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# The business of human trafficking: slaves and money between Western Italy and the House of Islam before the crusades (*c*.900–*c*.1100)

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**ABSTRACT**

Before the First Crusade, the maritime cities of Italy imported precious objects from Islamic regions. The question of what they exported in return has long occupied historians. Due to the large economic disparity between Latin Italy and the wealthier House of Islam, human trafficking offered a strong profit opportunity to merchants from Amalfi, Pisa and other ports. This was because the price of a slave in Egypt or North Africa, at around 20 gold dinars, represented a large sum in the silver currency zones of Latin Europe, especially compared to low prices in Italy. Even moderate numbers of trafficked humans may therefore have provided the capital for further maritime economic expansion. Moreover, slaves offered a commodity with low infrastructure and transportation requirements, unlike bulk agricultural products, as well as unique advantages in market access, which suggests that slave trading preceded investment in other branches of commerce.

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## The Snow Child

At some point in the tenth century, the fairy tale later known as the *Snow Child* began circulating. In the story, a merchant returns home after two years abroad to discover a new baby in his wife's arms. She explained that having swallowed some snow, she had given birth to a child of snow. Some years later, the merchant departed on another journey, and brought the snow child with him. Overseas, he sold the boy for 100 pounds and returned home a rich man. To his distraught wife, he said that under the southern sun, the boy of snow had melted away.[1] Much might be said about this text. Here we are concerned with the most prosaic: might a merchant who sold a boy overseas return a rich man? One hundred pounds is a significant treasure, but even if the sum is

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[1] The following abbreviations are used in this article: MGH: Monumenta Germaniae Historica; SRG: Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum; SS: Scriptores.

The *puer nivis* story is one of the 'Cambridge Songs', a collection originating on the Middle Rhine but held at Cambridge. It represents the first appearance of the Snow-Child folktale (Aarne-Thompson 1362), which remains in circulation up to the present. Carl Breul, *The Cambridge Songs. A Goliard's Song Book of the XIth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1915), 11 (manuscript transcription), 56 (text: *Modus Liebinc*). See also Jan M. Ziolkowski, ed. and trans., *The Cambridge Songs (Carmina Cantabrigiensa)* (New York: Garland, 1994); and idem, *Fairy Tales from before Fairy Tales: the Medieval Latin Past of Wonderful Lies* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2007), 42.

fantastical, can we take it as the fictional reflection of the financial reality that people could be sold for plenty of money? Let us pose a more precise question: in the decades on either side of the first millennium, might a merchant from Latin Europe do good business selling people overseas via one of the ports of western Italy?

This question has precedent. Michael McCormick, in his *Origins of the European Economy*, posited a trade in humans to the Islamic world as the financial motor for the success of Venice as one of the great ports of the Mediterranean. But Venice was already an international hub in the eighth century and McCormick's work – and responses to it – largely focused on the Carolingian era.[2] The rise of other maritime cities occurred later. Pisa and Genoa, for example, expanded from minor seaside towns to thriving entrepôts in the very different world of the eleventh century. The Campanian towns – Gaeta, Amalfi, Naples and Salerno – had earlier links with the Muslim world, but there is little evidence of their merchants trading beyond the Tyrrhenian until the late tenth century. It is worth asking, then, to what extent – if any – the slave trade with Islamic polities contributed to the development of inter-regional commerce in Pisa or Amalfi in the post-Carolingian era.

Due to its roots in Marxist historiography, the study of slavery in the first millennium has focused on the labour economy of unfree men and women.[3] Here, however, our subject is their commodification, that is, the commercial exchange of humans for money. This is approximately cognate with slave-trading, but includes the ransoming of captives. The latter is often treated separately by historians, because in the High Middle Ages the mutual class ethos of Europe's aristocracies produced an infrastructure for the ransoming of prestigious captives, which evolved into early modern conventions of prisoner parole and exchange.[4] Under such systems a prisoner was not usually a legitimate commodity. But in the tenth and eleventh centuries no such conventions applied. Between a villager seized from the shores of Campania by Saracen raiders and a Genoese taken from Rafallo in 1078 by Pisans, no real difference existed. In both Latin and Arabic, the same words were used for captives ransomed and slaves sold.[5] A ransom is but a price offered by a potential slave's family or friends. Because this 'transactional' definition of slavery departs from that usually encountered in medieval historiography, I have adopted the modern term 'human trafficking' to denote human commodity transactions irrespective of whether the humans end up at home or unfree.

[2] M. McCormick, *The Origins of the European Economy: Communications and Commerce* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), applied his thesis not solely to Venice, but to Carolingian Europe, arguing that the export of slaves provided the wealth to jumpstart a commercial economy. However, Rio has recently clarified that slaving played little part in Western Europe's internal economy, although she agrees it was important to Venice: Alice Rio, *Slavery After Rome, 500–1100* (Oxford: Oxford, University Press, 2017), 24–7.

[3] Rio, *Slavery After Rome*, 175–212.

[4] Thus Jean Dunbabin, *Captivity and Imprisonment in Medieval Europe, 1000–1300* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002). See also William D. Phillips, *Slavery in Medieval and Early Modern Iberia* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Pres, 2013), 40. The distinction is being eroded in recent work: Y. Rotman, 'Captif ou esclave? Entre marché d'esclaves et marché de captifs en Mediterranée médiévale', in *Les esclaves en Mediterranée. Espaces et dynamiques économiques*, eds. Fabienne P. Guillén and Sarah Trabelsi (Madrid: Casa de Velázquez, 2012), 25–46.

[5] A Venetian document, Gottlieb L. Friedrich Tafel and Georg M. Thomas, eds., *Urkunden zur Ältern Handels- und Staatsgeschichte der Republik Venedig*. 3 vols. (Vienna: Aus der Kaiserlich-Königlichen Hof- und Staatsdruckerei, 1856–7), vol. 1: no. 13, uses *mancipia* for both Venetians redeemed from captivity and for slaves sold overseas; S.D. Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society. The Jewish Communities of the Arab World in the Documents of the Cairo Geniza*. 6 vols. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967–93), 1: 145.

## Moving commodities on the Mediterranean

Much of the growth of inter-regional commerce in early medieval Europe was funded by wealth from the Islamic world. In the decades around 900, Egypt was once again an independent polity. Its resources and population – probably the greatest in the Mediterranean – were invested regionally instead of being siphoned eastwards to the Abbasid capital. Not coincidentally, it is around this time that we see evidence of growth along the Mediterranean's northern shores. Spain, and to a lesser extent southern Italy, now outstrip their northern neighbours. Both regions established a monetary union with the Islamic world – a great convenience to merchants, according to al-Muqaddasī.[6] These trends were consolidated by the 960s, when the Fatimids took Egypt, uniting the Islamicate coasts into a single trade zone and enabling what appears to have been a golden age of commerce on the Mediterranean.[7] At the millennium, Cairo-Fustat was perhaps the richest city on earth.[8] This was in sharp contrast with the communities of Latin Europe, but with such wealth circulating the middle sea, some of it inevitably accrued to Amalfi, Pisa or others. From the thriving trade zone, the Italian merchants extracted riches for distribution across Europe. They did so, by and large, peacefully. Their merchants, in order to operate within the Mediterranean network, needed to comply with its norms.[9]

The products of trade with the East are common in the Latin sources. The artisan Theophilius complained around 1100 that men 'voyage over lands and seas to procure foreign things'.[10] Many survive, scattered in treasuries and museums.[11] Ivory was imported in sufficient quantities to justify semi-permanent workshops.[12] Cloth and silk appear, usually first, in treasure lists, and every cleric and magnate of ambition needed such stuff.[13] Many imports are easily overlooked because they are fragile, like textiles, or fugitive, like incense. The all-day rite at Cluny, processions at Rome and elsewhere, funerals, consecrations and anointings all required incense, the ingredients for which originated in the eastern Mediterranean or beyond. Adhemar of Chabannes remarks that musk, imported from the region now known as the Himalayas, was burned at Aachen.[14] Henry I of England owned a lion and camels, Otto I apes and ostriches.[15] Constantine

[6] Al-Muqaddasī, *Best Divisions for Knowledge of the Regions*, trans. Basil Collins (Reading: Garnet, 2001), 198–9.
[7] The classic study is Goitein, *Mediterranean Society*; and recently Jessica Goldberg, *Trade and Institutions in the Medieval Mediterranean: the Geniza Merchants and Their Business World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012). Maritime prosperity also extended to Byzantium: A.E. Laiou and C. Morrisson, *The Byzantine Economy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 136.
[8] On Egypt, see Chris Wickham, *The Inheritance of Rome: a History of Europe from 400 to 1000* (London: Penguin Books, 2009), 362–7.
[9] Romney David Smith, 'Calamity and Transition: Re-Imagining Italian Trade in the Eleventh-Century Mediterranean', *Past & Present* 228, no. 1 (2015): 15–56.
[10] Theophilus, *De diversis artibus*, ed. and trans. C.R. Dodwell (London: Nelson, 1961), 3.
[11] Avinoam Shalem, *Islam Christianized: Islamic Portable Objects in the Medieval Church Treasuries of the Latin West* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1996).
[12] At Metz, for example: P. Lasko, *Ars Sacra, 800–1200*. 2nd edn. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 35–40, 59–62; the Montecassino chronicle mentions ivory workers brought to Montecassino in the 1060s: H. Hoffmann, ed., *Chronica monasterii Casinensis.* MGH, SS 34 (Hanover: Hahn, 1980), 396 (III.27).
[13] Maureen Miller, *Clothing the Clergy: Virtue and Power in Medieval Europe, c.800–1200* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2014).
[14] J. Chavanon, ed., *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique* (Paris: Alphonse Picard et fils, 1897), 105 (2.25).
[15] Willene B. Clark, *A Medieval Book of Beasts: the Second-Family Bestiary* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2006), 18; Widukind of Corvey, *Rerum gestarum Saxonicum libri tres*, eds. H.-E. Lohmann and P. Hirsch. MGH SRG in usuam scholarum separatim editi, 60 (Hanover: Hahn, 1935), 135 (III.56), after Otto's triumph in 955. For discussion, see Sharon Kinoshita, 'Animals and the Medieval Culture of Empire', in *Animal, Vegetable, Mineral: Ethics and Objects*, ed. Jeffrey Jerome Cohen (Washington, DC: Oliphaunt Books, 2012), 37–65.

the African suggests an aphrodisiac of cloves from today's Maluku Islands in Indonesia.[16] And then there are pigments used for dying cloth and painting frescoes.[17] These examples might be multiplied, but are intended only to give the flavour of a burgeoning trade.

Precious goods nourished the nascent trade routes of Latin Europe by way of the maritime cities of Italy – making them rich in the process. But trade is a two-way process. If treasures arrived in Amalfi or Pisa, something must have left them. A cornerstone in McCormick's thesis was that early medieval Europe had little, aside from humans, worth exporting. The assertion is suggested by the sources, which dwell on costly imports, but never allude to reciprocal exports. This reticence is repeated on the southern side of the Mediterranean. Geniza letters provide a number of references to Christian (*Rūm)* merchants – whether Latin or Byzantine is unfortunately irrecoverable. The Jewish merchants write of Rūm buying pepper, or brazil wood, but they show no interest in the commodities the Rūm brought to market.[18] This puzzle has not escaped the attention of historians, who have sought a solution from limited data. What follows, then, is an exercise in plausibility: the evidence for any possible export is inferential based on the availability of commodities and the certainty that early medieval Europe must have exported *something*.[19]

Researchers have adduced a variety of goods to weigh down the hulls of the Italian merchants. Epstein, reflecting on the early days of rockbound and resource poor Genoa, supposed that they must have scrounged what silver they could to purchase goods in the Islamic Mediterranean.[20] Europe was not resource poor, but demand for its resources in, say, Egypt, did not necessarily exceed the difficulties – monetary, political or technical – inherent in exporting them. Citarella proposed an Amalfitan trade restricted to bulk commodities: wine, fruits, linen, and grain.[21] Skinner had seen agricultural products as Amalfi's eastern exports.[22] Kreutz emphasised the importance of timber.[23] Historians have expressed doubts about all these. In a recent study of Mediterranean trade, Guérin considers it 'incredible that such mundane agricultural products as hazelnuts … were transformed into silks, spices and gold through the alchemy of commerce'.[24] These reservations are well founded, and worth exploring in more detail.

[16] Paul Delany, 'Constantinus Africanus' "De coitu": a Translation', *Chaucer Review* 4, no. 1 (1969): 55–66 (64).
[17] Goitein, *Mediterranean Society*, 1: 210: lapis lazuli brought to Sicily; lapis used in a fresco in a tenth-century church in Apulia: Paul Arthur, 'Economic Expansion in Byzantine Apulia', in *Histoire et culture dans l'Italie Byzantine. Acquis et nouvelles recherches*, eds. Andre Jacob, Jean-Marie Martin and Ghislaine Noyè (Rome: École française de Rome, 2006), 389–405 (399).
[18] On Jewish exclusion from certain trade sectors, e.g. slaves and weapons: Moshe Gil, *Jews in Islamic Countries in the Middle Ages* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 663; Goitein, *Mediterranean Society*, 1: 211.
[19] As Kreutz puts it, 'the Amalfitans were finding something worth transporting, for somehow they were managing to return home with goods for the Italian market.' B. M. Kreutz, *Before the Normans* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1991), 92.
[20] Steven A. Epstein, *Genoa and the Genoese, 958–1528* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 24.
[21] Armand Citarella, 'Patterns in Medieval Trade: the Commerce of Amalfi before the Crusades', *Journal of Economic History* 28, no. 4 (1968): 531–55 (533). He suggests (553) a three-point trade in which Amalfitans sold agricultural goods in Egypt for gold, used the gold to buy luxuries in Constantinople, and returned to Italy to sell them to the elites of Europe. This is unnecessarily complicated, for Byzantium had few luxuries that could not be purchased, probably for less, in Cairo-Fustat. Rotman, 'Captif ou esclave?', notes the greater purchasing power of cash in Cairo.
[22] Patricia Skinner, *Family Power in Southern Italy. The Duchy of Gaeta and Its Neighbours, 850–1139* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 286, but she has since moved away from this position.
[23] Barbara Kreutz, 'Ghost Ships and Phantom Cargoes: Reconstructing Early Amalfitan Trade', *Journal of Medieval History* 20 (1994): 347–57.
[24] Sarah M. Guérin, 'Forgotten Routes? Italy, Ifrīqiya and the Trans-Saharan Ivory Trade', *Al-Masaq: Islam and the Medieval Mediterranean* 25, no. 1 (2013): 70–91 (73).

It is possible to make some general observations. The goods arriving at Amalfi, Pisa or Salerno were high value, low volume commodities. Aromatics, for example, were traded in small bundles and flasks.[25] The logic of commerce would seem to call for reciprocal exports, for not only are bulk goods like grain cheap in comparison to luxuries, their movement makes a very different set of technical demands. Unless there was no alternative, it is improbable that the Italians erected the elaborate scaffolding necessary to move bulk commodities in order to carry home eastern goods in their pockets.

If the imports with which the Italian ports supplied Europe were easy to carry, they were expensive. We have recipes for incense, suitable for 'emperors in their chapels', in the *Antidotarium Nicolai,* a pharmocopeia probably from early twelfth-century Salerno.[26] One of them, the *confectio nere*, contains aloes wood, camphor and musk – all long-distance imports – and we may estimate its cost in Egypt at 12–15 dinars for less than 1.5 ounces.[27] If burnt at Aachen, this handful of incense would come to approximately 37–47 solidi.

Finally, the slow speed of sea travel, especially on the doldrum-plagued Gulf of Salerno, must also have incentivised high-value transactions, in order to maximise the time to profit ratio. Any commodity that relied on frequent delivery would have been difficult.[28] In short, a merchant ideally required a commodity that was valuable, easy to move, and readily available.

Ideals are rarely met. Nonetheless bulk commodities like grain posed serious problems, not as objects of commerce, for they were certainly traded, but as sources of capital in towns that had not yet consolidated their status as trade centres. In the mid tenth century, for example, there was probably no merchant infrastructure in Pisa or Genoa. At some point in the ninth century the same was doubtless true of the Campanian cities. Skinner, who has examined the question of grain closely, has pointed out that

[25] S.D. Goitein, *Letters of Medieval Jewish Traders. Translated from the Arabic with Introductions and Notes* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press,1973), 78, 151; N.A. Stillman, 'The Eleventh Century Merchant House of Ibn 'Awkal (a Geniza Study)', *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 16 (1973): 50. Such flasks have been found, for example, aboard the *Serçe Limanı* wreck. George F. Bass and others, *Serçe Limanı. An Eleventh Century Shipwreck*. 2 vols. (College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 2004–9), 2: 237–41.

[26] W.S. van den Berg, ed., *Eene middelnederlandsche Vertaling van het Antidotarium Nicolaï: (Ms. 15624-15641, Kon. Bibl. te Brussel)* … (Leiden: Brill, 1917), no. 12.

[27] This estimate relies on the prices of camphor and musk in Geniza fragment TS 20.76 (mid eleventh century), and Al-Mas'udi (*c*.940–50), for the aloes wood. Goitein, *Letters*, 118–9; Al-Mas'udi, *Historical Encyclopaedia: Entitled 'Meadows of Gold and Mines of Gems'*, trans Aloys Sprenger (London: Oriental Translation Fund of Great Britain and Ireland, 1841), 375, 384. Currency conversions in this paper are on the basis of metallic weight, comparing 1.1 g silver deniers with 1.38 g silver dirhams. Both weights represent an average of a range of possible values, as in practice the coins were not standardised. They are converted into the main currencies at the known exchange rates, i.e. 12 deniers to 1 solidus (which was a money of account and not subject to variation). I use a relatively conservative rate of 30 dirhams to 1 dinar. In fact the rate often reached well past 40:1, which would only strengthen the economic argument of this study. See S.D. Goitein, 'The Exchange Rate of Gold and Silver Money in Fatimid and Ayyubid Times: a Preliminary Study of the Relevant Geniza Material', *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 8, no. 1 (1965): 1–46. For the average weights, see P. Grierson and L. Travaini, *Medieval European Coinage, with a Catalogue of the Coins in the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge,* volume 14, *Italy,* part 3: *South Italy, Sicily, Sardinia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 40–1; and Paul Balog, 'History of the Dirham in Egypt from the Fatimid Conquest until the Collapse of the Mamluk Empire', *Revue Numismatique*, 6th series, 3 (1961): 109–46. The reader is cautioned that currency conversions are speculative, and that while this paper uses the actual weights of coins (in which 1 dinar = *c*.37 deniers), Smith, 'Calamity and Transition', used the canonical weights of dirhams and deniers (1 dinar = *c*.52 deniers). I will address this subject in more detail in a forthcoming publication.

[28] Doldrums: Kreutz, *Before the Normans*, 91; slow speed: A.L. Udovitch, 'Time, the Sea. and Society: Duration of Commercial Voyages on the Southern Shore of the Mediterranean during the High Middle Ages', in *La navigazione Mediterranea nell'alto medioevo*. Settimane di studio del Centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo 25 (Spoleto: sede dell' centro, 1978), 510–4.

cereal crops are an unlikely export for Amalfi, given that they needed to import it to feed themselves.[29] Liudprand of Cremona observed: 'the merchants of Amalfi and Venice need our wheat to live and in order to obtain it they provide us with these ornaments.'[30] Furthermore, it appears that Amalfitan trade revolved around Sicily, but that island was itself one of the great breadbaskets of the Mediterranean, and it is difficult to see how little Amalfi could compete.[31] Nor, despite periodic famines, was Egypt a promising customer, for that country possessed the most developed and productive agriculture in the Mediterranean.

The preceding could be overcome, and eventually was. But grain is too cheap a commodity to balance much luxury. As a practical example, in the 1020s the abbot of Montecassino purchased a cloth in Amalfi, presumably a spectacular piece of fabric, as a gift for the emperor.[32] We might imagine it cost its Amalfitan dealer 50 dinars in Egypt.[33] But to cover such a purchase, our Amalfitan would have had to move and sell 7143 litres of grain – approximately 45 modern American oil barrels (at approximately 159 litres each), which take up some 41 square metres of deck space.[34] This is perhaps two-thirds of the deck space of the Serçi Limanı vessel, our only well documented cargo ship of the era.[35] The infrastructure difficulties are obvious. The Amalfitans had ships capable of moving grain – they used them to move it from their estates in Campania back to the city.[36] But this is a very different matter from sailing to Egypt.

These same arguments apply to other bulk products. Not surprisingly, Skinner finds that Amalfi's considerable chestnut crop was largely for internal consumption.[37] Timber was reasonably valuable in the eastern Mediterranean – a Geniza letter from around 1040 records 18 fir trees purchased for 23 dinars.[38] Historians have assumed

[29] Skinner, *Amalfi*, 59, 68–9. Del Treppo and Kreutz likewise rejected the emphasis on grain: M. del Treppo and A. Leone, *Amalfi medievale* (Naples: Giannini Editore, 1977), 12; Kreutz, 'Ghost Ships'.
[30] *Legatio*, III, in Liudprand of Cremona, *The Complete Works of Liudprand of Cremona*, trans. Paolo Squatriti (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2007), 272.
[31] Sarah Davis-Secord, *Where Three Worlds Met. Sicily in the Early Medieval Mediterranean* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2017), 149–50.
[32] Hoffmann, ed., *Chronica monesterii Casinensis*, 385 (III.18).
[33] A plausible price for luxury material. In 1010 a Jewish magnate in Egypt wore a robe worth 60 dinars: Goitein, *Letters*, 76; a merchant speaks of selling 25 dinar robes, coloured lead-grey, with borders: Goitein, *Letters*, 77. High grade cloth produced in Tinnīs could go for 100 dinars a piece, according to Kindī (897–961), in his *Excellencies of Egypt*, while Ibn Bassām noted garments up to 1000 dinars: both cited in Yacob Lev, 'Tinnīs: an Industrial Medieval Town', in *L'Égypte fatimide. Son art et son histoire*, ed. Marianne Barrucand (Paris: Presses universitaires de Paris-Sorbonne, 1999), 83–96 (84, 91). Historians have often assumed the robe in Amalfi came from Constantinople, but there is no evidence either way – and the silk output of both centres was often indistinguishable: Anna Muthesius, 'Silk in the Medieval World', in *The Cambridge History of Western Textiles*, vol. 1, ed. David Jenkins (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 325–54 (327). The abbot's trip is discussed in A. Citarella, 'The Relations of Amalfi and the Arab World Before the Crusades', *Speculum* 42, no. 2 (1967): 299–312 (301–2).
[34] At a going rate of 0.007 dinars per litre, that is $^{1}/_{9}$ of a dinar per Egyptian *waiba* of grain: Rotman, 'Captif ou esclave?', Table 2a; Eliyahu Ashtor, *Histoire des prix et salaires dans l'Orient médiéval* (Paris: S.E.V.P.E.N., 1969), 124–30; Walther Hinz, *Islamische Masse und Gewichte: Umgerechnet ins metrische System* (Leiden: Brill, 1955), 30–52. This price does not include the initial outlay in Italy, or travel costs, such as renting the required deck space, which was calculated on the basis of eight 55 gallon barrels to a standard 42 in. × 48 in. pallet.
[35] Bass and others, *Serçe Limanı*, vol. 1: ship dimensions given at various points, e.g. 179–80.
[36] Skinner, *Amalfi*, 31; for a Genoese example, Epstein, *Genoa*, 27.
[37] Skinner, *Amalfi*, 67.
[38] Moshe Gil, 'Maintenance, Building Operations, and Repairs in the Houses of Qodesh in Fustat: a Geniza Study', *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 14, no. 2 (1971): 136–95 (165); Geniza fragment: TS 18 J 2, f. 1, edited in S.D. Goitein, 'The Synagogue and Its Furnishings According to Genizah Documents,' [Hebrew], *Eretz Israel* 7 (1964–5): 87. A record survives of Italian merchants in Egypt delivering timber – but it dates from the reign of al-Āmir (1101–30): S.M. Stern, 'An Original Document of the Fatimid Chancery Concerning Italian Merchants', in *Studi orientalistici in onore di Giorgio Levi della Vida*, vol. 2 (Rome: Istituto per l'Orient, 1956), 529–38.

that the Amalfitans assisted the Fatimids with the 'timber, iron, pitch, hemp and other crucial raw material inputs' that the latter needed for naval operations.[39] But the Fatimids were quite capable of handling these needs themselves, nor was Egypt so denuded of trees as today. The Fatimids maintained significant woodland, with its own bureaucratic apparatus, and financed afforestation to maintain their shipbuilding capacity.[40] In particular, Sicily's resources met this need, especially the forests of the north-west.[41] The Fatimid administrator Jawdhar, who owned ships in a private capacity, imported timber from Sicily.[42] Timber resources appear in the works of Arabic geographers – the *Account of Marvels* notes the timber of Sardinia, which may have been that island's main resource.[43] The island was a target of the aggrandisement of Denia in the early eleventh century, which Bruce has suggested was in part motivated by the need for timber.[44] The value of timber probably rose over our period, as supplies were consumed, and Sicily and the Magreb fell out of the Fatimid sphere, and especially after the First Crusade. Timber, then, was a viable export for the Italians. Its sheer bulk suggests the need for specialised infrastructure – which could be provided, but was a big risk in the early days of trade. And while the recorded prices were good, were they sufficient to drive the economy of Amalfi or Pisa? The emperor's robe was worth 39 fir trees – in comparison to more mobile commodities, this was an awkward bundle.

What about Epstein's suggestion that the traders simply relied on whatever silver they could scrape together? This is possible – silver was currency everywhere, and easy to carry.[45] But the House of Islam was a much more monetised society than Latin Europe. Silver dirhams circulated in numbers greater than the deniers in Italy.[46] Moreover, there was a great difference in purchasing power: a quantity that would buy a house in Genoa in 1000 would barely pay the rent in Cairo-Fustat.[47] Italian traders would have faced the fiscal and psychological barrier that their silver bought much less in Egypt than within Europe. The Genoese, then, would be better off selling almost anything in Egypt for silver dirhams to spend in Europe, than they would be spending silver

[39] Michael Brett, *The Rise of the Fatimids* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 320; G.W. Heck, *Charlemagne, Muhammad, and the Arab Roots of Capitalism* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2006), 192. According to Ibn Hawqal, Sicily manufactured its own rope out of papyrus (presumably Egypt did too) and mined its own iron: Ibn Hawqal, *Configuration de la terre*, trans. Johannes Hendrik Kramers and Gaston Wiet (Paris: G.-P. Maisonneuve et Larose, 1964), 121.

[40] Gil, 'Maintenance, Building Operations, and Repairs in the Houses of the Qodesh in Fustat', 161–2; al-Maqrīzī specifies that Egyptian timber was used to construct galleys: D. Agius, 'The Arab Šalandī', in *Egypt and Syria in the Fatimid, Ayyubid and Mamluk Eras: III. Proceedings of the 6th, 7th and 8th International Colloquium Organized at the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven in May 1997, 1998 and 1999*, eds. U. Vermeulen and J. van Steenbergen (Leuven: Peeters, 2001), 49–60 (51).

[41] Al-Jawdharī, *Inside the Immaculate Portal. A History from Early Fatimid Archives*, ed. and trans. Hamid Haji (London: I.B. Tauris, 2012), 126.

[42] Al-Jawdharī, *Inside the Immaculate Portal*, 129, 132.

[43] Bernard Carra de Vaux, trans., *L'Abrégé des merveilles* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1898), 69.

[44] Travis Bruce, 'Piracy as Statecraft: the Mediterranean Policies of the Fifth/Eleventh–Century Taifa of Denia', *Al-Masaq* 22, no. 3 (2010): 235–48 (240).

[45] If deniers were not legal tender in Egypt, the Geniza contains enough references to silver by weight to suggest the problem could be circumvented, e.g. TS. 20.121 and TS Arabic 54, f. 93, in Goitein, 'Exchange Rate', 39, 45. Christian, probably Italian, merchants are recorded using silver in *c.*1060s Tunisia (17).

[46] The period was one of silver shortage, but the quantity of dirhams circulating in Egypt indicate the deficit was not too acute: e.g. Lev, 'Tinnīs', 86.

[47] Rents in Egypt varied greatly, but range from 0.75 dinars for part of a wooden house to 6 dinars for a prestigious stone house (perhaps 28–225 denarii): Geoffrey Khan, *Arabic Legal and Administrative Documents in the Cambridge Genizah Collections* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), nos. 1 and 32. The same collection gives us houses valued at 80 (no. 1), more than 60 (no. 2), 40 (no. 3), 42 (no. 10), one quarter of a house for 70 (no.13) dinars. At the conversion rate used in this paper, 1 dinar was worth around 37 denarii.

deniers in Egypt. That 50 dinar robe would have cost 1500 dirhams, or approximately1880 deniers, a very large amount for the middle elite in Italy around the millennium. In comparison, a moderate two-storey house in Pisa in 1017 might go for as little as 120 denarii.[48] A lone mention of 'Pisan' coins occurs in Tunisia in the 1060s, but by this date Pisan expansion was already well underway.[49]

Finally, the historians who put forward the possibilities above assumed that Italian goods were exported in Italian ships, which is not certain and in fact unlikely for the early days of commerce. In that era, the likelihood is that ships came to Pisa or Amalfi from the House of Islam.[50] If the point of sale was the beaches of Pisa or quays of Amalfi, the infrastructure demands of bulk commodities were much reduced. So, however, were the profits. There was no question of achieving Egyptian prices in Italy. While the earliest trade with the Islamic world probably did take place on Italian shores, trading incentives would sooner or later push the Italians into the broader Mediterranean trade network. The only account of a voyage from Amalfi to Egypt in this period describes travelling on a small ship to Palermo, and there booking passage on a larger ship to Alexandria.[51] The sources are quite clear that this is how merchants in the Mediterranean commercial network travelled, and there is every reason to suppose the Amalfitans did the same, renting space aboard ships owned by others. Under such conditions, the predominance of low volume goods is to be expected, as the more substantial the commodity (like trees), the greater the rental expenditure on deck space.

Conversely, Italian merchants would have had to pay Egyptian prices for their luxuries. Geniza merchants were willing to inquire about prices in faraway locations – and wait for a reply – rather than sell low.[52] In the mid eleventh century, a merchant visiting Amalfi preferred to warehouse his olibanum and pepper and try for better prices in Mahdia.[53] It is clear that no Muslim or Jewish merchant would travel to the Italian peninsula in order to sell for less.

To sum up, a bundle of fir trees, grain and other available commodities were insufficiently valuable and portable to balance the import of aromatics and silk easily. Long distance bulk commodity trading implies an economy that has already achieved significant

[48] Emma Falaschi, ed., *Carte dell'archivio capitolare di Pisa*, vol. 1, *930–1050* (Rome: Storia e Letteratura, 1971), 125, no. 44. Other houses were of course more expensive, but do not approach the value of real estate in Egypt.

[49] Goitein, *Letters*, 122. This has been taken as evidence that Pisans were buying goods in north Africa, but might equally indicate that Muslim or Jewish merchants were selling in Pisa. The balance of probability is that the coins resulted from transactions in Palermo, then under Zirid suzerainty and known to have been frequented by Pisan traders: Geoffrey Malaterra. *De rebus gestis Rogerii Calabriae et Siciliae comitis et Roberti Guiscardi ducis fratris eius*, ed. E. Pontieri. Rerum Italicarum scriptores (Bologna: N. Zanichelli, 1928), 45 (II.34). The identity of the coins has provoked comment, as Pisa did not mint currency until the 1150s. Nearby Lucca issued deniers, but its output was very weak at the time. This leaves us with the deniers of Pavia. See Alessia Rovelli, 'Nuove zecche e circolazione monetaria tra X e XIII secolo: l'esempio del Lazio e della Toscana', *Archeologia Medievale* 37 (2010): 163–70 (166–7). Other incidents of Rum deploying large quantities of silver (also 1060s–70s) probably reflect successful transactions in the Islamic world redeployed to buy commodities for the trip home to Italy, e.g. Goitein, *Mediterranean Society*, 2: 376 (TS 12.794).

[50] For an extensive discussion, Smith, 'Calamity and Transition', 36–44.

[51] Goitein, *Letters*, 40–1 (no. 3). The source does not say, but a large ship in Palermo was likely sailing the main line from Spain to Egypt, and could be of any origin: Smith, 'Calamity and Transition', 41. For discussion of the route between Sicily and Egypt, see Ruthi Gertwagen, 'Geniza Letters: Maritime Difficulties Along the Alexandria-Palermo Route', in *Communication in the Jewish Diaspora: the Premodern World*, ed. Sophia Menache (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 73–91.

[52] e.g. TS 8 J 19, f. 27, in Goitein, *Letters*, 45–8 (no. 5).

[53] TS 8 Ja 1, f. 5, in Goitein, *Letters*, 42–4 (no. 4).

operational sophistication.[54] We should not look for it in the small worlds of tenth-century Pisa or ninth-century Amalfi, whose merchants, in the absence of a commodity that was both valuable and portable, would not have had much chance with chestnuts. But such a commodity was available.

## Italians making money from men and women in the House of Islam

That slaves are absent from the above discussion reflects the state of research before McCormick.[55] For example, Kreutz acknowledges Amalfitan slaving in the ninth century, but suggests that slaving in Tyrrhenian Italy ended with fall of Garigliano in 915.[56] We will address the evidence for slaving within Italy below, but first it is necessary to look at the conditions of exchange between Italy and the House of Islam.

Humans were worth a lot of money. A customary price of 30–33.3 dinars prevailed throughout our period as the ransom price of a healthy adult male.[57] This amount was not always achieved in commercial transactions, but humans were always valuable (Appendix 1). For women, who then as now made up the majority of slaves, a price of around 20 dinars was typical.[58] The cheapest humans I am aware of in the House of Islam in this era went for 12.5 dinars for a male child in the early eleventh century, and 7.5 for a male slave in 922/3.[59] On the upper end, things become more complicated. One occasionally hears of colossally expensive slave girls, such as one purchased for 30,000 dinars.[60] Such amounts were perhaps possible in the hothouse atmosphere of Harun al-Rashid's Baghdad. The *Book of Gifts and Rarities* has a 3000 dinar slave girl.[61] And al-Maqrīzī tells of a slave girl a Fatimid princess hoped to sell for 1000 dinars, although she only fetched 600.[62] Such prices cannot be rejected out of hand, despite their anecdotal sources. In every era, prices will gravitate towards a customer's capacity to pay, and there were certainly people in Egypt who could afford the 1000 dinars for a slave 'beautifully made … [whose] qualities and perfections gave her great value'.[63] Readers might consider the price differences between a discount chain and a haute couture brand. Writers favour the exceptional, but normal prices appear as well: Ibn Abi Usaibia cites an 'intelligent slave girl' for about 36 dinars in tenth-century

[54] C. Wickham, *Framing the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 699–700.
[55] Kreutz, *Before the Normans*, 79–92; and Jill Caskey, *Art and Patronage in the Medieval Mediterranean: Merchant Culture in the Region of Amalfi* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 62, for the acrobatics performed by earlier historians to avoid admitting the Islamic connection.
[56] Kreutz, 'Ghost Ships', 353; eadem, *Before the Normans*, 87.
[57] Goitein, *Mediterranean Society*, 2: 137; Ashtor, *Histoire des prix*, 89.
[58] On gender and slavery, the indispensable Susan Mosher Stuard, 'Ancillary Evidence for the Decline of Medieval Slavery' *Past and Present* 149 (1995): 3–28.
[59] D.S. Richards, 'Fragments of a Slave Dealer's Day-Book from Fustāt', in *Documents de l'islam médiéval. Nouvelles perspectives de recherche*, ed. Y. Rāgib (Cairo: Institut français d'archéologie orientale, 1991), 89–96; Yūsuf Rāgib, *Actes de vente d'esclaves et d'animaux d'Égypte médiévale*, vol. 1 (Cairo: Institut français d'archéologie orientale, 2002), 16, no. VI. An early eleventh-century statute given by al-Qudūrī admits the possibility of a slave worth less than 40 dirhams: G.H. Bousquet and L. Bercher, eds. *Al-Mukhtaṣar: le statut personnel en droit musulman hanefite* (Paris: Recueil Sirey, 1952), 181, trans. in B. Lewis, *Islam from the Prophet Muhammad to the Capture of Constantinople*, vol. 2: *Religion and Society* (New York: Walker and Company, 1974), 239.
[60] In Ibn aṭ-Ṭiqṭaqâ, *al-Fakhri*, trans. C.E.J. Whitting (Westport, CT: Luzac, 1947), 199 (cap. 277).
[61] Ghādah al-Hijjâwi al-Qaddumi, trans., *Book of Gifts and Rarities* (Cambridge, MA: Center for Middle Eastern Studies of Harvard University, 1996), 192 (cap. 246).
[62] Al-Maqrīzī, *Towards a Shi'i Mediterranean Empire: Fatimid Egypt and the Founding of Cairo*, trans. Shainool Jiwa (London: I.B. Tauris, 2009), 64. See Appendix 1 for more examples.
[63] Al-Mas'udi, *Historical Encyclopaedia*, 277, admittedly a ninth-century example.

Baghdad, while Buzurg b. Shahriyar has 30 dinars for 'a young negro, handsome and well made', kidnapped by a despicable ruse.[64]

The preceding derive from narrative sources and are more or less anecdotal. When we turn to documentary evidence, we find a less stupefying but still varied range of prices. A valuable source is a fragmentary business day-book of a slave trader in early eleventh-century Fustat.[65] Here we find at the high end a girl 'not a virgin', sold by Mansūr, the agent of Abū Ishāq, to a qadi of Tripoli for 110 dinars. This is among the highest documentary prices for any slave, which lends credence to the high values assigned to certain slave girls in anecdotal sources. Four other female slaves appear in the day-book, at 100, 57.5, 40 and 27 dinars. The lone male is the child, born a slave, for 12.5 dinars. The letters of Jewish merchants preserved in the Geniza offer a smaller range of prices. The price of 80 dinars for a Christian slave girl in 995 appears in a marriage portion, and is probably inflated by a factor of two – although 40 dinars is not insubstantial.[66] Other prices include 28 dinars for a Nubian woman and her young daughter, purchased by Joseph b. Solomon Kohen in 1094, and 23 dinars for a slave girl named Secrecy.[67] More exceptionally, around 1100 several relatives banded together to purchase a Jewish woman from captivity for an exorbitant 60 dinars.[68] To sum up, a merchant might hope to get 33 dinars for a male slave, and be confident about at least 20. This was a lot of money in Egypt, certainly the era's most monetised economy – more than a year's income for a middle artisan.[69] But if 20 dinars was a large sum in Egypt, it was astronomical in Italy.

Italy's economy, particularly its money economy, underwent significant growth over the tenth and eleventh centuries. Even by 1100, it was still catching up with the eastern Mediterranean, although it led Latin Europe. Until at least the last third of the eleventh century, the relationship between the two regions was structured by major economic disparity. A mundane 20 dinar slave transaction in Egypt was worth about 750 silver deniers, or 62 solidi, in Italy. Conversely, in Pisa in the year 1006, both males and females were traded for 20 solidi, which was less than 7 dinars.[70] Prices might be lower – in Genoa in 1005, a certain Erkentruda, healthy in body and mind, changed hands for 10 solidi, which is the lowest price I have found anywhere in Italy.[71] Significantly, in Amalfi, where prices in general were higher, humans were similar in price to northern Italy. In 1090 a girl was indentured for life by her mother for the equivalent of 3 dinars.[72]

[64] Ibn Abi Usaibia, *History of Physicians*, trans. L. Kopf: Bethesda, National Library of Medicine, History of Medicine Division, Modern Manuscripts Collections, MS C294, p. 438 (described at http://www.tertullian.org/fathers/ibn_abi_usaibia_00_eintro.htm); Buzurg b. Shahriyar, *Les merveilles de l'Inde*, trans. L. Marcel Devic (Paris: Alphonse Lemarre, 1878), 45 (cap. XXXI).
[65] Richards, 'Fragments of a Slave Dealer's Day-Book.'
[66] It was customary to exaggerate the value of marriage portions: Goitein, *Mediterranean Society*, 1: 138 (TS 16.70).
[67] Goitein, *Mediterranean Society*, 1: 434, n. 64 (ENA 4020 I).
[68] Goitein, *Mediterranean Society*, 2: 500. She was a survivor of the massacre at Jerusalem in 1099.
[69] Goitein, *Letters,* 76, n. 16; Goitein, *Mediterranean Society*, 1: 98–9: daily wages were 1.5 to 3 dirhams for the untrained or humble, and up to 4 to7 for the skilled or masters. Secretarial work was among the least remunerative. Seasonal workers, such as flax-pickers, received half a dinar a month plus working clothes and full board.
[70] M. Alessandro Nannipieri, ed., *Carte dell'Archivo di Stato di Pisa*, vol. 1: *780–1070* (Rome: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1978), 40, no. 15.
[71] Epstein, *Genoa and the Genoese*, 18. Similar prices prevailed in nearby Croatia: Edo Pivčević, ed., *The Cartulary of the Benedictine Abbey of St Peter of Gumay (Croatia) 1080~1187* (Bristol: David Arthur & Sons, 1984).
[72] Skinner, *Amalfi*, 34; *Codex diplomaticus Cavensis*. 10 vols. (Naples: various publishers, 1873–1990), 1: 85. The full document is translated into English in P. Skinner and E.M.C. van Houts, eds., *Medieval Writings on Secular Women* (London: Penguin, 2011), 57–8.

Amalfitans might then purchase a human in Italy for 3–7 dinars, and hope to sell at three or more times that price overseas (Figure 1).[73]

The customary price, whatever its origin, likely had a stabilising influence on the market price of humans. And indeed, the value of humans was less susceptible to fluctuation than other commodities.[74] The rate of 33 dinars a head, or 100 dinars for three captives, may be found from the early tenth century through to the twelfth.[75] The attractions of stable prices are clear. Geniza merchants often arrived in a new market to find their goods achieved mediocre returns, which led to trips to (hopefully) better markets, as in the case of Salāma b. Mūsā, or the need to linger overlong, or send letters across the Mediterranean for instructions (which is how we know about such problems).[76] A slave merchant could expect an easier time. This was especially true of merchants from distant regions like Italy; a slaver of Amalfi would be able to plan a voyage with confidence of success. This is a strong circumstantial argument for slave trading in the early days of the development of the Italian ports, for they were operating in a naturally high risk environment: a significant profit margin was available to an enterprising merchant. And they needed it, for their luxury imports were expensive. But as we saw above, such imports were also portable. Did human commodities also meet this requirement?

Infrastructure demands would have been an impediment to bulk commerce for a developing maritime centre like Pisa, but slave trading offered its own challenges. It is important to recognise the retroactive shadow cast by slavery in the modern era. The image of slave ships packed with human cattle is a strong one, and receives impetus from the example of the Atlantic slave trade. And this vision of slave ships crowded to capacity does occasionally crop up in our sources, most famously in an episode of *c.*870, when the monk Bernard witnessed at Taranto ships laden with human cargo.[77] From (probably) the same time and region, there is a mysterious poetic fragment:

> Behold, ships! Behold, ships! A coming into port.
> Go and see what ware they bring.
> – Handsome lads more precious than gold
> – Go and see what they are sold for
> – An ephah of gold and gems
> – Ah, shipmaster, cheaply is it sold.[78]

[73] For prices and profits of slavery in the Carolingian era, see McCormick, *Origins*, 759.
[74] Goitein, *Mediterranean Society*, 1: 139. In a late tenth-century example, St Nilus of Rossano sent 100 nomismata to the emir of Palermo to redeem three Calabrian monks: Youval Rotman, *Byzantine Slavery and the Mediterranean World* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), 50. On the other side, al-Muqaddasī records that the Byzantines returned Muslim captives to Palestine at 100 dinars for three.
[75] Al-Muqaddasī, *Best Divisions for Knowledge of the Regions*, 184.
[76] In 1064, Salāma b.Mūsā was unable to sell his goods in Sicily, and moved on to a 'Christian country': Goldberg, *Trade and Institutions*, 298; Shlomo Simonsohn, ed., *The Jews in Sicily*, vol. 1: *383–1300* (Leiden: Brill, 1997), xxxiv.
[77] '… ad portam Tarentine civitatis, ubi invenimus naves sex, in quibus erant ix milia captivorum de Beneventanis Christianis. In duabus nempe navibus, que primo exierunt Africam petentes, erant tria millia captivi, alie due post exeuntes, in Tripolim deduxerunt similiter iii … ': T. Tobler and A. Molinier, eds., *Itinera Hierosolymitana et descriptiones Terrae Sanctae bellis sacris anteriora & Latina lingua exarata*, vol. 1 (Geneva: J.-G. FIck, 1879), 309–20, cap. 4. He offers the fantastical number of 9000 captives in six ships. McCormick, *Origins*, 772–4, argued that large volumes of slaves were moved in the Carolingian era. If we reduce Bernard's estimate by a factor of 10, we get 150 captives per ship, a quantity comparable to that recorded in the early tenth century for the East African slave trade, as in a ship carrying over 200 slaves in an anecdote related by Buzurg ibn Shahriyār, *Kitāb 'Ajā'ib al-Hind*, trans. in Lewis, *Islam from the Prophet Muhammad*, 2: 83.
[78] Translated from Hebrew in Zvi Malachi, 'A Hebrew Poem from Italy on the Slave Trade', *Israel Oriental Studies* 2 (1972): 288–9. Malachi attributes the poem to a ninth-century rabbi in the Bari region.

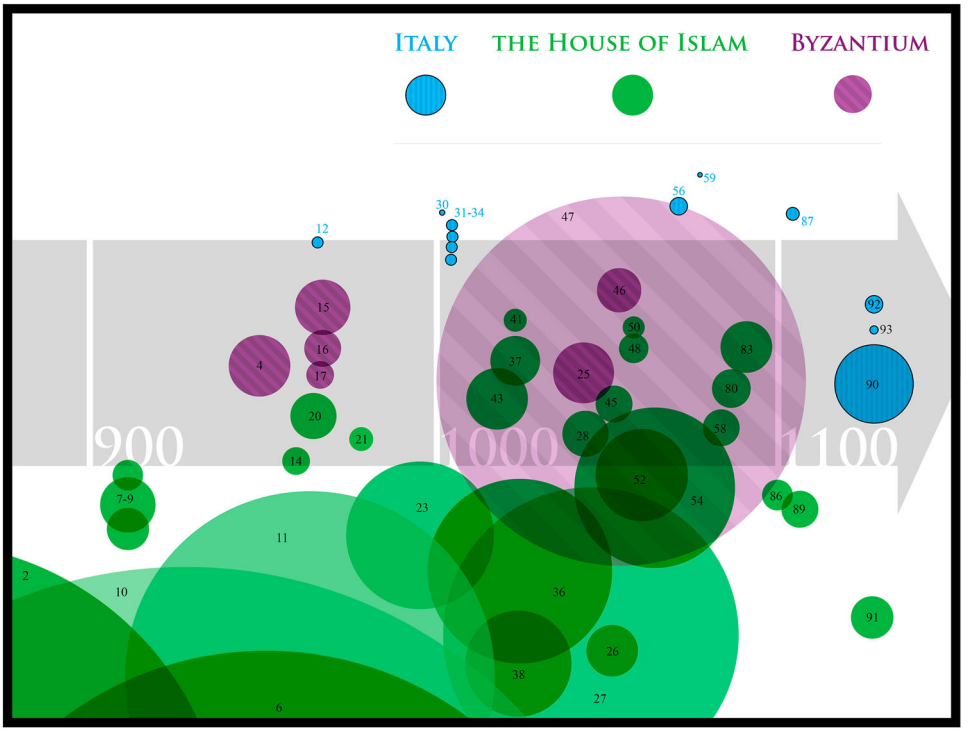


**Figure 1.** Slave prices, *c.*900–1100, between Italy, the House of Islam and Byzantium. Each circle is centred on an approximate date, and represents a transaction with a documented price, which is reflected in the size of the circle. The numbers in the figure are those of the entries in Appendix 1. Many more transactions are known in which the price is not given. Prices have been relativised on the basis of the metallic weight of the coin. This figure is representative, not complete: some instances of common prices have been omitted for clarity; some large values have been reduced, e.g. nos. 2, 6, 11 are represented at a third, and no. 10 at a sixth. Source: Appendix 1.

The mass transit of slaves suggests specialised ships, but one does not get this sense of scale in the tenth- and eleventh-century Mediterranean. Rather, humans were obtained with difficulty, moved considerable distances, and sold for a great deal of money. In short, slaves were a luxury good. If we sometimes encounter them in large quantities, it is in the context of exceptional circumstances: war, or individuals of immense wealth, like the Fatimid princess Sitt Miṣr (d. 1063), daughter of al-Hakim, who owned 8000 slave girls.[79] The available evidence indicates that ships in the eleventh century carried heterogeneous cargoes accompanied aboard by merchants or their agents.[80] Slaves, then, probably travelled alongside other commodities in moderate quantities. The account book from Fustat lists at least 17 exchanges over a period of around 10 days – but less than two transactions per day does not seem like much for a professional trader in the most important commercial centre in the Mediterranean.[81] It is sometimes thought that slaves make a difficult commodity, but in fact the infrastructure demands of small-scale

[79] Al-Hijjāwi al-Qaddumi, trans., *Book of Gifts and Rarities*, 222 (cap. 354).
[80] Smith, 'Calamity and Transition', 32.
[81] Richards, 'Fragments of a Slave Dealer's Day-Book', 91; but note that as the account is fragmentary, additional transactions may be lost.

slaving are minor. One slave was far easier to transport than 20 barrels of grain. Unlike timber or agricultural produce, slaves move themselves.

Sometimes, however, slaves move themselves away from their owners or captors. Escape looms large in narrative accounts, but probably did not have much of an impact on commerce. Modern evidence shows that fetters are unnecessary to maintain persons in bondage. Through a combination of fear, coercion and incentives, illegal slaves have been kept under the noses of neighbours even in modern liberal democracies.[82] In practice, the conditions of unfree work often precluded shackles, either for domestic or agricultural slaves.[83] An east African nobleman in the early tenth century escaped slavery by simply walking away, but such resourcefulness was not usual.[84] Nonetheless, fetters had resonance – they add drama to escape narratives: when a ninth-century scholar of Cordoba, Baqi ibn Makhlad, prayed on behalf of a captive, his chains fell from his body.[85] In Christian accounts, saints would strike shackles from the limbs of captives.[86] Maiolus of Cluny, captured by raiders, offered a histrionic description of his plight, 'wretched and enchained, encircled by the hordes of Beliel'.[87] But most sources are concerned with males of military experience – the group most likely to escape and therefore to require fetters. It may not be too much to say that bonds were proportional to status – as the poet Ibn al-Labbana (d. 1113) wrote, collars of mail become collars for the neck.[88] It was noble Saracens that the Pisans led away in chains in 1114.[89] Iron shackles show up in the archaeological record, but may have been a luxury from the perspective of the slavers.[90] Shackles might even be disadvantageous to the slave-takers, whose encumbered prisoners might expose them to pursuit.[91]

Despite the grim tone of the foregoing, escape was apparently not a concern for all those living in servitude.[92] Many slaves lived ordinary lives: we hear of slaves travelling and

[82] e.g. Kevin Bales, *Disposable People: New Slavery in the Global Economy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 22; John Bowe, *Nobodies: Modern American Slave Labor and the Dark Side of the New Global Economy* (London: Random House, 2007).

[83] Slave-based agriculture was not a feature of this period, but individual slaves might certainly be put to such labours, as in the case of a certain Peter, captured in battle and put to work in his master's garden in Murcia until St Dominic freed him: Grimald's *Life of Dominic*, II.25, trans. Colin Smith, *Christians and Moors in Spain*, vol. 1, *711–1100* (Warminster: Arts and Phillips, 1988), 93–7.

[84] Buzurg ibn Shahriyār, *Kitāb 'Ajā'ib al-Hind*, trans. in Lewis, *Islam from the Prophet Muhammad*, 2: 85.

[85] P.S. Van Koningsveld, 'Muslim Slaves and Captives in Western Europe', *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 6 (1995): 5–23 (9–10).

[86] For example, in Grimald's *Life of Dominic*, II.25, trans. Smith, *Christians and Moors*, 1: 93–7. A Coptic example of *c*.981–1002 concerns a certain Wazah, who was imprisoned in Cairo and rescued by St Mercurius. Alfred J. Baker, *The Ancient Coptic Churches of Egypt*. 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1884), 1: 127.

[87] At least according to the ransom letter attributed to him by the Clunaic monk Syrus, who penned an account of Maiolus in 1010: Syrus, *Vita sancti Maioli*, in *Agni immaculati: recherches sur les sources hagiographiques relatives à Saint Maieul de Cluny, 954–994*, ed. D. Iona-Prat (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1988), 253 (3.5). In fact, his captors seem to have treated him quite well: J. France and P. Reynolds, eds. and trans., *Rodulfi Glabri, Historiarum libri quinque* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 20 (I.9). He was then over 60 and unlikely to have required chains.

[88] In a lament for the defenders of Seville at its fall to the Almoravids. T.J. Gorton, trans., *Andalus. Moorish Songs of Love and Wine* (London: Eland, 2007), 79.

[89] 'innumera multitudine utriusque sexus nobilium Saracenorum … quamplurimos in vinculis ponentes captivos ad propria ducunt.' G. Scalia, ed., *Gesta triumphalia per Pisanos facta* (Florence: SISMEL-Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2010), 93.

[90] For a full discussion, J. Henning, 'Rome, the Carolingians, and Slavery in the First Millennium AD', in *The Long Morning of Medieval Europe. New Directions in Medieval Studies*, eds. Jennifer R. Davis and Michael McCormick (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), 33–53.

[91] Jarbel Rodriguez, *Captives and Their Saviours in the Medieval Crown of Aragon* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2007), 26. If a raid goes awry, according to Byzantine military manuals, it was best to kill the captives: G.T. Dennis, ed. and trans., *Three Byzantine Military Treatises* (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks, Research Library and Collection, 1985), 185.

[92] Goitein, *Mediterranean Society*, 1: 143–4.

conducting business for both Muslim and Jewish masters.[93] And ordinary people owned slaves. In the mid twelfth century a slave girl named Musk went through three owners in the Jewish community: a perfumer, a wax-maker and a housewife.[94] The same was true in Byzantium.[95] In Amalfi, Pisa and Genoa slaves were owned by individuals of wealth but no great status. The price of labour was so low in Italy that slaves played only a marginal economic role – if that. They served as conspicuous consumption; the lists of slaves owned by the lords of Gaeta are small mirrors of the thousands possessed by the Fatimid caliphs. On the lower level, we may imagine slaves as an indication of medium status. Goitein described the acquisition of a slave as a matter of congratulations among the Jews of Cairo, as we might the purchase of a house in a better neighbourhood.[96] In the southern Mediterranean the unfree served as teachers and doctors, and were occasionally known to rise to high levels of society, a pattern also observed in Norman Sicily. If this did not occur in Latin Italy, it was because of the relative rarity of slaves, not differing cultural attitudes about slavery.

Establishing commerce in a new region is not just a matter of showing up. Selling slaves, like arranging marriages, appears to have required brokers. These, to judge by a tenth-century short story, offered different degrees of specialisation. Selling a high value human – in our sources usually a sexually attractive female – required presentation, refreshments, in short a luxury retail experience,[97] and perhaps a deceptive one, for 'how often has a scraggly girl been sold as plump … , an aging man as a full-bottomed boy … , a sick slave as healthy and a boy as a girl.'[98] For such services, at least in our fictional example, the broker took 100 dinars out of 1000, and this fee appears in documentary sources as well.[99] In addition to facilitating the transaction, the broker oversaw the conditions of sale, noted defects and ensured that the sales tax was paid. Finally, slaves were almost always bought with cash, not credit, and were proverbially non-returnable goods.[100] The point of the preceding is that selling slaves was an exceptionally good vector of entry for newcomers to the market. The broker, like a modern real estate agent, was incentivised to make things easy for the potentially inexperienced seller – to provide a soft introduction to the complexities of the market.[101] Out of all possible commercial avenues, then, slavery was surely the only one in which newcomers might expect such assistance.

[93] Al-Qudūrī, *Al-Mukhtaṣar: le statut personnel*, eds. Bousquet and Bercher, 180–5, trans. in Lewis, *Islam from the Prophet Muhammad*, 2: 239–40; Goitein, *Mediterranean Society*, 1: 132–3.
[94] S.D. Goitein, 'Slaves and Slavegirls in the Cairo Geniza Records', *Arabica* 9, no. 1 (1962): 1–20 (12).
[95] Rotman, *Byzantine Slavery*, 82–130.
[96] Goitein, 'Slaves and Slavegirls', 3–4.
[97] 'The Story of Talha, Son of the Qadi of Fustat', in *Tales of the Marvellous and News of the Strange*, trans. Malcolm C. Lyons (London: Penguin Classics, 2014), 23–39 (26–7).
[98] Ibn Butlān, *Risāla fī Shirā al-Raqīq*, ed. M.J. de Goeje (Leiden: Brill, 1885), 354–8, in Lewis, *Islam from the Prophet Muhammad*, 2: 243–51 (243–4).
[99] Richards, 'Fragments of a Slave Dealer's Day-Book', 91.
[100] Goitein, *Mediterranean Society*, 1: 140–1; Olivia Remie Constable, 'Muslim Spain and Mediterranean Slavery: the Medieval Slave Trade as an Aspect of Muslim-Christian Relations', in *Christendom and its Discontents. Exclusion, Persecution, and Rebellion, 1000–1500*, eds. Scott L. Waugh and Peter D. Diehl (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 264–86 (270–1), for a buyer failing to get redress from a slave trader. For a valuable discussion of the use of cash across cultural frontiers, see Roxani Eleni Margariti, 'Coins and Commerce. Monetization and Cross-Cultural Collaboration in the Western Indian Ocean (Eleventh to Thirteenth Centuries)', in *Religion and Trade. Cross Cultural Exchanges in World History, 1000-1900*, eds. Francesca Trivellato, Leor Halevi and Cátia Antunes (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 192–215.
[101] One might wonder whether such services led to the later institution of the dragoman.

An implication of the high value of human commodities is that relatively few might have a significant economic impact. The merchant who sold the snow child came home rich. The best survivals of eleventh-century Pisa – churches – tell us that its merchants did too. If Amalfi could bring 2000 slaves to market in Egypt in a year (an improbable number, but perhaps not impossible), the city would be generating wealth in the same class as the German emperor.[102] The injection of such quantities of cash would reverberate in the political landscapes of the cities. We do not have clear examples how (and whether) this actually happened, but one possible case is that of the Docibili of Gaeta in the 860s. The abrupt rise of this family, as well as their association with Saracen contingents, led Skinner to hypothesise that their power was fuelled by trade with the Islamic world.[103] In all probability that trade was in slaves, which would have brought a return on investment like little else in Gaeta. This suggestion is reinforced by the fact that the Docibili, for whom we have testaments, owned large numbers of slaves – more, in fact, than any other documented Italian potentates of the period.[104] In Pisa, it is conceivable that the absence of political turmoil reflects imported wealth which bound 'maiores et minores' together.[105]

The luxury trade, as Wickham emphasises, is by definition a marginal portion of total trade.[106] Everyone needs to eat; few need perfume or slaves. But major economic disparity can unbalance this commonsense assumption. The limiting factor on luxuries may be elite demand, not supply. The luxurious margin, therefore, is a proportion of the market in which demand originates, in our case Egypt and other Islamic polities. And as Egypt was an economy an order of magnitude larger than any Italian city in this era – indeed, than all of Italy – it is possible that the size of its luxury market – although marginal to the whole – nevertheless was greater than the total market size of Pisa or Amalfi. In other words, elite demand for luxuries in the Islamic world may have provided sufficient capital to sustain the entire overseas commercial activity of Pisa or Amalfi in the tenth or eleventh centuries.

Leaving aside practical obstacles, what of the law? It was illegal for Muslims and Christians to sell their co-religionists. Liudprand found a way around this because the merchants of Verdun were (in theory) selling pagans, as were, presumably, the slaves imported over the Alps mentioned in the *honorantie civitatis Papie*.[107] But it is unlikely the issue much animated anyone in this era.[108] As far as we can tell, whatever rules

[102] Smith, 'Calamity and Transition', 21, based on David Bachrach, 'Toward an Appraisal of the Wealth of the Ottonian Kings of Germany, 919–1024', *Viator* 44, no. 2 (2013): 1–27.
[103] Patricia Skinner, 'Noble Families in the Duchy of Gaeta in the Tenth Century', *Papers of the British School at Rome* 60 (1992): 353–78.
[104] *Codex diplomaticus Cajetanus*, 3 vols. (Montecassino: In eodem Archicoenobio Montis Casini, 1958–67), vol. 1: no. 19 (906), no. 52 (954). Slaves are not uncommon in Gaetan documents of the era, e.g. vol. 1: nos. 100, 110, 123, 143, 153, 168; vol. 2: no. 284.
[105] Maria Luisa Ceccarelli Lemut, 'Mare nostrum Mediterraneum. Pisa e il mare nel medioevo', in *Pisa crocevia di uomini, lingue e culture. L'età medievale: Atti del Convegno di studio (Pisa, 25–27 ottobre 2007)*, eds. Lucia Battaglia Ricci and Roberta Cella (Rome: Aracne, 2009), 11–24 (18).
[106] Wickham, *Inheritance of Rome*, 549.
[107] C.-R. Brühl and C. Violante, eds., *Die 'Honorantie civitatis Papie'* (Cologne: Böhlau, 1983), 17.
[108] Or in other eras. Thomas J. MacMaster, 'The Transformative Impact of the Slave Trade on the Roman World, 580–720' (Ph.D. diss., University of Edinburgh 2015), emphasises that the advent of Christianity had no effect on the business, reinforcing an old observation of Marc Bloch, *Slavery and Serfdom in the Middle Ages*, trans. William R. Beer (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), 14. Jonathan Conant, *Staying Roman: Conquest and Identity in Africa and the Mediterranean, 439–700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 72–3, offers examples of Roman citizens enslaving fellow citizens.

existed against slave owning were ignored.[109] Christians in Egypt were discouraged, but not forbidden, from buying and owning Christians captured in Europe, and infra-faith purchases are extant.[110] To judge by onomastics, slaves held in Gaeta, Pisa and Genoa were not pagans: in 965 a woman bearing as Christian a name as Cristina was sold in Pisa.[111] It is, however, possible that slaves were renamed, or had converted;[112] but a priest of Atrani owned two 'Frankish' slaves, who were certainly Christian.[113] Both Christians and Muslims deemed 'enslaveability' a condition bestowed at birth, and conversion did not automatically bestow freedom. Moreover, Christians and Muslims seemed to consider captives an exception to the rules. Even the rigid Almoravids sold off their co-religionists after they seized the cities of al-Andalus.[114] Atto of Vercelli, writing *c.*1040 of free-born captives in wartime, observed that 'some were redeemed, others remained slaves.'[115] Finally, the ban on enslaving co-religionists was in practice directed at slaveholding within Christian or Muslim society. There was no possible enforcement mechanism to prevent, for example, Pisans from selling in Africa the Genoese they captured in 1077, or even a Spanish Muslim from selling another Muslim to foreign merchants in Almeria.[116] Perhaps the Byzantine emperor's mandate regulating Venetian slave trading carried more weight, but it seems unlikely.[117] Other legal exemptions include indentures for life, as practised at Amalfi, where in 1090 a woman named Asterada sold her daughter Sica for 12 tarí (3 dinars).[118] As for the Jewish community, they were in the tenth and eleventh centuries primarily customers of the slave business, although in the Carolingian era Jewish merchants had traded slaves across Europe.[119] The reason for this change is unknown, but may relate to the increased importance of military slaves, as Jews were also excluded from dealing in other military materials. Jews were, moreover, on one shore of the Mediterranean or another, forbidden to own Christian or Muslim slaves. Their own slaves were expected to become Jews, and a slave who wished to be sold could force the matter by converting to Islam.[120]

[109] Skinner, *Family Power*, 285; Rio, *Slavery After Rome*, 36, 154.
[110] Severus ibn Al-Muqaffa, *The Lamp of the Intellect of Severus ibn Al-Muqaffa', Bishop of Al-Ashmūnain*, eds. R.Y. Ebied and M.J.L. Young. Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium, 365–6. 2 vols. (Louvain: Imprimerie orientaliste, 1975), 2: 22; in 1090, a Christian clerk sold to a Jew from Fustat a Christian slave girl and her son for 21 dinars: Khan, *Arabic Legal and Administrative* Documents, no. 56.
[111] Falaschi, ed., *Carte dell'archivo capitolare di Pisa*, 1: 19 (no. 6).
[112] This happened in Spain, where statements in cartularies inform us that slaves with Christian names at the abbeys of Sobrado and Celanova were captured Muslims. R. Hitchcock, *Mozarabs in Medieval and Early Spain. Identities and Influences* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), 64–6.
[113] *Codex diplomaticus Cavensis*, 2: no. 244 (966), cited in Skinner, *Amalfi*, 34.
[114] As bemoaned by Ibn al-Labbana: Gorton, trans., *Andalus. Moorish Songs*, 79.
[115] 'alii redimuntur, alii remanent servi.' Atto of Vercelli, *Expositio epistolarum S. Pauli*, in *Attonis Vercellensis episcopi, Opera omnia*, ed. J.-P. Migne. Patrologiae cursus completus series Latina 134 (Paris: Garnier Fratres, editores et J.-P. Migne successores, 1884), col. 638.
[116] For the latter (and an interesting swindle), see Remie Constable, 'Muslim Spain and Mediterranean Slavery', 270–1.
[117] See Rotman, *Byzantine Slavery*, 80; the bans are found in Tafel and Thomas, eds., *Urkunden zur Ältern Handels- und Staatsgeschichte der Republik Venedig*, 1: 5 (no.7), 16 (no.12), 17 (no.13); and in Marco Pozza and Giorgio Ravegnani, eds., *Pacta Veneta 4: I trattai con Bisanzio 992–1198* (Venice: Il Cardo, 1993), no. 1.
[118] Sica would also receive 8 tarí, and her freedom, upon the death of her new owner. Skinner, *Amalfi*, 34.
[119] Private sales of slaves, via a broker, were of course common enough in the Jewish communities of Egypt. See Goitein, 'Slaves and Slavegirls', 12; Gil, *Jews in Islamic Countries in the Middle Ages*, 663. For discussion on the Jewish Radhanite merchants in the Carolingian era, see M. Gil, 'The Rādhānite Merchants and the Land of Rādhān', *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 17, no. 3 (1974): 299–328, and Rotman, *Byzantine Slavery*, 66ff.
[120] Goitein, 'Slaves and Slavegirls', 14.

In short, there is no reason to suppose that an Amalfitan merchant would have problems bringing a few slaves to market. One transaction would pay for the trip with profit left over: for a merchant importing portable luxuries, slaves made an admirable reciprocal export. They were valuable and easy to move, and enjoyed an advantageous market environment. Under these circumstances of exchange, it would be a difficult phenomenon to explain if humans were not trafficked, but we are saved from attempting such an explanation, for there is evidence – much of it, admittedly, inferential – that humans were traded.

## Human trafficking in Italy around the millennium

Due to the disparity of prices, there was every incentive for Italians to sell humans to traders operating from Islamic polities. We can, therefore, hardly expect to find documentation – there was no call for Latin charters documenting sales to visiting Saracens, and still less for transactions in Egypt.[121] Moreover, commercial activity was not valorised by the authorial cultures of this era, as McCormick has emphasised.[122] Even the most innocuous trades are little documented, and slavery is not innocuous. What we do have, then, are incidental clues to a picture of slave trading in Italy that is suggestive, but far from complete.

In the early Middle Ages, the business of exporting humans to the Muslim world from Italy was in the hands of Muslims. In the ninth century, ships from the Emirate of Bari carried slaves to Tunisia, the Levant and Egypt.[123] The Saracen base at Garigliano, extinguished in 915, was a base for raiding parties but also maintained relations with local polities. The settlement of Fraxinetum, likewise devoted to slave raiding, lasted until 972.[124] The *Novalesca Chronicle* states that its fall was precipitated by internal strife over a captured slave girl.[125] This is a fine piece of melodrama, but we should not discount the capacity of real humans to behave in literary ways. Our monastic chronicler no doubt relished the opportunity to deploy tropes about women as a source of dissension, and predatory Saracens as prey to avarice and lust. But a female slave could – as we have seen – be sufficiently valuable booty to disrupt the smooth sailing of any pirate nest. Fraxinetum's longevity in a hostile neighbourhood testifies to the strength of market demand.

[121] Nearly all our documents reflect the accumulation of landed property by the Church, which retained and copied them in order to prove ownership – which tends to exclude transmarine merchant transactions. And even then, these documents are not common before the millennium, e.g. at Amalfi: Skinner, *Amalfi*, 76. In Amalfi, a city of merchants, merchants are hardly documented. See discussion in Skinner, *Amalfi*, viii–xi, 15–8. The first mention of Pisan merchants in a Pisan source comes in the 1080s, a century after their trade began, in a diploma of Henry IV: Dietrich von Gladiss and Alfred Gawlik, eds., *Die Urkunden Heinrichs IV*. MGH Die Urkunden der deutschen Könige und Kaiser 6. 3 vols. (Hanover: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 1941–78), 2: 442–3 (no. 336).

[122] For a discussion of how our – largely monastic – writers elided the presence of trade and merchants, see McCormick, *Origins*, 12–5.

[123] Leor Halevi, 'Bernard, Explorer of the Muslim Lake: a Pilgrimage from Rome to Jerusalem, 867', *Medieval Encounters* 4, no. 1 (1998): 24–50. Although Bernard arranged his trip in Bari, he left Italy from Taranto. In 925, in the same city, Saracen raiders sold their victims from nearby Otranto, among them the young Sabbatai Donnolo: D. Castelli, *Il commento di Sabbatai Donnolo sul Libro della Creazione* (Florence: Tip. dei successori Le Monnier, 1880), 1–4.

[124] An important recent discussion of Fraxinetum can be found in Scott Bruce, *Cluny and the Muslims of La Garde-Freinet: Hagiography and the Problem of Islam in Medieval Europe* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2015), 23ff.

[125] The *Novalesca Chronicle* is messy and unreliable, but also close to the action, and offers more detail than any other sources on Fraxinetum. Gian Carlo Alessio, ed., *Cronaca di Novalesa* (Torino: Einaudi, 1982), 278–80 (cap. V.18), has a Saracen, disaffected by the confiscation of the slave girl by a superior, revealing secret routes to the Christians. It is worth considering that Fraxinetum may have been in competition with the slave market at Verdun and the other slaving entrepôts of central Europe. This fact need not have moved the Provençals to destroy it – they had sufficient motivation – but may have helped propel Otto I's unprecedented diplomatic overtures to Cordoba, which was understood, correctly or not, as Fraxinetum's overlord.

The sources paint the settlement as a nest of serpents, but it is apparent that its inhabitants were not entirely divorced from their neighbours.[126] Another *Novalesca* anecdote illustrates the point: in 961 a soldier (*miles*) and his attendant were seized by raiders from Fraxinetum on the road to Vercelli (almost 400 km from the Saracen base). Shortly afterwards, a relative of the soldier recognised the attendant, yoked as a prisoner, at the court of Vercelli's bishop, and gave his armour to purchase him. Only then did the attendant reveal that his master was also for sale, and the relative had to petition the bishop (who was unable to help) and all his neighbours and kin to raise the necessary money.[127] This looks like ransom, but the Saracens had not sought out their customer, nor had he known that his relative had been captured. He seems to have come across the attendant by chance. Had some other buyer arrived first, the captives would have remained in servitude, and the incident unreported. Note, too, that the transaction was a private one, and there is no mention of any public figure contributing to the ransom. In other words, this was a regular slave transaction, in which the buyer happened to be kin and the sellers Saracens, taking place at a normal enough slave market in northern Italy.

There was another slave market at nearby Pavia. The *Honorantie civitatis Papie* confirms that slaves were brought across Alpine passes to that city in the tenth century, but does not mention who bought them.[128] One known transaction, however, is that of Bishop Liudprand of Cremona, who purchased four eunuchs, castrated in Verdun for export to the south or east.[129] There is every reason to believe that this was the common pattern. Just as slaves brought to Verdun from eastern Europe were moved onward to Spain, they likewise travelled down the Italian peninsula. If no source documents this movement, it is worth reiterating how few sources there are for the slave trade (or other trades) in this era.[130] But the *Honorantie* states that Amalfitans (and Salernitans, Gaetans and Venetians) came north to do business in Pavia.[131] That they moved slaves onwards to Sicily, North Africa or Egypt appears to be common sense, despite Citarella's suggestion that Amalfi was too remote from sources of slaves to participate in the business.[132] Later in the 1080s, Pisans are documented in Pavia as well.[133]

Fraxinetum fell in 972. Almost immediately – or as close as archaeology can make it – ceramics from Muslim regions appear at Pisa. The evidence of the Bataiguier wreck suggests that Fraxinetum was not solely a raiding outpost, but the destination for regular trade goods.[134] Did Saracen traders, having lost their station in Provence, simply divert to Tuscany? And while there is no certain evidence of that, there were

[126] B.E.C. Guérard and N. de Wailly, eds., *Cartulaire de l'abbaye de Saint-Victor de Marseille*. 2 vols. (Paris: Typographie de C. Lahure, 1857), 1: 18–9 (no. 15), dated 1005, describes how 'the habitations of men' became those of wild beasts. But the erstwhile king of Italy, Adalbert, son of Berengar, sought refuge with the Saracens of Fraxinetum. He returned in 963, sailing to Civitavecchia (presumably aboard a Saracen ship), and thence to Rome to meet John XII: Liudprand, *Concerning King Otto*, in Liudprand of Cremona, *Complete Works*, trans. Squatriti, 221.
[127] Alessio, ed., *Cronaca di Novalesa*, 264–6 (cap. V.9).
[128] Brühl and Violante, eds., *Honorantie civitatis Papie*, 17.
[129] Liudprand intended them as gifts for the eastern emperor: *Antapodosis* VI.6, in Liudprand of Cremona, *Complete Works*, trans. Squatriti, 199.
[130] See discussion in Rio, *Slavery After Rome*, 19–20.
[131] Brühl and Violante, eds., *Honorantie civitatis Papie*, 19.
[132] Citarella, 'Patterns in Medieval Trade', 538. Amalfitans in Egypt: Claude Cahen, 'Un texte peu connu relatif au commerce oriental d'Amalfi au Xe siècle', *Archivio Storico per le Province Napoletane* 34 (1955): 61–7; Skinner, *Amalfi*, 225–6.
[133] Gladiss and Gawlik, eds., *Die Urkunden Heinrichs IV*., 2: 442–3 (no. 336).
[134] J-P. Joncheray, 'L'épave sarrasine (haut moyen-âge) de Bataiguier, ou Batéguier, opérations archéologiques de 1973 et 1974', *Cahiers d'Archéologie Subaquatique* 16 (2007): 131–222.

certainly slaves in Pisa. Further south, in Gaeta, large numbers of slaves appear in wills, although we do not know where they came from.[135] In contrast, in Apulia the slave girls are often identified as Saracens.[136]

Latin narratives about Muslims and Arabic narratives about Christians invariably mention slavery; human trafficking was a main interfaith activity of the era. The symmetry of the northern and southern sources provides an index of their reliability. Neither side, according to their own texts, was anything but victim in the matter of slaves. An Arabic poem assumes that Christian warships were rowed by Muslim captives.[137] Abu 'l-Ṣalt states outright that the Pisans came to Mahdia in 1087 to carry away 'the wives and the sons of the Muslims'.[138] The fathers, we imagine, did not survive, although the captives taken from the Balearics three decades later were 'of both sexes'.[139] In both cases, the Pisans justified their attacks with reference to the mistreatment of Christian captives.[140] At Jaffa in 1099, the Pisans specified that they would receive a third part of all booty, including captives.[141] Another source tells us that Christian (Rūm) pirates, in 1038 or before, seized a ship sailing from Alexandria to Mahdia, but were intercepted by a Sicilian fleet, which freed the captives and took them to Sicily.[142] Had the Rūm not been caught, their captives might have made it home anyway: a Geniza document of *c*.1050 recounts how the Jewish community in Alexandria ransomed from some Amalfitans three Jews, whose ship had been seized by another unspecified Christian group, who had subsequently sold the Jews to the Amalfitans. The Amalfitans claimed they were doing the Jewish community a good turn, but the letter calls them 'hard masters', and another interpretation is that they were engaging in human commodity trading – purchasing slaves in order to resell them for a higher price. They sold the three for 16, 16 and 12 dinars, which was low for Egypt, but more than what they might have paid to sellers from Italy.[143] Such occasions may have been common; if they did not touch the Jewish community, we cannot expect

[135] e.g. *Codex diplomaticus Cajetanus*, 3 vols, Montecassino: 1958–67, vol. 1: no. 52, in which Docibilis II, duke of Gaeta, frees at least 72 slaves, assuming that couples designated as freed together with 'omnibus filiis et filiabus illorum' had at least one. Many are listed by name, and it is tempting to believe that the two known as 'de Gariliano' may be associated with, or acquired from, the Saracen stronghold, notwithstanding the intervening 40 years. The names of the slaves are overwhelmingly Latin and Greek, which suggests (but does not prove) they came from southern Italy.

[136] Most, however, are twelfth-century: Skinner, *Amalfi*, 36, n. 15; eadem, 'Women, Wills and Wealth in Medieval Southern Italy', *Early Medieval Europe* 2 (1993): 133–52 (138); Donald Matthew, *The Norman Kingdom of Sicily* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 160–1.

[137] M.C. Lyons, 'The Land of War: Europe in the Arab Hero Cycles', in *The Crusades from the Perspective of Byzantium and the Muslim World*, eds. Angeliki E. Laiou and Roy Parviz Mottahedeh (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks, 2001), 44.

[138] Abū 'l-Ṣalt, a contemporary poet, quoted in At-Tijäni, *Rahlah, ivi*, in M. Amari, *Biblioteca Arabo-Sicula*. 2 vols. (Turin: Ermanno Loesher, 1880), 2: 62–3.

[139] *Gesta triumphalia*, in *Gli Annales pisani di Bernardo Maragone*, ed. Michele Lupo Gentile. Rerum Italicarum Scriptores, 2nd edn., 6, part 2 (Bologna: N. Zanichelli, 1930–6), 92.

[140] H.E.J. Cowdrey, 'The Mahdia Campaign of 1087', *English Historical Review* 92 (1977): 1–29 (24); *Gesta triumphalia*, 89.

[141] *Gesta Francorum Iherusalem expugnantium*, in *Recueil des historiens des croisades. Historiens occidentaux*, vol. 3, (Paris: Imprimerie impériale, 1866), 527 (cap. 1).

[142] Known from a fatwā preserved as a citation by the fourteenth-century writer al-Wansharīshī: P. Guichard and D. Menjot, *Pays d'Islam et monde latin, Xe–XIIe siècle. Textes et documents* (Lyons: Press universitaires de Lyon, 2000), 31–2.

[143] J. Mann, *The Jews in Egypt and in Palestine Under the Fatimid Caliphs*. 2 vols. (London: Oxford University Press, 1920–2), 1: 205 (TS 12.338, 1. 18 ff.); Citarella, 'Patterns in Medieval Trade', 544; Goitein, *Mediterranean Society*, 1: 329; 484, n.14. The prices suggest that initial sellers were Italians, for Byzantines would have known and probably charged the Amalfitans the full 30 dinars.

Geniza writers to mention them – as is the case in this incident, for it is unlikely that three Jews were the only prizes aboard the captured ship.[144] Probably the Amalfitans purchased and resold the rest of the crew at the same time.

Henning has emphasised the geographical advantage enjoyed by Venice in its domination of the slave trade in the Carolingian era.[145] But by the late ninth century, western Italy also benefited from proximity to the markets of the Islamic world in recently conquered Sicily. *Ṣaqāliba* – that is, European slaves possibly of Slavic origin – were present in Sicily, just as in Spain, given that Ibn Hawqal states that Palermo had a *harat as-Saqaliba*, a waterfront quarter where, perhaps, new slaves arrived, or soldiers and administrators of *saqaliba* origins resided, or both.[146] There would have been Latins among them, as the Kalbids were quite successful in their military expeditions on the Italian mainland.[147] No doubt others were purchased, some perhaps from the Venetians, as Chiarelli suggests.[148] The origin of the *saqaliba* in al-Andalus is well known. They were delivered across the Pyrenees from staging centres further east, most famously Verdun, whence they arrived via a broad network of slave centres in central and eastern Europe.[149] In the case of Sicily, we can only suppose that slaves were brought across the Alps and down the peninsula from the same sources, presumably – as we have seen – by Amalfitan and other Italian merchants. Some were then shipped onwards, for the Arabic geographers agree that slaves were a chief export from Sicily.[150]

They remained so under the Normans. The Muslim inhabitants of Palermo were 'sold as vile prisoners' after the city's fall, although we are not told to whom – a fact which alerts us to the volume of slave transactions that went unrecorded.[151] The conquest of Sicily was seemingly financed by the sale of prisoners.[152] It may be that the astonishing success of the Normans can be put down to the economic impact of trafficking. To a warrior newly arrived from Normandy, a single captive represented astronomical booty – a strong motivator to further raiding. The logic of non-stop Norman aggrandisement may have been primarily fuelled by such profits.[153] Certainly it was the Italo-Norman contingent among the crusaders in 1099 who understood the possibilities of ransom among their Islamic foes.

[144] Other incidents that did touch the Jewish community are known: Mann, *Jews in Egypt and in Palestine*, 1: 88ff.
[145] Joachim Henning, 'Slavery or Freedom? The Causes of Early Medieval Europe's Economic Advancement', *Early Medieval Europe* 12, no. 3 (2003): 269–77 (271).
[146] On Palermo, see Ferdinando Maurici, *Palermo Araba* (Palermo: Kalós edizioni d'arte, 2015), 77–92.
[147] L.C. Chiarelli, *A History of Muslim Sicily* (Venera: Midsea Books, 2011), 165. Latin and Greek sources attest to the capture of of Calabrians in particular, e.g. in Giuseppe Cozza-Luzi, 'Vita et conversatio sancti patris nosti Sabae iunioris', *Studi e Documenti di Storia e Diritto* 11-12 (1890-1): 37–56, 135–68, 311–23 (VIII, 81).
[148] Chiarelli, *History of Muslim Sicily*, 257.
[149] Al-Muqaddasī, *Best Divisions for Knowledge of the Regions*, 200.
[150] e.g. Abū Ishāq al-Istakhrī, *Kitāb masālik al-mamālik*, ed. M.J. de Goeje (Leiden: Brill, 1967), 70, in the early tenth century; some of the slaves must have been native Sicilians, especially in the ninth century when the conquest of the island was still going on.
[151] Amatus of Montecassino, *The History of the Normans*, trans. Prescott N. Dunbar; introduction and notes by Graham A. Loud (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2004), 156 (VI.16).
[152] Amatus of Montecassino, *History of the Normans*, trans. Dunbar, 156 (VI.16), 157 (VI.17), 159 (VI.22).
[153] Compare the thesis that Carolingian expansion was fuelled by war booty: Timothy Reuter, 'The End of Carolingian Military Expansion', in *Charlemagne's Heir: New Perspectives on the Reign of Louis the Pious (814–840)*, eds. Peter Godman and Roger Collins (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 391–405, and idem, 'Plunder and Tribute in the Carolingian Empire', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5th series, 35 (1985): 75–94. The Normans kept it up under Roger II, who twice deported into servitude the populace of Djerba, off the Tunisian coast, in 1135 and 1153: Alex Metcalfe, *Muslims and Christians in Norman Sicily: Arabic Speakers and the End of Islam* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003), 47.

This is the likely subtext to Tancred's rage at the slaughter of captives at the Dome of the Rock.[154]

Finally, it must be noted that Byzantium was as much a slave market as Egypt, if a more regulated one. It lies beyond the remit of this paper, but must have exerted a strong influence on southern Italy, much of which was a Greek province in this period. Greek slavers were busy in Calabria in the ninth century and there is no reason to imagine that their trade had ebbed.[155] In 982 we find a Greek ship off Calabria, where it was witness to the battle of Stilo. It is not identified as a slaver, but it is suggestive that when a Latin survivor of the battle swam out to the ship, its crew planned to take him to Constantinople.[156] And why, one might wonder, was it loitering adjacent to a battlefield anyway? That the Greeks sold humans to Islamic polities is evidenced by the legislation governing the trade – which must have been disobeyed as often as not. The poet Ma'arri (973–1057) suspected Aziz al-Dawlah of Aleppo might have purchased his Mameluke slaves from Byzantium.[157] Slave prices, however, were lower in Constantinople than Egypt, while most other goods were dearer – a simple fact that may explain the Campanian adoption of Islamic rather than Byzantine currencies, and certainly must have lessened the appeal of the Greek capital to Italian merchants.[158]

It is apparent that Italy was no stranger to slavery and human trafficking. When ships from the House of Islam docked at Amalfi or Pisa, they found humans a going commodity. And when Italians travelled for trade, they had in nearby Sicily a convenient market for humans. As their horizons broadened, so did their access to new markets, in north Africa and Egypt. The profits were considerable, and one may suspect that the constant low-level warfare in southern Italy in this era was motivated partly by trafficking.[159] It would be strange, for example, if the Venetians failed to sell the victims of their Croatian campaigns.[160] Certainly in the late eleventh century there was an active slave market in Dalmatia, where Peter Crni purchased over 40 humans to endow a new monastery.[161] As for the Pisans, when we read that in 1077 they burnt the Genoese port at Rapallo and 'marched away the captive men and women, hands tied behind their backs', it

[154] Rosalind Hill, ed., *Gesta Francorum et aliorum Hierosolimitanorum* (London: Thomas Nelson, 1962), 92 (c.38). In Albert of Aachen, *Historia Ierosolimitana: History of the Journey to Jerusalem*, ed. Susan B. Edgington (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007), 440–1 (6.29), Tancred's peers attributed his mercy to greed. Y. Friedman, *Encounter Between Enemies: Captivity and Ransom in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem* (Leiden: Brill, 202), 147ff., argues convincingly that the crusaders subsequently adopted the conventions of ransom from their Muslim foes.

[155] McCormick, *Origins*, 771.

[156] The story of Otto II's escape is well known.

[157] Pieter Smoor, *Kings and Bedouins in the Palace of Aleppo as Reflected in Ma'arrī's Works. Journal of Semitic Studies* Monograph 8 (Manchester: University of Manchester, 1985), 130.

[158] Rotman, 'Captif ou esclave?', documents the lower value of slaves in Byzantium.

[159] As Rotman, 'Captif ou esclave?', 29, suggests for the raiding in the Balkans between Byzantine and Abbasid forces in the ninth century. Amatus of Montecassino, *History of the Normans*, trans. Dunbar, 187 (VIII.2), 190 (VIII.4–5), records the tactics of Gisulf of Salerno in the eleventh century.

[160] *Iohannis Chronicon Venetum*, in *Chronica et gesta aevi Salici*, ed. G.H. Pertz. MGH, SS in folio 7 (Hanover: Hahn, 1846), 30 (August 996). Rural Bosnians were especially vulnerable to capture by foreigners, according to a late tenth-century complaint of their prince Crnomir: Stuard, 'Ancillary Evidence', 18.

[161] Pivčević, ed., *Cartulary of the Benedictine Abbey of St Peter of Gumay*. In the same volume Benedikta Zelić-Bučan and Celia Hawkesworth, 'The Cartulary of St Peter's Abbey in its Historical Context', 11–16, argue that the *servi* in the cartulary were not slaves, as they could own property and engage in trades. However, both conditions were possible for the unfree in this era. Neven Budak, 'Slavery in Late Medieval Dalmatia/Croatia: Labour, Legal Status, Integration', *Mélanges de l'École Française de Rome* 112, no. 2 (2000): 745–60 (748–9), offers an overview.

would be equally strange if they failed to profit from them.[162] To imagine fellow Christian feeling might preclude such a course is to assign the Pisans virtues their contemporaries never ascribed to them.

## Conclusion

It is not likely that an Italian merchant boarded a ship for Egypt with a few slaves and came directly back to Amalfi with some musk. The trade network was not restricted to bilateral relationships. Our Italian might sell slaves in Fustat and buy goods, sail another ship to Mahdia, where he might sell those goods and buy different goods, sell those in Spain and repeat the process, and so on until eventually he returned home with – hopefully – goods in demand in Italy. In contrast to the large numbers of slaves proposed by McCormick for the Carolingian era, in the tenth and eleventh centuries even a moderate quantity of slave transactions might have provided enough gold or silver to consolidate the Italian entry into the trade network of the Muslim Mediterranean. That initial monetary return provided Italian merchants with the wherewithal to travel further, trade in more commodities and eventually sail the routes of the trade network in ships of their own. The importance of slaving to Venice in the Carolingian period, as described by McCormick, may be extended to the other maritime cities in the following centuries. Such were the profits to be made in human trafficking that it would be astonishing if the Amalfitans or Pisans failed to take advantage. A snow child was worth a lot of money. On the other hand, the necessary conditions were not stable. The crises that wracked the large polities of the Mediterranean, which – following Goitein and others – I elsewhere call the great calamity, were unrelated to the activities of Italian mariners,[163] but they had a profound effect on them. By 1070, the depredations of the Normans had wrenched Sicily from its place as lynchpin of the Mediterranean.[164] No longer could an Italian merchant expect to book passage on a big ship in Palermo. By this date, then, we can expect that Italians were increasingly travelling on Italian vessels, and expanding their repertoire of cargoes. With Sicily under Norman rule, a stronger market for grain and timber in Islamic regions must have emerged.[165] In the 1080s, for the first time, we hear of grain exported to the eastern Mediterranean from Italy.[166] The next step was marked by the First Crusade, when the Italians established permanent trading posts in the cities of the Levant. The Latins were reaching the same economic plane as the Egyptians, particularly in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem, where the currencies and prices were similar to neighbouring Egypt. Humans were still sold, but the disparity of price that made trafficking such a unique vector of profit faded. As time passed, as wealth and knowledge accumulated in Italian cities, and above all as external circumstances changed, the Italians must have met the challenges outlined above.

[162] ' … viros ac mulieres, manibus post tergum ligatis, captivos tripudianter perduxerunt.' *Chronicon Pisanum seu fragmentum auctoris incerti*, in *Gli Annales Pisani di Bernardo Maragone*, ed. Gentile, 100.
[163] Smith, 'Crisis and Transition', 44–52; Goitein, *Mediterranean Society*, 1: 310; André Raymond, *The Glory of Cairo: an Illustrated History* (Cairo: American University of Cairo Press, 2002), 138.
[164] Jeremy Johns, 'Arabic Sources for Sicily', in *Byzantines and Crusaders in Non-Greek Sources 1025–1204*, ed. Mary Whitby (Oxford: Oxford University Press for the British Academy, 2007), 341–60 (349); Goldberg, *Trade and Institutions*, 324–6, 333; Davis-Secord, *Where Three Worlds Met*, 189–91, warns us that not all trade was effaced by the Norman invasions.
[165] A Jewish merchant noted the resultant increase in the price of grain: Goitein, *Letters*, 167 (no. 33).
[166] Nitti di Vito, 'La traslazione delle reliquie di San Nicola', *Iapigia* 8 (1937): 295–411 (337).

Human trafficking lost its central importance. Before long, we hear more of Saracen slaves in Italy than of Latin slaves in the south.[167]

The bulk of Europe's economic growth in this period, fuelled by burgeoning population and agriculture, must have consisted of regional trade in mundane commodities,[168] such as Amalfi's chestnuts and Pisa's grain, commodities embedded in local networks persisting – on a smaller scale – from the early Middle Ages. Most Italian centres were so embedded, and it would be a mistake to assume that a commodity found in Amalfi pertains to the broader Mediterranean network when smaller regional networks are sufficient to sustain it. Such normal economic activity cannot, however, explain the abnormal prosperity of the maritime trading cities, which – driven by abnormal commodities like slaves – outstripped the rest of the Latin West by a conspicuous margin. This margin of prosperity, like others, was dangerous, and contained the prescription for a new relationship of rulers and ruled. But that is another story.

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## Note on contributor

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## Appendix 1. Prices and ransoms in the Mediterranean, *c.*900–1100

The following table collates prices for slave transactions collected by the author, arranged in chronological order. It builds on lists compiled by other researchers (especially Rotman, *Byzantine Slavery*), and will, I hope, be superseded in turn by future research. The value of the transactions is expressed in gold dinars, as an aid to thinking about trans-Mediterranean trade. The reader is strongly cautioned, however, that currency conversions for this era are speculative.

*Notes on table sections*
*Price:* I have made the dinar equal to the Byzantine gold nomisma, which is a very loose approximation; in the tenth and eleventh centuries, the dinar (4.25g) was 94% as valuable as the histamenon nomisma (4.5g), or worth slightly more than the tetareron nomisma (4.13g): Cécile Morrisson, 'Byzantine Money: Its Production and Circulation', in *The Economic History of Byzantium: From the Seventh Through the Fifteenth Century*, ed. Angeliki E. Laiou. 3 vols. (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2002), 3: 909–66 (922–3, table 4). P. Grierson, in S.D. Goitein, 'Appendix: The Exchange Rate of Gold and Silver Money in Fatimid and Ayyubid Times (*JESHO* VIII, pp. 1–46): Additions', *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 9, nos. 1–2 (1966): 67–8 (68), notes another case in which the dinar was worth around 82% of a Byzantine solidus. After the 1040s, Byzantine coins were significantly debased and fell rapidly in relation to the dinar: Morrison, 'Byzantine Money', 931–2, figures 2, 3. For this reason, no conversion is attempted for the Byzantine solidi (i.e. nomisma) recorded for Dalmatia in the 1080s.
*Price (original):* nom. = nomisma.
*Type:* C = regular commerce; R = ransom

[167] For example, in the notarial records in Genoa for the second half of the twelfth century, Saracen slaves are the most common category, followed by Sardinians. Constable, 'Muslim Spain and Mediterranean Slavery', 273–4.
[168] Wickham, *Framing the Middle Ages*, 707.

| | Price in dinars | Price (original) | Date | Location | Type | Sex | Incident | Source |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 30,000 | | 800 | Baghdad | C | F | A rather strange story in which the governor of Egypt, the Emperor of Byzantium, and the governor of Khurasan each buy from the narrator (Ishaq son of Ibrahim of Mosul) the same slave girl, for 30,000, 30,000, and 40,000 dinars respectively, in order to give her to al-Fadl, son of Yahya, to whom she was duly delivered by the narrator (who had trained the girl himself, and already given her to al-Fadl). | Ibn aṭ-Ṭiqṭaqâ, *al-Fakhri: Dealing with Dynasty by Dynasty*, trans. Whitting, 199 (cap. 277). |
| 2 | 1000 | 1000 | 861–2 | Egypt | C | F | A slave girl, 'beautifully made, charming to look at, and her qualities and perfections gave her great value.' | Al-Mas'udi, *Historical Encyclopaedia*, trans. Sprenger, 277. |
| 3 | | 150 lbs. of silver, 150 cloaks, 150 swords, 150 slaves | 869 | Provence | R | M | Roland, archbishop of Arles, ransomed back to his city | G. Waitz, ed., *Annales Bertiniani*. MGH, SRG in usu scholarum separatim editi, 5 (Hanover: Hahn, 1883), 106–7, sub anno 869. See discussion in Bruce, *Cluny and the Muslims of La Garde-Freinet*, 23. |
| 4 | 33.33 | 33.33 nom. | 10th cent. | Peloponnesus | R | M | 100 nom. for the ransom of 3 people | Rotman, *Byzantine Slavery and the Mediterranean World*, Table C.1 (*Spiritually Beneficial Tales of Paul of Monembassia*, 8.3). |
| 5 | | 5–10 nom. | 10th cent. | Kiev | R | M | Russians ransom a slave who had taken refuge with Greeks | Rotman, *Byzantine Slavery*, Table C.1 (*Laurentian Chronicle*, 75). |
| 6 | 1100 | | 10th cent. | Cairo | C | F | In the (probably) 10th century Story of Talha, a slave dealer took 1000 dinars as the price of the slave girl, which went to her seller, and 100 dinars for himself as a brokerage fee | Lyons, trans., *Tales of the Marvellous and News of the Strange*, 28. |
| 7 | 16.5 | | 922–3 | Egypt | C | M | A black slave, purchased by a woman, 'Āliya ibnat al-Husayn, via her agent, from a certain Ahmad al-Maghribi. | Rāgib, *Actes de vente d'esclaves et d'animaux d'Égypte médiévale*, 16, no. VI |
| 8 | 30 | | 922–3 | Oman | C | M | 'A young negro [king], handsome and well made' | Buzurg b. Shahriyar, *Les merveilles de l'Inde*, XXXI, 45; Lewis, *Islam from the Prophet Muhammad*, 2: 83 |
| 9 | 22.8 | | 922–3 | Oman | C | M | Companions of the king, above, 8 | Buzurg b. Shahriyar, *Les merveilles de l'Inde*, XXXI, 45; Lewis, *Islam from the Prophet Muhammad*, 2: 83 |
| 10 | 3000 | | 934–40 | Baghdad | C | F | Slave girl purchased for the Abbasid caliph Ar-Radi | Ghada al-Hijjawi al-Qaddumi, trans., *Book of Gifts and Rarities*, 192 (cap. 246) |
| 11 | 600 | | 960s? | Egypt | C | F | A Fatimid princess sent a slave girl to Egypt to be sold, hoping for 1000 dinars. Her agent sold her for 600 to 'a young woman riding an ass', and was subsequently told 'O Maghribi, the Ikhshīdid woman | Al-Maqrīzī, *Itti'āz*, 64 = *Towards a Shi'i Mediterranean Empire*, trans. Jiwa, 64. |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | | who has bought the young concubine so as to enjoy her is Kāfūr's [the ruler] lady.' When Al-Mu'izz heard of this, he exhorted his shaykhs, 'O brothers, attack them, for nothing shall impede you. For if they are so opulent that one of the daughters of their rulers goes out to purchase a concubine so as to enjoy her, the virility of men has weakened and their jealousy has departed. So let us attack them.' | |
| 12 | 6.4 | 20 solidi | 965 | Pisa | C | F | Maria sells to the priest Domenico a female slave (*ancilla*) named Cristina | Falaschi, ed., *Carte dell'archivo capitolare di Pisa*, 1: 19 (no. 6). |
| 13 | | 1 lb. of gold + 2 slaves | 966 | Salerno | C | F | 'John, an Atranese priest apparently resident in Salerno, exchanges with the priest of St Maximus in the latter city two named "Frankish" slaves plus a pound of gold for another female slave, Riganda, daughter of the nun Maria. All of the names in this transaction suggest that the slaves were Christian. Any indication that this was a charitable transaction, however, is negated by the fact that Riganda's son was not exchanged, thereby separating mother and son.' | Skinner, *Amalfi*, 34, n. 8 (*Codex diplomaticus Cavensis*, 2: 244). |
| 14 | 15 | | 966 | Egypt | C | F | A Nubian woman, Narhis, for 15 dinars; sold by a woman, Fātima bint Bisr al-Hindī, to Riyād, client of Farag al-Ihsīdī | Ragib, *Actes de vente*, 18, no. VII. |
| 15 | 30 | 30 nom. | 969 | Syria | R | M | Refugee returned under the Treaty of Aleppo | Rotman, *Byzantine Slavery*, table C.1 |
| 16 | 20 | 20 nom. | 969 | Syria | R | F | Refugee returned under the Treaty of Aleppo | Rotman, *Byzantine Slavery*, table C.1 |
| 17 | 15 | 15 nom. | 969 | Syria | R | | Refugee child returned under the Treaty of Aleppo | Rotman, *Byzantine Slavery*, table C.1 |
| 18 | 6376 | 1000 lbs. silver | 972 | Provence | R | M | Abbot Maiolus, seized by raiders from Fraxinetum, ransomed back to Cluny | France and Reynolds, eds. and trans., *Rodulfi Glabri, Historiarum libri quinque*, 18–23 (1.9). |
| 19 | 709.68 | 11,000 dirhams | ante 976 | Baghdad | C | F | 'Hilāl ibn al-Muhsin ibn Ibrāhīm al-Sābi'i, the Scribe relates: "I have it on the authority of Abū Muhammad al-Hasan ibn al-Husayn al-Nawbakhtī that the Sherif Abū al-Hasan Muhammad ibn 'Umar ibn Yahyā said that he once wished to buy an intelligent slave girl from the Banū Khākān for 11,000 dirhams. He said to Abū al-Musayyab Fahd ibn Sulaymān, who acted as middleman: "I want you to ask Abū al-Hasan al-Harrānī to see her and give his opinion about her.'" | Ibn Abi Usaibia, *History of Physicians*, *p*. 438. At this date, a lower exchange rate of 15.5 dirhams to the dinar is used: Balog, 'History of the Dirham in Egypt', 114. |
| 20 | 25 | | 977 | Egypt | C | F | A Garamante (i.e. from Garama in the Fezzan), apparently with a lip-plug or other facial adornment, | Ragib, *Actes de vente*, 20, no. VIII. |

(*Continued*)

Continued.

| | Price in dinars | Price (original) | Date | Location | Type | Sex | Incident | Source |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | | for 25 dinars of Al'Mu'izz. Sold by Fātima ibnat Nasr to Ahmad b. 'Imrān. She is described in detail: 'Elle a les cheveux du toupet frisés, un front proéminent, des sourcils écartés, de grands yeux, un nez camard, des lèvres épaisses, dont l'inférieure est percée, un menton court et brisé.' | |
| 21 | 13 | | 983 | Egypt | C | F | A Christian Nubian woman for 13 dinars; sold by Mīnā b. Girga, of Tutūn [in the Fayyum], to ʿĪsā b. Ismāʿīl | Ragib, *Actes de vente*, 24, no. IX. |
| 22 | 40 | | 994 | Egypt | C | M | Three Christian Nubian black slaves, a mother Iqbāl, her youngest daughter Dallālla, and the latter's infant son Surūr, for 40 dinars of al-Azīz; sold by Mīnā b. Girga to Aqāwa b. Tomās [Thomas, possibly indicating a Greek or Copt] | Ragib, *Actes de vente*, 26, no. X. |
| 23 | 80 | | 995 | Fustat | C | F | A Rum slave girl, part of a rich bride's marriage portion | Goitein, *Mediterranean Society*, 1: 138; 433, n. 45 (TS 16.20, ll. 9, 16). |
| 24 | 30 | 300 dirhams | late 10th cent. | Ghazna | C | | The land tax 'on Ghazna [is] 2000 slaves valued at 600,000 dirhams'. | Al-Muqaddasī, *Best Divisions for Knowledge of the Regions*, 277. |
| 25 | 33 | 33 nom. | 11th cent. | Sicily | R | M | Three people redeemed | Rotman, *Byzantine Slavery*, Table C.1 (*Life of Nilus of Rossano*, 70–2). |
| 26 | 28 | | 11th cent. | Cordoba | C | F | A white female | Fatwa compilation of Ibn Sahl, cited in Remie Constable, 'Muslim Spain and Mediterranean Slavery', 270. |
| 27 | 160 | | 11th cent. | Cordoba | C | M | A black slave | Fatwa compilation of Ibn Sahl, cited in Rennie Constable, 'Muslim Spain and Mediterranean Slavery', 270. |
| 28 | 25 | | 11th cent. | Egypt | R | | 5000 dinars given to ransom 200 people | Rotman, *Byzantine Slavery*, Table C.1 (TS, Ioan 28, f. 1); Jacob Mann, *Texts and Studies in Jewish History and Literature*. 2 vols. (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 1931), 1: 354–6. |
| 29 | 20 | | 11th cent. | Alexandria | C | M | A Greek slave | Joshua Holo, *Byzantine Jewry in the Mediterranean Economy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 219 (T-S 13 J 20.25). |
| 30 | 3.2 | 10 solidi | 1005 | Genoa | C | F | Armando sold the slave Erkentruda, a Burgundian, for 10 solidi to the couple Benedetto and Benedetta, The charter guarantees that she is healthy in body and mind. | Epstein, *Genoa and the Genoese*, 18, citing L.T. Belgrano, 'Cartario genovese ed illustrazione del registro arcivescovile', *Atti della Società Ligure di Storia Patria*, 2, part 1 (1870): 67. |
| 31 | 6.4 | 20 solidi | 1006 | Pisa | C | M | At a place on the Arno called Chinzica, Ildebrandus sells to Ghisla 'quattuor inter servi et ancille' (2 men, | Nannipieri, ed., *Carte dell'Archivo di Stato di Pisa*, vol. 1: *780–1070*, 40, no. 15. |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | | Rodilando and Baldo, and 2 women, Imilla and Berta) for 'nusche duo de auro, provalentes solidos octuaginta in prefinito'. | |
| 32 | 6.4 | 20 solidi | 1006 | Pisa | C | M | As 31 | Nannipieri, ed., *Carte dell'Archivo di Stato di Pisa*, vol. 1: *780–1070*, 40, no. 15. |
| 33 | 6.4 | 20 solidi | 1006 | Pisa | C | F | As 31 | Nannipieri, ed., *Carte dell'Archivo di Stato di Pisa*, vol. 1: *780–1070*, 40, no. 15. |
| 34 | 6.4 | 20 solidi | 1006 | Pisa | C | F | As 31 | Nannipieri, ed., *Carte dell'Archivo di Stato di Pisa*, vol. 1: *780–1070*, 40, no. 15. |
| 35 | | 15 nom. | 1010 | Thessaly | R | M | Price of land sold to raise money to redeem a son taken by pirates. Not necessarily the full amount of the ransom. | Rotman, *Byzantine Slavery*, Table C.1 (*Iviron*, I 16). |
| 36 | 100 | | 1000–50 | Fustat | C | F | A girl purchased by the daughter of al-Gabbān | Richards, 'Fragments of a Slave Dealer's Day-Book'. |
| 37 | 27 | | 1000–50 | Fustat | C | F | A girl sold by Suwār al-Qarsawī | Richards, 'Fragments of a Slave Dealer's Day-Book'. |
| 38 | 57.5 | | 1000–50 | Fustat | C | F | A girl sold by Ramadān, purchased by Rahāb | Richards, 'Fragments of a Slave Dealer's Day-Book'. |
| 39 | 110 | | 1000–50 | Fustat | C | F | A girl (not a virgin), sold by Mansūr, the agent of Abū Ishāq; purchased by Ibn Haydara, Qadi of Tripoli. | Richards, 'Fragments of a Slave Dealer's Day-Book'. |
| 40 | 40 | | 1000–50 | Fustat | C | F | A girl sold by Ibn Bukrān | Richards, 'Fragments of a Slave Dealer's Day-Book'. |
| 41 | 12.5 | | 1000–50 | Fustat | C | M | A male child, born in slavery | Richards, 'Fragments of a Slave Dealer's Day-Book'. |
| 42 | 24 | | 1000–50 | Alexandria | R | F | A Jewish captive sold to the Jewish community. The price is exclusive of tax. | Mann, *Jews in Egypt and Palestine*, 2: 88 (MS Adler 2804); Holo, *Byzantine Jewry*, 73. |
| 43 | 33.33 | | 1028 | Alexandria | R | | The pirate Mukhtar sells 5 Jews captured overseas to the Jewish community. | Mann, *Jews in Egypt and Palestine*, 1: 89 (Bodleian Library, MS Heb. a. 3 (cat. 2873), f. 26v, l. 28.) |
| 44 | 33.33 | | 1030 | Alexandria | R | | A Jew from Byzantium ransomed by the Alexandrian community | Mann, *Jews in Egypt and Palestine*, 1: 92; 2: 91. (MS Adler). |
| 45 | 20 | | 1048 | Barqa | C | M | An Edomite (i.e. Greek) slave was offered for 20 dinars (under rather strange circumstances) | M. Gil, 'Institutions and Events of the Eleventh Century Mirrored in Geniza Letters (Part II)', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 67, no. 2 (2004): 168–84 (176). |
| 46 | 24 | 24 nom. | 1050 | Asia Minor | C | M | A slave who had committed murder sold to a bishop | Rotman, *Byzantine Slavery*, Table C.1, (*Syntagma*, 5: 58–9), in V. Grumel, ed., *Les regestes des actes du patriarcat de Constantinople*. 2nd edn. 2 vols. (Paris: Institut français d'études byzantines 1972–89), 1, parts 2–3: 376 (no. 887). |
| 47 | 312 | 400 nom. | 1059 | Eastern Asia Minor | C | F | A slave girl named Zoe | Rotman, *Byzantine Slavery*, Table C.1, (Lemerle, *Boïlas, test*., 34, and n. 27). N.B. Rotman thinks the high price must be a mistake, but inflation may also be to blame – the nomisma was down to 18 carats from 23 carats (*c*.78%), which would make Zoe worth 312 old gold coins. See C. Kaplanis, 'The Debasement of the "Dollar" |

(*Continued*)

Continued.

| | Price in dinars | Price (original) | Date | Location | Type | Sex | Incident | Source |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | | | of the Middle Ages', *Journal of Economic History* 63, no. 3 (2003): 768–801. |
| 48 | 16 | | 1060? | Alexandria | R | | Amalfitans sell a captive Jew to the Jewish community. | Goitein, *Mediterranean Society*, 1: 329; 484, n. 14 (TS 12.338, 1. 18ff.). |
| 49 | 16 | | 1060? | Alexandria | R | | As 49 | Goitein, *Mediterranean Society*, 1: 329; 484, n. 14 (TS 12.338, 1. 18ff.). |
| 50 | 12 | | 1060? | Alexandria | R | | As 49 | Goitein, *Mediterranean Society*, 1: 329; 484, n. 14 (TS 12.338, 1. 18ff.). |
| 51 | 40 | | post 1065 | Egypt | C | | A Jewish captive sold in the market to a Muslim or Christian | Holo, *Byzantine Jewry*, 217 (TS 10 J 27.8). |
| 52 | 50 | | post 1065 | Egypt | C | | As 51 | Holo, *Byzantine Jewry*, 217 (TS 10 J 27.8). |
| 53 | 70 | | post 1065 | Egypt | C | | As 51 | Holo, *Byzantine Jewry*, 217 (TS 10 J 27.8). |
| 54 | 87 | | post 1065 | Egypt | C | | As 51 | Holo, *Byzantine Jewry*, 217 (TS 10 J 27.8). |
| 55 | 100 | | post 1065 | Egypt | C | | As 51 | Holo, *Byzantine Jewry*, 217 (TS 10 J 27.8). |
| 56 | 10 | 10 Amalfi solidi | 1070s? | Amalfi | C | M | A woman, Gemma, a concubine of another man, handed over her child John to a couple for life for 6 solidi upfront and a further 4 solidi bequeathed to John on the couple's death. | Skinner, *Amalfi*, 33; *Codex diplomaticus Cavensis*, 5: 833. |
| 57 | 15 | | 1070 | Fustat | C | F | A Sudanese girl (*kūshiyyā*) | Goitein, *Mediterranean Society*, 1: 137, n.38 (Dropsie 341). |
| 58 | | 40 *romanati* | *c.*1080–90 | Dalmatia | R | M | 'We bought Semjan from his enemies for 40 *romanati*.' | Pivčević, ed., *Cartulary of the Benedictine Abbey of St Peter of Gumay*, 43. |
| 59 | 15 | 15 Byzantine solidi | *c.*1080–90 | Dalmatia | C | | Cyprian, his children and vineyards. | Pivčević, ed., *Cartulary of the Benedictine Abbey of St Peter of Gumay*, 61–3. |
| 60 | 6 | 6 Byzantine solidi | *c.*1080–90 | Dalmatia | C | M | The servus Negozay | Pivčević, ed., *Cartulary of the Benedictine Abbey of St Peter of Gumay*, 63. |
| 61 | 5 | 5 Byzantine solidi | *c.*1080–90 | Dalmatia | C | M | The servus Dragaza | Pivčević, ed., *Cartulary of the Benedictine Abbey of St Peter of Gumay*, 63. |
| 62 | 3 | 3 Byzantine solidi | *c.*1080–90 | Dalmatia | C | M | The servus Peter Dracculus, purchased from 'the men of Catarum'. | Pivčević, ed., *Cartulary of the Benedictine Abbey of St Peter of Gumay*, 63. |
| 63 | 7 | 7 Byzantine solidi | *c.*1080–90 | Dalmatia | C | M | The servus Zorgi Dracculus, from the constable of the archbishop. | Pivčević, ed., *Cartulary of the Benedictine Abbey of St Peter of Gumay*, 63. |
| 63 | 40 | 40 Byzantine solidi | *c.*1080–90 | Dalmatia | C | M | The man Andriulus, sold to redeem a debt owed by his father who could not otherwise repay it. | Pivčević, ed., *Cartulary of the Benedictine Abbey of St Peter of Gumay*, 63–5. |
| 65 | 4 | 4 Byzantine solidi | *c.*1080–90 | Dalmatia | C | M | The servus Pribilus of the Olmisans | Pivčević, ed., *Cartulary of the Benedictine Abbey of St Peter of Gumay*, 65. |
| 66 | 7 | 7 Byzantine solidi | *c.*1080–90 | Dalmatia | C | M | The servus Bolezo | Pivčević, ed., *Cartulary of the Benedictine Abbey of St Peter of Gumay*, 65. |

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| 67 | | '1 measure' | *c.*1080–90 | Dalmatia | C | M | The servus Dragadet | Pivčević, ed., *Cartulary of the Benedictine Abbey of St Peter of Gumay*, 65. |
| 68 | 3 | 3 Byzantine solidi | *c.*1080–90 | Dalmatia | C | M | The servus Dedona and his son | Pivčević, ed., *Cartulary of the Benedictine Abbey of St Peter of Gumay*, 65. |
| 69 | | 1 horse | *c.*1080–90 | Dalmatia | C | M | The servus Maracus | Pivčević, ed., *Cartulary of the Benedictine Abbey of St Peter of Gumay*, 65. |
| 70 | 10 | 10 Byzantine solidi | *c.*1080–90 | Dalmatia | C | M | The servus Radovan of the people of the Campus | Pivčević, ed., *Cartulary of the Benedictine Abbey of St Peter of Gumay*, 65. |
| 71 | 3 | 3 Byzantine solidi | *c.*1080–90 | Dalmatia | C | | Nycola and his sister Marina | Pivčević, ed., *Cartulary of the Benedictine Abbey of St Peter of Gumay*, 65–7. |
| 72 | 7 | 7 Byzantine solidi | *c.*1080–90 | Dalmatia | C | M | The servus Desinna | Pivčević, ed., *Cartulary of the Benedictine Abbey of St Peter of Gumay*, 67. |
| 73 | 3 | 3 Byzantine solidi | *c.*1080–90 | Dalmatia | C | M | The servus Raccana | Pivčević, ed., *Cartulary of the Benedictine Abbey of St Peter of Gumay*, 67. |
| 74 | 3 | 3 Byzantine solidi | *c.*1080–90 | Dalmatia | R | M | Lutizo, who gave himself in lieu of a debt of 3 solidi; his sons remained free | Pivčević, ed., *Cartulary of the Benedictine Abbey of St Peter of Gumay*, 67. |
| 75 | 2 | 2 Byzantine solidi | *c.*1080–90 | Dalmatia | C | M | The servus Perinna | Pivčević, ed., *Cartulary of the Benedictine Abbey of St Peter of Gumay*, 67. |
| 76 | 3 | 3 Byzantine solidi | *c.*1080–90 | Dalmatia | C | M | Chudali, sold by his father Zacharia | Pivčević, ed., *Cartulary of the Benedictine Abbey of St Peter of Gumay*, 67. |
| 77 | 2 | 2 Byzantine solidi | *c.*1080–90 | Dalmatia | C | M | The servus Velcoz from Nebistan | Pivčević, ed., *Cartulary of the Benedictine Abbey of St Peter of Gumay*, 67. |
| 78 | 15 | | 1084 | Fustat | C | F | A Nubian girl | Goitein, *Mediterranean Society*, 1: 137 (TS 18 J 1). |
| 79 | 3 | 12 tari | 1090 | Amalfi | C | F | The girl Sica was indentured for life to a couple by her mother Asterada, for 4 tari (which she returned 'on account of my daughter's debt'), plus 8 tari to be bequeathed to Sica on her owner's death. | Skinner, Amalfi, 34; *Codex diplomaticus Cavensis*, 1: 85. The full document is translated into English in Skinner and van Houts, eds., *Medieval Writings on Secular Women*, 57–8. |
| 80 | 21 | | 1090 | Cairo | C | F | A Jewish merchant purchased a Christian slave girl with her son from a Christian official at the dār al-dībāj (the house of silk, i.e. the silk market). | Gil, *Jews in Islamic Countries*, 608. |
| 81 | 21 | | 1090 | Fustat | C | F | A Christian clerk sells to a Jew from Fustat a Christian slave girl 'carob coloured' and her son, a slave boy, for 21 dinars. | Khan, *Arabic Legal and Administrative Documents*, no. 56. |
| 82 | 23 | | 1091 | Fustat | C | F | A girl named Secrecy | Goitein, *Mediterranean Society*, 1: 434, n. 64 (ENA 4020 l). |
| 83 | 28 | | 1094 | Fustat | C | F | A Nubian named Dexterity with her young daughter, sold to Joseph b. Solomon Kohen | Goitein, *Mediterranean Society*, 1: 137 (TS 20.93, sec. 2) |
| 84 | 1000 | | 1099 | Beirut | R | M | Crusaders sought 1000 dinars for Abu 'l Qasim Makki b. 'Abd al-Salam al-Rumayli al-Maqdisi, an author, | Franz Rosenthal, *A History of Muslim Historiography*. 2nd edn. (Leiden: Brill, 1968), 464, 468. |

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Continued.

| | Price in dinars | Price (original) | Date | Location | Type | Sex | Incident | Source |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | | but stoned him to death at Beirut in 1099 when the money could not be raised | |
| 85 | 60 | | *c.*1100 | Jerusalem | R | F | Relatives buy back a Jewish girl for 60 dinars, almost double the usual head cost. She had to travel (with her brother) to Egypt to raise her ransom from the communities or else return to captivity. | Goitein, *Mediterranean Society*, 2: 500. |
| 86 | 16.75 | | 1100 | Fustat | C | F | A Nubian Tawfiq | Goitein, *Mediterranean Society*, 1: 434, n. 64 (Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Heb. b. 12 (Cat. 2875). f. 20). |
| 87 | 7.5 | 6 tari + 6 solidi | 1104 | Amalfi | C | F | The girl Sicula, in 1104, indentured to the rich woman Theodora, to serve until the latter's death, for 6 tari upfront to the girl's parents and a further 6 solidi bequeathed to the girl. | Skinner, *Amalfi*, 34, citing Cava, Holy Trinity archive, Arca XVII, doc. 118. |
| 88 | 20 | | 1105 | Fustat | C | F | A Nubian named Dexterity, sold by the sons of Moses Kohen to their sister | Goitein, *Mediterranean Society*, 1: 137 (TS 16.188). |
| 89 | 20 | | 1108 | Fustat | C | F | A Nubian girl named Pleasure, purchased by the widow of Nahray b. Nissīm | Goitein, *Mediterranean Society*, 1: 137 (TS 18 J 1). |
| 90 | 43 | | 1130? | Acre? | C | M | Usāma ibn Munqidh mentions a William, who had seized a vessel from Spain and seized 400 Muslims making the pilgrimage to Mecca. Usama purchased some of them. One was an ascetic, owned by a Frankish tanner, who had paid 43 dinars for him. | Cited in Hadia Dajani-Shakeel, 'Diplomatic Relations Between Muslim and Frankish Rulers, 1097–1153', in *Crusaders and Muslims in Twelfth-Century Syria*, ed. M. Shatzmiller (Leiden: Brill, 1992), 190–215 (214). |
| 91 | 23 | | 1137 | Fustat | C | F | A Nubian named 'Im (i.e. 'Alam, 'flag' or 'Ilm, 'knowledge') | Goitein, 'Slaves and Slavegirls', 11 (TS 20.4). |
| 92 | 10 | | *c.*1140s | Hungary | C | F | Al-Gharnati (d. 1169) bought a slave girl, 'more beautiful than the moon' | Cited in Nizar F. Hermes, *The (European) Other in Medieval Arabic Literature and Culture: Ninth-Twelfth Century AD* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 130. |
| 93 | 5 | | *c.*1140s | Hungary | C | M | Al-Gharnati (d. 1169) bought an 8-year old boy | Cited in Hermes, *The (European) Other*, 130. |