

of Sappho in Roman literary sources in both Greek and Latin, and a more imaginative (and somewhat less persuasive) homoerotic evaluation of visual representations of Roman female homosocial groups, particularly the Muses and Aphrodite.

My occasional hesitation about Avanger's conclusions reflect my greater discomfort with several of the essays on physical evidence. Sensual, intimate representations of women apart from the company of men are interesting in their own right. Perhaps too strictly for the volume's editors, I find attempts to sharply distinguish friendly from erotic touch, embrace, or glance between women often fail to persuade, and wonder ultimately whether it is terribly important; how much more interesting if the ambiguity in the evidence reflects ancient female indifference to the modern categories 'erotic' and 'non-erotic'. Perhaps the most important lesson of this volume is how difficult such distinctions are.

Rabinowitz's introductory admonition against assuming a necessary connection between homosocial activities and the homoerotic is too infrequently taken by the remaining contributors. Rehak's essay on the paintings of Xeste 3 at Akrotiri draws some remarkable conclusions about odd coloration in the eyes of figures in the frescoes and medicinal use of saffron in the women's cult there depicted, but needlessly conjectures, 'it would be surprising indeed if these healthy women did not express their care and attention for each other erotically'. Rabinowitz's careful reading and judicious contextualization of Greek vase paintings depicting female homosocial groups, in contrast, finds an appropriate balance between open-mindedness and rigor; comparison with visual evidence for male homoerotic scenes reveals similarities (gestures and love tokens) and differences (no age/class distinctions among women). Younger discusses the fascinating Kerameikos tombstones representing unrelated female pairs. He views the cemetery as a women's space, 'an extension of the gynaikonitis', which, he argues, would have encouraged homoerotic interpretations of the tombstones, particularly as many 'triangulate' the spectator into the groups there depicted. He, like Rabinowitz, is most persuasive when comparing male homoerotic representations; unlike Rabinowitz, he imaginatively conjures the female viewers' responses to the images as homoerotic.

This volume is interesting, both for what one learns generally about ancient female homosocial and homoerotic relationships, and about the current range of approaches to the relationships of ancient women, from the old-fashioned literary critical to the more contemporary agenda-driven. The cooperation demonstrated here is a laudable model for future efforts, where Rome, and studies of both textual and visual material, might find a larger rôle.

Boston University

PATRICIA J. JOHNSON

GREEK DISEASES, ROMAN CORPSES

V. M. HOPE, E. MARSHALL (edd.): *Death and Disease in the Ancient City*. Pp. xii + 194. London and New York: Routledge, 2000. Cased, £45. ISBN: 0-415-21427-0.

Given that its origins lie in a conference on 'Pollution and the Ancient City', it is perhaps unsurprising that the content of this collection of eleven essays is somewhat narrower than the title of the volume might suggest. The focus is upon perceptions of and responses to death and disease rather than the underlying phenomena of urban morbidity and mortality. Considerations of ancient concepts of disease causation

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and the relative importance of hygienic and religious factors in determining funerary practice, themes neatly elucidated in both the editors' introduction and its companion piece, E. Marshall's 'case study' of Cyrene, predominate.

Disease occupies the first half of the volume. R. Brock's study of illness as a metaphor in Greek literature for political dysfunction reveals the extent to which medical knowledge penetrated civic and philosophical discourse, but is more helpful for an understanding of the *polis* as a socio-political unit than as a conurbation possessed of a characteristic pathogenic environment. J. Clarke Kosak adduces a variety of texts portraying the city as a locus for misfortune in an attempt to discover a consciousness among fifth-century Greeks of an urban–rural mortality differential. F. Borca contrasts the literary topos of the marsh biotope as exceptionally insalubrious with the frequent proximity of towns and cities to such sources of miasmatic peril. J. Longrigg offers a superb account of the manner in which epidemic disease was understood and confronted in archaic and classical Greece; the development of 'rational medicine' appears to have had little impact (p. 63). V. Nutton concludes from his excellent survey of sources ranging from the Hippocratics to Cassiodorus that despite an awareness in the medical literature of the hazards of 'urban pollution' (p. 70), the implementation of public health measures was precluded both by a conceptual framework which held mediation of the individual's relationship to his environment to be the central goal of medicine and by the generally marginal status of physicians.

The second half of the volume considers death, or more accurately, the disposal of the dead. J. Patterson's essay on the topography of Rome's boundaries highlights the pragmatic concerns which governed the location of tombs. In a fascinating paper, V. Hope notes that, lifeless though it was, the corpse remained a valuable resource as a vehicle through which honor or shame might be conferred upon the living and through the exploitation of its magical properties. Adopting a 'bottom up' approach (p. 128), i.e. ignoring the processions and monuments of the élite in favor of an examination of potter's fields and funeral workers, J. Bodel observes that Roman attitudes towards death were marked by a complex interplay of issues of sanitation and public safety on the one hand, and notions of religious impurity on the other. In the final essay of the collection, H. Lindsay surveys Roman views on the defilement engendered by contact with the dead and offers a careful description of funerary ritual.

Despite the generally excellent caliber of the individual contributions, the whole is something less than the sum of its parts. Death and disease appear in this volume as largely autonomous phenomena. Further, a striking disjunction in the geographical disjunction of the essays is to be noted: the chapters on death, with the exception of Marshall's piece, are devoted to Roman praxis; conversely, those on disease concentrate primarily upon the Greek world. Illustrative of the erroneous impressions which such an imbalance in presentation may create is the editors' assertion—substantiated by reference to the essays on Cyrene and Rome—of a diachronic shift in the importance of public hygiene in determining funerary conventions (p. 3); clearly the most that can be inferred from this comparison is a cultural differential.

One is struck, moreover, by a degree of overlap among the essays surprising for so slender a volume. The same topics, even the same texts, recur throughout. Both Brock and Clarke Kosak treat of *stasis*/sickness imagery; the contribution of overcrowding to the Athenian plague features in the essays of Longrigg and Clarke Kosak; Nutton and Borca consider the health hazards of the marsh; Hope and Bodel discuss the burial of paupers; not only is the differentiation of tasks among funeral workers examined in the

essays of Bodel and Lindsay, but both writers make use of comparanda drawn from rural Cantonese society. In the majority of these instances there is no substantive disagreement among the authors, and this iteration emphasizes both the narrowness of the evidentiary base which has been drawn upon and creates an aura of needless repetition. Where the writers do offer contrasting interpretations of the same text, e.g. Longrigg and Clarke Kosak, one regrets the absence of any dialogue. Nevertheless, such failings neither negate nor outweigh the value of the insights to be gained from a reading of this collection of essays.

Stanford University

JAMES GREENBERG

ATHENIAN HUNTING

J. M. BARRINGER: *The Hunt in Ancient Greece*. Pp. xiii + 296, ills. Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002. Cased, £33. ISBN: 0-8018-6656-1.

‘Why did hunting survive in art, literature, and in actuality long past its utilitarian function?’ (p. 1). That is the question behind B.’s meticulously referenced study of images of hunting (‘not snapshots of reality but selective reflections of cultural values’, p. 113). B. distinguishes her approach by focusing on ‘social and political issues’ (p. 6): in particular, she sets out to demonstrate that ‘hunting was . . . a defining activity of the masculine aristocracy and that those social connotations pervade its many depictions in art and literature’ (p. 7).

Despite the title, this book is chiefly about the hunt in Athens; more specifically, it is about the hunt in Athens during the mid- to late sixth century, the period that has bequeathed the greatest number of images on black-figure pottery. The first chapter makes a virtue of that bias (p. 14), arguing that the shift in iconography between the two peaks of popularity (c. 560–550 and c. 520–470) corresponds to the difficulties which the Athenian aristocracy experienced in retaining their social, cultural, and political clout. Until 520, hunting was predominantly presented as a collective and symmetrical activity, often conducted on horseback; then came a dramatic change in iconography, as hunting became a solitary enterprise, usually conducted on foot, with hunters represented as hoplites and adopting the iconographic modes of heroes. Given the precipitous social changes that coincided with and brought about the establishment of democracy, B. argues, the aristocracy asserted an ideology of *kalokagathia* by presenting the traditionally aristocratic pastime of hunting as key to ephebic rites of passage; B. spends less time exploring hunting imagery c. 560–550, but vaguely relates its surge in popularity to the changes in the aristocratic power-base during the onset of Peisistratid rule (p. 46). B.’s reasoning never quite matches the tautness of her conclusions, repeated throughout the chapter (and cf. pp. 7–8, 203–4): precisely what, for example, lay behind the assimilation of the aristocratic hunter to the hoplite at this time? And why should the humble scratchings on even humbler pots amount to an exclusively aristocratic ideology (or at least an ideology taken up by ‘nonelites wishing to imitate and appropriate the customs and ideology of the propertied class’, p. 46)? The various interludes along the way—into, among other things, Athenian pedagogy and the tragic presentation of ephebes—do little to help the clarity of the argument.

The subject of the second chapter, the aristocratic representation of pederastic courtship as ‘hunting’ in late archaic and early classical Athens (‘just as the hunter hunts his prey, so the erastes pursues the eromenos’, p. 86), is now well-trodden ground