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## **ἐλευθέρα εἶμεν καὶ νέφαπτος: An Examination of the Manumission Inscriptions at Delphi**

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### **Abstract**

Located at the ancient sanctuary of Apollo at Delphi is a collection of inscriptions that detail the sales of slaves by their owners to the god Apollo. In reality, these slaves were purchasing their freedom, and the Delphic inscriptions are the manumission contracts between slave and slave owner. But how did the Greeks reconcile the integration of slaves into free civilization with their established systems and rationalizations surrounding slavery? My project investigates the Delphic approach to manumission, using the manumission inscriptions in conjunction with evidence from other locales to examine the circumstances and methods that would enable a slave to achieve freedom through the Delphic procedure. Close reading and consideration of these inscriptions reveal a tension between the many advantages manumission offered to slaveowners, and the centuries of alienation and objectification of the slave figure to the appellation of merely σῶμα ("body"). This tension, and other evidence of Greek discomfort and anxiety concerning boundary-crossing and categorical dilemmas, may help explain the strange role of the god in the Delphic epigraphy.

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*ἐλευθέρα εἶμεν καὶ ἀνέφαπτος:*  
**An Examination of the Manumission Inscriptions at Delphi**

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2017–2018 Wolf Humanities Center Undergraduate Research Fellow  
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completed under the supervision of Dr. Jeremy McInerney

Senior Research Paper in the Classical Studies major in the Department of  
Classical Studies of the University of Pennsylvania

## Abstract

Located at the ancient sanctuary of Apollo at Delphi is a collection of inscriptions that detail the sales of slaves by their owners to the god Apollo. In reality, these slaves were purchasing their freedom, and the Delphic inscriptions are the manumission contracts between slave and slave owner. But how did the Greeks reconcile the integration of slaves into free civilization with their established systems and rationalizations surrounding slavery? My project investigates the Delphic approach to manumission, using the manumission inscriptions in conjunction with evidence from other locales to examine the circumstances and methods that would enable a slave to achieve freedom through the Delphic procedure. Close reading and consideration of these inscriptions reveal a tension between the many advantages manumission offered to slaveowners, and the centuries of alienation and objectification of the slave figure to the appellation of merely σῶμα ("body"). This tension, and other evidence of Greek discomfort and anxiety concerning boundary-crossing and categorical dilemmas, may help explain the strange role of the god in the Delphic epigraphy.

Ancient Greece was not only a society dependent on slave labor, but also one that took the enslavement of other human beings for granted as a fact of human life.<sup>1</sup> Yet there is ample evidence—some literary, but primarily epigraphic—that there existed the opportunity for an escape from servitude in Greece, and that manumission may even have been a commonplace practice. Notably, the evidence for manumission is more limited in larger cities like Athens, Corinth, and Thebes; most of the known manumission inscriptions have been found in other regions of northern and central Greece, including locations like Thessaly, Boeotia, Elateia, and Phocis. The Delphic sanctuary of Apollo houses the largest of these epigraphic collections.<sup>2</sup> The degree to which the evidence from Delphi, or indeed from any of these places, is representative of Greek manumission as a whole is still up for debate, due to the scattered nature of the evidence (perhaps as a result of these regions' particular recording habits) and its confinement to particular periods of time. In other words, a location's manumission inscriptions can only really speak to the manumission procedure of that location at that time, at least without a comparative study.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Finley, "Was Greek Civilization Based on Greek Labour?," in *Slavery in Classical Antiquity*, ed. Moses Finley (Cambridge: Heffer, 1968) 53.

<sup>2</sup> Zelnick-Abramovitz, *Not Wholly Free : The Concept of Manumission and the Status of Manumitted Slaves in the Ancient Greek World* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 2-3.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

Still, the individual collections are informatively fruitful, especially one as abundant and detailed as Delphi's. Of particular interest for this discussion is the representation of the slave in the majority of Delphic manumission inscriptions by the word *σῶμα* ("body"), which provides an unfortunate reminder of the initial status that he or she occupied in servitude. How did the Greeks approach the transformation of a *σῶμα*—a slave alienated, objectified, and stripped of legal rights to the point of being what Patterson labels "socially dead"<sup>4</sup>—into a free human being? How was this even possible logically and logistically in a society that participated in the systematic subjugation and exploitation of masses of people? The inscriptions at Delphi are valuable resources for examining how the Greeks effected the manumission of slaves, and how they conceived of manumission.

### Overview of the Delphic Manumission Epigraphy

The body of manumission inscriptions in the ancient sanctuary of Delphi records the release of over 1200 individuals from slavery. Dating between 201 BCE and roughly 100 CE, the inscriptions that survive lie primarily on the polygonal masonry comprising the terrace wall of the temple of Apollo—some can also be found in other locations around the site, such as on public monuments along the Sacred Way and the theater.<sup>5</sup> Through the particular process documented at Delphi (the cases of which number over a thousand), manumission took the form of the god Pythian Apollo purchasing one or more slaves from a slave owner. In reality, the slave bought his or her own freedom and was only nominally the property of the deity.<sup>6</sup> Accordingly,

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<sup>4</sup> Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982), 237; Zelnick-Abramovitz, 5.

<sup>5</sup> Hopkins, *Conquerors and Slaves* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978): 133-134.

<sup>6</sup> Kamen, "Sale for the Purpose of Freedom: Slave-Prostitutes and Manumission in Ancient Greece," *The Classical Journal* 109 (2014): 285.

scholars often refer to these transactions as “fictive sales,”<sup>7</sup> “trust sales,”<sup>8</sup> or, more broadly, “sacral manumission.”<sup>9</sup> The inscription recording the manumission of a slave named Ladika is fairly typical and can illustrate the standard form of this practice:

ἄρχοντας Ἐμμενίδα τοῦ Καλλία μηνὸς Δαιδαφορίου, ἀπέδοτο Τελεσῶ Μνασικράτους Δελφίς, συνευδοκέοντος καὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ Κλέωνος, τῷ Ἀπόλλωνι τῷ Πυθίῳ σῶμα γυναικεῖον αἱ ὄνομα Λαδίκη τὸ γένος Σύραν, τιμᾶς ἀργυρίου μνᾶν τριῶν, καὶ τὰν τιμὰν ἔχει, καθὼς ἐπίστευσε Λαδίκη τῷ θεῷ τὰν ὠνὰν, ἐφ’ ὅτε ἐλευθέραν εἶμεν καὶ ἀνέφαπτον ἀπὸ πάντων τὸν πάντα χρόνον, ποιέουσα ὅ κα θέληι καὶ ἀποτρέχουσα οἷς κα θέληι. βεβαιωτὴρ κατὰ τὸν νόμον τᾶς πόλιος· Ἀστοξενος Διονυσίου. εἰ δέ τις ἐφάπτοιτο Λαδίκας ἐπὶ καταδουλισμῶι, βέβαιον παρεχόντων τῷ θεῷ τὰν ὠνὰν ἃ τε ἀποδομένα Τελεσῶ καὶ ὁ βεβαιωτὴρ Ἀστοξενος· εἰ δέ μὴ παρέχοιεν βέβαιον τὰν ὠνὰν τῷ θεῷ, πράκτιμοι ἐόντων κατὰ τὸν νόμον. ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ οἱ παρατυγχάνοντες κύριοι ἐόντων συλέοντες ὡς ἐλευθέραν οὔσαν ἀζάμοι ἐόντες καὶ ἀνυπόδικοι πάσας δίκας καὶ ζαμίας μάρτυρες· τοὶ ἱερεῖς τοῦ Ἀπόλλωνος Ταραντῖνος, Ἀμύντας καὶ τοὶ ἄρχοντες Ἀριστίων, Ἄσανδρος, Ἀριστόμαχος, ἰδιῶται Πατρέας, Εὐκράτης, Ἀστοξενος, Κλέων, Ἀρτεμίδωρος, Χαρίξενος.<sup>10</sup>

While Emmenidas son of Kallias was archon in the month of Daidaphorios, Teleso daughter of Mnasikrates of Delphi, with her son Kleon also consenting, sold to Pythian Apollo a female body named Ladika, Syrian in origin, for the price of three *mnai* of silver, and [Teleso] holds the payment, accordingly as Ladika entrusted the sale to the god, according to which she be free and untouchable by all for all time, doing whatever she wishes and going wherever she wishes. The guarantor in accordance with the law of the city: Astoxenos son of Dionysios. If anyone should lay hands on Ladika for enslavement, let both the seller Teleso and the guarantor Astoxenos provide the sale as secure to the god; if they should not provide the sale as secure to the god, let them be fined in accordance with the law. Likewise also let bystanders have the power to protect her as being free, themselves being unpunished and not liable to any judgment and penalty. Witnesses: the priests of Apollo Tarantinos, Amuntas, and the magistrates Aristion, Asandros, Aristomachos, and the private citizens Patreas, Eukrates, Astoxenos, Kleon, Artemidoros, Charixenos.

The inscriptions, which are largely formulaic, begin much like other contractual epigraphy: they date the sale by month and by specific annual magistracies, and introduce the enumeration of conditions upon which the involved parties have agreed. Multiple slave owners could play a direct hand in selling the slave, but occasionally other family members appear in the

<sup>7</sup> Kamen, “Manumission and Slave Allowances in Athens,” *Historia* 65 (2016): 424.

<sup>8</sup> Westermann, “Between Slavery and Freedom,” *The American Historical Review* 50 (1945): 215.

<sup>9</sup> Kamen (2014), 285.

<sup>10</sup> SGDI 1735.

text as simply *συνευδοκέοντος* (“consenting”)—this addition, which Westermann labels the “approval clause,” most likely protected the freedperson from potential contestations to his or her freedom by the slave owner’s heirs in the future.<sup>11</sup> These masters were most often from Delphi, a smaller but still sizable portion were from central Greece, and some few others came from farther locations like Athens or even Macedon.<sup>12</sup>

Next in the document after the name of the slave owner is the description of the sale, detailing the amount of money the owner received from the divine buyer, Apollo—a sum that really came from the slave, as indicated in the language of the epigraphy: *ἐπίστευσε... τῷ θεῷ τὰν ὄνάν* (“he/she entrusted the sale to the god”). Despite this mention of action undertaken by the slave, as an object traded in a transaction he or she is referred to simply as a gendered *σῶμα* (“body”) with a name and occasionally with an origin (only about a fifth of the inscriptions specify ethnicity).<sup>13</sup> The inscriptions do, however, indicate that Apollo would not be exercising his new rights of ownership, for a result of the sale is that the slave *ἐλευθέρα εἶμεν καὶ ἀνέφαπτος* (“is free and untouchable”).

The manumission agreements often arranged for multiple layers of protection over this new status of the manumitted slaves (which suggests, also, how plausible the dangers were to a freedperson’s newfound freedom). One such measure was, as mentioned previously, the written approval of the manumission by certain family members of the manumittor, so that they renounced any future claim they might have been able to make on the freed slave. The contracts also come with witnesses and guarantors, whom the inscriptions specifically name and who were acting *κατὰ τὸν νόμον τᾶς πόλιος* (“in accordance with the law of the city”), suggesting that there

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<sup>11</sup> Westermann, “Extinction of Claims in Slave Sales at Delphi,” *Journal of Juristic Papyrology* 4 (1950): 58.

<sup>12</sup> Hopkins, 138.

<sup>13</sup> Hopkins, 139.

was also a degree of security that the polis itself indirectly provided the manumitted slaves.<sup>14</sup> A mix of private citizens and officials, both sacred and secular, typically made up the witnesses, and a number of manumission agreements include a penalty, usually monetary, against the seller and guarantor should they not fulfill their duties in ensuring the security of the sale.<sup>15</sup> This obligation to pay a financial penalty to the god Apollo invested the interest of the guarantor and the seller into the protection of the manumitted slave's freedom and into upholding the terms of the agreement. Many inscriptions also bestow onto any bystanders the power to defend the freedperson's freedom with impunity. This clause essentially provides a sense of protection over the manumitted slave's freedom in perpetuity, granting anyone permission—and indeed, conferring a certain sense of responsibility—to come to the defense of a freedperson without any fear of legal or criminal consequence (which was especially important in the event that the manumittor or guarantor should die). Though not all of the inscriptions include all of these provisions, a substantial proportion of them provide at least some security against anyone challenging or threatening the freedom acquired through the manumission. Despite the “fictitious” nature of the transactions in the manumission epigraphy, the legal provisions and safeguards were entirely real.

Two thirds of the slaves named in the Delphic epigraphy did immediately receive the powers *ποιεῖν ὃ κα θέλει, εἶμεν εἴ κα θέλει* (“to do whatever he/she wishes and to live wherever he/she wishes”) with the accompanying protections from the moment of the payment.<sup>16</sup> However, about a third of the manumission cases at Delphi include a clause that required the slave to “remain” (*παραμένειν*) after the sale for a prescribed duration of time with the former

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<sup>14</sup> For the interest of the city in manumissions, see Zelnick-Abramovitz, “Freed slaves, Their Status and State Control in Ancient Greece,” *Revue Européenne d'Histoire* 16 (2009): 303-318.

<sup>15</sup> Kamen (2014), 288-289.

<sup>16</sup> Hopkins, 140.

owner or other individual—hence the name for a contract of this kind, *paramone* (παραμονή). A typical *paramone* clause takes a form similar to that in a slave woman Philtate’s manumission:

παραμεινάτω δὲ Φιλτάτη Εὐκλέα τὸν τᾶς ζωᾶς χρόνον, πᾶν ποιῶσα τὸ ἐπιτασόμενον ἀνεκκλήτως. εἰ δὲ μὴ ποιέοι, ἐξουσίαν ἔχέτω ἐπιτειμέουσα Εὐκλέα τρόπῳ ᾧ κα θέλη.<sup>17</sup>

Let Philtate remain beside Euklea as long as she lives, doing everything ordered irreproachably. If she should not do so, let Euklea have the power to punish her in whatever way she wishes.

Though following a recognizable formula, the *paramone* arrangements themselves involved conditions of varying number and stringency. Generally, the *paramone* clause obligated the manumitted person to stay in the service of the master or the master’s family, and usually until the slave owner died (though some slave owners did set a specific number of years).<sup>18</sup> Some contracts offered the manumitted slave the option to pay additional sums to shorten the period of continued service; there are indeed examples of such *apolyxis* (“release”) inscriptions, which discharged the manumitted slave early from the *paramone* term.<sup>19</sup> The large number of contracts involving *paramone* service suggests that manumission was often not a simple conversion in status, but could instead be a complicated and drawn-out process.

The collection of manumission epigraphy in the sanctuary to Apollo at Delphi contains these common features, which make the inscriptions similar to one another but which also make the group as a whole distinctive. However, such standard and formulaic features do not come close to illustrating the complexity and peculiarity of the Delphic fictive sales, which include hundreds of individualized stories with unique characters, backgrounds, and results.

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<sup>17</sup> FD 3.3.300.

<sup>18</sup> Hopkins, 142.

<sup>19</sup> FD 3.3.398, 419; SGDI 2015, 1868.

### Motivations for Manumission

Despite this apparent ability to enter into a contract with commitments and benefits, the slave was still originally the legal property of the slave owner, used as a tool in whatever way the owner decided. So why were these slaves in the Delphic inscriptions able to purchase release from enslavement? Selling the slave was fully in the slave owner's right to do, and freeing the slave deprived the owner's heirs of part of their inheritance. Moreover, freed slaves were not granted citizenship in Greece as in Rome, so there were none of the social or political benefits that came along with accumulating loyal clients.<sup>20</sup> So why did Greek slave masters offer the option of freedom to their slaves, when they were under no obligation to do so?

For the unconditional and immediately effective manumissions, it seems likely that the slave owner used manumission to replace an older slave with a younger one at minimal cost. In other words, another slave owner would pay less money to purchase the older slave than would the slave himself or herself. Hamel's interpretation of the manumission of Neaira, a slave-prostitute in Athens, illustrates this opportunity. Neaira's two male owners, when they wanted to get married, offered her freedom for two-thirds of the price they paid to own her, a gesture which Apollodoros (or Pseudo-Demosthenes) suggests is generosity as a result of affection for the slave-girl.<sup>21</sup> Hamel, however, disagrees. She points out the difficulty that the two men would likely face in trying to sell a slave-girl of Neaira's age, already older and "past her prime"—they might not even have received as much as the sale-price they extended to girl herself, at least without investing time (which they perhaps could not spare) into finding the right customers. "They were certain of getting their price, and they were spared the trouble of haggling," Hamel

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<sup>20</sup> Zelnick-Abramovitz (2005), 60.

<sup>21</sup> Dem. 59. 30

notes.<sup>22</sup> Whatever the true intent of Neaira’s owners was, Hamel’s reasoning can easily apply to the Delphic manumissions. Zelnick-Abramovitz even calls it the “most obvious reason,” namely that the slave owners would want to rid themselves of an older and less sellable slave while at the same time acquiring the money to buy a younger and more vigorous replacement.<sup>23</sup> Still, this is largely speculation, since there is no way to know the age of the manumitted slaves in the inscriptions, but the manumission prices in the inscriptions did correlate closely with the market-price of a new slave (the average price range being three to five *mnae*).<sup>24</sup>

Manumissions with *paramone*, however, could actually yield a profit for the slave owner, even in excess of the manumitted slave’s original purchase price. In manumissions that obligated the slave to a period of *paramone*, the slave owner received both the money for purchasing another, younger slave, and also the continued service of the manumitted slave, often until the slave owner’s death. A common provision for *paramone* was that, during its extent, the manumitted slave *ποιοῦντα πᾶν τὸ ἐπιτασσόμενον* (“do everything that is ordered”), often accompanied with *ἀνεγκλήτως* (“irreproachably”) or *πᾶν τὸ δυνατόν* (“in every way possible”). Such conditions imply that the slaves in these documents were meant to keep working much as they did as slaves, compelled to follow every order of the masters’ to the best of their abilities. If the implication is not clear, some inscriptions are more explicit: in FD 3.3.337, three manumitted slave-girls agree to *δουλεύοντα* (“be slaves”) during the term of *paramone*, which is until the master dies. Similarly, in FD 3.6.51, Sotima and her son Polytimidas reserve the power, if the manumitted slaves do not follow orders, to *ἐπιτιμέοντες ὡς δούλοις* (“punish them as/as if

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<sup>22</sup> Hamel, *Trying Neaira: The True Story of A Courtesan’s Scandalous Life in Ancient Greece* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2003).

<sup>23</sup> Zelnick-Abramovitz (2005), 151.

<sup>24</sup> Zelnick-Abramovitz (2005), 155; Hopkins, 159-160.

slaves”). Such language raises the question: was the person who had paid for manumission, but obligated to serve a *paramone* term, really still a slave?

To approach this question, it is necessary first to examine the conceptual framework within which these manumission inscriptions were operating. The epigraphy presents a crucial liminal moment in the lives of those sold to Pythian Apollo, capturing the transition between slavery and freedom. The carved manumission contracts themselves not only effected this transition, but also preserved it—in the future, the manumitted slave could point to the inscription as evidence of his or her free status. The inscriptions therefore serve as a valuable source for examining how the ancient Greeks conceived of and put into practice ideas of freedom and personal liberty—what rights or qualities did those drawing up these contracts believe were part of a free man’s status, and what distinguished a freed slave from an ordinary slave?

In the inscriptions, Westermann highlights four elements that appear often as markers of freedom, distinguishing the freed slave from the pre-manumission slave:

1. He is to be his own representative, his own master, in all legal matters, without need of intervention of a second party. This is the legal expression of freedom.
2. He is not subject to seizure as property. Said otherwise: No one dares lay a hand upon him.
3. He may do what he desires to do.
4. He may go where he desires to go. Or, in a variant form, he may live where he desires to live.<sup>25</sup>

Westermann is certainly correct that the Delphic sales often include these aspects of liberty to expound the manumitted slave’s new freed status. That no one may seize the manumitted slave as property is illustrated in the slave becoming *ἀνέφαπτος* (“untouchable”) through manumission—this sense of the word is confirmed by the commonly added provisions that anticipate the possibility that *τις ἐφάπτοιτο...ἐπὶ καταδουλισσμῶν* (“someone should lay hand on

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<sup>25</sup> Westermann, “Slavery and Elements of Freedom in Ancient Greece,” in *Slavery in Classical Antiquity*, ed. Moses Finley (Cambridge: Heffer, 1968): 26.

[the manumitted slave] for the purpose of enslavement”). The conferral of freedom of action usually appears in the contracts as the manumitted slave *ποιέουσα ὃ κα θέλη*, and likewise the freedom of movement as *ἀποτρέχουσα οἷς κα θέλη*.<sup>26</sup> These various personal freedoms can appear in any number or combination in the inscriptions, but all together they usually comprise the most detailed descriptions of the shift from slave to freedperson.

For the nearly three quarters of the inscriptions which bestow immediate and unadulterated freedom, there is not much that is vague in the manumitted slave’s status; he or she is now a free person, free to do whatever, to go wherever, and to not be enslaved. However, contracts that include *paramone* agreements have incited much debate and confusion in scholarship regarding the question of servile status, particularly because in such cases the slave continues serving the master *after* the time of the manumission contract. The convention is to label the state of the person serving in *paramone* “conditional freedom” since the contract attaches certain obligations to the enslaved party.<sup>27</sup> This term, however, is ambiguous. When they employ it, the scholars tend to treat it as a paradoxical state of freedom, whereby there are conditions placed upon the activities of the freed person: Kamen describes those obligated to *paramone* as “slaves freed with strings attached.”<sup>28</sup> The confusion arising from this understanding of “conditional freedom,” in conjunction with how harsh these “strings” were in *paramone*, is reflected in its treatment in scholarship. Westermann asserts, “To the Greek mind, freedom was not a unit but something divisible,”<sup>29</sup> and explains that those bound to *paramone* terms were legally free, but not necessarily free in respect to the other elements of freedom that

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<sup>26</sup> For examples in which all of these elements are included (often in the same sentence), see SGDI 1686, 1724, 1727, 1728, 1733.

<sup>27</sup> Kamen, *Status in Classical Athens* (Princeton: University Press, 2013), 34; Tucker, “Women in the Manumission Inscriptions at Delphi,” *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 112 (1982): 226; Hopkins, 141; Finley (1968), 55.

<sup>28</sup> Kamen (2013), 30.

<sup>29</sup> Westermann (1968), 27.

he identified.<sup>30</sup> In short, he affirms of the Greeks, “Theirs was a society in which a man could be part free and part slave, *ἡμίδουλος*.”<sup>31</sup> Similarly, Kamen describes conditionally freed slaves as being “neither free nor slave, but in some ways both,”<sup>32</sup> Zelnick-Abramovitz speaks of them as occupying a position of “semi-slavery, or half way between slavery and freedom,”<sup>33</sup> and Sokolowski refers to “the half freedman in *paramone*.”<sup>34</sup> Despite his many disagreements with Westermann, Finley too observes the phenomenon that “a man who has been a slave is freed, but his freedom is partly withdrawn in the same action in which it is given to him,”<sup>35</sup> leaving the man with only partial freedom; he puts the conditionally freed slave on the “spectrum of statuses” between slave, freedman, and free citizen.<sup>36</sup> Despite this apparent consensus, scholarly opinion on the status of slaves during periods of *paramone* seems rather steeped in uncertainty, settling only on an agreement on the ambiguity of the status.

The general assumption, then, appears to be that the master freed the slave upon the sale recorded in the manumission inscriptions, and that the manumitted slave performed the *paramone* as a freedperson—thus the slave’s precarious state of liberation. Westermann says as much explicitly: “*paramone* was not just a deferral of manumission, but rather a new status for the slave as a freedman with certain obligations and duties.”<sup>37</sup> As mentioned above, scholars therefore usually treat the “conditional” part of “conditional freedom” as shaping the life of the freedman or freedwoman following liberation, as conditions *under* which the freedperson could be free (at least until the owner dies). However, conditions of this kind exist in the inscriptions outside of *paramone* clauses, and these are typically not included in the category of “conditional

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<sup>30</sup> Westermann, 28-29.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid. Westermann invents this term—it does not appear anywhere in the epigraphy.

<sup>32</sup> Kamen (2013), 37.

<sup>33</sup> Zelnick-Abramovitz, (2005), 339.

<sup>34</sup> Sokolowski, “The Real Meaning of Sacral Manumission,” *The Harvard Theological Review* 47 (1954): 174.

<sup>35</sup> Finley, “Servile Statuses of Ancient Greece,” *Revue Internationale des Droits de L'antiquité* 7 (1954): 182.

<sup>36</sup> Finley, (1968): 55.

<sup>37</sup> Westermann, “Paramone as a General Service Contract,” *Journal of Juristic Papyrology* 2 (1948): 16.

freedom” (which usually exclusively refers to *paramone* cases). For example, in SGDI 1718, Epicharidas prohibits the manumitted slave Asia from living outside Lileia (where he resides), and in FD 3.3.26, Lais’ manumittors dictate that she cannot “speak badly” of them.<sup>38</sup> In neither of these cases are the manumitted slaves obligated to *paramone*, and in both these cases the manumittors lay out the conditions that are specific to their transaction. In just the sheer number of *paramone* contracts (four hundred),<sup>39</sup> Westermann therefore seems correct in arguing that *paramone* prescribed a distinct status for the slave that could be encapsulated in the recognizable and much-used term *παραμεινάτω* (“let him/her remain beside”). However, when contrasted with these more straightforward examples of rule-based freedom, could the sense of “conditional freedom” in the case of *paramone* be instead that there were conditions *upon the completion of which* the freedperson was manumitted? In other words, was the agreement of *paramone* instead that the slave would acquire freedom *after* fulfilling the conditions?

It is worthwhile to examine to what extent the elements of freedom identified by Westermann are applicable to the situation of the person under *paramone* obligations. In terms of the virtually always-present statement that the slave in the manumission contract *ἐλευθέρα εἶμεν*, Sosin points out that the infinitive “to be” in the Delphic inscriptions “referred to something that ‘is to’ come about,” a “prospective, future sense of the infinitive” that appears in many legal contexts.<sup>40</sup> As an example, he calls attention to the language of a contract for a fourth century lease, which indicates that a number of individuals *κατὰ τάδε ἐμίσθωσαν* (“let [several buildings] on the following conditions”), *ἐφ’ ᾧτιτε διδόναι* (“according to which [the lessee] pay”) the rent in two installments.<sup>41</sup> The present infinitive “to be” in the Delphic inscriptions almost always

<sup>38</sup> “μὴ εἰπά[τ]ω δὲ Λαῖς κακῶς μήτε Μενὸ μήτε Καλλίαν.”

<sup>39</sup> Hopkins, 140.

<sup>40</sup> Sosin, “Manumission with *Paramone*: Conditional Freedom?”, *TAPA* 145 (2015): 329-330.

<sup>41</sup> *IG* II2 2496

follows *ἐφ' ὧστε* just as *διδόναι* does here, and just as *διδόναι* is a present infinitive indicating future action, so too could be the role of *εἶμεν* in the manumission contracts. It is not, Sosin asserts, “effecting, or even recognizing existing liberty,” as many scholars often misconstrue it to do.<sup>42</sup> There are even some inscriptions that make clear that the manumission follows the completion of *paramone* service: for example, SGDI 1703 dictates, *εἴ κα παραμείνη, καθὼς γέγραπται, βέβαιος ἔσ[τ]ω ἂ ὠνὰ τῶι θεῶι* (“if [the slave] remains beside, accordingly as has been written, let the sale be guaranteed to the god”).<sup>43</sup> It is impossible to know whether these cases are special or simply articulate what is implicit in most. If, however, Sosin is correct and the act of manumission does not necessarily occur at the moment of the monetary transaction, there is little to suggest that the people serving under *paramone* have any share of freedom yet.

The description of the freedperson’s status as *ἀνέφαπτος* best illustrates the contradictions within the Delphic sales if the slave in *paramone* is, in fact, free, as many scholars take for granted. Considering one sense of “untouchable” being “not subject to enslavement”, there are multiple examples of inscriptions that allow the manumittor to render the contract void and thereby return the “manumitted” slave to slavery before the completion of the *paramone* term (usually as a result of the slave not satisfactorily performing the services in *paramone*).<sup>44</sup> In these cases, the “manumitted” individual could easily fall right back into enslavement—there is little authority or protection in his new status. Furthermore, being “untouchable” could also refer to the use of physical force that was characteristic of slavery. Demosthenes comments:

If, gentlemen of the jury, you will turn over in your minds the question what is the difference between being a slave and being a free man, you will find that the biggest difference is that the body of a slave is made responsible for all his misdeeds, whereas corporal punishment is the last penalty to inflict on a free man.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Sosin, 329-330.

<sup>43</sup> See also SGDI 1704.

<sup>44</sup> See SGDI 1819, 1944; FD 3.3.6.

<sup>45</sup> Dem. 24.167, trans. A.T. Murray (East Sussex, Delphi Publishing Ltd: 2015). See also Dem. 22.55.

Slaves could, and often did, suffer physical and violent punishment at the hands of their masters, something that distinguished them from free men and which Demosthenes even considers as being a defining quality of slavery. Certainly those serving *paramone* terms were subject to physical punishment at the will of the slave owner; frequently the master was allowed *ἐπιτειμέων τρόπῳ ᾧ κα θέλη* (“to punish [the slave] in whatever way he/she wishes”) if the slave did not perform as promised or desired.<sup>46</sup> This is despite the fact that, in many cases, the same inscriptions say that the slave is to be free and untouchable *ἀπὸ πάντων τὸν πάντα βίον* (“by all for the rest of his/her life”) or sometimes *τὸν πάντα χρόνον* (“for all time”).<sup>47</sup> It seems like quite a contradiction for a contract to protect the freed slave from physical harm or re-enslavement by *anyone* for the rest of his or her life (such privileges as come with freedom), and a few lines later to bestow unto the slave owner the power to physically harm or re-enslave this same freedperson. This apparent inconsistency can be reconciled if the slave is not actually manumitted until after the period of *paramone*.

Returning back to the sometimes explicit obligation of slaves in these contracts to serve their masters *δουλεύοντες* (“being slaves”) and so on,<sup>48</sup> such language eliminates the last two elements of freedom outlined by Westermann: the ability to do or go wherever one wishes, or freedom of action and of movement respectively. The person in *paramone* certainly cannot go wherever he or she pleases, since he or she needs to be near the slave owner in order to execute *πᾶν τὸ ἐπιτασσόμενον ἀνεγκλήτως* or *πᾶν τὸ δυνατόν*—and this of course means the same person does not have the freedom to do whatever he or she pleases either (especially with the threat of violent punishment or nullification of the contract). If, then, the only qualities distinguishing a

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<sup>46</sup> FD 3.3.329, 332, etc.

<sup>47</sup> See FD 3.3.318.

<sup>48</sup> FD 3.3.329, 337; 3.2.129; 2.3.337; SGDI 2072, 2092, as some examples.

slave from a freed slave are these elements of freedom illustrated in the Delphic sales themselves and enumerated by Westermann (for most freed slaves, most likely did not receive citizenship),<sup>49</sup> and the slaves under *paramone* evidently enjoyed none of these personal freedoms, then were they not just still slaves?

It appears likely that those who were conditionally manumitted (however one may define it) were what Kamen calls “privileged slaves,” who had more autonomy than the average chattel slave over their movement and who had the potential to make money.<sup>50</sup> By this definition, they would have been privileged even before the composition of the manumission contract, but the inscribed legal promise of future manumission surely heightened this privilege. It may be more accurate, then, to consider the inscriptions including *paramone* clauses as being “pre-contracts,” written commitments to a legally clear process that *will result* in the slaves’ freedom, but not grant it immediately. Yet even if scholarly consensus is correct about a free-servile gray area created by *paramone* agreements, nonetheless it is worth noting that the “freed” slaves under *paramone* resembled average slaves a great deal, and that the dynamic between manumitted and manumittor during *paramone* periods resembled the previous and more straightforward slave-master relationship a great deal. Therefore, in sum, from *paramone* agreements, manumittors benefitted by obtaining the monetary sums to replace a slave who essentially still continued his or her servile labor in the same manner as before.

There were other ways the slave owner could benefit from the manumissions with *paramone* attached. If a slave wanted early release from the agreed term of extended service, often he or she would pay an additional sum for *apolyxis*, which was no small fraction of the

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<sup>49</sup> Zelnick-Abramovitz (2005), 60.

<sup>50</sup> Kamen (2013), 24-27.

original manumission cost.<sup>51</sup> Moreover, there are multiple examples of contracts that stipulate that the property of a freed slave, upon his or her death, go to the manumittor or the manumittor's family.<sup>52</sup> Such inheritances could have been a way to make up for the assets lost by the manumittor's heirs as a result of the manumission; whatever the financial loss involved in the relinquishment of a slave, it was reabsorbed when the yields of his or her labor in freedom returned back into the manumittor's family. The slave owner demanding *paramone* could therefore make money both directly from the price of manumission (with no loss in labor for, in most cases, the rest of the owner's life) and from other payments after the inscribing of the manumission contract.

The assumption is, of course, that the sums passing between the hands of the slave and the master were compensatory for the monetary loss of the slave's service and meant to go toward the acquisition of a new slave. One example illustrates this *mna*-to-person relationship: in SGDI 1717, Aphrodisia agrees to remain with her manumittors until they die, and thereupon to buy her freedom from their son for one *mna*. However, she can achieve early release from her *paramone* by purchasing a female slave (of the same age) who would take her place. Tucker indicates a particularly interesting element of this agreement: should she attain her *apolysis*, upon the death of her manumittors Aphrodisia has to give their son either the aforementioned one *mna*, or the female slave who served in her stead.<sup>53</sup> The new female slave would therefore still belong to Aphrodisia during the *paramone* term, and would quite literally be standing in for Aphrodisia and serving the term for her.

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<sup>51</sup> SGDI 1717, 1811.

<sup>52</sup> See SGDI 1891, 2097, 2202.

<sup>53</sup> Tucker, "Women in the Manumission Inscriptions at Delphi," *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 112 (1982): 234.

Such arrangements cast even more skepticism over the status of a manumitted slave's "freedom" under *paramone*. Aphrodisia could purchase a slave, but for a number of women, even the human life they created while "remaining beside" their former masters did not belong to them. These cases provide an especially disheartening view into the dehumanizing business of slavery, whereby slave owners used the reproductive potential of female slaves to capitalize on manumission. At least thirteen of the inscriptions require slave-women in *paramone* to supply one or more children for enslavement to the manumittor's family, usually to his children.<sup>54</sup> Occasionally, owners also retained the right to keep children born from a woman in *paramone* as slaves or to sell them as they wish. As an example, in FD 3.6.39, Aristion and Eusias state that children born to Sostrata during her time in *paramone* would be free, *ἐκτὸς ἐὰν μὴ τι θέλωντι Ἀριστίων καὶ Εἰσιάς πωλῆσαι πρὸς ἔνδειαν* ("except if Aristion and Eusias wish to sell them in the face of need").<sup>55</sup> Most commonly, though, the arrangement entailed the female slave paying the price of manumission, serving her master until his or her death, and giving a baby or babies to the manumittor's heir. For her manumission, Sotericha (FD 3.3.273) pays the initial manumission fee, submits to a term of *paramone* in the service of her manumittors, agrees to provide children for her manumittors, and is given an additional price to pay for *apolyxis* if she wants to be released early.<sup>56</sup> These instances are particularly disturbing illustrations of how far the objectification of these slaves, and slave children, could go on both sides of the transaction—and how slavery could rend families apart. "Parents left children behind in slavery to win freedom for themselves as adults," observes Hopkins.<sup>57</sup> Through conditional manumission, slave owners could get multiple slaves out of a single slave; whether by the *mnae* the freed slave gave

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<sup>54</sup> Hopkins, 156.

<sup>55</sup> See also FD 3.3.306.

<sup>56</sup> See also FD 3.3.291, 332, 3.6.22, 39, 43, 57.

<sup>57</sup> Hopkins, 166.

or by the slave's own flesh and blood—or in many cases both—the manumission of one slave could more than make up for itself with respect to the master's slave supply.

Not even should apparent parentage in the inscriptions necessarily suggest fondness or kindness as primary motivations for the manumitters. Some manumitters could indeed have been the fathers of the slave children mentioned, and some inscriptions suggest this relationship more than others. One such case is that of Agamestor, son of Telestas; he manumitted Zopyra and her two children, *σώματα ἀνδρεῖα δύο οἷς ὀνόματα Ἀγαμήστωρ, Τελέστας, τὸ γένος οἰκογενεῖς* (“two male bodies named Agamestor [and] Telestas, home-born in origin”).<sup>58</sup> In addition to her children—both born in the home—sharing the names of the slave owner and of his father, Zopyra and her sons were to remain with Agamestor for the rest of his life. These pieces together make the parties in this inscription look like something of a family unit. In another similar case, Kleomantis manumits Eiasias in standard fashion, committing her to *paramone* and even clarifying his power to punish her however he wishes should she not hold up her end of the agreement.<sup>59</sup> However, Eiasias' *apolyxis* appears later in FD 3.3.333, as well as that of *τὸν γεγεννημένον ἐν τῇ παραμονῇ ἐξ αὐτῆς υἱὸν Νικόστρατον, ὃν καὶ μετωνόμασα θέσει Κλεόμαντιν* (“her son Nikostratos born from her in *paramone*, whom also [Kleomantis] has changed the name to Kleomantis”). Kleomantis then names Eiasias and her son as his heirs, after his wife. Between the written manumission of Eiasias and her *apolyxis*, she may have borne a child by Kleomantis, as illustrated in her new inheritance and in the change of her son's name.<sup>60</sup> However, seeing as Eiasias and her son become his beneficiaries, it seems probable that Kleomantis has no other offspring to whom he can pass on his legacy. The biological truth of

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<sup>58</sup> SGDI 1715.

<sup>59</sup> FD 3.3.329.

<sup>60</sup> Tucker, 230-231.

nominally paternal inscriptions like these<sup>61</sup> is difficult to ascertain, but both the cases of Agamestor and Kleomantis demonstrate how a slave owner—presumably one without free or “legitimate” offspring—could turn to manumission in order to secure his family name and property, or perhaps to ensure the arrangement of his funeral rites, as a number of inscriptions also require of the manumitted slave.<sup>62</sup>

It appears best, in general, to avoid assuming that these manumitters offered freedom to their slaves purely out of generosity or affection. There could always be the exceptional cases, but financially slave owners stood to gain a great deal from offering their slaves the prospective of freedom, especially through a *paramone* arrangement. Hopkins points out the irony that lies at the heart of this kind of manumission. “The legal force of contract was being used to get ex-slaves to agree to their own exploitation,”<sup>63</sup> he remarks, then continues later: “Manumission and the slave market grew hand in hand.”<sup>64</sup> The types of manumission arrangements preserved in the Delphic epigraphy made the slave complicit in the slave system; the money one slave paid to grasp freedom went toward the continued enslavement of another. This cycle is all the more apparent when the slaves and slave owners use human lives as bargaining chips in these manumission transactions.

### Purchasing Manumission

One of the most fundamental aspects of Delphic manumission was the payment of money by the slave to the slave owner.<sup>65</sup> In the whole collection of inscriptions, there are only two cases in which the manumitters give freedom (though with *paramone*) to slaves *δωρέαν* (“as a gift”)—

<sup>61</sup> See also SGDI 2144, FD 3.6.125, FD 3.3.287, FD 3.3.372.

<sup>62</sup> See FD 3.2.243; 3.3.24, 269, 364; 3.6.40.

<sup>63</sup> Hopkins, 154.

<sup>64</sup> Hopkins, 170.

<sup>65</sup> Zelnick-Abramovitz (2005), 208.

in other words, free of charge.<sup>66</sup> But how did slaves, a group of people who by definition did not perform labor for compensation, and especially in a society where slaves had, in theory, no legal rights over property,<sup>67</sup> possibly raise this money with which they could purchase their freedom? And why would masters allow their slaves to keep this money at all, when they could claim all of it for themselves?

Regarding the specific occupations that provided the slaves in the Delphic inscriptions the means to save up the cost of manumission, the epigraphy does not offer much information. In the whole collection, a tiny number (less than a dozen) of the inscriptions include the specific trade of the slave, and even then the texts can be vague,<sup>68</sup> such as when the slave women are simply referred to as *τέχνητις* (“skilled woman”, or “craftswoman”).<sup>69</sup> There are, however, two inscriptions that include flute-playing slaves,<sup>70</sup> and two that include seamstresses.<sup>71</sup> In FD 3.1.565—the only inscription that names a male slave’s craft—the manumitted man is a bronze worker (*τεχνείταν χαλκῆ*).<sup>72</sup> But the small size of this sample, of course, does not mean that the slaves who are not explicitly associated with a skill were unskilled. Tucker guesses that inscriptions may have included the slave’s occupation as an explanation for a particularly high manumission price,<sup>73</sup> but the seamstresses in FD 3.2.230 and 3.3.26 purchased their freedom for five *mnae* and four *mnae*, 30 staters respectively, a perfectly average cost for manumission in the

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<sup>66</sup> See FD 3.3.364, 45.

<sup>67</sup> Kamen (2013), 20.

<sup>68</sup> Hopkins, 168; Zelnick-Abramovitz (2005), 181.

<sup>69</sup> See SGDI 2154 and 2177.

<sup>70</sup> SGDI 1842 (“*τεχνῆταν ἀλλήτριδα*”) and FD 3.3.54 (“*τεχνίτιδα ἀλλήτρην*”).

<sup>71</sup> FD 3.2.230 and 3.3.26: “*τεχνίτιν ραφίδην*.”

<sup>72</sup> Kamen identifies the slaves in three more inscriptions as prostitutes, but her reasoning is a bit tenuous and rests on the multiple meanings and forms of “*ἐργάζομαι*”; though the verb is a popular euphemism for sexual work, another inscription in the collection nonetheless uses this verb with the literal meaning of “to work” (specifying the work as fullery, SGDI 1904), meaning that the word’s use in the inscriptions she discusses could well be the same. Kamen may be correct, but the verb alone is insufficient evidence for drawing any definite conclusions about the presence of prostitutes in the epigraphic collection. Kamen, “Slave-Prostitutes and ΕΡΓΑΣΙΑ in the Delphic Manumission Inscriptions,” *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 188 (2014): 149–153.

<sup>73</sup> Tucker, 226.

Delphic data. Likewise, within this small sample of inscriptions, the race or origin of the slave seems to have little correlation with the slave's occupation.<sup>74</sup> All in all, there seems to be little significance in whether or not a manumission inscription included the particular kind of work in which the manumitted slave was engaged. Just as with the mention of the slave's birth, the mention of the occupation was likely a discretionary addition to the manumission contract for a more detailed identification of the manumitted slave, perhaps if the slave planned on continuing in this occupation in his or her freedom. Surely the more explicit the description of the manumitted slave was, the better the inscription served as evidence in the event that the freedperson had to prove his or her free status (and the slave owner may simply not have wanted to pay to inscribe anything that was not imperative to include).<sup>75</sup>

The Delphic inscriptions themselves therefore do not supply much material for understanding the range of jobs in which the manumitted slaves were previously employed. This relative silence presents a conundrum of a clear possession of money by the slaves manumitted in Delphi (for that it was they who paid the manumission price instead of, ostensibly, the god Apollo, the overwhelming majority of the inscriptions communicate with the statement that the slave "entrusted the sale to the god") and little to no evidence from the epigraphy or Delphi as to how they possibly acquired these sums. Most evidence of slaves' accumulation of money comes from Athens, particularly because of the city's judicial system and the court speeches that have survived. The extent to which Attic evidence can speak to Delphic practice is, of course, limited and can only be speculative, but it provides some mode of addressing this conundrum—and

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<sup>74</sup> One seamstress is *τὸ γένος οἰκογενῆ* ("home-born in origin") while the other is *τὸ γένος Θροινιάδα* ("from Thronium in origin"). One *τεχνίτιν* is *τὸ γένος Γαλάτισσαν* ("Galatian in origin") while another is *τὸ γένος ἐνδογενῆ* ("born-within in origin"). There does not appear to be any indication that skilled slaves tended generally to be either of foreign extraction or born within the home.

<sup>75</sup> Westermann (1946), footnote 2.

especially because there are indications that a *paramone*-like procedure existed in Athens,<sup>76</sup> there is reason to suppose that the two regions had similarities in their slave systems.

The means by which a slave could receive and save up money seems chiefly to be found in the multiple mentions of an *ἀποφορά* (“*apophora*”), a payment that slaves regularly made to their masters.<sup>77</sup> Aeschines in *Against Timarchus* provides the most detail about the nature of these payments: he says that Timarchus had “nine or ten slaves who were skilled shoemakers, each of whom paid him a fee (*ἀποφορὰν ἔφερε*) of two obols a day.”<sup>78</sup> The term itself lends some information: the prefix *ἀπο* suggests that money came “from” the slave, meaning that the slave possessed some means from which he or she could pay the sum<sup>79</sup> (Kazakévich illustrates the clear distinction between a slave supplying an *apophora* and a slave who was *μισθοφορῶν*, “*misthos*-bearing” or “rent-bearing,” who handed over to the slave owner the money which a third party provided for the slave’s services).<sup>80</sup> Excluding, then, the pay from hired-out service to another individual, a likely source of this *apophora* money was profit derived from the manufacturing and sale of goods. These skilled slaves sometimes received a “slave-allowance,”<sup>81</sup> a fraction of their earnings which they were allowed to keep: the Old Oligarch confirms that the *apophora* which such slaves gave to their owners was only a portion of what they earned in their work.<sup>82</sup> Especially if, as in Timarchus’ case, the monetary obligation of these slaves to their owners was a fixed price, Kamen logically assumes that the slaves were typically permitted to keep whatever earnings remained after the *apophora* and use them as they wished<sup>83</sup>—including

<sup>76</sup> See Westermann, “Two Studies in Athenian Manumission,” *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 5 (1946): 92-104.

<sup>77</sup> W. Schmitz, “Apophora,” in H. Cancik et al. (eds.), *Brill’s New Pauly: Encyclopaedia of the Ancient World* (Leiden 2002): 885–86.

<sup>78</sup> Aeschin. 1.97; Thphr. *Char.* 30.15.

<sup>79</sup> Kazakévich, “Were the χωρὶς οἰκοῦντες Slaves?,” ed. D. Kamen, GRBS 48 (2008 [1960]) 354-355.

<sup>80</sup> Kazakévich, 347-377.

<sup>81</sup> Kamen (2016), 413.

<sup>82</sup> Ps.-Xen. *Ath.Pol.* 1.11.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*

saving them up to buy freedom. Acton concurs, and remarks “being able to keep profits after the *apophora* was best of all, especially as it offered the prospect of manumission,”<sup>84</sup> and Kamen adds that slaves who had this chance at purchasing freedom were distinctly “privileged” relative to the largely wage-less slave population.<sup>85</sup>

Kamen also calculates the kind of time frame that saving up for manumission could entail: using the shoemaking slaves of Timarchus as an example, she concludes that, with a savings rate of one obol a day, it would have taken at least five to eight years for a slave to raise the money for manumission.<sup>86</sup> Even if saving one obol a day is perhaps unrealistic, this is not a particularly long amount of time—for example, if a young slave girl started working and saving in her early adolescence, she could theoretically buy her freedom in her early adulthood (which may perhaps help explain the multiple Delphic manumission contracts which require, and therefore assume feasible, that manumitted women bear children for the manumitters). However, how the practice of *apophora* worked is still obscure in the details, for although Timarchus’ system appears to be a fixed price paid daily, other examples indicate that longer distances sometimes existed between slave and slave master which would have made daily payments unlikely. Each arrangement probably differed from case to case, as probably did the rate a slave saved up money.<sup>87</sup>

Many scholars assume that the *apophora* came from slaves who were “living apart” from their masters, running factories or workshops outside the master’s home on the master’s behalf.<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> Acton, *Poiesis: Manufacturing in Classical Athens* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 285.

<sup>85</sup> Kamen (2013), 29.

<sup>86</sup> Kamen (2016), 416-417.

<sup>87</sup> See Andoc. 1.38., Men. *Eptir.* 378-380,

<sup>88</sup> Kazakévich argues quite convincingly that these slaves were not part of the *χωρίς οἰκοῦντες* category to which many scholars erroneously assign them: see Kazakévich (1960). For an explanation as to why scholarship has been mistaken for so long regarding this label and another investigation into the identities of the *χωρίς οἰκοῦντες*, see Lewis, “Khoris Oikountes and the Obligations of Freedmen in Late Classical and Early Hellenistic Athens,” *Incidenza dell’ antico* 12 (2014): 91-113.

There were indeed slaves who conducted businesses in a semiautonomous manner at a distance from their masters,<sup>89</sup> and there were a number of advantages for the slave owner who granted this kind of independence to a slave. By having slaves work in (as well as, often, manage)<sup>90</sup> these satellite businesses, the slave owner essentially made a low-risk, low-maintenance investment that yielded steady profits. The slave owners could leave much of the business management to the slaves and simply reap the benefits of his or her slaves' industry. Though with a fixed *apophora* the slave could consequently lose money when the business suffered, he or she also stood to make a great deal of money when it succeeded. "The risk and the profit of the business belonged to the foreman," Acton observes.<sup>91</sup> The slaves worried about the daily operation of the business, and they provided the owner a constant stream of money.

However, these slaves working outside their master's households cannot account entirely for the large quantity of slaves in the Delphic epigraphy. For one thing, the majority of the slaves in the inscriptions are female.<sup>92</sup> Though there are examples of women working in or even running separate businesses and workshops,<sup>93</sup> the overall relegation of women in Greece to the household usually set the female slaves over domestic services. Therefore, if the slave owner were to set up satellite businesses, he or she would probably not send out the female slaves to run them. Furthermore, seeing as there are hundreds of slaves whose manumissions are recorded in the inscriptions, this would be an astounding number of privately owned slaves to work outside the home. Hopkins additionally deduces from the Delphic manumission data that the masters generally did not own large numbers of slaves,<sup>94</sup> and so they would probably not have invested

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<sup>89</sup> Kamen (2013), 24.

<sup>90</sup> Acton, 286: "A slave workforce managed by slaves or recently freed men was the normal system for dedicated workshops."

<sup>91</sup> Acton, 286.

<sup>92</sup> 61%; Hopkins, 140.

<sup>93</sup> Brock, "The Labor of Women in Classical Athens," *The Classical Quarterly* 44 (1994): 342.

<sup>94</sup> Hopkins, 169.

their limited slave labor into enterprises not directly linked with the running of their household. It seems more likely, therefore, that a large proportion of the slaves in the manumission inscriptions worked within the owner's *oikos*, and that "privileged" slave status was not limited to those who worked outside the owner's supervision.

How did slaves earn money for manumission—as those who ran separate businesses could do—from the *oikos*? Certain archaeological investigations suggest that some households in ancient Greece had workshops incorporated into them, even manufacturing on a large scale. Cahill comes to this conclusion in his discussion of the site of Olynthus and the wealth of archaeological evidence on Greek households that it contains.<sup>95</sup> From his examination of this excavated city and its homes, Cahill makes the following determinations: first, that household industry—by which he means "the production or processing of goods for sale or consumption outside the household" rather than production geared just toward the needs of the household itself<sup>96</sup>—was not at all uncommon. Second, that the industry was not "geographically marginal": the houses that engaged in this kind of production were centrally located within the city and well dispersed throughout it. Lastly, household industry was not even marginal within the house itself, but rather it was "closely integrated with other household activities" and located in the heart of the *oikos*, off the courtyard and adjoining rooms, and sometimes opening out onto the street (and so giving the appearance of a shop). After noting that the homeowners could easily have sequestered the workshops from the rest of the household activity, Cahill concludes, "the degree of integration of domestic industry into the rest of the household is striking."<sup>97</sup> Ault comes to the same conclusions, saying that the Greek household was oriented "towards market exchange" and

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<sup>95</sup> Cahill, "Household Industry in Greece and Anatolia," in *Ancient Greek Houses and Households: Chronological, Regional, and Social Diversity*, eds. Bradley A. Ault and Lisa C. Nevett (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005) 54-55.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

<sup>97</sup> Cahill, 59-60.

“not merely subsistence, but surplus production.”<sup>98</sup> Included among the archaeologically attested types of work within the household are large-scale weaving, stonemasonry, sculpting, cobbling, metalwork, and baking.<sup>99</sup>

Cahill and Ault both regard this evidence as at odds with the general disdain toward banausic, technical work conveyed in the ancient sources,<sup>100</sup> signaling a divide between ideology and reality—Greeks may have looked down on craftsmanship and commerce in principle, but they still engaged in them and reaped their rewards. The presence and centrality of such production within Greek households does suggest that the condemnation of artisan activities was probably stronger in speech than in practice, and perhaps was an attitude primarily belonging to the elite. However, a passage from Xenophon’s *Memorabilia* may reconcile this seeming inconsistency: when Aristarchus laments to Socrates that he cannot afford to feed all the people in his house now that a number of female relatives have moved in, Socrates asks why another man, Ceramon, is able to feed the same number of mouths while also making a profit. Aristarchus responds, “The explanation, of course, is this: my dependents are gentlefolk, his are slaves.” When Socrates suggests he put the free members of his household to work, Aristarchus continues to insist that although his female relatives know how to do tasks like weaving and baking, such jobs are unsuitable for free women.<sup>101</sup> As with many of the arguments presented by Socrates’ interlocutors, Aristarchus’ reasoning represents a generally held assumption, in this case that household industry, like the production of textiles and food, is the job of slaves, and only in times of exceptional need did the free participate in it (even this latter condition is a

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<sup>98</sup> Ault, “Oikos and Oikonomia: Greek houses, households and the domestic economy,” *British School at Athens Studies* 15 (2007): 259-263.

<sup>99</sup> Ault, 263; Cahill, 58-59.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid. For ancient sources, see Plat. *Rep.* 493d-e, 522b, 590c; Xen. *Oik.* 4.2-3; Arist. *Pol.* 1278a.

<sup>101</sup> Xen. *Mem.* 2.7, trans. William Heinemann, *Xenophon in Seven Volumes* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1923).

concession Socrates has to force from Aristarchus). Here, then, is a likely source of the manumission payment for those slaves who lived within the owner's home. Whether in a household workshop of larger scale or simply through a surplus of goods that were part of the ordinary production of the *οἶκος*, both male and female skilled slaves could have the opportunity to manufacture goods for sale and generate income.<sup>102</sup> The *apophora* system, and the potential for monetary gain that it offered slaves, was thus not restricted to those who worked outside the home.

A slave “privileged” by Kamen’s definition could therefore still live within the slave owner’s domicile, and probably did more often than not. The skilled slave in the home would not have the greater degree of freedom and autonomy that slaves further away enjoyed, but there were many other aspects of his or her position that contributed to a relatively privileged status. For one thing, skilled slaves making products for the household could stand to make money by creating a surplus of their product for outside sale, especially if their skill was unique and refined enough that their goods and, consequently, the slaves themselves became special (though, admittedly, this could raise the manumission price proportionally to the slave’s perceived value—some slaves explicitly regarded as “skilled” in the inscriptions had to pay as much as eleven or fifteen *mnæ*).<sup>103</sup> An agricultural slave’s production of surplus product probably did not so directly contribute to profits that the slave would derive wages from them, and there was perhaps also less room for distinction in agricultural labor. Furthermore, the centrality of workshops and other places of production within the home, and their integration with the other household activities (which Cahill so thoroughly emphasized), would make it more possible for slaves to interact with their owners’ families and forge familiar, and even close, relationships

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<sup>102</sup> For women’s ability to generate income and their methods of doing so, see Brock (1994).

<sup>103</sup> SGDI 2177 and FD 3.1.565, respectively.

with them. Though the nearly always-present payment by the slave for manumission suggests that affection between slave and master was not usually sufficient to result in the slave's liberation, fondness for the slave could certainly have led the master to lower the manumission price, not require a *paramone* term, impose lighter contractual obligations, or even just be open to the slave purchasing his or her freedom. In light of these advantages, it is not surprising that not one of the occupations specified in the manumission inscriptions refers to agricultural work, and it would probably not be erroneous to assume that the larger proportion of the slaves in the Delphic manumission epigraphy were skilled, and not agrarian, workers.

Still, such benefits for the skilled slaves were a result of, and secondary to, the benefits that such slave-driven household industry offered the slave owners. The profitable advantages of production within the home were similar to those of the distant slave-run workshops, except in the former case the slave owners could maintain supervision and tighter control over the slave workers. Furthermore, by incentivizing the slaves to increase their productive output with the promise of a piece of the sale earnings and, consequently, manumission, the slave owners were “exploiting their domestic activities for profit,” as Brock puts it.<sup>104</sup> Production of textiles, food, and other staples was necessary to the functioning and self-sufficiency of the *οἶκος*, and so people (usually slaves) would be engaged in the creation of these household goods anyway. The *apophora* system could enable the slave owners to effectively extend their normal productive domestic activity into the commercial sphere, to actually—as Socrates mentions Ceramon doing in Xenophon's *Memorabilia*—make a profit while performing the ordinary maintenance of his or her *οἶκος*. At once the needs of the slave owner's family and dependents were being provided for and the slave owner was generating income.

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<sup>104</sup> Brock, 340.

Presumably a sizable percentage of the money that the slave owner allowed the skilled slave to keep ended up in the slave owner's own pocket when the slave handed over his or her savings for manumission. So, however positive an outlook one might take on the masters bestowing onto their slaves higher degrees of autonomy and the means toward attaining freedom—this “privileged” (a term which must always be considered relative to the situations of other Greek slaves) status—they probably granted such privileges for self-serving purposes. In addition to fostering good will and trust between slave and master (and therefore ensuring the cooperation of the slave, to a certain degree), the slave owner also was able to guarantee revenue. He or she could profit twice, once on a daily basis from the slave's income generating labor, and then again upon the slave's manumission. Manumission in some sense was the element driving this boosted exploitation forward. It provided the incentive for the slaves' participation, while also supplying a way for the system to replenish itself with younger slaves and so to continue as an almost self-sustaining organism.

### From Property to Personhood

Another of the most characteristic elements of Delphic manumission is the recorded purchase of slaves by the god Apollo, typically *κατὰ τοὺς νόμους τᾶς πόλιος* (“in accordance with the laws of the city”). The coexistence of legal procedure and religion is nothing extraordinary in ancient Greece, where there was no distinct separation between “church” and “state”<sup>105</sup>: for example, oaths to the gods could be used in legally binding agreements, and state assemblies

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<sup>105</sup> See Parker, “What are Sacred Laws?” in *The Law and Courts in Ancient Greece*, eds. Edward M. Harris and Lene Rubinstein (London: Gerald Duckworth & Co, 2004) 57-71 and Connor, W. R., “‘Sacred’ and ‘Secular’: Ἱερὰ καὶ ὄσια and the Classical Athenian Concept of the State,” *Ancient Society* 19 (1988): 161-88.

regularly passed decrees regarding acts of impiety and temple operation.<sup>106</sup> In these Delphic inscriptions, however, the god is not invoked simply as a guarantor or witness of a legal procedure—Apollo plays an active role in the slave’s manumission. This practice is typically referred to as “sacral manumission,” whereby one or more divinities are involved in the liberation of a slave (as opposed to the absence of gods in “secular manumission”). Delphi presents the largest body of evidence for sacral manumission, and the act of fictive sale to a god may have even originated there.<sup>107</sup> But what was the purpose of framing manumission in this way? Why is the god Apollo present at all in these inscriptions, and how did selling a slave to the god translate into making that slave “free”?

In an effort to make sense of sacral fictive sale, some scholars have sought its origins in actual practice, trying to establish a historical basis from which it evolved. They have invoked temple slavery, the act of seeking asylum in temples, and genuine consecration of humans to gods as possible ancestors of sacral manumission.<sup>108</sup> However, none of these ideas have gained widespread acceptance.<sup>109</sup> Taking a different approach, Patterson has rightfully observed that “when the authority of the state was strong (as in Athens, Corinth, and Thebes) there was no need for, and no surviving evidence of, sacral manumission.”<sup>110</sup> In other words, the presence of the god could have served some legitimizing role in the manumission, providing a divine sanction to the transaction (the *real* transaction between slave and owner) in places where a state sanction was not as possible or authoritative. Yet this does not satisfactorily explain the role of

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<sup>106</sup> Robert Parker, “Law and Religion” in *The Cambridge Companion to Ancient Greek Law* eds. Michael Gagarin and David Cohen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005) 61-81.

<sup>107</sup> Kamen, (2014): 285.

<sup>108</sup> One of the more prominent of these efforts, which incorporates many of the arguments and theories geared toward a historical (and more literal) basis for sacral manumission, is Sokolowski, “The Real Meaning of Sacral Manumission,” *The Harvard Theological Review* 47 (1954): 173-181.

<sup>109</sup> For responses to these theories, see Patterson, 237-238; Westermann, “The Freedmen and the Slaves of God,” *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 92 (1948): 56-57; Zelnick-Abramovitz, 97-99.

<sup>110</sup> Patterson, 238.

the god as an actual party in the transaction—simply an invocation of Apollo as a witness could have achieved similar ends.

Instead of in historical or practical origins, the answer may lie in the ideological leap that the manumission of slaves demanded of Greek citizens. Freeing a slave necessarily involved the conferral of personhood onto that which had previously been regarded as property. The designation of the slaves as *σώματα* (“bodies”) in the Delphic manumission inscriptions is itself indicative of the degree to which the Greeks objectified their slaves. There was a long tradition of free Greeks defining themselves in opposition to slaves, especially because of the association they maintained between “barbarism” and slavery (as many slaves were of foreign extraction). As a result, much of the “othering” that the Greeks employed in respect to foreign peoples, whether through the reasoning of environmental determinism or criticism of foreign political systems, applied to slaves in Greece as well.<sup>111</sup> Weighted with all these negative ethnic stereotypes in addition to the disdainful qualities of servitude itself, the slave was the ideological antithesis to the free Greek citizen. It is therefore not surprising that slavery often served as the substance of *ad hominem* attacks in Athenian courts. One especially aggressive example is the invective Apollodoros employs in his speeches against his stepfather, a freedman named Phormion. Apollodoros calls Phormion a slave (*δοῦλος*) no fewer than five times,<sup>112</sup> says that he is “base and unjust, and has been from the beginning, since [he left] the Anakeion”<sup>113</sup>—where often slave sales took place—and entreats the jurors:

If only each of you might consider what domestic slave he left at home and imagine that you have suffered from him the same things that we have suffered from this man [i.e. Phormion]. Do not consider that each of them is Syros or Manes or something else, while

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<sup>111</sup> Wrenhaven, 48-52.

<sup>112</sup> Dem. 45.75, 76, 83, 84, 85. Observed by Kamen, “Servile Invective in Classical Athens,” *Scripta Classica Israelia* 28 (2009): 49.

<sup>113</sup> Dem. 45.80, trans. Kamen (2009), 49.

this man is Phormion. The matter is the same: they are slaves, and he was a slave; you are masters, and I was a master.<sup>114</sup>

Besides the obvious negative connotations that his references to servitude are meant to evoke, Apollodoros is also appealing to an “us versus them” mentality toward slaves that is likely already well established among the citizen jurors—his expectation of this is evident in the sheer number of mentions he gives to Phormion’s former life as a *δοῦλος*. However, Apollodoros’ insults toward his stepfather also illustrate that this is not simply a distinction in status; after all, Phormion is technically free now, and so he is in fact “something else” from Syros or Manes. Apollodoros’ comments are not meant to literally challenge whether Phormion is legally free. Rather, he means for them to paint Phormion’s character negatively, more specifically, as slave-like. Slavery is not simply a socioeconomic or legal position, but a quality inherent in one’s very being. This is likely a general assumption upon which Apollodoros and many other orators<sup>115</sup> relied when constructing their slave-referencing attacks in court. The servile invective, as well as its purpose and intended effect on the jurors, says a great deal about the common attitude of the Greek citizens toward the slaves they owned.

There were many negative qualities that the Greeks attributed to the slave’s inherent nature, and which were typically diametrically opposed to their own. Slaves in comedy and oratory often appear as prone to such vices as drunkenness, laziness, intemperance, dishonesty, and stupidity, and as otherwise generally untrustworthy.<sup>116</sup> There was also, noted previously, the scorn of the elite, most often articulated by philosophers like Aristotle, Plato, and Xenophon, toward craftsmanship (an occupation of many slaves) and the mental and physical weakness it

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<sup>114</sup> Dem. 45.86, trans. Kamen (2009), 49.

<sup>115</sup> Such as Demosthenes and Aeschines; see Kamen (2009).

<sup>116</sup> Wrenhaven, 43-89.

produced.<sup>117</sup> “The focus was not so much on whether slavery as an institution was justifiable but on what terms,” Wrenhaven observes.<sup>118</sup> Naturally, the enslavement of another human being was easier to rationalize the larger the distance was between master and slave, especially if the slave embodied particularly negative traits and was essentially dehumanized. Of course, no discussion of the reduction of slaves to nonhuman status is complete without consideration of Aristotle’s notorious “natural slave” theory that he presents in the *Politics*.

It is worthwhile to consider how these manumissions fit within Aristotle’s theory for a few reasons: first, as Finley notes of Aristotle, “he produced not only the first but also the last formal, systematic analysis of the subject [of slavery] in antiquity, as far as we know.”<sup>119</sup> Additionally, Schlaifer says that it is “the most commonly held of all the later theories” on slavery,<sup>120</sup> although truthfully it is difficult to know the mindset and attitudes of the general population in antiquity. Most significantly in respect to the Delphic manumission epigraphy, his theory poses the greatest ideological challenge to the notion that a slave should or can be free.

Aristotle treats slaves as, by their very nature, different from free men. At times he equates them with animals, calling an ox “the poor man’s slave,”<sup>121</sup> affirming hunting to be a necessary skill for use against wild animals and uncooperative slaves,<sup>122</sup> and commenting, “indeed the use made of slaves and of tame animals is not very different.”<sup>123</sup> His reasoning lies in the fundamental differences in the composition of the soul; whereas reason dominates the soul in (free) men, and animals by contrast “obey their instincts” and cannot grasp reason,<sup>124</sup> a slave

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<sup>117</sup> Plat. *Rep.* 493d-e, 522b, 590c; Xen. *Oik.* 4.2-3; Arist. *Pol.* 1278a.

<sup>118</sup> Wrenhaven, 43.

<sup>119</sup> Finley and Shaw, *Ancient Slavery and Modern Ideology* (London: Markus Wiener, 1998): 120.

<sup>120</sup> Robert Schlaifer, “Greek Theories of Slavery from Homer to Aristotle,” in *Slavery in Classical Antiquity*, ed. Moses Finley (Cambridge: Heffer, 1968): 99.

<sup>121</sup> Arist. *Pol.*, trans. Benjamin Jowett (Oxford, Oxford University Press: 1905), 1252b.

<sup>122</sup> Arist. *Pol.* 1256b.

<sup>123</sup> Arist. *Pol.* 1254b.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*

“participates in rational principle enough to apprehend, but not to have, such a principle,” he says.<sup>125</sup> In other words, while slaves have a share in rationality their version of it is somehow deficient, rendering them distinct from those people who are by nature “free”.

This particular constitution that Aristotle ascribes to slaves is what renders them a natural “living tool”, as he describes them.<sup>126</sup> For “it is clear that the rule of the soul over the body, and of the mind and the rational element over the passionate, is natural and expedient; whereas the equality of the two or the rule of the inferior is always hurtful,” he declares<sup>127</sup>—in other words, the person who is born with this deficient form of rationality is at a disadvantage which renders the person a lesser form of what he or she could be. Mastery by those who have full faculties of intellect and rationality (in other words, those “free” by nature) corrects such shortcomings in the soul, putting to use the little capacity that the slave has (too little to allow for a meaningful and independent existence) in his service. “The master need only know how to order that which the slave must know how to execute,” Aristotle says, and this allows the masters to devote their abilities to philosophy or politics while the slaves devote theirs to servile work.<sup>128</sup> Just as the slave makes inanimate tools, like the shuttle or lyre, useful by putting them to action (for these instruments cannot perform their functions on their own),<sup>129</sup> so too the master makes the slave useful by enslaving him or her and harnessing the slave’s capabilities—to the master’s benefit. The slave-master relationship therefore, by Aristotle’s logic, allows both parties the chance to realize their potential.

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<sup>125</sup> Ibid.

<sup>126</sup> “ἐμψυχον ὄργανον” Arist. *NE* 1161b.

<sup>127</sup> Arist. *Pol.* 1254b.

<sup>128</sup> Arist. *Pol.* 1255b.

<sup>129</sup> Arist. *Pol.* 1253b.

Aristotle in this way consistently strains to paint slavery as something “expedient and right”<sup>130</sup> by virtue of the inherent predisposition to enslavement possessed by what here appears as the “natural slave.” In furthering this aim, he tries to demonstrate that the master-slave relationship is something that is mutually beneficial. It is through this reasoning of his that manumission can perhaps fit into the natural slave theory. One analogy Aristotle employs in his discussion is that of the whole and the part—the slave being the part, the master the whole.<sup>131</sup> Just as a part functions in the service of the whole, the slave functions in the service of the master: “for example, if the whole body be destroyed, there will be no foot or hand, except in an equivocal sense, as we might speak of a stone hand; for when destroyed the hand will be no better than that.”<sup>132</sup> While this statement reiterates the uselessness of a slave without slavery, like a hand without a body, it also emphasizes the “common interest” that Aristotle repeatedly mentions of the slave and the master.<sup>133</sup> Though the whole takes precedence over the mere part, nonetheless they are bound to the same cause. As Aristotle points out, this symbiotic relationship places a degree of responsibility on the master to ensure the quality of the slave’s work: “that rule is better which is exercised over better subjects,”<sup>134</sup> he notes, but later he warns, “The abuse of this authority is injurious to both; for the interests of part and whole... are the same.”<sup>135</sup> He then observes that the dynamic between slave and master can be one of friendly collaboration in pursuit of the same aim, but that when the relationship “rests merely on law and force the reverse is true.”<sup>136</sup> To a certain extent, Aristotle advocates a “carrot” method of motivation, acknowledging that willful cooperation of the slave yields better results than does pure “stick”

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<sup>130</sup> Arist. *Pol.* 1255a.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid.

<sup>132</sup> Arist. *Pol.* 1253a.

<sup>133</sup> Arist. *Pol.* 1252a., 1255b.

<sup>134</sup> Arist. *Pol.* 1254a.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid.

motivation comprised primarily of punishment and coercion. In other words, the slave will be a better slave if he or she is not just working *because* he or she is legally a slave, and so subject to violent compulsion. Rather, the work will improve if the slave derives some benefit from it. By this kind of logic, manumission could certainly serve as such a positive incentive for the slave to be obedient and pleasing to the master—and in fact, Aristotle almost says so himself. Later in the *Politics*, he remarks passingly, “Why it is advantageous that all slaves should have their freedom set before them as a reward, we will say later.”<sup>137</sup> Later never comes, but the reasoning probably follows similar lines as that present in the first book of his same work.

For the two-thirds of the Delphic slave inscriptions which grant immediate freedom upon payment to the manumitted slaves, manumission can perhaps be reconciled (though admittedly tenuously) with Aristotle’s theory of natural slavery simply through Aristotle’s allusion to positive reinforcement for slave labor and his own suggestion of an offer of freedom to slaves. Manumission with *paramone*, however, can be understood through the first book of the *Politics* in another way. The master-slave relationship is only one element of household management that Aristotle discusses. The others are the relationship between husband and wife (predicated on the natural urge to produce offspring, “that the race may continue”<sup>138</sup>) and, subsequently, between father and children. The free man in the *Politics* rules over all three subjects—the slave, the wife, and the children.<sup>139</sup> The natural superiority of a free man over a slave, however, differs from that over the wife and the child, for “the slave has no deliberative faculty at all; the woman has, but it is without authority, and the child has, but it is immature.”<sup>140</sup> Aristotle therefore emphasizes that each of these subjects in the household is inferior to the free man in a distinctive way, the

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<sup>137</sup> Arist. *Pol.* 1330a.

<sup>138</sup> Arist. *Pol.* 1252a.

<sup>139</sup> Arist. *Pol.* 1260a.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid.

differences in their respective capacities and in the man's rule over them not being in degree, but in kind.<sup>141</sup>

There is one more element, however, which Aristotle says some consider to be equally a part of household management, and that is wealth acquisition. After consideration, Aristotle concludes that one kind of wealth acquisition is in fact a natural part of household management, but that the other kind (that of exchange and commerce) is a separate art. The former is grounded in one's own property: "Property," he says, "seems to be given by nature herself to all, both when they are first born and when they are grown up." He continues, "Of the art of acquisition then there is one kind which by nature is a part of the management of a household, in so far as the art of household management must either find ready to hand, or itself provide, such things necessary to life, and useful for the community or state, as can be stored."<sup>142</sup> Accumulating such wealth as one's own property yields (such as meat or materials from livestock or produce from farming) is indeed, in Aristotle's opinion, a natural part of managing a household, for nature itself provides such products for the man and his household. He also makes it clear throughout the first book of the *Politics* that slaves, as men's possessions, are counted among men's property.<sup>143</sup>

Aristotle treats all of these components of managing a household separately—being the master to a slave, being the husband to a wife, being the father to a child, and acquiring wealth for the household's upkeep and wellbeing. However, the manumission inscriptions in Delphi present a circumstance in which all of them are combined. In agreements, discussed previously, whereby the female manumitted slave agrees to bear enslaved children for the manumittor or the manumittor's heirs, the slave master is co-opting—for his or her own profit—the procreative

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<sup>141</sup> Arist. *Pol.* 1259b.

<sup>142</sup> Arist. *Pol.* 1256b.

<sup>143</sup> Arist. *Pol.* 1253b.

relationship usually confined between husband and wife, and incorporating it into the slave-master relationship. Following the reasoning of Aristotle's theory of natural slavery, manumission therefore enables the master to extend the use of the female slave by tapping into her reproductive potential, and in doing so is simply engaging in the art of acquiring wealth through the natural yields of his own property. That the freed female slave is by nature slave-like, and so more fit for slavery than for freedom according to Aristotle's theory, is besides the point; through this kind of *paramone* arrangement, the slave actually becomes more useful through her capacities to the master in being freed than in continued enslavement. This point extends as well to any older slave whose manumission money goes toward the purchase of a younger and therefore more productive slave. As Hopkins also observes, "It was a paradox of classical slavery that a master maximized his profit from a valuable slave by selling him freedom."<sup>144</sup>

Manumission can therefore conceivably be reconciled with the natural slave theory Aristotle presents, however only to a limited extent. Aristotle's presentation of these ideas hardly holds up to careful scrutiny, with Garnsey even calling it "a battered shipwreck of a theory."<sup>145</sup> Aristotle confuses cause and effect with regard to slave characteristics and behavior, with the result of dizzying circular logic, and he himself admits certain realities during his discussion (particularly that a difference exists between slavery "by law", through enslavement following military defeat, and slavery "by nature"<sup>146</sup>). In truth, Aristotle's theory, more than anything else, is an envisioned ideal and justification for slavery, rather than an earnest investigation into the true nature of the slave system. Presumably, knowing that populations defeated in war often served as the sources of their slaves, this constructed dichotomy served also as some reassurance

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<sup>144</sup> Hopkins, 147.

<sup>145</sup> Garnsey, 107.

<sup>146</sup> Arist. *Pol.* 1255a.

to the slave owning population that the masters would remain masters and were themselves impervious to enslavement.

In light of this, what Garlan calls “a ‘rhetoric of otherness’” in Greek communities, which “as a general rule turns the slave into the reverse of a free man—that is, a subversive incarnation of incompleteness and disorder,”<sup>147</sup> there is plenty of reason to believe that many Greeks would have had difficulty in grappling with the ability of a slave to achieve freedom and, thereby, the very personhood which by principle slaves were supposed to lack. Through literature, art, philosophy, oratory, and, one would expect, general discourse, over centuries the freeborn Greeks had strictly drawn the firm line between “slave” and “free”—what meaning did it hold if someone could simply cross that line?

Boundary crossing was clearly a source of anxiety for the Greeks. Their collective unease with categorical confusion is manifest in their cultural tales, in which hybrid creatures are often disruptive forces. A conclusion that appears repeatedly in scholarship on monstrous beings in Greek mythology is that a large part of the essential “monstrosity” of these fantastical characters is their violation of limits and structure. Strauss Clay discusses the role of hybridity in such tales:

By definition, the monstrous is the anomalous, that which does not fit into usual classifications or transgresses normal limits, and hence may be considered dangerous... Generally speaking, Greek monsters are hybrid creatures that unite normally disparate elements, for example, the human and the bestial... Occasionally also, as we shall see, the monsters incorporate contradictory elements that violate fundamental categories, for instance, mortal/immortal, young/old, and male/female.<sup>148</sup>

Meanwhile, the manumitted slave embodied the contradictory elements of free/slave. In his seven theses on monster theory, Cohen makes observations similar to Strauss Clay’s:

This refusal to participate in the classificatory “order of things” is true of monsters generally: they are disturbing hybrids whose externally incoherent bodies resist attempts

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<sup>147</sup> Garlan, *Slavery in Ancient Greece* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), 19.

<sup>148</sup> Strauss Clay, *Hesiod’s Cosmos* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003) 151-152.

to include them in any systematic structuration. And so the monster is dangerous, a form suspended between forms that threatens to smash distinctions.<sup>149</sup>

The destructive power of these monsters lies primarily in the fact that, by being able to defy categorization and leap boundaries, they reveal “that difference is arbitrary and potentially free-floating, mutable rather than essential.”<sup>150</sup> Lack of categorization means lack of order, and lack of order means chaos. It is not difficult to see how these fears and anxieties embodied by mythological monsters could be the same ones underlying the more immediate danger of status confusion that manumission posed to the constructed slave-free dichotomy. If a slave is able to transcend his or her objectified status and join the ranks of the free population (albeit not with all the legal and political rights of a citizen, although there are some manumitted slaves in the Delphic epigraphy who received citizenship and so posed further theoretical difficulties)<sup>151</sup> then status is not fixed at all, but fluid—and in that case, the whole ideological system is challenged. The divide between slave and master becomes blurrier, and the master’s position of dominance becomes less secure.

This messiness of status that manumission presents is perhaps what Aristotle was trying to tidy up through his theory of “natural slavery” in the *Politics*. Indeed, at multiple points in his discussion he clearly indicates that he is responding to arguments that are contrary to his own, in particular those that point out that circumstance—namely, warfare—is what enslaves many freeborn people, who would therefore not be naturally suited to slavery.<sup>152</sup> Of course, as mentioned previously, in the end his explanation is unconvincing, circuitous and contradictory as

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<sup>149</sup> Cohen, “Monster Theory (Seven Theses),” in *Monster Theory: Reading Culture* ed. Jeffrey Jerome Cohen (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996) 6.

<sup>150</sup> Cohen, 12.

<sup>151</sup> SGDI 2133, 1844

<sup>152</sup> Arist. *Pol.* 1255a.

it is. Despite Aristotle's efforts to reinforce the binary, the ideological tension is clearly still present.

There is something also to be said for the agency the slave undertakes in his or her manumission in the Delphic manumission epigraphy, as well as in similar systems of sacral fictive sale. In opening up the possibility for the slave to work and save up money to purchase his freedom, the master to a degree provided the slave the ability to achieve upward mobility. If the act of crossing boundaries was a source of concern within the Greek "ideological fiction"<sup>153</sup> surrounding slavery, the slave taking a deliberate and active role in this transition would certainly be all the more upsetting to the system. Yet, as has been seen, the benefits of manumission through payment by the slave, and especially through a *paramone* arrangement, were high and probably enticing to the master. There were plenty of reasons why, even in the face of these categorical dilemmas, a slave owner would want to make manumission possible for his or her slaves.

So then how ideologically was it possible for a *σώμα* to become *ἐλευθέρῃ καὶ ἀνέφραπτος*?<sup>154</sup> The role of the god in the manumission may here have an explanation. Just as the *deus ex machina* comes in to resolve swiftly the problems in Greek drama that seem unresolvable, the god in manumission could perhaps have served a similar purpose. Like monsters, deities do not adhere to rules, boundaries, or categorizations. Just as a monster can disrupt the order, a god can restore it. If sacral manumission were simply a maneuver that involved a third party to act on behalf of the slave—for the slave had no legal capacity—this

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<sup>153</sup> Kamen (2009), 55.

<sup>154</sup> It should be noted that that Greek communities were not actively contemplating and trying to resolve these concepts and conflicts—there is little evidence for any ongoing ancient debate about the morality or rationality of slavery. Rather, these considerations are concerning mental processes that operate below consciousness. When a community such as the Greeks grapples with its collective anxieties by displacing them onto a monster or embodying them in servile bodies, this same community will probably employ a similar mental operation to reconcile the paradox of property attaining personhood that it faced.

could be accomplished by the intervention of another free person, as occasionally it was in Athens (the case of Neaira is one such example).<sup>155</sup> Similarly, if the god's presence was meant primarily to provide divine sanction to the transaction, the god could have been invoked in the agreement rather than included as an active party in the transaction. It is possible that either or both of these purposes accounts for the god's role in sacral manumission; in fact, it seems likely that the god was meant to serve multiple ends in manumissions. The involvement of the god in the slave's sale, however, does shift the procedure into the realm of the divine, and suggests that some Greeks treated manumission as something separate from the ordinary dealings of their human world.

### Conclusion

The manumission inscriptions in the sanctuary of Apollo at Delphi, both in their high number and in their largely formulaic components, testify to the development of at least one standardized manumission procedure in Greece. However, this development should not serve as an indication of progress in Greek society, despite the prospect of social mobility that it seems to offer. Manumission was not, as it may appear, a departure from the Greek institution of slavery, but rather an extension of it. The act of manumitting a slave could hardly have been born primarily from generosity or fondness on the part of the slave owner; the conditions of too many of the Delphic manumissions are too severe to grant this. This epigraphic collection presents the many advantages, monetary profit and additional slave bodies among them, which slave owners could enjoy by liberating a slave through the Delphic fictive sale—especially if it included a *paramone* clause. In attaining his or her freedom through this process, a slave actually became implicated in the exploitative slave system by supplying money that was presumably intended

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<sup>155</sup> Kamen (2014), 292.

for the purchase of another slave and, for some unfortunate women, by becoming participants in the negotiation of human lives as transferrable property. The involvement of a god in these manumissions, however, suggests that there still remained an ideological barrier to the change in the slaves' status, but one that was worth overcoming to accrue the benefits. Therefore, a *σῶμα* could become a person, but only on a case-by-case basis and with divine intervention.

Manumission, at least in Delphi, could certainly benefit the individual slave, but the practice overall enabled the institution of slavery in Greece to thrive.

It is worth noting, however, that this paper does not consider and discuss the historical context of this Delphic epigraphy. In the time period during which these sacral manumission inscriptions first appear both in Delphi and elsewhere, regions all over Greece were experiencing social and economic disorder; Alexander Fuks observes roughly seventy cases of “social-economic conflict and social-economic revolution” between the end of the fourth century and the middle of the second century BCE, and central Greece was one region undergoing such unrest.<sup>156</sup> Further investigation into how these manumission inscriptions fit within the events of this turbulent period, and why the practice of sacral fictive sale arose in the last decades before Rome took over, would surely shed more light on the slave sales to Apollo and on Greek manumission.

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<sup>156</sup> Fuks, “Patterns and Types of Social-Economic Revolution in Greece from the Fourth to the Second Century B.C.,” *Ancient Society* 5 (1974): 59.

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