

**ANCIENT HISTORY:
RESOURCES FOR TEACHERS**

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ANCIENT HISTORY: RESOURCES FOR TEACHERS

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The Secretary
Macquarie Ancient History Association
Ancient History/Faculty of Arts
Macquarie University
NSW 2109
FAX 02 - 9850 8240

Editorial correspondence should be directed to
The Editor
Ancient History: Resources for Teachers
Ancient History/Faculty of Arts
Macquarie University
NSW 2109
FAX 02 - 9850 8240

Notes on Contributors

Bruce Harris	Founding Editor, 1971–1974
Boyo Ockinga	Editor, 1994–1995
Graham Joyner	Editor, 1991–1993
Lea Beness	Editor, 2005–
Tom Hillard	Editor, 1974–1981, 1997, 2007
Bill Leadbetter	Editor, 1996–1998
Rosalinde Kearsley	Editor, 1988–1991
Edwin Judge	Editor, 1980
Doug Kelly	Editor, 1973–1974

was secure; he must look to his own safety, and could not afford to trust others. Inferior intellects generally succeeded best ... (PW 3.83)

Julian Holden
Pymble Ladies' College

Mary K. Lefkowitz and Maureen B. Fant, *Women's Life in Greece and Rome. A source book in translation*, 3rd ed., Duckworth, London, 2005; xxvii + 420 pp.; 22 b/w photographs. ISBN 0-7156-3433-X; pb £18.00.

It is serendipitous that publication of the third edition of Lefkowitz and Fant's *Women's Life in Greece and Rome* (hereafter, L & F3) coincides with the introduction of the latest incarnation of the Higher School Certificate Ancient History syllabus. A brief survey of the 'history' of the place of ancient women's lives in the teaching of Ancient History in New South Wales since the introduction of the H.S.C. in 1967 demonstrates an interesting parallel development of concerns and approaches.

Lefkowitz and Fant originally published their source-book in 1982, during which year the Board of Senior School Studies (B.S.S.S.) introduced an Ancient History Course differentiated by options (A: Emphasis on Archaeological Emphasis; B: Emphasis on Written Evidence) and units (2 Unit General; 2 Unit Related Common; 3 Unit). In the syllabus documents approved by the B.S.S.S., the subject of women's life in ancient times is not mentioned, the only historical female named is Hatshepsut, the only female historians cited are K. Kenyon and M. Lichtheim, and the only mention of 'social life' is as a 'useful topic' for study of the Roman world AD 69-212 (WE14). This limited treatment of the lives of women in antiquity was a common feature of secondary and tertiary education (and scholarly research) in the early 1980s throughout the Western world. (The landmark English-language publication in the study of women in antiquity was: Sarah B. Pomeroy, *Goddesses, Whores, Wives, and Slaves. Women in Classical Antiquity*, New York, 1975.)

Ten years later, when Lefkowitz and Fant published the expanded second edition of their source-collection, interest in and study of the lives of ancient women had registered an impact on the content of scholarly books and

articles and some university courses. To the same extent, the Board of Studies (B.O.S.) Stage 6 Ancient History syllabus documents, implemented in 1994, reflect not only the integration of written and archaeological sources in investigating ancient societies, personalities/groups, and historical periods, but an explicit recognition of the historical and social importance of women's lives in antiquity. For the first time, 'the position of women' is included as an aspect of selected ancient societies (Israel, Persia, Classical Athens, Republican Rome) which 'teachers may wish to consider'; female historical personalities are listed as legitimate choices for intensive study (Hatshepsut, Jezebel, women in classical Greece, Cleopatra VII, Agrippina II); and women, individually (Hetepheres I and II, Khentkawes I, Iput, Sebekneferu, Hatshepsut, Nefertiti; Cleopatra VII; Livia) and collectively (Old Kingdom Queens; Imperial Roman women), are cited directly as part of the 'historical' process. Similarly, topics in the 3 Unit Additional Course included aspects touching on the lives of ancient women, either specifically (Egyptian Queens' burials) or generally (as the headings 'women' or 'role of women').

This expansion of interest in the status, position and experiences of ancient women is reflected in a variety of academic publications from the 1980s: for example, the essay collections of H. Foley (ed.), *Reflections of Women in Antiquity*, London, 1981; A. Cameron and A. Kurht (eds.), *Images of Women in Antiquity*, London, 1984; J. Peradotto and J. P. Sullivan (eds.), *Women in the Ancient World, The Arethusa Papers*, Albany, 1984; and M. B. Skinner (ed.), *Rescuing Creusa. New Methodological Approaches to Women in Antiquity*, Texas, 1987.

Publication of L & F3 coincides with the fortieth anniversary of the NSW Higher School Certificate and the first examination of the latest incarnation of the Ancient History syllabus. Direct references in the B.O.S. documents to women, as well as use of the terms 'gender' and 'sexuality', are numerous and substantial. The role and status of women—in relation to the written and archaeological record, social structure and political organization—as well as gender roles and relationships in cultural and everyday life are incorporated in a variety of Preliminary Case Studies and HSC Options, including the new Core Study. (For references in the Preliminary and HSC syllabus documents, see the list appended at the end of this review.). This emphasis in the syllabus—on the location, selection, description and evaluation of sources dealing with information about the nature, position, function, occupation and representation of women in the ancient world—draws considerable support from scholarship on women and the family that has burgeoned since the early 1990s. To give a few examples of recent scholarship: E. Fantham, H. P. Foley, N. B. Kampen, S. B. Pomeroy, H. A. Shapiro (eds.), *Women in the Classical World. Image and Text*, New York and Oxford, 1994; Suzanne

Dixon, *Reading Roman Women. Sources, Genres and Real Life*, London, 2001; M. B. Skinner, *Sexuality in Greek and Roman Culture*, Oxford, 2005. Within this context, a collection of pertinent ancient sources in English translation would make a valuable contribution to class study and discussion of ancient Greek and Roman women specifically and of issues about gender and sexuality in antiquity more generally. L & F3 does this very well.

As the authors note, L & F3 is a source-collection 'intended to make accessible to people who do not know the ancient languages the kinds of materials ancient historians work with' (1992/2005: xxiii). It is divided into two sections. The first and larger section comprises a page-by-page reproduction of the materials published as the second edition of the collection: 452 sources (pp.1-334), 625 notes (pp.335-359), abbreviations of reference collections (pp.360-362), and a bibliography (pp.363-366). The second section is an Appendix of new material, consisting of 74 sources (pp.367-392), 104 notes (pp.393-397), a bibliography (pp.397-398), and a geographical and chronological concordance (pp.400-401). A concordance of sources (pp.402-406), an index of women and goddesses (pp.407-413) and a general index (pp.414-420) refer to both sections of the collection. 22 black-and-white illustrations, including 15 from the second edition and 7 new plates, are reproduced between pp.164-165 in the middle of the book.

The sources collected by the authors are limited to documents which 'describe the lives of women in specific historical contexts' (1992/2005: xxiv). Texts which are too long, too fragmentary, too difficult to interpret, or published elsewhere and easily accessible, are not included (1992/2005: xxiii-xxiv; 2005: xxvi-xxvii). The 526 complete or excerpted texts, scattered over all places and times in Graeco-Roman antiquity, comprise a broad range of types and genres: poetry; drama; prose; legal documents; magic spells, letters, and other records preserved on papyrus; inscriptions; and graffiti. Sources 1-27 in Section 1 and 6A and 27A in the Appendix are written (or thought to have been written) by ancient women; the remainder are written about women by male writers. (For an anthology of texts written predominantly by women in antiquity, see I. M. Plant (ed.), *Women Writers of Ancient Greece and Rome*, Equinox Publishing, London, 2004.) The sources in both sections are provided with a descriptive title; the letters G and L, included after the identification of each source, indicate whether the original text was in Greek or Latin. All texts are grouped by topic and chronologically under each topic. These topics are: I. Women's Voices; II. Men's Opinions; III. Philosophers on the Role of Women; IV. Legal Status in the Greek World; V. Legal Status in the Roman World; VI. Public Life; VII. Private Life; VIII. Occupations; IX. Medicine and Anatomy; and X. Religion.

The new material in the Appendix—including a recently discovered fragment of Sappho's poetry (no.6A, p.367), newly translated Hellenistic epigrams (no.53A, pp.369-371), little-known magic spells (nos.423A-C, pp.388-389), and treating topics as diverse as ageing (e.g. nos. 6A, 53A3 and 10), clitoridectomy (no.362B), Late Antiquity (e.g. nos.446A, 450A), the geographic periphery of the Graeco-Roman world (e.g. nos. 413A, 446B), and even the topography of Rome (e.g. no.285C)—is numbered to conform with the existing order (e.g. nos.330A, 330B). This organizational scheme allows the reader to study a text or texts by content or by historical period. The new geographical and chronological concordance (pp.400-401) makes the task of identifying or correlating sources from a particular place or time in Graeco-Roman antiquity simpler by providing a table of the collected documents keyed to approximate location (region or city) and date (century or year). The concordance of sources (pp.402-406)—divided into texts, inscriptions and documentary papyri—provides a means of ascertaining what individual writers say about women within specific writing contexts. The index of women and goddesses (pp.407-413) cites historical and mythological women in an undifferentiated alphabetic list by name (e.g. Cleopatra, Juno) or group (e.g. Graces, Vestal Virgins).

The authors introduce many of the sources with a brief paragraph that contextualizes the material in historical, archaeological or literary terms. For example, we learn that the epic poetry of Hesiod was read as a school text in antiquity (no.54, p.23); that ancient biographers regarded Juvenal's poetry as factual evidence for the poet's attitudes towards women (no.69, p.31); that the similarities between Lycurgus' reforms of the Spartan constitution and Socrates' ideal state in Plato's *Republic* may not be accidental (no.95, p.83); and that many papyri and inscribed surfaces testify to a pervasive belief across social strata in antiquity in the efficacy of magic (no.414, p.294). Additionally, end-notes provide further explanatory detail and may refer the reader to relevant specialist scholarship.

However, teachers should be aware that the collection comprises texts which are supposed to 'speak for themselves, with a minimum of editorial comment' (1992/2005: xxiv). In other words, L & F3 is a collection strictly limited by space. The reader is alerted to the potential biases within genres of evidence—the documents are seen 'as objects almost as much as texts' (2005: xxvi). But the authors omit any discussion of questions about the representation or 'construction' of textual and visual images of women and men in ancient sources, the manner in which these images operated within specific performative contexts, and how literary and artistic genres and settings inform an audience (ancient or modern) about important social and

cultural meanings relating to issues of gender, sexuality and identity. While L & F3 is a useful collection of material relating to the minutiae of women's daily lives in the Graeco-Roman world, for critical analysis of these sources in terms of their role in constructing society and their place within the cultural imagination teachers should augment use of the selected material with reference to pertinent additional scholarship.

This codicil applies equally to the illustrations of evidence such as monumental sculpture, funerary reliefs, votive offerings, Athenian figured vases, wall-paintings, coins, papyri, mosaics and inscriptions (figures 1-22, between pp.164 and 165). Although the authors point out that these illustrations were selected 'for their relevance to topics covered in the text, rather than as sources in themselves' (1992/2005: xxv), the captions provide only brief descriptive details (type of source, material and period of manufacture, origin of object, present location) and no explanatory or contextual information. There is no explicit link provided—either in the caption to any illustration or elsewhere in the collection (the contents, the body of the source-book, the geographical and chronological concordance, or the indices)—between a particular illustration and a text or texts; nor is any illustration presented in historical, archaeological, aesthetic or cultural terms.

In sum, L & F3 offers Stage 6 teachers of Greek and Roman topics in the new H.S.C. Ancient History syllabus a broad range of evidence relating to women in Graeco-Roman antiquity. The texts are clearly identified, translated into readable English, and arranged in an easily accessible format; the illustrations are cleanly reproduced and large enough to permit examination of pertinent features. This source-collection should provide teachers with a wealth of reference material to supplement the study of social structure and political organization in the Core Study (Cities of Vesuvius), as well as Options G, H, J, I, N, O, and P (Minoan Crete and Mycenaean Greece; Athenian and Spartan societies; Rome in the Republican, Julio-Claudian and High Imperial periods).

Appendix: Direct references to Women, Gender, and Sexuality in the Preliminary and HSC Ancient History syllabus documents

PRELIMINARY

- Role and status of women: treatment of Helen, fate of Trojan and Greek women, goddesses (Case Study 6: Homer and the Trojan War)
- Role of women in Celtic Britain (Case Study 7: Boudicca: resistance to Roman rule)

- Role of women: wife and mother, rights, work outside the house, the unmarried woman and the 'stranger', images of women in the written and archaeological record (Ancient Society 2: Deir el-Medina)
- Gods and goddesses of New Kingdom Egypt (Ancient Society 2: Deir el-Medina)
- Role of women in the biblical narratives: Abigail, Michal, Tamar, Bathsheba (Ancient Society 6: Early Israel)
- Major themes and concerns of Greek drama: gender roles and relationships (Ancient Society 9: Greek Drama)
- Personalities of the Celtic world: Boudicca (Ancient Society 12: The Celts in Europe)
- Woman of Vix (Ancient Society 12: The Celts in Europe)
- British resistance to Roman rule: Boudicca (Ancient Society 13: Roman Britain)

HSC

- Social structure: women (Core Study: Cities of Vesuvius—Pompeii and Herculaneum)
- Social structure and political organization: roles and status of women: royal and non-royal (Option A: Egypt: Society in Old Kingdom Egypt—Dynasties III to VI; Option B: Egypt: Society in New Kingdom Egypt to the death of Amenhotep III; Option C: Egypt: Society in New Kingdom Egypt during the Ramesside period, Dynasties XIX and XX; Option E: The Near East: The Near East: Society in Israel from Solomon to the fall of Samaria; Option F: The Near East: Persian society at the time of Darius and Xerxes)
- Social structure and political organization: issues relating to gender and identity of the ruler/s; palace elite: priestesses; roles and status of women (Option G: Greece: The Bronze Age—Society in Minoan Crete)
- Social structure and political organization: roles and status of women (Option H: Greece: The Bronze Age—Mycenaean society; Option J: Greece: Athenian society in the time of Pericles)
- Social structure and political organization: role and status of women: land ownership, inheritance, education (Option I: Greece: Spartan society to the Battle of Leuctra 371 BC)
- Hatshepsut, Cleopatra VII, Agrippina the Younger (Personalities in their times: Options A: Egypt; I: Greece; L: Rome)
- Augustan principate: imperial family and problems of the succession; role of imperial women: Livia, Julia (Historical Period N: Rome: The Augustan Age 44 BC—AD 14)
- Development of the principate: imperial family and problems of the succession: Livia, Julia, Germanicus, Agrippina the Elder, Messalina,

Agrippina the Younger (Option O: Rome: Julio-Claudians and the Roman Empire AD 14-69)

- Political developments: role of significant imperial women: Plotina, Julia Domna, Julia Mamaea (Option P: Rome: The Roman Empire AD 69-235)

In addition, the general rubrics 'Cultural Life' and 'Everyday Life' (in Part II: Ancient Societies) imply the location, selection, description and evaluation of sources dealing with information about the nature, position, function, occupation, and representation of women in the ancient world.

Finally, it should be noted that one of the Case Studies in the History Extension syllabus requires an understanding of issues relating to women and gender relations. Option 8 (Tacitean View of the Early Principate) asks students to examine and evaluate Tacitus' characterization of women and men with regard to similarities and differences.

Peter Keegan
Macquarie University

Marcel Le Glay, Jean-Louis Voisin, Yann Le Bohec, *A History of Rome*. 4th ed. Blackwells, Oxford, 2009; 586 pp. ISBN 0-631-21859-9 (pb). \$47.95.

Table of contents: <<<http://au.wiley.com/WileyCDA/WileyTitle/productCd-1405183276,descCd-tableOfContents.html>>>

The proposed National History Curriculum (a Federal government initiative overseen by the Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority) foreshadows a brave new world of K-10 history education in Australia—and will, at a time yet to be announced, impact in ways yet to be fully understood on the current NSW Board of Studies Ancient History syllabus. It is fortuitous, then, in view of what will be for many teachers of ancient world studies a demonstrable need for historical resources that cater for a wider range of student ages and interests, that Wiley-Blackwell has published the 4th edition of the popular *A History of Rome*.

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