

From no personhood to manumitted man...

Being a **mango**, variously translated as either a **dealer** or a **slave-monger**, is testing

There are expenses, and expenses, and even more expenses. You need an **import-export license** and on sale of the slave, you pay a **sales tax**. And of course, the prospective slave could always sicken and die before market day

The slave market is cosmopolitan Rome on display. Slaves come from across the Empire, and in many instances beyond the frontier. The slave market is a gathering of ethnic groups

A note for our era, racism does *not* exist in the Empire; there is *no* colour discrimination. Yet, there is social differentiation based on *status*: whether you are a **civis**, **citizen** or; **peregrinus**, **foreigner** or; **servus** or **serva**, **male slave** or **female slave**

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The State does *not* intervene in the **master-slave relationship**. The relationship is a closed world. The **dominus**, **the master** alone decides the nature of the relationship. Did anyone protest?

Lucius Annaeus Seneca the Younger, a philosopher and statesman, was advisor to the emperor **Nero**. He spoke about the state of slavery. Seneca asserted the proposition that slaves were human beings, not chattels; and should be treated accordingly. Slaves, however were critical to the economy such that nobody believed it was possible to do without them. What occurs over time is a gradual improvement of the slave's personal state

During the Republic, the slave's circumstance was harsh. Under the Empire the slave gained **permissions**, not rights

If a slave earned money, he could retain it with a view to purchasing own freedom. He could marry. The marriage was a form of *servile* matrimony. A child or children born of such a union was or were the property of the **dominus**. Mistreatment declined. The **dominus** no longer had the prerogative to slay a slave

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Slaves regained their freedom through **manumission**. A slave had no personhood. The slave's only legal protection was under his master's property law. There are several routes to acquiring manumission. One course of action, the **dominus** can grant manumission through his **Will**. The formal approach was to go to the **Forum Trajanus**, to the **Basilica Ulpia** which housed the **Atrium Libertatus**, the **House of Liberty**. The **Atrium Libertatus** held the **census roll**, which recorded the names of all citizens. A manumitted man was **libertus**, a woman **liberta**

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Atrium Libertatus

The Formal Act of **manumissio vindicta**, **Freedom by the Rod**

On the day of liberty, the slave shaved his head. He wore the **pileus**, the **cap of liberty**. The cap was made from soft, undyed wool, pressed into felt. The ceremony began with the slave being called forward, the **servos ad pileum vocare**, **a summons to liberty**. These words invoked the ancient promise to take up arms to defend liberty. The **dominus** now presented the slave to the **magistratus**. The **dominus** spoke and stated the **causa**, **the grounds** on which the manumission is to be granted. The **lictor**, **an officer of the court** touched the slave's head with the **festuca**, **a rod** and declared the slave a freeman, saying, **ex iure quintium** that is **vindicavit in libertatem**, **freedom by the rod**. The **lictor** then turned the new free man around to face the assembled court, this is the act of letting go, **emisit e manu** or **misit manu**. The **magistratus** declared the former slave: *free*

The free man's name is entered in the census

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The **libertus** customarily took the former owner's **family name**, **nomen** and **clan name**, **gens**. By example, **Marcus** is a personal name, with **Tullius Cicero** respectively the **nomen** and **gens**

Not all citizens held the same freedoms and privileges. A **liberta** could become a citizen; but tradition, custom, and conservatism circumscribed behaviour. Social codes dictated conduct in the public and private spheres. There were also legal restrictions, such as; a woman was neither permitted to vote nor to hold public office

A **libertus** could not be a **sacerdos**, **priest** to the emperor or hold similar high offices. A **libertus** however could become an **apparitor**, **civil servant** or **scriba**, with the sense of being either a **public clerk** or **secretary**. The **libertus** could accumulate as much wealth as he wanted. His sons and daughters held full citizenship

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liber et erectus