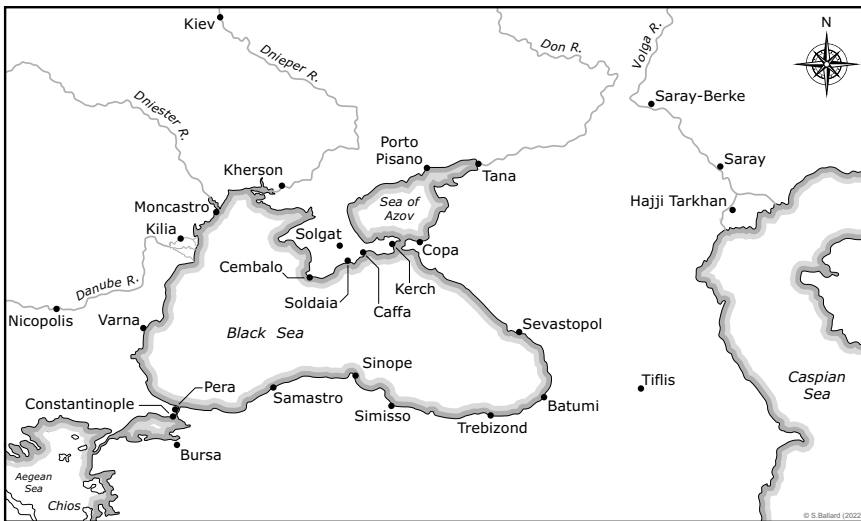


Slavery in the Black Sea Region

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INTRODUCTION

Slavery pervaded the medieval Black Sea, as it did most parts of the medieval world, and was practiced there in a variety of forms. In order to trace the full range of slave-related activity in the region, one may begin with Joseph Miller's call to treat slavery as a matter of strategic decision-making on the part of both enslavers and enslaved within specific historical contexts that shaped their actions and that they intended their actions to shape. In other words, slavery should be considered both a cause and an effect of historical change, not a static system of power relations. According to Miller, "the definable and distinguishing position of slavers is their marginality;" from this position, slavers adopt slaving as a strategy "to convert their marginality toward centrality."¹ The experiences of the enslaved are characterized by "isolated helplessness, or helpless isolation;" their primary strategies, therefore, aim "to overcome their initial isolation, to make human contacts with whomever they find accessible, to build committed relationships of whatever sorts, and to defend whatever connections they manage to make with whatever means may be available."²

From this perspective, the Black Sea may seem a slaving zone *par excellence*, a region on the margins of conquests (Arabs, Magyars, Mongols), empires (Byzantine, 'Abbasid, Ottoman, Russian), and trade routes (the northern arc, the silk roads, the Italian shipping networks). Making slaves and trading them were certainly strategies that inhabitants of the Black Sea used to center themselves and gain leverage over the powers that surrounded them. Yet inhabitants of the Black Sea also found themselves targeted for enslavement, isolated and scattered to the far ends of the medieval world in service to the strategies of others. As Miller intended, this strategy-focused perspective forces us to ask *which people* in the Black Sea benefited from slaving and *which people* were targeted.

In the chapter that follows, I will outline some of the strategies associated with slaving in the Black Sea from about 500 to about 1500 CE. Although the survey format emphasizes commonalities, it is essential to remember that the strategies of Black Sea slavers changed over time and varied across cultures. Rus' merchants of the tenth century lived in a different world than Mongol soldiers of the thirteenth century, and their slaving strategies differed accordingly. In addition, because the surviving source base is richer after 900 CE, my survey will skew toward the end of the period in question.

A greater challenge is to address the experiences of the enslaved. Although the majority of surviving sources from medieval Black Sea were written by enslavers, there are a few exceptions. I have chosen to highlight three that describe entrances into, experiences of, and exits from slavery in some detail. The first was written by Kirakos Gandzakets'i, an Armenian monk and chronicler who described his own capture, enslavement, and escape during the Mongol conquest of Armenia in 1236.³ The second was Johann Schiltberger, a Bavarian soldier captured at age sixteen during Bayezid I's victory over Sigismund of Hungary's crusading army at the battle of Nicopolis in 1396.⁴

Johann served as a military slave for over twenty years, passing from court to court as a gift or prize until he made his escape via the Black Sea and recounted his experiences in writing. The third was Giorgio, kidnapped at age six from the Crimean port of Caffa and enslaved as a domestic in Chios and Ancona. Ten years later, in 1460, he narrated his story in a petition for freedom addressed to the government of Siena.⁵ Note that although women constituted the majority of those enslaved within and exported from the Black Sea, the written record of their experiences is more fragmentary than that of enslaved men. This is unfortunate because it was the fetishization of enslaved women in the Ottoman harem that led early racial scientists to choose “Caucasian” as the generic name for their newly imagined white, and therefore inherently beautiful, race.

ENTRANCE INTO SLAVERY

Free people might become enslaved in the Black Sea in a number of ways. Violent capture was the most common. Taking captives in war as well as targeting human beings alongside cattle and other valuables in raids were widespread practices throughout the medieval world. Every state in the region, as well as various non-state-based societies and small groups of raiders acting on their own initiative, shared in this predatory attitude toward the vulnerable.

A few examples will illustrate the point. In the ninth century, Magyars habitually raided coastal Slavic settlements, bringing their captives to the Byzantine port of Kerch to sell in exchange for brocade, woolen cloth, and other goods.⁶ Riverine Slavic settlements were attacked by the Rus', who took their captives to Khazar and Bulghar entrepôts to sell.⁷ But the Rus' did not consider themselves bound either to the rivers as routes or to the Slavs as victims; in 943, they carried out a particularly large and violent raid on the south coast of the Caspian Sea, carrying off people who would normally have been slave-buyers.⁸

In the twelfth century, as the polity of Kievan Rus' began to collapse, Rus' princes seized and enslaved each other's subjects in the course of their infighting. So did their occasional allies, the Polovtsy (also known as Cumans or Kipchaks), who also took slaves in campaigns against their Turkic neighbors. Hunter-gatherer groups known as the Ves and the Yughra, living on the Kama River and in the Belozersk region respectively, raided for slaves to exchange for swords imported from the Islamic world via the Bulghars.⁹ The khan of the Bulghars conducted his slave raids seasonally, “in the winter, [when] the cold is so intense that wood splits. It is at this season of great cold that the king sets out on raids against the infidel and captures his women, his sons, his daughters and his horses.”¹⁰ The cold may have prevented his targets from evading capture or fleeing during the subsequent forced march.

The most notorious slavers of the thirteenth century were the Mongols. Kirakos Gandzakets'i, an Armenian monk, gave a detailed account of his own capture during the Mongol conquest of Armenia in 1236. He had been studying with a senior monk and historian named Vanakan when villagers

fleeing a Mongol unit led by Molar-*noyin* took refuge in Vanakan's cave. They had no food or water, and the summer heat was intense. After several days, the villagers pleaded with Vanakan to "go and save all of our lives, descend to them and make friends with them."¹¹ He agreed and went with two priests to persuade Molar-*noyin* that they were "neither soldiers nor lords of goods, but exiles and foreigners assembled from many lands for studying our religion." Then the rest surrendered: "We descended, quaking, like lambs among the wolves, frightened, terrified, thinking we were about to die, each person in his mind repeating the confession of faith in the Holy Trinity." The Mongols gave the captives water, confined them in a church, then forced them to march for several days to the main encampment.

In the early fourteenth century, according to a Franciscan friar appointed bishop of the Circassian port of Sevastopol, raiders were "selling Christians for a price on market days, where they are dragged with a rope tied from the tail of a horse to the neck of those who are sold."¹² A Dominican friar appointed archbishop of Sultaniyyah in the late fourteenth century explained where these captives came from: Circassian nobles "go out from one village to another publicly, or else secretly if they can, and violently seize children and adults of the other village, and immediately sell [them] to merchants by the sea. And in the same way as the Tatars were accustomed to sell theirs, so too these wretched people."¹³

Unlike the unfortunate Circassian villagers, Johann von Schiltberger was captured as a combatant in the Battle of Nicopolis in 1396. After the battle, when Bayezid "saw that so many of his people were killed, he was torn by great grief, and swore he would not leave their blood unavenged."¹⁴ Johann's captor bound all three of his captives with the same rope and brought them before the emperor, where he was ordered to kill them. "Then they took my companions and cut off their heads, and when it came to my turn, the king's son saw me and ordered that I should be left alive, and I was taken to the other boys, because none under twenty years of age were killed, and I was scarcely sixteen years old." As part of the spoils, Johann was eventually claimed by the sultan and taken to the imperial palace in Bursa.

Even during peacetime, the inhabitants of the Black Sea were vulnerable to kidnapping. A tenth-century treaty between the Rus' and Byzantines banned the enslavement of shipwreck survivors discovered along the coast near Kherson; almost five hundred years later, enslavement still threatened shipwreck survivors on the Circassian coast.¹⁵ In the fourteenth century, Italian shippers, already involved in the export of slaves, sold their free passengers too. For example, a group of Tatars who thought they had arranged passage from Porto Pisano to Caffa on a Venetian ship were instead sold as slaves by the pilot and two sailors in 1373.¹⁶ This case is documented only because the enslavers were denounced to the Venetian authorities, found guilty, fined, imprisoned, and banned from future voyages in the Black Sea.

Most kidnappers were not punished. In 1460, a boy named Giorgio testified in Siena about the circumstances of his enslavement. At the age of six, he had

been playing on the shore near Caffa with a group of boys. "A ship of Genoese being in port, it sent a gondola to land with several men and secretly captured me and another boy, who was with me, age ten years or so, and then we rose and betook ourselves to Chios of the Levant, and there I submitted, or indeed my masters assigned me, to one Lorenzo da Richasole of Florence."¹⁷ What else could a six-year-old do? Although there was a Genoese statute against enslaving the free inhabitants of Caffa, Giorgio may not have been aware of it. Even if he had been, he could not file a petition for freedom until he turned fourteen. In the end, he presented his petition at age sixteen. The outcome is unknown, but if he were successful, his original kidnappers would still have remained anonymous and unpunished.

Non-violent modes of enslavement were spelled out in the various legal codes that governed Black Sea communities. These included the expanded redaction of the Russkaia Pravda, the four major schools of Sunni Islamic law, the *ius commune* that prevailed in Latin communities, and the Mongol Yasa.¹⁸ Marriages between enslaved people were legally and religiously recognized, and the children of enslaved parents were automatically born into slave status. In general, the children of an enslaved woman and a free man were considered free, either immediately (Islamic and Mongol law) or at the death of their father (the Russkaia Pravda). The possibility of an enslaved man having a child with a free woman was not acknowledged. Islamic and Mongol law also permitted the children of enslaved women and free men to inherit, but the Russkaia Pravda conflicted with Russian ecclesiastical law on this point.¹⁹

The exception was the Latin *ius commune*, which stipulated that a child must always follow the status of its mother. Free Latin men who wanted to claim their children from enslaved women therefore found ways to circumvent the law. For example, in a letter from 1345, the Venetian merchant Francesco Bartolomei asked his correspondent to alter the testament of his deceased brother Petro. Petro had been a merchant in Tana, where "he bought a slave with whom he slept and so a child was born," a boy whom they named Pascuale. A life in slavery was not what Petro wanted for his son, but two months after the boy's birth, Petro fell seriously ill. Before his death, Petro first drew up a testament, then decided to "marry his slave, the mother of the boy, in the presence of good witnesses... he did this for his soul and because the boy was legitimate."²⁰ Yet Tana was experiencing political turmoil, and Francesco feared that the witnesses to Petro's marriage might die. He therefore asked his correspondent to alter Petro's testament. Instead of "I leave to my natural son Pascuale," could it be changed to say "I leave to my legitimate son Pascuale"? After all, despite the penalties for tampering with a notarial document, Francesco argued that this second statement was the truth,²¹ "and it is a thing that does not turn to the detriment of anyone."

People born free could be enslaved through legal means as well. Allegations of child sale were levied against parents in the Black Sea, but internal evidence to support it is limited.²² Under certain circumstances, free people could also choose to enslave themselves. Self-sale was possible under the Latin

ius commune. The Russkaia Pravda recognized three forms of self-enslavement for free men: selling oneself, marrying an enslaved woman, or undertaking to work as an estate manager or household steward.²³ The Yasa forbade free Mongol men from becoming domestic servants, perhaps to prevent them from evading military service. Islamic law forbade the sale of free people into slavery, though in practice there were exceptions. The most famous was Qawṣūn, a young man who traveled to Cairo in the entourage of the daughter of Özbek Khan of the Golden Horde.²⁴ One day he went up to the citadel, either as a merchant selling leather goods or in the company of slave traders. There he encountered the sultan and was persuaded to sell himself into military slavery. His price was sent to his brother Şuşūn in the Black Sea. Later, when Qawṣūn had become well-established in Cairo, he sent for his brother and cousin and appointed them military commanders.

Enslavement was also used as a punishment, individual or collective. The Árpád kingdom of Hungary enslaved clerics convicted of theft, women who left their husbands three times, and those who could not pay judicial fines. In the Russkaia Pravda, enslavement was the penalty for various kinds of debt, including merchants who lost the goods of others through drinking or gambling; merchants who borrowed money from foreigners and then went bankrupt; and indentured laborers who stole or tried to escape their contracts.²⁵ Early Muscovite law allowed enslavement for murder and for thieves on their second offense.²⁶ After the Mongol conquest of Rus' principalities in the early thirteenth century, Mongol tax farmers enslaved those who could not pay what they owed. This led to a revolt in 1262, after which enslavement for tax debt seems to have ceased. Nevertheless, in 1348, a Venetian merchant was threatened with enslavement by Tatar authorities after having been imprisoned twice for debt in Tana.²⁷

EXPERIENCE OF SLAVERY

Enslaved people in Black Sea societies were used for a wide range of purposes. In addition to performing domestic, sexual, reproductive, artisanal, agricultural, administrative and military labor, slaves functioned as commodities, financial assets, and symbols of prestige. Slave ownership was not limited to wealthy elites. Slaves appeared in urban and rural settings; in sedentary and nomadic cultures; and in the possession of women and men.

Female slaves who belonged to women were expected to provide them with personal service, companionship, and assistance in their work. Enslaved women performed domestic tasks such as preparing food, making and washing clothes, cleaning, and child care. When the Moroccan traveler Ibn Baṭṭūṭa visited the wives of Özbek Khan of the Golden Horde, he found one cleaning cherries with fifty slaves and another embroidering cloth with twenty slaves.²⁸ Even the wives of traders and ordinary people had three or four slave attendants to carry the trains of their garments when they went out. He also

observed that ordinary Mongol women owned male slaves who accompanied them to the market with sheep and milk to sell.²⁹

In the Black Sea, as in most of the medieval world, an enslaved woman who belonged to a man was understood to be sexually available to him regardless of her consent. As discussed previously, any children that she bore him would most likely be born free and raised as his heirs. As a result, the boundaries between different kinds of labor could become blurred. Nursing a free infant, for example, was only possible if an enslaved woman had already given birth to a child of her own. While the companions of the king of the Rus' in the tenth century were each reported to own two slave women, one for sex and the other "to wait on him, wash his head, and provide him with food and drink," a Rus' merchant would use just one woman for sex, carrying the washbasin, serving food, and as a commodity to sell.³⁰

Slaves also engaged in agricultural and artisanal work. In nomadic societies, male slaves herded cows and sheep but not horses. In sedentary societies, slaves worked on farms. Even the Mongols moved captured farmers to devastated areas to rebuild them. The princes of the Rus' used elite slaves to manage their estates; those slaves could also be authorized to trade on behalf of their owners. They appear most frequently in princely testaments, which often provided for the manumission of enslaved estate managers, household stewards, and treasurers. Boyar households probably also used slaves as stewards and estate managers but on a smaller scale.

The production of wax and honey, two major exports of the Black Sea region, intersected with slavery as well. In addition to estate managers, Rus' princely testaments mentioned slaves as beekeepers. Abū Hāmid al-Garnatī, a traveler from Granada who visited Hungary in the mid-twelfth century, purchased an eight-year-old slave girl whom he set to process honey and wax: "one day I bought for half a dinar two jars full of honeycomb with its wax and I said to her: 'I want you to purify this honey and extract the wax.' Then I went out and sat on a bench at the door of the house, where people were gathered. After sitting with them for a while, I went back into the house and saw five disks of wax as pure as gold and two jars full of liquid honey that seemed like rose water. The honey had been purified and returned to the two jars, all within an hour."³¹ Finally, in 1360–1361 in the port of Kilia, merchants from Hungary, Caffa, and Piacenza pledged slaves as surety against the loans which they used to buy wax and honey for export.³²

Rulers had many additional uses for slaves. Female slaves were sometimes sacrificed during elite funerals, most notably by tenth-century Rus' leaders.³³ Thirteenth-century Mongol commanders absorbed captured units into their own forces; employed slaves received as tribute from the Rus' for military service; and sent captives ahead of their main forces as arrow fodder, to test the safety of river and swamp crossings, or to inflate the size of their armies. Johann Schiltberger, the captive taken at the Battle of Nicopolis, served the Ottoman sultan Bayezid I for twelve years, first running before him, "it being

the custom that the lords have people to run before them,” then riding with him as part of his guard.³⁴

Eunuchs were comparatively rare and expensive because of the high mortality rate associated with castration. In the ‘Abbasid and Ottoman courts, eunuchs acted as gatekeepers between the inner and outer parts of the household. In the Byzantine court, they mediated access to the sacred person of the emperor as well as guarding imperial women. According to the sixth-century Byzantine historian Prokopios, the kings of Abkhazia enriched themselves by castrating Abkhaz boys and selling them to the Byzantine court until Justinian sent Euphratas, one such eunuch, to stop the practice.³⁵ The Khazar court operated on a similar model, with eunuchs attending the king and his wives and concubines. Mongol khatuns also had eunuchs among their attendants. But because they were traded as slaves across cultural and linguistic boundaries, eunuchs were equipped to mediate in other ways too. In the ninth century, Slavic-speaking eunuchs acted as interpreters between Rus’ merchants and their customers in Baghdad.³⁶

Slaves, especially those from far-away places, could be publicly displayed or exchanged as gifts to demonstrate prestige. When the Grand Prince Igor’ received Byzantine emissaries to ratify a treaty in Kiev in 944, he gave them gifts of fur, wax, and slaves.³⁷ Upon the occasion of Berke Khan’s conversion to Islam, the Mamluk sultan Baybars sent him gifts including slaves of African origin and enslaved cooks. Berke’s successors in the Golden Horde reciprocated with gifts of Black Sea slaves.³⁸ When elite women married, their dowries included people as well as livestock and goods. The human dowry or *inje* of a Mongol khatun might include slaves and domestic servants as well as a share of her father’s free subjects who formed part of her retinue.³⁹ According to the fourteenth-century traveler Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, the wives of Özbek Khan of the Golden Horde had retinues of several hundred slave soldiers; four hundred slave girls; three hundred slave boys; ten or fifteen Greek and Indian eunuchs; and eight or ten slave girls as attendants.⁴⁰ His third wife Bayalūn, herself a Byzantine princess, had Nubian slave women in her retinue as well as Greeks and Turks.⁴¹ Özbek Khan’s daughter, in turn, brought hundreds of Black Sea slaves to Egypt when she arrived to marry the Mamluk sultan al-Nāṣir Muḥammad ibn Qalawūn.

The Mongols were known to seek out educated people and skilled artisans among their captives. Those who learned the Uighur script were incorporated into the bureaucracy. For instance, when the Armenian monk Kirakos and his fellow captives reached the Mongol encampment in 1236, “they took me from my companions to serve their secretarial needs, writing and reading letters. During the day they made me travel with them and in the evening they would bring us to the *vardapet* [Vanakan], with a pledge.”⁴² Poets, musicians, chemists, astronomers, physicians, and others with unusual skills were often sent to the capital cities of the Mongol empire. Perhaps the most interesting example of this phenomenon was the creation of workshops in which enslaved artisans produced luxury goods such as *nasīj* (cloth of silk and gold)

to be distributed by the Mongol khans. Artisans captured in different areas were brought together in these workshops, where they learned new techniques and created distinctive styles.⁴³ These enslaved artisans and bureaucrats were usually allowed to bring their families or create new ones, receive money for their work, and enjoy a certain degree of freedom of movement.

Finally, a significant number of slaves moved through the Black Sea as commercial and financial assets. Soldiers and raiders took people, as they took silver, gold, and cattle, in the expectation that these forms of loot could be easily converted into money through sale or ransom. After a raid or battle, captives were divided among the participants to compensate them for their work. Slaves could be used in lieu of money to make other payments too. Until 1262, Russian vassals paid tribute in silver, fur, and slaves to their Mongol lords. In 1415, the scribe of a Venetian ship in Tana used a female slave to make partial payment on a loan that would come due when he returned to Constantinople.⁴⁴ The commander of the Burgundian fleet during the crusade of Varna in the 1440s used five female slaves to repay money which he had borrowed in Trebizond to purchase supplies for his galleys.⁴⁵ As mentioned previously, slaves could also be pledged as security for loans, such as the silver borrowed by merchants in Kilia to finance the honey and wax trade. And they could be rented: in 1448, a woman identified as “Chexum Bicha Usdena, a Goth or Circassian, called Caterina in our idiom, an inhabitant of Tana” rented her male slave Semen to a Venetian merchant for 120 bezants per year.⁴⁶

Merchants treated slaves as commodities to be traded for profit, sometimes over long distances. In the early ninth century, captives taken in northern Europe passed via Scandinavia and the Baltic Sea into the river systems of eastern Europe, through the Black and Caspian Seas, and thence to the slave markets of Constantinople and Baghdad. Rus’ traders dominated the northern sections of this route, while Khazars dominated the southern sections. The traveler Ibn Faḍlān observed that when Rus’ merchants reached Khazar settlements, their first act was to offer food and drink to wooden figures of their gods, praying: “Lord, I have come from a distant land, with such and such a number of female slaves and such and such a number of sable pelts... and I have brought this offering... I want you to bless me with a rich merchant with many dinars and dirhams who will buy from me whatever I wish and not haggle over any price I set.”⁴⁷ In the late ninth century, control over the southern parts of the route passed to the Bulgars.

At every stage, local raiders added new slaves to the supply and local buyers purchased some of the slaves passing through. For example, an episode from the *Laxdæla Saga* portrays an Icelandic farmer buying an enslaved Irish woman from Gilli the Russian, a slave trader with a Gaelic name and a Russian epithet, at an assembly called by the Norse king.⁴⁸ The woman was very beautiful and Gilli was reluctant to sell her. Presumably he meant to take her south to the Volga, where she would fetch a high price, but the Icelander had enough silver on hand to make an immediate sale worthwhile.

The Mongol propensity to move slaves around their empire has already been discussed. Thus, people captured in eastern Europe were taken long distances through the Silk Road trade network, and vice versa. Indian eunuchs appeared in the retinues of the khatuns of the Golden Horde, and an Indian girl was sold in Caffa in 1289.⁴⁹ In 1302, a woman identified as Chinese (*de partibus Catajo*) was sold in Genoa.⁵⁰ On the other hand, William of Rubruck, a traveler to the court of Möngke Khan in the mid-thirteenth century, met a woman there, a slave of one of the khatuns, who had been captured in Hungary and found a husband among the other slaves, a Ruthenian who built houses.

Finally, the long-distance trade in slaves between the Black Sea, Egypt, and Africa during the thirteenth through fifteenth centuries deserves comment. The close relationship between the Golden Horde and the Mamluks, including the exchange of slaves as gifts, has already been mentioned. Those exchanges brought small numbers of African slaves, male and female, to the Mongol court, where their presence undoubtedly contributed to the khan's prestige by illustrating the long range of his influence. But slaves moved in the other direction as well. The Mamluk rulers themselves were former slaves, many with origins in the Black Sea. Baybars, the first Mamluk sultan, had been captured as a child during the Mongol conquest of the Kipchak steppe and sold to the Ayyubid sultan of Egypt. From the markets of Egypt, slaves from the Black Sea region were exported as far away as the West African kingdom of Mali, where the ruler's retinue included about thirty military slaves, "Turks and others who are bought for him in Egypt."⁵¹ As in the Mongol court, the presence of "exotic" slaves confirmed the ruler's prestige by displaying his power over distant peoples.

Rulers surrounding the Black Sea treated the long-distance slave trade as a rich source of tax revenue. Slavic kings taxed Rus' slave traders by taking one of every ten slaves.⁵² In the second half of the fourteenth century, the Genoese began to collect a head tax on slave sales and possession in their principal colony of Caffa, generating annual revenues of 13,666 aspers (in 1465) to 219,332 aspers (in 1446).⁵³ They also taxed slave sales and possession through the port of Copia. At the same time, Genoa created the Office of Saracen Heads of St. Antony to tax Muslim travelers. In this way they raised significant sums by taxing, among others, Muslim merchants taking Muslim slaves to the Mamluks.

EXIT FROM SLAVERY

The status of people enslaved in the Black Sea could be changed in several ways, but only a few of them were within the enslaved person's control. Change of status was an individual matter; enslaved groups were usually not given their freedom collectively. Also, in almost all cases, release from slavery was not automatic but required a conscious act of intervention. The

following discussion will therefore focus on the different actors and types of interventions that could change an enslaved person's status.

Perhaps the most common type of status change was manumission. This act could be initiated only by the enslaved person's owner, but all Black Sea societies recognized the concept of manumission and the right of slave owners to perform it. Some legal systems (Rus') enacted manumission by oath, while others (Latin) enacted it in written documents. Manumission could also be performed posthumously through a testament.

Some manumissions were unconditional. Such acts might express piety, gratitude, or celebration. Tomaxius Zariexa, a Venetian inhabitant of Tana in 1407, freed two slave women, Agnes (formerly Saraimelich) and Magdalena (formerly Suer), who seem to have been the mothers of his two daughters, "for the remedy of my soul."⁵⁴ In 1436, Antonelus Crescono freed his slave Magdalena with bequests of money and land for her dowry.⁵⁵ Muscovite princes often manumitted enslaved estate managers and their families in testaments for pious reasons.

Other manumissions imposed conditions of varying severity and complexity. Hungarian manumissions usually required the enslaved person to repay their price or make regular gifts to a church. In 1290 in Caffa, Iacobus was freed on the condition that he serve Stephanus the Armenian and his wife for the duration of their lives.⁵⁶ In 1362 in Tana, a Venetian stipulated that his slave Aza should be freed if she agreed to become Christian; otherwise, he instructed his executors to sell her at their discretion.⁵⁷

Another common method for changing an enslaved person's status was ransom. The distinction between captivity and slavery was blurry, but as a rule of thumb, captivity was understood by both the captive and the captor to be temporary, while slavery was understood by both the enslaved and the enslaver to be permanent. Turkic languages made a distinction between slaves that could be sold and slaves held as political hostages, pledges, or prisoners.⁵⁸ However, these understandings sometimes turned out to be mistaken. Thus people who believed themselves permanently enslaved were sometimes freed, while people who expected to be ransomed sometimes fell into permanent slavery.

Captives and slaves could attempt to facilitate their own ransoms by writing to family members, business partners, and state agents, though there was no institutionalized system of ransom as in the western Mediterranean or during the Ottoman-Russian period.⁵⁹ Nicholeto Gata, a Venetian merchant, was threatened with sale by Mongol authorities after having been imprisoned twice for debt in Tana. He turned to his business partners for help, believing that he could settle his affairs for 20 sommi.⁶⁰ Maria, a Russian woman enslaved by a Venetian in Tana, contacted her brother Samuel. By the time he made a down payment on her ransom, however, three years had passed and Maria had given birth to her enslaver's daughter. He refused to release her until she had nursed the child for an additional two years.⁶¹ For unexplained reasons, an

Italian crossbowman and a shopkeeper named Usayno (Husain) the Saracen collaborated to ransom an enslaved Alan man in Tana in 1451.⁶²

If no one agreed to pay a ransom or if the captor refused to accept it, then that route to freedom was closed. Returning to the story of Kirakos, the Armenian monk captured and employed as a scribe by the Mongols, a ransom by pious Armenians was arranged for his teacher Vanakan but not for Kirakos because “we [the Mongols] need him to read and write letters. No matter what sum you offer, we will not give him up.” Molar-*noyin* instead offered Kirakos a wife, his own tent, and a horse to help reconcile him to slave status. But Kirakos was not satisfied and ended up regaining his freedom through escape.

When large groups of people were taken *en masse*, especially during a military conflict, state officials might pay their ransom or negotiate their release as part of a peace treaty. On the other hand, some captors refused ransoms, either to make a political point or because they needed to raise money more quickly than the ransom process would allow. Aleksandr Nevskii, saint and prince first of Kiev and then of Novgorod during the Mongol invasion, made great efforts to ransom the Rus’ taken captive by Batu’s army. Italian merchants captured by Janibek, khan of the Golden Horde, in Tana in 1343 were released four years later as a result of peace negotiations. Yet when Timur (Tamerlane) conquered Tana in 1395, he preferred to keep its Italian residents as slaves and refused to accept a ransom for them. The Ottomans agreed to release captives taken during their conquest of Caffa in 1475 in a context of territorial expansion, but not after their victory at the battle of Nicopolis in 1396 in the context of holy war.

The third method of changing an enslaved person’s status, escape, could be initiated by the enslaved without the cooperation of their enslavers. Most records of escape in the Black Sea concern people who crossed jurisdictional boundaries. This makes sense both as a strategy of the enslaved to gain free status and as an artifact of the archival process, since escape across jurisdictions generated conflict and paperwork.

States around the Black Sea addressed the potential for conflict over fugitive slaves in their treaties and legal codes. Slaves who escaped from Rus’ owners or merchants in the Byzantine territory would be returned, and vice versa.⁶³ Within Rus’ territory, the escape of a slave was to be announced in the market place. If the slave had taken refuge with someone, that person had three days from the time of the announcement to return the slave.⁶⁴ People who voluntarily returned fugitive slaves to their owners were rewarded. Otherwise, there were detailed provisions governing the reclamation of fugitive slaves and punishment for those who helped them.⁶⁵

Slaves who fled from Caffa to Solgat, the Golden Horde’s regional capital in Crimea, and vice versa, were covered by a treaty dating to 1380–1381.⁶⁶ They should be returned to their owners for a fee of 35 aspers, with any disputes to be adjudicated by the Genoese consul of Caffa. Slaves who escaped to Caffa “from the countryside or the Ordo, but not from Solgat” entered a grey area.

They were understood to be free, but if their owners managed to find them, “the *sindicatori* are held to sell the said slave at a public auction and give his price to the said master of the said slave.” Slaves who escaped within the city of Caffa could take refuge in the home of the bishop. The bishop was required “to give notice to the *sindicatori* [Genoese authorities] without delay... and to baptize them within three days, then to present them immediately before the said *sindicatori*, who ought to sell such male and female slaves and pay their proceeds to their masters.” Thus, at least in theory, escape within the city of Caffa or its immediate hinterland entailed a change of enslaver but not of status.

I have found one case in which this law was tested. In 1450, the Genoese consul in Tana, Iohannes Spinola, issued a decision in the case of “a certain Ivan, Ruthenian or Russian, about twenty years old, formerly the slave of a certain Saracen named Ari Gozza, baker, inhabitant in this place of Tana,” who had appeared before him to be resold.⁶⁷ “On account of [Ivan’s] zeal for Christianity, which he had enjoyed from his youth, born from worshippers of Christ, and... marked by baptism and the sign [of the cross],” he had fled from his Muslim owner to Erasmo Salomone, the Franciscan chaplain for the Genoese in Tana. Under Erasmo’s protection, he took the name Franciscus “as is customary.” Then the speaker (it is not clear whether this was Ivan/Franciscus, Erasmo, or someone else) requested that the consul, “according to law as much as custom, attributed to him in such things and similar things... carry out and manage the sale of his slave.” In other words, the friar, acting in place of a bishop, had fulfilled the same legal obligations that applied to fugitives between the Tatar and Genoese communities in Caffa. The consul in Tana, however, decided not to sell Ivan/Franciscus. Instead, he granted him an unconditional manumission. Although failing to compensate a slaveowner for the loss of his slave might have had serious repercussions, in this case it apparently did not.

Enslaved people being exported sometimes found opportunities to escape while in transit, a situation in which the forms of coercion and surveillance that enslavers normally used to control slaves’ behavior might slip. In 1395, the Dominican bishop of Caffa arranged for two slaves, a man, and a woman, to be shipped to a contact in Genoa, but after they had crossed to the southern coast of the Black Sea, the man jumped from the ship and fled inland.⁶⁸ In 1437, two male slaves in transit from Caffa to Genoa also seized the opportunity to flee along the southern coast when plague broke out on their ship.⁶⁹ The merchant charged with their transport searched for three days and nights but could not find them.

Other slaves sought ships to carry them away from their places of enslavement. After two decades as a military slave, Johann Schiltberger escaped with four companions at a moment when their owner was fleeing into political exile along the Circassian coast.⁷⁰ The fugitives first headed to the port of Batumi and “begged that we should be taken across [the sea], but it was not granted to us.” Then they rode along the coast for four days until they saw a cog

about eight miles out to sea. That night they made a fire, and the captain sent a skiff to investigate. "They asked what sort of people we were? We said we were Christians, and were made prisoners when the king of [Hungary] was defeated at Nicopolis, and had come so far with the help of God; therefore, might we not go over the sea, as we had dependence and hope in God, that we should yet return to our homes and to Christianity. They would not believe us, and asked if we could repeat the Pater Noster, the Ave Maria, and the Belief? We said, 'Yes', and repeated them. They then asked how many of us there were? We said, 'Five'. They told us to wait on the mountains." In the end the captain agreed to take them to Samastro and eventually to Constantinople. A Turkish boy who escaped from the Moroccan traveler Ibn Baṭṭūṭa may have had a similar strategy; he fled from Saray Berke toward the Caspian coast at Hajji Tarkhan but was recaptured after three days.⁷¹ An even more daring Tatar man named Georgio escaped from Bussana, a small port west of Genoa, with the intention of traveling all the way back to the Black Sea.⁷² It is not clear whether he succeeded.

Finally, enslaved people were sometimes able to gain freedom by petition. This process could be initiated by a slave, but the final decision concerning freedom rested in the hands of a judge. The petition of Giorgio, the boy kidnapped from the coast near Caffa, has already been mentioned. Another case was that of Cecilia, "the daughter of Theodorus the Greek, an inhabitant of Caffa."⁷³ Her petition was phrased in a distinctive way: she instructed her representative "to proclaim freedom on her behalf against Georgius Stella, notary, who, as she asserts, is striving to hold her as a *de facto* slave." Whoever was responsible for this wording was careful not to use any phrase that would reify Cecilia's enslavement or imply even the most provisional acceptance of it.

CONCLUSION

Slavery in the medieval Black Sea had an enduring legacy. The Ottoman takeover of port cities during the 1470s reoriented the slave trade again, this time to serve the needs of the court at Istanbul and the broader empire. Crimean Tatar raids on the Polish and Ukrainian populations increased. As the emerging Russian state challenged Ottoman control of the north coast of the Black Sea and the Caucasus, these rivals developed a system for managing the ransom and exchange of captives. Meanwhile, Mediterranean slaveholders from Egypt to Iberia turned decisively toward Africa, East and West, for domestic slaves and eventually for military slaves.

It was in this context that one of the early racial scientists, Johann Friedrich Blumenbach, selected the skull of an enslaved Georgian woman as his exemplar of white beauty and therefore supremacy.⁷⁴ Women from this region had been enslaved, sexually exploited, and fetishized both locally and globally for centuries before the Ottoman or Russian empires existed. Men from the Black Sea had also been enslaved for centuries, sought out especially as eunuchs for

the Byzantine court and as soldiers for the Mamluk army. Yet by the eighteenth century, western Europeans had come to focus on enslaved women, especially Georgians and Circassians, in association with the Ottoman harem. They became objects of orientalist sexual fantasy, most famously in artistic depictions of odalisques but also in verbal descriptions composed by European travelers to the Caucasus. These attitudes were reinforced by the immersion of educated western European men in ancient Greek texts, like Euripides' *Medea* and Aristotle's *Politics*, that associated Scythians from the Black Sea with slavery, sexuality, and barbarism.⁷⁵

Blumenbach used this fetishization of enslaved Georgian and Circassian women to promote his racial theories. Although he could not access the corpses of women from the Ottoman court, he was aware that women from the Caucasus were marketed in more than one place and managed to procure a sample for his collection from Russia. In his treatise *On the Natural Variety of Mankind*, Blumenbach introduced the skull of "a young Georgian female, made captive in the last Turkish war by the Russians, and brought to Muscovy. There she died suddenly, and an examination was made of the cause of death by Hildebrandt, the most learned anatomical professor in Russia. He carefully preserved the skull for the extreme elegance of its shape, and sent it to St Petersburg to de Asch," who forwarded it to Blumenbach at the University of Göttingen.⁷⁶ The image commissioned to accompany the skull was "an Eastern scene... the whole breathing as much as possible the finest voluptuousness... [like] something out of Niebuhr's *Travels* or still more precisely out of Russel's *Natural History of Aleppo*."⁷⁷ In his note stored with the skull, Blumenbach wrote that it confirmed "the beauty of the Georgians... [and] the delightful charms of their women."⁷⁸ In this way, by drawing on the fantasy of the beautiful enslaved Georgian woman to center his classification system within the eighteenth-century scientific discourse on race, Blumenbach transformed the geographical term "Caucasian" into a generic term for white people.

The association between "Caucasian," whiteness, and beauty emerged from a web of enslavers' strategies: the writers and artists who used sexualized depictions of Circassian and Georgian women to attract an audience; the Russian soldiers who demonstrated their power over both Georgians and Ottomans by taking this particular Georgian woman captive; the anatomy professor in Moscow who honed his expertise by dissecting her body; the baron in St. Petersburg who cultivated his scholarly network by sending her skull to Germany; and Blumenbach, the professor who presented her skull as the elegant centerpiece of his racial classification system. In turn, the association between "Caucasian," whiteness, and feminine beauty was used strategically by enslavers in other contexts to justify their oppression of other groups in Blumenbach's racial hierarchy, especially black Africans.

Recentring this story on the enslaved Georgian woman rather than her skull highlights the gap between the racialized meaning of "Caucasian" and the reality of people targeted for enslavement in the Caucasus. We know

nothing about this woman's name, parents, self-ascribed identity, or the community in which she grew up. Her experience of slavery is also obscure: a violent experience of capture, a journey from Georgia to Moscow, a sudden death caused by venereal disease,⁷⁹ and a ghost value attached to her bones which made them vulnerable to public display as late as the 1980s.⁸⁰ The identity of this woman as an individual, her unique life story, was erased by Blumenbach to make her a fitting representative of his newly invented group. Yet if the characteristic strategy of the enslaved is to seek connection, then at a minimum we can render this anonymous woman less isolated by connecting her experiences not only to those of her contemporaries taken captive in the Russo-Turkish wars, but also to the long history of slaving and enslavement in the Black Sea.

NOTES

1. Joseph Miller, *The Problem of Slavery as History: A Global Approach* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), 24, 29.
2. Miller, *The Problem*, 31, 33.
3. Kirakos Gandzakets'i, *History of the Armenians*, trans. Robert Bedrosian (New York: Sources of the Armenian Tradition, 1986), Chapter 24.
4. Johann Schiltberger, *The Bondage and Travels of Johann Schiltberger, A Native of Bavaria, in Europe, Asia, and Africa, 1396–1427*, trans. J. Buchan Telfer, ed. Philip Brunn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).
5. Giulio Prunai, "Notizie e documenti sulla servitù domestica nel territorio senese (secc. VIII–XVI)," *Bullettino senese di storia patria* n.s. 7 (1936): 415–6, doc. 45.
6. Paul Lunde and Caroline Stone, eds., *Ibn Fadlān and the Land of Darkness: Arab Travellers in the Far North* (London: Penguin Books, 2012), 122–123, citing Ibn Rusta.
7. Lunde and Stone, eds., *Ibn Fadlān*, 126, citing Ibn Rusta.
8. Lunde and Stone, eds., *Ibn Fadlān*, 145–152, citing Mas'ūdī and Miskawayh.
9. Lunde and Stone, eds., *Ibn Fadlān*, 72, citing al-Garnatī.
10. Lunde and Stone, eds., *Ibn Fadlān*, 67, citing al-Garnatī.
11. Gandzakets'i, *History*, Chapter 24.
12. Friedrich Kunstmann, "Studien über Marino Sanudo den älteren," *Königliche bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften; Philosophische philologische und historische Klasse* 7 (1855): 817–8.
13. Anton Kern, "Der 'Libellus de notitia orbis' Iohannes' III. (de Galonifontibus?) O.P. Erzbischofs von Sulthanyeh," *Archivum fratrum praedicatorum* 8 (1938): 110.
14. Schiltberger, *The Bondage*, 4–7.
15. Daniel Kaiser, *The Laws of Rus'—Tenth to Fifteenth Centuries* (Salt Lake City: Charles Schlacks Jr., 1992), 11; Kern, "Der 'Libellus,'" 111.
16. Sergei Karpov, *La navigazione veneziana nel Mar Nero XIII–XV sec.* (Ravenna: Edizioni del Girasole, 2000), 61.
17. Prunai, "Notizie," 415–6, doc. 45.
18. Byzantine law is addressed in another chapter. Kaiser, *The Laws*, xlv, 20–34; Robert Brunschvig, "'Abd,'" in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed. (Leiden:

- Brill, 1960), 1:24–40; R. H. Helmholtz, “The Law of Slavery and the European *Ius Commune*,” in *The Legal Understanding of Slavery: From the Historical to the Contemporary*, ed. Jean Allain (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 17–39; George Vernadsky, “The Scope and Contents of Chingis Khan’s Yasa,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 3 (1938): 337–60.
19. Kaiser, *The Laws*, 31 vs. 63.
 20. Raimondo Morozzo della Rocca, *Lettere di mercanti a Pignol Zucchetto (1336–1350)* (Venice: Comitato per la pubblicazione delle fonti relative alla storia di Venezia, 1957), 33–6, doc. 14.
 21. This is debatable. A child born to married parents was legitimate. A child born to parents who could have been married but were not was natural. Marriage between free and enslaved people was legal as long as the free partner was aware of the enslaved partner’s status, but Pascuale’s parents had married after he was born. It was possible to have a natural child declared legitimate by an ecclesiastical authority after the fact, and this was clearly Petro’s wish, but he had not had time to carry it out before his death.
 22. Barker, *That Most Precious Merchandise*, 125–8.
 23. Kaiser, *The Laws*, 32.
 24. Khalīl ibn Aybak al-Ṣafadī, *Kitāb al-Wāfi bi-al-Wafayāt* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1962), 24: 277–80; Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-khiṭaṭ wa-al-athār fī Miṣr wa-al-Qāhirah*, ed. Ayman Fu’ad Sayyid (London: Al-Furqan Islamic Heritage Foundation, 2002–2004), 4: 224–6. See also Donald Little, *A Catalogue of the Islamic Documents from Al-Haram aṣ-Ṣarīf in Jerusalem* (Beirut: Orient-Institut der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft, 1984), 380, doc. 683 in which a man named Tugha Timur ibn Karlabi sold himself and his wife into slavery. Tugha Timur’s father received their price.
 25. Kaiser, *The Laws*, 26–28, 32; Lunde and Stone, eds., *Ibn Fadlān*, 76, citing al-Garnatī.
 26. Kaiser, *The Laws*, 108, 112.
 27. Morozzo della Rocca, *Lettere*, 118, doc. 63.
 28. H. A. R. Gibb, trans., *The Travels of Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, A.D. 1325–1354* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959), 2: 487–488.
 29. Gibb, trans., *The Travels*, 481.
 30. James Montgomery, trans., “Mission to the Volga by Aḥmad ibn Faḍlān,” in *Two Arabic Travel Books*, ed. Philip Kennedy and Shawkat Toorawa (New York: New York University Press, 2014), 243, 253.
 31. Lunde and Stone, eds., *Ibn Fadlān*, 81, citing al-Garnatī.
 32. Michel Balard, *Gènes et l’Outre-mer* (Paris: École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, 1980), 2: 193–4, doc. 122; Geo Pistarino, *Notai genovesi in oltremare: Atti rogati a Chilia da Antonio di Ponzò (1360–61)* (Genoa: Università di Genova, Istituto di Paleografia e Storia medievale, 1971), 63–65 and 72–73, docs. 39 and 43.
 33. Lunde and Stone, eds., *Ibn Fadlān*, 127, 159; Montgomery, trans., “Mission,” 245–53.
 34. Schiltberger, *The Bondage*, 7.
 35. Prokopios, *History of the Wars, Books VII and VIII*, trans. H.B. Dewing (London: William Heinemann, 1928), book VIII.
 36. Lunde and Stone, eds., *Ibn Fadlān*, 112.
 37. Kaiser, *The Laws*, 12.

38. Barker, *That Most Precious Merchandise*, 71.
39. Evans, "The Womb of Iron and Silver," 110.
40. Gibb, trans., *The Travels*, 484–86, also 498.
41. Gibb, trans., *The Travels*, 488.
42. Gandzakets'i, *History*, Chapter 24.
43. Thomas Allsen, *Culture and Conquest in Mongol Eurasia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001). The earlier Türk state also created communities of captured weavers and blacksmiths.
44. Nina Prokofieva, "Akti venetsianskogo notariya v Tane Donato a Mano (1413–1419)," *Prichernomorie v srednie veka* 4 (2000), doc. 73.
45. Henri Taparel, "Un Épisode de la politique orientale de Philippe le Bon: Les bourguignons en Mer Noire (1444–1446)," *Annales de Bourgogne* 55 (1983): 21.
46. Venice, Archivio di Stato di Venezia (ASVe), Cancellaria inferiore, Notai, b.148, N.6, reg. 2, fol. 39r–v. Notary Pietro Pelacan (1448 May 29). The term *uzden* suggests that she was a free peasant from the North Caucasus. Thanks to John Latham-Sprinkle for this information.
47. Montgomery, trans., "Mission," 243–5.
48. <https://medievalslavery.org/europe/source-anonymous-laxdacla-saga-early-1200s/>.
49. Balard, *Gênes*, 1:150–151, doc. 388.
50. Genoa, Archivio di Stato di Genova (ASG), Notai Antichi 137, fol. 49v–50r. Notary Conrado Castello de Rapallo (1302 May 7).
51. N. Levtzion and J. F. P. Hopkins, eds., *Corpus of Early Arabic Sources for West African History* (Princeton: Markus Wiener, 2000), 265, citing al-ʿUmarī.
52. Montgomery, trans., "Mission," 239.
53. Barker, *That Most Precious Merchandise*, 138–9. Aspers were silver coins issued by various polities surrounding the Black Sea. In 1436, a Venetian ducat was worth 35 aspers. Peter Spufford, *Handbook of Medieval Exchange* (London: Offices of the Royal Historical Society, 1986), 290. In 1447, slaves auctioned by the commune of Caffà cost about 1000 to 1500 aspers. ASG, Banco di San Giorgio, Sala 34, 590/1235 (Caffà Massaria), fol. 21v, 54v, 57v.
54. Sandro de' Colli, *Moretto Bon, Notaio in Venezia, Trebisonda e Tana (1403–1408)* (Venice: Comitato per la pubblicazione delle fonti relative alla storia di Venezia, 1963), docs. 26, 27.
55. ASVe, Cancellaria inferiore, Notai, b.231, N.3, reg. 1, f.8v–9v. Notary Nicolaus de Varsis (5 June 1436).
56. Balard, *Gênes*, 1:347, doc. 846.
57. Charles Verlinden, "Le recrutement des esclaves à Venise aux XIV^e et XV^e siècles," *Bulletin de l'institut historique belge de Rome* 39 (1968): 195, doc. 116.
58. Golden, "The Terminology," 42.
59. Tenth-century Rus'-Byzantine treaties did address the possibility of mutual ransom. Kaiser, *The Laws*, 6, 10.
60. Morozzo della Rocca, *Lettere*, 118.
61. Prokofieva, "Akti," doc. 20.
62. ASVe, Cancellaria inferiore, Notai, b.148, N.6, reg. 2, fol. 60v–61r. Notary Pietro Pelacan (12 July 1451).
63. Kaiser, *The Laws*, 6, 10.

64. Kaiser, *The Laws*, 23.
65. Kaiser, *The Laws*, 33.
66. C. Desimoni, "Trattato dei genovesi col Chan dei Tartari nel 1380–1381 scritto in lingua volgare," *Archivio storico italiano* 20 (1887): 164; Amadeo Vigna, "Statuto di Caffa: Codice diplomatico delle colonie tauro-ligure," *Atti della società ligure di storia patria* 7, no. 2 (1879): 634–5.
67. ASVe, Cancellaria inferiore, Notai, b.148, N.6, reg. 2, fol. 55v–56r. Notary Pietro Pelacan (16 Dec. 1450).
68. ASG, Notai Antichi 402, fol. 108r–v. Notary Bartolomeo Gatto (1 Sept. 1395).
69. Domenico Gioffrè, *Il mercato degli schiavi a Genova nel secolo XV* (Genoa: Fratelli Bozzi, 1971), 157.
70. Schiltberger, *The Bondage*, 99–100.
71. Gibb, trans., *The Travels*, 517.
72. ASG, Notai Antichi 397, fol. 203r–v. Notary Bartolomeo Gatto (31 Oct. 1376).
73. ASG, Notai Antichi 497, doc. 50. Notary Giacomo di Camulio (26 Mar. 1397).
74. Nell Irvin Painter, *The History of White People* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2010), 43–90.
75. Shelley Haley, "Self-Definition, Community, and Resistance: Euripides' 'Medea' and Toni Morrison's 'Beloved'," *Thamyris* 2, no. 2 (1995): 177–206.
76. Johann Friedrich Blumenbach, "On the Natural Variety of Mankind, ed. 1795," in *The Anthropological Treatises of Johann Friedrich Blumenbach*, ed. and trans. Thomas Bendyshe (Boston: Longwood Press, 1978), 162. The war in question was Catherine the Great's second Caucasian campaign against the Ottomans.
77. F. W. P. Dougherty, ed., *Commercium epistolicum J.F. Blumenbachii* (Göttingen: Niedersächsische Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Göttingen, 1984), 156.
78. Dougherty, ed., *Commercium*, 148.
79. Ibid.
80. Dougherty, ed., *Commercium*, 148, no. 178 is the skull itself, displayed in the foyer of Göttingen's university library in 1984. Daina Ramey Berry, *The Price for Their Pound of Flesh: The Value of the Enslaved, from Womb to Grave, in the Building of a Nation* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2017), 7.

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