Most societies in the past have had slaves, and almost all peoples have at some time in their pasts been both slaves and owners of slaves. Recent decades have seen a significant increase in our understanding of the historical role played by slavery and wide interest across a range of academic disciplines in the evolution of the institution. Exciting and innovative research methodologies have been developed, and numerous fruitful debates generated. Further, the study of slavery has come to provide strong connections between academic research and the wider public interest at a time when such links have in general been weak. *The Cambridge World History of Slavery* responds to these trends by providing for the first time, in four volumes, a comprehensive global history of this widespread phenomenon from the ancient world to the present day.

Volume I surveys the history of slavery in the ancient Mediterranean world. Although chapters are devoted to the ancient Near East and the Jews, its principal concern is with the societies of ancient Greece and Rome. These are often considered as the first examples in world history of genuine slave societies because of the widespread prevalence of chattel slavery, which is argued to have been a cultural manifestation of the ubiquitous violence in societies typified by incessant warfare. There was never any sustained opposition to slavery, and the new religion of Christianity probably reinforced rather than challenged its existence. In twenty-two chapters, leading scholars from Europe and North America explore the centrality of slavery in ancient Mediterranean life from diverse perspectives and using a wide range of textual and material evidence. Non-specialist readers in particular will find the volume an accessible account of the early history of this crucial phenomenon.

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FAMILIES AND FAMILIAE IN ROME

In the early first century AD as one left the centre of Rome along the via Labicana heading south-east in the general direction of Praeneste (modern Palestrina), one would pass by the vast suburban estate of the Statilii Tauri, a distinguished senatorial family. These Horti Tauriani (‘Taurian Gardens’) had been developed by one of Augustus’ most trusted generals, T. Statilius Taurus, consul in 37 BC and again in 26 BC. They eventually attracted the avaricious attention of the younger Agrippina, wife (and niece) of the emperor Claudius, and when in AD 53 T. Statilius Taurus (consul in AD 44) committed suicide after being charged with treason, the property passed into imperial hands. The marriage of Statilia Messallina, niece of the consul of 44, to Nero in 66 rehabilitated the family, who regained control of their luxury gardens, but this was to be short-lived; for once Messallina’s marriage came to an end with Nero’s suicide in 68, the estate reverted irrevocably to the imperial fisc. In the far south-east corner of these horti, near to where the Porta Maggiore now stands, the family constructed under Augustus or Tiberius a large funerary monument to house the remains of the many slaves and freed slaves who had been owned by the various members of the gens Statilia. During the family’s political renaissance under Nero, further chambers were added. Archaeological excavations, which began in 1875, uncovered not just the burial chambers but many of the epitaphs of the slaves and freedmen buried there: 381 came to light in the largest chamber, though it was designed with no fewer than 700 burial-spaces, another 46 in the adjoining smaller rooms. The monument and its epitaphs allow us a vivid sense of the size and complexity of an aristocratic slave household in Julio-Claudian Rome.

We can glimpse part at least of the range of occupations entrusted to the slaves of the Statilii: we find personal attendants and footmen, Germanic bodyguards and litter-bearers; wardrobe attendants, hairdressers and barbers; wet nurses, childminders and tutors; doctors, masseurs and a midwife; spinners, weavers and wool-workers, dyers and fullers, clothes-menders and shoemakers; financial managers, stewards, accountants and
secretaries, as well as the staff responsible for the upkeep of the amphitheatre of Taurus in the centre of Rome until its destruction in the great fire of AD 64. We can also trace something of family relations among the slaves and freedmen, some of whom had been allowed to marry or, more accurately, to set up quasi-marital unions (contubernia) within the slave household or occasionally with slaves from other households. But most of all the fact that the Statilii Tauri, like other Roman elite families, saw the need to provide burial facilities for its slaves and former slaves illustrates the close bond that existed between Roman aristocrats and their dependants. Slaves and freedmen – both conceptually and in lived reality – formed an integral part of the Roman family.¹

The Latin term familia, from which the English word ‘family’ and related terms in other Indo-European languages derive, further underlines the centrality of slaves to the ways in which the Romans conceptualised the family. For while it could be used, like the English term ‘family’, to denote the freeborn members of a nuclear conjugal unit (comprising mother, father and child or children), it was much more frequently employed in a broader sense to refer to this nuclear unit together with the slaves of the household.² The importance of slaves to the Roman family was emphasised at the festival of the Compitalia, revived by Augustus in 12 BC and celebrated each year in either December or January. At the main crossroad (compita) of each urban neighbourhood in Rome, families decorated the shrines of the Lares Augusti (the ‘Augustan household gods’) with a puppet (male or female, as appropriate) for each freeborn member of the household and a ball for every slave. Although the manner in which they were represented made them visibly distinct from the freeborn and stripped them of any human or gendered identity, slaves were still deemed important enough to be included in a family’s offerings in a public cult intimately linked to the household. At the rural equivalent, where the Lares Compitales who guarded the boundaries of rural estates were propitiated, wine rations for slaves were increased for the duration of the festival.³ However, the term familia could also refer just to the slaves of the household, as it frequently does, for instance, in Petronius’ satirical novel the Satyricon, written in

¹ Agrippina’s alleged desire for the horti: Tac. Ann. 12.59. For the monument and its epitaphs, see Caldelli and Ricci 1999; for the monument and the estate, 35–21; for a new edition of the epitaphs from the tomb (CIL 6.6213–6640), 83–126 (Appendix 1); see also Hasegawa 2005: 4–17 (monument), 30–91 (analysis of epitaphs). For the columbaria of other aristocratic families from the suburbs of Rome, note especially the tombs of the staff of the Volusii Saturnini and of Livia on the Appian Way: Buonocore 1984; Treggiari 1975a, 1975b. For other examples, see Hasegawa 2005: 5, Table 2.1. On slave occupations, see John Bodel’s chapter in this volume.

² For this, see Saller 1984; 1994: 74–101. For the legal definition of familia, see Dig. 50.16.195.

the mid-first century AD. So at the excessively luxurious banquet of the rich freedman Trimalchio, we encounter his entire slave staff (tota familia) singing in chorus to accompany a performance by the actor Syrus, and not long afterwards we hear the slave familia cry out in alarm when a slave-boy slips and falls heavily on Trimalchio’s arm.  

How many families in Roman society owned slaves is extremely difficult to estimate with any precision. In the Roman empire as a whole, only the city of Rome and peninsular Italy from the second century BC onwards can legitimately be characterised as slave societies, that is, where the ownership of slaves was widespread at a number of social levels and crucial to the organisation of economic production. Even here it is not easy to generalise about how many slaves individual families at each social level might have owned. Senatorial families frequently had slaveholdings, it would appear, in excess of 500 slaves. This is certainly what the burial-chambers of the Statilii Tauri would suggest, and anecdotal evidence such as the case of the urban prefect L. Pedanius Secundus, whose urban familia comprised 400 slaves in AD 61 when he was murdered by one of his slaves, or the fact that the younger Pliny in the early second century AD bequeathed funds to manumit and support 100 slaves would point in the same general direction. Lower down the social scale, slave-ownership is likely to have varied quite substantially depending on individual family needs and local cultural practices, not to mention fluctuating levels of surplus wealth. It is even more difficult to assess the significance of slavery to families in the Roman provinces. There were significant slave populations in Roman colonies, whose legal, political, social and religious institutions were modelled on those of the city of Rome, and in regions that contained considerable numbers of Roman and Italian immigrant settlers, especially in urban centres on, or with easy access to, the Mediterranean coast: in Baetica, coastal Tarraconensis, southern Gaul, north Africa in the west, mainland Greece and Asia Minor, Syria and Egypt in the eastern empire. Slavery would appear to have been less prevalent in remoter rural areas, where pre-Roman forms of labour often persisted

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4 Petron. Sat. 52, 54; cf. 31 (tota familia), 36, 37, 50, 59, 64, 67, 69 (familia rustica), 70, 71 (his familia moan and groan in lamentation as Trimalchio reads out his will), 72 (tota familia), 74.


6 L. Pedanius Secundus: Tac. Ann. 14.43; Pliny: ILS 2927, Mediolanum, with Bradley 1994: 11. I see no means of confirming or refuting Scheidel (2005a: 67) on equestrian families owning ‘dozens’ (rather than hundreds) of slaves; after all, some equestrian families were just as rich as their senatorial peers; but see Walter Scheidel’s chapter in this volume.

7 So Scheidel 2005a: 66, based on comparative data from the Antebellum southern USA and colonial Jamaica; see also Saller 2003 (esp. 189).

8 For slavery in the western provinces, see Shtaerman et al. 1987. For slavery in Egypt, see Biezuńska-Małowist 1984; Straus 1988, 2004. For slavery among Jews in the Roman world, see Hezser 2003, 2005 and her chapter in this volume.
under Roman rule. But it is impossible to generalise for all social levels throughout the Roman Empire over the central four centuries, from 200 BC to AD 200, of Roman history. While slaves were crucial to the functioning of the elite Roman household, it is much less easy to judge for families lower down the social scale.

**FAMILIA URBANA — FAMILIA RUSTICA**

Within the slave households of the elite, a distinction was evidently drawn between those slaves who made up the urban (or domestic) staff and those who worked on the family’s country estates; the former constituted the *familia urbana*, the latter the *familia rustica*. In their checklists of slaves and account books of slave rations, owners seem to have designated formally whether each slave was ‘urban’ or ‘rural’. It was plainly an important difference when it came to bequeathing slaves as part of one’s estate in one’s final will and testament. While the distinction was grounded in the place where slaves normally resided and worked, it was always possible to have some ‘urban’ slaves on a rural estate, so long as they did not carry out agricultural labour.

From a slave’s point of view, life in a *familia urbana* might often have had advantages over that in a *familia rustica*. In his agricultural handbook, written in the mid-first century AD, Columella advises landowners not to select a member of the urban household to manage a rural estate. ‘This kind of slave,’ Columella claims (*On Agriculture* 1.8.2), ‘is dedicated to sleep and idleness, and because he has been used to leisure, gymnastics, race-courses, theatres, dicing, wineshops and brothels, he dreams of this nonsense all the time.’ While not all urban slaves enjoyed such diversions on a regular basis, if at all, Columella’s main point seems to be that urban slaves had a relatively easier time than their rural counterparts. The younger Seneca, a contemporary of Columella, had a similar impression, as is clear from his comments on the relatively easy life of an urban slave, ‘with all its holidays’, in contrast to the hard labour a rural slave was forced to put in. Being sent to the *familia rustica* could be a punishment meted out to a disobedient or errant urban slave, as we hear happened to Trimalchio in Petronius’ novel, when as an adolescent he was banished by his master to the *familia rustica*.

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9 See Whittaker 1980.

10 For the distinction, see *Dig.* 32.99, also discussing some of the problems of classification. For funerary commemorations set up collectively by a *familia urbana* to their master, note *CIL* 6.1747 (Rome), 9.825 (Luceria); by a *familia rustica*, note *CIL* 9.3028 = *ILS* 7367 (Teate Marrucinorum).

11 For a fictional slave allegedly devoted to the Greens, betting on a Green victory in some upcoming *ludi circenses*, see Petron. *Sat.* 70.

12 Sen. *Ira* 3.29. However, even rural slaves appear to have been granted some holidays: see Bradley 1979: 112–13; 1987b: 40–4.
on suspicion of helping to satisfy the sexual needs of his master’s wife (Petron. Sat. 69). Urban slaves could expect to be provided with the basic necessities of life (food, clothing and adequate shelter), while conditions in rural households could be more basic. Although the farm’s bailiff and slave-supervisor (vilicus) and his wife (vilica) had a responsibility to ensure that rural slaves were sufficiently well fed to have the energy to perform their work, slaves often had to use their own ingenuity to supplement their basic supplies.¹³

Greater proximity to their owners meant that urban slaves had more opportunity to build up personal relationships with them than did their rural counterparts. They could more easily get noticed and be rewarded for meritorious service. Within the elite household, some slaves became trusted confidants and personal assistants to the master and mistress. Slaves and freedmen were essential in managing family property, and slave or freedmen financial managers (procuratores) and stewards (dispensatores) held positions of great responsibility and hence trust within the household. Their work was supported by a cadre of record-keepers (tabularii), accountants (sump-tuarii), secretaries (librarii and a manu), shorthand note-takers (actuarii) and treasurers (arcarii). Owners of such trusted slaves (or former owners, in the case of freedmen) treated them with much greater respect than the less skilled slaves lower down the slave hierarchy.¹⁴

Not surprisingly, it was urban rather than rural slaves who sometimes undertook acts of conspicuous self-sacrifice to save their masters. Valerius Maximus in his collection of Memorable Deeds and Sayings, compiled under Tiberius, devotes a whole section to salutary examples of slave fidelity (6.8, ‘On the fidelity of slaves’). A slave of M. Antonius, the distinguished orator who held the consulship in 99 BC, we are told, insisted on being tortured to attest to his master’s innocence when his master was forced to stand trial on a charge of unchastity (incestum), while another slave nobly volunteered to assume his master’s identity during the violent proscriptions of 43 BC and die in his place, to save his life.¹⁵

On the other hand, more frequent interaction with their masters in the domestic setting could prove problematic for urban slaves. At moments of

¹³ See Sen. Ben. 3.21.2; Bradley 1994: ch. 5. See also Roth 2005, arguing that some agricultural slaves were given an allowance (peculium) by their owners that consisted in animals for supplementing their diet.

¹⁴ Not surprisingly, Cicero, as lawyer, orator, politician and man of letters, had a high proportion of secretaries and clerical staff among his familia urbana, which was relatively small in size: see Garland 1992; cf. Treggiari 1969a. For hierarchies within a slave familia, note Dig. 7.1.15.2: a usufructuary should provide food and clothes for the slaves ‘according to their rank and dignity’ (secundum ordinem et dignitatem).

¹⁵ Val. Max. 6.8.1, 6.8.6. For a subtle analysis of anecdotes about loyal slaves, see Parker 1998 (esp. 156–63).
irritation, certain owners (possibly many) lashed out at their slaves, sometimes inflicting severe beatings on them. In the Satyricon, Trimalchio constantly threatens his domestic slaves with violent corporal punishment.\footnote{Petron. Sat. 30 (slave stripped for flogging, but reprimed), 34 (slave has his ears boxed), 45 (report of a gladiatorial slaves flogged for poor performance), 49 (slave stripped for torture), 52 (Trimalchio threatens to execute a slave-boy), 53 (report of a slave crucified for damning the soul of his master), 54 (slave fears punishment for falling on Trimalchio’s arm), 69 (Scintilla threatens to brand a slave for acting as a pimp).} Exaggerated perhaps, but the satire only retains its force if Petronius’ audience could associate with the verisimilitude of the practice; and Petronius’ general picture is confirmed by the mid-second-century medical writer Galen, who commented on the frequency with which slaves were physically disfigured following sudden outbursts of their master’s rage: they suffered kicks and punches, and even had their eyes poked out by irate masters wielding styluses.\footnote{Gal. Anim. Pass. 1.4, 1.8, cited by Bradley 1994: 28–9. For the regularity of slave punishments, see more fully Bradley 1987b: 113–37; Saller 1991; Hopkins 1993: 7–10.} Another of Valerius Maximus’ exemplary stories of slave fidelity involves the slave of Antius Restio, a further victim of the Triumviral proscriptions. Even though this particular slave had suffered many punishments on his master’s orders – he had been chained up and even had his face branded with indelible letters – he volunteered to help Restio escape the soldiers despatched to kill him, while his much more favourably treated fellow domestic slaves were busy plundering their master’s goods.\footnote{Val. Max. 6.8.7; cf. App. B Civ. 4.43. For discussion of branding and tattooing, see Jones 1987 (esp. 153–5).} Some of these punishments could be carried out by professionals. As the law of the early first century AD from Puteoli regulating the local funerary trade reveals, in some cities at least slave-owners could hire expert floggers (\textit{verberatores}) or even executioners (\textit{carnifices}) from the firm that ran the town’s funeral services to punish their own slaves.\footnote{AE 1971: 88, esp. col. II, lines 8ff.: \textit{qui supplic(ium) de ser(vo) servare privatim sumere vel(e) volet etc.;} for new critical editions with helpful commentary, see AA. VV. 2004, esp. pp. 35–172; Hinard and Dumont 2003.}

\section*{Slaves within the Households}

Slaves’ duties within individual households were carefully defined and differentiated, especially in elite families. We have noted the often specialised occupations carried out by slaves of the Statilii Tauri, and this is echoed in the more scattered and patchier evidence for slave occupations in other elite households.\footnote{See in particular Treggiari 1973, 1973b, 1976; cf. Joshel 1992: 71–85, esp. Table 3.2; and John Bodel’s chapter in this volume. For specific rural slave occupations, see Bradley 1994: 58–61, with Tables 1–2 (based on Dig. 33.7 and Columella respectively).} Ethnographic accounts of non-Roman peoples help to
confirm what the Romans considered normal in this regard. Tacitus, for instance, makes a number of illuminating observations on slavery in his discussion of the Germans, completed in AD 98. Among the Germans, he remarks, slaves were not assigned to particular tasks within household ‘as they are with us’ (Tac., Germania 25.1). Roman practices clearly differed.

In the same passage Tacitus also comments that slaves in Germania lived separately from their owners: ‘each one controls his own house, his own Penates (i.e. household gods)’. While a Roman family’s slaves lived together under the same roof (or under a series of roofs, since elite families usually owned a conglomeration of urban, suburban and rural properties), a single slave household might in fact contain several groups of slaves (familiae) that were each legally distinct. By the early imperial period, only a small percentage of Roman women passed on marriage under the legal control of their husbands (i.e. in what Roman legal authorities termed a marriage cum manu). Most remained under the power of their father or, if their father were deceased, as was likely the case for about half the women aged twenty, they were legally independent (sui iuris) but under the supervision of a male guardian, usually selected from among their father’s agnatic kin; as a result, their property remained legally distinct from that of their husbands. So in most marriages both husband and wife would each own a separate slave familia. In the comedies of Plautus, written in the early second century BC, the mistress of the house (the domina) often owns her own slaves, who promote her interests frequently at the expense of her husband in the domestic politics that form a focal point of much of the drama. In addition, manumitted slaves (i.e. freedmen and freedwomen) quite frequently remained part of the household even after manumission, as in the household of the Statilii Tauri; they too could own their own slave familia. Even slaves had their own slaves (known as vicarii) to assist them in their work. For instance, two imperial slaves Sabbio and Sporus, both managers (vilici) of the Aqua Claudia, jointly owned a tomb plot in the suburbs of Rome and divided it, so that each could use half of it to house their own remains, those of their respective wives, freedmen and freedwomen, their vicarii and their descendants (CIL 6.8495 = ILS 1612). Such vicarii were often gifts from the slave’s master as a reward for hard work and good behaviour or as a means towards greater productivity,

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21 Tac. Germ. 25.1: suam quisque sedem, suos penates regit.
24 For freedmen continuing to live in their former owner’s house, note Tac. Ann. 13.32.1; for a detailed discussion, see Fabre 1981: 131–40. For slaves of slaves, Baba 1990.
or both; but slaves could also save up their daily allowance (peculium) and use it to purchase a slave-assistant, so long as their master or mistress consented to such an arrangement.\textsuperscript{25} Some slaves were jointly owned – by a pair of brothers, for instance, who had inherited a group of slaves between them; this had the potential to complicate domestic slave households still further.\textsuperscript{26} So many elite households contained complex mixtures of several groups of slaves, each group legally separate, but in actual social practice often coalescing into a single interrelated slave-unit.

In fact, it is clear that a ‘community’ of slaves developed ‘below stairs’ in many Roman households, even though the slaves who made up this community regularly came from a range of different backgrounds: some were bred within the house, the children of slave women (vernae);\textsuperscript{27} others were purchased on the slave market and so often came from very diverse ethnic origins, speaking different languages and blessed with varying types and levels of skill. The solidarity that developed among household slaves provided them with much needed spiritual support in what was commonly a hazardous and precarious position, where their quality of life very much depended on the whim of their owners. A freed slave from Rome, A(ulus) Memmius Urbanus, fondly recalled the strong emotional bonds that existed within the slave household to which he had formerly belonged in the epitaph he set up for A. Memmius Clarus, his ‘most beloved’ former colleague and companion in slavery (conlibertus, idem consors carissimus):

\begin{quote}
I cannot remember, my most respected fellow-freedman, that there was ever any quarrel between you and me. By this epitaph I invoke the gods of heaven and of the underworld as witnesses that we first met on the slave-dealer’s platform, that we were granted our freedom together in the same household, and that nothing ever parted us from one another except the day of your death.\textsuperscript{28}
\end{quote}

Domestic religion helped to consolidate this sense of community. A number of houses at Pompeii had shrines of the household gods (lararia) located in their kitchens. Often with paintings of the protective spirit (genius) of the head of the household (paterfamilias) sacrificing to the household gods (the lares), these are of much sketchier quality than the

\textsuperscript{25} The elder Cato allegedly loaned money to his urban slaves to allow them to purchase slaves of their own, train them up for a year and then sell them at a profit: Plut. Cat. Mai. 21. For the slave’s peculium, see Watson 1987: 90–101.

\textsuperscript{26} For jointly owned slaves within the imperial slave household (the familia Caesaris), see Chantraine 1967: 216–24.

\textsuperscript{27} On house-bred slaves (vernae), see Hermann-Otto 1994.

\textsuperscript{28} CIL 6.22355a = ILS 8432: A(ulo) Memmio Claro / A(ulus) Memmius Urbanus / conliberto idem consorti / carissimo sibi / inter me et te sanctissime mi / conliberte nullum unquam / disurgium fuisse conscius / sum mihi hoc quoque titulo / superos et inferos testor deos / una me tecum congressum / in venalicio una domo liberos / esse factos neque ullus unquam / nos diunxisset nis hic tuus / fatalis dies.
more monumental lararia found in the main reception rooms of the same houses. These kitchen lararia, it would appear, were for the use of the household’s slaves, while those in the more public areas of the house were reserved for the paterfamilias and freeborn members of his family. In the kitchen of one particular house, a lararium has a particularly striking painting of the male Genius of the paterfamilias and the female Juno of the materfamilias sacrificing at an altar, with two rows of slaves in white tunics participating in the ritual (Fig. 16.1). A painting from another kitchen lararium shows what has been interpreted as the slave familia joining together in a modest banquet, perhaps as part of some domestic religious event. So while domestic religious rituals provided slaves with occasions for communal celebration, at the same time they also reminded them of the centrality of the master and mistress to the welfare of the household and of the slave familia within it.29

But where physically did slaves live within the family home?30 Literary sources allude to groups of slaves occupying small cells (cellae or cellulae) in

29 For this see George 2007. For the lararia, see Frohlich 1991. For the kitchen lararium in House 1 13.2 with the Genius and Juno, Fröhlich 1991: 178–9, 261, cat. no. L29 & Taf. 28.1–2; Clarke 2003: 76–8, with figs. 39–40; for that with the banqueting slaves in the House of Obellius Firmus (IX 14.2/4), Fröhlich 1991: 179–81, 299, cat. no. L11 & Taf. 48.1; Dunbabin 2003: 56–8, with Fig. 27.

30 For this topic, see further Wallace-Hadrill 1994: 38–44, 47–50, 53; George 1997a; Basso 2003; Michele George’s chapter in this volume.
both urban houses and rural villas. Structures resembling such cells have been identified in some of the very few houses known from the centre of Rome; the house excavated on the north slopes of the Palatine in the area between the Arch of Titus, the Via Sacra and the House of the Vestals, for instance, had thirty such cells in its basement level, each measuring 1.2 by 1.5 metres, with ceilings about 2 metres high. The town of Pompeii provides further examples, especially in some of its larger homes. But the whole subject raises methodological problems, since unless some item has been discovered that links these rooms directly to slaves (such as a post and chains used for punishing them), their identification as slave quarters will always remain possible or plausible rather than proven. The idea that slaves were often quartered in the upper floors of Pompeian houses is also difficult to verify, since these upper storeys no longer survive. But did all Roman houses necessarily have specific slave quarters? There are enough references in our literary (and even legal) sources to suggest that slaves often slept scattered throughout the house, wherever there happened to be space. In Apuleius’ novel *Metamorphoses* (otherwise known as *The Golden Ass*), Milo’s slaves sleep outside a guest’s room (*cubiculum*), while slave maids (*ancillae*) sometimes slept inside their mistress’s bedroom. At night, as during the day, the Roman house appears to have been filled with slaves. The result of this was that freeborn Romans of a certain rank had to get used to living with slaves all around them. There was little privacy in the Roman house, especially one such as that in the city of Rome owned by the urban prefect, Pedanius Secundus, which as noted earlier had to accommodate no fewer than 400 domestic slaves in AD 61. The freeborn, from an early age, had to become accustomed to conducting their domestic lives with slaves privy to even their most intimate of moments. Slaves were so omnipresent as to be almost invisible. However, their very omnipresence meant that they were often the ‘eyes and ears’ of the household. As such, they were indispensable as witnesses to crimes committed within the house, although their evidence was admitted in court only if it had been extracted under torture.

32 George 1997a: 16–17, with Fig. 1; Basso 2003: 448–50, with Figs. 158–60; Carandini 1988: 359–87.
33 For slave-chains found in a *cella* of a suburban villa near Pompeii (the Ville delle Colonne a Mosaico), see Basso 2003: 455 and Fig. 167.
34 Apul. *Met.* 2.15; for *ancillae*, note Tac. *Ann.* 14.8 (Agrippina’s *ancilla* was sleeping in her mistress’ *cubiculum* on the night Agrippina was put to death); cf. *Dig.* 29.5.1.28.
35 Hence slaves are often on hand in depictions of Roman lovemaking in a variety of media: see Clarke 1998.
36 For eavesdropping slaves (*oricularii servi*) causing problems for their master, see Petron. *Sat.* 43. For slave evidence only admissible if extracted by torture, see *Dig.* 48.18; Brunt 1980; Bradley 1994: 165–70.
FAMILY LIFE AMONG SLAVES

One specific way in which a slave-owner promoted a sense of community among his or her slave household was to allow certain slaves to set up quasi-marital unions. These were known as contubernia, a term borrowed from Roman military slang to describe the situation where individuals ‘shared the same tent’ (or, to put it more bluntly, ‘shacked up together’). It was clearly a reward that owners could offer their slaves as an incentive for good behaviour and hard work, but it also helped to enhance a sense of community and sociability among the slaves of a household, permitting them to form some social ties in the socially deracinated universe that was a hallmark of the slave condition. Such unions could be established between two slave partners (contubernales) or between a slave and a manumitted slave, usually but not exclusively from the same slave familia. Although these unions were never legally recognised, they seem in some ways to have resembled formal marriages (iusta conubia). They were governed by the same customs regarding incest, and partners in such unions used exactly the same terminology to refer to their kin as individuals linked in a iustum conubium: their spousal partners were contuges, mariti or uxor(es), their children filii and filiae. For offspring frequently resulted from such unions. These children, however, always remained the legal property of the slave mother’s owner. So at the Roman colony of Augusta Emerita (modern Mérida) in Lusitania, a modest and rather inelegant tombstone was set up in the later second or early third century AD by a slave couple, Euhodus and Callityche, to commemorate Euhodia, their ‘most devoted daughter’ (Fig. 16.2). Although it is clear from this epitaph that Euhodia’s slave parents had formed a lasting affective bond with their fifteen-year-old daughter and felt the desire to commemorate her with an epitaph after her untimely death, they formally designated her as the ‘house-bred slave of Mellinus,’ from which we may deduce that Mellinus was Callityche’s (and probably also Euhodus’) master. Although Euhodia formed part of a slave family, her formal legal relationship to her mother’s owner was more important than her kinship relation with her parents. In the eyes of posterity, she was to be remembered as Mellinus’ slave, her official status.

The larger the slave household, the greater the number of such unions there might have been at any one time, and the greater the possibility for each slave family to develop more complex bonds of kinship. In such situations, house-bred slaves (vernae) might well have had a number of aunts, uncles and cousins, especially on the maternal side. In the funerary

37 On such unions see Rawson 1974; Flory 1978; Biežuńska-Małowist 1979; Treggiari 1981; 1991: 52–4; for incest rules applying to contubernia, see Dig. 23.2.14.2–3.

38 AE 1982: 485, with my revisions: D(is) M(anibus) s(acrum) Euhodia Mellini verna an(norum) XV h(ic) s(itia) e(ter) l(evis). Euhodus et Callityche filiae) pientissimae (sic).
monument of the Statilii Tauri, Hermione, slave of C. Minucius Gallus, looked after the burial of her maternal uncle (avunculus), Philadelphus, whose name would suggest he too was a slave (CIL 6. 6469), while a paternal uncle (patruus), the freedman Statilius Hesychus, commemorated his nephew Primus the caterer (opsonator), house-bred slave (verna) of Messallina wife of Nero (CIL 6. 6619). At the Roman colony of Emerita in the mid- to later second century AD, a freedwoman Argentaria Verana owned a number of slaves, some at least of whom were also related to her by blood. She looked after the burial of her ‘cousin and freedman’ (sobrinus et libertus), M. Argentarius Achaicus, and in due course was herself commemorated by another of her freedmen, Argentarius Vegetinus, who described her on her epitaph as his ‘maternal aunt and patroness’ (matertera et patrona).39

Such slave *contubernia* sometimes allowed links to be established between a husband’s slave *familia* and his wife’s, legally separate but often socially bonded, as we have seen. A quasi-marital union between two ex-slaves attested at Emerita from the early first century AD may well reflect this: C(aius) Iulius C(ai) l(ibertus) Felix had, we must presume, been allowed to form a union with Quinta Caecilia (mulieris) l(iberta) Mauriola, probably when one or both were still slaves, since they were buried together along with their son, C. Iulius Modestus, in a small mausoleum in one of the colony’s suburban cemeteries. Either Mauriola and Felix had been allowed by their respective owners to marry outside their slave *familia*, or they were the former slaves of a married couple: Mauriola, the slave of a certain Caecilia, and Felix, the slave of Caecilia’s husband, one C(aius) Iulius.\(^{40}\) Similarly in the tomb of the Statilii at Rome, Claudia Caenis was commemorated by her spouse (*coniunx*), T. Statilius Pharnaces. Although neither of their names contains an explicit reference to their status as freed slaves, this is highly likely given their Greek *cognomina* and the fact that Claudia Caenis was commemorated in this tomb. Their *nomina* reveal that Caenis was once the slave of a Claudius or Claudia, and Pharnaces a slave of a T. Statilius. They evidently originated from different slave *familiae*.\(^{41}\)

In sum, certain slaves were permitted to lead some sort of family life as a nuclear unit within the household, but most were unlikely to be granted much privacy within the crowded slave quarters that, as we have seen, marked most Roman houses. Only those slaves at the top of the domestic slave hierarchy – accountants, financial managers, secretaries – could have realistically hoped for a room of their own.\(^{42}\) Nonetheless, many of these slave unions were evidently long-lasting and continued after one or both partners had been given their freedom.

**TENSIONS WITHIN THE SLAVE FAMILIA**

Even though some sense of community developed within many slave *familiae*, and although some slaves were allowed to form lasting emotional relationships and even, as a result, to enjoy some sort of family life, we need to bear in mind that all this could be shattered in an instant by the unilateral decisions of slave-owners. They might legitimately see the need to rotate their slaves around their properties. They might also decide to sell off some of their slaves or present others as gifts to their friends. Divorce would lead to a former wife taking her slave *familia* away with her from the conjugal

\(^{40}\) AE 2000: 692: C(aius) Iulius C(ai) l(ibertus) Felix Quinta Caecilia (mulieris) l(iberta) Mauriola. S(it) t(ibi) t(erra) l(evis). C(aius) Iulius Modestus ann(orum) XXVII. For their tomb and further discussion, see Edmondson 2000: 299–301, with plates 1–2.

\(^{41}\) CIL 6.6422: D(is) M(anibus) Claudiae Caenidi T. Statilius Pharnaces coniugi b(ene) m(ere)ti p(osuit).

\(^{42}\) So George 1997a: 24.
home, including any she had brought into the marriage as part of her dowry. The death of a slave-owner was a moment of particular unease for his or her slaves; for although it was the occasion when a limited number of the deceased’s slaves might be manumitted, it could also often lead to the dispersal of the slaves as the owner’s property was divided among several heirs.

Quasi-marital unions were particularly vulnerable to the whims of slave-owners. Temporary periods of segregation might occur, as, for instance, when slave-owners decided to send newly born slaves away from their parents and the *familia urbana* to be nursed and raised on a rural estate, although how often this occurred is difficult to assess. As regards the sale of slaves, papyri from Roman Egypt demonstrate that a variety of different practices obtained. In some situations slave-owners sold off female slaves together with any offspring they had produced; occasionally a slave mother, father and their child (or children) were sold as a unit; but slave children could easily be removed from their mothers and sold off separately. The divorce of a master and mistress would cause particularly serious problems for slave partners in a quasi-marital union where one *contubernalis* came from the husband’s slave *familia* and the other from the wife’s.

But tension could also arise within the household when a master or mistress showed favouritism towards certain slaves over others. Although all slaves were in legal and theoretical terms equal (they were all equally unfree), a status hierarchy existed within virtually every slave *familia*. The more literate and skilled slaves were held in higher esteem than personal attendants, hairdressers and waiters, who in turn were more valued than humble agricultural labourers, muleteers or, lowest in the hierarchy, mining slaves. Problems occurred particularly when favouritism was displayed towards just some of those of the same status level. The bumptious freedman Trimalchio makes no secret of the fact that he was favoured by his master, and this allowed him to gain the latter’s trust, move up the hierarchy within his slave *familia* and win his freedom much more quickly than other fellow-slaves. Trimalchio is quite frank about what lay behind his master’s attitude: as a young boy he was attractive and sexually desirable to his master. He fell into the category of *deliciae* (also known as *delicia* or *pueri delicati*), the slaves whom a slave-owner ‘took delight in’, his petslaves. Another of the ex-slaves at Trimalchio’s banquet admits that when he was young, he too was a *puer capillatus* (a ‘long-haired slave-boy’); and he revealingly remarks that people in the *domus* were always trying to trip

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43 For the practice, note *Dig.* 32.99-3.

44 For offspring being separated, note *PMich.* 326 (Tebtunis, AD 48); SB 5.7573 (Elephantine, AD 116); *BGU* 3.859 (the Fayum, AD 162 or 163); see Bradley 1987b: 63–70; Straus 2004: 271–5. In late antiquity, the emperor Constantine attempted to prevent the separation of slave families at least on imperial estates: *Cod. Theod.* 2.25.1, with Evans Grubbs 1995: 25–6, 307–8.
him up’, both literally and metaphorically, we must imagine.\footnote{Petron. Sat. 63 (Trimalchio as a servus capillatus, living a ‘Chian life’, a life of luxury), 75 (his master’s delicia by the age of fourteen), 57 (the puer capillatus tripped up by his peers: habeam in domo qui mihi pedem opponerent hac illac). On deliciae, see Laes 2003; cf. Sigismund Nielsen 1990.} This is just the sort of reaction that pampered slaves might arouse in their fellows, who became jealous of the attention and favours that their masters bestowed on them.

**SLAVES AND TENSIONS WITHIN THE FAMILY**

Slaves could also cause tension among the freeborn members of the family. It is theoretically possible that the close relationship that often developed between a young child and his or her slave playmate might have had an effect on how that freeborn child related to other siblings. While Tacitus does refer to the ‘traditional hatreds between brothers’ (Annals 4.60; cf. 13.17), in practice, prevailing demographic patterns probably meant that few Roman children had a sibling close enough in age to become jealous of any relationship his brother or sister might have had with a slave.\footnote{On siblings, see Bannon 1997; Rawson 2003: 243–50.} The sexual attraction and availability of slaves proved a much more divisive issue in many Roman families.

We have already noted how Trimalchio’s alleged sexual encounters with his master’s wife led to his being banished to a rural estate (Petron. Sat. 69). In the pastiche-style biography of the slave and author of fables Aesop, which was put into written form in the early imperial period, the wife of Aesop’s master fantasises about having sex with a handsome young slave and later ends up in bed with the ugly, pot-bellied, hunchback Aesop. Though patently fictional, these episodes nevertheless attest to the very real anxieties that male slave-owners felt about the sexual fidelity of their wives and about being cuckolded by their own male slaves.\footnote{See Hopkins 1993 (esp. 14–18, 24–5).} Roman social attitudes considered affairs between freeborn women and slaves deeply shameful, and a series of laws introduced heavy penalties for women who indulged in such inappropriate behaviour. By the time of Hadrian, if a freeborn woman cohabited with a male slave without the consent of the slave’s owner, she and any children that had resulted from this union became slaves of the slave’s owner; even if the slave’s master had given his consent, the freeborn woman was still reduced to the status of a freedwoman.\footnote{For the complex historical development of the legal attempts to regulate such unions, see Evans Grubbs 1993.} The fact that in many households the wife was regularly attended by male slaves clearly raised in Roman husbands feelings of sexual jealousy and mistrust.
Figure 16.3 Gold bracelet with inscription (‘The master to his very own slave-girl’) found on the arm of a female victim of Vesuvius, AD 79, from Moregine, near Pompeii.

Attitudes towards a freeborn male’s sexual relationship with his own slaves – whether casual affairs with slaves of either sex or a more permanent liaison with a female slave known as concubinage (concubinatus) – were much more tolerant. It was simply taken for granted that part of the degradation of being a slave involved gratifying the sexual urges of one’s master. Some masters paid high prices for extremely beautiful male or female slaves, in part to impress guests at banquets, but sometimes with an eye on more selfish carnal pleasures. In some households, these relationships might be justified in terms of the offspring that often resulted, which enhanced the property of the household with fresh supplies of house-bred slaves (vernae).

On occasion, ongoing emotional bonds developed between a master and his slave. A fine gold bracelet discovered just outside Pompeii on the arm of a female victim (aged about thirty) of the eruption of Vesuvius in AD 79 (Fig. 16.3) provides perhaps an inkling of such affection, with


50 High prices for attractive slaves: Mart. Epig. 1.58. For the idea that slave women who gave birth to more than three sons should be granted exemption from work, see Columella, Rust. 1.8.19. On the relative importance of house-bred slaves in the overall slave supply, see Bradley 1987a; cf. Scheidel 1997; Harris 1999.
its inscribed message, ‘The master to his very own slave-girl’ (dom(i)mus ancillae suae). Although some have argued that it provides evidence of a master decorating a slave to make her a more attractive prostitute, the presence of the touching dedicatory inscription strongly hints that this was a lover’s gift.\(^{51}\) But if the master was married, these casual or more long-lasting sexual encounters had the potential to strain relations between husband and wife. In the Satyricon, Trimalchio’s wife Fortunata turns on her husband with a torrent of verbal and physical abuse the moment he kisses an attractive slave-boy rather too longingly (Petron. Sat. 74). Tertia Aemilia, wife of Scipio Africanus, the conqueror of Hannibal, was used by Valerius Maximus as one of his examples of wives’ fidelity towards their husbands (6.7.1). She was so faithful that she turned a blind eye towards her husband’s liaison with a slave-girl, showing herself to be a model of companionship (comitas) and endurance (patientia). Her very exceptionality suggests that in many more cases Roman wives were emotionally scarred by their husbands’ philandering.\(^{52}\) Hence Plutarch, in his essay Conjugal Advice, takes special care to reassure the newly wed bride that she should not be jealous of her husband’s affairs with slaves (Moralia 140b). Slaves, especially sexually attractive ones, had the power to drive an emotional wedge between husband and wife.

Competition for the body of the same slave could also lead to tension between a father and his son, and not just in the plots of Roman comedies such as Plautus’ Casina.\(^{53}\) Slaves could sometimes become embroiled in jealous rivalry with their master for the affections of a lover. The murder of Pedanius Secundus in AD 61 by one of his slaves might have been triggered, so Tacitus believed, by the slave’s ‘being inflamed with love for an older male prostitute (exoletus) and not being able to stand having his master as a rival’.\(^{54}\) Slaves, despite their theoretical powerlessness, often had the potential to complicate relations among the freeborn members of the household.\(^{55}\)

SLAVES AND KIN RELATIONS WITHIN THE FAMILY

Slaves also played a significant role in establishing the social identity of the family within the community and in structuring kin relations within the family. A family’s slaves were often to be seen on the city streets,
running errands for their owner, conducting business operations on his (or her) behalf or operating a market-stall or shop selling the produce of the family’s estates. In this way they served as representatives of the family in the public sphere. But they enhanced the image of the family still more when they escorted their master or mistress in public. Whenever the paterfamilias left the home to attend to public business, attend the law-courts or take part in public religious activities, he would be accompanied by a group of his own slaves as well as freeborn friends and connections as he processed down into the Forum. So too the mistress of the house, as we see vividly in Apuleius’ Metamorphoses when the wealthy Byrrhaena, a member of the local elite of Roman Greece, makes a sortie from her home to the marketplace; her status is immediately clear by her dress and her impressive retinue of slaves. When freeborn members of the family went out to the public baths, they were similarly escorted by a group of household slaves, who carried fresh clothes, bathing oils and ointments and other paraphernalia, and then pampered their master or mistress during the bathing session. Roman children were accompanied to school by a family slave, the paedagogus, who remained to attend his young charge during his or her lessons. When an elite slave-owner died, a group of his slaves, especially those grateful for their manumission on their master’s death, took part, conspicuous in their freedmen’s caps (pillei), in mourning rituals that took place during the lying-in-state of the corpse in the atrium of the domus before the funeral proper, while some of them may often have joined male relatives and friends of the deceased in carrying the bier or otherwise participating in the funeral procession (pompa).

Whenever visitors arrived at the family home, they formed an immediate impression of the family as they were greeted by the slave doormen and attendants, who were often kitted out in special livery that marked them emphatically as the slaves of that particular house. Banquets and dinner parties, and not just imaginary ones like that conjured up so vividly in Petronius’ Satyricon, were occasions where the wealth and prestige of the household were displayed in part by the sheer quantity, beauty and

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57 On the importance of escorts in public for male elites, cf. [Cic.] Comm. Pet. 36; Nicolet 1980: 357–8. Byrrhaena: Apul. Met. 2.2; she also has a glittering array of liveried footmen (diribitores) and elegantly coiffured and beautifully dressed slave-boys as part of a luxurious dinner party she hosts: Met. 2.19.


60 Lying-in-state: Flower 1996: 94. Funeral procession: Toynbee 1971: 46; Bodel 1999: 261–3, 266–7. There are, however, no references to slaves or freedmen in the classic account, dating to mid-second century BC, of a Roman aristocratic funeral: Polyb. 6.53–4; it is possible that Polybius simply took their participation for granted.

61 On slave clothing, including livery, see Bradley 1994: 87–9.
decorative quality of the household slaves who waited on the guests. As a result, slaves feature prominently in a painting of a banquet that graced the dining-room (triclinium) of a relatively modest house in Pompeii (Fig. 16.4). It shows four slaves and just six diners. One slave takes off a late-arriving guest’s shoes, while another offers him a drink; a third props up a diner who is bent over vomiting; a fourth, a black slave, gazes up at his master, who has his arm around him in a gesture hinting that he might be one of the master’s special pet slaves (deliciae). Even though the slaves are depicted at a smaller scale than the freeborn diners, they were patently important to the image of his hospitality that the person who commissioned this painting to decorate his own dining-room wished to convey. The number and attentiveness of these slaves underlined his wealth and
Male and female slaves who were particularly good-looking took on a special value, enhancing by their physical attractiveness the pleasures (voluptates) of the occasion. Slaves made a key contribution to the manner in which one’s fellow-citizens viewed one’s family both inside and outside the home; they very much boosted its public visibility and its social prestige.

But slaves also helped to articulate kinship relationships between free-born members of the family. Let us begin with wives. As we have already noted, by the time of the late Republic most Roman wives did not fall under the legal power (patria potestas) of their husbands and so were able to own property that was legally separate from that of their spouses. Such property would often include slaves. The younger Pliny, in expressing his readiness to contribute towards the dowry of an old friend’s daughter, comments that she will need a goodly number of slave attendants given the social rank of her fiancé (Letters 6.32). Indeed an emblematic image of the Roman matrona showed her assisted at her toilette by a group of her own slave women, such as on a sculpted relief, dated to the later second or third century AD, now in the Landesmuseum in Trier (Germany) (Fig. 16.5). The presence of the mistress’s slaves in the conjugal home helped to underline her legal independence from her husband, which was further emphasised by the legal prohibition of gifts between husband and wife during marriage. In the eyes of the law, the property of each spouse should not be mingled or confounded. But in actual social practice the assets of both husband and wife were often merged and jointly managed.

In the touching eulogy of his deceased wife known as the ‘Eulogy of Turia’ (the Laudatio Turiae), composed at the end of the first century BC, the husband, whose identity is not preserved, represented their marriage as one in which their respective property was shared and administered mutually:

We preserved all your patrimony received from your parents with shared diligence; for you had no concern for acquiring that which you handed over completely to me. We divided our duties so that I bore the guardianship (tutela) of your fortune, while you sustained the care of mine.

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62 From the House of the Triclinium (v 2.4): see Dunbabin 2003: 58–9, and fig. 28; Clarke 2003: 242–3, with colour plate 21; Roller 2006: 74–5 and colour plate V. For the practice that had developed by the mid-first century AD whereby masters dined surrounded by a ‘crowd of standing slaves’, see Sen. Ep. 47.2.
63 See further Pollini 2003.
64 Espérandieu 1935: 321–3, no. 5143 (with photos) from Noviomagus (modern Neumagen); Dixon 2001: 125–6 and pl. 16. This emblematic image of matron and slave-girls is savagely critiqued by the satirist Juvenal at Sat. 6.487–507.
65 See Dig. 24.1. Pre-nuptial gifts were permitted (Dig. 24.1.27) and gifts that came into effect after the donor’s death (Dig. 24.1.9–11). For separation and mixing of property within marriage, see Treggiari 1991: 365–96.
66 FIRA iii.69 = ILS 8393, col. I, lines 37–9 quoted. There is no secure basis to identify the wife as ‘Turia’. In general on this fascinating document, see Wistrand 1976.
Slaves, therefore, played a double role in articulating relations between husband and wife. On the one hand, the legal fact that the mistress owned slaves of her own marked her independence (both economic and social) from her husband, but the common practice whereby the husband might often subsume them into his own slaveholdings and administer them jointly with his own slaves illustrates the de facto control that a husband often exerted even over a wife who was not legally in his power.

Slaves also played a key part in defining how Roman fathers related to their children, since children were often assimilated to slaves in the social dynamics of the household. Children and slaves both fell under the legal power (the patria potestas) of the paterfamilias, a term that was flexible enough to convey that the head of a household was at the same time the biological father of his freeborn children and paternalistic master of his slave familia. On a similar conceptual trajectory, slaves – no matter what their age – were known as ‘boys’ (pueri) and thus generically assimilated to children. This may explain why slaves were usually represented in Roman art as much smaller figures than freeborn individuals, even those much smaller.

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younger in age and smaller in stature than themselves. Roman children, just like slaves, could not own property; the best they could hope for was an allowance (peculium), which the paterfamilias also provided for some of his slaves. Both children and slaves were also subject to the power of the paterfamilias to inflict corporal punishment, even if in actual practice a father was expected to show restraint in disciplining his son or daughter, which was never an expectation in his handling of his slaves. On a more positive note, both sons and slaves could serve as business agents (institores) of the paterfamilias.

Children and slaves, however, were not just associated in legal theory. Sons and daughters spent considerable amounts of time in their early years in the company of the household’s slaves, who constituted a kind of surrogate kin for them as they were growing up. They were often breastfed by the same wet nurse as the slave children of the household. (Wet nurses were normally slaves or freedwomen from within the household, but occasionally a freeborn woman was hired for the purpose from outside on a contract.) The fact that Cato’s wife Licinia in the second century BC breastfed not just their own children, but their slaves’ offspring as well would appear to be eccentric, eliciting Plutarch’s attention, which it is unlikely to have done if it were a common practice. Such nurses provided more than just their milk, since they often continued to look after young infants well after they had been weaned. Freeborn children also often had slave playmates as they were growing up, while some Romans decided to take in foundling infants, who became foster-brothers and foster-sisters (alumni) for the natural offspring of the family. It is difficult to reconstruct the precise nature of their play, but it is quite likely that it was through play that children began to learn how to give orders to their slave playmates.

Slaves (usually more elderly male slaves) served as childminders (nutri- tores, educatores or paedagogi) and then as their first teachers (praeceptores) as children developed physically and intellectually. Again the elder Cato seems to have been unusual in insisting on teaching his own son ‘as soon as the boy had reached the age of understanding’, even though he had skilled

68 On this, see further Saller 1994: 133–53.
69 Kirschenbaum 1987; Aubert 1994.
70 Plut. Cat. Mai. 20. Writing in approximately the same period as Plutarch, Tacitus comments that among the Germans, mothers breastfed their own children (Germ. 20.1). The epitaph of Gratia Alexandria, the wife of an imperial freedman, also comments that she ‘brought up her children with the milk of her own breasts’ (CIL 6.19128 = ILS 8,451, Rome). Such evidence seems to confirm that it was unusual for Roman mothers to do this. On wet nurses within the family, see Bradley 1986b; 1991: 13–36 (focusing on Italy and the provinces); cf. 149–55 for collactanei (children, sometimes of very different social status, breastfed by the same woman).
71 On slave playmates, note Sen. Ep. 12, where during a visit to one of his suburban estates Seneca fails to recognise an elderly slave who had been his playmate when young. For foster-children, see Rawson 1986a; Bellemore and Rawson 1990; Rawson 2003: 250–9.
72 For these male slave child-carers, see Bradley 1991b.
literate slave teachers capable of doing this job among his domestic slaves (Plut. *Cato the Elder* 20). It was only once children had emerged from childhood and were ready to take their place as adolescents (*adulescentes*) that their regular association and identification with members of the slave *familia* came to an end. This is not to say that they did not recall with evident fondness their slave-companions and slave-carers from these early years. Pliny provided his former nurse with an estate worth 100,000 sesterces and poignantly recalled in a letter how Minicia Marcella, who had died just before her thirteenth birthday, ‘used to love her nurses (*nutrices*), child-minders (*paedagogi*) and teachers (*praecptores*) as was appropriate to the status of each of them’. A number of surviving epitaphs confirm the strength of the emotional bonds that the freeborn developed with their slave playmates, wet nurses and childminders, and such feelings were often mutual, to judge from the memorials that childminders set up to their former charges. But the key point is that Roman children were very much associated, both conceptually and in routine daily life, with the slaves of the household in their early years. Slaves played an important role in their emotional development, but there came a time when freeborn Romans were expected to have outgrown their dependence on the slave household. They were then ready to take their place in the world of freeborn Roman citizens. This was when a father started to play a greater role in his son’s education, especially his moral training, and to supervise his son’s entry into public life.

**CONCLUSION**

Each year in December slave-owners joined together with their freeborn kin and their slaves to celebrate the festival of the Saturnalia in the family home. Masters exchanged gifts with their slaves, reclined at the same table to eat and drink with them and obediently submitted to their slaves’ commands, especially those issued by the slave appointed ‘prince of the Saturnalia’ (*Saturnalicius princeps*). Slaves were even allowed to indulge in some verbal abuse of their masters. For these few days of convivial merriment, the habitual order of things within the household was inverted. Festive licence ruled, symbolised by the wearing of ‘liberty caps’ (*pillei*). These were customarily worn by slaves at the moment of their manumission, but their use by slaves and their masters too at the Saturnalia emphasised the temporary liberation from normality that the festival engendered. At another festival,

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73 Minicia Marcella: Plin. *Ep.* 5.16; cf. *CIL* 6.16631 = *ILS* 1030 for her precise age at death. For memorials set up for and by childminders and nurses, see the articles of Bradley cited in nn. 70 and 72; for representations of nurses and *paedagogi* in funerary art, George 2000.

74 On the various phases in a child’s education, see Rawson 2003: 146–209, 225 (father’s role).
held each year on 1 March, slave mistresses served their slaves special meals at the Matronalia and, as we have already seen, slaves were also included in family offerings at the Compitalia in December or January. All these festivals underlined the centrality of slaves to the wellbeing of the family and the importance of integrating them ritually within the households to which they belonged. By temporarily releasing slaves from their position of subservience, these festivals may also have helped to reduce the sort of tensions that built up, as we have seen, within a Roman household: in particular, the tension between slave-owners and their slaves, but also the stress that arose between individual slaves living in close physical proximity to one another and the strains that slaves on occasion caused for the freeborn members of the family. However, these relatively brief moments when the normal rules of the slave condition were relaxed may often have served only to emphasise to the slaves the bitter and enduring reality of their subordination.

Some slaves – as a result of their skills, their hard work or simply their good looks – could rise up the slave hierarchy of the familia, eventually coming to control slaves of their own and even obtaining their freedom. Some could win the genuine affection of their masters or mistresses. But countless thousands laboured on rural estates far beyond the gaze of their masters, with little chance of improving their lot unless they impressed the estate-manager (vilicus) sufficiently for him to put in a good report with the master. So in seeking to assess the influence of slaves on the Roman family, we need to bear in mind the vast divergences in their working conditions and individual situations within the slave hierarchy. What does seem clear is that slaves did make the lives of the families to which they belonged very much more complicated, and in many cases, especially within the urban household, they had the power to affect intra-family relationships in a manner that far belied their lowly legal status.

**BIBLIOGRAPHIC ESSAY**

Many of the best recent works on the Roman family include some discussion of slavery (note especially Dixon 1992 and Bradley 1991a; more briefly Hanson 1999), as do a number of contributions in the many volumes of essays now available on the Roman family: Rawson (1986b); Andreau and Bruhns (1990); Rawson (1991); Kertzer and Saller (1991); Rawson and Weaver (1997); Dixon (2001); Balch and Osiek (2003), with much discussion of non-Christian families despite its title; George (2005). More specific treatments of aspects of Roman family life, such as Rawson (2003)
on childhood, Treggiari (1991) on marriage or Parkin (2003) on old age, also include important discussions of slavery, as do studies focusing on Roman women: for example, Fantham et al. (1994), Gardner (1986b) and D’Ambra (2007).

Conversely, two of the most important recent studies of Roman slavery (Bradley 1984 and 1994) contain much illuminating material on the place of urban and rural slaves within the family. Treggiari (1969b) and Fabre (1981) remain the best treatments available on freedmen and freedwomen. More specific analysis of the relationship between slaves and freeborn members of the family may be found in Saller (1987), (2003) and Martin (2003).

Crook (1967b) and Gardner (1986b) and (1998) provide useful discussions of Roman family law (and note Evans Grubbs (1995) on the later Roman Empire), while Watson (1987) analyses the main features of Roman slave law in a clear and digestible manner. Frier and McGinn (2003) and Evans Grubbs (2002) are useful sourcebooks on Roman family law, with helpful commentary. For stimulating discussion of the literary representation of slavery within the household, it is well worth consulting Fitzgerald (2000) and, for more specific studies, McCarthy (1998), focusing on the plays of Plautus, Hopkins (1993) on Aesop, Veyne (1961) on Petronius’ Trimalchio, and Bradley (2000a) and (2000b), both on Apuleius.

ABBREVIATIONS

JOURNALS

Abbreviations, where used, follow the usage of *L’Année philologique*. For items not there listed, standard disciplinary conventions have been used.

EDITIONS AND REFERENCE WORKS

*AE*  
*L’Année Épigraphique*, published in *Revue Archéologique* and separately (1888–)

*BGU*  
*Berliner Griechische Urkunden (Ägyptische Urkunden aus den Kgl. Museen zu Berlin)*, ed. W. Schubart et al. (1895–)

*CAlH*  

*CIL*  
*Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* (1863–)

*CISem.*  
*Corpus Inscriptionum Semiticarum* (1881–)

*CSEL*  
*Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum* (1866–)

*FGrH*  
*Fragmente der griechischen Historiker*, ed. F. Jacoby et al. (1923–58)

*FIRA*  
*Fontes Iuris Romani AnteJustiniani*, ed. S. Riccobono (1941)

*Fr.Vat.*  

*IDélos*  
*Inscriptions de Délos*, ed. F. Dürrbach (1923–37)

*IG*  
*Inscriptiones Graecae* (1873–)

*IGLS*  
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*ILS*  

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<td>Kaniecka</td>
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Tab. Herc.  

TAM  
*Tituli Asiae Minoris*, ed. E. Kalinka et al., (1901–)

TLL  
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TPSulp  

UPZ  

West  
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Wilcken, Chr.  
See Mitteis, Chr.

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The names of literary authors and works are in general abbreviated according to the usage of *The Oxford Classical Dictionary* (3rd edn, 1996). Papyrological sources are cited according to the abbreviations given in the List of Abbreviations or, where possible, those supplied in *The Oxford Classical Dictionary* (3rd edn, 1996); otherwise according to the abbreviations supplied at the online Checklist of Editions of Greek, Latin, Demotic, and Coptic Papyri, Ostraca and Tablets (http://scriptorium.lib.duke.edu/papyrus/texts/clist.html). The abbreviations of rabbinic works follow the list in Günter Stemberger, *Introduction to Talmud and Midrash*, 2nd edn (Edinburgh 1996), but note in particular the following (M. = Mishnah, T. = Tosefta, y. = Talmud Yerushalmi).

*Gen. R*  
Midrash Genesis Rabbah

*Lev. R*  
Midrash Leviticus Rabbah par. Pesiqta de Rav Kahana = PRK

*M. B.M.*  
Mishnah Baba Metzia

*M. B.B.*  
Mishnah Baba Batra

*M. Ber.*  
Mishnah Bereshit

*M. Ket.*  
Mishnah Ketubot

*M. Makh.*  
Mishnah Makkshirin

*M. Pes.*  
Mishnah Pesahim

*M. Qid.*  
Mishnah Qidushin

*M. Shen.*  
Talmud Yerushalmi Maaser Sheni

*M. Sot.*  
Mishnah Sotah

*M. Suk.*  
Mishnah Sukkah

*M. Yad.*  
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*Mekh. Mishpatim/Neziqin*  
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