HYPHEN

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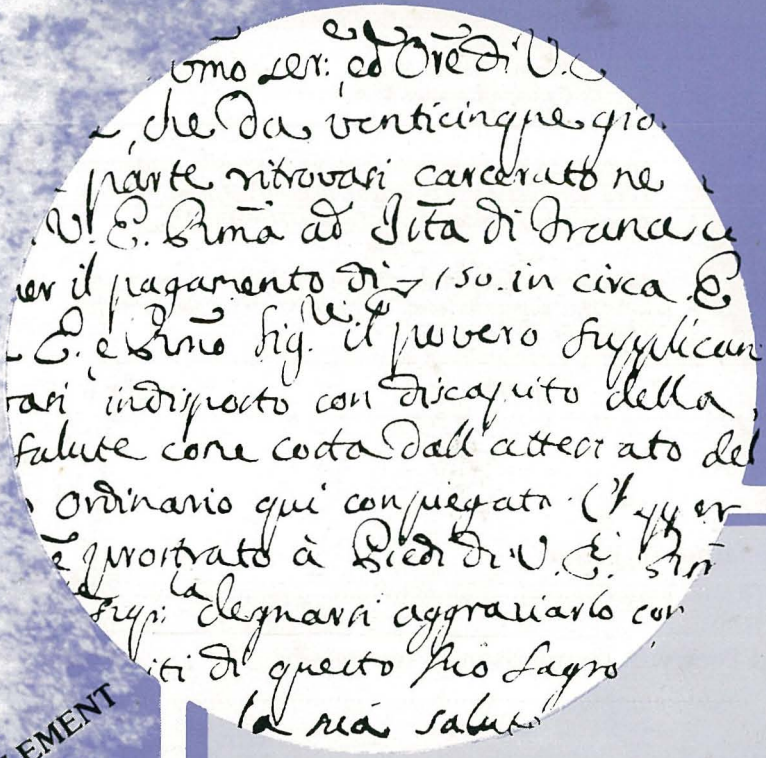

SUPPLEMENT

Systems of knowledge Syllabus & Exam Papers June 1991

Hyphen

A Journal of Melitensia and the Humanities

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Cover Picture: Gaetano Mifsud's petition to stay outside prison. Mifsud was the step-father of Mikiel Anton Vassalli. (See article by Frans Ciappara, pp. 237-241)

VASSALLI'S STEP – FATHER IN PRISON

Frans Ciappara

With very minor exceptions, Vassalli's early years are still shrouded in mystery. This is most unfortunate since the experiences of adoloscence bear very much on one's character later on in life. Fortunately, quite unexpectedly, I explored such a piece of valuable information. By now I have come to expect such unlooked-for discoveries. The most desirable findings are not necessarily those which are unearthed consciously. It is the least expected documents that sometimes satisfy your intellectual curiosity most.

As far as I am concerned, knowledge about Vassalli has always cropped up that way. My first published article about him was back in 1983 when I described his winning a prize for Arabic at the school which the *Propaganda Fide* had in Malta.[1] Such a valuable piece of information I had kept in my possession for seven years. I never imagined that the young man whom the manuscript described as *Michel'Angelo* was none other than the worthy *Michel'Antonio.*[2] It was only after the publication of Mgr C. Sant's article about Vassalli's stay in Rome[3] that I drew my conclusions. My point is that in most cases it is wrong to taunt the historian with implications that had never entered his head. The writer of history does not, generally speaking, delve into the archives with *a priori* conclusions, or even with a theme in mind. It is most unscholarly, not to say defamatory, then, to ascribe to him ulterior motives and to claim that he is selective in his choice of material. To use a metaphor, the conductor does not execute his own work, but the music written by others.

On Sunday, 28 July 1776 between 9/10 a.m. were leased by auction at the civil chancery of the Inquisition, Vittoriosa, the plots of land *Gran Fontana* (Għajn il-kbira) and *l-Għars*, beneath Boschetto gardens. The highest bidder was Gaetano Mifsud. Internal evidence proves that

1. F. Ciappara, 'M.A. Vassalli wins a prize for Arabic', *The Sunday Times*, 19 June 1983, 12.
2. *A*(rchives of the) *I*(nquisition) *M*(alta), *R*(egistrum) *A*(ctorum) *C*(ivilium), C7 (1782-1787), ff. 174r-v. See also *AIM, Corr*(ispondenza) 96, f. 399v.
3. C. Sant, 'M. A. Vassalli's Sojourn in Rome (1788-1790)', *The Sunday Times*, 3 April 1983, 9.

he must have been Vassalli's step-father. Not only was he of Zebbug, and the son of Giuseppe;[4] but he is also mentioned in conjunction with his wife, Catarina[5] Vassalli's mother, whom he had married on 19 June 1770.[6] He offered the substantial sum of 901 scudi annually. The rent was to be paid in three equal instalments, while the lease was for eight continuous years. The deed was signed in the presence of the Tribunal's assessor, Fr Pietro Francesco Gristi, and the two witnesses Fr Vincenzo Abela and Fr Ignazio Abela. The sureties presented by Gaetano were Francesco Busuttil of Valletta and Angelo Fenech of Zebbug.[7]

No sooner, however, had Gaetano become a *gabellotto*, or tenant farmer, of the Inquisition, than he started being pestered by his creditors. He failed to pay the rents,[8] the fodder,[9] the *decime* or tithes,[10] the price of a cow,[11] the manure, and the *mischiato*.[12] He did not even present the four capons he had to donate to the Inquisitor annually.[13] On 30 January 1778 he had a bull confiscated by the captain of the Holy Office.[14] On 20 August of the same year another mandate was issued against him. Four oxen of Susa, two calves, a roomful of hay, all the fruit on the trees, the cotton not yet collected, three *salme* of *mischiato*, the manure, and all the farming implements were to be sold by auction.[15]

On 26 June 1779 Gaetano presented a petition to the Inquisitor, Mgr Zondadari. He reminded him that three years previously he had taken the lease of *Għajn il-kbira* for hundreds of scudi. This proved to be such a financial burden that he had become debtor of about 300 scudi, and found himself daily plagued by creditors. At the moment he could pay none of his debts, chiefly because his lands were still under cotton cultivation. He, thus, humbly asked Mgr Zondadari to give him a respite till the following November by which time he would have gathered his products. Unfortunately, we do not

4. *AIM, RAC,* C6 (1776-1782), f. 39r.
5. *AIM, A*(tti) *C*(ivili) 551 (i), ff. 119r-v. *AIM, AC* 553 (i), ff. 189r, 190r, 192r.
6. Parish Archives, Zebbug. Liber Matrimoniorum IV (1762-1814), 103-4.
7. *AIM, RAC,* C6, ff. 38r-42v.
8. See for instance, *AIM, AC* 553 (i), ff. 223r-229v; *AIM, AC* 556 (i), ff. 9r-14v; *AIM, RAC,* C6, f. 247r; *N*(otarial) *A*(rchives) *V*(alletta), R 138/1, ff. 178r-180v.
9. *AIM, RAC,* C6, ff. 175 r-v.
10. *AIM, AC* 556 (i), ff. 98r-103v.
11. *AIM, AC* 554, ff. 4r-12v.
12. *AIM, AC* 551 (i), ff. 198r-207v.
13. *AIM, AC* 553 (i), ff. 217r-218v.
14. *AIM, RAC,* C6, f. 148r.
15. Ibid., ff. 179v-180r.

know what sequel there was to this petition, except that the creditors were to be notified, *intimetur creditoribus.*[16]

The following month, July, Gaetano was made to pay 75 scudi for a cow;[17] while at the end of the year it was the turn of Fr Pietro Zammit to ask for 55 scudi.[18] Another creditor was Antonio Camilleri who had already demanded on 8 August 1778 32 scudi for fodder.[19] In September 1779 Antonio claimed that he was still owed 21 scudi; but, as Gaetano denied the charge, he produced three witnesses who were examined at the instance of the Tribunal's chancellor by notary Filippo Amato of *Città Rohan*. They were not sure what sum Gaetano still had to pay, but they knew for certain that he had truly bought the *forraina*. They had seen his mare and young she-mule eating the said fodder, which they had even seen the accused transporting to the *Gran Fontana*. Another witness was Pasquale Galea, the captain of the Holy Office, who made his deposition in front of notary Paolo Vittorio Giammalva on 1 March 1780. He testified that Mifsud had paid another 7 scudi of the remaining 21 scudi; but, though he had succeeded in earning a respite, he continued to procrastinate from week to week.[20]

Eventually Gaetano ended up in the prisons of the Inquisition. On 23 February 1779 he had been given two days' time in which to pay 150 scudi to Francesco Borg;[21] by February of the next year he still had not paid his debt. On the 16th of the same month at the instance of Francesco he was incarcerated.[22] On 10 March 1780 Gaetano asked the Inquisitor to let him stay outside the prison cell, though in the limits of the Sacred Palace.[23] He was suffering, as the prison doctor, Angelo Pace, testified, from hydrocele in the right testicle – *ernia nel testicolo destro.*[24] Francesco Borg was notified of this petition, and had to answer within twenty-four hours if he would consent to Gaetano's request. Since Borg replied in the affirmative, Gaetano had his wish granted on 13 March 1780.[25] Then, on 20

16. *AIM, AC* 556 (i), ff. 35r-36v.
17. *AIM, AC* 554, ff. 4r-12v. See also *NAV, R*5/23, ff. 508r-v.
18. *AIM, RAC,* C6, f. 281v. *NAV,* R328/36, f. 407r.
19. *AIM, RAC,* C6, ff. 175r-v.
20. *AIM, AC* 555 (i), ff. 404r-417v.
21. *AIM, AC* 561, f. 77r.
22. *AIM, AC* 555 (i), f. 215v.
23. Ibid., f. 211r.
24. Ibid., f. 212r. I would like to express my thanks to Prof. Dr R. Ellul Micallef for translating this term to me.
25. Ibid., f. 211v: *Praesentata fuit, et est praesens supplicatio per Gaetanum Mifsud*

Ecc.mo e Rmo Monsig.re

Gaetano Mifsud umo serv.re ed Ore di V.E. Rma
riv.te espone, che da venticinque giorni
à questa parte ritrovasi carcerato ne i
Carceri di V.E. Rma ad Ista di Francesco
Borg per il pagamento di ₰ 150 in circa. E
perche E. e Rmo Sig.re il povero supplicante
ritrovasi indisposto con discapito della
sua salute come costa dall'attestato del
Medico ordinario qui compiegato. Pperò
egli Ore prostrato à piedi di V.E. Rma
umilm.te supp.ca la degnarsi aggraziarlo con lasciar
lo nei limiti di questo suo sagro Tribunale
per ricuperare la sua salute e della
grazia &

Intimetur Parti. Datum in Palatio nro Ap.co hac die 10 Martii 1780
A [illegible]

211

[illegible] supplicatio per laxandi

Gaetano Mifsud's petition to stay outside the prison cell.
(AIM. AC 555 i. f.211[r])

April 1780 the *Gran Fontana* and *l-Għars* were leased for the next six years ot Michele Gambin of Siggiewi.[26]

This incident is of paramount importance to the understanding of Vassalli, who at that time was a lad of sixteen. Firstly, it shows that his connection with the Inquisition began much earlier than 1785 when he was a student at the School of Arabic. Secondly, his step-father's imprisonment must have left a deep scar on him. This psychological hardship drove him on irresistibly to the role of the revolutionary he was to become later on. To describe Vassalli as a scholar living in an ivory tower is only a figment of the imagination. He was a revolutionary at heart, who dreamed of turning medieval Malta upside down. The orphan whose step-father knew what the dungeons of the Holy Office meant, and who even experienced the stigma that this entailed, avenged himself on a retrograde society.

It is only through such research that a good biography of Vassalli must ultimately and painstakingly emerge. Facile assumptions must be disregarded not only because – to repeat J.S. Mill – the infidels demand your proofs, but also, and largely, because statements call for elaboration.

et recept. notif, de ea Francisco borg cui etiam fuit praefixus terminus horarum viginti quatuor ad respondendum, ut constitit per Aloysium Damato cursorem. Die II Martii. Attenta partis contumacia fiat ut petitur. Datum ex Palatio Apostolico. Die XIII Martii 1780. A. Zondadari. Thanks are due to Canon John Azzopardi for helping me transcribe this Latin text. It may be noted that in a previous article Canon Azzopardi had produced a document describing the selling of two heifers by Gaetano to his step-son, Michel'Antonio. See '5 Dokumenti ġodda fuq Mikiel Anton Vassalli', *Sagħtar* 62, March 1979, 20.

26. *AIM, RAC,* C6, ff. 290r-294v.

FRANS CIAPPARA, M.A. teaches History at the G.F. Abela Upper Lyceum, Msida. He is the author of *Marriage in Malta in the late eighteenth century, Mill-Qigħan ta' l-Istorja* (1987) and other scholarly works.

GOOD AND BAD POETRY: A COMPARISON OF TWO POEMS

David Clarke

Most poems try to recreate an experience of some sort. Whether or not they do this successfully is usually determined by reference to their integrity of language. 'This is a very happy event' or 'I am very sad' are not statements which arouse much feeling in the reader, even though the poet who makes them is entirely sincere in his statement. What matters is whether the feeling of sadness or happiness is recreated in the mind of the reader by the power of the words on the page.

This can be demonstrated by a consideration of two poems. The first, 'By the Statue of King Charles at Charing Cross', is often found in anthologies. It is by Lionel Johnson, who was born in Broadstairs, Kent, in 1867. Educated at Winchester and New College, Oxford, he became a literary journalist and critic in London and died in 1902. Here is the poem:

Sombre and rich, the skies,
Great glooms, and starry plains;
Gently the night wind sighs;
Else a vast silence reigns.

The splendid silence clings
Around me: and around
The saddest of all Kings,
Crown'd, and again discrown'd.

Comely and calm, he rides
Hard by his own Whitehall.
Only the night wind glides:
No crowds, nor rebels, brawl.

Gone, too, his Court: and yet,
The stars his courtiers are:
Stars in their stations set;
And every wandering star.

Alone he rides, alone,
The fair and fatal King:
Dark night is all his own,
That strange and solemn thing.

Which are more full of fate,
The stars; or those sad eyes?
Which are more still and great:
Those brows, or the dark skies?

Although his whole heart yearn
In passionate tragedy,
Never was face so stern
With sweet austerity.

Vanquish'd in life, his death
By beauty made amends:
The passing of his breath
Won his defeated ends.

Brief life, and hapless? Nay:
Through death, life grew sublime.
Speak after sentence? Yea:
And to the end of time.

Armour'd he rides, his head
Bare to the stars of doom;
He triumphs now, the dead,
Beholding London's gloom.

Our wearier spirit faints,
Vex'd in the world's employ:
His soul was of the saints;
And art to him was joy.

King, tried in fires of woe!
Men hunger for thy grace:
And through the night I go,
Loving thy mournful face.

Yet, when the city sleeps,
When all the cries are still,
The stars and heavenly deeps
Work out a perfect will.

The poem is a meditation upon the character and fate of Charles I. The statue at Charing Cross is, to the poet's eye, representative of Charles's ultimate victory over his enemies: his memorial speaks of his triumph and will do so 'to the end of time'. The great king, artistic, graceful, divine, in his triumph and splendour is contrasted with the duller world of 'London's gloom' and its weary inhabitants worn down by 'the world's employ'. The poet grieves at the sad fate of the king, but, in the last stanza, suggests that human destiny is shaped by vast, significant, and unknown forces. 'The stars and heavenly deeps/Work out a perfect will.'

In feeling and tone the poem is romantic, melancholic, elegaic. The rather strained claims for Charles's greatness are shown in the extravagant statement 'The stars his courtiers are' and in the overblown rhetorical questions which comprise the sixth stanza. This striving after effect is continued in the somewhat facile oxymorons of the seventh verse. Even so, there is a pleasing sense of quiet and peacefulness contained in words such as 'sighs', 'Comely and calm', 'alone', 'sad'. And there is some movement from darkness and solemnity to an idea of triumph. The poet aims at grandeur in the moralistic ending of the last four lines. Overall, however, the reader is inclined to find here a poem impressed with its own music. It certainly doesn't say much for so many verses, and despite the poet's claim 'through the night I go/Loving thy mournful face', one feels the poem is 'made' rather than felt.

The verse form consists of a string of quatrains rhyming *abab* in regular iambic trimeters with the occasional trochee for variety at the start of a line. There is very little enjambement, so that the flow of the poem is largely confined to the unit of sense within pairs of lines in each stanza. Furthermore, the verses drift in loose connection without a tightly progressive structure: a number of verses could be omitted without causing damage to the poem. Indeed, it might even be improved in this way. The consciously artistic effects – for example, the repetition of 'alone' in line 17 and the alliteration of lines 18, 20, and 21 – amount to little more than verbal tricks. The rhetorical questions of lines 21-24 are meaningless. At best their intended answer brings the poet into conflict with the resolution of the last verse. The posed questions of lines 33 and 35 are answered with some emphasis, 'Nay' and 'Yea' being in strong positions at the end of the lines, but the effect is still contrived – like the apostrophe of line 45. The exclamation is supposed to add weight to the

sentiment. In fact, it exposes a very ordinary metaphor. The compression of 'No crowds, nor rebels, brawl./Gone, too, his Court' shows a keener awareness of the need to shape and control the language.

Images in the poem seldom rise above the level of cliché. The wind 'sighs' and 'glides', the silence 'reigns' like a king but also 'clings' in rather undignified fashion, and there seems to be no imaginative or logical basis for calling the stars 'his courtiers', then 'stars of doom', and finally suggesting that 'The stars and heavenly deeps' are responsible for carrying through some vast, omnipotent design. 'Dark night' is a commonplace metaphor for death, even if it is 'strange and solemn'. The trial by fire in line 45 is similarly unconvincing. The skies, the night, and the night wind make too many appearances in the poem. Reference to the stars, which are invoked on seven occasions, is also overworked. Johnson is striving after effect, making the reader work upon the poem rather than the poem work upon the reader. Sentimental, sloppy in its use of language, largely empty – not a good poem.

The second poem is by Edward Thomas who was born in London on 3 March 1878 and was killed in action at the battle of Arras on 9 April 1917. His poetry, all of it written in the two years 1914-16, is remarkable for introspective musings on the meaning of nature and the purpose and quality of human life. 'The Sun Used to Shine' is a good example:

The sun used to shine while we two walked
Slowly together, paused and started
Again, and sometimes mused, sometimes talked
As either pleased, and cheerfully parted

Each night. We never disagreed
Which gate to rest on. The to be
And the late past we gave small heed.
We turned from men or poetry

To rumours of the war remote
Only till both stood disinclined
For aught but the yellow flavorous coat
Of an apple wasps had undermined;

Or a sentry of dark betonies
The stateliest of small flowers on earth,
At the forest verge; or crocuses
Pale purple as if they had their birth

In sunless Hades fields. The war
Came back to mind with the moonrise
Which soldiers in the east afar
Beheld then. Nevertheless, our eyes

Could as well imagine the Crusades
Or Caesar's battles. Everything
To faintness like those rumours fades –
Like the brooks' water glittering

Under the moonlight – like those walks
Now – like us two that took them, and
The fallen apples, all the talks
And silences – like memory's sand

When the tide covers it late or soon,
And other men through other flowers
In those fields under the same moon
Go talking and have easy hours.

In 'The Sun Used to Shine' the poet looks back on past, pleasant walks with his friend (Robert Frost) and their discussions on 'men or poetry', war, and nature. As the poem progresses, persistent thoughts of war cast shadows over their talk and lead Thomas to recognize that, although 'the war/Came back to mind', it is as remote from their experience as 'the Crusades/Or Caesar's battles.' In turn, he contemplates the impermanence of everything. All 'To faintness...fades'. Everything significant is also transient. It fades and is eventually erased by time.

In feeling and tone the poem is peaceful, quiet, reflective. Despite the sunny first line and diction which suggests contentment ('pleased', 'cheerfully', 'never', 'disagreed') and the imagined, future 'easy hours' of other men and the end of the poem, the background of war is a disturbing influence and overall the poem creates a feeling of melancholy. There is an awareness of the plight of the soldiers – compare another of Thomas's poems, 'The Owl', where this awareness is more explicitly presented – and the friendship shared

in the opening verses gives way to a more solitary regret that 'Everything/To faintness like those rumours fades'.

On the surface, the verse form of the poem is conventional: quatrains, rhyming *abab*, with mostly regular lines of eight syllables in iambic metre. But this formality of structure is subjected to Thomas's masterful skill in creating natural, flowing speech. Virtually all of the poem's lines are run-on and all stanzas without exception carry over into the next verse. The effects of this is to create the spontaneous flow of a speaking voice, with the meaning spilling over into each succeeding verse and carrying the reader onwards, the freer speech-rhythms being finely counterpointed by the rhyme and formal arrangement of the verse. The construction of the first two stanzas, with their run-on lines and pauses within lines (2, 3, 4, 5, and 6), recreates the pausing and starting movements of the two friends. A pleasing variety of structure is introduced in lines 5-6 and 20-22, where short sentences, which make their point succinctly, are introduced in contrast to the much longer sentences which form the main body of the poem. In the long sentences of lines 8-17 and 22-32, the use of alternatives in 'but...Or...or' and the linking of similes in parallel ('like those rumours', 'Like the brooks' water', 'like those walks', 'like us two', 'like memory's sand') enable the poet to illustrate his meaning with a series of examples within the framework of a clear design.

There is surprisingly little imagery in the poem. Of note are 'undermined' and 'sentry', applied to fruit and flowers but suggestive of military enterprise, and 'sunless Hades fields', a phrase suggesting darkness and death: a menacing contrast to the beginning of the poem and, indeed, to the flowers' 'birth'. The crocuses themselves are rooted in death. The diction is drawn largely from nature: the detail of an apple and wasps, flowers, the forest verge, the moon-rise, the brooks' water, sand, and the tide; and there are telling contrasts of colour – yellow, dark, pale purple, glittering moonlight. The simile 'like memory's sand' is elaborated in the last stanza to signify that in time even cherished memories recede into oblivion.

'The Sun Used to shine' is a perfect evocation of a moment in time (August 1914). Simple, unremarkable events, a country walk and talk, are recorded with fidelity and sensitivity, and, in the more complex reflections to which these events give rise, nothing is overstated or contrived. With unobtrusive artistry Edward Thomas deals with real experience and the paradoxes such experience often contains. The

concluding lines are gently and tentatively balanced by opposing senses of continuity and loss.

Here, then, is the essential difference between the two poems. Johnson's poem is made in an 'art for art's sake' way. Its obvious and artificial poetic designs intrude upon the reader and damage his response to the words on the page. In contrast, Edward Thomas has recreated his experience in the mind of his readers, so that the poet's thoughts and feelings come alive each time we read the poem. We share his experience and feel we are there in that time and place, each time the poem is read.

DAVID CLARKE is the author of *The Language of Literature*.

SCIENCE AND HISTORY

Stephen F. Mason

If we wish to define what science has been and what it has accomplished historically, we find it difficult to formulate a definition which holds for all times and places. The sciences of the bronze-age civilizations differed markedly in character from those of the ancient Greeks, while Greek science possessed only some of the many-sided attributes displayed by science in the modern world. Behind the changing character of science throughout the ages, thee has been an element of continuity, for the men of each period have developed and enlarged some aspect of the science bequeathed to them. Accordingly, we may perhaps say that science is a human activity developing an historically cumulative body of inter-related techniques, empirical knowledge, and theories, referring to the natural world. The American authority upon the history of science, Sarton, indeed considers that in this respect science is 'the only human activity which is truly cumulative and progressive'. But only part of science has been cumulative up to the present time, namely, its practical techniques and its empirical facts and laws. Judged by a long time scale, the theories of science have been ephemeral hitherto. The laws of levers and of the reflection of light, known to the Greeks, have become part of the permanent heritage of science, but the scientific theories of the Greeks are only of historical interest. Similarly, given a continuance of the present tempo of scientific activity, we can hardly suppose that any of the scientific theories of today will remain unmodified for long.

In the civilizations of the bronze age, mathematics and astronomy were largely utilitarian techniques used for keeping accounts, surveying, and calendar making. The sciences then did not differ greatly in character from the arts of the craftsmen, save that they were handed on through a written record, rather than by word of mouth. The ancient Greeks made an important advance in generalizing the discovery that empirically known fact belonging to a particular class could be theoretically demonstrated and shown to hold for all similar cases, as in the examples of the Pythagoras theorem or the laws of levers. The Greeks also used geometry to interpret theoretically their astronomical observations, so that empirical data now began to give

a quantitative structure to cosmological theory. However, the dominant world systems of the Greeks were influenced by the conception that the heavenly bodies were superior to the earth, a notion which led them to prefer geocentric systems, notably the homocentric and the epicyclic, both of which, in their final forms, conflicted with facts known in antiquity. Moreoever, the Greeks did not develop a consistent experimental method, though they made experiments on occasion; nor did they extend the application of science to new fields, except possibly military engineering and the making of general world maps.

In the subsequent civilizations of Rome, the Muslim world, and medieval Europe, science did not transcend the bounds set to it in Greek times, and its influence upon those civilizations was not large. During the modern period of history, however, science, and the forces promoting science, have developed an ever-increasing power of historical change. Experimental enquiry, together with the qualitative-inductive, and the quantitative-deductive methods discussed during the early decades of the seventeenth century, gradually found their appropriate place and application in all of the sciences. Applied first to mechanics and astronomy, they elucidated the workings of the solar system, and then to electricity, chemistry, biology, and other sciences, they rendered these subjects in turn more precise and fruitful. Such developments have helped to bring about a profound secularization of the human mind, science assuming, whether by sympathy or antipathy, a more and more important place in all general systems of thought, and, in the industrialized countries, colouring the views generally accepted concerning the nature of the universe and man's place in it. The applications of science too spread beyond the classical bounds of surveying and calendar making, first to navigation, and then to industry, agriculture, and medicine. The changes so wrought have done much to form the character of modern civilization, dissolving old traditions and old ways of life, so that when we speak of modern civilization spreading, say to the orient, we are thinking primarily of the spread of science and its applications.

The long-term consequences of the applications of science were not widely appreciated before the beginning of the present century. James Watt hardly could have foreseen the urban congestion that arose from the adoption of his steam engine in the factories, nor Faraday the relief of that congestion through the rise of the suburbs, which was aided by the application of his electrical researches to problems of

UNIVERSITY OF MALTA

Matriculation Examination

MAY/JUNE 1991 SESSION INTERMEDIATE LEVEL

Subject: SYSTEMS OF KNOWLEDGE

Paper Number: Paper I

Answer **one** *question from each section.*
Answers may be given in **Maltese** *or in* **English.**

PART A

Section 1: Man and Symbols

1. Discuss the importance of linguistics in the modern study of languages.
2. The plays of Shakespeare and other great dramatists, normally performed in the intimate atmosphere of a theatre, stand to gain considerably by being projected on the big screen. Discuss.
3. Discuss one of the following:
   (i) the relation between mind and matter,
   (ii) thinking and language.
4. In a society where the infant mortality rate is high, the value of a child's life is almost negligible; in fact, in young societies war is glorified. This leads to a very significant conclusion: as the average age increases, the number of the elderly grows, so that society becomes more peace-loving and attaches greater importance to life and its prolongation.
   Comment on the above statement.
5. Determine, giving reasons, whether the following statements are valid or not:
   (i) All unicorns are fighters of dragons.
   All fighters of dragons are fearful of fire.
   Thus all unicorns are fearful of fire.

   (ii) If the weather is fine and I feel like it, I will go to Lija.
   I did go to Lija.
   So the weather was bad and I did not feel like it.

   (iii) He will not pass the exam unless he studies hard.
   He failed the exam.
   Therefore he did not study hard.

   (iv) If the weather is bad, I will neither go jogging nor go to Sliema.
   I went to Sliema.
   So the weather was fine and I went jogging.

   (v) Everyone who eats gets hungry.
   Whoever gets hungry needs food.
   Whoever needs food is weak.
   Anyone who is weak is feeble.
   All who are feeble are sick.
   So anyone who eats gets sick.

Section 2: Man and Environment

6. 'Social justice is about people's rights to have their basic needs satisfied.' Do you agree? If so, which are the basic needs, in your view, and how can the state see to their satisfaction? If not, give your reasons.
7. Is one ever entitled to break the law by claiming the right to conscientious objection? Discuss in full giving reasons for your views one way or the other.
8. 'The world's environmental problems are greater than the sum of those in each country. Certainly they can no longer be dealt with purely on a nation-state basis.' (Tom McMillan, Minister of Environment, Canada, 1986) Discuss this statement.
9. Why is energy the most critical of all resources?
10. Some people maintain that the population explosion is responsible for today's environmental ills; others are just as sure that the blame lies elsewhere. Discuss.

Section 3: Man and History

11. If you were to write the history of your country, how would you go about it?
12. Which are, in your opinion, the most important contributions made by the ancient Greeks to Western Civilization?
13. What happened in the Mediterranean in the Middle Ages?
14. What role did Malta play in checking Turkish expansion in the Mediterranean in the 16th century?
15. Write an account of what you think were the most significant effects of the French Revolution.

Paper Number: Paper II

Answer **one** *question from each section.*
Answers may be given in **Maltese** *or in* **English.**

Section 1: Set Texts – Man and Power

1. 'Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely. Great men are almost always bad men ...' (Lord Acton) Discuss with reference to the set texts.
2. 'The hero's ambition to reach beyond the barriers of human existence often ends, not in salvation, but in damnation.' How true is this of the main characters in the texts you have studies?
3. Two students of Systems of Knowledge are having an argument. The first student believes that longer literary works are superior to shorter ones. The second student insists that (a) long literary works make tedious reading; and that (b) worthwhile ideas gain in impact by being described very briefly.

   Reproduce the argument in dialogue form and conclude by saying why you agree, or disagree, with the ideas put forward, making specific reference to the set texts.
4. If you were marooned on a desert island, which one of the four texts would you choose to take with you and why? State why you would prefer it to the other three.
5. What importance do the authors of the set texts attach to the element of Love? Illustrate with reference to the texts you have studied.
6. 'The writer is a painter of word-pictures.' Choose at least one example from not less than **two** of the set texts and, discussing it as though it were a painting or a photograph, say why you find the scenes vivid and memorable.

Section 2: Scientific Methods and History of Science

7. Discuss how our concept of time has changed dramatically over the past hundred years.

8. Discuss the following statement with reference to the genetic material of living organisms:
'All information is coded. A code is fundamentally a non-random pattern or arrangement of parts. When this pattern is altered or changed, the code is corrupted and its information content is either completely lost or greatly modified.'

9. Science has been defined as 'Proof without Certainty' and Faith as 'Certainty without Proof.' Discuss.

10. Bronowski in *The Ascent of Man* writes: 'Science cannot look back to the past. There never was a Golden Age (in Science).' Do you agree? Give reasons for your answer.

11. While Darwin's Theory of Evolution is considered by almost all biologists as central to the understanding of modern biology, it was, and still remains, a matter of lively public controversy. Give a brief outline of this theory as stated by Darwin. Discuss the possible reasons for the public interest and the controversies it has generated.

Section3: Artistic Aims and Achievements

12. The two sculptures by Michelangelo (Plate A) and Alberto Giacometti (Plate B) are of different ages. What do they tell you about the view of humanity of the respective artists?

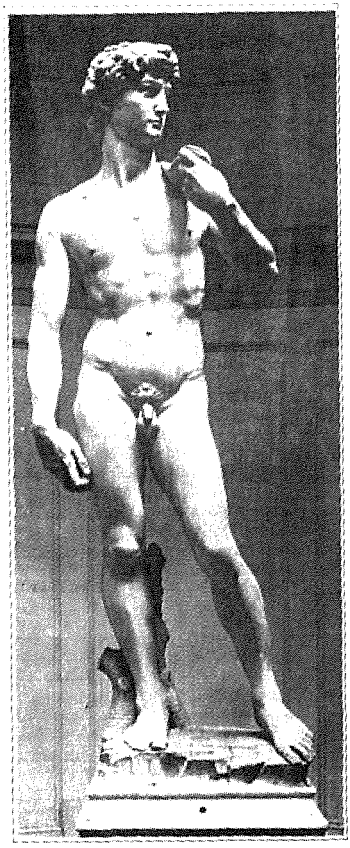
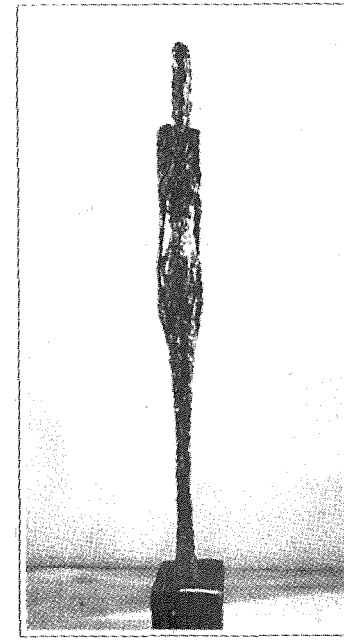


Plate A

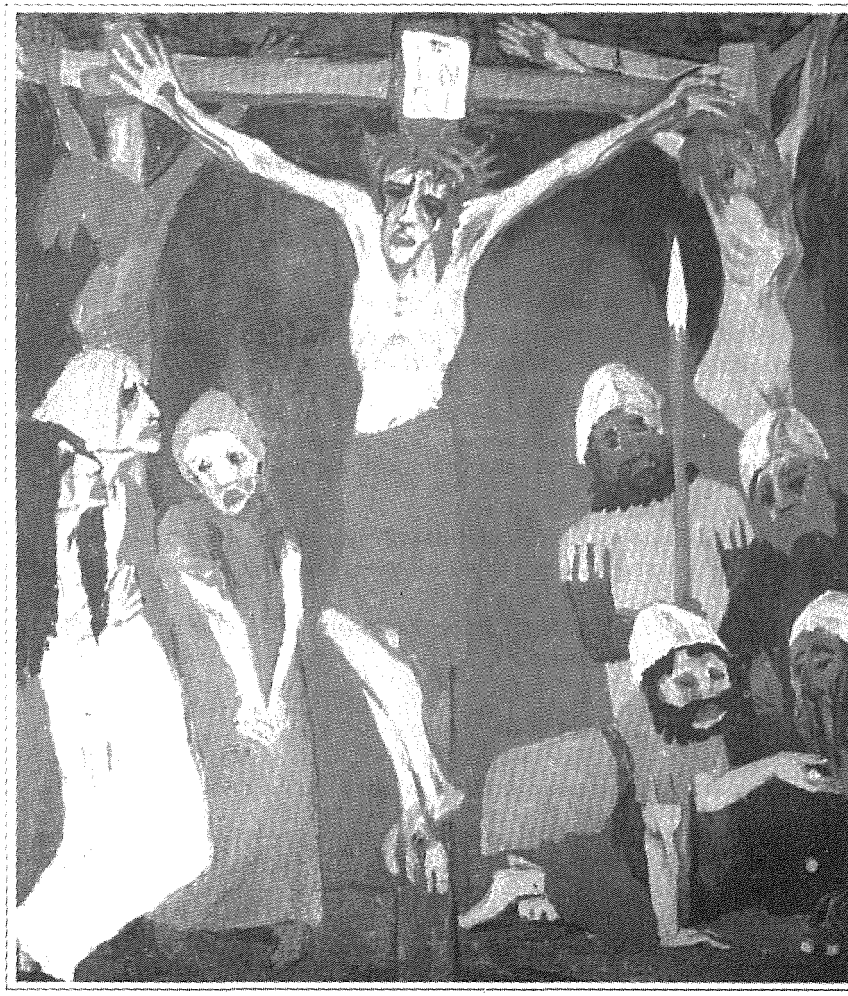
Plate B



13. Write a commentary on Caravaggio's famous painting 'The Supper at Emmaus' (Plate C) showing how it illustrates his art.
13. The painting by the expressionist artist Emil Nilde (1867-1956) of the 'Crucifixion' (Plate D) is striking in many ways. Comment on its style and significance.
15. Take any prominent piece of architecture in Malta (an auberge, church, palace, public building etc.), describe it and discuss its style and elements of aesthetic interest.
16. The modern artist Paul Klee wrote that the function of art is 'to reveal the reality that is behind things'. What do you think he meant? Do you agree with him? If you do, give reasons; if not, describe what you believe to be the proper function or functions of art.

Plate C

Plate D



UNIVERSITY OF MALTA
Intermediate Matriculation Examination
SYLLABUS FOR 1993
SYSTEMS OF KNOWLEDGE

1. The examination will consist of two papers and candidates must show competence in each. In addition, a project must be submitted as indicated below.
2. Books listed as **Recommended Reading** are intended to indicate the range of topics candidates are expected to be able to tackle. Candidates are not required to have read any of the books listed as **Further Reading.** They will, however, gain familiarity with approaches helpful to establishing interdisciplinary linkages related to central themes (e.g. power) and applications to the Maltese context, by consulting some of them. Teachers may refer their students to as many, or as few, of them as they think fit.
3. Questions will be set in English, but may be answered either in Maltese or in English.

PAPER I (3 hours)

Candidates will be required to answer three questions, one from each section. 35% of the marks will be awarded for this paper.

1. Man and Symbols

(a) Thinking and learning,

(b) Language and other media of communication.

Recommended Reading:

E. De Bono, *De Bono's Thinking Course,* Ariel, 1985.

J. Nisbet & J. Shucksmith, *Learning Strategies,* Routledge Chapman & Hall, 1986.

M. Serres, *Hermes: Literature, Science, Philosophy,* J.V. Harari, & D.F. Bell, (ed), John Hopkins, 1983.

Further Reading:

P.T. Geach, *Reason and Argument,* Blackwell, 1977.

R.J. Kreyche, *Logic for Undergraduates,* Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1970.

A. Borg, *Ilsienna: Studju Grammatiku,* Malta, Ħas-Sajjied, 1988.

2. Man and Environment

(a) Global ecosystems; world human population, environment and society; natural resources; threats to the environment. Special reference to Malta where appropriate.

(b) Government (rule of law and division of powers) and the principal institutions of social life.

Recommended Reading:

B.J. Nebel, *Environmental Science: the way the world works,* Prentice-Hall Inc., 1986 (2nd edition).
Aristotle, *Politics,* Penguin, 1981.

Further Reading:

G.T. Miller, *Living in the Environment: an Introduction to Environmental Science,* Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1988 (5th edition).
J. Turk & A. Turk, *Environmental Science,* Saunders College Publishing, 1984 (3rd edition).
I. Illich, *Tools for Conviviality,* Calder & Boyars, 1973.
E.F. Schumacher, *A Guide for the Perplexed,* Har-Row, 1978.
J. Vanek (ed.), *Self-Management: Economic Liberation of Man,* Penguin, 1975.

3. Man and History

The Mediterranean and its role in the world.

Recommended Reading:

E. Bradford, *Mediterranean: Portrait of a Sea,* Hodder & Stoughton, 1971.

Further Reading:

F. Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II,* Fontana, 1975.
A.P. Vella, *Storja ta' Malta,* Klabb Kotba Maltin, 1974.

PAPER II (3 hours)

Candidates will be required to answer three questions, one from each section. 35% of the marks will be awarded for this paper.

1. Set Texts – Man and Culture

These books are for compulsory study. Candidates are required to have a thorough knowledge of their structure and to be able to produce reflections on their form and content on the basis of personal reading.

Camoens, *Lusiads,* Penguin Classics.
Shusaku Endo, *Silence,* Sceptre.
Nagiub Mahfouz, *Midaq Alley,* Heinemann.
Victor Xuereb (tr), *Odissea,* Department of Information, Malta.

2. Scientific Methods and History of Science

Facts and hypotheses, achievements and limitations of past and present models, divisions (physics, chemistry, biology, earth sciences, etc.) and correlations, impact on society and relationship to other fields of knowledge.

Recommended Reading:
J. Bronowski, *The Ascent of Man,* Futura.

Further Reading:
M. Goldstein & I. Goldstein, *The Experience of Science: An Interdisciplinary Approach,* Plenum Press, 1984.
A. Koestler, *The Sleepwalkers: A History of Man's Changing Vision of the Universe,* Hutchinson, 1959.
C. Sagan, *Broca's Brain: The Romance of Science,* Hodder, 1980.

3. Artistic Aims and Achievements

Comprehension of non-verbal messages, aesthetic perception and the different languages of art.

Recommended Reading:
K. Clark, *Civilization,* Penguin.

Further Reading:
J. Attali, *Noise,* University of Minnesota Press, 1985.
M. Buhagiar, *The Iconography of the Maltese Islands 1400-1900,* Progress Press Co. Ltd., 1987.
W.H. Gombrich, *The Story of Art,* Phaidon Press.
F. Haskell, (ed.), *Patrons and Painters,* Yale University Press, 1980.

PROJECT

Technology and the Quality of Life

A maximum of 30% of the marks will be awarded for the project.

AIMS

The aim of the project is to achieve an understanding of what technology is ('*application of knowledge for making and doing purposeful and useful things*' – UNESCO) and its requirement of other knowledge besides scientific (e.g. skills in design, evaluation of solutions, etc.).

ASSESSMENT

Assessment will be of a technological project, including:

1. the production of an object or programme; and
2. an account of its making, i.e.:
   (a) problem to be solved, relevance and constraints;
   (b) ideas (thought of, discussed, researched) for solution;
   (c) design (rough sketch, drawing, description, or first prototype) of solution;
   (d) construction;
   (e) testing;
   (f) evaluation; and
   (g) display/modification.

The project is intended to provide candidates with an opportunity of exercising the required skills in a relatively relaxed environment and is therefore more likely to lead to the production of interdisciplinary material characterized by some degree of integration. It should also relieve candidates of some of the examination tension, since the marks awarded for the project will reduce the percentage required for a pass in the examination.

Projects can be carried out by individuals or groups of not more than five candidates, provided that the personal contribution of each member of the group can be identified. Descriptions of projects must be submitted to the Board of Examiners for approval at least fifteen months before the examination to which they refer.

Recommended Reading:

T.R. De Gregori, *A Theory of Technology,* Iowa State University Press, 1987.

Further Reading:

J.K. Feibleman, *Technology and Reality,* Martinus Nijhoff, 1982.
M. Pirsig, *Zen and the Art of Motor-cycle Maintenance,* Bantam, 1976.

Further Information Regarding the Project

Assessment

In assessing the project, account will be taken of the candidates' ability to:

1. describe and apply facts, principles and concepts related to the production of the object or programme;
2. give evidence of graphical and other communication skills necessary for describing the object or programme;
3. identify problems which lend themselves to solution through practical technological activity;
4. identify the resources required for solving practical technological problems;
5. produce and interpret data by means of diagrams, charts, graphs, experimental results;
6. think up and record ideas as likely solutions to problems;
7. describe the interaction between technology and the needs of society; and
8. record the production of the object or the development of the programme.

The level expected by the Board of Examiners in the project is comparable to that of a Craft, Design and Technology (CDT) course in the fifth and final year of secondary school.

Approval Of Proposed Projects

Projects should be thought up by the candidates and short descriptions of them should be submitted on the appropriate form to the Board of Examiners for approval by the following dates:

For First Session 1993: Friday, 20th March 1992
For Second Session 1993: Friday, 23rd October 1992.

Candidates will be informed whether their Project has been approved or

otherwise through the school or individually as the case may be.

The Systems of Knowledge project can form part of a broader project or undertaking of whatever nature so long as the Systems of Knowledge project is a distinct element of the whole activity.

Procedure For Assessment

Candidates presented by School. Assessment of each candidate's performance in the project will be school-based. Tutors will submit their mark, through the Head of School, to the Matriculation Office, University of Malta. The school should make the projects available to the Board of Examiners for the purpose of carrying out the moderating exercise. Each candidate is required to be present during this exercise to answer any question the examiners may put.

The projects of candidates attending a school may be carried out at the school or at home but they must be made available at the school for the purpose of the moderation exercise already referred to.

The assessment mark for the completed project must be submitted by schools by the following dates:

For First Session 1993: Friday, 19th March 1993;
For Second Session 1993: Friday, 22nd October 1993.

Private Candidates. The projects presented by private candidates will be assessed directly by the Board of Examiners. Such projects should be readily portable and made available at the University for assessment on the following dates:

For First Session 1993: on 11th and 12th March 1993;
For Second Session 1993: on 14th and 15th October 1993.

However, a private candidate may join a school-based group for the project if the school authorities permit it. Such permission must be granted in writing by the Head of School and copied to the Board of Examiners. In such cases, the private candidate's project assessment will be school-based.

RE – SIT OF THE EXAMINATION

Candidates failing in the examination are not obliged to present a *different* project when they re-sit the examination. In such cases the mark obtained for the first session project will remain the project mark applicable for subsequent sessions of the examination. In interpreting the word *different* in the first sentence of this paragraph, the Board of Examiners' decision is final.

Notes On Project: Technology And The Quality Of Life

In order to identify a direction or directions in which students should work we include the following notes. These are not to be taken as hard and fast rules but simply as helpful hints.

1. **Static and dynamic models** made of suitable materials will be accepted. These should simulate an actual operation or part of the logic or process of part of the entity being dealt with. Models are 'making' activities which show creativity, ingenuity, mental concepts, manipulative skills, art, and even courage.
2. **Sketches and diagrams** should represent not only the outer shape but also the inner and outer functions of the object or the process. This is also a 'making' activity which involves scientific concepts, artistry, manipulation and creativity.
3. **Handwriting:** A short part of the project is to be handwritten by the candidate. After all, handwriting is a technical process which includes artistry, manipulative skills, and a degree of originality. It is also a 'making' activity.
4. **The script** must be a straight-forward and objective description of the functions, logic and processes involved.
5. Making use of ready-made *photos and videos* and, of course, *photocopies* does not constitute a 'making' activity. These are merely evidence of one's ability to select information. One's creativity is here open to discussion.
6. **Typed copies** will not be regarded as a 'making' activity, but only as a process for improving one's presentation by the use of a technical device made by someone else.
7. In **Group Projects** each individual contribution must be clearly identifiable. However, candidates taking part must know every part of the project.
8. **No photocopies of already published material** are to be used. Sketches and diagrams are to be drawn by the candidates. If computer-drawn diagrams are used, proof that these were originated and generated by the candidate must be given through a demonstration.
9. If **photographs** need to be used, these should preferably be taken by the candidates. Photographic ability and knowledge of the operation of a camera may enhance a project.
10. If ***video cameras*** are used, they should be operated and handled by the candidates. The script and narration should also be the students' whenever possible.
11. In projects using ***computer software***, candidates must show knowledge of the basic processing of information through the computer hardware.
12. **All students should have some knowledge of human behaviour** in a technological society/environment and how society and individuals including oneself react to work and leisure in our post-industrial age.
13. **Historical information** should be kept to a minimum; great attention should be given, instead, to the working logic of the entity being dealt with.

14. In carrying out the project, bear the following in mind:
    a. Reasons for shapes and structures.
    b. Logic of shapes, structures or processes.
    c. Operation of individual parts or a system.
    d. Stresses involved in parts – weaknesses, forces.
    e. Manufacturing methods. Metals used.
    f. Special tools required. Operation and logic of tools.
    g. Materials – choice and behaviour.
    h. Improving design possibilities.
    i. Applications.
    j. Sequence of putting it together.
    k. Substitutes or equivalent possibilities.
    l. Limitations.
    m. Costings – competition.
    n. Completion time – dates.
    o. Man-hours involved – work distribution.
    p. Guarantees, reliability, built-in obsolescence.
    q. Selling price.
    r. Operating manuals required.
    s. Safety precautions – protection – standards.
    t. Packing methods – transportation.
    u. Insurances and added costs.
    v. Various environments the product operates in.
15. **Finally,** the candidates are advised to 'just look around them' and try to appreciate that every single item or particle involves a wonderful hidden technical principle, with impressive logic, which is waiting to be identified. Candidates have selected impressive projects of their own choice, which will bring to life all the hidden operations. Look for the logic; it is all around you waiting to be extracted and shown by model, sketches and words.

public transportation and the transmission of industrial power. The inadvertent nature of the long-term changes brought about by science is perhaps most strikingly illustrated by the fact that they have begun to limit the realization of the values belonging to the period and the society which brought modern science into being. The individualism of men in modern times, and the value accorded to personal endeavour, have provided much of the driving force behind the development of modern science, both directly through the desire to make a personal exploration of nature and indirectly through the connection of science with the movements in which those values found an expression, such as the voyages of geographical discovery, the agrarian and industrial revolutions. But amongst other things, the development of the applications of science has more and more set a limit to the realization of those values. The steam engine, and the new textile machinery, ended the day of the individual hand-loom weaver, and subsequent developments made the technical units of industry even larger, drawing the individual into a composite organization, which circumscribed his activities. The electrical generating station at its inception served a large region, eliminating a number of individual steam engines, and later it was found to be more efficient when operated, as part of a national unit, through grid connections with other stations over a country as a whole. Finally, when atomic energy appeared, it was considered to be a development too precious and powerful for private use, and it has remained a state project in all countries, even in those where the value accorded to private endeavour is most deeply rooted.

In the modern world science has led mainly to the secularization of thought and the development of utilitarian applications, but it has had some influence upon human values and standards of judgement. Attempts have been made by a number of scientists, particularly biologists, to derive an ethical code from the theory of evolution, but it is probable that the scientific method has had more influence upon human evaluations than any particular theory. The scientific method relies upon rational arguments rather than emotional appeals, and it suggests that empirical evidence should decide between rival viewpoints, practices which have become perhaps a little more general in personal relationships than they were a century or so ago. It is notable that the practice of settling differences of opinion by duelling began to decline in the early decades of the nineteenth century, 'the scientific century' as the men of the period termed it,

and that the decline was most marked amongst the middle classes of Britain and France, the section of the world community which was then the most scientifically minded. The tendency of men imbued with the scientific attitude to adopt a rational and a humanistic point of view is illustrated by the opposition of the British scientsits of the mid-nineteenth century to the policies of Eyre, the governor of Jamaica, who repressed a disturbance there in 1865 in a particularly arbitrary and barbaric fashion. Writing of the incident in his *Life of John Bright*, Trevelyan remarks:

'Except for Tyndal, the men of the finest scientific mind, – Darwin, Huxley, Mill, Leslie Stephen, Sir Charles Lyell, – ranged themselves on the side of law and humanity, whilst those whose cue it sometimes was to complain of the hardness of the scientific attitude to life, – Carlyle, Ruskin, Kingsley, Tennyson, – showed by their own conduct how prone sentimentalists are to inconsiderate worship of brute force and the "strong man".'

Another feature of the scientific method, which perhaps has had some influence upon human evaluations, is its dynamic and inventive quality. The scientific method is essentially a means of discovering new phenomena, and of formulating new theories, so that the sciences constitute ever-expanding systems of knowledge, old theories being overthrown constantly by new ones, so long as that method is practised. The American authority, Sarton, has written in this connection:

'Science always was revolutionary and heterodox; it is its very essence to be so; it ceases to be so only when it is asleep.'

Men with a feeling for this aspect of science tend to be moved by forward-looking values, and to be impatient of institutions which have much inertia. Joseph Priestly, we remember, 'saw reason to embrace what is generally called the heterdox side of almost every question'. Discoursing upon the relations between the Catholic Church and the sciences, Priestly remarked that, in the degree to which the Pope patronized science and polite literature,

'he was cherishing an enemy in disguise. And the English hierarchy (if there be any thing unsound in its constitution) has equal reason to tremble even at an air pump or an electrical machine.'

However, the influence of the scientific method upon the men who espouse it, for the most part, has been small. Scientists generally have adopted the values of the society to which they have belonged, even in the cases where those values have been detrimental to the advance

of science, as in Germany under the Third Reich.

Similar considerations hold, to a greater or lesser degree, for the other changes brought about by science, and for the development of science itself. We cannot regard science as an entirely self-moving historical phenomenon, nor as a completely autonomous agent of historical of historical change, even though it has a tradition and a momentum of its own. The development of science has only been one of a number of historical movements that have formed an interconnected complex, in which science until recently has been of minor force. The science of a given age has belonged, not only to its own tradition with its own methods, values, and accumulated knowledge, but also to its own historical period, in which other movements have made their own impact upon it. In comparatively static periods of history, such as the middle ages, science has not displayed a notable development, whilst in expansive periods science has often thrived. Moreover, within a given period, there have been fashions, hesitations, and abrupt changes in the development of science, which do not appear to have been due to internal causes. In the modern period of history we have that curious stagnation of science during the first half of the eighteenth century, which affected chemistry and optics in particular, and electicity to a smaller degree.

Such happenings indicate that scientific activity has been directed now into one channel, and then into another, and that upon occasion the forces promoting science were relaxed, or even reversed. In a general way, it may perhaps be said that the practical problems of a given historical period have had an influence upon the empirical enquiries undertaken by the scientists of the time, while the intellectual interests of the age have influenced the form in which scientific theories were expressed. Thus the geographical explorations of the sixteenth century stimulated the search for methods of determining the longitude, and promoted the study of astronomical and mechanical problems which such methods entailed. Similarly the theory of natural selection was influenced by the *laissez-faire* current of English thought during the nineteenth century, an influence which Darwin acknowledged indirectly by specifying his debt to the views of Malthus. The division, however, has not been rigid. Practical problems have stimulated the rise of new theories, as in the case of the theory of thermodynamics which arose in part from the study of steam engine problems, while intellectual currents have orientated empirical scientific enquiry into specific channels,

as in the case of the romantic and historical German philosophy which promoted the study of embryology amongst the Germans of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

In the past the forces promoting the growth of science were not consciously directed, and only the results which those forces produced were immediately apparent. Scientists at the turn of the seventeenth century appreciated 'the present languid state of natural philosophy', though the causes of that state remained obscure. In recent times, however, science has become more consciously and directly orientated into specific fields, the choice of which has passed more and more out of the hands of the scientists themselves. As scientific research grew more complex, the amateur tradition in science declined, and research became professionalized and externally directed, except in the academic sphere, through the setting up of research institutions governed by outside bodies, such as industrial firms and governmental ministries.

These bodies in the main have been concerned primarily with the applications of science, and for a number of decades now they have provided the bulk of the resources devoted to scientific research. At first they sought mainly the improvement of industry, agriculture, and medicine, as illustrated in Britain by the formation of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research in 1917 and the Agricultural and Medical Research Councils a few years later. Subsequently, however, researches upon subjects of military interest have become more and more stressed. The Civil Estimates, and other publications, indicate that the monetary resources expended by the British government upon military research and development increased sixty-seven-fold, from the year 1936-7 to the year 1950-1, while over the same period the amounts devoted to research and development in the industrial field increased tenfold, in medicine ninefold, and agriculture eightfold. By comparison, government expenditure on the universities, where most of the fundamental scientific research is still carried out, increased nearly sixfold over the same period. These figures are indicative of the general trends within the science of our time, and of the character which applied scientific activity is now assuming, countries which are industrially less advanced perhaps devoting a greater proportion of their resources to industrial research, and the more industrialized states allocating perhaps a greater proportion to researches of a military nature.

Such developments have had their effect upon fundamental science. They have created, for example, a greater demand for atomic scientists, and they have given an impetus to fundamental researches in the particular field of nuclear physics. They have also clothed those researches with a veil of secrecy, which hitherto has been alien to the scientific tradition. Again they have placed greater premiums upon the intellectual conformity of the scientist to the values and viewpoints of the dominant group within the particular society to which he belongs, a trend which has been accompanied by the association of some scientific theories with the one or the other of the two opposing ideologies of the mid-twentieth century.

Throughout history scientific theories have been favoured or opposed, apart from considerations based upon the criteria of the scientific method, according to the degree to which those theories have been congruent, or at variance, with the generally accepted beliefs of their time and place. Such judgements, and the actions based upon them, have been particularly conspicuous during those periods of history when two major movements of comparable strengths have stood in opposition to one another. During the period of the Protestant Reformation and the Catholic Counter-reformation, for example, the Copernican and Prolemaic theories were often judged by criteria which were wholly external to the scientific method. A not dissimilar situation obtained in the mid-twentieth century, though the two movements be secular, and in the 1950s, for example, theories of genetics aroused passions akin to those inflamed by astronomical theories during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It is a measure of the historical importance which science has assumed in modern times, however, that the scientific revolution made little or no contribution to the force of either the Reformation or the Counter-reformation, whilst it is generally recognized in our time that science has become one of the important determinants of the strength of any major historical movement during the twentieth century.

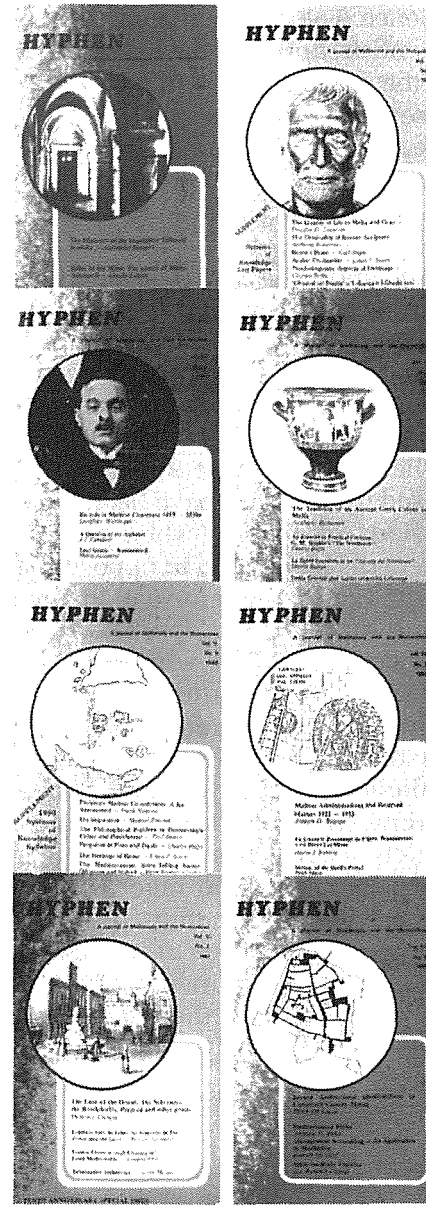
STEPHEN F. MASON, formerly Senior Lecturer in Chemistry at the University of Exeter, is the author of *A History of the Sciences.*

HYPHEN

A Journal of Melitensia and the Humanities

Minn meta ħareġ l-ewwel darba fl-1977, *Hyphen* ġie stabbilit bħala perjodiku akkademiku ta' interess kemm għall-istudjuż u kemm għall-istudent. L-artikli dwar kull aspett ta' melitensia huma miktuba minn awturi Maltin u barranin bħal A. Luttrell, A. Hoppen, D. G. Lochart, J. Boissevain, G. Wettinger, A. Bonanno, V. Mallia Milanes, A. Bonnici, O. Friggieri, u ħafna oħrajn. *Hyphen* huwa wkoll ta' għajnuna indispensabbli għall-istudent li qiegħed ihejji ruħu f'suġġetti ta' livell avanzat, speċjalment għal min se jagħmel l-eżami ta' l-Oqsma ta' l-Għerf *(Systems of Knowledge)*.

Hyphen jista' jinkiseb mil-Liċeo l-Ġdid Ġ.F. Abela, l-Imsida, kull numru 60ċ, jew Volum (b'sitt numri) Lm3.25ċ (posta mħallsa). Jistgħu jinkisbu wkoll ħarġiet ta' l-imgħoddi (60ċ kull kopja).



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AĦNA SINJURI*

J.J. Camilleri

Sas-sittinijiet, ir-rumanz Malti baqa' wieħed tradizzjonali. Bażikament kien rumanz storiku għax il-kittieba tradizzjonali ppreżentaw l-eroj storiku fi sfond storiku. Bilkemm ukoll ma gglorifikawx il-passat kolonjali. Influwenzati żżejjed kif kienu minn sentimenti qawwija reliġjużi, nazzjonali u patrijottiċi ma esprimewx ruħhom bi ħsibijiet għal kollox ħielsa u indipendenti, l-aktar meta naqsu li janalizzaw il-preżent li fih għexu bil-problemi soċjali u politiċi tiegħu. Riżultat ta' dan kollu kien li ma setgħux ma jsibux irwieħhom magħluqin f'ċirku ta' konvenzjoni. Ma nistgħux iżda ngħidu li Ġużè Muscat Azzopardi u Anton Manwel Caruana, l-ewwel esponenti tar-rumanz storiku, injoraw għal kollox aspetti ta' natura politika u soċjali, iżda waqt li investigaw il-passat ħarbu l-preżent. Bir-rumanzi ta' Ġ. Aquilina u Ġino Muscat Azzopardi, is-sitwazzjoni baqgħet bejn wieħed u ieħor waħda statika u bażikament storika. Fl-intervall żvillupaw ir-rumanzi gotiċi, fosthom dawk ta' Arturo Caruana, A.E. Borg u Ġ. Cumbo. Dawn hejjew it-triq biex wieħed jibda jinnota t-tbatijiet soċjali u ambjentali. Sar żvillup bil-kitbiet ta' Ġużè Chetcuti u Frans Ebejer għaliex dawn ħarsu lejn is-soċjetà ta' żmienhom b'enfasi fuq ir-realiżmu. Iżda billi baqgħu ma ndaħlux u identifikaw irwieħhom, ir-realiżmu tagħhom baqa' wieħed oġġettiv. Ir-rumanzieri riformisti bħal Ġ. Ellul Mercer, Ġużè Bonnici u Ġwann Mamo kienu l-osservaturi kritiċi li talbu inkjesti tal-problemi. Iżda l-istħarriġ ta' dawn baqa' wkoll oġġettiv. Il-moviment li daħal fil-qalba tar-relazzjonijiet soċjali u li tkellem ċar u mingħajr ekwivoċi sab l-esponenti tiegħu fis-sittinijiet bil-kitbiet ta' J.J. Camilleri, Lino Spiteri u Frans Sammut. Bir-raġun li dak il-moviment tqies bħala wieħed rivoluzzjonarju.

Aħna Sinjuri (1965) jitqies l-ewwel rumanz soċjo-politiku modern, "dawl ġdid, arja friska fuq tradizzjoni twila u għanja, iżda eżawrita, ta' rumanzi storiċi." L-awtur mhux biss ikkommetta ruħu soċjalment meta ttratta l-aspetti tal-ħajja Maltija, il-mard gravi tas-soċjetà u r-

* Dan l-artiklu ntbagħat mill-awtur bi tweġiba għal għadd ta' mistoqsijiet li sarulu mill-edituri.

relazzjoni bejn il-klassijiet, iżda wkoll għax, għall-ewwel darba, l-awtur ma tiġħemx il-kliem u ssogra meta tkellem daqshekk bil-miftuħ u b'dak il-għadab.

Kritika

"*Aħna Sinjuri* għandu fih biżżejjed biex il-qarrej jieqaf jaħseb ftit fuq dak li għandu xi jgħid J.J. Camilleri dwar Malta u niesha ta' żmienna. Ried imiss il-polz; jiftaqad il-ħajja ta' mdawaru; jara x'radda qed jaqbad il-moħriet fix-xogħol ta' kuljum; ried jistqasi: x'inhu u għalfejn dan kollu li nara u nħoss madwari?"

Il-Malti

"F'*Aħna Sinjuri* l-ewwel rumanz ' ta' għadab bil-Malti', J.J. Camilleri jesplora l-ġlieda bejn il-klassijiet f'Malta, il-ħakma ta' reliġjożità reazzjonarja fuq taqsimiet sħaħ tal-popolazzjoni..."

Problemi ta' Llum

"J.J. Camilleri is the novelist who has come closest to ending the dichotomy. His *Aħna Sinjuri* dealt with most aspects of Maltese life and went uninhibitedly to the core of social relations, using individual characters as representatives of social classes. It was the first, and still the only modern socio-political novel."

Lino Spiteri – 'Maltese Literature Dichotomy'

Kritika aktar reċenti tippreferi tfittex dak li jitqiesu bħala d-difetti tar-rumanz u telabora fuqhom. Il-kritika ewlenija hija li l-valur letterarju tar-rumanz jinħonoq mid-dettalji żejda li m'għandhomx x'jaqsmu mal-ġrajja u għalhekk hemm devjazzjoni, kummenti żejda, deskrizzjonijiet twal. Imħabba dawn ir-raġunijiet l-awtur huwa ppreżentat bħala l-awtur-alla, jew dittatur illi fl-omnipotenza tiegħu "jidher xi filosfu, għalliem, moralista, predikatur, surmast, profeta, qassis, konfessur jew teologu." Għalhekk il-preżenza tiegħu tinħass il-ħin kollu u tikkontrolla lill-qarrejja. Kritika oħra serja hija illi n-narrattiva ta' bixra analitika tagħti aktar importanza lill-azzjoni, illi din tidħol skond il-bżonn u biex taqdi lill-kittieb, milli lill-karatterizzazzjoni. Il-karattri, skond il-kritiku, huma manipulati mill-awtur għax jilgħab bihom kif irid hu. Igħid ukoll li hemm enfasi fuq il-kumbinazzjoni u l-fataliżmu u li l-interventi ma jħallux lill-qarrej bil-kurzità għax jispjegaw wisq. Madanakollu, il-kritiku ma janalizzax ir-rumanz fl-isfond tiegħu ambjentali u fil-kuntest ta' l-iżvilupp storiku tar-rumanz Malti.

Charles Briffa, *Neo*, Diċembru, 1990

Fil-qasam letterarju hemm wisgħa għall-opinjonijiet differenti u għalhekk sewwa wieħed janalizza kull kritika li ssir u jiddeċiedi meta l-kritika tkun kostruttiva, distruttiva jew jekk din issirx b'ċerta aggressività. Kull kittieb, bħal kull artist ieħor, jesprimi ruħu bl-istil tiegħu u m'hux ristrett b'normi u ideat ta' ħaddieħor. Qatt m'hemm lok illi moħħ jippredomina fuq ieħor.

'Genre' Ġdid

Il-ġrajja f'*Aħna Sinjuri* m'hix waħda kumplikata, iżda tieħu d-drammatiċità tagħha sew sew għaliex hija sempliċi u realistika u għaliex il-kittieb xtaq iġiegħel lill-qarrejja jaħsbu meta ttrattahom bħala qarrejja intelliġenti. Ma kellux għalfejn, u fil-fatt lanqas ma pprova jkun didattiku u jimponi ruħu. Dwar l-istil biżżejjed wieħed jinnota l-kelma u l-idjoma mexxejja, l-importanza li tingħata lid-djalogar, l-użu ta' xi kliem tekniċi, id-deskrizzjonijiet u l-kummenti qosra, l-atmosfera u l-kulur lokali wżat bħala sfond, il-bini tal-karattri u l-eliminazzjoni ta' l-eroj tradizzjonali.

X'inhuma l-elementi li jagħmlu r-rumanz *'genre'* ġdid?

L-ewwel ħaġa wieħed irid iżomm quddiem għajnejh illi sa dak iż-żmien il-kittieba Maltin donnhom beżgħu li jaljenaw jew joffendu s-sentimenti ta' l-ordni stabbilita. Imħabba dik il-prudenza kienu selettivi fl-għażla tat-temi u għalhekk limitati fl-ideat. *Aħna Sinjuri* ma baqax limitat u mal-pubblikazzjoni tiegħu, il-proża Maltija kellha għax theżheż is-sisien politiċi u reliġjużi li fuqhom hija mibnija s-soċjetà għax għall-ewwel darba tkellmet bla ħabi u fil-miftuħ u kixfet l-ipokresija li eżiżtiet f'dawk l-oqsma. Ir-rumanz soċjo-politiku ġdid kiser it-tradizzjoni, tbiegħed mill-konformità u l-kompromess imdorrijin bihom. Mal-pubblikazzjoni tiegħu bdiet isseħħ ukoll bidla fl-atteġjament tal-kittieba l-ġodda.

Jitqies ukoll ġdid għaliex il-kittieb *issensibbilizza ruħu ma' l-ispirtu taż-żmien (zeizgest)* u għalhekk l-evoluzzjoni ma saritx b'mod artifiċjali. Kif igħid fid-daħla tar-rumanz, huma l-ħaddiema u l-foqra u l-ħajja ta' kuljum ta' madwarna li jagħmlu l-istorja tal-pajjiż u li din hija daqshekk ieħor u mhux anqas eċċitanti "mill-ġrajjiet tat-Torok , tal-Furbani u tal-Kavallieri." L-ispirtu taż-żmien jintrabat ukoll ma' l-ambjent, mal-kultura u għalhekk il-protagonisti jgħixu ħajjithom sew sew fl-ambjent ta' żmienhom – it-taqlib politiku, il-livell baxx ta' għajxien u l-kundizzjonijiet ħżiena soċjali, it-taqtigħ ta' qalb fuq ix-xogħol, l-isfruttar tal-ħaddiema, l-inganni u l-imbrolji li jherru s-soċjetà. Għalhekk il-ġrajja fir-rumanz hija ambjentata f'naħat

mhux tradizzjonalment imdorrijin bihom. Mill-aspett ta' l-*ambjent*, p.e. l-isfond tat-tarzna, ir-rumanz huwa wkoll ġdid. Din il-forma ta' kitba ġdida hija wkoll ikkaratterizzata bis-sinċerità u bl-espressjoni persunali għaliex il-kittieba l-ġodda huma sensittivi u għax iżommu għajnejhom miftuħin ma jistgħux ma jkunux kritiċi. Il-kittieb għandu wisq xi jgħid, aktar milli jtenni nisġa ta' ġrajja. It-temi tar-rumanz jaslu għand il-qarrejja permezz ta' l-imġiba, tal-kummenti, u tad-djalogar tal-karattri u fl-isfond ta' l-ambjentazzjoni lokali.

Ambjentazzjoni

L-atmosfera fl-isfond ta' ambjent mhux tas-soltu li fih iseħħu l-ġrajjiet hija karatteristika oħra tar-rumanz. Għall-ewwel darba nsibu l-kwadru tat-tarzna, bil-ħwienet tax-xogħol, bl-uffiċini u l-irkejjen tagħha. Tinħass l-atmosfera taż-żminijiet ta' bidla, it-theddid tas-sensji, ta' inkwiet industrijali u attività trejdunjonistika. Il-ġrajja sseħħ mit-Teatru Manoel, għall-funderija, għall-fabbrika ta' Ġorġ, teħodna fil-port waqt il-ħatt tal-merkanzija fi żmien il-gwerra waqt attakk mill-ajru, fuq il-luzzu għal sajda qrib Filfla. Il-festa parrokkjali, nhar l-Imnarja fil-Buskett, fuq il-lanċa tal-kuntrabandu, il-ħajja fil-kerrejja, il-mewt tat-tifel Twannie u inċidenti oħra għandhom lewn lokali.

Il-karattri

Il-karattri jistgħu jitqiesu bħala tipi, la suwed ħafna u lanqas bojod iżżejjed. Ninu Pulis, p.e., jitbiegħed mill-forma ta' l-eroj tradizzjonali. Imkien ma niltaqgħu ma' l-eroj ideali għaliex l-imġiba tiegħu tinbidel il-ħin kollu maċ-ċirkustanzi li jinqalgħu. Jiġu waqtiet li jsir bniedem ieħor. Min igħix f'soċjetà mħawda, min jiddependi minn ħaddieħor u min jiġi wiċċ imb'wiċċ mat-tentazzjoni ftit li xejn jista' jkun eroj. Il-bniedem jista' jirreżisti, jista' f'ċerti waqtiet ikun ukoll eroj, iżda jista' wkoll iċedi u jaqa' meta jsib ruħu fit-tiġrib. Ninu Pulis, Marija, it-tabib Fredu u l-oħrajn kollha huma umani, ħajjin, nies tad-demm u l-laħam. Jekk juru inkonsistenza fl-imġiba tagħhom għaliex huma karattri realistiċi. Ninu fil-bidu tal-ġrajja m'hux Ninu tat-tmiem, lanqas Dun Anġ Chircop ma jżomm it-tradizzjoni tal-qassis sempliċi u impekkabbli mdorrijin biha. Hu stess jistagħġeb u jintebah li d-dinja m'għadhiex li kienet meta jgħid: "Fiex wasalna biex tkellmu qassis hekk?"

Ta' min jinnota li l-karattri jimponu rwieħhom wieħed fuq l-ieħor, ħadd minnhom m'hu iżolat, u jinfluwenzaw dak li jiġri matul il-ġrajja fil-kumpless tagħha. Donnhom ukoll jiproġettaw irwieħhom fi gruppi.

Hekk, p.e., hemm il-ġemgħa tal-Kaċiċċlu, iddominata minn Pawlu Mifsud innifsu u tinkludi l-ħawwada, bħal uliedu, Ġorġ u Indri, lil Turu u lil Kelinu. Dawn ikaxkru wrajhom u jinfluwenzaw lil Marija, u lil żewġha t-Tabib Fredu. Hemm imbagħad il-ġgajta moderata ta' Ninu li fiha nsibu lil Dwardu, lil Wiġi, lill-familja ta' Xandru. Hemm ukoll gruppi oħrajn, bħal dak tat-tarzna b'Valerju, Koli u Deidun.

Problemi

Il-ġrajja hija fuq kollox waħda ta' mħabba. Hemm l-imħabba leċita u sabiħa kif issimbolizzata fl-imġiba ta' Xandrina, hemm dik illeċita riżultat taċ-ċirkustanzi u d-destin li tiżvillupa fil-marda moderna tat-'trianglu'. Marija u Ninu jiltaqgħu fil-maltemp u dan ma jawguralhomx tajjeb għall-ġejjieni. Imħabbithom tibqa' bħal blanzun bla ma jwarrad. Hemm għadd ta' raġunijiet għal dan il-falliment, fosthom l-istess karattru tat-tfajla. Sabiħa, imħajma, ma jonqosha xejn, iżda ma tafx x'inhu tajjeb għaliha u sew sew xi trid. Ninu jipprova jiġġustifika ruħu għall-imġiba tiegħu għax għalih hemm imħabba bla żwieġ. Iġħid illi l-hena ma tinbeniex fuq il-liġijiet, fuq l-użanzi u l-preċetti. Għalhekk ma jaċċettax il-kundanna tad-dinja għaliex Alla biss jagħmel il-ħaqq.

Hemm ittrattata l-problema ta' l-artifiċjalità. Marija tispiċċa miżżewġa lit-tabib Fredu, li tassew iħobb lil martu iżda jirreċita l-parti ta' 'aħna sinjuri' biex ikun jista' jgħammex u jżommha mal-klikka tas-sinjuri. Jispiċċa l-ħabs ħtija ta' dan. Ninu jiżżewweġ lil Xandrina. Hija tħobbu, hu ma jħobbhiex. Marija u Ninu jerġgħu jintebhu b'xulxin, iżda jibqgħu mnikktin. L-istess ġralu l-Kaċiċċlu. Twieled fqir, bis-sogru u bl-opportunitajiet li nqalgħu sar sinjur. Bħala sinjur mill-ġodda seta' nbidel fil-bixra ta' barra, iżda baqa' sew sew ir-raġel goff f'imġibtu, fil-karattru tiegħu, u fil-mod kif jaħsibha.

L-awtur juri li joffendi ruħu bil-kilba ta' l-ispekulaturi, bl-imġiba ta' min hu prepotenti, bl-injurant f'impjiegi għoljin, bil-korruzzjoni u bil-bażużli. Hemm għadd ta' eżempji li juru kif tħabbat il-qalb tal-kittieb. Ta' min isemmi l-inċident ta' Fidiel u missieru li waqgħu vittma ta' l-ispekulaturi, ta' Xandru Bugeja li ċċaħħad mid-dar li kienet tmiss lilu b'mod skandaluż, l-indħil tas-Surġent Manġjun li ried sehemu, il-mod kif l-awtoritajiet ittrattaw mal-korrispondent Ingliż li kellu mnieħru twil u għamel mistoqsijiet imbarazzanti.

Hemm temi oħrajn li ġew itrattati b'mod aktar indirett. Xandru u martu jirrassenjaw ruħhom mal-faqar u jqisuh biċċa minn xortihom. Il-fqir għandu dellu tqil u n-niket jiġri warajh. Dik it-tema li l-fqir tista'

biss tgħinu billi tagħtih il-karità għax il-faqar ma jistax jinqered, kienet sa ftit ilu waħda aċċettata u wkoll reliġjuża. Xandru ħarab mingħalih il-faqar tiegħu billi emigra.

Hemm ir-referenza għad-destin, l-'*ate*' jew il-ġenn li l-allat Griegi kienu jiddilettaw bih. Il-bniedem ma jgħixx ħajtu kif ifassalha hu. Bosta drabi huma ċ-ċirkustanzi, u n-nies li tagħmilha magħhom li jiddeterminawhielek. Hekk ġralhom Ninu u Marija.

Il-flus iġibu magħhom is-setgħa u s-setgħa tikkorrompi. Pawlu Mifsud u wliedu jaħsbu li d-dinja saret tagħhom. Is-sur Ġorġ jipprofitta ruħu mit-tfajliet li jaħdmu miegħu fil-fabbrika, il-Kurunell Vella jiddetta x'għandu jsir mill-ħaddiema li weħlu l-ħabs, is-sur Fons iħammem kif jista' jsir sinjur mingħajr ħafna taħbit.

Il-folklor m'hux element importanti tar-rumanz bħalma hu f' *Il-Għar Tax-Xitan*. Iżda hemm referenzi li jagħtu lill-ġrajja kulur lokali. Bħala eżempju, ta' min isemmi n-nies ħerġin mill-bieb tat-tarzna, il-laqgħa ta' Ninu u Marija ma' Dun Anġ fis-sagristija, iż-żjara f'San Ġwann, is-serata fit-teatru, it-tiswija tal-luzzu fuq ix-xatt.

Ta' min jistaqsi jekk dak li ħammem l-awtur snin ilu b'sens realistiku aktar milli sentimentali meta qal li jifraħ jekk il-ħoss ta' sider Malta jkun qawwi u bla serħan u jitbeżża' meta jinstema' mitfi, maqtugħ u għajjien, għadux igħodd u jagħmilx aktar sens għaż-żminijiet tal-lum.

J.J. CAMILLERI, M.A., formerly an Education Officer, is the author of *Aħna Sinjuri*, and numerous other works of Literary, critical and historical nature.

GENERAL INDEX: VOLUME VI
1989 – 1991

ERNLE BRADFORD'S MEDITERRANEAN: PORTRAIT OF A SEA

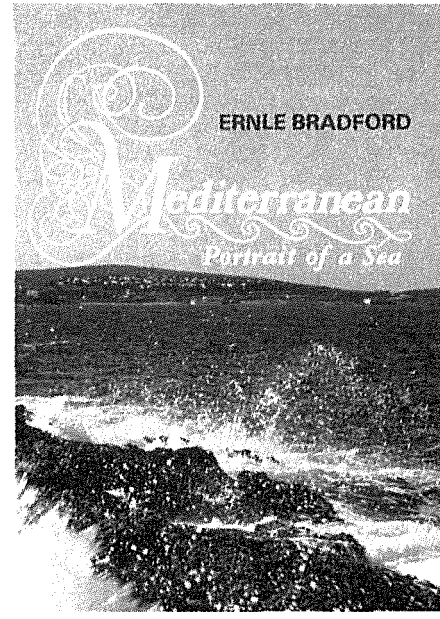
Ernle Bradford's masterpiece *Mediterranean: Portrait of a Sea*, first published by Hodder & Stoughton in 1971, is once again available in an excellent reprinting by Tutor Publications.

Bradford's easy yet deep style is what makes *Mediterranean* so eminently readable. While the layman will find it a fascinating interpretation of the saga of the Middle Sea, the historian will appreciate Bradford's sound research, his clear exposition of facts and his wise conclusions – a combination of qualities in which Bradford's personal experiences sailing the seas has certainly had a great bearing.

Bradford guides the reader around the sea that gave birth to Western culture and civilization – introducing the traders, the sailors, and the fighters who have all left their mark on its history and our civilization, itself the result of the continual interplay between East and West.

The author skilfully presents the history of the Mediterranean with one eye on its geography and another on the succession of historical events. Indeed the story of this sea is impossible to understand if one ignores the geographical environment of the various regions that form part of it. The Mediterranean emerges as one whole, almost as a distinct personality whose portrait Bradford will so lovingly and so convincingly present to us.

For the variety of peoples and races that have been so inexorably attracted to its shores, the Mediterranean has been a link rather than a barrier, giving rise to, but finally overcoming, a diversity of cultures and beliefs.



Il-Malti jista' jingabar
f'enċiklopedija ta'
Letteratura Maltija.
Ibgħat għall-kopji ta'
l-imgħoddi
lis-Sur Pawlu Mifsud,
24 Triq il-Linja l-Qadima,
B'Kara.