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Citation for published version (APA):

Mouritsen, H. (2019). Slavery and manumission in Imperial Italy: the album from Herculaneum revisited. In M. Maiuro, & M. Balbo (Eds.), *Popolazione, risorse e urbanizzazione nella Campania antica* (pp. 211-231). (Pragmateiai; Vol. 31)..

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Pragmateiai

Collana di studi e testi
per la storia economica, sociale e amministrativa
del mondo antico

diretta da Elio Lo Cascio

31

POPOLAZIONE, RISORSE E URBANIZZAZIONE NELLA CAMPANIA ANTICA

Dall'età preromana alla tarda antichità

a cura di Marco Maiuro e Mattia Balbo

ESTRATTO - OFF PRINT

ISSN 2531-5390

ISBN 978-88-7228-897-9

DOI <http://dx.doi.org/10.4475/897>



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2019

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HENRIK MOURITSEN

SLAVERY AND MANUMISSION IN IMPERIAL ITALY:
THE *ALBUM* FROM HERCULANEUM REVISITED

The *album* from Herculaneum has, after centuries of almost complete neglect, recently been recognised as one of the potentially most important sources on Roman demography, slavery, and manumission¹. A lively debate about the interpretation of this document and its implications is currently taking place, as underlined by the Rome colloquium and the papers in this volume devoted to the *album*. This contribution first revisits some of the basic questions relating to the *album* – its structure and original size – in order to reassess its nature and the identity of the people listed in it. Finally, a few general observations about Roman slavery will be ventured in light of this reconstruction. From the outset it must be stressed that any attempt to reevaluate the material in its current state by its very nature must remain provisional, as future discoveries may alter our understanding of the document quite fundamentally².

The history of the fragments is well known and need not be covered in any great detail here. The document was long believed to represent a list of the local Augustales and *prima facie* this assumption was not without basis since almost all the persons listed were freedmen and the body was sub-divided into *centuriae*, a structure also encountered among the Augustales at nearby Puteoli. However, re-examination of the fragments has made it clear that the list contained far too many names for it to be that of the relatively exclusive body of Augustales³. The current consensus assumes a minimum

¹ I would like first to thank Elio lo Cascio for the kind invitation to the seminar at La Sapienza. I am also grateful to Luuk de Ligt, Peter Garnsey, John Pearce, Dominic Rathbone and Charlotte Roueché for their valuable comments on earlier drafts of this paper. Their help and advice do, of course, not imply any responsibility for the content nor indeed for any remaining errors. Finally, I am much indebted to George Maher for his assistance with the demographic calculations presented in the final section.

² The re-edition by Camodeca 2008 marked a great advance on previous publications, although complete photographic documentation was missing, as were important measurements of the fragments, e.g. letter height and the thickness of the marble slabs which is indicated for some of the fragments but not for others; on page 94 he simply notes that it varied between 2,5 and 5 cm. The most complete collection of photos of the fragments can be found in de Ligt - Garnsey 2012, on whose illustrations much of the following analysis is based.

³ Key to this reinterpretation of the document are the decorative frames which surrounded the double panels that made up the inscription. Although quite substantial – c. 9 cm wide – the frames are indicated in *CIL* 10 only by an easily overlooked double line, the significance of which is not explained. Moreover,

of around 1080 names, although some scholars go even higher⁴. A body of that size would be unparalleled and difficult to reconcile to what is otherwise known about the Augustales, who despite considerable local diversity never seem to have reached such numbers⁵. Scholarly opinion has therefore in recent years converged on an alternative interpretation that views the inscription as a list of all free adult male citizens/residents in Herculaneum⁶. Such a document would logically have been based on the local census, and the notion of a census roll set in stone has received further credence by the scale and monumentality of the inscription as well as the suggestion that it was originally located in what appears to be a semi-public space, the Basilica Noniana⁷. Before examining this theory more closely it must be noted that no parallel to such a document exists from the Roman Empire⁸. In itself this does not represent a compelling objection, for whichever interpretation is preferred the document remains unusual; the question is to what extent and in which way.

1. The theory of a comprehensive list of male citizens drawn from the local census relies on a reconstruction of the fragments which entails that it must have comprised virtually all adult males in Herculaneum, by all accounts a town of fairly modest size; recent estimates suggest a population between 4,000 and 5,000 inhabitants⁹. This particular reconstruction in turn presupposes that all the fragments belong to a single document created at a specific moment in time. However, as I shall argue below, that premise cannot be taken for granted. In the original *CIL* publication of the inscriptions from Herculaneum Mommsen grouped a number of fragments together under a single number, 10.1403. Their provenance was in several cases unclear but in terms of shape and content they shared a number of features, all listing freedmen in a largely similar manner. Still, even then there were exceptions, since one fragment contained *ingenui* who had been adlected, while two others, wholly or in part, left out filiation or pseudo-filiation and also differed somewhat in their internal layout. Moreover, since Mommsen's

photos of the fragments only became available relatively recently. Three of the fragments published in *CIL* 10 belong to right-hand panels, which gives us the minimum number of double panels. The fact that each of these contained six columns of around 60 names in turn forms the basis for the modern calculations.

⁴ Camodeca 2008; Wallace-Hadrill 2015. de Ligt - Garnsey 2012, 79, assume even more double panels, envisaging no fewer than six, of which one was of reduced size.

⁵ Cf. Duncan-Jones 1974, 283-7. For Augustales see also Mouritsen 2006 and Mouritsen 2011a, 249-60; Laird 2015.

⁶ First suggested in passing by Pesando 2003, followed by de Ligt - Garnsey 2012, 69, who also provide a summary of recent scholarship. The theory has recently been developed further by Wallace-Hadrill 2015, 124-29. There is some disagreement among scholars whether *incolae* might have been included, cf. de Ligt - Garnsey 2012, 69-70; de Ligt - Garnsey 2016, 75-76.

⁷ See the detailed discussion in Wallace-Hadrill 2015, 116-19.

⁸ It has been suggested that two bronze fragments from Veneto, *I.Ital.* X.3 nos. 30 and 136, both containing lists of names with age indications, may be based on the census. They do, however, differ substantially from the *album* from Herculaneum.

⁹ de Ligt - Garnsey 2012, 69 mention a likely range of 4,000-5,000 inhabitants. According to Camodeca 2008, 88, the population hardly exceeded 4,000. Wallace-Hadrill 2015, 125-6, argued for a potentially even lower figure.

time additional discoveries have been made, published by Guadagno in 1977, which complicate matters further; one new fragment belongs to a much smaller, single-columned panel, while another lists *ingenui*¹⁰. Nevertheless, despite these variations the unity of the document has not yet been called into question.

The apparent uniformity of the content of the fragments, not least as presented in *CIL*, has in the past tended to overshadow the question of epigraphic consistency, but before we can consider the nature and demographic implications of the document it is crucial that we look carefully at the inscribed stones themselves; only when we have clear understanding of the physical document can we begin to assess its content. An epigraphic study of the fragments, including the shape of the panels, the layout and format of the columns, as well as the way in which the names are presented, casts doubt on the assumption that we are dealing with a single document. It does not follow, however, that the fragments are all unrelated. While there is considerable diversity, it is also possible to identify a substantial group of fragments which are entirely homogeneous in both appearance and content. They seem to constitute what we might call the 'core' document, to which other supplementary lists were later added. They comprise the large fragments *CIL* 10.1403 *a, f, g, AE* 1978, 119a, and the smaller *b, e, h, i, k*, and *AE* 1978, 119c, which are quite uniform in style and layout. Every column is identically structured with a straight left border, while the names are regularly spaced with no attempts at creating internal columns or separating individual elements¹¹. It is also in these fragments that we find the references to the internal sub-divisions, the *centuriae*.

The remaining fragments differ in a variety of ways from the 'main' inscription. As noted above, one fragment, *AE* 1978, 119d, completely breaks the pattern of paired double panels, each containing three columns of names, since this panel consists of just a single column. So if the symmetrical principle was maintained, the implication is an inscription which had two rather than the normal six columns¹². In terms of epigraphic style and content this fragment is otherwise quite similar to those of the 'core' document. Fragment 10.1403c contains a list of *adlecti*, and while the layout follows the 'standard' format, the lettering is notably smaller than that found in any of the other fragments attributed to this document¹³. A comparison with the fragments alongside which it is displayed in the Museo Nazionale in Naples suggests that the columns in this panel may have accommodated around 85 names, as opposed to the usual 65 in the rest of the fragments (cf. *CIL* 10.1403g, where the full height of the panel is preserved)¹⁴.

The two joined fragments *CIL* 10.1403l and *AE* 1978, 119b have been the focus of

¹⁰ Guadagno 1977.

¹¹ When the *cognomen* was particularly short, the stonecutter occasionally created small gaps between pseudo-filiation and *cognomen* in order to make the right-hand margin appear more even.

¹² de Ligt - Garnsey 2012, 76; 79, suggested it was combined with a 'normal' three-column panel.

¹³ No measurements of the lines of this fragment are available. Camodeca 2008 gives the height of the heading as 2.3 cm, but offers no measurements for the lines below.

¹⁴ Letter height is recorded for only some of the fragments. Guadagno 1977 gives these measurements: *AE* 1978, 119a: 11-14mm; 119b: 12-13mm; 119c: 13-14mm; 119d: 13-14mm. Camodeca 2008, 94 merely stated that the lettering in the fragments measured 1,2-1,5 cm.

much debate, to which we shall return below. Here just the epigraphic features will be considered. They show marked inconsistencies in the layout of the three columns, which vary considerably in width, the middle one being much narrower than the first and the third. Moreover, the first column is quite unusual since the *praenomina* are arranged in its own column and separated from the *nomina* by a substantial gap. The second column retains elements of this layout, but with a smaller space between *praenomina* and *nomina*, presumably necessitated by the lesser width of column as a whole. Both these columns also contain an unusual amount of large gaps between *nomen* and *cognomen*. Finally, the third column abandons this layout altogether and adopt the standard pattern without internal columns.

The large fragment *CIL* 10.1403*d* also contains a number of peculiarities. The panel is, as published photos indicate, visibly broader than *CIL* 10.1403*a*, below which it is displayed in the Museo Nazionale. The first column is noticeably wider than the following two which are of roughly equal width. Its layout is also unique, since the *cognomina* have been separated from the rest of the name and arranged in a column of their own. The middle column follows the normal pattern but with some unusually large gaps between *nomen* and *cognomen*. The third column, of which just a few lines survive, appears to follow yet another style of layout, since it lists the *praenomina* separately.

The heterogeneity of these fragments raises important questions about the unity of the document, and the recently published marble fragments with traces of painted names further underline the diversity of the material. Most crucially they demonstrate that the document was not just updated through the addition of names to existing panels, but that supplementary new panels were also commissioned¹⁵. The diversity of the fragments may therefore be best explained as the result of a steady accretion of panels which were added to an original ‘core’ document. Conversely, if all the fragments had been commissioned and executed as part of a single continuous operation it would be difficult to account for the variations in style and appearance. Moreover, it seems that the disparities are not merely the inevitable inconsistencies arising when several stonecutters share a project. Closer study of the lettering suggests that the same craftsman may in fact have been responsible for carving all the fragments, and perhaps even the additions to existing panels, although these by necessity are less well executed¹⁶. In that case the diversity becomes explicable only if the fragments were separated chronologically, perhaps by substantial intervals. While this conclusion might raise the question how closely the ‘atypical’ fragments relate to the ‘core’ document, the connection between them is hardly open to doubt. Not only do they seem to have shared the same location but there are also evident attempts to connect the fragments visually, as indicated by the matching frames and broadly similar formats. The likely use of the same stonecutter throughout the process would point in the same direction.

¹⁵ Pagano 1992, cf. Wallace-Hadrill 2015, 119 with illustrations.

¹⁶ Some letters are distinctive across all the fragments, including ‘V’ and ‘X’, which both have characteristic shapes. The stonecutter also showed a tendency to add occasional interpuncts at the end of longer names in the first and second columns. Again, this peculiarity recurs in most of the fragments.

The stonecutter readily experimented with layout and style, not just when new panels were produced, but also when more names were added to existing lists. These additions are, as noted, of much poorer quality than the original lettering, presumably because work was carried out while the panels remained attached to the wall. But it is interesting to observe that the craftsman decided to follow a different layout for the names in these instances. In *CIL* 10.1403*a* he created an entirely new format which divides the pseudo-filiation from the rest of the name and creates a separate column for this element. This unusual format is also found in the additions to *CIL* 10.1403*g*. The logical implication is not just that the additions were made by the same stonecutter, but also that he had few misgivings about departing from the original format of these documents. This peculiarity may help explain the heterogeneous style and execution of the later panels¹⁷.

The internal structure of the supplementary panels may also have differed from the 'main' document, fragment *CIL* 10.1403*d* attracting particular interest in this context. Before additional names were inserted into this panel, there would have been considerable free space at the bottom of the final column, whereas in the most complete fragment of the 'core' inscription, *CIL* 10.1403*g*, the vacant part is located at the bottom of the first column, suggesting a difference in layout. In *CIL* 10.1403*g* we may assume that a new *centuria* heading was placed towards the top of the second column in the same way we see it in *CIL* 10.1403*a* and *AE* 1978, 119*c* / *CIL* 10.1403*b*, *i*, *k* (and possibly also *AE* 1978 119*a*, although the distance of this fragment from the top of the panel is unknown). The fact that *CIL* 10.1403*d* differs in layout from these would suggest that it was structured internally along different lines from the main document. We should therefore be cautious not to assume the later panels simply added more names to the document while following the same general pattern.

2. If we turn from issues of epigraphic execution and style to the content of the document, further doubt is cast on the theory of the *album* representing a list of all adult males in Herculaneum. Supposedly, such a list would have been based on the census, but in that case we would have expected more clusters of identical *nomina*, since the local citizens presumably were registered by family groups¹⁸. Freedmen may be a special case in this context, but among the freeborn only four pairs of names occur out of 28, implying that the large majority of family units had only one adult male and none had more than two¹⁹. More importantly, there is no evidence that freedmen were ever allocated to separate civic units in Roman towns or in the capital itself, where there was no republican precedent for such a practice; while freedmen during most of this period were

¹⁷ Alternatively, the differences in style might derive from the list of names, presumably written on papyrus scrolls, that was passed on to the stonecutter as the template for the supplementary inscriptions. Over time different scribes might have used different formats, which were then reproduced on the stone.

¹⁸ As mentioned above n. 8, it has been argued that some epigraphic documents from Veneto may reflect the structure of the census record, and it is worth noting that they list people according family group, mixing males and females as well as *ingenui* and *liberti*.

¹⁹ In *CIL* 10.1403*d*, which must also have listed freeborn (cf. discussion below), the pattern is even more pronounced, with only four gentilicial pairs among the original 42 names.

confined to certain units, they shared them with (underprivileged) freeborn citizens²⁰. In the assemblies based on the tribes freedmen were concentrated in the four urban *tribus* along with the *plebs urbana*. In the military assembly, the *comitia centuriata*, no century was formally set aside for freedmen either, although as non-combatants they would in practice have been confined to a few unarmed centuries. The lack of urban models for the segregation of freedmen in the civic sphere means we would not expect to encounter it at municipal level either, local political institutions and practices typically reflecting those of the imperial centre. It is therefore not surprising that we find no trace of such a separation in any of the surviving municipal charters.

The subdivisions featuring in the 'core' document may provide a clue as to the nature of the list. The *centuriae*, which appears three times in these fragments, are otherwise documented only for *corpora*, including, as mentioned earlier, the Augustales in Puteoli²¹. In a municipal context they are not attested as a type of civic unit employed for political purposes. The most common units were the *curiae*, while in the *lex Ursonensis* we find *tribus*²². The latter clearly suggest topographically defined voting groups modelled on those of Rome, as do the urban divisions that may be identified in neighbouring Pompeii²³. The names of the centuries in the *album* are intriguing too, since they – in contrast to what seems probable in Pompeii – appear to allude to the imperial house and its ideology. *Cla(udia)* and *Veneria* are documented and in the case of the fragmentary *CIL* 10.1403i Mommsen suggested [Concord]ia, which, although conjectural, is entirely plausible given the surviving remains. Crucially, one of the *centuriae* is singled out as being *ingen(uorum)*, while the two others, both comprising freedmen, merely carry a name without indication of legal status. The striking implication is that freeborn status is presented as a particular distinction, which seems incompatible with a list based on the local census where *ingenuitas* rather than *libertinitas* must have been norm. Even if we assume that there was a freeborn and a freed version of each *centuria* (for which we have no evidence), we would expect the latter to indicate status rather than the former. We are, in other words, dealing with a body of people in which freed status is typical, whereas freeborn background is somehow considered special, a pattern also reflected in the heavy preponderance of freedmen in the surviving fragments.

If, as argued here, this is not a register of the citizens of Herculaneum, the question is what it is. Given the fragmentary state of the document and the loss of the crucial

²⁰ Mouritsen 2011a, 75-9.

²¹ Puteoli: *CIL* 10.1873, 1874, 1888. One also finds *centuriae* used as subdivisions in the large *corpus* of the *iuniores* of the *tribus Suburana* in Rome, *CIL* 6.200, cf. 198. These *centuriae* appear to be unrelated to the divisions of the *comitia centuriata*.

²² *lex Mal.* 51-57; *lex Irn.* 50; *lex Tarent.* 14-17; *lex Col. Gen. Urs.* 101.

²³ Cf. Spitzl 1984, 38-9. In Pompeii the following four groups are documented of which at least the first three probably corresponded to local topographical divisions: Campanienses: *CIL* 4.470, 480; Salinienses: *CIL* 4.128; Urbanenses: *CIL* 4.7667, 7676, 7706, 7747; Forenses: *CIL* 4.783. Amodio 1996 suggested they may refer to extra-mural *pagi*, but in that case the absence of the only securely documented *pagus*, the *Pagus Augustus Felix Suburbanus*, would be hard to explain, as would the topographical distribution of the electoral inscriptions featuring their names.

explanatory headings, any suggestion will have to remain conjectural (as well as provisional), but considering the features set out above it seems plausible that we may be dealing with a large *corpus*, to which most if not all local freedmen belonged. In that case it might have been vaguely associated with the imperial house, to which the names of the *centuriae* refer more or less explicitly. If engaged in honouring the emperor in some form, that might also explain another curious feature of the document, which is the complete absence of imperial *liberti* from the list. At the Bay of Naples this social category would have been both numerous and prominent, as indeed suggested by the many Iulii and Claudii in the document²⁴. The fact that not a single imperial freedman (as opposed to their own freedmen) features in the list would be less surprising if it records a local *corpus* rather than the entire citizen population. Thus, the emperor's own freedmen were conspicuously absent from the numerous local organisations that sprang up across imperial Italy, mostly recruited from freedmen and involved in a variety of euergetic activities, including the honouring of the emperor²⁵. Precisely why they did not join these bodies remains unclear, but it would explain why we find no *liberti Augusti* in the *album* from Herculaneum.

One fragment may cast further light on the nature of the document. *CIL* 10.1403c contains a short list of freeborn individuals under the heading 'adlegerunt'. Grammatically the heading makes little sense since the names below, presumably those 'adlected', are in the nominative. The fragment has been seen as a reference to the admission of *incolae* into the local Herculanean citizen body, and the people listed are clearly outsiders to the town, as indicated by their *tribus* and general lack of family connections to other individuals in the document²⁶. It follows from this theory that the acting subject must be the local officials organising the census, who publicly confirmed that the individuals in question had become full members of the citizen body of Herculaneum. In that case, however, they would presumably have been registered in their respective civic units, the *centuriae*. The decision to list them separately – rather than as part of their new *centuria* – therefore implies that the inscription is commemorating a specific public act or event. It follows that the document does not simply reproduce the new citizen list but records the practical actions taken that year by the presiding magistrates. This distinction becomes important because, contrary to expectation, more names were later added to the list of *adlecti* in the same way they were subsequently appended to the *centuriae*. The conclusion we may draw from this is that the *adlecti* did not become members of the centuries – supposedly the local citizens – but somehow remained separate from these bodies, forming a distinct group to which more could be added. This

²⁴ The *album* features five Claudii and nineteen Iulii.

²⁵ In imperial Italy I have come across only one exception, T. Flavius Aug. I. Crescens, Augustalis from Aquileia, *CIL* 5.987, while another Augustalis was freed by the empress Domitia, *CIL* 9.3432. Local citizenship and residency cannot have been required for membership of these organisations, as indicated by numerous instances of individuals who were members in several towns. Moreover, the imperial freedmen are also virtually absent from the colleges of the *magistri vici* in Rome as illustrated by the long list, *CIL* 6.975, where we find only two members of the emperor's *familia*, col. 1 line 5 and col. 5 line 12.

²⁶ The majority of the *adlecti*, or 11 out of 19, carry *nomina* that are otherwise unattested in the *album*.

in turn casts further doubt on the ‘census’ theory, for although *adlectio* was the formal process by which *incolae* were admitted to local citizenship that did not produce a civic category of *adlecti*²⁷.

The apparent existence of a permanent group of *adlecti* suggests that we are dealing with a different kind of list and with a different type of body. While *adlectio/adlectus* does feature in inscriptions as a technical term describing the admission of *incolae*, epigraphically it is most common in the context of co-optation into more narrowly-defined groups or into distinct ranks within formal bodies, either *ordines* or *corpora*. Indeed it is overwhelmingly attested in relation to the *ordo decurionum*, although examples of adlected *Augustales* also occur²⁸. It would therefore seem to fit better into a *corpus* interpretation, since these groups had more flexible structures and, unlike the local citizen body, easily could accommodate external ‘adlected’ members’ who would remain distinct from the core membership. The *Augustales* at Misenum did, for example, include a specific category of those ‘qui in corpore non sunt’ alongside the *corporati*²⁹. Finally it should be stressed that the status of this fragment of the *album* remains unclear. As noted above, the lettering is distinctly smaller than in any of the other fragments, which raises the possibility that it did not form part of the original commission.

One issue remains to be considered and that relates to the nature of the *centuria ingenuorum*; for if we are indeed dealing with a *corpus* of local freedmen, the question is what the minority of freedborn is doing there. Why would they wish to be members of a body with that particular profile and character? A number of options are possible. The *centuria* of *ingenui* might have been particularly distinguished citizens, a means of honouring local notables as well as the patrons of the freed members. However, a quick glance at the names of the *ingenui* casts doubt on that theory, for not only is there little overlap with known members of the *ordo*, but we also find a suspicious number of Greek and ‘servile’ Latin *cognomina*. We will therefore have to look elsewhere for a category of people who mixed easily with former slaves without suffering social stigma or experiencing personal embarrassment - and pursuing that line of enquiry logically takes us to their own freeborn children³⁰. Is it possible that the *ingenui* might be the sons of the freed members, who had been given their own special *centuria* alongside those of their fathers? This solution, which mirrors that already suggested for the freeborn members of the *corpus Augustalium* in Misenum, would explain not just the presence of *ingenui* on the list but also their smaller numbers, assuming of course that the extant fragments provide a reasonably accurate reflection of the original composition³¹. An

²⁷ For the *adlectio* of *incolae* into the local citizen body, see Thomas 1996, 84-7.

²⁸ E.g. *CIL* 10.1804 and 1890 from Puteoli, and D’Arms 2000, Inscr. C lines 20-21 from Misenum, which records the adlection of a woman into the *corpus*.

²⁹ D’Arms 2000, Inscr. A lines 8-9; Laird 2015 183-214.

³⁰ Following observations made by Wallace-Hadrill 2004, de Ligt - Garnsey suggested that the *centuria Claudia ingenuorum* might have been reserved for the sons of freedmen, 2012, 71 n.15.

³¹ The *Augustales* at Misenum included a separate category of *ingenui corporati*, which have been plausibly interpreted as the sons of *Augustales*, as suggested e.g. by the fact that they received only half the rate of *sportulae* as the *Augustales*, cf. D’Arms 2000, Inscr. A lines 9-10 with commentary p. 132. It is

analysis of their names offers further support for this interpretation, since 76 per cent of their *nomina* also appear among the names of the freedmen on the *album*, while no fewer than 60 per cent of the *ingenui* share both *praenomen* and *nomen* with recorded freedmen on the list³². This theory would also explain why the freeborn *adlecti* were not enrolled in the *centuria(e?)* of the *ingenui*, since that would have placed them in a category to they did not belong; for although they were *ingenui* they were not the offspring of local freedmen from Herculaneum, for whom the *centuria(e) ingenuorum* may have been reserved. We cannot tell whether there was more than one *centuria* of *ingenui*; the three surviving *cognomina* in the column preceding the ‘centuria Claudia ingenuorum’ might suggest so, since they are all Latin and ‘respectable’. But if the *ingenui* were listed before the *liberti*, as normal hierarchies would dictate, this panel would have opened the list, in which case the first *centuria* may have contained considerably fewer members than the others³³.

3. Where does this interpretation leave the reconstruction of the document? If we accept that several of the fragments represent later additions, we may concentrate on what might be called the ‘core’ document, the original list which recorded the members of our putative *corpus* at a specific moment in time. The fragments in question are epigraphically homogeneous and display a similar structure with subdivisions into *centuriae*. The most economical reconstruction of these fragments suggests a document comprising two double panels, of which the first panel listed *ingenui* and the rest *liberti*. The precise relationship between this document and the remaining fragments cannot be determined, but, as noted, they differ in important respects from the main body as well as from each other, suggesting they were later supplements commissioned over an extended period. They were generally made to match the existing panels in overall appearance, although one fragment belongs to a much smaller inscription, perhaps containing no more than two columns. The supplementary panels list freedmen, freeborn, *adlecti* and persons of unknown status. In this context two fragments, *CIL* 10.1403*d* and *AE* 1978, 119*b* / *CIL* 10.1403*l*, have attracted particular attention since they entirely or in part leave out status indicators, in turn triggering a lively debate about the identity of the persons in question. Attempts to clarify the status of these so-called *incerti* include suggestions

worth noting too that just as in the *album* it is the *ingenui* who are singled out while the ordinary members simply carry the standard title without indication of personal status. This pattern can also be observed in Puteoli which likewise included a separate group of *ingenui corporati*, *CIL* 10.1881.

³² In *AE* 1978, 119*a* fifteen of the *ingenui* shared both *praenomen* and *nomen* with freedmen in the *album*, four shared the *nomen*, leaving just six for whom no connection can be demonstrated. In *CIL* 10.1403*d*, which also listed *ingenui*, the corresponding figures are: 43 (62%), 8 (16%), and 18 (26%).

³³ The issue would of course be complicated if, as suggested above, the *ingenui* were the sons of the freed members, which would have created a clash between legal and familial hierarchies. A similar ambiguity can be observed among the Augustales at Misenum, where the *ingenui* received lesser *sportulae* than the freedmen despite their higher status, presumably because they were their own sons.

they may have been Latini Iuniani, enfranchised Latini Iuniani, illegitimate *ingenui*, young *ingenui* held on a waiting list, or most recently *liberti orcini*³⁴.

The search for possible categories that might explain the lack of status indicators has been complicated by the fact that the *incerti* include both freedmen and freeborn. As I have argued elsewhere, the *cognomina* demonstrate beyond doubt that those listed in *CIL* 10.1403*d* must be freeborn, while those in *AE* 1978, 119b / *CIL* 10.1403*l* clearly were freed, as also indicated by the presence of the well-documented freedman L. Venidius Ennychus in this fragment³⁵. This basic difference suggests that rather than looking for distinct social categories to explain the missing elements of their nomenclature, we might attempt a different approach to the so-called *incerti*, one that treats them as an analytical category rather than as a social/legal type.

Historians have usually not treated *incerti* as a specific social group, for the simple reason that most epigraphically attested Romans belong to that category. The general decline in the use of filiation and pseudo-filiation under the Empire is well-documented, and as a result *incerti* gradually came to constitute the large majority of those appearing in inscriptions. Since *incerti* strictly speaking are people about whom we have too little information to determine their status, they present what is essentially a heuristic problem. However, the *incerti* in the *album* from Herculaneum have - quite exceptionally - been turned into a historical problem because they feature in what appears to be a semi-official document that otherwise included status markers. It is this particular context that has suggested that the omission of status indicators might be indicative that the people in question did not have any.

Leaving out status markers for some individuals while including them for others would indeed seem illogical and presumably have been unacceptable in a public document of a formal administrative nature. However, as observed above, the fragments in which they appear are also in other respects distinct from the 'main' document in terms of content as well as layout. Thus, if 1) the texts do not represent official census registers, and 2) we are dealing with several inscriptions put up over an extended period, then the omission of status markers may no longer require a historical explanation; it simply becomes absence of evidence rather than evidence of absence. We can of course only speculate about the reasons why were they left out in these, also in other respects, unusual panels, but we have to remind ourselves that the basic function of filiation and pseudo-filiation was not to signal legal status but to state one's personal identity. The paternal lineage was an essential part of the identity of any Roman, and in the case of the freedman the absence of a legal father meant that the patron's name took his place in their nomenclature (which also reflected - and reinforced - the paternal construction of

³⁴ de Ligt - Garnsey 2012; Wallace-Hadrill 2015; Camodeca (in this volume). The suggestion of the latter that the freedmen without pseudo-filiation might have been *liberti orcini* is hardly plausible, not least because in formal terms it made absolutely no difference for the status of a freedman whether his patron was alive or not.

³⁵ Mouritsen 2007. Venidius Ennychus features in *CIL* 10.1403*l*.

the patron's role)³⁶. In this way the patronymic element of the name incidentally allowed the Romans to distinguish freeborn from the (fatherless) freed, although that had never been its original purpose or rationale.

Over time the usefulness of including the father's *praenomen* diminished, as it became common to pass it on from father to son. This hereditary trend may have been particularly pronounced among freedmen and their sons, since, as Wallace-Hadrill observed, all the *ingenui* in the document carry the same *praenomen* as their father³⁷. Considering the extent of this practice it is hardly surprising that those who composed panel *CIL* 10.1403*d* chose to leave out filiation, along with the – by then largely redundant – *tribus* affiliation; the name of someone's father could be directly inferred from the person's own. The status of the people listed on the panel was presumably included in the heading that would have been located in the lost upper section of the panel. However, as the vacant spaces were subsequently filled in with more names, they realised that an exception had to be made since one of the newly admitted members was illegitimate. In this case 'Sp(urii) f(ilius)' was therefore added in order to indicate his proper identity.

The two joined fragments *AE* 1978, 119*b* / *CIL* 10.1403*l* are more complex and have been the subject of considerable discussion. The presence of L. Venidius Ennychus in 10.1403*l* has focused the debate on the position of Latini Iuniani, since he is known to have been 'upgraded' from Latin status to full Roman citizenship in March 62³⁸. A further complication stems from the inconsistencies in the rendering of the names, the first two columns omitting pseudo-filiation while the third includes it. This has led to the assumption that those in the final column may have differed in status from the others listed in the panel. It has, for example, been ingeniously suggested that the latter may be Iunian freedmen and the former their freedmen, explaining why those with pseudo-filiation are listed after those without³⁹.

The notion that Iunian Latins did not use pseudo-filiation seems to have become well established and deserves closer examination. At the root of the theory lies the assumption that Latini Iuniani could not use pseudo-filiation because they legally were not *liberti*, a term supposedly reserved for *cives Romani*⁴⁰. This particular theory can be traced back to a three-page article from 1923, in which Buckland discussed the terminology employed by Imperial jurists to describe the different statuses of Roman freedmen⁴¹. He noted that they tend to refer to formally manumitted slaves as *liberti cives* and those with the lesser Latin status as *Latini Iuniani* or simply *Latini*⁴². On that

³⁶ Cf. Mouritsen 2011a.

³⁷ Wallace-Hadrill 2004.

³⁸ Camodeca 2006.

³⁹ de Ligt - Garnsey 2012, 80-83. *Contra* Wallace-Hadrill 2015 135-6, who argues that Latini Iuniani could not possibly manumit slaves who would become 'proper' freedmen.

⁴⁰ de Ligt - Garnsey 2012, 82, followed by Wallace-Hadrill 2015, 136-7, all referring to Buckland 1923. It should be noted that de Ligt - Garnsey have recently modified their position on this question (de Ligt - Garnsey 2016, 77 n. 19). For this debate see also Mouritsen 2007 with further literature.

⁴¹ Buckland 1923.

⁴² There are exceptions, however, such as Gaius *Inst.* 3.56, a difficulty which Buckland tried to overcome

basis he concluded that the latter were not classified as *liberti*. This inference seems doubtful, however, not least because the jurists explicitly include *Latini Iuniani* among the *liberti* in their definitions of basic legal categories⁴³. It would also be surprising if *libertus* somehow had been considered a ‘protected title’, since, as the jurists confirm, it simply means someone who has been freed from *iusta servitus*, which the Iunian Latins undoubtedly had⁴⁴. The jurists probably used *Latini Iuniani*/*Latini* as convenient shorthand for the more cumbersome *liberti Latini Iuniani*, because the meaning was obvious and the risk of misunderstandings negligible. Moreover, in Roman legal statutes there appears to have been no equation of *liberti* with *cives Romani*, as demonstrated, for example, by the municipal *leges* which describe the freedmen of provincials holding Latin status as *liberti*⁴⁵.

It is not evident either that the usage found in juristic discourse necessarily would have had any direct impact on everyday epigraphic practices. Not only was *libertus* the Latin standard term for a freed slave, but the notion that freedmen without citizenship were legally barred from referring to their patron (to whom they were tied even more closely than were other freedmen) seems inherently implausible. Since pseudo-filiation indicated a relationship, not a legal status (and therefore is a more accurate term than ‘libertinisation’), it is doubtful whether there existed a type of freedman who would not have been able to follow common practice and include the patron in their nomenclature⁴⁶. It follows that we will have to look elsewhere for an explanation of the missing pseudo-filiation in *AE* 1978, 119b / *CIL* 10.14031, and one way to overcome the impasse might be to apply a straightforward epigraphic approach, focusing on the basic function of the list which was to convey the identity of the people included.

A freedman automatically received the *praenomen* of his patron, whose identity therefore could be deduced from the freedman’s own name. There were exceptions, however, since they might have multiple patrons or a female patron. Of the former there are no examples in our document, but there are a number of the latter, although they remain relatively few. Nevertheless, it meant that pseudo-filiation could not be implied as it appears to have been the case with filiation. In fragment *CIL* 10.14031 only the

by emending the text. He also suggested that the term *libertinus* might have had a broader application than *libertus*, but there is no compelling evidence for that; imperial sources appear to have treated them as interchangeable, cf. Mouritsen 2011a, 264–5.

⁴³ Gaius *Inst.* 1.12: *Rursus libertinorum tria sunt genera: nam aut cives Romani aut Latini aut dedictiorum numero sunt*, cf. Ulp. *Epit.* 1.5: *Libertorum genera sunt tria: cives Romani, Latini Iuniani, dedictiorum numero*. Likewise *Frg. Dos.* 4.

⁴⁴ In Gaius’ classic definition, *Inst.* 1.11: *libertini, qui ex iusta servitute manumissi sunt*. He further stresses the *libertas* of *Latini Iuniani* in 1.22, and in 3.56 he notes that with the *lex Iunia* ‘*liberos esse coepisse*’ and ‘*per legem Iuniam liberi facti sunt*’, cf. *Frg. Dos.* 6: *lex Iunia, quae libertatem eis dedit*.

⁴⁵ *Lex Irn.* 23 and 97. Also the public freedmen of the Latin town of Irni are labelled *liberti*, 72.

⁴⁶ Wallace-Hadrill 2015 and others have suggested that even former Iunian Latins who had received the full franchise might not have been allowed to use pseudo-filiation. However, this idea has little support and would be difficult to explain, legally as well as epigraphically. Emmerson’s discussion of individuals without pseudo-filiation in Pompeii is therefore also without foundation, 2011. Omitting filiation and pseudo-filiation became increasingly common under the Empire and attempting to identify those without as a separate legal category is both futile and ill-conceived.

third column includes pseudo-filiation, and it is perhaps not by chance that this is also where we encounter several female patrons. Is it possible that there were no *patronae* in the previous two columns, making pseudo-filiation redundant there? Each column, we should not forget, was always conceived separately; even in the ‘core’ document there is no alignment of the columns across the panels. And in this particular panel the execution seems distinctly improvised with little sign of prior planning, leading to columns of varying width and marked differences in style. The general lack of consistency should be taken into account when evaluating the differences in naming practice, since it opens up the possibility that those responsible for this panel (or perhaps even the stonemason himself) left out pseudo-filiation in the first two columns because there was no need for it in this part of the inscription. Later, however, when reaching the third column, they noticed that several of the freedmen had female patrons, which meant they had to be included in this section.

4. To summarise the two main points argued in the previous pages:

Firstly, the ‘census list’ interpretation seems untenable for a number of reasons. The way the names are organised does not match that of any municipal structure known from the Roman Empire. The use of *centuriae*, the separation of *liberti* and *ingenui*, and the fact that the former appear to represent the norm rather suggest that we are dealing with a *corpus* of local freedmen, to which their sons and a few outsiders were admitted. The main argument for the ‘census list’ model derives from the size of the document which has been taken as indicative that virtually all adult male citizens/residents must have been represented. That brings me to my second point, the structure of the document itself.

Secondly, the unity of the inscription has been called into question on the basis of a detailed analysis of the appearance and layout of the fragments which seem to vary far more than it has hitherto been realised. These variations are hardly compatible with the notion of a single document but might be explained as the result of a gradual process by which supplementary panels were added to an original ‘core’ document. The dynamic nature of the document is itself not in dispute, as demonstrated by the addition of more names to existing panels; the question is merely whether some of those fragments previously considered ‘original’ are later supplements updating the list. If we accept this re-interpretation, the vexed issue of the *incerti* also disappears, since they are no longer part of the epigraphic context that made them appear as a distinct social category; instead they emerge as a by-product of epigraphic practices changing over time.

The document remains unusual, although perhaps not quite as exceptional as the theory of a census-based list would have entailed. In terms of organisational structure there are close parallels to our body in the recorded *corpora* of Augustales in the neighbouring towns of Misenum and Puteoli, with which it shares a number of features. Here too we find memberships which were counted in their hundreds, a division into *centuriae*, the presence of a distinct group of ‘non-corporati’, and the existence of *ingenui corporati* who seem to mirror directly the *centuriae ingenuorum* and most likely

comprised the children of the *corporati*. The single most important difference lies in the extraordinary scale of the Herculean *corpus* in relation to the community, which means that it, unlike the more exclusive bodies of the Augustales, must have been open to virtually all local freedmen.

Corpora did occasionally commission long commemorative lists of their membership. The best known examples are the large *collegia* inscriptions from Ostia, but fragments of other lists have come to light across Italy⁴⁷. From an epigraphical point of view the attempts to keep the membership list up-to-date through continuous additions may represent the most remarkable feature of the *album*, although there are parallels such as the list of Augustales from Liternum which was also updated and steadily expanded in size⁴⁸. The precise nature of the later supplements to the *album* cannot be determined. Some may update the original list with new generations of freedmen and their sons who had come of age. Others again may commemorate particular actions taken by the *corpus*, such as the adlection of freeborn outsiders, who naturally did not form part of the membership. The amount of subsequent supplements suggests that the original list probably predated the earthquake, since the additions must have been the result of an extended period of revision and updating. Thus, focusing on the freedmen alone we reach an estimate of around 350-450 later additions, depending on how the fragments are reconstructed⁴⁹.

There are a number of important implications for our picture of the demography of Herculaneum. Since it was most likely not a comprehensive list of local citizens or residents, the relative number of freeborn and freed in the document gains a different demographic significance, indicating the share of freedmen who had freeborn sons rather than the overall ratio of *ingenui* to *liberti*. This also obviates the need to posit a number of lost panels listing *ingenui* in order to create a more realistic demographic profile. What remains crucially important is the number of local freedmen represented in the original document, since that is the key to understanding the scale of manumission in Herculaneum. According to my estimate, this list was considerably shorter than previously assumed. As noted above, the following fragments may be identified as part of this document: *CIL* 10.1403*a, e, f, g, h*, *AE* 1978, 119*a*, and *AE* 1978*c* + *CIL* 10.1403*b, i, k*, the simplest and most economical reconstruction involving two double panels. Three of the single panels would be comprised of freedmen, *CIL* 10.1403*a* and *g* forming two right-hand panels and *AE* 1978*c* + *CIL* 10.1403*b, i, k* a left-hand panel. On the final left-hand panel, which may also have contained the heading, we find the *ingenui*

⁴⁷ E.g. *CIL* 10.6713; *AE* 1976, 113; *AE* 1985, 401 (*St. Romag.* 19, 1968, 291-307); *Epigraphica* 20, 1958, 24 no. 16; *AE* 1995, 423.

⁴⁸ Camodeca 2001.

⁴⁹ Additions to original panels: *CIL* 10.1403*a* – 4 added names preserved (c. 16 more names are likely); *CIL* 10.1403*g* – 18 names document (c. 4 more likely). In *AE* 1978, 119*c* + *CIL* 10.1403*b, i, k* an unknown number of additions is likely e.g. at the top of column two. Additional panels: *CIL* 10.1403*d* and *AE* 1978, 119*b* / *CIL* 10.1403*l* could in principle have held 3 x 65 names each, making a total of 390. The structure of *AE* 1978, 119*d* is largely hypothetical, but 130 names is perhaps most likely. Whether all the names on *CIL* 10.1403*c* were *ingenui* is an open question and if some columns listed *liberti* they should added to our total.

of *AE* 1978, 119a. A full column could, as indicated by *CIL* 10.1403g, hold 65 names, but the panels were originally quite generously laid out with considerable amounts of vacant space, at the top above the *centuriae* headings and at the bottom of columns, presumably where a *centuria* came to an end. Taking these features into account allows us to estimate the original number of names in our two double panels. On average the columns appear to have held around 57 names, which gives us a total of 513 freedmen, in addition to the *ingenui*, listed on the first half-panel, who may plausibly have reached a figure of around 150.

We cannot tell whether all freedmen resident in Herculaneum were members of this *corpus*, which given its size must have been played a largely formal and ceremonial role, rather than acted as a genuine forum for social interaction and networking. In terms of membership there is no obvious reason why *Latini Iuniani* would have been excluded, although very young freedmen may have been, since most formal bodies in the Roman world seem to have been restricted to adults. Some freedmen might of course not have wished to become members; as noted, there is a conspicuous absence of imperial freedmen. Still, the calculations give us a minimum figure which may not be far from the total number of freedmen in Herculaneum around the middle of the first century.

5. It follows from this reinterpretation of the fragments that the number of freedmen must be reduced considerably compared to previous estimates. That does not overcome the fundamental obstacle facing any attempt to quantify the social and demographic implications of the *album*, which is the sheer number of variables involved. Thus, in order to explain how a community like Herculaneum could have over five hundred adult male freedmen, one would need to know the size of the local population as well as the distribution between urban and rural inhabitants; the size of the slave population and their urban/rural distribution; the gender balance among slaves and their relative rates of manumission, and finally the ages at which slaves – male and female – were manumitted.

In their ground-breaking analysis of the *album* de Ligt and Garnsey explored various demographic scenarios that would have enabled such numbers of freedmen. Their calculations were developed around two basic figures, the 850 freedmen they derived from the *album* and an estimated population of the town of Herculaneum of around 5,000⁵⁰. Using these baselines they investigated the implications of different rates of manumission and gender balances. In their preferred model the rate of manumission became extremely high, since ‘80 per cent of males who reach the age of thirty obtained their freedom’, a figure that falls to 67 per cent if slaves aged 25-29 are included⁵¹. Their model also implied that the proportion of freed slaves far exceeded that of freeborn,

⁵⁰ In their most recent discussion they assume that a fifth of the freedmen may have resided in the territory, which they argue will reduce the urban population to 4,000, cf. de Ligt - Garnsey 2016, 82.

⁵¹ de Ligt - Garnsey 2012, 88. The corresponding rates for female slaves, supposedly freed later than men, are estimated as 52 and 44 per cent. In the following pages the gender ratio as well as the possible differences in manumission rates for male and female slaves will be left out of the equation, not because they are insignificant but because our current evidence does not allow us to quantify these factors.

since the latter counted only 375 adult males compared to 850 freedmen. Overall, they assume that slaves made up 44 per cent of the urban population and far outnumbered *ingenui* (2194 to 1236).

The picture of the demographic structure of Herculaneum emerging from these calculations raises a number of questions and at least some of the implications would seem to stretch the limits of credibility. The reduction of the number of freedmen from 850 to around 500, as entailed by the reinterpretation of the fragments presented above, might help to resolve some of the difficulties encountered by de Ligt and Garnsey. Adjusting the number of freedmen downwards opens up a range of options. It allows us to reduce the overall slave population and thereby rebalance the ratio of slaves to free in the local community. But cutting the number of freedmen does not automatically lower the exceptionally high manumission rate implied by their model. It might therefore seem preferable to assume a slave population of the same order of magnitude, or perhaps even higher, but a significantly lower rate of manumission, perhaps well below 50 per cent, which would seem more in tune with our general understanding of Roman manumission⁵². Thus, the suggested manumission rate of 80 per cent for slaves living to 30 would make manumission virtually universal and effectively transform urban slavery into a relatively brief phase in the lives of most of those subjected to it. However, our evidence otherwise suggests that, although very common, manumission remained selective and continued to represent a real source of pride for those who managed to escape servitude.

The age at which manumission happened may also have been even lower than posited in the demographic model explored by de Ligt and Garnsey. The sheer number of freedmen in Herculaneum, as indicated by the *album*, in itself suggests that slaves must have been freed at a relatively early age, since a short lifespan after manumission would have rendered such a proportion of freedmen practically impossible. In addition, there is substantial epigraphic evidence from across the Roman world of slaves freed who were freed while still in their teens and early twenties; an average age at manumission around 25 might therefore not be unrealistic. The Augustan age limit for the acquisition of citizenship to those freed after the age of 30 would also indicate that many received their freedom well before reaching this symbolic 'age of maturity' for former slaves⁵³.

Combining these estimates of the manumission rate and the age of manumission with our figure of c. 500 freedmen enables us to explore some demographic scenarios. Thus, if we furthermore assume that freedmen had a life expectancy of 31 years after manumission (corresponding to Coale and Demeny's Model West 7), the town of Herculaneum would have required a slave population of no fewer than 2,000 male slaves in order to support the 500 freedmen documented in the *album*⁵⁴. Such a figure makes little sense given the size of Herculaneum's urban population, usually estimated to lie

⁵² The working assumption is that no male slave was freed below the age of 25, but there is substantial epigraphic evidence for relatively early manumission.

⁵³ Mouritsen 2011a, 186–202. The implication is, of course, that a very large proportion of freedmen received only Latin status upon manumission.

⁵⁴ The calculations imply that 16 male slaves were freed annually, which in turn suggests that the later

around 4,000-5,000⁵⁵. For the town to be able to sustain a freed population of that size we would therefore have to assume an even higher manumission rate, a solution which, as noted earlier, raises problems of its own. Alternatively, the life expectancy of freedmen might have to be extended upwards, but that would take it to a level unparalleled in pre-modern societies. On the other hand, if we lower the urban male slave population to a more realistic 50 per cent (or 1250, assuming a population of 5,000 as well as broad gender parity), while maintaining the other parameters used above, we reach a total of 328 freedmen, which falls well short of the number recorded in the *album*. It therefore follows logically from these calculations that the slave population in the town could not have been maintained entirely through natural reproduction but had to be supplemented from external sources.

Wallace-Hadrill recently suggested that some of the freedmen on the list might have been based in the *territorium* rather than the city⁵⁶. But while it makes good sense to look more broadly at the community of Herculaneum, countryside as well as town, it also seems beyond doubt that the large majority of freedmen would have resided in the town, manumission being an overwhelmingly urban phenomenon. However, what might deserve closer consideration is the possibility that some of our freedmen may have been born and raised in the *familia rustica* and only later transferred to the city in order to receive their education. The *familia urbana* and the *familia rustica* were never sharply separated; presumably there was fairly close contact and exchange between them, also in terms of labour, itself facilitated by the small scale of the community. It is not inconceivable that *vernae* may have been brought up in the countryside, perhaps more conducive to child rearing than the urban *domus*, and later trained, employed – and ultimately freed – in the town⁵⁷. That would have reduced the share of imported adult slaves required to reach the number of freedmen documented in the *album*. If we, again for the sake of argument, posit a rural male slave population twice size of the urban holdings, i.e. 2500, then even a manumission rate among them of just five per cent would create another 66 freedmen, who would have to be added to the 328.

This particular source is unlikely, however, to have covered the entire gap in the slave supply indicated by the *album*. A higher rate of manumission would have to be envisaged, which merely shifts the problem to the countryside by creating a deficit in the rural slaveholdings. Moreover, not all slave owners had rural sources of labour to draw upon. Externally sourced slaves were therefore a necessity, to keep up the vast slave population and to sustain the extreme level of manumission which must have created a net loss of unfree labour. Not only does epigraphic evidence indicate that many

additions would have been made over a period of around 25 years. The original document would in other words have been put up sometime during the 50s.

⁵⁵ This figure is likely to err on the generous side as do the other estimates used here. The implication is that the conclusions, however striking they may appear, can realistically only be revised upwards.

⁵⁶ Wallace-Hadrill 2015, 126-9. As noted above, de Ligt - Garnsey have recently also placed a fifth of the freedmen in the *album* in the territory (de Ligt - Garnsey 2016, 82).

⁵⁷ The existence of slave families and child rearing on country estates has been explored in detail by Roth 2007.

freedwomen were freed while still of child bearing age, but freedmen often appear to have formed unions after their manumission which produced freeborn offspring. The *album* contains at least one *centuria* of *ingenui*, who are likely to be the sons of the freedmen of the *corpus*, and on that hypothesis we might conclude that just under a third of freedmen fathered freeborn sons who managed to reach – at least near – adulthood. In that case the freeborn offspring of *liberti* would have contributed to a steady growth of the free population of Herculaneum, which can be estimated at 0.2 per cent per annum, again – generously - assuming a population of 5,000. Or put differently, the population would over a 100 year period grow by around 1000 from this source alone. This increase was in effect drawn from the – lost - supply of *vernae* which had to be compensated by externally sourced slaves⁵⁸. Most likely therefore, manumission was one of the main drivers of population increase in first-century Herculaneum, sustained by a continuous movement of people, from the countryside and from other parts of Italy, from the provinces and from beyond the borders of the empire.

The rate of urban manumission remains extremely high even after the reinterpretation of the fragments; indeed, it is quite unparalleled in the history of slavery. This raises the question how such a system could be maintained, in terms of labour supply as well as with regard to slave reproduction. High levels of manumission could be accommodated by what might be described as the ‘life stage’ model, according to which most (urban) slaves would be born into servitude but end their lives as free persons while leaving behind slave children who in turn would undergo the same process of personal transformation. A key element of this model is continuity of service, which means that manumission altered their legal status but left their position as dependent labour largely unaffected. Thus, as I have argued at length elsewhere, the exceptional Roman manumission rates must imply a general expectation of unbroken patronal bonds and continued access to the skills and labour of the freedman⁵⁹.

It follows that high rates of manumission in principle might be viable if slaves were freed late and *vernae* left behind to ensure future supplies. But as already noted, manumission could never be entirely self-sustaining. Many slaves, including females, were freed too early to fit the model, forming unions outside the *familia* and thus causing a net deficit of *vernae* to take their place in the household⁶⁰. The scale of this problem is reflected in the *album* which includes a whole section reserved for what most likely were the freeborn sons of freedmen. However, it is the overall demographic structure implied by the *album* that demonstrate the need for external supplies most unequivocally, since the ratio of freedmen to the overall population would entail an impossibly large number of slaves. The logical implication is that the system must have relied on a substantial influx of adult (or adolescent) slaves into the local economy.

⁵⁸ This conclusion was anticipated by de Ligt - Garnsey 2012, who also emphasised the need for substantial import of adult slaves. This model has recently been developed further in their important paper on migration and mobility (de Ligt - Garnsey 2016).

⁵⁹ Mouritsen 2011a, 120-205.

⁶⁰ Mouritsen 2011a; Mouritsen 2012.

Where these slaves came from raises important questions. The Roman slave supply has been much debated, the main positions formulated by Harris, Lo Cascio and Scheidel, who argued for what we might call the import and reproduction models⁶¹. Both models defy precise quantification, although Scheidel convincingly demonstrated the problems involved in a pure import model as well as the extensive evidence for slave reproduction in the Roman world. Leaving aside the scale and composition of these sources, it is worth noting that the underlying premise of the debate has been the notion of slave labour as a scarce commodity, the supplies of which required long-term strategies of household management. However, the slave system that emerges from the Herculanean *album* rather suggests this was not the case; the sheer number of freedmen implies that local slave owners freed on a vast scale, showing scant regard for the shortfalls it inevitably would have entailed. Thus, while the practice of manumission, on the one hand, was firmly embedded in long-established cultural, social and economic patterns, it was, on the other hand, also maintained on a daily basis by individual slave owners faced with a concrete choice whether to free a given slave or not. In that particular situation they may have given little consideration to the wider societal implications of their actions, but collectively their choices nevertheless provide a valuable insight into the subjective experience of slave owners and their perception of the risks and uncertainties involved in household maintenance. As such it adds another dimension to the globalising, structural approach that has tended to dominate the debate. And judging from the manumission practices of Roman *domini* future supplies were not considered an issue of particular concern, neither in terms of procuring sufficient slaves nor financially in terms of cost-benefit decisions regarding individual slaves/freedmen. If the long-term prospects of their domestic slave holdings had been an ongoing source of concern in the Roman world, manumission rates could hardly have been maintained at such exceptional levels.

We are left with the conclusion that from the perspective of individual slave owners supplies materialised when and wherever a need arose. In this context it is important to stress the diverse and fluid nature of Roman slavery. There was an ongoing buying, selling and transfer of slaves, as some households were broken up or reduced and others formed or expanded. Even without frequent manumission vacancies would have appeared, often unpredictably, rendering long-term household management almost impossible. Confronted with these structural challenges a market developed to meet the demand for steady supplies of slave labour, probably drawn from a wide range of sources, internal and external to the empire; apparently it was so effective that most Romans envisaged little difficulty in maintaining their *familiae* and therefore continued to free slaves on an extraordinary scale.

The *album* from Herculaneum, presenting the clearest evidence we have for the scale of Roman manumission, offers a rare glimpse of the underlying demographic

⁶¹ Harris 1980, 1999; Scheidel 1997, 2011; Lo Cascio 2002. For a summary of the debate see Mouritsen 2011b, 130-2.

realities behind urban slavery. Irrespective of which particular variables are preferred in our calculations, the document leaves little doubt as to the extent and pervasiveness of the use of unfree labour as well as the unparalleled frequency of manumission in the Roman world. At least half of all male slaves in the city are likely to have received their freedom; their numbers, as indicated by the *album*, in turn suggest that slaves and free must have been fairly evenly balanced as were the freed and freeborn in the town. At the same time the slave population was continuously being replenished from external sources. The paradoxical implication is a remarkably dynamic system of slavery, which nevertheless was experienced by those operating within it as both stable and durable.

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