

popular discourse, extensively dealing with the function of the right hand (which is indeed indispensable when dealing with the meaning of left-handedness) in shaking hands, religious ceremony, loyalty, oaths, prayers, and victories (p. 113–152). For the left hand, various topics are dealt with as the role of this hand for wearing clothes, or the left hand in connection with theft, sexuality, the underworld, magic, drink, and food (p. 152–196). On the third level, concrete daily life instances of left-handers in the Graeco-Roman world [for the case of Sergius Silus' iron hand, a reference to the fundamental study by M. Beagon, "Beyond Comparison: M. Sergius, Fortuna Victor", in G. Clark and T. Rajak (eds.), *Philosophy and Power in the Graeco-Roman World. Essays in Honour of Miriam Griffin* (Oxford, 2002), 111–132, is sorely missed], left-handed gladiators, and the presumed left-handedness of Tiberius and Caesar are dealt with (p. 209–240). The book concludes with a list of abbreviations; an excellent and thorough bibliography; an index usefully enabling the readers to trace common threads, such as e.g. education of children; and a list of illustrations, which are presented in both a functional and beautiful way at the end of the volume.

Projects like this one are often challenged with questions about the time frame and chronology. Wirth responds to possible objections in a convincing way. This book does not deal with Christianity and more specifically Christian liturgy, since such studies already exist (p. 10–11). As for the putting together of Greek and Roman evidence, the majority of the testimonies stem from the Roman period, and Roman culture particularly emphasized such aspects as the pejorative role of the left hand in sexuality/masturbation, scenes of theft, and invocation of the dead. As such, it seems as if Roman formalism in religious matters influenced views on the issue of left-handedness in a more negative way than Greek culture did. Wirth is appropriately careful in his comparison of Greek and Roman culture: he takes into account caveats such as what exactly is meant by both terms (p. 197–208).

I particularly appreciated the author's comparative approach and his wide mastery of scholarship on the topic. Throughout the book, one finds references to other periods and cultures such as, e.g., Egyptian, Islamic and Jewish thought and practices, or present-day neurological and psychological studies on left-handedness. Wirth not only convincingly demonstrates how after a German monograph by Humer in 2006 another book on the topic was needed [p. 11–12], he also demonstrates that left-handedness in the past is much more than "a banal issue" [R. Elze, "Rechts und Links: Bemerkungen zu einem banalen Problem", in M. Kitzinger, W. Stürner, J. Zahlten (eds.), *Das andere Wahrnehmen. Beiträge zur europäischen Geschichte. August Nitschke zum 65. Geburtstag gewidmet* (Cologne, Weimar, Vienna, 1991), 75–82]. The lateness of this review should in no way diminish the great appreciation for this book, which is undoubtedly meant to become a κτήμα εἰς αἰεί.

*Christian Laes*

MAUREEN CARROLL: *Infancy and Earliest childhood in the Roman World: 'A Fragment of Time'*. Oxford University Press, Oxford 2018. ISBN 978-0-19-968763-3. XIII, 317 pp., 86 b/w illustrations, 2 maps. EUR 84.61, USD 100, GBP 75.

In her latest monograph, Maureen Carroll sets out to bring light to the earliest phases of childhood in Roman antiquity, concentrating especially on recent archaeological evidence throughout the Roman

empire. The topic is approached by means of analysing funerary evidence, epitaphs, material culture, and comparing these with literary sources. Carroll's book is the first concise English-language study on earliest childhood in the Roman world. The theme has been handled before, to some extent, especially in the French-language scholarship, of which the latest and most thorough is *Le sourire d'Omphale: maternité et petite enfance dans l'antiquité* (2015) by Véronique Dasen (which unfortunately is not mentioned in Carroll's work).

The book is divided into nine chapters, each concentrating on a different aspect of earliest childhood or on a different type of evidence. In the introductory first chapter, Carroll briefly presents the background of the research on Roman families and children but leaves out some of the most recent publications especially from 2014 onwards. The book starts chronologically with the second chapter concentrating on the burials and depictions of children in the Pre-Roman period across the vastness of the later Roman empire. In a sense this chapter follows the disposition of the whole book, summed up only in the context of the Pre-Roman period and thus not in the main temporal focus of the research at hand. Introducing the main themes and the structure of the book in a miniature format already in the first chapter brings a certain feeling of repetitiveness when reading the later parts of the work.

After this, in the third chapter, attention is on the development and milestones of the first year of an infant's life, starting even from before birth. By analysing the archaeological evidence Carroll suggests that in addition to the traditionally viewed life stages of Roman infancy (*dies lustricus*, *professio*, teething, first birthday, etc.), the evidence of swaddled baby votives could be interpreted as the end of a life stage in a baby's life. The parents thanked the gods that they were able to have a child that had survived the perilous first months, during which it had been swaddled.

After these chapters, Carroll focuses on different types of materials that give evidence on the lives of infants and toddlers. First in the fourth chapter by concentrating on the objects and clothing used by children, drawing examples especially from burial finds, such as grave goods. The fifth chapter approaches small children from an iconographical point of view. In chapters six and seven the focus is on the untimely death of infants and small children, first by studying the places and spaces of infant burials and second by concentrating on the burial methods themselves. In the concluding chapter all the previously presented evidence is interpreted and compared from the perspective of the literary evidence on earliest childhood.

By means of recent technological advancements, we are able to get more information from the skeletons of the deceased as well as from their burial contexts. It is possible, for example, to find traces of diseases and possible malnourishment that even the youngest of the society had already experienced during their brief lives. Carroll analyses thoroughly this important bio-archaeological evidence, adding even more depth to the information on earliest childhood. The fact that the book concentrates mainly on material evidence, which in the case of infants and toddlers consists mostly of funerary evidence, leads to a setting where the same burial contexts are interpreted multiple times from the various perspectives of different chapters – the outcome being quite repetitious.

Carroll impressively compiles the material evidence of infancy and early childhood in the Roman empire (and before). To be able to compose a work of this nature, requires years of specialization and experience from the field, making Carroll the ideal scholar for the undertaking. The book has value both as a source book on the material evidence of earliest childhood and as an exhaustive

research on the matter. Carroll's work is thus invaluable to anyone interested in early childhood in antiquity and especially for those not working with the material evidence directly.

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TAKASHI FUJII: *Imperial Cult and Imperial Representation in Roman Cyprus*. Heidelberg Alt-historische Beiträge und Epigraphische Studien (HABES) 53. Franz Steiner Verlag, Stuttgart 2013. ISBN 978-3-515-10257-5. 248 pp. EUR 46.

Fujii's book presents a study of Roman imperial representation in one specific area in the eastern Mediterranean, Cyprus. The time frame of the study ranges from the end of the first century BCE, when the island came under Roman rule, to the end of third century CE. The main focus of Fujii's study is the imperial cult in Cyprus and the main evidence used is epigraphic. The book is based on the author's dissertation from the year 2010. The strengths of the book lie in its comprehensive discussion of source material and all the aspects of the imperial cult and the attention it gives to an area that was less central in the Roman Empire.

The book consists of an introductory chapter, discussion divided into three parts, and a conclusion that is followed by an appendix, abbreviations and bibliography, and indices. The appendix catalogues the 90 Greek and Latin inscriptions used as sources and provides translations as well as other information, including date, find spot and further references. The inscriptions are listed by cities in alphabetical order. This solution is reasoned well in the discussion, but it prevents the reader from gaining a temporal overview. A list of inscriptions by emperors would have been useful too.

Part 1, "The Emperor in the Wide Spectrum of Representation", consists of four chapters and is the widest of the three parts. The part's focus is on the religious status of the Roman emperor and the relationship and ritual transfer between traditional deities and the emperor. Fujii studies this by examining imperial epithets and titles, imperial statues, the arrangement of imperial monuments in the civic landscape and the Cypriot oath of allegiance to Tiberius from 14 CE. The chapters create a consistent image of the processes that the Cypriots used to adapt to imperial power in terms of religion and the ways of representing that power.

Part 2, "Political and Social Settings of the Imperial Cult", has two chapters. They focus on ways of communication through imperial cult and the integration of the imperial cult into Cyprus's socio-political framework. The section examines the imperial cult in Cyprus on three levels – provincial, civic, and individual – and the interaction through the imperial cult on all levels.

Part 3, "The Emperor in the Life of the Cypriots", also consists of two chapters. The chapters examine the presence of the emperor in the everyday life of the Cypriots by focusing on festivals and calendars. These presented a yearly cycle that included regular honors towards the emperor and imperial family but that was built on the existing cultic frameworks of traditional deities.

Fujii's study of communication and interaction through the Roman imperial cult in Cypriot society is a good example of a case study of a Roman province. Its focus is on the province and its people and their reactions to Roman central power. Direct comparisons with other eastern provinces are scarce but Fujii places Cyprus and its imperial cult well within the larger frame of