**AGE OF MARRIAGE IN ANCIENT ROME (AMAR)**

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<td>i-ii</td>
<td>Foreword: Entirely new one needed. Either that or no Forward at all. It should start with who will need to read this book and why: everybody with a dog in the fight over sexual freedom, including self-determination for the young. Keep this brief: Origins of the original and present work; why the new version was felt to be needed; acknowledgement of earlier scholars.</td>
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<td>iii-x</td>
<td>Preface: This is Bullough’s &amp; must be dropped. Some themes can be lifted &amp; put in a new Foreword which acknowledges B’s input. What is really anachronistic for the modern reader is to be focusing on marriage, as opposed to sex: so remarks should address themselves to the significance of the marriage age as an indicator of both social and sexual mores in the past. Urgent need to get across that this book may be dealing with data on marriage but its implications go much further; also the book will not be morallyistically suggesting marriage as the only appropriate context for sexual expression. Bullough’s context-setting stuff: marriage age in other cultures, and modern unwillingness to face early Roman marriage, is actually good: v-vi: “historians of today, perhaps ever fearful of child sexual abuse, might well be loathe to recognise…” – That could be pulled up to the beginning. vi-vii: Bullough’s anaemia argument: should be just a single short para in the Foreword on the biological advantage of early sex &amp; reproduction (not marriage!). Readers can be teased with revealing the biological advantage reasoning/evidence later. Anaemia argument notwithstanding, there has been argument recently on biological disadvantages of early mate selection &amp; reproduction: this should at least be acknowledged and (as can be done) rebutted in the context of Roman demography. NB: I do really mean biological disadvantages not social ones, despite this paper: N M Morris. The biological advantages and social disadvantages of teenage pregnancy.. American Journal of Public Health: August 1981, Vol. 71, No. 8, pp. 796-796.</td>
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**CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION**

1-2 Starts with population trends in the modern world: interesting, but not the way to start

3 Fundamental fact of high Roman mortality: this is vital and must come early, perhaps as early as page 3; but pages 1-2 need to start with sex, not general demographics.

4 Weakness of the demographic evidence of longevity & marriage age for ancient world. Literary sources for Rome & Greece compared. Do these sources represent the norm?

5 Epitaphs: little Greek evidence.

6-7 The Greeks: special impact of infanticide & absence of pro-natalist policies.

8 The Greeks: Percy on Cretan anti-natalist policy, which fits in with pp6-7

9-10 The Greeks: monogamy. The Romans: more complex evidence:  
   1. Literary sources  
   2. Epigraphy: a term that needs to be elaborated, with at least two or three verbatim dedications given as examples with commentary in the main text: authors need to choose the best from appendices and give commentary ideas. Saller/Shaw interpretation: literary sources valid only for upper class. The alternative view in favour of lower age.  
   3. Weak marriage stats, but wider contextual, or circumstantial, evidence (which present study will demonstrate), support early marriage in Rome.

10-11 Approach will necessarily be impressionistic in absence of stats that would satisfy modern demography. Plenty of individuals whose age of first marriage is known or can be inferred from literary sources; their cases also give valuable context: family background, careers. Intro to next chapter: nature of evidence for early marriage in ancient Roman society in context of demography: approach will be historical (diachronic). Focus on successive periods of history, chapter by chapter.

**CHAPTER TWO: THE EVIDENCE**

13 Early marriage sustained by: (1) Patria potestas. This key concept needs a couple of paras of explanation here. From Encyclopaedia Britannica: patria potestas (Latin; “power of the father”) In Roman family law, the power that the male head of a family (paterfamilias) exercised over his descendants in the male line and over adopted children. Originally this power was absolute and included the power of life and death; a paterfamilias could acknowledge, banish, kill, or disown a child. He could free his male descendants from this obligation or turn over his daughter and all her inheritance to the power of her husband. By the end of the republic (from about the 1st century BC), a father could inflict only light punishment and his sons could keep what they earned. [Britannica Concise Encyclopedia]. Comments? I am bearing in mind Beert’s letter to Bill here about Lucian’s Dialogues of the Courtesans, (2) demands of military service (3) in upper classes: political advantage & dynastic continuity

13-14 Evidence: (1) literature (2) laws (3) epigraphs Saller & others have misinterpreted the epigraphic evidence against early age at first marriage (AAFM). There have been exceptions to early AAFM that can be explained. The norm: female AAFM 12-16; male 17-20.
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<td>15</td>
<td>Literature: mainly about the elite; some about the plebs. Tombstones: urban artisan &amp; shopkeeper class. Laws: all classes. Some aimed at upper classes (Augustus pro-natalist law); some at the poor: the alimenta. Law underlined patria potestas. A new biographical database: book presents first systematic database of Roman AAFMs from written sources.</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>Previous database work very thin. Friedlander: only eight AAFMs (average age 14). Hopkins: 2 more. Appendix 1 of this book: 70 male AAFMs; Appendix 2, 31 female AAFMs.</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>On ambiguous information such as ante quem dates (a term which needs explanation): AAFM easily overestimated grossly by reference to first known child of the marriage. NB Wikipedia has article titled Terminus post quem, which begins this: “Terminus post quem (&quot;limit after which&quot;, often abbreviated to TPQ and terminus ante quem (&quot;limit before which&quot;) specify the known limits of dating for events. A terminus post quem is the earliest time the event may have happened, and a terminus ante quem is the latest. An event may well have both a terminus post quem and a terminus ante quem, in which case the limits of the possible range of dates are known at both ends, but many events have just one or the other.”A version of this could appear in the text. The Wiki article gives examples. A link could be given to this article.</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>Revisits points made pages 10-11. Cut one page?</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>Validity of impressionistic approach to demography is supported by demographers Parkin et al. Contribution of prosopography is discussed (another term that needs explaining). As with the ante quem explanation above, and patria potestas, I can easily find explanations online. Best procedure may be just to get on with it and seek Bill &amp; Beert’s approval later! Rejection of “the Everest fallacy” that literary sources only reveal the exceptional, not the norm. Three fairly obscure ideas on this page could be enlivened with explanation &amp; examples e.g. the brief reference to Justin I could be spelled out (or, even better, an earlier figure). Thoughts on this?</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>Variations &amp; deviations: regional variations in marriage customs across the empire; also variations among the Romans themselves with respect to time, place, class and circumstance: reasons for this. Authors reject the idea of a “Mediterranean type”, of general model of marriage in antiquity i.e. a pattern of late marriage for males (around 28) &amp; early for females (around 18).</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>There was such a Mediterranean pattern in Greece, but not in Rome. Information on marriage patterns elsewhere around the Mediterranean are partially relegated to footnotes but is interesting enough (especially as regards practices noted in the Bible) for the main text. Yes?</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>Mediterranean pattern: other areas: Phoenicia, Carthage, Egypt etc</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>Only Mediterranean generalisation (except for Sparta) is early marriage for girls. This accords with the need to secure high reproduction rates to offset high death rates.</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>Usual basic demographic assumptions: Roman empire average life expectancy was 25; five live births per woman were needed just to maintain population level, and six for the modest growth that appeared to take place. This assumes reproductive years from 15-44. But research on Scandinavian mediaeval data suggests these assumptions may be optimistic. With marriage postulated at 20 for girls, and (probably) few births after 35, this leaves only 15 reproductive years for six children at intervals of 30 months. The book actually cites 29 months. More clarity needed over the figures here.</td>
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<td>25</td>
<td>Conclusion: the AAFM had to be as low as the evidence possibly allows. In reaching this conclusion reference is made to the practice of breast feeding but this is insufficiently dealt with. Also, there is a lot of info consigned to footnotes that needs to be recast as part of a single-thread narrative. This info is based on opposing views; there needs to be a bit of drama here on the clashing sides. Thoughts?</td>
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<td>26</td>
<td>This is very untidy indeed: authors start talking about female infanticide and its implications in the main text after slipping it into a mere footnote on the previous page. Infanticide needs to be singled out as a theme that presents a serious challenge to the authors, and debated as such. The text fails to make clear the distinction between (a) the historian’s need to account for a growing population; with its estimates of a high number of required children; and (b) the need of families at the time to keep low the number of their legitimate offspring: they did not conduct themselves in order to fulfill imperial population targets.</td>
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<td>27</td>
<td>Again, this needs a total re-write: the main point, starting at the end of p26, is that people will marry &amp; have kids if it seems economically a good idea and (a point buried until too late) Rome was an agricultural society in which early marriage &amp; reproduction would be favoured: as in all agricultural societies, children meant more labour for the farm. Other societies, favouring later marriage (especially for men, though this point is largely mute), included those where waiting to inherit property was important, or who needed to “establish themselves” in a profession. Actually, there is a problem here: agricultural society can mean delaying marriage until the farm becomes available, rather than going hell for leather earlier on to reproduce more farm labour. This needs to be explained/resolved. [TOC: see p.32 below: the paradox is resolved at least when extended families are the norm.]</td>
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| 28   | Need to take into account, even in ancient Rome, urban pressures for early AAFM e.g. labour for shopkeeping teams. Plagues & wars encourage more population growth. This point is rather thinly referenced, with no
29  **CHAPTER THREE: EARLY ROME** 

Starting with Rome’s origins, the evidence is thin, but enduring family structure and marriage patterns were established. [TOC: Well, we only know they endured if there is evidence to say they had always been that way.] “The habit of early marriage would have arisen naturally enough” in a society of warriors and peasants. [TOC: Maybe: this depends on the strength of evidence from analogous, better evidenced, later societies. My own vague recollection of reading about this long ago suggests it is well established.] “The preceding stages” are summarised: (1) Neolithic transition from hunting/gathering (2) agriculture: more children (3) emerging elites coerce more labour & greater surpluses: pro-natalist.

30  The land: plenty of it, so more productive in Roman central Tuscany to agrarian expansion & elite state building than in Greece. Most Romans were under-employed. The abundance of spare time was expressed in the number of public holidays and co-option into military service. [TOC: No doubt this is true, but it needs explaining why, in that case, increasing the labour force was such a priority. Presumably it is a question of the seasonal nature of agricultural work.]

31  Further explanation: any tendency to overpopulation would have been countered by wars, plagues and famines. Some info on individual early AAFMs: Romulus, Coriolanus.

32  The extended family prevails: this made practical sense in the context of agricultural underemployment, seasonal warfare & colonial expansion. If a single farm includes more than one nuclear family, sons need not wait for the father to die before they marry & reproduce. NB: Saller & Shaw have been criticised for asserting that nuclear families prevailed in Rome: their epigraphical data are overwhelmingly urban.

33  The system was able to continue for centuries without exhausting “the carrying capacity” of the land thanks to colonization. *The text talks about the dangers of “local resource exhaustion” but it is not clear what is meant: the soil? Census figures show population expanded: not possible without early AAFMs. Also, in the absence of polygamy, male AAFM also needed to be low.*

34  Promotion of remarriage of widows, reported in Plutarch’s life of Camillus, [Marcus Furius Camillus (ca. 446 – 365 BC) was a Roman soldier and statesman of patrician descent. According to Livy and Plutarch, Camillus triumphed four times, was five times dictator, and was honoured with the title of Second Founder of Rome] Plutarch: “During his censorship one very good act of his is recorded, that, whereas the wars had made many widows, he obliged such as had no wives, some by fair persuasion, others by threatening to set fines on their heads, to take them in marriage...” [TOC: It is an interesting snippet, certainly. Probably needs to be some discussion as to the applicability (or not) of this policy across time. In later times, there would perhaps have been more pressure on the land...] The concept of the “ager publicus” (public land) is introduced without any explanation. There probably needs to be at least a couple of paragraphs here on the type, extent, and significance of the public lands, and their colonisation. It is said that “By building private estates out of public lands, the elite could maintain their fortunes and status...” The implications for population growth (and the need to limit it) are mentioned as “customary limits on reproduction”, which may (or may not) have existed. **This is a bit thin.** An example from among the wealthy landed classes is discussed.  

**The patria potestas and its relevance to aristocratic marriage customs:** the Law of the Twelve Tables shows a rigorously patriarchal family structure.

35  **Law of the Twelve Tables: this needs introducing: where did it come from? When?** Apart from extended family living arrangements the system included patriarchal control over marriages/divorces of offspring & disposition of property. Exercise of this authority continued “demonstrably as a spur to large number of early SSFMs across all centuries of Roman history”. This is a big claim. Where is the demonstration? The appendices, or other evidence, need to be linked to this claim. Also, this claim comes a long way after bringing in the Twelve Tables. The middle section of the page, beginning "Technically..." (line 8) is obscure, with apparent non sequiturs. Towards the end: "...the rather rigid formalism of the Twelve Tables gives way to the more flexible and sophisticated ius honorarium of the Praetors”. Needs explanation. Then, turning from the law towards custom and practice, “we see an endogamous clan-based system of in manu marriages...” Again, needs explanation.

36  This page, as it stands, might as well be written entirely in Latin: Latin phrases need to be not just translated but explained. The main message seems to be that conservation of property within the family, or wider clan of common descent, was best secured through control of young, pliable offspring, “without the interference of romantic love”. *Footnote reference is made to Saller’s Patriarchy. Although he is “the opposition” on Roman marriage age, I just wonder whether some collegiate brief description of his work might be in order.*

37  On aristocratic marriage: they already had family resources, so did not need to wait to get married. Authors say early aristocratic female AAFM is widely accepted; they argue same for men.

38  Evidence for male AAFM of 17-22: prospect of early death (of groom or marriage broker) would have put pressure on those involved for early marriages. [TOC: This is pure argument: no evidence here]
The second century BC
Plays of Plautus and Terence reveal it was expected that fathers would interfere in the marriage arrangements of their sons and daughters.

39 This fatherly exercise of power was available throughout Roman history: this page says little else of substance, but that is no problem: the style is easier here.

40 Mutual respect v parental fiat: Roman statutes shed light on the status of coerced consent to marriage: consent was expected all round, including parents, but it could include "consent" to a least-bad alternative, rather than enthusiastic agreement. Once a marriage is made, though, there can be no later repudiation based on non-consent. How a generational battle of wills might play out in practice.

41 Clearly, it is in the father's interests to impose his will early, while he is able. More discussion of the implications of the plays' themes. Summary of the laws. This page OK.

42 Some remarks on how to escape from patriarchal control; also the two main types of dowry. This is admitted to be complicated, and there is a promise to return the subject later. It is not clear why either of these subjects is being discussed here, nor what we are meant to conclude from the discussion. Both themes clearly have a bearing on AAFM, though. Perhaps a clear and thorough discussion of dowry should be made here.

Hellenizing influences
Polybius stands witness to this influence. Two strands:
1. Aristocratic youths take Greek older men as mentors – and they may have advised the Greek custom of later marriage
2. See p43: This worked in the opposite direction

43 Second factor in foreign influence: recourse of young men to sex with slaves and prostitutes, also in imitation of Greeks. [TOC: It's not clear why this works "in the opposite direction". Like any advice given by mentors favouring late marriage, this recreational sex would presumably have either been before marriage or, if alongside it, would have tended to minimize legitimate births. Perhaps the authors mean that mentors would favour delayed sex whereas Greek customs would have favoured early sex: these would indeed by opposites. But this is not clear.]
Roman response: Roman male child protected by the bulla: the amulet that said "hands off".

44 The law defined molestation of free born boys and girls as a crime. But slaves were not off limits, and literary evidence is adduced to show some breakdown of youthful obedience to adult strictures against sending money in this way, a practice which did indeed begin to erode the practice of early marriage among aristocrats. Another Greek innovation was shaving.

45 By the time of Nero the "first shavings" had become a rite of passage. From then on, at around age 20, the young man was officially no longer the object of men's desire. Vulnerability in that respect lay officially between the laying aside of the bulla and the toga of childhood to take on the toga virilis at 14, and the first shaving i.e. between pubic hair and chin hair. The point of this interesting digression from marriage is to suggest that putting aside slave lovers for women could have been a problem. TOC: Yes, for a few, but only a few.

46 Further problem: young husbands as the objects of male sexual interest if they were still before their first shave. Also young Roman women, unlike Greek ones, were not hidden away: they were subject to attentions. Back to main theory: Greek influence came through the geographical intrusion of the Greek world into Rome, via Sicily (Greater Greece). Saller's epigraphical data for southern Italy may reflect Greek rather than Roman marriage norms.

47 Biographical examples
This is scant, but sufficient down to 100BC to establish early male AAFMs of 22-23. The list in the Appendix starts with Scipio Africanus. Apparently late AAFM of some men may overlook that evidence relates to a second marriage.

48 Detailed biographical examples. Two sequences "as good as proof" of early male AAFM: father-son-grandson sequences with known birth intervals. TOC: sounds highly dubious "proof" to me – and to Sumner: see next page.

49 Sumner thinks sequences described p48 are exceptional; authors contest his reckoning procedure, enabling them to produce another father-son-grandson sequence from biog. Evidence with very early AAFMs. Discussion here is technical and hard going. Difficult to see how this can be much improved without filling in a lot of interesting (one hopes) family saga to flesh out the bare dry bones.

50 The relatively early AAFMs described above could be considerably earlier than it is possible to pin down from the available data, which go in many cases by the first birth, not the marriage date. Very good biog. illustration is given of how problems often delayed getting a surviving male heir, and how this potentially obscured information about earlier offspring and hence earlier AAFM.

Apparent gaps between generations in Rome's political elite may be illusory.

51 Apparent gaps between generations: argument from Hopkins: in order to maintain senatorial privileges, it was not necessary to have a senator in every generation. Thus "missing" generations may actually have existed below the radar of the surviving office data. This needs to be made much
The effects of militarism

Losses in battle provided every incentive for early marriage and procreation but it came very soon after military service in cases examined by the authors, once they had proved their manhood.

52

The upper class may only notionally have done military service before marriage: marriage may have come before seriously risky combat tasks. Evidence discussed.

53

Other ranks: heavily committed to tough military service. Most male citizens served from 17-22 or more. Sources universally indicate that this brought distress to wives and children, especially when these young men served abroad. They must have married young.

54

Interesting case of Spurius Ligustinus. Introduction of slavery in 2nd century BC & displacement of peasant proprietors by latifundia of the elite "must have had an effect" on AAFM of rural population. But this is controversial.

55

The page is vague and inconclusive. Was there rural depopulation and unwillingness to marry? Or not? What was the effect there "must have been" on AAFM? The lack of a conclusion really needs to be further explained.

CHAPTER FOUR: LATE REPUBLIC & EMPIRE

57

Transition to empire: what was changing. Change to sine manu marriage (wife still under the legal control of her father). Various complex economic changes mentioned, but nothing on this page about their effect on AAFM, except "signs of evasion and rebellion" by young men against the still-prevailing traditional pattern.

58

Signs of looser morals and less interest in reproduction and family life. Evidence from 19 cases studies in appendix. Signs of delayed marriage among "new men": those rising in the service of the aristocracy on the basis of talent. Also men marrying older women.

59

Sources indicate rebellious young males: Mark Antony and others. Contribution of civil war and chaos. But even in these years early AAFMs abound.

60

Examples of early AAFMs among upper class males. Case of Octavian, who created scandal by returning his bride "intact". Documented female AAFMs.

61

The empire: royal families, aristocrats, tombstones and peasants

The most abundant evidence for (early) AAFMs across a wide spectrum of society comes from the time of empire. Three kinds: written, legal, gravestones.

Literary evidence: the imperial families

Augustus and Tiberius demonstrated the early marriage pattern, for both males and females.

62

The Julio-Claudians, male & female: exceptional, or typical?

63

Flavian, Antonine & Severan males: early AAFMs. Exceptions & explanations of them.

64

Overall, imperial status tended either to accelerate or delay AAFM for males

Aristocracies old & new

Very interesting evidence of change "under the Principate", which needs explanation: The Principate (27 BC – 284 AD) is the first period of the Roman Empire, extending from the beginning of the reign of Augustus to the Crisis of the Third Century, after which it was replaced with the Dominate. The Principate is characterized by a concerted effort on the part of the Emperors to preserve the illusion of the formal continuance of the Roman Republic. Authors speak of delayed upper class marriages and an anti-natalist attitude. At the same time, curiously, as males were marrying later, their (upper class) brides were getting younger, even prepubescent. [TOC: Presumably sex with a prepubertal wife would also have contributed, deliberately, to low reproductive rate.]

65

Evidence from doctors of consummated prepubescent marriages. [TOC: All of the evidence for this should be included! It is in Hopkins, M.K., “The age of Roman girls at marriage”, Population Studies 18 (1964-5) pp.309-27 – I now have a copy of this paper. At a preliminary glance I see it contains speculative discussion on the age of puberty in Roman times & other interesting background that should really have a place in the new AMAR book.] In der Tat traten wohl die Töchter edler Häuser aus der Kinderstube unmittelbar in die Ehe: “In fact, probably the daughters of noble houses entered into the marriage immediately from the nursery.”

Contemporary writers did not bother to comment on the ages at which Octavia (11) and Agrippina (12) were married. What excited comment was when brides were returned intact. This was apparently rare, as males generally liked “psychologically malleable virgins”.

66

Related discussion.

Legal evidence

Some of this discussed in the last chapter; some in the next chapter. Here, though, two aspects are looked at: two specific sets of legislation enacted under Augustus.

67

These sets of Augustan legislation are (1) military reforms: professional legionaries forbidden to marry until end of their service (2) on p.68, penalties imposed on members of the senatorial class who did not marry.

(1) Delayed marriage of legionaries: as they volunteered for 25-year terms, this law was hugely significant: it solved a problem for the under-employed and for the state, in terms of ensuring military manpower. Soldiers could have unofficial liaisons with partners in settlements near their far-flung army camps. These men had delayed AAFM but their
numbers (two- to three-hundred thousand across the empire) were small in relation to total population and in relation to the 13% of adult males serving in the armed forces of Rome. Distinction needs to be made here between volunteer legionaries and obligatory service of Roman citizens.

68 (2) Penalties imposed on members of the senatorial class who did not marry: two laws: Lex Julia and Lex Papia Poppaea. Those who failed to marry, and widowed or divorced persons who failed to re-marry, could not inherit: their fortunes would go to the state. They also needed to have a child in order to inherit fully. This applied alike to men and women: this needs to be spelled out more clearly.

69 Much stuff here about the workings of Lex Julia and Lex Papia Poppaea that require fuller treatment in order to secure easy comprehension. The bottom line implication is clear though: men would need to get married years before the law required – and have children –or risk being disinherited.

70 To be sure of avoiding penalties, a daughter would have to be married by 15-16 and a son by 21-22. Thus these laws support the idea of early AAFM for both sexes. These laws concern only the senatorial class, but the provisions of the alimenta of Trajan imply that the offspring of lower and lower middle-class Italian townsmen and farmers were also expected to marry very early.

The workings of the alimenta scheme, which provided security for poor children, are explained here & on p.71. According to Pliny, it was in effect a safety-net: seeing that there was some provision for the poor enabled not very well off people to have children with more confidence. This needs clearer explanation. In any case, Pliny's view is disputed; it did not promote an increased birthrate.

71 For this book, though, the main significance of the alimenta is the age at which child support ceased: 16 for boy and 14 for girls. Boys (according to Pliny) were then expected to enlist in the army and girls were expected to marry and procreate. Why cut off the support to girls at 14 if their expected AAFM was later, as some claim?

72 The young man would be forced to start work; if he had little prospect of that he could join the legions or go to Rome and join the proles living on the grain dole.

CHAPTER FIVE: EPIGRAPHY EVIDENCE REVISITED

73 Most surviving funerary inscriptions come from the empire, not the republic: that's why they are considered late on in this (diachronic) sequence of chapters. There is a bias towards those who could afford tombs: leaves out the slaves and slum dwellers and well as rural population. So the inscriptions are mainly by craftsmen, merchants, etc. Inscriptions that state age at marriage (not necessarily a first one) directly, or which can be deduced from stated length of marriage (LOM) and age at death (AAD) support early AAFM thesis. First major collection of AAFM was by Friedlander; these support early AAFM for females.

74 A Victorian scholar, Harkness, disputed Friedlander's interpretation, but Hopkins later showed he was wrong: he used a modal average, whereas Harkness used a misleading "crude" average (presumably the mean). [TOC: This might be a good place to include more background to Hopkins' work.]

Hopkins used the Harkness data + Leclerque’s + his own. Total 501 inscriptions, with regional & gender breakdown is given here. Hopkins concluded that the modal AAFM was 12-15 for pagan girls, 15-18 for Christian girls, 17-20 for pagan males and 20-23 for Christian males.

75 Hopkins concluded that his data represented the respectable classes: shopkeepers and above, but not the senatorial class.

Brent Shaw queries whether these data are representative: he says freedmen figure too strongly: these aspirational ex-slaves would have been aping the social mores of the senators. But in an earlier study written with Saller, Shaw explained the relative scarcity of child-to-parent commemorations among freedmen as indicating that manumissions and therefore also legal marriages occurred late in life for this group.

76 Authors attempt to reconcile Shaw’s divergent points. The discussion here is quite complex but the conclusion is simple, based on work by Parkin, who has “dismissed decisively” the suitability of dates from Roman epigraphs for answering questions about mortality and age structure. [TOC: “age structure” would appear to include AAFM, so why then bother to discuss epigraphs at all?]

77 The Saller-Shaw hypothesis of later marriage: more data gathered to support this idea, based on the “Mediterranean type”. Database was five times bigger than that of Hopkins. Lelis et al. refer to the “decade wide gap” between husband and wife age that this implies. [TOC: Female AAFM of 14 and male AAFM of 24 would allow for early marriage of both men and women while maintaining the decade gap.]

Complicated reasoning used by Saller-Shaw is stated briefly here: might be helpful to put in background from original S-S account. They held that the usual AAFM would have been round about the average AAD at which spouses overtake parents as the most frequent commemorators. This is based on the idea that once someone was married the surviving spouse would be the usual person to commemorate the dead spouse.

S-S came up with late teens for female AAFM and late twenties for male AAFM. The S-S method was appealing because many more epitaphs show AAD plus commemorator than AAD plus LOM.
But S-S method was based on an unwarranted assumption that the spouse would become the usual commemorator after marriage. Evans queried this before the present authors, who prove through one example that parents commemorated a married daughter, Scantia, with excellent detail. Authors refer to "several important objections" to the way S-S use their evidence [TOC: the number of points, with a brief description, should be made clear before going to each in turn.]

1. They do not account for the re-appearance of parents as dedicators when, as often happened, the deceased had been predeceased (or divorced) by their spouse. A completely incoherent point is made from Shaw here that needs elaboration.

The distribution of dedicators by type introduces biases. This is very unclear without seeing the original studies. Perhaps best to ask Beert to elaborate. N.B. Is the CIL database (footnote 19) now in searchable electronic format? [If it is electronically available, there should be a link to it in the new e-book.]

3. Unanswered questions about S-S data selection. Why exclude AAD + LOM type? Complex argument here: again, needs elaboration e.g. why is it, as authors assume, that this type of dedication would necessarily be made by the spouse? Why would a parent not know, and be willing and able to state, both AAD and LOM? It may be obvious to fellow scholars, but not to me.

4. S-S founder on their inability to prove a close connection between the observed commemorative practice and the marital status of those commemorated. Shaw admits to key assumptions about commemorative practice, especially as regards a husband's legal duty to perform funeral rites (including memorial) if he retains the dowry.

This page elaborates the weakness of S-S assumptions in (4) above. This is relatively clear and persuasive.

Now we come to the authors' preferred view: it is not the average age at which married status changes that marks a change in the likely dedicatee to a deceased from parent to spouse. Other factors come into play. At this point the authors do not say what factors. Should they?

Instead, the text reverts to attacking S-S: they oversimplify the legal situation. There is a lot of Latin terminology here that needs explaining, but the bottom line is that authors argue for the continued role of parents as dedicators deep into some marriages.

This page on inheritance, and dowries, is half in Latin and is all Greek to me at present. Fortunately, there is nothing intrinsically difficult here, though.

The bottom line on dowry seems to be that parents retained an economic interest in their offspring, and as likely commemorators.

Here is the nitty gritty of this chapter: "Combining the above understanding of the inheritance laws with more realistic AAFMs than those proposed by Saller and Shaw and with a correct interpretation of the life expectancy figures pertinent to the Roman case easily explains the pattern of identity shift in commemorators by which they set such store."

NB Life expectancy in Rome was discussed briefly on p.24. As we are just about to go into a highly technical discussion here, it may be as well to revisit that information before proceeding further.

Here we come to a key concept, which the authors flag by saying "It is essential to realize that..." This needs to be hammered home even harder by saying something like, "What you are about to hear is deeply counterintuitive".

Then comes the big concept: "...a parent was more likely to outlive a son of daughter than vice versa." Then we get into hard-core number porn: very sexy for numerophiliacs, but the rest of us are left cold. Que faire?

For one thing, the "levels" in the life tables need fuller description. Indeed, there needs to be some sort of introduction to what life tables are, and what is to be expected of them. That said, the figures speak for themselves once you start looking.

Key point: "...even a man who marries and fathers a son around thirty is more likely to reach sixty...than is his son to reach thirty."

Implications: young wives and husbands who died early would probably have had a father still living to commemorate them (or mother: but how many mothers commemorated?) Also: "Sons older than thirty increasingly no longer have fathers who are alive. Hence the duty of commemoration devolves to their spouses."

The case of early death of wives is considered separately: if they did not have surviving children they would not necessarily have been greatly valued their surviving spouse: her parents might have mourned her more.

A wife marrying at (typically) 15 would be much more likely to have surviving children if she dies at 20. So it makes sense that after 20 she would stand a greater chance of being commemorated by her spouse (as noticed by S-S.)

Now we come to wet nursing, and return to the anaemia argument (of the need for early reproduction) advanced by Vern Bullough in the Preface (p. VII). Really, this is the correct place for Bullough's contribution.

Some calculations are set out here to show that fathers were on average 30 years older than their children. Epigraphical evidence, say the authors, shows a father died on average when his son was 28. So on average this death would have been at 58. While this is undoubtedly interesting, what
implication are we supposed to draw? Also, it is not clear how epigraphical evidence has given the
average age of sons when fathers die. Are there substantial numbers of tombs where the birth years
of all the children of the deceased are recorded? Also, how does the above square with the comment
from Parkin on p. 76, who has “dismissed decisively” the suitability of date from Roman epigraphs for
answering questions about mortality and age structure?

Does the next paragraph explain what we are supposed to conclude from the first para. on this page?
Not really. There are separate points for each gender. The point about daughters is explained well
enough on previous pages: parents tended to commemorate a daughter until she had become
memorable to her husband and in-laws and had produced offspring. But the point about sons is
more obscure. We are told that parents tended to commemorate a son as long as the father was
alive to do so. One unspoken assumption here is that mothers seldom if ever commemorate. A more
important point, though, may or may not relate to the foregoing discussion at the top of the page,
which discusses the longevity of fathers. This would thus appear to relate to the point about fathers
commemorating as long as they are alive to do so. Are the authors simply saying that most fathers
would indeed still have been around to commemorate (at least in the case of sons who died at 28 or
less)?

This second para. concludes by saying “Neither consideration affects the AAFM.” So what, then, has
been the point of the discussion, if it does not go to the book’s central thesis? The point, presumably,
is that the whole chapter has been to rebut the S-S claim that the pattern of dedications does affect
the AAFM. The reader needs to be reminded here that the laws, customs, etc, supporting the
authors’ contentions effectively do rebut S-S and hence do affect the AAFM by supporting their own
early AAFM view.
The further points made on the rest of the page are mercifully straightforward.

90

Only one substantial point here, explaining absence of children as dedicatees of tombstones of
young deceased fathers. Simply, they would have been too young.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION: LATE EMPIRE AND CHRISTIAN INFLUENCE

91

Trend of early AAFMs and paternal power continues, but with Christianity comes rising AAFM for
girls: Hopkins shows this from funerary inscriptions.

92

The most severe and enduring change coming from Christianity was the banning of divorce.

Biographical examples

14 male and 9 female late empire cases in the appendices, all but 3 being from imperial families.

These cases are discussed: main theme and explanation of exceptions.

93

More case discussion. These cases, being personal, are intrinsically interesting, so no great
problems here.

94

More case discussion. The novel Christian phenomenon of consecrated virgins.

95

More case discussion. Positive and negative aspects of the chastity “option” for different women.

96

ducta est uxor, quamvis nondum in cubiculum marii venerit” (married a wife, though not yet come
to the room = not yet consummated = an unconsummated marriage). Is this Latin quotation (not
translated in the book) meant to be an exact quotation from Ulpian? Is this part of the quote that is
translated a couple of lines earlier?

Conclusion: early AAFMs are still ubiquitously in evidence in the late empire.

Final remarks

The pattern of low AAFM throughout Roman history made sense considering the demographic
pressures. Indeed, the one class of Roman – the senatorial aristocracy – that abandoned early and
prolific marriages also became extinct.

97

Early AAFM dovetailed with the typical life-course of the individual Roman: stages of life and rites of
passage are described.

Infancy is described as extending from birth to age about seven, when a child (or at least a boy?),
gained some voice in directing his own affairs”. This is a striking comment, surprising to the modern
taste. Some elaboration would be useful.

A boy of 14 could legally marry and set up house, although father would normally need to give
permission and grant living expenses and his would continue under financial custody of a guardian.

98

Vulnerability of the youth to homosexual advances until the first shavings. Liability for military service
at 17. Full responsibility for property only at age 25, and not even then if his father is still alive. By
then (unlike modern offspring, who spend an eternity in education and training) they would typically
have had time to prove their worth.

For females the life course was somewhat less complex: early marriage and access to the adult
social world, plus child-bearing.

99

Women never held political office but could gain considerable influence and financial freedom. The
authors cite Augustus’ law exempting women from “tutelage” after giving birth to three children as “a
major sign of progress”. Presumably this means women did not have to be under guardianship. This
needs to be clear because exempting women from being tutored hardly sounds an advance.

Reluctance to accept early marriage may reflect modern discomfort over child abuse. This is
compared (interestingly) to the reluctance of classical scholarship to discuss pederasty and other
forms of homosexuality in Greek civilization.
Scholars who deny early AAFM in Rome need to explain the economic, demographic, and environmental conditions that would support their case. The overall shape of the evidence does not allow for precision, but strongly suggests early AAFM for both females and males.

Virtually all other ancient Mediterranean societies, and most other societies, except for the Greeks, have done so.

The end: This concluding section is straightforward and basically OK as is.