1. Install, make sure that connectors are installed into your browser (Chrome or Firefox)2. Make sure that Zotero is integrated into MS Word so that you can do citing3. Add several articles, or books into Zotero3a. Try adding a record from a library catalog (UniWien; WorldCat.org, etc.)

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In Byzantine studies questions of gender have attracted considerable attention in the last decades. However, studies on motherhood remain limited. Judith Herrin demonstrated the importance of maternal agency in educating and promoting their sons and daughters.[[1]](#footnote-1) Peter Hatlie[[2]](#footnote-2) analysed the representation of mothers in texts, which explicitely or implicitely aim at representing famous sons (and sometimes daughters): hagiographies with excurses to the childhood and education of the saint, hagiographies of holy women who are mainly defined as the mothers of even holier sons, and laudations of the author’s own mother. As Hatlie puts it, “the biographical texts in question […] are of interest because they employ narratives of motherhood to praise indirectly the virtues and character of their biographical subjects. Thus they differ from mother-narratives of an autobiographical nature […] only insofar as the biographical subject differs”.[[3]](#footnote-3) Hatlie’s approach provides an important methodological tool by considering whose identity is constructed in narratives of motherhood. In this article I will concentrate on motherhood in a different category of texts: not those focusing on sons and daughters and how they were mothered, but on women, who, as we learn or deduce, had children. The literary construction of maternal identity in these sources may reflect the experience, but, perhaps more important, it also forms the experience by providing the women with an identity and a model of interpreting their experience. The texts primarily analysed are childbed-related prayers in Byzantine Euchologia, contextualised on the basis of further Byzantine sources: normative texts (penitentials and depictions of posthumous judgments), selected hagiographic texts, and documents with autobiographic elements.

1. Judith Herrin, ‘Mothers and Daughters in the Medieval Greek World’ (Princeton: University Press, 2015), https://doi.org/10.1515/9781400845217-008. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Peter Hatlie, ‘Images of Motherhood and Self in Byzantine Literature’, vol. 63 (Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2009), 41–57. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Peter Hatlie o.c. 55. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)