A COMPARATIVE STUDY IN LEXICAL MATERIAL
RELATING TO NICKNAMES AND SURNAMES

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To read in verse 19 of Chapter II of Genesis that 'The Lord God having formed out of the ground all the beasts of the earth and all the fowls of the earth brought them to Adam to see what he would call them. For whatever blas called any living creature the same is its name'. This is the first historical record of man as a name-giver. As a name places a living, or non-living, creature, a thing or an idea, or any intellectual abstraction, within a context of recognizable reality of human experience in a way that it can be distinguished from others existing within the same, or different, kindred, category, we can say that names individualizing realities or subjective reactions are indicative labels. In a sense the name is the thing or the person itself.

Indeed, amongst savages the name is considered as an integral part of the person that bears it. As a rule, therefore, the savage prefers to be known rather by his substituted name than by his real name, the reason being that while one cannot harm him through the substituted name one can reach him and do him harm through his own name, which is his real personal identity. Hence the Maasai saying: 'Kondeja ngumwe khamela 'As you are so is your surname'. Latin nomen omnia nomen 'names are omens', and a Kimbundu saying: 'Ina nipo unso 'The name is that which gives'.

Man's earliest attempt at name-giving was also his first attempt at the compilation of a working vocabulary which, in the course of the centuries, increased its resources to make possible the individualization of the largest number of things or, as one might also say, of every single component of human knowledge and experience. Man not only gave a name to every living creature as we read in the passage from the Bible, but to everything that formed an object of observation, to everything his eyes saw and his other senses and sensory recorded for future reference. Words and man have been travelling together along the high road of civilization from the very beginning described in Genesis.

Personal names become necessary as social labels or tags to make it possible to tell one man or family, tribe or clan from another. Such was the early practice amongst the Old Egyptians, Biblical Hebrews, Greeks...
and Romans who bore a name apparently invented for them to commemorate a circumstance or coincidence attending the child's birth or some personal or physical quality or a cherished hope in the child's future. Hence the massa Romana nonus Rcinnon amare. As in time the social structure of multiplied humanity became more complex, also naming became a more complex social ritual. To the individual's name in order to facilitate greater identification was added later the father's name or that of his country, place of origin or profession, or some flattering and often unflattering descriptive. The Romans adopted the threefold system of: (1) praenomen (the individual's first name; ex. Publius); (2) nomen (the stock or tribe to which the individual belonged; ex. Cornelius); (3) cognomen (the particular part of the tribe to which the individual belonged; ex. Scipio). Hence the threefold label Publius Cornelius Scipio.

The fifth century grammarian Dionysius defines agnomina, which, incidentally, is in silver and baccaarna (the old term of names) as: agnomen est quod extraeversum cognomen habet. In aliqua nativa vel virtute quasdam et est Africanus, Numenius et similis. Further examples of such agnomina are: Barbatus (I. surname Barbet, Gooz nickname, Tal Seja), Spanish (I. surname Spagnolo, also M. Spanio, and Africana (I. surname Mucio). But also cognomina, the equivalents of our surnames (M. komponetom) contained allusions to physical aspects. Such examples are: Rufus (I. surname Rufo, C. also Rosso and N. nickname, Tal-Mnaf, Eng. Redman); Coecles 'one-eyed' (Cp. M. I-Aguard); Crispus (I. and M. Crisp, S.M. Chercuito; Balbus (I. Dalbo), 'stammering'; Cnaus 'Heavored' (I. and M. surname De Carlo); Agicolica (I. surname Agiclo), Camillus, a boy and girl free born whose parents were alive, employed in religious rites (I. surname Camilio); Pastor 'shepherd' (I. surname Pastorino; Pictor 'painter' (I. Pittore). Very often the cognomina were used as an adjective with case-ending 0 (genitive onis, with accusative onem where corresponding Italian surname in one).

Such examples are: Naso, nickname of a man having a prominent nose (I. surname Naso, also Nasoni, pl. form); Cicero 'warty' (I. surname Cicero, Cicenio, Ciciri); Sciapio 'leaning on a staff' (I. Scipione, Scipioni); Cato 'shrewd' (I. surname Caten, Catoni); Nero 'mighty, powerful' (I. surname Neroti). By means of the suffix inus (m) and ins (f), the Romans obtained a number of patronymic and matronymic surnames. Here are some examples: Carinus, made up of Carus(is) + inus = son of Carus; Messalina, made up of Messal(a) + ins = daughter of Messala. My surname Aquilina, a matronymic surname less common in Italy than Aquilina, should, therefore mean 'daughter of Aquila', though I think it is more likely a later diminutive form of Aquila 'eagle' as the Lat. family name was Aquilius, the name of a Roman gens.

The Arabs similarly used individual names indicating the father of the child; so did the highlanders of Scotland (ex. MacArthur = the Son of Arald). Irish examples are: O'Farrell and O'Neil meaning 'grandson of Feargheal and Niall'. The Old Norsemen attached the word Fath (Lat. Filius; ex. Fitzgerald), while the peasants of Russia suffixed the termination witz (ex. Peter Paulowitz = Peter, the Son of Paul) and the Poles suffixed sky (ex. Janes Pawlowsky = Janes, the Son of Peter).

Civilised man was not content with just a simple nickname (some ancient kings bore their nickname too) or family name; he gradually evolved a more or less complicated system which, for reasons of social prestige or easier identification, indicated his parentage, his personal or family rank, his social status, his religious membership and other aspects of social ranking that are due to man who instinctively seeks the limelight for himself and his own and does not want to be confused with the common herd. This explains the intricacy of the names of the ruling classes. Thus in time arose trade and occupational names as well as others connected with one's place of origin.

As words increased the volume of the human lexical material, so also the nicknames, simple or composite, that were drawn from the resources of this lexical material increased the variety of human speech forms. Dauzet, saying of French surnames what we could say of Maltese family names, and naturally what others could say of their peoples' family names, wrote: Les noms de personnes font partie de patrimoine linguistique au même titre que les mots du vocabulaire.

Of the first known settlers, who were the Phoenicians and later the Carthaginians, whose settlement is historically attested by Diodorus Siculus (1st Cent. B.C.) and the Acts of the Apostles (1st Cent. A.D.), we have no record of personal names except that of their god Melkart, Lord of Troy who, as we can tell from the bilingual Cipri found at Marsala, in 1696, was extensively venerated in Malta.

The name of this deity, the mighty god of Tyre, identified by the Greeks with Hercules, is made up of two words melka (Cp. Heb. 'th' 'king' + car (Cp. Heb. 'th' 'city'); hence the composite name which means 'The King's or Lord's City', Civitas Domini (Regis) as one might say in Latin. Phoenician and later personal names must have followed the style of Hebrew composite, or simple and mainly descriptive personal names with a religious content, with the difference that the divine nomenclature was, naturally, polytheistic. Here are a few examples: 'UR', (Cp. Heb. 'TH') 'light', the name of a god of light as Lucifer was the name of a light-bearing angel; and composite Abbaccal, the Lord's Father, (Peter
Domna), which the Greeks turned into Abbasaga. Composite names made up of AB (Cp. Heb. 'Ab) 'father'; Abi, Abi (my father) are very common in Biblical Hebrew. Examples are: El (my father) (Cp. Heb. 'El); my father has gathered (Cp. Heb. יִקְרָא 'El); my father is judge (Cp. Heb. 'יִקְרָא 'El); He in father (Cp. Heb. מִי 'El); 'The exalted one is my father' etc. (Cp. Heb. 'יתמן 'El).

Examples of composite names made up of 'Son' (Ben) (Cp. Heb. בֶּן); personal name given to Benjamin by his mother; Son of mercy (Cp. Heb. 'גֶּרֶן 'Ben); Son of (my) right hand etc.

Examples of other composite surnames made up of that (Cq 'Daughter') daughter: Daughter of multitudes (Cq 'Daughter') daughter of oath (Cq 'Daughter'), the wife of Utah, and Daughter of Opulence (Cq 'Daughter') the name of David's wife Solomon's mother.

Under the Romans, Carthaginian names must have survived amongst the lower classes in the colloquial form, while those of the few leading families must have been Latinized or Hellenized. To deduce this from parallel instances of similarity Latinized or Hellenized onomatopoeia elsewhere, especially amongst the Hellenized Jews.

From Cicero's description of Verres, the corrupt Governor of Sicily whom people named Verres, we know that one of the victims of Verres' rapacity was one Maltese capitalist, Domoinos who at that time lived in Libya, Rome, in the more westerly province of Syria. Another distinguished Maltese mentioned by Cicero in the same sentence was Aulus Lucius Aemilius, a fellow of Pompey in the civil wars against Caesar. Names of other distinguished Maltese are: Marcus Vullius; Cassius Vullius; Vullius Putorius; Lucius Caecilius; Titus Vultus; Aemilius; Dicianilius; Celsus and others. The list bears out what I said earlier, namely that the distinguished Maltese families had their name Romanized, or Hellenized, according to the general practice when Rome and Greece dominated the world, the former intellectually and the latter militarily. On the other hand, from Diodorus' description of the people under the Romans there is no doubt that they were ethnically Phoenicians or Carthaginians because he described Malta and Gozo as both Phoenician colonies. The exact recorded names of the inhabitants must have been humble nicknames befiting humble artisans, weavers, land-tillers and fishermen.

The Acts of the Apostles mention by name a distinguished canonized Governor of Malta who flourished in 60 A.D. That governor was Publius, the leading citizen of the island. Now Publius was a Roman praenomen. If Publius was the chief of the island he was so as a Roman official. Was he really Maltese, or was he just a Roman official, the governor of the island like the British Governor who represents Her Majesty in our time?

As we read in the Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture (Nelson) the phrase 'the chief man of the island' was the title of the representative of the Praetor of Sicily, and is found in inscriptions. Once he had possessions in the Island, and had his wife with him, he may have established his home in the island for good, but it is not likely that he was a member of the native community described as Barbarians by St. Luke because they spoke neither Latin nor Greek. In any case, the name Publius is historically one of the oldest Roman praenomens we come across and which, after all, we can consider as much Maltese as we consider later established surnames of foreign origin.

In the matter of Latin names we are even better off than in Maltese words. We have come across a few Maltese personal names in Latin or Greek garb, but there is not one word in the Maltese language or toponomy that I could refer back to this time.

As in the case of words of Semitic origin, we move on to Roman ground when we come to the period of the Roman domination. Are there Arabic equivalents of Maltese nicknames and surnames found, say, in Tunisia, Egypt and other parts of the Arab world? There are only a few ones like Sallila well known in Palestine amongst the Christian Arabs, a reminder of the Crusaders, but as a rule Maltese Semitic surnames have evolved in Latin. Some of the Maltese Semitic surnames are not with also as nicknames or sobriquets of distinguished names in Arabic Literature. Such are: [list of examples].

1 Vito Galizia, Italian Malta, p. 339.
Arabs to the prophet Ezekiel; كنعانی (Cp. M. Bond), the sobriquet of Abu Muhammad Mousa b. Hazin, so called since he was known as a good example of the new word class in the Arabic language. In fact, the Arab language was the dominant language in the region.

Examples of extinct Arabic names surviving as place-names are:

- جبل (Jabal, Gozo) (Cp. M. Ghasn, Malta) meaning 'mountain'.
- جول (Ghul, Gozo) (Cp. M. Ta' Dhib) meaning 'concrete'.
- جبل (Jabal, Gozo) (Cp. M. Place-name Jabr) 'two silk tunics'.
- جبل (Jabal, Gozo) (Cp. M. Dinech) 'the fearful'.

However, the total number of Semitic surnames is very small indeed as compared with the much larger number of Romance surnames mainly Sicilian, the number of which is still increasing through intermarriage.

Abela in his Malta Illustrata (1647) gave an interesting list of distinguished Maltese families who owed their origin to the Normans. Most of these families are extinct, either because they died out or because they returned to Sicily. The list of extinct surnames shows the prevalence of the foreign settlers making their home in Malta, but a few Semitic surnames like Avus and Attard amongst the distinguished Maltese families show that the peaceful pre-Arabic families did compete with their foreign rulers for high-ranking posts in the administration of the country.

The number is rather small, but the fact remains that the native surnames crop up with the newly imported foreign names even among the nobility. Needless to say, that a good number of such surnames then considered foreign has now been incorporated into the Maltese vocabulary very much as loanwords from Sicily and Italy have since been incorporated into the language and become an integral part of the society.

There are now only a few Jewish families in Malta. No more than ten families, I think, but there was a time when they formed a substantial part of the population. Several place-names still recall their presence: Ghajn Lhudi 'Jews' Fountain'; Ghajn Lhudi 'Jewish Garden'; Ta' Lhudi 'Jewish Ghettos' (Birgu), Ghar il-Lhudi 'Jews' Grave', Ghajar il-Lhudi 'Jews' Cave' and a few others. Glibert in his report to Frederick II (1240) said there were twenty-eight Jewish families in Gozo on a population of 203 Christian families and twenty-five Jewish families in Malta on a population of 471 families.

In order to understand why a number of Maltese personal surnames have been considered as originally of Jewish origin, one should bear in mind the following few facts: While pre-Exilic Jews used Biblical names or native ones evolved from within the language, the post-Exilic Jews preferred the use of foreign names. Jewish, Greek and Roman names are quite usual. In the Talmudic period Hebrew names were often translated into the foreign languages. Thus Heb. Yisrael became Latin Iudaeus; Heb. Tobi because of Greek Tobi; and Heb. Yeh与众不同 because of Greek Stasin, Jewish family names died out in the Talmudic times.

In the post-Talmudic times the Jews began to draw upon foreign languages to form their personal names. Such names were generally Biblical, Jews were prone to adopt names ending in el and sometimes Christian names or surnames. The choice of a civic name was generally made from a local place-name, which was added to their second name. The general trend of nomenclature among Jews in the Middle Ages was to adopt that of the countries in which they lived. Sephardic, that is linguistically Romance, names are largely local. This explains the large number of topographic surnames in Malta and Italy.

In this paper I am going to treat Maltese surnames as many additions to, or extensions from, the lexical material of the Maltese Language. To conform to the structural pattern of the language, I am going to divide Maltese surnames into two major linguistic divisions as I did in my book The Structure of Maltese (1959). These two linguistic structures are (a) the earliest Maltese surnames which belong to the Semitic Stock as well as (b) later Maltese surnames belonging to the Romance Stock which, in their turn, are divided into two categories, namely (i) Romance surnames which, in all probability, go back to the early times of the Normans or later Romance linguistic influences accumulating among the nobility and (ii) those which are comparatively modern and go back to recent times.

It is remarkable that though the Maltese tongue is, as I have repeatedly pointed out, basically Semitic with a Romance superstructure, the number of Semitic surnames is no more than about fifty. But these fifty surnames are significant because, though small in number, each one of them is borne by a large number of Maltese families in Malta and Gozo, whereas many of the more modern Romance surnames, though far more numerous when taken singly as a whole, are borne by a smaller number of families, in some cases by only a few families.

I am now going to give the whole list of Maltese Jewish surnames with the Semitic origin in their alphabetical order so that one may also understand the meaning of surnames which have ceased to mean anything to us because the original meaning has been lost in Malta.

The Maltese Semitic surnames alphabetically arranged are:
Abel: Cpr. Hebr. אֵבֶל, to mourn. The Abellas, originally Jewish family names, were of Spanish origin. Abdulla < Ar. عبد, servant slave > عبدي, hence the whole surname means ‘servant or slave of God’. Aber Heb. עבד, ‘servant’. Agnes Ar. أنيس, old woman.

Asia: This is a village name — and may be either Ar. عُسْيَا, plural of عَسَيْنَ, ‘bindweed’ at Ar. عُسْيَا (both masculine and feminine) meaning ‘loving passionately’. Azumpsdi (Cpr. Hebrew, Haspadi), indicating the Jews of Spain and the other Latin countries. Attard Ar. عُتَرْد, ‘perfumer, dougga’ + Ar. ات, adj. suffix of (pl. 1) Ar. تَرْد, pl. تَرْد, whence surname Attardi.

Bajada Ar. بَجَاة, ‘good layer’, or fem. of Cpr. عاج, ‘egg-seller’, white clay. Burg Ar. بُرْج, ‘tower’, Bajada, the name of the seaport known as Bougie in the department of Constantine (Algeria). Dibajaghe Ar. دِبَّاج, (a word meaning casualty or possession) + Ar. دار, ‘cavern, seep hole’; Hamadi Ar. هَمْدِي, ‘son of Huma for sixty’, the full meaning being the leader (or possessors) of sixty (men). (Cpr. nickname هامد, ‘father of five’). Quero, Quera ‘possibly suggesting the rare occurrence of quintuplets’ (J. Cassar Pucillines, Social Aspects of Maltese Surnames, 1966, p. 153). Buttiella Ar. بُتِّيِلْلا, + Juma, ‘he that owns houses, dwellings’; the owner of houses, dwellings.

Caruna Ar. كَرُنْ، ‘a holy city of Tunisia’ in North Africa, founded about 670 A.D.; Cienha Ar. كِنْهْا, ‘a name peculiar to that of Noto (Sicily)’. Casar Ar. كَسْرَاء, ‘the name of a district of Noto (Sicily)’, Ar. الدَّارِ, ‘castle, palace’.

Chejaka Ar., كَصْجَا, ‘chicken newly hatched’, Cpr. also كُكُ كُكُ, ‘poulter’ (Kaz.). Chirepp, also a place name, of doubtful origin. Cpr. Eng. Kirrip.

Cuscheri: perhaps connected with Ar. كَصْحَرْ, ‘a house’ + Ar. كَسْحَا, ‘a place, dwelling’, ‘at the house’ (Sicily). Caru Ar. كَرُوْ، ‘generous and hospitable’ (Kazikresa). Qumi Ar. قُمِيْ, ‘noble, noble, of nobility’, who is of noble creation, ‘Noblesse, de générosité appartenant au caractère noble’ (Kaz.). Cpr. also مُخَوْصِيَن, ‘a stem of a tree’, gumi ‘jasmine flower’ (Beauss).

Dimech: Some believe this surname to be originally Maltese, though ‘ears’ Ar. مَجُشُور, but it is very likely of Ar. origin. Cpr. It. surname Dimenca ‘of Sicily’. There are no certain Sicilian surnames beginning with ‘D’ in Maltese.


Famnia Ar. فَنْجْ، ‘chicken’, Fenech ‘rabbit’ < Ar. فَنْج, ‘kind of fox; marten’, a word of Persian origin. According to Dozy Ar. فَنْج, may mean ‘any furred animal’. Filit: Cpr. Ar. فيل, ‘male’, ‘miserable, disturb, temper, seduce, allure, captivating’. Franko, perhaps this is a composite surname made up of ‘fusad’ (< Ar. فُسَّاد) also figuratively, ‘he made me lose my temper and I flared up’, a verbal pronounal suffix, first person singular m. ‘me’, ‘he bleed me’.

Galea, Cpr. Ar. غَلا, ‘a high place’; Guauci, perhaps Sicilian notaries’ transcription of Ghauoli, Gozitan.

Hafer Heb. هَفِر ‘companion’, Hammet, perhaps derives from M. place-name لَمِّنْتُ ‘limen in the limits of Gozo’; Ar. حَمَمْتَ, ‘Ghannam, the valley of (flame)’; Hill: perhaps a Maltese version of Ar. name ‘Hillili’. Cpr. also ‘Hilla’ ‘a dock of goats’, ‘strength’, whence M. hilla ‘strength, ability’; hence Hill ‘the strong or able one’.

Meiling Ar. مَلِيَّنْ, (M. pl. melig) ‘a pike, sword, a pike’ (Dozy); also the current M. word for ‘stop’, ‘Mercecas: minoed noon perhaps from Ar. مَكْرُ ‘to throw a missile’; but more likely from semicacized mkeq < Sic. merci, ‘to strike off the overmeasure of copper’ (Falzoni); Micallef from Ar. مَكْالِف, active participle of bela (Ar. مَلَأ, ‘to spread’ (by God), the form being phonetically sicilisirised; Micallef past participle of abilities < Ar. مَكْاَلِف, ‘to be corrupt’ or ‘vicious’ (Cpr. miala ‘an added egg’); or it may also be the past participle of Ar. مَكْاَلِف, ‘to bleed’, Minto, notorious modification of miala, past participle of miala ‘to knock out feathers’ < Ar. مَكْيَا, ‘Micallef: this is the Ar. place-name Masciat, the town on the South coast of the gulf of Oman.

Said < Ar. مَجِيد, ‘happy’, ‘canal of irrigation’; Saydun: this is the Ar. place-name Sidun, the name of a coastal town of Lebanon; Saliba Ar. سَلِبَة, ‘cross’; Sammut (less common variant Samut) < Ar. مَصُوت, ‘silent’ from مَسْحُوت, ‘to remain silent’. Cpr. M. use of mawwad in the sense of ‘he remained dumbfound, did not utter a word’. Notice that the Maltese surname has lost the medial radical; Saluma < Ar. سُلْميْ, ‘ruiser, Sultan’ (Cpr. Eng. ‘King’).
(iv) Rank Names: Bunoutil, Nicaufel, Sultana, Zummit.
(v) Instruments: Mejbas, Mercieca.
(vi) Land Fortification: Borg, Galle (if from Ghalja, 'hill'), Cassar, Zarrub.
(vii) Time-word: Ellul < Heb. יְלַל (Elul) August 8 – September, cp. Assyri w-itu), which, in the Middle Ages, became the month of repentance.
(ix) Food-word: Cuscieri, if it stands for Egyptian كسي، 'food made of lentils and rice'.
(x) Plant Names: Asliug, if the meaning is 'bind-weeds', Pasalla, Sallma, Sejuson, Thessa, Zebra.
(xi) Descriptive: a) physical, b) moral: (a) Asius, Chtoutti, Xuweeb, (b) Cwid, Cutajur, Fintir, Axиру, Illis, Mifsud, Said, Sammut, Xerri.
Of those Saliba, Sultana, Asius and Asliug, if it is not the pl. of Ar. السلا, are patronymic, that is, names originally borne by the mother of the family.

Though the classification of Semitic Maltese surnames is fairly varied, naturally as the total number is small, it is necessarily small also is the number included under each category. The fewness of such categories shows that these surnames go back to the times when Maltese society was more simply graded than it is in our time, or, anyhow than it began to be from the time of the Normans onwards. The five rank-words, apart from Zummit which may have retained the original meaning, very likely indicated no more than a metaphorical elevation of the original rank. Thus the fact that there are so many Sultanas in Xagha (Gozo) does not mean that they all go back to some royal family or princess. The surname may have originated as a nickname to indicate the first woman that gave herself airs, or that may have originally belonged to a ruling clan. Metaphor plays a great part also in surnames as in the extension of meaning from literalness to figurativeness in general.

The word-pattern is a basic character of the Maltese language. All the surnames which were included in the above list conform to one or other of the nominal and descriptive patterns of the language which I exemplified in extracts on pages 147-219 of my book The Structure of Maltese (1959), comparative references to which are indicated below by the abbreviation S.T.M. followed by the number of the page and sometimes by the section letter.

These are:
(1) QVTL (Cp. Ar. and M. kurd 'cold', No. 1, B, ST.M., p.147): Zarb;
(2) QVTL (Cp. M. ghafla Ar. غافلة), Camba;
(3) QVTL (Cp. M. roda,

Dimensional Formations

(25) QeTl, the only Maltese word in the language conforming to this pattern is Mellha 'a screw' which is also the surname Mellha. See No. 48ST.M. p.209). (26) QeTl: no such example exists in modern Maltese. (Cp. M. qas'baj, 'rather young', Ar. مَثاَرَة, No.46 ST.M. p.208). Cunzi. (27) QeTl: this is the feminine formation of previous

*Il Bella stands for M. Meddug (Ar. ابْنْ الْبَلْدَة, 'belonging to village'), it can be included as a pattern conforming to QeTl with infection of a to see. Yet while QeTl could morphologically be a phonetic modification of Meddug, one must note that the surname entered into use in Italy.

Pattern which in Maltese becomes QeTl, Ar. QeTl (Cp. M. qurt, a small tree', Ar. مَثاَرَة, No.46 ST.M. p.208). Paella. (28) QeTl (no such pattern exists in modern Maltese. This is a phonetic modification of QeTl (+a, fem.) (Cp. place-name in Gozo Ta' Mejna; Bejma.

With Prepositional 'm'


The only plural formation in the list of Semitic surnames is Ebejfi which is still used in the language as the plural of ghbara 'a one-year old sheep'. In the list there are also a few compound surnames the prefix of which from Ar. مَثاَرَة indicates possession or causality.

We now pass on to a more numerous and linguistically not a less interesting list of surnames. These are the surnames which originated from outside the Semitic linguistic stock coming to Malta with generally Sicilian or Italian men who married Maltese women.

The following is the alphabetical list of the non-Semitic surnames which continue to increase with the ever-increasing temo of mixed marriages, but of the older non-Semitic surnames given (and grossly mishandled etymologically) by Assunta Freca in his book Maltese Camara (1904).

(Precia's list of surnames is also incomplete. The following, marked with an asterisk, are listed as surnames of Sicilian nobility by Antonio Mango di Casagrafica in his two volumes Il Nobileta di Sicilia (Palermo, MCMXVI). Additional surnames in brackets are those not included in Precia's book, but are included in Mango's. One need hardly say that linguistics and heraldry are two separate studies, and that not even bearer of a surname borne by a noble family is himself necessarily of noble origin)

A

* Alagona; * Alistri; * Albanu; Allegri; Alama; * Amato; * Ammirati; Apa; Aquila; Armenia; Avola; Azaghen; * Abebe; * Accioli; * Albana (M. Albanez); * Amodeo; * D'Accona; * Arena; * Amgno.

B

Bagnoiolo; Baldacchino; * Baiela; * Balza; * Barba; * Bartolo; Beiluomo;
L

Laiino; Lanzo; *La Rosa; Lia.
The list of Sicilian surnames in Maltese is comparatively much larger than that of Semitic Maltese. There are two streams, so to say, of Romance surnames in the language, one which is very much older and goes back to the times of the Normans and another more recent which came with comparatively recent marriages. While the Semitic surnames may go back to pre-Quranic times though not necessarily so, the Older Romance surnames are generally post-Arabic and, some of them at least, may go back to Norman times.

Maltese surnames of Italian or Sicilian origin may be listed under different headings, the main ones being:

1. Place-Names:
   - (i) Albanese; Ascenese; Avellino; Cremona; De Piro; Dandria; Denaro; Formosa; Genova; Giappone; Lucchesse; Messina; Montreux; Padovan; Panzilerescu; Paris; Penza; Pisani; Puglia; Salerno; Savona; Talama; Tanti; Trapani.

2. Country of Origin:
   - Spain: Cardona; Corrado; Enriquez; Flores; Galles; Galizia; Granada; Heretti; Inglesas; Navarra; Seville; Spagnol; Vidal.
   - Portugal: Carmona; Coelina (original spelling Calheiro); Portugues.
   - English: Joslin; England; (sp. also Ingles); Mortimer (Mortimer in Normandy).
   - Irish: Burgess; Craig; DeGray; Douglas; Dowling; Holland; Jones; Lowell; Munro; O’Brien; Turner; Tawington.
   - French: Bouvet; Doubud; Gourier; Guillouier; Lauro; Latier; Morgan; Randon; Rigeaud.
   - Jewish: Amato; Bondin; Cossen; Kissaun; Marks.
   - Greek: Cachia; Callus; Calamata; Colombo; Filipplidas; Grece; Salinas.
   - German: Huber; Miessi; Tedesco; Werz; Wirth.

Examples of Maltese nicknames, (i) Semitic (S.N. for short) or (ii) Romance (R.N. for short), the meaning of which corresponds to that of Maltese and/or foreign surnames are:

(i) Surnames of Semitic Origin:

(ii) Surnames of Romano Origin:

As we have said at the outset, surnames are an integral part of the spoken language, some of the forms being obscure or obsolete like some part of the spoken or written vocabulary of the language. In order to give an idea of the origin of Maltese surnames generally as nicknames, I am going to classify a considerable list of Italian surnames to which may or may not correspond Maltese surnames incorporated into Maltese ethnography compared with French and English correspondences.

The correlation of surnames will help us to illustrate the origin of most surnames from nicknames as expressions of the psychological reactions of common folk who, as many still do in Gozo, prefer to call their friends and families not by their surnames, but by their nicknames. The nickname is still so popular in the countryside that at the Musa folk-hall ball competition held every year on the feast of SS. Peter and Paul, some of the singers prefer to be announced to the listeners by their nicknames. This shows how spontaneous is the growth of a nickname which originates from a variety of motives such as affection, respect, and sometimes even contempt, indeed quite a number of motives which can be exemplified by the following lists of Italian surnames given under separate headings.

In order to show that surnames as so many words belong to the Dictionary of the Language, I have grouped them under separate headings, as in a Vocabulary by subjects:

Explanation of Symbols & References:
(1) + after a surname indicates that there are other forms besides that given; multiple variants.
(ii) + pl. 1 indicates the surname is in the plural form.
(iii) + before a surname means that it is also found in Malta and/or Gozo.
(iv) = means that there is no corresponding surname in the language preceding it.
(v) Duzac = Albert Duzac, author of Dictionnaire Philologique Des Notes De Famille et Prénoms de France (Paris).

I. Religion (including names derived from ecclesiastical dignities):

(b) Nicknames, Il-Qassieb (Rabbat) 'priest'; Il-Papas 'priest of the Orthodox Church'; (Siggiewi); Gesuit 'Jesuit', (Siggiewi).
II. The World and its Elements

(a) It: Dell’Aqua; Fr: Auvergne; Eng: Water(s), Waterer, River(s); It: Caldo; Fr: Chaud; Eng: Warm; It: Freddo; Fr: Froide; Eng: Cold; It: Golfo; Fr: Golfe; Eng: Fjord(s); Fr: Baie(s); It: Gravina; Fr: Baie; Eng: Snow; It: Luci; Fr: Lumière; Eng: Light; Lyte; It: Lucenti (+ pl.); Fr: Brillant; It: Luna; Fr: Lune; but Eng: Moon(s); Anglo-French noun, mne, monk; (P.H.R.); It: Mort; Fr: Mort; Eng: Death; It: Oceano; Fr: Ocean; Eng: Ocean; (<OE, 'seas, sea-water.'); It: Mondello (+ pl.); Fr: Mer; Eng:; It: Nebbia; Fr: Brume; Eng:; It: Nuvola; Fr: Nébule; Eng:; It: Nuvola; Fr: Nébule; Eng:; It: Polvere; Fr: Poussière; Eng: Dust; Dond; It: Stella; Fr: Étoile; Estelle; Eng: Star; (C.M.E. 'Snare 'star'); It: Tempesta (+ pl.); Fr:; Eng: Storm(s); Siamese, also Tempest; It: Terra; Fr: Terre 'entre dans de nombreux noms a valeur topographique eic.'(Douza); Eng: Land.

(b) Nicknames: Selbign Dinja 'Seventy Years' (Siggiewi); Tal-jumar 'moon' (Sellicka); Ta' Helija 'Djinn (Qormi); Tal-Mond (Qormi); Talllina (Islanders); Tal-L-Akkawa (Mqabba).

III. The Winds

(a) It: Brezza (+ pl.); Fr: Brise; Eng: Breeze, Breeze, nicknames from OE. Brósa 'a gaudily' (P.H.R.), with which cp. M. nickname Dubh-bás-bona.

(b) Nicknames: Ta’az-zuqa 'breeze' (St. Julians); Ta’ Vence (St. Julians), 'to blow strongly - wind'; Ta’ Gjentzi (Victoria, Gozo); 'Orient'; Ta’Xlakk (Gozo); Ta’Rbk (Gozo).

IV. Soil and Water

(a) It: Argilla; Fr: Glaise; Eng: Clay(s); Collet, Fr: Col, Colline; Eng: Hill(s), Hille; It: Costa, Fr: Côte; Eng: Coast(s); Fr: Côte; or Riva; Fr: Rivière; Eng: River(s); (doubtful etymology); It: Giradino; Fr: Jardin; Eng: Garden, Gardo; It: Isola, Fr: Ile, 'isle whence Lillo; Eng: ilena, Hen, It: Lago, Fr: Lac; but generally composite in Du Lac or della Lac, Eng: (s) 'dweller by the stream' (P.H.R.); It: Monte (+ pl.); Fr: Mont, also Montagne; Eng: Mount, Mounteb; Fr: Montagne; Eng: Mountain; It: Montalbano; Eng: Mounteb; Fr: Montalban; It: Mocal; Eng: Bois; It: Bois; Fr: Bock; Boke; It: Valle; Fr: Vail; (generally preceded by the definite article in Laval; or a preposition, as in Duval), Eng: Valley.

(b) Nicknames: Bellregua 'whirlpool' (Birgu); Ta' Nuja Tomma 'half a tunola' (Gozo); Tal-Qortina 'wasteland'; Tas-Siena 'water-wheel'; Tal-Gabillut 'landlocked.'

V. Minerals and Metals

(a) It: Acciaio; Fr: Acier; Eng: Steel(s); Steele; It: Argento; Fr: Argent; Eng: Silver, Lit: *Carbone; Fr: Carbone (rare); Charbonnier, Eng: Coke(s); Cu, Comas; It: Diamenti; Fr: Diamant, Eng:; It: Ferro; Fr: Fer; Dorer 'patronyme assez rare pour désigner un marchand de fer' (Daussat); Eng: Ironmonger (also Smith, the commoner name in the British Isles); It: Granito (+ pl.); Fr: and Eng:; It: Mercure (+ pl.); Fr and Eng:; It: Metallo; Fr: Métal; Eng: Gold, Gold; Gold, cp. also Golosann; It: Gigone (+ pl.); Fr: Eng: Brass, Eng: Plume(s).

(b) Nicknames: Ta’ Halidu 'iron' (Rabat); Tal-Diamanti 'diamond', (Rabat; Gozo, and Siggiewi).

VI. Animals

(a) It: Agnello; (+ pl.); Fr: Agneau; Eng: Lamb; It: Animal; Fr: Bœuf; rare, Eng:; It: Animal, Fr:; Eng:; It: Aquilla; *Guglia; (Maltese bon); Fr: Aigle, Eng: Eagle(s); It: Camel; Fr:; Eng: Camel(s);; It: Cane, Fr: Chien; Eng: Doggett; It: Gallo; Fr: Cheval, Eng: Horse; It: Colombo (+ pl.); Fr: Pigeon; Eng: Dove, also Pigeon or Pidgeon; It: Conigli, Fr: Lièvre, Lièvre; (le liévre était le symbole de la polonnera (Daussat), cp. sumane Fenech); Fr: 'la 'mante', Eng: Harc(e); Habitat(s), hypocoristics of Robert (P.H.R.); It: Gallo (+ pl.); Fr: Coq; Eng: Coq(e) (es); Cox; It: Leopard, Fr:; Eng: Léopard, Lippard; It: Lopre (+ pl.); Fr: Lièvre; Eng: Harc(e); It: Lupo (+ pl.); Fr: Loup; Eng: Wolf(e); Cox; It: Wawdelet; Fr: Cochon; Eng: Pig(s); also Hog, Fr: Papier, Fr: Ju(au), Jar(a), Jaraul; Eng: Goose; Fr: Becs (very rare) also Moulin; Eng: Sheep and Sheepmonger; It: Pellicano; Fr:; Eng:; It: Peace (+ pl.); Fr: Poisson; Eng: Fish; It: Pernice; Fr: Perdix; Eng: Partridge; It: Polli, also Pollina, Fr: Poussin, Poulin, Eng: Chicken; It: Rondinella; Fr:; Eng: Swallow; It: Scimmia; also Scimm; Fr: Singe(s); Eng:; It: Soci, Fr: Souris, Eng:; It: Tascchi, Fr:; Eng:; It: Quaglia; Fr: Camille; Eng: Quali(e) also Quaglia; It: Roccelin also Uccella (+); Fr: Oiseau; Eng: Bird(s), Bird(e); It: Vaca, whence *Vaccaro extinct in Malta(s); Fr: Vacher; Eng: Coward, 'coward'; It: Viscio (+); Fr:; Eng:; It: Vitell; Fr: Veau, Veau(s); Eng: Veal; Veal(s); It: Veal; Eng; Cal; Cal; Fr: Volpe (+ pl.); Fr: Renard; Eng: Fox.

(b) Nicknames: Tal-Fenech 'rabbit' (Rabat, Manxar, Gozo); Tal-Muccu 'cory' (Zebbug); Tas-Zamm 'small rabbit' (Nadur, Gozo); Tal-Qattus.
'cat' (Victoria, Gozo); Ta' Dorbies 'lion' (Siġġiewi); Ta' Djeb 'wolf', (Gharb); Tal-Ween 'gander' (Xagħra, Gozo); Tal-Għaderjer 'one year old ewes' (Għarb, Gozo); Ta' Qaqa 'red-tailed goat'; H/iclu 'silly', Tal-Filfezz 'chickens' (Xewkija, Gozo); Tal-Hafut 'swallows'; Tal-Gudjen 'rat' (Victoria, Gozo); Il-Grejden 'the little mouse' (Għajnsielem, Gozo); Ta' Soni 'mice' (Rabat, Malta); Ta-Sanun 'spoil' (Mellieha, and Munxar, Gozo); Tal-Ħaṣfor 'bird', (Munxar, Gozo); Ta' Roħel 'quarter of a carcass' (Luqa); Ta-Ċaneg 'butcher blocks' (Nadur, Gozo); Tal-Għogħ 'bull' (Victoria, Gozo); Tal-Bajhdan 'pigeon hawk', (Ħasabba); Ta-Nellu 'white wagtail', (Ċaqabba); Ta-Nellur, 'thrush'; (Qrendi); Ta-Nukkuk, 'hen'; (Rabat, Gozo); Ta-Birkaqum, 'barn owl' (Ħal Qormi).

VII. Reptiles and Insects

(a) It. Apl, Fr. Abelle (Cp. nickname In-Nobi, (Għab, Gozo), Eng. Beel, used for industrious person (P.H.R.); It. Clinca, Fr. Pou, Eng. Bugg (e.g. 'hobgoblin, bugy, scarecrow'); It. Fasena (+ pl. i) (mouth); Fr. –; Eng. –; It. Formica (+ pl. ehi), Fr. Fourmi (+ very rare), also Fermigier, Eng. –; It. Monga (+ pl. ch), Fr. Mouche +; Eng. –; It. Ragnu (+ pl. i), Fr. Araigné +, Eng. –; It. Rupe, Fr. Grenouille (e.g. 'rare' symbol of the hereditary and of the commerical (Dauat) Eng. –; It. Vespa, Fr. Guêpe, Eng. Wasp(e).

(b) Nicknames: Tax-xidda 'horned', (Kerċem); Tam-Nevusa 'mosquito', (Għajn); Ta' 'Nmihus 'beetle', (Siġġiewi); Tal-Farjet, (Munxar, Gozo); Ta' Ghakkar 'snail' or 'sluggant', (St. Julian's and Xewkija, Gozo); Tal-Bibil 'lark', (GĦam, Gozo); Tal-Pepezzu 'little bird', (Għam, Gozo); Tal-Bikkar 'woodcock'; (Cp. Eng. surname Woodcock) and Fr. Bécasse, la bécasse symbolissant la petite, (Dauat); Il-Grenu or L'agrenu, Tal-Grenu (Victoria, Gozo), 'grass'; cp. Eng. nickname Grane, Fr. Grut, diminutive form of gran.

VIII. Fruit-Trees, Flowers, etc.


(b) Nicknames: Ta'l-Hakkett 'bouquet' (Munxar, Gozo), Ta' Karmba 'carob tree', (Għagra), Tax-Simura 'common rush', (Għajnsielem, Gozo and Siġġiewi); Tal-Bajjer 'pickly pears' (Mellieha); Ta' Prawa 'strawberry', (Mellieha); Karzuza 'celery' also devil's fumous nickname, (Rabat); Tal-Parsuit, 'a kind of fig', with which cp. It. surnane Partinolli; N'Gambu 'bemp' (Żebbug, Gozo); Ta' Kemmen, (Xaghra, Gozo); Tsajju 'cotton wool', (Ilima).

IX. The Human Body

(b) Nicknames: *Figeron* 'fashion', *modella* (Birgu); *Čoff* 'brows', (Birgu); *Il-Nodi* 'fashions', (Čebbug); *Ta' Saba* 'framelli seven flannel-shirts', (Siġiewi).

XII. Food and Drink

(b) Nicknames: *Ta'll-ħnied 'wine' (Rabas); Taš-Šoppa 'soup'; Taš-Ponté 'punch', *Taš-Ċaibra 'gin'; Il-Leglegi 'wine bibber'; Taš-Dqigu 'hour' and Taš-Malhuta 'a mixture of corn (qamh) and barley (xghibr)'; Taš-Nobx 'baker', (Żejjna).

XIII. Eating and Cooking

(b) Nicknames: *Il-Platt 'plate' (Rabas); Stimmata 'coffee pot' (Rabas); Taš-tigum 'tripe-pot'; Taš-Lida 'peci.'

XIV. Houses and Furniture
(b) Nicknames: Tauschtujgurt 'chairs' (Queeni), Tual-Covey 'Queni and Robert, (loka). Un & uupa (Ujabbua) 'the lamp'. Ikuka 'lamp, glass' (Ujabbua). ReelGubguk 'tampubang'. Kuti 'the wig' (Ujabbua).

XV. Town and Country


(b) Nicknames: Tual-Brazil 'Brazil' (Binga), Il-Germani 'German' (Manzar, Gozo); Tal-Mang 'Greek' (Hus-Hzebbuq), Tal-Laud Jew 'Vallitina'; Tual-Siciliani 'Sicilians' (Xewkija, Gozo); Tal-Queni 'Queni' (Valletta).

XVI. Profession and Trades


(b) Nicknames: Tal-Fanuli or Tal-Fanulli 'Laundress - Launnder-maker' (Zejuin), Ta-Banni 'sea-arches'; Tal-Landier 'baker', (Rabat, Malta); Tal-Fumar 'baker' (Siggiewi); Tal-Mastra 'master' (Siggiewi); Tal-Knud 'commander' (Tan-Sinhu 'sirvice, mayor'.

XVII. Colours


(b) Nicknames: Tal-Mmar 'ruby' or red, Il-Glenn 'fair', Tal-Twod 'black'.

XVIII. Ships and Shipping Instruments


(b) Nicknames: Tal-Parram (Gozo); Tal-Yazzell; Tal-Sarkum and Tal-Barkum (Victoria, Gozo).

XIX. Travelling

(b) Nicknames: Tal-Rakhan (Kabat, Gozo); Tal-Babri.

XX. Writing and Writing Implements

(a) It. Carta, Fr. Papier; Eng. -; It. Penna, Eng. Penne; OE pen; 'pen, fold' or 'hill' (P.H.R.); in the sense of 'feather' cp. Eng. and Fr. Plume; It. Calamaio (+ pl. i), Fr. Calame, Eng. -; It. Stilo, Fr. Sceau non de localite d'origine (Dauzat), Eng. Seal, -; probably metonymic for 'sealer' (P.H.R.); It. Basti also Destelli, Fr. Buisel = personne a long bost, Eng. -; Fr. Chiro, Fr. -; Eng. -; It. Malta (+ pl. i), Eng. Grinder, 'grinder of corn', 'millstone', in Medieval England the reference may have been to a sharpener of tools or to a grinder of colours of papers (P.H.R.), Fr. Meulennas, also Meulennas homme de la neule avec s. genetil de niation (Dauzat).

(b) Nicknames: Ta’ Kuns (Qorni), 'papera'; Tan-Naqax (Qorni), 'acetyloterm of grinding stones'.

XXI. Shooting Implements and Fishing Tackle

(a) It. Sega, Fr. -; Eng. Saw, also Sawyers; It. Schioppa, Fr. Fusili also Fusillier, Eng. Gun; -; It. Polvera, Fr. -; Eng. -.

(b) Nicknames: Kennezzat 'shining-net' (Zejtoa).

XXII. Times and Seasons

(a) It. Giorno, Honggiorno (+ pl. i), Eng. Day < OE dagge (fem.) ME Day(e), Day(e) 'kneader of bread', 'bread-baker', later 'dairy-maid', Day is also a pet name for David (P.H.R.); It. Giornell'beltù; Fr. Jour(e)belt, It. Lunedi, Fr. Montag (Alsatian, German), Eng. Monday, 'perhaps a name given to one born on Sunday or to a holder of Mondayland which was 'land held on condition of working for the Lord on Mondays', (P.H.R.); It. Marte (+ pl. i) Fr. Mars (i) Le nom de lieu d'origine (ii) altération de la forme populaire de Veledad (iii) le nom d'un enfant trouvé en mars, Eng. -; It. Mercato (+ pl. i), Fr. and Eng. -; It. Giovedi, Fr. Jeudi (+ pl. i) 'surnom d'un enfant trouvé un jeudi (Dauzat)', Eng. -; It. Venere, Fr. -; Eng. Friday(e), 'perhaps one born on that day', (P.H.R.), Fr. Samedi, nom d'enfant trouvé un samedi (Altaret), It. Dominicano, De Dominicano, De Domingue, It. Domenica.

(b) Nicknames: Ta’ Xintu ‘Fintry’ (Luqa and Żebbqra); Tal-Harfe ‘Autunnumal’; Ta’ Sefj ‘Summetry’.

XXVII. Embarrassing Surnames (including bodily or moral deformities)


(b) Nicknames: Tal-Rakhan (Zejtoa); Ta’ Berdib (Zejtoa); Karmila (Bizgib); Bezza’-Art Hai-Żebbqra; Bezza’ Maita (Maqabbz); Id-Daghba (Maqabbz); Il-Pligell (Maqabbz and Qurumji); Is-Salfa (Maqabbz).

XXIV. Indicating Nationalities


XXV. Numbers (i) Cardinals (ii) Ordinals

(i) It. Quattro (+ mani, ochi, etc.), Fr. Quatre (+ beaux, arbres, etc.), Eng. Four (+ acre), It. Sette(+ pl. i), Fr. Sept (+ id., fonda), Eng. Seven (+ oaks), Fr. Otto, Fr. 8, Eng. -; It. Ventila, Fr. -; Eng. -; It. Trenta, Fr. -; Eng. -; It. Quattor, Fr. -; Eng. -; It. Cenito (+ pl. i), Fr. -; Eng. -; It. Mille (+ flot), Fr. -; Eng. -.

(ii) It. Primo (+ pl. i) Fr. Primand, +, Eng., -; It. Secondo, Fr. Second, Eng. -; (N. French and English, as far as I could check, do not seem to have the corresponding surnames for It. Terzi, Quarto, Quinto, Sesto (Fr. has Six); Settimo, and Ottaviano (+ pl. i).

The general purpose of this study has been an illustration of the interdependence existing between nicknames and surnames in time and place and, under this aspect, the contribution to the lexical material of the language which the individual surnames constitute. Indeed, further linguistic study might have explored also grammatical peculiarities such as in the formation of Italian surnames the frequent plural formation in -i, also of singular nominal and adjectival surnames ending in -a, and various the multiple forms which the same surnames may assume, some of which may represent old grammatical forms that have died out since the.
LA MARINA MALTESE
DAL MEDIO EVO ALL'EPoca MODERNA
STORIA E TERMINOLOGIA MARITTIMA
DI A. CREMONA

Malta posta a mezza del transito marittimo del Mediterraneo fra la costa europea e quella dell'Africa Settentrionale ha fin dai tempi non ricordati dalla storia offerto ai naviganti il punto più ospitale e favorevole di sosta e ricovero nel traffico marittimo dall'oriente verso le terre del Mezzogiorno e perfino fuori dallo stretto di Gibilterra verso le terre nordiche.

Ciò lo dimostrano le tracce di templi e dinose megalitiche che si attribuiscono ai primi colonizzatori dell'isola nei pressi della costa in diversi punti eminenti e più intensamente le tombe puniche nella parte occidentale dell'isola.

Ai Fenici e Cartaginesi che abitavano l'isola nei primordi del periodo storico si riconosce la nascita di una intensa navigazione nel bacino mediterraneo con il loro deposito commerciale nell'isola di Malta. Fin dal secolo IX i Fenici avevano fondato colonie nell'occidente della Sicilia prima dei Greci che rileggiamo con i Fenici nell'attività commerciale. Utica, presso Cartagine, sarebbe la più antica colonia fenicia, poi Tiro e la nuova città di Cartagine. I Fenici occuparono anche il meridione della Spagna, ai compiti come la posizione invidiabile delle isole di Malta, con i loro semini di mare, era più che un invito al traffico commerciale dei navigatori fenici nella loro concorrenza con la Grecia.

Si deve presumere che il commercio marittimo tra le terre italiane e la costa dell'Africa settentrionale ebbe il primo sviluppo durante il periodo romeo quando le terre della costa africana settentrionale dalla Girenetica fino ai confini della Libia erano l'emporio delle terre europee adiacenti al mare mediterraneo. Dalla caduta dell'impero romano fino all'invasione ed il dominio saraceno corre un periodo oscuro di oltre tre secoli in cui...

Nota: La trascrizione grafica della nomenclatura maltese, in questo modo, segue quella usata aggiungendo nel maltese scritto, cioè il sistema trascrizivo della Għeqqa tal-Kittelba tal-Malti (Società degli Scrittori Maltesi), in cui le lettere e corrispondono le parole in italiano al suono di e in ico, le lettere a al suono di a, che in caso di precede o le prime lettere h, g, s, e le semi-consonanti i, u, alla lettera araba: c, g, s, l, l, d, rispettivamente, la lettera a alla i italiana con leggera aspirazione, etimologicamente alla sembe ".