Coming of Age in Rome: The History and Social Significance of Assuming the *Toga Virilis*

by

Fanny Lyn Dolansky
B.A., Trent University, 1997

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

in the Department of Greek and Roman Studies

We accept this thesis as conforming to the required standard

[redacted]

Dr. K. R. Bradley, Supervisor (Department of Greek and Roman Studies)

[redacted]

Dr. I. E. Holmberg, Departmental Member (Department of Greek and Roman Studies)

[redacted]

Dr. J. L. Osborne, Outside Member (Department of History in Art)

[redacted]

Dr. G. R. Blue, External Examiner (Department of History)

University of Victoria

Supervisor: Dr. Keith R. Bradley

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this thesis is to collect and analyze evidence for the assumption of the *toga virilis* in Roman society. Though the study of Roman childhood, and to a lesser extent, Roman adolescence, have recently attracted considerable scholarly attention, the celebration of donning the *toga virilis*, the rite of passage that marked the transition from childhood to adulthood for freeborn Roman boys, has largely been overlooked by Roman family historians. The present work seeks to redress the balance by treating the coming of age ceremony in a comprehensive and comparative study in an effort to enrich knowledge of Roman family life in general, and Roman childhood and adolescence in particular.

Chapter One begins by summarizing the major trends in scholarship related to the Roman family, childhood, and adolescence, in order to provide the requisite background to the study of the *toga virilis* ceremony. The latter third of the chapter discusses the sources of evidence for a *rite de passage* that is widely attested in the Roman world, both chronologically and geographically.

Chapter Two opens with a discussion of the relationship between puberty and the coming of age ceremony, and then examines the role of the *paterfamilias* in the celebration. The object of this chapter is to describe the distinct elements of the rite -- including what and who were involved and where different stages of the ritual took place -- and to draw together the fragments of evidence to form a composite picture of what can be seen to be a defining moment in a young boy's life.

Chapters Three and Four examine the political, legal, social and religious implications

for the Roman boy who has assumed the *toga virilis*. They also explore the issues of independence and ambiguity. The *toga virilis* conferred important rights and privileges on the Roman youth and was a necessary step towards full inclusion in aspects of public life. Receipt of the toga was also associated with education and the study of philosophy, as well as certain social activities and sexual pursuits.

Chapter Five employs modern anthropological theory and comparative evidence to understand more fully the *toga virilis* ceremony as a rite of passage, and to appreciate its significance both practically and symbolically. A discussion of the demographic implications of donning the toga and Roman views of childhood and its hazards follows. Finally, the assumption of the toga is examined as a type of public display that satisfies various criteria for a spectacle.

A short appendix is included in which Latin and Greek sources that refer to the distinct elements and stages of the rite are listed.

Examiners:

[redacted]

Dr. K. R. Bradley, Supervisor (Department of Greek and Roman Studies)

[redacted]

Dr. I. E. Holmberg, Departmental Member (Department of Greek and Roman Studies)

[redacted]

Dr. J. L. Osborne, Outside Member (Department of History in Art)

[redacted]

Dr. G. R. Blue, External Examiner (Department of History)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABBREVIATIONS, EDITIONS AND TRANSLATIONS

Abbreviations of the names of ancient authors and ancient works follow those used in:

The Oxford Classical Dictionary, third edition (S. Hornblower and A. Spawforth eds., Oxford: 1996).

The following exceptions may be noted with their corresponding equivalents in *The Oxford Classical Dictionary* listed on the right:

Dig. = *D.*
Fronto *Ad M. Caes.*, *Ad Amic.* = Fronto *Ep.*
Plin. *Ep.* 10.116 = Plin. *Tra.* 116
Plut. *De Aud.* = Plut. *Mor.* 37C-48D
Suet. *DGR* = Suet. *Gram.*, Suet. *Rhet.*
Varro *LL* = Varro *Ling.*

All Latin and Greek quotations are taken from standard editions except where noted. Translations are my own unless indicated otherwise.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am pleased, first and foremost, to thank my supervisor, Professor Keith Bradley, for his guidance throughout the composition of this thesis. I am grateful for his patience, persistence, and meticulous attention to detail, and for constantly challenging me to produce nothing less than my best effort. I wish to thank the members of my committee for their helpful suggestions and probing questions, and the faculty in the Dept. of Greek and Roman Studies for their interest in my work, particularly at the graduate student colloquium. Dr. Laurel Bowman deserves special mention for her generosity of time and resources during my initial computer searches, but more importantly for her advice and good humour during difficult points. I am grateful also to the University of Victoria for its financial support.

Many friends in diverse locales helped along the way, and though there is not space to thank all of you individually, your friendship and assistance have not gone unnoticed. My fellow graduate students were always interested in my progress, particularly Paul Wilson, who continued to look out for me from quite a distance. I owe a special thanks to Margaret Small for her help during the first year of the program. The faculty in the Dept. of Ancient History and Classics at Trent University fostered my early interest and prepared me well. I am especially indebted to Toph Marshall, who has been an excellent sounding board throughout. Karen Friesen edited an initial draft of the thesis and shared in many stimulating discussions of the Classical world. Clara Brounstein offered friendship and opportunities to explore more of the island. Kathy Dell, Jen Griffith, and Julie Fotheringham commiserated and rejoiced with me about 'the graduate experience.' Allyson Miller was always willing to listen and has convinced me of the wisdom of her 'deal with it and move on' philosophy for academics and life in general. Finally, my graduate studies in Victoria would have taken on a completely different complexion if not for the friendship and constant support of Rebecca Jamin, who listened tirelessly and shared in all of the ups and downs.

Last, but certainly not least, I wish to thank my family for their love, support, and endless encouragement during my entire program: my parents, Diane and Ben, and my sisters, Sara, Tammy, and Lila. I hope this brief acknowledgment conveys some of the fondness and appreciation I have for all of them.

CHAPTER ONE

Questions and Context

Introduction

During the Principate of Augustus, Nicolaus of Damascus (4.8-10) composed a biography of the first emperor down to approximately 25 BCE, in which he included the following episode from Augustus' life:

> He came down into the Forum, when he was about fourteen years old, so that he might lay aside at that time the purple-edged toga and assume the pure white toga, which is the symbol of enrolment in manhood. He was gazed upon by all the people because of his fine appearance and the brilliance of his high birth, and he was enlisted in the priesthood in the place of Lucius Domitius who had died. The people applauded him very enthusiastically, and at the same time as he changed his toga, this honour was bestowed upon the young man; and he sacrificed to the gods.[1]

Nicolaus' detailed description succeeds in capturing much of the excitement and ceremony of this defining moment in a boy's life: the exchange of the childhood toga (*toga praetexta*) for the man's toga (*toga virilis*), marking his entrance into manhood.[2] Similar references to this

---

[1]κατέβαινε δὲ εἰς τὴν ἀγορὰν περὶ ἔτη μάλιστα γεγονὼς ιδ', ὥστε ἀποθέσθαι μὲν αὐτὸν ἤδη τὴν περιπόρφυρον ἐσθῆτα, ἀναλαβεῖν δὲ τὴν καθαράν, σύμβολον οὖσαν τῆς εἰς ἄνδρας ἐγγραφῆς. περιβλεπόμενος δ' ὑπὸ παντὸς τοῦ δημοῦ [Bellemore's text incorrectly reads δήμον] διά τε εὐπρέπειαν καὶ λαμπρότητα εὐγενείας [ἔθυε τοῖς θεοῖς καὶ] ἐνεγράφη εἰς τὴν ἱερωσύνην εἰς τὸν Λευκίου Δομιτίου τόπον τετελευτηκότος. καὶ ὁ δῆμος μάλα προθύμως ἐχειροτόνησε. καὶ ὁ μὲν ἅμα τῇ μεταλλαγῇ τῆς ἐσθῆτος καὶ τῇ καλλίστῃ τιμῇ κοσμηθεὶς ἔθυεν <τοῖς θεοῖς> (text and trans. Bellemore).

[2]Modern scholars most often refer to the toga of manhood as the *toga virilis* though ancient authors used a variety of epithets to describe it, as discussed below in Chapter Five. Varro (*LL* 8.13.28) provides the earliest Latin reference to the *toga virilis* in which he seems to employ the epithet *virilis* to distinguish the toga from women's garments: 'Moreover, whichever things are taken into daily life for use, [it is our practice] to seek utility and not resemblance: thus in clothing, although a man's toga is very unlike his tunic, and a woman's stola is very unlike a pallium, nevertheless we do not object to the difference.' *Accedit quod quaecumque usus causa ad vitam sint assumpta, in his † non utilitatem querere, non similitudinem: itaque in vestitu cum dissimillima sit virilis toga tunica<e>, muliebri<s> stola pallio, tamen inaequibilitatem hanc sequimur nihilo minus.* This seems to suggest that the original name *virilis* was due not to the fact that the toga was an extension of Roman

rite of passage emerge from a wide range of ancient sources spanning a considerable period of Roman history, suggesting that it was a social institution of endurance and significance. The ceremony, however, with its many practical and symbolic implications, has been curiously neglected by social historians. Perhaps more surprisingly, it has been largely overlooked by Roman family historians, and is yet to be treated in a comprehensive study.[3] It is the purpose of this thesis, therefore, to collect and analyze evidence for the assumption of the *toga virilis* in an effort to determine its importance in Greco-Roman society both within the context of Roman family life and from the broader perspective of the community as a whole. As a contribution to the study of the Roman family, this thesis promises to enrich the knowledge of Roman family life and enhance our understanding of Roman youth and early adulthood.

The ritual laying aside of the childhood *praetexta* and subsequent adoption of the adult *toga virilis* was a celebration of a boy's coming of age -- a rite of passage in anthropological terms[4] -- to mark his transition from boyhood to manhood. This event in a boy's life was significant on various levels, and contained within it the potential for a range of social and political consequences, so that one scholar has suggested that it ought to be considered not simply a passage from one age to another, but a major turning point in a young man's life: *le grand passage*.[5] The donning of the *toga virilis* was an important ritual throughout much

---

ideas about masculinity and virility, or because it had deep symbolic associations with purity or liberty, but rather that it had a very literal, practical sense: it was the garment that men and not women wore. But because the toga itself and the ceremony endured, it acquired a new, more complex symbolic significance which 'spoke' more loudly than its original, very literal meaning.

[3]The only study devoted specifically to the ceremony seems to be Amiotti 1981: 131-140. Several Roman family historians have included useful but limited sections on the rite: Néraudau 1979: 147-163; 1984: 251-257, Wiedemann 1989: 113-142, and Dixon 1992: 101-102, 134-135.

[4]The term was invented and developed by Arnold van Gennep in his seminal work *Les Rites de passage* (first published in 1909 in French; English edition translated by M. B. Vizedom and G. L. Caffee, 1960). On rites of passage as a theoretical framework, and the applicability to the *toga virilis* ceremony, see Chapter Five.

[5]Néraudau 1979: 158.

of Rome's history, though whether its overall importance or specific social, political or legal aspects became less or more prominent or consequential over time remains to be seen.

The ceremony of taking the *toga virilis* was a part of Roman life from nearly the beginning of Roman history to the end, as the evidence demonstrates. The rite is not mentioned explicitly by any early Republican authors, but a passage by Dionysius of Halicarnassus (*Rom. Ant.* 4.15.5), written during the Principate of Augustus, suggests its possible antiquity. Dionysius records that in the monarchic period there existed a means of distinguishing boys from young men, for in the reign of Servius Tullius, Rome's sixth king, boys who had 'arrived at the age of manhood' were required to donate to the treasury of Juventas, the goddess of youth, so that the number of men eligible for military service could subsequently be determined. Contemporary eye-witness accounts allowing reconstruction of the ceremony begin to emerge in the first century BCE, but it is in the latter years of the late Republic and the first two centuries of the Principate that the concentration of evidence for the *toga virilis* ceremony lies. Moreover, it appears still to be a part of regular Roman social life in the fourth and even early fifth centuries CE, despite the assertion by Wiedemann that there is an absence of late references to the ceremony and that it was 'ignored' by pagan and Christian writers alike.[6] It is, in fact, the Christian writer Augustine, in his early fifth century work *De civitate Dei*, who provides the latest testimony to the maintenance of this Roman custom. In a critique of contemporary Roman polytheism, specifically the practice of ascribing numerous attributes to a single god such as Jupiter, Augustine refers to the goddess Juventas as an aspect of Jupiter, who presides over young men once they have laid aside the *toga praetexta*. The passage is written in the present tense, indicating that at the time of its composition, there still existed a goddess to oversee this event.[7]

---

[6]Wiedemann 1989: 107. He is correct that neither Symmachus nor Cyprian pay any attention to the ceremony but mistaken regarding Augustine.

[7]August. *De civ. D.* 4.11: *Ipse dea Iuventas, quae post praetextam excipiat iuvenalis aetatis exordia* / 'Let him [Jupiter] be Juventas, the goddess who takes up the beginnings of the youthful age once the *praetexta* [has been laid aside].' The seventh century bishop, Isidorus of Seville, includes an entry on the *praetexta* in his encyclopedic work, *Etymologiae* 19.24.16, stating that it was no longer worn by boys beyond the age of 16. Isidorus' reference is,

The *toga virilis* ceremony spanned not only several hundred years of Roman history but also occurred on a wide scale geographically. In Italy, although Rome may have been the preferred location, there are references to the ceremony taking place elsewhere, including the cities of Cremona and Arpinum. With the growth of empire, the practice was also exported to the provinces. Pliny mentions the ceremony among other social occasions that were common occurrences in the province of Pontus and Bithynia. Apuleius and Tertullian, both North Africans, were familiar with the rite. Similarly, Augustine, who was born in Thagaste, expresses his knowledge of Roman deities and rites associated with adolescence, such as the ceremonies honouring the donning of the *toga virilis* and the growth of the first beard, further attesting to the extension of Roman culture beyond Italy. The ritual passage into manhood was an integral part of Roman culture and a regular, perhaps even daily, affair in many parts of the Empire, drawing both positive and negative reactions from a wide audience. Romans such as Cicero and Pliny, and Greeks such as Plutarch and Nicolaus of Damascus focussed on the ceremony, as did the Christian authors Tertullian and Augustine. It is clear that the assumption of the *toga virilis* held a prominent place in Roman thought and Roman society. It is, however, not so much as a social occasion but more so as a family rite that the ceremony seems to have secured its vitality as a Roman social institution. In order to appreciate fully this salient feature of the rite, and to understand better the practical and symbolic consequences for the Roman boy himself, some preliminary remarks about the Roman family, childhood and adolescence are necessary.

Rethinking the Roman Family: Some Recent Scholarly Trends

In the past two decades, interest in the Roman family has grown immensely and a considerable amount of scholarship has amassed. For the present study, it would be neither practical nor feasible to attempt to survey all of the recent trends in Roman family studies.

---

however, problematical for a variety of reasons. The antiquarian nature of the work, the probability of his heavy reliance on earlier ancient works, and perhaps most importantly, the extent or lack thereof of Roman culture that remained in Visigothic Spain, all suggest that his comment applies to earlier times and is not representative of his own experiences. See Brehaut 1964: 18-20 and 30-46 on Isidorus' work in relation to Visigothic and earlier culture.

An introduction to this continually expanding field, however, and an exploration of some of its main themes should provide a useful background for examining the *toga virilis* ceremony.

One need only glance at the contents of recent works on the Roman family in order to see the many directions which Roman family studies are taking. One such example is the very recent *The Roman Family in Italy: Status, Sentiment, Space* (1997), edited by Beryl Rawson and Paul Weaver, a collection of studies on topics ranging from the position of the elderly within the family to the representation of children on monuments and coinage. The subject matter is diverse, offering a spectrum of approaches and relying on a wealth of resources to aid further in the reconstruction of family life. In addition to the range of scholarly interests, what is also apparent from this collection is the ambiguity of the term 'family.' Our English use of the word 'family' embraces many different combinations of related and unrelated individuals who may be joined by biological, emotional, economic or legal ties. Our late twentieth century conception of the family is rigid neither in definition nor composition. For the Romans, this was equally true. The form of the Roman family was largely amorphous and frequently refigured because of death, divorce and remarriage. It is thus difficult to assign any single definition to the already vague Latin terms that pertain to the Roman family such as *familia, domus* and *mei.* Depending on the author and the context, any one of these words might refer to the nuclear family triad of father, mother and child(ren), or to a broader group of people extending beyond bloodlines to include slaves, freedmen and other dependants. Clearly the Roman family was a highly fluid entity, a social institution characterized by flexibility and adaptability.[8]

Despite the many possible configurations of a family, it is difficult to break away from conventional conceptions of the family and not to connect the conjugal unit of husband and wife with most discussions. It was, therefore, with a focus on marriage that Roman family studies began to take shape as a separate field of interest within ancient history, prompted by

---

[8]The Roman 'family' as an elastic concept: Rawson 1986b: 7-15; Bradley 1991a *passim*; Dixon 1992: 1-35. While Saller 1994: 74-101 [drawing on Saller 1984 and Saller and Shaw 1984] acknowledges the difficulties in defining the Roman family and states (1994: 74) that 'it is pointless to endeavor to identify *the* form of *the* Roman family,' he nevertheless argues for the prominence of the nuclear family.

Keith Hopkins' early work on marital ages, contraception, and demography.[9] For members of the elite, many marriages seem to have been arranged far more on the basis of family background and political power than on romantic love or emotional compatibility. Hopkins' examination of marital ages revealed the young age at which most elite girls were married, some even prior to puberty, dispelling earlier overestimates by some scholars that most girls married in their late teens. Perhaps more importantly, though, Hopkins brought to light a number of significant topics of study which he felt ought to be considered in conjunction with studies on Roman marriage -- and ones which would ultimately contribute to the overall understanding of the Roman family -- such as the implications of demography for marital practices and widowhood, the prevalence of divorce, and the question of romantic love.[10] In the last fifteen years, several scholars have taken up these threads of investigation, resulting in a considerable number of studies exploring many aspects of elite marriage.[11]

Interest in elite marriage has been paralleled by efforts to discover more about relationships among members of the silent masses in Roman society -- the lower classes. Roman history had been almost exclusively a history of the elite until recently. The lower classes were largely discarded as unworthy of study for they had 'no voice in government, no place in history.'[12] Yet the record is far from silent about the private lives of slaves, or of the humblest of Roman citizens whom Rawson aptly labelled 'the 'fringe' citizens' of Roman

---

[9]Hopkins 1965a, 1965b, 1966.

[10]Hopkins 1965a: 326-27.

[11]The literature is vast; what is cited here is intended only to offer some initial directions to pursue. The most comprehensive work to date is Treggiari's *Roman Marriage*, which covers a wide range of subjects from how spouses were chosen and dowries arranged, to death and the dissolution of marriage. On demographic implications, specifically in relation to *patria potestas*, see Saller 1994: 12-42 and 119-130. On divorce and remarriage among the elite, and the possible repercussions, see Bradley 1991a: 125-176, and Corbier 1991: 47-78. For affective relationships, see Dixon 1991: 99-113 and 1992: 83-90.

[12]Syme 1939: 476.

society.[13] Denied legal unions, many freed and slave partners nevertheless adopted the terminology of a *iustum matrimonium* in their own *de facto* unions of concubinage and *contubernium*, perhaps longing for the recognition and status upper-class couples enjoyed. Furthermore, lower-class partners may have been envious of elite couples who did not have to contend with the obstacles and missed opportunities the absence of free status entailed for themselves and their children.[14]

Most legal marriages led in one of two directions: either they were 'successful' and continued until one partner died, or they failed and ended in divorce. For successful marriages, producing children and providing security for the future and heirs for succession were paramount concerns for most.[15] There were, however, some couples who could not or chose not to reproduce. Whether married couples actively endeavoured to control the size of their families has been a matter of debate. Hopkins' early study of contraceptive practices in Imperial Rome illustrated the range of methods available to Romans, many of which would have been highly ineffective. Yet Romans believed in their efficacy, and their mere existence raises the issue of conscious, deliberate efforts to limit family size, a matter that has recently resurfaced. It has been argued that some Romans regularly employed contraceptives and abortifacients for the regulation of family size, and furthermore that these efforts to limit population growth are directly related to the demographic profile of Roman society.[16] Yet without more exact knowledge of the extent and efficacy of contraceptive practices, and the level of acceptance, morally and socially, it is difficult to determine the demographic significance. Moreover, attempting to recover attitudes toward contraception and abortion is nearly impossible. What remains are the views of elite Roman males and Christians; neither

---

[13]Rawson 1966: 71.

[14]On *de facto* unions, see Rawson 1974, Treggiari 1981a, b. Problems for lower-class families: Gardner 1997: 35-53 and Weaver 1997: 55-72.

[15]On succession, see Crook 1986: 58-82, Saller 1994: part III 'The devolution of property in the Roman family,' and Saller 1991a: 26-47. On the view of children as security for the future see Dixon 1992: 108-116 and Wiedemann 1989: 32-43.

[16]Riddle 1992: 3-24.

lower-class Romans nor women of any socioeconomic class are represented at all.[17]

In contrast, divorce is well documented for Roman society. Among upper-class Romans it was easy and frequent. It was an option available to both spouses and though it might be viewed as an unfortunate end to a union, there were neither the religious nor moral stigmas attached to it as in modern western societies.[18] Divorce was sought less often to resolve unhappy marriages than as a step toward securing new alliances. It was, as Corbier calls it, a familial strategy like adoption, used for the purpose of acquiring relations beyond bloodlines.[19] The high incidence of divorce and subsequent remarriage created numerous blended families with combinations of full and step siblings and parents who might live together for only a short period of time before divorce and remarriage once again reshaped their family. The upper-class family was subject to 'constant interruption, disruption, and reconstitution'[20] and all of its members, though perhaps especially its younger ones, must have been affected by the lack of stability.[21]

There was, however, one stable feature of the Roman family, that of the *paterfamilias* (head of the household), a figure who has recently received considerable scholarly attention and a much-needed reassessment. In her introductory chapter to *The Family in Ancient Rome* (1986), Rawson urged scholars to examine the formal position of the *paterfamilias* so that the limitations which operated against it in actual practice could be determined.[22] Though

---

[17]Role in the demographic regime: Parkin 1992: 126-133. In response to Riddle, see Frier 1994: 318-333.

[18]Treggiari 1991b: 40-41.

[19]Corbier 1991: 47-78.

[20]Bradley 1991a: 171.

[21]Bradley 1991a: 125-155, especially the two case studies which illustrate clearly the consequences of multiple divorces and remarriages for the children of Sulla and M. Antonius (131-36). Treggiari 1991a: 466-471 addresses some of the effects of divorce but only touches on the possible repercussions for children.

[22]Rawson 1986b: 16.

some scholars continue to adhere to the traditional view of the *paterfamilias* as a severe and authoritarian head of the household, Saller has convincingly shown that this despotic image is a distorted one, based largely on legal rules and a legendary past. Through his possession of *patria potestas* (paternal power), the rights and spheres of control ascribed to the *paterfamilias* were extensive. Issues of various kinds from properties and dowries, to personal choice of marriage partner, were all within the domain of the *paterfamilias*. In theory, his powers were boundless; he even possessed the right of life and death (*ius vitae necisque*) over all of his descendants, regardless of their age or gender. But in practice, there is only a minimum amount of evidence to show that *patresfamilias* exhibited tyrannical behaviour. In fact, the actual enforcement of the most remarkable aspect of *patria potestas,* the right of life and death, is barely evident in the historical record.[23] Upon closer examination, the relationship between the *paterfamilias* and his family members seems often to have been characterized by affection rather than subjugation. The importance of *pietas* -- more than simply filial dutifulness, but rather 'broadly affectionate devotion among all family members,' as Saller argues -- helped to mitigate the extreme powers of the *paterfamilias*.[24] When *pietas* is viewed in this manner, it is easier to envision loving, affectionate fathers interacting with respectful, obedient sons and daughters. The few examples of fathers putting their children to death, cruelly terminating their marriages or exiling them for alleged adultery, hardly seem representative of how most *patresfamilias* acted toward their children in managing the immense power with which they were invested.

The Growth of Childhood Studies

The preceding description of the role of the *paterfamilias,* particularly his interaction with sons and daughters, points to another area of concentration within the study of the Roman family, and one of particular import to this thesis. The more recent establishment of

---

[23]As Harris 1986 shows, there are literally only a handful of historical instances of fathers employing *ius vitae necisque*.

[24]Saller 1994: 131.

a separate category of investigation devoted to Roman children and childhood is a highly significant development. Interest in Roman childhood was initially propelled by the publication of Philippe Ariès' *L'enfant et la vie familiale sous l'ancien régime* in 1960 (translated in 1962 as *Centuries of Childhood*). Ariès proposed that a concept of childhood, as a separate phase in the life cycle, simply did not exist in the pre-industrial world. It was a modern 'invention' that was completely absent from antiquity. Instead, Ariès found the first signs of childhood emerging as a distinct age only in the Middle Ages, for he stated that '[n]o doubt the discovery of childhood began in the thirteenth century.'[25] Relying heavily on iconographic evidence, Ariès argued that there was a 'marked indifference...to the special characteristics of childhood' until the thirteenth century, but that it was only in the seventeenth century that artists portrayed children as they actually appeared rather than as miniature adults, and depicted them with regularity.[26] Reaction to Ariès by historians of various periods has been profound, and among Roman family historians, the response continues.

In their earlier works, Hopkins and Rawson both touched on some of the issues related to children which are currently occupying scholars, but a substantial focus on children themselves has lagged behind other areas of family research.[27] Twenty years ago, children received relatively little scholarly attention in comparison with other members of the Roman

---

[25]Ariès 1962: 47. References are from the 1962 English translation.

[26]Ariès 1962: 46. He claimed that medieval artists depicted children as miniature adult men up to the twelfth century and that '[t]his refusal to accept child morphology in art is to be found too in most of the ancient civilizations' (33-34).

[27]In his work on the age of girls when first married, Hopkins 1965a: 326-27 suggested a number of areas which had then been relatively unexplored, some of which have direct implications for children such as favouritism of boys, demography and the frequency of divorce. Rawson 1966 presented a clear picture of the fragility of family life for persons of lower status, including the prevalence of broken families primarily through the sale of slave children to other households which apparently often resulted in the separation of very young children from their parents and other siblings. A similar situation occurred for elite children as Bradley's studies 1991: 125-176 on divorce and dislocation, and the effects of remarriage, have recently shown.

family, and what had been written was largely from a legal perspective.[28] As Evans notes in *War, Women and Children in Ancient Rome*, it is clear that even now the study of children in Roman society is still in the formative stages.[29] Nevertheless, the interest in children is flourishing and this exciting new direction in family studies should continue to broaden our understanding of children as individuals, while discovering the Roman family to an even greater extent than before. Scholars have drawn on much of the available evidence in order to reconstruct the lives of children, relying on legal texts, literary sources, inscriptions, art and archaeology to detail the roles of children within society and the family, and the attitudes of adults toward them as a distinct social group.

One cannot attempt to understand fully the place of children in the family and to recreate their lives without first acknowledging the demographic background against which their lives must be set. One demographer estimates that in the early Roman Empire the infant mortality rate (IMR) was approximately 300 per 1000 per year, almost unimaginably high in comparison with modern, industrialized rates, though not exceptionally high in regard to poorer modern countries where the IMR ranges from 50 to over 200 per 1000 per year.[30] Poor sanitation, unhygienic obstetric practices (relative to modern medical standards), and potentially harmful post-natal regimens probably all contributed to the loss of many infants in their first year of life. To attribute the high IMR to ignorance or irresponsibility, however, is to project onto the past the views of the present. The tendency to judge the Romans by modern standards is particularly evident in the treatment of parental reactions to infant mortality, namely the suggestion that parents were indifferent to infant deaths. An attitude of 'stern realism in the face of high levels of fetal, perinatal, and infant mortality'[31] may have existed, but this does not in turn imply that parents did not care about the children they lost. Literary and inscriptional sources often refer to children as *dulcis/dulcissimus* ('sweet'/'very

---

[28]Binkowski and Rawson 1986: 245-6.

[29]Evans 1991: 4.

[30]Parkin 1992: 93.

[31]Garnsey 1991: 53.

sweet') or *carus/carissimus* ('dear'/'most dear'), while their deaths were characterized as *acerba,* translated as 'bitter.'[32] Parents in antiquity thus seem 'far from being indifferent' as Golden argues; instead, they had developed various means of coping with their grief through the sharing of child-rearing responsibilities with others and therefore avoided feelings of utter devastation at the loss of a young child.[33]

Until the 1980s, scholars had also largely neglected the subject of child-rearing practices in regard to the care of infants and older children as well.[34] Recent studies have shown that the nurse was an important, indeed omnipresent figure in the lives of Roman children. Upper-class Romans frequently employed the services of wet-nurses (*nutrices*), as did some members of the lower classes, despite the fact that there was a certain amount of uneasiness about, and occasionally blatant distrust of, wet-nursing as a practice, and the competency or lack thereof of its practitioners in particular. Nurses were responsible for feeding and caring for their charges, which often included swaddling and molding the limbs.[35] Many of these practices which were prescribed by the medical profession as parts of a proper infant-care regimen may have had a significant impact on infant health and chances of survival. Yet it is important to bear in mind that the ancients did not have the benefits of modern medical knowledge to appreciate the detrimental effects some of these measures could have. Romans believed these practices *were* in the best interest and health of the child.[36]

---

[32]For examples in literature and inscriptions, see Nielsen 1997: 169-204.

[33]Golden 1988: 155-56.

[34]Binkowski and Rawson 1986: 246 note that very few scholars had examined infant care prior to the mid-1980s, with the exception of Etienne's 1976 study which combined the evidence of Soranus with archaeological material such as cradles.

[35]Ambiguous attitude toward nurses: Bradley 1986, Dixon 1988: 120-125. Duties of the nurse: Bradley 1986, 1991a: 13-36, 1994, and Garnsey 1991.

[36]Garnsey 1991 is highly critical of the extent of ancient medical knowledge (e.g. [57] the 'twisted wisdom of the medical profession') and seems to get caught up in the lack of scientific basis for many Roman practices, and the desire to find a correlation between infant

The role of the nurse, however, seems to have extended far beyond simply being a care-giver. As Bradley suggests, the nurse achieved the status of a surrogate parent, shaping the body and mind of the child.[37] Nurses were the constant companions of their charges, with whom they spent vast amounts of time, sometimes even sleeping in the same room. They were held to have a powerful effect on children, influencing not only physical maturation, but also language acquisition and character development. Furthermore, there is evidence for the existence of intimate, affective relationships between nurses and their charges. Ancient sources associate certain toys with nurses, and record the practice of story-telling which is in itself a voluntary, sentimental act that 'transcended the purely physical dimension of the ordinary tasks of child care.'[38] Though the relationship between nurses and children was close, and often continued into adulthood, there is no evidence to suggest that it had a negative impact on the development of intimate bonds between parents and children.[39]

It appears to have been very common for children of all social backgrounds to come in contact with a wide range of adults, both kin and non-kin members of their household. Yet who was involved in a child's life and in what capacity depended largely on socioeconomic circumstances. In upper-class families, male child-minders including *paedagogi, educatores,*

---

care and infant mortality; in the process, he overlooks the fact that parents actually did believe these methods would work, as Bradley 1986: 214-220, 1993: 245 has argued.

[37]Bradley 1994: 152.

[38]Bradley 1994: 151.

[39]Dixon 1988: 104-140, esp. 120-129. The involvement of the Roman upper-class mother in her young child's life was very different from a modern, western conception. Dixon 1988: 129 suggests that '[w]here we tend to see that part of the life cycle as at home with Mother, then at school with Teacher, Romans saw it as spent with nurses, then with teachers and parents.' On the long-standing relationship between children and their nurses, including the changing nature as children became adults, see Dixon 1988: 145-155. Loyalty and reciprocity seem to have characterized the adult relationship. See for example, Pliny *Ep.* 6.3, where he stresses how important it is that the farm he gave his old nurse be maintained physically and restored to its former value, or the report by Suetonius (*Dom.* 17.3) that the emperor Domitian's nurse, Phyllis, cremated his body after he was assassinated and denied proper funerary rites. Cf. Suet. *Nero* 50 for Nero's two old nurses assisting his mistress, Acte, in the emperor's funeral arrangements.

and *nutritores* were important figures in the lives of children from a very young age until adolescence. These individuals were involved extensively in the rearing of their charges and invested with considerable responsibility: '[t]he socialization of the Roman child was heavily dependant on the person of the pedagogue, as indeed on that of the *nutritor* and *educator*....child-minding figures provided a presence whose impact on the child may well have been as great as the influence of parents.'[40] For lower-class children, parenting figures such as *tatae* and *mammae* were among the individuals who helped to socialize and structure their formative years, perhaps at least until the child was old enough to be seriously trained for future work. In some instances, these women and men may have been asked to help rear a child by the parents themselves, while at other times, they assumed a more exclusive parenting role for children who were orphaned or abandoned.[41]

The importance of studies uncovering the roles of these various non-parental figures is even more significant when we consider the harsh realities of ancient demography and the prevalence of certain social phenomena, namely divorce and remarriage. Computer simulations suggest that approximately one-quarter to one-third of children reaching the age of fifteen would have been fatherless,[42] while many children would have lost their mothers due to the dangerous process of childbirth. Death, however, was not the only thing that might deprive a child of his or her parents. It might be expected that divorce and remarriage exacted a heavy toll on all members of the family, but perhaps particularly on the children. Partial separation of children from their mothers and the creation of fragile, often short-lived step-sibling relationships are among the consequences of frequent divorce and remarriage. One can surmise that the impact of the high occurrence of divorce on the quality of Roman childhood was considerable. As Bradley suggests, the high incidence of divorce and remarriage 'helped to create the prospect of a profoundly unsettled beginning to life for the

---

[40]Bradley 1991a: 55. On male child-minders, see especially Bradley 1991a: 37-75, as well as Dixon 1988: 149-155.

[41]Bradley 1991a: 76-102, Dixon 1988: 146-149. Cf. also Rawson 1986c: 170-200 who discusses the quasi-familial relationships that existed for *alumni* and *vernae*.

[42]Saller 1994: 121.

offspring of the elite."[43] In the face of death and divorce, both of which could easily separate children from their parents, it appears that nurses and child-minders may have been some of the few constant adult figures in the lives of elite children and may have played a valuable role in the emotional worlds of these children.

For many children of the lower classes, family life was often fragile -- if it existed at all. Slave children were particularly vulnerable, subject to a life of disruption and often exploitation too. Slave children, even of a very young age, could be sold into a different household with no respect on the part of their masters for family unity and little regard for the effects this type of behaviour might have on the children.[44] For countless children of slave and poor families, premature entry into the workforce placed an early and likely unpleasant end to childhood. Many were sent away to become apprentices where working conditions appear to have been strenuous, with some apprenticeship contracts specifying that children work from sunrise to sunset.[45] Other slave children led a very different existence as *delicia* ('pets'), purchased either to act as playmates for their masters' children or to provide entertainment and company for their wealthy adult owners.[46] Several texts strongly intimate that *delicia* may have served as more than social companions;[47] they often were kept naked and many possessed names which are clearly suggestive of other purposes, such as Veneria and Aphrodisius.[48]

---

[43]Bradley 1991a: 139.

[44]Rawson 1966: 78-79 and especially Bradley 1987: 47-80, where he notes that there is evidence for sales of children as young as two and three.

[45]Bradley 1991a: 110.

[46]Slater 1974: 133.

[47]Néraudau 1984: 348-49, Garrido-Hory 1981: 163-168. Nielsen 1990, however, argues that the terms *delicatus*, *delicium* and *delicia* occasionally had a sexual connotation but more often simply reflected an affectionate relationship between masters and their young slaves.

[48]Slater 1974: 136-37. See also the discussion of Huskinson (1996: 16, 89, 107) of a banquet scene in which nude *delicia* wait on a young hero (plate 4-1) as well as a similar banquet motif in which *delicia* attend the figures of Cupid and Psyche.

In the last decade, much scholarly attention has been directed toward uncovering adult perceptions of children and childhood. The emphasis has been primarily on children of the upper classes, which is understandable given the fact that the vast majority of the literary evidence attesting to adult views is from elite male sources. Nonetheless, a picture of Roman children is gradually emerging. Wiedemann was one of the first to explore this aspect of social relations in his *Adults and Children in the Roman Empire*, which is a valuable contribution to the study of Roman children, though its shortcomings are significant. Wiedemann focusses on the literary genres of biography, panegyric, and personal letters to draw out how elite males viewed children of various ages, and how these perceptions changed over a broad period of time. One of the difficulties with this approach is that attempting to trace changing ideology over time is a challenging, but not entirely profitable, endeavour when dealing with limited and disproportionate sources of evidence.[49] Wiedemann's analysis also suffers from his selectivity regarding recent scholarship on the Roman family, and children and youth in particular. Inclusion of studies on wet-nursing, infant mortality, and the social roles available to youth would have been beneficial.[50]

A wealth of information about attitudes toward children, especially the existence of sentimental and affective relationships between parents and their children lies not only in the literary evidence but also in sepulchral inscriptions and funerary monuments. It is possible to gauge to some extent how much parents valued their children from the manner in which they represented them in death. Sons and daughters, particularly very young children, are frequently characterized in epitaphs as *dulcissimi* ('very sweet') or *pientissimi/piissimi* ('most

---

[49]For reviews of Wiedemann, see Saller 1991b: 240-42, and Bradley 1991b: 258-63, who notes (259) the problems inherent in tracking change: "Rome' is an ever-changing construct, the evidence at one's disposal is always becoming more complex, and objective comparison of one era with another is difficult to achieve.' Wiedemann's treatment of children as marginal beings is also a concern that Golden 1990: 90-94 addresses.

[50]Though Wiedemann's work was published before the appearance of several key contributions to the study of Roman childhood, he nevertheless overlooked the work of Bradley 1986 on nurses, Hopkins 1983: 69-107, 217-235 on demography, and Néraudau 1979 on youth.

dutiful'), and as Nielsen suggests, this type of commemoration 'shows the strong ambition in all status groups of creating a family and the profound loss felt when this hope was dashed.'[51] Recent studies of the iconography of childhood have also made a welcome contribution to our knowledge of attitudes toward children. Ariès argued that artists were unable to render the child according to its natural form before the early Middle Ages; in fact, he interpreted depictions of children as miniature adults as a 'refusal to accept child morphology.'[52] Yet there exists an immense number of examples of children in Roman art, particularly from the Imperial period. Children appear in a variety of media -- funerary monuments, coins, paintings and reliefs -- and in individual and family group representations intended both for public and predominately private audiences. Many of these images are highly evocative, such as a young girl tugging on her mother's dress in a late Republican relief, or the funeral altar of five-year old A. Egrilius Magnus, from the mid-first century CE, holding onto a small goat.[53] Children's sarcophagi illustrate an interest in the Roman child as 'a being differentiated socially and physically from adults.' Children are shown in scenes portraying what Huskinson calls 'child-specific themes' such as playing games or with dolls, and progressing through a series of accomplishments from the first bath to the first lesson at school, which strongly suggest a recognition and valuation of childhood as a separate and special stage of life.[54]

---

[51]Nielsen 1997: 204. See also Dixon 1991: 99-113, who combines literary, epigraphic and art historical evidence to argue that from the late Republic onwards, a sentimental ideal did exist. The corpus of Latin inscriptions continues to yield new perspectives on family life and valuations of children. For an examination of regional variation and commemorative practices, see Shaw 1991: 66-90, who proposes that urban environments in the western Empire 'encouraged a different valuation of children' (77).

[52]Ariès 1962: 34.

[53]Rawson 1997: 205-232. The young girl is depicted in a funerary monument from the Villa Doria Pamphili in Rome and appears in Rawson with description (217, figure 9-5). On the altar of A. Egrilius Magnus, see Rawson's brief remarks 220, figure 9-8.

[54]Huskinson 1996: 124.

On The Threshold of Adulthood: The Study of Roman Adolescence

The burgeoning interest in Roman children, fuelled by the Ariès debate, has been paralleled, to some extent, by a concomitant interest in Roman adolescence or youth. In several disciplines, the study of youth has been a 'recurrent theme' of researchers throughout the 1970s and 1980s, perhaps in response to Ariès, who declared that '[u]ntil the eighteenth century, adolescence was confused with childhood....People had no idea of what we call adolescence, and the idea was a long time taking shape.'[55] Yet as the editors of a recent volume devoted to youth note, it has 'not really been treated directly, nor subject to a major synthesis; nor has it been viewed in a cultural-historical perspective.'[56] Ancient history, however, does not seem to have suffered quite the same fate. Though studies on Roman youth are few in comparison with those focussed on other groups within society, several recent monographs deal specifically with adolescents -- their place in society, their public, and to a lesser degree, private roles and responsibilities, and their relationship with older generations. The concentration has thus far been directed toward elite young men, partly because of the lack of evidence for young women, but primarily because there was no comparable, transitionary period for women of the same age.[57] Marriage brought an abrupt

---

[55]Ariès 1962: 25 and 29.

[56]Levi and Schmitt 1997b: 1.

[57]Despite the limitations of the evidence, it seems possible to reconstruct the lives of young women (i.e. female adolescents) to a greater extent than has previously been done. This stage in life for girls/young women is too often dismissed by the simple statement that marriage closely followed childhood and forced girls to become adult women at a very young age. Yet many of these essentially child-brides must have experienced a transitionary phase as boys did. It is hard to imagine that these girls matured into the roles of wives and subsequently mothers virtually overnight. Though we lack the testimony of these young women themselves, one might reasonably wonder if, by using the evidence of male sources on marriage (specifically their views on pubertal and pre-pubertal brides) and children, combined with the inscriptional and iconographic evidence available, we could not form a better picture of the 'youth' of Roman girls. Studies on the role of lower-class women in the economy (some of whom were really 'girls' by their young ages) undertaken primarily by Treggiari (e.g. 1975, 1976 and 1979) are a step in that direction, though their focus is not on reconstructing the experience of Roman girls.

end to childhood for elite girls who were forced to enter the adult world in their middle teenage years. For girls as well as boys of other classes, socioeconomic circumstances would have pushed them into the work force and thus the adult world at an even younger age, and many may not have lived much beyond their early teens.[58]

Emiel Eyben has initiated much of the interest in Roman youth as a branch of study. In the early 1970s, Eyben published a series of studies which explored Roman conceptions of youth, stages of life, puberty, and the attitudes of youth toward public figures and authority.[59] He has been instrumental in setting 'youth' apart from childhood as a distinct life-stage spanning roughly the ages 14 to 25. The argument that youth must be viewed as a period separate from both childhood and adulthood has been the underlying focus of much of his early work, including his examination of the position of youth in society and the recent English translation and adaptation of his earlier monograph, which now appears as *Restless Youth in Ancient Rome.*[60] Yet Eyben's contribution to the study of youth, important as it may be, has been primarily through the collection rather than the analysis of evidence. Moreover, his tendency to use Roman Republican authors side by side with Christians writing under the late Empire, and to mingle early events in Rome's history with later ones indiscriminately limits the usefulness of his works beyond their function as collections of evidence.[61]

Marc Kleijwegt's *Ancient Youth: The Ambiguity of Youth and the Absence of*

---

[58]Bradley 1991a: 115 notes that young ages at death are typical, but not necessarily 'normal,' for many child workers. For example, Phoebe, an *emboliaria* (interlude artist) died at 12; Thyas, a *salatrix* (dancer), at 14; the *ornatrices* (hairdressers) Sperata, Anthis, and Pieris at 13, 12, and 9 respectively. Boys did not fare any better: Pagus, a jeweler, only lived to 12, C. Valerius (Dioph)anes died at 11, and C. Vettius Capitolinus at 13. See Prosperi Valenti 1985 for the first two examples; *CIL* 6.9728, 9726, 9731; 6.0437, 2.2243, 6.6182.

[59]Eyben 1972a, 1972b and 1973.

[60]Eyben 1981. *Restless Youth in Ancient Rome* (London: Routledge, 1993) appeared in earlier versions as *De jonge Romein volgens de literaire bronnen der periode ca. 200 v. Chr. tot ca. 500 n. Chr.* (1977) and *De onstuimigen. Jeugd en (on)deugd in het Oude Rome* (1987).

[61]Cf. the review of Noy 1994: 223-224.

Adolescence in Greco-Roman society is an interesting contribution to the field, primarily because of the concentration on inscriptions, a substantial body of evidence which Eyben, for one, ignores completely. In many ways, however, Kleijwegt's monograph is both frustrating and disappointing.[62] From his subtitle, one might think that he would attempt to refute successfully the argument of Eyben and others that a separate life-stage called youth actually did exist in Roman society, and to demonstrate that childhood proceeded into adulthood without a clear acknowledgement of a phase falling in between. Instead, Kleijwegt seems simply to substitute 'youth' for 'adolescent,' or occasionally the indefinite term 'young man,' supporting the notion of ambiguity but adding little clarity to the debate. Elsewhere, he argues that the ephebes were the only group comparable to modern 'teenagers.' Boys of similar age in Roman society were 'not represented as adolescents acting separately from the world of adulthood, but as young adults aspiring to attain full adult status.'[63] Views of adolescence aside, Kleijwegt, like Eyben, adds much to our growing knowledge of young people by virtue of his collection, rather than analysis of evidence, particularly his inclusion of a considerable amount of epigraphic evidence. Unlike literary sources which tend to focus on the elite, inscriptions offer glimpses into the lives of more ordinary Roman youths. Much of this evidence seems to contradict Kleijwegt's thesis as it attests to young people below the age of twenty-five fully engaged in 'adult' pursuits, rather than simply preparing for them. For example, though equestrian officers were on average between thirty-six and fifty-five years

---

[62]Kleijwegt's tantalizing hints at the roles of girls and young women in Roman society are a clear example. All of these claims are unsubstantiated and unfortunately do not actually succeed in filling in the gaps in our knowledge of female adolescence at all. For instance, in discussing the establishment of a minimum age of 25 for entry into municipal politics, Kleijwegt 1991: 72 casually remarks that 'many sons (and daughters) of the municipal aristocracy held office at an earlier age' yet provides no evidence to corroborate such a bold statement. Kleijwegt then fails to recognize the considerable differences in gender attitudes where children were concerned by mentioning 1991: 75, again in an off-hand manner, that there was an absence of a system of educational facilities 'for the average boy (or, for that matter, girl).' It is precisely gender differences such as greater educational opportunities and the prospect of full participation in politics that would have shaped a completely different course for young males than females.

[63]Kleijwegt 1991: 115.

old, a number of inscriptions mention officers who were in their late teens or early twenties when they died. Similarly, there are examples of young physicians and lawyers, some still in their late teens, practicing, not studying for, their respective professions throughout the Empire.[64]

Perhaps the most comprehensive treatment of the role of youth in Roman society, and the most balanced use of both literary and epigraphic evidence comes from Jean-Pierre Néraudau's *La Jeunesse dans la littérature et dans les institutions de la Rome républicaine* (1979). Neither this study, nor Néraudau's later work on children which contains some discussion of youth, figure prominently in either Eyben's or Kleijwegt's examinations of Roman youth. Nevertheless, *La Jeunesse* is a well-documented assessment of the position of youths in Roman society, their involvement in social, political and religious life, and to a lesser extent, their role within the Roman family. At first glance, Néraudau's title might suggest that his work is more a study of literature than social history. Instead, he draws on a variety of genres, including poetry, comedy, and prose, supplemented by inscriptional evidence, to detail the important historical involvement of youth in Roman rites and political affairs. Young figures appear throughout the history of the Republic, as participants in the festival of the Lupercalia, and supporters of *coup d'états* such as the so-called Catilinarian conspiracy, and sometimes, as in the cases of Marcus Caelius Rufus and Octavian, they are indeed the focus of history, as defendants in high profile trials and powerful leaders of Rome.

From this brief survey of current research on Roman youth, it is apparent that scholars continue to employ a wide range of foci and approaches in their investigations of the attitudes and activities of Roman youth. Though many of these authors have touched on the *toga virilis* ceremony, or even devoted entire chapters or sections to the discussion of the rite, to this point none has treated the subject in a comprehensive study. The ceremony is certainly paid more attention and thus deemed of greater significance by some authors. Néraudau, for example, provides the most complete assessment yet available in *La Jeunesse,* in addition to a small but informative section in his work on Roman children; furthermore, he is the only one

---

[64]On young soldiers and professionals, see Kleijwegt 1991, chapters 5, 6 and 8.

to emphasize strongly the importance of the rite to the family and not just the *res publica*. Eyben generally refers to it in passing, using the assumption of the toga as a launching point for other discussions, as is largely the case for Wiedemann, who is most concerned with the political implications of the toga and the issue of marginality. Kleijwegt, on the other hand, barely mentions the *rite de passage* in the text of his work, relegating his most serious discussion to a single footnote, and seems to consider the ceremony of minimal importance by not even including an entry for it in the index. Family historians have overlooked the multi-faceted significance of the ceremony in similar fashion. Dixon, for instance, comments that the transition to adulthood is 'more nebulous' for boys than girls, and that the ceremony therefore tends 'for reasons of cultural emphasis to be marked by specific, fairly public ritual, since it marks above all a change in boys' relationship to the state.'[65] One cannot discount the fact that the assumption of the *toga virilis* did confer certain rights, privileges and status on a boy, and thus changed his role within the community. To emphasize only the public and political aspects and implications of the ceremony, however, is, as we shall see, to neglect the long tradition of the rite first and foremost as a celebration within the Roman family and with significant consequences for its members.

Sources of Evidence: Range, Reliability and Literary Use

The assumption of the *toga virilis* is well-attested for the central period of Roman history (200 BCE to 200 CE), but as noted above there is evidence for the ceremony spanning a much broader time frame. In fact, it seems to have been a common Roman practice until the late Empire when it ceased to be recorded by either pagan or Christian writers. The majority of the literary evidence for the rite during the Republic can be dated to the first century, with a heavy concentration of references falling into the three decades from Julius Caesar's first consulship (59 BCE) to the Battle of Actium (31 BCE). This is not surprising. The late Republic was a tumultuous period of Roman history, an era in which political rivalries dominated and certain individuals figured prominently in events of their day and in

---

[65]Dixon 1992: 101.

the imaginations of many. An ambitious and intriguing character such as Octavian (the future emperor Augustus) thus captured the interest of both contemporary and later sources who sought to relate his life history, including the significant marking of his passage into adulthood. During such difficult times, however, some also sought to divert their attention away from the turmoil and to seek refuge in the remembrance of earlier, more stable times or in more pleasant matters concerning their private lives. From Cicero's letters, for example, it is clear how much his public responsibilities continued to encroach on his private life and probably, as a result, how much sanctuary he found in focussing on his family and occupying himself with preparations for certain family affairs such as his son's and nephew's coming of age. Finally, we are fortunate to have a substantial amount of literature from this period, covering a variety of genres, in which aspects of daily life are well-detailed. This is partly because of Cicero's prolific output but also because of the number of active Republican poets whose works survive.

In the Imperial period, literary accounts of the ceremony are more evenly distributed throughout the first two centuries, with several third and fourth century authors, and even one fifth century source mentioning the Roman rite. Some Imperial sources, by the nature of their genre, document the *toga virilis* ceremony for Republican figures, as is the case for certain references from the biographers Suetonius and Plutarch, and the historian Cassius Dio, yet many other sources report on contemporary or less distant instances in which the toga was granted to a young man. It is, in fact, from Imperial writers such as Pliny and Apuleius that we have important information about certain aspects of the ceremony that Republican authors do not comment on, such as the distribution of *sportulae* (gifts) by the boy's parents to the people in honour of the occasion, or the use of the ceremony for personal and political gain. The Christian writers, Tertullian and Augustine, offer an interesting, albeit somewhat hostile, perspective on this Roman practice but nonetheless contribute further details missing from Republican accounts.

Latin as well as Greek authors report on the coming of age ritual, and although most of the references occur in Latin texts, there are several significant passages in Greek. Furthermore, Greek sources such as Nicolaus of Damascus and Appian describe the rite more

fully, possibly because the intended audience was Greek-speaking and less well-acquainted with certain features of Roman life.[66] Mention of the *toga virilis* ceremony appears in virtually every genre of Latin literature: poetry, historical writing, biography, didactic, moral and antiquarian works, letters, speeches, even the ancient novel, testifying to its ubiquity in Roman society.

The geographical distribution of the evidence further supports this conclusion. As already seen, in the Republican period, most writers who report on occasions in which they attended or participated in the rite situate the ceremony either in Rome itself, or in other parts of Italy. Yet even in the late Republic there is evidence for the ceremony being held outside of Italy. Cicero tells Atticus (*Att.* 5.20.9) that he has been asked to celebrate his nephew's assumption of the *toga virilis* upon arrival in Laodicea in Asia Minor, while Marcus Antonius decided to grant the toga to his son, Antyllus, at Alexandria in Egypt (Plut. *Ant.* 71.3). In the Republican period, celebrating outside of Italy seems to have been more a matter of circumstance than common practice; by the end of the first century of the Imperial era, however, the granting of the *toga virilis* is recorded as a regular occurrence in the provinces. Pliny writes to the emperor Trajan of his concerns regarding possible corruption of the ceremony in Pontus and Bithynia and uses the verb *solere* ('to be accustomed, to make it a practice') to describe the circumstances, indicating that both the ceremony and the accompanying practices were regular occurrences in this province.[67] Several other sources

---

[66]This appears to be the case in Nicolaus' description of Augustus' assumption of the toga. His account is the most complete of any Latin or Greek source, and one of the least allusive. In this one brief passage (4.8-11), he contrasts the attire of the child with that of the newly recognized man, notes the important social, political and religious facets of the ceremony, and remarks on its legal and social implications, including the ambiguous and transitionary position both the boy and his family might now find themselves in as a result of the ceremony. There is no comparable Latin passage that contains as much detail about so many different features. The other authors who comment on the rite in Greek are not as thorough as Nicolaus: Appian, in his *Civil Wars*, Plutarch, in some of his *Lives* of Roman figures as well as in a moral treatise to a young friend named Nicander, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, and Cassius Dio.

[67]Plin. *Ep.* 10.116: *Qui virilem togam sumunt...solent totam bulen atque etiam e plebe non exiguum numerum vocare binosque denarios vel singulos dare.* 'Those who are assuming

mention provincial celebrations as routine: Apuleius (*Apol.* 87.10) reports that his stepson, Pudens, received his toga in Oea (modern Tripoli), Caracalla donned his toga in Antioch according to the *Historia Augusta* (*Sev.* 16.8), and Tertullian (*De Idol.* 16.1) discusses attending the pagan ceremony as one of his social duties in North Africa.

It has already been argued that most scholars who have focussed on the *toga virilis* ceremony to any extent fail to recognize the familial significance of the rite, despite the fact that they are often drawing on much of the literary evidence that, because of its very nature, tends to emphasize the more private qualities of the ceremony. It is precisely because there are references in poetry, biography, and personal letters that we see that the family, in terms of its members, its gods, and its position within society was of great importance to this rite of passage. It is often from the poets that we glean some sense of the emotional issues attached to the rite and its location within the context of the Roman family. The demographic significance of the ceremony is clear from both Propertius and Statius, who comment on the absence of one parent at the ceremony because he or she had predeceased the son. Death also overshadows the rite for Ovid, who recalls that the day on which he and his brother both received their togas was only a few short years before his brother passed away.[68] A similarly personal perspective emerges from the letters of Cicero. He seems anxious about a sudden addition to the calendar disrupting his plans to hold his nephew's ceremony on March 17, at the Liberalia, and equally distraught over the infringement of politics on the scheduling of his son's coming of age in either Rome or Arpinum. For the latter celebration, he twice seeks Atticus' advice and aid, either directly or indirectly, as to how and where he should proceed, suggesting that the ceremony was of considerable interest even amid serious turmoil.[69]

---

the toga...are accustomed to invite the whole council (i.e. all the local senators) and even a considerable number of common people and to give as gifts one or two denarii.' On the practice of inviting large numbers of guests and distributing gifts, see briefly in Chapter Two, and further in Chapter Five.

[68]Stat. *Silv.* 5.2.64-67; Prop. 4.1.132; Ov. *Tr.* 4.10.27-32. For further discussion of these passages, particularly the demographic implications, see Chapters Two and Five.

[69]Cic. *Att.* 5.20.9, 6.1.12; 9.6.1, 9.17.1-2, 9.19.1.

The ceremony is also used for literary purposes in both poetry and biography as a means of marking the first significant adult achievement in a man's life. Several poets incorporate the donning of the toga in autobiographical or biographical sketches, using it to set the background for amatory or career pursuits. For Propertius, laying aside his childhood *praetexta* signalled the beginning of his love affair with Lycinna and the start of his amorous adventures, as well as his decision to devote his life to poetry and not politics, while for the young Crispinus, as Statius notes, putting on the adult toga permitted him to embark on a military career just like his father.[70] In Suetonius' *De Vita Caesarum*, mention of the assumption of the *toga virilis* signals the end of childhood for the subject of the biography, and the end of childhood as a subject of interest within the biography. Youth, and especially adulthood, are considered the crucial stages in an emperor's life. The passage to adulthood, though not described in much detail, stands out because the biographer uses it to introduce noteworthy early accomplishments which foretell a successful adult future.

It is important in any study to keep in mind the nature of the literary evidence available. Every genre has its own conventions and presents unique challenges to the social historian. In the case of the *toga virilis*, different aspects of the ceremony feature more prominently in different types of literature. Some sources, however, are clearly more problematic than others and must be read with additional caution. The *Historia Augusta* is the primary example. Its authenticity and reliability are often questionable. Syme labelled the figure he regarded as the sole author 'careless, cynical, subversive.'[71] In his convincing assessment of the work, Honoré, also rejecting the notion of multiple authorship, suggests that the single author enjoyed using documents to demonstrate his expertise, regardless of whether they were genuine or fabricated pieces of evidence. In spite of these remarks, there

---

[70]Prop. 3.15.5.8, 4.1.131-34; Stat. *Silv.* 5.2.61-69. Cf. Persius at 5.30-37, where the assumption of the toga marks the beginning of his more serious philosophical pursuits. I have adopted Goold's 1990 convincing re-arrangement of the initial lines of 3.15 rather than either Barber's 1960 edition (*Oxford Classical Texts* = *OCT*) or P. Feldini's 1984 Teubner text. See Goold's introduction for a manuscript discussion. For the purposes of this study, however, it is of little consequence whether Goold is correct or not.

[71]Syme 1968: 191; Honoré 1987: 166.

is no need to dismiss it as a useful source entirely. Specific details of individual ceremonies may be accepted with some skepticism, but it is the overall impression that the author gives of the rite as an important occasion and achievement in the lives of second and third century men that is a most valuable contribution to the understanding of this social institution.[72]

In comparison with literary evidence, epigraphic evidence for the ceremony is minimal. There are barely more than a handful of inscriptions commemorating the occasion; yet despite the small sample, they add several interesting dimensions to the emerging picture of the rite. The inscriptions can be dated from the late first century BCE to the late third or early fourth century CE. Not surprisingly, three of the eight inscriptions are included in the *Fasti* recognizing the donning of the toga by members of the Imperial family: Augustus, Tiberius, and Nero, the elder son of Germanicus. Other inscriptions, however, demonstrate more intimate or private relationships between the recipient of the toga and the dedicator of the inscription. Two late second century or possibly early third century CE inscriptions show slaves honouring their master on his assumption of the toga, while a third of similar date, was erected by a Roman knight for his *amicus incomparabilis* ('peerless friend'). In addition to the range of circumstances expressed in these few inscriptions, they also further attest to the prevalence of the rite beyond the boundaries of Rome, to include Thermae Himeraeae in Sicily, Surrentum (modern Sorrento) in Italy, and possibly Ager Antipolinensis (modern Antibes) in the Alpes Maritimae.[73]

There is an even greater dearth of iconographic evidence for the ceremony.

---

[72]A similar situation arises for the *Life of Virgil* attributed to Donatus, in which he mentions Virgil's assumption of the toga briefly. The text is 'both uncertain and contradictory' at various points, according to Sandbach 1940: 73, and the precise passage referring to Virgil's ceremony is no less problematical. Nevertheless, it is a useful reference, even if it is not wholly reliable.

[73]The inscription in question, *CIL* 12.221, does not seem to relate to the donning of the *toga virilis* at all. Yet Ginestet 1991: 96, 204-209 argues, on the basis of a very tenuous reconstruction, that the text commemorates an eighteen year old boy who died on the very day that he took the toga. It is extremely difficult to see how he interprets the reconstructed phrase *luce(m) foro duceret* as 'il allait consacer au forum un brillant âge viril.' For a completely different and more plausible interpretation of this inscription, see Chastagnol 1988.

Huskinson notes the relative absence of portraits which look like 'youths' as opposed to children or mature adults, and asserts that '[a]s for *rites de passage*, there are no depictions, it seems, of the assumption of the *toga virilis*.'[74] There may, however, be at least one exception to this statement -- the late first century or very early second century CE funerary sarcophagus termed the Via Portuense monument. The monument is of a man reclining on a funerary couch with a woman seated near his shoulder. Below the mattress of the couch runs a continuous frieze which is damaged, but nonetheless narrates the life of an elite man from infancy to adulthood. Missing sections may attest to a marriage, political or military career, and possibly his death as well, but the surviving portions focus on his childhood and youth. The frieze begins with the infant's first bath followed by a scene illustrating the toddler learning to walk; it then progresses through his childhood: the boy wearing the *toga praetexta* is shown with his school class, two older children are depicted probably playing with hoops, and then his childhood years seem to be complete with a curious final scene.[75] In an early study of the monument, Faccenna proposed two possible explanations: either the scene illustrated the donning of the *toga virilis*, or, it was an ordinary declamation scene. This latter interpretation is clearly favoured by some.[76] Kampen, however, is less certain and concludes that 'the meaning of the scene can only be tentatively described as either a first public oration by the youth or his assumption of the *toga virilis* which signals his new manhood and corresponding responsibilities to the state.'[77]

The absence of scenes from a man's youth in visual biography largely parallels the

---

[74]Huskinson 1996: 92.

[75]Studies of the monument: Faccenna 1949-50, Berczelly 1978, Kampen 1981. Faccenna 1949-50: 225 asserts that in the school scene, the boy is clad in a tunic and *toga praetexta*, indicating that he is freeborn. It is unclear whether this is also Berczelly's meaning 1978: 64 when he states that the boy and the teacher, standing in front of the class, are '[d]ressed alike in the everyday toga.'

[76]Faccenna 1949-50: 226-227. Berczelly 1978: 66 implies that Faccenna preferred the *toga virilis* interpretation, but his language indicates otherwise (1949-50: 227): 'Con diversa ipotesi si può credere invece che qui sia resa una scena di orazione.'

[77]Kampen 1981: 48.

situation for its literary counterpart, as Kampen explains: 'Education is regularly discussed [in literary biography], as is childhood, with an interest in the character and exceptional ability of the youth....The first speech or assumption of the *toga virilis* are present less frequently.'[78] As we noted above, biographers generally do not describe the ceremony in great detail yet they do provide certain elements of individual ceremonies which they appear to deem particularly noteworthy in those specific cases. This may not be attributable to the conventions of the genre, however, as Wiedemann proposes. He stresses that biography in antiquity did not focus on events and experiences in a man's life, but rather on lifestyle: 'a *vita* is an account of what sort of person he was throughout his life....it is not primarily about individuals at all: it is about character-types.'[79] Yet it is equally possible that the assumption of the *toga virilis* was not described in great detail because it was so deeply embedded in Roman experience that it was simply assumed everyone knew what it entailed.

While the Romans themselves were aware of the distinct elements and multifarious significance of the *toga virilis* ceremony, Roman family historians have yet to piece together the scattered references to form a composite picture of this important familial and social rite. It is the aim of this thesis to collect and analyze evidence for this widely, if allusively, attested rite of passage, in the belief that a study of this defining moment in a young man's life may contribute to our knowledge of Roman family life, and enable us to understand better the experiences and perceptions of youth in Roman antiquity. We are fortunate to have the testimony of individuals such as Cicero, Propertius, Persius, and Pliny, for whom the assumption of the toga figured prominently in their own lives, as well as the accounts of biographers and historians, to aid in reconstruction of this crucial event in a freeborn boy's life. It is largely from the perspective of the individual, in the context of his role as a member of a Roman family, that subsequent chapters will proceed in an effort to address the importance of the ritual on a variety of levels, and to determine the consequences of becoming an adult Roman male socially, politically, legally, and symbolically.

---

[78]Kampen 1981: 50.

[79]Wiedemann 1989: 50.

CHAPTER TWO

Sollemnitas togae purae: Reconstructing a Roman Boy's Coming of Age

Introduction

What actually happened at the ceremony of the granting of the *toga virilis*? When scholars comment on a Roman boy's entry into adulthood, they often describe the accompanying rites in brief, nebulous terms.[1] Unfortunately, such cursory treatments overlook the complexity of this *rite de passage* and rob the ceremony of much of its richly textured nature as well as the excitement and magnificence of its private and public features. To state simply that the transition to manhood was marked by sacrifice and ceremony only tells part of the story. My purpose in this chapter is to reconstruct the various elements of the *sollemnitas togae purae* -- the rite of the donning of the pure toga as Tertullian (*De Idol.* 16.1) calls it, and, in effect, to recreate the atmosphere and experiences of a typical coming of age ceremony held in the Roman world. By drawing together the many fragments of evidence available, we can form a composite picture of the distinctive stages and features of this ancient and unique ritual. An analysis of the practical and symbolic consequences and significance of the ceremony will follow in subsequent chapters.

Status, Puberty, and the *Paterfamilias*: Some Preliminary Remarks

As far as the evidence shows, the only boys who participated in the transitional rite were freeborn Roman boys. In Horace's tale (*Sat.* 1.5) of a journey from Rome, he recounts how Sarmentus, a freedman, and a native Oscan named Messius Cicirrus, were engaged in

---

[1]The account of Dixon 1992: 101-102, for example, seems liable to lead to confusion about what the ceremony consisted of, in what order the various elements could and did take place and where. She suggests that the laying aside of the *bulla* and *praetexta* might be held in private (in the family home one might assume, but with other, non-family members present or not?) or at the public festival of the Liberalia; she then notes that after sacrificing in 'a temple,' a boy would return home 'for domestic sacrifice and the usual family party.' From the details she provides, precisely who would attend or participate in the temple sacrifice, the family sacrifice or the party is unclear or where the exchange of togas would occur if a boy did not do this at home.

a battle of wits over their respective lineages. In response to one biting comment, Cicirrus asked Sarmentus if he has already made an offering of his chain to the household gods called the Lares (*Sat.* 1.5.65-66). He may be referring to an ordinary chain of no particular significance and criticizing Sarmentus' lack of piety, or more likely, given the context of the account, he may have a more specific, status-oriented object in mind. Cicirrus' aim is to emphasize Sarmentus' servile background, so it is possible, as Morris suggests, that the 'chain' in question might mean 'fetters,' which the former slave, now that he has his freedom, is dedicating to the gods who favoured him.[2] Cicirrus may, however, be calling attention to the 'chain' he lacked -- the *bulla,* which freeborn boys wore to indicate their status.[3] Though no longer a slave, Sarmentus would never be entitled to wear the *bulla* and subsequently dedicate it to the Lares.

The younger Pliny offers some explicit detail about the status of the boys who received the *toga virilis*. In a letter written in 97 CE to a correspondent named Maximus, Pliny (*Ep.* 2.14.6) laments the current state of the Centumviral court where audiences are hired to move from case to case for a fee and vociferously support primarily young, unknown advocates at their trials; two of Pliny's own slaves, his *nomenclatores*, have received three denarii apiece, a sizable sum given that a labourer's or soldier's pay was less than a single denarius per day.[4] Pliny seems disturbed by this practice, especially because two of his slaves could not resist temptation. He adds, in an aside, that the boys would have been old enough to receive the *toga virilis* had they been born free rather than slaves, and insinuates that in view of their age they should have known better than to get involved in something so scandalous.[5] Pliny has no need to elaborate on why his slaves will not take the toga or even

---

[2]*multa Cicirrus ad haec: donasset iamne catenam | ex voto Laribus, quaerebat;* 'Cicirrus had much to say to this: had he already made a votive offering of his chain to the Lares, he inquired.' Morris 1939: 93.

[3]See below regarding the *bulla*.

[4]Sherwin-White 1966: 183.

[5]*Here duo nomenclatores mei* (*habent sane aetatem eorum qui nuper togas sumpserint*) *ternis denariis ad laudandum trahebantur.* 'Yesterday two of my *nomenclatores* (who are

puberty commenced.[7] Literary sources generally concur with the legal age set at fourteen, but also acknowledge that this fixed age did not have to be rigidly adhered to as some boys older than fourteen might not show signs of physically maturing for several subsequent years.[8]

Rousselle contends that the *toga virilis* ceremony was first and foremost a celebration of the onset of puberty, and argues that a physical inspection would determine the beginning of sexual maturation and, consequently, the date for the donning of the toga. She states that '[the boy] and his family would watch for the first signs of his sexual maturity. The appearance of pubic hair and his first ejaculations were a cause for celebration for the whole household, particularly the father.' The ceremony might take place immediately after the initial signs of puberty became apparent, or be postponed until a later date such as the Liberalia on March 17, so that a boy could join his peers in a collective celebration of puberty.[9] She does not,

---

[7]Gaius (*Inst.* 1.196) and Ulpian (*Reg.* 11.28) both comment on the issue of whether physical development or age signify the onset of puberty. It was a matter of some contention as it continues to occupy the jurists even during the compilation of the *Codex* in the sixth century. The problem of determining when boys were actually pubescent apparently had its origins in Rome's early history. At that time, puberty in males was judged *non solum ex annis, sed etiam ex habitu corporis* ('not only from their years, but also from their bodies'), but because it was later considered indecent to examine physically boys for signs of maturation, the completion of the fourteenth year was established as the legal age at which puberty commenced. The ages of fourteen for boys and twelve for girls remained in effect under the emperor Justinian in the sixth century (*Cod. Iust.* 5.60.3).

[8]E.g. Festus 330 *s.v. pubes*; Censorinus *DN* 1.7.3,1.14.2; Macrob. *In Somm.* 1.6.71, *Sat.* 7.7.6; Isid. *Etym.* 11.2.13. Servius, however, commenting on *Aeneid* 7.53, proposed that physical development first and then age determine puberty: *primum ergo ad habitum, secundum ad annos pertinet.* See Eyben 1972a for additional sources and discussion of ancient views on puberty. For the variance in ages when puberty sets in, see Censorinus, *DN* 1.7.3-4 who states that though boys usually begin to mature at fourteen (*quarto decimo autem pubescere soleamus*; cf. *post quartum decimum annum nonnullos ...pubescere*), 'all will have started to develop by the age of seventeen' (*sed omnes intra septimum decimum annum pubescere*).

[9]Rousselle 1988: 59. The issue of using a physical examination to ascertain whether a child has reached puberty and can subsequently participate in a coming of age ritual is quite obviously problematic. In Judaism, for example, there is no Biblical indication of the age at which a minor attains majority (*The Oxford Dictionary of the Jewish Religion* [1997] *s.v.* adult). By the early third century CE, however, Rabbinic law had established that boys and

however, cite any evidence to support this claim nor can it be substantiated, for there is not a single reference in the sources to physical maturity as a prerequisite for the assumption of the *toga virilis*. Physical inspection for puberty was practiced by Romans for the purpose of ascertaining whether a boy or a girl had the capacity to marry, but not for the granting of the *toga virilis*.[10] Furthermore, though the issue of physical examination was a matter of dispute among jurists of the first century CE, there is no indication that it was still a common practice under the Principate. As some scholars suggest, it may have been abandoned for both males and females because it was considered indecent, long before Justinian officially abolished it in 529 CE.[11]

---

girls reach adulthood when puberty begins which is evidenced externally by the growth of two pubic hairs. Yet because of the problems which could ensue, including the possibility that the hairs could have grown and then fallen out, this method of determining puberty proved to be ineffective, and at some point in Jewish history, a more flexible conception of the attainment of puberty and arrival at adulthood was adopted. The average ages of puberty were fixed at thirteen for boys and twelve for girls, after which the celebrations of the *bar* or *bat mitzvah* (the former marks a boy's achievement of adult status, the latter a girl's) could take place (Unterman 1994: 122). [It is difficult to date any of these developments with precision. Discussion of puberty is contained in a tractate of the Mishnah called *Niddah* (5:6; 52a) that deals mostly with women and impurity. The fifth and final generation of Rabbinic scholars who contributed to *Niddah* was Rabbi Judah Ha-Nasi who flourished around 200 CE. When physical examination gave way to fixed ages does not appear to have been documented. For further, refer to *The Encyclopedia of Judaism* (MacMillan 1989) under *Niddah* and *Tanna*].

[10]Corbett 1930: 51.

[11]*Cod. Iust.* 5.60.3: *Pubertatem autem veteres quidem non solum ex annis, sed etiam ex habitu corporis in masculis aestimari volebant. Nostra autem maiestas dignum esse castitate temporum nostrorum bene putavit, quod in feminis et antiquis impudicum esse visum est, id est inspectionem habitudinis corporis, hoc etiam in masculos extendere.* 'The ancients judged of puberty in males, not only by their years, but also by the development of their bodies. But we, from a wish to conform to the purity of the present times, have thought it proper, that what seemed, even to the ancients, to be indecent towards females, namely, the inspection of the body, should be thought no less so towards males' (trans. Sandars). Both Gaius (*Inst.* 1.196) and the *Regulae* (11.28) mention a dispute between Sabinians and Proculians (mid-first century CE); the former insisted upon physical examination, while the latter argued that male puberty was attained on completion of the fourteenth year. On the likelihood that the practice had declined well before the sixth century enactment, cf. Staples 1998: 177 n. 121. Dixon 1992: 215 n. 14 suggests that the practice was gradually replaced.

It is entirely possible that many adult Romans felt a boy should already exhibit the initial signs of maturity before he would be given a toga that identified him as a man, and that from sensible reasoning soon developed what became a common practice -- the granting of the toga to boys of fifteen or sixteen who were already well in the midst of the process of physical development. When *impuberes* assumed the toga, the sources suggest that the circumstances were unusual and a break with tradition. Tacitus (*Ann.* 12.41.1), for example, describes the conferring of the toga on Nero at the age of thirteen as *maturata* ('hastened'), no doubt due in large part to the machinations of his mother, Agrippina, who sought to promote her son as successor over Claudius' son Britannicus. Likewise, Suetonius (*Claud.* 43.1) records how Claudius intended to give Britannicus the toga at thirteen even though he was still immature and young (*cumque impubi teneroque adhuc*) because his stature justified it (*quando statura permitteret*). The emphasis placed on the age of the boy by identifying him as *impubes* and using the adjective *tener,* which is frequently associated with young children, suggests that many Romans may have considered this somewhat extraordinary.[12]

When we examine evidence such as that of Suetonius, it is clear that the impetus for the granting of the toga came most often from Roman parents and, more specifically, from fathers. The strong paternal involvement in the rite emerges from both Cicero's letters and his speeches. On three separate occasions Cicero wrote to Atticus (9.6.1, 9.17.1, 9.19.1) of his intentions to celebrate his son Marcus' coming of age in his *patria* of Arpinum, while in an earlier letter (6.1.12), Cicero informed Atticus that he planned to give his nephew Quintus

---

Corbett 1930: 51-52 implies that after examination was discontinued in early times, it would only be required for litigation, i.e. if there was a dispute regarding the puberty of an opponent.

[12]Cf. Dio 61.34.1 who mentions Agrippina's actions but does not comment on Britannicus' young age. Britannicus was born 12 February 41 and his father pushed to have him receive the toga before his death in October 54, so Britannicus could have been thirteen and a few months at the most when he was being considered as a candidate for the toga, still relatively young compared to some of his Julio-Claudian ancestors. As Mottershead 1986: 140 suggests, however, Claudius may have been motivated less by political considerations than by his own ailing health and desire to perform a father's duty: 'as the boy's father, [he] would have been proud to see Britannicus assume the toga of manhood; and if his health was failing he would have been more anxious to advance the date of the ceremony.'

the toga on the Liberalia because Quintus' father commissioned him to do so (*mandavit enim pater*). The elder Quintus was absent, wintering with the army near Tarsus, yet even though he could not bestow the toga on his son himself, he still retained control over the situation.[13] In the *Pro Sestio* (144), Cicero told of how Publius Lentulus had recently received the *toga virilis* at his father's instigation (*patris...iudicio*) and was now sitting before the court pleading for his father's life to be spared.[14] And only a few years after Marcus, Quintus, and Lentulus received their togas from their fathers, directly or indirectly, the son of Brutus, newly invested with the *toga virilis*, was escorted by his father into the Forum Romanum on the very day of Julius Caesar's assassination (Plut. *Brut.* 14.4). Similarly, Antyllus, Marcus Antonius' son, was presented with his new garment by his father while staying in Alexandria, according to Cassius Dio (51.6.1) and Plutarch (*Ant.* 71.3). Under the Principate, the custom of fathers giving their sons the toga seems to have continued at least into the third century as Septimius Severus provided his son Caracalla with the *toga virilis* in Antioch and later gave Geta his toga, presumably in Antioch as well (SHA *Sev.* 16.8, 14.8).[15]

Much of our evidence for the granting of the *toga virilis* during the Principate concerns members of the Julio-Claudian family. Death, divorce, remarriage and adoption were all strategies employed at different points in time and by various members of the Imperial family to reconfigure its shape for personal preservation and political profit. The decision to end a marriage or to adopt an heir was generally made by the most powerful member in the family -- the emperor himself, who was at once the head of state and the head of his household. This is true for the first two emperors, Augustus and Tiberius. As successive *patresfamilias*, both men were directly concerned with and involved in the

---

[13]Garrido Božić 1951: 15. Entrusting Cicero to oversee young Quintus' coming of age is not unusual in light of the 'sharing' of the children that went on between Cicero and the elder Quintus. On this notion of the children as 'common property' see Bradley 1991a: 185.

[14]*Sest.* 144: *cui superior annus idem et virilem patris et praetextam populi iudicio togam dederit.* Cf. *Cael.* 4.9.

[15]Though the rite is still documented in the fifth century (see above, Chapter One), the *Life of Severus* provides the latest evidence of a father giving his son the toga. The fourth and fifth century references to the ceremony are brief and include minimal detail.

assumption of the *toga virilis* by members of the Imperial family. Augustus adopted his grandsons Gaius and Lucius as his own sons, then introduced them into the Forum after they had both come of age, as he recorded in his *Res Gestae* (14.1; cf. Suet. *Aug.* 26.2). Though neither Augustus nor his biographer Suetonius explicitly state that Augustus gave his grandsons the toga, he probably did award it to each of them personally. It would have been a prudent display of the strength of the ruling family and reinforced in a very public and visual manner his legislative efforts to restore the idea of the family to a place of prominence in Roman society. Furthermore, Augustus was heavily involved in their lives after their adoption, assuming responsibility for much of their education and training for government (Suet. *Aug.* 64.2-3). Introducing his sons to the Forum was a natural extension of his new role as their father, and it was usually the father of the new *togatus* who took him to the Forum for his first exposure to legal and political life, the so-called *tirocinium fori* which will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Three. Finally, there is evidence that Tiberius selected the dates when Caligula and the elder sons of Germanicus, Nero and Drusus, all of whom were fatherless at this stage in their lives, were to be granted the toga.[16]

Several literary figures had also lost their fathers before assuming the toga. Propertius (4.1.132) recalls how he donned the toga *ante deos matris*, because his father had died when he was young. His mother may have been the one who initiated the ceremony, or, if she had remarried, then possibly the decision rested with his stepfather. Crispinus, the son of Vettius Bolans, an officer in the Roman army, may have been in an even more awkward predicament. At the age of just sixteen, Crispinus was fatherless. Statius (*Silv.* 5.2.64-67) implies that Bolans' death may have been sudden, and perhaps he had not made testamentary arrangements for the children before he died:

> nor is your father close by; for a cruel fate consumed him
> and he died, leaving two children without a guardian;
> he did not even take off the purple of boyhood from your

---

[16]Caligula: Suet. *Calig.* 10.1. Germanicus' elder sons, Nero and Drusus: Suet. *Tib.* 54.1, Tac. *Ann.* 4.4.1.

slender arms and cover your shoulders with the white robe.[17]

Probably other male relatives or close friends, out of a sense of moral responsibility and duty to the boy's father, ensured that Crispinus received his toga.

The case of Pudens, Apuleius' stepson, falls somewhere between Propertius' situation and Crispinus'. From Apuleius' speech, the *Apologia*, we know that Pudens' father died when the boy was quite young, possibly only two or three, and that his mother, Pudentilla, had remained a widow for fourteen years until she and Apuleius were married. Pudens' brother, Pontianus, had been appointed his *tutor* and was still alive when his brother put on the *toga virilis*.[18] Yet the boy was also surrounded by various other individuals who could have determined when he was to assume the toga, including his paternal uncle Sicinius Aemilianus, and Pontianus' future father-in-law, Herennius Rufinus, who, according to Apuleius, took a personal interest in the welfare of the boy. At the time of Pudens' ceremony, Apuleius was not yet his stepfather so may not have had any say in the matter. Apuleius presents Pudentilla as a very capable, independent woman in managing her private affairs, from her finances to her own marriage, but he does not mention her involvement in the ceremony until her distribution of *sportulae* to the people of Oea in Tripolitania. Who then determined when

---

[17]Stat. *Silv.* 5.2.64-67: *nec genitor iuxta; fatis namque haustus iniquis | occidit et geminam prolem sine praeside linquens; | nec saltem teneris ostrum puerile lacertis | exuit albentique umeros induxit amictu.* See below for attendance at coming of age rites as a social duty. According to the *Life* of Persius (3), Persius lost his father when he was six and then his stepfather shortly after his mother remarried. There is no indication, however, either of when his mother remarried or whether the stepfather died before Persius assumed the toga. Furthermore, the reliability of the *Life* is questionable so we ought to be cautious including Persius as an additional example of a fatherless *novus togatus*. See below in Chapter Four for further discussion.

[18]Pudens' age, either at the time of Apuleius' trial or at his assumption of the toga is not mentioned. Apuleius frequently emphasizes how young his stepson is and insinuates that he took the toga somewhat prematurely, but as Butler and Owen 1914: *xx* n. 10 propose, Pudens cannot have been much younger than eighteen at the time of the trial, which would mean that he received his toga probably at sixteen or seventeen. Both boys had previously been *in potestate paterni* of their grandfather, Sicinius Clarus (*Apol.* 68.2) but when he died, Pontianus was old enough to be legally independent and be appointed his brother's *tutor* (*Apol.* 68.6).

Pudens would take the toga? Apuleius tells us that both Pontianus and Pudens were *idoneos*, of suitable ages, to marry and to don the toga respectively, and later, that Apuleius' own marriage was only slightly delayed because Pontianus' and Pudens' celebrations were to occur first. Perhaps Pontianus took it upon himself to oversee his brother's entry into adulthood on the same day that he himself entered into matrimony. Yet we learn from Apuleius that Pudens had earlier left his mother's residence to stay with his uncle while he was still a boy. Apuleius accused Aemilianus of taking Pudens in as a child and turning him out a man, suggesting that perhaps Aemilianus and not Pontianus was responsible for the granting of Pudens' toga. We cannot know for certain who actually made the ultimate decision, but the sheer number of possibilities suggests that in some families, what should have been a happy occasion might have instead been marred by tensions and rivalries.[19]

Of course not all boys who celebrated their coming of age were the sons of the ruling elite or famous from their literary connections. Phaedrus tells the fictional story of a man who was deeply in love with his wife and on the verge of giving his son the toga when tragedy intervened. In an effort to substitute himself as the nearest heir in place of the man's son, the man's freedman had taken him aside and told him cruel lies about the boy and questioned the fidelity of the man's wife. Later, in a moment of confusion, the man accidentally stabbed and killed his son before the boy had the opportunity to become a man.[20] Phaedrus' fable, though

---

[19]Apul. *Apol.* 70.7: *iam deum voluntate ipsum uxori, fratrem eius virili togae idoneos esse.* 'Now, by the will of the gods, they were suitable ages, Pontianus himself to marry and his brother to assume the *toga virilis*.' 73.9: *Vix ab eo tantulam moram impetramus, dum prius ipse uxorem duceret, frater eius virilis togae usum auspicaretur: tunc deinde ut nos coniungeremur.* 'From him [Pontianus] we scarcely obtained a short delay, just until the time when he himself should have taken a wife and when his brother would assume the *toga virilis*: then we could have celebrated our marriage.' 98.5: *Investem a nobis accepisti; vesticipem ilico reddidisti.* 'He was a mere boy when you took him from us: you have promptly made him into a man.'

[20]Phaedrus 3.10.9-17: *Maritus quidam cum diligeret coniugem | togamque puram iam pararet filio, | seductus in secretum a liberto est suo, | sperante heredem suffici se proximum.| qui cum de puero multa mentitus foret | et plura de flagitiis castae mulieris,| adiecit id quod sentiebat maxime | doliturum amanti, venitare adulterum | stuproque turpi pollui famam domus.* 'A certain married man, although he loved his wife and was preparing

fictional and moralistic, does give us a suggestion of the lives of ordinary Roman citizens. In addition to illustrating the importance of family and the value of children, Phaedrus' tale also places the ceremony specifically within the context of the Roman family.

In many of the sources, there are hints of other aspects of the ceremony besides the bestowing of a new robe upon the boy. Horace perhaps alludes to the dedication of a freeborn boy's locket to the household gods. Statius speaks of a father taking off the 'purple of boyhood' and replacing it with a pure white garment. Suetonius records a father bringing his sons into the Forum for the first time. Did all of these separate acts have some relation to one another, and if so, in what order did they combine to form the *rite de passage* so often associated solely with the receipt of the *toga virilis*?

Reconstruction of a Roman Boy's *rite de passage*

A boy's ritual passage into manhood was actually marked by several distinct ceremonies. It began with the laying aside of the *bulla* and *toga praetexta*. These were the *insignia puerorum ingenuorum,* the emblems of freeborn Roman boys.[21] The *bulla*, when

---

to give the pure toga to his son, was taken aside in secret by his freedman who hoped to have himself substituted as the nearest heir. This man, when he had invented many lies about the boy and even more about the shameful crimes of his wife's chastity, added something which he felt would especially cause pain to one beloved, that a lover often came over, a rumour dishonouring the house by a disgraceful sexual offense.'

[21]The *bulla* and *praetexta* are often referred to as the *insignia* of freeborn boys, either separately or together: Hor. *Ep.* 5.12, Val. Max. 5.6.8, Festus 36 *s.v. bulla aurea*, Macrob. *Sat.* 1.6.11, Anon. *De vir. ill.* 6.9. Plutarch *QR* 101 calls the *bulla* τὸ παιδικὸν παράσημον, a badge of childhood, and suggests that it was used to distinguish freeborn boys (ἐλεύθεροι παίδες) from slaves. Cf. Cic. *Verr.* 2.1.113 where he speaks of a girl's *praetexta* as part of her *ornamenta ingenuitatis*. Girls, however, did not wear the *bulla*. There is only one mention of a girl wearing a *bulla* -- in Plautus' *Rudens* 1171; the slave girl, Palaestra announces that 'it is a golden *bulla*, which my father gave to me on the day I was born.' There are several problems with this brief reference. First, the girl is a slave and nowhere is it attested that *bullae* were given to slave children. Secondly, the custom was to give freeborn baby boys the *bulla* on the *dies lustricus* which fell nine days after birth, not on the actual birth day. Finally, as Palmer 1998: 44 notes, there are no other references in literature, nor any in art depicting a girl wearing the *bulla* 'or any comparable accessory' to provide more conclusive evidence of the practice. Cf. Goette 1986: 137-138.

worn as a badge of free birth, was often fashioned in gold, especially for upper-class Roman boys, though Palmer argues that all freeborn boys wore lockets made of gold.[22] Statius (*Silv.* 5.3.119-120) proudly states that his father had worn the *nobile...aurum* ('the noble gold') granted at birth along with the *toga praetexta* to honour his freeborn, upper-class status (*stirpis honore datos*). The *bulla* was hung from a loose leather thong (*lorum*) as we see on the *Ara Pacis*, for example, in the representations of Drusus, the son of Germanicus and Antonia Minor, and Gnaeus Domitius Ahenobarbus, the son of L. Domitius Ahenobarbus and Antonia Maior.[23] Juvenal (5.164-164) suggests that a gold *bulla* was typical of affluent Romans living in the late first century CE, and calls it *Etruscum...aurum*, alluding to its antiquity. But he also provides evidence for *bullae* made of other materials for boys of the lower orders when he comments on 'the poor boy's leather badge' (*nodus...signum de paupere loro*). Braund takes Juvenal's remarks very literally and proposes that 'the amulet consisted of a knot (*nodus*) in a leather thong (*loro*),' but that '[t]his too is an indication (*signum*) of free status.'[24] This leather *bulla* may have actually been a small pouch rather than a knotted thong,

---

[22]Palmer 1998, who discusses *bullae* in great detail, is adamant that freeborn boys only wore golden *bullae*, and stresses that those made of leather or other materials were different from the lockets worn by freeborn boys. While there are many references to the necklace as a *bulla aurea* (e.g. Plut. *Sert.* 14.4, Juv. 5.164, Festus 36 *s.v. bulla aurea*, Macrob. *Sat.* 1.6.8, 11), I am not convinced that *all* freeborn boys wore golden *bullae* as Palmer insists. The sources clearly state that the *bulla* was a mark of free birth but do not qualify that by adding 'when made of gold.' If this were the case, then the custom would be limited to a very small segment of the population who could afford such luxury. Furthermore, we might expect to see the *bulla* described as a mark of *nobilitas* rather than the more general and inclusive *ingenuitas*. The existence of bronze *bullae* used to adorn animals, namely horses and elephants, suggests that there may have been other options available to poorer families than either gold or leather for their sons' *bullae*. On animal *bullae*, see Warden 1983: 70.

[23]See Gabelmann 1985: 523. Palmer details Roman (rather than Etruscan) depictions of the *bulla* suspended from a *lorum:* on the Ara Pacis, as well as on what he suggests may be a fragment of an altar to the Lares [Augusti] (1998: 40), in addition to a statue once on the Capitol of Marcus Aemilius Lepidus (consul 187 BCE) to commemorate his act of valor which dates to 215/14 BCE (1998: 21-24) and is described by Valerius Maximus (3.1.1). The fragmentary altar is pictured in Goette 1986: 139.

[24]Braund 1996: 303.

though there is no description of its form to clarify Juvenal's vague statement.[25]

There is some disagreement in the sources about the actual shape of the locket. Plutarch (*Rom.* 20.3) asserts that it was bubble-shaped and was thus called a *bulla,* the same word being used to denote a water bubble. Elsewhere (*QR* 101) he dismisses the contention that the word is derived from the Greek βουλή, meaning counsel or advice, but Festus (36) nonetheless adheres to that etymology. Macrobius (*Sat.* 1.6.17) reports that in his day some proposed that it was heart-shaped, and furthermore adds (*Sat.* 1.6.9) that the locket contained charms (*remedia*) believed to be *adversus invidiam valentissima*, of the greatest potency in warding off the Evil Eye.

Probably the father if present, or perhaps another relative or attendee, removed the locket from the boy's neck so that the boy could subsequently dedicate it to the gods. Perhaps standing or kneeling before the *lararium,* the boy presented his *bulla* to the Lares,

---

[25]Courtney 1980: 250 argues that 'it would consist merely of a knot in a leather thong,' and cites Onians 1973: 376 n. 8 who asserts that the evidence for sacral knots worn in Minoan times 'explains' Juvenal's *nodus...de paupere loro*. The extent to which a very early Greek practice can elucidate a Roman custom is, however, highly questionable. Palmer 1998: 45 dismisses the possibility of a leather *bulla* entirely, stating that '[i]n defiance of common sense a leather *bulla* has been foisted on the sons of freedmen....The scholion on Juvenal *Sat.* 5.165 is vague enough on the poet's *vel nodus tantum et signum de paupere loro* because he did not understand when he wrote *antiquitus nobilium pueri bullas aureas habebant, pauperum de loris, signum libertatis*. Also in writing the note the imperfect tense showed the 'scholiast's' acknowledgement of the defunct custom.' But a passage of Pseudo-Asconius (on Cicero *Verr.* 2.1.152) also suggests the existence of a leather *bulla*: *bulla suspendi in collo infantibus ingenuis solet aurea, libertinis scortea, quasi bullientis aquae* / 'the *bulla* that was hung from the necks of freeborn babies was usually gold, for [the infants] of freedmen it was leather, as if of bubbling water.' Cf. Macrob. *Sat.* 1.6.14: *libertinorum quoque filii...lorum in collo pro bullae decore gestarent* / 'the sons of freedmen even wore the leather thong on their necks instead of the distinction of the *bulla*.' Palmer 1998: 46, however, discards Pseudo-Asconius' remarks, stating that '[f]ew would want to base an argument on the 'bubbling water' of Pseudo-Asconius. What was clearly a thong in the classical authors and on the monuments has become a leathern *bulla*, and so it has come to have a false existence today. A leather thong has been misconstrued for a leather pouch.' Yet when we consider the probable apotropaic function of the *bulla*, discussed below [and in more complete detail in Chapter Five], the likelihood is greater that the *bulla* of lower-class boys was sometimes made of leather in the form of a pouch so that it could hold the *remedia* (curatives) that reputedly gave the *bulla* its protective qualities.

as Persius tells us from personal experience:

> When first the guardianship of the purple was removed from me, trembling,
> and the *bulla* was hung up as a gift to the girted Lares...[26]

He may have then made an additional offering or sacrifice to the Lares. Spelt, grapes, garlands of grain, honeycombs and honey cakes are mentioned specifically in connection with the Lares.[27]

As its name suggests, the *lararium* was a shrine to the Lares, the household gods, and was the center of domestic worship. A *lararium* might be located in one of several rooms in a Roman house. In Pompeii, for example, many kitchens had *lararia* while other shrines have been found in *atria* and peristyles. George suggests that the latter shrines may have been used primarily by the master and his family, while the kitchen *lararia* may have been reserved more for slaves.[28] For upper-class Roman boys, the *lararium* in the *atrium* was probably selected for their coming of age rites as it was this room that was chosen for various family rituals including naming ceremonies (*nominalia*), girls' dedication of dolls and other objects prior to

---

[26]Pers. 5.30-31: *cum primum pavido custos mihi purpura cessit, | bullaque succinctis Laribus donata pependit.* Prop. 4.1.131-132: *mox ubi bulla rudi dimissast aurea collo, | matris et ante deos libera sumpta toga* / 'Next, when the golden *bulla* was removed from your innocent neck, and you donned the toga of freedom before your mother's gods.' As noted above, Propertius' father had died sometime earlier as evidenced by the reference to his mother's gods, and the passive *dimassast* provides no detail about those participating in the ceremony at all. This is also the case for Persius 5.30, the second of the two references which discuss the process directly, in which the poet also uses an impersonal construction and does not indicate who actually took off the *bulla*.

[27]Juv. 9.137-138: incense or frankincense, spelt, garlands; Hor. *Carm.* 3.23.3-4: incense, grain; Tib. 1.10.21-24: grapes, garlands, honey cakes (*liba*), honeycomb.

[28]George 1997: 316-317. The decoration of the *lararia* seem to provide some clues about who the intended users would be, as George notes 1997: 317 n. 41. For example, the scenes painted in shrines found in *atria* and peristyles tend to depict the *penates* (gods of the store-cupboards), the worship of whom belonged to the *paterfamilias* himself. In the kitchen *lararia*, however, there is greater emphasis on the Lares and the Genius, and the responsibility of the cult of these latter deities resided mainly with freedmen and slaves. Cf. Fröhlich 1995: 205.

marriage, and rituals of death and mourning.[29] The *atrium* was a covered forecourt with a central catchment pool (*impluvium*), as well as statuary, basins, marble furnishings such as tables, and often several wooden chests and cupboards for storage purposes.[30]

Evidence from Pompeii and Herculaneum may help to set the ceremony in its proper social and spatial context for lower-class freeborn boys. *Lararia* have been discovered here in *insulae* which were often (over)crowded residences similar to tenement blocks. For poor, struggling citizens living in squalid conditions with few joys in life, a son's arrival at manhood might have been cause for special celebration. Having a separate shrine for each family in a busy *insula* would have been an important factor in preserving family unity and facilitating domestic worship. In the Casa del Bicentenario in Pompeii, a *lararium* painting was situated immediately about the *fauces* (entrance) while the upstairs rooms in the same complex had a handsome wooden shrine, suggesting that separate apartments had their own distinct *lararia*. Similarly, in the Casa a Graticcio, one upstairs flat has a wooden *lararium* as does the front (lower) flat.[31]

*Lararia*found in Pompeii and Herculaneum were either in the form of a small shrine (*aedicula*), a wall-painting of the household deities, or a combination of these two styles.[32] Representations of images of the deities honoured and provision for sacrifice were common features of all *lararia*.[33] The Lares themselves are usually depicted as curly-haired youths wearing high-girt tunics and boots, and holding in their hands the attributes of peace and plenty such as *rhyta*, *paterae*, and *cornucopiae*. Sometimes they appear in wall-paintings as dancing figures with their tunics or togas tucked up, as in Persius' description of his

---

[29]Clarke 1991: 9-10.

[30]Allison 1997: 333-334.

[31]Wallace-Hadrill 1994: 110.

[32]Allison 1997: 333.

[33]Orr 1978: 1576-1577.

dedication to the *succintis Laribus*.[34] In addition to the Lares and the Genius (the deity associated specifically with the *paterfamilias*), a wide range of Roman gods are often shown, including Fortuna, Vesta, Bacchus, Mercury and Hercules; there are also some examples of gods of Egyptian origin such as Isis and Harpocrates.[35] Plants and flowers as well as various cult animals feature regularly in *lararium* paintings and many Pompeian shrines are covered with painted decorations of garlands in addition to having means of hanging actual floral wreaths and garlands.[36]

Following the dedication of the *bulla*, the *toga praetexta* would be removed. The *toga praetexta* was a distinctive garment with a purple border running around its lower edge, in contrast to the all-white *toga virilis*.[37] Although in some instances a boy's father removed the *praetexta* and then laid it aside, never to be worn again, it seems that more often the boy discarded the *praetexta* himself.[38] In Cicero's *De Amicitia* (10.33), Laelius, one of the

---

[34]Typical depictions: Waites 1920: 251, Orr 1978: 1568, 1577-1580. Ovid refers to the *incinctos Lares* (*Fasti* 2.634), 'the Lares with their girt-up tunics.' Cf. Valerius Maximus' description of the statue of M. Aemilius Lepidus: *statua bullata et incincta praetexta* (3.1.1).

[35]Orr 1978: 1580-1581 mentions Fortuna, Vesta and Bacchus as the most popular deities in Pompeian shrines and mentions that Isis-Fortunata is also present. Fröhlich 1995: 205 adds to the list Hercules, Mercury and Minerva, as well as Harpocrates.

[36]Floral decoration and provision for garlands etc.: Orr 1978: 1583. Many *lararia* were decorated in vibrant colours and with ornate detail. See both the full-length study of Fröhlich 1991 and his more recent study 1995 for full-colour representations.

[37]Kleijwegt 1991: 306 claims that the toga was 'an expensive piece of clothing and embroidered with a purple band it was definitely only accessible to a small elite: it functioned as an important mechanism for distinguishing status.' While he is correct that the *praetexta* was a status marker, I do not find the argument convincing that only *elite* freeborn children wore this garment. Again, as in the case of the *bulla*, the sources refer to the *praetexta* as a marker of freeborn not elite status.

[38]Statius (*Silv.* 5.2.66-67) emphasizes that Crispinus' father did not remove the *praetexta* because he had already died, suggesting that if present, a father might perform this part of the rite *ipse*. Other sources, however, refer to the process impersonally. For example, Propertius (3.15.3) informs us that *mihi praetexti pudor est relevatus amictus*, 'the restraint of boyhood's garb was lifted from me' (trans. Goold) and Persius reports that *custos mihi purpura cessit*, 'the guardianship of the purple was removed from me' (see Harvey 1981: 135 for this meaning

interlocutors, notes that often boys set aside their closest childhood friendships along with the *toga praetexta*. Plutarch (*De Aud.* 37C) argued that boys abandoned their sense of shame and modesty when they removed their childhood attire.[39] Nevertheless, the occasion was a happy one for the boy as Seneca (*Ep.* 4.2) reminded his friend Lucilius: 'you certainly remember how much joy you felt when you laid aside the *praetexta* and donned the *toga virilis*, and were escorted to the Forum.'[40] Statius (*Silv.* 5.3.116-120) suggests that it was a cause for celebration regardless of finances, when he describes the circumstances surrounding his father's passage to manhood:

> No birth of obscure blood disgraced you, nor was your family without distinction though your parents' fortunes were constrained by their expenses; for indeed it was in lavish ceremony that Infancy chose you to set aside the purple-edged robe, given in honour of your birth, and the proud gold from your breast.[41]

From most of the sources, it seems that consecrating the *bulla* and laying aside the *praetexta* took place within the house. According to Nicolaus of Damascus (4.8), however, Augustus changed from his *toga praetexta* into his *toga virilis* in the Roman Forum in front of crowds of onlookers. But it is important to keep in mind that Nicolaus' *Life of Augustus* is in many ways as much a panegyric as an historical biography. While it is possible that men

---

of *cessit*).

[39]Cic. *Amic.* 10.33: *summi puerorum amores saepe una cum praetexta toga ponerentur*, 'boys' greatest loves are set aside together with the *toga praetexta*.' Plut. *De Aud.* 37C: ἔνιοι νέων τῶν ἅμα τῷ τὸ παιδικὸν ἱμάτιον ἀποθέσθαι συναποθέμενοι τὸ αἰδεῖσθαι καὶ φοβεῖσθαι / 'some youths, when laying aside the dress of childhood, lay aside their sense of shame and fear together with it.'

[40]*tenes utique memoria quantum senseris gaudium cum praetexta posita sumpsisti virilem togam et in forum deductus es.*

[41]*non tibi deformes obscuri sanguinis ortus | nec sine luce genus, quamquam fortuna parentum | artior expensis. etenim te divite ritu | ponere purpureos Infantia legit amictus | stirpis honore datos et nobile pectoris aurum.* Hardie 1983: 6 proposes that *divite ritu* may indicate that 'a small-town merchant splashed out too much....the whole passage, with its symbolic references to the toga and the *bulla*, is strained. Statius' grandfather was probably a less than successful businessman.'

of high profile, such as the members of the Imperial family, did perform their ceremony in a public venue rather than at home, it seems unlikely that this would have been a regular occurrence.[42]

The boy then put on a special tunic called the *tunica recta* or sometimes *tunica regilla*, that his father gave him to wear underneath the *toga virilis* he would soon receive. This was a white tunic woven on an archaic upright loom from top to bottom with the weaver standing rather than seated.[43] Festus (289; cf. 277) tells us that boys wore this for good luck (*ominis causa*).[44] One scholar suggests that the boy slept in the *tunica recta* the night before his ceremony just as brides-to-be did, but Festus' entry is not clear on this matter and it is equally possible that he only put it on when he was about to don his new toga as well.[45]

---

[42]Nic. Dam. 4.8: κατέβαινε δὲ εἰς τὴν ἀγορὰν περὶ ἔτη μάλιστα γεγονὼς ιδ′, ὥστε ἀποθέσθαι μὲν αὐτὸν ἤδη τὴν περιπόρφυρον ἐσθῆτα, ἀναλαβεῖν δὲ τὴν καθαράν. 'He went down into the Forum at about the right age, so that he might lay aside at that time the purple-edged garment, and take up the pure [white] one.'

[43]See Forbes 1964: 203-206 for further on the loom called a warp-weighted loom.

[44]Festus 289: *Regillis tunicis, albis, et reticulis luteis utrisque <re>ctis, textis susum versum a stantibus, pridie nuptiarum diem virgines indutae cubitum ibant ominis causa; ut etiam in togis virilibus dandis observari solet.* 'For good luck, on the night before their wedding day, virgins used to go to sleep clothed in royal white tunics and yellow hairnets, both woven (by people) standing in front of an upright loom. Boys about to be given the *toga virilis* also observe this practice [i.e. they too wear the white tunic for good luck].' Cf. Festus 277, a passage which seems to have been overlooked by scholars in regards to the *toga virilis* ceremony: *Rectae appellantur vestimenta virilia, quae patres liberis suis conficienda curant ominis causa: ita usurpata quod a stantibus et in altitudinem texuntur. 'Rectae* [straight tunics] are called masculine garments, which fathers provide for their children [sons?] for the purpose of securing good luck: because they are woven vertically [upwards] by weavers who are standing, they are so named.' Pliny (*HN* 8.74) does not describe how the garments are woven but does mention that they are worn by both new brides and new *togati*. On the *tunica recta* in connection with brides, see for example La Follette 1994: 54-55, Staples 1998: 89 and Treggiari 1991a: 163.

[45]Fraschetti 1997: 65. The passage in Festus (289) is somewhat problematic. The issue hinges largely on how one interprets the final phrase *ut etiam in togis virilibus dandis observari solet*. Other scholars who refer to this passage treat it in a variety of ways. La Follette 1994: 56 translates it 'just as is the custom also in the giving of the toga virilis to boys' but is unclear about what this means and when the boy would take up the garment. Staples

In the next stage of the ceremony, the boy's father handed his son the *toga virilis*, the toga worn by adult men. No doubt the boy required some assistance in order to drape his toga properly. The toga could be a cumbersome garment to arrange neatly and securely, while movement in it with ease and style required not only practice but skill. Quintilian (*Inst.* 11.3.137-144) stressed how important it was for orators to appear *splendidus et virilis* ('distinguished and manly') in their togas and outlined in great detail the appropriate ways to wear a toga, such as not covering up too much of the neck or letting the toga graze the heels of one's shoes. Tertullian (*De Pallio* 5.1) could not understand why Romans persisted in wearing the toga, a garment which necessitated an artist to execute its tedious arrangement. He extolled instead the virtues of the *pallium*, a garment a man could wear rather than bear as a burden (*habere vestem an baiulare?*).[46] Just as an orator would be under the eyes of his audience, so too would the boy who was about to make his first public appearance as a man; it was critical, therefore, that nothing was out of place, least of all the toga which instantly signified his newly acquired status.

The replacement of the clothes worn as a child with adult dress must have been an extraordinary experience for the boy himself and for those witnessing his visual transformation. Valerius Maximus (5.4.4) reports that Marcus Cotta (consul 74 BCE) inaugurated his talent and his youth on the day on which he took the toga: *et ingenium et*

1998: 89 similarly does not indicate when she believes the boy would have put on the tunic and instead concentrates on the question of how often the practice of weaving the tunic would have actually been observed. Néraudau 1979: 148, however, envisions the boy putting on the *tunica recta* immediately before the *toga virilis*: 'Dépouillé des vêtements qui ont symbolisé son enfance, le garçon revêt en signe de bon présage la *tunica recta*, puis la toge.'

[46]Cf. Gell. *NA* 1.5.2 and Macrob. *Sat.* 3.13.4-6 who both provide anecdotes about Quintus Hortensius, a contemporary of Cicero, who was known for his great care and exactness in arranging the folds of his toga. Stone 1994: 17 estimates that the toga on the Etrusco-Roman statue known as the Arringatore (third century BCE), was slightly over 12 feet or 3.7 metres in length. In comparison, the toga of the first century CE which boys such as Persius and Crispinus would have donned, was 15-18 feet or 4.8-5.0 metres. One can readily imagine how a garment of such length and considerable weight might be very difficult to arrange properly and stylishly, but without impeding necessary movement! On the toga in general, including the problems of draping, see Wilson 1924, Goette 1990 and Stone 1994.

adulescentiam praeclaro opere auspicatus. Apuleius (*Apol.* 73.9) also uses the verb *auspicor* to describe Pudens' assumption of the *toga virilis*, suggesting that a boy's first appearance in his *toga virilis* would have been an awesome, emotionally and religiously charged moment for all of those present. It also reminds us that these different phases of the ceremony were part of a socio-religious ritual that began with an offering to the gods and included further acts of thanksgiving. This was not simply a mechanical performance but rather a celebration for the family and the community of a boy's coming of age under the auspices of the gods.

As the boy dressed in his new toga, he became the focus of pride and admiration for those attending the ceremony. We know very few specific details about who actually observed these more private aspects of a boy's transition to manhood. Though the sources emphasize only the importance of the father's presence, we might reasonably assume that other members of the boy's family, particularly his mother and siblings, shared in this defining moment of his young life. A passage in Ovid's autobiographical poem, *Tristia* 4.10, suggests that he and his brother may have assumed their togas in a joint ceremony not long before his brother's death:

> Meanwhile, as the years slipped away with silent footsteps,
> my brother and I donned the toga of a freer life.[47]

A similar interpretation seems to fit Horace's remarks (*Carm.* 1.36.9) about boyhood friends named Numida and Lamia who *mutataeque simul togae*, 'changed their togas together' or 'at the same time.' The sense of the two translations is not radically different; the latter, however, allows for the possibility that the boys did not actually celebrate in a common ceremony, but rather that both celebrations occurred on the same day or maybe even within a particular span of days or weeks.

Two late second or early third century CE inscriptions from Rome suggest that in addition to members of the immediate family, members of the *familia* (the household) might attend the ceremony. In both inscriptions, a certain Lucius Ragonius is commemorated *ob honorem togae virilis*, 'in honour of his assumption of the *toga virilis*,' in one by his slave

---

[47]Ov. *Tr.* 4.10.27-28: *interea, tacito passu labentibus annis,| liberior fratri sumpta mihique toga est.*

Verecundinus, and in another by a slave named Ofellius. Though neither text states that these slaves were present for their master's rites, it is entirely possible that they were. Verecundinus and Ofellius seem to have had a close relationship with their master. Verecundinus, for example, refers to him as *dominus optimus*.[48] Furthermore, though it is mere conjecture, Ragonius and his slaves may have lived together from birth as *collactanei*, children simultaneously breast-fed by the same woman. If this was the case, the young master and his slaves of similar age would have spent a considerable amount of time together under the watchful eye of a woman who was nurse to one and mother to another. By the time these boys reached their early teens, they might have become friends despite the difference in power and status. When the time came for Ragonius to undergo his adolescent rites of passage, Verecundinus and Ofellius may have attended the ceremony and subsequently honoured their master and friend by erecting two memorials of the occasion.[49]

Aside from members of the *familia*, personal remarks by Pliny and Tertullian indicate that influential individuals in the community, who might simultaneously be friends of the boy's parents, might be asked to attend the ceremony. Pliny (*Ep.* 1.9.1-3) mentions to his friend Minicius Fundanus how he often spent his days in Rome performing the social duties (*officia*) required of a man of his stature. He notes that on any single day he might attend a *toga virilis* ceremony, a betrothal, or a wedding, and that such engagements might occupy his time for several successive days.[50] These *officia* expected of Pliny were one aspect of the institution

---

[48]*CIL* 5.2089: *L. Ragonio L. f.* | *Pap. Tuscen* | *Quintiano C. I.* | *ob honorem* | *togae virilis* | *Verecundinus ser.* | *domino optimo*; 6.1504: *L. Ragonio L. f. Pap.* | *Urinatio Tuscenio* | *Quintiano* | *domino, ob honorem* | *togae virilis* | *Ofellius ser. ark.*

[49]On *collactanei/ae*, see Bradley 1991a: 145, 149-155.

[50]Plin. *Ep.* 1.9.1-3: *Mirum est quam singulis diebus in urbe ratio aut constet aut constare videatur, pluribus iunctisque non constet. Nam si quem interroges. 'Hodie quid egisti?' respondeat: 'Officio togae virilis interfui, sponsalia aut nuptias frequentavi, ille me ad signandum testamentum, ille in advocationem, ille in consilium rogavit.' Haec quo die feceris, necessaria, eadem, si cotidie fecisse te reputes, inania videntur, multo magis cum secesseris. Tunc enim subit recordatio: 'Quot dies quam frigidis rebus absumpsi!'* 'It is extraordinary how, if one takes a single day spent in Rome, one can give a more or less accurate account of it, but scarcely any account at all of several days put together. If you ask

of *amicitia*, political friendship. Making an appearance at a *toga virilis* ceremony was a significant gesture. In a letter addressed to the emperor Trajan, Pliny (*Ep.* 10.116) informed him that in Pontus and Bithynia it was common practice to issue invitations to all of the local senators and many of the *plebs* as well, for affairs such as *toga virilis* ceremonies and marriages. Pliny goes on to say that sometimes over a thousand invitations were extended, which may be an exaggeration, or he may be alluding to the public aspects of the rite which took place in the Forum or other public locales.[51]

At a later date, Christians of high profile sometimes attended coming of age ceremonies. In the *De Idololatria* (16.1-3), Tertullian discusses whether a Christian should attend various Roman private and public ceremonies such as the *sollemnitas togae purae*, marriages, and *nominalia*. He refers to attendance at these celebrations as *officia* for which one must consider the reasons for fulfilling them. He concludes that the *toga virilis* ceremony and marriages, for example, are in themselves pure and not for the purpose of paying homage to idols, and that though they include the element of sacrifice, this does not have to override one's ability to attend: 'Let me be invited and let the reason for my social service (*officii*) be

---

anyone what he did that day, the answer would be: 'I was present at a coming-of-age ceremony, a betrothal, or a wedding. I was called on to witness a will, to support someone in court or to act as assessor.' All this seems important on the actual day, but quite pointless if you consider that you have done the same sort of thing every day, and much more pointless if you think about it when you are out of town. It is then that you realize how many days you have wasted in trivialities' (trans. Radice, Loeb Classical Library).

[51]Plin. *Ep.* 10.116: *Qui virilem togam sumunt vel nuptias faciunt vel ineunt magistratum vel opus publicum dedicant, solent totam bulen atque etiam e plebe non exiguum numerum vocare binosque denarios vel singulos dare. Quod an celebrandum et quatemus putes, rogo scribas. Ipse enim, sicut arbitror, praesertim ex sollemnibus causis, concedendum ius istud invitationis, ita vereor ne ii qui mille homines, interdum etiam plures vocant, modum excedere et in speciem* διανομῆς *videantur.* 'It is general practice for people at their coming-of-age or marriage, and on entering upon office or dedicating a public building, to issue invitations to all the local senators and even to quite a number of the common people in order to distribute presents of one or two denarii. I pray you to let me know how far you think this should be allowed, if at all. My own feeling is that invitations of this kind may sometimes be permissible, especially on ceremonial occasions, but the practice of issuing a thousand or even more seems to go beyond all reasonable limits, and could be regarded as a form of corrupt practice' (trans. Radice, Loeb Classical Library).

not connected with a sacrifice, then the fulfillment of my service (*operae meae*) can also take place at pleasure.'[52]

Seneca's (*Ep.* 4.2) mention of Lucilius' rites clearly illustrates the close sequence of events: 'you certainly remember how much joy you felt when you laid aside the *praetexta* and donned the *toga virilis*, and were escorted to the Forum.'[53] Properly attired in his gleaming new toga, the boy departed for the Forum and ultimately the Capitol. This part of the ritual might have been commonly termed *ad Capitolium ire*, 'going to the Capitol.' Though some scholars erroneously assert that among the Romans this phrase was equivalent to the donning of the *toga virilis,* it is clear from the sources that the procession to the Capitol was a separate element in a complex, multifaceted ritual.[54] En route to the Forum, the boy and the members of his entourage may have passed old priestesses of Liber adorned with ivy-wreaths sacrificing *liba* (honey cakes) for interested purchasers. The cakes were like those a boy might offer to the Lares alongside his *bulla aurea* and were sold in the streets on the day of the Liberalia, March 17. For many fathers and sons, the Liberalia seems to have been preferential for the assumption of the toga. Cicero (*Att.* 6.1.12) intended to celebrate Quintus' ceremony on the Liberalia unless an addition to the calendar forbade him, and Ovid (*Fast.* 3.771-88) explores the possible reasons why the festival of Liber was often chosen by fathers

---

[52]Tert. *De Idol.* 16.3: *Sim vocatus nec ad sacrificium sit titulus officii, et operae meae expunctio quantum sibi licet* (text and trans. Waszink and Van Winden).

[53]Latin text cited above in n. 40.

[54]The fourth century commentator, Servius, seems to be the only source to use the expression or a variation of it. On the phrase *Iovis incrementum nutrimentum* (Jupiter's offspring being cared for) in *Eclogues* 4.49, he remarks that 'they say with merit that Jupiter cared for the growing of boys because when boys have donned the *toga virilis*, they go to the Capitol' / *sane Iovem merito puerorum dicunt incrementa curare, quia cum pueri togam virilem sumpserint, ad Capitolium eunt.* It is interesting to note that Servius refers to this custom in the present tense as a regular practice of late antiquity. Wiedemann 1989: 116 somehow interprets Servius' comment to mean that the *bulla* might be dedicated on the Capitol but there is no evidence to support this contention; furthermore he fails to recognize that the distinct phases of the ceremony were precisely that: distinct and therefore unique. He seems to suggest that the same expression was used to indicate both the dedication of the *bulla* on the Capitol and the assumption of the *toga virilis*.

for the granting of the *toga virilis*.[55] Yet in many instances, a boy's ceremony did not coincide with the Liberalia. In fact, Quintus Cicero is the only boy for whom we have conclusive evidence that he received his toga on March 17. No members of the Imperial family celebrated on the Liberalia, and the dates chosen seem to be quite arbitrary: Augustus on October 18, Tiberius on April 24, Galba on January 1.[56] Scheduling it for the Liberalia therefore may have been a convention less frequently observed than Ovid would have us believe.

Evidence on who actually accompanied the boy to the Forum is unfortunately scanty. There is a single explicit reference that states that Brutus led his son down to the Forum while his co-conspirators waited at the house of Cassius on the day that Julius Caesar was assassinated.[57] The circumstances surrounding this particular ceremony are of course unique, so we must be careful not to treat it as typical of the way Romans celebrated this *rite de passage*. It does, however, demonstrate once again the significant role of the father, first by overseeing the domestic rites and then by introducing his son for the first time as a man to the

---

[55]Priestesses of Liber: Varro *LL*. 6.3.14: *Liberalia dicta, quod per totum oppidum eo die sedent ut sacerdotes Liberi anus hedera coronatae cum libis et foculo pro emptore sacrificantes*. On the Liberalia and the significance of Ovid's lengthy passage, see below in Chapter Five.

[56]Augustus: *CIL* 10.8375 (= *ILS* 108); Tiberius: *CIL* I p. 316; Galba: Dio 56.29.5.

[57]Plut. *Brut*. 14.4: τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ τὸ καλούμενον ἀνδρεῖον ἱμάτιον ἀναλαμβάνοντα κατῆγον εἰς ἀγοράν / 'he led his son, who had assumed the so-called manly cloak, to the Forum.' The circumstances are even stranger when we consider how Brutus had already girt himself with a dagger (in preparation for the assassination) when he escorted his son to the Forum. Sources often cited in connection with the *toga virilis* refer to the introduction of boys to the Forum for a period of apprenticeship called the *tirocinium fori* (see Chapter Three). For example, Suet. *Aug*. 26.2 *quemque tirocinio deduceret in forum* ('when he led each one into the Forum for their *tirocinium*'); Suet. *Nero* 7.2 *deductus in forum tiro* ('he was introduced into the Forum as a 'new recruit' [the word *tiro* has a definite military flavour and is difficult to translate into English; the sense is derived from the word's use to describe new soldiers or recruits]'). Suet. *Tib*. 15.1 lacks any definite indication of whether the author is referring to the rites immediately following the assumption of the toga, or the introduction of a boy some time in the future: *Romam reversus deducto in forum filio Druso* / 'having returned to Rome, he introduced his son Drusus into the Forum.'

crowds thronging the Forum.[58] Plutarch's remarks are also useful in helping to determine when the passage to the Forum and indeed any of the various rites associated with a boy's coming of age took place. According to Suetonius (*Iul.* 81.4), Julius Caesar was not assassinated prior to the fifth hour on the Ides of March.[59] For Brutus to escort his son to the Forum before he murdered Caesar, he must have done so before the fifth hour. Carcopino estimates that at the winter solstice, the fifth hour would last from 10:31 to 11:15 a.m., whereas at the summer solstice, from approximately 9:29 to 10:44 a.m.[60] On the Ides of March, the fifth hour would probably begin around 10 o'clock.

A passage in Cicero's *Pro Murena* (69) has been used by some scholars to indicate when the procession to the Forum took place.[61] Cicero is attempting to justify why crowds of people came out to meet Murena upon his return to Rome. He notes that many were asked to turn out, as was the usual practice, and adds the following comment:

> in this city [i.e. Rome], we are accustomed to be asked to come almost immediately after midnight, for the purpose of leading down the sons of the humblest citizens, often from the farthest ends of the city.
>
> *qua in civitate rogati infimorum hominum filios prope de nocte ex ultima saepe urbe deductum venire soleamus.*

---

[58]Nic. Dam. 4.9 provides a good indication of the possible atmosphere and number of people a boy and his entourage might encounter in the Forum. Nicolaus is exaggerating when he reports that Augustus was gazed upon by *all* the people, but the Forum was a crowded place and no doubt many would show up to witness the son of Julius Caesar changing his toga and sacrificing to the gods.

[59]Suet. *Iul.* 81.4: *quinta fere hora progressus est libellumque insidiarum indicem ab obvio quodam porrectum libellis ceteris.*

[60]Carcopino 1941: 153. On the variation in the length of hours, he remarks that '[t]ime was perpetually fluid...The hours were originally calculated for daytime; and even when the water-clock made it possible to calculate the night hours by a simple reversal of the data which the sun-dial had furnished, it did not succeed in unifying them' (152).

[61]Marquardt 1886: 125, Dixon 1992: 102. Néraudau 1979 at first associates it with the *tirocinium* (112) but then later cites it in reference to the boy's procession to the Capitol (148).

He seems to be exaggerating the early hour as he proceeds in the next clause to state that men were prepared to greet Murena at the third hour which, even in the summer months, would only be approximately 7 o'clock in the morning. More important than Cicero's rhetoric is the interpretation of *deductum*. Though scholars have translated this as 'escorting to the Forum,' from an examination of similar uses of this verb it seems this meaning is not actually inherent in the verb at all. The Forum was in a downward direction, hence *de-duco,* but the idea of leading *down to the Forum* simply cannot be inferred from the verb alone. Furthermore, in other instances in which this verb is used, it is followed by a preposition and a direct object, and when the Forum is the destination, it is mentioned explicitly.[62]

Suetonius' description (*Claud.* 2.2.) of Claudius' passage to the Capitol may help to clarify the matter. He records that on the day when Claudius assumed the toga, he was taken by litter to the Capitol around midnight (*circa mediam noctem)* without the usual rites, that is, without the customary procession (*sine sollemni officio*). Mottershead proposes that the Imperial family 'wanted the minimum of fuss and attention' but that *circa mediam noctem* 'may well have been an exaggeration.'[63] If this is the case, then Cicero's remark in the *Pro*

---

[62]*TLL s.v. deduco,* section c. Other Republican authors, including Cicero himself in another passage, pair the verb with a preposition and object: e.g. Cic. *Mil.* 26 *ex Apennino deduxerat*; Caes. *Civ.* 3.21.3 *deduxit de rostris*; Liv. 30.33.9 *deductis ex asperrumis*. Cf. the examples given above in n. 57. Cicero's use of *deductum* in *Mur.* 69 is the only example of the supine listed under this verb. There is the additional problem of the awkward phrase *prope de nocte*. In his commentary on this passage, Long 1856: 140 notes that the literal meaning is 'almost by night' but that 'it really means almost immediately after midnight' just as *de die* signifies 'after midday.' He proposes that *de nocte* is acting in place of the full expression *de media nocte.* Dixon 1992: 102, however, takes the phrase to mean 'early in the morning' which might situate Cicero's reference at dawn or shortly thereafter. It is unlikely that the Forum would be especially populated at 5 or 6 o'clock in the morning. Leading a boy through the city center at this early hour, for the purpose of showing him off to onlookers as a man, would therefore be pointless.

[63]Mottershead 1986: 35. Suet. *Claud.* 2.2: *et togae virilis die circa mediam noctem sine sollemni officio lectica in Capitolium latus est.* These remarks follow comments earlier in the same chapter pertaining to Claudius' poor health which had the result that his adolescence was atypical: he did not attain a magistracy or a private career at the age he should have because his family deemed him incapable and he continued to have a *paedagogus* even after he was no longer *in tutela.*

Murena may actually refer to the procession of new *togati* to the Forum, in spite of the grammatical difficulties of the construction. Though we cannot attach a time to the procession with any certainty, the combined evidence suggests a morning ceremony was usual in Rome.

Depending on the size of the procession, and similarly how busy the Forum was, the journey to the Capitol might be a long one. Appian (*B. Civ.* 4.5.30), describing the proscriptions of the early 40s BCE, records how a new *togatus* named Atilius went with friends to sacrifice in the temples, presumably on the Capitol itself. He states that this was done according to ἔθος, custom or habit.[64] We do not know what the sacrifices consisted of, nor precisely in which temples the boy sacrificed, but it seems probable that he would have at some point made an offering to Jupiter in the temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus. He may have also sacrificed to Juventas, the goddess of youth, whose small shrine was housed in the *cella Minervae* in the temple noted above. While in the *aedicula* of Juventas, the boy might deposit a coin into her treasury to mark his arrival at manhood as Romans in the days of Servius Tullius are reported to have done. Juventas also had a temple of her own somewhere in the vicinity of the Circus Maximus and it is possible that the boy subsequently stopped here to sacrifice after he had completed his rites on the Capitol. An additional sacrifice might have been warranted at the statue to Liber Pater which was probably in the *Area Capitolina*, before the boy, his father, and friends made their way down the Capitol.[65]

We have very little evidence regarding what happened after the completion of the formal elements of the ceremony within the house, the Forum Romanum, and finally on the Capitol. Probably upper-class Romans invited their guests back to their home for a banquet or party so that the boy's parents could revel in their son's achievement, and the boy could

---

[64]App. *B. Civ.* 4.5.30: Ἀτίλιος δὲ ἄρτι τὴν τῶν τελείων περιθέμενος στολὴν ἦει μέν, ὡς ἔθος ἐστί, σὺν πομπῇ φίλων ἐπὶ θυσίας ἐς τὰ ἱερά / 'Atilius, having just assumed the robe of adulthood, went, as is the custom, with a procession of friends to the temples for sacrifices.'

[65]Richardson 1992 *s.v.* 'Iuppiter Optimus Maximus,' 'Iuventas,' and 'Liber Pater,' for a description and a list of source references. Treasury of Juventas: Dion. Hal. 4.15.5.

mingle with friends and family as a man rather than as a boy. It is clear from Pliny and Apuleius that some wealthy families distributed monetary gifts called *sportulae* to members of the community either at a public location, perhaps within the Forum, or outside of their residences. In Pontus and Bithynia, gifts of one or two denarii were handed out to people on such occasions, and Pliny (*Ep.* 10.116) expressed his concerns to Trajan about the possibility for corruption because hundreds or perhaps even more than a thousand invitations, and subsequently, small donations, were regularly issued. In Oea in Tripolitania, Pudentilla distributed HS 50 000, a sizable sum, to mark Pudens' assumption of the *toga virilis* and Pontianus' marriage.[66] Less affluent citizens may have occasionally given gifts of food rather than money -- as a man from Surrentum did who was honoured for his long-standing generosity to his community including a gift of cakes and mead to the people on the day when he came of age.[67] Members of the Imperial family also dispensed gifts to the public. *Congiaria* (largesses) were distributed when Germanicus' son, Nero, took the toga in 20 CE, and Antoninus Pius reputedly dedicated a temple and gave largesse in honour of Lucius Verus' assumption of the toga.[68]

Caligula's ceremony stands apart from most others because he was already eighteen when Tiberius finally bestowed the toga upon him at Capri. Perhaps it was because he was absent from Rome that neither *sportulae* nor *congiaria* were given to mark the occasion. Yet in 37 when he was proclaimed emperor, he generously compensated the people by paying out HS 240 per person which should have been distributed when he took the toga, and an additional amount of HS 60 apiece for interest that had accrued. His arrival at manhood is even more unique because he is reported to have assumed the toga and shaved his first beard

---

[66]Apul. *Apol.* 87.10. As Hunink 1997: 215 notes, a gift of HS 50 000 is 'considerable' when we learn from Apuleius that HS 60 000 is the price for a small estate (*Apol.* 101.5) in second century Tripolitania. Cf. Duncan-Jones 1982: 106 for other *sportula* distributions in comparison with Pudentilla's substantial expenditure.

[67]*CIL* 10.688.4-5: *hic togae virilis die | crustulum et mulsum populo dedit.*

[68]Nero: Suet. *Tib.* 54.1, Tac. *Ann.* 3.29.3, *Fasti Ostienses* 20 CE: *VII idus Iun. Nero to*[*g. vir.*] *sumpsit. cong. di*[*visum*] (Ehrenberg and Jones 1976: 41). Antoninus: SHA *Ver.* 3.1.

on the same day.[69]

The consecration of the first beard is often called *depositio barbae* and is sometimes associated with the assumption of the *toga virilis* by modern scholars. The sources, however, suggest that it usually did not follow the *toga virilis* ceremony with such immediacy as it did for Caligula. Augustus, for example, received his toga in 48 BCE, but did not dedicate his first beard until the year 39 when he was already 25. According to Dio (48.34.3), Augustus celebrated the occasion grandly himself and provided a feast for all citizens -- at public expense. From an epigram about Augustus' nephew, Marcellus, who is said to have returned from war and shaved his beard for the first time, the rites seem to have been celebrated publicly, at least within the Imperial family.[70] During a gymnastic contest several years after he had assumed the *toga virilis*, Nero placed the clippings from his first beard in a gold box ornamented with valuable pearls and dedicated it on the Capitol, after which oxen were sacrificed. The rites were followed by a festival and public feast.[71] Lucian (*D. Syr.* 60) tells us that the first clippings of a youth's beard were placed in a gold or silver vessel in a temple

---

[69]Compensation: Dio 59.2.2. Suet. *Calig.* 10.1: *undevicensimo aetatis anno accitus Capreas a Tiberio uno atque eodem die togam sumpsit barbamque posuit, sine ullo honore qualis contigerat tirocinio fratrum eius.* 'In his nineteenth year, he was summoned to Capri by Tiberius and on the very same day he assumed the toga and deposited his beard, without any of the honour such as what befell his brothers on the occasion of his *tirocinium*.'

[70]*Anth. Pal.* 6.161: Ἐσπερίου Μάρκελλος ἀνερχόμενος πολέμιου | σκυλοφόρος κραναῆς τέλσα πάρ' Ἰταλίης, | ξανθὴν πρῶτον ἔκειρε γενειάδα· βούλετο πατρὶς | οὗτος, καὶ πέμψαι παῖδα καὶ ἄνδρα λαβεῖν. 'Marcellus, returning from the Western war, receiving the spoils, to the boundaries of rocky Italy, first clipped his yellow beard. Such was the wish of his country, to send him as a boy and to take his back as a man.' He probably received his *toga virilis* some time prior to his departure as a soldier for *praetextati*, boys still wearing the *praetexta*, were not permitted to serve in the army and only did so under exceptional circumstances. See below in Chapter Three.

[71]Suet. *Nero* 12.4: *gymnico, quod in Saeptis edebat, inter buthysiae apparatum barbam primam posuit conditamque in auream pyxidem et pretiosissimis margaritis adornatam Capitolio consecravit.* Dio places the rite at the Juvenalia of 59 and says that Nero put his clippings in a small golden globe and offered them to Jupiter Capitolinus (61.19.1), then celebrated extensively (61.19.2-61.21.1). Suetonius may be describing the events of 60 (Bradley 1978: 88) but regardless, it is clear that this rite occurred several years after his assumption of the toga in 51.

and then sacrificed, after which the young man added his name to those already inscribed, presumably on a plaque affixed to a wall of the temple. He himself took part in these rites when he was young. Boys might honour one of several deities associated with youth, or perhaps a particular god connected with the growth of beards, 'Fortuna barbata' as Tertullian (*Ad nat.* 2.11.11) and Augustine (*De civ. D.* 4.11) suggest.[72] Some scholars argue that it was fundamentally a Greek tradition 'with no formal significance for Romans.'[73] Though it does not seem to have had the same significance of the *toga virilis* ceremony, it was apparently an important subsequent *rite de passage* for many. Even Trimalchio, the boorish freedman of Petronius' *Satyricon*, saved the clippings of his first beard and kept them secure in a large golden box for anyone to see.[74]

Conclusions

The objective of this chapter has been to reconstruct a Roman boy's coming of age ceremony, a celebration Statius (*Silv.* 5.3.118) described as a *dives ritus* -- a ritual that was 'rich' in the most comprehensive sense of the word. As we have seen, the passage to manhood comprises several distinct elements, and one can imagine that the cumulative effect of this series of dramatic rituals might have been great. In an effort to (re)capture much of the pageantry and excitement of this defining moment, and to draw together the many pieces of evidence to create a vivid, composite picture, I offer the following re-enactment of a Roman boy's *rite de passage.* To recreate the scene most effectively, I have combined diverse fragments of evidence spanning a wide range chronologically and geographically, and opted to envision how the ceremony might have been realized for a typical upper-class Roman boy

---

[72]Tert. *Ad nat.* 2.11.11: *<Est et Iu>venta novorum togatorum, virorum iam Fortuna barbata* (text: Borleffs). August. *De civ. D.* 4.11: *ipse sit et Fortuna barbata, quae adultos barba induat.* [Augustine is criticizing the ability for gods to have many attributes within the Roman system of polytheism, hence the use of *ipse* rather than *ipsa* because he is referring to the multi-faceted nature of Jupiter. Cf. his remarks on Iuventas quoted in Chapter One].

[73]Wiedemann 1989: 116-117.

[74]Petron. *Sat.* 29: *pyxis aurea non pusilla, in quo barbam ipsius conditam esse dicebant.*

and his family, rather than attempting to detail the rite for a genuine historical figure on the basis of limited evidence.

***

On the morning when he was to don the *toga virilis*, the boy entered the *atrium* to find members of his family, friends, and his child-minders gathered around the shrine to the Lares to witness the transformation that was about to take place. The boy approached the *lararium* which was decorated with garlands of flowers. He lifted the golden *bulla* over his head and, perhaps with trembling hands, hung it around the neck of the small statuette of the Lares. The room filled with the smell of incense as the boy performed a small sacrifice to offer his thanks to the gods. He removed the purple-bordered *toga praetexta* he had worn throughout his childhood, and prepared to assume the pure white *toga virilis*. He stood in the *tunica recta* that he had put on early in the morning in hopes of securing the favour of the gods, and waited for his father to hand him the toga that would from then on identify him as a Roman male citizen. The small crowd looked on, admiring the boy as he dressed in his new toga, and awaiting the procession that was to begin soon. For the boy, it was a joyous occasion to exchange togas, announcing that he had just become the newest adult member of the community.

The boy's father led him together with relatives and friends to the center of the city, the Forum Romanum, where small groups of people gathered around them in honour of the new *togatus*. Finally they made their way through the Forum and began the ascent to the Capitol. Upon arrival, the boy entered the temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus for the first time as a *novus togatus* to sacrifice to the god who oversaw the growth of young men. From there he proceeded to the small shrine of Juventas in the *cella Minervae*, dropping a coin in her treasury before leaving, as, according to legend, boys like him had done for hundreds of years. As the boy and his father set out to return home, their entourage grew with anticipation of the *sportulae* to be distributed when the boy-turned-man arrived home to complete his ceremonial passage to adulthood.

***

Now that the boy had laid aside his childhood *bulla* and *praetexta* for the *toga virilis*,

and celebrated his coming of age privately and publicly, was he really, in the eyes of society and his family, no longer a boy but rather a man? What were the practical implications of his assumption of the robe of an adult male? In the next chapter, we will examine the many practical consequences of a boy's arrival at manhood, the opportunities available to him in politics, the military, and religious office-holding, as well as his legal rights and status within the family.

CHAPTER THREE

Puer iuvenisque videri
Independence and Ambiguity:
The Practical Consequences of the *toga virilis*

Introduction

In book three of the *Metamorphoses*, Ovid devotes a lengthy passage to the fate of Narcissus, a youth whose love of his own image secures his demise (*Met.* 3.339-510). Ovid reports that when Narcissus reached the age of sixteen, about the age at which mortal boys donned the *toga virilis*, he seemed to be at once a boy and a young man (3.351-52).[1] As a stage of life, youth is a social and cultural construct, distinguished by its liminal and transitory nature, which makes assigning a single, universal definition impossible. Youth is situated 'somewhere between the shifting margins of infantile dependency and adult autonomy, within the period -- a period of perpetual change -- in which adolescent potential reaches turbulent fulfillment.'[2] In many societies, adolescents enjoy a certain level of freedom, released from the marginality and passivity of childhood. At the same time, they neither possess the full powers nor the authority afforded to adults. The position they occupy is often ambiguous, residing on the borders between immaturity and maturity, complete exclusion and total inclusion. This is certainly true for Roman youth. In the context of Roman society and specifically within the Roman family, the boy who had been given the *toga virilis* was *puer iuvenisque*: in some respects still a child, yet in others, a young adult. Physically and intellectually he might appear and behave as a boy, but the garment he now wore identified him as a man. How did the change of dress translate into a change of status in daily life? What were its immediate consequences? How independent did the boy become, and can we accurately speak of the new *togatus* as an adult male? In this chapter, I will examine the practical implications of the assumption of the *toga virilis* from a variety of perspectives,

---

[1]*namque ter ad quinos unum Cephisius annum | addiderat poteratque puer iuvenisque videri.* 'Narcissus had added one year to three times five and was able to seem a boy and a young man.'

[2]Levi and Schmitt 1997b: 2.

including political and religious office-holding, military service, and public and private law, in order to determine the rights and responsibilities that followed a boy's ceremonial coming of age.

Marginality, Passivity, and the Position of Children in Roman Society

In many ways, women and slaves constitute the silent masses of Roman history. Almost no literature survives attesting firsthand to their experiences, and they generally occupied the background, rarely having an opportunity to assume active, public roles. Roman society was always highly stratified, and though elastic enough to permit some mobility, gender and to a large extent, age, presented immovable obstacles not simply to advancement but even to mere participation in many areas of life. Society effectively revolved around the adult male citizen, and in both the public and private spheres. If we envision Roman society as Walters proposes, adult males of the upper ranks are at the center, surrounded by 'various social groups that, each in their own way, are *unmen*, or at least *not fully men.*'[3] Children, regardless of their gender, fell into this category of individuals who were not yet, or never could be full male citizens. Because of their lack of adulthood, children were excluded from civic responsibilities, deprived of a voice within the community and frequently denied an active public role. In the central period of Roman history, children could neither vote nor hold political office, and only under extraordinary circumstances, were they appointed to priesthoods or expected to serve in the army while still *praetextati*.[4]

---

[3]Walters 1993: 31.

[4]The Republican principle that children should not hold any magistracy (Ulpian, *Dig.* 50.17.2: *ITEM impubes omnibus officiis civilibus debet abstinere*) was formally contravened in the late second century CE when Septimius Severus appointed Caracalla Caesar and then made his eight (or possibly ten) year old son emperor-designate. Wiedemann 1989: 113-142 discusses the issue of child magistrates in detail as well as military service, noting that '[d]espite the pressure...to maximise its manpower, the exceptions to the rule that no one under the age of 17 *should* serve in the army were rare' (115) [my emphasis: see below on military service]. The military feats of *praetextati* were therefore singled out as remarkable. For example, Valerius Maximus (3.1.1) stresses that Aemilius Lepidus (consul 187 BCE) was *puer etiam* when he saved a citizen's life in battle; he was later honoured with a statue on the

Some scholars of Roman childhood and youth argue that because children were not yet full citizens, they were marginalized and excluded. The theme of children as 'marginal' beings permeates Wiedemann's study of children. He states that '[c]lassical society relegated children, together with women, old men, and slaves, to the margins of community life....that gave each of these groups an intermediate position between being fully human and being a beast.'[5] In Wiedemann's view, children were pushed to the margins because they suffered from an absence of rational thought. He proposes that the child's inability to communicate as an adult makes him irrational and excludes him from participation in the world of the adult citizen.[6] There is evidence, however, that Romans believed children, even while still infants, were capable of forms of communication and rational thought. Lucretius (5.10.31-32), for example, notes that because infants cannot speak, they use gestures instead. Cicero (*Fin.* 5.25.42) acknowledges that when infants are born, they lie helpless and appear to be inanimate; yet when they have more strength, 'they exercise their mind and their senses...they begin to reflect and to learn.'[7] But according to Wiedemann, irrationality, and hence marginality, was not always a negative state of existence for children as it 'occasionally gives them certain advantages,' namely that 'they should not normally be killed in warfare, and

---

Capitol that was *bullata et incincta praetexta,* again emphasizing Lepidus' young age (see above in Chapter Two).

[5]Wiedemann 1989: 176. Cf. Kleijwegt 1991: 306 n. 137 who distinguishes between childhood and youth by emphasizing that only the former was a period of marginality: 'To call this stage [i.e. youth] marginality is to miss the essential aspect of youth: that of semi-dependence.' Eyben 1993: 9-11 is hardly interested in childhood at all, even as the precursor to youth; though he does not refer to it in terms of marginality, he does stress that several sources comment on the irrationality and weakness of children.

[6]Wiedemann 1989: 22.

[7]Lucr. 5.10.31-32: *protrahere ad gestum pueros infantia linguae | cum facit ut digito quae sint praesentia monstrent.* Cic. *Fin.* 5.25.42: *parvi enim primo ortu sic iacent, tamquam omnino sine animo sint; cum autem paulum firmitatis accessit, et animo utuntur et sensibus, conitunturque sese ut erigant....incipiuntque commentari aliquid et discere* (trans. of Cicero from the Loeb Classical Library).

generally have a claim to protection and respect from those more fortunate than themselves.'[8] There are, however, some fundamental problems with Wiedemann's and others' view of children as marginalized or partial members of Roman society. And, simply to replace 'marginal' with 'passive' seems to overlook many of the active, even vital roles children played in Roman life, especially in religion and within the family.[9]

Perhaps to view the circumstances of children, and particularly of boys, more positively than Wiedemann has, we might consider their political role to be essentially a dormant one, characterized by potential. For though they could not participate actively in the *res publica*, they were being groomed as its future leaders and had to be properly prepared for this role. So, for example, as a means of becoming acquainted with the machinery of Roman governance, it was once customary for the sons of senators to accompany their fathers to the Curia, even when matters of considerable importance were under discussion.[10] In public religion, however, children of both sexes were involved regularly as assistants at sacrifices and members of choirs during public supplications to the gods and ceremonies such as Augustus' Secular Games of 17 BCE.[11]

For children, their sense of duty and obligation lay primarily with the family rather than the civic community, and they directed their *pietas* toward their parents rather than their *patria*. Within the family, their power and authority remained limited because of the institution of *patria potestas*. To view it in the extreme, their very existence and future survival ultimately depended on their *paterfamilias*. But their exclusion from certain spheres

---

[8]Wiedemann 1989: 25.

[9]In his review of Wiedemann's work on childhood, Bradley 1991b: 262 suggests that 'it might be preferable to substitute 'liminal' for 'marginal', with the dynamic connotations of that term constantly kept in mind.' Whatever term is employed needs to be flexible enough to incorporate the roles of children in different contexts. 'Marginal' certainly does not allow for that.

[10]Gell. *NA* 1.23.4-5, Macrob. *Sat.* 1.6.19. The custom had apparently gone out of fashion by Gellius' time as he reports that it was a usual practice *antea* (formerly).

[11]On the various roles of children in public rites, see especially Néraudau 1984: 229-234, as well as Fowler 1896 and 1920 more generally. Children in choirs: Wiedemann 1989: 182.

of the adult world, and their position of dependence in public and private matters, did not mean that children were not valued or deemed important by their parents specifically or by society as a whole.[12] Nor was the interest in children reflective solely of the preoccupation with succession.[13] In fact, the opposite picture emerges, particularly from sources writing about the children in their own families. Cicero's letters, for example, are replete with loving remarks about and concerns for the happiness and well-being of his own children, his nephew, and even the children of friends, while Fronto's description of little Victorinus conveys a grandfather's immense pride over his grandson's charming antics.[14] The establishment of large-scale programs to assist children such as the *alimenta* instituted by Trajan and extended by his successors demonstrates an official desire to 'cultivate an awareness of and sensitivity to children's welfare,' and reflects the social valuation of children current in the second century CE.[15]

If children were appreciated by adults and not pushed to the margins as some suggest, why was childhood itself viewed so negatively, as a phase in life to be forgotten once discarded with the *toga praetexta*? Perhaps the answer lies in the realities of childhood in antiquity. It was a period fraught with danger in which children, being physically and morally vulnerable, were susceptible to numerous serious and even fatal influences. Both of these features of childhood may explain why, among the freeborn at least, the end of childhood was celebrated. As Finley observed, childhood was 'a preparatory stage for adulthood, to be

---

[12]See Dixon 1991: 99-113 and Nielsen 1997: 169-204 on the valuation of children.

[13]Saller 1994: 161-180 emphasizes the importance of children in succession strategies. For a different view of children as a type of investment for the future, see the remarks of Dixon 1992: 109 on lower-class children and Bradley 1991a: 103-124, esp. 118: 'children elsewhere in society [i.e. other than the upper classes] had to be trained in jobs in order to preserve the essential well-being of their families. Child labor was a function of people's basic struggle for survival.'

[14]On Cicero's attitudes toward children, particularly his devotion to his own daughter and son, see Bradley 1991a: 177-204. Fronto's love for his grandson: *Ad Amic.* 1.12.

[15]Rawson 1991: 24. See also Rawson 1997.

traversed as rapidly as biologically reasonable, and nothing more.'[16] For boys, the onset of adolescence, however, marked a turning-point when preparation started to give way to practice as the process of full inclusion began.[17] The assumption of the *toga virilis* was the first in a series of rites of passage moving freeborn boys closer to full participation in the adult, civic community.

Ante hoc domus pars videntur, mox rei publicae: Inclusion and Participation in the Body Politic

With the exchange of togas commenced a period of personal and social awakening in which the avenues closed during childhood gradually began to open. By far the most immediate and significant consequence was the boy's new status as an adult Roman citizen. Enrolment in the citizen-lists at Rome enabled the new *togatus* to vote and identified him as a full member of the civic community.[18] Tacitus' statement in the *Germania* (13.1) succinctly captures the importance of the change of status for Roman boys. He notes that while German

---

[16]Finley 1981: 159. For a more complete discussion of demography, see below in Chapter Five.

[17]The situation for girls was considerably different. Childhood was preparation for adulthood but in a more limited sense than for boys, particularly because girls had no future roles in politics and there were few public religious roles available to women as Vestal Virgins or other priestesses. Most girls were destined for marriage and motherhood, both of which often came soon after puberty, at least among the elite. Dixon 1992: 101 notes that there is no evidence for a ceremony celebrating the onset of puberty for Roman girls; furthermore, it is 'usually assumed that marriage marked the formal transition from girlhood to womanhood.'

[18]In Rome, the list of citizens was kept in the *tabularium* (Rome's records office) which was housed in the temple of Saturn on the Capitol. See Richardson 1992 *s.v. tabularium*. It is because of this location that some scholars believe boys were registered as citizens on the same day as they donned the toga, during the procession sometimes referred to as *ad Capitolium ire* (Marquardt 1886: 125; Néraudau 1979: 148; Wiedemann 1989: 116). No source, however, explicitly connects a boy's enrolment as a citizen with his procession to the Capitol. There were also records offices in other communities, and Pliny (*Ep.* 10.31, 65, 66, 72, 73), for example, provides several instances of the transfer of documents from provincial records' offices to Rome. See Sherwin-White 1966: 604-605. But, there is nothing to substantiate Wiedemann's 1989: 116 claim that copies of provincial citizen lists were sent to be included in the official records at Rome.

youth become full members of the adult community through their receipt of arms, for Roman boys it is by receipt of the *toga virilis*, for 'before this they seem a part of the household, next a member of the civic community.'[19] Under the Republic, voting was serious business. Citizens voted on every law that was proposed, on the election of magistrates, and, until the development of the public courts in the first century, on the guilt or innocence of men accused of crimes against the state. It was, therefore, a 'major occupation,' for there was 'hardly a season of the year when Rome was free both from voting assemblies and from the campaign in preparation for voting.'[20] For the young Roman living in Rome or nearby, acquiring the right to vote allowed him to exercise his civic duty and to exert some personal choice, regardless of any family pressures to support particular candidates or laws.[21] Under the Principate, the structure of government and the nature of citizenship changed dramatically. The possession of citizenship ceased to guarantee automatic participation in political life. Voting, which had been the first stage of integration into the civic community, was no longer an essential activity for the functioning of the state. Imperial citizenship was not, however, valueless to the young Roman as it remained essential for advancement within the government, for service in the legions, and as a 'civil and juridical safeguard.'[22]

For many aspects of public life, the assumption of the toga was the first of several

---

[19]*nihil autem neque publicae neque privatae rei nisi armati agunt. sed arma sumere non ante cuiquam moris quam civitas suffecturum probaverit. tum in ipso consilio vel principum aliquis vel pater vel propinqui scuto frameaque iuvenem ornant: haec apud illos toga, primus iuventae honos; ante hoc domus pars videntur, mox rei publicae.* 'They do neither public nor private business unless armed. But, the custom is that no one takes up arms until the community has tested that he will be competent: then in the assembly itself, either one of the leaders or his father or relatives equips the young man with a shield and spear: for them this is like the toga, the first honour of youth; before this, the boy seems a part of the household, next a member of the civic community.'

[20]Taylor 1966: 1.

[21]The voting assemblies only met in Rome (Taylor 1966: 1). Furthermore, travel to Rome could be time consuming and costly. Thus the possibility of actually having the opportunity to vote may have been greatly reduced for many new *togati*.

[22]Nicolet 1980: 20.

requirements for eligibility, particularly among the elite. Clearly not all new *togati* were members of the elite, destined to become senators. Yet because so much of the evidence concerns the upper classes, discussion of the consequent rights and privileges must be limited to a small segment of the population, especially in regard to the political sphere. The acquisition of the toga did not on its own provide access to office-holding but it was a necessary precursor. It brought a young man one step closer to embarking on his career path and full, adult participation in civic and political life. New *togati* could acquire some political experience and enhance their credentials during the preparatory period called *tirocinium fori,* literally 'recruitment to the Forum.' The primary purpose of the *tirocinium*, which usually lasted a year, was to give a young man an opportunity to study with and observe a distinguished politician or orator.[23] Cicero's father brought him to study under Quintus Mucius Scaevola, the eminent Republican lawyer and augur, after he had assumed the *toga virilis* (Cic. *Amic.* 1.1; cf. *Brut.* 303, 306). Once he himself became established, Cicero mentored Caelius Rufus (*Cael.* 4.9). Many men recognized the value in apprenticing with a leading politician or orator when they were young.[24] Quintilian (*Inst.* 5.7.7) recalled the advantages of his personal relationship with Gnaeus Domitius Afer. In his youth, Tacitus used to listen enthusiastically to the orators Marcus Aper and Julius Secundus when they were pleading in court, but his learning extended beyond these formal occasions, as he spent time in their homes and accompanied them around the city (*Dial.* 2.1). Tacitus later had many

---

[23]Purpose: Tac. *Dial.* 34.1-7 (as an instructional period); Cic. *Cael.* 5.11 (practical training for politics and the army, preservation of moral character -- see further in Chapter Five for this stage in life as a morally precarious time). Duration: Cic. *Cael.* 5.11 *annus erat unus ad cohibendum bracchium toga constitutus* / 'a single year was set for 'keeping our arms confined in our togas." Marrou 1956: 243, presumably on the basis of Cicero's statement, states that theoretically the *tirocinium* would end after a year but that some might remain with their mentor for longer, e.g. Cicero himself remained with Scaevola until the latter's death sometime in 88 BCE. From his *Brutus* (306), it seems that the year of Sulla and Pompey's consulship (89) followed the commencement of his study with Scaevola; he therefore may have been under his tutelage for nearly two years. Austin 1960: 58 argues that Caelius similarly had a longer *tirocinium.*

[24]On the importance of having models to learn from and imitate, see Cic. *De Off.* 2.13.45 and *De Or.* 2.22.90-92, as well as Eyben 1972b.

student admirers according to Pliny (*Ep.* 4.13.10), who, when he himself was a young man, aspired to emulate his friend whom he held to be the greatest among a number of distinguished orators of that time (*Ep.* 7.20.4). From Fronto's intertextual allusion to a remark by the elder Cato, it is clear that being an accomplished orator was part of what an elite male should become. In his correspondence with Marcus Aurelius, Fronto (*Ad M. Caes.* 4.1.2) declares that 'before you had reached an age at which you could be trained, you were already perfect and complete in all noble qualities: before puberty a good man, before the *toga virilis* an experienced speaker.' Fronto's comments are significant, for not only does he point to the importance of oratorical training and hence the *tirocinium*, but he also illustrates the prominence of the assumption of the *toga virilis* in Roman life. Even for an extraordinary young man such as Marcus Aurelius, the donning of the toga was a definite marker in the life-course to be singled out as a major achievement.[25]

The *tirocinium* was regarded as 'a transitional stage between the strict discipline of the home-circle and the freedom of public life.'[26] It had been established to prepare young men for public life, and their instruction therein was primarily to take place in the Forum itself. By the beginning of the first century BCE, teachers of literature and, more importantly, rhetoric, began to open their own schools, moving away from the traditional setting of the households of the elite. Suetonius (*DGR* 25.2) suggests that these schools posed a danger to well-established customs and principles (*consuetudo ac mos maiorum*). As a result, the censors attempted to close down schools of rhetoric in 92 BCE, though this was only a

---

[25]Fronto *Ad M. Caes.* 4.1.2: *nam priusquam tibi aetas institutioni sufficiens adolesceret, iam tu perfectus atque omnibus bonis artibus absolutus: ante pubertatem vir bonus, ante togam virilem dicendi peritus.* Cato's remark in Quintilian (*Inst.* 12.1.1): *sit ergo nobis orator quem constituimus is qui a M. Catone finitur vir bonus dicendi peritus* / 'the orator, therefore, whom I wish to form, shall be the orator as defined by Marcus Cato, 'a good man skilled in speaking." I adopt the text of Winterbottom (*OCT* 1970) rather than Radermacher (*Teubner* 1965), though the difference is not significant.

[26]Gwynn 1964: 16.

temporary solution.[27] The *mos* that these schools threatened was the *tirocinium fori*. As Kaster argues, '[b]y its nature the *tirocinium* was part of a closed and rigid system that monopolized entry to a civic career. Access depended heavily on the ascribed status of the participants and the connections of family and friendship, and its methods were informal, based upon the personal relationship between the younger and the older man.'[28] Despite this challenge, the *tirocinium* evidently remained important even once rhetoric became a recognized component of school training, as the examples of Tacitus and Pliny attest for both followed their *tirocinia* with successful political careers.[29]

After completing the *tirocinium fori*, a young man who intended to pursue a senatorial career set his sights on the *cursus honorum*. The *cursus* was the proper sequence of magistracies held by senators, following a basic progression of quaestorship, praetorship, consulship, though other offices might be fitted into the sequence. This order was not only

---

[27]*DGR* = Suet. *De Gramm. et Rhet.* [The text and numbering system follow Kaster 1995]. Concern had developed earlier and teachers of rhetoric were prohibited from living in Rome by a decree of 161 BCE (*DGR* 25.1). On the measures taken to limit rhetorical instruction, see Kaster's commentary on these passages as well as his work on grammarians, 1988: 51-52.

[28]Kaster 1988: 52.

[29]Gwynn 1964: 132-133 seems to exaggerate in arguing that the fall of the Republic 'made the *tirocinium fori* an idle pretence' because the Forum ceased to be the center of Roman life. The remarks of Tacitus and Pliny point to the way in which the institution was esteemed late in the first century CE. Furthermore, Tacitus fondly recalled his own apprenticeship (*Dial.* 2.1) so Gwynn's argument that he speaks of the *tirocinium fori* as a 'thing of the past' by using the phrase *apud maiores* (*Dial.* 34.1) does not make much sense. In the end, Gwynn believes the *tirocinium* was replaced 'by a ceremonial entry on public life, apparently connected with the putting on of the *toga virilis*.' Evidently he misunderstands the role and significance of both the *tirocinium* and the assumption of the *toga virilis*. It is possible that the *tirocinium* and formal rhetorical instruction were eventually combined into a single institution called *contubernium*. Fronto (*Ad Amic.* 1.10), for example, writes of a man whom he introduced to the Forum from his own home and *contubernium*: *de mea domo meoque contubernio in forum deductum*. *Contubernium* appears in many ways to be analagous to *tirocinium* from Champlin's description 1980: 39: 'In brief, a young man just starting out on his career is commended to an experienced and influential elder by a shared interest in culture.' It involved a much more intimate relationship than the *tirocinium* though. It signifies 'not merely living together but studying together as master and pupil or as fellow students, always as friends. Its importance extended beyond the classroom' (Champlin 1980: 46).

traditional but compulsory and rarely circumvented.[30] In 180 BCE, with the introduction of the *lex Villia annalis*, the loosely-regulated *cursus* acquired some rigidity; minimum ages were set for each of the curule magistracies, beginning with the office of quaestor at 27, and an obligatory two-year hiatus from office (a *biennium*) was instituted.[31] Sulla then raised the minimum age for the quaestorship to 30, but by the middle of the first century BCE, the tradition of the *cursus honorum* began to crumble. Julius Caesar treated adherence to the *cursus* as optional by appointing men to the consulship who had never been senators. Others continued to relax the strict standards. The fixed age of 42 for the consulship was ignored as men held office in their 30s and some even in their 20s. Augustus stemmed the tide by establishing 25 as the minimum age for the quaestorship and 33 for the consulship. According to Dio (52.20.1), using Maecenas as his mouthpiece, it was considered disgraceful and indeed dangerous to entrust public offices to men of a younger age; permitting the quaestorship to be held by men of 25 was apparently a significant concession.[32]

As Syme remarked of Augustus' measures, 'at least no juvenile consuls are attested for some time.' But this did not last for long.[33] In the first century of the Principate, the *cursus* had already been eroded to such an extent that the admission of young men, even those barely out of the *toga praetexta*, was no longer unimaginable. Within the Imperial family, even the assumption of the *toga virilis* was not always an impediment to office-holding. Augustus set the precedent: he did not let even his grandsons' ceremonial achievement of manhood stand in the way of their political future. Both were designated as consuls when

---

[30]See further below for disregard of the *cursus*, particularly by members of the Imperial family.

[31]On the *lex Annalis* generally, see Astin 1958. He notes (6) that the *biennium* applied to the tenure of the patrician magistracies (quaestorship, curule aedileship, praetorship and consulship) only. Promagisterial or extraordinary offices could be held during the two year period.

[32]Birley 1981: 12 suggests that the age was further modified to 24 on the basis of Ulpian, *Dig.* 50.4.8.

[33]Syme 1939: 369.

they were fourteen and were to enter office following a lapse of five years. They were each declared *princeps iuventutis* and specially honoured by the equestrian order (*RG* 14.1-2). According to Tacitus (*Ann.* 1.3.2), the boys had not even deposited their boyhood togas yet, though Furneaux infers from the passage in the *Res Gestae* that the Senate's decree would have coincided with their assumption of the toga.[34] The title *princeps iuventutis* subsequently became 'the regular prerogative of the heirs to the succession.'[35]

Throughout the Principate, the *toga virilis* was not always considered an essential prerequisite for office-holding for members of the Imperial family, nor was there much consistency regarding the age at which their titles and offices were conferred. Decisions about both seem to have been rather arbitrary. Augustus defied tradition by not waiting for his grandsons to come of age before honouring them with senatorial posts. Caligula, however, combined his brother's assumption of the toga with political honours (Suet. *Calig.* 15.2). Claudius seems to have followed his predecessor's example. Tacitus (*Ann.* 12.41.1) reports that in 51 CE, Nero was prematurely awarded the toga at the age of thirteen so that he would appear qualified for a public career. He was declared consul designate until he could assume the position at nineteen, and further honoured with the title *princeps iuventutis* and the right to exercise proconsular *imperium* outside of Rome. The implication seems to be that the

---

[34]Furneaux 1896: 182. Goodyear 1972: 109 is more tentative. He suggests that Tacitus may be exaggerating in writing *necdum posita* but dismisses its importance: 'the exaggeration is trivial.' The coinage issued to celebrate these honours may help to clarify the time frame, for Sutherland 1951: 71 suggests that it was 'presumably in 2 B.C. that the Lugdunum mint began to issue the great flood of gold and silver in which these events were mirrored.' The coins reflect Gaius' and Lucius' *toga virilis* ceremonies, receipt of priesthoods, designations as consul for 1 CE and 4 CE respectively, and the title of *princeps iuventutis*. On the obverse is the laureate head of Augustus with the legend CAESAR AVGVSTVS DIVI F. PATER PATRIAE. On the reverse, the boys are pictured wearing togas; they stand veiled (as pontifex and augur respectively), each holding a silver spear and shield with the emblems of priesthood (*simpulum* and *lituus*) above. The legend reads C. L. CAESARES AVGVSTI F. COS. DESIG. PRINC. IVVENT. [*BMCEmp* I, Aug. 513-543, *RIC* I, Aug. 350-51]. See also Giard 1976: 226-227 for the weight and description of each coin in the series; he dates the issue from 2 BCE to possibly 4 CE.

[35]Taylor 1924: 159.

donning of the *toga virilis* would legitimize Nero's early office holding and was a necessary, though unofficial, prerequisite for such a young new *togatus*.[36]

The trend toward increasingly younger emperors which began with the accession of Nero becomes far more pronounced as the second century progressed. Moreover, the holding of titles and offices appears to be associated less with the assumption of the *toga virilis* than previously. Commodus and Marcus Annius Verus, the sons of Marcus Aurelius, were proclaimed Caesars in 166 when both were young boys; Commodus then received the additional title of Germanicus at the age of eleven. Both honours perhaps had more formal significance than the title of *princeps iuventutis* which Commodus was given when he donned the toga at the age of thirteen. Only a year later, he was hailed *imperator*.[37] Clearly his father was eager to introduce him as his successor as soon as he deemed it reasonable. Septimius Severus followed a similar course of action. He named both Caracalla and Geta as Caesars, presumably in 198; he may have been anxious to incorporate his sons into politics but waited until he had given the toga to Caracalla in 202 before he appointed him consul.[38]

---

[36]The title *princeps iuventutis* soon appeared on the coinage, as did a representation of the *decursio* (parade) which Nero led to honour his assumption of the toga, according to Suetonius (*Nero* 7.2). On Nero's various honours, including references to the coinage, see Bradley 1978: 59, as well as the discussion of Sutherland 1951: 144-145.

[37]SHA *Comm.* 1.10-2.2. Wiedemann 1989: 125 traces Commodus' early career; he is incorrect, however, when he states that 'instead of ceremonially putting on his adult toga on the Capitol at Rome, he [Commodus] was simply declared to have come of age on 7 July 175.' There is no indication from the SHA that Commodus did not engage in the usual rites. The language, in fact, clearly demonstrates his active role; 2.1: *cooptatus est inter † tressolos... princeps iuventutis, cum toga<m> sumpsit.* 2.2: *indutus autem toga est nonarum Iuliarum die* / 'He was elected among...and *princeps iuventutis* when he donned the toga. The toga, however, was assumed on the Nones of July.' [one MSS inserts *trossulos* (an ancient name for equestrians though the meaning was lost by Pliny's time: *HN* 33.9) before the lacuna, which might make some sense] Cf. SHA *Comm.* 12.4: *profectus in Germaniam xiiii kal. Aelias, ut postea nominavit. isdem conss. togam virilem accepit.* 'He set out for Germany on the fourteenth day before the Kalends of Aelius, as he later named it [May 19, 175]. In the same year, he took the *toga virilis*.'

[38]Caesars: SHA *Sev.* 16.3. See the notes on this passage in Birley 1976 regarding the incorrect dates associated with this event. Caracalla as consul: SHA *Sev.* 16.8.

It is important to keep in mind, however, that the members of the Imperial family, particularly the young successors, are hardly representative of the elite, especially in regard to their early careers. For many upper-class boys, their career paths took an entirely different course, beginning with the achievement of the *latus clavus*. The *latus clavus*, the upright purple stripe on the tunic, signified senatorial rank. It qualified men for the minor offices that made up the vigintivirate and gave them the right to stand for senatorial office. The right to wear the senator's stripe seems to have been contingent upon receipt of the *toga virilis*. Augustus (Suet. *Aug.* 38.2) allowed senators' sons to assume the *latus clavus* immediately after they had taken the *toga virilis*, and to attend meetings of the Senate. He also granted the *latus clavus* to men of the equestrian order, as he did in the case of Ovid and his brother.[39] Under the Principate, men could petition the emperor for the *latus clavus* which became an established practice by the reign of Claudius.[40] According to Suetonius (*Vesp.* 2.2), Vespasian made no attempt to win it for a long time after donning the *toga virilis*, and finally had to be induced by his mother to pursue it. Braithwaite's commentary on this passage suggests, however, that the delay could only have been two or three years as Vespasian held the praetorship at the earliest age possible.[41] Others may have sought the *latus clavus* sooner. At the age of seventeen, Septimius Severus successfully petitioned the emperor Marcus Aurelius (SHA *Sev.* 1.5). When Septimius was given the *toga virilis* is unknown, but if it was at the customary age of fifteen or sixteen, then his pursuit of the senator's stripe followed promptly. He probably served in the vigintivirate two years later in 164 if Birley is correct. This early official post would have yielded contacts with many leading men in Rome, but the

---

[39]Ov. *Tr.* 4.10.29: *induiturque umeris cum lato purpura clavo* / 'our [Ovid's and his brother's] shoulders put on the broad purple stripe.'

[40]Millar 1977: 292.

[41]Braithwaite 1927: 23. Suetonius' language is not explicit: *sumpta virili toga latum clavum, quanquam fratre adepto, diu aversatus est, nec ut tandem appeteret compelli nisi a matre potuit*. 'Once he had received the *toga virilis*, he shunned the *latus clavus* for a long time, although his brother obtained it, and at length he did not seek it until he was pushed to do so by his mother.' On the grant of the *latus clavus* to equestrians and its changing significance, see the discussion of Millar 1977: 279-303.

grant of the *latus clavus* was not insignificant, for it 'placed him on the threshold of public life.'[42]

In the Imperial period, serving in the vigintivirate was one of youth's first honours (Ov. *Tr.* 4.10.33: *tenerae primos aetatis honores*). Young men were appointed to minor magistracies responsible for various aspects of administration including minting coin, policing the city of Rome, and street maintenance. In the late Republic, there had been six boards, collectively called the *vigintisexviri*, but Augustus abolished two boards in 13 BCE, decreasing the number of officials and renaming the collective the *vigintiviri*.[43] Under the Principate, service on one of these boards was not merely an honour; it was essential to a senatorial career.[44] For some young men, their first taste of political life was enough to alter

---

[42]Birley 1988: 40. Barnes 1967: 91 notes that there is no record of a post in the vigintivirate and does not speculate on the possibility that Septimius held one. The *Historia Augusta* provides no details of his service in the vigintivirate but Birley 1988: 40 is convincing: 'This silence, combined with a confused story elsewhere about his early career, has led to the view that he did not occupy any such post, which is unjustified. One may be confident that soon after his arrival in Rome [162 CE] Septimius did spend a year as a *vigintivir*, either as *decemvir* like his brother...or in one of the other groups.' See also Birley 1988: chapter 4 generally on his early career and the problematic evidence of the *HA*. Barnes 1967: 87, however, suggests that Septimius was brought to Rome by his father 'perhaps when still extremely young.'

[43]Cicero describes the functions of the different boards under the late Republic: *Leg.* 3.3.6. See Robinson 1992 for additional details and analysis. The two boards no longer in existence under the Empire were the *duoviri viis extra urbem purgandis,* who oversaw the maintenance of the city's immediate environs, and the *praefecti Capuam Cumas,* responsible for sending *praefecti* to Campania. Dio (54.26.5-7) records the nature of the different offices and the decree passed by the Senate in 13 BCE which opened up the vigintivirate to youth of equestrian rank and abolished two of the boards.

[44]Talbert 1984: 13. It seems exemptions from the vigintivirate were reserved for members of the Imperial family. Tiberius skipped the vigintivirate by Augustus' request. When Germanicus' son, Nero Caesar, was 'approaching manhood' (*ingressum iuventam*), Tiberius proposed that he omit the viginitivirate and serve as quaestor five years earlier than the legal age (Tac. *Ann.* 3.29.1). Three years later, after Nero's brother Drusus donned the toga, he received the same honours and exemptions (Tac. *Ann.* 4.4.1). From *cursus* inscriptions for senators outside of the Imperial family, it is difficult to determine whether they also omitted the vigintivirate or if the post was simply not mentioned. Many begin with the quaestorship but this does not necessarily mean that neither the vigintivirate nor the military tribunate were

their career path completely. Ovid, for example, soon after he donned the toga, served either among the *tresviri monetales* or the *tresviri capitales.* He admits, however, that he was suited neither physically nor mentally to politics and advanced no further, choosing instead to devote himself to poetry (*Tr.* 4.10.33-40).[45] In contrast, the younger Pliny began his long senatorial career with the achievement of the *latus clavus* and service in the vigintivirate as *decemvir stlitibus iudicandis*, presiding in the Centumviral Court.[46]

Service in the Roman Army

To serve Rome was both a duty and an honour, whether it was in the Senate house or on the battlefield. Because the Romans were always a militaristic people, the size and status of their forces were constant concerns, even before imperialist designs germinated.

---

not held beforehand (Birley 1981: 5, esp. n. 6).

[45]It is unclear from Ovid's brief remark (*Tr.* 4.10.34) of which board he was a member -- those responsible for minting coins or policing and fire control: *eque viris quondam pars tribus una fui* / 'and at that time I was one third of the board of three.' Ovid's decision to abandon politics followed his role as one of the *tresviri.* He declares (4.10.37) that *nec patiens corpus, nec mens fuit apta labori* ('neither could my body endure it, nor was my mind suited to the toil'). The board of the *tresviri capitales* or *triumviri capitales* as they are sometimes called, may have been more labour-intensive than that of the mint. The former were primarily concerned with the safety of the city during the night which entailed a certain amount of fire control and what seems to be equivalent to modern law enforcement. Its members could inflict corporal punishment and may have had the power to imprison, even citizens (Robinson 1992: 175-180; see also Nippel 1995: 22-26). However, as Nippel 1995: 23-26 cautions, there is little evidence to prove that they also possessed the right to impose and execute the death penalty on slaves, and furthermore, on citizens of humble origins. Ovid may have had a stint as one of the *tresviri capitales* rather than the more administrative *tresviri monetales*, and been forced to get his hands dirty -- literally, thus turning him off a life in politics. Birley 1981: 5-6 notes that the *tresviri capitales* was '[c]learly the least favoured' of the boards, and the one with the worst success rate as a launch for future administrative glory. After 43 BCE, only one former *capitalis* is known to have received imperial backing for any of the republican magistracies until the reign of Severus Alexander; only three, all of which appear to be special cases, are known to have secured the shorter, favoured route to the consulship (with a single senior praetorian post) and only five are recorded as governors of consular imperial provinces in comparison with sixteen former *monetales*.

[46]Sherwin-White 1960: 72-73.

Determining the number of men eligible for service was vital, particularly during Rome's early period when military service was compulsory but citizen-lists did not yet exist. Rome's sixth king, Servius Tullius, is credited with a dramatic reform that had 'an explicit military purpose' -- the centuriate organization. This involved the division of people into classes according to wealth, and then the subdivision of those classes into smaller groups called centuries. Citizens were also divided into age groups so that each class had an equal number of centuries of *iuniores,* men aged 17 to 45 who would serve as front-line soldiers, and *seniores*, men aged 46 to 60, who would defend the city. According to Dionysius of Halicarnassus (*Rom. Ant.* 4.15.5), to calculate the number of boys who were eligible for conscription in a given year, boys who had arrived at manhood deposited one coin each into the treasury of Juventas to indicate their eligibility.[47] There are several problems with this account, as Cornell indicates, and the system Dionysius describes probably dates to the fourth and third centuries rather than the reign of Servius Tullius.[48] Yet Dionysius' remarks suggest that Romans believed there was a certain antiquity to the practice of distinguishing new men from boys for the very practical purpose of military service. Later in the Republic, potential soldiers were more easily identifiable, their names recorded in the lists of citizens and their adult status and military eligibility visually apparent from wearing the *toga virilis*.

The question of who qualified for and engaged in military service, both in terms of custom and law, is, however, somewhat more complex. Nicolet stresses the close connection between citizenship and the military: '[i]n Roman eyes a soldier and a citizen were the same thing.'[49] Indeed the first requirement of a recruit (*tiro*) was his possession of Roman citizenship.[50] A boy who had received the *toga virilis* was recognized as a citizen and

---

[47]Livy 1.42-43 also details the reforms under Servius but does not mention the practice of depositing into the treasury of Juventas.

[48]For a summary of the Servian reforms, see Cornell 1995: 173-197.

[49]Nicolet 1980: 93.

[50]Davies 1989: 9 remarks that in the early Empire, it was only 'in time of great emergencies' that freedmen were recruited, such as after the disastrous defeat of Varus during Augustus' principate.

therefore allowed to enter military service. As noted above, some *praetextati* did serve in the Roman army, but they seem to have been exceptional cases because of the individuals and the circumstances involved.[51] Ordinarily, boys did not serve until after they discarded the *praetexta* and often not until their late teens. For example, Suetonius (*Aug.* 8.1) reports that Octavian, who donned the toga in 48 BCE at the age of fifteen and joined Julius Caesar in his celebration of his African triumph in 46 BCE, had not taken part in the war 'on account of his age' (*propter aetatem*). Vegetius (1.4), however, states that 'indeed, if the ancient practice is to be observed, everyone knows that the [age for] enlisting is the beginning of puberty.' Isidorus (*Etym.* 9.3.37), writing in the seventh century, agreed, noting that '[i]t was, however, the custom in the Roman army for those in the first stages of puberty to train with arms. For in their sixteenth year, recruits used to fight.'[52] Yet puberty, like the receipt of the toga, occurred at varying ages, hence the range of ages attested for adolescent *tirones*. From an analysis of approximately 500 men who were legionaries in the Imperial period, the range of ages of enlisted men is from thirteen to thirty-six, and three quarters of these joined between eighteen and twenty-three. Thus for many ordinary citizens, donning the *toga virilis* signalled the beginning of a military career and the assumption of important adult responsibilities.[53]

Perhaps because the age at which the toga was taken was as young as thirteen or

---

[51]Livy (22.57.9) notes, for example, that in 216 BCE prior to the battle at Cannae against Hannibal, the dictator Marcus Iunius along with Tiberius Sempronius as *magister equitum* ('master of the horse') proclaimed a levy and enlisted the young men seventeen years and over and some *praetextati* / *inde dictator ex auctoritate patrum dictus M. Iunius et Ti. Sempronius magister equitum, dilectu edicto iuniores ab annis septemdecim et quosdam praetextos scribunt.*

[52]Suet. *Aug.* 8.1: *quadriennio post virili toga sumpta militaribus donis triumpho Caesaris Africano donatus est, quanquam expers belli propter aetatem.* Vegetius, *Epitoma Rei Militaris* 1.4: *Et quidem, si antiqua consuetudo servanda est, incipientem pubertatem ad dilectum cogendam nullus ignorat.* Isid. *Etym.* 9.3.37: *Romanae autem militiae mos fuit puberes primos exercere armis. Nam sexto decimo anno tirones militabant.*

[53]Davies 1989: 7. See also the inscriptional evidence collected in Kleijwegt 1991: 209-212 on the young ages of some military officers of equestrian status.

fourteen, it was decided that young, barely pubescent boys should not serve if possible.[54] Precautions were necessary to prevent this, particularly if boys could be forced into service. In 122 BCE, Gaius Gracchus proposed a law that forbade the enlisting of any recruits who were under the age of seventeen (Plut. *G. Gracc.* 5.1). Stockton suggests that 'the abuse must have been prevalent enough to require statutory correction, and must reflect an overall shortage of men available.'[55] Some confusion, however, seems to have developed around Gaius Gracchus' proposal regarding what was common practice and actual legal restriction. Wiedemann states that the law prohibited the conscription of boys under seventeen, and argues that 'the crucial division between child and adult was at 17: the age at which a male could learn to fight.' Néraudau similarly regards seventeen as the age for initial 'capacité militaire' but also considers it the legal age for eligibility. Both scholars echo Fowler's assertion, though he viewed the consequences of turning seventeen more severely, envisioning the boy who now possessed the legal capacity to fight going 'straight from the home to the levy.'[56] Yet Plutarch, the only source to document the Gracchan age restriction, lists it among the proposals Gaius Gracchus put forward; he does not indicate that it actually passed. There is no evidence, therefore, that boys below the age of seventeen who had already assumed the toga were prohibited from entering the service voluntarily. They were citizens and it was their legal right.

In the Republic, a citizen had to consider himself liable for service during most of his life, from the age of seventeen until approximately sixty. Among the elite, military service

---

[54]According to Dio (79.13.4), Macrinus actually dismissed a member of his staff for admitting youth who were deemed immature (μειράκια ἔξωρα). The word ἔξωρος can also have the sense of unsuitable so the youth may have been rejected for character flaws rather than physical immaturity.

[55]Stockton 1979: 137. The so-called *lex militaris* also required that clothing and equipment be provided for soldiers free of charge, without deducting anything from their pay.

[56]Wiedemann 1989: 114; Néraudau 1979: 117; Fowler 1916: 192. Cf. Carter 1982: 97 regarding Suetonius' remarks about Octavian quoted above: 'Caesar's African triumph took place in Sept. 46 B.C., the month when Augustus celebrated his seventeenth birthday and became qualified for military service.'

was 'socially obligatory' if one aspired to public office.[57] Prior to any sort of career, a year (or possibly more) of 'training' was required following the assumption of the *toga virilis*. For those pursuing glory in the army, the *tirocinium* would consist of physical and technical training, some of which took place on the battlefield itself. But even those intent on a career in the Forum or the lawcourts would undergo some military training. From Cicero's description in the *Pro Caelio* (5.11), the *tirocinium militiae* appears to have paralleled the *tirocinium fori*: 'In my young days, a single year was set for 'keeping our arms confined in our togas,' and for physical training on the *campus* wearing tunics, and if we began our army service at once, the rule was the same for our training in camp and on the field.'[58] Austin refers to both forms of *tirocinium* as 'probationary' periods but the evidence suggests that is more applicable to the preparation for the Forum.[59] Upper-class boys went into the field soon after or even during their *tirocinium*, whereas those preparing for the courts and the senate sometimes experienced a delay of several years before their debut.[60] During their service,

---

[57]Nicolet 1980: 96-97.

[58]According to Taylor 1924: 158 (following M. I. Rostovzteff. 1905. 'Römische Bleitesserae,' *Klio*, Beiheft iii, 59-61]), it seems the *tirocinium* was lengthened from one year to two. Perhaps this occurred under Augustus as Taylor states that he 'restored this preliminary training.' If the *tirocinium* had ceased to be a regular part of adolescence, it could only have been for a few decades as Cicero refers to it in the 50s in his defense of Caelius. Taylor appears to base this view on a speech in Dio (52.26.1) which dates to 29 BCE. Dio, however, does not seem to refer to the *tirocinium* unless significant modifications had been made since Cicero's day. He has Maecenas declare that 'when boys come out of childhood into adolescence, they should turn to horses and arms, having publicly funded paid teachers for each of these departments.'

[59]Austin 1960: 58. He suggests that physical training was also highly beneficial for the practice of oratory which involved 'severe bodily strain.' On the significance of the phrase *ad cohibendum bracchium toga*, see Austin's note and the archaeological evidence of Richardson and Richardson 1966, as well as the discussion in Chapter Five.

[60]The delay was sometimes only 3 or 4 years. At 20, Julius Caesar prosecuted Dolabella and Asinius Pollio was 21 in his debut; Lucius Crassus, however, was a mere 18 when he tried C. Cato (Tac. *Dial.* 34.7). Some exceptional youths did not waste any time after assuming the toga, such as Marcus Cotta (consul 74 BCE), who successfully prosecuted Gnaeus Carbo (consul 82 BCE) on the very day he took the toga (Val. Max. 5.4.4).

was awarded the military tribunate in the same year (Stat. *Silv.* 5.2.174f). Hardie notes that Crispinus 'was clearly in a hurry' and his appointment was an honour; but he cautions that 'there existed the risk of an adverse social reaction to opening a career too soon,' and as a result, Statius had to temper his praise.[65] There may have been some disapproval regarding Crispinus' appointment because the position was normally held between eighteen and twenty, and Crispinus was barely sixteen.[66] As Talbert stresses, however, the post was not a prerequisite for entry to the Senate, and furthermore, 'members of long-established senatorial families, bothered with it much less' than men from non-senatorial backgrounds (*novi homines*).[67]

The *toga virilis* and Roman Priesthoods

According to Nicolaus of Damascus (4.9), immediately after his spectacular assumption of the *toga virilis*, Augustus was 'enlisted in the priesthood [the pontificate] in the place of Lucius Domitius [Ahenobarbus] who had died.' In her commentary on this passage, Bellemore remarks that the *toga virilis* 'seems to have been a prerequisite for the office of the *pontifex*.'[68] But was this custom or law, and did this apply to all priesthoods? Szemler states that there were three qualifications for entry to the priestly colleges: Roman citizenship, free birth, and an absence of bodily defects. He proposes, however, that 'unspecific characteristics must have been more exacting' and suggests that 'specific social norms' must have been used

---

[65]Hardie 1983: 146.

[66]Hardie 1983: 146 holds that the standard age was 18 but Birley 1981: 9 suggests that it was generally 19 or 20.

[67]Talbert 1984: 14. That the military tribunate was more an honour for Crispinus than a necessary career choice is clear from his background. His father, Vettius Bolans, was not only a senator, but had been a suffect consul, a legionary legate under Gn. Domitius Corbulo, and governor of Britain and Asia (Hardie 1983: 146). And, because Crispinus' appointment came directly from the emperor, Domitian, one might imagine that any disapproval was kept relatively quiet.

[68]Bellemore 1984: 77.

in the selection of priests.[69] Thus, in theory the *toga virilis* was a preliminary qualification as it indicated by the formal entrance upon citizenship. But in practice, the holding of religious office somewhat paralleled the political: rules existed but they were often broken, at least for members of the Imperial family and other members of the upper classes.

Clearly boys who were still *praetextati* were eligible for certain priesthoods. Tiberius Gracchus, for example, may have been coopted to the college of augurs at the age of ten.[70] Tiberius Gemellus had been admitted to the Arval Brethren before he donned the toga and Vitellius made his seven-year old son a member of the same college.[71] And, according to the author of his biography (SHA *Comm.* 1.10), Commodus was enrolled in the *collegium sacerdotum* in January 175, six months before he took the toga. It does, however, appear to have been customary to wait until a boy had donned the toga before he was elected to the pontificate. For Augustus, both honours occurred on the same day, but usually a short period

---

[69]Szemler 1972: 31. See also the useful chart in Beard 1990: 20-21 (Table 1) for additional details. For example, originally only patricians could be pontiffs and augurs; from *c.* 300 BCE on, plebeians could also hold these offices. Citizenship was essential as most offices were only open to patricians and plebeians. There were few exceptions to these rules; freedmen were permitted to be *luperci* by the late Republic and the status and admission requirements for the *Fratres Arvales* is unknown.

[70]There is little conclusive evidence regarding Tiberius Gracchus' age when he became an augur. Plutarch (*T. Gracc.* 4.1) reports that he had already been appointed by the time he left behind his childhood days. Scullard 1982: 24 states that he was ten but cites no evidence. He became an augur not long before he was betrothed to Claudia. As Stockton 1979: 30 notes, it is 'annoying' that the date for his marriage is unknown; 143 is the commonly accepted date but it could have been as late as 136 and clearly any sort of chronology for his early youth can only be conjectured. Though Tiberius may have been enrolled at ten, there is some evidence to suggest that it was more customary to wait until a boy had first achieved the toga. Cicero (*Sest.* 144) recalled how Publius Lentulus took his toga then assumed the *praetexta* a year later. The scholiast on this passage indicates that the *praetexta* here is the priestly robe of the augur, and Long 1856: 574 provides the additional detail that Lentulus was seventeen at the time of his appointment. Augustus' grandson, Lucius, also became an augur at or after his coming of age ceremony as an inscription from Rome (*CIL* 6.900) attests. His age is recorded as fourteen, which suggests that the two honours came in close proximity.

[71]Scheid 1975: 164, 166 suggests that Tiberius Gemellus was probably coopted in 33 CE in place of Germanicus' son, Drusus Caesar, who died in the same year. He was only 14 at the time and was not granted the toga until 37. On Vitellius' son, see Wiedemann 1989: 122.

of time separated the two.[72] However, Gaius, Augustus' grandson, may not have waited for his toga. Dio (55.9.2) places his award of the pontificate in 6 BCE but his assumption of the toga in the following year (55.9.9). An inscription from Viterbo (*CIL* 11.3040) records all of the honours Gaius received, religious and political; it has been dated to 4 or 3 BCE but is obviously later than the date when the honours were conferred. Nero is also a special case for his arrival at adulthood was marked by an even more prestigious award than the pontificate: by senatorial decree he became a supernumerary member of all the priestly colleges.[73]

The Legal and Economic Status of the *novus togatus*

How did the assumption of the toga affect a boy's legal position on a daily basis? Within the family, his legal status did not change. He continued to be a *filiusfamilias* in the *potestas* of his *paterfamilias* until his own death or the death of the latter, though when he reached his early twenties, and the age of 25 in particular, the restrictions on his legal capabilities abated to some degree.[74] When he reached fourteen, the legal age of puberty, the

---

[72]Nero Caesar's admission to the pontifical college seems to have closely followed his assumption of the toga from the somewhat vague details Tacitus records (*Ann.* 3.29.1-3). Woodman and Martin 1996: 266 note that there is no reference to a *pontificatus* for Nero in an inscription of 27-29 CE which lists his other priestly offices; however, Tacitus later says that the Senate repeated the honours decreed for Nero when Drusus came of age (*Ann.* 4.4.1). Their brother, Caligula, was appointed to the pontificate by Tiberius in 31, the same year he received the toga (Dio 58.7.4, 58.8.1).

[73]This is not recorded by the literary sources but is known from the coinage. See Bradley 1978: 59 for references.

[74]On the significance of reaching 25, see below. It seems that prior to Augustus, some young men below the age of twenty were manumitting slaves. However, the *lex Aelia Sentia* in 4 CE established twenty as the minimum age for owners who wished to manumit their slaves. According to Gaius (*Inst.* 1.38), the law 'forbids manumission by an owner under twenty except [by rod] when a good reason for manumission has been shown to the committee' / *lege minori XX annorum domino non aliter manumittere permittitur, quam si* [*vindicta*] *apud consilium iusta causa manumissionis adprobata fuerit.* Thus many young masters, some of whom already possessed the *toga virilis*, could not free their slaves until they themselves were twenty. Gaius' (*Inst.* 1.40) remarks put the situation in perspective: 'a consequence for

boy was released from *tutela* ('guardianship'). Presumably if he assumed the toga prior to that age, he would remain *in tutela* until he achieved legal puberty. It is probable that many elite boys then entered into *curatio* or *cura minorum* ('caretakership' or 'supervision') after their *tutela* ended. Crook suggests that as early as the middle Republic people 'realized that the ending of *tutela*...left youngsters at a very tender age to be in sole control of great fortunes in a wicked world--not to mention that *filii familas* were sometimes cheated into doing foolish things with their *peculium*.'[75] In 193/192 BCE, the *lex Plaetoria* was passed, affording special protection for minors (those who were *sui iuris* and between the ages of puberty and 25). It provided a defense if minors were sued by a person defrauding them, on the grounds that their youthful inexperience had been exploited. Those who contracted with minors, however, could insist that a *curator* was present during transactions to avoid any potential problems.[76] By the reign of Marcus Aurelius, it was common practice for minors to apply for a *curator* to act for the entire period of time until they reached 25. In fact, according to the author of his *Life* (*Marc.* 10.12), Marcus established that all youths should receive *curatores* without special reasons being given out and created the permanent institution of *cura minorum*.[77] Thus as Eyben aptly notes, 'the capacity to act, which a young

---

someone over fourteen was that, despite having capacity to make a will, appoint an heir and leave legacies, he cannot till twenty give freedom to a slave' / *evenit, ut qui XIIII annos aetatis expleverit, licet testamentum facere possit et in eo heredem sibi instituere legataque relinquere possit, tamen si adhuc minor sit annorum XX, libertatem servo dare non possit* (the text is that of Seckel and Kuebler printed on corresponding pages to the translation of Gordon and Robinson).

[75]Crook 1967: 117.

[76]Dixon 1992: 106.

[77]Gardner 1993: 225 n. 3. SHA *Marc.* 10.12: *de curatoribus vero, cum ante non nisi ex lege Laetoria vel propter lasciviam vel propter dementiam darentur, ita statuit, ut omnes adulti curatores acciperent non redditis causis.* Note that the Praetorian law is sometimes referred to as the *lex Laetoria* as it is here. The relevant passage in Gaius' *Institutes* is lost so details regarding the evolution of *cura minorum* are unclear. Saller 1994: 188 speaks of a '700-year evolution,' presumably referring to the period of time from the *lex Praetoria* to the inclusion of *cura minorum* in the *Digest* under Justinian (see especially *Dig.* 4.4).

man in theory possessed from the moment he put on the *toga virilis*, had in practice more and more strings attached to it.'[78]

If the new *togatus* was also a *filiusfamilias,* then he was 'legally transparent' as Gardner terms it, as he had 'relatively little in the way of acknowledged rights, or existence, apart from his *pater.*'[79] The most significant impact of *patria potestas* was the father's influence over property, as all of the property in the *familia* ultimately belonged to the *pater.* His children had some resources at their disposal, namely the *peculium*, but whatever they acquired with it technically resided in the *pater*'s control. The *peculium* was a regular spending allowance either in the form of money or property, which a son or daughter could use to generate income. Saller proposes that it gave children 'a degree of de facto financial independence,' and furthermore, that it was much more than mere 'pocket money,' as it provided *filiifamilias* with means to contract business and fulfill family obligations, as well as to perform public services.[80] Potential problems arose, however, concerning how the *peculium* was managed and what transactions young men entered into with or without their fathers' consent. Gardner notes that it was therefore 'common practice for a *pater* to give a general blanket authorisation of administration, to cover all necessary operations with the *peculium.*'[81]

Perhaps because of this tendency for some fathers to leave complete management of the *peculium* to their sons, *filiifamilias* sometimes became easy targets for exploitation. Some remarks by Horace (*Sat.* 1.2.12-17) indicate that new *togati* might be especially

---

[78]Eyben 1981: 330.

[79]Gardner 1993: 79.

[80]Saller 1994: 123-124. Hopkins 1983: 244 calls the *peculium* 'pocket money,' but there are indications that the amount could be sizeable. For example, Cicero (*Cael.* 17-18) notes that M. Caelius Rufus paid for his apartment on the Palatine from his *peculium.* Cicero (*Att.* 15.20.4) himself set aside the rents from certain properties to ensure that his son Marcus had a constant and generous allowance. On the relationship between the *peculium* and the performance of public duties, note Thomas 1982: 573: 'Nous savons maintenant que le système des *munera* liés aux *honores* rendait nécessaire l'existence d'un pécule.'

[81]Gardner 1993: 59; *Dig.* 15.1.46.

vulnerable in the economic sphere. He describes the practices of one unscrupulous money lender named Fufidius, whose exorbitant interest rates pushed men closer to their demise. The usurer even 'strives to get accounts from young men who have just assumed the *toga virilis* and are under the control of stern fathers.'[82] It is understandable that some young men did get themselves into financial difficulties such as the situation Horace describes. There were several praetorian actions available to a *filiusfamilias* in his own name, including the right to make contracts involving items for both safekeeping and actual use. Thus, though 'father controlled the family purse-strings,' on a daily basis, a son could handle much of his financial business without having to involve his father at all.[83] This explains why some young men were already in financial straits when they had barely entered adulthood.[84]

---

[82]Hor. *Sat.* 1.2.12-17: *nomina sectatur modo sumpta veste virili | sub patribus duris tironum.* Villeneuve 1962 in the Budé edition notes that Fufidius is unknown as an individual but his family is attested, originally hailing from Arpinum and associated with tax-collecting. Fufidius has acquired a bad reputation from his discreditable methods of earning his great wealth. He charges five times the usual monthly interest rate from the principal, and hounds men who are already close to financial ruin (1.2.14f): *quinas hic capiti mercedes exsecat, atque | quanto perditior quisque est, tanto acrius urget* / 'he slices off five times the interest from the principal, and the nearer to ruin someone is, the harder he pressures him.'

[83]Gardner 1993: 77. For a readable, thorough survey of the position of the *filiusfamilias* and the various legal actions available to him, see the discussion in Gardner 1993: chapter 3, esp. 72-78).

[84]Cf. Cicero's tirade against M. Antonius in the Second Philippic (2.44): *visne igitur te inspiciamus a puero? sic opinor; a principio ordiamur. tenesne memoria praetextatum te decoxisse? 'patris' inquies 'ista culpa est.' concedo. Etenim est pietatis plena defensio. illud tamen audaciae tuae quod sedisti in quattuordecim ordinibus, cum esset lege Roscia decoctoribus certus locus constitutus, quamvis quis fortunae vitio, non suo decoxisset. sumpsisti virilem, quam statim muliebrem togam reddidisti.* 'Would you like us to examine you from when you were a boy? I think so; let us begin from the beginning. Do you remember that you became bankrupt as a *praetextatus*? 'That is my father's fault,' you will say. I grant that, for indeed it's a defense full of filial piety! Nevertheless, it was because of your impudence that you sat in the fourteen rows, although a certain place was assigned to bankrupts by the Roscian law, however much a man had gone bankrupt by the fault of fortune and not his own. You donned the toga of manhood and immediately turned it into a prostitute's robe.' [The Roscian law was passed in 67 BCE and reserved the first fourteen rows in the theatre for men of equestrian rank. The *muliebris toga* refers to the fact that female prostitutes wore the toga; they were the only women to do so.]

An additional reason why new *togati* could be victimized financially may relate to their right to inherit legacies and inheritances. Suetonius reports that whenever Augustus was left legacies or shares in inheritances by men who had children, he either turned them over to the children at once, or if they were *pupilli* ('wards'), he waited until they assumed the *toga virilis* or got married before paying them both the inheritance and the interest accrued (*Aug.* 66.4). Children had no capacity to make wills themselves but they were certainly entitled to inherit; their estates were managed by tutors until they attained puberty, at which point, the tutors were obliged to render accounts, and if mismanagement occurred, legal actions could be brought against the offenders. As has been shown, the assumption of the toga did not necessarily coincide with the attainment of puberty and termination of guardianship. Thus it seems as though Augustus' decision was not based on legalities at all, but rather on social norms. In many regards, the adoption of the toga for boys and marriage for girls were viewed as formal entries into adulthood; Augustus may have wanted young people at least to appear adults and thus capable of handling their own affairs before he relinquished potentially large sums of money.[85]

One final legal matter requires some clarification, regarding the possible connection between adoption and the assumption of the *toga virilis*. Adoption was common within the Imperial family and is particularly evident among Julio-Claudians, though its overall legal relevance to the status of the average new *togatus* is limited. The problem seems initially to lie in a misinterpretation of the term *vesticeps*. Festus (368) defines *vesticeps* as 'a boy who has already been robed in puberty; in contrast with *investis,* one who has not yet been robed in puberty.' Yet when Apuleius (*Apol.* 98.5) uses these terms to describe the transformation of Pudens under the tutelage of his uncle, Sicinius Aemilianus, Butler translates *vesticeps* to

---

[85]Suetonius presents Augustus as a generous, considerate paternal figure, ensuring that these children be provided for appropriately. How often he actually followed through on this, however, we cannot determine. Carter's remarks 1982: 189 on this passage provoke a certain amount of skepticism of Suetonius' portrayal of an altruistic Augustus: 'The reader gains the impression from this passage that Augustus had little interest in the money. In fact his finances depended on it: he received in this way, in the last twenty years of his life, 1,400 million HS (see 101.3), an immense sum. For comparison, his total expenditure on pensions and land for veterans and funding the *aerarium militare* was 1,430 million HS (*RG* 16-17).'

indicate the grant of the *toga virilis*: 'You took him from us a mere boy and straightaway gave him the garb of manhood.'[86] Néraudau similarly links *vesticeps* to the adult toga: 'le jeune homme à peine revêtu de la toge est *vesticeps*, l'homme enfin est *togatus*.'[87] It is from these incorrect associations that misconceptions in regard to adoption arise.

Gellius (*NA* 5.19.7) states that 'no one may be adopted by *adrogatio* unless he is already a *vesticeps*.' 'Adoption' involved the transfer of a person *alieni iuris* from the *potestas* of his *paterfamilias* into that of another; 'adrogation' involved the merging of a person who was *sui iuris* into one's own family whereby the family of the *adrogatus* became extinct in the process.[88] A boy brought into a family by either *adoptio* or *adrogatio* became a *filiusfamilias*, but only the *adrogatus* brought with him all of those in his *potestas*.[89] That *vesticeps* specifically indicated a boy who had attained puberty is clear from the jurists' remarks on these processes. According to Gaius and Ulpian, under Antoninus Pius an *impubes* could be adopted by *adrogatio* in special cases;[90] previously the handling of the issue was arbitrary -- sometimes it was permitted and sometimes not.[91] There is, however, no

---

[86]Festus (368): *vesticeps puer, qui iam vestitus est pubertate; econtra investis, qui necdum pubertate vestitus est.* Apul. *Apol.* 98.5: *investem a nobis accepisti: vesticipem ilico reddidisti.* Butler 1909: 151.

[87]Néraudau 1979: 147. Cf. his remarks on Festus (160 n. 1 and 3): 'Festus atteste le rapport entre la prise de la toge et la puberté;' 'L'adjectif *in-vestis* montre que la toge est par excellence le vêtement qui symbolise l'homme.'

[88]Crook 1967: 112. The adoption of females was rare.

[89]Buckland 1963: 125.

[90]As Gardner 1998: 131 notes, Gellius was apparently unaware of this development, and seems to have relied on an out-of-date source, Masurius Sabinus, whom he names later in the same passage (*NA* 5.19.13).

[91]Gai. *Inst.* 1.102: *Item inpuberem apud populum adoptari aliquando prohibitum est, aliquando permissum est: nunc ex epistula optimi imperatoris Antonini, quam scripsit pontificibus, si iusta causa adoptionis esse videbitur, cum quibusdam condicionibus permissum est. apud praetorem vero et in provinciis apud pro consulem legatumue cuiuscumque aetatis adoptare possumus.* 'Again, for a person below the age of puberty adoption effected by the people has sometimes been forbidden and sometimes permitted. At

mention of the *toga virilis*. In instances in which an adoption is closely connected with the assumption of the toga, it is merely coincidence.

One such example is Caligula's adoption of Tiberius Gemellus on the day that he took the toga. Neither Suetonius (*Calig.* 15.2) nor Dio (59.8.1) specify whether it was by *adoptio* or *adrogatio*. Hurley suggests that the adoption might not have been legal regardless of which procedure was followed, and that Gemellus' status was ambiguous for either form. She argues that although his *paterfamilias*, Tiberius, was dead at this time (37 CE), he was still a minor and would remain so until he received the *toga virilis* from Caligula. Furthermore, she proposes that the grant of the toga may have been intended to make Gemellus eligible for *adrogatio*.[92] There seems to be some confusion, however, not only about the association between puberty and the *toga virilis,* but also about Gemellus' actual age. Though Philo (*Leg.* 23-26) reports that Caligula called Gemellus a mere child, he is surely exaggerating, as he also states that Gemellus was just entering adolescence.[93] Tacitus (*Ann.* 2.84.1) dates Gemellus' birth to 19 CE but later (*Ann.* 6.46.1) records that he was *nondum pubertatem ingressus*. From these contradictory statements as well as Philo's remarks, which 'might be put down to a desire for pathos,' Wardle concludes that Gemellus was in fact not *impubes* at all: 'Rather, Tiberius, who had kept Caligula *praetextatus* until he was at least 18, may have

---

present, according to a letter written to the pontiffs by the excellent Emperor Antoninus Pius, it is permitted under certain conditions, if there appears to be a good reason for the adoption. On the other hand, we can adopt persons of any age before the praetor, and in the provinces before the proconsul or legate.' (trans. Gordon and Robinson). Cf. Ulp. *Reg.* 8.5: *Per praetorem vel praesidem provinciae adoptari tam masculi quam feminae, et tam puberes quam inpuberes possunt.* 'Both males and females, and whether they have attained puberty or are below the age of puberty, may be adopted by authority of a praetor or governor of a province.' Though in both references *adoptari* is used instead of *adrogari*, Buckland 1963: 126 and Sandars 1922: 45-46 take these to indicate the regulations for adrogation.

[92]Hurley 1993: 49 n 22.

[93]*Leg.* 23: ἄρτι γὰρ ἐκ παίδων εἰς μειράκιον ὁ δύστηνος μετῄει / 'for the unfortunate boy was just emerging from childhood into adolescence'; 26: ὁρᾶτε δὲ καὶ αὐτοὶ νήπιον ἔτι ὄντα κομιδῇ καὶ χρῄζοντα ἐπιτρόπων καὶ διδασκάλων καὶ παιδαγωγῶν/ 'you see yourselves that he is a mere child being in the care and need of guardians, teachers and *paedagogi*.'

been similarly slow with Gemellus.'[94] The form of adoption used was *adrogatio* because Gemellus had no extant descendants so was *sui iuris*; furthermore, public acknowledgement of the adoption involving the Comitia Centuriata, as the process of *adrogatio* required, 'fits the theatrical taste of Caligula.'[95]

Conclusions

In both the Republic and the Principate, there were three principal areas of public life for elite males: politics, the military, and religion. As the evidence indicates, young men were engaged in all of these areas to serve the *res publica*. The assumption of public responsibilities, or at least the training for large scale responsibilities could come very early, and sometimes followed the assumption of the *toga virilis* closely. There was, however, a divide between childhood and adulthood that was strictly demarcated and further delineated by the acquisition of the *toga virilis*. The grant of the toga set apart the boys from the men as it conferred the right to vote and afforded its recipients full inclusion in the civic body. For many new *togati* of the upper classes, preparation for politics began soon after they donned the toga with the period of *tirocinium fori*, during which young men observed and sought to emulate established orators and politicians. In the Imperial period, if a young man was destined for a senatorial career, the award of the *latus clavus* and service in the vigintivirate often followed the *tirocinium*, both of which enabled him to acquire skills and credentials. The young man then had to wait several years to obtain a political role of significance such as the quaestorship because of the limitations set for the *cursus honorum*, the proper sequence of magistracies. Within the Imperial family, however, neither the assumption of the *toga virilis* nor the established order of offices necessarily impeded the advancement of future successors.

Some members of the elite acquired experience at a young age through military service, though many seem to have preferred battles in the Senate house to ones in the field.

---

[94]Wardle 1994: 153.

[95]Wardle 1994: 163.

Nevertheless, it was customary for new *togati* to complete a year of physical training called the *tirocinium militiae*, during which they often had the opportunity to study under a successful general. Under the Principate, the office of military tribune offered additional military experience to young men though it seems to have been treated largely as an honorary post and was not a prerequisite for entry to the Senate. While military service was less frequently the career path chosen by members of the elite, for young men of other classes, entering the army was one of the main options available. Moreover, there is evidence that a considerable number of recruits enlisted in their late teens or early twenties, and thus began their careers soon after taking the adult toga.

Receipt of the *toga virilis* seems to have had little effect on the participation of elite youth in the religious life of Rome. Not only were children frequently involved as assistants at sacrifices and as members of choirs, but many also served in the priesthoods, for example as augurs and Arval Brethren, while still *praetextati*. Members of the Imperial family in particular were honoured with priesthoods at relatively young ages, though it is possible that appointment to the pontificate was contingent upon the *toga virilis*. Similarly, although the boy's status changed markedly in some areas of public life, his legal position within the family did not change. If his *paterfamilias* was alive, then the new *togatus* remained *in potestate* as a *filiusfamilias*. His legal capacity was therefore limited, but he could exercise a certain amount of financial independence by means of the *peculium,* an allowance granted by his father. In spite of protective measures such as the availability of *curatores* and the later institution of *cura minorum*, however, the *novus togatus* was vulnerable to exploitation and could be easy prey for unscrupulous money-lenders.

The next step will be to examine the position of the young man recently invested with the *toga virilis* in society generally and within the family specifically with a focus on ambiguity and independence. To what extent did the assumption of the toga empower a young man, enabling him to exercise greater personal freedom and allowing him increased mobility? Which restrictions continued to be placed either by parents or society, and is it possible to gauge the response of adolescent Romans to these limitations? Ovid referred to the sixteen-year-old Narcissus as *puer iuvenisque*: in the following chapter, we will determine to what

extent this assessment can be applied to boys who have assumed the *toga virilis*.

CHAPTER FOUR

Adulescens, paene potius puer
Familial and Social Attitudes toward the *novus togatus*

Introduction

In the *Third Philippic* (3.3), Cicero praised the noble efforts of Octavian in the months following Julius Caesar's assassination. According to Cicero, Octavian had invested his own money and energy to preserve the *res publica*, acts which were even more admirable because Octavian was *adulescens, paene potius puer*, 'a young man, or rather hardly more than a boy.' Octavian, however, was already nineteen years old; moreover, he had become an adult Roman citizen five years earlier when he donned the *toga virilis*. Cicero's remark hints at the familiar issue of the ambiguity of Roman youth. For the new *togatus*, the passage to manhood was a gradual process. Adult responsibilities in politics and the military often came at a young age, but full acceptance of adult status by fellow members of society was not an automatic achievement with the assumption of the *toga virilis*. Because the toga was a prerequisite for certain posts and privileges in politics, religion, and the military, we might reasonably wonder if the same was true for participation in other areas of social and family life as well. For example, did the receipt of the toga alter a boy's relationship with his family and render him an adult in his parents' eyes instead of a child? How did his growing independence, though limited by *patria potestas*, affect his educational opportunities and philosophical pursuits? What types of social and sexual freedoms did the adult toga confer? In this chapter, we will examine the various familial and social implications of a Roman boy's coming of age ceremony and assess the changing position of the new *togatus* within the contexts of the family and society.

Relations Within the Family

The donning of the *toga virilis* was, first and foremost, a celebration within the Roman family of a boy's achievement of manhood. The rite was an important symbolic and ceremonial event, and marked the beginning of a new phase in the family's history. Though

there is little evidence for the responses of family members, a boy's coming of age affected them too, as they shared in this defining moment and in the period of adjustment that one might anticipate followed. Prior to the boy's assumption of the toga, he behaved and was regarded as a boy. Now, at least theoretically, he was to act as a man and presumably he expected to be treated as one too. In practical terms, however, the transition was not always accomplished easily. Late adolescence was 'a time of mutual testing, of the generation gap' and sometimes the strain within the family was evident.[1] Ambiguity and inconsistency characterized this stage of life as the boy-turned-man gradually began to emerge from the cocoon of childhood.

Nicolaus of Damascus offers a glimpse of one Roman family. He notes (3.5) that while in the house of his stepfather, Lucius Marcius Philippus, Augustus 'was raised as if in the care of a father.' His mother, Atia, and stepfather 'took pains to learn every day from his teachers and the men set in charge of the boy, what he had done, where he had gone, and how and with whom he had passed his time' (3.6). Yet in describing Atia, Nicolaus emphasizes how she continued to monitor and limit his behaviour even after he exchanged togas:

> (4.10)...his mother prevented him from going out of doors, except where he had gone before when he was a boy, and she compelled him both to maintain the same way of life and to go to bed in the same bedroom where he had before. In legal terms alone he was a man, but in other respects he was treated like a child. (5.12)....He went to the temples on the prescribed days but by night because people would approach him during the day, seeing that he inflamed many women with his handsome appearance and the brilliance of his lineage. He was preyed upon by them but it is clear that he never succumbed....his mother kept women away from him, protecting him and not releasing her hold in any way.

Tacitus (*Dial.* 28.6) praised the *disciplina ac severitas* with which Atia raised her son, and Dixon suggests that Nicolaus considered her close supervision to be 'particularly commendable and somewhat unusual.'[2] It is difficult to determine whether Atia's behaviour

---

[1]Dixon 1988: 168.

[2]Dixon 1988: 169. Cf. Tacitus' description (*Agr.* 4.2-3) of the childhood of Gn. Julius Agricola, in which he comments that 'his [Agricola's] mother, Julia Procilla, was a woman of

toward her adolescent son was typical or if her austerity has been exaggerated. Eyben argues that excessively strict parents became increasingly rare by the late Republic, and cites Atia's 'severe' control as a vestige of earlier parenting techniques.[3] Atia's vigilance may have been motivated to some extent by concern for her son's poor health. He was often ill throughout his life and suffered from a serious illness only two years after taking the toga.[4] Nevertheless, Atia is presented as overprotective and overbearing. Though Augustus' relationship with his mother appears to have been close and loving, he perhaps chafed under her watchful eye because of her intervention in his affairs, particularly as a youth. His situation was consistent with Seneca's comment (*Ad Marc.* 24.1) that regardless of age children were always in the guardianship of their mothers (*sub matris tutela semper*).[5]

---

rare virtue (*castitas*). Brought up under her loving care he passed his boyhood and youth in the pursuit of all liberal accomplishments; he was shielded from the snares of sinners...I remember how he used himself to tell that in early life he was inclined to drink more deeply of philosophy than is permitted to a Roman and a Senator, had not his mother's discretion imposed a check upon his enkindled and glowing imagination' (trans. Hutton in the Loeb Classical Library).

[3]Eyben 1991: 123.

[4]Nicolaus of Damascus (6.15) reports that Julius Caesar released Octavian (as he was then called) from military service in 46/45 BCE in Spain because of the young man's ill-health (ἐν ἀσθενεῖ σώματι). He suffered a serious illness in 46 (Suet. *Aug.* 8.1: *gravi valetudine*; Nic. Dam. 9.20) and again in 42 during the Philippi campaigns (Suet. *Aug.* 13.1). Suetonius devotes several chapters in his biography to the various conditions and medical calamities Augustus endured and the preventative measures he took to avoid further illness (e.g. 80-83). Pliny (*HN* 19.128, 25.77) discusses some of the remedies Augustus' physicians used.

[5]In late 47, Octavian wanted to join Caesar who was intending to campaign in Libya but when he realized his mother's opposition, he said nothing to contradict her and remained at home (Nic. Dam. 6.14-15). A little over a year later, when he had recovered from illness and planned to travel to Munda to join his uncle, he rejected many travel companions, 'even his mother' stresses Nicolaus (10.22). Atia continued to offer advice to her adolescent son, particularly following Caesar's assassination (Nic. Dam. 18.52). But later, when he decided to gather Caesar's *coloni* and form an army, he concealed his plan from her lest she hinder his ambition by her motherly affection and womanly weakness (Nic. Dam. 31.131-34). As Dixon 1988: 180 remarks, '[e]ven Octavian, that pious son, eventually disregarded his mother's pleas...his independent action [depicted by Nicolaus] as a step into manhood, a necessary separation from an over-anxious mother.'

Cicero's letters offer a more personal perspective than biography, and are useful for evaluating parental attitudes toward new *togati*. Although Cicero tries to regard Marcus and Quintus as young adults, his adjustment to their new status is not automatic. While the boys may have relished the onset of adulthood, Cicero struggled with all that it encompassed. Yet Wiedemann suggests that the transition was immediate and painless. He states that '[a]fter the ceremony, in April, Quintus is no longer a child.' To support his claim, he quotes from one of Cicero's letters to Atticus (6.2.2) in which Cicero wrote: 'The boy Cicero, or rather now young man.'[6] However, Wiedemann's selectivity is misleading. In the same letter in which Cicero catches himself referring to Quintus as a boy (*puer*) when he is now a young man (*adulescens*), he comments that 'the boy's nature (*pueri ingenium*), though gifted, is complex, and I have plenty to do guiding it.'[7] This might be dismissed as an insignificant slip of the pen, yet Cicero persists in calling Marcus and Quintus *pueri* several months after their ceremonies, rather than *adulescentes* or *iuvenes*. Furthermore, Cicero was keenly aware of the potential for *puer* to take on a pejorative meaning when applied to a young man in his late teens and might have tried consciously to avoid it.[8] Cicero's reluctance to accept that the boys were growing up did have more serious consequences and led to problems in his relationship with Quintus especially. By the spring of 49 BCE, tensions had escalated within the state and among the Cicerones. Quintus began to test his uncle's limits, causing Cicero to tighten his rein but to no avail (*Att.* 10.6.2). Clearly the young man wished to exert himself and demonstrate that he was capable of independent thought and action but his efforts were

---

[6]Wiedemann 1989: 86.

[7]*Att.* 6.2.2: *nec satis est in eius modi re se quemque praestare, ac maximae partes istius offici sunt <p>ueri Ciceronis sive iam adulescentis....sed est magnam illud quidem verum tamen multiplex pueri ingenium; quod ego regendo habeo negoti satis.* 'But in a matter of this sort it is not enough to answer for oneself, and a large share of this responsibility falls upon the boy, or young man as he now is....but the boy's nature, though gifted, is complex, and I have plenty to do guiding it' (trans. Shackleton Bailey).

[8]When Antony slandered the nineteen year old Octavian by calling him *puer*, Cicero (*Phil.* 3.3, 4.3, 13.24) reprimanded him repeatedly in the *Philippics*. The proper term of address for Octavian was *adulescens*, though he was 'hardly more than a boy' (*paene potius puer*) in Cicero's estimation (*Phil.* 3.3).

met with both censure and disappointment. In early April, Quintus temporarily defected from the family, claiming that he had met with Caesar and disclosed his uncle's intention to leave Italy. Cicero (*Att.* 10.4.5) proclaimed of his disintegrating relationship with Quintus that 'nothing has turned out more bitterly for me in my entire life'.[9] A year later, Quintus parted ways with his uncle for good, remaining with the Caesarian army while Cicero retreated from public life.

There was substantially less friction between Cicero and his own son, though one might expect their relationship to show signs of equal or even greater strain. Adolescence is often a turbulent time and conflicts inevitably erupt, especially between parents and children as the established power dynamics are tested. Furthermore, minor conflicts and strictly verbal disagreements sometimes escalate into serious physical confrontations. Roman families were no exception, as various sources reveal.[10] Although much of the evidence on family conflict is anecdotal and not necessarily representative, some scholars nevertheless argue that certain attitudes and trends are apparent, particularly regarding youth. Saller, for instance, maintains that '[i]n youth (*adulescentia*) children were thought to have acquired reason and a sense of honor that mitigated against corporal punishment.' This view is based partly on a saying by Publilius Syrus that 'youth should be mastered by reason, not force.'[11] Similar advice is offered in a moral treatise ascribed to Plutarch (*De lib. educ.* 16), where the author recommends that when sons have misbehaved, fathers ought 'to bring the young men to

---

[9]*nihil enim mihi accidit in omni vita acerbius.*

[10]On family conflict in general, see Bradley's study of Cicero's family 1991: 177-204, and Dixon 1997: 149-168. Regarding tension between adolescents and their parents, Dixon 1988: 179-199 treats the mother-son relationship, examining a range of issues and emotions, from conflict and rebellion to maternal anxiety and concern. Eyben 1993: 206-215; 1991: 114-143, focusses primarily on fathers and sons. Among ancient sources, attitudes toward corporal punishment of children by their parents varied, as do modern interpretations of the evidence. For differing views, see for example the discussions of Saller 1994: 133-153, Evans 1991: 168-171 (who argues that sexual abuse is also well-attested), and Eyben 1991.

[11]Saller 1994: 147. Publilius Syrus, *Sententiae* 627: *ratione non vi vicenda adulescentia est.*

reason by instruction, by threats, by entreaties.'[12] As the remarks of Pliny (*Ep.* 9.12) indicate, conflicts between boys and their fathers sometimes arose regarding how the former (mis)spent their *peculium*.[13] It is possible that in response fathers sought to exert their authority by more tightly controlling their property rights, especially by limiting the *peculium*.[14] There is no evidence, however, that other forms of punishment replaced physical abuse after the assumption of the toga as Eyben asserts: '[s]ome fathers resorted to beating good sense into a son, at least as long as he was a child and did not yet wear the *toga virilis*.'[15] Quintilian (*Inst.* 1.3.15-16), whom Eyben cites on this matter, suggests that beating a young man (*iuvenis*) may not be as effective as it was for a little child (*parvulus*), yet he mentions no legal or social sanction against the practice where older boys are concerned. He only discusses the use of corporal punishment by schoolteachers, not parents.[16] Given that a *paterfamilias* possessed the right of life and death over his descendants (*ius vitae necisque*), it is simply absurd that a son's arrival at manhood would suddenly limit his father's powers in such a significant way.

---

[12]Translated by Babbitt in the Loeb Classical Library as Plutarch's *Moralia* 12C.

[13]*castigabat quidam filium suum quod paulo sumptuosius equos et canes emeret.*

[14]Saller 1988: 405. Cf. Saller 1991c: 151, where he notes that in various literary sources, adult sons 'are threatened with, or punished by, disinheritance.'

[15]Eyben 1991: 133. Cf. Saller's 1991: 162 vague remark that 'what was appropriate punishment for a slave was therefore not appropriate for a freeborn man, at least not after childhood.' It is unclear whether he is referring to the formal end to childhood signified by the donning of the *toga virilis*, or has the less precise notion of physical maturation in mind.

[16]Quint. *Inst.* 1.3.15-16: *Denique cum parvulum verberibus coegeris, quid iuveni facias, cui nec adhiberi potest hic metus et maiora discenda sunt?* 'Furthermore, although you may compel a little child with beatings, what can you do to a young man, for whom this fear has no bearing and greater tasks must be learned?' The theme of the chapter (1.3) in which these remarks are found is the behaviour of the teacher in relation to students of various ages and temperaments.

Education and the Study of Philosophy

Education is one area in which the ambiguous position of the new *togatus* within the family is clear. Cicero's correspondence indicates that as father and *paterfamilias*, he continued to be actively involved in the education of his son and nephew for several years after their assumption of the *toga virilis*. In March 45 Cicero wrote that his son, now nearly twenty, was to study in Athens. Whether the impetus originally came from Cicero or Marcus himself is unclear, but from the outset, Cicero was in control of the situation. He seemed reluctant to allow Marcus to oversee the arrangements without assistance. He asked Atticus (*Att.* 12.24.1) to attend to the logistics and only conceded some decisions to Marcus at Atticus' request (*Att.* 12.27.2). While Marcus was in Athens, Cicero monitored his progress closely. He corresponded with his son's teachers and Atticus maintained contact with Marcus' companions; Cicero was probably only partially satisfied by long-distance reports and thus planned a visit for the spring of 44 to evaluate the situation in person.[17]

Although it was conventional for a Roman father to supervise his son's education, surely not all fathers were as diligent as Cicero. For some, however, it may not have been a lack of interest or effort that determined their involvement, but rather a belief that a unilateral approach such as Cicero used was simply unacceptable. The assumption of the *toga virilis* was apparently an appropriate time to allow a boy some choice in molding his future. Persius offers an account of his adolescent educational experiences in which he transcended the typical student-teacher relationship. At the age of sixteen, when he was vulnerable and in need of moral and intellectual guidance, Persius found salvation in the tutelage of Lucius Annaeus Cornutus, a Stoic philosopher:

> When first the guardianship of the purple was removed from me, trembling, and the *bulla* was hung up as a gift to the girted Lares, when my companions were coaxing, my toga, now white, allowed me to cast my glances over the whole Subura with impunity; at a time when the path is uncertain, wavering and ignorant of life, and leads tremulous minds down to the branching cross-roads -- I placed myself in your care. And you, Cornutus, took up my tender

---

[17]Correspondence: Plut. *Cic.* 24.8; Cic. *Att.* 14.16.3-4. Planned visit: Cic. *Att.* 14.13.4, 16.3.4.

years in your Socratic bosom.[18]

According to the *Life* (3), when Persius was almost six his father died; his mother later remarried, but her second husband died within a few years, though whether he died before Persius donned the toga is unclear. Persius moved to Rome at the age of twelve to study with the grammarian Remmius Palaemon and the rhetorician Verginius Flaccus. Then at sixteen, he began a friendship with Cornutus that was so close that he allowed nothing to come between him and his mentor (*Life* 4). From the *Life*, Persius appears to have taken control of his educational future himself even before he assumed the *toga virilis*. The reliability of the *Life*, however, is open to question, not only because of its uncertain authorship, but also its inconsistencies.[19]

Persius' own reflections on his youth, however, offer further testimony to the ambiguity and adjustment in the period following the assumption of the toga. It is a time when the path of life is uncertain (34 *iter ambiguum est*) and the new *togatus* must determine his own route when the course is divided (35 *ramosa...compita*). As the young man matures,

---

[18]Pers. 5.30-37: *cum primum pavido custos mihi purpura cessit, | bullaque succinctis Laribus donata pependit, | cum blandi comites, totaque impune Subura | permisit sparsisse oculos iam candidus umbo, | cumque iter ambiguum est, et vitae nescius error | deducit trepidas ramosa in compita mentes, | me tibi supposui. teneros tu suscipis annos | Socratico, Cornute, sinu.*

[19]In the manuscripts, the *Life* is said to be taken from the commentary of Valerius Probus, the first century BCE grammarian mentioned by Suetonius (*DGR* 24.1). Yet as Barr 1987: 170 notes, 'there is no certainty that such a commentary ever existed and it was long fashionable therefore to attribute it to Suetonius himself.' Perhaps the most notable inconsistency in the text is Persius' age at death. In the opening chapter, he is reported to have died in the consulship of Publius Marius and Afinius Gallus (62 CE), at the age of nearly twenty-eight; yet later (9) the author specifically states that 'he died of stomach trouble in the thirtieth year of his life' / *decessit autem vitio stomachi anno aetatis XXX* -- which would make him twenty-nine. Nevertheless, Barr 1987: 170 holds that '[i]n spite of the doubt [concerning the authorship] and some difficulties in the text, it enjoys an authority largely free from the reservations long felt in regard to the ancient lives of Juvenal.' Cf. the remarks of Morford 1984: 1 that 'it appears to go back to a time close to Persius's own and so gives us more reliable information than we normally can glean from such Lives.'

he begins the process of gradually separating himself from his parents.[20] Because of *patria potestas*, the transition to greater independence is not immediate and the young man may seek substitutes for the familiarity and security of his natal home, as Harvey's translation of *me tibi supposui* suggests: 'I made myself your suppositious child.' Harvey offers an interesting interpretation of Persius' clever and complex sentiments, particularly the final sentence: 'Viewed one way, it presents a metaphor of father taking up a child. *tu suspicis...sinu* means 'you take to your bosom;' *teneros...annos* means 'infancy'; *Socratico* recalls Socrates' concern for the young. Considered another way, however, the lines are not metaphorical: *tu suscipis* may mean 'you take as a pupil,' *teneros...annos* can mean 'immaturity,' *sinu* for 'protection' or

---

[20]The evidence for young men establishing separate residences from their parents is scanty and there is nothing that conclusively connects it with the assumption of the *toga virilis*. Dixon 1988: 169 proposes that Nicolaus of Damascus' comment (4.10) that Octavian continued to live with his mother and stepfather after he received his toga, indicates that the biographer found this to be 'both particularly commendable and somewhat unusual.' The sources that do mention young men living apart from their parents, however, refer to people sometimes considerably older than the fourteen year old Octavian. Sulla, for example, lived on his own as a youth, according to Plutarch (*Sull.* 1.2; cf. 1.4); it is unclear though how old he was as μειράκιον covers a range of ages as does its Latin equivalent. Caelius Rufus also had his own apartment which Cicero (*Cael.* 18) argued was hardly cause for reproach for a young man *in hac aetate.* If Caelius was born in 82, then at the time of the trial in 56, he was approaching thirty and his assumption of the toga was as many as ten years in the past. [See Austin 1960: Appendix I on the debate over Caelius' birthdate]. It may not have been disrespectful or cause for disapproval for a youth in his late teens to live on his own, though it seems imprudent to state as Dixon 1988: 170 does that 'it was not uncommon by the age of seventeen or eighteen.' Cf. Saller 1988: 403 regarding the 'widespread practice (at least among the elite) of adult sons establishing separate households;' he does not specify whether 'adult' refers simply to boys who had donned the toga, or if he has older men in mind. Cicero remarked to Atticus (*Att.* 12.32.3) that Marcus had been thinking of renting a house in Rome, but Marcus was nearly twenty. Setting up a separate residence for a son depended as much on finances as it did on other considerations. As we saw in Chapter Three, some young men like Caelius used their *peculium* to pay their rent. The fact that young men *in potestate* had to rely on the generosity of their fathers in order to live on their own, highlights the omnipresence of *patria potestas* and may have been the source of tension for some. For less affluent freeborn Romans, establishing a separate residence for adult sons may have been an opportunity few could provide. See the discussion of Bradley 1991a: 163-164.

'care', and *Socratico* would relate to philosophy.'[21] It seems Cornutus had much to offer Persius in addition to Stoic philosophy, as he was a teacher, rhetorician, 'prolific writer,' and author of a commentary on Virgil.[22] Therefore, whatever Persius' actual motives for attaching himself to Cornutus, it appears that he found in him a paternal figure to supervise his moral and intellectual development, but without the familial issues of piety and *potestas* to affect the relationship.

Aulus Gellius' quest for learning largely parallels that of Persius. Gellius (*NA* 18.4.1) recounts how he set out to find more erudite teachers after he laid aside his *toga praetexta*:

> Now when I was a young man in Rome and changed my *toga praetexta* of childhood, and was then seeking, of my own accord, more experienced teachers for myself, I was by chance among the booksellers on the Sandal-makers' Street, when there was Sulpicius Apollinaris in a meeting of many men, a man in my recollection, more learned than others.[23]

It cannot be determined whether Gellius is reporting accurately on his youth or embellishing later in life as he assumes a literary pose. As Holford-Strevens remarks, this is 'the earliest of the incidents, real and fictitious...from his past life.'[24] Regardless of the veracity of his claims, Gellius describes an interesting situation. He presents himself as a young man who seized the opportunity his status as a *togatus* now afforded to exercise some control over his own life, as his vocabulary demonstrates clearly: 'The emphatic pronouns indicate that his was the power of decision: his father either respected his maturity of judgement or was

---

[21]Harvey (1981) 137.

[22]Morford 1984: 3 adds that Cornutus was a freedman from Leptis Magna whose name, Annaeus, 'implies that he had been a slave in the family that included Seneca and Lucan among its members.' Gellius (*NA* 9.10.5) refers to Cornutus as *homo...non indoctus neque inprudens* / 'a man who lacked neither skill nor wisdom.'

[23]*Cum iam adulescentuli Romae praetextam et puerilem togam mutassemus magistrosque tunc nobis nosmet ipsi exploratiores quaereremus, in Sandaliario forte apud librarios fuimus, cum ibi in multorum hominum coetu Apollinaris Sulpicius, vir in memoria nostra praeter alios doctus.*

[24]Holford-Strevens 1988: 9.

already dead.'[25] As well, most students of grammarians were *praetextati*, their studies arranged by well-meaning fathers; yet Gellius sought out Sulpicius on his own after he assumed the *toga virilis*. As Kaster notes, 'the relations and status of student and teacher are immediately characterized as extraordinary thereby.'[26] Furthermore, Gellius was not merely a pupil but an adherent and a friend. Thus, the bond was 'different from and more intimate than the exchange of cash for learning, the normal, tainted relationship between student and teacher.'[27] Donning the toga was a defining moment in Gellius' life, for it not only marked his arrival at manhood but also the beginning of a life-long friendship and intellectual odyssey.

One final example illustrates the connection between the assumption of the toga and advanced education. In *De Audiendo* (37C-E), a treatise on how to listen to lectures properly, Plutarch suggests that when a young man dons the toga, he is ready to begin philosophical and moral instruction.[28] At that age, he no longer needs the supervision of a *tutor* or a *paedagogus* as he is capable of guiding himself by reason.[29] Plutarch addresses the

---

[25]Holford-Strevens 1988: 10.

[26]Kaster 1988: 59.

[27]Kaster 1988: 59. The relationship continued for many years as Sulpicius acted as an advisor to Gellius even when he was a mature adult, in fact a *iudex* (*NA* 12.13). Gellius as a follower rather than simply a student: *NA* 7.6.12 (*audivi Apollinarem Sulpicium, quem inprimis sectabar*), 13.18.3 (*nam id temporis ego adulescens Romae sectabar eum discendi gratia*), 20.6.1 (*percontabar Apollinarem Sulpicium, cum eum Romae adulescentulus sectarer*). Sulpicius as a *familiaris*: 11.15.8 (*Apollinaris noster*), 13.20.1 (*sederemus ego et Apollinaris Sulpicius et quidam alii mihi aut illi familiares*).

[28]See below in Chapter Five on the significance of the assumption of the *toga virilis* in a Greek context.

[29]It is significant that Plutarch suggests that the boy is capable of looking after himself without the supervision of a pedagogue. A pedagogue performed two primary functions: he could be an early teacher for a child, and, more importantly, he was a child-minder in a comprehensive sense of the term. He was simultaneously *paedagogus et custos* (Petr. *Sat.* 94.2), responsible for protecting the child from sexual advances and for teaching him proper etiquette and decorum (Bradley 1991a: 51-55). Plutarch's reference to the boy no longer needing a *tutor* is less noteworthy for boys were released from *tutela* at the age of fourteen, which for some preceded the assumption of the toga.

written version of his discourse to Nicander, apparently the son of C. Memmius Euthydamus, a colleague in the priesthood at Delphi.[30] Nicander seems to have been a pupil of Plutarch's at Chaeronea, and may have attended the original lecture in addition to receiving a copy from its author.[31] The introductory passage contains several familiar themes. The rite of passage marks the beginning of an intellectual awakening for the young man and also provides opportunities not yet available to him as a boy. As well, Plutarch's lecture contains the familiar notions of the new *togatus*' ambiguity and moral vulnerability. Having achieved adulthood, he is now capable of independent thought, but he is not steeped in philosophical teachings nor does he yet possess the maturity of one schooled in philosophy and life. Like Persius, Nicander is at his own moral and intellectual crossroads, according to his teacher and mentor:

> I have written out and sent to you, Nicander, my lecture on how to listen, to help you to know the correct way to listen to anyone who is trying to persuade you, now that you have been released from guardians and have taken on the mantle of manhood....Just as, according to Herodotus, women discard their inhibitions along with their clothes, so when some young people shed the mantle of childhood, they simultaneously shed inhibition and caution, and no sooner have they divested themselves of restrictive clothing, than they overflow with self-indulgence. You, on the other hand, have often been told that following God and listening to reason are identical; so bear in mind that for intelligent people the passage from childhood to adulthood is not an abandonment of rules, but a change of ruler: instead of someone whose services are hired and bought, they accept in their lives the divine leadership of reason -- and it is only those who follow reason who deserve to be regarded as free.[32]

---

[30]On Nicander, see the discussion of Hillyard 1981: xxxiv with notes, who quotes a largely neglected inscription to support the internal evidence. Plutarch mentions Nicander's presence at a discussion in his work *On the Cleverness of Animals* (*Mor.* 965C), suggesting that he was one of Plutarch's pupils. Euthydamus is identified as Plutarch's colleague in the priesthood in a passing reference in the *Quaestiones Convivales* (*Mor.* 700E).

[31]Hillyard 1981: xxxiv.

[32]Τὴν γενομένην μοι σχολήν, ὦ Νίκανδρε, περὶ τοῦ ἀκούειν ἀπέσταλκά σοι γράψας, ὅπως εἰδῇς τοῦ πείθοντος ὀρθῶς ἀκούειν, ὅτε τῶν προσταττόντων ἀπήλλαξαι τὸ ἀνδρεῖον ἀνειληφὼς ἱμάτιον....καὶ καθάπερ Ἡροδοτός φησιν ἅμα τῷ χιτῶνι συνεκδύεσθαι τὴν αἰδῶ τὰς γυναῖκας, οὕτως ἔνιοι νέων τῶν ἅμα τῷ τὸ

Hillyard proposes that Nicander 'has acquired the *toga virilis* in its material sense...but has yet to acquire what it stands for, the mind of a free man.'[33] Obviously wearing the toga did not automatically invest a young man with the *logos* to which Plutarch refers, something attained only through study and experience. Yet adopting the toga did release a young man from some of the restrictions imposed upon children and empowered him with greater mobility and social freedom.

Social and Sexual Freedom: The Participation of the *novus togatus* at Banquets and Brothels

Dining was an integral part of Roman social life. Dinner guests, entertainment, etiquette, and of course, the *pièces de résistance* -- the food and drink -- are topics which occupied poets, historians, and antiquarians throughout Roman history. Dining customs were often of particular interest, as one of Plutarch's *Quaestiones Romanae* (33) illustrates. He inquires 'why, in the old days, did they [Romans] not dine out without their sons, even when they were still children?' Plutarch suggests that the purpose was to familiarize boys with proper dining habits so that they would learn to consume food and wine in an orderly and decorous manner. He adds that the presence of their sons would also encourage fathers to behave modestly and sensibly.[34] Many Romans seem to have concurred with Plutarch's views.

παιδικὸν ἱμάτιον ἀποθέσθαι συναποθέμενοι τὸ αἰδεῖσθαι καὶ φοβεῖσθαι καὶ λύσαντες τὴν κατασχηματίζουσαν αὐτοὺς περιβολήν, εὐθὺς ἐμπίπλανται τῆς ἀναγωγίας. σὺ δὲ πολλάκις ἀκηκοὼς ὅτι ταὐτόν ἐστι τὸ ἕπεσθαι θεῷ καὶ τὸ πείθεσθαι λόγῳ,νόμιζε τὴν εἰς ἄνδρας ἐκ παίδων ἀγωγὴν οὐκ ἀρχῆς εἶναι τοῖς εὖ φρονοῦσιν ἀποβολήν, ἀλλὰ μεταβολὴν ἄρχοντος, ἀντὶ μισθωτοῦ τινος ἢ ἀργυρωνήτου θεῖον ἡγεμόνα τοῦ βίου λαμβάνουσι τὸν λόγον, ᾧ τοὺς ἑπομένους ἄξιόν ἐστι μόνους ἐλευθέρους νομίζειν (text Hillyard; trans. Waterfield).

[33]Hillyard 1981: 48.

[34]It is difficult to capture in English the full sense Plutarch's language conveys. When describing the desired convivial conduct of children, he states that they should not become accustomed to behave θηριωδῶς μηδ' ἀτάκτως, literally 'like beasts nor disorderly,' but rather εὐλαβείας, 'with caution or discretion.' Their fathers would be μᾶλλον αἰδεῖσθαι καὶ σωφρονεῖν, 'more respectfully [i.e. to avoid feeling ashamed] and self-controlled.'

Apparently it was equally important for children and adults to comport themselves properly in social situations, and dinners were no exception. As Bradley remarks, '[n]o matter who was in attendance, there were certain proprieties that the *cena* [dinner] demanded of its participants,' ranging from removing one's shoes before eating to using a napkin correctly.[35] The presence of children at *cenae* seems to have been optional rather than conventional;[36] thus children may have had limited opportunities to dine with adults and may consequently have been expected to exhibit exemplary table manners when dining in front of their elders, whom Plutarch (*QR* 33) suggests would act as 'supervisors and spectators.' A certain level of adult decorum was also expected. Cicero reviled Verres for exposing his son to unlimited indecencies during *convivia,* including adulterous matrons and the company of Apronius, whom he describes as *inhumanus ac barbarus* to others, with whom Verres shared his drinking cup and his private chamber. Apronius also had the audacity to dance stark naked before all of the guests -- even Verres' son, a *praetextatus*, which Cicero found particularly reprehensible. After all, childhood was 'the most unstable and dangerous period in life' when highly impressionable young people could easily learn from a bad example.[37] So if an *heres bullatus* was prone to gambling or had extravagant eating habits, his parents were to blame at least partly, if not completely (Juv. 14.4-10 and *passim*).

---

[35]Bradley 1998: 38-39. While children may have learned the rules of good dining to a certain extent through simple observation, sources suggest that parents and more often slave childminders taught appropriate manners and behaviour for the dinner-table. For references and discussion, see Bradley 1998.

[36]Bradley 1998: 38.

[37]Adulterous matrons: Cic. *Verr.* 2.5.137. Characterization of Apronius and his behaviour, including his assumption of the role and title of master of the banquet (*in convivio dominus*): *Verr.* 2.3.23. Cicero stresses the inappropriateness of Apronius' nude entertainment: *ac tum maxime cum accubante praetextato praetoris filio saltare in convivio nudus coeperat*; 'then especially when he was reclining by the praetor's son, a *praetextatus*, he began to dance stark naked before the *convivium.*' Cf. Festus (316) on the use of obscene language in the presence of *praetextati*; he notes that it was a serious offense (*nefas sit*). According to Juvenal (14.47), children deserved *maxima reverentia* (Juv. 14.47). Instable, impressionable age: Cic. *Verr.* 2.5.137. On Verres' further indiscretion in terms of his attire generally and presumably at *convivia* as well, see Heskel 1994: 133-145.

Diners reclined to eat following proper form by leaning on the left arm and taking food with the right hand. Yet not all participants in a Roman dinner were entitled to engage in what seems to have been a practice of significant social privilege. Men of low status such as freedmen might be invited by their host to recline,[38] but slaves and children were traditionally forbidden to do so. Even the children of the Imperial family were not exempted from the prohibition. Suetonius (*Aug.* 64.3) reports that when Augustus dined with his grandsons while they were still children, they had to sit either on the bottom couch (the one reserved for least honoured guests) or at the bottom of his couch, depending on how the Latin is interpreted.[39] Claudius' sons and daughters, as well as the children of upper-class Romans, dined with the emperor on a regular basis, sitting on the arms of the couches the adults used, according to ancient custom (Suet. *Claud.* 32). Tacitus (*Ann.* 13.16.1) records that in Nero's reign, the children of the Imperial family, including Britannicus, and those of other prominent families sat at a separate table within view of the adults. But in Suetonius' account (*Tit.* 2), when Nero arranged to have Britannicus poisoned and joined him for his last supper, Britannicus was reclining at the table with his boyhood friend, the future emperor Titus. As Booth suggests, '[p]erhaps Suetonius imagined that Britannicus had assumed the toga of manhood before his murder; otherwise, as Tacitus' account reveals, Suetonius has missed a point of etiquette...[the] general convention whereby the right to recline came with the grant of the garb of manhood.'[40]

That the assumption of the *toga virilis* enabled ordinary young men as well as Imperial princes to recline at banquets emerges from Persius' autobiographical reflection. Recalling his intimate association with Cornutus, Persius (5.41-42, 44) declares that 'indeed with you

---

[38]Bradley 1998: 39.

[39]*neque cenavit una, nisi ut in imo lecto assiderent.* Carter 1982: 185 prefers 'on the bottom couch' for *in imo lecto* but notes that the Latin bears either interpretation. Cf. the remarks of Dunbabin 1991: 123, on the evidence from the Casa del Criptoportico in Pompeii (I.6.2-4): 'Low benches run along the ends of the couches and the walls in front, where children or other inferior persons could sit.'

[40]Booth 1991: 109-110.

I remember consuming long days, and with you enjoying early nights with feasting...and we relaxed serious matters with a moderate table.' This social aspect of Persius' relationship with his mentor immediately follows his receipt of the toga, indicating that the garment was a prerequisite for full participation in convivial life.[41] Moreover, while it seems Persius exercised admirable self-control at banquets, Apuleius (*Apol.* 98.5-7) alleges that his stepson, Pudens, treated the toga as a license for debauchery. He accused Pudens' uncle, Sicinius Aemilianus, of indulging the boy's appetites:

> You took him from us as a mere boy; you have promptly made him into a man. When he was under our care, he used to go to school; from that he now escapes with great flight into the low-class tavern, despising serious friends, and, boy that he is, he spends his time with the most dissolute little youths amongst prostitutes and wine-cups at dinner parties. He himself is the ruler in your house, he is the very master of your *familia*, and the director of your banquets.[42]

As Booth assesses it, '[t]he charge is clear: this youth did not benefit from the proper *tirocinium convivii* deemed necessary to mold the use of the freedom bestowed by the toga of manhood.'[43]

It is perhaps with convivial pleasures -- and perils -- in mind that Statius (*Silv.* 5.2.68-69) wondered 'whom has unrestrained youth not corrupted and the hasty freedom of a new toga?'[44] For some young men, freedom from parental control and the excesses available at

---

[41]*tecum etenim longos memini consumere soles, | et tecum primas epulis decerpere noctes; | ... | atque verecunda laxamus seria mensa.* Harvey 1981: 139 remarks that *primas* suggests the avoidance of excessive pleasure and similarly that 5.44 indicates that the pair's relaxation 'is tempered with frugality and moderation.' On the advantage the assumption of the toga yielded for young men, compare Bradley 1998: 46: 'no matter how frequently they attended *cenae*, children were never admitted as full and equal members of a family group.'

[42]*investem a nobis accepisti; vesticipem ilico reddidisti. Cum a nobis regeretur, ad magistros itabat; ab iis nunc magna fugela in ganeum fugit, amicos serios aspernatur, cum adulescentulis postremissumis inter scorta et pocula puer hoc aevi convivium agitat. Ipse domi tuae rector, ipse familiae dominus, ipse magister convivio.*

[43]Booth 1991: 109.

[44]*quem non corrupit pubes effrena novaeque | libertas properata togae?*

the *convivium* were a dangerous combination. Persius boasted of his moderate dining behaviour, yet he too might have given in to the temptations of the *convivium* had he not 'submitted temporarily to Cornutus who tamed his spirit and made it obedient to reason.'[45] Drunkenness and gluttony were among the vices associated with Roman dinner parties, and the tendency was great for vulnerable youth to succumb to various other influences. Not surprisingly, Octavian's behaviour at dinner-parties is described by Nicolaus of Damascus as beyond reproach while his companions succumbed to their desires. He reports that Octavian regularly joined his uncle, Julius Caesar, at drinking parties (8.18) but demonstrated considerable restraint. In a fragmentary passage (18.28-30) which seems to explain why Caesar adopted his nephew, Nicolaus remarks that 'nor to be in attendance with the young men as they get drunk, nor to remain at drinking parties past evening...[e]specially because of this, Caesar esteemed him more than others and not, as some people think, because of their blood-relationship alone.'[46]

In addition to drinking, it was common for a spectrum of entertainments to be provided for the guests, ranging from air-borne acrobats to tragic actors, depending on the space available, the wealth of the host and the guests to be impressed.[47] Sometimes dancing

---

[45]Dessen 1968: 72.

[46]Trans. Bellemore.

[47]Dunbabin 1996 discusses the issue of space and suggests (78) that the *stibadium* of late antiquity could accommodate entertainments more easily because a large part of the room was left completely open: 'Elaborate spectacles become much more feasible.' On the *stibadium* and its predecessor, the *triclinium*, see Dunbabin 1991. Though less relevant to the present discussion, two points are worth noting. First, as Dunbabin 1996 shows, the concept of dinner entertainment or spectacle is a later development. In the Republic and early Empire, the dinner itself was the spectacle. There was limited room for entertainment and much less emphasis on the 'external spectacle' as an essential element in the *convivium*. Secondly, in some instances, there was a theatrical quality about the physical setting -- 'part of the entertainment comes from the setting itself' (Dunbabin 1996: 66). *Triclinia* were set in the midst of aviaries and in gardens where water frequently added to the splendor. Some garden *triclinia* were equipped with pipes that emitted jets of water to play in the center of the tables and to run along ledges at the front of couches (Dunbabin 1991: 123-124). There was also the *triclinium*-grotto; one elaborate example is the Tiberian villa at Sperlonga in which the dining area is on an island in the rectangular *piscina* and is only accessible by boat (Dunbabin

girls were present -- to the moralists' dismay, and pantomime performances with plots including rapes and seduction scenes were apparently traditional convivial fare.[48] The provocative content of some of the entertainments intermingled with heavy drinking and general revelry could lead to sexual promiscuity. Furthermore, sometimes sexual pleasure was even 'an expected sequel to a banquet.'[49] Pliny's (*Ep.* 9.17) response to Julius Genitor strongly suggests such a situation. Genitor had complained to Pliny about a dinner party where 'jesters, male dancers (*cinaedi*), and clowns kept wandering around the tables.' Pliny sympathizes, for he himself does not find the dancer's charms, the mime's impudence, or the clown's buffoonery attractive. Moreover, he wonders 'how many...call for their shoes or lie back in disgust no less, as you did when you had to endure these monstrosities as you call them.'[50]

Persius' remarks (5.37-40) directly preceding mention of his dinners with Cornutus

---

1996: 72; cf. Dunbabin 1991: 124-125).

[48]On the range of entertainment provided, see Jones 1991: 193 who cautions that '[w]e should not imagine that even in cultivated circles dinner theater was always so decorous as a reading of Plutarch or Pliny might imply.'

[49]Edwards 1993: 188 n. 45; see also her discussion of the excesses of *convivia* and the reaction of moralists, 187-190 and 198-204.

[50]*...quereris taedio tibi fuisse quamvis lautissimam cenam, quia scurrae cinaedi moriones mensis inerrabant....*(2) *quia nequaquam me ut inexspectatum festivumve delectat, si quid molle a cinaedo, petulans a scurra, stultum a morione profertur....*(3) *quam multi, cum lector aut lyristes aut comoedus inductus est, calceos poscunt aut non minore cum taedio recubant, quam tu ista* (*sic enim adpellas*) *prodigia perpessus es.* On *mollis* and *mollitia*, and associations with effeminacy and sexual passivity, see Edwards 1993: 63-97. In the middle Republic, the term *cinaedus* was used to indicate a male dancer or pantomime. However, it gradually changed in meaning to refer specifically to a sexually passive man (see Parker 1997, and below n. 54). Corbeill 1997: 105 provides an explanation of how these two distinct ideas combined: 'Part of the stigma of the dance derives from its associations with the passive role in male-male sexual encounters since, in ancient Greece and Rome, male-male homoerotic behavior was figured as nonreciprocal, involving a virile penetrator and a passive, penetrated partner. *Cinaedus*, in fact, eventually became a standard word to describe the penetrated partner in such a relationship. The dance, it seems, indicated commitment to a specific, predetermined lifestyle.'

may point to moral threats of these types:

> At that time, your clever rule strained to straighten my crooked morals and my spirit, struggling to be tamed, was molded by reason and took on a skillfully crafted complexion under your thumb.[51]

Harvey notes that the representation of right and wrong by straight and crooked is common, whereas the use of *intortos* in a moral sense 'is unparalleled before ecclesiastical Latin, and its combination with the abstract *mores* is audacious.'[52] To precisely which 'crooked morals' Persius refers is unclear, but his use of *intortos* coupled with his description of Cornutus' embrace as *Socratico* are certainly curious. His selection may be very deliberate. Persius may have felt the need to defend his intimate friendship with Cornutus, either because of his own past experiences, his *intortos mores*, or because of suspicions arising from their close association. He alludes to the alleged purity of Socrates' relationship with Alcibiades, and, as Booth maintains, keeps 'his reputation at the *convivium* pure through the protection of Cornutus' 'Socratic' bosom.'[53]

---

[51]*tum fallere sollers | apposita intortos extendit regula mores, | et premitur ratione animus, vincique laborat, | artificemque tuo ducit sub pollice vultum.*

[52]Harvey 1981: 137.

[53]Booth 1991: 118. Barr 1987: 136 proposes that *sinu* has a 'fatherly ring' to it. The 'purity' of Cornutus is, however, debatable. In the previous satire, Persius explores the theme of appearance versus reality, concluding with several provocative remarks by/about 'Socrates' (4.42-51): 'We snipe at others' legs and expose our own to arrows. One lives on these terms, as we know. Below your loins you have a blind wound, but the belt, with its broad gold, conceals it. As you choose. Cheat, and deceive your body...If you do whatever comes to penis...in vain will you have given the people thirsty ears. Reject what you are not' (trans. Lee). If *Satire* 4 is read in connection with 5, then Persius' *Socratico sinu* assumes an entirely different meaning. The Socrates in *Satire* 4 is a deceptive, potentially corrupting individual; with this in mind, it is difficult not to be at least a little skeptical of Cornutus. Aside from the possible connection between the two passages (a suggestion for which I am grateful to Dr. C. Littlewood) which would call into question Cornutus' propriety, several sources indicate that improper teacher-student interaction was a recurrent problem. Quintilian (*Inst.* 1.2.4-5) notes that it is sometimes in schools themselves that morals are corrupted and stresses the need to choose a teacher who is *sanctissimus*. For some, morality, or lack thereof, was apparently deemed of lesser importance than teaching ability. Palaemon, for example, held a leading rank among grammarians despite the fact that he was notorious for vices of every

Without the supervision of Cornutus, Persius might have later wished to rehabilitate his reputation. Several anecdotes suggest that for new *togati*, the possibility of being homosexually seduced at *convivia* did exist. In Scipio Africanus' day, for example, P. Sulpicius Gallus was scorned for his effeminate attire and dissolute lifestyle. Scipio, in Gellius' account (*NA* 6.12.5), describes Gallus as an *adulescentulus* who attended banquets in a long-sleeved tunic and offended those present by reclining with a lover on the inside of a couch; Scipio stresses that Gallus was 'not only fond of wine, but fond of men too' (*non modo vinosus, sed virosus quoque*) and makes a disparaging reference to Gallus' sexual behaviour.[54] Catullus (21) warns Aurelius, an amatory rival, of the dire consequences if he does not keep his hands off of Catullus' young lover, Juventius. It seems Aurelius has 'been cuddling up to Juventius at dinner parties (where diners reclined) and making blatantly sexual advances.'[55] The remarks of a threatened and perhaps possessive lover must be set within

---

kind (*infamis omnibus vitiis*) according to Suetonius (*DGR* 23.2). For attitudes on the character of teachers, particularly morally disreputable ones, see Bonner 1977: 105-110.

[54]*qui in conviviis adulescentulus cum amatore cum chirodyta tunica interior accubuerit, qui non modo vinosus, sed virosus quoque sit, eumne quisquam dubitet, quin idem fecerit, quod cinaedi facere solent?* Scipio apparently considered Gallus' behaviour, specifically his homosexuality, truly repugnant from his clever double entendre as *virosus*, with a long i, means 'stinking, fetid' while the same word with a short i translates as 'fond of men', or as the *OLD* entry, 'having an excessive sexual craving for men,' which captures a more pejorative sense. The distinction between the two words could easily be blurred through ambiguous pronunciation, forcing the listener to question which of the two adjectives was really intended. His disapproval is even more blatant by accusing Gallus of being a *cinaedus*. This is a distinctly contemptuous term which Parker 1997: 48 suggests defining as 'passive/abnormal man,' though he demonstrates that this equivalent does not fully encompass Roman sentiment. He cautions (58) against equating it with homosexual, however, arguing that it represents a real category along the spectrums of gender and sexual activity yet it 'simply does not correspond to our construction of the 'homosexual'.'

[55]Garrison 1989: 106. Catullus 21.4-6: *pedicare cupis meos amores.| nec clam: nam simul es, iocaris una,| haerens ad latus omnia experiris.* 'You're eager to bugger my favourite boy. And not on the sly: you're around at the same time, you joke with him, you stick to his side and try everything.' The convivial setting is further suggested by the opening line of the poem: *Aureli, pater esuritionum* / 'Aurelius, father of all starvations'; Aurelius spends more time satisfying other needs than his hunger during dinner parties.

their proper context. Yet they should not be dismissed completely as Catullus 'evokes a realistic situation wherein the beloved has been dined, wined, and seduced,' even if his beloved was not yet eligible to wear the *toga virilis* or had consciously chosen to make himself sexually available to others despite his aristocratic status.[56]

One final example illustrates the very real possibility that the new *togatus* might be exposed to homosexual advances in a convivial context. In an episode in the *Satyricon* (85-87), Eumolpus relates his late-night seduction of the son of his Pergamene host, specifically locating it in the *triclinium*.[57] Though Booth insists on Hellenizing the tale, referring to Eumolpus' lover as a 'new Greek adult' and misrepresenting Pliny's remarks about donning the toga in Bithynia,[58] there are certain elements which give the account a distinctly Roman flavour.[59] The nature and genre of the evidence contained in the *Satyricon* necessitate a

---

[56]Wiseman 1985: 130 calls Juventius 'that youthful blossom on a noble family tree' and states that 'like some other young aristocrats, he was prepared to make himself sexually available.' Cf. Cicero's remarks (*Att.* 1.16.5) about young men of the nobility bribing members of a jury with sexual favours. On the nobility of Juventius' ancestry, see Cicero's remarks in *Pro Plancio* against Marcus Juventius Laterensis (5.12, 27.67).

[57]That Eumolpus' lover has probably already received his toga is suggested by Petronius' reference to the young man as *ephebus*. He interchanges *puer* with *ephebus* almost equally (6 times compared to 4) in the passages relating the seduction, which further supports the argument that his lover had already come of age in both Greek and Roman terms.

[58]Booth 1991: 113-114 attempts to equate the *toga virilis* with the ephebic cloak and apparently misses some fundamental aspects of Pliny's account (*Ep.* 10.116; see above in Chapters One and Two). He is mistaken that '[a]s the Younger Pliny reminds us, donning the ephebic cloak was regarded as equivalent to the *toga virilis*.' The two articles of clothing are completely different in practical and symbolic function, and further distinguished from one another by the institutions with which they are associated. One of the intriguing and highly significant features of Pliny's report is that he refers specifically to the *toga virilis,* not the ephebic cloak. This demonstrates that Roman social and cultural practices were not only being exported to Greek provinces such as Bithynia, but were being incorporated into the pre-existing indigenous culture, becoming part of provincial life as regular, even daily occurrences. For Greek clothing, see Evans 1964. On the ephebate see Schnapp 1997: 12-50.

[59]Petronius seems to emphasize deliberately the Roman authenticity through certain details. Eumolpus introduces the incident (85.1) by stating that it was 'when I went to Asia to serve

cautious approach; it cannot be taken as wholly reflective of Roman society, nevertheless it does offer a valuable commentary on some of its social and sexual practices.

There seems to have been a latent, but constant anxiety in society as a whole toward homosexual behaviour, though from these select passages it is clear that Roman attitudes on this subject varied. It is necessary, however, to bear in mind that in Roman society, 'the only culturally condoned male homosexual relationship was that between a sexually active adult citizen male and a sexually passive male, usually younger, who was a slave, an ex-slave, or a non-citizen. The status of *vir* and sexual *patientia,* to be a man and to be penetrated by another man's penis, are conceptualized as mutually incompatible.'[60] To be seduced was to allow oneself to be 'unmanned,' and the implications were considerable for a citizen male, especially one preparing for a public career. Given these views, it is understandable that some genuinely feared that new *togati* could be homosexually seduced at *convivia*, regardless of the frequency with which this fear was realized.

For some young men, assumption of the toga translated almost immediately into greater sexual freedom in which liaisons were solicited by the young man himself. For elite young men, it seems its acquisition often signalled the beginning of a period of sexual activity, perhaps of some intensity, for the second century BCE annalist, Calpurnius Piso Frugi, complained that 'youths are given up to the penis.'[61] Not to acquire a certain amount of sexual

---

on the quaestor's staff.' He then describes (85.2) his initial strategy to seduce the *formosissimum filium* of his host: 'I hatched a plan to insure that I would never be viewed with suspicion by the paterfamilias (*patri familiae*): whenever the conversation at dinner (*in convivio*) even hinted at the sexual attraction of beautiful boys, I would blush like a virgin and object in the severest of tones that my ears were offended by such obscene talk.' Later in the evening (85.4-6), when he is alone with the young man in the dining room (*in triclinio*), he invokes the goddess of love -- Venus, not Aphrodite, for divine assistance in these first tentative stages of the seduction (trans. Branham and Kinney).

[60]Walters 1997: 31. Recent studies on Roman homosexuality are numerous. For a range of Roman attitudes toward homosexuality and lesbianism, see the articles of Hallett, MacMullen, Sullivan and others conveniently collected in *Homosexuality in the Ancient World* (1992), edited by W. R. Dynes and S. Donaldson, in addition to Richlin 1983 and Parker 1997.

[61]Piso Frugi's remark in Cic. *Ad Fam.* 9.22.2: *adulescentes peni deditos esse.*

experience soon after donning the toga was apparently unusual, as praise of Octavian's allegedly chaste adolescence suggests. Cicero (*Phil.* 3.15) contended that 'there is no more pure and modest young man (*adulescens*) than Caesar, no more conspicuous example of old-time morality in this younger generation of ours,' while Nicolaus of Damascus (15.36) marvelled at Octavian's abstention from sex for 'a whole year at just the age when young men are especially sexually active -- and even more so, young men of wealth.'[62]

Naturally it was not only for members of the senatorial order that a heightened interest in sexual activity closely followed the assumption of the *toga virilis*. Two poets of equestrian status connect their achievement of the toga with early amatory accomplishments. Catullus (68.15-17) proudly acknowledges that 'at the time when the pure white gown was first handed to me / when my blossoming youth was keeping pleasant springtime, / I had plenty of playful affairs.'[63] Propertius (3.15.3-6) is more modest but nevertheless makes explicit the sexual significance of the toga:

> When the restraint of boyhood's garb was lifted from me and I was given freedom to learn the way of love, my accomplice on those first nights, who initiated my untried heart, was Lycinna, won, ah me, by never a gift of mine![64]

For those young men not fortunate enough to find a lover right away, there were always other avenues to explore, including prostitution. It is uncertain whether the *toga virilis* was a formal prerequisite, but Persius' comment (5.32-33) that it permitted his eyes to wander with impunity over the Subura suggests that at least an unofficial association existed

---

[62]Cic. *Phil.* 3.15: *quis enim hoc adulescente castior, quis modestior, quod in iuventute habemus illustrius exemplum veteris sanctitatis?* (text and trans. Shackleton Bailey).

[63]68(a).15-17: *tempore quo primum vestis mihi tradita pura est,| iucundum cum aetas florida ver ageret,| multa satis lusi.* Though Garrison 1989: 149 suggests that *lusi* could refer to poetry as the verb is used in that sense, Thomson 1997: 476 seems correct that it means 'playing the lover' as Catullus 'is still talking about *munera Veneris* rather than those of the Muses.'

[64]3.15.3-6: *ut mihi praetexti pudor est relevatus amictus | et data libertas noscere amoris iter,| illa rudis animos per noctes conscia primas | imbuit, heu nullis capta Lycinna datis!* (text and trans. Goold 1990).

between the exchange of togas and the exchange of money for sex.[65] Prostitution thrived in this part of Rome as literary and archaeological sources attest.[66] Brothels were found nearly everywhere in the Empire, and the attraction of youth to these establishments was not confined to the capital. Apuleius (*Apol.* 98.6), for example, argued that after Pudens donned the toga in Oea, he began to frequent a *ganeum* and associate with prostitutes (*scorta*).[67] Roman comedy presents the brothel as an establishment with immense power to corrupt and consume. Though some young men were advised to seek out the services of prostitutes, evidence suggests that visits to brothels could get out of hand. Eyben recounts an incident involving the elder Cato in which he congratulated a youth leaving a brothel for curbing lust

---

[65]In his recent study of prostitution and Roman law, McGinn 1998 does not indicate that there was any legal relationship between the assumption of the toga and the purchase of a prostitute's services.

[66]See Richardson 1992 *s.v.* 'Subura.' Martial, for example, has much to say about the sale of sex in the Subura in particular: 2.17, 6.66, 11.61, 11.78.

[67]Although *ganeum* is defined by the *OLD* as 'a common eating-house (typically the resort of undesirable characters)' and thus not explicitly connected with prostitution, Apuleius' mention of *scorta* and *adulescentulis postremissumis* in the same clause strengthens the notion that more than just food and drink were for sale at this local tavern. Hunink 1997: 240-241 insists that Pudens actually exhibited even greater independence than simply seeking sex in brothels. He maintains that there is a clear sexual connotation to *patientem* in *Apol.* 98.5: *at nunc adeo patientem te ei praebes itaque eum indulgentia corrumpis, adeo ei nulla re adversare, ut per haec suspicacioribus fidem facias.* 'And now you show so much patience toward him and so you spoil him by your indulgence, you don't oppose a single thing to such an extent that through these things, you make your credibility even more suspect for those who are suspicious.' Hunink argues that '[w]e should keep in mind that Aemilianus is the one addressed here. The suggestion is that he has been *sexually passive* to Pudens, and so turned him from a boy into a 'real man' by giving up his own masculine role. Furthermore, Hunink asserts that the technical terms *investis* and *vesticeps* which Apuleius employs later in 98.5 also have 'clear sexual overtones; they refer to a boy below the age of puberty and a sexually mature boy respectively.' [On the two terms, see Festus *s.v. investis* (368) and the discussion below in Chapter Five.] Hunink's view of a homosexual allusion here is supported to a point by the distinctly sexual meaning *patiens* can have and by the phrase *indulgentia corrumpis*, which could similarly be interpreted in a sexual sense. However, the veracity of Apuleius' insinuation, if indeed Hunink is correct, is impossible to gauge; furthermore, it is important to consider the genre in which this reference is found as accusations of homosexuality were standard in invective, whether the claims were ever substantiated or not.

by legal means,[68] yet when he found him there too often, he chastised him saying 'I praised you because you came here, not because you lived here!' Eyben argues further that Augustus ordered brothels to open their doors only after the ninth hour, by which time new *togati* had returned home from their training on the Campus Martius.[69]

Though the acquisition of the toga seems to have been a prerequisite for illicit sex, it was not directly connected to marriage. Capacity to marry depended on attaining puberty for both sexes, not on receipt of the *toga virilis*.[70] There may, however, have been some relation

---

[68]Capacity to commit adultery and presumably *stuprum* as well (broadly categorized by Crook 1967: 101 as 'criminal fornication') was fixed at puberty (14 for boys), according to *Dig.* 48.5.37: *si minor annis adulterium commiserit, lege Iulia tenetur, quoniam tale crimen post pubertatem incipit.* 'If a person below the age of majority commits adultery, he is liable under the *lex Julia*, because [the ability to commit] a crime of this nature begins at puberty' (trans. Watson). Walters 1993: 28 argues that in spite of a youth's ability to commit adultery, below a certain age it would be considered improper for him to be doing so not because it was illegal, but because he was still immature. On the basis of Apul. *Met.* 9.28, Walters states that 'the adulterous youth is too young to be doing what he is doing -- it is explicit: 'you are still a child, what are you up to...before your time?" [*admodum puer...intempestivum tibi nomen adulteri vindicas?*] See also Walters 1997: 34-36 on youth and *stuprum*.

[69]For the dangers of the brothel in Roman comedy, see for example Tatum 1983. The threatening, consumptive powers of the brothel emerge clearly in Plautine comedy. For example, in *Bacch.* 56, the brothel is compared to an animal's lair (*latebrosus locus*) while at 368-374, the exposition of the establishment as a place that will literally swallow a man alive is cleverly developed. Youth commended to visit prostitutes: Val. Max. 7.3.10. Cf. Cic. *Cael.* 28 and additional references in Austin 1960 sanctioning youthful love affairs. Cato's remarks in Eyben 1993: 232 are somewhat problematic and cannot be verified. Baldwin 1976: 230 also refers to presumably the same passage (without providing a reference) in which Cato praised a young man for visiting a brothel but adds that 'some versions continue the anecdote to make Cato rebuke the same youth for living there....But a Cato sanctioning youthful whore-mongering is...improbable.' Augustus' regulation: Eyben 1993: 234, again with no reference provided. Compare, however, some of Augustus' other limitations on the activities of youth detailed by Suetonius (*Aug.* 31.3) such as a ban on the participation of beardless youth in the Lupercalia, and the insistence that young people of either sex attend the Secular Games with an older, adult accompanying them.

[70]A boy was *pubes* at fourteen, and a girl deemed *viripotens* at twelve, according to the jurists (Ulp. *Reg.* 5.2, Gaius *Inst.* 1.10).

between the assumption of the toga and betrothals.[71] The author of the *Life* of Marcus Aurelius (4.5), for example, reports that he donned the toga in his fifteenth year, 'and straightaway, at the wish of Hadrian, the daughter of Lucius Ceionius Commodus was betrothed to him.'[72] Treggiari argues that it seems to have been customary for boys to take the toga prior to becoming engaged. The sources she cites, however, are few and relate to a very small segment of society, so cannot be taken as representative of a widespread convention by any means.[73] Furthermore, while in some instances marriage closely followed a boy's entry into adulthood, even among the elite this does not seem to have been the usual practice. As Syme's study of marriage ages among senators shows, there was considerable variance during the Republic. Though there are examples of young men marrying at fifteen or sixteen, Syme rightly warned that '[a]s elsewhere, it is hazardous to draw conclusions of general import from sporadic evidence.'[74] Both literary and inscriptional evidence suggest that

---

[71]Treggiari 1991a: 153 notes that *sponsi* (those who were betrothed) 'were supposed to be of an age to understand what they were promising,' which post-classical jurists set at seven as a minimum age (*Dig.* 23.1.14). There are examples, however, of very early engagements when girls were mere infants, suggesting that not all Romans were as concerned about the participants' understanding as the jurists were. See the discussion of Treggiari 1991a: 153-155.

[72]*virilem togam sumpsit quinto decimo aetatis anno, statimque ei Lucii Ceionii Commodi filia desponsata est ex Hadriani voluntate.* Pflaum 1970: 212 notes that the daughter was Ceionia Fabia.

[73]Treggiari 1991a: 154. She does not include Marcus Aurelius' betrothal among the four examples she provides in n. 151, one of which (the reference to Quinctilius Varus in Sen. *Cont.* 1.3.10) does not refer to a betrothal at all. The three remaining individuals are all members of the ruling elite, thus do not reflect typical freeborn practices. Julius Caesar was *admodum praetextato* (Suet. *Iul.* 1.1) and below the age of 16 when he was betrothed. Claudius' son, Drusus, was probably approaching puberty (Suet. *Claud.* 27.2) but the MSS is defective so it is difficult to tell whether he was already fourteen or not. [I am inclined to follow Mottershead's *prope tum puberem* rather than Ihm's *pomeium puberum.*] Claudius was in fact only about fourteen though Suetonius describes him as *admodum adulescens* (*Claud.* 26.1). On the age and circumstances of Claudius at the time of the betrothal, see Mottershead 1986: 106.

[74]Syme 1987: 321. He uses the case of Gaius Sulpicius Galba (the second son of the consul of 149) to make his point. Galba was only sixteen when he married a daughter of P. Licinius

men entering on senatorial careers tended to marry in their early twenties, probably to benefit from the concessions given to fathers by the Augustan laws.[75] Pliny provides several examples of this phenomenon, such as Gaius Ummidius Quadratus, who married before the age of twenty-four, and his friend Gnaeus Pedanius Fuscus Salinator, who also married at approximately the same age (*Ep.* 7.24.3, 6.26).[76] The epigraphic evidence, though it must be treated with caution, is particularly useful for studying the age at first marriage. From his analysis of the epigraphic evidence, Saller argues convincingly for a late pattern of marriage for Roman men, meaning that 'men begin to marry in significant numbers in their mid or late twenties, with a median age at first marriage around thirty and many postponing marriage until after thirty.'[77] Only five cases have been found in the entire corpus of Latin inscriptions which attest to men who married before the age of twenty who were living outside of Rome and were not ex-slaves, soldiers, or Christians. There is similarly minimal evidence for men marrying in their early twenties as only nine examples record men who married between the ages of twenty and twenty-four.[78] The implications of donning the *toga virilis* for marriage thus seem to be minimal, for the two occasions were often separated by a decade or more. Even among the elite, the assumption of the toga generally preceded marriage by several years.

Crassus Mucianus but the fact that he married at this young age does not on its own indicate a pervasive trend. For example, he notes (324) that Marcus Brutus, born in 85, is not mentioned in association with his wife, Claudia (daughter of Appius Claudius Pulcher) until 51.

[75]Saller 1994: 38. On the effects of the Augustan legislation, see Treggiari 1991a: 77.

[76]Cf. Plin. *Ep.* 8.23. For further detail on these young men and their careers, see Sherwin-White 1966: 367-368, 386, 431.

[77]Saller 1994: 36.

[78]Saller 1987: 29.

Conclusions

The period following the assumption of the *toga virilis* was a time of formation and transformation for a young man within society as a whole and within the family in particular. In both of these spheres, the position of the new *togatus* was characterized by ambiguity, rendering him very much a boy and a man at the same time, as Ovid's reference to the sixteen-year-old Narcissus as *puer iuvenisque* or Cicero's mention of Octavian as *adulescens, paene potius puer* attest. In many ways, a boy's rite of passage signalled the beginning of a transitional phase for the entire family. The adjustment, however, was not always completely smooth as parents attempted to view their sons as children one day and young adults the next, and adolescents aimed to accelerate their incorporation into the adult world. As a result, the potential existed for tensions to erupt over lifestyle and education in particular, two areas managed by parents, especially fathers, throughout childhood and somewhat reluctantly and in fact only partially relinquished with the onset of adolescence. The arrival at adulthood was marked by struggles for authority and autonomy, yet it initiated a period of opportunity and discovery in which the formation of an individual identity and the exercise of independent thought were not wholly suppressed, though they were limited to an extent by *patria potestas*. In fact, at one point in the Republic, it was only after a young man had taken the toga that he assumed his own identity in a fuller sense as he was then permitted to use his *praenomen* (given name).[79] Receipt of the toga invested a young man with greater freedom

---

[79]Varro preserves a statement by an anonymous author that 'Q. Scaevola (consul 95 BCE) reports that it used to be the custom for boys not to use their *praenomina* before they assumed the *toga virilis*, and for girls not before they married. At that time, there were *praenomina*, now there are *cognomina*, as Postumus Agrippa Proculus Caesar.' *pueris non prius quam togam virilem sumerent, puellis non ante quam nuberent praenomina imponi moris fuisse Q. Scaevola auctor est. quae olim praenomina fuerunt, nunc cognomina sunt, ut Postumus Agrippa Proculus Caesar.* (*Auctor de praenominibus*, para. 3.6, text in H. Funaioli, *Grammaticae Romanae Fragmenta*, Leipzig, 1907: 331). From Cicero's correspondence, it might seem that the custom of using the *praenomen* for new *togati* fell into disuse only decades after Scaevola made his remark. In his letters from Marcus' childhood, Cicero supports Scaevola's statement by calling him by his cognomen, Cicero, often accompanied by affectionate epithets (e.g. *Att.* 1.18.1: *mellito Cicerone*) rather than his *praenomen*; yet after Marcus donned the toga, Cicero continues to call him 'Cicero' not Marcus (e.g. *Att.* 14.7.2 from April 44). Is Cicero an unusual case? Is this an epistolary

to explore socially and sexually, to gain experience and acquire knowledge as the personal reflections of Catullus, Propertius and Persius illustrate. But the sudden freedom the toga conferred was also overwhelming for some who were vulnerable to certain aspects and excesses of adult life, as the case of Pudens and the tempered advice of Plutarch suggest. The importance of the adoption of the *toga virilis* in a family and within society is thus apparent: it separated childhood from early adulthood or youth, and began 'a process of solidification, through stages, ensuring the gradual definition of adult roles.'[80]

While the practical significance of the assumption of the toga is clear, the symbolic significance of the ceremony and of the *toga virilis* itself has yet to be uncovered. As we have seen, the transition to manhood involved a series of rites which combined to form a complex whole, a *dives ritus* as Statius (*Silv.* 5.3.118) proclaims. In the next chapter, we will examine the donning of the *toga virilis* as a rite of passage deeply imbued with symbolism and tradition, in an effort to understand better its function, importance and enduring appeal in Roman society.

---

convention? Clearly Scaevola's assertion is difficult to test from the evidence available. Cf. the interesting yet not wholly reliable statement by the author of Marcus Aurelius' *Life* 1.10 regarding name changes and coming of age: 'After the death of his real father, he was called Annius Verissimus by Hadrian, yet after he assumed the *toga virilis*, Annius Verus.' / *post excessum vero patris ab Hadriano Annius Verissimus vocatus est, post virilem autem togam Annius Verus.*

[80]Levi and Schmitt 1997b: 5.

CHAPTER FIVE

Symbolism in Ceremony: The Significance of a Roman Rite of Passage

Introduction

A Roman boy's coming of age ceremony consisted of a series of rites to mark his departure from childhood and arrival at adulthood. It began with the laying aside of the boyhood *toga praetexta* and culminated in a public procession in which the boy, now vested in the *toga virilis,* presented himself to his family and community as an adult citizen male. Statius (*Silv.* 5.3.118-119) captures much of the splendor of this defining moment when he describes his father's celebration, declaring that 'it was in rich ceremony (*divite ritu*) that Infantia chose you to set aside the purple robe.' As already seen, Tertullian (*De Idol.* 16.1) called it *sollemnitas togae purae*, 'the ritual of the *toga pura*,' a phrase that evokes sanctity and formality. Moreover, he listed it among naming ceremonies and weddings, occasions of considerable significance for the entire community and categorized in anthropological terms as *rites de passage.*

One anthropologist describes these dramatic, transformative moments as instances when '[b]orders are crossed; identity symbols are stripped away, familiar roles and customs suspended.'[1] Because transitional rites involve movement from one age or status to another, their relationship with the demographic composition of society often merits consideration. Roman society was plagued by massive infant and child mortality;[2] a rite honouring the achievement of manhood was therefore of some consequence. Set against this background, it is perhaps easier to make sense of certain beliefs surrounding childhood and early adolescence, such as the protective, even sacred qualities of the *bulla* and *praetexta*, or why attaining adult status was an occasion for celebration yet also signaled a period of renewed caution and conservatism. In his study of Jewish initiatory rites in Medieval Europe, Marcus

---

[1]Myerhoff 1984: 310.

[2]Parkin 1992: 93; Hopkins 1983: 225. See below in the section 'Demographic Implications for the Donning of the *toga virilis*' for further discussion.

proposes that ritual constitutes a 'public record.'[3] As a type of social artifact, the composition and function of ritual are of considerable interest, but assessment of its value and overall importance is incomplete without taking into account its symbolic significance. It is the purpose of this chapter to progress beyond the technical aspects and practical implications of the assumption of the toga to examine it in the context of symbolic communication. What messages did a pure-white toga convey in a highly status-conscious society? How did the various names for the adult toga or the association of particular deities with stages of the rite work constantly to reaffirm Roman virtues and values concerning liberty, purity, and masculinity? By exploring aspects such as these, the ceremony assumes the quality of a 'meaningful drama'[4] rather than a mechanical performance, and both its significance and endurance can be more fully appreciated.

Rites of Passage: Anthropological Theory and Functional Significance

The term *rite of passage* was coined by an ethnologist and specialist in the study of folklore, Arnold van Gennep, in his work, *Les Rites de passage,* published in 1909. The book is considered one of the most important works about ritual published prior to World War I, and although critics have detected some shortcomings in van Gennep's analysis, he is nonetheless credited by anthropologists for the depth of his insight and his 'tremendous contribution' to the study of cultural anthropology and of traditional/tribal societies in particular.[5] Van Gennep's main theory concerned the sequence of rites used to alter people's

---

[3]Marcus 1996: 5.

[4]Raphael 1988: 18.

[5]Gluckman 1962: 1-2. For critical assessments of van Gennep's work, see Gluckman 1962 in particular, with valuable analyses in the remaining three articles in the same volume, and Vizedom 1976. Kimball, in the introduction to the translation of *Les Rites de passage* by Vizedom and Caffee 1960, also offers some useful remarks. The primary criticism of van Gennep's work was his argument for the universality of rites of passage. As Gluckman 1962: 10 remarks, his 'scheme of passage was a major step forward: but in the end he too succumbed to the prevailing methods of proof, for he too seems to have felt that he had to show that the process of *rites de passage* occurred universally.'

social relationships. He argued that rituals dealing with movements -- of people and nature, between groups of people, and into new statuses -- exhibited a common order, a tripartite structure of separation, transition, and incorporation[6]:

> For groups, as well as for individuals, life itself means to separate and to be reunited, to change form and condition, to die and to be reborn. It is to act and cease, to wait and rest, and then to begin acting again, but in a different way. And there are always new thresholds to cross: the threshold of summer and winter, of a season or a year, of a month or a night; the thresholds of birth, adolescence, maturity, and old age; the threshold of death and that of the afterlife -- for those who believe in it.[7]

Van Gennep noted that the presence of these rites was especially prominent at moments of considerable change in an otherwise continuous life-course, such as the onset of puberty or entry into a new occupation. Because life consisted of a succession of transformations, disruption to the equilibrium was a constant concern. He believed that all societies acknowledged the potential negative effects of changes and devised ways to counter them by celebrating and facilitating passages through ritual.[8]

For many traditional, non-literate societies, the passage to adulthood is immensely important for both the individual and the community as a whole. The transition, especially for boys, is often marked by a series of rituals to measure their fortitude and worth as prospective adult members of society. The tests may be severe and involve beatings, scarification, seclusion, genital mutilation and various forms of physical and psychological deprivation. These rites are powerful dramas, and according to van Gennep, ultimately bring about the symbolic death of the boy and his resurrection as a man.[9] Because of their complex

---

[6]van Gennep referred to a 'schéma complet des rites de passage' which he divided into 'Rites de séparation, Rites de marge et Rites d'agrégation,' and proposed that they could be further analyzed as preliminal, liminal, and postliminal rites (French edition 1909, reprinted 1969: 14).

[7]van Gennep 1960: 190. All references are taken from the English translation of *Les Rites de passage* by Vizedom and Caffee.

[8]van Gennep 1960: 13.

[9]The theme of death and rebirth permeates van Gennep's interpretation of adolescent initiation rites (see esp. 75-77), and indeed the symbolic death of the child is present in many

nature, transitional rites have attracted considerable attention.

Victor Turner has contributed much to the study of rites of passage, emphasizing the processual nature of ritual and the important relationship between social relations and social rituals.[10] He describes the circumcision rites called *Mukanda*, practiced by several West Central Bantu peoples and the Ndembu in particular, as typical *rites de passage* as

---

tribal ceremonies. The Poro Bush of West Africa, for example, dramatically enact the death of the boy to commence initiation as Raphael 1988: 4-5 details: 'A thick stalk and a bladder filled with chicken blood are tied under the boy's shirt. The boy is then ceremonially killed by spears thrown by masked dancers. The bladder breaks, spilling all the blood. Although the thick stalk acts like a shield to protect the boy, he pretends to be dead and falls to the ground. He is then picked up and tossed over a fence....On the other side of the fence one Poro member catches the boy while another drops a log, creating the impression that the boy has hit the ground. The women who have been observing the ceremony are supposed to believe that the boy has actually died. They will not see him again until he is resurrected as a man.'

[10]Turner 1969 explores these themes. Vizedom 1976: 13-24 discusses van Gennep's anthropological successors and why it was not until the 1960s and 1970s that scholars really broadened and intensified the study of rites of passage. Turner is credited in particular for developing the theme of liminality and for his work on the implications of these rites for a society's conceptions of itself. Though Margaret Mead's *Coming of Age in Samoa* (1928) might seem an obvious inclusion in the discussion of rites of passage, it has been deliberately omitted. When Mead contrasted Samoan and American adolescence, she found 1928: 197 that the element of 'storm and stress' that she considered characteristic of American adolescence was absent in Samoa. Instead, there was a 'general casualness' about the whole society, especially in regard to sexuality, 1928: 198. She argued that Samoan society was far more permissive than American society and this eliminated much of the conflict adolescents experienced. In fact, from Mead's description, the Samoans seem obsessed with sex; indeed she states 1928: 33 of a typical Samoan girl, '[a]ll of her interest is expended on clandestine sex adventures.' Mead's work was pioneering but it is also highly problematic. Her analysis of Samoan adolescence is deeply coloured by her own dissatisfaction with the moral climate of the 1920s which was patriarchal and sexually restrictive in her estimation. There is a further significant problem with Mead's study. Controversy arose in 1983 when an Australian scholar, Derek Freeman, published an article in which he argued that Mead's view of Samoa was a myth -- that she had actually completed very little fieldwork among the Samoans on which to base her study and had misrepresented and misinterpreted her limited data. The veracity of Freeman's claims has in turn been questioned. Nevertheless, Mead's work has been cast in a negative light and the matter remains unresolved and clearly beyond the scope of the present study. See P. Shankman, 'Mead-Freeman Controversy' in *Encyclopedia of Cultural Anthropology*, 1996: 757-759.

characterized by van Gennep: the boys are removed from their homes in their villages, circumcised, secluded for a period of time in which they are subject to certain rules and prohibitions, then finally returned to their villages as men. Circumcision and other ordeals which the initiate must endure are symbolic of the initiatory death. As Turner explains, '[t]he novice dies to be transformed or transmuted, and attain to a higher quality of existence. This is death to the indistinct and amorphous state of childhood...in order to be reborn into masculinity and personality.'[11]

Even in societies in which the progression from child to adult is less pronounced and traumatic, certain demonstrations of the initiate's mettle are nevertheless required. Among the !Kung hunter-gatherers of the Kalahari desert, participation in some initiation ceremonies is completely voluntary, but full incorporation into adulthood is contingent upon a boy's killing of a large animal such as a giraffe or buffalo and the subsequent celebration, after which a boy is eligible to marry and choose a wife. Boys spend several years preparing for the crucial hunt, and celebrate their achievement with a scarification rite that produces permanent welts on the upper torso, as well as with the receipt of spears as gifts to mark the occasion.[12]

Although cultural anthropologists have devoted considerable study since van Gennep's work to the rituals of tribal cultures, and in particular to rites of passage, interest in transformative rites in modern, literate societies has lagged behind, perhaps because these ceremonies seem to lack alluring, exotic qualities, especially for the transition from childhood or adolescence to adulthood. Nevertheless, the concept of *rites de passage* has definite applications for non-tribal cultures. As Kimball remarks in the introduction to the English translation of van Gennep's work, 'rites of passage deserve attention within themselves. The

---

[11]Turner 1962: 173. Clearly all of these rites are far more complex than these cursory summaries suggest. However, neither space nor necessity permits further discussion here. Turner's 1962 interpretation of circumcision rites among the Ndembu is highly accessible. Vizedom 1976 provides a convenient comparison of initiation rites for boys and girls in nine societies in Australia, New Guinea, and Central Africa.

[12]Fried and Fried 1980: 74-75.

critical problems of becoming male and female, of relations within the family, and of passing into old age are directly related to the devices which the society offers the individual to help him achieve the new adjustment. Somehow we seem to have forgotten this.' Recently, there has been a renewed focus on these defining moments in contemporary society, not only by cultural anthropologists but by scholars in other fields as well.[13] The growing interest in adolescent rites, for example, may stem from a desire to examine and understand some of the factors influencing different concepts of masculinity and male insecurity, as Raphael suggests.[14] His work, *The Men from the Boys: Rites of passage in male America*, is a probing examination of late-twentieth century practices and views regarding masculinity. Enhanced by the personal reflections and experiences of his interviewees, Raphael describes some common transitionary rites associated with the arrival at adulthood: entering the military, commencement of post-secondary education, pledging a fraternity, and training for certain professions, such as medical internships. All exhibit the features of van Gennep's tripartite schema of separation, transition, and incorporation, though several place greater emphasis on the transition or liminal phase and may prolong it by requiring the novices or initiates to prove their mettle by enduring various ordeals.

Beyond structural similarities, these modern adolescent rites of passage differ considerably from the Roman celebration of the assumption of the *toga virilis*. The modern examples are wholly secular in nature, participation in them is largely voluntary, and performance or lack thereof will not limit full membership in society. There is, however, a contemporary ceremony which does provide a good parallel to the Roman celebration of a boy's coming of age: the Jewish *bar mitzvah*. For comparative purposes, it is worth

---

[13]Kimball 1960: xvii. See for example the special issue of *Child & Youth Care Forum* (October 1998) titled 'Rites of Passage in the Postmodern Age: Implications for Child and Youth Care Workers,' and S. Venable, 'Adolescent rites of passage: An experiential model,' *Journal of Experiential Education* 20 (1997) 6-13.

[14]Raphael 1988: x and *passim*. Gilmore's 1990 cross-cultural study and Foley 1993 on Native-American youth in Iowa offer perspectives from other modern, literate groups to balance out the views expressed in Raphael. On the absence of formalized rites of passage for American males and the repercussions, see Raphael 1988: esp. 15-23. Cf. Murphy 1983.

examining in some detail.

In ancient Judaism, a boy's achievement of the age of thirteen, the age of religious majority, was not marked by a ceremony at all, and it was only in the Middle Ages that the tradition of celebrating the *bar mitzvah* emerged.[15] The term *bar mitzvah* means 'son of the commandment,' and indicates that the boy is now a young adult and subject to the commandments of the Torah.[16] The ceremony usually takes the following form: the boy is called up for an *aliyah* ('going up') in the synagogue to recite a blessing over a section of the weekly Torah reading. The minimum expected of the boy is the singing of the blessings before and after the Torah portion but more often he will perform a significant part of the Sabbath service, singing the *haftorah* (a portion read after the weekly reading), leading the congregation in the order of prayers, and delivering a sermon. After the service concludes, the boy's family often sponsors a community luncheon or an evening party to honour the occasion. The boy is now considered a man for religious purposes and is entitled to wear the *talit* (prayer shawl) and to put on *teffilin* (phylacteries) in daily worship. Though some argue that the *bar mitzvah* ceremony is not a true rite of passage by van Gennep's definition,[17] it nevertheless entails separation (from childhood), transition (while the boy studies in

---

[15]Marcus 1996: 13. Marcus calls the ceremony a 'late medieval innovation' (16). In Ashkenazic Jewish culture [one of the two branches of world Jewry whose members are of central or eastern European ancestry], the *bar mitzvah* began in the fifteenth century as a public act to mark the transition to manhood. The *bat mitzvah*, the ceremony honouring a girl's attainment of religious majority at the age of twelve plus one day, is a very recent tradition originated by a German Neo-Orthodox rabbi in the nineteenth century and first introduced into the United States in the 1920s. For further detail, see the entry *bat mitsvah* in *The Oxford Dictionary of the Jewish Religion* (1997).

[16]Unterman 1994: 122.

[17]Raphael 1988: 18. Cf. Unterman 1994: 113, who states that the Torah 'does not distinguish between rituals associated with birth, puberty, marriage and death and other rituals. It is thus artificial to isolate rites of passage rituals from the ritual corpus of Jewish life.' Yet he proceeds to describe the *bar mitzvah* in terms of an initiatory rite involving at least the latter two phases of van Gennep's scheme (transition and incorporation) for there is 'the element of trial by ordeal, proving the worthiness of the boy to be an adult and to become a full member of the community' (123).

preparation of his ritualized passage to adulthood), and incorporation (as a full adult member of the religious community). Furthermore, it shares some specific elements with a Roman boy's coming of age ceremony. Both celebrations, though they honour individuals, are moments of immense importance to the family and the community. Each rite marks the official end of childhood and involves the performance of certain acts, after which return to childhood is impossible yet attainment of full adulthood is often several years away. The Jewish *bar mitzvah* boy and the *novus togatus* must grapple with the ambiguity of their new statuses: the former has reached religious majority yet remains limited in his legal and social rights, while the latter possesses some but not all of the benefits and freedoms of manhood.[18]

If rites of passage inevitably leave participants in an indeterminate state, what purpose do they serve? Van Gennep argued that they reduce the negative effects disturbances to the life-course cause, and stressed that in different situations any one of the three rites might be emphasized -- rites of separation at funerals, rites of transition at initiations and betrothals, and rites of incorporation at weddings.[19] Some anthropologists have built upon this initial explanation. Vizedom, for example, maintains that these ceremonies, especially male initiation rites, enable participants to release emotional tension.[20] Indeed, transitionary rites do involve alterations in status or condition and may require an emotional or psychological adjustment that ritual may facilitate. Contemporary views, however, tend to consider the functional significance of these rites in more complex terms than simply as coping mechanisms. Rites of passage, like all rituals, are social constructions, products of culture

---

[18]In his study of European Jewish youth between 1300 and 1800, Horowitz 1997: 85 asserts that thirteen was 'the age of bar mitzvah, and thus of legal majority.' Presumably this legal majority only applies to a boy's status within the Jewish community; elsewhere he would have been subject to the laws of the land like any other citizen. Horowitz discusses the limited capacities of the new adult Jew to enter into marriage or perform ritual slaughter, and notes 1997: 92 that there was a tendency between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries to postpone until eighteen the various rights of adulthood previously associated with the age of thirteen.

[19]van Gennep 1960: 11.

[20]Vizedom 1976: 22-24.

designed to perform certain functions within a social group. A sociogenic interpretation thus lies behind any explanations espoused.

Rites of passage operate on many levels to accomplish several tasks, one of which is to socialize. They provide opportunities to instill in new members the tenets of society, and at the same time to reaffirm the values esteemed by the society evident in its existing social and symbolic order. As Myerhoff suggests, they are 'moments of dramatic teaching and socialization, occasions that societies construct to inculcate and clarify, to make its members most fully and deeply its own.'[21] Though the tendency may be to view transitionary rites as focussing on and primarily affecting the individual who is undergoing the change in status, these are social experiences of importance for the entire community. All those present are participants in the process, even as spectators, and as a shared experience the ritual promotes collectivity and connectivity. Participants are linked to one another, and through the transmission of tradition, they are linked to the past and the future. In this way, rites of passage also function to integrate. They offer instances for individuals to enter into new phases of community membership and for the collective to reconfigure itself to accommodate the incorporation. Finally, rites of passage reinforce the social structure by first disrupting it and then returning it to a state of normalcy. Rites of passage entail crossing of boundaries and entering unfamiliar territory, which means they are also rites of access. They involve persons seeking access and those capable of granting it, and as Vizedom explains, are therefore rituals of confrontation too, often between younger and older generations.[22] As potential members vie for entry, they question the composition of the structure and their place in it, either directly or indirectly, and cause existing members to do likewise. The welcoming of new members into the ranks marks the end of the testing period; the structure has survived and will persist.

---

[21]Myerhoff 1984: 309.

[22]Vizedom 1976: 45.

A Rite of Passage in Roman Context

Van Gennep did not include the assumption of the *toga virilis* in his discussion of Roman practices or of adolescent rites, yet it conforms to his schema nonetheless.[23] More precisely, the theoretical framework I have just outlined is helpful for uncovering the immense importance and functional significance of a practice that endured in Roman society for several hundred years. Interpreting the *toga virilis* ceremony in van Gennep's terms, as I have set out below, will enable us to understand better the significance of both the individual elements and the ritual in its entirety.

A recent anthropological definition of ritual states that it is 'a dynamic process -- symbolically, spatially, and temporally reorganizing society and lived experience.'[24] It can be argued that ritual therefore involves movement on various levels. Van Gennep's concept of a rite of passage begins with the element of separation, which manifested itself in several ways for the *toga virilis* celebration. As the boy-turning-man laid aside his *toga praetexta* and dedicated his *bulla*, he symbolically closed a chapter of his life. He consciously abandoned his identity as a child when he discarded the identifying markers. He then experienced a physical or spatial separation when he departed from the house to progress through the city as a *novus togatus*.

The transition or period of liminality can be seen very literally in connection with the procession through the city. As the boy departed from his house, he physically crossed the *limen* or threshold and awaited his journey to the Capitol. Until he made his way to the Capitol, however, he had only completed part of his ritual passage to manhood and remained in a liminal state. In a more symbolic sense, the new *togatus* had cast aside his former identity but had not yet fully adopted or perhaps created his new one. He was somewhere between

---

[23]van Gennep's references to Roman rites and practices are few and very brief. He mentions sacrifice in relation to the triumph and the practice of veiling (21; 168), adoption (38), and initiation into mystery religions such as Isis worship and the Eleusinian mysteries (89-93). Surprisingly, he touches on puberty in Rome, noting that in Roman society 'social puberty precedes physiological puberty' (66), yet does not mention the *toga virilis* ceremony.

[24]Evans 1996: 1121.

a child and a man. Having removed his *praetexta*, he had crossed a border and could never return to childhood. He now wore the *toga virilis* but resided on the fringes of adult Roman life, for his incorporation into the ranks of Roman citizen males was dependent on more than a piece of clothing, regardless of how deeply imbued with significance it may have been.

Incorporation forms the final component of van Gennep's ritual process. This is clearly an important stage. Completion of the rite brought the boy back to where he started -- his family and his home. In very basic terms, this is '(re)aggregation,' or 'incorporation' as translators render van Gennep's original phrase. The *togatus* rejoined his family but as a man instead of a child; though his status was altered, he was admitted to the family and to the home, physically and symbolically. The incorporation can also be viewed in light of the stratification and precise ordering of Roman society. During the first two phases of the passage, people are removed from their social categories; through incorporation, they are properly placed or re-placed. The condition of the boy during separation in contrast to integration can be represented by two fundamental oppositions: child/adult and non-citizen/citizen. In this latter phase, the *novus togatus* joined the ranks of adult men. His *toga virilis* instantly identified him as a man and associated him with adult males despite his young age. At the same time, he was fully included in the civic community. He was thus simultaneously welcomed as a man and a citizen.

Demographic Implications for the Donning of the *toga virilis*

In his essay *On Consolation* (16.3), Seneca states matter of factly of Cornelia, mother of the Gracchi, 'twelve births did she recall by just as many deaths.' Of the twelve children she bore, only three survived childhood. Other similar cases of high fertility and high mortality stand out in the literary record: Agrippina and Germanicus had nine children, two of whom died in infancy and one in early childhood, while Marcus Aurelius and Faustina, parents of at least twelve children, saw only one son reach adulthood.[25] Parkin cautions that

---

[25]Cornelia: Plin. *HN* 7.13.57; Plut. *Ti.Gracch.*1.3-4. Agrippina: Suet. *Calig.* 7.1; Plin. *HN* 7.13.57. Faustina: Parkin 1992: 94. Cf. Plut. *Mor.* 312 C-D for comparable tales of fecundity.

these examples, though interesting, are 'highly selective and tell us nothing of the general demographic realities of the time.'[26] Representative they are not, but they do suggest the existence of a 'high pressure' regime -- consistent high fertility and mortality levels -- and probably reflect real experiences of many Roman women. With an average life expectancy at birth of about twenty-five years, each woman needed to bear an average of five children during her reproductive years in order for Roman society to maintain a stable population.[27] These figures seem staggering from a modern, Western perspective, yet what do they really mean? Parkin summarizes their relation to mortality and age structure as follows:

> about 30 percent of an original birth cohort dies in its 1st year, and 50 percent dies before the age of 10 years. From that age on life is somewhat less hazardous. Of those who reach age 5, over 80 percent will reach age 20 and over 30 percent age 60 years. It is mainly the severe rates of mortality at infancy and childhood that produce such a low expectation of life at birth. Those who survive to age 5 can on average expect to live at least another 40 years.[28]

The degree of infant and child mortality in antiquity was massive if an estimated 300 out of every 1000 infants died in their first year of life. Surviving birth -- 'that most dangerous operation' -- did not guarantee anything.[29] Fewer than 10 per 1000 infants die each year in modern developed countries, and even in less developed countries the infant mortality rate is smaller than that postulated for Roman society, ranging from 50 to over 200 per 1000.[30] Limited medical knowledge rather than indifference denied many newborns even a fighting chance at the future; the merits of colostrum and the dangers of swaddling and molding the

---

[26]Parkin 1992: 94.

[27]Parkin 1992: 92; Saller 1994: 42.

[28]Parkin 1992: 92.

[29]Garnsey 1991: 51.

[30]Parkin 1992: 93. Hopkins 1983: 225 arrives at a similar IMR (280 per 1000) but others suggest a considerably higher rate of over 350 per 1000. See the discussion of Parkin 1992: 67-90.

limbs, as well as many other practices, were either unknown or largely misunderstood.[31] Furthermore, the Roman world was 'a tough, unhealthy place...with disease and death lurking around every corner.'[32] Poor sanitation and malnutrition made infants and young children of both the wealthy and the poor vulnerable, especially to gastrointestinal illnesses which could prove fatal.[33]

Though we cannot use modern data to represent *the* Roman experience as Saller has rightly noted, we can use the figures available to help form a plausible picture for Roman society. From Saller's study of modern demography, it is clear that the prospects of life expectancy increase considerably for children at about the age of fifteen[34] -- precisely the age when most Roman boys donned the *toga virilis*. Demography is a modern science of which the Romans had no knowledge, and yet it is as if they somehow knew that when children reached their middle teens, the worst years were behind them.[35] A milestone in the life-course

---

[31]Regarding child rearing practices, we must keep in mind that the Romans lacked much of the medical knowledge, even some very basic knowledge, that we take for granted. Thus Garnsey's 1991: 57 comment, for example, about the impact of the 'twisted wisdom of the medical profession' is unwarranted. On the care of infants by midwives and nurses, see Bradley 1991a: 23-29 and 1994, as well as Garnsey 1991. Etienne 1976 assigns much of the blame to the medical profession for advising practices that were not conducive to growth and good health, and for a lack of interest in pediatric care. Parkin 1992: 93-94 and Saller 1994: 21-22 propose factors which influenced mortality in Roman society in general.

[32]Koloski-Ostrow 1996: 82. For a thorough yet disturbing study of living conditions in Roman society, particularly in urban centers, see Scobie 1986. Among the long list of unhygienic, pathogenetic practices, Scobie notes the common placement of latrines in or adjacent to kitchens, the absence of running water or any washing facilities at many public latrines, and the occasional use of human excrement in conjunction with animal fertilizers.

[33]Saller 1994: 21. As Bradley 1994: 145 notes, not all childhood ailments and diseases were life-threatening, but some could be very dangerous such as convulsions, mouth ulcers, and dysentery.

[34]Saller 1994: 23-25.

[35]This idea is developed from Bradley 1999: 190, who remarks that it was 'as if the demographic reality were understood that the dangerous years of childhood were over and the prospects of survival now increasing dramatically.'

had been achieved; a child had survived and triumphed over the stern realities that shaped ancient existence. This was definite cause for celebration. This notion of the *toga virilis* ceremony is explicit from Seneca's *De Consolatio ad Marciam* (9.2). He laments not only the tendency for people not to anticipate that misfortune will befall them, but their refusal to learn from the mishaps of others:

> So many funeral processions are led past our home, yet we do not think about death. So many tragic deaths, yet we make plans for our own infants -- donning the toga, serving in the army, and succeeding to their father's property.[36]

The assumption of the toga stands out as the first significant achievement in a young man's life after he has negotiated the hazardous path of childhood.[37] The ceremony is also a milestone in a ritualistic sense: this is the second major celebration, indeed rite of passage, in his young life. On the ninth day after birth, the *dies lustricus*, a boy was formally given his name and the *bulla* was placed around his neck to denote his freeborn status.[38] Many years later, he laid aside this *bulla* in the second prominent ritual act focussing on him exclusively and serving to incorporate him fully into the family and the community.[39]

---

[36]*tot praeter domum nostram ducuntur exsequiae: de morte non cogitamus. tot acerba funera: nos togam nostrorum infantium, nos militiam et paternae hereditatis successionem agitamus animo.*

[37]It is surprising that the ceremony is not represented on children's sarcophagi which depict a *cursus vitae* or journey through life, its stages marked out by milestones and sundials as Huskinson 1996: 110 describes. On the dearth of iconographic evidence for the assumption of the toga, see the discussion above in Chapter One.

[38]Dixon 1992: 101. For details regarding possible locations for the naming ceremony and references, see Marquardt 1886: 83-84. Incidentally, the rites on the *dies lustricus* or the *nominalia* as Tertullian called it (*De Idol.* 16.1), were also celebrated for infant girls; they were named on the eighth day following birth.

[39]Once again a parallel can be drawn with Jewish practices. On the eighth day after birth, a baby boy is circumcised. The rite, commonly called a *bris,* recognizes the boy as a Jew and accords him membership in the community. This first religious celebration is followed thirteen years later with a second milestone -- the *bar mitzvah* ceremony (Unterman 1994: 124). For further details on the circumcision rite, see the entry 'circumcision' in *The Oxford Dictionary of the Jewish Religion* (1997).

The Vulnerability and Venerability of Childhood

In any society, the prevalence of death and disease undoubtedly influences perceptions about life, and molds social relationships to anticipate and accommodate loss. Roman society was no exception. Witnessing the deaths of so many infants and children left little recourse to adults but to regard children as only temporary survivors of a treacherous age. This acute awareness of the fragility of early life seems to have contributed to the view that children deserved *maxima reverentia*, as Juvenal (14.47) declares. This dual notion of children as vulnerable yet venerable beings is present in classical literature, and is also strongly reflected in the symbolism with which the markers of childhood, the *bulla* and *toga praetexta,* were deeply imbued.

Scholars often refer to the *bulla* as an amulet or apotropaic necklace, though only a single source mentions that it possessed such a quality.[40] According to Macrobius (*Sat.* 1.6.7), the *bulla* contained charms or curatives (*remedia*) believed to be of the greatest potency in warding off the Evil Eye (*invidia*).[41] *Invidia* was a serious concern in Roman society. Infants and children were thought to be especially susceptible to it, and a number of precautions were taken to guard against their exposure to it. Persius (*Sat.* 2.31-34) describes how a grandmother or maternal aunt averts the Evil Eye when removing a baby from its crib by dabbing the baby's forehead and lips with saliva. Plutarch (*Mor.* 682B) reports that some mothers went so far as to refuse to show children to their fathers because of the Evil Eye. The danger was apparently deemed so great that Romans created not only a special goddess of the cradle, Cunina, but also entrusted the protection of infants to Fascinus, who was also

---

[40]Marquardt 1886: 84; Fowler 1911: 60; Néraudau 1984: 145; Dixon 1992: 101; Dupont 1992: 223.

[41]Palmer 1998: 41 proposes that the leather thong on which the *bulla* hung may have come from a sacrificial animal and thus have curative properties itself. Though he acknowledges that this is pure speculation, he suggests that since the wealthy could have afforded a chain of gold if they could afford a gold locket, 'the conventional use of the thong must have been thought (or sensed) to be peculiarly fitting to the purposes served by the locket or by its contents.'

the guardian of generals.[42]

Yet in spite of these preventative measures, children remained vulnerable, constantly at risk of succumbing to a powerful force such as *invidia*, as much as a multitude of other threats.[43] Since neither the efforts of humans nor gods could guarantee the security parents desired, they looked to other promising means of safeguarding their children from harm. Varro (*LL* 7.97) reports that boys hung phallic pendants from their necks called *scaevolae,* believed to ward off evil. He derived the etymology of the word from *sinistra* meaning 'left,' and noted the usage of both *sinistra* and *scaeva* in reference to the taking of good auspices on the left-hand side. He also mentions that *praebia* (charms) keep boys safe when hung around their necks because they act as *remedia* (*LL* 7.107). Small children also seem to have worn gold ithyphallic finger-rings, probably as apotropaic devices.[44] The custom of wearing *bullae* for this same purpose is therefore entirely plausible.

---

[42]Cunina: August. *De civ. D.* 4.11; Fascinus: Plin. *HN* 28.6.39, who also advises nurses to spit three times at the baby if a stranger arrives or someone looks at a sleeping baby. The Evil Eye is a phenomenon that has been documented from Biblical times to the present and in a vast number of cultural and ethnic groups, as the collection of articles in *The Evil Eye: a folklore casebook* attests [Alan Dundes (ed.); New York: Garland, 1981]. Its effects were and still are believed to be very serious and children, particularly infants, are deemed the most vulnerable in many cultures.

[43]Children were apparently susceptible to a variety of human actions which could have a negative, even fatal, effect. Some of these could be more easily controlled than *invidia* or disease. Festus (245), for example, records that adults were encouraged to choose their words carefully to avoid injury to a child: *praetextum sermonem quidam putant dici, quod praetextatis nefas sit obsceno verbo uti: ali quod nubentibus depositis praetextis a multitudine puerorum obscena clamentur* / 'Child-friendly language they believe it is termed, because it is a serious offense to use obscene words with *praetextati* present: others think it is because obscenities were shouted by a crowd of boys once brides laid aside their childhood togas.' *Obscenus* here may refer to the use of indecent language in the presence of children. There is, however, an additional meaning of the word which Festus may be employing. According to the *OLD*, it can mean 'ill-omened,' though it is listed under the fourth entry (b) of 'indecent or obscene language.' Yet Fowler 1896: 318 makes a good case for Festus choosing this word particularly for its dual sense, suggesting that the meaning is partly literal (i.e. ill-omened) and partly 'ethical' (i.e. impure, polluted). The choice of *nefas*, a loaded word in Roman consciousness, lends some support to this possibility.

[44]Johns 1982: 63.

Ancient evidence on the *bulla* conveys the sense that the necklace was associated primarily with a communicative function (as a status marker) rather than a protective one. Apotropaic devices were ubiquitous in Roman society, so for ancient writers to emphasize the function of the *bulla* as a talisman would be to comment on a matter of common knowledge. Furthermore, if its tutelary purpose was never in dispute, then it was even less likely to warrant discussion. On the other hand, the role of the *bulla* as a status indicator was veiled in controversy. Authorities were not clear about precisely which groups were entitled to wear the *bulla* and at which points in time. Macrobius (*Sat.* 1.6.10-14) linked it in his day to *pueri nobiles* without elaboration, but noted that according to others, the *bulla* was first offered only to patricians and later extended to the sons of freedmen (but as a leather rather than gold amulet). The confusion surrounding status may have resulted in this facet of the *bulla*'s functions achieving greater prominence among the sources.

In contrast to the *bulla*, Roman awareness of the symbolic attributes and protective properties of the *toga praetexta* is more apparent. Fowler asserted that '[t]he *praetexta* never became a mere badge of youth, like an English boy's jacket: it always retained the ideas of sanctity and distinction.'[45] It was a guardian of the innocent and vulnerable, as Persius relates (5.30: *pavido custos mihi purpura cessit*), a sacred garment that empowered and protected those invested with it.[46] These associations are explicit from a passage in a declamation attributed to Quintilian, in which the speaker declares: 'I swear to you as well on that sacral quality itself of the *praetexta,* with which priests and magistrates are robed, and we make sacred and venerable the weakness of childhood.'[47] The antiquity of the *praetexta,* and the

---

[45]Fowler 1896: 318.

[46]Anderson 1982: 160 regards the *custos* as parental control. This is one possibility but it seems that Persius is specifically referring to the undefinable protective power the *praetexta* was held to possess. The theme of the passage is moral vulnerability at the dawn of adolescence and independence. The absence of the protective tokens of boyhood left Persius in a morally precarious position, at least until he met Cornutus who directed him toward the path of reason and true freedom. Cf. Barr 1987: 135 and Harvey 1981: 135.

[47]Ps-Quint. *Decl.* 340: *ego vobis allego etiam ipsum sacrum praetextarum, quo sacerdotes velantur, quo magistratus, quo infirmitatem pueritiae sacram facimus ac venerabilem.*

symbolic significance of its prominent purple stripe, contributed to the prevailing notion of the sanctity and inviolability of the garment, and by extension, of the child wearing it.

The elder Pliny (*HN* 9.63.136) reports that the *toga praetexta* was first worn in the monarchical period by Tullus Hostilius after the conquest of the Etruscans, with whom the origins of the robe lie (*HN* 8.74.195). In the Republican period, the *praetexta* was adopted by curule magistrates, the only magistrates who possessed the right to perform public sacrifices. A host of religious figures also wore the *praetexta*. Livy (33.42.2) reports that in 196 BCE, the *tresviri epulones* were elected for the first time and granted the right to wear the bordered toga as *pontifices* did. Elsewhere (34.7.2) he indicates that it was common place in the second century BCE for those holding priesthoods (*viri...in sacerdotiis*), apparently of any sort, to wear the *praetexta*. Servius (*Ad Aen.* 12.169) adds that magistrates and those about to sacrifice donned the bordered toga, while the *flamen Dialis* (priest of Jupiter) wore it at all times (*Ad Aen.* 8.552).

It is unclear when the custom of boys wearing the *praetexta* developed, though sources indicate its antiquity.[48] In his fascinating yet unreliable account of the various origins

---

[48]Freeborn girls also wore the *praetexta*. Cicero (*Verr.* 2.1.113) calls it the mark of freebirth (*ornamenta ingenuitatis*). They relinquished it when they married, as Propertius (4.11.33) reveals: 'when maiden's toga gave way to the nuptial torch' / *ubi iam facibus cessit praetexta maritis*. It was customary to dedicate their childhood robes to Fortuna Virginalis but this practice may have died out. Arnobius (*Adv. nat.* 2.67), a Christian writing in the late third century, asks whether Romans still offer their daughters' togas to the goddess (*puellarum togulas Fortunam defertis ad Virginalem?*). From Cicero's remark above, there is evidence for the *praetexta* as a garment of girls as well as boys from at least the early first century BCE. Gabelmann 1985: 520-21 suggests that the use of the *praetexta* by girls was an adoption of boys' attire. But Sebesta 1994: 47 argues that '[i]t is possible...that girls 'originally' wore the toga praetexta.' Citing a passage of Varro (preserved by Nonius, 541 M) that states that the toga was once the common garment for both women and men in daytime and night, Sebesta notes that 'we might reasonably suppose that children of both sexes also wore the toga.' She also proposes that girls wore the *praetexta* because they participated in the original marriage rite of *confarreatio*. It is not clear, however, from Festus' entry (245) on these child attendants (called *patrimi et matrimi*, i.e. children with both parents still living), that they were of both sexes. Festus reports that the bride was led to her husband's house following the marriage by *pueri praetextati tres*. At least one of the three was male (*unus, qui facem praefert ex spina alba*), though Treggiari 1991a: 166 interprets the passage to indicate an all-male accompaniment.

of the *praetexta* as boyhood attire, Macrobius (*Sat.* 1.6.7-17) records that it was not worn by children during Tullus Hostilius' reign, for at that time it was only a mark of office-holding, not free birth; it was his successor, Tarquinius Priscus, who introduced the custom when he presented his fourteen year old son with a *bulla* and *praetexta* to honour him for displaying courage beyond his years in battle. Macrobius (*Sat.* 1.6.10) concludes that the emblems of boyhood were thus worn 'as a presage of, and prayer for, manliness (*virtus*) like that of him who first received these rewards while yet a boy.'[49] But Macrobius' details seem confused and suggest that perhaps they were derived from the elder Pliny, whose information on this matter is also suspect. Pliny (*HN* 33.4.10; cf. Plut. *QR* 101) declares that it was well known that Tarquinius Priscus started the custom of giving *bullae* to boys because he presented one to his son 'when, while still at an age to wear the *praetexta*, he killed an enemy,' implying that the *praetexta* predated the *bulla* as a badge of boyhood. Pliny also records that only the sons of men who had served in the cavalry were permitted to wear golden *bullae*; all other boys (*filii ceteri*) wore the *lorum* (leather thong) alone. Yet as many ancient sources suggest, and Palmer's recent study confirms, the dividing line was not between sons of *equites* and *all* other boys as Pliny believed, but rather between boys of free birth and boys of all other ranks.[50]

The *praetexta* was distinct from other garments because of the purple band that surrounded the bottom edge of an otherwise white toga. This vibrant ring of colour was more than mere decoration: it was a complex means of symbolic communication. For the Romans, purple was a colour rich in splendor and symbolic value.[51] Pliny (*HN* 9.60.127)

---

[49]*hinc deductus mos ut praetexta et bulla in usum puerorum nobilium usurparentur ad omen ac vota conciliandae virtutis ei similis cui primis in annis munera ista cesserunt* (trans. Davies).

[50]See above for a discussion of the *bulla* as a status marker in Chapter Two as well as Palmer 1998.

[51]As Reinhold 1970: 38 aptly notes, 'the use of purple in antiquity is most massively documented for Roman society, which was, in general, the most status-symbol-conscious culture of the ancient world.' It was a symbol of official status, but also an indicator of economic status, frequently decried as a sign of *luxuria*. The Romans themselves seem to have been more concerned with the moral associations of purple than any of its other symbolic aspects. This is largely the focus of Reinhold's study *History of Purple as a Status*

remarked on its mysterious power such that 'Roman rods and axes [the official symbols of magisterial, especially consular office] clear it a path, and likewise it denotes the majesty of boyhood...it makes every garment radiant (*inluminat*).'[52] It was a bearer of light, which Gage suggests gave it a heavenly quality, adding that 'it was the brilliance and lustre of the colour that was most noticed; it may well have been that, like Apelles's dark varnish, it was the miracle of purple to incorporate within itself darkness and light and hence the whole world of colour.'[53] The presence of contradictory, even competing qualities of darkness and light in the same colour indicates its peculiar potency and unique status in the spectrum.

Though the Romans called the colour *purpura*, and used that term as a metonym for the child's *praetexta*,[54] the shade used to adorn the toga more closely resembled garnet rather than what one might call purple today.[55] Roman purple varied in intensity, encompassing rose and scarlet hues. But according to Pliny (*HN* 9.62.135), in its highest glory, purple was the colour of congealed blood, 'blackish at first glance but gleaming when held up to the light.'[56] Blood represents and sustains life; it is a powerful, vital force. As Sebesta notes, 'a wide range of red hues, which for the Romans included the hue purpura, has been used in cultures

---

Symbol in Antiquity which is useful for assessing the moral and political implications of the use of purple for public, predominately political figures, but of little relevance for the study of its use on the child's *praetexta*.

[52]*fasces huic securesque Romanae viam faciunt, idemque pro maiestate pueritiae est ...omnemque vestem inluminat.*

[53]Gage 1993: 25.

[54]Hor. *Ep.* 5.7: *purpurae decus*; Pers. *Sat.* 5.30: *custos purpura*; Stat. *Silv.* 5.3.119 *purpureos amictus.*

[55]Wilson 1924: 119 provides a sample of how Roman *purpura* probably appeared.

[56]*laus ei summa in colore sanguinis concreti, nigricans aspectu idemque suspectu refulgens.* Pliny (*HN* 9.60-65) provides extensive detail about the sources for different shades of purple dyes. Murex, for example, Pliny (9.60.126) calls the *flos purpurae*, which not surprisingly produces a dark rose hue (*nigrantis rosae colore*). The famous Tyrian purple, on the other hand, was a combination of sea-purple (a type of shellfish) and whelk dyes, resulting in a blackish-purple colour at its best (9.62.135).

throughout the world to protect those who are seen as particularly helpless and defenseless against evil forces, such as babies, children, pregnant women....For the Romans, the hues of red protected nascent life.'[57]

However, the coloured border of the *praetexta* had another important symbolic significance which derived from the omnipresent institution of sacrifice. It is from this association that the *purpura* of the *toga praetexta* acquired its potent, sacral qualities. Sacrifice was an essential part of ancient life, a means of interchange between mortal and immortal worlds. Shades of *purpura* were prominent during the performance of many types of sacrifice -- in the blood of animal sacrifice, but especially in the vestments of religious personnel. The purple border was a common feature of public sacrifices. It was visible in the *praetextae* worn by curule magistrates and religious figures. All priests of the ancient priesthoods wore the *praetexta* when performing sacrifices, as did the *Fratres Arvales* for the first two days of their three-day festival to Dea Dia when they were occupied with sacrificial work.[58] Dramatic purple detail also accented the sacrificial attire of the Vestal Virgins. Vestals veiled themselves with the *suffibulum*, a short white veil that Festus describes as *praetextum,* fastened with a *fibula*.[59] Festus does not elaborate on the colour of the border but it may have been purple as La Follette suggests.[60] Beneath her veil, the Vestal wore an *infula*, a white fillet of wool which was coiled around her head at least five times. Servius (*Ad Aen.* 10.538) explains that the *infula* with its pendant strands (*vittae*), is 'a band in the fashion of a diadem, from which ribbons hang down on either side; most are broad and

---

[57]Sebesta 1994: 47. The Red Cross comes to mind as an obvious example in our society.

[58]Fowler 1920: 43.

[59]Festus (348): *suffibulum est vestimentum album, praetextum, quadrangulum, oblongum, quod in capite virgines Vestales, cum sacrificant, semper habere solent, idque fibula conprehenditur* / 'the *suffibulum* is a white, bordered piece of cloth, four-cornered and oblong, which Vestal Virgins are always accustomed to wear on their heads when sacrificing, and it is fastened with a clasp.' Varro (*LL* 6.21) provides its etymology: *id dicitur ut ab suffigendo subfigabulum* / 'it is so named as if *sub-figabulum* from *suffigere*, to fasten down.'

[60]La Follette 1994: 57.

twisted, red and white [in colour].'[61] It was 'a symbol of inviolacy and ritual purity,' worn by sacrificial victims and suppliants seeking asylum, as well as priestesses of Vesta.[62] The stark contrast of purple trim on a white background recalls the boy's *praetexta*, reinforcing visually the symbolic value of the purple border as a powerful, sacrosanct feature of an otherwise ordinary item of clothing.

The Precarious Path to Adulthood: Adolescence as *lubrica aetas*

The *praetexta* conferred a certain dignity on a boy, as Horace (*Ep.* 5.7) suggests when he speaks of *purpurae decus*, the grace or distinction of the purple. Indeed Macrobius (*Sat.* 1.6.17) reports that some believed the *praetexta* was given to boys so that 'the blush of the purple might teach them to order their lives with a modesty (*pudor*) befitting their free birth.' Yet in the course of setting aside the *praetexta*, some boys cast off *pudor* as well and ventured into untrodden, potentially dangerous territory, as Propertius (3.15.3-6) explains: 'When the restraint (*pudor*) of boyhood's garb was lifted from me and I was given freedom to learn the way of love, my accomplice on those first nights, who initiated my untried heart, was Lycinna.'[63] Having survived the dangers of childhood, he no longer needed the protective tokens of boyhood, but was the *novus togatus* really safe? Demographically, he had overcome a major hurdle, but morally he remained susceptible to a variety of negative

---

[61]*Infula fascia in modum diadematis, a qua vittae ab utraque parte dependent: quae plerumque lata est, plerumque tortilis de albo et cocco.* The red colour Servius refers to, *coccum* or often *coccinu(e)us*, is described by Sebesta 1994b: 69 as an 'unadulterated brilliant scarlet hue.' It is produced by a parasitic scale insect which inhabited a small oak bush (*Quercus coccifera*). Though we tend to view purple and red as distinct colours, the Romans classed many hues as variants of purple.

[62]La Follette 1994: 57.

[63]Macrob. *Sat.* 1.6.17: *togamque praetextam his additam ut ex purpurae rubore ingenuitatis pudore regerentur* (trans. Davies). Prop. 3.15.3-6: *ut mihi praetexti pudor est relevatus amictus | et data libertas noscere amoris iter, | illa rudis animos per noctes conscia primas | imbuit...Lycinna* (trans. Goold). Camps 1966: 125 suggests that '*pudor* is the feeling that you should not do (or have done) something.' It is often translated as 'modesty' but really encompasses the concepts of honour and decency as well.

influences. Horace (*Ars P.* 161-165) describes how the beardless youth, finally freed from his tutor, is 'soft as wax for molding to evil' and easily succumbs to a long list of vices. Adolescence was a critical period of life, when nature placed before the young many slippery paths (*multas vias adulescentiae lubricas*).[64]

Understandably, many Romans were especially preoccupied about the period immediately following the assumption of the *toga virilis*. In the late Republic, the concern manifested itself in a unique mode of dress and deportment, as Cicero (*Cael.* 5.11) indicates:

> In my day, we usually spent a year 'keeping our arms in our togas' (*ad cohibendum bracchium toga*), and we were clad in tunics undergoing our physical training on the Campus, and if we began our military service right away, there was the same practice for training in the camp and the field. At that age, unless someone could defend himself by his own strength of character and clean living, with discipline fostered at home and also some inborn virtue, however he might be guarded by his own friends, he could not, however, escape from scandal backed by truth. But he who preserved those first beginnings of youth innocent and undefiled, when he had at last grown up and was a man among men, no one would speak evil about his reputation and virtue.[65]

Austin calls Cicero's *ad cohibendum bracchium toga* 'a picturesque way' of implying that new

---

[64]Cic. *Cael.* 17.41: *multas vias adulescentiae lubricas ostendit quibus illa insistere aut ingredi sine casu aliquo ac prolapsione vix posset* / '[Nature] presents many slippery paths to youth on which it is scarcely possible to set foot or proceed without falling or slipping in one direction or another' (text: Austin 1960). Cf. *Cael.* 31.75 where Cicero describes *adulescentia* as the dangerous corner at the turn of the course. The Roman concept of youth as a 'slippery' age also occurs in Imperial literature, e.g. Seneca (*Contr.* 2.6.4) calls it *lubricum tempus* (a slippery time), while Tacitus (*Ann.* 13.2.2; 14.56.2) refers to the *lubrica aetas* (slippery age) and the *lubricum adulescentiae* (slippery paths of adolescence). The notion is also present in legal sources, e.g. *D*ig. 4.4.11.5 refers to the *lubricum aetatis* (the slippery paths of the age).

[65]*Nobis quidem olim annus erat unus ad cohibendum bracchium toga constitutus, et ut exercitatione ludoque campestri tunicati uteremur, eademque erat, si statim merere stipendia coeperamus, castrensis ratio ac militaris. Qua in aetate nisi qui se ipse sua gravitate et castimonia et cum disciplina domestica tum etiam naturali quodam bono defenderet, quoquo modo a suis custoditus esset, tamen infamiam veram effugere non poterat. Sed qui prima illa initia aetatis integra atque inviolata praestitisset, de eius fama ac pudicitia, cum iam sese conroboravisset ac vir inter viros esset, nemo loquebatur.*

togati were put on probation, and adds that taken literally, 'it means that at this stage extravagant gesture was forbidden.'[66] This fashion consisted of wearing the toga so the right arm was almost completely immobilized by the drapery and the left freed only to accommodate moderate gestures.[67] Apparently young men continued to wear the toga this way for some time after Cicero's youth as a remark by the elder Seneca (*Contr.* 5.6) attests. New *togati* were thus physically and morally limited in their exercise of freedom.[68]

In spite of this dress-related control of comportment, Statius (*Silv.* 5.2.68-69) nevertheless worried that the resultant freedoms of the toga might be conferred prematurely and wondered 'whom has unrestrained youth not corrupted?' Plutarch (*De Aud.* 37C-F) was similarly exercised about the potential for problems, to the extent that he prefaced one of his lectures with some observations on the morally vulnerable *novus togatus*, as we saw above in Chapter Four. He advised young men to seek reason in order to acquire moral and intellectual freedom and effective self-governance.[69]

New *togati* were faced with a wide range of opportunities made available by the acquisition of the toga. Access, however, sometimes resulted in excess, as not all young men were adequately prepared to handle the temptations adult life presented. Eyben stresses that for many, 'a rather negative chapter in their personal development opened with the assumption of the toga...[as they] were not in a fit state to integrate this newfound freedom.' He notes that if a young man's father was alive, his freedom was often strictly limited, but when a boy was left fatherless in early puberty, the dangers to which he might be exposed were

---

[66]Austin 1960: 58.

[67]Richardson and Richardson 1966: 266.

[68]Cf. Néraudau 1979: 113: 'Pour les jeunes gens, il n'y a pas de choix: une véritable obligation morale les contraint à la décence et le bras entravé est aussi nécessaire que le port de la tunique dans les exercises. Mais c'est une obligation religieuse: il s'agit de préserver un certain état de grâce, propre à l'enfance, et de protéger, un an encore ou deux, cette *pudicitia* qu'on attend de lui.'

[69]See above in Chapter Four in 'Education and the Study of Philosophy' for the full text.

'particularly great.'[70] In a moral essay attributed to Plutarch (*De lib. educ.* 16), the author argues that 'the iniquities of early manhood are often monstrous and wicked -- unlimited gluttony, theft of parents' money, gambling, revels, drinking-bouts, love affairs with young girls, and corruption of married women.' Parents should curb licentious behaviour and fathers especially needed 'to be vigilant and alert, and to bring the young men to reason' by various tactics.[71] Unfortunately, the demographic reality of Roman society did not permit many fathers even to witness their sons' arrival at manhood, let alone follow this advice. Over one-third of Roman children were fatherless before puberty, and another third before they reached twenty-five.[72] Therefore, many boys celebrated their coming of age without their fathers, as Propertius (4.1.132) indicates when he dedicated his *bulla* 'before my mother's gods' (*matris...ante deos*). Similarly, Statius (*Silv.* 5.2.64-67) laments the cruel fate that snatched away Vettius Bolans before he could set the *toga virilis* upon his son's shoulders. Donning the toga was in fact an accomplishment for the entire family and an achievement one could justifiably boast about as a speech in Livy (42.34.3-5) by Spurius Ligustinus suggests: 'When I came of age, my father gave me as a wife his brother's daughter, who brought with her nothing except her free birth and her chastity, and with these a fertility which would be enough even in a wealthy home. We have six sons and two daughters, both of whom are already married. Four sons have assumed the *toga virilis* and two are *praetextati*.'[73]

The Visual Language of the *toga virilis*

In a single sentence, Livy captures vital details about the status and approximate age of six boys simply by mentioning the clothing they wear, demonstrating the power of language

---

[70]Eyben 1993: 20-21.

[71]Trans. Babbitt in the Loeb Classical Library as Plutarch's *Moralia* 12B-D.

[72]Saller 1994: 189.

[73]*Cum primum in aetatem veni, pater mihi uxorem fratris sui filiam dedit, quae secum nihil adtulit, praeter libertatem pudicitiamque, et cum his fecunditatem, quanta vel in diti domo satis esset. sex filii nobis, duae filiae sunt, utraeque iam nuptae. filii quattuor togas viriles habent, duo praetextati sunt.*

in its written form.[74] But Roman society was by and large not a written culture.[75] So if the medium was the message, then in Roman society, a more effective medium had to be employed. There were elements of an oral culture, but as Bonfante notes, '[i]n a society that had no regular newspapers, radio, or television, the official means of communication were mostly visual: coins, statues, paintings, relief sculpture.'[76] Visual language is composed of symbols which contain information about values, beliefs, and emotions. To understand symbolic communication one needs to have a certain level of cultural familiarity, not literacy. Because Roman society was profoundly status-conscious, clothing was a convenient, highly effective vehicle for conveying information about age, rank, and even wealth, in a single glance. Joseph states that clothing is 'very much a social artifact -- a form of communication,'[77] that, like other visual media, can be 'read' as a meaningful document.[78] Furthermore, he argues that it is 'a system of signs that derives meaning from its context while enabling us to carry on our activities. In turn, changes in clothing serve as a means of accommodating and facilitating changes in their contexts.'[79]

---

[74]Compare the effects in written and spoken language of using the legal terms describing one below puberty, *investis*, which Isidorus (*Etym.*10.152) defines as the state of being *sine veste*, and one who has reached puberty, *vesticeps*. Cf. Festus 368 (cited above in Chapter Three in the section 'The Legal and Economic Status of the *novus togatus*'). Ancient definitions reflect the way in which verbal language encompassed visual, and suggest that the attainment of legal puberty and the assumption of the *toga virilis* had been conflated in the minds of some Romans. Officially, however, the two achievements were mutually exclusive.

[75]Levels of literacy can only be estimated for antiquity, but it is clear that only a small pocket of the Roman population, mainly elite men, were literate. The elite formed an extremely small percentage of the total population so the number of consumers of written material is correspondingly minute. Harris 1989: 267 suggests that the overall rate of literacy in Italy, for example, was below fifteen percent.

[76]Bonfante 1994: 5.

[77]Joseph 1986: 1.

[78]Bonfante 1994: 5 asserts that '[a]n artistic monument was just as often a document to be 'read' with a particular meaning in mind.' Clothing can be viewed in the same way.

[79]Joseph 1986: 1.

When a Roman boy reached adulthood, he set aside his childhood *praetexta* and assumed the *toga virilis*, discarding one identity in favour of another. He slipped effortlessly into his new identity, created and communicated through the *toga virilis*. Without uttering a single word, any Roman onlooker knew that regardless of the boy's young age, he was a freeborn male citizen. In this way, we see that clothing 'is not the sole channel of information but precedes and introduces other systems [of communication].'[80] Through its multifarious symbolic associations, the adult toga subtly transmitted ideas and ideals about Roman culture for mass consumption. The feature that instantly distinguished the *toga virilis* from all other togas worn by adult men was that it was completely white. Persius (5.33) calls it *candidus umbo*, 'shining white toga', emphasizing its dazzling appearance.[81] More often, however, it is termed *toga pura*, which Stone indicates was to denote its natural colour, probably off-white or grayish-white.[82] Yet *pura* (pure) is complex in meaning and was deliberately employed by the Romans for its significance beyond the literal sense. Cicero's fondness for the epithet *pura* in all of his correspondence with Atticus about Marcus' and Quintus' ceremonies illustrates the connection between the innocence of childhood and the prevailing concerns about early adulthood. The boys were emerging from childhood, a period of protective benefits, in human and material forms, that left them ritually and sexually unspoiled.[83] The garment that inaugurated their adulthood functioned as a means of moral

---

[80]Joseph 1986: 4.

[81]The *umbo* is the band-like fold of the toga across the chest (Tert. *De Pallio* 5), but as Harvey 1981: 136 points out, 'its metonymic use for *toga* seems unparalleled,' and furthermore, '*candidus* applied to the *toga virilis* is also highly unusual.' Camarero 1960: 10 notes that *candidus* is a more powerful colour term than *albus*, both of which mean white, as the former is 'el blanco brillante, lúcido, con más luminosidad. Por ello, tiene este último un sentido fisico y moral más afectivo y puro (*candor*) y representativo de bondad o candidez, felicidad y pureza de acción (*candidatus*).'

[82]Stone 1994: 15.

[83]As we saw from the discussion of the *praetexta*, children were believed to be in some sense sacred and inviolable. Fowler 1896: 318 emphasized the participation of children in ritual, especially at sacrifices, and argued that 'the idea of holiness and the corresponding dress...is retained also for children, not only because of the constant demand for them as ministrants,

and religious continuity.[84] Connected to this notion of ethical purity, is the idea that those permitted to wear the *toga pura* are in some way pure because of their freeborn status. Their lineage has not been polluted by servile blood. Moreover, white garments were ideally reserved for the upper orders, dark for the lower.[85] This may be why both a status-conscious *ingenuus* such as Cicero, and a freedman like Phaedrus, employ this terminology instead of

---

but because of their being in reality 'unspotted from the world' -- an ethical idea here gradually superimposing itself upon the original purely ceremonial conception of holiness.' Recall too that legally *praetextati* were sexually off-limits. For example, Gaius (*Inst.* 3.220) stated that *iniuria autem committitur...sive quis matrem familias aut praetextatum adsectatus fuerit* / 'outrage is committed...if one pursues a matron or a boy.' So in theory, freeborn boys entered into adulthood sexually untainted. On seduction of *praetextati* and the legal and social proscriptions against it, see Walters 1997: 35-36. On *adsectari*, note McGinn 1998: 333: '*Adsectari* is the silent, close, persistent pursuit of someone in an attempt to seduce him or her.'

[84]It is interesting to note Tertullian's use of the term *toga pura* in a moral and ritual sense that is very different from the one Cicero seems to hint at. In his discussion (*De Idol.* 16.1-3) of whether it is appropriate for a Christian to attend Roman family festivals, he begins by calling the adult toga the *toga pura* to highlight his concerns about ritual purity: 'As regards the attendance, however, at private and public ceremonies, such as that of donning the white toga, betrothals, weddings,...I should think that no danger can be noticed in the breath of idolatry which is mixed up with them' / *circa officium vero privatarum et communium sollemnitatum, ut togae purae, ut sponsalium, ut nuptialium,...nullum putem periculum observari de flatu idololatriae, quae intervenit.* He then explains that 'one should consider the reasons that social duties are fulfilled. They are in themselves pure, I think, since neither manly dress (*vestitus virilis*) nor the marital ring or union proceed from a homage to some idol. After all, I do not find any dress cursed by God except that of women worn by men....Now the toga is even called manly.' / *causae enim sunt considerandae, quibus praestatur officium. Eas mundas esse opinor per semetipas, quia neque vestitus virilis neque anulus aut coniunctio maritalis de alicuius idoli honore descendit. Nullum denique cultum a deo maledictum invenio nisi muliebrem in viro...Toga vero etiam appellationis virilis est.* Waszink and van Winden 1987: 248 stress the purposeful use of *pura* in *togae purae* for in Tertullian's estimation, if the proper object of attending the festivity is 'pure,' then a Christian may take part in it. Tertullian's initial use of *pura* followed by repeated emphasis on the fact that only men wear the toga (*vestitus virilis*, *toga...appellationis virilis est*) indicates a secondary concern regarding moral and religious purity, that of transvestism which he declares is a travesty against God and nature (text and trans. Waszink and van Winden).

[85]Garrido-Hory 1981: 151.

others.[86]

Directly associated with purity in terms of status is the use of the epithet *libera* (free) to describe the citizen's toga.[87] In Roman society, there was a fundamental status distinction, as the jurist Gaius (*Inst.* 1.9-10) stated: 'The main classification in the law of persons is this: all men are either free (*liberi*) or slaves (*servi*)....among free men, some are free-born (*ingenui*) while others are freed (*libertini*).'[88] Freedom (*libertas*) was a fundamental concept with a distinctly civic character. As Wirszubski explains, it 'consists in the capacity for the possession of rights and the absence of subjection....the Romans conceived *libertas* as an acquired civic right, and not as an innate right of man.'[89] The assumption of the toga marked the acquistion of full citizenship and full freedom, though not independence, a distinction that could never be overemphasized.

Ovid's insistence on the toga as a passport to freedom reflects the complexity of the concept in practice. In his autobiographical poem (*Tr.* 4.10.28), Ovid recalls how he and his brother assumed the *liberior toga*, the 'freer toga,' a theme he explores in greater depth in the *Fasti* (3.771-88):

> It remains for me to discover why the gown of liberty is given to boys, fair Bacchus, on your day [the Liberalia], whether it is because you seem ever to be a boy and a youth, and your age is midway between the two, or it may be that, because you are a father, fathers commend to your care and divine keeping the pledges that they love, their sons; or it may be that because you are Liber, the gown of liberty is assumed and a freer life is entered upon under your auspices. Or was it because, in the days when the ancients tilled the fields more diligently, and a senator laboured on his ancestral land, when a

---

[86]In his correspondence to Atticus, Cicero uses *toga pura* exclusively. He does, however, use the conventional *toga virilis* in other instances (e.g. *Amic.* 1.1; *Cael.* 4.9; *Phil.* 2.18.44 [to highlight Antony's unmanly behaviour]; *Sest.* 69.144). Phaedrus 3.10.10: *togamque puram iam pararet filio*. Phaedrus' use is curious, particularly because the fable in question points to the potential for freedmen to be unscrupulous and dangerous toward *ingenui*.

[87]The adult toga does not seem to have been called the *toga liberalis* as suggested by Nagle 1995: 27, 204 n. 10.

[88]Trans. Gordon and Robinson.

[89]Wirszubski 1950: 1-3.

> consul exchanged the bent plough for the rods and axes of office, and it was no crime to have horny hands, the country folk used to come to the city for the games (but that was an honour paid to the gods, not a concession to popular tastes, the discoverer of the grape held on his own day those games which now he shares with the torch-bearing goddess); and the day therefore seemed not unsuitable for conferring the gown, in order that a crowd might gather round the novice?[90]

Ovid's attempt to explain the origins of this custom illustrates the paramount importance of *libertas*; it is civicly motivated but this does not mean it is restricted to politics, for it plays a role in every aspect of the free man's life. The *toga libera* is granted to boys on the verge of adulthood who have escaped the perils and passivity of childhood. Now under the patronage of Liber, god of wine and fertility, they are ready to exercise greater freedom -- socially, sexually, and morally.[91] Propertius (4.1.132) also employs *toga libera* in a passage in which he defends his decision to write elegy rather than plead cases.[92] Receipt of the toga

---

[90]*restat ut iuveniam quare toga libera detur | Lucifero pueris, candide Bacche, tuo:| sive quod ipse puer semper iuvenisque videris,| et media est aetas inter utrumque tibi; | seu quia tu pater es, patres sua pignora, natos,| commendant curae numinibusque tuis: | sive, quod es Liber, vestis quoque libera per te| sumitur et vitae liberioris iter:| an quia, cum colerent prisci studiosius agros,| et faceret patrio rure senator opus, | et caperet fasces a curvo consul aratro,| nec crimen duras esset habere manus,| rusticus ad ludos populus veniebat in Urbem -- | sed dis, non studiis ille dabatur honor:| luce sua ludos uvae commentor habebat,| quos cum taedifera nunc habet ille dea -- | ergo ut tironem celebrare frequentia posset,| visa dies dandae non aliena togae?* (trans. Frazer, Loeb Classical Library; the text is that of the 1978 Teubner edition, with the exception of line 787 for which I adopt *posset* instead of *possit* as in Frazer's translation).

[91]Cf. Persius' variation at 5.32-33 by using *permitto*: *totaque impune Subura | permisit sparsisse oculos iam candidus umbo* / 'and the white gown allowed me to cast my glance over the whole of the Subura with impunity.' On Liber's role in fertility, Augustine (*De civ. D.* 6.9) provides much detail: 'They say that the god Liber gets his name from liberating because it is through his favour that males in intercourse are liberated from, or relieved of, the semen which they emit.' (7.21) '...Liber, a god whom they have put in charge of moist seeds; this includes not only the juice of fruits, among which wine somehow holds first place, but also the semen of animals.' This latter section contains a lengthy description of rites to Liber (trans. Green, Loeb Classical Library).

[92]The use of the epithet *libera* by both Propertius and Ovid, and the latter's emphasis on a connection between Liber and a Roman boy's passage to adulthood, may be reflective of the period in which these poets were writing. Castriota 1995: 94 argues that 'Liber had never

enables him to follow his own moral and intellectual path.[93] The sense of his greater freedom is further intensified by the connection to a termination of parental dependence, as it is bracketed by mention of his deceased father and the location of his coming of age ceremony *matris...ante deos* / 'before my mother's gods.'

Polytheism and the Passage to Manhood

A boy's transition from childhood to adulthood was celebrated under the watchful eyes of his family and community, but also under the aegis of several Roman deities. Ovid's entry in the *Fasti* (3.771-88) suggests a connection between Liber and his festival, the Liberalia, and the *toga virilis* ceremony. On the basis of this passage, some scholars argue that the toga was always granted on the Liberalia, observed annually on March 17.[94] Aside from Ovid's manifold aetiologies, no other source from antiquity substantiates that Liber shared his day with coming of age rites as an established practice, and not merely an occasional coincidence. Varro (*LL* 6.3.14), a respected antiquarian and scholar of Roman religion, writing several decades before Ovid composed his *Fasti*, explains that the Liberalia owes its etymology to *liba*, small honey cakes which priestesses of Liber cooked and sacrificed to customers in the street on the day of the festival. In the second century CE, Tertullian (*De Spec.* 5.4, 10.7) noted that the Romans held *ludi* (games) called Liberalia to honour Liber's discovery of wine (cf. Festus 83). He was not, however, unfamiliar either with Liber or the *toga virilis* ceremony, yet does not correlate the two, suggesting that even if there was some firm relationship between the Liberalia and boys' rites, it may not have survived into the second

---

been more popular in Italy than he was in the Augustan period,' and his prominence is evident in a variety of media in art and in literature. On the literary and artistic importance of Liber during the Principate of Augustus, see the discussion of Castriota 1995: 73-123.

[93]Cf. Persius' achievement of moral freedom after donning the toga. See above in Chapter Four.

[94]For example, Dupont 1992: 229, Harmon 1978: 1598.

century of the Empire.[95] Confusion about the true aetiology of the festival aside,[96] it is clear that though some may have preferred to grant the toga on the Liberalia as Cicero (*Att.* 6.1.12) intended to do, many boys nevertheless donned the toga on other days throughout the year.[97]

It is unclear whether Liber was associated with all boys who assumed the toga or only those who chose to celebrate their rites coincident with the Liberalia. Divinized 'youth,' however, alternately called Iuventus, Iuventas, and Iuventa, is mentioned by several sources as a deity who presided over the transition to adulthood.[98] Dionysius of Halicarnassus (*Ant. Rom.* 4.15.5) reports that in the monarchical period, new arrivals at manhood deposited coins

---

[95]Varro *LL* 6.3.14: *Liberalia dicta, quod per totum oppidum eo die sedent ut sacerdotes Liberi anus hedera coronatae cum libis et foculo pro emptore sacrificantes.* Tert. *De Spec.* 5.4: *et cum promiscue ludi Liberalia vocarentur, honorem Liberi patris manifeste sonabant. Libero enim a rusticis primo fiebant ob beneficium quod ei adscribunt demonstrata gratia vini.* Festus 83 (*s.v. Liberalia*): *Libera festa, quae apud Graecos dicuntur* Διονύσια. *Naevius (com. 113): 'Libera lingua loquimur ludis Liberalibus.'* Tertullian implies (*De Idol.* 16.1-3) that he himself attends various Roman celebrations, including coming of age rites, which he specifically associates with Iuventa (*Ad Nat.* 2.11.11): *<est et Iu>venta novorum togatorum, virorum iam Fortuna barbata* / 'Iuventa is the [god] of new *togati*, Bearded Fortuna of those who are already men.' Cf. Augustine's silence about the Liberalia as a joint celebration of Liber and new *togati*, despite his considerable knowledge of Liber and his rites in particular (*De civ. D.* 4.11, 6.9, 7.21), and his awareness of the *toga virilis* ceremony and the god affiliated with it (*De civ. D.* 4.11: *ipse dea Iuventas, quae post praetextam excipiat iuvenalis aetatis exordia* / 'Let him [Jupiter in one of his many aspects] be the goddess Iuventas, who takes up the beginnings of the youthful age after the *praetexta* has been laid aside.'

[96]The festival may have been tied into a preceding celebration, to Anna Perenna on March 15, and the later *sacra Argeorum* on May 15 as Fowler 1899: 50-57, 11-121 proposed. Though some scholars seem to have avoided the Liberalia, dismissing it with the statement that it 'is apparently ancient' as Dumézil 1970: 377 does, others have tried to make sense out of the confusing details, especially in light of Fowler's thesis. See Porte 314-15, 383; Scullard 1981: 90-92; York 1986: 98-101, 121-123; and Staples 1998: 86-89.

[97]E.g. Virgil on October 15, Octavian on October 18, Cicero's son, Marcus, on March 31, the emperor Tiberius on April 24, Commodus on July 7. See above in Chapter Two for further examples.

[98]There is no indication that boys secured the interest of a divinized puberty, Pubertas, through a sacrifice on the Capitol as Fowler 1899: 56 asserted.

in the treasury of Iuventas. Christian writers also testify to the importance of a deity of youth. Tertullian (*Ad Nat.*2.11.11) and Augustine (*De civ. D.* 4.11) criticize the polytheistic Romans for creating a god for every circumstance, and specify that Iuventa(s), as an aspect of Jupiter, oversaw those assuming the toga. This connection persisted beyond the ceremony itself, for the citizens of Cumae celebrated the anniversary of Augustus' ceremony on October 18, with an annual *supplicatio* to Spes (Hope) and Iuventus. The inclusion of this date for celebration in the long list of Augustus' accomplishments 'clearly indicates the value the Romans accorded this ritual.'[99]

Augustus' assumption of the toga was reputed to be a rather ominous occasion. According to Suetonius (*Aug.* 94.10), on the day that Augustus donned the *toga virilis*, he also received the *latus clavus*, the tunic which indicated senatorial status. The tunic was suddenly ripped apart on both sides and fell to his feet. Some interpreted this 'as a sure sign that the order of which the tunic was the distinguishing mark, would some day submit to him.' In Dio's version (42.2.5-6), Augustus himself deciphered the meaning: 'Now this event in itself not only foreboded no good as an omen, but it also distressed those who were present because it had happened on the occasion of his first putting on man's garb; it occurred, however, to Octavius to say, 'I shall have the whole senatorial dignity beneath my feet,' and the outcome proved in accordance with his words.' Both of these sources record other oddities and unpropitious occurrences in relation to the *toga virilis* ritual. On the day that Nero donned the toga, Dio (61.31.2) reports that a divine force (*to daimonion*) shook the earth for a long time, 'and by night struck terror to the hearts of all alike.' For Galba, a dream marked his arrival at manhood in which Fortune urged him to admit her to his door lest she fall prey to someone else (Suet. *Galba* 4.3). In his comments on the significance of 1 January 14 CE, Dio (56.29.5) indicates that it was auspicious for two reasons. The consuls then in office were in some way related to Augustus, and, Galba took the toga then and later became the first emperor after the Julio-Claudians, thus '[giving] occasion to some to say that this had not been a mere coincidence, but had been brought about by some divine purpose.' These

---

[99]Fraschetti 1997: 65. Augustus' ceremony: *ILS* 108 = *CIL* 10.8375 Feriale Cumanum: *18 Oct. XV k. Novembr. Eo die Caesar togam virilem sumpsit. Supplicatio Spei et Iuve*[*ntuti*].

incidents are interesting but of dubious veracity -- doubtless post-eventum legends. Nonetheless, they reflect the importance Romans attributed to the ceremony as a milestone, even in the lives of extraordinary men, through the efforts by biographers and historians to aggrandize the occasion, elevating it from a moment of considerable magnitude, to an event of spectacular proportions.[100]

Tironem celebrare frequentia posset: Ceremony as Spectacle

Although the *toga virilis* ceremony was fundamentally a family ritual, it was never exclusively a private affair. Whether it was celebrated by a member of the Imperial family or one of the *plebs Romana*, in metropolitan Rome or a tiny provincial town, the assumption of the toga seems often to have had a communal flavour and an element of public spectacle with varying degrees of splendor. The word 'spectacle' derives from the Latin *spectare*, 'to look at, behold.' As MacAloon emphasizes, spectacles 'give primacy to visual sensory and symbolic codes; they are things to be seen.'[101] Ovid indicates (*Fast.* 3.787-88) that the notion of spectacle was indeed inherent in the coming of age rite when he asks if 'the day therefore

---

[100]Suet. *Aug.* 94.10: *sumenti virilem togam tunica lati clavi resuta ex utraque parte ad pedes decidit. fuerunt qui interpretarentur, non aliud significare, quam ut is ordo cuius insigne id esset quandoque ei subiceretur.* Suet. *Galba* 4.3: *sumpta virili toga somniavit Fortunam dicentem, stare se ante fores defessam et nisi ocius reciperetur, cuicumque obvio praedae futuram.* Translation of Dio by Cary in the Loeb Classical Library. It is important to keep in mind that these omens were reported by sources writing many decades (over a century in the case of Dio) after they allegedly took place. There is thus the strong possibility that these are projections of later popular sentiment onto the historical record. For example, regarding Galba's dream, Murison 1992: 35 suggests that it was either 'a propaganda story put about at the time of Galba's bid for power or it is a tale which arose after his success as an elaboration of the undeniable fact that Galba was indeed an enthusiastic devotee of the goddess Fortuna.'

[101]MacAloon 1984: 243. This discussion of the spectacle relies considerably on MacAloon 1984, in which he remarks (243) that '[o]f all the genres of cultural performance, the spectacle is the least well known by anthropologists. The ethnography of particular spectacles is in its infancy and comparative studies do not yet exist. The following attempt to catalog the distinctive features [243-246] of the spectacle is to my knowledge the first.' See also his useful comments in the introduction to the same volume on cultural performances and culture theory in general.

seemed not unsuitable for conferring the gown, in order that a crowd might gather round the novice?'[102] Although the toga celebration may seem to fit more appropriately into the category of 'ritual' than 'spectacle,' it does not have to be placed in one or the other, as the two genres of cultural performance sometimes overlap. Some of the features of spectacles that MacAloon outlines are useful for classifying the Roman practice:

> Not all sights...are spectacles, only those of a certain size and grandeur, or, as the dictionary puts it, 'public displays appealing or intending to appeal to the eye by their mass, proportions, color, or other dramatic qualities'....Spectacles institutionalize the bicameral roles of actors and audience, performers and spectators. Both role sets are normative, organically linked, and necessary to the performance. If one or the other set is missing, there is no spectacle. Thus, in a strict sense, it is not the case that 'most ceremonies and rituals are spectacles,' as Max and Mary Gluckman have claimed. Certain rituals require no audience, and though rituals involve grand interests and are often visually impressive, the congregation is rarely free simply to watch and to admire.[103]

The donning of the toga was inarguably a ritual because of its content and form, and by its size and grandeur, and essential participants -- actors/performers and audience/spectators -- it satisfied the various criteria for spectacles laid down by MacAloon. Finally, the ceremony meets the requirements for spectacle as it too 'is a dynamic form, demanding movement, action, change, and exchange on the part of the human actors who are center stage, and the spectators must be excited in turn.'[104]

Nicolaus of Damascus (4.8-10) vividly portrays Octavian's celebration and captures the features of a spectacle. Although the passage was quoted earlier, because of its importance it is worthwhile to examine the full text again:

> He came down into the Forum...so that he might lay aside at that time the purple-edged toga and assume the pure white toga, which is the symbol of enrolment in manhood. He was gazed upon by all the people because of his fine appearance and the brilliance of his high birth, and he was enlisted in the

---

[102]*ergo ut tironem celebrare frequentia posset, / visa dies dandae non aliena togae?*

[103]MacAloon 1984: 243. The reference to Max and Mary Gluckman is to their essay 'On Drama, and Games, and Athletic Contests,' in Moore and Myerhoff 1977: 227.

[104]MacAloon 1984: 244.

> priesthood in the place of Lucius Domitius who had died. The people applauded him very enthusiastically, and at the same time as he changed his toga, this honour was bestowed upon the young man; and he sacrificed to the gods.[105]

Octavian's ceremony was spectacular, even if amplified by his biographer, prompting the question whether the element of spectacle manifested itself in the ceremonies of more ordinary freeborn boys. Much of the evidence for the rite is limited to the elite, but within this group, features of the spectacle are present in typical celebrations. Several sources attest to the presence of an audience, often family and friends, but sometimes members of the community as well.[106] Unable to confer the toga in Rome, Cicero (*Att.* 9.19.1) instead marked his son Marcus' arrival at adulthood in Arpinum to the delight of his fellow-townsmen, presumably because they participated in the momentous occasion as spectators. They may have been pleased, of course, because it was customary for the boy's family to distribute gifts of money or food (*sportulae*), an aspect of the ceremony that understandably attracted crowds. As seen earlier, according to Pliny (*Ep.* 10.116), it was common practice in the province of Bithynia to issue invitations and subsequent gifts of one or two denarii to all of the local council members and a considerable number of the *plebs*. Apuleius (*Apol.* 87.10) reports that his wife, Pudentilla, handed out HS 50 000 to the people of Oea in honour of her elder son's marriage, and her younger son's assumption of the toga. Moreover, he testifies to the tendency for crowds to gather on these occasions; indeed he and Pudentilla decided to marry *in suburbana villa* 'to avoid a fresh concourse of citizens demanding largesse.'[107]

Some remarks about the role of spectacle in Roman society in general may clarify its importance in the coming of age rite. As a form of spectacle, the games were not simply one

---

[105]Trans. Bellemore. See Chapter One under 'Introduction' for the corresponding Greek text.

[106]See above in Chapter Two.

[107]Butler's 1909 translation nicely captures Apuleius' sentiment at 87.10: *quippe ita placuerat, in suburbana villa potius ut coniungeremur, ne cives denuo ad sportulas convolarent.*

important facet of life, but as one leisure historian asserts, they were clearly 'central in Roman life.'[108] Games (*ludi*) consisted of three types: chariot races, theatrical productions, and fights involving gladiators and wild-beasts (*venationes*). Of these spectacles, gladiatorial combats provide a particularly useful context and basis for comparison with the *toga virilis* ceremony.[109] Gladiatorial shows (*munera*) apparently originated as an element in funeral games as Tertullian (*De Spec.* 12) reports. The first *munera* were held in 264 BCE in the Forum Boarium, presented by the ex-consul D. Iunius Brutus Pera and his brother in honour of their dead father.[110] From the third century BCE until the building of an amphitheatre in 29 BCE, however, the *Forum Romanum* was 'the principal, if not the exclusive, setting for gladiatorial combat at Rome.'[111] Romans therefore expected to see spectacle in the Forum. During the later Republic, others staged funeral games, perhaps most notably Julius Caesar who gave elaborate presentations in 65 (for his father) and 46 BCE (for his daughter).[112] Gradually *munera* were transformed in form and function, as Hopkins explains:

> In the city of Rome, in the late Republic and early Principate, the religious and commemorative elements of gladiatorial shows were increasingly fused with, even eclipsed by the political and the spectacular....Public participation, attracted by the splendour of the show and by the distributions of meat (*visceratio* -- Livy 41.28), magnified the respect paid to the dead and the honour of the whole family. Aristocratic funerals were political acts. And funeral games had political overtones....Indeed, the growth in the splendour of gladiatorial shows was largely fuelled by political competition between ambitious aristocrats.[113]

---

[108]Toner 1995: 36.

[109]Literature on the games is copious. Toner 1995: 150 n. 3 offers a useful bibliography to the subject in addition to his chapter devoted to the Imperial Games.

[110]Futrell 1997: 19-25 discusses the first *munera* in depth.

[111]Purcell 1995: 331.

[112]Hopkins 1983: 4 cites Caesar's funeral games as an example of the way in which the scale and frequency of gladiatorial shows increased over the two centuries since their inception.

[113]Hopkins 1983: 5.

Some parallels to the upper classes' celebration of a boy's coming of age emerge. The ceremony can be characterized neither as strictly religious nor social, nor did it completely lack elements of the political; instead, like the *munera*, it was an amalgam of all these elements. Furthermore, its public component, by its very nature, encouraged participation, sometimes of substantial numbers, through the distribution of *sportulae*. But this aspect of the ceremony also contained within it the potential for personal advancement through manipulation of the masses.

Status and self-presentation were of prime importance, but among the elite, an individual did not strive simply to match his peers, but rather to surpass them. Spectacles provided opportunities for displays of wealth and power, and 'the ever aggrandizing ethos of the spectacle, with its generic maxim 'more is better" which MacAloon notes,[114] serves as an effective means of attracting crowds and garnering support. Pliny's (*Ep.* 10.116) remarks to Trajan about *sportulae* clearly illustrate this point: 'I pray you to let me know how far you think this should be allowed, if at all. My own feeling is that invitations of this kind may sometimes be permissible, especially on ceremonial occasions, but the practice of issuing a thousand or even more seems to go beyond all reasonable limits, and could be regarded as a form of corrupt practice.'[115]

There is an additional similarity between gladiatorial shows and the *toga virilis* ceremony in terms of their place in the political arena. Though not their primary purpose, both types of spectacle were used by prominent figures as exhibitions of power and dynastic continuity. For gladiatorial shows, this is particularly apparent under the Principate. In 22

---

[114]MacAloon 1984: 246.

[115]See above in Chapter Two under 'Reconstruction of a Roman Boy's *rite de passage*' for the Latin text. Sherwin-White 1960: 727 notes that this is not a reference to political bribery, but rather 'that these private functions were developing into rowdy, public occasions which ought to be controlled.' But Williams 1990: 155 suggests that Pliny may be informing Trajan of a two-part problem. He argues that the use of διανομή 'must mean that it was the fact of cash being handed out to large numbers which was the objectionable feature. The word *dianome* is used in Greek texts of the 2nd century A.D. to refer to gifts distributed to the masses to win support...P. himself would have been alert to the dangers of the votes of councilors being bought.'

BCE, Augustus placed ordinary *munera* under Imperial control, limiting the size, frequency, and expenditures of the games traditionally presented by the praetors. The emperor and his family would put on all other gladiatorial games, further concentrating power and public image in the hands of one man. As Futrell suggests, the spectacles 'would thus serve the purpose deemed appropriate by the *princeps*: the demonstration of the proper use of Roman *imperium* in a carefully orchestrated form, rife with symbols meaningful to the Roman heritage. The ritual of the arena manipulated traditional symbols and events as an instrument of power, rearranged by Augustus to distinguish himself and his successors from the previous *editores* of the games.'[116] Through *munera*, Augustus was able to present and promote his strength through the participation of his successors. The *toga virilis* ceremony accomplished a similar feat. On a small scale, each time an elite family celebrated a son's attainment of adult status, spectators observed the formation of a new link in the family chain, connecting the past to the present and the future. But when the ceremony occurred in a larger venue, the implications were much greater. When Mark Antony conferred the toga on Antyllus, his son by Fulvia, Plutarch (*Ant.* 71.3) alleges that 'for many days, banquets and revels and feastings occupied Alexandria.' Yet Antony was not merely fulfilling a father's traditional obligation by marking his son's arrival at manhood; he was making a strong political statement about power and dynasty, magnified by the length and extravagance of the celebration.

As a spectacle, the *toga virilis* ceremony also achieved more positive ends than political manipulation and self-promotion. Because of its public elements, the rite was an instrument for the indirect spread of Roman culture to the provinces. The ceremony presented Roman values and beliefs to non-Romans in an attractive and dramatic form that was no doubt difficult to ignore. This exportation of culture moved in several directions, including eastward to Greece. Plutarch's familiarity with the customs surrounding the coming of age rites emanate from his lecture *On Listening* addressed to his young friend and pupil, Nicander. It is not surprising that Plutarch himself was aware of the ceremony for he had travelled extensively in the Roman Empire and lectured occasionally in Rome; furthermore,

---

[116]Futrell 1997: 45.

he had many Roman friends and had been granted Roman citizenship.[117] But Chaeronea, Plutarch's hometown in Boeotia, has been described as 'a provincial backwater,'[118] not a place one might expect to find Greeks embracing Roman traditions. It is this spread of culture from the west to the east, the reversal of the usual flow, that is noteworthy. Pliny's mention of the regular celebration of the *toga virilis* ceremony in Bithynia or Apuleius' observance of his stepson's rite of passage in North Africa illustrate the anticipated course of Romanization; the presence, even conventionality of the ceremony in Greece, however, is indeed remarkable.

Conclusions

The assumption of the *toga virilis* was a defining moment in the lives of Roman boys and their families. It was a celebratory occasion marked by ceremony and deeply infused with symbolism and tradition. The ritual transition to adulthood was a dynamic process, a *rite de passage* in the classic sense, entailing a separation from the familiar world of childhood, followed by a period of liminality and uncertainty before full incorporation into the civic body as an adult citizen male. Placed within the context of Roman demography, the rite assumes an even greater significance. Infant and child death was omnipresent in Roman society -- even the wealthy were not immune. Many parents sought various means to safeguard their children against dangers, particularly intangible and uncontrollable forces, such as the Evil Eye. Freeborn children were adorned with the protective emblems of childhood, the *bulla*, believed to contain apotropaic charms, and the purple-bordered *praetexta*, imbued with an aura of sanctity and inviolability. Yet for many, death was inevitable. Those who successfully traversed the hazardous course of childhood to reach early adulthood achieved an immense accomplishment of significance for the family and the community.

When the boy laid aside his boyhood dress and donned the pure white *toga virilis*, he symbolically abandoned his former identity and adopted a new one, ritually crossing a border

---

[117]On Plutarch's Roman friends and grant of citizenship from L. Mestrius Florus, see Jones 1971: 48-64.

[118]Kidd 1992: 5.

that could not be reversed. The assumption of the toga afforded him entry into manhood, but it did not guarantee a smooth passage. Early adulthood presented an array of privileges and problems to the new *togatus* who, though no longer requiring the protective garments of boyhood, nevertheless remained morally susceptible to temptation, unprepared for the proper management of his newly acquired freedom. Furthermore, a considerable percentage of boys lost their fathers before attaining adult status, and therefore lacked both a role model and an incentive to behave with modesty and dignity, qualities the toga did not automatically confer.

The adult toga did, however, instantly communicate the freeborn status of the boy-turned-man, and through visual language, a potent and effective medium, conveyed the notions of purity and liberty with which the toga was frequently associated. The toga was the quintessential symbol of *Romanitas*, an identifying marker of Roman masculinity recognized throughout the Empire and continually reinforced by the movement of people and practices into new Roman territories. The rites marking the assumption of the *toga virilis,* particularly because of their public nature, presented Roman culture to the masses as ritual and spectacle fused together to form a tradition of enduring appeal.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this thesis has been to collect and analyze evidence for the assumption of the *toga virilis* in order to make a contribution to the growing understanding of the history of childhood in Roman society. Though considerable scholarship has been devoted to the study of the Roman family in the last twenty years, the history of Roman childhood is a relatively new subject, and in many respects, it is still in the formative stages. Nevertheless, much attention has recently been focussed on the study of Roman children, and to a lesser extent, on Roman youth, enabling historians to form a more complete picture of childhood, adolescence, and family life in Roman antiquity. Surprisingly, however, the celebration of the donning of the *toga virilis*, the rite that marked the passage from childhood to adulthood for freeborn Roman boys, has been curiously neglected. In this thesis, therefore, I have endeavoured to redress the balance by treating the coming of age ceremony in a comprehensive study, exploring its form, function, practical implications, and symbolic significance. It is an important addition that should enrich our knowledge of Roman family life, and Roman childhood and adolescence in particular.

As we have seen from the introductory chapter, the ceremony is widely, if allusively, attested for several hundred years of Roman history. Furthermore, there is evidence that the assumption of the *toga virilis* occurred in various parts of the Roman empire, including the Greek East. Writers in nearly every genre of Latin literature offer testimony of this important family rite, from poets to orators to biographers. Several Greek sources also provide useful details of the celebration, and suggest its conventionality in the empire, rather than simply in Italy. The ceremony, however, is scarcely mentioned in the epigraphic record, and perhaps only represented artistically in a single example from a Roman biographical sarcophagus. Overall, the evidence is essentially concentrated on the upper classes and we know little about how the lower classes celebrated the rite.

Ancient writers, both pagan and Christian, intimate that there was a richness to the ceremony, describing it as a *dives ritus* (Stat. *Silv.* 5.3.118) or *sollemnitas togae purae* (Tert. *De Idol.* 16.1). The *rite de passage* comprised several distinct elements, and from the scattered references in the sources, we have been able to form a composite picture of the day's

celebration. This momentous occasion began with the dedication of the *bulla* and the laying aside of the childhood *toga praetexta*, both of which indicated the boy's freeborn status. These stages of the ritual were held before family and friends, emphasizing the significance of the celebration as primarily a family affair. Once the boy received the *toga virilis* from his father, he was conducted to the Forum, where he sacrificed on the Capitol. He then returned home where it seems to have been customary among the elite to distribute gifts to the *plebs* to mark the boy's achievement of adult status. It has become evident that while some fathers preferred to grant the toga to their sons on the Liberalia, which was celebrated on March 17, this was merely a tradition some chose to follow, for many bestowed the toga on other dates during the year. Even within the Imperial family, there are no examples of the coincidence of the two celebrations. Finally, from the range of ages recorded, it is clear too that there was no official age at which a boy had to take the toga, nor was the onset of puberty a prerequisite.

In the third and fourth chapters, we examined how the assumption of the toga fits into the political, social, legal and religious contexts of Roman life. Though the toga conferred certain rights and privileges on the Roman youth, namely the right to vote, to acquire the senatorial tunic called the *latus clavus*, and to recline at banquets, we have seen that the position of the *novus togatus* was largely characterized by ambiguity. He was *puer iuvenisque*, a boy and a young man at the same time, as Ovid (*Met.* 3.351-52) suggested of the sixteen-year-old Narcissus. Receipt of the toga was a necessary step en route to full inclusion in politics and the military, but because of *patria potestas*, a barrier remained that prevented the boy from gaining complete independence. Yet the arrival at adulthood does seem to have initiated a period in which the boy-turned-man exercised greater personal freedom in social and sexual matters. It was a time of intellectual discovery as the new *togatus* is often associated with the study of philosophy and other educational pursuits. From the personal reflections of certain Roman poets, the toga also provided young men with opportunities to explore socially and sexually, and to acquire some sexual experience through love affairs, legal prostitution, and full participation in *convivia*. For some, however, who were morally vulnerable, the privileges and excesses of adult life were too much to handle,

and translated into dissolute and debauched behaviour.

Scholars of the Roman family, and of Roman childhood and youth more specifically, often refer to the assumption of the *toga virilis* as a *rite de passage*, a term coined by Arnold van Gennep in his seminal work on the subject. In the final chapter, we have seen how modern anthropological theory and comparative evidence can be used to amplify our understanding of rites of passage in general, and the *toga virilis* ceremony in particular. Van Gennep argued that these rites had a tripartite structure of separation, transition, and incorporation. Through my interpretation of these three phases in the context of the Roman boy's coming of age ceremony, I believe we can appreciate more fully the significance of the rite both practically and symbolically. The intermediate stage of the process, the transition or period of liminality, was especially prominent in the Roman rite, and, one might even suggest that the donning of the toga marked the beginning of a lengthy period of liminality for the Roman boy, for whom full incorporation did not take place until several years later. As we have noted, the familiar theme of ambiguity can often be seen in regard to the new *togatus,* for he was not an adult in all spheres of social and legal activity.

Anthropological theory was also useful in examining the assumption of the *toga virilis* as a spectacle. Though the rite was fundamentally a family ritual, it was nevertheless a cultural performance, a type of public display which, by its size, visual appeal, and essential participants of actors and audience, satisfied the various criteria for a spectacle, at least among the elite. Furthermore, through a comparison with *munera*, we have seen that spectacles were linked to power, prestige, and self-presentation, all of which were associated with the coming of age rite to a certain degree.

One of the most interesting findings of this study concerns the connections between ancient Roman practices and the modern science of demography. Infant mortality rates for Roman society were extremely high by the standards of modern, developed countries. But, even survival of infancy was not a guarantee, as childhood was a very dangerous period of life. Infants and young children of both the wealthy and the poor were vulnerable, causing Seneca (*Marc.* 9.2) to remark that there were 'so many tragic deaths,' -- so many children who would never don the toga, serve in the army, or succeed to their father's property. Romans

recognized that childhood was a hazardous stage, and in turn, they attributed protective properties to the *bulla* and *praetexta* worn by boys throughout their childhood years. Yet a correlation exists between the age at which the toga was taken and modern demographic estimates of when life became more certain. Around the middle teenage years the prospects for life expectancy increase dramatically. Although Romans had no concept of demography, it seems as though they had reached the conclusion that once a child was beyond the precarious years of childhood, his chances for a longer life were much greater. The assumption of the *toga virilis* was therefore a milestone in a very practical, as well as symbolic sense, an achievement of considerable significance that placed the boy on the verge of Roman manhood.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Allison, P. 1997. 'Artefact Distribution and Spatial Function in Pompeian Houses,' in Rawson and Weaver 1997: 321-354.

Amiotti, G. 1981. 'Religione e politica nell'iniziazione romana. L'assunzione della toga virile,' *Contributi dell'Istituto di storia antica* 7: 131-140.

Anderson, J. G. C. 1938. *Cornelii Taciti De Origine et Situ Germanorum*. Oxford.

Anderson, W. S. 1982. *Essays on Roman Satire*. Princeton.

Ariès, P. 1962. *Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life*. London. Translated from the French original, 1960.

Astin, A. E. 1958. *The Lex Annalis before Sulla*. Brussels.

Austin, R. G. 1960. *M. Tulli Ciceronis Pro M. Caelio Oratio*. Oxford.

Balsdon, J. P. V. D. 1969. *Life and Leisure in Ancient Rome*. New York.

Baldwin, B. 1976. 'Young and Old in Imperial Rome,' in S. Bertman (ed.), *The Conflict of Generations in Ancient Greece and Rome* (Amsterdam) 221-233.

Barnes, T. D. 1967. 'The Family and Career of Septimius Severus,' *Historia* 16: 87-107.

Barnes, T. D. 1971. *Tertullian. A Historical and Literary Study*. Oxford.

Barr, W. 1987. *The Satires of Persius*. Liverpool.

Beard, M. 1990. 'Priesthood in the Roman Republic,' in M. Beard and J. North (eds.), *Pagan Priests* (London) 17-48.

Bellemore, J. 1984. (ed. and trans.) *Nicolaus of Damascus. Life of Augustus*. Bristol.

Berczelly, L. 1978. 'A Sepulchral Monument from Via Portuense and the Origin of the Roman Biographical Cycle,' *Acta ad Archaeologiam et Artium Historiam Pertinentia* 8: 49-74.

Bernstein, A. H. 1978. *Tiberius Sempronius Gracchus. Tradition and Apostasy*. Ithaca.

Binkowski, E. and B. Rawson. 1986. 'Sources for the Study of the Roman Family,' in Rawson 1986a: 243-257.

Birley, A. R. 1976. *Lives of the Later Caesars.* Harmondsworth.

Birley, A. R. 1981. *The Fasti of Roman Britain.* Oxford.

Birley, A. R. 1988. *The African Emperor: Septimius Severus.* London.

Bonfante, L. 1973. 'Roman Costumes: A Glossary and Some Etruscan Derivations,' *Aufsteig und Niedergang der römischen Welt* 1.4: 584-614.

Bonfante, L. 1975. *Etruscan Dress.* Baltimore.

Bonfante, L. 1994. 'Introduction,' in Sebesta and Bonfante 1994: 3-10.

Bonner, S. F. 1977. *Education in Ancient Rome.* London.

Booth, A. 1991. 'The Age for Reclining and Its Attendant Perils,' in Slater 1991: 105-120.

Borleffs, J. G. P. 1929. (ed.) *Ad Nationes Libri Duo.* Leiden.

Bradley, K. R. 1978. *Suetonius' Life of Nero: An Historical Commentary.* Brussels.

Bradley, K. R. 1986. 'Wet-nursing at Rome: A Study in Social Relations,' in Rawson 1986a: 201-229.

Bradley, K. R. 1987. *Slaves and Masters in the Roman Empire: A Study in Social Control.* New York and Oxford.

Bradley, K. R. 1991a. *Discovering the Roman Family.* Oxford.

Bradley, K. R. 1991b. 'Review of *Adults and Children in the Roman Empire*,' *Classical Philology* 86: 258-263.

Bradley, K. R. 1993. 'Writing the History of the Roman Family,' *Classical Philology* 88: 237-250.

Bradley, K. R. 1994. 'The Nurse and the Child at Rome. Duty, Affect and Socialisation,' *Thamyris* 1.2: 137-156.

Bradley, K. R. 1998. 'The Roman Family at Dinner,' in I. Nielsen and H. S. Nielsen (eds.), *Meals in A Social Context* (Aarhus) 36-55.

Bradley, K. R. 1999. 'Images of Childhood: The Evidence of Plutarch,' in S. B. Pomeroy

(ed.), *Plutarch's Advice on Marriage and Consolation to his Wife* (New York) 183-196.

Braithwaite, A. W. 1927. *C. Suetoni Tranquilli Divus Vespasianus*. Oxford.

Branham, R. B. and D. Kinney. 1996. (eds. and trans.) *Petronius Satyrica*. London.

Braund, S. M. 1996. *Juvenal Satires Book I*. Cambridge.

Brehaut, E. 1964. *An Encyclopedist of the Dark Ages: Isidore of Seville*. New York.

Buckland, W. W. 1963. *A Text-book of Roman Law*, third edition. Cambridge.

Butler, H. E. 1905. *Sexti Properti Opera Omnia*. London.

Butler, H. E. 1909. *The Apologia and Florida of Apuleius of Madaura*. Westport, Conn.

Butler, H. E. and A. S. Owen. 1914. *Apulei Apologia*. Hildesheim.

Butler, H. E. and E. A. Barber. 1964. *The Elegies of Propertius*. Hildesheim.

Camarero, A. 1960. *Estetica Del Color en la Lengua Latina*. Bahia Blanca, Argentina.

Camps, W. A. 1965. *Propertius Elegies Book IV*. Cambridge.

Camps, W. A. 1966. *Propertius Elegies Book III*. Cambridge.

Carcopino, J. 1941. *Daily Life in Ancient Rome*. Harmondsworth.

Carter, J. M. 1982. *Suetonius Divus Augustus*. Bristol.

Castriota, D. 1995. *The Ara Pacis Augustae and the Imagery of Abundance in Later Greek and Early Roman Imperial Art*. Princeton.

Champlin, E. 1980. *Fronto and Antonine Rome*. Cambridge, Mass.

Chastagnol, A. 1988. 'L'inscription du Sarcophage de Saint-Cézaire-sur-Siagne,' *Bulletin de la société nationale des antiquaires de France*. 280-288.

Clarke, J. R. 1991. *The Houses of Roman Italy 100 B.C. - A.D. 250. Ritual, Space, and Decoration*. Berkeley and Los Angeles.

Clarke, M. L. 1971. *Higher Education in the Ancient World*. London.

Corbeill, A. 1997. 'Dining Deviants and Roman Political Invective,' in Hallett and Skinner 1997: 99-128.

Corbett, P. E. 1930. *The Roman Law of Marriage*. Oxford.

Corbier, M. 1991. 'Divorce and Adoption as Roman Familial Strategies,' in Rawson 1991: 47-78.

Cornell, T. J. 1995. *The Beginnings of Rome. Italy and Rome from the Bronze Age to the Punic Wars (c. 1000-264 BC)*. London and New York.

Courtney, E. 1980. *A Commentary on the Satires of Juvenal*. London.

Crook, J. A. 1967. *Law and Life of Rome, 90 B.C.-A.D. 212*. Ithaca.

Crook, J. A. 1986. 'Women in Roman Succession,' in Rawson 1986a: 58-82.

Daremberg, C. and M. E. Saglio. 1877-1919. *Dictionnaire des Antiquités Grecques et Romaines*. Paris.

Davies, P. V. 1969. *Macrobius: The Saturnalia*. New York.

Davies, R. W. 1989. *Service in the Roman Army*. Edinburgh.

Dessen, C. 1968. *Iunctura Callidus Acri: A Study of Persius' Satires*. Chicago.

Dixon, S. 1988. *The Roman Mother*. London and Sydney.

Dixon, S. 1991. 'The Sentimental Ideal of the Roman Family,' in Rawson 1991: 99-113.

Dixon, S. 1992. *The Roman Family*. Baltimore.

Dixon, S. 1997. 'Conflict in the Roman Family,' in Rawson and Weaver 1997: 149-168.

Dumézil, G. 1970. *Archaic Roman Religion*. Chicago.

Dunbabin, K. M. D. 1991. 'Triclinium and Stibadium,' in Slater 1991: 121-148.

Dunbabin, K. M. D. 1996. 'Convivial Spaces: Dining and Entertainment in the Roman villa,' *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 9: 66-80.

Duncan-Jones, R. 1982. *The Economy of the Roman Empire*, second edition. Cambridge.

Dupont, F. 1992. *Daily Life in Ancient Rome*. Cambridge.

Dynes, W. R. and S. Donaldson. 1992. (eds.) *Homosexuality in the Ancient World*. New York and London.

Edwards, C. 1993. *The Politics of Immorality in Ancient Rome*. Cambridge.

Ehrenberg, V. and A.H.M. Jones. 1976. *Documents Illustrating the Reigns of Augustus and Tiberius*, second edition. Oxford.

Etienne, R. 1976. 'Ancient Medical Conscience and the Life of Children,' *Journal of Psychohistory* 4.2: 131-161.

Evans, E. 1996. 'Ritual,' in D. Levinson and M. Ember (eds.), *Encyclopedia of Cultural Anthropology* (New York) 1120-1123.

Evans, J. K. 1991. *War, Women and Children in Ancient Rome*. New York.

Evans, M. 1964. 'Chapters on Greek Dress,' in M. Johns (ed.), *Ancient Greek Dress*. Chicago.

Eyben, E. 1972a. 'Antiquity's view of puberty,' *Latomus* 31: 677-697.

Eyben, E. 1972b. 'The Concrete Ideal in the Life of the Young Roman,' *L'Antiquité classique* 41: 200-217.

Eyben, E. 1973. 'Roman Notes on the Course of Life,' *Ancient Society* 4: 213-238.

Eyben, E. 1981. 'Was the Roman 'Youth' an 'Adult' Socially?,' *L'Antiquité classique* 50: 328-350.

Eyben, E. 1991. 'Fathers and Sons,' in Rawson 1991: 114-143.

Eyben, E. 1993. *Restless Youth in Ancient Rome*. London.

Faccenna, D. 1949-1950. 'Monumento funerario dalla Via Portuense,' *Bullettino della Commissione Archeologica Comunale di Roma* 73-74: 215-233.

Fairweather, J. 1987. 'Ovid's Autobiographical Poem, *Tristia* 4.10,' *Classical Quarterly* 37 (n.s.): 181-196.

Fantham, E. 1995. 'Aemilia Pudentilla: Or the Wealthy Widow's Choice,' in R. Hawley and B. Levick (eds.), *Women in Antiquity: New Assessments* (New York and London)

220-232.

Finley, M. I. 1981. 'The Elderly in Classical Antiquity,' *Greece and Rome* 28: 156-171.

Foley, D. E. 1993. 'Mesquaki Sports Participation as an Adolescent Rite of Passage,' *Journal of Ritual Studies* 7.1: 27-44.

Forbes, R. J. 1964. *Studies in Ancient Technology*, second edition, volume 4. Leiden.

Fowler, W. W. 1896. 'On the Toga Praetexta of Roman Children,' *Classical Review* 10: 317-319.

Fowler, W. W. 1899. *The Roman Festivals of the Period of the Republic*. London.

Fowler, W. W. 1911. *The Religious Experience of the Roman People*. London.

Fowler, W. W. 1916. *Social Life at Rome in the Age of Cicero*. London.

Fowler, W. W. 1920. 'The Religious Meaning of the Toga Praetexta of Roman Children,' in W. W. Fowler, *Roman Essays and Interpretations* (Oxford) 42-52.

Fraschetti, A. 1997. 'Roman Youth,' in Levi and Schmittt 1997a: 51-82.

Fried, M. N. and M. H. Fried. 1980. *Transitions. Four Rituals in Eight Cultures*. New York and London.

Frier, B. 1994. 'Natural Fertility and Family Limitation in Roman Marriage,' *Classical Philology* 89: 318-333.

Fröhlich, T. 1991. *Lararien- und Fassadenbilder in den Vesuvstädten*. Mainz.

Fröhlich, T. 1995. 'Pompejanische Lararienbilder,' *Antike Welt* 26.3: 203-210.

Furneaux, H. 1896. *The Annals of Tacitus*, second edition. Oxford.

Futrell, A. 1997. *Blood in the Arena. The Spectacle of Roman Power*. Austin.

Gage, J. 1993. *Colour and Culture. Practice and Meaning from Antiquity to Abstraction*. London.

Gardner, J. F. and T. Wiedemann. 1991. *The Roman Household: A Sourcebook*. New York.

Gardner, J. F. 1993. *Being a Roman Citizen*. London and New York.

Gardner, J. F. 1997. 'Legal Stumbling-Blocks for Lower-Class Families in Rome,' in Rawson and Weaver 1997: 35-54.

Gardner, J. F. 1998. *Family and Familia in Roman Law and Life*. Oxford.

Garnsey, P. 1991. 'Child Rearing in Ancient Italy,' in Kertzer and Saller 1991: 48-65.

Garrido Božić, I. M. 1951. 'Quintus Filius,' *Greece and Rome* 20: 11-25.

Garrido-Hory, M. 1981. *Martial et l'esclavage*. Paris.

Garrison, D. 1989. *The Student's Catullus*. Norman, Oklahoma.

George, M. 1997. 'Repopulating the Roman House,' in Rawson and Weaver 1997: 299-319.

Giard, J.-B. 1976. *Catalogue des Monnaies de l'Empire Romain I. Auguste*. Paris.

Gilmore, D. D. 1990. *Manhood in the Making: Cultural Concepts of Masculinity*. New Haven.

Ginestet, P. 1991. *Les organisations de la Jeunesse dans l'Occident Romain*. Brussels.

Gluckman, M. 1962. 'Les Rites de Passage,' in M. Gluckman (ed.), *Essays on the Ritual of Social Relations* (Manchester) 1-52.

Goette, H. R. 1986. 'Die Bulla,' *Bonner Jahrbücher* 186: 133-164.

Goette, H. R. 1990. *Studien zu römischen Togadarstellungen*. Mainz.

Golden, M. 1988. 'Did the Ancients Care When Their Children Died?,' *Greece and Rome* 35: 152-163.

Golden, M. 1990. 'Chasing Change in Roman Childhood,' *Ancient History Bulletin* 4.4: 90-94.

Goodyear, F. R. D. 1972. *The Annals of Tacitus Books 1-6*. Cambridge.

Goold, G. P. 1990. (ed. and trans.) *Propertius Elegies*. Cambridge, Mass.

Gordon, W. M. and O. F. Robinson. 1988. *The Institutes of Gaius*. Ithaca.

Gwynn, A. 1964. *Roman Education From Cicero to Quintilian*. New York.

Hallett, J. P. and M. B. Skinner (eds.) 1997. *Roman Sexualities*. Princeton.

Hardie, A. 1983. *Statius and the Silvae: Poets, Patrons and Epideixis in the Graeco-Roman World*. Liverpool.

Harmon, D. 1978. 'The Family Festivals of Rome,' *Aufsteig und Niedergang der römischen Welt* 2.16.2: 1592-1603.

Harris, W. V. 1986. 'The Roman Father's Power of Life and Death,' in R. S. Bagnall and W. V. Harris (eds.), *Studies in Roman Law in Memory of A. Arthur Schiller* (Leiden) 81-95.

Harris, W. V. 1989. *Ancient Literacy*. Cambridge, Mass. and London.

Harvey, R. A. 1981. *A Commentary on Persius*. Leiden.

Herbert-Brown, G. 1994. *Ovid and the Fasti: An Historical Study*. Oxford.

Heskel, J. 1994. 'Cicero as Evidence for Attitudes to Dress in the Late Republic,' in Sebesta and Bonfante 1994: 133-145.

Hillyard, B. P. 1981. *Plutarch: De Audiendo. A Text and Commentary*. New York.

Holford-Strevens, L. 1988. *Aulus Gellius*. London.

Honoré, T. 1987. 'Scriptor *Historiae Augustae*,' *Journal of Roman Studies* 77: 156-176.

Hopkins, K. 1965a. 'The Age of Roman Girls at Marriage,' *Population Studies* 18: 309-327.

Hopkins, K. 1965b. 'Contraception in the Roman Empire,' *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 8: 124-151.

Hopkins, K. 1966. 'On the Probable Age Structure of the Roman Population,' *Population Studies* 20: 245-264.

Hopkins, K. 1983. *Death and Renewal*. Cambridge.

Horowitz, E. 1997. 'The World of Jewish Youth in Europe, 1300-1800,' in Levi and Schmitt 1997a: 83-119.

Hunink, V. 1997. *Apuleius of Madauros. Pro Se De Magia*. Amsterdam.

Hurley, D. W. 1993. *An Historical and Historiographical Commentary on Suetonius' Life of C. Caligula*. Atlanta.

Huskinson, J. 1996. *Roman Children's Sarcophagi.* Oxford.

Johns, C. 1982. *Sex or Symbol? Erotic Images of Greece and Rome*. Austin.

Jones, C. P. 1971. *Plutarch and Rome.* Oxford.

Jones, C. P. 1991. 'Dinner Theater,' in Slater 1991: 185-198.

Joseph, N. 1986. *Uniforms and Nonuniforms. Communication Through Clothing*. New York and Westport, Conn.

Kampen, N. B. 1981. 'Biographical Narration and Roman Funerary Art,' *American Journal of Archaeology* 85: 47-58.

Kaster, R. A. 1988. *Guardians of Language: The Grammarian and Society in Late Antiquity*. Berkeley and Los Angeles.

Kaster, R. A. 1995. *C. Suetonius Tranquillus De Grammaticis et Rhetoribus*. Oxford.

Kertzer, D. I. and R. P. Saller (eds.). 1991. *The Family in Italy from Antiquity to the Present*. New Haven.

Kidd, I. 1992. 'Introduction,' in R. Waterfield (trans.), *Plutarch. Essays*. London.

Kleijwegt, M. 1991. *Ancient Youth: The Ambiguity of Youth and the Absence of Adolescence in Greco-Roman society*. Amsterdam.

Koloski-Ostrow, A. O. 1996. 'Finding Social Meaning in the Public Latrines of Pompeii,' in N. de Haan and G. C. M. Jansen (eds.), *Cura Aquarum in Campania: Proceedings of the 9th International Congress on the History of Water October 1-8 1994*: 79-86.

Konrad, C. F. 1994. *Plutarch's Sertorius. A Historical Commentary*. Chapel Hill.

Lacey, W. K. 1986. *'Patria Potestas,'* in Rawson 1986a: 121-144.

La Follette, L. 1994. 'The Costume of the Roman Bride,' in Sebesta and Bonfante 1994: 54-64.

Le Bonniec, H. 1990. *Ovide. Les Fastes*. Paris.

Lee, G. 1987. (trans.) *The Satires of Persius*. Liverpool.

Levi, G. and J.-C. Schmitt (eds.). 1997a. *A History of Young People in the West. Volume One: Ancient and Medieval Rites of Passage*. Cambridge, Mass. [= *Storia dei giovani, 1: Dall'antichità all'età moderna*. 1994. Rome-Bari; and *Histoire des jeunes en occident, 1: De l'antiquité à l'époque moderne*. 1996. Paris.]

Levi, G. and J.-C. Schmitt. 1997b. 'Introduction,' in Levi and Schmitt 1997a: 1-11.

Levick, B. 1976. *Tiberius the Politician*. London.

Lindsay, H. 1995. *Suetonius Tiberius*. London.

Long, G. 1856. *M. Tullii Ciceronis Orationes*. London.

MacAloon, J. J. 1984. 'Olympic Games and the Theory of Spectacle in Modern Societies,' in J. J. MacAloon (ed.), *Rites, Drama, Festival, Spectacle. Rehearsals Toward a Theory of Cultural Performance* (Philadelphia) 241-280.

Magie, D. 1950. *Roman Rule in Asia Minor To the End of the Third Century After Christ*. Princeton.

Manning, C. E. 1981. *On Seneca's "Ad Marciam"*. Leiden.

Marcus, I. 1996. *Rituals of Childhood. Jewish Acculturation in Medieval Europe*. New Haven.

Marquardt, J. 1886 (repr. 1960). *Das Privatleben der Römer*. Darmstadt.

Marrou, H. I. 1956. *A History of Education in Antiquity*. New York.

Martin, D. B. 1996. 'The Construction of the Ancient Family: Methodological Considerations,' *Journal of Roman Studies* 86: 40-60.

Martin, R. H. and A. J. Woodman. 1989. *Tacitus. Annals Book IV*. Cambridge.

Martin, R. H. and A. J. Woodman. 1996. *The Annals of Tacitus Book 3*. Cambridge.

McGinn, T. A. J. 1998. *Prostitution, Sexuality, and the Law in Ancient Rome*. New York and Oxford.

Michels, A. K. 1967. *The Calendar of the Roman Republic*. Princeton.

Millar, F. G. B. 1977. *The Emperor in the Roman World*. London.

Mommsen, T., P. Krueger and A. Watson. 1985. (eds.) *The Digest of Justinian*. Philadelphia.

Moore, S. F. and B. G. Myerhoff. 1977. (eds.) *Secular Ritual*. Amsterdam.

Morford, M. 1984. *Persius*. Boston.

Mottershead, J. 1986. *Suetonius Claudius*. Bristol.

Murison, C. L. 1992. *Suetonius Galba, Otho, Vitellius*. London.

Murphy, M. D. 1983. 'Coming of Age in Seville: The Structuring of a Riteless Passage to Manhood,' *Journal of Anthropological Research* 39: 376-392.

Myerhoff, B. 1984. 'Rites and Signs of Ripening: The Intertwining of Ritual, Time, and Growing Older,' in D. I. Kertzer and J. Keith (eds.), *Age and Anthropological Theory* (Ithaca) 305-330.

Myerhoff, B. *et al.* 1987. 'Rites of Passage: An Overview,' in M. Eliade (ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Religion*. New York. 380-386.

Nagle, B. 1995. *Ovid's Fasti: Roman Holidays*. Bloomington and Indianapolis.

Néraudau, J.-P. 1979. *La Jeunesse dans la littérature et les institutions de la Rome républicaine*. Paris.

Néraudau, J.-P. 1984. *Être enfant à Rome*. Paris.

Newmyer, S. T. 1979. *The Silvae of Statius: Structure and Theme*. Leiden.

Nicolet, C. 1980. *The World of the Citizen in Republican Rome*. London.

Nielsen, H. S. 1990. '*Delicia* in Roman Literature and the Urban Inscriptions,' *Analecta Romana Instituti Danici* 19: 79-88.

Nielsen, H. S. 1997. 'Interpreting Epithets in Roman Epitaphs,' in Rawson and Weaver 1997. 169-204.

Nippel, W. 1995. *Public Order in Ancient Rome*. Cambridge.

Nisbet, R. G. M. and M. Hubbard. 1970. *A Commentary on Horace: Odes Book I.* Oxford.

Noy, D. 1994. 'Review of *Restless Youth in Ancient Rome*,' *Classical Review* 108: 223-224.

Onians, R. B. 1951 (repr. 1973). *The Origins of European Thought*. Cambridge.

Orr, D. G. 1978. 'Roman Domestic Religion: The Evidence of the Household Shrines,' *Aufsteig und Niedergang der römischen Welt* 2.16.2: 1557-1591.

Page, T. E. 1968. *P. Vergili Maronis Bucolica et Georgica*. London.

Palmer, R. E. A. 1998. '*Bullae insignia ingenuitatis*,' *American Journal of Ancient History* 14: 1-69.

Parker, E. R. 1946. 'The Education of the Heirs in the Julio-Claudian Family,' *American Journal of Philology* 67: 29-50.

Parker, H. N. 1997. 'The Teratogenic Grid,' in Hallett and Skinner 1997: 47-65.

Parkin, T. 1992. *Demography and Roman Society*. Baltimore.

Pauly, A. and G. Wissowa. 1893-. *Paulys Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft*. Stuttgart.

Pelling, C. B. R. 1988. *Plutarch. Life of Antony*. Cambridge.

Petrini, M. 1997. *The Child and the Hero. Coming of Age in Catullus and Vergil*. Ann Arbor.

Pflaum, H.-G. 1970. 'La valeur de la source inspiratrice de la *vita Hadriani* et de la *vita Marci Antonini* à la lumière des personalités contemporaines nommément citées,' in *Bonner Historia Augusta Colloquium 1968/1969* (Bonn) 173-232.

Porte, D. 1985. *L'Étiologie religieuse dans les fastes d'Ovide*. Paris.

Powell, J. G. F. 1990. *Cicero: Laelius, On Friendship and The Dream of Scipio*. Warminster.

Prosperi Valenti, G. 1985. 'Attori-bambini del mondo romano attraverso le testimonianze epigrafiche,' *Epigraphica* 47: 71-82.

Purcell, N. 1995. 'Forum Romanum (The Republican Period),' in E. M. Steinby (ed.) *Lexicon Topographicum Urbis Romae* (Rome) 325-336.

Quinn, K. 1980. *Horace. The Odes*. London.

Raphael, R. 1988. *The Men from the Boys: Rites of Passage in Male America*. Lincoln, Nebr.

Rawson, B. 1966. 'Family Life Among the Lower Classes at Rome in the First Two Centuries of the Empire,' *Classical Philology* 61: 71-83.

Rawson, B. 1974. 'Roman Concubinage and Other *De Facto* Marriages,' *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 104: 279-305.

Rawson, B. 1986a. (ed.) *The Family in Ancient Rome: New Perspectives*. London and Sydney.

Rawson, B. 1986b. 'The Roman Family,' in Rawson 1986a. 1-57.

Rawson, B. 1986c. 'Children in the Roman *Familia*,' in Rawson 1986a. 170-200.

Rawson, B. 1991. (ed.) *Marriage, Divorce, and Children in Ancient Rome*. Oxford.

Rawson, B. 1997. 'The Iconography of Roman Childhood,' in Rawson and Weaver 1997. 205-232.

Rawson, B. and P. Weaver. 1997. (eds.) *The Roman Family in Italy. Status, Sentiment, Space*. Oxford.

Reinhold, M. 1970. *History of Purple as a Status Symbol in Antiquity*. Brussels.

Reinhold, M. 1976. 'The Generation Gap in Antiquity,' in S. Bertman (ed.), *The Conflict of Generations in Ancient Greece and Rome* (Amsterdam) 15-54.

Richardson Jr., L. and E. H. Richardson, '*Ad Cohibendum Bracchium Toga*: An Archaeological Examination of Cicero, *Pro Caelio* 5.11,' *Yale Classical Studies* 19: 251-268.

Richardson Jr., L. 1992. *A New Topographical Dictionary of Ancient Rome*. Baltimore.

Richlin, A. 1983. *The Garden of Priapus. Sexuality and Aggression in Roman Humor*. New Haven, Conn. and London.

Riddle, J. M. 1992. *Contraception and Abortion from the Ancient World to the Renaissance*. Cambridge, Mass.

Robinson, O. F. 1992. *Ancient Rome. City Planning and Administration.* London and New York.

Rousselle, A. 1988. *Porneia. On Desire and the Body in Antiquity*. Cambridge, Mass. and Oxford.

Saller, R. P. 1987. 'Men's Age at Marriage and Its Consequences in the Roman Family,' *Classical Philology* 82: 21-34.

Saller, R. P. 1988. '*Pietas*, Obligation and Authority in the Roman Family,' in *Alte Geschichte und Wissenschaftsgeschichte: Festschrift für Karl Christ* (Darmstadt) 393-410.

Saller, R. P. 1991a. 'Roman Heirship Strategies in Principle and Practice,' in Kertzer and Saller 1991. 26-47.

Saller, R. P. 1991b. 'Childhood in Imperial Rome,' *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 4: 240-242.

Saller, R. P. 1991c. 'Corporal Punishment, Authority, and Obedience in the Roman Household,' in Rawson 1991. 144-165.

Saller, R. P. 1994. *Patriarchy, Property and Death in the Roman Family.* Cambridge.

Sandars, T. C. 1922. *The Institutes of Justinian*. Westport, Conn.

Sandbach, F. H. 1940. '*Lucreti Poemata* and the Poet's Death,' *Classical Review* 54: 72-77.

Scheid, J. 1975. *Les Frères Arvales*. Paris.

Scheid, J. 1992. 'Myth, Cult and Reality in Ovid's *Fasti*,' *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society* 38: 118-131.

Schnapp, A. 1997. 'Images of Young People in the Greek City-State,' in Levi and Schmitt 1997a: 12-50.

Scobie, A. 1986. 'Slums, Sanitation, and Mortality in the Roman World,' *Klio* 68: 399-433.

Scullard, H. H. 1963. *From the Gracchi to Nero*, second edition. London and New York.

Scullard, H. H. 1981. *Festivals and Ceremonies of the Roman Republic*. London.

Sebesta, J. L. 1994. *'Tunica Ralla, Tunica Spissa*: The Colours and Textiles of Roman Costume,' in Sebesta and Bonfante 1994: 65-76.

Sebesta, J. L. and L. Bonfante. 1994. (eds.) *The World of Roman Costume*. Madison.

Shackleton Bailey, D. R. 1968. *Cicero's Letters to Atticus*, volume III. Cambridge.

Shackleton Bailey, D. R. 1986. *Cicero Philippics*. Chapel Hill and London.

Shaw, B. 1991. 'The Cultural Meaning of Death: Age and Gender in the Roman Family,' in Kertzer and Saller 1991: 66-90.

Sherwin-White, A. N. 1966. *The Letters of Pliny: A Historical and Social Commentary*. Oxford.

Sherwin-White, A. N. 1973. *The Roman Citizenship*. Oxford.

Slater, W. J. 1974. 'Pueri, Turba Minuta,' *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies* 21: 133-140.

Slater, W. J. 1991. (ed.) *Dining in a Classical Context*. Ann Arbor.

Smallwood, E. M. 1967. *Documents Illustrating the Principates of Gaius, Claudius and Nero*. Cambridge.

Staples, A. 1998. *From Good Goddesses to Vestal Virgins. Sex and Category in Roman Religion.* New York.

Stockton, D. 1979. *The Gracchi*. Oxford.

Stone, S. 1994. 'The Toga: From National to Ceremonial Costume,' in Sebesta and Bonfante 1994: 13-45.

Sutherland, C. H. V. 1951. *Coinage in Roman Imperial Policy 31 B.C. - A.D. 68*. London.

Syme, R. 1939. *The Roman Revolution*. Oxford.

Syme, R. 1968. *Ammianus and the Historia Augusta.* Oxford.

Syme, R. 1987. 'Marriage Ages for Roman Senators,' *Historia* 36: 318-332.

Szemler, G. J. 1972. *The Priests of the Roman Republic.* Brussels.

Talbert, R. J. A. 1984. *The Senate of Imperial Rome.* Princeton.

Tatum, J. 1983. *Plautus. The Darker Comedies: Bacchides, Casina, and Truculentus.* Baltimore.

Taylor, L. R. 1924. '*Seviri Equitum Romanorum* and Municipal *Seviri*: A Study in Pre-Military Training Among the Romans,' *Journal of Roman Studies* 14: 158-171.

Taylor, L. R. 1966. *Roman Voting Assemblies.* Ann Arbor.

Thomas, Y. 1982. 'Droit domestique et droit politique à Rome. Remarques sur le pécule et les *honores* des fils de famille,' *Melanges d'Archéologie et d'Histoire de l'École Française de Rome* 94: 527-580.

Thomson, D. F. S. 1997. *Catullus.* Toronto, Buffalo and London.

Toner, J. P. 1995. *Leisure and Ancient Rome.* Cambridge.

Treggiari, S. 1975. 'Jobs in the Household of Livia,' *Papers of the British School at Rome* 43: 48-77.

Treggiari, S. 1976. 'Jobs for Women,' *American Journal of Ancient History* 1: 76-104.

Treggiari, S. 1979. 'Questions on Women Domestics in the Roman West,' in *Schiavitù, manomissione e classi dipendenti nel mondo antico* (Rome) 185-201.

Treggiari, S. 1981a. '*Contubernales* in *CIL* 6,' *Phoenix* 35: 42-69.

Treggiari, S. 1981b. '*Concubinae*,' *Papers of the British School at Rome* 49: 59-81.

Treggiari, S. 1991a. *Roman Marriage. Iusti Coniuges from the time of Cicero to the time of Ulpian.* Oxford.

Treggiari, S. 1991b. 'Divorce Roman Style: How Easy and how Frequent was it?,' in Rawson 1991: 31-46.

Turner, V. 1962. 'Three Symbols of *Passage* in Ndembu Circumcision Ritual: An

Interpretation,' in M. Gluckman (ed.), *Essays on the Ritual of Social Relations* (Manchester) 124-173.

Turner, V. 1969. *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*. Chicago.

Unterman, A. 1994. 'Judaism,' in J. Holm (ed.), *Rites of Passage*. London. 113-137.

van Gennep, A. 1909 (repr. 1969). *Les Rites de passage*. Paris.

van Gennep, A. 1960. *Les Rites de passage*. Trans. by M. B. Vizedom and G. L. Caffee. London. Originally published in French, 1909.

Verrall, A.W. 1969. *Studies Literary and Historical in the Odes of Horace*. Port Washington, New York.

Villeneuve, F. 1962. *Horace Satires*. Paris.

Vizedom, M. 1976. *Rites and Relationships: Rites of Passage and Contemporary Anthropology*. Beverly Hills and London.

Waites, M. C. 1920. 'The Nature of the Lares and Their Representation in Roman Art,' *American Journal of Archaeology* 24: 241-261.

Wallace-Hadrill, A. 1994. *Houses and Society in Pompeii and Herculaneum.* Princeton.

Walters, J. 1993. "No More Than a Boy': The Shifting Construction of Masculinity from Ancient Greece to the Middle Ages,' *Gender & History* 5.1: 20-33.

Walters, J. 1997. 'Invading the Roman Body: Manliness and Impenetrability in Roman Thought,' in Hallett and Skinner 1997: 29-43.

Warden, P. G. 1983. 'Bullae, Roman Custom and Italic Tradition,' *Opuscula Romana* 14: 69-75.

Wardle, D. 1994. *Suetonius' Life of Caligula. A Commentary*. Brussels.

Waszink, J. H. and J. C. M. van Winden. 1987. *Tertullianus De Idololatria. Critical Text, Translation and Commentary*. Leiden.

Waterfield, R. 1992. *Plutarch. Essays*. London.

Watson. A. 1967. *The Law of Persons in the Later Roman Republic*. Oxford.

Watson, A. 1970. *The Law of the Ancient Romans*. Dallas.

Weaver, P. 1997. 'Children of Junian Latins,' in Rawson and Weaver 1997: 55-72.

Wiedemann, T. 1989. *Adults and Children in the Roman Empire*. London.

Williams, W. 1990. *Pliny. Correspondence with Trajan From Bithynia (Epistles X)*. Warminster.

Wilson, L. M. 1924. *The Roman Toga*. Baltimore.

Wilson, L. M. 1938. *The Clothing of the Ancient Romans*. Baltimore.

Wirszubski, C. 1950. *Libertas As a Political Idea at Rome During the Late Republic and Early Principate*. Cambridge.

Wiseman, T. P. 1985. *Catullus and His World: A Reappraisal*. Cambridge.

York, M. 1986. *The Roman Festival Calendar of Numa Pompilius*. New York.

APPENDIX: SOURCES FOR THE *TOGA VIRILIS* CEREMONY

I. LATIN SOURCES

i. *toga virilis*

All citations listed below refer specifically to the *toga virilis* and in most instances appear in a phrase indicating the act of donning the toga (e.g. *togam virilem sumere,* 'to assume the *toga virilis*').

Apul. *Apol.* 70.7
Apul. *Apol.* 73.9
Auct. de praen. c. 3.6
Cic. *Amic.* 1.1
Cic. *Cael.* 4.9
Cic. *Phil.* 2.18.44
Cic. *Sest.* 69.144
Donat. *Vit. Verg.* 6-7
Festus 289
Fronto *Ad M. Caes.* 4.1.2
Livy 26.19.5
Livy 42.34.3-5
Petron. *Sat.* 81.5
Plin. *Ep.* 1.9.1-3
SHA *Marc.* 1.10
SHA *Marc.* 4.5
SHA *Sev.* 14.8
SHA *Sev.* 16.8
SHA *Ver.* 3.1
Sen. *Ep.* 4.2
Serv. *Ecl.* 4.49
Suet. *Aug.* 8.1
Suet. *Aug.* 38.2
Suet. *Aug.* 66.4
Suet. *Aug.* 94.10
Suet. *Tib.* 7.1
Suet. *Calig.* 15.2
Suet. *Claud.* 2.2
Suet. *Galba* 4.3
Suet. *Vesp.* 2.2
Tac. *Ann.* 4.4.1
Tac. *Ann.* 12.41.1
Tert. *De Idol.* 16.2
Val. Max. 5.4.4
Varro *LL* 8.13.28
Vell. Pat. 2.29.5
Vell. Pat. 2.99.2
CIL I p. 316
CIL 5.2089
CIL 6.1504
CIL 10.688
CIL 10.7346
CIL 10.8375
Ehrenberg and Jones 41

ii. *toga pura*

Most examples of *toga pura* occur in connection with the verb *dare* ('to grant') or a similar verb such as *parare* ('to provide') as in Phaedrus.

Cic. *Att.* 5.20.9
Cic. *Att.* 9.6.1
Phaedrus 3.10.10

Cic. *Att.* 6.1.12	Cic. *Att.* 9.17.1	Plin. *HN* 8.74
Cic. *Att.* 7.8.5	Cic. *Att.* 9.19.1	Tert. *De Idol.* 16.1

iii. *toga libera*

Ov. *Fast.* 3.771	Prop. 4.1.132

iv. variations on i-iii

Examples in this section are listed alphabetically by the first word of the Latin phrase.

Stat. *Silv.* 5.2.67 *albenti amictu umeros inducere* ('to cover the shoulders with the white robe')

Pers. 5.33 *candidus umbo permisit* ('the dazzling white toga allows')

Ov. *Tr.* 4.10.28 *liberior toga* ('the freer toga')

SHA *Comm.* 2.2 *toga indutus esse* ('to have been clothed in the toga')

Apul. *Apol.* 87.10-11 *toga involutus esse* ('to have been covered by the toga')

Livy *Per.* 26 *togam accipere* ('to take the toga')

SHA *Comm.* 12.4 *togam accipere* ('to take the toga')

Gell. *NA* 18.4.1 *togam mutare* ('to change one's toga')

Hor. *Carm.* 1.36.9 *togam mutare* ('to change one's toga')

Plin. *Ep.* 2.14.6 *togam sumere* ('to assume the toga')

Plin. *Ep.* 10.116 *togam sumere* ('to assume the toga')

SHA *Comm.* 2.1 *togam sumere* ('to assume the toga')

Suet. *Calig.* 10.1 *togam sumere* ('to assume the toga')

Hor. *Sat.* 1.2.16 *vestem virilem sumere* ('to assume the manly robe')

Catull. 68.15 *vestis pura traditus esse* ('to have been handed the pure garment')

v. related references that do not correspond to i-iv

Cic. *Cael.* 5.11 *ad cohibendum bracchium toga constitutus* ('to keep one's arms confined in the toga')

Sen. *Ad Marc.* 9.2 *togam...agitare animo* ('to intend [to give] the toga')

Tac. *Germ.* 13.1 *toga...primus iuventae honos* ('the toga as the first honour of youth')

Tert. *Ad Nat.* 2.11.11 *novi togati* ('new recipients of the toga')

vi. *bulla*

Anon. *De vir. illus.* 6.9
Festus 36
Cic. *Verr.* 2.1.152
Juv. 5.164-165
Juv. 14.4-5
Macrob. *Sat.* 1.6.8-17
Pers. 5.31
Prop. 4.1.131
Stat. 5.3.120
Val. Max. 3.1.1

vii. *toga praetexta*

The *toga praetexta* is often paired with the verb *ponere* ('to set aside'). A list of variations on '*toga praetexta*' follows the primary list and is arranged alphabetically by author.

August. *De civ. D.* 4.11
Cic. *Amic.* 10.33
Cic. *Verr.* 2.1.152
Festus 36
Festus 245
Gell. *NA* 18.4.1
Isid. *Etym.* 19.24.16
Livy 22.57.9
Livy 42.34.5
Macrob. *Sat.* 1.6.3-25
Prop. 3.15.3
Ps.-Quint. *Decl.* 340
SHA *Comm.* 2.1
Sen. *Ep.* 4.2
Tac. *Ann.* 1.3.2
Val. Max. 3.1.1

Hor. *Ep.* 5.7 *purpurae decus* ('the distinction of the purple')

Pers. 5.30 *custos...purpura cedere* ('to remove the guardianship of the purple')

Stat. *Silv.* 5.2.66-67 *ostrum puerile lacertis exuere* ('to take off the purple of boyhood from one's shoulders')

Stat. *Silv.* 5.3.119 *ponere purpureos...amictus* ('to lay aside the purple robe')

viii. *deducere in forum*

Variations on *deducere* such as *ingressus esse* or *venire in forum* are also included.

Aug. *RG* 14.1	Fronto *Ad Amic.* 1.10.1	Suet. *Nero* 7.2
Cic. *Brut.* 303	Sen. *Ep.* 4.2	Suet. *Tib.* 15.1
Cic. *Mur.* 69	Suet. *Aug.* 26.2	Tac. *Ann.* 3.29.3

Cf. Suet. *Tib.* 54.1 *patribus conscriptis commendare* ('to recommend to the Senate')

II. GREEK SOURCES

i. Hellenization of *togam virilem sumere* and its variations

App. *B. Civ.* 4.5.30 τὴν τῶν τελείων περιτίθημι στολὴν ('to don the robe of full-grown males'). Note that τέλειος is also used to describe sacrificial victims which are unblemished and may be used here to capture both the epithets *virilis* and *pura*.

Dio 45.2.5 τὴν τε ἐσθῆτα τὴν ἀνδρικὴν ἐνδύειν ('to put on the manly garment')

Dio 45.2.6 τοῦ ἀνδρικοῦ χιτῶνος ἐνδύειν ('to put on the manly robe')

Nic. Dam. 4.8 ἀναλαβεῖν δὲ τὴν καθαράν ('to assume the pure [robe]')

Plut. *Ant.* 71.3 ἀπόρφυρον καὶ τέλειον ἱμάτιον...περιτίθημι ('to don the borderless white robe')

Plut. *Brut.* 14.4 τὸ καλούμενον ἀνδρεῖον ἱμάτιον ἀναλαβεῖν ('to assume the so-called man's robe')

Plut. *De Aud.* 37C τὸ ἀνδρεῖον ἀναλαβεῖν ἱμάτιον ('to assume a man's robe')

ii. Hellenization of *toga praetexta*

Nic. Dam. 4.8 ἀποθέσθαι...τὴν περιπόρφυρον ἐσθῆτα ('to set aside the purple-bordered garment')

Plut. *De Aud.* 37D τὸ παιδικὸν ἱμάτιον ἀποθέσθαι ('to lay aside the robe of childhood')

Plut. *Rom.* 20.3 ὁ περιπόρφυρος ('the purple-bordered [robe]')

Plut. *Sert.* 14.4 ὁ περιπόρφυρος ('the purple-bordered [robe]')

iii. *bulla*

Plut. *QR* 101	Plut. *Rom.* 20.3	Plut. *Sert.* 14.4

iv. Hellenization of the phrase *deducere in forum*

Nic. Dam. 4.8 καταβαίνειν δὲ εἰς τὴν ἀγορὰν ('to go down to the Forum')

Plut. *Brut.* 14.4 κατάγειν εἰς ἀγοράν ('to lead down to the Forum')

v. Equating the assumption of the toga with entry into the ephebate

The phrase ἐς τοὺς ἐφήβους ἐγγράφειν ('to register among the ephebes') is used consistently by Dio to refer to the assumption of the *toga virilis*. A variation is also found in Nicolaus of Damascus 4.9: εἰς ἄνδρας ἐγγράφειν ('to be enroled among men').

Dio 45.2.5
Dio 51.6.1
Dio 55.22.4
Dio 56.8.1
Dio 59.8.1
Dio 61.31.2
Dio 61.34.1-2

VITA

Surname: Dolansky Given Names: Fanny Lyn

Place of Birth: Montreal, Quebec, Canada

Educational Institutions Attended:

University of Victoria	1997 to 1999
Trent University	1993 to 1997

Degrees Awarded:

B.A. (Honours)	Trent University	1997

Honours and Awards:

University of Victoria Fellowship	1997 to 1999
Howard E. Petch Research Scholarship	1997 to 1998
Governor General's Silver Medal	1997
Lady Eaton College Fellow's Prize	1997
John Gilchrist Memorial Scholarship	1997
Trent University Scholarship	1996
Hector and Geraldine Elizabeth Gray Scholarship	1995
Katherine E. Scott Scholarship	1994
Canadian Scholars' Press Award	1995
Midwives' Prize	1994
Trent University Tuition Scholarship	1993
Governor General's Bronze Medal	1993

Publications:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

PARTIAL COPYRIGHT LICENSE

I hereby grant the right to lend my thesis to users of the University of Victoria Library, and to make single copies only for such users or in response to a request from the Library or any other university, or similar institution, on its behalf or for one of its users. I further agree that permission for extensive copying of this thesis for scholarly purposes may be granted by me or a member of the University designated by me. It is understood that copying or publication of this thesis for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission.

Title of Thesis:

Coming of Age in Rome: The History and Social Significance of Assuming the *Toga Virilis*

Author 

Fanny Lyn Dolansky

April 21, 1999