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# The Siculo-African Peace and Roger I's Annexation of Malta in 1091

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The eleventh century events marking Latin Christian expansion across the Mediterranean world, mostly at the expense of Muslim states, are well known and have been reconstructed in detail by generations of historians. This expansion happened in different ways and forms, and was achieved as much by merchant entrepreneurs venturing into north African and Levantine markets as by soldiers using improved techniques on the battlefield, by intrepid seamen who mastered the business of Mediterranean shipping, as by churchmen who justified and assisted Christian warfare, conquest, colonization and settlement throughout the region. The significant Latin Christian achievements of the High Middle Ages were by no means a foregone conclusion, and no eleventh century man needed reminding that the attainments of a century of steady work and investment could rapidly be undone. The early successes of the Christian *Reconquista* in the Iberian peninsula by the end of the century, together with the establishment of Latin Christian rule in Southern Italy and Sicily by the Norman conquerors, were paralleled by the establishment of Crusader states (in what is today the Middle East) as a result of the First Crusade. In the wake of Latin Christian expansion, large Muslim populations in the Iberian peninsula, the central Mediterranean islands, Syria and Palestine were subjected to non-Muslim rule. Nonetheless, the conqueror of Sicily openly boasted about his peace treaty with the African Zīrīd ruler based at al-Mahdīa, Tamīm ibn al-Mu'izz ibn Bādīs.

It will be presently argued that this Siculo-African friendship was the cornerstone of Roger I's central Mediterranean policy at least from the mid-1080s onwards and that, moreover, the study of the Norman annexation of the Maltese islands in 1091 benefits from an appreciation of this wider reality. Comparisons are drawn between the sack of Pantelleria, az-Zawīla

and al-Mahdīa by Genoese, Pisan and allied forces in 1087, and the Norman conquest of Malta and Gozo by Roger I, Count of Sicily, in 1091. While little discussion has taken place with regard to the assault on Pantelleria in 1087, 1091 has long been recognized as a key element in Maltese history, to the extent that early modern Maltese historiographers 'mythified' the event into a national epic and projected the Norman warrior as a liberator of a presumed local Christian population from the Muslim yoke, on the basis of an elegant misinterpretation of the relevant passage from Geoffrey Malaterra's *De rebus Gestis Rogerii Calabriae et Siciliae Comitis*, completed by the Benedictine author about 1100. The 'myth of Count Roger' acquired a life of its own, once planted in the fertile soil of the collective imagination; unfortunately, its uprooting by the expert hands of twentieth century scholars has threatened to remove the wheat with the chaff.

The process of 'demythification' was launched by A.T. Luttrell's able editorship, in 1975, of a seminal collection of studies on medieval Malta which did away with many of the unfounded assertions concerning the Norman period of Maltese history, and more besides. Later contributions, especially Godfrey Wettinger's study of the documentary sources about the Muslim period in Malta, completed this same process of historical debunking of the (Maltese image of) Count Roger. Malaterra has rightly been upheld as the sole spokesperson with regard to the Norman expedition to Malta and Gozo in 1091; to be sure, were it not for his extensive description of the expedition organized, and led in person, by the Count of Sicily, we would have no other indication at all of its having taken place. The Arabic sources seem to be completely silent on the matter, as, indeed, they are on many relevant aspects of Roger's gradual conquest of the whole of Sicily between 1060 and 1091. Given the centre stage occupied by Malaterra's text on Malta in the island's historiography, it is strange that a study of the chronicler's lengthy description of Roger's Malta campaign in relation to the rest of his work has still, to date, not taken place. The exercise, which goes beyond the scope of the present contribution, has been made easier by K.B. Wolf's recent discussion of Norman historiography in eleventh-century Italy.

It is equally odd that no real comparisons have been drawn between the Norman annexation of the Maltese islands in 1091, and contemporary Latin Christian interest – and intervention – in the smaller island bases of the central Mediterranean region. Few textbooks on Europe in the High Middle Ages fail to mention, in one form or other, the astonishing wave of conquests, colonizations and annexations marking Latin Christian expansion across the Mediterranean lands and islands, as well as beyond the Straits of Gibraltar, in the period. Very often, Christian campaigns against the minor islands are relegated to the footnotes of history, yet the control of offshore island bases straddling the primary or secondary maritime routes had a significance which, arguably, exceeded by far the limited, short-term material benefits brought about by such depredations or annexations. The ability of Latin

Christian fleets to launch long-distance campaigns against insular outposts underlined the direction in which the balance of naval mastery of the Mediterranean would tilt. It laid bare the advantages that sheer naval strength would create if used in effective and strategic ways.

Effective strikes against Muslim outposts revealed the ability of Latin Christian fleets to intervene in most areas of the Mediterranean world and protect their far-flung commercial interests. This not to mention the subtler psychological and moral benefits to be had from military victory, in some cases 'foreshadowing' the coming together of Christian forces which would later characterize the composition of the Crusading armies. The success of the joint Genoese-Pisan expedition in 1016 to free Sardinia from a large Spanish Muslim armada led by a Muslim emir, al-Mujāhid, which had practically conquered it in a couple of years, was echoed by later raids, including the Pisan strikes against the north African seaport of Bône (present day Annaba) in 1034 and the Sicilian capital city, Palermo, in 1063. The joint military effort witnessed in Sardinia in 1016 – an intervention which paved the way for substantial and long-term Pisan and Genoese activities in that island – was repeated in 1087 in the strike against Mahdia; this time, however, there was no similar follow-up as the Italian forces which sacked the Zīrīd capital did not hold on to it.

The 1087 campaign has frequently been regarded, not without some justification, as a 'forerunner' of the First Crusade. "It was as a *peregrinatio*, or pilgrimage, that the *Gesta Francorum* understood the expedition of 1096-9 to liberate the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem," remarks H.E.J. Cowdrey, "but in 1087... the Pisans already wore pilgrim insignia as they prepared themselves to fight. Pilgrimage and holy war were evidently drawing together." The fact that (some of) the Pisan and Genoese warriors wore their pilgrim purses as they launched their attack on Pantelleria and the North African twin cities might not, altogether, be accidental to their military endeavour; on the other hand, historians should not make too much of the fact that the clerical author of the Pisan victory poem pointed out this fact. The presence of Roman and Amalfitan troops among the Christian forces sacking az-Zawīla and al-Mahdīa contributed a marked 'Italian' dimension to the main Genoese and Pisan thrust of the campaign. It is unclear whether the troops collectively undertook a pilgrimage to Rome on their way to north African waters. There is little doubt, however, that both Victor III and his successor, Urban II, positively encouraged such Latin Christian shows of force and unity; the latter Pope cited, in 1092, Pisa's victories over the Saracens in justification of newly granted rights to the Pisan Church in the island of Corsica. The 1087 campaign is singled out, in Cowdrey's words, through its "blend of maritime adventure with religious fervour rooted in the idea of a *militia Christi*". What, therefore, would lead an Italian pilgrim-armada to attack an offshore island base before taking on the mainland objectives?

The answer might lie as much in the ambitious geography of Latin



Christian expansion as in the 'strenuous' and 'arduous' deeds of heroic protagonists in clerical texts. One obvious answer is that the pilgrim-soldiers of 1087 attacked Muslim Pantelleria because it was in their path, being eager to demonstrate their Christian fervour and profit from it. The Christian armada hardly needed to 'eliminate' the forces based on that island to ensure the success of their intervention in Africa; there was no way the garrison on Pantelleria could have prevented the Christian strike against the African cities although, in the event, they did forewarn the mainland by sending letters attached to carrier pigeons. All the same, the island's location halfway across the Sicily-Africa channel meant that its sacking by a Christian force would send a powerful signal to the Norman conquerors in Sicily, then engaged in a major (and, as would turn out, final) push against the remaining Muslim fortresses. Roger's forces took the key south-eastern seaport of Syracuse in October 1086. At the time of the Genoese-Pisan expedition to North Africa, they were actively besieging Agrigento; the siege lasted from April until July 1087.

This is how the anonymous author of the Pisan victory song, the *Carmen in victoria Pisanorum*, described the attack on Pantelleria [my free translation]: "Navigating the sea they reached an island called Pantelleria [which was endowed] with a strong fortress; its inhabitants dispatched pigeons with letters informing Timinus about the large fleet. [Both] nature and man made the castle there astonishing, unlike any other castle in the world; two thousand men held the citadel, acknowledging neither God nor human virtue. [The Christians] landed there amazed at the buildings, and constructed very tall wooden towers; they destroyed and killed as God wished, and did what no one in the world may believe. I reckon only six men of those who came forth survived; they sent other pigeons with news about what had happened. King Timinus despaired upon learning this, and, troubled by the news, sought to negotiate with princes." At least two eminent Muslim chroniclers, an-Nuwayrī and Ibn al-Athīr, also recorded the event: "This year the Rūm put together [a fleet of] four hundred ships, and, assisted by the Franks, they all sailed to Pantelleria, which they depredated, devastated and burned. They then captured the city of az-Zawīla next to al-Mahdīa. The troops of Tamīm [Tamīm ibn al-Mu'izz ibn Bādīs, Zīrīd ruler from 1062 to 1108] had gone out [of Mahdīa] to suppress a revolt. [Tamīm] therefore made peace with the Rūm, paying them eighty thousand dinār, on condition they hand back all the captives they had taken. Having done this, they all returned home". The description by an-Nuwayrī is echoed by Ibn al-Athīr, who claimed that the armada of the Pisans and Genoese, "both Frankish [in nationality]", took "four years" to put together, and that Pantelleria was their meeting place.

Both Muslim authors dated the Christian expedition against Pantelleria, az-Zawīla and al-Mahdīa to the Muslim year 481 (= 27<sup>th</sup> March 1088-15<sup>th</sup> March 1089); the expedition was, doubtlessly, the same one as that celebrated in the 'Victory poem of the Pisans', which its modern editor, Cowdrey, dates

to 1087. Likewise, in the *Kitāb al-Bayān al-Maghrib* Ibn ʿAdhārī dated the attack by the *Rūm* on al-Mahdīa to 480 (= 8<sup>th</sup> April 1087-26<sup>th</sup> March 1088); the Moroccan writer claimed the attack was borne by a fleet of three hundred warships with thirty thousand fighters on board, but made no mention of the sack of Pantelleria. Interestingly, he claimed the Zīrīd army was fighting in a province away from al-Mahdīa and that the townsmen lacked arms and munitions to defend themselves; moreover, the town walls were derelict, the Zīrīd prince was unwilling to heed warnings he had received about the invasion, and his ministers were divided on which defence strategy to follow. These reasons were repeated by at-Tigānī, who claimed the Christians took the King's ransom money but sailed away with the women and children.

One element stressed by most authors is that Tamīm could count on his money to strike a deal with the invaders; the fabulous sum of eighty thousand dinār mentioned by an-Nuwayrī may be an exaggeration, but the Italian attackers are unlikely to have sailed away without adequate indemnity. According to Ibn al-Athīr, the Zīrīd ruler's ability to spend money was unmatched, considering it as a sure sign of his greatness. Nevertheless, we learn from Malaterra that Tamīm could count on something else as well besides the depth of his gold-chest: a treaty with Count Roger of Sicily. The agreement between Roger and Tamīm, which is also mentioned by Ibn al-Athīr, was effective at least between 1087 and 1098. Malaterra claimed that, upon realizing they lacked the men and means to hold on to al-Mahdīa, the Pisans offered the lordship of the city to Roger of Sicily. The Norman count quickly turned down the offer, citing a peace pact he had made with Tamīm. Malaterra had this to say on the event: "While this was happening, the Pisans who had travelled to Africa to do commerce became the victims of reprisals. They put an army together and took by storm the city of King Teminus and obtained all of it except the main fortress where the king himself was holding out [the Qasr al-Mahdī, according to at-Tigānī]. He bravely prevented the attackers, who were not in sufficient numbers, from keeping hold of the city which they had sacked. So they sent representatives to the Count of Sicily, who was very powerful and had the means to carry out these things, enquiring whether he desired to have the city [for himself]. However [Roger] had already made a peace treaty with King Teminus and was committed to honour it, so he upheld the agreement and turned down the offer as it was against Teminus's interests. When King Teminus was no longer able to defend himself by means of arms, he offered money in exchange for peace. The [Christian] fleet left his realms after receiving his money. Nonetheless he swore according to his faith not to attack any Christian land in future, and to release all his Christian captives."

The circumstances of Roger's peace treaty with Tamīm may only be conjectured. One thing is for sure: whatever the nature of the Norman leader's agreement with al-Mahdīa around 1087, it certainly did not prevent him from proceeding with his war against the surviving Muslim enclaves

in Sicily. As has been noted, at the time of the Genoese-Pisan attack, Roger's forces were besieging Agrigento. In the first half of the Norman conquest of Sicily, the Zīrīd ruler had aided the Muslim defence on various occasions and in different ways, notably by dispatching a large army led by his two sons. This African force helped slow the pace of Norman conquest but, unfortunately, it was drawn into the same Sicilian faction-fighting which had debilitated the Muslim government of the island. The Zīrīd ruler organized raids against Nicotera and Mazara in 1074 and 1075. According to Malaterra, as late as 1079-80, a squadron of north African ships was allegedly spotted off Taormina, which was then besieged by Roger's troops.

To be sure, the pact with Tamīm was not the only factor which made the alleged Pisan offer of al-Mahdīa unacceptable to Roger. The Italian maritime republics had invested considerable time, energy and resources in the whole campaign, and their spoils were important short-term rewards for their efforts; but there were decisive long-term benefits, not least in the form of commercial privileges, to be expected from Roger should he accept to rule over the city they had conquered for him. The plan was not altogether implausible; it would be enacted, with a measure of success, by Roger II in the mid-twelfth century. The Norman leader's island kingdom lay a few miles away from the North African mainland; but geographical proximity could hardly be exploited without the considerable means which were needed. It is to be doubted whether Roger had the means necessary to establish a permanent African lordship; the lack of men and resources, which hampered his conquest of Sicily, was painfully evident in most of his campaigns, as well as in the later efforts to attract Christian settlement. Logistical and military considerations apart, Africa was a major market for Sicilian grain, and Sicilian landowners, not least the government, profited considerably from it. Count Roger's agreement with the Zīrīd court was probably designed to protect and foster peaceful commercial exchange across the central Mediterranean waters.

This is confirmed by Ibn al-Athīr's report, dated to AH 491 (= 9<sup>th</sup> December 1097- 27<sup>th</sup> November 1098) on an incident related to the Frankish conquest of Antioch. The passage traces the emergence of Frankish domination in the Mediterranean world, mentioning the conquest of Toledo, the conquest of Sicily, and the temporary capture of footholds on the African mainland. The Arab chronicler dated the Frankish incursion in Syria to 490 (= 19<sup>th</sup> December 1096 – 8<sup>th</sup> December 1097) and reported Baldwin's request of assistance from Count Roger for the passage of a large Frankish army to conquer Africa. Roger's counsellors urged him to co-operate with the Franks. In his reply, Roger dwelt at length on Siculo-African relations: "When these Franks arrive here, a thousand ills will afflict me: I would be forced to provide them with ships to transport them to Africa, and to send my own troops too. Now, suppose they conquer the land and become its masters, they will control the trade in victuals instead of the Sicilians, and I would lose, to their advantage, the profit I make each year on the price of grain. If, on



the contrary, they fail to achieve their objective, they would return to my land, and I shall be vexed with their presence. Moreover, Tamīm will tell me: 'You have betrayed me; you have violated our pact', and will discontinue our friendship and the commerce between Sicily and Africa. No: It is much better that this remains to our profit, until we feel strong enough to take Africa ourselves". Then calling Baldwin's ambassador, he told him "Since you propose to wage a Holy War against the Muslims, the noblest enterprise is the conquest of Jerusalem, which you will surely be able to free from Muslim domination, to your glory. With regard to Africa, know that I am bound by oaths and pacts stipulated with that people."

Ibn al-Athīr's assertion that Roger redirected Baldwin's attention from Africa towards Jerusalem may be unfounded; yet his text confirms the nature of the Siculo-African rapprochement and provides an important insight into Roger's character. Whatever the real date of the incident (dramatized by the Arab chronicler through the use of direct speech), one thing is clear: the peace treaty between Roger and Tamīm enabled the Norman leader to redouble his efforts and finalize the conquest of Sicily. Meant, as it must have been, to provide the two powers on both sides of the central Mediterranean channel with a measure of commercial peace and neutrality, it evidently dealt the final blow to the Muslim enclaves which were still engaged, in the 1080s, in active resistance to the Norman conquest of the island. Roger's reluctance, in 1087, to comply with Genoese-Pisan designs takes on a fuller significance in the light of the strong commercial links between the two countries; in the conqueror's view, the direct economic benefits of peaceful trade with Africa by far outweighed the advantages promised by the prospect of an African lordship. Moreover, Roger's official statements avowing his commitment to honour the peace with the Zīrīd court reveal a keen understanding of the regional balance of power. By citing his treaty with Tamīm as the reason for not providing assistance to fellow Latin Christian warriors (the Italian attackers of 1087; the Frankish delegation of 1096), Roger was upholding an agreement with a Muslim lord above what was dutifully expected of Christian rulers. Whichever other factors may have been, precluding Roger from embarking on an African *reconquista*, this Siculo-African rapprochement about the time of the First Crusade stands as an astonishingly pragmatic alternative to the call issued at Clermont.

The Norman-Zīrīd peace treaty also signalled the end to any hopes the Muslims of Sicily might have nourished with regard to help from Africa; Roger's commercial partner across the straits was unlikely to intervene to prevent the Norman forces from completing the conquest of Sicily. Sicily and its neighbouring islands were effectively chalked off as Roger's sphere of influence. Within this wider context, Roger's rapid conquest of the remaining Muslim enclaves in Sicily and Malta takes on added significance. From the re-conquest of Catania around 1085 to the annexation of the Maltese islands in mid-1091, Roger notched an impressive series of victories: Catania,



Syracuse, Agrigento, Butera, Enna, Noto, and Malta followed in quick succession. In the case of Noto, the last Muslim enclave to succumb to Norman rule, according to Malaterra, its garrison sent envoys to Roger at Mileto, to offer the town's surrender; significantly, Roger proceeded immediately to consolidate his control of Agrigento and Noto by building, or strengthening, their citadels.

Contrary to the Genoese-Pisan attack on Pantelleria, which was motivated, as Cowdrey stated, by a mixture of 'maritime adventure' and 'religious fervour', Roger's Malta campaign in mid-summer 1091 was the logical sequence to the completion of his conquest of Sicily. Like the Italian maritime republics, active as they were in Sardinia (and, perhaps, to a lesser extent in Corsica), the Count of Sicily had been engaged for three decades in the takeover of a major Mediterranean territory, the island of Sicily. Unlike Pisa and Genoa, however, Roger staked a direct title to his victories; Latin Christian control in Sicily depended, in the least, on success on the battlefield, but enabled the victor to reap the richest of rewards: none less than a new Christian kingdom (all but in name).

It is unlikely that this was the first Norman move against Malta; already in 1072, just before occupying Catania, Robert Guiscard made clear his intention to attack Malta; this was a move, comments Graham Loud, "aimed not just at wrong-footing the Sicilian Muslims but also at diverting the attention of the Zīrīds". No such intervention from North Africa was expected or feared in 1091; this much is clear in Malaterra's account. According to the Count's quasi-official biographer, having concluded the conquest of Sicily, Roger grew so impatient in peacetime, and was so driven by lust for material gain and by desire for physical exertion, that he pondered which overseas realm to take next. Geography dictated the answer: no sooner did he set himself to administering his island realm, that he did not alert the fleet for the coming campaign and instruct his knights to make themselves ready for Malta. Having gathered 'a great army' at Cape Scalambri in July 1091, Roger set to sail, accompanied by trumpeters and other players of musical instruments – but not before overcoming, according to his chronicler, his son Jordan's tearful remonstrance that he should be allowed to command the fleet to Malta in his father's stead. The drama between father and son was poignant; Jordan, a child sired by the Count out of wedlock, was established as lord of Syracuse, Noto and Lentini towards the end of his life (the unfortunate lad died prematurely in late 1091). Jordan was linked to a rebellion against Count Roger in the Val Demone around 1083-84; the Count was seriously worried, according to Malaterra, that his son might "defect to the Muslims". Roger's determination to lead the expedition to Malta in person related as much to his fear that his wayward son might enact something mischievous in Malta, as to his desire to be seen as a formidable Christian soldier. Whilst contrasting his own youth and inexperience with his father's wisdom and leadership, Jordan offered to take his elderly father's stead as his loss would be of much less consequence

than the Count's. Significantly, the Count told this son that, as he desired to be the major beneficiary from new conquests, it befell him, first and foremost, to carry them out.

Roger's annexation of the Maltese islands was partly facilitated by the coming to terms of the community on the larger island of Malta. The islanders did attempt to resist the Norman landing "in great numbers", according to Malaterra; a number of local fighters were killed, the island was searched and the siege of the town was started. Nonetheless, the attack against Malta did not prove to be as perilous a task as Jordan had made it out to be. "Unaccustomed to warfare", says the chronicler, "the sight of their enemies greatly frightened them"; the island's *gaytus* and the other chief citizens sought terms for their peaceful surrender. Roger's concession of peace terms effectively transformed the Muslim population on Malta into a subject community, one "bound to himself" through its obedience. This much is signified by Malaterra's term, *confoederati*. The islanders surrendered their Christian prisoners, beasts, and weapons, and took oaths "according to their law" to promise the due payment of annual tribute, in exchange for Roger's protection; they had little choice but to bow down to the new tributary status which the distinguished campaigner, bolstered by his 'friendship' with Zīrīd Africa, imposed on them. Malaterra lost no opportunity to exalt the Count as the prototypical Christian warrior and liberator of fellow coreligionists. The Norman leader insisted that all Christian prisoners held within the town be released; these emerged from the citadel and, in a tearful show of gratitude, waving makeshift crosses and shouting 'Kyrie Eleyson', placed themselves at the Count's feet, moving the seasoned warriors to tears.

The newly released captives sailed away from Malta on board his ship, witnessing no doubt Roger's sack of Gozo; God's right hand raised the Count's ships a full cubit upwards as they took to sea. Once in Sicily, Roger duly set the prisoners free and tempted them with the prospect of a new settlement which was to be permanently exempt from any payment of tribute or rendering of labour services. It is unclear how many of the captives accepted to settle down in this 'free town', aptly called Villa Franca; Malaterra remarks, however, that Roger granted the homesick among them full supplies and a free passage across the Straits of Messina, enabling them to return home. They travelled back to 'their native lands' via different routes, 'magnifying' the Count's name abroad wherever they went.

By contrast with the carefully planned-out conquest of Malta, a common element underlies the sacking of Pantelleria and Roger's 'devastation' of Gozo; no doubt, the prospect of rapid gains was overshadowed, in Gozo's case, by the desire to seal the annexation of the Maltese archipelago. Moreover, there is little indication in Malaterra that Roger encountered anything resembling the resistance of the "two thousand"-strong garrison on Pantelleria. Unlike the Pelagian island, which remitted precious information to the African mainland, Gozo was Roger's *cul de sac*; its ravage (if

Malaterra's account is to be trusted) served no purpose beyond a rapid annexation: "realizing that in this way he would secure its capitulation and add it to his dominions." In 1087, the pact with al-Mahdīa prevented Roger from embarking on an African career; no similar considerations inhibited his move against Muslim Malta in 1091. Unlike the attack on al-Mahdīa in 1087, which reflected the long-term interests wielded by the Italian merchant polities in the southern Mediterranean, Roger's expedition against the Maltese islands was not only the result of three decades of warfare in Sicily, but also the logical consequence of Roger's friendship with Zīrīd Africa. The Siculo-African peace paved the way for the annexation and subjection of Sicilian Islam, by guaranteeing African non-intervention in the Norman sphere of influence; it neutralized the one Muslim state in the central Mediterranean which, in the late eleventh century, had the means and power to halt, if not reverse, the Norman conquest of Sicily and Malta. The peaceful balance of power was not maintained by the two rulers' twelfth century successors; the reversal of this policy culminated in a short-lived but dramatic expansion of Norman lordship into North Africa.

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Geoffrey Malaterra's text was published by E. Pontieri (ed) *De Rebus Gestis Rogerii Calabriae et Siciliae Comitis auctore Gaufrido Malaterra*, in *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*, second edition, Bologna, 1927-8; his detailed description of the Malta campaign is found in Book IV, 16, 94-6. Recent discussions of the Norman attack on the Maltese islands in 1091 include Charles Dalli, *Iz-Zmien Nofsani Malti* (Malta 2002), 36-8; Mario Buhagiar, "The Norman Conquest of Malta: History and Mythology", in Paul Xuereb (ed), *Karissime Gotifride. Historical Essays presented to Professor Godfrey Wettinger on his Seventieth Birthday* (Malta 1999), 47-54, also includes a partial translation of Malaterra's text. See also A.T. Luttrell's introduction to his collection of studies, *The Making of Christian Malta* (London 2002); the study by Godfrey Wettinger, "The Arabs in Malta", in *Malta: Studies of its Heritage and History* (Malta 1986), 87-104 was the first to establish the correct interpretation of Malaterra's words with regard to the *captivi Christiani* on Malta.