JEWISH CHILDHOOD IN THE ROMAN WORLD

This is the first full treatment of Jewish childhood in the Roman world. It follows minors into the spaces where they lived, learned, played, slept, and died and examines the actions and interaction of children with other children, with close-kin adults, and with strangers, both inside and outside the home. A wide range of sources is used, from the rabbinic rules to the surviving painted representations of children from synagogues, and due attention is paid to broader theoretical issues and approaches. Hagith Sivan concludes with four beautifully reconstructed “autobiographies” of specific children, from a boy living and dying in a desert cave during the Bar-Kokhba revolt to an Alexandrian girl forced to leave her home and wander through the Mediterranean in search of a respite from persecution. The book tackles the major questions of the relationship between Jewish childhood and Jewish identity which remain important to this day.

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Acknowledgments

This book had a long gestation, seven years to be precise. I am grateful to Cambridge University Press for its patience and to Michael Sharp for his trust.

Throughout the Childhood years I have incurred debts of gratitude to colleagues who invited me to share my research on Jewish childhood and, above all, who kindly afforded me opportunities to learn a great deal from others through various workshops and conferences. Judith Evans Grubbs and Tim Parkin held a workshop in Manchester which led to The Oxford Handbook of Childhood and Education in the Classical World. At the Finish School at Rome a workshop on the family led to Children and Family in Late Antiquity: Life, Death and Interaction, edited by the conveners, Christian Laes, Katarina Mustakallio and Ville Vuolanto. I was fortunate enough to participate in two workshops in Oslo, organized respectively by Christian Laes and Ville Vuolanto, and by Reidar Aasgaard and Cornelia Horn, the former resulting in Children and Everyday Life in the Roman and Late Antique World, the latter in Childhood in History: Perceptions of Children in the Ancient and Medieval Worlds. At Haifa University, a workshop organized by Uriel Simonsohn and Yaniv Fox provided an additional opportunity to share my thoughts on Dura’s silent children as did a workshop at Brown, organized by Jonathan Conant. Some of the material presented found its way also to this book. A special debt is owed to Ross Shepherd Kramer, who took time from her extremely busy schedule to read an embryonic version of the project and to provide invaluable comments. Thanks are also due to one of the Cambridge University Press readers, who astonished and pleased me by warmly endorsing my creative-nonfiction chapters (eight to eleven), even proposing to spice up the academic sections with the same herbal mixture. Alas, this was not possible. There are limits to my ventures into creative writing.

I was fortunate to reside for a term at the Albright Institute of Archaeology in Jerusalem as the Annual Professor. Ann Scoufield, who,
Acknowledgments

Fortunately for me, was Associate Dean at CLAS/University of Kansas, graciously granted leave permission and modest financial support. In Israel I had fascinating conversations with Israel Zvi Gilat, Amram Tropper, Ronit Porat, Rona Avissar-Lewis, Shulamit Wexler and Reuven Kiperwasser, and I benefitted greatly from visits to archaeological sites where I did not plant my invented children. I leave it to others to exert their imagination and readings. I made a pilgrimage to Tzfat to bask in Susan Weingarten’s erudition on one of the coldest days in my Israeli memories.

The jacket image was generously provided by Dr. Ortolf Harl, whose magnificent site (www.ubi-erat-lupa.org) contains rare and incredibly valuable images. Permission to reproduce other images was generously provided by Constantine Marinescu and Uzi Leibner. Wayne Meeks provided insightful comments and a lovely lunch in New Haven. Pam LeRow has been a tower of strength and kindness, as ever. I would like to dedicate the book to my mother, Dvorah Sivan, who is, and is not, with us, and to my dear childhood friend Aliza Rodnitzky.