VERBS

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The year 1090 A.D. saw the end of the Arabs' political domination in Malta. When they were expelled from the island about 200 years later, round about 1245, the Arabic language had ceased to feed the native tongue of the Maltese from its own lexical resources. The Norman domination introduced a new civilization with its own vocabulary. The Arabic linguistic resources were replaced by others from Romance sources, largely Sicilian. But by the time the Normans conquered Malta, Arabic morphology had established itself so firmly that all loan-words, with few exceptions, conformed to Maltese-Arabic morphological patterns.

Verbs borrowed from old Sicilian and Old Italian as well as those borrowed from modern Italian and English (contemporary accretions) are conjugated like the native Maltese verbs of Arabic origin having a weak third radical (*j*, Ar. ي).

In this paper I have collected a list of Maltese correspondences of Italian verbs grouped under three headings. The following are three examples of conjugated Romance verbs: two of Sicilian origin and another of English origin:

(i) *abbanduna*, (<It. *abbandonare*) 'to abandon'; (ii) *fada*, (<Sic. *fidari*) 'to trust'; (iii) *illandja*, (<Eng.[to] *land*) 'to land (aeroplane)'.

Perfect — Singular Person

abbanduna	*fada*	*illandja*	*qara* (Cl. Ar. قَرَأَ qara'a > M. *qara*)
1. abbandun*ajt*	fd*ajt*	illandj*ajt*	qr*ajt*
2. abbandun*ajt*	fd*ajt*	illandj*ajt*	qr*ajt*
3. abbandun*a*	fad*a*	illandj*a*	qar*a*
4. abbandun*at*	fd*at*	illandj*at*	qr*at*

Perfect — Plural Person

1. abbandun*ajna*	fd*ajna*	illandj*ajna*	qr*ajna*
2. abbandun*ajtu*	fd*ajtu*	illandj*ajtu*	qr*ajtu*
3. abbandun*aw*	fd*aw*	illandj*aw*	qr*aw*

Imperfect — Singular Person

1. *n*abbandun*a*	*n*afd*a*	*n*illandj*a*	*n*aqr*a*
2. *t*abbandun*a*	*t*afd*a*	*t*illandj*a*	*t*aqr*a*
3. *j*abbandun*a*	*j*afd*a*	*j*illandj*a*	*j*aqr*a*
4. *t*abbandun*a*	*t*afd*a*	*t*illandj*a*	*t*aqr*a*

Imperfect — Plural Person

1. *n*abbandun*au*	*n*afd*aw*	*n*illandj*au*	*n*aqr*au*
2. *t*abbandun*aw*	*t*afd*aw*	*t*illandj*au*	*t*aqr*aw*
3. *j*abbandun*aw*	*j*afd*au*	*j*illandj*au*	*j*aqr*au*

Imperative

Singular abbandun*a*	afd*a*	illandj*a*	aqr*a*
Plural abbandun*aw*	afd*aw*	illandj*aw*	aqr*au*

Past Participle

abbandun*at*	afd*at*	illandj*at*	*mo*qri

[N.B. Note that the past participle of loan verbs, including those of English origin, with the exception of a few morphologically semiticised forms (such as m*feddel* < *feddel*, to domesticate, denominative form *fidil*, Sic. *fidili*), are formed on the pattern of It. or Sic. past participles. Two examples of the latter in Sic. having their past participle ending in -*ut* not in -*at*, are *batut*, '(person) in a very bad state of health', and *fallut*, 'bankrupt' from *patiri* and *falliri*].

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Maltese Verbal loans which in Italian begin with the vowel *a* can be listed under the following three classes:

CLASS I: Verbs which in their Maltese form retain the vowel *a*;

CLASS II: Verbs which change initial *a* of the Italian verb to *i*;

CLASS III: Verbs which drop the first syllable of the Italian verb and adapt themselves to the Semitic triliteral form with the 3rd radical weak on the pattern of (i) Q-T-[Y] (1st form) following in their conugation verbs like *qara* 'to read' or (ii) Q-T-[Y] (2nd form) like *halla* 'he left' or (iii) Qattal (2nd form).

Also verbs belonging to Class I and II in their conjugation follow verbs with the 3rd radical weak.

eg. (1) *abbandunajna* — 'We have abondoned'.

(2) *ikkalmajt* — 'I have calmed down'.

CLASS I — 1ST VOWEL *a*

abbanduna, 'to abandon', (< It. abbandonare)

abbona, 'to subscribe' (to a paper), (< It. abbonare)

abbonda, 'to abound', (< It. abbondare)

abborra, 'to abhor', (< It. abborrire)

abdika, 'to abdicate', (< It. abdicare)

abita, 'to reside', (< It. abitare)

abolixxa, 'to abolish', (< It. abolire)

abroga, 'to abrogate', (< It. abrogare)

abbuża, 'to abuse', (< It. abusare)

aċċenna, 'to hint', (< accennare)

aċċenta, 'to accent', (< It. accentare)

aċċentwa, 'to accentuate', (< It. accentuare)

aċċerta, 'to ascertain', (< It. accertare)

aċċetta, 'to accept', (< It. accettare)

akkumpanja, 'to accompany', (< It. accompagnare)

akkuża, 'to accuse', (< It. accusare)

akkwista, 'to acquire', (< It. acquisatre)

adatta, 'to adapt', (< It. adattare)

adura, 'to adore', (< It. adorare)

adotta, 'to adopt', (< It. adottare)

afferma, 'to affirm', (< It. affermare)

aggredixxa, 'to assault', (< It. aggredire)

aġita, 'to agitate', (< It. agitare)

ajjuta, 'to help', (<It. aiutare)

ama,[1] 'to love', (<It. amare)

ammetta, 'to admit', (<It. ammettere)

amministra, 'to administer', (<It. amministrare)

ammira, 'to admire', (<It. ammirare)

ammona, 'to admonish', (<It. ammonire)

analizza, 'to analyse', (<It. analizzare)

annunzja, 'to announce', (<It. annunziare)

antiċipa, 'to anticipate', (<It. anticipare)

appella, 'to appeal', (<appellare)

applawda, 'to applaud', (<It. applaudire)

applika, 'to apply', (<It. applicare)

apprezza, 'to appreciate', (<It. apprezzare)

approffita, 'to avail oneself of', (<It. approfittare)

approva, 'to approve', (<It. approvare)

arma, 'to arm', (<It. armare)

armonizza, 'to harmonize', (<It. armonizzare)

arresta, 'to arrest', (<It. arrestare)

assalta, 'to assault', (<It. assaltare)

assassina, 'to assassinate', (<It. assassinare)

assedja, 'to beseige', (<It. assediare)

assigura, 'to ensure', (<It. assicurare)

assista, 'to assist', (<It. assistere)

assoċja, 'to subscribe to' (paper, etc.), (<It. associare)

assuma, 'to assume', (<It. assumere)

attakka, 'to attack', (<It. attaccare)

awtentika, 'to authenticate', (<It. autenticare)

avanza, 'to advance', (<It. avanzare)

avvelena, 'to poison', (<It. avvelenare)

avviċina, 'to approach', (<It. avvicinare)

avvelixxa, 'to vilify', (<It. avvelire)

CLASS II – 1ST VOWEL *i*

ibbordja, 'to sail' (yachting), (<It. abbordare, 'to lay a ship alongside')

ibbozza, 'to sketch', (<It. abbozzare)

ikkaġuna, 'to cause', (<It. accagionare)

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[1] This occurs in some of the dialects of Gozo in a context like this: eg. *Ma ko-dux li ghadda u ma rajtux?* — 'Can it be that he passed by and you did not see him?'

ikkappara, 'to appropriate to oneself', (<It. accapparare) 'to secure by
   paying a deposit'

ikkarezza, 'to caress', (<It. accarezzare)

iččentra, 'to centralise', (<It. accentrare)

ikkomda, 'to accomodate', (<It. accomodare)

ikkorda, 'to tune', (guitar, etc.), (<It. accordare)

iddrizza, 'to set (one's clothes, etc.) right', (<It. addirizzare)

iffačenda, 'to bustle about', (<It. affacendare)

iffissa, 'to have a fixed idea', (<It. affissare, 'to fix with the eye')

iffolla, 'to crowd', (<It. affollare)

iffoltja,[2] 'to become thick', (<It. affoltire)

iffonda, 'to become a wreck', (<It. affondare, 'to sink')

iffranka, 'to save' (money), (<It. affrancare), 'to exempt', 'to stamp' (letter,
   etc.)

iffronta, 'to affront', (<It. affrontare)

iggančja, 'to hook', (<It. agganciare)

iġġudika, 'to judge', (<It. aggiudicare)

iġġusta, 'to adjust', (<It. aggiustare)

illarga, 'to go away to a place for a short time', (<It. allargare), 'to
   widen'

illoġġja, 'to lodge', (<It. allogiare)

immakkja, 'to bruise', (<It. ammaccare)

immoderna, 'to modernise', (<It. ammodernare)

immolla, 'to move up and down under pressure (spring bed), (<It. ammol-
   lare)

immoffa, 'to mouoder', (<It. ammoffare, ammufire)

ippačifika, 'to pacify', (<It. appacificare)

ippostja, 'to place', (<It. appostare)

ipponta, 'to sharpen' (pencil, etc.), 'to point at', (<It. appuntare)

irrabja, 'to be angry', (<It. arrabiare)

irranka, 'to rush off', (<It. arrancare), 'to trudge'

irranġa, 'to arrange', (<It. arrangiare)

irrenda, 'to surrender', (<It. arrendere)

irriskja, 'to risk', (<It. arrischiare)

issoda, 'to become steady', (<It. assodare)

issuġġetta, 'to subject', (<It. assoggettare)

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[2]This is an exception to the general rule that verbal loans from Italian or Sicil-
ian end in a (eg. iffitta 'to importunate') and those from English end in ja (eg.
iffittja 'to fit'; skiddja 'to skid'). Another exception is spissja 'to do something
frequently', Italian spesso, Sicilian spissu.

issomma, 'to sum', 'to be pensive and silent', (<It. assommare)
ittenda, 'to become aware', (<It. attendere, 'to care for', 'to attend')
ittanta, 'to tempt', (<It. attentare)
ivvampa, 'to flare up', (<It. avvampare)
ivvantaġġja, 'to prove useful', (<It. avvantaggiare)

CLASS III – SEMITIZED FORMS
[(i) QaTa[Y], (ii) QaTTa[Y], (iii) QaTTaL]

baxxa, 'to lower', (<It. abbassare)
batta, 'to abate', (<It. abbattere)
ma kodux,[3] 'to happen', (<It. accadere)
fada, 'to trust', (<It. affidare)
faga, 'to suffocate', (<It. affogare)
fannad, 'to deepen', (<It. affondare)
majna, 'to lower sails', (<It. ammainare)
poġġa, 'to place', (<It. appoggiare)
vaża, 'to give notice', (<It. avvisare)

[3] This occurs only in the proverbial context of the following saying: *Min thobbu u tamah, dak li jaghmel ma tarahx.* 'One does not notice the shortcomings of the person one loves'. One notes here that *tamah* is merely a repetition of *thobbu.*