

Foreword

The Junior College was set up in 1995 as an integral part of the University of Malta with a very clear mission to prepare students for university. It provides students with a unique learning experience which is of high quality, personalized, inclusive, and holistic.

The academic programme is at the core of the course but the experience offered is planned to be a formative one during which each student is guided to develop his or her full potential.

This means that life at the Junior College for both students and staff is much more than just formal teaching and learning in the classroom. The College offers various opportunities which go beyond what one would expect in a standard post-secondary school setting, including various cultural and social events, sport activities, participation in European projects, assisting in the professional development of staff, and hosting academic conferences with the participation of renowned scholars.

Hence when the Junior College was invited to organize and host the international conference on the theme *Mediterraneità Europea* stemming from the work of Angelo Fàvaro, it was immediately accepted as it fitted congruently within the vision for the College.

Furthermore, the theme of the conference was very appropriate as the Maltese islands cannot be anything other than Mediterranean. Geographically, the islands lie right in the centre of the Mediterranean basin. The islands' coastline is surrounded by the Mediterranean sea and its geomorphology has been moulded by the Mediterranean climate.

Over the course of time, life on the islands has been infused by the prevailing cultural influences of the region and beyond. These influences were blended together to make us what we are today as a Maltese nation with our own unique language and identity.

The conference provided a unique opportunity for exploring the definition of cultural identity formation which allows the inclusion of diverse cultures. Based on the quantity and quality of the work presented from so many experts, not least by Junior College academics, one can safely conclude that the conference was a great success.

Moreover, when it was suggested that the proceedings of the *convegno* be published in our journal *Symposia Melitensia* the editorial board immediately accepted because we believe that, by doing so, the valuable research of the learned participants will be made accessible to more scholars. It also the policy of the Junior College to make the journal available online to reach an even wider audience. *Verba volant, scripta manent.*

Words of appreciation and gratitude go for the main supporters of this conference. The European Commission Representation in Malta, the Università degli Studi di Roma ‘Tor Vergata’, the Istituto Italiano di Cultura di Malta, which has most generously partly subsidized the journal, the *Rivista di Studi Sinestesi* online, the Department of Italian of the Junior College, and the editorial board. A sincere thank you goes also to all participants and contributors.

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