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Motherhood and Infancies in the Mediterranean in Antiquity

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Chapter 16

Seruae, mothers and the mother–child bond in Roman Italy. The analysis of the epigraphic evidence

Carla Rubiera Cancelas

General considerations on slave families

Overall, a slave had a precarious personal life, also in regard to family, as slave systems were characterised by the lack of respect towards families (Stevenson 1996, viii). They did not exist in the eyes of the law;¹ even more, they were not considered in the eyes of some owners. This precarious situation was strongly connected to the uncertainty of separation. K. R. Bradley speculates about the tension that a slave must always have had in mind: ‘the tension between being held in a state of total subjection that denied all sense of personhood on the one hand, and being at the same time a human agent capable of responding to submission in a variety of self-validating ways on the other’ (Bradley 1994, 178). This would have affected all kinds of relationship developed within the family. Bradley’s assessment is based on the evidence of the slaves from the New World, mainly on slave narratives. These kinds of texts stress two elements: the suffering caused by ill-treatment, and the devastating consequences of families’ separation. We can assume that the situation in the Roman world was somehow similar and, as a consequence, family relationships were pretty much likely marked by vulnerability and insecurity. At any moment of life, members of slave families could be separated by the master and, in regard to the very topic of this chapter, mothers could be taken away from their children. Three different scenarios demonstrate the fragility of slave families, as well as of the mother–child bond.

First scenario: sale auctions

Young children could be destined to be sold alone, even without their mothers (Curchin 2000–01, 541; 543). Some sale contracts, most of which were preserved in Egypt, let us visualise isolated children at an early age – e.g., in Oxyrhyncos, an

8-year-old girl was sold alone (AD 77); in Tebtynis, a 7-year-old house-born slave was sold alone (AD 108–116); in Side (Pamphilia), a 10-year-old girl was sold alone for 280 denarii (AD 142), etc. (more examples in Bienzunska 1984, 331–334; Edmonson 2011, 350). A further case from Londonium attests that Fortunata (the Roman name given to her), a 13-year-old girl from Diablintian (Gallia), was sold alone. The text says she was in good health and not a runaway slave, but it does not shed light on whether she travelled with her family (or at least one family member) from Gallia to Britannia (Tomlin 2004, 49–50; Korporowicz 2011, 216–221).

Second scenario: breeding strategies

A second scenario is associated with nursing babies. Basically, owners decided entirely on the upbringing and education of the slave population. This meant that, in some occasions, a slave could feed her offspring, while other times she could be forced to get rid of her baby by abandoning it; by doing this, the woman was available to be rented as a wet nurse of an outside baby.² Mothers were taken away from their own children to nurse the offspring of their masters (Joshel 1980). Likewise, female slaves were separated from their children in order to feed babies belonging to other families: wet nursing contracts from Egypt prove this reality.³ In addition, considering some references regarding the training of slaves, we can also assume that slaves from the *familia urbana* were sometimes sent to the countryside in order to be educated, which could lead to separation (ULPIAN. *Dig.* 33. 7. 12. 42) (Gardner 1987, 208).

Third scenario: owners' death

As H. Mouritsen has recently emphasised: 'Slave families probably found themselves most at risk when the master died, an event that might result in the breaking-up of the entire household' (Mouritsen 2011, 139). When a slaveholder died, his/her slaves might indiscriminately be distributed among the heirs or sold off to different buyers (Edmonson 2011, 350). In Rome, as it happened to properties, slaves and their offspring could be bequeathed to different owners.⁴

Scaevola, in the 2nd century AD, tells us about the provisions of a testator. According to the jurist, the man left all his freedmen their servile consorts, as well as their sons and daughters, with the exception of those who were left to his wife (SCAEV. *Dig.* 32. 41. 2). Another interesting reference, once again from Scaevola, explains how a *uilicus* (an administrator) was not in the same legacy of his contubernal and his daughter because they lived in different places: the man lived in the city, while the two women lived in the countryside (SCAEV. *Dig.* 33. 7. 20. 4).

These three scenarios confirm the instability that characterised slave families overall. All these examples allow us to prove the functioning of a system and the result of the application of concrete rules, which affected many aspects of the family life of slaves. If we look at the examples just provided, the mother–child bond was attacked

from the very beginning, just after birth and during the period of breastfeeding. Despite this, as the epigraphic evidence attests, slaves were able to create families. Unlike literary and legal sources that speak about them as ‘an accident,’ the epigraphic records intentionally illustrate this topic. In fact, in order to inquire into the slave family beyond the owner’s perspective (offered by many of the preserved sources), it seems necessary to turn to epigraphic records, as they allow us to perceive the other side, even though with a big limitation: we are looking at a very specific picture of a very particular moment. An inscription will never give us the whole biography of a female slave.⁵ Overall, it will never tell us about abandoned babies, mothers who were sold or given away, slaves who were separated and, of course, deceased in a context that moves away from the moment when the monument was set up. Despite this, epigraphy serves us as a snapshot of the conformation of the slave family where women appear, among other categories, as mothers.

Female slaves as mothers and the mother-child bond: the evidence from Roman Italy

The existence of a slave system implies the typification and regulation of some forms of slave supply (Scheidel 2011, 287–310). In ancient Rome, various forms were used to increase the slave population, among which we find biological reproduction: ‘Slaves come from our enemies or those born of our slaves’ (MARCIAN. *Dig.* 1. 5. 5). There are references in literary and legal sources that demonstrate how women were an important part of the slave supply system (Di Nisio 2007, 1493–1517; Rubiera Cancelas 2014, 217–256). This means, their bodies became a source for obtaining house-born slaves, the so-called *uernae* (Scheidel 1997; Harris 1999; Harper 2013, 70). Any child born in these circumstances followed the mother’s condition: ‘This is the law of nature: somebody of illegitimate birth succeeds to the condition of the mother unless a particular law introduces an alternative outcome’⁶ (ULPIAN. *Dig.* 1. 5. 24). Therefore, since marriage between slaves was not legally acknowledged,⁷ children of slave men and women were considered illegitimate.

Some literary sources show that masters intervened in the formation of slave couples and encouraged their slaves to have children (Laes 2011, 157–158); ‘... so they have fellow slaves as wives, from whom they may have children. For from this state of affairs they become more loyal and more attached to the farm’ (VAR. *R.* 1. 17. 5). In fact, marital relationships were not necessary for reproduction, only female slaves were (Mouritsen 2011, 134). Thus, where and when needed, slaves were used as wombs for generating new generations of slaves at the service of the owners. We should not also forget that slave boys and girls could be obtained in other ways, for instance through wars and conquests, or even with kidnapping, a method that was illegal but yet recorded in ancient sources (Scheidel 2011, 297).

Slave relations were marked by a dualism inherent to slavery: slaves were objects and subjects. Therefore, women were used by slaveholders as animals of

their property for collecting wealth, but at the same time slave women catalogued themselves as mothers in the epigraphic records.⁸ The slave context made it difficult for a mother, although not impossible, to maintain a relationship with her offspring, as the epigraphic records belonging to Roman Italy show. The sample we use here was collected during the project carried out at the University of Edinburgh between the years 2014–2016. This sample attempted to cover the whole Italian Peninsula (excluding Rome) in order to have an image as complete as possible. A total of 538 inscriptions, most of them funerary, offer data regarding labour (a minority), personal life and ownership. In these texts, *seruae* are described as mothers in single-parent and in nuclear families. Regarding the first group, which will be discussed below, we have 30 inscriptions in which the slave-mothers appear alone either as dedicators or dedicatees. An example is represented by the following text:

D(is) M(anibus)/Ianuariae/matri pien/tissimae/Ianu(a)rius Aug(usti)/n(ostri) adiut(or) tabul(ariorum)/f(aciendum) c(uravit). *CIL* 5, 371, Vabriga

In this epitaph Ianuarius, *adiut(or) tabul(ariorum)* of the imperial family, remembers his mother Ianuaria, possibly still a slave, with whom he shares the same name. B. Rawson (2003, 111) as interpreted this as an indicator of how parents would be involved in naming their children, despite not having the right to select the name of their babies because it belonged to the owner. In reality, there is slight information regarding the influence of parents at the moment of naming slave babies. Therefore, we always have to consider ‘the owner, the *uilicus* or someone else who was supervising the slaves and the slave parent(s)’ (Bruun 2013, 32).

The group of inscriptions that attest slave women as single parents offers a varied panorama of information; some of them, in fact, were set up by sons and daughters commemorating their slave mothers, and these texts reveal details also on the working life of these women. We know of Hygia (*InscrIt-4-1*, 391, Narnia, AD 71–130) and Egdechome (*CIL* 9, 6316, Teate Marrocinorum, AD 71–130) to whom their *fili*i, Fidus and Expectatus respectively, dedicated a funerary monument. These two inscriptions follow the same model: a son, whose age is not given, remembering his mother. In neither of the cases a reference to the father is present, meaning that he is either not in the lives his relatives or, if he is, he cannot be acknowledged in this role in the epitaphs. In both the texts the names of the *seruae* appear followed by those of their owners: Hygia was Autronia Fortunata’s slave (*obstetrix*, midwife), and Egdechome was Ateia Acumene’s slave. In the funerary monument of the latter, the commissioner added a pair of scissors and a *codex*, objects related to her work activity.⁹ Both the examples capture the lives of two slaves associated to personal and work identities, something that is not common, due to the fact that most of the inscriptions in the sample report only details about personal relationships and not work activities.¹⁰

Mothers also appear as dedicators of their offspring (along with other sons and daughters), who have sometimes passed the stage of *infantia* and *pueritia* (Cenerini 2016, 196); this attests a long relationship in time between the mother and her child,

with the latter reaching adulthood. The strength of the mother-child bond and the cohesion of families are here proved despite the circumstances derived from slavery. We have the example of Mercator, an imperial *uerna* of 29 years and 21 days old, who is commemorated by his mother and brothers (A *Epig.* 2006, 265, Albanum, AD 81–130). This rich funerary monument is manifested as a proof of a lasting mother-child relationship, a reality we have known of thanks to the accuracy with which the age of the deceased is reported. In other unfortunate situations, the slaves saw their progeny die at an early age,¹¹ as in the epitaph of Restituta, a 1-year and 8-month old baby, who is remembered by her mother, whose name has not survived, as a slave of Procula Fidelia (CIL 9, 3637, Aveia Vestina). Also in Matilica, a 6-year-old girl named Anaphe is commemorated along with her deceased mother, a 20-year-old woman (A *Epig.* 1981, 313, 50–1 BC).

Some mothers achieved freedom before their offspring, a reality that does not call our attention since there are examples in literary and legal sources that show how slaves are offered freedom in exchange of having a stipulated number of *uernae* (TRYPH. *Dig.* 1. 5. 15). Freedom could be obtained in exchange for work, as the slaves were able to pay for their own freedom. In the examples collected here, despite the improvement of legal status, the slaves continued to maintain a relationship, at least with the children that appear indicated in the epigraphic texts. We have to remember the manumission did not necessarily mean a drastic change in the lives of the *seruae*, who could continue to maintain a relationship with their ex-owners or even continue to work for them (Mouritsen 2011, 225; Edmonson 2011, 343–344). This situation is precisely the one that would have allowed the mothers to keep in touch with their offspring, not affecting their everyday relationship, yet always taking into account that they had no right over it. Vindicia Primigenia, described as a freedwoman, is in charge of the setting up of a funerary monument for her daughter Nymphersusa, 18 years old, and her son Nymphius, 22 years old (A *Epig.* 2001, 872, Sipontum, AD 101–200); once more we deal with long-lasting relationships, considering the age of the children. In this case, in light of the information offered by the inscription, this single-parent family would have belonged to the same woman.¹² Other inscriptions attest freed mothers and their slave children, as in the case of Claudia Epiteuxis, whose onomastic reflects that she had a different legal status of that of her daughter Calliste, 20 years old and still a slave at the time of her death (A *Epig.* 2007, 423, Tarentum, AD 70–100). The situation could occur in reverse, of course, with a slave mother and her freed offspring, as we can see in the epitaph of Ursilla, a 40-year-old imperial slave commemorated by her son Ulpius Fortunatus (A *Epig.* 1972, Tarentum, AD 116 98–117).

So far we have mentioned private slaves and those belonging to the imperial family; however, motherhood was experienced also by public slaves, although these are a minority in the epigraphy of Roman Italy, only nine. Occasionally, these slaves are described as *publicae*, other times their names are linked to towns that appear as owners e.g., *Lepora Histoniensium serua* (CIL 9, 2889, Histonium), *Thymeleni Corfiniensium serua* (A *Epig.* 1983, 323, Corfinium) and *Agre, seruae publica* of Luceria (CIL 9, 819). Two

of them, Lepora and Agre, are commemorated by their offspring in simple and concise inscriptions; in the second case, the dedicators are not identified with a personal name but by the word *fili*. All the examples discussed so far, being representatives of many others, show the existence of families where no father figure is identified. This leads us to reflect on the identity of the father, and the reasons why he does not appear in the funerary monument: maybe he was already dead at the same of the setting up, or he could not be identified as a father (for instance, when the father was the slave's owner), or he simply did not exist in the life of the slave mother and her offspring.

As disclosed at the beginning of this section, *seruae* were also part of nuclear families. Unlike the previous cases, the following texts present a series of interpretive problems: sometimes it is impossible to know for sure whether a slave was the father or the mother of a third part, that is defined as a son or daughter. These two examples are representative of this situation:

D(is) M(anibus)/Phileto/Triphosa co[n]/servo et Phile/tus p(atri) b(ene) m(erenti) fe[c(it)]. (A *Epig.* 1983, 216, Venusia, AD 101–150)

[D(is) M(anibus?)]/Statori L(uci) Val(eri)/Potiti ser(vo) Mu/sa cons{s}erva/et Stator filius/[b(ene)] m(erenti) f(ecerunt) v(ixit) a(nnos) XXXV. (A *Epig.* 2012, 399, Heraclea AD 60–120)

In the first inscription, Triphosa sets up a funerary monument to Philetus, whom she defines as a *conseruus*, and so does Philetus to his father. However, the information provided by the epitaph does not allow us to assure that Triphosa is the mother of Philetus. The same happens in the second inscription where Musa, *conserua*, and Stator, *filius*, are commissioners of the funerary monument of Stator senior (father). Again, it is impossible to know with certainty whether Musa was the mother of Stator junior (son) or not. In spite of the complications when interpreting these monuments, I have included them in the group of inscriptions that would focus nuclear families, a total of 55 texts. If we look at the inscriptions of the two Statores, the father and the son carry the same name, unlike what happened in the very first epitaph that we analysed in this section, where the son of Ianuaria was named Ianuarius. Mothers and children sharing name (in masculine or feminine as appropriate) also appear in those epigraphic texts that reveal the existence of nuclear families:

Lascivo/T(iti) Anini/Numidae/ser(vo) v(ixit) a(nnos) XV/Echio et/Lasciva/f(ilio) piissimo/p(osuerunt). (A *Epig.* 2006, 374, Aveia Vestina)

Restutae Mariorum ancil[l]ae¹³/ann(orum) XXIII men(sium) VII d(ierum) X/ Restutus fil(ius) [e]t Ep[i]ctetus coniunx/v(ivus) f(ecit) et sibi. (CIL 5, 629, Tergeste, AD 101–200)

Although we identified the men, the onomastics could indicate that these are not the biological parents, taking into account that their names, Restitutus and Lascivus, are connected with the mothers' onomastic. In both the examples, the mothers, Lascivia and Restituta, do not specifically indicate their legal status, thus they have to be considered as *incertae*, although there it is very likely that they were still slaves. In

relation to naming, we should remember that servile girls and boys belonged to the owner who had, among his rights, the one to name the *uernae* and all other slaves. There is nothing more personal than a name, even if, in the case of slaves, this could have been chosen by an owner, who might have changed the original name following her or his own criteria.¹⁴ There is no obligation to respect the original name of a slave, for instance, after s/he had been sold. Not only masters could give them a new name, but also slave dealers could (McLean 2002, 127). As a result, from that moment, the slave would be recognised according to the new nomenclature as a part of a new identity.¹⁵ Essentially, this practise could be considered as the first step in the ‘possession process’: renaming as a way to own something or someone. Even if the owners or proprietors were responsible for naming the children of the slaves, they may have done so by basing the children’s name on those of the mothers, marking the prevalence of the mother-child bond in a context in which the children follow the legal status of their mothers.

As it happened when we referred to single-parent families, also sons and daughters could achieve freedom before their two parents, as in an inscription from Venusia, AD 130–170, in which we read Philetus and Comice, mother and father (once again a nuclear family) and imperial slaves, were commemorated by their daughter Aelia Philete, an imperial freedwoman (*A Epig.* 2003, 485).¹⁶ Nuclear families also included brothers and sisters who participated as deputies with their parents. So Amoena, slave of Ulpius, is remembered by her mother Ursula, her brother Amoenus and her companion Pyladius (*A Epig.* 2003, 393, Venusia, AD 150–200); Severus a 13-year-5-month-and-5-day-old slave, is remembered by his parents, Utilis and Cypare, as well as his sister Quinta (*A Epig.* 1989, 259, Sulmo, AD 101–200).

Other funerary monuments reflect how the members of the nuclear families belonged to different owners, as in the following inscription, in which we see a slave, her mother, her father and a man defined as *amicus*.¹⁷

[P]rimae Accai/[D]eutera Neri/mater Verna/[p]ater Eros amic(us)/pos(uerunt). (*A Epig.* 1989, BC 70–30 AD 258 Sulmo)

It is important to point out that the mother and daughter belonged to different persons; this could mean that they did not live together under the same roof, or that they did not have daily contact, aspects that are not explained, unfortunately, in the epitaph. Otherwise, they may have lived in the same house, but belonging to different people from the same *familia*. The reading of these inscriptions reminds us, to a greater extent, those elements we cited at the beginning of this chapter about the instability and fragility of slave families. However, even in this adverse context, it should be noticed that mother, father and daughter, according to what we have here, maintained their relationship, although unfortunately this epitaph does not include the age of the deceased.

Other sources report the age of the children: Stratonice, an imperial *uerna* commemorated by her father and mother, was victim of a premature death since she

died at the age of 1 year, 1 month and 4 days (*CIL* 14, 1642). The same situation can be seen in an inscription from the territory of Interpromium, according to which a father and a mother witnessed the death of their two daughters, of six and one year old respectively (Buonocore *et al.* 1991, 424):

D(is) M(anibus) [s(acrum)]/Antinoe et Phoebe/duae sunt conservae/sorores servae
Vo/lusiorum Marci et Aemiliani/hic sunt positae Phoebe vixit/annis VI m(ensibus)
X d(iebus) XV Antinoe/annum d(ies) XX P(h) oebus et Rhodope/filiabus pientissimis
et Tertius p(osuerunt). (*A Epig.* 1984, 347, AD 101–200)

In this example, the father and the mother are present, even if they do not explicitly indicate their status. Along with them and the deceased, a third character is listed: Tertius, who may have been their brother (his name could mark the order at birth). In addition to the extensive text, this funerary monument is interesting because of the relief it includes.¹⁸ As F. Cenerini recently published, through the analysis of the epigraphic evidence of the *Regio VIII*, it is not common to find reliefs that commemorate a slave child (Cenerini 2016, 205). This circumstance gives more value to this evidence. The relief has a difficult interpretation regarding the gender and age of the subjects. It is supposed that the image would show two girls, at least considering the text of the epitaph. Here the subjects are hugging. It is unclear if the figure on the right is wearing a *bullā*, which would identify him as a free boy (Cenerini 2016, 196). If, on the other hand, s/he is holding an apple,¹⁹ nothing particular could be said as this fruit is a recurring object in the representation of children. The figure on the left present rounded sinuous forms on the chest that may indicate the character is an adult woman rather than a child. My interpretation suggests that the image, instead of properly representing the two deceased, especially considering that one of them is a baby and therefore would not correspond to any of the relief figures, could be interpreted as a representation of the affection that parents felt for their children (*pietas*).²⁰ The exchange of apples, as well as the hug, can be interpreted as a sign of affection and love, feelings that in the funerary relief are associated with the figure of an adult woman and a child.

Finally, and with this we close this section, inscriptions also reflect the maternal absence. This is the case of Crescentilla, a *uerna* of 2 years and 6 months old, who is remembered by Titus Flavius Epagathus (EDR105347); that of Felicula, *Sempronia Primitiva uernacula*, also 2 years old (*CIL* 11, 5102); and the one of Chloe, 5-years-old and slave of Cneus Pompilius (EE-08-01, 16). In these epitaphs the girls, who are still in the stage of *infantia*, appear isolated without any news of their parents, although they are associated with other people who are not relatives in any degree, or at least they do not manifest any familial bond. On other occasions, we do have a relative, the father, who appears alone, as in the epitaph of Prugia, a 6-year-old slave, and Dercilis, aged 3 and possibly also a slave, only commemorated by their father (Inscrit -10-02, 193, Parentium). A further evidence of maternal absence is found in Brundisium, where Silvana, a 12-year-old slave, is remembered by her grandmother (*A Epig.* 1980, 278). In the absence of a first-degree relative such as the mother, another relative

took the place in the dedication of the funerary monument, and most probably also in the girl's everyday life.²¹

Undoubtedly, all these types of inscriptions we have discussed throughout this chapter demonstrate the plural reality in which the slaves took part, either as single mothers or as members of nuclear families. Unfortunately, none of them clarifies the quality of the mother-child bond. The epigraphic evidence shows a very specific moment in time: we have to deal with it by analysing the information we have at our disposal, as well as trying to recover what has been omitted, even if it is almost always impossible. Even so, regardless of whether we are interested in motherhood, fatherhood or childhood, in some critical ways, the slavery's mark made slave families very different from other families. 'Unpredictable, fraught and uncertainty,) these have been the words chosen by C. Laes (2011, 157) to define the life of slave children in ancient Roman society. In the same way, these would be the words we need to describe the lives of mothers. There were no guarantees that would ensure the unity of the *seruae* and their offspring; despite this, the mother-child bond survived where the unilateral decisions of those who represented the slave system did not break it.

Conclusions: between the owner's position and the slave's voice

Thanks to the epigraphic records we know that some Roman slaves could enjoy emotional relationships. However, considering the legal references as a starting point, the possibility of creating a family and enjoying a family life was not as big as for free people. On the background of the slave families, there is always the lack of freedom, as well as the unilateral decisions of the owner. And it is at this point that we do not only question ourselves about the data, which are more or less evident, provided by inscriptions, but about the silences. As we have said, there are those sons, daughters and mothers who succumbed to the slavery system. In the margins there are those who were sold, who were abandoned due to the wishes of a third party. Broken relationships have hardly left any evidence behind. Depending on the circumstances and the different scenarios, slaves would have exercised a more or less long motherhood.

When we read about the life of a slave, embodying the role of a mother, even though she appears with a partner (nuclear family), we should remember that the story of the mother-child bond and emotions might have been characterised by instability or fragility, but not by inexistence. The epitaphs surviving from Roman Italy show slaves as mothers, therefore mother-children bonds within slavery. There is no security in the slave union, there is no security in the slave mother-son/daughter relationship. In this way, what is evident is not only the mother-child bond, but also its strength, where it is unprotected, or even where parents and children belonged to different people or had different legal status. Regardless of the existence of a life subject to a stability that responds to the whims of another person. Even so, and this is not

clarified by any of the sources that I have been able to analyse so far, not even by the epigraphic evidence, all violence that interrupts the communication between a mother and her offspring generates failures, gaps and traumas on both sides. Despite this, we can hear the voice of the slave mothers and their sons and daughters, beyond Roman prohibitions, which leads us to learn about the incorporated strategies of survival of the slave families.

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Notes

- 1 As the jurists plainly state that 'the laws do not apply to servile relationships' (*ad leges serviles cognationes non pertinent*, D 38.10.10.5, Paul; cf. D 38.8.1.2, Ulpian) (Mouritsen 2010, 129).
- 2 About slaves as *nutrices* (wet nurses) see Bradley (1980; 1986) and Joshel (1980).
- 3 Some of these contracts are discussed in Masciardi and Montevicchi (1984). An accurate study of this type of sources, which involve enslaved women, is under development.
- 4 Although some authors have proposed that the slave family could have been divided with little concern for the family units (Bradley 1984, 64–70).
- 5 'Epitaphs do not offer perfect images of life ... Nevertheless, this information often provides our most direct access to the experience and perspective of an individual; we must rely on the evidence of death as a mirror of life that reflects how men and women saw themselves' (Joshel 1992, 8).
- 6 For instance the *senatusconsultum Claudianum* 54 AD. See Storchi Marino (1999, 391–426).
- 7 The Roman slave system did not allow slaves to enjoy *connubium*, but they were free to create *contubernia*. As *contubernium* had no legal validity, the possible offspring was considered illegitimate.
- 8 About the treatment of enslaved women as animals, see Bradley (2000, 110–125).
- 9 About meaning of tools on funerary inscriptions see Buonopane (2013, 73–82).
- 10 N. Tran has recently confirmed speaking about slaves (male and female): 'Aussi, sur leurs inscriptions funéraires, les Italiens choisissaient-ils, dans leur majorite, de ne pas relever a la posterite leur profession' (2007, 121).
- 11 About high mortality rate and *uernae* see Hermann-Otto (1994, 230).
- 12 *Suppllt* 24, 44.
- 13 About this word see Mano (2013, 312–313).
- 14 Renaming slaves was a practice already known in ancient Greece (Robertson 2009, 81–83). Many facts justify this custom in Roman times, including the difficulty in the pronunciation of foreign names, trends and tendencies (Bruun 213, 23).
- 15 This reflection makes sense speaking about adults becoming slaves.
- 16 About Aelia Philete: 'La dedicante è la stessa persona di Monumenti 52, dove è ricordata, defunta, dal coniuge Purpurio. I genitori sono morti ancora schiavi, mentre Philete è stata affrancata. La figlia porta, al femminile, il cognome del padre.' *Suppllt* 20, 2003, 244–245.

- 17 Latin Oxford Dictionary about *amicus*: '1. A personal friend. 2. A lover. 2. A friend in public life.'
- 18 <http://db.edcs.eu/epigr/bilder.php? bild=PH0003506; PH0003447; PH0003450; PH0003449; PH0003448; PH0003451>
- 19 It may be also a ball. About iconography of childhood in funerary monuments and attributes (apples, pets, birds, scrolls, etc.) see Mander (2012, 36–64).
- 20 'but slave families, though not recognized such in law, were regarded as bound by *pietas*' (Saller 1994, 112).
- 21 Other surrogate mothers may have been the wet nurses, that have been discussed, still from the territory of Roman Italy, in a forthcoming publication Rubiera Cancelas. See also note 9.

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