judgements on hands, as the focus of attention is different.) The prospects are not good. As T. himself states:

> complete study of any given cutter requires literally years of work . . . these factors, namely the need to devote oneself full-time to the study . . . militate against anyone undertaking it, even the most tenacious. In the present academic climate, it is certainly not a line of enquiry that one can recommend to young scholars.

One might apply the same remarks to epigraphy in general. Neither in Britain nor in the USA are there satisfactory arrangements for the accommodation of this fundamentally important but highly laborious and skill-rich research field within the university system, and it is increasingly falling to scholars working outside it to carry the flame.

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doi:10.1093/clrevj/bni177

EPITAPHS

G. J. Oliver (ed.): *The Epigraphy of Death. Studies in the History and Society of Greece and Rome.* Pp. xiv + 225, ills. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2000. Paper, £16.95. ISBN: 0-85323-915-0.

This volume, the result of a conference on Greek and Roman funerary inscriptions organized by G. J. Oliver and E. G. Clark at the University of Liverpool in 1995, brings together seven essays on various uses of the inscriptional evidence of gravestones to illuminate the social history of the classical world. A thoughtful introductory chapter by O. sets the several contributions into the broader context of the epigraphic and funerary cultures of Athens and Rome, and emphasizes the importance of regarding epitaphs as integral elements within a network of ritual, social, and especially archaeological contexts. There follow five case studies, arranged chronologically, which to a greater or lesser extent illustrate the central proposition, proceeding from developments in classical Athenian funerary sculpture (K. Stears) and tomb monuments (G. Oliver), to Milesian immigration into late Hellenistic and Roman Athens (T. Vestergaard, with a note on the silting up of Miletus' harbors by A. Greaves), to the commemoration of infants in Rome (M. King) and the sculpted tombstones of Roman auxiliary soldiers at Mainz (V. Hope). A final chapter considers the importance of inscriptions (authentic and fake) to collectors of ash urns during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (G. Davies). Some thirty-five figures and black and white photographs, an *index locorum*, and a general index complete the volume.

With the exception of the final chapter by Davies, 'The Inscriptions on the Ash Chests of the Ince Blundell Hall Collection: Ancient and Modern' (a primer on distinguishing the spurious from the authentic and a cautionary tale: fewer than half of some fifty in the collection are certainly genuine), all of the essays are broadly concerned with ways in which different groups in Athenian and Roman society represented themselves or can be identified through the medium of the inscribed funerary monument. Statistical arguments—inevitable with discussions involving analysis of epitaphs in quantity—are there to be found, particularly in the chapters by Vestergaard and King, but the authors are generally less concerned with demographic

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https://doi.org/10.1093/clrevj/bni178 Published online by Cambridge University Press

or biometric questions than with social and cultural issues less easily quantified: how monument types were chosen, how marginal or élite groups distinguished themselves, how parents grieved. That the Greek contributions are primarily diachronic in approach whereas the writers on Roman topics aim for a more synchronic picture of *mentalités* is incidental, but characteristic of certain trends in resent research on Greek and Roman epitaphs.

In the first case study, 'The Times they Are A'Changing: Developments in fifth-Century Funerary Sculpture', K. Stears's reassessment of the chronology of Athenian sculpted grave monuments on the basis of the evidence provided in new corpora of monuments (Clairmont's, *Classical Attic Tombstones*) and texts (*IG* I^3) leads to an avowedly unfashionable functionalist interpretation of laws as determinants of funerary behavior: the restrictive legislation elusively mentioned by Cicero at *Leg.* 2.64–5 (here assigned to *c.* 480/79 and seen as an act of Cimonian 'cryptophilolakonism' disguised as egalitarianism) explains the disappearance of late archaic sculpted tomb monuments around 480, whereas the reemergence of inscribed *stelai* for both men and women in the 440s is in turn attributable to civic pride following the Periclean citizenship law of 451/50. S. skillfully projects the funerary record against the political background of the period, but one may yet suspect the neatness of an interpretation that ties the rise and fall of funerary fashion so directly to specific political acts. The variable breezes of Zeitgeist characteristic of windy political times perhaps provide a more plausible explanation.

G. J. Oliver, 'Athenian Funerary Monuments: Style, Grandeur, and Cost', casts doubt on efforts to estimate the wealth of fourth-century Athenians directly from the size or sculptural elaboration of their tomb monuments by reviewing the various considerations that inspired the selection of types, which ranged from personal taste to fashion to social position, and by facing squarely our ignorance not only of the relation of recorded tombstone costs to total burial costs but also, too often, of the original placement of individual *stelai* in relation to other monuments. Wealth, in fourth century Athens, expressed itself in other ways in funerary commemoration than through the grandeur of the individual monument.

In 'Milesian Immigrants in Late Hellenistic and Roman Athens', T. Vestergaard exploits the database of Attic funerary inscriptions compiled by Mogens Hansen's team at Copenhagen to remark and explain the preponderance of Milesians among the foreigners commemorated on Athenian tombstones during the three centuries from 100 B.C.E. to 200 C.E. The concept of an epigraphic habit is recognized and good use is made of the ephebic lists to corroborate the picture of prominence presented by the epitaphs, but the discussion vacillates uneasily between acknowledgement of the difference between commemorative behavior and demographic reality and a failure to account for it consistently in practice.

A similar discontinuity marks the essay by M. King, 'Commemoration of Infants on Roman Funerary Inscriptions', who rehearses at length the reasons why we cannot regard epitaphic expression as an unfiltered reflection of genuine sentiment (in this case grief) and then goes on to demonstrate, mainly by comparison of the epithets in Roman epitaphs for children under four years of age with the behavior of contemporary Britons mourning their young, that Roman parents did indeed grieve for the loss of infants—a conclusion that many will be prepared to accept without conceding the cogency of the argument.

V. Hope, 'Inscription and Sculpture: the Construction of Identity in the Military Tombstones of Roman Mainz', interprets a distinctive preference for figured reliefs among auxiliary (as opposed to legionary) soldiers, especially cavalrymen, at the

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first-century Roman military camp at Mainz as an assertion of Romanness. As with the funerary portrait reliefs of early imperial freedmen at Rome, which advertise the *gravitas* of the newly enfranchised, the type of a horseman riding down an enemy favored by auxiliary cavalrymen at Mainz—Roman virtue triumphing over barbarism—stakes a claim to the citizen status that only their premature deaths denied them.

An Athenocentric focus in the contributions on the Hellenic world does little to diminish the success of the volume in illustrating a range of approaches to exploiting funerary inscriptions in order to reconstruct the social history of classical antiquity. Vestergaard and Davies address new questions of interest; Stears provides valuable synthesis and skillful analysis; and Oliver and Hope bring methodological clarity and conceptual sophistication to the interpretation of epitaphs within their original contexts.

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doi:10.1093/clrevj/bni178

INSCRIPTIONS IN NAPLES

G. Camodeca, H. Solin (edd.): *Catalogo delle iscrizioni latine del Museo Nazionale di Napoli (ILMN). Vol. I: Roma e Latium.* Pp. 399, pls. Naples: Loffredo Editore, 2000. Paper, €36.15. ISBN: 88-8096727-4.

Anyone who has ventured into the bowels of Naples Archaeological Museum will gaze in wonder at this volume, which catalogues in exemplary fashion over 650 Latin (and a few Greek) inscriptions from Rome and Latium, most of which belong to the museum's Farnese and Borgia collections. The vast majority of them are epitaphs, with Jewish and Christian inscriptions from Rome's catacombs as well as pagan ones. These range from the mundane to the quirky, my favourite being a verse epitaph for a horse (no. 154). The other inscriptions range from Republican *leges* (*Lex Cornelia de XX quaestoribus* and *Lex Antonia de Termessibus*) to imperial dedications, patronal tablets, honorific statue bases, religious dedications, and *fistulae*. Modern copies and forgeries come at the end.

A few of the inscriptions in this catalogue have already benefited from modern republication in new fascicles of *CIL* VI, but two of these deserve comment. What was once thought to be a dedication by a doctor to his father (*CIL* X 1675), turns out to be a monumental dedication to Augustus (*CIL* VI 40312a = no. 20), whilst a dedication to Titus (no. 23) shows Rome's thirty-five urban tribes acting as a collective unit alongside the *plebs urbana frumentaria* (*CIL* VI 40453a).

Every text has been carefully reassessed on the basis of autopsy, correcting many minor errors in *CIL*. Other alterations are more significant: changes to names listed on *CIL* VI 200 (no. 6); lines missing from *CIL* VI 16061 (no. 232); and a much improved text is offered of *CIL* VI 32517 (no. 67), which had been compiled without having been able to locate the stone. Autopsy of the curious inscription relating to Sejanus on the Aventine (no. 159) allows for a reassessment of the various supplements on offer, and incidentally reveals that what really mattered for the speaker was his appeal to his fellow-tribesmen, inscribed in larger letters. The volume ends with a superb

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