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# TOWARDS AN ECONOMIC HISTORY OF EIGHTEENTH CENTURY MALTA

Buzzaccarini Gonzaga's Correspondence to the Venetian Magistracy of Trade  
1754-1776.

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The restraining late medieval legacy of allegiance and dependency which the Knights of St. John inherited on settling in the tiny central Mediterranean island of Malta had never been compatible with the Order's grand aspirations<sup>1</sup>. The history of Malta's foreign relations from 1530 to 1798 is the story of the Order's conscious and protracted efforts to remove the negative structural and institutional forces which debarred growth and development in order to mobilize the positive forces which would lead to economic progress. It was a difficult task to break away from the pattern of politico-economic subjection — to powers like France and Spain — to conditions which would reduce Malta's complete dependence on traditional markets, manufactures and capital. Veneto-Maltese mutual economic approaches during the eighteenth century were just one outstanding example of this complex process of economic re-orientation. It is my purpose here to examine these "approaches" within the broad framework of the island's economy as a whole and the conceptions of it entertained by the Venetian Magistracy of Trade — the *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia*<sup>2</sup>. My examination will draw heavily on the large collection of Massimiliano Buzzaccarini Gonzaga's original, manuscript despatches from Malta to the Cinque Savi<sup>3</sup>.

### I BUZZACCARINI GONZAGA

#### The Man

On 21st April, 1776 Antonio Pousielgues, the Venetian Consul in Malta<sup>4</sup>, wrote to the Cinque Savi in Venice to tell them of the sad and sudden death of Buzzaccarini Gonzaga<sup>5</sup>. Still a minor<sup>6</sup>, Commendatore Fra Massimiliano Emanuele<sup>7</sup>, Marchese<sup>8</sup> Buzzaccarini Gonzaga<sup>9</sup>, from Padua<sup>10</sup>, son of the noble Antonio de Buzzaccarini, Knight of San Giorgio<sup>11</sup>,

professed a Knight of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem on 20th January, 1712<sup>12</sup>. On 25th September, 1754 he was the first to be accredited *Huomo della Repubblica di Venezia* to the Grandmaster's Court in Malta<sup>13</sup>, and on the morning of 4th December he arrived on the island in that capacity<sup>14</sup>. Soon after, he paid courtesy calls on all members of the Venerable Council<sup>15</sup>.

In his letter, the consul paid tribute to the Knight for his "rare and sterling qualities" he had demonstrated

throughout his long term of office as Venetian Minister in Malta<sup>16</sup>. For an almost<sup>17</sup> uninterrupted stay of over twenty years on the island, Buzzaccarini Gonzaga had been entrusted with protecting and helping all Venetian subjects who either "proceeded to Malta for purposes of trade", or who were "conducted to that place by shipowners and Christian corsairs". In the latter case, he was "to procure, by care and effort, the immediate release of ships, effects and persons", and to take cognizance of "all minute details of the circumstances", particularly, the exact locality in which such "arrests" had occurred<sup>18</sup>.

### His Correspondence

During his tenure of office, Massimiliano Buzzaccarini Gonzaga kept in constant touch with the Venetian Magistracy of Trade, writing an average of one letter a fortnight<sup>19</sup>, giving what may be defined as a regular news-sheet, enriched by frequent, sound value-judgements of all that was happening in and around Malta. The whole collection is an enlightening and vociferous primary source for a socio-economic history of eighteenth century Malta. It owes its importance to four basic reasons. Firstly, it records not only the major events in the history of Malta during the period covered by the letters, but also the daily occurrences which usually pass unnoticed, and therefore unrecorded, in normal official correspondence<sup>20</sup>. Secondly, it penetrates deeply into the nature, character and potentiality of Malta's economy<sup>21</sup>. Thirdly, Veneto-Maltese day-to-day commercial and mercantile relations are presented in a clear and vivid perspective<sup>22</sup>. Finally, it throws sharp

light on the island's trade links with other European, Levantine and North African markets<sup>23</sup>.

Buzzaccarini Gonzaga's correspondence ranges from an analysis of matters of far-reaching influence on Venetian policy in the central Mediterranean<sup>24</sup> to items of purely local significance<sup>25</sup>; from an accurate rendering of the certain repercussions of the "Ottoman Crown" episode on the whole of Christendom<sup>26</sup>, probing with precision into the state of fortifications of the Maltese Islands in the 1760s<sup>27</sup> and into the psychology of the local inhabitants faced with an imminent Turkish assault<sup>28</sup>, to frequent passing references to a long-drawn-out postal dispute between the Government of Malta and Sicily<sup>29</sup>; from a meticulous description of Malta's trade potentialities<sup>30</sup> to the attempt by Robert Damiens on the life of Louis XV<sup>31</sup>; from the feasibility of establishing through Malta permanent trade links between Venice and Denmark<sup>32</sup> to the celebration on the island of the feast of "Our Glorious Protector St. Mark"<sup>33</sup>; from news that Algiers had declared war on the Dutch and Livornese<sup>34</sup> to news of the "immense damages caused by a terrible earthquake" in Lisbon, of floods in Cadice<sup>35</sup>, the wild spread of plague in Algiers and of an epidemic in Naples<sup>36</sup>.

The collection of Buzzaccarini Gonzaga's correspondence, in conjunction with the equally important consular despatches<sup>37</sup>, provides ample documentation for a reconstruction of the gradual evolution of Veneto-Maltese commercial relations during the eighteenth century<sup>38</sup>: from the very poor facilities available to Venetian merchants and seamen in Malta in 1700<sup>39</sup> to the formal establishment in the 1750s of a

Maltese Consulate in Venice and a Venetian Consulate in Malta<sup>40</sup>; from the negligible trade carried out between Venice and Malta in 1700<sup>41</sup> to the lucrative bilateral commercial agreement between the two countries in the 1760s<sup>42</sup>; from the occasional appearance in the Maltese harbours of an insignificant number of Venetian vessels at the opening of the century to the Venetian Republic's full exploitation of Malta as a naval base in the 1780s<sup>43</sup>.

## II AN ECONOMIC SURVEY?

### Buzzaccarini Gonzaga's description of Malta

It took Massimiliano Buzzaccarini Gonzaga seven years to survey Malta's economic condition and potentialities. In 1761 he defined the island as "a country extremely limited in natural resources"<sup>44</sup>, producing only cotton fibres<sup>45</sup> and a very limited amount of ashes<sup>46</sup>. The latter were mostly imported from Sicily<sup>47</sup>, to be in turn resold to a number of foreign markets, including Venice<sup>48</sup>. For almost everything else the island depended on foreign sources of supply<sup>49</sup>. Malta, implied Buzzaccarini Gonzaga, would gain in economic significance to the Venetian empire if only its purchase-market potentialities were fully exploited. The process would prove feasible and the attempt viable if the island would be encouraged to redirect its search for raw materials to the Adriatic port<sup>50</sup>. The only difficulties were of a partly psychological character. On the one hand the Order had always been ready to grasp at every opportunity to offset its old ties of politico-economic dependence on Sicily, Spain and France, but due to the nature of its composition<sup>51</sup>, it still harboured in

general an innate preference for anything that was French. French commodities enjoyed a privileged position in Malta. The knights in their majority were prejudiced against anything else<sup>52</sup>. This frame of mind on the part of the administration was bound to restrain the conduct of trade and restrict the extent of trading operations. On the other hand the Maltese merchant, accustomed as he was to the traditional slow rhythm of his unadventurous and unsophisticated trade, to the small range of his land's agricultural yield and to his unrivalled, regular sea links with Sicilian ports, was by nature conservative<sup>53</sup>. The process of change would have to be gradual<sup>54</sup>. Only "with industry and confrontation", confessed Buzzaccarini Gonzaga, would he be able to overcome these difficulties<sup>55</sup>.

Not that the Maltese merchant was unresponsive to initiative or ambition, to risk or adventure. His bold piratical incursions in the Adriatic were not an uncommon occurrence, even as early as the fourteenth<sup>56</sup> or fifteenth<sup>57</sup> century, while his daring corsairing activity in the Levant during the next two centuries was as dreadful to the Turks as it was devastating to the Venetians<sup>58</sup>. By the time Buzzaccarini Gonzaga was writing, the Maltese merchant — partly with the connivance of the Order, partly on his own initiative — had previously tapped the Venetian market as a secure source of supply<sup>59</sup>. Large assortments of commodities — from timber, wax and ironmongery to paper, copper, mirrors and other glassware — were shipped from the old Adriatic port to Malta, very often in exchange for ashes of Kalimagnum<sup>60</sup>. This commercial service was of long standing<sup>61</sup>. Other vast shipments of foodstuffs and other products were purchased from Levantine markets, whereas it was

only recently that the Maltese merchant had been venturing on Dalmatian markets, particularly for wine<sup>62</sup>. He had also lately resolved to start buying ironmongery from Trieste, seemingly unaware, according to the Venetian Minister, of "loss of time on the longer voyage and of differences in weights and quality"<sup>63</sup>. The Maltese merchant sailed to these distant ports, in distant hostile waters, rarely safe from piracy or immune from similar mishaps, with "ready cash" on board, entirely at his own risk<sup>64</sup>.

Buzzaccarini Gonzaga's "economic survey" mentioned other determining factors. The first was the Greek merchant whose ties with Malta had for long been close<sup>65</sup>. With the services of a Greek Consulate on the island<sup>66</sup>, he frequently visited the place on his own ship or on foreign galleys as a peaceful trader, received safe-conducts from the Grandmaster, dealt in the 'art' of ransoming slaves and often called at the local tribunals to sue against "wrongful depredations"<sup>67</sup>. A favourite pilot on Maltese vessels, he knew very well the worth of the Maltese corsair in the Levant, occasionally supplying him with important secret intelligence<sup>68</sup>. Sensitive to the urgency and priority the Order attached to the grain trade and to the perennial wheat shortage experienced by the island, the Greek merchant was continually exploiting the situation<sup>69</sup>. He was a formidable trader in the Mediterranean and an even more formidable competitor in Malta's grain and timber trade, always managing to extract handsome profits, and being occasionally mistaken for Venetian<sup>70</sup>.

The Order's social life in its "commodious palaces of Valetta... and the countryside"<sup>71</sup>, at once dignified and impressive, extravagant and

ceremonial, became through the years more sophisticated, and sharpened its members' ever increasing appetite for luxury. Economically this was another effective force of change. On the other hand, the Maltese inhabitants' experience of "prosperity and a comfortable standard of living"<sup>72</sup> was mirrored in the island's steady demographic growth. From 64,000 inhabitants in 1650<sup>73</sup>, population increased to 100,000 a century later<sup>74</sup> and to about 130,000 by 1785<sup>75</sup>. Amelioration in the social life of the country was bound to be reflected in, and in turn to stimulate, the diversification of Malta's trade pattern.

### The Cinque Savi's idea of Malta

The Cinque Savi's idea of Malta in the 1760s was derived partly from Massimiliano Buzzaccarini Gonzaga's correspondence and other regular despatches of the Venetian consul resident on the island<sup>76</sup>, and partly from the rich collection of original documentation preserved in the Archives of the Magistracy<sup>77</sup>. In 1761 they submitted a detailed, elaborate report on Malta to the Venetian Senate<sup>78</sup>. The report, hitherto unpublished, is important to the economic historian of the Mediterranean. In clear and specific terms, the Cinque Savi laid down what they considered to be the basic characteristics of Malta's economic structure and trade pattern and the island's potentialities as a purchase-market and commercial entrepôt. In so doing they penetrated into the nature of the former close Veneto-Maltese trade links and into the forces that were threatening to undermine these ties in the eighteenth century. The report is a forceful attempt to fit in Malta's developing commerce with the Venetian policy of self-readjustment and rehabilitation,

placing the various events and developments in Mediterranean economy in perspective. It betrays a vivid consciousness of the complex forces pressing hard on the Republic's ailing economy. In fact, the Cinque Savi's concept of Malta was conditioned by the Republic's inability to reassert its identity and its withdrawal productively "further and further into uncomplimentary local and parochial economies" <sup>79</sup>.

Nature, the Cinque Savi pointed out, had been deplorably avaricious in her dealings with Malta. The rigidity and barrenness of the soil deprived the country of any natural resources, contributing only towards the island's impregnability <sup>80</sup>. As if to conform with the meagre character of the land, the local inhabitants were renowned for their lack of skill and inexpertise in every important trade <sup>81</sup>. With revenues flowing "luxuriously" into the country from the Order's possessions all over Europe, and with the islanders' practice of exchanging a highly restricted range of local products, the Order of St John was compelled to seek from foreign sources not only "essential foodstuffs" but also "all other commodities for human use and comfort" <sup>82</sup>. The island was bound regularly to import what the Cinque Savi called "the produce of the land" — like wheat, oil, wine and salt — either from neighbouring markets — like those in the Kingdom of Naples, Sicily and the Morea — or from others which, due to surplus production, were deemed of greater convenience.

The Cinque Savi recalled that centuries earlier the political situation in the Mediterranean had deprived the Republic of her previous customers and of her commanding position. Cities, like Marseilles <sup>83</sup>, were quick to take over the role previously

monopolized by Venice. States, "better enlightened" and "provided with their own merchant fleets", like France, Holland and England, by-passed her as the traditional middleman <sup>84</sup>; others "opened their own ports" with a similar objective. "The Court of Vienna" did its utmost to attract these new, commercially "independent" States to Trieste, "deviating their [original] trade routes to our detriment", while "the merchants of Trieste, flying the Imperial flag, diffused themselves in all parts of the commercial world" <sup>85</sup>. Nevertheless, Venice in the 1760s, according to the Cinque Savi, was still "a centre of distribution of copious congeries of manufactured goods" <sup>86</sup>.

Nor was the Adriatic port by any means a new source of supply for Malta. On many previous occasions the *Dominante* had supplied the island's demands for a vast array of manufactured goods of iron, steel, copper and brass <sup>87</sup>. Amid the changing circumstances of the Mediterranean, the Order — and on its example, the Maltese merchant — still favoured its traditional Adriatic market, until it succumbed to such forces as self-interest and pressing warnings from its Resident Receivers in Venice <sup>88</sup> to change its trade direction <sup>89</sup>. "Some under Austrian, some under Roman influence," these Receivers sought respectively to promote the commercial interests of Trieste, Leghorn and Ancona, aiming successfully, according to the Cinque Savi, at redirecting Maltese merchant ships. This deviation of Maltese trade became even more pronounced in 1761 when a number of Maltese ships proceeded to load the whole or part of their merchandise in Trieste <sup>90</sup>. On this occasion the Maltese merchant availed himself of the proximity of other neighbouring markets to buy

supplies of sugar and wax from Fiume<sup>91</sup>, glassware from Bohemia, paper from Romagna, silk goods from Tuscany and many other commodities from surrounding markets<sup>92</sup>. The Venetian consul in Trieste, wrote the Cinque Savi, had repeatedly informed the Magistracy of these developments<sup>93</sup> which were again to be "respectfully stressed" later by Knight Michele Sagramoso<sup>94</sup>, "who, with noble sentiments, [sought] to remedy the loss suffered by Venice on account of Maltese trade deviation by possibly redirecting it in the future"<sup>95</sup>.

To achieve this end, it was vital to find means of restoring confidence to the Maltese merchant community. "It is therefore necessary," concluded the Report of 1761, "to make every effort to recall and reinstate a not unimportant branch of commerce which has slipped visibly from our hands, and in so doing, has undermined not only a portion of our distribution of Germanic goods, but — and this is even worse — a host of our own manufactures."<sup>96</sup> Anxious to secure the possible benefits of a Veneto-Maltese trade link, the Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia deemed it expedient "to relieve that branch of commerce of export duties and, by way of restitution, of import duties too on all Germanic goods exported to Malta. These burdens had lain at the root of Malta's trade deviation."<sup>97</sup>

### Malta's customs-tariff system

Busta 43 of the Archives of the *Gran Priorato dell'Ordine di Malta* in Venice contains a very interesting document on the system of customs-tariff practised in Malta<sup>98</sup>. In principle customs dues were generally reckoned in terms of value, while extra charges were imposed separately on different classes of merchandise, rated in terms of

weight (*cantaro, salma...*), volume (*botte, cafisio, barrile...*) or number (*dozana...*), depending on the type of goods involved. There were two rates of customs-tariff<sup>99</sup>. Merchandise imported by nationals and Sicilians<sup>100</sup> was charged 3½% *ad valorem* duty, while all other foreign merchants were subject to a 6½% *ad valorem* duty. Foodstuffs and potables, together with any other type of merchandise friegh-ted to the Order in Malta by its Receivers in Europe, were exempted from all customs dues<sup>101</sup>. Dues on transit-trade, a facility to be enjoyed only by the foreign merchant, were reckoned at 1% if re-exported within a year; otherwise, the levy for bonded merchandise was worked out at the rate of 6½% for Maltese/Sicilian merchants and 12% for all other foreign traders<sup>102</sup>.

Tables A, B and C are a reproduction of the above-mentioned document. They give a clear and detailed cross-section of the Maltese customs-tariff system and other related charges imposed by the local autonomous corporation known as the *Università dei Giurati* whose main function was to administer the *Massa Frumentaria*, which gave interest of 3% *per annum* on savings deposits. Investments in the *Massa Frumentaria* would go for the purchase of the necessary foodstuffs, particularly wheat<sup>103</sup>. Table D shows consular dues in Malta.

## III AN UNWRITTEN TRADE

### AGREEMENT

#### Buzzaccarini Gonzaga's initial measures

In Buzzaccarini Gonzaga's early correspondence (i. e. from 1754 to 1760), only occasionally does one come across isolated references to ships proceeding to Malta with Venetian

merchandise. But was not this the Venetian consul's task?<sup>104</sup> In May 1755, for example, *La Galleria S. Pietro*, master Nicolò Tarabocchia, arrived in Malta from Venice in 46 days, laden "with effects" for "this Sacred Religion"<sup>105</sup>, while Pietro Iannich "unloaded" in Malta "a cargo of wheat" before proceeding to Trapani<sup>106</sup>. Others came, at remote intervals, with shipments of construction timber and other merchandise<sup>107</sup>. It is however in conjunction with his "economic survey" that Buzzaccarini Gonzaga's initial measures to augment Veneto-Maltese trade relations should be traced. In his letter of 1st June, 1761 the Cinque Savi were told that the local Maltese merchant was seemingly inclined to start buying "quantities of linen operated by Antonio Carrari" from Bovolenta. One Maltese trader was in fact furnished with all relevant information and recommended to a certain Signor Smichia. He was also advised by Massimiliano Buzzaccarini Gonzaga to see for himself "the manufacturing process of silk fabricated in Venice"<sup>108</sup>. Shortly afterwards, the Venetian Minister this time approached the Order on the same question, ordering samples of linen from Carrari. This proposal, wrote Buzzaccarini Gonzaga in February 1762, "was still being considered"<sup>109</sup>. During his "months-long" visit to Malta, Giovanni Martinich was encouraged by the Minister in his attempt to foster a Veneto-Maltese trade link "of no mean consideration [and] from which great benefit would be drawn by Venetian merchants and ships"<sup>110</sup>.

Faced with the triple task of consolidating initial gains, attracting Venetian merchants to Malta and redirecting Maltese trade to the old Adriatic port, Massimiliano Buzzaccarini Gonzaga, in February 1762, proposed the

urgent setting-up of a Venetian Trading House (*Casa di Commercio*) on the island<sup>111</sup>. "It would remedy," he explained, "the inconvenience of a Nation which must avail itself of all opportunities [for its subsistence] to the point of vexing even the foreign merchant whenever it is felt necessary to transact business with him." With a Venetian House in Malta, "merchandise proceeding from the Levant, particularly linen-cloth manufactures, would be stored in [local] warehouses to await the right opportunity, or else transhipped to other markets whenever Maltese merchants were not prepared to pay the right prices." An "established House", affirmed Buzzaccarini Gonzaga, would gradually absorb Malta's eastern Mediterranean trade. This branch of Maltese trade, "which today is being carried out by the Maltese merchant, would be performed by Venetians on their own ships; merchandise would be brought to Malta either through commission or put in bond for a year as foreign merchandise in transit, paying 1% duty besides warehouse dues." If this objective materialized, thought the Minister, "the introduction of other commodities, like wool, silk and other manufactures, would be a matter of course...; besides, these articles would also sell in Sicily and Barbary" in exchange for ashes, Tunisian linen-cloth and a host of other goods. Deeply rooted and sustained commercial contacts existed between Malta and these parts, and trade with the area gave ample scope for development, manouvre and even monopoly<sup>112</sup>. However, the establishment of a Venetian Trading House in Malta, in Buzzaccarini Gonzaga's view, was bound to encounter an important technical difficulty. Would Venetians be granted equal rights to trade on the island as the Maltese merchant?

Would they be subjected only to the same customs-tariff? How would the conservative Maltese merchant react to such a project? Massimiliano Buzzaccarini Gonzaga had to wait for instructions from Venice before starting formal negotiations with the Grandmaster <sup>113</sup>.

### The 'April Decrees'.

In 1761 the Sublime Porte was threatening the island of Malta with an imminent assault unless the *Ottoman Crown*, "the most beautiful vessel of Constantinople", was immediately restored by the Order <sup>114</sup>. Faced with the serious, turbulent situation at Constantinople <sup>115</sup>, and sensitive to the urgent precautions being taken in Malta against any Turkish attack <sup>116</sup>, the Venetian Senate, on the Order's petition, granted Knight Michele Sagramoso licence to export duty-free from Venice large quantities of pick-axes and mattocks to the island <sup>117</sup>. Sagramoso was no idle diplomat. He was fully acquainted with the Republic's inclination towards securing a purchase market in Malta and using the island as a central Mediterranean entrepôt <sup>118</sup>. Early in 1762, in his capacity as Acting-Receiver in Venice <sup>119</sup>, he submitted, on his own initiative, a new case before the Senate. The dynamic element, latent in every society however conservative, would regenerate the island's old trade link with the *Dominante*, if carefully exploited with regards to Malta. With psychological finesse, he explained that it had always been the Order's desire to reactivate Maltese trade with the Adriatic port in preference to any other foreign market <sup>120</sup>. Were not heavy tariffs and high prices among the main causes of deviating Maltese commerce with Venice and her colonial ports? If the tariff exemptions

granted lately in connection with the *Ottoman Crown* episode were extended and made permanent, would not both the Venetian merchant and the Order of St John benefit? Would not this be a wise gesture on the part of the Republic to encourage the Maltese merchant to redirect his trade towards the Adriatic market, and inject Veneto-Maltese trade with a new vitality <sup>121</sup>? The Senate described Sagramoso's case as "worthy of being cultivated and fully seconded" <sup>122</sup>.

In April 1762 the Venetian Senate issued two important decrees. The first, dated 2nd April, exempted *Germanic* merchandise directed to Malta via Venice from all export duties for a five-year probationary period. Import charges imposed on such goods on entering Venice were to be refunded <sup>123</sup>. The second decree, dated 30th April, extended tariff exemption to *all* merchandise exported to Malta <sup>124</sup>.

In the context of the second decree, complete tariff exemption meant reimbursement of all dues (import and export) paid on merchandise shipped to Malta. To qualify for such a privilege, the Maltese merchant had to follow a set of prescriptions stipulated in the *Terminazione degl' Illustrissimi, et Eccellentissimi Signori Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia. Che comprende li Metodi da osservarsi per bonificare il Dazio d'Uscita a tutte le Merci, che saranno estratte per Malta, e quello d'Ingresso ai Generi infrascritti. Approvata con Decreto dell' Eccellentissimo Senato dei 30. Aprile 1762. Stampata per li Figliuoli del qu. Z. Antonio Pinelli, Stampatori Ducali* <sup>125</sup>. In brief, the methods and documents demanded by the Cinque Savi were the following:

#### On arrival in Malta

— ship's master would submit the Bill of



lading to the Venetian consuls, who would verify whether the shipped *colli* were strictly in accordance with the *Bolletta*. He would then issue a *Responsale*, a document, bearing the consular seal, certifying the arrival of merchandise.

#### Before departure from Venice

— two authentic copies, bearing the merchants' signature, of the *Manifesto di Mercanzia*, which contained (a) a detailed description of the nature, quality and quantity of the merchandise about to be exported; (b) the name of the ship being used for the purpose; and (c) the Master's name.

— one copy had to go to the *Fede Raggionato* of the Magistracy of Trade, the other to the *Fedel Nodaro* and *Scrivano d'Uscita* for scrutiny and registration.

— two copies of the Bill of lading (*Bolletta*) identical to the *Manifesto*: one for the owner of the merchandise, the other for the *Raggionato*.

— sorting out and packing of merchandise into *colli* in the *Fante's* presence.

— each *collo* had to be sealed with the "Stamp of Our Protector St Mark".

— Lading of merchandise on board in *Fante's* presence. *Fante* would give Captain an authentic list, bearing his signature, of merchandise laden on ship, to be handed over to the *Raggionato*.

— no alteration could be made in the *Manifesto* after this stage.

— *Responsale* to be countersigned by Massimiliano Buzzaccarini Gonzaga in his capacity as *Uomo della Repubblica*.

#### Claim

— Submission of authentic *Responsale* to *Fedel Raggionato* in Venice for reimbursement of all duties paid in the process.

The Maltese merchant's right to reclaim duties on goods paid on entering Venice was restricted to a host of commodities specified in the *Terminazione*. The list, comprising 47 different types of commodities, is being reproduced here in the original.

#### Nota de' Generi, ai quali sara' restituito il-Dazio d'Ingresso alla loro estrazione per Malta

Bande di ferro  
Bazze di Fillo di ferro  
Caldare e Caldarette di Rame  
Corigioli  
Chiodi di sorte  
Fil di Rame diverso  
Lamerini di Ferro  
Legnami Tedeschi  
Lime di Ferro  
Lime di Paglia  
Oro battudo da Colonia  
Piconi di Ferro  
Rame di Piancia  
Rame rosso diverso  
Telle Carnizze in sorte, dette  
/anco Lubiane  
Telle Cavalline

Telle Costanze curate  
Telle Costanze greze, Olandine  
/fine, & ordinarie dal Can. e  
Cavalline in sorte  
Telle da Tamisi  
Telle da Campidonia  
Telle di Slesia e di Germania  
Telle di Rensi Tedeschi  
Telle Giurini in sorte  
Telle G. H. cioè Telle greze da  
/Pittori di Cento Aquilone,  
Agnelline, e Ariete in sorte  
Telle Fiocchetti, o sian Olmi  
Telle Negresine  
Telle Occhietti  
Telle Paggere e Paggerine  
Telle Poggiane, o sian da Velle

e da Locca  
 Telle Rigate  
 Telle Sangali e Quadretti  
 Telle Stampate  
 Telle Tovagliate di Lino e Stoppa  
 Telle Terlise e Terlisette  
 Telle Terlisoni  
 Zappe e Zapponi di Ferro  
 Carte Bergamine

Azzali  
 Banda Raspatha  
 Banda Stagnata  
 Cortelli con Pironi  
 Cortelli Caravani  
 Fili Latton  
 Lametta di Latton bianca e gialla  
 Padelle di Ferro  
 Trementina

Tariff exemption applied also to the export of heavy timber (*tavolame*, *travame*, *alborame*), purchase of which had normally to be exacted from the Venetian Guild of Timber Merchants <sup>126</sup>.

The Republic's measures of April 1762 were explicitly directed at attracting a "not unimportant" branch of Maltese trade away from Trieste <sup>127</sup>. Austrian policy, particularly after the Treaty of Passarowitz, had been especially geared to isolate Venice "within the Adriatic". Austrian Trieste and Rijeka (Fiume) had been declared free ports in 1719 and since then had been waging "an economic siege", "a war of industry" against the Republic. Not only was the fiscal policy at the *mercato realtino* appearing by comparison over-burdensome to the foreign trader — whether from the Levant, the West, Albania, the Turkish provinces or Germany — but was even repellent to the Venetian merchant himself. Total or partial tariff exemptions at the port of Trieste, declared the Cinque Savi, "had lately succeeded in deviating Maltese ships from lading in Venice supplies of Germanic manufactures", previously monopolised by the Republic <sup>128</sup>. These, having been one time the leading articles of Maltese trade with the Republic, used to serve as an occasion for the purchase of a host of other Venetian products <sup>129</sup>. Germanic goods had become much more expensive to buy in Venice than in any other market <sup>130</sup>. In the

face of such growing competition, the April Decrees would lure the Maltese merchant and re-route a substantial part of his trade towards the Venetian emporium.

To stretch the objectives of these concessions a step further, the Cinque Savi commissioned Buzzaccarini Gonzaga to try and follow up the April Decrees by reaching a similar agreement — "by way of treaty" — with the Government of Malta: Venetian merchandise shipped to Malta by Venetian merchants on Venetian ships would receive similar facilities and tariff exemptions at the port of Malta <sup>131</sup>, "until this mutual practice evolved into a permanent convention" <sup>132</sup>.

This was a delicate question which would involve one of the Order of St John's most fundamental principles — that of neutrality. As this subject has been treated at some length in another paper <sup>133</sup>, I shall limit myself to two observations. Firstly, the Grandmaster would not venture on a policy that would prove unwelcome not only to himself but also to his successors, "since the revenue accrued from customs and excise duties constituted a fair portion of his income" <sup>134</sup>. According to an independent source, the Grandmaster's yearly income (*Ricetta Megistrale*) during the early decades of the eighteenth century had risen to about 100,000 Scudi "because customs duties have been extremely increased, higher than ever before".

The same source points out that 30% of the magisterial revenues, then, came from the *Dogana* alone<sup>135</sup>. By the 1760s trade and duties had increased accordingly<sup>136</sup>. Secondly, favouring the Venetian merchant would almost inevitably create a precedent. Exemption of a few would lead to exemption of all. France, Spain, Portugal and the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies would have reason to demand similar tariff concessions which would be diplomatically impossible to refuse. Privileges enjoyed by the Order and the Maltese merchant in French, Spanish, Portuguese, Neapolitan and Sicilian ports were, according to Grandmaster Pinto, much more substantial and extensive than those recently accorded by Venice. None of these had ever approached the Order for anything like preferential treatment<sup>137</sup>.

### An Alternative Design

In August 1763 Massimiliano Buzzaccarni Gonzaga submitted his alternative project to the Grandmaster for the establishment in Malta of a Venetian Trading House<sup>138</sup>. The design was based on three principles.

- 1 One or two Venetian merchant "families" would be granted naturalization, i. e., they would be allowed to take up residence in Malta in their capacity as traders<sup>139</sup> and to enjoy "il Privilegio Nazionale", i. e., all those customs-tariff exemptions normally reserved only for the Maltese merchant.
- 2 They would enjoy "il Privilegio di Transito" or "il Privilegio dei Forastieri", i. e., transit trade concessions not shared by nationals. Imported merchandise, Venetian or otherwise, would be allowed re-

exportation from Malta, subject only to 1% duty, and storage in local warehouses for a period not specified period, and used instead exceeding one year; if not exported before the expiry of that for local consumption, it would become subject to the "Law of Higher Duty of 6½%".

- 3 Merchandise initially manifested for transit purposes and afterwards declared for local usage, would be bracketed within the 3½% concession.

Massimiliano Buzzaccarni Gonzaga's design fitted in nicely with the Republic's economic rehabilitation policy. Venetian trade in the central Mediterranean would gradually absorb not only a large portion of Maltese trade but also — due to the island's geographical position — of trade with Sicily and North Africa. The Venetian Minister was, no doubt, conscious of the difficulties involved in apportioning without distinction the comparatively limited trade of the island among nationals and foreigners, as this in practice would necessarily reduce the profits of the Maltese merchant<sup>140</sup>. Nonetheless, the Grandmaster seemed inclined, in general principle, towards acceding to this alternative design, provided that "this acquiescence" would not be embodied in any "authentic document", as this would open the door for other States to make similar claims<sup>141</sup>. The one or two Venetian families would be granted the *privilegio nazionale* and the *privilegio di transito*<sup>142</sup>. The third article was rejected as the principle it involved would automatically render all tariff legislation in Malta extremely flexible to the sole discretion of the owners of the respective merchandise. The Venetian families concerned would be in a position "to assume

control over the largest part of the island's traffic" <sup>143</sup>. The Grandmaster's Decree, granting the Venetian families naturalization and enabling them to partake of the said privileges, would be issued to the merchants concerned, on their arrival and at their own request. This would give the document a *private* character and the Trading House an *informality* of a private business concern <sup>144</sup>.

Although these concessions were not as liberal as their Venetian counterparts, they were nonetheless "acceptable" to the Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia, as they would give the Venetian merchant a greater opportunity of strengthening his trade links with Sicily and North Africa. The only setback was that the agreement would not be embodied in a formally written, binding and officially rectified convention. Successive Granmasters could, if they so desired, completely disregard it <sup>145</sup>.

Towards the end of their report, the Cinque Savi paid tribute to Buzzaccarini Gonzaga and Sagramoso: the former, for having, with "dexterity" and "true diligence", succeeded in extracting "advantages, singularly concerning Our Commerce" from "a Government indisposed to concede them"; the latter, for his "praiseworthy thoughts and ability" with which he had grasped the opportunity "of redirecting to the *Dominante* the Commerce of Malta" and for "the uninterrupted attention with which he had so indefatigably worked to recall Maltese ships to Our Harbour" <sup>146</sup>.

### Requests for Renewal

Just as the five-year period of Venetian tariff concessions was about to expire <sup>147</sup>, a group of interested, shrewd Maltese merchants — including the brothers Carlo and Antonio

Mattei, Giuseppe Grech, Pietro Felice, Giuseppe Bonello, Giulio d'Andrea, Carlo Ciantar, Gio. Andrea Xerri and Lorenzo Grech — <sup>148</sup> petitioned the Grandmaster "to interpose his good offices" so that the Venetian Republic "would have the kindness to grant the renewal of the said exemptions for another five years" <sup>149</sup>. In 1769, two years after, Massimiliano Buzzaccarini Gonzaga, on behalf of the Grandmaster, submitted a formal request for renewal to the Venetian Magistracy of Trade <sup>150</sup>, asking for a modification of the April Decrees. No reference was made in the application to goods of Germanic origin, nor to Venetian manufactures, which had featured so prominently on the first occasion. Perhaps the most significant trade concession contained in the April Decrees had been the granting of the right to purchase and export different types of timber free of all imposts. The Magistracy was now being asked to retain concession on this indispensable commodity. Buzzaccarini Gonzaga indicated also the Order's desire to start buying regularly annual amounts of grain — from 20 to 30 thousand *staia*, tax-free <sup>151</sup>.

The application was referred to the *Magistrato alle Biave*, but due to a number of difficulties concerning navigation, the State's finances and "domestic economy", it remained shelved for the next twelve years or so <sup>152</sup>. On 20th December, 1781 the question was brought up again by the Order's Receiver in Venice in a *promemoria* submitted to the Venetian College <sup>153</sup>. On the strength of past performances, would a renewal of tax-exemptions prove economically rewarding to the old Adriatic port? Was the preferential treatment which Venice extended to the Maltese merchant in 1762 instrumental to the improvement in the Republic's net-

work of trade relations with other cities? Were there any marked differences in Venetian exports to Malta between the five-year period of concession (1762-67) and later years?

The 1760s had shown promising signs of recovery in Venetian trade relations with Denmark and the Barbary Regencies. Denmark, in her "modernization" drive, was seeking opportunities for expanding her overseas commerce with the east and the Mediterranean. Trade agreements had already been concluded with France, Spain, Genoa and Naples<sup>154</sup>. "Why not with Venice, too?" thought Buzzaccarini Gonzaga. In his despatch of 10th August, 1761 the Venetian Minister submitted an account of his negotiations with the superintendent of a Danish trade mission during the latter's sojourn in Malta. He explained plans for a provisional Veneto-Danish trade agreement and advised the Magistracy to act promptly in that direction lest the outcome might prove as abortive as the 1750 attempt<sup>155</sup>.

In 1763 Venice concluded peace treaties with Algiers<sup>156</sup> and Tunis<sup>157</sup>, in 1764 with Tripoli<sup>158</sup> and in 1765 with Morocco<sup>159</sup>. It is premature, if not too presumptuous, to assert that such a development in Mediterranean history had been a definite outcome of a close Veneto-Maltese rapport. Other forces at play there certainly were, particularly Austria's stipulation of commercial treaties with the Barbary Regencies, which Cessi calls "a moral threat to the Republic"<sup>160</sup>. However, Malta's share in the process cannot be denied, if only as a secure and direct source of intelligence, even though her relations with Barbary could have never been cordial<sup>161</sup>. From the Venetian point of view, Austria's progressive relations with the Regencies constituted a very

undesirable stage in Mediterranean political and commercial development. In December 1755 Buzzaccarini Gonzaga informed the Cinque Savi that Turkey had given Algiers specific instructions to settle peace with Austria<sup>162</sup>. Two months later he observed that no marked progress had yet been made towards Algerian peace with the Habsburgs<sup>163</sup>. Was it perhaps because Algiers was at war with Tunis?<sup>164</sup> Was it because Algerian Beys were by nature "always the most insolent and the most fiercely given to the corso"<sup>165</sup> Or was it perhaps because the Regency's alliance with the strong naval powers in the Mediterranean, France and England, encouraged Algerian corsairs to confine their reprisals to the weaker nations?<sup>166</sup> Certainly the situation was even worse than in early 1755 when strained relations between the Regency and the Dutch and Livornese had caused unrest to Austrian navigation<sup>167</sup>. Now, even the Austrian consul in Tunis had been conducted to slavery in Algiers<sup>168</sup>. Buzzaccarini Gonzaga depicted the Algerian siege of Tunis with great mastery and detail, overconfident that the Magistracy in Venice would be awaiting news of the latest developments<sup>169</sup>.

Relations between Venice and Tripoli were traced with no less skill and colour<sup>170</sup>. It was precisely in one of his despatches on this theme that Buzzaccarini Gonzaga implicitly confirmed the intermediary role Malta was playing between the Republic and the Regencies. Writing in mid-1764 he referred to the recently concluded peace treaty between Venice and Tripoli<sup>171</sup>.

I trust that this new Commerce with Barbary will provide me with greater opportunities to render service and obedience to Your Excellencies. This Island's position,

being within easy reach, gives me access to the most reliable and speedy information about other Nations' trade with Barbary. Through these Nations, which call here frequently, Venetian consuls [there] would keep me in touch with all developments the moment they receive instructions from Your Excellencies.

Malta had a new role awaiting her. Five months before the Order's Receiver had submitted his *pro-memoria* <sup>172</sup>, a plague-stricken Venetian ketch, the *Buona Unione*, master Girolamo Padella, anchored in the vicinity of Marsamxetto Harbour. With a rich cargo of linen, wool, camel-hide and rice, she had been chartered for Sfax by some Tunisian merchants. "To prevent the plague from spreading and preserve the tranquility of the Mediterranean", the Grandmaster ordered the ketch to be incinerated on the 9th July in St Julian's Creek. The incident was communicated to the Trade Magistracy by Antonio Poussielgues, the Venetian consul in Malta, on 14th July, 1781 <sup>173</sup>. The Venetian Republic's refusal to compensate the loss of 14,000 *zecchini* claimed by the Tunisian merchants <sup>174</sup>, and its failure to overawe the Tunisian Bey with Andrea Querini's imposing squadron <sup>175</sup>, were sufficient evidence that the episode would lead to serious repercussions. It would be suicidal for the Republic to break the good relations with the Order at a moment when Malta was bound to have an important function to perform <sup>176</sup>.

There were other equally important factors to consider. The *Manifesti di Esportazioni e Ruoli di Bastimenti*, contained in the archives of the Cinque Savi, provide a means for an examination of the commodities which filled the holds of most ships trading between Venice and Malta. The correspondence of merchants and consuls

in Malta very rarely recorded the respective amounts, values or volumes of freighted goods; and it is only from 1778 onwards that Antonio Poussielgues started to submit regularly lists, backdated from 1773, of Venetian ships arriving in Malta <sup>177</sup>. Between 1762 and 1767 about 100,000 planks of *Larese* <sup>178</sup> timber was shipped to Malta from Venice <sup>179</sup>. In 1763-64, which were years of severe bad harvests and grain shortage reaching famine proportions <sup>180</sup>, Malta imported over 15,500 *staia* of grain. Other Venetian merchandise included all types of paper (*carta, carta strazza, carta da scrivere, carta da scrivere fina, carta stampata, carta da navigar, cartone*), books <sup>181</sup>, glass panes, mirrors, crystals, nails, copper, lead, wax, turpentine, linen and wool <sup>182</sup>. The Cinque Savi claimed that a close examination of Venetian exports to Malta during the tax-free period 1762-67, when compared to the next five years when tariff concessions had expired, revealed "only a very slight difference". This was a strong indication, they explained, of the vital necessity for Malta to secure regular supplies — with or without concessions <sup>183</sup>.

Besides, in 1782 the *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia* was still seeking to utilise Venetian trade links with Malta towards a new industrial joint venture. On the 27th September of that year, the Magistracy made overtures to the Venetian consul in Malta for the possibility of having the Order's ships constructed in the Venetian arsenal <sup>184</sup>. Did not the Grandmaster recently attempt to revive the recrudescing Maltese *corso* <sup>185</sup>?

The Magistracy of Trade was in favour of renewing the April Decrees. There was no other country better suited than Malta, they explained, which, in proportion to its slender

means, could readily meet the requirements concerning the promotion of "an active and profitable trade"<sup>186</sup>. However, in view of what were termed as "recent developments"<sup>187</sup>, there were other points that had to be considered before exemptions were renewed. Firstly, a variety of Venetian manufactures "in imitation" of those bought from Germany, particularly *PELLI*, *tele* and *LANA*<sup>188</sup>, could be gradually introduced on the Maltese market in order to stimulate the local industry and to reduce the burden of tax-exemptions<sup>189</sup>. Secondly, regulatory efforts should be made to avoid disparity in prices for the same Venetian commodity. If Venetian timber were undersold from Malta, by way of transit, to Mediterranean and Barbary markets, where it was always in unvarying demand, the credibility of the Venetian product would be subtly undermined and would thus be defeating the purpose of such concessions<sup>190</sup>. In the end, the Cinque Savi proposed a tax-exemption period of

ten years<sup>191</sup>.

Such was the framework within which Veneto-Maltese economic approaches moved during Massimiliano Buzzaccarini Gonzaga's ministry, leading the Order of St John and the Adriatic Republic towards a very close relationship. It was a rewarding process of readjustment for both countries. Venice gained, alongside the other European Powers, a stable position in the neutral, strategically invaluable Maltese principality. The Order of St John found in the Venetian emporium a guaranteed market which it was determined to safeguard at all costs. Pinto's hesitancy to join the papal coalition against the immediate repercussions of the Veneto-Tripolitan Peace Treaty of 1764<sup>192</sup>, and the stringent precautions taken by De Rohan in the 1790s to prevent the recurrence of corsairing hostility in the Levant<sup>193</sup> betrayed an obvious timidity of encroaching upon the Republic's delicate cordiality with Turkey.

#### REFERENCES AND NOTES

AGPV	=	Archivio del Gran Priorato dell'Ordine di Malta, Venice
AIM	=	Archives of the Inquisition, Malta
AOM	=	Archives of the Order of Malta, National Library, Malta
ASV	=	Archivio di Stato, Venice
CSAM	=	Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia
MBG	=	Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia, prima serie, busta 601, Lettere del Commendatore di Malta Massimiliano Buzzaccarini Gonzaga
MCCV	=	Museo Civico Correr, Venice
MV	=	Modo Veneziano
NLM	=	National Library, Malta

1. For a sound bibliography of twentieth century works on the history of the Order of St. John in Rhodes, see J. Mizzi, "A Bibliography of the Order of St John of Jerusalem (1925-1969)", *The Order of St John in Malta with an exhibition of paintings by Mattia Preti Painter and Knight*, Malta 1970, nos. 160-202. Prof. Lionel Butler's long awaited study on the subject is still a *desideratum*. No systematic analysis of the Order's eight-year odyssey (1522-1530) from Rhodes to Malta has yet surpassed R. Valentini, "I Cavalieri di S. Giovanni da Rodi a Malta,

- Trattative diplomatiche", *Archivum Melitense* IX (1935), pp.137-237.
- For the history of Malta before 1530 the standard work is A. Luttrell (ed.) *Medieval Malta: Studies on Malta before the Knights*, London 1975. It is regretted, however, that the economic aspect has only received passing references. The editor's contribution, "Approaches to Medieval Malta", is by far the best modern bibliographical study of the period both in exposition and interpretation.
- The original Bull ceding Malta to the Order of St. John, dated 23 March, 1530, is in AOM 70.
2. M. Borgherini-Scarabellin, "Il Magistrato dei Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia dalla istituzione alla caduta della Repubblica", *Miscellanea di Storia Veneto-Trentina* II (Venice, 1926), pp. 1-148, is a useful and readable survey of the history of the Magistracy.
  3. ASV, CSAM, *prima serie*, busta 601, "Lettere del Commendatore di Malta Massimiliano Buzzaccarini Gonzaga".
  4. He was appointed consul on 22nd March, 1766. AOM 569, f.194v.
  5. ASV, CSAM, *prima serie*, busta 711, 21st April, 1776.
  6. AGPV, busta 166, n. 26.
  7. AOM, f.690
  8. AGPV, busta 166, n. 26, *passim*.
  9. All his letters to Venice were signed "Massimiliano Buzzaccarini Gonzaga", though the "Gonzaga" was rarely appended to his name in the correspondence he received from Venice or in other Venetian documents.
  10. AOM 2166, pp. 284-285.
  11. See Appendix.
  12. AOM 2166, pp. 284-285. AGPV, busta 166, n.26.
  13. ASV, CSAM, *Diversorum*, busta 403, fasc. 76.
  14. AOM 2231, p.6. ASV, MBG, 7th December, 1754.
  15. *Ibid.*
  16. On at least three occasions Massimiliano Buzzaccarini Gonzaga referred to his being grievously afflicted with gout. *Ibid.*, 12th March, 1763; 23rd June, 1766; 3rd August, 1767.
  17. He had left Malta for Venice on 20th May, 1760 and returned on 3rd April, 1761. For information about his journey, see *ibid.*, 14th June, 1760 (from Padua); 7th March, 1761 (from Rome); 17th March, 1761 (from Naples). During his absence from Malta, his cousin Fra Alviero Zazzo acted as Venetian Minister in his stead. *Ibid.*, 14th June, 1760.
  18. ASV, CSAM, *Diversorum*, busta 403, fasc. 76, "Commissione per l'Homme della Repubblica di Venezia in Malta", 25th September, 1754.
  19. See note 29 below.
  20. ASV, MBG, *passim*.
  21. See below.
  22. See below.
  23. The few studies that exist on the commercial history of Malta during the Order's rule deal only with the island's trade relations with individual countries. For Venice see V. Mallia-Milanes, "Some Aspects of Veneto-Maltese Trade Relations in the XVIIIth Century", *Studi Veneziani* XVI (1974), pp.503-553; and the same author's "Malta and Venice in the Eighteenth Century: A Study in Consular Relations", *Studi Veneziani* XVII-XVIII (1975-76), pp.265-320. For France see M. Chaillan, "Le commerce de Malte avec Marseille et la France", *Memoires de l'Insti-*



- tut historique de Provence* (1935), pp.173-199; and J. Godechot, "La France et Malte au XVIIIe", *Revue historique* CCVI (July-September, 1951), pp.67-79. On Anglo-Maltese commercial relations see A.P. Vella, "A Sixteenth Century Elizabethan Merchant in Malta", *Melita Historica* V, 3 (1970), pp.197-238; and V. Mallia-Milanes, "English Merchants' Initial Contacts with Malta: A Reconsideration", *Melita Historica* VI, 4 (1975), pp.342-361. Tunisian trade links with Malta are dealt with by L. Valensi, "Les relations commerciales entre la Régence de Tunis et Malte au XVIIIeme Siecle", *Cahiers de Tunisie* 11 (1963), pp.71-83.
24. See ASV, MBG, 14th April, 19th May, 11th and 25th August, 1st December, 1755; 5th January, 16th February, 1755 MV; 10th and 31st May, 14th, 18th and 26th June, 23rd and 31st July, 2nd December, 1756; 30th January, 1756 MV; 15th March, 1757; 7th April, 1761; 11th January, 1762 MV; 20th May, 19th August, 1763; 7th June, 27th July, 30th August, 1764.
  25. See, for example, *ibid.*, 6th October, 1755.
  26. The author is preparing a paper on the subject.
  27. See previous note.
  28. See note 26 above.
  29. See, for example, ASV, MBG, 10th May, 1756 and 12th August, 1765.
  30. See below.
  31. ASV, MBG, 15th March, 1757.
  32. See below.
  33. ASV, MBG, 22nd March, 19th May, 1756.
  34. *Ibid.*, 14th April, 1755.
  35. *Ibid.*, 5th January, 1755 MV.
  36. *Ibid.*, 10th May, 1756; 27th July, 1764.
  37. ASV, CSAM, *prima serie, busta* 711.
  38. See V. Mallia-Milanes, "Some Aspects...", *loc.cit.*
  39. V. Mallia-Milanes, "Malta and Venice...", p.302.
  40. *Ibid.*
  41. See note 39 above.
  42. See below.
  43. See V. Mallia-Milanes, "The Buona Unione: An Episode in Veneto-Maltese Relations in the late XVIIIth Century", *Journal of the Faculty of Arts, The Royal University of Malta*, IV, 4 (1971), pp.309-326.
  44. ASV, MBG, 1st June, 1761.
  45. As late as 1785 an anonymous traveller to Malta had this to say about cotton production on the island: "Il Cotone è il maggiore prodotto dell'Isola; sorte quali tutto vergine o filato, e le sole manufatture di questa merce si fanno al Gozzo, e consistono in Berette e coperte e calzette. Il celebre M.r de Soufrin (*sic*) aveva fatto negli anni scorsi trasportare a quest'isola una Colonia di 30 indiani: per istabilirvi di que' fini lavori; ma poi da lui stesso fu mandata nelle vicinanze di Parigi, e ne fece un presente al Re." MCCV, *Miscellanea Correr* LXXIX/2654 (unpaginated).
  46. ASV, MBG, 1st June, 1761. V. Mallia-Milanes, "Some Aspects...", p.504. See also *Istruzione per Ordine de' Censori sopra l'Arte Vetraria per la coltivazione del Kali Maggior ec.*, Venice 1780.
  47. ASV, MBG, 1st June 1761.
  48. L. De Boisgelin, *Ancient and Modern Malta* I, London 1804-1805, p.109.
  49. V. Mallia-Milanes, "English Merchants...", p.344.

50. ASV, MBG, 1st June, 1761.
51. See J. Godechot, *Histoire de Malte*, Paris 1952. *Id.*, "La France et Malta...", *loc. cit.*; and M. Chaillan, *op.cit.*
52. ASV, MBG, 24th February, 1761 MV.
53. *Ibid.*
54. *Ibid.*
55. *Ibid.*
56. These adventures may be followed in A. Luttrell, "Malta and Dubrovnik towards the year 1380", *Melita Historica* V, 2 (1969), pp.158-164.
57. See F. B[orlandi], "Corsari maltesi a Ragusa nel Quattro e nel Cinquecento", *Archivio Storico di Malta* VII (1936), pp.243-245.
58. A few excellent studies have been devoted to this theme. P. Earle, *Corsairs of Malta and Barbary*, London 1970; A. Tenenti, *Piracy and the Decline of Venice*, London 1967; P. Cassar, "The Maltese Corsairs and the Order of St. John of Jerusalem", *The Catholic Historical Review* XLVI (1960), (1960), 2, pp.137-156; J. Godechot, "La course maltaise le long des côtes barbaresques à la fin du XVIIIe siècle", *Revue Africaine* XCVI, 430-431 (1952), pp.105-113; and R. Cavaliero, "The Decline of the Maltese Corso in the Eighteenth Century", *Melita Historica* II (1959), pp.224-238.
59. ASV, MBG, 24th February, 1761 MV.
60. *Ibid.*
61. *Ibid.*
62. *Ibid.*
63. *Ibid.*
64. *Ibid.*
65. As the Greek merchant's role in Malta's trade pattern has not yet been submitted to any comprehensive analysis, our knowledge of the subject is still imperfect. The same may be said of Malta's commercial relations with the Levant.
66. See, for example, AOM 461, f.316v; *ibid.*, 481, ff. 281v-282v; *ibid.*, 1197, ff.311-314.
67. P. Earle, *op.cit.*, *passim*.
68. *Ibid.*
69. ASV, MBG, 24th February, 1761 MV.
70. *Ibid.* See also *ibid.*, 10th June, 1765; 6th January, 1765 MV.
71. L. Butler, "The Order of St. John in Malta: An Historical Sketch", *The Order of St. John in Malta with an exhibition.....*, p.41.
72. *Ibid.*
73. NLM, *Library* 23, ff.237v-261.
74. H. Bowen-Jones, J. C. Dewdney, W.B. Fisher, *Malta: Background for Development*, Durham 1960, pp. 133-135.
75. MCCV, *Miscellanea Correr* LXXIX/2664 (unpaginated).
76. For a detailed study of Veneto-Maltese consular relations see V. Mallia-Milanes, "Malta and Venice.....", *loc.cit.*
77. See A. Da Mosto, *L'Archivio di Stato di Venezia*, Rome 1397-40.
78. ASV, CSAM, *Diversorum*, busta 396, fasc. 126, *scrittura* 9, 2nd March, 1761.
79. See B. Pullan (ed.), *Crisis and Change in the Venetian Economy in the 16th and 17th Centuries*, London 1968. *Aspetti e Cause della Decadenza Economica Veneziana nel Secolo XVII*, Venice-Rome 1961.
80. The author is preparing a critical edition of an early eighteenth century description of Malta.

81. See previous note.
82. ASV, CSAM, *Diversorum*, busta 396, fasc. 126, scrittura 9, 2nd March, 1761.
83. See J. Billoud, *Histoire du commerce de Marseille: de 1515 à 1599*, Paris 1951.
84. ASV, CSAM, *Diversorum*, busta 396, fasc. 126, scrittura 9, 2nd March, 1761.
85. *Ibid.*
86. *Ibid.*
87. *Ibid.*
88. On the office and function of the Order's Receiver, see AOM 1683.
89. ASV, CSAM, *Diversorum*, busta 396, fasc. 126, scrittura 9, 2nd March, 1761.
90. *Ibid.* See also ASV, CSAM, busta 752, 18th, 25th April, 26th September, 1761.
91. On the Maltese consul in Fiume, see G. Kobler, *Memorie per la Storia della liburnica città di Fiume II*, Fiume 1896, p.78.
92. ASV, CSAM, *Diversorum*, busta 396, fasc. 126, scrittura 9, 2nd March, 1761.
93. See ASV, CSAM, busta 752, *passim*.
94. See AOM 1518, "Memoria" of 31st October, 1762.
95. ASV, CSAM, *Diversorum*, busta 396, fasc. 126, scrittura 9, 2nd March, 1761.
96. *Ibid.*
97. *Ibid.*
98. Enclosed in "[Copia dei] Capitoli che si propongono per esser confirmati da S.A.Em.a con suo Decreto presentati dal Si.gre Cav.re Buzzaccarini".
99. ASV. MBG, 24th February, 1761 MV and 17th September, 1763.
100. In Malta the Sicilians were considered as co-nationals. So were the Maltese in Sicily. See A. Mifsud, "L'approvvigionamento e l'Università di Malta nelle passate Dominazioni", *Archivum Melitense III* (1918), pp. 163-212.
101. ASV, MBG, 24th February, 1761 MV.
102. *Ibid.*
103. See, in particular, AIM, *Un Giornale Istorico*, f.12.
104. See ASV, CSAM, *prima serie*, busta 711, especially Poussielgues's despatches from 1778 onwards.
105. ASV, MBG, 19th May, 1755.
106. *Ibid.* See also 2nd June, 1755.
107. *Ibid.*, 31st May, 14th June, 23rd July, 1756.
108. *Ibid.*, 1st June, 1761.
109. *Ibid.*, 24th February, 1761 MV.
110. *Ibid.*
111. *Ibid.*
112. *Ibid.*
113. *Ibid.*
114. See note 26 above.
115. *Ibid.*
116. *Ibid.*
117. AOM 1517, Pinto to Sagramoso, 10th August, 1761.
118. ASV, CSAM, *Diversorum*, busta 396, fasc. 126, scrittura 9, 2nd March, 1761.
119. The Receiver, Fra Zenobio de Ricci, was on a mission in Vienna. *Ibid.*
120. AOM 1518, "Memoria", 31st October, 1762.
121. ASV, *Senato, Deliberazioni, Roma Ordinaria, Secreta, reg.* 108, f.190r.
122. *Ibid.*
123. *Ibid.*
124. *Ibid.*, f.193v. See also ASV, CSAM, *prima serie*, busta 937, Al Buzzaccarini, 30th

April, 1762.

125. ASV, CSAM, *Diversorum*, busta 396, fasc. 126, "Malta".
126. "Altro Metodo per la Restituzione del Dazio a tutti li Legnami, che verranno estratti per Malta, qual dovrà farsi dal Consorzio dei Mercanti da Legname", *ibid.*, "Terminazione.....".
127. ASV, CSAM, busta 190, *Scritture* 1762-63, f.15v.
128. *Ibid.*
129. *Ibid.*
130. AGPV, busta 43, 2nd April, 1762, (copia).
131. ASV, CSAM, busta 190, *Scritture* 1762-63, f.15v.
132. *Ibid.*, ff.15v-16r.
133. V. Mallia-Milanes, "Some Aspects...", pp.515-520.
134. ASV, CSAM, busta 190, *Scritture* 1762-63, f.16r.
135. See note 80 above.
136. B. Blouet, *The Story of Malta*, London 1967, pp.124-125.
137. ASV, CSAM, busta 190, *Scritture* 1762-63, f.16r.
138. "Proposizioni del Cav. Buzzaccarini: Capitoli che si propongono per essere confirmati da S.A.E. con suo Decreto". AOM 1518, August, 1763. ASV, MBG, 19th August, 1763.
139. AOM 1518, August 1763. ASV, CSAM, busta 190, f.16v.
140. *Ibid.*
141. *Ibid.* See also ASV, MBG, 18th August, 1763 and ASV, CSAM, *prima serie*, filza 99, f.130.
142. ASV, MBG, 19th August, 1763.
143. ASV, CSAM, busta 190, f.17r.
144. ASV, MBG, 19th August, 10th September, 1763.
145. ASV, CSAM, busta 190, f.17r.
146. *Ibid.*, f.17v.
147. AGPV, busta 43 (unpaginated).
148. The first three, together with Carlo Grech Delicata, had been described in another document as "the names of the pricipal Maltese merchants". *Ibid.*
149. *Ibid.*
150. *Ibid.*, *Scritture* 24th February, 1769. ASV, CSAM, *Diversorum*, busta 396, fasc. 126, *scrittura* 2, 27th September, 1784.
151. Every 3½ Venetian *stata* were equivalent to 1 Maltese *salma*. ASV, MBG, 10th January, 1764 MV. For a definition and value of the *salma* as a unit of weighing grain, see F.F. Olesa Munido, *La Organizacion Naval de les Estados Mediterraneo en Especial de Espana durante los Siglos XVI y XVII*, Madrid 1968, I, pp.246-247.
152. ASV, CSAM, *Diversorum*, busta 396, fasc. 126, *scrittura* 2.
153. *Ibid.*, *scrittura* 9/E, 20th December, 1781.
154. On the history of Denmark, see L. Krabbe, *Histoire de Denemark*, Paris 1950.
155. ASV, MBG, 30th June, 10th August, 1761. On the Danish expedition of 1761-67, see T. Hansen, *Arabia Felix*, London 1964. On its relations with Malta, see *ibid.*, p.75f.
156. See A. Sacerdoti, "La mission a Alger du Consul de Venise Nicolas Rosalem", *Revue Africaine* XCVI (1952), pp.64-104. *Id.*, "Venise et les Regences d'Alger, Tunis et Tripoli 1699-1764", *Revue Africaine* CI (1957).
157. See V. Marchesi, *Tunesi e Venezia nel secolo XVIII*, Venice 1882.
158. See G. Cappovin, *Tripoli e Venezia nel secolo XVIII*, Verbania 1942. F. Corò, *Il*

- Consolato della Repubblica di Venezia a Tripoli dal 1764 al 1797*, Tripoli 1955.
159. See V. Marchesi, "La Repubblica Veneta e il Marocco", *Rivista Storica Italiana* III (1886).
  160. R. Cessi, *Storia della Repubblica di Venezia II*, Milan 1968, p.237.
  161. ASV, MBG, 27th January, 1765 MV.
  164. *Ibid.*, 10th May, 14th June, 23rd July, 1756. See also V. Paradis, *Alger au XVIIIe Siecle*, Algier 1898.
  165. M. Nani Mocenigo, "La marina della Religione di Malta", *Ateneo Veneto* CXXXVIII, 2 (1937), p.81.
  166. See S. Bono, *I corsari barbareschi*, Turin 1964. G. Fisher, *Barbary Legend: War, Trade and Piracy in North Africa*, 1415-1830, Oxford 1957. H.D. de Grammont, "Etudes Algeriennes: La course, l'esclavage et la redemption à Alger", *Revue Historique* XXV-XXV (1884-85). P. Grandchamp, *La Correspondance des Consuls d'Alger*, 1690-1742, Algier 1890. M.S. Anderson, "Great Britain and the Barbary States in the eighteenth Century" *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research* XXIX (1956).
  167. ASV, MBG, 14th April, 1755.
  168. *Ibid.*, 2nd December, 1756.
  169. *Ibid.* See also *ibid.*, 15th March 1757; 11th January, 1762 MV and 30th August, 1764.
  170. See *ibid.*, 12th March, 30th April, 13th May, 1764; 2nd December, 1765; 29th January, 13th February, 1765 MV; 24th March, 21st April, 12th May, and 29th August, 1766.
  171. *Ibid.*, 7th June, 1764.
  172. That is on 6th July, 1781.
  173. ASV, CSAM, *prima serie*, busta 711, 14th July, 1781.
  174. S. Bono, *op.cit.*, p.64.
  175. R.S. Anderson, *Naval Wars in the Levant 1559-1853*, Liverpool 1952, p.310.
  176. See V. Mallia-Milanes, "The Buona Unione", *loc.cit.*
  177. See *id.*, "Some Aspects...", pp.536-43, 552-53.
  178. See G. Boerio, *Dizionario del Dialetto Veneziano*, 2nd Edition, Venice 1856, p.361 *sub voce*.
  179. On Veneto-Maltese timber trade in the eighteenth century, see V. Mallia-Milanes, "Some Aspects.....", pp. 533-536.
  180. *Ibid.*, pp.530-533.
  181. ASV., MBG, despatches from 1764 onwards, *passim*.
  182. ASV, CSAM, busta 909 and busta 910, *passim*.
  183. *Ibid.*, *Diversorum*, busta 396, fasc. 126, *scrittura* 2, 27th September, 1784.
  184. ASV, CSAM, *prima serie*, busta 711, 9th October, 1782.
  185. P. Earle, *op.cit.*, pp.269-270. R. Cavaliero, "The Decline of the Maltese Corso...", pp.224-238.
  186. ASV, CSAM, *Diversorum*, busta 396, fasc. 126, *scrittura* 2, 27th September, 1784.
  187. *Ibid.*
  188. *Ibid.*
  189. *Ibid.*
  190. *Ibid.*
  191. *Ibid.*
  192. AIM, *Corr.* 100, f.278, 16th January, 1765.
  193. ASV, CSAM, *Diversorum*, busta 403, fasc. 76, 21st March, 11th April, 1793.

TABLE A

“Merci soggette al Diritto di Nuovo Imposto oltre il Diritto di Dogana”

ARTICLES	Unit of Measurement	Soudi	Tari	Grani
Coia pelose di Bovi, e Vacche grandi ...	coio	—	2	—
Li Merrani ... ..	coio	—	1	10
Vitelline ... ..	coio	—	—	10
Pelli d'agnello pelose ... ..	cento	—	6	—
Sola e Vacchetta di Ponente e Levante	cantaro	2	—	—
Infodere, ossia Barrane ... ..	Dozana	—	1	—
Camuscie bianche ... ..	dozana	—	1	—
[Camuscie] di colore ad olio ... ..	dozana	—	2	—
Montonine ... ..	dozana	—	2	—
Vitelline ... ..	dozana	—	6	—
Bragotti ... ..	dozana	—	6	—
Alacche rosse e gialle ... ..	dozana	—	6	—
Vacchette di Fiandra ... ..	pelle	—	3	—
Carta da scrivere di Veneria ... ..	cassa	3	—	—
Carta bruna grande da straccio ... ..	ballone	—	1	—
Carta fina, carta reale e castarda ... ..	risma	—	3	—
Carta da campana di Francia ... ..	ballone	2	—	—
Cartone ... ..	cantaro	4	—	—
Cordovane ... ..	dozana	—	4	—
Tabacco in foglia di Levante ... ..	cantaro	2	6	—
Mendicanti ... ..				
Tabacco avana, Spagna ed in carotte	cantaro	2	1	—
d'ogni qualità ... ..	cantaro	7	—	—
Mendicanti ... ..	cantaro	5	—	—
Caffè di Levante ... ..	cantaro	3	—	—
[Caffè] di Ponente ... ..	cantaro	2	4	—
Acquavite ... ..	barile	—	6	—
Sapone in pietra fino ... ..	cantaro	2	—	—
Sapone ordinario ... ..	cantaro	1	—	—
Sapone liquido ... ..	cantaro	—	6	—

TABLE B

“Merci soggette al Diritto dell'Università oltre il Diritto di Dogana”

ARTICLES	Unit of Measurement	Scudi	Tari'	Grani
Cimino dolce, ed agro ... ..	cantaro	—	—	10
Sapone d'ogni specie ... ..	cantaro	—	1	10
Cottone filato ... ..	cantaro	—	2	—
Cottone in lana e cornuto ... ..	cantaro	—	1	—
Cottone con semenza, ed in cocca si riduce in cotone in lana ... ..	cantaro	—	1	—

TABLE C

“Altre [merciè] soggette al solo diritto dell'Università”

ARTICLES	Unit of Measurement...	Scudi	Tari'	Grani
Vino ... ..	Botte di 22 Barili	—	2	10
Diritto d'Abbatia ... ..		—	6	—
Vino musto ... ..	Botte	—	2	—
Diritto d'Abbatia ... ..		—	4	—
Formaggio della Sicilia e Morea ... ..	Cantaro	—	2	—
Casciocavallo ... ..	Cantaro	—	2	—
Formaggio scaldato ... ..	Cantaro	—	2	—
Olio ... ..	Ogni 100 Cantaro	1	—	—
Ogno sorte di carne salata e salami ... ..	Cantaro	—	2	—
Formento ... ..	Salma	—	—	16
Sarde Tonnina ed Ancioie salate ... ..	Barile	—	—	5
Surra ... ..	Barile	—	—	10

TABLE D

## "TARIFFA PER IL CONSOLE RESIDENTE IN MALTA"

	Scudi	Tari	Grani
Per ogni Nave Polacca, o altro Bastimento che naviga con valle quadre, negli alberi di Maestra e Trinchetto ... ..	6	6	10
Per ogni altro Bastimento che naviga con valle quadre nel solo albero di Maestro, o Trinchetto ... ..	3	6	—
Per ogni tartana con poppa piatta, e vele latine ...	1	4	—
Per pinco, pincotto, martingana, pandoria, fregatella, o altro simile bastimento latino ... ..	1	—	—
Per schiffazzo, filuca, bergantino o speronara che portj caicco ... ..	—	8	—
Per schiffazzo tarantino, guzzo, lentello, bergantino, filucca e speronara a due alberi senza caicco ...	—	4	—
Per filucca speronara o altro simile bastimento a ramo, con un albero ... ..	—	2	—

SOURCE: ASV, CSAM, *busta* 943.



## APPENDIX

### MASSIMILIANO BUZZACCARINI GONZAGA'S FOUR QUARTERS OF NOBILITY

ARMA BUZZACCARINA	ARMA LEONI	ARMA PINBIOLA	ARMA CUMANO
Arcoano	Francesco detto Checo	Francesco Engelfreddj	Giacomo
Francesco	Paolo	Pietro Bono	Rinaldo
Arcoano	Leonello	Sebastiano	Giacomo
Agostino	Francesco	Pimbiolo	Gasparo
Lodovico	Gentile	Ottaviano	Giacomo
Francesco	Co. Girolamo	Gio. Fran.co	Claudio
Brunoro	Co. Leonelli	Annibale	Giacomo
Vincislao	Co. Girolamo	Lorenzo D.r	Glaudio
Brunoro =	Beatrice Co. Leoni	Lorenzo	Giacomo
		Girolamo =	Laura Cumano
			Claudio
			Chiara Pimbiolo Engelfreddi
			<i>Madre</i>

SOURCE. AGPV, busta 166, n.26