

MEDIAEVALIA

“BANDI”, TRANSACTIONS OF THE “CONSIGLIO POPOLARE”, Etc, OF THE XV CENTURY

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This year's contribution to *Mediaevalia* is a continuation of the “Bandi” of the 15th Century, documents including proclamations and transactions of the *Consiglio Popolare* taken from MS No. 11 kept in the Royal Malta Library.

The material chosen is as diverse as possible in order to give a general view of life in Malta at that period. Naturally fortifications were very important and mention of these is predominant; hygiene and the importation of wheat are mentioned and it is interesting to read that in 1473 drought threatened the island and that as a result the Maltese considered mass exodus to Sicily. Price control seems as much in force as in present times, though the fines for infringement of the law vary considerably!

We have included a list of Charters, letters and other writings belonging to the *Universitas* of the island, which was ordered to be made by the Jurats in 1471. These Charters were the rights and freedoms dearly won and were much treasured by the government and people. They were preserved in a lead-lined wooden chest.

In the Royal Charters are freedoms awarded by King Martin in 1397; and the first Charter dated 1350, curiously enough, concerns integration! An important freedom was granted by King Alfonso in 1428.

The importance of this inventory can be grasped when the fact is realised that many of these charters have been lost through the years; fortunately some still exist and are found at the Royal Library in Valletta, others in the Archives of the Metropolitan Cathedral.

As in previous years capital letters have been used in the transcription of proper names as in use today; punctuation, which is absent in the original texts, has been introduced to clarify the meaning and all abbreviations have been extended in accordance with the rules of palaeography. Where numerals have been added they are in brackets.

Also as previously done we have given a precis in English below every entry which in the original are in Mediaeval Latin and Old Sicilian.

I take this occasion to express my deep gratitude to Dr. Lionel Butler, Professor of Mediaeval History at St Andrew's. Without his encouraging words and advice my research work might not have been continued.

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1. (3rd September, 1460) Fol. No. 87 verso.

Eodem

Praefatus serviens preconizavit quod nemo cuius sit condicionis et status audeat vendere in sua domo oleum vel vinum nisi data fuerit sibi mensura per dictos acatapanos et hoc sub dicta pena.

The Town Crier read his order which forbade the sale of oil and wine in the private premises of the sellers, unless these had obtained the specific measures from the Catapans. Those caught contravening this order would be fined.

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2. (10th September, 1462) Fol. No. 164 verso.

Eodem

Emissum fuit et est bannum seu proclama publicum per eundem servientem per loca publica et consueta, ex parte regia de mandato dominorum juratorum quod nemo audeat taglarj li cuglunj di li crastatj ymo vindirila cum li cuglunj et non taglarj exceptu kj non fussiru presenti li catapanj, alias sia in pena contraveniens di carlini quindichi a li dicti catapanj.

The above "Bando" refers to the castration of livestock and their sale. To ensure that castration had been performed correctly it was ordered that the Catapans should be present to inspect the animals at the time of sale. The fine for contravening this regulation was fixed at 15 carlini payable to the Catapans.

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3. (11th November, 1471) Fol. No. 215 verso.

XI Novembris

Emissum est bannum sive proclama in locis publicis debitis et consuetis civitatis praedictae ex parte regia de mandato dominorum juratorum per Georgium Galdes servientem: ki nixunu pocza vindiri meli ultra la meta zoe di XV grana la ubara sub pena di carlini XV da aplicarj a la maramma e carlini XV a lu catapanu.

Item ki nixunu ausa vindiri carni a quartu sub pena predicta.

Item ki nixunu piscaturj ausa vindiri pixi fora di la piscaria sub pena predicta.

Item ki nixunu putigaru ausa di pisari cum alcuna altra pisa kj acatari oy vinda sub pena predicta.

This proclamation was read at the usual places by the Town Crier Giorgio Galdes. It forbade the sale of honey at a higher price than 15 grana per ubara, under a penalty of 15 carlini payable to the fund for the repairing of the city walls and a further 15 carlini payable to the Catapans.

It was also forbidden to sell meat "a quartu" (probably retail), and to sell fish anywhere except the fish market. Shopkeepers were warned against using false weights either for buying or selling merchandise, under the above penalties.

"Ubara" was the measure used for honey, milk, butter, ricotta and oil. Monsignor A. Mifsud in his article entitled La Milizia e le Torri antiche di Malta published in "Archivum Melitense," Vol. IV, No. 2, page 65, has the following note: MS 963 Regist. civit. Notab. an. 1600 f.4 ed an. 1615 f.7. Bibl. Ivi la misura di miele di Malta è chiamata habara ed abara. L'identica parola è usata quale misura dell'olio tra le decime tesorierali, (libro D). "Abara d'olio di un rotolo alla grossa secondo l'antica ed inveterata consuetudine di quest'isola di Malta costa di venti misure sive due cartucci— per me D. Salv. Zammit deputatum anno 1752".

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4. (19th March, 1473) Fol. No. 235 verso.

Ihesus XVIII Marcij VI Indictione

Emissum est bannum sive proclama publicum in locis publicis et consuetis civitatis Melivetanae de mandato dominorum iuratorum ipsius civitatis regia ex parte, quod unusquisque veniat ad ipsos iuratos in dies tres ad aiustarj lu so tuminu cum quo vendit frumentum at alia res, sub pena carlenorum XV acatapanis ipsius civitatis et aliarum carlenorum XV marammati civitatis predictae, quod quidem bannum emissum fuit per Gulliellum Buchaiar, servientem ipsorum dominorum iuratorum.

This "Bando" was read by Guglielmo Buhagiar at the usual places in the city by order of the Jurats. It called upon all vendors of wheat and other commestibles to go to the Jurats within three days for the testing of their measures. This order was made to ensure that the population obtained correct measure and right value when purchasing goods. Those failing to comply with this order were liable to a fine of 30 carlini: 15 payable to the Catapans and 15 for the upkeep of the city walls.

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5. (20th June, 1473) Fol. No. 247 verso.

XX Junij VI Indictione

Emissum fuit et est bannum publicum sive proclama per Gulliellum Buchaiar servientem, da mandato dominorum iuratorum civitatis et insule Malte, in locis publicis et consuetis, regia ex parte: chi tucti quilli persuni li quali sunnu soliti intraveniri et intrari in consiglu ac et tucti quilli chi su mandati sindachi per parti di li capelli diyati statim viniri et intrarj a la logia a lu consiglu generalj chi si divi tiniri hoggj.

This "Bando" was read by the Town Crier in the usual places of the city. It called all those citizens who formed part of the Council, likewise all those chosen as representatives of the Parishes in the island to assemble immediately at the "logia" of Notabile for an urgently called general meeting, which would be held that day. The "logia" was the meeting place of the Consiglio Popolare — a place in the open but protected by a covering — by this means all discussions were freely heard by the citizens.

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6. (30th June, 1473) Fol. No. 250 recto.

Ultimo mensis eiusdem

Gulliellmus Buchaiar servientes retulit emisisse bannum publicum regia ex parte de mandato dominorum iuratorum in locis publicis et consuetis, quod omnes qui solent intervenire in consilio debeant, sub pena unciarum quinquaginta, venire hodie post horam vespertinam ad consilium per ipsos iuratos tenendi pro beneficio publico.

Guglielmo Buhagiar, the Town Crier, read this "Bando" in the usual places. It called all the members of the council — the Consiglio Popolare — to attend a meeting that evening, and those failing to obey this order would be fined 50 uncias.

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7. (4th September, 1473) Fol. No. 261 verso.

IIII Septembris VII Indictione

Emissum fuit bannum per Johannem Caukj, in locis publicis consuetis de mandato dominorum juratorum, regia ex parte, quod nemo de dicta civitate et insola cuiuscumque gradus, status, et condicionis, ausi vindiri la carne in publicu ne in privatu a quartu si no a rotulu, secundu la meta ordinata subra pena di carlini quindichi a li accaptapanj.

This "Bando" was read by the Town Crier Giovanni Cauchi. It was an order to forbid the selling of meat "a quartu", whether in a private dwelling or at the market. It states that meat must be sold by the "rotolu" at the price fixed by the Jurats. Those failing to comply with this order would be fined 15 carlini payable to the Catapans. The reason behind the issuing of this order is not known, therefore the meaning is obscure. We can, however, safely assume that the order was to protect the population from fraudulent deals.

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8. (11th September, 1473) Fol. No. 262 verso.

Eodem die

Emissum fuit bannum juxta deliberacionem dicti consilij de mandato dominorum juratorum per Johannem Caukj, servientem, in locis publicis et consuetis, quod nemo cuiusvis condicionis, status, gradus et condicionis existat audeat neque presumat emere et comparare aliquas mercancias extra dictam civitatem, et quod dicta trafica minime fiat in Rabbato civitatis predictae, sub pena carlenorum XV aplicandorum domino capitaneo diete civitatis et aliorum carlenorum quindechim marammatis diete civitatis et aliorum XV carlenorum a li accaptapanj.

According to a decision made at a council meeting the above "Bando" was read by Giovanni Cauchi, the Town Crier. It stated that under no circumstances whatsoever should anyone sell or buy any kind of merchandise outside the walls of the city, and by no means were business transactions to be carried out in the suburb of Rabat. The fine for breaking this order was fixed at 45 carlini: 15 payable to the Captain of the City, 15 for the upkeep of the city walls and another 15 paid to the Catapans.

The purpose for this order was to centralise the market and so insure a fair price of merchandise, which would not have been possible had there been scattered market places.

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9. (22nd October, 1477) Fol. No. 368 recto.

Emissum fuit est bannum sive proclama in locis publicis debitis et consuetis per eundem Laurencium, quod nemo cuiuscumque gradus, condicionis existat ausa a gictari mundicza per canali oy per finestra supra li mura di la chitati, et si havi gictatu kj dicza ad octu jorni la facza nitarj et non gecta pluj supra pena di carlini XV di aplicarj a lu capitaneu et carlini XV a la maramma et kj dicza contraveniens chi sia chiusa la finestra oy canali per unde gictassi tal mundicza.

This order was read in the usual places by the Town Crier Lorenzo. It forbade citizens to pollute the streets and walls of the city by emptying refuse (filth) into the channels opening on to the road; or through the windows overlooking the bastions. All

erstwhile guilty of this abuse were ordered to clean both the walls and streets within 8 days, and forbidden to repeat the offence under the following penalties: a fine of 30 carlini, 15 of which were to be paid to the Captain of the City and 15 for the upkeep of the city walls. As a further penalty those breaking this order would have their windows bricked up and the water channels draining their homes sealed.

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10. (4th September, 1478) Fol. No. 388 verso.

Pinus de Luna serviens retulit qualiter de mandato dominorum juratorum emisit bannum sive proclama, quod nemo audeat joculari lu rullu per anti la porta di Thumeo Cassia esistenti in Casale Lie, sub pena di uncia una ponderis da aplicari a lu Capitanu.

Pino de Luna, Town Crier, read this "Bando" by order of the Jurats forbidding anyone from playing "rullu" outside the front door of the residence of Thumeo Cassia at Casal Lia. Those failing to obey the order would be fined one uncia for the Captain of the City.

*"Rullu" was a game popular at the time.
Thumeo is a derivative of Bartolomeo.*

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11. (23rd July, 1479) Fol. No. 399 recto.

XXIII° Julij XII Indictione

Pinus de Luna serviens retulit emisisse bannum puplicum sive proclama in Casali Musta: kj nixuna persuna di qualisivogla gradu et condicionj si sia presuma jocarj a lu rollu sive rucellu in dicto casali et eius conturiu, maxime a lu terrinu di Beb Guytan, sub pena carlenorum XV Capitaneo et aliorum carlenorum XV marammati menium civitatis, quod bannum fuit emissum de mandato juratorum cum interventu nobilis judicis curiae capitaneo.

The above "Bando" was read by Pino de Luna in the village of Musta. It prohibited the game of "rollu" in the village and its surroundings, making special reference to the precincts of the locality known as Beb Guytan, under the fine of 30 carlini: 15 payable to the Captain and another 15 to go to the upkeep of the city walls.

This is the second order forbidding the game of "rollu" from which we assume this game was objectionable either because of gambling or because it incurred boisterous merriment or quarrels.

In the previous "Bando" the spelling of "rollu" differs, i.e., "rullu". The game was also known as "rucellu".

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12. (9th September, 1481) Fol. No. 499 verso.

Eodem

Lanceas Delia, serviens ipsorum dominorum juratorum, retulit emisisse bannum sive proclama in locis puplicis et consuetis de mandato ipsorum supradictorum juratorum regia ex parte, quod unusquisque veniat hinc ad dies octo per ajustarj li soy pisi et bilanczi et rotula et misuri, tantu di vinu comu di oglu, et ancora li obari di lacti, di burru et di oglu, et di qualsivogla, et quilli di li Casali hinc ad dies XV, sub pena di quindichi carlini a li Cattapani, unde de premssis fuit facta presente nota in acta dominorum juratorum.

The above "Bando" was read at the usual places by Lanceas Delia, the Town Crier. It called upon all vendors and traders in the city to have their weights and measures examined and adjusted. It is interesting to note how the measures are enumerated: the rotoli and measures for wine, also the "obari" for milk, butter and oil, and all other measures. Traders and vendors from the villages were allowed 15 days to comply with this order. The fine for not obeying this order was fixed at 15 carlini payable to the Catapans. The above "Bando" was entered in the Acts of the Jurats of the City.

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13. (31st October, 1482) Fol. No. 517 recto.

Ultimo eiusdem

Fuit emissum bannum per Masium Xellulj, servientem de mandato dominorum juratorum regia ex parte, sub pena unciarum quinquaginta ponderis regio fisco applicanda, chi tucti quilli persuni li quali rumasiru et hannu a darj di la collecta digianu di cza a tuctu domenica prime sequente, alias sia in la dicta pena non pagandu in ipso tempo restandu altri bandi in eorum robore.

The above "Bando" was read by the Town Crier, Masiu Xelluli, at the usual places in the city. It called upon all those who had failed to pay the poll-tax due for that year to do so within the period of the day of the "Bando" and the following Sunday, otherwise they would be liable to the fine of 50 uncias payable to the government. It was further stated that previous "Bandi" relating to this matter were still in force in spite of the present order.

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14. (15th November, 1469) Fol. No. 29 recto.

Consilium congregatum super salario aromatarij, et super facto pecunie mutuandae de redditibus Sancti Pauli, ad opus satisfacendi residua collectae anni praesenti Indictione primae preterito.

Die XVa Novembris, primae Indictione.

A meeting of the Council was called to discuss the salary to be granted to the "aromatarius", the Chemist of the Hospital of Santo Spirito in Rabat. The second item to be discussed was in relation to a loan from the funds of the Cathedral. It appears that the poll-tax had failed to yield sufficient to cover the required amount.

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15. (11th September, 1472) Fol. No. 225 recto.

Ihesus XI° Septembris VIe Indictione apud Melivetum sub anno Domini MCCCCLXXII.

Incipiunt acta dominorum juratorum civitatis eiusdem existentibus juratis: Nobilibus Georgio de la Chabica, Tristayno de Guyvara, Antonio Gactu de Sgnaes, et Petro de Vaccaro; pro iudicibus curie civilis: Gilio Zammit, Francisco Laurerio et Fabiano Zammit; pro Notario eiusdem curie: Paulo Tunne; pro Acatapanis: Honorabilis Nicolao de Caxaro et Lancea Xidi; pro Iudice notarium seu Notario dictorum dominorum juratorum: Andreas Fauzonus.

The above is the entry recording the elected Jurats and other officials of the government of Malta for the year 1472-73. The four Jurats were Giorgio de la Chabica, Tristano de Guyvara, Antonio Gactu de Sgunes and Pietro de Vaccaro. The Judges of the civil court were: Gilio Zammit, Francesco Laurerio and Fabiano Zammit. The Notary of the Court was Paolo Tunne. The Catapans were Nicola de Caxaro and Lancea Xidi. Andrea Fauczonus was elected as Notary for the Jurats.

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16. (18th October, 1472) Fol. No. 226 verso.

XVIII° Octobris

Consilium congregatum per Nobiles Juratos civitatis Malte super facto marammatis civitatis, videlicet: an debeat fierj per ingara vel per collecta seu taxa generali, vel vero per inposicionj di dui per chentu super li mercancij et super lu maldinaru di la carnj, in quo quodam consilio interfuerunt persone infrascriptis.

The council sat to discuss the repairing of the fortifications of the city. Suggestions were put forward regarding the manner by which the walls should be repaired: whether by villenage, i.e., all adult males would be obliged to give their labour free for this purpose for a period to be determined; whether to raise funds to pay for the repairs by means of a poll-tax or whether by obtaining the necessary amount by means of a tax of 2 per cent ad valorem on all merchandise and on meat.

This meeting was attended by 35 members including the representatives of Birkirkara and Naxxar. It would seem that no decision was reached at this gathering for the matter was brought up again in the agenda of a future meeting held on November 8 (see No. 17 below).

In the MS three words are cancelled preceeding "la carnj". These are "lu maldinaru di". Since this phrase meant tax on meat the scribe probably deleted the redundancy.

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17. (8th November, 1472) Fol. No. 228 verso.

VIII° Novembris

Consilium iterum congregatum per Nobiles Juratos super facto marammatis murorum seu menium civitatis, videlicet: an debeat fierj al la Ingara vel per inposicionem di dui per chentu super mercancijs extrahendis ab insula Malte et gabella carnis, an non per collecta seu taxa generali iuxta continenciam binorum rescriptorum seu provisionum nuper emanatorum ab illustrissimo domino Vicerege, lectis prius in consilio dictis rescriptis seu provisionibus in eodem consilio in quo intervenerunt virj infrascripti.

An assembly of the council met to discuss for the second time the repairing of the fortifications: whether by villenage or taxation on exports at the rate of 2 per cent and a tax on meat, or a poll-tax according to recent intructions received from the Viceroy, which had been read at the beginning of this council meeting.

This assembly was composed of 52 members, a large gathering, from which it appears that much interest was taken in the agenda which was to have repercussions on the whole population.

The following parishes were represented at this meeting by groups of persons elected for the purpose: Capella di Santa Caterina, Capella Bir Miftuh, Capella Sigeuj, Capella Curmj, Capella Bircarcara, Capella Zurric, Capella Nazar, Capella Zebug and Capella Rabbatj.

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18. (19th March, 1473) Fol. No. 235 verso.

Eodem

Consilium congregatum per nobiles dominos Juratos civitatis Meliveti pro regio servicio et Reipublice civitatis et insule predictae conservacione super eo, videlicet: ex quo non pluit et tucti li seminati su suchj, in tantum quod populus intēdit aufugere et se absentare ab hac insula propter penuriam et necessitatem maximam, quod fiendo et quo modo aut qua via debeant vivere pauperes at alij qui non habent unde vivere; et super collecta seu donativo venturo in hac civitate et insula ex quo fertur quantocius debere venire dicta collecta seu donativum; et super protextacione nuper facta pro Magistrum Salvatore Passa, aromatarium.

A council meeting was held to debate on the following three items. On account of the lack of rain drought threatened the island: the ground was so dry that the seeds had failed to sprout. As a result of threatened famine the entire population sought to leave the island. It was debated how to find a solution in this extremity and seek a way of existence of the indigent and the poor. The second item on the agenda was connected with the above. With famine at the gates whether it would be possible to levy the poll-tax for that year. The final item referred to a protest lodged by Salvatore Passa, the chemist of the hospital.

The above sitting was attended by 34 members of the council and the resolutions on the first two items were as follows: a general moratorium was granted and the impoverished population would be exempted from all taxation. (Published by Mgr. A. Mifsud: L'Approvigionamento e l'Università di Malta nelle passate Dominazioni, in Archivum Melitense, Vol. III, p.177, Malta, 1918).

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19. (21st March, 1473) Fol. No. 238 recto.

XXI° Marcj

Consilium congregatum per dominos Juratos civitatem Malte super facto frumenti nuper delati a regno Sicilie per ipsos Juratos cum pecunia Universitatis quod fiendum sit de eo pro presenti in quo quedam consilio intervenerunt virj infrascripti videlicet.

The council met to discuss the cargo of grain recently received from Sicily which had been purchased from funds of the Universitas. Thirteen members attended this council meeting which probably lifted the fear of famine from the drought stricken island.

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20. (31st March, 1473) Fol. No. 238 verso.

Ultimo Marcj

Consilium congregatum per Nobiles dominos Juratos civitatis Malte super frumento aportando a regno Sicilie, pro subvencione huius insule cum pecunia Universitatis, videlicet, quod questa quantitate frumenti mictat pro presenti ex pecunia Universitatis, in quo consilio intervenerunt virj infrascripti, videlicet.

The council met to vote the necessary funds required for the purchase of wheat from Sicily for local consumption.

From the minutes of this debate 18 members were present and it was decided to purchase 100 salmi of grain.

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21. (30th April, 1743) Fol. No. 242 recto.
Ultimo Aprilis

Consilium congregatum per nobiles Georgium de la Chabica et Petrum de Vaccaro, duos ex Juratis propter absenciam sociorum super facto frumenti delati per Pinum de Amurello, de civitate Agrigenti, ex quo ipse Pinus re obtulit velle capere aliquod prestitum cum Universitate, et super facto duorum maurorum seu saracenorum nuper captorum ex quibusdam fustis nuper applicandi et existentis in maritimis sive calis huius insule quod fiendum de dicti moris.

A council meeting was called by Giorgio de la Chabica and Pietro de Vaccaro, two of the Jurats, the others being absent. The purpose of this meeting was to debate on a request for a loan by Pino de Amurello of the city of Agrigento, who needed money to import wheat from Sicily. The other item on the agenda concerned two saracen prisoners who had been recently captured from an enemy ship, and it was to be decided how they should be treated.

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22. (20th June, 1473) Fol. No. 249 verso.
Eodem

Omnes predicti di consilio eligerunt et aprobaverunt viros infrascriptos ad eligendum anno quolibet Supermorammerium marammatis menium civitatis tamquam deputati cum juramento super libro Santi Pauli, de eligendo aliquem probum, actum et fidedignum; omni amore, passione et rangore post positis, videlicet:—

Nobiles dominus Capitaneus una cum ejus Judice seu Assessore qui fuerint et Magistro Notario ipsius curie.

Nobiles domini Jurati una cum eorum Judice seu Notario.

Nobiles Joannes de Mazara.

Nobiles Joannes Chabica.

Nobiles Franciscus Gact de Sguanes.

Nobiles Goffridus de Sguanes.

Nobiles Angelus Vaccarus.

Nobiles Nardus de Burdino.

Nobiles Petrus de Ribera.

Egregius Notarius Petrus Caxaru.

Nobiles Paulus de Biglera.

Honorabilis Rugerius de Caxaro.

Nobiles Antonius Falca.

Egregius Matheus Manuelj.

Nobiles Antonius Gact de Sguanes.

XII Indictione ex quo fuit mortuus dictus Franciscus Gact de Sguanes fuit electus eius filius per Juratos et Deputatos.

The above minute states that an election was held to form a sub-committee to consider the nomination of the "Supermorammerium", an official in charge of the building and repairing of fortifications. Mention is made to the fact that the members selected

for this purpose were required to take oath on the book of "Santi Pauli", probably the old and precious MS now preserved in the Museum of the Metropolitan Cathedral.

Subsequently Antonio Gact de Sguanes was elected to the sub-committee in place of his deceased father Francesco.

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23. (23rd June, 1473) Fol. No. 250 recto.

Consilium congregatum per Nobiles Juratos super facto frumenti quod fiendum propter penuriam futuram frumenti in hac insula vigentem, et super liceteris seu provisionibus nuper emanatis super donativo sive collecta unciarum sexaginta quatuor quod fiendum lecte prius ipsis provisionibus in eode consilio etcetera.

The council met to discuss the manner in which to meet the wheat scarcity and threatened famine on the island. Also to debate on the instructions recently received from Sicily to levy a poll-tax of 64 uncias, these instructions having previously been read in the council.

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24. (2nd July, 1473) Fol. No. 252 verso.

II° Julij

Consilium congregatum per Nobiles dominos Juratos super facto frumenti ex quo Blasius Michola offert se velle portare ad hanc insulam salmas duo milia si Universitas se obligaverit dare eidem Blasio carlenos septem pro salma di guadagnu.

The above debate concerned the importation of wheat by Blasio Michola. This merchant stated he was willing to supply 2,000 salmi of wheat on condition that the government agreed to allow him a profit of 7 carlini per salma.

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25. (11th September, 1473) Fol. No. 262 recto.

XI eiusdem

Consilium congregatum super ementis sex bumbardis a Nobili Johanne de Maczara, ad opus moniciomum dicte civitatis.

The council met to discuss the acquisition of six bombards for the purpose of fortifying the city. These were to be purchased by Giovanni de Maczara.

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26. (11th September, 1473) Fol. No. 262 verso.

Eodem die

Per omnes supradictos fuit conclusum et deliberatum: ki nixunu ausi accactarj et traficari in mercantia, zoe filati et faldellj et cuctunj oy ne altra qualsivogla mercantia sino intra la chitati et no a lu Burgu oy a lu Rabbatu di la chitati predicta, subra pena di carlini XV di aplicarj a lu Capitaneu, altri XV a la maramma, et altri XV a li Accaptapanj.

The above deliberations concerned trading of wool and cotton yarns and any other material. It was forbidden to buy or sell these articles in any place other than the city, whether the Borgo (now Vittoriosa) or Rabat. The fine for infringement of these orders was 45 carlini: 15 payable to the Captain of the city, 15 for the upkeep of the city walls and 15 to the Catapans.

It is supposed that the purpose of the above regulations was to centralise the market thereby obtaining stable prices.

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27. (1st December, 1479) Fol. No. 407 verso.

Primo Decembris XIII Indictione

Consilium congregatum per Nobiles dominos Juratos super facto abbacie monialium ipsius civitatis urgentis ad ruinam, quo modo et di qua pecunia fiat maramma in ipsa abacia la quali tueta si va per terra et ubi stare debeat abatissa cum suis monialibus interim usque ad expeditionem ipsius abacie.

Egregius Caxaru laudat ki si mectanu unci X di la Universitati et quatu di San Paulu et sei di lu hospitali et mictanu per bursa et ipsu promisi carlini sei et ki si hajanu li casi di Rugeri oy di quondam Notari Antoni a lugheri, di inde laudavit ki sianu dati a la abatissa tantu quantu dichinu li maiuri vuchi.

Nobiles Gofridus de Sguanes laudat quod capiantur uncie XII ex pecuniam Universitatis, di lu spitali uncie III, et quod ipsa abatissa cum monialibus stet intus ecclesiam ipsius abacie.

A meeting was held to discuss an urgent matter regarding the abbey of the Benedictine nuns in the city. This building was in need of reconstruction owing to the bad state of repair, and the council was to discuss the ways and means of rebuilding the abbey and, during the period needed for the work, where the mother abbess and her community were to be accommodated.

Twenty-four members attended this meeting and two of the speakers were Nicola Caxaru and Gofridus de Sguanes. Caxaru suggested that the Universitas provide the sum of 10 uncias for the reconstruction of the abbey, 6 uncias from the Cathedral and 4 from Santo Spirito Hospital, and he himself would donate a further 6 carlini. He further proposed that during the period the works were being undertaken the community should be accommodated either in the buildings belonging to a certain Ruggero or in others the property of the late Notary Antonio. De Sguanes proposed that the sum of 12 uncias be granted from the funds of the Universitas and 4 from the hospital. Regarding the matter of accommodation he suggested that the abbess and her community should live in the church of the abbey during the reconstruction of of her convent.

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28. (28th January, 1481) Fol. No. 471 verso.

Vicesimo octavo Januarij XIII Indictione

Consilium generale congregatum per dominos Juratos civitatis Melitae, super facto Cappellanj missi ut asseritur per Reverendum Dominum Episcopum, hoc est si acceptetur vel quid agendum sit de huiusmodi negocio cappellanie, ex quo iste missus est juvenis et linguam huius insule ignorat.

A general council met to discuss the appointment of a new Parish Priest to the Cathedral who had been chosen and sent to Malta by the Bishop. It was to decide whether or not to accept his appointment, taking into consideration his youth and lack of the language (Maltese).

At the time the Bishop of Malta resided in Sicily. Probably the Parish Priest in question was a Sicilian protegee of the Bishop.

Magnificus Georgius de la Chabica Capitaneus laudat quod si dictus Cappellanus est vere missus ad hanc civitatem per Dominum Episcopum ut habeat dictam cappellaniam, scribatur ad Dominum Episcopum ki multum ni mara viglamu di Sua Signoria ki ni havj provistu di tali Cappellanu maxime ki non sa la lingua et ki placza Sua Signoria providiri di altru Cappellanu ydoneu eo maxime ki antiquati tali Cappellanu si solia eligiri per consiglu dicte civitatis alia ki hayanu de recurriri ad Sanctissimum Patrem.

The above is an extract from the debate that followed the council meeting and is the deliberation of the Captain of the city on the subject. He said that a letter should be addressed to the Bishop saying that if it were true that he had selected this young priest to be Parish Priest, the Council was much surprised at his choice, principally because the priest in question had no knowledge of the Maltese language. The Bishop was to be requested to make another selection in keeping with the point raised by the council since by ancient custom it was the right of the council to select their own Parish Priest. Should the Bishop differ in opinion it was proposed to have recourse to the Pope. (The last two entries were published by Mgr. A. Mifsud in La Diocesi, Malta, 1918: Sulla elezione del Parroco della Cattedrale che non sapeva il Maltese. A.D. 1481, pp. 203-5.

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29. (5th October, 1482) Fol. No. 511 recto.

V Octobris Prime Indictionis.

Consilium congregatum per dominos Juratos super facto di furniri guardi di Blalut il Meze, Lippie, Hayn Tuffieha, lu Gumarinu, per che su isfornute, non si trovanu homini exenti si lu parj che cum licencia di lu consiglu si hagianu a piglarj homini di li mura et di la placza per furnirili di quilli chi eranu anti-quamenti et foru livati.

The council met to discuss the appointment of sentries at the following places: Blalut il Meze, Lippie, Hayn Tuffieha and Gumarinu, as these posts had fallen vacant. Since the sentries had been withdrawn from these places to work on the fortifications of the city, permission was sought from the council to order their return to their previous duties.

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30. (11th December, 1482) Fol. No. 525 verso.

XI Decembris Prime Indictione.

Consilium congregatum super facto procuratoris ordinandi ad fabrica seu reditus operae Sancti Pauli Ecclesiae Cathedralis civitatis predictae.

The council met to elect two Procurators for the general administration of the Cathedral property.

From the debates registered it appears that Antonio Falca and Rogelius de Caxaro were elected. Should Antonio Falca decline to accept nomination Blasio Michola was to be offered the post.

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31. (8th February, 1471) Fol. No. 202 recto.

VIII eiusdem Februari IIII Indictione.

Matricula di li privilegij, litteri et autri scripturi di la Universitati di la chitati predicta, facta, et ordinata per li Nobilis Jurati anni predicti, li

quali foru et su misi intra la caza di la Universitati predicta.

(1) In primis li capituli di la dicta chitati impetrati per lu Nobili Johannem de Maczara comu ambaxaturij a sacra maiestati domini regis Johannes intra Barchinonam die secunda mensis Januarij VIII Indictione anno a Nativitate Domini MCiiiLX cum pendente de serica rubea et in quo sunt arma ipsius sacrae maiestatis et sunt in carta parcomena.

(2) Item li capituli di la dicta chitati impetrati novissime per lu dictu Nobiles Johannes de Maczara come ambaxaturij ab illustrissimo domine Vice-rege sub data Messane XVII Januarij XIII Indictione MCiiiLXVI cum pendente et cera rubea in qua sunt arma sacre maiestatis in una buxulicta et est in carta parcomena.

(3) Item executoria di li capituli obtenti a majestate quondam gloriose memoriae regis Alfonsi per continenti infra lautro lu ricaptu di la Capitania e di lu Castellu sub data Panormi nono mensis Februarij prime Indictione.

(4) Item una littera di lu illustrissimu signuri Vicere super li spaci de Gued Ghersume sub data Panormi XXVIII Aprilis sexte Indictione.

(5) Item una littera domini precedentis de la prohibitum di armari fusti, sub data Panormi Vta Marcij XV Indictione.

(6) Item una altra confirmatoria di la supradicta domini Viceregie, sub data Panormi XXVIII Aprilis XI Indictione MCiiiLXIII.

(7) Item una littera domini Viceregis super la paga di la collecta di quilli ki non habitanu a lu Castellu, sub data Sace XXV Februarij XIII Indictione.

(8) Item una littera domini Viceregis revocandu unu capitulu lu quali dictava ki la Universitati havissi eligir Judichi per si remittendu la cosa a la Universitati.

(9) Item privilegiu super la gregacionem di li Insuli a lu regiu demaniu e di lu recaptu sub data Panormi, anno Domini Incarnationis MCiiiXXVII, die III Januarij, VI Indictione cum sigillo pendente in carta parcomena.

(10) Item la confirmacione bone memorie Alfonsi pre inferri proxime privilegij sub data Valencie die vicesimo Junij anno a Nativitate Domini MCiiiXXVIII in carta parcomena cum sigillo pendente.

(11) Item unu privilegiu di Re Lodevicu de la gregacioni di li Insuli a lu regiu demaniu sub data Messane Anno Domini MCiiL mensis Octobris VII eiusdem III Indictione in carta parcomena cum sigillo pendente.

(12) Item unu privilegiu di Re Martinu di la agregacione di li Insuli a lu demaniu sub data Cathanie Anno Domini MCiiiLXXXXVII die XXVII Novembris VI Indictione in carta parcomena cum sigillo pendente.

(13) Item unu privilegiu di Re Martinu di la frankicza di la doana sub data Cathanie MCiiiLXXXXVII die XVIII Februari VI Indictione, in carta parcomena cum sigillo pendente.

(14) Item li capituli impetrati per lu Nobile quondam Manfre de la Habica a maiestate quondam felice memorie regis Alfonsi, sub data in Castello Novo civitatis Neapolis die secundo mensis Novembris Anno Domini MCiiiLV, in carta parcomena cum sigillo pendente.

(15) Item la executoria loru sub data Panormi, die VII mensis Marcij III Indictione MCiiiLV.

(16) Item la executoria di loru facta per lu conservaturi sub data

Neapolis, die XIII mensis Februarii IIII Indictione MCiiiiLVI in carta paperi.

(17) Item dui litteri supra licencia di extrahiri frumentum.

(18) Item capituli portati per lu magnificu qondam misser Ximuni di Maczara e misser Franciscu Gactu in carta di papiro, sub data Cathanie XX Martij VII Indictione MCiiiiX.

(19) Item certi capituli impetrati per Stephanu de Perera olim ambaxaturi di questa Universitati et infra li autri che unu capitulu di Miseb Rihi sub Anno Domini MCiiiiL in carta di paperio.

(20) Item una copia extracta per qondam notarum Angelum super lu factu di lu ricaptu di li officii.

(21) Item la confirmacioni di lu privilegiu di la gregacioni di la dicta chitati et insula a lu regiu demaniu sub data Panormi XII Julij IIII Indictione.

(22) Item capituli inpetrati per quondam notarum Angelum data in civitate Capue, die XVIII mensis Octobris M^oCiiiiXXXVIII in carta paperij.

(23) Item una littera di li ministrali ki staianu intra la chitati.

(24) Item una altra littera contra li Judej super li stagli di la marama.

(25) Item una altra littera super la licencia di extrahiri frumentum sub data Cathanie IIII Madij XI Indictione.

(26) Item una littera di licencia di inponirj la cabella di fiorinu per bucti, sub data Cathanie VIII Octobris X Indictione.

(27) Item tri transunti facti per manu di notariu Franciscu Calava di li privilegij di la gregacionj di li Insuli a lu demaniu, zoe di Re Lodevicu, di Re Martinu e di Re Alfonso in carta parchimina.

(28) Item unu transuntu di unu privilegiu di la frankyeza di la doana per tuctu lu regnu di Sicilia di Re Alfonsu per manu di notaru Antonio Falczunj.

(29) Item li capituli di la dicta chitati inpetrati per lu magnificu misser Per Johanne de Mazara a sacre maiestate felice memorie qondam regis Alfonsi, sub data in Terra Sancti Severj, die XXII Februarij VI Indictione, MCiiiiLVIII cum sigillo pendent in carta parcomena cum eorum exequitoria in carta di papiro sub data Panormi VIII mensis Madij MCiiiiLVIII.

(30) Item li capituli inpetrati per Cola Rocca da lu illustrissimu signuri Vicere in carta di papiro, sub data Panormi die XIII mensis Marcij XII Indictione MCiiiiXXXVIII infra li quali che unu capitulu ki non si ponnu conchidiri li spacj esistenti per casa cuj non havj.

(31) Item li capituli inpetrati per lu nobilis qondam Carlu Paternò a sacra mejestate felicis memorie qondam regis Alfonsi, in carta papiro sub data in Castello Novo Neapolis, die XVIII Novembris prime Indictione MCiiiiLII infra li quali che unu capitulu di lu Castellu et unu autru capitulu di li fallutj lu quali dicta ki infra vidimu exequatur pena a fallentibus quo elapso intelligatur exactas via esclusa compitum.

(32) Item una littera conservatoria di li capituli sub data Capue XVIII mensis Octobris III Indictione MCiiiiXXXVIII.

The above is a list of charters, letters and other writings belonging to the Universitas of the island of Malta and kept in the safe of the said Universitas, which list was ordered to be made by the Jurats. In the manuscript the paragraphs are not numbered. To facilitate the indication of the different items we have numbered every paragraph. These added numbers are bracketed.

The items relating to "capituli", i.e., charters obtained by Giovanni de Maczara, Manfre de la Habica, Ximuni de Maczara and Francesco Gatto, Stefano de Perera, Notary Angelo, Pier Giovanni de Maczara, Cola Rocca and Carlo Paternò are numbers (1), (2), (14), (15), (16), (18), (19), (22), (29), (30) and (31). Items relative to government offices are numbers (3), (8), (20) and (23). Items relating to taxation are (7), (26) and (28). Items concerning integration with Sicily are (9), (11), (21) and (27). Royal Charters are included in Nos. (10), (12), (13) and (32). Items relating to importation of wheat are (17) and (25). Piracy is considered under items (5) and (6). Item (4) concerns grounds at Wied Gherzuma and item (24) regards the position of the Jews.

BOOK REVIEWS

DE MAJO, Paul, *Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio*. Malta, Department of Information, 1959. 33p.

This is one of the useful pamphlets which the Department of Information issues from time to time on subjects of local interest. It contains 35 pages of well-written text, illustrated by 11 half-tone reproductions of Caravaggio paintings, including the picture cover of the Martyrdom of St. Matthew (Rome, San Luigi dei Francesi). The master himself is shown in the frontispiece. The list of references at the end includes some recent publications on Caravaggio.

Professor John Pick, who was Fulbright Lecturer at the Royal University of Malta in 1955/1956, writes as follows in his Preface to this survey and appreciation of the famous master: "In the present study Paul De Majo modestly presents a synthesis of the scholarly researches devoted to Caravaggio during the last fifty years. His appeal is not so much to specialists or advanced art historians as to that larger public eager to be introduced to one of the most powerful of the Renaissance painters. His little booklet weaves together a survey of the life of Caravaggio with an analysis of some of his most important and representative paintings which have been newly examined and freshly observed."

Few will disagree with this fair assessment of De Majo's pamphlet.

J.C.P.

DENARO, Victor F., *The Maltese Obsidional Coins of 1800*. Reprinted from the "Numismatic Chronicle", Sixth Series, Vol. XVIII, 1958, pp. 173-176.

The author of this extract has already published a few studies on the coinage struck by the French in Malta in 1798-1800. In the present article he turns his attention to the 30-tari pieces of the Occupation Period identical with those struck by the last Grand