

Extended Notes

AUTHOR'S NOTE

p.3 n.a “The archives of history” The historical archive for early Christianity was designed by freeborn elites. Our history is figuratively written by victors from an enslaving class of people who only strategically acknowledge the humanity of enslaved people. When Roman elites paid attention to their unfree workers, it was to discuss how best to control them, to crush their spirits, and to force them into submission. They only recognized the will and agency of so-called ‘bad slaves,’ those who resisted, rebelled, disobeyed, or sought freedom. ‘Good slaves’ are invisible to us; their work is obscured by passive verbs and a predatory logic that made their contributions a credit only to their enslavers. See David Brion Davis, who writes: “the slave has no legitimate, independent being, no place in the cosmos except as an instrument of her or his master’s will,” in *Inhuman Bondage: The Rise and Fall of Slavery in the New World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 31–32. The subsequent erasure of certain voices means that we must adjust our expectations. So, David Kazanjian, “Freedom’s Surprise: Two Paths Through Slavery’s Archives,” *History of the Present: A Journal of Critical History* 6.2 (2016): 133-145.

p.3 n.1 Saidiya V. Hartman, “Venus in Two Acts,” *Small Axe: A Caribbean Journal of Criticism* 12.2 (2008): 1–14; Hartman, *Lose Your Mother: A Journey Along the Atlantic Slave Route* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2008), 16; Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery, and Self-Making in Nineteenth-Century America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997); and Marisa J. Fuentes, *Dispossessed Lives: Enslaved Women, Violence, and the Archive* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016). Hartman’s method was employed in the context of the archives of transatlantic slavery and the erasure of the ship-ledger. Fuentes emphasizes that the history of enslavement reproduces the discourses of slaveholders and, thus, reinscribes the erasure of enslaved workers. Fuentes’s project disrupts the historical archives by rewriting her sources from the perspectives of enslaved and freed women. On agency: There is a thoughtful debate among scholars of Atlantic slavery about social death and agency. The important and influential work of Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982) looms large here.

My use of Hartman’s mode of critical fabulation will be most clearly apparent in the imaginative narrations that open each chapter, but I find myself inspired by her work and methodologies in my reinterpretations of Biblical stories, characters, phrases, and manuscripts. On Hartman’s influence on public scholarship and life, see <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2020/10/26/how-saidiya-hartman-retells-the-history-of-black-life>.

Similar calls to imagination have been sounded by feminist theorists, queer biblical scholars, and disability critics, who note that our historical record reproduces a vision of women and sexuality that is ultimately patriarchal and ableist. We might compare, also, Robert Orsi’s statement that “constraints on the scholar’s imagination become, by means of his or her scholarship, constraints on the imaginations of others, specifically those whose lives the scholar aims to represent and

understand,” in Robert Orsi, *History and Presence* (Cambridge: Belknap/Harvard University Press, 2016), 64. See also Katherine A. Shaner, *Enslaved Leadership in Early Christianity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), xi-xiii: “How...do we incorporate the pervasive presence of enslaved persons in ancient life when our ancient materials often render them invisible apart from their masters’ perspective?”

p.4 n.2 Imagination is not only a necessity for historical work; it is equally important when engaging with one’s contemporaries. In the early twentieth century, sociologist Amy Tanner and a friend took jobs as waitresses in the café connected to a military apartment house. She found herself working long, aching hours for an employer who was oblivious to the burden she forced upon her staff. Later, when Tanner published her findings, she wrote, “This mistress, then, sinned chiefly in her inability to imagine.” Even up close, Tanner reveals, powerful people in asymmetrical relationships fail to imagine the lives of others well. Her point is that imagination is the foundation of empathy and human connection. If all history writing is an exercise in measured imagination, and if imagination is grounded in human experience, then the goal of telling the story of Christianity necessarily shifts. The questions are now: with whom do we choose to imagine and live? Do we challenge ourselves to move beyond the stubborn limits of our own experiences and closely held assumptions? See Amy E. Tanner, “Glimpses at the Mind of a Waitress,” *American Journal of Sociology* 13.1 (1907): 48–55 [54].

So, too, Deborah Kamen and Sarah Levin-Richardson direct us to the “ethical obligation” of using imagination to tell the stories of the marginalized. See their “Epigraphy and Critical Fabulation: Imagining Narratives of Greco-Roman Sexual Slavery,” in *Dynamic Epigraphy: New Approaches to Inscriptions*, ed. Eleri H. Cousins (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2022), 201–221 [217].

This is one place where we should, with Chin, attempt to admit history’s “weird” qualities: “The historical project of making people from past worlds like us is an empathetic project, and it does useful work in many contexts, such as when we argue for the continued relevance of ancient history to the contemporary world. I would like to suggest, though, that the empathetic project of history, especially premodern history, is better served by a kind of imaginative stubbornness, a determination to remember that people living in past worlds were not always very much like us, but that we should pay attention to them anyway. And this much harder project of empathy is what I think focusing on weirdness allows us to undertake,” in C. M. Chin, “Marvelous Things Heard: On Finding Historical Radiance,” *Massachusetts Review* 58.3 (2017): 478–91 [480]. It is because of Chin’s arguments that I documented the ancient sources for any projections of emotions in my text.

The idea of consciously choosing to imagine with people draws upon an idea inherent to Latin American Liberation Theology, namely, that we actively read and live with marginalized peoples. I am grateful to Luis Menéndez-Antuña for inspiring this line of thought. See his “Whiteness and the Dismissal of Emancipatory Hermeneutics in Biblical Studies: A Decolonial Genealogy,” in *Multiracial Biblical Criticism*, ed. Wongi Park (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature Press, forthcoming). Compare here also Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection*, 14: “I also recognize the political utility and ethical necessity of historical fiction.”

p.4 n.2a “quite rightly” I say quite rightly because I am not only an affluent white Englishwoman, but I can also be fairly oblivious. It was not until I was a teenager that I realized that others thought that my black (step)mother, one of the people dearest to me in the world, was my nanny.

p.4 n.2b “Sociologists” In utilizing the work of sociologists of labor, I do not mean to suggest that bad working conditions are the same as enslavement. They are not.

p.5 n.3 "Spectral listening" This language comes from Avery F. Gordon, *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), 23. I am mindful of Roxane Gay's comment that it is not writing across identity lines but rather writing across identity lines badly and inaccurately that is the problem. See The Argument, "[Who Can Write About What? A Conversation with Roxane Gay and Jay Caspian Kang](#)," *The New York Times*, 15 June, 2022.

In adapting work from other periods, I am partly inspired by Ulrike Roth's work on the *vilica* (the "wife" of the enslaved overseer of Roman agricultural slaveholding), which utilizes anthropological models of female economic exploitation in other pre-industrial societies. See Ulrike Roth, *Thinking Tools: Agricultural Slavery between Evidence and Models*. Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies, Supplement No. 92. (London: Institute of Classical Studies, 2007), 9-12.

p.5 n.4 "abstractions can be useful" See Frederick Cooper, *Colonialism in Question: Theory, Knowledge, History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 17. But, as Cooper notes, abstractions do not shed light on the social or political experience of enslavement. Niall McKeown has warned that "we must be careful not to 'rescue' the voice of the ancient slave by making it a distorted version of our own," in *The Invention of Ancient Slavery?* (London: Duckworth, 2007), 163. See also Angela Parker's concern: "How can scholars and activists prevent Western epistemic racial frameworks from colonizing intersectionality as their own?," in Angela N. Parker, "'And the Word became...gossip?' Unhinging the Samaritan Woman in the Age of #MeToo," *Review & Expositor* 117.2 (2020): 259-271 [262].

p.5 n.4a "multifaceted, complex human beings whose interests and experiences varied widely" We might say, using the language of Crenshaw, that they led intersectional lives. See Kimberlé Crenshaw, "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics," *University of Chicago Legal Forum* 1, Article 8 (1989): 139-67.

p.6 n.5 In addition to being influenced by Hartman's work, I am convinced by Vincent Brown and Walter Johnson that we should more carefully theorize questions of agency, resistance, and humanity. Social death was a compelling metaphysical threat in the lives of enslaved people, but agency is an aspect of existence that should be assumed. See Walter Johnson, "On Agency," *Journal of Social History* 37.1 (2003): 113-124; Vincent Brown, "Social Death and Political Life in the Study of Slavery," *American Historical Review* 114 (2009): 1231-49 [1246-1248].

p.6 n.6 P. Gabrielle Foreman, et al., "Writing about Slavery/Teaching About Slavery: This Might Help," Community-sourced document, Accessed November 20, 2020. <https://naacpculpeper.org/resources/writing-about-slavery-this-might-help/>.

p.7 n.7 On presentism in its various forms, see Laurent Loison, "Forms of presentism in the history of science: Rethinking the project of historical epistemology," *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science* 60 (2016): 29-37. I am grateful to historian of science Daryn Lehoux for leading me to these terms.

I have seen firsthand how a failure to name even the clearest forms of violence can harm. In 2021, I wrote a piece for the Washington Post entitled "Five Myths About Catholics." One of the myths I identified was the problematic and erroneous assumption that homosexuality and, to a lesser extent, celibacy are responsible for the sex abuse in the Catholic Church. One reader of the piece, whose letter was printed in the newspaper, felt that in jettisoning this myth, I had been insensitive

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to those who had experienced this violence. I was mortified. I took it as read that pedophilia is a horrendous crime. It is a mistake I do not want to repeat.

p.7 n.7a “My work is neither the beginning of the conversation nor the period at the end of the sentence.” For the metaphor of ellipsis, I am grateful to Sarah Bond.

INTRODUCTION

p.9 n.1 "Roman Society" I do not mean to suggest either that those in the Roman provinces were not powerful and wealthy or that Paul could have expected to mingle with the uppermost echelons of society. On wealth in the provinces, see John Weisweiler, "Capital Accumulation, Supply Networks and the Composition of the Roman Senate, 14-235 CE," *P&P* 253.1 (2021): 3-44.

p.10 n.1a "fishing for good will" This is a literal translation of the Latin *captatio benevolentiae*, an element typical of ancient letter writing that was usually included at the beginning of a letter. The sender would praise and flatter the recipients, thus putting them in a good mood.

p.11 n.2 The phrase "brothers and sisters," which in Greek just reads "brothers," is used as a shorthand for the community in Rome, in Rom. [1:13](#); [7:1](#); [8:12](#); [10:1](#); [11:25](#); [12:1](#). The social connections are mentioned in [Rom. 16](#).

p.11 n.2a "I, Tertius..." While some have portrayed Paul as generously allowing Tertius to include this greeting, it is possible that Paul was unaware of this insertion in the letter.

p.12 n.3 On Tertius: Heikki Solin, *Die stadtrömischen Sklavennamen: Ein Namenbuch I-III. Forschungen zur antiken Sklaverei, Beiheft 2* (Stuttgart: Steiner, 1996), 1.152-3. Tertius is a Latin name, and we might infer from this that Tertius was a *verna*, or "home-born" enslaved man, on which, see more below. The identification of names is notoriously tricky. A seal ring found in the luxury villa at Oplontis, for example, was owned by the elite Lucius Crassius Tertius. Hans Petersen argues that Tertius was used as a *praenomen* (personal name) in Celtic circles in the imperial period. There are, thus, a number of possibilities for his social status. See Hans Petersen, "The numeral praenomina of the Romans," *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 93 (1962): 347-354.

p.13 n.4 On the baptism of enslaved workers, see Jennifer A. Glancy, *Slavery in Early Christianity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 47. The same was true of enslaved workers in the homes of Jewish enslavers. On this, see the directive in [Gen. 17:12-13](#), and Catherine Hezser, *Jewish Slavery in Antiquity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 30-31.

p.14 n.4a "enslaved workers (and often the fact of their enslaved status) have been obscured" Tertius, for example, is remembered today as a bishop and a martyr. He is not celebrated as a coworker on the most influential and theologically weighty texts in the New Testament. We might want to refer to this process as being "forgotten" or rendered "silent," but as scholars like Tera Hunter and Olufémi O. Táíwò have emphasized, this kind of language deemphasizes the ways in which the "forgetting" and "silencing" were deliberate and violent.

p.15 n.5 "Neither slave nor free": [Gal 3:28](#). See Angela N. Parker, "One Womanist's View of Racial Reconciliation in Galatians," *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 34.2 (2018): 23-40. The task here is to excavate both culpability (that is, of Christ followers who willfully participated in slavocracy) and responsibility (what it would mean to admit this past and deal responsibly and reparatively in the future). I am grateful to Laura Nasrallah for this analysis.

p.15 n.5a "This is not to cast blame, of course..." Blame might rightly strike some readers as a strange concept to introduce into this discussion. How could enslaved writers be held accountable for how others utilized their writings? The suggestion that enslaved workers might be blamed was raised to me even as I first started thinking about this project. I introduce it here both to head it off at the pass and for two other reasons: First, the task of assigning or claiming authorship is about credit and power. Second, assigning credit is a powerful act. While some might want to avoid the economic and reductive framework of credit/blame, I do not think that we are there yet. Even philosophical conversations about the agency of objects and computers turn quickly from questions of agency to ones of blame. See, for example, Ronald N. Giere, "The Role of Agency in Distributed Cognitive Systems," *Philosophy of Science* 73.5 (2006): 710-19 [716].

p.15 n.5b "spawned and nurtured later theories of enslavement that were" For the connections between colonial slavery and ancient slavery, see Dorothy E. Roberts, *Fatal Invention: How Science, Politics, and Big Business Re-Crete Race in the Twenty-First Century* (New York: The New Press, 2011), 51. Recent work on this question has noted that ideologies about racism, race and otherness do not have to manifest identically across history in order to serve as useful analytical tools for thinking about enslavement. On this point, see Javal Coleman, "Call It What It Is: Racism and Ancient Enslavement," Society for Classical Studies Blog, Dec 31, 2021, and Samuel O. Flores, "Teaching Ancient Slavery in the South," Society for Classical Studies Blog, November 23, 2018.

For the relationship between enslavement in the Roman period and enslavement in the contemporary world see Jennifer A. Glancy, *Slavery as Moral Problem: In the Early Church and Today* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2011).

p.15 n.5c "attempted to dehumanize enslaved people" Just because rhetoric and language attempted to dehumanize people does not mean that it ever succeeded. On unrealized dehumanization, see Stephanie Smallwood, *Saltwater Slavery: A Middle Passage from Africa to American Diaspora* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007).

p.16 n.6 Jamaica Kincaid, "In History," *Callaloo* 20.1 (1997): 1-7. To use the words of Esau McCaulley, in a plenary address to the British New Testament Society, the language of slavery "sits in the soul" of black and brown readers of the Bible. See Esau McCaulley, "Finding Onesimus: Who has the Right to Speak to an Enslaved Person's Hope?," British New Testament Conference, August 18, 2022.

CHAPTER ONE

p.21 n.1 For the graffito, see Heikki Solin and Marja Itkonen-Kaila, eds., *Graffiti del Palatino I: Paedagogium* (Helsinki: Acta Instituti Romani Finlandiae, 1966), 210-212, 246, and discussion in Peter Keegan, "Reading the 'Pages' of the *Domus Caesaris: Pueri Delicati*, Slave Education, and the Graffiti of the Palatine Paedagogium," in *Roman Slavery and Roman Material Culture*, ed. Michelle George (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013), 69-98; Felicity Harley-McGowan, "The Alexamenos Graffito," in *The Reception of Jesus in the First Three Centuries*, ed. Chris Keith et al. (London: T&T Clark, 2019), 105-140; Tyler Schwaller, "Picturing the Enslaved Christ: Philippians 2:6-8, Alexamenos, and a Mockery of Masculinity," *JECH* 11.1 (2021): 38-65. For the earliest discussion and initial identification of the graffito, see Raffaele Garrucci, *Un crocifisso graffito da mano pagana nella casa dei Cesari sul Palatino* (Rome: Copi tipi della civiltà, 1856), who provides a line drawing. Tertullian refers to non-Christians describing Jesus as asinine: Tertullian, *Ad Nat.* 1.14.1-4. On mistreatment of donkeys: Apuleius, *The Golden Ass*. On the schoolroom, see Maria Antonietta Tomei, *The Palatine* (Milan: Electa, 1998), 58. Whatever function we designate to the space of the schoolroom, it is tied to enslavement. As Keegan puts it, "All views, though, require the structure to be occupied by a significant proportion of enslaved and manumitted persons," in "Reading," 72.

On crucifixion in general, see John Granger Cook, "Crucifixion as Spectacle in Roman Campania," *NovT* 54.1 (2012): 68-100. On crucifixion and enslavement in particular, see Martin Hengel, *The Cross of the Son of God, Containing the Son of God, Crucifixion, the Atonement* (London: SCM Press, 1986), 143-55, and Wenhua Shi, *Paul's Message of the Cross as Body Language* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 28-31.

p.22 n.1a "The images of crucifixion that decorated the bowls..." For a discussion of representations of the crucifixion on household objects, see Robin M. Jensen, *The Cross: History, Art, and Controversy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2017), 74-96, and Harley-McGowan, "The Alexamenos Graffito." For other roughly contemporaneous examples, see a late second/early third-century [graffito from Puteoli](#) first published by Margherita Guarducci, "Iscrizioni greche e latine in una taberna a Pozzuoli," in *Acta of the Fifth International Congress of Greek and Latin Epigraphy*, Cambridge, 1967 (Oxford: Blackwell, 1971), 219-23, and a similarly dated [Christian bloodstone amulet](#) in the British Museum (inv. 1986,0501.1) discussed by Harley-McGowan.

p.23 n.2 For the use of the name "Alexander" among Jews in Rome, see David Noy, *Jewish Inscriptions of Western Europe. Volume 2: The City of Rome* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 514. On the Roman naming practices for enslaved "home-born" children, see Christer Bruun, "Greek or Latin? The Owner's Choice of Names for *vernae* in Rome," in M. George, *Roman Slavery and Roman Material Culture*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press (2013), 19-42. For an example of a captive from Jerusalem becoming an overseer in the imperial household, see [Titus Flavius Acraba](#), an imperial freedman possibly enslaved and later manumitted by Titus ([CIL 6.8962](#)). The tunic, especially the one worn by the crucified figure, has been a sticking point in the conversation. It may simply refer to a utilitarian garment worn by men, women, enslaved and formerly enslaved. See discussion in Harley-McGowan, "The Alexamenos Graffito," 137. For those enslaved in 70 C.E., see Josephus, [J.W. 6.9.3](#). On the price of enslaved workers after the Bar Kokhba revolt, see Catherine Hezser, *Jewish Slavery in Antiquity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 253.

p.23 n.3 "[first century manual cautioned readers to be on their guard](#)" In Ibn Butlan, *General Treatise*, likely adapted from Rufus of Ephesus's *On the Purchase of Slaves*, in Simon Swain, *Economy, Family and Society from Rome to Islam: A Critical Edition, English Translation, and Study of Bryson's Management of the Estate* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 271.

p.23 n.3a "[visually distinctive red wavy locks](#)" The physiognomist Polemo associated red hair with northern tribes and described it as being correlated with animalistic character, immodesty, and envy. See Robert Hoyland, "A New Edition and Translation of the Leiden Polemon," in *Seeing the Face, Seeing the Soul: Polemon's Physiognomy from Classical Antiquity to Medieval Islam*, ed. Simon Swain (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 329-463.

p.24 n.4 On the development of the category of race, see Henry Louis Gates, Jr. and Andrew S. Curran, eds., *Who's Black and Why? A Hidden Chapter from the Eighteenth-Century Invention of Race* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2022). Walter Scheidel estimates that at least 100 million people were trafficked throughout the Roman empire: "During the millennium from the emergence of the Roman empire to its eventual decline, at least 100 million people—and possibly many more—were seized or sold as slaves throughout the Mediterranean and its hinterlands. In terms of duration and sheer numbers, this process dwarfs both the transatlantic slave trade of European powers and the Arabic slave trade in the Indian Ocean ... The modern observer must wonder how to do justice to the colossal scale of human suffering behind these bland observations," in Walter Scheidel, "The Roman Slave Supply," in *The Cambridge World History of Slavery, Vol. 1: The Ancient Mediterranean World*, ed. Keith Bradley and Paul Cartledge (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 287-310 [309].

p.24 n.5 Pseudo-Hippocrates, *Airs, Waters, Places* 23; On [Greekness](#) and *paideia*: Isocrates, [Panegyricus 50](#). "[Toga-Wearing Race](#)": Suetonius, [Augustus 40.5](#). On Jews worshipping donkeys: Josephus, [Against Apion 2.79](#). On Jews "born to be slaves": Cicero, [On the Consular Provinces 5.10](#). On antisemitism among ancient Greeks and Romans, see Zvi Yavetz, "Latin Authors on Jews and Dacians," *Historia* 47.1 (1998): 77-107.

p.25 n.6 Emma Dench, "Race," in *A Cultural History of Western Empires in Antiquity*, ed. Carlos Noreña (London: Bloomsbury, 2019), 201-222. On the *fiscus Iudaicus* that taxed circumcised men, see Martin Goodman, "Nerva, the Fiscus Judaicus and Jewish Identity," *JRS* 79 (1989): 40-44, and Goodman, "The Meaning of 'Fisci Iudaici Calumnia Sublata' on the Coinage of Nerva," in *Studies in Josephus and the Varieties of Ancient Judaism*, ed. S. J. D. Cohen and J. Schwartz (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 81-89; M. Heemstra, *The Fiscus Judaicus and the Parting of the Ways* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), and Heemstra, "The Interpretation and Wider Context of Nerva's Fiscus Judaicus Sestertius," in *Judaea and Rome in Coins, 65 BCE-135 CE*, ed. D. M. Jacobson and N. Kokkinos (London: Spink & Son, Ltd., 2012), 187-201. The concept of diaspora is a complicated one. I am here influenced by Arthur Francis Carter, Jr., "Diaspora Poetics and (re)Constructions of Differentness: Conceiving Acts 6.1-8.40 as Diaspora." (PhD diss., Vanderbilt University, 2016).

p.25 n.7 Benjamin Isaac, *The Invention of Racism in Classical Antiquity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006); Rebecca Futo Kennedy and Molly Jones-Lewis, eds., *The Routledge Handbook of Identity and the Environment in the Classical and Medieval Worlds* (New York: Routledge, 2020).

p.25 n.8 On hostages: Theophrastus, *Economics* 1.5.6 (Note that this text circulates under Aristotle's name as *Economics* [1.1344b](#)), compare Varro, *Rust.* [1.17.5](#). On the demand for "home-born" enslaved children, see Harriet Flower, "The Most Expensive Slave in Rome: Quintus Lutatius Daphnis," *Classical Philology* 117.1 (2022): 99-119. On the natal alienation of enslaved people, see Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death*, 13. There is inscriptional evidence that enslaved children did know who their parents were, and that enslaved people would use their meagre resources to erect tombstones for their children when they died. See Ulrike Roth, "Anything But Enlightened: Child Slavery in the Roman World," *The Historian* 146 (Summer 2020): 30-33. Roth notes that "of the roughly 1,000 Latin tombstones of enslaved children (up to 15 years of age) that survive from across the Roman Empire, one third were commissioned by the children's parents, much as for free (that is: freeborn) children," 33. Some scholars have argued that enslaved parents may have been responsible for naming their biological offspring. The evidence on this is limited; see E. Hermann-Otto, *Ex ancilla natus* (Stuttgart: Steiner, 1994).

p.26 n.9 On the sources of enslaved people, see Walter Scheidel, "Quantifying the Sources of Slaves in the Early Roman Empire," *JRS* 87 (1997): 156-69; Scheidel, "The Roman Slave Supply."

p.27 n.10 On Melior, see T. E. Kinsey, "Melior the Calculator," *Hermes* 107.4 (1979): 501, and Hella Eckardt, *Writing and Power in the Roman World: Literacies and Material Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 130. The Melior inscription hints at sexual exploitation as well. Several scholars have doubted the accuracy of the inscription and have questioned whether a thirteen-year-old truly wrote mathematical treatises. See discussion in Melissa Kutner, "Numeracy," in *Writing, Enslavement, and Power in the Roman Mediterranean, 100 BCE-300 CE*, ed. Coogan, Howley, and Moss (Oxford: Oxford University Press, forthcoming).

Note that we do not have the inscription itself. It is known from a 1646 letter sent to Cardinal Francesco Barberini by Lucas Holstentius. See Agnès Béranger, "Les 'Calculatores,'" *XI congresso internazionale di epigrafia greca e latina: Roma, 18-24 settembre 1997* (Rome: Edizioni Quasar, 1999), 1.639.47 [645].

p.27 n.11 Donkey and mill inscription: The donkey and mill inscription is from Room 8, north wall of the *paedagogium*. The inscription reads: "work, little ass, as I have worked, and you will profit by it" (*labora, aselle, quomodo ego laboravi, /et proderit tibi*). See Solin and Itkonen-Kaila, *Graffiti*, 1.289. A brilliant reading of this graffito as being subversive can be found in Sandra R. Joshel and Lauren Hackworth Petersen, eds., *The Material Life of Roman Slaves* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 144.

p.28 n.12 Enslaved uniforms: Seneca, [On Mercy 1.24.1](#). Ointment: This is alluded to in Petronius, [Sat. 75.8](#). On the *peculium* and the complicated question of whether enslaved workers kept it once they were manumitted, see Ulrike Roth, "Peculium, Freedom, Citizenship: Golden Triangle or Vicious Circle? An Act in Two Parts," *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies, Supplement No. 109: By the Sweat of Your Brow: Roman Slavery in Its Socio-Economic Setting* (2010): 91-120. Roth challenges the assessment of earlier generations that the opportunities for manumission in the Roman system set it apart from other 'slave systems.' Instead, she emphasizes both the exploitation of freedmen and the iterative process.

p.29 n.13 On the jobs performed by enslaved children, see Christian Laes, "Child Slaves at Work in Roman Antiquity," *Ancient Society* 38 (2008): 235-83; Roth, "Anything But Enlightened." Material evidence for the work of enslaved children suggests a variety of roles. For waiting at table, see *Dig.* 33.7.12.32. As bathhouse attendants, see Pliny, *NH* 33.40. As sexual objects, see Suetonius, *Nero* 28; Seneca, *Ep.* 95.24; Tertullian, *Apol.* 13. On folding clothes, see 14-year-old Iucunda (*vestiplica*) in Italy (Abruzzi), *CIL* IX, 3318. For children as 'public slaves,' see 15-year-old Secundula (*serva publica*) crossing gender lines to perform this task, *AE* 1972, 737; Secunda *CIL* XI, 2656. For literate enslaved children, see 15-year-old Rufus (*tabularius*) in what is now modern Lyon, *CIL* XIII, 1823. For potential sex workers, see 12-year-old Septentrio in Narbonne, *CIL* XII, 188. For weavers, see Nike *PSI* 241.

p.29 n.14 "Crippled slave": Hieronymus of Rhodes, fr. 19. Hadrian: Galen, *De propriorum animi cuiuslibet affectuum dignotione et curatione* 5.17.15. Graffiti might have served as an outlet for enslaved frustration; see Keegan, "Reading," 88.

p.30 n.15 Libanius, *Ep.* 131. On the physical demands of bookwork, see Carolyn Marvin, "The Body of the Text: Literacy's Corporeal Constant," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 80.2 (1994): 129-149 [132].

p.30 n.16 Pliny, [Ep. 8.1](#). From the reign of Claudius onwards, enslavers killing sick enslaved workers became illegal. This was not a humanitarian intervention but a practical one.

p.31 n.17 Galen, *Hipp. Epid.* I. 102.29. The language of emotional labor was coined by sociologist Arlie Russell Hochschild in *The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983). Compare here the fears of the unjust steward in Luke 16:1-13. Galen first learned about the effects of stress firsthand while working as a physician to gladiators in Pergamum. There are numerous stories of enslaved secretaries and notaries receiving harsh punishments—ranging from amputation to crucifixion—for doing their jobs incorrectly.

p.31 n.17a "might also have been targeted by spurned wives..." For the punishment of innocent enslaved workers, see the struggle between St. Monica and her mother-in-law in Augustine, [Confessions, 9.9.20](#) (here "enslaved" is translated as "servant"). See discussion in Jennifer A. Glancy, "The Mistress-Slave Dialectic: Paradoxes of Slavery in Three LXX Narratives," *JSOT* 72 (1996): 71-87. On the complicity of women in enslaving violence, see Stephanie E. Jones-Rogers, *They Were Her Property: White Women as Slave Owners in the American South* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2019).

p.31 n.17b "Gladiators encapsulated the problem perfectly." Some gladiators apparently volunteered, but most were enslaved, prisoners of war, or criminals. An inscription from Pompeii (*CIL* 4.2508) reveals that, at one show, nineteen enslaved and six free men participated in the games, for example. Broadly speaking, all gladiators were socio-legally marginalized. On the social status of gladiators in various regions, see Luciana Jacobelli, *Gladiators at Pompeii* (Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2003); V. M. Hope, "Fighting for Identity: The Funerary Commemoration of Italian Gladiators," in *The Epigraphic Landscape of Roman Italy*, ed. A. Cooley (London: Institute of Classical Studies, 2000), 93-113.

p.31 n.18 Fear: John Chrysostom, *Homily on Acts* 12.4 (PG 60.104); *Homily on 1 Timothy* 16.2 (PG 62.590); Chris de Wet, *Preaching Bondage: John Chrysostom and the Discourse of Slavery in Early*

Christianity (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2015), 170-219; Blake Leyerle, *The Narrative Shape of Emotion in the Preaching of John Chrysostom* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2020), 112-49.

p.32 n.19 On “carceral mechanisms,” see Sandra R. Joshel, “Geographies of Slave Containment and Movement,” in *Roman Slavery and Roman Material Culture*, ed. Michele George, 99-128. She here draws upon the work of Camp, *Closer to Freedom*. On rebellion, see Keith Bradley, *Slavery and Rebellion in the Roman World, 140 B.C.-70 B.C.* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989). On the problematic status of rebellion in conversations about enslavement, see Noel Lenski, “Ancient Slavery and Modern Ideology,” in Lenski and Cameron, *What is a Slave Society?*, 106-48. On the punishment of lower-status people in the Roman empire, see Julia Hillner, *Prison, Punishment, and Penance in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 51.

p.32 n.20 “From a young age elite children were taught to use crucifixion as a threat...” Colloquium Harleianum 18a in Eleanor Dickey, *Learning Latin the Ancient Way. Latin Textbooks from the Ancient World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 55. “Enrolled in different curricula” See the work of Martin Bloomer, who writes, “The boy was learning to command: he was rehearsing the role of slave owner, father, advocate, all the roles of the *paterfamilias*,” in W. Martin Bloomer, “Schooling in Persona: Imagination and Subordination in Roman Education,” *Classical Antiquity* 16.1 (1997): 57-78.

The same process of schooling the enslaving class in domination—physical and sexual—was reflected in the architecture of Louisiana plantations. Here the construction of *garçonnières*, purpose-built structures where young men could learn mastery whilst out of sight of freeborn white women, created a “portal to becoming a full enslaver-patriarch.” See Andrea Livesey, “Learning Slavery at Home: *Garçonnières* and Adolescent Enslavers in Rural Louisiana 1806-1861,” *Journal of Global Slavery* 6.1 (2021): 31-54 [33].

p.33 n.21 Pliny, [NH 35.58.201](#); Tacitus, [Ann. 12.53.4](#), and discussion in Rose MacLean, *Freed Slaves and Roman Imperial Culture: Social Integration and the Transformation of Values* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 107-11.

p.33 n.21a “as a duty (*officium*) to provide sexual services” Seneca the Elder refers to a saying of Haterius: “Losing one’s virtue is a crime in the freeborn, a necessity in a slave, a duty for the freedman” (*Declamations* 4 pr.10, trans. Winterbottom).

p.34 n.22 Scent of enslavement: Valerius Maximus [6.2.8](#). Re-enslavement: Suetonius, [Claudius 25.1](#); Cassius Dio, [Roman History, 60.13.2](#); Tacitus, [Ann. 13.26-7](#); [Dig. 25.3.6.1](#). The evidence for re-enslavement is complicated but it is clear that many of the enslaving class thought about it. See Henrik Mouritsen, *The Freedman in the Roman World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011); Rose MacLean, *Freed Slaves and Roman Imperial Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

Epaphroditus: Tacitus, [Ann. 15.55](#); Suetonius, [Nero 49](#); [Dom. 14](#). The proximate causes for Epaphroditus’s execution are unclear. This narrative is relayed to us by those who were hostile to Domitian. On the sliding scale of enslavement and freedperson status, see Mouritsen, who writes: “If manumission merely converted slave labour into free labour, it became a part of a different system of rewards—one where manumission did not mark the end of a process but represented a point on

a broad continuum of incentives that covered the entire working life of a slave/freedman. The apparent expectation of continuity raises the question of how this was achieved in practice and puts the focus on the ties which bound the freedman to his patron...The change in status therefore required new incentives and forms of control to enhance performance and ensure loyalty" (*Freedman*, 152). On the continued legal and economic dependence of freedpeople on their former enslavers, see Wolfgang Waldstein, *Operae libertorum. Untersuchungen zur Dienstpflicht freigelassener Sklaven* (Stuttgart: Steiner, 1986), and Pedro López Barja de Quiroga, "La dependencia económica de los libertos en el Alto Imperio Romano," *Géron* 9 (1991): 163-74.

p.34 n.23 Pliny, *Ep.* [7.29](#); [8.6.2](#). Recently, Erik Gunderson has argued that during the reign of Domitian, when literary standards and work were brought under the imperial aegis, elite authors Martial and Statius came to frame their work as derivative of imperial standards and coopted the cultural scripts of servile posture and work. This posture, ultimately, only served their carefully negotiated position as freeborn elites whose *iudicium* (judgment) guaranteed their superiority to imperial freedman 'peers.' It also highlights the ways in which, at the end of the first century and during a period when Jesus followers first wrote the Gospels, the aesthetics of servility and authorship were constantly being negotiated against a political backdrop. See Erik Gunderson, *The Art of Complicity in Martial and Statius: Martial's 'Epigrams,' Statius' 'Silvae,' and Domitianic Rome* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021).

p.35 n.24 Manumission at the age of thirty was a result of the [lex Aelia Sentia](#) of 4 C.E. This applied predominantly to men. Some imperial freedmen may well have been manumitted later in life. In his work assembling the relevant evidence, Nicholas Tran notes that most imperial couriers (*tabellarii*) were freedmen or enslaved people, and they were, on average, freed at about the age of forty. See Nicolas Tran, "Les *tabellarii Caesaris nostri* de Narbonne et les collèges d'esclaves impériaux dans le monde Romain (*CIL*, XII, 4449)," *Cahiers du Centre Gustave Glotz* 26 (2015): 109-125 [117]. Tran notes that many such workers in the guild had been promoted to managerial posts by this stage. Tran does not specify which locations were included in his statement, but had earlier mentioned Rome, Narbonne, Ephesus, Carthage, and Rome.

Women were not usually manumitted until they were in their 40s and their child-bearing years were over. On gender and manumission, see Matthew J. Perry, *Gender, Manumission, and the Roman Freedwoman* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013). "[Expelled to Freedom](#)": Lucian's *The Dependent Scholar* pictures Greek intellectuals under the patronage of Roman elites as captives in their households and describes both the physical hardships of their lives and the way in which worn out intellectuals were cast out of the home penniless once they were past their prime (40-42).

p.35 n.24a "[On a global scale there were many different ambiguous situations of bondage that do not neatly fit into the division of enslaved and free.](#)" We can find examples of grey space in ancient Greek slavery. On freedpersons, see, for example, Mirko Canevaro and David M. Lewis, "Khoris *oikountes* and the Obligations of Freedmen in Late Classical and early Hellenistic Athens," *Incidenza dell'Antico* 12 (2014): 91-121. On the blurriness of manumission and sale/dedication to deities in the Eastern Mediterranean, see Deborah Kamen, "Manumission, Social Rebirth, and Healing Gods in Ancient Greece," in *Slaves and Religions in Graeco-Roman Antiquity and Modern Brazil*, ed. Stephen Hodkinson and Dick Geary (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2012), 174-194; Rachel Zelnick-Abramovitz, *Not Wholly Free: The Concept of Manumission and the Status of Manumitted*

Slaves in the Ancient Greek World (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 69–70; Sara Zanovello, “L’affrancamento mediante *πῶσις ὀνή* nelle iscrizioni di Delfi,” *Rivista di Diritto Ellenico* 4 (2014): 179–219. On the variation from a global perspective, see, for example, the discussions of asymmetrical dependency explored in *Slaves and Slave Agency in the Ottoman Empire*, ed. Stephan Conermann and Gül Sen (Bonn: Bonn University Press, 2020). For important attempts to revisit the models of slavery using a global framework, see *Slaving Zones: Cultural Identities, Ideologies, and Institutions in the Evolution of Global Slavery*, ed. Jeff Flynn-Paul and Damian Pargas (Studies in Global Slavery 4; Leiden: Brill, 2018), and Lenski and Cameron, *What Is a Slave Society?*

p.36 n.25 “Anyone who got into debt...” There is some debate about how often debt-related self-enslavement happened. On this question, see Monika Trümper, *Graeco-Roman Slave Markets: Fact or Fiction?* (Oxford: Oxbow, 2009). On the demographics of slavery in general, see Scheidel, “Quantifying the Sources of Slaves.”

p.36 n.25a “Certainly, a high-status enslaved worker in a wealthy household would have had greater food and housing security than the freeborn poor.” All lower-status people navigated complicated but highly individualized structures of power that marginalized and disenfranchised them. What we can and should say is that every aspect of marginalized identity that made one vulnerable in antiquity was rendered more precarious by enslavement. The marginalization that disability, language barriers, age, poverty, gender, education, sexuality, racial and ethnic difference, and immigrant status conferred upon people was only intensified by enslaved status. We can root around in the intestines of Roman oppression for exceptions to prove our own cleverness, but only after we render as full an account as possible of the violence of ancient structures of power.

p.36 n.25b “If being an influential writer is just a question of volume, then Pliny the Elder, the prolific author of the encyclopedic...” See Aude Doody, *Pliny’s Encyclopedia: The Reception of the Natural History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010). On the harvesting of enslaved people’s knowledge, see Padilla Peralta, “Epistemicide.”

p.37 n.26 Pliny, [Ep. 6.16](#).

p.37 n.26a “one recent estimate suggests that only about ten percent of the population of the Roman empire was able to read and write fluently” See Harry Gamble, *Books and Readers in the Early Church: A History of Early Christian Texts* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 2–41, who draws upon earlier influential studies like that of [William Harris](#). A variety of literacy rates have been proposed and those vary based on whether we are talking about the Roman empire in general, urban centers, Rome, or ancient Judaism. For an overview of the discussion of literacy, see Chris Keith, *Jesus against the Scribal Elite: The Origins of the Conflict*, 2nd rev. ed. (London: T&T Clark, 2020), 20–26.

p.39 n.27 On gender and comportment: Maud W. Gleason, *Making Men: Sophists and Self-Presentation in Ancient Rome* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995). On foreign language and identity: Olivia Elder, “Citizens of the Wor(l)d? Metaphor and the Politics of Roman Language,” *JRS* 112 (2022): 79–104.

On the education of enslaved workers, see Keegan, “Reading.” Speech was not only associated with gender and social status, it also intersected with ethnic otherness and ability. Obscene speech was sometimes associated with mental illness; see Hippocrates, *Epidemics* 3.17.11; 4.15, Marianne

Bjelland Kartzow, *Gossip and Gender: Othering of Speech in the Pastoral Epistles* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2009), 180–82, and Jeremy Hultin, *The Ethics of Obscene Speech in Early Christianity and Its Environment* (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 13–14. Speech impediments were tied to excessive moisture and heat in the body. See Christian Laes, *Disabilities and the Disabled in the Roman World: A Social and Cultural History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 133–35, 144.

We might compare the weightiness of self-presentation to James Baldwin's observation that "To open your mouth in England is (if I may use black English) to 'put your business in the street': You have confessed your parents, your youth, your school, your salary, your self-esteem, and, alas, your future." In "If Black English Isn't a Language, Then Tell Me, What Is?," in *The Price of the Ticket: Collected Nonfiction 1948-1985* (Boston: Beacon, 2021), 693–96 [694].

p.40 n.27a "slave schools" UPZ I.148. For a school from the Ptolemaic period in which enslaved Greeks follow classes on Egyptian medicine, see discussion in R. Rémondon, "Problèmes du bilinguisme dans l'Égypte Lagide," *Chronique d'Égypte* 39 (1964): 126–46, and Cribiore, *Gymnastics*, 25.

p.40 n.28 On the names of Palatine children, see discussion in Keegan, "Reading," 79–80. [Nepos, Att. 13](#). Atticus's footmen are called *pedisequi* (footmen), and, in the imperial family (*familia Caesaris*), may have shared the same status as *nomenclatores* (people who remembered names) and *tabellarii* (messengers). On this, see P. R. C. Weaver, *Familia Caesaris: A Social Study of the Emperor's Freedmen and Slaves* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972). Compare Galen on the need to invest in scribes and book production, in *On Affections and Errors* 48, Kühn 1.32.

p.41 n.29 [P. Oxy IV.724](#). For a full treatment of ancient shorthand, see Hans C. Teitler, *Notarii and Exceptores: An Inquiry into Role and Significance of Shorthand Writers in the Imperial and Ecclesiastical Bureaucracy of the Roman Empire (from the Early Principate to c. 450 A.D.)* (Leiden: Brill, 1985); Candida R. Moss, "The Secretary: Enslaved Workers, Stenography, and the Production of Early Christian Literature," *JTS* 74.1 (2023): 20–56.

p.41 n.29a "Chicken scratch" The image of handwriting as chicken scratch comes from Plautus, *Pseudolus* 11.29–30.

p.42 n.30 On Caesar: John Robert Gregg, "Julius Caesar's Stenographer," *Century Magazine* (May 1921), 80–88. On Bar Kochba shorthand, see *Mur.* 164; Pierre Benoit, Józef T. Milik, and Roland de Vaux, eds., *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert, Vol. 2: Les Grottes de Murabba'at* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1961), 1.275–277 and plates CIII–CV.

p.42 n.31 For Tiro, see Jerome, *Orig.* 1.22. For a freedman of Maecenas, see Dio Cassius, [Hist. 55.7.6](#). For the view that the Romans copied the system of tachygraphy from the Greeks, see H. J. Milne, *Greek Shorthand Manuals* (London: Egypt Exploration Society, 1934), 1. For the opinion that it was developed by enslaved Romans, see H. Boge, "Die Tachygraphie-eine Erfindung römischer Sklaven: Neues zur antiken Schnellschrift und zur Frage der Priorität ihrer Erfindung," in *Alttertumswissenschaft mit Zukunft, dem Wirken Werner Hartkes gewidmet*, ed. H. von Scheel (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1973), 52–68.

On shorthand signs and writers, see H. J. Milne, *Greek Shorthand Manuals* (London: Egypt Exploration Society, 1934), to be read with Sofia Torallas Tovar and Klaas A. Worp, *To the Origins*

of *Greek Stenography* (P. Monts. Roca I). *Orientalia Montserratensia 1* (Barcelona: Publicacions de l'Abadia de Montserrat, 2006).

p.43 n.31a “...there are rarely spaces between words...” There were workarounds to some of these problems (like paragraph breaks and diacritics), which we will discuss in the next section of the book. Even now, we should consider the possibility that enslaved workers were the ones developing these technologies of non-linear access and reference. See Chapter Five.

p.44 n.32 For voluntary associations paying copyists fees and leasing space for documents, see *IEph* 1687 (31 BCE); *IErythrai* 122 (100 BCE); *IPriene* 111 (100 BCE); SEG 32:1149. For archives, see *IKyme* 13.79 (130 BCE); *IPriene* 108.222 (129 BCE); and discussion in Richard Last and Philip A. Harland, *Group Survival in the Ancient Mediterranean: Rethinking Material Conditions in the Landscape of Jews and Christians* (London: T & T Clark, 2020), 89–91.

p.45 n.33 On writing technologies, see Georgios Boudalis, *The Codex and Crafts in Late Antiquity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018); Bruce Holsinger, *On Parchment: Animals, Archives, and the Making of Culture from Herodotus to the Digital Age* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2023); Anna Willi, [Manual of Roman Everyday Writing. Volume 2: Writing Equipment](#) (Nottingham: LatinNow ePubs, 2021).

p.46 n.34 “one houseguest in fourth-century Egypt” [P. Oxy 56.3860](#).

p.46 n.34a “Today, roughly a third of the global population have some form of visual impairment”: <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/blindness-and-visual-impairment>. We should not assume that more people had vision loss in antiquity than in the present. Extended life expectancy today means that the problems associated with blindness and visual impairment are increasing. See Peter Ackland, Serge Resnikoff, and Rupert Bourne, “[World Blindness and Visual Impairment: Despite Many Successes, the Problem is Growing](#),” *Community Eye Health* 30 (100) (2017): 71–73. I am grateful to Nicolette D’Angelo for this observation.

p.46–47 n.34b “Archaeologists who excavated the ancient healing shrines in Greece or Turkey found dismembered clay limbs, heads, and torsos...” For the evidence of the production of anatomical votives, see Jessica Hughes, *Votive Body Parts in Greek and Roman Religion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017). Hughes draws upon van Straten’s tables of body parts from the Athenian inventories, in which there are more than twice as many eye(s) than any other body part. See F. T. van Straten, “Gifts for the Gods,” in *Faith, Hope, and Worship: Aspects of Religious Mentality in the Ancient World*, ed. H. S. Versnel (Leiden: Brill, 1981), 65–151.

p.47 n.35 For a full treatment on the intersection of enslavement, disability, and writing, see Candida R. Moss, “Disability,” in Jeremiah Coogan, Joseph A. Howley, and Candida R. Moss, *Writing, Enslavement, and Power* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, forthcoming); Jane Draycott, *Prosthetics and Assistive Technology in Ancient Greece and Rome* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022), 154–168.

p.47 n.36 “Vision was superior”: Quintilian, *Inst.* 1.12.11. Cicero, [Tusc. Dis. 5.112–113](#). On child *lectores* in Christianity: Cyprian, *Ep.* 38.1.2; Augustine, *Sermon* 352. Some rabbinic authors suggest

that blind scholars were more intellectually qualified than their able-bodied peers; see Julia Watts Belser, "Reading Talmudic Bodies: Disability, Narrative, and the Gaze in Rabbinic Judaism," in *Disability in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam: Sacred Texts, Historical Traditions, and Social Analysis*, ed. Darla Schumm and Michael Stoltzfus (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 5-27; Julia Watts Belser and Lennart Lehmhaus, "Disability in Rabbinic Judaism," in *Disability in Antiquity*, ed. Christian Laes (New York: Routledge, 2017), 434-52.

"Scientific studies have shown" See John Plass, Emmanuel Guzman-Martinez, et al., "Lip Reading without Awareness," *Psychological Science* 25.9 (2014): 1835-37. I am grateful to Meghan Henning for mentioning this to me. On "choreographed hand gestures," see more in Chapter Six.

p.47 n.36a "Mobility impairments, like those caused by arthritis" Osteoarchaeological evidence reveals a high incidence of arthritis among the ancient population. A study of human remains from the northern part of the Kharga Oasis in Egypt, for example, reveals that three quarters of those over the age of thirty suffered from the condition. See Roger Bagnall and Paola Davoli, "Archaeological Work on Hellenistic and Roman Egypt, 2000-2009," *American Journal of Archaeology* 115.1 (2011): 103-57 [139], summarizing the work of Françoise Dunant. A study of arthritis based on human remains at a Roman cemetery near Poundbury, Dorset, concluded that osteoarthritis was present in 66% of skeletons of all age groups; see A. K. Thould and B. K. Thould, "Arthritis in Roman Britain," *British Medical Journal* 287.6409 (Dec. 24-31, 1983): 1909-11.

In Isthmia (ancient Greece), severe arthritis was found in both hands of an elderly man (T14 67-002A) and the thumbs of a woman in her late 40s (NEG 69-007A). See Joseph L. Rife, *Isthmia IX: The Roman and Byzantine Graves and Human Remains* (Princeton, NJ: American School of Classical Studies at Athens, 2012). In the case of the woman, Rife notes that "Arthritic changes to the joints probably developed from the continued use of both thumbs in activities that involved pressing them forcefully against an object and then releasing them independent of the other fingers, such as when clasp something to the palms or driving something downward with the thumb tips," 389. This sounds like a reasonable description of navigating book rolls or, equally, weaving. We should note that arthritis affects women earlier in life. We might assume that the girls with "beautiful handwriting" gifted to Origen by Ambrose would have had to leave bookwork earlier in life. Tony Waldron summarizes his exhaustive survey of the osteoarchaeological evidence by concluding that "osteoarthritis is uncommon under the age of about 40, but the incidence and prevalence increase considerably thereafter," in Tony Waldron, *Palaeopathology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 31.

p.48 n.37 Suetonius, [Galba 21](#); Fronto, *ad Amicos* 2.3.1. In a handbook on rhetoric and education, the Roman rhetorician Quintilian obliquely refers to accommodations for visual impairments by noting that people with vision loss can write more clearly using papyrus rather than wax tablets. This was because of the contrasting color of dark ink against a light background (*Inst.* [10.3.31-33](#)). For Florentius's text, see, for example, Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional de España, [Manuscript 80](#). On medieval copyists, see Catherine Brown, "Scratching the Surface," *Exemplaria* 26.2-3 (2014): 199-214.

p.48 n.38 On the effects of bookwork on a person: Seneca [Ep. 15.6](#), where he warns Lucilius to use scribes and readers and stop "always bending over [his] books and tablets." See also Celsus, *On Medicine* [Pr. 6](#) and [1.2.1](#). I am grateful to Claire Bubb for the references to Celsus.

God's Ghostwriters Extended Notes

“Scientists call this phenomenon skill decay.” The literature on skill decay is vast. See, for example, Laura Gonzalez and Suzan Kardong-Edgren, “Deliberate Practice for Mastery Learning in Nursing,” *Clinical Simulation in Nursing* 13.1 (2017): 10-14; J. M. Childs and W. D. Spears, “Flight-Skill Decay and Recurrent Training,” *Perceptual and Motor Skills* 62.1 (1986): 235-42.

p.49 n.39 Seneca, [Ep. 27](#). Compare the enslaved worker of Habinnas in Petronius, *Sat.* 68-70. Calvisius sets the limits of acceptability for us by outsourcing excessive intellectual work to his enslaved workers. On having enslaved workers memorize philosophy and drama, see Plutarch, *Table Talk* [7.8](#), 711B-C.

CHAPTER TWO

p.50 n.a “dusty journey up from Jerusalem to Damascus in Syria” The story is told several times in Acts [9:1-19](#), [22:6-21](#), and [26:12-18](#). It is unclear if his companions all saw the light and/or heard both sides of the otherworldly conversation. On the date of Acts, see Clare K. Rothschild, *Luke-Acts and the Rhetoric of History: An Investigation of Early Christian Historiography* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), and Shelly Matthews, “Does Dating Luke-Acts in the Second Century Affect the Q Hypothesis?,” in *Gospel Interpretation and the Q-Hypothesis*, ed. Mogens Müller and Heike Omerzu (London: Bloomsbury, 2018), 245–66.

p.51 n.b “And a plausible guess is that they were enslaved attendants” The language of fellowship (*koinonia*) is balanced by their stereotypically servile actions as “eavesdroppers.”

p.51 n.1 On Jews as enslavers, see Catherine Hezser, “Slavery and the Jews,” in Bradley and Cartledge, *The Cambridge World History of Slavery*, Vol. 1, 438-55; Hezser, *Jewish Slavery in Antiquity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); Hezser, *Jewish Literacy in Roman Palestine* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001); Hezser, “The Impact of Household Slaves on the Jewish Family in Roman Palestine,” *Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman Period* 34 (2003): 375-424; Hezser, “‘The Slave of a Scholar is Like a Scholar’: Stories about Rabbis and Their Slaves in the Babylonian Talmud,” in *Creation and Composition: the Contribution of the Bavli Redactors (Stammaim) to the Aggadah*, ed. Jeffrey L. Rubenstein (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), 181–200.

p.52 n.2 Sarah E. Rollens, “Rethinking the Early Christian Mission,” in *The Gospels and Their Receptions: Festschrift Joseph Verheyden*, ed. Henk Jan de Jonge, Mark Grundeken, John Kloppenborg, and Christopher Tuckett (Leuven: Peeters, 2022), 557–578, and Cavan Concannon, “Economic Aspects of Intercity Travel among the Pauline Assemblies,” in *Paul and Economics: A Handbook*, ed. Thomas R. Blanton IV and Raymond Pickett (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2017), 333–60.

p.54 n.3 On associations of Roman citizens, see Sailakshmi Ramgopal, “Mobility,” in *A Cultural History of Western Empires in Antiquity*, ed. Carlos F. Noreña (New York: Bloomsbury, 2018), 131–152. See discussion of early Christians as organized following the model of voluntary associations see John S. Kloppenborg, *Christ's Associations: Connecting and Belonging in the Ancient City* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2019) and discussion below.

p.55 n.3a “here too, in the warm homes of Christ followers we hear their soft footsteps” So, Jennifer Glancy, *Slavery in Early Christianity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 45: “domestic slaves would have tended to [their] needs, from washing [their] feet upon entering the household to preparing food for communal meals.”

p.55 n.4 Ulrike Roth, “Paul and Slavery: Economic Perspectives,” in *Paul and Economics: A Handbook*, ed. Thomas R. Blanton IV and Raymond Pickett (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2017), 155–82.

p.56 n.5 On Ephesus' fishermen: *IEph* 20 Cf. [PSI VIII 901](#); four freedwomen: *AE* 1975.179.

p.56 n.6 [Luke 8:3](#).

p.57 n.7 On Paul and citizenship, see Calvin J. Roetzel, *Paul: The Man and the Myth* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1999), 19–22. Paul's claim to citizenship appears, quite suddenly, in Acts [22:22-29](#), [25:6-12](#). See also Richard A. Horsley, "Paul's Shift in Economic 'Location' in the Locations of the Roman Imperial Economy," in *Paul and Economics*, ed. Blanton and Pickett, 89–124.

p.58 n.8 Paul and work, see Todd D. Still, "Did Paul Loathe Manual Labor? Revisiting the Work of Ronald F. Hock on the Apostle's Tentmaking and Social Class," *JBL* 125.4 (2006): 781–95. On Greco-Roman voluntary associations and early Christianity, see John S. Kloppenborg, *Christ's Associations: Connecting and Belonging in the Ancient City* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2019). The refusal of compensation assimilated Paul and his peers to those philosophers who refused remuneration, allowing them to distinguish themselves from both establishment medics and silver-tongued charlatans. In this way, they both imitated and subverted the more recognizable and profitable forms of Greco-Roman medicine. Yet all the Apostles were willing to accept donations that were ostensibly on behalf of others, and here they teeter on the edge of their self-proclaimed moral high ground. According to Acts, Peter accepted (and seems to have expected) donations, but this money was redistributed to those who needed it. Paul refused money from the Corinthians ([2 Cor 11:8](#)), but only because of the gifts he received from other assemblies. His work among the cash-strapped Thessalonians was sponsored by a series of charitable donations that he received from the Philippians. To Paul, the donations that supported him were not payment—at least certainly not to him, a mere servile emissary of God overseeing the dissemination of God's message. In his mind, if the Philippians accrued "credit" with anyone, then it was with God, Paul's patron and enslaver ([Phil. 4:15-19](#)). On Paul as administrator and overseer figure, see John K. Goodrich, *Paul as an Administrator of God in 1 Corinthians* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), and Goodrich, "Overseers as Stewards and the Qualifications for Leadership in the Pastoral Epistles," *ZNW* 104.1 (2013): 77–97.

p.58 n.9 Emerson B. Powery, "Reading with the Enslaved: Placing Human Bondage at the Center of the Early Christian Story," in *Bitter the Chastening Rod: Africana Biblical Interpretation after Stony the Road We Trod in the Age of BLM, SayHerName, and MeToo*, ed. Mitzi J. Smith, Angela N. Parker, and Ericka S. Dunbar Hill (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2022), 71–90.

p.59 n.9a "If we categorize the apostles as medical specialists" To look at what Jesus and his first followers did through ancient eyes is difficult: much of the evidence comes from later, when devastating wars, profound social shifts, and important intellectual movements changed the cultural and political landscape. We have no alternative, however, than to look through the tissue of these later narratives. Jesus was not the only religious figure who dispatched others to advertise his teachings. The second-century satirist Lucian wrote that a certain Alexander, the founder of the popular (and, in Lucian's view, fraudulent) cult of the serpent Glycon, sent emissaries abroad to advertise the shrine's miraculous success and attract tourists. The messengers of Christ were similar but unmoored; they were mobile repositories of power who were perpetually in motion.

In many ways, Jesus and the Twelve resemble traveling doctors. All kinds of early Christian texts depict them healing the sick, casting out demons, and even raising the dead. These public displays of power and proficiency were a way to publicize one's cause; intellectual debates, miracles, healthcare, and fortune-telling all took place out in the open, in the marketplaces and streets of the cities. Using the term "doctor" to describe the apostles might have offended the sensibilities of the

official civic physicians who worked in Alexandria, but even the most affluent physicians participated in public medical contests that appeared, to many onlookers, a great deal like miracles. Though the label of wonderworker was one that Galen tried to avoid, anyone in the medical profession was vulnerable to that characterization. The work of Jesus and his disciples, thus, lay at the intersection of medicine and marvel, and it also crossed the threshold between public performance and private consultation. Jesus is not only shown healing in public; he was called to bedside consults in the houses of a centurion (Matt. [8:5](#)) and a synagogue leader (Luke [8:41](#)).

For discussion, see Wendt, *At the Temple Gates*, 114–45; Giovanni Battista Bazzana, “Early Christian Missionaries as Physicians: Healing and its Cultural Value in the Greco-Roman Context,” *NovT* 51.3 (2009): 232–51. For early Christian artwork depicting Jesus as a doctor, see Lee M. Jefferson, *Christ the Miracle Worker in Early Christian Art* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2014). For the literary depiction of Jesus and his apostles as wonderworkers, see Robyn Faith Walsh, *The Origins of Early Christian Literature: Contextualizing the New Testament within Greco-Roman Literary Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021), and Walsh, *Popularizing Jesus: The Gospels as Roman Literature*, forthcoming. We might, as some have done, think of ancient healthcare as a two-tier medical system with properly trained doctors catering to the wealthy and lower-status medics administering to the poor. We could go further and talk about the distinctions between medical specialists in major cities and generalists in rural areas, or the differences between doctors and magicians, or between Roman and foreign medicine. Such distinctions have utility, but they also entrench rhetorical and socioeconomic divisions that obscure the public nature of ancient healthcare. Regardless of status, physicians were still dependent on public perception. See Vivian Nutton, *Ancient Medicine* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 92.

In the most affluent and cosmopolitan cities of the empire, Jesus’s delegates would have found themselves competing with other religious and medical experts. We catch whispers of them in biblical stories: some are casting out demons in Jesus’s name, as in Luke [9:49](#) and Acts [19:13](#). Jesus himself was apparently unconcerned about these rivals, but sharper divisions are reflected in later tradition. When Peter landed in Rome, he found himself embroiled in a contest—which he inevitably won—with the magician Simon Magus (as told in the *Acts of Peter*). The narrative of these events comes from a period in the second century when Rome was flooded with divinatory experts and self-described doctors, and, consequently, it is difficult to know if it accurately depicts the religious and medical landscape of the mid-to-late first century. But these images of apostles facing off against the magico-medical celebrities of their day place the work of the apostles in a particular professional niche.

In his own letters, Paul focused on his role as an authoritative interpreter of scripture. In founding his assemblies, he catered primarily to a Gentile audience, albeit one that included Gentiles who admired Jewish religious practices, frequented synagogues, and supported diaspora Jewish assemblies. In these contexts, Paul’s ties to the Jerusalem Temple and his credentials as a Pharisee helped him to position himself as an authority on things like law observance, circumcision, and proper diet. On Paul as a divinatory authority figure, see Jennifer Eyl, *Signs, Wonders, and Gifts: Divination in the Letters of Paul* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019). On Paul in general and the sometimes blurry line between ‘Jews’ and ‘Gentiles,’ see Paula Fredriksen, *Paul: The Pagan’s Apostle* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017).

Later, in the crowded religious marketplace of second-century Rome, many leveraged their specifically Judean identity to present themselves as expert interpreters of the law, astrologers, exorcists, prophets, and dream interpreters. In a late first-century text by Juvenal, we catch sight of a (caricatured) Judean “high priestess” who is an intermediary for heaven and an interpreter of the

laws of Jerusalem. We might be suspicious of these claims, but for a Roman merchant or artisan, stressed by financial or romantic woes and familiar with Jewish practices only through hearsay, a horoscope drawn up by an 'exotic' priestess might have held some appeal. A comparison with Paul might seem inappropriate, but to an outsider, he made some equally potent claims: he professed to have had a vision of the risen Christ (1 Cor. [15:8](#)) and to have been entrusted with the ability to interpret "the oracles of God" and "myster[ies]" (Rom. [3:1-2](#); [11:25](#)). That he could compellingly interweave his interpretation of the Hebrew Bible with a philosophically informed ethical program made his message more authoritative, but not categorically different. See Juvenal, *Sat.* 6.548-52. On Paul: Heidi Wendt, *At the Temple Gates: The Religion of Freelance Experts in the Roman Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016). The vision of the third heaven referred to in 2 Cor. [12](#) may be another example of Paul's visionary experiences. Certainly, some early Christian readers believed that Paul was referring to himself, and many modern interpreters agree. On the reception of this passage, see Vernon K. Robbins, "The Legacy of 2 Corinthians 12:2-4 in the *Apocalypse of Paul*," in *Paul and the Corinthians: Studies on a Community in Conflict*, ed. T. J. Burke and J. K. Elliott (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 327-339, and James Buchanan Wallace, *Snatched into Paradise (2 Cor. 12:1-10): Paul's Heavenly Journey in the Context of Early Christian Experience* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2011).

p.59 n.10 Quinquatrus: Ovid, *Fast.* 3.809-21.

p.59 n.11 Celsus is preserved in Origen, *Cels.* 3.55. Laundering clothes is the image for the salvation of martyrs in Revelation [7:14](#); and Jesus's clothes are bleached better than any launderer could have accomplished at the Transfiguration in Mark [9:3](#); Christians are identified as fullers in Pliny, *Ep.* [10.96](#); Justin Martyr's school is mentioned in *Acts of Justin* A.3. As many scholars have noted, Celsus intends to insult Christianity and its adherents, but this does not mean that his analysis of Christian socioeconomics was wrong. After all, his comments about artisans were intended as a similarly damning indictment of the group.

p.60 n.12 On porters (*saccarii*) in Roman ports, see Nicolas Tran, "La mention épigraphique des métiers artisanaux et commerciaux en Italie centro-méridionale," in *Vocabulaire et expression de l'économie dans le monde antique*, ed. Jean Andraeu and Véronique Chankowski (Bordeaux: Ausonius, 2007), 119-41 [124]. The enslaved workers may have been rented. See Petronius, *Sat.* [117.11](#), and Protagoras in Gellius, *NA* [5.3.1-6](#).

On warehouse managers: *TPSulp.* 46 and 44. Giovanni Becatti, *Scavi di Ostia, Vol. 4, Mosaici e pavimenti marmorei*. 2 vols. (Rome: Libreria dello Stato, 1961), 2:35-37, no. 58, plates 187-88. See also Nicolas Tran, "The Work Statuses of Slaves and Freedmen in the Great Ports of the Roman World (First Century BCE-Second Century CE)," trans. Ethan Rundell, *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales* 68.4 (2013): 999-1025.

On co-ownership by voluntary associations, see Cleon, a tri-lingual worker enslaved to salt-farmers near Cagliari in Sardinia (*CIL* I² 2226), and a legal ruling in *Dig.* 2.4.10.4 that presumes that corporate entities could "own" enslaved people. See also *CIG* 3071, in which a wealthy man bequeathed enslaved people to assist with the dedication of a sanctuary gifted by him to his associates in Pergamum. For co-ownership in Egypt, see *P. Oxy.* [44.3197](#). For co-ownership by Jews, see Hezser, *Jewish Slavery*, 290, who cites A. E. Cowley, *Aramaic Papyri of the Fifth Century B.C.* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1923), no. 28. On early Christians pooling resources, see Acts [4:32](#). See also Ulrike Roth, "Paul, Philemon, and Onesimus," *ZNW* 105.1 (2014): 102-130.

p.60 n.13 Quote on “pauperizing” from Roth, “Paul and Slavery,” 164. There is a fierce debate about the social location of early Christians and their distribution (or lack thereof) across a wide range of social locations. The most well-known contribution is that of sociologist Rodney Stark, *The Rise of Christianity: A Sociologist Reconsiders History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996). New Testament Scholars have been influenced by Steven J. Friesen, “Poverty in Pauline Studies: Beyond the So-called New Consensus,” *JSNT* 26.3 (2004): 323–61. This piece, in turn, was influenced by the work of Justin Meggitt. For a survey of the twists and turns of the scholarly debate, see Timothy A. Brookins, “Economic Profiling of Early Christian Communities,” in Blanton and Pickett, *Paul and Economics*, 57–87.

p.61 n.13a “In 70 C.E., after a bitterly hot summer and an eight-month siege, Jerusalem fell” See Josephus, *Jewish War*. He writes that “almost 100,000” were enslaved and later gives the more precise figure of [97,000](#).

p.62 n.14 “Later Christian writers liked to imagine that their religious forefathers” Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 3.5.3; Epiphanius, *Panarion* 29.7.7-8; Epiphanius, *On Weights and Measures* 15.

p.63 n.15 Pompey (63 BCE). Cassius (52-51 BCE) enslaved thirty thousand Jews at Tarichea (Josephus, [J.W. 1.8.9](#)) and later enslaved four cities (Josephus, [J.W. 1.11.2](#); [Ant. 14.11.2](#)). Gaius (4 BCE) enslaved those who resisted in the Galilee ([J.W. 2.5.1](#)). Claudia Aster: [CIL X 1971](#). According to the Roman historian Tacitus, roughly 4,000 Jews were shipped to Sardinia by Tiberius in 19 C.E. Prior to the siege of Jerusalem, Titus allegedly enslaved 2,130 women and children from Japha in the Galilee ([J.W. 3.7.31](#)). See discussion in Hezser, *Jewish Slavery*, 229; Ephraim E. Urbach, “The Laws Regarding Slavery as a Source for Social History of the Period of the Second Temple, the Mishnah and Talmud,” in *Papers of the Institute of Jewish Studies, University College London*, Vol. 1, ed. J. G. Weiss (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1964), 1–94 [31]; Gideon Fuks, “Where Have All the Freedmen Gone? On an Anomaly in the Jewish Grave-Inscriptions from Rome,” *Journal of Jewish Studies* 36 (1985): 25–32.

Enslaved Judeans make cameos in the writings of the late first- and second-century authors Josephus, Petronius, Suetonius, and Lucian. On Paul as a religious expert akin to those enslaved and trafficked, see Wendt, *At the Temple Gates*.

p.63 n.16 On the titles of the Gospels, see Annette Yoshiko Reed, “EYΑΓΓΕΛΙΟΝ: Orality, Textuality, and the Christian Truth in Irenaeus’ *Adversus Haereses*,” *VC* 56.1 (2002): 11–46. On anonymity and its power, see Tom Geue, *Author Unknown: The Power of Anonymity in Ancient Rome* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2019). For the view that the titles (as opposed to a tradition about authorship) of the Gospels date to the time of their earliest circulation, see Simon J. Gathercole, “The Titles of the Gospels in the Earliest New Testament Manuscripts,” *ZNW* 104 (2013): 33–76, and Gathercole, “The Alleged Anonymity of the Canonical Gospels,” *JTS* 69.2 (2018): 447–76. On elite notions of Roman authorship and the erasure of assistants, see Joseph Howley, “Visible Erasure: Writing Personnel and Equipment in Latin Verse,” forthcoming. On the “unmastered” form of the Gospels, see Robyn Walsh, “IVDEA DICTA: The Gospels as Imperial ‘Captive Literature,’” in *Class Struggle in the New Testament*, ed. Robert Myles (Minneapolis: Lexington/Fortress Academic, 2019), 89–114. Walsh defines imperial Captive Literature as “works that reflect on the places and persons in conflict with and subjugation to the empire.” I would add some ambiguity to this and suggest that the composition of such literature deliberately exploited the

memories and minds of enslaved works and perhaps also represents, in fragmentary form, their interventions.

p.64 n.16a "Graffiti from the back alleys and brothels of Pompeii, places not usually frequented by elites..." On this graffito, see Kristina Milnor, *Graffiti and the Literary Landscape in Roman Pompeii* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

p.64 n.16b "best known in antiquity for its hot springs and the cult of the Syrian goddess Atargatis" The cult of the Syrian goddess Atargatis made Hierapolis a major pilgrimage site. See J. L. Lightfoot, ed. and trans., *Lucian: On the Syrian Goddess* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

p.65 n.17 Papias is cited in Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 3.39.15 (trans. Ehrman, *Apostolic Fathers* LCL). Christian tradition often identifies Mark with a man called John Mark, mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles as an assistant or "helper" to Paul and Barnabas, but there is nothing in the New Testament that describes John Mark (or any other Mark) as an author (though 1 Peter references a Mark to whom Peter dictated the letter. This composition almost certainly exploited a pre-existing tradition that linked Peter and Mark).

p.65 n.18 Throughout the Gospel, we find not just the use of Aramaic words and phrases, but also vestiges of Aramaic. On Mark's knowledge of Aramaic: Mark [5:41](#); [7:11](#), [34](#); [14:36](#); [15:22](#), [34](#). Latinisms in Mark include 4:21 (*modius*); 12:14 (*census*); 12:42 (*quadrans*); 15:15 (*flagellare*); and 15:16 (*praetorium*). Though I do not believe that Mark was influenced by Aramaic sources, it is worth noting Maurice Casey, *Aramaic Sources of Mark's Gospel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

p.66 n.19 For a more detailed exposition of my argument here, see my "Fashioning Mark: Early Christian Discussions about the Scribe and Status of the Second Gospel," *NTS* 67.2 (2021): 181–204. For the papyrological evidence for translators and their social status, see Rachel Mairs, "Hermēneis in the Documentary Record from Hellenistic and Roman Egypt: Interpreters, Translators and Mediators in a Bilingual Society," *Journal of Ancient History* 7.2 (2019): 1–53.

p.67 n.20 Aulus Gellius, NA [1.7.1](#); [13.21](#).16-17; James E. G. Zetzel, "Emendavi ad Tironem: Some Notes on Scholarship in the Second Century A.D.," *HSCP* 77 (1973): 225–43.

p.67-68 n.20a "Whoever wrote the Gospel turned a Galilean message into written Koine Greek, the lingua franca of the eastern Mediterranean." *Koine* was formed through the language contact generated by movement, displacement, trade, and conquest. As such, and as the common dialect of displaced people, it was an appropriate medium for the movement of the Jesus message. It's worth noting that the register of Mark's Greek is also unsophisticated and that this was not always the case with *koine* (compare here Strabo and Plutarch). The rise of *koine* is often associated with Alexander the Great and his sprawling Greek-speaking empire. On the history of the Greek language, see Stephen Colvin, *A Brief History of Ancient Greek* (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2014).

p.69 n.20b "We don't know the charges that had led to Paul's imprisonment..." On chastity in early Christianity, see Virginia Burrus, *Chastity as Autonomy: Women in the Stories of Apocryphal Acts* (Lewiston, NY: Mellen, 1987); Elizabeth A. Castelli, "Virginité and its Meaning for Women's

Sexuality in Early Christianity,” in *A Feminist Companion to Patristic Literature*, ed. Amy-Jill Levine with Maria Mayo Robbins (London: Continuum, 2008), 72–100.

On food sacrificed to idols, see Alex T. Cheung, *Idol Food in Corinth: Jewish Background and Pauline Legacy* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1999); John Fotopoulos, “Arguments Concerning Food Offered to Idols: Corinthian Quotations and Pauline Refutations in a Rhetorical *Partitio* (1 Corinthians 8:1–9),” *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 67.4 (2005): 611–31; David Horrell, “Idol-Food, Idolatry, and Ethics in Paul,” in *Idolatry: False Worship in the Bible, Early Judaism and Christianity*, ed. Stephen C. Barton (London: T&T Clark, 2007), 120–40; Emma Wasserman, “‘An Idol is Nothing in the World’ (1 Cor 8:4): The Metaphysical Contradictions of 1 Corinthians 8:1–11:1 in the Context of Jewish Idolatry Polemics,” in *Portraits of Jesus: Studies in Christology*, ed. Susan E. Myers (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012), 201–27.

p.70 n.20c “If he was lucky, they would hurl only abuse.” On the mocking of prisoners, see Mark [14:65](#); 4 Maccabees [6:1-30](#); Plutarch, *Life of Pompey* [24.7-8](#). Degrading and mocking condemned prisoners was a favorite pastime of Roman authorities, with forms of humiliation ranging from public rape, to forced nudity, to role-playing. Instances of guards heckling inmates are transhistorical. For a modern example, see Harriet Kryzkowski’s testimony narrated in Eyal Press, *Dirty Work: Essential Jobs and the Hidden Toll of Inequality in America* (New York: Farrar, Straus, & Giroux, 2021), 24.

On the archaeology of Roman prisons, see Mark Letteney and Matthew Larsen, *Ancient Mediterranean Incarceration* (Berkeley: University of California Press, forthcoming), who discuss the lunate windows through which food and other objects were passed. In the first century C.E., Columella specified that enslaved laborers who were chained should be kept “in an underground prison, as wholesome as possible, receiving light through a number of narrow windows built so high from the ground that they cannot be reached with the hand.” (*On Agriculture* [1.6.3](#)).

On Paul’s experience of incarceration, see Matthew Larsen, *Early Christians and Incarceration: A Cultural History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, forthcoming).

On prisons in antiquity, see Cécile Bertrand-Dagenbach, Alain Chauvot, Jean-Marie Salamito, and Denise Vaillancourt, *Carcer: prison et privation de liberté dans l’Antiquité classique: actes du colloque de Strasbourg (5 et 6 décembre 1997)* (Paris: De Boccard, 1999); Cécile Bertrand-Dagenbach, Alain Chauvot, Jean-Marie Salamito and Denise Vaillancourt, *Carcer II. Prison et privation de liberté dans l’Empire romain et l’Occident médiéval. Actes du Colloque de Strasbourg, décembre 2000* (Paris: De Boccard, 2004); Valerio Neri, “Chiesa e carcere in età tardoantica,” in *Carcer II. Prison et privation de liberté dans l’Empire romain et l’Occident médiéval, Actes du Colloque de Strasbourg (décembre 2000)*, ed. Cécile Bertrand-Dagenbach, Alain Chauvot, Jean-Marie Salamito, and Denise Vaillancourt (Paris: De Boccard, 2005), 243–56; T. J. Cadoux, “The Roman Carcer and Its Adjuncts,” *GR* 55.2 (2008): 202–21; Hillner, *Prison*; Matthew D. C. Larsen, “Carceral Practices and Geographies in Roman North Africa: A Case Study,” *SLA* 3.4 (2019): 547–80; L. Stephanie Cobb, “From Prison to Palace: The Carcer as Heterotopia in North African Martyr Accounts,” in *Desiring Martyrs*, ed. Harry O. Maier and Katharina Waldner (Berlin: De Gruyter: 2020), 137–54; Julia Hillner, “Female Crime and Female Confinement in Late Antiquity,” in *Social Control in Late Antiquity*, ed. Kate Cooper and Jamie Wood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 15–38; Mark Letteney and Matthew Larsen, “A Roman Military Prison at Lambaesis,” *SLA* 5.1 (2021): 65–102.

p.72 n.21 Porphyry, [On the Life of Plotinus, 8](#). For a different interpretation, see Jeremiah Coogan, “Transforming Textuality: Porphyry, Eusebius, and Late Ancient Tables of Contents,” *SLA* 5.1 (2021): 6-27.

p.73 n.22 On outdoor education, see Raffaella Cribiore, *Writing, Teachers, and Students in Graeco-Roman Egypt* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996), 18, 25. A mural from Pompei depicts students learning outdoors while passers-by glance at their work over their shoulders.

There may be some evidence for (potentially enslaved) scribes who specialized in prison transcription. The Zeno archive (whose texts represent the work of a very large number of enslaved workers) contains several prison letters written in the same hand, which Larsen and Letteney suggest may be indicative of a single scribe: "It is possible that these requests to Zeno were all written by the same person. It is certain that they were produced at least by writers with remarkably similar training, analogous formats for such letters, and who even use identical stock phrases to render a prisoner's pleas. In either case, the similarities suggest that these letters are not written by prisoners," in Larsen and Letteney, *Ancient Mediterranean Incarceration*, forthcoming. On the representation of enslaved people in the Zeno archive, see Roger Bagnall, *Everyday Writing in the Graeco-Roman East* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012), 55-61.

p.73 n.22a "Paul had plenty of time to prepare—in his head—what he would say in advance" On mental preparation, see Quintilian, *Inst.* [10.3.19-20](#), and his student Pliny, *Ep.* [9.36.2](#), with discussion in Sean Gurd, *Work in Progress: Literary Revision as Social Performance in Ancient Rome* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 10. In literary accounts, enslaved workers sit at the feet of their enslavers. In the scenario I have imagined, the scribe would have looked down upon the indistinct figure of Paul below. The spatial dynamics may have flipped the conventional arrangement of power and "invert[ed] the perspective"; see G. Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, trans. M. Jolas (Boston: Beacon, 1969), 149.

p.74 n.23 Market square vendors: See [P. Oxy VI. 932](#) and Roger S. Bagnall and Raffaella Cribiore, *Women's Letters from Ancient Egypt, 300 BC-AD 800* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2006), 62. In some of these ancient missives dictated by women to secretaries, we can even see fatigue setting in; as the letter progresses, the scribe abandons their initial plan to elevate the writing and shifts to the less cumbersome task of taking dictation.

p.76 n.24 Matt. [19:12](#). On Origen, see Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 6.8.2 (self-castration) and 6.23.1-2 (Ambrose's gift). To be read with discussion in Kim Haines-Eitzen, *Guardians of Letters: Literacy, Power, and the Transmitters of Early Christian Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 42-43.

p.76 n.25 On the Hexapla: Anthony Grafton and Megan Williams, *Christianity and the Transformation of the Book: Origen, Eusebius, and the Library of Caesarea* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006), and Jeremiah Coogan, "Tabular Thinking in Late Ancient Palestine," in *Knowledge Construction in Late Antiquity*, ed. Monika Amsler (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2023), 57-81.

p.78 n.26 Origen's hypothesis is reported in Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 6.12-14.

p.78 n.26a "One interpretatively important example from Romans 5:1" Scholars have devoted a great deal of energy to sorting out the 'original' reading here and its interpretive consequences. The subjunctive and indicative are, admittedly, different understandings of peace that can be put to different rhetorical and theological ends; however, their differences do not necessarily imply textual

interference or 'corruption.' The same pronunciation issue involving the subjunctive and the indicative reappears in 1 Cor [15:49](#). For a discussion of this passage, see Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* (2nd ed.; New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 452.

p.78 n.26b "Collaboration with enslaved workers is invisible to us not only because dependence upon one's social inferiors was embarrassing..." On the embarrassment caused by dependence on enslaved workers, see the examples in Moss, "The Secretary," and in Kutner, "Numeracy."

p.79 n.27 On tools: Aristotle, *Eth. Nic.* 1161a30–b6; Varro, *Rust.* [1.17.1](#); Frontinus, *Aq.* 2. On body parts: Cicero, *Ad fam.* 16.10.2; Martial, *Ep.* 1.10; 14.208. On the enslaved worker as a body part: Sarah Blake, "Now You See Them: Slaves and Other Objects as Elements of the Roman Master," *Helios* 39.2 (2012): 193–211; Blake, "In Manus: Pliny's Letters and the Arts of Mastery," in *Roman Literary Cultures: Domestic Politics, Revolutionary Poetics, Civic Spectacle*, ed. A. Keith and J. Edmondson (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2016), 89–107. On Jewish authors referring to enslaved people as body parts and tools see: Hezser, *Jewish Slavery*, 277–299 (y. Peah 4:6, 18b and y. Qid. 1:3 60a).

p.79 n.27a "Athletes, surgeons, artists, artisans, and musicians are known for their neuromuscular virtuosity and dexterous fingers..." On neuromuscular skills, see Shinichi Furuya, Takanori Oku, Fumio Miyazaki, and Hiroshi Kinoshita, "[Secrets of Virtuoso: Neuromuscular Attributes of Motor Virtuosity in Expert Musicians](#)," *Scientific Reports* 5 (2015): 15750. This study concluded that "Neither the age of musical training initiation nor the amount of extensive musical training before the age of twenty was a predictor" of the varying skill levels among the most talented.

p.79 n.27b "Yet in the ancient model, all decisions and skills are credited to the enslaver, who becomes for us the author." It is worth noting that we often do something analogous in English: when people talk about renovating their homes, they take credit for work that they are (usually) not doing themselves. (This example is adapted from William Fitzgerald, "The Slave, Between Absence and Presence," in *Unspoken Rome: Absence in Latin Literature and Its Reception*, ed. Tom Geue and Elena Giusti [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021], 239–49.) This isn't just about physical labor. Even if we oversee a project and make hundreds of decisions, most of us can't do all the cognitive work ourselves. Moreover, there are thousands of other decisions, predicated on a familiarity with raw materials, sensory skills, and pure kinesthetic experience that we do not have, that happen behind the scenes and out of sight. I do not wish to elide the transhistorical differences through this comparison: the ethical situations of these ancient and modern phenomena both are and are not comparable.

p.81 n.28 Inscription: *ST Sa 35 =Ima. Ita. CIL 12.3556a*. My analysis owes a great deal to Katherine MacDonald, "[Four Footprints, Two Languages, One Tile](#)." Sandra R. Joshel and Lauren Hackworth Petersen, *The Material Life of Roman Slaves* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 87–88. On bilingual inscriptions, see the groundbreaking study of J. N. Adams, *Bilingualism and the Latin Language* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

p.82 n.29 "hidden transcript" is from James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990); "floating fragments" are discussed in Dan-el

Padilla Peralta, "Epistemicide: The Roman Case," *Classica. Revista Brasileira de Estudos Clássicos* 33.2 (2020): 151-86 [167].

p.83 n.30 Tax rolls from the Fayum: P. Mich 223.2665. H. C. Youtie, "Callimachus in the Tax Rolls," in *Proceedings of the Twelfth International Congress of Papyrology*, ed. Deborah Samuel (Toronto: Hakkert, 1970): 545-551. In her classic study of the meaning of boredom-inducing repetitious work, Barbara Garson writes that, in addition to resentment and sabotage, she found "quite the opposite of nonco-operation... Whatever creativity goes into sabotage, a more amazing ingenuity goes into manufacturing goals and satisfactions on jobs where measurable achievement has been all but rationalized out." In Barbara Garson, *All the Livelong Day: The Meaning and Demeaning of Routine Work* (New York: Doubleday, 1975), xi.

p.84 n.31 For the full argument see Candida R. Moss, "Between the Lines: Looking for the Contributions of Enslaved Literate Laborers in a Second-Century Text (P. Berol. 11632)," *SLA* 5.3 (2021): 432-52.

p.85 n.32 Exhortation to wakefulness in the New Testament is connected to the Parousia and eschatological expectations. Compare Rom. [13:11-14](#); Eph. [5:14](#); Mark [13:35](#); Luke [12:35-40](#); Matt. [25:13](#). On enslaved people (as Christians) staying awake all night for the return of the enslaver, see Luke [12:35-40](#). On sleep deprivation and enslaved workers, see Mitzi Smith, *Insights from African American Interpretation* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2017), 80-97 and Candida R. Moss, "Chronometric Violence: Sleeplessness, Slavery, and the Mechanics of Control," in *The Wakeful Night*, ed. Dawn LaValle Norman, Kylie Crabbe, and Sarah Gador-Whyte (Cambridge: Cambridge university press, forthcoming).

p.87 n.33 *Styloi* ([Gal. 2:9](#)); *Stoicheia* (Gal. [4:3](#), [9](#)). This language of bookwork was pointed out to me by Jeremiah Coogan. Paul himself seems to have embraced the language; in the section written in his own hand, he refers to the *stigmata* on his own body. The marks are often seen as scars or brands, but they could also refer to written marks (Gal. [6:17](#)).

p.87 n.34 Johan Huizinga, *Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play-Element in Culture*, trans. R. F. C. Hull (London: Routledge, 2008; orig. pub. 1938), 3.

CHAPTER THREE

p.89 n.1 My rendition follows Mark [2:1-12](#), but versions of the story are also found in Matt [9:2-8](#) and Luke [5:17-26](#). To my knowledge, the only scholar to consider the possibility that the four were enslaved people is Anna Rebecca Solevåg, *Negotiating the Disabled Body: Representations of Disability in Early Christian Texts* (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2018). My reading is distinguished from hers in as much as I see the workers engaged in agentive work.

p.89 n.2 Academic translation and commentary: Joel Marcus, *Mark 1-8* (Anchor Yale Bible Commentaries Series; New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 215: "And a paralytic was brought to him, carried by four of his friends."

p.89 n.2b "The sight of a man being carried was common enough in the first century" On the association of wealth and being carried, see Pliny the Elder, who writes, "We walk with the feet of others, we recognize our acquaintances with the eyes of others, rely on others' memory to make our salutations," Pliny, *NH* [29.8.19](#).

p.91 n.2c "As cognitive scientists have argued, group labor distributes agency among its members." My use of the concept of distributed cognition is borrowed from the work of Seraphina Cuomo and Andrew Riggsby. It originates in the field of cognitive science and the work of Edwin Hutchins, *Cognition in the Wild* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1995). Hutchins's study was based on how the crews of ships distribute cognition among themselves. For the use of this idea among classicists, see Miranda Anderson, Douglas Cairns, Mark Sprevak, eds., *Distributed Cognition in Classical Antiquity* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2019); Andrew Riggsby, *Mosaics of Knowledge: Representing Information in the Roman World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019).

p.92 n.3 "See through" This phrase is adapted from Joseph A. Howley, *Aulus Gellius and Roman Reading Culture: Text, Presence, and Imperial Knowledge in the 'Noctes Atticae'* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 175.

p.93 n.3a "There are good reasons to think that enslaved co-authors were involved in the composition of all the canonical Gospels." Matthew is presented by Papias as a translator who translated "according to the best of his ability," and thus, like Mark, might be assumed to have been servile or assisted by servile workers. On Matthew/Levi's social status, see Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* 6.25, and Jerome, *Vir ill.* 3. See discussion of this phrase in my "Fashioning Mark," 187n21, and Mairs, "Hermēneis," 8. Luke used assistants known as "underlings of the word" in Luke 1:2. "Underlings" is not the usual translation of the Greek term in Luke 1:2, but the more conventional rendering "servant" obscures their unfree status. Tradition maintains that John, the author of the Fourth Gospel, was almost a hundred years old when he wrote his Gospel. We might infer that he would have needed assistance.

p.93 n.4 For an assessment of traditional narratives about the composition of the Gospel of John see Hugo Méndez, "Did the Johannine Community Exist?," *JSNT* 42 (2020): 350-374.

p.94 n.5 On Hagar and her reception, see Nyasha Junior, *Reimagining Hagar: Blackness and the Bible* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019). For the connection between Hagar and the experiences of African-American women, see also Renita J. Weems, *Just a Sister Away: A Womanist Vision of Women's Relationships in the Bible* (San Diego: LuraMedia, 1988); Delores S. Williams, *Sisters in the Wilderness: The Challenge of Womanist God-Talk* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1993); and Williams, "Hagar in African-American Biblical Appropriation," in *Hagar, Sarah, and Their Children: Jewish, Christian and Muslim Perspectives*, ed. Phyllis Trible and Letty M. Russell (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2006), 171–84; Diana L. Hayes, *Hagar's Daughters: Womanist Ways of Being in the World* (New York: Paulist, 1995).

There are Jewish incantation bowls and religio-medical amulets on which a sick patient is identified solely matrilineally (by their mother's name). On this, see Tal Ilan, "Women in Jewish Life and Law," in *The Cambridge History of Judaism, Vol. 4: The Late Roman-Rabbinic Period*, ed. Steven T. Katz (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 627–46. Compare b.Yoma 83b-84a; Esther Brownsmith, "[That's What She\(?\) Said: Gendering Authorship and the Hebrew Bible](#)," as part of the 'Books Known Only By Title' project at the Centre for Advanced Study at the Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters on March 3, 2021.

p.95 n.5a "Even as he builds a new set of powerful sympathetic ties with his followers, a sense of kinlessness and alienation remains" I draw here on Hortense J. Spillers, "Mama's Baby, Papa's Maybe: An American Grammar Book," *Diacritics* 17.2 (1987): 64–81.

p.96 n.5b "The lofty religious connotations are clear: Jesus is the anointed one, even if the person who anoints him before his death in the Gospel is an anonymous low-status, potentially servile woman" We might see this sort of move as evidence of Mark as a kind of subversive biography that resisted the conventions of more elevated biographies of political leaders and focused on more liminal characters. On this, see David Konstan and Robyn Walsh, "Civic and Subversive Biography in Antiquity," in *Writing Biography in Greece and Rome: Narrative Technique and Fictionalization*, ed. Koen De Temmerman and Kristoffel Demoen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 26–44. For a recent overview of Mark as biography, see Helen K. Bond, *The First Biography of Jesus: Genre and Meaning in Mark's Gospel* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2020).

p.97 n.6 Enslaved Mary: Winsome Munro, *Jesus, Born of a Slave. The Social and Economic Origins of Jesus' Message* (Lewiston, NY: Mellen, 1998); Mitzi J. Smith, "Abolitionist Messiah: A Man Named Jesus Born of a *Doulē*," in *Bitter the Chastening Rod*, ed. Mitzi J. Smith, Angela N. Parker, and Ericka S. Dunbar Hill (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2022), 53-70; Smith, *Re-Reading the Lukan Jesus for Liberation: Anointed Abolitionist Born of a Doule Called Mary* (Eugene, OR: Cascade, forthcoming). On the mistranslation of *doulos* in modern Bibles, see Smith, "Abolitionist Messiah"; Clarice J. Martin, "Womanist Interpretations of the New Testament: The Quest for Holistic and Inclusive Translation and Interpretation," in *I Found God in Me: A Womanist Biblical Hermeneutics Reader*, ed. Mitzi J. Smith (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2015), 19–41. Martin notes that translating *doulos* as 'servant' obscures the fact that "service" was "not a matter of choice" and therefore "minimizes the full psychological weight of the institution of slavery itself" (25). For a reading of Mary as a sex worker, see James N. Hoke, "Behold, the Lord's Whore? Slavery, Prostitution, and Luke 1:38," *BibInt* 26.1 (2018): 43–67.

"Mediterranean naming conventions identified men as their father's sons" Roman inheritance law privileges *patria potestas*, the power of the father (*paterfamilias*).

"To the ancient reader, the lack of a patronym is a suggestive social brand that marks him as status-less, illegitimate, servile." Some have seen allegations of illegitimacy in John 8:41 as well.

p.97 n.7 Celsus: Origen, *Cels.* 1.28-32; Tertullian, *On the Shows* 30. The Talmudic traditions relay a number of different spellings for Panthera's name. On the connection between imperialism, colonialization, sex, and desire, see David J. Mattingly, *Imperialism, Power, and Identity: Experiencing the Roman Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011), 94-124.

p.99 n.8 On natal alienation, see Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death*, in which he defines enslavement as "the permanent violent domination of natively alienated and generally dishonored persons," 13.

p.99 n.8a "Mark's point, subtly put, is: it was the marginal, fatherless child who was chosen. Jesus was once Ishmael" I should acknowledge that the transition from Ishmael to Isaac at the baptism here may reinscribe the rejection of the enslaved Ishmael and sow the seeds for antisemitism in the future.

p.99 n.8b "In Philippians 2:5-11, a passage some believe was once an ancient hymn, Jesus transitions from the "form of a God" to the form of a "slave" (doulos) at his birth" Winsome Munro sees this passage as evidence that Jesus was enslaved from birth (*Jesus, Born of a Slave*, Chapter Three). Munro's argument is important because she calls our attention to the meaning of the language. As Smith and Powery have noted, in every instance that we read enslavement as a metaphor, we should justify this move. For a discussion of the hymnic status of these verses, see Gregory P. Fewster, "The Philippians 'Christ Hymn': Trends in Critical Scholarship," *Currents in Biblical Research* 13.2 (2015): 191-206.

p.100 n.9 On the relationship between the death of Jesus and biographies of Aesop, see Adela Yarbro Collins, "Finding Meaning in the Death of Jesus," *The Journal of Religion* 78.2 (1998): 175-96.

p.101 n.10 Phaedrus, *Fab.* 3 prologue 43-47, where Phaedrus writes that whereas Aesop had built a footpath, he had constructed a highway. On the importance of Aesop, see Leslie Kurke, *Aesopic Conversations: Popular Tradition, Cultural Dialogue, and the Invention of Greek Prose* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011). On the Life of Aesop, see Jeremy B. Lefkowitz, "Reading the Aesopic Corpus: Slavery, Freedom, and Storytelling in the *Life of Aesop*," in *Slaves and Masters in the Ancient Novel*, ed. Stelios Panayotakis, Michael Paschalis, and Costas Panayotakis (Eelde: Barkhuis, 2019), 233-58. On the social status of Phaedrus, which has been contested, see E. Champlin, "Phaedrus the Fabulous," *JRS* 95 (2005): 97-123. On Babrius, see Maria Jagoda Luzzatto and Antonio La Penna, eds., *Babrii Mythiambi Aesopei* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1986). On the fables and their relationship to the parables of Luke, see Justin David Strong, *The Fables of Jesus in the Gospel of Luke: A New Foundation for the Study of Parables* (Leiden: Brill Schöningh, 2021).

p.101 n.11 Quote is from Babrius, *Fab.* 47. On parables and fables, see Mary Ann Beavis, "Parable and Fable," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 52.3 (1990): 473-98.

p.102 n.12 On popular morality and the social origins of fables, see Teresa Morgan, *Popular Morality in the Early Roman Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007). A better choice of language here for an "authorless" text might be "less authored." It is not that Phaedrus and Mark were not authored; it is that their status prevented them from being strong authors. As a consequence, according to the conventions of Roman literary culture, their texts were even more open to revision than usual.

p.103 n.13 On the selection of overseers, see Columella, *De re rustica* [1.2-9](#). I am grateful to Joseph Howley for conversations about this. See also Grant Nelsestuen, "Overseeing res publica: The Rector as Vilicus in *De Re Publica* 5," *Classical Antiquity* 33.1 (2014): 130–173; Arjan Zuiderhoek, "Sorting out Labour in the Roman Provinces: Some Reflections on Labour and Institutions in Asia Minor," in *Work, Labour, and Professions in the Roman World*, ed. Koenraad Verboven and Christian Laes (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 20–35.

p.104 n.14 On the history of this text, Hilary of Poitiers, and the forged manuscript of Hilary's work, see Kevin Madigan, *The Passions of Christ in High-Medieval Thought: An Essay on Christological Development* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

p.104 n.15 On the problem of managing estates from a distance, see Columella, *De re rustica* [1.2.1-2](#).

p.105 n.16 Courageous interpreters: See Munro, *Jesus, Born of a Slave*, and Smith, *Re-Reading the Lukan Jesus*.

p.105 n.17 Ancient funerary inscription: ILS 7479, discussed in Jane Gardner, "Slavery and Roman Law," in Bradley and Cartledge, *The Cambridge World History of Slavery*, 1.420, and Laura Nasrallah, *Archaeology and the Letters of Paul* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 44n14.

p.106 n.18 See Tom Geue, "Rush Job: Slavery and Brevity in the Early Roman Principate," *Cambridge Classical Journal* 68 (2022): 83-111. Here, scholarship on ancient slavery takes its leave from scholarship on modern slavery. For the latter, see Walter Johnson, "Possible Pasts: Some Speculations on Time, Temporality, and the History of Atlantic Slavery," *Amerikastudien/American Studies* 45.4 (2000): 485-99. On meandering, see Stephanie M. H. Camp, *Closer to Freedom: Enslaved Women and Everyday Resistance in the Plantation South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004).

p.107 n.19 In this case, crucifixion turned victims into the letter *tau* or 'T.' The association between the letter tau and crucifixion is an ancient one; see the conclusion to Lucian, *The Consonants at Law*. Violence, as geographer James Tyner has written, "is a social and spatial practice"; see James A. Tyner, *Space, Place, and Violence: Violence and the Embodied Geographies of Race, Sex, and Gender* (London: Routledge, 2011), ix. Important re-readings of the crucifixion, which appropriately place it in the context of enslavement, include Mitzi Smith, "'He Never Said a Mumbalin' Word': A Womanist Perspective of Crucifixion, Sexual Violence and Sacralized Silence," in *When Did We See You Naked? Jesus As a Victim of Sexual Abuse*, ed. Jayme R. Reaves, David Tombs, and Rocio Figueroa (London: SCM Press, 2021), 44–66, and Allen Dwight Callahan, "God's Only Begotten Thug," in Smith, Parker, and Dunbar Hill, *Bitter the Chastening Rod*, 39–52.

p.107 n.20 During the Roman Republic, slaveholders could torture and kill their enslaved workers without censure. An inscription from Puteoli reveals that enslavers could contract professional torturers—often enslaved workers themselves—to flog and crucify at a standard rate equivalent to about half a soldier's daily wage. By the imperial period and the time of Jesus, slaveholders' ability to kill with impunity had begun to be regulated, but it was still possible for enslaved people to be

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condemned for minor infractions, most commonly theft. For crucifixion and humor, see Amy Richlin, *Slave Theater in the Roman Republic: Plautus and Popular Comedy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 83.

p.108 n.21 Pagan critics on the death of Jesus: Origen, *Cels.* 7.53-55.

p.109 n.22 Jon Sobrino, *Jesus in Latin America* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2004); James H. Cone, *The Cross and the Lynching Tree* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2011); M. Shawn Copeland, *Knowing Christ Crucified: The Witness of African American Religious Experience* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2018).

p.109 n.23 Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others* (New York: Farrar, Straus, & Giroux, 2003), 108. On "willingness to speak the bloody truths about their mistreatment," see Luis Menéndez-Antuña, "The Book of Torture. The Gospel of Mark, Crucifixion, and Trauma," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 90.2 (2022): 377-95. On veiling and unveiling, see Toni Morrison, "The Site of Memory," in *Inventing the Truth: The Art and Craft of Memoir*, ed. William Zinsser (2d ed; New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1995), 83-102 [91].

p.110 n.23b "It tells an unthinkable history in which marginalized enslaved death overpowers even a celestial event" The concept of "unthinkable history" comes from Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1995).

p.110 n.24 See Maureen Carroll, "'The Mourning Was Very Good.' Liberation and Liberality in Roman Funerary Commemoration," in *Memory and Mourning: Studies on Roman Death*, ed. Valerie M. Hope and Janet Huskinson (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2011), 126-49. On the importance of mourning, see Smallwood, *Saltwater Slavery*; those being trafficked "confronted a dual crisis: the trauma of death, and the inability to respond appropriately to death," 152.

p.111 n.25 Wil Gafney, "[Of Gods, Men, and Kings](#)," a sermon published on February 6, 2018.

p.112 n.26 On Jesus as enslaver and enslaved, see Katherine Shaner, "Enslavement in Early Christianity," Special Panel at the New England/Eastern Canada Regional Meeting of The Society of Biblical Literature, March 19, 2022.

CHAPTER FOUR

p.115 n.a “Thomas was absent when the resurrected Jesus first appeared to the disciples in the upper room and was, understandably, skeptical about the claims of his friends” John 20:24-28. Arguably, Thomas’s skepticism is perhaps more relatable to modern readers. Any reader of ancient wonder literature (paradoxography) is familiar with postmortem apparitions and conversations with the dead. See Gregory Riley, *Resurrection Reconsidered: Thomas and John in Controversy* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995), 63-68; Deborah Prince, “The ‘Ghost’ of Jesus: Luke 24 in Light of Ancient Narratives of Post-Mortem Apparitions,” *JSNT* 29.3 (2007): 287-31. Many in antiquity were skeptical about such stories, but their positions were only sometimes associated with what we call “atheism.” On the latter, see Tim Whitmarsh, *Battling the Gods: Atheism in the Ancient World* (New York: Knopf, 2015).

p.116 n.1 The *Acts of Thomas* is one of a cluster of second-century apostolic acts that circulated among early Christians. Translations adapted from Han J. W. Drijvers, “Acts of Thomas—Introduction and Translation,” in *New Testament Apocrypha, Volume Two: Writings Relating to the Apostles, Apocalypses and Related Subjects*, ed. Wilhelm Schneemelcher, trans. Robert McLean Wilson (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1992), 322-410. For more information on manuscripts, translations, and bibliography, see Jonathan Henry, “[Acts of Thomas](#),” *e-Clavis: Christian Apocrypha*. On pepper and India, see Elizabeth Ann Pollard, “Indian Spices and Roman ‘Magic’ in Imperial and Late Antique Indomediterranea,” *Journal of World History* 24.1 (2013): 1-23. Ironically, many “luxury” Indian exports were commonplace in their context of origin. I am grateful to Divya Kumar-Dumas for this observation.

p.116 n.1a “Channeling Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane” Compare Mark [14:36](#); Luke [22:42](#).

p.117 n.1b “following the footsteps of Alexander the Great” As Apollonius of Tyana did in Philostratus’ *Life of Apollonius of Tyana*. For a comparison of Apollonius and Thomas, see Kendra Eshleman, “Indian Travel and Cultural Self-Location in the *Life of Apollonius* and the *Acts of Thomas*,” in *Journeys in the Roman East: Imagined and Real*, ed. Maren R. Niehoff (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017), 183-202. We should note that the *Acts of Thomas* recounts a largely fictionalized journey and that speculating about the route that Thomas took is a thought experiment. Post-Jewish War, it may have been easier to take the route through the Persian Gulf. From Jerusalem, the route would have run overland to Basra, then by sea to Karachi. On the commercial sea route, see Albrecht Dihle, *Umstrittene Daten: Untersuchungen zum Auftreten der Griechen am Roten Meer* (Cologne: Opladen, 1965), 16-17, 20-23, and Dihle, “The Conception of India in Hellenistic and Roman Literature,” *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society*, No. 10 (190) (1964): 15-23; Kendra Eshleman, “Indian Travel”; Nathanael J. Andrade, *The Journey of Christianity to India in Late Antiquity: Networks and the Movement of Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 94-136, who suggests that confusion of ‘India’ with the trading ports of the Red Sea and south Arabia may mean that Christianity travelled to India later than expected. On the debate between the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea, see Eivind H. Seland, “Persian Gulf or Red Sea? Two Axes in Ancient Indian Ocean Trade, Where to Go and Why,” *World Archaeology* 43.3 (2011): 398-409, and Seland, “Trade and Christianity in the Indian Ocean during Late Antiquity,” *JLA* 5.1 (2012): 72-86.

p.118 n.1c “the otherwise unknown royal city of Andrapolis” This possibly fictional city should be distinguished from Andropolis, Egypt. For the view that the city mentioned in the text was not in India, see George Huxley, “Geography in the ‘Acts of Thomas,’” *GRBS* 24.1 (1983): 71–80.

p.118 n.1d “There were no mental maps to orient himself” Ptolemy lived in the second century C.E., whereas Thomas fictively traveled in the first (even if his story was written later). On mapping knowledge as a particularly Roman preoccupation, see Jason König and Tim Whitmarsh, “Ordering Knowledge,” in *Ordering Knowledge in the Roman Empire*, ed. Jason König and Tim Whitmarsh (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 3–40. For Ptolemy, see Alexander Jones, *Ptolemy's Geography: An Annotated Translation of the Theoretical Chapters* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000). It is worth noting that Ptolemy may not have been the inventor of latitude and longitude, but rather a systematizer of existing mathematical systems of knowledge. For the influence of Ptolemy on later Pacific cartography, see Lawrence C. Wroth, “The Early Cartography of the Pacific,” *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 38.2 (1944): 87–231, 233–68.

p.118 n.1e “With no enslaver from which to derive a modicum of protection” On abuse, see the Parable of the Vineyard (Matt. [21:33-46](#)). Technically, Thomas has a local enslaver, but he also (quite fascinatingly) has two enslavers, one human and one divine.

p.118 n.1f “Flutists were sexualized in antiquity and the apostle demurely averted his eyes” On this, compare Petronius, [Sat. 68](#). The term flute here does not quite capture the meaning of the original language.

p.118 n.2 This point is made by Jennifer Glancy, “Slavery in Acts of Thomas,” *JECH* 2.2 (2012): 3–21. On enslavement in Jewish and Christian pseudepigrapha and apocrypha, see Ronald Charles, *The Silencing of Slaves in Early Jewish and Christian Texts* (New York: Routledge, 2021). My reading of this story follows that of Glancy, in *Slavery in Early Christianity*, 13, 96–98.

p.120 n.3 Multiple messengers: Cicero, [Att. 2.19.5](#). Greek translator: Plutarch, [Themistocles 6.2](#). His status as enslaved may well have been compounded by his status as translator and, perhaps, also as ethnic other. Alexander: Pseudo-Callisthenes, [The Alexander Romance 1.37](#). Puetoli: This story is recounted in Cicero, [Against Verres 5.154](#).

p.120 n.4 Ovid, [Met. 9.568-581](#). See discussion in Chris Londa, “Letters,” in *Writing, Enslavement, and Power*, ed. Coogan, Howley and Moss, forthcoming. Londa notes that at every stage, the fear of the enslaved courier is registered. For other examples of the dangers faced by enslaved couriers, see Josephus, *Life of Flavius Josephus*, 48–51, and Peter M. Head, “Named Letter-Carriers Among the Oxyrhynchus Papyri,” *JSNT* 31.3 (2009): 279–299 [217]. On the divorce certificate: M. Git 2. 3 and T. Git. 2:4, and see discussion in Hezser, *Jewish Slavery*, 65.

p.120–21 n.4a “In the parables of Jesus, kings, landowners, and powerful men...” On these stories, see Chapter Eight, and discussions in Glancy, *Slavery in Early Christianity*, 102–39; Mary Ann Beavis, “Ancient Slavery as an Interpretive Context for the New Testament Servant Parables with Special Reference to the Unjust Steward (Luke 16:1–8),” *JBL* 111.1 (1992): 37–54; Elizabeth Dowling, “Slave Parables in the Gospel of Luke: Gospel ‘Texts of Terror’?,” *Australian Biblical Review* 56 (2008): 61–68; Mitzi Smith, *Insights from African American Interpretation* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2017); Jon

Hatter, "Slavery, the Enslaved, and the Gospel of Matthew." (PhD diss., Loyola University Chicago, 2021). On the violation of the enslaved workers in parables, we should note that the English translation of the Greek term for mockery/mistreatment (*hubrizo* in Greek) used in Matt. [22:6](#) obscures the sexual connotations of the mistreatment of the enslaved worker abroad.

p.121 n.5 Enslaved messengers: [P. Duk. Inv. 609](#) and *TPSulp.* 48. On travel and Christianity, see Timothy Luckritz Marquis, *Transient Apostle: Paul, Travel and the Rhetoric of Empire* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013). For the calculation of fifty miles a day, see John H. Nicholson, "The Delivery and Confidentiality of Cicero's Letters," *Classical Journal* 90.1 (1994): 33–63 [34]. This calculation is based on an analysis of Cicero's letters. On enslaved literate messengers in maritime commerce, see Jean Andreau, "Les esclaves 'hommes d'affaires' et la gestion des ateliers et commerces," in *Mentalités et choix économiques des Romains*, ed. Jean Andreau, Jérôme France, and Sylvie Pittia (Bordeaux: Ausonius, 2004), 111–27; Tran, "The Work Statuses of Slaves and Freedmen," 670–76.

p.122 n.5a "They were expected to travel simply—no staff, change of clothes, or money was permissible—" For the understanding that disciples' attire and belongings portrayed them as Cynic-Stoic philosophers, see Adela Collins, *Mark: A Commentary* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 2007), 299–302.

p.122 n.6 *Did.* 11.3-12; 12:1-5. The *Didache* has been dated to between the late first and mid-second century. On the relationship between the *Did.* and the canonical New Testament works, see Christopher M. Tuckett, "Didache," in *The Reception of the New Testament in the Apostolic Fathers*, ed. Andrew F. Gregory and Christopher M. Tuckett (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 83–128. Compare Herm. *Man.* 11.12, in which false prophets were characterized using many of the negative traits attributed to "bad slaves": being talkative, deceptive, impudent, and attracted to luxury.

p.123 n.6a "Alexander was a genuine ancient celebrity whose portrait graced local coins" For the [coins](#) of Alexander of Abonoteichus, see discussion in Liv Mariah Yarrow, "Antonine Coinage," in *The Oxford Handbook of Greek and Roman Coinage*, ed. William E. Metcalf (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 423–454 [445–46]. See also Peter Thonemann, *Lucian: Alexander or the False Prophet* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021), who argues that this text is addressed to the same Celsus who criticized Christianity.

p.124 n.6b "rather than the southern route, which Burrhus surely thought would have been vastly more convenient" It is likely that Burrhus was from Ephesus or its environs. Though residents of both Smyrna and Ephesus sponsored his trip, Ignatius requests of the Ephesians that Burrhus be permitted to stay in Smyrna with him (*Ign. Eph.* 2.1). If Burrhus was from Ephesus, then the southern road that led to Smyrna through Ephesus would have been easier to access. It is possible that Burrhus only located Ignatius and his party in Smyrna; if that is the case, then he still had to navigate the presumably unfamiliar city. As Peter Head notes in forthcoming work, we know very little about the actual journeys of letter carriers. For a similarly complex issue involving the route of travel, see Cicero, *Att.* 3.8, in which Marcus is unsure of his brother's route, and *Att.* 9.16.4, where he is concerned about the impact of weather on the delivery of a letter. I am grateful to Peter Head for allowing me to read his work prior to publication. There are some (for example, Randolph Richards) who argue that Burrhus was only the emissary, not the secretary. See E. Randolph

Richards, "Silvanus Was Not Peter's Secretary: Theological Bias in Interpreting διὰ Σιλουανοῦ ...εγγραψα in 1 Peter 5:12," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 43.3 (2000): 417–32.

p.124 n.7 There are legitimate questions to be asked about whether Ignatius's journey has been fictionalized. On this, see Yonatan Moss, "From Syria All the Way to Rome': Ignatius of Antioch's Pauline Journey to Christianity," in *Journeys in the Roman East: Imagined and Real*, ed. Maren R. Niehoff (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017), 409–421. Any reconstruction of Ignatius's journey faces two problems: the complexity of the literary tradition from which it is extrapolated and the various routes he may have taken from Antioch to Smyrna. On the former issue, see Schoedel, *Ignatius of Antioch*, 3–7. See also Theodor Zahn, *Ignatius von Antiochien* (Gotha: Friedrich Andreas Perthes, 1873). For challenges to the scholarly consensus, see particularly the work of Reinoud Weijenborg, *Les lettres d'Ignace d'Antioche, étude de critique littéraire et de théologie. Mis en français par Barthélemy Héroux* (Leiden: Brill, 1969); Josep Rius-Camps, *The Four Authentic Letters of Ignatius, the Martyr* (Rome: Pontificium Institutum Orientalium Studiorum, 1980); Robert Joly, *Le dossier d'Ignace d'Antioche* (Bruxelles: Éditions de l'Université de Bruxelles, 1979). Joly's reconstruction has not yet dislodged the work of Lightfoot. A detailed discussion of Joly's hypothesis is found in C. P. H. Bammel, "Ignatian Problems," *JTS* n.s. 33.1 (1982): 62–97.

It's possible that the soldiers needed Ignatius to justify the free housing they received while transporting prisoners. The emperor Hadrian specified that soldiers should not receive free lodging unless they were 'on duty,' as it were, including "transporting prisoners or wild animals" (SEG 59.1365). Hadrian's declaration is only relevant if we take a late view of the date of Ignatius's arrest. See discussion in Larsen and Letteney, *Ancient Mediterranean Incarceration*. On the memory of messengers: Jürgen Blänsdorf, *Das Thema der Sklaverei in den Werken Ciceros* (Stuttgart: Steiner, 2016), 91, 97. The importance of memory in message-delivery is noteworthy, as memory was highly prized in elite *paideia*. On exceptional memory skills in professions that are socially devalued today, see, for example, King Beach, "Becoming a Bartender: The Role of External Memory Cues in a Work-Directed Educational Activity," *Applied Cognitive Psychology* 7.3 (1993): 191–204; Joy Stevens, "An Observational Study of Skilled Memory in Waitresses," *Applied Cognitive Psychology* 7 (1993): 205–17.

p.124 n.7b "What is clear is that he was able to distinguish himself in Ignatius's eyes; so much so that his role in the composition and delivery of two extant letters is noted in their conclusions" Burrhus is called an elder (*presbyteros*) in Ign. *Eph.* 2.1. That an enslaved worker would also hold a position of authority is not altogether unusual. Ignatius also refers to a bishop named Onesimus, who some have speculated was the enslaved Onesimus discussed in Paul's letter to Philemon. See Shaner, *Enslaved Leadership*, 89–91. There is some question about whether Burrhus was a secretary, a letter-carrier, or both. I follow Schoedel in suggesting that he may well have served as both. Certainly, a man of Ignatius's age is likely to have needed a secretary; see discussion in Chapter One, and William R. Schoedel, *Ignatius of Antioch: A Commentary on the Letters of Ignatius of Antioch* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1985), 45.

p.125 n.8 "Runaway" The language of running presupposes that slavery is a legitimate social structure. On the use of children as a kind of "hostage" that kept enslaved workers docile, see Chapter One. For a servile worker who wanted to return "home" after serving Paul, see Phil. 2:25–26. The request to stay: Ign. *Eph.* 2.1. Burrhus as a servile name See Schoedel, *Ignatius of Antioch*, 46. "Word of honor" (*Phld.* 11.2) "Copy" (*Eph.* 2.1; 11.2). When Ignatius speaks of Burrhus and Crocus,

he consistently refers to the honor that they bring to the Ephesians and Smyrnaeans. He describes them as literate objects, calling them “living cop[ies]” of the love of the Ephesians. The word for “copy” here is *exemplarium*, a Latin loanword used to describe copies of legal documents (*Dig.* 31.47). Messengers were regularly pictured as extensions of the presence and character of those who had sent them, but their status as breathing objects evokes the Roman elite practice of describing secretaries as tablets and pens; see Howley, “Visible Erasure,” forthcoming. But we should note that Ignatius uses the same language for the Bishop Onesimus (*Ign. Trall.* 3.2). Other servile messengers (Onesimus, Fronto, and Euplus) are also named in the account (*Eph.* 2.1).

“The trail goes cold” We know that Burrhus went as far as Troas. One of Ignatius’s correspondents, Polycarp of Smyrna, suggests that he sailed from there to Europe, docking first at Neapolis and stopping in Philippi in Macedonia.

p.125 n.9 On the refreshment supplied by Burrhus and Crocus, see *Ign. Eph. 2.1*; *Smyr. 12.1*. Elsewhere, Ignatius uses the language of refreshment to ask that other messengers be “refreshed” with material support like food and lodging (*Ign. Rom.* 10.2); we can infer that not everyone took on this responsibility from *Phld.* 11.1. On letter-carriers finding work to support themselves, see P.Oxy. XVIII.2190, in which two enslaved workers accompanied a pair of brothers to school in Alexandria. One enslaved worker was a schoolteacher and perhaps took notes on behalf of the brothers; the other attendant worked to cover living expenses. See Criboire, *Gymnastics*, 50, 57–59. On the importance of timing, see Cicero, *Fam.* 9.16.1, and Head, “Onesimus the Letter Carrier and the Initial Reception of Paul’s Letter to Philemon,” *JTS* 71.2 (2020): 628–656 [653]. Cicero notes that timing is an important element in the delivery and reception of letters. We should assume that this skill was transferable to other moments: “Accordingly [I have] instructed the bearer to watch for the right moment to hand you his charge, for a letter delivered unseasonably often annoys us like an inopportune visitor. But if, as I hope, you will have nothing to worry and distract you and my messenger chooses a sufficiently tactful and convenient time to make his approach, I am confident that the request I have to put to you will be readily granted.” (*Fam.* 9.16.1, trans. Shackleton Bailey). Cited and discussed in Head, “Onesimus,” 643.

p.125 n.10 “This was heroic work” The language of heroic work is adapted from Jürgen Blänsdorf, *Das Thema der Sklaverei in den Werken Ciceros* (Stuttgart: Steiner, 2016), 91. The length of Ignatius’s journey was calculated using ORBIS, an online resource designed by Walter Scheidel and produced by a collaborative team that included Elijan Meeks, Karl Grossner, and Noemi Alvarez (<https://orbis.stanford.edu>).

p.125–26 n.10a “Burrhus’s companionship in Ignatius’s final months was a luxury” That he was expensive may gesture not just to the cost of travel but the value of a higher-status literate worker. On the cost of literate workers, see Flower, “Most Expensive Slave.”

p.126–27 n.11 Child messengers were utilized in Rome, ancient Mesopotamia, and late antique and early Islamic Egypt. It is noteworthy that in late antique Egypt, many examples involve monastic communities and children “gifted” to these communities. See Benjamin Hinson, “Send Them to Me by This Little One: Child Letter-carriers in Coptic Texts from Late Antique and Early Islamic Egypt,” *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 80.2 (2021): 275–89. On the problems of identifying enslaved workers in Egyptian monastic contexts, see Christine Luckritz Marquis, “Divining Slavery in Late Antique Egypt: Doulogy in the Monastic Works of Paul of Tamma and Shenoute,” in *Slavery in*

the Late Ancient World, 150-700 CE, ed. Chris L. de Wet, Maijastina Kahlos, and Ville Vuolanto (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022), 149–69; Christian Laes, “Child Slaves at Work in Roman Antiquity,” *Ancient Society* 38 (2008): 235–83. On children in monastic Egypt, see Caroline Schroeder, *Children and Family in Late Antique Egyptian Monasticism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020). For ancient Mesopotamia, see Seth Richardson, “Walking Capital: The Economic Function and Social Location of Babylonian Servitude,” *Journal of Global Slavery* 4.3 (2019): 285–342.

Letter from Hermopolis: [SB XII.11084](#), trans. Raffaella Cribiore, *Gymnastics of the Mind* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 243. We should note, with Jan Heilmann, that the network of long-distance lending libraries often worked in conjunction with the more commercial book market. The commercial market, however, also depended upon enslaved labor.

p.127 n. 12 [Catullus 50](#) and Duncan F. Kennedy, “Crossing the Threshold: Genette, Catullus and the Psychodynamics of Paratextuality,” in *The Roman Paratext: Frame, Text, Readers*, ed. Laura Jansen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 19–32.

These concerns are one of the reasons that we encounter distribution without “publication.” The fiction of the unfinished text helped assuage concerns about judgment. I am grateful to Jeremiah Coogan and Joe Howley for conversations about this. For forays in this direction, see Matthew D. C. Larsen, “Accidental Publication, Unfinished Texts and the Traditional Goals of New Testament Textual Criticism,” *JSNT* 39.4 (2017): 362–87; Raffaella Cribiore, “The Dissemination of Texts in the High Empire,” *American Journal of Philology* 140.2 (2019): 255–90. In his [Sorrow 1.1](#), Ovid also personified his book as an enslaved person/child when dispatching it into the world. On the foreignness and othering of the personified book, see Carole Newlands, “The Role of the Book in *Tristia* 3.1,” *Ramus* 26.1 (1997): 57–79. Newlands sees the book as a cipher for Ovid himself. More broadly on books in Latin poetry, see also G. D. Williams, “Representations of the Book-roll in Latin Poetry: Ovid, *Tr.* 1,1,3-14 and Related Texts,” *Mnemosyne* 45.2 (1992): 178–89.

p.127 n.12a “Beyond the normal social benefits derived from gift-giving” The concept of gift exchange is derived from the work of French sociologists Pierre Bourdieu and Marcel Mauss. For recent New Testament scholarship adopting this framework, see Thomas R. Blanton IV, *A Spiritual Economy: Gift Exchange in the Letters of Paul of Tarsus* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017).

p.128 n.12b “The letter-carrier-turned-reader could be schooled to read the book with the correct intonation.” On instructing letter-carriers what to say, see Head, “Named Letter-Carriers,” and Londa, “Letters.” In some later sources, sending letters without readers was sometimes seen as burdensome. See Hugo Lundhaug and Lance Jenott, “Production, Distribution, and Ownership of Books in the Monasteries of Upper Egypt: The Evidence of the Nag Hammadi Colophons,” in *Monastic Education in Late Antiquity: The Transformation of Classical Paideia*, ed. Lillian I. Larsen and Samuel Rubenson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 306–25. Letter-carriers were “the vital link between sender and recipients,” as is argued by Pieter J. J. Botha, *Orality and Literacy in Early Christianity* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2012), 243. As Botha puts it, the process of dictation and oral delivery (which he correctly expects to often involve the same person) creates a situation of “co-authorship.” See M. R. P. McGuire, “Letters and Letter Carriers in Christian Antiquity,” *The Classical World* 53.5 (1960): 149–150.

p.128 n.13 Cicero, *Ep.* 12.30.3 LCL. In his forthcoming book on letter-carriers, Peter Head suggests the translation, "Upon my word, he made me see your every look to the life, let alone conveying your mind and words," which captures the spirit of the Latin. I am grateful to Head for sharing a pre-publication copy of this chapter with me.

p.128 n.14 "Copy" (*Eph.* [2.1](#); 11.2). Role of letter carriers: Head, "Named Letter-Carriers," 294, 298; Pieter J. J. Botha, "Letter Writing and Oral Communication in Antiquity: Suggested Implications for the Interpretation of Paul's Letter to the Galatians," *Scriptura* 42 (1992): 17-34; Botha, "The Verbal Art of the Pauline Letters: Rhetoric, Performance, and Presence," in *Rhetoric and the New Testament: Essays from the 1992 Heidelberg Conference*, ed. Stanley E. Porter and Thomas H. Olbricht (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993), 409-28.

p.129 n.15 Pieter J. J. Botha, *Orality and Literacy in Early Christianity* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2012), 243. Pliny commends his reader Encolpius for reading as he himself would (*Ep.* [8.1](#)). For more on readers as extensions of enslavers, see Chapter Six.

p.129 n.15a "Paul—and Ignatius along with him—were in more delicate situations. In due course they would emerge as titans in Christian history, but in the moment they were innocent of the future." I cannot summarize the complicated debates about conflict in assemblies associated with Paul. My best recommendation is to read Fredriksen, *Paul*. For a survey of opinions about conflicts in Antioch involving Ignatius, see Allen Brent, *Ignatius of Antioch: A Martyr Bishop and the Origin of Episcopacy* (London: T&T Clark, 2009).

p.129-30 n.16 "life of mimicry" See Londa, "Letters." For other studies of the role of letter-carriers as "living paratexts," see Bianca-Jeanette Schröder, "Couriers and Conventions in Cicero's Epistolary Network," in *Letters and Communities: Studies in the Socio-Political Dimensions of Ancient Epistolography*, ed. Paola Ceccarelli, Lutz Doering, Thorsten Fögen, and Ingo Gildenhard (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 81-102 [81]. For enslaved people as agents in business, see *Digest* [5.1.19.3](#) (Ulpian), in which a contract made with an enslaved shopkeeper in Rome, whose 'master' was in Laebo, was considered a contract with the provincial enslaver. See also a wooden writing tablet from London (WT50), with discussion in Roger S. O. Tomlin, *Roman London's First Voices. Writing Tablets from the Bloomberg Excavations 2010-14* (London: Museum of London Archaeology, 2016), 54, 168. For a discussion of enslaved literate workers in artisanal, mercantile, and military contexts, see Chapter Two.

On Paul's messengers: Timothy ([1 Cor 16: 10-11](#)), Onesimus ([Philemon 17](#)), Tychicus ([Eph 6:21](#); [Col 4:7](#)), Epaphroditus ([Phil 2:29](#)), Titus ([2 Cor 7:15](#)), and Phoebe ([Rom 16:1-2](#)). On Phoebe as letter-carrier, see J. Ross Wagner, *Heralds of the Good News: Isaiah and Paul 'In Concert' in the Letter to the Romans* (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 38: "It is quite likely that the bearers of Paul's letters were charged by the apostle with the further responsibility of helping interpret them." For an excellent discussion of Onesimus's social status and role, see Head, "Onesimus." For a discussion of the various ways in which Onesimus experienced violence, see Joseph Marchal, "The Sexual Use of Slaves and Paul's Letter to Philemon," *JBL* 130.4 (2011): 749-70. On Onesimus's utility, see Jennifer Glancy, "The Utility of an Apostle: On Philemon 11," *JECH* 5.1 (2015): 72-86; Mitzi J. Smith, "Utility, Fraternity, and Reconciliation: Ancient Slavery as a Context for the Return of Onesimus," in *Onesimus Our Brother: Reading Religion, Race, and Culture in Philemon*, ed. Matthew V. Johnson, James A. Noel, and Demetrius K. Williams (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2012), 47-58.

Epaphroditus, the carrier in Philippians, was also likely to have been enslaved or formerly enslaved; his name, which means “lovely,” was “perhaps the commonest of Roman slave names.” See P. R. C. Weaver, “Epaphroditus, Josephus, and Epictetus,” *CQ* 44.2 (1994): 468–479; Heikki Solin, *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum: Die griechischen Personennamen in Rom* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1982), 2.320. On the conventions of envoy-sending in general, see Margaret M. Mitchell, “New Testament Envoys in the Context of Greco-Roman Diplomatic and Epistolary Conventions: The Example of Timothy and Titus,” *JBL* 111.4 (1992): 641–662.

A Tychicus is mentioned in Eph [6:21](#); Col [4:7](#); Tit [3:12](#); and 2 Tim [4:12](#). The manuscript evidence for Tychicus in Col. [4:8](#) is complicated. On this, see Peter Head, “Tychicus and the Colossian Christians: A Reconsideration of the Text of Colossians 4:8,” in *Texts and Traditions: Essays in Honour of J. Keith Elliott*, ed. Peter Doble and Jeffrey Kloha (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 303–315. Head notes that the long form of the subscription to the letter identifies it as having been delivered by both Tychicus and Onesimus. Tychicus was described as a “fellow slave” by Paul (Col. [4:7](#)), but it is unclear whether this language refers to legal enslavement. We should note that Tychicus was the name of an enslaved man mentioned in *CIL* 6.623.

Medieval tradition maintains that Phoebe was the enslaver of Tertius, the secretary to whom Paul dictated the text. The ninth-century Mount Athos, [Monastery of the Lavra A.88, fol. 99 verso](#) (GA 049) titles Romans “Letter to (the) Romans written from Corinth through (*dia*) Phoebe the deacon.” The fourteenth-century Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, grec 47, fol. 244 recto (GA 18) has: “The letter to (the) Romans written through (*dia*) Tertius and sent through (*dia*) Phoebe from Corinth.” These examples are taken from Brent Nongbri, “The Manuscript Tradition,” in *T&T Clark Handbook to the Historical Paul*, ed. Ryan S. Schellenberg and Heidi Wendt (London: T&T Clark, 2022), 55–68. On Phoebe, see Caroline F. Whelan, “Amica Pauli: The Role of Phoebe in the Early Church,” *JSNT* 15.49 (1993): 67–85; Roman Garrison, “Phoebe, the Servant-Benefactor and Gospel Traditions,” in *Text and Artifact in the Religions of Mediterranean Antiquity: Essays in Honour of Peter Richardson*, ed. Stephen G. Wilson and Michel Desjardins (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2000), 63–73.

p.130 n.16a “As the reader passes down the chain, the social status of these human ciphers grows obscure, but their role remains the same” Here, I evoke the work of Elizabeth Castelli on the “mimetic economy” in Paul. See Elizabeth A. Castelli, *Imitating Paul: A Discourse of Power* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1991), 94. On ambassadorial envoys and letter-carriers, see Luckritz Marquis, *Transient Apostle*, 42–45, 127–47.

p.130 n.17 Botha, *Orality and Literacy*, 243. Even outside the circles of famous leaders, Egyptian Christians also used enslaved workers to deliver invitations and local letters. See AnneMarie Luijendijk, “Books and Private Readers in Early Christian Oxyrhynchus: ‘A Spiritual Meadow and a Garden of Delight,’” in *Books and Readers in the Premodern World: Essays in Honor of Harry Gamble*, ed. Karl Shuve (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2018), 111–12. See also Harrill, *Manumission*, 63; Patrick Reinard, *Kommunikation und Ökonomie: Untersuchungen zu den privaten Papyrusbriefen aus dem kaiserzeitlichen Ägypten* (Rahden: Leidorf, 2016), 358–66, 480. Such workers were useful because letters and messages often necessitated a response. Only someone under the slaveholder’s control could be relied upon to follow directions and return home. On relaying responses to the letter-carrier, see, for example, 1 Clem 65.1, and Eldon J. Epp, “New Testament Papyrus Manuscripts and Letter Carrying in Greco-Roman Times,” in *The Future of Early Christianity: Essays in Honor of Helmut Koester*, ed. Birger A. Pearson (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991), 35–56. See Peter Head, “Witnesses

between You and Us': The Role of the Letter-Carriers in *1 Clement*," in *Studies on the Text of the New Testament and Early Christianity: Essays in Honour of Michael W. Holmes on the Occasion of his 65th Birthday*, ed. Daniel M. Gurtner, Juan Hernández, Jr., and Paul Foster (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 477–93. On the trustworthiness of servile people, see also the role of Hermas in the *Shepherd of Hermas* (Vis. 1–4), and discussion in Bonar, "Enslaved to God."

The trustworthiness of representatives was integral to the success of any communication, and servile workers could be held accountable in ways that friends and acquaintances could not. To give but one example of trustworthy letter-carriers, some decades after Paul's death, three "trustworthy and prudent men" were sent to Corinth as "witnesses" by the church of Rome (*1 Clem* 65.1). The role of these messengers—Claudius Ephebus, Valerius Bito, and Fortunatus—was to ensure that the letter was understood and to report back on how it was received. It was a precarious situation: a fissure had emerged between Rome and Corinth and, in the eyes of the Roman Christians, Corinth was in crisis. Their names suggest that Claudius Ephebus and Valerius Bito were freedmen, possibly imperial freedmen, and that Fortunatus was enslaved. On Claudius Ephebus and Valerius Bito as freedmen from the imperial families, see Lightfoot, *Apostolic Fathers*, 1:27–29; Peter Lampe, *From Paul to Valentinus: Christians at Rome in the First Two Centuries*, trans. Michael Steinhauser (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003), 184–86. Lampe tellingly describes Fortunatus as being mentioned as "an appendage" (*From Paul to Valentinus*, 185).

Some recipients may have preferred a digestible and interrogable summary to a dense letter like *1 Clement*, which took nearly two hours to read aloud. The estimate of this reading time is based on a presumed vocalized reading speed of 150 words per minute.

p.130 n.17a "A relay, such as that devised by the Persians, or the imperial post..." The imperial post founded by Augustus was initially called the "vehiculation," but was later described as the "cursus" or "servus publicus."

p.131 n.18 The following section on gossip is influenced by: Gianni Guastella, *Word of Mouth: Fama and Its Personifications in Art and Literature from Ancient Rome to the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017); Marianne Bjelland Kartzow, *Gossip and Gender: Othering of Speech in the Pastoral Epistles* (BZNW 164; Berlin: De Gruyter, 2009).

p.132 n.19 Virgil, *Aeneid* [173-97](#). This is a monstrous reconfiguration of Homer's idea of "winged words." Plutarch, *On Being a Busybody*, *Moralia* 519F. Some early Christians shared this view: see Kartzow, *Gossip and Gender*, 208. In the minds of elites, authorless rumors accrued layers of editorializing and embellishment. They were untrustworthy. In many examples of military hearsay, the essential message about the outcome of the conflict is correct, but, away from the scrutinizing glare of verification, the details had mushroomed in the dark. In many ways, the word "gossip" (and the many linguistic terms that carried this meaning) is just a pejorative way of describing unsanctioned informal speech, or the spread of information by those who were not authorized to speak freely. As such, we should see it as a potential form of resistance and egalitarian speech by which the disenfranchised were able to "insinuate a critique of power while hiding behind anonymity." It is precisely "because gossip is hard to repress," writes Mary Leach, that "it supplies a weapon for outsiders; it often reflects moral assumptions different from those of the dominant culture; it provides language and knowledge potentially disruptive to the state order but vital to individual and community life of subordinated classes." See Mary Leach, "Feminist Figurations:

Gossip as a Counterdiscourse,” in *Working the Ruins: Feminist Poststructural Theory and Methods in Education*, ed. Elizabeth St. Pierre and Wanda Pillow (New York: Routledge, 1999), 232.

Rumor challenged those in power. If you were to walk down a street in ancient Pompeii, only storefronts would be open to your view. Homes were shut away, surrounded by a stone epidermis that protected the *paterfamilias* from the eyes and ears of potential busybodies and critics. But this architecture was more aspirational than effective, because the home was vulnerable to all kinds of informational leaks. It bustled with workers who knew their enslavers intimately: they saw them naked and at their most vulnerable, overheard privileged conversations and drunken banter, and read sensitive correspondence. (On knowledge of the affairs of the enslaver, see V. J. Hunter, *Policing Athens: Social Control in the Attic Lawsuits, 420-320 B.C.* [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994], 70–95, and Keith Bradley, “Slavery in the Roman Republic,” in Bradley and Cartledge, *The Cambridge World History of Slavery*, 1.241–64). The elite home was filled with attendants, each of whom had the potential to become a domestic enemy and spy. An ancient maxim recognized this chink in the armor of domination: “You have as many enemies as you have slaves” (Seneca, [Ep. 47.5](#)). See J. Albert Harrill, “The Domestic Enemy: A Moral Polarity of Household Slaves in Early Christian Apologies and Martyrdoms,” in *Early Christian Families in Context: An Interdisciplinary Dialogue*, ed. David Balch and Carolyn Osiek (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 231–54.

With the memory of the rebellion of Spartacus in the back of their minds, the powerful were, quite literally, kept up at night with worry. One first-century C.E. guide to ancient household management recommended that the *paterfamilias* retire after his workers, rise before them, and wake in the middle of the night to monitor their activities (Philodemus, *On Property Management*, column B).

The Roman enslaver may have had almost complete power, but that power was vulnerable to attack not only through overt and usually unsuccessful acts of violent rebellion, but also through small acts of resistance, such as the surreptitious dissemination of household secrets or the mismanagement of time and resources. The architecture of enslavement only added to the problem. The attendant forced to sleep outside the bedroom of the *paterfamilias* was also privy to the details of his sex life. It was because of this that deaf people were sometimes highly valued as enslaved workers: What they could not hear they also could not repeat. See Martial 11.38, in which the satirist writes that a hearing-impaired mule driver sold for 20,000 sesterces on account of his condition. Deaf people were categorized under Roman law alongside others with perceived defects (*Dig. 21.1.3-4* pr. [Gaius and Ulpian]). In the case that their enslaver was murdered at home, they were—unlike other enslaved workers—protected from punishment because they could not have been expected to hear the attack and offer help (*Dig. 29.5.38* [Ulpian]). See discussion in Christian Laes, *Disabilities and the Disabled in the Roman World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 114–32.

p.132 n.19a “The errands that took enslaved workers out of the house allowed them to form small sympathetic alliances, intimate bonds, and looser social ties.” From the perspective of the slaveholder, the agency and conversation of enslaved workers were a perennial threat. The response of enslavers was to attempt to control both the movements and speech of their domestic help. Trimalchio, the antihero of Petronius’s *Satyricon*, is depicted as having a sign on the door of his home that promised a hundred lashes to any enslaved resident who left it without his permission (Petr. [Sat. 28.7](#)). The satirical tale caricatures a reality in which enslavers and their agents attempted to surveil the movements of their staff. Even in agrarian contexts, there was concern about enslaved movement. “The overseer (*vilicus*),” wrote the agronomist Columella, “should not be an ambler” or stroll around the farm for pleasure (Columella, *On Agriculture* [1.8.7](#)). The same strategies of

containment and restraint were used in elite Roman homes and spaces. These impulses are cross-cultural; in her work on the antebellum American South, Stephanie Camp writes that the “systematic constriction of slave movement...helped establish slaveholders sense of mastery” and assuage enslaver fears about domestic subversion or laziness; see Camp, *Closer to Freedom*, 6.

p.132 n.20 Martial, [Ep. 8.75](#). On funerary workers, see Sarah E. Bond, *Trade and Taboo: Disreputable Professions in the Roman Mediterranean* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2016), 59–96. Though it might seem obvious that accidental relationships were integral to the spread of the Christian message, it is important to acknowledge. Without them, we would be left with a skeletal outline of the spread of Christianity that turns only on the words of a few elite men.

p.133 n.21 Origen, *Cels.* 3.44, trans. Chadwick.

p.134 n.22 On sleeping: Tacitus, [Histories 1.43](#); Pliny, *Ep.* [7.27.13](#); Franco Luciani, “Public Slaves in Rome: ‘Privileged’ or Not?,” *CQ* 70.1 (2020): 368–84. “[Archaeological evidence...](#)” Adele Rinaldi, “Preesistenze tardo repubblicane di carattere abitativo sotto la pavimentazione del foro di Nerva (con appendice di G. Maglie),” *Scienze dell’Antichità* 21.3 (2015): 3–32.

On [romantic relationships](#): CIL 5.3707, and Maclean, *Freed Slaves and Roman Imperial Culture*, 24.

“[elite caricature of truant staff day-drinking in taverns](#)” Columella refers to urban enslaved workers in this way, writing that “this lazy and sleepy class of slaves, accustomed to leisure (time off from work), to the campus, the circus, and the theatres, to gambling, to taverns, to brothels, never ceases to dream of these follies” (*On Agriculture* [1.8.2](#)). For enslaved religion, see *Dig.* [21.1.1.9–10](#). For a discussion of the spatial dynamics of the home, see Joshel, “Geographies of Slave Containment,” 99–123. Regarding the use of alcohol by enslaved workers, it is possible to see this as self-medication and defiant self-nurturance. The language of defiant self-nurturance is borrowed from Barbara Ehrenreich, *Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting by in America* (New York: Metropolitan, 2001), 31.

p.135 n.23 On women: Margaret Y. MacDonald, “Was Celsus Right? The Role of Women in the Expansion of Early Christianity,” in Balch and Osiek, *Early Christian Families in Context*, 157–84; Kartzow, *Gossip and Gender*, 208; Kate Cooper, “Insinuations of Womanly Influence: An Aspect of the Christianization of the Roman Aristocracy,” *JRS* 82 (1992): 150–64; Jeremiah Coogan, “Meddling with the Gospel: Celsus, Early Christian Textuality, and the Politics of Reading,” *NovT* 65 (2023), 400–22.

Quote from Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *On Literary Composition* 25.193. This construction of authorship developed over time. On the emergence of singular elite authorship and elite status, see Joseph Howley, “Visible Erasure,” forthcoming. On the gendering of authorship, see Karen L. King, “‘What is an Author?’: Ancient Author-Function in the *Apocryphon of John* and the *Apocalypse of John*,” in *Scribal Practices and Social Structures Among Jesus Adherents: Essays in Honour of John S. Kloppenborg*, ed. William E. Arnal et al. (Leuven: Peeters, 2016), 27–31.

p.135 n.24 Matthew 26:[51](#), [69](#). This argument is made with regard to the parallel passage in [John 18:10](#), [26](#), in Katherine Shaner, *Recentring Women and Slaves in the Early Christian Story* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, forthcoming).

p.135 n.24a “As a result, Jesus could not enter urban centers without attracting attention.” This is strikingly early in the Gospel. Compare John [4:39-42](#). On the Samaritan woman at the well, see Angela Parker, “‘And the Word became... Gossip?’ Unhinging the Samaritan Woman in the Age of #MeToo,” *Review & Expositor* 117.2 (2020): 259-271. With respect to the Gospel of Mark, these characters are normally called “minor characters.” See Elizabeth Struthers Malbon, *In the Company of Jesus: Characters in Mark’s Gospel* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2000), 191-92.

p.136 n.24b “This last episode—the aborted angelic message in Mark 16—has elicited a great deal of conversation.” On women as disciples in Mark, see Joan L. Mitchell, *Beyond Fear and Silence: A Feminist-Literary Reading of Mark* (New York: Continuum, 2001), 8-9; Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her: A Feminist Theological Reconstruction of Christian Origins* (New York: Crossroad, 1983), 320; Elisabeth Struthers Malbon, “Fallible Followers: Women and Men in the Gospel of Mark,” *Semeia* 28 (1983): 29-48; Hisako Kinukawa, *Women and Jesus in Mark: A Japanese Feminist Perspective* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1994), 90-106; Seong Hee Kim, *Mark, Women and Empire: A Korean Postcolonial Perspective* (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2010), 117-32. We should set the alleged ‘failure’ of the women in contrast to their attendance to the suffering of Jesus at the crucifixion; see Angela Parker, “Sandra Bland at the Cross: A Womanist Reading of Mark 15:40-47,” *Review & Expositor* 118.1 (2021): 89-101.

p.137 n.25 Lucius Domitius: Suetonius, [Nero 1.1](#). Barber: Plutarch, [On Talkativeness 509B](#). On the safety of anonymity in Roman literary culture, see Geue, *Author Unknown*. We find references to more socially acceptable forms of gossip in the oral Gospel discussed by Papias. Some of the elders who served as his sources may well have been enslaved.

p.137 n.26 Plutarch, [On Talkativeness 503D](#); Hesiod, [Works and Days 760-64](#): “No talk is ever entirely gotten rid of, once people talk it up: it too is some god.” (trans. Glen W. Most).

p.138 n.27 On the wind-like qualities of rumor, see Guastella, *Word of Mouth*, 26-33. Peter’s speech is clearly an important factor: Acts wants us to imagine that bold public speech and subversive speech operate together. For the Christian condemnation of gossip and slander, see [1 Tim 4:7](#); [2 Tim 4:3](#); [Tit. 1:10-11](#); Kartzow, *Gossip and Gender*, 195-201. For an alternative reading of this scene in Acts 2, see Meghan R. Henning, “Holy Impairment: The Body as the Nexus of Apocalyptic *Ekphrasis* in Acts 2:1-13,” *JBL* 141.3 (2022): 533-52.

CHAPTER FIVE

p.141 n.1 Codex Bobiensis is sometimes spelled Bobbiensis. An extraordinary history of the text is provided in Matthew D. C. Larsen, "The Real-and-Imagined Biography of a Gospel Manuscript," *EC* 12.1 (2021): 103–131. On Bobiensis in general, see Hugh Houghton, *The Latin New Testament: A Guide to its Early History, Texts, and Manuscripts* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 10, 22; Claire Clivaz, "Mk16 im Codex Bobbiensis: Neue Einsichten zur Textgeschichte des kurzen Markusschlusses," *Zeitschrift für Neues Testament* 24.47 (forthcoming).

p.142 n.2 [Gospel of Peter 39](#). This, too, is the kind of gossipy speech that Jewish and Roman authorities tried, through bribery and threats, to contain. On this scene in the *Gospel of Peter*, see Mark Goodacre, "[The Walking, Talking Cross in the Gospel of Peter](#)," *NT Blog*, October 11, 2011. On the endings of Mark, see discussion in Chapter Six.

p.143 n.3 "Is this what the copyist of Bobiensis imagines?" Or the earliest manuscript copied by the scribe of Bobiensis (though, of course, we do not have this text). "[wheezing Pliny the Elder](#)": Pliny, *Ep.* 6.16. "[a metaphor for intellectual dependence in the writing of Lucian](#)" See Lucian, *ad. Indoc.* The identity of Lucian's target is unknown, but see C. P. Jones, "Two Enemies of Lucian," *GRBS* 13.4 (1972): 475–87. Cat Lambert's work has analyzed this trope in Seneca; see Cat Lambert, "Enslavement and the Reader(s) in Seneca's Moral Epistles," paper presented at the "Economic Aspects of Reading in Antiquity Symposium," University of Munich, August 4-6, 2022. "[theological point as well...](#)" See Candida R. Moss, *Divine Bodies: Resurrecting Perfection in the New Testament and Early Christianity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2019). For an analysis of the manuscript of this section, see D. W. Palmer, "The Origin, Form, and Purpose of Mark XVI.4 in Codex Bobbiensis," *JTS* 27.1 (1976): 113–122.

p.143 n.4 Larsen, "Real-and-Imagined Biography."

p.144 n.5 Those who specialize in ancient manuscripts tend to distinguish between the scribe and the copyist, reserving the latter term only for those whose intention was to produce a precise copy. A copyist may also have done editorial and secretarial work. That secretarial labor may well have involved composing sentences, phrases, paragraphs, and even whole letters in the names of others (on this, see Moss, "The Secretary"). So, too, someone whose status was identified as a secretary (e.g., Tiro) would also copy texts. For the purposes of this chapter, I will try to highlight activities performed by those known—in terms of job title—as copyists.

On the disrepute of copying, see *Rhet. Her.* 4.6; Cornelius Nepos, [Eum. 1.5](#). On bureaucratic copyists (*scribae*), see Benjamin Hartmann, *The Scribes of Rome: A Cultural and Social History of the Scribae* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 13–60.

Referring to copying as "blue collar" work is crass because our own attitudes are both continuous and discontinuous with those of our ancient Greek and Roman sources, with those continuities often entailing the conscious developments of ancient biases. Elite writers, as we will see throughout this book, use classed language to designate literate work that they did not themselves perform as "servile" or "artisanal." On this, see Jeremiah Coogan, Candida Moss, and Joseph Howley, "The Socioeconomics of Fabrication: Textuality, Authenticity, and Class in the Roman Mediterranean," *Arethusa*, forthcoming. Most formative for my own thinking about the crafting of

the divide between “physical” and “intellectual” work is Sara Ahmed’s concept of the fantasy of disembodied and immaterial “paperless philosophy” that takes place apart from supporting labor, in *Queer Phenomenology* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2016), 33. It is worth noting, however, that the Cartesian distinction between mind and body, which informs so many modern classed assessments of work, has antecedents in antiquity. Histories of work usually trace the view of manual labor as degrading to Plato and Aristotle, who saw the work of artisans and in the marketplace as ignoble, corrupting, and antithetical to the pursuit of the Good. On this, see, for example, the discussion in Herbert Applebaum, *The Concept of Work: Ancient, Medieval, and Modern* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992), 3–175. What the language of “blue-collar” evokes is the arbitrary ways in which wealth, social status, morality, and intelligence are layered onto one another in historically contingent ways. One unparalleled feature of Roman medical thought that is worth raising is the Galenic view that “thinking” is a form of physical activity that requires sustenance. I am grateful to Claire Bubb for this insight.

p.145 n.6 For an example of attempts to persuade monks to continue as copyists, see the abbot of Sponheim, Johannes Trithemius, *In Praise of Scribes* (1492); *Martyrdom of Polycarp* [22.3](#).

As evidence of the many benefits that copying conferred upon monks, Trithemius claimed that when one monastic scribe, who died after decades of copying, was disinterred, the three writing fingers on his right hand were found to be incorrupt. See Trithemius, *In Praise of Scribes [De Laude Scriptorum]*, ed. Klaus Arnold, trans. Roland Behrendt, O.S.B. (Lawrence, KS: Coronado, 1974), with discussion in James O’Donnell, *Avatars of the Word: From Papyrus to Cyberspace* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998), 79–82. On the religious aspects of copying, see Jeremy M. Schott, “Plotinus’s Portrait and Pamphilus’s Prison Notebook: Neoplatonic and Early Christian Textualities at the Turn of the Fourth Century C.E.,” *J ECS* 21.3 (2013): 329–62.

p.145 n.7 On Christian manuscripts and copying, see Harry Y. Gamble, *Books and Readers in the Early Church: A History of Early Christian Texts* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995); David C. Parker, *The Living Text of the Gospels* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Kim Haines-Eitzen, *Guardians of Letters: Literacy, Power and the Transmitters of Early Christian Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); Larry W. Hurtado, *The Earliest Christian Artifacts: Manuscripts and Christian Origins* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006); AnneMarie Luijendijk, *Greetings in the Lord: Early Christians and the Oxyrhynchus Papyri* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008); Roger Bagnall, *Early Christian Books in Egypt* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009); Brent Nongbri, *God’s Library: The Archaeology of the Earliest Christian Manuscripts* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018).

We might compare early Christian representations of collating manuscripts with Porphyry, *Life of Plotinus*. Many aspects of bookwork—collation, crafting, and so on—sit at the intersection of work and “elite hobbies.” Collation was performed by some exceptional ancient elites like Galen, and I have several academic friends who, as an outgrowth of their intellectual interests, dabble in crafting books, inscriptions, and leather goods.

On copyists in the Roman world: T. Keith Dix, “Beware of Promising your Library to Anyone’: Assembling a Private Library at Rome,” in *Ancient Libraries*, ed. Jason König, Katerina Oikonomopoulou, and Greg Woolf (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 209–34; Raymond J. Starr, “The Circulation of Literary Texts in the Roman World,” *CQ* 37.1 (1987): 213–23; George W. Houston, *Inside Roman Libraries: Book Collections and Their Management in Antiquity* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014); William A. Johnson, *Readers and Reading Culture in the High Roman Empire: A Study of Elite Communities*. (Classical Culture and Society; Oxford:

Oxford University Press, 2010); Myles McDonnell, "Writing, Copying, and Autograph Manuscripts in Ancient Rome," *CQ* 46.2 (1996) 469-491; and Joseph A. Howley, "Enslaved Labor and the Ancient Roman Book," unpublished lecture delivered at the University of Pennsylvania, November 4, 2019. For books as gifts, see Cicero, *Fam.* [16.20](#). On acquiring books in the homes of others: Cicero, *Fin.* [3.2.7](#). Much as modern scholars receive free copies of books that they endorse, Cicero often received copies of books dedicated to him; see *Att.* 13.12.3, 13.50.1, 15.1a.2; *Fam.* 3.4.1, 3.11.4, 6.7, 7.24.2, 9.8.1, 15.21.1-1.

p.146 n.8 Horace, *Ep.* [1.20](#). Horace likens the commercial world of bookmaking to a life of prostitution in which sellers worked as pimps. I use the pejorative language of prostitution (as opposed to the preferable neutral language of sex work) in order to preserve the character of Horace's description. Freedman bookshop owners included Secundus, the freedman of Lucensis (Martial, [1.2.7](#)). Of the seven identifiable booksellers in the city of Rome, four have Greek names (Atrectus [Martial [1.117.13](#)], Sextus Peducaeus Dionysius [CIL 6.9218], Dorus [Seneca, *Ben.* [7.6.1](#)], and Trypho [Martial [4.72.2](#), [13.3.4](#)]), a detail that has led several scholars to conclude that they were formerly enslaved. See, for example, Norbert Brockmeyer, "Die soziale Stellung der 'Buchhändler' in der Antike," *Archiv für Geschichte des Buchwesens* 13 (1972): 237-48.

p.146 n.9 For more information about bookshops, see Peter White, "Bookshops in the Literary Culture of Rome," in *Ancient Literacies: The Culture of Reading in Greece and Rome*, ed. William A. Johnson and [Holt N. Parker](#) (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 268-87.

p.147 n.10 We should note that it is difficult to know to what extent the Price Edict represents an accurate picture of commerce. See Jan Heilmann, "The Relevance of Ancient Book Prices and the Book Market for Ancient Reading Culture," in *Economic Aspects of Reading in Antiquity*, ed. Jan Heilmann and Robyn F. Walsh (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, forthcoming). I am grateful to Jan for sharing a prepublication copy of this work. An online translation of the Price Edict of Diocletian has been published by Antony Kropff here: <http://kark.uib.no/antikk/dias/pricedict.pdf>. On false advertising: Strabo, *Geog.* [13.1.54](#); Cicero *QFr.* [3.4.5](#), [3.5.6](#); Martial [2.8](#). Diocletian's Price Edict [7.39-41](#).

In matching the quality of the hand to the economic value of a manuscript, we might overlook the extent to which individual copyists may have bent or toyed with such rules, especially in the period of our interest, when such standards were not enforced in this way. We should be mindful of Garson's observation regarding repetitive work, that "whatever creativity goes into sabotage, a more amazing ingenuity goes into manufacturing goals and satisfactions on jobs where measurable achievement has been all but rationalized out," in *All the Livelong Day*, xi. See also Sara Ahmed's statement that "Paper matters. Paper can also be queer; paper can be used queerly...to queer use can be to linger on the material qualities of that which you are supposed to pass over; it is to *recover* a potential from materials that have been left behind, all the things you can do with paper if you do not follow the instructions," in Sara Ahmed, *What's the Use?: On the Uses of Use* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2019), 206-7.

p.147 n.10a "Scholars speak of scribal error and rarely of scribal expertise." For the concept of scribal knowledge versus scribal error, I am grateful to Kelsie Rodenbiker and Martina Vercesi. On the presumed "incompetence" of enslaved workers, see Moss, "The Secretary," and Schultz, "Collecting," in *Writing, Enslavement, and Power*.

p.148 n.11 Some scholarship has, following the logic of Diocletian's Price Edict, sharply distinguished between the elegant literary hands that copied literature and the more informal documentary ones that did bookwork. More recent scholarship has blurred the boundaries between these two categories. On documentary/literary hands, see the nuanced discussion in William A. Johnson, *Bookrolls and Scribes in Oxyrhynchus* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 161; Colin H. Roberts, *Manuscript, Society and Belief in Early Christian Egypt* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), argues that early Christian papyri were copied by those who were neither "professional calligrapher[s]" nor "private scholar[s]" (14). Though he is sometimes misread, Roberts himself does not equate calligraphic elegance with careful copying. For discussions of early Christian manuscripts, see Luijendijk, *Greetings in the Lord*, and Luijendijk, "A New Testament Papyrus and Its Documentary Context: An Early Christian Writing Exercise from the Archive of Leonides (P. Oxy. II 209/q10)," *JBL* 129.3 (2010): 575–96. For work problematizing the designation of "documentary" and "literary" hands, see Nongbri, *God's Library*. Deluxe copy of Virgil: *P.Ant.* I 29, mentioned in Colin H. Roberts, *The Antinoopolis Papyri, Part 1* (London: Egypt Exploration Society, 1950), 75; Haines-Eitzen, *Guardians of Letters*, 68–75. See also Alan Muggidge, *Copying Early Christian Texts: A Study of Scribal Practice* (WUNT 362; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2016), 147; Colin H. Roberts and T. C. Skeat, *The Birth of the Codex* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), 46.

"What if copying a text well but in an informal documentary style is evidence of a copyist who took satisfaction in their work?" For discussions of sabotage and satisfaction in menial work, see Barbara Garson, *All the Livelong Day: The Meaning and Demeaning of Routine Work* (New York: Doubleday, 1975). Her chapters on "Paper" and clerical work not only expose the wide range of important innovations and interventions made by clerical workers, but also prove illuminating for those interested in questions of resistance, motivation, and satisfaction.

p.148 n.11a "Many people make accidental changes when transcribing and copying texts—our best guess for professional copyists is about one per page" On copyist errors, see James Royse, *Scribal Habits in Early Greek New Testament Papyri* (NTTSD 36; Leiden: Brill, 2007), 409–90; Bart D. Ehrman, *The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture: The Effect of Early Christological Controversies on the Text of the New Testament* (2d. ed; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

p.148 n.11b "Book manufacturing, like any kind of luxury goods industry..." On books as luxury objects, see the seminal work of Roger Bagnall, *Early Christian Books in Egypt*, 62–63. In a forthcoming work, Jan Heilmann presents some compelling evidence that the book was not necessarily a luxury object, at least in the city of Rome. See Jan Heilmann, "The Relevance of Ancient Book Prices," forthcoming. That said, the scribe of Bobiensis writes in a careful hand, and the quality of the parchment is high. Even if, as Heilmann argues, books weren't always luxury goods, this particular book was not inexpensive.

p.149 n.12 The argument that Bobiensis was produced by a non-Christian is all the more compelling given the fact that we have a number of very early commentaries on the Lord's Prayer by North African writers Tertullian and Cyprian. See F. C. Burkitt, "Further Notes on Codex k," *JTS* 5.17 (1903): 100–107 [107]. I am grateful to David Parker for directing me to this source. Houghton argues that the mistakes in Bobiensis may be attributed to a sloppy copyist (*Latin New Testament*, 22). On the possibility of non-Christian readers, see Nongbri, *God's Library*, 23; Walsh, *Origins*, 134–69.

p.149 n.13 On paratexts, see Gérard Genette, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Laura Jansen, ed., *The Roman Paratext: Frame, Texts, Readers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

p.150 n.14 This list of paratexts is inexhaustive and the literature is too extensive to discuss here. See Martin Wallraff and Patrick Andrist, "Paratexts of the Bible: A New Research Project on Greek Textual Transmission," *Early Christianity* 6.2 (2015): 237–43. For a full treatment of the history of this manuscript and this story, see Jennifer Knust and Tommy Wasserman, *To Cast the First Stone: The Transmission of a Gospel Story* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2018). Knust and Wasserman's work underpins my reading of this passage.

p.152 n.15 On bookmaking, see Boudalis, *Codex and Crafts*. Eye of the needle: [Matt 19:24](#); [Mark 10:25](#); [Luke 18:25](#). The origins of the myth of a pedestrian gate have been traced to Anselm by Agnieszka Ziemińska, in "[The Origin of the 'Needle's Eye Gate' Myth: Theophylact or Anselm?](#)," *NTS* 68.3 (2022): 358–61. The mythology maintains that a camel could pass through the small gate if the camel was not loaded with baggage and crawled through the opening. On this, see my column, "[Your Understanding of the Eye of the Needle is Probably Wrong](#)," *The Daily Beast*, June 13, 2022: <https://www.thedailybeast.com/your-understanding-of-eye-of-the-needle-is-probably-wrong>. On Family 13, see Didier Lafleur, *La Famille 13 dans l'évangile de Marc* (Leiden: Brill, 2013). Although the idea of a "Caesarean Text-Type" has fallen out of vogue, Family 13 reflects a relatively controlled cluster of texts associated with the city around the fourth century C.E. The textual evidence is complicated because, in the Gospel of Matthew, Family 13 represents the majority reading, whereas in Mark, it is secondary. This might lead us to conclude that the change was made as the Gospel of Matthew was being composed and that the alteration to the Markan textual tradition was intended to harmonize Mark with Matthew. My proposal is that both harmonization and the life-world of the bookshop are on view. For an overview of the debate on Caesarean text-types, see Yii-Jan Lin, *The Erotic Life of Manuscripts* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 86–94. When inadvertent, this kind of error is known to text critics as itacism or iotacism. It refers to when various vowels (i, e, u) or diphthongs (ei, oi, ui) came to be pronounced as an iota (i). On this, see Bruce M. Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration* (3rd ed.; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 190.

An important caveat to this conversation is the question of when the *kamilos* suggestion arose. Some have proposed that the *kamilos* is a late Byzantine scholiastic suggestion for how the 'error' arose rather than a manuscript reading as such. For evidence against this objection, see Saul Levin, "Le chameau et le trou de l'aiguille: *καμηλος ου κάμιλος?*," *L'information grammaticale* 51 (1991): 35–38. What should be noted is that *kamilos* and *kamelos* would have been pronounced identically and thus we might be dealing with an issue that arose in vocalized reading and dictation.

p.153 n.16 On the cognitive skills involved in work, see Mike Rose, *The Mind at Work: Valuing the Intelligence of the American Worker* (New York: Viking, 2004). Rose directed me to a number of other important studies from the field of cognitive science. On tools, see Jeff Taylor, *Tools of the Trade: The Art and Craft of Carpentry* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1996); Charles M. Keller and Janet D. Keller, *Cognition and Tool Use: The Blacksmith at Work* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996). On attention, see David LaBerge, *Attentional Processing: The Brain's Art of Mindfulness* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995). Bookmaking required steady hands and fresh eyes, but also relied upon the tactile feedback supplied by the cord and needle. Rulers appear in our

sources as trusted implements. In addition, the smell of leather and glue, the feel of the grain of the leather or the roughness of the cord, the sound that the connection of writing material to writing implement made, even the viscosity of different kinds of inks, all provided sensory feedback. Reed pens had to be sharpened and papyrus was sometimes too thin (Quintilian, *Inst.* 10.3.31; Horace, *Sat.* 2.3.7. On papyrus: Pliny, *NH* 13.74-89). Cicero had to explain to his brother Quintus that he had not been busy or angry when he wrote his previous letter, he'd simply had a bad pen (*Q.Fr.* 2.14.1). See Frampton, *Empire of Letters*, 2.

The medley of sensory, kinesthetic, and cognitive abilities that contributed to the biomechanical skills of bookwork are a neurological marvel in themselves, but they were maximized in the constrained environments where copyists and bookmakers worked alongside one another. Cognitive scientists and studies of modern labor practices reveal that this kind of tactile work is always intimately connected to the use of tools. On technologies of bookmaking: John L. Sharpe, "Wooden Books and the History of the Codex: Isocrates and the Farm Account, Evidence from the Egyptian Desert," in *Roger Powell: The Compleat Binder, Liber Amicorum*, ed. John L. Sharpe (Turnhout: Brepols, 1996), 107-129; Boudalis, *Codex and Crafts*.

This analysis is possible even if the emendation stems from the authors of Matthew and harmonization is at work. A potential problem here would be the chronological development of the codex, which did not achieve broad use until the second century (Matthew is traditionally dated to the end of the first century C.E.). Nevertheless, wax tablets, which were in wide use from the eighth century B.C.E. onwards, were also sewn together with cord. See Boudalis, *Codex and Crafts*, 21-34. Note that we tend to assume that rulers can always be used for measurement. In antiquity they were more like straight edges.

p.153 n.17 "In many cases this analysis is undoubtedly correct, but studies of the behavior of workers engaged in repetitive literate work in more recent periods suggest that there might be other explanations" A clerical worker named Elayne, who was tasked with data entry at Banker's Trust in the 1970s, relayed how she played games with herself to pass the time. "Sometimes," she said, "I spell out 'Pool Number,' other times I write 'pl#.' Interest rate I might go '9.50 percent' or '9.5%'" The reason for such 'inconsistencies' in her digital footprint is not varying sources, it is the copyist herself. Elayne was not incompetent, she was bored. "I guess you do anything for a little change," she said, "Something to *do* inside your head." Elayne is cited in Barbara Garson, *All the Livelong Day: The Meaning and Demeaning of Routine Work* (Rev ed.; New York: Penguin, 1994), 243. The comparison might be far-fetched. But Elayne, an African-American woman working in a predominantly African-American workplace—"Nobody white ever stays," another interviewee said of her position (241)—described it in enslaving terms: "I hate this job. It's a big plantation. You write that in black letters." (244) When she stayed through the night to work and had to pay her babysitter extra, she explained, "You got no choice when you're slaves" (240) She was not alone in viewing her workplace in this way; her white manager seemed to have absorbed some of the exploitative overseer ethos familiar to us from structures of enslavement. He lectured the assembled clerks that "[My] productivity is how much work I get out of you for the hours I have to pay." (243) See also Jesper Isaksen, "Constructing Meaning Despite the Drudgery of Repetitive Work," *Journal of Humanistic Psychology* 40.3 (2000): 84-107. The relationship between stress, dehumanization, and monotonous work has been extensively studied by psychoanalysts, cognitive scientists, and those in working class studies.

Other clerical workers who are routinely told that their jobs are mindless play different kinds of games. A young woman named Ellen, who proofread documents at Fair Plan Insurance Company

around the same time as Elayne, noticed that one client had insured his store for \$165,000 against vandalism and \$5000 against fire. It was surely a mistake but, after some mental back and forth, she decided to do nothing. "I'm not supposed to understand it," Ellen said, "If they're gonna give me a robot's job to do, I'm gonna do it like a robot." Ellen (not her real name) is cited in Garson, *All the Livelong Day*, x.

p.154 n.18 Aesop: *Life of Aesop* G 38 (oil) and G 41(lentil pot), with discussion in Keith Hopkins, "Novel Evidence for Roman Slavery," in *Studies in Ancient Greek and Roman Society. Past and Present Publications*, ed. Robin Osborne (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 206–225. David Graeber, *Bullshit Jobs: A Theory* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2018). I am grateful to Nicolette D'Angelo for this reference. The scribe who wrote allusions to Callimachus in the margins of a tax document from ancient Egypt (P. Mich 223.2665) was of this sort.

p.155 n.19 Heilmann, *Lesen*. His insights broaden our sense of the mechanical vocabularies, embodied skills, environmental constraints, and interests at work. See also the important work of AnneMarie Luijendijk in *Greetings in the Lord* and "The Gospel of Mary at Oxyrhynchus (P. Oxy. L 3525 and P. Ryl. III 463): Rethinking the History of Early Christianity through Literary Papyri from Oxyrhynchus," in *Re-Making the World: Christianity and Categories. Essays in Honor of Karen L. King*, ed. Taylor G. Petrey, Carly Daniel-Hughes, Benjamin H. Dunning, AnneMarie Luijendijk, and Laura S. Nasrallah (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2019), 391–418.

p.155 n.20 Cicero, *Att.* 4.4a. On libraries, see *Ancient Libraries*, ed. J. König, K. Oikonomopoulou, and G. D. Woolf (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013). This section on organization owes a great deal to Alexandra Leewon Schultz, "Collection," in Coogan, Moss, and Howley, *Writing, Enslavement, and Power*, forthcoming. Pasting texts together was messy work and it is unclear if the *glutinarius*/*glutinator* mentioned by Cicero (compare *CIL* 6.9443) refers to a designated role or a distinctly bookish skill: Glue was utilized in a variety of contexts.

p.155 n.20a "All was right with the world now that Cicero's library was in order." We might compare Cicero's sentiments to Walter Benjamin's famous essay, "Unpacking my Library: A Speech on Collecting" (1931), or to Marie Kondo, *The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up*, trans. Cathy Hirano (Berkeley: Ten Speed Press, 2014).

p.156 n.21 Galen, *Lib. Prop.* 1. Extant book tags reveal that whoever made them was clearly literate (P. Lond. Lit. 27). See discussion in Brent Nongbri, "Maintenance," in Coogan, Howley, and Moss, *Writing, Enslavement, and Power*, forthcoming. For enslaved workers in libraries in general, see George Houston, "The Slave and Freedman Personnel of Public Libraries in Ancient Rome," *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 132 (2002): 139–76. Female librarians: Treggiari, "Jobs for Women," 78, 90, and Haines-Eitzen, "Girls Trained in Beautiful Writing," 634–40.

p.157 n.22 Codex Fuldensis (F), produced between 541 and 546 C.E.

p.157 n.23 On Marcion's collection, see Ulrich Schmid, *Marcion und sein Apostolos: Rekonstruktion und historische Einordnung der marcionitischen Paulusbriefausgabe* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1995).

p.158 n.24 Pasted rolls: Cicero, [Att. 9.10](#). Cicero and Atticus each treasured rolls of the letters that they had received from one another: Cicero, *Att.* 16.5.5. On 2 Cor., I follow Brent Nongbri, “2 Corinthians and Possible Material Evidence for Composite Letters in Antiquity,” in *Collecting Early Christian Letters: From the Apostle Paul to Late Antiquity*, ed. Bronwen Neil and Pauline Allen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 54–67.

p.158 n.24a “While some think that Paul himself had editorial oversight and control, the process of assembling letter collections in antiquity almost always involved enslaved workers.” For the proposal that Paul edited himself, see David Trobisch, *Die Entstehung der Paulusbriefsammlung: Studien zu den Anfängen christlicher Publizistik* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1989). For an excellent overview of the conversation relating to Paul, see Gregory Fewster, “Archiving Paul: Manuscripts, Religion, and the Editorial Shaping of Ancient Letter Collections,” *Archivaria* 81 (2016): 101–28.

p. 159 n.25 Mary Beard, “Ciceronian Correspondences: Making a Book Out of Letters,” in *Classics in Progress: Essays on Ancient Greece and Rome*, ed. T. P. Wiseman (British Academy Monographs; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 103–144. For the proposal that Tiro edited the letters himself, see W. C. McDermott, “M. Cicero and M. Tiro,” *Historia* 21.2 (1972): 259–86, and the critique in James Zetzel, “Emendavi ad Tironem: Some Notes on Scholarship in the Second Century AD,” *HSCP* 77 (1973): 225–43. For the contributions of other literate workers in the production of Cicero’s *oeuvre*, see the forthcoming dissertation of John Izzo, Columbia University.

p.159 n.25a “For Roman literary elites, organization was an authorial task” On organization (*taxis*) as an elite task critical to the writing process, see Moss, “Fashioning Mark,” and Jeremiah Coogan, “Order of Gospel Books.”

p.160 n.26 On indices and tables of contents: Riggsby, *Mosaics of Knowledge*. On subversive alternative reading schemes: Roy Gibson, “Starting with the Index in Pliny,” in Jansen, *The Roman Paratext*, 33–55. For a modern example, see Wilda C. Gafney, *A Women’s Lectionary for the Whole Church: A Multi-Gospel Single-Year Lectionary. Year W* (New York: Church Publishing, 2021).

p.160 n.27 Jeremiah Coogan, *Eusebius the Evangelist* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022). On nonlinear reading in antiquity and among early Christians, see Jeremiah Coogan, “Gospel as Recipe Book: Nonlinear Reading and Practical Texts in Late Antiquity,” *EC* 12.1 (2021): 40–60, and “Transforming Textuality: Porphyry, Eusebius, and Late Ancient Tables of Contents,” *SLA* 5.1 (2021): 6–27. What follows, like much of this chapter, is indebted to many fruitful conversations. On the canon tables, see also Francis Watson, *The Fourfold Gospel: A Theological Reading of the New Testament Portraits of Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2016), and Matthew Crawford, *The Eusebian Canon Tables: Ordering Textual Knowledge in Late Antiquity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019).

p.162 n.27a “one of the oldest illuminated Gospel manuscripts in existence, a sixth-century Ethiopian Gospel book, includes an image of Eusebius” The manuscript is written in Classical Ethiopic (ገዳሚ) and known as Abba Gäräma III. It was mistakenly re-bound into Abba Gäräma II, [fol. 295v](#). For a discussion of the manuscript and portrait, see Judith S. McKenzie and Francis Watson, *The Garima Gospels: Early Illuminated Gospel Books from Ethiopia* (Oxford: Manar al-Athar in collaboration with Allard Pierson Museum and the Deeds Project, University of Toronto, 2016).

p.162 n.27b “Eusebius too is an evangelist” See Coogan, *Eusebius the Evangelist*, 1.

p.162 n.27c “In this way, Roman reading practices, which often focused on the author, were disrupted by a new scheme that moved people’s attention away...” This is not to suggest that the Eusebian team was deliberately disrupting or subverting authorial intention. He emphasizes how it preserves the love of truth of individual evangelists. I imagine that they were creating reading aids that they believed represented the viewpoint of the ultimate authorial voice: the Divine One. And, indeed, they might have understood themselves to be secretarial workers in service of the divine author.

p.162 n.28 Coogan, *Eusebius the Evangelist*, 46 n.54 (enslaved workers) and 123–71 (influence).

p.163 n.29 Strabo, *Geography* [13.1.54](#). Compare Plutarch, *Sulla* 26. On this scene, see William A. Johnson, “Cicero and Tyrannio: *mens addita videtur meis aedibus* (*Ad Atticum* 4.8.2),” *The Classical World* 105.4 (2012): 471–77.

p.163 n.30 Vitruvius recommended that libraries be built facing the east, since in “those that face the south and west, books are damaged by worms and dampness.” See Vitruvius, *On Architecture* [6.4.1](#); Aulus Gellius, *NA* [9.4](#). On military doctors: [P. Ross. Georg. 3.1](#). On parasites, see Cat Lambert, “The Ancient Entomological Bookworm,” *Arethusa* 53.1 (2020): 1–24.

p.164 n.31 On the Library of Alexandria, see Alexandra Leewon Schultz, “Imagined Histories: Hellenistic Libraries and the Idea of Greece,” PhD dissertation, Harvard University, 2021, and Stephen Johnstone, “A New History of Libraries and Books in the Hellenistic Period,” *Classical Antiquity* 33.2 (2014): 347–393, which builds on Roger S. Bagnall, “Alexandria: Library of Dreams,” *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Association* 146 (2002): 348–62. On bookworms, see Horace, *Ep.* 20.11; Ovid, *ex Ponto* 1.1.72; Martial 13.1; Lucian, *Ind.* 1; Galen, *Hipp.* 6 *Epid.* 17a.795 Kühn. A twelfth-century copy of the Gospel of Luke (MS f.3.12) at the University of Liverpool was recently found to contain bookworm excrement. Lambert, “Bookworm,” 1–24.

p.165 n.32 On enslaved curators: Cicero, *Att.* [4.4a](#), [4.8a](#); Nepos, *Att.* [13.3-4](#). On enslaved curators of clothes: Petronius, *Sat.* [78](#). On care for rolls: [Lucian, Ind. 17](#). See also P. Fam. Tebt. 15, ll. 35–37, in which an inspector complains that documents were damaged and moth-eaten.

On cedar oil as a depilatory: Pliny, *NH* [32.47](#). For books: Pliny, *NH* [24.11](#); Ausonius, *Epigrams* 19.1. See AnneMarie Luijendijk, “‘Embalm Them with Cedar Oil’: Maintenance of Manuscripts with Oil of Cedar,” in *Festschrift for Martha Himmelfarb*, ed. Ra’anan Boustan, David Frankfurter, and Annette Yoshiko Reed (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, forthcoming). I am grateful to AnneMarie for sharing a pre-publication version of this paper. A third-century CE shopkeeper’s account in Egypt ([P. Oxy XIV.1727](#)) includes the purchase of cedar oil alongside papyrus. As Luijendijk has suggested, this might indicate that cedar oil and papyrus were purchased together, almost as we might purchase insurance along with our cars. See also Mark de Kreij, Daniela Colomo, and Andrew Lui, “Shoring Up Sappho: P. Oxy. 2288 and Ancient Reinforcements of Bookrolls,” *Mnemosyne* 73.6 (2020): 915-48; Andrea Jördens, “Reparaturen in arsinoitischen Gauarchiven,” in *Actes du 26e Congrès International de Papyrologie. Genève, 16-21 Août 2010*, ed. Paul Schubert, *Recherches et Rencontres* (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 2012), 371–79.

p.165 n.33 Horace, *Ep.* [1.20](#); Martial, *Ep.* 1.117.15. On bookshops and publication as sex work, see Ellen Oliensis, "Life after Publication: Horace, *Epistles* 1.20," *Arethusa* 28.2/3 (1995): 209–24. On Rabbinic texts: m. B. Meṣ 2.8-9; b. B. Meṣ. 29b. On frayed beards: Martial, *Ep.* [14.84](#). See discussion in Newlands, "The Role of the Book," 62.

p.166 n.33a "The making of the Bible is not just about copying, it is about the arts of crafting, curation, and care." All of this is important work. Hypothetically speaking, the small pieces of papyrus that were used to mend old books might, centuries later, have been subjected to carbon 14 dating.

p.167 n.34 Lucian, [Indoc. 22](#); Rabbinic text: m. Git. 2:4: 4, in which "Rabbi Judah ben Batera says: they do not write [a get] on a sheet from which writing has been erased nor on semi-finished parchment, for it can be faked. But the sages validate [such a get]."

p.167 n. 35 Knust and Wasserman supply a pithy history of some of these issues in *To Cast the First Stone*, 18–46. Perhaps the most famous example of recent scholarship focused on the theological ramifications of manuscript evidence is Bart Ehrman, *Misquoting Jesus: The Story Behind Who Changed the Bible and Why* (San Francisco: HarperOne, 2005). It is worth noting that Ehrman did not discuss the social status of copyists in his book. On how the field of textual criticism has been riddled by racist and racializing assumptions, see Lin, *The Erotic Life of Manuscripts*. For a response to Ehrman's work, see H. A. G. Houghton and D. C. Parker, eds., *Textual Variation: Theological and Social Tendencies? Papers from the Fifth Birmingham Colloquium on the Textual Criticism of the New Testament* (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias, 2008).

The past fifteen years have revolutionized the study of textual criticism; scholars like Kim Haines-Eitzen, Jennifer Knust and Tommy Wasserman, Brent Nongbri, Jeremiah Coogan, and AnneMarie Luijendijk have pursued different questions, many of which involve a turn to the material history of objects. On this material turn in the study of ancient Jewish and Christian religious texts, see Liv Ingeborg Lied and Hugo Lundhaug, eds., *Snapshots of Evolving Traditions: Jewish and Christian Manuscript Culture, Textual Fluidity, and New Philology* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2017).

p.169 n.36 Aulus Gellius, [NA 9.4](#). Christians were also concerned about textual corruption. See Tertullian's complaint about a pirated version of his *Against Marcion*, in 1.1. On this tendency in ancient literary theory in general, see William Johnson, *Readers and Reading Culture*, 74–96; Coogan, "Meddling with the Gospel"; Sean A. Gurd, "Galen on ἔκδοσις," in *Perceptions of the Second Sophistic and Its Times—Regards sur la Seconde Sophistique et son époque*, ed. P. Fleury and T. Schmidt (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010), 169–84. For overviews of early Christian textual criticism and literary theory, see Knust and Wasserman, *To Cast the First Stone*, 82–93, and Jennifer Wright Knust, "Early Christian Re-Writing and the History of the *Pericope Adulterae*," *J ECS* 14.4 (2006): 485–536. Origen specifies four reasons for textual difference: well-intentioned mistakes, indolent alterations, audacious and rash emendations, and mistaken correction (*Comm. Matt.* 15.14). In this list, Origen does not mention accurate corrections as those are, of course, appropriate. On the exceptional nature of Origen's activities, see Coogan, *Eusebius the Evangelist*, 43–44. Even in a city as well-documented as Oxyrhynchus, it is often difficult to ascertain the social status of the actual copyist. See Peter J. Parsons, "Copyists of Oxyrhynchus," in *Oxyrhynchus: A City and Its Texts*, ed. A. K. Bowman, R. A. Coles, N. Gonis, D. Obbink, and P. J. Parsons (London: Egypt Exploration Society,

2007): 262–70 [265]. P. Lond. 2110 specifies that a copyist was paid at the rate of 28 drachmas per 10,000 lines.

p.169 n.37 So Coogan, “Meddling with the Gospel”; Howley, in conversation. For a similar challenge, the famous mathematician Archimedes published a fake set of mathematical theorems to unmask those who would steal his ideas. The inadequacy of the plagiarists would be unveiled by their inability to identify and produce proofs. See Reviel Netz, *The Works of Archimedes: Volume 2, On Spirals* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 12, 19, 28–30. Tertullian may be doing something analogous in the “test” he sets his readers in *De pallio* 3.4, on which, see Blake Leyerle, “Tertullian’s Chameleon,” *JRS* 109 (2019): 275–89.

p.169 n.38 Galen, *Hipp. Epid.* VI. It’s worth noting that much of Galen’s *oeuvre* involved collating manuscripts of Hippocrates and other medical writers. See Claire Bubb, “Medical Literature and Medicine: Going beyond the Practical,” in *Medicine and the Law under the Roman Empire*, ed. Claire Bubb and Michael Peachin (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2023), 196–215.

p.170 n.39 Theodotus’s name may suggest that he was ethnically Jewish. On Theodotus’s origins, see Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 5.28. Eusebius uses a source known as the *Little Labyrinth*, which is often attributed to Hippolytus of Rome. For a wide range of possibilities for his background, see H. Gregory Snyder, “Shoemakers and Syllogisms: Theodotus ‘the Cobbler’ and his School,” in *Christian Teachers in Second-Century Rome: Schools and Students in the Ancient City*, ed. H. Gregory Snyder (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 183–204.

p.171 n.40 On bookstores: Galen, *Lib. prop.* 1 (K 19.8–9); Martial 2.17. Cicero on Tiro: Cicero, *Fam.* 16.17.1. This is not a nice letter. In response to Tiro’s request that he receive his own book, Cicero berates him for using an anachronism and demeans him by calling him a “ruler.” On the Theodotians, see Lampe, *From Paul to Valentinus*, 344–48.

p.171 n.41 Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 5.23.13–19, modified translation. The language of recklessness (*aphobos*) is repeated in several places (*Hist. ecc.* 5.28.13, 15). The words suggesting correction/straightening here are *diōrthōkenai* and *katōrthomena*.

p.171 n.42 On Marcion’s origins: Justin, *1 Apol.* 26.5, 58.1; Irenaeus, *Haer.* 1.27.2; Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 5.13.3; Tertullian, *Marc.* 1.1.3. On Marcion’s wealth: Tertullian, *Praescr.* 30.2; *Marc.* 4.4.3. See discussion in Lampe, *From Paul to Valentinus*, 241–57.

p.172 n.43 On Marcion: Tertullian, *Marc.* 1.1.5, 4.2.3–4; Irenaeus, *Haer.* 1.27.2, 3.11.7, 3.12.12, 3.14.4. For the view that Marcion had produced his own Gospel for only a small group of friends and disciples and that it was published accidentally, see Markus Vinzent, *Marcion and the Dating of the Synoptic Gospels* (Leuven: Peeters, 2014), 97.

p.172 n.44 “Corrected” and “recovered”: Tertullian, *Marc.* 4.4.4; 4.4.5. Pontic mouse: Tertullian, *Marc.* 1.15. Dismembering Paul: Irenaeus, *Haer.* 1.27. Theological commitments: Tertullian, *Marc.* 4.6.2. Dowry for Marcion’s work: Tertullian, *Marc.* 1.19.4; 4.1.1. Tertullian described the *Antitheses* as the “dowry” for Marcion’s Gospel and claimed that, for Marcion’s followers, the *Antitheses* were the more important work. As the producer of an early Gospel, Marcion has attracted attention from

modern textual critics as well as ancient theologians. There is considerable debate about the contents of his Bible, his redactional motivations, and the relationship of his Gospel to other real and hypothesized early Christian texts (see Vinzent, *Marcion*). For our purposes, we are more interested in where other early Christian thinkers located the heretical impulse.

p.172 n.44a “the “barbarian” assumptions of Marcion’s” The opening of *Marc.* 1.1 includes a chauvinist salvo about the barbarism of Pontus in general.

p.173 n.45 Mistakes and errors: Tertullian, *Marc.* 1.20; 2.8.4; 2.24.1-2; 3.8.1; 4.12.9; 4.29.6. Circumcised the Gospel: Tertullian, *Praescr.* 38.9. Tertullian was troublingly antisemitic, although it is doubtful how many Jews he had actually met. I use the language of antisemitism here deliberately; Tertullian’s prejudice was more likely directed against the Punic locals that he identified as semitic, non-Roman, and barbarian. We should note, therefore, that Tertullian’s biases are more clearly directed against what is non-Roman and servile.

p.173 n.46 Celsus had accused Jesus of being a mere construction worker who “fabricated” the miraculous story of his birth, implying that people who fabricate buildings and furniture might also fabricate texts (*Cels.* 1.28). See Origen, *Cels.* 2.27. See also Coogan, “Meddling with the Gospel,” for further discussion. The idea that literate enslaved workers can only produce fabrications and, by extension, forgeries, is visible in other periods as well. Take, for example, an advertisement offering a one-hundred-dollar reward for the whereabouts of a self-emancipated enslaved pressman from the early twentieth century, which describes the man as someone who “reads and writes, and may have forged FREE papers with him,” *Charleston City Gazette and Commercial Daily Advertiser*, May 5, 1815, 2. Cited and discussed in Jordan Wingate, “Enslaved Pressmen in the Southern Press,” *American Periodicals: A Journal of History & Criticism* 32.1 (2022): 34–52 [44].

p.174 n.46a “For people of the enslaving class (which included Christians).” On the early Christian figures who fit comfortably into the elite intellectual culture of Antonine and Severan Rome, see Laura Nasrallah, “Mapping the World: Justin, Tatian, Lucian, and the Second Sophistic,” *Harvard Theological Review* 98.3 (2005): 283–314; Kendra Eshleman, *The Social World of Intellectuals in the Roman Empire: Sophists, Philosophers, and Christians* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012); Jason König, *Saints and Symposiasts: The Literature of Food and the Symposium in Greco-Roman and Early Christian Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012); Jared Secord, *Christian Intellectuals and the Roman Empire: From Justin Martyr to Origen* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2020).

CHAPTER SIX

p.176 n.a “crawfish and pig’s liver” See recipes in Joseph Dommers Vehling, ed. and trans., *Apicius Cookery and Dining in Imperial Rome* (New York: Dover, 2012), 9, 63, 120, 159, 161.

p.176 n.b “the floor littered with the detritus of the costly meal” For food littering floors, we have only to turn to the mosaics that depict dining events. See, for example, one such 3rd-4th century C.E. [stone tesserae scene](#) published in *Phoenix Ancient Art* 13 (2014): 86–95, no. 13. Such images give new shape to our understanding of the “scraps” dogs ate from the table in Matt. [15:26-27](#)//Mark [7:27-28](#). “Dogs” was sometimes a euphemism for enslaved or subjugated people (see Judges [1:7](#): “seventy kings with their thumbs and big toes cut off used to pick up scraps under my table”). That Matthew uses the language of despotics (*kurios* or ‘master’) may suggest that this is the situation on view here. Note that in Matthew [15:27](#), both Jesus and the proverbial ‘master’ are described in the same way.

p.176 n.1 My construction of this reading scene relies on Walsh, *Origins*. This chapter has benefitted enormously from the work of classicist Cat Lambert, which she kindly shared with me pre-publication. See Cat Lambert, “Bad Readers in Ancient Rome,” PhD dissertation, Columbia University, 2022.

p.177 n.1a “Reading events were supposed to spark conversation, and exotic stories of foreign marvels in far-flung lands were usually quite good for that.” On marvels or *thaumata* prompting discussions of philosophy, medicine, and science, see Michiel Meeusen, “Aristotelian *Natural Problems* and Imperial Culture: Selective Readings,” *Scholia* 12.1 (2018): 28–47. An alternative view, suggested to me by Jeremiah Coogan, is that the ambiguous ending of Mark might have sparked conversation and generated the long ending. Rhodion, in this version, would have noted the conversation and incorporated it into the expanded text.

p.177 n.1b “He had likely jotted some light marks in the margins as a guide...” On these kinds of marginal notes, see William A. Johnson, “The Function of the *Paragraphus* in Greek Literary Prose Texts,” *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 100 (1994): 65–68.

p.177 n.1c “Reading was an energetic, disheveling, and sweaty activity...” Quintilian, *Inst.* [11.3.147](#): “our speech draws near its close, more especially if fortune shows herself kind, practically everything is becoming; we may stream with sweat, show signs of fatigue, and let our dress fall in careless disorder and the toga slip loose from us on every side.”

p.177 n.1d “Perhaps the group would get distracted and fixate on the original meaning of a word.” For further discussion of pedantic elitist attitudes to reading, see Lambert, “Bad Readers in Ancient Rome.”

p.178 n.1e “had the apostles recline alongside the audience” Mark [16:14](#).

p.178 n.1f “Felix’s expansions now had textual form.” Methodologically, my use of the word “expression” comes from FRBR, a model utilized by proponents of what academics call the ‘new’ or ‘material’ philology: a new approach to textual criticism that is interested in the material artifacts

themselves and how they came to be. For an updated articulation of the FRBR model, see Chryssoula Bekiari, Martin Doerr, Patrick Le Boëuf, and Pat Riva, "Definition of FRBR₀₀: A Conceptual Model for Bibliographic Information in Object-Oriented Formalism," *International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions* 2016. https://www.ifla.org/files/assets/cataloguing/FRBRoo/frbroo_v_2.4.pdf.

p.178–79 n.1g "unlike the more familiar forms of bureaucracy that emerged in the aftermath of the French Revolution" On paperwork in the French revolution, see Ben Kafka, *The Demon of Writing: Powers and Failures of Paperwork* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012).

p.179 n.1h "Though my account is narrative rather than argumentative, it is not markedly different from other scholarly explanations for the longer ending" One alternative theory relayed (but not supported) by David C. Parker (in *Living Text*, 143) solves "the problem [of the abrupt ending of Mark] by suggesting that something happened to the evangelist to interrupt him. Either arrest or death overtook him mid-sentence, and so we have in his manuscript an unfinished masterpiece." This does not, to me, seem less speculative than my own reading. While Felix is a fabulation, preserving records of actual unnamed enslaved people is critically important work for our knowledge of history. For an example of this, see the "Enslaved: Peoples of the Historic Slave Trade" project (Enslaved.org) based at Michigan State University and led by Walter Hawthorne, Dean Rehberger, and Daryle Williams. At the time of consultation, June 12, 2022, the database included 13,909 enslaved people whose names are unknown. The language of "fabulation," as noted in the introduction, is derived from the work of Saidiya Hartman, in particular her "Venus in Two Acts" and *Lose Your Mother*.

p.179 n.2 For traditional analyses of the longer ending of Mark, see James Kelhoffer, *Miracle and Mission: The Authentication of Missionaries and Their Message in the Longer Ending of Mark* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000). For text critical analyses, see Parker, *Living Text*, 124–47; Claire Clivaz, "Looking at Scribal Practices in the Endings of Mark 16," *Henoch* 42.2 (2020): 373–87; and the essays in Claire Clivaz, Mina Monier, and Dan Batovici, eds., [The Transmission of Mark's Endings in Different Traditions and Languages](#), Papers Presented at the International Workshop, Lausanne, 2–3 June 2022, *Comparative Oriental Manuscript Studies Bulletin* 8.2 (2022).

p.179 n.2a "At gatherings of Christians, it was the servile reader..." The illiteracy of early Christians was a talking point from the beginning. They were variously described by their critics as "uncultured (*apaideutos*)," "uneducated (*idiotes*)," "ignorant (*amatheis/rudes*)," and "illiterate (*agrammatos*)." These accusations are inferred from the writings of early Christian apologists. It may be noteworthy, as Allen Hilton suggests, that Christians did not dispute these claims. See Allen Hilton, *Illiterate Apostles: Uneducated Early Christians and the Literates Who Loved Them* (LNTS; London: T&T Clark, 2018). On the portrayal of the Apostles and the textual revolution in early Christianity, see John S. Kloppenborg, "Literate Media in Early Christ Groups: The Creation of a Christian Book Culture," *J ECS* 22.1 (2014): 21–59; Chris Keith, *Jesus' Literacy: Scribal Culture and the Teacher from Galilee* (London: T&T Clark, 2011), 156–63.

p.180 n.3 See William A. Johnson, *Bookrolls and Scribes in Oxyrhynchus* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 160. On reading in antiquity, see Jan Heilmann, "Ancient Literary Culture and Meals in the Greco-Roman World: The Role of Reading During Ancient Symposia and its

Relevance for the New Testament,” *JTS* 73.1 (2022): 104–25, and *Lesen in Antike und frühem Christentum: Kulturgeschichtliche, philologische sowie kognitionswissenschaftliche Perspektiven und deren Bedeutung für die neutestamentliche Exegese* (Tübingen: Narr Francke Attempto, 2021). On the lector, see Christian Laes, “Lectors in the Latin West: The Epigraphical Evidence (c. 300-800),” *Arctos* 53 (2019): 83–127. As Laes notes, there are no studies dedicated to enslaved readers, but see Philipp Fondermann, “Anagnóstēs,” in *Handwörterbuch der antiken Sklaverei*, ed. Heinz Heinen (Stuttgart: Steiner, 2017): col. 105, and also “Briefbote,” in Heinen, *Handwörterbuch*, col. 430–34.

p.181 n.4 On learning to read See William Johnson, *Readers and Reading Culture*, 3–16. Some scrolls from Qumran do have word divisions, and practical Latin texts and some inscriptions often had interpuncts indicating word division. Decipherment is a feature of all reading, regardless of what language a text is written in; my intention here is only to flag the differing junctures at which interpretation took place in the ancient languages under study.

p.182 n.5 On ancient Jewish reading: Rebecca Scharbach Wollenberg, “The Dangers of Reading As We Know It: Sight Reading as a Source of Heresy in Early Rabbinic Traditions,” *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 85.3 (2017): 709–45. On Rabbinic experts: b. Shabbat 152b; b. Ketubot 106b Gellius, NA 13.31; Dio Chrysostom, *Or.* 18.6–7.

p.182 n.6 On silent reading, see William A. Johnson, “Toward a Sociology of Reading in Classical Antiquity,” *American Journal of Philology* 121.4 (2000): 593–627; Quintilian, *Inst.* 10.3.22–26. On Augustus: Suetonius, *Aug.* 78.2. Quote is from Dio Chrysostom, *Or.* 18.6–7 LCL. I am grateful to Cat Lambert for this reference.

p.183 n.7 On speaking and acting: Pliny, *Ep.* 6.17, 7.17.1, 3.18, 5.5; Tacitus, *Dial.* 13; Suetonius, *Nero* 10. See Dan Nässelqvist, *Public Reading in Early Christianity: Lectors, Manuscripts, and Sound in the Oral Delivery of John 1–4* (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 100–103, and Anne Elvey, “Strained Breath and Open Text: Exploring the Materiality of Breath in Relation to Reading Luke 4:16–30,” *The Bible and Critical Theory* 16.2 (2020): 73–87.

p.183 n.7a “Christian reading can appear either as a subset of Jewish religious reading” Of course, Jewish reading is itself a subset of Mediterranean textuality in general, but it is rarely treated as such.

p.184 n.8 On Christian texts that assume public reading: 1 Thess [5:27](#); Col [4:16](#); Rev. [1:3](#). On Justin Martyr: *1 Apol.* 67.2. On benefits for the reader: Rev. [1:3](#), compare 1 Tim [4:13](#); 2 *Clem.* 19.1. On reading practices and the use of readers, see William David Shiell, *Reading Acts: The Lector and the Early Christian Audience* (Leiden: Brill, 2004); Laes, “Lectors”; Heilmann, *Lesen*. We have already met Burrhus; on enslaved Christians in leadership roles, see, for example, the two female deaconesses who were tortured by Pliny when he was governor of Bithynia (*Ep.* [10.96](#)), and Shaner, *Enslaved Leadership*.

p.185 n.8a “Modern scholars of the New Testament agree that there is a literary relationship between Matthew, Mark, and Luke.” On invisible workers in the composition of the Synoptic Gospels, see Jeremiah Coogan, “Synoptic Work: Compositional Practices, Invisible Workers, and the Synoptic Problem,” forthcoming. Historically, the material turn in the study of Synoptic relationships has looked at benches; body posture; the controversial status of desks (or tables); the book roll, the tablet,

and the codex; and even the utility of the floor. The problem that materiality and the potential absence of desks posed for discussions of the Synoptic Problem is noted in Parker, *Living Text*, 186. For recent inroads into the question of materiality and the Synoptics, which are best read in chronological order, see Robert A. Derrenbacker, Jr., *Ancient Compositional Practices and the Synoptic Problem* (Leuven: Peeters, 2005); Derrenbacker, "The 'External and Psychological Conditions Under Which the Synoptic Gospels Were Written': Ancient Compositional Practices and the Synoptic Problem," in *New Studies in the Synoptic Problem. Oxford Conference, April 2008. Essays in Honour of Christopher M. Tuckett*, ed. Paul Foster et al. (Leuven: Peeters, 2011), 435–457; Derrenbacker, "Texts, Tables and Tablets: A Response to John C. Poirier," *JSNT* 35.4 (2013): 380–387; F. G. Downing, "Word-Processing in the Ancient World: The Social Production and Performance of Q," *JSNT* 19.64 (1997): 29–48; Downing, "Waxing Careless: Poirier, Derrenbacker and Downing," *JSNT* 35.4 (2013): 388–393; Alan Kirk, *Q in Matthew: Ancient Media, Memory, and Early Scribal Transmission of the Jesus Tradition* (London: Bloomsbury/T & T Clark, 2016); J. C. Poirier, "The Roll, the Codex, the Wax Tablet and the Synoptic Problem," *JSNT* 35.1 (2012): 3–30.

p.186 n.9 On child readers: Quintilian, *Inst.* 1.12.8; Victor of Vita, *History of the Vandal Persecution* 3.34; Cyprian *Ep.* 38.1.2; *Ac. Scil.* 12. See Laes, "Lectors," 88–90, 92–94. On Speratus as a name for enslaved workers, see Ronald Syme, "'Donatus' and the Like," *Historia* 27.4 (1978): 588–603.

p.186 n.10 Dio, *Or.* 20.10.

p.187 n.11 Sulpicia Petale: *AE* 1928, 73. Butcher's wife: Trastevere, second century, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Dresden, inv. ZV 44. Natalie Kampen argues that the woman is a scribe, in *Image and Status: Roman Working Women in Ostia* (Berlin: Mann, 1981), 81. On the *lectrix*, see Susan Treggiari, "Jobs in the Household of Livia," *Papers of the British School at Rome* 43 (1975): 48–77. Grapte: *Herm.Vis.*2.4. Grapte is identified as a teacher of women. Her name suggests that she was enslaved or formerly enslaved. See Solin, *Griechische Personennamen*, 3.1171–73. Perpetua: *Pass. Perp.* For a traditional view of Perpetua's literacy, see Walter Ameling, "'Femina liberaliter instituta': Some Thoughts on a Martyr's Liberal Education," in *Perpetua's Passions: Multidisciplinary Approaches to the Passio Perpetuae et Felicitatis*, ed. Jan N. Bremmer and Marco Formisano (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 78–102.

The literary accoutrements of the female reader included, it seems, the bookstand. These were, as the name implies, lectern or table-top-style holders that held a scroll open for a reader. Scholarly analysis has offered two persuasive explanations for the bookstand: it either protected the scroll from wear and tear or it held the roll open so that a user could take notes. What is striking, as Stephanie Frampton has noted, is how frequently they are found in contexts associated with women. Stephanie Frampton, "Sulpicia's Ashes: Gender, Literacy, and Inscription(s)," unpublished paper presented at the Society for Classical Studies Annual Meeting, 2021. On bookwinders, see Susan Wood, "Literacy and Luxury in the Early Empire: A Papyrus-Roll Winder from Pompeii," *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome* 46 (2001): 23–40.

Structurally, bookholders are similar to devices that held textiles—so similar that initial excavation reports hypothesized that the bookstands found in women's graves were used for embroidery or weaving. The theory did not quite work: bookholders are too small to allow the hands of the fabric worker access to the cloth. Nevertheless, the misidentification directs us to the similarity in their designs. Perhaps bookholders as a technology were an outgrowth of technologies ordinarily associated with and produced for women. In general, women suffered from arthritis and bone loss

earlier than men and were expected to engage in weaving and textile production-tasks that strained the same joints as did using book rolls. Perhaps bookholders were a way of minimizing painful effort? Or perhaps they were simply a means of displaying an expensive text and one's own erudition. In pursuit of evidence for women's reading, I have ventured far out on a limb; but in either case, the bookstand's association with women is one more piece of evidence for women's reading.

This is not to say that all weaving was performed by women. It was not; there were guilds of male weavers in antiquity (P. Mich. [2.123](#)). As with work in Atlantic slavery, queer scholarship has also advocated for imaginative and creative modes of reconstructing queer women's lives, experiences, and work. Bonnie Zimmerman writes that the work of the lesbian critic "involves peering into shadows, into the spaces between words, into what has been unspoken and barely imagined. It is a perilous critical adventure, with results that might violate accepted norms of traditional criticism, but it may also transform our notions of literary possibility," in Bonnie Zimmerman, "What Has Never Been: An Overview of Lesbian Feminist Criticism," in *Making a Difference: Feminist Literary Criticism*, ed. Gayle Green and Coppélia Kahn (New York: Routledge, 1985), 178-210 [188].

p.188 n.12 On the funerary evidence, see Eckardt, *Writing and Power in the Roman World*, 154-74.

p.188 n.13 See b. Megillah 18b; m. Megillah 4.4; t. Megillah 3:39; Wollenberg, "The Dangers of Reading as We Know It." The dates of many of these rabbinic sources are later than the period under discussion and we should be cautious about assuming that they supply equally firm evidence about an earlier period. On the oral performance of early Christian texts, see Nässelqvist, *Public Reading in Early Christianity*, 100-103; see also Valeriy A. Alkin, *The Earliest History of the Christian Gathering: Origin, Development and Content of the Christian Gathering in the First to Third Centuries* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 147-82.

p.189 n.14 Mark [13:14](#) was first seen as an instruction for an enslaved lector almost a century ago by Julius Wellhausen, in *Einleitung in die drei ersten Evangelien* (Berlin: Reimer, 1905), 103. For a fuller explanation of the variety of options here, including the idea that the reader was being granted interpretive license, see John Muddiman, "The Reader of Mark 13:14B as the (Re-) Interpreter of Apocalyptic," in *Revealed Wisdom: Studies in Apocalyptic in Honour of Christopher Rowland*, ed. John Ashton (Leiden: Brill, 2014): 170-82. For the view that this passage refers to the individual anonymous reader, see Heilmann, *Lesen*, 105-34. Heilmann is correct to keep the possibility of private reading in view.

p.191 n.15 On gesture and communication, see Shiell, *Reading Acts*; Erik Gunderson, *Staging Masculinity: The Rhetoric of Performance in the Roman World* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000). Shiell's work draws from the work of classicist Gregory S. Aldrete, *Gestures and Acclamations in Ancient Rome* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003).

p.191 n.15a "The relationships between reader and scribe and between reader and audience were always unstable and irreplicable" The aesthetic theories of reception history (*Rezeptionsgeschichte*) articulated by Iser and Jauss lean into this kind of approach. See Wolfgang Iser, *The Act of Reading: A Theory of Aesthetic Response* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978); Hans Robert Jauss, *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception*, trans. Timothy Bahti (Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 1982).

p.192 n.16 Quint. *Inst.* 10.1. Readers are influenced, wrote Quintilian, by the orator's voice, gestures, and the adaptation of the delivery itself. Quintilian explicitly genders the reader as male, although we should not assume that this was always true. On performance while holding a scroll, see William Johnson, *Readers and Reading Culture*, 119–20.

p.193 n.16a “While enslaved *lectores* are invisible in modern histories of the Gospels, they were, to ancient audiences, the faces of the Gospel” This is not to say that they directly competed with other repositories of apostolic tradition, but rival sources of power are well known among early Christian assemblies. We can see this as early as the Pauline epistles. On the intimate relationship between reading and writing, see Shane Butler, *The Matter of the Page: Essays in Search of Ancient and Medieval Authors* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2011).

p.193 n.17 Pliny, *NH* 35.9-10. Quote from David Petrain, “Visual Supplementation and Metonymy in the Roman Public Library,” in König, Oikonomopoulou, and Woolf, eds., *Ancient Libraries* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013): 332–46 [340n36]. There were other Christian forms of such safeguarding: for example, by providing images of the evangelists in Gospel books. On this, see Jaś Elsner, “Beyond Eusebius: Prefatory Images and the Early Book,” in *Canones: The Art of Harmony*, ed. Alessandro Bausi, Bruno Reudenbach, and Hanna Wimmer (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2020), 99–132. Similarly, we might posit that textual descriptions of authorial characters (for example, Paul in the *Acts of Paul and Thecla*) helped safeguard some writings from such revisions.

Clearly, there were different kinds of readers, and, in certain circumstances, Roman displays of wealth and power might have made it preferable to utilize readers whose bodies and physical appearance were perceived as matching the subject matter. If readers took their audiences on a journey, it was desirable to have a local guide. For Romans, who delighted in shipping *garum*—a popular fish paste that tasted the same no matter where one obtained it—from far-flung parts of the empire, having a Gallic reader perform the tales of Caesar's wars in France, or an enslaved Jewish man read the suddenly popular stories of Israel's past, might have held a perverse kind of cachet. In such cases, things like accent, diction, and bodily mannerisms would have played a significant role in reshaping the text and its reception. In conversation, Stephanie Frampton has speculated that the use of the Greek (*anagnostes*) rather than Latin (*lector*) word for a reader might suggest something about the ethnic origins of the reader as well as the language in which they read. Compare here the work of Merve Emre, *Paraliterary: The Making of Bad Readers in Postwar America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017), which explores how the categories of good and bad reading developed in postwar America.

p.194 n.18 Tertullian, *Praescr.* 36.1-2.

p.194 n.19 Clement, *Strom.* 1.1.13.1–4. On the ear: *Strom.* 1.1.15.2, 9.45.1; 2.5.23.3–6.25.3; 7.14.88.4. On heretics: *Strom.* 3.4.29.1. On this, see Jane M. F. Heath, *Clement of Alexandria and the Shaping of Christian Literary Practice: Miscellany and the Transformation of Greco-Roman Writing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020).

p.195 n.20 Irenaeus, *Haer.* 3.7.2. Compare Irenaeus's statements about the readerly interpretation of John 1:14 and 1 Cor 7. See also Augustine, *Sermon* 352.

p.195 n.20a “they developed an ideology of “good reading” as an elite skill formed through education.” A “good” Christian reader, wrote Origen, subjects the text to torture to ascertain the truth of its meaning (Origen, *Cels.* 3.58). On this point, see the brilliant work of J. Albert Harrill, “‘Exegetical Torture’ in Early Christian Biblical Interpretation: The Case of Origen of Alexandria,” *BibInt* 25 (2017): 39–57. “Bad” readers were those without enslaving powers and elite training and, in this respect, everyone Christian and non-Christian alike worried about “bad” readers and their influence. On the nature of Christian knowledge, see Blossom Stefaniw, “Knowledge in Late Antiquity: What is it Made of and What Does it Make?” *SLA* 2.3 (2018): 266–93, and *Christian Reading: Language, Ethics, and the Order of Things* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2019).

CHAPTER SEVEN

p.202 n.1 For a historical analysis of this text, see Candida R. Moss, *Ancient Christian Martyrdom: Diverse Practices, Theologies, and Traditions* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), 100-122. For a discussion of the historical incidence of persecution in the first three centuries, see my *Myth of Persecution: How Early Christians Invented a Story of Martyrdom* (San Francisco: HarperOne, 2013). As I am regularly misunderstood on this point, I should state that while I am skeptical about the extent to which Roman authorities persecuted (i.e., deliberately targeted and sought out) Christians before the Diocletianic persecution, I do not deny that early Christians died as martyrs during this period (even if their number is exaggerated).

p.202 n.2 The story of Blandina is part of the *Letter of the Churches of Lyon and Vienne*, which is preserved by the fourth-century historian Eusebius of Caesarea (*Hist. eccl.* 5.1-2). My reading of the story of Blandina draws heavily on my earlier work on martyrdom as well as on Ronald Charles, *The Silencing of Slaves in Early Jewish and Christian Texts* (New York: Routledge, 2019), 166-70.

The term “blandus” was often associated with childlike charm. Blandina is described as small and weak, though the text supplies no rationale for this characterization (5.1.18). The word I have interpreted as puffy and suggestive of illness is *aeide*, which is used by Hippocrates (or Pseudo-Hippocrates) to describe the bloated complexion of women with uterine difficulties (*On Natural Women* 41). It was also used to refer to disfigurement and unsightliness (Josephus, *Jewish War* 7.5.5). The word *eukataphroneta*, often rendered as “contemptible” in English translations, suggests that she was easy to despise, and, in my version of events, blame. In my retelling of this story, I attribute her physical weakness to the conditions of her enslavement. In the ancient imaginary, these may also have been linked. Bryson advises the putative slaveholder about how to treat enslaved people so that they do not become too weak (§67). Martial’s epigram about the corpulent Gaul with an emaciated enslaved attendant might hint at a stereotype of Gauls mistreating and starving their workers (*Ep.* 8.75). Given that Blandina is portrayed as ugly and cheap, it is unlikely that she was a *pedisequa* (a more attractive enslaved woman who was decked out in fine clothing as an ornament to her ‘mistress’). Plautus describes *ancillae* as those who weave, grind grain, cook, and take a beating (*Mercator*, 396-98). On cleaning and domestic work, see Plautus, *Curculio* 577; Cicero, *Tusc.* 5.20.58. On the expense of having *ancillae*, see Plautus, *Truculentus* 533: “Do I need more *ancillae* to feed?,” and Richard Saller, “Women, Slaves, and the Economy of the Roman Household,” in *Early Christian Families in Context: An Interdisciplinary Dialogue*, ed. David Balch and Carolyn Osiek (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 185-206. On women’s roles in Roman households, see Susan Treggiari, “Jobs for Women,” *American Journal of Ancient History* 1 (1976): 76-104. In agrarian and mining contexts, enslaved women were the support staff: the *instrumentum instrumenti* or “equipment of the equipment” (*Digest* 33.7.12.5-6). See discussion in Matthew D. C. Larsen, “Carceral Practices and Geographies in Roman North Africa: A Case Study,” *SLA* 3.4 (2019): 547-580. On enslaved women in the New Testament, see Christy Cobb, *Slavery, Gender, Truth, and Power in Luke-Acts and Other Ancient Narratives* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2019).

One domain in which *ancillae* exerted influence was food and drink preparation. Given this, we might reasonably infer that Biblis, who refuted accusations of cannibalism and asserted the bloodless character of the Christian diet earlier in the account (Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 5.1.26), was also an enslaved kitchen attendant.

p.203 n.3 I here follow Charles: “Blandina is presumed to have had a body that is habituated to corporal punishments, which would enable her to receive the blows” (*Silencing of Slaves*, 180). Ancient elites were aware that corporal punishment made enslaved people better at withstanding pain than freeborn people (Cicero, *Tusc.* 2.41; Plautus, *Comedy of Asses* 557). Insensibility to pain is a theme in martyrdom accounts in general. See L. Stephanie Cobb, *Divine Deliverance: Pain and Painlessness in Early Christian Martyr Texts* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2016).

p.204 n.4 Blandina: Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 5.1.17; 5.1.41; Charles, *Silencing of Slaves in Early Jewish and Christian Texts*, 166–70, utilizes the important work of Trouillot to frame his analysis. In my earlier work, which is generously referenced by Charles, I too argued that Blandina’s identity was elided in the text. See *Other Christs*, 62–63, 92–94, and *Ancient Christian Martyrdom*, 113. What Charles amplifies in his own work is the importance of Blandina’s enslaved status and the way that she, like other enslaved martyrs, is used to advance particular theological interests. If, as I argue below, spiritual possession is articulated using the logic of masterly extensibility, it makes a perverse kind of sense that Blandina is the model martyr.

p.204 n.4a “While Blandina is the one who dies, it is less clear if she is the one acting.” I am mindful of the work of Saba Mahmood, which explores how Western liberal descriptions of freedom and agency train us to equate agency with resistance. My question here is who the text means to portray as being in control. See Saba Mahmood, “Feminist Theory, Embodiment, and the Docile Agent: Some Reflections on the Egyptian Islamic Revival,” *Cultural Anthropology* 16.2 (2001): 202–36. For an overview of the history of traditional debates about agency in the reception of Paul, the major figure in this chapter, see John M. G. Barclay, “Introduction,” in *Divine and Human Agency in Paul and His Cultural Environment*, ed. John M. G. Barclay and Simon J. Gathercole (London: T&T Clark, 2007), 1–8.

p.204 n.5 “Scholarly interpretations of this story have been divided.” For the view that Blandina is the active agent, see Elizabeth A. Goodine and Matthew W. Mitchell, “The Persuasiveness of a Woman: The Mistranslation and Misinterpretation of Eusebius’ *Historia Ecclesiastica* 5.1.41,” *JECS* 13.1 (2005): 1-19, and Cobb, *Divine Deliverance*, 75–77. For the view that Blandina is eclipsed, see Charles, *Silencing Slaves*, 166–70. For Felicity, see *Passion of Perpetua and Felicity* 15.6, trans. Thomas Heffernan, in *The Passion of Perpetua and Felicity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 132. Heffernan argues that the physical residence of Christ in Felicity and other martyrs “owes something to Justin’s notion of the pre-existing seed of the Logos, which exists in everyone but which Christians share more fully because they worship and participate in the life of the Logos,” 309.

The dating of the *Letter of the Churches of Lyon and Vienne* and the *Passion of Perpetua and Felicity* is derived from the chronology of the events provided in the text. As I and others have argued, the dating of both accounts can and should be contested. See Ellen Muehlberger, “Perpetual Adjustment: The *Passion of Perpetua and Felicity* and the Entailments of Authenticity,” *JECS* 30.3 (2022): 313–42. On Felicity’s neglect by modern scholars, see L. Stephanie Cobb, “The Other Woman: Felicitas in Late Antiquity,” *JLA* 15.1 (2022): 1–27.

p.205 n.5a “Many believed that supernatural entities could inhabit human bodies, to cause them great harm, control them, endow them with great powers, or even provide them with comfort.” On the materiality and proximity of the supernatural realm, see Dayna S. Kalleres, *City of Demons: Violence, Ritual, and Christian Power in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2015),

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1-23, and Peter R. L. Brown, "Sorcery, Demons, and the Rise of Christianity from Late Antiquity into the Middle Ages," in *Witchcraft: Confessions and Accusations*, ed. Mary Douglas (London: Tavistock, 1970), 17-45.

p.206 n.6 See Glancy, *Slavery in Early Christianity*, 102-29; Sheila Briggs, "Can an Enslaved God Liberate? Hermeneutical Reflections on Philippians 2:6-11," *Semeia* 47 (1989): 137-53. Metaphorical language of enslavement: Marianne Bjelland Kartzow, *The Slave Metaphor and Gendered Enslavement in Early Christian Discourse: Double Trouble Embodied* (New York: Routledge, 2018), 21-46; Sam Tsang, *From Slaves to Sons: A New Rhetoric Analysis on Paul's Slave Metaphors in His Letter to the Galatians* (New York: Peter Lang, 2005); de Wet, *Unbound God*, 7. Shaner too hints at this when she writes "some liberation perspectives arguing for egalitarian trends in early Christianity tend to ignore or downplay the ways in which logics of masters and slaves are embedded into the structures of leadership," in *Enslaved Leadership*, 111-12. I take her to mean that the logics of slavery permeate more than just texts about enslavement.

p.206 n.7 Shively T. J. Smith, *Interpreting 2 Peter through African American Women's Moral Writings* (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2023). Smith allows for the possibility that those involved in the composition of the Petrine epistles were not enslaved but found the model useful for Christian identity and community imperatives.

p.207 n.8 On the ways in which the notion of redemptive suffering harms black women, see Delores Williams, *Sisters in the Wilderness: The Challenge of Womanist God-Talk* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1993).

p.208 n.8a "The human body was known to be porous..." The porosity of the female body is one reason that women were often highly regarded as prophetesses and oracles who could channel spirits in their bodies—in social contexts ranging from the Pythia at Delphi to the enslaved fortune-tellers of urban marketplaces and alleys. On the penetrability of women's bodies, see Candida R. Moss, "The Man with the Flow of Power: Porous Bodies in Mark 5:25-34," *JBL* 129.3 (2010): 507-519. On gender, see the recent study by Brittany Wilson, *Unmanly Men: Refigurations of Masculinity in Luke-Acts* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).

p.209 n.9 On Philippians (2:6-11): Theologians describe this as *kenosis* and debate what exactly it entails. In *Herm. Mand.* 43.14, the same language is used to describe the desertion of the Spirit from a person. Among the divine qualities and powers that Christ emptied from himself was a singularly powerful self-actualizing will. The God of the Hebrew Bible need only voice things to have them done. This incarnational process involved not just self-abasement but a new state of obedience. Arguably, the Spirit hovering over a formless creation is a type of possessive power ([Gen 1:1-2](#) spirit is here translated as "wind"). See Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations* 8.48.

p.209 n.10 Blandina: Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 5.1.18.

p.210 n.11 Exorcism in the New Testament: See Matt [12:43](#); Mark [1:23-26](#); [3:30](#); [5:2-8](#); [7:25](#); [9:25](#); Luke [8:29](#); [11:24](#). Note that the language is also used in Zech [13:2](#) and may reflect a first-century Jewish idiom. On possession in various forms of Jewish thought contemporaneous with the Jesus Movement, see David Frankfurter, "Master-Demons, Local Spirits, and Demonology in the Roman Mediterranean World: An Afterword to Rita Lucarelli," *Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Religions* 11

(2011): 126-31. On pre-baptismal exorcism in the early church: Hippolytus, *Trad. ap.* 20.1-4. On Kiss of the Peace: Hippolytus, *Trad. ap.* 18.3.

The use of exorcism in modern baptismal liturgies varies from denomination to denomination and, in the Anglican Communion, on a geographical basis. In the Roman Catholic tradition, *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* and the *Rite of Baptism for Children* both call for minor exorcisms (which should be distinguished from the more dramatic solemn or major exorcisms performed by priests and depicted in horror movies). On these, see the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* §1673.

p.211 n.12 The discussion that follows draws a great deal on recent scholarship on spiritual possession by Giovanni B. Bazzana, *Having the Spirit of Christ: Spirit Possession and Exorcism in the Early Christ Groups* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2020) and Bazzana, "Negotiating the Experience of Possession in Hermas's Shepherd," in *Experiencing the Shepherd of Hermas*, ed. Angela Kim Harkins and Harry O. Maier (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2022), 9-29. Bazzana's work is important for the ways in which it seeks to subvert secular biases against the language and concept of possession. It also forms part of a broader recent pattern of academic interest in Christian anthropology and spiritual possession. Most of this literature remains unconcerned with the relationship between enslavement and possession. For a notable exception, see the work of Chance Bonar, discussed throughout this chapter.

p. 212 n.13 *Herm. Man.* 5.1.2-4, trans. modified from Chance Bonar, "Enslaved to God: Slavery and Divine Despotics in the *Shepherd of Hermas*," PhD diss., Harvard University, 2023. Conversations with Bonar inform not only my reading of the *Shepherd of Hermas* but also my thought about the Spirit as instrument of divine extensibility. Carolyn Osiek connects the Holy Spirit's desire for space to a low-status anthropomorphism: "The anthropomorphism of the sensitive Holy Spirit that feels suffocated when forced to share its dwelling with the evil spirit of bad temper (v. 3) could well be inspired by the stifling, poorly ventilated close quarters of three-to-five-story apartment houses or *insulae*, in which most of the urban underclass of a Roman city live," in *The Shepherd of Hermas: A Commentary* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1999), 119.

p.212 n.14 If these ideas strike you as teetering on the edge of superstition, then you should know that you are not alone. Scholars, both ancient and modern, have tended to distinguish between possession by an alien entity and the difficulties that some people had keeping themselves in order. The invasion model is often seen as a 'popular' belief held by uneducated people of lower status, while the imbalance model is more regularly cited as a philosophical and medical view.

One first century pagan medical writer: Celsus, *On Medicine* 4; *Herm. Man.* 5.1.2-4. The term rendered as double-souledness here is *dipsuchia*, which is often translated as "doubt," "indecision," or "double-mindedness." On double-souledness in Hermas, see Bonar, "Enslaved to God," who draws on Andrew Crislip, "The *Shepherd of Hermas* and Early Christian Emotional Formation," *Studia Patristica* 83 (2017): 231-50.

The language of the "Christian biome" comes from John David Penniman, "Blended with the Savior: Gregory of Nyssa's Eucharistic Pharmacology in the Catechetical Oration," *SLA* 2.4 (2018): 512-41. For examples of Christians attempting to regulate the Christian biome, see also Clement of Alexandria's *Stromateis*. The perspective of Clement and Origen is not so different from that of Galen, who believed that the character of the soul could be destroyed by bad habits. On this, see Heinrich von Staden, "The Physiology and Therapy of Anger: Galen on Medicine, the Soul, and

Nature,” in *Islamic Philosophy, Science, Culture, and Religion: Studies in Honor of Dimitri Gutas*, ed. Felicitas Opwis and David Reisman (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 63–87; Blake Leyerle, “Clement of Alexandria on the Importance of Table Etiquette,” *J ECS* 3.2 (1995): 123–41.

p.213 n.15 Bazzana, *Having the Spirit of Christ*, 136.

p.213 n.15a “If Blandina was an instrument of divine will, it is only because she allowed herself to be.” I think here not only with Hartman but also with the theory of archival counterfactual history and accountability to the enslaved developed by Stephanie Smallwood in her book *Saltwater Slavery*. In Smallwood’s own words: “[The method I developed was] taking its cues from such openings and aiming to tell the history that is accountable to the enslaved—the counter-history the archive tells only reluctantly. Its narration entails theorizing what we might call the counterfact, by which I mean the fact the archive is seeking to ignore, marginalize and disavow—the detail it does not want to animate and make narratable,” in Stephanie Smallwood, “The Politics of the Archive and History’s Accountability to the Enslaved,” *History of the Present* 6.2 (2016): 117-32 [125]. I am also influenced by Cavan Concannon’s call to “create Paulinisms that can change the world,” in Cavan Concannon, *Profaning Paul* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2021), and Concannon, “[Paul is Dead. Long Live Paulinism! Imagining a Future for Pauline Studies](#),” *Ancient Jew Review*, 1 November 2016. Concannon’s approach is prefigured by the wealth of nineteenth-century voices (many of which are collected together in Bowens, *African American Readings of Paul*) that did just this. As Matthew Novenson has remarked to me, academic scholarship on Paul is still catching up to the work of David Walker, Frederick Douglass, and others.

p.214 n.16 On Vettius Epagathus: Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 5.1.9–10. The Spirit is here referred to as the Paraclete, a conceptual synonym for the Holy Spirit used in the Gospel of John. On Acts [16:6-7](#): It is worth noting that “Asia” here refers to Turkey, not the continent known to us as “Asia.” In his commentary, Willie Jennings describes Acts as “a history yielding to the Spirit” and returns to this motif throughout the work in Willie James Jennings, *Acts: A Theological Commentary on the Bible* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2017), 4. For Christians as temples of the Holy Spirit, see 1 Cor. [3:16](#); [6:19](#); 2 Cor [6:16](#). For Paul’s language of being “filled by the Spirit,” see Eph [3:19](#); [5:18](#); Col [1:9](#) (note that the authorship of these letters is disputed). I have gendered God as male here because, in formulations of masterly extensibility, the body of the “master” is always male.

“God extends his reach...”: The language of extension draws on Brendon Reay’s concept of “masterly extensibility,” on which, see below.

Possession was so critical to the cultural grammar of ancient Greece and Rome that it affected how people talked about language itself. Greek and Latin are case-based language systems in which the cases of words denote the role that a word plays in a sentence. In an expansive volume explaining Greek syntax, the second-century C.E. grammarian Apollonius Dyscolus describes the genitive case not just as the case of possession but as being intrinsically linked to domination. Having laid out a theory of language based on domination, he then worries that in noun phrases, “it’s the one who is master or owner whose name is put in the genitive case, and the possessed one is in the nominative,” and supplies the example *Aristarchou* [genitive] *doulos* [nominative],” or “slave of Aristarchus.” On one level, he is simply describing how language works, but the description frames language using the despotic idea of elite possession. When the system doesn’t quite work, he worries that others will criticize him for turning the matter “upside down,” and is troubled that language does not precisely replicate his structures of power. Apollonius Dyscolus, *Syntax* 3.174–5, trans. Fred W. Householder,

The Syntax of Apollonius Dyscolus (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1981), 218. Apollonius's problem is illustrative of the jerky elliptical relationship between the elite conception of slavery and the practice of slavery. As Ibram Kendi has written, particular ideologies of enslavement often follow and, in turn, reinforce what is already happening on the ground. Ibram X. Kendi, *Stamped from the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America* (New York: PublicAffairs/Bold Type Books, 2016), 21. Apollonius cannot force language into his despotic box because language precedes enslavement. The desire to naturalize a particular view of possession and domination by hardwiring it into 'Nature' or language is constantly dashed on the rocks of real-world evidence.

Apollonius directs us to the rotten foundations of enslaving ideology. Try as people did to naturalize slavery, it is a cosmic aberration that can only avoid its own destruction through constant reinscription. As Page duBois has put it, slavery is not a "static object"; every attempt to assert possession or ownership of others, to threaten or to break them, is "an act, a taking of a position in an ongoing struggle to maintain authority and mastery on the part of ancient slaveholders." (duBois, *Slaves and Other Objects*, 31). In a similar vein, see the work of Katherine Shaner, who writes of despotic order: "It was an argument that continually needed assertion." (*Enslaved Leadership*, 26).

p.214 n.16a "Imagining ourselves alongside them as they listened, we might find ourselves reading Paul's language about the body of Christ in 1 Corinthians 12 with fresh eyes." Paul calls body parts "members." The image of a group of people as a body was not a Pauline invention. On the contrary, it's highly likely that the recipients of his letter found it familiar to the point of banality. Both ancient Greeks and ancient Romans thought of groups as bodies that had to be regulated and protected. Both the city (*polis*) and the household (*domus*), the conceptual cornerstones of Greek and Roman societies, respectively, were described and pictured in this way. For a recent study of Paul's ideas about the body in the context of ancient philosophical thought, see Michelle V. Lee, *Paul, the Stoics, and the Body of Christ* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 29-45. For Pauline bodies in general, see Joseph Marchal, *Appalling Bodies: Queer Figures Before and After Paul's Letters* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019). "Putting on" Christ is also Pauline language; see Rom [13:14](#).

p.215 n.16b "They would have heard themselves described as—and sometimes even named after—hands, feet, and implements" See, for example, Scarus and Nastas, two children of the Palatine schoolroom who likely waited at table (*Graf. Pal.* 1.22, 261, 262), and discussion in Keegan, "Reading," 69-98.

p.216 n.17 City as body: Margaret M. Mitchell, *Paul and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation: An Exegetical Investigation of the Language and Composition of 1 Corinthians* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1993). Others see the model of the body as resonating with ancient Stoicism. In Stoic metaphysics, the spirit (*pneuma*) that animates all things and ripples like an undercurrent through the world is a material force. See Troels Engberg-Pedersen, *Cosmology and Self in the Apostle Paul: The Material Spirit* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2010). For the connection between Stoic materiality, spirit possession, and the body of Christ, see Bazzana, *Having the Spirit of Christ*, 135. On masterly extensibility, see Brendon Reay, "Agriculture, Writing, and Cato's Aristocratic Self-Fashioning," *Classical Antiquity* 24.2 (2005): 331-61.

Palestinian Talmud: y. Peah 4:6, 18b and y.Qid. 1:3, 60a. Quotation on the "faithful [enslaved worker]" is from Fabian Udoh, "The Tale of an Unrighteous Slave (Luke 16:1-8 [13])," *JBL* 128.2 (2009): 311-35 [330]. See also John Bodell, "Villaculture," in *Roman Republican Villas: Architecture, Context, and Ideology*, ed. Jeffrey A. Becker and Nicola Terrenato (Ann Arbor: University

of Michigan Press, 2012), 45–60. The idea of the enslaved worker as a prosthetic device akin to a stylus has been thoughtfully explored by Sarah Blake, “Now You See Them: Slaves and Other Objects as Elements of the Roman Master,” *Helios* 39.2 (2012): 193–211; Blake, “In Manus: Pliny’s Letters and the Arts of Mastery,” in *Roman Literary Cultures: Domestic Politics, Revolutionary Poetics, Civic Spectacle*, ed. A. Keith and J. Edmondson (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2016), 89–107.

p.216 n.18 Bryson §61 (trans. Swain). Bazzana sees the Spirit as connecting body parts (*Having the Spirit of Christ*, 136). Bonar sees an analogous process at work in the *Shepherd of Hermas*. In a recent article, Matthew Thiessen offers an alternative explanation for Christ’s simultaneous possession of multiple bodies that draws on readings of the Septuagint. See Matthew Thiessen, “‘The Rock Was Christ’: The Fluidity of Christ’s Body in 1 Corinthians 10.4,” *JSNT* 36.2 (2013): 103–126. Thiessen draws upon Benjamin D. Sommer, *The Bodies of God and the World of Ancient Israel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

p.217 n.19 See Peter of Alexandria, Canons 5-7, and discussion in Daniel Vaucher, “Glaubensbekenntnis oder Sklavengehorsam?—Petrus von Alexandrien zu einem christlichen Dilemma,” *VC* 72.5 (2018): 533–60. Peter of Alexandria condemned the practice, recognized that they had been coerced, and suggested the penalty of a year’s penance ([Canon 6](#)).

p.217 n.20 Bryson §61 (trans. 12). On prosthetics, see Don Ihde, *Technology and the Lifeworld: From Garden to Earth* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), 75; David Wills, “Preambles: Disability as Prosthesis,” in *Derrida Downunder*, ed. Laurence Simmons and Heather Worth (Palmerston North: Dunmore Press, 2001), 35–52. Wills here builds on Derrida’s idea of the “dangerous supplement” that both assists and signals inadequacy. The fantasy of elite masterly superiority often depended on the denigration of people considered ‘slavish’ and ‘womanly’ and on fictions that portrayed enslaved people and women as dependent on elite men (e.g., Seneca, *On the Tranquility of the Mind* 8.8). See Joy Connolly, “Mastering Corruption: Constructions of Identity in Roman Oratory,” in *Women and Slaves in Greco-Roman Culture: Differential Equations*, ed. Sandra R. Joshel and Sheila Murnaghan (New York: Routledge, 1998), 130–51. Often the language of body parts is seen as a gentler form of enslaver rhetoric. At least, the argument goes, becoming a body part humanizes enslaved workers in as much as they aren’t seen as “property” or “tools.” Since the late 1960s and the pioneering work of classicist Moses Finley, sociological models of enslavement that try to analyze and compare different systems of slavery often focus on the idea of the “slave as property” as one of the hallmarks of a “genuine Slave Society.” See Moses I. Finley, *Ancient Slavery and Modern Ideology* (New York: Viking Press, 1980).

There is no doubt that the description of enslaved people as property is dehumanizing, but there is no need to adjudicate between better or worse models of slavery. Comparison tends to have the inadvertent effect of rehabilitating the so-called “kinder” systems. For enslavement as a structuring device, see Lenski and Cameron, *What is a Slave Society?*, and Enrico Dal Lago and Constantina Katsari, *Slave Systems: Ancient and Modern* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008). As useful as the model has been, the interest in the idea of enslaved people as private property often obscures the perversely varied ways in which ancient elites tried to dehumanize and degrade their workers. Picturing people as bodyparts is a form of psychic violence that attempts to strip people of their identity, humanity, and autonomy. I am grateful to Joseph Howley for conversations on this question that have shaped my own views. See Howley, “Despotics,” forthcoming. There is a tension,

as Hartman discusses in *Scenes of Subjection*, between *dehumanization*, which denies the humanity of enslaved people, and *abjection*, which acknowledges the humanity of enslaved people and criminalizes them.

p.217 n.20a “Indeed, some have understood this passage as an optimistic reworking of an intrinsically harmful image.” See Sara Ahmed, *Willful Subjects* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014), 103. Ahmed draws upon Gerald R. Bray, *1-2 Corinthians* (Westmont, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1999), 21.

p.218 n.21 See Ahmed, *Willful Subjects* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014), 103. Compare here Epictetus, who makes a very similar analogy (SVF 2.366 and 368). Epictetus is noteworthy because he was formerly enslaved and was voiced through the words of his elite former student, Arrian. Other stories also explore the interconnectedness of various parts of the body in despotic terms. Aesop's Fable of the Belly and its Members (P130) cautions the parts of the body not to rebel and refuse to feed the lazy stomach because without it they will all die. It is a political class-oriented fable that, according to Plutarch, was used by Menenius Agrippa in an attempt to persuade the people to respect the decisions of the Roman senate (Plutarch, *Coriolanus* 6.3-4). Another version of the fable can be found in Livy [2.32.9-11](#). Shakespeare also provides one in his *Coriolanus*, I.1.93-151.

p. 218 n.21a “The flourishing of the united will of the body of Christ was predicated on the withering of plural voices, desires, and perspectives.” We can see this later in the letter when Paul seeks to retrain the languages used in worship services. Though his intentions might be practical, we might see this as a form of ethnic and linguistic alienation that operates, like natal alienation, to control and erase. On language and ethnicity in 1 Corinthians, see Ekaputra Tupamahu, *Contesting Languages: Heteroglossia and the Politics of Language in the Early Church* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022). For the emphasis on obedience, see 1 Cor [7:15](#), [9:13](#); Rom [6:16-18](#); Garnsey, *Ideas of Slavery*, 18.

p.218-19 n.21b “This is the logic that runs throughout the Pauline corpus; it is made more powerful by the fact that it does not name itself.” I am influenced by de Wet's use of the term “doulology” to refer to the process by which “slavery and mastery operate together as a concept ‘to think/communicate with’” about a whole range of theological concepts. See Chris L. de Wet, *The Unbound God: Slavery and the Formation of Early Christian Thought* (New York: Routledge, 2018), 8. It is important to acknowledge, as de Wet does, the influence of Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza's concept of “kyriarchy” here. Schüssler Fiorenza uses this language to refer to what she calls the “complex pyramidal political structure of dominance and subordination, stratified by gender, race, class, religious and culture taxonomies and other historical formations of domination,” in Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *But She Said: Feminist Practices of Biblical Interpretation* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1992), 115. See also Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her: A Feminist Theological Reconstruction of Christian Origins* (New York: Crossroad, 1994).

p.219 n.22 Amy Richlin, “Cicero's Head,” in *Constructions of the Classical Body*, ed. James I. Porter (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999), 190-211 [194]. Logic of Slavery: Chris L. de Wet, *The Unbound God: Slavery and the Formation of Early Christian Thought* (New York: Routledge, 2018), 8. See Achille Mbembe, “Necropolitics,” *Public Culture* 15.1 (2003): 11-40 [22], who draws on Susan Buck-Morss, “Hegel and Haiti,” *Critical Inquiry* 26.4 (2000): 821-65.

p.219 n.23 Blandina: It is important to note that she only works as a Christian exemplar because of her obedience and the fact that her will aligns so precisely with that of God. Compare Benjamin Palmer's statement that enslaved people should pray only for "what is agreeable to the will of God," in *A Plain and Easy Catechism*, 32. Mitzi Smith notes, "While the slave is to take her desires to God, those desires must align with God's will as taught to her in the catechism," in "U.S. Colonial Missions to African Slaves," 83. It is not accidental that, in narratives of loyal enslaved people, the will of "good slaves" is recognized only in and after self-sacrificial deaths. These stories repeat the fiction of "happy slaves" who obey, place themselves in harm's way, and are warmly remembered by others. See Richard Hofstadter, "U. B. Phillips and the Plantation Legend," *Journal of Negro History* 29.2 (1944): 109-124.

p.219 n.24 Nicolas Malebranche, *The Search After Truth*, ed. Thomas M. Lennon and Paul Olscamp (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 333. The appeal to destruction and disorder here manifests a "state of exception" in which order must be enforced by any means necessary. This state of exception structures sovereignty. See Mbembe, "Necropolitics," 4, 38.

p.220 n.24a "Most people did not have an understanding of what it meant to be a Christ follower that drew upon all of Paul's letters or an idea of discipleship that was assembled from multiple Gospels so we will not attempt anything similar." We do not know the precise circumstances under which people encountered the texts we now call the New Testament, but we do know that they were dissimilar from our own. It is impossible to talk about even a loosely held canon of texts until the fourth century; we must assume that people heard writings attributed to Paul or to another apostle read aloud and in a fragmentary form.

p.221 n.25 The language of the "slave market" and the importance of sale in 1 Corinthians come from Laura Salah Nasrallah, *Archaeology and the Letters of Paul* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 40-75. See also Engberg-Pedersen, *Paul and the Stoics*, 339n8: "After all, a slave is not expected as a slave, to care for himself too, but precisely for his master."

p.221 n.26 On the incomplete manumission of slaves to deities and the qualified 'freedom' it provided, see Theophrastus, *Economics* [1344b15-22](#); Keith Hopkins, *Conquerors and Slaves* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 118; de Wet, *Preaching Bondage*, 21. For sale to the god Apollo: SGDI II 1735 (170-156 B.C.E.), lines 1-8, with discussions in E. Leigh Gibson, *The Jewish Manumission Inscriptions of the Bosphorus Kingdom* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1999), 40. For the modified sale of the *paramone* inscriptions from Delphi whereby a person continued to work for their former enslaver, see SGDI II 2066 (188/7 B.C.E.), lines 6-16. For Leukoptra: IL 16 (184/5 C.E.). For the Bosphoran Kingdom, see CIRB 1123 (41 C.E.), CIRB 70, 71, 73; SEG 43.510. For workers in synagogues in Pantikapaion, Phanagoria, and Gorgippia, see CIRB 70, 71, 73; SEG 43.510 with discussion in Gibson, *The Jewish Manumission Inscriptions*, 126-27, 144-50, 160-62, 172. On Gods as theo-economic agents, see Jennifer A. Quigley, *Divine Accounting: Theo-Economics in Early Christianity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2021). Chance Bonar discusses this kind of enslavement in his forthcoming work; I am grateful for conversations with him on this. For a recent example of the view that enslavement to deities was fictitious, see John Byron, *Slavery Metaphors in Early Judaism and Pauline Christianity: A Traditio-Historical and Exegetical Examination* (Tübingen: Mohr

Siebeck, 2003), 1-16. For the role of enslaved workers in temple cults in Ephesus, see Shaner, *Enslaved Leadership*.

p.221 n.26a "Ancient papyri and inscriptions reveal that enslaved workers were sometimes jointly 'owned' by multiple members of the same community." See, for example, Poplius Granius and Lucius Arellius, two enslaved workers, mentioned in a list of magistrates from Delos ca. 125 B.C.E. (CIL 3.14203), who were co-held by two (different) sets of brothers. I am grateful to John Kloppenborg for this reference. An enslaved woman called Elpis from Tebtunis was divided into quarters: according to a census, one half of her 'belonged' to Sarapammon, with the remaining part being divided between Kroniaine and Taorsis ([P. Fam. Tebt. 48](#)). See also the work of Katherine Burgett, who, in a talk in 2020, argued that Plautus provides evidence of negotiating these familial dynamics even without legal co-ownership: Katherine Burgett, "Choosing the Right Master: Negotiating Liminal Ownership in Plautus and Romans 6," Paper Presented at the Annual Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature, 2020. Compare also [Matt. 6:24](#): "No one can serve two masters; for a slave will either hate the one and love the other or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth."

p.222 n.27 MacLean, *Freed Slaves*, 162. Contrast here John [8:36](#). Inscription for a sixteen-year-old: ILS 7479, discussed in Jane Gardner, "Slavery and Roman Law," in *The Cambridge World History of Slavery: Volume 1*, ed. Bradley and Cartledge, 414-437 [420], and Nasrallah, *Archaeology*, 44n14. On the adoption of freedpersons, see Jane F. Gardner, "The Adoption of Roman Freedmen," *Phoenix* 43.3 (1989): 236-57; Hugh Lindsey, *Adoption in the Roman World* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009); Gardner, *Family and Familia in Roman Law and Life* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 179-90. Vineyard parable in the Shepherd of Hermas: *Herm. Man.5*

On sonship and inheritance in Paul see Caroline Johnson Hodge, *If Sons, Then Heirs: A Study of Kinship and Ethnicity in the Letters of Paul* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007); John Goodrich, "Guardians, not Taskmasters: The Cultural Resonances of Paul's Metaphor in Galatians 4.1-2," *JSNT* 32 (2010): 251-284; John Goodrich, "As Long As the Heir is a Child: The Rhetoric of Inheritance in Galatians 4.1-2 and P.Ryl. 2.153," *NovT* 55 (2013): 61-76; and Paula Fredriksen, *Paul: The Pagans' Apostle* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017).

p.222 n.28 Terence, *The Brothers*, 455-6, trans. Mouritsen, *Freedman*, 37. Mouritsen notes that a similar connection is made for comedic purposes in Plautus, *The Rope*, 1265-6. Cicero, *For Rabirius* 15: "servi, si libertatis spem propositam non haberent, ferre nullo modo possent," trans. Mouritsen, *Freedman*, 144; Ulrike Roth, "Men Without Hope," *Papers of the British School at Rome* 79 (2011): 71-94. On manumission in early Christianity, see Harrill, *Manumission*.

p.223 n.29 The theological conversation about faith is nuanced and vast. I cannot possibly hope to do justice to it here. On *pistis*, see Teresa Morgan, *Roman Faith and Christian Faith: Pistis and Fides in the Early Roman Empire and Early Churches* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015). On *pistis* in Paul, see Jennifer Eyl, *Signs, Wonders, and Gifts: Divination in the Letters of Paul* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 170-212, and Eyl, "Soldiers, Slaves, Sons, and Brides: Expectations of Fidelity in Paul's Letters," Paper Presented in the Redescribing Christian Origins Working Group, Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting, 2021. On the question of whose faith saves human beings, see David J. Downs, *The Faithfulness of the Risen Christ: Pistis and the Exalted Lord in the Pauline Letters* (Waco, TX: Baylor University, 2019), and Karl Friedrich Ulrichs, *Christusglaube: Studien zum Syntagma pistis*

Christou und zum paulinischen Verständnis von Glaube und Rechtfertigung (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007).

p.223 n.29a “It was a facet of many relationships but, as an attribute, it appeared more regularly in literary portrayals of “good slaves” and freedpeople than any other virtue except deference.” See Kelly L. Wrenhaven, *Reconstructing the Slave: The Image of the Slave in Ancient Greece* (London: Bloomsbury, 2012). Paul echoed the same sentiment when he identified himself as a servile overseer and wrote that it is “required of stewards that they be found trustworthy.” 1 Cor [4:1-2](#). For Paul as “overseer,” see 1 Cor [9:17](#). His language is tricky, but it is suggestive that he hints that while he finds satisfaction in the task imposed upon him, he may have been somewhat unwilling to receive it. So, Teresa Morgan, *The New Testament and the Theology of Trust* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022), 282–323. I am grateful to Morgan for sharing prepublication work with me.

On “good slaves” and “bad slaves,” see G. Fabre, *Libertus: Recherches sur les rapports patron-affranchi à la fin de la république romaine* (Rome: École française de Rome, 1981); Joshel, “Slavery and Roman Literary Culture”; MacLean, *Freed Slaves*, 37–38; Annalisa Rei, “Villains, Wives, and Slaves in the Comedies of Plautus,” in Joshel and Murnaghan, *Women and Slaves*, 92–108; Kathleen McCarthy, *Slaves, Masters, and the Art of Authority in Plautine Comedy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000); C. W. Marshall, *The Stagecraft and Performance of Roman Comedy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 194; Roberta Stewart, *Plautus and Roman Slavery* (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012); J. Albert Harrill, “The Dramatic Function of the Running Slave Rhoda (Acts 12.13–16): A Piece of Greco-Roman Comedy,” *NTS* 46.1 (2000): 150–57; Cobb, *Slavery*, 28, 125–27.

p.224 n.29b “it often sounds like the loyalty expected of enslaved people...” This is striking precisely because Christianity, following a particular line of Protestant interpretation, has so effectively reified the notion of faith. Today, many people see faith as an exclusively cognitive process: we have faith, we believe. The most influential instantiation of this definition is that of Martin Luther, whose notion of justification by faith alone is a sturdy foundation stone in the many declensions of Protestantism generated by his writings. The whispered alternative to salvation by faith alone is salvation through works or actions. In simplistic caricatures of Protestant and Catholic theology, this binary is the distinction between the faith-focused descendants of Luther and the works-righteousness children of St. Peter. Our understanding of what faith is has been shaped both by fierce post-Reformation intra-Christian debates about salvation and by the ubiquitous way in which faith has become a synonym for religion and religiosity. In predominantly Christian countries, ‘faith’ is now the default intellectual and affective state in which people ‘do religion.’

p.224 n.30 On reciprocity: Teresa Morgan, *Roman Faith*, 4: “*Pistis* is a relational concept whose meaning is always defined in part by the relationship in which it operates: the faithfulness of a slave towards her master is not the same as that of a client towards his patron or that of a believer towards Christ.” On wives, sons: Eyl, “Soldiers, Slaves, Sons, and Brides.”

p.224 n.31 On *Pistis*/*Fides* and freedmen: Mouritsen, *Freedman*, 61. For Cicero on Tiro, see *Fam.* [16.16.2](#); *Att.* [9.17.2](#). It is significant that Tiro’s work was literary. As Talitha Kearey has argued, it is during this period that the “slavish” quality of “faithfulness” came to be applied to texts. See Kearey, “Editing,” in Coogan, Moss, and Howley, *Writing, Enslavement, and Power*, forthcoming. Epictetus, *Disc.* [2.22](#) (26-20).

p.225 n.32 On the economics of divine gifts and the obligations of repayment, see Quigley, *Divine Accounting*, and Devin Singh, *Divine Currency: The Theological Power of Money in the West* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2018). On freedom as a gift that demanded gratitude, see Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death*, 209–247. For the importance of context to readings of Paul, see Concannon, *Profaning Paul*, and Concannon, “[Paul Is Dead. Long Live Paulinism! Imagining a Future for Pauline Studies](#),” *Ancient Jew Review* (November 1, 2016).

On gratitude to the enslaver: Funerary inscriptions of freedpersons indicate that it was through continued obedience and other servile virtues like industry, honesty, and loyalty that manumitted people secured an afterlife of commemoration (CIL 5.5930; 6.10021, 26926, 33903; 9.4796; 10.4915; AE 1968, 74, AE 1968, 164, AE 1987, 196). So, too, argues MacLean with respect to Romans 6: “Working in a Judeo-Christian idiom, Paul identifies submission as a step toward glory; here, liberation from sin and willing enslavement to God hold the promise of immortality through salvation... To those who seek glory, honor, and immortality through endurance in doing good, he will give eternal life. But for those who are ambitious, disobey the truth, and obey evil, there will be wrath and anger,” in *Freed Slaves*, 67–68. Christian epigraphy, even more than that of contemporaries, stressed the importance of *fidelis*. See Maureen Carroll, *Spirits of the Dead: Roman Funerary Commemoration in Western Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 268, and Hanne Sigismund Nielsen, “The Value of Epithets in Pagan and Christian Epitaphs from Rome,” in *Childhood, Class and Kin in the Roman World*, ed. Suzanne Dixon (New York: Routledge, 2001), 166–177. On enslaved people in funerary art, see Cobb, *Slavery*, 19–24.

p.225 n.33 For imperial and senatorial efforts to re-enslave “ungrateful freedmen,” see Suetonius, [Claudius 25.1](#); Dio Cassius, *Hist.* [60.28.1](#) and [68.13](#). It does not seem to have been the case that the re-enslavement was prescribed until Constantine, but the fact that it was discussed is evidence of what Manning calls an “almost obsessive concern” about the obligations of freedpersons to their patrons. See C. E. Manning, “‘Actio ingrati’ (Seneca, *De Benef.* 3, 6–17: a contribution to contemporary debate?),” *Studia et Documenta Historiae et Iuris* 52 (1986): 61–72 [69], and discussion in Mouritsen, *Freedman*, 55–118.

Acte inscription: CIL 6.20905. There are two inscriptions on the altar: the first a more straightforward epitaph to the child (from which the child’s name has been scratched out) and the second on the back of the altar. My source for this analysis is Javal Coleman and Dan-el Padilla Peralta, “Rhetoric,” in Coogan, Moss, and Howley, *Writing, Enslavement, and Power*, forthcoming. The statement about how there was nothing Acte could do to erase the debt she owed her former enslaver turned husband was made verbally by Padilla Peralta in the workshop that preceded the publication of the volume. Compare Katherine P. D. Huemoller, “Freedom in Marriage? Manumission for Marriage in the Roman World,” *JRS* 110 (2020): 123–39. Seneca, [Ben. 3](#).

“The unrepayable gift was a yawning chasm of obligation: If it did not necessitate repayment, that was only because there was no way to repay it.” 2 Cor. 9:15: “Thanks be to God for this unreckonable gift.” I thus agree, in a modified way, with John M.G. Barclay, *Paul and the Gift* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015). Barclay is not interested in freedpersons, explicitly choosing “to leave [them] to one side,” 36n94. Articulating this in the terms of enslavement seems, to me, preferable to translating the language and logic of slavery into theologically familiar categories like “the message of God’s grace in Christ” or “a massive unremitting sense of answerability to one’s Maker.” Certainly, it can explain some of the “paradoxes” in Paul’s writing. For these terms, see Stephen Westerholm, “The ‘New Perspective’ at Twenty-Five,” in *Justification and Variegated Nomism, Volume 2: The*

Paradoxes of Paul, ed. D. A. Carson, Peter T. O'Brien, and Mark A. Seifrid (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), 1-38. This is not to say that these more theologically productive readings are less important, but rather that for those, like myself, interested in the political work done by readings of ancient texts, they obscure certain dynamics. On Paul and his political afterlives, see Concannon, *Profaning Paul*; Matthew V. Novenson, *Paul, Then and Now* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2022), 1-12.

p.226 n.33a "Pistis was always reciprocal, but as in all hierarchies, these duties and obligations weighed more heavily on the side of the enslaved." On the social status of Paul's addressees and of first- and early second-century Christians in general, see Chapter One. I should add that, regardless of their social status, everyone was aware of the social hierarchies and expectations that governed the relationship between enslaver and enslaved. On reciprocity and action, see Morgan, *The New Testament and the Theology of Trust*. Even though God, unlike other masterly figures, had the ability to know the hearts and minds of his formerly enslaved, this did not augment the character of the relationship. On the contrary, this made it impossible to feign gratitude. Roman elites could only fantasize about the capacity to know the minds of those they dominated.

p.226 n.33b "Discipleship began with familial alienation and financial precarity" Everyone in the Roman empire, even the confidantes of emperors, agreed that wealth was corrupting, but their solution was to avoid protracted tasting menus and conspicuous displays of consumption. Rendering oneself destitute was another matter entirely. Subsistence workers were only a bout of illness or dry spell away from starvation. For even the slightly well-off, this instruction was difficult to accept.

p.227 n.33c "Bills of sale from ancient Egypt dispassionately relate the trade in enslaved 'homebred' children who learned the hard way that they had no home." Children were often apprenticed in the households of business contacts in order to learn a trade, or were moved abroad through alien markets and foreign ports. Almost 100,000 Judeans, including followers of Jesus, were trafficked in the aftermath of the Roman destruction of Jerusalem in 70 C.E. As discussed in Chapter One, enslaved Judeans were swallowed both by the engine of slavery and by a historiographical tradition that does not acknowledge them as Jesus followers, much less as missionaries.

p.227 n.33d "or any others first met their 'mistresses' or 'masters' in the flesh" is borrowed from Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 5.1.18. On alienation from family and enslavement, see Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death*, 13. On separation from family, see Bradley, *Slaves and Masters*, 48-53. On kinlessness as a constitutive part of slavery, see Finley, *Ancient Slavery and Modern Ideology*, 77.

Paradoxically, in this respect, enslavement, as a mirror for discipleship, reflected the ways in which enslaved people were, by virtue of their position, better Stoic philosophers than elites. They were not free to indulge bodily appetites like sex, food, and alcohol, and were forced to control their emotions. That enslavers were aware of this may only have added to the cruelty they meted out; see Moss, "Chronometric Violence."

p.228 n.34 On God as father, see Michael Peppard, *The Son of God in the Roman World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 147ff. On dying daily: 1 Cor [15:31](#); Mbembe, "Necropolitics."

p.228 n.34a "the Gospel of Matthew strengthens the connection between discipleship and slavery by likening Jesus' disciples to enslaved workers and Jesus himself to an enslaver" See the similar analogies in Mark [10:43-45](#); Luke [12:37-38](#); [17:7-10](#); John [13:14-16](#); [15:20](#). In a recent paper, Shaner

sees this idea at work in the healing of the centurion's enslaved attendant in Luke (Katherine Shaner, "Enslavement in Early Christianity," New England/Eastern Canada Regional Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature, March 19, 2022).

p.228 n.35 For the view that Matthew presents followers of Jesus as "volunteer slaves," see Edmund Neufeld, "Vulnerable Bodies and Volunteer Slaves: Slave Parable Violence in the Rest of Matthew," *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 30.1 (2020): 41-63. For this view with respect to Luke, see Kyoung-Jin Kim, *Stewardship and Almsgiving in Luke's Theology* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1998), 128.

p.229 n.36 Valerius Maximus, *Memorable Works and Deeds* 6.8. Valerius notes that the *fides* of enslaved people is particularly commendable because it is "less expected" (*minus expectatam*, 6.8.pr.). One of his most striking examples involves Restio, an enslaved worker who was brutally shackled and branded by his enslaver but who later risked his life—and rescued his enslaver—by pretending that the enslaver was already dead and burning on a funeral pyre (6.8.7, also narrated in Appian, *Civil War* 4.43; Dio Cassius, *Hist.* 47.10.4-5). See discussion in Rebecca Langlands, "Roman Exempla and Situation Ethics: Valerius Maximus and Cicero *de Officiis*," *JRS* 101 (2011): 100-122; Glancy, *Slavery in Early Christianity*, 117. Other examples of tales of "loyal slaves" include Seneca, *Ep.* 47.4, 11-15, 18; *Ben.* 3.25.1; Macrobius 1.11.16; Tacitus, *Annals* 4.29.

"Enslavers, thus, deluded themselves" Joshel and Murnaghan, *Women and Slaves*, 14-15. On Blandina: Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 5.1.17.

p.229 n.37 *Ign. Rom.* 4.3, modified from Ehrman, *Apostolic Fathers*, 1.275. Some see the language of the absence of desire as a reference to the things of this world. This reading is confirmed by additions in several manuscripts (See Ehrman, *Apostolic Fathers*, 1.275n69). My reading follows Hans-Werner Bartsch, *Gnostisches Gut und Gemeindetradition bei Ignatius von Antiochien* (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann, 1940), 94-96.

p.230 n.38 Angela N. Parker, "One Womanist's View of Racial Reconciliation in Galatians," *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 34.2 (2018): 23-40 [37]. See also Glancy, "Slavery and the Rise of Christianity," 464-480, and Col. 4:1; Eph. 6:1; Kartzow, *The Slave Metaphor*, 101: "The metaphor of God as a slave owner was not necessarily a liberating one for those who heard these texts. To be a 'slave of the Lord' may of course have worked as a comfort for real slaves, since this relationship may have trumped the relationship between slave and owner. Or it may have simply added to the pain and suffering, and given a double burden of slavery. Or the metaphor may have blended into the slave reality in very complex ways, making it hard to grasp what was real slavery and what was metaphorical slavery."

p.230 n.39 Enslaved workers could not enter into marriage contracts or deny their enslavers sexual access to their bodies. Even some freedpersons found themselves compelled to acquiesce to the coercive sexual demands of their former enslavers. It is unclear whether Christian enslavers viewed sexual relations with their enslaved domestic workers as fornication, or if they saw them as a licit sexual outlet. As mere "bodies," enslaved workers might not have "counted," or might have been viewed as what Paul calls "vessels" for their sexual desires. See Glancy, *Slavery in Early Christianity*, 71-101. Roughly two hundred years later, the *Apostolic Tradition* suggested that enslaved concubines could participate in the Christian community if they remained "faithful" to their enslavers and raised their children. An accommodation for enslaved women that presupposed that they submit

themselves to rape and sacrifice any form of meaningful romantic relationship of their own is deeply horrifying. See Glancy, *Slavery in Early Christianity*, 50. Joe Marchal explores the possibility that Paul himself may have sexually exploited Onesimus; see Joseph A. Marchal, "The Usefulness of an Onesimus: The Sexual Use of Slaves and Paul's Letter to Philemon," *JBL* 130.4 (2011): 749–70. Roth argues that Paul was, together with Philemon, an enslaver of Onesimus; see Ulrike Roth, "Paul, Philemon, Onesimus: A Christian Design for Mastery," *ZNW* 105 (2014): 102–130.

The Pauline texts that feature in academic conversation about this question are [1 Cor. 5:1–13](#) (instructions against sexual immorality); [1 Cor 7](#) (instructions about marriage and social status); 1 Thess [4:3–8](#) (where Paul instructs people to "obtain [their] own vessel"). On these, see S. Scott Bartchy, *First-Century Slavery and the Interpretation of 1 Corinthians 7:21* (Missoula, MT: Society of Biblical Literature for the Seminar on Paul, University of Montana, 1973); J. Albert Harrill, "Revisiting the Problem of 1 Corinthians 7:21," *Biblical Research* 65 (2020): 77–94; Briggs, "Can an Enslaved God Liberate?"; Tyler M. Schwaller, "'A Slave to All': The Queerness of Paul's Slave Form," in *Bodies on the Verge: Queering Pauline Epistles*, ed. Joseph A. Marchal (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2019), 165–90.

Later generations of interpreters also struck on the ways in which the practice of slavery forestalled the possibility of full participation in the Christian community. A petition addressed to the governor, council, and representatives of Massachusetts in 1774 argued that slavery "rendered [enslaved people] incapable of shewing our obedience to Almighty God" because it prevented enslaved people from following the commandments and being good family members. The petition, which draws extensively on Paul, highlights the incompatibility of the Christian life and enslavement. "Founders' Constitution, Slave Petition," 3:432–33, cited in Lisa M. Bowens, *African American Readings of Paul: Reception, Resistance, and Transformation* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2020), 30. The petition is also discussed in Allen Dwight Callahan, *The Talking Book: African Americans and the Bible* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 34–35.

p.232 n.40 For the influence of the household codes in later interpretation: Clarice J. Martin, "The *Haustafeln* (Household Codes) in African American Biblical Interpretation: 'Free Slaves' and 'Subordinate Women,'" in *Stony the Road We Trod: African American Biblical Interpretation*, ed. Cain Hope Felder (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991), 206–31; Shively T. J. Smith, *Strangers to Family: Diaspora and 1 Peter's Invention of God's Household* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2016), 17–43. For liberative reinterpretations of Paul in the context of antebellum slavery, see Allen Dwight Callahan, *The Talking Book: African Americans and the Bible* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006); Brian K. Blount, *Then the Whisper Put on Flesh: New Testament Ethics in an African American Context* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2001); Emerson B. Powery and Rodney S. Sadler, Jr., *The Genesis of Liberation: Biblical Interpretation in the Antebellum Narratives of the Enslaved* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2016). On Paul and enslavers: Clarice J. Martin, "'Somebody Done Hoodoo'd the Hoodoo Man': Language, Power, Resistance, and the Effective History of Pauline Texts in American Slavery," *Semeia* 83/84 (1998): 203–33; Vincent Wimbush, "The Bible and African Americans: An Outline of an Interpretive History," in Felder, *Stony the Road We Trod*, 89–93; Harrill, *Slaves in the New Testament: Literary, Social, and Moral dimensions* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2006), 165–92. For a recent overview that includes examples of subversive readings, see Lisa M. Bowens, *African American Readings of Paul: Reception, Resistance, and Transformation* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2020).

For the reception of enslaved obedience, see the 1854 *Catechism for Slaves*: "Q. Who gave you a master and a mistress? A. God gave them to me. Q. Who says that you must obey them? A. God says that I must." Cited and discussed in Mitzi J. Smith, "U.S. Colonial Missions to African Slaves:

Catechizing Black Souls, Traumatizing the Black Psychē,” in *Teaching All Nations: Interrogating the Matthean Great Commission*, ed. Mitzi J. Smith and Jayachitra Lalitha (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2014), 57–85 [71].

p.233 n.41 Quotation from Benjamin M. Palmer, *A Plain and Easy Catechism, Designed Chiefly for the Benefit of Coloured Persons, to Which are Annexed Suitable Prayers and Hymns* (Charleston, SC: Observer Office Press, 1828), 32. Cited in Tammy K. Byron, “‘A Catechism for Their Special Use’: Slave Catechisms in the Antebellum South” (unpublished PhD diss., University of Arkansas, 2008), 110–11. I was led to Byron by Smith, “U.S. Colonial Missions to African Slaves,” 83. See also Dave Gosse, “Examining the Promulgation and Impact of the Great Commission in the Caribbean, 1942–1970: A Historical Analysis,” in Smith and Lalitha, *Teaching All Nations*, 33–56, and Beatrice Okyere-Manu, “Colonial Mission and the Great Commission in Africa,” in *Teaching All Nations: Interrogating the Matthean Great Commission*, ed. Mitzi Smith and Jayachitra Lalitha (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2014), 15–32.

p.233 n.42 The importance of remembering and not forgetting is emphasized by womanist scholar and Roman Catholic theologian M. Shawn Copeland in her classic book, *Knowing Christ Crucified: The Witness of African American Religious Experience* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2018); Hortense J. Spillers, “Mama’s Baby, Papa’s Maybe: An American Grammar Book,” *Diacritics* 17.2 (1987): 64–81 [68]. The use of this quote in this context was inspired by Bonar, “Enslaved to God.”

p.234 n.43 Mark [14: 3-9](#); Matthew [26: 6-13](#). Compare [Luke 7: 36-50](#) and a parallel story in [John 12: 1-8](#), in which the woman who anoints Jesus is Mary, the sister of Lazarus.

p.235 n.44 This line of argument is inspired by Angela N. Parker, *If God Still Breathes, Why Can’t I?: Black Lives Matter and Biblical Authority* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2021). For African American women involved in the interpretation of scripture, see Shively T. J. Smith, “Witnessing Jesus Hang: A Womanist Reading of Mary Magdalene’s View of Crucifixion through Ida B. Wells’ Chronicles of Lynching,” in *Stony the Road We Trod: African American Biblical Interpretation, 30th Anniversary Expanded Edition*, ed. Cain Hope Felder (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2021). Key figures in this interpretive project include Gay Byron, Renita Weems, Vanessa Lovelace, Vincent Wimbush, Mitzi Smith, Fernando Segovia, Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, and many others. For a fuller list of scholars involved in this project and additional resources for locating their work, see the online notes.

p.235 n.45 Translation of [2 Pet 2:1](#) is from Shively Smith, *Interpreting 2 Peter*, 133. Quotation from Ahmed, *Willful Subjects*, 200.

CHAPTER EIGHT

p.236 n.1 My reading of Euclia draws heavily on the work of Charles, *Silencing Slaves*, 194–200, and Christy Cobb, “Hidden Truth in the Body of Euclia: Page duBois’ *Torture and Truth* and *Acts of Andrew*,” *Biblical Interpretation* 25.1 (2017): 19–38. My discussions of body parts, wholes, and willfulness are shaped by Ahmed, *Willful Subjects*. The story of Euclia appears in the final part of the *Acts of Andrew*, also known as the *Passion of Andrew*. Translations are adapted from Dennis Ronald MacDonald, *The Acts of Andrew* (Santa Rosa, CA: Polebridge Press, 2005), 12–13. References to the Greek text follow the edition of Jean-Marc Prieur, ed., *Acta Andreae* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1989). Those interested in further information about manuscripts and interpretation of the story should consult the eClavis database entry: <https://www.nasscal.com/e-clavis-christian-apocrypha/acts-of-andrew/> and Jan N. Bremmer, ed., *The Apocryphal Acts of Andrew* (Studies in the Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles 5; Leuven: Peeters, 2000).

p.236 n.1a “Increasingly, he seemed to her to be a brutish man” Following the assessment of Anna Rebecca Solevåg, *Birthing Salvation: Gender and Class in Early Christian Childbearing Discourse* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 137–197.

p.236 n.1b “She was now a bride of Christ” The term “bride of Christ,” which evolved in Christian tradition to become a synonym for the church, was used from the third and fourth centuries onwards to refer to women (e.g., Thecla and Melania) who chose ascetic lives and thus had a privileged means of access to God. On female ascetics in general, see, for example, Athanasius of Alexandria, *Second Letter to Virgins*, 21. I take some liberties in using it with respect to such an early text.

p.237 n.2 “Euclia was young, shapely, and insubordinate” The Greek description of Euclia is interesting. The language translated by MacDonald as “wanton” is *phusin atakton*; this does have connotations of sensuality, but it also evokes notions of being disordered, out of step, and out of one’s proper place. In some contexts, it means something like “lazy,” but it can also, as an affective state, mean something like “impulsive” or “undisciplined.” Cobb translates it as “sensual by nature,” in “Euclia’s Story,” 43. I have translated it as “insubordinate” to match the interpretation of Euclia as bragging later in the account and due to my interest in her willfulness and refusal to be property. Both Ahmed and Hartman discuss the paradox of the enslaved sexually exploited worker who must be both “will less and always willing” (Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection*, 81–84). My reading here follows Glancy, *Slavery in Early Christianity*, 22n68: “the danger for a slave is not sexual contamination but the possibility that she will forget her proper place, a conclusion that is hardly a protest against upper-class ethics.”

“Erotic body double” Glancy, *Slavery in Early Christianity*, 22, 155. On Euclia’s lack of choice, compare Ahmed, *Willful Subjects*, 55; Charles, *Silencing Slaves*, 197; Cobb, “Euclia’s Story,” 42. On the problem of sexual consent in ancient contexts involving enslaved women and women in general, see Rhiannon Graybill, *Texts After Terror: Rape, Sexual Violence, and the Hebrew Bible* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021), and the work of the Shiloh Project (<https://www.shilohproject.blog>). Roman comedy often portrays women and enslaved people as prone to the servile vices of greed and lust. Female sex workers in particular were portrayed as being paid in or demanding jewelry (Plautus, *The Twin Brothers*, 541-3; *The Churl*, 272). See discussion in Amy Richlin, *Slave Theater in the Roman Republic: Plautus in Popular Comedy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 117, 288.

p.237 n.2a "She may have been pregnant, or perhaps she sensed an opportunity, but in any case she decided to exert what power she had." On Euclia's potential pregnancy, see Cobb, "Hidden Truth," 28-29; Saundra Schwartz, "From Bedroom to Courtroom: The Adultery Type-Scene and the Acts of Andrew," in *Mapping Gender in Ancient Religious Discourses*, ed. Todd C. Penner and Caroline Vander Stichele (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 267-311 [305]; Solevåg, *Birthing Salvation*, 191.

p.237 n.2b "Yet like so many freedwomen—if in fact Maximilla legally freed her—Euclia did not leave." It is unclear whether Maximilla had the right to free Euclia or what kind of process was undertaken; it seems to have been, at best, informal. The mistreatment of Euclia suggests that she was not manumitted, but her disobedience and ingratitude may have inspired ad hoc re-enslavement. On conversations about re-enslavement and ingratitude, see Chapter Seven. On the processes of manumission, see Henrik Mouritsen, *The Freedman in the Roman World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 10-35.

p.237 n.2c "who resented her bragging, saw her as a brazen and greedy sex worker" According to the agrarian writer Columella, treating different kinds of enslaved workers in different ways was an effective means of social control because it inspired enslaved workers to compete with one another for resources and to resent those who were better treated. See Columella, *On Agriculture* 1.9.6-9 and Bryson §73. Perhaps this is why she was betrayed by her coworkers. We might read Euclia's "boasting" and interest in ribbons and jewelry as a form of resistance. On forms of dress and especially elevated dress as a form of willful resistance to oppressive power, see Talitha L. LeFlouria, *Chained in Silence: Black Women and Convict Labor in the New South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015), 88-90.

p.238 n.2d "Maybe Maximilla mumbled something about Euclia's wantonness, or perhaps she saw this as an opportunity to silence her increasingly difficult worker" The story wants us to read Maximilla as a paradigm of virtue. I do not mean to imply that Maximilla's life was easy—only that whatever injustice she experienced, she was willing to force onto Euclia. The history of the complicity of women in the domination and violation of enslaved women is long. It begins in the Bible with Sarah and Hagar, and continues into Atlantic Slavery. On the latter, see Stephanie E. Jones-Rogers, *They Were Her Property: White Women as Slave Owners in the American South* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2019). On Maximilla, see Kate Cooper, *The Virgin and the Bride: Idealized Womanhood in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996); Caroline T. Schroeder, "Embracing the Erotic in the Passion of Andrew: The Apocryphal Acts of Andrew, the Greek Novel, and Platonic Philosophy," in *The Apocryphal Acts of Andrew*, ed. Jan N. Bremmer (Leuven: Peeters, 2000), 110-26; Schwartz, "From Bedroom to Courtroom"; Charles, *Silencing Slaves*, 194-200.

p.238 n.3 Amputation was a necessary form of surgery in antiquity. War, workplace accidents, and infections meant that amputation was often a treatment of last resort. The risk of bleeding out was real and so, to increase the patient's chances of survival, surgeons would use ligatures. See my *Divine Bodies*, 45-52. Wealthy Roman households were often staffed by doctors (themselves often enslaved) who were part of the *paterfamilias*'s entourage. Given Aegeates' social station, perhaps we should assume that he had one on staff. I am grateful to Claire Bubb, a historian of medicine, for discussing the probability of ligature use in a case like Euclia's.

For evidence of a professional enslaved torturer in Puteoli, see AE 1971, 88, and discussion in Bond, *Trade and Taboo*, 238n43. See also Petronius, [Sat. 49](#), and discussion in Glancy, "Slaves and Slavery in the Matthean Parables," 67. My description of this experience draws on the first-person account of Muhammed Sulaiman, an Iraqi man who was victimized in this manner. In the previous chapter, we have already noted the ways in which early Christians were understood to be parts of the body of Christ. It is worth noting here the ways in which the portioning of human beings has been racialized in subsequent iterations of enslavement. As M. Shawn Copeland notes, the "black woman's body has been reduced to body parts—parts that allowed white men pleasure, however unsettling; parts that afforded white men economic gain; parts that literally nursed the heirs of white racist supremacy," in M. Shawn Copeland, "Body, Representation, and Black Religious Discourse," in *Womanist Theological Ethics: A Reader*, ed. Katie Geneva Cannon, Emilie M. Townes, and Angela D. Sims (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2011), 98–112.

Mindful of Hartman's work, I worry that my description here, which draws out the violence of the scene, is prurient. I aim to avoid both the rhetorical pull of the text and an unpleasant academic habit of rendering the violence of Christian stories "abstract," and an acceptable part of the Christian "moral universe." On this tendency, see Anders Martinsen, "God as the Great Parasite? Ideology and Ethics in Interpretations of the Parables," *JECH* 1.2 (2011): 135–51. On prurience in early Christian literature, see David Frankfurter, "Martyrology and the Prurient Gaze," *JECS* 17.2 (2009): 215–45, and Elizabeth Castelli, "Visions and Voyeurism: Holy Women and the Politics of Sight in Early Christianity" (*Protocol of the Colloquy of the Center for Hermeneutical Studies* n.s. 2; Berkeley, CA: Center for Hermeneutical Studies, 1995), 1–20.

p.239 n.4 "Having introduced Euclia as a narrative device..." In other contexts disabled people are used in this way. On disabled bodies as narrative devices, see David T. Mitchell and Sharon L. Snyder, *Narrative Prosthesis: Disability and the Dependencies of Discourse* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001).

"Deserving of "punishment," rather than as a victim of abuse." As scholars of Atlantic slavery note, using the language of punishment is deeply problematic because it legitimizes the despotic violence used to coerce and control enslaved people. For a pithy summary, see Diana Paton, "Afterword: Punishment, Slavery and Legitimacy," *Journal of Global Slavery* 7.1-2 (2022): 203–209, which draws upon Vincent Brown, *Tacky's Revolt: The Story of an Atlantic Slave War* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2020).

"willfulness" In the prefatory material that opens *In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1983), Alice Walker defines a "womanist" as a "black feminist or feminist of color...Usually referring to outrageous, audacious, or *willful* behavior," xi.

p.239 n.5 "One unnamed man who provided unexpected evidence" this case is discussed in CJ 6.1.3. Cicero refers to a favored enslaved worker named Strato who was crucified after having his tongue removed at the orders of his enslaver, who worried that his dying words might convict her (*For Aulus Cluentius* [187](#)). On torture and enslaved workers, see Page duBois, *Torture and Truth* (New York: Routledge, 1991). "During other periods of history": On the amputation and the severing of the Achilles tendon of runaways in other periods, see Jenifer L. Barclay, *The Mark of Slavery: Disability, Race, and Gender in Antebellum America* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2021), 70, 111. Barclay notes that amputation was sometimes used to enforce antiliteracy laws in the antebellum South (78–79).

On the torture of enslaved people in Athenian law, see David C. Mirhady, "The Athenian Rationale for Torture," in *Law and Social Status in Classical Athens*, ed. Virginia Hunter and Jonathan Edmondson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 53–74; Michael Gagarin, "The Torture of Slaves in Athenian Law," *Classical Philology* 91.1 (1996): 1–18; in the Principate, see P. A. Brunt, "Evidence Given under Torture in the Principate," *Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte* 97 (1980): 256–65; Jane F. Gardner, "Slavery and Roman Law," in *The Cambridge World History of Slavery, Vol. 1: The Ancient Mediterranean World*, 431; Bradley, *Slavery and Society*, 165–70. On torture and early Christianity, see Virginia Burrus, "Torture, Truth, and the Witnessing Body: Reading Christian Martyrdom with Page duBois," *BibInt* 25 (2017): 5–18; L. Stephanie Cobb, *Divine Deliverance*.

p.241 n.6 On Thomas and the Cupbearer, see discussion in Chapter Four. On the postmortem exposure of low-status bodies, see Julia Hillner, *Prison, Punishment, and Penance in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

p.241 n.7 This section on hell is greatly influenced by the work of and conversations with Meghan Henning, *Hell Hath No Fury: Gender, Disability, and the Invention of Damned Bodies in Early Christian Literature* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2021); see also Larsen and Letteney, *Ancient Mediterranean Incarceration*. In the Matthew passage, the Greek *dichotomesei* (v.51) can be translated either as "cut in pieces" or "cut off." Both punishments are violently forced upon Euclia. On the Matthean parables and hell, see Meghan R. Henning, *Educating Early Christians through the Rhetoric of Hell: "Weeping and Gnashing of Teeth" as Paideia in Matthew and the Early Church* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014), and Hatter, "Slavery, the Enslaved, and the Gospel of Matthew."

p.242 n.8 Some of these workers would have been intimately acquainted with their enslavers. Many were overseers charged with managerial tasks and financial affairs. Just as real enslaved workers were not protected from corporal punishment and violence by virtue of their status, so too the parabolic overseers are answerable with their bodies. For the idea that enslaved people were "answerable with their bodies," see Demosthenes, *Against Timocrates* 167; Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death*, 299–303; Bradley, *Slaves and Masters*, 137; Glancy, "Slaves and Slavery in the Matthean Parables," 74. Enslaved people are explicitly identified in six Matthean parables: the weeds and wheat (13: 24–30), the "unmerciful slave" (18: 23–25), the wicked tenants (21: 33–41), the wedding banquet (22: 1–10), the unjust steward (24: 45–51), and the parable of the talents (25:14–30). I am convinced by Mitzi Smith that the young women in the parable of the ten virgins (25:1–13) are also enslaved (Mitzi Smith, "Slavery, Torture, Systemic Oppression, and Kingdom Rhetoric: An African American Reading of Matthew 25:1–13," in *Insights from African American Interpretation* [Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2017], 87–91), and by Harrill that we should see the prodigal son in Luke as becoming an indentured laborer (see Luke 12:42–48; 15:15; cf. J. Albert Harrill, "The Indentured Labor of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:15)," *JBL* 115.4 (1996): 714–17).

On the importance of enslaved people in the parables, see Munro, *Jesus, Born of a Slave*, 327; Mary Ann Beavis, "Ancient Slavery as an Interpretive Context for the New Testament Servant Parables with Special Reference to the Unjust Steward (Luke 16:1–8)," *JBL* 111.1 (1992): 37–54; Jennifer A. Glancy, "Slaves and Slavery in the Matthean Parables," *JBL* 119.1 (2000): 67–90 [70–71]; Llewellyn Howes, "Agricultural Slavery and the Parable of the Loyal and Wise Slave in Q 12:42–46," *Acta Classica* 58 (2015): 70–110.

On the *servus callidus* (bad/tricky enslaved person), see Amy Richlin, *Slave Theater in the Roman Republic: Plautus in Popular Comedy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017); Ferdinand Stürner, "The *Servus Callidus* in Charge: Plays of Deception," in *A Companion to Plautus*, ed. Dorota Dutsch and George Fredric Franko (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell, 2020), 135-49; Kathleen McCarthy, *Slaves, Masters, and the Art of Authority in Plautine Comedy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).

p.242 n.8a "Given that the debt was the rough equivalent of 160,000 years' worth of pay for a day laborer" This calculation comes from Daniel J. Harrington, *Sacra Pagina: The Gospel of Matthew* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1991), 270. There are questions to be asked about how the man even accumulated a debt of this size. For an elegant summary of the debate so far, see Hatter, "Slavery," 168-172. One previously unconsidered possibility is whether he was being held liable for the losses of the Lord (*kurios*) for whom he had acted as an agent. The enormity of the sum may point us towards despotic injustice in commerce.

p.242 n.8b "In some sense, the anonymous enslaved people are the invisible power" At the same time, we should exercise caution; these stories encouraged enslaved workers to surveil their colleagues and betray them to the "master." They also hint, in ways that echo despotic fictions, that freeborn enslavers are kinder and that enslaved workers should fear their coworkers and manumitted authority figures. Munro emphasizes that "it is always the slave characters and experiences with which the hearer/reader is to identify," in *Jesus, Born of a Slave*, 355-66. This might be evidence of the kind of "moral economy" that Alex Lichtenstein detects in the rationalization of theft by captive women in the American South. Alex Lichtenstein, "'That Disposition to Theft, with Which They Have Been Branded': Moral Economy, Slave Management, and the Law," *Journal of Social History* 21.3 (1988): 413-40.

p.243 n.9 Sulfur: Gen. [19:24](#); [Rev 9:17-18](#); [14:10](#). Flames of hell: [Luke 16:24](#). Worms: [Mark 9:48](#). For a discussion of early Christian tours of hell, see Meghan Henning, *Hell Hath No Fury: Gender, Disability, and the Invention of Damned Bodies in Early Christian Literature* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2021). On the torture of Roman slaves, see Bradley, *Slavery and Society*, 165-70; Gardner, "Slavery and Roman Law," 431. On the fear of public exposure and execution, see Brent Shaw, "Judicial Nightmares and Christian Memory," *J ECS* 11.4 (2003): 533-63. On the relationship between judicial torture and hell, see István Czachesz, "Torture in Hell and Reality: The *Visio Pauli*," in *The Visio Pauli and the Gnostic Apocalypse of Paul*, ed. Jan N. Bremmer and István Czachesz (Leuven: Peeters, 2007), 130-43.

p.244 n.10 "shuffle of angelic bureaucrats" The notion of "angelic bureaucrats" takes its inspiration from Giorgio Agamben, *The Kingdom and the Glory* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2011), 144-166. On Revelation, see Jeremiah Coogan, "Revelation's Heavenly Tax Office: Roman Provincial Bureaucracy and the Textuality of John's Apocalypse," Papyri, Inscriptions, and the Contexts of Early Christianity Program Unit, Annual Meeting on Christian Origins, Centro Italiano di Studi Superiori sulle Religioni, Bertinoro, Italy, October 1, 2021. Parable of the Talents: Matt. [25:30](#). Outer darkness: Matt [8:12](#); [22:13](#); [25:14-30](#). On cisterns as carceral spaces, see examples in Letteney and Larsen, *Ancient Mediterranean Incarceration*.

It is likely that the shackled Pompeian skeleton belonged to an enslaved worker; see H. Etani, S. Sakai, and V. Iorio, "L'indagine archeologica svolta dal Japan Institute of Paleological Studies di

Kyoto tra il settembre del 2002 ed il febbraio del 2003,” *Rivista di Studi Pompeiani* 14 (2003): 312–14. Letteney and Larsen adduce similar examples in *Ancient Mediterranean Incarceration*. There are various ways to read the “gnashing teeth” of hell. In Roman medical thinking, they could represent fear, but they were also associated with cold; see Hillner, *Prison*, 242–78.

p.245 n.11 For a typology of prisons and their functions, see Letteney and Larsen, *Ancient Mediterranean Incarceration*. On stocks: Archaeologically speaking, the evidence is limited. Stocks were likely attached to wooden platforms (which do not survive). The prison for condemned people in Cagliari has anchors in the walls for stocks. I am grateful to Mark Letteney for this reminder.

Food rations: According to P. Cair. Zen. 4.59707, prisoners were given about 1700 calories’ worth of wheat (probably in bread form) per day. As Mark Letteney, who supplied me with this reference, put it in conversation, “It’ll keep you alive, but just barely.” See Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 5.4.3. On Blandina, see discussion in the previous section. For other examples of ancient prisoners dying in custody, see discussion in Letteney and Larsen, *Ancient Mediterranean Incarceration*. On the food rations supplied by local authorities and their agents, see Sallust, *Histories* 3, fr. 15.19; Seneca, *Declamations* 9.4.20; Seneca, *Ep.* [18.10–11](#). For food supplied by friends and family, see O. Mon. *Epiph.* 177. See discussion in Letteney and Larsen, *Ancient Mediterranean Incarceration*.

“The air was filled with the noise”: the noise of hell is mentioned in Lucian’s *Menippus* and *Apocalypse of Paul* 43. Eyewitness reports of prisoners throughout history testify to the inescapable noise. Evan A. Kutzler, *Living by Inches: The Smells, Sounds, Tastes and Feeling of Captivity in Civil War Prisons* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2019), 83–103.

On fetters: O. *Epiphanius* 176, in which an incarcerated man was forced to urinate on himself because his incarcerator had “maimed his hands.” *Code of Justinian* [9.4.1](#) describes a Constantinian law regulating the use of fetters and stipulating that they should not be too close to the bone.

“the slow work of graffiti-making” On Christian graffiti in prisons, see the ship, chi-rho, and crosses from the Prison of the Condemned in Carales (Cagliari, Sardinia), discussed in Letteney and Larsen, *Ancient Mediterranean Incarceration*. As is well established for other periods, graffiti sometimes offered faint resistance to the structures that constrained prisoners. On U.S. prison art, see Nicole R. Fleetwood, *Marking Time: Art in the Age of Mass Incarceration* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2020). See examples from San Lucas Prison, Costa Rica, where some twentieth-century pieces were composed in blood, and examples from the seventeenth-century Inquisitors’ Palace in Palermo, Sicily. For the latter, see the discussion in Gianclaudio Civale, “Animo Carcerato. Inquisizione, detenzione e graffiti a Palermo nel secolo XVII,” *Mediterranea-Ricerche Storiche* 40 (2017): 249–294, who follows others in characterizing them as “screaming without sound” (“urla senza suono” [252]).

p.245 n.12 Only two dedicated “toilets” have been found in gladiatorial prisons: at the prison at Carales and (possibly) the Julian basilica prison at Corinth. See discussion of the layout of the gladiatorial prison at Carales (Sardinia) in Letteney and Larsen, *Ancient Mediterranean Incarceration*. It’s possible that the contamination of food was part of a deliberate strategy to dehumanize prisoners, on which, see again the work of Larsen and Letteney.

On worms as a form of punishment, see Isaiah [66:24](#); *Apocalypse of Peter* 7–9; *Apocalypse of Paul* 36–37; *Latin Vision of Ezra* 34–36; Henning, *Hell*, 96–99. Parasitic infections varied regionally throughout the Roman empire, but fecal-oral parasites seem to have been ubiquitous. Soil samples reveal that roundworm and whipworm (two parasites visible in human excrement) were common in Greece, Anatolia, the Balkans, Turkey, and Serbia. For scientific analysis, see, for example, Marissa L. Ledger, “Intestinal Parasitic Infection in the Eastern Roman Empire During the Imperial Period

and Late Antiquity," *American Journal of Archaeology* 124.4 (2020): 631–57; Ann Olga Koloski-Ostrow, *The Archaeology of Sanitation in Roman Italy: Toilets, Sewers, and Water Systems* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015). On Roman latrines, see Barry Hobson, *Latrinae et Foricae: Toilets in the Roman World* (London: Duckworth, 2009).

p.246 n.13 Often, prisoners consigned to “public works” ended up in mills and bakeries. Pliny the Elder mentions that in Campania, Italy, there were wooden mortars run by convicts in chains. For discussion, see Bond, *Trade and Taboo*, 145–46. On mines: Letteney and Larsen, *Ancient Mediterranean Incarceration*; Larsen, “Carceral Practices”; Fergus Millar, “Condemnation to Hard Labour in the Roman Empire, from the Julio-Claudians to Constantine,” *Papers of the British School at Rome* 52 (1984): 124–47. One intriguing connection made by Letteney and Larsen is that dark prisons could damage the vision of prisoners.

p.246 n.14 “The air was deadly and difficult”: Strabo, [Geography 12.3.40](#) (modified translation). On the relationship of the mines to descriptions of hell, see Letteney and Larsen, *Ancient Mediterranean Incarceration*; Henning, *Hell*, 42–44. For Christians being sentenced to the mines, see Eusebius, *Eccl. Hist.* 8.8, 10; *Martyrs of Palestine* 7.4, 8.1; and Fergus Millar, *Rome, the Greek World, and the East, Volume 2: Government, Society, and Culture in the Roman Empire* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 137–45. For archaeological evidence that challenges the dominant view that mines were primarily staffed by enslaved people and prisoners, see Megan A. Perry, Drew S. Coleman, David L. Dettman, John P. Grattan, and Abdel Halim al-Shiyab, “Condemned to Metallum? The Origin and Role of 4th-6th Century A.D. Phaeno Mining Camp Residents Using Multiple Chemical Techniques,” *Journal of Archaeological Science* 38.3 (2011): 558–69. John Chrysostom, *Homily on Matthew* 43.5: “But as those who work in the mines are delivered over to certain cruel men, and see none of the people they live with but only their overseers; so will it be then also: or rather not so, but even far more cruel. For here it is possible to go unto the king, and entreat, and free the condemned person: but there, no longer; since it is not permitted, but they continue in the scorching torment, and in such great bodily pain, as it is not possible for words to tell.” (PG 57: 462.56–59, trans. Henning, *Hell*, 185n104). On fear in John Chrysostom, see Blake Leyerle, *The Narrative Shape of Emotion in the Preaching of John Chrysostom* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2020), 112–49.

p.247–8 n.15 “Though descriptions of hell also drew upon stories of the underworld from Greek mythology and from contemporary Judaism...” There is a wealth of scholarship on the cultural origins of ideas about hell. For representative examples, see Martha Himmelfarb, *Tours of Hell: An Apocalyptic Form in Jewish and Christian Literature* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1983); Georges Minois, *Histoire des Enfers* (Paris: Fayard, 1991); Alan E. Bernstein, *The Formation of Hell: Death and Retribution in the Ancient and Early Christian Worlds* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993); Herbert Vorgrimler, *Geschichte der Hölle* (Munich: Fink, 1993); Jan N. Bremmer, *The Rise and Fall of the Afterlife: The 1995 Read-Tuckwell Lectures at the University of Bristol* (New York: Routledge, 2002); Alan F. Segal, *Life after Death: A History of the Afterlife in the Religions of the West* (New York: Doubleday, 2004).

“Under a Roman law passed in the early first century CE, anyone who had been branded, shackled, tortured and found guilty of a crime, imprisoned, or sent to a gladiatorial school was ineligible for citizenship” Instead, they would remain perpetually alienated, sharing the status of defeated foreigners. Well into late antiquity, enslavers displayed an “obsession” with tracking down

“runaways.” The enslaver would hunt them down and, if the worker was found, brand their face or envelop their neck in an iron collar. The *Lex Aelia Sentia* of 4 C.E. describes the status of the manumitted “bad slave” (*dediticii*). The intentions of the legislation are debated; some have seen it as an attempt to protect the citizen body, while others have suggested that it was about preventing enslavers from manumitting “criminal slaves.” See Gaius, *Institutes* 1.13-16, with discussion in Gardner, “Slavery and Roman Law,” 427–28; Mouritsen, *Freedman*, 33.

An entire section of the Roman *Digest* (11.4) is devoted to the subject of self-emancipated workers. For examples of collars used to mark workers as “runaways,” see David L. Thurmond, “Some Roman Slave Collars in *CIL*,” *Athenaeum* 82 (1994): 459–93. On branding: [Rev. 13:16-17](#). On blasphemy against the Spirit, see [Mark 3:28-29](#), [Rev. 13:6](#). On branding as a way of dehumanizing people, see Karl Jacoby, “Slaves by Nature? Domestic Animals and Human Slaves,” *Slavery & Abolition* 15.1 (1994): 89–99.

p.248 n.5a “Some have argued, for example, that parables about enslaved workers dignify them by portraying them as moral agents capable of making ethical decisions.” This argument, like analogous arguments about the regulations governing enslaved workers in the Hebrew Bible, works through comparison. The “biblical models” of slavery are understood to be better because they seem kinder than those of contemporary societies. This argument has two fatal flaws: first, it ignores the simple fact that the enslavement of human beings is fundamentally unjust. Second, it willfully overlooks the fact that these supposedly kinder biblical models have been used to justify the most brutal slave societies in documented history. The abuses of Atlantic slavery were grounded in the interpretation of these same texts. On religion and Atlantic slavery, see David Brion Davis, *In the Image of God: Religion, Moral Values, and Our Heritage of Slavery* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001).

“Others engage in philological and cultural gymnastics, pretending that the overseers are freeborn servants and insisting that the parables nestle in the quotidian hierarchical arrangements between wealthy employers and those who depended on them.” In particular they gesture to the relationship between a patron and their client. For summaries and critiques of these opinions, see Glancy, “Slaves and Slavery in the Matthean Parables,” 69–71, 75; Martinsen, “God as the Great Parasite.” Glancy writes, “Although crucial to Roman social relations, the patron-client structure is an unsuitable category for the analysis of slavery... Despite certain similarities, including the asymmetry of power relations, a slave was not a client, and an owner was not a patron. By collapsing master-slave relations into the patron-client paradigm, Scott and other New Testament scholars distort the parabolic representation of slavery,” in *Slavery in Early Christianity*, 124–25.

“Others still have argued that these stories are mere metaphors, the most capaciously allegorical part of Jesus’s teaching” Sometimes these impulses are explicitly connected to the religious motivations that underpin them. Snodgrass, for example, writes that “God does not have torturers, and the story cannot be pushed to yield information about the nature of judgement,” in Klyne R. Snodgrass, *Stories with Intent: A Comprehensive Guide to the Parables of Jesus* (2nd ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2018), 74.

p.248 n.16 Tertullian, [Of Patience 4.1-2](#), translation modified from ANF. As Jeremy Williams and Laura Nasrallah describe it, “in the doulology of antiquity, the real enslaved and slave as metaphor cannot be unentwined,” in Laura Salah Nasrallah and Jeremy Williams, “Justice,” in Coogan, Moss, and Howley, *Writing, Enslavement, and Power*, forthcoming.

p.250 n.17 On the Palermo graffiti, see G. Pitrè and L. Sciascia, *Urla senza suono. Graffiti e disegni dei prigionieri dell'Inquisizione* (Palermo: Sellerio, 1999). Luca Pinelli, *Meditationi utilissime, sopra i quindecimysterii del Rosario, della Sacratissima Vergine Maria*. Brescia: Pietro Maria Marchetti (1600). Andrea Celli, *Dante and the Mediterranean Comedy: From Muslim Spain to Post-Colonial Italy* (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave MacMillan, 2022), 133.

p.250 n.18 Consumption: Angela Y. Davis, "Racialized Punishment and Prison Abolition," in James, ed., *The Angela Y. Davis Reader*, 96–107 [99]. Fears of consumption: Hartman, *Lose Your Mother*, 110–25. On the persistent association of hell and incarceration among prisoners, see Judith Vasquez, "On the Verge of Hell," in *Hell is a Very Small Place: Voices from Solitary Confinement*, ed. Jean Casella, James Ridgeway, and Sarah Shourd (New York: The New Press, 2016), 55–60 [58], and Galen Baughman, "The Freshman," in *Hell is a Very Small Place*, 129–36 [131].

p.250 n.19 On cannibalism and the fears about the resurrection it prompted, see Athenagoras, *On the Resurrection*; Tertullian, *On the Resurrection of the Dead* 32; Methodius, *On the Resurrection* 1.20–24. See discussion in Moss, *Divine Bodies*, 78–86.

p.251 n.20 Medieval text: *Latin Vision of Ezra* 50. Similarly, in the Gospel parables, it is higher-status enslaved overseers who are punished for their mistreatment; see Glancy, *Slavery in Early Christianity*, 112. For *defixiones*: Laura Salah Nasrallah, "Judgment, Justice, and Destruction: *Defixiones* and 1 Corinthians," *JBL* 140.2 (2021): 347–67, and Laura Salah Nasrallah and Jeremy Williams, "Justice," in *Writing, Enslavement, and Power*, forthcoming. Both pieces draw on Jeremy L. Williams, "Making Criminals: An Analysis of the Rhetoric of Criminality in the Acts of the Apostles" (PhD diss., Harvard University, 2021). For an overview of the *defixiones*, see Esther Eidinow, "Binding Spells on Tablets and Papyri," in *Guide to the Study of Ancient Magic*, ed. David Frankfurter (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 351–87. Captives from other historical periods also issue curses. For examples from the U.S. Civil War, see Kutzler, *Living by Inches*. It may be the case that injustice and captivity generate curses. The language of outlaw justice used by Nasrallah and Williams derives from Theodore W. Jennings, Jr., *Outlaw Justice: The Messianic Politics of Paul*. (Cultural Memory in the Present; Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2013).

For the Christian prison graffiti: C. Breytenbach, "Christian Prisoners: Fifth and Sixth Century Inscriptions from Corinth," *Acta Theologica* 36, Suppl. 23 (2016): 302–309.

p.251 n.21 On modern incarceration and its connection to Atlantic slavery and subsequent emancipation, see W. E. B. DuBois, "The Spawn of Slavery: The Convict-Lease System in the South," in *African American Classics in Criminology and Criminal Justice*, ed. Shaun L. Gabbidon, Helen Taylor Greene, and Vernetta D. Young (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publishing, 2002), 81–88; Angela Davis, *Are Prisons Obsolete?* (New York: Seven Stories, 2003); David Oshinsky, *Worse Than Slavery: Parchman Farm and the Ordeal of Jim Crow Justice* (New York: Free Press, 1996); Dennis Childs, *Slaves of the State: Black Incarceration from the Chain Gang to the Penitentiary* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015); Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* (rev. ed.; New York: New Press, 2012).

p.252 n.22 On hell in Christian education, see Henning, *Hell*.

p.253 n.23 To give but two small examples, the language of “punishing” enslaved people, which reflects ancient slaveholding and biblical sources, suggests that enslaved people were in some way deserving of the unjust violence they experienced. So, too, as public theologian and scholar Esau McCaulley has argued, Christians (including New Testament scholars) continue to refer to Onesimus as a “runaway slave,” as if a person who had been kidnapped and held against their will was in some way at fault for escaping. No one who uses such language supports enslavement, but it reveals that we have not thought deeply about rooting it out, either. These turns of phrase show how deeply embedded ideologies of enslavement are in the interpretation of scripture and how much work still needs to be done. Esau McCaulley, *Reading While Black: African American Biblical Interpretation as an Exercise in Hope* (Westmont, IL: IVP Academic, 2020), 156: “We must stop calling [Onesimus] a runaway slave. To call him a ‘runaway’ in church pews and Sunday Schools centers the opinion of slave holders because when someone runs away, the logical thing is to return them. But Onesimus had no desire to be returned. Onesimus did not run away; *he escaped*.” On the problem of the language of “punishment,” see Diana Paton, “Afterword: Punishment, Slavery and Legitimacy,” *Journal of Global Slavery* 7.1-2 (2022): 203–209.

EPILOGUE

p.255 n.1 On Petilianus and Church Councils, see Thomas Graumann, *The Acts of the Early Church Councils: Production and Character* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021), 38–39.

p. 259 n.2 When, two weeks after my encounter with the billboard, I contracted the most docile variant of the virus, it was quite dramatic, and I should confess that, as of this moment, I have not yet recovered fully.

p.260 n.2a “It is no accident that the writings of enslaved and formerly enslaved authors were open to constant revision by others” On the revision of the work of low-status workers, see Coogan, Moss, and Howley, “The Socioeconomics of Fabrication,” and Coogan and Moss, “Textual Demiurge.” What follows draws on my earlier work in “The Secretary.” See also Catherine Conybeare and Simon Goldhill, eds., *Classical Philology and Theology: Entanglement, Disavowal, and the Godlike Scholar* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020).

p. 260 n.3 For an overview of the emergence of the figure of the authorial genius, see Christine Haynes, “Reassessing ‘Genius’ in Studies of Authorship: The State of the Discipline,” *Book History* 8 (2005): 287–320. Important studies on the emergence and categorization of authorship include Roger Chartier, “Figure of the Author,” in *The Order of Books: Readers, Authors, and Libraries in Europe between the Fourteenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, trans. Lydia Cochrane (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994), 25–60; Mark Rose, *Authors and Owners: The Invention of Copyright* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993); Martha Woodmansee, *The Author, Art, and the Market: Rereading the History of Aesthetics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994); Carla Hesse, *Publishing and Cultural Politics in Revolutionary Paris, 1789–1810* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991).

Joseph Addison, *The Spectator* 160 (3 September 1711), in *The Spectator*, ed. Donald F. Bond, 5 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1965), 2.126–30. Gregory Moore, “Introduction,” in Johann Gottfried Herder, *Shakespeare*, ed. and trans. Gregory Moore (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), xxx. Of the many candidates for the role, two—Shakespeare and Homer—stood above the rest, channeling, in plain speech, the “soul of the nation.” For a discussion of German Romanticism and the ways in which the author-genius was viewed as spokesperson of the people, see Walsh, *Origins of Early Christian Literature*, 78–84.

p.260–1 n.4 “Wherever the work of the genius is discussed, its foil is pictured as servile—as if servility and brilliant creativity are antithetical.” For an array of examples, see David Cook, “On Genius and Authorship: Addison to Hazlitt,” *The Review of English Studies* 64.266 (2013), 610–29 [614–15]. Arguably, this bifurcation begins with Seneca, as already discussed.

John Stuart Mill, signed “Antiquus,” “On Genius,” *Monthly Repository* 6 (1832): 649–59. Gregory Moore, “Introduction,” in Johann Gottfried Herder, *Shakespeare*, ed. and trans. Gregory Moore (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), xxx. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, trans. Paul Guyer and Eric Matthews (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 195–96.

p.261 n.5 On state censorship, see Hannah Marcus, *Forbidden Knowledge: Medicine, Science, and Censorship in Early Modern Italy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2020). On copyright: Paul K.

Saint-Amour, *The Copywrights: Intellectual Property and the Literary Imagination* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2003). I do not want to pretend that anonymity did not have a rich life in the 18th and 19th centuries. It had expedience for women, for those who did not wish to create a stir, for those who wished to disrupt social norms, and so on. See, for example, Mark Vareschi, *Everywhere and Nowhere: Anonymity and Mediation in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2018).

p.262 n.6 Martin Luther, *Address to the Christian Nobility of the German Nation*, in *Luther's Primary Works*, ed. Henry Wace and C. A. Buchheim (London: John Murray, 1883), 169–71. Compare Thomas Cartwright, *Syn theoi en christoi: The Answer to the Preface of the Rhemish Testament* (Edinburgh: R. Waldegrave, 1602), 113, who calls monastic scribes “ordinary jaylors” of the Bible. The demonization of Jewish scribes goes back to medieval passion plays, if not the Gospels themselves.

The new processing technology of the printing press—God’s preaching device—inspired and disturbed; it forced reflection about the transmission of the Gospel from one medium to another. On the question of oral tradition in the Reformation period, see Robert Preus, *The Inspiration of Scripture: A Study of the Theology of the Seventeenth-Century Lutheran Dogmaticians* (Mankato, MN: Lutheran Synod Book Co., 1955), 5. The question of medium was also relevant; on the aesthetics of paper and cheap Bibles during the Reformation, see Joshua Calhoun, “The Word Made Flax: Cheap Bibles, Textual Corruption, and the Poetics of Paper,” *Proceedings of the Modern Language Association* 126.2 (2011): 327–44. As John Calvin put it, “there is this difference between the apostles and their successors, [the apostles] were sure and authentic amanuenses (*certi et authentici amanuenses*) of the Holy Spirit; and, therefore, their writings are to be regarded as the oracles of God.” John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 4.8.9. Compare *Institutes* 4.8.6, in which he describes Old Testament prophecies as “compositions (*lucubrationes*) of the prophets, but framed (*compositae*) at the dictation of the Holy Spirit (*dictante spiritu sancto*.)” We might here compare seventeenth-century Lutheran Abraham Calov’s interpretation of 2 Peter 1:12, in which he similarly describes the biblical authors as “amanuenses” of God, in *Biblia Novi Testamenti Illustrata* (Frankfurt: Balthasar Christoph Wust, 1676), 2.1034.

See also Francis Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, 1.13.13; Edward Leigh, *A Systeme or Body of Divinity* (London: William Lee, 1654), 1.viii; Leonard van Rijssen, *Summa Theologiae Elencticae* (Amsterdam: Georgi Sonnleitneri, 1676), 2.xix, controversy I. This is not to say that understandings of the apostles as divinely inspired cannot incorporate the existence of additional workers. See, for example, Norman L. Geisler, who writes that “we can accommodate the fact that amanuenses were used in [scripture’s] production, without attributing inspiration to the amanuensis,” in *Inerrancy* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1980), 190.

p.262 n.7 “We are heirs to this hierarchical system of categorization that recognizes some actors while eliminating others.” See Ellen Muehlberger, “On Authors, Fathers, and Holy Men,” *Marginalia Review of Books*, September 20, 2015, accessed June 1, 2021, <http://themarginalia.review.com/on-authors-fathers-and-holy-men-by-ellen-muehlberger/>

“Lady Typists” Price and Thurschwell, “Introduction,” in *Literary Secretaries / Secretarial Culture*, ed. Leah Price and Pamela Thurschwell (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), 3. In 1893, Edward V. Murphy wrote in defense of his class of reporters and courtroom stenographers that they “are not manufactured... as are typewriters, clerks and bookkeepers,” and went on to assert, in true Roman fashion, that unlike their lowly female counterparts, the male stenographer must possess all the

learning of a good “liberal arts education.” In Edward V. Murphy, “Stenography as a Skilled Profession,” *National Stenographer* 4 (1893): 301–7 [305]. It might be of interest to the reader to know that many nineteenth century typewriters were modelled on the design of contemporary sewing machines.

p.263 n.7a “we also prize authorship because we see cognitive labor (thinking, writing, planning, and managing) as more dignified...” Many others have highlighted the problems with Cartesian mind/body dualism. In the work of postcolonial scholar Vanessa Andreotti, this logocentric commitment to the mind comes at a cost to us as people and as a society. See Vanessa de Oliveira Andreotti, Sharon Stein, Cash Ahenakew, and Dallas Hunt, “Mapping Interpretations of Decolonization in the Context of Higher Education,” *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 4.1 (2015): 21-40.

p.263 n.8 On kinesthetic expertise and experience, see Roger Kneebone, *Expert: Understanding the Path to Mastery* (New York: Viking, 2020). Kneebone, a surgeon, explains how his own work depends on sensory and embodied expertise that is learned through experience. This he calls not a skill or a craft, but a practice. To push back against myself, Origen believed that the kidneys produced the *sperma* necessary for intellection and writing.

p.264 n.8a “what might be gained by decentering authorship and thinking with collaboration instead?” The language of “decentering” is drawn from an approach in Biblical scholarship that decenters traditional questions and actors. For examples of this project and criticisms of the Eurocentric goals of New Testament scholarship, see the work of Vincent Wimbush, “Knowing Ex-centrics/Ex-centric Knowing,” in *MisReading America: Scriptures and Difference*, ed. Vincent L. Wimbush (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 1-22; R. S. Sugirtharajah, “Critics, Tools, and the Global Arena,” in *Reading the Bible in the Global Village: Helsinki*, ed. Heikki Räisänen, Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, R. S. Sugirtharajah, Krister Stendahl, and James Barr (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2000), 49-60. For an introduction to the New Testament that utilizes this approach, see *Toward Decentering the New Testament: A Reintroduction*, ed. Mitzi Smith and Yung Suk Kim (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2018).

Pursuing authors and authorial intent is certainly part of the traditional array of approaches that scholars, influenced primarily by white European Enlightenment values, bring to the New Testament. Our interest in and pursuit of authors and apostles—to the exclusion of enslaved collaborators—is not just an unwitting reproduction of the ancient structures of power that privilege the will of a single “master”; it is also a statement about ourselves. It is a statement about our own power and agency, about our freedom to express and power to claim ownership, about those with whom we identify, and about those whose ideas, work, and personhood we think is worth preserving. Given that all texts are collaborative and also the ways in which ascribing credit and authorial power have erased the work and contributions of others, why not just give up on authorship altogether and center other questions?

Perhaps we should, but I have stuck with it here for two reasons: the first is that authorship and intentions have stuck. Despite many elegant and compelling interventions in favor of other interpretative priorities, as a society, we continue to privilege authorial intentions. The academy may have moved on, but I am not convinced that society has. Whether we speak of books, ideas, or social movements, we care about authors and their viewpoints. Intention is what the prosecutor chases down in the courtroom, and it is what matters in petty conflicts between lovers and friends. We can

forgive people a great deal if we think they acted with good intentions. We care what the authors of the texts meant.

My second reason is related to power. Is it for those who have had power and have historically been able to leverage authorial status to put an end to its authority at exactly the moment in time when others are being recognized and acknowledged as contributors and coauthors? Can invisible and alienated workers not have their day in the sun? Rushing to non-authorial models runs the risk of ignoring the tyrannical ways in which the power of authorship has been utilized in the past and continues to be felt in the present. Disenfranchised literate workers have always been subject to violence: as surrogates for the more powerful author, they were vulnerable to flogging, crucifixion, and scapegoating. Given all of this, perhaps we might pause for a moment to recognize their contributions?

When I was researching this book, I spoke to editors at various publishing houses about the project. Almost all the editors were interested and encouraging, but one—a former conservative Christian turned more progressive book editor—seemed frustrated with me. The irritation was palpable: “You can’t prove that slaves wrote any of these texts,” he began. I walked him step-by-step through the arguments showing that, in fact, the arguments for enslaved collaborative co-authorship are stronger than those for solitary authorship. At each turn, he conceded the point and endeavored to find another objection before, finally, coming to his true concern: “Why do we have to talk about slaves as authors?,” he asked exasperatedly. “Why can’t we talk about all the good things Christianity has done for slaves?” There was a long pause. Later, I spoke to my (step)mother Marcia about his response. I didn’t understand why he was so resistant and upset. “Giving credit,” she said, “is a subversive act.”

p.264-5 n.8b “The perspectives of enslaved collaborators can explain plot details and narrative elements that trouble Christian readers and lay historians alike.” By listing these few examples, I do not mean to imply that collaboration is only important because it “fixes” problems in traditional approaches, as if the dominant forms of interpretation should maintain their status in perpetuity. I am conscious, thinking with Wimbush, of the ways that traditional modes of analysis have devalued unconventional ones. As Wimbush puts it, “the views, sentiments, passions, testimonies and interpretations of nonwhites, especially black peoples, are devalued. Their ‘readings’ within this racialized society are always necessarily understood by the ‘white’ mind/ear/eyes—in the complex effects of empire, attached to any color of body!—as a ‘lack,’ a ‘misreading’ of a different kind,” in Wimbush, “Knowing Ex-centrics,” 2.

p.265 n.9 On power and forgery, see Coogan, Moss, and Howley, “The Socioeconomics of Fabrication,” *Arethusa* (forthcoming); and Coogan and Moss, “Textual Demiurge.”

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