

Malta and Djerba, 1241–1798

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It would seem perfectly correct to say that for most of the past two centuries, except for the occasional and very rare migrant, the islands of Malta and Djerba have largely ignored each other's existence. And yet for some six hundred years before that, when their respective cultural allegiances were unmistakably ranged on either side of the great divide that has sundered the Mediterranean World since the Islamic conquests of the eighth and ninth centuries, Malta and Djerba were in constant touch precisely owing to the incessant warfare that plagued the relations between the two. Practically at any time after that it would seem that there were Maltese captives on Djerba and Djerba captives on Malta desperately trying to return to their home island, corresponding with their relatives and other persons and agents in order to bring this about and, no doubt, informing all and sundry in their respective place of captivity what a blessed place their island of origin was.¹ In Malta one knows for a certainty that in the first half of the sixteenth century Djerba itself was frequently in men's minds in connection with the activities of the corsairs, then at their best, dominating the trade routes and threatening the security of all the inhabitants of the coastal areas of the Mediterranean countries and islands.

In spite of the lack of information about Malta during the High Middle Ages, it is known that in 1241 Malta had eighty-four slaves from Djerba working on the royal estates: *octoginta quatuor servi Gerbini deputati in serviciis paricolarum curie nostre*, this at a time when the total population probably amounted to less than 10,000, and when the local Muslims still lived openly on the island and apparently outnumbered the Christians.² In 1134–60, 1284–1335 and 1383–92 Malta and Djerba shared the rule first of the Normans and then of the Aragonese, and personal and commercial contact between the two islands could have easily developed.³ In the fifteenth century, after decades of warfare, there were still among the Jews of Malta several whose family name showed a connection with Djerba.⁴ In fact, the militia roster for Malta of c. 1417 contains the following names among the 31 Jewish members of the force on guard duty: Muxi Girbi, Merdoc Girbi, Mahaluf Girbi and Fadaluni Girbi.⁵ Eight years later, Fadalun Girbi is accompanied by Josef Girbi, Jacob Girbi and Galluf Girbi. In 1485 one finds Sadi Girbi, Jacob Girbi, Benchas Girbi, Xamuel Girbi son of Chayri, and Semah Girbi. Such Jews are known to have maintained Malta's trading links not only with Syracuse in Sicily but also, as one could expect, with North Africa. On the other hand, the fifteenth

century was prevailingly one of political hostility between Tunisia and the Kingdom of Sicily, of which Malta then formed an integral, if somewhat detached, part. Not only were Hafsid raids on Malta and Gozo quite frequent but retaliatory expeditions sometimes used Malta as a resting place during their journeys across the Mediterranean.⁸ Thus the expedition which reconnoitred the island of Djerba in 1424, before sacking the Kerkennas, led by Prince Pedro, the brother of King Alfonso, and the other led by King Alfonso himself in 1432, which assaulted Djerba, both touched at Malta during their outward journey. On the latter occasion, King Alfonso asked Maltese and Genoan vessels to reconnoitre the hostile shores, and on his return King Alfonso actually stopped at Gozo where he even issued documents dated from Mġarr. Both expeditions had been preceded by Hafsid raids on Malta and Gozo, and they therefore partook of the nature of retaliatory raids.⁹ Fortunately after the failure of both expeditions Alfonso adopted a friendly policy towards Tunis, and Djerba is not mentioned again in Maltese affairs until the closing years of that century. Corsairing activity on both sides was, however, very active.¹⁰

The rebellion of Djerba against the Hafsid rulers of Tunisia in the middle 1490s was an episode in which a prominent Maltese corsair, Petrus de Armenia (or Darmanin) took a prominent part.¹¹ On 20 March 1496 the Viceroy of Sicily declared that Petrus de Armenia of the town of Malta had informed him by letter and word of mouth that the Xech and inhabitants of Djerba had raised the flag of the Spanish King (who ruled also over Sicily) on the castle of Djerba, the keys of which were handed over to the Viceroy by de Armenia himself.¹² The latter had left his vessel, a *fusta*, back at Djerba together with a *barchetta* belonging to Alligritti de Nicolao to help in guarding the castle. The Royal Council of Sicily arranged for the payment of the men of the two vessels for their past services, and engaged them for a further period of two months, part of the money coming from the *composizioni* imposed on the Jews of Sicily before their expulsion in 1492. Some weeks later Lope Arriagua was sent to Djerba as Captain General of the Christian forces there on land or sea with special instructions to ensure that the Christians did not molest or annoy the Muslims in any way. In fact the Muslims were to be favoured and helped in person and possessions, so that they would not have any reason to complain. He was specifically told that he had no authority over them.¹³ In June the Viceroy wrote again that he had sent some vessels to Djerba from Palermo under charter from the Crown, adding that, on calling at Malta, Petrus de Armenia had persuaded five other ships to join the expedition at his expense, afterwards defrayed by the Viceroy's government.¹⁴ On 1 August 1496 Petrus de Armenia was instructed to proceed to Barcellona with official

letters to the King himself and return with an answer.¹⁷ Two years later he was granted a pension of three *steldos* of Barcelona *per diem* for the rest of his life for services rendered to the Spanish Crown.¹⁸ In 1493 the officials of the Commune of Gozo stated that the sum of 260 *uncie* had been spent in Malta on equipping the *fiuste* which had been sent to the aid of the *galleys* of Djerba.¹⁹ This must have been a relatively large force since the *galleys* of 1496 had cost the Sicilian exchequer only 30 *uncie*.²⁰

There cannot be any doubt that Malta and the Maltese participated fully in the fighting which led to the Spanish conquest of Tripoli in 1510. Bosio is lacking about Maltese participation in the serious reverse suffered by the Christian forces shortly afterwards at Djerba. That Maltese were occasionally captured and enslaved at Djerba before and after that date is fully documented. In 1496 Petrus Darmaninu (alias De Armenia) on his journey from Djerba to Palermo found time during his stop at Malta to appoint someone to protect his interests by collecting the ransom money he had paid for the redemption from captivity of a Maltese man named Bellule Calleya most probably at Djerba or close by.¹⁹ In 1512 one hears of *Cataldum Abdille filium Bernardi Abdille Maltensem tunc captivum ali Gerbi*.²⁰ In 1529 Juliano Axac was similarly kept captive at Djerba until he paid his ransom.²¹ In February 1516 the town Council of Malta anxiously debated reports that Turtuculi the Turkish 'pirate' was stationed in the island of Djerba with an armament of 3,000 Turkish men.²² In 1528 again, reports that Ranchichiue(?) the Turkish corsair and others were making hectic preparations for operations from their base on the island of Djerba led the Viceroy of Sicily to fear an attack on Malta, and he therefore reinforced the armaments inside the castle of Malta.²³ On the other hand, in 1523 the Viceroy of Sicily ordered the restitution to the *Xeco* of Djerba of a vessel which had been captured by the Maltese corsair Cola Fardella.²⁴

The establishment in Malta and Gozo of the Order of St. John in 1530, after its expulsion a few years before from the island of Rhodes by Sulaiman the Magnificent, and the rise of the power of the great Muslim corsairs partly based on the island of Djerba led to an intensification of belligerency on both sides. Bosio gives a detailed and rather heavy account of combat after combat when forces based on either island came into conflict with those of the other.²⁵ A recent naval historian of the Order of St. John, basing himself mainly but not solely on Bosio, explicitly connects with Djerba in one way or another the capture by the Knights of some 17 vessels during the period 1534–1556.²⁶ In addition, Maltese corsairs were themselves quite active but not much is known about their activities. On the other hand, hundreds of Maltese and scores of Knights must have languished in captivity in Djerba for periods of varying length. These included in 1540–41 no less a figure

than the knight Jean de la Valette, who was later on to lead the successful resistance of the Knights and the Maltese against the Turkish assault on Malta in 1565 when the corsair Dragut, so well known on Djerba, himself lost his life.

Djerba provided slaves to the bagnios of Malta throughout the period 1659–1798 when the Order of St. John ruled over Malta and Gozo.²⁸ A sampling of the records covering only twenty-two years falling in the period 1580–1700 has led to the discovery of some 76 passports issued to persons from Djerba, mostly slaves or ex-slaves returning to their island home, a few free merchants or agents engaged in the ransoming of Christians on Djerba and others in that of Muslims on Malta.²⁹ These amount only to a very small percentage of such passports issued at the time, a mere one or two per cent, and they show no sign of diminution towards the end of the period. In fact, Napoleon himself freed the last seven captive slaves born on Djerba when he set free 597 Muslim slaves on his arrival at Malta in June 1798: Selem bin Ibrahim, Sehit bin Selah, Muhammet bin Ali, Sehit bin Imhammet, Ali il Misturi, Omor bin Hac Selem and Seit bin Salem.³⁰ Auction sale records of 1779–85 contain several references to slaves from Djerba: four men were sold on 23 November 1779, two on 12 July 1780, fifteen on 23–24 July 1784, five on 17 August 1784, one on 23 August 1784 and another on 19 October of the same year, in sale auctions of a total of 497 slaves.³¹ Similar sales of some 766 slaves between 1659 and 1664 contain the names of some twelve slaves from Djerba.³² Other records also refer to slaves from Djerba. Quarantine records reveal the entry into Malta of nine *schiaivi gerbini* on 14 January 1727,³³ of Rais Omor bin Ali and Rais Buecher Jahia on 3 September 1771, of Casem bin Ali on 14 November 1772, of Raies Casem bin Aly on 27 April 1773, and of eight others, all from Djerba, on 13 May 1779.³⁴ Selah bin Hissia arrived in captivity on 19 November 1780 and Amor bin Selem on 20 June 1783.³⁵ And so it went on. No source contains more than two or three per cent of slaves from Djerba, but numerous other captive slaves similarly recorded originated from the Kerkenna islands, Sfax, Gabes, Tunis itself and every locality on the neighbouring coasts, as well as others from practically every country and province of the Ottoman Empire from Bosnia and Roumelia in the North (with an occasional Russian or Pole) to Egypt in the South, and others from Morocco and Bornu in Africa.

Several of the slaves from Djerba must have died in captivity; between 1 May 1657 and 30 April 1666 such deaths included Mahamet bin Said Girbino, Gimac bin Omor delli Gerbi and Soliman bin Ali delli Gerbi, all slaves of the Order.³⁶ In the same period, other deaths among the Order's slaves comprised 360 Turks, 133 other Moors, 13 Christians, 16 converts to Christianity,

10 Negroes, 1 renegade and 6 otherwise unidentifiable Muslims,³⁸ only 127 slaves managing to obtain their freedom by paying a ransom, while 126 slaves were sold off by the Order to private persons.³⁹ Thus on 18 January 1586 Soliman ben el Fadal il Cadri of Djerba still awaited the arrival of the ransom money from his brother and sister in Djerba; in a contract drawn up before a notary on 3 August 1584 he had arranged for an Egyptian named Naser Ali, a North African Moor on leave of absence from his owner Stavriano Cagnano of Malta and about to depart 'for those parts', to collect the money if necessary from Naser himself unless the latter was prepared to bring it to Malta himself on the return journey of the same French vessel on which Ali was travelling.⁴⁰ The money was to be invested in goods at Djerba for sale in Malta, the slave's owner obtaining two-thirds both of the sum invested (150 gold scudi) and of the profits on it, the rest going to Rais Ali. On 14 January 1545 Amor ben Banchar, a servant of Caid Ali, in Malta to arrange the ransom of one of the slaves, obtained a safe-conduct from the Grand Master to travel to Tripoli and Djerba and return.⁴¹ Such safe-conducts were to become extremely common in the following two centuries and more, and persons from Djerba frequently obtained one. Thus on 10 February 1556 Bussalem Bensait of Djerba obtained a safe-conduct for nine months similar to the one just issued to the Turk Hianza Dorla, a slave in Malta, who wanted to go to Djerba to arrange the ransom of some Christian slaves over there and return to Malta with his own vessel and his merchandise and goods.⁴² Only five days before, Selem Abez of Sfax, after a long period of captivity in Malta, having paid his own ransom now obtained a safe-conduct to last eight months to enable him to make a return journey from Malta to Djerba and Sfax with his own vessel and merchandise and goods intended for the ransom of some slaves.⁴³ In the previous October, Hagi Buabdallah de Chalipha of Tripoli left for Djerba on his own vessel and with a crew employed by him, intending to return with a cargo for Malta.⁴⁴ In November 1556, Rays Amor Melhay, himself a slave of the Prior of Lorraine, left Malta with his master's permission and a safe-conduct from the Grand Master to obtain his own ransom from Djerba, returning to Malta on a vessel he owned manned by seven men with goods to sell in Malta in order to ransom other slaves belonging either to the Order or to private owners.⁴⁵ Safe-conducts of the second decade of the seventeenth century included one dated 10 December 1612 issued to Michamed il Gerbino who had already made two journeys previously,⁴⁶ and another to Mahmut bin Abdilhedi, aged thirty, who had made not less than four previous voyages.⁴⁷ Even now they still continued to arrange the ransoms of Christian captives in Djerba and to return to Malta with merchandise for the ransoming of their fellow-islanders

enslaved on Malta. Rays Hachmuda bin Abdilliedi of Djerba, aged 37, had to go to Capo Buon' Andria to see to the ransoming of some Christians. In 1610 Sessi bin Abdalla in 1612 had to ransom some Christians in Barbary. In 1613 Yachya bin Brahim had to do the same and return to Malta with merchandise to ransom Muslims there.⁵⁰ Hader bin Seit, on the other hand, obtained a safe conduct enabling him to come to Malta to arrange his brother's ransom and that of other inhabitants of Djerba.⁵¹ Michamet bin Chafar in 1616 wanted to return to Malta to release his wife and children from their personal recognizance by paying his creditors in the island.⁵² On 9 July 1616 Raijs Selem bin Selach Gerbino was allowed to rent accommodation in Valletta for himself, his wife, his female slaves and his merchandise. On 14 October 1616 he was given a safe-conduct for North Africa, Zuara being recorded as his place of residence.⁵³ Chalfun bin Barhun, a Jew from Djerba in 1634 prepared to return to Malta with the Christian slaves whose ransom he was negotiating in Djerba.⁵⁴

However, a number of the slaves from Djerba, like others from elsewhere, were released simply in return for the good service they had performed during their captivity. This was the reason why Calife Benasal of Djerba was given his freedom in 1570.⁵⁵ Some tried to arrange an exchange with Maltese men who were enslaved in North Africa. Thus on 23 April 1560 Bubacar Ben Ali *Gerbinus Maurus*, 40 years old and belonging to a private owner, agreed to be exchanged with Simon Grima, a Maltese slave belonging to Bubacar's brother; Bubacar had also to surrender sixty *cafisa* of oil to obtain his freedom. On 14 July 1661 Juseph Bin Chag Sihid el Gibeli, another inhabitant of Djerba, obtained a safe-conduct to go to Algiers to procure the freedom of the prominent Maltese merchant Lazzaro delli Albori in exchange with himself, his wife and young son.⁵⁷ Most, however, paid a ransom. Amor bin Seyd *Girbi* paid 100 scudi in 1579; Yunes bin Machamett *gerbino* paid 120 scudi in 1583; Ayacaya ben Yunes *de gerbi* paid 200 scudi in 1589 and Cassem bin Aly *gerbino* paid 250 cequinos in 1591.⁵⁸ A document of 1602 records these estimated ransom values for slaves from Djerba in a list which included several others from elsewhere:⁵⁹

Jachie ben Sechsil gerbino, 50 years old	250 scudi
Bubachar ben Achmet gerbino, 30	190 scudi
Chomor ben Soliman gerbino, 40	} 630 scudi
Salim ben Jachilef, gerbino, 25	
Chasem ben Chabdalla	
Ag Iunes ben Chali gerbino, 30	
Chachim <i>figlio</i> di Giuda gerbino, 25	400 scudi
Hachmet ben Chali girbino, 40	200 scudi
Charaibi ben Brachim gerbino, 20	300 scudi

Chafi ben Soliman gerbino, 60	
Marssuch ben Chidir gerbino, 22	200 scudi
Jachic ben Demari gerbino, 13	100 scudi
Homelul ben Hali gerbino, 50	100 scudi
Hamumen Biniri Jahlef gerbino, 50	} 100 scudi
Ames bint Buchi gerbino, 60	

such sale prices were, in general, lower than ransom prices except, of course, for wealthy slaves changed ownership. Thus the price obtained for Chachin di Ginda, Charaibi ben Brachim and Marssuch ben Chidir shows that they must have been relatively wealthy men. Even sixty years later auction prices rarely reached that level.⁶⁰

Junes bin Brahim di Girba, 14	130 scudi
Michamet bin Homor delli Gerbi	161 scudi
Homor bin Ahmet Gerbino	241 scudi
Ali bin Seid Gerbino	231 scudi
Suleiman bin Jahia Gerbino	247 scudi
Cassem bin Ahmet Gerbino	268 scudi
Cassen bin Ali Gerbino	231 scudi

The auction prices for the Djerba slaves of a whole century later are so low relative to the general increase of slave prices in Malta that one must conclude that the slaves in question were of a humbler status than these previous ones:⁶¹

Seid figlio di Gaballa, 30	200 scudi
Ali figlio di Mihamet, ca. 45	50 scudi
Homor figlio di Selem, 12	300 scudi
Sesi bin Gimha, 40	151 scudi
Jahia bin Omor, 14	200 scudi
Imhammet bin Musa, 20	158 scudi
Homor bin Ahmet, 15	250 scudi
Juseph bin Selab, 30	121 scudi
Sihid bin Ahmet, 17	200 scudi
Mihammet bin Smahid, 55	52 scudi
Haset bin Rumdam, 25	110 scudi
Mishud bin Omor, 30	206 scudi
Mansur bin Sihid il Mahbul	100 scudi
Hamet bin Ali, 55	69 scudi
Selah bin Ibrahim, 30	200 scudi
Sesi bin Sihid, 55	81 scudi
Sehid bin Mihammet, 45	84 scudi
Jahia bin Sciaban, 16	431 scudi
Musa bin Omor, 60	271 scudi
Hammet bin Kasem, 25	202 scudi
Abdalla di Gerba nero	119 scudi
Abdriham di Gerba nero	99 scudi
Omor bin Mishud, 22	290 scudi
Seliman bin Casem, 20	240 scudi

In all these prices the higher values would undoubtedly represent values dependent on the wealth of the individual concerned back on Djerba while the lower values would, instead, indicate the value of his labour on the Maltese labour market after the cost of his maintenance and his insurance and risk of his escaping had been taken into account even if only implicitly. Only in the lower prices, therefore, would his age, sex, health and character have been taken fully into account.⁶³

A search of suitably spaced portions of the quarantine records of Malta reveals that even in the worst periods from 1654 onwards an occasional ship did sail between Djerba and Malta and, therefore, presumably also in the opposite direction which would not be recorded in such documents.⁶⁴ Single trips were made from Djerba to Malta in 1654, 1655, 1666 (two trips), 1667, 1672, 1683, 1685 and 1687, several of the vessels flying the Maltese flag, others that of France.⁶⁴ Most of them were rather small ships, *tartanes*, and they normally carried oil, sponges, hides, linen (especially linen sheets), soap, candle and dates. One cannot say that the trade between the two islands was constant or heavy, but the numerous ships sailing between Malta and Susa or other Tunisian ports certainly frequently also carried goods destined for or originating in the island of Djerba.

In the period 1660–94 several ships captured in the vicinity of Djerba by Christian corsairs, mostly based on Malta, were brought to the latter island by their prize crew. Their record in the quarantine registers of Malta enables the modern economic historian to learn something about the trade carried on between Djerba, the mainland of Tunisia, and elsewhere.⁶⁵

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| 1660 | a <i>garbo</i> from Sfax; a <i>sandal</i> from Djerba loaded with earthenware jars, plates and jugs, some barley, raisins and myrtle |
| 1662 | a <i>garbo</i> |
| 1667 | three <i>garbi</i> from Djerba loaded with barley and wheat; a <i>fregata</i> with wheat and barley; a <i>tartana</i> from Djerba going to Tripoli with salt, salted octopuses, goat-wool cloths, caps and some cloth sheets |
| 1668 | two <i>pollacche</i> from Djerba with wheat, barley and some hides and goat-wool cloths |
| 1671 | a <i>garbo</i> from Djerba with goat-wool cloths, caps and other goods; a <i>garbo</i> from Djerba with three bales of goat-wool cloth |
| 1678 | a <i>garbo</i> from Djerba to Tunis (a man, two women and two boys were captured) |
| 1679 | a Turkish <i>vassello</i> with a cargo of canvas, goatwool cloth, raisins, jars and diverse kinds of earthenware, with salt as ballast (60 persons were also captured, including 10 women or children); a <i>tartana</i> on its way to Djerba with a cargo of soap, oil, nuts, hides, woollen felt and skins of shaggy billy-goats |
| 1680 | a <i>felluca</i> on its way to Tripoli; a <i>carabò</i> from Susa to Djerba |

It would seem that direct traffic between Malta and Djerba increased somewhat during the course of the eighteenth century. On 30 January 1740 a French *tartana* with a crew of five brought a cargo of some dates and sponges and 25 'Turkish' passengers from Djerba after a journey of five days.⁶⁶ On 17 November of the same year a French *marlegana* with a crew of 13 brought to Malta, instead, a cargo of oil, soap and diverse other goods as well as 90 Moors as passengers. An English ketch arrived in ballast from Djerba on 8 June 1741, a Dutch *vassello* with twelve *cafisi* of wheat on 8 January 1743, and a French pinque with 56 Moorish or Negro passengers on 1 March 1744 after a journey of four days from Djerba, bound for Smyrna. In the same period captured vessels reaching Malta from the vicinity of Djerba included a *carabò Gerbino* on 10 October 1742 with two sacks of sponges captured on a journey from Djerba to Maometta, another vessel of the same type travelling from Djerba arrived on 30 June 1743, and yet another *carabò* with two boxes of money, a horse, five cows and 28 persons captured near Djerba on its way from Sfax, as well as a *sandalo Gerbino* on 24 December 1744 with nine captives on board, including two females, captured while sailing between Djerba and Tripoli.

Corsairing activities by ships based on Malta continued right up to the last days of the Order's rule (1798).⁶⁷ Thus on 15 September 1793 a Maltese galeote captured in Djerba waters a 'Turkish' *sandal* manned by seven Moors on its way from Djerba to Sfax with empty jars, and on the following 21 July another Maltese galeote under the same captain, Georgio Mitrovich, captured another empty *sandal* manned by six 'Turks'.⁶⁸ Mitrovich seems to have had a particular liking for the neighbourhood of Djerba because on 1 April 1795 he captured another *sandal* in those waters with 10 Turks on board on its way from the Kerkenna Islands to Djerba with a cargo of barley, and yet another *sandal* with empty jars travelling in the opposite direction. On 22 May 1795 a similar Maltese galeote commanded by Giuseppe Romea of Vittoriosa, Malta, captured three 'Turks' on a *sandal* laden with barley which he then abandoned. These activities must have been something of a nuisance to the inhabitants and traders of Djerba and the neighbouring islands and coasts, and possibly account for the contemporary decline of direct commercial contact between Djerba and Malta.⁶⁹

In fact just before this period trade between Malta and Djerba seems to have reached a peak unattained, so far as is known, at any earlier period. No fewer than seven vessels arrived in Malta from Djerba in 1790 alone, four in 1791, two in 1793, but only one for each of the years 1794, 1795 and 1796. Part of the decline, however, might have been caused by the outbreak of war between France and England, seeing that ten of the ships were French,

and only one was Ragusian, two Maltese and one Venetian. Between 1423 and 1429 these ships are known to have carried at least 1134 *caffisi* of barley, 400 *caffi* of wheat, 50 quintali of *arimgha seccia* or dried fish², 200 quintali of dunnese hare skins, six cloths of goat wool, 24 bands of cloth, and an undetermined quantity of oil. Two of the ships were in ballast. Only further research can reveal the further developments of this trade, and precisely when and how it started and ended. On the unhappy matter of slavery, however, there is no doubt. The Emperor of Morocco in the years immediately before the French Revolution, and Napoleon in 1798, between them put an end to the enslavement of Muslims captured in the constant fighting that occurred between ships based on Malta and those based on North African ports: not only were all Muslims set free but Maltese in captivity in the Maghreb and Constantinople were also able to obtain their freedom.³ In later years the inhabitants of the two islands could live side by side without the stigma and humiliation of captivity and enslavement.

Notes

- 1 On slavery in general in Malta during Early Modern times see: G. Wettinger, 'Some Aspects of Slavery in Malta, 1530–1800', unpublished Ph.D. thesis, 1971, University of London.
- 2 *Serri Gerbini*: in E. Winkelmann, *Acta Imperii Inedita seculi XIII* (Innsbruck, 1880) 713–715. For the enslavement of inhabitants of Djerba at this time see: I. Peri, *Il Villanaggio in Sicilia* (Palermo, 1965) p. 137.
- 3 Article on 'Djarba' in *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (Leiden and London, 1965).
- 4 G. Wettinger, *The Jews of Malta during the Later Middle Ages* (Malta, 1985) p. 11.
- 5 *Idem*, 'The Militia Roster of Watch Duties of 1417', *The Armed Forces of Malta Journal* 32 (October 1979) 25–42.
- 6 R. Valentini, 'L'Espansionismo Aragonese e la decadenza di Malta', *Archivio Storico di Malta* (Rome) 12 (May–December 1941) 97–130.
- 7 *Idem*, 'Ribellione di Malta e spedizione alla Gerba come conseguenza dell'inefficienza della flotta Aragonese nel Mediterraneo', *Archivio Storico di Malta* 8 (Rome) 253ff, F. Cerone, 'A proposito di alcuni documenti sulla seconda spedizione di Alfonso V contro l'isola Gerba', *Anuari de l'Institut Catalans* (1909–10) 51–89. For 1424 see also C. Trasselli, *Mediterraneo e Sicilia all'inizio dell'epoca moderna* (Cosenza, 1977) 133–134.
- 8 A[rchivio di] S[tato di] P[alermo], Protonotaro, vol. 33 (1432–33), fol. 207v; ASP, Tribunale del Real Patrimonio, Lettere Viceregie, vol. 22 (1442–43), fol. 43: *Data in Insula Gaudisti intus castramojar [Qala l-Imgarr] xx die mensis Septembris anno a navitate Domini MCCCCXXXII.*
- 9 One raid took place in 1423: *Diplomatarium Ragusanum*, 293; also in S. Giambruno and L. Genuardi, *Capitoli inediti delle città demaniali di Sicilia I* (Palermo, 1918) p. 400, records two invasions of the Maltese islands by the Moors in 1423. For the massive invasion of 1429 see A. Mifsud, 'Le franchigie costituzionali Alfonsiane e l'invasione dei Mori del 1429 nella compilazione della storia di Malta', *Archivum Melitense* 3 (1918–19), and C. Trasselli, *op. cit.*, 145–149 and 158.

- 10 F. Bollandi, 'Corsari maltesi a Ragusa nel Quattro e nel Cinquecento' *Archivio Storico di Malta*, 8, 213.
- 11 For Petrus de Armenia see G. F. Abela, *Una Descrizione di Malta ...* (Malta, 1647) 187-186. He is first mentioned in a document from Rhodes in 1470 as captain of the galley belonging to Joannis de Nava (of Malta), and died on his galeote in 1508 fighting the Moors: *ibid.* In 1494 he was engaged in corsairing and trading with Cyrenaica: as is revealed by documents from Syracuse: *Archivio di Stato di Siracusa, Notai defunti, Notaio Niccolo Vallone*, vol. 10233, fols. 104-105; *idem*, vol. 10235, fols. 221^v-222.
- 12 ASP, Real Cancelleria, vol. 192, fols. 236^v-237^v, 20 March 1496.
- 13 *Ibid.*, fols. 257-258, 15 April 1496; *ibid.*, vol. 193, fols. 328^v-329^v, 21 April 1496; and *ibid.*, vol. 194, fols. 58^v-59, 21 April 1496.
- 14 *Ibid.*, vol. 192, fol. 316, 20 June 1496; *ibid.*, fols. 337^v-338, 26 July 1496.
- 15 *Ibid.*, fol. 341^v, 1 August 1496; *ibid.*, fols. 342-343, 29 July 1496.
- 16 *Ibid.*, vol. 201, fols. 215^v-216, 28 December 1499.
- 17 N[otarial] A[rchives] V[alletta], Not. Jacobo Sabara, R 494/2, fol. 121, 15 June 1498.
- 18 ASP, Real Cancelleria, vol. 192, fols. 342-343, 29 July 1496.
- 19 NAV, Not. Jacobus Sabara, R 494/1, 3 March 1496, where Petrus himself states that he had brought Calleya with him from captivity to Malta but could not *moram facere neque tardare in eadem Insola ex eo quod est facturus et negociaturus ardua servica Regia*.
- 20 NAV, Not. Consalvo Canchui, R 140/5, fols. 115^v et seq., 8 February 1512.
- 21 Letter from the Viceroy of Sicily to the Captain at Arms and other officials of Malta, 28 June 1529 in Cathedral Museum, Mdina, Malta, Cathedral Ms. 28, pp. 437-39.
- 22 National [Library of] M[alta], Università, fols. 136 et seq. session of 9 February 1516.
- 23 ASP, Real Cancelleria, vol. 288, fol. 412^v (olim 387^v), dated 30 November 1528.
- 24 Cathedral Museum, Mdina, Malta, Cathedral Ms. 27, fol. 372, 16 January 1523 (?1524).
- 25 Giacomo Bosio, *Dell'Istoria della Sacra Religione et Illustrissima Militia di San Giovanni Gerosolimitano*, 3.
- 26 U. Mori Ubaldini, *La Marina del Sovrano Militare Ordine di San Giovanni di Gerusalemme di Rodi e di Malta*, Rome, 1971.
- 27 Mori Ubaldini, p. 160.
- 28 In the middle part of this article the author has used the extensive card index of archival references and notes which he had compiled while working on his thesis 'Some Aspects of Slavery in Malta, 1530-1800'; most of the stuff on Djerba is not separately referred to in the thesis itself.
- 29 NLM, A[rchives of the] O[rder in] M[alta], Mss 443, 458, 459, 256, 461, 464, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 499, 500 and 504, sections entitled *Salvacondotti et diversae scripturae*.
- 30 NLM, AOM, Ms. 6501. See G. Wettinger, 'The Abolition of Slavery in Malta', *Archivum*, 1 (Malta, 1981).
- 31 N[ational] A[rchives of] M[alta], Court Archives, Libro Vendita Schiavi.
- 32 *Ibid.*, T[ribunal] A[rmamentorum], Registro delle prese e schiavi.
- 33 NLM, Ms. 820, entry dated 14 January 1727.
- 34 NLM, AOM 6530, dates as in text.
- 35 *Ibid.*, AOM 6531, dates as in text.
- 36 Cathedral Museum, Mdina, Malta, Cathedral Ms. 117, fols. 184, 185, and 190.
- 37 *Ibid.*, lists on fols. 184-194.
- 38 *Ibid.*, lists of ransomed slaves of the Order on fols. 196-198, and of slaves sold to private persons on fols. 201-203^v.
- 39 NAV, Not. Gioacchino Sillato, R 441/5

- 1588, fol. fols. 110^v–119.
- 40 Cf. Silvano Cagnano see my thesis on Cagnano, pp. 248–49.
- 41 NLM, AOM, Ms. 419, fol. 196^v.
- 42 NLM, AOM, Ms. 425, fol. 200^v. A similar contract was granted on the same day to Bussalem Bensait *moro giorbino* for nine months: *ibid.*, fol. 210.
- 43 *Ibid.*, fol. 210^v.
- 44 *Ibid.*, fol. 207^v, dated 3 October 1555.
- 45 NLM, AOM, Ms. 426, fol. 250^v, dated 12 November 1556.
- 46 NLM, AOM, Ms. 458, fol. 294^v.
- 47 *Ibid.*, fol. 327^v, dated 24 November 1614.
- 48 NLM, AOM, Ms. 459, fol. 268, dated 4 July 1619.
- 49 NLM, AOM, Ms. 458, fol. 293^v, dated 28 July 1612.
- 50 *Ibid.*, fol. 311^v, dated 8 October 1613.
- 51 *Ibid.*, fol. 313, dated 21 January 1614.
- 52 NLM, AOM, Ms. 459, fol. 322, dated 10 June 1616.
- 53 NAM, Court Archives, Magna Curia Castellaniae, Registrum Revelationum mancipiorum, 1588–1617.
- 54 NLM, AOM, Ms. 464, fol. 388^v, dated 25 July 1634.
- 55 NLM, AOM, Ms. 433, fol. 243, dated 24 May 1570.
- 56 NAV, Not. Giacomo Baldacchino, R 44/4, fols. 43^v–45 of the year 1559–1560.
- 57 NLM, AOM, Ms. 6466.
- 58 NLM, AOM, Ms. 438, fol. 265^v; Ms. 441, fol. 256; Ms. 442, fol. 247^v; Ms. 446, fol. 266; and Ms. 445, fol. 269^v, respectively.
- 59 NAV, Not. Francesco Imbroglio, R 316/7 (1599–1602), fols. 705–711.
- 60 NAM, Court Archives, Magna Curia Castellaniae, Registrum Revelationum mancipiorum, 1588–1617, fol. 210^v, dated 3 October 1555. Attachment on fol. 210^v (1661) refers to the same price.
- 61 *Ibid.*, fol. 210^v.
- 62 G. Wettinger, 'Some Aspects of Slavery in Malta 1530 to 1995', *Journal of Ransom and Ransomed*, 2005.
- 63 For the period 1653–1661, see NLM, AOM, Mss. 6526 to 6533 and NLM, AOM, Ms. 820 (1723–39) and 818 (1740–46).
- 64 NLM, AOM, Ms. 6526 (1653–54).
- 65 *Ibid.*
- 66 This and the other details in this paragraph are from NLM, AOM, Ms. 6526 (1739–46, seen only down to 1745).
- 67 G. Wettinger, 'Some Aspects of the Decline and Disappearance of Slavery in Malta', and especially P. Caruana, 'The Last Years of the Maltese Conquest', Hons. thesis (unpublished) at the University of Malta (Department of History, 1972).
- 68 The details in this and the following paragraphs are taken from NLM, AOM, Ms. 6532 (1790–98, seen for this paper on 17 November 1796).
- 69 Cf. J. Godechot, 'La course Malaise le long des côtes Barbaresques à la fin du XVIII^e siècle', *Revue Africaine* 96, Nos. 380–381 (1952), 105–113.
- 70 G. Wettinger, 'The Abolition of Slavery in Malta', *Archivum: the Journal of Maltese Historical Research* (Malta) 1 (1981), 1–19.