

# *DIES AMALPHITANA IV*

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*Malta and Genoa*  
*1150 - 1375*

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IN THE years around 1100 Genoa and Pisa expanded their mercantile empire at the expense of other Central European maritime republics like Amalfi and Gaeta which diversified their mercantile operations in other directions at the time<sup>1</sup>. Like Venice on the Adriatic, the dominant republics on the Tyrrhenian «found themselves able to supply consumers with whom the older generation of merchants from Amalfi had not been able to make close and regular contacts»<sup>2</sup>. But the Genoese, Pisans and Venetians were not the only contenders for supremacy. Just as they had «gained control of the elongated routes carrying goods and pilgrims between West and East, the Sicilians established control over the vital passage-ways between the Tyrrhenian and the East, and between the Adriatic and the East. Sicilian naval supremacy in these waters presented the North Italians with a dilemma. Unless they wished their ships to be at the mercy of the Sicilian navy, they had to make friends with the court in Palermo. In 1156 the Genoese made a treaty with King William I [whereby they] were granted reduced taxes on cargoes carried from Alexandria and the Holy Land through Messina, for the treaty was concerned with the security of the routes to the East as much as it was with the right to take certain goods out of Sicily. Equally, the Genoese needed the produce of Sicily. The city had to feed itself as it grew, and Sicilian wheat was more plentiful and of higher quality than Sardinian, for which, in any case, the Genoese competed with the Pisan. The Treaty describes how the Genoese would require wheat, salted pork, wool, lambskins and cotton, mainly from the area around Agrigento. By bringing large quantities of raw cotton from

<sup>1</sup> D. ABULAFIA, *Southern Italy, Sicily and Sardinia in the Medieval Mediterranean Economy*, in D. ABULAFIA, *Commerce and Conquest in the Mediterranean: 1100-1500*, Aldershot 1993.

<sup>2</sup> For a concise and lucid treatment of the emergence of the North European republics, D. ABULAFIA, *The Great Sea-change, 1000-1100*, in D. ABULAFIA, *The Great Sea. A Human History of the Mediterranean*, Milton Keynes 2011, esp. p. 277.

Sicily to Northern Italy, the Genoese laid the basis for a cotton industry that would flourish throughout the Middle Ages. Some of the best cotton came from Malta and Maltese cotton is already recorded in Genoa in 1164»<sup>3</sup>.

This is the earliest association of Malta with Genoa that can be detected in existing documentation. This sporadic reference must be the tip of the iceberg of communications between Northern European maritime mercantile republics and Sicily that made convenient stop-overs on the Maltese Islands, during the Norman period, nor were the Genoese the sole visitors to Malta's excellent harbours. Abulafia notes how in 1180 the captain of a Pisan ship at Malta found a boat from Gafsa in Tunisia, appropriated its merchandise and threw the crew into the sea. The goods were sold in Pisa but the deprived owner successfully appealed to the Pisan consuls who, in 1184, ordered the restoration of his property. Piracy doubtlessly flourished<sup>4</sup>.

Contacts between Genoa and Malta assumed a more solid nature when, towards the end of the XIIth century and the demise of Norman rule, Emperor Henry VI, abetted by his Genoese allies, invaded Sicily and was crowned King at Palermo Cathedral on Christmas Day 1194. Even before his coronation, on 23 November, one finds Henry already confirming to Guglielmo Grasso, a Genoese, and to his heirs in perpetuity, the County of Malta with all its rights<sup>5</sup>, having removed the incumbent, Margarito da Brindisi, who was to end his days blinded in a German prison after a revolt in 1197<sup>6</sup>. This appointment ushered a link between Malta and the Genoese family of De Castro or Castello that was to last for more than a century. The association was so strong that the family was hardly ever referred to by its proper surname but became known as De Malta<sup>7</sup>. By November 1198, and following the death of Henry VI, it was Grasso's turn to clash with the monarchy, having also irritated his Maltese

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 322-3.

<sup>4</sup> A. T. LUTTRELL, *Medieval Malta. Studies on Malta before the Knights*, London 1975, p. 31.

<sup>5</sup> L. SCIASCIA, *Pergamene siciliane dell'Archivio della Corona d'Aragona: 1188-1347*, Palermo 1994, pp. 41-2, Doc. 2.

<sup>6</sup> E. JAMISON, *Admiral Eugenius of Sicily*, Oxford 1957, p. 130.

<sup>7</sup> S. FIORINI, *The De Malta. Genoese Counts of Malta: c. 1192 – c. 1320*, «Melita Historica», xii/4 (1999) pp. 359-66.

subjects, and be declared ‘our enemy’ by Empress Constantia, Queen of Sicily, and by her four-year-old son Frederick, King of Sicily: «*actendentes fidem et devocionem sinceram quam universus populus totius insule Malte et Gaudisii, tam Christiani quam Saraceni, ... fideliter et constanter se habuere in nostra fidelitate contra inimicum nostrum Guillelmum Crasum*». In the same breath, it was found convenient for the monarchs at the time that the Maltese islands be promised reintegration within the royal demanium ‘for ever’<sup>8</sup>. The empty promise was very soon to be forgotten and by 1203, Guglielmo Grasso’s son-in-law Arrigo, nicknamed *Pescatore*, a pirate turned Admiral of Sicily, appears to have somehow inherited the title of Count of Malta. Very soon afterwards, these islands became embroiled in Arrigo’s piratical activities. The attack on Syracuse in 1204-5 marked the culmination of a series of violent attacks on Pisan shipping, the aim being to prevent the Pisans from establishing themselves permanently on Sicilian territory, precisely where the Genoese had been promised lands by Henry VI. The attack was coordinated by the Genoese corsair, Alamanno de Costa, whose fleet moved to Malta to secure Arrigo’s support. Having seized Syracuse in August 1204, the Pisans retaliated by a counter expedition to ward off which, the new master of Syracuse again appealed to *Pescatore*, who was in Malta, for support. With four galleys and much money, Arrigo headed for Syracuse to tackle the Pisans who were ousted for good in December 1205.

The year that saw the elimination of the Pisan threat saw also the opening of hostilities against the other rival, Venice. Arrigo sailed east. Off Greece, he captured two Venetian merchantmen on their way to Constantinople, along with a large booty of money, arms and 200 bales of cloth, including scarlet and fustian. From Greek waters the Genoese ships moved east to the Holy Land but found it impossible to land either at Tyre or at Acre. Sailing north to Tripoli the town was besieged until capitulation terms with Bohemond IV, Count of Tripoli-Antioch, were agreed: an exchange of Maltese naval aid for the Count’s good will and protection. With the help of 300 *juvenes maltenses*, Bohemond managed to suppress the rebellious forts of Nefin, Jubayl and Jebel Accar. Arrigo’s part of the deal discharged, Bohemond paid his fee in July 1205 by granting the Genoese freedom of trade in his territories at the expense of oth-

<sup>8</sup> C. SCHROTH-KÖHLER *et al.*, *Zwei staufische Diplome für Malta aus den Jahren 1198 und 1212*, «Deutsches Archiv», 33 (1977) pp. 501-21, Doc. 1.

ers, including Venice. On their return to Malta the men were fêted and Arrigo promptly sent a copy of the privilege obtained to a delighted Genoa<sup>9</sup>. These early exploits of the Count of Malta are celebrated in the famous verses of the Languedoc troubadour, Peire Vidal, who had originally sided with the Pisans but had now thought it a better idea to side with Genoa and had joined *Pescatore* in Malta – «*Ar ai conquest sojorn e banh / A Mauta, on sui albergatz / Ab lo Comt'Enric ...*» – [Now I have conquered leisure and bathe in Malta's sea, where I reside with Count Arrigo]<sup>10</sup>.

In Frederick's early years, Arrigo was sufficiently popular with his master that, in January 1212, he was even given the right to mint his own coins in the island: «*tibi liceat monetam novam quidem facere in predicta terra tua Malte et pertinentiis eius*»<sup>11</sup>. Furthermore, in March 1218, as envoy of the Genoese colonies in Sicily to Frederick II, the Count of Malta managed to obtain from his master a major confirmation and extension of Genoese commercial rights in Sicily; in Ogerio Pane's words: «*cartas retulit ab eo preceptorias, quo Januenses in toto regno Sicilie franchi essent, et nullum dirictum, nullamque exactionem dare tenerentur*», and as a sign of Frederick's favour, by 1221, Arrigo had been made Admiral of the Sicilian fleet<sup>12</sup>. This notwithstanding, within a couple of years, Arrigo had fallen out with the Emperor and lost his title of Count of Malta. His services, however, were not easily replaced, and he was soon afterwards reinstated retaining the title but not jurisdiction over the *Castrum*<sup>13</sup>. Among the tasks Frederick set Henry to do on his behalf was that of acting as emissary to the Holy See in an effort to patch up relations with the Papacy after being excommunicated. A letter of Gregory IX to the people of

<sup>9</sup> D. ABULAFIA, *Henry Count of Malta and his Mediterranean activities*, in LUTTRELL, *Medieval Malta*, pp. 111-3. The Vatican copy of the relevant part of the *Annales Cafari* [Ogerii Panis: 1197-1219] cited, is published in G. AQUILINA and S. FIORINI, *Documentary Sources of Maltese History. Part IV: Documents at the Vatican. No. 2: Archivio Segreto Vaticano: Cancellaria Apostolica and Camera Apostolica and related sources at the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana: 416-1479*, Malta 2005 [=DSMH], IV/2, Doc. 16.

<sup>10</sup> J.M. BRINCAT, *Le poesie "Maltesi" di Peire Vidal: 1204-5*, «*Melita Historica*», vii/1 (1976) p. 75, Poem VIII.

<sup>11</sup> SCHROTH-KÖHLER *et al.* *Zwei staufische Diplome*, Doc. 2

<sup>12</sup> ABULAFIA, *Henry Count of Malta*, 119.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 104-25.

Genoa, however, shows that all such efforts on the part of the Emperor were quite futile<sup>14</sup>. By May 1232, Arrigo was presumably dead as the title was then being used by his son Nicoloso, for instance, when signing a treaty between Genoa and Arles<sup>15</sup>.

In view of the close relationship between Malta and its Genoese overlords, De Castro, *sive* De Malta, it is understandable that these islands were involved in the trading network of Genoa, possibly in connexion with the cotton market which, by 1200, had disappeared from Sicily but Malta, with its predominantly Arab/Muslim population continued to produce throughout the Middle Ages and later<sup>16</sup>. It is perhaps in this context that one can locate the sale of a white Maltese slave-girl called Maimuna to Raymundo Barberio in Genoa in 1248, in which, interestingly, she gave her consent for the sale of her own person<sup>17</sup>.

Following the death of Frederick II on 13 December 1250 and the succession to the throne by his son Conrad who, from Germany, left his Sicilian affairs in the hands of Frederick's natural son, Manfred, it appears that Nicoloso, at the head of a Genoese faction in Malta, engaged in otherwise undefined activities that ran counter to Manfred's interests. Meanwhile, Conrad died on 21 May 1254 leaving his two-year-old son Conradin heir to the throne. By now, all effective power was in the hands of Manfred, in spite of Papal opposition. It was only in July 1257 that a peace treaty between Manfred and the Genoese was signed in Melfi, patching up the situation. The peace treaty, which, in its confirmation of 22 March 1259, took the form of a royal privilege of the Genoese, which on the one hand safeguarded their vital economic interests in Sicily and on the other guaranteed for Manfred neutrality of Genoa *vis-à-vis* his enemies, reveals, as far as Malta is concerned, the identity of the anti-Manfred faction in these islands. Those concerned were the Genoese Bartholomeo de Monte, Vitale de Gaeta, Roberto Boccanegra and his sons Leo de Creta, Balduino de Castello and his sons, and his relative,

<sup>14</sup> DSMH IV/2, Doc. 24.

<sup>15</sup> L. SCIASCIA, *Le donne e i cavalieri: Gli affanni e gli agi*, Messina 1993, p. 74: By this time, Nicoloso had returned to his native city where he was actively engaged in the administration of the *Comune*.

<sup>16</sup> D. ABULAFIA, *L'origini del dualismo economico italiano*, in ABULAFIA, *Commerce and Conquest*, esp. p. 375.

<sup>17</sup> R. LOPEZ, *La vendita di una schiava di Malta a Genova nel 1248*, «Archivio Storico di Malta», vii/3 (1935-6) p. 391.

Nicoloso de Castello, son of Arrigo *Pescatore*. By virtue of the treaty, all of these were allowed to stay in Sicily if they so wished. Nicoloso was reinvested with the title of Count of Malta but, as happened with his father, without control of the key *castrum*<sup>18</sup>.

Discussing this important text in its original form of 1257 and its confirmations of 1259 and 1261, Valentini interprets the scenario in Malta as evidence for a rebellion, headed by the clergy and the nobility, in protest against Frederick's extorsions, that exploded soon after Frederick's death. This faction was supported by the Genoese who, still eager to ensure a base in the island, pushed forward their co-national Nicoloso's former rights, thereby reinforcing their commercial position in Sicily. Besides, Valentini's working hypothesis claims that in 1257, the year Manfred assumed full control over Sicily, the alleged Maltese faction abetted by the Genoese, were still in control of the *Castrum Maris*. Furthermore, Valentini interprets the wording of the 1261 accord as a rebellion against Manfred still brewing in Malta, led by an anarchic government, and sustained by other Sicilian cities supported by a Genoese faction promoting the interests of the Papacy and of Charles of Anjou, Manfred's enemy<sup>19</sup>. If Valentini's hypothesis is, by and large, plausible, one cannot but agree with Luttrell in finding fault with the assertion that the clergy were at the helm. One presumes that it was the Latin clergy that Valentini had in mind, but recent research has shown that at the time the local clergy was predominately Greek, with no particular devotion to Rome, and the Latin clergy was just about beginning to emerge<sup>20</sup>. Valentini is perhaps assuming that the protests of the clergy in 1270 during the Angevin interlude [1270-1284]<sup>21</sup> were already lying dormant (or, better, not so dormant) ten years earlier.

Furthermore, Luttrell convincingly argues that, on the other hand, Manfred and the Genoese had every reason for coming to an accord beneficial to both parties. Manfred certainly needed to consolidate an alliance

<sup>18</sup> A. T. LUTTRELL, *Malta e Gozo: 1222-1268*, «Jaime I y su época. X congreso de historia de la Corona de Aragón, Zaragoza» (1980) pp. 589-603.

<sup>19</sup> R. Valentini, *Il comune demaniale di Malta dall'origine alla crisi sveva*, «Archivio Storico di Malta», x (1939) pp. 226-30.

<sup>20</sup> S. FIORINI, *Greek Protopapas of Malta*, «The Sunday Times [Malta]» (8 January 2012) p. 48. S. FIORINI, *The triple strand of the liturgical tradition of the Church in Malta: Byzantine, Roman, Gallican rites*, «Melita Theologica», 63/2 (2013) pp. 5-18.

<sup>21</sup> V. LAURENZA, *Malta nei documenti angioini del R. Archivio di Napoli*, «Archivio Storico di Malta», v/1-4 (1934) Doc. II.



with Genoa in order to preempt both (i) any English candidates the Papacy was trying to push onto the Sicilian throne and, later, (ii) Charles of Anjou, from availing themselves of Genoese naval support. On the other hand, the Genoese needed both (i) to counterbalance the existing alliance between Venice and Pisa, and (ii) to protect their commercial interests in Sicily.

How useful Malta was for the Genoese is patent from the incident of 1264 that set the scene for later ones. In that year, 22 Genoese galleys under Admiral Simon Grillo, carrying 3,500 men armed against Venetian shipping, headed for Sicily and spread the rumour that the ultimate goal was Syria; in fact Grillo came to Malta sheltering in the safe Maltese harbours. The Venetians, swallowing the bait, headed towards the Levant, leaving their merchant fleet unprotected and at the mercy of the Genoese lying in wait at Malta; no less than 22 *taride veneziane* fell prey to his attack off Durazzo<sup>22</sup>.

The Papal alliance with the French under Charles of Anjou against Manfred finally bore fruit when their armies defeated Manfred, killing him, near Benevento on 26 February 1266. The young Conradin, taking up the Hohenstaufen cause, from Germany prepared an expedition in Italy, which however was dispatched without further ado at Tagliacozzo in August 1268. It is possible that Malta continued to support the Hohenstaufen at this time as Angevin records for the island do not appear before March 1270, a letter, whereby Charles of Anjou continued to recognize Nicoloso's rights over the island, ordering his officials to give him back all that Manfred had deprived him of<sup>23</sup>.

In spite of this, it appears that by December 1272 the Genoese had quarrelled with the Angevins as one can deduce from a letter Charles wrote to Bertrandus de Real, Castellan of Malta's *Castrum Maris*: «*Cum capitanei Janue nobis et genti nostre plures intulissent offensas ... tibi districte precipimus quatenus nullum ibidem per ipsos Januenses aut alios inimicos inferri valeat nocumentum*»<sup>24</sup>. De Real's reaction was immediate. On Christmas Day of that same month there happened to be in Malta

<sup>22</sup> *Monumenta Germaniae Historica: Scriptores* [=MGH SS] 18, 226-248: *Annales Januenses* (1249-1264). *DSMH* IV/2, Doc. 32.

<sup>23</sup> LAURENZA, *Malta nei documenti angioini*, Doc. I.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, Doc. XXIV.



Genoese merchants Nicola Auria, his brother Micheleto and Thomas Squarciafico, on two *naves Januensium magni valoris*, who wanted to winter in Malta's harbour. The Castellan, on receipt of Charles' letter (cited), tried to capture them deceitfully, inviting them to dinner, but with the intention of withholding them. On realizing his intent, they tried to flee the island leaving behind both vessels and their precious merchandise<sup>25</sup>. The details of the merchandise and the Genoese owners involved emerge from a later document that relates how, in January 1273, the Castellan was holding the ship named *Sanctus Nicolaus*, owned by Deotisalvus Margonus, and the ship called *Sanctus Franciscus*, owned by Lanfranquinus de Assolis, laden with arms, marked with the seal of Joannes Pilosi, *Consul Januensium*, which were held for use of the *Castrum Maris*<sup>26</sup>. From yet another document one learns that the three Genoese together with a fourth, Obbertus de Avignali, had in fact been caught and were being detained in the *Castrum* in February of that year<sup>27</sup>.

In the subsequent hostilities between Genoa and Anjou, the Maltese islands were to suffer. In 1274, the *Castrum Lombardum* at Ajaccio in Corsica, then in the hands of the Genoese, was attacked and taken by the Angevins. In retaliation, the Genoese Admiral Lanfranco Pignatario armed 22 galleys and headed towards Trapani, burnt the Angevin fleet there, inflicted much harm to the town and, before returning home via Messina, attacked Gozo which he depopulated<sup>28</sup>.

The Angevin iron-fisted repressive regime in Sicily came to its logical end with the events of the Sicilian Vespers on 30 March 1282, in which Malta took an active part. Thereafter, these islands came under Catalan-Aragonese rule by virtue of King Pedro III's claims to the Sicilian Crown through his wife Constantia, daughter of Manfred. The change of government from Anjou to Aragon did not happen overnight. Some officials quickly changed allegiance, such as Dionysius de Barba, formerly the islands' procurator for the Angevins, who became the islands' Justiciar for the Aragonese<sup>29</sup>. The Maltese in Mdina and in the countryside reacted

<sup>25</sup> MGH SS 18, 267-288: Annales Cafari (1270-1279). DSMH IV/2, Doc. 34.

<sup>26</sup> LAURENZA, *Malta nei documenti angioini*, Doc. XXVII (18.iii.1273)

<sup>27</sup> R. MOSCATI, *Fonti per la storia di Malta nel Regio Archivio di Stato di Napoli*, «Archivio Storico di Malta», vii/4 (1936) 477-509, Doc. III.

<sup>28</sup> DSMH IV/2, Doc. 34.

quickly to overthrow the French regime, passing on vital information to the Aragonese<sup>30</sup>. They even ran riot taking the law into their own hands, killing Angevin supporters, with Justiciar De Barba turning a blind eye to events<sup>31</sup>. Nor was property spared, including that of the Genoese merchant Arrigo de Carmandano. In this case, King Pedro ordered De Barba to intervene in the returning of all possessions stolen and to ensure that the Genoese enjoyed royal protection<sup>32</sup>.

But in spite of this, the Angevins held on to the *Castrum Maris*. On 8 July the Aragonese fleet sent by King Pedro caught the Angevin vessels napping in Malta's Grand Harbour where a terrible battle ensued – according to Muntaner, «*desde tercia duró hasta hora de visperas*» – by which time practically the whole Angevin fleet was either taken or sunk. Still the *Castrum* resisted. In 1284 provisions were still being sent from Naples for its defence but soon after it was taken by Aragon only to be lost once more in 1287<sup>33</sup>. Charles of Anjou finally conceded victory by October 1288. The Genoese, allies of Catalunya, never lost interest in these islands. Interestingly, the oldest existing portulan, found in Cagliari, that describes well the Maltese islands, thought to be of Genoese origin, dates precisely from this period, the second half of the XIIIth century<sup>34</sup>.

Nicoloso de Malta faded out of the picture round about this time and, his elder son Perino having died before him<sup>35</sup>, the family's rights and

<sup>29</sup> LAURENZA, *Malta nei documenti angioini*, Doc. XV. G. SILVESTRI, *De rebus regni Siciliae: 9 Settembre 1282 – 26 Agosto 1283*, Palermo 1882, p. 307, Doc. CCCXVI (23.i.1283).

<sup>30</sup> R. MUNTANER E B. D'ESCLOT, *Cronache catalane del secolo XIII e XIV*, Palermo 1984, pp. 98-103, 118.

<sup>31</sup> SILVESTRI 1882, 611-2 Doc. DCLXXVII (12.iv.1283).

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, Appendix pp. 134, 141, Docs CXXXIII, CXL. Genoese trade with Maltese is evident in the registers of *Notai Genovesi di Oltremare*; details in ABULAFIA, *Commerce and Conquest*, Ch. XII, p. 206.

<sup>33</sup> G. WETTINGER, *The 'Castrum Maris' and its suburb of Birgu in the Middle Ages*, in: L. BUGEJA, M. BUHAGIAR and S. FIORINI (eds.), «Birgu – A Maltese Maritime City», 2 vols., Malta 1993, pp. 31-71, esp., 36-8.

<sup>34</sup> B. MOTZO, *Il Compasso da Navigare. Opera italiana della metà del secolo XIII*, «Annali della Facoltà di Lettere della Università di Cagliari», 8/1 (1947) 1-137. F.B., *Malta nel più antico portolano del Mediterraneo*, «Archivio Storico di Malta», vii/3 (1936) 389-90.

<sup>35</sup> SCIASCIA, *Pergamene siciliane*, Doc. 24.

title of Count of Malta were claimed by his younger son, Andreas. It is known that on 26 June 1290, Charles of Anjou confirmed to the noble Andriolo *Comes Malte* and to his heirs in perpetuity the county of Malta and other rights in Sicily. It is clear that, at the time, Andreas' sympathies, like his father's, were with the Angevins, but he soon realized in which direction the favourable political winds were blowing and, by October 1292, he was being recognized as Count of Malta by the Angevins' enemy, King Jayme of Aragon, who made Andreas contribute towards the upkeep of Malta's *Castrum Maris*. Again, in 1300, King Frederick III of Sicily acknowledged some, if not all, of the Genoese claims over Malta<sup>36</sup>:

*«Item offerunt castrum Malte dicto comuni Ianue sive illis Januensis ad quos spectat ipsum castrum, ita quod Comune ipsum sive illi Januenses ad quos spectat castrum illud faciant ipsum custodiri per hominem fidedignum qui diligat partem et statum presentem, qui teneatur eidem Domino Regi sicut alii barones sibi tenentur in homagio et in fide, secundum consuetudinem Regni Sicilie».*

This, naturally, brought about a punitive reaction from Charles of Anjou who, on 22 April 1300, stripped him of the title and invested his faithful Admiral Rogerio de Lauria with it<sup>37</sup>. This state of affairs persisted practically throughout the whole of the following century with Counts of Malta being appointed simultaneously and independently by Aragon and by Anjou.

Luttrell comments that it is not clear what influence Genoa had over Malta during the XIIIth century. It may have been responsible, for example, for placenames like *Ra al Arrig* and *Ra al Nikolo u*. Certainly, the attention paid by Genoa to the island placed the archipelago on the map of the Mediterranean powers. The way they used the island as a base for their operations rather than as a colony in which they could settle as overlords, may have, in a strange way, contributed to the preservation of the island as a Semitic preserve and, in particular, it may have saved its Maltese language<sup>38</sup>.

<sup>36</sup> *Liber Jurium Reipublicae Genuensis*, 2 vols., Torino 1857, vol. II, pp. 415-8.

<sup>37</sup> LAURENZA, *Malta nei documenti angioini*, Doc. LXVI.

<sup>38</sup> LUTTRELL, *Malta e Gozo: 1222-1268*.

The Genoese Andreas is not heard of again after 1300 and his rights to the title of Count of Malta passed on to a female, Lukina, the grand-daughter of Andreas' brother Perino. She married the Catalan Guglielmo Raymundo Moncada who became the new Count of Malta<sup>39</sup>. At this time, Malta and Gozo fitted well into the Catalan-Aragonese community by virtue of their attachment to Sicily, more for their strategic than their commercial value. Luttrell argues that Genoese interest in Malta was never sustained for long during the first half of the XIVth century because, with Venice allied to Aragon, the Genoese presumably realized that it would be hard to retain Malta while the Aragonese, with whom they were at war, controlled Sicily<sup>40</sup>. But their peace with Aragon was concluded in 1360 so that Maltese and Genoese merchants began to come together again as at the Cagliari market, trading especially in slaves and cotton<sup>41</sup>. This collaboration is exemplified by the case of Gozitan and Maltese cotton, of the Genoese merchant Nicoloso Spinola, being exported to Girgenti for onward transmission on the galley *Sant'Antonio et Papa Urbanus* captained by the Genoese Chiccus Pezagnus on 13 May 1378<sup>42</sup>. Genoa's dormant interest in the island had certainly been renewed as the events of the 1370s clearly evidence.

From 1356 onwards the central figure in Maltese history was Giacomo Peregrino. Married to the King's relative, Margarita d'Aragona, he was Captain, Castellan, *Secretus* and Justiciar for the Maltese Islands; an untitled Count of Malta. His many interests included piracy and this activity is, very probably, what made him clash with the Papacy<sup>43</sup>, with the King and with the Genoese. Peregrino's power must have gone to his head and he must have thought of himself strong enough to be able to flout royal authority with impunity. In the end, King Frederick IV decided to intervene personally when, in 1372, with the support of ten Genoese galleys, willing partners stung by Peregrino's piratical acts<sup>44</sup>, he laid

<sup>39</sup> FIORINI, *The De Malta*.

<sup>40</sup> LUTTRELL, *Medieval Malta*, p. 42.

<sup>41</sup> L. GALOPPINI, *Notizie su Maltesi e il cotone di Malta a Cagliari nella seconda metà del trecento*, «Melita Historica», x/1 (1989) pp. 13-26, esp. p. 16.

<sup>42</sup> H. BRESI, *Sicile, Malte et Monde Musulman*, in S. FIORINI and V. MALLIA-MILANES (eds.), «Malta. A Case Study in International Cross-Currents», Malta 1991, pp. 47-79, esp. 75.

<sup>43</sup> *DSMH* II/1, Doc. 22.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, Doc. 92.

siege to Malta for full two months<sup>45</sup>. Peregrino was removed and the Genoese were compensated by Frederick for their support. Among these, mention is made of Aginanti, Count of Corniglia who was given 500 florins, Aloisio Banoso who received 400 florins and each of Nicoloso de Zoallis and Isnardo de Guarco who were granted 1,000 *tratte* of wheat each<sup>46</sup>.

One last point of contact between Malta and Genoa, worth mentioning at this time, concerns the Bishop of Malta, Antonius de Musco, who must have had connexions there, as it is known that he died in Genoa, in 1371<sup>47</sup>.

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<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, Docs, 100, 101.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, Doc. 31.

<sup>47</sup> *DSMH* IV/2, Docs. 100, 103, 122.