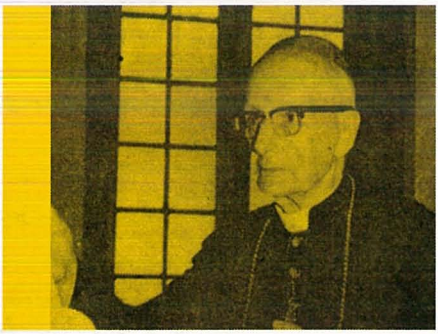
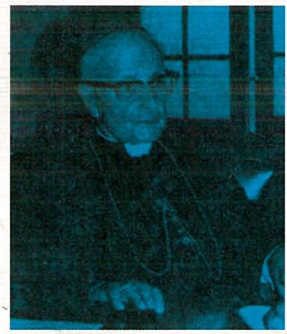
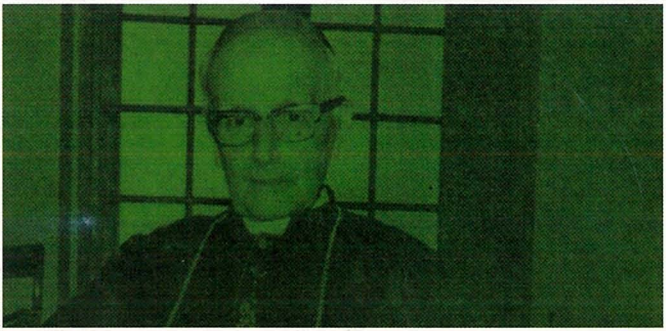
STORJA







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Dennis Vella
Samantha Abela
Dianne Camilleri

30TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION

1978 /2008

STORJA

30TH ANNIVERSARY

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STORJA'S 30th ANNIVERSARY

'Qisha ħolma' – it's like a dream – our parents used to say of life. Initially, when one is still young, this seems rather meaningless but, with the passage of time, its profound if transient significance begins to hit you.

When I first told the late Professor Andrew Vella OP about my plan to start a Maltese History journal (after coming down from Oxford in 1976) he was fully supportive. He was the first head of the University's History Department, which he effectively set up, encouraging research in Maltese history, even offering incentives to students who wished to embark voluntarily on a History dissertation in the BA (General) degree (mine was on *'A Social Background to the Maltese Labour Movement'*). Professor Vella attended *Storja*'s launch at a press conference held in my then office, together with George Attard, MA, the assistant editor.

Thirty years have passed since then.

Our first edition included an interview we prepared with the late Archbishop Gonzi – perhaps the best one ever. We went together to conduct it at the Palace in what used to be known as Strada Vescovo (Archbishop Street), Valletta. This 1,000 print-run of *Storja*, the frontispiece of which we are reproducing in this 30th anniversary edition, quickly sold out, which was encouraging – a feat which it may be more difficult to repeat today, when the means of communication have multiplied. 1978 was a short-lived experiment. In 1979 the Faculties of Arts and of Science were abolished by the then (Maltese) government through an Education Act, just as the Polytechnic staff suddenly moved up the hill in several cases to occupy what until then had been the University's offices and lecture rooms, including our History Lecture Room, which became a Polytechnic lecturer's office. History degrees ceased to be possible in Malta. Even using the words 'Malta' and 'Maltese' in a book or in the name of a shop came to require special permission!

Various colleagues packed their bags and left, as I did. I remember an announcement from Geneva, published in *The Times of Malta* and other sections of the press, notifying the public that *Storja* had wound up. Little did I know or imagine at that time that ten years later I would be offered re-

1 In History our first two students after 1988 were Charles Dalli and Simon Mercieca, both of whom went on to become distinguished colleagues in our *Alma Mater*.

instatement; History would be rehabilitated as a discipline in its own right, with students again able to obtain degrees in it at Malta;[1] or that I myself would repatriate from the emigration; and that I would be in a position somehow to resume the publication of *Storja* on behalf of the Malta University Historical Society, which Professor Vella had set up, and on whose committee I had sat as an undergraduate with other fellow students in the mid-1960s!

The fight for academic freedoms in an appreciative, unhindered intellectual environment, where free inquiry and open encounter are encouraged, was – and is – worth every sacrifice. This is what every self-respecting University of Studies exists for; it is what an academic corps and an academic community mean, as every author and indeed every bright student will tell you. The moment that any regime sought misguidedly, insensitively and self-defeatingly to reduce that uplifting creative inspiration, drive and professional expertise in self-fulfilling careers simply to a utilitarian-functionalist 'product', riding roughshod over the travail of internationally-recognised thinkers and scholars which allows an institution to obtain its recognition as a seat of learning (or otherwise), the very *raison d'etre* of a University of Studies would be lost. This understanding is all the more telling in Malta where unfortunatley so far there has only been such seat of learning.
After the 1988 Education Act, which 'refounded' the institution at the same time as it abolished Chairs and professorial norms from our University, Professor Godfrey Wettinger, a former teacher of mine at the Lyceum and the only colleague left in Malta from Professor Vella's original department,[2] had acted as a kind of custodian of the Historical Society's minutes and papers. He eventually passed these on to us.

Vella may have had his limitations – don't we all – but he was a pioneer in seeking to divulgate Maltese History in Maltese, also for schools, in addition to which he wrote the first two volumes in an intended *Storja ta' Malta* series (which I have been striving with some difficulty to complete). Like him and other colleagues, I sought to encourage greater under-graduate and graduate participation in the affairs of the History Society and particulary in its journal, the editorship of which I resumed, with indispensable student assistance and support from one or two fellow travellers.
On a separate page following this editorial we are listing the authors and titles of all the articles appearing in editions of *Storja* that have been published since 1978. These are self-explanatory. We are including, too, the names of all those serving on its committees. Publication has been intermittent for

2 The others had been Mr Roger Vella Bonavita, who remained in Australia; Mr J. T. McPartlin, who returned to Britain; Professor Vella who suffered a stroke and was confined to his room in the Dominican Priory at the sea-front 'Nazzarenu' in Sliema; and myself who left in 1978. I found out about Professor Vella's death on a plane during a research trip to Europe from Australia in 1986 and wrote an obituary there and then (carried immediately by *The Times*), just missing his funeral by a twist of fate.

many reasons, including financial ones. I am indeeed pleased and honoured today however to see a resumption of interest in the Society's endeavours, including this 30th edition of the journal. I trust that in the interest of History and of student *camaraderie*, this torch will continue to burn, linking discplines and passing on from one generation to another as has happened in the past. This endeavour has been simply a labour of love, but it has permitted a closeness to those younger at heart who look can look forwards rather than backwards! From the earlier beginnings, with successive crops of History graduates a history-instructed school (or rather schools) of thought have indeed come into being, as originally desired. That was not a given. In 1969 the finalists in a secondary school quiz on MTV had never as much as heard of the *Sette Giungo.*

One hopes that such a formative heritage will be able in future the better to penetrate not only scholarship but also the educational institutions and the mass media, by way of professionally educating the public in our own past, in its meanings, and in the realisation that there can be no appreciation of real change outside of a modicum of continuity. One of the lessons of History – and of life – surely is that any 're-inventing of the wheel' may denote arrogance and ignorance rather than beckon innovation or endear respect, much as plagiarism reduces the perpetrator. I just hope that a premonition once expressed in these columns that a consciousness of Maltese self-identity would not be swamped by membership in a larger whole and through its attendant consequenes, such as the EU, will never come to pass. On the contrary, if resources are well directed and managed, the opposite might ensue, in spite of - or perhaps because of - globalization. I hope too that the Maltese language will continue to thrive as a literary medium without undue 'Americanization' phonetically rendered, without italics, least of all when current Maltese words exist to express the sense intended or conveyed. Thus, 'ippresieda' need not be 'iċċerja', 'televiżjoni' need not read 'televixin', and 'meraq tal-laring' or 'laring magħsur' tastes so much sweeter than 'orenġjus', nor for that matter does 'Austria' need a 'j' because vowels in Maltese are pronounced. Professor Aquilina, our foremost lexicographer (and a personal friend of Andrew Vella) must be turning in his grave as even his dictinories became outdated for normal Maltese words and idioms to the explanation of which he prodigiously dedicated a life-time. As for the pedagogical repurcussions, one hesitates to hazard a guess.

I would like to thank especially Charles Dalli, who remained a close and cherished confidante, and the MUHS presidents and committee members

over the past years, who have helped sustain and indeed revive the Society, and whose names are being listed in this souvenir edition. In particular I would like to thank the members of my Editorial Board whose names too are being duly listed in this edition, as have been those of their predecessors in earlier editions. The same goes for those students who have helped compile the lists of dissertations and of Melitensia publications spanning over the past four years, even if abstracts were not so readily available. Last but not least, I thank all the contributors, without whose articles it would not have been possible for *Storja* to exist and to last. Given the death of similar publications at Malta, this appreciation is by no means a perfunctory one.

As MUHS seems geared to come increasingly into its own as a student society I hope, too, that in the years ahead its committees and leaderships will have the required drive, sobriety and maturity to take direction more and more into their own hands, living up to the Society's good name, doing justice to its scope and mission in the pursuit of historical discipline, in University life, and in Maltese society.

THE EDITOR
18th November 2008

List Showing Editorial Board Members, Authors and Titles of Articles: *STORJA* 1978-2008

Storja 78
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Mr George Attard

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Aspects of Anglo-Maltese relations under the later stuarts

Joseph Grima
The Order of St John's Galley Squadron at Sea

Peter Fava
A reign of austerity – Economic difficulties during the rule of Grand Master Ximenes

Francis Ciappara
Lay Healers and Sorcerers in Malta (1770-1798)

Paul Bartolo
Il-Ħobż tal-Maltin – U l-kummerċ ħieles li riedu l-Ingliżi (1812-1838)

Henry Frendo
L-Evoluzzjoni ta' Partiti Politiċi fil-Gżejjer Maltin (1880-1926)

Intervista ma' l-Arċisqof Mikiel Gonzi dwar il-karriera pubblika tieghu matul dan l-aħħar nofs seklu

Intervista ma' l-industrijalista Spiru Mizzi, fundatur ta' l-intrapriża "Mizzi Brothers"

Storja 1996

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Articles

Evelyn Pullicino
The MUHS – Past and Present

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From Jerusalem to Valletta: The Evolution of the Order of St John's Chapter-General (1131-1631)

Carmel Cassar
U Mulu Di Malta: The Maltese Trade in Donkeys and Mules

Kenneth Gambin
A Saint or an Impostor? The case of Francesca Protopsalti during the plague of 1676

Richard Spiteri
Malta in 1776: The Impressions of a Future Minister of the French Republic

Henry Frendo
Everyday Life in 'British' Malta

Storja '98

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Articles

Storja 2001

Articles

Storja 2003-2004

Articles

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The launch of the 25th edition of *Storja* in the University Library, Valletta, in 2004. From left, MUHS editorial board members Manuel Buttigieg, Stefan Cachia, Professor Henry Frendo and James Sultana.

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Documentary Sources for a Study of the Maltese Landscape

Nicholas C. Vella and Mevrick Spiteri

Tangible objects form a challenging kind of historic record. They challenge us because we know that objects have meaning if only we know how to decipher it; moreover by their very presence, and refusing to go away, objects demand to be interpreted. To archaeologists no form of material artefact is perhaps more challenging – tantalizing and illuminating at one and the same time – than the vast disorderly collection of human artefacts that constitute the cultural landscape. By cultural landscape, archaeologists (but also geographers) mean the total assemblage of visible things that human beings have done to alter the face of the earth for economic, social, religious, or symbolic purposes: quarries for the extraction of building stone and clay; dams to control water, cisterns to store it and conduits to deliver it for irrigation purposes and to sustain human and animal life; the purposeful manipulation of the earth's vegetative cover in farms, woodland, orchards and terraces; tracks, paths and roads used to transport objects and ideas; walls erected to subdivide land into manageable units and to separate portions of the earth from one another.[1]

Landscapes differ in appearance from place to place, not only because they are made up of changing ecosystems that are peculiar to a region or a place but also for the self-evident reason that all cultures have collective ambitions about the way they interact with the earth's surface to achieve different goals over time. It can be said, therefore, that landscapes are a kind of document, preserving traces of the cultural autobiography that humans have carved and continue to carve into the earth's surface. It follows that if a landscape is a document than this can be read in a manner analogous to the way we read written documents, an exercise led and constrained by material possibilities and by the material associations, similarities and differences in the evidence. Just like ancient parchments that have been written on again and again but imperfectly erased between successive uses, cultural landscapes are rich palimpsests.[2] Unravelling the traces of past human activities in that palimpsest is an exercise that depends on an explicit combination of the physical survey and the study of the historical record, following the methods established by historical geographers like Maurice Bloch and W. G. Hoskins in the twentieth century.[3] For the archaeologist the palimpsest can be understood in a process of recovery that proceeds very much like a stratigraphic excavation, peeling

away the most recent "layer" of material traces in order to uncover earlier ones, which may lie below.[4] For the early periods, when historical records do not exist or are largely missing, the recent historical record provides a useful lens through which to view the physical remains in the landscape. This is done not only to check on the existence of extant landscape features (or cultural markers) at a certain point in time but also because historical records illuminate early phases of place making and of economic and social improvement and restructuring.[5]

The aim of this article is to bring to the attention of those interested in studying the Maltese landscape a selection of documentary sources useful for the task of understanding its form within a framework of time and space. Especial attention is given to the property books which go by the name of *cabrei* (singular *cabreo*). We close with some thoughts on certain landscape features.

Documentary sources

The potential range of documentary sources for a study of the Maltese landscape is great. Without attempting to provide a complete inventory, we highlight some of them here.

1. Published sources and dissertations

A book on the making of the Maltese landscape which could take its cue from works inspired by that pioneer work, *The Making of the English Landscape*, published by W.G. Hoskins in 1955, still has to be written. In its absence, the volume which puts together the findings of the Malta Geographical Survey Project (1955-1958) remains the most important study, especially its chapters on land use and agriculture albeit with a bias on the British period.[6] Several contributions which appeared in a special issue of the journal *GeoJournal* (vol. 41/2) in 1997 relay the results of much recent work on the Maltese landscape, whilst J. Chircop's unpublished MA dissertation (1993) *Underdevelopment: the Maltese Experience 1880-1914*, builds on the records kept by the *Società Economica Agraria* founded in Malta in 1844 on the initiative of the Governor, William Reid.[7] In 1963, the geographer B. Blouet submitted his PhD thesis at the University of Hull entitled *The Changing Landscape of Malta during the rule of the Order of the St John of Jerusalem 1530-1798*.[8] It is the best – unpublished – account to date for the period which saw significant

activity in the countryside. C. Giacinto's much overlooked work *Saggio di agricultura per le isole di Malta e Gozo* (Messina, 1811) takes up the account for the opening decade of the 19th century. For the earlier Medieval period, G. Wettinger's writings fill important gaps especially his *Agriculture in Malta in the Late Middle Ages*,[9] and his *The Lost Villages and Hamlets of Malta*.[10] For the prehistoric period, R. Grima's PhD thesis, *Monuments in Search of a Landscape: the Landscape Context of Monumentality in Late Neolithic Malta* (University of London, 2005), points the way future research ought to go, especially if complemented by studies of the sort undertaken by K. Fenech in her *Human-Induced Changes in the Environment and Landscape of the Maltese Islands from the Neolithic to the 15th Century AD*, published in 2007.[11] For a reconstruction of Malta's landscape before human colonisation started in the Neolithic much remains to be done as pointed out by C.O. Hunt and P.J. Schembri in their *Quaternary Environments and Biogeography of the Maltese Islands*.[12] For the historic period, however, C.F. Grech's, PhD thesis *The History of Forests, Trees and Gardens in the Maltese Islands up to 1798* (University of Aberdeen, 2001) is useful as it gathers much data gleaned from a close reading of the *cabrei* and related documents. For the British period, the thesauri of flora are useful although the introduction of particular species to Malta still deserves study.[13] Other, important information is to be found in several travelogues, starting with Jean Quintin d'Autun's *Insulae Melitae descriptio* (Lyons, 1536) and in G.F. Abela's *Della Descrittione di Malta* (Malta, 1647) with its revised edition by Count Ciantar of 1772.[14]

2. Maps

For Malta, the 1:25000-scale maps and accompanying series of large-scale 1:2500 survey sheets produced by the Malta Environment and Planning Authority (MEPA) provide the basic topographic information for anyone seeking to understand landscapes. The islands' geology is contained in two 1:25000-scale maps produced by the Oil Exploration Division of the Office of the Prime Minister in 1993, revising a first geological survey map of 1955. Older editions of maps and survey sheets prepared by the Ordnance Survey when Malta was a British colony (1800-1964) provide the topographical framework for studying site-use and survival over time.[15] The last edition of survey sheets at 1:2500-scale produced in 1968 and revised in 1974 superseded the 25-inch survey sheets produced at the turn of last century. From the 25-inch survey sheets were compiled the 6 inches to the mile map series produced in ten sheets for Malta (but not for Gozo) in 1910, last updated before World War II. They all provide useful information which subsequent development has almost wiped

from the landscape and, therefore, from modern maps. Boundary markers of Crown property and milestones are shown, and a variety of water catchment facilities including wells and tanks are often included. Behind the first edition of these 6-inch and 25-inch maps is a fine set of original surveyors' Crown property or tenement maps in watercolour drawn to a large scale and produced between 1861 and 1867, bound in four large volumes and held at present at the Chief Draughtsman's Office in Floriana.[16] Each map carries the name and number of the Crown tenement and contains a detailed description, including the area of the property, the quality and use of the land, built structures (often redrawn at a larger scale and included as an inset), rock-cut features, rubble walls, and adjoining tracks, paths or roads. Property belonging to pious foundations and legacies that passed under Crown control after 1800 were surveyed and mapped in the same manner, and are to be found bound in rolls at the Chief Draughtsman's Office too.[17] The key with tenement numbers to these maps is to be found on rolls of 25-inch and 1:2500 survey sheets held in the same office.[18] Other maps and plans deal with different aspects of landscape, including archaeological monuments (rolls 100 and 100A). Significant information related to Malta's maritime landscape, for instance, is contained in the hydrographic charts published by the Hydrographic Office of the British Admiralty. They all build on the first survey conducted by William Smyth and published in 1823, and contain a wealth of information related to coastal buildings, features and archaeological sites.[19] These maps ought to be seen in conjunction with the written description of the coasts contained in pilot books published by the Admiralty or compiled for the Order.[20] The oldest portolan mentioning a host of features on the Maltese coastline dates to 1296.[21]

3. Archival sources

The most important primary sources for a study of the Maltese landscape are contained in various state, church and private archives.[22] The National Library of Malta in Valletta contains volumes in its Treasury series (A and B) belonging to the Order of St John and the *Università*; they are listed in a printed catalogue drawn up by the Library and on the website of the US-based Hill Museum and Manuscript Library.[23] Series A consists of several account books related to the lease or sale and maintenance of rural and urban territorial holdings, sometimes referred as *compendia*. Series B includes several hundred volumes, mostly property books or *cabrei* (see below) of holdings in Malta which contain an extensive collection of estate plans, mostly in colour, and land use data covering the period 1654-1810. Land possessed

by the church can be researched in contracts, written surveys of estates and *cabrei* which the ecclesiastical authorities drew up. Several such volumes are held in the Archives of the Cathedral of Malta in Mdina[24] and in the Archives of the Episcopal Curia of Malta in Floriana,[25] but parishes, religious orders, and the Inquisition had their own.[26] The earliest survey map we are aware of goes back to the 1620s and depicts the territory of Miżieb ir-Riħ in northern Malta, bought by the Mdina cathedral in 1523. A stone pillar topped with the coat of arms of the Mdina Cathedral still marks the northernmost boundary of the territory; others have been lost.[27]

The National Archives of Malta housed in the former Santo Spirito hospital in Rabat preserve documents pertaining to the British era. Most are records and correspondence files between governmental offices. Of particular significance are correspondence letters between the Chief Secretary to the Government and the Collector of Land Revenue,[28] records of governmental granting of public sites,[29] leases of government land allotments,[30] and a register of licenses granted by the Land Revenue for the building of tenements in rural areas, for stone quarrying and soil transportation.[31] A large map also hangs in one of the corridors and it shows the rural tenements, individually numbered, given out on emphyteutical lease to farmers after 1850.

Other documentary sources of a more legal nature are kept at the Notarial Archives in Valletta. The earliest deeds covering land leases and transfers of property go back to the Late Medieval period and records are available from 1467. A selection has been published and several others have been studied in an effort to throw light on socio-economic conditions of the islands in the late 15th and early 16th century.[32] Acts drawn up during the British period are also kept here. It is not known when the practice of appending sketch plans of the property to the deed started. It was the practice in the 17th and 18th century to have extracts from contracts relating to leases of agricultural land carved on stone tablets and affixed to rural farmsteads and town houses.[33]

Several archives also exist in private possession and are mostly related to the acquisition, sale and maintenance of land by members of the Maltese nobility. Most fiefs were created before the arrival in Malta of the Order of St John in 1530 but some were subsequently recognised by the grand masters whereas others were annexed to the Order's property.[34]

Finally, collections of aerial photographs of the Maltese Islands exist locally and abroad.[35] Their use for studying the landscape and in particular relics of cultural heritage is still largely untapped.

4. Iconography

Landscape representations became common towards the end of the 17th century, often accompanying travelogues.[36] The *International Dictionary of Artists who painted Malta* (Malta², 2002) by Nicholas de Piro gives an idea of the variety of the record which varies according to the modes of thought and aesthetics cherished by generations of artists. Of particular importance for the historian and archaeologist are the images included in Jean Houel's *Voyages pittoresque des Isles de Sicile, de Lipari, et de Malte* of 1787 and the series of watercolour drawings by Charles Frederick de Brocktorff.[37] Photography facilitated the recording and reproduction of landscape views and for a twentieth century record of the Maltese landscape the work of Richard Ellis and Geo Fürst should be singled out amongst many others.[38]

5. Toponymy

The place-names of a country record its successive peoples and languages, and the topography, vegetation, land tenure and land-uses of the past. G. Wettinger's monumental dictionary *Place-Names of the Maltese Islands ca. 1300-1800* (Malta, 2000) is the fundamental reference work for the study of Maltese toponymy, and the introductory essay is an insight into the myriad ways in which the lie and shape of the land, crop suitability, habitation types, hydrography, geology, soil, and the existence of thoroughfares have dictated the choice of names for the land. Wettinger consciously excludes place-name evidence after 1800, recorded in British-period cadastral and other maps, and relinquishes an earlier choice of giving map coordinates for place-names that could be identified on maps.[39] These place-names were listed by N. Tagliaferro in 1910 in an unpublished work preserved in the University of Malta library.[40] Zammit Ciantar's *Placenames of the Coast of Gozo* (Malta, 2000) is useful as it adds a maritime perspective to the process of naming landscape features.

The *cabrei* of the Order of St John

The Italian term *cabreo* (or Spanish *cabrero*, from the Latin *capi brevium*) appears to have come into use for the first time in 1597 by the Grand Priory of Pisa, one of the Italian commandaries of the Order of St John. The term was adopted by the Order to denote a collection of records consisting of a written and drawn survey of land and property holdings.[41] The drawn survey often consisted of manuscript maps drawn by *periti agrimensori* (land surveyors) at

scales large enough to allow detailed depiction of the landscape, and bound together in one volume with a long-winded description. Written surveys of estates or holdings, known in English as terriers and in Italian as *decimari*, preceded the appearance of the graphic form for the estate record.[42] For the Order of St John, however, the term *cabreo* became a synonym for the written survey even when the latter was still the common form of recording immoveable property in the 17th century. It was in this century, in fact, that the Order felt the pressure to record the extent of its territorial possessions in the Maltese Islands. The need to draw up a *cabreo* of magistral property is recorded in the minutes of the Council of the Order for 1643.[43] The main requirement was to locate the fiefs which had become the Order's property in 1530 and on which no rent had ever been collected. The completion and description of the *cabreo magistrale* was announced in 1654.[44]

The National Library holds other *cabrei* related to the Maltese Islands produced in the course of the eighteenth century when the practical value of mapping for running and improving estates within clear definitions of the boundaries must have become obvious. Foundations, including those set up by successive grand masters to provision galleys, build and maintain fortifications and other deeds – e.g. Wignacourt in 1617,[45] Lascaris in 1651,[46] Cotoner in 1674,[47] de Vilhena in 1724[48] – and others, including the foundation set up in 1607 with the specific intent of redeeming Christian slaves (*Fondazione della Monte di Redenzione degli schiavi*) had their own *cabreo*.[49] A record of the lands pertaining to the Mdina *Università* and the venerable assembly of conventual chaplains are to be found in their respective *cabrei*.[50] Indeed, the eighteenth century must have been a century of intense surveying activity and the quality of the cartographic record is often high, with *cabrei* produced in elegant style containing colourful coat of arms or a portrait of the grand master himself.[51]
In general, a *cabreo* belonging to a foundation consisted of the following parts. The frontispiece is followed by an introductory description about the foundation, motives for its establishment including details of the founder (often the grand master himself), and the foundation date. Instructions given for the compilation of the *cabreo* were also integrated in the first section of the volume. This included the name of the person or authority calling for the compilation of the *cabreo*, the commissioners entrusted with the survey and the specific reasons for the compilation of the *cabreo*. The work to be carried out is notified to the interested parties by the issue of a *bando*. The administrative documentation is followed by further information of a more judicial nature related to the land bought by the foundation since its inception. This part is generally followed by a list, a veritable index, of all the urban and rural possessions described in the *cabreo*.

The description and illustrations of the immoveable property, urban followed by rural, constitutes the central part of the *cabreo*. Houses in towns have scaled plans and elevations whereas plots of land are delimited by colour banding to denote contiguous properties often listing the name of the owner or the institution. The survey depicts structures and other features, including farmsteads and storage rooms, animal pens and sties, cisterns, water tanks and conduits, threshing floors. Rubble walls, paths, tracks or roads are marked to show the limit of the property.[52] Trees are often included. Land quality is rendered in different ink and watercolour washes: pink hatching sometimes interspersed with grey ones denotes arable land of very good quality, grey and ink shades are used to denote mediocre land, and shades of grey and black represent rocky surfaces and generally bad quality land. A scale bar and a north point invariably accompany the plans; sometimes the name of the surveyor is included too. The description, often found on the opposite page, includes essential information about the property: name, the area of land and its quality, and contiguous possessions. Details of the lease often follow: the name of the notary who drew up the contract, the name of the lessee and village or town of origin, and the rent paid.

Thoughts about some landscape features

It is often possible to discern the extent of territorial enclosures belonging to various foundations or other institutions when these are plotted on a modern map, better still on the 6-inch maps which depict the islands before massive building development altered large swathes of countryside. Such an exercise has been done by one of us to study the field system at the head of Mistra Valley in Malta.[53] In that case it was possible to locate the extent of the Mdina Cathedral territory of Miżieb ir-Riħ on the valley floor, the enclosures belonging to the *Fondazione Lascaris* spread along the Bajda Ridge, the magistral territory of Għajn Tuffieha to the south, the territory belonging to the *Università* to the north, and the property of the *Fondazione di Redenzione* around Selmun to the north-east. That exercise made it possible to peg dates to various relics of occupation in a region of northern Malta, relics that define the agricultural organization and utilization of the landscape at its most basic level: field enclosure rubble walls, terraces, access roads and pathways, cave and other forms of settlement. In what follows we comment on some of these features in order to highlight the ramifications that a study of historical documents can have on an archaeological survey which has as its scope an understanding of the material organization of the landscape.

Although the investigated area is now crisscrossed by several roads, few public access routes existed before the mid-19th century. In the 17th and 18th centuries, three roads crossed the Bajda ridge northwards. To the west, a road descended into the Pwales valley from Tal-Palma and Għajn Tuffieħa respectively to join at Manikata, dropped into the Miżieb valley and climbed up the ridge above Għajn Żnuber. In the *cabreo magistrale* of 1654, one of these roads is described as '*la strada che viene dal giardino di hayn Tofeha e va al sbarcatore del Gozzo*'.[54] The stretch of road in the valley bottom at Mizieb between the fields known as '*ta Schiatba*' and '*il Catgha tal Ghain Znuber*' is also shown in the enclosure map drawn up by Cathedral surveyors dating to the 1620s. The road to the east which climbs the Bajda ridge from Xemxija bay behind the redoubt (built in 1715/16), and descended into the valley was known in the written survey of the immoveable property of the Lascaris foundation as the '*salita per la quali si va alla Madonna della Mellecha*'.[55] The documents cited here allow relics of the landscape long viewed in a mood of open naiveté to be studied in a historical context. For instance, the road just described and others that crisscross this area orthogonally have long been thought to be Roman roads on account of their straight alignment and impressive engineering.[56] In actual fact, all straight roads on the Bajda ridge and in northern Malta do not appear in the Order's *cabrei*. They are post 1850 in date and were built by British engineers to service a large territory that was divided up in rectilinear parcels of land. They are evidence of the attempt by the Colonial government and the *Società Economica Agraria* to reclaim garigue (known as wasteland) for agricultural purpose or to improve the quality of what existed already.[57] The boundary walls, built in dry rubble, are orthogonal to the roads and they superimpose – often physically – an earlier pattern of shallow contour terraces which appear in 18th century *cabrei*. It is possible, in fact, to write a "wall-to-wall history" on the basis of close observation and study, creating a relative sequence of wall types which are after all ubiquitous features of limestone landscapes anywhere.[58] Such a technical exercise should be led by economic and social considerations, often the driving-force behind the investment of labour and capital, which may have overridden concerns driven solely by environmental possibilities and constraints.[59] Such an approach should also direct the investigation into human habitation in marginal landscapes, such as those in northern Malta, where corbelled huts (*giren*) and caves, often assumed to be Medieval settlement forms,[60] are found. It is telling, for example, that the huts that dot the garigue in the Cortino di Hain Tofieha (Xaghra l-Ħamra area) are missing from the *cabreo* of the Lascaris foundation; instead a description is given of the sole farmstead, still standing to this day: "*una granda stanza di pietra [...] coperta di balati*".[61]

We close with a comment on water sources, one vital ingredient in sustaining settlement on islands with limited annual rainfall. The work of archaeologist K. Buhagiar has done a lot to highlight the importance of *qanat*-type water galleries to tap rainwater from the perched acquifer.[62] He is convinced that the system may date back to the Arab occupation of Malta which may very well be but still needs to be proven. We believe that in the absence of direct evidence a closer scrutiny of Early Modern documentary sources may provide data to make a stronger case, working by elimination.[63] The 1620s estate map of Miżieb ir-Riħ mentioned earlier includes three important water sources – 'fontane' – on the south flank of the Mellieħa ridge. One of these, Ghajn Znuber, which falls in territory long held by the Mdina *Università*, was highlighted in the Morris report of 1952 which includes a plan of its rock-cut gallery and ventilation shafts.[64] That the Order of St John knew about similar water galleries is known from reports commissioned to assess their state. One, compiled in 1718 by the French engineer M. Blondel, includes a fine map of the system underlying Rabat.[65] We also know that one such gallery, dry but visible to this day, supplied the hamlet at the northern end of the Ghajn Tuffieħa territory with water. In 1654, the *cabreo magistrale* relates that repairs had been made to it: "*[...] vi sono state fatte in detto fego molte reparationi e particolarmente della mina e beveratura sotto le grotte in detto fego.*"[66] This datum provides us with a significant *terminus ante quem* for the existence of this water gallery.[67]

We write this study at a time when property development and a systematic programme of road construction are fast unmaking those very features that give character and a time depth to the Maltese landscape besides endangering archaeological resources as never before. We can only hope that work on the lines suggested here be utilized to identify, record and understand the landscape. After all, "*landscape has an important public interest role in the cultural, ecological, environmental and social fields, and constitutes a resource favourable to economic activity and whose protection, management and planning can contribute to job creation*".[68]

NOTES

[1] B. K. Roberts, 'Landscape Archaeology' in J.M. Wagstaff (ed), *Landscape and Culture: Geographical and Archaeological Perspectives*, (Oxford, 1987), 77-95.

[2] The term palimpsest has long been used to describe landscapes; see C. Taylor, *Village and Farmstead: A History of Rural Settlement in England*, (London, 1982) and for its use more recently, B. Bender, *Stonehenge: Making Space*, (Oxford, 1998).

[3] M. Bloch, *Les caractères originaux de l'historire rural francais* (Oslo, 1931); W. G. Hoskins, *The Making of the English Landscape*, (London, 1955). There are those who are adamant that the historical document is fundamental to provide firm evidence for landscape change and encourage a richer analysis of social and economic change; see D.W. Holdsworth, 'Landscape and archives as texts', in P. Groth and T.W. Bressi (eds), *Understanding Ordinary Landscapes*, (New Haven, 1997), 44-55. For a classic example in this genre, see A.H. Galt, *Far from the Church Bells: Settlement and Society in an Apulian Town*, (Cambridge, 1991).

[4] For landscape as a "stratified document" see L. Bartolotti, *Storia, Città e Territorio*, (Milano, 2002), 64.

[5] Recent archaeological field survey work in the Mediterranean has also highlighted the importance of ethnoarchaeological observation to provide a detailed historical context for the material culture patterns preserved in the abandoned landscape; on this see T.M. Whitelaw, 'An ethnoarchaeological study of rural land-use in north-west Keos: insights and implications for the study of past Aegean landscapes' in N.P. Doukellis and L.G. Mendoni (eds), *Structures rurales et sociétés antiques. Actes du colloque du Corfou, 14-16 mai 1992*, (Paris, 1994), 163-186.

[6] H. Bowen-Jones, J. C. Dewdney, W. B. Fisher, *Malta: Background for Development*, (Durham, [1961]).

[7] On William H. Reid's contribution to the improvement of agriculture in Malta see, O. W. Blouet, 'Sir William Reid, F.R.S, 1791-1858: Governor of Bermuda, Barbados and Malta', in *Notes and Records of the Royal Society of London*, 40/2, (1986), 169-191. On the wider ramifications of agricultural improvement much can be learnt from S. Tarlow's *The Archaeology of Improvement in Britain 1750-1850*, (Cambridge, 2007).

[8] A copy of the thesis is available in the Melitensia section of the University of Malta library (Classmark: MZT, A). Other publications by B. Blouet dealing mainly with land reclamation are his 'Some observations on the distribution of *xaghra* place-names in Malta', in *Journal of Maltese Studies* 4, (1967), 81-84 and 'The distribution of marshland in Malta during the seventeenth century', in *Journal of Maltese Studies* 2 (1964), 198-204.

[9] The contribution by G. Wettinger was published in *Proceedings of History Week* (1981).

[10] The chapter was published in A. Luttrell (ed), *Medieval Malta: Studies on Malta before the Knights*, (London, 1975), 181-216. Some of Luttrell's own remarks in the introduction to the same volume (pp. 1-70) are worth serious consideration but the pessimistic stance on the unlikelihood of finding pottery scatters (p. 13) ought to be revised. An archaeological fieldwalking project undertaken by the universities of Malta and Ghent (Belgium) and the Superintendence for Cultural Heritage (Malta) in northern Malta in September 2008 recovered 20,000 sherds over two weeks in an area of less than 2 km^2.

[11] Grima's methodology could be applied with profit to the early historic period on which see N.C. Vella 'Unravelling past agricultural landscapes in the Maltese Islands: making a case for the Phoenician and Punic periods' in A.M. Aruda, C. Gómez Bellard and P. van Dommelen (eds), *Sítios e Paisagens Rurais do Mediterrâneo Púnico*, (Lisboa, 2007), 69-85, and A. Bonanno, 'L'habitat maltese en età romana', *Kokalos* 22-23 (1976-1977), 385-395.

[12] The contribution is published in A. Mifsud and C. Savona Ventura (eds), *Facets of Maltese Prehistory*, (Malta, 1999), 41-75.

[13] See for example, S. Zerafa, *Florae melitensis thesaurus, sive Plantarum Enumerato quae in Melitae Gaulosque insulis ant indiginae ant vulgatissimae occurrunt*, (Malta, 1831); J.C. Grech Delicata, *Flora Melitensis systems stirpes Phaneorgans in Melita Insulisque adjacentibus hucusque detectas*, (Malta, 1853). Such studies, combined with palynology should offer exciting insights into the ecological history of the Maltese Islands. For a case study, see C.O. Hunt and N.C. Vella, 'A view from the countryside: pollen from a field fill in Mistra Valley, Malta', *Malta Archaeological Review* 7 (2004-2005), 61-69.

[14] On Abela's topographic description see J. Galea, 'Topography of Malta in Abela's times', *Essays in honour of G. F. Abela by members of the Malta Historical Society*, (Malta, 1981), 38-48.

[15] To our knowledge, no history of land surveying and topographic map production in nineteenth-century Malta, or indeed of the preceding centuries, exists; the agrarian contribution to land surveying initiatives would seem to us to be worthy of study especially if seen against the development of the Ordnance Survey in Britain (see

W.A. Seymour, A *History of the Ordnance Survey*, (Folkstone, 1980). The cartographic production related to Malta before 1800 has been studied by A. Ganado in several publications, including *A study in depth of 143 maps representing the Great Siege of Malta of 1565*, (Malta, 1994-1995) co-authored with M. Agius-Vadalà, and *Valletta città nuova: a map history* (1566-1600), (Malta, 2003).

[16] *Descriptive Plans of the Crown Property in Malta and its Dependencies*. 4 vols. 1861-1867. The survey was conducted under the administration of Lieutenant General Sir John Gaspard Le Marchant G.C.M.G. Governor and Commander in Chief and under the direction of E. L. Galizia, Chief Surveyor, Department of Land Revenue and Public Works.

[17] These include: Rendenzione Monte di Pietà; Santo Spirito; Maddalena-Barone Inguanez, Barone Xerri, Notaro C. Gatt; Redenzione and Santo Spirito; Maddalena-Barone Inguanez, Barone Xerri, Notaro C. Gatt, Legato.

[18] Annotations in pencil and ink on these maps relate to files belonging to various government departments. Access to some of these files and other records, especially recent ones, may be restricted by the provisions in the Data Protection Act.

[19] The Hydrography of Sicily, Malta, and the adjacent Islands; surveyed in 1814, 1815, and 1816 under directions from the Right Honourable the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, by Capt. William Henry Smyth, R.N.K.S.F. Fellow of the Astronomical and Antiquarian societies of London, (London, 1823).

[20] Portolans have been discussed in a preliminary study by F. Theuma, 'Across the wine dark sea: Early Modern portolans from Malta', presented at the *5th International Congress of Maritime History*, Greenwich, (UK, 2008).

[21] A. Cassola, 'The Maltese toponymy in three ancient Italian portulans 1296-1490', *Al-Masaq* 5 (1992), 47-64.

[22] For a general survey of archives in Malta see *Notum sit omnibus ... A selection of documents from public and private archives in Malta and Gozo: exhibition catalogue*, (Malta, 2002).

[23] *List of Volumes and other Documents of the Order of St John of Jerusalem and of the Municipal Institutions known as the Università, preserved in the Government Treasury*, Institute of Historical Research Malta, 3 (1932). The Hill Museum and Manuscript Library catalogue can be searched at www.hmml.org.

[24] Of particular significance are the manuscript volumes making up the series of cabrei, *Beni della Cattedrale* which cover the period 1528-1830.

[25] Two volumes are particularly important: *Descrizione generale di tutt'i beni stabili esistenti nella isola di Malta e Gozo spettanti alla S. Chiesa Cattedrale Arcivescovile di Malta colle loro denominazioni, piante, capacità, comrade, confine, concessioni, ed annuo canone; e di alcune Ricognizioni terminate correndo l'anno 1838 coll'indice generale nel fine del Sacerdote Giuseppe Maria Cachia Cancelliere Capitolare*; *Judicale Inventarium Bonorum*. 1759 (property belonging to the Mensa Vescovile). Others are listed in the catalogue of the Hill Monastic and Manuscript library: www.hmml.org/centres/malta/cathedral/aam/aam-cabr.html.

[26] A description of property held by the Inquisition is given in *Stato antico ed attuale de' Beni del Sant'Officio* – Archives of the Inquisition of Malta, Mem. 15 (1754-1759), referred to in F. Ciappara, *The Roman Inquisition in Enlightened Malta*, (Malta, 2000), 105, n. 13; see also F. Ciappara, The landed property of the Inquisition in Malta in the late XVIII century, in *Melita Historica* 7/1 (1976), 43-60.

[27] The extent of the territory of Mizieb ir-Riħ, starting from the 17th century, has been defined in Hunt and Vella, *A view from the countryside*.

[28] NAM, P[ublic] W[orks] 201-252 (1814-1900).

[29] NAM, PW 172-174 (1852-1857).

[30] NAM, PW 175 (1853-1854).

[31] NAM, PW 176 (1816-1862).

[32] In the series *Documentary Sources of Maltese History* published by the University of Malta, the notarial documents of Giacomo Zabbara (1486-1488, 1494-1497, 1471-1500) have already appeared in 3 volumes edited by S. Fiorini. A host of unpublished dissertations by History undergraduates are also available for consultation at the University library.

[33] Blouet, *Changing Landscape*, 92; a complete inventory of these tablets does not exist and is a major desideratum.

[34] Much has been done using private archives by J. Montalto in his *The Nobles of Malta 1530-1800*, (Malta, 1979); on Medieval fiefs see also H. Bresc, The Secrezia and the Royal Patrimony in Malta: 1240-1450' in A. Luttrell (ed), *Medieval Malta: Studies on Malta before the Knights*, (London, 1975), 126-162.

[35] Extensive German air photo coverage of Malta was carried out between 1941 and 1943. The photographs are preserved in the United States National Archives at College Park, Maryland; see M. Abicht and R. Standring,

'Malta in camera, early air survey in the Mediterranean (paper abstract)' in N. C. Vella (ed), *The Fourteenth Annual Meeting of the European Association of Archaeologists* 16-21 September 2008, (Malta, 2008), 232. P. Saliba's poster communication at the same conference (p. 334) highlighted the importance of the collection of aerial photographs kept at the Malta War Museum Association and the Malta Environment and Planning Authority.

[36] On travelogues, the work of T. Freller is indispensable; see for instance his *Gozo: The Island of Joy,* (Malta, 1997). Landscape paintings may appear subjective, but were not independent of predominant worldviews. On landscape as a genre of painting in the 16th and 17th centuries, see T.M. Vella, *The Visual Representations of Land between the 16th and 17th centuries: An introduction to the Early Modern preoccupation with land in European societies.* Unpublished MA dissertation (University of Malta, 1999).

[37] B. Scicluna, *Charles Frederick de Brocktorff: Watercolours of Malta at the National Library of Malta, Vol. I,* (Malta, 2007).

[38] M. Harker, *Photographers of Malta, 1840-1990,* (Malta, 2000); G. Bonello, *Nostalgias of Malta: Images by Geo Fürst from the 1930s,* (Malta, 2006).

[39] The six-figure grid reference for some place-names appears in an appendix to Wettinger's *Lost villages and hamlets of Malta,* 205-216.

[40] N. Tagliaferro, *Vocabolario topografico dell'Isola di Malta (1900-1905).* Unpublished manuscript, University of Malta library; see L. Muscat, *Napoleon Tagliaferro: his life and works with an edition of his "Vocabolario topografico di Malta".* Unpublished BA dissertation (University of Malta, 1970).

[41] The history of the *cabreo* has been researched by L. Ginori Lisci in *Cabrei in Toscana: raccolte di mappe, prospetti e vedute, sec. XVI-sec. XIX* (Lucca, 1978). We are grateful to Teresa Zammit Lupi who kindly brought this book to our attention and lent us a copy. Zammit Lupi has studied and conserved one *cabreo* recording the property of Fra Mario Bichi (1653-1712) in San Pietro in Camollia in Siena, dated to 1692 and currently at the National Library of Malta; see 'The cabreo of Fra Mario Bichi', *Treasures of Malta* 8/2 (2002), 59-63. It has not been possible for us to consult a copy of *Cabrevatio Bonorum: Priorati, baliaggi e commende dell'Ordine di Malta,* (Perugia, 1997) brought to our attention by Dr A. Luttrell.

[42] See D. Fletcher, 'Map or terrier? The example of Christ Church, Oxford, estate management, 1600-1840, *Transaction of the Institute of British Geographers* 23 (1998), 221-237.

[43] All details are to be found in Blouet, *Changing Landscape,* 72 including the reference to AOM 257, f. 152.

[44] The *cabreo* consists of one volume, Treas. B 289. See Blouet, *Changing Landscape,* 73 with the reference to AOM 118 Liber Conciliorum 1652, 1653, 1654, f. 186v.

[45] NLM Treas. B 305: *Cabreo de' Beni Spettanti alla Fondazione Grotta di San Paolo.* 1705.

[46] NLM Treas. B 301: *Cabreo de' Beni Spettanti alla Fondazione Lascaris Vol. I, 1784*; Treas. B 301A: *Cabreo de' Beni Spettanti alla Fondazione Lascaris Vol. II, 1779*; Treas. B 302: *Cabreo de' Beni Spettanti alla Fondazione Lascaris Vol. III, 1784.*

[47] NLM Treas. B 300: *Cabreo Universale de' Beni Stabili della Fondazione Cotonera principiato l'anno 1737.* The compilation of the *cabreo* started in 1732.

[48] NLM Treas. B 310: *Cabreo o sia descrizione della Fondazione Manoel 1734;* NLM Treas. B 311: *Tomo secondo del Cabreo della Fondazione Manoel* [1736]. An appraisal of these two cabrei has been published by C. Thake in 'The cabreo of the "*Fondazione Manoel*"', *Treasures of Malta* 3/1 (1996), 47-52.

[49] NLM Treas. B 309: *Cabreo de Beni del Venerando Monte della Rendenzione de'Schiavi di quest'Isole di Malta e Gozzo.* The cabreo was completed in 1735.

[50] NLM Treas. B 303: *Cabreo o sia Descrizione di tutti li Beni Stabili così urbani, come rustici [...] dell'Università della Città Notabile, ed isola di Malta.* 1750.

[51] An insight into the production of a *cabreo* can be gleaned from a comparison of the 18th-century *cabrei* Treas. B 290 and 291. The latter volume consists of the plots of plans drawn from a physical survey carried out by triangulation; the traverse, in pencil, is shown. Templates in thick paper of the property outline survive in the volume. With these were drawn the boundaries of the same properties in Treas. B 290 which were then given watercolour washes.

[52] Blouet reconstructed the road network existing in Malta in 1650 on the basis of information gleaned from the *cabreo magistrale*; see *Changing Landscape,* fig. 6.11. On a study of roads in Malta, see C. Debono, *The Road Network of the Maltese Islands: A Case Study in Historical Geography.* Unpublished BA (Hons) dissertation (University of Malta, 2006).

[53] Hunt and Vella, *A view from the countryside,* especially figs 1, 2 and 4.

[54] Treas. B 289, ff. 94-95.

[55] NLM Lib. 1302, ff. 21-22.

[56] For example see H. Lewis, *A Guide to the Remote Paths and Lanes of Ancient Malta* (UK, 1974), 15-16 and E. Theuma, *San Pawl il-Baħar: a guide,* (Malta, 2003), 21ff.

[57] See Hunt and Vella, *A view from the countryside,* 69 n. 18.

[58] We take our cue from the work by R. Hodges, *Wall-to-Wall History: The Story of Roystone Grange,* (London, 1991). On Maltese rubble walls see the preliminary studies by C.O. Hunt conducted as part of the Gozo survey project in the late 1980s: A. Jones and C. Hunt, 'Walls, wells and water supply: aspects of the cultural landscape of Gozo, Maltese Islands', *Landscape Issues* 1/2 (1994), 24-29 and 'Cultural influences on the landscape of Gozo island, Malta', *Topos* 6 (1994), 37. For a useful typology of drystone walls see *Dry-stone work: Materials, tools and traditional techniques in the Mediterranean Islands Vol. 2: Mallorca* (Palermo, n.d.). Familiarisation with the literature on south-east Sicily is a must if only because the island was Malta's dispersed hinterland for many centuries; see M. Giorgianni, *La pietra vissuta: Il paesaggio degli Iblei,* (Palermo, 1978) and P. Tiralongo, *Pietra su Pietra: Architettura in pietra a secco degli Iblei* (Palermo, 1998).

[59] On this point see P. Horden and N. Purcell, *The Corrupting Sea: A Study of Mediterranean History,* (Oxford, 2000), 234-237.

[60] M. Buhagiar, *The Late Medieval Art and Architeture of the Maltese Islands,* (Malta, 2005), 44; see also D. Mallia, 'Indizi sull'architettura autoctona tra Malta e gli Iblei' in A. Bonanno and P. Militello (eds), *Malta in the Hyblaeans, the Hybleans in Malta/Malta negli Iblei, gli Iblei a Malta,* (Palermo, 2008), 269-281. An interesting study on the use of caves in the long term is by J. Chircop, 'Margined people of the karstland: pastoral cave-centred survival strategies in the central Mediterranean' in M. Emmanuelson and E. Johansson (eds), *Peripheral Communities. Crisis, Continuity and Long-Term Survival,* (Uppsola, 2008), 245-260.

[61] NLM Lib. 1302, f. 20v. *Giren* are the subject of an on-going in-depth study by Ernest Vella for an MA in Archaeology. The potential of linking the technical study of traditional farmhouses (as in C. Jaccarini's *Ir-Razzett: The Maltese Farmhouse,* (Malta, 2002)) with dated documentary sources is still untapped. The same can be said of apiary huts *(mgiebah)* often assumed to be of Roman date by specialists and amateurs alike; see A. Camilleri, *"Fejn jinzamm in-nahal l-imgiebah jitrawmu": A Case Study in Industrial Archaeology.* Unpublished BA (Hons) dissertation (University of Malta, 2003).

[62] K. Buhagiar, Water management strategies and the cave-dwelling phenomenon in Late-medieval Malta, *Medieval Archaeology* 51 (2007), 103-131.

[63] An attempt should be made to stay clear of certain pitfalls. The fine publication *A Study of Landscape and Irrigation Systems at Is-Simblija limits of Dingli, Malta and Conservation Project,* (Malta, 2002) co-authored by P. Saliba, J. Magro Conti and C. Borg, who worked along the lines suggested here, is marred by the cautious insistence that the Simblija hamlet outside Rabat, Malta, is of medieval date. We suspect that participation in the EU project which funded the survey conditioned the final publication and its conclusions.

[64] T.O. Morris, *The Water Supply Resources of Malta* (Malta, 1952).

65 NLM, Univ. 187, ff. 11v-12. A reference to this work is to be found in E. Theuma's interesting article 'Qanat, Saqqajja and Roman aqueduct system at Rabat, Malta', in T. Cortis (ed), *Proceedings of History Week* 2003, (Malta, 2004), 75-100.

[66] NLM, Treas. B 289, f. 94.

[67] This reference is also useful as it pre-dates the possibility that the *qanat*-system of water retrieval was introduced to Malta from the Balearics when the Cotoner grand masters (1660-1680) brought with them windmill technology from their island home Mallorca. On windmill technology transfer, facilitated by similar geology on both islands, see M.O. Moragues and B. Bestard, 'Geografía sanjuanista en Mallorca' in *La Orden de Malta, Mallorca y el Mediterráneo* (Mallorca, 2000), 199-211 especially pages 207-208. Water retrieval on Mallorca has been studied by M. Barceló, M.A. Carbonero, R. Martí, G. Roselló-Bordoy, *Les aigües cercades (Els qanāt(s) de l'illa de Mallorca),* (Palma de Mallorca, 1986).

[68] The statement is from the preamble of the European Landscape Convention - www.coe.int/dg4/cultureheritage/Conventions/Landscape/default_en.asp- which the Government of Malta signed in Florence in 2000 but has so far failed to ratify.

Some Early Forms of Financial Instruments found in Mid-Sixteenth Century Malta

Joan Abela

A new phase in the development of Malta's economic history was registered with the establishment of the Knights of St John in 1530. Prior to the arrival of the Order the local merchant's range of activity reflected the unrivalled regular sea-links with Sicilian ports which continued to be felt even after 1530.[1] However, the naval organisation and fighting spirit of the Order, which excelled in seamanship, opened up new frontiers in the Levant, the Straits of Gibraltar and beyond.[2] Furthermore, Malta's economy was stimulated when a proportion of the revenues from the Order's commanderies, which were spread all over Europe, was dispatched into the Common Treasury of the island.[3]

The island gradually witnessed an expansion in its trade network, which in turn resulted in a greater complexity of the money and credit market. The 'jingle of coin', as Braudel[4] terms it, diffused itself through various strata of society in Malta.[5] The harbour area became a focus of movement, constantly exchanging and dispatching goods, services and people – a process which necessitated a network of communication between the island and various other centres of trade. Monetary transactions reveal an intermingling of both local and Sicilian currencies. However, several other different currencies circulated simultaneously in Malta.[6] This influx of different currencies proved to be beneficial for Malta's economy, since merchants and businessmen were in a better position to carry out foreign payments in respect of various transactions.

Notarial instruments supply nearly all of the evidence available on commercial contracts, since they provide proof of the existence of an obligation. This reflects the importance which must be given to the study of notarial records when reconstructing economic, legal, and social history of trade in the early-modern Mediterranean world.[7] Listings of accessory clauses and anticipation of possible objections throw light upon all aspects of an obligation.[8] Various notarial acts dating back to the sixteenth century, which are deposited at the Notarial Archives in Valletta, reveal that even an island as small as Malta could serve as a rendezvous to an international mix of merchants.[9] The sheltered harbour of Birgu offered some of those same services that were available in established financial centres, although of course on a much smaller scale. The present paper focuses on some financial systems found in mid-sixteenth

century Malta, and delineates the importance of these financial activities in moulding the spirit of entrepreneurship in an island which, prior to the coming of the Hospitaller Knights, was more limited in its trading activities. These different financial aspects become all the more important when they are seen flourishing in an agrarian society such as was early modern Malta.

The most important financial instruments, apart from coins, in early modern Europe, were trade credit, bills of exchange, letters of credit, and other forms of loans. Apart from being a necessary tool for the merchant in order to protect his investments, these also provided a loophole for the businessman, who was prohibited by the Church to make a profit on loans.[10] Loans among individuals were particularly abundant and were disguised as 'amicable loans'. Notarial acts reveal that personal loans were common even among the villagers. Other common forms of business organisation were Partnership agreements. These were often short-term[11] and as such were terminated at the end of each business deal.[12]

Trade Credit

Credit is here understood as the exchange of two promises separated in time, since the person offering the service gets paid at a later date. It enabled merchants to carry on an ever-increasing amount of business in an age that possessed an inadequate stock of coins.[13] Loans were often supplied by petty usurers. However, more important in credit transactions were the money changers, a profession which many a time was performed by the notary himself. The machinery of credit varied immensely from country to country, and conducted at the lowest level, rested on the activities of moneylenders.[14] These often engaged in commerce,[15] but their main business consisted in changing money and in keeping deposit banks. The recurrent clause in commercial legal contracts which indicated that repayment had to be done, *'...in pecunia numerata*[16] *in pace et de plano ut bancus...'*[17] is indicative of the wide use of the services of money changers. **(Fig. 1)**

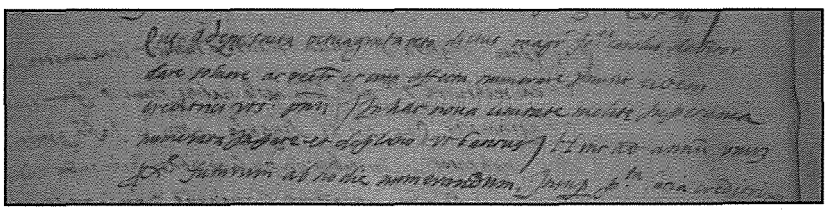

Fig. 1 '...in pecunia numerate in pace et de plano ut bancus...'

Source: NAV, MS 514/1, n.f., (28.ii.1560).

Usury – A necessary evil

The loan contract was the most widespread in early modern commerce. However, when discussing money matters one should not lose sight of the fact that in the Catholic West the Church did not recognise the legitimacy of interest.[18] All taking of interest tended to be regarded as usurious and no distinction was made between charitable loans and commercial loans.[19] This fact constituted a serious problem in an age when the Christian church was at the peak of its power as an institution and its dogma strictly adhered to.[20] Merchants found themselves in an ambivalent position: their profession and their goals were morally acceptable, but the routine they had to follow to attain these objectives, especially as sedentary merchants, was condemned.[21]

In spite of the fact that during the course of the sixteenth century these restraints were gradually weakened,[22] from research carried out at the Notarial Archives, one may note that even in Malta's case contractors were very prudent when it came to loan contracts. This is reflected in the recurrent use of phrases such as *'...causa puri veri et amicabilis mutui...'*,[23] *'...sine aliquo usurarum...'*.[24] **(Fig. 2)**

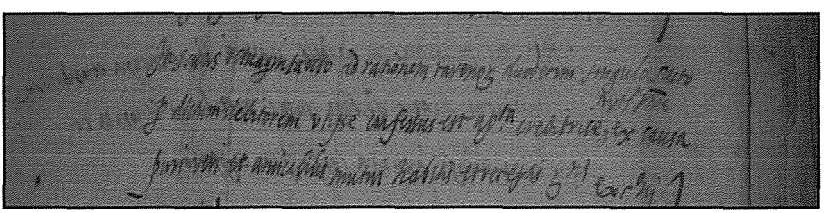

Fig. 2 '...causa puri veri et amicabilis mutui...'

Source: NAV, MS 514/1, n.f., (28.ii.1560).

Many a time when concluding a contract interest was included in the total sum due. The inclusion of interest through this method assured that the creditor recovered the amount due plus interest without him openly declaring a profit. However, there were cases wherein, due to commercial litigation, the contracting parties ended up in front of the state judges, and in such instances, the debtor usually accused the creditor of making usurious profit at his expense. A case in point is a plea which Antonio de Via presented in front of the judges at the *Magna Curia Castellania* on 8 January 1564.[25] Antonio stated that some years back he had borrowed the sum of a 100 *scudi* from Pero Mingra, who effected the payment against a contract which

stated that the sum due was that of 110 *scudi,* thus making a net profit of 10%.[26] Furthermore, Pero requested Antonio to pledge a slave which would guarantee payment in case the debtor defaulted in paying. Pero's worries were not unfounded since Antonio did not effect the requested payment. In view of this, Pero confiscated the slave and was about to sell her in order to get his remittance. It was at this point that Antonio presented his appeal in front of the tribunal, since he stated, Pero was going to sell the slave at half her price and this would jeopardise his financial position.

It is interesting to note however, that notwithstanding the rigorous teachings of the church, one may still find loan contracts that did away with the usual reservations. A case in point is a contract dated 23 February 1540 drawn up by notary Giuseppe de Guevara. In this contract although Paolo Burlo declared to have lent 11 *uncie* to Nicola Saga, it was not specifically stated that this was an amicable loan. The only condition which was stipulated was that Nicola had to repay his creditor within a year's time *'ut bancus'*.[27] In another contract[28] Gerardo Rei from Birgu, who was known as 'the baker', together with his wife Palma, were obliged towards Pietro Giovanni Pitre, a French merchant. The sum in question amounted to 50½ *scudi,* and since Pitre was absent, notary Giuseppe de Guevara appeared on his behalf. The debt had to be repaid by the coming Christmas through the bank and Giorgio Deneapolis from Rome stood as their surety.[29] Once again this *debitum* is presented as a straight loan without it being disguised behind the usual neutral terms. Although there is no indication of the payment of interest rates in the contracts, one wonders whether the phrase censoring usury was purposely left out, or whether this was just a slip of the pen.

The above quoted contracts reveal a violation of the prohibition of usury. However, this should not lead us to believe that there were many who obstinately questioned the teaching of the church.[30] Evidence of an uneasy conscience may be attained from the spontaneous restitution of usurious gains found in a will[31] dated 19 October 1546. In this will Margherita de Russo,[32] who was from Syracuse but resided at Birgu, stipulated that she owed Giorgio de Marimai the sum of 15 *scudi,* and to Isabella, his wife, another 3 *scudi.* This sum was due in view of an amicable loan, and it was further stated, that she was doing this act for the 'peace of her conscience.'[33]

It must also be noted that there were innumerable ways of circumventing the usury prohibition, and from a legal point of view, the merchants had ample chances to make most of the technicalities.[34] Compensation for loans was

not licit if it translated itself as gain for the lender. However, if it was charged as a reimbursement for loss or expense, it became licit.[35] Interest was considered as compensation due to a creditor in view of a loss he had incurred through lending,[36] and therefore it was licit to claim *damnum et interesse* for other reasons not inherent in a loan, such as the failure to repay the principal on maturity.[37] Thus, the manoeuvring of legal terminology provided the ways and means by which to procure the much needed advances for commercial activities.[38]

A contract highlighting the above principle is that drafted by notary Giuseppe de Guevara dated 13 November 1540[39]. This was categorised as *debitij ad cambium,* and in it the Maltese Lorenzo Chappara, Dimitrio Frendo and Michele Frendo, jointly confirmed to have received from Benedicto Petito and Giuseppe Calafato[40] the sum of 80 *scudi* in *'permutari seu ad cambium'*. They promised to remit the said sum, which they received in doubloons and gold *scudi* in the city of Messina, within ten days of their arrival in the said city with the *grippo* of Charfuso Bellia. Furthermore, it was stated that if the debtors fell victims of pirates or were shipwrecked, Lorenzo, Dimitrio and Michele were to guarantee that the creditor received payment through their possessions, both present and future. An additional 50 *scudi* were to be paid if the stipulated period of payment was exceeded. In this case interest might well have been disclosed by the fact that additional interest was quoted as a penalty clause in case of late payment. According to Hunt and Murray, in certain cases repayment dates were deliberately set earlier than actually planned in order to assess a charge for 'damages' and this could well have been such a case.[41]

Another interesting contract is that drawn up on 9 December 1557.[42] What makes this act stand out from other contracts is the fact that it is one of the few in which the rate of interest is stipulated. During the sixteenth century, it was common practice for loans to be repaid by ceding any right of action against debtors to the creditor. Thus we find that *Nob.* Giovanni Antonio de Bendicto from Messina ceded to *Nob.* Rocco Bottini any right of action against Lorenzo de Rosa and Giovanni Domenico de Lombardo, who jointly owed him 19 *scudi* 11 *tareni* 8 *grani,* and also against Antonio de Rosa who was in debt for the sum of 30 *scudi,* and Sebastiano de Iudica, who in turn was in debt for 27 *scudi* 10 *tareni* 8 *grani.* The total amount ceded amounted to 77 *scudi* 9 *tareni* 16 *grani.* Together with this sum 3 *scudi* 8 *tareni* 4 *grani* were to be repaid in cash. Furthermore, there was to be an interest of 8 *scudi* 6 *tareni* (approximately 10%), totalling the whole sum owed, to 90 *scudi.*

The interest was in respect of fluctuations in the rate of exchange,[43] since the payment was to be done in Syracuse within one month from the date of the contract and six days after Giovanni Antonio's arrival in the city on the ship belonging to Francesco de Randazo, in which ship Rocco was also a shareholder.[44] It was also stated that on this same ship there was enough insured merchandise belonging to the debtor to make good for the debt.

Another category of dealers in money very much in the public eye comprised pawnbrokers. This type of credit was necessary for both the poor as well as for the highborn who felt the need to maintain a style of life above and beyond their means. Entrepreneurs and merchants of all stripes frequently availed themselves of modest short-term advances to cover gaps in their cash flow and found it profitable to do so. Interest rates were high, mostly because of the paucity of alternatives. The moneylenders and pawnbrokers who participated in this business found it attractive enough to bear public opprobrium and the risk of eternal damnation.[45] No risk factor existed in the case of an illegal loan at interest generally secured on personal property, and thus it was unequivocally judged sinful by the Church.

Jewish lenders were neither bound by canon law, nor were they prohibited by their religion from lending money at interest, except to other Jews. In fact, Davide *russo piccolo,* who was a Jew, seems to have been a prominent money-lender during the mid-sixteenth century. Amongst others, one of his accomplices is recorded as being *Fra.* Masse who was said to be in charge of the slaves.[46] In a specific court case he testified to have lent 7s to the knight Bartolomeo Cortes against the pawning of various gold items. The borrower was tied with an interest of 1t each month for every *scudo* lent. In another instance *Fra.* Paolo de Loaysa declared that since he needed to borrow some money he pawned some cloth to the same Jew, who lent him 2 *scudi.* After about seventeen days he repaid the amount at a monthly interest rate of 1 *tareno* per *scudo,* which had to be paid in full even though the money was returned prior to the lapse of the month.[47] The witness testified that the cloth had been deposited in the house of the said Masse.

The same debtor declared that he once again reverted to the services of the Jew, when he needed to borrow 1 *scudo.* After two days he returned the money together with an interest of one *'carlino di usura et guadagno'.*[48] Another Jew who is mentioned as a pawn agent and a collaborator of Davide is Samuele. To this effect, the knight Hieronimo Coronel testified that since he was in need of money he gave some things for pawning to Samuele, after which the said Jew brought him 4 *scudi* less one *aquila.* The pawned goods

were left in the hands of the knight San Michele who was to acquire 1 *tareno* per *scudo* each month.[49]

On 17 August 1558 Carlo Lombardo declared that some two years back he needed to borrow some money to be able to buy wood for the completion of his ship.[50] He therefore approached the knight Maimon and offered him a share in the said vessel. Maimon informed him that he had no money and instead offered him a black slave which he valued at 60 *scudi*. Lombardo testified that this same slave had been bought for a lesser amount of 40 *scudi*. However, since he was in dire need of money he agreed to draw up a contract before the notary Giuseppe de Guevara wherein he declared that he was in debt for 60 *scudi* which were repayable in nine months' time. After the lapse of the prescribed period, Maimon made him pay 5 *scudi* as interest and took the capital by taking Lombardo to Court. The Court decreed that the latter was to pay, and he thus had to give him his house in return for the 40 *scudi*, even though the house was estimated at more than 100 *scudi*. The house was later sold to Narduchio Burlo. In all, Lombardo declared to have been burdened with expenses and interest amounting to none less than 100 *scudi*.

In another instance Bendicto Parodi declared that he had received the sum of 50 *scudi* '*secundum formam bulle*',[51] from the knight Baptista Romano, for which he had to pay an annual interest of 5 *scudi*, as per contract registered in the acts of Nicola de Agatiis. Finding himself in need of more money Parodi went to the knight Tommaso Strozzi, who lent him another 50 *scudi* of which he retained 4 *scudi* as interest for six months. This makes the interest rate which is stated here stand at 16% of the borrowed capital.[52] Another witness, this time the tailor Bartolomeo Guyo, declared that in the year 1547 he received 40 *scudi* from *Fra.* Giovanni Serdan Dellas Cortes according to the Royal Bull. These had been lent at the rate of 10% and the contract was drawn up by Nicola de Agatiis. In another agreement 20 *scudi* had been lent to the said Guyo by the knight Serdan who, according to the said Bull, had to pay 10% which covered the houses of the said witness. These had been tied for a period of nine years. The witness said that he knew that *Fra.* Serdan had lent about 60 *scudi* to Lorenzo Zolese, and after their reimbursement he had lent them to Marietta Scalena. He also lent another 40 *scudi* to Santoro Vella's mother and 20 *scudi* to Giovanni Rusni, as per contract which was noted in the acts of Carolo Cassia. Furthermore, he pawned some gold and silver items from the knight Giovannide Icugna for the price of 50 *scudi* at the rate of 10% per annum. To cover this loan a *polissa* had been drawn up in the presence of the said witness and that of *Fra.* Giovanni Serdan Dellas Cortes.

Pietro Ros was also involved in dealing with the said knight, and this he did at the rate of 10%.[53]

To this effect, we have Ros's testimony in the case. Ros stated that the knight Tommaso Strozzi had sent some money with Michele Russo's ship for the acquisition of wheat from Licata. The witness stated that more than a year earlier he had borrowed about 25 *scudi* from Strozzi against the payment of some interest to cover the payment of a default in the consignment of the said goods.[54] Ros also informed the commissioners that Paolo Burlo knew more about the matter. The said witness also stated that on request of a friend of his, he borrowed from the knight Serdan Dellas Cortes a sum of money at an interest of 10% according to the Royal Bull. He further stated that on two other occasions he borrowed the sum of 150 *scudi* against the pawning of some gold items and a *polissa*. After a year he remitted the capital plus the interest at the rate of 10% and in doing so recovered the pawned items. Interestingly enough, Ros once again sought the services of *Fra.* Serdan, however the knight informed him that he had now become a commander and therefore did not need to perform such services.[55] **(Fig. 3)**

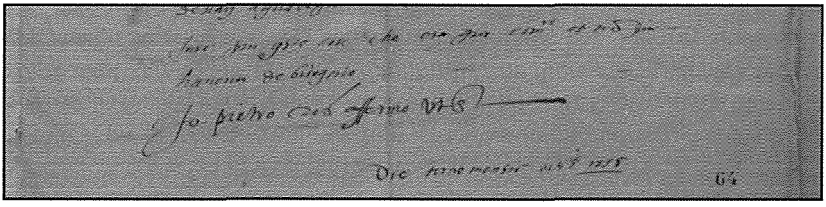

Fig. 3 Signature of Pietro Ros, confirming his testimony

Source: CEM, AO, MS 38, f.64. (1558).

Knights like Giovanni Serdan Dellas Cortes, Masse, Maimon, Montalto and Strozzi seem to have been important links in the pawn market. More testimonials declaring their involvement in this network are given even by merchants such as Antonio Habel and Carlo Lombardo, and by other fellow knights, amongst whom we find the knight Francesco della Motta, who was a receiver of the Order of St John stationed in Sicily, and who was a prime contact between Malta and Sicily.[56]

The Bill of Exchange

As early as the twelfth century, and perhaps even earlier, the remittance of foreign exchange was combined with credit. Since the taking of interest was prohibited, bankers had to find other ways and means of lending at a profit. Their favourite method was by means of bills of exchange (*cambium per litteras*). By the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, a standard bill of exchange was developed and became a common instrument of credit.[57]

Merchants made deposits in *'banche de scritta'* run by the money-changers.[58] These deposits were redeemable at a future date in another place and in another currency.[59] The changer had to secure correspondents in other towns who would honour exchange contracts drawn up on them and who in turn would draw up exchange contracts against him.[60] Profit was variable and speculative, depending on the future exchange rate, and as such was concealed in an exchange rate higher than would have prevailed in a cash transaction.[61] However, it was an advantage for the customer to eliminate the actual transportation of coins, since this involved both risk and expense.
According to de Roover, interest was undeniably included in the price of the bill, since loans customarily drew interest.[62] The argument put forward by merchants to justify the credit transaction was that an exchange transaction was not a loan *(cambium non est mutuum)*. They described this transaction as being either a commutation of moneys *(permutatio)* or a buying and selling of foreign currency *(emptio venditio)*.[63] **(Fig. 4)**

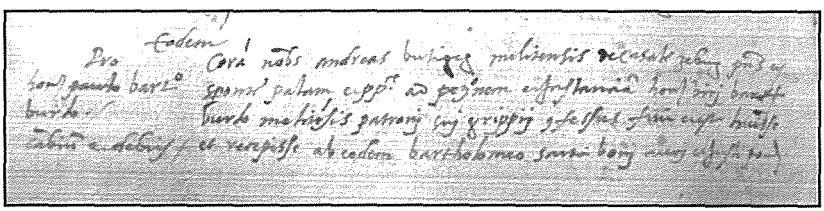

Fig. 4 Extract from a contract categorized as cambium et debitum

Source: NAV, R 224/1, f. 81v, (30.viii.1540).

The bill of exchange was one of the most common financial instruments used when effecting foreign trading transactions and repaying foreign debts. A case in point is that regarding a contract wherein all the contracting parties were foreigners. In this particular contract Giuseppe Bosche, a Catalan merchant

residing in Birgu, appointed Cristofero Roger, a Valencian merchant, to recuperate 360 florins from Michele de Salvador, who was also a Valencian merchant. This was to be done through a bill of exchange from Hieronimo Gene another Valencian merchant who was a resident of Palermo.[64]

In yet another contract Blasio Zirenzo from Birgu declared to have received 8u *'ad cambium'* from the city of Syracuse as part payment of a larger sum of money amounting to 15 *uncie* 5 *tareni*. This amount was due from Stefano Cesire and was transferred to *Don.* Antonio de Mazara in respect of a benefice named Il-Wileġ ta' Bir Għattar[65] The transfer was effected through Zirenzo's procurator Leonardo de Parisi.[66] As can be seen from this document, it was important to maintain contacts with various representatives in different countries since these greatly facilitated business transactions.

The letter of exchange was quite popular even among Knights of the Order, who were officially prohibited from engaging themselves in monetary transactions that resulted in usurious profits. However, it seems that, notwithstanding the restrictions in force, these still managed to pursue various financial engagements.[67] In a particular act[68] the German knight Conrado Schiualbaer appointed *Fra.* Giovanni Francesco della Motta, who was a receiver of the Order of St John stationed in Sicily, as his procurator. The latter was to recover a sum of money from Pietro Sanilia, a Genoese merchant. The outstanding amount was that of *'scuta auri Italica vulgo nuncupata pistoletti*[69] *ducento quinquaginta'*,[70] which sum had to be paid by another merchant, this time a German one named Agostino Stalburgel, by means of a letter of exchange.

In another deed the knight Hieronimo de Guette ceded any right of action he had against Dino Virgell who was a resident of Palermo, to Marietta La Cuzina, a Greek lady. The sum due was in respect of a bill of exchange and amounted to 760 1/3 florins at the rate of 6 *tareni* per florin which the debtor had to repay through a letter of exchange on 29 January 1562 in Palermo through *Fra.* Gio. Francesco della Motta.[71] The recurring mention of Francesco della Motta's name in various exchange contracts makes him one of the main contacts between Malta and Sicily at the time. **(Fig.5)**

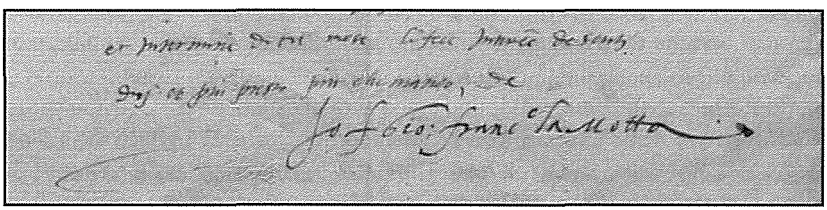

Fig. 5 Signature of Fra. Gio. Francesco della Motta.

Source: CEM, AO, MS 38, f.64v, (1558).

Another letter of exchange was the means of trade credit in a contract dated 30 August 1563[72] wherein, *Fra.* Filippo Nuccetto, an Italian knight of the Order of St. John, was appearing on behalf of *Fra.* Lorenzo Vagnon, another Italian knight. The sum to be recuperated was that of 26 ducats and 11 *soldi* at the rate of 13 *tareni* per ducat and was due from Giuseppe Farrugia, a Maltese. On 2 March 1563,[73] *Fra.* Aloisio Cruzat a knight of the Aragonese Langue from the Priory of Navarre proclaimed *Fra.* Baptista Daoijs from the same Langue as his procurator. The latter was to pay 40 ducats at the rate of 13 *tareni* per ducat in Palermo or in any other place. This sum was due to Baldassare Pandino who was a merchant resident in the same city, and formed part of a bill of exchange which had been drawn up in view of the sale of various goods amounting to 2,000 Spanish ducats.

The use of the *Polissa* or Cheque

The *polissa*, which is one of the earliest forms of what we nowadays call a cheque, was a written assignment drawn up on a banker by his customer and made out in favour of a third party.[74] This type of transaction did not gain much popularity since oral orders dictated personally by the depositor or his lawful attorney were preferred when effecting a transfer order.[75] According to de Roover, 'an important legal point in this regard is that payment by bank transfer, either through a written or oral assignment was final and, once accepted by the creditor, it discharged the debtor completely. This rule, however, did not apply to an assignment out of bank,[76] and the debtor remained responsible until the creditor had been fully satisfied.'[77]

The use of the *polissa* in Malta seems to have been an established form of payment, since various documents refer to its use when effecting settlement of outstanding dues. Notaries seem to have had the task of issuing such *polisse* on behalf of other persons. One such instance is the issue of three consecutive *polisse* by notary Bartolomeo Salvagio de Via on behalf of his client Giovanni Alamano.[78] The latter deposited 49 *scudi,* which sum was split up in three payments, and for which the notary issued three *polisse,*[79] the first one amounting to 25 *scudi* 6 *tareni,*[80] the second one amounting to 6 *scudi* 6 *tareni,*[81] and the third and last amounting to 17 *scudi.*[82] **(Fig. 6)**

A most interesting document found in the acts of Giuseppe de Guevara dated 23 November 1563[83] refers to a protestation or *protests*[84] which was filed by Marina Rondolina, a Greek lady. The latter was demanding a payment of

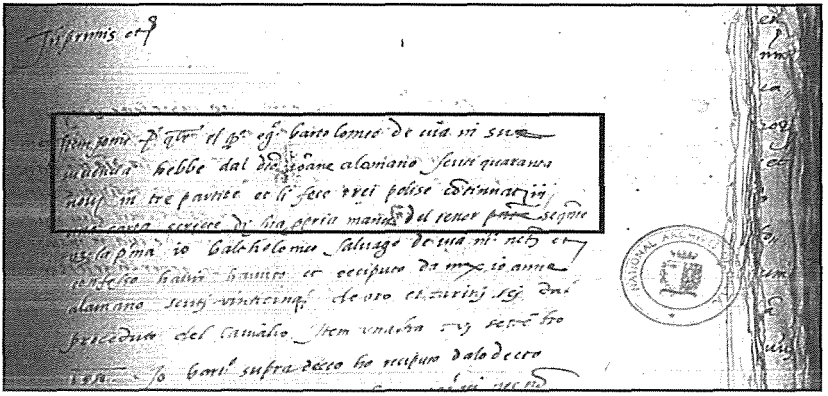

Fig. 6 Testimony recording a deposit of 49 scudi effected in three payments for which sum the notary later issued a number of polisse to cover various payments.

Source: NAM, ACA, Vol. 1, f. 342, (19.v.1559).

10 ducats that had been lent to Bartolomeo Barban against a *'polisa servita in Malta'* on the 4th November. This *polissa* was *'sotto scritta de propria mano'* and *Fra.* Francesco de Villanova had endorsed it on behalf of the said Bartolomeo.[85] The fact that Marina had filed a *protests* indicates that the cheque had not been honoured. The assigned commissioners decreed that Marina be repaid the said sum together with any additional expenses incurred by her.

In another contract categorised as *Depositum* and dated 6 September 1564, Vincenzo Curmi from Birgu declared to have received from Nicola Ruan the sum of 31 *scudi.* A number of goods were held as a security on the above loan and accordingly listed in the contract. Amongst these were *'...una polisa di scuti doi et tarenj setti et un altra polisa di un soldato di galera di scuti sei et tarenj quatro quae bona dictus Vincentius vendere et deliberater possit.'*[86]
In yet another document registered at the *Communis Aerarii,*[87] a procurator from Saint Giles, who was in charge of recuperating a substantial amount of money for a Maltese client, did this through the eventual collection of a number of *polisse* which were originally due to the debtor. The procurator explained that this was the only possible way to effect repayment, since even though the debtor had a substantial amount of wheat, the abundance of the product which was registered in that year (1542), led to a fall in prices. Furthermore, he added that the wheat could not be shipped to Malta since the *tratte* had already been issued.[88] Evidence of the use of financial instruments such

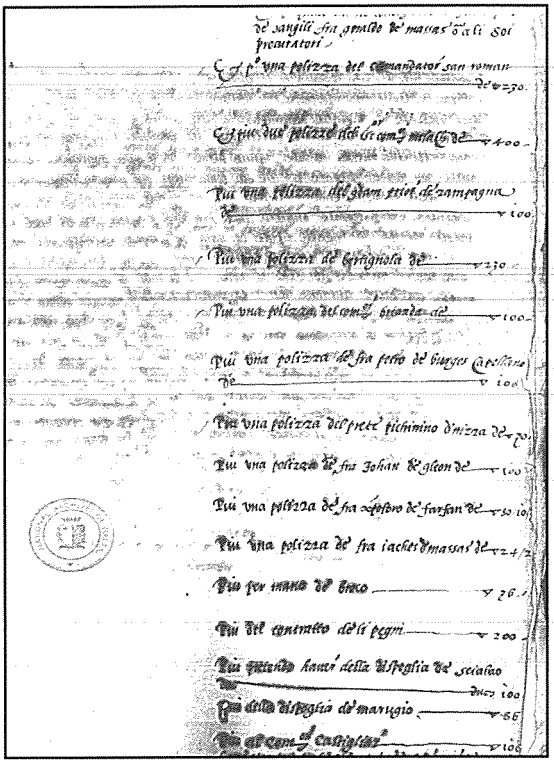

Fig. 7 List of polisse recuperated by a procurator in order to cover a sum of money due to his client.

Source: NAM, CA, n.f., (1542).

as the *polissa*, contributes to our knowledge of locally recognised financial methods of payment during the mid-sixteenth century. **(Fig. 7)**

Conclusion

The expansion in Malta's trade links which were a direct result of the establishment of the Order on the island led to the setting up of a stronger commercial network between Malta and other neighbouring countries. Attractive trade opportunities brought together a number of individuals and entrepreneurs who acted from different locations and took advantage of Malta's ideal positioning in the central axis of the Mediterranean. Although the island was essentially made up of an agrarian society, dealings in cash

were not only the prerogative of the town dwellers. Villagers also sought to participate and take advantage of the new demand that had been created due to the presence of a relatively handsome number of foreign merchants. The latter had either settled in Malta or else used the island as a port of call. Trade thrived on these communications, and on the cooperation of the different parties who found the adequate financial facilities and organisation to enhance their business activities.

NOTES

[1] Malta's attachment to Sicily is reflected in the fact that four-fifths of the total amount of shipping registered between 1564-1600 was directed to this nearby island. C. Cassar, *Society, Culture and Identity in Early Modern Malta*, (Malta, 2000), 73.

[2] V. Mallia-Milanes, *Venice and Hospitaller Malta 1530-1798 – Aspects of a Relationship*, (Malta, 1992), 8-9.

[3] Mallia-Milanes, *Venice and Hospitaller Malta*, 228.

[4] F. Braudel, *Civilization & Capitalism 15th – 18th Century, Vol.1 The Structures of Everyday Life*, (Trans by S. Reynolds), (California, 1992), 437.

[5] When the town economy became bound up with the rural areas, and external trade had become necessary, the need for money as a unit of exchange was felt. Barter and exchange still had their importance due to the fact that agricultural communities continued to be domestically self-sufficient. H. Kamen, *The Iron Century – Social Change in Europe 1550-1660*, (London, 1971), 102. Refer also to H. Van Der Wee, 'Monetary, Credit and Banking Systems', in *The Cambridge Economic History of Europe, Vol. V*, E.E. Rich and C.H. Wilson (eds.), (Cambridge, 1977), 306, who states that barter was a regular occurrence in the early modern age since it was an ideal way of disposing of goods that were difficult to sell and due to the shortage of hard cash.

[6] J. Abela, *Port Activities in Mid-Sixteenth Century Malta*, Unpublished MA Dissertation, (University of Malta, 2007), 19-20.

[7] In northern Europe records certified by municipal or gild authorities enjoyed equal authority as notarial contracts in the south. Refer to R. S. Lopez, & I. W. Raymond, *Medieval Trade in the Mediterranean World*, Illustrative Documents translated with Introduction and Notes, (New York, 1990), 230-231.

[8] Lopez & Raymond, *Medieval Trade*, 229.

[9] 'The equivalent of the modern businessman was the merchant, but he was not what we mean by the word merchant. Specialisation had not yet developed to the degree that characterizes industrial societies, and a merchant was very often the head of a manufacturing enterprise, a money lender, and a trader, all at the same time.' C.M. Cipolla, *Before the Industrial Revolution, European Society and Economy, 1000-1700*, (2nd edition), (USA, 1981), 65.

[10] 'Interest was added directly to the capital, or in what appeared as a bill transaction the interest was smuggled into the price of the bills; or commodities were lent in place of ready money and then charged at a high rate; or the loan was made in the form of a deposit, which was permissible, and so forth', quoted from R. Ehrenberg, *Capital & Finance in the Age of the Renaissance – A Study of the Fuggers and their Connections*, (trans H.M. Lucas), (London, 1958), 43.

[11] R. Goldsmith, *Premodern Financial Systems – A Historical Comparative Study*, (New York, 1987), 163.

[12] Abela, *Port Activities*, refer to chapter three.

[13] Van Der Wee, 'Monetary, Credit and Banking Systems', 306-307.

[14] Kamen, *The Iron Century*, 104.

[15] E. S. Hunt & J. M. Murray, *A History of Business in Medieval Europe, 1200 – 1550*, (Cambridge, 1999), 64.

[16] '*In pecunia numerata*: in hard cash or in counted coins? The expression *numerare pecuniam* means both to count and to pay cash.' Lopez, *Medieval Trade*, 167. According to Lane and Mueller *Pecunie* meant debits and credits as well as the coins used to pay debts and collect credits. See F. C. Lane & R. C. Mueller, *Money and Banking in Medieval and Renaissance Venice, Vol. 1 Coins and Moneys of Account*, (London, 1985), Preface xiii. Zerbi called those coins that constituted the basic links or coins in specific years and sectors of the economy *'moneta numerata'*. These were the kind of coins that parties to a transaction understood would be used in stating a price or in counting out the payment of a debt defined in a money of account. Tommaso Zerbi as quoted in Lane & Reinhold, *Money and Banking*, 9.

[17] N(otarial) A(rchives) V(alletta), MS 514/1, Notary Placido Abela, n.f., (2.xii.1559). The moneychanger became a *bancherius* deriving from bench (*bancum,* in Latin) upon which the changer placed the piles of coins. Lopez, *Medieval Trade,* 162. This terminology was already used in Ancient Greece where bankers were designated by the word *trapeziti,* a derivation from τράπεζα (*trapeza* or table). R. de Roover, *The Rise and Decline of The Medici Bank,* (USA, 1963), 15.

[18] In the Byzantine Empire this viewpoint never prevailed, so that interest on loans continued to be regarded as legitimate. See Lopez & Raymond, *Medieval Trade,* 157

[19] F. C. Lane, *Venice and History, The Collected Papers of Frederic C. Lane,* (Committee of Colleagues and Former Students eds.), (USA, 1966), 56-57.

[20] de Roover, *The Rise and Decline,* 12 &108-109.

[21] B. Z. Kedar, *Merchants in Crisis, Genoese and Venetian Men of Affairs and the Fourteenth-Century Depression,* (New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1976), 60. According to de Roover the practical effect of the usury doctrine was the opposite of that which was intended: the use of subterfuges, whether licit or illicit, increased risk and expense and kept the rate of interest high instead of lowering it. de Roover, *The Rise and Decline,* 121.

[22] H. G. Koenigsberger, G. Q. Bowler, *'Europe in the sixteenth century',* (2nd Edition), (London & New York, 1992), 2. Although there were a series of compromises involving exceptions, legitimacy of interest as such was not recognised. Lopez & Raymond, *Medieval Trade,* 157. Credit on a vast scale was financing wars and trade in Europe. Although interest was generally accepted, nevertheless, the theological controversy continued. Condemnation, however, came to be more overtly confined to those whom we today call usurers. In Catholic countries a decisive break with tradition did not come until the eighteenth century. See S. Homer, *A History of Interest Rates,* 2nd edition, (USA, 1977), 79-81.

[23] NAV, R439/9, Notary Bartolomeo Salvagio de Via, f. 37, (11.ii. 1533), R224/1, Notary Giuseppe de Guevara, f. 132, (12.ii.1541), f. 188v, (19.vii.1541), R439/42, f. 113, (8.v.1551), MS 514/1, n.f., (28.ii.1560), n.f. (3.iv.1560).

[24] NAV, MS 514/1, n.f., (18.xii.1557).

[25] N(ational) A(rchives) M(alta), M(agnia) C(uria) C(astellania), 'Cedulae Supplicae et Taxationes', Vol. 1. ff. 2 –2v, (8.i.1564).

[26] This amount tallies with the commercial short-term rates of interest quoted by Homer as those prevailing during the sixteenth-century in Italy. These were in the region of 8-10%. Homer, *A History of Interest,* 121.

[27] NAV, R224/1, f. 37v, (23.ii.1540).

[28] NAV, R224/1, f. 79v, (21.viii.1540).

[29] In legal terminology *fideiussio.* 'In Roman Law, a contract of suretyship, whereby one person binds himself to be answerable for the debt of another. The person primarily liable is called the *principalis debitor* and the surety or guarantor is secondarily liable. A surety could be called upon to pay even though the *principalis debitor* was completely solvent. He could also be sued for the whole amount even though there were several other guarantors.' S. Fiorini, *Documentary Sources of Maltese History, Part 1, Notarial Documents No. 2, Notary Giacomo Zabbara: R494/1(II-IV) 1494-1497,* (Malta, 1999), 427

[30] de Roover, *The Rise and Decline,* 12.

[31] In numerous medieval testaments the *testator* ordered the restitution of all usury and ill-gotten gains. These clauses became scarcer after 1350 since merchant-bankers contended that they were engaged in legitimate and non-usurious activities. de Roover, *The Rise and Decline,* 12.

[32] This woman has been described by J. Sciberras as a wealthy married woman who was active in business. J. Sciberras, *Women in Early Sixteenth-Century Malta,* Unpublished M.A. History thesis, (University of Malta, 2004), 86.

[33] NAV, R202/11, Notary Nicola de Agatiis, ff. 9-11, (19.x.1546).

[34] de Roover, *The Rise and Decline,* 11.

[35] Hunt & Murray, *A History of Business,* 72-73.

[36] Interest was distinct from usury. 'The Latin noun *usura* means the "use" of anything, in this case the use of borrowed capital; hence, usury was the price paid for the use of money. The Latin verb *intereo* means "to be lost"; a substantive form *interisse* developed into the modern term "interest". Thus interest was not profit but loss.' Homer, *A History of Interest Rates,* 73.

[37] de Roover, *The Rise and Decline,* 10-11.

[38] F. Braudel, *Capitalism and Material Life 1400-1800,* (trans. M. Kochan), (London, 1973), 368. de Roover, *The Rise and Decline,* 108.

[39] NAV, R224/1, f. 103v, (13.xi.1540).

[40] The inventory of the belongings of Giuseppe Calafato is found in NAM, MCC, AO Vol. I, ff. 44a- 49v. (8.iii.1553).

[41] Hunt & Murray, *A History of Business*, 72-73.

[42] NAV, R4/1, Notary Placido Abela, ff.106- 107v, (9.xii.1557).

[43] As has already been stated, according to the Catholic doctrine, interest could be charged if the loan was thought to be carrying a high percentage of risk or else due to fluctuations in exchange rates which may lead to a loss.

[44] NAV, R4/1, f.107v, (9.xii.1557).

[45] Hunt and Murray, *A History of Business*, 70-71.

[46] C(uria) E(piscopalis) M(elitensis), AO, MS 38, (1558), f. 60.

[47] CEM, AO, MS 38, (1558), f. 60v.

[48] CEM, AO, MS 38, (1558), f. 60v. (One carlino was equivalent to 10 grani).

[49] CEM, AO, MS 38, (1558), ff. 65-65v.

[50] CEM, AO, MS 38, (1558), ff. 61-61v.

[51] Most probably this refers to the papal bulls *Regimini* (1425 and 1455) which were in force at the time wherein credit through annuities was subject to the following conditions: 1. the annuities created had to be assigned to a specific piece of real estate; 2. it had to be possible to buy them back again if the debtor so desired; 3. they might not represent a higher annual income than 10 per cent of the capital invested. Van Der Wee, 'Monetary, Credit and Banking Systems', 304.

[52] CEM, AO, MS 38, (1558), f. 62v.

[53] CEM, AO, MS 38, (1558), ff. 63-63v.

[54] CEM, AO, MS 38, (1558), ff. 63v-64. *Fra* Tommaso Strozzi could possibly have been a close relation of *Fra.* Leone Strozzi who was Prior of Capua. In 1552 the latter formed part of a commission which was appointed to survey Malta's fortifications. The commission decided to adopt Strozzi's proposal to fortify the tip of the promontory of Sceberras and to protect Birgu from the other side of *Porto delle Galere*, today's Dockyard Creek. Thus it was that Forts St. Elmo and St. Michael came into being.

[55] CEM, AO, MS 38, (1558), f. 64.

[56] Abela, *Port Activities*, Refer to Section 2.10.

[57] Homer, *A History of Interest Rates*, 77.

[58] F. Braudel, *Civilization & Captialism 15th – 18th Century, Vol. 3 The Perspective of the World*, (Trans. S. Reynolds), (London, 2002), 128-129.

[59] The theologians insisted a great deal upon the observance of the *distantia loci* (difference in place). de Roover, *The Rise and Decline*, 109

60 Lopez & Raymond, *Medieval Trade*, 162.

[61] Although the church forbade borrowing at interest, it permitted the bill of exchange due to the risks to which it was exposed on its travels.

[62] de Roover, *The Rise and Decline*, 11. In the account books of the Italian merchant-bankers, one rarely finds traces of discount, but there are thousands of entries relating to exchange transactions. Interest is not accounted for however, there are records of accounts entitled *Pro e danno di cambio* (Profit and Loss on Exchange). *ibid*, 11, 130.

[63] de Roover, *The Rise and Decline*, 11.

[64] NAV, MS 778/4, Notary Giuseppe de Guevara, ff. 119- 120v, (11.iv.1564).

[65] G. Wettinger, *Place-Names of the Maltese Islands, ca. 1300-1800*, (Malta, 2000), 592.

[66] NAV, R44/7, Notary Giacomo Baldacchino ff. 420v- 421, (22.v.1564).

[67] D. Rossi, *The Monte di Pietà in Hospitaller Malta*, Unpublished B.A. Hons. Dissertation, (University of Malta, 1998), 10.

[68] NAV, MS 778/4, ff. 191- 192, (30.viii.1563).

[69] In 1537 the Castilian devaluation lead to the replacement of the *excellente* of Granada by the *pistoleto* (or *escudo* or *corona*) and the Castilian ducat became a money of account. F. Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, (trans S. Reynolds), (University of California Press, 1995), 472.

[70] NAV, MS 778/4, f. 191, (30.viii.1563). Two hundred and fifty gold *scudi* which in Italian were known as *pistoletti.*

[71] NAV, MS 778/4, ff. 109-110v, (26.i.1562).

[72] NAV, MS 778/4, Part II ff. 189-190v, (30.viii.1563).

[73] NAV, MS 778/4, Part II, ff. 96-97v, (2.iii.1563).

[74] Van Der Wee, 'Monetary, Credit and Banking Systems', 314.

[75] It is interesting to note that in Barcelona, the regulations of the municipal bank (*taula*) forbade the use of the cheque (*polissa* in Catalan) as late as 1567, and in Venice this prohibition was still in force in the eighteenth century. de Roover, *The Rise and Decline*, 19.

[76] An assignment out of bank is a mode of payment according to which a creditor accepts, in settlement of a debt, a claim of his own debtor on a third party. de Roover, *The Rise and Decline*, 19.

[77] de Roover, *The Rise and Decline*, 19.

[78] *'Fatte a sua cautela dal detto egregio Bartolomeo'*. NAM, 'Suprema Appellationis Curia et Tribunalis Publicae Audentiae Causae, (ACA), Vol. 1, f. 339, (19.v.1559).

[79] NAM, ACA, Vol. 1, f.342, (19.v.1559).

[80] Dated 10 August 1551. NAM, ACA, Vol. 1, f. 349, (3.xii.1552).

[81] Dated 6 September 1551. NAM, ACA, Vol. 1, f. 349, (3.xii.1552).

[82] Dated 22 September 1551. NAM, ACA, Vol. 1, f. 349, (3.xii.1552).

[83] NAV, MS 778/V, ff. 227- 227v, (23.xi.1563).

[84] Braudel, *Captialism and Material Life*, 368.

[85] Contrary to today's custom cheques were endorsed on the front and not on the back. Braudel, *Civilization and Capitalism*, Vol. 1, 474.

[86] NAV, R224/23, ff.23-25, (6.ix.1564). A *polissa* amounting to 2s.7t and another one belonging to a soldier amounting to 6s.4t, which Vincenzo had the right to sell.

[87] NAM, 'Comune Aerarium', (CA), n.f., (1542).

[88] NAM, CA, n.f., (23.iii.1542).

Social Relationships in Mid-Sixteenth-Century Malta: An Analysis through Notary Juliano Muscat's Register R376/11

Emanuel Buttigieg

Introduction

The themes to be discussed in this paper transpire from the notarial deeds of Notary Juliano Muscat, and in particular register R376/11. This was compiled by Notary Muscat between February and August 1545, although it also includes a number of entries from 1546. In all, 330 separate acts were analysed. The volume, held at the Notarial Archives in Valletta (NAV), is written in Medieval Latin, although some Italian, Sicilian and Maltese words were used as well.

Social relations in mid-sixteenth-century Malta were extensive, variable, and constantly changing. Even in a small island like Malta people lived their lives within different social settings which were nonetheless concurrent and overlapping. The nature of the source at hand, that is, the notarial register R376/11, determined the subdivision of this paper into five parts. The first part sets out a framework within which to place the lives and actions of the people who appear in the acts of Notary Muscat. The next part outlines and discusses the merits and limits of notarial acts for historical research, while providing a short biographical sketch of Notary Muscat himself. The discussion then examines social relationships in terms of two dichotomies: Employers and Employees, Masters and Slaves. The final part is concerned with gender issues, and in particular with women's lives, in the belief that notarial records can help to redress the almost complete silence that shrouds women's history in the sixteenth century.

Context and Environment

In this discussion 'Environment' is seen as the product of a complex interaction of human and physical factors, and not simply as a material backdrop. The coming to Malta of the Knights of St John altered completely its geo-strategic significance but seems to have – at least initially – impinged little, if at all, on the lives of most Maltese. Mid-sixteenth-century Malta existed in a wider Mediterranean and European context, which over the decades was to impinge more often and more directly on local developments; in Abela's

words: "*Ecco Malta posta fra l'Isole d'Italia, e per conseguenza nell Europa*".[1] The years 1545 to 1550 were characterized by a certain lull in the Habsburg-Ottoman struggle for supremacy in the central Mediterranean as the two camps took some breathing space. Nonetheless, corsairing activities still went on and tensions ran high on both sides.[2] From Malta, the Order of St John fully participated in the incessant Habsburg-Ottoman Mediterranean-wide struggle.[3] Late fifteenth-century Malta had been fully aware of the bitter consequences intrinsically implied in its frontline existence.[4] By the 1540s the negative implications of being on the frontier were further accentuated. Malta belonged to a Christian commonwealth led by Charles V and opposed to the Muslims. It was this overall reality that had brought about an accidental change of ruler,[5] which in turn brought the islands further at the heart of the conflict and linked them with the North African outpost of Tripoli. Notarial documents reveal that the 20-odd years political link between Malta and Tripoli created a substantial amount of commercial links as well.[6]

Mid-sixteenth-century Malta was a predominantly agrarian society. Its strategic importance was beginning to assert itself now that the island was the headquarters of the Knights of St John, but most of its economy was still dependent on agriculture. This in turn made land the most valuable asset one could possess. Notwithstanding the fact that the acts under study give only fragmentary evidence, a general picture of the environment of mid-sixteenth-century Malta can still be elicited. In contrast with nowadays' largely built-up landscape, mid-sixteenth-century Malta was much more rural. Fields, gardens (that is, places where horticulture was practiced) and vineyards, interspersed by isolated farmhouses or clusters of farmhouses of the Ħal Millieri type, dotted the landscape of much of central and southern Malta.[7] Very prominent natural features of the landscape were the valleys, as in *gued Inchita*.[8] Some fields were left fallow, so that when the Noble Gregorio Xerri sold to the Noble Perio de Maczara of Syracuse a field at *Dejr il-Baqar*, it was specified that parts of it were left uncultivated.[9]
Not all land was private land, some of it being the highly cherished public lands and spaces known in Maltese as *xagħri*, which are literally pockets of workable soil in the limestone landscape.[10] Some lands were feudal holdings, meaning that their owners had owed some military obligations to the Crown, for serfdom had long disappeared from Malta.[11] One example is the *feudi di la marsa* which belonged to the Calava family.[12]

The use of space for residential purposes is dynamically related to the physical and social environment. Changes in this environment affect the utilisation of

space and alterations in the man-built environment resulting from shifts in the pattern of utilisation of space affect social behaviour.[13] A considerable number of people did not live in a constructed house. Quintinus in fact noticed: 'they dig caves and these are their houses'.[14] After all, caves are particularly suited to the Mediterranean climate since they keep cool in summer and warm in winter. It is significant to note that some houses had a cave attached to them, probably illustrating some intermediate stage from troglodytism to constructed houses.[15] Quintinus also observed that most houses had very primitive roofing,[16] so that when the noble Nicola Bondino bought a house from Marco and Paolo Grixti (father and son) for 2 *uncie*, it was considered worthwhile specifying that this house had a roof of slabs.[17] A house in Birgu might even have an upper floor and be worth 70 gold ducats.[18] Some houses had water cisterns, which guaranteed a supply of water. These houses also tended to have trees with them.[19] Most houses, even those in urban areas like Rabat and the Castle of Gozo, often had a plot of land attached to them.[20]

There has been an assumption that in pre-industrial Europe, every family occupied a space of its own, but this was not necessarily so.[21] For example, Margerita Burg and Thomaso Falzon (mother and son) decided to share their house with Joanna Mifsud to whom they sold a room in their house for 18 *tareni* redeemable after 6 years.[22] It would appear that, generally speaking, in rural areas people who shared a house were relatives.[23] On the other hand, in urban areas, virtual strangers were forced to live in close proximity owing to poverty and a shortage of affordable housing.[24] Thus, for instance, Matheo Haius of Rabat leased half a house from Josepho Sillato of Rabat paying 8 *tareni* a year. The other half was leased to the Honourable Petro Vaccaro and his wife Clara.[25]

In these traditional face-to-face societies, nicknames were common coinage and sometimes even Notary Muscat used them to identify his clients. Nicknames were as much a means of unambiguous identification, as they were a means of social control.[26] They were a popular and unofficial form of personal and family nomenclature and as such were only very rarely recorded by notaries, scribes, and priests.[27] The information contained in Table 1 is therefore all the more valuable.

Title	Name	Provenance	Nickname	Reference
	Andrea Actard		gamal	f.628v, et seq.
Hon.	Jacobo Aczupard		gebil	ff.604-605. et seq.
Nob. Not.	Vincentio Bonaventura		carpati	ff.633v-634v, et seq.
	Antonio Camenzuli		zayfi	ff.655-656v, et seq.
	Joannes Falsun		marchis	ff.631v-632
	Laurentio Haius	Hal Qormi	chibeyca	ff.728-730
Ma.	Ferdinando de Modica		millardia	ff.550v-551, et seq.
Nob. Not.	Francesco Rochoni	Birgu	turres	f.610v
	Josepho Sillato	Rabat	emeni	ff.548-549, et seq.
	Mariano Vella		xironta	f.751v
	Joannes Zarb		saymar	ff.669v-670v
	Antonio Zimech		schime	ff.742v-744
	Juliano Zimech	Haż Żebbuġ	schuse; sardayna	ff.685v-687, et seq.

Table 1. Nicknames which appear in the acts of Notary Juliano Muscat, R376/11, 1545.

Notarial Acts, Historical Research and Notary Juliano Muscat

The cardinal point about notarial acts is that they were essentially private records. Although the notary was a public figure of great weight in society, his records were intimately private. Every act was the result of the coming together of different parties in front of the notary to record some aspect of their daily lives.[28] Most of these transactions took place between private citizens. Sometimes, however, one finds institutions dealing with individuals, as when the *universitas* hired the Honourable Juliano Vella of Birgu to go to Licata to buy grain.[29]

The notarial profession exhibits a long tradition in the Mediterranean, dating back to Roman times.[30] Waley points out the enormous number of notaries to be found in the thirteenth-century Italian city-republics: there were 2,000 in Bologna, 1,500 in Milan, and 600 in Padua. According to Waley, the fact that notaries were literate disrupts the conventional picture of medieval society, comprising literate clergy and illiterate laymen, and accords them a unique role in society.[31] Both Waley and Dalli discuss the notary's role as part of an administrative set-up. They were people whose social pre-eminence depended primarily on their ability to secure a tight hold over municipal affairs. They were literate, which was, at best, an instrument of social control and, at worst, a weapon against potential enemies.[32] Among the first duties of all notaries was to listen diligently. The notarial acts, written in Latin, do lose in

proximity to the mother tongue, but they gain in proximity to the remembered experience of the individual, with all its specificity.[33] The significance of notaries as links in the chain of everyday life cannot be dismissed. It was their profession which gave a certain stability to society in that the keeping of written records allowed for a more sedentary way of life for businessmen and others. Thus, for example, when Joannes Harabi, a Maltese living in Agrigento, sold to Nicola de Brincato a *tuminata unum de terra in contrata ta chilas app. tal chofor*, the transaction could be performed through Matheus Vella, a relative of Joannes Harabi, who presented Notary Muscat with the necessary documentation from Notary Angelo de Aratio of Licata, and from Notary Matheo de Capito of Agrigento.[34]

Having formed such an intimate and integral part of Mediterranean medieval and early modern societies, the records left by notaries are crucial to the reconstruction of these same societies. Prominent historians of the like of Dopsch, Pirenne, Bloch, Duby, and Herlihy, have all made extensive use of notarial documents in their works.[35] In Maltese historiography, notarial acts were first utilised by Abela, although their greater use came after the Second World War in the works of Bresc, Fsadni, Fiorini, Wettinger, and Dalli.

As a tool for historians, notarial records lend themselves to the study of a variety of fields. For instance, they are useful for the history of politics and institutions as when they show the workings of the *universitas*, how it raised its money, and the relationship of its jurats with the new Hospitaller Government. Wills and marriage contracts offer glimpses into the religiosity of the people concerned. Wettinger found notarial records useful for the study of clerical concubinage[36] and he also used them to produce numerous works about medieval Maltese nomenclature; he considers notarial acts as the most abundant and reliable source for place-names. Notaries had to be very careful in recording place-names since any error could invalidate their documentation. Wettinger, using mostly notarial acts, unleashed a mass of information on landownership and leasing, employment agreements and the sale of agricultural products and farm animals.[37] Hardly any other source, at least prior to 1600, compares with notarial acts for the study of language and linguistics. Most notaries also knew Maltese, a very important consideration in a place where almost everyone spoke only the vernacular.[38] Fiorini and Brincat have also made extensive use of notarial acts for their linguistics studies.[39]

Nonetheless, according to Violante, it is in the study of social relationships

and mentality that notarial acts excel.[40] The history of mentality emerges, for instance, in the use of formulae in notarial acts. Some historians dismiss notarial formulae as mere repetitions; this is a criticism that Zemon-Davis hauls at notarial acts. She argues that although marriage contracts, wills and other contracts are plentiful and reveal much about the actions, plans, and sensibilities of men and women who could not even sign their names, the documents are dominated by notarial sequences and formulae.[41] On the other hand, formulae themselves are the result of centuries of social developments, and as Violante points out, they reveal those deep innate under-currents of materialism and spirituality which mould societies over the *long duree*.[42]

As an established notary, Juliano Muscat took under his wing Enrico Zarb and Ferdinando Ciappara as his apprentices.[43] Furthermore, he was also involved in no less than four different business partnerships or *societates*. From the number of references to it in R376/11, it emerges that the most important of these *societates* for the year 1545 was the one in conjunction with the Honourable Michaele Vassallo, Joannes Muxi and Joannes Muscat.[44] Their main line of business involved the buying of cumin for export and the selling of cloth.[45] This *societas* also owned a shop in the *Platea* of Mdina, a very advantageous spot for any business.[46]

The two historians that have made most use of the acts of Notary Muscat are Wettinger and Fiorini. Wettinger made extensive use of Juliano Muscat's acts in his *Place-Names of the Maltese Islands*. He consulted the first ten volumes from R376/01 to R376/10, except for R376/08. He also consulted MS. 979, which is an original manuscript of Juliano Muscat.[47] Wettinger also referred to the acts of Notary Muscat in his compilation of explicit references to the Maltese language in Malta's public records, from the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries.[48] Fsadni and Wettinger also consulted R376/34 in connection with their work on the *Cantilena*.[49]

Fiorini describes Notary Muscat in 1564 as being an 'aging, well-established and experienced notary'.[50] He made use of a number of Notary Muscat's volumes in order to provide a preliminary etymology of Maltese prior to 1600.[51] In his work about *Santo Spirito* Hospital, Fiorini points out how the main source of income for the hospital came from its real estate consisting of an appreciable amount of land and other immovable property, such as, houses and warehouses.[52] Fiorini's main source of information were notarial records, in particular, Muscat's, and he consulted a whole range of the notary's volumes.[53] From what Fiorini extrapolates and from what the acts in R376/11 reveal, it would appear that Muscat was *Santo Spirito*'s most regular

notary. In register R376/11, the Noble Francesco Serrano and Simone Bartolo are described as the procurators of the hospital.[54] They bought the income of 1 *uncia* a year derived from a house in Mdina in Bishop's Road (*ruga appellata dilo episcopato*) from the Noble Jacobo Callus.[55] In conjunction with St Paul's Cathedral, the hospital also owned a territory in Gozo called *il casam di notar Janmuzo*, which was leased to Raynelio Damfasina of Gozo for four years for a total of 41 *uncie*.[56] Finally, in the marriage contract of the Noble Lady Imperia Caxaro to the Noble Thomaso de Bonello, the latter's parents gave him a plot of land known as *dilo hospitali* which had a lease of 12 *tarini* a year payable to the hospital.[57]

Employers and Employees

In the medieval frame of mind, clearly still evident in mid-sixteenth-century Malta, a trifunctional society of *oratores, bellatores et laboratores*, that is, those who pray, those who fight, and those who work, was still in operation.[58] It can even be said to have been reinforced by the sudden influx of a huge corpus of *bellatores* like the Hospitallers. Those who prayed and those who fought had no time for other business (such as the working of the land), which was also below their social status. They had to employ *laboratores*, thus creating a whole set of employer-employee relationships.

Most employer-employee contracts in R376/11 concerned the hiring of an administrator / worker, known as a *gabellotto* to manage or to work the land. The Reverend Pancratio Michalleff, Archdeacon of the Mdina Cathedral and Procurator for the Bir Miftuħ Chapel, for instance, hired the Honourable Salvo Briffa of Ħal Luqa to work the lands of his benefice in Gudja and Ħal Safi, for four years for 2 *uncie* a year payable at Easter time.[59] Besides paying rent, a *gabellotto* could have a number of other obligations. For example, when the Reverend Domenico Cubelles, Bishop of Malta, hired Thomaso Haius and his son Teramo to look after a garden for two years, they had to pay 33 *uncie* a year, plant a number of citrus trees and thirty fruit trees, and they had to give a number of oranges to the Bishop. They were also obliged to guard against trespassing animals, failing which they had to pay fines according to the damage perpetrated.[60]

The phenomenon of absentee landlords in Malta was an old one and always a thorn in the side of the Maltese *universitas*, but they were still present in 1545, extracting substantial incomes from their lands in Malta. Simone

Barthalo paid 218 *uncie* for an eight-year lease on the territory of *dilo monti calibo* to the Noble Lady Margerita de Falco and her daughter Lady Notella de Falco, widow and daughter, respectively, of the Noble Orlando de Falco. These ladies were from Agrigento. The middleman between de Falco and Barthalo was a Palermitan, the Noble Hieronimo Calvo, who lived in Malta.[61] Another substantial landholder in Malta was the Maczara family of Syracuse. The Noble Perio de Maczara and his wife, Lady Clara Maczara *de aragona*, owned lands at Mriehel, *beb il gizire* and *Dejr il-Baqar*.[62] They also owned a garden in *contrata sante marie ta xeuxa*, known as *deir is saf*, which they had bought from the Reverend Canon Matheo de Surdo.[63] Joannes de Maczara, son of Perio and Clara, was also in possession of a church benefice in Malta known as *il hueleg* in *contrata di ben guerrad*.[64] Before returning to Syracuse, Perio de Maczara made all the necessary arrangements in terms of choosing the *gabellotti* for his lands and the conditions under which they were to work.[65]

Shepherds were hired to take care of flocks of animals, such as when the Noble Alvaro de Nava and the Noble Joannes Lancea Inguanes leased to Salvo Delie of Rabat their herd of sheep and goats in *dilo monticalibo* for two years. Salvo had to pay 4 *tareni* 10 *grani* per head for every sheep and 3 *tareni* 10 *grani* per head for every goat, also giving a third of the produce to the owners. Salvo was also to give the owners four cloaks and two lambs. After the two years, Salvo was to keep the wool from the animals, but only after giving some of it to the owners.[66] This is but one example of how the inhabitants of Mdina dominated the economic life on the farms and received most of the profits. On the other hand, it should be said that without their participation the shepherds would not have had enough goats and sheep to tend.[67]

Some people were not employed to work the land but to provide a service. When the Monastery of St Peter of Mdina, known as *la abatia vechia*, needed to have its well waterproofed, it hired the craftsmen Augustino Mifsud, Michaele Michalleff, and Pancratio Grima. When the work was done, the procurator of the monastery, the Noble Simone Bartolo, paid these artisans the sum of 15 *uncie* 14 *tareni*. They had covered 14 *salme* with *battumj*, the Maltese term for waterproofing,[68] for 1 *uncia* 2 *tareni* per *salma*. The payment was made on condition that the well would not leak within a year's time. If a leak occurred, Augustino and his partners had to make good for it.[69]

Angelo Aczoppard of Ħ'Attard hired Antonio Cardona of the same *casale* to cut and carry enough stone to build a house:

"Taglarij tantj petrj et cantunj sufficientj et mures factj ad opus edificij et fabrice unius domus longitudinis cannarum quinque ex parte exteriorij altitudinis ... deci et octo cantimurj ... et taglarej tuctj li capitellj canali et balasj di palmj octo luno sufficientj ... per lo tecto seu copertura"[70]

The *maczacanj,* known in Maltese as *mazkan,* left over was to be given to Antonio. The work had to be completed within a year and a half, with Angelo paying Antonio 2 *uncie* 12 *tareni.*[71] This contract can be described as falling under the category *opus ad tascam*, whereby a man received an agreed sum of money for scrapping stone or some similar work that was easy to estimate quantitatively.[72] Despite the attested belief that mid-sixteenth-century Maltese lived in primitive huts, it is evident that the value of stone as a primary resource and its utilisation were not neglected. Although Antonio Cardona may not have been a mason, it is evident that he had the capacity to measure the quantities of stone necessary for the piece of work planned, which attests to the presence of highly skilled craftsmen in mid-sixteenth-century Malta.

Masters and Slaves

During the sixteenth century, the recruitment of galley slaves for Mediterranean warships of all nationalities became an especially brutal type of slave trade in convicts.[73] The extensive corsairing activities of mid-sixteenth-century Malta meant that the local market would be well provided for. Slaves formed a category of men and women without any form of legal rights and families of their own. They did not have even a name, save that given to them by their masters.[74]

Slaves were at the mercy of their owner's whims and were expected to do everything. They were usually meant for heavy work, as the phrase *ad usu di magaseni* shows. Contracts of sale of slaves could go into a few details about their skin colour, religion and name, but not always. Thus, for example, we are only told that the Venerable Zacharia Cachie sold to the Noble Nicola Xara, 'one black female slave', for 19 *uncie* 15 *tareni.*[75] A slave mother was often sold off with her child, as when the Noble Vincentio and Guaglarda Vasco of Mdina bought a black slave and her four-year-old son for 28 *uncie* from the Honourable Antonio Vassallo,[76] and when Joannes Michalleff sold to Nicola Jacobo Haius a black slave called Caterina with her black infant son called Georgio for 26 *uncie.*[77] The price of slaves was determined both by the market situation and the qualities of the individual slave.[78]

A difference emerges between the extent of slavery in Birgu and the countryside. Since Birgu was the only maritime outpost of the island and a prime centre for corsairing, the numbers of slaves there was bound to be more pronounced.[79] Slaves who became the property of the sedentary landowners were usually taken into the family household and remained with the family. Thus, when Agatha Camenzuli married Bertu Zammit, her parents gave her a dowry which included 80 *uncie*, a plot of land, a cloak, a dress and a black slave called Georgio.[80] This way, Georgio, the slave of the Camenzuli family, would now follow his mistress into her new household.

Most of the slaves whose name is given had a Christian name. This leads one to conclude that they had been baptized, but of course, embracing Christianity did not automatically mean freedom. Slaves could achieve their freedom only through manumission, that is, by buying their freedom from their masters, either by paying for it themselves or having someone else pay for them. In the acts under study we come across two *manumissi*, freed-slaves.[81] Sometimes, this change of status did not really signify a change in one's way of life. For instance, when the Reverend Matheo de Surdo hired Blasio Xuereb of Rabat to work a garden in *contrata sante marie ta xeuxe*, we find an anonymous *manumissus de Vassallo* attached to the garden; for him, life must have went on pretty much as it had before his change of status.[82]

On the other hand, some ex-slaves seem to have integrated well into Maltese society. Thus, Domenico Grima, *manumisso de vassallo*, bought two plots of land from the Noble Francesco de Bordino and his mother the Noble Hysabella de Bordino for 7 *uncie*, *cum gratia*[83] for four years. Then on 25 March 1547, the Noble Lady Hysabella de Bordino, on behalf of her son, who was away from Malta, ceded the said land to Domenico Grima for 11 *uncie*.[84] For legal purposes, Domenico Grima seems to have had to carry his title of ex-slave forever, but other than that, the contract is a normal sale-of-land transaction. Moreover, Domenico seems to have been in possession of a substantial income.

When someone bought a slave, he/she would expect to get the value for his/her money. Therefore, if something happened to the slave which reduced his/her value, the owner would try to seek compensation. Such was the case of the Honourable Teramo Michalleff: he had bought a slave called Antonina for 21 *uncie* from Dianora Maffia, widow of Carolo Maffia. Teramo complained that Antonina was not getting her menstrual cycle (*nun venerunt menstrua ipi serva*) and that she had not worked for six months; the reason for Antonina

not experiencing her cycle was not specified. Teramo wanted his money back from Dianora but the widow did not have the means to do so. The Honourable Petro Xerri intervened on her behalf and an agreement was reached whereby if Antonina did not get her menstruation within four months, then Dianora had to compensate Teramo.[85]

Women and the Family

In pre-industrial societies women and the family were so closely equated as to be hardly considered as separate. Consequently understanding the history of women can only come by confronting the history of the family.[86] For many ancient and medieval writers, the status of women was naturally subordinate, but it was not cruel or despotic. Indeed it was beneficial for both women and men, and for society that women should occupy such a position.[87] St Paul retracted many of the gender-neutral or egalitarian claims of the early Christians, enjoining women to remain subordinate to their husbands.[88] Marriage placed men in a socially dominant position over women, especially since they became responsible for their wives in the eyes of the law.[89] People lived within a social and cultural system which was male-dominated, but which at the same time permitted concerted female action in public, particularly in defending basic social values. Although in theory women were meant to be subordinate to the men, in reality they often were not.[90] In Maltese history women have for long have been invisible or marginalized, however, in recent years, dissertations done at the University of Malta and a number of published works have started to shed light on this segment of the Maltese population.[91] Notarial records have a significant part to play in increasing understanding about the lives of women in the past. Of the women who appeared in register R376/11, 25% were unmarried, 48% were married and 27% were widows.

The Council of Trent (1545 – 63) took marriage away from the hands of the laity and placed it under the strict supervision of the clergy.[92] But in pre-Tridentine Malta of the 1540s, marriage was still a very personal affair and this is the reason why very detailed marriage contracts were drawn up. The signing of the marriage contract, at which the notary officiated, preceded the wedding, at which the priest officiated. The contract guaranteed the wife her dowry, other property, and widow's portion, which afforded her some independence in the family economy.[93] Certain clauses were always included – a declaration of the bride's virginity, a declaration that the marriage was to be celebrated *ala greca seu ala romana* and that a priest will be present.[94] That a clause

specifying that the marriage be celebrated in front of a priest was included is indicative of those pre-Tridentine attitudes where couples could live together without too many formalities. A case in point is that of the Honourable Lady Helegia Tabune: while setting down her will she included a clause where she declared that she and her husband, the Honourable Thomaso Tabune were a married couple despite the lack of any written agreement.[95]

In both urban and rural settings, marriage was closely linked with property or a job and the enjoyment of income.[96] The wedding of the Noble Lady Imperia Caxaro to the Noble Thomaso de Bonello was by far the richest marriage contract encountered in the acts under study. A first consideration to be made here concerns periods of mourning. Imperia's father, the Noble Luca Caxaro, was dead, so her uncle, the Venerable Brandano de Caxaro, took care of her.[97] From a separate entry it emerges that Luca was still alive on 22 April 1545.[98] Imperia was therefore celebrating her wedding only four months after the death of her father.[99] Though this may seem like a short space of time, it nonetheless reflects a familial and societal need to have brides with rich dowries married and secured as soon as possible. On a different note, not only did this marriage contract include the usual clause about the presence of a priest, but it was declared that three priests would celebrate this marriage, including the Venerable Brandano de Caxaro himself.[100]

In mid-sixteenth-century Malta it was the dowry which tangled the threads of a woman's fate.[101] Imperia's dowry included two houses, one in Wied il-Busbies, the other in Mdina *In quarterio sante marie de scalis*; a plot of land known as *xyhaira* in *contrata Ponta siuttilj*; 10 *uncie* 6 *tareni* cash and a black female slave called Mathia with her infant daughter Helena.[102] To complement all this, Thomaso gave Imperia a *dodarium*[103] of 41 *uncie*. Thomaso's parents, the Noble Antonio and Lady Paula Bonello, gave him four plots of land: *ta librag* at *casal musta*, *ta liudi* at *ghiren lussifus*, *il chbule* at *ta barie*, and a plot of land known as *dilo hospitali*, with a lease of 12 *uncie* a year to *Santo Spirito* Hospital. Thomaso was also given a black slave.[104] An additional entry states that Notary Muscat read out the act to the Noble Lady Paula Bonello, mother of Thomaso, and that she had approved the arrangements. This last clause not only reflects a certain level of education on the part of Paula, because she could understand Latin, but also shows how women could have an important say in the management of property.

Since time immemorial marriages had served the purpose of uniting the great families of a land.[105] A very typical example of one such marriage was that

between the Noble Caterinella Inguanes, who was sixteen years old, and the Noble Perio de Naso, who was eighteen years old. This marriage did not just represent the coming together of two individuals, but also of two families. Calculated friendship of this kind confirmed and reinforced kinship and marriage ties translating them into practical terms, reciprocal obligations extending over two or three generations.[106] The marriage was arranged on the one hand, between the Noble Lady Paulina Inguanes, widow of Jacobo Inguanes and mother of Caterinella, and on the other, the Noble Paulo de Naso, father of Perio. The marriage was even sanctioned by a bull from Rome.[107] The young couple to be wed could hardly have had any say in these arrangements.

Once married, the husband and wife were expected to be faithful and sexually available to one another. The Catholic Church instructed its confessors to inquire into sexual behaviour with the intention of discouraging the use of contraception.[108] Childbirth was dangerous and could easily claim the life of mother and child; it has been estimated that for every 1,000 births, 25 mothers died.[109] In such circumstances, precautions had to be taken. Namrata Aczupard, wife of Petro, of Siġġiewi, prepared her will, and made her husband her universal heir. She also left a house in Ħal Qormi to be divided between her son Vincentio Pachi, born from her first marriage with Lentio Pachi, and her brother Francisco Chiantar. But the main purpose of this will was related to Namrata being pregnant. Fearing she might die during labour, she left to her unborn baby two plots of land.[110] One can almost feel a mother's desperate wish to make sure her baby would be well provided for, even if she would not be around to do it herself. But death was a constant companion to Europeans of all ages in a century when men and women faced disease, natural catastrophes, wars and lack of hygiene without much protection.[111]

The great number of widows that appear in Notary Muscat's acts is generally explained by the fact that, unlike the de Naso-Inguanez marriage mentioned above, most marriages tended to be characterized by a disparity of age between the groom and the bride, with the man often being quite older than his wife.[112] Widows and single women who lived by themselves were viewed suspiciously and were prone to be suspected of bad conduct and easily accused of prostitution.[113] That is why the idea of a *mundualdus*,[114] a guardian, was set up. Women were not legally competent, therefore, they had to be under the legal protection of a legally competent male.[115] Out of sixty-four single women only nine did not have a *mundualdus* to represent them, exceptions that prove the rule that women needed to have a legal

guardian. Nonetheless they are crucial exceptions, for when a *mundualdus* was not present, social custom was being disregarded.[116]

A very revealing case is that of Joanna Mifsud, daughter of the deceased Demetrio Mifsud. She is described as being a 'nun of the third order', that is, a tertiary.[117] She bought a room in a house in Rabat from Margerita Burg, widow of Manfred Burg, and from her son Thomaso Falzon of Rabat, who was eighteen years old. It was specified that the room faced west and overlooked the courtyard. The price was of 18 *tareni cum gratia* for six years. Women who decided to live a holy life as tertiaries placed their family honour in jeopardy by the mere fact of their celibacy.[118] Thus, not only was Joanna representing herself in this transaction, but she was also defying social custom by going to live on her own.[119]

Power and Shahar believe that many single women supported themselves as shopkeepers.[120] Such was the case of the Noble Lady Imperia de Grugno, widow of the Noble Francisco de Grugno, of Mdina, who owned two shops in the *Platea* of Mdina, one of which she sold to Antonio Vassallo and Joannes Zarb for 10 *uncie cum gratia* 9 years, but also paying an *uncia* a year.[121]

Without detracting any of the significance of the above examples, one should keep in mind that they were exceptions to the rule, and that most women needed a man to help them out in a male-dominated world. For example, Joanna Dingli, widow of Jacobo Dingli, needed the help of the Noble Michaele de Allegritto, an 'outsider', to make sure that the annual income of 5 *uncie* promised by her father, was given to her by her brothers Jorlando and Augustino Burg.[122] Lady Contessa Xara, widow of the Honourable Petro Xara, also needed the intervention of an outsider, the Noble Thomaso Barun of Syracuse, to recuperate some money from the Honourable Alfio de Gallo, known as *lu chirculo* of *terra palaczolj*.[123] Paula Cachie, widow of Stephano Cachie, was represented by her 'dearest son' Benedicto, who was eighteen years old in selling a house to Luca Haius of Siġġiewi for 14 *uncie* and 6 *tareni*.[124]

Many women married to men older than themselves became widows at an early age, often in their early twenties; a good number of these tended to remarry. If a woman became a widow without some form of financial security and or work, it was imperative for her survival to find a new husband. Under such circumstances a hasty remarriage after the death of the first partner was frequent.[125] The wicked stepfather or stepmother of the fairytales had their basis in quite common experiences, even if the wickedness was often not

so much a matter of evil inclination as of family jealousies over the actual or prospective inheritance of property.[126] A case in point was that of Joanna Vella. Joanna married twice, with both husbands dying before her. From her first husband, Joannes de Bono, she had a son, Leonardo. From her second husband, she had four children. A quarrel developed between Leonardo de Bono on one side and his mother Joanna Vella and her children on the other. Leonardo claimed that he and his offspring were the rightful heirs to a house. Joanna and her children refused and instead offered to pay Leonardo 8 *uncie*. In the end, the dispute was settled by Joanna giving to Leonardo a plot of land in *casal tel harabi* which stood next to land belonging to the *venerabilis conventi carmelitani*, in exchange for the house.[127]

Conclusion

Medieval Malta had been a *civitas* – one of many – within the Kingdom of Sicily. By 1798 Malta was practically a sovereign state, with a grand master who was every inch a monarch.[128] In between these two poles lay the mid-sixteenth-century Malta portrayed above, slowly breaking away from its medieval characteristics and moving steadily into the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

The landscape of mid-sixteenth-century Malta was predominantly rural and its economy was essentially agrarian and it follows that most of its people lived in the countryside and were involved in agriculture. Their lives, actions and interactions, as analysed in this paper show the existence of a vibrant popular culture in mid-sixteenth-century Malta, existing outside the limelight of the *histoire evenementielle*. Furet argued that the only way to reintegrate the masses into history was through demography and sociology, through numbers and anonymity. However, as Ginzburg argued, the characteristics of particular social strata within a specific time frame can be discerned in the typical or a-typical behaviour of individuals handpicked from the masses.[129]

Men and women performed different but complementary tasks, although women's jobs tended to be more closely associated with the home.[130] This does not mean that women were excluded from public life: the Noble Lady Imperia de Grugno owned two shops in Mdina.[131] It is not even a case of women being perforce illiterate and uneducated; just as some women could only understand Maltese,[132] so the Noble Lady Paula Bonello and Margerita Buchaiar were educated and could understand Latin when they heard it.[133] It

was rather a situation where women formed an integral part of a whole set of social relationships which, at one and the same time, made them dependent on the actions of other members of their families and indispensable for the survival of these same members.

Finally, a comparison of marriage patterns as discerned in R376/11 with the findings of Bowman and Sultana for the seventeenth century[134] and those of Ciappara for the eighteenth century[135] reveals two phenomena in early modern Malta. The first one concerns the continuous and predominant presence of widows who remarried. The second one, reflecting the greater cosmopolitan character of seventeenth and eighteenth century Malta shows many more Maltese, especially women, marrying people of foreign extraction. This is a clear-cut example of how the process of Europeanisation[136] was not just something relegated to language, the arts and manners, but was a process seeping down Maltese society and fundamentally changing its character.

NOTES

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[33] Cf. N. Zemon-Davis, *Fiction in the Archives – Pardon Tales and their Tellers in Sixteenth Century France*, (Stanford, California, 1987), 22.

[34] R376/11, f.854-f.855, (10.vii.1545).

[35] Violante, *Atti Privati*, 12-15.

[36] G. Wettinger, 'Concubinage among the Clergy of Malta and Gozo ca. 1420-1550', *Journal of the Faculty of Arts*, vi, 4, (1977), 166.

[37] G. Wettinger, 'Agriculture in Malta in the Late Middle Ages', 1.

[38] *Ibid.*

[39] S. Fiorini, 'Ut Vulgur Dicitur – Pre-1600 Material for a Documented Etymology of Maltese', in P. Xuereb (ed.), *Karissime Gotifride – Historical Essays Presented to Professor Godfrey Wettinger on his Seventieth Birthday*, (Malta, 1999), 161-76. J. M. Brincat, 'The *Cantilena*: Vintura. Why? Who?', in P.Xuereb (ed.), *Karissime Gotifride – Historical Essays Presented to Professor Godfrey Wettinger on his Seventieth Birthday*, (Malta, 1999), 177.

[40] C. Violante, *Atti Privati*, 69.

[41] Zemon-Davis, *Fiction in the Archives*, 5.

[42] Violante, *Atti Privati*, 23.

[43] S. Fiorini, 'Malta in 1530', in V. Mallia-Milanes (ed.), *Hospitaller Malta 1530 – 1798: Studies on Malta and the Order of St. John of Jerusalem*, (Malta, 1993), 85.

[44] R376/11, 582v.-583v. (11.iii.1545), *et seq.*

[45] R376/11, f.682v., (15.iv.1545) *et seq.* R376/11, f.588v., (15.iii.1545) *et seq.*

[46] R376/11, f.769-770v., (22.v.1545).

[47] G. Wettinger, *Place-Names*, liv.

[48] G. Wettinger, 'Linguistic Pluralism and Cultural Change in Medieval Malta', *Mediterranean Language Review*, 6-7, (1990-93), 160.

[49] M. Fsadni & G. Wettinger, *L-Ghanja ta' Pietru Caxaru - Poeżija bil-Malti Medjevali*, (Malta, 1983), 32.

[50] S. Fiorini, 'Malta in 1530', 85.

[51] S. Fiorini, 'Ut Vulgur Dicitur', 161-76.

[52] S. Fiorini, *Santo Spirito Hospital at Rabat, Malta - the Early Years to 1575*, (Malta, 1989), 75.

[53] *Ibid.*, 76-81.

[54] R376/11, 685v.-f.687, (15.iv.1545), *et seq.*

[55] R376/11, 685v.-f.687, (15.iv.1545).

[56] R376/11, f.715-f716v., (24.iv.1545).

[57] R376/11, 997v.-1001v., (30.viii.1545).

[58] J. Le Goff, 'Introduction – Medieval Man', in J. Le Goff (ed.), *The Medieval World*, (London, 1997), 11.

[59] R376/11, f.858v., (10.vii.1545).

[60] R376/11, 841v.-843v., (6.vii.1545), '*...Item che Per ogni Pedata di animali grandi o picculo che si trovano Intra li dui mura habbiamo di Pagare un grano et di ogni arbero che si trova mangiato o guastato di animali Paghiranno tari sei*'.

[61] R376/11, f.812-f.813, (20.vi.1545).

[62] R376/11, 613v.-614v., (19.iii.1545); R376/11, 614v.-615v., (19.iii.1545); R376/11, f.616-617v., (19.iii.1545). R376/11, 618v.-f.619, (19.iii.1545).

[63] R376/11, 620v.-f.622, (19.iii.1545).

[64] R376/11, f.626v., (21.iii.1545). R376/11, 626v.-f.627, (21.iii.1545).

[65] R376/11, f.619-620v., (19.iii.1545).

[66] R376/11, f.783-f.784, (8.vi.1545).

[67] Wettinger, 'Agriculture in Malta in the Late Middle Ages', 41.

[68] Fiorini, 'Ut Vulgur Dicitur', 164.

[69] R376/11, f.984v., (22.viii.1545).

[70] R376/11, f.504-f.505, (11.ii.1545).

[71] R376/11, f.504-f.505, (11.ii.1545).

[72] G. P. Jones, 'Building in Stone in Medieval Western Europe', in M. M. Postan and e. Miller (eds.), *The Cambridge Economic History of Europe, II – Trade and Industry in the Middle Ages*, (Cambridge, 1987), 777.

[73] H.G. Koenigsberger, G.L. Mosse, G. Q. Bowler, *Europe in the Sixteenth Century*, (London and New York, 1992), 51. G. Wettinger, *Slavery in the Islands of Malta and Gozo, ca. 1000-1812*, (Malta, 2002).

[74] I. Origo, *The Merchant of Prato*, (London, 1963), 197.

[75] R376/11, 609v.-f.610, (18.iii.1545), '*...servam unam nigram*'.

[76] R376/11, f.735-f.736, (5.v.1545).

[77] R376/11, f.782v., (7.vi.1545), '*...servam unam nigrani nomine Caterinari cum eius filio nigro Infante noie Georgi*'.

[78] S. Bono, *I Corsari Barbareschi*, (Torino, 1964), 223.

[79] For a discussion about slavery in Birgu see Bezzina, *Early Hospitaller Birgu*, 62-6.

[80] R376/11, 673v.-f.677, (15.iv.1545).

[81] R376/11, 505v.-f.508, (11.ii.1545); R376/11, f.566-567v., (7.iii.1545).

[82] R376/11, f.566-567v., (7.iii.1545).

[83] The term *cum gratia* meant 'the right of redemption'. A seller could repurchase the property at the original price for up to one year, one month, and one day from the date of sale, unless other time parametres were specified.

[84] R376/11, 505v.-f.508, (11.ii.1545).

[85] R376/11, f.712v., (24.iv.1545).

[86] L.J. Jordanova, 'The History of the Family', in The Cambridge Women's Studies Group (ed.), *Women in Society – Interdisciplinary Essays*, (London, 1981), 41. D. Herlihy, *Medieval Households*, (Cambridge Massachusetts, and London United Kingdom), 1985, 115.

[87] D.G. Tannenbaum & D. Schultz, *Inventors of Ideas: An Introduction to Western Political Philosophy*, (Boston and New York, 1998), 9.

[88] *Ibid.*, 72-3.

[89] D.M. Hadley, 'Introduction: Medieval Masculinities', in D. M. Hadley (ed.), *Masculinity in Medieval Europe*, (London and New York, 1999), 14. C. Klapisch-Zuber, 'Women and the Family', in J. Le Goff (ed.), *The Medieval World*, (London, 1997), 292.

[90] U. Rublack, *The Crimes of Women in Early Modern Germany*, (Oxford, 1999), 197-230.

[91] Y. Vella, 'Fejnhom in-Nisa fl-Istorja ta' Malta?', in P. Mizzi (ed.), *Min kien Callus? Analiżi Storika taż-żminijiet li fihom għex Ġużeppi Nattew Callus*, (Malta 2003), 63-9. Three recent dissertations based on notarial records, have already contributed in this direction. See S. Cachia, *The Family and the Land in Late Medieval Malta: a Study of the Acts of Notary J. Zabbara*, Unpublished B.A. Hons. dissertation, (University of Malta, 1999), 17-39; J. Busuttil, *Economy, Society and Women in Malta in the 1530s – A Study of the Notarial Deeds of Notary Brandanus de Caxaro, 1533-1536*, Unpublished B.A. Hons. Dissertation, (University of Malta, 2000), 65-84; Bezzina, *Early Hospitaller Birgu*, 55-62. C. Cassar, *Daughters of Eve: Women, Gender Roles, and the Impact of the Council of Trent in Catholic Malta*, (Malta, 2002).

[92] F. Ciappara, *Marriage in Malta in the Late Eighteenth Century (1750 – 1800)*, (Malta, 1988), 117.

[93] N. Castan, 'The Public and the Private', in R, Chartier (ed.), *A History of Private Life, III – Passions of the*

Renaissance, (Cambridge Massachusetts, and London United Kingdom, 1989), 411.

[94] R376/11, 997v.–1001v., (30.viii.1545).

[95] R376/11, f.529-530v., (24.ii.1545).

96 Herlihy, *Medieval Households*, 142.

[97] R376/11, 997v.–1001v., (30.viii.1545).

[98] R376/11, 708v.-f.709, (22.iv.1545).

[99] For a discussion about mourning practices and marriage see, G. Wettinger, 'The Young Widow on Gozo Who Remarried Too Soon, 1465-68', *Melita Historica*, xii, 20, (1997), 140-50.

[100] R376/11, 997v.–1001v., (30.viii.1545).

[101] C. Cassar, *Society, Culture and Identity in Early Modern Malta*, (Malta, 2000), 148.

[102] R376/11, 997v.–1001v., (30.viii.1545).

[103] The *dodarium* or dower, was a sum fixed in the marriage contract which the groom promised to give to his bride.

[104] R376/11, 997v.–1001v., (30.viii.1545).

[105] J. Goody, *The Development of the Family and Marriage in Europe*, (Cambridge, 1983) p. 193.

[106] M. Aymard, 'Friends and Neighbours', in R. Chartier (ed.), *A History of Private Life, III – Passions of the Renaissance*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London, United Kingdom, 1989), 453.

[107] R376/11, f.561-f.564, (6.iv.1545).

[108] Koenigsberger, et. al., *Europe in the Sixteenth Century*, 68.

[109] *Ibid.*, p. 69.

[110] R376/11, f.630-631v., (24.iv.1545).

[111] Koenigsberger, et. al., *Europe in the Sixteenth Century*, 69.

[112] Klapisch-Zuber, 'Women and the Family', 297.

[113] *Ibid.*, p. 310.

[114] The *mundualdo* was a Lombard institution which in the course of time found its way into Sicily and Malta. A *mundualdo* was a legally competent male who took under his wing a woman to represent her in a legal transaction where she couldn't appear by herself. The *mundualdo* could be the husband, father, brother, uncle, or even a friend of the woman.

[115] S. Fiorini, (ed.), *Documentary Sources of Maltese History, Part 1, Notarial Documents, No. 2, Notary Giaconom Zabbara: R494/1 (II – IV), 1447 – 1449*, (Malta , 1999), 429.

[116] C. Meek, 'Women between the law and social reality in early Renaissance Lucca', in Letizia Panizza (ed.), *Women in Italian Renaissance and Culture*, (Oxford, 2000), 182-93.

[117] R376/11, 538v.-540v., (26.ii.1545), '*...moniali tertij ordinis*'.

[118] C. Cassar, 'Popular Perceptions and Values in Hospitaller Malta', in V. Mallia-Milanes (ed.), *Hospitaller Malta – Studies on Early Modern Malta and the Order of St. John of Jerusalem*, (Malta, 1993), 462.

[119] R376/11, 538v.-540v., (26.ii.1545).

[120] E. Power, *Medieval Women*, (Cambridge, 2000), 49. S. Shahar, *The Fourth Estate - A History of Women in the Middle Ages*, (London and New York, 1983), 194. Samuel K. Cohn, 'Women and Work in Renaissance Italy', in J. C. Brown and R. C. Davis (eds.), *Gender and Society in Renaissance Italy*, (London and New York, 1998), 107-26.

[121] R376/11, f.769-770v., (22.v.1545).

[122] R376/11, 546v.-547v., (27.ii.1545).

[123] R376/11, 502v.-f.503, (9.ii.1545).

[124] R376/11, f.591-593v., 593v.-f.597, (16.iii.1545)., '*...caru filij*'.

[125] M. Baulant, 'La famille en miettes: sur aspect de la démographie du xvii sieÐle', *AESC*, 27, 1972, 967, quoted in, Cassar, *Society, Culture and Identity*.

[126] Koenigsberger, et. al., *Europe in the Sixteenth Century*, p. 66.

[127] R376/11, f.789-791v., (13.vi.1545).

[128] V. Mallia-Milanes, 'Was Early Modern Malta an 'Isolated World'?', in C. Marullo di Condojanni (ed.), *Conference at Fort St. Angelo of the S.M.O.M.*, (Malta, 2000), 23.

[129] C. Ginzburg, *Il Formaggio e I Vermi - Il Cosmo di un Mugnaio del'500*, (Torino, 1976), xix.

[130] Jordanova, 'The History of the Family', 51.

[131] R376/11, f.769-770v., (22.v.1545).

[132] Busuttil, *Economy, Society and Women in Malta in the 1530s*, 82.

[133] R376/11, 997v.1001v., (30.viii.1545). R376/11, 979v.-f.984, (22.viii.1545).

[134] R. Bowman & P. Sultana, *Marriages between 1627 – 1650: A Study of the Records held in the Parish Church of*

Our Lady of Porto Salvo and St. Dominic at Valletta, Unpublished B.A. Gen., (Royal University of Malta, 1973), 20.

[135] Ciappara, *Marriage in Malta*.

[136] For a discussion of the Europeanisation of Malta in Early Modern times, see V. Mallia-Milanes, 'Introduction to Hospitaller Malta', in V. Mallia-Milanes (ed.), *Hospitaller Malta – Studies on Early Modern Malta and the Order of St. John of Jerusalem*, (Malta, 1993), 3-42; and 'Paths of Power and Glory – The Hospitaller Grand Master and his Court in Valletta', in A. Ganado (ed.), *Palace of the Grand Masters in Valletta*, (Malta, 2001), 71-9.

Making Amends with History: A Vindication of Maltese-Portuguese Relations[1]

Henry Frendo

What do we know of Maltese-Portuguese relations? Although Malta and Portugal have had diplomatic relations since 1968, His Excellency Antonio Russio Dias is, since 2005, the first resident Portuguese ambassador, while Malta has only had a resident ambassador in Lisbon for two years. To the average person this Southern European connection still might seem a rather obscure one, at least outside of some links generally known to have existed at the time of the Knights or, in the 20th century, devotionally, the pilgrimage to Fatima.

Historiography tends to be influenced by victors and rulers. Since the 18th century, however, patriotism and nationalism have been driven by the urge to overturn such patterns, giving rise to a historiography of their own in the process, one predicated on the notion of popular sovereignty. But influence can be disproportionate, and liable to interpretation. It may depend on size, stealth or strategy as much as on economics, education or presence. At the end of the 18th century both Britain and Portugal were committed to the defence of their territorial integrity and empires against the expansionist threat posed by France.

The theory of duration in historiography posits that the meaningfulness of an event may be less related to how long it lasts than to what it has meant. In a long time nothing out of the ordinary may occur, but in a relatively short while there may be a turn of events which is of the utmost relevance and consequence. That which lasts less will thus count for more in real terms. People, however, are not always conscious of this. Time passes them by as they cope with their daily chores, and the more so if the inter-generational transmission of knowledge and of sentiment becomes removed, restrained, blurred or fades away altogether.

One such instance in history has been the role played by Portugal at a momentous time which would determine the fate of Malta and, to an extent, that of the Mediterranean and beyond it. For Europe generally, that time would be the Napoleonic era, when in the wake of the French revolution Bonaparte's armies swept across continental Europe. For Malta, more specifically, that would be the Popular Insurrection of 2nd September 1798, exactly 210 years ago today, shortly after its French takeover from the Knights.[2]

Many people in Malta today - less so in Portugal - will know that two of the most prominent and longest-reigning rulers of Malta were Portuguese. These were the grand masters Antonio Manoel de Vilhena and Manoel Pinto de Fonseca. The former ruled for 14 years from 1722 to 1736; the latter ruled for 32, from 1741 to 1773. There was a third Portugese grand master, Luis Mendez de Vasconcelos, who was only in office for less than two years in the 17th century (from 1622 to 1623). These Portuguese rulers of Malta are remembered from their legacies in a collective memory which became tangible, visible, renewable, even parochial, be that by means of a fort or a rampart, a theatre, an auberge or a town identified with them, or indeed half-named after them to this day.[3]

At least two localities today continue to be associated directly with these two grand masters, Floriana with Vilhena and Hal Qormi as Casal Pinto. In the case of the former, the name originates from its engineer, Pietro Paolo Floriani, about whom in February this year we had a book published by the Filarmonico-Drammatica of Macerata; but the recognition of and the debt to Vilhena continues to live heartily through its philharmonic society and band club, of which I happen to be an honorary president.[4] Moreover it is here, at the Vilhena, that every year during the feast of St Publius, the highest dignitaries of the land, the Head of State and the Archbishop, traditionally convene and deliver national messages which are invariably reported by all sections of the press and media.

But the purpose for this historic encounter at the Upper Barracca today is not to recall and to record Portugal-linked personalities and events which are the better known, but, on the contrary, to highlight and to render homage to others which are less well known. Ironically, however, from a more sensitively national, modern and post-colonial point of view, it is these latter that appear to be the more significant and consequential.

Were it not for the prompt Portugese succour to the Maltese insurgents in September 1798, when the Insurrection was arguably at its most critical and delicate stage, it is quite possible that the back of the courageous but badly armed and hardly trained rebels would have been broken, with God knows what consequences. The French garrison would have dug in and been further reinforced, making its eviction from the walled cities and quite possibly from the rest of the country far more hazardous and prolonged, even unlikely before several more years would have passed. A strategically located and highly fortified archipelago with excellent deep water harbours in the central

Mediterranean could have been lost to Britain and her allies, among which Portugal was the most faithful, at a time of incessant, dramatic warfare lasting nearly two decades, when it would have been invaluable to the then enemy, France. Within a few months on the Insurrection, history might well have been written the other way round: an earlier Maltese surrender to the French rather than a later French surrender to the British.

The possession of Malta was coveted by other powers especially Russia, whose czar Paul I had himself elected the Order's Grand Master on 7th November 1798 and so crowned shortly afterwards.[5] In 1798 the Russian squadron was in the Mediterranean and Nelson was in contact with its commander as he was indeed with the Ottoman fleet. It was not until March 1801 that Paul I's successor, Alexander I, adopted a neutral stance until the Treaty of Tilsit was signed on 8th July 1807, between France and Russia. The first people Bonaparte threw out of Malta in June 1798, giving them 24 hours to leave, were the Russians and the Portugese, sequestering their properties together with any British ones.

A Roman Catholic kingdom and empire, Portugal had excellent relations with the Order until its expulsion from Malta in the summer of 1798, as may be seen from the congratulatory letter sent to Ferdinand von Hompesch upon his recent accession by Dona Maria.[6] By the grace of God Queen of Portugal and of the Algarves, on this side and across the seas in Africa, Mistress of the Guineas and of the Conquest, the Navigation and Commerce of Ethiopia, Arabia, Persia and India, she had received his election "with much pleasure and great satisfaction":

> *"Holding your most notable qualities in such opinion, I cannot but praise this most excellent choice, in view of the particular esteem and respect in which I hold this illustrious Order of which you have become the Grand Master."*[7]

So far as Portugal was concerned, the wresting of Malta from the Order by France had already been distressing. In now supporting the Maltese insurgents against French rule, Portugal was thus being consistent with her earlier ties. In this case, however, there was further pressure. News of the Maltese Insurrection reached Sicily within a few days by means of fishermen acting on instructions from a Żejtun commander, but soon afterwards the Maltese leaders wrote to the King of the Two Sicilies, Ferdinand IV, and more importantly to Admiral Horatio Nelson, asking for muskets, ammunition, provisions and military assistance. On 13th September 1798, just eleven days after the outbreak of the Maltese Insurrection in and around the old Citadel,

writing at sea from the *Vanguard*, Admiral Horatio Nelson, on repairing to Naples after the Battle of Aboukir, had implored Portugal's Marquis De Niza urgently to intervene in Malta:

> *"Being informed by Captain Hood of your return from Alexandria, I beg to represent to Your Excellency the great benefit it would be to the common cause should you proceed off Malta, and to attempt to intercept a French ship of the Line and two Frigates that made their escape from Alexandria, and which are cruising there, having been driven out of the Ports of Malta by the Maltese, who are in arms against the French, and have retaken several of their Towns... I send Your Excellency two papers with information concerning them; and by Your Excellency's cruising there for a short time it might be the means of driving the French from the island..."*
>
> *"Nelson added that from the intelligence he had received, he thought De Nisa would "find no difficulty in communicating with the inhabitants of Malta or Gozo."*[8]

Admiral Antonio De Nisa who commanded the Portugese squadron that came to the assistance of the Maltese insurgents in 1798 and 1799, landing officers and engineers ashore.

By the time that two Maltese rebel emissaries who had left Malta for Sicily on 5th September, accompanied by the local governor of Siracusa, had sailed out some distance to see whether they would encounter the Portugese squadron, the Portugese ships were already in Maltese waters. In his *Giornale*, Baron Azzopardi vividly depicted the scene, which the Maltese just about regarded as a miracle. The four ships-of-the-line and two frigates, which at daybreak on Wednesday 19th September 1798, were seen approaching Malta on the misty horizon, were De Nisa's squadron. The Maltese thought here was the British fleet, but it wasn't; it was the Portuguese one. Not any less evocative is the

day by day account given by Felice Cutajar, Ball's secretary. His entry for 18th September started thus:

> *"Vi fu qualche mormorio, vedendo il popolo che tutto cominciava a mancare, fin il pane e la carne, ne' alcuna vela compariva dalla Sicilia in Porto, anzi sempre piu' si accostavano verso la Citta' Quattro vele, cioe' due Navi e due Fregate, in modo di bloccare il Porto..."*[9]

And in his entry for the following day, he even mentions a failed French attempt to prevent the Maltese making contact with the newly-arrived Portuguese:

> *"Comparvero la mattina altre due vele, cioe' un altro Vascello ed una Fregata, e conosciute erano Portughesi, alli quli non lasciarono subito i Campagnoli d'inviar loro da S. Paolo una speronara a dar contezza di tutto, come fece, benche' le barche canoniere dei Francesi tentavano col cannone impeder loro tale corrispondenza..."*[10]

Censu Borg's sentry had the battleships and frigates spotted on the horizon from the look-out of the belfry of the Birkirkara parish church. Borg rushed to Rabat to alert Notary Manuel Vitale, a very central figure in the Insurrection. In the afternoon of that same day, Borg and Vitale together boarded de Nisa's flagship, the *Principe Real*, which carried 90 guns and 948 men. There was also a brigantine, and an English frigate, which later was joined by another Portuguese frigate. The Maltese leaders were given a warm welcome aboard as De Nisa (usually spelt Nizza in the few period Maltese texts) listened to the plight and needs of the insurgents. He gave them his solemn promise that he would not leave Maltese waters before the arrival of the British ships. He also gave them 500 muskets and gunpowder. In an act that would distinguish the Portuguese support of the Insurrection, de Niza did not limit himself to blockading the harbours. He immediately sent an engineer, Don Antonio Consalvo Saverio Pereira, with 20 artillerymen ashore to assist and advise the Maltese on the best sighting and construction of trenches which they had erected or were building, including the one at Cottonera. In the citadel, the Portugese flag was immediately hoisted on the tower alongside the Maltese and Neapolitan colours.[11] More ammunition and supplies were made available later on by a passing British squadron, which however sailed on to attend to other business.

> *"In the words of a biographer of de Nisa writing about the Portugese squadron's first arrival in Malta, "logistical support is given to the local population and ten vessels are seized."*[12]

Most Maltese will have heard of Admiral Horatio Nelson, and probably taken pictures of his column in Trafalgar Square, but few would know anything about his Portuguese counter-part, the Marquis de Nisa, although the latter had a

short but fast and distinguished naval career, rudely interrupted by smallpox at the age of 36. In the 1790s De Nisa had his Ocean squadron moved to the Mediterranean and was involved in various operations including Tripoli, Livorno and especially Naples, in addition to Malta. Since 1798 he was Vice-Admiral in command of Portugal's Mediterranean squadron and Inspector of the Royal Marine Brigade. By this time Portugal had one of the most powerful naval forces in Europe; in 1782 this already comprised 65 ocean-going ships, including 14 carracks, 23 frigates, three corvettes, 17 brigantines, and 8 cargo vessels, with 800 officers and 20,000 sergeants and other ranks, active not just in the Mediterranean but all the way from Brazil to India.[13]

The Portuguese would constitute a backbone of the naval blockade and at one time had as many as 400 troops ashore alongside the Maltese insurgents. They stood in when the British navy was otherwise engaged at the most crucial moments, first in the Autumn of 1798, from September to November, as the Insurrection started, and then again in the summer and winter of 1799, from August to December, as it was ending. Until the transfer of two British regiments from Messina under the command of Brigadier Thomas Graham, which comprised 800 men, towards the end of 1799, it was the Portuguese who mostly had non-Maltese fighting men ashore. At least two officers are known to have distinguished themselves in particular.

One was the already mentioned engineer Pereira, always energetic, committed and alert. Another was Xavier Mattheus, often praised by Sir Alexander Ball for his courage and promptness in leading the Żejtun and Żurrieq volunteers against the French in the latter half of 1799. A few letters of advice or instruction, including intelligence, have survived. One was addressed by Pereira to Canon F. S. Caruana of Żebbuġ, who commanded the St Joseph Camp, dated 22nd October 1798. This was about the need to reinforce the gates at Kordin and Zabbar as a great number of Frenchmen had been posted at Cospicua and the Cottonera. In another entreaty dated 13th December 1798 from Hal Tarxien, Pereira deplored the urgently needed but all too slowly executed upgrades being undertaken near the Vittoriosa battery:

> *"I urge you to hurry because the time is quite near. Send everyone to work here, day and night, without any delay. I can tell you that the battery could not start firing if it is not manned by 200 men, with 1,000 in reserve at Tarxien village under the command of any one of the Neapolitan officers who, up to now, have not done anything..."*[14]

The French garrison comprised some 4,000 troops, but there were barely half that number among the Maltese who were battle worthy; most were

peasants, former militia men or emboldened young volunteers.[15] Some of the Portuguese fighting alongside the Maltese on land laid down their lives. I do not have a roll call of honour because we lack all the details, but we do have some. For example, we know of one Portuguese called Emanuele Francisco who died in action at the age of 25 on 22nd January 1799, but we do not have his surname. He lies buried at the Tarxien parish church and listed in its *Liber Mortuorum*. Another Portuguese who died by enemy action and is similarly buried and registered at Tarxien is Don Consalvo Brago, who lost his life at the age of 28 on Kordin Heights on 8th October 1798. Another Pereira, Giocchino Pereira, died on 25th October 1799. He is listed in the *Liber Mortuorum* of the Żejtun parish church. The parish archives at Ħal Qormi mention another Portugese, Joannes de Sylva, who died there on 7th September 1799.[16] There are certainly others who would deserve the ultimate recognition as unknown soldiers fallen in battle. The Maltese lost many more men of course, thousands more, in a dramatic series of events, including a failed attempt to take Valletta. The British blockaded, supported and supplied, but those of them who actually died fighting on the ground were few indeed. Naples sent some men and helped in other ways but it was itself threatened by France and was in no position to intervene at all decisively.

In spite of pressure from Lisbon to return to base in the Autumn of 1799, Admiral De Niza kept the promise he had made to Vitale and Borg aboard his flagship on of 13th September 1798. He would not abandon Malta until the British arrived. He finally sailed for home on 13th December 1799, fifteen months later, just as the English troops from Messina were being disembarked. There was only a six week interruption of the naval blockade, in the early summer of 1799, at a time of alert when a combined Franco-Spanish attack was feared, a lull which allowed the French garrison to be replenished and reinforced.[17] But for the rest, the Portuguese no less than the British, separately or jointly, and to a lesser extent the Neapolitans, were the ones who helped out. Such assistance on land and at sea may well have prevented a Maltese surrender and a possible rout or massacre, especially at the start of the Insurrection when the largely unequipped Maltese, however brave, resourceful and successful, were most vulnerable to French sorties. That was when Nelson's fleet was on the mend in Naples, although Nelson did visit Malta soon and he kept up the pressure throughout. Malta was, he wrote, "in my thoughts waking and sleeping."[18] De Niza was the most effective and trustworthy ally he could rely on in the Mediterranean. He richly deserved the letter of thanks handed to him before his departure in December 1799 by the Maltese 'congresso nazionale'. And so did he too the mention of appreciation

from Queen Carolina of Naples. Nor was Nelson sparing in his praise of De Nisa. In a letter of thanks to him written in Palermo on 24th October 1799, he told him that his conduct in the blockade of Malta "has garnered the esteem and affection of Governor Ball, the British officers and troops, and of all the Maltese." Adding: "You can add the name of Nelson to those of your most fervent admirers, as an officer and friend."[19]

"In his magnum opus on the French in Malta published by Midsea in 1998, the late Dr Carmelo Testa rightly noted that it was "a deplorable fact that Malta has never commemorated by some visible sign this Portugese admiral and his countrymen and marines who had helped so much the Maltese in their hour of need."[20]

Mr President, Mr Ambassador, Ladies and Gentlemen, this evening Portugal and Malta - and History - tangibly record and chisel out such past valour and comradeship. On so decorously evocative a day as this, the 2nd of September 2008, we finally make lasting, demonstrable amends for so long and silent a shame.

That concluded the oration. Afterwards, and as a consequence of it, I was alerted and given access to two further pertinent documents. These show that the Portugese commitment to the Maltese cause in the Insurrection was still more significant and revealing.

2nd September 1998:- On behalf of the MUHS Professor Henry Frendo lays a wreath at the foot of the 2nd September 1798 monument in what is now Pjazza Indipendenza, Valletta.

The first document consists of the Marques de Nisa Diaries during the Mediterranean campaigns - the entire texts. While not solely or specifically about Malta, these permit greater contextualization of the goings-on, insights on de Nisa, and put into sharper relief the Portugese engagements in Malta under his command, which are included in it and to which I had already made some reference from other less comprehensive sources.[21]

A second document, which until now had remained largely unknown and unstudied, is still more important.[22] This is a detailed report, which originally had also included a plan of battle, written by and based on the live testimony of Lieutenant-Captain Antonio Gliz. Pereira from the Royal Brigade of the Navy, who on de Nisa's instructions landed in Malta to plan and direct operations in 1798 and in 1799, reporting back to him accordingly.[23]

The Pereira report and testimony is historically significant for two main reasons. First, it is a strategy, a plan of campaign, showing how best the French could be made to capitulate, organizing the defences and attack posts, warning the inexperienced Maltese leaders against resorting to certain tactics which in desperation they came to favour, such as valiantly but vainly attempting to scale the walls, which risked being self-defeating and ending, in the *rapporteur*'s words, "in sorrow not in glory". Second, it gives us valuable information as to the situation on the ground, the numbers of troops on both sides, the actual or desirable composition of the Maltese batallions, the location and indeed the construction of batteries, what ammunition was available and/or needed, data about French sorties both real and potential, the delivery of Neapolitan reinforcements, even a hint as to internecine disagreements among the Maltese themselves as to how to deal or proceed.

In so far as strategy was concerned, much of this is inevitably in the nature of planning, what should or would be and if not what fall back positions were to be resorted to. What he calls the 'stone walls', meaning rubble walls (*hitan tas-sejjieh*) he regarded as *de facto* trenches, the use of which the besiegers were to exploit, even as parapets when firing against *sorties*. The distribution of men had to be better ordered. In the absence of muskets, an order had to be placed for pikes, at least eight feet long and with an iron head. Artillery was insufficient: it had to be supplanted and better positioned. At night signals would be by means of air rockets (foguetes do ar), in day-time by flags or streamers aloft (a cavalo). Security was of the essence, hence much stricter recourse to passwords, sentries and patrols were required, outlined and timed in detail:

"As soon as the inferior officer who came out of the station presents himself to his officer, the latter will order 'Present Arms!' and say 'Let the officer come forward!'. When the latter is very close, they will lay hold of their swords one against the other and, their ears close to each other's mouth, the office of the guard will receive the first password and give the answer...."

Before between 10,000 and 12,000 inhabitants had been expelled from Valletta, Pereira had thought it best to bombard the city – "the fortified town of Valletta is one of the strongest in Europe" – believing that such an assault would provoke the inhabitants into mutiny as had happened at the Castle of Nice, at Kaiserwerth, Mons, Venlo and Menin. But that was now no longer the case. Because of the circumstances, 'the only way of forcing the enemy to surrender is through lack of food supplies" for which the siege would have to be well organized and a blockade conducted at sea to prevent the entry of all provisions. The report mentions various field-works for defence and siege which had to be or were undertaken. For topographical and logistical reasons, he did not think Valletta should be attacked from its Floriana side but from the Cottonera. He had a list of required war munitions to the King of Naples and a toned down version of these arrived some time later from Naples on two frigates. They comprised 2 12" mortars, 2 8" howitzers, 400 bombs, 600 grenades, 1200 fuses, 200 powder barrels of 60 rotolos each, 2,000 infantry muskets and 100,000 musket cartridges. He refers to Ball By "the blockade commander", Pereira means Ball, but there was also a Commander Manoel Vital engaged with the Maltese ground forces.

Writing to Ball from Tarxien on 28 January 1799, Pereira explained the unfolding situation as follows:

"Commander Manoel Vital has been speaking to me every day of an assault which the Maltese are planning on Cottonera. Inexperience has heated the brains of these people to such a point that in spite of my opposing their scheme with arguments which have seemed to me persuasive, they persevere and will not be persuaded. The walls of Valletta are not of such a kind that will admit assault without first making a breach and demolishing the defences. In consequence, I believe that the result of such a venture will be sorrow rather than glory.

A scaling of the walls with ladders was planned three times, the third time being on 16 February 1799, when 900 men assembled at Corradino, but it was not carried out. Pereira also opposed fortifying Fort Manoel because this was too exposed in relation to Valletta. By contrast, he had mortar batteries erected elsewhere mainly but not only to the south. "I had the beacon (lampo) of St Joseph entrenched", Pereira reported to de Nisa, "and two traverses built on the highway that from that station leads to Valletta, so as to prevent the enemy from using it. The erection of a 4-mortar battery before Harhar was finished and, at the same time, all the avenues on that side blocked with traverses. Meanwhile I ordered the building of the great traverse of Msida, with an accompanying ditch. Unfortunately the 'accompanying plan' is not available, but we have offensive and defensive preparations taking shape simultaneously. Valletta could not be attacked directly:-

The attack must be made at Cottonera. Once the beseigers are established there... they must attack For St Margaret and Vittoriosa and follow by the capture of Senglea, dominating thus the harbour on which Valletta wholly depends.... Should St Angelo Castle not surrender... then an attack should be made on Fort Ricasoli..."

From an intercepted dispatch addressed by General Vaubois to the Directoire in Paris, it was known that the French garrison counted no more than 4,000 troops. On the strength of this, Pereira calculated how many men could be committed to a sortie and what should be the numbers, positions and lines of the Maltese men in wait for them. We get a detailed breakdown of the field situation in 1798 according to a distribution determined by Pereira, although the stations had already increased their arms by 500 and their men by 600. Here is his table:-

Title	Armed Men	Unarmed Men	Total
Żejtun	700	2,100	2,800
Żabbar	900	700	1,600
Tarxien	250	400	650
Corradino	700	600	1,300
Samra[24]	300	400	700
St Joseph	750	2,100	2,850
Harhar[25]	500	300	800
Total	4,100	6,600	10,700

This meant that the number of armed men were not so far apart. Victory was possible. Plans had to be devised accordingly.

Very revealing is the description of one of the failed French sorties:

> *"On the 21st of November 1798, the French made a sortie numbering over 500 men, at the place between Cottonera and Corradino, in order to attack the Corradino station which had given them so much cause for anxiety, as could be told clearly from the continuous fire they directed onto that place both from Valletta and from Cottonera, destroying a large wall which gave cover to the workmen, making it necessary to rebuild it three times, for as many times as it was brought down. When the attack began, the Borg battery[26] removed the screen that covered it and began to direct a lively fire against the enemy, forcing them to withdraw immediately in disorder, killing a few and maiming a great many, as was later confirmed by the account of a number of deserters."*

These highly evocative period accounts bring closer to home what the 2nd September Insurrection truly entailed and represented. The first and only armed popular insurrection in Maltese history, it mobilized a heroic effort against a foreign rule which had grossly transgressed its supposedly liberating mission. However, they also bring to light the proximity and advice of De Nisa's Portuguese strategists and planners to the military preparations and operations on the ground, at so crucial and difficult a time. In the end, as foreseen by Pereira from the outset, it was starvation that led to surrender. Scaling the walls would have almost certainly produced a massacre.

NOTES

[1] This is the text of an oration delivered on 2nd September 2008 at the Upper Barracca Gardens under the patronage of the Head of State on the occasion of the unveiling of a slab commemorating Portuguese assistance to the Maltese during the Maltese Insurrection of 2nd September 1798.

[2] For a brief analytical discussion of this see H. Frendo, *Malta's Quest for Independence: Reflections on the Course of Maltese History* (Malta, 1989), chap. 3 "From Generals to Generals", 39-71; and *Żmien l-Ingliżi* (Malta, 2004), Vol. 1, chap. 2 "L-Insurrezzjoni Maltija u l-Intervent Ingliż", 5-26. See also A. Ganado & J. C. Sammut, *Malta in British and French Caricature 1798-1815* (Malta, 1989).

[3] The first known Portuguese maps of Malta date back to the 1730s while some books recording Maltese naval engagements on the "famoza Ilha de Malta" were published in Lisbon during Pinto's reign. See the short entry in an article by A. Ganado, "Historic links between Portugal and Malta", *The Times*, 22 July 2007, 52-53.

[4] Cf. H. Frendo, 'I Floriani di Macerata e La Floriana di Malta', in Simonetta Torresi, *Discorso intorno a Pompeo Floriani* (Societa' Filarmonico-Drammatica di Macerata, 2008), 5-9.

[5] H. Frendo, 'Czars, Knights and Republicans: The Malta Question in Paul I's Time', paper delivered in St Peteersburg published in *Ruskii Vopros* (Journal of Russian History, Brno), 3, 2002, reprinted in *Storja* (Journal of the Malta University History Society), (2003-2004), 62-75.

[6] Queen Maria reigned from 1777 to 1816. King Joao VI was Regent from 1792 to 1816.

[7] See the textual translation from the Portuguese original in A.P.Vella, *Malta and the Czars 1697-1802* (Royal University of Malta, 1972), 50-51.

[8] *The Dispatches and Letters of Vice Admiral Lord Viscount Nelson, with Notes by Sir Nicholas Harris Nicolas CGMG* (London, 1845), Vol. 3, Jan. 1798-Aug. 1799. For related documentary exchanges and evidence see also W. Hardman , *A History of Malta during the Period of the French and British Occupations 1798-1815* (London, 1909) and H.P.Scicluna, *Documents relating to the French Occupation of Malta in 1798-1800* (Malta, 1923), *passim*.

[9] F. Cutajar, L'Occupazione Francese di Malta nel 1798 (Malta, Valletta, 1933), from original manuscript at the Bibliotecha, with a preface by Dott. Giovanni Curmi, 55.

[10] *Ibid.*, 56.

[11] See especially V. Azopardi, *Giornale della Presa di Malta e Gozo* (Malta, 1836), and also Felice Cutajar, but see also later secondary works such as V. Denaro, C. Boffa, F. Sammut, and other more important ones cited or listed below.

[12] Antonio Marques Espateiro, *O Almirante Marques de Nisa* (Lisbon, 1987), quoted after First Lieutenant Jorge Manuel Moreira Silva in the *Revista de Armada* (Nov. 2004). A internet rendering is *Marquis de Niza: A Portugese Admiral between Nelson and Napoleon*, 4. I am grateful to Mr L. Zammit Munro for making this source known to me (Zammit Munro/Frendo, 21 Aug. 2008).

[13] See the biography *Marquis de Nisa: A Portuguese Admiral between Nelson and Napoleon.*

[14] C. Testa, *The French in Malta 1798-1800* (Malta, 1998), 375-376.

[15] An English source writing to Colonel Graham in early September 1799 noted that Niza's ships had returned but they would not take Valletta. "A French garrison of 4000 men is at present blocked by about 2500 half-naked, half-starved, half-armed Maltese...two of the *Alexander*'s lower-deck guns are the only battering pieces... and for lack of powder they have hardly fired for two months." A.B. Roger, *The War of the Second Coalition* (Oxford, 1964), 196-197; quoted after D.Gregory, *Malta, Britain and the European Powers 1793-1815*, (London, 1996), 76. The *Alexander* was the ship captained by Sir Alexander Ball, who was the British officer in charge in Malta.

[16] C. Testa, *op.cit.*, ftn. 5, 358; ftn. 6, 729.

[17] D. Gregory, *op.cit.*, 70-77.

[18] *Ibid.*, 78.

[19] Antonio Marques Espateiro, *op.cit.* (see ftn. 12 above).

[20] C. Testa, *op.cit.*, 702.

[21] These diaries, compiled and edited by Antonio Marques Espateiro, Capitano-Tenente, are entitled 'O Almirante Marques De Nisa', contain a portrait of De Nisa '7o Marques De Nisa', and were published as a CD by Edicoes Culturais Da Marinha in Lisbon. I am grateful to the President of the Comissao Cultural Da Marinha, Rui Manuel Rodrigues de Abreu, who was present in Valletta on 2nd September 2008, for his gracious letter and its enclosures in Rodrigues de Abreu/Frendo, Lisbon, 20 Oct. 2008.

[22] This document, MS 15, entitled 'Sitio de Malta – Antonio G. Pereira' had been acquired for the Archives and

Rare Books Department at the University of Malta Library, where it was laid to rest in peace many years ago. In his bibliography of manuscript sources, Testa does not mention it (*op.cit.*, pp. 843-846.) I was alerted to its existence by Dr Paul Xuereb, our former librarian, who informed me that the late Dr Joseph Cremona (who lectured on Romance Philology at Cambridge University) had had it translated into English by one of his students. I was granted access to both the original Portuguese text and its English translation by the current University of Malta librarian, Mr Anthony Mangion, under certain conditions (enc. M.Samut-Tagliaferro/Frendo, 13 Nov. 2008).

[23] On his second landing he was accompanied by Second Lieutenant Matheus Xavier from the same Royal Brigade. Some parts of the manuscript are not readily decipherable; nor is it clear if this is yet another Pereira or if he is the one commended by Ball, with whom he was in direct contact, and to whom I twice referred in my talk as reproduced here. The name and surname are identical but his second name he signs repeatedly as 'Glitz', so at least is it rendered in the type-written transcription in the Portuguese (as well as in the English) version of his MS. It is possible that this was his actual second name and that it was rather the 'Consalvo Saverio' (or perhaps 'Gonsalvo') which had been wrongly rendered and conveyed. Pereira is a common Portuguese surname. Our *rapporteur* Antonio G. (Glitz.)was a Lieutenant Captain, well instructed and experienced in the arts of war, and certainly no ordinary engineer. This is a curious detail; the substance of the document is what matters. There can be no doubt as to it authenticity.

[24] Still known as Tas-Samra (where there is a church), this was further down the road to Valletta from Hamrun; Casa Blacas (in the Little Sisters of the Poor area) served as an advance post for the Samra battery's guns. On the high ground past where there is San Gejtanu church, it was on the Hamrun side, roughly overlooking Marsa. According to Dr Joseph F. Grima, the Malta Historical Society's secretary who has written extensively about the Order's rule and Hal Qormi, in those days it formed part of Hal Qormi, and it engaged the Floriana defences. St Joseph (that is the San Giuseppe camp), is further up towards Santa Venera, near Casa Leoni (court martials and executions were carried out here), in what was part of Birkirkara. Strada San Giuseppe (still today's main road by the same name), divided Hamrun into two, Qormi on one side, Birkirkara on the other.

[25] This is almost certainly a reference to the well dug out and fortified battery site known as Tal-Ghorghar or tal-Gharghar, the area extending from north of Birkirkara to San Ġwann (then known as l-Gholja tal-Ghorghar). According to our colleague Charles Dalli the written version is an approximation of how the word would still have been pronounced in the late 18th century sounding the 'gh' as an 'h'. G.F.Abela (1647) had described this area as wooded with juniper trees. San Ġwann tal-Gharghar is a name still in use.

[26] The Corradino emplacement was known as 'the Borg battery'.

The Hospitaller Activities of the Sisters of Charity of St Joan Antide in the Maltese Islands

C. Savona-Ventura

Christianity from its initiation looked at nursing of the sick and infirm as a Christian duty and several communities dedicated to the service of the sick and infirm were founded throughout the centuries. One such community of nursing sisters was founded in Paris in 1633 by St Vincent de Paule and St Louise de Marillac under the title of "Daughters of Charity, Servants of the Poor". This order was the first of the non-enclosed congregations of nuns whose charitable domains involved nursing, moral and social welfare, and teaching. It was to serve as a model to other non-enclosed congregations, which were founded in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. One of these congregations was that of the Sisters of Charity founded in 1799 by St Joan Antide Thouret in France. St Antide was a French peasant girl who at the age of 22 years joined the Daughters of Charity of St Vincent de Paul. Shortly thereafter, the French Revolution broke out and all of the Sisters were disbanded and set back to their hometowns. St Antide was requested by the Vicar General of Besancon, France to begin work among the people of his diocese. On the 11th April 1799, St Joan Antide Thouret opened a free school for the education of girls and organised a soup kitchen for the poor. From its humble beginnings in 1799, the community eventually spread from France to other European countries and ultimately to America and Asia. In 1810, Jeanne Antide was asked to begin the same works in Savoy, Switzerland and Naples, Italy. In 1868 they were asked to come to Malta to care for orphans and later to nurse the sick in government hospitals and hospices. In 1932 the Sisters of Charity of St Joan Antida extended their works to the United States where they ministered to the Italian immigrants in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, at the height of the depression. The Order has continued to branch out across 25 countries.[1]

The nursing profession in the Maltese Islands has a very long tradition dating to the Medieval period when servants or nurses were mentioned in respect to Santo Spirito Hospital at Rabat. A further impetus in nursing standards was made with the arrival of the Order of St John of Jerusalem, but the standards of nursing care deteriorated in the last decades of the eighteenth century.[2] The arrival of the Hospitaller Order of St John of Jerusalem in 1530 introduced the female section of the Order known as the Sisters of Saint Ursula, established in the 11th century in Jerusalem. These like their male counterparts had a long nursing tradition. However after their arrival to the Maltese Islands, the social

welfare contribution of this congregation of nuns was limited to the care of illegitimate children at the *Casa delle Alunne* and penitent prostitutes at the Mary Magdalen Asylum. The Order of Saint Ursula in Malta never undertook nursing duties. They were spared exile when the Order of St John were expelled from the Maltese Islands by Napoleon Bonaparte in 1798, and still maintain their monastery in Valletta [Malta].[3]

The nursing standards by the mid-nineteenth century, while under British rule, became a serious concern to the authorities and by the mid-19th century a proposal was made by the Governor Richard More O'Ferrel to employ nuns in government charitable institutions that included hospitals, hospices and orphanages.[4] The first opportunity to act on the Governor's proposal turned up in 1868. The Superintendent for the Orphan Asylum in Valletta - Mrs. Charlotte Butler - was due to retire her post because of ill-health. She proposed acquiring the services of the Sisters of Charity to care for the institutionalised orphans. This proposal was well received by the Comptroller of Charitable Institutions and the Italian Branch of the Order was asked to send a number of nuns for the purpose.[5] A number of Italian Sisters of Charity Nuns arrived in Malta and on the 1st December 1868 took over the female division of the Orphan Asylum.[6] The experience at the Orphan Institute was very positive and after a year it was commented that there was a marked "improvement in the morals, discipline and economy of the Female Division of that establishment".[7] The Orphan Asylum, established in 1851, continued to function as an orphanage under the responsibility of the Comptroller of Charitable Institutions until this department was amalgamated with the Public Health Department in 1938. In 1937, the Asylum had accommodation for 50 boys and 60 girls, preference being given to orphans of both parents followed by children who had lost their father. The institution was then under the charge of a Resident Superintendent, while the Sisters of Charity were in charge of the girls. The children were discharged when they reached 18 years of age.[8] In 1922, orphan boys under 13 years of age were withdrawn from the Government Elementary Schools and started to be educated in the Asylum, the two infant classes and Standard I being taught by the Sisters of Charity, and Standards II-IV by the Superintendent and the Chaplain. Girls over 12 years of age were trained as General Servants.[9] In July 1939, the Girls' Section was transferred to the control of the Education Department, the boys' section having been moved to the Salesian Industrial School at Sliema [Malta] in April.[10] The Valletta Asylum was destroyed by enemy action during the Second World War when it was transferred to Sr. Joan Antide School at Sliema. In 1975 it catered for about 50 orphan girls.[11]

Because of the positive experience in the Orphan Asylum, the Medical Superintendent of the Lunatic Asylum and the Commissioners of Charity on the 15th December 1869 requested the authorities to employ nuns belonging to the order of the Sisters of Charity in the Female Division of the Lunatic Asylum.[12] The suggestion was well received by the Comptroller of Charitable Institutions and the Governor, and on the 16th September 1870 the Governor authorised the gradual appointment of Sister of Charity nuns to those positions that fell vacant in all the government Charitable Institutions. On the 13th October 1871, a number of Italian nuns arrived in Malta to take up the positions at the Lunatic Asylum, the Central Hospital and the Ospizio. Three Sisters of Charity were employed in the female division of the Lunatic Asylum together with eight attendants and two servants under the control of a matron. The Mother Superior was called the Chief Ward Attendant, whereas the other two Sisters were known as Head Ward Attendants.[13] In the Central Hospital and the Ospizio, the Sisters of Charity took up the posts of Matrons, Ward Mistresses, Portresses and Chief Laundresses. Further nuns took up posts at Saura Hospital in 1873 and Santo Spirito Hospital in 1878.[14] The experience with the Sister of Charity nuns in the Charitable Institutions was so positive that the Crown Agent for the Colonies Sir Penrose Julyan in 1880 described the move as "an admirable innovation".[15]

With the moves of upgrading the standards of nursing practice, in May 1885 it was decided that the attending nuns should be certified nurses. In July 1885, the first qualified nuns, trained at Santo Spirito Hospital in Rome, arrived in Malta. Their duties included the nursing of both male and female patients, the proper keeping of instruments, the distribution of diets, and the superintendence of the night nurses. To facilitate their acceptance, they were given "officer" status. In a memorandum dated 10th August 1887, the Comptroller of Charitable Institutions (Mr. R. Micallef) instructed the Sisters of Charity of the hospitals under his charge to teach the nurses how to attend upon the patients, stating that "the nurses being generally illiterate, the Sisters shall teach them practically their various duties in and out of the wards".[16]

By January 1888, the Lunatic Asylum female staff had been augmented to sixteen employees under the supervision of six Sisters of Charity. These Sisters occupied the positions of Chief Female Ward Attendant, Deputy-Chief Female Ward Attendant in charge of two convalescent wards, two Sisters-in-Charge of female wards and two Sisters in charge of occupational activities, and laundry/pantry. Only one sister, who was in charge of the ward for the bodily infirm was a qualified nurse.[18] By 1893, the paramedical staff at the

CHARITABLE INSTITUTION	YEAR
Orphan Asylum, Valletta (transferred to Sr. Joan Antide School, Sliema after 2nd World War)	1868
Central Hospital, Floriana (transferred to St Luke's Hospital, Gwardamangia: 1940-50s)	1871
Lunatic Asylum, Attard	1871
Ospizio, Floriana (moved to the Poor House, Mgieret in 1892)	1871
Saura Hospital, Rabat	1873
Casetta, Valletta (moved to the Poor House, Mgieret in 1892)	1875
Santo Spirito Hospital, Rabat	1878
Lazaretto Hospital, Manoel Is.	1900
Santo Spirito Lazaretto Hospital, Xewkija, Gozo	1881
St John's the Baptist Hospital, Rabat, Gozo (later Victoria Hospital 1887)[17]	1888
Ospizio, Rabat, Gozo	1888

Ospizio was made up of a Matron and an Assistant Matron, both Sisters of Charity and ten other Sisters of Charity referred to as surveillantes (Ward Supervisors), assisted by six male and four female nurses, and 18 extra female attendants.[19] By 1898, it was established that women patients in the Central Hospital were entirely entrusted to trained Sister of Charity nuns, while male patients were entrusted to certified male nurses working under the supervision of a Sister of Charity.[20]

CHARITABLE INSTITUTIONS **1896 Colonial Estimates[21]**	**Number of Nuns receiving remuneration from Government ***
Central Hospital	Matron (£40); Assistant Matron (£30); 2 trained Nursing Sisters (£25 each); Sister in charge of Kitchen (£30)
Santo Spirito Hospital	Matron (£35); Sister in charge of kitchen (£30)
Poor House (incl. Hospital for Incurables, Magdalen Asylum, and Foundling Hospital)	Matron (£40); Assistant Matron (£30); 10 Surveillants (£20 each)
Lunatic Asylum	Chief female Attendant (£35); 2 Attendant (£25 each)
Orphan Asylum	Resident Superintendent (£75); Assistant Superintendent (£35); Portress-Ward Mistress (£25); Female Attendant (£25); Cook (£25)
Hospital at Gozo	Matron (£25)
Ospizio at Gozo	Matron (£25)

** all ineligible for the ordinary superannuation allowance.*

A Royal Commission was appointed on the 12th August 1911 to investigate and advise about the economic depression that affected Malta during the period. The Commission investigated the management of the Charitable Institutions, including the contribution given by the Sisters of Charity. The evidence given by the Comptroller of Charitable Institutions, Mr. C. Pace Bardon, emphasised that the members of the Sisters of Charity were giving a sterling service to the country at a very low cost. From the evidence it transpired that the State was paying the Order a total sum of £250 plus rations for ten sisters, while furnishing free accommodation at the hospital for these sisters and a further 30% excess. In return, the Order gave the regular services of the ten nursing sisters and others not falling under the annual financial estimates.[22]

The problems with recruiting trained nurses persisted well into the first half of the 20th century. A scheme for training nurses in the United Kingdom was initiated. In addition a Nursing School in Malta was established on the 22nd August 1937 with the engagement of an English-trained Nurse Ms. L.M. Doherty as a Sister Tutor. Ms. Doherty started a refresher course for a number of Sisters of Charity serving at the Central Hospital. The projected new school for nurses was to train male and female lay nurses, besides young nuns belonging to the Order of the Sisters of Charity. The new St Luke's School for Nurses was inaugurated in October 1938, the first six pupils being young nuns of the Order. In the subsequent year, a further fifteen new probationers joined the Nursing School. By 1940 there were 25 probationers.[23]

In the Debate of the Council of Government of the 16th October 1940 (Sitting No. 45), the Chief Government Medical Officer defined the various nursing classes envisaged by the proposed scheme. The nurses were divided in (1) a number belonging to the Order of the Sisters of Charity, some of whom had received a certain amount of training abroad; (2) a number of 'lay nurses' newly termed 'Hospital Attendants' who had received a theoretical course of training of 10-12 months; and (3) a projected group of nurses fully trained in English Hospitals. A group of 19 ladies were then under training. The CGMO further stated,

> "We shall retain the services of the Sisters of Charity. We cannot do without them. They are willing and devoted workers and they offer advantages which are not to be found in lay nurses, however willing the latter may be. They take no vacation leave, they draw a small salary and they do not marry... But the Sisters of Charity have also to be trained....."[24]

The onset of the Second World War hostilities required the suspension of the theoretical part of the nursing studies course, and the probationer Sister nurses were employed in the emergency hospitals. In spite of the dangers

from bombs, the Sisters of Charity opted to remain serving the leper patients at St Batholomew's Hospital when these decided not to be evacuated to alternative premises in Gozo. In July 1942, a delayed action bomb fell behind the kitchen wherein the Sister of Charity in charge and several other employees were working. When the bomb went off, it wrecked the kitchen and killed one of the kitchen servants. A Sister of Charity (Sr. Alexandra Borda), together with four patients and two other hospital attendants, lost her life during enemy action on the Hospital for Mental Disease while trying to persuade two refractory patients to go down to the shelter.

The suspended nursing studies were resumed with twelve Sisters of Charity in the latter part of 1942. Six of these Sisters successfully passed the final course of instruction in 1945 and were certified.[25] In 1946, a Sister of Charity (Sr. Aldegonda Farrugia) underwent a year's training in London and in December qualified as a Sister Tutor. The appointment of Sr. Farrugia enabled the re-opening of the St Luke's Training School of Nurses in the latter part of 1947; the first pupils included three lay females and four nuns. A further six Sisters in 1946 proceeded to England for a three-year course of training in General Nursing.[26] By 1952 the Nursing Course at St Luke's Hospital had received recognition for registration purposes by the General Nursing Council (UK).

The post-War period saw an increase in the appeal towards nursing as a profession with more applications for enrolment to the School of Nurses by lay young women. During the period 1951-56, a total of 57 nurses qualified from the St Luke's School of Nursing. Of these only 32, including 13 Sisters of Charity nuns, continued to work in the government hospitals. With a total of 87 qualified British and locally trained S.R.N.s, the standards of nursing were considered to be still very far from what was desirable. The contribution of the Sisters of Charity remained an essential part of Maltese medical services.[27]

The 1957 Medical Services Commission and Dr. John Cronin acknowledged the continuing contribution towards nursing in the government hospitals and hospices by the Sisters of Charity. The latter, in his report on the medical services of the Islands, commented that

> "It is impossible not to be impressed by the devotion and kindness of the Sisters of Charity. They look after the patients most conscientiously and are almost invariably praised by the medical staff, the patients and everyone who comes into contact with them."[28]

Both the Medical Services Commission and Dr. Cronin commented on the poor standards of nursing in the hospitals resulting from the deficiency of

qualified nursing personnel. Dr. Cronin recommended "that as many Sisters of Charity and nurses as possible receive systematic training and preparation for the examination for State Registration". Furthermore the appointment of a Superintendent of Nurses and a Matron for St Luke's Hospital was recommended, these appointments being arranged in such a way at to in "no way interfere with the functions of the Mothers Superiors of the hospitals". The Mother Superiors, acting as matrons, were responsible for female nurses at St Luke's Hospital, the Hospital for Mental Disease and St Vincent de Paule Hospital in Malta, and Victoria Hospital and Chambrai Hospital in Gozo. Only one of the Mother Superiors was a fully trained nurse. The male nurses in the hospitals were under the control of the wardmasters, none of whom were state-registered nurses. Most of the ward sisters in the hospitals were Sisters of Charity who lived on the hospital grounds. At St Luke's Hospital these were all state-registered nurses, but only a very few of the ward sisters working in the other hospitals were fully trained.[29] With regards to the Sisters of Charity, the Medical Services Commission concludes,

> "Though the Sisters of Charity form the largest body of state registered nurses in the islands, there are less than thirty so qualified. Fortunately, the Mother Provincial of the order realises the need for more fully trained religious Sisters and intends to send an increasing number of her Sisters to the United Kingdom, not only to obtain state registration but for post-graduate courses - for sister tutors and administrators and for training in special nursing such as paediatric, tuberculosis. In the Sisters of Charity, Malta has its most promising field of recruitment for its nursing service and the order should be encouraged and helped to expand their training programme to its limit."[30]

The Order continued with its hospitaller contribution in the government hospitals in the subsequent decades. In 1975, the Sisters of Charity were tending about 2200 sick people in the various Government Hospitals; this besides caring for the handicapped at Villa Mons. Gonzi at Siggiewi [Malta], running an old people's hospice at Saura Hospital at Rabat [Malta] and a rest house for old and sick Sisters of the Order. In 1974, the Order had 209 sisters in Malta, 19 in Gozo and 9 abroad. Besides their hospitaller contribution, the Sisters of Charity also ran orphanages and schools.[31]

The nursing order of the Sisters of Charity of St Joan Antida was the main contributor to nursing in the government charitable institutions throughout the 19th and 20th centuries. However other nursing congregations similarly contributed towards the nursing services in the Maltese Islands in hospitals specifically managed by them. An important nursing congregation in Malta was the Little Company of Mary, better known as the Order of Blue Sisters. The congregation was originally set up in 1877 by Mary Potter in the United Kingdom with the aim of providing a community of trained religious nurses.

In 1894, the congregation was invited to come to Malta on the initiative of Archbishop Pietro Pace. The Archbishop formed a committee to collect sufficient funds to enable renting a house in Sliema [Malta] and support the congregation until such time as they became self-sufficient. Four sisters arrived from Rome and soon set up a community nursing service. The constant demand for their services made it necessary for the congregation to increase its numbers. Moves were undertaken to construct a more suitable convent for the Order. Various personalities, including Governor Sir Arthur Lyon Freemantle, and Rev. Debono Cassia, made sizeable donations sufficient to enable a new convent named Casa Leone XIII to be built in Sliema. Building commenced in 1898 and the convent was finalised in 1901. During the first decade of the twentieth century, the upper floor of the convent served as a hospital. An adjoining hospital was commissioned by Henry Lyman Clapp, who unfortunately died in 1907 before the project had been completed. His wife Emilia Zammit Clapp and her sister Mary Zammit took up the project, and the hospital was completed in 1910. On 23 June 1911, the two sisters donated the newly built hospital to the government with the proviso that the Order of Little Company of Sisters continued its management initially as a Seaman's Hospital.[32] The nursing, food, attendance, washing and other services necessary for the patients were to be provided by the Sisters against payment of 2s6d a day per patient by the Board of Trade or other parties. The medical attendant, drugs, surgical instruments/appliances, clothing and bedding were to be provided by the government. This arrangement resulted in a saving in government expenditure during the first year. The government expenditure in the early years of the arrangement (financial year 1913-14) included (1) medical attendance £40, (2) drugs and appliances £4.11s3d, (3) clothing and bedding £6.7s9d, (4) divine service and spiritual assistance £20, and (5) telephone £4.[33] During the First World War the hospital and part of the convent were converted into a military hospital accommodating 150 beds. In November 1918, a War Memorial Ward for Children, comprising Medical and Surgical Divisions, was set up on the upper floor of this hospital. The Seamen's Hospital ceased to form part of the Department of Health in December 1922 when the King George V Merchant Seamen's Memorial Hospital was opened.[34] The hospital with only 20 beds was turned over to the Sisters of the Little Company of Mary who started using it as a children's hospital. The building was expanded in 1933. During the Second World War Zammit Clapp Hospital and the ground floor of the adjoining Sacred Heart Convent were taken over for use as a Casualty Hospital for the north-western region of Malta. It also housed the Female Medical, ENT Divisions and the Children War Memorial Hospital. After the end of hostilities, the hospital was again returned to the

management of the Sisters of the Little Company of Mary who continued to expand the medical services introducing a maternity division in 1947 that later in 1950 saw the opening the Mary Potter Maternity Wing. In 1957, it was the only privately managed hospital of any size in the Maltese Islands with 64 adult beds and 15 maternity beds and furthermore accommodated 34 infants. During the 1970s, eighteen sisters, helped by lay nurses looked after about 130 patients.[35] During 1971-77 it accounted for about 11.8-14.5% of the total maternities that occurred in the Maltese Islands. Its contribution towards maternity services continued to progressively increase so that in 1977 and 1979 it contributed to 16.3% and 16.9% of deliveries respectively.[36] Zammit Clapp Hospital continued to function until December 1980 when it was closed down after the untimely departure of the congregation from Malta, a byproduct of the industrial dispute between the Government and the Malta Medical Association.[37]

Another congregation that gave a significant contribution to nursing in Malta was the Order of Dominican Nursing Sisters. The Order saw its origins in the Maltese Islands through the agency of a Maltese lady (Carolina Cauchi) living in the island of Gozo. Encouraged by the Bishop of Gozo Mgr. Pietru Pace, Cauchi in 1885 commissioned the construction of a convent in Rabat [Gozo]. The building was completed in 1889 and eight Maltese and Gozitan sisters commenced their mission in Gozo working with the sick and aged. The congregation was canonically erected and amalgamated with the Dominican Order in 1893. In 1900 they received nursing training at the Gozo government hospital under the direction of the medical officers and the Sisters of Charity, after which they were entrusted with the care of patients in the Lazaretto in Gozo. In 1916 they extended their nursing services to Malta opening St Peter's House at Lija [Malta]. By 1923 this building was enlarged and modified to function as a small hospital. Their activities in Gozo expanded through the setting up of Trionfi Hospital at Rabat [Gozo] that served as a private hospital with surgical facilities. In September 1974, the hospital premises were moved to another building in the vicinity named St Dominic's Hospital while Trionfi Hospital was adapted for the care of the elderly. The small 28-bed clinic catered also for maternity cases delivering a total of 152 maternities until its closure in November 1976. On 12 April 1959, the Dominican Sisters officially inaugurated another privately managed hospital named St Catherine of Sienna Hospital at Attard [Malta], while St Peter's Home was adapted as a hospice for the elderly. The hospital expanded and introduced maternity services in 1961 and continued until 1980 when the hospital was converted into a nursing home for the elderly. The number of deliveries during the first two years of its opening remained low accounting for about 2.3% of the total deliveries in the Maltese

Islands in 1961-62. By 1966-67 the proportion rose significantly to account for 11.5% of all deliveries, further peaking at 18.3% in 1971-72. In 1977 and 1979 it accounted for 10.4% and 21.8% respectively.[38] By the 1970s the Dominican Nursing Sisters had seven houses in Malta and six in Gozo, with four buildings - Hospital of St Catherine, St Peter's House, Trionfi Home and St Dominic's Hospital - being specifically used for the care of the elderly and sick. They moreover also ran schools and cared for orphans. In 1980, the congregation ceased with their hospital services and concentrated their activities with caring for the elderly and attending social problems in children.

Other religious congregations contributed towards the care of the elderly in Malta. The Order of the Little Sisters of the Poor were asked to introduce their services in October 1877, doing so in the subsequent year by opening a home for the elderly at Pieta` [Malta]. In 1880, the Order were leased a government-owned house at Hamrun [Malta] to serve as their convent and hospital for the elderly. In the 1970s the congregation consisted of 16 sisters and two collates who cared for 190 inmates at Hamrun and in a home at Naxxar [Malta] acquired in 1975. The Tertiary Order of St Francis managed St Joseph Hospital at Zebbug [Malta] established in 1788. They also during 1817-1994 managed St Anne's Hospital at Senglea [Malta].[39]

The 1970s saw a major turning point in the nursing activities of the various congregations. The efforts of the various government administrations to increase the standards of nursing in the government hospitals resulted in a significant increase in the trained nursing personnel. In 1997 there were a total of 575 qualified nurses and 65 midwives at various levels of seniority, 698 enrolled nurses, and 864 health assistants. The majority of these were lay personnel. Only a total of eight nursing personnel in 1997 belonged to a religious order including the Sisters of Charity. These included four Nursing officers, one Midwifery officer, one Staff Nurse, and two Enrolled Nurses.[40] The increasing number of lay fully-trained nurses competing for senior posts in government service necessitated the gradual replacement of Sisters of Charity nurses in the government hospitals after these had given a sterling service in nursing practice and education to the Islands for more than a hundred years. This congregation and those of the Dominican Sisters and Little Sisters of the Poor concentrated their nursing services towards the care of the elderly, and today still remain the main secondary contributors towards this aspect of social welfare.[40]

NOTES

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[2] C. Savona-Ventura: *Knight Hospitaller Medicine in Malta [1530-1798].* (Malta,2004), 94.

[3] E.E. Hume: *Medical Work of the Knights Hospitallers of Saint John of Jerusalem.* (Baltimore 1940), 64-66, 154; National Malta Library: *Registres des Deliberations de la Commission du Government. 6523 B,* fol.109-119. Manuscript volume, 1798. Quoted in C. Testa: *The French in Malta 1798-1800.* (Malta, 1997), 180-183; G. Aquilina: *Is-Sorijiet Ġerosolimitani – Il-Knisja u l-Monasteru ta' Sant'Ursola, Valletta.* (Malta, 2004).

[4] M&H Arch: *Register of References to the Comptroller of Charitable Institutions.* Vol. 6, 75. in: P. Cassar: *Medical History of Malta.* (London, 1965), 406; A. Bonnici: *Is-Sorijiet tal-Karita` u l-hidma taghhom f'Malta.* (Malta, 2002).

[5] M&H Arch: *Register of References to the Comptroller of Charitable Institutions.* 7: 12,42. in: P. Cassar, *Medical History of Malta,* 407; A. Bonnici, *Is-Sorijiet tal-Karita` u l-hidma taghhom f'Malta.*

[6] M&H Arch: *Letters to Government from 3rd May 1867 to 5th March 1869* fols.275, 474, 476. in: P. Cassar, *Medical History of Malta,* 407; A. Bonnici, *Is-Sorijiet tal-Karita` u l-hidma taghhom f'Malta.*

[7] M&H Arch: *Letters to Government from 31st January 1872 to 11th June 1878,* fols. 201. in: P. Cassar, *Medical History of Malta,* 407; A. Bonnici, *Is-Sorijiet tal-Karita` u l-hidma taghhom f'Malta.*

[8] *Annual Report on the Health Conditions of the Maltese Islands and on the work of the Medical and Health Department for the year 1937,* (Malta, 1938), xlix-l.

[9] A. Galea: Office of Charitable Institutions. *Reports on the workings of Government Departments during the financial year 1922-23.* (Malta, 1925), Q2.

[10] *Annual Report on the Health Conditions of the Maltese Islands and on the work of the Medical and Health Department for the year 1939,* (Malta, 1940), xxiv.

[11] A. Bonnici, *History of the Church in Malta op. cit.,* 141.

[12] M&H Arch: *Letters to Government from 5th March 1872 to 31st January 1872,* fols. 230. in: P. Cassar, *Medical History of Malta: op. cit.,* 407; A. Bonnici, *Is-Sorijiet tal-Karita` u l-hidma taghhom f'Malta.*

[13] P. Cassar: *The institutional Treatment of the Insane in Malta,* (Malta, 1949), 37-38, 41-42.

14 M&H Arch: *Letters to Government from 31st January 1872 to 11th June 1878,* fols. 356, 715. in: P. Cassar, *Medical History of Malta,* 407; A. Bonnici, *Is-Sorijiet tal-Karita` u l-hidma taghhom f'Malta.*

[15] P.G. Julyan: *Report on the Civil Establishments of Malta,* (London, 1880), 26.

16 M&H Arch: *Letters to Government from 23rd March 1883 to 20th April 1888,* fols.277 in: P. Cassar, *Medical History of Malta: op. cit.,* 408; P. Cassar, *The institutional Treatment of the Insane in Malta op. cit.,* 40 footnote 26; *Is-Sorijiet tal-Karita` u l-hidma taghhom f'Malta.: ibid.*

[17] M&H Arch: *Correspondence Book for Victoria Hospital for period 9 February 1896 to 26 February 1889,* fols. 209, 250 (manuscript in Gozo archives collection). Letter dated 21st March 1888 to Mr. Trapani, Assistant Secretary for Gozo from the Medical Superintendent to Victoria Hospital and Gozo Ospizio requesting permission for the two sisters of the hospitals to visit their superior in Malta. Similar letter requesting permission for one Matron Sister of Charity dated 5th September 1888. Her duties were to be carried out by her companion.

[18] P. Cassar, *The institutional Treatment of the Insane in Malta op. cit.,* 37-38, 41-42.

[19] *Malta Blue Book for the year 1893,* (Malta, 1893), H50 in: P. Cassar: *St Vincent de Paule's Residence for the Elderly. The medico-social record,* (Malta, 1994), 18-19.

[20] M&H Arch: *Letters to Government from 10th April 1895 to 31st March 1903,* fols.163. in: P. Cassar, *Medical History of Malta: op. cit.,* 408; A. Bonnici: *Is-Sorijiet tal-Karita` u l-hidma taghhom f'Malta.*

[21] Colonial Estimates, Malta, 1896. *Malta Government Gazette,* 20 December 1895, 952-958.

[22] J. Rizzo Naudi: The Sisters of Charity of St Jeanne-Antide Thouret and the Maltese Health Service. One hundred years of service for the people, *The Sunday Times [of Malta],* 29th August 1999, 56-57.

[23] *Annual Report ..... 1937,* 1938: *op. cit.,* lvii,lx; *Annual Report on the Health conditions of the Maltese Islands and on the work of the Medical and Health Department for the year 1938,* (Malta, 1939), li; *Annual Report..... 1939,* 1940: *op. cit.,* xxxii; J. Rizzo Naudi, 1999: *op. cit.*

[24] J. Rizzo Naudi, The Sisters of Charity of St Jeanne-Antide Thouret and the Maltese Health Service. One hundred years of service for the people, *op. cit.*

[25] *Report on the Health Conditions of the Maltese Islands and on the work of the Medical and health Department including the Emergency Medical Services for the year 1941*, (Malta, 1943), xxi,xxv; *Report on the Health Conditions of the Maltese Islands and on the work of the Medical and health Department including the Emergency Medical Services for the year 1942*, (Malta, 1943), xiii; *Report on the Health Conditions of the Maltese Islands and on the work of the Medical and health Department including the Emergency Medical Services for the year 1945*, (Malta, 1948), xiv; J. Rizzo Naudi, The Sisters of Charity of St Jeanne-Antide Thouret and the Maltese Health Service. One hundred years of service for the people, *op. cit.*

[26] *Report on the Health Conditions of the Maltese Islands and on the work of the Medical and health Department including the Emergency Medical Services for the year 1946*, (Malta, 1948), xxxiii; *Report on the Health Conditions of the Maltese Islands and on the work of the Medical and health Department including the Emergency Medical Services for the year 1947*, (Malta, 1949), iv. Sr Aldegonda Farrugia became a member of the Order of the Sisters of Charity in 1935, after which she started her training in nursing as an Assistant to the ward Head Nurse in the government hospital. She followed the first course in nursing studies held in Malta in 1938, and was one of the first nurses to qualify. In 1945 she proceeded to the UK and followed a course as Tutor of Nursing at Kensinton College graduating in 1946. She returned to Malta as a Nursing Tutor in 1947. J. Rizzo Naudi, The Sisters of Charity of St Jeanne-Antide Thouret and the Maltese Health Service. One hundred years of service for the people, *op. cit.*

[27] *Report on the Health Conditions of the Maltese Islands and on the work of the Medical and health Department including the Emergency Medical Services for the year 1953*, (Malta, 1954), 109; L. Farrer-Brown, H. Boldero, J.B. Oldham: *Report of the Medical Services Commission*, (Malta, 1957), 52,54.

[28] L. Farrer-Brown et al, *Report of the Medical Services Commission*, 53; J. Cronin: *Report on the Medical Services of Malta*, (Malta, 1957), 5.

[29] J. Cronin, *Report on the Medical Services of Malta*, 6; L. Farrer-Brown et al, *Report of the Medical Services Commission*, 52-53.

[30] L. Farrer-Brown et al, *Report of the Medical Services Commission*, 58.

[31] A. Bonnici, *History of the Church in Malta op. cit.*, 118, 136-142, 165.

[32] Casa Leone XIII and the Zammit Clapp Hospital. *Malta and Gibraltar Illustrated*, A. Macmillan (ed.), (London, 1915), 310-311.

[33] *Malta Government Gazette Supplement*, 22 November 1912; *Reports on the Working of Government Departments during the financial year 1911-12*, (Malta, 1912), M:2; *Reports on the Working of Government Departments during the financial year 1913-14*, (Malta, 1914), L:2.

[34] *Reports on the Working of Government Departments during the financial year 1922-23*, (Malta, 1925), Q:1.

[35] A. Bonnici *History of the Church in Malta op. cit.*, 119, 136-137; Davies JOF: *Report on a Hospital Building Programme for Malta*, (Malta, 1957), 4.

[36] *Register of Deliveries in Maternity Division: Zammit Clapp Hospital, Malta* (letter from Crehan S., 11 August 1989).

[37] E. Mizzi: *Malta in the Making 1962-1987. An eyewitness account*, (Malta, 1995), 337-348.

[38] Cassar P, *Medical History of Malta op. cit.*, 409; Bonnici A, *History of the Church in Malta op. cit.*, 136-137; *Register of deliveries in Maternity division: St Catherine of Siena Hospital, Malta* (letter from Attard E., 19 April 1989); *Register of deliveries in Maternity division: S. Dominic Hospital, Gozo* (letter from Attard P., 4 March 1991).

[39] A. Bonnici, *History of the Church in Malta* op. cit. 118; C. Savona-Ventura: Civil Hospitals in Malta in the last two hundred years. *Historia Hospitalium*, 21 (1998-99), 45-63.

[40] *Staff List of the Government of Malta as on 1st January 1997*, (Malta, 1997) 357-460.

Cultural History and Politics: From Richard Wagner to Adolf Hitler A Critical Appreciation of the 2007 Annual Andrew Vella Memorial Lecture

Ivan Vassallo

Hosted at the University of Malta's Aula Magna in Valletta, the Malta University Historical Society's 2007 Andrew Vella Memorial Lecture lecture was delivered on 1st December by Dr. Gottfried Wagner. The theme, as agreed, was: Cultural History and Politics with the title "From Richard Wagner to Adolf Hitler". In this very well attended event, Dr. Wagner, an anti-Nazi musicologist and historian who is a direct descendent of Richard Wagner, spoke on the connection between the operas composed by Richard Wagner and the political developments in Germany after its unification and more markedly with the rise of the National Socialist regime.

Wagner: the ideas behind the Artist

Though Wagner is known as a composer, he was also involved in political affairs and in the revolutionary activity for German Unification. His works were also permeated by his ideas. In fact all the works from the music itself to the libretto, from the set's decoration to the performers' acting on stage, were totally directed by Richard Wagner. This obsession with dealing himself with his own work also related to the meaning and explanation of his play. Unlike other composers, Wagner did not discuss his works either with the librettist or any other person. This is fundamental because many of his compositions were also propagating his outlook on race.

Even theatre décor was touched by his ideas, artistic and political. Dr. Wagner explained that Richard Wagner's plays had a three pointed message. The three points were: the liberation of mankind from greed which was identified with the Jews, which would then lead to the regeneration of the German people and purification. With these ideas the artist is presented as the awakener of consciousness and thus the saviour against what was alien and inimical to the German people.

The Bayreuth Festipielhaus was to be the new temple for German musical

identity, built in the form of a Greek theatre, while the musicians are hidden to focus concentration of the spectators and to enhance musical projection[1] with great artistic effects, the words being devised by Wagner in line with his composer's message. Thus Wagner the artist puts himself and his influences at the centre of his works, identifying himself with the heroes of the play as saviours of their people.

Wagner's Jewish Connection and Anti-Semitism

Wagner's aversion to the Jews was partly on the level of his own perceived or real connection with the Jewish community itself. After he had lost his father at young age, he lived with his mother and step father Ludwig Geyer, a Jew in Dresden's Jewish quarter. This was to be a source of attack from his rivals especially in the world of composers. This lack of a father is a constant theme which persists in Wagner's opera: heroes and paladins of his plays such as Parsifal, Siegfried or Lohengrin all do not know their father – or the father died at their birth – which leads to a search for identity.

On the musical field, in his initial works Wagner took a lot from the influences of Jewish composers such as Giacomo Meyerbeer and Felix Mendelssohn, especially during his years in exile. However in his later years from the 1850s onwards, particularly in his writings on "Judaism and Music", Wagner launches an attack on their music. Distancing himself from such composers, in an increasingly vitriolic way he attacks he Jews, their music and their art. In one such letter he says:

> "Very naturally, in Song – the most vivid and most indisputable expression of the personal emotional-being – the peculiarity of the Jewish nature attains for us its climax of distastefulness; and on any natural hypothesis, we might hold the Jew adapted for every sphere of art, excepting that whose basis lies in Song".[2]

In another tirade, he adds: "*so that Judaic works of music often produce on us the impression as though a poem of Goethe's, for instance, were being rendered in the Jewish jargon*[3]."

Dr. Wagner explained that in Wagner's operas, the heroes' antagonists were meant to be caricatures of the Jews, greedy and spiteful against the pure heroes, which represent the German nation as the notes by Richard Wagner. One such case arises in the opera 'Parsifal', which tells the story of a young and pure knight searching for the Grail to heal Amfortas the head of the Grail Knights. One such character in this play is a temptress sent by

Parsifal's arch-enemy, Kundrie, who finds redemption. In the opera Parsifal, after she had tempted the young Knight to go against his vows, and repented of her malevolent action, she had to die as she personified a concept which embodied something alien, evil to Wagner's world which had to be disposed of.

Wagner's first anti-Semitic writing dates back to 1850 but he was not alone. He corresponded, hosted and had intellectual exchanges with the British Houston Stewart Chamberlain, who also had connections with the German Imperial Family as cultural advisor and wrote books were part of the German educational system. Richard Wagner also published attacks against the Jews in the newspaper *Bayreuther Blätter*. He met Count de Gobineau, the French Aryanist ideologue. In some of his articles published in the *Bayreuther* he praised Arthur de Gobineau's book *An Essay on the Inequality of the Human Races*[4]. As in the opera, Wagner was always aware of what he was writing. The impact of this newspaper was not only restricted to monarchical circles. It came out of a cultural centre, the soul of the Reich; it was widely read by the bourgeoisie of the German Reich. Thus not only was there the impact of Wagner the artist but also of the opinionist, who elucidated and propagated his ideas, speaking through the Language of the Opera and the language of politics.

The Bayreuth Festival, Hitler and the relationship with the Wagners

The town of Bayreuth was to be for Wagner the centre of his operatic activity, especially as an alternative to what he saw the Jewish-dominated Paris. Its theatre, the Bayreuther Festspielhaus, had been built a couple of years after the creation of the German Empire in 1876. In its artistic expression Bayreuth was to be the new temple of the German people. The Bayreuth festival was an important event which not only attracted important leaders such as the Kaiser and Dom Pedro of Brazil but also learned men of culture.

After the death of Richard Wagner, his work and thought was further developed and radicalised by his wife Cosima, who was also daughter of Franz List, a composer who like her husband harboured anti-semitic views. This legacy was thus propagated by the Wagner family into the later years of the Second German Empire and into the Weimar Republic.

Adolf Hitler was impressed in his youth by the operas, the opulence and strength of the work of Richard Wagner. In fact Dr. Wagner quoted Hitler

saying: "My religion is Wagner". Moreover, despite Hitler's genuine fondness of Wagner's music, arias from Wagnerian operas were used as an instrument of propaganda and party pageantry[5]. As already noted, Wagner's opera puts the artist as the saviour of the race. In Hitler's case, the artist who as Wagner imagined in his operas becomes the leader of the Reich, as a Messiah which will purify the German people, manifesting itself in legislation such as the Nuremberg Laws.

Winifred Wagner, an Englishwoman married to Wagner's son Siegfried, after the latter's death in 1930 organised the Bayreuth Festival – she was the connection between the Wagner family and Adolf Hitler. Hitler regularly went to Bayreuth, and supported the Wagner family in the running of the Bayreuth festival even giving slave labour from the neighbouring concentration camp of Flossenburg. In peace and during the war, Bayreuth and its festival remained a pilgrimage site of the Reich with thousands of soldiers who visited it annually.

Thus there was a conscious cooperation between the Wagners and Adolf Hitler, in fact Hitler visited regularly Bayreuth, and from the memoirs of Albert Speer, it emerges that, "someone whose dearest wish would have been to live in Bayreuth presumably as general manager of the festival[6]" Bayreuth was the soul of Germanism which Hitler haunted and took as his own, embodied and used for his "renewal" and "purification" of the German people.

Conclusion

Richard Wagner was a formative influence on the formation of a German soul searching during the political unification in giving a cultural coherence to the idea of Germany and afterwards as an expression of the greatness of national soul, moulding and popularising aspects of German identity through operas like Rienzi, Der Nibelungslied, Lohengrin or Parsifal.

In Wagner, culture and politics merge, mutually influencing one another. This manifests itself in the sense that the pre-1870 political need or ideal of German unity led Wagner to use motifs from German folk tales and myth in order to create operas which recreated an imagined community or a semblance of past unity. After the fall of the German Empire in 1918 and through the crises which eventually drove Hitler and the National Socialist Party, Wagner's opera was not only a source of inspiration or nostalgia of a past glory that could be

attained, but also a blueprint as to what was to be done to attain redemption and give new vigour to a Germany traumatised by defeat in the First World War – a Germany in search of her soul and ready to assert itself against the order imposed upon it by the treaty of Versailles.

NOTES

1 Frederic Spotts; *Bayreuth: A History of The Wagner Festival*, (London, 1994), 9
2 Richard Wagner, *Judaism in Music, Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen : Volume V*, (Germany, 1850), 66-85
3 R.Wagner, *Judaism in Music*, 66-85
4 Joachim Bergfeld; *The Diary of Richard Wagner – the Brown Book 1865-1882*, (London, 1980), 203
5 F.Spotts; *Bayreuth: A History of The Wagner Festival*, 165
6 F.Spotts; *Bayreuth: A History of The Wagner Festival*, 103

Emvin Cremona and Rome: A Lasting Influence[1]

Dennis Vella

Emvin Cremona (1919-1987) was among the foremost Maltese painters of the twentieth century, soon becoming a formidable name in the fields of landscape, church decoration and, later, stamp-design and abstract painting. He developed extensively his initial encounters with Modernism in Rome in the light of his artistic development and also of subsequent dramatic circumstances in Malta. Following two decades of Impressionistic landscape painting and some of the first manifestations of abstraction in Malta, his art took a dramatic turn in 1960 in reaction to the grave politico-religious crisis that dominated events at the time. This artistic development will be the main subject of this paper.

Cremona was born on 27 May, 1919.[2] Up to 1936, and during a period of mounting tension between Britain and Italy over Malta, he attended the Italian-funded *Istituto Umberto I* school in Valletta.[3] He later recalled having joined some form of Fascist youth organisation around that time.[4] Probably in this context he first visited Rome on an organised excursion in 1933.[5] In 1935 he entered the Malta School of Art in Valletta, in company with Willie Apap,[6] (1918-1970) Anton Inglott (1915-1945),[7] Esprit Barthet (1919-1999)[8] and Victor Diacono (b.1915),[9] among others.[10] In 1937 he was awarded the Second Prize in the competition for a cover for the Overseas Journal of Education.[11] Writing to congratulate him, Edward Caruana Dingli, Principal of the School, stated that "*The fact that this prize has been awarded to you in, a competition in which hundreds of other students from Great Britain and the British Empire have taken part is something to be proud of*".[12]

Cremona used to participate in group painting sessions in the countryside, sometimes in company with Caruana Dingli. These would have been occasions for him to practise painting scenes *en plein air,* and prepared him for his later work in Rome, where he was to excel in this field. In 1937 he came third in the Government scholarship examination for painting, after Apap and Inglott.[13] This factor necessitated that he find alternative sources of funding to study in Rome. Cremona however, stating much later that British art was not particularly admired at the time, claimed that, until after the War, they had not been helped by the British. He also claimed that he and other 'working class' students necessarily needed support to advance, and that they found this support from Italy.[14]

As with some other Maltese artists, Cremona, too, participated, by designing a (somewhat Futuristic) postcard, in the flourish of artistic activity generated by the 1938 Diocesan Congress held to mark the anniversary of the Eucharistic Congress of 1913.[15] On 10 August, 1938, Cremona, stating that he had studied drawing and painting at the Government School of Art, and that he had also been enrolled in the pre-military course at the *Regia Scuola Umberto I*, requested admission to the following academic year of study, 1938-1939, at the *Accademia di Belle Arti*, of Rome.[16] (Fig. 1) In September he exhibited his works at Ellis Studios in Kingsway in Valletta[17] and, in October, applied to join the first year of the painting course in Rome. He stated that he had attended the Academy of Arts in Malta for three years and that he *did not belong to the Jewish race, while professing the Roman Catholic religion.*[18] This humiliating conformity with the shameful and recently introduced *Leggi Razziali,* designed to exclude Jews from Italian public life, is also found in the applications by Anton Inglott and Victor Diacono to join the *Accademia.* The *Leggi Razziali* of 1938 – strongly instigated by Nazi Germany – also indirectly affected Maltese students as they did many other persons, particularly those of Jewish descent, against whom they were mainly intended. By Cremona's time, application forms by Maltese art students to the *Accademia di Belle Arti* begin to take a servile, accommodating stance in declaring that they did not belong to the Jewish race, through either of their parents. What is to be observed is that these young artists, would have gone through the mill of four or five years' hard study at the Malta School of Arts, accompanied by personal and financial sacrifices, in order to compete for, and actually win, a scholarship to specialize in art at the *Accademia.* Accordingly, they do not seem to have been prepared to let a seemingly internal matter of Italian politics get in their way to obtaining their *Diploma di Licenza.* Their attitude, as with countless other young foreigners in Italy at the time, is to be seen as a curious mix of lack of correct information on, or indifference to, the implications of these infamous Racial Laws, in a climate of overwhelming State propaganda. They might have been urged explicitly to state that they were Aryans and not of Jewish blood, besides being of the Roman Catholic Religion, either by their superiors in Malta as a way of compromising with a regrettable state of affairs in a foreign country, and later, on admission to the Academy, by their superiors in Rome in order to reach and maintain a *modus vivendi* with things as they were.

On 16 February, 1939 Caruana Dingli again wrote to Cremona, to congratulate him on having passed his admission examinations to the *Regia Accademia.* He said he felt sure Cremona would do honour to himself and to his School,

Fig. 1. Accademia di Belle Arti application.

Fig. 2. Piazza di Spagna, Rome.

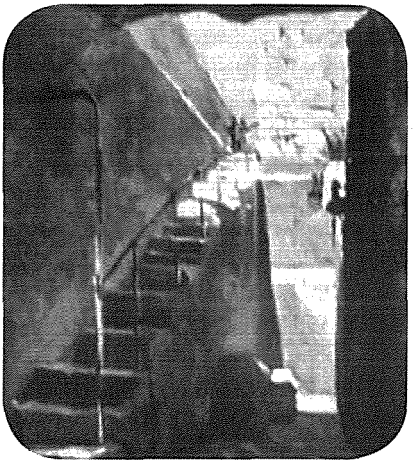

Fig. 3. Roman Cistern.

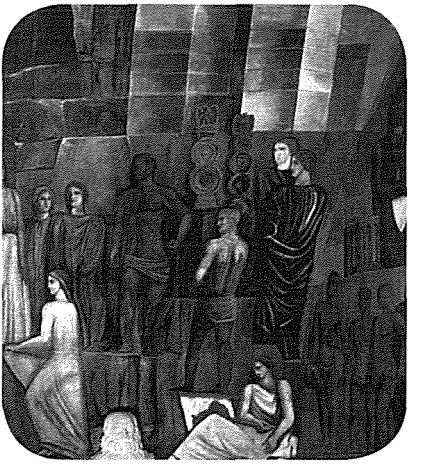

Fig. 4. Mario Sironi. Detail from the Universita' 'La Sapien.

working assiduously with zeal and intelligence. As regards the study of decoration, Cremona was to follow the same advice that his Head had given to Inglott, and which was also applicable to him. Students who studied in Rome apparently concentrated on a single figure while neglecting group compositions, analogous backgrounds and the open air. This, Caruana Dingli felt, was very necessary and should take place at least after the first two years at the Academy.[19] In that same month, together with Carmelo Borg Pisani,[20] he exhibited at the *Prelittoriali d'Arte* exhibition in Rome.[21]

Cremona was especially close to Anton Inglott, ever since their student days in Malta. In Rome they frequently painted outdoors in each other's company, in fact examples exist of works that had obviously been painted or drawn while the artists were sitting practically side by side. They also shared lodgings, and sometimes painted each other, or the interior of their apartment. In 1939 Cremona participated in the twenty-fifth Exhibition of the Malta Art Amateur Association with four paintings.[22]

The literary magazine *Collezione Melitensia III* ***Estate*** featured an illustration of the *Piazza di Spagna* by Cremona with the commentary:

> *"Il giovanissimo Emmanuele Vincenzo Cremona, sebbene non abbia ancora completato i suoi studi a Roma dove egli segue il corso di quella R. Accademia di Belle Arti, e' gia' artista per la sicura vocazione e per le qualita' tecniche gia' aquistate. Il suo genuino istinto pittorico gli ha permesso di tradurre la realta' secondando una sua interna visione: pittura succosa la sua che rispetta l'evidenza e la saldezza dei volumi"*[23]

Cremona's two related paintings of hawkers' umbrellas at *Piazza di Spagna* (Fig. 2) illustrate his commitment to painting that was, quite perceptively, departing from mere topographical description, while cautiously approaching a form of abstraction. Warm, ochre and pastel tones are utilised for atmospheric and decorative effect while the artist's attention is mainly directed to the subtle geometrical arrangements obtained by the two different viewpoints used in these paintings. Thus the solidity of pillars and flights of steps alternates with the precariousness suggested by swaying, white sun-umbrellas and the rickety stalls bearing all kinds of colourful fish seen from above. In the *Collezione Melitensia* version of *Piazza Di Spagna*, a significant factor is the strong interplay of light and shadow that models the painting into a rich, though restrained, variety of tones of brown.

Cremona's *Tiber Scene* utilises the solid mass of the arch of a stone bridge in the background to anchor a composition that could easily have become excessively formless on account of the strong element of reflections on the river surface. This device is also used by the placement of the two boats, drying their nets, which are moored in the foreground. An effective compositional device is the placement of the two diagonal lines of the reddish rods that unite the two poles of the picture, although they are actually many metres apart across the water.

On 7 December, 1939, Cremona, while again stating that he was of Aryan race, and belonging to the Roman Catholic religion, registered for admission into the second year, 1939-1940. Next to his signature, he wrote "*godo di una borsa di studio del governo Italiano*".[24] This reference to an Italian government scholarship points to alternative support eventually conceded to him to make up for his missed opportunity for the British Government scholarship, and renewed in view of his impressive achievements at the *Accademia*. The fact that he was an old student of the *Umberto Primo* must have also worked in his favour with the Italian Consulate.

Probably prior to the winter of 1940[25] Cremona exhibited some of his most recent paintings at Valletta.[26] Carlo Liberto, writing as *Er Binocolo*", wrote about Cremona, giving a pen-portrait of his characteristic working and business habits as well as his dandyish appearance. His success from an early age was also remarked on:

> *"Pittore "enfant prodige". D'inverno studia a Roma, quindi noi lo vediamo solo d'estate: pantaloni bianchissimi, giacca color terra battuta, capelli sacramentalmente lunghi impiastrati di brillantina, fronte ampia, bocca dall'eterno sorriso. Lavora, lavora, lavora. A ottobre, prima di tornarsene a Roma, espone da Ellis. Vende. Incassa. Compra il biglietto e... addio. L'anno dopo come sopra. "Fior di banana : ogni anno c'e' una mostra di Cremona/e tutti quei lavori ch' egli espone / riscuotono successo e ammirazione"*[27]

In the same edition a reproduction of the *Cisterne Romane* at *Ta' Kaċċatura,* Birzebbugia (fig. 3) was published, accompanied by a commentary*:*

> *"Il giovanissimo pittore, con sensibilita' di artista maturo, ha qui' saputo trarre motivo di bellezza da pochi nudi gradini scavati in un abbandonato cisterno romano. Una visione semplice e rude espressa con linguaggio preciso e sicuro."*

The *Roman Cistern* is an impressive exercise in abstraction of form. The critic for the publication in question significantly notes that the artist was able to elicit "*elements of beauty*" demonstrating that appreciation of pictorial art had already moved substantially from Nineteenth century

aesthetic canons that concentrated so heavily on literal and unswerving truth to outside appearances. The reservoir's volumes are awesome, suggestive and picturesque, considering its relatively small dimensions compared to those in Rome and Constantinople. The absence of any human presence, vegetation, elements of landscape or other trappings of a conventional view painting made this an ideal subject for the artist. His yearning for artistic development appears already to have begun to lead him gradually towards an intelligent simplification of masses through modelling by light and shade. This trait was fully developed by Cremona later in his career, culminating in full abstraction.

While painting several commonplace subjects purely for their pictorial appeal, Cremona was not remain immune to the lure of the more historical landmarks of Rome. A number of views exist, some painted quite close to the artists' quarter, and include the *Piazza Del Popolo, Porta Flaminia* from *Trinita' dei Monti,* the *Foro Romano, Piazza San Pietro* and *Trinita' dei Monti.* He must also have been aware that there would be a fair demand for them in Malta at his exhibitions. In fact several patrons with a marked pro-Italian outlook acquired his paintings, which however also went to some appreciative British collectors resident in Malta. These pictures show the artist confidently tackling subjects that involved large architectural groupings. Although accurate observation was something he had been rigorously trained for, this was not, in these works, essential for its own sake. It is clear that Cremona steered well away from any Expressionistic distortions of the urban landscape as certain artists of the Scuola di Via Cavour stream of the *Scuola Romana* like Mario Mafai and Scipione, practised at the time. But then their motivations were not merely artistic: an element of protest against officially-promoted, conventional styles of art in Rome was a constant undercurrent in their work. Cremona concentrated instead on the subtleties of light which was generally more diffused than what he had been used to in Malta, and which thus brought out the mellowness of colours that was such a trademark of the Tonalist stream in Italian painting at that time, and to which he appears to have been naturally receptive.

There is a varied stylistic mix that makes up the collection of influences which appear in Cremona's work. it is clear that, during his stay in Rome, and even much later, he was well aware of the suffocating influence which Italy's domination by the Fascist party exerted on art and culture. In this respect it is understandable that he too could not but succumb to these artistic currents, to some extent, as most others did, at the time.

The Fascist ideology, as with the Communist creed elsewhere, laid great stress on the formative effect of official propaganda forcefully transmitted by public art especially murals, scenographic decorations, architecture and other forms of mass media.[28] *L'Arte del Regime*, as this art was generically known in Italy, cannot be clearly defined, unless by virtue of the amount of its political content. While generally overstated and melodramatic, it also showed an uneasy symbiosis with Rationalist and other Modernist trends although these were never really favoured by the regime. Some art of this period, irrespective of its content, was marked by discipline and harmony (Fig. 4) while, in a few cases, artists succumbed to unspeakable vulgarity. This kind of art was promoted in art academies[29] and could also be found all over Italy, in public spaces, exhibitions, books, posters and the like. Considering that some of Italy's best artists were involved, it is unlikely that Cremona would have been immune to its easy appeal. At the same time, various Modernist currents were permitted to exhibit in Italy, as in the *Biennale Internazionale d'Arte di Venezia*, the world's greatest modern art exhibition, which Cremona may have visited in 1938, and where he too was eventually to exhibit in 1958.

Mario Sironi was the most prominent artist working in Italy within the parameters of Fascist art.[30] He began as a Futurist painter and served in the First World War. His art is nearly always grave and monumental, rich in texture and archetypal imagery. While simultaneously practising as an easel painter, and participating in many major exhibitions, he was also responsible for designing huge, propagandist mural paintings and mosaics for numerous important public buildings. Inspired by Mussolini's concept of *Romanita'*, his public art symbolised, on one hand, the martial achievements and glories of ancient Rome while also extolling the Virgilian pastoral beauties of traditional life in Italy. His works also glorified Mussolini's achievements in Italy and the empire, technology being alternately stressed or ignored and understated in the iconography used, depending on the programmatic needs of the work in question. Among Sironi's most celebrated works were much of the design and decorations for the commemorative *Mostra Della Rivoluzione Fascista*, the mural paintings at the Aula Magna of the University of Rome, 'La Sapienza'.

Following Italy's defeat in the War, Sironi became a bitter and disillusioned man. He remained a believer in Fascism throughout his life, claiming that its ideals had been betrayed. He was initially ostracised in the post-War climate but was soon rehabilitated. His reputation eventually recovered and he has enjoyed uninterrupted prestige in the history of Italian art, being found in every Italian museum and important private collection.

In Rome, the *Mostra della Rivoluzione Fascista* was concieved as a lasting testimonial to the sacrifices and achievements of Italian Fascism from 1914. It had been inaugurated by Mussolini at the *Palazzo delle Esposizioni* on 28 October 1932. The exhibition ran for two whole years and attracted over 2,800,000 visitors.[31] It is still considered today to have been the peak of Fascist propaganda events, both for its artistic level and its content which demonstrated a strong martyrological slant. The *Mostra*, while not intending "*to take historical re-evocation as a goal in itself*" aimed at collecting the "*most important and significant relics, photographs, pamphlets, autographs, artifacts, newspapers and publications*" in order to create something "*that will be deeply felt by the people in their souls, thirsting for light, love and drama*".[32] Its layout proceeded through twenty-three rooms that featured key issues of each year of Fascism from the First World War, ending in the *Sala del Duce* and *Sacrario dei Martiri*. The exhibition achieved extremely impressive and effective results through the poignancy of the exhibits and theatricity of their display, presented by some of the leading artists of the time.

Another major exhibition held in Rome, during Cremona's stay in that city, was the *Mostra Augustea della Romanitá* on the anniversary of the birth of the Emperor Augustus. This was organised at the express wishes of the Duce himself and inaugurated by him on 23 September 1937. The exhibition consisted of faithful replicas of Roman works of sculpture from all over the Mediterranean world and elsewhere, and was ultimately intended to be absorbed into the Museum of the Empire.[33] Among the great number of exhibits some works of Roman art from Malta were also included, and the significance of this fact would not have been lost on most of the Maltese visitors to the exhibition. These would have been closely drawn to Italian culture and conscious of the great cultural tug-of-war being waged by the British Government with Italy over this delicate question. The wide scope of the *Mostra Augustea* ranged from military and naval activity, legislation, architecture, public health, commerce, literature and art. It was eulogised as having been a natural prerequisite of the greatness of Rome of the Caesars, reborn during the *Risorgimento* and, in its Imperial apotheosis during the Fascist era, through the Duce's own impulse and vision.

After a decade of continuous tension, war finally broke out between England and Germany in the summer of 1939 while the Maltese art students were in Malta for their holidays. This momentous and untimely event suddenly and completely upset their plans for proper study in Rome. Most of them had had little direct and willing involvement in Italian politics, apart from occasionally

doing as the Romans did. Previously they had been welcomed and feted in Italy as theoretically belonging to an unredeemed territory of the Greater Italy. They now suddenly realised that, as British subjects, they would probably be considered to be undesirable aliens – and risk internment – should Italy fulfil its long bluff and enter the war on the side of the Axis. Italy initially held back from direct involvement, as if watching to see which way things would swing. However Mussolini had, by then, flirted too closely with Hitler for years not to be drawn into the struggle in turn.

While in Malta the Maltese students eagerly waited for developments in Italy, and thus had unavoidably to miss their admission examinations for their next year of study. However the authorities at the *Accademia* (following a request from one or more of them), allowed them to sit for their exam at a later session in order that they might resume their interrupted studies.[34] The *Accademia* was probably well aware of the psychological impact of the patronisingly generous favour it was about to grant.

As 1940 approached, Cremona now returned to Rome and who, as with several of his artist companions, was back at his studies, could not fail to realize that the political situation in Italy – and Rome in particular – was fast deteriorating. His position, therefore, was becoming somewhat ambivalent. As with all Maltese parents, Cremona's were very concerned at their son's increasingly precarious position as a potential enemy alien in Italy during wartime. Carlo Liberto, who at the time worked in the Consular section of the Italian Consulate in Malta - besides also being a good personal friend of the artist's – remembered the constant entreaties he received from Cremona's parents to speed his return from Rome:

> *"Quando si presentava l'entrata in guerra dell'Italia, il padre di Cremona veniva spesso in Consolato ad implorarmi di fare il possibile per far rimpatriare suo figlio da Roma. E con l'aiuto del Console Generale il problema era stato risolto."*[35]

Cremona accordingly returned to Malta with Inglott.[36]

The Malta Art Amateur Association organised an art exhibition at the Palace Armoury in Valletta and inaugurated on 10 November, 1941 at the height of the war.[37] The exhibition included oil paintings and landscapes, watercolours, pencil and pen and ink drawings, photography, leatherwork, woodcarving, sculpture and modelling.[38] The characterisation in the portraits Cremona exhibited in the 'Professional' section, was favourably noted.[39] He also had a personal exhibition at the British Institute, then at the Auberge D'Aragon in Valletta, in 1943.[40]

Once Emvin Cremona had been conscripted into the Allied war effort his conspicuous talents as an artist were not unnoticed, although he had to turn his hand to the most unlikely occupations. He is said to have been engaged in designing "*ingenious camouflage for gun-emplacements around the Maltese shores*".[41] One feels, however, that he must have somewhat welcomed (or, at least, been resigned to) such unexpected uses of his talents as a good way of keeping in some form of painterly practice, besides also as very good therapy and release from the tensions of wartime. Cremona served in the army for four years and "*on several occasions (he) produced scenery and other artistic settings for E.N.S.A*".[42] During the War, he was also commissioned to restore various heraldic emblems at the Main Guard in Palace Square, Valletta.[43] Whenever his rigid schedule permitted Cremona as with other artists also painted more appealing subjects showing sacred or everyday scenes, possibly to remind themselves and their audience, that the war would some day end, and they could start to rebuild their lives anew.

The Malta Society of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce organised its Second Biennial Exhibition of Sacred Art at its premises in 1945, at the end of the war. Besides Cremona it also featured a good number of the painters and sculptors who had studied in Rome during the 1930's.[44] The Society, which had been one of the mainstays of art education and patronage in Malta for many decades, appears to have chosen precisely the theme of sacred art as an act of thanksgiving for the successful conclusion of the war. Cremona soon after took part in another exhibition held, under austere post-War conditions, by the M.A.A. at the Palace Armoury, in October 1945.[45]

In 1945 and 1946 Cremona took the astute step of continuing his interrupted professional studies not in Rome, but in London.[46] This shift may not have taken place entirely be chance: it is likely that in the 'cultural purge' which took place in Malta after the War, the authorities may have urged a number of Maltese artists to look towards Britain as a new horizon where to seek advanced studies.[47] In London, where he studied at the renowned Slade School of Art, he found the students to be outstanding draughtsmen but indifferent colourists, who marvelled at his work. He also prepared himself for his first major church decoration, namely the continuation and conclusion of the cycle of paintings in Msida parish church which had been started by Anton Inglott with his monumental *Death of St Joseph*, but which he had not lived to complete.[48] In London he would have had his first personal experience of a cultural climate far more up-to-date with current trends that Rome ever was.

Cremona stayed in Paris for a short period of a few months, studying at the *Ecole Superieure des Beaux Arts*. Although he had already felt its influences previously, the period spent with Jean Dupas, a famous painter and decorator from the *Art Deco* movement of the 1930's, further reinforced this attraction for stylisation.[49] Dupas' mannered style influenced Cremona for a brief period following his return to Malta, since it ran parallel with his attraction to Medievalizing trends he had shared with Inglott, and which appeared briefly in his sacred art. At the same time his stay in Paris clearly exposed Cremona to the most contemporary trends of abstraction then finally coming into their own.

The presence of Cav. Vincenzo Bonello (1891-1969), as a major influence on the progress of Cremona's career, especially related to the Church, can be sensed throughout the 1960's. Bonello, a staunch Italophile and art-historian of international recognition, had been the founder of the Art Section of the Malta Museum.[50] He gave the collection a strong Latin, and particularly Italian, Baroque character as his form of passive cultural resistance to the British colonial – and Protestant – administration.[51] Not surprisingly he was eventually dismissed by the Museum for alleged pro-Italian activities, which were never satisfactorily proven. Together with a large number of fellow pro-Italians, he was later interned in Malta in 1940 and exiled to Uganda in 1942 when his presence in Malta during wartime was officially considered to be too dangerous for public order.[52] Although Bonello was a conservative in matters of art,[53] he was quite aware of modern developments in Italy, as his Rationalistic *Tribuna* during the 1938 Eucharistic Congress shows.[54] Bonello was never re-instated in his Museum post but made a living designing church architecture, furniture and decorations in a variety of antique styles, and is acknowledged as having been the main advisor on art to Archbishop Gonzi.

Cremona, who subsequently came to dominate the field of Church art, cautiously managed to introduce into Maltese church ceilings increasingly novel stylistic devices, most probably inspired by Mario Sironi's, and other, monumental propagandist murals which had been so prominent and influential during Cremona's Roman years. The substitution of machine guns, ploughshares and *fasci littori* by crosses and the palms of martyrdom, and the retention and development of monumental poses and broad compositions, made Cremona's bold, apparent, departure from the Baroque generally successful, since the differences between the two styles were not essentially that many. It is acknowledged that much had to be compromised to meet the suffocating demands of parish priests and patrons. Cremona's style was also successfully carried over into his parallel work in philately where he is even credited with introducing certain innovations.

Fig. 5. Piazza d el Plebiscito.

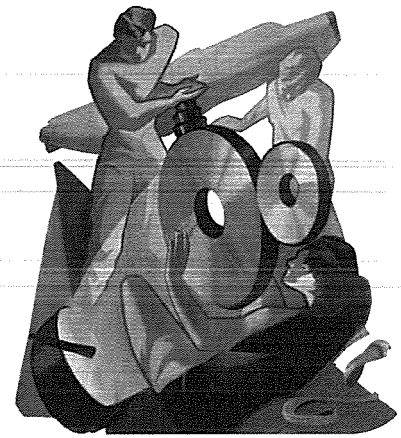

Fig. 6. Allegory of the Cinema.

Fig. 7. Knights' Hall decorations.

Sironi's monumentality and 'gravitas', together with decorative traits from certain other artists of the period, start appearing in Cremona's work already in the 1950's, in both figurative and abstract work, which Cremona largely pioneered in Malta. A painting of *Piazza del Plebiscito* in Naples (1949) is heavily charged with majestic character. (Fig. 5) The life-sized *Allegory of the Cinema*, c.1953, (Fig. 6) and the small *Baptism of Christ*, 1951, already show a clear tendency for angular composition and massive forms for which Sironi must have been one of the likelier inspirations. In 1949 Cremona, then Teacher of painting at the School of Art, was commissioned to create a number of painted decorations to cover certain War-damaged and unsightly areas of the Knights' Hall in Valletta, then functioning as a theatre. The artist engaged a number of his students,[55] included Joseph Caruana, Tony Pace, Louis Wirth and Helen Cavagna, to paint these panels to his designs. (Fig. 7) Several of these panels are recorded and show them to be allegories of the arts, including various symbols and attributes. Cremona borrowed certain motifs and stylistic traits from paintings by artists from the second wave of the Italian Futurist movement, the *Secondo Futurismo*. This movement, following the aerial battles of the First World War and simultaneously with Mussolini's African campaigns, also practised a panoramic interpretation of this dynamic style known as *Aeropittura*. There are references to a mural and installation by Enrico Prampolini for the *Mostra del Dopolavoro* of 1938 in Rome, (Fig. 8) another by Gino Severini for the same occasion, characterised by the easy legibility of the clearly identifiable, traditional subjects.

Since, already by the early Fifties, Cremona had clearly shown his versatility in both the fine and applied art, his graphic style was well in demand. He designed a number of covers for the annual Malta International Trade Fair, whose style again harks back to Italian artists whose work he had assimilated in his Roman years. (Fig. 9) These covers have a common trait of being treated either from a high viewpoint or of featuring their subject suspended and animated in thin air. Thus *Aeropittura* was again referred to for its adaptability to this particular artistic requirement. When a public competition was held in the early Fifties for a fountain outside Valletta, and which was eventually won by Vincent Apap, Cremona submitted at least three proposals, all having clearly pre-war Roman inspiration. (Fig. 10) One drawing, showing a high pylon covered with rows of hieratic figures in high relief, harks to a pre-War project by Sironi for a *Casa Littoria* (Fig. 11).

The Pauline Celebrations of 1960

The culmination of Cremona's Sironi-inspired style may be said to have been the numerous decorations and graphic works designed for the Pauline anniversary celebrations held in Malta in 1960. Some form of grand commemorative event would undoubtedly have been held to celebrate the coming of St Paul to Malta. However this occasion also neatly coincided with a moment of particularly acute ideological struggle between the Maltese Church and the Malta Labour Party. Besides several minor issues the wider bone of contention was whether post-War Malta should become a secular state, (restraining the Church within defined parameters) and thus join the 'modern' world, or retain her previous filial submission to the Church, even in matters arguably deemed to be of exclusively civil import. At the time of the McCarthyite hysteria in the United States of America, the threat of a Communist takeover of Malta was perceived to be imminent and Reds were believed to lurk under every pious Maltese bed.

In these Church-organized celebrations Cremona's art was omnipresent.[56] Its bold, indeed martial, character was perfectly suited both to the religious fervour and the tense political climate of the times. By 1960 the situation in Malta had changed forever. Similarly Sironian influences are apparent in Cremona's postage stamps, the cover for the official English-language programme of the Centenary (Fig. 12) (especially Sironi's poster for the *Mostra Della Rivoluzione Fascista* of 1932) (Fig. 13), a mural on the arrival of Count Roger who re-Christianized Malta in 1091, the illustrations for Vincenzo Maria Pellegrini's Pauline drama *L'Araldo di Cristo* of 1960, (fig. 14) the interior designs especially created for much of the Catholic Institute in Floriana, in the pre-War style which Cremona would be familiar with.

Ironically, Malta's main Pauline icon, the statue of St Paul by Melchiorre Caffa, created in Rome during a period of counter-Reformation triumphalism, shows the apostle preaching, not waging war. Not so with Cremona. The soaring figure of St Paul, sword in hand, accordingly appeared frequently in Cremona's art of this period, but never as boldly as in the front cover of the commemorative issue of the Church's newspaper *Leħen is-Sewwa* (The Voice Of Truth).[57] (Fig. 15) Graphically designed and majestically composed in cubistic, jagged lines and strident colours, this iconic image is straight out of a Sironi mural, and no less rousingly effective in its message. References to other probable sources as a cover to a Fascist youth manual, a Fascist party magazine, *Gerarchia*, (Fig. 16) and a postcard signed *'Tato'*, (Fig. 17) (of which Mussolini personally endorsed the design), give the image added, and unambiguous, historical significance.

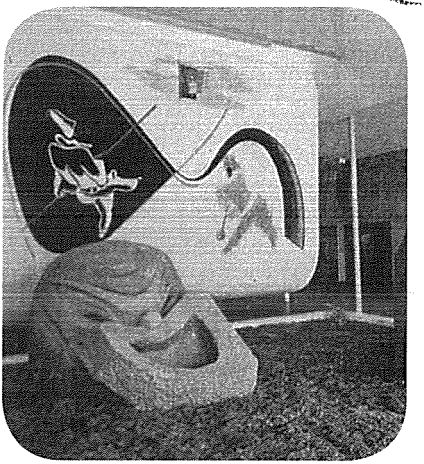

Fig. 8. Enrico Prampolini. Padiglione del Dopolavoro.

Fig. 9. Malta Trade Fair programme.

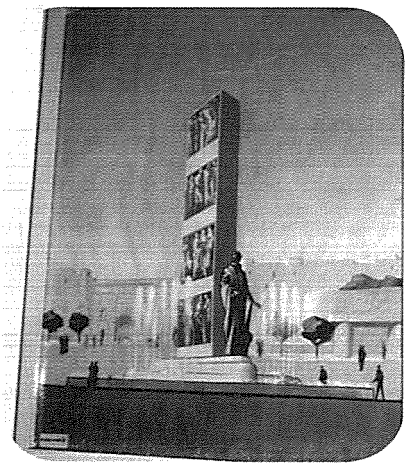

Fig. 10. City Gate Fountain project.

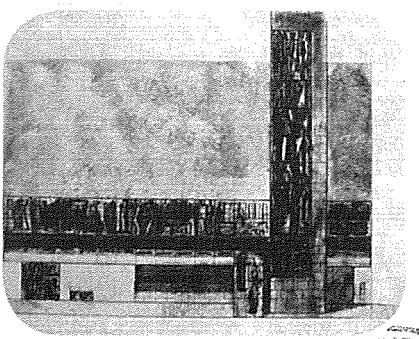

Fig. 11. Mario Sironi. Project for a Casa Littoria.

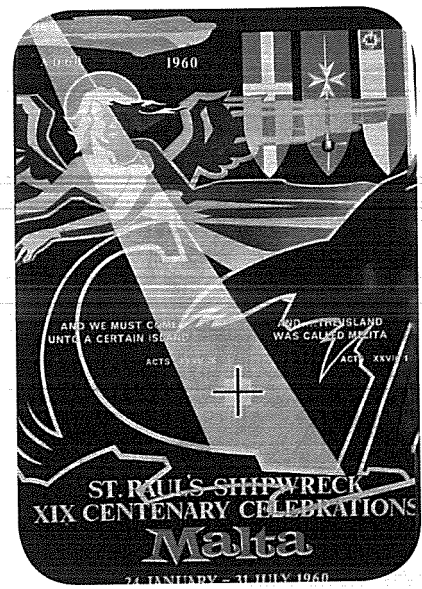

Fig. 12. St Paul anniversary celebrations programme cover.

Fig. 13. Mario Sironi, Poster for the Mostra della Rivoluzi.

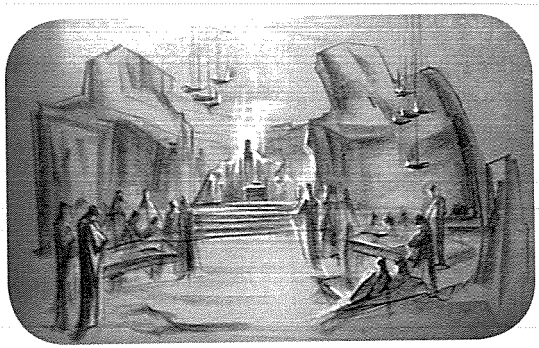

Fig. 14. Illustrations for V. M. Pellegrini's L'Araldo d (1).

Fig. 15. Cover for the special edition of the Lehen is-Sewwa.

Fig. 16. Mario Sironi. cover for Gerarchia. 1925.

Fig. 17. Postcard by 'Tato'.

Fig. 18. Madonna of Aviation-1965.

Fig. 19. Impasro abstract. H.S.B.C. Head Office.

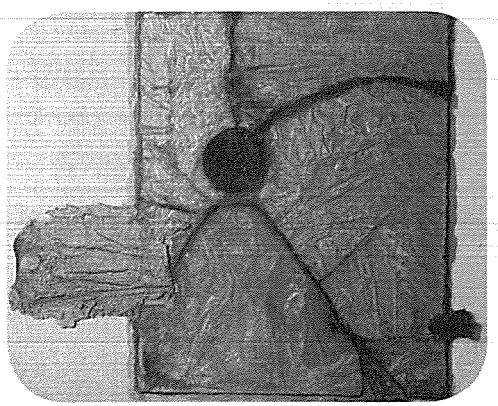

Fig. 20. ision M209. 69. National Museum of Fine Arts.

Cremona's participation in the Pauline anniversary celebrations indelibly marked his decorative style, especially in the field of church painting which he came to dominate for the next two decades.[58] His geometrically abstracted figures remained to the fore while the previous Fascist influence, and martial poses, were suppressed, since the need for them was largely past. He adopted a more decorative approach using ingeniously invented orchestrations of colour, black and gold which held their own in the predominantly Baroque surroundings of Malta's churches. In fact, he frequently had to bend over backwards to accommodate the narrow, and generally uninformed, requirements of his patrons. It is clear that his genuine aspirations were to create a church art that was modern yet authentically devotional, while moving forward from the early days of his artistic partnership with Anton Inglott. (Fig. 18) Cremona's art for Maltese churches is among the very best of its kind, but it is not his best achievement, a fact he ruefully admitted.[59] Thankfully, he was simultaneously creating his 'Impasto' paintings and later his 'Broken Glass' collages. Apart from their many merits, the Impastos frequently have a marked commercial undercurrent, revealing itself in references to Malta's glorious past manifested in the period of the Knights of St John, the Church, as well as its folklore. The fact of their being created around the time of Malta's achievement of Independence, with the revived sense of national identity among artists, might justify this frequent reference to certain subjects. Cremona's technique in these pictures, probably developed simultaneously with related textural work by Antoine Camilleri, was the most adventurous seen in Malta. He used gravel, sand, plaster, glass and other materials integrated into his pictures but, although the technique was progressive, in line with *Arte Povera,* and contemporary trends, the atmosphere and content was generally conservative, and referred chromatically to Mario Sironi in its gravity and solemnity.

His Impasto abstracts, on the other hand, are in a class of their own, where he could work with complete autonomy. (Fig. 19) They relate to the international school best epitomised by Antoni Tapies and Alberto Burri who used burnt and torn plastics, textiles, junk and gravel in their paintings.[60] Cremona's pictures are the natural precursors to his greatest achievement, the 'Broken Glass' collage paintings, which took the Maltese art-world by storm in 1969. (Fig. 20) They revealed the breadth of his character: a believer who was also affected by the bleakness of the future of Mankind. While Cremona was, by then, a fully developed artist at the height of his maturity, the underlying linear organization and thematic gravity imbibed from Sironi can still be sensed. It survived in his work and adapted itself to changing stylistic circumstances,

retaining its grandiosity yet being masterfully assimilated into Cremona's most essential style at the culmination of his career.

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NOTES

[1] This lecture was delivered at the *Istituto Italiano di Cultura* on 14th October and the *Casino Maltese* on 17th December, 2008.

[2] Baptismal certificate (26.9.1938), Parish Church of Porto Salvo, Valletta, *A[ccademia] di B[elle] A[rti], R[oma], 'arch.*, Cremona first cited in Dennis Vella, *Maltese Artists in Rome, 1930-1940*, unpublished Master of Arts dissertation, (University of Malta, 1999).

[3] See Carmel Farrugia, *Polluted Politics (Background to the deportation of Maltese Nationals in 1942)*, (Malta, 1995), 31.

[4] Notes of Interview by Dominic Cutajar, 30th March, 1979.

[5] Emmanuel Fiorentino, 'Emvin Cremona: a leading artist of the Twentieth century', *Treasures of Malta*, Summer, 1997.

[6] On Willie Apap see Edward Sammut "Willie Apap, His Life and Times" in *Willie Apap:1918-1970*, Exhibition Catalogue, Friends of the Cathedral Museum, (Malta, 1984), Vella, *Maltese Artists in Rome*; Emmanuel Fiorentino & Louis Grasso, *Willie Apap, 1918-1970*, (Malta, 1993); Dennis Vella, *Willie Apap, The Conspiracy Trial Drawings*, (Malta, 2005).

[7] On Inglott see John Azzopardi, ed., *Anton Inglott, 1915-1945*, Friends of the Cathedral Museum, (Malta, 1988); Emmanuel Fiorentino, *Anton Inglott, 1915-1945, His Life and Work*, (Malta, 2002), Vella, *Maltese Artists in Rome, 1930-1940*.

[8] On Barthet see Mario Azzopardi, *'Esprit Barthet, L-Arti Tiegħu'*, (Malta, 1973); Dennis Vella, *Esprit Barthet Portraits*, (Malta, 2000); Emmanuel Fiorentino, *Esprit Barthet, retrospective exhibition catalogue*, (Malta, 2001).

[9] On Diacono see Vella, *Maltese Artists in Rome, 1930-1940*; Joseph Paul Cassar, *The artistic life of Victor Diacono*, (University of Malta, 1998).

[10] Dominic Cutajar, "Emvin Cremona", in V. Fenech, ed., in *Malta: Six Modern Artists*, (Malta, 1991), 73.

[11] Carmelo Attard Cassar, *Exhibition of Maltese Art at the British Institute*, (1946), 17.

[12] Letter by courtesy of Anna Azzopardi Cremona, c. 1995.

[13] Cutajar, *"Emvin Cremona"*, 73.

[14] Verbal communication to Mr Laurence Mizzi, cited in L. Mizzi, *Għall-ħolma ta' ħajtu*, (Malta, 1983) 29.

[15] Postcard made available by Judge Giovanni Bonello (13.2.1997) who states that a Maltese artist contemporary of Cremona, and who later emigrated to England, made this attribution. See G. Bonello, "An International Dictionary of Artists who painted Maltese Postcards", *The Sunday Times*, 18.10.1992, 33-36 and 25.10.1992, 39-41.

[16] Application, (65, *Strada Saluto* [Battery Street] Valletta), *A.B A R. arch.* Cremona.

[17] *Collezione Melitensia* II, *Estate* 1939, 33.

[18] Application, (89, Via del Babuino, Roma), *A.B.A.R., arch.* Cremona.

[19] Letter, (16.02.1939) *A.B.A.R. arch.* Cremona.

[20] On Borg Pisani see especially Mizzi, *għall-ħolma ta' ħajtu*, and *Il-Każ Borg Pisani*, (Malta,2003) and Dennis Vella,

'Busts of Carmelo Borg Pisani discovered in Rome', *The Sunday Times*.

[21] *Collezione Melitensia* II, *Estate* 1939, 34.

[22] Malta Art Amateur Association Catalogue, 1939. On the M.A.A.A. see Vella, *Maltese Artists in Rome, 1930-1940*.

[23] (The young Emmanuel Vincent Cremona, while still to complete his studies at the *Regia Academia di Belle Arti*, is already an artist for his firm vocation and the technical skills at his command. His authentic pictorial instinct has allowed him to transform reality, following his inner vision. His is a luscious kind of painting that respects the evidence and solidity of volumes.) *Collezione Melitensia* III *Estate,* 1939, 28a.

[24] Application, (*Pensione Lombarda, Via Del Babuino* 89), *A.B.A.R. arch.* Cremona.

[25] *Collezione Melitensia* II, *Estate* 1939, 43.

[26] Carlo Liberto, letter to the author, 5.11.1993. The Consul General for Italy, Canino, had purchased a picture of *Boats at Marsaxlokk*.

[27] (An *'enfant prodige'* painter. He studies in Rome in winter, so we only see him during summer: brilliant white trousers, an earth-coloured jacket, sacramentally long hair plastered with brillantine, wide forehead and a mouth with an eternal smile. He works, and works, and works. In October, prior to returning to Rome, he exhibits at Ellis. He sells, the money comes in, he buys his ticket and good bye. The following year, as with the one before. Banana flower, every year there is a Cremona exhibition and all those works he exhibits attract success and admiration.) ..... *Collezione Melitensia, IV, Antologia, Inverno*, 1940, 12a.

[28] See Tim Benton, Simonetta Fraquelli, Lutz Becker, Ester Coen and John Willett in David Britt, ed., *Art and Power: Europe under the Dictators, 1930-1940*, (Thames and Hudson, 1995).

[29] Ferruccio Pasqui, *Scuole d'arte in Italia, Quaderni della Triennale*, (Hoepli, 1937), XV.

[30] See Emily Braun, ed, *Italian Art in the Twentieth Century*, (Prestel, 1989); Vittorio Sgarbi, *Mario Sironi: Gli anni della solitudine, 1940-1960*, (Mondadori, 2004.

[31] See Maria Stone, "Staging Fascism: The Exhibition of the Fascist Revolution", in *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 28 (1993), 215-243, esp. 217-226 for the *Mostra*'s design, (SAGE).

[32] *ACS, PNF, direttorio - Ufficio Stralcio, busta 273, fac. 'Edoardo Alfieri'* cited in *ibid.*, 216.

[33] Foreword by Giulio Quirino Giglioli, Exhibition catalogue, *Mostra Augustea della Romanita'*, 2nd edition, xv, (Rome, 1937), Gift of Dr Goffredo Randon, (one of the many Maltese students in Rome at that time), to the Cathedral Museum, Mdina,. The front cover of this catalogue carries an annotation in pencil referring to Roman works of Maltese provenance.

[34] Letter from Rivosecchi to Carmelo Borg Pisani, (11.10.1939, XVII), A.B.A.R. *Fascicolo Anno Scolastico 1939 XVII-1940 XVIII*, cited in M.Ellul, *op. cit.*, 21.

[35] (When Italy appeared to be about to enter the War, Cremona's father frequently came to the Consulate to beg me to do what could be done to bring back his son from Rome. The problem was soon resolved with the help of the Consul General.) C. Liberto, letter to the author, 5.11.1993.

[36] Verbal communication from Mrs Mary Inglott.

[37] *T.O.M.* 10.11.1941, 3.

[38] "Art exhibition at the Palace", by E.P.R.D., *T.O.M.*, 14.11.1941, 3.

[39] John Lascelles, "Tribute to Maltese Art", Correspondence, *T.O.M.*., 3.12.1941, 2.

[40] D. Cutajar, E. Fiorentino, *op. cit.*, 273.

[41] D.Cutajar, "Emvin Cremona", 74.

[42] Attard Cassar, *op. cit.*, 17.

[43] Information kindly supplied by Capt. C. Adrian Strickland, K.M.

[44] *Sacred Art Exhibition*, 1945, Exhibition catalogue, the M.S.A.M.C., 1945.

[45] *Catalogue*, Malta Art Association, Malta, 1945, n.p. The exhibition was also reviewed on the *T.O.M.*, 11.10.1945, (reference kindly provided by Mr Dominic Cutajar).

[46] Edward Sammut, biographical outline, *Malta Cultural Institute* exhibition, 1952.

[47] Dominic Cutajar, 'A Travailed Ascent to Modernity,' in V. Mallia Milanes (ed.), *The British Colonial Experience, 1800-1964*, Mireva, 1988; D. Vella, *Maltese Artists in Rome, 1930-1940*, 269.

[48] Letter to Dr Edward Vassallo, 1946, private collection, Malta

[49] See Edward Lucie Smith, *Art Deco Painting*, Phaidon.

[50] On Bonello see especially Stephanie Vella, *Vincenzo Bonello as a pioneer in Maltese art history and criticism*, unpublished B.A. (Hons) dissertation, (University of Malta, 1997).

[51] Dennis Vella, *The David Elyan donation of 'School Print' lithographs to the National Museum of Fine Arts, Malta*, (Malta, 2001).

[52] Herbert Ganado, *Rajt Malta Tinbidel*; Arturo Mercieca, *Le Mie Vicende*, 1947; Max Farrugia, *L-Internament u l-Eżilju Matul l-Aħħar Gwerra*, (Malta, 2007).

[53] See John Azzopardi, (ed.) *Vincenzo Bonello (1891-1969) Designer of ecclesiastical objets d'art and architectural works*, Wignacourt Museum, 2006.

[54] See *Primo Congresso Eucaristico Diocesano Maltese, Aprile 1939*, Commemorative programme *Tipografia Casa S. Giuseppe*, (Malta, 1939).

[55] V. M. Pellegrini, *La Crociata*, January, 1950.

[56] The official logogram of the event was however created by Frank Portelli who also designed part of the Pauline exhibition in the Catholic Institute.

[57] For the most recent study of the 'Maltese ' iconography of St Paul see Guglielmo De Giovanni-Centelles, *'Elementi Mediteranei Nell' Iconografia Di San Paolo'* in John Azzopardi (ed), *The Cult of Saint Paul in the Christian Churches and in the Maltese Tradition*, (Malta, 2006), 64, 65.

[58] Cremona's church painting is comprehensively discussed especially in Richard England, 'Emvin Cremona' in P. Serracino Inglott, (ed.), 1973; Dominic Cutajar, 'The art of Emvin Cremona', *Annual Report*, (Malta, 1985); D. Cutajar, *Malta: Six Modern Artists*; E. Fiorentino, 'Emvin Cremona: a leading artist of the Twentieth century', and Mark Sagona, 'Emvin Cremona (1919-1987) and the rise of modern sensibilities in Maltese sacred art' in *Treasures of Malta*, Summer, 2008.

[59] Dominic Cutajar, *Malta: Six Modern Artists*.

[60] Dennis Vella, *Antoine Camilleri: Pictures in Clay*, (Malta, 2008), 13.

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   'Maternity and childbirth in the Maltese Islands with a special focus on Gozo in the twentieth century'

4. Galea, Clifford
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5. Gauci, Henry Franz
   'A demographic study of Ħaż-Żebbuġ, 1550-1650'

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   'Maltese journalists and politics in Malta, 1918-1928: a comparative study of some newspapers'

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   'A history of the Armed Forces of Malta, 1970-1980'

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1. Grixti, Dario
   'Electoral politics in Malta: 1921-1932'

M.A. ARCHAEOLOGY

1. Zammit, Maria Elena
   'An Archaeological Survey of Baħrija'

Ph.D. ARCHAEOLOGY

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   'Human-induced changes in the environment and landscape of the Maltese islands from the Neolithic to the 15th century AD as inferred from a scientific study of sediments from Marsa, Malta'

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1. Agius, Victoria
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2. Attard, Noel
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3. Borg, Elizabeth and Alden, Harry
   'Harry Alden: The Op art and hand-edge tradition in modern and contemporary Maltese art'

4. Calleja, Clint
   'The art of Toni Pace (1930-1989): an appreciation'

5. Cassar, Kenneth
   'Baroque portraits of popes, bishops and high ecclesiastics in Maltese public collections (1600-1800)'

6. Griscti, Priscilla Ainhoa
   'Antoine Camilleri: the man and the artist'

7. Mifsud, Fabrizio
   'George Fenech: capturing the soul of Malta'

8. Vella, Charlene
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1. Balzan, Francesca
   'Jewellery in Malta during the Knights' period (1530-1798): an art historical review'

2. Borg, Katya
   'Abstract painting in Malta in the 1980's: its character and development within an international context'

3. Briffa, Nadine
   'Edward Caruana Dingli: a portrait painter'

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1. Vernon, Edward
   'International perceptions of Malta's policy of non-alignment in the 1970s: an investigation into how Maltese foreign policy was perceived abroad during the 1970s'

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1. Debono, Christian
   'The road network of the Maltese Islands: a case study in historical geography'

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1. Critien, Ian
   'Fort St. Angelo: the evolution of its historic fabric'

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   'The Mosta Rotunda: its structure and construction aspects'

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M.A. QUALIFYING

1. Grech, Vicky
   'The politico-religious question and Gozo, 1928-1932'

2. Vella, Pauline
'Aspects of Gozitan life, 1900-1939: developments in early twentieth century Gozo'

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1. Bugeja, Mark Anthony
'A study in local history since 1800: Mosta'

2. Buttigieg, Sarah Ann
'Prisons and the prison population in the Maltese Islands 1870-1914'
3. Camilleri, Charlene
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4. Caruana, Marouska
'A study in local history since 1921: Marsa'

5. Ebejer, Elizabeth
'Public elementary schooling in the inner harbour area: 1900-1939'

6. Fenech, Christopher
'Malta: an electoral analysis 1962-1971'

7. Gauci, Liam
'Hospitaller Malta 1741-1798: aspects of decline (1)'

8. Gauci, Liam
'The eighteenth century Hospitaller galley and the meals served on board (2)'

9. Montebello, Edward
'A study of freemasonry in Malta: history of the lodge of St. John & St. Paul 1815-1915'

10. Sallard, Wayne
'R.A.A.F. Vampires over Malta: a short term Australian colony 1952-1955'

11. Xuereb, Isabel
'A bibliography of the Hospitaller Order of St. John of Jerusalem (1970-2007)'

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   'Port activities in mid-sixteenth century Malta'

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   'Maltese independence in retrospect: attempts at consolidation, 1964-1974'

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   'Aspects of social life in Valletta 1813-1854'

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1. Azzopardi, Elaine
   'The Xlendi Bay Shipwrecks: An Archaeological Study'

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1. Attard, Lisa
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2. Borg, Jessica
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3. Caruana, Daphne Marie
   'The Xaghra Parish Church: art and architecture'

4. Fenech, Noella
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5. Vella, Maria
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1. Debono, Sandro
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2. Munro, Dane
   'A re-edition and translation into English of the monumental inscriptions

found at the main nave of St. John's Co-Cathedral (Valletta, Malta), including introduction, full commentary and indices'

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   'Maltese primary teachers in 19th century: a portrait of the teaching profession'

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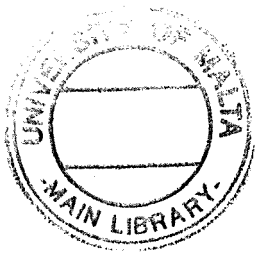

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2. Cauchi, Maria Pia
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5. Seychell, Marion Victoria
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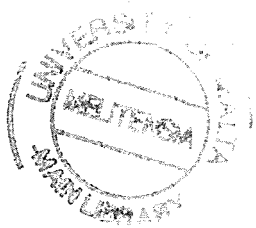

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