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The Gozo Observer

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Editorial Board:

Prof. Lino Briguglio, Mr Joseph Calleja,
Prof. Maurice N. Cauchi, Ms Caroline Camilleri Rolls

Editorial Office:

University of Malta - Gozo Campus,
Mġarr Road, Xewkija, XWK 9016, Gozo
Tel: (356) 21564559; Fax: (356) 21564550;
e-mail: ugc@um.edu.mt
Web: www.um.edu.mt/ugc

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Introduction

This edition of *The Gozo Observer* contains five articles, mostly of a historical nature, as well as a book review and a brief account of recent activities at the University Gozo Campus. The *Observer* is in its 18th year, with two editions annually. The articles contained in past issues covered a variety of subjects, all with a focus on Gozo. Most articles related to historical aspects, but there were others with an economic, cultural and environmental orientation. This edition carries a list of titles of all articles carried in the *Gozo Observer* since 1999.

The first article in the present edition, on Pregnancy and Childbirth in Gozo between 1867 and 1914, authored by Sandra Portelli, contains a very interesting account of the practices associated with this very important stage in one's life. As the author states, the data sheds light on the way of living during those times and on the mentality of the Gozitan women with regard to health, at a time when the benefits provided by medicine and health-care were replacing traditional methods. The article also covers a number of related matters including the social particulars and the physical conditions of women, the forms of treatment during and after delivery, and the role of the midwife (*Qabla*). The article is very detailed and should serve as a useful source of information for researchers on cultural aspects associated with childbirth.

Godwin Vella, an expert on Gozitan heritage, authored the third and concluding section of an article which adds to the materials published by the same author in the two previous editions of *The Gozo Observer*. The article is an account of *Caxaro's description of Gozo (1704)*. Most of this section of the article deals with the governance of the island during the 17th century, and refers to the documentation that was kept for this purpose. An issue that is often referred to in the text is that the government archives relating to that period preserved civil and criminal cases and related registers and documents from 1551 onwards, as earlier records were destroyed during the Turkish invasion. Likewise all court registers, acts, case files and related documents from 1551 onwards were kept, but previous records were lost during the 1551 assault. This article is full of detailed and useful information for those interested in the history of Gozo during the 16th and 17th century.

Gozo abounds with talented craftsmen, and one of the articles featured in the current edition of *The Gozo Observer*, authored by Geoffrey Attard, focusses on a well-known personality in this regard. His name was Ġorġ Gauci, known as Ġorġ ta' Frallillu. He spent a good portion of his working life as a carpenter employed with the government, but he offered most of his spare time to help in the enlargement and

embellishment of St George's Basilica in Rabat, Gozo. He is well known for his involvement in the building of the side-chapels and for the completion of the dome of the Basilica, as well as for the fabrication of the canopy (*baldacchino*) for the main altar of the same church. A masterpiece with which Ġorġ Gauci is associated is the piece of furniture (called *bredella*) on which a statue of St George is put for veneration. The author argues that the fact that the parish chose Ġorġ to do this important piece of work shows the high esteem in which he was held. Ġorġ Gauci died on the 28th of December 2016 at the age of 90 years. The author states that whenever one looks in St George's Basilica, he is expected to see artistic works on which Ġorġ worked and dedicated his time and energy.

During the last two decades of the nineteenth and first decades of the twentieth centuries, the boom in car manufacturing, particularly in Detroit and Michigan, was at its initial stages and many young men were being employed in this growing economic sector. Word among young Maltese, but it seems especially amongst Gozitans, encouraged migration to the USA where many took up secure jobs and built fortunes for themselves and their families. In the fourth article in this edition of the *Gozo Observer*, Joe Zammit Ciantar writes about one such emigrant, with the name of William Pace. The author, through assiduous research, managed to find information about Pace's entry into the USA and his volunteer services to the Civil Defence in Detroit. Persisting in his research endeavour, the author managed to find information about William Pace and his Gozitan family. This article shows that a perseverant researcher can bring to light detailed information which would otherwise remain buried in archives and family collections.

A characteristic of the Island of Gozo is the important role that the Parish church plays in the lives of the residents. A major parish in Gozo is that of Nadur and the zealous life of one of early parish priest, Don Giovanni Andrea Falson, is the subject of an article authored by Daniel Meilak. Falson was born on 23rd September 1670, ordained priest on 23rd October 1695, and was appointed Parish Priest of Nadur when he was 38 years old. The author lists a number of achievements of this priest through tireless work for the parish. Documentary evidence about Falson portrays him as a caring and prudent pastor in charge of a growing parish. The author dwells at some length on Falson's legacy as evidenced in his last will, a document which gives a detailed record of the parish priest's possessions, and his generosity in dispensing of these possessions for the good of the Nadur parish church and a number of deserving persons.

Lino Briguglio

Women: Pregnancy and Childbirth in Gozo 1867-1914¹

SANDRA PORTELLI

Introduction

Most of the *Registers of Admissions and Discharges in the Lying-in-Wards* of the Victoria Hospital give insightful details about the women that were admitted to the Victoria Hospital. The information provided in the registered records included; (i) the social particulars of the women; (ii) any physical conditions and/or issues; (iii) the result and forms of treatment during and after delivery; and (iv) the health conditions on their dismissal from hospital.

The data clearly indicated the transition both in the way of living and also in the mentality of the Gozitan women with regards to health. Women were increasingly aware of the benefits provided by modern medicine and health care and sought professional help in hospital when needed.

The Role of Women in Gozitan Society

The role of women within the family experienced a change during the period under review. During the first decades of the 19th century, many women were employed either as weavers or spinners, beaters and dyers of cotton in their residence or in small manufacturing factories. The decline of the cotton industry in the Maltese Islands resulted in a severe decline in female employment in the same industry (Chircop, 1997:55). According to Prof. J. Chircop this situation led to an “intensified sexual division of labour” (Chircop, 1997:55), where the economic sectors started to be filled with male workers, whilst the females, previously employed in the cotton industry, were now bound to domestic and reproductive responsibilities. Although in the villages women still helped with the fieldwork, during the early 20th century

all previous manufacturing activities came to an end (Chircop, 1997:55). Thus women gradually became more home orientated, whilst the father, the *paterfamilias*, the head of the household, became the breadwinner (Chircop, 1993:chapter 2).

This transition can be clearly seen from the occupations of both men and women as recorded in the registers. During May of 1867 and May of 1872, 98 women were admitted to the Victoria Hospital. Out of these 66 were *Lavoratrice di Merletto* (lace maker), 23 *Filatrice* (cotton spinner), 3 were *Bracciante Agraria* (agrarian labourer), 2 *Mammanna* (Midwife), 1 *Lavoratrice di Cucina* (kitchen helper), 1 *Mendicante* (beggar), 1 *Sigarriera* (tobacco maker) and 1 *Tesatrice* (weaver). On the other hand, 46 men worked as agrarian labourers, 7 were registered with an unknown occupation, 5 were fishermen and 4 were carpenters where several others worked in various trades such as shoemaker, sailor or fishmonger.

During the period in question, Malta was still predominantly an agrarian society, especially in Gozo where “agriculture [was] by far the oldest and chief occupation of the Island” (Bezzina, 1985:66). Being an agrarian labourer was the most common occupation for the poor in rural areas at the time (Frendo, 1988:187). Before 1842, these labourers earned £0.033 daily and by 1864 they were paid £0.125. On the other hand, female agrarian labourers earned £0.017 to £0.037 daily and children earned nearly £0.006 a day (Bezzina, 1985:69-70). As such, a family of a field labourer including the father, mother and an average of five children earned about £5 yearly. Farmers who managed their own land were a little better off (Bezzina, 1985:69-70).

¹ This article, is based on the B.A. (Hons) dissertation (2008) by the present author. The research was conducted from the voluminous registers of Admissions and Discharge in the lying-in-wards of the Victoria Hospital, Gozo. It covers the periods 27 May 1867 to 30 May 1872 and 1 January 1910 to 29 December 1914.

There was an increase of 225 women admitted to the Victoria Hospital between 1910 and 1914. Of these women, 267 were registered as housewives, 53 lace makers, 1 servant and 2 of unknown occupation. The majority of the husbands, however, were labourers amounting to 263, and 22 engaged as fishermen.

Home Versus Hospital

The registers under review clearly illustrated that the Gozitan mothers who opted to give birth in hospital were still very poor. From the 98 pregnant women admitted during the years 1867-1872, 95 were registered as Povera (poor) and in 1868 there were 3 women registered as Pensionista (pensioners). In the registers, pensioners referred to women who received some sort of social benefits.

Furthermore during the years 1910 and 1914, 37 patients were registered as 'paupers'. A pauper was considered a person who was in an impoverished situation. 11 paupers came from both Victoria and Kala (Qala), followed by 5 from Caccia (Xagħra), 3 from Nadur, 2 from Xeuchia (Xewkija), and 5 from Għasri, Kerċem, Malta, Munxar and Żebbuġ respectively. 275 women were registered as poor, 4 patients were on payment of -/2p.d. and 7 of unknown financial status.

Thus the results revealed that the majority of women using the hospital for delivery were poor and destitute (Savona-Ventura, 1997:96). Moreover, giving birth in hospital was looked down upon. It was only meant for the very lower class of people (Galley, 1993:31) and those who required medical attention due to complications.

Upon further examination of the Victoria Hospital registers, one notes that there were various factors which led these women to use the state hospital in order to give birth. During the period 1867 to 1872, the District Medical Officers (DMO) sent 83 pregnant women to hospital, one case was transferred from the medical wards within the same hospital, and 14 pregnant women went on

their own free will (self-admitted). On analysing the years between 1910 and 1914, there was an increase in the number of women sent to hospital for further examination by the DMO, with a total of 311 pregnant women. The reason why there was an increase in the number of pregnant women being admitted by the DMO is not clear, yet "hospital confinement was a rarity and usually reserved for necessitous women or difficult cases" (Savona-Ventura, 1997:1).

It must be pointed out that most of the labouring classes were traditionally afraid of the hospital (Bezzina, 1985:79). Indeed the majority of Gozitan women, like their Maltese counterparts, delivered at home.² Pregnant women found it more comfortable to give birth at home. Such practice can be noted in local home architecture. The *alkova* was a niche big enough to place the mother's bed in



The *alkova*

² Census of Malta and Gozo 1871 [registered a population in Gozo of 17,391 out of which 3,083 were wives. Comparing the data of the Lying-in-Wards registers of the period 1867-1872 there were only 98 women admitted to hospital. Therefore the women admitted to hospital for delivery were in minority compared to the overall number of wives in Gozo during that period].

it, while giving the possibility of hanging a curtain for privacy whilst giving birth with the help of the *qabla* (midwife) (Lanfranco, 2001:145).

The *Qabla* (Midwife)

The popular performance of having a baby at home was also confirmed by medical books written by Maltese doctors, instructing midwives on how to assist a pregnant woman at her home.

A book written in Maltese by Professor S. L. Pisani in 1883, entitled *Ktieb il Qabla* (book for midwives), provided midwives with knowledge about the foetus, its conception and development, the physical state of the mother, problems that might occur during pregnancy and childbirth. The book instructed the midwife, upon arrival at the house of the *gravida* (pregnant woman), to check in which stage of pregnancy the woman was, prepare the bed upon which the delivery was to take place and check whether she had all the necessary things to assist both mother and child. After the child was born she had to give due care to the woman and the baby (Pisani, 1883:66).

Assisting the *qabla* was yet another home-based ‘tool’ called *Sijju* or according to Agius de Soldanis *il-mambar* (De Soldanis, 2016:533), the birthing chair, which was believed to ease the birthing process. This chair looked like a normal chair with arms yet instead of the seat there was a semicircle



The *sijju*

on which the pregnant woman would sit. This chair was banned from usage in 1883, since it was found to possibly lead to health risks for both mother and child. However, sources indicate that it continued to be used. But from 1883 onwards midwives who were still to be found using the birthing chair were immediately suspended (Pisani, 1883:71). From that date onwards, those who did use the chair were those who did not call for the help of professional midwives and used traditional means of delivery through the help of unqualified midwives or relatives.

Following the successful delivery of the baby, the qualified midwife had to follow strict instructions as per new scientific methods and guidelines being adopted at the time under review. The *qabla* had to expel the placenta, cleanse the mother and allow her to rest. “The mother [was] not allowed to nurse the baby before at least eight hours after the confinement so as to allow her sufficient time to rest” (Pisani, 1883:71). Attention then was turned to the newborn as the midwife had to examine the baby for any ailments or deformity, clean and dress him and let him rest.

The qualified midwife who aided delivery at home was generally paid in money not in kind (Savona-Ventura, 1997:88) (Borg, 2000:420). However, when it came to the traditional *qabla*, a non-qualified helper, reciprocal assistance played a very important part as the midwife was usually either a relative of the woman giving birth or part of an extended family or neighbouring network (Borg, 2000:415). The trust that was shown towards these helpers was a fundamental factor which led to more women delivering at home rather than going in, what they considered and indeed at that time was, a dull place like the state hospital (Bezzina, 1985:79). As such, women felt more secure at home with their loved ones rather than being confined in hospitals (Cassar, 2002:79) (Lanfranco, 2001:142).

Location, Age and Marital Status

Tables 1a and 1b show the topographic distribution of the women admitted to hospital. One may note that the majority came from Rabato during the years 1867-1872, whilst during 1910-1914, most women were registered from Caccia (Xagħra).

Table 1a: Female admissions to give birth in the Victoria Hospital 1867-1872

	1867	1868	1869	1870	1871	1872	Total
Rabato	6	9	6	11	11	6	49
Caccia	4	5	2	1	2	3	17
Garbo					1		1
Għajnsielem		1		1			2
Kala		1					1
Kerċem		1	3		1		5
Munxjar							0
Nadur		1				1	2
San Lawrenz							0
Sannat	1	3	2	3	1	1	11
Xeuchia	2	1	2	1		1	7
Żebbuġ				1	1	1	3

Source: NAG, H1/03/01

Table 1b: Female admissions to give birth in the Victoria Hospital 1910-1914

	1910	1911	1912	1913	1914	Total
Victoria	12	8	14	6	12	52
Caccia	17	13	22	4	7	63
Garbo		1	2	1	2	6
Għajnsielem	5	2	3		1	11
Għasro	2	1	1		1	5
Kala	18	12	16	7	6	59
Kerċem	1	7	2	2	3	15
Malta	1		1		1	3
Munxjar	3					3
Nadur	16	16	15	3	8	47
San Lawrenz					1	1
Sannat	2	1			1	4
Santa Luċia					1	1
Xeuchia	7	6	6	6	10	35
Żebbuġ	1		5		1	7

Source: NAG, H1/03/06-07

An important characteristic which marked the female population using the Victoria Hospital for childbirth is age, with the majority being within childbearing age. Table 2 shows the age distribution of both the mothers that were admitted to hospital and the respective fathers. As one may

note, there was a shift in the age of women giving birth during 1910 – 1914 as represented below.

Table 2: Age distribution

	1867 - 1872		1910 - 1914	
	Fathers	Mothers	Fathers	Mothers
15-19 yrs	3 %	6 %	2 %	5 %
20-24 yrs	21 %	19 %	14 %	22 %
25-29 yrs	15 %	22 %	20 %	21 %
30-34 yrs	13 %	21 %	20 %	27 %
35-39 yrs	15 %	18 %	13 %	13 %
40-44 yrs	11 %	10 %	18 %	12 %
45-49 yrs	2 %	2 %	5 %	0 %
50-54 yrs	8 %		2 %	
55-59 yrs	1 %		0 %	
60+	2 %		1 %	
Unknown	7 %		5 %	

Source: NAG, H1/03/01-06-07

The above table shows that during the period 1910-1914, the majority of the women admitted to give birth in the Victoria Hospital were in their early thirties, unlike the period 1867-1872, which marked a majority of women admitted at the age of 25 to 29. What caused this transition is not clear, as more in-depth research is needed.

Between 1867 and 1872, 90% of those admitted to hospital were married, followed by 7% who were unmarried and 3% registered as widows. On the other hand between 1910 and 1914, 98% were married and 2% were unmarried.

Illegitimacy has always been an important issue when dealing with children. An illegitimate child was vulnerable in society especially in a closely-knit Gozitan village (Galley, 1993:141). These were seen as the “unwanted children”, born out of lust not love, and children who “ought not to have been born” (Teichman, 1982:7). The traditional views regarding illegitimate children were more economically based especially in the west (Teichman, 1982:8) where the child was seen as “a burden to the state and the taxpayer and, in all probability a misery to itself; in other words, a child with no legal claims on a breadwinning [male] parent” (Teichman, 1982:8).

For both periods under study there were 14 illegitimate cases born in the Victoria Hospital. The average age of the unmarried mothers throughout the 10 year period was 24 years of age, the youngest one being a 16-year-old. From these 14, 5 came from Malta (Birchircara, Żabbar, Mosta, Rabato Notabile and Valletta); the others came from Gozo with 2 from Rabato and Nadur, 1 from Kala (Qala), 1 from Għajnsielem, 1 from Żebbuġ, 1 from Garbo (Għarb) and 1 from Caccia (Xagħra). The fact that the majority were Maltese confirms the popular belief that Gozo was a hiding place where unmarried pregnant women from Malta came on their own, away from their village community, to give birth without shaming their family's name (Teichman, 1982:119).

Post-Partum

Following the delivery, full attention shifted to the baby. He or she was the most vulnerable and most prone to diseases and death. These health risks were even higher in babies born in poverty, in unexpected children, or when suffering from malformations and illnesses (Ciappara, 1988: 08). The birth registers indicate that male births were more common than female ones as shown in Figure 1.

In an article by Dr C. Cassar, it is noted that after the successful birth of the child and when the sex of the baby was made known, in the event of it being a boy, his nativity was held with more merry making than if it were a girl, more so if it was the couple's

first son (Cassar, 1985:108). Having a baby boy meant a contribution to the family's purse when he grew up and started to work (Zarb, 1998:129). A Maltese proverb sustains that “*Hafna subien bsaten u t-tmien; hafna bniet, ilaħħqu l-biċċiet*”, (many boys mean walking sticks and top hats; many girls get no further than the loom) (Aquilina, 1972:181). In addition “*Min għandu l-bniet għandu l-utied*”, (He who has got daughters, has got pegs). This meant that the more girls the father had, the more burden they were to all his family, since he had to provide a dowry for each daughter, thus if he was poor it would be difficult for him to pay for all the expenses (Aquilina, 1972:172-173).

Also both honour and prestige were considered important, especially in a traditionally closed society such as Malta (Zarb, 1998:129). The anxiety surrounding the birth of a female arose from the belief that girls were more apt to fall into dishonour or disgrace since girls were thought to be morally weak (Zarb, 1998:129). A woman who only delivered girls was not held in high esteem in the social consciousness of her neighbourhood (Zarb, 1998:131-132). All this reflects a Mediterranean culture. Indeed comparable scenarios regarding the joy of having a baby boy are found in other Mediterranean countries and in Arab Muslim societies. For example, in Morocco;

“As soon as the sex of the newborn infant is made known throughout the household, three ululations (*Żrarit*) are uttered, if it is a boy; but this is not the case with a girl. Her birth, however, is not

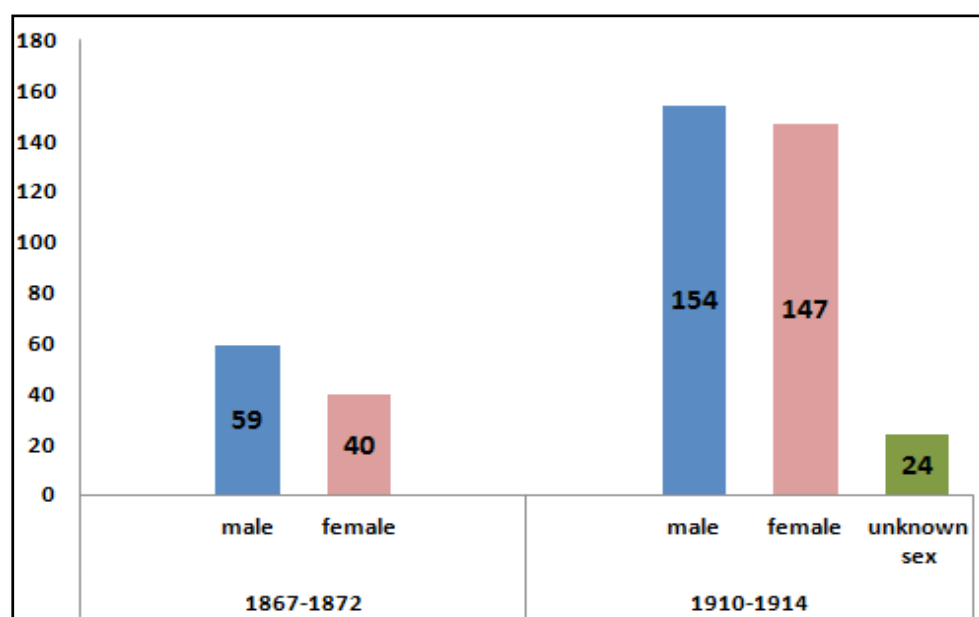


Figure 1. Birth by gender

unwelcome; the child is greeted with kind words of good augury, and a blessing is called down upon the parents” (Legey, 1935:127-128).

In most Arab cultures, an old woman was given great power within the family if throughout her life cycle she had delivered male children (Hourani, 1991:120). In nearby Sicily, the husband was congratulated with the words “Cu saluti e figghiu masculu!” (Good health and a baby boy!), if the new born was a boy, but simply “Cu saluti!” (Good health!) if the child happened to be a girl (Pullicino, 1992:224). In the Maltese Islands, the birth of a baby boy was met with merry making and music, hence the Maltese proverb “Meta jitwieled tifel sa jgibu l-banda”, (They even bring a band when a boy is born), (Zarb, 1998:129).

The Wet-Nurse

As pointed out earlier, soon after birth the major concern was the well-being and nutrition of the defenceless newborn. The wet-nurse had an important role in the whole pregnancy and childbirth scenario. It was she who sometimes gave the first nutrition to the baby. Breast milk was strongly suggested and favoured (Savona-Ventura, 2004:46), yet certain health issues like mastitis, tuberculosis, heart problems, chronic kidney diseases, pulmonary fever and influenza (Bonnici, 1932:17) incurred by the mother following delivery made breastfeeding difficult if not impossible. At this point the mother had to find a substitute to suckle her child and such a person was called the wet-nurse (imreddgħa) (Galea, 1972:106). Breastfeeding a child by a stranger was much common (Galea, 1972:106). This popular practice was also recorded in the registers of the Victoria Hospital especially when it came to orphans or children of sickly mothers. On these occasions it was the duty of the wet-nurse to take care of the child as if it were her own (Savona-Ventura, 2004:37). Some not only were employed in hospitals or foundling homes (Kertzer, 1999:1) but many others were engaged as wet-nurses in the homes of both the wealthy and labour class (Galea, 1972:106-107).

Dr L. Manchè in his book entitled “It trobbija tat-tfal jeu tuissijiet għall ommijiet”, suggested that the wet-nurse was to be chosen before the

birth of the baby, so as not to make a hasty choice when the baby was born and when the mother was found to be unable to suckle her child. The book recommended that the doctor visits the wet-nurse to see if she was healthy and the parish priest must make sure she was honest and trustworthy (Manchè, 1907:20-21). When chosen, a wet-nurse had to be given adequate food, clothing and ample rest.

It was normal for the wet-nurse to come from the same neighbourhood as the mother and many, especially if they were unmarried mothers who had neither an occupation nor a place to stay, were offered such assistance as payment (Galea, 1972:106).

Healers, Herbalists and Alternative Medicine

At a time when mainstream medicine was still a novelty, herbs were used to treat various illnesses; some proved successful and some not. However it is a matter of curiosity as to how people came to know about their qualities and their usage. Herbal medicine was very much requested and from past times it can be noted that;

“Women have always been healers. They were the unlicensed doctors and anatomists of western history. They were abortionists, nurses and counsellors. They were pharmacists, cultivating healing herbs and exchanging the secrets of their uses. They were midwives, travelling from home to home and village to village, barred from books and lectures, learning from neighbor to neighbor and mother to daughter. They were called ‘wise women’ by the people, witches or charlatans by the authorities” (Ehrenreich & English, 1973:3).

In an interview conducted by the author in 2007, with a 69-year-old woman herbalist from Nadur, Gozo, when asked if herbal medicine was used in the past by pregnant women she stated:

‘Issa hej dik ma nistax nghidlik fuqha ghax ma nofx, nof li il hxejjix mhumieq tajbin meta il-mara tku, ik, tkun tqila ghax il-hxejjix imexxu u tiflef lit-tarbija.’ (Oh! Now I cannot tell you anything about that because I don’t know, I just know that herbs don’t do any good when

a woman is pregnant, because herbs act as diuretics and she loses the baby).

Ġorġ Pisani, in his book “Id-Duwa tal-Madalena” maintained that some herbs were used to halt the pregnancy, resulting in an induced abortion. The ‘deadly’ herbs/plants included ergot, pennyroyal, white horehound, parsley, oregano, chamomile, feverfew and rye grain. These taken in specific doses and in specific ways stimulated the menstrual flow, thus leading to the loss of the baby (Pisani, 2000:6-17). Pennyroyal was prepared as an infusion and taken as hot as possible; some women drank the infusion in a hot bath. Only four cups were to be consumed per day and for no more than five days. This was considered sufficient to induce menstruation (Weed, 1986:8).

Apart from treating or preventing illness, herbs and plants were used when cosmetic products were still unknown. A practice that was used in order to wean the baby was by using aloe vera, in Maltese “sabbara”. Juice extracts from the aloe plant were used as ointment on the mother’s breast and its bitter taste led the baby to refuse breastfeeding (Lanfranco, 2001:155). This method for weaning was also used in the nearby island of Sicily (Manchè, 1907:36).



Some of the plants and herbs used in medicine

Furthermore in their booklets, Dr Borg, Dr Bonnici and Dr Manchè made reference to the usage of the opium poppy, in Maltese “xahxieh”. Some mothers used this opium to cause drowsiness in their children when they could not fall asleep. The opium poppy was boiled and its juice was given to the child for drinking (Borg, 1911: 18). Dr Manchè stated that the excess use of opium caused brain damage especially in children who were most susceptible to such ailment. He emphasised that the police should have obstructed the popular usage and selling of such a substance, since it was extremely dangerous and against the law (Manchè, 1907:194).

Throughout their first months and years, babies are faced with teething problems. During a painful tooth eruption children were given the malva sylvestris, in Maltese “hubbejza” (Boffa, 2005:34), a plant credited for its healing properties. Our ancestors made use of both the leaves and the flowers of this medicinal plant and, apart from relieving dental pain, it was also used to calm the nerves and procure easy breathing during a cold or coughs. Furthermore it was also used as poultice in Maltese “ġbara” for inflamed skin, and was used with honey to alleviate stomach pains (Lanfranco, 2001:194).

Conclusion

The gradual advancements in education and social conditions in the Maltese Islands led to progress in the medical sphere and in hospital facilities.

Nowadays, people no longer fear such institutions but take advantage of public health establishments. Even more significant is the fact that pregnant women are generally confident in giving birth away from home, away from their mother and the traditional midwife. They rely on the qualified midwife and graduate obstetrician, breaking the ties with the vestiges of the “qabla”, the “alcova” and the “sijju”.

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Sandra Portelli is a history graduate with special interest in the social and medical history of the Maltese.

A Description of Gozo at the Turn of the Eighteenth Century

GODWIN VELLA

This is the third and concluding section of the article which continues on those published by the same author in the two previous editions of The Gozo Observer.

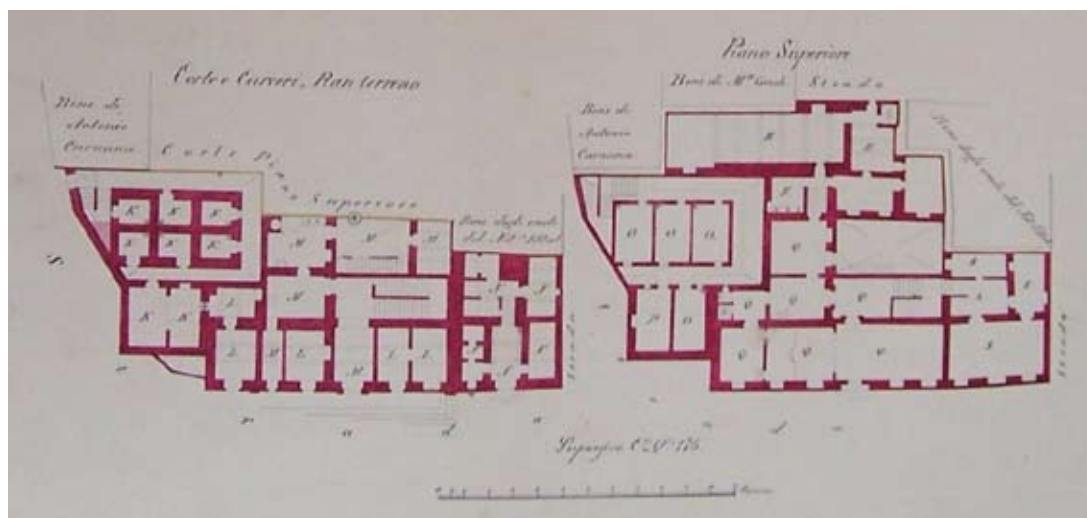
This section proceeds with Caxaro's description of Gozo (1704).

Gozo's Governance

Renovated in 1667,¹ the Governatorial Tribunal inside the Castello is chaired by the Governor, a judge for civil and criminal cases, a fiscal officer and a notary. A night captain and other supporting personnel are also attached. Its archive preserves all civil and criminal cases and related registers and documents from 1551 onwards. Earlier records were reduced to ashes by the Turks. Petty litigations where an ounce² or less is at stake are chaired by an idiot judge.³ The Governatorial Tribunal complex incorporates also three detention units, namely one in the Governor's house, another affixed to and accessed through the sentinels quarters⁴, and a third abutting onto the archive.

The Jurors' Court at Rabat is presided by four jurors, a treasurer and a notary. They hold their sittings in the notary's banca⁵ where all registers, acts, case files and related documents from 1551 onwards are kept. As in the case of the gubernatorial archives previous records were lost during the 1551 assault. The Juror's Court employs four inspectors to regulate the open public spaces, shops, taverns and butchers on the island and certify the weights, scales and measures in circulation. They are to report any contraventions detected and advise the Court on the penalty to be imposed, which is not to exceed 15 tari. Said inspectors are obliged also to disseminate all edicts issued by same Court.

All litigations related to the government-owned property leased to third parties are evaluated and decided by the same Judge of the Governor's Court with the assistance of a notary. Furthermore, in 1660, the illustrious Cotoner⁶ strengthened the Gozo Courts with the appointment of a dedicated official to coordinate the summoning of the respective parties.



The ground and first floors of Courts of Justice and Old Prison compound as at 1861. The former Governor's Palace stands on the right hand section. The façade of the complex was heavily modified during the subsequent years.

¹ The Gozo Courts of Law were successively remodelled during the 19th century.

² An ounce is equivalent to 2½ scudi.

³ Derived from the Italian word *idiozie* meaning petit issues.

⁴ These detention facilities remained in use until the early 20th century and were eventually inaugurated as a cultural attraction on 4 October 1996.

⁵ The Banca Giuratale moved out of the Castello to its present location in 1661. The rear part of the present building was completed in 1733, while the semi-circular facade was added in 1875 (Bezzina 2005, pp 50–4).

⁶ Grand Master Raphael Cotoner reigned between 1660 and 1663.

University of Gozo

As from 1643, the University became the net beneficiary of all revenues from the renting out of public estates on Gozo. These yield around 860 scudi per annum, whereas a tax on wine and bread consumption returns some 280 and 75 scudi a year respectively. The latter was introduced in 1648 to finance the honoraria of the musketeers' regiment officers. Further variable annual proceeds are harvested in form of administrative charges on the storage and resale of foodstuffs. For instance during the six-year period 1683 to 1687 it amounted to 76, 74.4, 60.8, 186 and 169 scudi respectively, while in 1690 it totalled 91 scudi.

The University generates also some 166 scudi in interest on the capital employed for the annual provision of the same foodstuffs. It receives also 24 scudi and 5 tari in connection with the annual dowry to a poor girl drawn up by chance and who would eventually be expected to get married on the feast of the Nativity of Our Lady which falls on 8 September. This dowry is derived from the incomes of various properties donated by the people of Gozo for the purpose over the years.



The coat-of-arms of the University of Gozo along the façade of the Courts of Justice and Prison compound.

The incomes, rights and annual emoluments collected by the university are employed to pay the salaries and for the recurrent expenses required for the maintenance of the governor's residence, towers, coastal guard stations, artillery mounts and wheels, arms, gun powder, timber, and related military equipment, and for the upkeep of the island's infrastructure, namely:

Governor's Honoraria – 18 scudi

To the four Jurors – 20 scudi

To the Judge of the Governor's Court – 23 scudi

To the Treasurer of the University – 25 scudi

To the Doctor – 140 scudi

To the Surgeon – 50 scudi (plus a supplement of 20 scudi)

To the Pharmacist – 55 scudi

To the Notary of the University for issuing mandates, compiling the Militia lists and to register all purchases – 20 scudi

To same Master Notary for the manufacture of registers – 15 scudi

To same Master Notary for paper – 4 scudi

To the Armourer – 33 scudi

To the school master – 30 scudi

To the Preaching Priest for the usual donations – 33 scudi

To the two ... – 24 scudi

To the castelian of Dwejra tower (including an allowance of 2 scudi for oil consumption) – 22 scudi

To his assistant – 25 scudi

To the castelian of Xlendi tower (including an allowance of 2 scudi for oil consumption) – 22 scudi

To his assistant – 25 scudi

To the castelian of Mgarr ix-Xini tower (including an allowance of 2 scudi for oil consumption) – 38 scudi

To his assistant – 25 scudi

To the castelian of Daħlet Qorrot Tower (including an allowance of 2 scudi for oil consumption) – 38 scudi

To his assistant – 25 scudi

To the castelian of Marsalforn tower for signalling fires – 4 scudi

To the castelian of the Castello – 4 scudi

To same for signalling fires – 4 scudi

To same for mortar cartridges – 4.2.8 scudi

To the drummer of the Castello – 20 scudi

To the cavalry's trumpeter – 20 scudi

For the bonfire in honour of St John the Baptist – 4 scudi
 To the musketeers' regiment – 50 scudi
 Dowry to a poor girl – 24.5 scudi
 For the Palios⁷ of the August 15th horse race⁸ – 33 scudi
 For the visit of the Seneschals – 100 scudi
 Petty cash – 100 scudi
 For 360 measures of oil to light up the lamp of Our Lady of Soledad's niche (calculated at the rate of 6 grani per measure) – 9 scudi
 For 300 measures of oil for the soldiers' base and lookout post inside the Castello – 7.6 scudi
 Total – 1098.1.8 scudi

In addition to the above listed recurrent expenses, the University repaired as necessary the towers, coast guard stations and roads.

Mass-Provision of Food Supplies

The University of Gozo secured a number of loans against an annual interest rate of 4% to finance the mass procurement of wheat and barley. The creditors are:

Zomellina Foundation	1914 scudi
Gattinara Foundation	5000 scudi
Marrados Foundation	2000 scudi

St Paul's Grotto	1018.10 scudi
St Ursula's Monastery	3800 scudi
Commenda of Modica	650 scudi
Total	14383 scudi

The Jurors of Gozo employ these funds and their University's liquid capital of 3900 scudi for the annual procurement of some 3000 salms⁹ of wheat and barley. Local farmers are encouraged to enrol into a scheme whereby they receive payment in advance for the supply of good quality and resalable cereals by the feast of St John the Baptist. Any untaken funds are eventually redirected for the acquisition of supplementary provisions. Those farmers who fail to deliver their pre-agreed quota in time will incur a penalty of 4% to make good for the resultant lost opportunity and ensuing potential damages.

Administration of the University's annual purchase and resale of food provisions, taking into consideration load interests, storekeepers' fees and related expenses to safeguard the assets employed.

Under normal circumstances, ground rent is payable in two instalments, the *meta* or first half on the feast of St John the Baptist and the remaining balance or *contrometa* on St Martin's. The first instalment is



An early 20th century photo of a family sifting its freshly threshed grain. The process had not changed much from the early 18th century, when the Island's annual yield was already unable to meet the annual requirements of the Gozitans.

⁷ Small flags awarded to winners.

⁸ Government still votes a sum every year for the organisation of such horse races in Gozo (Financial Estimates).

⁹ A salma (Maltese modd) is equivalent to 290.9 litres.



The exponential population increase during the course of the 18th century necessitated the construction of additional food storage facilities at St Martin's Quarter Street. This 1770s vaulted store currently houses Heritage Malta's Gozo Area Office.

lower than that of mainland Malta. Calculated at eight- and six-*grani* per *tumolo*¹⁰ for wheat-sown and barley-sown fields respectively, the University's income pays for the capital loan interest of 4%.

Transport to the University's stores is charged five *grani* per *salma*, while the storekeeper receives two *tari* for each *salma* sold. The Master Notary's honoraria totals three scudi, one each for wheat, barley and *meschiato*¹¹. The respective overheads are added up to the provisions purchase price to establish the true cost per *salma*, while the eventual selling price incorporates also a slight margin of profit in favour of the University.

The *contrometa* is imposed also on merchants and land owners who store provisions for eventual retail, thus supplementing the University's central supply and ensuring that the people of Gozo are well stocked throughout winter. If need be, additional food stuffs are imported from mainland Malta and beyond.

For the benefit of the reader, hereunder are the summarised workings for purchase and resale of wheat and barley during 1702:

484.8 *salme* of wheat at 8.2.12 scudi per *salma*
– 3940.8.4.2 scudi

4% interest on financing capital – 157.7.10.5 scudi
Storekeepers fee of 2 *tari* per *salma* – 80.9 scudi
Transport at 5 *grani* per *salma* – 10.4.2.3 scudi
Master Notary's honoraria – 1 scudo
Total Cost – 4190.0.17.4 scudi

Resale of said wheat at 8.8 scudi per *salma*
– 4199.1.1.4 scudi
Less total costs incurred – 4190.0.17.4 scudi
Profit – 9.0.4 scudi

332.13 *salme* of barley at 4.3.4 scudi per *salma*
– 2359.2.8 scudi
4% interest on financing capital – 94.4.6.2 scudi
Storekeepers fee of 2 *tari* per *salma* – 92.1.17.3 scudi
Transport at 5 *grani* per *salma* – 11.6.5 scudi
Master Notary's honoraria – 1 scudo
Total Cost – 2558.2.16.5 scudi

Resale of said barley at 4.8 scudi per *salma*
– 2580.4.10 scudi
Less total costs incurred – 2558.2.16.5 scudi
Profit – 22.1.13.1 scudi

Profits vary from year to year, depending also on the *meta* and *contrometa* combination. Between 1683 and 1690 profits surpassed the highlighted 1702 outcome, whereas on several other years inferior results were registered. Prior to the securing of the aforementioned loans, the people of Gozo could not afford such a scheme and many suffered hunger during winter.

Grain had to be imported from Malta or Sicily at a much higher cost. Loan interests were in the tune of 16.8%, while the purchase costs were inflated by both shipping expenses and by the allowance of 6 *tari* per diem awarded to the Juror who travelled overseas to negotiate the deal and who would at times be constrained to lengthen his stay abroad because of unfavourable weather conditions.

Having evaluated all options available the Governor and Jurors held a popular council meeting at the Governor's residence to come up with a practical

¹⁰ A *tumolo* (Maltese *tomna*) is equivalent to 1124 m².

¹¹ A mixture of wheat and barley.

solution. The greater part of those present seconded their leaders' proposal to explore the possibility of stocking the island's own produce. A trial was set out for the following season and, on experiencing the resounding success, a subsequent popular council meeting approved its introduction on a perennial basis. The required loan capital was secured from Malta, while the interest payable went through a gradual decrease until reaching the present percentage as confirmed by the University's registers. A rate of 8.4% was originally charged but was subsequently lowered to 6%. In 1683 the respective lenders were persuaded by the University to reduce the interest payable toll to 5.6% and a further discount of 0.6% was granted the next year. The interest payable was set at 4% as from 1697.

Magisterial Tenements and Fertile Territories Adorning the Island's Countryside

Tat-Taflija tenement
Ta' Bordin Tenement
Ta' Ghajn Nahrin tenement with fresh water spring
Tal-Ghasafar tenement
Tal-Lews tenement

St George's tenement and Porta Reale fields
Ghajn Mghel el tenement
Ghajn il-Kbira and Is-Saqwi tenement abounding all year round in vegetables and fruits¹²
Tal-Mgarr territory with fresh water spring¹³
Ta' Hamet tenement
Ghajn Abdun tenement with fresh water spring¹⁴
Ghajn Qasab tenement with fresh water spring
Tal-Hamrija tenement
Ta' Majmuna tenement, known also as Ġnien Is-Sultan because of the beautiful vineyards that used to be cultivated there.

Gozo is inhabited by some 830 families each with its own residence. The Island's population totals 5934, namely:

Castello and district plus Rabat	2991
Xewkija	630
Gharb	517
Sannat	370
Nadur	494
St Anthony at Caccia	565
Żebbuġ	367

Around 1000 men fit for fighting are enrolled in militia to defend the island as and when required.



An early 17th century depiction of the Militia Corps. Detail of Altar Painting, Church of the Nativity of Our Lady (Ta' Savina), Victoria. Photo: Daniel Cilia.

¹² This was by far the most important agricultural tenement in Gozo. In the late 14th century, it accounted for 25% of the total annual income from state-owned fountains and Gardens (Bresc 1975).

¹³ The Mgarr or Wied Biljun spring was equally exploited by seafarers to replenish their water supplies.

¹⁴ During the 1930's, when its water was still being channelled to the Castello reservoirs, Ghajn Abdun or Abdul yielded an average of 1300 gallons per day in summer and 6000 gallons per day in winter (Gatt 1934).

The Militia and Its Management

The island's militia is structured in three corps, being the cavalry, infantry and the musketeers. The cavalry comprises some 60 horsemen,¹⁵ each with his own stallion or mare and armed with carbines, pistols and pikes. Divided in three squads, it is headed at all times by the Lieutenant Governor with the assistance of a standard-bearer, two flag bearers, two mounted archers and a trumpeter. The cavalry officials receive the following annual emoluments for their services: the standard-bearer obtains eleven scudi, being the equivalent of the rent income from a piece of land, the flag bearers cash six scudi each from the University's storekeepers being the rent of said stores, the mounted archers get twelve scudi each from the University coffers, while the trumpeter is entitled to twenty scudi from the same University.

Next in line is the infantry, which embraces the aforementioned 392 armed seacoast guards. Together with the sergeant and nine soldiers of the Castello, eighty supporting musketeers and four corporals, the island's infantry falls under the direct command of the University's Head Juror who acts also as their leading standard-bearer.

Established in 1648, the 460-strong regiment of musketeers is subdivided in four units under the

command of a standard-bearer, four sergeants, four corporals, a flag bearer and four drummers. All musketeers, including the eighty seconded with the infantry, are to double up as seacoast guards whenever required. In such eventuality, they are expected to work eight shifts each. The annual salaries of the regiment's officers are paid by the University through a purposely introduced tax on bread. The standard-bearer receives eighteen scudi, each of the four sergeants gets five scudi, the corporals and drummers are paid one scudo each, whereas the flag bearer is entitled to four scudi.

The Castello and respective towers are supplied all year round with arms and ammunition by the Order. Following the devastating assault of 1551 the Order forked out thousands of scudi to refortify and reconfigure the Old City into the present Castello and has ever since maintained its walls and bastions.

In 1666, a friable stretch of the north-facing wall and underlying bedrock had to be rebuilt all the way up from the foundations at a notable expense of several hundred scudi. Some years later, a squadron of forty Turkish vessels was feared to be heading towards the Maltese Islands and the then Governor of Gozo and Prior of Messina Fra Ottavo Tancredi accommodated the Castle's tunnels¹⁶ and had it supplied with artillery mounts, 260 muskets,



A 2005 view of the north-facing encient of the Gran Castello. Note the then fresh collapse of part of the towering cliff face.

¹⁵ Though undersized, the cavalry played a crucial role in the defence of Gozo. In 1645, for instance, they managed to fend off an Ottoman assault (Agius De Soldanis, Vol. I, Ch. 6., Sec.2).

¹⁶ Caxaro seems to be referring to the series of underground tunnels dug in 1645 at the base of Castello's fortifications to have the ramparts blown up should the enemy stand a good chance to overpower the defending force (Vella 2007).

100 spontoons, 100 barrels to store fresh water, a large quantity of gunpowder and related military equipment.

Between 1693 and 1696 the Castello's walls, bastions, ravelin and ditch received another costly renovation. Following the scare of a major Ottoman incursion in 1701 each of the two cavaliers was equipped with a new gunpowder magazine¹⁷ whereas the projecting battery at the back of the old gunpowder magazine had its walls reinstated. Besides, the Castello's cisterns were replenished with fresh water from the Gran Fontana, while the armament compliment was reinforced with fourteen artillery pieces (twelve iron and two bronze) and accompanying mountings, 23 quintals of gunpowder, a large quantity of wooden planks and scantlings, wicker baskets, pick axes, shovels, ploughs, lead pellets, cannon balls, caskets for water storage, fuel (wood and carbon), and related supplies. The operation cost the Order nothing less than 700 scudi, including a staggering 100 scudi for the transportation of fresh water.

Gozo's coastal defence network necessitates the construction of two small towers, similar to the ones at Dwejra and Xlendi, at Qala¹⁸ and at Wied il-Ghasri¹⁹ respectively.

May Our Lord bestow his infinite benevolence and protect the most serene and eminent Fra Don Raimondo de Perellos et Roccaful,²⁰ Grand Master of the Order of St John and Prince of these islands of Malta and Gozo.

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¹⁷ That on St Martin's Cavallier could have been housed within one of the two corner turrets featured in the 1745 pen drawing of the Castello by the Capuchin Friar L. Bartolo.

¹⁸ A coastal battery was eventually built at Ras il-Qala in 1723.

¹⁹ No form of fortification was ever constructed at Wied il-Ghasri. Instead, during the mid 1760s a clockmaker from Malta decided to exploit the area for salt extraction. To his misfortune, though, the project turned out to be disastrous (Houel Vol. IV pp 81-2).

²⁰ Grand Master Raimondo de Perellos and Roccaful reigned between 1697 and 1720.

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Godwin Vella is Head Curatorial Affairs within Heritage Malta.

Ġorġ Gauci: The Talented Craftsman and Carpenter from Gozo

GEOFFREY G. ATTARD

Introduction

Nicknames still play an important role in our islands especially when one is trying to make a find-out about a particular person. Gozo, being the smaller island of the archipelago, with a community where people know each other well, nicknames are still commonly used. Ġorġ Gauci, the renowned craftsman whose name is attached to the parish Basilica of St George in Victoria, was and still is referred to now that he has passed away, as Ġorġ ta' Frallillu.

Ġorġ Gauci was born in Library Street, Victoria on the 23rd of May 1926, the son of Wigi Gauci and Marija neè Tabone. Ġorġ was the third child among five, the others being Ġużeppi, Francesco, Nazinu and Dolora. When he was still a young boy, he frequented St George's Parish Church on a daily basis and was also an altar-server. While attending school in Victoria, he showed a special ability in all types of crafts. Although an intelligent student, his preference was for manual rather than academic pursuits. When still a teenager, he began to work as an apprentice carpenter with Emanuel Sacco, a carpenter from Victoria, brother of Canon Carmelo Sacco and father of Canon Joseph Sacco, both

of Victoria. He spent twenty-five years working with Sacco; later on he set up his own workshop which was situated in St Ursula Street, in the area known among the people of Victoria as "wara ta' Ghedrin". He spent the last part of his working life as a carpenter employed with the government.

Family Life

Ġorġ married Vitorine Vassallo at St George's Basilica on the 7th of October 1962. At this point in time, he was already the most sought after carpenter by the Archpriest of Victoria, Mgr Michael Cefai, later Vicar-General of Gozo. Mgr Cefai carried the title of Archpriest of the Cathedral Church, which is the fourth ranked dignity within the Collegiate of the same Cathedral, as well as Parish Priest of St George's in the old town of Rabat. Therefore, enjoying the confidence and trust of such an important prelate involved quite a lot of work.

Ġorġ had already been instrumental in the excavation process that led to the building of the side chapels of St George's Parish Church. He became so much involved that on one occasion he accidentally found himself buried under some

stones and was fortunate enough to survive. One has to keep in mind that by helping out in the project of the enlargement of the church, Ġorġ was giving his input in favour of his own parish church, the church in which he was baptised, confirmed and even entered Holy Matrimony; this was the church of his forefathers. So zeal and love accompanied by a sense of belonging were never lacking. Ġorġ was about 36 years



Archpriest Mgr Michael Cefai conducting the Marriage for Ġorġ and Vitorina on 7th October 1962.



Mgr Giuseppe Farrugia celebrating nuptial Mass of Ġorġ Gauci and Vitorine Vassallo on 7th October 1962.

the saint. Various portraits and sacred objects of the small church were transferred to St George's Basilica. Contemporaries of Ġorġ Gauci, including Francesco, son of Emmanuel Sacco, himself also a carpenter, who knew Ġorġ practically inside out, remembers Ġorġ helping out at St James' Church in Independence Square. The small church is renowned for its devotion for Our Lady of Sorrows.

old when he got married and the couple had three children: Louis (1963), Marlene (1966) and Ġorġ (1973). Ġorġ was a dedicated husband and a much loved father; quiet and reserved but a workaholic in the good sense of the word, and his company was sought by one and all.

Ġorġ's Love for Churches

Ġorġ had a special love for churches. Whenever he went abroad, the local churches were his favourite places of interest. It is understood that Rome was his favourite city with its multitude of churches and basilicas dotting every corner of the eternal city. So it is no surprise that Ġorġ was involved in the building of the canopy designed by Carlo Pisi of Rome for the parish church of St George.

When Ġorġ was married in the same church, only the four plinths for the standing columns were ready. Later on, Ġorġ helped Pisi to put in place the *baldacchino* which a much faithful but smaller copy of the tribuna at St Peter in the Vatican. Ġorġ served also as sacristan of the tiny church of St Joseph which used to stand in front of St George's Church. The small church was popular with Gozitan villagers who used to visit Victoria in the morning for their daily errands; many devotees used to enter the church to say a short prayer or to express their devotion for St Joseph. When the church was demolished to make space for St George's Square, the street leading from St George's Square to It-Tokk, now Independence Square, was named after

Ġorġ used to help the rector of the church in his preparations for the feast of the titular saint on the 25th of July. He practically served as sacristan during the weeks preceding the feast and Mgr Ġużeppi Farrugia known as Ta' Menzja, who served as rector of the church for many years, found in Ġorġ a right-hand man. Various people who knew Ġorġ well would narrate how his conversations always had churches as their main theme.

A Dedicated Craftsman

Ġorġ lived in a period when St George's Church was not only being enlarged but also embellished. Before the Second World War, Archpriest Mgr Alfons Marija Hili had supervised the building of the upper part of the church's dome. Since the Earthquake of Saint Ighino which had devastated Gozo on the 11th of January 1693, St George's had been without a dome; strictly speaking only its drum survived. The actual dome and lantern were destroyed. Vitor Vella, the renowned Gozitan mason from Żebbuġ, (Vella Muscat, 2009:157-158) had built it again and restored it to its former splendour. At the same time, the side chapels known in Maltese as the "navi" had been built, rendering Charity Street and St George Street – the streets on each side of the church – even narrower. Ġorġ was born and bred while these works were taking place. For Ġorġ and hundreds of other parishioners, this must have seemed as the golden

age in the history of their parish church. As he grew older, Ġorġ helped both priests and laymen in the embellishment process.

The Ambitious Project of the Dome and Side-Chapels

The project of the building of the side-chapels and the completion of the dome were supervised by Archpriest Mgr Alfons M. Hili. However, when Hili died in 1944, the work was not yet finished. The church's vault was about to be painted. A Roman painter, Gian Battista Conti, was chosen for this arduous task. Pawlu Pace, a Gozitan living in Rome, known locally as Pawlu tax-Xejxier was married to the daughter of Italian marmista Carlo Pisi (1897-1979), had commissioned Pisi to oversee the installation of the new marble within St George's Church. Pawlu Pace had taken up residence in Rome after having married one of Pisi's daughters, Gigliola; he was a cousin of the Bishop of Gozo, Mgr Giuseppe Pace and has been

described as 'the agent and intermediary of Pisi in Malta' (Sagona, 2007: 6). Ġorġ helped in this process and at a later stage, he was the right hand man of Maltese sculptor Giuseppe Galea of Rabat (Malta) who was in charge of the artistic decoration of the church's vaults (Galea, 2000).

Another ambitious project commissioned by St George's Parish Church for Carlo Pisi was the *baldacchino* or canopy for the same church which was a replica of Bernini's Baldacchino also referred to as the Altare della Confessione in St Peter's at the Vatican. Ġorġ Gauci was involved in the installment of the canopy; the four columns which hold the *baldacchino* are made of wood. Ġorġ helped also in the placing of the new baptismal font made in marble by the same Pisi and which was put at the back of the church on the right hand side entering the Basilica. A new high altar for the church was commissioned and made by Pisi in 1960 and it is made up of four kneeling angels carrying the altar table on their wings. Sagona states that the symmetrical marble work includes a portrait of the artist's daughter Gigliola shown as the left-hand angel on the front (Sagona, 2007:8).



Ġorġ Gauci (left) holding the 'Salib tal-Bażilika' which he carved out of wood.

The Making of the "Bredella"

The "bredella" is the square piece of furniture upon which a statue is put for the veneration of the faithful especially on the saint's feast-day or during the days preceding it. The "bredella" for the statue of Saint George was made by Ġorġ Gauci in 1967. The fact that the parish chose Ġorġ to carry out this important piece of work shows the high esteem in which he was held. Although Ġorġ finished the work in wood in 1967, there was still work to be done on the "bredella". Various bronze pieces were to be inserted in order to make it more attractive; the first pieces arrived in Gozo on Saturday, the 9th of July 1994 (Vella, 1997:85), a week before the celebrations in honour of St George which take place on an annual basis on the third Sunday of July and the preceding week. Small statues of saints connected with St George were made out of bronze by Maltese bronze sculptor Joseph Chetcuti. Chetcuti was helped by Anthony Xuereb, a parishioner and a maker of small statues. The statues were previously modelled by Chev. Alfred Camilleri Cauchi, a renowned Gozitan sculptor



Ġorġ Gauci standing besides the “bredella” which he made in 1967.

who lives in Malta. The project of the “bredella” was supervised by Mgr Anton Grech Vella, one of the most illustrious benefactors of St George’s Basilica.

Into his late eighties, George could still be seen spending long stretches of time at St George’s, either praying before the Blessed Sacrament or otherwise looking at the vaults of the church. Whenever he opened his mouth to say something, the subject would be related to the church which he loved and cherished and on more than one occasion, he expressed to the author his wish that the church’s vaults would be restored. He said more than once that since the church was painted in the first place, the vaults had never been restored or looked after and they were in dire need of restoration.

Conclusion

Ġorġ Gauci died on the 28th of December 2016 at the age of 90 years. He is survived by his three children Louis, Marlene and George. His funeral Mass took place at St George’s Basilica on Friday the 30th of December; Archpriest Mgr Joseph Curmi referred to St George’s as ‘Ġorġ Gauci’s second home’. Wherever one looks in St George’s Basilica, he is expected to see artistic works on which Ġorġ worked and dedicated his

time and energy. I believe I would not be guilty of exaggeration if I were to apply to him the epitaph that Sir Christopher Wren, the designer of London’s St Paul’s applied for himself; *Si monumentum requiris, circumspice* - If you seek my monument, look around you.

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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.

The Civil Defence in Detroit (Mi.) USA and Gozitan William Pace

JOE ZAMMIT CIANTAR

The Civil Defence in Detroit

It is said that during World War I (28 July 1914 – 11 November 1918), President Roosevelt was deeply concerned about the safety of the Americans. He instructed the Government to establish a Council of National Defence to help co-ordinate resources for national defence and stimulate public morale. State and local communities set up their own defence councils even though the volunteer groups did not get involved in actual civilian defence. In those years the aviation industry was still in its infancy and military attacks from other countries could not reach America. However, in the 1940s, with the outbreak of World War II, the situation was different.

On 20 May 1941, in fact, in the United States, the Office of Civilian Defence [OCD] was set up.¹ It was conceived as a federal emergency war agency,² and had to co-ordinate state and federal measures for the protection of the civilians in case of war emergency. It was created to protect the general population in the event of an attack, keep up public morale if the United States were to enter the war in Europe, and involve civilian volunteers in the country's defence. It had two branches which supervised protective functions such as blackouts and special fire protection. Besides, it was responsible for child care, health, housing, and transportation. It also embraced a Civil Air Patrol.

The OCD was divided into nine regional offices, each with a salaried regional director at the helm. Under each regional director there were unpaid volunteer state directors, county and city directors, and block leaders. Each block was headed by a block captain whose duties were to enrol volunteers for service as air wardens, auxiliary firemen and police, drivers, nurses, and messengers.

It is doubtful whether the OCD was an effective organisation, and it was criticised by the media in this regard. It was never able to act upon any of its plans. However, it did establish important civil defence measures, including sandbag stockpiling, which later proved useful for natural disasters.

The agency was terminated on 4 June 1945.³

A Maltese in the OCD

Among the volunteers in the Detroit Metropolitan Area Office of Civilian Defence there was an American naturalised citizen, born in Malta – William Pace. I did not trace if there were any more volunteers in the same or other branches of the American Civil Defence who were of Maltese origin. Besides, the interest of the present author focused on this one William Pace.

Why William Pace?

In the midst of the many old papers in the possession of the present author, which he keeps and treasures with nostalgia, there are three documents and an Identity Card which once belonged to a Mr William Pace. Together with the Identity Card, the documents consist of two original certificates and an original letter typed on an A4 sheet of paper, addressed to Mr William Pace, then of Plum Street, Detroit, Michigan, USA.

The first document is a certificate, signed by Edward J. Jeffries Jr.,⁴ Coordinator of the Detroit Metropolitan Area, which certifies that William Pace 'has satisfactorily completed the Required Courses of Training prescribed by the Civilian Defence Institute' and was thereby appointed 'Air

¹ This information was collected from <http://www.michigancivildefense.com/index.html> (visited on 14.ii.2011).

² Executive Order 8757.

³ Executive Order 9562.

⁴ Edward Jeffries – a Republican – was the 64th Mayor of Detroit. He served between 2 January 1940 and 5 January 1948. In 1940, Jeffries moved to the mayor's office, winning four consecutive terms before losing to Eugene Van Antwerp in 1947. Jeffries was elected once more to serve on the City Council, beginning in 1950, but died in office shortly thereafter.



Certificate which shows that William Pace has satisfactorily completed the required training

Raid Warden'. This meant that Pace was entitled to wear the Official Emblem and Insignia created by the authority of the Michigan Council of Defence. The Certificate is dated 25 February 1943.⁵

Another Certificate

William Pace seems to have taken a very active part in the Civilian Defence activities. The Office of the Director of Civilian Defence of the State of Michigan issued him a 'Certificate of Award' for '500 hours service as a volunteer in Civilian Defence activities which materially assisted in the prosecution of the War (World War II)'.



Certificate – Awarded to William Pace for his 500 hours of service in the Civil Defence

The certificate was signed, again, by Edward J. Jeffries Jr., Mayor of Detroit and chairman of the City of Detroit Defence Council, by the Director of Civilian Defence,⁶ and by Harry F. Kelly, Governor.⁷ It is dated 10 April 1944.⁸



Harry F. Kelly, Governor of Detroit

Receipt of Certificate

On 2 June 1944, the 21 Area Warden, Mr E.J. Hudson sent Mr Pace a letter – with letterhead 'Detroit Metropolitan Area – Air Raid Warden Division' – in which the former informed the latter (Mr Pace) that the 'attractive and appropriate Certificate of Recognition' for his (Pace's) contribution of time and effort to the Air Raid Warden Service has reached his (Hudson's) office and may be collected personally from a certain Ms Fallows,⁹ in the Area Headquarters Office, in

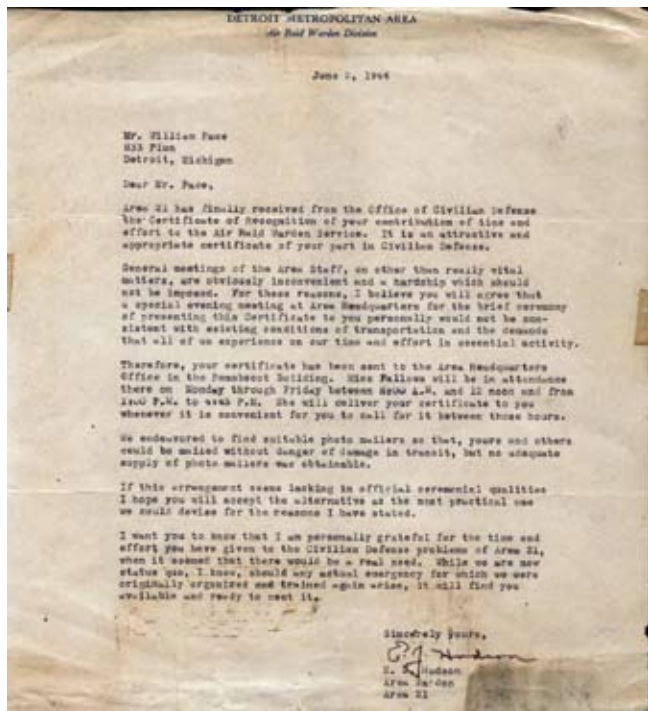
⁵ See relative certificate in picture top left above.

⁶ The name cannot be read well.

⁷ Harry F. Kelly (1895–1971), of Detroit; Secretary of State, 1939–42, Governor, 1943–46. Cf. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Harry_F._Kelly.jpg (visited on 14.ii.2011).

⁸ See relative certificate in picture bottom left above.

⁹ No first name is given.



Letter sent to William Pace instructing him how to be given his '500 hour service' certificate

Penobscot Building,¹⁰ between 8.00 a.m. and 12.00 noon, or between 1.00 p.m. and 4.45 p.m., any day between Monday and Friday, at his convenience. In the letter, Hudson explained that 'General meetings of the Area Staff, on other than really vital matters, are obviously inconvenient and a hardship which should not be imposed. For these reasons, I [Hudson] believe you [Pace] will agree that a special evening meeting at Area Headquarters for the brief ceremony of presenting this Certificate to you personally would not be consistent with existing conditions of transportation and the demands that all of us experience on our time and effort in essential activity.'

Mr Hudson expressed personal gratitude for the 'time and effort you [Pace] have given to the Civilian Defence problems of Area 21'.

Pace picked up this second certificate, which he seems to have treasured, together with the first one, the letter he received from Hudson, and the Identity Card he was given as Post Warden, in the Office of Civilian Defence, Air Raid Protection Service,



Penobscot Building

of the city of Detroit. He affixed both certificates on black cardboard – one above the other – and seems to have hung them somewhere at his home. He attached the ID card with adhesive tape to the bottom of the second certificate. He stuck the letter by Hudson to the back of the black cardboard, with adhesive tape, too.¹¹

Pace's ID card number as member of the Civilian Defence Office was numbered 58342, and shows that he was qualified and serving in Area 21, Zone



The Civil Defence membership ID card of William Pace

¹⁰ The Greater Penobscot Building, commonly known as the Penobscot Building, is a skyscraper and class-A office building in downtown Detroit, Michigan, with 47 stories and rising 566 feet (172.3 m). The building is located in the heart of the Detroit Financial District. Today, the Penobscot is a hub for the city's wireless Internet zone and fibre-optic network. Cf. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Penobscot_Building#Origin_of_the_name (visited on 22.ii.2011).

¹¹ This is the state in which the certificates, letter, and Civilian Defence ID card found their way in possession of the present author.

1, Sector A, Post 8. Besides the signature of Mr Pace, on the ID card there is also that of Edward J. Jeffries Jr.¹²

Research

With this information the present author embarked on an assiduous task of searching the Ellis Island records, and the 1920, 1930, and 1940 American Censuses records, for William Pace.

At that time – about eight years ago – in the records of immigrants/passengers who had passed through Ellis Islands there were at least 3421 persons with last name ‘Pace’; most of them were of Italian origin. Quite a few were Maltese.¹³

Different Abodes

In the 1920 fourteenth census of the population of the United States,¹⁴ William Pace is registered as male, of white colour, living at no. 167, Elizabeth Street – East, in Detroit, Michigan, a lodger with another 15 people. Of these, eight were born in Malta and had applied to be naturalised as American Citizens, as William Pace did. These were:

1. Head, Charles Mizzi (M[arried]), (58 years old), (born in Malta); [Arrived in the USA on 19 February 1910, to meet with his son Eugenio who had already been in the USA, before. He travelled on the ship S.S. Principe di Piemonte which left Naples on 4 February 1910].¹⁵
2. Wife, Antonia Mizzi (M), (50), (born in Malta);
3. Son, Eugenio Mizzi (S[ingle]), (33), (born in Malta); [Eugenio had been in the USA since he was 20 years old, when he arrived in New York on 27 June 1907, on S.S. Lazio which sailed from Naples on 11 June 1907].¹⁶

4. Son, Lorenzo Mizzi (M), (28), (born in Egypt);
5. Daughter-in-law, Marie Frances Mizzi (M), (27), (born in Tennessee);
6. Daughter-in-law, Mary Mizzi (Widow), (32), (born in Malta);
7. Sister-in-law, Carmela Said (S), (54), (born in Malta);
8. Grand-daughter, Mari Antonia Said (S), (6), (born in Michigan);
9. Grand-son, Charles John Said (S), (5), (born in Michigan);
10. Grand-son, Edgar Anthony (S), (36/12), (born in Michigan);
11. Grand-son, Eugene Emmanuel (17/2), (born in Michigan);
12. Lodger, Alfred Pardi (S), (37), (born in Malta);
13. Lodger, Arthur Pardi (M), (35), (born in Malta);
14. Lodger, Joseph Pace (M), (34), (born in Malta);
15. Lodger, William Pace (S), (22), (born in Malta); and
16. Lodger, Anthony Pace (S), (22), (born in Malta).

William Pace in the 1920 American Census

¹² See picture of ID card, bottom right, on previous page.

¹³ Cf. <http://www.ellisland.org/search/matchMore.asp?MID=14883756830908784000&LNM=PACE&PLNM=PACE&kind=exact&offset=0&dwpdone=1>.

¹⁴ ‘Department of Commerce – Bureau of the Census – Fourteenth Census of the United States: 1920 Population’, State of Michigan, County of Wayne, Detroit, Supervisor’s District No. 145, Enumeration District No. 93, enumerated on 8 January 1920, Sheet No. 13 B.

¹⁵ Cf. http://www.ellisland.org/search/shipManifest.asp?MID=14883756830908784000&LNM=MIZZI&PLNM=MIZZI&last_kind=0&RF=105&pID=101273050217&lookup=101273050217&show=%5C%5C192%2E168%2E100%2E11%5CImages%5CT715%2D1413%5CT715%2D14130719%2ETIF&origFN=%5C%5C192%2E168%2E100%2E11%5CImages%5CT715%2D1413%5CT715%2D14130720%2ETIF (visited on 20.iv.2011).

¹⁶ Cf. http://www.ellisland.org/search/shipManifest.asp?MID=14883756830908784000&FNM=EUGENIO&LNM=MIZZI&PLNM=MIZZI&CGD=M&bSYR=1886&bEYR=1888&first_kind=1&last_kind=0&RF=1&pID=102013110134&lookup=102013110134&show=%5C%5C192%2E168%2E100%2E11%5CImages%5CT715%2D0931%5CT715%2D09310234%2ETIF&origFN=%5C%5C192%2E168%2E100%2E11%5CImages%5CT715%2D0931%5CT715%2D09310234%2ETIF (visited on 20.iv.2011).

In the same census, William is registered as aged 22,¹⁷ with both of his parents Maltese, was 'single', migrated to the USA in 1919, was waiting for naturalisation,¹⁸ could read and write, and was employed as 'machinist' in an auto-factory (in Detroit).¹⁹

Of the people living in the same building, there were another two men whose surname was also Pace – Joseph and Anthony. Their common surname and their ages, together with the fact that they were staying in the same 'house', gave me the intuition that the three could be related.

The Other Two Paces

In the same 1920 census, Joseph,²⁰ the eldest, was registered as aged 35, was 'married', emigrated to the USA in 1916, was awaiting naturalisation, and was employed as a 'machinist' with an auto-factory too.²¹ Although he was recorded as being married, his wife does not feature in the Census. However, one should keep in mind that it was the custom that many Maltese and Gozitan married men emigrated alone and sent money to their family at home, until a decision either to make their wife join them when they settle down, or return back home in Malta when they would have made a small fortune.

In the same census, in 1920, Anthony is registered as having been 22 years old, was 'single', emigrated to the USA in 1919 – most probably together with William – had applied for naturalisation that same year, and was employed also as 'machinist' with an auto-factory.²²

All three – Joseph, Anthony and William may have

been employed with the same car makers, probably General Motors Corporation where several Maltese were employed.

Ten years later, in the 1930 fifteenth census of the population of the United States²³ William Pace is registered as living at no. 541,²⁴ Elizabeth Street – East, in Detroit, Michigan, again as a lodger, this time together with just nine other people.

These were:

1. Head, Charlie Mizzi (74 years old), (born in Malta);
2. Wife, – H. Mary A. Mizzi (66), (born in Malta);
3. Son, Eugenio Mizzi (42), single, (born in Malta);
4. Lodger, Niche Kundasar, (40), single, (born in Greece);
5. Lodger, Mustari (?) Karamen, (52), single, (born in Arabia);
6. Lodger, William C. White (68), widower, (born in Germany);
7. Lodger, George Sofieto (51), married, (born in Greece);
8. Lodger, William Pace (34), single, (born in Malta);
9. Lodger, George Karas (47), single, (born in Greece); and
10. Lodger, Peter Andrea (47), single, (born in Greece).

In this census William Pace's age is shown as being 34 years old – a figure which is 'two' years older than that shown ten years earlier. This was in fact the correct age of Pace who, this time, is shown as employed with an auto-factory, as a 'painter', no

¹⁷ This age is mistaken; William Pace was actually 24/25 years old.

¹⁸ In the column next to year of arrival, a 'PA' was inserted. This abbreviation indicates that Pace had submitted his declaration of intention – the first step of the naturalisation process. This 'Pa' appears again in the 1930 census. Cf. 'Detroit City, Wayne County, Michigan, Enumeration District 82-68, Sheet 4B, Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930, National Archives Microfilm Publication T626, roll 1034, Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29, National Archives Building, Washington, D.C.'

¹⁹ Cf. 'Department of Commerce – Bureau of the Census – Fourteenth Census of the United States: 1920 Population'.

²⁰ Joseph was baptised on 1 December 1884. Cf. 'Die 1 Dicembris 1884, Ego Archip.r Felix Refalo baptizavi infantem heri natum ex Paolo Pace, et Maria Antonia Calleja cog. Cui impositum est nomen Ioseph, Vincentius, Georgius. Patr. Georgius Portelli gno. Salvatoris et Gratiella, ejus mater.' Liber Baptizatorum in Ecc. Parr.li S. Georgii M., Vol. 12 (1879-1892), p. 219. He is however registered as having been born on 12 December 1884, in Act 592/1884, in the Public Registry of Gozo.

²¹ Cf. 'Department of Commerce – Bureau of the Census – Fourteenth Census of the United States: 1920 Population'.

²² Cf. 'Department of Commerce – Bureau of the Census – Fourteenth Census of the United States: 1920 Population' – Population Schedule', State of Michigan, County of Wayne, 3rd Precinct, Detroit City, Supervisor's District No. 21, Enumeration District No. 21, enumerated on 14 May 1930, Sheet No. 4 B.

²³ 'Department of Commerce – Bureau of the Census – Fourteenth Census of the United States: 1930 – Population Schedule', State of Michigan, County of Wayne, 3rd Precinct, Detroit City, Supervisor's District No. 21, Enumeration District No. 21, enumerated on 14 May 1930, Sheet No. 4 B.

²⁴ Most probably this is the same abode where William Pace lived in 1920; the house/flat number was changed. Some of the people who lived at 167, in 1920, were still living at 541, together with William Pace, in Elizabeth Street – East, in Detroit, Michigan.

The image shows a 1930 US Census form for William Pace. The form includes sections for personal information (name, age, sex, race, birth date, place of birth, marital status, occupation, etc.) and a list of neighbors. The neighbors are listed in columns, with their names and addresses. The form is filled out with handwritten information.

William Pace in the 1930 American Census

more as a ‘mechanist’. Pace was also identified as being still ‘single’. This is perhaps why he could afford to enrol in the voluntary service of the Civil Defence, an involvement which required him to participate in his after work free time.

Together with him, only three other Maltese-born, from those of the 1920 census, still dwelt in the same abode, while both of his fellow lodgers Joseph Pace and Anthony Pace do not appear at all. One may presume they may have returned to Malta.

In the USA only William stayed; he was single and, eventually, as we learn later on, died single.

The Maltese-born citizens living in the same abode are the same Head of the family Charlie Mizzi (now 74 years old), his wife now registered as Mary A. (aged 66), and their son Eugenio (aged 42)²⁵ who was still single. The Mizzis seems to have been the ‘renting’ family, back in 1920, too.

Who were the Paces?

As already stated, the fact that Joseph, Anthony, and William had the same surname, were living in the same residence, were working (perhaps) in the same

car-factory, together with their (next to each other’s) ages led the present author to sense a relationship; they could have been possibly brothers, or at least were blood related.

Moreover, the fact that the documents once owned by William Pace were in possession of the present author’s father, indicated the possibility that William may have had some connection with Gozo.

With these conjectures in mind, and the approximate years of birth of the three Paces, the present author started research in both of the Malta and Gozo Public Registry Offices. The names did not feature in the registry of people born in the island of Malta. However, a diligent employee²⁶ in the Gozo Public Registry succeeded to trace all three – born in Gozo – and provided the present author with their registry ‘acts’.

At this point in time all that was known to the present author was that three Pace brothers – a Joseph, an Anthony, and a William – were definitely born in Gozo.

The present author asked Mr Francesco Pio Attard, a nephew of his, to check for these names – now with definite relative dates of birth – in the register

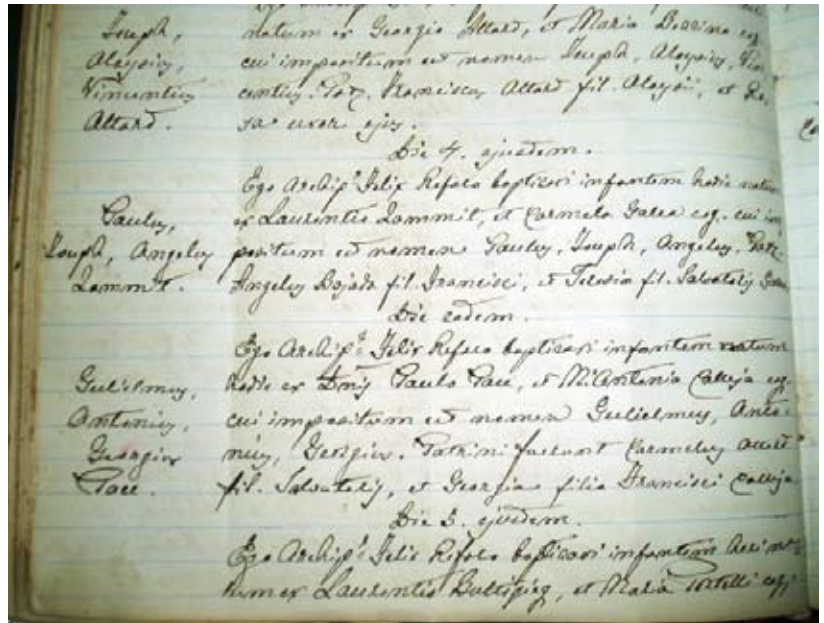
²⁵ As may be observed from a comparative study of the ages of the same people featuring in the 1920 and 1930 censuses, there are some discrepancies in the ages given.

²⁶ Ms Margaret Gatt, from Victoria, Gozo.

of baptisms performed in St George's (Basilica) Parish church, in Victoria, Gozo.

The Three Brothers

There were three men, Joseph, Anthony, and William Pace, who were truly brothers. This is what the present author thought and this is the end result of this research. They came from Victoria, Gozo, Malta:



a) Joseph – the eldest among the three – was born on 30 November 1884 and given the names Ioseph, Vincentius, Georgius at baptism, which took place at St George's parish church, in Victoria, Gozo, on 1 December 1884.²⁷ He was registered 'Giuseppe' in the Gozo Public Registry.²⁸ At the age of 28 he married Carmela, daughter of Frangisk Mejlak and Dolora Debono, in the Cathedral church of Gozo, on 11 August 1912.²⁹

b) Antonio, born on 4 December 1888,³⁰ was given the names Antonius, Aloysius, Iosepho, at baptism, which took place at St George's parish church, in Victoria, Gozo, on the same day he was born, 4 December 1888.³¹ At the age of 22, he married

Maria, daughter of Mikiel Mercieca and M'Rosa Portelli, in the Conventual Franciscan church, in Victoria, Gozo, on 4 November 1910.³²

c) Gulielmo, born on 4 July 1895,³³ was given the names Gulielmus, Antonius, Georgius, at baptism, which took place at St George's parish church, in Victoria, Gozo, on the same day he was born, 4 July 1895.³⁴ Nowhere in the register of baptisms are there notes about him having ever married.

These three men were the sons of Paolo – a school master – and Maria Antonia née Calleja (housewife), born in Victoria, Gozo (Malta), too.³⁵ However, Anthony Pace who arrived in Ellis Island, aged '22' years,³⁶ on the ship of travel Lafayette

²⁷ Cf. Liber Baptizatorum in Ecc. Parr.li S. Georgii M., Vol. 12 (1879-1892), p. 219.

²⁸ Cf. Act no. 592/1884, Births, Public Registry, Gozo.

²⁹ Joseph's wife does not feature in the 1920 USA Census for people living in Detroit, Michigan. However cf. 'Ipse contraxit matrimonium cum Carmela fil. Francisci Mejlak et Dolora Debono cog. in Ecc. Cathed. die 11 Augusti 1912.' This is a note written down on the same page, beneath the insertion of the name, in the left hand side margin, of Liber Baptizatorum in Ecc. Parr.li S. Georgii M., Vol. 12 (1879-1892), p. 219.

³⁰ Cf. Act no. 610/1888, Births, Public Registry, Gozo.

³¹ Cf. Liber Baptizatorum in Ecc. Parr.li S. Georgii M., Vol. 12 (1879-1892), p. 365.

³² Cf. 'Ipse contraxit matrimonium cum Maria fil. Michaelis Mercieca et M. Rosa Portelli cog. in Ecc. Minorum Conv. die 4 Novembris 1910.' Liber Baptizatorum in Ecc. Parr.li S. Georgii M., Vol. 12 (1879-1892), p. 365.

³³ Cf. Act no. 402/1895, Births, Public Registry, Gozo.

³⁴ Cf. Liber Baptizatorum in Ecc. Parr.li S. Georgii M., Vol. 13 (1892-1908), p. 108. In this document, the Archparish priest Felix Refalo states that he baptized the child on the same day he was born.

³⁵ Cf. 'Gulielmo Pace, act no 402/1895, ... Joseph, and Anthony have the same parents. Their act numbers are 592/1884 and 610/1888 respectively. The parents are Paolo (school master) and Maria Antonia née Calleja (housewife).' The present author wishes to acknowledge the information provided by Ms Margaret Gatt at the Public Registry in Victoria, Gozo, on this research.

³⁶ In both of the records held for arrivals on Ellis Island and in the USA census for 1920, the age of this Antonio is registered as having been 22, as well. Cf. http://www.ellisland.org/search/passRecord.asp?MID=14883756830908784000&LNM=PACE&PLNM=PACE&last_kind=0&TOWN=null&SHIP=null&RF=3421&pID=603453050820 (visited on 4.iv.2011)

and 'Department of Commerce – Bureau of the Census – Fourteenth Census of the United States: 1920 Population', State of Michigan, County of Wayne, Detroit, Supervisor's District No. 145, Enumeration District No. 93, enumerated on 8 January 1920, Sheet No. 13 B.

which departed from the port of 'Le Havre', in the north of France, on 17 November 1919, registered as Antonio Pace, was 'single', with ethnicity 'British Italian So. Maltese', and his last place of residence was 'Victoria, Malta', with manifest line number '0024',³⁷ is not the brother of either Joseph or Guglielmo.

Guglielmo Sive William Pace

William Pace was in fact baptized Guglielmo – an Italian name more commonly given rather than the English 'William', during the nineteenth century, especially in traditional Gozo. Guglielmo could have adopted the name William, or the latter name could have been 'bestowed' upon him, when he migrated to the USA in 1919. Likewise, his elder brother's name, Ioseph did not need a lot of change to become 'Joseph'.

William Pace arrived in Ellis Island, on 17 November 1919, aged '24' years, on the ship of travel Lafayette – on which was, probably, 'his cousin' Antonio – which departed from the port of 'Le Havre', in the north of France, on 8 November 1919. He was registered as Guglielmo Pace, 'single', with ethnicity 'British, Italian So., Maltese'. His place of 'previous residence was 'Victoria, Malta'.³⁸ His manifest line number was '0022'.³⁹

In the ship's manifest, the name and complete address of nearest relative or friend in country whence alien (Guglielmo) came were: 'Father – P. Pace – strada Ghain Kaset (for 'Qatet') 2 – Victoria'

and he was registered as having final destination – Canada.⁴⁰ It seems that although his intention was to keep going on to Canada, for some reason, Guglielmo, sive William decided to stay in the USA, and eventually settled in Michigan.

In the 1930 USA Census, William Pace is registered as still having submitted his declaration of intention, the first step of the naturalisation process. A 'Pa' still features in the column related to 'naturalisation' information.⁴¹

The discrepancy between 'brother' Antonio whose actual age in 1920 was 31 and that given in the USA 1920 census for Anthony Pace aged 22 was confusing. A search for another Anthony Pace who, in 1920 was dwelling in the same abode as Joseph and Guglielmo at 167, Elizabeth Street – East, in Detroit, Michigan, had to take place.

The true identity of Anthony Pace, aged 22 years in 1920, was provided by the statistics of arrivals on Ellis Island in 1919.

Another Anthony Pace

Another Anthony Pace arrived on Ellis Island, on 17 November 1919, aged '22' years,⁴² on the ship of travel Lafayette, which departed from the port of 'Le Havre', in the north of France, on 8 November 1919. He was registered as Antonio Pace, was 'single', and had the ethnicity of a 'British Italian So. Maltese'. His last place of residence was 'Victoria, Malta'. His manifest line number was '0024'.⁴³

³⁷ Cf. http://www.ellisland.org/search/passRecord.asp?MID=14883756830908784000&LNM=PACE&PLNM=PACE&last_kind=0&TOWN=null&SHIP=null&RF=3421&pID=603453050820 (visited on 4.iv.2011).

³⁸ Victoria is the capital city of the island of Gozo, smaller sister island of Malta.

³⁹ Cf. http://www.ellisland.org/search/passRecord.asp?MID=14883756830908784000&FNM=GUGLIELMO&LNM=PACE&PLNM=PACE&CGD=M&bSYR=1895&bEYR=1897&first_kind=1&last_kind=0&TOWN=null&SHIP=null&RF=1&pID=603453050818 (visited on 31.iii.2011).

⁴⁰ Cf. http://www.ellisland.org/EIFile/popup_weif_5a.asp?src=%2Fcgi%2Dbin%2Ftif2gif%2Eexe%3FT%3D%5C%5C%5C%5C192%2E168%2E100%2E11%5C%5Cimages%5C%5C715%2D2698%5C%5C715%2D26980720%2ETIF%26S%3D%2E5&pID=603453050818&name=Guglielmo%26nbsp%3BPace&doa=Nov+17%2C+1919&port=Le+Havre&line=0022 (visited on 14.iv.2011).

⁴¹ Detroit City, Wayne County, Michigan, Enumeration District 82-68, Sheet 4B, Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930, National Archives Microfilm Publication T626, roll 1034, Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29, National Archives Building, Washington, D.C.

⁴² Antonio was in fact 31 years old. However, for some reason, in both of the records held for arrivals on Ellis Island and in the USA census for 1920, his age is registered as having been 22, as well. Cf. http://www.ellisland.org/search/passRecord.asp?MID=14883756830908784000&LNM=PACE&PLNM=PACE&last_kind=0&TOWN=null&SHIP=null&RF=3421&pID=603453050820 (visited on 4.iv.2011).

and 'Department of Commerce – Bureau of the Census – Fourteenth Census of the United States: 1920 Population', State of Michigan, County of Wayne, Detroit, Supervisor's District No. 145, Enumeration District No. 93, enumerated on 8 January 1920, Sheet No. 13 B.

⁴³ Cf. http://www.ellisland.org/search/passRecord.asp?MID=14883756830908784000&LNM=PACE&PLNM=PACE&last_kind=0&TOWN=null&SHIP=null&RF=3421&pID=603453050820 (visited on 4.iv.2011).

In the ship's manifest, the name and complete address of nearest relative or friend in country whence alien (Antonio Pace) came from are: 'Father – G. Pace of Biaza [Piazza] San Agostino, 12, Victoria, Gozo' and he was registered as having final destination Detroit, Michigan, where he would join his cousin Joseph Pace, at 167, Elizabeth Street, Detroit, Michigan.⁴⁴

Hence Antonio was not a brother but a cousin to Joseph, as stated in the ship's manifest. This also clearly shows that Antonio and William (in Detroit) were not brothers; they were cousins who travelled together, on the same ship to Ellis Island, and eventually were dwelling together in the same apartment in 1920. It is also elicited that Guglielmo sive William and Joseph were brothers and, henceforth, both cousins to Antonio, too.

Giuseppe Pace

The eldest brother, Giuseppe Pace, migrated to the USA in 1916, when he was 31 years of age. In the ship manifest he is registered as having been a teacher, married to Carmela, from Gozo. He had a ticket which was paid for him by his father, and was going to join another Giuseppe Pace (whom I did not succeed to trace), at 129 Michigan Street, Detroit, Michigan. He was in possession of \$50, was 5' 10" tall, had regular complexion, was in good health, and had brown hair and eyes. He travelled on the ship SS Duca degli Abruzzi which left the port of Naples on 9 September 1916 and arrived at the port of New York about fifteen days later, on 23 September. His Manifest line number was 22.⁴⁵

Different Abodes

According to documents cited, in the USA, in 1916 Joseph Pace had to join another Joseph Pace, living at 129 Michigan Street, Detroit, Michigan. Meanwhile, in 1919, in the USA, Antonio Pace had to join his cousin Joseph Pace, at 167, Elizabeth Street, Detroit, Michigan.



Giuseppe Pace

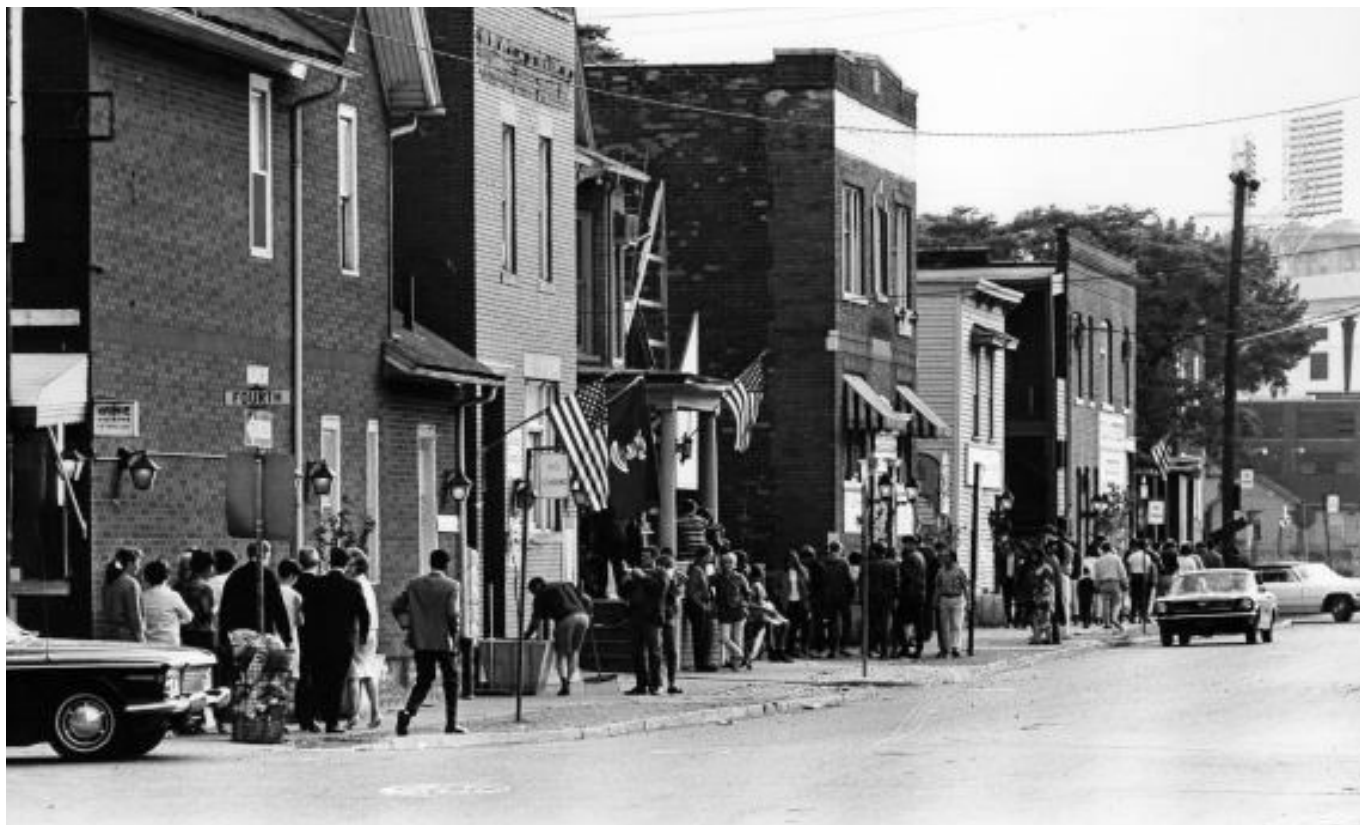
In 1919, the ship manifest shows that Guglielmo Pace, was travelling transit, on his way to Canada, to join his friend Carmela Caruana, who was residing at 23 Widmere St., Toronto, Canada. However, in the 1920 USA Census, William Pace is recorded as staying at 167, Elizabeth Street, East, Detroit, Michigan; a year after his arrival on Ellis Island, instead of in Canada, William is living in Detroit, together with his brother Joseph and their cousin Anthony.

In the 1930 USA census, William is living at 541, Elizabeth Street, East, Detroit, Michigan. He is registered as still having submitted his declaration of intention for ‘naturalisation’.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Cf. http://www.ellisland.org/ElFile/popup_weif_5a.asp?src=%2Fcgif%2Dbin%2Ftif2gif%2Eexe%3FT%3D%5C%5C%5C%5C192%2E168%2E100%2E11%5C%5CIMAGES%5C%5CT715%2D2698%5C%5CT715%2D26980721%2ETIF%26S%3D%2E5&pid=603453050820&name=Antonio%26nbsp%3BPace&doa=Nov+17%2C+1919&port=Le+Havre&line=0024 (visited 1.v.2013).

⁴⁵ Cf. http://www.ellisland.org/search/passRecord.asp?MID=14883756830908784000&LNM=PACE&PLNM=PACE&last_kind=0&TOWN=null&SHIP=null&RF=3421&pID=103072030022 (visited on 14.iv.2011).

⁴⁶ Detroit City, Wayne County, Michigan, Enumeration District 82-68, Sheet 4B, 46th Census of the United States, 1930, National Archives Microfilm Publication T626, roll 1034, Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29, National Archives Building, Washington, D.C.



Plum Street in the 1940s

Then, in 1944 – the period when he was enrolled in the Detroit section of the Civilian Defence – William was dwelling at 833, Plum Street,⁴⁷ Detroit, Michigan⁴⁸ – a street parallel with Elizabeth Street.

Back in Malta

The present author could not trace more information about the movements of William Pace in Detroit, after 1944, when he was 49 years of age.

However, there is evidence that he visited Malta often to spend some time with his family in Gozo, and return to Detroit where he could have kept working until retirement, and perhaps even after. A diligent search in the ‘Status Animarum’ register, in St George’s Basilica archives, provides records of when William was at home in Gozo, and was visited by the parish priest in his annual ‘blessing

of homes’ in his parish.

Born in Victoria

Guglielmo was born in Victoria, Gozo, on Thursday, 4 July 1895. His father, Paolo, was a teacher hence, it is presumed that the children, in the early years of the twentieth century, had a good education, even though regular normal classes were as yet non-existent. Still, perhaps being encouraged or at least inspired by the spirit of adventure and, following the footsteps of fellow same-age youths and relatives who had emigrated before, Guglielmo applied for a passport to be able to travel.

Passport Application

Guglielmo filled in the declaration in an application for a passport at Victoria, Gozo, on 30 September

⁴⁷ In the 1960s, Plum Street became one of the quirkiest neighborhoods and a depressed neighborhood in Detroit. In the spring of 1967, young counter culture types, self-described as “freaks,” set up head shops, clothing boutiques, alternative bookstores, and several small eateries within a two or three block area. It also captured the attention of a local motorcycle gang - The Outlaws, who rolled in and started taking over and roughing people up. However, with help from law enforcement, the Plum Street “experiment” failed and the area once again became deserted and depressed. Cf. <http://fornology.blogspot.com.mt/2012/02/detroits-plum-street-turns-sour-in.html> (visited on 5.vii.2017).

⁴⁸ Cf. letter sent to Pace by E.J. Hudson for picking the Certificate of award for Service.



Guglielmo Pace's application for a passport



The parish priest's certificate of baptism of Guglielmo Pace

1919.⁴⁹ In the central upper part of this printed form, Pace declares that then he resided at No. 2, S(tra)da Ghain Katet,⁵⁰ Victoria, Gozo, that he is a British born subject, that he was born in Victoria, Gozo on the 4th July 1895, and that he was applying for a Passport for the purpose of travelling to Toronto, in Canada. Moreover, Pace states that his profession was that of a messenger.

In the lower part of the application, Public Notary Ang Cauchi, from Nadur, Gozo, declares that he believes the information given by Mr Pace was true, and that from his personal knowledge of him, vouches that he (Mr Pace) is fit for a passport.

The application carries the signatures of both Mr Pace and Notary Cauchi, respectively.

A Photo

A black and white photo of Guglielmo Pace, twice the size of a normal present day passport photo, was also attached. It was once stapled on the left hand side of the form. The staple's rust ruined parts of the photo, though not the figure of the applicant. In this, Guglielmo – a definitely healthy looking young man, aged just over 24 – is wearing a white shirt, a tie, and a semi-dark jacket. He looks very serious and sombre. From the photo and the description of applicant notes written down on the right hand side of the same application we learn that Guglielmo had chestnut hair, was very well groomed with parting on the left, had a round face, a high forehead, dark brown eyes, a broad nose, a normal mouth, and a square chin. His complexion is given as dark. He is said to have been 5 feet 5 inches tall.

Guglielmo Pace and his Family

In Victoria, Gozo, a family which in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century had the surname Pace and the nickname 'Tal-Ferħ' was a

⁴⁹ For this and the information given infra cf. N(ational) A(rchives) M(alta), MFA01, 2696/1919. This document consists of the application form (size A3), a birth certificate issued by both the Cathedral and St George's Parish in Victoria, in the name of Guglielmo, and signed by Archpriest Can. Alphonse M. Hili, on 24 September 1918, and a declaration signed by Public Notary Ang Cauchi whereby he certifies that Mr Guglielmo Pace 'is of respectable character, loyal to His Britannic Majesty both in act and word, and that he is a fit and proper person to be entrusted with a passport signed by the Government requiring His Majesty's Representatives abroad to afford him every assistance and protection of which he may stand in need.' Cf. *ibid.* sheet 3.

⁵⁰ This is present day 'Għajn Qatet Street' in Victoria. The house – which still stands today – is situated among buildings behind St Francis church.



William Pace in the 1950s

twentieth centuries. Among these some were from Victoria, Gozo – Guglielmo was one of them.

Around the turn of the twentieth century the United States became the world's leading industrial power especially due to an outburst of entrepreneurship in the Northeast (which includes Michigan) and Midwest, and millions of immigrant workers and farmers from Europe invaded the United States, and settled in places where jobs were in abundance, and had friends or relatives who would help them with dwelling places. The boom of car-making, particularly in Detroit and Michigan, was at its initial stages and many young men were being employed in the flourishing business, doing all kind of work. Word among young Maltese, but it seems especially amongst Gozitans, encouraged migration to the 'States' where many took up secure jobs and built fortunes for themselves and their families. It was this prosperous period – which continued throughout the 1960s – which helped Maltese and Gozitan 'Americans' to make a fortune and come back home and build large homes which were given names like 'Sweet America' and 'God bless America', and fly American flags on the roofs of their houses, as recognition.

William Pace was one of these migrants. He worked in a car factory, perhaps all his life, until retirement.

He was and remained single. He must have fallen in love with the USA; he went on living in Michigan even after he retired, and kept frequently coming to Gozo to visit his relatives, and returning back to the 'States', until his sudden death in Victoria, Gozo, in 1969, when he was 74. However, due to the altruistic enthusiasm shown in his participation in the voluntary service of the Civil Defence of the locality where he lived, during his free time, in the early years of the Second World War, he earned himself acknowledgement from the Detroit authorities with certificates of recognition. These certificates eventually inspired this research, which is being published, in turn, as an appreciation for William's sive Guglielmo's good deed towards society, especially at a time when it was threatened by a world war.

Acknowledgements

Leelyn Johnson, Librarian, Library of Michigan, Lansing; Francesco Pio Attard, St George's Basilica Archives, Victoria, Gozo, Malta; Margaret Gatt, Public Registry, Gozo, Malta; Karen L. Jania, Head, Access and Reference Services, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan; Mike Smith, Director, Walter Reuther Library, Wayne State University, Detroit; Rebecca Sharp, Archives Specialist, Archives I Research Support Branch, National Archives and Records Administration, NW Washington; Ms Marlene Gouder and Pauline Cortis, Customer Care Office, The National Archives, Rabat, Malta; Ms Marianne Azzopardi, Assistant Head, Xewkija Primary School; and mother Maria, and her daughter Josette Vassallo, relatives of Guglielmo Pace.

Dr Joe Zammit Ciantar, BA, MA, PhD (8.5.1942-). was born in Ta' Sannat, Gozo. He received his education in Victoria, Gozo. He used to teach at primary level between 1960 and 1971, at secondary level up to 1976, and at tertiary level from 1976, at the Junior College, and later on with the University of Malta until his retirement as Senior Lecturer in 2006. Between 1991 and 2006 he also lectured at the Università degli Studi (L'Orientale) in Naples.

Wrapping up a Zealous Life - The Discovery of an Eighteenth Century Parish Priest's Will

DANIEL MEILAK

The day was 30th April 1743. The moribund parish priest of Nadur, Don Giovanni Andrea Falson lay on his deathbed, still in his full senses, directing notary Antonio Madlane to write down every detail of what was to become of his worldly possessions. Falson passed away a few hours later on 1st May at the age of 73 after spending roughly half of his life, at the helm of the Nadur parish.

Context

Falson steered the eastern-most parish of Gozo through thick and thin. Born on 23rd September 1670, probably in Gharb, Giovanni Andrea was baptised on the same day by Don Giovanni Antonio Camilleri, Archpriest of the Gozo Matrice.¹ At that time, the rural settlement of Gharb was still part of this parish. His father Ignatio, the son of a meat seller called Carolo, hailed from the area known as 'il-Belliegħa' in Rabat, just beneath the Castle, while his mother Antonia was most probably from Gharb as well.² Ordained to the priesthood on 23rd October 1695, the young priest immediately commenced his pastoral ministry in his presumably home parish of Gharb, established as a separate parish on 29th August 1679. Not long after, he assumed the responsibility of being the assistant parish priest to Don Giovanni Maria Camilleri. Among other responsibilities, he oversaw the construction works of the new parish church of Gharb, which started in 1699. This skill would later on become an asset for the young priest.³

Across the island, Nadur experienced the death of its first parish priest, Don Bernardo Haber in 1705 and eventually between 1705-1706, Falson was entrusted with running the parish as vicar-curate. In 1706 Don Ignatio Hagius, from Valletta, was chosen to lead the parish. This only lasted for around two years, and his tenure was brought to an abrupt end by serious accusations he faced (Bonnici, 1984:163-164). In

1708, Bishop Davide Cocco Palmieri promoted the young Falson to lead the Nadur parish as its third parish priest. He was then thirty-eight years old and ready to take on the responsibility of the largest parish of Gozo in terms of territory, encompassing today's Nadur, Qala, Għajnsielem, Imġarr and the island of Comino, and with a total population of around 600 people (Bonnici, 1984:163-164). Figures from a 1715 Status Animarum indicate a booming population with 400 adults and a relatively high figure of 200 who were enlisted as being young (Bonnici, 1984:163-164). By the end of his life, the population increased to 1,143 persons.⁴

The presence of the Hospitaller Order of St John in Malta since 1530 brought about more stability and security in terms of defence from foreign threats (Fiorini, 1993:309). This, no doubt, was a catalyst in the ruralisation of Malta and Gozo, and contributed towards the clustering of new villages near the coast. In Falson's parish, the government constructed a tower, known vernacularly as Ta' Soppu between Dħlet Qorrot and San Blas between 1667 and 1680, while more coastal defences were commissioned in the first half of the eighteenth century around Ramla l-Hamra and another redoubt at Ras il-Qala in 1731-1732. The memory of 1688, when Cocco Palmieri established the parish, and therefore automatically recognised the status of a new village, was still fresh in the minds and hearts of the parishioners. Following the tenures of Don Bernardo Haber and Don Ignatio Hagius, who had laid the foundations of the infant parish, it was Falson's turn to prove Cocco Palmieri right in entrusting him with this ministry.

Falson's Tireless Work in the Parish of Nadur

Immediately, Falson's name appears in the parish registers, administering the day-to-day sacraments of baptism and marriages, joyful occasions in

¹ Gozo Cathedral Parish Archive, Bapt., 3 (1646-1673), f.340.

² Gozo Curia Archive, Capitula, Processus super erectione Collegiatae Insulae Gaudisii, f.53r.

³ <http://www.gharbnet.com/history/history3.html> (accessed on 5th June 2017).

⁴ This figure was derived from a Status Animarum during the first months of parish priest Don Salvatore Grech on 1744 (Bonnici, 1984:198).

their own right, while presiding over funerals and internments in the parish church. The liturgy was an essential part of his ministry, with daily masses, annual feasts, processions and other devotional activities. Every main altar in the church was run by its own procurator, while two confraternities – that of the Holy Sacrament, founded as early as 1690, and that of the Holy Rosary in 1705 – assumed a central role in the spiritual and social improvement of the parishioners. During the leadership of Don Giovanni Andrea, the latter confraternity commissioned the first ever statue of the new parish – that of Our Lady of the Rosary. It was carved entirely out of a mulberry trunk. The statue was later transferred to the present parish church where it still goes around town in the annual Holy Rosary procession held on the first Sunday of October (Bonnici, 1984:191).

His name is intimately linked with equipping the new parish church for liturgical and devotional functions. Besides large-scale projects such as proceeding with its construction – which had initiated in the 1690s, opening a new cemetery around the church – built between 1723 and 1729, and commissioning a new bell, several other additions were urgently needed. He ordered two new confessionals to be placed on either side of the church. By 1736, he managed to buy a new organ and placed it in the main balcony above the main door of the church and commissioned a new painting depicting Our Lady of Light, discussed *infra* (Bonnici, 1984:189-190). One of his final projects was the restructuring of the high altar in 1742, currently preserved in the north sacristy of the church.

The Integrity of the Human Being

The first half of the eighteenth century witnessed a generally downtrodden, financially-deprived population, although a section of the population was better-off than the rest.⁵ Rural life was generally harsh, short and highly dependent on climatic factors such as fluctuating rainfalls or droughts, the spread of disease and pests. One such instance occurred on 6th April 1743, just a few days before Falson's death. A hail-storm killed several animals, indispensable for work or nutrition, and destroyed crops, notably wheat



Our Lady of Light, 1736, St Peter and St Paul Collegiate Basilica, unknown painter.

and barley (Agius de Soldanis, 1936:122). This was coupled by a declining, yet still present, threat from Barbary pirate raids. When in 1733 one such raid composed of seventy-five pirates and headed by Bet-Kit from Sfax (modern Tunisia) who was acting for a converted Genovese called Mustafà, landed in the dead of the night in Ramla l-Hamra, an entire family of six people, save the eldest son who was sleeping a stone-throw away from the house, were carried to North Africa as slaves. Fortunately for this family, whose father was Giovanni Mercieca known as 'tal-Indju', a happy ending followed suit. Enslaved in the household of a kind Muslim woman, they seemed to have provided a very good image of their own religion, since this lady eventually converted from Islam to Christianity on her deathbed and after being so gentle and understanding when the Gozitan wife was about to

⁵ In a 1667 census, 63% of the population was enlisted as *capo di casa povero*, while the remaining 37% were better off as they enjoyed a regular income. The former were thus exempted from paying tithes (Bezzina and Muscat, 2007).

give birth to her slave child. After approximately two years, the entire family was redeemed from slavery and returned to Gozo to tell their story.⁶

Disease and child-mortality were high, mainly due to very poor hygienic and health conditions, aggravated by malnutrition (Cassar, 1993:445-449). Education was mostly inexistent and illiteracy was rife. On the other hand, society was composed of strong-family units and quite homogenous in terms of beliefs and religious practice (Cassar, 1993:445-449, and Bonnici, 1993:337). They accepted common values and worldviews, together with a shared history and identity. Preceding Abraham Maslow by more than two centuries, Falson understood well that his pastoral ministry could only be carried out after the parishioners' basic material needs were met.

Upon initiating a new project of commissioning a new bell for the newly built parish church in 1711, a collective effort was needed to raise the required funds. Sadly for him, when he drew up his will in 1743, the bills were still unsettled. Such was the building of the parish church which had started in the 1690s, and was still incomplete when he died.⁷ This clearly shows the deprived material conditions which afflicted the parish. Falson explicitly paid a sum of money to the slaves who worked on the casting of the bell, even though he knew perfectly well that it was a painful feat to raise enough money for the bell itself, let alone for added expenses such as was this (Bonnici, 1984:183). Nevertheless, his respect for human dignity made him go out of his way. Eventually he ended up paying a sizeable portion of the overall price for the bell from his very own pocket.

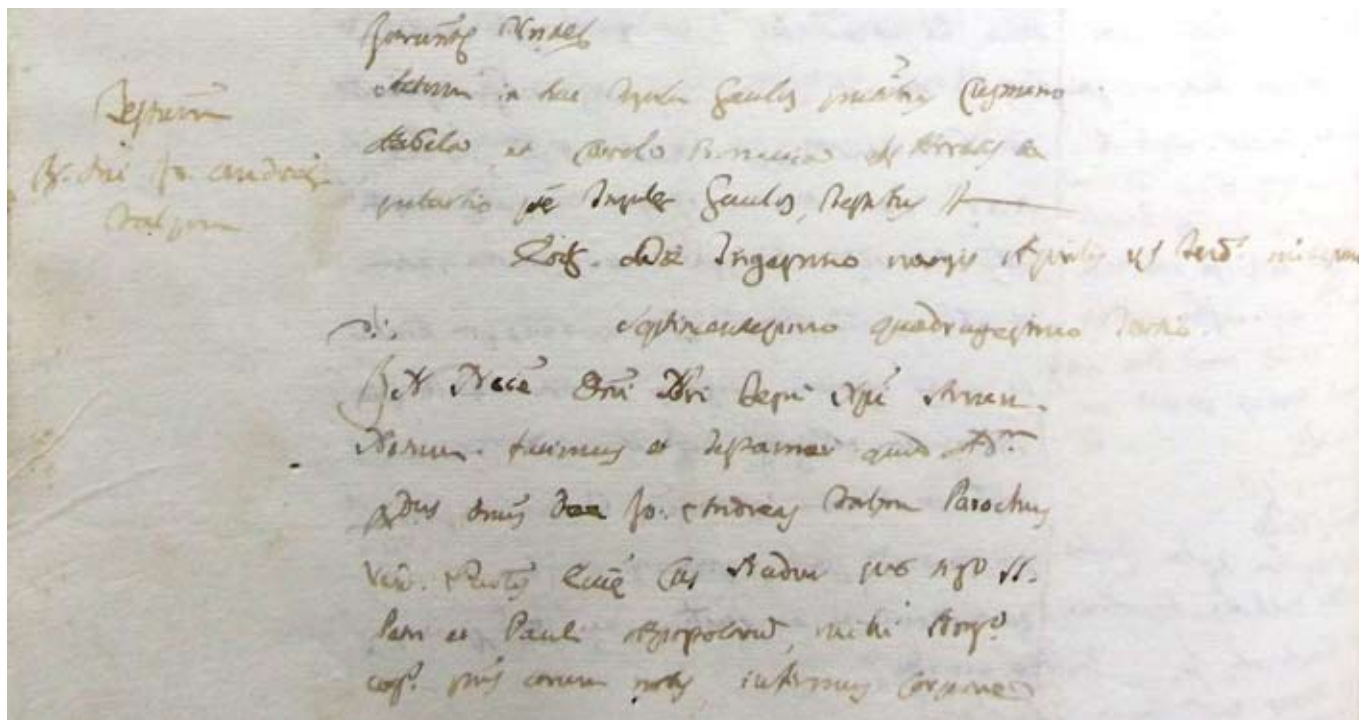
Acting proactively, and in a sense revolutionary by providing the fishing rod rather than the fish, Falson ordered that lands bestowed or owned by the parish were to be tilled by hired labourers. This ensured a means of living for several families under his care (Bonnici, 1984:183). Moreover, evidence suggests that he strongly believed in education as the key

to alleviate the material and social condition of the people. In 1721, he pleaded to the Ecclesiastical Authorities to grant him a licence to give children some basic education, namely grammar and other elementary subjects. This was to complement his duty as curate of teaching catechism on a regular basis. A similar licence was already granted to the parish priests of Xagħra and Għarb, while in Rabat this had already been in practice. Permission was officially granted on 22nd July 1722 (Borg, 1972:230-241). These were the birth pangs to a lengthy process of democratising education among the working classes. Later on in the eighteenth century the latter philosophy found Maltese advocates like the enlightened Michele Antonio Vassalli who filed an application in 1795 for the opening of a 'public and normal school of reading and writing in the Maltese language' – the only tongue used by the great majority of the Maltese working class people (Ciappara, 2006:75-76). These efforts by priests to educate children was also the start of a process of transition from informal to formal state-provided education in the following century.

Fusing together the spiritual with the material, the traditional feast of l-Imnarja, celebrating the martyrdom of St Peter and St Paul, was given importance during Falson's term, and thus provided an opportunity for the people to entertain themselves. As from 1720, the festivities started taking place in an ancient garden known as Il Boschetto, limits of Dahlet Qorrot and bordering another garden called Ġnien Musfar, with food, entertainment, dance, and races for people and for animals. The winners earned trophies which were funded from the rent of lands donated by Grandmaster Emmanuel de Vilhena. The highest dignitaries of Gozo, including the Knight-Governor of the island and members of the Università, attended this feast which took place after the solemn Vespers in the parish church dedicated to the saints (Bonnici, 1984:169-170); Mifsud, Pelagio, 152v; Agius de Soldanis, 1963:23; Agius Sultana, 2016:607). These celebrations continued to exist through the centuries that followed.

⁶ This striking narrative was documented by two contemporary history-writers: Giovanni Pietro Francesco Agius de Soldanis and Pelagio Mifsud with some variations. (Agius de Soldanis, 1936:121.) Also Malta Cathedral Archive, [Padre Pelagio], Notizia VII, Misc., 55, 152v.

⁷ It is rather ironic that just a few years after Falson's death and after decades of building the first parish church, in 1760 parish priest Don Salvatore Galea laid the foundations for a new larger parish church, due to the ever-increasing population, and eventually demolished the previous one (Bonnici, 1984:193).



The initial lines from the will.

The End of Falson's Term and Life

At 73, Don Giovanni Andrea was still carrying out his work to the best of his abilities, and his name persistently appears in the baptism, marriage and death registers of the parish. That is, until a few days prior to his death. The first sign of ill-health was Michele Muscat's baptism on 22nd April 1743 which was recorded by Don Domenico Cassar, his assistant. In a matter of a few days, his condition seemed to have deteriorated rapidly and on 30th April he summoned notary Antonio Madlane to his house, together with seven witnesses, all hailing from Nadur. Those were Don Publio Vella, Don Francesco Tabone, Don Gregorio Attard, Andrea Speranza, Angelo Camilleri, Michel'Angelo Tabone and Pietro Portelli.⁹ Time was ripe to distribute his material possessions before taking his last breath, which happened just a few hours later on 1st May 1743. His will saw the light 274 years later when it was discovered by the present author and published for the first time.¹⁰

Leaving a Legacy

This will is recorded in notary Antonio Madlane's manuscripts in the Notarial Archives, Valletta. It gives a detailed record of the parish priest's possessions, and a bird's eye view of Falson's personality. Despite not being born or raised in Nadur, he spent almost his entire priestly ministry in that parish, and became intimately attached to its people. The first orders concerned his funerary arrangements. He desired to have a modest funeral with his corpse leaving the parish house (which most probably was on the right side of the church) and proceeding towards the parish church, accompanied by six priests.¹¹ His death record was written by his assistant, Cassar, who also noted that the funerary rite was presided by himself.¹² On top of this, Don Giovanni Andrea chose to be buried in the parish church in which he officiated as parish priest, rather than his home parish, and his wish was fulfilled.¹³

As was the practice in those times, suffrage for a deceased person's soul was considered fundamental

⁸ Mifsud, Pelagio, 152v.

⁹ Notarial Archive Valletta, Testamentum Reverendi Domini Joannes Andreas Falzon, Antonio Madlane, R323, vol. 24, 135r.

¹⁰ For a transcript and translation (in Maltese) of the will, see Luminaria, St Peter and St Paul Parish – Nadur, June 2017, no. 126, 38-44.

¹¹ Testamentum, 132v.

¹² Nadur Parish Archive, Mort., vol. 1 (1689-1761), 85.

¹³ Ibid.

in order to accelerate the transition from purgatory to heaven. Towards this cause, Falson dedicated 100 scudi (€24) to be spent on masses for his repose and to be specifically celebrated in the same parish church. This was to be paid for using the standard rate of two tari (€0.04) per mass on each first, second and last days of each month, together with another one on the anniversary of his death. Little perhaps did he think that his actual death anniversary was to coincide with the first of these dates.¹⁴

Next on the list came his deceased family members. 110 scudi (€26.40) were to be spent on repose masses for his father Ignatio; his mother Antonia; his sister Maria; his grandparents Margerita Habela and Monsika Darmanin; Giovanna Maria Habela; Michael' Angelo Habela; Aloisio Habela; Adeodato Habela; Maria and Giovanni Maria Habela - 10 scudi each (€2.40). This sum was even larger than the 100 scudi he dedicated towards his soul's suffrage. The parish priest did not necessarily possess these lump sums in cash. In fact he offered some of his immovable property to be sold in order to finance these masses. Four annual anniversaries were set up by Falson himself, when these masses were to be held at the same rate of two tari per mass, namely the day of his own death; a day during the octave following the solemn memorial of All Souls for his parents; on 30th June for Giovanni Maria and Antonia Habela; and a day during the novena of the blessed Virgin Mary for his grandparents. For an unknown reason, Falson omits his male grandparents from both his maternal and paternal sides, and only mentions his female ones.¹⁵

From the spiritual realm, Falson then moved to the material one. 10 scudi were bequeathed to Giovanni Battista Hellul's children at the rate of two tari per scudo. These were to be handed over in the form of a legate. This family resided in Ħal Tarxien Malta.¹⁶ It is already established that the priest had relatives residing in Malta. Padre Pelagio Mifsud, a Capuchin from Ғaḏ-Ғebbuḡ, Malta, boasted of being related to him in a document describing Nadur and its two

most important churches: the parish church and the Immaculate Conception Sanctuary, dating to the years following 1764.¹⁷ 10 more scudi were bequeathed to Josepha Cumbo in regular instalments, starting in the fourth year following his death and for a period of ten years, with one scudo annually.¹⁸ All this money totalled 230 scudi (€55.20).

The will then specified what was to become of his immoveable property. Falson divided these possessions between his relatives and his beloved parish of Nadur. Six individuals were appointed as universal heirs of this will. These were Ipollito Habela; Cosmano Habela; Giovanni Tommaso Habela; the children of Giovanni Battista Habela, deceased; the children of Grazia Camilleri, deceased; and the children of Valu? Habela.¹⁹ It is highly probable that these individuals were entirely selected from Falson's mother Antonia's Habela family. They were entitled to an equal share of one sixth each.²⁰

These universal heirs were bound to sell lands owned by Falson in 'Tal-Virtut', in Gharb. Furthermore, the dying priest prohibited the use of the *Lex Falcida* and the *Quarta Trebellanica*. *Lex Falcida* was an ancient law written by Publius Falcidius and used since Roman times. This law stipulated that an inheritor could only refuse three quarters of the bequest, and had to accept the other remaining quarter (*Quarta*).²¹ By prohibiting the *Lex Falcida* and *Quarta Trebellanica*, Falson ensured that his heirs accept, willingly or not, his bequest. It is highly likely that the reason behind this decision was to ensure that the money needed to pay for the repose masses and the bell were adequately raised from his possessions, and not from the heirs' pockets, as this would have been unfair.

As already referred to earlier, since 1711 Falson was busy raising money for the first bell to be cast for the new Nadur parish church. Despite an incoming flow of money during these first years, and a personal donation of 25 (€6) scudi, thirty-two years later the bill was still unsettled. He wanted to

¹⁴ Testamentum, 132r-v

¹⁵ Ibid., 132v – 133r.

¹⁶ Ibid., 134v.

¹⁷ Pelagio Mifsud, 160r.

¹⁸ Testamentum, 134v.

¹⁹ This name was not clear in the document and the most possible version of it was given here.

²⁰ Testamentum, 133r.

²¹ Testamentum, f.133 r-v

be responsible by not burdening his successor with debts and bequeathed a piece of land known as 'tal-Vlece' in Qala to be rented and therefore settling the remaining debts by paying 25 scudi annually from its generated rents. Falson's worries were legitimate, since thirty two-years of collecting money for a bell were undesirably overstretched. He also ordered his universal heirs that should the land in Qala not generate 25 scudi annually, they were obliged to pay them from their own pockets! Upon the settlement of the bell-debt, the land was to be sold, and its proceeds channelled to finance the running of the side-altars of St Peter and St Paul's parish church, divided in four equal shares: for the altar of the Holy Rosary; for that of the Holy Souls; for the altar of Our Lady of Light, and the last fourth for that of St Francis of Paola. All this was to be offered for his main preoccupation, that is, the repose of his soul.²² These altars were administered by procurators who were also responsible for organising the feast celebrations respectively. The altar of Our Lady of Light was that of the Immaculate Conception, since the small Our Lady of Light painting was commissioned to complement the former by Falson himself around 1736. He was perhaps one of the earliest disseminators of this devotion to our Lady of Light in Malta.

Another contributor towards raising the required lumps of money for the repose masses mentioned earlier on was a piece of land known as Ta' Chiparem. Upon the fulfilment of the required masses obligations, this land was to be sold with the proceeds being shared between the universal heirs of his will.²³ Finally, the dying Falson had only one possession left to hand on. This consisted of a small garden in 'Tal-Virtut', Għarb, bequeathed to Ipollito Habela in the form of a legate.²⁴

Conclusion

Documentary evidence about Don Giovanni Andrea Falson portrays a caring and prudent pastor in charge of a growing parish, with the daily occupations of the parishioners being mainly agricultural or maritime in nature, and where life was harsh and simple. His proactivity in trying his best to alleviate the people

from poverty and illiteracy while working tirelessly to run the parish on a daily basis, including the liturgical aspect, and the better equipping of the parish church, are perhaps the best biographical certificate of this priest. His will further testifies to a sense of responsibility and resignation of a dying priest who cared for his flock, settled his debts and unfinished projects such as the bell, without omitting his biological relatives. His love for the Nadur parish was forever immortalised by his deeds as well as by his burial in St Peter and St Paul's parish church.

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Daniel Meilak B.A. (Hons), M.A. History (Melit.) was born in Victoria in 1988. He started reading History and Philosophy at the University of Malta in 2006 and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in 2009. He pursued his post-graduate studies at the same university, obtaining a distinction in his Master of Arts degree in History in 2015, focusing on Romanticism and Nationalism in Malta during the nineteenth and early twentieth century. His interests include Cultural and Intellectual history and contributes his research towards various local publications. Currently he is a teacher in a state school and an independent researcher.

²² Testamentum, 133v-134r.

²³ Ibid., 134 r-v.

²⁴ Ibid., 134v.

Book: Spirituality, Devotions & Traditions of the Augustinian Friars in Gozo

Peter Paul Cachia

Malta: Augustinian Province (2017); 399 pages

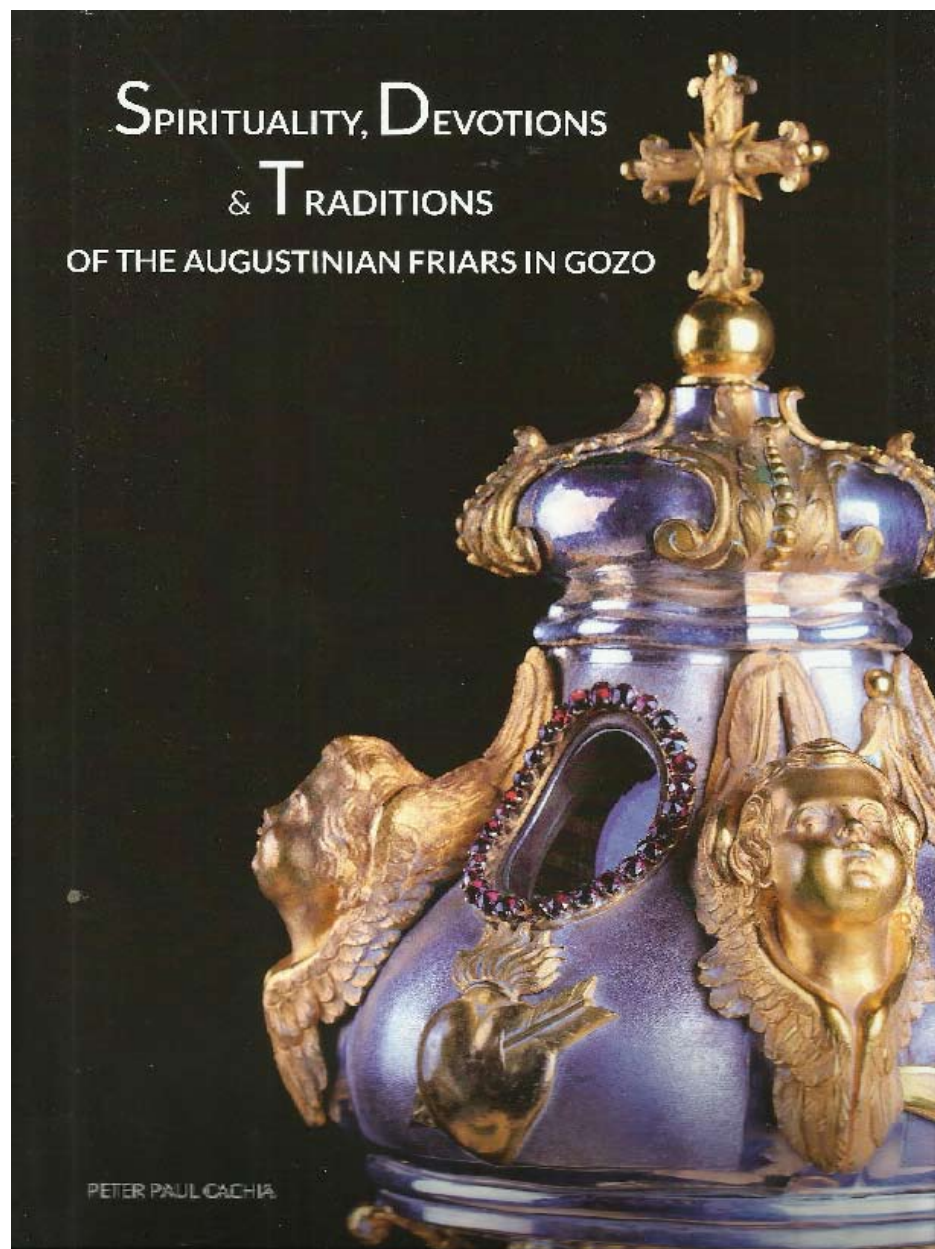
REVIEWED BY GEOFFREY G. ATTARD

The name of Augustinian monk Fr Peter Paul Cachia of Victoria, Gozo is gradually becoming synonymous with the history of the Augustinian Order in the Maltese islands. The Augustinians arrived in Malta in 1413 but before 1453 they already had a priory on the island of Gozo. After publishing a book about the history of the priory and Augustinian church of Rabat, Gozo, Cachia

has now delved deeper into the history of the same priory and provided us with a detailed sketch of the various spiritualities, devotions and traditions of the Gozitan Augustinians.

The first part of the book focuses on the different characteristics of the Augustinian spirituality as they evolved in time on the island of the three hills.

The arrival of the monks in the middle of the fifteenth century must have been quite an event for the Christian community of the island. Gozo, suffering from the phenomenon of what has now been coined as double-insularity, always played a secondary role in the history of the archipelago. However there were exceptions to this rule; the discovery of the ancient poem *Tristia ex Melitogaudio* and its translation into English and eventual publication is proof of this. Gozo must have maintained the Christian faith even during the Arab rule. Now, in the mid-15th century, Gozo was embracing the first Catholic religious order ever to arrive on the islands. Being part of the Kingdom of Aragon through their connection with Aragonese Sicily, at this point in time the Maltese Islands had been consolidated once again in their Christian inheritance. The coming of the Augustinians served to enrich the Christian heritage of the tiny island of Gozo, an island which was very



much a backwater and was to remain so under the Knights of St John. Within this historical milieu, the Christian community of Gozo must have been overjoyed to witness the arrival of a religious order with such an enriching history. The Augustinians came from Sicily since Malta formed part of the Sicilian province. The very fact that these monks envisaged a living on the small island is a proof in itself of a vibrant religious community on Gozo. Having mentioned the Order of St John, it is vital to mention at this point that Fra Bartolomeo Bonavia was the Augustinian monk who served as an intermediary between the Knights and the Ottoman Pasha when the Turks attacked Gozo in what is now known as the Great Siege of Gozo of 1551.

The second part of the book studies the characteristics of the Augustinian devotions and their traditions. Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary the Mother of God under the title of 'Our Mother of Consolation' known in Latin as Mater Boni Consilii can be considered as one of the major characteristics of the Augustinian presence on the island. Various paintings, statues and artefacts carrying this particular Marian title are studied in detail in Cachia's book. One cannot be far from the truth if he were to say that in the same manner that the Franciscans promoted devotion to the Immaculate Conception and the Carmelites brought forward the devotion to Our Lady of Carmel, the Augustinians focused on Mary as the fountain of consolation and considered her their rightful protectress. Cachia provides ample information about the various statues that adorn the church and priory of St Augustine of Victoria. Among these I would like to mention the statue of St Monica sculpted by Agostino Camilleri in

1924, the statue of Augustine also made in papier-mâché by the same Camilleri together with the statues of St Nicholas of Tolentine made in wood by an unknown artist that goes back to 1738 and another statue of St Nicholas of Tolentine made in papier-mâché by Agostino Camilleri in 1913. Since devotion to St Rita of Cascia is the prerogative of the Augustinians, I cannot fail to mention the statue of St Rita that Agostino Camilleri sculpted in 1916 and which still attracts many devotees especially on her feast day in May. The third and last part of the book focuses on other Augustinian traditions that were not tackled in the previous two chapters; this part takes into consideration the ex-voto that are to be found in the priory.

Fr Peter Paul Cachia's latest publication is the ideal source-book for all those who want to become friendly with the Augustinian presence in Gozo. The book is enriched by the beautiful photographs taken by young Gozitan photographer Anthony Grech; the photographs bring to life the artistic treasures with which the priory is endowed. Young art critic and researcher Paul Cassar gave his input from the artistic point-of-view; it was he who discovered documentation stating that Mattia Preti was the painter of the main altarpiece depicting the saintly bishop of Hippo. The last section of the book features the various objets d'art, paintings and statues that past priors, monks and benefactors commissioned throughout the ages. *Spirituality, Devotions & Traditions of the Augustinian Friars in Gozo* which I consider as the magnum opus of Fr Peter Paul Cachia OSA is a celebration of the Augustinian's cultural, artistic and religious heritage on the island of Gozo, a heritage which is to be enjoyed and appreciated by one and all.

Recent Activities at the University of Malta - Gozo Campus

JOSEPH CALLEJA

Examinations

During the May/June session of examinations, more than 730 examinations were held in Gozo, partly at the Examination Centre in Victoria and partly at the University Gozo Campus in Xewkija. Moreover, during the Supplementary Examinations Session, held in September, around 160 examinations were organised at the Gozo Campus. In this way all Gozitan students following courses at the Msida Campus were again given the possibility to sit for their written examinations in Gozo.

Go Go Gozo 2017

Thirty-five students from five different universities, namely Warwick (UK), Manchester (UK), Utrecht (NL), Olomouc (CZ) and Malta, followed the Go Go Gozo course at the University Gozo Campus between 2nd and 12th May. The students came from various disciplines: digital, geography, media studies, geographic information systems and games studies.

The aim of this course was to bring together students from different disciplines, through blended mobility, to develop novel, digital, mobile and map-based research methods and skills. The course also aimed to assess the potential of playful, experiential

and participatory learning in this context as well as to provide a course structure that facilitates interdisciplinary and multinational encounters in the real world beyond university.

During the two-week course the students had the opportunity to create a number of artefacts which were displayed at an exhibition open to the public. The exhibits included maps of various locations in Gozo which were presented in a fun way. Mapping methodologies included a technique called kite-mapping which consists of aerial photography through the use of kites. Maps that document the soundscape and the smellscape of Gozo were also on display during this exhibition.

This was the third year that this course was organised in Gozo thanks to a successful Erasmus Plus grant application.

Students Advisory Services

Advisors from the Students Advisory Services at the University of Malta, were available at the Gozo Campus on 15th and 16th July. Prospective Gozitan students were provided with the necessary information and advice in order to make informed and sensible choices. This is another service which the University of Malta offers to the Gozitan public in Gozo.

Gozo Lace Day 2017

On 30th April, the Lace-Making Programme organised its annual event, the “Gozo Lace Day”. This event was held at the Gozo Campus for the twentieth year, and as in previous years it included a number of exhibits and demonstrations related to Gozo lace. The event also included a number of talks on matters related to lace making. Lace makers were invited to bring their own pillow and join others in lace making.



Professor Christopher Perkins (left) delivering a lecture.



Some of the exhibits at the Gozo Lace Day.

Present for the event were Prof Louis Cassar, Rector's Delegate for the Gozo Campus, and Dr Consiglia Azzopardi, coordinator of the Lace-Making Programme.

Dr Azzopardi delivered an interesting speech about the courses offered and the work carried out by the Lace-Making Programme during the past academic year. She also gave information about a diploma course in Lace-Making which the University of Malta will be offering in 2018.

In his address, Dr Louis Cassar congratulated Dr Azzopardi for her important work in lace-making. He also gave a short overview of the courses and activities held at the University Gozo Campus. Later he was shown round the exhibition by Dr Azzopardi. Here he had the opportunity to meet and talk to a number of lace makers and visitors.



Professor Louis F. Cassar being shown around the exhibition by Dr Consiglia Azzopardi.

Courses

The courses running at the Gozo Campus during academic year 2017-2018 are:

- Certificate in Proof Reading: Maltese (Yr 1)
- Diploma in Commerce (Yr 2)
- Bachelor of Commerce (Yr 1)
- Bachelor of Psychology (Honours) (Yr 2)
- Master of Arts in Islands and Small States (Yr 2)

The lectures of these courses are held every week on Friday evenings and Saturday mornings.

A number of other courses were offered during week days via the video-conferencing system. This facility allows Gozitan students to follow all the lectures held at the Msida Campus, without having to cross over to Malta.

The courses offered via video-conferencing were:

- Diploma in Facilitating Inclusive Education (Yr 2)
- Executive Master of Business Administration in Public Management (Yr 2)
- Executive Master of Business Administration in Public Management (Prep. Yr)
- Postgraduate Certificate in the Teaching of Ethics in Schools (Yr 1)

Four of these courses came to an end and the successful students are awaiting their graduation later this year.

The University of the Third Age continued with the offering of its programme for elderly people. Dr Michael Refalo delivered a course entitled 'L-Ewropa fis-Seklu Dsatax', while Professor Joe Troisi delivered a study-unit on 'Aging in a Sociological Perspective'. Over fifty elderly people attended these courses.

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

36th Edition of the Gozo Observer

LINO BRIGUGLIO

The first edition of the *Gozo Observer* was issued in May 1999. Initially the Observer was not issued regularly but as from the thirteenth issue (1995), two editions per year were published. The articles covered a variety of themes, including economic, environmental and social issues relating to Gozo. Most editions carried reviews of books published by Gozitan authors. Every issue also contained a section which gave an update on activities which

had taken place at the University Gozo Campus (previously called the University Gozo Centre).

The following is a list of articles carried in the *Gozo Observer* as from the 25th edition. The list of topics covered from the first to the 24th edition of the Gozo Observer are available at: http://www.um.edu.mt/__data/assets/pdf_file/0020/144650/Gozo_Observer_25_Final_small.pdf (page 35)

Issue No.	Date	Title	Author
25	December 2001	Editorial: The Bishop of Gozo and the Gozitan Diaspora	Maurice Cauchi
		Three Crabs, and a Gozo Connection	Patrick Schembri
		Managing Gozo's Marine Protected Areas	Alan Deidun
		Geological and Geomorphological Aspects of the Żebbuġ and Marsalforn Region	George Said
		Victoria: 125 Years of City Status 1887 – 10 June 2012	Geoffrey G. Attard
		The Frightening Tremors of January 1693	Godwin Vella
		Why 'Lace Studies' at Academic Level?	Consiglia Azzopardi
		25 th Edition of the Gozo Observer	Lino Briguglio
		Recent Activities at the University of Malta - Gozo Campus	Joseph Calleja
26	June 2012	Editorial: Public Library	Maurice Cauchi
		The Maħras of Gozo Before 1530	Stanley Fiorini
		Under and On Canvas – Paul Camilleri-Cauchì	Aaron Attard Hili
		The Art and Architecture of Twentieth Century Gozo	Jason Joe Farrugia
		The Monumental Church of Nadur	Joseph Muscat
		Book Review: The Church of St Cecilia on the Island of Gozo	Geoffrey G. Attard
		Peasant Costumes: Insights into Rural Life and Society: An Exhibition Review	Kenneth Cassar
		The Scottish-Gozitan Connection	Geoffrey G. Attard
		Recent Activities at the University of Malta - Gozo Campus	Joseph Calleja
27	December 2012	Editorial: Regulation or Education?	Maurice Cauchi
		The Origin of the Name of Gozo	Horatio Caesar Roger Vella
		A Bill to Reform the Courts in Gozo and to Simplify Proceedings between the Courts in Malta and those in Gozo	Kevin Aquilina
		Spatial Preparedness for Green Criminology	Saviour Formosa
		Infectious Diseases During the First World War in Gozo	Mario Saliba
		The Xagħra Monumental Church	Julian Refalo Rapa
		Book Review: Stones of Faith. Tombstones, Funerary Rites, and Customs at the Gozo Matrice	Geoffrey G. Attard

		Book Review: Vitor Vella. L-Imghallem Bennej Tas-Santwarju Ta' Pinu	Geoffrey G. Attard
		Recent Activities at the University of Malta - Gozo Campus	Joseph Calleja
28	June 2013	Editorial: The Future of Gozo	Maurice Cauchi
		The Polio Epidemic in Gozo	Mario Saliba
		Burnout and Well-being: An Incremental Validity Study	Michael Galea
		The Xewkija Parish	Mark Zerafa
		The Woman in Gozitan Folklore	Anton F. Attard
		Of Humour and Satire in Clerical Circles: A Gozitan Perspective	Geoffrey G. Attard
		Lorenzo Zammit Haber: Unsung Gozitan Patriot	Geoffrey G. Attard
		Book Review: Fil-Aħħ u l-Baħħ. Poeżiji minn ġol-Paraxut tat-Tama	Geoffrey G. Attard
		Book Review: Kwadri tal-Imghoddi	Geoffrey G. Attard
		Recent Activities at the University of Malta - Gozo Campus	Joseph Calleja
29	December 2013	Editorial: A Pressing Problem: The Economies of Time-Wasting	Maurice Cauchi
		Saverio Colombo Pluchinotta: a Young Sicilian Patrician in Gozo (1890)	Arnold Cassola
		The Woman in Gozitan Folklore	Anton F. Attard
		The Village of Żebbuġ, Gozo - Its Parish and Titular Statue	Geoffrey G. Attard
		Surnames as an Indication of Demographic Changes in Gozo	Maurice Cauchi
		The Creation and Management of Artificial Wrecks	Mario Saliba
		Enhancing Emotional Literacy through PSD	Marcelle Vella
		Book Review: De Soldanis: an eighteenth century intellectual	Geoffrey G. Attard
		Book Review: Maltese for Foreigners	Esther Galea
		Recent Activities at the University of Malta - Gozo Campus	Joseph Calleja
30	Summer 2014	Editorial: Educational Developments in Gozo	Maurice Cauchi
		Barumbari Giren and Mġiebaħ: - Vernacular Gems in Oblivion	Godwin Vella
		Gozo 3D Immersion: Reality-to-Virtual Framework	Saviour Formosa
		With Remarkable Love - Gozo, 150 Years a Diocese	Joseph Bezzina
		'Hain Selem' - The Village that Flourished around a Spring	Kevin Cauchi
		Studying the History of Lace Making	Consiglia Azzopardi
		Recent Activities at the University of Malta - Gozo Campus	Joseph Calleja
31	Winter 2014	Editorial: A Picture of Gozo	Maurice Cauchi
		Gozo After the Siege of Malta: A study of the Acts of Notary Tomaso Gauci 1566-68	Mariana Grech
		Wied il-Mielah and Wied il-Għasri as Attractions for Rural Tourism	Joanna Grima
		An Uncharacteristic Success	Miriam Muscat
		Fifty Years Ago – The Storm that took Gozo by Surprise	Geoffrey Attard
		Gozo Tourism: Figuring the Figures	Joe Muscat
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