

SCIENTIA ET RELIGIO

*Studies in memory of Fr George Aquilina OFM
(1939-2012)*

Scholar, Archivist and Franciscan Friar



A Wignacourt Museum Publication
edited by Mgr John Azzopardi
Malta 2014

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The Greek Orthodox Church in Malta after 1530

It is well known that the Church in Malta from around the mid-VIIIth century, and certainly till the Arab invasion of 869 A.D., belonged to the Byzantine Church.¹ It has been argued in the recent publications *Tristia ex Melitogaudio* and *Tristia Rivisited*,² that even if the devastation wrought in Malta by the Arabs may have meant an ethnic, and consequently also a religious, break with pre-869, there need not have been an identical development on the smaller island of Gozo. It is certainly established there that, when Roger II invaded these islands in 1127, he discovered an existing Christian community which, together with its ‘Bishop’, had been labouring under a hateful regime.

More recently and since these publications, confirmation of the continued Greek Christian presence has been found in the two obituaries unearthed in the *Tetraevangelo* of the Parma *Biblioteca Palatina* – MS. Pal. 5 – as announced in the *Sunday Times* of 8 January 2012.³ It is recalled that these obituaries relate to *Nicólaos Protopapàs Máltes* who died on 4 December 1230 and to his wife, Milo (or Milas), who preceded him to the grave a year before, on 21 November 1229. The XIIIth-century form of the name *Máltes* – of Malta – leaves no doubt as to the identity of this island, confirmed by the fact that the codex’s next resting place was Messina, where, by 1457, it came to be deposited in the library of the Monastery of *San Salvatore de Lingua Phari*.⁴ From the Maltese perspective, this is solid evidence of an active Greek Church in XII-XIIIth-century Malta. Nicolaos’ title of *Protopapás* implies the existence of a Greek hierarchy, Greek Christian community and a parochial structure. He would have been the equivalent of a Greek Bishop as, in the XI-XIIIth centuries Constantinople was appointing a *Protopapás* or *Archipresbyter* instead of a Bishop in some of its dioceses. Thus at Palermo, following the replacement by a Latin Archbishop of the Greek Bishop Nicodemus, found in the city by the Normans in 1072, several *Protopapás* are encountered in the XII century, including *Basileios*, *Protopapàs*

¹ T.S. Brown, ‘Byzantine Malta’, in: A.T. Luttrell (ed), *Medieval Malta: Studies on Malta before the Knights* (Rome, 1975) 71-87.

² J. Busuttìl, S. Fiorini, and H.C.R. Vella, *Tristia ex Melitogaudio. Lament in Greek Verse of a XIIth-century Exile on Gozo* (Malta, 2010). S. Fiorini, *Tristia ex Melitogaudio Revisited: Objections, Clarifications, Confirmations* (Malta, 2010).

³ S. Fiorini, ‘Greek Protopapás of Malta’, *The Sunday Times* [Malta] (8 January 2012), 48.

⁴ Article #57 describing the *Tetraevangelo* MS. Pal. 5, in: *Cum picturis ystoriatum: codici devozionali e liturgici della Biblioteca Palatina* (a cura di P. Eleuteri) [Modena: Il Bulino 2001] 268-270.

póleos Panórmou in 1138-1146.⁵ The fact that Nicolaos, *Protopapàs Máltes*, was married shows that he was no celibate Basilian monk and that he was subject to the Constantinian Orthodox Church which had formally separated from Rome in 1054. The fact that he died in 1230 places him at the head of the Maltese Christian community (then, still a minority of the population in Malta, but not in Gozo) decades before the first ever mention of a Latin cleric. This information corroborates fully the thesis in *Tristia* where it is shown that the Maltese Church continued to be Greek, as it had been before the Arab conquest. It confirms earlier data of the 1270s and of the turn of the XIVth century,⁶ showing that the links were with the Patriarchate of Constantinople, a Church which, under the pressure of Latinization, especially after the Angevin interlude, succumbed almost completely to Rome, so that by the mid-XVth century the precious liturgical *Tetraevangelo*, no longer needed, was handed over to the nearby Basilian Monastery in Messina. This situation is exactly paralleled not only by what happened in Sicily,⁷ but, more significantly, by what happened in Pantelleria at the time, where Bresc notes evidence for a Greek monastery that survived from before the Arab conquest and was restored by Roger II in 1115 and where the Greek rite was still in evidence in the XVth century.⁸

By way of summing up, a feasible working hypothesis for the revamping of the Church in sub-Islamic times, is that in the XII-XIIIth centuries the Christians in these islands belonged to the Greek Orthodox Church headed by its *Protopapàs* and organized in one or more parishes. The Mdina Cathedral was as yet nonexistent, judging by the document of 1299 which speaks of it as if under construction, but the Cathedral Chapter at the head of a small nucleus of other priests was being formed, serving especially the Latin enclave that was the *Castrum Maris* with its two churches and its garrison of some 200 soldiers and their families as described in Giliberto's report of 1241.⁹ It is also to be concluded

⁵ Busuttill / Fiorini / Vella, lxix, fn. 156 for details. Likewise, at Oppido in Calabria, Nicolaos *Protopapàs Sikelías* active in around 1050 (J.-M. Martin, 'La contea di Sicilia e l'Africa', in: G. de' Giovanni-Centelles (ed.), *Ruggero I Gran Conte di Sicilia: 1101-2001* (Rome: Istituto Italiano dei Castelli 2007) 105-123, esp. p. 113). For several occurrences of a *Protopapàs* in Calabria during the XI-XIII centuries, cf. A. Guillou, *Studies on Byzantine Italy* (London: Variorum 1970), IX: 'Inchiesta sulla popolazione greca della Sicilia e della Calabria nel medio evo'; grateful thanks to Prof. E.A. Mallia for indicating this reference.

⁶ Reference is made to the presence, in this transitional period, of married Greek clerics (one of whom is surnamed *Gaoutes* / *Gauci* / the Gozitan) and members of the Latin clergy, side by side in equal numbers, authenticating the copy of the *Tristia* manuscript: Busuttill / Fiorini / Vella, xvi-xvii.

⁷ M. Scaduto S.J., *Il Monachismo Basiliano nella Sicilia Medievale. Rinascita e Decadenza: sec. XI-XIV* (Roma: Edizioni di 'Storia e Letteratura' 1947).

⁸ H. Bresc, 'Pantelleria entre l'Islam et la chrétienté', *Cahiers de Tunisie*, XIX (1971) 105-127, esp. p. 109.

⁹ This argument is elaborated, in S. Fiorini, 'The triple strand of the liturgical tradition of the Church in Malta: Byzantine, Roman, Gallican', *Melita Theologica* (2014).

that the mid-XVth century wraps up what can be termed as Phase I of the Greek Orthodox Church in Malta that had started in the mid-VIIIth century, if not before. But now we come to:

Phase II: The Church after 1530

A second phase of the intimate relationship between this island and Greek Orthodoxy surfaces in 1530 when the Greek Church received an important boost with the arrival of the Rhodiots in Malta. This immigration of some 500 individuals represented yet another wave of Christian migration to the Central Mediterranean region under Turkish pressure on the Levant. This phenomenon had been apparent for a century and especially since the fall of Constantinople to the Turks in 1453 followed by the Albanian influx into the South of Italy and Sicily after the collapse of their valiant hero and leader, Scanderbeg.¹⁰ These migrants' predominant religious affiliation was to the Orthodox Church of Constantinople although, in the case of the Rhodiots who had been living under the regime of the Order of St John for two centuries, many, if not all, had acknowledged allegiance to Rome. In order to understand how this mixed crowd functioned and ticked we need first to focus on them in the context of their homeland. As Luttrell explains, the Latin occupation of Rhodes was largely peaceful and the major reason for this successful integration was an acceptable religious accommodation. In particular, arrangements concerning religion were governed by an agreement made at the time of surrender in 1309. The Rhodians evidently retained the Greek rite and at least some ecclesiastical property, but they had formally to acknowledge papal supremacy and the overall control of ecclesiastical matters and appointments by the Master and Convent of the Hospital. The Latins took over the Greek cathedral and any other churches that lay within the *collachium* and Latin churches were established in the *borgo* and outside the city walls. However, the Greeks retained many churches and monasteries, including the several parishes referred to.

¹⁰ G. Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State* (New Brunswick / New Jersey: Rutgers University Press 1999) 565-7.

TABLE
The Greek Parish Churches within the City of Rhodes and its Suburb:
1440-1450

Name	Description	Doc.	Date	Archival Ref.
Hagios Athanasios	Parochialis ¹¹	125	26.vii.1440	AOM 354, f. 270
Panagia Eucolitissa	Cappella	144	19.ii.1445	AOM 356, f. 228
Panagia Blacheronitissa	Cappella	159	15.ii.1446	AOM 358, ff. 237 ^v -8
Panagia tis Metropolis	Metropolis	162	10.xii.1446	AOM 359, f. 213
Kyra Alistheni	Cappella	163	26.iii.1447	AOM 359, ff. 216 ^v -7
Hagios Symeon	Cappella	215	13.vii.1450	AOM 362, f. 183
Panagia i Paramythia	Cappella	219	29.viii.1450	AOM 362, f. 183 ^v
Hagios Eleutherios	Cappella	220	3.ix.1450	AOM 362, f. 183 ^v

[Source: Z.N. Tsirpanlis, *Unpublished documents concerning Rhodes and the South-East Aegean Islands from the Archives of the Order of St John: 1421-1453* (Rhodes, 1995) to which the document numbers (column 3) refer.]

There was little sign of any attempt at conversion and, indeed, proselytization would have been difficult. Thus, it is known that in 1436 the Latin archbishop, who was actually a Greek from Constantinople, was licensed by the Pope to preach and celebrate Mass in Greek for the sake of the Rhodian Uniates – that is, those Orthodox Greeks who became subject to the Roman Catholic Church – who could not understand Latin, and for the conversion of other Greek schismatics.¹²

Against this background one can understand how the colony that followed the knights out of Rhodes in 1522 and as far as Birgu in 1530 was representative of all these religious elements: Latin Roman Catholics, Greek Uniates subject to Rome and Greek Orthodox Schismatics. It also explains the interest the Byzantine Church took in this community. It is clear that the Greek Orthodox Church did not dismiss these islands from their jurisdiction with the Arab take-over and,

¹¹ The Greek term *paroikia* derives from the verb *paroikeo*, meaning ‘to dwell besides (close by)’, hence stressing the notion of ‘nearness’ of the church. For the equivalence of the terms *capella* = *paroikia*, cf. Du Cange’s lexicon, citing *Statuta Communia Bononiensia* (1250-67). Note, further, that in the context of Rhodes, the rector of the parish-church of St Athanasios is called *cappellanus* as also are the rectors of the other *cappelle*.

¹² A.T. Luttrell, ‘The Greeks of Rhodes under Hospitaller Rule: 1306-1421’, *Rivista di Studi Bizantini e Neoellenici*, n.s. 29 (1992) 193-223, esp. 207-8. Z.N. Tsirpanlis, ‘Cenni sulla storia religiosa di Cipro, Rodi e isole minori durante il periodo latino’, in: L. Vaccaro (ed.), *Storia Religiosa della Grecia* (Milano: ITL 2002) 141-165.

indeed, continued to support their presence here well into the XVIIth-century as is evident from what has already been said here and from the fact that the *Notitiae Episcopatumum* of Byzantium continue to show Malta as dependent on Constantinople in 1621.¹³ Doubtlessly, the 1530 immigration of some 400 Rhodiots, many of whom were Greek, must have boosted their motivation as now the island could be viewed as fertile missionary ground. But, as Fiaccadori, who looked into the situation, explains, the 1621 mention was not as Brown would have it that they ‘continued to refer to Malta and the other Sicilian bishoprics long after they had passed out of the jurisdiction of the Patriarch of Constantinople [because] based on an earlier list’, but because they were still actively catering for these dioceses.¹⁴

In view of the hard reality of a strong Greek Orthodox presence in the South of Italy, the Holy See had come to accept the *status quo* and was led to take a more accommodating stance towards the ‘schismatics’, granting them rights and freedoms in Italy which, however, only came to an abrupt end with the Council of Trent in 1564, even if in Orthodox eyes this initial *rapprochement* of the Holy See was viewed as ‘politically motivated’, judging by the contents of a *Rapporto sull’inganno dello scellerato Papa*, in which His Holiness *abbia tratto in inganno gli ortodossi Bulgari ed abbia istituito per loro un patriarcato di Ochrida*, vying with *Costantinopoli*. These developments are discernible in a clutch of documents dated from 1548 onwards, made known by Vittorio Peri in a series of publications,¹⁵ in which Malta figures as well.

It appears that during a re-organization of the Byzantine Church in the second half of the XVIth century, these islands were placed under the authority of the Oriental Metropolitan of Agrigento who, in turn was “suffragan” of the Archbishop of Ochrid in Macedonia. [This Maltese connexion with Ochrid is still remembered there in touristic promotional publicity literature.]¹⁶ Proof of the Orthodox activity in Malta comes from a document dated 7 June 1555 from Agrigento which shows how Paphnutius, the Melchite Metropolitan of Agrigento, then dependent on the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of Sinai, came to

¹³ Brown, 81.

¹⁴ G. Fiaccadori, ‘Byzantina Melitensia’, *Annali della Facoltà di Lettere e Filosofia dell’Università degli Studi di Milano*, LXIII/iii (2010) 337-348.

¹⁵ V. Peri, ‘Chiesa latina e Chiesa greca nell’Italia posttridentina [1564-1596]’, *La Chiesa Greca in Italia dall’VIII al XVI secolo*, 3 vols., a cura di M Maccarrone et al. (Padova: Antenore 1973), vol. I, 271-469; Idem, *Chiesa Romana e ‘Rito’ Greco. G.A. Santoro e la Congregazione dei Greci [1566-1596]*, (Brescia: Paideia 1975); Idem, ‘I metropolitani orientali di Agrigento: La loro giurisdizione in Italia nel XVI secolo’, *Bisanzio e l’Italia. Raccolta di studi in memoria di Agostino Pertusi* (Milano: Vita e Pensiero 1982) 274-321.

¹⁶ <http://www.ochrid.com.mk/history>.

Malta to ordain the Greek cleric Leontius, son of Stephanos Fundomali, to the order of lector.¹⁷ [The elder Fundomali, a tailor by profession, was, in fact, a rich, prominent and respected member of the Greek Rhodiot community of Birgu.]¹⁸ Furthermore, in July 1566, Paisios, Archbishop of Ochrid, transferred the Metropolitan Timoteus from Korçë in Albania to the eparchy of Italy including the territories *Sikelias kai Melites*. Little wonder that all this Greek activity, whose tenacity was still bothering Bishop Alpheran in the XVIIIth century, should prompt the Inquisitor Dusina in 1575 to send to Cardinal Giulio Antonio Santoro, President of the recently founded *Congregazione dei Greci*, a memorandum – hitherto unnoticed in Malta – entitled *Haereses Graecorum Melitae* (cf. Appendix, Doc. I). As also appears from the original 1575-report (f. 128v) of Dusina – who, incidentally, turns out to have been a Dominican friar – one of his complaints was that the Greek Papás used to procure the Sacrum Chrisma, not from the Latin bishop of Malta, but, in spite of the distances, insisted on bringing it all the way *a suis praelatis orientalibus* with the consequence that it was hardly ever changed and, by 1575, had turned rancid. This information should clarify the doubts raised by Chetta-Schirò as to the ‘Orthodoxy’ or otherwise of the Greek community in XVIth-century Malta; he makes the unwarranted assertion that *Rodi all’epoca dei Cavalieri era unita nella fede a Roma*.¹⁹

The Mount Sinai connexion is interesting. From information kindly passed on to me by my late friend Fr George Aquilina (to whom this work is dedicated) it transpires that, in her will of 1584, Catherina Calamia *dicta Grugno Ordinis Dive Marie Jesu*, probably a terciaria, made bequests to the Church of *Sancta Catherina Montis Sinai* and to that in Valletta *Dive Marie Lemonitra*.²⁰ More significantly, on 14 April 1600, Papas Emmanuel Metaxí ratified in front of Notary Andreas Albano an agreement made with two Greek Basilian monks from the Monastery of St Catherine on Mount Sinai whereby these monks were to take over the Damascene Church in Birgu (Appendix, Doc. II). The contract clarifies that Metaxí was not only the parish priest of the Eleimonitria Church in Valletta,²¹ but also rector of the Damascene Church in Birgu, sited within the grounds of the Cemetery of St Lawrence. Metaxí, who was getting on in years, could not cope very well with the running of two parishes on opposite shores of the harbour, so that he had been looking around for some suitable pastor who could take

¹⁷ S. Cusa, *I diplomati greci ed arabi di Sicilia*, vol. 1 (Palermo: Lao 1868) 685-6.

¹⁸ S. Fiorini, ‘The Rhodiot Community of Birgu, a Maltese City: 1530-c.1550’, *Library of Mediterranean History*, I (1994) 194, 204, 205, 212, 219, 226.

¹⁹ F. Chetta-Schirò, *Chiese e Rito Greco in Malta* (Malta: Tipografia del ‘Malta’ 1930) 8-9.

²⁰ N[otarial] A[rchives] V[alletta] Not. Francesco Imbroli R316/3 (27.viii.1584) ff. 835-842v, esp. ff. 837v-8.

²¹ It is to be noted that the brothers, Papas Angelinus and Papas Manoli Metaxi, are known to have purchased 425 sqr. canes of land in Valletta on 7.xi.1569 (NAV Not. Placido Abela R4/2, #140).

over the responsibility of one of them. The golden opportunity for Metaxí came when the two Greek Orthodox monks from Sinai, the priest Nicodemus Discopoulos and the sub-deacon Mercurios Choreftis, were on a visit to Malta collecting alms for their monastery. His proposal to them was accepted under various conditions listed in the contract. On his part, Metaxí listed various benefices and properties of the Damascene Church which he was to hold on to as usufructuary for the duration of his life. From these revenues he was to give the Basilian monks 10 *scudi* annually for their services. On their part, the monks, acting on behalf of the Archbishop and Monastery of Mount Sinai,²² were to establish a grange or convent as residence for the monks, dependent on Mount Sinai, on land already earmarked for this purpose. This new Basilian institution was to be subject to the custom of Mount Sinai of being visited every two years by an *hyconomus sive prior* to see to its proper running. It is highly interesting that (i) the hand-over was being made with the consent of the Bishop of Malta [Gargallo] in whose palace in Valletta the deed was drawn up, (ii) the transfer included also all icons within the church, presumably including the *Damascena*, (iii) the Valletta Church in 1600 is being called, not *Damascena* but, *Eleimonitria*, and was said to be founded by *juspatronatus* of the Calamia family, and (iv) the monks were Orthodox Schismatics acting on behalf of their Archbishop of Mount Sinai.²³ It is not clear how one can square Bishop Gargallo's attitude towards the schismatics in 1600 in view of the posttridentine relations between the Holy See and the Oriental Church's bishops, especially the *facoltà riconosciute nel 1562 e revocate gli nel 1564 da Pio IV ed abolite definitivamente nel 1566 da Pio V*.²⁴ Doubtlessly, in all this, Gargallo was safeguarding his position by the blanket clause in the contract whereby the deal would stand if and only if papal confirmation for it was forthcoming.

Nor is this the only sign of activity of Basilians in Malta in the XVIth – not XIIIth – century. On 19 May 1628 present in Valletta we find Soror Claritia Brunet *Tertiaria Ordinis Sancti Basilii*.²⁵ As to the Damascene Madonna titular, this appears to have been still referring only to the Birgu Church in January 1614,²⁶

²² On the Orthodox Monastery of Mount Sinai, A Marinescu, "The Hierarchs' Catalogue of Monastery St Catherine in Mount Sinai", *Études Byzantines et Post-Byzantine*, IV (Bucuresti: Trinitas 2014) 267-289. In 1600, the Archbishop was Laurentios [1592-1617].

²³ G. Aquilina, 'Santa Katarina ta' Lixandra u t-tliet tempji ewlenin f'għiehha', *Santa Katarina Vergni u Martri: Festi Centenarji 305-2005. Programm tal-Festa 2005* (Zurrieq, Socjetà Muzikali S. Katarina) 155-169. Cf. Appendix I. Interestingly, Catherina Calamia bequeathed a small icon of the *Eleimonitria* to this church: *quatum parvum in quo extat depincta S. Maria Lemonitria*: NAV Not. Francesco Imbroll R316/3, f. 837^v.

²⁴ Peri 1982, 287-290.

²⁵ NAV Not. Pietro Vella R476/10 (19.v.1628) ff. 312^v et seq. Reference kindly provided by Fr George Aquilina.

²⁶ NAV Not. Andrea Albano R12/21 (31.i.1614, ind. XII) ff. 218^v-221^v; R12/14(I) (18.v.1599) ff. 488^v-491^v; R12/20 (24.xi.1612) ff. 710-712^v, (2.iv.1612) ff. 343^v-345.

but seems to have been moved to Valletta by May of that year.²⁷ Nevertheless, the Birgu Church continued to be referred to as *Damascena* long after this transfer, so that there were two Damascene Churches in 1694, one in Valletta and one in Birgu.²⁸

APPENDIX

Document I

Biblioteca Nazionale, Napoli, MS. Branc. I B 6. ff. 210 –211^v (1575).

Mgr Pietro Dusina's report to the Holy Office concerning the 'heresies' and the Greek Rite in Malta.

Published in Peri 1975, 212-3, Doc. II.

[f. 210 col. a]

Haereses quas sacerdotes Graeci Melitae habitantes hactenus credidisse confessi sunt:

Non credunt purgatorium;

Credunt Spiritum Sanctum procedere ex solo Patre, non autem ex Filio;

Non credunt quatuor minores ordines esse necessarios, et ideo qui ad sacerdotium promoventur illos non suscipiunt;

Credunt Summum Pontificem esse caput Ecclesiae occidentis tantum, non autem orientalis, cuius caput asserunt Graecos Patriarchas existere;

Credunt Conciliis Niceno, Constantinopolitano, Ephesino et Calchedonen. ac auctoritatibus Sanctorum Patrum Graecorum contra illos vero aut concilia predicta non credunt, nec Concilio Tridentino nec decretalibus Summorum Pontificum;

Credunt non esse necessarium conficere chrisma quotannis;

Non credunt sacerdotem habere potestatem absolvendi poenitentes et ideo in confessione utuntur illa forma: Parcat tibi Dominus etc.

[col. b]

Ritus quos more suo sacerdotes Graeci Melitae degentes inter alios multos, ut ex confessione illorum obiter fuit habitum, servant hi sunt:

Sacramentum Confirmationis ministratur a simplicibus sacerdotibus;

²⁷ NAV Not. Gian Dom. Pace R387/1 (15.v.1614) ff. 315^v-316; Not. Antonio Abela R1/9 (2.x.1621) ff. 39^v-43.

²⁸ Archives of the Maltese Jesuit Province, Naxxar, Visitatio Pastoralis Cocco Palmeri 1692-98, ff. 264^v, 292.

Sacerdotes capiunt chrisma ab episcopis Graecis et illud conservant per multos annos donec durat absque eoque singulis annis renovetur;

Septem sacerdotes si tot haberi possunt vel in minori numero prout copia datur, praevis epistola, evangelio ac quibusdam orationibus quae ab omnibus sigillatim dicuntur sacramentum extremae unctionis ministrant;

Oleum pro ministratione Sacramenti Extremae Unctionis quo tempore ministrandum fuerit a sacerdote benedicitur;

Sacerdotes baptizant in aqua comuni facta trina immersione, per haec verba: *Baptizetur servus Christi;*

Sacerdotes absolvunt poenitentes hac absolutionis forma servata: *Parcat tibi Dominus etc.;*

Non recipiunt aliquam approbationem

[f. 210^v col. a]

ab Episcopis Latinis ad audiendas confessiones;

Cum matrimonium contrahitur sponsi sumunt Eucharistiam et statim, si ipsi abstinere noluerint, carnaliter copulantur;

Servant festa a Graecis servari debita, non autem illa quae sunt de praecepto apud Latinos;

Diebus Sabbati vescuntur carnibus, hoc tamen habent in recompensam quatuor quadragesimarum quas ipsi servant;

Vigilias Latinorum non custodiunt nec in illis ieiunant et praeter tres vigilias, Paschatis, videlicet, Nativitatis Domini et Epiphaniae nullas alias servant;

Non suscipiunt quatuor ordines minores;

Uti Graeci obediunt eorum Patriarchae Graeco in omnibus quae sibi mandantur.

FINIS

[f. 211] blank

[f.211^v]

Haereses et ritus Graecorum degentium* Melitae transmissae per R. P. D. Petrum Dusinam Prothonotarium Apostolicum Inquisitorem et Visitatorem Apostolicum ibidem ad Sanctum Officium Inquisitionis – 1575.

* *Peri* (p. 213 fn. 1) states that the words from 'degentium' till the end were added by Cardinal. G. A. Santoro in his own hand. He also claims (*ibid.* p. 208), without declaring his sources, that Dusina was a Dominican friar.

Document II

NAV Not. Andrea Albano R12/14(II) ff. 384^v-389^v (14.iv.1600).

The concession, with the approval of Bishop Gargallo, by Papàs Emanuel Metaxì to the Greek Monastery of St Catherine in Mount Sinai of the Birgu Damascene Church and all its belongings.

Relaxacio Ecclesie pro Monasterio Montis Sinai contra Papatum Emanuelem Metaxi.

In nomine Domini nostri Jesu Christi. Amen.

Anno a Nativitate eiusdem millesimo sexcentesimo mense Aprilis die vero XIII^o eiusdem mensis XIII^e indicionis, pontificatus SS. in Christo Patris et Domini nostri Domini Clementis divina providentia Pape octavi anno eius nono.

Tenore presentis publici instrumenti cunctis pateat evidenter et sit notum quod coram Ad[modum] Illustre et Reverendissimo Domino Fratre Don Thoma Gargallo, Dei et Apostolice Sedis gratia Episcopo Melevitano et regio consiliario ac Commende de Barbens Commendatario, personaliter constitutus Reverendus Papas Emanuel Metaxi, presbiter grecus, rector sive cappellanus in ritu greco parrochialis ecclesiae unius Sancte Marie sub vocabulo della Damascheni posite in Cimiterio Sancti Laurentii Victoriose Civitatis, alterius vero sub (sic) Sancte Marie sub vocabulo della Helemonitria posite in Civitate Vallette fundate imperpetuum jus patronatus ab heredibus quondam de Calamia (sic) mihi notus sponte exposuit quod cum exponens ipse a pluribus annis infra habuisset curam cultus et divinorum officiorum dictarum ambarum ecclesiarum et similiter animarum dictis ecclesiis subditarum in et sub dicto ritu greco, ingentibus quidem persone laboribus stante locorum distantia et senili exponentis aetate et non valens ulterius, ali[o]que suae conscientiae detrimento et periculo, utreque ecclesiae et populo curam adhibere et satisfacere, maxime in celebratione missarum [f. 385] pro defunctis que in utraque ecclesia pro plurium benefactorum salute celebrande sunt in ferialibus diebus, jam diu obtavit comoditatem alicuius presbiteri vel cuiuslibet alterius religiosi ritus greci habere ut possit sibi alteram ecclesiam renuntiare et ipsum remanere in cura alterius solius, et cum noviter (favente Domino) advenerint ad hanc insulam duo Reverendi Patres Religiosi dicti ritus greci Venerandi Monasterii Sanctae Catherinae Montis Sinay Ordinis Sancti Basilii nominati, alter Pater Nicodemus Discopulo presbiter et alter Mercurius Choreftis subdiaconus, missi ab Ad[modum] Illustre et Reverendissimo Domino Archiepiscopo Montis Sinay, et a Multum Reverendis Patribus Congregationis dicti Conventus ad petendum et colligendum

elemosinam pro dicto conventu, quibus Reverendis Patribus, exponens ipse significaverit eius intentionem et voluntatem et ultimo eis rogaverit et requisiverit ut velint nomine dicti eorum conventus Archiepiscopi et congregationis acceptare dictam Ecclesiam Sancte Marie Damascheni positam in dicta Victoriosa Civitate in conventum sive grangiam dicti eorum Monasterii Montis Sinay cum omnibus et singulis suis redditibus, utilitatibus et elemosinis acquisitis et aquirendis, fulcitam cum suis imaginibus, jocalibus, libris, vestimentis et aliis guarnimentis cultui divinatorum offitiorum dictae ecclesiae necessariis et in ea vacare et quotidie offitiare prout in aliis ecclesiis et grangiis dicti Monasterii [f. 385^v] Montis Sinay, tam orientalibus quam occidentalibus hactenus offitiati consuetum est. Qui Reverendi presbiter et subdiaconus predicti, cognita mente et voluntate ipsius exponentis, et actenta eius requisitione et rogamine acceptantes eorum nomine ac nomine et pro parte dicti eorum conventus Archiepiscopi et congregationis oblationem ipsius exponentis devenerunt cum eo coram dicto Reverendissimo Domino Episcopo Melevitano ad infrascripta omnia et singula, videlicet:

Reverendus Quod dictus Dominus Papas Emanuel Metaxi tenore presentis de sua certa scientia, deliberate et consulto et de sua mera et libera voluntate renuntiavit et renuntiat ac dimisit et dimictit supradictis Reverendis Patribus Nicodemo Discopulo et Mercurio Choreftis, presentibus et ab eo recipientibus ac acceptantibus eorum nomine et dicti eorum conventus Archiepiscopi et congregationis me quoque notario pro eis stipulante, dictam Ecclesiam Sancte Marie sub vocabulo della Damascheni cum omnibus et singulis predictis suis introytibus, redditibus, elemosinis et bonis mobilibus et stabilibus, jocalibus, imaginibus, libris, guarnimentis et quibuscumque aliis juribus et pertinentiis omnibus et singulis habitis et habendis ac acquisitis et aquirendis, ubique existentibus et melius apparentibus ad dictam ecclesiam quocumque et qualitercumque spectantibus et pertinentibus, salvo tamen et reservato in omnibus et per omnia auctoritate, consensu et confirmatione Sancte Sedis Apostolice et non alias, aliter nec alio modo que [f. 386] que (*sic*) reservatio censeatur in principio, medio et fine presentis instrumenti ac repetita in quolibet capite et clausula ipsius instrumenti, sine qua ad presen[s] instrumentum nullatenus devenissent et non aliter. Salvis quoque et reservatis ipsi Reverendo Papati Emanuelli stipulanti una candela durante sua vita, in jure recognitionis, sibi danda quolibet anno per dictos patres in festo Assumptionis Beate Semper Virginis Marie et facultate celebrandi missam in dicta ecclesia in dicto festo, nec non infrascriptis bonis et redditibus, videlicet:

Scutis quindecim annualibus juxta formam bulle apostolice debitis per capitale scutorum centum quinquaginta per Spectabilem Ju[ris] D[octorem] Dominum

Joannem Angelum de Anastasio, vigore publici contractus celebrati u[t asseritur] in actis Magnifici Notarii MarcAntonii Chiappara die //...//, sive sc. 15
Item, in aliis scutis decem annualibus juxta formam bulle apostolice per Magistrum(?) Julium Delia per capitale scutorum centum vigore publici contractus celebrati u[t asseritur] in actis Magnifici Notarii Joannis Dominici Spitieri die //...//, sive sc. 10
Item, in aliis scutis sex annualibus juxta formam bulle debitis per Magnificum Jacobum Metaxi per capitale scutorum sexaginta vigore publici contractus celebrati ut asseritur in actis Magnifici Notarii Joannis Luce Gauci die //...//, sive sc. 6
[f. 386^v] Item, aliis scutis quatuor censualibus debitis per Magistrum Crispinum Fava, sive sc. 4
Item, alio scuto uno debito ab Antonio Zammit vigore legati quondam Francisci Pizuni, sive sc. 1
Item, aliis scutis duobus annualibus relictis per quondam Antoninum Dupriuri, sive sc. 2
Item, scuto uno et tarenis sex debitis per Braytum Carceppo, relictis a Magnifica Aloysia Famigliomeno, sive sc. 1.6
Item, uno loco domorum in hac Civitate Vallette in quarterio furnorum donato per Dominam Dianam Miraglia vigore publici contractus in actis meis diei //...//;
Item, uno horreo sive magazzino posito in marittima dicte Victoriose Civitatis relicto per quondam Spectabilem Melac;
Item, quidam sito vacuo cum una cisterna posito similiter in dicta Victoriosa Civitate legato per quondam Catherinam Zaccaria;
Item, una tertia parte unius magazzeni positi in dicta Victoriosa Civitate relicta per quondam Chiantram,
Quorum bonorum et annualium reddituum supranominatorum et reservatorum ipse Reverendus Papas Emanuel sit et remaneat usufructuarius durante sua vita tantum et dumtaxat, quo mortuo, usufructus predictus consolidetur cum proprietate et sic revertatur et perveniat ad dictam [f. 387] Ecclesiam della Damascheni et per consequens ad Reverendos Patres Montis Sinay commoraturis et offitiaturis in dicta Ecclesia della Damascheni inperpetuum, presentibus dictis Reverendis Patre Nicodemo et Mercurio et consentientibus ac aquiescentibus omnibus quibus supra presenti reservationi. Habita consideratione tot laborum ipsius dicti donatoris adhibitorum in cura et cultu dicte ecclesie et maxime quia contemplatione ipsius de Metaxi dicta bona et redditus fuerint relicta et donata dicte ecclesie a personis consanguineis et devotis ipsius de Metaxi, habita quoque consideratione plurium beneficiorum et benefactorum per ipsummet Dominum de Metaxi factorum in dicta ecclesia, de et ex quibus redditibus su[pr]a reservatis,

ipse Reverendus Papas Emanuel teneatur et sic promisit seque sollemniter obligavit singulis annis durante dicta sua vita dare et solvere ut bancus dictis Reverendis Patribus Nicodemo et Mercurio presentibus et stipulantibus, vel aliis qui pro tempore extiterint, vacaverint et offitiaverint in dicta Ecclesia della Damascheni, me notario pro eis stipulante, scuta decem de tarenis XII pro scuto in pecunia numerata et ut bancus in dicto festo Assumptionis Semper Virginis Marie, incipiendo primam [f. 387^v] solutionem facere in prima festivitate Assumptionis post confirmationem dicte Sedis Apostolice et continuando donec vixerit sine aliqua juris et facti exceptione et contradictione.

Et e converso, dicti Reverendi Pater Nicodemus et Mercurius, tenore presentis se obligantes, tam nominibus eorum propriis quam etiam nominibus et pro parte dicti Reverendissimi Domini Archiepiscopi, conventus et congregationis predicte teneantur dictam Ecclesiam sub vocabulo della Damascheni adherire(?) et in conventum seu grangiam dicti Monasterii Montis Sinay capere et gubernare et de ea eiusque bonis, redditibus et juribus suis omnibus et singulis curam adhibere officia divina et missas, tam pie ac devote fundatas quam alias pro cultu dicte ecclesie in diebus dominicalibus et aliis festivitatibus sollemnibus et de precepto ac ab(...) in dicta ecclesia celebrari solitas et consuetas, celebrare et celebrari facere juxta ritum grecum et omnia que spectant et pertinent ad cultum Dei in dicta ecclesia et ad curam animarum que dicte ecclesie sunt et fuerint subdite facere et adimplere. Insuper, et fabricari facere conventum in sito eis jam oblato, pro fratrum stantia et habitatione, et denique [f. 388] beneficari dictam ecclesiam in omnibus quibus opus habeat et singulis annis duobus juxta laudabiles mores et consuetudines dicti Monasterii Montis Sinay creare facere et transmittere ad hanc insulam hyconumum sive priorem pro regimine dicte ecclesie et conventus, et denique rathificari facere presens instrumentum in omnibus et per omnia posita in eo ja(...)a per dictum Reverendum Dominum Archiepiscopum et dictos Reverendos Patres congregationis dicti eorum Monasterii per instrumentum publicum et autenticum omnibus sollemnitatibus et clausulis necessariis et opportunis munitum et roboratum et dictum instrumentum sive eius exemplum autenticum consignare et tradere hic Melite in manibus dicti Reverendissimi Episcopi Melivetani seu Reverendi Papatis Emanuelis infra duos annos continuos et completos postquam Sanctissimus Dominus noster Papa confirmaverit presens instrumentum et autenticum et consensum suum in eo prestiterit in antea enumerandis. Et, secuta prelibati Sanctissimi Domini nostri confirmatione, teneantur ipsi Reverendi Pater Nicodemus et Mercurius seu alii qui tunc fuerint in dicta ecclesia cabreum seu inventarium manu publici notarii conficere de omnibus bonis, redditibus, jocalibus et omnibus aliis que sunt et fuerint [f. 388^v] dicte ecclesie et ad eam

spectant et <pertinent> spectabunt. Et similiter de omnibus oneribus tam celebrationis missarum quam aliorum divinorum offitiorum in dicta ecclesia pie et devote relictis adeo ut omni futuro tempore habeatur et haberi possit cognitio bonorum, reddituum et jurium dicte ecclesie et similiter onera et obligationes eiusdem et non aliter. Et pro modo, dictus Reverendus Papas Emanuel dedit et consignavit ipsis Reverendis Patribus presentibus et confitentibus ab eo habuisse unum calicem argenteum valoris scutorum viginti, aliquos libros missarum pro diversis offitiis et unam imaginem Dive Marie (...)tam argentatam et omnes illas imagines et picturas existentes in dicta ecclesia que latius describentur et annotentur per cabreum seu inventarium faciendo per modum ut supra. Postremo vero et ultimo, ipsi contrahentes juraverunt et jurant in manibus prelibati <Ill.> Reverendissimi Domini Episcopi Melivetani, presenti, instrumentum non intervenisse nec intervenire dolum, falsum seu simoniacum labem nec quamcumque aliam illicitam pactionem et corruptelam et non aliter.

Quamquidem [renu]ntiationem omniaque et singula supradicta et infrascripta promiserunt [f. 389] ipsi contrahentes sibi ipsis ad invicem nominibus et modis quibus supra singula singulis congrue et respective referendo sollempnibus stipulationibus hinc inde legitime intervenientibus ratam, gratam, acceptam et firmam ac rata, grata, accepta et firma habere in omnem eventum in pace etc., sub hypoteca et obligatione omnium et singulorum bonorum eorum mobilium, stabilium, presentium et futurorum habitorum et habendorum jurium et actionum quarumcumque qui constituerunt se etc. Cum refectione omnium et singulorum damnorum, interesse et expensarum litis et extra ad quas expensas pars debitor et contraveniens teneatur (...) venerit sacculo parato etc., et fiat ritus et executio in persona et bonis partis contravenientis cit[ari] possit etc., adversus quem ritum et formam partis(?) contractus ac verificationem extremorum nec ad quemcumque alium effectum non possint se opponere, excipere et defraudari quin prius solvant et adimpleantur et pignora vendantur ad discursum. Renunciantes privilegio fori eorum et <si dil.> capitulo “si diligenti etc.” de foro competenti itaque et feriis omnibus et specialiter cum juramento beneficiis moratorie, guidatici, supersessorie, quinquennalis, annalis et generaliter [f. 389^v] et predicta omnia et singula attendere et observari juraverunt tacto pectore. Unde etc.

Datum Melite in Civitate Vallette in Palatio solite habitationis dicti Reverendissimi Domini Episcopi, presentibus Reverendo Fratre Vincentio de Opertis et Magnifico Petro sive Perach de Char, scientibus linguam grecam, et pro maiori cautela et intelligentia dictorum patrum adhibitis pro eorum interpretibus, nec non et Magistro Joanne Dominico Gatt et Magistro Josepho Petit testibus ad premissa vocatis specialiter et rogatis.