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Margarita Sánchez Romero and Rosa Cid López, eds. *Motherhood and Infancies in the Mediterranean in Antiquity*. Oxford and Philadelphia: Oxbow Books, 2018. Pp. 296. Paper (ISBN 978-1-78925-038-1) \$59.99.

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her book is a pleasure to read, and many of the examples she chooses to make her case will cause the reader pause and reflect. There is a lot to be learned from the book even if not all of it will be persuasive, depending on the image that each reader has of “Homer” and the Homeric tradition. Dué’s views obviously clash frontally with the work of the late M.L. West, the most recent editor of both *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. Dué does not avoid discussing the differences between these approaches, which she does with respect and professionalism.

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This book was inspired by a 2016 conference, “Maternities and Childhood: Historical and Archaeological Perspectives,” in Granada, Spain. It is the seventh volume in the *Childhood in the Past* monograph series published by Oxbow Books. The twenty-one essays cover a wide chronological range, with discussion of representations of women and children from the Bronze Age to the modern day. Geographically, the essays focus on evidence from Mesopotamia, Spain, Italy, and Greece and address an array of issues, including constructions of maternity and childhood, legal perspectives on motherhood and on mother-child relationships, funerary commemoration of children, and current pedagogical approaches. In what follows, I offer an overview of several chapters to provide prospective readers with a sense of the variety of the contributions.

In Chapter 1, “Motherhood and infancies: archaeological and historical approaches,” Margarita Sánchez Romero and Rosa Cid López cite recent debates in archaeology and social history that have inspired the volume and have underscored the need for further work that challenges naturalized views of motherhood and childhood. Taking this as a point of departure, they state that their aims in the project are “to discover in greater detail the true social, economic, and technical dimension of maternal practices and to reflect on childhood from a gender perspective” and “to investigate the emergence of mother-daughter ties and their development” (p.7). This introduction to the volume provides a useful overview of scholarship on women and children, and it includes an admirably up-to-date set of references to current research.

In “Beyond biology: the constructed nature of motherhood(s) in ancient Near Eastern sources and studies” (Chapter 4), Agnes Garcia-Ventura sets out to demonstrate how the concept of motherhood was established in the ancient Near East, focusing on a set of

documentary cuneiform texts from the beginning of the second millennium BCE. These administrative and legal texts in Akkadian mention a set of women in Babylon known as *nadītu* who committed their lives to the service of the god Marduk. Garcia-Ventura outlines the rules and expectations governing their lives, which she notes were unusual even compared other *nadītu* mentioned in Akkadian texts. Most notably, while most women of this type were not allowed to marry or bear children, the *nadītu* of Marduk were expected to marry, probably in order to facilitate ties between prominent families. Once married, they were allowed to rear children, but only those whom a surrogate had borne for them, as they were not allowed to become pregnant (45). This community of women, often overlooked by scholars, are of interest as a group who participated socially but not biologically in the experience of motherhood.

Taking up the topic of constructions of motherhood in the world of law, Laura Pepe offers an analysis of classical Athenian sources in “The (ir)relevance of being a mother: A legal perspective on the relationship between mothers and children in ancient Greece” (Chapter 11). Comparing the evidence of family law that survives from two *poleis*, Athens and Cretan Gortyn, she argues that the Gortyn code provided women with more freedom to decide whether they wished to rear their infants. In Athens, there is evidence that “the destiny of babies born from *iustae nuptiae* was placed exclusively in the hands of fathers” (155) or in the hands of the archon if the woman was a widow. Athenian evidence says nothing about women who gave birth after their husbands left or divorced them, but the Gortyn code seems to indicate that in such scenarios, some consideration was given to the woman’s point of view on whether to bring up the infant (156). Pepe notes that even with the scarcity of evidence for classical Greek literary and legal perspectives on mother-child relationships, the divergence between Athens and Gortyn serves as a reminder that there might have been significant variation in such perspectives across Greece.

With a focus on representations of childhood, and especially on how the death of children affected families, Rosa Maria Cid López analyzes a small set of twenty inscribed funerary poems in “*Mors immatura*, childhood and maternal-filial relationships in the *carmina epigraphica*: case studies from the Iberian Peninsula” (Chapter 13). Cid López sets out to elucidate what these stylized funerary inscriptions for this group of children -- who range in age from seven months to fifteen years -- might reveal about “the way childhood was conceived in Hispanic provinces and others of the Roman Empire” (177) and points to elements of the poems that may reveal something about socialization. For example, she notes that while parents are portrayed as grieving for the loss of their children, they are also keen to emphasize masculine and feminine virtues in the epitaphs, with deceased boys praised for physical strength and speaking abilities and girls honored for their beauty (180).

Infants who were too young for eulogies of their strength, beauty, or education could be praised for their potential -- or they could be commemorated in a different way altogether, as Mireia López-Bertran discusses in “Creating beings: relations between children and

animals in the Iron Age Western Mediterranean” (Chapter 7). Focusing on osteological and archaeological evidence for social responses to the untimely death of newborns and stillborn fetuses, she interprets the pairing of animals and children in two sets of evidence: child cremations in Phoenician and Punic tophets (8th-2nd centuries BCE) and burials of children in Iberia (5th-3rd centuries BCE). For example, at Tharros, in Sardinia, newborn and stillborn human remains in urns are combined with the remains of ewes or newborn lambs. López-Bertran argues that the mixing of these remains suggests “a specific way of understanding and defining one type of human corporality” (96), with newborn infants and stillborns considered more similar to animals than to humans.

The volume concludes with two essays by Silvia Medina Quintana (Chapter 20) and Antonia Garcia Luque (Chapter 21) that move into modern-day curricular concerns especially in pre-college education. Medina Quintana asserts the need for history textbooks in primary and secondary schools to present a narrative that makes clear to young students that women’s lives consisted of more than simply their domestic activities; Garcia Luque offers specific strategies for changes to teacher training that would make this possible. These essays highlight that even as researchers seek new directions in the study of women in the ancient Mediterranean, they should be alert to current debates in educational studies and to pedagogical strategies for conveying information to a variety of audiences.

In sum, the authors of the essays in *Motherhood and Infancies* offer numerous individual insights into cultural responses to motherhood, mother-child relations, and childhood in the ancient Mediterranean. Photographs, tables, and maps are useful supplements to the text, and each essay ends with a list of bibliographical references. It might have been desirable for authors to cross-reference their discussions, to make it easier for the reader to draw connections between the themes and evidence treated in the essays. However, the volume certainly succeeds in providing a combination of thought-provoking case studies and surveys of the available evidence, following lines of inquiry from previous scholarship and paving the way for more research in these areas.

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Sheramy Bundrick, *Athens, Etruria, and the Many Lives of Greek Figured Pottery*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2019. Pp. 352. Cloth (ISBN 978-0-299-32100-0) \$119.95.

When landowners in central Italy began unearthing black- and red-figure ceramics in the eighteenth century, they famously judged these pots “Etruscan”; however, within a few decades, the case of mistaken identity had been cleared up. Since then, discussions of these