

The Maltese *Zaqq*

(With music transcriptions and notes on the music by P. R. COOKE)

Il-haj jerfa' l-mejjet
Il mejjet ighajjat kemm jiflah
u l-haj bla nifs.

The living carries the dead; the dead one cries at the top of his voice; and he who is alive is out of breath. 'The *Zaqq*-player' (an old Maltese riddle from Birkirkara).¹

OF those instruments that fall within the category of 'bagpipes' few are less known or more poorly documented than that of Malta. The paucity of information regarding the Maltese bagpipe is reflected in that even in Baines's far-ranging and informative book on bagpipes² it receives only brief mention. It was, indeed, Baines's remark that 'an interesting offshoot of the Aegean group of bagpipes exists or has existed, in Malta' that inspired the present investigation. This became possible when parents of one of the authors (J.K.P.) became resident there, and gives the results of three visits to the Islands in Dec. 1971, Dec. 1972 and Sept. 1973.

It became apparent at the outset that an immediate investigation was called for, as the instrument appeared to be on the verge of extinction, and only a very few elderly players remained. Furthermore it was considered that the Maltese bagpipe might be uniquely interesting in view of Malta's position as a 'cultural crossroads' having been influenced by, or owned by, peoples of widely different origins, Phoenicians, Arabs, Greeks, Italians, French and British amongst them. Also, being confined to Malta and Gozo, the instrument has a clearly defined geographical distribution which precludes 'overlap' with other neighbouring types of bagpipe, and within which the instrument has been able to evolve independently. In view of these factors, an attempt has been made to retrieve and document every piece of available information on the instrument, whether of a musical, sociological or ethnological nature, and regardless of whether it seemed of importance or not. It is not possible with our present-day value judgments to know what will be of greatest significance to the investigator of the future, and with the impending disappearance of the instrument it

seemed essential to record all obtainable pertinent information as of equal value. We have also collated as many published references as we could find to the existence of bagpipes on Malta and Gozo, so that this paper may also serve as a bibliography of the Maltese bagpipe. No doubt many stones have been left unturned, but the results of our inquiries are here presented.

Present status of the instrument: a fairly thorough investigation revealed a total of nine living players of the Maltese bagpipe, all on Malta itself. We could find no players at all remaining on Gozo. Of these nine players most were capable of making their own pipes, but only one was still active, both making and playing the instrument. These musicians were only too pleased to assist us in every way, and furnished much information, for which we express our gratitude.

The name of the instrument: the Maltese bagpipe is called the *zaqq* (in correct Maltese orthography, *żaqq*, the 'z' pronounced as English 'z'). Occasionally it is spelt *zakk* in older literature, and the word is Maltese for 'belly, stomach, or anything swelling out'.³ An article in *Piping and Dancing*, 1939,⁴ referring to the Maltese *zapp* is certainly erroneous. The word was probably obtained from the caption of the lithograph, of unknown origin, with which the article is prefaced. (It should be mentioned however that the error could easily be made by a listener unaccustomed to the language, as the final consonants in *zaqq* are barely pronounced, being more in the nature of a glottal stop.) Thus the suggestion that the name (*zapp*) may be an abbreviation of 'zampogna' (Baines *loc. cit.*) is unlikely, especially since the word *zampogna* does not appear to be used in Malta, the Maltese 'Italian' word for bagpipe being *irimella* or, according to Ilg and Stumme⁵, *kornanuza*.

Bearing in mind the dangers of attempting linguistic derivations we could nevertheless point out the apparent similarity between *zaqq* and *zakra*, the Tunisian bagpipe (to which the *zaqq* shows some degree of resemblance). Moreover Maltese is an 'Arabic vernacular closely related to the western (Tripolitan/Algerian) arabic dialects'.⁶ Further circumstantial evidence for such a derivation might lie in the fact that *zakra*, like *zaqq*, also means a 'belly or paunch'.⁷ However the word *zakra* also appears in the Maltese language as *zocra*, where it has come to mean 'navel'. It is interesting that one single family of *zaqq* players from Vittoriosa always refer to the instrument as a *zocra*. As Maltese is an Arabic derivative this may be a special instance of the retention of a more ancient usage of *zocra* in the Arabic sense of a 'belly', a usage

which has otherwise disappeared in modern Maltese. The term *zocra* as applied to the Maltese bagpipe was quite unfamiliar to *zaqq* players elsewhere in the island.

Published descriptions of the zaqq: references in the literature to the *zaqq*, or to any species of native bagpipe in Malta are extremely rare, and descriptions of such an instrument are even more so. This may be due to the scarcity of the instrument, for even as early as 1838 the Rev. G. P. Badger wrote⁸ of the native instruments (*zaqq*, tambourine, friction drum, etc.): 'these however are getting into disuse, and their place is being supplied by companies of blind fiddlers who are found in almost every village'. It may be of significance in this respect that another early traveller, Davy, who visited Malta in about 1842 and who had a good eye for such detail (having given a thorough account of bagpipes and other musical instruments on the Ionian Islands)⁹ makes not even passing reference to the existence of bagpipes on Malta.

The earliest detailed description we have found of a bagpipe in Malta is that given by Andrew Bigelow¹⁰ who described his travels in Malta in 1827. Whilst staying (lodging in Palace Sq., Piazza St. Georgii, Valetta), he wrote the following intriguing account of a mendicant piper:

'The shifts which the Maltese resort to for their means of subsistence cannot be better perhaps illustrated than in the case of a poor musician who passes daily under my windows. He has made a bagpipe of the strangest form and materials, but for all the purposes of sound, it is as good an instrument of the sort as I have ever heard. The bag is the complete skin of a large dog, exhibiting besides the body, the appliances of head, legs, and tail to boot. A bullocks horn is fitted to the mouth and punched with the requisite number of holes for playing. The big end is outwards, and the horn closed at that part. A small pipe is inserted into one of the forepaws, and with this the performer fills the machine. He carries the thing under the left arm, belly up, and so carefully has the shape of the animal been preserved that it looks for all the world like a live dog, or a wild mountain cat, squeaking in new and strange sounds. The oddity of the contrivance and the skill of the musician are sure to attract attention, and before the fellow has gone the length of a street his drone and his twang seldom fail of being stopped by the toss of a few coppers which he hastes to pick up'.

As will become apparent the bagpipes he describes, with the use of an inflated dogskin are, in general terms, similar to the *zaqq* of today, though the chanter with holes punched directly into the horn, and the end of the horn covered (if his observations are correct) differ considerably.

In 1838 Badger⁸ gave the following account:

'The tamarine, a species of bagpipe, the kettledrum, a hollow tube about

half a foot in diameter with a distended skin over one surface and a round stick tied to the centre of it which is rubbed up and down with the hand, causing a most monotonous sound (This instrument is called by the natives *rabbaba* or *zuvzava*) and several different shaped lyres with from two to four strings form the native band of the Maltese country people. Of the above the bagpipe or *zaqq* as it is called merits the most attention as it is the most esteemed. This instrument is formed of an inflated dogskin, which is held under the left arm with the legs directed upwards and having a mouthpiece by which the skin is filled, and a flute or pipe played with both hands. This instrument is generally accompanied by a tambarine and a dancing company who move their bodies in graceful evolutions or ridiculous gestures to the sound of the duet'.

This was to become the most complete description of the instrument until the present day. Busuttill's¹¹ 1894 account of the *zaqq* is, on the technical details, identical with that of Badger. The account given by Ulderico¹² is again that of Badger, in Italian. Cassar Pullicino¹³ ¹⁴ gives a similar description, adding only that a calf's skin may be used instead of a dogskin.

The anonymous description in *Piping and Dancing*⁴ mentions 'a single conical chanter curved like a primitive hunting horn'. This would appear to be based on the accompanying lithograph, where such a chanter is illustrated. Drawings of this type are frequently inaccurate on technical details and certainly all present day examples of the *zaqq* have a two-pipe chanter, A possible reason for this disparity however, is that there appears to have existed in the Maltese Islands *two* forms of bagpipe. In addition to the *zaqq* which survives to the present day there existed a simpler counterpart, consisting of a bag with a single chanter pipe, and bell, and called a *qrajna*. This word is a diminutive of *qarn*,³⁶ the word for horn. This may imply that it was considered a smaller relative of the orthodox *zaqq* (cf. Northumbrian *small pipes*). The *qrajna* has been mentioned in passing in an article by Bezzina.¹⁵ Unfortunately it does not seem to have survived to the present day, and the last known maker (Anthony Meylak, of Gozo) died, aged 98, in 1973.³⁷ Few details and little recollection of the *qrajna* survive though Mr Pawlu Gatt (aged 87) a *zaqq* player of Mosta, remembered seeing them, but considered them most inferior. Nevertheless the *qrajna* seems to have formed the basis of some early illustrations and has also left an expression in the Maltese language '*qrajna ma qrajna*' (see below). Recently Brockman¹⁶ made passing reference to 'a primitive kind of bagpipe made from a pig's bladder and called a "belly"', on Gozo. The naming is correct, but as far as we can ascertain pig's bladders were never used as bags for the *zaqq* or *qrajna*.

Baines (*loc. cit.*) furnishes a brief technical account of a *zaqq* in the Crosby-Brown collection (no. 2513) in the Metropolitan Museum, New York, which 'closely resembles a Cycladean bagpipe. It has a wooden yoke with two cane pipes, holes R. 5, L. 1 (V). The serrated cowhorn bell is neatly fashioned though considerably larger than in the Aegean pipes'. This was, until recently the only published accurate description of the chanter of a specimen of the Maltese pipes; however this instrument, which we have examined, is in some respects atypical, and we have encountered only one other such instrument (i.e. with this chanter arrangement) in Malta. The only other technical description of a *zaqq* to appear in print is an account by the senior of the present authors¹⁷ of a specimen obtained in Malta in 1972. As this account is not generally available all relevant details will be included herein.

Published illustrations of the zaqq: illustrating Badger's (1838) description of the instrument is a lithograph of a *zaqq* player accompanied by a tambourinist. This has been reproduced by Cassar-Pullicino.¹⁴ The pipe is dressed in traditional Maltese folk costume, and carries the bag—contrary to Badger's written description—under the right arm. Otherwise the bagpipe illustrated is as described, an inflated skin with the legs pointing upwards and the tail still attached, the blowpipe inserted into one of the forelegs, and a chanter plugged into the neck. The chanter seems to expand into a horn, but the picture does not show fine detail.

In an anonymous collection of coloured prints published c.1880¹⁸ (a copy in the Royal Library, Malta) appears another picture entitled 'bagpiper', showing a piper again accompanied by a tambourinist. The bagpipe illustrated is again of an inflated skin, with a blowpipe attached to a foreleg, and a chanter inserted into the neck. Here the bag is depicted under the left arm. The chanter appears to be a single pipe, with the player's finger position confirming this interpretation. It terminates in what is probably a cowhorn. This picture is very similar to that reproduced in *Piping and Dancing*⁴ and in miniature on the covers of the *Maltese Folklore Review*,¹⁹ and it may be a prototype of these later illustrations. From its single chanter the illustration would appear to represent the *qrajna*, mentioned above (p. 115). A pen and ink drawing, published in Malta as a postcard (in A. Bugeja's possession), again appears to be a version of the same picture, save that the chanter has been doubled—hence the artist may have been more acquainted with the *zaqq*. A rather enigmatic photograph of a bagpipe player identified as a *zaqq* player appeared in a Maltese newspaper

article.¹³ The instrument does not in fact appear to be a *zaqq*, or if it is, it is certainly unique as it bears a separate drone pipe of cane(?) thrown over the player's left shoulder. The *zaqq* is—and according to the players always has been—droneless.

Photographs of genuine *zaqq* players, along with those of tambour and friction drum, have appeared sporadically in Maltese newspapers²¹ (see Pls. XXII–XXIV). Surprisingly, for such a little known instrument, the *zaqq* has the rare distinction of having been illustrated on a postage stamp. The one penny stamp of the 1969 Malta Christmas issue carries an artist's impression of a *zaqq* player and tambourinist. (The *zaqq* was customarily played at Christmastide, see below.) Apart from the above references and illustrations we have been able to discover no further documented descriptions of the Maltese bagpipe. It is apparent that very little detailed information on the construction of the *zaqq* is available from the literature.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE ZAQQ

A total of nine specimens (four incomplete) of the Maltese *zaqq* have been examined. These, numbered I to IX, are described in more detail in Appendix 1. We base the following general notes about the instrument on these specimens (for I and VIII see Figs. 1 and 2), on photographs of others, and on oral information obtained from the living pipers visited, and from relatives of deceased players. The Maltese for the technical terms is given in brackets, where known. The component parts of the instrument will be dealt with individually.

1. The bag (*zaqq*).

This is traditionally of dogskin, calf, or goat. Another animal widely used for making a *zaqq* was the cat. A *zaqq* player from Mosta remarked in interview: 'I used to kill a dog, big cat or small calf, but mostly a dog. I had a calf-skin but one of my enemies drilled a hole in it. The skin is taken from the neck down, turned inside out, and salt is rubbed in. It is then hung in the sun to dry for nine to ten days' (Skinning: *Tisloh*, to skin; Curing: *Tnixxef*, to dry). Another *zaqq* player commented that 'cats make good bags because their skin is pliable—in fact cat is the best; but female cats cannot be used for this purpose for air will leak out from the bag through the nipples!'

Though no existing specimens are made from a cat or dog, one of the players whose present bag is a calf skin previously had a bag made from a bulldog. Other than in the *zaqq* we have discovered only two references to the use of dogskin in bagpipes. Baines cites Aristophanes

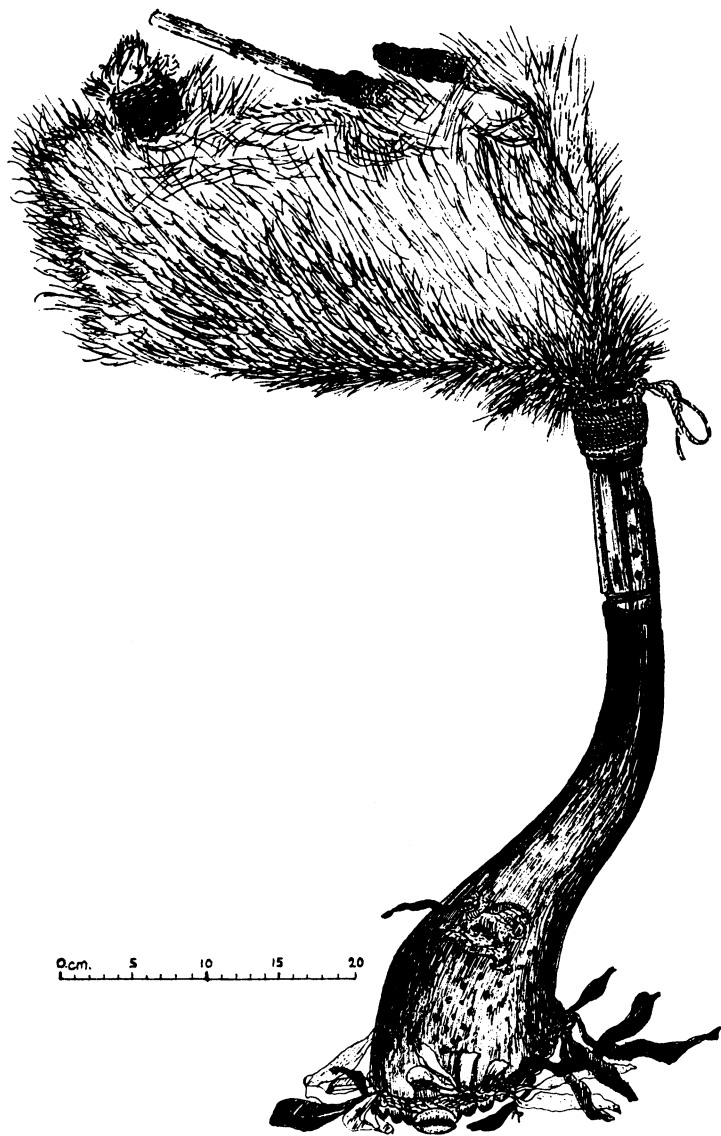


FIG. 1 *Maltese zaqq, Set I*

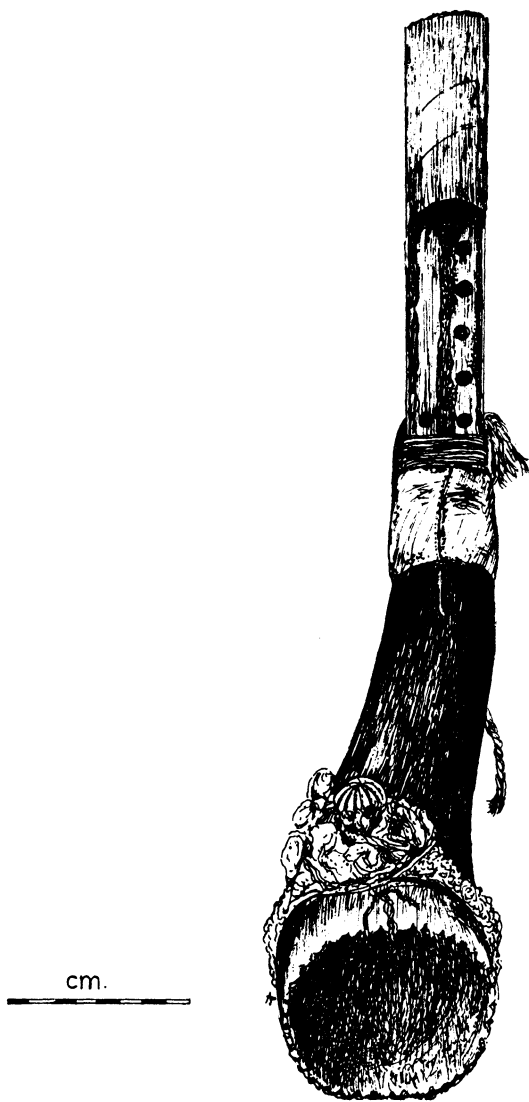


FIG. 2 *Maltese zaqq chanter and bell (Set VIII)*

making derogatory allusion to the piper of Thebes: 'You pipers who are here from Thebes, with bone pipes blow the posterior of a dog'. In Hungary, too, dogskin was employed, along with that of sheep or goat. Manga²² refers to an Hungarian piper, Bene Hajra, who was known as the 'dogpiper', as his bagpipes were of dogskin. In many countries sheepskin is extensively used for bagpipe making; sheep have also been used for this purpose in Malta, but, it would appear, very rarely. Of the five *complete* instruments examined one has a goatskin (Fig 1 and Pl. XXII *b*), and three have calfskin (Pls. XXII *a*, XXIV). The information accompanying the fifth (that in the Crosby-Brown Collection, Metropolitan Museum of New York) states 'bag formed of natural deerskin'. Since there are no deer in Malta,* and were none at the time the instrument was obtained this would seem highly unlikely. It is almost certainly goat.

Whatever animal is employed, the skin is removed whole (not cut and resewn) and the legs are usually tied off separately (in specimen I, Fig. 1, however, the hind end and back legs are bunched). The bag is always made with the hair or fur exposed. The bag may be held under either arm. Of recent players four held the bag under the left arm, three under the right.

2. The blowpipe (*Mserka*).

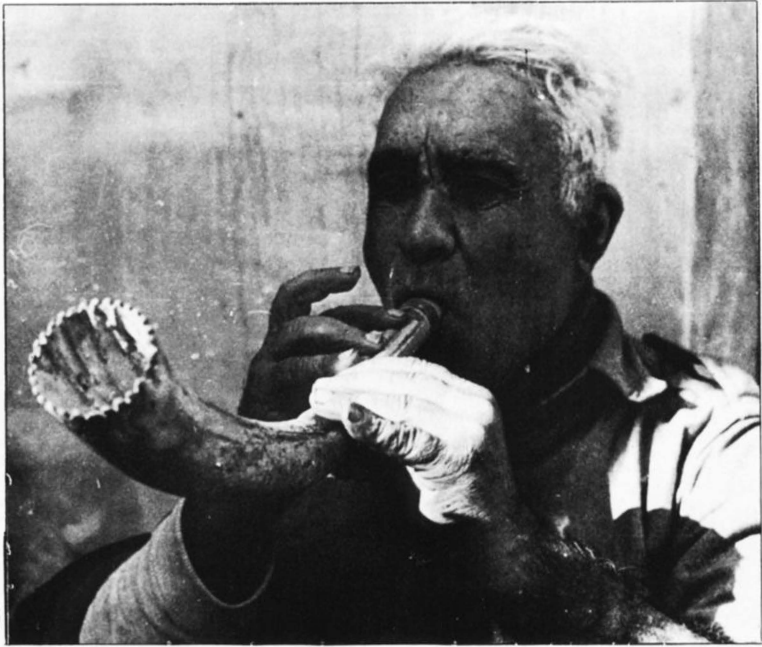
This is traditionally of cane (*qasba*) and is tied into one of the forelegs—the animal's right foreleg if the bag is held under the right arm, and *vice versa*. The *zaqq* is valveless, the blowpipe being stopped with the end of the tongue. Two of the pipers use a blowpipe of rubber tubing. This they stop by closing it between the teeth while taking a breath. The blowpipe is usually in the region of 18 cm long, but the length exposed depends to some extent on the length of the foreleg on the bag.

3. The chanter (*saqqafa*) and associated fittings

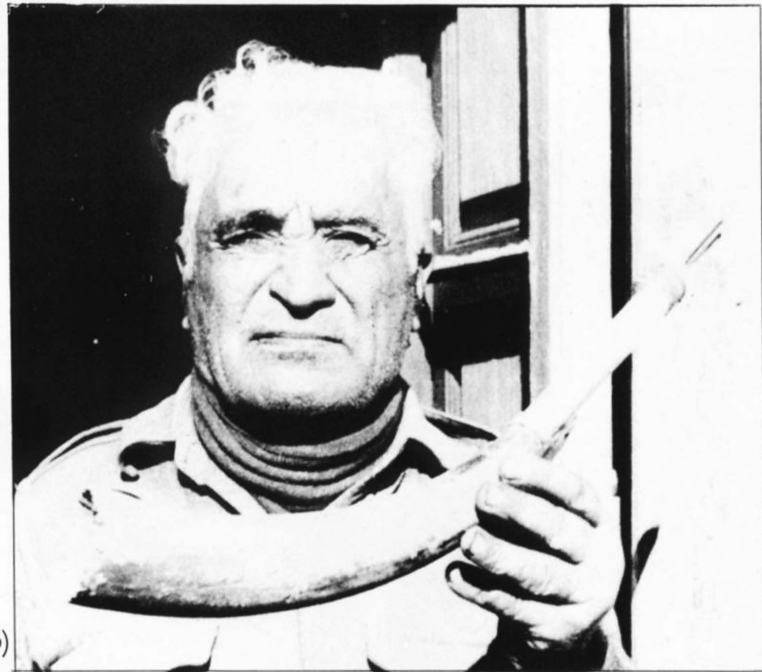
(a) *The 'stock'*. The bag has no true wooden stock; instead the skin of the neck is doubled back, and firmly bound with twine, and as a result a firm socket is formed into which the yoke of the chanter is directly inserted. This 'stock' is called a *rabta* (ligature or tie).

(b) *The yoke*. The reeds and the chanter pipes are both set into a cane yoke which is itself inserted into the 'stock'. The yoke is carved to

* Antelopes and gazelles were introduced into Malta²³ in the time of the Knights, during the 15th–18th centuries for hunting purposes, and a half dozen deer still survived as late as 1770.²⁴ There was also a short-lived reintroduction shortly before the first World War, again for hunting purposes. The Crosby-Brown *zaqq* dates from the 19th century.



(a)



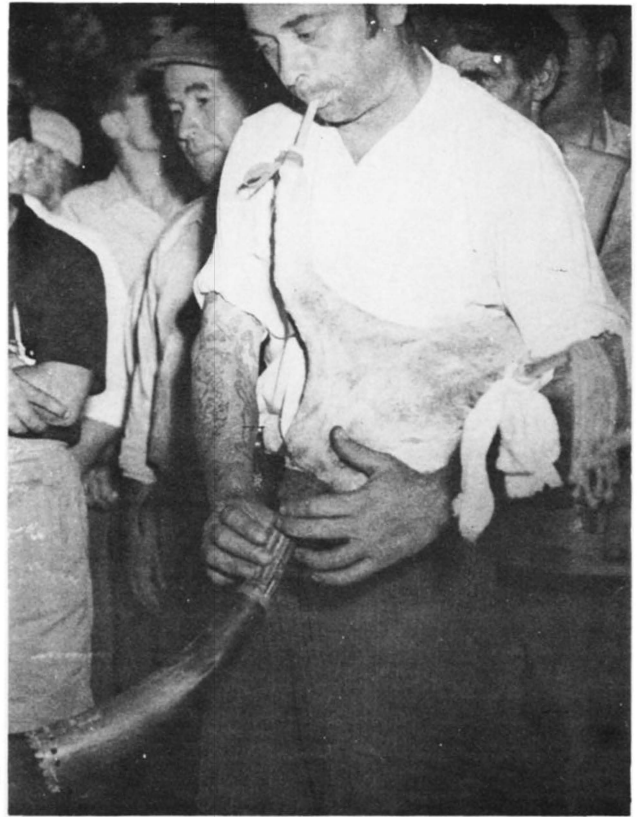
(b)

PLATE XXI

*Lazrio Camilleri of Mosta. Dec. 1971.
(a) testing his chanter and (b) displaying the same*



(a) Paul Vassallo o Dingli, zaqq player. Died 1968
Note the method of playing the tambur using stiff fingers



(b) Tony Cachia (zaqq) of Naxxar at 'L-Imnarjia'. 28th June 1955
Photo: Times of Malta'

cover over the reeds (thus affording them protection) and to lie under the chanter pipes as a support (Fig. 3).

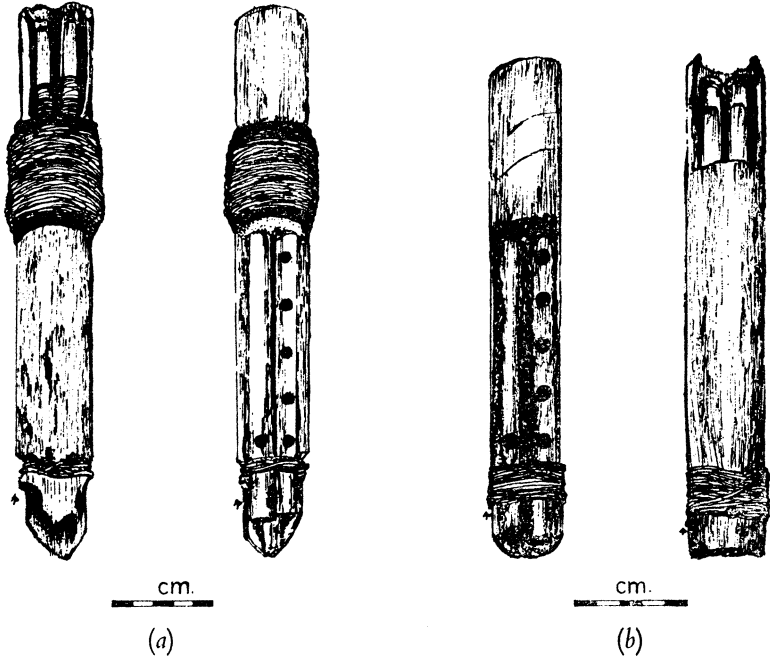


FIG. 3 Zaqq chanters from: (a) Set I and, (b) Set VIII

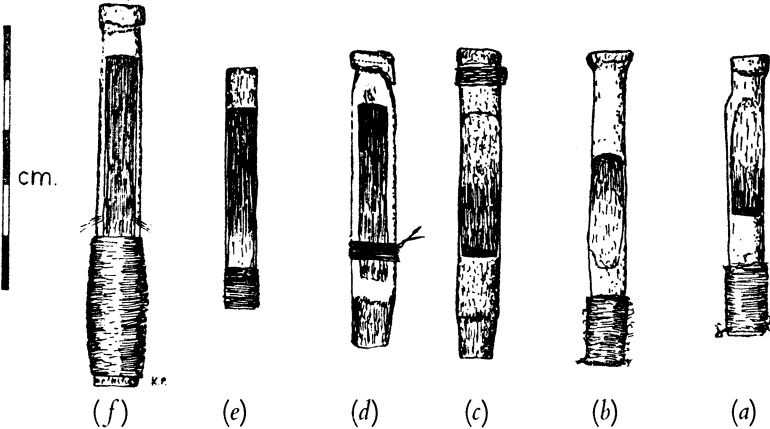


FIG. 4 Zaqq chanter reeds: (a), (b), and (c) from the Gozo set (Set VII) (reeds (a) and (c) are upcut, the other, (b), is downcut). (d) Set VIII, (e) the Crosby Brown set (Set VI), (f) Set I

(c) *The reeds* (*Bedbut*, sing; *bdiebet*, plur; Fig 4). These are also of Maltese cane (*Arundo donax*) and are usually downcut single reeds. Two of these, tuned identically, are set into the two chanter pipes. They are bound with thread, which can be moved up or down for tuning. A hair may be inserted beneath the tongue to prevent the reed from 'clapping'. The size of the reed varies considerably, being directly proportional to the dimensions of the chanter pipes. The only chanter from Gozo (Set VII) was fitted with one downcut reed, and, uniquely, an *upcut* reed. A spare reed, also up-cut, was also provided.

(d) *The chanter pipes* (*qima*, sing; *qimi*, plur.). These are traditionally of cane, as in Sets II i, IV (Pl. XXI), V, VI, VII, VIII (Fig. 3), and IX. Recently a variety of other materials has been employed. In Set I the pipes are of 1 cm. diameter lead piping. The brass pipes of Set II were made from the piping of a German aircraft shot down in World War II. Neither of the chanter pipes is ever stopped at the end, both opening directly into the horn.

The arrangement of the holes, following Baines's (q.v.) terminology is usually L₅ R₁ (V). Internationally this does not seem to be a very common arrangement; the only example cited by Baines occurs on a bagpipe from Georgia. On two *zaqq*s only have we found the hole arrangement reversed, i.e. R₅ L₁ (V). One is the Crosby-Brown specimen (Baines, p. 46), the other is a *zaqq* owned, and formerly played, by G. Buhagiar, a quarryman from Siggiewi. This variation does not seem to be related to the 'handedness' of the player. Apparently the Buhagiar family always made them this way round, and it seems likely that the differences in design ran in different families of makers. Elsewhere this R₅ L₁ (V) arrangement is found in the Greek Islands (Baines).

(e) *The horn* (*qarn*, sing; *qrunn*, plur). The bell is usually a simple curved horn, ornamentally serrated at the wide end and frequently embellished with other decorative attachments. The horns traditionally used were those of the Maltese draught oxen (*Gendus*), now said to be numbering fewer than twenty in the two islands. The most elaborate horn is that of Set I (Fig. 1), which is relatively long and twisted, as well as curved. In addition to the customary serrated fringe, the end of the horn is bound with a silver chain to which are tied red, yellow, and green bunches of ribands (*Gmiemen*). A cap badge of the Royal East Kent Regiment (The Buffs, who have been based on Malta on several occasions over the last two centuries) is attached a third of the way up the horn for further ornament. Small decorative holes are punched in a serpentine array in the upper surface of the horn. Also, four slits are cut into the under side of the

horn about a third of the way up. They may possibly be to modify the tone as they are not found in any of the other, less elaborate, chanters with shorter, cowhorn bells.

A further interesting feature is present in this horn. At the wide end, dangling from the upper lip, is a small cowrie shell, or '*bahbuha*' (*Cypraea spurca* Linn.).²⁵ This, the *zaqq*-players say, is 'for luck'. It is probably more in the nature of an amulet than a talisman however. The Maltese are a superstitious people and fear of the 'evil eye' was widespread to the present day. Many Maltese houses are still adorned with a pair of ox horns (Horns of Mithras) the traditional symbol to ward off the evil eye. That cowrie shells were similarly used in Malta was attested by Busuttil in 1894:¹¹ 'Evil eye: various charms are practised for counteracting this cruel species of witchcraft. Some . . . hang a sort of sea shell called a *bahbuha* round the necks of the little ones, or cattle'. This custom of decorating the instrument, and even the use of cowrie shells in this way, is not confined to Malta however. Farmer, writing of musical instruments of North Africa,²⁶ states: 'A particular point of interest about the *gumbri* [a primitive form of lute] is the custom of decorating the instrument. Usually of plain and somewhat primitive structure itself, the neck and sound chest are generally adorned. Shells and metal ornaments are often attached to the latter whilst the former is furnished with a curious assortment of shells, teeth, bells, coins, chains, tassels, ribbons etc. dangling from it. Many of the adornments are looked upon by their owners as charms, and the cowrie shell especially brings "good luck" to women . . .' Farmer, however sees another function in the decorations as he adds in a footnote: 'The lure of display is however at the root of the custom. Just as the professional musician of the city likes to possess an instrument richly inlaid with mother-of-pearl and choice woods, with exquisite carvings and metalwork so the mendicant negro minstrel yearns for his fripperies and garnishings . . .' This may be particularly appropriate too, to Malta, where the people are greatly attracted by the 'lure of display', extending the use of such 'garnishings' not merely to musical instruments but to personal dress and even public transport!

Fingering methods: when playing the chanter the right hand lies below the left hand, regardless of whether the bag is held under the right or left arm (see Plates XXII-XXIV). Both fingers and thumbs are held above the almost horizontal chanter. No manual support is given to the chanter, the air pressure and the stiffness of the bag furnishing adequate support (Plates XXII-XXIV). The fingering of the holes is apparently not standard and three methods have been

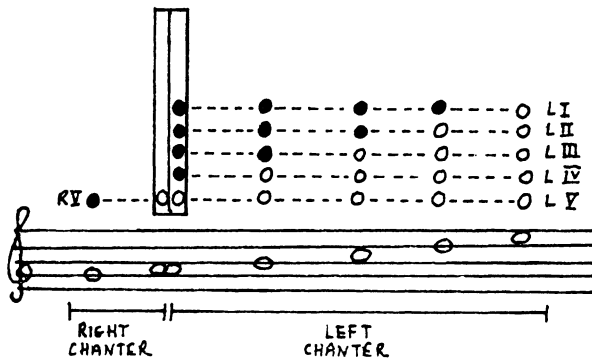
encountered (for typical L₅ R₁ (V) holing):

1. Holes LI–LIV played with L.H. fingers 1 to 4 (respectively).
Hole R.V. played with R.H. finger 1.
 2. Holes LI–LIII played with L.H. fingers 1–3.
Holes LIV and RV played with R.H. fingers 1 and 2.
 3. Holes LI and LII played with L.H. fingers 1 and 2.
Holes LIII, LIV and RV played with R.H. fingers 1, 2 and 3.
- Hole LV is not fingered, remaining uncovered at all times. ‘Half-holing’ or cross-fingering in order to inflect pitches, produce pitch glides, or chromaticism is never employed.

With regard to the single chantered *qrajna*, no specimens are known to us and we have been able to ascertain neither details of construction nor the number of holes in the chanter. From the finger positions shown in the early illustration we would suggest that there were six holes, as in the whistle or its Maltese cane equivalent, the *flejguta*.

Tuning (by P. R. Cooke): the pitch of the different instruments varies with such parameters as reed and chanter size. Nevertheless certain features were found common to all the instruments recorded on tape. The lowest note of all sets is approximately *g'* (392 cps.). All instruments produce a hexatonic scale which is only roughly diatonic but can be conveniently notated as shown in Table I.

Table I



The most striking feature apparent in the table of tunings is the accuracy of the tuning of the ‘natural’ major third *g’–b’*. The ideal ratio 5:4 (386 cents) would ensure the optimum consonant blend of the upper note with the rich harmonic spectrum of the drone *g’*. The music transcriptions reveal how important this interval is in the

melodic structure: it is used consistently as the point of repose at the end of every phase. The chord $g'-d'$ is apparently next in importance in the music and this also comes very close to the ideal consonance of the perfect interval (ratio 3:2, 702 cents), though to a lesser extent. In contrast, the other notes are more variable in pitch. With Vassalo's instrument the second degree is closer to $a'\sharp$, thus giving only a semitone between second and third degrees. The note c'' of set II (the best maintained and most frequently played instrument) lies midway in pitch between b' and d'' , producing 'neutral' tones rather than a distinct pattern of tones and semitones (Table II).

Table II: ZAQQ TUNINGS

		g'	a'	b'	c''	d''	e''
<i>Set II</i>	c.p.s.	391	449	490	536	587	653
	interval, cents		239	151	156	157	184
	cents interval from g'		239	390	546	703	887
	Pythagorean (from g') intervals (ratios)	000	204 9:8	386 5:4	498 4:3	702 3:2	884 5:3
<i>Set I</i> (played by Camilleri)	interval cents		202	175	105	182	200
	cents interval from g'		202	377	482	664	864
<i>Set I</i> (played by Bugeja)	interval cents		207	188	154	167	110
	cents interval from g'		207	395	549	716	826
Paul Vassalo's instrument (1964)	interval cents		273	103	126	191	?
	cents interval from g'		273	376	502	693	?

In the absence of separate recordings of chanter scales and of more sophisticated machinery for objective measurement the above figures (in Table II) were obtained by matching the pitches sounded during

recorded performances with the pure tone of an oscillator. The oscillator's tones were then measured with an electronic frequency counter. In view of the initial subjective element and in particular the difficulty of disregarding the pitch of the drones when attempting to isolate and match separate pitches of the melody, the figures should be treated with caution. An accuracy of ± 10 cents (2-3 c.p.s.) is the best that should be assumed. Absolute pitch is given only for Set II, when a tuning fork was used during recording to give a standard.

Accompaniments to the zaqq: the traditional instruments accompanying the *zaqq* have been given in the early description by Badger (1838) as 'the tambourine', a type of friction drum, kettledrums, and a variety of 2 to 4 stringed lyres. Of these the lyres have vanished and the kettledrums too seem to have disappeared, but the friction drum and tambourines have survived to the present, and either of these is an invariable accompaniment to the *zaqq*. In fact the *tambur* is regarded as indispensable—we were told 'a *zaqq* is no use without a *tambur*'.

The tambourines (*tambur*) are of conventional design though colourfully decorated. They are about 15 to 18 inches in diameter with skin on one side, and with small 'cymbals' set into the hoop, and often with numerous additional small bells around the edge (see App. 2). They are played mainly with the fingers but are also struck off the head, elbows, knees and other parts of the anatomy, and are generally played with great exuberance.

The friction drum is again of fairly normal construction. A cask or pitcher or similar object is covered with a goatskin, or, preferably the more flexible cat skin, with a cane decked with ribands attached to the centre. Rhythmical rubbing of the cane with a moistened hand produces a sound which is very similar to that of someone sawing a log. Badger described it as a 'hoarse moaning sound which is peculiarly grateful to the uncultivated ears of the country people'. The name of the instrument is generally given as *rabbaba* though the players themselves actually pronounce the name 'rumbā'ba'. The alternative name of *zuvzava* or *zavzava* still survives, particularly on Gozo, where it and the *tambur* now accompany accordions.

Costume of the zaqq-player: it would appear from the few available illustrations of *zaqq* players that the costume they wore was the 'gala' version of the traditional Maltese folk costume. For a description of the dress one cannot better that of Angas²⁷ writing in 1842:

'... the native dress is still worn by many of the lower classes. Its chief peculiarity is the Phrygian cap, which resembles a long bag made of wool hanging down behind, or over the left shoulder. This cap is of various colours, but

generally it is either blue, brown or white. On Sundays and gala days they generally wear a sort of cap of a crimson colour, which is dyed with the Kermes of Barbary, and much esteemed. This article often forms a receptacle for small things which the wearer may wish to carry about with him, and sometimes it serves also as a purse. A girdle is frequently worn by the lower orders; it is generally from three to four yards in length, and with it the pantaloons are confined around the waist, this portion of the dress is commonly made of blue plaid cotton and is called a '*terha*', it is sometimes composed of red or yellow silk when it is called a '*bushakka*'. Those who wear this dress do not commonly have a jacket, its place being supplied by a '*sedria*', or vest, which, if the wearer can afford it, is often ornamented down the front with several rows of silver buttons as large as half-crowns. At other times, instead of these I have seen them wear quarter dollar pieces and sometimes shillings with metal shanks fastened to them. A Maltese thus equipped, or 'in gala', as they term it, presents a very smart figure, with a long curl of hair hanging down on each side of his face, and his fingers ornamented with massive rings, to which the Maltese are extremely partial. Sandals are now only worn by the country people, and the Capuchin friars; but they used formerly to constitute a necessary appendage to the native dress . . . Most . . . wear over their shoulder what they call a *khurg*, in which they carry their provisions to town for the day, and on their return home it is filled with supplies for their families. It is about three yards long and two wide, open in the middle, and reminds one of a gigantic purse'.

That such a costume was still worn until quite recently by *zaqq* players is attested by a photograph in the authors' possession. It was taken some time in the 1940s and shows a player wearing a gala cap, waist-coat-like *sedria*, and *bushakka* around his waist, and with the *khurg* slung over his shoulder (see Tony Cachia's costume, Pl. XXIV).

Occasions for the use of the instrument: the *zaqq*, like the majority of bagpipes, is essentially an outdoor instrument. As one old player (Lazrio Camilleri, Pl. XXI) remarked 'it is good for street playing because it carries so well: especially at night'. Generally it was employed on joyful, festive occasions. Predominant among these was Christmas. Busuttill¹¹ (see also Anon.²⁸) wrote in 1894: 'The approaching festival of Christmas is heralded in some of the villages of Malta by the appearance of *zakk* . . . players in the streets. This the country people play at this time of year to represent the shepherds of Bethlehem'. Whether or not this latter interpretation be correct, it is certainly recorded that the instrument was actually played in church. Whilst mentioning street performances during the novena before Christmas Cassar-Pullicino²⁹ adds: 'Folk memory records that for the midnight service on Christmas eve bagpipers played in the principal churches striking a genuinely pastoral note'.

We found that the playing of the *zaqq* in the Church of St. Paul Shipwrecked, Valetta, during the novena and at midnight mass over forty years ago is still vividly remembered to this day. However, Christmas eve performances were sometimes of a more secular nature, if no less festive. An elderly piper in Mosta gave us this account: 'We played mostly at Christmas. We used to begin at 9 or 10 p.m. on Christmas eve and play right through the night until 5 o'clock next morning, going from wineshop to wineshop. If the *zaqq* was going well I could play all that time with no bother, playing as I walked'. He last played in this way in about 1967.

An entertaining account of the preparations for Christmas in Gozo some seventy-five years ago¹⁵ describes how the material for a *zaqq* might be obtained. Translated somewhat freely it reads:

'As soon as the month of November began you would see young people gathering in the village square to consider where they would look for cats. As the town of Rabat is old there are many cellars there, and at about 7 p.m. they would go there to survey the area. In those days Rabat was very quiet, and the only light was from poor oil lamps, which left much in darkness.

At about 6 or 7 o'clock you would find them waiting beside an entry ready to grab the first cat that came along, which they would put into a sack. Afterwards they would kill the cat, let it dry, and from it make a *zaqq* for Christmas. (On Christmas eve) at about 8 p.m. the crowd would become very clamorous. From the villages the players of the *qrajna* and the *zaqq* would come along and fill the streets of Rabat "as full as an egg" . . . On the evening of Christmas day one would again get the same festive atmosphere and musicians'.

As this story indicates the *zaqq*'s lesser relative, the *qrajna*, was also in use at Christmastide. Mr J. Bezzina gave us this account of its use in Gozo (see above, p. 115): 'Usually each village had its pair of *qrajna* players that waited at the top of the steps at the entrance to the church until the villagers had entered the said church, when their place was taken over by another pair from a different village. This occurred because formerly the Christmas mass was held only in the Cathedral church'. The appearance of competition given by the two *qrajna* players playing against each other resulted in the Maltese expression '*qrajna ma qrajna*', meaning 'vieing in bitter competition'. Perhaps the nearest English equivalent would be 'neck and neck'.

One of the major festivals in the Maltese calendar is the Carnival (formerly from the Saturday preceding Lent until the following Tuesday)³⁰ and the *zaqq* players have always been associated with it. Badger³¹ in the 19th century wrote of the *zaqq*: 'it is in use amongst the lower classes, and almost exclusively during the last three days of Carnival'. Most of the living pipers have played at Carnival, and this festivity seems to have been a major occasion for its use. According

to one authority³² the 'bagpipe' (presumably the *zaqq*) along with the violin and bass drum was used to provide the music for the 'Parata', the characteristic traditional dance of Carnival Sunday. Conversely, Cassar-Pullicino¹⁴ states '5 violins and a drum provide the accompaniment, and *no wind instruments are supposed to take part*'.

Other occasions upon which our informants had played the *zaqq* included New Year, Easter, and, in particular L'Imnarjia, a major Maltese feast celebrated on the 29th June (SS Peter and Paul). This last festival has become the major focus for the revival of Maltese folk music, and those responsible for the competitions staged on that occasion have had commendable success, especially in conserving the traditional *ghana* singing, a unique style of singing spontaneously composed verses. In connection with this event there was a short-lived revival of *zaqq* and *tambur* playing as one of the competitive events. Results and adjudications of two such competitions were published in the Maltese press^{33a, b} in 1954 and 1955. The adjudication for *L'Imnarjia* 1955 reads (in translation):

The Playing of Bagpipe and Tambour

The judging panel agrees that a medal should be awarded to the under-mentioned bagpipe and tambour players who took part in the contest:—

1. Ganni Vella of Naxxar (bagpipe player) and Toni Cachia, also of Naxxar (tambour player).
2. Toni Cachia of Naxxar (bagpipe) and Nikola Aquilina of Qormi (tambour).
3. Awsonju Bugeja of Vittoriosa (bagpipe) and Wenzu Bugeja, also of Vittoriosa (tambour).

The judging panel can proudly say that the playing of the bagpipe and tambour has been well acclaimed among all those present, and according to last year's suggestion, the bagpipe players did their best in providing their instrument made from animals' skins as in the past.

From what we have observed, we could frankly say that the way in which they dance and the contortion of the body made by he who played the tambour, as well as he who played the bagpipe, varies from one player to another, and this variation is much appreciated and should be encouraged in order to create a variety of dancing and playing based on traditional custom.

On the other hand, we regret to say that some of the players, who usually used to register themselves to play the '*zavzava*', an old instrument, which, little by little, is disappearing, did not encourage others to play this instrument, thus the only chance of reviving the custom of playing the '*zavzava*' is fading away.

(The reference to the dancing of the players will be discussed below.)

Since the *zaqq* was widely used at festivals it is surprising that none of the living players had ever performed at weddings, though one recalled its use on such occasions. The following description, however, testifies to its former use at wedding ceremonies:

'When the last guest arrived at the bride's house the party was formed and under a damask and velvet canopy supported on four poles the happy couple walked to church, amidst the ringing and clanging of bells. They were preceded by a few musicians who, while scraping on a violin, or strumming a guitar, ding-donging a jews harp or droning a bagpipe, sang the praises and charms of the bride. On the way sweets and nuts were thrown to the onlookers that lined the streets.'³⁴

In fact, the *zaqq* was used, as one player put it 'on all joyful occasions'. In this respect it is interesting to note that Cremona³⁵ records its use at funerals. He describes the traditional Maltese funeral thus:

'Old custom required that the dead body should be placed on a hand barrow, or in a coffin, with a cushion stuffed with laurel and orange leaves fixed under the head. The body was then conveyed to the Church with the relatives and friends following, and the wailing of the mourners accompanied by the sound of bagpipes, which in some villages are now replaced by violins and counter-basses, to which lamentations are sung'.

If this were the case, this usage of the instrument must have died out long ago for none of the living *zaqq* players had ever heard of it, and indeed all were emphatic that the *zaqq* is used only on occasion of festivity. Such an excellent outdoor instrument must surely also have been used for 'busking' when times were hard, and no doubt the mendicant bagpiper whom Bigelow encountered playing for coppers at the beginning of the last century¹⁰ was but one of many both before and since that time.

A question that is difficult to resolve is whether the *zaqq* was ever employed as accompaniment to the traditional *ghana* singing. Although a bagpipe might appear unsuitable for song accompaniment, *ghana* singing is intensely penetrating and usually performed at maximum volume. Ilg and Stumme⁵ described the traditional singing performance and listed the instruments (guitar, mandoline or accordeon), normally used for accompaniment, and they also mention the barrel organ and the *zaqq* in this context: '. . . also the bagpipe (*zaqq* or *kornamuza*) now and then comes into question as an accompanying instrument . . .' (translation). However the tunes Ilg published for the songs, and those generally employed for *ghana* singing today have a melodic range beyond the compass of the *zaqq*. The role of the *zaqq* in this context is thus an open question. It is interesting to note that the *zaqq* tune collected from A. Cachia (see Ex. 1) formerly, he alleged, had words but unfortunately he could not remember them.

Nature of the performance: the performance of *zaqq*, *tambour* and *rabbaba* players is more than just a rendering of music. In addition to playing, the musicians dance to the rhythm of their music. The nature

of the dancing is to some extent defined by the instrument, the *tambur* player being far less restricted than the *zaqq* player and therefore freer to dance more actively. The *tambur* player cavorts in a sinuous fashion to the music, often turning on his axis, beating the *tambur* high overhead, or bending and striking the instrument off his knee or some other part of the body (see Pl. XXIII *a* and *b*). There appears to be no definite stepping, or clear-cut sequence of movements. As mentioned in the adjudication of the L'Innarjia competition (quoted on p. 129) the 'contortion' of the body varied 'from one player to another'. The *zaqq* player though more limited, also moves about rhythmically, retiring from and advancing toward the *tambur*, and occasionally playing the horn into the back of the *tambur*, possibly increasing the reverberation of the sound. One *zaqq* player, Awsonju Bugeja, used to go down onto one knee and, still playing, rise up again, then go down on his other knee and, presently, he would rise up again and continue dancing and playing. The gyrating movements of the players give an insight into the probable nature of the dance to which Badger refers (p. 115) when describing the 'dancing company who move their bodies in graceful evolutions or ridiculous gestures to the sound of the duet'. Whether or not *zaqq*, *tambur*, and *rabbaba*, formerly accompanied song and dance, or were incidental to religious or social festivities, it cannot be denied that they do present a blend of music and movement that is a complete and entertaining performance in itself. One feels it could well have been passed on through time as a self-contained tradition, regardless of the festivities with which it has become associated.

THE MUSIC TRANSCRIPTIONS

By P. R. COOKE

It has already been remarked that *zaqq* playing is apparently a dying tradition: furthermore, the small number of recordings available were mostly made away from the normal social context and were not always accompanied by the traditional dancing movements of piper and drummer. Two of the performers were sadly out of practice and were playing on unfamiliar instruments; hence their performances contained tempo fluctuations, hesitations and 'mistakes' which were less likely to have occurred were the tradition flourishing. The percussion accompaniments also suggested that the performers were not always used to playing together. Recordings of Cachia's playing, however, suggest that the tambourine more commonly played a lively 6/8 rhythm which kept time with and sometimes duplicated the

♩ = 60.

Tumbour pattern:

Section A:

Section A':



EX. 1 Zaqq performance by Tony Cachia, Malta 1973
 Transcribed by P. R. Cooke



$\text{♩} = 72$

EX. 2 Zaqq motifs: played by Awsonju Bugeja, Vittoriosa, Malta
 Transcribed by P. R. Cooke



$\text{♩} = 60$

EX. 3 Zaqq motifs: played by Lazrio Camilleri 1972
 Transcribed by P. R. Cooke

rhythm of the *zaqq* melody. One recorded fragment of a *rabbaba* (friction drum) accompaniment suggested that the regular hand strokes on the 'drum-stick' produced a $3/4$ rhythm (the drum sounding on the crotchet down strokes) cutting across the $6/8$ *zaqq* rhythm.

Ex. 1 is a transcription of a short complete performance by one player (Cachia); two others (Exs. 2 and 3) are condensed versions of performances by Bugeja and Camilleri giving the range of motifs used by each. Together they illustrate the general structure of the music and give a fairly clear idea of the playing technique. The following are the salient features:

i) The music is usually in duple time: this is most often compound duple ($6/8$) though Camilleri begins his performance in simple duple and imperceptibly moves into compound time. It is clearly music for dancing or processional movement.

ii) It has no fixed structure or length. In this respect, it resembles East European and Near East musical styles rather than those of West Europe. Each player has his own small stock of motifs which he repeats and combines in various ways throughout the performance, building them often into a variety of two- or four-bar phrases. Thus in Ex. 1 Cachia's motif *x* is repeated linked to another motif to make the common phrase *A* which recurs with great frequency.

iii) Whereas the main impression given is that of single melody over single drone (*g'*) both Camilleri and Bugeja contrive to give the effect of two voices at times by frequently using the upper of the two drone notes. However, all regularly use the upper drone (*a'*) as the penultimate note in cadences. The cadence chord itself is always the sweetly consonant major third (*g'-b'*) giving a feeling of detension after the varying degrees of harmonic tension created between drones and other melody notes.

iv) In common with other bagpipe traditions, all the players make considerable use of graces and 'cuttings' to separate notes of the same pitch, to maintain rhythmic impetus and as a means of ornamentation. 'Graces' (notes of higher pitch than the melody note) are more common than 'cuttings' (notes of lower pitch). The most common grace note is *d''*; it is easily obtained by lifting the second finger of the left hand to separate either *b'* or *c''* with equal ease. The only cutting used is the note *a'* which Bugeja and Cachia produce simply by dropping the middle finger of the left hand, both using the third fingering method (cf. above).

It is possible that the tradition has not only been decaying during the last thirty years but also changing considerably owing to the strong Western European influence on music which may earlier have had

greater affinity with Middle Eastern or North African styles. Cachia is the youngest player recorded. His music sounds more familiar to a westerner than the playing of older musicians and it is certainly less ornate than that of the older man, Bugeja. A fragment of a public performance by Paul Vassalo in 1964 (Ex. 4) with its less western-sounding intonation, and more fluid, also contains features of ornamentation reminiscent of some Arabic music styles. However, more cross-cultural studies are required before one can comment more usefully.



$\downarrow = \pm 96$

EX. 4 *Zaqq motif; played by Paul Vassalo 1964*
Transcribed by P. R. Cooke

AFFINITIES AND POSSIBLE ORIGINS OF THE ZAQQ

N. Africa. With the strong Punic influence in Maltese cultural history, the linguistic link between Maltese and Arabic, and the similar name for the instrument in the two regions, relationships for the *zaqq* might be expected with the Tunisian *zakra* and other African bagpipes. Superficially there is a strong resemblance (double chanter; bag with hairy side out) but the following features preclude relationship:

<i>Maltese</i>	<i>N. African</i>
Valveless	Strip valves
Single bell	Double bell
Yoke	No yoke

Sicily and Italy. Both Sicily and Italy have strong cultural links with Malta. The name of the Maltese instrument has been associated with the Italian '*zampogna*' (see p. 113); furthermore it is popularly thought in the more academic Maltese circles that the *zaqq* came from Sicily. However, both the Italian *zampogna* and Sicilian *cornamusa* are totally unlike the *zaqq*, and show no relationship with it.

Greek Islands. On the little information available to him, Baines concluded that the Maltese bagpipe was an offshoot of the Aegean group of bagpipes. Certainly in detailed construction there is much similarity. Aegean pipes, like Maltese, are frequently valveless, have double chanters set into a common yoke, and often a single cowhorn bell. The most common differences lie in the method of tying the skin.

The Aegean pipes more commonly have the neck and hind limbs tied inside, with the skin exposed; the Maltese *zaqq* is the converse, with the hair exposed.

The commonest hole arrangement in Malta is L₅ R₁(V), which does not appear to be common in the Aegean group, although the converse—R₅ L₁(V)—found in two *zaqq*s, occurs in the *tsambouna* from Rhodes and Carpathos. The only example Baines cites of L₅ R₁ is a specimen of the *stivri* from Georgia. (The Aegean type of instrument extends in distribution across Thrace to N.E. Turkey, and Armenia.)

Of all the primitive types of bagpipe the Aegean form seems to have the greatest similarity with that of Malta; and yet the Maltese instrument *looks* very different, with its very large bag, and with the chanter protruding from the neck almost horizontally. Whereas most Aegean pipes look like a skin bag, with chanter, the essence of the *zaqq* is that the bag still looks alarmingly like the animal from which it was made. If the Maltese instrument is in some way related to the Aegean group, it is to some extent an unexpected affinity. Although Malta has received crosscurrents of culture from most quarters of the Mediterranean, it has had relatively little influence from the Aegean Islands. The Knights of Malta it is true, moved to Malta from Rhodes in the 16th century, but it seems unlikely that they would have introduced such a peasant instrument. It could perhaps be mentioned that the *zaqq* players themselves have the tradition that their instrument was brought to Malta by the Phoenicians.

Decline of the zaqq: in spite of the reports from the early 19th century, cited above, that the *zaqq* was, even then, a rare instrument being ousted by bands of blind fiddlers 'whose performances if exhibited within the hearing of a man acquainted with the science would certainly put him into a position to serve as an exact counterpart to Hogarth's "Enraged Musician"' (Badger 1838), the *zaqq* seems to have survived into the 20th century in fair numbers, on Malta. According to one of the youngest living players (aged 56), *zaqq*-players were still quite common when he was a boy. Mosta for instance had about twenty players, and Naxxar about ten. Their decline came 'about twenty-five years ago with the appearance of the radio, television, and accordions'. The fact that the decline has been so dramatic, within such a short space of time, would imply that even then most of the players were elderly.

The disappearance of the instrument from the smaller island of Gozo seems to have been much more complete and probably occurred much earlier. No living performers could be located on the island, and no



(a)



(b)

PLATE XXIII

(a) *Tony Cachia (tambur) and Giovanni Vella (zaqq) both of Naxxar at 'L-Innarjia'. July 1955*

(b) *Traditional instrumental group. Tony Cachia (zaqq), Carmenu Falzon (tambur) and Vincent Falzon (rabbaba)*

Malta Playing Fields Association. 30th July 1972

Plata 'Times of Malta'



PLATE XXIV

Tony Cachia playing his zaqq (Set II), Sept. 1973

Photo: Malta Tourist Board

evidence of recollection of the *zaqq* was forthcoming from even the oldest inhabitants.*

The future of the Maltese bagpipe: In all, the future outlook for the *zaqq* is bleak. It would seem that this paper must serve as an epitaph, for after evolutionary millenia it would appear that extinction is inevitable. In the totally altered social climate of the islands the instrument is considered an anachronism, and the young people, even assuming they have encountered the instrument shew no interest in it. The only active player said that he was willing to teach any young people who were interested, but hitherto none had been so.

The sad aspect is that with the changed nature of Maltese festivities the *zaqq* really has no *raison d'être*; the wine shops on Christmas eve, for instance, are no longer thronged with revellers, and of those who still foregather only the elderly shew interest in the bagpipes. The only current use which may conserve the instrument (together with *tambur* and *rabbaba*) is as a tourist entertainment (Pl. XXIII *b*). This may prolong its life, but is a doubtful basis for long term survival, or true revival as part of the Maltese way of life. The Maltese with a few noteworthy exceptions shew little interest in their own folk culture, and any artificial attempts at revival seem unlikely to succeed. It seems sad that an island that can boast an excellent Scots pipe band, can find no room to preserve, perhaps even to develop its own native bagpipe. However it is hoped that this paper may preserve for the future information that might otherwise have been lost, and which will be available to later generations who may have a different attitude, and may wish to revive the Maltese *zaqq*.

We would add, as a brighter footnote, that during our most recent investigations in Malta (September 1973) the 13-year-old son of our main informant (Mr Tony Cachia), who frequently acted as our interpreter became, as a result, very interested in the instrument and persuaded his father to make him a small *zaqq* and to teach him to play it. The Maltese bagpipe may yet have a future.

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APPENDIX I

Details and dimensions of instruments with biographical notes on their owners and other musicians.

SET I (Figs. 1, 3a, 4)

(a) *Chanter and reeds*

Two cylindrical bore, lead pipes (9 mm. internal diameter) held in a cane yoke of 2.3 cm. bore, with 11.6 cm. of their total length exposed. Upper end sunk in putty; lower end tied onto a notch in the yoke. Hole arrangement L5 R1 (V). All holes 5 mm. with equal spacing between them (13 mm.). A 7 cm. single cane reed (down cut, Fig. 4 f) is set in the top of each pipe, the yoke extending the full length of the chanter in front to give protection to the reeds.

(b) *Bell*

A gaily decorated horn (c.40 cm. long) of the *gendus* (Maltese ox, now virtually extinct), festooned with coloured ribbons and bearing a brass cap badge belonging to the Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment). Around the mouth of the horn is attached a twisted silver chain from which a small cowrie shell hangs. Holes have been drilled in an ornamental fashion into the upper side of the horn and three slits have also been cut into the side, possibly for acoustic reasons.

(c) *Bag*

Kidskin, hair displayed. Hind end and hind legs tied outside and sealed with pitch. Left foreleg takes a cane blowpipe which is valveless. Right foreleg tied. Neck rolled back and whipped to form chanter stock.

Made by Mr Tony Cachia of Naxxar, now in J. K. P's possession (see Set II).

SET II (Pl. XXIV)

(a) *Chanter and reeds*

Chanter of two brass cylindrical tubes of 8 mm. internal diameter set in a cane yoke. Upper part of yoke ornamented with hammer and sickle design. Lower part of yoke supporting the chanter ornamentally serrated on either side. Hole arrangement: L5 R1 (V). Holes of 5 mm. diameter, each approx. 15 mm. apart. *Reeds* as in Set I, but smaller (total length 5.5 cm.).

(b) *Bell*

Curved cow's horn, with a serrated end. Horn decorated with a modern emblem of a lion surmounting a globe.

(c) *Bag*

Black and white calf skin (c.75 cm. long). Hair exposed. Legs tied off individually, and decorated with coloured tassels. Inflated by rubber tubing inserted in animal's left foreleg.

II (i) A spare chanter of cane, used with same accessories as above. Hole arrangement and reeds as above.

Both are owned and played by Mr Tony Cachia ('Hamhrun'), who made them and Set I. Mr Cachia, of Naxxar, has been playing more than forty years, and is the last active performer. He was taught by Joseph Larrun, Mosta, who died 'about 25 years ago'. Tony Cachia has recently made another *zaqq* similar to those above, with a small bag, for his son (also Tony Cachia). For Mr Cachia's music see Ex. 1.

SET III

(a) *Chanter and reeds*

Chanter and reeds identical in form and hole arrangement to Set I but smaller (no measurements taken). Pipes metal. Yoke inserted into a small curved cow's horn lacking decoration.

(b) *Bag*

Of calf-skin, hair exposed, with legs tied and a short (c. 7 cm.) wooden blow-pipe inserted medially. A cork had been used to repair a hole in the bag.

This *zaqq*, together with many miscellaneous components of older *zaqq*s, and some tambourines, were owned (and made) by Mr Awsonju Bugeja ('Grixti') of Ancient St., Vittoriosa. Mr Bugeja made and sold nougat, particularly at Festas. His nephew Laurence also plays both *zaqq* and *tambur*, and they used to play both together, turn for turn. Neither have performed regularly for several years. Awsonju Bugeja's music was considerably different from that of the other players (see Ex. 2).

SET IV (Pl. XXI a and b)

(a) *Chanter*

of cane with holes L5 R1 (V). Yoke un-ornamented, fitted with two downcut cane reeds. Wax had been used for tuning, inserted into hole L (V)—the unfingered hole.

(b) *Bell*

Curved cow horn, about twice the chanter length, serrated at the end, and ornamented with a metal Maltese Cross.

(c) *Bag*

Missing. Formerly a variety of bags from dog, big cat, or calf had been used.

This *zaqq* was made and played by Mr Lazrio Camilleri of Mosta, aged over 70. Mr Camilleri, a veteran of the Royal Malta Artillery, had been taught to play by his father—Luka—at the age of thirteen. He last played about ten years ago. He was acknowledged as a fine player and had a large range of variations and ornaments (see Ex. 3).

SET V

(a) *Chanter*

Like *zaqq*s I–IV in form and hole arrangement. Varnished cane pipes of c. 13 cm. in length, 10 mm. internal diameter and 15 mm. between 5 mm. holes. Reeds missing.

(b) *Bell*

Straight, 27 cm. long and made of painted and jointed metal (probably tin-plate). It is 25 mm. in diameter at the insertion of the chanter and widens to 70 mm. at the mouth, which is serrated. The *bag* is missing.

This incomplete instrument is owned by Savior Grima (aged about 70) of Melleiha. He told us this chanter and bell was 150 years old and had belonged to his grandfather. Savior no longer plays the *zaqq*, his fingers being too stiff from farm work, but he does play the piano accordion and the castanets on Carnival day.

SET VI

(a) *Chanter and reeds*

Double cane chanter of 6 mm. internal (9 mm. external) diameter held in a cane yoke. Holes 4 mm. diameter and between 12 and 14 mm. apart, this specimen being rather smaller than the other *zaqq*s. Hole arrangement R5 L1 (V) as in IX.

The *reeds* (Fig. 4 e) are correspondingly small (4.3 cm. long, ext. diam. 6 mm.), are downcut and bound with fine string.

(b) *The bell*

Formed of a sharply-curved plain cow horn 24 cm. long with a serrated end.

(c) *The bag*

Stated to be deerskin, more probably goatskin. Hind legs both tied loosely with faded red ribbons. Forelegs: right plugged but not tied; left taking a 20 cm. cane blowpipe of which c. 6 cm. is exposed. Hind end tucked in but tail left dangling. Skin at neck gathered in to form the stock and the chanter glued into the bag. Access to reeds is gained by slipping the pipes out of the yoke.

This specimen is located in the Crosby Brown Collection (No. 2513) in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York and was collected in Malta in the late 19th century.

SET VII

Chanter and reeds only. This incomplete *zaqq* is the only known surviving example from Gozo. The chanter was very loosely assembled, and had the pipes arranged as in No. VI with the hole arrangement R5 L1 (V). However this may have been reassembled wrongly, as the loose pipes fitted better the other way round. Both chanter pipes of cane, inside diameter 8 mm. (overall 11 mm.). Holes of 5 mm. diameter, and spaced between 13 and 15 mm. apart. Pipes were fitted into a plain cane yoke, with beeswax.

Reeds. With the chanter were three cane reeds, one down cut, and two up cut (Fig. 4 a–c). These were the only upcut reeds found in a *zaqq*.

This specimen is in the possession of Inspector J. Attard (Malta Fire Service). It is believed to have belonged to Carmelo ta Schembri of Xhara, Gozo.

SET VIII (Figs. 2 and 3 b)

Chanter, reeds and bell only. Formerly used with bags of calf, lamb, and occasionally dogskin.

(a) *Chanter*

Crudely fashioned of cane. Chanter pipes fixed into plain cane yoke with string and beeswax. Hole arrangement: L₅ R₁ (V). Total length of yoke 22 cm.

Chanter pipes 16–17 cm. Ext. diameter 10 mm., internal 7–8 mm. Hole diameter 6 mm., each 15 mm. apart. *Reeds*: down cut. 55 mm. x 7 mm. ext. diameter (5 mm. int. diam.) (Fig. 4 d).

(b) *Bell*

Curved cow horn, serrated at the end, and sheathed at the base in tinplate painted green. Length of horn c.25 cm. Horn ornamented with an orange plastic child's bracelet set round it, near the mouth, with a paper flower attached on the upper side.

This specimen, now in the possession of J. K. P., formerly belonged to Mr Pawlu Gatt ('Il Zubin') of Mosta. Mr Gatt, aged 87, was formerly a stone cutter. He used to play at L'Imnarjia, Carnival, and Christmas.

SET IX

(a) *Chanter*

Cane chanter pipes with hole arrangement R₅ L₁ (V), as in the Gozo chanter (Set VII) and the New York specimen (Set VI). Pipes sealed into yoke with beeswax. Wax had also been used for tuning, by placing it in hole R₂. *Dimensions*: overall length (of yoke) 20 cm.; pipes, 12 cm. long, 9.5 mm. internal diameter; holes 6.0 mm. diameter, 16 mm. apart. *Reeds*, down cut cane, 6.5 mm. diameter, lengths 5.7 cm., and 7.0 cm.

(b) *Bell*

Curved cow horn. c.23 cm. long. Not serrated at the mouth, but decorated with a band of dog-tooth patterning at the narrow end.

(c) *Bag*

Two large calfskin bags, black and white, both now unusable.

This *zaqq* belongs to Giorolmo Buhagiar, of Siggiewi. Mr Buhagiar, now over 70, was formerly a stone cutter and quarryman. His late brothers had also been *zaqq* players. His family all played with the five melody holes in the right chanter pipe.

OTHER MUSICIANS

Paul Vassalo ('Il Bimblu') of Dingli, who died in 1968 and whose playing is represented by Ex. 4. His *zaqq* had a cane chanter, with a bag of dog, calf or goat. An existing photograph (Pl. XXII a) shows him playing a *zaqq* with a very large bag (calf) and with a small, plain horn with a serrated end as a bell. *Joe Vella* ('Il Hawli') of Naxxar. Aged about 70. No longer plays regularly. Formerly played both *zaqq* (Pl. XXIII a) and *tambur* with Tony Cachia.

Lazrio Camilleri of Mosta, aged 65 and a cousin of his namesake (see above, Set IV). Being a goatherd he used to make his bag from a kid. Played *tambur* also.

Carmenu and *Vincent Falzon*, Naxxar, play the *tambur* and *rabbaba* (respectively) and accompany *Tony Cachia* in performances at hotels and folk music concerts (see Pl. XXIIIb).

Joseph Debrincat of Victoria, Gozo, died about 1940 and played the *zaqq*.

APPENDIX 2: Accompanying instruments

Tambur (Tambourine)

The home-made *tambur* owned by *Tony Cachia* is typical. The instrument is 40 cm. in diameter and 10 cm. deep. The skin is of a male sheep and is stretched across one side only, held in place by a hoop of painted wood. All *tamburs* we examined were decorated with bells and/or metal cymbals, the latter always paired. Mr *Cachia's* *tambur* had five pairs of double metal cymbals 7.5 cm. in diameter, made from metal can tops, set into spaces in the side. The paired cymbals were grouped into about two-thirds of the circumference of the *tambur* and the remaining space was occupied by bell decoration and a handle-hole. The sides of the instrument are gaily painted and the design consists of a lattice of blue, white and red diagonal lines on a yellow background.

Rabbaba or *zavzava* (Friction drum)

These are rarely seen nowadays but the few that do exist vary in form. That played by *Vincent Falzon* of Naxxar (see Pl. XXIII b) consists of an earthenware pitcher approx. 30 cm. high, with a skin stretched across the mouth. A 1 cm diameter cane stick about 55 cm. long is tied into the centre of the skin and is decorated with coloured ribbons at the free end. A necklace of spherical bells has been hung around the neck of the pitcher. The performer carries a small plastic 'squegee' bottle covered in cloth—from which he wets his playing hand from time to time. The *rabbaba* is held under the arm and played by rubbing a hand up and down the cane, causing the skin to vibrate. Another example is made of a small wooden cask to which are tied large spherical bells in a ring around the base. A shoulder strap made of woven material is provided.

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