

The idea that individual self-sufficiency was something for everyone to aim at was clearly at variance with the fact that wealthy Romans felt they needed to display slaves. It is interesting that Seneca can argue that slaves cost money, time and trouble to keep — not that they are an 'investment' and bring their owner an income.

(5) Now look at the heavens; you will see that the gods are naked, they give everything and keep nothing for themselves. Do you think that someone who has laid aside those things which mere chance has bestowed is poverty-stricken, or is he rather like the immortal gods? (6) Do you think that Pompey's freedman Demetrius, who wasn't ashamed to be richer than Pompey, was also happier? Every day he used to go through the list of slaves he owned as though he were an army commander, though he should have considered himself well off if he just had two under-slaves (*vicarii*) and more spacious sleeping quarters. (7) Diogenes had just one slave who ran away from him, and when he was told where he was, he didn't think it worthwhile to bring him back. 'It would be dishonourable,' he said, 'if Manes could survive without Diogenes, but Diogenes couldn't survive without Manes.' I think that what he meant was this: 'You go and mind your own business, Fortune, you have no claim on Diogenes any longer: my slave has run away, and I've got my freedom back.' (8) Slaves require a clothing and food allowance; you have to look after the appetites of all those greedy creatures, you have to buy clothes, you have to keep a watch on those hands ever ready to steal things; you have to make use of the services of people who are always breaking down in tears and who hate us. How much happier is a man whose only obligation is to someone whom he can easily deny — himself! (9) But since we don't have that much self-reliance, we should at least reduce our inherited wealth so that we are less exposed to the damage Fortune can inflict on us.

85. Lysias 24: *On Behalf of a Cripple*

As a result of its imperial expansion, Athens was one of the wealthiest Greek states and could afford to grant a subsistence allowance of two obols per day to physically disabled citizens. The *Constitution of Athens* states that those owning property worth less than three minae could apply to the *Boulē* (executive council) for this grant. This speech written by Lysias on behalf of a disabled citizen implies that even poor Athenians would have looked upon ownership of a slave assistant as an investment to provide an income.

(5) I think that you are all aware of the truth about this supposed great

income which my trade provides me with, and the other circumstances in which I find myself; I shall nevertheless say a few words on the subject. (6) My father didn't leave me anything, and I only stopped supporting my mother when she died two years ago. I don't yet have any children who could provide for me. My craft can only bring me very limited assistance, and I can only exercise it with difficulty; and I am quite unable to buy (*ktēsasthai*) anyone to take it over from me. I have no other source of income apart from this grant; if you take that away from me, I will be in danger of suffering very great hardship.

86. Demosthenes 27: *Against Aphobus*

Some of the slave craftsmen owned by Athenians brought them a rent in money which augmented the income they drew from their agricultural estates. We know from inscriptions that slave, Metic and citizen workers would all receive identical wages (e.g. the Erechtheum building accounts, *IG* 1.2, 374 col. 2, 5ff). But the slaves (and freed slaves, No. 94 below) then had to transfer part of their wages, or their profits as craftsmen, to their owners. Aeschines mentions two obols a day for a craftsman (91); at this rate, one mina 'rent' would represent 300 working days.

(9) The size of my property is clear from the witnesses' statements. The rate of tax assessed for a property worth fifteen talents is three talents; and that was the amount they agreed should be paid in tax. You will see even more clearly how great this estate was if you listen to the details: for my father, men of the jury, left behind two workshops, each with highly skilled craftsmen. One had thirty-two or thirty-three cutlers, each one worth five or six minae, and even the least skilled of them were worth not less than three minae; they provided him with an annual income of thirty minae before tax. Then there were twenty furniture-makers who had been given to him as security for an outstanding debt of forty minae; they brought him twelve minae before tax. There was also cash to the value of one talent which had been loaned out at the rate of one drachma [per mina per month]; the annual interest on this came to more than seven minae. (10) These were the items that brought in an income, as my opponents themselves will agree; the capital amounts in all to four talents and 5,000 drachmae, and the annual interest on all this comes to fifty minae.

87. Xenophon, *Revenues*, 1

The use of slaves in the Athenian silver mines is the most large-scale

example of slave-holding as a means of obtaining an income. Xenophon's pamphlet contains various proposals for increasing the income of the Athenian state: one is that the state should do what private citizens like Nikias had already been doing (Athenaeus refers to this passage in No. 80, 272c above), and invest in slave miners.

(13) To explain more clearly my ideas about state grants, I will now show how the silver mines can be organised in the way which is most useful for the community. I don't however think that anyone is going to be surprised by what I am going to say, as if I had discovered the solution to anything particularly complex. For some of the things I shall talk about we can all see with our own eyes as they exist today, and we have heard similar things from our fathers about the way things were in the past. (14) But what is surprising is that although the community realises that there are many private individuals who make a lot of money out of mining, it does not follow their example. Those of us who are interested in the subject will have heard a long time ago how Nikias the son of Nikeratos owned a thousand men who worked in the silver mines and hired them out to Sosias the Thracian on condition that he paid him a clear obol a day per man and always maintained the number of workers at the same level.

(15) Hipponikos also had six hundred slaves whom he leased out in the same way, which brought him an income of one mina a day before tax. Philemonides owned three hundred, which brought him half a mina, and I suppose other people's incomes were in proportion to their means. (16) But why do I have to talk about days gone by? Even today there are many men in the silver mines who are leased out in this way. (17) If my proposals were to be put into practice, the only thing new would be that, just as private individuals who buy slaves are provided with a continuous income, so the community too should acquire public slaves, until there would be three for each Athenian citizen. (18) Anyone who wishes should examine my plan point by point and judge whether what I say is feasible.

As regards the cost of buying these men: it is clear that the public treasury can find the money more easily than private individuals. And it would be easy for the Council to make an announcement that 'anyone who wishes should bring his slaves' and buy those who are brought along. (19) And once they have been bought, why should anyone be less willing to hire slaves from the treasury than from a private person, if he can get them on the same conditions? After all, they rent temple property and houses from the state, and buy the right to collect taxes.

(20) In order to keep the slaves that the treasury has bought in good condition, the treasury could require guarantees from those who hire them, as it does from those who farm taxes. (Someone who has bought

the right to farm a tax actually has greater opportunities for fraud than someone who hires slaves — (21) for how can you detect public money when it is being smuggled out of the country, since privately owned money looks exactly the same? But how could anyone steal slaves who have been branded to show that they were state property, if there were a penalty decreed for anyone who traded in them or exported them?)

So up to this point it appears to be possible for the community to acquire and keep men. (22) If one goes on to consider how a sufficient number of people could also be found to hire such a large workforce, one should be encouraged by the thought that many of the people who are already operating in the mines will hire state slaves in addition, since they have substantial means, and many of the men who are now working there are getting old, and there are many other Athenians and foreigners too who do not have the will or the physical strength to work with their own hands, but would be delighted to provide an income for themselves by acting as managers. (23) If we had twelve hundred slaves at first, it is likely that there would be not less than six thousand as a result of this source of income after five or six years. If each man brings in an obol a day nett, then the income from this number of slaves would be sixty talents a year. (24) If twenty of these were invested in the acquisition of further slaves, the community could use the other forty for anything else it required. When the number of ten thousand has been reached, the income would be one hundred talents. (25) But anyone who can still remember what the income from slaves was before the Decelean affair [see No. 211 below] will testify that the community would receive a good deal more than this.

88. Varro, *Agriculture*, 1, 16

The independence of the household unit (not to be confused with the kin-group) is one of the ideals of many peasant societies. Naturally, this self-sufficiency is relative: one may provide one's own food and clothing for one's dependants, but there are some goods one has to go to the market to buy, and there are some services that can only be provided by people who have been trained to exercise special skills. But when such professionals — smiths, doctors or cooks (Pliny, *NH* 18, 109), for example — are outside the household, one can never be certain that they will be available exactly when they are needed. Thus a major motive for owning slaves was so that these specialists would be in the household whenever they were needed: a rich man did not own a doctor or high-class hairdresser just for the fees from their outside clients, but so that they would be available to serve him at any time, as an independent doctor would not. Varro points out that owning your

own specialised craftsmen is even better than having a market nearby or friendly neighbours.

(3) Similarly, if there are towns or villages nearby, or even just well-stocked fields and estates belonging to wealthy owners, so that you will be able to buy cheaply from them anything you need for your own farm and can sell them your own surplus products — for instance stakes or poles or reeds — then your farm will be more profitable than if things have to be brought in from far away, and frequently it will even bring more profits than if you are able to provide these goods yourself by having them produced on your own farm. (4) For this reason small-holders prefer to have people who live in the neighbourhood under a yearly contract so that they can call on their services (under this heading come doctors, fullers and carpenters), rather than keep their own on their estate; for the death of a single craftsman can wipe out the estate's profitability. But rich landlords generally entrust all these functions of a great estate to members of their own household. If towns or villages are too far from their farm, they make sure that they have some smiths on the estate as well as the other essential craftsmen, so that the slaves on the farm won't have to leave off working and idle about on work days as though they were on holiday, instead of making the farm more profitable by getting on with their tasks.

89. Hypereides, fragment 29

If one of the reasons for owning slaves was that they were economically profitable, the question arises whether the civilisation of classical Athens and Rome would have been possible without the economic basis of slave labour. The ancient evidence for calculations of the total number of slaves, or the proportion of slaves to free men, is weak (see No. 80, 272b–d above).

The tenth-century Byzantine lexicon called the *Suda* contains this excerpt from a speech in which the anti-Macedonian politician Hypereides seems to have suggested after the battle of Chaeronea (338 BC) that resistance against King Philip could be continued if citizenship were extended to slaves and others. He put forward a proposal:

that first of all those [slaves] working in agriculture and in the silver mines and elsewhere in the country, who were more than 150,000, and then those who were in debt to the state treasury and those who had lost their civic rights and those who had been disenfranchised and the resident aliens . . .

90. Lysias 12: *Against Eratosthenes*

There are a few passages in fourth-century orators which give precise and probably reliable figures for the numbers of slaves which particular individuals owned. But there is no way of telling just how typical these figures are: Lysias and his father and brother were Metics who were debarred from investing their wealth in land; and the demand for weapons in the last years of the Peloponnesian war suggests that their shield factory was exceptionally large.

(19) They took seven hundred shields that belonged to us, and all our gold and silver, so much copper and jewellery and furniture and clothing for women as they had never dreamed they would get hold of, and one hundred and twenty slaves: of all these things they kept the best for themselves and handed over the rest to the state treasury.

91. Aeschines 1: *Against Timarchus*

Specifications of property in slaves tend to mention only craftsmen who paid their owner a fixed rent; there is little mention of domestic servants or agricultural slaves, whose contribution to productivity would have been difficult to calculate in money terms, although they were clearly used to work the land of the rich at least (No. 139).

(97) His father left him an estate which anyone else would have found sufficient to provide a liturgy; but he wasn't even able to keep it for himself. There was a house at the back of the Acropolis, a country estate at Sphettos and another at Alopeke, apart from nine or ten slave craftsmen who were skilled at producing shields, each of whom brought him an income of two obols a day, while the manager (*hēgemon*) of the workshop brought in three. And in addition there was a woman who was skilled at weaving flax, who marketed her first-class products in the Agora, and an embroiderer, and also some men who owed him money, and then all his furniture.

92. Pliny the Elder, *Natural History*, 33, 47

There are indications that Athenaeus was right (272de, No. 80 above) to think that the wealthiest Romans owned slaves on an entirely different scale from the Greeks. Although initially simply a quantitative difference, the size of Roman slave-holdings tended to make the ideal that slaves were part of the household increasingly ineffective; Roman

95. Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of the Philosophers*

The details of the testamentary dispositions made by famous philosophers which Diogenes Laertius includes in his biographies are almost certainly fictitious, but they do give an impression of the number of slaves which the educated Greek-speaking readers of the Second Sophistic would have expected a gentleman (albeit a philosopher) to own.

Book 5: Aristotle

(13) My daughter is to have three women to attend her, whom she is to choose herself, in addition to the little girl she already has and the boy Pyrraios. (14) I want Ambrakis to be freed when my daughter is married and given five hundred drachmae plus the slave girl she has now; Thales is to be given one thousand drachmae and a slave girl, in addition to the little girl I bought whom she has now. (15) Apart from the money given him already to buy another slave, Simon is either to have a slave bought for him, or be given the equivalent in cash. When my daughter gets married, Tykhon is to be freed, and so is Philon and Olympios and his child. None of the slaves who served me is to be sold, they must all be used; and when they have reached the appropriate age, they are to be given their freedom according to their deserts.

Book 5: The Philosopher Lykon

(72) This is my Will concerning those who serve me (*therapeuontōn*): Demetrios was freed a long time ago; I remit the money he owes for his freedom and give him five minae, a cloak and a tunic, to reward him for all the work he has done for me during my life. I also remit Kriton from Chalcedon the money he owes me for his freedom and give him four minae. I also manumit Mikros; let Lykon [his nephew] look after him and see to his education for six years from this date. (73) I also manumit Khares; let Lykon look after him. I leave him two minae and the manuscripts of my public lectures; the unpublished writings are for Kallinos, who is to edit them carefully. I give to Syros, who is already free, four minae and Menodora; if he owes me anything, I remit it. I give to Hilaré five minae, a carpet, two pillows, a blanket and whichever bed she chooses. I also manumit Mikros' mother, Noemon, Dion, Theon, Euphranor and Hermias; Agathon is to remain for two more years and then be given his freedom, and the litter-bearers Ophelion and Poseidonios are to remain for four more years. (74) I give Demetrios, Kriton and Syros a bed each and whatever blankets Lykon thinks fit out of those that I leave behind.

In Epicurus' Will (10, 21), four slaves are manumitted; Straton (5, 63) manumits four and leaves one slave to a friend; Plato (3, 42) frees one

and leaves four to his heirs.

96. Apuleius, *Defence*, 47

The paucity of reliable evidence for any statistical estimate of the number of slaves that existed at any period in antiquity is shown by the fact that some scholars have used this passage as the basis for serious calculations. But the context makes it clear that the only reason why Apuleius says that precisely fifteen slaves constitute a household (*domus*) or a prison (*ergastulum*) is that his accuser had claimed that he had carried out a magic rite in the presence of that number of slaves.

As far as I know these magic rites are something covered by the law, and right from the earliest times they have been forbidden because of the incredible business of enticing corn from one field to another. As a result, they are secret as well as disgusting and frightening, and involve staying up at night and hiding under cover of darkness and avoiding witnesses and saying the spells silently, in the presence of very few free men. Yet here you are suggesting that fifteen slaves were in attendance! Was this some kind of wedding reception or some other celebration or similar feast? Are these fifteen slaves taking part in the magic rites as if they had been appointed the fifteen State Commissioners for Religion? For what reason would I have invited such a number — far too many for the secret to be kept? Fifteen free men make a community, the same number of slaves a household, and if they are chained they constitute a prison. I suppose such a large number might have been needed to hold down the sacrificial victims for the duration of the ceremony: but the only victims you've mentioned have been chickens . . .

97. Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, 2, 5

Attempts to assess the relative productive 'efficiency' of slave and free labour are pointless, not merely because of the absence of statistical evidence, but also because what was bought was the slave's person, not his labour. Thus even in the same city at the same time, the range of 'values' was enormous. However, we can use the ratio between the price of a slave and the annual income he brought his owner (No. 86) to give us some idea of the minimum number of years a slave will have had to serve before being allowed his freedom.

(2) Antisthenes — said Socrates — do friends have different values, like slaves? For one slave may be worth two minae, another less than half

a mina; one five minae, another even ten. Nikias, the son of Nikeratos, is said to have paid one talent for an overseer for his silver mines. So I wonder whether friends, just like slaves, may not have different values.

98. Pliny the Elder, *Natural History*, 7, 12

Like the literary evidence about the size of slave-holdings, that for prices is slanted towards the exceptional and remarkable. What does emerge is that high prices, like large numbers, were eagerly accepted as a display of the owner's wealth and status.

(56) When Marcus Antonius was already a triumvir, the dealer Toranius managed to sell him as twins two particularly attractive slaves, one born in Asia and the other north of the Alps — they were that similar. But the fraud was brought to light because of the slaves' accents, and Antonius angrily complained about the high price he had paid (200,000 Sesterces), amongst other things. But the clever trader replied that that was actually why he had asked for such a high price — there was nothing wonderful about twin brothers looking alike, but to find such a similar appearance in two persons who belonged to quite different races was really something that was beyond price; and he managed to make Antonius think this so surprising (a feeling highly convenient to the trader) that although he was busily arranging the proscriptions and had just been in a terrifying rage, this man ended up thinking that no other items that belonged to him were better symbols of his high status.

99. Pliny the Elder, *Natural History*, 7, 39

(128) The highest price I have been able to discover that has been paid for a man born in slavery up to the present day was when the political leader Marcus Scaurus offered 700,000 Sesterces for the grammarian Daphnis, who was being sold by Attius of Pisaurum (Pesaro). In our own time this figure has been greatly exceeded by actors buying their freedom with their earnings — even in the days of our ancestors, the actor Roscius is supposed to have earned 500,000 Sesterces per annum. I don't suppose anyone thinks the man whom Nero manumitted for 13,000,000 Sesterces is relevant in this context; he was responsible for financing the recent Armenian war fought because of Tiridates, and the money was payment for the war, not just for the man — just as the 50,000,000 Sesterces for which Clutorius Priscus bought Sejanus' eunuch Paezon was payment for lust and not for beauty. He paid this outrageous price at a time when the city was in mourning, and no one

had the time to complain about it.

100. Diocletian's Edict on Maximum Prices: *ZPE* 34 (1979), 177

Official documents provide too small a sample to allow us to deduce 'average' prices (see Nos. 23–6 above, 105 below and AVN 75). Diocletian's edict imposing maximum prices during a time of rapid inflation is of limited value since it tells us nothing about prices a few years earlier or later. But it does give an idea of relative prices between slaves and other goods, or between different classes of slaves: the ratios between men, women and children are very similar to those we find in *paramone*-agreements (see Hopkins, *Conquerors and Slaves*, Ch. 3). We may also compare the wages laid down for one day's work (as at Athens, no distinction is made between slave and free): 25 *denarii* for labourers, and for skilled workers between 50 *denarii* and 150 (for a picture-painter): see L&R II, 140.

[Prices of slaves:]

[?Male slave or eunuch or young slave?]

Between the ages of 16 and 40:	30,000 <i>denarii</i>
Female of age above-specified:	25,000 <i>denarii</i>
Man between 40 and 60:	25,000 <i>denarii</i>
Female of age above-specified:	20,000 <i>denarii</i>
Boy between 8 and 16; also girl of age above specified:	20,000 <i>denarii</i>
Man (<i>homo</i>) over 60 or under 8:	15,000 <i>denarii</i>
Female of age above-specified:	10,000 <i>denarii</i>

With regard to a slave trained in a skill, agreement is to be reached between buyer and seller with regard to the sex and age and the type of skills, in such a way that the price may not exceed double that fixed for a slave.

Mutatus,
attendant
Creticus,
attendant

Communis,
chamberlain
Pothus,
attendant
Tiasus,
cook

Firmus,
cook
Secunda.

128. *Xenophon, The Householder, 7*

Xenophon describes how the wealthy landowner Iskhomakhos instructs his young wife in her duties, which include training her slave attendants. Their skills are not very different from those required of their mistress.

(41) You have some enjoyable tasks of your own, like when you take a girl who knows nothing about spinning wool, and make her skilled in it, and she becomes worth twice as much to you; or when you take a girl who knows nothing about management or the duties of a servant, and you make her skilled and trustworthy and a good attendant, so that she becomes worth any sum at all; or when you have the opportunity to reward those in your household who are self-controlled and useful, and to punish anyone who seems to be bad . . .

129. *The Nurse: ILS 8532*

It was of course the more unpleasant, troublesome and time-consuming domestic tasks that were given to slaves. Despite the social pressures on mothers to nurse and look after their own children, those who could afford it preferred to leave them to nurses, bought or hired (see Tacitus, *Dialogus* 28f.); Quintilian (*Inst. Or.*, 1, 4f. = L&R II, 73) discusses how important the right choice of nurse is even before he mentions the role of parents. By no means all nurses were slaves or freedwomen, rather than poor citizen women, but some inscriptions explicitly mention nurses who had been slaves (see No. 136 below).

To the Spirits of the Dead.

To Servia Cornelia Sabina, freedwoman of Servius.

Servius Cornelius Dolabella Metillianus

made this for his nurse and 'mummy' (*nutrici et mammul.*), who well deserved it.

130. *Quintilian, Educating an Orator, 1, 1*

The slaves who were closest to their masters were the ones who had looked after them when they had been children: for women, their nurse, and for men normally the *paedagogus*, the slave who had accompanied them to school every morning and had generally been responsible for protecting and assisting them. Even the law recognised how deep the friendships between these slaves and their masters might be (see No. 5, Ch. 19 above).

But although the educational role of these slaves was crucial, they were often appointed merely because they were useless for any other kind of work: when Pericles saw a slave fall from a tree and break his leg, he is said to have remarked that he had just become a *paedagogus* (Stobaeus, *Florida*, 4.209).

(8) What was said about nurses should also be said about the playmates with whom the child you want to become a great orator is going to be brought up. There is an additional point to make about tutors; they should either be thoroughly well educated (which I would prefer) or else they should be aware of their lack of education. Nothing is worse than those who have got a little beyond the alphabet and falsely persuade themselves that they are very knowledgeable. For they think it insults their dignity to give way to those whose job it is to teach, and they imperiously and sometimes brutally impose their own stupidity on their charges as though they had some claim to authority (which is what makes all people of this kind inordinately proud). And their foolishness is equally harmful to their charges' character, certainly if it was Alexander's tutor Leonides who infected him with some of his vices (so Diogenes the Babylonian says); as a result of the education he had received as a child, these vices clung to him when he had grown up and was already the greatest of kings.

131. *Pliny the Elder, Natural History, 12, 32*

As with doctors (No. 73 above), so with *paedagogi* it was felt to be somehow unnatural for a free man to be under the control of a slave, even if he was just a child. This resentment felt by the Greek and Roman elite at having once had slaves as their special companions expressed itself in frequent jokes about *paedagogi* (for example, in Roman comedy; see Martial, 11.39, and No. 240 below). When Pliny illustrates the exceptional expense of frankincense, he tells how the world's greatest conqueror had once been told off by a slave.

house-born slave of some woman. He was originally a weaver, but then learned letters when he accompanied his master's son to school.

(27) Lucius Voltacilius Pilutus is said to have been a slave, and even to have been chained up in the old-fashioned way as a door-keeper, until he was set free because of his intelligence and interest in literature, and assisted his patron in making legal accusations in court.

134. Xenophon, *The Householder*, 9

The most important domestic slave was the manager, since he or she would allow the master the leisure required for participation in civic affairs (see No. 2, Ch. 23). Iskhomakhos says that he had personally trained his managers (*epitropoi*) to be careful and loyal agents, and the head of the women slaves is also treated with respect.

(11) When we chose our manageress, we considered which woman seemed to us to show the most temperance with regard to food and wine and sleep and intercourse with men, and in addition which one seemed to be endowed with the best memory and to be the most circumspect (so that she would avoid being punished by us for carelessness) and most keen to please us so that we would reward her in return. (12) We taught her to be well disposed towards us by communicating our joy to her when we were pleased, and asking for her sympathy if there was something which disappointed us. We trained her to want the household to prosper, by making her know all about it and making sure she shared in its success. (13) And we encouraged her to develop a sense of justice by giving more honour to the just slaves than to the unjust ones, and pointing out to her that their lives had more riches and more freedom than those of the unjust. And that was the position which we entrusted to her.

135. Seneca, *Letters*, 12

Nineteenth-century abolitionists were keen to argue that apart from being immoral, slave labour was less economic than that provided by a free labour market. One of the points they made was that a capitalist employer did not have to concern himself with that section of the workforce which was sick or too old to work, whereas slave-owners did have to look after such people. The number of functions which might usefully be performed by old and feeble slaves was limited; they could become *paedagogi* (Nos. 130–1 above), *nomenclatores* (No. 132) or door-keepers. Seneca's story about how he failed to recognise his

old playmate is an illustration of the callous ancient attitude to old age generally; and also an instance of the immediate tour of inspection of an estate a master had not seen for a long time, recommended by the agricultural textbooks (No. 149, Ch. 6 below).

(1) Wherever I turn, I see indications that I'm getting old. I was visiting a suburban estate of mine and complaining about the expense of the dilapidated building. My manager told me that this wasn't the fault of neglect on his part — he was doing everything, but the fact was that the building was old. Actually this house was built under my own supervision — what is to happen to me, if stones of the same age as myself are in such a crumbling state? (2) I was upset at what he had said and used the next suitable occasion for an outburst of anger. 'These plane-trees are obviously not being looked after,' I said; 'there aren't any leaves on them; the branches are all knotted and parched, and the bark is flaking off those squalid trunks. That wouldn't happen if someone was digging round them and giving them water.' He swore by my own soul (*genius*) that he was doing whatever he could, that there was no respect in which his efforts were falling short — but they were old. Between ourselves, I planted them myself; I saw their first growth of leaves. (3) I went up to the entrance. 'Who,' I said, 'is that decrepit fellow? How suitable that he should have been moved to the door — he's clearly waiting to move on. Where on earth did you get hold of him? What possessed you to steal a corpse from someone else?' But the fellow said to me, 'Don't you recognise me? I'm Felicio — you used to give me puppets at the Saturnalia. I'm the son of your manager Philositus, I was your playmate when I was little.' 'The man's absolutely mad,' I said. 'Now he's turned into a little boy and a playmate of mine. Could be true though — he's toothless as a child.'

136. Pliny, *Letters*, 6, 3

An old family retainer who was particularly close to his or her master might be pensioned off with a small estate — but one assumes that this will have been rare.

Greetings from Gaius Plinius to Verus.

I thank you for taking over the running of the little farm which I had presented to my old nurse. It was worth 100,000 Sesterces when I originally gave it to her; but afterwards the income declined and the value of the estate fell accordingly; with you managing it, it will recover its former value. You must remember that it is not trees and soil with

on the other hand he was concerned about the sums that had been deposited by others, since a lot of people had complained that they had entrusted their deposits to Callistus because the legal responsibility lay with Carpophorus. Yet he accepted their arguments and ordered Callistus to be freed from the tread-mill. But he didn't have anything with which to pay back his creditors, and because he wasn't able to run off again because he was being kept under guard, he worked out a plan to get himself killed: one Saturday, pretending that he was going to meet his creditors, he went to the synagogue where the Jews assembled, and got up and created a disturbance. The Jews were upset by his behaviour and started insulting and beating him and dragged him off to the Urban Prefect, Fuscianus. Here they made a statement to the following effect: 'The Romans have agreed that we can recite in public the laws of our ancestors, and then this fellow comes along and stops us by causing a disturbance and proclaiming that he's a Christian.' Fuscianus, from the judge's bench, was very angry with Callistus on the basis of the evidence presented by the Jews; and someone went and told Carpophorus what had occurred. Carpophorus hurried off to the Prefect's court and shouted, 'Lord Fuscianus, I beg you, don't believe this man, he isn't a Christian at all but wants to get himself killed because he's made away with a lot of money belonging to me, as I shall show you.' The Jews assumed that this was a trick on the part of Carpophorus to have him released on this pretext, so they appealed to the Prefect in an even more hostile manner. He gave in to them, had Callistus whipped and sentenced to be sent to the mines in Sardinia.

In the end Callistus managed to get his name on to a list of Christian prisoners who were pardoned by Commodus at the instigation of his concubine Marcia, who was herself a Christian; he returned to Italy and was elected Pope — quite unjustifiably, according to Hippolytus.

139. Xenophon, *The Householder*, 5

From the point of view of production, slavery may be seen primarily as a mechanism for achieving a quantitative increase in the productivity of the household unit, rather than as a separate 'mode of production'. In Hesiod (*Works and Days* 406) and Homer, slaves provide domestic services and are not used in agriculture; such work is carried out by dependant tenants or day-labourers (*Odyssey* 11,489; 18,356-64). But in the classical period, slaves are found providing additional labour for work on the land in Chios (see No. 80,265b) and Corcyra (Thucydides 3, 73). The fact that only twelve of the seventy-nine slaves whose occupations are specified on Athenian apostasy records worked

on the land (see No. 27) may mean that slaves were more frequently used in domestic service and industry than in agriculture, or more probably that agricultural slaves were far less likely to win their freedom. For the rich at least, the use of agricultural slaves is taken for granted. Thus Xenophon praises agriculture because a man who is experienced in controlling agricultural slaves will also be a good army officer.

(14) Farming also trains men to assist each other as a team. When you campaign against an enemy, you use men; and working the land requires men too. (15) So if you are going to be a good farmer, you must make your workers co-operative and willing to obey you; and when you lead men against an enemy you must try to achieve this too, by giving rewards to those who behave as brave men should, and punishing those who lack discipline. (16) It is just as necessary for a farmer to give his workers frequent encouragement as for a general to encourage his troops. Slaves have no less need of something good to hope for than do free men — if anything, more, so that they may stay with you willingly.

140. Aristotle, *Politics*, 7, 9

Aristotle believed that all those who did agricultural work should have a lower status than leisured gentleman citizens. In actual fact classical Athens was a society of peasant farmers who worked the land themselves, side by side with their sons and any slaves they may have had; Aristotle was thinking of the ideal of Sparta, where the Helot population liberated the citizens for political and military activity.

(9) If I am to state my own preference, the people who cultivate the land should be slaves; they should not all come from the same tribe or nation, and they should not be too courageous. This will make them useful workers and safe from the danger of revolt. As a second best, they should be non-Greek-speaking serfs (*barbarous perioikous*) with natural characters as similar as possible to those I have indicated. Those of them who are used on private estates must be private property, and those used on community land public property. I will discuss on a separate occasion how slaves ought to be treated, and why it is better if freedom is held out as a prize to all slaves.

141. Appian, *Roman Civil Wars*, 1, 1

At Rome, slaves did not liberate the peasant farmer to take part in