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Il mondo islamico croato. — L'arte rurale e l'operosità casalinga in Croazia. — Primi inizi della cinematografia croata. — L'attività del Teatro di stato croato. — Il centenario della «Matka Hrvatska». — Un esempio della Croazia bosniaca. — Dalla Croazia. — Politica. — Economia. — Cultura. — Varie.

IL MONDO ISLAMICO CROATO

H. SABANOVIC

I croati vennero a contatto col mondo islamico già nel corso del VII secolo. Questa prima conoscenza avvenne attraverso i mercanti di schiavi bizantini. Molto interessante è il fatto che gli arabi e i croati siano stati nel passato spesso volte reciprocamente collegati e costretti a combattere insieme contro il comune nemico, Bisanzio. In pari tempo, quando gli arabi ebbero occupato la Siria e la Palestina (635—637), i croati, debellati gli avari, occuparono la Dalmazia. Il traffico tra la Siria e la Dalmazia era già prima vivace. L'opposizione politica e religiosa contro Costantinopoli era forte tanto in Siria quanto in Dalmazia: i legami politici degli arabi e dei croati ebbero spesso buon successo, come emerge dalle vicende della guerra comune e dall'assedio di Costantinopoli nell'anno 677, e come risulta dall'efficace appoggio prestato ai croati dagli arabi in occasione della sollevazione contro Bisanzio negli anni 802—811.

Nelle relazioni dei mercanti arabi nel corso del secolo VIII si fa cenno dei croati, ma non si può discernere se si tratti di croati d'oltre i Carpazi oppure dei croati del Litorale. Più frequenti e precise sono le relazioni che ci pervengono dai tempi successivi all'occupazione della Sicilia e dell'Italia meridionale da parte degli arabi. Da quell'epoca Palermo divenne un punto importante per il commercio tra la Croazia e la Spagna. Le vecchie relazioni e i vincoli dei croati col mondo islamita derivavano da avventurosi stimoli di numerosi noti e ignoti croati, che si spingevano per stimolo di curiosità per le terre lontane, nell'interno dell'Oriente, dove alcuni acquistarono in certe regioni delle Indie titolo di principi (melik), come lo dimostra il caso di Jaša il Raguseo, che mille anni fa si stabilì in India, conseguendo il titolo di principe. D'altra parte poi il

primo contatto dei croati col mondo musulmano avvenne per mezzo dei rapporti commerciali internazionali, oppure pure in seguito alle lotte per il predominio sul mare. Così, per esempio, è noto che l'offensiva degli aglebidi africani (800—809) contro Bisanzio nella Sicilia e nell'Italia meridionale spinse i pirati arabi sino alla sponda dell'Adriatico, dove le incursioni delle forze marittime arabe erano assai frequenti e dove si svolsero aspri combattimenti, ai quali partecipò anche la flotta croata (870). Le lotte cessarono sotto il governo dell'imperatore Lodovico II nell'anno 871, ma le relazioni commerciali si mantennero perché le città marittime, innanzi tutto Venezia e i commercianti longobardi di Bari, e successivamente anche i siciliani e i catalani si occupavano del commercio degli schiavi dalla Dalmazia. Tale commercio era così lucrativo che tutti i divieti non valsero a nulla. Perciò il glorioso re croato Zvonimir, in occasione dell'incoronazione nell'anno 1076, dovette assumersi l'impegno verso il papa Gregorio VII di impedire tale commercio. I divieti si resero necessari anche nel secolo XIV e XV a Spalato, Curzola, Dubrovnik.

V. Mažuranić, ritenne croati i sacalibi, che dal IX al XII secolo si ricordano nell'Africa meridionale e specialmente in Spagna. Un gran numero di questi croati, spediti dalla Dalmazia in Africa e in Spagna, si distinse in seguito in riguardevoli posizioni e anche alla corte dei califfi di Cordova, e in generale nella vita pubblica della Spagna islamita. I califfi di Cordova avevano spesso volte, non soltanto la propria guardia del corpo composta da sacalibi, ma, v'erano a Cordova dei generali, architetti, poeti e scrittori sacalibi. È noto che il re sacalibo (croato) «di Gebalim» era in diretta relazione diplomatica col più celebre califfo spagnuolo,

Abdurrahman III. Dalle su esposte circostanze si può considerare con ragione il «re di Gebalim», secondo Mažuranić, quale croato.

Nel mondo scientifico l'influenza dei croati sull'impero arabo di Spagna, specialmente all'epoca del culmine della forza e potenza dell'impero è ben nota: l'influenza croata si estendeva su tutta la vita pubblica.

Tale influenza dei croati sulla vita politica, e in generale sulla vita pubblica della Spagna maomettana provocò presso i nobili arabi e presso i potenti berberi un senso di risentimento, per cui vennero mosse delle accuse e degli attacchi contro i croati, per menomare almeno in parte la loro influenza alla Corte. Ma i croati avevano anche in Spagna dei valenti scrittori che con

loro penna prendevano la difesa dei propri compatriotti. Soltanto così si può spiegare la genesi della famosa opera del poeta croato Habib dal titolo «Il libro delle vittorie e delle prove per coloro che non conoscono

belle doti dei croati». Con questa sua opera Habib assunse la difesa dei propri connazionali influenti e potenti contro gli attacchi dei berberi e degli arabi. Avendo Habib composto la sua opera sulla base delle canzoni e degli annali dei suoi compatriotti, da ciò si può dedurre che nella Spagna islamitica v'erano molti altri croati che si occupavano di letteratura. L'opera di Habib è andata disgraziatamente smarrita e ciò costituisce un gran danno per questa parte della storia croata.

Ancor più caratteristica è l'influenza dei croati sullo sviluppo politico dell'Impero turco. Esistevano intere pleiadi di celebri croati, per lo più della Croazia bosniaca ed erzegovinese, che in diverse epoche della storia turca coprirono cariche importanti presso la Porta. Per i meriti del pascià croato Mahmut, che occupò la Bosnia e l'Erzegovina e che fu il primo dei croati a raggiungere il grado di gran visir, dunque la più alta carica nel potente impero turco, i croati coprirono per due interi secoli importanti posizioni presso la corte turca. La sola carica di gran visir fu coperta

da ventiquattro generali di sangue e origine croata. Secondo il giudizio di alcuni storiografi turchi, diversi visir croati vengono considerati come colonne del potente impero d'allora. All'epoca più splendida della storia turca, al tempo di Solimano il Grande (1620—1566) nove croati coprirono la carica di gran visir. Mentre gli uni si distinsero come valenti militari e uomini di stato, gli altri si notarono come eccellenti amministratori delle finanze dello stato ottomano.

Alla Sublime Porta la lingua croata era coltivata come seconda lingua ufficiale, dato che molti sultani parlavano il croato. È accertato che Maometto II e Solimano il Grande parlavano il croato. Tutt' e due i sultani avevano alla corte tra i migliori e più devoti magistrati e collaboratori molti croati. Ibrahim-pascià da Požega era il prediletto e il migliore collaboratore di Solimano il Grande, a cui quest'ultimo deve una gran parte della sua gloria. Egli occupò Bagdad e Tibris e assediò Vienna e Kisek. Era tanto potente che si faceva chiamare sultano. Interessante ma nello stesso tempo anche infausto è il suo incontro, o meglio scontro con un altro glorioso figlio della stirpe croata, Nikola Jurišić, il difensore di Kisek. I due valorosi eroi, dello stesso sangue e della stessa lingua, al servizio di padroni stranieri, si scontrarono come avversari sul campo di battaglia. Il prof. Vjekoslav Klaić, nella sua «Povijest Hrvata» (Storia dei Croati) descrisse sino ad un certo punto l'incontro dei due eroi.

È un fatto storico che i nomi di Mehmed-pascià Sokolović, quale uno dei più grandi statisti turchi, del croato Rustem-pascià, quale ultimo rigeneratore dell'Impero turco e di Ibrahim-pascià di Novošehri, il cui carattere e le cui doti diplomatiche furono innalzati dagli storiografi turchi sino alle stelle — nella storia dei turchi stanno come colonne sulle quali a suo tempo posava il più potente impero turco. Attraverso questi ed altri grandi uomini l'Oriente ha conosciuto la nazione croata come nazione umana, coraggiosa, intelligente e accorta, dotata di tutte quelle qualità positive che distinguono un popolo.

'ARTE RURALE E L'OPEROSITÀ CASALINGA IN CROAZIA

Ancora oggi nell'Europa sud-orientale si conserva l'arte rurale come parte integrale della cultura nazionale. In queste regioni l'arte rurale non si limita alla semplice cornice decorativa della vita rurale, ma è la sua parte integrale e la sua espressione spirituale. L'arte rurale non è un fenomeno separato, ma è strettamente legata con tutta la giuntura delle sue caratteristiche tradizionali, come del resto si manifesta nei costumi, negli usi, nel lavoro e negli attrezzi. Soltanto noi consideriamo l'arte rurale quale espressione della vita collettiva del contadino, possiamo renderci conto del suo significato e del suo valore. E fin quando queste condizioni vitali esisteranno, non cesserà l'espressione artistica del contadino.

In genere l'integrità delle manifestazioni vitali del villaggio può mantenersi soltanto allora, quando tutti elementi di tali manifestazioni siano conservati inalterati.

Se si scuote, sotto l'influsso di fattori esterni, anche uno solo degli elementi della vita del contadino, si rovescia tutto il suo equilibrio.

Da questo processo non si è potuto liberare neppure la Croazia, però ugualmente, col sopraggiungere delle circostanze, la vita tradizionale è rimasta ancora in molte regioni quasi intatta. E in queste regioni, particolarmente nella Zagora dalmata, nella Bosnia, nella Posavina e nella Podravina si osserva assai bene la compattezza della vita del contadino croato. Pertanto nelle regioni in cui l'infiltrazione della civiltà cittadina, specie dell'industria, è avvenuta con ritmo accelerato, la vita armoniosa e tradizionale del paese appare già scossa. Ma neppure le regioni isolate non si sono potute tenere del tutto lontane dagli elementi stranieri, tanto più perchè appunto tali regioni sono soverchiamente povere, e dipendono, quindi, dall'industria cittadina.

Mentre il villaggio viveva chiuso nella sua sfera vitale, economica e culturale, gli oggetti del suo lavoro artistico furono nel tempo stesso anche oggetti delle proprie necessità quotidiane (costume, ceramica, incisione, ecc.). La distribuzione del lavoro presso le case padronali primitive rese possibile al contadino di dedicare a tali oggetti la più grande attenzione, e creare da essi oggetti d'arte che coi loro ricchi ornamenti e la

Aucun souvenir ni aucun document nous prouve l'existence d'un théâtre romain à Palerme; au contraire, en existait dans le village voisin de Imera, et il avait la forme classique d'un amphithéâtre.

Au Moyen Age, Palerme, qui fut un centre politique et culturel très important, put connaître les bouffons, les mimes, ~~et~~ les "ioculatores" et leurs exhibitions, de même que toutes les autres villes de l'époque.

Ces exhibitions s'ennoblirent et atteignirent un niveau artistique très ~~haut~~ élevé dans les somptueuses cours normandes et souabiennes.

Mr. Debartolomeis, avec beaucoup d'intelligence, a étudié le caractère dramatique et représentatif du célèbre Ciullo d'Alcamo, un des premiers monuments de la littérature italienne.

Mr Ugo Falcando, qui écrivit sur les faits de Sicile dont il fut témoin du 1154 au 1169, M. Pietro de Eboli dans sa chronique et beaucoup d'autres auteurs nous ont assurés qu'en face du Palais Royal, il existait une "Salle Verte" ou *teatrum imperiali palatii* qui était destiné aux spectacles publics. Le voyageur arabe, Abd er Rahman déclarait que "le théâtre resplendit sur toutes les oeuvres d'architecture" et un autre arabe Ibn el Giubbair, qui fut en Sicile en 1184, s'exprimait en des termes pleins d'admiration pour sa grandeur et sa beauté. Cette Salle toutefois n'existait déjà plus au XV siècle.

Dans les siècles suivants nous avons des nouvelles au sujet de farces, de laudes, de représentations religieuses, etc. Mais avant qu'on puisse parler d'une véritable représentation, il faut arriver au 1538; ~~en~~ en cette année en effet, dans l'église de Sainte Marie de la Pinta, et sur ordre du Vice Roi Ferrante Gonzaga, ~~avec la~~ un spectacle fut donné "Représentation de la Création et le Verbe Incarné" qui fut même appelée l'Acte de la Pinta.

Cette oeuvre fut composée par le célèbre écrivain bénédictin Teofilo Folengo, qui en 1537 fut envoyé par punition au Monastère de San Martino delle Scale près de Palerme, à cause de son ouvrage, les célèbres "maccaronie", pas du tout orthodoxes, paru sous le pseudonyme de Merlin Cocai.

Pour se rattrapper sous le point de vue spirituel, il avait composé un poème long et ennuyeux de quarante-huit chants sous le titre "La Palermitaine", c'est à ~~dire~~ dire qu'il s'agit d'un poème, et la prose s'alterne avec la musique dans un ensemble chorégraphique luxueux. Le moine bénédictin fut l'auteur du commentaire musical.

Cette représentation fut donnée plusieurs fois, ~~et~~ avec un éclat et une richesse de scènes toujours plus grande, jusqu'à l'année 1601, et les chroniqueurs de l'époque en parlent avec admiration. Il faut se rappeler qu'en ces temps là le rideau ne se levait pas, mais au contraire il était abaissé jusqu'à terre, tradition celle-ci que jusqu'aujourd'hui existe dans les principales églises de Palerme lors des cérémonies religieuses du Samedi Saint avec la fameuse "calata da tila" au moment du "gloria".

Les premières comédies profanes furent données, dans l'église de S. Nicolò en 1545 à l'occasion du mariage du fils du Vice Roi Gonzaga (il avait tout juste neuf ans) avec la dame Diana Cardone, mariage déclaré nul par l'Archevêque de Milan à cause de l'âge de l'époux.

Ces représentations, à l'église, dans les places où dans les palais furent très fréquentes à partir de cette époque, et toujours pour des fêtes, des mariages et des célébrations.

Un incident assez bruyant déranger une de ces réceptions au mois de février 1578 dans la maison du Capitaine de Justice don Vincenzo Buongiorno. La comédie était si polissonne et elle était représentée avec si peu de tenue, qu'à un certain moment le Vice Roi ~~abandonna~~ quitta la salle avec sa femme et toute sa cour. Le lendemain les artistes, qui étaient des comiques génois-étaient mis au ban par ordre du Vice Roi.

Drôle de pudeur en un homme qui avait organisé le spectacle indigne des courses entre ~~les~~ femmes des rues et qui avait créé tellement de scandales à causes de ses amours avec la baronne de Miselandino !

~~Palerme~~ Après Ferrare, Mantoue, Venise et Rome, Palerme fut une des premières villes qui purent avoir un théâtre permanent. Il fut bâti par le Sénat Palermitain sous le Vice Roi Colonna dans l'ancienne église de Sainte Marie du Spasme, ainsi surnommée parce qu'on y adorait le célèbre tableau de Raphaël qui se trouve aujourd'hui au Musée du Prado. L'Eglise du Spasme fut transformée en théâtre (pour les représentations tragiques et comiques qu'il fallait faire selon les occasions et les temps) aussitôt que les moines de l'Uliviens furent transférés à l'Eglise de St. ~~Esprit~~ Esprit, aujourd'hui cimetière de Ste Ursule. Cette salle de spectacle fut inaugurée le 22 février 1582 avec le "Fou sage"

de Antonio Usodimare. En même temps les Jésuites faisaient représenter dans leur collège les drames religieux à ~~leur~~ et les Philippins faisaient connaître leur "Oratoire". D'autres théâtre provisoires naquirent un peu partout et en 1554 un mélodrame fut représenté pour la première fois à Palerme, le "Serse" de P.F. Cavalli. Le premier théâtre dans le sens moderne du mot ~~théâtre~~ put naître en 1682 sur l'initiative de l'Union des Musiciens, et ce fut le théâtre de Ste Cécile. Il contenait soixante sept loges divisées en quatre rangées et une salle de troiscent places. Il fut inaugurée le 28 octobre 1693 avec le mélodrame religieux "L'innocence pénitente, c'est à dire Sainte Rosalie", vers de Mr le dr. Vincenzo Giattini et Musique de Ignazio Pollice, tous les deux de Palerme. Avec l'inauguration du théâtre de Ste Cécile l'opéra musicale à Palerme eût une période de grande prospérité. Au commencement l'on représentait presque exclusivement des pièces de musiciens siciliens tels que ~~Scarlatti~~ Em. Rincon ~~XXXXXX~~ (Augusta 1860-Madrid 1757), Alessandro Scarlatti (Palermo 1659-Napoli 1725) et bien d'autres. Ensuite le répertoire ~~XXXXXX~~ présentait aussi le mélodrame italien pre et post métastasien et même l'opéra comique napolitaine. En 1726, dans la place Ste Cathérine, dans un magasin du Palais de Valguarnera de Sainte Lucie (qui auparavant avait été utilisé comme théâtre populaire, dit des Travaglini) un autre théâtre fut construit, et il fut appelé de Ste Lucie et de Ste Cathérine. Le tremblement de terre de la même année endommagea le théâtre en construction et le "Ste Cécile" en les réduisant à néant, et, dans l'attente des réparations, un théâtre d'été fut construit tout le long de la plage. Le théâtre de Ste Cécile, rendu plus moderne et enrichi, fut ouvert au public à nouveau l'en '37. Le "Ste Lucie" était en état cinq années après. Une furieuse concurrence se déchainait ainsi ~~par~~ entre ces deux théâtres, et à ce sujet pouvons-nous lire des chroniques assez piquantes dans les journaux de l'époque. Les deux théâtres vers la fin du siècle étaient encore une fois rendus plus jolis et agrandis: et en cette occasion dans le "Ste Cécile" ~~XXXXXX~~ on enleva les grillages en bois (tel que dans les fenêtres des couvents) qui fermaient à moitié les loges face aux spectateurs, et qui permettaient aux dames de ... faire ce qui leur plaisait. Dans la partie supérieure de la loge qui était sans grillages on voyait un peu partout des plumes rouges et vertes. Appartenaient-elles au petit chapeau d'une jeune fille ingénue que la mère très jalousement gardait, ou au chapeau d'une dame d'augustine qui avait l'habitude de ces grillages pour continuer même au théâtre son romans avec son cicisbée?

Malgré la préférence du public pour les spectacles musicaux et malgré le grand triomphe du mélodrame, l'art dramatique continua à s'imposer. ~~XXXXXX~~ La Comédie de l'Art avec ses comiques et ses masques fit son apparition à Palerme, et la comédie tragique fut très populaire ~~XXXXXX~~, surtout à cause de Pietro Mancuso, auteur très riche.

Pendant toute le XVIII Siècle on a des nouvelles au sujet de nombreuses troupes de prose qui étaient venues à Palerme pour faire des représentations. En 1808 le théâtre Ste Lucie fut complètement reconstruit sous le nom de St Carolino, en l'honneur de la Reine Maria Carolina, et il existe encore aujourd'hui sous le nom de Théâtre Bellini.

D'autres petits théâtres surgirent aussi en cette période, par exemple le "Santa Anna" dans un magasin de l'autre Palais Valguarnera, actuellement Palais Gangi, le "San Ferdinando", ensuite appelé "Humbert", l'~~XXXXXX~~ dans la Rue Merlo, le "Loreto" en face à Villa Giulia, et bien d'autres encore.

Le "San Ferdinando" fut construit exprès pour recevoir la Troupe des "Vastate" (des choses vulgaires) qui avait été formée en 1786 par Biagio Perez avec des gens du peuple. ~~XXXXXX~~ Giuseppe Marotta en fut l'acteur principal, et il créa le masque de Nofrio. ~~XXXXXX~~ Pendant tout le XIX Siècle, le "Pasquino", prit la place de "Nofrio", masque typiquement palermitain, et il fut interprété successivement par différents artistes; ~~XXXXXX~~ Le comique Salvatore Tomasino, qui représentait dans le "Ste Anne" fut le dernier. ~~XXXXXX~~

Dans la deuxième moitié du XIX Siècle, et même au XX siècle, Palerme, ~~XXXXXX~~ eut, dans le cadre de la vie artistique italienne, une activité importante en ce qui concerne le théâtre.

Les anciens théâtres furent à la longue insuffisants soit du point de vue de la scène, soit ~~XXXXXX~~ par le fait qu'ils devaient accueillir le public d'une ville qui s'agrandissait toujours davantage.

~~XXXXXX~~ Le grand Théâtre Politeama fut créé en 1874, dans un style pompeien classique, et sur dessein de l'Architecte ~~XXXXXX~~ Palermitain, Giuseppe Damiani Almeida, et peu après on commença la construction du Théâtre

Massimo, peut être le plus grand et le plus beau d'Europe, oeuvre de l'architecte palermitain G.B. Basile qui gagna le concours international lancé par la Commune de Palerme.

Le Théâtre Biondo fut créé en 1903 (arch. N. Mineo) et il a été inauguré par Ermete Novelli. Dans ce même théâtre fut la Gioconda de Gabriele d'Annunzio eût sa première représentation. Le Théâtre Nazionale fut créé en 1914, le Finocchiaro en 1920, et en plus de tous ceux-là il faut mentionner d'autres et nombreuses salles cinématographiques, parmi les quelles le Diana, récemment remis à neuf et qui reçoit aussi des troupes dramatiques.

Les nombreux dommages dégâts dont furent victimes nos Théâtres, à la suite des bombardements ont été immédiatement réparés grâce à l'esprit d'initiative et au courage de certains privés. Et, malgré toutes les plaies dont souffre encore notre ville meurtrie, la vie théâtrale a repris à Palerme sa vie, en suivant ainsi les glorieuses traditions dont on a si brièvement parlé dans cette étude.

loulou

Le Théâtre Populaire eût fin

(1) (Sant'Anna) avec lui et avec les "mariusi" de la Vicaria (du Vicariat) de Giuseppe Rizzuto, pièce représentative du Théâtre Réaliste, ~~montrant la situation~~
~~palermitaine~~

(2) "Vastato" vient de "vastaso" qui en dialecte palermitain signifie "porteur", "débarrasseur", "homme du peuple". Les acteurs étaient recrutés seulement dans ce milieu.

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When one enters the Cappella Palatina (Palatine Chapel) one is suddenly charmed as if before a surprising thing of which one feels the power before having understood it.

GUY DE MAUPASSANT, Wandering Life.

ITINERARY II

(S. Giuseppe⁽¹⁾, Piazza Bologna⁽²⁾, Cattedrale⁽³⁾, Museo Diocesano⁽⁴⁾, Palazzo Schafani⁽⁵⁾, Palazzo Reale⁽⁶⁾, Cappella Palatina⁽⁷⁾, S. Giovanni degli Eremiti⁽⁸⁾).

Beginning from the Quattro Canti and entering Victor Emmanuel Street in a direction opposite to the sea, in the short way as far as Porta Nuova, we see monuments of great interest.

In the first place the Church of St. Joseph of the Shepherds which has two entrances: one in Maqueda St. and the other in Victor Emmanuel St. This baroque building at Latin cross, with three naves divided by fourteen monolithic marble columns by Billiemi, rich in gilt stuccoes and frescoes due to Philip Trancardi of Messina.

1. St. Joseph Church. 2 Bologna Square. 3 Cathedral. 4 Diocesan Museum. 5 Schafani Palace. 6 Royal Palace. 7 Palatine Chapel. 8 St. John of the Hermits.

Let the Cathedral has before it a large 1 24

representing episodes of the life of St. Cajetan (20)
~~which have gone lost owing to the air-raids of 1943.~~
~~which the famous art of William Biondini is affixed~~
~~to the door of the church and which were destroyed~~
~~by fire in 1943.~~
The tourist must not neglect to
see the S. Gaetano in adorazione (St. Cajetan in
worship) by Peter Novelli ~~which is on the left wall~~
~~to its old place~~ the Crucifix attributed to friar
Umile Pintorno in ~~the right~~ chapel on the right,
and at last the large crypt under the Church
where a Madonna della Provvidenza (Our Lady
of the Providence) is worshipped: this place inspires
a religious meditation and is much frequented by
the believers on Wednesdays.

Continuing our walk along Victor Emmanuel St.
we meet the Piazza Bologna (Bologni Square) whose
austere aspect, due above all to the palaces Villa
franca and Riso, has been changed by the war.
The statue of Charles V, a work by Scipione Li
Volpi, that always succeeded, in times of revolution,
in escaping destruction, was particularly in the
sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the place preferred

Let the Cathedral has before it a large
for exposing bills containing lampoons and
satires against the Government or powerful
people: anonymous complaints, often hung during
the night, to the neck of the slender figure of the
Emperor, to indicate a state of mind diffused
in the population in the only way of protest, possible
in those times. It is in the Palazzo Villafranca
(Villafranca Palace) that Garibaldi took some
hours' rest in the same day when he entered
Palermo after overcoming by surprise the ^{first} resi-
stance of the enemy. At the bottom of the square is
Via S. Chiara (St. Chiara Street). Entering it you see
at No 2 the Palazzo Raffadali or Speciale (Palace
Raffadali or Speciale).

Going again along Victor Emmanuel St. you meet
S. Salvatore (The Saviour Church) a Norman
Church since many years closed to the public
to make repairs. Almost in front of this Church
is the ancient Collegio dei Gesuiti (The Jesuits
College) now the seat of the Biblioteca Na-
zionale (National Library). The large reading-
hall on the first floor has been heavily struck by
the bombs and books of considerable value have

Let the Cathedral has before it a large
been buried under the ruins; they are
being recovered by degrees. The work of the
library goes on, on the ground-floor: the entrance
is on the side of Via delle Scuole. In 1812 the Sici-
lian Barons met together in the ancient College
of the Jesuits and solemnly voted the end of
their privileges. The bibliographic Superintendent and Direc-
tor of the Library is Dr. Giralaldi.

Near the entrance of the Library on May 29th
1860, trying to oppose the sally of the Bourbo-
nis soldiers out of the Royal Palace, two
patriots, two brothers, Pascal and Saviour Di Be-
nedetto fell dead in the generous attempt
of building up a barricade. Their family de-
served the comparison with Cairolì. Seven
years later the eldest brother fell heroically
in the campaign of the Agro Romano, in the
desperate attempt of delivering Rome.

And now we are in the large rectangular
Piazza della Cattedrale (Cathedral Square) surround-
ed by a marble balustrade on which is a row
of saints. Within the enclosure there are flower-
beds, but, unhappily, they are little cared of.

Yet the Cathedral has before it a large square and its bulk is imposing even at a distance. (23) Since remote times there were here monuments sacred to worship. There was at first a Christian Basilica, which, in the IX century, when they first conquered the Island, the Arabians changed into a Mosque. The ancient Mosque was afterwards transformed into a Catholic Temple by the Norman Kings. Guaitiero Offamilio (Walter of the Mill), Archbishop of Palermo was its founder in 1185; now he sleeps his everlasting sleep in a sepulchre of the crypt.

But what discordancy in the great constructive whole! The ancient Norman building that partook both of the Church and of a fortress together, has lost its originality owing to later changes and additional works, above all between 1481 and 1801 due to the Florentine Ferdinand Guga, so that now of the Cathedral of Offamilio only remain the apses with the corresponding steeples and a part of the walls of the nave. Every century added or modified something to the ancient monument; but, if in many cases this actually improved the whole, the same cannot be said of

^{tomb of} Constance of Aragon, wife to Frederick II; the

the works executed by Guga, sometimes
quite vandalic work. He transformed
the task he has been charged to provide for some
urgent repairs into that of a renovator of the
whole building. And what an unhappy renovator!
To him is due the transverse nave, to him the
dome of the XVII century, to him the heavy and un-
pleasant ~~the~~ battlements, and, at last, to him is due
the dispersion of the decorations, once magnificent,
as is seen on looking at some remains of the
great tribune, a work by Antonello Gagini.

A witness of the Saracen period is a Kufic in-
scription in one of the columns of the Southern
porch. It is taken out of the Sura VII, v. 55
and runs as follows: Our Lord created the
day followed by the night; the moon and the
stars are at his command. Is it not true that
he has created these things? Is it not true that
he is the Master? ~~Allah~~ God be blessed,
Lord of the centuries.

The inside of the Cathedral seems squalid
~~the~~ compared with the ~~richness~~ richness and mo-

^{tombs} Constance of Aragon, wife to Frederick II; the

died in 1222 and by her feet was for many

monumental appearance of the outside. The tourist must not forget to visit the treasure, the crypt and the royal tombs; these last are the greatest attraction of the Cathedral.

The treasure contains the most precious objects discovered in the royal tombs. Above all the tourist must fix his attention on the crown of Constance of Aragon and on a precious Spanish altar-frontal.

The crypt is damp, dark, and, unhappily, ~~is~~ ill-kept. Its entrance is not easy. Under its cross-vaulting, along two naves there are about ten sarcophagi mostly occupied by the Archbishops of Palermo. Among them the sarcophagus of the founder of the Church; Walter Offamilio. The figure lying on the sixth sarcophagus and representing the Archbishop John Paterno is attributed to Antonello Gagini. The royal tombs are six; they are situated in two chapels enclosed with railings just at the beginning of the right nave. Four of them are under canopies, two ^{are} set in the wall. In the wall is the tomb of Constance of Aragon, wife to Frederick II; she

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died in 1222 and by her feet was for many
centuries a wooden box containing the imperial
crown that is kept now in the treasure of the Church.
The tomb of Duke Guglielmo, son of Frederick II of
Aragon is also in the wall. Under rich canopies
supported by pillars streaked with mosaics are the
tombs of King Ruggiero II and of the Empress Costanza
his daughter who was the mother of the famous Em-
peror Frederick II. Seats ~~rich~~ rich, though under
canopies in arches of porphyry are the tombs of the
Emperors Henry VI and Frederick II: fulgor
of imperial diadems on Swabian eagles, Arago-
nese, Swabian, Norman blood did beat in the
bodies now enclosed in the powerful simplicity of
the sarcophagi. ^{all} The splendid epoch of Sicily is in
the name and in the glory of his kings and Empe-
rors who now sleep their last in the Cathedral.
In the short but constructive period of their life
Palermo saw splendid churches, majestic palaces
rise, victorious armies come back, ambassadors of
far away countries humble themselves; Palermo saw
the Sicilian poetic school beginning with Frederick

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the literary history of Italy. And among (27)
the tombs, that of Frederick II, the great
Frederick, draws the largest number of reverent
visitors. Here is what remains of him who waged
war ^{upon} the Pope, ~~the~~ the Commons, ~~the~~ the Saracens,
~~the~~ ^{upon} the feudatories of Italy and Germany: a
hard figure when in arms, kind at ~~the~~ Court:
even now it is made alive, throbbing by the
tumult of battles, not only in this Church, in this
Palermo from where he started for his ruinous
flights, but in Italy, in Germany, in the Levant,
wherever there were rebels to submit or laurels to
reap.

In 1781 Rosario Gregorio was charged to draw up
a report on the royal tombs as it had been necessary
to open them owing to the displacements establish-
ed by Guga. The eminent Sicilian historian has
left us an ~~most~~ accurate and still lively report:

4 Upon Frederick's body were superposed two other
corpses. The one on the ~~left side~~ right side was cover-
ed with a royal mantle and wrapped up in a
silk
seven cloth filled with cotton-wool. Between the cloth

the Cappella are
(Chapel of the Incoronato)

mains of the ancient Cathedral of Palermo 3/
before the time when in the same place rose
that of Walter Offamilio which is the present
Cathedral. The Chapel is without roof, the walls
were shot down by the Bourbonic artillery that
fired at the garibaldines; the weeds and rubbish
give a sense of abandonment as they thrive on an
ancient floor of which only few feeble traces re-
main. Along the left side is the Loggia dell' In-
coronata (the Lodge of the Incoronata) whose
origin may be traced up to the XII century.

At this lodge the Kings of Sicily, as soon as they
were crowned, showed themselves to answer the cheers
of the crowd. Opposite is the Ospedale per i convalescenti
e per i sacerdoti (Hospital for the convalescent and
clergymen) remarkable for the stuccoes by Serpotta
that are in its Oratorio.

The street where these are the Loggia and the O-
spedale takes its name from Matter Bonello. An
impetuous and dark figure that of Matter Bonello!
But it is well that this street be named after
him for the tragic event of which the young
Norman knight was the protagonist. On the night

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On November 10th 1160, Matteo and other
 the conspirators waited in this place for the High
 in Admiral Maione. As soon as he came out of the
 Ha Archiepiscopal Palace, they rushed upon him and
 da killed him, a stiletto thrust on the ~~the~~ right top side
 of the gate of the Archiepiscopal Palace, even now,
 the according to tradition, calls to our mind the tra-
 ge- gical ambush; nay, it is believed that this is that
 S. same stiletto by which Bonello himself slew Maione.
 It is no use ~~use~~ looking into that remote history; it
 suffices to hint at two figures of women in that
 one seething period of the reign of William the Wicked.
 Maione's daughter, first wished for, then neglected
 (Vit by Bonello, and Clemence, illegitimate daughter of
 put Roger II, Countess of Catanzaro, a new and last
 who love of the Norman knight that became an assassin.
 mo. However it may be, it is from here that the revolt of
 squ Palermo of 1160 began, a revolt that, owing to the
 4th, changing vicissitudes of fortune, saw first the King
 pa himself made prisoner of ~~the~~ Bonello's partisans, and
 M. then, having been delivered, to cause his foolhardy
 to a opponent to be caught and blinded.

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In the inner yard of the palace, on the right, is (33)
the Museo Diocesano (Diocesan Museum), rich
in several works by Gagini. Do not neglect the
Hall D. which contains paintings by Luke Gior-
dano, Vasari, Marco del Pino^{the} Siennese, Peter
Novelli and others. In the vestibule is a Corin-
thian capital that seems to have been used by
Antonello Gagini as a work-bench.

Several balconies of the Archiepiscopal Palace
open on the Corso Vittorio Emanuele. The curious
tourist must look, among the support-brackets of
one of them the heads by Gagini.

This side of the Palace is on the Piazza Vittorio
(Vittoria Square) occupied by the Villa Bonanno, or
public garden without enclosure in the midst of
which are remains of Roman abodes with floors in
mosaic. On the left, on the North-East side of the
square rises the Palazzo Scialfani (Scialfani Palace).
It is related that Matteo Scialfani has caused this
palace to be built to rival with his brother-in-law
Manfred Chiaramonte who had caused the Steri
to be built, and that stimulating the artists,

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succeeded in completing it in only one year, and just in 1330. Now the building is used as barracks. On the entrance, in the Piazzetta S. Giovanni Decollato is a little niche containing the armorial bearings of the Sclafani: two cranes. An object of particular admiration has been in past times the painting Triumph of Death that calls to mind the celebrated one in the cemetery of Pisa. Now, as we have seen, this painting is in the Town-Hall.

The Corso Vittorio Emanuele ends at Porta Nuova (New Gate), in the South-West corner of the square. This gate, that is imposing still now for its grandiosity, was built in 1535 in order that the recollection of the visit of Charles V ^{remained; indeed, he} came back from the victorious expedition of Tunis, in which had taken part with him many noble Sicilian knights.

On the South-West side of the Piazza Vittoria rises the bulk of the Palazzo Reale (Royal Palace). Opposite this palace is the statue of Philip V Bour-

With hasty but precise touches Gregorovius 35
thus describes the Palace in his « Promena-
des through Italy » (1855):

This castle, so extraordinarily interesting especial-
ly for the Germans, because there spent his poetic
youth one of the greatest emperors of Germany,
and also interesting for the Italians that conti-
dered it as the cradle of their national poetry,
rises at the end of a street called Cassero on
the square from which one may have a sight
of the whole city. As it seems it is the most an-
cient building in Palermo, even since the
rule of the Saracens, the Carthaginians, the
Romans, the Goths that established their their
chief seat. There undoubtedly rose the palace
of the Emirs, from whom the name of Cassero
is thought to derive, a name afterwards extended
to the whole city, and it ended by remaining
the name of the principal street. It is believed
that the palace has been caused to be built by
the Saracen Adelkan. Roger I and his successor
caused it to be enlarged; there lived Frederick,
Manfred and his successors reducing it into the

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... the ambient and (41)
irregular form of palace and fortress (36)
that it has at present.

Galeando thus describes it at the times of William the Wicked: "This marvellous palace is built with stones worked with great care and exquisite art. It is surrounded with solid walls and is full of gold and silver. At its corners two towers rise: the Pisana, which is destined to keep the royal treasures, and the Greek, which overlooks that part of the city called Khemonia. In the midst rises a hall extraordinarily decorated, called Soaria, where the King and his confidants meet, in secret sittings and where the King grants hearings to the Barons to discuss the most important business of the kingdom."

Almost every trace of those ancient buildings has gone lost; the tower of St. Angelo only remains, and it must be the most ancient part of the castle, and the famous Cappella Palatina (Palatine Chapel). At the top of the tower rises the Osservatorio (Observatory), from which Father Piazza, on the 1st June 1801, discovered Cerere, the star named thus after the

...himself to the ambient and
name of the goddess patroness of the
shroud. The inner yard has three orders of
porches that surround it; on the first floor is the
celebrated Cappella Palatina (Palatine Chapel), one
of the finest monuments of the Norman time,
caused to be built by King Ruggero (Roger) in 1132
and dedicated to St. Peter. It is joined to the palace
and has no true front: its entrance is by a ~~portico~~
portico supported by eight columns of Egyptian
granite with mosaics on the upper part which re-
present scenes of the Old Testament and the corona-
tion of Ruggero. There is an inscription in Arabian,
Greek and Latin which explains that the King had
caused a sun-dial to be constructed in the palace
with the greatest care. The inscription in Arabian
has been thus translated: "His Royal Majesty, the
Magnificent and illustrious King Roger, may
God protect and eternize Him! gave orders that
this instrument might be built to ^{point out} ~~mark~~ the hours
in the metropolis of Sicily protected by God, in
the year 536." (of the Hegira).

X When Gregorovius visited Palermo, it was believed

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where that of the old Arabian-Norman build (38)
of Re ing, once a towered fortress called El
and t Halka, existed only the Torre Pisana (Pisan Tower)
Bern or of St. Vinfa and the Cappella Palatina. But
prepa when the palace, that made part of the properties
prodia of the Savoia, ~~passed to the~~ ^{became} dependante ~~of~~ ^{on} the
the en Board of Education (1921), ~~with~~ the Superintendente
golden to the Galleries and Works of Art of Sicily and to
that the Monuments of West Sicily were established there,
of be then diligent researches brought to the discovery
saries of ambients recorded in history or quite unknown.
termo The same may be said of the Political Prisons,
sed or whose narrow loopholes looked on to the torrent
exquis Kemonia, now disappeared; of the Chamber of the
a jewe Treasures in the Torre Pisana; whereas some mo
stical saries came to light in the upper premises, and a
and h vault with stalactites, like those of the Zisa ~~off~~
notter ~~area~~ was discovered in the Observatory. In the
The g same time the Sala degli Armigeri (the Armiger's
mirac Hall) was freed from partitions and masonry.
the un But the jewel of the Palace, nay, of the whole Palar
ration mo is the Cappella Palatina (Palatine Chapel).

ac... himself to the ambient and
to... will receive.

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where, according to the happy expression
of René Bazin, all the poetry of the North
and the South meet and mix together. Amy
Bernardy, exalting the peculiar beauty of Palermo
prepares the visitor of the Chapel to the sublime
prodigy that waits for him as soon as he has crossed
the entrance: Only when you have entered the
golden hollow of the Palatine Chapel you will feel
that what you had until now thought the last word
of beauty in the world, for what refers to mo
saries — Rome, Venice, Ravenna, and here, in Pa
lermo itself at the Martorana — had to be surpas
sed and discoloured by something rarer, more
exquisite, more fantastic, more sumptuous; by
a jewel~~ls~~ turned into a cathedral, by the ecclesia
stical embroidery which has turned into a church
and has become crystallized from light to a
nether light and from a wonder to another wonder.
The great richness of the shade causes the infinite
miracle of the walls and the ceiling to sparkle, and
the unexpected gleam and the ~~deeply~~ reverbe
rations leaping from the clamydes of the saints

to the backgrounds of the heavens inge-
nuously and wonderfully suggested to your
~~look~~ fascinated look, in the luminous little
stones, charm and keep it in a circle of inde-
scribable splendour 57.

40

The vestibule is adorned with seven pillars of
which six are of Egyptian granite; the modern
mosaics that substitute the ancient ones on the
wall, take nothing to the beauty of the porch.
When the tourist ~~is~~ is in it, if he is able, as we wish,
to catch the incomparable brilliancy of the mo-
saics without the veil of the devices suggested by
the state of war, he has really caught in the shade
that the light of the windows forms when reflected
on the walls, the secret of this closed beauty of Pa-
lermo.

After he may remark that the Chapel is in the
shape of a Basilica with three naves, that the same
trinary rises of three steps, that the eight narrow win-
dows are covered with ~~inscriptions~~ Latin and
Greek inscriptions, that the naves are divided by
means of columns, that the middle ~~the~~ nave has
a wooden ceiling with stalactites. After having

viewed and ~~admired~~ them in the inner-garments, the

accustomed himself to the ambient and (41)
beginning to ~~then~~ look round, he will perceive
in the little chapel, that is only 13 metres wide and
33 metres long, other wonderful things, which, in
this place, wonderful by itself, may charm. The
same may be said of the ambon supported by columns
of the marble candelabrum for the Easter candle,
which ~~is~~ is of the XII century; the same may
be said of the firmament of shining stars which con-
stitutes the middle ceiling, and, the monk Filogato
exalted it in this same church in the XII century.
Everywhere are vitreous or calcareous mosaics, of
different epochs, but all wonderful and on a golden
background. This gold sparkling will prevent the
visitor from distinguishing the more ancient mo-
saics from the more recent ones; it will accom-
pany him ~~thence~~ out of the chapel, in the marble
stairs of the palace and causes the magnificent
halls of the royal apartments of the upper floor as
if they were squalid. Let us visit the hall of the
Viceroy, of the Parliament with frescoes by Joseph
Velasquez, the Audience Hall, and, at last, the Hall
where are ~~the~~ the menageries, the

1. continue the superb stretches of plain of King Ruggero in the Torre Pisana (Pisan Tower) that is interesting for mosaics representing hunting scenes: but nowhere ~~the~~ will the visitor see again the golden sparkling of the Chapel.

If the ~~visitor~~ tourist has not neglected to visit the treasure of the Palatine Chapel (constituted mostly of splendid small chests among which the Arabian one, delicately inlaid, is remarkable) it only remains for him to go up to the Astronomical Observatory. The fatigue of the long staircase will be compensated by the panorama that will be offered to his ~~sight~~ eyes. Numberless visitors have ~~admired~~ ^{beheld} from this place the city and the luxuriant Conca d'Oro; but only Joseph Pitre, the most celebrated Sicilian demapsychologist has been able, with the heart of a Sicilian and of an artist together, ~~will~~ to describe the splendid panorama: the blue sea that vanish away in the distance, the stately Arabian and Norman monuments that detach themselves from the other buildings, the crown of the mountains, the rich villas and around them the kitchen-gardens, the

of nature, the superb stretches of plain 161
orchards, and, above all, the brilliancy of (43
the oranges, the Arabian castle of Javara or
Maredolce voluptuously sung by the Mussulman
poets, thus concluding: On the right all speaks
of the Past, on the left all shines of the Present;
down there all is old, here all is new. at
every step on that side is a deep mark of
Emirs and of Norman Princes; and every step
on this side is a solemn echo of Palermitan
noblemen. Where the Arabian Emirs and the
Norman Princes chose as their pompous sojourn,
the Palermitan noblemen did not choose to have
their villas of the eighteenth century built for
their quiet country-stay. Another society,
another way of conceiving life: the gentlemen
and the gallant little abbés of two centuries ago
preferred not to meet the rigid shadows of their
conquerors.

But all this is felt and understood by him who
knows the local history: ^{but} he who does not know it,
when he looks at the panorama from the Specola
(Observatory) he perceives with wonder the beauties

of nature, the superb stretches of plantations of oranges and lemons, perhaps he looks up along the mountains to find the way followed by Garibaldi or towards the blue sea that penetrates in the amphitheatre of the gulf, and is satisfied with this miracle of God.

Now, if the tourist desires to conclude ^{with a moment of delicious meditation} this day dedicated to so many monuments of the first order that have produced in him so many different raptures, he must go to S. Giovanni degli Eremiti (St. John of the Hermites). When out of the Royal Palace, he must turn round the statue of Philip V, ~~can~~ go down the flight of steps, then turn to the right into Via del Bastione and then to the left into Via

dei Benedettini: here is the suggestive structure of San Giovanni degli Eremiti with its red little domes that we have seen at S. Cataldo, with ^{plain} ~~rough~~ outside walls, with its Eastern aspect to which is added the verdure of the garden.

It is of little importance for the tourist to know that the primitive shape of the Church was an Egyptian cross, that its apses are three, as

this was of little consequence to an ~~other~~ intelligent visitor, a man full of sentiment: A. Dry. 65

What I liked most, he says, in this corner of Palermo is the cloister, a little medieval cloister, certainly posterior to the church, but of a delicious privacy and very well preserved. Nothing is changed in this cloister since eight hundred or nine hundred years. The thin columns of matchless gracefulness are those that the hermites of St. John caused to be risen. On the marble benches in the corners of the little cloister, the monks wearing cassocks of coarse gray-coloured cloth have come to sit down and read in the shade the sacred texts, to avoid the rays of the sun that, then as now, peeped into through the embroidery of the little columns and irradiated the ~~back~~ rosebushes. ^{flower-} Mandarines must grow, since the XIII century in the beds of the cloister.... Instinctively I expect that under the marble door appears an old monk.... I ^{am under} ~~have~~ the impression that ~~he~~ he will come to

the roses.

46

in the midst of this splendid scenery,
these delicious perfumes, the good hermites of
St. John should think of death without bitter-
ness and ^{without} desperation. Though separated from
the rest of men, they must and could love life,
since they had in this cloister a part of what
still to-day makes the delight of the inhabitants
of Sicily: the sun, the shade, the flowers.

