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No Longer a Slave:
Manumission in the Social World of Paul

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No Longer a Slave:
Manumission in the Social World of Paul

by

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In memoriam
Janet Ruth Flexsenhar

*mea avia piissima*
Abstract

No Longer a Slave:
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The Roman Empire was a slave society. New Testament and Early Christian scholars have long recognized that slaves formed a substantial portion of the earliest Christian communities. Yet there has been extensive debate about manumission, the freeing of a slave, both in the wider context of the Roman Empire and more specifically in Paul’s context. 1 Cor. 7:20-23 is a key passage for understanding both slavery and manumission in Pauline communities, as well as Paul’s own thoughts on these two contentious issues. The pivotal verse is 1 Cor. 7:21. The majority opinion is that Paul is suggesting slaves should become free, i.e., manumitted, if they are able. In order to better understand this biblical passage and its social implications, this project explores the various types of manumissions operative the Roman world: the legal processes and results; the factors that galvanized and constrained manumissions; the political and social environment surrounding manumission in Corinth during Paul’s ministry; as well as the results of manumission as it relates to Paul’s communities. Finally, the project returns to the passage in 1 Cor. 7:20-23 and offers a new interpretation.
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CHAPTER 1
MANUMISSION IN PAUL’S SOCIAL WORLD: POSSIBILITIES AND RESULTS

“You were called as a slave?” So begins Paul’s rhetorical foray in 1 Cor. 7:21-23. One of the discrete characteristics of this passage is the unexceptional nature of its content. The word slave (δοῦλος) is as ubiquitous in Paul’s letters as the word gospel.¹ Paul self-identifies as a slave (Rom. 1:1; 1 Cor. 9:19-27), describes Christ as a slave (Phil. 2:5-11), uses the term slave in baptismal formulae (Gal. 3:28; 1 Cor. 12:13), describes the moral life as slavery, whether to sin or to righteousness (Rom. 6:15-23), writes about an actual slave (Philm), and uses slavery to explain his gospel (Gal. 3:23-4:11; Rom. 8:14-17; 9:1-24). What is equally remarkable about 1 Cor. 7:21—despite how shocking it may seem to us—is how it betrays the banality of slavery in the Roman world and in Paul’s milieu. The names Paul records in his letters—names like Fortunatus, Onesimus, and Urbanus—and the persons he does not name—like “those of Chloe” (1 Cor. 1:11)—intimate that slavery was a reality for the earliest Jesus movement, and that many slaves or former slaves likely filled the ranks of Paul’s communities.

1 Cor. 7:21-23 is also one of the only verses in Paul’s letters that seems to deal directly with the institution of slavery, and contains the only reference in the New Testament to the word “freedman” (ἀπελευθερωμένος) (7:22a), that is, a slave who has been

¹ A form of the word δοῦλος appears seventeen times in the undisputed Pauline corpus: Rom. 1:1; 6:16, 17; 19, 20; 1 Cor. 7:21, 22, 23; 12:13; 2 Cor. 4:5; Gal. 1:10; 3:28; 4:1; 4:7; Phil. 1:1; 2:7; Phlm. 16. In the same semantic complex, the word διάκονος occurs ten times Rom. 13:4; 14:4; 15:8; 16:1; 1 Cor. 3:5; 4:1; 2 Cor. 3:6; 6:4; 11:15; 11:23. For
manumitted, “freed.” It is fitting that a passage mentioning slavery and freedmen should be addressed to communities in Roman Corinth. The city astride the isthmus was a center for Mediterranean slave trade. As a Roman colony it was also a center for Roman freedmen. Roman freedmen, i.e. former slaves, had been instrumental in Corinth’s re-founding as a Roman colony under Julius Caesar in 44 BCE, and became its first citizens.

What is more remarkable still is Paul’s rhetorical line in 1 Cor. 7:21b: ἀλλ’ εἰ καὶ δύνασαι ἐλεύθερος γενέσθαι, µᾶλλον χρῆσαι. It is well-known for its hermeneutical difficulty. Today the majority opinion among scholars is that Paul was instructing slaves in Corinth to make use of freedom; nonetheless, this reading must be discussed. In other words, Paul was referring to manumission in 1 Cor. 7:1b, the release of slaves. But what would manumission entail? What were the processes and results? What were the expectations for manumission, the factors that conditioned it, and the impact manumission had on Paul’s communities? Why would Paul mention manumission and how might one interpret the wider passage of 1 Cor. 7:21-23 anew? This project attempts to answer such questions.

2 ἀπελευθερῶς is a hapax legomenon in the New Testament, meaning more technically “restored to freedom.” The Latin equivalent is libertus. In 1 Cor. 7:21 and 22 Paul uses the word ἐλεύθερος, which means “free person,” that is, one who has not been a slave.

Just as there were diverse forms of slavery in the Roman world–rural agricultural, urban domestic, private and public–there were also many forms of manumission, with varying processes and differing results for the freedperson. This introductory chapter begins to explore manumission by laying out the different types, and explaining the various legal and social features. It is generally agreed that because Corinth was a Roman colony at the time of Paul, Roman forms of manumission would most likely be operative there. This specificity, though sometimes overlooked, is critical because there were vast differences between Roman and Greek types of manumission. Roman manumission afforded citizenship. Greek types generally did not. The conceptual, legal, and social distinction between Roman and non-Roman, moreover, is vital for understanding the impact of manumission in Paul’s communities. We do not know the precise legal status of the Corinthians who followed Paul, but clearly some were slave and some were free (1 Cor. 12:13), either freeborn or freed slaves. It is safe to assume, however, that some, perhaps just a few, in Paul’s Corinthian communities were Roman citizens. These citizens could also be former Roman slaves. The socio-historical payoff of this project, therefore, is that former Roman slaves could also have been Paul’s patrons and the benefactors of the earliest Christian communities.

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Roman Manumission

Roman manumission depends on both the legal status of the slave owner, a Roman citizen, and the legal process undertaken. According to Roman law, as it comes down to us through the casebook of the jurist Gaius (110-180 CE), Roman manumissions supposed two legal categories, formal and informal. In the imperial period formal manumission resulted in full Roman citizenship for the manumitted slave, and was accomplished by two processes according to civil law (ius civile), i.e. law pertaining to Roman citizens.  

(1) *Manumissio vindicta* occurred in a legal proceeding in which the slave, in the presence of the owner and a Roman magistrate, was officially declared free and a full Roman citizen. The term for the magistrate’s rod, *vindicta*, derives from the verb Latin *vindicare* meaning to lay legal claim to, or to appropriate, but also to protect and defend. The ritual of manumissions of this sort required the presiding magistrate to “dub” (knight-like) the freed slave with his “rod,” thereby indicating the conferral of his or her new status. In Rome the magistrate officiating the *manumissio vindicta* could be a consul or a praetor, and in the provinces, a proconsul, an imperial legate, or an imperial procurator. Such officials, of course, were not always accessible for a legal hearing. But as we shall see, certain locales, more specifically, certain types of cities, furnished more opportunities for magistrates and *manumissio vindicta* than others. In order for the

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5 I do not include *manumissio censu*, manumission by a censor, as it fell to disuse in the imperial period.
process to be successful a manumission tax (\textit{vicesima libertatis}) of 5\% on the value of the slave also had to be paid. The inner workings of this tax are unclear, but suffice it say that because a slave’s value was not standardized until the fourth century CE (in the price edicts of Diocletian),\textsuperscript{6} and because many slaves were freed using processes other than \textit{vindicta}, the tax must have been based on a notional value.\textsuperscript{7} The legal practice (\textit{vindicta})


\textsuperscript{7} Keith Hopkins, \textit{Conquerors and Slaves} (Sociological studies in Roman History 1; Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 129, n.67. As Hopkins pointed out, the tax makes best sense if the slave carried a definite price, which of course the slave did not. The owner could also collude with the salve, and deliberately devalue his or her price in order to pay smaller tax. Hopkins, \textit{Conquerors and Slaves}, 129, n.67. Since, however, many slaves were clearly freed \textit{gratis}, e.g. in wills, and informally manumitted, the tax must have been based on a notional sum. Cf. Henrik Mouritsen, \textit{The Freedman in the Roman World} (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 160, n.184. Although the administrative titles for the collectors of this tax are well-attested in certain places of the Empire, the precise workings of the tax are unknown. For general study cf. Keith Bradley, “The \textit{vicesima libertatis}: Its History and Significance,” \textit{Klio} 66.1 (1984): 175-182. The tax was bundled under the agricultural category, and the duty and sum of the tax collection could be auctioned off to tax farmers (\textit{publicani}) who would go out and collect. For the practice in Italy, cf. Werner Eck, \textit{Die staatliche Organisation Italiens in der hohen Kaiserzeit} (Vestigia 28; München: Beck, 1978). For an example from Egypt, in which the exact mode of collection is not known (P. A. Brunt, \textit{Roman Imperial Themes} (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 403, n.157), cf. P.Turner 19=P. Select 24. Another hurdle to our understanding is that the manumission tax– in terms of the overarching Imperial economy–was not a regular tax, like the poll tax (\textit{tributum capitis}) or the land tax (\textit{tributum soli}). Rather, it was imposed on an irregular basis as required or when the taxable situation arose. Werner Eck, “Provincial Administration and Finance,” in \textit{Cambridge Ancient History XI: The High Empire A.D. 70-192} (ed. Peter Garnsey, Dominic Rathbone, Alan K. Bowman; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 266-292, esp. 282. In one instance from Alexandria, (119-123 CE) the Egyptian Prefect Haterios Nepos writes to \textit{strategoi} instructing them to assist in whatever ways, the collectors of Futius Secundus for τὸ τέλος τῆς εἰκοστῆς τῶν ἔλευθερῶν. P.Oxy. 20.2265. Eck has observed that it is amazing that the prefect would have even required such a recommendation to work with the \textit{strategoi}. The implicit meaning being that the tax was not managed properly or people were not even paying it.
was standardized across the empire. Documents drawn up as a result of the vindicta procedure became the personal identification papers of the freedperson (libertus/ liberta), sealed in a wax tablet and copied on papyrus or some other material (See Appendix A Number 1).

(2) Manumissio ex testamento, manumission by will or codicil upon the death of the owner, required an explicit statement of liberation in an owner’s last will. Slaves freed by this method were known as freedmen of the dead (liberti orcini) since their patron resided in the underworld. This legal process did not require a manumission tax or a magistrate, although an office of inheritances was necessary to ratify the will’s

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Werner Eck, “Zur Erhebung der Erbschafts- und Freilassungssteuer in Ägypten im 2. Jahrh. n. Chr.,” ZPE 27 (1977): 201-09. Therefore, manumission and the vicesima was part of what David Mattingly calls the Provincial Economy, which included the local markets and networks, rural areas, and manufacturing productivity. The Provincial strand of the Roman economy also integrated aspects of pre-Roman economic structures, involving practices embedded in social customs. Moreover, because the manumission tax was collected by “variable practice,” its collection was not always efficient. As Mattingly explains, the rich were probably more successful in deferring tax payments, and tax arrears often built up in many provinces. David Mattingly, *Imperialism, Power, and Identity: Experiencing the Roman Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011), 138-145. These arrears, however, were periodically remitted on a small or large scale. Nero exempted all of Achaia: Syll. 814; ILS 8794; IG 7.2713; cf. also Ulpian, Dig. 50.15.1(Augustus for Berytus); SEG 31.952; I Eph 4101 (Trajan for Physicians and Teachers). It seems plausible, therefore, that the “rate” of manumission varied also depending on the collection of taxes. My assumption in this study is that from the owner’s perspective the manumission tax could be not necessarily a deterrent.

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8 There may even be a fideicommissary clause in a will, in which a dying master asked his heir(s) to free a certain slave(s) who came to the heir by the will, but without absolutely directing in the will that the slave should be free. Dig. 40.5.26. For more discussion of manumissio ex testamento cf. Maureen Carroll, *Spirits of the Dead: Roman Funerary Commemoration in Western Europe* (Oxford Studies in Ancient Documents; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 236-39, although the work focuses on legal implications in Italy. Cf. A. M. Duff, *Freedmen in the early Roman Empire* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1928), 25-6.
contents. Thus it is often thought that *manumissio ex testamento* was the more common process than *vindicta*. This seems to be confirmed by the ubiquitous surviving examples both papyrological from Egypt and epigraphic on tombs lining the roads outside of Roman towns and cities.

On the other hand, the inability of the owner to act as a patron to the slave after his or her manumission, and to receive reciprocity from the freedperson(s), may have been a deterrent for this process. Additionally, as part of the emperor Augustus’ so-called moral legislation, the *lex Fufia Caninia* (2 BCE) set limits on the number of slaves that owners could manumit at one time in their will. Thus, it is not clear which process, *vindicta* or *testamento*, was preferred or more common (See Chapter Appendix A, Number 2).

Depending on the type of manumission, three conditions had to be met in order for a slave to qualify for Roman citizenship. Gaius writes:

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Keith Bradley helpfully points out that after the *lex Fufia Caninia*, which limited the number of slaves a master could manumit in a will, *manumissio ex testamento* forced a principle of selectivity on the part of the master, and initiated competition among slaves. Bradley also argues there are no justifiable grounds for believing that *manuissio ex testamento* was more common than other methods, otherwise the passage of the *lex Aelia*, which applied to manumission during the owner’s lifetime as well as by his will (Gaius, *Inst.* 11.17; 18) would have been superfluous. Keith Bradley, *Slaves and Masters in the Roman Empire: A Study in Social Control* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1987), 90-1. The reverse could also be true: based on the other Augustan laws, there is no reason to think that other manumission methods were more common. Cf. P.Hamb. 1.72= chla.11.496=CPL 174, dated on paleography to the 2nd century CE, appears to be an example of a will from Egypt that is in accordance with Roman law. The unknown executor manumits a number of slaves if they were not fugitives. Significantly the will is written in Latin, and explicitly mentions the *lex Fufia Caninia*. For other examples of wills from Roman Egypt, cf. Livia Migliardi Zingale, *I testamenti romani nei papiri e nelle tavolette d'Egitto : silloge di documenti dal I al IV secolo D.C* (Toronto: G. Giappichelli, 1991). Cf. also Duff, *Freedmen*, 26. Cp. P.Oxy. 3.494=Chr.Mitt.305.
For any person who meets three conditions— that he is above the age of thirty, that his master is a Roman citizen (ex iure Quiritum domini), and that he is freed by a lawful and legal manumission, that is by vindicta, census, or testamento, he becomes a Roman citizen (Romanus fit), but if any of those conditions are lacking, he will be a Latin (Latinus erit) (Gaius, Inst. 1.17).

The legal status that Gaius calls Latinus is often referred to as Junian Latin. This was an intermediate level of citizenship and was the result of some informal types of manumission. There were two types of informal manumission according to the branch of Roman law known as ius praetorium. (1) For manumissio per epistulam the slave owner wrote a letter to a friend stating that his or her slave was manumitted. (2) Manumissio inter amicos was conducted by the master before friends, who served as witnesses that the slave had been manumitted. Neither process resulted in full Roman citizenship for the slave, but rather Junian Latin citizenship. Many extant letters from Egypt record either an owner’s intention to manumit or the completion of manumission. Likewise many surviving documents record manumission among friends. But in both of these cases it is difficult to identify with confidence the slave owners as Roman citizens. Thus, while both of these informal process were widespread in the Roman Empire, only the slaves of Roman citizens, which included many freedpersons, could be Junian Latin citizens when informally manumitted.

\[10\] Cf. e.g. Pliny, Ep. 10.16. AE 1904, 0217= P.Lips. 2.151; P.Tebt. 2.407.
Roman Manumission: Summation of Rights

The slave who was formally manumitted by vindicta or ex testamento had many legal rights, and a full explanation at this juncture is not necessary.\textsuperscript{11} To summarize some of the more salient rights: e.g. legal protection under citizen law (\textit{ius civile}) as the head of a new \textit{familia} (\textit{potestas}); the ability to conduct a variety of transactions of sale (work animals, slaves, etc.) including landed property (\textit{mancipatio}); the legal right to conduct business and Roman contracts (\textit{ius commercii}); the right to a legally recognized (\textit{ius civile}) marriage with a Roman citizen (\textit{ius conubii}), from which offspring were also freeborn Roman citizens; the right to make and take a Roman will (\textit{testamenti factio}). As a freed Roman citizen there were certain restrictions and vulnerabilities, to be sure.\textsuperscript{12} Normally freedmen (\textit{liberti}) were excluded \textit{de facto} from holding public office, then \textit{de jure} after the \textit{lex Visellia} of 24 CE. The rights listed above were significant, however, and often underestimated by modern scholars. The social privileges and implications become more salient when compared to the rights of the majority of people in Rome’s empire. I take up this topic below.

(Junian) Latins

The rights and status of the slave who was informally manumitted were more complex, and deserve some detailed comment here. Those slaves manumitted informally are called

\textsuperscript{12} Gardner, \textit{Roman Citizen}, 17-38.
Junian Latins (*Iunianus Latinus*), after the legislation that created this intermediate citizenship status (*lex Iunia*, Augustan). The freedpersons were partially enfranchised, but did not possess all the rights of a Roman citizen. Gaius writes: “They are called *Latini* because they were classed with Latin colonists, and *Juniani* because they received their freedom under the terms of the *lex Junia*, as before it was passed they were considered slaves (Gaius, *Inst. I.22*).”

A précis of the conventional understanding of Junian Latin rights is as follows: Junian Latins had the right to enter contracts and conduct business on their own as if as if a full Roman citizen (*ius commercii*), the right to make sales (*mancipatio*), as well as the right to own property. At the time of their death, however, if they had not achieved full Roman citizenship, their entire property would be transferred to their manumittor. It is thought, moreover, that Junian Latins did not have *ius conubii*, the right to a legally recognized marriage (*ius civile*) with a Roman citizen. But as discussed below, this may not be the case. Finally, Junian Latins also lacked *testamenti factio*, the right to make or take under a Roman will, unless they obtained full Roman citizenship within a hundred years.

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days of the reading of the will.\textsuperscript{17} Their children were considered freeborn \textit{(ingenui)}, but not citizens.

Because the legal status of Junian Latins resulted from an informal legal process, it is often thought that, far from being a peculiarity, Junians Latins were abundant in the Roman Empire, perhaps even more numerous than freedpersons with full Roman citizenship.\textsuperscript{18} Geza Alföldy’s study of freedmen epitaphs from Italy, Hispania, and the Danubian region suggested that manumission prior to thirty was widespread.\textsuperscript{19} \textit{De jure}, he assumed, manumission before age thirty resulted only in Junian Latin status. For instance, he indicated that out of 1201 inscriptions in which the age at death is known, 750 were manumitted before age thirty.\textsuperscript{20} Alföldy concluded from his study that slavery was essentially a transitional state, which ultimately gave most slaves a recognized, if not a fully equal place as members of the Roman citizen community.\textsuperscript{21} Alföldy’s claims, however, were far too broad, and concerning the expectation, regularity, and outcome of manumission, they were highly problematic.\textsuperscript{22} Yet the most basic conclusions to be

\textsuperscript{17} Gai \textit{Inst.} 1. 23-24; 2.275; \textit{Inst. lust.} 3.7.4; Ulpian, \textit{Reg.} 17.1; 22.3, 22.8.
\textsuperscript{18} Lopez Barja de Quiroga, “Junian Latins,” 149.
\textsuperscript{19} Lopez Barja de Quiroga, “Junian Latins,” 152.
drawn from his data—that many slaves were informally manumitted before age thirty in those western regions—is valid, and may be corroborated with more recent studies from the provinces of Illyricum, as discussed in the following chapter.

Albert Harrill has argued, however, that the “creation of Junian Latins [by slave owners?] became common under the Principate because of efforts to bar slaves from full Roman citizenship.”

A Junian Latin, for example, could work as an agent for his or her patron (ius commercii), but without the right to live and work independently—a restriction that appealed to slaveholders. Jennifer Glancy even writes, “Informally freed, Junian Latins were not citizens,” and they were “still outsiders to the dominant society.” The current project contests these arguments. One aspect that I may challenge here is that both conclusions devalue Junian Latin “citizenship” and overlook the attendant legal rights and possibilities.

In the Republic many slaves were informally manumitted, indeed in large numbers, but were left in an ambiguous status by their masters. They had no legal rights and were, in effect, still enslaved. The purpose of Augustus’ lex Iunia, then, was to solidify a citizenship status for these freedpersons, and legally specify their rights with the understanding that manumissions—and the creation of some kind of citizen—would

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23 Harrill, Manumission, 55.
24 Harrill, Manumission, 55.
25 Glancy, Slavery, 94-5.
continue. It also is important to note that the other Augustan legislations (*lex Aelia* and *Fufia*) did not attempt to curb the number of manumissions, but to control the process so as to affect the result, namely, citizenship at some level, whether full or intermediate. Thus, after the *lex Iunia* slaves who were informally manumitted were indeed legally citizens, even if not fully enfranchised. This subtle distinction is important in light of wider populations of the Roman world, especially the Greek east, in which the right of Greek citizenship was endowed at birth.

Concerning Junian Latin rights, *ius conubii* could be granted to a Junian Latin when *veterani* (veterans) married women of Junian Latin status. Junian Latins could also marry informally according to common law (*ius gentium*), a provision that allowed them to pursue full Roman citizenship through *anniculi probatio*. This granted full Roman citizenship to the Junian Latin if he had a one-year-old son born from a marriage and brought him before the praetor or governor of a province, but also a *duovir* of a colony (*lex Aelia*, 4 CE). The Junian Latin, moreover, could obtain full citizenship if manumitted again (*iteratio*) by his former owner, provided that he was over thirty and that the process was enacted formally by *testament* or *vindicta*, again before a praetor or governor of a province, or a *duovir* of a colony. As Chapter 3 explains, some locales in

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the provinces provided more consistent face-time with Roman magistrates than others and with important affects.\textsuperscript{33}

The \textit{lex Aelia Sentia} (4 CE), furthermore, required slaves to have reached thirty years of age, and the owner twenty years of age in order for the freedperson to qualify for full Roman citizenship.\textsuperscript{34} This is one of the three conditions to which Gaius referred. There were important exceptions to this law, however. A slave manumitted before age thirty could not become a full Roman citizen unless the process of manumission was \textit{vindicta}, and was preceded by justifiable \textit{causa} before an assembly (\textit{consilium}).\textsuperscript{35} In Rome the \textit{consilium} consisted of five senators and five \textit{equites}, or in the provinces twenty Roman citizens (\textit{recuperatores}).\textsuperscript{36} Justifiable \textit{causa} were: (a) if the slave was an \textit{alumnus} (foster child); (b) a blood relation to the master (\textit{naturalis}); (c) a teacher (\textit{paedagogus}) of the owner’s children; (d) a potential wife for the owner (\textit{ancilla matrimonia causa}); (e) a potential \textit{procurator} for the owner; or (f) if the slave rescued the owner from danger or saved his life (\textit{dominum servus liberavit}).\textsuperscript{37}

\textsuperscript{33} Another, rarer option, was for full Roman citizenship to be imperially granted (\textit{beneficium principis}). Pliny the Younger, for instance, asked the emperor Trajan to grant citizenship to “Latins” who had previously been manumitted by Valerius Paulinus (\textit{Ep.} 10, 104).

\textsuperscript{34} Dio, \textit{Hist. rom.} 55.13.7.

\textsuperscript{35} Gaius, \textit{Inst.} 1.18: Quod autem de aetate serui requiritur, lege Aelia Sentia introductum est. nam ea lex minores xxx annorum seruos non aliter uoluit manumissos ciues Romanos fieri, quam si uindicta, apud consilium iusta causa manumissionis adprobata, liberati fuerint.

\textsuperscript{36} Gaius, \textit{Inst.} 1.20; cf. \textit{CIL} VI.1877; XIV.1437.

\textsuperscript{37} Gaius, \textit{Inst.} 1.19, 39; Iusta autem causa manumissionis est ueluti si quis filium filiamue aut fratrem sororemue naturalem, aut alumnun, aut paedagogum, aut serum
What is more, Junian Latins, perhaps had more rights than previously thought.\(^ {38}\)

One of the more perplexing problems for modern scholars is that in the ancient sources, like Pliny, *Ep.* 10.104 and in Gaius, *Inst.* 1.17, “Junian” Latins were known simply as Latins (*Latini*). This is the same designation, however, for the inhabitants of *coloniae* and *municipia* with Latin rights. Consequently, it has been argued more recently that Junian Latins actually possessed rights equal to those in Latin municipalities, that is, the same rights once given to the former allies of the Latin league in 338 BCE.\(^ {39}\) This makes sense given Gaius, *Inst.* 1.22, which did not distinguish the rights between Latins and Junians but names only (*homines Latini Iuniani appellantur*). According to Pedro Lopez Barja de Quiroga, the *lex Iunia* in fact granted a *civitas Latina*–the citizenship equal to that of Latin colonies–to slaves manumitted informally within a Latin civic framework.\(^ {40}\) The *civitas* could be transmitted to descendants. Thus, children of Junian Latins were not simply freeborn (*ingenui*) but also Latins. The only distinction to be made between Latins and Junians is that the latter could not make or benefit from wills.\(^ {41}\)

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\(^ {40}\) Lopez Barja de Quiroga, “Junian Latins,” 146

\(^ {41}\) Lopez Barja de Quiroga, “Junian Latins,” 147.
therefore, had the right to marry either women who were Roman citizens (*ius conubii*) or Latin colonists, or those who were of the same legal status as themselves.42

**Roman Public Slaves: *Familia Caesaris* and *Servi Publici***

The processes and resulting status of Roman manumissions depended also on the position of the slave within the Roman system. The slaves of the emperor, as part of the *familia Caesaris*/*Καῖσαρος οἰκία*, had different expectations for, as well as, after manumission. This “virtual civil service,” employed as the administrative bureaucracy in Rome and in the provinces,43 did not expect informal manumission, Junian Latin status, or manumission before age thirty—although there were important exceptions. Rather, their expectation was full enfranchisement as Roman citizens. According to P.R.C. Weaver, at age thirty imperial slaves were expected to purchase their freedom using their savings (*peculium*) unless they were given free manumission (*gratis*).44 Full enfranchisement followed, after which the freedmen could take on high-level administrative posts in the provinces.45 Weaver seems to deduce this process of *peculium*, self-purchase

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45 P. R. C. Weaver, *Familia Caesaris*, 267-81.
manumission by comparison with private types (vindicta, epistulam, etc). As Chapter 2 argues, however, this is somewhat problematic since, of course, the peculium technically belonged to the emperor’s fiscus. It is just as plausible that the slaves were granted (gratis) their freedom at age thirty.\textsuperscript{46}

Other public slaves (servi publici/δοῦλοι δημόσιοι), appear to have experienced a different manumission process altogether. The evidence for the process comes exclusively from a single municipium, the Municipium Flavium Irnitanum (ancient Irni, Spain), but the process must have been similar for other coloniae or cities as the terminology and related onomastics are widespread.\textsuperscript{47} The process appears to have occurred as follows: The person who was a slave of the municipium, was technically under the ownership of the annual (or biennial) duovir. If the duovir wished to manumit the servus publicus he brought him or her before the civic council, decuriones or conscripti, when not less than two-thirds of them were present. Then a two-thirds vote is needed from those present in order for the manumission to be ratified, and the slave must pay or give security to the public account (arcarius publicus, or the common fund of the municipium) the sum that the decuriones decide, then the slave will be manumitted as a citizen of the municipium, that is a Latin, not a Junian Latin. It is not clear what

\textsuperscript{46} On the other hand, the ability of local bureaucrats to amass wealth as a byproduct of office or local patronage must also be considered.

\textsuperscript{47} This process we know from the lex Irnitana, a document of the Municipium Flavium Irnitanum (ancient Irni, Spain). The process is most likely similar for a colony as well, although the resulting citizenship may have differed. Cf. Julián González and Michael H. Crawford, “The Lex Irnitana: A New Copy of the Flavian Municipal Law,” JRS 76 (1986). For analogue, compare colonia Ostia in Russell Meiggs, Roman Ostia (2d. ed. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973), 173-4.
expectations the *servi publici* had for manumission. I will return to the *familia Caesaris* and *servi public* in Chapters 3 and 4 respectively.

To sum up, the purpose of the legal descriptions above concerning process and resulting status is to highlight what Roman manumission afforded to freed slaves. Augustus and his deified father Julius Caesar set, by Roman standards, an unprecedented trajectory of integration for slaves and freedmen that effects of which would continue for centuries. 48 Barbara Kellum and others, moreover, have called attention to artistic representations of the Battle of Actium among Italian freedmen. She writes:

> In many respects, Actium became the cornerstone of the new order. Viewed in relation to the inscripational and monumental record, it becomes apparent that Augustan social legislation, while affirming class hierarchy, at the same time laid a firm foundation for social change. Freed persons were favored consistently. 49

This mindset was transposed onto the empire in the first century CE, but scholars can take for granted the inherent social power of Roman manumissions. They immediately produced a type of Roman citizen. And especially in the provinces of the first-century CE when Roman citizens were rather scarce, this is a significant social privilege. 50 As

Chapter 2 explains, because Roman manumissions resulted in Roman citizenship of some kind, manumission was also a versatile and effective social apparatus. The implications of Roman manumissions in various settings outside of Rome and Italy, particularly the social world of Paul are thus explored in Chapters 3 and 4.

**Greek Manumissions**

Greek manumission refers also to the legal status of the slave owner and the legal process undertaken. The legal status of the owner according to my classification is a non-Roman citizen, although he may have Greek citizenship in a particular *polis*. The differences between Roman and Greek manumission were legion, and related to their discrepant social and cultural practices, but especially their respective understanding of citizenship. Maria Youni summarizes:

> Greeks considered citizenship as the ultimate privilege accorded by birth, and occasionally attributed to outsiders exclusively by a collective decision of the community concerned, i.e. the citizens’ assembly. Being an essentially political right, citizenship functioned predominantly in the *public sphere*, whereas the main effect of Roman *civitas* was protection of its possessor in the exercise of his rights in *private law*.  

Greek types cannot be explained from legal textbooks like their Roman counterpart, but gathered only from those who applied the laws, “whether officials of the *polis* who

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recorded payments of the manumission tax or masters of slaves who recorded the act of
manumission on stone.”

They also took various forms according to the varied practices of the Greek poleis, “which had its own set of legislation that was modified in the course
of time with the introduction of new statuses and the adoption of new practices.”

Taxonomies of Greek types, moreover, must be gathered from “men and women from different backgrounds in texts of varying form, formality, and literacy.”

Despite the different methods and forms of manumissions, some common threads emerge, which one can only sketch more broadly. Following Rachel Zelnick-Abramovitz’s extensive study, a taxonomy for Greek types of manumission may be schematized as follows, based primarily on the parties or entities involved: the public or private identity of the manumittor (the polis or a private citizen); the presence of a deity (sacral manumission); the involvement of political institutions; and the degree to which the action is publicized.

One could also add known cases of so-called synagogue or proseuche manumissions, which mixed different aspects of Greek manumissions including the sacral and public.

These categorical features reflect the “lack of restrictions on the form and

52 Youni, “Manuimssions,” 311-12.
54 Youni, “Manuimssions,” 312.
56 E. Leigh, The Jewish Manumission Inscriptions of the Bosporan Kingdom (TSAJ 75; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1999), 124-52; 159-72; cf. e.g. IJO I BS20=CIRB 1123; CIRB 70; IJO I BS18=SEG 43.510.
“terminology” employed in Greek legal deeds of manumission. “Individuals were practically free to determine both the form and contents of a contract or will,” with only two prerequisites, volition and express statement. All of the Greek types involved witnesses such as family or friends—similar to Roman *inter amicos*—but whose presence served only for purposes of evidence in court should it be needed. Because of the informal nature of these manumissions, little evidence survives.

Two non-Roman manumission processes most common in the eastern provinces are well-attested: sacral and polis.

(1) In a *sacral manumission* a slave owner dedicated or sold a slave to a deity. A common feature of the *sacral manumission* was a *paramone* clause (from παραμένειν, “to remain, stay, or continue”), which stipulated that despite payment for manumission (presumably the slave’s self-purchase) the now freedperson must continue in service to the master for a certain period. The slave’s ostensible purchase of freedom presupposed a social and economic dislocation from the slave owner. Thus, the purpose of the *paramone* was to insure continued service after the slave was manumitted. Not surprisingly, while widely discussed, many have questioned the reality and practicality of the former slave’s freedom post-manumission. Moritz Bloch, one of the first scholars to study manumission deeds from Delphi, suggested that manumission via *paramone* was

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58 Youni, “Manumissions,” 312.
essentially a continuation of slavery. W. L. Westermann interpreted the continuation feature of the manumission as somewhere between slavery and freedom. The paramone type is hence often referred to as conditional manumission. Manumission may have provided “freeborn” status for the former slave’s children, but left the “manumitted” in de facto slavery. Even so, many slaves might have opted for such meager gains. Evidence for sacrual manumission, including paramone clauses, is well attested in the Greek world, especially at the Temple of Apollo in Delphi. The manumissions were inscribed on the temple itself. (See Chapter 1 Appendix, Number 4).

(2) A polis manumission may be described as a publication list of owners and their freed slaves. The document had the legal backing of city officials, but they were not involved in the manumission process. The manumission processes had already occurred by an undisclosed process. But to ensure publicity, or legal recognition, of the slave’s

59 Moritz Bloch, Die Freilassungsbedingungen der delphischen Freilassungsinsschriften (Strasbourg: Joseph Singer, 1914), 30.
62 The evidence of paramone manumission deeds from the precinct at Delphi has been particularly utilized in studies of manumission. The main evidence is the corpus of 1,200 inscriptions from the Temple of Apollo ranging from Hellenistic to early Roman period. For texts cf. Sammlung der griechischen Dialekt-Inschriften (GDI) 1684-2342; Fouilles de Delphes III.1; III.2; III.3; III.3, 2; III.6. For early discussion of paramone contracts cf. W. L. Westermann, “The Paramone,” 9-50 and A. E. Samuel, “The Role of Paramone Clauses in Ancient Documents,” JJP 15 (1965): 221-311.
63 Another indication is the perfect periphrastic construction οἱ φἀμενοι ἀπηλευθερώθαι as in IG X,2 541 (Flavian period) or οἱ φἀμενο[ι] γεγονέναι ἀπελεύθεροι in IG X,2 463 (49/48 BCE), both from Pelasgiotis.
status change, the manumissions had to be registered in the polis and a registration or publication tax had to be paid.\textsuperscript{64} We know that in Thessaly, at least, the publication cost in the first century was roughly 22 denarii.\textsuperscript{65} Patrons for the freedpersons were not necessarily represented in such lists, as Greek manumissions did not presuppose patrons for freed slaves. The citizenship status of the manumittors is not known, but would have been tied to a polis. Likewise the former-slaves’ legally recognized statuses were linked to the polis, but as non-resident foreigners (xenoi) with few legal rights. Evidence of polis manumission is also fairly well-attested as the lists were publically inscribed. (See Chapter 1 Appendix, Number 5).

**Greek Manumissions: Summation of Statuses and Rights**

In contrast to Roman manumission, which was undergirded by various statuses relative to Roman citizenship, Greek manumissions “never conferred citizenship upon freedmen, who remained foreigners and acquired a status similar to that of resident aliens.”\textsuperscript{66} All slaves possessed the legal rights of xenoi in the poleis in which they were manumitted.\textsuperscript{67} They could not own property or lend money on the security of land or house, unless granted this right (enktesis) by the Assembly. They had no political rights, such as the

\textsuperscript{64} Zelnick-Abramovitz, *Not Wholly Free*, 77, 309-11.

\textsuperscript{65} Cf. e.g. *IG X.2* 543 (Claudian), 546 (Hadrianic).

\textsuperscript{66} Youni, “Manumissions,” 313. For Greeks, citizenship was a genetic trait “accorded by birth and occasionally attributed to outsiders exclusively by a collective decision of the community concerned.” (Italics added).

\textsuperscript{67} Zelnick-Abramovitz, *Not Wholly Free*, 80.
right to vote or, attend the Assembly, or hold office. A patron was not granted or assumed in the manumission process. In Athens, and in other poleis, the manumitted slave was required to register a patron (prostates), their former owner unless he was a manumitted slave or metic. The freedperson could acquire more prestigious statuses depending on the customs and laws of the individual polis, or pre-arrangement with the owner.

In Athens, for instance, a manumitted slave could be registered as a metic if he settled in Athens, and was willing to pay the 12 drachmae registration tax (metoikion) required of a metic, and received permission to register (with a prostates) in a deme.68 Children born from the union of manumitted slaves (or metics) and citizens were not considered citizens themselves. The children of manumitted slaves (exeleutheroi), however, could enjoy the privilege of isoteleia (the citizen tax rate). In Epirus, by contrast, manumitted slaves seem to have entered the families of their manumittors as legal equals, and in Thessaly, manumitted slaves could be granted the right to own property (enktesis).69 In these contexts, a private person (i.e. the manumittor) was able to establish the manumitted slave’s status in the polis. Thus, if possible the manumitted slave would want to enter a polis that presented the most opportunities for advancement. This of course, depended on the pre-arrangements or obligations to the former owner.

While it is common and appropriate for modern scholars to think of manumission from the slave’s perspective, the legal status of the owner and the Roman political rubrics acted as constraining factors on non-Roman manumissions. In most general terms, the

68 Zelnick-Abramovitz, Not Wholly Free, 310; and 310-14 for the rights of metics.
69 Zelnick-Abramovitz, Not Wholly Free, 318. SEG 15, 384=SEG 37, 515 (Epirus); IG IX 2, 1290 (Thessaly).
Roman administration allowed the ancient Greek practices and types of manumission to continue in Greek cities, even up through the Constitutio Antoniniana of 212 CE, with little change. But for the Greek citizen slave owner what were the incentives to manumit, and what were the implications for the freedperson in light of Roman rule? The trouble was that the previous legal statuses in the Mediterranean world were demoted in Roman political rubrics, since Roman citizenship was the new political benchmark. Roman manumission, in other words, was for the slave of Roman citizens only. A Greek citizen slave owner could not use *manumissio vindicta* or *testamento* unless he had joint Roman citizenship. And while he could manumit by a process akin to the Roman *epistulam* or *inter amicos* the resulting status for the freedperson would not have been (Junian) Latin citizenship, unless, again, the slave owner had joint Roman citizenship.

All non-Roman types of manumissions, moreover, whether *sacral, polis* (or *synagogue*) would have fallen under the Roman legal category of informal manumissions, but without affording citizenship status. The upshot for Paul’s context is that former Roman slaves, whether formally or informally manumitted, could have more legal status and political rights than the majority of freeborn populations.

All non-Roman citizens were legally classified as foreigners (*peregrini*), the Latin equivalent of the Greek *xenoi*. As Jane Gardner summarizes, *peregrini* had only limited *ius commercii*. Property could only be transferred between *peregrini* and Roman citizens; *peregrini* could make contracts, but they did not have the right of *mancipatio* (formal sale

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71 Cf. n. 56 above.
or transaction) or have the right of full legal ownership (res muncipi); a legal fiction allowed them access to the civil courts; only exceptionally did they have conubium, and so most family law including the law of inheritance, effectively excluded the possibility of familial relations between peregrini and Roman citizens.\(^\text{72}\) As Gardner recognizes although this legal classification represented the majority under the Roman system, the ancient Roman lawyers were writing for Romans, and only rarely mention the ways of peregrini.\(^\text{73}\)

As Chapter 3 investigates, in a Roman colony like Corinth the incentive for peregrini to manumit was dubious. Unless the slave owner was registered as a citizen of the colony, he and his manumitted slave would have had the same legal status according to Roman law, namely peregrine status. Conversely, Roman citizens have no incentive to manumit by a Greek process. This interplay between incentive and disincentive for manumission that arises in particular Roman administrative rubrics is precisely in line with Roman colonialism and the pull of Roman citizen privilege.

Despite the profound differences between Roman and Greek manumissions, many scholars have tried to hold the two together. Specifically, it is often assumed that the paramone type clause of Greek manumission is the Eastern equivalent to the Roman expectation of freedmen duties owed to the patron. Operae (chores) and obsequium (deference) were expected after the Roman slave’s manumission as reciprocity for


\(^{73}\) Gardner, *Roman Citizen*, 188.
manumission and personal patronage. Harrill suggests that the \textit{paramone} was a “more demanding agreement than the stipulation under Roman private law of \textit{operae} from \textit{liberti} to patron.” Keith Hopkins, Keith Bradley, and Orlando Patterson, moreover, have proposed that while legally freed, the duties owed by a Roman freedman to the former master (\textit{operae}, \textit{obsequium} and \textit{officium}), so severely restricted the former slave’s actions and status that the condition after manumission was not significantly improved. Moses Finley wrote: “[The slave’s] loss of control, furthermore, extended to the infinity of time, to his children and his children’s children– unless, again, the owner by a unilateral act broke the chain through unconditional manumission.” Similarly, Sandra Joshel argues that freedmen suffered “disabilities” that freeborn citizens did not share.

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\textsuperscript{75} Harrill, \textit{Manumission}, 169.
\textsuperscript{77} Moses I. Finley, \textit{Ancient Slavery and Modern Ideology} (London: Chatto & Windus, 1980), 75.
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especially important in this respect were the stigma of a servile past and the continuation of a limiting relationship with an ex-master.\textsuperscript{78}

Scholars of the New Testament and Early Christianity reiterate this assumption. Craig de Vos, for instance, asks of Philemon, What difference would the manumission of Onesimus actually have made to the situation?\textsuperscript{79} The link between authoritarianism, patriarchalism and patronage, de Vos reasons, would have been even more pronounced in the case of freed slaves than it would have been between “ordinary” patrons and clients.\textsuperscript{80} de Vos concludes that the “act of manumission did not significantly change the circumstances of most slaves,” and “almost certainly would not have changed the actual relationship that they had with their former masters.”\textsuperscript{81} Thus manumission would have made “no significant change to the relational dynamic between Philemon and Onesimus.”\textsuperscript{82}

Moreover, de Vos also adds in a note, citing Harrill, Bradley, and Glancy, that clearly “there were some advantages for slaves in being manumitted, but these should not


\textsuperscript{80} de Vos, “Once a Slave,” 98.

\textsuperscript{81} de Vos, “Once a Slave,” 100. Italics are the de Vos’s.

\textsuperscript{82} de Vos, “Once a Slave,” 100.
be over-exaggerated.”83 Even with Roman citizenship, “it could be a couple of
generations before their descendants were completely integrated into society and they
were fully accepted.”84 Finally, “there could often be some improvement in their social
status after manumission, even though few experienced any genuine social mobility.”85
Harrill even proposes that manumission was “a limited form of freedom that created a
social order of freedpersons beneath that of the freeborn population.”86

These interpretations need further nuance for several reasons. First, A. M. Duff
noted long ago that the actual duties included in the Roman terms operae and obsequium
are never formulated, and Koenraad Verboven has recently expressed the view that
obsequium was a passive concept that ensured a patron’s superiority but did not give him
authority over his freedmen.87 Rather, the duties of a Roman freedperson reflected that
which was expected from all clients towards their patrons and generally of social
inferiors to their betters.88 Second, we should be wary of interpreting patron-freedperson

83 de Vos, “Once a Slave,” 100, n. 40.
84 de Vos, “Once a Slave,” 100, n. 40.
85 de Vos, Once a Slave, 100, n.40 citing Bradley, Slaves and Masters, 81-82; Harrill, Manumission:122; Glancy, Slavery, 68-69. Italics are de Vos’s.
87 Duff, Freedmen, 36; Verboven, “The Freedman,” 95-6. The point is that the relationship became somewhat more voluntary, presumably based on the former slave’s perception of benefit or gain.
relations exclusively in terms of calculation, exploitation, and conflict. Many manumission witness a vow of protection over the freedperson and his or her descendants, particularly rights in relation to burials and sepulchral feasts.

Third, and most importantly, implicit in these arguments is the idea that manumitted slaves wanted to be absolved from their patrons, to be absolved from the duties and the “humiliating ritual of the morning salutatio.” Slaves could certainly resist their masters in many forms from subtle to overt, and the same applies to freedpersons who were legally vulnerable to patrons. In the imperial period, however, patronage was not just a dyadic relationship, a single, personal patron with a string of freedmen clients who were bound under him. Instead, patronage was interlocking, web-like and tentacular, with persons having multiple allegiances to multiple patrons and extending beyond the household. The emperor, moreover, concentrated more resources in fewer hands and so brokerage and social entrepreneurship became increasingly important as groups and

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90 For example, the will of Epictates of Nacrasos also from the period 50-150 CE. P. Hermann and K. Z. Polatkan, Das Testament des Epikrates (Sitzungsberichte Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-Historische Klasse 265.1; Wien: Böhlau 1969); AE 1987, 130; AE 1987, 154; AE 1988, 196. Cf. discussion in Carlos R. Galvao-Sobrinho, “Feasting the Dead Together,” in Free at Last! The Impact of Freed Slaves on the Roman Empire (ed. Sinclair Bell and Teresa Ramsby; London: Bristol Classical Press, 2012), 130-176.

91 Harrill, Manumission, 163.

persons sought connections to those resources. Imperial patronage, furthermore, towards communities, towns, and regions, undermined personal connections between patrons and their clients. Consequently, patron-client bonds became less diffuse and all encompassing.

**Pictures of Roman Manumission**

Roman manumission facilitated social integration and mobility in ways impossible for non-Romans (*peregrini*). In particular, the process of manumission and the resulting legal rights, allowed the freedperson to traverse many of the Roman-constructed boundaries in which non-Romans were enclosed. As Clifford Ando explains, the provinces resembled “complex mosaics” of peoples with varying political and economic privileges, which were “reassigned to and re-identified within new social and geographic realities of Roman rule.” Every social group of the Empire, moreover, operated within *prisms*. These were the limitations on mobility and the quality of social resources that constrained an individual or group’s potential, and market capacity. All the more, poverty

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94 Stewart, “Patronage,” 159


limited access to more favorable environments. Each of these prisms vacillated within Roman territorial classifications and political boundaries.

It must have been readily apparent to all people living under Roman rule that there were limitations on social mobility and the quality of social resources. The ability for a Roman to create another Roman citizen, however, was a prerogative that the dominant held over the conquered. Greg Woolf:

One of the consequences of the low level of institutionalisation of the empire was that it depended for its success on a series of social institutions most of which pre-dated empire, but which assumed new roles as Rome acquired hegemony over the Mediterranean world. Among the institutions that were especially important were citizenship and slavery, both of which led to a steady expansion in the numbers of Romans.

The intersecting radii of power in the manumission process also suggest a certain geographic connectedness with other Romans. This papyrus fragment from the mid-second century CE represents the personal identification of the freedman M. Antonius Hermes:

Antonius Antoni lib(ertus)
Hermes ann(orum) xxxx
manumissus vindictis
[------------------------]
prefeçi Ąeg(ypti) (VICESIMAM) solb(it)
p(ublice). (VICESIMA) lib(ertatis) p(opuli) R(omani) accepi Chal
cedonius Aug(ustorum) n(ostrum)

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Antonius Hermes, 40 years old, freedman of (Marcus) Antonius, manumitted by 
vindicta (by prefect X in the nome of X), the prefect of Egypt, (M. Antonius) paid 
the 5% manumission tax to the state. I, Chalcedonios, house-born slave of the 
emperors, have received the 5% manumission tax of the Roman people from 
Marcus Antonius [----------] (P. Mich. 7.426=CPL 171).

This text offers a synoptic view of the interconnected relationships that formal Roman
manumission encompassed. First, Hermes was fully enfranchised as a Roman citizen 
through his former master, now patron Marcus Antonius, who sponsored the 
manumission and social transformation. The manumission not only created a citizen, but 
allowed the slave owner to become a formal patron to a Roman citizen. Second, the 
manumission had the legal backing of the unnamed prefect of Egypt who oversaw the 
legal process. Third, Hermes’s new status was ratified by an imperial bureaucrat named 
Chalcedonios. He himself was a slave (verna) in the emperor’s empire-wide family 
(familia Caesaris). Fourth, Hermes was thus vicariously linked to the emperor himself. 
This identification document relates that Herems, the former slave, is a Roman citizen 
with geographically transportable rights, guaranteed wherever Roman law was 
recognized.

My intention in the discussion above was not to qualitatively compare the Roman 
slavery system to the Greek system. The Roman Empire was not a benevolent institution,
and slavery was one of its most brutal programs. This project, however, underlines the significance of Roman manumission in the social world of Paul. Slavery was not uniform, just as manumission was not uniform. Nor was the experience of slavery uniform. Some slaves had a more reasonable expectation of manumission than others, with different expectations of life after manumission. For some manumitted slaves the system—despite its warts and scars—was justified and re-inscribed. Slaves owned slaves. Freedpersons owned slaves. Citizen freedpersons manumitted slaves and became patrons of other citizen freedpersons.\textsuperscript{100} Charting out the various features of Roman manumission allows one to see parallels with some of crucial aspects of the early Jesus movement as it was manifested in Paul’s ministries.

\textit{Manumission as social apparatus.} Manumission presupposed integration and connectedness of the freed slave. Why Romans manumitted is a question Chapter 2 investigates. The “most important factor,” Jane Garner writes, “in the willingness of the Romans to admit to their citizenship slaves freed by individual Romans was that the slave had been an integral part of a \textit{familia}.”\textsuperscript{101} Manumission was thus a versatile social practice that served a variety of Roman family needs including economic, hereditary, and marital.

\textit{Manumission in Corinth.} Roman colonies, Chapter 3 suggests, especially freedmen colonies like Corinth, were fast tracks for Roman manumissions, full enfranchisement, civic and social integration of freedpersons. For skilled urban domestic

\textsuperscript{100} Cf. e.g. \textit{AE} 1988, 196 (2\textsuperscript{nd} cent. CE Ostia); \textit{IG} 10, 02 (2\textsuperscript{nd} cent. CE Thessalonica).

\textsuperscript{101} Gardner, \textit{Roman Citizen}, 19.
slaves of Roman citizens, or indeed for slaves of Roman freedpersons, colonies provided more opportunities for manumission and the possibility of Roman citizenship. This environment generated expectations, shaped mindsets, and induced social pressures for manumission to continue, which strengthened the social system and patronage networks that initiated the process. Paul’s congregations were part of this environment in Corinth, and we know of several persons Paul mentions who were likely slaves in Corinth. This sheds light on 1 Cor. 7:20-23, but also on the descriptions of these persons and their activities.

Manumission within social networks. The manumission of a slave within social networks also affected others in the network. The mobility and integration of a freedperson, i.e. participation in a Roman civis whether social, economic, political, or religious meant precisely that he or she was embedded in a patronage web. Slave owners could plant certain types of slaves in particular situations, and then strategically manumit those slaves into those situations, which could benefit themselves, the freedperson, but also with whom the freedperson has a relationship. As chapter 4 explains, freedpersons were also geographically mobile. The ability to travel and conduct business, and do so as part of an occupational networks, has important counterpoints in Paul’s own ministry. The upshot is that those who were likely slaves or freedpersons in Paul’s ministry may themselves have been benefactors or patrons for Paul and the communities he founded.

Manumission in 1 Cor. 7:21. In light of the legal and social conditions of Roman manumission, Chapter 5 argues for a new grammatical and syntactical reconstruction of 1 Cor. 7:21. Paul, it seems, was not offering a conditional clause from which slaves could
choose manumission if the opportunity arose, nor was 7:21 was an exception to Paul’s rule in 1 Cor. 7:17 that one should remain in the state of one’s baptismal call. Instead, Paul used a standard rhetorical device, often called a diatribal form, that offered instruction on how to respond to external conditions out of one’s control: both the condition of slavery and the act of manumission.
CHAPTER 2:
MANUMISSION IN CONTEXT: INCENTIVES AND CONSTRAINTS

In his monumental work *Conquerors and Slaves*, Keith Hopkins aptly inquired, “Why did the Romans free so many slaves? The answer, according to Hopkins, was because manumission was a major reinforcement of the slavery system. The prospect of freedom was an incentive for hard work, and kept slaves under the control of the master. Slaves used their *peculium*, i.e. savings, gifts from third parties, or allowances from the master, to pay substantial sums for their freedom, from which monies masters were able to replace the manumitted slave with a younger one. This self-purchase would have covered the manumission tax (*vicesima libertatis*) as well, a 5% tax on the value of the slave incurred at manumission. Masters, moreover, could withhold manumission until a slave had progeny who could replace him or her in servitude. Thus, most of the servile population of the Roman world probably never achieved freedom at all.

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103 Hopkins, *Conquerors and Slaves*, 118.


Other classical scholars such as Thomas Wiedemann and Keith Bradley have supported this interpretation of manumission, and Sandra Joshel recently articulated the issue thusly: “the frequency of manumission is important for understanding the Roman practice of mastery, because the possibility of freedom holds out a promise to the slave, which the owner could use to secure the slave’s acceptance of his or her condition as one that had an end.” Additionally, scholars of the New Testament and Early Christianity have followed this line. Dimitris Kyrtatas, in his book *The Social Structure of the Early Christian Communities* argued that “The new religion [Christianity] imparted to slaves no sense, vision or expectation of liberation.” Slaves, Kyrtatas explains, “sacrificed all their savings,” and those who “in old age handed over to their masters all their savings, with little or no prospect of earning them afresh, serve as an example of what freedom meant.” The “money [the masters] obtained could be used for the purchase of new slaves.” Manumission thus “helped reproduce rather than abolish” slavery. Likewise, Jennifer Glancy writes:

manumission was hardly an exceptional or a revolutionary occurrence. Indeed, regular manumission was part of the smooth functioning of the Roman slave system, and hope of manumission motivated loyalty and hard work among slaves. Slave earnings typically financed a slave’s liberty; the slaveholder could use those

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funds to purchase a younger, more vigorous slave. Nonetheless, the majority of slaves in the first century were still enslaved when they died.\textsuperscript{110}

The notion that manumission was replacement, or what I henceforth call the replacement model of manumission, is flawed. That is not to deny there is some truth to the rather ugly fact. But it is limited in its applicability because it assumes that Roman concepts of manumission were exclusively, or at least principally, economic and decided by the slave. According to this model, then, manumission was an economic transaction that was initiated, and in some way determined, by the slave and his or her monetary value, and to which the master secondarily responded. Yet, this stress on the economic basis of manumission isolates the slave and master relationship and occludes wider issues that underscored both the concept and process of Roman manumissions, sometimes for the worse. For example, if manumission occurred as replacement, what were the reasons to manumit if no replacement was needed? This chapter argues that Roman concepts of manumission were not strictly “replacement oriented and thus economic. As a result, the incentives for manumission should be re-evaluated. Manumission was also a social apparatus that presupposed integration and connectedness of the freed slave. It served a variety of purposes related most basically to diverse family needs, which included among others, family agents, progeny or heirs, and marriage.

Manumission could and did reinforce the slavery system to a certain extent, and I affirm that the notion of self-purchase for manumission was operative in the Greco-Roman world. But the hypothesis of self-payment and replacement vis-à-vis Roman manumissions should be attenuated. First, as Henrik Mouritsen points out, compelling evidence for it is lacking. Out of the 1,200 or so inscriptions that record payment on the Temple of Apollo at Delphi out and that record payment, only one hundred occur in the first century CE. Notably these are sacral manumissions, which was not a legally recognized manumission process according to Roman law. Likewise, evidence of self-purchase from Egypt is also minimal. The procedures and formulas used in papyrus documents that record payment seem to reflect older Greek traditions and procedures, not Roman, and suggest continuity from the Ptolemaic period in which a formalized system of payment was likely to be a part. Roman legal sources, moreover, “barely hint” at the possibility that a peculium might be used for self-purchase. Book fifteen of the Digest, entirely dedicated to the peculium, mentions its use as payment on only three occasions, all linked to situations where a slave had borrowed money that was then offered to the

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111 By Roman manumission I mean both the legal status of the slave owner- he or she is a Roman citizen whether freeborn or freed- and the legally recognized process of manumission- manumissio vindicta, testamento, epistulam, inter amicos. Cf. discussion in Chapter 1.


113 Hopkins, Conquerors and Slaves, 140.

master in return for manumission.\textsuperscript{115} In other words, the evidence for “self-purchase” is generally older (from the Greek and Hellenistic period) and not fully institutionalized into the Roman system.

It is Roman comedy in fact that provides more references to self-payment than any other literary genre.\textsuperscript{116} But we should be especially suspicious of its supposed reflection as social reality. The scenarios of slaves accumulating money for their own manumission were clearly a crude classist joke, many of which had likely already appeared in the original Greek productions of the plays. For example, Plautus’s stereotypical character Pseudolos- a Latinized form of the Greek “liar slave”- may be misleading as it was originally staged at Rome in 191 BCE, but based on a Greek original of 309/8 BCE and set in Athens.\textsuperscript{117} Additionally, in these comedies the self-purchased freedman was depicted as a social oddity, separated from his patron.\textsuperscript{118} What is more, the idea that slaves could affect their own manumission was, for the ancient Roman audience, ridiculous, not least because the peculium belonged to the slave-owner anyway.

Second, manumission as replacement also runs counter to the Roman notion of


\textsuperscript{116} Nowhere in the surviving corpus of Cicero’s writings is there any hint that payment was part of the manumission process. Cf. Mouritsen, \textit{The Freedman}, 163.

\textsuperscript{117} Wolfgang de Melo, \textit{Plautus IV} (LCL; Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2012) 225-6; Paul Nixon, \textit{Plautus IV} (LCL; Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1932), vii. cf. also Plautus, \textit{Aul.}, which is set in Athens.

\textsuperscript{118} Mouritsen, \textit{The Freedman}, 164-5.
the patron-freedperson relationship. Henrik Mouritsen summarizes the situation nicely:

Payment for manumission in itself is a logical hypothesis- but only if we suppose that a replacement should be needed. The fundamental difference between Rome and other slave societies such as Greece and South America lay in the slave’s unique status after manumission and the well-documented expectation of continuous links between patron and freedman. Self-purchase did occur, but the evidence suggests it was the exception rather than the rule and probably concentrated in certain [slave] professions. 119

The economic basis of manumission by ostensible self-purchase was characteristic of non-Roman manumissions, which presupposed a discontinuation of the slave’s service. As we saw in the previous chapter, Greek manumissions, for example, did not presuppose a patron for the freedperson. Thus there was a need for paramone clauses to keep the nominally freed slave tethered and working. By contrast, Roman manumission was conceptualized as an act of beneficium on the part of the owner who was able to grant Roman citizenship to a freed slave immediately upon his or her manumission. The transition from slave, i.e. property, to a type of citizen, moreover, suggests that social integration, of some sort, for the former slave was assumed. Roman manumissions in the imperial period worked within a complex patronage system in which manumission presupposed a relationship between the former slave and a patron. What that relationship entailed is a question that deserves some comment. The relationship between former owner, now-patron, and former slave, now-freedperson, was hence a type of enforced social pedagogy, and one that did not form in a vacuum but within social networks.

Third, and most importantly, the replacement model must assume a need for a new slave in order to work. But manumission could fulfill a number of basic family needs, only some of which necessarily relied on a replacement slave. The incentives for manumission should therefore be reconsidered. In what follows I emphasize three alternative stimuli for manumission besides replacement: family agents, progeny or heirs, and marriage.

**Incentives for Manumission**

The consensus among scholars is that there was more motivation to manumit a slave from the urban domestic staff, with whom masters would typically have been familiar, than a rural worker.\(^{120}\) This seems reasonable. One should also consider, though, the wider social relations and the competencies that an urban context assumed and necessitated for owners and slaves alike: a city or colony’s businesses and shops, civic and cultic institutions, varying literacies, multi-ethnic peoples, multilingual communications whether verbal or epigraphic, and higher population densities, to name a few. Those slaves whom the owner purchased so as to function in such a setting—i.e. skilled slaves—were also those most likely to be manumitted.

To be clear, moreover, there were economic incentives for owners to manumit. Yet, manumission “as an institution” was “not governed by any strict economic logic.”\(^{121}\)

\(^{120}\) Mouritsen, *The Freedman* 199; Garnsey, *Ideas*, 98.

\(^{121}\) Mouritsen, *The Freedman* 196.
The economic incentives for manumission were not limited to a desired replacement slave. The desire for economic agents for the owner or family was also a significant factor. Observe, for example, this pair of inscriptions from Puteoli:

D(is) M(anibus)
P(ublius) Claudius Aciba
sibi fecti

To the Divine Shades.
Publius Claudius Akiba made this (monument) for himself (CIL X.2258).

D(is) M(anibus)
P(ublius) C(aulius) Coeranus
negotiatori
ferrariarum et
vinariarum
Acibas lib(ertus)
patrono merenti

To the divine shades. For Publius Cauilus (sic Claudius) Coeranus, merchant in iron-goods and wines, (Publius Claudius) Akiba, (his) freedman, (made this monument) for his deserving patron (CIL X.1931).

The process of his manumission is not indicated, but the freedman P. Claudius Akiba was at least a (Junian) Latin and perhaps fully-enfranchised as a Roman citizen. The reference to his “well deserving” patron (patrono merenti), moreover, applies beyond Akiba’s manumission and legal enfranchisement. It is likely that the former, owner now-patron, P. Claudius Coeranus manumitted Akiba and made the former slave his business agent or partner in the merchant industry. Additionally, Akiba’s ability to furnish a funerary epitaph for himself and his patron seems to suggest that he acquired economic means.

Many historians have held that freedmen, even those that were economically
active such as Akiba, were not independent to any meaningful extent, but their patrons lurked behind them exerting a high degree of control.\textsuperscript{122} Through his study of the \textit{Augustales}, an Empire-wide \textit{collegia} of principally wealthy freedmen, John D’Arms has instead argued for the notion of “independent freedmen.”\textsuperscript{123} After manumission, according to D’Arms, freedmen were released from the restricting controls of a former master and his \textit{familia} and were in a position to accumulate wealth in commercial and manufacturing ventures. Their success depended upon their own capacities, contacts and initiative, and their ability to establish and maintain social relationships that were largely of their own choosing. D’Arms thus suggested that these exceptionally wealthy, and by default mobile, former slaves were patron\textit{less}.\textsuperscript{124}

As Henrik Mouritsen observes, however, D’Arms’s theory implies that the most energetic and gifted slaves were trained and set up in business, then freed and endowed with a substantial \textit{peculium} with which they would amass fortunes matching those of


their patrons. “More realistically,” Mouritsen counters, “we might try to explain the rich freedman within the context of patronal relationships…the richest freedmen were precisely those who enjoyed the greatest support.”\textsuperscript{125} That is, they helped build or augment the patron’s fortunes as well as their own.

To return to the inscription above, Akiba would have already had the support of Coeranus prior to his manumission. Akiba would already have been involved in some type of patronage web, social or occupational network, into which Coeranus then manumitted him. If not by \textit{ex testamento} process, moreover, the possible costs of freeing Akiba—the manumission tax or court fees incurred before the magistrate (\textit{manumission vindicta}) –were most likely underwritten as “part of the regular cost of running the familia” in an urban context.\textsuperscript{126}

Greg Woolf’s comments are insightful on this score. Woolf has recently argued that the idea of most adult males being completely under the thumb of an aged \textit{paterfamilias} has to be rejected for all periods of Roman history. In a world in which men typically did not marry for the first time until their late twenties or after, and in which life-expectancy was at pre-modern levels, many adult Romans would have had no living parents.\textsuperscript{127} Those old men who did survive were treated with enormous respect, but families needed all their adult members, including slaves, to be able to operate as

\textsuperscript{125} Mouritsen, \textit{The Freedman}, 234.
\textsuperscript{126} Mouritsen, \textit{The Freedman} 196.
effective economic agents. And it is important to recall that whether formal or informal manumission, according to Roman law, the right afforded for the manumitted slave to conduct business (*ius commercii* and *mancipatio*) as if a full Roman citizen was guaranteed.

A vast corpus of freedmen epigraphic evidence seems to support the notion that wealthy, mercantile Roman freedman, including the empire-wide *collegia* of *Augustales*, dominated the urban commercial sector. The typicality of the wealthy Roman freedman, like Petronius’ Trimalchio, was once a hot topic of scholarly discussion. For many, the masses of freedmen inscriptions indicated that ambitious former slaves propelled their “servile” descendants into Italy’s aristocratic *ordo decurionum*, leading to the latter’s ultimate decline. Others have taken a more cautious approach. Mouritsen

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132 Mouritsen, furthermore, has called for a reevaluation of the freedmen epigraphic corpus. The evidence, he argues, is indicative of freedmen epigraphic habits, and not wholly representative of their social mobility, the *ordo*’s makeup, the demographics or population of the city. There were other reasons for freedmen
demonstrated, convincingly in my view, that far from manumitted slaves overrunning the aristocracy, the aristocracy actually assisted in raising freedmen and their families to social prominence.\textsuperscript{133} While such cases may not have been typical,” Mouritsen admits, it “shows a remarkable potential for social integration.”\textsuperscript{134} We will revisit this topic in the following chapter.

Manumission could also be a response to a shortage of progeny and heirs. Consider as an example, the letters of Marsisouchos, ex-high priest of the imperial cult temple to Hadrian (\textit{P.Tebt. 2.407}). Marsisouchos’s first letter informs the unnamed daughter of the contents of a portion of his will. He relates that he has inherited property form his mother, including slaves, and that two of the female slaves (Serapis and Soteria) are to be free (\textit{ἐλεύθερα εἶναι}) “on account their relationship (\textit{συν[υ]σάν}) with me, my familiarity ([\textit{συντροφίαν}) and concern (\textit{κηδεμονίαν}) for them.” In addition, he relates, Serapis’ and Soteria’s slave children out to be free, totaling five house-born slaves

epigraphic practices and self-representation, such as the importance of family for the newly freed person, conjugal and parental bonds, commemoration and reinforcement of collective identity. Henrik Mouritsen, “Freedmen and Decurions: Epitaphs and Social History in Imperial Italy,” \textit{JRS} 95 (2005): 38-63; Mouritsen, “Mobility and Social Change in Italian Towns During the Principate,” in \textit{Roman Urbanism: Beyond the Consumer City} (ed. Helen M. Parkins; New York, NY: Routledge, 1997), 59-82.

Concerning the same epigraphic data, Paul Zanker focused on social and cultural nuances pointing out that freedmen were simply the most likely to memorialize their families in stone. Paul Zanker, “Tombs of Freedmen” \textit{Jdl} 90 (1975): 267-315. She explored the “Epigraphic Habit” of the Western Empire and asserted that Roman testamentary privilege was not only one of the many benefits that came to new citizens [formally manumitted slaves], but was a privilege desired, commented on, and verifiably exercised. Elizabeth A. Meyer, “Explaining the Epigraphic Habit in the Roman Empire: The Evidence of Epitaphs,” \textit{JRS} 80 (1990): 74-96.

\textsuperscript{133} Mouritsen, “Mobility,” 68-81; Mouritsen, \textit{The Freedman}, 261-78.
\textsuperscript{134} Mouritsen, “Mobility,” 70.
Marsisouchos then writes a second letter to his wife Berenike, in which he relates that three other male house-born slaves (Euporos and Nikephoros and Holokottinos) should be free. These are children of another person whose name is lost to a lacuna, but they are registered as offspring of Berenike’s female slave Epiteuxis (ἐγγ[δ-]...νων...διὰ ἀπογραφῆς ἐκ δούλης σου Ἐπιτεύξεως). The second letter closes by stating that Marsisouchos has paid in full the manumission tax on behalf of them. Both letters contained warnings for his wife and daughter not to interfere with his plans (ἐὖ ποιήσεις µὴ κακώσασα), and state that he writes the letters while on his way to the circuit court, presumably to ratify his will. Finally, both letters functioned as a manumissio per epistulam for his family.

In the first set of manumissions, Marsisouchos himself seems to have been the father of the five vernae through the two female slaves he inherited. The slaves previously belonged to his mother, and may themselves have been vernae who were raised with Marsisouchos (συντροφία). He manumits the mothers and children together maintaining some semblance of family structure. In the second set, Marsisouchos does not specify the reason for manumitting as he does in the first. But it is possible that Marsisouchos’ daughter has informally adopted the boys of her mother’s female slave

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135 P.Tebt. 2.407 (199 CE).
137 [...] ε ἁπτής [ἐγ]ραψα πορευόμενος εἰς τὸν διαλογισμὸν [...].
138 Cf. Chapter 1, and Chapter 1 Appendix.
Epiteuxis. It is perhaps telling that the letter addressed to Marsisouchos’ daughter does not mention a husband or any adult male for that matter. It is noteworthy that the desire for offspring, slave reproduction, and manumission seem to cooperate in this family vignette, however messily.

The preservation of slave family structure, and protection of freedpersons should also be noted. A Roman will from Cappadocia dating to 50-150 CE illustrates this well:

Here is what I order those that have been freed by me, on this condition and according to what I have arranged in my two tabulae and codicil(s): that their children are not put out for sale (ἐκτίθεσθαι) and so the family of the freedmen be preserved forever (ὡστε τὸ γένος τῶν ἀπελευθέρων), also that no one be deposited in my grave. And if one of my freedmen or their descendants are wronged or deprived of something given by me, harmed or threatened, he will pay each year to the goddess Comana nine virgin girls, 9 boys, 9 bulls, 9 white creatures with gilded horns, 9 cows, 9 golden-bridled horses, 9 white goats, 9 she-goats, 9 golden-fleeced rams, 9 white swallows. Let these things be offered up to Zeus Thymnasa to Zeus Pharnavas and to Anaitis, and should the aforementioned gods not be appeased, may the earth not yield fruit, nor the sky water, nor the sun light, but let him be liable to sacrilege. And may that wicked one be destroyed, utterly ruined. I set up this tablet on my tomb (AE 2002, 1489).

Most likely the slaves of the unnamed owner were manumitted ex testamento, and this type was often a result of faithful service on the part of the slave. At the same time, a particular mutually beneficial relationship developed between master and slave, which

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139 Christopher P. Jones, “A Roman Will in Cappadocia,” EA 37 (2004): 97 takes ἐκτίθεσθαι as “exposed,” and notes that references to exposure of children are very rare in inscriptions. Given the ensuing mention of the freedmen’s family (τὸ γένος τῶν ἀπελευθέρων), such a stipulation seems out of place.
may have allowed greater mobility after manumission. And this will’s outrageous curse on those who infringe on the patron’s freedmen is indicative of some of the strong relationships among the familia. Both of the examples above, moreover, challenge the claim that “slaves embarked on lives as freedmen with no recognition of pre-existing conjugal relationships, and consequently a rather different family structure from that existing amongst the freeborn community.” To be sure, “manumission of members of a servile family,” Richard Saller writes, “was often spread over time, with the result that at any one moment these families straddled the slave/free boundary.” The will from

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140 Bradley, *Masters and Slaves*, 90-1 helpfully points out that after the *lex Fufia Caninia*, which limited the number of slaves a master could manumit in a will, *manumissio ex testamento* forced a principle of selectivity on the part of the master, and initiated competition among slaves. Bradley also argues there are no justifiable grounds for believing that *manuissio ex testamento* was more common than other methods, otherwise the passage of the *lex Aelia*, which applied to manumission during the owner’s lifetime as well as by his will (Gaius, *Inst.* 11.17; 18) would have been superfluous. The reverse could also be true: based on the other Augustan laws, there is no reason to think that other manumission methods were more common. Moreover, since the *lex Fufia Caninia* refers to Roman wills and thus formal manumission, its intent was to limit the number of slaves a master could as, but Roman wills are largely absent from Egypt and presumably from other non-citizen wills in the provinces, I wonder how much Bradley’s argument applies beyond Italy. By contrast, P.Hamb. 1.72=CPL 174, dated on paleography to the 2nd century CE, appears to be an example of a will from Egypt that is in accordance with Roman law. The unknown executor manumits a number of slaves if they were not fugitives. Significantly the will is written in Latin, and explicitly mentions the *lex Fufia Caninia*. For other examples of wills from Roman Egypt, cf. Livia Migliardi Zingale, *I testamenti romani nei papiri e nelle tavolette d'Egitto : silloge di documenti dal I al IV secolo D.C* (Toronto: G. Giappichelli, 1991). Cf. also Duff, *Freedmen*, 26. Cp. P.Oxy. 3.494=Chr.Mitt.305.

141 Lindsay, *Adoption*, 131. For similar wills some of which also preserve family structure, cf. P.Oslo 3.129 (3rd cent. CE); P.Oxy. 3.494=Chr.Mitt.305; P.Tebt. 2.407; P.Select. 14= P.Test. Roma 7.

Cappadocia, however, challenges the idea that slave families were unrecognized, and the will of Marsisouchos reframes the notion of what a normal structure among freeborn families looked like.

The particular family need, whether for economic agents as Woolf suggests, or for male children, sheds light on Mouritsen’s observation that house-born slaves (οἰκογένεις/θερεπτεῖς/vernae) may have held an advantage for manumission prospects. As attested in the epigraphic record, however, the term verna also denoted a private relationship usually between children and adults. The expression verna, moreover, was in the same semantic complex as the word for adopted, foster child (alumnus/a), and even son or daughter (filius/a). The expression verna could also distinguish social status within a family, and was well as an occupational role. Many inscriptions, for example, testify to the high social, political, or economic positions of verna in the emperor’s household (familia Caesaris). This broader semantic range suggests that the original definition of the word verna as a house-born slave may need modification. Thus, verna often grew up among other members of the family, learning the same skills as other children, and later operated as family agents, whether slave or freed. The advantage for verna may also apply to inter and intra-family adoption: insuring that one’s oikos does not become

144 ILS 410; ILS 377=CIL 14.2856; ILS 1421; ILS 1503; ILS 1504; ILS 1511.

Roman slaves informally manumitted (\textit{Latini Iuniani}) were not able to benefit from wills according to Roman law (Ulpian, \textit{Inst.} 20,14; Gaius, \textit{Inst.} 1,23), but by adopting them a family could avoid this legal barrier.

An inscription from the Roman colony of Scupi in Moesia Superior (\textit{Colonia Flavia Aelia Scupi}) evinces similar familial concerns, although with a twist. A Latin epitaph of the second century CE reads:

\begin{quote}
D(is) M(anibus) Maria Maxima vix(it) an(nos) L M(arcus) Marius Blicities l(iber) e(x) t(estamento) e(ius) p(onendum) c(uravit) et Val(erii) Sabinianus et Maximianus f(ili) m(onumentum) p(arenti) b(en) m(erenti) f(ecerunt).
\end{quote}

To the Divine Shades. Maria Maxima lived 50 years. Marcus Marius Blicities, freedman by her testament, arranged the placement and Valerius Sabinianus and Valerius Maximianus, sons, made this monument for their well-deserving parents (IMS 6.131=IL Jug 0045=AE 1984, 0769).\footnote{IMS 6.131=IL Jug 0045=AE 1984, 0769.}

Maria appears to have been a freeborn woman, apparently a Roman citizen, as inferred from the lack of a legal-status marker. She had two sons by her slave Blicities. Upon his
manumission (*ex testamento*) Blicities became a Roman citizen, and took her *gens* as his *nomen*. Most likely his praenomen is the name of one of her male relatives. Significantly, it seems Blicities outlived his former-master Maria who died at age fifty, either because he was granted an exceptionally long life, or because he was much younger than she. Indications of male guardianship for Maria, moreover, such as husband or father, are also lacking, and thus the situation may have been similar to the daughter of Marsisouchos. Blicities perhaps stood in for Maria’s lost husband and helped produce offspring, who seem to bear the freeborn “father’s” *gens* name—Valerius. Or the two boys were adopted.

The ancient Roman term that describes such a union between a freeborn and a slave was *contubernium*, and more specifically since Maria was probably a Roman citizen *contubernium cum cive*. Suffice it to say, as the etymology signifies, *contubernium* (lit. tent-companion) was not a legally recognized union. In such cases the offspring inherited the legal status of the mother according to Roman law. The thinking was most likely that a male slave owner could produce more slaves (*vernae*) through his slave women (*ancillae*). In the case of Maria, however, we have the opposite consequence of the legal stipulation.

The two boys Sabinianus and Maximianus would take Maria’s status as Roman citizens. We can further gather from the “-ianus” appellations on their names that these sons of Maria and Blicities were adopted out to the *Valerii* family, and possibly adopted up. Whatever the particular family circumstances, the citizenship statuses of Sabinianus

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and Maximianus would have made such an heirship-adoption more attractive for the Valerii. The rigors of life, the demands for family, and/or the desire for personal, social survival varied across the Roman world, and any number of surprising social arrangements between free and slave could result. Indeed, unions between slave and freeborn were more common than often realized, at least in certain contexts. The upshot for Blicities, though, is that his manumission was most likely linked to his relationship with Maria.

Because the social boundaries between statuses were continually crossed, the prospects of manumission for marriage, especially for women, could also be significant. The slave supply, Niall McKeown and William Scheidel argue, depended on reproduction via female slaves, and hence the chance of ancillae gaining their freedom during their childbearing age was greatly restricted. While no doubt this hypothesis has


\[\text{151 Garnsey, Ideas, 98.}


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some basis, it cannot apply uniformly for all locales or for all types of slaves. Slave supply estimates assume what I have described as the replacement model of manumission. As we have seen, however, manumission could satisfy basic family needs, many of which could probably not or did not wait for a replacement slave. What is more, Neville Morley has recently argued citing Wiedemann and Scheidel, that the demography of the slave population and its numbers could only have been sustained if manumission rates were low.\textsuperscript{153} This claim, however, does not hold up in particular urban settings in which manumission was a social norm and mindset. And as will become clear, cinching off opportunities for manumission could enfeeble family longevity, a topic to which the project turns in the next chapter.

If manumission was withheld until after childbearing age, moreover, then slave women would be manumitted in old age only, if at all. This scenario was certainly a possibility, perhaps realized quite frequently. Manumission of pre-menopausal slave

\textit{World History of Slavery: Volume 1, The Ancient Mediterranean World} (ed. Keith Bradley and Paul Cartledge; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 287-310: “for it is safe to say that in the most general terms, the relative significance of capture in war had to be gradually eclipsed by natural reproduction.” Harris, “Demography,” 62-75, however, doubts the fertility rate proposed by Scheidel as an adequate explanation. As McKeown, \textit{The Invention}, 136 notes, vital for Scheidel’s argument is his estimate that 10% or more of the population were slaves, yet there is very little on which to base this estimate. This is a circular argument, however, for Scheidel’s 10% estimate must also be based on an assumption of the practice and rate of manumission. For general discussion of slave supply cf. Keith Bradley, \textit{Slavery and Society at Rome} (Key Themes in Ancient History; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 31-56; P. A. Brunt, \textit{Italian Manpower, 225 B.C.-A.D. 14} (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), 121-30.

women by “ransom” from a third party, for example, was not uncommon, at least as evidence from Egypt suggests. The need for a ransom in order to relinquish a female slave thus reinforces that manumission could be withheld from ancillae.

But there is also much evidence to suggest other possibilities. Given what Roman law authorized (ancilla matrimonia causa), for instance, manumission for marriage must have been unexceptional, and the epigraphic evidence seems to bear this out. More recent work on the provinces of Illyricum has yielded important results in this respect: out of a total of fifty-seven manumitted individuals with known age at death, twenty-nine (i.e. over 50%) died at thirty years or below, thus under the legal age limit for full enfranchisement as a Roman citizen. Twenty-one of these twenty-nine freedpersons were women.

Geza Alföldy’s data, the reader will recall, though culled from a different region of the empire, suggests a similar picture of manumission, as does evidence from the familia Caesaris, the emperor’s network of slaves and freedpersons. The imperial freedmen (lib. Aug.) owned their own slaves, who were also considered part of the familia Caesaris. Upon their manumission they became the freedmen or freedwomen of the imperial freedmen (lib. liberti/ lib. liberate). According to Weaver, where the age at

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154 P.Oxy. 38.2843=P.Oxy. 1.48 (86 CE); AE 1904, 0217=P.Lips. 2.151 (3rd cent. CE); P.Oxy. 4.722 (91-107 CE); P.Turner 19=P. Select 24 (101 CE); P.Oxy. 2.349=SB 1.5616 (1st cent. CE)

155 Lucrețiu Mihăilescu-Bîrliba, Les affranchis dans les provinces romaines de l’Illyricum (Philippika 12; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2006) 88. The author remarks: it is not very surprising that a relatively high percentage of the freedpersons are of an early age. The first person who fails to comply with the law is the emperor himself who offers the freedom to slaves before 30 years.
death is stated, the evidence (19 inscriptions) indicates a high rate of manumission before age thirty, particularly for women. And marriage, Weaver notes, was one of the means by which or ends for which female slaves in this group (lib. libertii/ lib. liberate) were manumitted (ancilla matrimonia causa).

Numbers like these are tricky. Ancillae were undoubtedly some of the most vulnerable and abused persons in the ancient world, and they were used to bolster the slavery system. But ancillae were also manumitted because of sexual relationships with their owners, or for the sake of marriage with their owner, or for marriage with another male. An example of this common family dynamic is Annia Laveria from second-century Ostia:

L. Mindius Dius  
fecit sibi et Genuciae Tryphaenae coniugi  
incomparabili cum qua vixit annis xxiii mens iii  
et Lucceuae Ianuariae ma-  
rit «ae et Anniae Laueriae contuverna»  
<li suae sanctissimae>  
et libert(is) libertab(usque) suis post[er(is)q(ue)] eor(um)  
h(oc) m(onumentum) e(xterum) h(eredem) n(on) [s(equetur)].  
In fronte p(edes) xxx, in agro p(edes) xxxi.

L(ucius) Mindius Dios made (this monument) for himself and for (his) incomparable wife Genucia Tryphaena at the time she died, (aged) 24 years and 3 months, and for Lucceia Ianuaria his spouse, and for Annia Laveria his most venerable slave wife Annia Laveria, and for his freedmen and freedwomen and all

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156 P. R. C. Weaver, Familia Caesaris: A Social Study of the Emperor's Freedmen and Slaves (Cambridge, UK: University Press, 1972), 99-100. Cf. e.g. CIL VI.29378; XIV.524; VI.8866.

those after him. This monument on the outside will not go to the heirs. In front, thirty feet, in rear 31 feet (CIL 14.5026).

The first wife (coniunx) of L. Mindius Dius, Genucia Tryphaena, is the primary dedicatee of the epitaph. Dius must have married Lucceia Januaria (marita) quickly after Tryphaena’s death at a young but not uncommon age. Januaria also died, apparently just on the heels of Tryphaena, as both names of the wives were commemorated on the stone simultaneously (i.e. by one hand). Thus, it was probably Januaria’s death that prompted the epitaph. Although we cannot be sure, Januaria was perhaps of lower status than Tryphaena, maybe even a freedwoman (liberta). This would help explain the differentiation in the relational terminology marita, as opposed to incomparabilis coniunx for Tryphaena, at the time the inscription was made. Anniia Laveria was a slave. The descriptor contubernalis, a cognate word of the legal term contubernium, signified her quasi-marital, but legally unsanctioned relationship with her owner L. Mindius Dius. She was written into the epitaph at a later date over an erased line, most likely a line indicating Januaria’s age at death. As an ancilla, Laveria was most likely Dius’ paramour even while he was married to the other women. Given Laveria’s later civil partnership with Dius, however, it is reasonable to deduce that she would have been manumitted had she not died before Dius. Finally,

\[\text{\footnotesize 158 Hadrianic-Antonine period. Reading corrected from the stone by L. Michael White, OSMAP 8.460B.} \]

\[\text{\footnotesize 159 On the other hand, both terms, as well as vir and uxor, were used to describe contubernium and matrimonium. P. R. C. Weaver, “The Status of Children in Mixed Marriages,” in The Family in Ancient Rome: New Perspectives (ed. by Beryl Rawson; Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1986), 147.} \]
Laveria’s appellation is noteworthy. Despite her sexual defenselessness she is described as sanctissima, a term that can mean most venerable, most holy, but also most chaste.

Considering the legal opportunities, the biological and social necessities of families, coupled with the common interlacing of slave and free relationships, the numbers related to manumission for ancillae make good socio-cultural sense nonetheless. These numbers, of course, do not represent a cross-section of the Empire’s slave population. But to a certain extent this is precisely the point. Manumission varied according to family needs and context. Studies of slave supply and manumission should thus be attune to the heterogeneity, and where possible, compile micro-pictures of the manumission environment.

**Conclusions**

This chapter has argued that the replacement model of manumission should be reassessed. This model of manumission asserts that a slave’s self-purchase for manumission allowed masters to replace the manumitted slave with another, thus reinforcing the slavery system. According to this model, manumission was an economic transaction that was initiated, or could be determined, by the slave and his or her financial worth. There were economic incentives to manumit and manumission did reinforce the slavery system to a certain extent. The replacement model, however, is not adequate to explain the full extent of Roman manumission. The supporting evidence for self-purchase is thin, and runs counter to the Roman system of patronage that envisioned an ensuing

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patron-freedperson relationship. Manumission was, at least in part, an act of *beneficium* (gift) from the owner that created an ongoing social relationship between the former master, now patron and the newly freed person. In other words, self-purchase would have worked against this aspect of the Roman system.

Additionally, this chapter critiqued the replacement model for its inability to include wider issues that underlay both the concept and process of Roman manumissions. I argued instead that Roman concepts of manumission were not limited to economics and replacement, and the impetuses for manumission should be re-evaluated. Manumission was a versatile social apparatus that presupposed social integration and connectedness. It could satisfy a variety of purposes related most basically to diverse family needs. I thus offered three basic incentives for manumission besides replacement: family’s economic agents, especially in urban settings; progeny or heirs; and marriage.

Manumission varied according to family needs and context. And the patronage system behind manumission and the possible reasons for manumission should thus be considered, as far as possible, in particular Roman locales. In the following chapter the study turns to a locale most pertinent for the social world of Paul, namely the Roman colony of Corinth.
In the spring of 107 CE Cornelius Fabatus, the grandfather of Pliny the Younger’s wife Calpurnia, had a problem. Fabatus, who lived far to the north on lake Como, near the Alps, where both Pliny and his uncle had been born, had already manumitted an unknown number of slaves informally (*inter amicos*). These freedpersons had (Junian) Latin citizenship and its attendant rights, but they were not full Roman citizens. Fabatus planned to remedy the situation by undertaking *manumissio iteratio*, that is, manumission again by a formal manumission process. In order to carry it out, however, Fabatus needed a Roman magistrate to oversee the *manumissio vindicta* that would lead to full enfranchisement for the freedpersons. He thus wrote to his grandson-in-law Pliny requesting assistance. In his reply Pliny related that Calestrius Tiro, the newly appointed proconsul of Spain, was a very close friend (*familiarissime*) with whom Pliny was associated both personally and publically (*privatis mihi et publicis*), with whom Pliny had served in the military and in the post of quaestor, and finally both had often hosted one another in their respective villas. Pliny continues:

He is now about to leave for his province of Baetica as proconsul, by way of Ticinum. I hope, indeed, I am confident, that I shall readily persuade him to diverge from his route for you (*deflectat ad te*), if you wish to free slaves *vindicata* (*si voles vindicta liberare*) whom you recently manumitted *inter amicos* (*inter amicos manumisisti*). You need not fear that this will be a nuisance for him, since he would not regard a journey round the world as overlong if he made it for my sake (Pliny, *Ep*. 7.16, 3-4).
The above vignette richly illustrates some of the problems with *manumissio vindicta*, a common Roman method for manumission. Fabatus’ geographic location, coupled with the mountainous topography, and a rural political district limited his access to magistrates capable of exercising the necessary *imperium*. Pliny explains that Tiro, following the *via Aemilia*, will travel to *Augusta Taurinorum* (Turin) and Spain through Ticinum (modern Pavia), northwest of Picacenza along the river Po. Ticinum was 54 miles (87 km) south of Comum. That Pliny could so readily expect the new proconsul to undertake that tangential trek was only possible because of Pliny’s social network—a particularly important aspect of manumission to which we shall return.

For now, the example of Pliny and Fabatus helps us reflect on the “gradations of expectations”¹⁶¹ for manumission in the Roman colony of Corinth. That is, how predictable or unpredictable was the manumission process? What were the incentives for the owners? What were the general social expectations? Citing the epistolary correspondence between Pliny and Fabatus, Keith Bradely explains that while in Rome the magistrate officiating the *manumissio vindicta* could be a consul or a praetor, in the provinces it was necessary to acquire the presence of a proconsul, an imperial legate, or an imperial procurator.¹⁶² And although all of these provincial magistrates took residence

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¹⁶² Bradley, *Slaves and Masters*, 104. Bradley also points out that in Egypt manumissions often took place before the *agoranomos* of a town, not a Roman magistrate, and were subject to local law rather than Roman. He further notes that many of these manumissions were “casual,” by which we must presume he means, not entirely of the formal type. Bradley, *Slaves and Masters*, 100; cf. also Raphael Taubenschlag, *The Law of Greco-Roman Egypt in the Light of the Papyri, 332 B.C.-640 A.D* (New York:
in provincial capitals, they could spend much of their time travelling through the provinces for so-called assize tours, during which they would adjudicate legal cases and preside over manumissions.

Their presence in these locales, moreover, was only temporary and occurred on special days (market days). Those Roman citizens living in the surrounding conventus (districts with assize cities at the center) were constrained to the particular location of the Roman magistrate on the particular day in order to have his ear. Thus one may question how often slave owners like Fabatus were willing to expend time and money, as well as travel with their slaves, especially given the limited attendance of the necessary magistrate. The geographic and administrative difficulties, Bradley concludes, made the whole operation “unpredictable,” because any number of adverse factors might intervene to “scotch the whole process.”

This chapter argues, however, that Roman colonies, particularly citizen colonies like Corinth, were fast tracks for Roman manumissions, full enfranchisement, civic and social integration of freedpersons. That is, for skilled urban domestic slaves of Roman citizens, or indeed for slaves of Roman freedpersons, colonies provided more opportunities for manumission and the possibility of Roman citizenship. Roman colonies

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Bradley, Slaves and Masters, 102, n.84. cf. the case of the emperor Galba in Seutonius, Galba 10.1; Plutarch, Galba 5.1.


Bradley, Slaves and Masters, 102.
first furnished the necessary political and civic mechanisms for Roman types of manumission. In turn the act of Roman manumission—the creation of a citizen–generated expectations, shaped mindsets, and induced social pressures for manumission to continue. In turn, this strengthened the social system and patronage networks that initiated the process.

**A Culture of Manumissions**

Nicholas Purcell, in his article “Romans in the Roman World” describes Roman colonies as “the insertion of another strategy of status, another deployment of favour, another rearrangement of rights and privileges, into the geography of Romans overseas.” More generally Purcell sees Romans and the “Roman diaspora” as a “mediator of authority” in the “social and political encounters between ruler and ruled in the Roman empire.” Likewise Clifford Ando articulates that the Roman government was “organized to constrain and direct geographic aspects of social and economic conduct” towards “monumentalized urban centers wherein the depersonalized structures of Roman power were instantiated.” Roman government, Ando summarizes, was “an exercise in social and demographic engineering” meant to transform populations into *civitates*.


167 Purcell, “Romans,” 104.

168 Clifford Ando, “The Roman city in the Roman Period,” Rome, a City and Its Empire in Perspective: The Impact of the Roman world through Fergus Millar’s
Manumissions in Roman Corinth must be understood as part and parcel of a privileged opportunity for Romans in the Roman world, and simultaneously as an expression of social and demographic transformation. Only Roman types of manumission could establish Roman citizenship, and the process was directed and constrained to urban centers of Roman power. Non-Roman slave owners and their slaves, however, had fewer options in a Roman colonial context. Greek types of manumission, sacral or other, generally continued in the Roman period, as we know from manumission records at Thessaly. But it seems Greek practices were divided along what Harrill calls “Romanized and non-Romanized lines.” That is, Greek manumission practices constellated in the free Greek cities of the Roman east, which continued to maintain their various manumission traditions.

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169 The privilege, as scholars of slavery have noted, was structurally linked to Roman geography and political rubrics. Bradley, Slaves and Masters, 103 suggests that “[Roman] urban domestic servants, who had close contacts with their owners, would be able to win the attention and favour of owners and thus present good claims for emancipation, especially if their jobs were rather more than simply menial.”


171 J. Albert Harill, The Manumission of Slaves in Early Christianity (HUT 32; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1995), 55-6 advances “The geographic distribution along Romanized and non-Romanized lines must also be recognized. In Romanized areas, the legal procedures included three formal forms…and two informal forms. There were also degrees of enfranchisement: Junian Latins and Roman citizens. In non-Romanized areas, we find Hellenistic manumission forms with their own particulars, such as the paramonē contracts recorded as fictitious sales of slaves to gods.”
By contrast, in Roman Corinth there is a complete absence of evidence for sacral manumissions, or Greek types of manumissions more generally, and when compared with the neighboring colony at Buthrotum (Colonia Iulia Buthrotum), the absence is more telling. At Buthrotum, between 230 to 150 BCE there are over 400 sacral manumissions recorded on the Asklepieion, with the latest inscription dating to the mid first century BCE, just before Buthrotum’s re-founding as a Roman colony.\textsuperscript{172} Even the evidence for sacral manumissions at the Temple of Apollo at Delphi, the locus classicus for manumission in the Greek world peters out in the 1\textsuperscript{st} cent. CE with only fifty manumissions recorded between 48 and 100 CE.\textsuperscript{173} Of course, the disappearance of sacral manumission in certain areas is not necessarily a direct effect of Roman presence in the east, but the correlation between the data must be respected. How is one to account for it?

Certain administrative and social mechanisms in Roman colonies seem to have generated a disincentive for non-Roman types of manumission. At the same time, these mechanisms allowed Romans slave owners to more readily create Roman citizens by formal manumission—the benefit a system tailored for Romans. An undated honorary inscription from the Roman colony of Mediolanum (modern Milan) provides evidence for that the administrative mechanism. The key lines read:

Libero Patri C(aius) Albinius C(aii) f(ilius) Ou(fentina) Optatus, IIvir i(ure)

\textsuperscript{172} Bronwen L. Wickkiser, “Asklepios in Greek and Roman Corinth,” in Corinth in Context: Comparative Studies on Religion and Society (eds. Steven J. Friesen, Daniel N. Schowalter, and James C. Walters; NovTSup 134; Leiden: Brill, 2010), 63, 64-6.

\textsuperscript{173} Keith Hopkins, Conquerors and Slaves (Sociological Studies in Roman History 1; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 140.
d(icundo) man(umittendi) pot(estate).

“For Liber Pater. Gaius Albinius Oufentina Optatus, son of Gaius, duovir with legal authority to pronounce manumissions (AE 1947, 47, l. 1-5).”\(^{174}\)

Indeed, one could translate this last phrase (manumittendi potestate) “as legal authority to pronounce enfranchisement” or citizenship. As Lopez Barja de Quiroga noted, it is possible that duoviri had imperium and criminal jurisdiction, and thus it cannot be excluded that duoviri could formally free the slaves of colonists.\(^{175}\) In this case, because the duoviri had the necessary imperium to enact the vindicta, slaves who lived in Roman coloniae had perhaps the most frequent access to opportunities for formal manumission and immediate Roman citizenship. It has even been argued that duoviri in municipalities with Latin rights could carry out the manumissio vindicta.\(^{176}\) Whatever the case, in Roman colonies this perk could expedite the process of manumission and full

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\(^{174}\) AE 1947, 47, l. 1-5. Cf. also CILV.5509, whose reading AE 1947, 47 improves.


\(^{176}\) Alvaro d’Ors Pérez-Peix, Epigrafía jurídica de la España romana. Publicaciones del Instituto Nacional de Estudios Jurídicos. Ser. 5. Textos jurídicos antiguos, 100. (Madrid: Ministerio de Justicia, 1953), 143, 241-3 and 298-300; Georges Fabre, Libertus. Recherches sur les rapports patron-affranchi à La fin de la République romaine (Collection de l’École française de Rome, 50.; Rome: École française de Rome, 1981), 16-17. The evidence comes from (1) the chapter 108 of the charter of Colonia Genetiva Iulia Urbanorum, Urso (modern Osuna, Spain), CIL II.5439=ILS 6087; (2) Pauli Sententiae 2.25.4 and (3) Cod. Iust. 7.1.4. The last two are very late, both after the Edict of Caracalla. And the first, from Urso’s charter, is extremely fragmentary according to Lopez Barja de Quiroga, with only eleven letters preserved: …] Hvir qu[…/…]esto. Urso, like Corinth was founded by Julius Caesar in 44 BCE. Cf. Caesar, b. Hisp. 22, 28, 41; Pliny NH 3.3. Thus the possibility of a magistrate with manumittendi potestate is not far-fetched.
enfranchisement, and could have mitigated several of the hurdles Roman slaves may have faced.

It is noteworthy that the colony of Mediolanum was only 24 miles (38 km) south of Como, and thus the duovir there could perhaps have overseen the manumissio vindicta process for Fabatus. This was a short journey, but one that Fabatus was certainly not willing to take. The implications are twofold. First, the duovir’s authority (manumittendi potestate) was local only, centralized in the colony. Second, Pliny’s social network and his own personal leverage persuaded his proconsul friend to diverge and manumit Fabatus’ slaves. Yet, the slaves in the colony at Mediolanum potentially had a more direct path to formal manumission and full enfranchisement than did the slaves of Fabatus.

Similarly, such colonies afforded other aids to the process of manumission. It would be easier, for example, to find twenty recuperatores, Roman citizens, to hear a slave owner’s causa for the manumission and full enfranchisement of a slave under thirty. The availability of recuperatores would also be more pronounced in a citizen colony as opposed to a veteran one. Junian Latins, moreover, like those slaves previously manumitted by Fabatus, could acquire full Roman citizenship if over thirty. And citizens–enfranchised former slaves–could also act as witnesses for wills, which included manumissio ex testamento, or as witnesses for manumissions inter amicos.

Equally important to the administrative mechanism was the social mindset that undergirded manumission, and helped fashion a socio-cultural system in Roman towns.

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177 Cf. discussion in Chapter 1; also Gaius, Inst. 1.20; cf. CIL VI.1877; XIV.1437.
As Chapter 2 explained, manumission, whether in a colony or not, was a form of Roman patronage. But from the view of the Roman owner the act of making a citizen through formal manumission was also an expression of civic benefaction. Consider the conclusion of Pliny’s correspondence with Fabatus, who, once the process of formal manumission was successfully complete, notified Pliny by letter. Pliny responds:

I am delighted that the visit (adventum) of my (friend) Tiro has been a pleasure for you, and I am especially happy at your mentioning that you took the opportunity (oblata occasione) of the proconsul’s presence to grant freedom to a large number (plurimos). For I desire (cupio) that our native area (patria) should be advanced in every material way (rebus augeri), but especially in the number of its citizens (maxime civium numero), since this is the strongest accession to our towns (id enim oppidis firmissimum ornamentum). I am also pleased, though not vainly (ambitiosum), at your additional news that you and I have been celebrated both in a vote of thanks (gratiarum actione) and in expressions of praise (laude celebratos), for, as Xenophon remarks, ‘praise is the sweetest thing to hear,’ especially if you believe that you have deserved it. Farewell (Pliny, Ep. 7.32).

Note the specific language Pliny uses. He celebrates the proliferation of new Roman citizens, manumitted slaves, in the towns of his native region. This action he equates with the physical ornamentation of those towns. Notice also that Fabatus has no qualms about manumitting a large number of slaves. The issue, rather, is that without formal manumission they cannot be as beneficial to Comum—or himself. And although we cannot be sure, it is also likely that the newly-enfranchised freedpersons reciprocated Pliny and Fabatus’s benefaction in their manumission with physical honors of some sort. This may help explain the vote of thanks and expressions of praise that both Pliny and Fabatus received. Fabatus must have initially relayed the news of the honors they received in his intervening letter, which also related the successful manumission. Pliny
confirms the honors in his response, and by accepting he confirms the new reciprocal, patronage relationship.

This may also shed light on Pliny’s self-exoneration from ambitiosus, which smacks of the type of behavior Dionysius of Halicarnassus (1st cent. BCE) bemoans in relation to manumission. Dionysius’ concern is with the social ostentation that manumission provides slave owners, and the ease with which slaves can become Romans. Slave owners, Dionysius decries, often manumit because of φιλανθροπία and κενὴν δοξοκοπίαν, that is, an empty thirst for fame (Ant. rom. 4.24.5-6). At the very least, Pliny’s letter shows how in the same breath both he and Fabatus can discuss manumission along with other civic benefactions. The manumission scenario, moreover, along with being framed as a procsonuslar adventus—likely meant that Tiro would also have been invited to be the guest of Fabatus at his villa on the lake—a famous resort even in those days. Pliny, of course, had brokered the whole ordeal.

The correspondence throws additional light on the phenomenon of former slaves entering the civic structures of a colony. At Corinth, this practice was foundational. Roman Corinth was re-founded as a citizen colony by Roman freedmen, not Roman

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179 Pliny relates in Ep. 7.11 that his freedman Hermes sold five-twelfths of Pliny’s estate for 700,000 sesterces, but was worth 900,000. On Pliny’s provisions for his hometown of Comum, cf. Richard Duncan-Jones, The Economy of the Roman Empire: Quantitative Studies (2d ed.; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 30-1.
veterans. Anthony Spawforth’s study of Corinth’s early Roman elite, which catalogued numismatic evidence of Corinth’s *duoviri* according to *nomina*, suggested a not-insignificant number (19%) of wealthy and politically successful individuals were “probably or certainly of freedman stock.” For instance, Cn. Babbius Philinus, most likely a freedman of Julius Caesar, is attested as a *duovir* in the late Augustan period (*Corinth* 8.2 132), and the later Babii would climb into the provincial aristocracy. Ultimately, “the picture which emerges” is of a “colony which in its early years was dominated socially and politically by wealthy men of freedman stock and by Roman families with business interests in the east, some no doubt of freedman stock themselves.” Likewise, Benjamin Millis, in his explorations of the social and ethnic origins of early Roman Corinth, explains, that Roman freedmen formed the bulk of those

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181 Anthony J. S. Spawforth, “Roman Corinth: The Formation of a Colonial Elite,” in *Roman Onomastics in the Greek East: Social and Political Aspects* (Meletēmata 21; ed. A. D. Rizakis; Athens: Kentron Hellēnikēs kai Rōmaiikēs Archaiotētos, 1996), 169. Spawforth, “Roman Corinth,” 171 also recounts that Corinth as a new colony drew off eastern negotiores, some of whom could have been the freedmen of Roman families, who were displaced by sack of Corinth in 146 BCE.
182 Spawforth, “Roman Corinth,” 169.
who would have come to assume positions of prominence within the colony.\textsuperscript{184}

Brilliant civic careers of former slaves are exceptional, too be sure, but not wholly alien to the atmosphere of Roman colonies.\textsuperscript{185} Evidence from the Roman colony of Dium, for instance, portrays a similar atmosphere. A Latin inscription discovered in the temple of Isis and Serapis in reads:

\begin{footnotesize}
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\textit{Millis, “The Social and Ethnic Origins,” 22. Millis largely confirmed the work of Spawforth, but argues that these freedmen were Greek in origin–not Roman–and thus the former Greek slaves of Roman families, who were adept at balancing both Roman and Greek culture and language. Millis, “The Social and Ethnic Origins,” 30-1. This proposal, however, relies almost entirely on the tenuous supposition that a freedman’s Greek cognomen indicated Greek origin. Millis, “The Social and Ethnic Origins,” 30. Additional problems: the “best evidence” for “one’s self-identification is the language used in writing of a strictly personal, nonpublic character,” 26. But Millis’ argument concerning the Greek epigraphic record of the “lower echelons” of Corinthian society has no bearing on his argument concerning the Greek makeup of the freedmen settlers. It is a non sequitur. The freedmen settlers were not at the lower end of the Colony anyway, but at the top. For civic identity of Corinth cf. James Walters, “Civic Identity in Roman Corinth and Its Impact on Early Christians,” in \textit{Urban Religion in Roman Corinth: Interdisciplinary Approaches} (ed. Daniel N. Schowalter and Steven J. Friesen; HTS 53; Cambridge, MA: Harvard Theological Studies, 2005), 397-410; on similar issues cf. more recently Constantina Katsari and Stephen Mitchell, “The Roman Colonies of Greece and Asia Minor: Questions of State and Civic Identity,” \textit{Athenaeum} 95 (2008): 219-47, which focuses on the numismatic evidence and suggests, for example, that in Corinth only 6-8\% of representation on legends were local notables before the reign of Claudius, while in the rest of the colonies of Achaea the presence of native wealthy individuals in the epigraphic sources is almost non-existent. “Nevertheless,” they caution “we should take into consideration the possibility that many freedmen colonists may have been provincials returning home,” 241. The authors summarize: “Each colony thus established its own individual character within the spectrum of different civic constitutions. The representation of state themes would distinguish the colonies from the rest of the cities, while the representation of local themes would distinguish them from each other. The establishment of differences rather than similarities helped to create particular combinations of state and civic identity in the individual eastern colonies,” 241. On Pompeii, cf. Henrik Mouritsen, “Mobility and Social Change in Italian Towns During the Principate,” in \textit{Roman Urbanism: Beyond the Consumer City} (New York: Routledge, 1997), 68-70. On Antioch in Pisidia, cf. Barbara Levick, \textit{Roman Colonies in Southern Asia Minor} (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967), 98-9, 111.
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Serapi et Isi et colonis portic(us) duas, ianum, alam P. Anthestius P. l. Amphio aug(ur) aed(ilis) IIvir quinquennalis) et Anthestia P. l. Iucunda d(e) s(ua) pecunia] faciunda) curtaverunt).

For Serapis and Isis and the colony. Publius Anthestius Amphio, freedman of Publius, **augur** aedile, duovir quinquennalis, and Anthestia Iucunda, freedwoman of Publius, from their own money arranged for the making of the double portico, door, and wing (AE 1998, 1209= SEG 34, 630).

A Severan date has been suggested for the inscription. Freedmen were often excluded *de facto* from holding municipal offices, and then excluded *de jure* by the **Lex Visellia** of 24 CE. Dium was founded as a late Republican colony and then re-founded under Augustus, and thus this inscription, if correctly dated, thus appears to be the only extant instance in which a freedman is recorded as holding public office after the **lex Visellia**. It seems just as likely that, as we see in Corinth, such a meteoric rise began at the re-foundation of Dium under Augustus. Nevertheless, the inscription jarringly illustrates how quickly an ex-slave can rise to prominence in particular colonial settings.

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P. Anthestius’ partner or wife Anthestia Iucunda is also known from other honorary inscriptions in the temple of Isis and Serapis in which she is either the sole dedicator or dedicatee. For instance, a bilingual Greek and Latin inscription reads:

Ἀνθεστία Ποπλίου ἀπελευθέρα Ἰουκούνδα Ἀφροδείτη Ὑπολύμπιδια καὶ κολῶσι.

Anthestia Iucunda, freedwoman of Publius. For Beautiful Hypolympidia and the Colony (AE 1998, 1207-1208 = SEG 34, 630).

Or, another found in the space identified as a wing of the temple:

Colonarum et incolarum coniuges Anthestiae P. l. Iucundae honoris causa.

Κολώνων καὶ παροίκων αἱ γυναῖκες Ἀνθεστίαι Ποπλίου ἀπελευθέραι Ἰουκούνδαι ἀρετῆς ἑνεκεν.

The wives of the colony and the residents for Anthestia Iucunda, freedwoman of Publius, on account of her virtue (AE 1998, 1210 = SEG 34, 631).

Finally, a woman who seems to be the freeborn daughter of the freed couple is also honored on a statue base found in the same place as the above inscription:

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\(^{190}\) AE 1998, 1207-1208 = SEG 34, 630.

\(^{191}\) AE 1998, 1210 = SEG 34, 631. The term παροίκος can mean resident alien, comparable to metic (μέτοικος) or just resident apropos of the Latin equivalent incola. Diogenes Laertius, 1.5.82 who, commenting on Bias, contrasts opinions that claimed Bias was a wealthy person (πλούσιος) with the testimony of Duris who claims Bias was a παροίκος, the opposite of wealthy. incola could also be later immigrants who had not been granted citizenship of the colony. Levick, Roman Colonies, 74-5, n.1; Dig. L.16.239.2; Cod. Just. X.40.7; lex Flavia Malacitana (modern Málaga, Spain), ILS 6089; lex Ursonensis, ILS 6087.103; cf. also AE 1916, 42 for Volubilis (in modern Morroco).
Serapidi Isi Anubi Anthestiam P. f. Maximam parentes.

Σεράπιδι Ἰσιδὶ Ἀνουβὶ Ἀνθεστίαν Ποπλίου θυγατέρα Μαξίμαν ὁ γονὶς.


The P. Anthestii were apparently an important family in Dium as this brief catalogue attests to their civic benefactions. They show similarities, moreover, to the early Roman families in Corinth that Spawforth studied, and in general show similarities to many other Roman families dispersed in the Greek east who had “an eye for the commercial and agrarian opportunities.”

P. Anthestius the patron appears to have formally manumitted Publius Anthestius Amphio and Anthestia Iucunda together, and undoubtedly into a social network, which helps explain their prominent position. Amphio—who is of course, fully enfranchised—could have accrued status independently, but Publius Anthestius

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192 Purcell, “Romans in the Roman World,” 96. Cf. also Olli Salomies, “Contacts Between Italy, Macedonia and Asia Minor During the Principate,” in Roman Onomastics in the Greek East: Social and Political Aspects (Meletêmata 21; ed. A. D. Rizakis; Athens: Kentron Hellênikês kai Rômaikês Archaiotêtos, 1996), 111-127. Other members of the Anthestii, although not a well-attested nomen, pop up in distinguished civic positions elsewhere. At Corinth, for instance, on a fragment of a monument, a Γ. Ἀντισπίος Βοῦρρος (Gaius Anthestius Pyhrus or Burrus, meaning red) is recorded as an agonothete during the reign of Commodus (Corinth 8,1 16). Cp. also Corinth 8,1 58 for a fragmentary inscription that witnesses an Anthestius Maxim(us). And in the Peloponnesus, at Olympia, a Δέκμος Ἀνθέστιος Ἡθογένης (Decimus Anthestius Theogenes) is registered as a θεοκόλος, or a priest, at the temple of Zeus in the Trajanic period (IvO 91). Cf. Sophia Zoumbaki, “Die Verbreitung der Römischen Namen in Eleia,” in Roman Onomastics in the Greek East (Meletêmata 21; ed. A. D. Rizakis; Athens: Kentron Hellênikês kai Rômaikês Archaiotêtos, 1996), 200.
himself could have helped raise Amphio into the upper tiers of the colony. To be sure, the case of Amphio and Iucunda— or the freedmen of early Roman Corinth— is not the ordinary experience of Roman slaves. The point, however, is that formal manumission—citizenship— presupposed civic, or more directly, social integration.

As part of the social mindset and in the imperial period particularly, manumission was both a process and result of Roman patronage. But Amphio and Iucunda were not only in a patronage relationship with Publius Anthestius; they themselves were patrons. As Andrew Wallace-Hadrill says, “one man’s client is another man’s patron.” The wives of the colony and (indigenous?) residents honor Iucunda, most likely because of benefactions she previously granted to them. The freed couple also patronized the Temple of Isis and Serapis, and by implication, were patrons of the colony. Similarly, the freedman Numerius Popidius Ampliatus was a benefactor for the Temple of Isis in Pompeii. As a freedman he could not himself enter the local civic council (ordo

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193 Alleius Nobilis, a freedman, inherited wealth from the Eumachii/ Numistrii and/or the Alleii. Maius then became the adoptive father of the freeborn Cn. Alleius Nigidius Maius, one of the most prominent citizens of Pompeii in the years before its destruction. Cf. Mouritsen, “Mobility and Social Change,” 68-70; also Willem Jongman, The Economy and Society of Pompeii (Dutch Monographs on Ancient History and Archaeology 4; Amsterdam: J.C. Gieben, 1988), 259-62.

194 While the concept of Roman patronage was adopted in the Greek world, the manumitted slaves of Greeks, “whether still dependent on or totally disengaged from their former masters,” Rachel Zelnick-Abramovitz notes, “had to fend for themselves.” Zelnick-Abramovitz, Not Wholly Free, 320. This model, however, is foreign to the Roman concept of manumission. As described in Chapter 1, much has been made of the seemingly burdensome and hindering duties required of Roman freedmen towards their patrons. But this notion neglects the wider social phenomenon of Roman imperial life: everyone except the emperor had a patron, everyone had a better who deserved their due respect.

decurionum), but his freeborn son could. Thus his son Numerius Popidius Celsinus was elected to the decurionate in response to his freedman father’s benefactions. His son Celsinus, however, was elected while only six years old (CIL X.846=ILS 6367). Eric Stewart’s vigilance is apposite here: “What is sometimes lost in discussions of personal patronage is how a system of patronage operates at multiple levels in a society.”

Even as manumission created a new relationship between an individual slave and patron within a family, the dynamic was centrifugal. Manumission could extend a family’s patronage web in a colony: the more families manumit, the more they corner the market, so to speak. Hence Dionysius criticizes the social ostentations of manumission (Ant. rom. 4.24.5-6), but nevertheless relates that it was a matter of great praise (μέγας ἔπαινος) “to have as many clients as possible (ὡς πλείστους πελάτας ἔχειν) and not only to preserve the succession of hereditary patronages (προγονικάς) but also by their own merit to acquire others (διαδοχὰς τῶν πατρωνειῶν) (Ant. rom. 2.10.4).” This dynamic is visible on thousands of inscriptions from the Roman world.

Take, for instance, the following inscription from first-century CE Corinth.

m(emoriae) L(uci) Rutili Alcimi et L(uci) Rutili Martialis f(iliis) eius L(ucius) Rutilius Primus l(ibertus) et L(ucius) Rutilius Clymenus l(ibertus)

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ex testamento (CIL III.6100).

The Latin epitaph, dedicated by two freedmen, Lucius Rutilius Primus and Lucius Rutilius Clymenus, is in memoriam Lucius Rutilius Alcimus and his son Lucius Rutilius Martialis. Primus and Clymenus appear to have been manumitted ex testamento by either the freedman father Alcimus or the freeborn son Martialis. These particular names are otherwise unknown. But the L. Rutilii were a prominent, magisterial family of Corinth, well-known as negotiatores, whose presence is attested throughout the 1st cent. CE, and whom Spawforth documents in his numismatic catalogue. Members of the L. Rutilii family—which included slaves and freedpersons–expanded the family’s patronage network by filling inter-social boundaries: that is, those emptied social spaces between individuals, families, and civic life that would otherwise be present if not for the patronage network.

Simultaneously, clients functioned in the social networks of patrons to promote the interests of the patrons with those outside the patronage network. The above inscription, in other words, also advertises the L. Rutilii more generally and the individual

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198 Spawforth, “Roman Corinth,” 181. L. Rutilius Plancus was duovir between 12 and 16 CE. Lucius Rutilius Piso was duovir quinquennalis in 66 CE. A certain Lucius Rutilius […] was a donor of a public building (Corinth 8,2 120=CIL III.534); a Lucius Rutilius […] was agonothete (Corinth 8,2 84) and a Lucius Rutilius Fuscus was an isagogus (Corinth 8,2 82), an office connected with the imperial cult games on the Isthmus (West, Corinth 67-8).

199 Cf. T. Johnson and C. Dandecker, “Patronage” 223. From Ephesus, consider the Cusinii family IE VI.2246a.

patrons more specifically. The family increases in prestige and status with the successful transformation of their slaves into Roman citizens. The patronage dialectic I am attempting to describe, moreover, repeats in cyclical fashion throughout various levels of the network. The system of manumission and patronage was hence ingrained and re-inscribed: patrons had freedmen and freedwomen who had slaves and freedmen of their own, and the result was a series of interlocking layers of statuses, patronage lines, and reciprocities.\(^{201}\) Consider this first or second century CE inscription from Thessalonikē:

\[
\begin{align*}
T(itus) & \text{Minucius } T(iti) \ l(ibertus) \\
\text{Diogenes } & \text{salve et } t\text{u} \\
\text{salve quisquis } & \text{es} \\
\text{monumentum } & \text{fecit} \\
T(itus) & \text{Minucius } T(iti) \ f(ilius) \ P(alatina) \ Mace-
\text{do et } T(itus) & \text{Minucius } T(iti) \ l(ibertus) \ Hila-
\text{rus } & \text{patrono } \text{su}o
\end{align*}
\]

Titus Minucius Diogenes, freedman of Titus (Minucius) made this monument. Hello, and you, hello whoever you are. Titus Minucius Macedo, Palatina tribe, son of Titus Minucius (Diogenes), and Titus Minucius Hilarus, freedman of Titus (Minucius), for his patron (\textit{IG X,2 1688}).

Diogenes was manumitted by a Titus Minucius. Whether Diogens was formally or informally we do not know, but at the time of the inscription he may have been fully enfranchised.\(^{202}\) His son Macedo was thus born a free Roman citizen. Hilarus is the


\(^{202}\) The \textit{Minucii} nomen, for example, seems to derive from the Venetian area. But \textit{Minucii} was also an aristocratic \textit{gens} of Istria (modern Croatia), and hence shows another
freedman of either Macedo or Diogenes, one of whom he honors as his patron and publicizes the benefaction of manumission he received. The centripetal dynamic, moving back towards the patron, is the other half of the patronage dialectic, and it is one of the more persuasive incentives for Romans to manumit. Good patrons promote their clients’ actions, and they, in turn, support the patron’s pursuits, and offer praise for their patrons advertising their benefaction to all.203

Because manumission was understood as social benefaction, the social pressure on the owner, however explicit or implicit, was to keep the show on the road.204 Philip Harland explains:

A clearly defined set of social roles or expectations corresponded to one’s position or status within the social structure. Failure of the wealthy to appropriately provide such benefactions was a threat to the position and status they strove to maintain within society. In this sense benefaction became a duty or obligation, not simply a voluntary action.205

Manumission thus generated expectations, shaped mindsets, and induced social pressures for the process to continue. This correspondingly strengthened the social system and patronage networks that initiated the process. A brutal system, to be sure, but

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203 Stewart, “Social Stratification,” 156.
204 As mentioned in the last chapter, whatever the precise cost of the manumission tax for formal manumission—i.e. for enfranchisement—may have been, Roman families appear to have underwritten it as part of the cost of running a familia in a Roman urban setting. Mouritsen, The Freedman, 196.
nonetheless self-reinforcing, and for those who made it through, worth the grind.

**Test Case: Erastus (Rom. 16:23)**

Thus far the chapter has focused on manumission in a particularly Roman political context, namely Roman Corinth, and in relation to families and social practices. In what follows I use the Erastus Paul mentions in Rom. 16:23 as a test case to apply, as far as possible, the above concepts to public slaves of Roman colonies. Such an exercise offers an alternate, though, related framework with which to consider the opportunities and expectations of manumission for Roman slaves in Roman colonies. Moreover, it will segue into an investigation of those in early Christian congregations who might have been slaves, and explores the ways in which their position could contribute to the communities before or after manumission.

Paul writes in Rom. 16:23b: “Erastus, οἰκονόμος τῆς πόλεως, and our brother Quartus greet you.” There has been much debate concerning the identity and status of the person named Erastus in Rom. 16:23. The critical question is whether the Erastus Paul designates as οἰκονόμος τῆς πόλεως was synonymous with the aedile of Corinth that is attested in the inscription (*Corinth* 8,3.232).\(^{206}\) As Steven Friesen has, in my view,

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convincingly argued, the answer is no. Erastus of Rom. 16:23 was undoubtedly a public slave servi publici/ (δοῦλοι) δημόσιοι, apparently of Corinth. The title οἰκονόμος τῆς πόλεως is witnessed throughout the Roman east for slaves corporately owned by cities and temples. Like slaves of families, public slaves could be acquired by purchase, confiscation, gift and inheritance, and natural reproduction. Sometimes those persons dubbed as public slaves, (δοῦλοι) δημόσιοι, even have their patronyms attached, suggesting that they were freeborn persons, perhaps entering public service.

Servi publici had a wide range of duties in their own cursus honorum or sorts,  

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207 As reasons for identifying the wrong Erastus, Friesen cites scholarly ideology of upwardly mobile Christians, misinterpretations of the archaeological evidence, and circular reasoning—e.g. assuming, based on Rom. 16:23 that the Erastus inscription was from the first century CE. Steven J. Friesen, “The Wrong Erastus: Ideology, Archaeology, and Exegesis,” in Corinth in Context: Comparative Studies on Religion and Society (NovTSup 134; ed. Steven J. Friesen, Daniel N. Schowalter, and James C. Walters; Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2010), 231-56.


209 Cf. Alexander Weiß, Sklave der Stadt: Untersuchungen zur öffentlichen Sklaverei in den Städten des römischen Reiches (Historia Einzelschriften 173; Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2004), 51-54. SEG 24, 496 (2nd-3rd cent. CE, Stobi); SEG 38.710 (Roman period, Thessaloniki); Cp. also IE II.541; VII.3513 for οἰκονόμοι in connection to the temple of Artemis at Ephesus; CIL III.333; 13649a=ILS 1539=IGR 3738=IGR 3,25=IK 29.46 (Kion, Bithynia et Pontus), οἰκονόμος is used as the Greek equivalent of Latin dispensator in the familia Caesaris; CIL III.555; 7287=ILS 1867=AE 1999,1484 (1st-2nd cent. CE Athens), Philetus is p(u)bl(ici) XX lib(ertatis) vi(li)cus, that is, manager in the office of the manumission tax is designated ΙΚΟΝΟΜΟΣ (οἰκονόμος) in the Greek portion. Vi(c)i were often slaves.


211 E.g. AE 1997, 1358 reads Onesimus Aelius Menogenus, oikonomos, son of Aelius Menogenus, dedicated to his deceased wife Nike, his living daughter Onesime, and his living mother Euphrosune. Cf. also TAM V.2.1075 date unknown; TAM V.2.1084=IGRR IV.1284 date unknown; TAM V.2.1142=IGRR IV.1281=IGR 3509 date unknown; TAM V.2.1152=IGRR IV.1283 (239-40 CE); discussion in Weiß 2004: 51-54.
spanning from the highest—those personal retainers of the colonial magistrates (*limocinti*)—to the lower, menial jobs such as executioners (*carnifex*). In between were a slew of administrative positions such as personal assistants to judges, secretaries of associations of slaves, managers of weights and measures, archivists, administrators in gymnasia, or assistants in temples. An ὀικονόμος seems to have been somewhere in this middle area, and thus a safe interpretation of Erastus’ position is that he was a low to mid-level financial officer in Corinth’s bureaucracy, with perhaps some socio-economic status. Three implications are relevant to the discussion.

First, some *servi publici* could themselves own slaves. A certain Quadratus, oikonomos of Beroia (Κοδ[ρ]ῶτος ὀικον[όμος τῆς Βεροιᾶς πόλεως), for instance, records that he has purchased several slaves, and manumits a young female slave (*παιδίσκη*) named Elipis (*ILeukopetra 78*). Thus, Quartus, from whom Paul sends greetings may have been a slave or a freedman in the household of Erastus.

Second, *servi publici* could be patrons or benefactors in various capacities. In Hierapolis, Phrygia two oikonomoi, Tatianus and Diokles, paid from municipal accounts for the statue of a man who had served as treasurer, city magistrate, and judge (*IGR 4.813*). Likewise, in the *municipium* of Stobi, Macedonia Diadoumenos and fellow slaves

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214 *ILeukopetra 78* (230 CE) is a *sacral manumission* to Meter Theon Autochthonos.
commissioned a statue of nymphs (SEG 24, 496). Moreover, servi publici were also involved with associations. For the example, an inscription of the cultores Silvani in the colony of Philippi (Colonia Iulia Augusta Philippensis) documents those persons who contributed financially to the Temple of Silvanus, an important local cult (IPhil 163 = CIL III, 1.633 = ILS 5466,2). The association members were mostly slaves or fully enfranchised Roman freedmen, and included public slaves such as Orinus, (Orinus coloniae), Tharsa (Tharsa coloniae), Phoebus (Phoebus coloniae), and Phoibus (Phoibus coloniae). Furthermore, as noted above, some public slaves could be comparatively wealthy, and have advantages over the urban freeborn. On the other hand, others could be indigent. Much like with families, the situation of the public slave varied according to the particular context.

Third, and most important for the current inquiry, public slaves were connected to the civic structures, even before their manumission. The reader will recall from Chapter 2 the process of manumission, that public slaves were under the auspices of the duoviri.

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216 Cf. also IG X,2 1.150 (Thessalonike mid 3rd cent. CE).
217 Cf. also IPhil 163-166 (2nd cent. CE). On the cult of Silvanus, cf. Peter Pilhofer, Philippi: Band I: Die erste christliche Gemeinde Europas (WUNT 119; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1995), 108-12. Other names in IPhil 163, which are either slave or freed names and relevant to Paul’s ekklesiaie are Urbanus (I.4; Rom. 16:9), Rufus (I.22; Rom. 16:13), Onesimus (I.54; Phlm 10).
and the *decurions* secondarily. The result of manumission in a *municipium* at least (*Municipium Flavium Iripanum*), was Latin citizenship and rights for the public slave. In a Roman colony, however, as opposed to a *municipum* with Latin rights, one has grounds to assume that manumission resulted in full Roman citizenship, at least in the colony itself. Alexander Weiẞ documents numerous public freedmen (*liberti rei publicae*) who were former public slaves of colonies and carry the Roman *trinomina*. For instance, Gaius Publicius Pelops, *libertus coloniae*, from Alexandreia Troas in Asia Minor (*IK 53=AE 1996, 1435*), or Publius Publicius Fortis, *libertus coloniae*, from Cirta, Numidia (*CIL VIII.19521*).\(^{219}\) Weiẞ also points out that some *servi publici* continued to be employed after their manumission.\(^{220}\)

Therefore, while we do not know Erastus’s exact circumstances and capacities, or whether he was actually a participant or just a more distant acquaintance with Paul’s churches,\(^{221}\) for Paul, Erastus’s significance is related to his civic and social connections. It is unlikely that a former *servi publici* could jump to the office of *aedile* as some have supposed.\(^{222}\) Notwithstanding, if Erastus was a public slave of a Roman colony, he was already in a position to benefit Paul’s churches through his social ties regardless of his

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\(^{219}\) Weiẞ, *Sklave*, 236-45.  
\(^{220}\) Weiẞ, *Sklave*, 72.  
\(^{221}\) Friesen, “Erastus,” 249.  
ability or inability for upward mobility. Based on the comparative evidence of his title, it seems he was not in the lowest rungs of the colony’s bureaucracy. Erastus’s location in the conclusion of Paul’s final greetings of Rom. 16 was thus probably not coincidental. Greetings come from Erastus, or vicariously through Quartus, just after Gaius whose house is a host to a whole church (ὅλης τῆς ἐκκλησίας). And if Erastus could achieve manumission within his pre-existing social ties more opportunities would be afforded to Paul’s churches.

Conclusions

This chapter has argued that Roman colonies offered privileged opportunities for manumission to particular groups of people, namely Romans, with corresponding incentives and results. The constraining and directing of Roman political administration shaped colonies such as Corinth into locales in which Roman slaves could be transformed into citizens with fewer hindrances. As a consequence, there were fewer beneficial options for non-Romans in Roman colonies. Further, along with an administrative structure that bolstered Roman manumission, this chapter proffers that a mindset undergirded the practice of manumission. In certain Roman contexts, manumission was an expression of civic benefaction, and presupposed civic and social integration. At the same time, there were constraints or limitations on how far or fast freedpersons might “rise” in social prominence. Thus while social mobility was a fact, it was also controlled both politically and socially.
The social mindset also induced social practices and pressures for manumission to continue, which, in turn, strengthened the social system and patronage networks that initiated the process. Roman manumission was thus a self-reinforcing social system. The example of Erastus highlighted how some public slaves of Roman colonies were already in a connected social and civic position prior to manumission. Moreover, I suggested that *servi publici* in colonies, in contrast to *municipium*, were likely to receive full enfranchisement if or when they were manumitted.

The results of the study do not lead to the conclusion that the extraordinary success stories—the dazzling rise from slave to citizen—apply to all the slaves Paul was addressing in 1 Cor. 7. Rather, the point is that, first, Roman colonies, and Corinth in particular, were environments that presented the most frequent opportunities for Roman slaves to be manumitted, integrated, and even elevated. Paul embraced this reality. Second, because of the tentacular Roman system of patronage and benefaction, a slave’s manumission or a freedperson’s elevation reverberated and elevated those further down the patronage lines to whom those slaves or freedpersons were connected. This, I think, does apply 1 Cor. 7. What is key is that Paul is operating in a series of benefaction networks in which slaves, like Erastus, or freedpersons were featured components. He makes explicit reference to two of these networks in his letters: family networks and occupational networks. The next chapter explores how Paul may have utilized them, and surveys some of the people who made it possible.
In the opening exhortation to the Corinthians Paul encourages the ἀδελφοί to consider their state at the time of their calling. “Not many,” he writes, “were wise according to the flesh, not many powerful, not many nobly born (1 Cor. 1:26).”\(^{223}\) Indeed, perusing the opening and closing of some of Paul’s letters shows the more modest circumstances of the names and inconspicuousness of the persons he mentions.\(^{224}\) The possibility that some of these persons, as well as others in Paul’s congregations, were slaves or freedpersons (i.e. former slaves) has by no means been lost on scholars, but the question is to what extent and in what capacity they were involved.\(^{225}\)

\(^{223}\) Βλέπετε γὰρ τὴν κλῆσιν ὑµῶν, ἀδελφοί, ὅτι οὐ πολλοὶ σοφοὶ κατὰ σάρκα, οὐ πολλοὶ, οὐ πολλοὶ εὐγενεῖς.

\(^{224}\) E.g. “those of Chloe,” or “those who belong to Chloe” (ὑπὸ τῶν Χλόης) (1 Cor. 1:11); Ampliatus (Rom. 16: 8), Urbanus (Rom. 16:9), Tertius (Rom. 16:22), Erastus (Rom. 16:23), Quartus (Rom. 16:23); and, of course, Onesimus (Philm).

For instance, at the close of 1 Corinthians Paul urges (παρακαλῶ) the brothers to submit (ὑποτάσσομεν) to those like Stephanus, who devote themselves to service (διακονία) for the saints, working (συνεργοῦντι) and toiling (κοπιῶντι) together (1 Cor. 16:15-16). In the following verse Paul reiterates with an example:

I rejoiced (χαίρω) at the arrival (παρουσία) of Stephanus, Fortunatus, and Achaicus because they filled up (ἀνεπλήρωσαν) up your deficiency (τὸ ὑπέμετερον ὑστέρημα οὗτοι ἀνεπλήρωσαν). For they refreshed (ἀνέπαυσαν) my spirit and yours. So then, recognize such ones as these (ἐπιγινώσκετε οὕν τοὺς τοιούτους) (1 Cor. 16:17-18).

In his Essays on Corinth Gerd Theissen stumbles on a bit of a quandary here. He notes that it is not impossible that Fortunatus and Achaicus were slaves or freedmen, but appraises, “One difficulty with this assumption is that Paul enjoins the community to be

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First Urban, 51-3; cf. also discussion in Stark, The Rise, 30-33. Theissen’s more recent treatment of the issue is particularly helpful. He puts it succinctly: “Early Christianity was located in the plebs urbana, but attracted also a small minority of people at the periphery of the local upper class. These were above all people with dissonance of status, caused by lower birth, by gender or by the fact that they were aliens (peregrini) or well-to-do people outside the privileged circle of the decurions. Within these limitations early Christianity comprised all social levels and groups, which we discover on and below the level of the local power elite. In particular cases Christianity also penetrated the elite. But this was an exception confirming the rule. There should be no doubt that the majority of the Christians were common and low people.” Gerd Theissen, “The Social Structure of Pauline Communities: Some Critical Remarks on J.J. Meggitt, Paul, Poverty and Survival,” JSNT 84 (2001): 74-5.

What Theissen misses, however, is that one likely reason Fortunatus and Achaicus are accorded some prominence is because they were slaves within the *familia* of Stephanus (τὸν Στεφανᾶ οἶκον), which Paul baptized (1 Cor. 1:16), and which became Paul’s first-fruits of Achaea (1 Cor. 16:15). Fortunatus and Achaicus, moreover, like their owner or patron Stephanus (1 Cor. 1:16), were also coworkers, toilers, and devotees of service travelling with Stephanus to bring refreshment to Paul.

Implicit in Theissen’s assessment is the assumption that slaves and freedmen were vulnerable, lowly, and- to use Orlando Patterson’s phrase- socially dead. While this could be true, it is important to consider the ways in which persons who were probably slaves and/or freedpersons, like Fortunatus, Achaicus, and Onesimus, could have effectively operated in Paul’s various social networks. Particularly salient are the ways in which their social network facilitated their manumission, and how their manumission could have affected others in that network, not least Paul himself. Is it possible that Fortunatus and Achaicus’ manumission is also related to others in the church recognizing them?

This chapter argues that because slaves and freedpersons were active in various social networks, their manumission resonated through intersecting social ties, which

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227 Theissen, *The Social Setting*, 92 and n.50.


229 Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982).
could impact Paul’s *ekklesiae* in significant ways: mobility, economic support, and social connections to name a few. Secondarily, by incorporating comparative material this chapter offers suggestions concerning particular people named in Paul’s Corinthian letters who were likely slaves or freedpersons, but may themselves have been benefactors or patrons for Paul and the communities he founded.  

**Patronage and Benefaction: Manumission in Networks**

Philip Harland describes the makeup of early Christian congregations as “webs of social network connections, at times intersecting” that “framed social relations in the Greco-Roman world.” These enmeshed “social ties” drew primarily from five overlapping types of networks: family or household (including slaves, freedpersons, and other dependents); ethnic or geographic (manifested in immigration and diasporas); neighborhood (streets, blocks, quarters, conglomerations in particular areas of a city); occupational (guilds, crafts, business); cultic (common religious interests, honoring a particular deity, initiations). The various networks, moreover, could also play a role in

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the formation and growth in membership of *collegia*, guilds, and associations, including Christian groups.\(^{233}\)

There have been numerous and thorough comparative studies of Pauline *ekklesiae* and Greco-Roman associations that I will not reiterate here, but two points deserve mention. First, the household was the most basic locus of organization for associations, and notably these could develop among slaves and freedpersons.\(^{234}\) For example:

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[ − − − − − − − − − − − − − ]
λης, γυν[αίκ]α · Κ(σίντου) · Φουρίου
Πρόκλου · οἱ ἀπελεύθε
ραι · καὶ ἀπελεύθεραι
Φουρίου Πρόκλου καὶ αὐτῆς
Μαξίμας · δι’ ἐπιμέλειαν
Οὐαρεινίας · Ἀρετῆς,
γραμματεύοντος · Μ(άρκου) · Οὐαρει
νίου Μακεδόνος.
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[For Q(uintus) Furius Proclus and (Varinia ?) wife of Quintus Furius Proculus. The freedmen and freedwomen of Furius Proculus and his own wife (?) Maxima

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\(^{234}\) One of the more famous examples of a household association is that of Pompeia Agrippinilla, *IGUR* I.160= *SEG* 43.660 (160-70 CE). She is a priestess of mysteries (ἱέρεια μύσται), and an émigré in Torre Nova, Italy originally from Mytilene. Her household association was a Bacchic society (*thiasos*) consisting of 402 members, which included both men and women, free, freed, and slave. For discussion cf. Harland, *Associations*, 30; Bradley H. McClean, “The Agrippinilla Inscription: Religious Associations and Early Church Formation,” in *Origins and Method: Towards a New Understanding of Judaism and Christianity. Essays in Honour of John C. Hurd* (JSOTSUp 86; ed. John C. Hurd and Bradley H. McLean; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993), 239-70.
(honor them); in the care of Varinia Arete, when Marcus Varinius Macedon was serving as secretary (IG X.2 1.208).

This household association is comprised of freedmen and freedwomen who dedicate an inscription to their former masters Gaius Furius Proculus and Maxima in second or third century CE Thessalonike. Varinia Arete and Marcus Varinius Macedon, under whose charge was the dedication, were probably related to the household of Proculus as well. Consequential for Paul’s situation is that “not only relatives, freedmen, or slaves participated but also other persons who had a looser relation to the household.”

Second, slaves and freedmen were not only members in associations or collegia, whether occupational, cultic, or other, but could themselves be magistrates of associations. And by the second century CE Roman collegia could legally own and manumit slaves. The upshot is that Roman manumission specifically, as a type of personal and civic benefaction in a patronage system, reverberated- however slightly- through the various strands of the social networks and affected an association in significant ways.

The reader will recall, for instance, that informal manumission resulted in (Junian) Latin status. Although this status was restrictive in many respects, Junian Latins nevertheless had the right to enter contracts and conduct business (ius commercii;

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mancipatio) as if an enfranchised Roman citizen. They were also able to marry according to common law (ius gentium), and perhaps even enact a legal marriage (ius conubii). The new legal status afforded them rights that affected their ability to conduct business (occupational network) in another or any area of the empire (geographic network), during which they could attach themselves to cults or thiasoi (cultic network). They could also build families (family network) and even own property (neighborhood network). All of this, of course, hinged on numerous factors including the individual situation of the slave, and most importantly on the capability and will of the owner. But as the discussion in the previous chapter underscores, if the right opportunity presented itself—oblate occasione as Pliny writes (Ep. 7.32)—Roman families, or even their slave-owning freedpersons, had few misgivings about

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240 E.g. IByzantion 31=SEG 18, 280=AGRW 68 (85-96 CE; Rhegion, Thrace) Semnos is a slave or freedman and acts as priest for initiates of Dionysius. Cp. SEG 56, 1009=AE 2006, 1239 (unknown date), in which initiates on Samothrace include Trophimus doulos and a Karpos, likely a freedman. Discussion in Dimitris Matsas and Nora Dimitrova, “New Samothracian Inscriptions Found outside the Sanctuary of the Great Gods,” ZPE 155 (2006): 127-36. Cf. also AE 1975, 236 (Paestum, Italy; bronze tablet found in the temple): association erected this monument to the unconquered god (deus invictus, i.e. Mithras) for Aurelius, a freedman, from their own resources.
241 If without full Roman citizenship at the time of death, transferable to the manumittor. Gaius, Inst. 3.56-62.
manumission.

We do not know the precise status of those persons in Paul’s networks, although, as will become clear, they were most certainly not elite. In what follows, however, I would like to attempt a prosopographical sketch of the persons in Paul’s networks and Corinthian associations, based primarily on the persons he mentions. Two networks with which Paul was certainly involved will receive attention, viz. familial and occupational.

Family Networks

Two passages in 1 Corinthians suggest that Paul’s dealings brought him into contact with larger family networks that included slaves or freedpersons. In 1 Cor. 1:11 Paul writes: “For it was declared to me by those of Chloe (ὑπὸ τῶν Χλόης), concerning you my brothers, that there are factions among you.” The τῶν Χλόης are likely either slaves or freedpersons. The closest parallels to Paul’s genitive construction τῶν Χλόης are “those of Aristobulus” (τοὺς ἐκ τῶν Ἀριστοβούλου) and “those of Narcissus (τοὺς ἐκ τῶν Ναρκίσσου) in Rom. 16:10 and 11 respectively, and “those of Caesar’s household” (οἱ ἐκ τῆς Καίσαρος οἰκίας) in Phil. 4:22. In the former Paul sends greetings from unnamed persons who are known only vicariously by another. In the latter the greetings certainly are from slaves or freedpersons. A few other features deserve note. “Those of Chloe” are clearly known to the recipients of Paul’s letter, and thus are known beyond Chloe’s own

\[\text{εὐχαριστοῦν ἡμῖν ἀδελφοὶ τῶν Ἕλληνων, ἐπεὶ ὁ Ἰησοῦς τὸν αὐτοῦ θεὸν ἀναμετέχει.}\]
Paul does not have to “introduce” them. Moreover, they were travelling, apparently in Asia and probably in Ephesus (1 Cor. 16:8), when they encountered Paul, and hence may have been attending to other business.

The second passage pertains to the household or *familia* of Stephanas, introduced above. It should be noted that both Fortunatus and Achaicus are slave or freedman names, both were travelling with Stephanus, and both seem to have had means to physically “refresh” Paul. Achaicus is conceivably a name he received outside of Achaea, perhaps as the Greek slave of a Roman who had acquired him while working or traveling through the province. Fortunatus (lucky) is also known as a slave or freedman name. In the Roman colony of Emerita (Lusitania, Spain), for instance, a freedwoman Argentaria Verana owned a number of slaves, some of whom were related to her by blood. She saw

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244 Theissen, *Social Setting*, 93.
245 The verb ἀναπαύω has a range of meanings, some of which includes economic support. Cp. Phlm 7, 20; cf. Craig S. Wansink, *Chained in Christ: The Experience and Rhetoric of Paul’s Imprisonments* (JSNTSup 130; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), 193-95; it can be related hospitality as well, as in 2 Cor 7.13, 15. Cp. agricultural usage in *P.Tebt*.1.108 (90-60 BCE); *P.Tebt*.1.105 (ca. 103 BCE). I thank Landon Capps for the references.
247 Fortunatus, freedman of L. Antistius Vetus, *cos.* 55 CE (Tacitus, *Ann.* 16.10); Fortunatus freedman of Vespasian (*PIR*² F 481); Fortunatus freedman of Herod Agrippa who was dispatched (Josephus, *Ant.* 18.240-46; *BJ* 2.181-3).
to the epitaph of her cousin and freedman M. Argentarius Achaicus (AE 1993, 904). Upon her death, Verana is commemorated by another freedman, Argentarius Vegetinus, who describes her as his aunt and patroness (matertera et patrona) (AE 1993, 903).

As we have seen elsewhere, family need or aspiration is often related to manumission of slaves and benefaction of freedpersons. What the above example of Argentaria Verana spotlights is how manumission was a form of patronage and benefaction within family networks, even in families comprised of slaves and freedpersons themselves. What is more, slaves could take on new capacities in the family after manumission. Consider this first century CE inscription from Corinth:

“Quintus Cornelius Secundus, son of [Q(uintus) Cornelius] of the tribe of Aemilia, and his wife Maecia daughter of [Quintus Maecius], his son […](Quintus) Cornelius Secundus] Maecianus, his son Quintus Cornelius Secundus, his [daughter] Cornelia [Secunda, who is the wife of Quintus] Maecius Cleogenes the freedman of Quintus (Maecius), [built (?)] the meatmarket […] along with […] and a fishmarket […] (Corinth 8,3 321).”

The freedman Cleogenes appears to have been previously manumitted by Maecia’s father Quintus. Cleogenes then married Quintus’ freeborn granddaughter Cornelia Secunda, as

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248 AE 1993, 904 (mid-late 2nd cent. CE).
250 Corinth 8,3 321. Cf. Appendix: Corinth Catalogue n.16.
he promoted within the family several generations later. Perhaps the above discussion may also help unveil some of Paul’s rhetoric in Philemon, particularly in Paul’s attempts to recast Onesimus’ role in Philemon’s family network.

The churches in Corinth, furthermore, were spread across multiple families. The recipients of 1 Corinthians, for instance, knew both the household of Chloe and the household of Stephanas. Family networks intersected for a variety of reasons. Slaves and freedpersons, however, often made the connections possible, and undoubtedly manumission played a part. An undated inscription from Philippi documents that a Marcus Aurelius Tertius, the son of a certain Spurius, was married to Vivia Hilara, a freedwoman of a Titus Vibius (IPhil 345). Tertius who seems to be a freeborn man—although beyond this, his exact status is unclear—linked with the Vibii, a prominent Thessalonian family (cf. also IPhil 392) through one of their freedwomen Vivia Hilara. Hilara, who could also have been the freedwoman of any of the Vibii’s freedmen, may thus have been manumitted matrimonia causa to Tertius.

251 This type of intra-family mobility is not uncommon. Cf. e.g Gaius Silius and the freedwoman Silia Fausta from Ostia, CIL 14. 415.
253 There are also inter-family instances in which a freeborn woman married a freedman. Cf. e.g. IPhil 270 and IPhil 430. Cf. also from second-century CE Thessalonike Gaius Avius Symphoros honors his freedman Gaius Avius Spherus through his friend (φίλος) a Varinius Pothos (EΘ IV.3). Based on their names, both Symphoros and Pothos may have been freedmen or descendants of freedmen. The nomina Avii and Varinii belong to the numerous Italian families of Thessalonike, whose presence and activities are documented in the city throughout the imperial period. Here the two
Occupational Networks

Paul was also involved in certain occupational networks, which could overlap or evolve within family networks. Occupational networks comprised those with a similar trade and, as mentioned above, could produce associations and professional guilds. The canonical book of Acts explicitly describes Paul’s own occupation as a tent-maker and those of others: Acts 16:14 has Lydia as a purple-dealer (πορφυρόπωλις) who hails from Thyatira in Asia Minor though relocated to Philippi, and Acts 18:1-3 describes Piscilla and Aquila as Jews (Ιουδαίοι) and fellow tentmakers (σκηνοποιοὶ τῇ τέχνῃ) with whom Paul worked at Corinth.

Paul’s own writings divulge far less about his trade. Richard Ascough argues, however, that the entire Thessalonian community may have been a professional association of “handworkers” perhaps tentmakers or leather-workers. 1 Thes. 2:9 and 4:9-12 in which Paul emphasizes his own labor and work (ἐργαζόμενοι) and then encourages the Thessalonians to work with their own hands (ἐργάζεσθαι ταῖς ἰδίαις χερσὶν) may indicate his relationship to such an occupational network. Similarly, in Rom. 16:3 Paul does not specify Prisca and Aquila’s line of work, calling them only his fellow families are joined through friendship (amicitia) and interlocking patronage of one or more freedmen Cf. Pantelis Nigdelis, Epigraphica Thessalonicensia: Contribution to the Political and Social History of Ancient Thessalonike (Thessaloniki: University Studio Press, 2006), 277. Cf. also IG X 2, 1.723


workers (συνεργούς) in Christ Jesus. But a more literal interpretation of this common Pauline phrase “fellow worker” is valid, and does not preclude other, more figurative nuances (Rom. 16:9, 21; 2 Cor. 8:23; 1 Thes. 3:2). It has been noted, on the other hand, that Paul betrays a slightly higher class attitude toward such work. And if indeed he was from a tent-making background in Tarsus, it has been suggested that his family may have owned the business.

One aspect on which canonical Acts and the undisputed Pauline letters agree is the importance of women in Paul’s networks and ministry. Women are described in many different capacities as patronesses and benefactresses of ekklesiae, as diakonoi, and as coworkers, both inside and outside the household. It is important to note, however, that these women may have been slaves or freedwomen. Indeed, slave women (ancillae), having acquired economic means in variety of ways both domestic and non-domestic,

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257 John S. Kloppenborg, “Greco-Roman Thiasoi, the Ekklēśia at Corinth, and Conflict Management,” in Rediscribing Paul and the Corinthians (Early Christianity and Its Literature no. 5; ed. Ron Cameron and Merrill P. Miller; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011), 212-13, distinguishes between patronage and benefaction within associations thusly: Patrons related to dependents. They provided meeting place, large contributions of money, or regular distributions of sportulae to associations. Benefactor refers to peers or members who contributed to the operation of the association through lesser administrative functions. This distinction, however, is difficult to maintain as the terms for patron and for benefactor seem to be applied when describing the same activities. Cf. e.g. Corinth 8, 3 67; 102; 503.
often acted as personal patronesses to others after their manumission. As freedwomen or former wives (*ancilla matrimonia causa*) they could be beneficiaries of wills, a scenario that has been proposed for the character of Lydia (Acts 16:14). A undated epitaph from Ephesus, for instance, records a that a certain Galatia was both a freedwoman and heir, most likely, of one or all the other persons mentioned in the text: (One)sime, (Chre)sime, or (Zo)sime (*IvE* VI.2519).

Moreover, several women who were once slaves but became patronesses may be similar to some of the names Paul mentions. For instance, Hellenia Meroe of Ephesus was a fully enfranchised freedwoman of a Sextus Hellenius. She erected a bilingual epitaph for herself and Publius Castricius Velanetius her husband (freeborn citizen?), and a number of other dependents or clients who most likely were the children or dependents of Castricius (*IvE* VI.2266). Perhaps Meroe was analogous to Chloe, who seems to have owned slaves and kept her own household (1 Cor. 1:11). Meroe may also be comparable to Phoebe whom Paul describes a patroness (*προστάτις*) for himself and for many (Rom. 16:1-2).

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261 A certain Kanoulia Potamila from second-century CE Thessalonikē may also be applicable. The inscription reads: Λ(όυκιος) Κανουλείος Ζώσιμος αὕτη ζών ὁ μαλαχός.
The freed couple Sextia Cytheris and Gnaeus Sextius Pytadis may also be informative for considering the status and role of Prisca and Aquila. A Latin epitaph for documenting Cytheris and Pytadis was found as a reused portion of Justinian’s Hexamillion wall, and dates to the second half of the first century CE. It reads:

V(iva) Sextia Cn(aei) [(Sextii)] l(iberta) Cytheris
Cn(aeo) Sextio Cn(aei) liberto Pytade Purp[u]rario,
Campa[n]o viro et Cn(aeuo) Sextio Cn(aei) [(Sextii) (Pytade)] f(ilio) Maximo
Pilio Post[e]risqu[e] suis

Sextia Cytheris, freedwoman of Ganeus (Sextius), living. For her husband Gnaeus Sextius Pytadis (?) [or Pyladis], freedman of the Gnaeus Sextius a Campanian purple-dyer/ seller [purpurario Campano], and for Gnaeus Sextius Maximus Pilius, son of Gnaeus (Sextius Pytadis/Pyladis) and for posterity (AE 2001, 1820).

At the time of the inscription the couple Sextia Cytheris and Gnaeus Sextius Pytadis were already manumitted and had a fully-enfranchised freeborn son. Prior to this, there are several possibilities to consider. One possibility is that the patron Gnaeus Sextius of unknown cognomen was a Corinthian colonist who manumitted the couple in Corinth or thereabouts. A second possibility is that the couple was with Gnaeus Sextius in Campania, was manumitted there, and subsequently moved into the Corinthia. Whether they were originally from Italy is uncertain. The nomen Sextius is not well-attested in the Greek East, but far more common in the west. Thus, that the inscription mentions a

καὶ Κανουλία Ποταμίλα τῇ ἀπελευθέρᾳ καὶ εὐεργετίσῃ μνήμης χάριν. ἔτους γ σ. “Lucius Canoulius Zosimus, still living, for himself, O gentle one! and for Kanoulia Potamila (his ?) freedwoman and benefactress, for memorial. Year 203 (?)” (IG X,2 1.451).

262 AE 2001, 1820.
263 E.g. Titus Sextius Spurius, and Titus Sextius Cynthius: AE 1983, 0317 (60 CE,
Campanian provenance may indicate that the couple moved to the Corinthia after their manumission, perhaps as part of their occupation. Additionally, the process of their manumission—whether formal or informal—is unknown. But all persons attested in the inscription appear to be Roman citizens of some sort, either intermediate (Junian Latin) or full (Roman). Furthermore, it is perhaps noteworthy that Cytheris is the principal dedicator of the inscription for both her husband and her freeborn (ingenuus) son, which marks her accessibility to the necessary to funds. One can safely assume, moreover, that Cytheris had funds at her disposal because she was a fellow worker in the Gn. Sextii family, or in the same trade with her husband, a common arrangement of couples.264

Paul mentions Prica and Aquila in a few different capacities. He describes the couple as fellow workers (Rom. 16:3) and as house-church patrons (1 Cor. 16:19 and Rom. 16:5). In both instances Paul connotes that the couple is geographically mobile. The migration and geographical mobility (ethno-geographic networks) of couples such as

Trebluba Mutuesca); Caius Sextius Paris: AE 1983, 0080 (1st–2nd cent. CE, Roma). Aulus Sextius Papiria Titullus: AE 1982, 0523 (late 1st–early 2nd cent. CE, Astigi, Hispania). In the Greek East, the only other Sextius nomen I was able to find is a certain Aulus Sextius Eratos (IvO 648), sculptor from Athens. Others Sextii in the wider east Caius Sextius Atta: CIL 3.1435 (2nd–3rd cent. CE Colonia Ulpia Traiana Sarmizegetusa, Romania); Lucius Sextius Viv[...]:CIL 3.8055 (2nd–3rd cent. CE Romania).

Prisca and Aquila—and perhaps like the freed couple Cytheris and Pytadis—for trade and business was central to the expansion of Paul’s work as a missionary.

Note also that Sextia Cytheris, like Prisca, is mentioned first in the name pairing with her husband. Further,

Finally, it is worth noting briefly Paul’s somewhat curious statement in Rom. 16:13. He writes: “Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine (τὴν μητέρα αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐμοῦ).” Rufus’ legal status is unknown. More significant is Paul’s reference to Rufus’ mother as his own mother. It is fairly certain that Paul uses the term figuratively here, and she most likely showed Paul hospitality at some point. The term ‘mother,’ Emily Hemelrijk suggests, could also refer to a slave or freedwomen who was a benefactresses in an association or collegia, particularly in cultic ones. The appellation ‘mother,’ as opposed to patrona, Hemelrijk argues, marked a woman of lower legal or economic status that could be “co-opted by collegia that were organized on the basis of a common cult, origin or status and which often had women among their members; they were probably recruited from among these female members or from the relatives of male

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265 MacDonald, “Was Celsus Right?” 165, following Meeks, First Urban, 16-17; Theissen, Social Setting, 91-96.


267 Emily Hemelrijk, “Patronesses and ‘Mothers’ of Roman Collegia,” CA 27.1 (2008): 121, 124; e.g. CIL XIV .326 (2nd-3rd cent. CE, Ostia) in which Claudia Arria was a mother for collegium dendrophorum (wood-cutters); AE 2001, 854 (late 2nd CE, Liternum) a Flavia Festa was a mother for Augustales, freedmen collegia.
members and officials.” Elsewhere Paul claims to have mothered or fathered new converts (1 Cor. 3:2; 1 Cor. 4:15; Gal. 4:19).

Excursus: *Familia Caesaris*

Another network Paul mentions is a combination of family and occupation. In Phil. 4:22 Paul sends greetings οἱ ἐκ τῆς Καίσαρος οἰκίας, “from those of Caesar’s household,” i.e. the *familia Caesaris*. This was essentially an occupational network or *collegia* of imperial slaves and freedmen, along with their own slaves and freedmen, all within the emperor’s empire-wide household (σιχομένη). Because of their administrative activities, the *familia Caesaris* was centralized in the Empire’s provincial capitals. It is generally supposed that during the reign of Claudius Corinth was reinstated as the provincial capital of Achaea (c.44 CE). Thus Corinth would most likely have been capital at the time of Paul’s activity there, and by the early second century Corinth certainly was a the epigraphic evidence of the *familia Caesaris* attests. Be that as it may, Paul was active in other

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268 Hemelrijk, “Patronesses,” 142. Note, however, that the term “mother” is also used for empresses: mater castrorum et senatus er patriae (mother of the army, the senate and the country). Hemelrijk, “Patronesses,” 136.

269 This is perhaps an example of what John Kloppenborg calls “peer benefaction,” contributing “to the operation of the association through lesser administrative functions.” Kloppenborg, “Greco-Roman Thiasoi,” 212-13.


271 Cf. e.g. *Corinth* 8,3 62= AE 1964, 167; *Corinth* 8,3 67; *Corinth* 8,2 76; *Corinth* 8,2 69; *Corinth* 8,3 64=SEG XI.88; *CIL* III.7268= *CIL* VI.8818= *ILS* 1503.
provincial capitals like Ephesus—from where Philippians was likely written, and Thessalonike. The comparative implications are important for the broader discussion of this chapter. The aim is to present an alternative perspective with which to view activity and prosopography of Paul’s networks, and manumission therein. Five aspects of the *familia Caesaris* are relevant for Paul, his social networks, and his associations.

First, besides the administrative function and bureaucratic structure, the *familia Caesaris* was active in civic benefactions. In Ephesus, for instance, a plethora of inscriptions displays their leading civic roles, their *euergetism* and care, and the honors

272 I understand the Philippian letter as one letter written from Ephesus. I follow Helmut Koester on the Ephesian origin, though not on the partition theory that Philippians comprises three separate letters. Helmut Koester, “Paul and Philippi: The Evidence from Early Christian Literature,” in *Philippi at the Time of Paul and After his Death* (ed. Charalambos Bakirtzis and Helmut Koester; Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1998), 52-58; cf. also Davorin Peterlin, *Paul’s Letter to the Philippians in the Light of Disunity in the Church* (SNT 79; Leiden; New York: Brill, 1995), 150-151 who proposes an Ephesian provenance for Philippians; L. Michael White, *From Jesus to Christianity* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2004), 185-94; Carolyn Osiek, *Philippians. Philemon* (Abingdon New Testament Commentaries; Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2000), 28-30 is less certain about an Asian provenance because of the term *praetorium*. She suggests that because Asia was a senatorial province it would not have had a *praetorium*, and that Pergamum was the administrative capital. Osiek also notes, however, that the term *praetorium* was broadly used in the first century and could refer to a large house as in Suet. *Tib.* 39 and Juv. 10.161. For similar objections to *praetorium*, a review of various positions, and a suggestion for a Roman provenance, cf. Markus N. A. Bockmuehl, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Philippians* (London: A. & C. Black, 1997), 20-32. It has also been argued that Paul’s use of the phrase δοῦλος Χρίστου in Romans 1:1 is an allusion to the *familia Caesaris* in Rome. Michael Joseph Brown, “Paul's Use of ΔΟΥΛΟΣ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ ΙΗΣΟΥ in Romans 1:1,” *JBL* 120.4 (2001): 723.

bestowed upon them.\textsuperscript{274} The evidence in Corinth is meager, though no less typical. An
unknown freedman procurator from the first century CE, whose inscription was found
East of the agora, appears to have been honored by decurial decree, most likely for
benefactions offered in Corinth (\textit{Corinth} 8.2 69).\textsuperscript{275} Procurator posts were the highest in
the \textit{cursus honorum} of the \textit{familia Caearis}, and Paul’s greetings from the \textit{familia} in Phil.
4:22 most likely did not include those of the provincial procurator.

Second, like other family and occupational networks, in the \textit{familia Caesaris}
personal patronage, as well as general benefaction and reciprocity, were decisive
characteristics. A fragmentary Latin inscription found south of Corinth’s agora, for
instance, records:

\begin{quote}

Gaius Julius Epagathus, freedman of Augustus, tabellarius
(\textit{West’s reconstruction, Corinth} 8.2 76).
\end{quote}

Two other inscriptions mention an Epagathus, all of which I take as the same person. The
first is the Epagathus known from the neighboring region of Arcadia (Lycosura), self-

\begin{quote}
\textsuperscript{274} \textit{IvE} III.859a, C. Julius Nicephorus (\textit{IvE} III.859, even elected \textit{prytanis} for life);
\textit{IvE} III.858=\textit{AE} 1899,65=\textit{GRIA} 160, T. Flavius Epagathus; \textit{IvE} III.855, Tib. Flavius
Pergamus; \textit{IvE} III.853, Tib. Claudius Clemens. cf. also \textit{CIL} III.349=\textit{AE} 1938, 145,
Craterus (\textit{verna fc}) pro salute; and from Laodicea, \textit{MAMA} VII.183=\textit{ILaodikeiaR} 3, M.
Aurelius Zosimus.
\textsuperscript{275} \textit{Corinth} 8.2 69:
L(iberto) Q[…]
Augu[stali, proc(uratori)]
ex d(ecreto) [d(ecurionum)].
\end{quote}
designated in a dedicatory inscription to the goddess Desponia as τοῦ κυρίου Καίσαρος ταβελλάριος (IG V,2.525). The second appears on a Latin inscription from nearby Sicyon, which reads: C(aio) Iulio Aug(us)ti l(iberto) Epagatho Ithacus amicus. (AE 1977, 779). A tabellarius–Epagathus’ title given in two of the inscriptions– was a lower-level clerical post held by slaves, whose responsibilities were those of imperial couriers or letter carriers. Tabellarii could also be deputies of voting ballots, or bookkeepers in the records office (tabularium), and the Southeast Building at Corinth is generally considered to function as such.  

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We may hypothesize that Ithacus honored his friend Epagathus in Sicyon (AE 1977, 779) upon the latter’s manumission and promotion to a freedman of Caesar. Thus the honorary stele from Sicyon may post-date the inscription from Corinth. On the other hand, since the inscription from Corinth is so fragmentary one cannot rule out the possibility that the text actually read tabularius instead of tabellarius. The function of the tabularius was very similar that of a tabellarius, but generally the tabularius was in the manumission stage of the familia Caesaris cursus honorum (See Appendix B: Familia Caesaris Cursus Honorum). The point is that Epagathus could have taken up a freedman post in Corinth, and thus after the inscription from Sicyon dedicated by his friend Ithacus. At any rate, upon his manumission Epagathus could have retired, or remained in the

system and tried to take an *officium*, i.e. a higher freedman post, in the *cursus*. Ithacus himself may also have been a slave, though not necessarily an imperial one, whose honorary inscription for his *amicus* was an act of patronage reciprocity. Indeed, it was common for the *familia Caesaris* to patronize those both outside the *familia*, and those inside hoping for a promotion.

Third, the *familia Caesaris* was active among associations, whether as patrons or members. Titus Flavius Antiochus, an imperial freedman of second century CE Corinth was one of the leading members (*primi*) or patrons of the Association of Lares of the Imperial House (*Collegio Larum Domus Divinae*). He saw to the erection of a statue, whose original location was probably the agora (*Corinth 8,3 62= AE 1964, 167*).

Similarly, Sagaris Alcimius, a house-born slave of the emperor (*verna*), an *arcarius* and a

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277 Cp. *P. Oxy* 46.3312 in which a Herminos “went off to Rome and became a freedman of Caesar in order to take offices.” Cf. P. R. C. Weaver, “‘P. Oxy.’ 3312 and Joining the Household of Caesar,” *ZPE* 149 (2004) 196-204 for discussion of joining the *familia Caesaris* and P. R. C. Weaver, “Phaon, Freedman of Nero,” *ZPE* 151 (2005): 243-252 on entering the *familia Caesaris*.

278 Outside: Epictetus’s fellow-slave Felico who was sold by Epaphroditus for being useless (ἄχρηστον). But Felicio was auspiciously purchased by a member of Caesar’s household, thus joining the *familia Caesaris*. Felicio became a cobbler to Caesar. Epictetus relates that Epaphroditus subsequently honored and consulted Felico! *Epictetus, Disc.* 1.19. Cf. also *IvE* III.854 (102-12 CE). Titus Flavius Soter with his sons Titus Flavius Rufus and Titus Flavius Montanus honor Marcus Ulpius Glyptus an imperial freedman with a statue base in the harbor baths. Inside: *IvE* VI.2037. *IvE* III.651= *CIL* III.6574=7126= *GRIA* 130. An *adiutor tabulariorum* / βοηθός ταβλαρίων (a mid-level secretarial post) named Spectatus honored a fellow-member of the *familia Caesaris*, Tiberius Claudius Vibianus Tertullus, in a bilingual inscription on the Temple of Diana/ Artemis in Ephesus. The inscription also documents Tertullus’s *curus* in descending rank as *ab epistulis Graecis*, *a rationibus*, *praefectus vigilum* on account of his *euergetism*. Those on the outside can also serve as patrons for the *familia Caesaris*. Cf. e.g. Thylander no. A251 (Tomb 94), and A124 from Isola Sacra, Ostia. Valeria Trophime was apparently a patroness who granted places in the columbarium to others, including Trophimus, a member of the *familia Caesaris*, and his wife Claudia Tyche.
vicarius, offered a votive to Sacred Venus and the *Gens* of the Corinthian Collegium of *Augustales* (*CIL* III.7268= *CIL* VI.8818= *ILS* 1503). This inscription witnesses several relational layers of benefactions, both the *Augustales* (a *collegium* of mostly freedmen) and the *familia Caesaris*. Evidence from elsewhere also attests to the participation of the wives of members of the *familia Caesaris*, especially in relation to burial associations. Philoumene, for instance, the wife of a freedman ταβλαρίος named Marcellus, dedicated an epitaph both to her deceased husband and son. The text adds that the tomb is protected by the *collegium of tabularii* in Ephesus (*IE* VI.2103= *GRIA* 75).

Fourth, the family of those in the *familia Caesaris* created important links to local life. The *familia Caesaris* proper—i.e. those holding official posts in the provincial government—was transplanted, and often after their manumission the freedmen took local wives, and settled down in retirement from the imperial service. The imperial slaves could not legally marry until after their manumission, but had informal marriages. The wives of either freed or slave were then considered members of the *familia Caesaris* as well, and could even be freeborn Roman citizens. Moreover, as noted in the previous

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279 The inscription was found in Altinum (modern Altino) northeastern Italy. The text is very difficult to interpret, especially the syntax of the key phrase: Sagaris Alcimi Aug(usti) vern(ae) ark(ari) vic(arius). Either a number of letters are missing from Alcimi, or there is an additional set of relationships represented with the names and titles.

280 Cf. also *SEG* 4, 594= *GRIA* 83 (2nd-3rd CE Notion, (Ionia) Asia). Stratoneikos supplies a tomb for Plusia his wife and Stratokeike and Onesime his children and for their children, his foster brothers. The tomb is protected by an association of imperial *decuriones*, *tabellarii*, and *notarii*; *CIL* XIV.250-51= *ILS* 6174-75, Titus Aurelius Strenion.

281 Cf. *MAMA* IV.53, pl.19= *GRIA* 61 (54-68 CE), Hyacinthus slave of Nero for (freeborn) wife Arruntia Attice and son Q.Arruntius Iustus; *ILaodLyk* I.85= *GRIA* 96;
chapter the members of the *familia Caesaris* had their own slaves and freedpersons in their local context, often designated *lib. liberti* / *lib. libertae*, i.e. freeman of freedmen or freedwoman of freedwomen. These slaves or freedpersons of imperial slaves or freedpersons were also considered members of the *familia Caesaris*, and functioned in the domestic sphere. And as we have seen, manumission before age thirty—especially among women—frequently occurred among the slaves of imperial freedmen (*familia Caesaris* proper). Further, the slaves or freedpersons of the *familia Caesaris* were also situated in patronage webs and benefaction networks, just as with freeborn slave owners or freeborn patrons with their domestic slaves and freedmen.

Fifth, members of the *familia Caesaris* engaged in private commercial and industrial enterprises on their own account, not connected with the emperor’s service. Many slaves of the *familia Caesaris* had occupational titles, which indicated that they practiced a skilled trade in domestic production for the imperial household. What is more, the emperor’s building projects required a web of skilled craftsmen and unskilled labor such as stonemasons (*lapidarii*), marble-cutters (*marmorarii*), carpenters

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*GRIA* 144; *CIL* III.456 = *GRIA* 62 (mid-late 1st cent. CE) and cp. cp. *IRhodEpit* 117 = *ILGR* 17 (from Cos); *IvE* VI.2272b; *MAMA* 1 XIV(2): Hermes (slave of Caesar) for Zmaragdo and Tertia his children; *MAMA* 8.341.

282 *cf. e.g. IvE* VI.2200A, Apollonius and his freedpersons; *IvE* VI.2203A, Aelius Zosimus, Aureliane (wife), Aelius Aurelianus (son) and freedmen.

283 *IvE* VI.2261, T. Flavius Sophron; *IvE* VI.2210 = *CIL* III.436 = *GRIA* 30, Ampliatus *verna* of Successus; *IvE* VI.2202a, P. Aelius Fronto and (P.) Aelius Hermias (freedman).


(structores), or master builders (architecti). Imperial freedmen could act as “workshop supervisors” (officinatores) connecting those were technically outside of the familia Caesaris to the network.

When Paul sent greetings from the familia Caesaris (Καίσαρος οἰκία), therefore, he could have been referring to any number of individuals in the network whom he encountered in the provincial capital’s Government-house, or πραιτώριον as he calls it in Phil 1:13: the domestic slave staff of certain individual members of the familia Caesaris proper, any of the numerous clerical workers (both slave and freed) of the familia Caesaris, or the outsourced workers of the familia Caesaris. In fact, Paul’s own work—whatever that may have been—is a plausible explanation for his initial link to the familia Caesaris. It even seems plausible that one of Paul’s patrons might have been a member of the familia Caesaris, although Paul himself was also acting reciprocally as a type of spiritual patron. That Paul boasts about the gospel ἐν ὅλῳ τῷ πραιτωρίῳ is indicative of the familia Caesaris’s clout, even though the group was comprised of slaves and freedmen.²⁸⁶

The familia Caesaris network also allows us to theorize some about Paul’s travel and entrance into new networks. The greeting in Phil. 4:22 may be taken to indicate that some of the familia Caesaris personally knew some within Paul’s Philippian community,

²⁸⁶ Pliny the Elder records how, during the reign of Claudius, a freedman of M. Claudius Marcellus Aeserninus, from motives of ambition, illegally tried to enroll himself as an imperial freedmen of the familia Caesaris. Pliny, Nat. 12.5.
as Davorin Peterlin suggests.\textsuperscript{287} The fact that Philippi was a Roman colony, moreover, could help explain the connection. Members of the imperial bureaucracy— which included those in administrative and clerical posts and their families— were regularly transferred to other cities sometimes several times over, and even across great geographic distances.\textsuperscript{288}

Or the connection might be the result of official messengers (\textit{tabellarii}) travelling between cities on business, as we saw with Epagathus. Since Paul was connected to the \textit{familia Caesaris} in some way his missionary activity may have mirrored this network’s movements.\textsuperscript{289} And it is likely that Paul continued to facilitate this triangular relationship in order to advance the gospel in new directions.

### Conclusions

Early Christian groups were comprised of interconnected social networks that included family, ethno-geographic, occupational, and cultic types. Paul, as well as the slave and freed members in his associations were involved in these networks. I offered two examples: family and occupation. Because slaves were included in these networks, their manumission resonated through the intersecting the social ties, and could impact Paul’s associations in various ways including mobility, economic support, social and family

\textsuperscript{287} Peterlin, \textit{Paul’s Letter}, 151.

\textsuperscript{288} Cf. e.g. \textit{IvE} III.666; \textit{CIL} III.431; \textit{IGR} III.1077.

connections, and so on. Manumission was potentially beneficial precisely it could be connected to social networks.

This chapter discussed manumission in family networks to highlight ways which manumission was intra-family benefaction that allowed mobility, elevation, or interconnections with other family networks. Moreover, I attempted to elicit conceptual connections with “those of Chloe” and the household of Stephanas who were likely slaves or freedpersons. The section on occupational networks focused on the participation women, and how it might shed light on the status of some in Paul’s congregations. The purpose was to suggest that the women Paul mentions as fellow workers, patronesses, or benefactors, could have been slaves or freedwomen. The exploration of the *familia Caesaris* charted out five characteristics relevant for Paul, his social networks, and his associations. These characteristics offered an analogous framework for considering the activity and prosopography of Paul’s networks, and manumission therein.

Other implications to be considered from this study include a more nuanced understanding of the possible socio-economic level of Paul’s churches. Slaves were not necessarily poor or socially dead, pace Orlando Patterson. On the contrary, many of those persons Paul named, who also happen to have servile names, were not only participants in the associations, but may have been benefactors or patrons. This is especially true of the *familia Caesaris*, who could be slaves, freedpersons, or slaves of freedpersons. Finally, it should always be apparent that those persons who were possibly of freed status were not the former slaves of elites. Rather, they could have been manumitted by another freedperson(s), themselves the freedpersons of another.
Few passages in the undisputed letters of Paul deal directly with the issue of slavery or manumission. Philemon is one and 1 Cor. 7:20-23 is another. But Paul’s statement in 1 Cor. 7:21 is a notorious crux for interpreters: \(\text{δοῦλος ἐκλήθης, µὴ σοι μελέτω· ἀλλ’ εἰ καὶ δύνασαι ἐλεύθερος γενέσθαι, µᾶλλον χρῆσαι.}\) The running together of the conjunctions and particle, (\(\text{ἀλλ’ εἰ καὶ}\) ) is complex enough, but worse is the ending of the verse. As 7:21b is currently understood, Paul sets up a type of conditional: \(\text{if you are able to become free, then make use}\) (\(\text{µᾶλλον χρῆσαι}\)). But \(\text{µᾶλλον χρῆσαι}\) forms a brachylogy, that is, the object of the verb \(\text{χρῆσαι}\) is thought to be omitted: “make use,” but of what? Scholars have consequently focused on the last two words (\(\text{µᾶλλον χρῆσαι}\)) in order to resolve the verse as a whole and conventionally, three interpretations have been offered: “make use” [of slavery], “make use” [of your calling], or “make use” [of freedom].²⁹⁰

By and large the scholarly consensus on 1 Cor. 7:21 is that Paul was suggesting that slaves make use of freedom. Several problematic assumptions about manumission, however, underlie this interpretation. It is commonly assumed that slaves could choose or

refuse manumission, and that Paul was speaking directly to slaves in 7:21. Additionally, scholars tend to read the verse as an exception to Paul’s statements about remaining in one’s calling (7:17a), and 7:21b as a conditional, if-then, clause that contrasts situations from which a slave could choose: if you are able then make use of freedom.

This chapter argues for a different interpretation. I suggest Paul was not offering a conditional clause from which slaves could choose freedom if the opportunity arose, nor was 7:21 was an exception to Paul’s rule in 7:17. Rather, in 1 Cor. 7:21 Paul employed a standard rhetorical device, often called a diatribal form, which he also used elsewhere (1 Cor. 7:17), but in 1 Cor. 7:20-23 inserted into a wider discussion concerning marriage and sexual intercourse. For the sake of teaching purposes Paul’s diatribe offered instruction on how to endure external conditions, some of which were out of one’s control: both the condition of slavery and the act of a slave’s manumission. In light of the social and legal aspects of Roman manumission already discussed, the chapter reconsiders the diatribe in 1 Cor. 7:20-23 as analogous to a philosophical diatribe in Epictetus. The chapter offers a new grammatical and syntactical reconstruction of the verse, translates the verse afresh, and relates the implications to broader issues in Paul’s ministries.

**Grammatical and Syntactical Reconstruction**

Scott Bartchy’s 1973 dissertation *Mallon Chresai* is one of the most famous treatments of 1 Cor. 7:21. Unfortunately, the study is remembered more for its dubious claims about
the relative humanity of slavery in the first century CE than it is for its other contributions. Bartchy argued that “neither Greek, Roman nor Jewish law made it possible for a person in slavery to refuse or forego manumission.” Since a slave could not choose to be manumitted, Bartchy reasoned, it would have been rather pointless for Paul to have advised slaves to choose manumission. Consequently Bartchy translated 1 Cor. 7:21:

“Were you a slave when you were called? Don’t worry about it. But if, indeed, you become manumitted, by all means [as a freedman] live according to [God’s calling].”

In comparison with other translations of 1 Cor. 7:21, Bartchyc’s was and still is rather peculiar. He employed the verb χράομαι as it is used by Josephus, “living according to the laws” of the Jews (Ant. 11.6.12 §281; 13.9.1 §257; 14.7.2 §116). Yet, the most basic meaning of χρῆσαι is “to make use of, or employ.” Bartchyc’s interpretation, moreover, does not suit the context. Although Bartchyc’s translation of 7:21b is not persuasive, his understanding of the options open to slaves in the manumission process is basically accurate, as the previous chapters have shown.

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292 Bartchy, Μᾶλλον Χρῆσαι, 110.
293 Bartchy, Μᾶλλον Χρῆσαι, 110. Oddly, the notion of a slave’s impotence in relation to manumission cuts against some of Bartchyc’s arguments for the humane treatment of slaves in the Roman period.
294 Bartchy, Μᾶλλον Χρῆσαι, 183.
295 Fitzmyer, First Corinthians, 309.
J. Albert Harill’s 1995 monograph *The Manumission of Slaves in Early Christianity* provided a sustained and erudite study of 1 Cor. 7:21. After thoroughly and properly dismantling Barthcy’s other claims about slavery in the first century CE, Harrill maintained that the most questionable assumption in Bartchy’s study is that slaves could never refuse manumission (“mandatory manumission”). Attempting to undermine this view, Harrill pointed to periods of political upheaval when, when leaders would offer freedom to large groups of slaves as a reward if they would desert their masters and fight. In some cases the slaves did not desert for such offers, which Harill interprets as their ability to refuse manumission. Additionally, Harrill cites Exodus 21:5-6 as evidence:

> But if the slave declares, “I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out a free person,” then his master shall bring him before God [alternative: “to the judges”]. He shall be brought to the door or the doorpost; and his master shall pierce his ear with an awl; and he shall serve him for life (Exodus 21:5-6; NRSV).

Finally, Harrill argues that when nondomestic parties (e.g. *collegia*) proposed to put up the cost of manumission - thus a third-party manumission-slaves did not always accept. For instance, in group-sponsored manumissions, a slave was able to purchase his or her

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freedom through sums of money borrowed in a loan called an *eranos*. Harrill presumes that in these types of legal ransoms, the slave could refuse the offer of money and thus refuse manumission. To be fair, Harrill is not solely concerned with 1 Cor. 7:21, but also with corporate manumission of slaves and the exegesis of Ignatius, *Ad Polycarp* 4.3. Nevertheless, his argument that slaves could refuse manumission is crucial for his interpretation and translation of 1 Cor. 7:21.\(^{301}\)

The problem, however, is that slaves— as Bartchy argued— really could not refuse manumission in normal circumstances. While Bartchy takes this notion too far to suggest that neither “slavery” or “freedom” could be the object of \(\chiρ\sigma\sigma\alpha\iota\) in 7:21 and instead opts for “calling,” Harrill’s evidence is not convincing either. Political upheaval is not applicable to Paul’s situation, nor is Exodus a helpful parallel due to its date and political context. What is more, though, Harrill’s crucial mistake was to collapse an offer of money from a third party (nondomestic party) into an offer of manumission.\(^{302}\)

The third party did not *own* the slave. They thus could not legitimately offer manumission because the buck fundamentally stopped with the owner, so to speak. A slave’s choice over an offer was not whether to accept manumission *per se*, but whether to accept a gift, or a sum of money, which the slave, the third-party, or both depending on the situation, could then use to persuade the *owner* to manumit. Generally, the third-party gift provided the slave with the money needed to ostensibly purchase his or her own

\(^{300}\) Harrill, *Manumission*, 167.
\(^{302}\) Harrill, *Manumission*, 100.
freedom, assuming that the owner was willing. A slave’s refusal of a third-party offer, therefore, was a refusal of a relationship with that third party, a refusal of a social dependency, in short, a refusal to be in a reciprocal, patronage relationship of debt with another. Simultaneously, such a refusal would have reinforced the slave’s loyalty to the owner, the only entity that could realistically affect a slave’s freedom.

Slaves could certainly work hard to gain the owner’s favor. But as this study has tried to show, the connection between economics and Roman types of manumission was not related to the slave’s ability to self-purchase.\(^{303}\) As we have seen, the incentives for manumission, moreover, depended on the owner’s legal status (citizenship(s)), political and geographical context (colony, Greek city, \(\text{territorium}\), etc.), social network (patrons, benefaction networks), economic capabilities, and so on. Furthermore, even if the \(\text{peculium}\) could hypothetically suffice for a slave’s self-purchase, manumission was fundamentally a decision of the owner, who after all, owned the slave’s \(\text{peculium}\). As Henrik Mouritsen astutely notes, “given the supposed ubiquity of self-purchase, the instances recorded in the literary sources remain few. Moreover, [these instances] must be set against a vast amount of evidence which either ignores payment, or indicates that freedom normally was gratuitous and granted for personal merit only.”\(^{304}\) Manumission, Harrill himself point out, “suited the master’s interests.”\(^{305}\)

\(^{303}\) Cf. discussion in Chapter 2.


\(^{305}\) Harrill, \textit{Manumission}, 171.
This assumption that slaves could refuse manumission shapes the reading of 1 Cor. 7:21 into a type of situational contrast, whose options are set before the slave(s) to decide: *If* this happens, *then* do this. Harrill argues, for instance, that Paul sets up two different situations in which two different courses of action are necessary, and Paul contrasts these courses of action with μᾶλλον, i.e. use X instead.306 “The ‘if’ clause of 7:21 sets up the second situation. Paul directs the person in the second situation to a different course of action (‘use your becoming free instead’).”307 Harrill translates the verse: “You were called as a slave. Do not worry about it. But if you can indeed become free, use instead [freedom].”308 Harrill thus reads μᾶλλον as a contrasting comparative, and his unnecessary separation of the particles εἰ καὶ to mean “if” and “indeed” heightens the conditional effect of the clause.309 Harrill was by no means the only scholar to read the verse as an if-then clause, and this reading still seems to be the consensus. But for all his important corrective work on the brutality of ancient slavery *pace* Bartchy *et al*, Harrill shared the assumption that slaves could choose manumission with many twentieth

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306 Harrill, *Manumission*, 109; and, 110-13
308 Harrill, *Manumission*, 118.
309 Paul uses εἰ καὶ clauses roughly ten times, and in the majority of cases the phrase can be rendered as an “although” type of concessive clause, without separating the particles. 2 Cor. 4:16; 5:16; 7:8; 7:12; 11:15; 12:11; Phil. 2:17. Cf. Smyth, *Greek Grammar*, §2375.
century interpreters of 7:21, including those who thought Paul was advocating slaves to remain in slavery.\(^{310}\)

A second, mutually reinforcing assumption is that Paul was directly addressing slaves in the Corinthian congregation(s) in 1 Cor. 7:21-23).\(^{311}\) This assumption facilitates reading 7:21 in isolation, or as Paul’s exception to his own rule in 7:17 and 20.\(^{312}\) Bartchy identified 7:21-24 as a “special application,” and Conzelmann thought it was a “direct

\(^{310}\) This argument relied on tautologies concerning Paul’s social conservatism and eschatology. Hans Conzelmann, for example, reasoned that “Paul is not calling for Stoic indifference, nor is he cultivating the resentment of the oppressed. This is understandable from his eschatology. As a result of the latter, civil freedom is seen to be merely a civil affair. In the church it has no value.” Hans Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians: A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians* (trans. James W. Leitch; ed. George W. MacRae; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975), 127. Conzelmann’s comparative scenario relied on taking εἰ καί as if it were καί εἰ, “even if.” Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians*, 127, n.22; cf., however, LSJ sv εἰ B.VIII.1. Conzelmann reads 7:21: *even if* you are able to become free, rather make use [of slavery]. One would expect, however, the present imperative if the slave was to continue in slavery, not the aorist imperative χρῆσαι. Fitzmyer, *1 Corinthians*, 309. For similar position to Conzelmann, cf. Heinz Bellen, *Studien zur Sklavenflucht im römischen Kaiserreich* (Forschungen zur antiken Sklaverei 4; Wiesbaden: F. Steiner, 1971), 147-54; C. K. Barrett, *A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians* (Black's New Testament Commentaries; London: A. & C. Black, 1968), 170-71.

\(^{311}\) Raymond F. Collins, *First Corinthians* (ed. Daniel J. Harrington; SP 7; Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1999), 277 reads 1 Cor. 7:21-23 as a virtual aside within the paraenesis directed to slaves; also J. Brian Tucker, *Remain in your Calling: Paul and the Continuation of Social Identities in 1 Corinthians* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2011), 82, “The next step in Paul’s discourse of social entrepreneurship focuses on slaves. In 7:21, he brings to the fore “slave” (δοῦλος) marking the next step in his discussion.”

address” because the slave “requires to be comforted.”

Similarly, Brad Braxton has argued that 1 Cor. 7:21 is “addressed to actual slaves.”

[I]t is not at all unlikely that Corinthian slaves had heard stories of how slaves in other parts of the Mediterranean world had been manumitted under the supervision of religious bodies such as the Jewish synagogue. If the synagogue would sponsor manumission, perhaps Corinthians slaves felt that the ἐκκλησία should follow suit. Much was riding on Paul’s words concerning the role of slavery and manumission with respect to the ἐκκλησία. On whichever side Paul landed, he would be both a winner and a loser. He was between the proverbial rock and a hard place.

Braxton argues that in such a precarious situation, Paul “retreated into the shadows of ambiguity,” and that the ambiguity of 1 Cor. 7:21-23 is “not a problem to be solved” but an “explicit feature of the text.”

To be sure, 1 Cor. 7:21 is applicable to slaves, and there is little doubt slaves were in Paul’s Corinthian congregations. But it is important to keep in mind the wider context of 1 Cor. 7. Paul seems to have been responding to a letter the Corinthians sent him, and the topics to which he turns in 7:1, and which carry through 7:40, are marriage, divorce, and sexual intercourse. Although the topic of slavery and manumission would not have

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313 Bartchy, Μᾶλλον Χρῆσαι, 9-10, 166-72, 183; Conzelmann, I Corinthians, 127.
315 Braxton, Tyranny, 226-7.
316 Braxton, Tyranny, 227, 233-4.
317 Fitzmyer, First Corinthians, 274; J.M.Gundry-Volf, “Controlling the Bodies: A Theological Profile of the Corinthian Sexual Ascetics (1 Cor 7),” in The Corinthian Correspondence (ed. Reimund Bieringer; BETL 125; Leuven: Leuven University Press,
been entirely off base in a discussion of marriage, particularly if that discussion was prompted by women (7:1), it seems Paul did not broach the topic because he had particular Corinthian slaves in mind. Rather, 7:21-23 is part of a more utilitarian teaching device (7:18-24) that Paul apparently used in all his churches (7:17b), but is in this instance was deployed as social *realia* for the topics at hand—marriage, divorce, and sexual intercourse.

Will Deming’s two treatments of 1 Cor. 7:21 argue that Paul used a “diatribe pattern” 7:17-24, which “conforms to a distinctive syntactical formula” common in philosophical argumentation. This diatribe pattern, according to Deming, was standard among Cynic and Stoic philosophical instruction. Among other similar diatribes from Teles, Philo, and Seneca, Deming uses this excerpt from Epictetus to illustrate the pattern:

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Remember that you must conduct yourself as in a banquet. Has something been passed around down to you?—reach out your hand and politely take some! It goes on by?—don’t hold it back! It hasn’t come yet—don’t set your desire on it at a distance, but stay put until it is down by you! Thus toward children, thus toward a wife, thus toward public office, thus toward wealth, and some day you will be worthy of the banquet of the gods. (Epictetus, *Ench.* 15).

The reader will note that the diatribe pattern consists of three parts: (1) A statement of fact is given in the form of a rhetorical question, followed by (2) an imperative rebuff that denies the statement of fact has any significance for a person’s life, and finally (3) an explanation is provided for why the statement of fact should be treated with indifference.

Deming’s reconstruction of Paul’s diatribe argument in 1 Cor. 7:21-22 is thus:

You were called as a salve?—don’t let it concern you!
*But if you can become free rather use it.*
For the slave who is called in the Lord is the Lord’s freedman; likewise, the one called as a freeman is Christ’s slave.

Paul also used the diatribe pattern elsewhere in the chapter. For instance:

περιτετμημένος τις ἐκλήθη, μὴ ἐπισπάσθω.

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322 Deming, “Diatribe,” 130.
ἐν ἀκροβυστίᾳ κέκληται τις, μὴ περιτεµνέσθω.
ἡ περιτοµὴ οὐδὲν ἐστίν καὶ ἡ ἀκροβυστία οὐδέν ἐστίν, ἀλλὰ τήρησις ἐντολῶν θεοῦ

Someone was called circumcised?—don’t undo the circumcision.
Someone had been called uncircumcised?—don’t get circumcised.
Circumcision in nothing and uncircumcision is nothing, but keeping the commandments of God (1 Cor. 7:18-19).

According to Deming, Paul’s interest in the pattern has prevented him from finishing out his paradigm in 7:21-22. Deming argues that as per the pattern, we expect in 7:21 “You were called a slave? Don’t seek to become free.” Instead Paul writes: “You were called as a slave?—don’t let it concern you! But if you can become free rather use it.” Thus Deming claims that 7:21b (But if you can become free rather use it) is an addition to the pattern, intruding between the imperative of 7:21a (part 2 of the diatribe) and the explanation of 7:22 (part 3 of the diatribe). Paul softens the imperative’s rebuff by writing, “don’t worry about it,” and in so doing indicates that he wishes “to mitigate the rhetorical impact” of the verse. 1 Cor. 7:21 Deming concludes, should be interpreted to mean “while Christian slaves should regard their disenfranchised state as a matter of indifference, they should not, as a consequence, forgo an opportunity to gain their freedom.”

While Deming’s argument is persuasive in many respects, it also misses some crucial details, which skew the understanding of Paul’s teaching in 7:21. Like other

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324 Deming, “Diatribe,” 133.
327 Deming, “Diatribe,” 137.
translators Deming reads ἀλλ’, “but,” as beginning a new, additional phrase that breaks the “diatribe pattern” or makes an exception to Paul’s rule about remaining in one’s call. Yet 7:21b should be read as a continuation of the second part of Paul’s philosophical argument (imperative rebuff), and not as an intruding clause. Deming assumes that slaves had a choice to make concerning manumission. This undergirds his argument that Paul broke the “diatribe pattern” by the addition of 7:21b: “But if you can become free rather use it.” What is often called a diatribe, however, was a genre of philosophical argumentation derived from the pedagogical activity of philosophical schools, and not a strict stylistic pattern.

To illustrate this we must reconsider the excerpt from Epictetus Enchiridion 15, this time with the Greek, and remembering that the example is dishes being passed around at a banquet:

οὔπω ἥκει: μὴ ἐπίβαλλε πόρρω τὴν ὄρεξιν, ἀλλὰ περίμενε, μέχρις ἄν γένηται κατὰ σέ.
oῦτω πρὸς τέκνα, οὖτω πρὸς γυναῖκα, οὖτω πρὸς ἄρχας, οὖτω πρὸς πλοῦτον: καὶ ἔσῃ ποτὲ ἄξιος τῶν θεῶν συμπότης.

It hasn’t come yet–don’t set your longing on it at a distance, but stay put until it is down to you! Thus toward children, thus toward a wife, thus toward public office, thus toward wealth, and some day you will be worthy of the banquet of the gods.

(Epictetus, Ench. 15).

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329 My translation.
Notice that in the diatribe the conjunction ἀλλά continues the imperative rebuff (Demin’s part 2). It does not begin a new or additional phrase. The application of the argument for Epictetus’s addressees is literally not to cast out one’s hand or reach out (µή ἐπίβαλλε πόρρω τὴν ὀρέξιν) at a plate from a distance, but to wait for it. Thus, a second imperative rebuff (περίµενε) follows the conjunction (ἀλλά), and a conditional clause (µέχρις ἂν γένηται κατὰ σέ) is tacked on. The conditional (temporal) clause directly qualifies the second imperative (stay put), more distantly the first imperative (don’t reach out from a distance), and is a counterpart to the statement of fact (It hasn’t come yet). All four grammatical pieces (imperative, conjunction, imperative and a condition) are included in the imperative rebuff of the diatribe (part 2).

Like the snippet from Epictetus, a conjunction, two imperatives, and a conditional clause are all included in 1 Cor. 7:21. The interpretive reconstruction of 7:21 as a rhetorical diatribe, therefore, should also reflect the argument in Epictetus:

δοῦλος ἐκλήθης, µή σοι μελέτω, ἀλλὰ µᾶλλον χρῆσαι εἰ καὶ δύνασαι ἐλεύθερος γενέσθαι.  
(1 Cor. 7:21 Reconstructed)

δοῦλος ἐκλήθης, µή σοι μελέτων ἀλλ’ εἰ καὶ δύνασαι ἐλεύθερος γενέσθαι, µᾶλλον χρῆσαι.  
(1 Cor. 7:21 Standard)

The actual word order of 7:21, however, has the imperative (χρῆσαι) at the end of the sentence, not following ἀλλ’. One explanation is that Paul used a parenthetical construction after ἀλλ’ and beginning with εἰ καὶ instead of immediately going to the
imperative (μᾶλλον χρῆσαι). It is not uncommon for words or phrases to come in between the conjunction ἀλλά and the main verb, especially when writing in verse, although such constructions also appear in prose. Paul may also have chosen to end 7:21a-b with imperatives μελέτω and χρῆσαι in order to parallel 7:18 a-b more closely, which also concludes with two imperatives. The rhetorical substance of the sentence is persuasive nonetheless (See Figure 1).

Figure 1: Diatribal Reconstruction of 1 Cor. 7:21-23

Several characteristics should be noted from this proposed reconstruction. First,

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330 LSJ s.v. ἀλλά A.III.3; Smyth, Greek Grammar, §2817. Herodotus 8.8; 9.109; Hom. Il. 7.242; Od. 14.355; Sophocles, Ant. 155. For instance, in Euripides, Phoen. 1307: ἀλλά γάρ Κρέοντα λέει στόν δέων συνεφή πρὸς δόμος στείχοντα, παύσω τοὺς παρεστῶτας γόους. “But now Creon I see on his way here to the house with clouded brow, so I will cease the present lamentations (Euripides, Phoen. 1307).” The clause coordinated by the conjunction γάρ gives, by anticipation, the reason for the ἀλλά clause. In other words, the point of this verse is that the chorus must stop its lamentations (ἀλλά...παύσω τοὺς παρεστῶτας γόους). But the parenthetic clause explains why it must stop, before completing the thought. It seems plausible that Paul’s ei καὶ is functioning in a similar way to the particle γάρ above, in that the ei καὶ provides the condition for the main verb of the apodosis (μᾶλλον χρῆσαι) before it is actually introduced.

331 Another, more speculative, reason for Paul’s construction is the prosody of the verse, particularly in the apodosis (ἀλλὰ ei καὶ δύνασαι ἐλεύθερος γενέσθαι, μᾶλλον χρῆσαι).
7:21b, specifically the ἀλλἠ should mark the apodosis of δοῦλος ἐκλήθης, μὴ σοι μελέτω, not the protasis of a new clause, as it is commonly taken. Moreover, 7:21 should be read with a comma separating μελέτω and ἀλλἠ, not a medial stop as in the standard Greek New Testament (Nestle-Aland text 28th edition). This punctuation has helped foster a misperception that Paul’s key phrase is detached from what we call 7:21a. It seems that the editorial decision to punctuate with a medial stop was inherited from Stephanus’ 1550 Editio Regia and the earlier English biblical editions, which began placing a hard-stop punctuation before the ἀλλἠ. By comparison, both Erasmus’ 1521 Greek New Testament (Textus Receptus)—which relied on the Byzantine Text—and Luther’s 1522 and 1530 German editions, only used a comma to separate μελέτω and ἀλλἠ. The hard-stop, or medial stop punctuation seems especially arbitrary when read against the diatribe in 1 Cor. 7:19, and the earliest textual witnesses of 1 Cor. 7:21. Neither P⁴⁶, Codex Sinaiticus, Codex Alexandrinus, or Codex Vaticanus indicate any pause between μελέτω and ἀλλἠ. In fact, in both Sinaiticus and Alexandrinus the breaks come before our 7:20 and after


333 One could make a case for a pause before ἀλḷἠ in codex Alexandrinus. But in comparison with the much clearer medial stops in other verses of the same passage in Alexandrinus, such a reading is difficult. There is very little space, moreover, between μελέτω and ἀλἀ in comparison with the previous line, which plainly marks a break between our 7:20 and 7:21. The next clear indication of a break is with τιμῆς in our 7:23. Thus it seems the scribes were demarcating 7:20-22: v. 20 is done so incipiently, and then v. 21 with a medial stop before δοῦλος. Erasmus’ 1521 edition (Textus Receptus), which relied on manuscripts of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries representing the Byzantine Text, has only a comma between μελέτω and ἀλḷἠ. Likewise, Luther’s German New Testament in both in the 1522 and 1530 editions does not have a full break. The tradition of inserting a hard stop seems to have developed in the English editions.
7:21, thus indicating Paul’s so-called diatribes (7:18-19; 7:20-21) should be read as single sentences.

Second, the conditional clause with εἰ καὶ should not be understood as part of a protasis, but a phrase in the apodosis, and included in the imperative rebuff (part 2 of the diatribe). Consequently, the condition Paul introduced with εἰ καὶ qualified the imperatives (µῆ σοι µελέτω and µᾶλλον χρῆσαι), analogously to the temporal clause in Epictetus’ diatribe. The conditional clause of 7:21b (εἰ καὶ...), moreover, should be read as a parenthetical concessive clause. As Smyth explains, “Concessive clauses are conditional, but they indicate that the condition they introduce may be granted without destroying the conclusion. The clause “states what is regarded as true notwithstanding what is assumed in the protasis,” in this case δοῦλος ἐκλήθης. Εἰ καὶ, furthermore, is a functional equivalent to the subjunctive ἐὰν καὶ, carrying the meaning “provided that.”

Compare the phrase in the decree of Antoninus Pius (issued 140-44 CE), that rebukes the Smyrneans for not using the proper titles (e.g. “first and greatest Metropolis of Asia”) in regard to Ephesos. The relevant sentence reads:


But I fear that the Smyrneans have unfortunately neglected these titles in their decrees concerning (your) common (i.e. provincial) sacrifices, but in the future they would be willing to adopt a conciliatory attitude, provided that in your

334 Smyth, Greek Grammar, §2370; 2369.
335 LSJ s.v. εἰ B.VIII.1.
correspondence with them you also are mindful to show what is properly theirs and has been justly determined for their city (in the use of titles) (SIG 849).  

After Antoninus Pius rebukes Smyrna, he adds that from now on Smyrna will use the proper title provided that (ἐὰν καὶ), or if of course the Ephesians reciprocate and use the proper titles in relation to Smyrna. The ἐὰν καὶ (or εἰ καὶ) construction is thus assumptive of the succeeding phrase. 1 Cor. 7:21, therefore, is not offering a conditional clause for slaves to decide whether, but rather a proviso for μᾶλλον χρῆσαι. Paul’s concessive suggests “don’t worry, but rather make use provided you’re able.”  

Third, the object of μᾶλλον χρῆσαι, or more precisely the referent of μᾶλλον χρῆσαι seems to be ἐλεύθερος γενέσθαι, though with a preceding parenthetical concessive clause. In this case, the concessive condition is εἰ καὶ δύνασαι, and not εἰ καὶ δύνασαι ἐλεύθερος γενέσθαι—a minor syntactical shift, but with significant hermeneutical effect. According to diatribal argumentation, then, a possible translation of 7:21b is this:

337 The infinitive (γενέσθαι) is a verbal noun, properly a case form in the dative, and in the middle voice χράομαι may take the dative. Smyth, Greek Grammar, §358; 1509
You were called as a slave?—don’t let it concern you, but (provided that you’re able) rather make use of becoming free [i.e. manumission].

I read ἀλλά with µᾶλλον as an intensive conjunction—a second rhetorical slap. I do no separate εἰ from καὶ as in “even if” or “if indeed,” but as two particles granting a situation. The referent of χρῆσαι would most likely be ἐλεύθερος γενέσθαι, but in the actual word order of 7:21 there is a brachylogy with µᾶλλον χρῆσαι.

Philosophical and Social Reinterpretation

Paul’s diatribe assumed and conceded manumission as an external reality, and a regular feature in Roman urban contexts. The language, however, is periphrastic vis-à-vis manumission (εἰ καὶ δύνασαι ἐλεύθερος γενέσθαι) and attenuated with the concessive clause. That which is assumed may be unstated and ambiguous to us, still one can rightly ask why Paul used none of the words that would have made the imperative rebuff of the diatribe most pointed- ἐλευθέρωσις (manumission) or ἐλευθερία (freedom). The answers to this, I think, are enwrapped in the philosophical underpinnings and social context of Paul’s ministry.

Deming’s argument in relation to 1 Cor. 7:21 also overlooks some of the philosophical baggage diatribes carried. Paul’s argument stressed an indifferent attitude

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338 Still an awkward construction to be sure, but the infinitive is a verbal noun, properly a case form, and chiefly dative (Smyth, Greek Grammar, §358) while the middle voice χράομαι is used with the dative (Liddell & Scott s.v. χράομαι III.1).
towards things that were neither good nor bad, but simply neutral (ἀδιάφορα; indifferentia; media): life, death, fame, ignominy, pain, pleasure, wealth, poverty, sickness, health, and the like.\(^{339}\) Just as Deming points out in his article “Paul and Indifferent Things,” the Stoics held that slavery and legal freedom were neither good nor bad in themselves. In the same article Deming also suggests that 1 Cor. 7:20-23 draws on this Stoic tradition.\(^{340}\) In stoic philosophical terms, then, Paul’s teaching in 7:21 concerned externals (φαντασία; ostentatio). “Some things are under our control (ἐφ’ ἡµῖν),” Epictetus says at the opening of the Enchiridion, “while others are not under our control (οὐκ ἐφ’ ἡµῖν).” Under one’s control is everything that is one’s own doing (ἔργα), most importantly virtue.\(^{341}\) Outside of one’s control is everything that is not one’s own doing (ἔργα).\(^{342}\) Epictetus goes on to instruct that one should concern oneself (µελέτα) with those externals (φαντασία) only to say, “It is nothing to me (οὐδὲν πρὸς ἐµέ).”\(^{343}\) It would thus have been nonsensical for Paul to write, “You were called a slave? Don’t seek to become free,” not only as Deming argues, because “such a stance toward

\(^{339}\) John T. Fitzgerald, Cracks in an Earthen Vessel: An Examination of the Catalogues of Hardships in the Corinthian Correspondence (SBLDS 99; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1984), 53-54.


\(^{341}\) Fitzgerald, Cracks, 53-55; 81-2.

\(^{342}\) Epictetus, Ench. 1.1.

\(^{343}\) Epictetus, Ench. 1.
slavery” would be “without parallel among Paul’s contemporaries,” but also because all of the options (manumission, freedom, or slavery) were ultimately out of the control of both the slave(s) and Paul himself. This is precisely the point of the diatribe (7:21-22).

1 Cor. 7:21b was not an exception to the instruction in 7:20 that each should remain (μενέτω) in his or her calling, as much as it was a second application of μὴ σοι μελέτω to external circumstances. Remember Epictetus instructs that the person who was passed up at the banquet should not reach out (μὴ ἐπίβαλλε), but remain (ἀλλὰ περίμενε) until the plate circles back around to him. This latter scenario is not in the person’s control any more than the statement of fact that he was passed up. The first imperative (μὴ ἐπίβαλλε) thus applies notwithstanding. Thus, to “wait” or “hold back oneself” (περίμενε) is the same as “not reaching” (μὴ ἐπίβαλλε). Likewise Paul’s instruction to persons whose external circumstances and hardships (περίστασεις) were out of their control (δούλος ἐκλήθης), was for them to be indifferent (ἀδιάφορα; indifferentia; media). Paul writes, “don’t let it concern you” (μὴ σοι μελέτω). The social reality was that some slaves could be manumitted while others not. The imperative μὴ σοι μελέτω applies to both possibilities. But the possibility of manumission was not in the slave’s control any more than the statement of fact that he or she δούλος ἐκλήθης. For those who happen to be manumitted, their external circumstances would also have changed, but

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345 Fitzgerald, Cracks, 33-46.
nonetheless out of his or her control: “For the one who was called (κληθεὶς) in the Lord as a slave is the Lord’s freedman (7:23a).”

The inherent social structures may also help explain Paul’s periphrastic language in 7:21. When interpreting Paul’s letter to Philemon a similar problem persists. The scholarly consensus is that Paul was seeking manumission for Onesimus. 346 Yet, one can rightly investigate, even if manumission is assumed in the letter, why didn’t Paul say it simply and explicitly? The answer for both Philemon and 1 Cor. 7:21, I think, is that Paul did not have the authority to do so. To co-opt Deming’s terms, Paul “mitigates the impact” of the diatribe, but does so with the concessive clause (εἰ καὶ δύνασαι), which serves as a rhetorical nod to the conditions that would allow slaves “to become free,” namely the slave owners. This is not to say that Paul was in cahoots with slaveholders but to admit the social reality. 347 The diatribal “pattern”—or any didactic, rhetorical formula


347 Cp. Horrell, Social Ethos, 166-67. I am not trying to read slaveholder ideology into Paul’s writings and to connote that he was a “social conservative.” If anything, 1 Cor. 7:23 resists such a reading. Much rather, what Paul thought about slavery is to a certain extent irrelevant. What matters is how manumission worked practically, and how the social mores of the Roman empire constrained Paul’s relationships.
Paul used for that matter–had to be consistent with the pre-existing social hierarchies of the households. Recall that Chloe (1 Cor. 1:11), Stephanas (1 Cor. 1:17), and Philemon, house-church patrons, likely owned slaves, and thus were included in the implied audiences of Paul’s letters (7:17). Part of the ambiguity of the verse, therefore, is the dual relevance: 7:21 applied both to slaves and the owners.

Manumission was a powerful social tool. As I have tried to show throughout the course of this project, the impact of Roman manumissions on the individual slave was immediate, and could have significant effects on those in his or her social networks. Above all, manumission provided some kind of Roman citizenship–full or intermediate–with the perks therein, a truly significant social transition for a slave, even if incremental and restrained within his or her own social horizons. This transformation from slave to citizenship could potentially create social and associative conflict, because it blurred the lines of what may have been perceived as clear demarcations of statuses.348 On the one hand, from the perspective of the freeborn, their cultural honor (dignitas) was intact in a way a slave’s or a freedperson’s was not. Yet on the other, the freeborn may not have possessed the skills or had access to the connections that some slaves or freedperson’s had. What is more, manumission could easily provoke peer rivalries and jealousies, especially bitterness or disparity in those slaves who were not manumitted. Thus,

348 Conflict in “associative contexts” was ultimately tied the assertion of status, and conflict within the ‘lower’ sector–slaves and freedpersons–was “just as common as conflict higher up the status ladder.” John S. Kloppenborg, “Greco-Roman Thiasoi, the Ekklesia at Corinth, and Conflict Management,” in Redescribing Paul and the Corinthians (Early Christianity and its Literature 5; ed. Ron Cameron and Merrill P. Miller; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011), 213; 209-13.
patronage and loyalty structures were the social control mechanism for manumission and
the various integrative processes from slave to citizen. Paul could not undercut the
patron’s role in the social pedagogy without risking a strain in his relationship to his
churches’ household patrons. By his rhetorical maneuvers, therefore, Paul reinforced the
household hierarchies while still maintaining the reality that manumission could rebuff
δοῦλος ἐκλήθης.

Concomitantly, status difference resulting from manumission, for example, was
also the backdrop against which Paul could symbolically erase those status distinctions.
Egalitarian language crops up particularly in the baptismal reunification formula Paul
used: “For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body. Whether Jews or Greeks or
slaves or free (δοῦλοι εἴτε ἑλεύθεροι), we were all made to drink of the one Spirit (1 Cor.
12:13).” As Wayne Meeks explains, this ritual pronouncement acknowledged real social
statuses, but inculcated an attitude, shaped a symbolic universe, and made a factual claim
about change in reality that fundamentally modified social those roles.  

349 Wayne A. Meeks “The Image of the Androgyne: Some Uses of a Symbol in
Earliest Christianity” in In Search of the Early Christians: Selected Essays (ed. Wayne A.
Meeks; New Haven, CT; London: Yale University Press, 2002), 11-12
Paul’s ministry encompassed household hierarchies, fluctuating statuses, and spiritual homogeneity, while strategically asserting its own authority in the mix.\(^{351}\) In this sense Paul was a status manager, a “broker for the heavenly patrons,” and an “official emissary of the heavenly *paterfamilias*.”\(^{352}\) Both the diatribe (1 Cor. 7:17-24) he used in all his churches (1 Cor. 7:17) along with the baptismal reunification formula were instruments of his repertoire that pointed to the ultimate status equalizer and the supreme benefactor and patron.\(^{353}\) As Paul writes: “For the one who was called in the Lord as a slave is the Lord’s freedman (*ἀπελεύθερος*). In the same way, the one who was called as a free person (*ἐλεύθερος*) is Christ’s slave (1 Cor. 7:22).”

**Conclusions**

This chapter attempted to show how a number of problematic assumptions about manumission skew the reading of 1 Cor. 7:21. Manumission, it was argued, was not in

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slave’s control and Paul was not speaking directly to slaves in 7:21, but to the wider situation in 1 Cor. 7. Moreover, the chapter maintained that 7:21 should not be understood as a conditional, if-then, clause that contrasts situations or makes an exception for slaves to chose: *if* you are able *then* make use of freedom. Instead, 7:21 should be understood as part of a standard philosophical diatribe that Paul used in all his churches (7:17), and which responded to external conditions out a slave’s control: slavery and manumission.

By reconstructing the verse in terms of a rhetorical and philosophical argument, the chapter tried to clarify Paul’s didacticism in 7:17-24 by highlighting several characteristics: 7:21b has inverted word order; it was not a new, additional clause but an apodosis and qualification of the external conditions of 7:21a; the conditional clause is εἰ καὶ δύνασαι and it is a parenthetical concessive meaning “provided that”; the referent of μᾶλλον χρῆσαι is ἔλευθερος γενέσθαι indicating manumission. Based on the diatribe pattern I suggested the following translation: *You were called as a slave?—don’t let it concern you, but (provided that you’re able) rather make use of becoming free* [i.e. manumission].

The chapter also offered several reasons for why the language of the verse is periphrastic in relation to manumission. Above all, it is not explicit because manumission was out of the control of both the slave(s) and Paul. It was an external circumstance. Paul’s philosophical diatribe reflected this social reality. Additionally, Paul did not explicitly instruct manumission because he did not have the authority to do so and thus it would have been socially inappropriate. Paul had to respect the authority of his house-
church patrons, some of whom owned slaves. Yet, Paul could symbolically erase status distinctions, for example in the baptismal reunification formula, and assert his authority as spiritual broker for the ultimate patron (7:23).
Appendix A: Roman and Greek Manumissions

(1). **Roman Manumission: *manumissio vindicta***


Antonius Antoni lib(ertus)  
Hermes ann(orum) xxxx  
manumissus vindictis  
[-----------------------------]  
prefeşti Άγ(ypti) (vicesimam) solb(it)  
p(ublice). (vicesima) lib(ertatis) p(opuli) R(omani) accepi Chal  
cedonius Aug(ustorum) n(ostrum)  
verna aĕb M(arco) A[ntonio——]  
[-----------------------------]

Antonius Hermes, 40 years old, freedman of (Marcus) Antonius, manumitted by *vindicta* (by prefect X in the *nome* of X), the prefect of Egypt, (M. Antonius) paid the 5% manumission tax to the state. I, Chalcedonios, house-born slave of the emperors, have received the 5% manumission tax of the Roman people from Marcus Antonius [-----------------------------].

For other example of *manumissio vindicta* cf. *SEG* 35, 1167= *GRIA* 106 (mid-3rd cent. CE, Maonia); *P.Oxy.* 40.2937 fr. 2 (270 CE).

(2). **Roman Manumission: *manumissio ex testamento***

*P.Hamb. 1.72=CPL 174.* Second century CE. Egypt.

[quicunque mihi ex ea, quae uxor mea est, tempore]

mortis · ῥῄae · natus · natave · erit ·, mihi hereš [ -ca.?- ]  
esto · suntove · quod · si unus unave ex his ·, quicunque [ -ca.?- ]  
natus · natave · erit · eruntve ·, moriatur ·, ērogo[ti]o -ca.?- ]  
hereditatis · [p]ro portione maior · esto.  
cum autem sciam ῶihi non licere per testameṇtum [plus -ca.?-]  
quam quob in lege Φušia{m} Caninia · conprehensum [ -ca.?- ]  
sit · man[u]ittere], rogo, hereš · karissiμe, μanum[ittas -ca.?- ]  
ei n(on) obstet fugitiyorum · servorum · <m>eorum numer[us -ca.?- ]  
si quid ego · post h[o]c testamentum meum · nuncupatu[m -ca.?- ]  
codicillis · charta · membrana · aliove quo generे [ -ca.?- ]  
scrip[tum signatumque re]li[i]quero, quo non recto tes-]
Roman Manumission: manumission per epistulam

P. Tebt. 2:407. 199 CE. Arsinoite nome, Egypt

[... ἀντίγραφον].

Μαρσίσιος ὁ Μαρσίσιος ὕψιστοι ἄρχιστος τῇ ἔν Ἀρ][σινοε[θηρ]μασματότου Ἀδριανείου


[...]ν καὶ Σαρπιάδα καὶ τ[ὸ ταύ]τας ἔγγονον Θ[ερμ.]ούθιν καὶ Σωτηρίαν


[εὐ ποιήσεις] μὴ κακώσασα, τὸ δὲ βούλημα τοῦτο ἐὰν μὴ φυλάξες διὰ

[...] προσφέρεται καὶ ἄλλα [τ]ινά <α> ἐκτῆτο ὧν αἱ ἀσφάλειαι

[...] εἶναι τοῦ Ἕλεξανδρεία θεοῦ μεγάλου Σαράπιδος. (ἔτους) ξ Τύβι κλ.

[...] ἤγγαινά εἰς τὸν ἐπὶ ἀγάθους γεινόμενον διαλογισμόν πορευόμενος.


[...] καὶ στῆτοι καὶ φοινίκων περὶ ἄλλας κόμας Πολέμονος μερίδος καὶ Ἱράκ-

[κλια Θεομείωτο] ὄν καὶ δουλ[i]κών σωμάτων Εὐπόρου καὶ Νικηφόρου καὶ Ὀλυ[κο]πείνου

[ταύτα ἐξεύθετα ἐμίαν ὑπὸ Δία] ἤγγειν Ἡ[λιοῦ], ὄντος μὲν [Ε]ὐπόρου καὶ Ὀλυκοπτείνου

[...] διὰ ἀπογραφή[ς] ἐκ δούλης σοῦ ἐπιτεύξεως εἰς ποιήσεις

[...] τοῦ] τοιοῦτοι καὶ τοι[ας] γράμμασι ή εἰδέναι σὲ μὴ ἐπίσημο-

[...] σαν [...] πάντα ὑπὸ σα[μ] ἐποίησα ἐπὶ ὑ[νόμα]τος σοῦ ἐμίαν τοῦ

[...] ἤγγειν Ἕλεξανδρεία θεοῦ] μεγάλου Σαράπιδος. τοῦτον γὰρ τὴν πάσαν νομήν


[...] [ἐπ]ί αὐτὸς ἀναδεδωκα τοῖς αὐτοῖς ἐλευθεροῦν-

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Copy. Marsisouchos son of Marsisouchos, ex-high-priest of the most sacred temple of Hadrian in the Arsinoite nome, to my daughter N.N. daughter of Marsisouchos, greeting. Whereas it is my wish that, of the property which I […] in agreement with my mother […] when securing the property coming to me including slaves, the slaves should be free under sanction fo Zeus, Earth and Sun on account of the fellowship and solicitude existing between us, namely […] and Sarapias and her child Thermouthis and Soteria and her children Isidora and Dioskoros and […]ius and Sarapammon, you will do well not to interfere, for if you do not observe these my wishes both what was settled upon you and what you have acquired, the contracts and title-deeds of which […] shall be the property of the great god Sarapis at Alexandria. The 7th year, Tubi 24. I write on my way to the court now being auspiciously held.

Another (copy). Marsisouchos son of Marsisouchos son of Apollonios, ex-high-priest of the most sacred temple of Hadrian in the Arsinoite nome, to Berenike daughter of Didumos, my wife, greeting. Whereas it is my wish that, of my property standing in your name, viz. a vineyard at the village of and arable land and palms at other villages of the division of Polemon and at Heraklia in the division of Themistos, and the slaves Euporos and Nikephoros and Holokottinos, the slaves should be free under sanction of Zeus, Earth and Sun, Euporos and Holokottinos being children of […] and registered as the offspring of your female slave Epitheus, you will do well to give heed to this letter of mine, otherwise you must know that if you disobey me all that I have placed in your name is the property of the great god Sarapis at Alexandria, and I have given to the aforesaid slaves, having paid in full the taxes for their manumission. I write on my way to the court.

(4). **Greek Manumission: sacral manumission with paramone clause**

*Fouilles de Delphes* 3, 6.36 (20-46 CE) Temple of Apollo at Delphi. Inscription.

ἄρχοντος Πάσωνος τοῦ Δάµωνος, μηνὸς Ἡρακλῆου, βουλευόντων Ἀβροµάχου τοῦ Ἐναγόρα, Μάρκου τοῦ Μάρκου, χειρόγραφον Σωσικλέους τοῦ Φιλλέα ὑπὲρ Σωφρόνα Στράτωνος παροῦσαν καὶ κελεύουσαν ὑπὲρ αὐτὰν γράψαι

ἐπὶ τοῦ σεδε Ἀπόλλωνι τῷ Πυθίῳ ἐπὶ ἔλευθερία σῶμα γνωστὶ καὶ ἀνόωσος ὑπὸ Λεόνα Ἡράκληδας, ἀφοῦ ἕως Ἔλευθερος ἵππος τῆς Ἱερᾶς καὶ ἀνέφητος ἀπὸ τῶν πάντων τοῖσδε ἡμέρας, καὶ ἐπὶ τὸν Ἱερὸν ποθήκον καὶ τὸν ἅγιον ἅγιον τῷ θεῷ Ἐυαγέλῳ Ἡρακλῆδας. οὐ προσοφΈρεται ἐπὶ δικαίωμα ὑπὸ τῶν Ἰεραρχῶν Ἱεροῦ πάντων, ἀφαίρετος ἀπὸ τῆς Ἰερᾶς, ἀπὸ τοῦ ἑρώτορος θεοῦ Ἰεράρχας θεοῦ Ἐναγόρα, ἀφαίρετος ἀπὸ τοῦ Ἷλόκοττος τοῦ Θεοῦ Ἐναγόρα.
ἐπ’ ἐλευθερίᾳ, ἀξάμιος ὃν καὶ ἀνυπόδικος πάσας δίκας καὶ ζεμίας.

παραμεινάτω δὲ Ὀνασίφορον Σωφρόνα πάντα τὸν τοῦ Ἰουνίου αὐτὰς χρόνον, ποιούσα τὸ ἐπιτασσόμενον ἄνενκλήτῳς, εἰ δὲ μὴ ποιεῖ, ἔξουσιαν ἐχέτω Σωφρόνα ἐπιτιμέεσσα τρέπω ς καὶ θέλη, δότω δὲ Ὀνασίφορον Σωσάνδρῳ βρέφος.

τίθεται τὴν ὠνὴν κατὰ τὸν νόμον, τὴν μὲν εἰς τὸ ἱερὸν τοῦ Ἀπόλλωνος ἐνχαράξασα, τὴν δὲ ἐτέραν διὰ τοῦ γραμματέως Λυσιμάχου τοῦ Νικάνορος εἰς τὰ δημόσια τῆς πόλεις γράμματα. μάρτυρες: χειρόγραφον Εὐκλείδα τοῦ Αἰακίδα. γέγονεν καὶ ἄρτυρες: οἱ αὐτοί, Διονύσιος Ἀστοξένου, Πάσων Πολεμάρχου οἱ ἱερεῖς τοῦ Ἀπόλλωνος, καὶ ἵδιώται Πάσων Δάμωνος, Κλέανδρος Φίλωνος, Ξενάγορας Ἀβρομάχου.

In the magistracy of Pason, son of Damon, in the month of Herakleos, when Habromakhos son of Xenagoras and Markos son of Markos were serving as councilors. Written in the hand of Sosikles son of Philleas on behalf of Sophrona, daughter of Straton, who was present and ordered him to write on her behalf.

On the following conditions Sophrona, acting with the consent of her son Sosandros, hands over to the Pythian Apollo to be free the female house-born slave [lit. body] named Onasiphoron, priced at three silver minae, and has received the whole price. Onasiphoron has entrusted the sale to the god, with the aim of becoming free and not to be claimed by anybody at any future time, and to have no obligations of any kind whatsoever to anyone. The guarantor required by law is Eukleidas son of Aiakidas. And if anyone touches Onasiphoron in order to enslave her, then she who has sold her and the guarantor together are to ensure that the sale to the god is valid. And similarly anyone at all is to have the legal right to take Onasiphoron away so that she may be free, without incurring any penalty or being subject to any legal action or punishment.

Onasiphoron is to remain with Sophrona for the whole period of the latter’s life, doing whatever she is ordered to do without giving cause for complaint. If she does not do so, then Sophrona is to have the power to punish her in whatever way she wishes to. And Onasiphoron is to give Sosandros a child.

This sale is to be deposited by law: one copy engraved on the Temple of Apollo, the other taken to the public archives of the city by the secretary Lysimakhs son of Nikanor. Witnesses: Signature of Eukleidas son of Aiakidas: I have become guarantor of the above-stated sale, appointed by Sophrona with the agreement of her son Sosandros.

Other witnesses: Dionysius son of Astoxenos, Damon son of Polemarchos, the priests of Apollo and their own Pason son of Damon, Cleandros son of Philo, Xenagoras son of Habromachus.

(5). **Greek Manumission: polis manumission**

*IG X,2 544. 41/ CE. Pelasgiotis Region. Larisa, Thessaly. Inscription.*

[-------------------------]
[τα]μειεύοντος τὴν δευ-
[τέ]ραν ἑξάμηνον ἐν τῷ π-
[ρώ]τῳ ἦτει Τιβερίου Κλαυδίου
[K]αίσαρος Γερμανικοῦ Σε-
[β]αστοῦ τοῦ καὶ λα’ στρα-
tηγοῦντος Ἀπολλοδῶ-
ρου τὸ τέταρτον, ταγευό-
ντων τῶν περὶ Εὔδημον
Μενεκράτους οἱ ἀπηλ-
eυθερωμένοι. Ἀφρίω. [---]  
Χαρμωσύνη ὑπὸ Ἡλάρα-
ς, Ἀβιδία ὑπὸ Ἰππονίκας, Σω-
tάς ὑπὸ Μενάνδρου, Ζω[π]-
ὑρα ὑπὸ Ἀσκληπιοδώρου, Δ[η]-
μητρία καὶ Δημητρία ὑπὸ Θ[εο]-
ίμας, Ἐκλησία ὑπὸ Ἀλεξάνδρον, Ἰκονία ἔπειτα ὑπὸ Θαυμαστοῦ. Θύ[ω].  
Πρίμα ὑπὸ Στραττίππου. Ὄμ[ολος]  
Παρμενίων ὑπὸ Παρμινιδοῦ, Ἰ[καν]-
ροστὲ ὑπὸ Δικαιοκράτου, Ν[
δρος ὑπὸ Πάτρωνος. [--- --- --- ---]
[--- --- --- ---]. [--- --- --- ---]

[---] when [---] was treasurer in the second sixth-month period in the first year of  
Tiberius Claudius Caesar Germanicus Augustus and also the 31th (year) when  
Apollodoros was strategos (for) the fourth (time), when Eudemon and Menecratos  
were rulers, those having been manumitted: Aphio [(manumitted) by X],  
Charmosune by Hilara, Abidia by Hipponika, Sota by Menander, Zopura by  
Asclepiodoros, Demetria and Demetria by Theotima, Thale by Alexandros,  
Iucunda Secunda by Thaumastos. Thuoiprima by Strattipus. Homolos Parmenion  
by Parmonidos, Arsinoe by Dicaiocrotas, Nikander by Patronos [----------]  
--------------------------------] [----------------].
### Appendix B: *Familia Caesaris Cursus Honorum*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| procurator | Freedman | • Provincial financial administrator  
| ἐπίτροπος | Freedman | • manager of imperial *patrimonium*  
| | | • paired with equestrian procurator |
| ab epistulis | Freedman | • secretary of correspondence (to emperor or other magnate) |
| ἕπι τῶν Ἑλληνικῶν ἐπιστολῶν | Freedman | • receiver of petitions (to emperor or other magnate) |
| a libellis | Freedman | | |
| a rationibus | Freedman | • accountants |
| καθέλαν λόγων | Freedman | | |
| dispenser | Slave/ Freedman | • manager or steward of household or treasury |
| vicarius | Slave/ Freedman | • deputy or praefectus praetorio/ vigiles  
| ἐπισκοπὸς | Slave/ Freedman | • under-slave |
| adiutor | Slave/ Freedman | • adjutant or assistant  
| βοηθός | Slave/ Freedman | • secretary |
| exactor | Slave / Freedman | • tax collector |
| commentarius | Slave/ Freedman | • record keeper |
| tabularius | Slave/ Freedman | • bookkeeper |
| tabellarius | Slave/ Freedman | | |
| ταβελλάριος | Slave/ Freedman | | |
| pedisequi | Slave | • footman  
| | | • attendant |
| custodes | Slave | • guards  
| | | • watchers  
| | | • overseers |
| nomenclator | Slave | • attendant  
| | | • herald |

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**Manumission Stage**

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Appendix C
CORINTH: Catalogue of Inscriptions

I. Familia Caesaris in Corinth

(1) Name: Titus Flavius Antiochus
Date: early-mid II CE
Title/ Position: Aug(gusti) lib(ertus)
Description: Latin inscription, bottom of status base, found in SW corner of agora.
['This monument was erected] by the decision of the Collegio Larum Domus Divinae (Association of Lares of the Imperial House). Those who had charge of its erection were Collegiani(s) primi(s) (firsts of the collegia), Titus Flavius Antiochus, a freedman of the emperor, and Tiberius Claudius Primigenius.”
Source: Corinth 8,3 62= AE 1964, 167.
Notes: The collegium was probably a “patriotic private club,” not an official compita, and Tiberius Claudius Primigenius was probably the son of a freedman. Kent’s statement “thus it appears that the membership of the club consisted largely of men of servile origin” is tenuous. Associations often consisted of freeborn and freed. Cp. CIL 03, 07301 (14 CE) from Thebes. Moreover, associations honored freedmen who could be members, patrons, or priests. Cp. CIL III.633=Philippi II 164/ L001, 163/ L002, 165/L003, 166/L004 (2nd cent. CE) from Philippi which lists contributions to the Temple of Silvanus by members of an association, includes largely freeborn Roman citizens, but also freedmen as members and leaders (e.g. Publius Hostilius Philadelphus); CIL XIV.250-1=ILS 6174-5 (2nd cent. CE) in which a list of leaders and members of an association of sailors and accountants from Ostia, Roman citizens, whose patrons include an imperial freedman, and some of whose members are also freedmen. Cp. Also IByzantion 31=SEG 18, 280= AGRW 68 (85-96 CE) from Rheaton, Thrace; AE 1975, 236 from Brutium and Lucania, Italy. For honored members of the familia Caesaris, cf. MAMA VII.183=LaodikeiaR 3=IGR IV.749 (late 2nd cent. CE) from Apameia Kelainai, Phrygia in which the archons honor Marcus Aurelius Zosmisus (PIR² I.1640) as benefactor of the city.

(2) Name: Phileros
Date: mid-III CE
Title/ Position: freedman of the emperor (Aug. lib.), procurator of the vicesima hereditas; tabularius
Description: Latin inscription on white marble slab, found on the floor of the bouleuterion. To the most sacred genius of the emperor. Phileros, freedman of the emperor, procurator of the vicesima hereditas for the province of Achaear and tabularius of this same patron and province, (set up this monument) with the official sanction of the decuriones.
Source: Corinth 8,3 67.
Notes: Phileros is a Roman citizen, but identifies himself only by his cognomen. Perhaps
there was no need to include the full *trinomina* because he was a well-known, or at least ‘public,’ figure in the city and province. Freedpersons, including members of the *familia Caesaris*, did not always use the Roman *trinomia*. Cf. e.g. *IE* III.633 (Ephesos); *IE* VI.2103=*GRIA* 75 (Ephesos; also a *tabellarius*). The inheritance tax (*vicesima hereditatum*) levied on Roman citizens upon inheritance or legacy. *Lex Iulia de vicesima hereditatum* (5 CE); Dio Cassius, 55.25; 56.28. cp. *IE* III.822=*CIG* 2980 (Ephesos). For other imperial freedman of 3rd cent. Corinth, cf. *CIL* III.536

(3) Name: (C. Julius) Epagathus  
Date: 1 CE (?)  
Title/Position: *tabellarius* Augusti  
Description: Fragmentary Latin inscription found south of the agora. It reads:  

```
EPAGATHUS
s AUGUSTI
```

West suggests a restoration as:  

```
[C. Julius, Aug. l.,] Epagathus
[tabellarius] Augusti
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Source: *Corinth* 8.2 76.  
Notes: An Epagathus is known from Lycosura, Arcadia, self-designated in a dedicatory inscription to the goddess Desponia as τοῦ κυρίου Καίσαρος ταβελλάριος (*IG* V.2 525). The name also appears on an inscription from neighboring Sicyon, which in Latin reads: C(aio) Iulio Aug(us)ti l(iberto) Epagatho Ithacus amicus. (*AE* 1977, 779). If the person is the same in all three inscriptions, the inscriptions from Lycosura and Sicyon suggests the name belongs to the 1st cent. CE. We may hypothesize that Ithacus honored his friend Epagathus upon the latter’s manumission and promotion to *libertus*. A *tabellarius* was usually a slave and thus the honorary stele from Sicyon may post-date the inscription from Corinth. Ithacus may also have been a slave, though not necessarily an imperial one.

(4) Name: [?]  
Date: 1 CE  
Title/Position: [?]  
Description: Fragmentary, acephalous Latin inscription found east of the agora. West tentatively restores as follows:  

```
[..........]
L(iberto) Q[…]
Augu[stali, proc(uratori)]
ex d(ecreto) [d(ecurionum)]
```

Source: *Corinth* 8.2 69.
Notes: The principal figure of the inscription is unknown due to the lacunae in line 1 and line 2, and thus the arrangement of abbreviations L and Q is difficult to decipher. These letters are larger and indented, and indicate they belong to the principal figure. Yet it is not clear whether there was a missing line above these abbreviations. If in fact L is abbreviated for liberto, the Q is slightly odd. It would probably designate the person’s cognomen, but then the next phrase AUGU would also break the regular pattern for imperial freedmen: Praenomen, Nomen, Augg. Lib. Cognomen.

(5) Name: Secundus  
Date: mid-II CE  
Title/ Position: ἀπελεύθερος θείων βασιληήων (freedman of deified kings)  
Description: Greek fragmentary inscription on statue base, found west of the Odeion. “Secundus, a freedman of deified kings, had this Hygeia erected in honor of the Healing Savior.”  
Source: *Corinth* 8,3 64=SEG XI.88  
Notes: Kent posits that the phrase “freedman of deified kings” means Secundus is an imperial freedman. Such a phrase would be highly irregular as imperial freedmen, i.e. members of the *familia Caesaris*, usually used a particular gentilicium in their name, or referred to imperial by the designation Augg. or Σεββ. Whose freedman Secundus was remains unclear. He was perhaps the freedman of a foreign magnate. According to Pausanius (II 4.5) a statue of Hygeia once stood in the sanctuary of Asklepios. The “Healing Savior” thus probably refers to Asklepios.

(6) Name: Sagaris Alcimius ?  
Date: Imperial  
Title/ Position: Augusti verna, arcarius and vicarius  
Description: Latin votive inscription. Found in Altinum.  
Source: *CIL* III.7268= *CIL* VI.8818= *ILS* 1503.
Notes: the inscription honors Venus and the tutelary spirit of the Corinthian collegium of Augustales

II. Sevir Augustales

(1) Name: Augustales
Date: I CE (Tiberian)
Patron: (?)
Description: Latin inscription from a cylindrical statue base of Augustus, on white marble, originally in the agora
Source: Corinth 8,3 53.
Notes: (cf. Laird, “The Emperor in a Roman Town,” 94 for a reconstruction of the monument, including four-sided benches surrounding the monument)

(2) Name: Quintus Cispuleius Primus, Aug(ustales)
Gaius Novius Felix (?)
Date: 14-37 CE
Patron: Quintus (Cispuleius)
Description: Latin inscription on limestone base for Q. Cispuleius Primus, freedman of Quintus (Cispuleius), erected by Gaius Novius Felix, possibly a freedman himself.
According to West, the text reads:

Q • CISPULEIO
Q • L • PRIMO • AU[G[
T • CAESARIS • AU[G]
C • NOVIUS • FELIX
D • D

The transcription would thus be as:
Q(uinto) Cispuleio
Q(uinti) l(liberto) Primo Au(gustalis)
T(iberii) Caesaris Au[gusti]

Source: Corinth 8,2 77.
Notes: Q. Cispuleius Primus is related to Q. Cispuleius Theophilus (Corinth 8,2 107). Either Primus is the father of Theophilus, or possibly his former slave since Primus erected an inscription to Theophilus when the latter received the ornamentation of a decurion from the colony (West, Corinth 61). I prefer the latter option, since it seems more likely that a familial relationship (designation pater or filius) would be indicated in the inscription (107), whereas the lack of the term libertus or patronus is not as unusual. The name Gaius Novius Felix connotes freedman stock, perhaps of the “family of Novius Bassus, duumvir of Corinth under Augustus (West, Corinth 61).” The title Augustalis of Tiberius Caesar Augustus appears to be unique, but the nomenclature of the Augustales was flexible and varied (cf. Duthoy, “Recherches” 143-214).
Name: Tiberius Claudius Stephanus, Augustalis  
Date: 1 CE (Julio-Claudian)  
Patron: Tiberius Claudius  
Description: Latin inscription, probably an epitaph. Reads: “For Tiberius Claudius Stephanus, Augustalis.”  
Source: CIL III.6099.  
Notes: The Claudii were a prominent family in Corinth in the 1st cent. CE. A Tiberius Claudius Optatus, for instance, was a duovir in 57 or 58 CE and Tiberius Claudius Anaxilaus was duovir in 67 CE. There are several possibilities: (1) that these duoviri were descendants of Stephanus; (2) that Stephanus was a freedman of one of them or of a member of their families (3) that Stephanus was a freeborn member of the Augustales with a Greek cognomen (4) that he was an imperial freedman, i.e. a member of the familia Caesaris.

Name: Gnaeus Cornelius Speratus, Augustalis  
Date: I CE (?)  
Patron: Gnaeus Cornelius (?)  
Description: Latin honorary inscription, white marble, found in the southeast area of the agora. “Sacred to the deified Augustus. Gnaeus Cornelius Speratus, Augustalis (dedicated this monument) on account of his justice.”  
Source: Corinth 8.3 52  
Notes: Speratus could be freeborn.

III. Freedpersons in Corinth

Unknown due to unavailable information, but hypothetically restored

(1) Name: [?]  
Date: early-I CE (?)  
Patron:  
Description: Latin inscription on a marble cornice block originally on an unknown small building or monument. Found at the east end of the Northwest Stoa. It reads: LIBERTI • QUI • CORINTHI • HABITAN[T]  
Source: Corinth 8.2 121.  
Notes: The building or monument from which the inscription derives is not known, but clearly the freedmen who reside in Corinth were responsible for the edifice’s construction. West suggests it is possible that the founding freedmen of Corinth (Strabo 8.381) were organized as a collegium libertorum.

(2) Name: (Publius) Thyrsus
Date: mid-I CE
Patron: Publius (?)
Description: Latin (honorary) inscription, fragmentary, found in a Roman drain. Only four lines preserved. It reads:

LIBERO • PAM[(philio)] – – –
SACRUM • CO[N]
PHILOCAESA[R]
P L THYR[SUS]

Source: Corinth 8.3 240.
Notes: The appellation φιλοκαίσαρος appears frequently with persons of influential and/or political status among the local aristocracies of the Greek east. Thrysus is surely a Roman citizen. The appellation was the Greek equivalent of amicus Caesar, granted officially to friends or companions of the emperor (West 1931: 14)

IvE I.27, 452 and I.33,16 record the donations of Gaius Vibius Salutaris to the citizenry of Ephesos the day before Artemis’s birthday, and Salutaris is described as a φιλοκαίσαρ. IvE Ia.29=GRIA 157 a related inscription on a dedicatory statue of Diana/Artemis, also given by Salutaris, mentions that the donation occurred while Tiberius Claudius Iulianus, φιλοσεβάστος, was grammateus for the second time.

IE II.446; 449; VII,1.3008 are plaques recognizing Marcus Tigellius Lupus’ restorative work on varius buildings in Ephesos in the late 1st cent. CE and he is recognized as a φιλοκαίσαρ and grammateus. A grammateus was the highest municipal official, normally serving a term of one year. Cp. AE 2005, 1506 (Patara, Lycia and Pamphilia: 45-46 CE); CIG 2283d= AE 2001,1802 (Delos: 36 BCE-14 CE); AE 2002, 1472 (Myra, Lycia and Pamphilia: 45-6 CE)

IE VII,2.3801, in a decision of Asia’s provincial council concerning the celebration of Tiberius’ birthday, the high priest of the the provincial imperial cult and agnothete for life is designated a φιλοκαίσαρ. Cp. IG 12, 02, 00541=AE 2002, 1361 (Eresus, Lesbos: 41-54 CE); EKM I, 106 (Beroea: 2nd cent. CE)
IvE II.233, a dedication by the people of Aphrodisias upon Ephesos assuming neokorate status, mentions that the proconsul Marcus Fulvius Gillo was a φιλοκαίσαρ.

ILGR 16=GRIA 137 (late I BCE) from Kos records an honorary inscription by a collegium of sellers of second-hand wares (scrutarei/ γρυτοπῶλαι) for Augustus Mercury, son of god, (when) Diogenes, son of Polychares, φιλοκαίσαρ (was presiding).
AE 2006,1268= SEG 56, 750= ΕΘ 1.2 (51-100 CE). A fragmentary inscription from Thessalonike, appears to record a dedication and contains a list of names, with the repeated epithet φιλοκαίσαρ.

(3) **Name:** P(ublius) Licinius [...], Philosebastos  
**Date:** 14-37 CE  
**Patron:** Publius Licinius (?)  
**Description:** Latin honorary inscription on limestone base, found in the agora. The honorary is a pro salute for Tiberius (Tiberius Caesar Augustus), probably erected via the association of Diana Lucifera. The official dedicator is the freedman Publius Licinius [...], a Philosebastos.  
**Source:** *Corinth* 8,2 15.  
**Notes:** The first two lines read [Dianae] Pacilucife[rae Aug]ustae Sacrum. The title Pacilucifer is unparalleled but the reading seems to be certain. The principal dedicator is P(ublius) Licinius freedman of Publius Licinius. A lacuna hides his cognomen, but at most is contained seven letters. Licinius is undoubtedly a Roman citizen.

(4) **Name:** [?]  
**Date:** II CE (?)  
**Patron:**  
**Description:** Fragment of a Latin epitaph, 5 lines. Location unknown.  
[...]  
[...]ORAE[...]  
[...]UNALI • ET [...] (et posteris)]  
[(eo)]RUM ET • LIBER[(TIS LIBERTABUSQUE]  
[...]SIMA • F • V • POM [...]  
**Source:** *Corinth* 8,2 142.  
**Notes:** West suggests possibly Neptunali for line 3 and hypothesizes a restoration of line 5 as “filia infelicissima fecit viva Pompeia” or “matri piissimae fecit viva Pompeia.” He also suggests that the “inscription seems to have been erected by a woman, and of the few names beginning with Pom-, Pompeius is the only one found at Corinth.” It seems likely that the dedicator, a woman, is the owner of slaves or the patroness of freedpersons who will share the family tomb. For another typically Italian style epitaph at Corinth involving freedpersons, cf. *Corinth* 8,2 151.

(5) **Name:** Theodora, freedwoman of [...] and wife of  
Delmatius/ Delmaticus freedman of Lucius  
**Date:** III CE
**Patron:** Lucius (?)  
**Description:** Bilingual honorary inscription found in the village of Solomo (1.2 miles southeast of Corinth). The text records a dedication, made by Theodora at a cost of 2,000 sesterces according to her will, for a decurion and praefectus named DELM[...].  
**Source:** *Corinth* 8.3 276  
**Notes:** The name of the dedicatee and the husband of Theodora appear to be the same, restored as DELM[...] in l. 1,3,5, and 7. Kent proposes Delmatius/ Delmaticus as the name, and that he was freed by Lucius, but not his wife Theodora. The reason for Kent’s hypothesis is unclear. Theodora seems to have been a woman of considerable means. What seems to be the case, however, is that Delmatius/Delmaticus was both a freedman and a magistrate, an exceptional case but one with a parallel: Publius Anthestius Amphio, freeman of Publius was *augur*, aedile, duovir quinquennalis of the Dium (3rd cent. CE). *AE* 1998, 1209= *SEG* 34, 630.

(6) **Name:** Quintus Maecius Cleogenes  
**Date:** 1 CE (Augustan)  
**Patron:** Quintus Maecius (?)  
**Description:** Latin honorary inscription. “Quintus Cornerlius Secundus, son of […] of the tribe of Aemilia, and his wife Maecia daughter of [Quintus], his son […](Quintus) Cornelius Secundus] Maecianus, his son Quintus Cornelius Secundus, his [daughter] Cornelia [Secunda, who is the wife of Quintus] Maecius Cleogenes the freedman of Quintus (Maecius), [built (?)] the meatmarket […] along with […] and a fishmarket […].”  
**Source:** *Corinth* 8.3 321.  
**Notes:** Cp. *CIL* X.1403b= *AE* 1978, 119c a very long album from Herculaneum in four fragments, each with multiple columns. It records the names of freeborn citizens and enfranchised freedmen (*AE* 1978, 119b=Fr. 2, col. 3). In the third fragment (*AE* 1978, 119c) the list of enfranchised freedmen continues and includes a [Quintus] Maecius Atta, freedman of Quintus (approx. l. 10). Undoubtedly, Atta is related to Quintus Maecius Cleogenes, either a *colibertus* of Quintus Maecius, or more likely a freedman of Quintus Maecius Cleogenes. The nature of the group represented in the album is unclear. One suggestion is that the freedmen belonged to the *augustales*.

(7) **Name:** Sextia Cytheris  
Gnaeus Sextius Pytadis  
**Date:** 51-100 CE  
**Patron:** Gnaeus Sextius […]  
**Description:** Latin epitaph.  
V SEXTIA CN L CYTHERIS  
CN SEXTIO CINCN L PYTADE PVRI
“Sextia Cytheris, freedwoman of Ganeus (Sextius), for her husband Gnaeus Sextius Pytadis (?) [or Pyladis], freedman of Gnaeus (Sextius), a Campanian purple-dyer/ seller [purpurario Campano], and for Gnaeus Sextius Maximus, son of Gnaeus (Sextius Pytadis/Pyladis) and for posterity.”

Source: AE 2001, 1820

Notes: The couple was probably manumitted together, and their son was born after their manumission. All are Roman citizens, and the couple seems to be of Italian (Campanian) descent.

(8) Name: Lucius Rutilius Primus
Lucius Rutilius Clymenus

Date: 1 CE

Patron: Lucius Rutilius Alcimus

Description: Latin epitaph for Lucius Rutilius Alcimus and his son Lucius Rutilius Martialis by the two freedmen Primus and Clymenus, who appear to have been manumitted ex testamento. Text reads:

m(emoriae) L(uci) Rutili Alcimi
et L(uci) Rutili Martiali[s] f(ilio) eius
L(ucius) Rutilius Primus l(ibertus) et
L(ucius) Rutilius Clymenus l(ibertus)
ex testamento.

Source: CIL III.6100.

Notes: Primus and Clymenus appear to be fully enfranchised Roman citizens. These particular names are otherwise unknown. The Rutilii were a prominent, magisterial family whose presence is attested throughout the 1st cent. CE, beginning from the last years of Augustus. L. Rutilius Plancus was duovir between 12 and 16 CE. Lucius Rutilius Piso was duovir quinquennalis in 66 CE. A certain Lucius Rutilius […] was a donor of a public building (Corinth 8.2 120=CIL III.534); a Lucius Rutilius […] was agonothete (Corinth 8.2 84) and a Lucius Rutilius Fuscus was an isagogus (Corinth 8.2 82), an office connected with the imperial cult games on the Isthmus (West, Corinth 67-8). The Rutilii are well-known as negotiaiores (Spawforth, “Roman Corinth” 181). For other family tombs that included rights for freedpersons, cf. CIL III.544; and Corinth 8.2 142.
Appendix D: Abbreviations


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