

Mary R. Lefkowitz and Maureen B. Fant, eds. *Women's Life in Greece and Rome. A Source book in translation*. Fourth Edition. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2016. ISBN 9781421421131. Pp. xxxiv, 457. 40 b&w illus. \$32.00 (pb).

Mary R. Lefkowitz and Maureen B. Fant have heroically offered up a fourth edition of their source book, *Women's Life in Greece and Rome*. The volume, now in its fourth decade, once again reflects the authors' thoughtful attention to the criticisms and *desiderata* expressed in reviews of the previous edition, and the current product is all the more useful for it.<sup>1</sup> Since the meat of the source book is largely unchanged from its last two iterations, this review will focus instead on how the fourth edition differs from and improves upon the third edition, with some further thoughts for what a possible fifth edition (*utinam!*) might look like a decade from now.

Two of the principal criticisms of the third volume centered on the presentation of the material, namely, the relation of the images and the newly added sources to the remainder of the text. In the case of the former, the images in the third edition were grouped together on six glossy plates inserted into the middle of the volume. Absent any immediate context or efforts toward contextualization, their utility was rightly questioned. This time around, the authors have integrated the images into their relevant sections, such that the much-maligned "Relief in Pentelic marble showing a maenad leaning on her thyrsus" (fig. 1 in the 3rd ed.; fig. 38 in the 4th ed.), for example, now appears alongside such sources as "Rules of ritual" (no. 483) and "Equipment for women's orgiastic rites" (no. 486). The image, in other words, has context. However, it continues to lack contextualization, and so it remains merely evocative. Furthermore, the relocation of the image still does not answer one of the other criticisms leveled against this particular relief, and thus one of the criticisms directed at the whole suite of images: the authors nowhere explain what a maenad is, though the terms "maenads" and "maenadic" appear in a source on the facing page, "Authorization by the Delphic oracle to establish a temple in Ionian Magnesia" (no. 485). This criticism strikes me as one certainly worth addressing in the future, particularly because students do not always come equipped with the necessary tools to make sense of visual evidence from the ancient world, and even a brief explanation and discussion can help them grasp what the image contributes to our understanding of women's life in Greece and/or Rome.

That being said, the authors do deserve commendation for making one other very minor change to the caption of the maenad relief in response to reviewers' critiques: the third edition described the relief as a "Roman **copy** of a Greek original," but the fourth edition now describes it as a "Roman **version** of a Greek original." In so doing,

---

<sup>1</sup> In particular, I am thinking of two reviews: Fiona Hobden. 2006. [BMCR 2006.07.22](#); Lisa A. Hughes. 2007. *Mouseion* 7.1: 64–7.

the authors align themselves more closely with current scholarly trends, reflecting the field's move away from the outmoded approach of *Kopienkritik*.<sup>2</sup>

The other principal criticism of the third edition concerned the relation of the added sources to the remainder of the text. Specifically, the third edition merely appended these sources to the main body of the text, in the form of an Appendix, thereby diminishing their accessibility. Granted, the authors did make a conscious effort to logically organize the new sources, assigning them numbers meant to suggest which of the other entries they should be read with, and grouping them under the relevant headings. Thus, a new fragment of Sappho (P.Oxy 1787) was numbered 6A and included under "I. Women's Voices: Female Poets." With the fourth edition, the authors have moved these new sources out of the Appendix and incorporated them into the main body of the volume. They have also added yet more new material, increasing the total number of entries from 526 to 571, and the total number of images from 22 to 40.

Two other improvements to the fourth edition warrant brief acknowledgment. First, the authors have changed the bibliographic format of the secondary sources which are cited in the notes at the end of each chapter. Whereas the third edition utilized the author-date method, with a fuller bibliography at the end, the fourth edition now provides the full citation in the note, and the volume's bibliography has shrunk accordingly. Second, the authors have now offered up their own translations for all of the sources, intending to save readers from abrupt changes in English style and vocabulary. For example, in the third edition, entry no. 150, "Dowry payment through a bank," includes this sentence: "(it is acknowledged) that he has received from Chaeremonis a dowry upon herself of 40 silver drachmas and 20 drachmas of white chiton." The fourth edition re-translates the title of the entry, "Bank-certified copy of a marriage contract" (no. 170), and re-renders the previous sentence: "This certifies that he has received from Chaeremonis a dowry for herself of 40 silver drachmas and a white tunic worth 20 drachmas." The modifications are relatively minor, perhaps the most significant of which is the change from "chiton" to "tunic"—a term that is likely more familiar to the average student. Other re-translations similarly target small issues of style and vocabulary, reflecting the authors' keen interest in maximizing the accessibility of the volume's myriad and varied sources.

For all its improvements, however, there remains one error that I hope can be corrected before a fifth edition is issued. In the preface to the third edition, the authors offered up a website, [www.maureenbfant.com](http://www.maureenbfant.com) (xxvii), where they said they would continue to make new material available. A quick exploration of that site today

---

<sup>2</sup> Recent challenges to *Kopienkritik* include, e.g., Bettina Bergmann. 1995. "Greek masterpieces and Roman recreative fictions." *HSPH* 97: 79–120; Ellen Perry. 2005. *The aesthetics of emulation in the visual arts of ancient Rome*. Cambridge University Press; Miranda Marvin. 2008. *The language of the Muses*. Los Angeles: Getty Publications.

reveals nothing but a half-page of corrigenda for the third edition, assembled on 26 October 2006. For the fourth edition, a new website has been created through the publisher to once again allow the authors to continue to make new material available (xxxii). Regrettably, at the time of this writing (29 January 2017) the URL provided, [www.bloomsbury.com/lefkowitz-fant-women's-life-4E](http://www.bloomsbury.com/lefkowitz-fant-women's-life-4E), returns a 404 Error.

With the closing of Gerald Duckworth & Co., the authors were left searching for a new home for this now standard source book. Johns Hopkins University Press has proved an excellent match: the production value is high, and despite the added images, the cost remains relatively low. The authors are to be applauded and thanked for their continued devotion to this project, which only improves with each subsequent printing.

MATTHEW P. LOAR  
UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA-LINCOLN  
[mloar2@unl.edu](mailto:mloar2@unl.edu)