

medium-quality wine and oil, and show investment in that type of agriculture, but their absence may only reflect a switch to less detectable screw-presses, which could be used in series for mass production, and commonly were in Roman Egypt, but were also suited to smaller-scale but high-investment production of quality wines. Wilson and Malouta valiantly try to sort out the terminology of water-lifting machines in the papyri, but the suspicion remains that the 'machines' of the Byzantine period are shadufs (simple and small), appropriate to its specific tenant-based system of agriculture.

The remaining two papers treat Roman Egypt. Bowman provides a magisterial conspectus of what has been achieved by attempts to quantify agricultural production in terms of gross areas of cultivable land, size of village territories, distribution of land by crop-types and farm-sizes, and populations and consumption needs of towns and villages. Blouin argues for a tension in the Mendesian nome (Nile Delta) between a market-oriented focus on wheat by the rich and the traditional autarkic diversification of the poor, with points of comparison to the North African situation. Blouin's paper encapsulates the big question of the volume, as fully and frankly laid out in the editors' Introduction. What can we quantify reliably, and how far does it take us? J. Andraeu, *L'Économie du monde romain* (2010) has sharply criticized modelling the ancient economy by quantified estimates. While Bowman and Wilson doubt the validity of macro-estimates, they urge faith in more specific data-rich studies. This volume exemplifies how much potential 'thick' data we have, and how we are beginning to confront seriously and overcome its limitations. What we have yet to work out is how we might meld disparate data from Roman Egypt, let alone Spanish wine-press data, North African tenancy regulations and Nabataean industrial pollution, into a coherent economic picture.

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C. LAES, *CHILDREN IN THE ROMAN EMPIRE: OUTSIDERS WITHIN*. Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011. Pp. xv + 334, illus. ISBN 9780521897464. £65.00/US\$105.00.

In the last decade, the study of children and childhood in Roman antiquity has significantly expanded: alongside Mary Harlow and Ray Laurence's *Growing Up and Growing Old in Ancient Rome* (2002), which followed the 'life-course approach', Beryl Rawson's *Children and Childhood in Roman Italy* (2003) and Peter Scholz's study on aristocratic socialization (*Den Vätern folgen* (2010)), the topics of education, children and memory, the impact of high mortality, and the representation of children have also been tackled in various conferences and articles. This monograph by Christian Laes is to be situated in the context of these debates. Its aims are twofold: it not only offers a description of the experience of childhood, it also discusses the perception of children in Roman society (x).

L. has published widely on Roman children; although most of his work is accessible to a non-Dutch/Flemish-speaking audience, the timely translation of his Flemish dissertation *Outsiders met toekomst. Kinderen in de Romeinse Oudheid* (Leuven, 2004; published in Dutch, 2006) in an updated and reworked form is to be greatly welcomed and offers a synthesis of his previous work. L. sets the methodological frame in his introduction (1–21). He does not focus solely on the city of Rome and its élite, but aims to cover a wide chronological span (from 200 B.C. to A.D. 400) and a broad geographical range (from Mesopotamia to Britannia). He is fully aware of the problems connected with such a vast undertaking, but points to the *longue durée* of certain concepts, attitudes and contexts (for example, the demographic background). L. explores three main issues: the position of children in a class-based society, the importance of age as a crucial factor in forming attitudes towards children and the perception of childhood as a psychological or a social category (19). Furthermore, he raises some rather unexpected questions concerning the empathy of historians towards their subject: while recognizing the importance of dispassionately analysing the facts, L. nonetheless makes the case against a complete moral detachment which might itself lead to a kind of 'ethical subjectivism' (21). Though we cannot change the past, the realities of childhood in antiquity that L. reveals in the following chapters might at least make us question our own treatment of children today and especially our attitudes towards child labour and exploitation.

In ch. 2 L. sets the stage, presenting the demographic and material context of Roman childhood. Though L. is aware of the difficulties of working with model life tables, high fertility rates have to be linked to high mortality rates especially during infancy, resulting in the frequent death of young children with which parents as well as siblings had to cope. Chs 3 and 4 follow the life course approach and concentrate on those persons involved with the upbringing of a child from birth to age fifteen. We are introduced to the rôles and functions of parents, midwives, wet nurses, *paedagogi*, *ludi magistri* and *grammatici*. L. also discusses ancient debates on the rôle of corporal punishment in education. Although these chapters are highly informative, one might still turn to Rawson for a more systematic approach to the different stages of Roman childhood.

In chs 5 and 6 L. ceases following the life course approach and presents his strongest chapters on children's work and on paedophilia and pederasty — topics not touched by either Rawson or Harlow/Laurence. Child labour was not discussed as a concept *per se* in antiquity, it was rather an undisputed fact that children supported and contributed to their families' welfare. As working children were not a concern of literary texts, L. turns instead to epigraphical, archaeological, papyrological, legal and even osteological evidence. He reveals the different social and working environments of young slaves, children of the Roman élite up to the *aula Caesaris*, apprentices in the crafts, performers and entertainers, orphans and poor children in the cities, children in the countryside and in the army. The overall picture shows that working did not mark an abrupt transition from a carefree childhood to adulthood (something of a modern concept), but that children followed in their parents' footsteps and that working was part of their socialization. In his treatment of paedophilia and pederasty, L. also warns his readers against applying modern standards to radically different Roman ideas of sexuality and subservience. L. builds on his previous work on Statius and Martial to present Roman notions on the relationship between master and *puer delicatus* which he sets in the broader context of sexuality in antiquity thereby stressing the different attitudes of Greeks and Romans. In both cultures, sexuality was linked with status, but when it came to availability, the Romans, unlike the Greeks, did not stress age, but rather physical development and social and civil status (242). A different concept of childhood and sexuality thus emerges. Lastly, L. touches on the influence of Christianity in prohibiting paedophilia as a threat to familial and especially marital relations.

L.'s study does not tackle all aspects of children's life during the Roman Empire: that is not its aim. In his conclusion, L. drives home his point that not age, but physical development and appearance were important criteria for being considered a child. Childhood has to be seen as a social rather than a psychological category (282–3). To describe children as 'outsiders' within their families due to the different social and legal status of children and parents might risk oversimplifying this picture a little: some adult men with surviving fathers were still subject to *patria potestas* while others lost their fathers at a young age. Having the same legal status as slaves was therefore not necessarily a marker for being a child and thus a social 'outsider'. Nonetheless, L. has masterfully presented not only the social meaning of childhood in Roman antiquity, but also the grim realities of children's lives.

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J. KÖNIG, *SAINTS AND SYMPOSIASTS: THE LITERATURE OF FOOD AND THE SYMPOSIUM IN GRECO-ROMAN AND EARLY CHRISTIAN CULTURE*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012. Pp. xi + 417, illus. ISBN 9780521886857. £70.00/US\$115.00.

This valuable work brings together the Greco-Roman symposium, the literary forms that engaged with it, early Christian engagements and Christian debate in later antiquity over reuses of pagan forms or rejection of earlier luxurious ways.

König focuses principally on Plutarch's sympotic questions, that kind of enquiring discourse that took place at the symposium and addressed itself to sympotic issues of a kind that might have arisen in the elegies of Theognis, in Plato or in the pseudo-Aristotelian *Problems*. Plutarch has that emphasis on decorum and the great Greek past which characterizes Greek literature of the period. From Plutarch K. extends to other 'encyclopaedic' collections of discussions about food, from Athenaeus to