

Pseudo-Aristotle, *Economics* 1.5 (trans. G.C. Armstrong) [Greek text; 4<sup>th</sup> century BCE?]

(1) Of property, the first and most indispensable kind is that which is also best and most amenable to Housecraft; and this is the human chattel. Our first step therefore must be to procure good slaves. Of slaves there are two kinds; those in positions of trust, and the laborers. And since it is matter of experience that the character of the young can be moulded by training, when we require to charge slaves with tasks befitting the free, we have not only to procure the slaves, but to bring them up <for the trust>.

(2) In our intercourse with slaves we must neither suffer them to be insolent nor treat them with cruelty. A share of honor should be given to those who are doing more of a freeman's work, and abundance of food to those who are laboring with their hands. And whereas the use of wine renders even free men insolent, so that in many countries they too refrain from it—as, for instance, the Carthaginians do when they are on campaign—it follows that we must either deny wine to slaves altogether, or reserve it for rare occasions.

(3) We may apportion to our slaves (1) work, (2) chastisement, and (3) food. If men are given food, but no chastisement nor any work, they become insolent. If they are made to work, and are chastised, but stinted of their food, such treatment is oppressive, and saps their strength. The remaining alternative, therefore, is to give them work, and a sufficiency of food. Unless we pay men, we cannot control them; and food is a slave's pay.

(4) Slaves, again, are no exception to the rule that men become worse when better conduct is not followed by better treatment, but virtue and vice remain alike unrewarded. Accordingly we must keep watch over our workers, suiting our dispensations and indulgences to their desert; whether it be food or clothing, leisure or chastisement that we are apportioning. Both in theory and in practice we must take for our model a physician's freedom in prescribing his medicines; observing at the same time that food differs from medicine in that it requires to be constantly administered.

(5) The best laborers will be furnished by those races of mankind which are neither wholly spiritless nor yet overbold. Each extreme has its vice; the spiritless cannot endure hard labor, and the high-spirited will not readily brook control.

(6) Every slave should have before his eyes a definite goal or term of his labor. To set the prize of freedom before him is both just and expedient; since having a prize to work for, and a time defined for its attainment, he will put his heart into his labors. We should, moreover, take hostages <for our slaves' fidelity> by allowing them to beget children; and avoid the practice of purchasing many slaves of the same nationality, as men avoid doing in towns. We should also keep festivals and give treats, more on the slaves account than on that of the freemen; since the free have a fuller share in those enjoyments for the sake of which these institutions exist.

Tacitus, *Annales* 14.42-45 (trans. Alfred John Church and William Jackson Brodribb) [Latin text; ca. 117 CE]

(42) Soon afterwards one of his own slaves murdered the city-prefect, Pedanius Secundus, either because he had been refused his freedom, for which he had made a bargain, or in the jealousy of a love in which he could not brook his master's rivalry. Ancient custom required that the whole slave-establishment which had dwelt under the same roof should be dragged to execution, when a sudden gathering of the populace, which was for saving so many innocent lives, brought matters to actual insurrection. Even in the Senate there was a strong feeling on the part of those

who shrank from extreme rigour, though the majority were opposed to any innovation. Of these, Caius Cassius, in giving his vote, argued to the following effect:—

(43) "Often have I been present, Senators, in this assembly when new decrees were demanded from us contrary to the customs and laws of our ancestors, and I have refrained from opposition, not because I doubted but that in all matters the arrangements of the past were better and fairer and that all changes were for the worse, but that I might not seem to be exalting my own profession out of an excessive partiality for ancient precedent. At the same time I thought that any influence I possess ought not to be destroyed by incessant protests, wishing that it might remain unimpaired, should the State ever need my counsels. Today this has come to pass, since an ex-consul has been murdered in his house by the treachery of slaves, which not one hindered or divulged, though the Senate's decree, which threatens the entire slave-establishment with execution, has been till now unshaken. Vote impunity, in heaven's name, and then who will be protected by his rank, when the prefecture of the capital has been of no avail to its holder? Who will be kept safe by the number of his slaves when four hundred have not protected Pedanius Secundus? Which of us will be rescued by his domestics, who, even with the dread of punishment before them, regard not our dangers? Was the murderer, as some do not blush to pretend, avenging his wrongs because he had bargained about money from his father or because a family-slave was taken from him? Let us actually decide that the master was justly slain. (44) Is it your pleasure to search for arguments in a matter already weighed in the deliberations of wiser men than ourselves? Even if we had now for the first time to come to a decision, do you believe that a slave took courage to murder his master without letting fall a threatening word or uttering a rash syllable? Granted that he concealed his purpose, that he procured his weapon without his fellows' knowledge. Could he pass the night-guard, could he open the doors of the chamber, carry in a light, and accomplish the murder, while all were in ignorance? There are many preliminaries to guilt; if these are divulged by slaves, we may live singly amid numbers, safe among a trembling throng; lastly, if we must perish, it will be with vengeance on the guilty. Our ancestors always suspected the temper of their slaves, even when they were born on the same estates, or in the same houses with themselves and thus inherited from their birth an affection for their masters. But now that we have in our households nations with different customs to our own, with a foreign worship or none at all, it is only by terror you can hold in such a motley rabble. But, it will be said, the innocent will perish. Well, even in a beaten army when every tenth man is felled by the club, the lot falls also on the brave. There is some injustice in every great precedent, which, though injurious to individuals, has its compensation in the public advantage."

(45) No one indeed dared singly to oppose the opinion of Cassius, but clamorous voices rose in reply from all who pitied the number, age, or sex, as well as the undoubted innocence of the great majority. Still, the party which voted for their execution prevailed. But the sentence could not be obeyed in the face of a dense and threatening mob, with stones and firebrands. Then the emperor reprimanded the people by edict, and lined with a force of soldiers the entire route by which the condemned had to be dragged to execution. Cingonius Varro had proposed that even all the freedmen under the same roof should be transported from Italy. This the emperor forbade, as he did not wish an ancient custom, which mercy had not relaxed, to be strained with cruel rigour.