



Breastfeeding Animals and Other Wild "Nurses" in Greek and Roman Mythology [

Ediciones Complutense,
2016-12-15

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Analítica

Both literary and material evidence strongly suggest that wet and dry nurses played a central role within the ancient world. A peculiar declination of the figure of the Greek and Roman wet-nurse are animal nurses, recalled by both literary texts and iconography. There are plenty of ancient legends concerning abandoned children breastfed by animals, such as Romulus, Telephus, and Zeus. These breastfeeding animals can be ascribed to the category of the "adjuvant" that is central in the myths concerning the biography of divine and legendary founders and kings. Adjuvants can be animals, either domestic or wild, or human beings, and mostly figures socially excluded belonging to specific social groups: shepherds, swineherds, washerwomen, slaves and even prostitutes. They could be also nymphs who live, like animals, in natural habitats (where babies are usually abandoned). Our aim is to suggest that those babies with an extraordinary future in front of them inherit something from their animal and/or wild nurses via milk

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Título: Breastfeeding Animals and Other Wild "Nurses" in Greek and Roman Mythology electronic resource]

Editorial: Ediciones Complutense 2016-12-15

Tipo Audiovisual: Amamantamiento animal Niñeras Nodrizas Maternidad Mitología griega y romana Animal breastfeeding Nurses Mothering Greek and Roman mythology

Variantes del título: Animales amamantando y otras "nodrizas" salvajes en la mitología griega y romana

Documento fuente: Gerión. Revista de Historia Antigua; Vol. 34 (2016); 307-323

Nota general: application/pdf

Restricciones de acceso: Open access content. Open access content star

Lengua: English

Enlace a fuente de información: Gerión. Revista de Historia Antigua; Vol. 34 (2016); 307-323 Gerión. Revista de Historia Antigua; Vol. 34 (2016); 307-323 1988-3080 0213-0181

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