A BAD REPUTATION FOR THE MALTESE INQUISITION UNDER MGR JOHN BAPTIST GORI PANNELLINI (1639-1646)

by

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A contradictory portrait of an Inquisitor

The personality of John Baptist Gori Pannellini (1), Inquisitor of Malta between the years 1639 and 1646, in the light of his own dispatches, lies in contradiction with what others thought about him. On account of Gori, the Knights of Malta, the Bishop, and the Maltese engendered or increased their hatred against the Tribunal of the Holy Inquisition.

In his dispatches to Rome, Gori appears to be a victim of injustice, a target of persecution, and one with a heart of extreme sensibility to suffering and of promptness to pardon. On the contrary, in the dispatches

1. For a brief reference to this Inquisitor, see Alex. Bonnici, O.F.M. Conv., "Superstitione la corte di Malta a tavola dell’Inquisition (1639-1646)". M. Hist. [Historia], vol. IV, n. 3 (1966), p. 169.

For the main sources about this Inquisitor, see:

a. (Archivio) Secretum (Vaticano), Secretaria S(tatus), Malta, 7, Lettere originali degli Inquisitori Giovanbattista Gori Pannellini, Antonio Pignatelli, e Carlo Cavalletti alla Segreteria, dal 9 maggio 1645 all’8 dicembre 1651 (275 ff.) [For a partial publication from this manuscript, see: P. Piccolomini, "Corrispondenza tra la Corte di Malta e l’Inquisitore di Malta durante la guerra di Candia (1645-1669)". Archivio S(troncato) I(taliano), n. 41 (1908), pp. 46-127 passim].


f. Archive of the I(Inquisition of Maltia), Lettere della Suprema Congregazione all’Inquisitore di Malta, 7 (1637-1641), 239 ff.

g. A.M., Lettere della Suprema Congregazione, 8 (1642-1648), 279 ff.

h. A.M., Processi del Tribunale dell’Inquisizione nel periodo di Gori Pannellini, 54-60.
of the Supreme Tribunal of the Holy Office, he appears as a person without the necessary ability for his office, with an exaggerated confidence in his ministers, and as one who gave occasion to a very bad reputation of the Tribunal itself. In the mind of the Maltese, he appears as a tyrannical executor of justice, or even worse, as a person who threw others into prison out of vain pretexts and fantastical illusions.

At the end of his term of office in Malta, Gori declared that he had adhered to his duties with the highest fidelity (2). He repeatedly confessed that he was ready to make any sacrifice for the sake of justice (3). Besides, he sincerely tried to give evidence of his kindness and tenderness. He often pleaded on behalf of the Maltese so that the Holy See might not give to foreigners the benefits of the Island (4). No occasion escaped him whenever he had the possibility to favour the Jesuits who, quite recently, had suffered a short but ignominious expulsion from Malta (5). When an Archbishop had been captured by French Corsairs and stripped of all his possessions, Gori insisted for and finally obtained his freedom; moreover, the Inquisitor offered him clothes, linens, provisions, money, and anything he needed (6).

A failure in diplomacy

Nevertheless, was Gori liked by the Maltese Authorities? Probably, they noticed his weakness. In front of the Bishop, he was afraid to defend his rights. On the contrary, in a manner with which he expressed a sense of inferiority complex, he accused himself for lack of diplomacy. Besides, considering that the Bishop of Malta was Mgr Michael John Balaguier De Camara (1635-1663) (7), the Inquisitor could not obtain but a negative

2. "Sei in sett'anni qui in Malta Inquisitore e Delegato Apostolico con ogni debita fedeltà": A.S.V., S.S. Malta, 7, f.26r.
4. "... pigliando maggior animo di supplicarla di questa gratia nel sentire che li maltesi habbino privilegio che li benetiti della loro isola non si conferiscano a forestieri": Ib., f. 33r.
5. "Non ho lasciato per il passato occasion'alcuna che mi sia presentata di servir li Padri Gesuiti": Ib., f. 50v.
6. The Archbishop mentioned here is Mgr Merullo of Manfredonia: "è stato fatto pigiorno per condurlo in Francia... Et essendoci andato ancora io per far la medesima instanza... et anco sono andato per visitare il detto Monsignor Arcivescovo e consolarlo, havengoli (1) offerto biancaria, panni, provisioni, denari, e qualsivoglia cosa che volete": Ib., 6686, f. 72r r-v.
7. For reference to this Bishop see:
   A. Zammit Gabarra, The presentation, examination, and nomination of the Bishops of Malta in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (Malta 1961).
effect; the Pastor of the Island took advantage of the Inquisitor's weakness. Gori was not stern enough, and consequently, Balaguer despised him for being a coward and frequently, while conversing with the Grand Master, referred to the Inquisitor with a sense of contempt. Then, on the other hand, speaking to the Inquisitor, the Bishop said anything that came to his mind against the Knights (8). The Bishop charged him also of coldness and indifference in dealing with the diocesan affairs in front of the Grand Master (9).

Notwithstanding this, Balaguer was disgusted with Gori. Seven Inquisitors, from Fabio Chigi up to Galeazzo Marescotti, presided over the Maltese Tribunal of the Holy Office during the episcopate of Balaguer. But, if we give credit to the Bishop's words, no Inquisitor had ever vexed the diocesan pastor more than Gori. According to the Bishop, the Inquisitor humbled him just to please the Knights of St. John. Other Inquisitors used to help the Bishop; but Gori did not ever give him a hand to relieve him from his troubles (10).

To our astonishment, the same Balaguer, who so often disdained Gori, had only words of praise for the Inquisitor on his departure from Malta (11).

The sad Inquisitorship of Gori does not result by any means better if we give a look to his relations with the Knights. He did his best to defend the Knights and to have their privileges confirmed; but, notwithstanding this, not only the Knights but also the Grand Master himself had no esteem for the Inquisitor and would have liked to get rid of him. **Grand Master Lascaris** (1636 - 1657) complained that the Inquisitor had accused him of injustices. Gori was also incriminated that he was favouring the enemies of the Grand Master; but, diversely from the Bishop, the Grand Master was not so impudent so as to face the Inquisitor with those denunciations (12). Furthermore, according to the Inquisitor, the

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8. "Lo pregai a scusarmi... Mi dispiaceva del cattivo concetto che ha di me... Li replicai che credevo d'haver il torto, come esso diceva, e che però mi scusasse, e che mi diceesse come voleva che io servissi, che l'avrei fatto volontieri": Bibl. Vat., *Barb. Lat.*, 6684, f. 105v.

9. "Sento che Monsignor Vescovo, con il suo Agente, si lamenti che nelle negozii suoi col Signor Gran Mastro io non tratti con fervore": *Ib.*, f. 79r-v.


12. "Ho inteso che si sia lamentato che io habbi detto che egli habbia fatta un'ingiustizia e che io habbi lì medesimi concetti de suoi avversarii in questo negozio; con me però non ha mostrato Sua Eminenza minimo segno di poco gusto, ma lodato sempre, e prima e dopo, il buoni offitii che passo seco": Bibl. Vat., *Barb Lat.*, 6684, f. 47 v.
worldly Knights of the Order were determined to exterminate him for having imprisoned their prostitutes (13).

In such a situation, it is not surprising that, during his seven years in Malta, Gori very often asked to be relieved of his office as Inquisitor. At first, the Pope, during his early years, did not take those petitions very seriously, until they became very pressing when the Inquisitor’s life was in peril (14).

On 8th September, 1646, Gori was informed by Cardinal Pamphili, Secretary of State, that Anthony Pignatelli, the future Pope Innocent XII, had been chosen by the Roman Pontiff to place him as an Inquisitor of Malta. Gori obtained the faculty of leaving the Island after choosing an apt person to take charge of his office up to the arrival of the new Inquisitor (15). When Balaguer, the Bishop of Malta, was chosen by Gori as “Pro-Inquisitor ad tempus”, he soon forgot all the former complaints against the Inquisitor (16). But if we scrutinize the words that the Bishop writes about the Inquisitor, after examining the facts in the light of the official documents, everything seems ironical or, at least, contradictory. According to the Bishop, when Gori left the Island, the Knights and the people of Malta felt an unusual sense of affliction because they had found in him a prudent and zealous minister in the regency of the Holy Office (17)!!!

Gori was really glad to leave the Island without even waiting for his successor. After fulfilling the conditions imposed on him, he left Malta.

13. “Sono in obbligo dar conto a Vostra Eminentza d’esser stato segretamente avviato che diversi Cavalieri habbin resoluto di levarmi la vita per haver fatto carcerare delle loro meretrici”: A.S.V., S.S., Malta, 7, f. 127r.
15. “Sono cinque anni ... Perciò la supplico ... la mutazione da quest’Isola”: lb., f. 67r.
16. For similar petitions to be relieved, see: A.S.V., S.S., Malta, 7, ff. 25r, 45r, 67r.
17. “Havendo la Santità di Nostro Signore destinato successore a Vostra Signoria in cotesta carica Monsignor Pignatelli, ne do a Lei quest’avviso acciò Ella sappia che è in arbitrio di Vostra Signoria il partir ad ogni suo volere di costà, dove Ella però dovrà, secondo il solito, lasciar soggetto habile al maneggio di quel che possa occorrere sino all’arrivo di Monsignor sudetto, che si muoverà di qua ben presto. Con che fine, auguro a Vostra Signoria prosperità di viaggio, e me le raccomando di cuore”: A.S.V., S.S., Malta, 82, f. 21r.
20. See Note 11.
immediately. He arrived very soon at Messina; but, unfortunately, the galleys of the Holy See had just weighed anchor the day before. Then, he was obliged to cross to Naples on a felucca in order to reach Rome as soon as possible. He wrote to the Pope from Messina to inform him about his immediate departure and to beg pardon for his delay (18).

A flashback on the administration of justice

Without any doubt, Gori acted with good intentions. Personally, he was convinced that he was doing his best in the service of the Holy Office. His despatches are the reflection of sincerity. They describe an individual who could not understand why so many persons were against him. He was prompt to be deferential towards his superiors and his equals also with the intention of gaining a good number of influential friends.

The Maltese, however, considered him, not only too severe, but also unjust in some of his decisions. Gori was the representative of the Holy See and, consequently, his faults had a tremendous repercussion on the Tribunal of the Inquisition itself. He himself, however, never noticed that harm because, up to the end, he was still sure of his utmost fidelity to all his duties.

On the arrival of Anthony Pignatelli in December 1646, everything became clear. The Roman Supreme Tribunal itself noticed that the Malta Inquisition had practically lost its honour in few years' time and regretted that everything was in such a disorder (19).

Throughout the period of Pignatelli (1646-1649), many charges discredited Gori. He had not kept an eye on his ministers who sometimes abused of their powers and framed notorious falsities in trials. On account of one of those cases, the Roman Holy Office complained with horror to Pignatelli about Gori: "The gravity of the case is manifest, the scandal should be removed, the dignity of the Holy Office ought to be restored"

18. "Poi che Vostra EMINENZA sè compiaciuta darmi la licenza di partirmi di Malta senza aspettare Monsignor Pignatelli, mio successore, con deputar alcuno che fra tanto ammini stri quella carico, credendo per servito delle cause della S. Fede che vertono non poter deputar chi meglio la poss'amministrare, ho eletto Monsignore Vescovo di Malta, e mi sono messo subito in viaggio per trovar le galere di Sua Santità a Messina, dove arrivato, ho trovato che il giorno avanti erano partite; e do conto a Vostra Eminenza che seguo il mio viaggio per Napoli con filiache, per esser a bascar quanto prima li piedi a Sua Santità ... Di Messina, 13 ottobre 1646": A.S.V., S.S., Malta, 7, f. 128r.


"... con molto dispendio e discredito di cesto Tribunale": Ib., f. 235r.
because the evil caused cannot be expressed in words and seems to be absolutely irreparable” (20).

The Inquisitor, however, was not the only person to be deceived by his Ministers. The best known among his Consultants, the learned and pious Jesuit Priest Fr. Sebastian Salellas, well known especially in Canon Law for his research about the Holy Inquisition (21), was, by the Supreme Congregation, accused of inability. At that time, the venerable Jesuit was worn out and enfeebled with age. He had already served as Consultant to various Inquisitors for over forty years (22). On that occasion, he was rebuked by the Congregation of the Holy Office which wondered at the facility with which he had admitted the denunciations. Infact, that Congregation doubted whether old age had deprived him of the prudence required in such cases (23).

The Supreme Congregation, on hearing the continual appeals against Gori during the period of Pignatelli and after examining each of the particular cases presented, deemed it necessary to revoke some sentences and moderate or subject to revision some others. The Holy Office com-

20. “La gravezza del caso da sé si manifesta; il scandalo è necessario che sia tolto; il decoro del Tribunale ricerca ristoro; il male seguito è inesprimibile et irreparabile”; ib., ff. 273v-274r.


22. See: A.S.V., S.S., Malta, ff. 379r-380v: Rollo de Patentati del S. Offitio. The following information, given in 1659 by Jerome Casanate, Inquisitor of Malta, demonstrates that Fr. Salelles had been dedicating his services for the benefit of the Maltese Inquisition for over fifty years: “Consultori: il P. Sebastiano Salellas Genuita, fatto l’anno 1605 da Mons. Diotallevi”; ib., f. 379r.

Also the Grand Master Lascaris nourished high respect towards this venerable Jesuit. Infact, when the Jesuits were, in 1639, expelled from the Island, there was an exception only for Fr. Salelles and Fr. Tedesco; “consentendosi che due solamente rimanesero qui, e questi furono il Padre Tedesco... et il Padre Salellas, spagnuolo”; Bibl. Vat., Barb. Lat., 6690, f. 179v (a letter of March 10, 1639 sent by Grand Master Lascaris to Cardinal Barberini).

23. “Solo che questi miei Eminentissimi sono restati assai maravigliati della facilità del P. Salellas; ma questo buon Padre, per altro dotto, deve con gli anni haver perduto di quella prudenza et avvedimento che sono necessar in casi somiglianti”; A.I.M., Lettere, 8, f. 254v.

Nevertheless, the opinion that this pious Jesuit had of himself was completely different. It is enough to recall an extract of a letter sent to the Pope when he was already in his eighties. In his words, we can observe the lucidity of mind and a keen interest in theological discussion; “Vita mea... cum sit iam protracta ad aetatem valde decrepitam 84 annorum, quamquam quisquis me non agnoscit, meo prospecto vultu, et in eo iuvenili colore prae animi exultatione semper retento, nequaquam 70 annorum mihi tribuit, imo nec 65. Scientes tamen meam longissimam moram 32 annorum in hac insula, dictam in me vetulum aetatem facile colligunt... Flores audio supplices libellus Sanctitatis Vestrae oblatus pro honoranda Sanctissima Virgine Maria et de fide eius immaculatissima conceptione decidunta (quod a te exequutum speramus citro audire). At de illius dignissimo sponso, de Sanctissimo nostro Josepdo nullus supplex libellus... Hunc a te exaltari maximopere cupio cum maiori festo reposito extra
plained that so many persons were kept imprisoned without any sound reasons just out of vain pretexts and fantastical illusions (24).

Several persons were innocently punished for two long years on false charges brought against them; they had been denounced of having boiled a human creature with an act of apostasy, an invocation and adoration of the devil, abuses against the Holy Sacrament with filthiness ("con sporcamento"), and other heretical profanities. That case demanded a particular consideration because it involved some persons who were highly respected and honoured (25). Gori was immersed in such a confusion that nothing could be clearly apprehended from a series of appeals, denunciations and accusations against the Holy Office itself. As a result of that, the Supreme Authorities in Rome felt constrained to forbid to the Inquisitor any further procedure in that matter without first receiving instructions from his Superiors (26). High Officials of the Holy Office

Quadragesimam per 8 dies, ut solet, cum ieunio in eius vigilia, cum inunctione facta episcopis de celebrando pontificaliter prima die festi, cum expressione perpetua nominis Joseph post Beatam Mariam, ante S. Michael in letanias maioribus, in Missa ad Confiteor, ad Canonem etc.; denique, cum strictissima prohibitione sub poenis, etc., ne ulius animae affirmare quod S. Joseph secundam duxerit uxorem, et ex ea filios procreaverit, etc."; A.S.V.; (Lettere di diversi Particolari (a Sua Santità), 35, Lettera del P. Salelles da Malta, il 16 sett. 1657, f. 190r-v.

24. "Dopo che Vostra Signoria ha scoperto la vanità del processo del bollimento della creatura, sono questi miei Eminentissimi di parere ch'Èlla termini cossa causa conforme le parere di giustizia, liberando herma cossa Inquisizione da tanti peccati ritenuti con tanto poco fondamento, e con peccati aerei, e fantastiche illusioni"; A.I.M., Letters, 8, f. 250r.

25. "Havendo fra l'altre cose in certo processo d'Inquisizione inviluppato i più onorati e bene stanti cittadini di questi luoghi con gran loro pregiudicio e nella fama e nella robbia"; A.I.M., Notizie per la cura d'Inquisitore, f. 316v.

The following is an extract from the letter that the falsely charged persons presented to the Supreme Congregation of the Holy Office in order to regain the good name that once they enjoyed: "Cirillo Portelli, Dottor dell'una e l'altra legge e Consulente del S. Office di Malta, humilissimo servitore dell'Eminenze loro, espone che, per malvagità del Dottor Leonardo Xara, Assessore in causa, Giovanni Battista Farrugia, all'ora Avvocato de poveri, Don Salvatore Burì, attuario, et il Notaro Natale Parmisciano, deputato per faciale, official del sudetto Tribunale del S. Office, et altri complici, da doi anni in qua s'e trovato carcerato e processato d'un preteso bollimento di creatura con apostasia, invocazione et adoratione al demonio, abuso del Santissimo con sporcamento, et altre qualità hereticall, delli quali, per gratia del Signore, così esso esponente, come altri pretesi complici, furono con publico spettacolo, sotto il due luglio 1648, dichiarati innocenti e dolosamente inquisiti et calunnianti"; A.I.M., Lettere 8, f. 271r.

26. The following is an extract from a letter sent by the Supreme Congregation, on 3rd September 1650, to the Inquisitor of Malta Charles Cavalletti: "Era di già spedita la causa di Monsignor Gori quand'e giunta a Roma la visita della stanza in cui s'asserisce esser fatto il bollimento della creatura. Il Farrugia è stato inhabilitato per sempre in causa del S. Office et a Monsignor Gori fatto ordine di non proceder in essa senza particolare istruzione di questa Sacra Congregazione. Serva a Vostra Signoria d'avviso"; Ib., 9, f. 77r.
ran also the danger of being charged with maliciously false reports (27).

An atonement for the unsparing Gori

It was the hard labour of Pignatelli that successfully brought forth a change of opinion in judging the Tribunal of the Holy Inquisition. More than two years after Gori’s departure from the Island, persons who had suffered injustices out of his final sentences were still crying against him and addressing their complaints to Rome in earnest and even importune demands so that they might be compensated for the evil suffered (28).

Pignatelli, after having discovered all the falsities and calumnies framed in those proceedings, opened the way for the triumph of justice. As a matter of fact, on 2nd July, 1648, they were publicly declared innocent (29).

The common voice of the Maltese did not accuse Gori just for his injustices, but also for his tyrannically severe sentences. Gori, who appeared so meek and benevolent in front of the Grand Master and the Bishop, quite often inflicted sentences of life imprisonment on the galleys of the Order. Such sentences, even in very serious denunciations, were never promulgated during the period of his immediate successor. The Supreme Congregation, on hearing those appeals, admitted that the sentences were extraordinarily severe. For the benefit of the Tribunal itself, the Holy Office tried to moderate them as much as possible.

Joseph Mercurio had been condemned to row on the galleys for all his life; but, after Gori’s departure, the Holy Office in Rome granted him a revision of his case (30). In another similar case of life imprisonment on the galleys, the Supreme Congregation left the deliberation to be taken about the individual’s freedom to the discretion of the Inquisitor Pignatelli.

27. “Rimettano a Vostro Signoria questi miei Eminentissimi l’aggiunto memoriale di Cirillo Portelli, Dottore Maltese, a finché Ella consideri se vi siano degli indizi da venire alla carcerazione di D. Salvatore Burliò e di Natale Parmigiano, suo sostituto, perché non vi è diligenza anco istraordinaria che non sia ben spesa quando si tratta di far apparire che gli inquisitori nel S. Ufficio siano stati calunniosamente e denuntiati e depositi e la loro causa dai Ministri del Tribunale ingiustamente maneggiata”: Ib., 8, f. 270v. (A letter of 26th September 1648, sent by Cardinal Barberino to Inquisitor Anthony Pignatelli).


telli (31). The return from exile of Marianna D'Orlando was also decreed
by the Roman Congregation, if it did not create any inconvenience on
the Island (32).

While partly condemning the inquisitorship of Gori, it is important
to notice that he was not the first Inquisitor to be rebuked by the Holy
Office. Some others were even more guilty than Gori. Just for the sake
of bringing an example, we mention only two instances. In 1613, the
Holy Office obtained full knowledge about some scandals that had oc-
curred in the time of the Inquisitor Leonetto Della Corbara (1607-1608);
though he was already far away from Malta, the Holy Office was still
seeking to apply a remedy because his faults had given rise to numerous
scandals (33). The Inquisitor Evangelista Carbonese (1608-1614) as well
was reprimanded by the Holy Office; in a certain case, he pretended to
proceed against a priest; but he was informed that similar matters did
not fall under his jurisdiction; besides, his trial was declared null by the
Supreme Congregation and he was ordered to set free all the persons that
he had confined into prison (34).

After seeing that the case of Gori was not unique in the history of
the Malta Inquisition, we have to add that the Inquisitor Pignatelli had no
personal hatred against him. His successor simply reported that the

31. "Nel prudente arbitrio di Vostra Signoria rimettono questi Eminentissimi il liberare
dal remo e l restituire al Priore di Sciampagna Tessarcult Trandafila da Limeo, con-
dannato alla carcere in vita, e di là trasmesso alla galera, credendo l’Eminentissime loro
ch’Ell’a sia per usar in ciò della sua solita prudenza": ib., f. 245r.
32. "Nel tempo del suo predecessore fu da cotesta città esigliata Mariana D’Orlando, Vostra
Signoria, si contenti di certificarsi se il ritorno di lei possi partorire
inconveniente alcuno, e secondo che ritroverà le congeda o negli ha gratia richiesta di
poter ripatriare; poiché questi miei Eminentissimi all’arbìtrio di Vostra Signo-
ria la rimettono": ib., 9, t. 3r.
33. "La Santità Sua m’ha ordinato che io scriva a Vostra Signoria che Ell’a dia avviso
se costi tuttavia duri la diffamazione et scandalò de tali excessi, o pure sia sopita et
estinta la memoria di essi. Onde Ell’a s’informi di ciò con ogni secretezza et circon-
spettione et scriva quanto intorno a ciò occorre a Vostra Signoria": A.I., M., Lettere,
3, f. 63r (Card. Milillo to Inquis, Carbonese, Dec. 20, 1613).
"Si desiderano sapere da Vostra Signoria dei particolari: il primo, se il sodetto Mon-
signor mentre stava così, fu diffamato di questi delitti che si pretendono, et se dette
scandalo; il secondo, se dura tuttavia la diffamazione et il scandalò": ib.
34. "L’Illustissimo Signor Cardinale Doria, Arcivescovo di Palermo ... avvisa che Vostra
Signoria si è servita del nome del S. Ufficio in più modi nelle differenti occorse costi
con Don Rocco Pirri, Di che fatto parte alla Santità di Nostro Signore, mi ha ordinato
che io scriva a Vostra Signoria che Ell’a non doveva usare in ciò il titolo del S. Uffi-
"La Santità Sua mi ha ordinato che io replichi a Vostra Signoria che non manchi libe-
rar subbito detto D. Rocco et suoi compagni ... avvertendo di non procedere in modo
alcuno all’esecuzione delle pene contenute nelle sentenze da Lei mandate, ma li rilasci
liberi, con ricordarli che per l’avvenire non s’ingerisca ne i negliti che non spettano
alla Santa Inquisitione": ib., f. 174r (Oct. 4, 1611).
Tribunal was in a state of confusion. It often happens, however, that a person invested with a new dignity exaggerates the pitious state of everything so that his efforts for a reformation may loom forth in a more conspicuous light.

Nevertheless, the judgement of Pignatelli was shared by many Maltese. The inhabitants of the Island took advantage of Pignatelli because they noticed that he was ready to help them against the injustices and severities of the Tribunal. The Inquisitor, however, stood aloof full of dignity, without ever uttering a single word against the person of Gori. He just obeyed the Supreme Tribunal and tried to find a remedy according to the dictates of justice.

In a report about the Inquisitors of Malta, preserved in the Royal Malta Library, a short negative judgement is given about Gori: “He stayed in that office for seven years and four months, but with a very little satisfaction of the people” (35). In other words, although he always had good intentions, Gori proved to be unfit for his office because, as an Apostolic Delegate, in his diplomatic relations with the Bishop and with the Grand Master, he was weak and often disliked for his lack of ability in balancing those two ma’or authorities of the Island. As an Inquisitor, at the head of the Tribunal, the Maltese had no trust in him because they found him cruel and sometimes unjust.

Gori left Malta at his own request; but, indirectly, it was on the urgent demand of all the inhabitants of the Island because they always did their best to get rid of him (36).

In that critical period for the Holy Tribunal, when the Maltese has acquired a bad impression and could not hope for anything good and prosperous from the new Delegate of the Holy See, the Roman Pontiff Innocent X chose for Malta Anthony Pignatelli “in order that, through his discretion, the Tribunal of the Holy Office might again appear necessary for the service of God and of the Catholic Church” (37).

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35. “In essa carica rimase per sette anni a mesi quattro, benché con poca sodisfazione del pubblico”: R[oyal] M[alta] L[ibrary], Library, 8, f. 215r.
36. In the above quoted report about the Maltese Inquisitors, we find the following words: “Monsignor Gori ... per la sue asprezze era stato richiamato da Roma”: A.A.M., Notizie, f. 316v. But this statement is not correct because the Supreme Congregation began to complain about Gori only after his departure from Malta.
37. “Spiea alla Sacra Congregazione che tutto sia così sconvolto; ma la prudenza di Lei saprà ben tosto ridurlo a quel segno ch’è necessario pel servitio di Dio e della Cattolica Religione”: A.I.M., Lettere, 8, f. 207r.