combined with honey in bread to maintain good health. Poppy seeds also help with insomnia, cure headaches, and are taken with wine for women when they experience excessive discharge. Other health benefits include anti-inflammation for the eyes and ears.<sup>96</sup>

Pliny also describes the use of the white poppy in culinary-related purposes, as it is often used in bread and in a honey dish. It is soporific and cures elephantiasis. The black poppy contains a milky juice derived from the stalk that is used as a narcotic. The juice is collected in wool, on one’s fingernail, or if collected in large quantities it is made into a lozenge. An overdose of the opium (black) poppy can produce a sleep that leads to death, and has been used in this way in Roman times. Pliny warns against using the opium poppy in eye treatments despite its

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<sup>92</sup> Thphr. *HP*. 9.12.3; Plin. *HN* 20.79; Dsc. discusses the poppy varieties providing information similar to Thphr. and Plin. See Dsc. *HN* 4.64-67.

<sup>93</sup> Plin. *HN* 19.53, 20.78.

<sup>94</sup> Plin. *HN* 21.41.

<sup>95</sup> Plin. *HN* 19.53.

<sup>96</sup> Dsc. 4.65; Plin. *HN* 20.77.

common use.<sup>97</sup> The leaves of wild poppies are used with unripe figs to draw out broken bones.<sup>98</sup>

### **Honey (μέλι / *mel*) and wine (οἶνος / *vinum*)**

Honey and wine are common ingredients in most herbal and medicinal treatments and are used commonly for culinary and religious purposes. Wine signifies the civilisation of the Greeks and those who drink it sensibly are believed to be representatives for the highest and most dominant of Greek culture.<sup>99</sup> Sherratt accurately states, “Wine in the Mediterranean region is practically synonymous with civilisation”.<sup>100</sup> According to Pliny, there are some eighteen varieties of sweet wine: some made with raisins or grapes,<sup>101</sup> others with honey and water.<sup>102</sup>

Pliny is explicit and detailed about the process of honey production, collection and the behaviour of bees.<sup>103</sup> On occasion in medicinal and culinary processes, honey is simply used to bind the ingredients together.<sup>104</sup> Medicinally, Dioscorides writes that Attic (Athenian) honey is the best available. Spring honey is apparently the best quality, followed by that of summer. Winter honey is the worst and is not recommended because it is believed to cause weals (irritated and raised red marks on the skin) and blisters. Honey is included in treatments for wounds, stings, bites, burns, ulcers, inflammations, certain skin diseases and most medicinal treatments.<sup>105</sup> There is a rinse described in Hippocrates that is to be used to aid in contraception, which contains: pine resin, honey, oil, spring wheat juice, barley water, eggs and native sodium carbonate. Another aid in conception in which honey is an important

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<sup>97</sup> Plin. *HN* 20.76.

<sup>98</sup> Dsc. 1.185;

<sup>99</sup> A case to this point is the mythical narrative of Odysseus and Polyphemus the Cyclops in Hom. *Od.* 9.306-330, 396. For fascinating discussions of alcohol and culture see Sherratt, 1995; F. Hartog, 2001. Pliny also criticizes Alexander the Great for his consumption of wine because he murdered friends “in his drunken fits”. Plin. *HN* 14.7.

<sup>100</sup> Sherratt, 1995, 17.

<sup>101</sup> Plin. *HN* 14.11.

<sup>102</sup> Plin. *HN* 14.11, 20. It is likely that we would classify this variety as mead. Also explored in Dsc. 2.98; 5.15-17.

<sup>103</sup> Plin. *HN* 11.8, 10-13, 15.

<sup>104</sup> Aret. *CD.* 2.3.

<sup>105</sup> Dsc. 2.101. Dioscorides identifies three kinds of honey: Attic, Sardinian and Heracleian. See Dsc. 2.101-103. For example, in most treatments described in Hippocrates honey is an ingredient. Hp. *Mul.* 1.

ingredient is an infusion containing: milk, pine resin and sweet pomegranate juice.<sup>106</sup> When mixed with other ingredients, honey draws out blood.<sup>107</sup> Hippocrates also refers to a mixture of juice from barley gruel, or of honey, eggs and an infusion of mallow. These mixtures aid in clearing the womb of problematic discharge and treat uterus ulcerations to avoid female infertility.<sup>108</sup> A suppository or pessary for the expulsion of the foetus (abortion) combines squirting cucumber, honeycomb and wine applied with a linen cloth. An alternative to this is a pessary of butter, alum and honey.<sup>109</sup> Honey is used to clear the uterus of excess phlegm, faeces and in mixtures generally used to clear out the body.<sup>110</sup> It also acts as a contraceptive when smeared at the opening of the uterus (*os uteri*, the entryway to the cervix) and is recommended for women who should not conceive for health or physical reasons. It is believed that such substances cause the uterus to wrinkle and close, thus disabling the passage of semen into the womb.<sup>111</sup>

Apart from its role as a symbol of civilised Greek culture, wine appears in medicinal mixes and treatments. Pliny observes that drinking wine results in the feeling of warmth in the abdomen and stomach, but applying it to the exterior of the body is cooling and refreshing.<sup>112</sup> This indicates two general methods of use: the internal consumption (drinking) of the liquid, the external application of wine to the body. Certain wines are good for digestion.<sup>113</sup> Others are useful for multiple maladies such as pains in the uterus, ulcerations, ruptures, spasms, asthma and coughs. Pliny warns against the internal consumption of wine for those who are vomiting, have a fever (except for the elderly) and for women who have just miscarried or given birth.<sup>114</sup> When recounting the miraculous properties of wine, Pliny describes a wine of Arcadia that results in “fruitfulness of women and of madness in men”. Of Carynia there is a wine that is an abortifacient and acts in this way after eating only one grape. Related to this wine is one of Treozen and those who consume it are either made sterile or the wine acts as a

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<sup>106</sup> Hp. *Mul.* 1.75.

<sup>107</sup> Hp. *Mul.* 1.74.

<sup>108</sup> Hp. *Mul.* 1.26.

<sup>109</sup> Hp. *Mul.* 1.78.

<sup>110</sup> For example Hp. *Mul.* 1.85, 109.

<sup>111</sup> Aët. XVI; Sor. 1. 61.

<sup>112</sup> Plin. *HN* 14.7.

<sup>113</sup> Plin. *HN* 23.21.

<sup>114</sup> Plin. *HN* 23.24.



contraceptive.<sup>115</sup> Other more explicit medicinal uses of wine include those for washing clean the female body after the use of a pessary or suppository.<sup>116</sup> In general, it seems wine was used in these instances a means of cleaning and removing substances from the body as well as an aid in rest and sleep.<sup>117</sup>

### **Vitex (ἄγνος / λύγος / ἄγιος / ἄγονον / *agnus-castus* / ‘chaste tree’)**

The vitex mats upon which it is said the women slept and sat in the Thesmophoria are attested only in later sources.<sup>118</sup> Vitex is not mentioned in the Cholargos Decree though this does not mean it was not present at the festival. The Greeks called the vitex plant ἄγνος or λύγος because of its use in the Thesmophoria. Pliny also states that there are two species.<sup>119</sup>

There are a vast number of uses for vitex. If taken in a drink or applied on the body with oil, vitex can induce fever and sweating and is a diuretic. Other uses include purging the lower body of flatulence, dropsy (edema), spleen issues, snake and spider bites, cures headaches, is used as a laxative and treats skin problems. Vitex is also used as an amulet attached to the body for neck cramps and spasms<sup>120</sup> and in a treatment for gonorrhea.<sup>121</sup> For women, the plant promotes menstruation and breast milk.<sup>122</sup> If used in a pessary or fumigator, vitex purges the uterus, which can be used after a woman has given birth and if the placenta needs help to be removed.<sup>123</sup> If a woman is experiencing a long labour, vitex encourages a quick birth.<sup>124</sup> Dioscorides prescribes it as a contraceptive or abortifacient and says it is helpful for womb

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<sup>115</sup> Plin. *HN* 14.22.

<sup>116</sup> Hp. *Mul.* 1.23.

<sup>117</sup> Examples of this generalisation include Hp. *Mul.* 1.42, 44, 45, 50, 57, 58, 78, 90; Dsc. 5.11.

<sup>118</sup> Dsc. 1.135; Plin. *HN* 24.38.

<sup>119</sup> Plin. *HN* 24.38: “lygos”, or “agnos”, from the fact that the matrons of Athens, during the Thesmophoria, a period when the strictest chastity is observed, are in the habit of strewing their beds with the leaves of this tree”.

<sup>120</sup> Plin. *HN* 30.12.

<sup>121</sup> Sor. 3.46.

<sup>122</sup> Hp. *Mul.* 1.46, 78.

<sup>123</sup> Hp. *Mul.* 1.46, 78.

<sup>124</sup> Hp. *Mul.* 1.77.

inflammation. Its other known name ἄρονον relates to its use as a contraceptive.<sup>125</sup> It is especially well known as an an-aphrodisiac.<sup>126</sup>

### **οἱ θεσμοί: the instructions of Demeter to her wives**

In much of the previous scholarship, the Thesmophoria has been characterised as having “original concerns” with agricultural prosperity<sup>127</sup> or with marital confirmation and stability,<sup>128</sup> which have then become synonymous with female fertility and reproduction. Foxhall has argued that as the scholarship continues to view the Thesmophoria in this frame, it thus limits any future understandings of this festival in the lives of women and its relation to the Greek *polis*.<sup>129</sup> The following section expands upon the research of Lucia Nixon, and adapts her approach towards uncovering the important links between women’s bodies and the natural products used in this widespread, exclusively female festival.<sup>130</sup>

Women’s empowerment through the capacity to control their own bodies is reflected in the natural products required for the festival because of their uses in treatments specifically for women. For example, wheat, barley, garlic, figs and honey are used in emmenagogic and lactation treatments.<sup>131</sup> Barley, wheat, garlic, sesame, poppy, vitex and wine are used in pessaries and purgatives for the female reproductive system.<sup>132</sup> Figs, vitex and wheat are ingredients in abortifacients, and honey is used as a contraceptive.<sup>133</sup> When used by women, these ordinary products are transformed into medicines that enable women’s self-empowerment and self-control. The uses of these natural products do not reflect “a rival,

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<sup>125</sup> Dsc. 1.135; Hp. *Mul.* 1.75.

<sup>126</sup> Plin. *HN* 24.38; 30.23: Pliny mentions many other uses including the treatment of sores and ulcers in the mouth, reduces the swelling of testes, irritations of the rectum, treatments of sprains, gout and chafing of the thighs. Hp. *Mul.* 1.44: Hippocrates refers to it as “the chaste-tree”.

<sup>127</sup> Humphreys, 1993, xxiv.

<sup>128</sup> Detienne, 1977, 81, 93; of which Winkler is rightly critical in Winkler, 1990, 199.

<sup>129</sup> Foxhall, 1995, 97.

<sup>130</sup> Nixon’s concluding remark that “there are at least two views of fertility in the cults of Demeter and Kore, depending, so to speak, on whom you might have talked to about them. Nixon, 1995, 92.

<sup>131</sup> Hp. 1.74, 44; Dsc. 1.183, 2.108, 2.182, 3.81; Plin. *HN* 22.65, 23.64.

<sup>132</sup> Dsc. 4.153; Plin. *HN* 22.64; Hp. 1.9, 23, 26, 37, 43, 64, 74, 78, 81, 83.

<sup>133</sup> Hp. 1.74, 78; Aët. XVI; Plin. *HN* 14.22.

female understanding”,<sup>134</sup> but reflect the multiplicity of uses of natural products in antiquity. These uses are often recorded in separate works that concentrate on women’s health and men’s health, but the fact that these writings address the uses by men and women does not suggest rivalry. It does suggest that the user determines *how* the natural product is to be used and the likely results of the product for the user.

Female fertility in this festival is not associated with agricultural prosperity in the sense that women’s efforts to promote their fertility will lead to a prosperous agricultural harvest. Rather, as Demeter controls the yielding of corn and of the seedlings planted in the tilled earth,<sup>135</sup> women are likewise in control of whether or not the ‘seed’ sown in their bodies will yield life. The knowledge to enact the decision regarding conception and child rearing is acquired through the instructions surrounding the natural remedies and treatments. The information regarding the evidence of the plant produce and the medicinal uses of this produce is intertwined with the celebration and proceedings of the festival. This knowledge is especially useful for women who already know that they can conceive and give birth to a living child. Diodorus Siculus recounts that Demeter was the first to discover how to sow and grow agricultural produce and taught this knowledge to humans. He also states that it is from Demeter that the laws and customs of mankind were given.<sup>136</sup> The setting of the Thesmophoria suggests that the laws or instructions Demeter provided relate to two of women’s major areas of activity: children and the household. That is not to say that women were not involved in the agricultural production of their society, but they are charged with the empowering capacity to control and determine the production of children. As much of the fault of reproductive problems is attributed to women,<sup>137</sup> by this same token women are also agents for themselves through the capacity to *choose* to reproduce. Hippocrates also writes that a woman is more likely to conceive if she desires to sleep with her husband.<sup>138</sup> This then

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<sup>134</sup> My argument disagrees with Parker, 2005, 274, n. 16, wherein he argues, “But I think Lucia Nixon goes too far... in inferring a rival, female understanding of such plants, which would make the festival a celebration of women’s control over their own fertility”.

<sup>135</sup> Isoc. *Pan.* 28-29. *h.Hom.* 2.305-310, 2.350-55, 2.452-53; Paus. 8.42.2. Demeter’s association with corn and corn sheaves are attested on many pottery examples. See: Athenian red-figure lekythos, Athens, 475-425 B.C., Athens, National Museum: CC1626;

<sup>136</sup> D.S. 5.68.

<sup>137</sup> Aët. XXVI.

<sup>138</sup> Hp. *Mul.* I.12.

implies that should the couple wish to conceive, the woman has agency and the decision rests significantly upon her.

Nixon notes that Demeter appears in the *Hymn to Demeter* as a skilled herbal medicine practitioner and connects her in a positive light with plant lore: “she knows the right antidote for dangerous medicine, as well as a strong safeguard against bad magic”.<sup>139</sup> Demeter’s herbal medicine skill and her position as the bringer of knowledge and regulation relates to the women and our understanding of the Thesmophoria. I would argue that the women view Demeter as a leader and instructor in the ways of regulating the female body. The festival setting brought together the plant products that had specific implications for women. The ways to do this are described in ancient herbal and medicinal remedies. Such treatments are recorded in the works of male medical writers, and we should not assume that this information was secret. Aristophanes jokes about the husband who runs around town trying to collect medicine to help with his wife’s long and pretended labour, which supports this point precisely.<sup>140</sup>

Yet, some gynaecological treatments and issues were entrusted to midwives only.<sup>141</sup> It is unlikely that men and husbands were very knowledgeable or interested in their wives’ fertility once the first child had been born. This lack of interest of men generally in the knowledge of female reproduction could also point towards a lack of evidence for this kind of commentary regarding the natural products used in the Thesmophoria. The husband responsible for the murder of Eratosthenes hints at this suggestion: once his first child was born, he began to trust his young wife and entrusted to her all his affairs. He thought nothing of her intermittent leavings from their bed to comfort the baby, who was actually being teased by the servant-girl so that her mistress might receive secret visits from her lover.<sup>142</sup> Similarly, it is unlikely that he doubted her ability to produce children because she already had. The future scenario of conceiving and rearing more children was not only possible but also probable because his wife had already successfully done so. It seems likely that men had only a basic understanding of the Thesmophoria as a festival that helped women with their fertility. Such limited knowledge provided to their menfolk might have suited the women, as men were

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<sup>139</sup> Nixon, 1995, 86.

<sup>140</sup> Ar. *Th.* 500-505. Such medication is described in Hp. *Mul.* I.77.

<sup>141</sup> Gourevitch, 1995, 150.

<sup>142</sup> Lys. I.6-11.

already suspicious of the happenings at women-only festivals.<sup>143</sup> Women are entrusted with the knowledge to their own bodies and it would probably have caused further suspicion had the husbands been fully aware of the exact proceedings and repercussions of the festival. Men's suspicion towards the secrecy and exclusivity of the Thesmophoria is also suggestive of women's 'taboo' knowledge. The secrecy of information about the activities at Demetrian festivals relates to such religious taboos that exclude men on the basis of knowledge and religious activity entrusted only to women.<sup>144</sup>

Ann Suter has argued that the Thesmophoria is alluded to in the *Hymn to Demeter*.<sup>145</sup> The second day of the festival seems most akin to the scene in the *Hymn*: the sexual jokes and utterances of the women while seated are like those of Iambe to Demeter.<sup>146</sup> However, I would argue that as well as cultic jokes, the women were exchanging knowledge related to sex that might seem rude or jest-like to those who were not fully aware. Just as Aristophanes mocks the women for their consumption of garlic,<sup>147</sup> the male source tradition might not be aware of the seriousness of Iambe's comments as sexual knowledge and important cultic jesting.<sup>148</sup> Those who are already 'initiated' through motherhood into this women's knowledge instruct and convey the methods for controlling and maintaining the female body to women who are new initiates themselves. The letter attributed to Theano mentioned in the general introduction cements this argument: women are instructed in the ways of running a household from other women who already have the experience.<sup>149</sup> It seems accurate then to assume that the women who are already informed and experienced passed on these

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<sup>143</sup> Ar. *Th.* 75-85; Ar. *Ec.* 15-20; Ar. *Lys.* 1-45. Foxhall also raises a good point wherein the general unease of the sources surrounding women's festivals highlights that "women did not necessarily passively accept men's ideas about how they ought to behave". Foxhall, 1995, 106.

<sup>144</sup> Call. *Aet.* 3.1. Similar ideas about the taboos surrounding Greek women and female homosexuality is explored in Dover, 1989.

<sup>145</sup> Suter, 2002, 6-7.

<sup>146</sup> *h.Hom.* 2.200-205; Apollod. 1.5.1; Orphic fr. 52 Kern.

<sup>147</sup> Ar. *Th.* 490-95. Incidentally, Detienne also views the garlic as a means to prevent sexual activity or to inhibit the sexual desires between men and women. Detienne, 1977, 80.

<sup>148</sup> O'Higgins, referring to the ancient evidence, presents the idea that the cultic jesting that was "sexual in nature and almost certainly [were] connected with Demeter's function as the protector of fertility, both agrarian and human... [the joking character of] Iambe is pointing to the grotesque paradox that lay at the heart of women's cultic jesting, in my view, the pregnant crone". O'Higgins, 2005, 44.

<sup>149</sup> Thea. *Ep.ad.Call.*

instructions and herbal treatments to those who were new or less experienced. It is also possible that female patients had the opportunity to become agents for themselves in diagnosis and treatment.<sup>150</sup> Demeter as the experienced female herbal practitioner and as a goddess with the double presence of both the ‘old wife’ and the breast-feeding mother is the most appropriate goddess to involve in such a process.<sup>151</sup> The ‘old wives’ and their tales are reinvigorated, and regardless of whether the treatments actually worked, women *believed* that they did.<sup>152</sup>

Demeter *Thesmophoros* (Lawgiver) presides over the festival and it is in her honour that the women hold a feast.<sup>153</sup> Whilst there is some indication of the involvement of Persephone, I would argue that the major goddess of the Thesmophoria was Demeter. *Thesmophoros* also connotes a parallel between the men’s assembly and the women’s assembly of the Thesmophoria. This parallel is in no way contradictory, but relates to women’s self-governance and regulation in areas including their bodies and particular religious contexts. This women’s assembly parallel is further insinuated in the title given to the two leaders of the Thesmophoria: the *archousai*. This feminine form of *archontes* reflects a parallel between the official state gatherings of the women with that of the men.<sup>154</sup> The men’s assembly was interrupted during the Thesmophoria because the woman inhabited the space.<sup>155</sup> The character, Euripides, refers to the women at the Thesmophoria as the “women’s assembly”.<sup>156</sup> The fact that this festival and the use of certain civic and religious spaces occurred annually

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<sup>150</sup> See King, 1995, 141-45 for a more detailed discussion of this point.

<sup>151</sup> O’Higgins, 2003, 43-44.

<sup>152</sup> I am adapting a term from King’s chapter wherein she states that in certain women and gender studies thus far of the Hippocratic corpus, “remedies are to be seen as women’s traditional knowledge, then either they work- in which case, women’s traditional knowledge scores high marks and is to be admired- or they didn’t work, in which case these nameless women go back to being negatively valued as ‘old wives’”. King, 1995, 138. I wish to re-claim the term ‘old wives’ in this Thesmophoric context and demonstrate the value and knowledge these women were believed to hold, regardless of the success of the treatments. The term does not need to embody negative connotations, especially if their contexts in which they appear are re-examined. Although the literal ‘old wives’, as in women past their child-bearing years, were excluded from the festival, the knowledge they were told and retold continues to be delivered through such festivals as the Thesmophoria and through this re-telling the women adapt this persona of the experienced ‘old wife’.

<sup>153</sup> Paus. 10.33.

<sup>154</sup> Evans, 2010, 112; Brenton Connelly, 2007, 42.

<sup>155</sup> Eans, 2010, 114-15.

<sup>156</sup> Ar. *Th.* 90.

also reveals the community's acceptance of this interruption. Also, that the state had to financially support the festival demonstrates the religious and civic status of the Thesmophoria in the community.<sup>157</sup> This leadership and self-management of the women in the Thesmophoria has been difficultly received in modern scholarship. For example, Detienne viewed the women participants of the festival as a contradiction because a perceived marginalised group is entrusted with the reproduction of the entire system.<sup>158</sup> Likewise, Goff also viewed ritual as a place of "exception" for women to momentarily break free from their secluded place in society.<sup>159</sup> However, these scholars have found it difficult to interpret the festival because their views of women do not accommodate complex, multifaceted female identities. Hylen illustrates this point succinctly with her review of Roman and early Christian women.<sup>160</sup> The women of the Thesmophoria inhabit social roles and expectations of women but are also negotiating these ways in a female-only context. Just as the experienced woman referred to in medical writings is expected to know exactly when she has conceived,<sup>161</sup> women's leadership in religion is necessary in a women-only context but is also expected of them. The men of the community do not simply permit or allow women to control and manage their female-only festivals; they expect that the women will and should do this. Again, the letter attributed to Theano mentioned previously communicates not only female agency and management in a home context but is evidence that women were *expected* to perform such management roles.<sup>162</sup> Female leadership roles in religious and social contexts such as that of the Thesmophoria are clear evidence for female empowerment and agency and arguably reinforce certain political ties between a woman and her "natal" family.<sup>163</sup> Through the proceedings of this festival, as well as through the natural products and their medicinal uses, women are equipped with the knowledge and experience that further encourage agency and self-governance.

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<sup>157</sup> *IG* 2<sup>2</sup> II84.

<sup>158</sup> Detienne, 1989, 129.

<sup>159</sup> Goff, 2004, 2.

<sup>160</sup> Hylen, 2014, 6.

<sup>161</sup> *Hp. Nat. Puer.* 6.

<sup>162</sup> *Thea. Ep.ad.Call.*

<sup>163</sup> Foxhall, 1995, 107.





## **Chapter 4.**

### **Flower power in the Anthesphoria**

...παίζομεν ἡδ' ἄνθεα δρέπομεν χεῖρεςσ' ἑρόεντα,  
μίσδα κρόκον τ' ἄγανδον καὶ ἀγαλλίδας ἡδ' ὑάκινθον  
καὶ ῥοδέας κάλυκας καὶ λείρια, θαῦμα ἰδέσθαι,  
νάρκισσόν θ', ὃν ἔφυσ' ὥς περ κρόκον εὐρεῖα χθών.

“... we were playing and gathering sweet flowers in our hands, soft  
crocus mingled with irises and hyacinths and rosebuds and lilies –  
wondrous to see – and a narcissus which the wide earth grew yellow  
as a crocus”.

*-Hymn to Demeter 425-428*

εἴματα μὲν χροὶ ἔστο τά οἱ Χάριτές τε καὶ ὥραι  
ποίησαν καὶ ἔβαψαν ἐν ἄνθεσιν εἰαρινοῖσι,  
οἷα φοροῦσ' ὥραι, ἔν τε κρόκῳ ἔν θ' ὑακίνθῳ  
ἐν τε ἴῳ θαλέθοντι ῥόδου τ' ἐνὶ ἄνθεϊ καλῶ  
ἡδέι νεκταρέῳ ἔν τ' ἀμβροσίαις καλύκεσσι  
ἄνθεσι ναρκίσσου καὶ λειρίου· τοῖ' Ἀφροδίτῃ  
ὥραις παντοίαις τεθυωμένα εἴματα ἔστο.

“She clothed herself with garments which the Graces and Hours had  
made for her and dyed in flowers of spring- such flowers as the  
Seasons wear- in crocus and hyacinth and flourishing violet and the  
rose’s lovely bloom, so sweet and delicious, and heavenly buds, the  
flowers of the narcissus and lily. In such perfumed garments is  
Aphrodite clothed at all seasons”.

*- The Cypria 6.1-7*

### **Introduction**

Flowers represent important cultural attitudes of the ancient Greeks through their uses in religious ceremonies, festivals and rituals. Women and girls are among the most common users of flowers, particularly in garlands and wreaths that they carry and wear about their

heads.<sup>1</sup> According to Pliny, the first garland maker was a woman named Glycera from Sicyon.<sup>2</sup> The colours, appearance and scent of flowers function in interesting ways. They are descriptors for goddesses, food or wines and the aesthetic quality of garments, clothing and the human body.<sup>3</sup> For example, the *Suda* describes women in ‘flowery clothes’ and the use of ‘flowery’ to describe the fragrance and flavour of wine.<sup>4</sup> Another entry describes a meadow as a “flowery place”, which could be understood as an important signifier for meadow settings.<sup>5</sup> Meleager’s description of the blooming of certain flowers contrasted with the image of a woman portrays the flowers anthropomorphically.<sup>6</sup> In the records of herbal medicinal treatments, flowers are common ingredients as oils, essences and as raw materials. Related to the religious and medicinal uses, flowers appear in scenes of Greek poetry that convey “powerful symbolism... of feminine sexuality” and the erotic natures of women.<sup>7</sup>

There are limited discussions about the Anthesphoria and the connection with flowers this festival entails. The name of the festival τὰ Ἀνθεςφόρια demonstrates that flowers were an

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<sup>1</sup> For example, Pandora: “... the fair-haired Seasons crowned her [Pandora] with spring flowers”. Hes. *Op.* 75; Sappho describes a scene wherein she recounts an experience of women being dressed in flowers: ... For many garlands of violets and roses and corcuses... together beside me did you put on, and many plaited wreaths of flowers around your tender neck did you place...”. Sapph. 5.33.11-16; Mel. 5.147.

<sup>2</sup> Plin. *HN* 21.3.

<sup>3</sup> ‘Lily-eyed’, ‘lily eyes’, ‘lily-like’ and similar phrases are common descriptors of women and girls. For examples, see B. *Dith.* 17.95; Hom. *Il.* 13.830; Hes. *Th.* 41. Sappho refers to a “violet bosomed bride”. Sapph. 2.7, 3.25, 35. 8.

<sup>4</sup> *Suda* s.v. zeta,12 (adler), alpha,2513 (adler), alpha,2518 (adler), mu,1172 (adler).

<sup>5</sup> *Suda* s.v. lambda,364 (adler).

<sup>6</sup> Mel. 5.144: “Already the white violet is in flower and the narcissus that loves the rain, and the lilies that haunt the hillside, and already she is in bloom, Zenophila, love’s darling, the sweet rose of Persuasion, flower of the flowers of spring. Why laugh ye joyously, ye meadows, vainglorious for your bright tresses? More to be preferred than all sweet-smelling posies is she”.

<sup>7</sup> Johnson, 2007, 52; Deacy, 2013, 398. The opening to Meleager’s *Stephanus*, as cited in the *Anthologia Graecae*, compares a great many poets to flowers. Of interest are the female poets: “Many lilies of Anyte he inwove, and many of Moero, of Sappho few flowers, but they are roses; narcissus, too, heavy with the clear song of *Melanippides* and a young branch of the vine of Simonides; and therewith he wove in the sweet-scented lovely iris of Nossis, the wax for whose writing-tablets Love [Eros] himself melted; and with it majoram from fragrant Rhianus, and Erinna’s sweet crocus, maiden-hued...” Mel. 4.1. The matching of poet to a particular kind of flower could refer to ancient ideas surrounding women and female sexuality. Of note regarding this point is Sappho, whose flower is the rose, the flower with which Aphrodite is also associated.

important focus of the festival. As such, the festival embodies the symbolism of flowers, the cultural use in religion and importance of flowers as part of nature and their uses in ancient medicine. The medicinal uses of flowers are likely important factors for their incorporation into this religious festival. As the ancient evidence and modern scholarship are limited on this festival, the aim of the following chapter is to review the evidence and expand upon current understandings and to enhance what is already known about the relationship between natural products and women's bodies and women's religious experience in an under-studied festival.

### **The flowery goddesses: Kore, Aphrodite, Demeter and Hera**

The Anthesphoria was a flower festival held in Sicily primarily in honour of Kore, as it was believed that Hades abducted her from a meadow in Sicily.<sup>8</sup> It is assumed that the festival was held during spring. Considering the stem (Ἀνθεσ-), the festival is connected with the month Ἀνθεστηριών (February-March) that was recognised for its abundance of flowers.<sup>9</sup> There are indications that it was held in other parts of the Greek world too. Strabo also recounts that there are flowery meadows in the region surrounding Hipponium and it is believed that Kore used to visit there from Sicily to gather flowers. As a result, the women of Hipponium gather flowers and weave them into garlands.<sup>10</sup> Kore is a goddess of youth, beauty and the object of desire of Hades. As Kore is a girl about to become acquainted with the experiences of Aphrodite, we could likely infer the participation of girls from a similar life stage. Burnett has suggested that the festival was a ritual imitation of Kore gathering flowers,<sup>11</sup> which highlights the importance and involvement of Kore in the Anthesphoria. There may have been ritual dancing involved that complemented the gathering of flowers.<sup>12</sup> Aside from the company of goddesses, the term ἡ ἀνθοφόρος has been identified as the title of the priestess of Demeter

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<sup>8</sup> Str. 6.1.5; Julius Pollux mentions the Anthesphoria in relation to Kore in *Onom.* 1.37 and to Hera in *Onom.* 4.78. A depiction on a cup shows Hades abducting Kore. Hades is holding Kore with one arm while she faces out with hand up-stretched in the same direction. Cup, vase painting, Apulia, terracotta, Underworld Painter, 330/320 B.C., LIMC/ThesCRA: MID7386, SMID7535- LIMC/ThesCRA: Hades 87, Persephone (S) 197, Austria, Wien, Privatsammlungen.

<sup>9</sup> This stem could also relate to the Anthesteria festival ("the Feast of Flowers") in honour of Dionysus. Liddell and Scott-Jones, 2009, s.v. Ἀνθεσ-τήρια.

<sup>10</sup> Str. 6.1.5.

<sup>11</sup> Burnett, 1988, 144.

<sup>12</sup> Lawler, 1944, 76.

and Kore and likely relates to the Anthesphoria.<sup>13</sup> From this term it can be deduced that there was some religious organisation involved, as a priestess indicates a religiously important and organised celebration. Athena and Artemis were also gathering flowers with Kore before her rape because they had made the “same choice of maidenhood” that Kore had.<sup>14</sup> As a result of the joy in flower picking, and somehow despite Kore’s rape, the island is much loved by Demeter, Kore, Artemis and Athena.<sup>15</sup> It can also be suggested that the Muses joined the celebrations of the festival.<sup>16</sup>

There are descriptions of these goddesses that reinforce their association with nature and to the Anthesphoria. A flower festival of sorts is described in a scene encapsulating the joy and laughter of Aphrodite and the muses on Mount Ida in Crete as they weave “sweet-smelling crowns of flowers of the earth” (chaplets) and wear them upon their heads.<sup>17</sup> Aphrodite, as she is carried over the waves to Cyprus, is described as a “lily among violets, she shines out from the calm sea”.<sup>18</sup> Hesychius identifies Aphrodite of Knossos with the epithet Ἀνθεια.<sup>19</sup> Aphrodite is intrinsically connected to the beauty of the natural world. Her connection with flowers, their sweet scent and the blooms of springtime are often used to describe her beauty, her association with natural beauty and her influence upon nature.<sup>20</sup> Bion describes that upon

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<sup>13</sup> IGI<sup>2</sup> (8).526 (Thasos), cf. 609, in Liddell and Scott-Jones, 2009, s.v. ἀνθες-φόρος .

<sup>14</sup> D.S. 5.3.3. Although, Diodorus is arguably the only source to state that Persephone had desired to remain an eternal virgin.

<sup>15</sup> D.S. 5.3.3; Str. 6.2.6.

<sup>16</sup> It seems that the joint worship of nature goddesses and mythical nature beings was not unheard of as Strabo also refers to a joint temple to Artemis, Aphrodite and the Nymphs that are “generally full of flowers because of the abundance of water”. Str. 8.3.13.

<sup>17</sup> *Cypr.* 6.12. The Homeric *Hymn to Aphrodite* 5 also describes Mount Ida as the place wherein Aphrodite and Anchises have their love affair. See *H.Hom.* 5.68. A fragment of Sappho might also relate to this flower festival of sorts: “Once the Cretan women danced so gracefully on their tender feet around the lovely altar...softly stepping on the delicate flower of grass.”. *Sapph.* 94.

<sup>18</sup> *Ana.* 57: “[Aphrodite] roaming over the waves like sea-lettuce, moving her soft-skinned body in her voyage over the white calm sea, she pulls the breakers along her path. Above her rosy breast and below her soft neck a great wave divides her skin. In the midst of the furrow, like a lily wound among violets, Kypris shines out from the clam sea. Over the silver on dancing dolphins ride guileful Eros and laughing Himeros (Desire), and the chorus of bow-backed fish plunging in the waves sports with Paphia where she swims.”

<sup>19</sup> *Hsch.* 5100.6.

<sup>20</sup> *Cypr.* 6; *h.Hom.* 5, 6.

Aphrodite discovering the dying Adonis, her grief spread throughout the land and caused every flower to droop.<sup>21</sup> Aphrodite is referred to as “Aphrodite Crowned with Flowers”,<sup>22</sup> demonstrative of her clear association with flowers. The “mythological meadow” is a place of sexuality, pleasure “combined with the heady scent” of flowers and it is a space especially “connected with Aphrodite”.<sup>23</sup> Female sexuality is a common association with Aphrodite as communicated in the poetic fragments of Sappho and Nossis and is applicable in the meadow setting of Kore and her maiden friends.<sup>24</sup> Other evidence includes the depiction of a hetaera holding a flower. The flower in this case likely represents female sexuality and the giving of this flower to a sexual partner.<sup>25</sup>

Diodorus Siculus and Cicero provide reasons behind Demeter’s involvement in the festival. They write that the island of Sicily is sacred to Demeter and Kore, and that Zeus gave the island to the Maid as a wedding gift.<sup>26</sup> As highlighted in the previous chapter, Demeter controls the yielding of fruit and grain from the earth. She can possess the seeds planted, inhibiting or encouraging their growth. She is connected with nature in a life-giving sense: when Demeter allows good harvest and plentiful produce mankind thrives; when she prevents the growth of grain and food the livelihood of mankind is threatened. There is also a temple to

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<sup>21</sup> Bion 1.45-50.

<sup>22</sup> Hom. *Od.* 8.302.

<sup>23</sup> Deacy, 2013, 398; Aphrodite is depicted in a relief with a small-sized winged Eros presenting or holding out a flower (possibly a rose?) to a male figure. The male figure has been identified as Hermes. Germany, München, Staatliche Antikensammlungen und Glyptothek, Inventory: N.I. 5042 (1. Inv.); Johnson, 2007, 51; Winkler, 1990, 186 as cited in Johnson, 2007, 51.

<sup>24</sup> Noss. 1; Sapph. 1.1.21-24.

<sup>25</sup> Red-figure cup, Attic, 480-470 B.C., British Museum, Inv. 1843, 1103.94. Compare and contrast with relief depicting Aphrodite, Eros, a rose and male figure, Germany, München, Staatliche Antikensammlungen und Glyptothek, Inventory: N.I. 5042 (1. Inv.). Compare also the difference in posture between Aphrodite in relief and Aphrodite depicted on a signed Oltyos cup: Aphrodite in this image has her body turned away from another figure and is looking back over her shoulder. She holds in front of her a rose and a bird that are also facing away from the figure behind her. In this scene we could perhaps interpret a refusal; if the rose and bird (dove?) symbolise in some sense her sexuality, the way she is depicted holding them away from someone could suggest a refusal or guarding of her sexuality.

<sup>26</sup> Pindar also notes that Zeus gifted Sicily to Persephone for her wedding to Hades. Pi. *N.* 1.13-14. It is also supposed that Sicily was the first place that wheat grew. D.S. 5.3.2; Cic. *Ver.* 2.4.48.

Demeter located at Enna (Nosowce) on a hill and surrounded by “broad plateaus that are tillable”.

Hera also has an interesting association with flowers. Ovid writes that it is from an unknown, magical flower with the help of Flora that Hera conceives Ares without sexual intercourse with Zeus.<sup>27</sup> In the *Iliad* when Hera wishes to distract Zeus from the Trojan War and Zeus and Hera sleep together, beneath them the grass grew and “dewy lotus, and crocus, and hyacinth, thick and soft...”.<sup>28</sup> As a result of their union, flowers and grass grew about them as evidence of their influence and connection to nature. Pausanias describes a temple to Hera Ἀνθείας, thus linking Hera to the flower celebration too.<sup>29</sup>

### **The medicinal and herbal uses of flowers**

The Greeks utilised the natural world that surrounded them in a variety of ways.<sup>30</sup> The use of flowers in medicinal treatments was common in the ancient world and their users had firm beliefs in the effectiveness of alleviating illnesses and health conditions. The flowers that will be discussed in the following section are those described in the *Hymn to Demeter* and are those that Kore and her young friends were gathering in the meadow. These are the crocus, iris, hyacinth, rose, lily and narcissus. The purpose of this chapter is not to prove or disprove these ancient findings about the medicinal uses of flowers. I am reviewing the ancient uses and perceptions around these flowers but I do not in any way recommend the forthcoming ancient prescriptions for health ailments.

Although the Anthesphoria festival is in springtime, Theophrastus argues that as long as the climate is mild and the sun is shining the flowers often extend outside of their seasonal pattern. Thus some of these flowers are mentioned as spring and summer flowers, with a couple of variants of the same species also blooming in autumn. For this reason, these seasonal categories should not impact upon the flowers’ inclusion in Kore’s spring flower festival.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Ov. *Fast.* 5.255-258.

<sup>28</sup> Hom. *Il.* 14.347-349.

<sup>29</sup> Paus. 2.22.1. This epithet of Hera’s is also listed in the *Suda*. *Suda* s.v. alpha,2504 (adler).

<sup>30</sup> Hughes, 1994.

<sup>31</sup> Thphr. *HP.* 6.8.1-4.

## **Crocus (κρόκος / *crocus gargaricus* / *crocus sativus* / *crocus cartwrightianus*)**

The crocus flower shares a strong association with sexuality and sensual experiences in mythology. It is a crocus flower that grows from Zeus and Hera's sexual union in the *Iliad* and is one of the flowers Kore picks in the meadow. In a similar meadow scene Apollo seduces Europa while she picked κρόκεα πέταλα (saffron-coloured petals).<sup>32</sup>

The crocus is known as the 'saffron-crocus' and is a plant that produces one of the purest scents and is one of the most diverse flowers.<sup>33</sup> Pliny calls it only saffron and notes that its use has persisted since the time of the Trojan War, citing Homer.<sup>34</sup> The crocus is used as a popular and very expensive dye and has many important medicinal uses.<sup>35</sup> The medicinal properties of the crocus mostly stem from the active substance saffron. Saffron is used often in treatments for the eyes because it cleanses and enables clearer eyesight.<sup>36</sup> It is also a helpful diuretic, helps digestion, deters nausea and is an anti-inflammatory for skin and ear irritations,<sup>37</sup> as well as other inflammation and mastitis.<sup>38</sup> For women, there are multiple uses of this substance that are gynaecological in nature. Such uses include mixtures of goose fat or in a pessary of Egyptian salt and sea turtle brain with saffron to remove the deceased foetus from the mother's womb.<sup>39</sup> It is used in purgatives to cleanse women's reproductive organs.<sup>40</sup> Used in conjunction with corn cockle/lavender grass in controlled smoke inhalation, saffron helps in conception.<sup>41</sup> Saffron oil is generally helpful to ailments of the uterus including problematic hardness and uterine closure because it produces warming effects and causes

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<sup>32</sup> *Hom. Il.* 14.347-349; *h.Hom.* 2.425-428; *E. Ion* 885-890.

<sup>33</sup> *Thphr. HP.* 6.6.5-6.

<sup>34</sup> Plin. cites Homer who states that the three most important flowers are the saffron (crocus), the lotus and the hyacinth. In Plin. *HN* 21.17.34.

<sup>35</sup> J.S., 2005, 28.

<sup>36</sup> *Dsc.* 1.25, 2.54, 2.199, 3.53.

<sup>37</sup> *Dsc.* 1.25; *Sor.* 1.50.

<sup>38</sup> *Sor.* 2. 77. For mastitis, other natural products can be substituted in place of saffron: rose oil, henna oil, cumin, vinegar, raisins, sesame, accompanied with water, wine, or honey.

<sup>39</sup> *Hp. Mul.* 1.78.

<sup>40</sup> *Hp. Mul.* 1.63, 74, 90.

<sup>41</sup> *Dsc.* 2.122.

relaxation. These same qualities attest to its use as a sleep-inducer.<sup>42</sup> Pliny also notes that saffron is used as an aphrodisiac.<sup>43</sup>

### **Iris (Ἴρις / *iris* / *gladiolus*)**

The iris grows in many colour varieties and for this reason Dioscorides records that the iris is named because of the flower's resemblance to the rainbow,<sup>44</sup> who is the messenger goddess for the gods in Hesiod and the *Iliad*.<sup>45</sup> Athenaeus, citing Philinus, conveys an anecdote about the naming of the iris. According to Philinus, the iris flowers are also known as λύκοι because they resemble the lips of a wolf (λύκος).<sup>46</sup>

The iris is used in medicines that are to soothe coughs and reduces the mucus that often accompanies coughs. A decoction (essence) of iris taken with water and honey will purge mucus, phlegm and bile. Dioscorides also prescribes the iris as a narcotic for sleeplessness and will help those bitten by animals.<sup>47</sup> As an ointment, iris oil can be used to cleanse ulcerations, clean wounds, aid the ears and purge the bowels.<sup>48</sup> It can also induce vomiting.<sup>49</sup> For women the iris essence is used in warm packs that are designed to soften and open the reproductive organs and can reduce swellings.<sup>50</sup> Iris oil expels the birth (placenta).<sup>51</sup> Owing to its use of opening the reproductive areas, iris oil is integrated into abortifacients.<sup>52</sup>

### **Hyacinth (ὕακινθος / *hyacinthus*)**

It is interesting that Pliny notes two different 'legends' for the hyacinth: there is the myth of the youth loved by Apollo;<sup>53</sup> the other is the flower that supposedly sprang from the blood of

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<sup>42</sup> Dsc. 1.64; Plin. *HN* 21.81

<sup>43</sup> Plin. *HN* 21.81.

<sup>44</sup> Dsc. 1.1.

<sup>45</sup> Hes. *Th.* 266; Homer, *Il.* 2.786.

<sup>46</sup> Ath. 15.28.

<sup>47</sup> Dsc. 1.1.

<sup>48</sup> Plin. *HN* 21.83; Dsc. 1.1.

<sup>49</sup> Dsc. 1.66.

<sup>50</sup> Dsc. 1.1.

<sup>51</sup> Dsc. 1.66.

<sup>52</sup> Sor. 1.64.

<sup>53</sup> Beloved of Apollo. Also referred to in Paus. 3.19.4; Ov., *Met.* 10.162; Ath. 1.3.3.



Ajax, the veins of the flower forming the Greek letters AI and the start of the name Ajax.<sup>54</sup> Theophrastus records that the hyacinth has cultivated and wild varieties, and the flower tends to bloom for longer than other flowers.<sup>55</sup> Dioscorides writes of a purple coloured hyacinth flower with a long green stalk about twenty centimetres long. The hyacinth flower is used also as a dye, as described in Xenophon.<sup>56</sup> It is also one of the flowers that grow around Zeus and Hera in the *Iliad*.<sup>57</sup> Sappho writes of a purple hyacinth as a metaphor for a bride trampled under foot by shepherds and men.<sup>58</sup>

There are not many medicinal uses for the hyacinth flower, and even less relate to women specifically. The medicinal uses of this flower include inhibiting hair growth on boys when combined with white wine. It is also good for maintaining bowel health, induces urine, helps spider bites and cleanses jaundice.<sup>59</sup> Pliny believes the hyacinth can deter the onset of puberty in children, which could be suggestive of its association with young girls and the Anthesphoria.<sup>60</sup>

### **Rose (ῥόδον / *rosa*)**

Theophrastus says that there are many differences present in roses that range from petal number, size, scent, colour and texture.<sup>61</sup> He argues that the roses that produce the sweetest scent originate from Cyrene and it is from these that the sweetest scented perfume is made.<sup>62</sup> Herodotus writes of a rose type that has sixty petals and grows with the sweetest scent in the Gardens of Midas.<sup>63</sup> The type of rose referred to in the *Hymn to Demeter* that is gathered by Kore and her friends is likely to be the kind described in Pliny, which is called *Graecula*: ‘little Greek rose’. The petals are “rolled together in a bunch” and remain “always like a bud”

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<sup>54</sup> Plin. *HN* 21.39.

<sup>55</sup> Thphr. *HP*. 6.8.2.

<sup>56</sup> Xen. *Cyr*. 6.4.

<sup>57</sup> *Hom.II*. 14.347-349.

<sup>58</sup> Sapph. 9.41c.

<sup>59</sup> Dsc. 4.63.

<sup>60</sup> Plin. *HN* 21.97.

<sup>61</sup> For example, he writes of one variety that has approximately one hundred petals. See Thphr. *HP*. 6.6.4.

<sup>62</sup> Thphr. *HP*. 6.6.4-5.

<sup>63</sup> Herodotus, *His*. 8.138.

unless forced by hand.<sup>64</sup> They also bear an association with Aphrodite and her sacred areas.<sup>65</sup> Photius recounts an anecdote about the death of Tigris, the daughter of a priestess of Aphrodite, who died after eating a rosebud in which a poisonous beetle hid.<sup>66</sup>

Medicinally, roses are astringent and cooling. The different parts of the rose can be used for different ailments. Pliny prescribes rose juice for the ears, sores (possibly ulcers) in the mouth and gums. It is used as a gargle for the tonsils, helps the stomach, uterus and headaches. The ‘nails’ of rose petals are used for eye treatments. Rose juice can be used as a narcotic (sleep inducer). Dried rose leaves are used to help chafed thighs. If taken in vinegar and water, roses can be used to check the health of menstrual discharges.<sup>67</sup> To maintain healthy lochial discharges apply rose oil, honey and peony root with wool. Rose oil can also be used to soothe the woman’s vagina if a pessary has caused irritation,<sup>68</sup> or as a purgative pessary to cleanse the body.<sup>69</sup> Dried roses boiled in wine or rose oil are applied with a feather for pain of the vulva.<sup>70</sup> For the treatment of ulcerations in the womb after childbirth Hippocrates prescribes full-bloom roses.<sup>71</sup> If a woman experiences nausea, a mixture involving rose oil can be used and applied externally to the stomach.<sup>72</sup> Rose oil was also used in contraceptives.<sup>73</sup>

### **Lily (λείριον / κρίνον / *lilium*)**

The lily varies in colour and the flower grows from the stem, some stems producing more than one flower. Many lilies are generally single-stemmed but Theophrastus also describes those that they can divide into two stems.<sup>74</sup> According to Pliny, the lily comes closest to the rose in terms of its fame and popularity because of its use in ointments and oils. The oil of the

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<sup>64</sup> Plin. *HN* 21.10.

<sup>65</sup> Sapph. 1.2.6; wall relief, Germany, München, Staatliche Antikensammlungen und Glyptothek, Inventory: N.I. 5042 (1. Inv.).

<sup>66</sup> Photios, *Biblio.* 94.

<sup>67</sup> Plin. *HN* 21.73.

<sup>68</sup> Hp. *Mul.* 1.78

<sup>69</sup> Hp. *Mul.* 1. 74.

<sup>70</sup> Dsc. 1.130, 1.53.

<sup>71</sup> Hp. *Mul.* 1.49.

<sup>72</sup> Sor. 1.50.

<sup>73</sup> Sor. 1.62.

<sup>74</sup> Thphr. *HP.* 6.6.8.

lily is known as *lilium* and there is a difference in the scents produced from the stamen and the petals (corolla). The bright white colouring of lilies is commonly combined with roses because the colours presumably produce a pleasant contrast. The red lily, not to be confused with the bright red narcissus variant, is known to the Greeks as κρίνον.<sup>75</sup> It seems that the Greeks and Romans were confused about the classification and differentiation between the red lily and the narcissus, as Athenaeus highlights.<sup>76</sup> Cratinus, cited in Athenaeus, speaks of floral crowns in which lilies are used.<sup>77</sup>

The lily is common in ailments that are inflamed and painful. The roots of the lily are used to treat snakebites and for foot corns. They are used to regrow hair that has been removed from burns, as well as treat other skin irritations, wrinkles and wounds. Lilies are also common in mixtures to maintain spleen health.<sup>78</sup> Lilies are commonly used in treatments for gynaecological conditions and purposes. Hippocrates describes a treatment in which lilies are used to treat lochial discharges.<sup>79</sup> Lilies and lily oil produce a softening effect when used for the uterus and encourage menstruation.<sup>80</sup> Dioscorides adds that the lily oil is useful for all female ailments including re-opening closures and soothing inflammations of the vulva. It seems that the lily is useful because it is a purifier.<sup>81</sup> For the treatment of nausea in women, there are a number of douches that could be used. For the rinsing of her body after the use of one of these douches, a woman could use squirting cucumber with lily oil.<sup>82</sup>

### **Narcissus (Νάρκισσος / *narcissus*)**

Narcissus appears in Graeco-Roman mythology as a youth who is cursed by the goddess Nemesis and falls in love with his own reflection.<sup>83</sup> Pliny distinguishes between two types of narcissus: the first is the bright flower and is named after the mythological Narcissus and the other has ‘grass-green’ leaves. The latter is not named after “the youth in the myth” but is

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<sup>75</sup> Plin. *HN* 21.11.

<sup>76</sup> Ath. 15.28.

<sup>77</sup> Ath. 15.28

<sup>78</sup> Plin. *HN* 21.74; Dsc. 3.116.

<sup>79</sup> Hp. *Mul.* 1.35.

<sup>80</sup> Plin. *HN* 21.74; Sor. 3.14.

<sup>81</sup> Dsc. 1.62.

<sup>82</sup> Hp. *Mul.* 1.80.

<sup>83</sup> Ov. *Met.* 3.413-3.510; *Suda* s.v. πῑ, 1934 (adler).

derived from the word *narce*, torpor.<sup>84</sup> There is a kind of bright-red lily that has a double stem, a larger bulb and a fleshier root called the narcissus. A characteristic that distinguishes the narcissus from the ordinary lily is that the leaves of the former grow from the root directly.<sup>85</sup>

There are several medicinal uses for the narcissus flower, some of which are derived directly from pounding and others require the inclusion of other ingredients. For example, the root of each narcissus tastes like honey and when mixed with honey it is helpful for burns, wounds, sprains and ulcers. The flower is an emetic (induces vomiting) and can thus be used as a purgative. It can also be used to control long-lasting joint pains (arthritis?) and is good for the ears.<sup>86</sup> For women, the oil of narcissus can be helpful if the vulva is damaged, closed or hardened.<sup>87</sup> As an alternative to the use of lily oil in rinses that followed pessaries and douches to treat nausea, narcissus oil can be substituted.<sup>88</sup> The head of a narcissus flower can be used with water and ground up to be applied for other purgative pessaries.<sup>89</sup> Narcissus can also be combined with other ingredients to make an emmenagogue if menstruation is delayed.<sup>90</sup> Oil of narcissus and wine is prescribed to maintain healthy lochial discharge.<sup>91</sup>

## **Women, their bodies and the symbolism of flowers**

The Anthesphoria gathers together the symbolism of flowers in a religious and social context. The social dynamic is a significant aspect of the Adonia and Thesmophoria and it is important in this flower festival. The symbolism of Kore enjoying herself in a meadow with other young women relates to symbolism about youth, beauty and the flowery meadow.<sup>92</sup> The youthful

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<sup>84</sup> Plin. *HN* 21.75.

<sup>85</sup> Plin. *HN* 21.12.

<sup>86</sup> Dsc. 4.161; Plin. *HN* 21.75; Hp. *Mul.* 1.66.

<sup>87</sup> Dsc. 1.63.

<sup>88</sup> Hp. *Mul.* 1.37, 80.

<sup>89</sup> Hp. *Mul.* 1.81.

<sup>90</sup> Hp. *Mul.* 1.74, 84.

<sup>91</sup> Hp. *Mul.* 1.37.

<sup>92</sup> An analogy of flowers being the children of Spring can be found in Athenaeus. It is in an interesting point to consider in regards to the associations between flowers, youth and beauty and the anthropomorphism of flowers. Ath. 13.88. Suter refers to this part of the *Hymn to Demeter* as the “core” story wherein the women control the events and the influence and will of Zeus is controlled and minimal. Suter, 2002, 10.

girl who has “golden” hair should wear flower garlands<sup>93</sup> and the beauty of a young girl resembles that of golden flowers.<sup>94</sup> The beauty of Kore and her maiden friends is accompanied by the images of blooming flowers, sunshine and the sweet scent of a flowery meadow.<sup>95</sup> Kore herself is drawn to the beauty of flowers, particularly the narcissus. As Deacy discusses, the meadow is a scenario in Greek poetry wherein women enjoy their sexuality and become equated with the nymphs and other “meadow-inhabitants.”<sup>96</sup> Before the male character intrudes, the women and girls involved in the mythical meadows are in a state of excitement, playful activity and sexual confidence.<sup>97</sup> Similar to the taboo of men intruding in the Thesmophoric rites, it seems that men should not be interrupting the women in the meadow, which could be one of the reasons there is no mention of male participants in the Anthesphoria. In the setting of the meadow the violence is commonly committed against the female character by the male intruder.<sup>98</sup> Whilst the violence committed by the women against men in the Thesmophoric tales is interpreted as blood-thirsty and dangerous,<sup>99</sup> the violence committed against women in myth, such as the confrontation between warrior and virgin or male character and female character in the meadow scenes is viewed differently; it, according to Burkert, “makes both pictorial and narrative accounts so thrilling”.<sup>100</sup>

Ancient authors attach special symbolism and meanings to the use and appearance of flowers in everyday life and in religious contexts. A major source for this discussion is Athenaeus. Citing Clearchus of Soli, a number of hypotheses are offered as to why people carry flowers. Do humans desire flowers because we “desire all kinds of beauty?” Or does the action of

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<sup>93</sup> Sapph. 5.36b.6-9.

<sup>94</sup> Sapph. 65.

<sup>95</sup> *h.Hom.* 2.417-430.

<sup>96</sup> Deacy, 2013, 400. Deacy also brings to focus the difference in the narrative: there is a ‘male-centred’ account of Kore’s abduction and Persephone’s that “offers a feminine construction of the experiences of the abductee”. S. Deacy, 2013, 404.

<sup>97</sup> The girls’ playfulness and the activity of gathering flowers is eroticised, then this sexual and erotic atmosphere conveys a sense of mutual, shared experience. This point was inspired by my reading of Greene, 1996, 1-14, especially 4-5.

<sup>98</sup> Sapph. 9.41c: just as men trample a beautiful flower.

<sup>99</sup> Detienne and Vernant, 1989; Burkert, 1985.

<sup>100</sup> Burkert, 1983, 60. I find this difference in the views and reception of violence against women and the violence against men frustrating and inconsistent: how can the violence women commit against men be received as threatening and yet the violence against women committed by men be received as thrilling?

carrying flowers secure future fortunes and good wishes? Is it that those who consider themselves beautiful are more inclined to admire the beauty of flowers, such as Kore and her friends?<sup>101</sup> It seems likely that these questions relate to the festival because the goddesses, flowers and scenarios involved in Anthesphoria articulate similar questions. The idea of securing future good will from the gods through the use of flowers resonates, especially if we consider the known information about the festival. Sappho writes that the Graces will favour the persons who are “well-flowered” and turn from those who are “un-garlanded”.<sup>102</sup> Strabo, when mentioning the women of Hipponium who gather together and to collect and make floral garlands, also states that on festival days it is disgraceful to wear bought garlands.<sup>103</sup> This demonstrates that the ancient Greeks believed that the gods and goddesses valued not only the beauty of the garlands but also the work of producing them.

The medicinal uses of flowers are not divorced from their presence in festivals. Callimachus, as cited in Pliny, writes that the health implications for people resulting from flowers are relevant to their uses in festivals. The example he provides is the wreaths worn at drinking parties designed to help avoid headaches and illness from excessive drinking.<sup>104</sup> We can argue that a similar understanding of flowers exists in the Anthesphoria. After reviewing the treatments specific to women that utilised flowers, it is clear that most treatments related to the female reproductive system. For example, the crocus and lily were used in purgatives that were designed to clear the uterus.<sup>105</sup> The flowers that were believed to be beneficial for menstruation were the lily, the iris and narcissus.<sup>106</sup> The crocus flower seemed to be quite versatile: it was used in treatments that were believed to help with conception, act as an

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<sup>101</sup> Ath. 12.79. Floral garlands also signify status, as became the custom amongst the Romans. These garlands or chaplets, made from a variety of materials including gold and organic matter, were used firstly to honour the gods and the Lares. Rose wreaths stitched together using real flowers from areas of India and beyond. These were then used to honour the wearer and women apparently adopted this. Pliny views it as a sign of luxury and expense. See Plin. *HN* 21.7-8.

<sup>102</sup> Sapph. 4.30. Athenaeus cites this same point of Sappho's. In Ath. 15.16.

<sup>103</sup> Str. 6.1.5.

<sup>104</sup> Pliny illustrates his point by providing a scenario in which Cleopatra uses the chaplets in order to poison a wearer. Plin. *HN* 21.9. See also Ar.*Ec.* 128ff.

<sup>105</sup> Hp. *Mul.* 1.63, 74, 90; Dsc. 1.62.

<sup>106</sup> Plin. *HN* 21.74; Sor. 3.14;

aphrodisiac and remove a deceased foetus from the womb.<sup>107</sup> Considering this last use, I would suppose that it might also have been used in abortifacients as the lily was.<sup>108</sup> These medicinal uses are relevant to the setting of the flowery meadow<sup>109</sup> because the meadow invokes images of the gifts,<sup>110</sup> descriptions and experiences of Aphrodite, including gold, natural beauty and female sexuality. She is the garland-loving goddess and the meadow is a place of contact with her.<sup>111</sup> The medicinal uses of these flowers relate to Aphrodite's "gifts" and the experiences associated with her. Medicinally, flowers provide a means for women to understand and control their bodies related to certain life experiences.

Although the girls in the meadow are inexperienced in the ways of Aphrodite, Deacy has identified a sexualised element to their playfulness. This sexualised element relates to an educational purpose of the festival's proceedings. The education of girls was important as it was expected that they be married to their husbands "maidens in years but women in wisdom".<sup>112</sup> The flower festival might be one such way of educating young girls approaching maturity with information specific to their forthcoming roles.<sup>113</sup> In an inscription in honour of Menophila, a girl who has died, an image is described where a young woman is honoured with a carved lily, a book, an alpha, a basket and a wreath: the book is for wisdom, the wreath a symbol of leadership, the alpha signifies she was an only child, the basket for "orderly excellence" and the flower "shows the prime of your [her] life" stolen by the Fates.<sup>114</sup> The

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<sup>107</sup> Hp. *Mul.* 1.63, 74, 78, 90; Dsc. 2.122; Plin. *HN* 21.81; Hp. *Mul.* 1.74, 84.

<sup>108</sup> Sor. 1.64.

<sup>109</sup> Rigoglioso, 2005, 19: Rigoglioso views Kore and her companions gathering flowers as part of an initiation rite, wherein the girls gather flowers that are entheogenic. Rigoglioso interprets that the myth is about the activity of "picking sacred medicinal flowers or herbs in conjunction with puberty initiation.

<sup>110</sup> This term is derived from *h.Hom.* 10.1.

<sup>111</sup> *h.Hom.* 2.102; *Cypr.* 6; S. Deacy, 2013, 398, 409.

<sup>112</sup> D.L. 1.6.91.

<sup>113</sup> Manganaro hypothesizes that the festival was a ritual imitation of the sacred marriage between Kore and Hades. Thus, the festival could also be a celebration of the marital hopes for the young female participants. Manganaro, 2004, 120.

<sup>114</sup> 'An accomplished woman' inscription in Lefkowitz and Fant, 1982, 24-25: "This stone marks a woman of accomplishment and beauty. Who she is the Muses' inscriptions reveal: Menophila. Why she is honoured is shown by a carved lily and an alpha, a book and a basket, and with these a wreath. The book shows that you were wise, the wreath that you wore on your head shows that you were a leader; the letter alpha that were an only child; the basket is a sign of your orderly excellence; the flower shows the prime of your life, which Fate

flower and the wreath are especially relevant to this study because they reinforce the connections drawn between youth, beauty, leadership and flowers. The wreath is important in this context of female leadership, particularly within a women-run festival. As Kore represents the young girl about to be initiated or taught in the ways of women,<sup>115</sup> the other goddesses Demeter and Hera, who know well the ‘gifts of Aphrodite’, could be viewed as aiders of the leaders in the garland making ritual and discussion; the wreath communicating their leadership and experienced positions. The lily flower connotes ideas of youth, feminine beauty and a subtle sexuality. In the context of the Anthesphoria, such connotations are abundant.<sup>116</sup> There is a sense of play and enjoyment whilst the girls made the garlands and learned about other uses of the flowers that complements the scenario portrayed in the *Hymn to Demeter*. Kore is the leading youthful goddess for the enjoyment of gathering flowers with her other young friends, which conveys an important social dynamic to the mythical meadow and the flower festival. It is about the joys of shared female experience in the company of other women and girls in a religious context.

Considering that the women of Hipponium made garlands and as a result the custom developed wherein bought garlands were not appropriate, there is a sense of religious purpose and significance in the Anthesphoria. The wider religious significance embedded in this festival is dependent upon the actions of the female participants. The women and girls who participated and managed this flower festival should be viewed as among the most socially and religiously significant because the gods favour those who decorate themselves with floral garlands, chaplets and wreaths. Women’s agency is detectable, as the women are responsible

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stole away. May the dust lie light on you in death. Alas; your parents are childless; to them you have left tears”. It is very important to note that, though she was young, Menophila was recognised as a leader early in life. This leadership likely occurred before she was married, as it seems she died unmarried because there is no reference to her husband and only to her parents. This then suggests that young women could be in positions that were considered to be that of a leader even before they became leaders and managers of households as wives.

<sup>115</sup> Rigoglioso, 2005, 15, 19.

<sup>116</sup> Johnson, 2007, 114: Johnson’s reading of Sapph.9.40c: the young woman who does not guard or forfeits her virginity is like the trampled hyacinth; Catull. 62.39-48, cited in Johnson, 2007, 115. I value and agree with Deacy’s reading of the comparison or metaphor of girls as flowers wherein she highlights a problem inherent in this metaphor. The girls are portrayed as victims because they are “picked”, despite the fact that they are the ones performing the eroticized act of picking flowers. Her reading of Europa’s and Kore’s abduction draws out the elements of female agency and sexuality that are often overlooked. Deacy, 2013, 399.



for their actions and understand the implications of their flower festival. Therefore, this festival is vital especially for women because their participation was likely viewed as a way to appease the four goddesses who are intimately connected with their experiences and roles as women.



## **Chapter 5.**

### **Conclusions**

The evidence of the Adonia, the Thesmophoria and, to a degree, the Anthesphoria has demonstrated the strong presence and subtle commentary from Ancient women in the religious contexts of women-only festivals. Through the study of these festivals, one of the most important results of this thesis has been reconnecting with the women of ancient Greece and sifting through the ancient source tradition to find the actions of these women.

In this study, five major themes and points have been evidenced that are shared amongst the three selected festivals. One such theme is the significance of the involvement of female deities in women's religious practice. It was apparent that in the religious spaces of women, the female goddesses were perceived as most manifest. Although Aristophanes made jokes about the swearing by female deities by women when they are attempting to masquerade as men,<sup>1</sup> his jokes are humorous because they reflect an aspect of society that was real. In the studies of the festivals in the previous chapters, it was clear that the goddess or goddesses involved dictated who was present, what was performed or undertaken and how women should behave in these exclusively female festivals. Within each festival, the goddess was both honourary guest and instructive leader, while the female participants were both learners and community leaders. Although these roles of ancient women might seem contradictory to certain modern eyes,<sup>2</sup> we should rather view these women and their roles as complex and multi-faceted.

It was also apparent that these supposedly "marginalised" women were agents for themselves. Part of their role as women within their female community was to encourage, empower and develop other younger, inexperienced or newly "initiated" women into this community and into the knowledge that was most relevant to them. The letter attributed to Theano indicated the expectations of women by men and women, their responsibilities to their homes, families and to other women within their community.<sup>3</sup> Leadership and management were important qualities for women as they governed, managed and partook in social and religious life. Both

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<sup>1</sup> Ar. *Ec.* 155-60.

<sup>2</sup> Detienne and Vernant, 2003.

<sup>3</sup> Thea. *Ep.ad.Call.*

the Adonia and Thesmophoria were in the hands of women. The sources were explicit that women were to plan, arrange, manage and provide for the activities associated with these festivals. In the case of the Thesmophoria, the governing deme including men in that community were also meant to aid and support these women in terms of finance and in the sharing of civic and/or religious space.<sup>4</sup> For the Anthesphoria, the inclusion of a priestess also conveyed this idea of female responsibility in a women's festival.<sup>5</sup> Related to women's management and responsibility was the perception that the actions of women within their festivals had significant religious consequences. In the Anthesphoria, the production of floral wreaths and chaplets revealed ancient perceptions about reciprocity and the appeasement of the gods in order to receive aid and favour.<sup>6</sup> Similarly, Demeter *Thesmophoros* and Aphrodite were honoured and included in the festivals so that women might also be protected and guided.

The importance of these festivals not only rested in the seriousness of the proceedings but also in the social, playful and expressive dynamics of women's religious practice. A common element to the three festivals of this study was the importance and enjoyment of shared experiences and activities with other women. The Adonia and Thesmophoria involved serious contemplation and sorrowful expression contrasted with cultic jokes (Thesmophoria) and perceived jovial behaviour amongst the female participants (Adonia). The social value of these festivals may have been as important as the serious religious and instructive or educational purposes. Within the Adonia especially, the participation of women from different backgrounds, socially and economically, was evidenced. The involvement of slaves, metics and prostitutes in this women only festival demonstrated the far-reaching importance and believed influence of goddess Aphrodite to women of all classes. The evidence for the Anthesphoria also demonstrated how important social interaction was in the lives and experiences of women, reflected in the myths surrounding Kore gathering flowers with her young, female friends.

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<sup>4</sup> IG2<sup>2</sup> II84; *LSCG Suppl.* 124; Is. *Pyr.* 3.80.

<sup>5</sup> *IGI*<sup>2</sup>(8).526(Thasos), cf. 609, in Liddell and Scott-Jones, 2009, s.v. ἀνθες-φόρος. A similar point can be made in relation to the *archousai* of the Thesmophoria: Evans, 2010, 112; Brenton Connelly, 2007, 42.

<sup>6</sup> Sapph. 4.30. Athenaeus cites this same point of Sappho's. In Ath. 15.16.

In the study of the medicinal uses of natural products for each of these festivals, it was interesting to note that in order to analyse the perceived uses of these products by women the emphasis of the study needed to be re-directed to women. Although this point sounds obvious, the more modern sources I consulted for this subject area of plants and natural products, the less it seemed to be common practice. For example, the persistent interpretation of lettuce in the Adonia had reflected the uses and perceived implications of this product for men. Information about how women used lettuce or the health implications of lettuce for women has been presented in this thesis to redirect the study to the women themselves. The scholarship on this festival, through the focus upon Adonis in the festival, had not addressed the use of the 'pot-herb' for women. As a result of this re-focusing on the female goddess and her women participants, the appearance and role of the natural products of this festival consequently became more complex. It is my hope that through this change of focus from the male to the female in the Adonia, a more comprehensive analysis and interpretation of the festival has been offered and will encourage similar research in other religious ceremonies.

Following the investigation of the natural products in these festivals more widely, I also hope that our current understandings and theories of ancient perceptions about women and the multiplicity of uses of natural products have been expanded. One of the most intriguing discoveries of this research was the reception of and engagement with such theories in current scholarship. For example, Nixon's challenging and valuable study of the natural products connected to the Thesmophoria and Eleusinian Mysteries inspired and encouraged my studies of the Adonia, Thesmophoria and Anthesphoria.<sup>7</sup> Other scholarship, such as Parker,<sup>8</sup> has been more critical of such an approach and viewed her interpretation as creating a "rival understanding" for the use of these products by women. Parker's comment, however, is restrictive considering that in most discussions of the Adonia the only interpretation of lettuce offered is that originally proposed by Detienne.<sup>9</sup> The taboo, the exclusivity and the knowledge that women had complete control over their festivals has made most ancient and some modern male authors uneasy. The suspicion that women could have discussed and developed

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<sup>7</sup> Nixon, 1995, 85-88, 92-93.

<sup>8</sup> Parker, 2005, 274, n. 16.

<sup>9</sup> Detienne, 1977.

‘rival’ ideas to those dominant in the patriarchal culture has also contributed to this uneasiness.<sup>10</sup>

Whilst the placement of responsibility for the festivals rested upon women and demonstrated qualities of leadership, self-governance and agency, the natural products involved in the festivals related to the empowerment of women and female agency. The selection of the natural products used in the performance of these festivals had specific applications for women’s health, including their sexual health. The treatments that were discussed and communicated in the festivals could be used in such ways that enabled women to believe that they could control their own bodies.<sup>11</sup> Women were empowered with the knowledge that could enable them to self-diagnose and self-treat. With the help and advice from the experienced women in the community, the ability to regulate and treat one’s own body evidenced a degree of independence and female agency. As King argued, the knowledge of one’s own body might also have presented a woman with the opportunity to use the system in place to her best advantage.<sup>12</sup>

There is much ground that still needs to be covered in this research field of women’s religious festivals and the natural products used within them. The limits of this thesis included: the restriction of the investigation to three women festivals; only a small selection of natural products was investigated; a limited treatment of how these festivals might have influenced those outside of the citizenship such as slaves, metics and prostitutes. These limits invite interesting opportunities for future research in the studies of ancient Greek women, religion and the natural world.

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<sup>10</sup> Foxhall, 1995, 106.

<sup>11</sup> Nixon, 1995, 92-93.

<sup>12</sup> King, 1995, 141-45.

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For the *Suda On Line* references provided in the abbreviations list, the following are the full citations as per the online citation instructions via SOL and are arranged alphabetically according to their Greek letters (<http://www.stoa.org/sol/citation.shtml>):

“Adonis’ gardens”. *Suda On Line*. Tr. Jennifer Benedict. 16 March 2001 <http://www.stoa.org/sol-entries/alpha/517>

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Unless otherwise stated, the following ancient texts are of the Loeb Classical Library Collection.

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Aeschines	<i>De Falsa Legatione</i> , C. Darwin Adams (trans.) (Harvard University Press, William Heinemann, Ltd., Cambridge, 1919).
Aeschylus	<i>Prometheus Vincitus</i> , H. W. Smyth (trans.) vol. I) (Harvard University Press, William Heinemann, Ltd., Cambridge, 1963).
Aëtios	<i>The Gynaecology and Obstetrics of the VIth Century, A.D.</i> , J.V. Ricci (trans.) (The Blakiston Company, Philadelphia, 1950)
Anacreon	<i>Greek Lyric II</i> Campbell, D. (trans.)(Harvard University Press, William Heinemann, Ltd., Cambridge, 1988)
Apollodorus	<i>Bibliotheca</i> , J.G. Frazer (trans.) (Harvard University Press, William Heinemann, Ltd., Cambridge, 1921).
Aristophanes	<i>Aves</i> , J. Henderson (trans.) (Harvard University Press, William Heinemann, Ltd., Cambridge, 1938). <i>Ecclesiazusae</i> (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, William Heinemann, Ltd., Cambridge, 1938). <i>Lysistrata</i> , J. Henderson (trans.) (Harvard University Press, William Heinemann, Ltd., Cambridge, 2000). <i>Pax</i> , J. Henderson (trans.) (Harvard University Press, William Heinemann, Ltd., Cambridge, 1999). <i>Thesmophoriazusae</i> , J. Henderson (trans.) (Harvard University Press, William Heinemann, Ltd., Cambridge, 1938).
Apollonius Rhodius	<i>Argonautica</i> , G.W. Mooney (trans.) (Harvard University Press, William Heinemann, Ltd., Cambridge, 1912).
Aretaeus	<i>De Curatione Diuturnorum Morborum</i> (χρονίων νούσων θεραπευτικόν), F. Adams (trans.) (Harvard University Press, William Heinemann, Ltd., Cambridge, 1972).
Aristotle	<i>Historia Animalium</i> 9.7.4 C. Gould, <i>Mythical Monsters</i> (Cosimo, New York, 2008).
Athenaeus	<i>Deipnosophistae</i> , C.D. Yonge (trans.) (Harvard University Press, William Heinemann, Ltd., Cambridge, 1854).
Bacchylides	<i>Dithyrambs</i> , D. Arnson Svarlien (trans.) (Harvard University Press,



	Cambridge, William Heinemann, Ltd., Cambridge, 1991).
Bion	<i>The Greek Bucolic Poets</i> , J.M. Edmonds (trans.) (The Macmillan Co., William Heinemann, Ltd., London, 1912).
Callimachus	<i>Hymnus in Cererem</i> , A.W. Mair (trans.) (G.P. Putnam's Sons, William Heinemann, Ltd., London, 1968).
Catullus	<i>Carmina</i> , L.C. Smithers (trans.) (The Macmillan Co., William Heinemann, Ltd., Cambridge, 1894).
Cicero	<i>Orationes Verrinae</i> , C.D. Yonge (trans.) (George Bell & Sons, William Heinemann, Ltd., London, 1903).
Clemens Alexandrinus	<i>Protrepticus</i> , G.W. Butterworth (trans.) (Harvard University Press, William Heinemann, Ltd., Cambridge, 1919).
Natale Conti (Natale Comes)	<i>Mythologiae</i> , J. Mulryan, and S. Brown, (Tempe, Arizona, ACMRS, 2006).
Cypria	<i>The Works of Hesiod: Theogony and the Homeric Hymns</i> , H. G. Evelyn-White (trans.) (Harvard University Press, William Heinemann, Ltd., Cambridge, 1959).
Demosthenes	<i>De Corona</i> , C.A. Vince (trans.) (Harvard University Press, William Heinemann, Ltd., Cambridge, 1926). <i>In Neaeram</i> , N. W. DeWitt (trans.), N. J. DeWitt (trans.) (Harvard University Press, William Heinemann, Ltd., Cambridge, 1949).
Diodorus Siculus	<i>Bibliothecae Historicae</i> , C.H. Oldfather (trans.), C.L. Sherman (trans.), C. Bradford (trans.) (Harvard University Press, William Heinemann, Ltd., Cambridge, 1939, 1966, 1973).
Diogenes Laertius	<i>Vitae et sententiae eorum qui in philosophia probati fuerun</i> , R.D. Hicks (trans.) (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1972).
Dioscorides (Epigrammaticus)	<i>Anthologia Graeca</i> , W.R. Paton (trans.) (Harvard University Press, William Heinemann, Ltd., Cambridge, 1920).
Dioscorides (Pendanius)	<i>De Materia Medica</i> , Osbaldeston, T.A. (trans.) (Ibidis Press, Johannesburg, 2000).
Euripides	<i>Ion</i> , R. Potter (trans.) (Harvard University Press, William Heinemann, Ltd., Cambridge, 1938) <i>Melanippe Captiva</i> , (Harvard University Press, William

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Praxilla	I.M. Plant, <i>Women Writers of Ancient Greece and Rome. An Anthology</i> (Equinox Publishing Ltd., London, 2004).
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Sappho	I.M. Plant, <i>Women Writers of Ancient Greece and Rome. An Anthology</i> (Equinox Publishing Ltd., London, 2004).
Scholion on Aristophanes	<i>Thesmophoriazusae</i> , M. Dillon, <i>Girls and Women in Classical Greek Religion</i> (Routledge, London and New York, 2002).
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Soranus	<i>Gynaecia</i> , O. Temkin (trans.) (The John Hopkins Press, Baltimore, 1956).
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Theano	<i>Letter to Callisto</i> , I.M. Plant (trans.), <i>Women Writers of Ancient Greece and Rome. An Anthology</i> (Equinox Publishing Ltd., London, 2004).
Theocritus	<i>The Greek Bucolic Poets</i> , J.M. Edmonds (trans.) (Harvard University Press, William Heinemann, Ltd., Cambridge, 1912).
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Theophrastus	<i>Historia Planatarum</i> (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, William Heinemann, Ltd., Cambridge, 1916).
Vergil	<i>Eclogues</i> , J. B. Greenough (trans.) (Harvard University Press, William Heinemann, Ltd., Cambridge, 1895).
Xenophon	<i>Cyropaedia</i> , W. Miller (trans.) (Harvard University Press, William Heinemann, Ltd., London, 1914).

## Ancient (non-literary)

The following are arranged in approximate chronology.

Title	Specifics
Aphrodite holding rose and bird (dove?)	Cup, signed by Oltos, red-figure, c.525-500 B.C., Tarquinia, Museo Nazionale RC 6848, from Tarquinia. <i>ARV</i> 60, 66, as cited in J. Boardman, <i>Athenian Red Figure Vases. The Archaic Period: a handbook</i> (Thames and Hudson, 1975). Aphrodite in this image has her body turned away from another figure and is looking back over her shoulder. She holds in front of her a rose and a bird that are also facing away from the figure behind her.
Aphrodite with rose, male figure and Eros.	Relief, Locri, terracotta, 475-450 B.C. Germany, München, Staatliche Antikensammlungen und Glyptothek, Inv. N.I. 5042 (1. Inv.).
Kylix	Red-figure kylix, Attic, 480-470 B.C., British Museum, Inv. 1843, 1103.94. Men and women in negotiations and woman holding rose depiction on the interior.
<i>IG</i> <sup>2</sup> II84; <i>LSCG Suppl.</i> 124	‘The Cholargos Decree’, S. Price, <i>Religions of the Ancient Greeks</i> (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1999).
<i>IG</i> <sup>1</sup> (8).526(Thasos), cf. 609	H.G. Liddell, & R. Scott-Jones, <i>Liddell and Scott’s Greek English Lexicon</i> , digitalised online by the <i>Thesaurus Linguae Graecae</i> (University of California, California, 2009).
Demeter and corn	Athenian red-figure lekythos, Athens, 475-425 B.C., Athens, National Museum Inv. CC1626.
Fragmented scene	Red-figure lebes fragment, 425 B.C., Painter of Athens 1454, Paris, Louvre Inv. CA 1679, in M. Dillon, <i>Girls and Women in Classical Greek Religion</i> (Routledge, London and New York, 2002).
Adonia scene	Red-figure squat lekythos, c. 420 B.C.- 410 B.C., CVA, Karlsruhe Inv. 278 (1, p. 27.1-4) (Beazley no. 361).

Adonis surprised by the boar.	Red-figure Athenian lekythos, 425-375 B.C., Corinth, Kassel, Staatliche Museen Kassel, Antikensammlung Inv. T389.
Adonia scene	Red-figure lekythos, 425-375 B.C. Italy, Ruvo, Karlsruhe, Badisches Landesmuseum Inv. B39, 278.
Adonia scene	Red-figure hydria, 400-300 B.C., Libya, Cyrenaica, London, British Museum Inv. E241.
Adonia scene	Red-figure squat lekythos, c. 400-300 B.C., Bulgaria, Apollonia, St. Petersburg, State Hermitage Museum Inv. 928, 2024
Abduction of Kore	Cup, vase painting, Apulia, terracotta, Underworld Painter, 330/320 B.C., LIMC/ThesCRA: MID7386, SMID7535-LIMC/ThesCRA: Hades 87, Persephone (S) 197, Austria, Wien, Privatsammlungen.
SEG 28.30	A.G. Woodhead, "Eleusis. Fasti Eleusinii, c. a. 330/270a. (SEG 23.80)," <i>Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum</i> , A. T. R.S. R.A. Chaniotis Corsten Stroud Tybout, Brill Online, 2014.
Female figurine waters garden of Adonis	Female figurine, terracotta, 325-250 B.C., Paris, Louvre Inv. Myr.233, in Oakley and Reitzammer, 2005, 142-144.
‘An accomplished woman’ inscription	Inscription, Sardis, 1 <sup>st</sup> century B.C., M. Lefkowitz, M.B. Fant, <i>Women’s Life in Greece and Rome</i> (Gerald Duckworth & Co. Ltd, London, 1982).

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