

## Ġużè Chetcuti Collection at the University of Malta Library

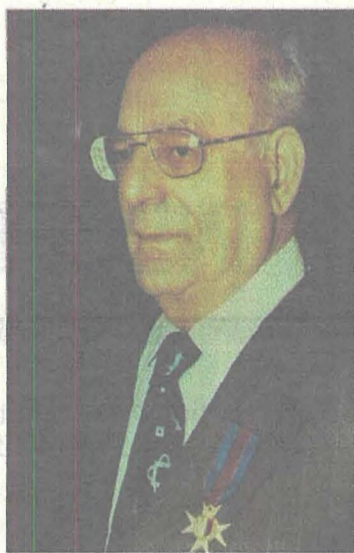
The University of Malta Library has announced that the family of Ġużè Chetcuti has donated a collection of manuscripts, letters, photographs and other memorabilia of the author.

This archive is now available to researchers in the Archives section of the Library and should interest academics and researchers from various disciplines. The listing of this collection has been uploaded on OAR@UM and can be searched through the online portal *Hydi*.

During the presentation of this new collection on 31 January 2020, the Director of the Library, Kevin J. Ellul, talked about the major role played by Ġużè Chetcuti in the development of the Maltese language and Maltese literature in the 20th century and about the significance of this acquisition by the Library. He thanked Pro-Rector Prof. Carmen Sammut and Prof. Adrian Grima of the Department of Maltese for facilitating this donation.

He also announced that the Library is working on transforming one of its main halls into a state-of-art Archives section.

Prof. Carmen Sammut, Pro-Rector for Student and Staff Affairs and Outreach, thanked the Chetcuti family for their donation, the Department of Maltese for its role in this acquisition and the Library for its sterling work. Prof. Carmen said that she



would like to see the UM take the initiative when it comes to acquiring collections of leading female figures in order to make their work accessible to as many researchers as possible.

The librarian who worked on this collection, Ms Antida Mizzi, said that although she had never actually met Ġużè Chetcuti in person, while working on the collection she felt that she had come to know him quite well. The collection includes pieces about the spelling of the Maltese language, many scribbles of poems, translations into English and Italian and translations from French, as well as many plays in Maltese and also in English and

Italian, and some interesting correspondences. Ms Mizzi believes that: "There is ample room for research in this small but very rich collection."

Prof. Bernard Micallef, from the Department of Maltese, spoke about his encounter with Ġużè Chetcuti when he was working on his dissertation on elements of realism in his prose: "Hjiel ta' Realizmu fil-Letteratura Maltija: Ġużè Chetcuti" (1987). The au-

thor had given him unique copies of manually-bound, unpublished novels in order to facilitate his research. Prof. Micallef said that Chetcuti stands out as a novelist who always remained faithful to the philosophy of determinism and positivist thought on which he based his realist narratives. In his work, he gives prominence to the setting and to genetics as factors in determining human be-

haviour. His protagonists are therefore always victims of the circumstances in which they find themselves.

During the presentation at the Library, those attending, including Dr Michael Spagnol, Head of the Department of Maltese and other lecturers from the Department, had the opportunity to examine the selection of writings and publications that were on display.

