

THE GOZO OBSERVER

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Contents

	<i>Page</i>
Editorial: Emigration: a blessing or a curse?	2
The Xaghra (Gozo) Windmill: Marcello Xicluna – The First Miller Joseph Scicluna	3
Fortunato Mizzi, 5 July 1844 – 18 May 1905 Founder of the Partito Nazionale – the Gozo Connection Joseph Bezzina	6
The Economic Situation in Gozo – Statistical Findings and Opinions Lino Briguglio	14
The Queen and Gozo: Elizabeth II on the Island of Calypso Geoffrey G. Attard	25
Edward Lear in Gozo in March 1866 – 150 years ago John Cremona	28
Book Review: Slavery, Malta at the Crossroads Transshipment of Slaves in a British Colony during the Nineteenth Century Lino Briguglio	30
Book Review: Profili ta' kittieba Ghawdxin Maurice Cauchi	31
Book Review: The Rotunda. A Testament to Faith, Courage and Love Geoffrey G. Attard	33
Recent Activities at the University of Malta - Gozo Campus Joseph Calleja	34

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Editorial:

Emigration: a blessing or a curse?

A recent article in *The Times* (February 22, 2016) commemorated an event exactly a century ago, which has become known as ‘The Maltese Migrants of New Caledonia’, when 214 Maltese (mostly Gozitans) sailed to Australia but were not allowed to land, and were transported to New Caledonia, an island in the Pacific just over 3000 km from Australia, where they had to stay for several months. An exhibition was set up earlier on this year at il-Ħaġar Heart of Gozo museum in Victoria to commemorate this event.

Emigration has been called ‘a safety valve’ which releases economic pressures at a time of great hardship, now conveniently forgotten. For most of the time in the early 20th century, poverty was rampant in the Maltese islands. Young persons (mainly males) had to leave their home to feed their family. Their contribution has now been forgotten, but it is well to remember that by the late 1960s, remittances sent to Malta from Australia were equal to the current Government expenditure, and certainly helped to keep Malta afloat.¹

It is unfortunate that Gozo is still going through a process of depopulation with young Gozitans preferring to settle in the sister island. This is a loss which Gozo can ill-afford. This is not a matter of choice, but of necessity, seeing that it is unreasonable in these days of lightening speed, for a Gozitan to spend two hours each way every day to go to work in Malta.

So to answer the question posed in the title: emigration is always associated with deep divisions, heartache, and a profound sense of loss which lasts for years, even in some cases for a lifetime. In this sense, it is a curse. On the other hand, the flourishing of migrants in their new home is something to be seen and be proud of, as evidenced by the way that their families have prospered, and their children have become achievers unheard of a generation ago.

A recent survey of the second generation Maltese in Australia has confirmed that the proportion of participants with a tertiary qualification has reached 58%, far higher than that of the average in Malta. The standard of living is higher, with many living in houses worth a million dollars.

These descendants of Maltese and Gozitan migrants, who now outnumber the first generation by four to one, need not be pitied. The average salary in Australia currently is over 50,000 AUD (equivalent to 30,000 euro). Their children are thriving members of the community who consider the world as their oyster.

So what was a curse for their parents and grandparents has turned into an unmodified blessing from which Malta has benefitted in the past and still does: for instance, the average Maltese descendant from Australia is expected to leave several thousand dollars when they visit their relatives in the Maltese Islands.

In the first instance it is relevant to stress the distinction between the concepts contained in the related but quite distinct words, namely migration, immigration, and emigration, distinctions which seem to be lost on a considerable proportion of the population. It is a shame that the terms ‘emigration’ has been conflated in the minds of some Maltese with vague words like ‘migration’ which do not make a distinction between ‘immigration’ and ‘emigration’. It is a pity that the movement of people seeking refuge has become such a burden to those least capable of helping them, which includes Malta also. However, this is not a justification for considering our relatives living overseas as in any way inferior or requiring commiseration, or to ‘trivialise Malta’s migration history’ as indicated in the article mentioned above.

The Council for Maltese Living Abroad (CMLA) has been set up under the auspices of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs to look after the needs of the many hundreds of thousands of Maltese living overseas. It was developed with the idea that Malta needs to reach beyond its shores, to develop into a ‘greater Malta’, to be all-inclusive consisting of those who left in the past and their progeny and those who stayed. It is a concept which has not yet penetrated into the psyche of the average Maltese.

Maurice Cauchi

¹ See further: ‘The Migrant Contribution: Remittances by Maltese Migrants’, in: *The Maltese Migrant Experience*: M.N.Cauchy, 1999, p 190-198.

The Xaghra (Gozo) Windmill: Marcello Xicluna – The First Miller

JOSEPH SCICLUNA

Introduction

The windmill located in Xaghra, Gozo, is popularly known as Ta' Kola after Nikola Grech, who was one of the last millers who owned it. Grech passed away in 1941 and, while enough is known about him, very little information has been available so far on the first miller who managed this windmill. He was Marcello Xicluna, who took over the lease of the windmill when its construction was completed on 1st February 1787 (Vella, 2010).

This windmill in fact had replaced a previous one, which had been built in 1725 by a Foundation established by Grandmaster Manuel de Vilhena. It functioned until 1786 when it had to be demolished because its structure had deteriorated considerably. The construction of the new windmill was likewise financed by the Vilhena Foundation and Marcello Xicluna took up the lease at a cost of 400 scudi per annum. He was also bound by a number of other conditions, known as *carnaggi*, since he was required to present to the officers of the Foundation seven roses on the 1st May of each year, as well as two cockerels to the Treasurer of the Foundation, every Christmas and Easter (Vella, 2010).

Marcello was born in Xewkija, Gozo, on the 30th October 1734 to Carlo Xicluna and Grazia neè Xuereb. He was baptised at Xewkija Parish Church and named Giobatta Marcello, although he is always referred to by his second name Marcello.¹ So when Marcello took over the lease of the new Xaghra windmill in 1787, he was already 53 years old, which would seem to indicate that he had previously already exercised his trade as a miller. It is not improbable therefore that he had previously held the lease of the old Xaghra windmill, although so far no record of this is available. In this respect, it is however pertinent to point out that records



Ta' Kola Windmill, Xaghra.
[Photo courtesy of www.visitgozo.com (accessed: 13/02/2016)]

exist which show that members of the same Xicluna family had been involved in the running of windmills in Gozo since the early decades of the eighteenth century. The windmill in Xewkija, where Marcello was born, is known to have been on lease to Gio Maria Xicluna in 1738 and this lease was eventually transferred to Gio Maria's son, Michele, in 1742 (Vella, 2010).

A Numerous Family

Marcello married Angela Bonello in Xaghra, Gozo, on the 5th July 1759 when he was 25 years old and together they produced 15 children, nine males and six females. Their first child, Carlo Liberato, was born within the first year of their marriage on 23rd May 1760, while their last one, Margarita

¹ Ġuljana Masini 1554-1930 - (National Archives Gozo - NAG). The Giuliana Masini, consisting of 88 manuscript volumes of various sizes, registers all the births, marriages and deaths that took place in Gozo between 1554 and 1930. It also registers the births of Gozitans in Malta and, sometimes, even abroad.



The Miller's Tools at the Ta' Kola Windmill Museum, Xaghra. [Photo courtesy of heritagemalta.org (accessed: 13/02/2016)]

Grazia Teresa, was born on the 7th November 1788, twenty nine years after their marriage. It is possible that one or more of their children died in their infancy since two of the children, one born in 1769 and the other in 1774 were both given the name of Damiano, a name which was inherited in the Xicluna family from one generation to another for many generations.

Liberato's Misfortune

Indeed, infant mortality was prevalent at the time and continued to be prevalent for many decades into the following century, especially during the first decades of British colonial rule when it became more pronounced due to the extreme poverty prevailing in the country, with the resultant low levels of public health. One of Marcello's children, Liberato Bernardo, who was born on the 13th April 1781 and who later married Maria Bajada, was very badly affected by this unhappy situation. In the summer of 1822, Liberato and Maria lost two infant children in the space of a few weeks. On the

27th June they lost a son, Marcello, aged one year three months while on the 19th August they lost a daughter, Angela, aged two years six months. The children had been named after their paternal grandparents who, by that time, had both passed away. Misfortune hit the couple years later when, on the 15th September 1836, they lost another son, Salvo, when he was only six days old (Ġuljana Masini, NAG).

When he took up the lease of the new windmill in 1787, Marcello had already fathered 14 of his 15 children. So only the last one of his children, Margarita, was presumably born in the new windmill.

Marcello died in Xaghra, Gozo, on the 1st May 1815, a year after an outbreak of the bubonic plague, which had claimed the lives of a large number of residents of that village. He was then 81 years old. His wife, Angela, died five years after him on the 26th March 1820 (Ġuljana Masini, NAG).

New Pastures in Malta

Some of Marcello's male children eventually followed in their father's footsteps. In fact, a number of them migrated to Malta to seek opportunities in the trade which they had learnt from their father. One of them, born on the 2nd October 1774 and christened Damiano Paolo Bernardo Rosario, migrated to Malta during the first decade of the 19th century where he took on lease the windmill located in the village of Qrendi and where he married a girl from the village, Maria Vella, on the 28th September 1807. Various entries in the Naxxar Parish Archives indicate that by the late 1830's, Damiano and his family had moved to Naxxar where one of his sons, Matteo, married Anna Bonavia on the 28th July 1840. Anna was the daughter of Onorato Bonavia, another miller, who had leased one of the five windmills then in existence at Naxxar (il-Mithna tal-Għaqba) and who transferred the lease to his son-in-law upon his marriage to his daughter.



A photograph of Onorato Xicluna - the great grandson of Marcello Xicluna.



Tal-Għaqba windmill, Naxxar.

The Last of the Xicluna Family of Millers in Malta

Matteo was not the last one in this line of the Xicluna family to be engaged in the milling trade. One of his sons, Onorato, who was evidently named after his maternal grandfather and who was born on the 5th September 1844, took over the lease of the windmill located at Mellieħa (il-Mithna hdejn is-Salib tal-Pellegrini) sometime in the 1870s until his premature death abroad around the year 1895. Onorato was the great grandson of Marcello Xicluna and he represented the last of at least four generations of millers in this line of the Xicluna family.

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Joseph Scicluna is a former Civil Servant. He retired from the post of Secretary to Cabinet in 2006. He is a direct descendant of Marcello Xicluna, the subject of this article.

FORTUNATO MIZZI

5 July 1844 – 18 May 1905

Founder of the Partito Nazionale – the Gozo Connection

JOSEPH BEZZINA

Fortunato Mizzi will be forever remembered in the annals of the history of Malta as the pioneer of political parties in Malta. He founded the Partito Nazionale 135 years ago. The Gozitans respected him wholeheartedly, nurtured high hopes in his ability to promote the interests of Gozo, and contributed in no small measure towards the success of his political career.

The Constitution of the Year 1849

Between 16 and 20 August 1849, when Fortunato was five years old, the people of Malta and Gozo voted in the first ever election held in Malta.

It was held under the Constitution of 11 May 1849 – the third of twelve granted by the British Government to Malta during one hundred and sixty four years of colonial rule. This Constitution established a Council with eighteen members: ten *ex officio* and eight elected by the people. It was craftily conceived, as while the Government had a majority on the Council through the official members, five of these officials were Maltese and so there was a majority of Maltese. The Council had the right to enact laws, but could not propose financial votes. Besides, the Colonial Office in London had the right to proceed in enacting legislation and to suspend laws approved by the Council.

So as to vote, one had to be over twenty-one years and either (1) had a property rendering one hundred Scudi annually (€19.40), or (2) one's residence, if rented, could render fifty Scudi a year (€9.70), or (3) one was partner in a business with a person so qualified. Malta and Gozo were divided into eight districts with Gozo as the eighth with 281 persons from a population of around 14,500 which had a right to vote for the Gozo candidate. Of these 281, only 128 were resident in Gozo, the remaining 153 were Maltese that had the right to vote for the Gozo candidate as they owned property in Gozo. This means that 54 per cent of the voters were people

resident in Malta who with all probability had never set foot on Gozo. Their only interest was to collect the annual rents and emphyteusis on their properties and not to promote the interests of the island and its inhabitants. The lawyer Adriano Dingli, the son of a Gozitan, was elected to represent Gozo with 117 votes.

The Council met for the first time on 8 January 1850. Dr Dingli succeeded to put Gozo on the agenda of the Colonial Government. It was through his endeavour that the Government voted money for a road between Mellieħa and Marfa easing transport to and from Gozo towards Mellieħa and Valletta. He played a pivotal role with Dun Pietro Pace in the establishment of the diocese of Gozo on 16 September 1864.

The 1849 Constitution remained in force, with small modifications, up to the year 1887. Fortunato Mizzi entered politics so as to improve on this Constitution.

The Gozitan Roots of the Mizzi Family

The roots of the family of Fortunato Mizzi in Gozo go back more than four hundred years (see Figure 1). On 5 March 1628, Domenico Mizzi married Marietta Azzopardi at the Gozo *Matrice*. Domenico was the son of Pietro Mizzi and a certain Paolina that might have settled in Gozo towards the end of the sixteenth century. Francesco Mizzi, the father of Fortunato, was the ninth generation ensuing from this couple.

On 25 July 1765, his great grandfather, Notary Placido Mizzi, who was also a cleric, presented a petition to the *Gozo Universitas*, to erect a plinth with a statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Loreto upon Pjazza San Ġorġ, ir-Rabat (see National Archives Gozo (NAG), UG, 03/*Suppliche* 97 170r-171v). The statue is still there but not on its original plinth. Through the same Placido, he is also



Dr Fortunato Mizzi
Founder *Partito Nazionale*
Family Tree

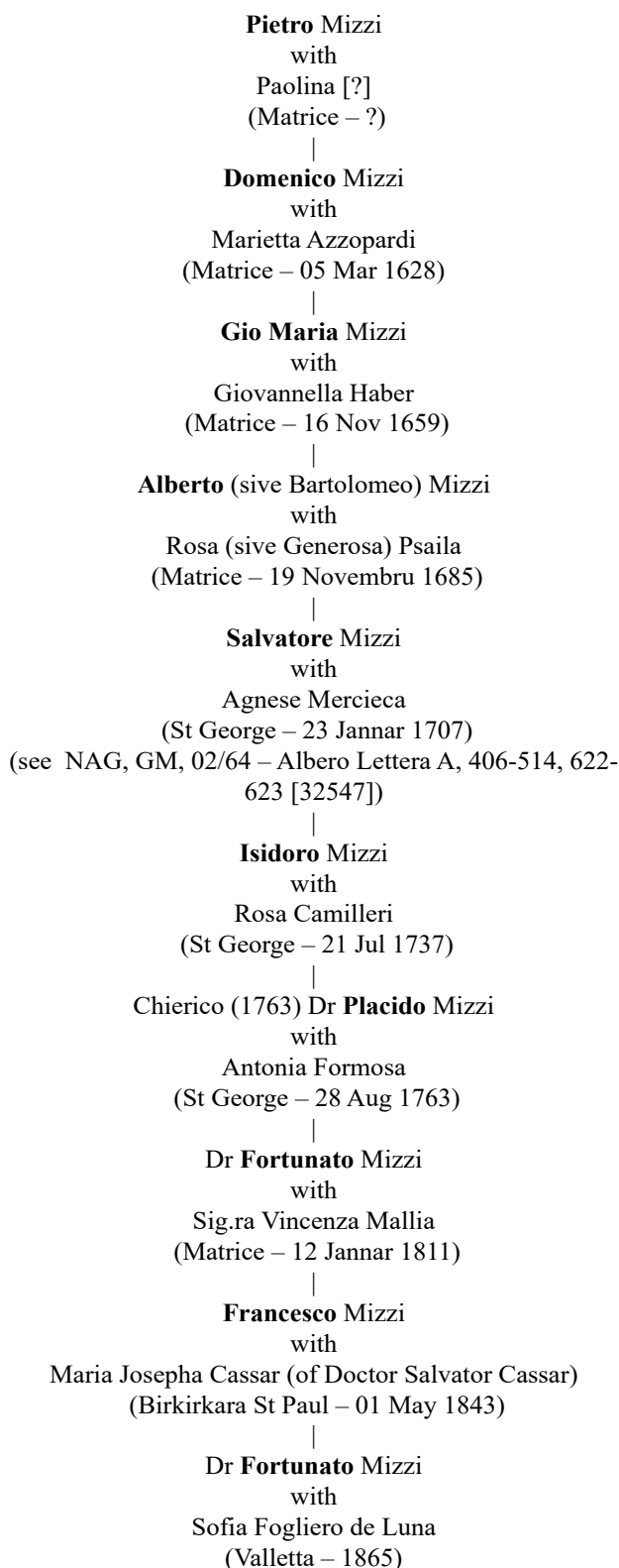


Figure 1: Family Roots. Courtesy NAG/Toni Calleja.

related to Karolina Cauchi, who in 1889 founded the Congregation of the Dominican Sisters of Malta.

His grandfather Fortunato Mizzi married Vincenza Mallia at the Gozo Matrice on 11 January 1811. Fortunato was named after him. The name originates from that of a *corpo santo*, the holy remains of a Roman martyr, that the Mizzi family kept with veneration at their home. In the early twentieth century, they donated it to the parish church of iż-Żebbuġ, where it is venerated to this day.

Francesco, his father, was born in Rabat, Gozo, and was baptised at the Matrice on 18 January 1819. He became a lawyer and, on 1 May 1943, soon after his graduation, he married Maria-Josepha Cassar, daughter of Salvatore, a well-known general practitioner, at the Chapel of Saint Paul, Birkirkara. Francesco exercised his profession in Malta and in December 1868 he was promoted to the bar. For some time he practiced in Gozo, as newly appointed magistrates were sent to Gozo for training.

Fortunato Mizzi

Fortunato was born in Valletta on 5 July 1844. In all probability, he passed his summer holidays in Gozo, as his family owned a residence at the resort of Marsalforn. He graduated a lawyer in 1865 and married Sofia Fogliero de Luna, descendant from Italo-Spanish nobility, on 22 July 1871 (see Figure 1).

During his life he militated for three ideals: to secure a liberal constitution for Malta; to defend the Roman Catholic religion and traditions of the island; and to promote the Latin and European culture of the people of Malta. He was fully aware that the liberal movement that was transforming the political class of Europe was squashed by the Imperial interests in Malta. He set himself the arduous task to align the political movement in Malta with that of Europe.

In October 1878, the Colonial Office in London, which ruled supreme over Malta, sent a Royal Commission made up of Sir Penrose Julyan and Patrick Keenan to prepare a report on the civil and educational system of Malta. The report, authored by Keenan, was concluded in June 1879, but it was only in August 1880 that it was presented to the British Parliament and became public. Mizzi



Figure 2: Fortunato Mizzi. Courtesy MAPN•Mizzi Archives-PN-Pietà/Richard Muscat.

and his ilk were of the opinion that the true reason behind the Commission was to enhance and further solidify the imperial interests in Malta.

In Mizzi's opinion, this was the real reason why the Commission suggested the promotion of the English language. Between August and October 1880, this line of reasoning brought together a group of gentlemen led by Mizzi and they decided to militate against the reforms proposed in the report. It was for this reason that the group, the nascent political party, became known as *Anti-Riformista*.

There is no doubt that Fortunato and his group were promoters of the Italian language, however, they opposed the imposition of English not because they were against that language *per se*, but as through this imposition they perceived more intrusions by the Colonial Government in the administration of Malta. So much so, that during a prize day ceremony at the Gozo Seminary, that was held under his auspices, he praised the teaching of English at the institution as it was carried out without any imposition.

This line of reasoning is reflected in the programmatic names that he gave to the newspapers that he edited. The first was *Il Diritto di Malta*, (the rights of Malta) and the Maltese vis-à-vis the Colonial impositions;

its first number was issued on 1 July 1880 and it was published for five years. He acknowledged that *Il titolo di un giornale deve rappresentare di per sé un programma*. On 10 November 1883, he published the first number of *Malta*, a name that encapsulates his whole political programme, a name declaring Malta as a political entity on par with other countries, a name in which it is possible to perceive the remote beginning of the road to Malta's independence.

This is what he himself wrote in the leader of the first number of *Malta* referring to the many possible titles that could have been given to the newspaper:

Molti ci suggerirono vari altri nomi tutti belli ed addatti alla circostanza... *La Gazzetta di Malta* rivaleggia molti grandi giornali del continente – *L'Unione* esprime una necessità nel paese – *La Voce del Popolo* echeggia le aspirazioni della Patria – *L'Antiriformista* simboleggia il Partito Nazionale – *La Patria* rammenta un dovere; tutti sono bei nomi – ma ... *MALTA* ... ahh! Questo è il nome che parla dolci accenti al cuore. Scegliamo questo caro nome e preghiamo venia ai nostri buoni amici se non ci sentiamo la forza di cambiarlo per alcun altro fra i tanti suggeriti.

It is in this leader of 10 November that the *Partito Anti-Riformista* is referred to for the first time as Partito Nazionale – its aim was to bring about a major constitutional change (see Figure 3).

Elections

The population of Gozo from 14,343 in the year 1842, when the first census was held, had climbed to 17,653 in the year 1881, and to 20,003 in the year 1901 – an increase of 39.47 per cent in sixty years.

The first election after the formation of the *Anti-Riformista* group was held between 13 and 16 October 1880. Fortunato Mizzi contested the Gozo district, the eighth, that had 292 electors, of which 172 were Gozitans and 120 Malta residents (see Figure 4, courtesy NLG/Paul Falzon). He was elected with 131 votes. The beginning of his political career is rooted in Gozo. In the election, the *Anti-Riformisti* won five of the eight seats.

In the following election, held between 8 and 11 October 1883, he once again contested the Gozo seat and won with 270 votes. Only 25.8 per cent cast their votes in this election; in Gozo the number

MALTA

Gazzetta Quotidiana Politica e Commerciale

Anno I.

Malta, Sabato 10 Novembre 1883.

Num. 1.

"MALTA"

Gazzetta Politica e Commerciale.

Diretta dal Dr. FORTUNATO MIZZI
(N. pubblica tutti i giorni, meno i festivi)

Abbonamento per Malta cinque scellini (se si desidera per l'estero scellini sei) e per l'estero sei scellini. Un numero separato 2 pence.

Inserzioni ed avvisi in prima e seconda pagina 4d per linea, in terza 3d, ed in quarta 2d.

L'ufficio del giornale è in Valletta Strada Zecca No. 15, ed vi si ricevono le abbonazioni e si rendono le copie separate.

Le lettere si devono dirigere nel modo seguente:
"Alla Direzione della Gazzetta quotidiana MALTA, 15 Strada Zecca — Valletta-Malta."

Quei signori, che non vogliono abbonarsi al presente diario, sono pregati, in cortesia, di respingere questo primo numero.

MALTA

10 NOVEMBRE 1883

PROGRAMMA.

Dopo il verdetto, che le urne han dato nelle recenti elezioni, — dopo il solenne duplice Plebiscito del 15 Ottobre — chi può mai dubitare che la opinione pubblica non sia contraria alle malangurate riforme proposte da Russell, Julian e Keenan?

Semberebbe impossibile trovare, in un piccolo paese come il nostro, dopo una pubblica manifestazione così solenne, chi osasse disconoscere in tutta la sua estensione la terribile condanna, da un popolo intero lanciata contro riforme, che a viva forza si vogliono imporre alla patria comune, o chi ardisse affrontare i sentimenti d'un intero popolo entusiastamente alla solenne vittoria riportata sugli oppressori.

Eppure!

Eppure i giornali riformisti, con una sfrontatezza rara se non unica, si accingono a continuare la guerra già da tre anni di più accesa contro una intera popolazione, che a tutto costo si vuole gettare nel fango e rendere schiava per sempre, spegnendo in essa ogni ciambra di sentimento nazionale. Anzi, ora più che mai sentono i riformisti di poter con maggior successo uscire in campo aperto contro i sostenitori del popolo, perchè sanno di poter disporre di due — anzi di tre — fogli quotidiani, quando gli antifuristi non ne hanno alcuno. E adoperando senza scrupolo le armi villi della calunnia, travisando i fatti, vituperando, schernendo, già si dan premura di denegare tutte le azioni più patriottiche dei Rappresentanti del Popolo, che uniti e risoluti combattono per i patrii diritti. Essi sanno quanta difficoltà si debba incontrare a fondare o mantenere un diario politico commerciale, e sperano che nessuno osi tentare l'ardua impresa per

poter scendere in campo a combatterli: ma, vivibile, essi fan male i propri conti — giacchè come per ben dieci-sette mesi il direttore di questo nuovo periodico ha potuto sostenere, senza alcun successo, il Riformismo or caduto in mano ai Riformisti, saprà così continuare il combattimento disinteressato, per tutta la vita, dedicando al bene dei suoi compatriotti le sue ore di riposo, colla sola speranza di trovare sufficiente "incoraggiamento per risarsi delle spese di stampa."

Ecco la ragione per cui un nuovo diario "non" è fondato.

È ben necessario che un giornale esponga in modo chiaro, preciso e veritiero gli atti tutti del Consiglio, perchè il pubblico possa seguire lo svolgimento della questione, che maggiormente lo interessano, e giudicare con esattezza della condotta dei suoi rappresentanti. E perchè non possa cadere dubbio sulla veracità delle espressioni, che il nuovo giornale andrà facendo delle cose patrie, esso pubblicherà per intero tutti i documenti, che verranno messi sulla tavola del Consiglio, ad eccezione di quelli che venissero pubblicati dalla stamperia di governo, o quando i documenti, che venissero posti sulla tavola del Consiglio, fossero troppo voluminosi e non potessero trovar luogo nel nostro giornale, ne verrà pubblicata la sostanza.

E siccome il rapporto stenografico dei dibattimenti del Consiglio viene pubblicato tardivamente (oltracciò costa poco meno del giornale) così sarà nostra cura di dare, senza ritardo, un sunto dei dibattimenti di ogni seduta del Consiglio.

Tuttociò serve a mantenere il popolo alla corrente degli affari pubblici, il che poi produrrà il benefico risultato di tenerlo sempre sveglio sui propri interessi e di impedire quella reapsia, che spesso ci ha immersi in profondo letargo con grave nostro detrimento.

Ed è ben necessario che un diario onesto sveli i misteri della politica interna, perchè una

Lercia, servil, malefica

Stampa alla mano avvezza

già si accinge a calpestare coi suoi luridi piedi ogni più onesta e patriottica azione di quelli, i quali, mandati dal popolo a rappresentarlo, non hanno altro scopo, che di cooperarsi a una buona amministrazione delle cose pubbliche. E infatti, qual altra via rimane ai pochi riformisti venduti per acquistare il terreno perduto, che di accreditare i Rappresentanti del Popolo? Il nuovo diario però, echeggiando continuamente la voce del Popolo, ridurrà al silenzio la stampa prezzolata e disonestata, difendendo la verità, e sempre la verità, e particolarmente quella azione di sentimenti e volontà, che nei membri elettivi, sotto fausti auspici, si è insin dal primo momento dell'elezione manifestata, e che dalle prime sedute del Consiglio venne pienamente confermata.

Nel dire che il nuovo giornale darà contezza precisa e chiara delle cose del

Consiglio, abbiamo di conseguenza voluto anche comprendere tutti gli atti del Governo e di ciascun dipartimento governativo, perchè nel Consiglio vanno a far capo tutti gli atti del Governo locale. Pertanto il nuovo giornale esporrà con precisione ogni atto di Governo o di ciascun Dipartimento Governativo, che, uscendo dalla ordinaria rotina d'azione, sia in bene che in male, meriterà menzione o di lode o di biasimo. Così ancora andrà svolgendo tutte quelle più utili riforme, che nella macchina governativa possono essere vantaggiosamente introdotte — continuando a far giusta guerra alle riforme effettuate e che si vogliono ancora effettuare sulle norme date dai tre Commissionari di infamata memoria.

Altra missione del giornale, in eduzione delle cose locali, sarà quella di incoraggiare le arti, le industrie, il commercio, e ciò non solo col riportare e illustrare ogni utile proposta, ma più particolarmente col tenere informati i lettori d'ogni nuovo ramo di industria, che viene a mano a mano introdotto in altri paesi, d'ogni perfezionamento e facilitazione nelle arti e nelle industrie, e ogni scoperta di pratica utilità, ed infine col cooperarsi a incoraggiare tutti quei generosi figli di Malta, che coi loro talenti si saranno resi benemeriti nelle industrie, nelle arti e nel commercio. Quanto al commercio poi in particolare, il nuovo giornale consacrerà la terza pagina a dare tutte le più estese ed importanti notizie finanziarie, commerciali e marittime.

Nà sarà trascurata la cronaca locale, procurando noi di dare al pubblico tutte le più importanti notizie, per la qual cosa molti amici, sparsi in vari casi delle due isole, ci promettono tenerci informati di tutto ciò che succede meritevole di nota. Per comodo poi dei Signori Avvocati, Procuratori Legali e litiganti, daremo sempre le liste delle cause da trattarsi nelle Corti Superiori, prendendo cura di due importantissimi punti — primo, che le liste siano ben corrette, e poi che siano sollecitamente pubblicate.

E fin qui delle cose locali. Ma il nuovo giornale avrà anche una parte dedicata alle notizie estere, che estraremo da altri giornali dei più accreditati nel Continente, e dai telegrammi. Però siamo lieti di aver trovato parecchi corrispondenti particolari, nel Cairo, in Alessandria, in Costantinopoli, in Tripoli, in Tunisi, ed in Roma. Questi si impegnano di tenerci informati degli affari politici e commerciali più importanti dei loro paesi. Nel presente primo numero del Giornale la politica estera è internamente trascurata, perchè c'è sovrabbondanza di materie locali: — ma in appresso il diario darà posto a tutto.

Non abbiamo bisogno di dire che il linguaggio nostro sarà sempre dignitoso ed urbano, senza imitare mai la scurrilità di certi altri fogli, che del sacrosanto ministero della stampa han fat-

to un abito molle; tre anni di vita politica esentano il direttore di questo foglio dalla necessità di qualunque dichiarazione su questo soggetto. Solo crediamo giusto di fare un'ultima parola, perchè non si creda che intendiamo esporre in salamelecchi. Chiameremo nero il nero, bianco il bianco; e quando accada di dire che un Tizio, nella vita pubblica, ha fatto mercato della sua posizione di rappresentante del popolo, noi chiameremo quel Tizio col nome che gli convengono, proclamandolo traditore e finida, senza riserva. — quando un Sempronio scriverà ai Ministri dell'impero, esprimendo a nome di tutta la popolazione le sue private aspirazioni, o si astenendo dal rendere di pubblica ragione i suoi scritti, noi chiameremo Sempronio un vigliacco ed un malandrino, senza domandargli il permesso. L'arbitrarietà dunque non l'faremo consistere in una convenzione fra noi, ma in ciò che sarà dovrebbe essere — cioè nel non attaccare alcuno senza una vita privata, e nel non adoperare frasi scurrili ed abbiette, nel non fare accuse ingiustamente o senza utilità pubblica; del resto, è già noto.

Ci resta ora a dire una parola, in nome, che abbiamo dato al nuovo diario.

Per contentare amici, avevamo diviso di battezzarlo "IL PLEBISCITO", in memoria del duplice solenne plebiscito del 15 Ottobre: ma in allora speravamo che il Diario avrebbe cominciato le sue pubblicazioni senza ritardo. Incontrammo però molti ostacoli alla esecuzione del nostro disegno, perchè non abbiamo potuto trovare stamperia ove cominciare le nostre pubblicazioni. Alcuni degli stampatori avevano davvero giuste ragioni per rifiutare la loro opera — ma alcuni altri han avuto paura di comprometterli con certe autorità. Per giungere allo scopo ci bisognò ricorrere ad un amico, il quale comprò a proprio nome la stamperia di uno di quelli che ci avevano rifiutato la pubblicazione del giornale, e poi ce ne fece il trasferimento. Questa storia giustifica il ritardo del promesso giornale, ed anche del cambiamento del titolo.

Ma se molti dei nostri abbonati han piacere che il titolo *Il Plebiscito* sia cambiato, certo nessuno quanto noi ne è contento. Innanzi dal primo momento che abbiamo diviso di fondare un giornale pensammo di dargli il nome più bello che possa mai sentirsi da orecchio maltese — il nome della nostra cara patria. Molti ci suggerirono vari altri nomi, tutti belli ed adatti alla circostanza. Il *Plebiscito* rammenta una data felice della nostra storia — LA GAZZETTA DI MALTA rivaloggia molti grandi giornali del continente — L'UNIONE esprime una necessità del paese — LA VOCE DEL POPOLO echeggia le aspirazioni della patria — L'ANTIRIFORMISTA simboleggia il partito nazionale — LA PATRIA rammenta un dovere — tutti, tutti sono bei nomi — ma... "MALTA"... ah! questo è il nome che parla dolci accenti al cuore!"

Figure 3: The first issue of *Malta*. Courtesy NLG•National Library Gozo/Paul Falzon — this facsimile, formerly unknown, is being published for the first time.

LISTA delle persone riputate avere le qualità richieste dalla legge per votare per la elezione di un Membro del Consiglio di Governo, per le isole del Gozo e di Comino.

LIST of persons deemed to possess the qualifications required by law to vote for the election of a Member of the Council of Government, for the islands of Gozo and Comino.

PARTE PRIMA.

Gran Castello.

Refalo, Can. Dr. Don }
Michelangelo } Salita Gran Castello
Xuereb LL.D., }
Michelangelo } Salita Gran Castello 6

Rabato.

Azzopard, Francesco Piazza Reale 22
Calleja, Francesco 26
Cremona LL.D., Paolo 1
Asciach, Salvatore 3
Meilach, Luigi di Antonio 6
Calleja, Antonio 9
Caruana, Vincenzo 11

Bondì, Giuseppe Str. Corsa 27
Bondì M.D., Luigi 27
Micallef LL.D., Vincenzo Paolo 52
Mizzi, Perito Fortunato 7
Pace, Luigi 6
Pace LL.D., Michele 54
Pace, Monsignor Dr. Don Pietro 56

Sammut M.D., Eduardo Via Migiarro 44
Bonello, Giorgio
Cassar, Don Francesco 20
Caruana LL.D., Luigi 16
Giardina, Perito Antonio 39
Mallia, Roberto 37
Mercieca LL.D., Felice 31
Sammut, Don Enrico 44
Xuereb LL.D., Giuseppe 41

Sammut, Farm. Ignazio Str. S. Giacomo 5

Attard, Perito Pietro Str. Gran Fontana 21
Lauro, Don Michele 128
Mercieca, Francesco 76

Pace, Can. Don Giuseppe Str. Ghammiesa 3

Cauchi, Don Giorgio Str. Manderaggio 62
Debono, Gio. Battista 2
Cremona, Not. Felice 3

Borg, Gio. Maria Str. Biblioteca 14
Formosa, Can. Don Saverio 28
Pace Cauchi, Francesco 47
Pace, Chier. Luigi 2

Gauci, Can. Don Mario Piazza S. Francesco 38
Grech, Can. Don Salvatore 5
Sammut M.D., Paolo 6
Zammit, Can. Don Francesco 8
Refalo, Not. Onorato Giovanni 41

Camilleri, Luigi Str. Ghain Katet 32
Refalo, Don Lorenzo 17
Sammut, Don Gaetano 31
Spiteri, Salvatore 19

Camilleri, Can. }
Don Paolo } Str. Sotto Porta Reale 6
Micallef, Giuseppe 13

Buhagiar, Don Francesco Str. Palma 38
Gauci, Not. Carmelo 41
Cassar, Perito Michele 67
Ferriggi, Don Antonio 17
Grima, Michelangelo 44
Mercieca, Luigi 69
Sammut, Farm. Giuseppe 73
Seychel, Can. Don Michele 15
Refalo, Aurelio 41

Debrincat, Pasquale Str. Stretta 14
Sammut, Can. Don Michele 1
Sultana, Can. Coad. Don Carmelo 12

Montanaro, Emmanuele Str. Conservatorio 42
Refalo, Can. Decano Don Salvatore 8

Farrugia, Eduardo Str. St' Andrea 73
Refalo, Arciprete Dr. Don Felice 21
Xerri, Don Lorenzo 18

Gauci, Luigi Str. Ghedin 20

Formosa, Fortunato Str. Nuova 39
Montanaro, Gaetano 44
Cutajar, Don Francesco 44
Tabone, Antonio 18
Farrugia, Don Giuseppe 16
Bonello, Lorenzo 14
Baluci, Tommaso

Busuttil Dalli, Chier. }
Michelangelo } Str. Pietà 12
Calleja, Can. Don Salvatore 44
Cauchi, Can. Don Antonio 63
Cassar, P.L. Pietro Paolo 24
Vella, Michele di Salvatore 9

Cauchi, Can. Don Francesco Str. Carità 32
Montanaro M.D., Giuseppe 76
Diacono, Angelo 100
Diacono, Don Francesco 100
Grech, Michelangelo 20
Mallia, P.L. Guglielmo 107
Debono M.D., Giuseppe 88

Calleja, Antonio Str. Mercato 30
Farrugia Pace, Francesco 28

Grech, Sud. Francesco Str. Provvidenza 7

Bugeja, Don Vincenzo Str. Provicario 12
Gioioso, Giacinto 4
Teuma, Can. Don Francesco 4
Pace LL.D., Ignazio 19

Refalo, Not. Vincenzo Piazza Sabina 25
Refalo, Can. Penitenziere Dr. Don }
Michelangelo } 5
Saliba, Giorgio 28
Mercieca, Can. Don Giorgio 19

Dalli, Giovanni Str. Arciprete 45
Farrugia, Don Luigi 13
Mizzi, Michelangelo 44
Portelli M.D., Lorenzo 58
Vella, Giuseppe 22

Bugeja, Antonio Str. Arciprete Vicolo 1° 50

Attard, Salvatore Str. S. Giorgio 5
Cassar, Antonio 67
Mizzi, Can. Don Giuseppe 86
Meilach, Giuseppe 12

Mifsud, Giuseppe Str. Sotto i Bastioni 18

Mercieca M.D., Barto- }
lommeo } Str. Weirigia 25
Ghain Tuta

Figure 4: List of persons eligible to vote in the 1880 elections. Courtesy NLG/Paul Falzon.

of voters exceeded 50 per cent in support of Mizzi. On that occasion, the *Anti-Riformisti* won seven out of eight seats. The low turnout demonstrates that the people were fed up of the political situation. In conformity with the general feeling, the elected members resigned soon after their election to the Council.

Expression of Gratitude

The Council met for the first time on Tuesday, 30 October 1883. The following weekend, Fortunato Mizzi travelled to Gozo to express his gratitude to the Gozitans for the trust they placed in him (see Figure 5). He reiterated his appreciation in

the first number of *Malta* in a leader entitled: *Ringraziamento ai Gozitani*:

I heartfully thank my good and generous compatriots for the overwhelming display of affection and support they showed me, when, following my election as their representative on the National legislative body, I went there to express my gratitude for the trust placed in me. The celebrations they prepared for me were touching, but, knowing that I did not merit them and I cannot take their credit in compensation for the meagre services that I have been able to render them up to now, I will consider them as an incentive to work effectively and as a strong encouragement to continue to strive for our rights Meanwhile I thank them from the bottom of my heart for all they did for me (*Malta*, 10 Nov 1883 p.2)

(Translated from the Italian language)

RINGRAZIAMENTO AI GOZITANI

Ho voluto adempiere a questo grato dovere subito dopo il mio ritorno dall' Isola sorella, ma disgraziatamente il *Diritto di Malta* di lunedì passato non poteva dar luogo a una mia lettera, e per ragioni già spiegate nel programma, questo nuovo diario non ha potuto veder la luce prima d' oggi.

Ringrazio di tutto cuore i miei buoni e generosi compatriotti per le tante dimostrazioni d' affetto e simpatia, che han voluto farmi allora quando, dopo la mia elezione a loro rappresentante nel Corpo Legislativo della Patria, sono stato a render grazie a loro per la fiducia in me riposta. Le feste, che mi han preparate, mi commossero, ma, sapendo di non averle meritate, non possono essere da me ascritte a compenso dei poverissimi servizi, che io ho potuto fin adesso render loro, ma a ragione li ritengo come incitamento a bene operare, e come un potente incoraggiamento a continuare la difesa dei nostri diritti. E qual cosa potrebbe meglio incoraggiare i Tribuni della Plebe a sostenere la guerra contro gli usurpatori del potere, che di sapersi fiancheggiati e protetti da tutte le classi della popolazione? Sì, io torno a promettere di adoperarmi a tutt' uomo per meritare allo stesso tempo e la fiducia dei concittadini, particolarmente dei buoni e generosi Gozitani, e le dimostrazioni d' affetto, onde essi mi colmarono. Li ringrazio intanto dal profondo del cuore per quanto fecero per me, e voglio operare, coll' aiuto di Dio, che essi non

Ringrazio ancora i Molto Reverendi

The *Partito Anti-Riformista* became the *Partito Nazionale* with the specific objective to strive for a better constitution. It was successful and through *Letters Patent* of 12 December 1887 – the fourth Constitution granted by the British to Malta – the elected members gained a majority in the Council and were granted the right to enact legislation and control local finances.

The number of electors in Gozo, as evinced from the electoral register published in the *Malta Government Gazette* (24 Feb 1888, p.91-99), had climbed to 1621 as the annual income granting one the right to vote was lowered from €19.40 to €14. Besides these there were 113 persons resident in Malta who had a vote in Gozo. Elections were held between 1 and 3 March 1888. Gozo was the tenth district and there were only four voting posts: at Victoria, l-Għarb, ix-Xewkija and in-Nadur. When Fortunato Mizzi made it known that he would once again contest the Gozo seat, no one dared to challenge him. It was a well-known fact that all Gozo was with Mizzi and that it would be useless to contest him. The *Partito Nazionale* of Mizzi set a record by winning all seats. The Council was inaugurated by General Sir John Lintorn Arabin Simmons, Governor of Malta, on 21 March 1888; however, it functioned for less than a year and a half as, due to a multitude of reasons, the members resigned.

Elections were held once again on 24 and 25 September 1889, but Mizzi did not contest. In an *Indirizzo ai Gozitani*, he informed the Gozitans that he was retiring for health reasons as he longed for some peace from the frenetic life full of tensions of a politician. He had partly fulfilled his political vision with the acquisition of the 1887 Constitution and a representative Council. He continued to play a role in local politics through the newspaper *Malta* for many more years.

The Appeal of the Gozitans

When elections were called for 28 and 29 September 1898, Mizzi was adamant not to enter politics again. On 15 August 1898, a group of admirers of Mizzi from Gozo started to circulate a petition to convince him to change his mind (published in *Malta* – 24 Aug 1898) (see Figure 6).

The petition opened by reminding him that since his exit from politics, the political freedoms laboriously

Figure 5: The text of the expression of gratitude to the Gozitans by Fortunato Mizzi. Courtesy NLG/Paul Falzon – this facsimile, formerly unknown, is being published for the first time.

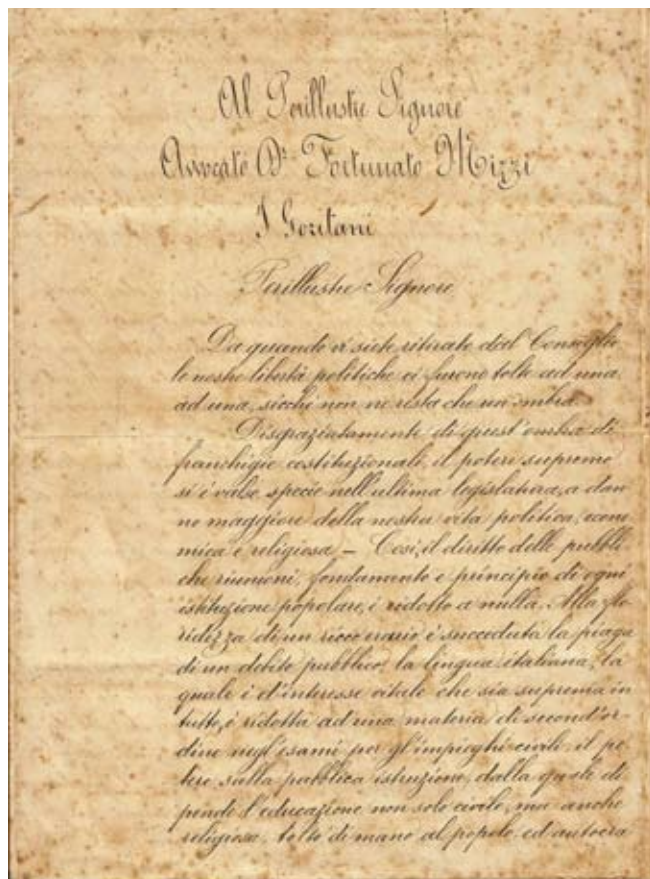


Figure 6: Petition to convince Mizzi to contest the election of 1898. Courtesy MAPN/Richard Muscat.

gained in the previous decades had been reduced one after another. The supreme power, a reference to the Imperial Government, was dominating all sectors of the political, economic, and social structure of the island. Public debt was on the increase and the right to public meetings had been squashed. The Italian language – *la quale è d'interesse vitale che sia suprema in tutto* – had been downgraded. The running of public instruction, upon which both civic and religious education depended, had been taken away from the people and passed over to a person who was neither of the same religion, nor Maltese. Private property was threatened on the pretext of military requirements and public hygiene.

Confronted by these threats, it was of utter importance that Malta would be led by an honest person full of vigour and energy. *La lotta nella quale per tanti anni siete stato il duce*, the struggle of which you were the undisputed leader for many years, bears witness to the fact that you are endowed with these qualities, they affirmed.

They proceeded: For this reason, *ardentemente*, (from the depth of our heart), we appeal to you to once again accept to represent Gozo on the Council.

Remember that the gifts with which you are endowed to be il *Duce del popolo*, (the undisputed leader of the people), were received from Divine Providence and when it trusted these gifts upon you, it did so in order to be its instrument.

You were the defender of our religious and political rights in difficult times when everything seemed lost. We do not wish that in the future you will have the misgiving that you did not cooperate with the plan of Divine Providence. For this reason, it is imperative that you undertake this generous sacrifice – concluded the petition.

The petition was signed by 95 priests, amongst them all the members of the Cathedral Chapter – the first signature is that of Archdeacon Ġużeppi Mizzi – and all the parish priests of Gozo. It was also signed by 70 other professionals and merchants. Dr Isidoro Xuereb, Gozo's leading lawyer, head these signatures. All the Gozitans that counted signed the petition.

Fortunato Mizzi was convinced and he once again contested the election on the Gozo district and got 346 votes, the absolute majority of the Gozitans that had a vote. He contested again in March 1899, in September 1900, and in January 1904. In the last three elections, people did not vote as candidates in Malta and Gozo were not contested.

The Council was hardly functional in those years due to one division after another on expenditure. The 1887 Constitution was withdrawn on 3 June 1903 and replaced by another, the fifth, a shameful document that put the political situation in Malta back to 1849. Gozo became again the eighth district.

In January 1905, Fortunato came up with the idea of a political union and the *Associazione Politica Maltese* came into being with the aim to pave the way for a popular election in the country. Fortunato was elected president, but he died suddenly on 18 May 1905.

Religious Family

Fortunato and his wife Sofia nurtured an exemplary and religious family. He was active in the *Pija Unjoni tad-Duluri* founded at the Church of Stella

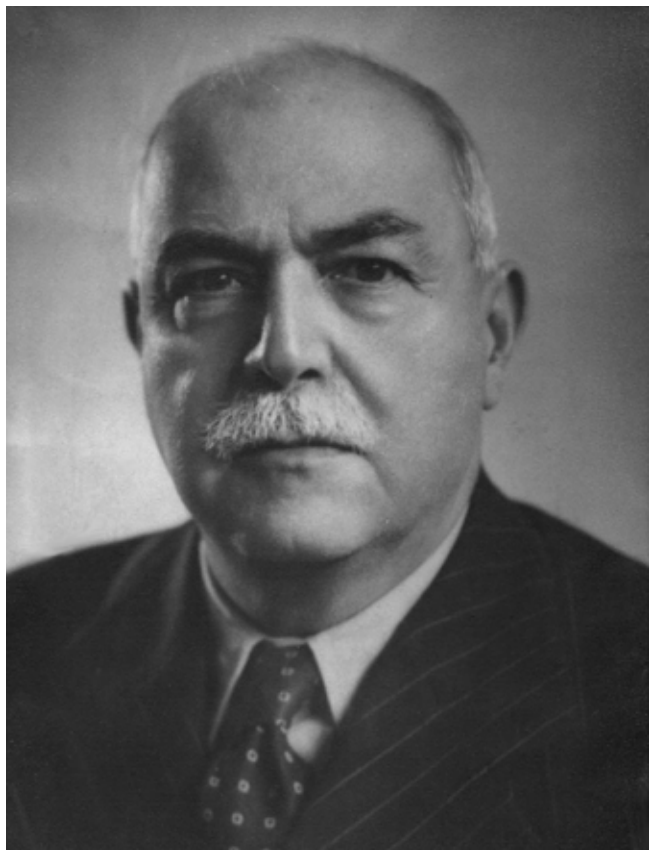


Figure 7: Enrico Mizzi. Courtesy MAPN/Richard Muscat.



Figure 8: Patri Fortunato. Courtesy MAPN/Richard Muscat.

Maris, Sliema. His son, Enrico, eventually became Prime Minister (20 September 1885 – 20 December 1950) (see Figure 7), they had two other sons both of whom joined the Franciscan Capuchins. Patri Fortunato (5 July 1880 – 23 July 1945), ordained

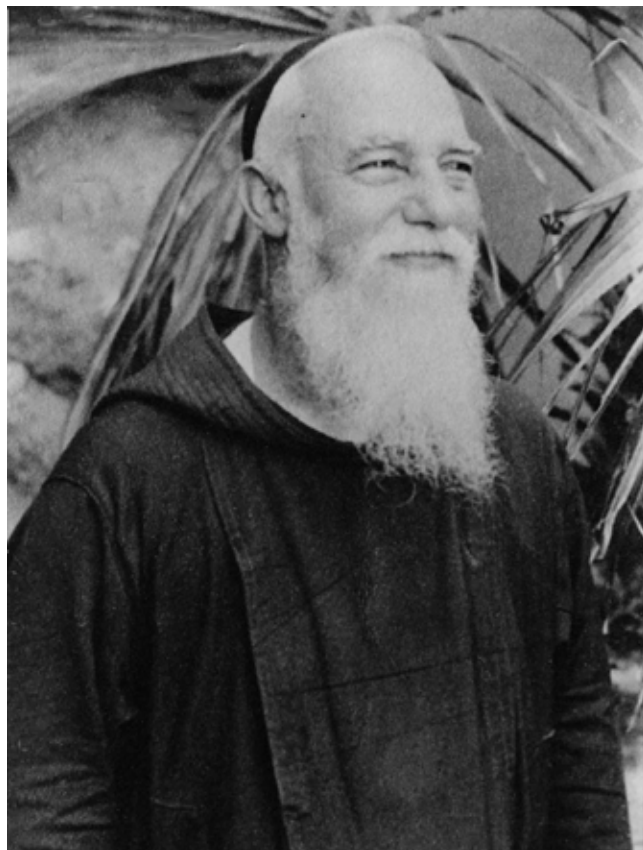


Figure 9: Patri Ang. Courtesy MAPN/Richard Muscat.

priest in 1906, fulfilled his pastoral mission in Ottawa, Canada, and afterwards on the island of Corsica (see Figure 8). His brother, Patri Ang (22 October 1888 – 16 May 1957), ordained priest in Burgos, Spain, on 20 December 1913, was for several years a missionary in Ethiopia and later on in India where he died and was buried (see Figure 9). He is the author of the researched book *L'Apostolato Maltese*, a biographical dictionary of the missionaries hailing from Malta.

Conclusion

Slowly, one step after another, the *Associazione Politica Maltese* and other political movements got stronger and their determination led to major achievements in the political and social sphere. It was finally crowned by the attainment of Independence on 21 September 1964.

Joseph Bezzina studied at the University of Malta and the Pontifical Gregorian University, Rome. He was ordained priest by Pope Paul VI in 1957. He was for many years Head of Department of Church History at the University of Malta and Senior Lecturer in history in the Faculty of Theology at the same University and at the Sacred Heart Seminary, Gozo. He is the Assistant National Archivist of Malta and Head at its Gozo Section that he founded in 1989.

THE ECONOMIC SITUATION IN GOZO

Statistical Findings and Opinions*

LINO BRIGUGLIO

1. INTRODUCTION

This article has two main sections. The first section presents data on the Gozitan economy, derived mostly from the NSO publications. The second section summarises the opinions of twenty-one Gozitan economic and social leaders expressed during face-to-face interviews that the present author conducted with these persons.

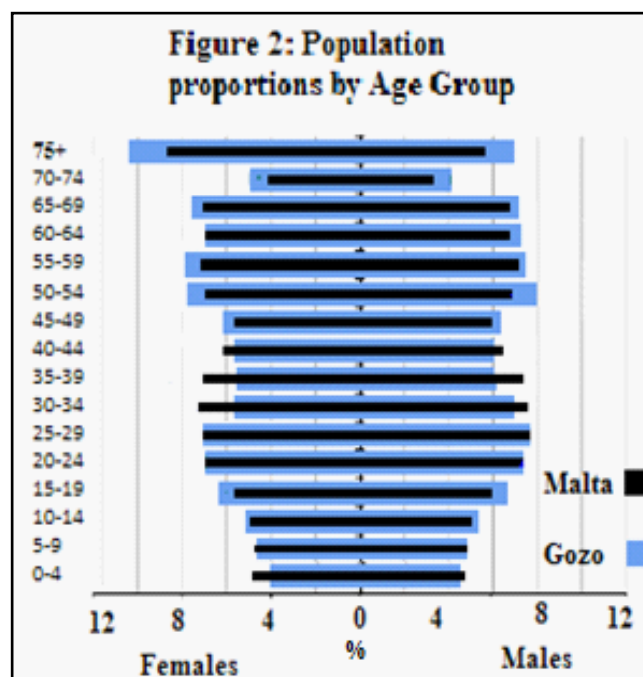
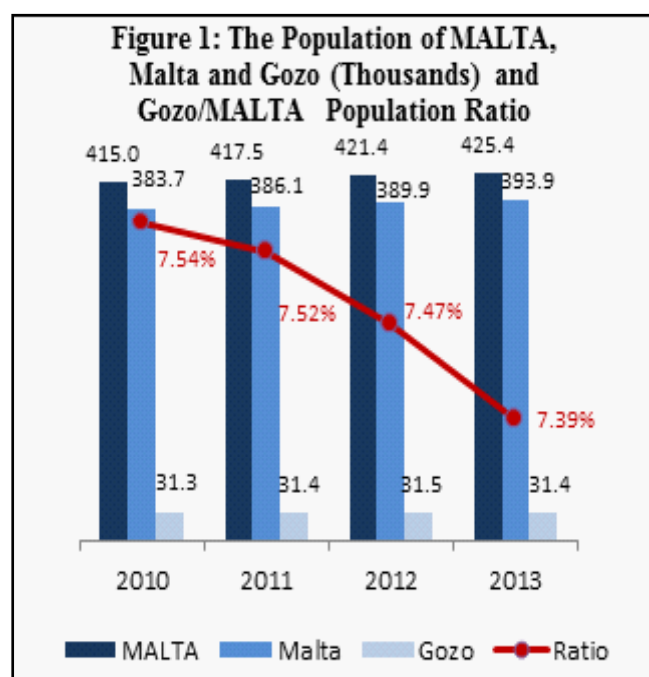
In what follows, the term “Maltese Islands” which includes Malta and Gozo, is written as MALTA (in uppercase letters), the term for “the island of Malta” is written as Malta (upper and lower case letters), and the term for “Gozo and Comino” is written as Gozo.

2. STATISTICAL FINDINGS

Population statistics

Figure 1 shows that the population of Gozo, which amounted to 31.4 thousand in 2013, was about 7.4% of that of MALTA. The table also shows that this ratio tended to decrease slightly between 2010 and 2013. The proportion of males and females on both islands was approximately equal.

Gozo has a higher proportion of older persons and of teenagers than Malta as can be seen from Figure 2. However the proportion of Gozitan teenagers is likely to change as in recent years the birth rate in Gozo was lower than that of Malta.



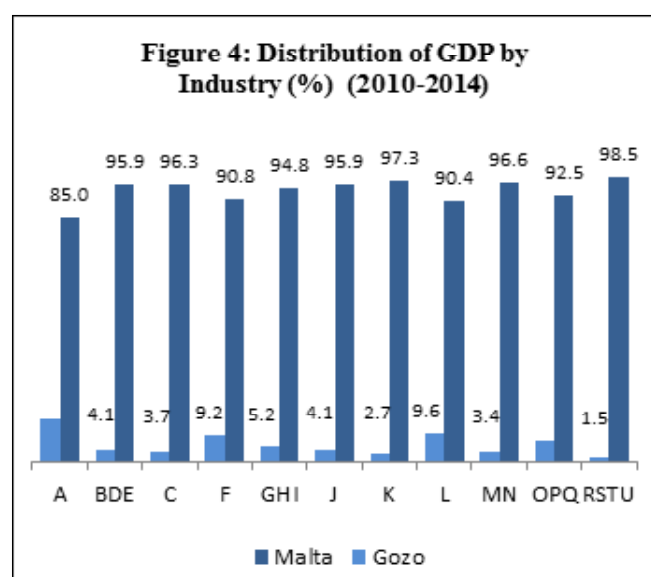
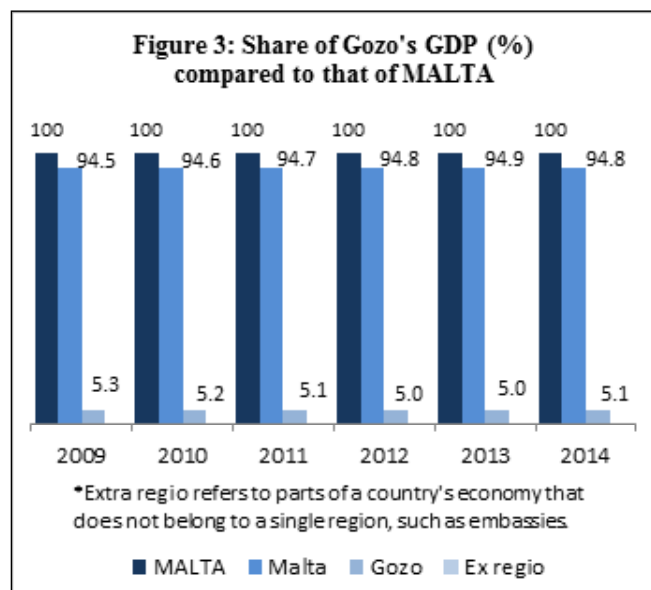
* This paper formed the basis of the presentation delivered during a conference organised by the Malta Council for Economic and Social Development on 23 October 2015 Grand Hotel, Gozo.

¹ The data was retrieved from the NSO sources as follows:

[http://nso.gov.mt/en/publicatons/Publications_by_Unit/Documents/02_Regional_Statistics_\(Gozo_Office\)/Gozo_in_Figures_2015.pdf](http://nso.gov.mt/en/publicatons/Publications_by_Unit/Documents/02_Regional_Statistics_(Gozo_Office)/Gozo_in_Figures_2015.pdf)
[http://nso.gov.mt/en/News_Releases/View_by_Unit/Unit_02/Regional_Statistics_\(Gozo_Office\)/Documents/2014/News2014_242.pdf](http://nso.gov.mt/en/News_Releases/View_by_Unit/Unit_02/Regional_Statistics_(Gozo_Office)/Documents/2014/News2014_242.pdf) and at
[http://nso.gov.mt/en/News_Releases/View_by_Unit/Unit_02/Regional_Statistics_\(Gozo_Office\)/Documents/2015/News2015_238.pdf](http://nso.gov.mt/en/News_Releases/View_by_Unit/Unit_02/Regional_Statistics_(Gozo_Office)/Documents/2015/News2015_238.pdf).

Gozo's share of GDP

In 2014, the Gozitan GDP amounted to €409.9 million, whereas that of MALTA amounted to €8106.1 million indicating that the share of GDP



- A = Agriculture, forestry and fishing
- B,D,E = Mining and quarrying; electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply; water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities
- C = Manufacturing
- F = Construction
- G,H,I = Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles; transportation and storage; accommodation and food service activities
- J = Information and communication
- K = Financial and insurance activities
- L = Real estate activities
- O,P,Q = Public administration and defence; compulsory social security; education; human health and social work activities
- R,S,T,U = Arts, entertainment and recreation; repair of household goods and other services

generated in Gozo was 5.1%, as shown in Figure 3. This means that the proportion of Gozo's GDP was lower than the population proportion. This could be real or could be due to the possibility that the informal economy in Gozo is relatively larger than that of Malta. The share of Gozo's GDP has tended to decrease slightly since 2009, as shown in Figure 3, due to faster growth rate in Malta.

However agriculture, construction and real estate in Gozo generate a proportionately higher contribution to the economy of the island when compared to the share of these sectors in the economy of Malta, as shown in Figure 4. Tourism, which contributes to the economy of Gozo more than it does to the economy of Malta is part of the GHI and RSTU industries and is not shown separately in Figure 4. Thus although overall the share of GDP per capita is lower in Gozo than it is in Malta, the share of these three broad industry groupings is relatively higher in Gozo per capita.

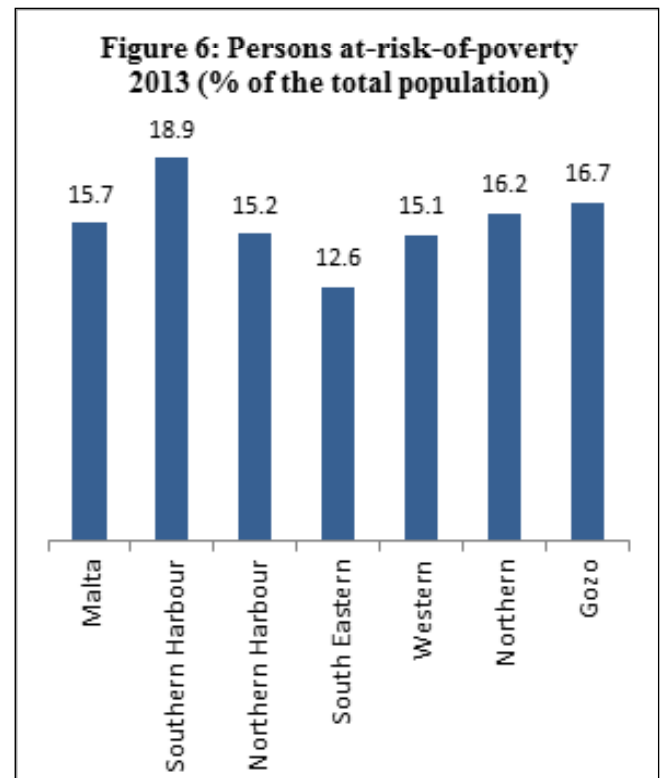
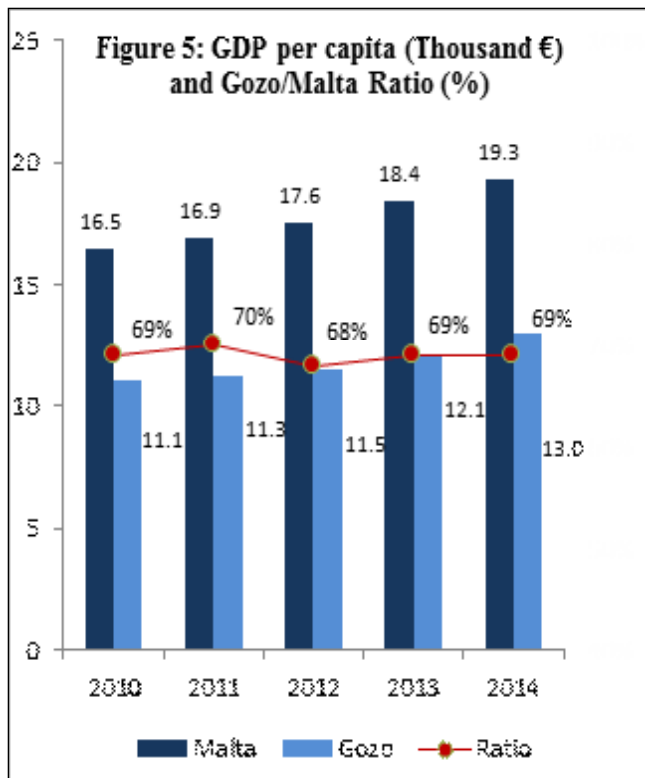
Income

Gozo's GDP per capita was about €13,000 in 2014, which amounts to about 69% of Malta's, as shown in Figure 5. This could be partly explained by the fact that wage rates per hour in Gozo tend to be lower than those earned in Malta in any given industry and also because the higher dependence on agriculture, construction and tourism is likely to translate itself into a higher proportion of low-paid jobs.

The percentage of the population at risk of poverty in Gozo was higher than that pertaining to the average for Malta in 2013 (as shown in Figure 6), although it is lower than that of Malta's Southern Harbour region. According to NSO statistics the relative difference between Malta and Gozo in this regard tended to vary over time.

Employment

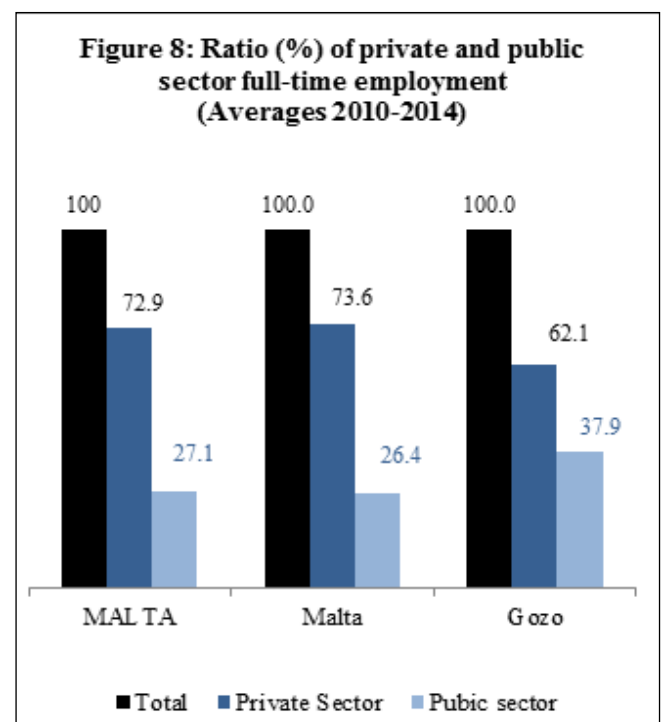
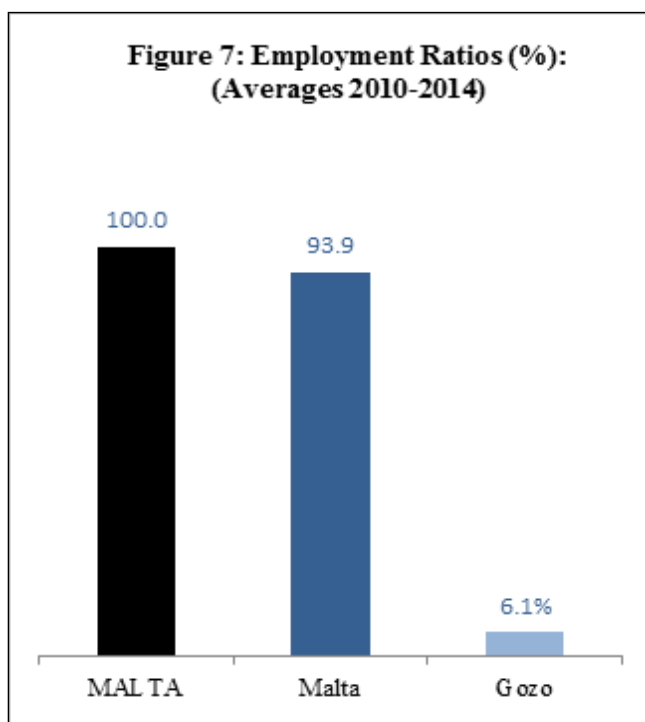
Average full-time employment between 2010 and 2014 was 154 thousand in Malta and Gozo, of which 9.3 thousand were employed in Gozo. Figure 7 shows that the employment share of Gozo was 6.1% of that of MALTA, which is lower than the proportion of the population.



In Gozo, public sector employment is almost one-and-a-half times as large in relative terms, as that of Malta, as shown in Figure 8. Public sector employment in Gozo has tended to increase at a faster rate than that of Malta.

Between 2010 and 2014, most growth in full-

time employment in Gozo occurred in the private sector, although there was substantial increase in public sector employment as well. Public sector employment between 2010 and 2014 grew faster than private sector employment in Gozo. However, overall, in Gozo, the growth of employment was slower than Malta's.

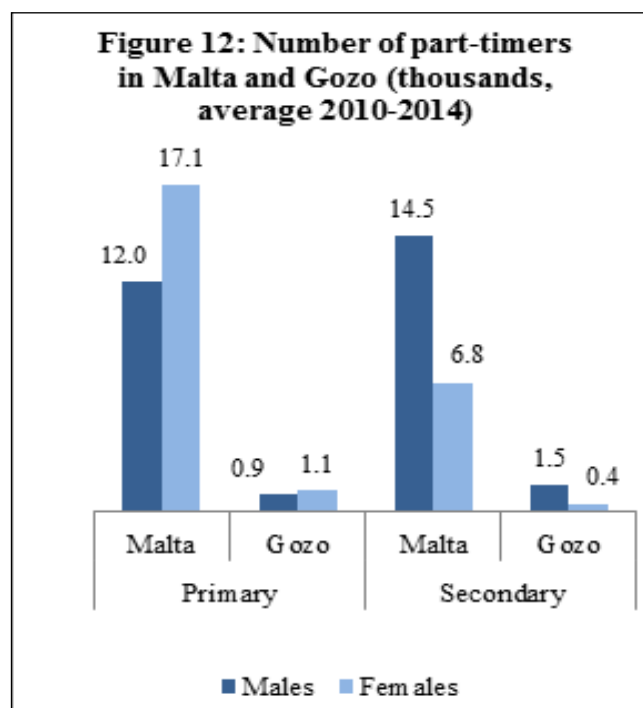
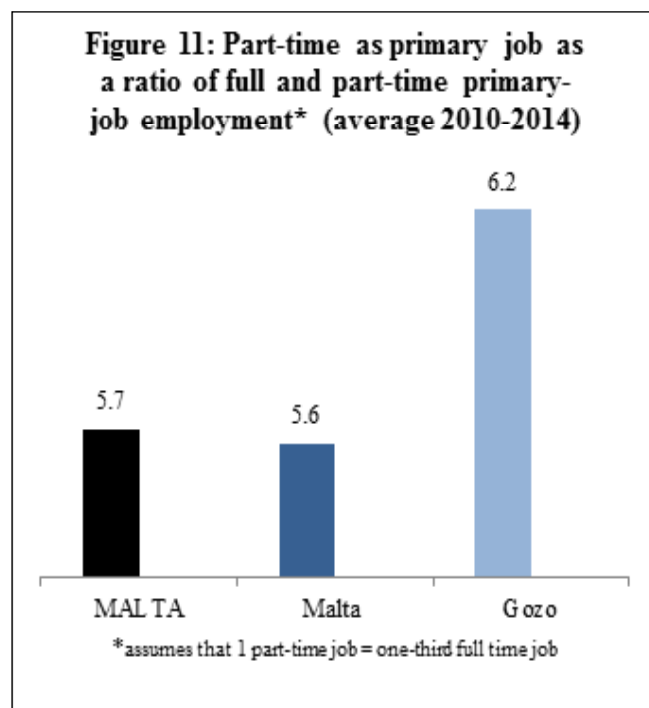
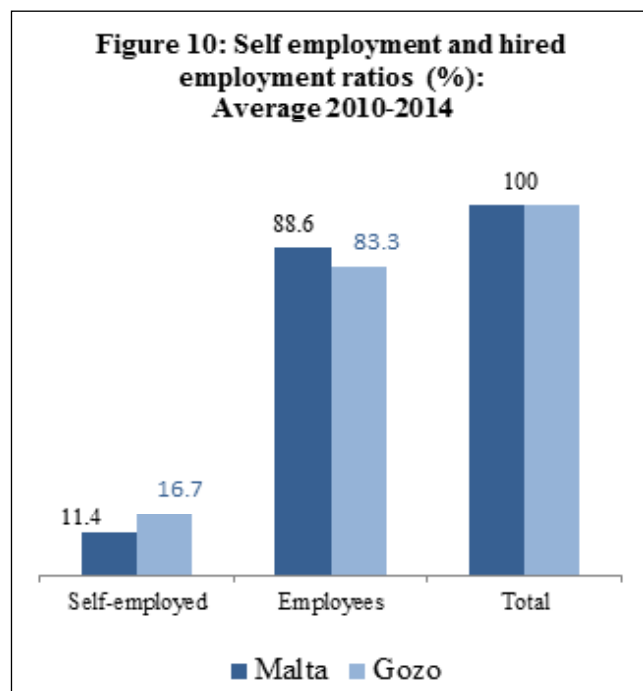
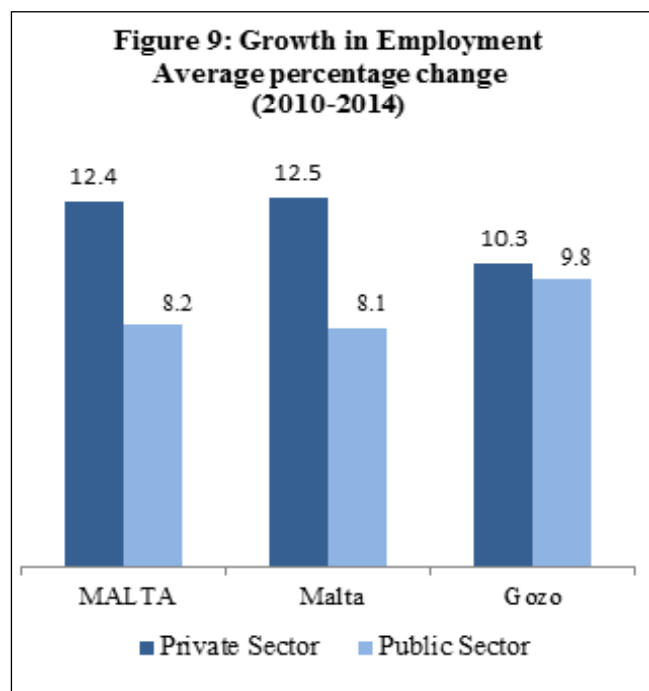


Between 2010 and 2014, the proportion of self-employed workers in Gozo was markedly higher than that of Malta, as can be seen from Figure 10. This possibly reflects the importance of small family owned businesses in Gozo, particularly in agriculture.

During the same period, the share of part-time employment as a primary job was higher in Gozo when compared to Malta as a percentage of all those in employment as primary job as shown in Figure 11.

Figure 12 shows that there were more women than men who worked part-time as a primary job in Malta as well as in Gozo. In the case of part-time work as a secondary job, there were more men than women on both islands.

Figure 13 shows that the labour force in Gozo has increased by about 900 (about 2.5% annually) between 2010 and 2014. As a result the participation rate in Gozo (employed and unemployed persons as a percentage of the working age population) has



also increased during the same period, but remains much lower than that of Malta.

The unemployment rate is much higher in Gozo than it is in Malta as can be seen from Figure 16. It hovered around 7.2% between 2010 and 2014, but decreased to 6.9% in 2014.

Figure 13: Size of the Labour Force (Persons)

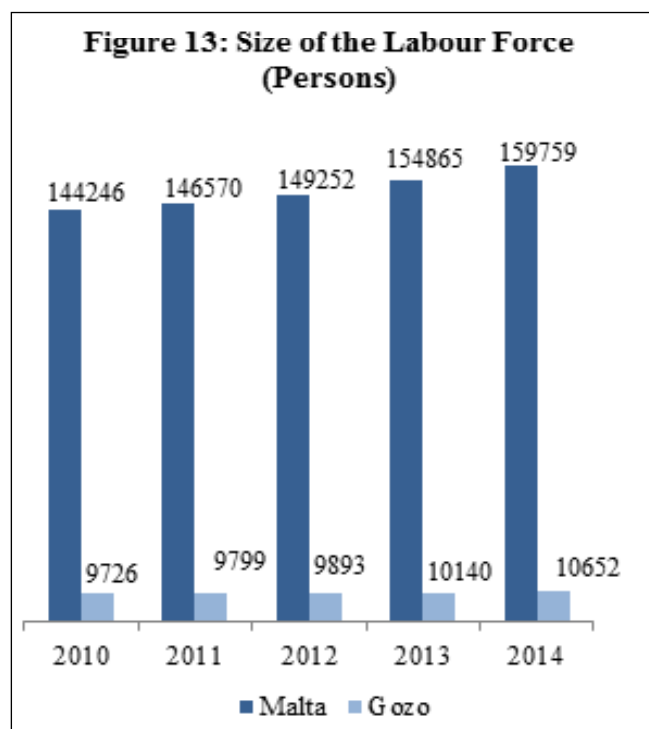
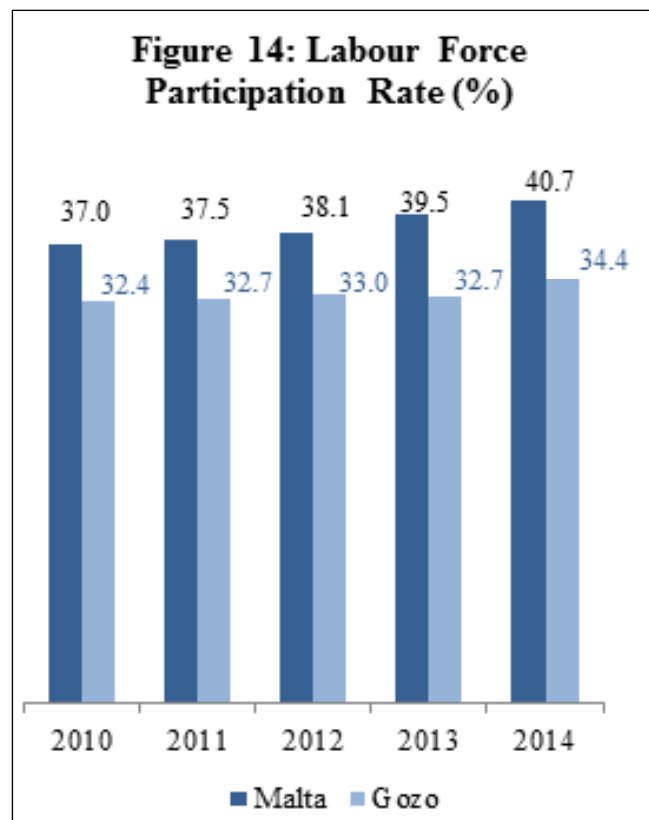


Figure 14: Labour Force Participation Rate (%)



Education

The number of University of Malta and MCAST graduates per thousand population has more than doubled between 2010 and 2014 in Malta and Gozo, with Gozo registering a more rapid increase, as can be seen from Figure 17.

In relative terms, there were more Gozitan graduates than Maltese in 2013/14 at MCAST as well as at the UoM. However many Gozitan graduates end up working in Malta due to lack of job opportunities in Gozo.

On an annual average, since 2010, there were about 1120 Gozitan students following courses at the UoM. About 70% of Gozitan students since 2010 studied subjects related to commerce, law,

Figure 15: Unemployed persons (number)

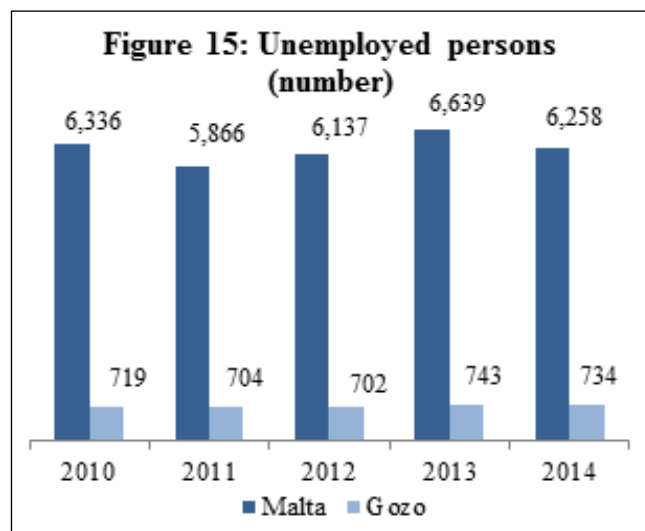
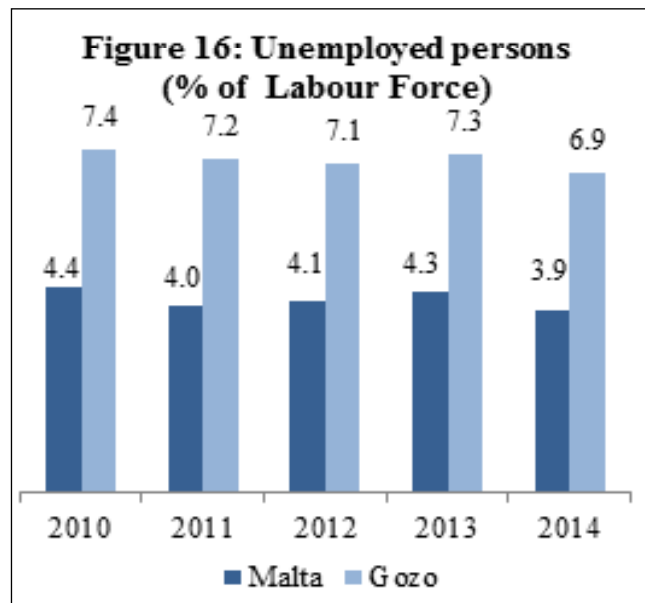
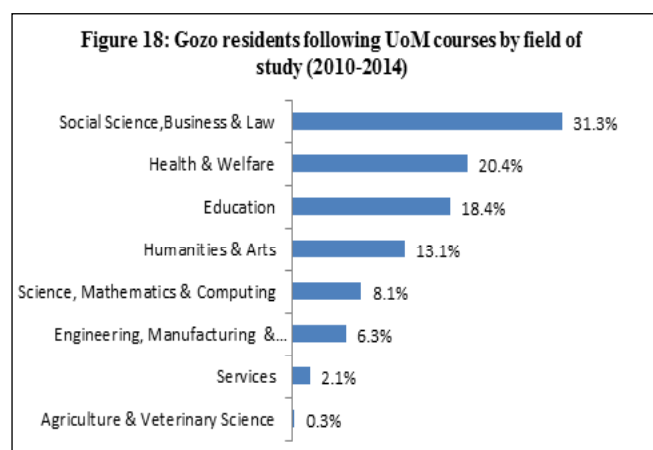
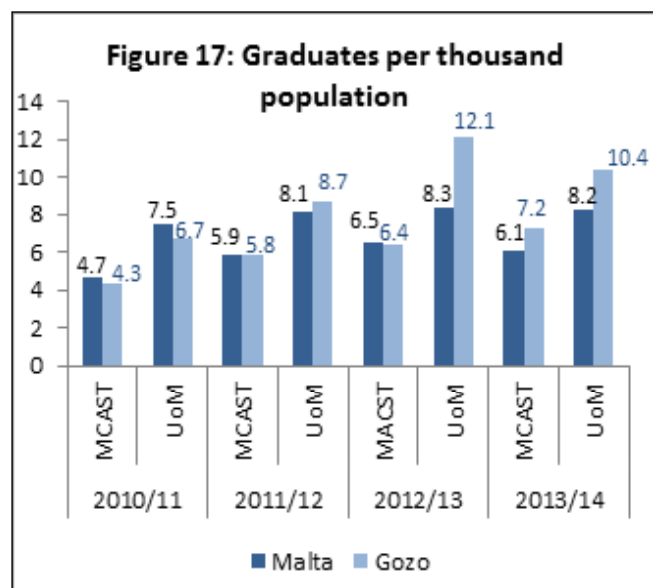


Figure 16: Unemployed persons (% of Labour Force)



education and health, as shown in Figure 18. A large proportion of graduates in these subjects are not likely to find employment in Gozo and opt to work in Malta or abroad.



3. INTERVIEWS WITH POLITICAL AND SOCIAL LEADERS

The interviews

During the week starting 12 October 2015, the present author conducted interviews with 21 Gozitan economic and social leaders to seek their views about the current economic and social situation in Gozo. No interviews were conducted with persons involved directly in politics. This was not a scientific opinion poll and the selected interviewees were persons who the present author considered to be highly influential in the Gozitan economic and social life.

The questions asked to the respondents are presented in the Appendix. The questions related to the general political environment, the economy, employment and the links between Malta and Gozo. The respondents were informed by the present author that their names would not be divulged.

The general political environment

The respondents were asked to state their views on political governance in Gozo. Fifteen respondents stated that overall political governance on the island was satisfactory. However, most of these respondents expressed the view that although many plans and mission statements have been drawn up for Gozo, a long-term social and economic development strategy for Gozo has never been satisfactorily implemented and this problem has been ongoing under successive governments.

Nineteen respondents commented on the fact that government representatives in Gozo tend to micro-manage, with some stating that this was needed to ensure that things are done while others felt government representatives tend to micro-manage for political mileage.

The general economic environment

When asked to express their views on the economic situation in Gozo, sixteen respondents felt that overall the Gozitan economy was progressing fairly well, although incomes generated in Gozo were lower than those generated in Malta and unemployment was relatively higher than that of Malta.

A major economic problem in Gozo identified by eighteen respondents was that a large number of Gozitan young people seek employment outside the island and therefore more pro-active measures are needed to reverse this trend. A problem that was often mentioned by respondents related to the outflow of graduates from Gozo to Malta, due to lack of job opportunities. This is considered to be a very worrisome problem mostly because Gozo could eventually be depopulated of its brightest sons.

Another problem mentioned by thirteen respondents again related to the lack of long-term economic strategy by political decision makers, and this was considered to have led to excessive dependence

on tourism, low paid and precarious jobs, and to a situation where the island now has too many eggs in one basket.

The education system

Sixteen respondents stated that the educational system was, overall, satisfactory. However, thirteen of these felt that, principally at secondary level, education in Gozo is somewhat divorced from Gozitan economic and social realities.

In this regard, respondents mentioned that very little, if at all, was being done to prepare future workers for entrepreneurship in agriculture so as to exploit the agricultural potential on the island, and that a one-size fits all educational approach for Malta and Gozo neglects the fact that Gozo has special needs. The education system should take these needs into account.

Fourteen respondents were of the view that an incentive scheme should be put in place to encourage tertiary education students to follow studies associated with the particular needs of Gozo, including entrepreneurship and innovation in agriculture, IT and tourism.

As the situation stands at present, these respondents argued, most tertiary education students are not

likely to find a job in Gozo. The end result will not only be depopulation of Gozo but also a decline in consumption expenditure of those young people who “emigrate” to Malta.

Permanent fixed link between Malta and Gozo

The attitudes towards a permanent fixed link between Malta and Gozo (bridge or tunnel) differed markedly between respondents.

Fourteen respondents were in favour of (or not against) the fixed permanent link, arguing that this would encourage Gozitans to continue living in Gozo, given that even if one works in Malta it would be feasible, in terms of gained time and reduction of discomfort, to work in Malta and live in Gozo.

Also, with a fixed link, commuting for business meetings will take a shorter time and will reduce discomfort for business people. A fixed link could also reduce the disadvantages of manufacturing firms in transporting materials to Gozo and some such firms could locate in Gozo, reducing the downsides associated with Gozo’s double insularity.

All respondents in favour of a fixed link said that such a link should be accompanied by proper



An artist's impression of how the Gozo bridge link would look.

infrastructural planning as otherwise it will cause traffic chaos. In addition these respondents argued, the tolls should not be prohibitive.

Seven respondents were of the view that the fixed link would be harmful to the Gozitan economy as this could reduce stay-over tourists and would also encourage more Gozitans to seek jobs in Malta. The fixed link could also harm the image and charm of Gozo as a small island. Three of these respondents were of the view that a fixed link would not be feasible economically and might lead to high tolls (charges) for those who use it.

One respondent said that a fixed link would be a sign of failure in that it would signal that Gozo has given up hope of generating jobs on the island.

The sea-link between Malta and Gozo

Eighteen respondents stated that the sea link between Malta and Gozo is suitable for tourists and leisure visitors, and that such a service is generally efficient and reliable for such people.

Most of these same respondents argued that the current sea link is however, not suitable for students, workers and business people who need to travel to Malta, as there is too much waste of time waiting on the quays. A fast link between Gozo

and Valletta and Sliema is needed for this purpose. These same respondents argued that a catamaran service, similar to the one that was discontinued some years back, is needed in this regard.

The air link between Malta and Gozo

Eighteen respondents stated that an air link (small aeroplane or helicopter) with Malta would be beneficial for Gozo, mostly because this would reduce the discomfort for travellers associated with landing in Malta from abroad and then having to take road and sea transport to Gozo. In addition the travel time needed for business meetings in Malta by Gozitan entrepreneurs would also be reduced.

Some of these respondents expressed the view that a possible fixed-wing connection with Sicily could also attract better quality tourism to the island from the continent.

Four respondents stated that a fixed-wing connection would require a runway which could harm the environment.

Mismatches in the labour market

Fourteen respondents explained that the catering sector often finds it difficult to attract Gozitan



A fast link between Gozo and Valletta and Sliema is needed.

employees and has to employ foreign persons for two main reasons, namely (1) catering establishments including hotels often pay low wage rates and (2) the workers are expected to work long hours, sometimes on the basis of an unpredictable time-table. Also, due to seasonality, job security in the tourism sector is weak.

However six respondents, including those with an interest in the tourism sector, said that the problem lies in the fact that Gozitan young persons without tertiary education prefer jobs with the government, where they could work five-days a week and have free evenings, whereas catering jobs often require weekend and evening work.

The temporary employment scheme

Fifteen respondents, when commenting on the temporary 5-month employment scheme launched by the Ministry for Gozo, stated that the purpose of this scheme and an earlier scheme could have beneficial effects as it could provide some training to participants and also could improve cleanliness in Gozo.

However seventeen respondents were of the view that the scheme may have various downsides, including that it may send the message that this is an opportunity for public sector employment.

Some respondents said that some participants in this scheme left their private sector job in order to join the scheme, hoping to land a permanent government job.

Ideas to generate jobs in Gozo

When asked to suggest measures as to how employment could be generated in Gozo, various ideas were put forward.

Nineteen respondents were in favour of the government offering strong fiscal incentives to attract investment in Gozo, given the current disadvantages of locating on the island. In this regard the success story RS2 p.l.c, was mentioned, where the company has invested €1 million to extend its Mosta Office in Gozo and in two years it will employ 100 workers.

Niche tourism was also mentioned in this regard. Four respondents stated that if Gozo wished to

develop medical tourism it has to attract the best doctors and other medical practitioners, and should be prepared to pay high remuneration rates to attract such specialists. This would render Gozo attractive for medical and rehabilitation services.

Fourteen respondents commented on the fibre-optic connection, which, they stated, was greatly needed if Gozo is to develop its IT operations and attract large scale investment in IT-based services. This link was promised but nothing has been done so far in this regard (possibly because it is very costly).

Another idea mentioned by three respondents included the creation of a separate Gozo organisation to attract investment, working closely with Malta Enterprise, as is the case in tourism, where the Gozo Tourism Association works closely with the Malta Tourism Association. Some respondents stated that Malta Enterprise does not do enough to encourage investment in Gozo.

4. CONCLUSION

From the statistical evidence produced by the NSO it emerges that in Gozo the unemployment rate is higher, income per capita is lower and the proportion of employment in the public sector is higher, when compared to the situation in Malta. These differences would probably have been more pronounced had the Gozitans who found employment in Malta had opted to seek employment in Gozo.

From the interviews carried out by the present author with social and economic leaders in Gozo, it emerged that there is a general perception that there is no clear strategic social and economic direction, that this has been an ongoing problem with successive governments, and that government representatives tend to micro-manage, with positive and negative effects.

A proposal that was very forcefully made by most respondents is that the government should put in place strong fiscal incentives to attract investment in Gozo, as a pro-active measure to reverse the trend of young persons seeking employment outside Gozo.

APPENDIX: THE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS AND THE RESPONSES

Question	Main responses (numbers in brackets refer to number of respondents)
1. State your views on political governance in Gozo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall political governance in Gozo is satisfactory (15). • The government representatives tend to micro-manage, to ensure that things are implemented (6). • The government representatives tend to micro-manage, to gain political mileage (13). • Although various plans and mission statements have been drawn up for Gozo, government representatives do not in practice implement a long-term strategy relating to social and economic development of Gozo (13).
2. State your views on the economy of Gozo.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Gozitan economy is progressing fairly well (16) • More pro-active measures are needed to reverse the current situation where a large number of Gozitan young persons are seeking employment outside the island (18). • The economy depends excessively on tourism, low paid and precarious jobs, and to a situation where the island now has too many eggs in one basket (13).
3. State your views on the educational system in Gozo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The educational system in Gozo is overall satisfactory (15) • Mainly at secondary level, the education system is divorced from Gozitan realities (13). • An incentive scheme should be put in place to encourage tertiary education students to follow studies associated with the particular needs of Gozo, including entrepreneurship and innovation in agriculture, IT, and tourism (14).
4. State your views on the fixed link between Malta and Gozo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The fixed link is needed as it improves connectivity between Malta and Gozo and this will benefit Gozitan students and business people who visit Malta island frequently (14). • The fixed link would be harmful to the Gozitan economy as this could reduce stay-over tourists (7). • The fixed link would be harmful to the Gozitan economy as it would encourage more Gozitans to seek jobs in Malta, to the detriment of the Gozitan economy and could lead to depopulation of the island (8). • The fixed link could harm the image and charm of Gozo as a small island (8). • The fixed link would not be feasible economically and might lead to high tolls (charges) for those who use it (5).
5. State your vies on the current sea link between Malta and Gozo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The sea link between Malta and Gozo is suitable for tourists and leisure visitors, and such a service is generally efficient and reliable for such people (18). • The current sea link is however, not suitable for business people, workers and students, as there is too much time wasting waiting on the quays. A fast link between Gozo and Valletta and Sliema is needed for this purpose (19).
6. State your views on the possibility of an air link between Malta and Gozo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An air link between Malta and Sicily would be beneficial for tourism in Gozo (18). • A fixed-wing connection with Sicily could also attract better quality tourism to the island from the continent (15). • A fixed-wing connection would require a runway which could harm the environment (4).

<p>7. State your views on job mismatches in Gozo</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Even though considerable unemployment exists in Gozo, the catering sector often finds it difficult to attract Gozitan employees and has to employ foreign persons because catering establishments including hotels often pay low wage rates and the workers are expected to work long hours, sometimes on the basis of an unpredictable time-table. Also, this is due to seasonality, leading to weak job security in the tourism sector (14). • The problem lies in the fact that young people prefer jobs with the government, where they could work five days-a-week and have free evenings, whereas catering jobs often require weekend and evening work (6).
<p>8. Do you approve of the 5-month temporary employment scheme launched by the Ministry for Gozo. What is the main reason for this?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The purpose of this scheme and an earlier scheme could have beneficial effects as it could provide some training to participants and also could improve cleanliness in Gozo (15). • The scheme may send the wrong message that there are opportunities for public sector employment (17).
<p>9. State your views on what needs to be done to generate jobs in Gozo</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The government should offer strong fiscal incentives to attract investment in Gozo, given the current disadvantages of locating on the island (19). • Medical tourism in Gozo could generate considerable well-paid employment but in order to succeed the best practitioners have to be attracted by paying them high pay rates (4). • In Gozo there should be a separate organisation to attract investment, working closely with Malta Enterprise (3) • A fibre-optic connection is greatly needed if Gozo is to develop its IT operations and attract large scale investment in IT-based services (14).

Lino Briguglio is Professor of Economics at the University of Malta. He was the Director of the University Gozo Centre between 1992 and 2012.

The Queen and Gozo: Elizabeth II on the Island of Calypso

GEOFFREY G. ATTARD

Introduction

The romantic story that evolved between the then Princess Elizabeth and her young and dashing husband Prince Philip Duke of Edinburgh on the island of Malta with Villa Guardamangia as their headquarters is no unknown fact. Tens of biographies of Her Majesty The Queen refer to this reality and all lovers of the British Royal Family are aware of the strong connection between the Queen and the George Cross Island. It is in this context that the Queen's short trips to Gozo are to be taken into consideration.

Princess Elizabeth on Gozo

The future Queen Elizabeth II visited Gozo for the first time as Duchess of Edinburgh on the 2nd of April 1951. On this occasion the Princess unveiled a marble plaque at the hospital which was to be known as the Craig Hospital and which is now referred to as the Gozo General Hospital (Gauci, 1993: 153). Also on this very day, Prince Philip and Princess Elizabeth, who were then Duke

and Duchess of Edinburgh, visited the village of Ta' Sannat. They stopped in front of the house of Ġużeppa Debrincat, the archpriest's mother known as tax-Xelina, and admired some young women working lace. Ġużeppa offered a piece of lace work to the Princess; later on they went to Ta' Ċenċ where the large water reservoir was being built. When the Princess became Queen, a marble plaque commemorating this visit was attached to the wall of the house of Ġużeppa Debrincat (Bezzina, 1989: 498).

Visiting Gozo as Queen

Princess Elizabeth visited Gozo as Queen of Great Britain and N. Ireland as well as Queen of Malta on the 7th of May 1954 (Gauci, 1993: 154). This was the first visit of Elizabeth II to Gozo as monarch in her own right. She had succeeded her father King George VI who had bestowed the George Cross Award to the island nation on the 15th of April 1942. This is a very important day in the history of Gozo because it was on this day that Her Majesty The Queen unveiled the monument of Christ the King



The Queen's visit to Gozo in 1954 (Photo courtesy of the Times of Malta).

at it-Tokk, now known as Independence Square, in Victoria (Gozo). The occasion was immortalised through various photos featuring this historical event.

Strangely enough, the Queen's visit to Gozo in 1967 was described by *The Times of Malta* as the first visit to Gozo by a reigning British monarch (Pace, 2010: 18).¹ The Queen and Prince Philip crossed over from Malta on the minesweeper Walkerton to lay the foundation stone of a new hospital and place a wreath on the war memorial in the main Rabat square.

The 1992 Visit to Gozo

Queen Elizabeth II visited the Maltese Islands again at the end of May 1992 in order to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the George Cross Award. Saturday the 30th of May 1992 was a day dedicated to the Queen's visit to Gozo. Among other places,



The commemorative inscription next to the north entrance to the Cathedral commemorating HM's visit to the Cathedral and the Citadel (Courtesy-Cathedral Archives-Gozo).

the Queen visited the Gozo Cathedral. She was welcomed at the door by the Bishop of Gozo Mgr. Nikol G. Cauchi, the Archdeacon Mgr. Giovanni B. Gauci and the Archpriest Mgr. Carmelo Scicluna.



HM Queen Elizabeth II accompanied by HRH Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, admiring the statue of Santa Marija at the Cathedral while attentively listening to Joseph Bezzina, HM's official guide during the Gozo visit. HL Mgr Nicholas J. Cauchi, bishop of Gozo, looks on (Courtesy-Cathedral Archives-Gozo).

¹ The subtitle for the paragraph referring to the Queen's visit was 'The First Royal Visit?' - the question mark is to be noticed.

² <http://thecommonwealth.org/history-of-the-commonwealth/18th-chogm>.

³ <http://royalcentral.co.uk/thequeen/the-queen-to-attend-commonwealth-heads-of-government-meeting-in-malta-45954> accessed on Thursday the 16th of July 2015.

Rev. Dr. Joseph Bezzina acted as official guide (Attard, 1992:29-32).

The President of the Republic Dr Ċensu Tabone and the Minister for Gozo the Hon. Anton Tabone were also present. At the end of the visit, before signing the visitors' book, Archdeacon Mgr. Gauci presented Her Majesty with a photo of the interior of the dome of the Cathedral Church painted by Antonio Manuele da Messina; it is a classic example of a *trompe l'oeil* (a painting giving the illusion of a three-dimensional object).

More CHOGM Meetings in Malta

The Queen visited Malta again in November 2005 on the occasion of the 18th Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) and was expected to visit the Ġgantija Temples in Xagħra; however this visit did not take place. The Queen was expected to visit Gozo again ten years later during her visit to preside the CHOGM in November 2015. The visit was however cancelled due to inclement weather.

On Wednesday 9th September 2015, about two months before visiting Malta, HM Queen Elizabeth became the longest reigning monarch in 1,000 years of British history.



Queen Elizabeth inspects the guard of honour at Malta International Airport at the end of a three-day state visit on November 28. Photo: Matthew Mirabelli. Reproduced from The Times of Malta.

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Geoffrey G. Attard was ordained priest for the diocese of Gozo in June 2004. He graduated M.Th. in Ecclesiastical History from the University of Edinburgh in November 2005 and he graduated M.Lit. in Practical Theology from the University of St Andrews with a dissertation entitled "Climate Change and the Catholic Church" in 2008. He has recently published his dissertation in book form.

Edward Lear in Gozo in March 1866 – 150 years ago

JOHN CREMONA

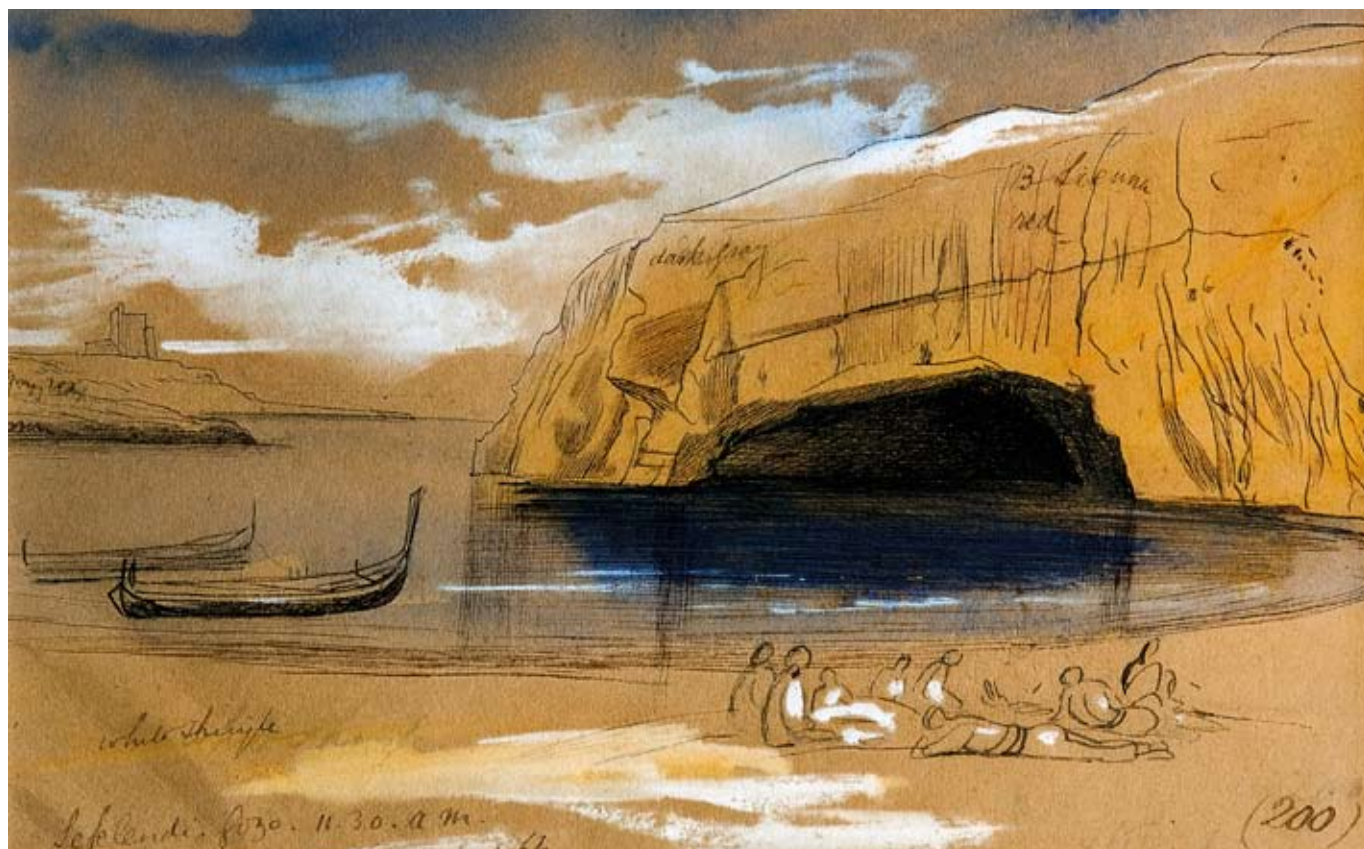
During this year 2016, we shall be commemorating the visit to Gozo of one of the greatest artists of international fame who ever set foot on the island, Edward Lear, who lived between 1812 and 1888. A pioneer on the study and research on Edward Lear and his visits to Malta and Gozo is Joe Attard Tabone.

During a conference held between the 12th and 15th July 2013 at the University of Aston in Birmingham UK, Attard Tabone delivered a lecture about the eight day visit of Edward Lear to Gozo in March 1866. The papers read during this conference were recently (2015) published by Oxbow Books in a book entitled *'Every traveller needs a compass'*. This conference is organised every two years by ASTENE (Association for the study of Travel in Egypt and the Near East).

Joe Attard Tabone is a well known personality in Malta and Gozo as a scholar and researcher of

various topics including archaeology, history, art and ornithology. One can safely say that he was a pioneer in various fields of study and he carried out research and studies in libraries, archives and institutions all over the World. Without doubt, Joe Attard Tabone will be remembered for the re-discovery and protection of a number of archaeological sites in Gozo including the Xaghra Circle (Brockdorff Circle) and the prehistoric hut at Ghajnsielem, just to mention two examples. For his efforts in the field of antiquities, on 10th December 2015, Joe Attard Tabone was elected Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London. This prestigious Society is housed in Burlington House on Piccadilly and was founded in 1707 making it Britain's oldest heritage organisation.

In our age one may carry out extensive research from the comfort of one's own home and with the aid of the internet one can carry out research in libraries and archives around the world. But before



Watercolour of Xlendi Bay, National Museum of Fine Arts, Valletta. Courtesy Heritage Malta.

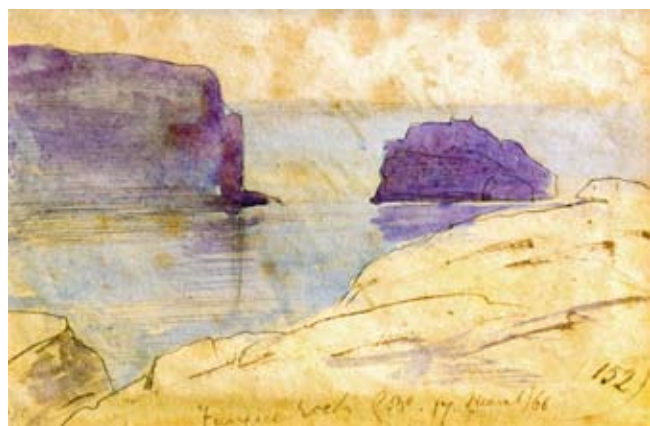
the advent of the internet, Joe Attard Tabone visited many countries abroad and spent most of his time leafing through voluminous records in libraries and archives.

In the above mentioned paper, the author gives a detailed day by day account of the short eight day visit of Lear to Gozo in March 1866, during which Lear managed to produce no less than eighty watercolours of various places in Gozo. These watercolours are now prized possessions of museums, libraries and even private individuals around the World.

From the diary notes left by Lear of his sojourn on Gozo, we gain invaluable information regarding the social situation in Gozo one hundred and fifty years ago, the weather conditions, traditions, food, people as well as on the accommodation and hospitality offered to the first tourists to Gozo.

Apart from being a famous artist, Lear was also a good writer and therefore his description of Gozo does not lack the artistic touch. Notwithstanding the fact that the days spent on Gozo were characterised by strong winds which bothered Lear and his servant Giorgio Kokali during their long walks in the Gozitan countryside, Lear recounts that they walked between fifteen and twenty miles every day. The first impression of Gozo taken on his arrival on the island, even though he had to walk from Mgarr to Rabat, was that *“Gozo is evidently full of picturesque views, the hills being so well drawn and separate. Rabato.....is like Athens – really immensely beautiful in its way”*.

On the same subject, Joe Attard Tabone also delivered a lecture at the Conference Hall of the



Watercolour of Fungus Rock, National Museum of Fine Arts, Valletta. Courtesy Heritage Malta.



Mr Joe Attard Tabone being admitted Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London by the Society President Dr Jill Andrews.

Ministry for Gozo in December 2012 and on that same occasion a small exhibition was set up, that included six original watercolour views of Gozo by Lear. The National Museum of Archaeology in Valletta has seven watercolours by Edward Lear, four of which depict Gozo subjects. Other views of Gozo by Lear are to be found in private collections in Gozo and Malta as well as in museums and libraries all over the world.

One of the watercolours left by Lear of Gozo is the one depicting the cave at Xlendi Bay that is to be found in the collection of the National Museum of Fine Arts in Valletta. Lear was so fascinated by the views offered by this spectacular inlet that he spent more than two hours producing watercolours of different views of the bay. This watercolour was drawn by Lear on 20th March 1866 at 11.30am.

Lear is renowned for the letter he wrote to Lady Waldegrave on 13th April 1866 where he writes: *“Did I tell you of my visit to Oudesch, vulgarly called Gozo? It was a most pleasant one, and with the help of Giorgio I drew every bit of it, walking fifteen or twenty miles a day. Its coast scenery may truly be called pomskezillious and gromphibberous, being as no words can describe its magnificence”*.

John Cremona has been involved in a number of cultural heritage initiatives with special reference to Gozo and has set on a number of boards and committees related to cultural heritage. Currently he is the Project Leader of the Cittadella restoration and rehabilitation project. He has published various articles related to Gozo.

Book: Slavery, Malta at the Crossroads. Transshipment of Slaves in a British Colony during the Nineteenth Century

Michael Refalo

Malta: BDL Publications (2015); 290 pages

ISBN 9789995746650

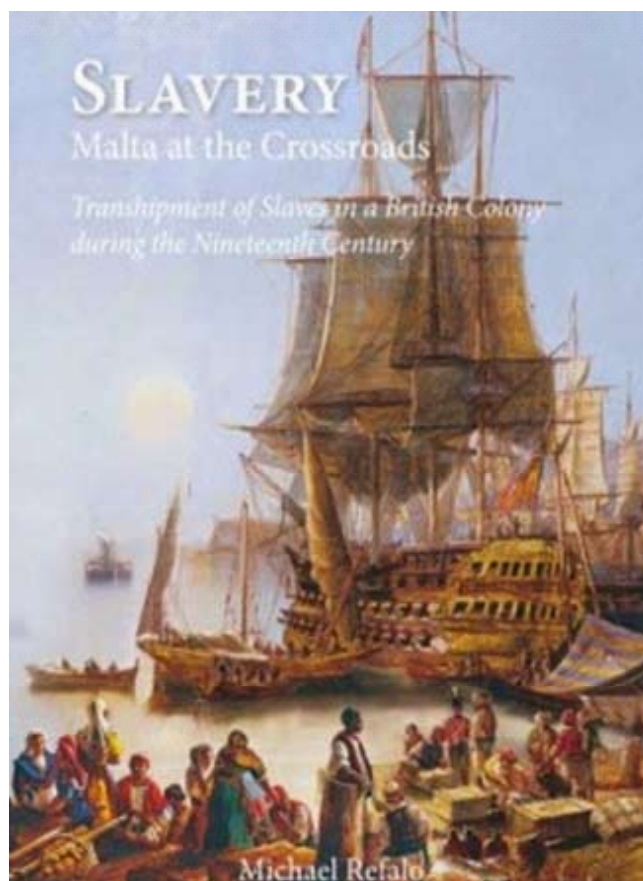
REVIEWED BY LINO BRIGUGLIO

By the end of the 18th century, repugnance of slave dealing was slowly and gradually seeping through mentalities, at least in Britain. This was not enough to end slave dealing, much less slavery itself. However, the seeds had been planted and philanthropists could aspire to a time when the subjection of human beings by their similar would finally be abolished. In 1806, finally, the British Parliament prohibited British participation in the slave trade and five years later made slave dealing a crime equivalent to piracy. Then, in 1833, slaves were emancipated throughout most of the British Empire.

In Malta, a British possession, slavery had been abolished during the short French period and was confirmed by the new coloniser. Nevertheless, the Mediterranean island's predicament was dependent not only upon its colonial status but also on its geographical position.

As Refalo's book illustrates, Malta's contiguity to the North African coast and the persistence of slavery and slave dealing in the Ottoman Empire, meant that the island's connection with slavery would not end by simple legislative enactment. In addition, the popularity of Cyrenaica and other North African Ottoman territories as a land for emigration and commerce, rendered slave ownership and slave dealing a familiar phenomenon for those Maltese who lived, worked or traded there. Thus, it is no surprise that, as the first chapter of the book illustrates, merchants like the Balbi brothers and Gio Andrea Debono would be tainted with suspicion of slave dealing.

Two chapters of the book examine in detail the triangular relationship between Malta's colonial administration, the Colonial Office and British consuls and other representatives in the Levant as these sought to grapple with the problem. Whereas consuls in Istanbul and Izmir sought to blame



the port authorities in Malta for allowing African slaves to be shipped from Tripoli to the Levant via Malta's Grand Harbour, the Malta governor did his best to exculpate his subalterns from accusations of negligence or connivance. The Colonial Office was placed in the embarrassing position of trying to solve the problem without harming the British Empire's political and commercial interests in the Mediterranean. The result, as the book shows, was that no concrete action could be taken. And this despite the fact that Malta's Crown Advocate, Adrian Dingli, proposed – twice – the promulgation of an Ordinance to solve the problem.

A chapter of the book discusses a little known incident: the involvement of the United States in the matter. Michel Vidal, American consul in Tripoli, sought to tarnish British reputation by imputing

to the authorities in Malta the blame of tolerating the passage of slaves through the island. Vidal's ultimate aim, one that must have had some backing in Washington, was to secure an American base on the north African coast. That Vidal's mission came to nothing did not diminish the frustration of the Maltese police, of the governor, and of the Colonial Office.

The final two chapters of the book are devoted to the slaves and their owners. The journey of the former from the heart of Africa until they reached Tripoli is referred to only briefly, this being the subject of numerous works on the matter. It is from the point of arrival at Tripoli to their arrival in Valletta, and their subsequent transshipment to the Levantine ports that is discussed in some detail. Even the slave owners get their share: these were not professional slave dealers. Rather, they were mostly Turkish officials seeking to make some extra money by purchasing slaves in Tripoli with a view to selling them in

Istanbul or Izmir. As Chapter 6 of the book shows, both slaves and slave owners wove a web of lies which enabled the owners to escape prosecution (attempted once without success) and the slaves themselves to hope for a better future.

The subject of the book may seem peripheral in the greater problem of Ottoman slavery. Most of the 19th century slave dealing was carried out further to the east from Malta. Nevertheless, the book is an example of problems relating to Ottoman slavery. Throughout the Turkish Empire slavery went on until, at least, the first decades of the 20th century. The argument sustaining it was that their slavery was different, that the opportunities available for emancipation and advancement were not comparable to slavery in the Americas. Further, the book shows how political and commercial interests took precedence over humanitarian sentiments. In that sense, the past offers a reflection on the present when the refugee problem dogs the governments of Europe.

Book: Profili ta' kittieba Ghawdxin

Joe M. Attard

Malta: BDL Publications (2014); 260 pages
ISBN 9789993274926

REVIEWED BY MAURICE CAUCHI

A recently published book: *Profili ta' Kittieba Ghawdxin*, (2014) ['Profiles of Gozitan writers'] by Joe M. Attard provides a welcome addition to publications which help to highlight the literary output in these islands, and in Gozo in particular.

The author is a well-known author and journalist and needs no introduction. He is very qualified to undertake the job of collecting information and writing about Gozitan authors. This is a collection of 54 writers, classified chronologically, starting with Mgr Luigi Vella (born 1859) and ending with Pierre J. Meylak, (1982), thus covering a period of over a century.

As Attard emphasises in the introduction to this work, this anthology is not complete, and in a work

of this nature it is quite possible for some authors to be missed or omitted for various reasons.

One must emphasise at the outset that this book is not about writers in general, but only 'literary' writers, i.e. those interested in publishing in Maltese language, prose or poetry. In some instances works of a more religious nature have featured prominently in some authors. Omitted from this collection are writers whose interest was not specifically linked to Maltese literature.

Professor Charles Briffa in his introduction to this book emphasizes that this is not a genre of writing distinct from that of other national writers. He says: "Although the writer talks about 'Gozitan Writers', this does not mean that there is some regional literature which is cut off from local culture, because Gozitan writers also reflect something

which is national in its character... writings from Gozo add to the national identity because they add other aspects to the national understanding in a language which is spoken by everyone in the Maltese Islands.' [my translation].

A review of personal characteristics and background of the individuals included here may throw some light on the various stimuli which push one to take up pen and paper and start writing. One sees for instance that the majority of writers (61%) hail from Victoria – this is a much higher proportion than would be expected simply on a per capita basis: the population of Victoria is no more than 17% of the total Gozo population.

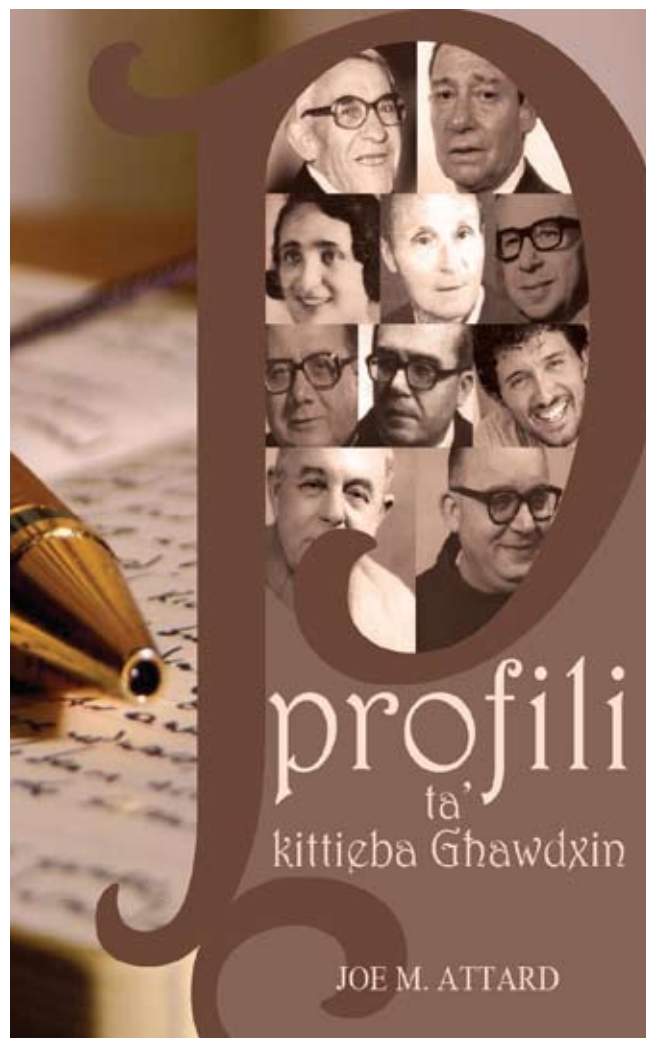
The representation of writers from the various villages is as follows: Xaghra (5). Qala (4), Sannat and Xewkija (3 each), and one from each of the following villages (San Lawrenz, Għajnsielem, Żebbuġ, Kerċem, Għarb and Munxar).

It is obvious that if one is interested in promoting the production of Maltese writing in these genres, then it would be important to find out why villagers are not interested or stimulated enough to embark on the production of Maltese literature.

Another interesting statistic is the high proportion of priests among Gozitan writers, which amounts to 37% of the total, obviously well out of proportion of the relative number of priests in the community. It is well known of course that in the past, the priests constituted a very substantial proportion of the educated public. But this is certainly not the case anymore and cannot explain the discrepancy noted here.

And perhaps the most damning statistic is the almost complete absence of women included in this group: only one woman managed to get in! Included in this publication we find Laurent Ropa who left the Islands when he was only two years old, and as far as I know has never written a word in Maltese. We also find Dun Ġużepp Cauchi who as the author says, 'has written a lot but never published anything in his lifetime'.

We have also a couple of authors from the Diaspora, namely Joe Axiaq from Melbourne, as well as a more recent recruit, Pierre J Mejlak, now



resident in Brussels. Arguably, there are many more Gozitan writers overseas who have not made it into this book.

The author should be congratulated on producing this book that highlights the work of Gozitan authors, and which might hopefully encourage others to follow on these tracks.

Book: The Rotunda. A Testament to Faith, Courage and Love

Ted M. Mizzi

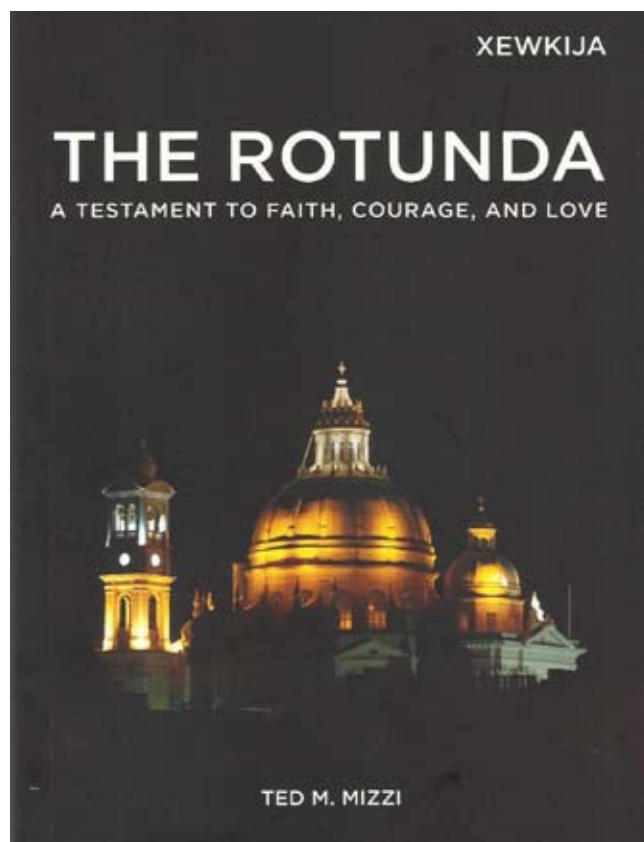
Malta: Progress Press (2015); 164 pages.

REVIEWED BY GEOFFREY G. ATTARD

Nemo me impune lacessit - No one attacks me with impunity. Few Scotsmen would not be aware that this Latin dictum is in fact the motto of the Most Noble Order of the Thistle and by association, of Scotland at large. However I imagine that fewer would be the *Xewkin* who would not be aware that their native village of old, shares the same motto with this North European country. Although there is no direct link between the two, tradition has it that the land where Xewkija now stands once abounded with thistles. Legend or hearsay may have a share in the formation of history but Ted M. Mizzi's masterpiece *The Rotunda. A Testament to Faith, Courage and Love* leaves both behind and delves deep into unearthing important documents and bringing together important facts that form the rich history of this most ancient village of the island of Gozo.

The first attempt for a history of Xewkija takes us back to 1978, the year that commemorated the three centuries since the foundation of the parish. Six *Xewkin* got together to write an outline of the history of the village of St John the Baptist which was given the status of parish by Bishop Girolamo Molina in November 1679. A year earlier, the periodical *Gourgion* was inaugurated with the aim of addressing the history of the village. This renaissance served its purpose well; since then, various publications – even if some of them minute – came to light, studying some particular aspect or other of the village. Ted M. Mizzi's is a monumental contribution to what I would call the aesthetic history of Xewkija. In his book, full of original pictures, most of which feature in book-form for the first time, Ted M. Mizzi, who stems from one of the prominent families of Xewkija, outlines the long but glorious journey of the building of the Xewkija Rotunda, which boasts one of the highest domes in the world.

The sense of patriotic love, sacrifice and endurance, that characterised parish priest Dun Ġużepp Grech and his fellow parishioners during the ordeal that began in the fifties only to end in the late seventies,



is the theme of the publication. Good will could not by itself be the only ingredient for such a big feat; perseverance during hard times and undying love and dedication for one's own village and community were the human strengths that empowered the *Xewkin* of a couple of generations ago to take up the challenge of such an ambitious project. The vivacity by which the author describes the various episodes that knit together the history of the Xewkija Rotunda makes for interesting reading. When I opened the book and read Dr Godfrey Baldacchino's foreword and proceeded to the first chapters, I knew I would not put the book away before having read it entirely.

Max Xuereb's sumptuous photos make the book so presentable that I only wish it could have been published as a coffee-table publication.

Ted M. Mizzi's *The Rotunda* is not only a testament to faith, courage and love; it is a testament of a one man's love for his own native village, a strong expression of patriotism that does not render the term either archaic or out-of-place but rather effective and noble.

Recent Activities at the University of Malta - Gozo Campus

JOSEPH CALLEJA

Courses Offered at the University Gozo Campus

In October the University of Malta opened a number of courses at its campus in Gozo. For the first time the International Institute for Baroque Studies at the University of Malta organised a new course leading to a Pre-tertiary Certificate in Baroque Architecture. The aim of the course is for participants to appreciate the value of Baroque heritage and to develop the skills needed to understand the Baroque architecture, distinguish between different architectural styles, how Baroque buildings are constructed and the mechanisms of their building elements. The course, which is being organised with the collaboration of the Ministry for Gozo, is being followed by seventeen students.

The Faculty for Social Wellbeing at the University of Malta, opened for the first time a degree course leading to the Bachelor of Psychology (Honours). The course, which is spread over five years, is being attended by eleven participants.

Another two courses which commenced in October are the Diploma in Commerce and the Masters in Islands and Small States Studies. The former aims to introduce students to Economics, Management and Accountancy, Tourism Studies and Information Technology. It also prepares them for further studies leading to the Bachelor of Commerce degree. The latter aims to impart knowledge on Islands and Small State issues and to provide the opportunity for students to conduct research on the same issues by submitting assignments and writing a dissertation.

Two other courses, namely the Diploma in Facilitating Inclusive Education and the Executive Master of Business Administration in Public Management, also commenced in October and are being offered via video-conferencing.

Following the success of the second course offered in Gozo, the Maltese Department of the University of Malta opened, for the third time, the Certificate course in Proof Reading: Maltese. The course is being followed by nine students.



The Hon. Anton Refalo, Minister for Gozo (centre), with Prof Joe Friggieri, Pro-Rector for Gozo (left) and Prof Denis De Lucca, Director of the International Institute for Baroque Studies (right), during a visit to a course lecture in February 2016. Courtesy MGOZ/George Scerri.



Students during a lecture of the course in Baroque Architecture. Courtesy MGOZ/George Scerri.

Other courses running at the Gozo Campus are: Certificate in Clinical Nursing Practice: Emergency Nursing, Diploma in Commerce, Bachelor of Commerce, Executive Master in Business Administration, and Higher Diploma in Public Accounting and Finance.

The Lace Making Programme at the University Gozo Campus organised two short courses in lace-making, namely 'Introduction to the Art of Making Lace' and 'Making a Lace Jacket'. Both courses are spread over one academic year.

Examinations at the Gozo Campus

For the June session of examinations as well as for that of September, almost all Gozitan students

following courses at the University of Malta were given the opportunity to sit for their end-of-semester examinations directly in Gozo. Over 860 exams were organised both at the Gozo Campus and at the Examination Centre in Victoria.

Graduation of Students

During the recent graduation ceremonies held at the Tal-Qroqq Campus, a number of students graduated after having successfully completed courses at the University Gozo Campus.

Thirty six students graduated with a Post Graduate Diploma in Educational Leadership. Two students obtained a Master of Science in Sustainable Energy, and two others graduated with an Executive Masters in Business Administration. Thirty eight students obtained a Diploma in Facilitating Inclusive Education and four others graduated with a Diploma in Commerce.

International Theatre Symposium

Between the 14th and 16th September 2015, the Gozo Campus hosted around forty international academics and theatre practitioners for a symposium entitled *Redefining Theatre Communities: Community Perspectives in Contemporary Theatre-making*.



The group of students who followed the Post-Graduate Diploma in Educational Leadership at the University Gozo Campus between 2013 and 2015, with Professor Christopher Bezzina, Course Co-ordinator.



One of the speakers during the symposium. Courtesy Fran Blanes.

Over the three days the delegates discussed issues relating to creating communities through theatre and finding ways of bringing about changes in communities through the use of theatre.

The delegates were welcomed by Prof. Joe Friggieri, Pro-Rector for Gozo, who introduced them to the university's history and its long connection with theatre-making and the study of theatre. He also made references to Gozo's unique heritage, including its many active theatres, which are run and maintained by the communities that use them.

The keynote speech by Prof. Mark O'Thomas, Head of the School of Fine and Performing Arts at the University of Lincoln, treated the ways theatre-makers in Europe have reacted to the recent austerity. Following this, the delegates discussed their research and practice ranging from performance art in the Caribbean to micro-theatre in the Australian outback, with several papers, presentations and workshops discussing issues of representation of identity, audience composition and reception, the use of conventional and non-



Participants during a break in the back garden of the Gozo Campus. Courtesy Fran Blanes.

conventional space for meaningful performance within communities and several other topics related to the main theme of the symposium.

The symposium was convened by Dr Marco Galea from the Department of Theatre Studies at the University of Malta and Dr Szabolcs Musca from New Tides Platform (U.K.). It was made possible through a research grant from the University of Malta, financial help from the Theatre Studies Department and logistical assistance from the university's Logistics and Events Coordination Office and staff at the Gozo Campus. The premises were kindly made available by the University of Malta.

Commonwealth Writers Workshop

As part of the CHOGM activities held in Malta during November, the Commonwealth Writers organised a short story workshop at the University Gozo Campus. The workshop was aimed at new and emerging Gozitan writers, as well as new, unpublished writers from the island of Malta. The workshop, which was led by short story writers Clare Azzopardi from Malta and Jacob Ross from Grenada and the UK, was attended by a number of writers who write in Maltese and also by those who write in English.



The workshop in progress. Courtesy MGOZ/George Scerri.

Joseph Calleja is Administrator of the University of Malta - Gozo Campus.



The Gozo Observer is published twice a year by the University of Malta - Gozo Campus. It contains articles relating to all aspects of life in Gozo, including culture, education, business, arts and literature. Those wishing to submit articles for inclusion in the Gozo Observer should contact the Editor of the magazine (contact details below).

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