

## CHAPTER 4

# THE HETERONOMOUS BODY: SLAVERY, HUMANNESS AND SUBJECTIVITY IN JOHN CHRYSOSTOM'S INTERPRETATION OF 1 CORINTHIANS 7:21-23

### 1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to problematize the concept of the heteronomy of the slave-body. The concept of heteronomy was already mentioned in the previous chapters, but here the focus will be more direct. The issue will be demonstrated by means of Chrysostom's interpretation of 1 Corinthians 7:21-23. The heteronomy of the body is directly related to the metaphor of slavery, which has already been seen in the Stoic and Philonic sources. The chapter will therefore start by delineating the exegetical difficulties underlying 1 Corinthians 7:21-23, followed by a brief synthesis and elaboration on the nature of Stoic-Philonic metaphorical slavery, and then an analysis of Chrysostom's interpretation thereof. Finally, the concept of heteronomy also concerns issues of agency and subjectivity, and this chapter will be concluded by reading the results in the light of recent debates on agency and subjectivity with regard to slavery.

### 2 THE PROBLEM OF 1 CORINTHIANS 7:21-23

There are almost no instances in the authentic Pauline letters where Paul addresses slaves directly.<sup>595</sup> The pericope in 1 Corinthians 7:21-23 (and, one could possibly argue, Gal. 3:28) is

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<sup>595</sup> One of the purposes of this chapter is to provide and examine the sources, since the problem of sources in the study of late ancient slavery is notorious. Sources cannot be viewed in fragments and since this dissertation does not provide an appendix of translations of sources, the sources will be cited in the chapters that discuss Chrysostom's commentary. It is therefore necessary to quote longer sections from ancient sources.

an exception to this, in which Paul directly tells slaves the following (1 Cor. 7:21; UBS<sup>4</sup>): δουλος ἐκλήθης, μή σοι μελέτω ἀλλ' εἰ καὶ δύνασαι ἐλεύθερος γενέσθαι, μᾶλλον χρῆσαι. The text is difficult to translate, but it could literally mean: 'Were you a slave when you were called? Do not let it trouble you, but if you can become free, rather use it.'

One immediately notices the ambiguity in this verse. It is specifically found in Paul's brachylogy<sup>596</sup> in the phrase μᾶλλον χρῆσαι. This phrase could be translated quite literally as 'rather use [it].' But what is it that the Corinthian slaves should use? Do they need to use their status as enslaved, or freedom? Does he perhaps refer to the slaves' 'calling' from God, that they need to use despite their social status? The pericope is littered with grammatical, syntactical and semantic ambiguities.<sup>597</sup> The meaning of the verb χρᾶομαι in the aorist imperative raises several possibilities for its translation. Some state that the aorist could indicate a 'definite opportunity,' while others point out that it could also indicate 'attitude of mind as well as behaviour.'<sup>598</sup>

There are convincing arguments for both possibilities. This chapter, however, is not concerned here with which reading is 'right' or 'wrong' – the conclusion of the chapter does represent a decision on the matter though. It is concerned with Chrysostom's understanding of the verse. His main discussion of this verse can be found in his commentary on 1 Corinthians. In *Homilia in epistulam I ad Corinthios* 19.5, Chrysostom states:

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<sup>596</sup> Brachylogy is the term used for a grammatical or syntactical omission usually for the sake of brevity or if there is an assumption that the recipient already knows the contents of the omission.

<sup>597</sup> For a detailed discussion of the grammatical difficulties of this pericope, cf. S. Scott Bartchy, *ΜΑΛΛΟΝ ΧΡΗΣΑΙ: First Century Slavery and 1 Corinthians 7:21* (SBLDS; Missoula: Society of Biblical Literature, 1973); Hans Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975), 127 (this discussion, however, is not detailed, and Conzelmann seems to make an easy choice in favour of inserting enslavement as the omission); Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 315–20; J. Albert Harrill, *The Manumission of Slaves in Early Christianity* (HUTH; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1995), 74–75; J. Dorcas Gordon, *Sister or Wife? 1 Corinthians 7 and Cultural Anthropology* (JSNTSupp; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 162–63; Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 553–59 (the most detailed discussion); John Byron, *Recent Research on Paul and Slavery* (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2008), 92–93.

<sup>598</sup> Cf. Thiselton, *First Corinthians*, 153–54; Byron, *Recent Research*, 92–93.

Incredible! Where has he put slavery? In the same way that circumcision has no benefit, and not being circumcised has no disadvantage; neither does slavery nor freedom bear any advantage. And in order to demonstrate this with excellent clarity, he [Paul] says, ‘But even if you can become free, use it rather,’ this means: rather continue to be a slave. Now for what reason does he tell the person who might be set free to remain a slave? He wants to show that slavery is no hindrance but rather an advantage. And we are not unaware that some people say the words ‘use it rather’ are spoken with regard to freedom - interpreting it: if you can become free, become free. But the expression would be quite contrary to Paul's argumentation if he meant this. For he would not, while consoling the slave and pointing out that he was in no way disadvantaged, have told him to seek freedom. Since someone might say, ‘What then, if I am not able to become free? I am a wronged and inferior person.’ This then is not what he says, but as I said, he means to show that a person benefits nothing by being made free; he says, ‘Even though it is in your power to be made free, remain rather in slavery’.<sup>599</sup>

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<sup>599</sup> Translation: De Wet; Greek text: PG 61.156.17-36: Βαβαί! ποῦ τὴν δουλείαν ἔθηκεν! Ὡσπερ οὐδὲν ὠφελεῖ ἡ περιτομή, οὐδὲ βλάπτει ἡ ἀκροβυστία, οὕτως οὐδὲ ἡ δουλεία οὐδὲ ἡ ἐλευθερία. Καὶ ἵνα δείξῃ τοῦτο σαφέστερον ἐκ περισυίας, φησὶν· Ἄλλ' εἰ καὶ δύνασαι ἐλεύθερος γενέσθαι, μᾶλλον χρῆσαι· τουτέστι, μᾶλλον δούλευε. Καὶ τί δήποτε τὸν δυνάμενον ἐλευθερωθῆναι κελεύει μένειν δοῦλον; Θέλων δείξαι, ὅτι οὐδὲν βλάπτει ἡ δουλεία, ἀλλὰ καὶ ὠφελεῖ. Καὶ οὐκ ἀγνοῶ μὲν ὅτι τινὲς τὸ, Μᾶλλον χρῆσαι, περὶ ἐλευθερίας φασὶν εἰρησθαι, λέγοντες, ὅτι εἰ δύνασαι ἐλευθερωθῆναι, ἐλευθερώθητι· πολὺ δὲ ἀπεναντίας τῷ τρόπῳ τοῦ Παύλου τὸ ῥῆμα, εἰ τοῦτο αἰνίττοιο. Οὐ γὰρ ἂν παραμυθούμενος τὸν δοῦλον, καὶ δεικνὺς οὐδὲν ἠδικημένον, ἐκέλευσε γενέσθαι ἐλεύθερον. Εἶπε γὰρ ἂν τις ἴσως· Τί οὖν; ἂν μὴ δύνωμαι, ἠδίκημαι καὶ ἠλάττωμαι; Οὐ τοίνυν τοῦτό φησιν, ἀλλ' ὅπερ ἔφην, θέλων δείξαι ὅτι οὐδὲν πλέον γίνεται τῷ ἐλευθέρῳ γενομένῳ, φησί· Κὰν κύριος ἦς τοῦ ἐλευθερωθῆναι, μένε δουλεύων μᾶλλον.

Chrysostom opts for a reading that assumes enslavement as the substitution for Paul's brachylogy; thus, slaves should rather remain slaves than seek freedom. It is clear however from the section above that even Chrysostom finds Paul's omission troubling, and that as early as Chrysostom's time there had been debate over the meaning of this verse.<sup>600</sup> Chrysostom understands Paul to mean that slaves should rather use their status as slaves, and not necessarily seek freedom. Chrysostom says that enslavement is no 'hindrance' (βλάπτω), probably meaning no hindrance to being Christian and following Christian (ascetic) values. He affirms this in his introduction to the Epistle to Philemon, stating (*Hom. in Phlm. Preface*): 'For this reason the blessed Paul, when giving them the best advice, said, "Are you called, being a slave? Do not be concerned about it, but even if you can be made free, rather use it;" that means: remain in slavery.'<sup>601</sup>

Slaves should rather use their status to exalt God. This same line of argumentation is used by Chrysostom when quoting this pericope in his discussion in *De Virginitate* 41.59-66, that both virgins and slaves have their status in order to glorify God based on Paul's argument in 1 Corinthians 7:25ff.<sup>602</sup> He understands that one's social status has no bearing with God, since all are equal before God (probably an allusion to Gal. 3:28). In the section before the passage quoted above, Chrysostom explains that being a slave is similar to being circumcised (or uncircumcised), or being married to an unbelieving wife, and concludes that 'they are no hindrances to piety.' It is therefore quite clear how Chrysostom interprets 1 Corinthians 7:21, and he does the same in three instances in his homilies on Corinthians and Philemon, as well as in *De virginitate*.

Several very important issues come to the fore when examining Chrysostom's commentary on the verse. There have been many interesting scholarly interpretations that follow Chrysostom's reading. Most notably, Bartchy has argued that it is not the social status that is the

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<sup>600</sup> Thiselton, *First Corinthians*, 553–56.

<sup>601</sup> Translation: De Wet; Greek text: PG 62.704.8-12: Διὰ τοῦτο καὶ ὁ μακάριος Παῦλος τὴν ἀρίστην αὐτοῖς εἰσάγων συμβουλήν ἔλεγε· Δοῦλος ἐκλήθης· μὴ σοι μελέτω· ἀλλ' εἰ καὶ δύνασαι ἐλεύθερος γενέσθαι, μᾶλλον χρῆσαι· τουτέστι, Τῇ δουλείᾳ παρᾶμενε. Cf. also: Chris L. de Wet, "Honour Discourse in John Chrysostom's Exegesis of the Letter to Philemon," in *Philemon in Perspective* (D. Francois Tolmie (ed.); BZNW 169. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2010), 317–32.

<sup>602</sup> Cf. Sally R. Shore and Elizabeth A. Clark, *John Chrysostom: On Virginity; Against Remarriage* (New York: Edwin Mellen, 1983), 38–39.

question since the slave has no say in this, but rather the calling that is the main issue.<sup>603</sup> Dale Martin builds on Bartchy's observations and uses the verse to argue for the upward social mobility of slaves in the first century.<sup>604</sup> There are many other interpretations that will merit discussion in this chapter, but before these issues are discussed, one needs to ask what lies behind both Paul and Chrysostom's comments to slaves. One of the very crucial issues, in my opinion, regarding the Pauline-Chrysostomic view of the body is its main characteristic as being heteronomous. The body always belongs to someone else; it is always a slave to something - either to Christ, or to the passions and to sin. This is a principle that Berger has traced back as far as Paul the apostle in early Christian literature.<sup>605</sup> Berger states: 'The body is thus regarded as an object for possession, ownership of which can pass from one person to another.'<sup>606</sup> We will now trace the development of this idea in the time of the New Testament and slightly before, since the New Testament serves as Chrysostom's primary frame of reference for this issue. But before the New Testament writings are considered in this investigation, Stoic attitudes to slavery need to be delineated since they exercised a substantial influence on the New Testament. Philo's modification of Stoic thought on the matter will also be discussed, and then our focus will turn to the New Testament and finally Chrysostom. The following is thus an examination of the historical development of the notion of the heteronomous body.

### 3 THE STOICS, PHILO AND MORAL SLAVERY

We have already devoted some attention to discussing Stoic views on slaveholding, particularly from Seneca's works. This section will serve as a more general discussion of metaphorical slavery, and will provide both a short synthesis of previous results as well as a wider elaboration on the topic with special reference to corporeal heteronomy.

The thought of the body that should be controlled and ruled was common in antiquity. Probably the most popular example of this is found in Aristotle. He distinguishes between the

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<sup>603</sup> Bartchy, *ΜΑΛΛΟΝ ΧΡΗΣΑΙ*, 137–54.

<sup>604</sup> Dale B. Martin, *Slavery as Salvation: The Metaphor of Slavery in Pauline Christianity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990).

<sup>605</sup> Klaus Berger, *Identity and Experience in the New Testament* (Charles Muenchow (trans.); Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003), 64.

<sup>606</sup> *Ibid.*

bodies of men, women, slaves and animals.<sup>607</sup> Interestingly enough, Aristotle considered non-Greeks, or barbarians, equal to slaves since they have no governance amongst themselves.<sup>608</sup> These distinctions are based on some ‘biological’ observations of Aristotle. The slave is marked for submission and obsequiousness at the hour of his or her birth (*Pol.* 1.5.1).<sup>609</sup> Their bodies are inferior to those of free men, and like animals, they need to be ruled.<sup>610</sup> The free, male, Greek body was seen as superior and considered the norm. This was also seen in the works of Xenophon, although he reasons not from the basis of nature but from social inclusion. It was even true for ancient Greek medical science in the time of Xenophon and Aristotle. In the Hippocratic corpus, there are no diseases that are characteristic to men.<sup>611</sup> Skinner states: ‘Thus men are regarded as the physiological norm, while women, with their peculiar bodily organs, constituted a special case.’<sup>612</sup> Slaves were objects that had to be dominated, and as we have seen they played an important role in the formation and maintenance of masculinity in antiquity.<sup>613</sup> Being able to master one’s wife, children and slaves characterized what it meant to be a man, implying that those who had to be mastered were considered ‘unmen.’<sup>614</sup> These unmen were to be passive subjects upon which the active, freeborn male could exercise authority and, in essence,

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<sup>607</sup> Eugene Garver, “Aristotle’s Natural Slaves: Incomplete *Praxeis* and Incomplete Human Beings,” *JHPH* 32 (1994): 173–95.

<sup>608</sup> Cf. Malcolm Schofield, *Saving the City: Philosopher-Kings and Other Classical Paradigms* (London: Routledge, 1999), 115–40.

<sup>609</sup> Malcolm Heath, “Aristotle on Natural Slavery,” *Phronesis* 53 (2008): 243–70.

<sup>610</sup> Cf. Karl Jacoby, “Slaves by Nature? Domestic Animals and Human Slaves,” *S&A* 15 (1994): 89–97; Keith R. Bradley, “Animalizing the Slave,” *JRS* 90 (2000): 110–25; Chris L. de Wet, “Sin as Slavery and/or Slavery as Sin? On the Relationship Between Slavery and Christian Hamartiology in Late Ancient Christianity,” *R&T* 17, no. 1–2 (2010): 30.

<sup>611</sup> Lesley A. Dean-Jones, *Women’s Bodies in Classical Greek Science* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1994), 110–12.

<sup>612</sup> Marilyn B. Skinner, *Sexuality in Greek and Roman Culture* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005), 151 Cf. Dean-Jones, *Women’s Bodies*, 110–12.

<sup>613</sup> Cf. Jonathan Walters, “Invading the Roman Body: Manliness and Impenetrability in Roman Thought,” in *Roman Sexualities* (Judith P. Hallett and Marilyn B. Skinner (eds); Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 29–46; Jennifer A. Glancy, *Slavery in Early Christianity* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2006), 24–29; Kyle Harper, *Slavery in the Late Roman World AD 275–425* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 326–48.

<sup>614</sup> Janice Capel Anderson and Stephen D. Moore, “Matthew and Masculinity,” in *New Testament Masculinities* (Stephen D. Moore & Janice Capel Anderson (eds); SBL Semeia Studies 45; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003), 69.

penetration.<sup>615</sup> But we also noted that there was a shift during and after the Augustan epoch to the notion of self-mastery.<sup>616</sup> Foucault states: ‘Whereas formerly ethics implied a close connection between power over oneself and power over others... [t]he formation of oneself as the ethical subject of one’s actions became more problematic.’<sup>617</sup> Foucault continues to trace this important development and centres on Stoic thought, although it was probably present in less popularized forms before Stoicism. Foucault quotes both Seneca and Epictetus in stating that being a slave, according to the Stoics, was merely a title, something that one could rise above.<sup>618</sup>

Although the notion of being a slave to a god is absent from Stoic thought, the Stoics did make some important shifts in views on slavery in the Graeco-Roman world. Furthermore, although it is difficult and erroneous to assume that Stoicism was monolithic, there does seem to be some philosophical continuity regarding their views on slavery.<sup>619</sup> Some of the shifts in foci that the Stoics contributed prepared the ground for Philo and early Christian thinking on slaves and the heteronomous body.

The Stoics promoted a shift in emphasis from Aristotelian natural slavery to Stoic moral slavery.<sup>620</sup> There is no explicit rejection of natural slavery, but as Garnsey notes: ‘[T]here appears to be a common assumption that by the early imperial period in Roman history...it was considered common place that no man was a slave by nature...,’ and Garnsey attributes this to Stoic influence.<sup>621</sup> Early Stoic thinking on moral slavery was especially the result of Cynic

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<sup>615</sup> Cf. Paul Veyne, “L’homosexualité à Rome,” *Comm* 35 (1982): 26–33; Walters, “Invading the Roman Body”; Holt N. Parker, “The Teratogenic Grid,” in *Roman Sexualities* (Judith P. Hallett & Marilyn B. Skinner (eds); Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 47–65.

<sup>616</sup> Capel Anderson and Moore, “Matthew and Masculinity,” 69.

<sup>617</sup> Michel Foucault, *History of Sexuality Volume 3: The Care of the Self* (Robert Hurley (trans.); New York: Vintage, 1986), 84.

<sup>618</sup> *Ibid.*, 84–86.

<sup>619</sup> Peter Garnsey, *Ideas of Slavery from Aristotle to Augustine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 128–30.

<sup>620</sup> John T. Fitzgerald, “The Stoics and the Early Christians on the Treatment of Slaves,” in *Stoicism in Early Christianity* (Tuomas Rasimus, Troels Engberg-Pedersen, and Ismo Dunderberg (eds); Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010), 152–54.

<sup>621</sup> Garnsey, *Ideas of Slavery*, 128.

influence, most notably that of Diogenes the Cynic.<sup>622</sup> He was captured by pirates and sold as a slave. His behaviour, as a typical wise man of antiquity, does not seem to be influenced by his status as a slave.<sup>623</sup> Legal slavery was therefore seen as an external of this life, something over which human beings have no control. This served as a trajectory for the development of the Stoic doctrine of ‘indifference’ (ἀδιάφορος).<sup>624</sup> Slavery is neither good nor evil, and cannot contribute to happiness or unhappiness. Slavery, in the Stoic sense, is more a matter of the disposition of the soul rather than the material body. A slave in body or in the legal sense can still be free in his or her mind, as Diogenes has illustrated. It is all a matter of one’s attitude and behaviour toward external factors that determine freedom or captivity. Legal or institutional slavery is therefore outside of one’s control and thus something not worth caring about. The slavery of the soul to the passions, however, is within the control of the individual and is therefore a matter of concern.<sup>625</sup>

We then find with the Stoics the first popularisation of a type of slavery that devaluates institutional and/or natural slavery for the sake of a moral trajectory. The body is therefore subject to forces outside of its control. The second-century Stoic, Epictetus, who was himself a former slave, makes this quite clear: ‘You ought to treat your body like a poor loaded-down donkey, as long as it is possible, as long as it is allowed; and if it be commandeered and a soldier lay hold of it, let it go, do not resist nor grumble.’<sup>626</sup> The institutionally enslaved can be ‘truly’ free in the Stoic sense if they chose not to be moral slaves.

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<sup>622</sup> Garnsey, *Ideas of Slavery*, 130–32. Cf. also: Peter Garnsey, “The Middle Stoics and Slavery,” in *Hellenistic Constructs: Essays in Culture, History, and Historiography* (Paul Cartledge, Peter Garnsey, and Erich S. Gruen (eds); Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 159–74.

<sup>623</sup> Jackson P. Hershbell, “Epictetus: A Freedman on Slavery,” *ASoc* 26 (1995): 185–204.

<sup>624</sup> Fitzgerald, “Treatment of Slaves,” 152–53.

<sup>625</sup> Epictetus, for instance, states: ‘When the tyrant threatens and summons me, I answer, “Whom are you threatening?” If he says, “I will put you in chains,” I reply, “He is threatening my hands and feet.” If he says, “I will behead you,” I answer, “He is threatening my neck.” If he says, “I will throw you into prison,” I say, “He is threatening my whole paltry body,” and if he threatens me with exile, I give the same answer. Does he, then, threaten you? Not at all. If I feel that this is nothing to me - not at all; but if I am afraid of any of these he threatens me.’ Arrian, *Epict. diss.* 1.29.6-8; cited in: Glancy, *Slavery in Early Christianity*, 32.

<sup>626</sup> Epictetus, *Diss.* 4.1.76-79; cf. Garnsey, *Ideas of Slavery*, 134.



But behind this lies another important advancement in Stoic thinking against that of Aristotle. The Stoics believed that slaves partake in the divine reason or *logos*, and thus have the ability to reason and rationalise.<sup>627</sup> In the earliest thinking on slavery, slaves were likened to animals, with the Greek word ἀνδράποδον (‘man-footed animal’) being a clear indication of this.<sup>628</sup> Aristotle did not consider slaves as animals, but he did view them as lacking in the abilities to reason.<sup>629</sup> Slaves can understand but they do not possess reason, which is the defining mark of separation. The Stoics come in sharp distinction here, and this is also where the Stoic attitude against natural slavery becomes clearer.<sup>630</sup> Epictetus states that all humans share the same kinship due to their descendancy from the gods.<sup>631</sup> Slavery is something that is made by human laws, not divine and natural laws. Petronius links slavery to fate and dismisses the notion that people are slaves from birth.<sup>632</sup> But the most important difference between Aristotle and the Stoics is seen with Cicero (and also Seneca), who states that all people are the offspring of the gods and therefore share the same ‘divine gift of mind.’<sup>633</sup>

These advances popularised a type of slavery that was not institutional, and aided in devaluating institutional slavery. This was certainly problematic, since institutional slavery was then not regarded as a problem. There is then an interesting development in the thinking regarding slavery. From the point of considering slaves equal to animals, to the notion of the slave that is slightly higher than the animal, but still biologically inclined to servitude, to the slave that has the ability to reason, and thus to choose to be morally free. As Foucault has pointed out, this started with the concept of the care of the self, in which the self should be mastered in order to be morally free and achieve happiness. Masculinity was now the ability to still master one’s wife and slaves, but, perhaps more importantly, to master oneself. It needs to

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<sup>627</sup> Fitzgerald, “Treatment of Slaves,” 156.

<sup>628</sup> Bradley, “Animalizing the Slave.”

<sup>629</sup> Garver, “Natural Slaves.”

<sup>630</sup> Fitzgerald, “Treatment of Slaves,” 156.

<sup>631</sup> Epictetus, *Diss.* 1.13.3-5; cf. also: Fitzgerald, “Treatment of Slaves,” 156.

<sup>632</sup> Petronius, *Saty.* 71; cf. Fitzgerald, “Treatment of Slaves,” 156.

<sup>633</sup> Cicero, *Leg.* 1.24; cf. also: Arthur A. Rupprecht, “A Study of Slavery in the Late Roman Republic from the Works of Cicero,” Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1960); William Fitzgerald, *Slavery and the Roman Literary Imagination* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 11, 70–79; Fitzgerald, “Treatment of Slaves,” 156.

be understood that these shifts were more than just symbolic or metaphorical. The rules of the game were changed, or as Foucault has it, a new political game was in play.<sup>634</sup> Since all people are inclined to become slaves of their passions, care needs to be taken to master the body and to make the soul truly free.

Philo is an important bridge between Paul and the Stoics. Philo shares the characteristics of Stoicism regarding moral slavery. It is especially seen in his treatise *Quod omnis probus liber*. Philo conceptualises two types of slavery.<sup>635</sup> Firstly, there is the slavery of the body, or institutional slavery, while against this, there is slavery of the soul, or moral slavery. The Exodus account played an important role in Philo's thinking on slavery. There is a type of hybridity in Philo's thinking, exhibiting much reliance on the Stoic concept of moral slavery, but, most importantly now, the notion of the believer as a slave of God, is an influence from his monotheistic and Judaistic background.<sup>636</sup> Slavery to God then becomes an acceptable form of slavery. Philo relates Abraham and Joseph as slaves of God. Philo explains (Philo, *Cher.* 107): 'For to be the slave of God is the highest boast of a man, a treasure more precious than freedom...'<sup>637</sup> He is not as consistent as Paul would be, but the notion of the slave of God is present enough to command attention. This type of thinking is characteristically Judaistic rather than Greek in the Aristotelian or Stoic sense. It is especially in Paul that we find the concept of the heteronomous body (as a slave of God) in its most developed form.

Thus, in both Graeco-Roman philosophy and in Hellenistic Judaism, we find the concept of the body that is made to be ruled. Animal bodies are to be ruled by humans, barbarians are to be governed by Greeks, women are to be ruled by men, and slaves by their free masters. At the top of this hierarchy is the free Greek (or Roman) male body, which should also master itself, since it is also inclined to be ruled by its passions, something that is truly shameful and slavish. But this principle, in the Stoic sense, does not only apply to the free Greek/Roman male, but to

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<sup>634</sup> Foucault, *Care of the Self*, 87.

<sup>635</sup> Garnsey, *Ideas of Slavery*, 157–72.

<sup>636</sup> Cf. John Byron, *Slavery Metaphors in Early Judaism and Pauline Christianity: A Traditio-Historical and Exegetical Examination* (WUNT; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003), 106–28; Catherine Hezser, *Jewish Slavery in Antiquity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 55–61.

<sup>637</sup> Translation: Garnsey, *Ideas of Slavery*, 160–61; Greek text: Cohn [TLG]: τὸ γὰρ δουλεύειν θεῷ μέγιστον αὔχημα καὶ οὐ μόνον ἐλευθερίας...

all human beings who have received reason from the gods. Philo, takes the final step in typical Judaistic fashion, stating that people should also be slaves of God and not moral slaves to their passions.

#### **4 PAUL, JOHN CHRYSOSTOM AND THE HETERONOMOUS BODY**

In Paul's introduction in the Epistle to the Romans, he refers to himself as a 'slave of Christ Jesus' ('...Παῦλος δοῦλος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ...'), and in the opening of the Epistle to the Philippians, he calls himself and Timothy slaves of Christ Jesus. Paul's self-conceptualisation as a slave of Jesus Christ is especially found in Romans 6:15-23:

What then? Shall we sin because we are not under the law but under grace? By no means! Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one you obey —whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness? But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you have come to obey from your heart the pattern of teaching that has now claimed your allegiance. You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness. I am using an example from everyday life because of your human limitations. Just as you used to offer yourselves as slaves to impurity and to ever-increasing wickedness, so now offer yourselves as slaves to righteousness leading to holiness. When you were slaves to sin, you were free from the control of righteousness. What benefit did you reap at that time from the things you are now ashamed of? Those things result in death! But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the gift

of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.<sup>638</sup>

It is quite clear from Paul's thinking here that one can either be a slave of sin or a slave of God in Christ.<sup>639</sup> Slavery to sin is probably a development from the idea of moral slavery found in Stoic philosophy. Romans 6:6-7 elaborates on the body that belongs to sin: 'For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin— because anyone who has died has been set free from sin.'<sup>640</sup> Romans 7:4 as well as the discourse in 1 Corinthians 6:20 affirms the view that the body of the believer now belongs to Christ, and is thus a slave to Christ through righteousness.<sup>641</sup> Thus, to get back to the passage under discussion, it would be plausible for Paul to recommend that slaves remain in their state of enslavement, since institutional slavery does not matter anymore. Although he does not explicitly mention it, it seems apparent that Chrysostom understood Paul's phrase μάλλον χρῆσαι to imply the Stoic indifference of institutional slavery. We have seen

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<sup>638</sup> Translation: NIV; Greek text: UBS<sup>4</sup>: Τί οὖν; ἀμαρτήσωμεν ὅτι οὐκ ἐσμὲν ὑπὸ νόμον ἀλλὰ ὑπὸ χάριν; μὴ γένοιτο. οὐκ οἶδατε ὅτι ᾧ παριστάνετε ἑαυτοὺς δούλους εἰς ὑπακοήν, δούλοι ἐστε ᾧ ὑπακούετε, ἤτοι ἀμαρτίας εἰς θάνατον ἢ ὑπακοῆς εἰς δικαιοσύνην; χάρις δὲ τῷ θεῷ ὅτι ἦτε δούλοι τῆς ἀμαρτίας ὑπηκούσατε δὲ ἐκ καρδίας εἰς ὃν παρεδόθητε τύπον διδαχῆς, ἐλευθερωθέντες δὲ ἀπὸ τῆς ἀμαρτίας ἐδουλώθητε τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ· ἀνθρώπινον λέγω διὰ τὴν ἀσθένειαν τῆς σαρκὸς ὑμῶν. ὡσπερ γὰρ παρεστήσατε τὰ μέλη ὑμῶν δοῦλα τῇ ἀκαθαρσίᾳ καὶ τῇ ἀνομίᾳ εἰς τὴν ἀνομίαν, οὕτως νῦν παραστήσατε τὰ μέλη ὑμῶν δοῦλα τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ εἰς ἁγιασμόν. ὅτε γὰρ δούλοι ἦτε τῆς ἀμαρτίας, ἐλεύθεροι ἦτε τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ. τίνα οὖν καρπὸν εἶχετε τότε ἐφ' οἷς νῦν ἐπαισχύνεσθε; τὸ γὰρ τέλος ἐκείνων θάνατος. νυνὶ δέ, ἐλευθερωθέντες ἀπὸ τῆς ἀμαρτίας δουλωθέντες δὲ τῷ θεῷ, ἔχετε τὸν καρπὸν ὑμῶν εἰς ἁγιασμόν, τὸ δὲ τέλος ζωῆν αἰώνιον. τὰ γὰρ ὀψώνια τῆς ἀμαρτίας θάνατος, τὸ δὲ χάρισμα τοῦ θεοῦ ζωὴ αἰώνιος ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ τῷ κυρίῳ ἡμῶν.

<sup>639</sup> Berger, *Identity and Experience*, 64.

<sup>640</sup> Translation: NIV; Greek text: UBS<sup>4</sup>: τοῦτο γινώσκοντες, ὅτι ὁ παλαιὸς ἡμῶν ἄνθρωπος συνεσταυρώθη, ἵνα καταργηθῇ τὸ σῶμα τῆς ἀμαρτίας, τοῦ μηκέτι δουλεύειν ἡμᾶς τῇ ἀμαρτίᾳ· ὁ γὰρ ἀποθανὼν δεδικαίωται ἀπὸ τῆς ἀμαρτίας.

<sup>641</sup> Cf. Neil Elliot, *The Rhetoric of Romans: Argumentative Constraint and Strategy and Paul's Dialogue with Judaism* (JSNTSup; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1990), 251–52; Robert Jewett, *Romans* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007), 417–27.

this view exhibited in other homilies of Chrysostom. One's socio-institutional status does not really matter; it rather matters whether one is a slave of Christ or a slave of sin. This is also evident in Chrysostom's commentary on Romans 6:15-23 (*Hom. Rom.* 11.1).<sup>642</sup> Let us turn to Chrysostom's explanation of 1 Corinthians 7:21-23. Commenting on 1 Corinthians 7:22, he states (*Hom. I Cor.* 19.5):

For the one that was called in the Lord while being a slave, is the Lord's free person; in the same way, the one that was called, being free, is Christ's slave. For, he [Paul] says, regarding the things that relate to Christ, both are equal: and as you are the slave of Christ, so also is your master. How then is the slave a free person? Because Christ has freed you not only from sin, but also from outward slavery while continuing to be a slave. For he does not allow the slave to be a slave, not even though such a person is someone in slavery; and this is the great wonder. But how is the slave a free person while continuing to be a slave? When this person is freed from passions and the diseases of the mind, frowning upon riches and anger and all other similar passions.<sup>643</sup>

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<sup>642</sup>Chrysostom also uses this verse in his commentary on Paul's Epistle to Philemon; cf. *Hom. Phlm.* 3; other instances of the use of this verse are: *Exp. Ps.* 112, 143; *Hom. Matt.* 16, 38, 68; *Hom. Jo.* 79; *Hom. Rom.* 1, 12; *Hom. I Cor.* 24; *Hom. Eph.* 18; *Hom. Phil.* 13; *Hom. I Tim.* 5; *Catech. illum.* 2.11, 3.5.

<sup>643</sup> Translation: De Wet; Greek text: PG 61.156.36-49: Ὁ γὰρ ἐν Κυρίῳ κληθεὶς δούλος, ἀπελεύθερος Κυρίου ἐστίν· ὁμοίως καὶ ὁ ἐλεύθερος κληθεὶς, δούλος ἐστὶ τοῦ Χριστοῦ. Ἐν γὰρ τοῖς κατὰ Χριστὸν, φησὶν, ἀμφότεροι ἴσοι· ὁμοίως γὰρ καὶ σὺ τοῦ Χριστοῦ δούλος, ὁμοίως καὶ ὁ δεσπότης ὁ σός. Πῶς οὖν ὁ δούλος ἀπελεύθερος; Ὅτι ἠλευθέρωσέ σε οὐ τῆς ἁμαρτίας μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῆς ἕξωθεν δουλείας μένοντα δούλον. Οὐ γὰρ ἀφίησιν εἶναι δούλον τὸν δούλον, οὐδὲ ἄνθρωπον μένοντα ἐν δουλείᾳ· τοῦτο γὰρ ἐστὶ τὸ θαυμαστόν. Καὶ πῶς ἐλεύθερός ἐστιν ὁ δούλος, μένων δούλος; Ὅταν παθῶν ἀπηλλαγμένος ἢ καὶ τῶν τῆς ψυχῆς νοσημάτων, ὅταν χρημάτων καταφρονῇ καὶ ὀργῆς καὶ τῶν ἄλλων τῶν τοιούτων παθῶν.

The concept that in Christ all are equal is based on the notion of the heteronomy of the body. Slaves and freepersons are equal in that they are both heteronomous despite their socio-institutional status. Universalizing the heteronomy of the body makes it possible for Chrysostom to interpret Paul's words on a higher level, namely that of the Antiochene *theoria*.<sup>644</sup> Being slaves of sin or Christ is the more important motif in this text, and being a real, institutional slave is merely coincidental. The same reasoning of Philo and Paul is also present with Chrysostom - there is a good and a bad type of slavery.<sup>645</sup> Good slavery means to be a slave of Christ in righteousness and bad slavery means to be a slave of sin. Chrysostom does make an interesting statement, in that Christ not only freed the slave from the slavery of sin, but even from 'outward slavery' ('...τῆς ἔξωθεν δουλείας ...'). This term does not seem to apply to institutional slavery, but rather to what we could term moral slavery. Chrysostom therefore formulates a three-tiered view of slavery: a) slaves of sin; b) slaves of the passions; c) socio-institutional slaves.

Chrysostom therefore refines the nature of slavery. Being a slave of sin seems to be related to the psychic life of the believer - a metaphysical state of captivity *not* based on the Stoic notion of being enslaved to the passions. This state of enslavement to sin is annulled upon confession and especially baptism. This distinction is not yet clear in Pauline literature, but certainly clear in Chrysostom. Chrysostom provides the reader with a further elaboration of 'outward slavery.' This type of slavery means being a slave to the passions ('...παθῶν ...') and the 'diseases of the mind' ('...τῶν τῆς ψυχῆς νοσημάτων ...'), in which he especially highlights greed and wrath, but includes the other passions. In the next section of the homily he would also mention gluttony. Chrysostom does not give much attention to the notion of being slaves to sin, which seems to be a highly theological concept. In two other homilies, Chrysostom describes service to the Law as slavery (cf. *Hom. Rom. 7.1*; *Comm. Gal. 5.1*). The Pauline notion of the Law still remains central in Chrysostom's thinking of enslavement to sin. Discussions of slavery to sin and slavery to the passions do however go hand in hand in Chrysostom's thinking. In this same homily quoted above, Chrysostom defames the Greeks for idolising their passions

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<sup>644</sup> For a discussion of *theoria*, cf. Bradley Nassif, "Antiochene θεωρία in John Chrysostom's Exegesis," in *Ancient and Post-Modern Christianity: Paleo-Orthodoxy in the 21st Century - Essays in Honour of Thomas C. Oden* (Kenneth Tanner & Christopher A. Hall (eds); Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press, 2002), 49–67.

<sup>645</sup> Garnsey, *Ideas of Slavery*, 183–86.

by calling lust Venus, anger Mars and drunkenness Bacchus. But sin is also used to illuminate institutional slavery. In a homily on Genesis, Chrysostom explains that institutional slavery entered the world at the time of the fall and expulsion from the Garden of Eden (*Hom. Genes. 4*).<sup>646</sup> This is Chrysostom's explanation as to why something like institutional slavery exists - it is due to sin. There is then a strong line of continuity between slavery of sin, the passions and institutional slavery.

He does devote much of the explanation to this 'outward slavery,' which is equivalent to moral slavery, with some interesting points of advice to institutional slaves. Continuing his discussion of 1 Corinthians 7:21-23, Chrysostom intimates the following (*Hom. I Cor. 19.6*):

'You were bought with a price - become not slaves of people.'  
This saying is directed not only to slaves but also to free persons. For it is possible for one who is a slave not to be a slave, and for one who is free to be a slave. And how can one be a slave and not a slave? When this person does all for God, with no pretence, and does nothing out of eye-service towards people, that is how one that is a slave to people can be free. Or again, how does one that is free become a slave? When this person serves other people in any wicked duty, either for gluttony or desire of wealth or for power. For such a person, while being free, is more of a slave than any person.<sup>647</sup>

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<sup>646</sup> Cf. De Wet, "Sin as Slavery"; Harper, *Slavery in the Late Roman World*, 213.

<sup>647</sup> Translation: De Wet; Greek text: PG 61.156.49-62: Τιμῆς ἠγοράσθητε, μὴ γίνεσθε δοῦλοι ἀνθρώπων. Οὗτος ὁ λόγος οὐ πρὸς οἰκέτας μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ πρὸς ἐλεύθερους εἴρηται. Ἔστι γὰρ καὶ δοῦλον ὄντα μὴ εἶναι δοῦλον, καὶ ἐλεύθερον ὄντα δοῦλον εἶναι. Καὶ πῶς ὁ δοῦλος ὦν, οὐκ ἔστι δοῦλος; Ὅταν διὰ τὸν Θεὸν πάντα ποιῇ, ὅταν μὴ ὑποκρίνηται μηδὲ κατ' ὀφθαλμοδουλείαν ἀνθρώπων τι πράττη· τουτέστι, δουλεύοντα ἀνθρώποις ἐλεύθερον εἶναι. Ἡ πῶς πάλιν ἐλεύθερός τις ὦν, γίνεται δοῦλος; Ὅταν διακονῆται ἀνθρώποις πονηράν τινα διακονίαν ἢ διὰ γαστριμαργίαν, ἢ διὰ χρημάτων ἐπιθυμίαν, ἢ διὰ δυναστείαν. Ὁ γὰρ τοιοῦτος πάντων ἐστὶ δουλικώτερος, κἂν ἐλεύθερος ᾖ.

In this section one can see the influence of the *haustafeln* on Chrysostom's thinking, especially Colossians 3:22. Chrysostom universalizes Paul's imperative in 1 Corinthians 7:23b to relate to both slave and free. This section is interpreted in the light of two opposites: one can be a slave to God, but also a slave to people, but not in a legal, socio-institutional sense. This refers to the ὀφθαλμοδουλεία and ἀνθρωπάρεσκοι of Colossians 3:22, which is then grouped in the second tier of Chrysostom's framework. Being a slave to the passions is inevitably linked to being slaves of people and, especially in Chrysostomic terms, being a slave of vainglory (κενοδοξία).<sup>648</sup> References to this type of slavery are numerous in Chrysostom's homilies on the Pauline Epistles and Hebrews. References to people as beings slaves of the belly (cf. *Hom. Rom.* 13.3, 32.1; *Hom. I Cor.* 17.1; 28.3; with reference to Esau, cf. *Hom. Heb.* 31.2), slaves to lust (cf. *Hom. Rom.* 11.1, 13.3; *Hom. I Tim.* 18) and slaves to wealth (cf. *Hom. Heb.* 15.7, 18.4, 25.8) are very common in Chrysostom's homilies. He uses the instance of Joseph and Potiphar's wife as an example of a man who was institutionally a slave, but in terms of virtue, quite free. Moreover, Joseph's conniving brothers are described as being the 'true' slaves (*Hom. I Cor.* 19.5). This type of thinking regarding slavery is by definition Stoic. The next section is especially illuminating (*Hom. I Cor.* 19.6):

This is the nature of Christianity; in slavery it bestows freedom.  
And as that which is by nature an indestructible body then exhibits  
itself to be indestructable when being pierced with an arrow, it is

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<sup>648</sup> Chrysostom is quite vocal on this matter (*Hom. Tit.* 2.2): 'But it is impossible that the slave of glory should not be a slave to all, and more slave-like than slaves in reality. For we do not compel our slaves to perform such tasks, as glory demands from her captives. Base and disgraceful are the things she makes them say, and do, and endure, and when she sees them obedient, she is the more urgent in her commands. Let us flee then, I beg you, let us fly from this slavery.' (Translation: De Wet; Greek text: PG 62.676.25-32: Οὐ γὰρ ἔστιν, ἀνθρωπον δόξης δούλον, μὴ πάντων εἶναι δούλον, καὶ αὐτῶν τῶν ἀνδραπόδων δουλικώτερον. Οὐ γὰρ ἐπιτάττομεν τοιαῦτα τοῖς δούλοις τοῖς ἡμετέροις, οἷα ἐκεῖνη τοῖς ὑπ' αὐτῆς ἀλοῦσιν· αἰσχρὰ καὶ αἰσχύνῃς γέμοντα πράγματα καὶ φθέγγεσθαι ποιεῖ καὶ πάσχειν· καὶ μάλιστα ὅταν ἴδῃ ὑπακούοντας, ἐπιτείνει μᾶλλον τὰ ἐπιτάγματα. Φύγωμεν οὖν, φύγωμεν, παρακαλῶ, τὴν δουλείαν ταύτην.); cf. especially: John H. W. G. Liebeschuetz, *Ambrose and John Chrysostom: Clerics Between Desert and Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 205–8.



not harmed; so too is the person that is free, when even under masters the person is not enslaved. For this reason Paul recommends remaining a slave. But if it is impossible for the one who is a slave to be a proper Christian, the Greeks will condemn the true religion of having a great weakness; but if they can be shown that slavery in no way hinders godliness, they will admire our doctrine. For if death does not hurt us, or torture, or chains, much less slavery. Fire and iron and many tyrannies and diseases and poverty and wild animals and many things more harmful than these have not been able to harm the faithful. No, in fact, they have made them even stronger. And how will slavery be able to harm us? It is not slavery itself, beloved, that hurts us, but the real slavery is that of sin. And if you are not a slave in this way, be bold and rejoice. No one will have power to harm you, having the heart which cannot be enslaved. But if you are a slave to sin, even though you are ten thousand times free you have no good of your freedom.<sup>649</sup>

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<sup>649</sup> Translation: De Wet; Greek text: PG 61.157.41-61: Τοιοῦτον ὁ Χριστιανισμὸς· ἐν δουλείᾳ ἐλευθερίαν χαρίζεται. Καὶ καθάπερ τὸ φύσει ἄτρωτον σῶμα, τότε δείκνυται ἄτρωτον, ὅταν δεξάμενον βέλος μηδὲν πάθη δεινόν· οὕτω καὶ ὁ ἀκριβῶς ἐλεύθερος τότε φαίνεται, ὅταν καὶ δεσπότης ἔχων μὴ δουλωθῇ. Διὰ τοῦτο κελεύει δοῦλον μένειν. Εἰ δ' οὐ δυνατὸν δοῦλον ὄντα εἶναι Χριστιανόν, οἷον χρῆ, πολλὴν τῆς εὐσεβείας ἀσθένειαν κατηγοροῦσιν Ἕλληνες· ὥσπερ, ἂν μάθωσιν, ὅτι τὴν εὐσεβείαν οὐδὲν βλάπτει δουλεία, θαυμάσονται τὸ κήρυγμα. Εἰ γὰρ θάνατος ἡμᾶς οὐ βλάπτει οὐδὲ μάστιγες οὐδὲ δεσμὰ, πολλῶ μᾶλλον δουλεία, πῦρ καὶ σίδηρος καὶ τυραννίδες μυρία καὶ νόσοι καὶ πενία καὶ θηρία, καὶ μυρία τούτων χαλεπώτερα, οὐκ ἔβλαψαν τοὺς πιστοὺς, ἀλλὰ καὶ δυνατωτέρους ἐποίησαν. Καὶ πῶς δουλεία βλάψαι δυνήσεται, φησίν; Οὐχ αὕτη βλάπτει ἡ δουλεία, ἀγαπητέ, ἀλλ' ἡ φύσει δουλεία ἡ τῆς ἀμαρτίας. Κἂν ταύτην μὴ ἦς τὴν δουλείαν δοῦλος, θάρσει καὶ εὐφραίνου· οὐδεὶς σε οὐδὲν ἀδικῆσαι δυνήσεται, ἀδούλωτον ἔχοντα τὸ ἦθος· ἂν δὲ ταύτης ἦς δοῦλος, κἂν μυριάκις ἐλεύθερος ἦς, οὐδὲν ὄφελός σοι τῆς ἐλευθερίας.

This section shows Chrysostom's discontentment, it seems, with Greek philosophy. Chrysostom generalizes much in this section, and it is not clear what he means by the 'Greeks'. Rather, he seems to be at quarrel with social conceptions of status, which are typically Graeco-Roman, rather than a specific philosophy. If he is aiming it at a specifically Greek philosophy, he seems to be pointing to Aristotelian philosophy of natural slavery or perhaps the Xenophonian notion of social exclusivity. This could be intimated in the first sentence, pointing that at birth the body is invulnerable and thus not immediately destined to be a slave or not. It could also imply that the Christian body is invulnerable to death, torture and imprisonment, as also mentioned in the commentary. I am inclined to understand this section to refer to the latter probability. His generalizations are probably referring to the active, masculine virtues of Graeco-Roman society, still very much based on notions of mastery and domination (which are related to Aristotelian philosophy, but not exclusively reserved by it, as we have seen).<sup>650</sup> The Pauline and thus Chrysostomic notion of the universally heteronomous body makes it possible to elevate passive values to the realm of virtue. The crux lies in Chrysostom's statement that Christians need to demonstrate that slavery 'in no way hinders godliness' ('...τὴν εὐσεβείαν οὐδὲν βλάπτει δουλεία ...'). As mentioned throughout this study, the Greek view of the body was based on the free male body as being the norm. The androcentrism of the ancient Greek medical writers was also pointed out. This view did change during the Roman Empire, when a 'one-sex' somatology was promoted. Men and women were in essence, physiologically, the same; the only difference, according to authors like Herophilus (cf. Soranus, *Gyn.* 3.3) and Galen (*Us. part. corp.* 14.6), was that the female genitals were inverted and the male genitals turned outward. The scrotum is the equivalent of the uterus, while the penis is like a vagina turned outward.<sup>651</sup> This new understanding of the body and gender during Roman times however did not change the social values of passivity and activity. Roman views of sexuality still perpetuated the view that the free, Greek/Roman male or *vir* is still the *penetrator* and *dominator*, while the woman or *femina* takes up the role of the passive one who is penetrated. The same is applicable to the abnormal, passive male or *pathicus*, who inverts the values of the *vir*. In this grid, a male slave could never be a *vir*, he is always a *pathicus*, even if the relation is not sexual (although the term

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<sup>650</sup> Cf. Walters, "Invading the Roman Body"; Harper, *Slavery in the Late Roman World*, 326–42.

<sup>651</sup> Skinner, *Sexuality in Greek and Roman Culture*, 153.

mostly implies sexual connotations).<sup>652</sup> The male slave may have a penis, but he does not have a phallus, hence the phenomenon of many male slaves becoming eunuchs.<sup>653</sup> We have seen that this social system could be termed phallogocentric. Behind this, as also mentioned earlier, lies the relationship between masculinity and mastery/domination. The slave, whether male or female, is then the object of domination and mastery, a shameful social disposition. Masculinity and thus its cardinal virtue or ἀνδρεία in the Greek are based on masculine virtues. Being active and able to dominate is honourable, but being a slave who is dominated and passive is shameful. Early Christianity does seem to represent a shift in this regard. Brent Shaw has shown how early Christianity promoted passive, feminine virtues rather than mainstream masculine virtues.<sup>654</sup> The proliferation of feminine values in early Christianity is especially seen in the martyr narratives. Both Perkins<sup>655</sup> and Shaw<sup>656</sup> have illustrated how the notion of suffering, a typically feminine value, was idealized in early Christianity. Aristotle promotes the virtues of being able to resist and fight back as honourable, while early Christianity rather responded with passive suffering as a virtue.<sup>657</sup> This is now also seen in Chrysostom's statement above. He equates slavery with other passive virtues such as being martyred, tortured or imprisoned, and states that possessing these values does not hinder godliness. He rather states, in line with Perkins' and Shaw's observations, that these things strengthened the early Christians. It still contains a veiled Stoic discourse emphasizing moral slavery and the Pauline discourse of slavery to sin. Being slaves to sin and the passions now become a hindrance to godliness and virtue. Since the body is in any case heteronomous, with no exceptions, it is not the status of being heteronomous that hinders virtue, but rather the identity of the metaphorical master of the heteronomous body. If the body is ruled by sin or the passions, it is shameful, but if it is ruled by Christ, it is honourable and virtuous. In Chrysostom's mind then, the heteronomous body serves as a social equalizer, at least in the eyes of Christ and the church.

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<sup>652</sup> Cf. Walters, "Invading the Roman Body"; Parker, "Teratogenic Grid."

<sup>653</sup> Glancy, *Slavery in Early Christianity*, 21–29.

<sup>654</sup> Brent D. Shaw, "Body/Power/Identity: Passions of the Martyrs," *J ECS* 4, no. 3 (1996): 269–312.

<sup>655</sup> Judith Perkins, *The Suffering Self: Pain and Narrative Representation in the Early Christian Era* (London: Routledge, 1995), 104–23.

<sup>656</sup> Shaw, "Passions of the Martyrs."

<sup>657</sup> *Ibid.*, 285.

As was also mentioned, the problem with this view of the heteronomous body is that it devaluates the importance of institutional freedom and sidesteps the moral problem of slavery. Chrysostom too is guilty of this, as seen in the next section of his commentary (*Hom. I Cor. 19.6*):

So, tell me, what use is it when, though not enslaved to a person, you bow in subjection to your passions? Since people often know how to be lenient, but those masters are never satisfied with your destruction. Are you enslaved to a person? Think about it: your master is also a slave to you, in providing you with food, in taking care of your health and in looking after your shoes and all the other things. And you do not fear so much less you should offend your master; but the master, in the same way, worries if you do not have any of those necessities. But the master sits down, while you stand. So what? Since this may be said of you as well as of the master. Often, at least, when you are lying down and sleeping peacefully, the master is not only standing, but experiencing countless problems in the marketplace; and the master tosses and turns more painfully than you.<sup>658</sup>

In the following section, the argument for the seriousness of moral and hamartiological slavery over-and-against institutional slavery receives another premise. The real slave is better

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<sup>658</sup> Translation: De Wet; Greek text: PG 61.157.61-158.16: Τί γὰρ ὄφελος, εἰπέ μοι, ὅταν ἀνθρώπῳ μὲν μὴ δουλεύῃς, τοῖς δὲ πάθεσι σεαυτὸν ὑποκατακλίνῃς; Οἱ μὲν γὰρ ἄνθρωποι καὶ φείσασθαι ἐπίστανται πολλάκις, ἐκεῖνοι δὲ οἱ δεσπότες οὐδέποτε κορέννυνταί σου τῆς ἀπωλείας. Δουλεύεις ἀνθρώπῳ; Ἄλλὰ καὶ ὁ Δεσπότης σοὶ δουλεύει, διοικούμενός σοι τὰ τῆς τροφῆς, ἐπιμελούμενός σου τῆς ὑγιείας καὶ ἐνδυμάτων καὶ ὑποδημάτων, καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἀπάντων φροντίζων. Καὶ οὐχ οὕτω σὺ δέδοικας, μὴ προσκρούσης τῷ Δεσπότη, ὡς ἐκεῖνος δέδοικε μὴ τί σοι τῶν ἀναγκαίων ἐπιλίπη. Ἄλλ' ἐκεῖνος κατάκειται, σὺ δὲ ἔστηκας. Καὶ τί τοῦτο; οὐδὲ γὰρ τοῦτο παρ' αὐτῷ μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ παρὰ σοί. Πολλάκις γοῦν σοῦ κατακειμένου καὶ ὑπνοῦντος ἡδέως, ἐκεῖνος οὐχ ἔστηκε μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ μυρίας ὑπομένει βίας ἐπὶ τῆς ἀγορᾶς, καὶ ἀγρυπνεῖ σοῦ χαλεπώτερον.

off than the moral slave because human masters can be kind and forbearing, while the passions are all equally harsh masters, more than any human master could be to his or her slave. He also elaborates on the notion that the master is in fact also a slave to his or her slave. This same type of reasoning is found with Chrysostom's teacher, Libanius. And as we have seen, it also has parallels in Theodoret.

The oration of Libanius utilizes the rhetorical trope of *dialexis* in which opposites are equated for the sake of irony. This type of rhetoric, found both with Chrysostom and Libanius, aims to ameliorate the problem of institutional slavery, in that it states that all people are in any case slaves. The master is a slave to the cares of the world, while the slave only needs to do what he or she is commanded. It is this type of rhetoric that aided in the perpetual survival of institutional slavery in the late ancient world.

What has been seen thus far is how intertwined the language of slavery is in the world-view of the ancient authors quoted above, Chrysostom being no exception. Often this type of language is simply labelled as slave-metaphors, which does not say much about institutional slavery except validating its existence and necessity. From the discussion in this chapter, however, it can be seen that the language of slavery, and slave-metaphors, are intricately linked with dynamics of institutional slavery, and these two aspects cannot be treated separately. In Chrysostom's exposition of 1 Corinthians 7:21-23, institutional and metaphorical or symbolic slavery are inseparable, and in fact two sides of the same coin. Sin is seen as the origin of institutional slavery, while in the eyes of the Stoics, Philo, Paul and Chrysostom, moral slavery did affect the status of an institutional slave, even if only on a metaphysical level. What has been exhibited so far is the potency of the slave-metaphor in Chrysostom's thinking. Being a slave to Christ (or sin, for that matter) is not merely a comparison, but it is a metaphysical reality to Chrysostom. There are three levels of enslavement - namely being a slave to sin, a slave to the passions and an institutional slave. Both sin and the passions of the body should therefore be brought into submission to Christ, the heavenly master. Like Paul, the holy person is a slave of Christ.

## **5 HETERONOMY, SUBJECTIVITY AND THE PROBLEM OF HUMANNES IN CHRYSOSTOMIC THOUGHT**

In the light of the findings on the heteronomy of the slave-body, and the close symbolic links

between institutional and metaphorical slavery, issues of subjectivity and humanness inevitably rise. It has been mentioned in several instances that slaves were considered both as persons, that is, human beings, and as property. The latter will be the topic of chapter 6. This statement, however, that slaves are *also* human, is somewhat problematic, since it implies that the humanity of the slave should be ‘discovered’ by scholarship, rather than assumed. Heteronomy assumes that human/divine beings rule all other human bodies. Being ruled by the passions is a distinctly human experience. The slave-body is therefore seen as a human subject. But what does this link between heteronomy and humanness tell us about the power-dynamics in both the habitus of Roman slavery and in Chrysostom?

In the same line as Hartman, I would hypothesize that the concept of the humanity of the slave in antiquity (or modernity) is in itself a technology of repression and regulation, very much in the same way as the concept of ‘soul’ functioned. Hartman states: ‘I argue that the barbarism of slavery did not express itself singularly in the constitution of the slave as object but also in the forms of subjectivity and circumscribed humanity imputed to the enslaved.’<sup>659</sup> Hartman continues to argue that notions of the humanity of slaves in fact intensified the suffering of slaves. Furthermore, Johnson rightly affirms that rather than seeking the humanity of slaves, or proving that slaves were in fact ‘human’ and had self-directed agency, the humanity of the slave should be assumed in the historical investigation. Moreover, it is exactly this recourse to the ‘humanity’ of slaves that led to highly oppressive forms of regulation and control. In Foucault’s terms, the docile body is made docile by various technologies of subjection - and humanness is one such technology. This is one of the major difficulties with most ancient writings promoting the humane treatment of slaves - this includes the Stoics, New Testament, even Gregory of Nyssa and of course, Chrysostom.

How does humanness function as a technology of subjection? The traits that are distinctly human, such as having a body that can experience pain, threats to family life via manumission, the rationing of food, sleep, regulating sexuality, etc, serve as strategies for controlling the slave. This was seen with Xenophon, Cato, Varro and Columella in their discussion on the management of slaves. These authors exhibit these strategies more directly, but it is certainly more subtle in

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<sup>659</sup> Saidiya V. Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery, and Self-Making in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 6. I am very grateful to Jennifer Glancy for pointing out this source to me, as well as the work of Walter Johnson, “On Agency,” *JSocHist* 37 (2003): 113–24.

the Stoics and Chrysostom. The Stoics and most other early Christian authors promote the humane treatment of slaves - thus, humanity is something that should first be discovered. By emphasizing the humanity of the slave, however, one also intensifies the possibilities for recourse to disciplinary measures that are distinctly human.

Related to the concept of humanness is that of agency. This is the main topic of Johnson's study, but is also a key to Hartman's work. Johnson is correct in noting that concepts of agency related to slavery have been influenced by nineteenth-century debates on liberalism and subjectivity.<sup>660</sup> Many scholars, erroneously in my opinion, ask whether slaves had personal free agency. In other words, did they have the freedom, despite their enslaved status, to make independent choices? The problem here is that it assumes slaveholders did have agency. Agency is in itself a very complex issue, and in the context of antiquity, where all bodies were considered to be heteronomous, it is even more problematic. Agency is directly related to the notion of subjectivity, and while debates on slavery and agency are often conducted in the background of nineteenth century liberalism, as Johnson rightly notes, the concept of the death of the subject, as Nietzsche had it, bears much relevance here.<sup>661</sup> This was the starting-point for Foucault's work on the subject. The idea that a subject is free to make his or her own decisions, based on agency, and thus form themselves as subjects, does not take into account that subjects are produced by discourses, institutions and relations of power. This demonstrates the potency of the habitus of Roman slavery - the lives of both slaves and slaveholders are rather scripted by the social forces and power-structures of the epoch. This is also Merleau-Ponty's point: 'Again, it is clear that no casual relationship is conceivable between the subject and his body, his world or his society. Only at the cost of losing the basis of all my certainties can I question what is conveyed to me by my presence to myself.'<sup>662</sup> Being part of society, culture and history, and in this context, a heteronomous body, implies that the subject, or the self, could not possibly be free or have something called free personal agency, despite claims (by Stoics and Christians alike) that certain forms of behaviour represent 'true' freedom. Humanness and the human being is an

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<sup>660</sup> Johnson, "On Agency," 115.

<sup>661</sup> This is especially highlighted in Friedrich Nietzsche's work, *The Gay Science* (Walter Kaufmann (trans.); New York: Random House, 1974).

<sup>662</sup> Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception* (London: Routledge, 1962), 504.

invention of the concurrent society, and as Foucault has famously remarked in his history of the human sciences:

As the archaeology of our thought easily shows, man is an invention of recent date. And one perhaps nearing its end. If those arrangements were to disappear as they appeared, if some event of which we can at the moment do no more than sense the possibility...were to cause them to crumble, as the ground of Classical thought did...then one can certainly wager that man would be erased, like a face drawn in sand at the edge of the sea.<sup>663</sup>

The rise of the human sciences, or humanities, with its accompanying disciplines of Psychology, Psychiatry, Sociology, Philosophy, Criminology, etc, were part of this search for subjectivity, or what it means to be a self. Heteronomy is an ancient manifestation of this social dynamic, and it inevitably produces and regulates the bodies of slaves and slaveholders. The fact that the sources from this epoch are not written by slaves also complicates the matter. For instance, in terms of resistance, are those stereotypical slave ‘vices’ like laziness and baseness due to the upbringing of slaves, as Chrysostom believes, or are they subtle forms of resistance as Bradley has noted?<sup>664</sup>

The point here is also a caveat. While reading ancient slavery in the context of the heteronomous body, questions of humanness and agency need to be carefully assessed. I prefer not asking whether slaves were acting out of agency or not, nor whether they were human or not. Rather, I would ask here how the concept of humanness in these ancient writings serves as a strategy for producing docile bodies and maintaining the system of slavery.

Chrysostom often falls back on the humane treatment of slaves. As we have seen before, the notion of reforming the slave-body is done by various technologies. I would argue that Chrysostom’s concept of humanness or philanthropy (φιλανθρωπία) is in fact a technology

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<sup>663</sup> Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (Charles Ruas (trans.); London: Routledge, 1970), 387.

<sup>664</sup> Keith Bradley, *Slavery and Rebellion in the Roman World, 140 B.C. - 70 B.C.* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989), 115–18.



similar to that of the ‘soul’. While much critique is given on the de-humanization of slaves, the humanization of slaves is equally problematic. By humanizing the slave, and having the slaveholder function on the premises of philanthropy, the opportunity for further oppression, often done by means of normalization in this case, becomes possible. It now implies that the slave has a soul, and thus the capacity for virtue. In other words, the heteronomous body of the slave now becomes viable for social reproduction. As a human, the slave still answers with his or her body. In Chrysostom’s case, not via violent corporal punishment, but via subtler forms of oppression, namely Christian normalization and masculinization. Having the slave remain in a state of slavery, as the scriptural apparatus of 1 Corinthians 7:21-23 does, yet promoting the humanness of the slave and philanthropy of the slaveholder, a perfect storm is formed, suitable for subtle oppression via spiritual exercises or exercises of the ‘soul’. What Johnson calls the ‘bare life existence’ of slaves, namely eating, sleeping and relieving oneself ‘were sedimented with their enslavement.’<sup>665</sup> With Chrysostom’s propositions noted in this chapter, as well as in the chapter before, the oppression of enslavement becomes much more pervasive, since it uses some of the most potent technologies of submission, namely humanness, philanthropy and the soul.

Rather than reading the statements of humanness and philanthropy of the Stoics, Paul or Chrysostom as positive forms of resistance from slaveholders, or as Vogt<sup>666</sup> has notoriously argued, a type of civilizing process, humanness and philanthropy should be read with much suspicion. Since the heteronomy of the ancient body, as a social disposition, produced the bodies of both slaves and slaveholders, agency and resistance become ambiguous, even opaque, and humanness and philanthropy should be viewed not as ameliorative, but in fact, as some of the most subtle technologies for oppressing slaves and reproducing them as docile bodies. Hartman’s statement serves again - rather than seeking or promoting the humanity of slaves, the humanity should be a simple axiom in the historical investigative enterprise.<sup>667</sup>

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<sup>665</sup> Johnson, “On Agency,” 115.

<sup>666</sup> Joseph Vogt, *Sklaverei und Humanität im klassischen Griechentum* (Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1953); this work was also very much the object of critique by Moses I. Finley, *Ancient Slavery and Modern Ideology* (Princeton: Markus Weiner, 1980), 122-128.

<sup>667</sup> Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection*, 5–6.

## 6 CONCLUSION

The interpretation of 1 Corinthians 7:21-23 by Chrysostom justified the slaveholding practice. In fact, with the exception of Origen and Jerome, patristic exegesis seems to favour a reading of verse 21 that slaves should remain enslaved. This view was undoubtedly influenced by the slave-texts of the Deutero-Pauline Epistles, especially the *haustafeln*. In terms of the meaning of verse 21, I am inclined to reason against Chrysostom and other patristic authors. I am of the opinion that the phrase  $\mu\tilde{\alpha}\lambda\lambda\omicron\nu\ \chi\rho\tilde{\eta}\sigma\alpha\iota$  should be understood as advice to slaves to obtain freedom. Both Harrill<sup>668</sup> and Fitzgerald,<sup>669</sup> rightly I believe, indicate that it would be highly unlikely, ludicrous rather, for Paul to allow a slave to refuse an owner's grant of manumission. If the option of obtaining freedom is available, it should be utilized.

We are still faced with the bulk of patristic authors arguing the opposite. Chrysostom attempted to solve this problem by using both Stoic and typically Pauline notions of slavery. The actual problem of remaining a slave was side-shifted and slavery to sin and the passions were emphasized at the cost of ignoring the social problem of institutional slavery. This type of language was not simply metaphorical or symbolic. It would also be erroneous to separate the symbolic and metaphorical language of slavery from literal and practical advice and guidelines to slaves and masters. There exist some very real conceptual links. These two discourses are connected and inevitably influence each other. This is a very important point this chapter has demonstrated. There are no neat lines between institutional and metaphorical slavery. Metaphorical slavery distracted people from the actual problem of institutional slavery. Discourses of being enslaved to sin and the passions also provided a myth of origin for institutional slaveholding, and since the problem of sin and the passions could only be 'solved' at the point of the *eschaton*, so too will institutional slavery only come to an end when there is no more sin. This highly problematic reasoning perpetuated the existence of the habitus of Roman slaveholding. At the centre of this discourse and interpretation of 1 Corinthians 7:21-23 by Chrysostom functions the concept of the heteronomous body. Since all bodies are designed to be ruled, in the Philonic and Pauline sense, by either God or sin, the problem is not being a slave, which is inevitable, but rather to whom one chooses to be a slave. This is a development away from Stoic thinking that still had a strong valuation of liberty. But the Stoic notion of

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<sup>668</sup> Harrill, *Manumission of Slaves*, 84–127.

<sup>669</sup> Fitzgerald, "Treatment of Slaves," 152.

‘indifference’ did not help in ameliorating the problem of institutional slavery. The combination of Stoic concepts such as indifference and Hellenistic-Judaistic formulations of divine slavery supported the notion of the heteronomy of the body, a concept also clearly present in Chrysostom’s reasoning. The idea that there could be a slavery that was ‘good,’ and the proliferation of passive, feminine values in early Christianity added fuel to the fire. The problem reaches its climax in that notions of humanness and philanthropy serve as technologies for oppressing the slave-body. Humanness and philanthropy should not simply be accepted as being admirable virtues and principles. The heteronomy of the ancient body complexifies concepts agency and resistance, and so humanness and philanthropy should be understood as being part of the problem of slavery. Rather than seeking the humanity of slaves, the humanity of slaves should be assumed. Thus the notion of the heteronomous body was a pillar in the habitus of Roman slaveholding, still central to Christian and non-Christian thought in late antiquity.