

environs, and the main elements of his style (and wit!) in the most significant musical genres.

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Al Servizio della Repubblica di Venezia: Le lettere di Massimiliano Buzzaccarini Gonzaga, Commendatore di Malta, inviate alla Magistratura dei Cinque Savii alla Mercanzia 1754–1776. Edited by Victor Mallia-Milanes. (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2014. Pp. 637. €34,00. ISBN 978-88-209-9273-6.)

The study of the history of the Catholic Church is often thought of in terms of the history of the development of the faith—the Christian faith, within the specific framework of Catholic theological doctrine. However, the richness of Catholic history goes beyond issues of faith. It also is composed of the history of its own institutions. This is what Victor Mallia-Milanes has attempted successfully with his book *Al Servizio della Repubblica di Venezia*.

Mallia-Milanes is a leading world expert on the history of the Knights of St. John during early modern times. In this book, he traces their diplomatic relations with the Republic of Venice. The Knights of St. John were (and still are) a religious order of the Church. Their professed members took religious vows (and still do) but, although considered friars—their origins predate the history of the mendicant orders of the thirteenth century—they do not say Mass. Instead, they dedicate their lives to the sick, and, in the Middle Ages, they became warriors or fighting knights. Today, the latter is not considered germane to a religious body. What is important about this book is that the history of this order goes beyond the fighting spirit that characterized the wars of religion in the Mediterranean from the rise of Islam until the arrival of Napoleon.

Mallia-Milanes seeks to portray how a religious order of the Catholic Church, which had assumed statehood by early-modern times, conducted its diplomatic relations. He introduces the reader to unique diplomatic experiences through the work of one ambassador accredited to the Order of St. John in Malta. From 1530 until 1798, the Knights of St. John were in possession of the island of Malta and hence their subsequent name as the Order of Malta. Yet, being accredited to this island state required, at the time, two peculiar requirements. The ambassador had to be a knight of the order, hailing from a Catholic state that had established ambassadorial relations with the Convent, as the State Council in Malta was known to the Knights. This meant that the Knights held diplomatic relations at ambassadorial levels only with Roman Catholic states. The other states were relegated to a consular status. The protagonist in this book, Massimiliano Buzzaccarini Gonzaga, was a Venetian Knight who became resident ambassador representing the Republic of Venice.

The author allows the documents to speak for themselves. He has published Buzzaccarini Gonzaga's correspondence, which he unearthed at the State Archives of Venice, and backs it with an extensive analytical introduction, wherein he gives

the general framework of diplomatic relations between Malta and Venice from 1530 until 1796.

These letters deal with issues of trade and disputes that broke out between the two countries from 1754 to 1776. They recount vividly the protests of Venetian merchants against what they considered illicit and wrongful behavior by those who have been incorrectly termed *Catholic pirates*. The war of the *corso* meant authorized naval expeditions by both Catholic and Ottoman vessels against each other. The Knights felt they were duty-bound to police the Mediterranean waters to render them secure against their mortal enemy: the Ottomans. Merchandise was the focus of this ongoing battle. Venice used the Ottoman flag or, more important, the Greek navy to bypass the existing Catholic embargo against trading with the Ottoman Porte. The Order of St. John was highly suspicious of Venetian merchants who were suspected of breaking the trade embargo on the Sublime Porte. Thus, Venetian merchandise from Ottoman harbors was subjected to what was seen as legitimate raids from Maltese corsairs checking on whether the cargo destined for what was known then as the *Piazza di Venezia* (p. 185) was covered by the correct documentation, stating clearly its provenance.

For its part, Venice was compelled to protect its merchants, irrespective of their actions and trading interests. This task fell to the *Magistratura dei Cinque Savii alla Mercanzia* or the entity in Venice that regulated trade disputes, with whom Buzzaccarini Gonzaga corresponded, with great reverence, in support of the Venetian traders.

In this beautifully presented work, Mallia-Milanes has gone to great pains to bring to light yet another aspect of yesteryear.

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SIMON MERCIECA

~~LATE MODERN EUROPEAN~~

~~*Romantic Catholics: France's Postrevolutionary Generation in Search of a Modern Faith.* By Carol E. Harrison. (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2014. Pp. xvi, 328. \$49.95. ISBN 978-0-8014-5245-1.)~~

~~Carole Harrison explores the lives and significance of a small cohort of Catholics in France who belonged to a generation that was born in the first two decades of the nineteenth century and whose religious devotion was shaped by a desire to reconcile faith and modernity after the upheaval of the French Revolution. They include Pauline Craven, Charles de Montalembert, Amélie and Frédéric Ozanam, Léopoldine Hugo, Maurice de Guérin, and Victorine Monniot. These "enfants du siècle," as Alfred de Musset described the generation who came of age without a firsthand memory of the French Revolution, were progressive and, according to Harrison, romantic in their aspirations. Her overarching goal is to resurrect this group of men and women whom historians have allegedly neglected and who were in many cases linked to one another through kinship, friendship, and~~