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**[p.101] The earliest surviving Accounts
Books of the Cathedral
Procurators: 1461-1499**

Stanley Fiorini

The object of this paper is to discuss the contents of the earliest extant books of accounts of the Cathedral procurators covering the period 1461-1499. Of these there are seven to be found in the Cathedral Archives, namely three quires belonging to the procurator Rogeri Caxaru for the years 1461-1474, 1474-1480, and after a gap of two years, 1482-1487. Two others belong to Manfre Caxaru for the years 1494-1498, 1498-1499 and another two belong to Peri Caruana for the years 1491-1495 and 1495-1496.¹

It is well-known that the Cathedral procurators, like other procurators for Santo Spirito Hospital and for monasteries and convents, were appointed by the Municipal authorities from time to time.² The origin of this municipal right to have such an important say in the financial matters of the church are not very clear. These roots can probably be found in some privilege enshrined in some lost *capitolo*. It is evident from the *Capitoli* of 1458 that [p.102] this right had been held AB ANTIQUO; the relevant *capitolo* (no. 23)³ bears reproducing as it sheds light on the situation:

Item perki di certi anni in dazà li renditi (di) certi conventi, monasteri, abacii si veninu a dilapidari per defectu ki non su dati yconimi et procuraturi ydoney, comu esti de jure, et prout ab antiquo è solitu di farisi et ordinarisi per li jurati, pertantu suplica la dicta universitati pro comodo dictarum ecclesiarum ki plaza a la maiestati prefata di dari autoritati et plenaria facultati a li jurati di la dicta chitati di putiri ordinari yconimi et procuraturi a li ecclesii, monasteri, conventi oy abacii predicti li quali hayanu anno quolibet et singulo mustrari cuntu di li dicti renditi a li predicti jurati...

¹ Museum of the Cathedral, Mdina [MCM], Archivum Cathedralis Melitae [ACM], Procura 1, Quire a: ff. 1-18 (Rogeri Caxaro, 1474-1480), Quire b: ff. 19-34 (Rogeri Caxaro, 1482-87), Quire c: ff. 35-45 (Rogeri Caxaro, 1461-74), Quire d: ff. 86-107 (Manfre Caxaro, 1494-98), Quire e: ff. 108-116 (Manfre Caxaro, 1497-99); Procura 1a, Quire 3: ff. 40-51^v (Peri Caruana, iii.1491-iv.95), Quire 4: ff. 52-71^v (Peri Caruana, iv.1495-iv.96), Quire 5: ff. 72-80^v (Resumé of outstanding dues, 1484-94). Citation of these documents will henceforth be Proc. 1 or Proc. 1a. Later books of accounts, not considered here, are also extant. Amongst these, one has found its way to the National Library [NLM], where it is catalogued Univ. 41 (Amministrazione A. Manduca, 1533-38).

² For the Santo Spirito procurators, S. Fiorini, *Santo Spirito Hospital at Rabat, Malta. The early years to 1575* (Malta, 1989) 88-89: Doc. II. For the Franciscan Friary of the Observants, NLM Univ. 67-81. For Santa Scolastica, Notarial Archives, Valletta [NAV] Not. Giacomo Zabbara R494/1(IV) f. 4^v (2.vi.1496) and S. Fiorini, *The 'Mandati' Documents at the Archives of the Mdina Cathedral, Malta: 1473-1539* (Malta, 1992), Mandati 1 ff. 47, 71^v, 114; Mandati 3 f. 176.

³ NLM Univ. 10, published by R. Valentini, "Documenti per servire alla storia di Malta (1452-1458)," *Archivio Storico di Malta*, ix (1938) 120.

It is clear that the jurats were after direct control of the revenues accruing to churches and monasteries, a right which they had had for long, and which somehow by the middle of the fifteenth century, had fallen into disuse. The first of the accounts books discussed here, coming as it does soon after this *capitolo* perhaps represents the positive outcome of the jurats' requests in 1458.

One asks why should the Università be bothering about the Church's finances – what was there to be lost? The answer lies, perhaps, in the very unfair situation prevalent then whereby the Bishop was invariably a foreigner who was most of the time absent from these islands and, to add insult to injury, was (to use present-day jargon) viring Maltese funds to his Sicilian needs. This is clearly stated in *capitolo* 26 of the same set of *capitoli* of 1458:

Item peroki In reverendu signuri episcopu di quista chitati ut plurimum sta fora in Sichilia, lassandu lu so episcopatu non sine maximo incommodo e inconveniente cum so sia cosa ki senza lu pasturi li pecurelli stanu malamenti paxuti et gubernati, plaza a la maiestati predicta di cumandari oy exortati a lu dictu reverendu episcopu ki nullo modo si diva partiri di so episcopatu cum quilla cohercicioni debita ki sinchi requedi cum non sit justum ki si prinda li renditi et ki li spenda in Sichilia...

This divergence of interests between the Maltese *municipium* and the foreign Bishop is very evident in the town-council minutes soon after this time. In the session of 11 September 1477,⁴ Bishop Antonio d'Alagona, present in [p.103] the council, was ensuring that his interests in the Cathedral finances be safeguarded, insisting that the Archdeacon Don Lancza Desguanes should be the procurator, whereas the rest of the council was backing Rogeri Caxaru. A compromise solution was suggested that both be appointed but *ky Rogeri sia caxa* – that is Caxaru had to hold the purse-strings which were not to be trusted in the hands of Archdeacon Desguanes. The last word appears to have been that of the moderate, respected-by-all Pietru Caxaru: *ki sia Don Lancza cum Rogeri e ki lu dicta Rogeri sia bursa et ki lu dicta Don Lancza haia a providiri di alcuni cosi ki su necessarij ala ecclesia*. He was therefore suggesting different roles for the two procurators but that the *bursa* should be the responsibility of the layman.

This incident was, perhaps, the beginning of the custom of appointing more than one procurator for the Cathedral and would explain why we now have two different sets of accounts books for the 1490s, namely those of Manfre Caxaru and the others of Peri Caruana. The town-council minutes are lacunose for these years although they do record other multiple elections in earlier decades such as when Antoni Falca was elected joint procurator with Rogeri Caxaru in 1481;⁵ Falca's records, if they ever existed at all, are now lost. It is very interesting that in this particular case the procurators were enjoined to accept the procuratorship of the Cathedral under pain of a fine of 50 *uncie* each payable to the Royal fisc. Things were anything but smooth for the procurator at that time when he was in the thick of a controversy between the Università and a Bishop who did not think twice before issuing an interdict against the whole City of Mdina and an order *sub pena excommunicationis* against the procurator himself. These troubled years explain the two-year gap in Rogeri Caxaru's records.

⁴ NLM Univ. 11 f. 365.

⁵ *Ibid.*, ff. 490^v-493 (20.vii.1481). For Manfredi Caxaro's appointment, NAV Not. G. Zabbara R494/1 (III) f. 51 (30.iv.1496). Another appointment, that of Antoni Gatt Desguanez, is recorded in the same acts: *ibid.*, R494/1 (I) f. 53 (22.i.1487).

The Università lost the right to appoint Cathedral procurators at the hands of another bishop – Domenico Cubelles – who, in 1556, by issue of a decree dated 24 August 1554 severed the cathedral's dependence on the municipal council; appeals to Rome during the following twenty years proved fruitless.⁶

[p.104] The Cathedral Structure

Coming to the contents proper of the accounts books, one finds in them a veritable mine of information on what was happening at the mother church during those forty odd years. No major overhauls of the fabric of the church are recorded except for the construction of a *murru novu sopra la tribuna dilu altaru grandi*⁷ and routine maintenance work on the roof and on the belfry. These records show without any shadow of doubt that the Cathedral roof in the fifteenth century was tiled and gabled. In November 1469 and again the following year the *massaru*, or Cathedral steward, was paid *per rinuvarj li charamidi dilu tectu di tucta la ecclesia et alcuni canalj*. On this occasion 400 *charamidj* (or *tegole*, roof-tiles) were bought from Pachi Cassar.⁸ In 1477, then, 500 *charamidi* were imported from Syracuse further to 25 others obtained locally from Lancza Percop.⁹ The *chatamidi di Santu Paulu* again needed seeing to the following year and the one after that.¹⁰

The work done on the campanile between 1474 and 1478 is discussed in detail. A large quantity of wood was imported from Syracuse *per la cubba dilu campananu*. This term suggests a hemispherical dome-like structure capping the *campanile*. Thirty seven *tavulj* and *serraticzi di prima xorta* together with 5 *rotob di chova ginuisky* (Genoese nails) were purchased from Mastru Arnaldu di Tholomeu and brought over from Syracuse by Meymu on his brigantine. The Jew Salamuni Meir provided seven other planks for the *qubbah* as the supply from Syracuse was not quite sufficient. Madonna Beatrichi also provided *dui peczi di ruvulu per mectiri alla cubba per fortificarj* and the Jewish blacksmith Xeul Cussu provided metal hinges – *perni per la cubba* – weighing 12 *rotula*. Mastru Cola Chakym was entrusted with the woodwork of the *qubbah* for which he was paid two and a half *uncie*, whereas the stonework was in the hands of Mastri Jacobu, Blasi and Micheli Dumah. When the structure was completed, it was given a coating of *bactumi* to make it water-proof. Nardu Saguna provided eight and a half *salmi* of lime which were mixed with sand from the sea-shore – *rina dilu marj* – to make the coating. The water was kept in two vats which came from a barrel sawn in two. The mixture was made by Mastru Barthalu Saura. The names of several other workmen, including a number of slaves, who were [p.105] employed in this operation are all given: Dardu Cadus, Luca Actard, Ximuni Muscat, Arrigu Consiglu, Antoni Barbara, Ramundu de Bonu, Antoni Maniuni, Deunisi Pucellu, Andria Dingli, Bernardu Cubie, Luca Dilfe and others.¹¹ This type of wooden roofing covered with a water-proofing layer of lime and sand can still be seen on an early seventeenth-century structure, namely the roof of the *Aula Capitolare* of the Cathedral made in 1626.

⁶ A. Mifsud, “La Cattedrale e l’Università, ossia il Comune e la Chiesa in Malta,” *La Diocesi*, ii (1917-18), 72-73.

⁷ Proc. 1 f. 38 (1462-3).

⁸ *Ibid.*, ff. 53-53^v, 55.

⁹ *Ibid.*, ff. 12-12^v.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, ff. 14^v, 15^v.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, ff. 61^v-68.

On this same topic the Procurator's accounts books, incidentally, also shed some light on another roofing technique, namely roofing with reeds as described several years later by Quintinus. It appears that in 1477 the *casa dilu magazeni* had been destroyed by fire and was being repaired. Eleven *salmi* of bamboo reeds – *canni per coprirli la casa dilu magazeni ky su arsa* – were bought for 5 *tari* 10 *grani*. These were cleaned and bound in bundles; another 1 *tari* 12 *grani* were spent *per mundari li canni per coprirli la casa dilu magazeni, Jtem per spagu, Juncu et sagula*. Another quantity of *rina dila marina* was purchased presumably in this connexion.¹²

Going back to the *campanile*, repairs were also effected on the *Jurlanda di sopra la porta dilu campanaru*, presumably some garland-shaped decoration in stone above the door-way; Mastru Jacobu Dumah worked for three whole days *per conczari et mectiri la dicta Jorlanda*.¹³ Another entry in connexion with work on the belfry refers to *li figuri*, costing no less than 8 *uncie*, which were brought from Palermo by Mastru Cola Vacar.¹⁴ These were, perhaps, decorative statuettes placed in niches in the *campanile*.

At around this time and also in connexion with the belfry, repair work was made on the bells. In 1467 and again in 1476 the bell-clapper needed seeing to. On the first occasion the Jewish blacksmith Haud Cussu was paid to mend *lu battaglu dila campana grandi* and his co-religionist Ben Meyr provided *dui passi di corda per lu battaglu per putiri sonari perli festi di tucti santi*. Haud Cussu also provided *certi cherky di ferro per conczari li canpanj perky su vinuti arruyna ky non si pussanu sonarj*. The Christians Mastru Antoni Zinzula and Mastru Frangiscu Zammit were paid *per loru mastria per chavarj li dicti cherky*, whereas Mastru Johanni Curazaru, literally the breastplate maker, effected repair works on the clock. This same Curazaru was [p.106] called in to mend the bell-clapper again in 1476.¹⁵ It is of interest to note that the bells in the Mdina medieval cathedral worked on a somewhat different system to that generally found in Malta today. It was not the clapper that was swung to and fro to hit the bell but rather the bell itself, at one with its axle, swivelled to knock against the clapper. One can deduce this from the fact that in 1471 a *Chicogna per la campana* needed to be bought in Syracuse and later references to the *chicogna dila campana grandi* and to the *chicogna dila campana dilu orloiu* are made.¹⁶ One learns that the *cicogna* – literally a stork – is in fact, a counterpoise or balancing weight usually made of wood which is attached to the axle to facilitate the swinging of the bell,¹⁷ as one can still see abroad in various belfries, including that of the Nativity Church in Bethlehem.

Other repair works carried out in and around the Cathedral was the paving with flagstones of the church parvis – *per Jnbalataij lu chanu dila banda di ponenti* and *per Jnbalatarj lu chanu ky su divanti la porta*.¹⁸ The windows were also fitted with *Jnchirati* – waxed linen – in 1469.¹⁹ Although it is known that the Cathedral doors were made anew in 1535, it appears

¹² *Ibid.*, ff. 10, 12, 12^v.

¹³ *Ibid.*, f. 12.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, f. 65.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, ff. 39^v-40 (iv-v.1464), f. 48^v (23.i.1467), f. 49^v (31.x.1467), f. 59 (15.viii.1472), f. 62 (20.vii.1474), f. 9^v (26.iv.1476), f. 11^v (2.v.1477), f. 15^v (13.x.1479), f. 16 (4.ii.1480), f. 17 (10.iv.1480).

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, f. 58 (30.xii.1471), f. 58^v (20.iii.1472), f. 59 (11.v.1472), f. 113^v (1497-99).

¹⁷ T. Bellini, *Dizionario della Lingua Italiana*, 8 vols. (Rome, 1861).

¹⁸ Proc. 1, f. 40^v (1462-63), f. 74 (1474-75).

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, ff. 52^v-53 (1.viii.1469).

from the present documents that a new main door had been fitted in 1471. *Tavulj di azaru per la porta grandi* were purchased in Syracuse for one *uncia* in that year.²⁰

Works of Art

In January 1477 Mastru Petru di Messina *pingiturj* was commissioned to paint the *cortina dilu altaru per pingirila et fari nova*. The gold for the cortina came to 1 *uncia* 9 *tari* and was obtained from abroad through Octavianu di Ravellu and Rogeri Cumbu. Di Messina's expenses amounted to another 4 *uncie* which included the rent of his house and thorns used as firewood during the cold winter months. At the end of that same year he is also [p.107] encountered working on the *scannellu dilu altarj grandi*, or main altar predella, whose *peczi Jntaglati* (15 in number) were made by Mastru Antoni di Trapani and cost more than 2 *uncie*. No less than 1,000 *pannelli di oru* were used for this predella, costing no less than 4 *uncie*, likewise obtained through Octavianu di Ravellu. Di Messina charged 12 *uncie* for his decoration of the predella.²¹

It is known from other sources that towards the end of Rogeri Caxaru's procuratorship the Cathedral acquired the choir stalls which the Dominican friars had procured from the Calachura brothers of Catania in 1481.²² The accounts books are completely silent on this important artistic acquisition. Fortunately however they shed important light on the acquisition of another prestigious work of art which also came from Sicily some time later. Reference is here being made to the marble baptismal font attributed, on stylistic grounds to Domenico Gagini. This attribution has been made by Hanno Walter Kruft, a reputable art historian and expert on Gagini. In his work, however, the only source quoted in support of his attribution is the work of Hannibal Scicluna in which it is asserted that the font was donated by Bishop Jaymo de Valguarnera but for which statement no reference is adduced.²³ Manfre Caxaru's accounts book for 1496-97, however, assures us that the baptismal font originated from Palermo and was brought by Magnifico Johanni de Guivara from that city for a sum of 10 *uncie*. Details are also given of how the ship carrying the font arrived at the port of Benarad whence it was taken to the *Castellu* by sea by Johanni Palma for 3 *tari* 6 *grani* and that another 4 *tari* 4 *grani* were paid for transport *dila dicta fonti dila marina ala chitatj*; the *corda di cannabu per ataccarj li fonti quandu la portaru dila marina* cost 3 *tari*. Having arrived safely at the Cathedral, Mastru Micheli Pisan was entrusted with making a *cuperchu dila fonti et Intavularj alu pedi dila fonti*. In preparation for the baptismal font, the area surrounding it had been cordoned off by a *ferro battuto* grill; Mastru Antoni the [p.108] blacksmith made a *firmitura* for the gate. The *cuperchu*, or wooden hood, covering the font made by Micheli Pisan could not have been the one seen at present. In fact, about a year later, this was replaced by another one made by Mastru Nardu Mautisi who was paid 1 *uncia* 27 *tari* 15 *grani per factura dilu cuperchu dila fonti et la pintura*.²⁴ It can be deduced that Mautisi's

²⁰ *Ibid.*, f. 58 (30.xii.1471). Sicilian *àzaru* = Italian *acero* = maple. For the new doors of 1535, Fiorini, *Mandati*, xliii-xliv.

²¹ Proc. 1, ff. 3^v, 10 (10.i.1477), f. 13 (14.viii.1477), f. 13^v (23.xii.1477). It appears that Mastru Antoni of Trapani was in Malta serving some penal sentence; he is described (f. 12) as *turrifinatu* and as *ky era alu castellu*. Soon after this time, Petru di Messina also worked on *la cona* possibly meaning restoration work on the St Paul retable for which he was paid by the jurats: NLM Univ. 11, f. 478 (4.v.1481).

²² M. Fsadni, *Il-Miġja u l-Hidma ta' l-Ewwel Dumnikani f'Malta* (Malta, 1965) 68-69.

²³ H.W. Kruft, *Domenico Gagini and seine Werkstatt* (Munich, 1972) 55, 244; plates 221-133.

²⁴ Proc. 1, ff. 101^v-102^v (1496-97), f. 113^v (1497-99).

hood had polychrome decoration so that it, too, is unlikely to be identical with the present one.

At about this time, some restoration work appears to have been executed on the *Cona grandi*, which must be the St Paul polyptych. Frati Johanni Antoni La Pucella was paid 2 *tarì* 10 *grani per colorari li trj braczoli di la cona grandi* whereas the son of Lancza Lamann was paid 12 *grani per fari tri pumi ali capidili braczoli*. Another 15 *grani* were paid to Mastru Micheli Pisanu for placing the *braczola supra la cona grandi*. Frati Johanni Antoni was also commissioned to repair the tabernacle and to paint the *braczolu dila lampa dilu Corpu di Christu*.²⁵

In 1496-97 an appreciable sum of more than 15 *uncie* was spent in obtaining old silver coins – 50 ounces weight from *coronati vechi* and another 12 ounces from *carlini vechi* – *per Jngastarj li reliqui di Sanctu Blasi et Santa Scollastica*; these *ingasti* were then gilded. This work was undertaken by Mastru Antoninu Maczunj who was paid more than 4 *uncie* for his efforts including those in refining the silver.²⁶ This *arginteri* Maczuni was also employed later to mend a chalice and paten which were broken, to make a *cuchara di argentu per la ecclesia*, *per farj duj ampulli lixi di argentu*, and *per furniri et conczari et pingiri(?) argentu ali ampulli*.²⁷ In December 1496 Maczuni was also commissioned by Don Antoni de Nicolachi, vice parish-priest of Żejtun, to make a gilt silver chalice for the church of St Catherine.²⁸ Sacred vessels made of silver seem to have been imported from Sicily at this time such as when silver cruets, weighing 30 ounces, were imported from Palermo in 1469 and five years later another pair of silver cruets, weighing [p.109] 23 ounces, were similarly manufactured for Misser Santu Paulu by Mastru Johanni of Palermo from some older silver cruets.²⁹

During the period under consideration, the Cathedral acquired a number of items of furniture and furnishings. In 1464 a new pulpit was made, in 1467 a new Bishop's throne was constructed together with two others flanking it, and in the following year a cross was purchased from Sicily. In 1474, then, bronze candelabra were acquired as well as a marble holy water stoup, a carpet, an *archibancu per mettiri libra*, and new frontals for the main altar.³⁰

The Organ

In these very detailed records no mention is made of an organ or organist before 1492-93 when Frati Antoni dili Rapi is encountered being accommodated in the *camera dilu Episcopu*, a fresh and clean mattress was being prepared for him and a year's salary paid to him.³¹ It is admitted that a gap exists in the records between 1487 and 1492 and the organist may have been present as early as 1487 but no mention is made in the books up to 1487 and the description of De Rapi's quarters suggests that he was moving in, in 1492. In January 1496, De Rapis died and Bishop Valguarnera employed first Don Lorenzo Vagnolu and then, soon

²⁵ *Ibid.*, ff. 98^v-100^v (1495-97).

²⁶ *Ibid.*, f. 100^v.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, f. 106^v (1497-98).

²⁸ NAV Not. G. Zabbara R494/1 (IV) f. 42 (28.xii.1496).

²⁹ Proc. 1 f. 51 (i.1469), f. 60^v (21.iii.1474).

³⁰ *Ibid.*, f. 41 (17.v.1464), ff. 49^v-50 (31.x.1467), f. 50 (vi.1468), ff. 60-60^v (21.iii.1474), f. 61 (1.vii.1474), f. 103^v (1497-98).

³¹ 1 Proc. 1a f. 46^v (1492-93).

afterwards, Don Nicola de Vermiglia as cathedral organists³² This information is corroborated by the *Procura* records which, however, have additional information to offer. The name of a hitherto unknown organist appears in these records between 1496 and 1499. He is Frati Pericuni, possibly the same Carmelite friar encountered in other near-contemporary records. He is recorded to have received an annual salary of 10 *uncie* and that his bellows-blower was the same Cola di Nasu nicknamed di Santu Paulu encountered in 1514; these records inform us that he was a *manumissu* – a freed slave. Frati Pericuni needed to go to Sicily in 1497 in connexion with the repairs of the organ. He purchased tin from Messina and had a mastra – possibly a vice – repaired in this connexion. Back in Malta, Mastru Johanni Batista was engaged *per [p.110] conczari et acordari li organi*, Mastru Salvu *per Jnfurarj lu organu di la banda direra* and Mastru Antoni the blacksmith *per conczari la manticha*.³³ The fact that the organ needed fairly extensive repairs soon after De Rapis' arrival suggests that it had been installed earlier but had probably not been used for a long time.

The *Procura* records supply a lot of information about the copying, binding and production of liturgical texts. Frati Pericuni is encountered as early as 1466 producing parchment for the copying of a *pistularu*; he supplied Don Matteo with three dozen skins in February of that year. By April, work on the copying had started and it was being done by Frati Antoni Saccu, elsewhere described as *lu canturi*.³⁴ Parchment was mostly produced locally in the friaries and in Gozo but on one occasion in 1473 parchment was imported from Palermo; names associated with this trade are Frati Petru Burg, Frati Guillelmu Lukys, Frati Luca dila Lunciata, and a certain Vassald. Various interesting specifications for the skins are encountered, such as *PELLI di vitulluzz*, *PELLI russa* and *PELLI di curduchina russa*.³⁵ Some copying and binding was also done in Gozo by Don Pinu Saliba especially in the 1460s and 70s. Other names of copyists are Don Amaturi Ziguchi in 1475, a certain Canchur, possibly Don Consalvu in his youth, in 1477, Mastru Antoni Mathi, a Sicilian, in 1478, Don Antoni Cassar in 1495 and Don Salvu and the layman Stefanu Zarb in 1498.³⁶ The binding was done either in Gozo or by Don Antoni Borg and Don Antonellu di Cachi; the latter was entrusted in 1496 with *lugari et fari cuperti alu vangelistaru*, probably the same one whose silver covers were made by Johanni Scarpa in 1519.³⁷ Further to this *vangelistaru* and the *pistularu* already mentioned, one finds among the books produced, *lu libru dili Judey* (1477), *lu missali dilu Episcopu Antoni* (1478), *un briviali* (1478), a *salteri*, a *graduali* and *lu ufficium di Santa Maria dili Nivi [p.111]* (1495), a *salteri grandi* (1498), and several other nondescript items referred to as *lu libru novu* or *libra di Santu Paulu*.³⁸

³² S. Fiorini, "Church Music and Musicians in Late Medieval Malta," *Melita Historica*, x(1) (1988), 1-11.

<http://www.xs4all.nl/~nizaar/Melita%20Historica/MH.10.1/Church%20Music%20and%20Musicians%20in%20Late%20Medieval%20Malta.pdf>

³³ For Vagnolu and Vermiglia, Proc. 1 ff. 97-98, 99^v. For Frati Pericuni, *ibid*, ff. 98^v-99^v, 101-101^v, 104, 112^v, 114, 114^v. A Carmelite Frater Periconus flourished c. 1450: S. Abela, *L-Ewwel Karmelitani f'Malta u l-Ewwel Knisja u Kunvent Tagħhom 'Il-Lunzjata l-Qadima' (1418-1659)* (Malta, 1976) 8, and A.T. Luttrell, "The Augustinians at Malta: 1413," *Analecta Augustiniana*, xxxviii (1975) 301.

³⁴ Proc. 1 f. 46 (26.ii.1466), (15.iv.1466); f. 62 (20.vii.1474).

³⁵ *Ibid.*, ff. 12^v, 15, 39-39^v, 45^v, 59^v, 62, 63, 64^v, 65, 106.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, ff. 10-11, 12^v, 13^v, 15^v, 63^v, 113, 113^v.

³⁷ Proc. 1 ff. 45^v, 53^v, 54^v, 98, 106. Proc. 1a ff. 49^v, 50. For the *Evangelistaro* and Scarpa, Fiorini, *Mandati*, xlvii-xlviii.

³⁸ Proc. 1 ff. 10, 14^v, 114^v. Proc. 1a ff. 62^v, 64.

By way of summary one can state that a comparison of the picture that emerges from the *Procura* records with what was happening at the Cathedral in the years 1500-1530 as depicted in the *Mandati* records shows that, except for the production of liturgical texts, the Cathedral was much more dependent on Sicilian artists and craftsmen in the earlier period than in the later. It is also clear that very little money was spent on the Cathedral rebuilding, renovation and decoration by comparison with what was achieved in the later years. Two related questions naturally pose themselves: How much money was the Cathedral making in pre-1500 years? and how was the bulk being spent?

The Cathedral *Introyti* are, unfortunately lacking from the *Procura* books of the 1460s and early 1470s, starting as they do in 1474. Over the twenty five years or so to 1499, it appears that the Cathedral incomes were steadily increasing. The following figures, in which years are indictional and where incomes are given to the nearest *uncia*, speak for themselves:

YEAR	1474-5	1475-6	1476-7	1477-8
INCOME	30	35	35	57
YEAR	1478-9	1481-2	1482-3	1483-4
INCOME	25	41	48	58
YEAR	1491-2	1492-3	1493-4	1494-5
INCOME	52	64	63	85
YEAR	1495-6	1496-7	1497-8	1498-9
INCOME	79	199	72	79

One can average out incomes in the 1470s as being of 30 *uncie*, those of the 1480s as 49 *uncie* and those of the 1490s as no less than 87 *uncie* approximately. These incomes derived from three main sources, namely collections and donations (including ones in kind in the form of candles, especially at Mnarja), dues from burials and such like services, and produce deriving from the Cathedral lands. But the bulk of the revenues – more than 90% – came from the lands.

[p.112] The answer to the second question is a corollary of this situation. The procurators, who must have had the improvement of the mother church at heart, could see that the most profitable investment was in land. It is evident that there was a deliberate policy of acquiring as much land as possible for the Cathedral, especially after 1467. From the details set out in the following Table it is clear that between 1467 and 1475 no less than 22 purchases of fields and other property were effected. This involved a total sum of no less than 330 *uncie*, practically all the money acquired during those years – and accounted for a rough estimate of some 40 *salmi* or 640 *tumina* of land. These included *lencza in contrata Musta, terreni a Santu Paulu, galkecta ky toccava ala galca vocata il curtine ky era di Madonna Paula, mitati di una galca la quali toccava a Santu Paulu, peczi di terra in contrata Rahal Churchupulli Jncantu di unu peczu di terra lu quali dunau Mastru Jacuku Chakym, quattru salmi di terra alu Gocz, pecza di terra vocata ta Dinerj in contrata Rahal Cuderj, mitati di una galca in contrata Callalia alias Gar Ilme, salma una di terra dilu Barrani, peczu di terra in contrata Callalia Jncantu la mitatj di la galca ky accatamu di Notari Paulu, peczu di terra conjuncta cum Santu Paulu*, and so on. From a number of instances, including some quoted, it is evident that land contiguous with other Cathedral property seems to have been preferred. It must be

stated that not all of this property actually remained in the Cathedral's possession as a number of purchases were *empciones cum gracia redimendi* that is, the seller was given the right that within a fixed term he could opt to redeem the land he had sold; it appears that in three cases this right had been exercised. But the fact remains that the Cathedral procurators' intentions was to buy the land.

There is no doubt that several of the transfers were in fact permanent and this showed in the increased incomes of the 1490s. This must have encouraged the procurators to invest even further towards the end of the century, their purchases including the important acquisition of *La Bachiria* from Magnifico Johanni de Guyvara at a price of no less than 70 *uncie*.

This information should, incidentally, be of especial use to present-day researchers into Cathedral property, particularly if they are after its provenance. This exercise had become of vital importance to some, some ten years ago. Although in most cases the notary who drew up the act of purchase is mentioned, it is very unfortunate that precious little remains of the originals and registers of the notaries in question. These were Notary [p.113] Luca Sillato, Notary Ingomes de Brancato, Notary Paulu Bonello, Notary Antoni Sarlu, Notary Laurenczu Farruge and Notary Jacubu Fauczuni.

It is even less likely to be able to trace the origins of property which was already in the possession of the Cathedral when these records were drawn up. These lands included extensive stretches at Ghallis, ta' Mlit (Mosta), Rahal Safi, ta' Hamrija, ta' San Gorg, Bieb il Gizire, ta' San Martin, ta' Deir Limara, ta' Bingemma and the land on Gozo held jointly with Santo Spirito Hospital. In connexion with this land, the *Procura* records furnish a lot of evidence for the payment of the *canuni regio*, which is a question of some importance.³⁹

Barring the Jews, information about whom has been put to good use in Wettinger's book,⁴⁰ these have been the main aspects on which substantial information exists in the *Procura* records but a detailed reading of them will reveal much incidental information on many another topics which should be of interest. This includes data about schoolmasters at the Mdina Grammar School, various craftsmen, clergy and church officials, and payment of tithes, to mention some of them.

[p.114] LAND PURCHASES BY THE CATHEDRAL: 1467-1498

Fol.	Date	Property	Seller	Price	Notary
49 ^v	8.vii.1467	peczu di terra in contrata Rahal Churchpulli Jncantu di unu peczu di terra lu qualj dunau Mastru Jacubu Chakym	Lia Ketib Judeu	2.0.0	Paulu Bonellu
50	8.iii.1468	contrata Rahal Curmi(?)	Antoni Callus	15.0.0	
53 ^v	21.x.1468	duj lenci et unu peczu undi esti lu puczu czo e ala galka di Santu Martinu	Don Arrigu di Burdino	?	Luca Sillato

³⁹ For the *canuni regio*, Fiorini, *Santo Spirito*, 45. For evidence of this payment, Proc. 1 f. 3 (1474-75), f. 22 (1486), f. 27^v (1483-84), f. 28 (Indictio II), f. 39^v (1465), f. 62 (1474), f. 63 (1474), f. 102^v (1496-97), f. 103 (1497-98), and so on.

⁴⁰ G. Wettinger, *The Jews of Malta in the Late Middle Ages* (Malta. 1985).

54	9.ii.1469	quattru salmj di terra alu Goczū	Nardu Saguna	30.0.0	Luca Sillato
56	8.iii.1470	pezza di terra vocata ta Dinerj in contrata Rahal Cuderj	Don Danczu Maniuru	15.0.0	Luca Sillato
57 ^v	31.viii.1470	mitati di una galca in contrata Callalia alias Gar Ilme	Notari Paulu Bonellu	12.0.0	Antoni Sarlu
57 ^v	21.vi.1471	salma j di terra dilu Barrani la quali lassau quondam Paulu Pilligrinu a Don Rogeri	Johanni dilu E piscopu et la mugleri	16.0.0 pecunie Malte= 2.8.11.3 boni	Paulu Bonello
58	5.ix.1471	pezzu di terra in contrata [...] (sic) mehud(?) vocata [...] (sic) ky era vigna di Gullelmu Axac	Giglu Zammit	4.0.0	Paulu Bonello
58	3.i.1472	# mitati dila galca di quondam Muni dili Nasi vocata ta Champra	Blasi Michola	20.0.0	Paulu Bonello
58 ^v	11.v.1472	pezzu di terra in contrata Callelia Jncantu la mitatj dila galca ky accatamu di Notari Paulu	Nardu Calava	3.0.0	Luca [Sillatu]
59	23.x.1472	pezzu di terra conjuncta cum Santu Paulu in contrata [...] (sic)	Martinu Zurafe	3.0.0	Paulu Bonello
59	30.xii.1472	pezzu di terra ky su vigna in contrata Hued il Bisbes	Zullu Sillatu	4.24.0	Paulu [Bonello]
[p.115]					
59 ^v	5.vii.1473	# lencza di terra in contrata ta Bongemma	Paulu Calabachi	18.0.0	Luca [Sillato]
60	9.xii.1473	# Galca vocata di Gracian in contrata Santu Theodoru et una altra galca in contrata Micabibe vocata di Horlandin cum la gistera et altra galketta	Neygu Chantar	68.0.0	Paulu Bonello
63	19.i.1475	una galca in contrata Santu Martinu	Giglu Zammit	8.0.0	Luca Sillato
64	20.vi.1475	la casa a lu chanu di avanti di Misser Santu Paulu	Paulu Farruge	10.0.0 pecunie Malte= 5.24.13	Paulu Bonello
11	27.iv.1477	lencza in contrata Musta	Custanza uxur quondam Pinu de Manuelj	6.0.0	Luca Sillato
5 ^v	9.i.1478	terreni a Santu Paulu	Neygu Chantar	?	?
15 ^v	20.viii.1479	galketta ky toccava ala galca vocata il curtine(?) ky era di Madonna Paula	Batista Farruge	2.2.3	Luca Sillato
15 ^v	27.ix.1479	mitati di una galca la quali toccava a Santu Paulu	Bertolu Saura di et la mugleri	12.0.0	Ingornes Brancatu
17	? .v.1480	terri	Nardu Saguna	20.0.0	?
27	1486-87	terri	Nobili Jufre Desguanez	80.0.0	Ingomes de Brancato

*64	6.iv.1496	lu terrenu	Misser Antoni Gat Disguanes	30.0.0	Laurenczu Farruge
97	1495-96	La Bachria	Magnificu Johanni de Guyvara	70.0.0	Gomes de Brancato
103 ^v	1497-98	galhetta in contrata Casalis Luca	Ximuni Aczupard	3.18.0	Jacubu Fauczuni
103 ^v	1497-98	galketta in contrata Tarxen(?) confinata cum lu terrenu di Santu Paulu	Mastru Grigori Chiche	2.17.3	Jacubu Fauczuni

signifies that the land had been redeemed by the seller at some future date.

* refers to Procura 1a.