

Archbishop Michael Gonzi in a Changing Malta

Sergio Grech

Ph.D.

November, 2022



L-Universit 
ta' Malta

University of Malta Library – Electronic Thesis & Dissertations (ETD) Repository

The copyright of this thesis/dissertation belongs to the author. The author's rights in respect of this work are as defined by the Copyright Act (Chapter 415) of the Laws of Malta or as modified by any successive legislation.

Users may access this full-text thesis/dissertation and can make use of the information contained in accordance with the Copyright Act provided that the author must be properly acknowledged. Further distribution or reproduction in any format is prohibited without the prior permission of the copyright holder.

ABSTRACT

The 1st of January 1944 was a turning point in the history of the Maltese diocese which was elevated to the rank of a Metropolitan See by Pope Pius XII who thereby established the Maltese ecclesiastical province. That move meant that Monsignor Michael Gonzi, a former Labour Senator from the Cottonera area, bishop of Gozo for about twenty years, and since October 1943 Bishop Coadjutor with the right of succession to Malta's Archbishop Mauro Caruana, was given the designation of Archbishop and Metropolitan of the newly-established Maltese ecclesiastical province. Since Archbishop Gonzi's episcopate was so exceptionally long (1924-1976), one may easily speak of an "Archbishop Gonzi era", at least within the realm of ecclesiastical history. His long tenure was bound to leave an impact on the public sphere in twentieth-century Malta.

The first chapter of this work maps and analyses the sources employed about Archbishop Gonzi whilst introducing the reader to new documentation utilised by the present author in the process of writing this thesis. The Fondo Gonzi, deposited at the Archives of the Archbishop's Curia, the Archives of the Secretary of State of the Holy See, the National Archives of the United Kingdom, those of Marquette University, and the tapping of other secondary sources, have proved highly beneficial.

The second chapter focuses on the role of the bishop within the Catholic Church and what the mentioned institution expected from the bishop's end. The chapter briefly outlines how the role of the bishop in the Catholic Church has developed over the centuries and provides the theological and juridical foundation regarding that role. It also shows the shift in the position regarding the office of the bishop from Vatican Council I to Vatican Council II where the concept of the triple office of the bishop to sanctify, teach and govern philosophy was formulated.

In Malta, the identity of the Maltese people, as in the case of the Irish, the Poles and the Spaniards, was intimately associated with their religion. The Roman Catholic Church in Malta has been a symbol of unity and a rallying point. Chapter three investigates the relationship between religion and politics proving that in Malta's case the two realms of religion and politics have never been totally separated but, on the other hand, grew together thereby leading to a mutual relationship. Knowing that religion could function as a powerful ideology, Mr Dom Mintoff, the leader of the Labour Party, wanted to change this relationship and was critical of the accepted norm that the teachings of the Catholic Church influenced the political decisions taken by the elected majority. The end result was a complex situation since Archbishop Gonzi's episcopate coincided with the rise of Communist and Liberal regimes which not only side-lined the Church but often depicted the Church itself as an enemy of the state and was consequently made to suffer. Moreover, the third chapter will elaborate on the fact that Archbishop Gonzi, in his resolved position against Integration and Independence, was only defending the model of the Church as a perfect society that he was trained to defend, together with the belief that in a Catholic State, it was the duty of its rulers to defend the Church. Still, Archbishop Gonzi made an important stride forward during the forging of the Independence Constitution that would be later championed by the Second Vatican Council, that is to say, the acceptance of a clause relating to freedom of conscience.

The fourth chapter of this dissertation interprets the interventions of Archbishop Gonzi in the social field in terms of the limits of civil power, the family's rights and responsibilities, the right to own private property, the rights of workers to join a trade union of their own choice and to take home a just and decent wage, the role of taxation and education, and particularly religious education in the context of the Catholic social tradition and of the particular social circumstances in Malta at the time. Towards the end, the chapter brings out two facets of Gonzi's personality, one being his strong commitment in assisting the poor, and the other being the controversial character of his interventions which were disputed by those who regarded the Church's active participation in society as an interference in politics.

Archbishop Gonzi's episcopate occurred in a very specific context since Malta was a British colony and because the islands' strategic position determined the way it was administered. The fifth chapter challenges the commonly held view that the Church in Malta has been treated with gloves to ensure a smooth government, and in fact shows that the matter should not be simplistically explained. Thanks to new documentation found at the Archives of the Holy See,

the chapter also dismisses the argument that Archbishop Gonzi was chosen for the post because of his pro-British sentiments.

The many political, economic and socio-economic changes that occurred in the nineteen-sixties and the reforms demanded by the Second Vatican Council are portrayed in the sixth chapter which also shows that the trends of secularisation and modernisation were threads that ran through the period that Archbishop Gonzi was at the helm of the Malta Church and not during the last decade of Archbishop Gonzi's episcopate. As a result, these novel trends redefined the role of religion in the public sphere but failed to 'banish' it to the private realm.

Chapter seven focuses on the development of the episcopate which resulted from the above-mentioned changes. The doctoral project refers to four distinct phases of the episcopate which show an episcopate in a continuous process of change and adaptation.

This work goes for you Giselle, Elysia and Matthias.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Firstly, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my tutors Rev. Dr René Camilleri and Prof Henry J. Frendo for their continuous support, patience, motivation, and the immense knowledge they have imparted on me. I am also grateful to Dr Terence Portelli, Mr André P. Debattista, Dr Charles Xuereb and Mr Joe Flask for frequent useful exchanges.

A word of gratitude must also go to Archbishop Charles J. Scicluna for granting me permission to read the *Fondo Gonzi*, which is still inaccessible to historians, and to the Archivist Rev. Dr Nicholas Doublet and the staff at the Archives of the Curia for making my stay there more than comfortable. I am also indebted to the staff at the Malta National Archives and to those at the Library of the University of Malta. My special appreciation goes to Dr Charles J. Farrugia, Mr Leonard Callus, Mr Joseph Amodio, Mr Noel D'Anastas, Mr Melvin Caruana, Ms Mary Sammut Tagliaferro and Mr Matthias Ebejer for their sterling service.

Thanks are also due to H.E. Malta's Ambassador to the Holy See Mr Frank Zammit, Cardinal Mario Grech and Mgr Francis Bonnici for easing the contacts with the direction of the Archivio Storico della Segreteria di Stato and the Gendarmeria Vaticana.

The present author is also obliged to Ms Francesca Balzan for allowing access to Olof Gollcher's Archives at Palazzo Falson in Mdina, and to Mr Michael Buhagiar who provided me access to the Żabbar Parish Church Archives.

This writer's appreciation is also extended to Prof William Zammit, Mr Anton Tabone, Ms Emily Barbaro-Sant, Mr Carmelo Pace, Perit Joe Dimech, Canon Joe Abela, Mr Frans Zahra, Mr Michael Galea, Mr Richard Muscat, Mr Giorgio Peresso, Mr Nicholas de Piro, Mr Steve Borg, Mgr Charles G. Vella, Mr Charles Galea Scannura, Dr Tonio Borg, Mr Josef Borg, Mr Carlston Grima, Mr Paul Catania and Mr Winston J. Zammit for allowing me access to their private collections. I salute Mgr Vella and Mr Winston Zammit who have meanwhile passed away.

I am also indebted to Mgr Anton Cassar for allowing me to interview a good number of Dar tal-Kleru residents. And I must also thank Mr Joe Cassar for helping out in formatting issues and Mr Albert Callus for his careful proofreading.

Last but not least, I would like to thank my family, especially my wife Giselle, and my children Elysia and Matthias, for supporting me throughout. I hope that they are now convinced that the time I spent away from them was worthwhile.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	ii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	vi
INTRODUCTION	1
Contribution to Knowledge	1
An Overview of Archbishop Gonzi’s Life and Career	2
Conclusion	6
CHAPTER ONE	7
MAPPING AND ANALYSIS OF PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SOURCES GATHERED	7
Prior Research on Archbishop Gonzi	7
Archbishop Gonzi in Local Academic Studies	14
Archbishop Gonzi in International Studies	26
Malta Labour Party Publications	32
Autobiographies and Memoirs	34
Perit Dom Mintoff’s Autobiography	39
Archival Material in Malta and Abroad	40
Use of Newspapers and Magazines	46
Pamphlets, Flyers and Booklets	48
The Use of Oral History	50
Unpublished Work	53
Reflections about Literature Discussed	54
Gaps in Research	55
Recommendations and Suggestions	57
Conclusion	58
CHAPTER TWO	60
THE BISHOP AND HIS ROLE IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH	60
The Role of Religion in Malta	62
The Role of the Bishop in the Catholic Church	66
The Historical Development of the Mission of the Catholic Bishop	67

The Council of Trent and the Role of the Bishop	69
The First Vatican Council and the Role of the Bishop	71
The 1917 Canon Law and the Role of the Bishops	72
Rituals, Cults and the Institutionalised Church before Second Vatican Council	74
The Role of the Parish Priest within the Catholic Hierarchy before Vatican II	78
The Second Vatican Council’s Position on Bishops	80
Conclusion	83
CHAPTER THREE	85
RELIGION, POLITICS, IDEOLOGY AND ACTIVISM: POINTS OF CONSENT AND DISSENT	85
The Place of Religion in Malta	86
Archbishop Gonzi’s Formation Period	88
The Threat of Communism	98
The Dominic Mintoff Factor	104
Mobilisation Factor	108
Archbishop Gonzi and Independence	116
Conclusion	119
CHAPTER FOUR	121
THE TENSION BETWEEN SECULAR AND RELIGIOUS VIEWPOINTS IN ADDRESSING THE SOCIAL QUESTION	121
The Church’s Social Teaching in Malta	122
The Social Conscience of the Malta Church	124
From Social Action to Catholic Action	128
Man and Society	131
Authority, Justice and the Law	133
The Functions of the Family in a Catholic Society	135
The Church, Private Property and Investments	139
The Church’s Perspectives towards Wages and Trade Unions	144
The Catholic Church, Taxation, Cost of Living and Casinos	149
The Role of Education in a Catholic Society	151
Conclusion	157

CHAPTER FIVE	159
RELIGION, NATIONALISM, LANGUAGE AND IDENTITY IN COLONIAL AND INDEPENDENT MALTA	159
The Consequences of a Fortress Colony	160
Features in Governing a Fortress Colony	162
The Relationship between the British Empire and the Malta Church	163
Emigration: An Example of Good Relations between Church and Empire	165
Arguments with the Protestants’ Community	168
Archbishop Gonzi and Freemasonry	169
Honours for the Collaborating Élite	170
The Order of Precedence	171
Italy and Britain in Maltese History	174
Archbishop Gonzi: A Pro-British or a Pro-Italian?	179
The Role of the Imperial Tools in a Colony Administration	188
Dependence and Decolonisation	196
Conclusion	202
CHAPTER SIX	204
THE CHALLENGE TO RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY, PRACTICE AND BELONGING	204
A Sketch of Malta of the Sixties	205
Secularisation in Malta	209
The Malta Church in the Period of the Second Vatican Council	224
The Significance of the Second Vatican Council	227
Archbishop Gonzi and the Second Vatican Council	230
New Structures promulgated within the Malta Church	232
Wide-ranging Reforms in the Area of the Liturgy	236
Reforms in the Priestly Vestments	238
Dramatic Reforms in the Field of Evangelisation	239
Conclusion	242
CHAPTER SEVEN	243
THE EVOLUTION OF ARCHBISHOP GONZI’S EPISCOPATE (1924-1976)	243
Phase One: 1924 to 1943	244
Phase Two: 1943 to 1955	254
Phase Three: 1955-1962	262

Phase Four: 1962-1976	269
Conclusion	276
CONCLUSION	278
BIBLIOGRAPHY	288

INTRODUCTION

The 1st of January 1944 was a turning point in the history of the Maltese diocese which was elevated to the rank of a Metropolitan See by Pope Pius XII who thereby established the Maltese ecclesiastical province.¹ This move meant that Gozo, one of the two main islands in the Maltese archipelago, was relegated to a suffragan diocese within the Maltese archdiocese even if it had enjoyed the status of a separate diocese from Malta since 1864.² It also meant that Monsignor Michael Gonzi, a former Labour Senator from the Cottonera area, bishop of Gozo for about twenty years, and since October 1943 Bishop Coadjutor with the right of succession to Malta's Archbishop Mauro Caruana, was given the designation of Archbishop and Metropolitan of the newly-established Maltese ecclesiastical province. Since Archbishop Gonzi's episcopate proved to be exceptionally long (1924-1976), one can easily speak of an "Archbishop Gonzi era", at least within the realm of ecclesiastical history. His long tenure was bound to leave an impact on society in twentieth-century Malta. The many political, economic and socio-economic changes that occurred during Archbishop Gonzi's episcopate, and later on the reforms demanded by the Second Vatican Council, made it impossible for the episcopate to be a monolithic structure unaffected by changes. The trends of secularisation and modernisation were threads that ran through the period that Archbishop Gonzi was at the helm of the Malta Church, but during the last decade of Archbishop Gonzi's episcopate, these realities seemed more evident than in previous decades. As a result, these novel trends redefined the role of religion in society but failed to 'banish' it to the private sphere.

Contribution to Knowledge

Maltese historiography lacks a balanced analysis of Archbishop Gonzi's role in Maltese history so this thesis will address a number of gaps and issues in this regard. First of all, it will study Archbishop Gonzi and his episcopate in the context of what the Catholic Church expected from its bishops – a consideration that tends to be neglected. Secondly, the thesis will also address

¹ AAS, Acta Pii pp. XII, Constitutio Apostolica Melitensis, An. et Vol. XXXVI, 26-6-1944 (Ser. U, v. XI num. 6), 161-163.

² Toni Callus, "Meta d-Djoċesi ta' Għawdex tilfet l-Awtonomija u saret Suffraganja ta' Malta," *Il-Korpus: Lehen mill-Parroċċa tal-Għasri* 36, (2011), 82.

the social dimension of the episcopate which will be interpreted as a continuation of the Catholic social tradition and in the context of where to draw a boundary line between religion and politics. Thirdly, this doctoral project will focus on the ‘mark’ of Archbishop Gonzi’s ‘imperialism’ since the latter was accused of being an imperialist and this requires to be explained in the light of numerous issues that were related to the colonial experience. Fourthly, the episcopate will also be assessed in response to the social and cultural changes that have emerged especially after the Second World War and the Church’s act of renewal through Vatican Council II. The fifth issue that this research work will raise is the evolution of the mentioned episcopate, how it changed during the long period from 1924 to 1976 and in what ways it changed, meanwhile analysing too the changes brought about in the social, cultural and political roles of the Church in Malta.

Rather than presenting the Church as a competitor with other social actors with the goal to dominate society, the present writer will focus on an institution engaged in a creative dialogue with the mentioned social agents defending and promoting the dignity and rights of each and every person. Rather than focusing on the position or the positions taken by Archbishop Gonzi on various issues, the present researcher will critically analyse the reason, or reasons, for the position taken in each case scenario.

An Overview of Archbishop Gonzi’s Life and Career

Archbishop Michael Gonzi was one of the most influential Catholic leaders in Malta in the twentieth century. The life of Archbishop Gonzi spanned over nearly a century. He passed away in 1984 at the age of 99 after having retired from Malta’s bishopric seat eight years earlier. His episcopate in Malta had lasted thirty years. Furthermore, the archbishop had also served as bishop of Gozo for a period of nineteen years between 1924 and 1943, succeeding Bishop Giovanni Maria Camilleri.

Archbishop Gonzi was born in 1885 at Vittoriosa, a maritime city in the southern part of the Grand Harbour, which the British used as a base for the Royal Navy’s Mediterranean Fleet. His father Giuseppe was employed with the Dockyard. Archbishop Gonzi’s educational journey included the Vittoriosa Primary School, the Minor Seminary which provided secondary education and the Major Seminary where youths were prepared for the priesthood. He enrolled as a student at the Royal University of Malta in 1904.

Once Archbishop Gonzi had been ordained a priest in 1908 and had completed his university studies in Malta, he furthered his education in Rome, studying Canon Law at the Pontifical Gregorian University, while residing at the Pontifical Beda College. According to Sanks, the Pontifical Gregorian University, during that particular phase, encouraged “rigid and juridical ways of thinking, based on a view of the Church which magnified the importance of authority, hierarchy and certainty.”³ Archbishop Gonzi also studied Biblical Studies at the Pontificio Istituto Biblico in Rome.

In 1915, Reverend Michael Gonzi was appointed Professor of Sacred Scripture and Hebrew at the Royal University of Malta. During the First World War, Reverend Gonzi served as a military chaplain. In 1921, Malta gained self-government and Archbishop Gonzi was elected Senator on behalf of the newly-founded Malta Labour Party. Reverend Gonzi entered the political fray after he was asked to do so by Archbishop Caruana.

During the period from 1922 to 1924, Mgr Gonzi served as Private Secretary to Archbishop Maurus Caruana. In 1923, Mgr Gonzi was appointed Canon Theologian at the Malta cathedral. The next year Mgr Gonzi resigned from his Senator office as he was chosen bishop of Gozo. That bishopric lasted nineteen years and was the catalyst for change. It was an episcopate that had spearheaded various reforms in the diocese. Archbishop Gonzi prohibited his cohort of priests to contest political elections. He reformed the Seminary and held four cycles of pastoral visitations. In a nutshell, Archbishop Gonzi worked hard to protect the Catholic identity of his flock in an era when liberalism, nationalism and emerging communism had reached the continent. During this particular phase of the episcopate, the two dioceses, Malta and Gozo, organised a Regional Council whose driving force was Archbishop Gonzi. He also encouraged the completion and finalisation of Ta’ Pinu Sanctuary. Regularly, he visited Maltese emigrants and participated in international conferences and eucharistic congresses abroad.

During the Second World War, Archbishop Gonzi convinced Gozitan farmers to sell their wheat to the British authorities. In doing so, Malta was saved from surrendering to the enemy. After a lengthy process, he was appointed bishop-assistant with the right of succession to Dom Mauro Caruana on 14 October 1943, after a very lengthy process. Mgr Gonzi succeeded Archbishop Caruana on the latter's demise which occurred on 17 December 1943. Following the elevation of the Maltese diocese to the rank of an archdiocese by Pius XII, Mgr Gonzi was

³ Howard T. Sanks, *Authority in the Church: A Study in Changing Paradigms* (Missoula, Scholar’s Press, 1974), 103.

given the title of Archbishop and Metropolitan of the Maltese ecclesiastical province on 1st January 1944.

During this phase of the episcopate, Archbishop Gonzi became an important national figure whose influence was also felt in the political and social spheres, besides the religious domain. The Maltese people saw in him the qualities of a national leader with the ability to show the way especially when in difficult moments. Following the Second World War, the episcopate faced the challenge to re-establish the Church's role in society asserting the values of the institution and seeing that the parishes provided the sacraments and other services to their parishioners. During this period, the British authorities in Malta developed a good relationship with Archbishop Gonzi. Indeed, on several occasions, especially when there were no elected Maltese governments, the episcopate asked for Archbishop Gonzi's advice and opinion.

His tenure as archbishop of Malta was partly marred by a strained relationship with the Malta Labour Party. The events of 1st May 1948 convinced the archbishop that Mr Dominic Mintoff was Communist and that his agenda was to paint Malta red. The Integration issue was a case in point. Prime Minister Mintoff's failing in not giving assurances and guarantees in writing to the episcopate that Integration would not harm religion in Malta, led the Church to join the opposition movement against the Integration project.

The sequence of events following the 1958 revolts were seen by Archbishop Gonzi as dramatic. These included Labour joining the AAPSO organisation, the Labour's Statement of Policy (March 1961), Mintoff's challenge to the bishops of the dioceses of Malta and Gozo for a public debate, the meetings between Mr Mintoff and Egypt's Colonel Nasser, Labour's broadcasts from Cairo, the Socialist delegation's visit in Malta (November 1961), the Labour Party's different contacts with communist leaders, the Labour's 1962 electoral manifesto, Mintoff's objections to the Church having a role in education and censorship, his declarations of getting material aid from the Russians and Chinese, and the publication of the booklet *Priests and Politics in Malta* led the Church to introduce the interdict penalty on Labour. This scenario affected the way Archbishop Gonzi looked at Independence to which he was not an enthusiast. Still, he did not object to the insertion of a freedom of conscience and religion clause among the fundamental rights of the individual section in the Independence constitution and this act preceded the famous Decree on Religious Freedom that was enacted before the Second Vatican Council.

Notwithstanding his old age, Archbishop Gonzi participated in the Second Vatican Council enacting the various reforms demanded by the mentioned council irrespective of his age. Furthermore, he reorganised his Curia and carried out key radical reforms in the administration of the Church's property. It was also a period of time when Archbishop Gonzi witnessed decolonisation. In fact, this was quite a vibrant and agitated period. The events included Malta's Independence (1964), the promulgation of Malta as a republic (1974), the 1972 Revision of the Financial Agreement and Defence Treaty, four general elections and a referendum, the 1969 peace treaty between Church and State, and Prime Minister Mintoff's secularisation programme. One must add that the social aspect was an important and strong feature of Archbishop Gonzi's episcopate. It was also an episcopate supported by various religious organisations.

In 1976, Mgr Gonzi, owing to poor health, relinquished Malta's archbishopric and was succeeded by Mgr Joseph Mercieca. Archbishop Emeritus Michael Gonzi passed away on 22 January 1984 and was buried at the Cathedral in Mdina. Considering the so many political, economic and socio-economic changes that took place both in Malta and abroad during the period from 1924 to 1976, it is impossible not to speak of evolution within Archbishop Gonzi's episcopate.

In 1946, Archbishop Gonzi was bestowed with the honour of Knight Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire, the second-highest rank in the British honorary system. In 1949, Mgr Gonzi commemorated the silver jubilee of his consecration as bishop, and Pope Pius XII bestowed on him the honour of Assistant at the Papal Throne. During the same year, Archbishop Gonzi was conferred the *Honoris Causa* degree by the Royal University of Malta and was created Bailiff Grand Cross of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta. In 1963, Generalissimo Francisco Franco of Spain granted Archbishop Gonzi the title of Grand Cross of the Order of St. Raymond de Penafort. Two years later, Archbishop Gonzi was appointed Commander of the Holy Sepulchre.

Conclusion

The end result of this research work will not be a biography but an attempt to understand the impact of Archbishop Gonzi in Malta and also a study of how Maltese Catholicism, over the years, adapted itself to new realities. Therefore, this project includes an analysis of the relationships of the Malta Church with the British coloniser, the local politicians and other

social agents and how she entered into a creative dialogue with them along the process giving importance to the dignity and rights of every person, a role that often had been mistakenly misinterpreted. The reader must bear in mind that here we are focusing on an institution that has always been regarded by its people as a leading, an inspirational force, a position that would be challenged during the episcopate of Archbishop Gonzi.

CHAPTER ONE

MAPPING AND ANALYSIS OF PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SOURCES GATHERED

In this chapter, the present writer will introduce the sources used in this investigation process, as well as the methodology employed and other issues at stake. The reader must bear in mind that this particular inquiry is being presented in a post-modern era when the concepts of grand narratives, ideologies, objective reality and absolute truth are being questioned. Despite such sceptic positions, academic historians have been aware for ages that a total reconstruction of the past or the accomplishment of absolute truth were impossible to achieve.¹ Truly, every researcher has his/her own bias, either personal or cultural. Philosopher Michel Foucault contended that the historian's interest "will inevitably determine the interpretation he or she provides of the past."² But as cultural historian Peter Burke had claimed, bias is best adjusted by offering various sights of a historical question. "In this way... the bias of each reporter will be corrected by the bias of the others."³ What follows here is an analysis of the sources, primary and secondary, that were used in relation to the research question. Secondary sources will be reviewed chronologically. Each source is seen and evaluated within the context of its contribution to the research question.

Prior Research on Archbishop Gonzi

Apart from Dominic Fenech's booklet about the 'behind-the-scenes' of Mgr Michael Gonzi's elevation to the role of archbishop of Malta,⁴ the scholarly publications published by Henry J.

¹ Andreas Boldt, 'Ranke: Objectivity and History,' *Rethinking History*, 18, (4), (2014), 458.

² Michel Foucault quoted after C. Behan McCullagh, 'Bias in Historical Description, Interpretation, and Explanation,' *History and Theory*, 39, (1), (2000), 54.

³ *Ibid.*, 15.

⁴ Dominic Fenech, *The Making of Archbishop Gonzi* (Malta, Union Press, 1976).

Frendo⁵ and by Joseph M. Pirotta,⁶ as well as other texts written by ecclesiastics like Arturo Bonnici,⁷ Alexander Bonnici⁸ and Joseph Bezzina,⁹ there has been no critical reading of primary texts devoted entirely to Archbishop Gonzi. The present writer will explain this claim at a later stage.

To be fair, Alexander Bonnici had attempted an analysis of Archbishop Gonzi's bishopric, following the latter's death, but that contribution was limited in its scope since the documentation that Alexander Bonnici had in hand at the time was insufficient and mostly based on his direct experience as a member of the local cohort of priests.¹⁰ In his analysis, Bonnici pointed out that scrutinising Archbishop Gonzi was far from an easy task. One should add here that Bonnici had done quite an impressive work in his studies regarding the Inquisition Tribunal in Malta and his books are a must for those who venture in that area of studies.¹¹

Moreover, the texts written by Frendo and Pirotta discussed specifically Archbishop Gonzi's role in the Integration and the Independence issues whereby Archbishop Gonzi was presented as a keen player against these two constitutional developments.¹² Additionally, the two mentioned academics based their analysis predominantly, although not exclusively, on sources coming from the National Archives of the United Kingdom. Fenech's 1976 booklet was also based on sources coming from the mentioned institution. Fenech wrote the booklet whilst

⁵ Henry Frendo, *Birth Pangs of a Nation: Manwel Dimech's Malta (1860-1921)* (Malta, Mediterranean Publications, 1972), *Party Politics in a Fortress Colony: The Maltese Experience* (Malta, Midsea Books, 1979), *Malta's Quest for Independence: Reflections on the Course of Maltese History* (Malta, Valletta Publishing, 1979), *Ċensu Tabone: The Man and His Century* (Malta, Maltese Studies, 2000), *Patrijott Liberali Malti: Bijografija ta' Ġorġ Borg Olivier (1911-1980)* (Malta, Pubblikazzjonijiet Indipendenza, 2005), *Maltese Political Development, 1798-1964: A Documentary History* (Malta, Ministry of Education, 1993), *The Origins of Maltese Statehood: A Case Study of Decolonisation in the Mediterranean* (Malta, BDL, 2000), *Europe and Empire: Culture, Politics and Identity in Malta and the Mediterranean (1912-1946)* (Malta, Midsea Books, 2012).

⁶ Joseph M. Pirotta, *Fortress Colony: The Final Act 1945-1964, Vol. 1 1945-1955* (Malta, Studia Editions, 1987), *Fortress Colony: The Final Act 1945-1964, Vol. 2 1955-1958* (Malta, Studia Editions, 1991), *Fortress Colony: The Final Act 1945-1964, Vol. 3 1958-1961* (Malta, Studia Editions, 2001), *Fortress Colony: The Final Act 1945-1964, Vol. 4 1959-1964* (Malta, Midsea Books, 2018), *L-Istorja Kostituzzjonali u l-Isfond Storiku (1942-2004)* (Malta, Pubblikazzjonijiet Indipendenza, 2005).

⁷ Arthur Bonnici, *History of the Church in Malta, Period IV: 1800-1975, Vol. 3* (Malta, The Author, 1967).

⁸ Alexander Bonnici, *Storja ta' Malta fi Ġrajjet-il Knisja* (Malta, Reliġjon u Hajja, 1996).

⁹ Joseph Bezzina, *Il-Kungress Ewkaristiku ta' Ġhawdex* (Gozo, Lumen Christi, 1979), *Religion and Politics in a Crown Colony: The Gozo-Malta Story 1798-1864* (Malta, Pubblikazzjonijiet Bugelli, 1988), *L-Istorja tal-Knisja f'Malta* (Malta, Pubblikazzjonijiet Indipendenza, 2002).

¹⁰ Alexander Bonnici, *Storja ta' Malta fi Ġrajjet il-Knisja* (Malta, Franġiskani Konventwali, 1996), 84.

¹¹ *Pubblikazzjonijiet ta' Alexander Bonnici OFM. Conv* (Malta, The Author, no date), Retrieved 10th January 2021, https://www.um.edu.mt/library/oar/bitstream/123456789/60025/1/Pubblikazzjonijiet_ta_Alexander_Bonnici_O_F_M_Conv.pdf.

¹² Joseph M. Pirotta, *Fortress Colony: The Final Act 1945-1964, Vol. 4 1959-1964* (Malta, Midsea Books, 2018), 39.

studying at Oxford University. In fact, the text was completely based on new documentation just released by the Public Records Office after the thirty-year period had elapsed.

An early attempt to write a 'biography' of Archbishop Gonzi was made in 1965 by Paul Saliba, President of the Malta Catholic Action movement between 1964 and 1977.¹³ But since the booklet was released during the politico-religious struggle of the early nineteen-sixties, it highlighted only the main achievements of Archbishop Gonzi's episcopate and there is no real evaluation of the subject. Saliba, a former *Leĥen is-Sewwa* editor, also published two other booklets to counterattack Labour's position during the above-referred to struggle: *Is-Socjalizmu*¹⁴ and *Min hu l-Isqof*.¹⁵

Is-Socjalizmu was published just a few weeks before the Maltese citizens went to the polls in February 1962. The booklet echoed the position of the Roman Catholic Church on Socialism. The author also used quotations from the local Church's position regarding the subject as well as photographs of the massive *Ġunta Djoċesana* rallies against Socialism that were so popular in the period preceding the 1962 electoral appointment.¹⁶ *Min hu l-Isqof* was more theological in nature. The third part of the book dealt with a profile of Archbishop Gonzi emphasising the pastoral achievements when the mentioned prelate was bishop of Gozo, the good relationship that existed between the Catholic Action and Archbishop Gonzi, and the social mission of the Malta Catholic Church.

To celebrate fifty years of Archbishop Gonzi's consecration as a bishop, the booklet *Ġublew tad-Deheb tal-E.T. Mons. M. Gonzi Arċisqof Metropolita ta' Malta* was published. The booklet provided a timeline of Archbishop Gonzi's biography¹⁷ and a list of honours that were bestowed on him during his fifty-year period as bishop.¹⁸ So its contribution to this research question was very limited.

In the 1980s, Klabb Kotba Maltin published a three-volume biography of Archbishop Gonzi written by Michael Galea and Emmanuel S. Tonna. As a part of their research, the authors had

¹³ Paul Saliba, *L-Arċisqof Gonzi: Ġrajjet mill-Hajja u mill-Hidma Tiegħu* (Malta, Malta Catholic Action, 1965).

¹⁴ Paul Saliba, *Is-Socjalizmu* (Malta, Malta Catholic Action, 1962).

¹⁵ Paul Saliba, *Min hu l-Isqof* (Malta, Malta Catholic Action, 1961).

¹⁶ Paul Saliba, *Is-Socjalizmu*, *op.cit.*, 12.

¹⁷ Frank Busuttill and Piju Spiteri, *Ġublew tad-Deheb tal-E.T. Mons. M. Gonzi Arċisqof Metropolita ta' Malta* (Malta, Kumitat Organizzattiv tal-Festi Ġubilari, 1974), 14.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 20.

long taped interviews with the archbishop at his palace in Valletta. The manuscript, before going to print, was revised by Archbishop Gonzi himself. The authors felt the need to highlight this on the back cover of the first volume of their series.¹⁹ Mr Galea had maintained with the present author that Mr Dom Mintoff was given access to those chapters in the biography that dealt with the Labour Party by Dr Paul Farrugia – a common friend of Premier Mintoff and Archbishop Gonzi. Dr Farrugia was also Archbishop Gonzi's personal doctor.²⁰ According to Galea, the Archbishop himself had forwarded the manuscripts to Dr Farrugia for his personal opinion, but Farrugia decided, without consulting the authors or Archbishop Gonzi, to show the manuscripts to Labour leader Mintoff.²¹ Galea revealed to the present writer that the text was written entirely by himself. Chevalier Tonna used to accompany him for the interviews with Archbishop Gonzi and, according to the said source, Tonna used to dominate the course of the cited interviews.²²

At this point in time, Archbishop Gonzi seemed aware of how history and social scientists would judge him. This frame of mind can be noted in the exclusive interview he gave to *Storja*'78, the mouthpiece of the Malta University History Society.²³ In the course of the interview, Archbishop Gonzi, aged 93, was very careful in his reactions. The interview was carried out two years after Archbishop Gonzi's retirement from the Malta bishopric. For instance, Archbishop Gonzi told his interviewers that he accepted the role of Bishop of Gozo only after his confessor had told him to do so since his first inclination had been to refuse the offer since he did not feel tailor-made for the post.²⁴ Mgr Gonzi praised Lord Strickland for apologising to the Supreme Pontiff and, in his own words, Gerald Strickland had died as a true Catholic.²⁵ The interview became interesting when Archbishop Gonzi spoke about his relationship with the colonisers. In fact, Archbishop Gonzi downplayed the claim that he was anti-British and blamed Sir Harry Luke for the propaganda which had been organised against him when the seat of the Malta bishop had become vacant following Archbishop Mauro Caruana's passing away.²⁶ Archbishop Gonzi referred to the amicable relationship that had

¹⁹ Michael Galea and Emmanuel S. Tonna, *L-Arċisqof Gonzi: L-Ewwel Volum* (Malta, Klabb Kotba Maltin, 1981).

²⁰ Taped interview Michael Galea, Private Residence, Valletta 13th April 2017, Sergio Grech Private Collection.

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² *Ibid.*

²³ Andrew P. Vella and George Attard, 'L-Arċisqof Gonzi: Intervistat mir-Rivista Storja,' *Storja*'78 (Malta, Malta University Historical Society, 1978), 121-133.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 126.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 127.

existed between himself and Lord Gort, but refrained from commenting on Labour leader Mr Dom Mintoff when he was asked about the Caravaggio's case.²⁷ According to the introductory notes penned by the journal's editor Henry J. Frendo, Archbishop Gonzi preferred not to comment on events that had happened between 1958 and 1976 with the exception of two particular themes – civil marriage, which was contrary to the Church's magisterium, and the 1976 pastoral letter that Archbishop Gonzi had issued following the violent episodes that had characterised the announcement of Labour winning at the polls. Still, Archbishop Gonzi preferred not to expand on those two themes. In fact, he only summarised the pastoral letter in a few sentences and avoided any political sound bites. Furthermore, Archbishop Gonzi's act of commissioning his own monument at the Metropolitan Cathedral in Mdina and in other localities which included the Bishop Palace in Valletta, the Gozo Cathedral, the Catholic Institute in Floriana and the Kalkara Parish Church, is further proof of such attempts on his part to influence historical memory of him.

Thirty years after the Galea-Tonna venture, Klabb Kotba Maltin published Charles Buttigieg's *Mikiel Gonzi: Hamsin Sena fit-Tmun*.²⁸ During the last four years of Archbishop Gonzi's bishopric, Buttigieg edited the Malta Church's newspaper *Il-Hajja*. It was common knowledge in those times that the Archbishop's Curia was directly financing the newspaper as sales dropped drastically over the years.²⁹ In the 1980s, Buttigieg was the Vice-President of the *Federation of the Parents-Teachers Association* (FPTA), an organisation that represented parents who actively resisted the Labour government's attempt to shut down Malta's Church schools in the period.³⁰ Mr Buttigieg also served as Public Relations Officer to Archbishop Joseph Mercieca, Archbishop Gonzi's successor. In *Mikiel Gonzi: Hamsin Sena fit-Tmun*, Buttigieg, besides narrating some of the main events of Archbishop Gonzi's bishopric, provided his own memoirs in relation to Archbishop Gonzi. But Buttigieg, and he put this black on white, chose not to reveal the contents of the discussions and thoughts that he himself shared with Archbishop Gonzi at crucial times which ultimately could have offered new perspectives about the subject, preferring to reveal some minor details like the instance when Archbishop

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 131.

²⁸ Charles Buttigieg, *Mikiel Gonzi: Hamsin Sena fit-Tmun* (Malta, Klabb Kotba Maltin, 2015).

²⁹ Taped interview Patri Hilary Tagliaferro, Millennium Chapel, Paceville, 30th January 2015, Sergio Grech Private Collection.

³⁰ For the Church's version of events see Dominic Scerri, *The Saga of the Church Schools in Malta (1970-1986): A Historical Portrayal of Events* (Malta, MUT Publications, 2000) and Anton Azzopardi, *Jesuit Schools in Malta, Vol. 4: St Aloysius College, 1965-2007* (Malta, The Author, 2007).

Gonzi was taken by surprise the moment that Mgr Joseph Mercieca was appointed as his Auxiliary Bishop.³¹

Mr Charles Buttigieg had also assisted Archbishop Mercieca in writing and editing his own memoirs, and a few years later he had also written a biography about Archbishop Mercieca. Archbishop Joseph Mercieca or his editor preferred to use the word memoirs rather than the term autobiography. The books were published in 2014 and 2017 respectively. The biography was published a year after Archbishop Mercieca died. The memoirs were sponsored by APS Bank, a Maltese bank that was established in 1910 by a Jesuit priest. In 1948, the Archdiocese of Malta became the bank's owner. Archbishop Gonzi was mentioned in both books.

In his memoirs, Archbishop Mercieca expressed his sense of loyalty to his predecessor arguing that he used to look at him as his father. Very diplomatically, Archbishop Mercieca hinted that Archbishop Gonzi had found it difficult to leave his bishopric seat to the point that even when he had no jurisdiction over the diocese, he still wanted to have a finger in the pie.³² In fact, Archbishop Mercieca noted that during his retirement phase Archbishop Gonzi kept attending the Curia and meeting the parish priests as he had been accustomed to do when he had administered the diocese himself.³³ Archbishop Mercieca put it that he wished the Curia to operate differently but, where possible, he opted to go for a *status quo* so as not to displease Archbishop Gonzi.³⁴ Archbishop Mercieca also noted that Archbishop Gonzi had not left the Valletta palace and that he, therefore, chose the Dar tal-Kleru, a retirement home for old members of the priesthood, at Fleur de Lys, as his temporary residence.³⁵

In Archbishop Mercieca's biography, Mr Buttigieg reconfirmed the episode he mentioned in his book about Archbishop Gonzi that the Malta Curia was puzzled when it was announced that an unknown Gozitan priest, that is to say, Bishop Mercieca, was chosen as Auxiliary Bishop to Archbishop Gonzi.³⁶ Buttigieg recorded Mgr Mercieca's activities during the mentioned era and he therefore quite often referred to the last few years of Archbishop Gonzi's bishopric. But no new knowledge was revealed at that stage.

³¹ Charles Buttigieg, *Mikiel Gonzi: Hamsin Sena fit-Tmun, op.cit.*, 59.

³² Charles Buttigieg, *Ilkoll Ahwa fi Kristu, Ġużepi Mercieca, Memorji* (Malta, Klabb Kotba Maltin, 2014), 35.

³³ *Ibid.*, 35.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 35.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 29.

³⁶ Charles Buttigieg, *Ġużepi Mercieca: Raġġaj għal Kull Staġun* (Malta, Klabb Kotba Maltin, 2017), 31.

During the year 2017, Klabb Kotba Maltin published another biography of Archbishop Michael Gonzi – ‘*Kollni kemm jien għalikom: Il-Hajja Mqanqla ta’ Mikiel Gonzi u Żminijietu (1885-1984)*.³⁷ The book was penned by a retired civil servant, had a preface written by historian Joseph M. Pirota, and also won the National Book Prize in the research category for local books published in 2017.³⁸ The book was the author’s first attempt in the realm of writing and publishing. Rather than offering a holistic perspective of the subject, the author preferred to shed light on the controversial facets of Archbishop Gonzi’s episcopate. The title is indicative of the route the author would take. Furthermore, Cilia, the biographer, mostly based his research on secondary sources and very limited printed primary sources.³⁹ The archival material employed by the author was predominantly limited to published articles that were at the disposal of the colonial bureaucratic machine, like the Senate and the Legislative Assembly Debates, or the economic surveys that were undertaken by Thomas Balogh and others.⁴⁰

During the year 2017, Klabb Kotba Maltin published *Mill-Hażna tat-Tifkiriet* penned by Advocate Joseph Micallef Stafrace, a retired Labour party activist who had been very much engaged in the Malta Labour Party from the late nineteen-fifties down to the nineteen-nineties. In the fifties, during his university days, Micallef Stafrace edited the newspaper *Is-Sebh* which was owned by the Malta Labour Party. During his editorship of *Is-Sebh*, Micallef Stafrace was condemned to four days of imprisonment after publishing a caricature which was deemed by the local courts as offensive towards Malta’s Governor Sir Robert Laycock.⁴¹ It is evident that the interdict imposed by Archbishop Gonzi in 1961 left a dramatic mark on Micallef Stafrace’s identity, and this theme is often mentioned in the book.

In fact, as a consequence of the interdict, Micallef Stafrace had to marry his spouse Yvonne in the sacristy of the Rabat Collegiate church. After the wedding ceremony, the newly-wed couple was insulted by supporters of the Żgħażaġh Ħaddiema Nsara who had meanwhile congregated on the church’s parvis.⁴² Micallef Stafrace had tried hard to convince Archbishop Gonzi to give

³⁷ Louis Cilia, ‘*Kollni kemm jien għalikom: Il-Hajja Mqanqla ta’ Mikiel Gonzi u Żminijietu (1885-1984)*’ (Malta, Klabb Kotba Maltin, 2017).

³⁸ ‘National Book Prize 2018 Award Ceremony,’ Retrieved on 14th August 2019, <https://ktieb.org.mt/national-book-prize-2018-award-ceremony/>.

³⁹ Louis Cilia, ‘*Kollni kemm jien għalikom: Il-Hajja Mqanqla ta’ Mikiel Gonzi u Żminijietu (1885-1984)*’ (Malta, Klabb Kotba Maltin, 2017), 561.

⁴⁰ *Ibid*, 563.

⁴¹ Joseph Micallef Stafrace, *Mill-Hażna tat-Tifkiriet* (Malta, Klabb Kotba Maltin, 2017), ix.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 9.

him permission to marry either at St. Patrick's chapel in Sliema or in an unknown countryside chapel, but Archbishop Gonzi had rejected his plea.⁴³ The Archbishop had offered him the possibility of marrying either at the Mdina Cathedral or at the Archbishop's own private chapel at the Valletta Palace. The offer was made on condition that Micallef Stafrace first asked for the archbishop's pardon.

Dr Micallef Stafrace hailed from a pro-British family who worked closely with the Royal Navy. Still, he ended up militating in a British-Go-Home camp. That is clearly manifested and explained in the book.⁴⁴ The author is very critical of Archbishop Gonzi but showed sympathy to Archbishop Emanuel Gerada.⁴⁵ In fact, Bishop Emanuel Gerada had baptised one of Micallef Stafrace's children. Micallef Stafrace had full praise for the Cana Movement and argued that the Maltese family owed it to Mgr Charles G. Vella's initiative in setting up the movement. His admiration for the wing of liberation theology is evident.⁴⁶

The book, running into more than 500 pages, contains a series of articles written by Micallef Stafrace and published in *Lehen is-Sewwa* between the years 2012 and 2015. The articles were submitted on the invitation of the journal's editor Reverend John Ciarlò. Incidentally, John Ciarlò penned a number of books which dealt with the persecution of the Roman Catholic Church during the modern period.⁴⁷ Indeed, he was one of the founders of Klabb Qari Nisrani which published religious books in the vernacular.

Archbishop Gonzi in Local Academic Studies

During the past decades, the study of religion and politics has grown considerably. As Moyser argued, "many scholars now recognise that earlier assumptions, at least in Western academic circles, about the fading of religion from political life, have not been borne out. On the contrary, instead of a gradual marginalisation and privatisation of religion, in many parts of the world the opposite has occurred. Even in the West, religion has retained or even reasserted its presence in public debate, not least in the United States."⁴⁸ In fact, academics have noted in the

⁴³ 'Iż-Żwieg fis-Sagristija 40 sena ilu ta' Joe Micallef Stafrace,' *It-Torċa*, 16th September 2001, 16.

⁴⁴ Joseph Micallef Stafrace, *Mill-Hażna tat-Tifkiriet*, *op.cit.*, 9.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 86.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 146.

⁴⁷ Michael J. Schiavone, *Dictionary of Maltese Biographies, Volume 1* (Malta, Pubblikazzjonijiet Indipendenza, 2009), 586.

⁴⁸ George Moyser, "Religion and Politics," in John Hinnells, (ed.), *The Routledge Companion to the Study of Religion* (New York, Routledge, 2005), 423.

case of the West, the new trend of “individualised Catholic identity” where the individuals “are not concerned to reconcile traditional religion with the demands of later modernity.”⁴⁹ Religion has become invisible rather than non-existent.⁵⁰ This led to a series of studies focusing on how religious phenomena influenced governance at a local, national and international level, and investigations regarding the way the political system responded to such influences by religious phenomena. As Grzymala-Busse maintained, “religious attachments affect voting and popular mobilisation. Churches can become powerful institutional players that lobby, influence policy, and form effective coalitions with both secular and denominational partners.”⁵¹ Such studies recognised the fact that religion and politics have never been totally separated to the point that “religion influences political attitudes and institutions while politics affect religious practice and political activity.”⁵² As these studies highlighted, religion can also function as a powerful ideology.

In the year 2005, Dominic Fenech published the book *Responsibility and Power in Inter-War Malta, Book One: Endemic Democracy (1919-1930)*. The book focused on the twenties of the twentieth century when Malta experienced for the first time self-government. Fenech asserted that, by the end of that decade, the Maltese colony was a highly charged political place where religion and politics crossed swords.⁵³ The event ended up as a diplomatic quarrel between Great Britain and the Holy See. Fenech based his research mostly on documents from the National Archives of the United Kingdom, even though the book was published during the period that the Vatican Archives had opened the documents pertaining to the era of Pope Pius XI. In his book, Fenech, at least, twice noted the different ways that Bishop Gonzi and Archbishop Caruana reacted to priests’ activity in politics. Bishop Gonzi had banned Gozitan priests from contesting the elections whilst Archbishop Caruana only suggested to his priests to refrain from participating in the political arena.⁵⁴ Bishop Gonzi, being stricter than Archbishop Caruana, felt that anti-clericalism was reaching Malta.⁵⁵ Fenech reminded his

⁴⁹ Anthony M. Abela, “Young Catholics in Malta: Similar Origins, Multiple Destinations,” in John Fulton, (ed.), *Young Catholics at the New Millennium: The Religion and Morality of Young Adults in Western Countries* (Dublin, University College of Dublin Press, 2000), 9.

⁵⁰ Adrian Gellel and Mark Sultana, ‘A Language for the Catholic Church in Malta,’ *Melita Theologica*, 59, (1), (2008), 24.

⁵¹ Anna Grzymala-Busse, ‘Why Comparative Politics Should take Religion (More) Seriously?’, *Annual Review of Political Science*, 15, (2012), 426.

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ Dominic Fenech, *Responsibility and Power in Inter-War Malta, Book One: Endemic Democracy (1919-1930)*, (Malta, Publishers Enterprises Group, 2005), 15.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 284, 343.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 285.

readers that Archbishop Gonzi had entered the political fray on instructions by Archbishop Caruana.⁵⁶ Bishop Gonzi himself had declared this in his *Storja* interview.⁵⁷

The book researched by Fenech showed how Lord Strickland became a *persona non grata* with the Holy See. Fenech suspected that during the case of the Anglican Bishops of Gibraltar (in January 1929), Bishop Gonzi had probably been “assessing his chances of becoming archbishop in Malta, in the light of current rumours that Caruana was demoralised and contemplating resignation.”⁵⁸ Fenech also showed that the issue of priests contesting the elections was the source of a meeting between Governor Charles Du Cane and the Holy See’s Cardinal Secretary of State Pietro Gasparri. The latter commented that the Vatican was not encouraging Maltese priests to contest the elections but admitted that the Vatican lacked a “universal policy on clerical involvement in politics and left it up to the local bishops to allow or to prohibit it.”⁵⁹ Moreover, Fenech argued that the real scope behind the Mgr Pascal Robinson mission was “a gambit in the mounting of a massive attack on Strickland of which Robinson, knowingly or unknowingly, was the agent.”⁶⁰

In October 2010, the Malta Labour Party organised an academic conference intended to evaluate the 90th anniversary of the mentioned party’s foundation and speakers were given the task to employ different theoretical perspectives and methods in order to re-examine, contest and revise what the organisers of the conference termed as “conventional historical narratives and ideas on the Labour Movement” in Malta. The contributions were published two years later in a book edited by John Chircop, under the heading *Revisiting Labour History*. It is interesting to note that the conference acts were not published by the Labour Party but by an independent publisher. Two specific contributions were of particular interest in the light of the present research; the long introduction by Chircop, who adopted anti-colonial theories in his perspectives, and the chapter written by Godfrey A. Pirotta. The mentioned writings, amongst other issues, lay focus on the era during which Archbishop Gonzi had contested the Senate elections in the early twenties of the twentieth century, and the tense relationship that developed between the Malta Church and Lord Strickland.

Chircop dwelt on the issue of how in its initial stages the Labour leadership committees shifted from a dominance of clerical elements to a more secular reformist and socialist current

⁵⁶ Ibid. 88.

⁵⁷ Andrew P. Vella and George Attard, ‘L-Arċisqof Gonzi: Intervistat mir-Rivista Storja,’ *op.cit.*, 124.

⁵⁸ Dominic Fenech, *Responsibility and Power in Inter-War Malta*, *op.cit.*, 365.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 354.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 132.

following the signing of the Compact between Labour and Gerald Strickland's faction.⁶¹ It transpired that, in its action, the former group was inspired by the teachings emanating from Pope Leo XIII's *Rerum Novarum* whilst the other section opted for contemporary political literature stemming from sources like the Independent Labour Party, the British Labour Party, the Fabians and so on. Chircop also stressed the influence on the Malta Labour Party by the British Jesuit Charles Plater, the founder of the Christian Social Guild in England, who visited Malta in 1920. The mentioned subject was also discussed by Rev. Emanuel Agius.⁶² Pope Leo XIII's encyclical letter *Rerum Novarum* was Fr. Charles Plater's font for his campaigns. Chircop had originally presented this research in his book *The Left within the Maltese Labour Movement*.⁶³ Chircop's work was useful since one of the themes that this thesis addresses is the formation of Archbishop Gonzi's political beliefs and convictions.

Godfrey A. Pirotta analysed the relationship between the Malta Church and the Labour Party between 1921 and 1976 and argued that the quarrels in the given period "revolved around issues touching on ideology, political freedom and democracy."⁶⁴ Furthermore, Pirotta described Integration, which Archbishop Gonzi and other organisations opposed vehemently, as a radical solution intended to eradicate poverty. Moreover, Pirotta strove to dispel the common perception that the quarrel between Archbishop Gonzi and Perit Mintoff was "at heart one based on personalities."⁶⁵

In 2011, Agius and Agius published the book *Strickland, Britain and the Vatican* - an updated version of Cesare Catania's doctorate presented to the Catholic University of Milan. The book was published posthumously. Catania used different archives like the Public Record Office, the Vatican Secret Archives, the Malta National Archives, the Malta Curia Archives and several other sources. Catania immersed the reader in the complex period giving also importance to the way the relationship between Britain and the Vatican was evolving. During the period, as stated Mgr Gonzi was bishop of Gozo, but it was commonly held that crucial decisions at this time were taken by him, not by Archbishop Mauro Caruana, Malta's archbishop. Catania convincingly showed that on his return to Rome, the Apostolic Delegate

⁶¹ John Chircop, *Revisiting Labour History* (Malta, Horizons, 2012), 35.

⁶² Emanuel Agius, *Social Consciousness of the Church in Malta, 1891-1921: The Impact of Rerum Novarum* (Malta, Media Centre Publications, 1991), 141.

⁶³ John Chircop, *The Left within the Maltese Labour Movement* (Malta, Mireva Publications, 1991).

⁶⁴ Godfrey A. Pirotta, "The Malta Labour Party and the Church: Building the Democratic State 1921-1976," in John Chircop (ed.), *Revisiting Labour History*, *op. cit.*, 85.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 119.

Mgr Robinson had presented two reports. The subject of one of them was Lord Gerald Strickland whilst the second concerned the Malta Church. Catania argued that the Holy See sidelined Robinson's work and "sided wholeheartedly with the Maltese bishops."⁶⁶

Eventually, Catania maintained that "the published report was actually edited but the parts removed had nothing to do with the reforms of the Church."⁶⁷ The censored bits included the claims that the Maltese priestly cohort supported mainly the Nationalist Party, that Gerald Strickland was stripping the Church from its property, and that Lord Strickland ought to be removed from the political arena.⁶⁸ The unpublished report was very critical of the priests in Malta even accusing them of lack of personal hygiene. Catania lamented of snobbery traces in the report and deduced that Robinson was not in good health during his mission and that most probably his findings were based on interviews rather than on what he saw at first-hand.⁶⁹ It also transpired from Catania's research that Mgr Robinson was highly critical of both Archbishop Caruana and of Bishop Gonzi. Robinson argued that "Caruana being a man of delicate conscience was incapable of perceiving even the least untrustworthy motive in the actions..."⁷⁰ Mgr Robinson went on to argue that Archbishop Caruana "lacked the talent and the necessary sense to overcome a difficult situation."⁷¹ For Robinson, Archbishop Gonzi was more competent but was arrogant and aggressive: "He seems to long for honours and promotions... he tries to obtain favours from those who are in power."⁷² Catania argued that it was purely a coincidence that the dispute between Church and State "started precisely at the time of the negotiations of the Lateran Treaty."⁷³

The book *Lord Strickland: Plots and Intrigue in Colonial Malta* published in 2018, researched by Victor Aquilina, was not really a biography about the mentioned controversial politician. The emphasis in the book revolved around Strickland's critics, the assassination attempt, the Terinu affair through which Lord Strickland was accused of being a freemason, and the famous apology that Strickland presented to the Pope before the 1932 elections. The author declared his position unmistakably clear by arguing that history had been unkind to Lord Gerald

⁶⁶ Cesare Catania, *Strickland, Britain and the Vatican, 1929-1939* (Malta, Agius and Agius, 2011), 132.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 276.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 282.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 290.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

⁷² *Ibid.*

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 262.

Strickland and he, therefore, set himself a mission that would put him in a better light. Aquilina argued that thanks to myths and unfounded claims, Lord Strickland's work was overshadowed. Before proceeding further, one should add that Aquilina was *The Times*' deputy editor for seventeen years and editor of the same newspaper from 1993 to 2003 when Malta was politically being geared to join the European Union. He was also a chief executive officer and trustee at the Strickland Foundation. Aquilina also authored *Black Monday, A Night of Mob Violence*, a first-hand account of the burning down of *The Times* building in Valletta, close to the Office of the Prime Minister, on 15 October 1979.⁷⁴

Aquilina used a wide array of archives for his Strickland book but not the Vatican Archives. But he used Aappo Laitinen's monograph about Strickland which was based on documents from the Vatican Archives.⁷⁵ He had also access to the Strickland Papers at Villa Parisio. The first chapter was considerably useful for this thesis as it focused on Protestantism, a theme that the present author will be discussing later. Another valuable chapter was the seventh which focused on freemasonry which will also be discussed at a later stage by the present researcher. Aquilina's line of thought in *Lord Strickland: Plots and Intrigue in Colonial Malta* was that the Archbishop Caruana/Bishop Gonzi opposition towards Strickland was based on the latter's drive in favour of Anglicisation which created a feeling that he was not a member of the Maltese community but one of the British Protestants.⁷⁶ And Anglicisation was also interpreted as the triumph of Protestantism and Freemasonry, two declared enemies of the Catholic Church. Mgr Gonzi took a definite umbrage of Strickland in 1929 during a three Anglican bishops' visit, and in fact, Bishop Gonzi protested with the authorities against the visit, convinced as he was that the three bishops' visit had been approved by the Governor. At that stage, Aquilina quoted Catania who argued that Mgr Gonzi himself, then bishop of Gozo, used to occasionally assume initiatives, even without the knowledge of Caruana, the Archbishop of Malta, in the same way, that the Anglican bishops' visit was being organised without his knowledge.⁷⁷ On reading the volume, one sensed that the Church and the Nationalist Party, especially Nerik Mizzi,⁷⁸ were to blame for overshadowing Strickland.

⁷⁴ Victor Aquilina, *Black Monday, A Night of Mob Violence* (Malta, Kite, 2019).

⁷⁵ Victor Aquilina, *Lord Strickland: Plots and Intrigue in Colonial Malta* (Malta, Kite, 2019), 15.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 509.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 19.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 81.

Still, Aquilina acknowledged the fact that Strickland was not an easy nut to crack. At least twice, the former *Times*' editor registered bad qualities in Lord Strickland's character. The latter, in Aquilina's view, was "temperamental and explosive when disagreeing with others,"⁷⁹ and "to his political rivals, Strickland was cantankerous, vindictive, tactless, ambitious and intolerant."⁸⁰ Aquilina attempted to excuse Strickland for poking fun at pontifical titles by referring to today's Pope Francis who is de-emphasising papal titles. Such a position is untenable and inadequate and falls short of convincing.⁸¹ Following the path of researchers like Fenech and Laitinen (to whom the present researcher shall refer later), Aquilina concluded that the Vatican was clearly not interested in Strickland's positive sides, and that his rivals' position was taken as gospel truth.⁸² Aquilina seemed to imply that there was a wrong reading of the Orlich report. Aquilina insisted that Reverend Orlich did not confirm that Strickland was a freemason but, as Laitinen put it, Orlich merely suspected that Strickland was a freemason.⁸³ Aquilina further argued that "Orlich could have easily checked the membership records of grand lodges in England and Malta or he could have gone through the Terinu story and the subsequent court case against him."⁸⁴ The latter pronoun refers to Strickland. Aquilina also went a long way to show that Strickland's apology was not an act of surrendering. He insisted that it was not "a blanket apology." Instead, Aquilina maintained, Lord Strickland only apologised "for words uttered in the heat of a debate which were interpreted as being anti-clerical and an attack against the clergy."⁸⁵

In 2018, Kite published the biography of Mgr Enrico Dandria penned by Max Farrugia whose bibliography includes a thick book about the internati. Mgr Dandria contested the General Elections of 1921 and 1927 in the interest of the Unione Politica Maltese. From 1923 to 1927, Dandria was minister in charge of education. Mgr Dandria was returned to the Legislative Assembly in 1932 and was appointed once again as minister of education. But he passed away shortly after the latter ministerial appointment. Dandria was diametrically opposed to Lord Strickland, describing him in fact, during a hot exchange, as heretical and excommunicated.⁸⁶ Farrugia contextualised Dandria's character, and therefore the biography also dwelt on the

⁷⁹ Ibid., 43.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 99.

⁸¹ Ibid., 50.

⁸² Ibid., 139.

⁸³ Ibid., 183.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 183.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 281.

⁸⁶ Max Farrugia, *Enrico Dandria: Qassis, Politiku, Patrijott* (Malta, Kite, 2018), 58.

Church-Strickland dispute. Farrugia used the Vatican Archives for copies of the Robinson and Orlich reports. The mentioned author devoted around hundred pages to the Strickland-Church issue, occasionally forgetting that his subject was Dandria and not Lord Strickland. Farrugia showed, through vivid examples, press articles in the pro-Strickland stable that targeted the Maltese priests who were taking an active part in politics.⁸⁷ Farrugia, as other researchers mentioned here, also referred to the editing of the Robinson report.⁸⁸

The author mentioned Bishop Gonzi's interests in the See of Malta whilst analysing the Robinson report.⁸⁹ Farrugia quoted from the interview that the editor of *Storja '78* had with Archbishop Gonzi and referred to the passage where Archbishop Gonzi declared that he had entered the political fry because this had been imposed on him by Archbishop Caruana. Archbishop Gonzi was also mentioned by Farrugia in relation to Strickland's apology. Strangely, Farrugia used Joan Alexander's biography of Mabel Strickland to recount how Mgr Gonzi delivered the letter of apology personally to the Pope.⁹⁰ Joan Alexander's biography tended to romanticise the Stricklands.⁹¹ Furthermore, the first two chapters were not written by her but by Victor Griffiths who later revealed this to the present author.⁹² The book was removed from the shelves in 2002 after "Mintoff had felt greatly upset by a comment in the biography implying that he had not obtained an Engineering Science degree from Oxford University. Mr Mintoff had also felt offended by a remark that he served as a tea boy at Castille when he was still a boy, a claim which he had also denied. The issue over the degree was checked with Oxford University, which confirmed that Mintoff had in fact received his Engineering Science degree."⁹³ Farrugia, as the other authors, noted that Strickland was never excommunicated.⁹⁴ Farrugia correctly dedicated a chapter to the role of the Maltese priests in politics but, rather than serving as an introduction to the Strickland times, it was erroneously placed after the apology part.⁹⁵ Max Farrugia revealed in his research about the internment of Maltese nationals to Uganda that Archbishop Caruana was afraid that Bishop Gonzi might be

⁸⁷ Ibid., 91.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 132.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 161.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 150.

⁹¹ Joan Alexander, *Mabel Strickland* (Malta, Progress Press Ltd, 1996).

⁹² Sergio Grech (ed.), "Riflessjonijiet tal-Editur," in *Mabel Strickland Bejn Storja u Miti* (Malta, Horizons, 2018), 8.

⁹³ Ibid., 12.

⁹⁴ Max Farrugia, *Enrico Dandria, op.cit.*, 164.

⁹⁵ Ibid., 296.

interned since some prominent member of the British authorities in Malta was convinced that Bishop Gonzi was a Mizzjan and a Fascist sympathiser.⁹⁶

The chapter “The delimitation of boundaries between Church and State in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century Malta” written by Michael Refalo and published in his book *Fragments* in 2019, was of interest to the present writer since the mentioned author tried to test the period under study against the theories of public space by Jürgen Habermas and especially Antonio Gramsci’s theories on politics. The gist of the chapter seemed to lie here: “the two institutions, (the Church and the British) collaborating in public and in private, were, at the same time, jealous to protect their respective areas of influence and competence. The Church... needed to be perceived by the faithful as independent and never subservient to the colonial government. The government... needed to show that possession of the instruments of coercion was firmly in its hands. And yet, both needed each other, and at the same time, both needed to be perceived as distinct.”⁹⁷ Refalo argued that, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the public sphere was “generally subservient to the Roman Catholic Church” whose influence was “pervasive, hegemonic and capable of sidelining the other components of society.”⁹⁸ For Refalo, the major preoccupation of the civil society, excluding the Church in the mentioned time span, was the protection of the Italian language.⁹⁹

In 2019, Archbishop Charles Jude Scicluna published his 1985 Licentiate thesis *Religion and the 1921 Malta Constitution: Genesis and Implications*. Furthermore, he included two chapters he published earlier in *Forum* and added a new postscript. The book also included some documentation pertaining to the period. The subject of the book is the non-inclusion of a religion clause in the 1921 Self-Government constitution, an issue that went on in the following constitutions down to 1964. From this aspect, this was a vital secondary source for the present researcher. Furthermore, the theme of the Church’s input to State running is even valid to contemporary Malta.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁶ Max Farrugia, *L-Internament u l-Eżilju matul l-aħħar Gwerra* (Malta, PIN, 2007), 241.

⁹⁷ Michael Refalo, *Fragments* (Malta, Kite, 2019), 25.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 32.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 30.

¹⁰⁰ Charles Jude Scicluna, *Religion and the 1921 Malta Constitution: Genesis and Implications* (Malta, Kite 2019), 121.

In the year 2021, SKS published a biography of Dom Mintoff written by a Dominican friar, Mark Montebello, who described himself as a philosopher by profession with wide expertise in historiography.¹⁰¹ The book was described as the first complete biography of the man based on “thousands of original documents, extensive research and numerous private interviews.”¹⁰² The publishers felt the need to add a note on the book’s dust jacket informing the readers that no conditions were foisted upon the author whilst researching and writing the biography. Before the book hit the shelves, the publishers mounted a soft book launch by releasing to the English press in Malta what they felt was good fodder to boost sales. In fact, they released the chapters dealing with Mintoff’s alleged marital infidelities and his ‘bedroom secrets.’¹⁰³ As a result of these moves, Mintoff’s family reacted negatively to these revelations and the party decided not to sell the book from its headquarters indirectly giving the impression that the biography would be removed from the market.¹⁰⁴ The plan worked perfectly well and sales soared.

Montebello used the chronological methodology and divided Mintoff’s life in eleven chapters. Considering what Mintoff himself had written in his autobiography about the role of the Church in his private and public life, and the tense relationship that had developed between the two sides, the present writer feels that Montebello had not given enough importance to the Archbishop Gonzi factor in Dominic Mintoff’s life. As late as the nineties of the twentieth century, whilst addressing Parliament Mintoff referred to Archbishop Gonzi and their relationship and even confirmed that in the seventies his government had wanted Archbishop Gonzi to remain in office and that it had been against the choice of Mgr Mercieca.¹⁰⁵ Critics of the Labour government of the seventies argued that Premier Mintoff favoured Archbishop Gonzi because the latter’s health was in a poor state.¹⁰⁶

At times some of Montebello’s claims were based on dubious grounds. For instance, Montebello implied that Archbishop Gonzi wanted Ms Moyra Mintoff, Dom’s wife, to convert to Roman Catholicism. Montebello’s source was one of the couple’s daughters, but no proof was forthcoming to back the claim.¹⁰⁷ At the time of the Lent pastoral letter of 1960,

¹⁰¹ Mark Montebello, *The Tail that wagged the Dog* (Malta, Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti, 2021), dust jacket.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Matthew Vella, ‘Sex and Socialism; Dom’s Bedroom Secrets,’ *Malta Today* 4th July 2021, 1.

¹⁰⁴ ‘Labour pulls Dom Mintoff Biography from its Shelves, Informal Orders to stop selling The Tail that Wagged the Dog,’ at Labour HQ, *Times of Malta*, 7th July 2022, <https://timesofmalta.com/articles/view/labour-pulls-dom-mintoff-biography-from-its-shelves.884833>.

¹⁰⁵ Louis Cilia, *Kollni kemm jien ghalikom: Il-Ħajja Mqanqla ta’ Mikiel Gonzi u Żminijietu. op.cit.*, 470.

¹⁰⁶ Charles G. Vella, *Sinjali Maltin ta’ Żmienna* (Malta, Klabb Kotba Maltin, 2000), 243.

¹⁰⁷ Mark Montebello, *The Tail that wagged the Dog, op.cit.*, 409.

Montebello asserted that Archbishop Gonzi must have known that Dom and the Labour Party were in contact with Britain's Social Democratic Party (SDP). Once again the assertion is not backed, but rather based on a comment passed during the executive meeting of the Labour Party. The author did not even mention who had uttered that remark.¹⁰⁸

In the 2020 edition of *Melita Historica*, published in 2022, Michael Galea, whose corpus include generic research about Archbishop Mauro Caruana, presented the text of an interview he had held with Sir Harry Luke way back in the late sixties. According to the editor, the mentioned interview deserved to be published because “of its historical and autobiographical contents.”¹⁰⁹ Luke served as Lieutenant Governor in Malta between 1930 and 1938. Galea asked Luke to give him which events the latter believed were outstanding during his term of Lieutenant Governor. Sir Harry Luke, inter alia, referred to the difficulties which existed in the relationship between Lord Strickland and the Church. It is however interesting to note that Luke on that occasion made no references to Archbishop Gonzi.¹¹⁰ More than thirty years later, Luke still believed that it was an appropriate measure to suspend the constitution twice.¹¹¹ Sir Harry Luke went on claiming that Strickland gave dignity to the Maltese language when he decided to publish *Il-Berka*.

Francis Bonnici's *The Academic Formation of Maltese Priests in the University of Malta 1838-1938* is a great reference work and should be in every scholar's library. The author used different local and international archives including the Vatican's. The book was crucial to determine who were Archbishop Gonzi's lecturers during his University days and therefore proved to be an essential guide to understand Archbishop Gonzi's formation.¹¹²

Although Joseph Bezzina's book *Religion and Politics in a Crown Colony* focuses mostly on Gozo and on the emergence of the Gozitan diocese in 1864, it still offers a good insight on how the relationship between the British and the Church came to be and evolved during the first three-quarters of the 19th century.¹¹³ The book's importance is stressed by the fact that on the

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 512.

¹⁰⁹ Michael Galea, 'An Interview with Sir Harry Luke,' *Melita Historica*, 2020, 187.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Francis Bonnici, *The Academic Formation of Maltese Priests in the University of Malta 1838-1938* (Malta, BDL, 2019), 285.

¹¹³ Joseph Bezzina, *Religion and Politics in a Crown Colony: The Gozo-Malta Story 1798-1864* (Malta, Bugelli Publications, 1985), 143.

1st of January 1944 the Maltese diocese was elevated to the rank of a Metropolitan See by Pope Pius XII who thereby established the Maltese ecclesiastical province. This move meant that Gozo was relegated to a suffragan diocese within the Maltese archdiocese even though it had enjoyed the status of a separate diocese from Malta since 1864.

Although Christopher Pollacco did not refer to Archbishop Gonzi in his book *An Outline of the Socio-Economic Development in Post-War Malta*, the publication still resulted instrumental for one to understand how post-Second World War Maltese fared socially, economically and politically. Such changes not only affected the people's political aspirations and challenged them for a better future, but also affected the Church's role in Maltese society and had their share in loosening the ties and dependencies on the institutional church. The author persuasively showed how Malta shifted from a military fortress to an economic diversification unit which included tourism, factories and how the country met the challenges that emigration and population growth brought about.¹¹⁴

Studies by Habermas,¹¹⁵ Boissevain,¹¹⁶ Vassallo,¹¹⁷ Tonna,¹¹⁸ Tabone¹¹⁹, Abela,¹²⁰ PRS¹²¹ and Discern¹²² were influential to understand key shifts in Malta's religious field. Reference books like *A Cecklist of Maltese Periodicals*,¹²³ *Maltese Biographies of the Twentieth Century*,¹²⁴ *Dizzjunarju ta' Kittieba Maltin u Ghawdxin: Ibieraħ u Llum*,¹²⁵ *Historical Dictionary of Malta*,¹²⁶ *Melitensia 1900-1975: A Classified List of Books and Articles on Maltese History*

¹¹⁴ Christopher Pollacco, *An Outline of the Socio-Economic Development in Post-War Malta* (Malta, Mireva Publications, 2003), 285.

¹¹⁵ Jürgen Habermas, *Between Facts and Norms: Contribution to a Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy* (Cambridge, Cambridge MIT, 1996), *Between Naturalism and Religion* (Cambridge, Cambridge Polity, 2008).

¹¹⁶ See Jeremy Boissevain, *A Village in Malta* (New York, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1980).

¹¹⁷ See Mario Vassallo, *From Lordship to Stewardship: Religion and Social Change in Malta* (The Hague, Mouton, 1979).

¹¹⁸ See Benny Tonna, *Malta Trends* (Malta, Media Centre Publications, 1993).

¹¹⁹ See Carmel Tabone, *The Secularisation of the Family in Changing Malta* (Malta, Dominican Publications, 1987).

¹²⁰ See Anthony M. Abela, *Secularised Sexuality: Youth Values in a City Island* (Malta, Social Value Studies, 1998).

¹²¹ PRS, *Religious Attitudes and Behaviour of University Students in Malta* (Malta, Pastoral Research Services, 1968).

¹²² DISCERN, *Malta: Sunday Mass Attendance Census, 2005* (Malta, Discern, 2009).

¹²³ Anthony F. Sapienza, *A Checklist of Maltese Periodicals* (Malta, Malta University Press, 1977).

¹²⁴ Robbie Mifsud Bonnici, *Dizzjunarju Bijo-Biblijografiku Nazzjonali* (Malta, Dipartiment tal-Infommazzjoni, 1960).

¹²⁵ Michael Galea, *Dizzjunarju ta' Kittieba Maltin u Ghawdxin; Ibieraħ u Llum*, (Malta, Bugelli Publications, 1995).

¹²⁶ W.C. Berg, *Historical Dictionary of Malta* (London, The Scarecrow Press, 1995).

printed between 1900 and 1975,¹²⁷ *Melitensia: A Catalogue of Printed Books and Articles in the Royal University of Malta Library Referring to Malta*,¹²⁸ *Mexxejja, Hassieba u Deputati Laburisti 1920-2000*,¹²⁹ *Index Historicus*,¹³⁰ *L-Arkivji f'Malta*¹³¹ and other titles provided more backing to the present author's research.

Archbishop Gonzi in International Studies

Over the years, a number of foreign academics wrote about various aspects of Melitensia. The subject of religion and politics in Malta interested different academics. One of those was Adrianus Koster who in 1984 published the book *Prelates and Politicians in Malta: Changing Power-balances between Church and State in a Mediterranean Island Fortress*.¹³² The book was written in the nineteen seventies and the reader should bear in mind that Koster was writing in a very particular context. Within the Malta Church, pressure was being exerted in favour of a new archbishop, but Archbishop Gonzi did not budge. It was a period when the main archives that could be researched were still closed. Koster had some access to documentation pertaining to the thirties from the National Archives of the United Kingdom. Therefore, Koster had to rely mostly on printed primary sources, a limited list of secondary sources and oral interviews. The book was an independent attempt to evaluate Church-State relations in an epoch that saw Malta changing from a colony to an Independent Republic, and in a country where this theme tends to be analysed according to partisan whims. In 1984, Koster announced that he was interested in writing a biography of Archbishop Gonzi but the book was never published, if ever written.¹³³ Referring to the Galea-Tonna project about Archbishop Gonzi, Koster maintained that “unfortunately Mgr Gonzi’s memoirs, as he dictated them to two trusted friends, have been published only in an abbreviated form. For history’s sake, I pray the original is still available for a future biographer.”¹³⁴

¹²⁷ Giovanni Mangion, *Melitensia 1900-1975: A Classified List of Books and Articles on Maltese History printed between 1900 and 1975* (Malta, Malta Historical Society, 1975).

¹²⁸ Paul Xuereb, *Melitensia: A Catalogue of Printed Books and Articles in the Royal University of Malta Library Referring to Malta* (Malta, Malta University Press, 1974).

¹²⁹ Francis Galea, *Mexxejja, Hassieba u Deputati Laburisti 1920-2000* (Malta, Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti, 2000), 247.

¹³⁰ Carmel Cuschieri, *Index Historicus* (Malta, The Author, 1979).

¹³¹ Charles J. Farrugia, *L-Arkivji f'Malta* (Malta, Pubblikazzjonijiet Indipendenza, 2006).

¹³² Adrianus Koster, *Prelates and Politicians in Malta: Changing Power-balances between Church and State in a Mediterranean Island Fortress* (Assen, Van Gorcum, 1984).

¹³³ Adrianus Koster, ‘I Remember Archbishop Gonzi,’ *The Sunday Times*, 25th March 1984, 14.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*

There are about thirty references with regard to Malta in the book *Il cardinale Pietro Gasparri, segretario di Stato (1914-1930)* edited by Laura Pettinaroli and Massimiliano Valente. The book was published by Heidelberg University Publishing in 2020.¹³⁵ The book incorporated twelve contributions, each of them in Italian except for one in French. Cardinal Gasparri, as said earlier on, served as the Holy See's Secretary of State under Popes Benedict XV and Pius XI and was behind the *1917 Code of Canon Law*, in effect until 1983. The publication dealt with the Vatican's diplomatic relations with several countries like Austria, Italy, the United Kingdom, Mexico, the United States and Eastern Europe through Cardinal Gasparri's office. It was far from a straightforward period. Cardinal Gasparri was in office during the period of the First World War and during the times that Fascism took over in Italy.

Lorenzo Botrugno, one of the contributors in the mentioned book, focused his investigation on the Church and State relationship during the Gerald Strickland era and based his research on unpublished documentary sources employing the minutes of the meetings of the Sacred Congregation of Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs. Botrugno argued that Cardinal Gasparri's appraisal of British matters was influenced by Ercole Consalvi and Mariano Rampolla, that is to say Gasparri's office predecessors. Botrugno used the conflict between Church and State in Malta as a case study to analyse Cardinal Gasparri's role and attitudes. It emerged from Botrugno's chapter that Cardinal Gasparri was totally in favour of the line adopted by the Maltese bishops Caruana and Gonzi with regard to Lord Strickland and argued that the British government "*in questa controversia con la Santa Sede confonde la causa coll'effetto. Egli afferma che la causa della penosa situazione politico-religiosa nell'Isola è il Clero che entra in politica e che L. S. (Lord Strickland) non fa che difendersi, mentre la vera causa è l'atteggiamento anticlericale di L. S. ed il clero non fa che difendersi. Del resto accade sempre così: quando un Governo massonico attacca la Chiesa, attribuisce sempre la colpa al Clero che invade i diritti dello Stato e che costringe lo Stato a difendersi, mentre la verità è che lo Stato invade i diritti della Chiesa e costringe il Clero a difendersi.*"¹³⁶

Cardinal Gasparri even backed completely the pastoral letter that was published on the first day of May 1930 in which the Maltese Church categorically asked Maltese voters not to vote

¹³⁵ Laura Pettinaroli and Massimiliano Valente, *Il Cardinale Pietro Gasparri, Segretario di Stato (1914-1930)* (Berlin, Heideberg University, 2020).

¹³⁶ Lorenzo Botrugno, "Gasparri ed i Rapporti con il Regno Unito nel Pontificato di Pio XI," in Laura Pettinaroli and Massimiliano Valente (ed.), *Il Cardinale Pietro Gasparri, Segretario di Stato (1914-1930)* (Berlin, Heideberg University, 2020), 157.

for Strickland. But Cardinal Gasparri believed that “*Rebus sic stantibus, io ritengo che la lettera pastorale non debba essere né ritirata né aggravata ma lasciata com’è; non ritirata, perché questo ritiro favorirebbe le sorti elettorali di Strickland.*”¹³⁷ Gasparri wanted Strickland out of politics. Botrugno’s secondary sources include Cesare Catania, Harrison Smith, Charles R. Gallagher, Benvenuto Cellini and Aappo Laitinen.¹³⁸

In the year 2013, Aappo Laitinen presented to the University of Helsinki his doctorate on *Lord Strickland, The Holy See, Britain, and the Crisis of Malta, 1927-1933*. A summary of the monograph was published in *Contemporary Church History*: a bilingual journal. In his thesis, Laitinen employed, using his own words, the “narrative structure.”¹³⁹ His sources included the Sacred Congregation of Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs which he described as the “most of the relevant source material”¹⁴⁰ and the National Archives of the United Kingdom.

Laitinen maintained that the matters between Lord Strickland and the Malta Church were not based on theological differences “but rather on the unrealistic notion, shared by most participants in the crisis, of a complete separation between religion and politics.”¹⁴¹ Further he remarked that, “... almost all the local players in the political arena were professing Roman Catholics. Thus from the modern historian’s perspective, the frequent allusions to Freemasonry and Protestant designs appear somewhat disproportionate. The culturally pro-Italian opposition and clergy used these insinuations to discredit pro-British politicians. However, the public debate also reflected the traditional idea of Britain as a ‘Protestant’ power. Anyone who seemed to be upsetting the traditional establishment with pro-British or, even worse, anticlerical initiatives was quickly suspected of furthering Protestant beliefs at the expense of Roman Catholicism.”¹⁴² In fact, Laitinen showed how a local dispute was turned into an international event involving the Holy See and Great Britain.¹⁴³ Moreover, the Helsinki academic correctly noted that the Anglo-Vatican relationship had been in “a state of disrepair” since the Reformation and that the events which had taken place during the twenties of the twentieth century in Malta strained that relationship even further.

¹³⁷ Ibid., 158.

¹³⁸ Ibid., 154.

¹³⁹ Aappo Laitinen, *The Holy See, Britain, and the Crisis of Malta, 1927-1933* (Helsinki, Kopio Niini Oy, 2013), 10.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., 14.

¹⁴¹ Aappo Laitinen, “Religion and Politics in Malta during the Interwar Years: Between Protestant Britain and the Holy See,” *Kirchliche Zeitgeschichte*, 30, (2), (2017), 377.

¹⁴² Ibid., 378.

¹⁴³ Ibid., 379.

Laitinen acknowledged the fact that the Maltese bishops tried to control their respective priests' community from participating in the political fray – a remark that was also passed by other historians like Catania, Fenech, and so on. In the opinion of the present writer, there was a striking difference between the two Maltese bishops as regards priestly involvement in politics and this tends to be underrated or neglected. Whilst Bishop Gonzi totally prohibited the Gozo priests from contesting the elections, Archbishop Caruana merely discouraged the priests from contesting.¹⁴⁴ According to Laitinen, Archbishop Mauro Caruana was “in many respects a similar burden to the Holy See as Strickland.”¹⁴⁵ Still, only few candidates were seen as possible successors. Laitinen showed that “in spite of the instructions of the bishops, the overwhelming majority of the clergy supported the Partito Nazionale and three priests were enlisted as candidates.”¹⁴⁶

Laitinen proved convincingly that the Strickland-Church issue was an opportunity for Mgr Gonzi, Bishop of Gozo, to play “a key role even though he had not yet been made archbishop.”¹⁴⁷ In a footnote, he described Archbishop Gonzi as “a native of Gozo.”¹⁴⁸ Laitinen maintained that Lord Strickland was “without doubt the catalyst of the crisis of 1927-1933” falling out “not only with his political opponents and the Church but also with the British government” which in turn decided that “it was wise to avoid contact with Strickland if possible.”¹⁴⁹ Laitinen, similarly to other researchers, concluded that the Vatican sabotaged Strickland's plans for a concordat. The academic from Helsinki drew the attention of his readers that the changes with the Holy See's top brass officials worked against Strickland rather than favoured him. For instance, it was Pizzardo who had “evidently succeeded in influencing Pius XI, and the (concordat) matter had been dropped.”

The author took to task Fenech and especially Catania. Laitinen believes that Fenech “does not provide a thorough analysis of the role and actions of the Holy See and the Malta bishops in the crisis.”¹⁵⁰ Laitinen argued that both Catania and Fenech suffer from the same shortcomings

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 377.

¹⁴⁵ Aappo Laitinen, *The Holy See, Britain, and the Crisis of Malta, 1927-1933* (Helsinki, Kopio Niini Oy, 2013), 208.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 28.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., 272.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., 28.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., 202.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., 16.

in the sense that their work was based too much on Foreign Office Archives.¹⁵¹ According to the Finnish academic, not only Catania did not consult the archives of the Sacred Congregation of Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs but “the reader remains uncertain whether Catania has actually examined all the relevant Vatican documents included in the bibliography.”¹⁵² Laitinen disagreed with Catania’s view that Cardinal Pacelli was more eager for peace than Cardinal Gasparri was.¹⁵³ Laitinen also maintained that the two mentioned Maltese authors had “misinterpreted or neglected” the role of the envoys: Orlich and Robinson.

Laitinen also contributed to the book *Pius XI and America*. The book was published before he presented his thesis to Helsinki University. His contribution concentrated on Lord Strickland and Malta. According to one of the editors David Kerzter, the book “represents the proceedings from a conference... held in Providence, Rhode Island, at the Brown University in October 2010” which was prompted by “the Vatican's opening of its archives in 2006 for the period of the papacy of Pius XI (1922-1939).”¹⁵⁴ This move, according to the mentioned editor, “has prompted a burst of historical research which is not only shedding new light on the role of the Holy See and the Church in this period of extraordinary political and social turmoil, but also on some of the major world events of this period.”¹⁵⁵

On this occasion, Laitinen focused intensely on the Reverend Alfonso Orlich report which was also analysed by Catania mentioned earlier in this chapter. Laitinen showed once again how the local dispute between Church and Strickland quickly escalated into an international diplomatic altercation between the United Kingdom and the Holy See. The Italian issue of the rise of Fascism complicated matters even further, and in Malta the term Italian came to be equalled with Fascism.¹⁵⁶ It clearly emerged that Pope Pius XI was antagonistic to Strickland and therefore the Holy See was absolutely siding with the Malta Church. The Orlich mission was kept secret, and it became known this delegate had long meetings with Bishop Gonzi. Orlich suspected that Strickland was a freemason and was certain that Strickland won the 1927 elections because of his wealth.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁵² Ibid.

¹⁵³ Ibid., 206.

¹⁵⁴ Charles R. Gallagher et al., *Pius XI and America: Proceedings of the Brown University Conference* (Munster, LIT Verlag, 2010), 261.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., 184.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., 243.

Simon C. Smith, from Hull University, studied the decolonisation process in Malta. He maintained that Archbishop Gonzi mistrusted Mintoff owing to the latter's secularising tendencies.¹⁵⁸ Since 1945, Archbishop Gonzi had described Mintoff as "an extreme left-wing Socialist." Archbishop Gonzi "was particularly concerned that closer association between Britain and Malta would involve "an increased seepage of "advanced" and possibly anti-clerical notions into the Maltese."¹⁵⁹ Smith did not regard integration as "an opportunity to loosen the grip of the Catholic Church" but rather an amelioration of the standard of living.¹⁶⁰ Smith, contrary to Mintoff, did not blame the Church for the failure of Integration. He argued instead that Integration had failed owing to the Maltese's insistence on "economic equivalence." Smith also refuted the thesis that integration failed because of the "downgrading of Malta's importance in the wake of the 1956 Suez debacle."¹⁶¹ Smith based his works on sources available from the National Archives of the United Kingdom and secondary sources by Joseph M. Pirotta and foreign researchers who concentrated their studies on imperialism.

Smith maintained that the Malta Church under Archbishop Gonzi's leadership, "took an overtly political stance over the leading issues of the day including integration with the United Kingdom, the declaration of an emergency in 1958, and Malta's progress towards independence."¹⁶² This meant an inevitable clash with Mr Mintoff and associates. But Smith observed that when independence became the way forward, Archbishop Gonzi "rather than seeking to stand in the way of Malta's move..., the Archbishop set about co-operating with the Nationalist Party of Giorgio Borg Olivier in the interests of securing the position of the Church within an independent Malta."¹⁶³ Whilst reading Smith, one received the impression that for him Archbishop Gonzi never really retired from politics. The academic held that decolonisation in Malta could not be separated from thaws between Archbishop Gonzi and Labour Leader Mintoff. Smith shared Pirotta's view that "while Mintoff's self-imposed mission was that of establishing the supremacy of the secular State, Gonzi was the jealous guardian of ecclesiastical

¹⁵⁸ Simon C. Smith, 'Integration and Disintegration: The Attempted Incorporation of Malta into the United Kingdom in the 1950s,' *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 35, (1), (2007), 56.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., 50.

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁶² Simon C. Smith, 'Priests and Politicians: Archbishop Michael Gonzi, Dom Mintoff, and the End of Empire in Malta,' *Journal of Mediterranean Studies*, 23, (1), (2014), 113.

¹⁶³ Ibid., 114.

supremacy.”¹⁶⁴ Smith put forward the argument that the “privileges of the Catholic Church” were one of the causes that delayed Malta’s independence.

Malta Labour Party Publications

Since the Labour Party’s relationship with the Malta Catholic Church in the twentieth century fared from bad to worse, the Party felt the need to provide its own version of the events to the extent that, over the years, a number of biased accounts written by party officials, activists or journalists employed either with the Labour Party’s newspapers or those owned by the General Workers’ Union (GWU) were published. The reader must bear in mind that the mentioned two entities, during the 1970s and 1980s, were fused statutorily.¹⁶⁵ Most of those authors were involved frontline in the Church-Labour Party disputes of the nineteen-sixties and the nineteen-eighties.¹⁶⁶ The majority of those books were published after 1979, the year which marked the closure of the British military base in Malta. Premier and Labour leader Dom Mintoff’s 1979 achievement was held by Labour as the most important event in Maltese history since, after the 31st day of March 1979, Malta was no longer a military base of a foreign power. The Labour Party in 1982 launched its publishing arm, the *Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti* (SKS). The net result of this enterprise was turning history-writing into a propaganda exercise. The majority of those authors received no formal academic training in history or other discipline. This analysis does not include academic books published by SKS which are scrutinised in the academic section.

The scope of those publications was that future generations would learn ‘the negative impact’ that the misuse of power by one of Malta’s oldest institutions would leave. Labour was repeatedly presented as the victim of a power-hungry archbishop, cynically referred to as Sir Michael Gonzi, who had vowed to destroy once and for all a party that was doing its best to put into practice Christ’s teachings. The common thread between these books was that Archbishop Gonzi was responsible for Labour’s years in opposition owing to the imposition of spiritual sanctions in the 1930s and the 1960s.¹⁶⁷ The Malta Church was branded as an “enemy

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., 115.

¹⁶⁵ Raymond Mangion, *Il-Partit Laburista 1920-2020* (Malta, SKS, 2021), 243.

¹⁶⁶ Contributors to this series of books included Piju Abela, Paul Carachi, Anton Cassar, Ġiġi Gauci, Ġwann Mifsud, Pawlu Montebello, Remiġ Sacco, Karmnu Zammit, and Joseph Zerafa.

¹⁶⁷ The list of Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti titles given here is not exhaustive - Anthony Azzopardi, *Il-Qawmien tal-Haddiem Malti* (Malta, Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti, 1986), Ġerald Azzopardi, *Il-Fundaturi tal-Partit tal-Haddiema* (Malta, Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti, 1984), Joe Borg, *Imkasbrin fil-Miżbla* (Malta, Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti, 1983), Anton Buttigieg, *L-Isbah Żmien ta’ Hajti* (Malta, Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti, 1984), Pawlu Carachi, *Il-Ġurnalista u l-Politiku* (Malta, Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti, 2002), Anton Cassar, *Meta l-Għawdxin kienu Mxewxa* (Malta, Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti, 1982), Anton Cassar, *Il-Compact* (Malta, Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti, 1991), Ġiġi Gauci, *Xhieda ta’ Seklu* (Malta, Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti, 2001), Remiġ Sacco, *Ix-Xandir*

of the workers.”¹⁶⁸ Originally, these ideas were repeated over and over again by Dom Mintoff in public meetings that he addressed from time to time over several years.

In the process of writing and publishing those books, intentionally or unintentionally, myths were also being fabricated. For instance, it was claimed – without the backing of documentation – that, between 1958 and 1971, there was a sort of a secret alliance between the Malta Church and the Nationalist Party to hold Labour out of power.¹⁶⁹ But several episodes clearly proved that the Church and the Nationalists were not always on the same bandwagon. In the late nineteenth century, pro-British Bishop Pietro Pace excommunicated the newspaper *Malta* owned by the Nationalist Party. The Party’s leader, Fortunato Mizzi, was even condemned by Pope Leo XIII who referred to him as ‘*l’uomo inimico*’ who “incited the hatred of the common people against the bishop.”¹⁷⁰

Mr Mintoff even referred to this fact in his booklet *Priests and Politics in Malta* and described Dr Fortunato Mizzi as “the able leader of the local *garibaldini* and *irrendentisti*.”¹⁷¹ On another occasion, Archbishop Gonzi had asked Nationalist leader Advocate Enrico Mizzi to reprimand his Deputy Leader Giorgio Borg Olivier for the comments the latter had passed against the emigration scheme for children to Australia which was backed by the local Church.¹⁷²

The majority of the above-cited authors compared Mr Mintoff to Moses who, according to the Book of Exodus, freed the Israelites from slavery imposed on them by the Egyptian Pharaoh. In the same manner, according to those authors, Mr Mintoff liberated his countrymen from the chains of colonialism.¹⁷³ The Moses metaphor was coined by Deputy Leader Anton Buttigieg

f’Malta (Malta, Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti, 1985), Karmenu Zammit, *Għad-Demokrazija u l-Helsien* (Malta, Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti, 1989), Ġużi Zerafa, *Brigata Laburista ‘Il Quddiem Imxi* (Malta, Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti, 1984).

¹⁶⁸ Joe Fino, *B’Saħħet il-Hidma* (Malta, Union Print, 1986), 98.

¹⁶⁹ Corey Formosa, ‘Il-Knisja tellfitna Għaxar Snin ta’ Progress,’ *It-Torċa*, 17th February 2011, 9.

¹⁷⁰ Henry Frendo, *Party Politics in a Fortress Colony: The Maltese Experience* (Malta, Midsea Books, 3rd edition 2013), 22.

¹⁷¹ Dominic Mintoff, *Priests and Politics in Malta* (Malta, Malta Labour Party, 1961), 1.

¹⁷² A total of 310 Maltese children were sent to Australia and over the years it was alleged that those children were victims of forced labour and were denied a sound education. See Henry Frendo, *Patrijott Liberali Malti: Bijografija ta’ Ġorġ Borg Olivier, 1911-1980* (Malta, Pubblikazzjonijiet Indipendenza, 2005), 119. See also, ‘Abused Children Migrants to give Evidence in Australia Inquiry,’ *Timesofmalta.com*, Retrieved on 20th February 2017, <http://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20140427/local/abused-maltese-child-migrants-to-give-evidence-in-australia-inquiry.516524>.

¹⁷³ Joe Camilleri, ‘Bħal Mintoff Qatt,’ *KullHadd*, 1st August 2010, 10.

during the early sixties when Mintoff was at loggerheads with the Malta Church.¹⁷⁴ Incidentally, Mr Mintoff admired Moses, the Biblical character.¹⁷⁵

Prime Minister Gerald Strickland's narrative appealed too to this genre of writing since his relationship with the Malta Church was poor. Promptly, similarities and parallelisms between Strickland and Mintoff were drawn.¹⁷⁶ Mr Mintoff was presented as more heroic than Lord Strickland since he never asked for pardon to the Church authorities as Strickland had done. Those narratives also included the heroic and the saintly elements. The heroes were the dissenting members of the clergy who had plucked up courage and 'disobeyed' their archbishop in the question of the administration of sacraments to Labour supporters when spiritual penalties were imposed.¹⁷⁷ The 'saintly' figures were those who were buried by the Church officials in the unconsecrated area of the government-owned Santa Maria Addolorata Cemetery as a result of the spiritual sanctions.¹⁷⁸ For the Labour Party, it was a must to keep the issue of Church-State relations alive because it was seen as an opportunity to win electoral support, and also because it was part and parcel of the secularisation process that the mentioned political agent had commenced in the seventies whilst in government.

Autobiographies and Memoirs

In relation to the research question, a number of autobiographies, published in Malta and abroad, have been consulted. Here the present writer is using the term autobiography very loosely since academics tend to distinguish between autobiographies, memoirs, historical and eye-witness accounts and other forms when they analyse this genre. These different categories result from the fact that people from all walks of life have believed that their experiences may be of value to others. In the case of Malta, the autobiography genre became popular in the last thirty years. The autobiographies consulted include the works penned by Mgr Charles G. Vella,¹⁷⁹ Sir Arturo Mercieca, Dr Edgar Mizzi,¹⁸⁰ Dr Herbert Ganado (especially the fourth

¹⁷⁴ CO 926/1142, 'Transcript of the Speech delivered by Anton Buttigieg on 3rd February 1962 at Hal Għaxaq,' *Attitude of the Malta Labour Party (1960-1961)*, The National Archives of the United Kingdom, Kew.

¹⁷⁵ Simon Mercieca, 'Il-Perit Duminku Mintoff u l-Immakulata,' in Sergio Grech (ed.), *Duminku Mintoff Bejn Storja u Miti* (Malta, Horizons, 2012), 69.

¹⁷⁶ Anton Cassar, *Il-Konkordat* (Malta, Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti, 2004), 5.

¹⁷⁷ Remiġ Sacco, 'Bhal-lum 30 sena miet il-Prof. Pietru Pawl Saydon,' *L-Orizzont*, 22nd March 2001, 14.

¹⁷⁸ See Joseph Borg, *Imkasbrin fil-Miżbla* (Malta, Dipartiment tat-Tagħrif Partit Laburista, 1989).

¹⁷⁹ Charles G. Vella, *Sinjali Maltin ta' Żmienna* (Malta, Klabb Kotba Maltin, 2000).

¹⁸⁰ Edgar Mizzi, *Malta in the Making, 1962-1987: An Eyewitness Account* (Malta, *The Author*, 1995).

volume of *Rajt Malta Tinbidel*),¹⁸¹ Dr Anton Buttigieg,¹⁸² Mr Lino Spiteri,¹⁸³ Mr Ġiġi Gauci,¹⁸⁴ Mr B.A. Zammit,¹⁸⁵ Mr Anton Cassar,¹⁸⁶ Mr Lawrence Mizzi,¹⁸⁷ Mr Salvu Sant,¹⁸⁸ and Rev J.M. Ghigo.¹⁸⁹

These sources require to be handled with a critical mind since their writers often tend to be subjective. In an auto-biography, the narrator is writing about himself. The subject is himself and he is writing from a particular standpoint. The author tends to write about those particular events that he/she regards as meaningful occurrences. There is a risk that these authors edit and interpret facts according to their whims and biases. Sceptics disregard the autobiographical genre and argue that in this case truth is being based on memory rather than on a document.

The present author is reserving briefly his comments on those autobiographies that, in his view, shed new light and fill gaps and therefore contribute directly to his research area. The rest either tend to be generic in nature or present a mere repetition. Rev Charles G. Vella shed new light on Archbishop Gonzi's reluctance to leave the bishopric seat and on the latter's conflict with Bishop Gerada.¹⁹⁰ Dr Herbert Ganado in his fourth volume traced the setting up of his political group in 1961, with Archbishop Gonzi's approval, whose ultimate aim was to keep Mr Mintoff out of power.¹⁹¹ In his autobiography, Sir Arturo Mercieca, Malta's Chief Justice between 1924 and 1940, referred to Archbishop Gonzi quite a few times although his writing style is telegraphic. Mercieca argued that the Gozitan community had welcomed Bishop Gonzi on his installation day as the community's bishop, referring to him as the "young priest."¹⁹² Mercieca analysed Strickland's way of doing politics and came to the conclusion that Strickland wanted to separate the Maltese from their clergy.¹⁹³ The author illustrated his point by declaring that the Bishop of Gozo was denied the right to choose the parish priests that were to administer the charitable institutions owned by the Maltese government and also the right to appoint

¹⁸¹ Herbert Ganado, *Rajt Malta Tinbidel, Volume 4* (Malta, Klabb Kotba Maltin, 1977).

¹⁸² Anton Buttigieg, *L-Isbaħ Żmien ta' Hajti* (Malta, Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti, 1984).

¹⁸³ Lino Spiteri, *Jien u Għaddej fil-Politika: Ġabra ta' Memorji* (Malta, Publishers Enterprises Group, 2007).

¹⁸⁴ Ġiġi Gauci, *Xhieda ta' Seklu* (Malta, Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti, 2001).

¹⁸⁵ B.A. Zammit, *The Power of the Cross* (Malta, The Author, 1999).

¹⁸⁶ Anton Cassar, *Hajti mhix kollha Ward u Żahar* (Malta, Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti, 2009).

¹⁸⁷ Lawrence Mizzi, *Minn Wara l-Mikrofonu* (Malta, Klabb Qari Nisrani, 1994).

¹⁸⁸ Salvu Sant, *Hajti: Familja, Politika, Sport* (Malta, Kite, 2021), 18.

¹⁸⁹ J.M. Ghigo, *Miexi Lejn id-Dawl* (Malta, APS Books, 2006).

¹⁹⁰ Charles G. Vella, *Sinjali Maltin ta' Żmienna, op.cit.*, 204.

¹⁹¹ Herbert Ganado, *Rajt Malta Tinbidel, Volume 4, op.cit.*, 335.

¹⁹² Arturo Mercieca, *Il-Mixja ta' Hajti* (Malta, PIN, 2010), 121. (Translated by Godwin Ellul).

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, 157.

ecclesiastics as members of charitable committees.¹⁹⁴ Mercieca noted that whilst Strickland was opposing Bishop Gonzi to be appointed to the Malta See, the Vatican authorities only wanted Mgr Gonzi for the mentioned post.¹⁹⁵ The appointment of Bishop Gonzi as Archbishop of Malta meant also, as stated earlier on, that Gozo was made a suffragan diocese of Malta, a measure that the intelligentsia of Gozo, including Mercieca himself, repulsed.¹⁹⁶

Advocate Edgar Mizzi's contribution went beyond partisan politics, and his autobiography filled gaps in the history of the forging process of the Independence and the Republican constitutions. On both occasions, Dr Mizzi was directly involved in talks representing the Maltese government side. The Church in the two case scenarios did its best to influence the course of history by campaigning in favour of legal articles that favoured her position in society. Mizzi showed that Secretary of State for the Colonies and Commonwealth Relations Duncan Sandys and Prime Minister Borg Olivier were in constant disagreement, and that during the Republican constitution talks, Premier Mintoff was discussing matters directly with the Vatican, and Archbishop Gonzi was not involved at any stage.¹⁹⁷

Lino Spiteri, whilst in his early twenties, was elected in the 1962 general elections, and in his autobiography he provided a testimony of how the interdict turned its victims into outcasts¹⁹⁸ and illustrated Mintoff's fear that the General Workers' Union decision to publish *L-Orizzont* would eventually lead to the killing of *Il-Helsien*.¹⁹⁹ The latter newspaper was the mouthpiece of the Malta Labour Party.

Albert Ganado, a lawyer by profession and a keen researcher, in his autobiography published in 2020, collaborated with what his cousin lawyer Herbert Ganado had claimed in the mid-seventies in the latter's autobiography *Rajt Malta Tinbidel*, specifically that Herbert Ganado was seen by the Church as more reliable than Ġoġ Borg Olivier during the 1962 turn of elections.²⁰⁰ Albert Ganado acknowledged the fact that Dr Herbert Ganado influenced Archbishop Gonzi, but added that "they (Archbishop Gonzi and Dr Herbert Ganado) were

¹⁹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid., 225.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid., 279.

¹⁹⁷ Edgar Mizzi, *Malta in the Making, 1962-1987: An Eyewitness Account, op.cit.*, 162.

¹⁹⁸ Lino Spiteri, *Jien u Għaddej fil-Politika: Ġabra ta' Memorji, op.cit.*, 77.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid., 77.

²⁰⁰ Austin Sammut and Sergio Grech (ed.), *Albert Ganado: Hajja mhux tas-Soltu* (Malta, KKM, 2020), 67.

fighting the same battle.”²⁰¹ Ultimately the Catholic vote shifted in favour of Borg Olivier due to Mintoff’s relationship with Communist satellites and there was the fear that Mintoff in government would transform Malta into a Communist base. On the issue of whether Archbishop Gonzi was pro-Italian or pro-British, Albert Ganado argued that all members of the clergy during that epoch were pro-Italian since Italian was the culture of the Malta Church. But the idea of Archbishop Gonzi as an anti-British was untrue. According to Ganado, this was fabricated by Lord Strickland and his daughter Mabel since they opposed the idea of Bishop Gonzi succeeding Archbishop Caruana.²⁰² Dr Ganado’s bibliography included the publication of a manuscript originally written by his father Judge Robert Ganado (1875-1948). Judge Ganado was also the president of the Committee that organised the Solemn entry of Archbishop Gonzi in 1944 in the Mdina Cathedral. Albert Ganado in the book included material that originally was used in the mentioned event.²⁰³

During the year 2021, Kite published the memoirs of veteran Labour politician Salvu Sant, brother of controversial figure Lorry Sant, ex Minister in the nineteen-seventies and nineteen-eighties. Mr Salvu Sant contested the General Elections for the first time in 1987 but his activity within the various ranks of the Labour Party had kicked off in 1955 when he was elected on Labour’s Executive Committee. That was the year when Prime Minister Mintoff made it to the polls for the first time after the 1949 split in the Labour Party. His main pledge was then Integration. The picture that emerged from the book published by Kite was that Salvu Sant was in Mintoff’s good books. Mr Sant also confirmed Mr Mintoff’s uneasy character and his fixations at balancing books. Sant was very active on Labour’s committee in the constituency of Paola, one of Labour’s strongholds in Malta’s south-eastern area. Indeed, the Labour Party managed to obtain its present club by virtue of his efforts. Mr Sant hailed from a poor family, and his background and that of his brother Lorry was strictly catholic. He attended St Michael’s school and was a member of Cardijn’s Young Christian Workers. The Sant memoirs were originally written by Kenneth Vella who works as a church school administrator. Sant and Vella share the same neighbourhood in the town of Fgura in south-east Malta. It was Vella who came up with the idea of having Salvu Sant’s memoirs written and published. The book

²⁰¹ Ibid.

²⁰² Ibid., 68.

²⁰³ Albert Ganado, *Judge Robert Ganado: A History of the Government Departments from 1815 and Lawyers from 1666* (Malta, BDL, 2015), 98-103.

employed the first person narration but, as the editor affirmed in the book's preface, the actual writer was Vella.

The book contributed to this research as it recounted some previously unknown minor facts. For instance, it was news to learn that the Sant family of Paola was related to the author Wistin Levanzin and Labour leader Paul Boffa.²⁰⁴ Sant's father was the first secretary of the committee of Labour's local club for Paola and Tarxien. Mr Sant's grandparents, the Consiglios, were staunch supporters of Lord Strickland to the point that the Count himself gave them two chandeliers as a gift on the occasion of their marriage.²⁰⁵ Mr Sant also revealed that Dr Paul Boffa had operated a younger Mintoff.²⁰⁶

As expected, one of the book's chapters was dedicated to the interdict and the effects of that sanction on Labour supporters and their immediate families. Salvu Sant, like his brother Lorry, was in the Labour Party's Executive at the time when Archbishop Gonzi imposed the interdict. Mr Lorry Sant was also the editor of *The Struggle*. Sant mentioned that an aunt of his, who was a nun, was verbally abused by her mates in the convent because of the interdict.²⁰⁷ He also revealed that a good number of GWU members were in a dilemma whether to leave their union or not because of the Church's prohibition.²⁰⁸ This highly contrasted with Joe Fino's version of the GWU's history in the period under study which underlined a united and compact union against Archbishop Gonzi and blindly in favour of Dom Mintoff. Sant confirmed that the 28 April 1958 strike was organised by the General Workers Union but was then hijacked by the Labour Party. Mr Sant narrated as well his experiences of Labour's meeting at It-Tokk, in Victoria, Gozo. The meeting was held in May 1961 when the Gozitans repulsed Mintoff and his supporters.²⁰⁹ Sant's analysis of the interdict was one-sided and followed the Labour Party's version of the events. He failed to distinguish between the administration of the Church and the abuse by Catholic fanatics which were not part of the hierarchical Church. Furthermore, Mr Mintoff's decision to join AAPSO, as well as the latter's continuous acts of provocation – which included a call for a public debate between him and the Church authorities – were not considered as contributors to the interdict penalty. Salvu Sant launched the idea of a double

²⁰⁴ Salvu Sant, *Hajti: Familja, Politika, Sport* (Malta, Kite, 2021), 18.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 48.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 36.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 62.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 48.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 64.

interdict for his brother Lorry, as he was both editor of *The Struggle* and a member of Labour's Executive.²¹⁰ This assertion has no foothold in Canon Law.

Whilst reading the book, the present writer understood that Salvu Sant had also an 'agenda' in mind, that is to say a rehabilitation of his brother Lorry's image. In his days as a Minister, Lorry Sant had been generally taken to task because his ministerial deeds were associated with corruption. To be fair, Salvu Sant admitted that his brother Lorry acted like a bully and that this frame of mind did influence Lorry's public actions. Salvu Sant's thesis was that his brother was eyed by his colleagues with suspicion when it was becoming obvious that Lorry Sant might assume the helm of the party after Mintoff's departure. That was a good enough reason for those who aspired to succeed Mintoff to put Mr Lorry Sant in bad light and discredit him as best they could.

Perit Dom Mintoff's Autobiography

In the year 2019, Mr Dom Mintoff's in part memoirs were published, both in Maltese and English. Texts were edited by his daughter and his grandson. The National Archives of Malta was a joint publisher in the venture. According to the editors, Mintoff was writing his memoirs during the period he brought down Prime Minister Alfred Sant's government in 1998. In his autobiography, Labour leader Mr Mintoff concentrated mostly on his youth rise, tracing very vividly his student years and subsequent formative years. Emphasis was laid by the author on personalities that he felt were key in forming his identity, ideals and ideas. One of those was his friend Mr Karmnu Carabott, from Żejtun, who warned Mintoff over and over again that, "to have the Catholic hierarchy after one's blood is to be already halfway to the prison cell."²¹¹

Mintoff's criticism of the Malta Church is harsh and leaves no stone unturned. In his autobiography, Mr Mintoff referred to the Malta Church as a power-hungry medieval establishment whose anti-Christian comportment headed him to choose in the long run socialist humanism instead. Such statements were not really new fodder for research since taking the Church to task was a constant feature in Mr Mintoff's discourse throughout his political career.

²¹⁰ Ibid., 62.

²¹¹ Daniel Mainwaring and Yana Mintoff, (eds.), *Mintoff, Malta, Mediterra: My Youth* (Malta, The Association for Justice, Equality and Peace, National Archives of Malta, 2019), 214.

What may be surprising is his claim that the notions of justice and love were instilled in him by “untainted priests and ascetic clerics.”²¹²

At the end of the day, Mr Mintoff in his youth decided to separate “local clerical practices from the revolutionary teachings of the great Nazarene.”²¹³ From then on, he “ran away forever from the shepherds and the flock” and “walked alone.”²¹⁴ Here and there, one notices a couple of deviations where the author forgets about the period he is writing about and refers to his issues with Archbishop Gonzi from the period between 1955 and 1970. For Mr Mintoff, Archbishop Gonzi “led valiantly the forces of darkness against us”²¹⁵ and was convinced that Bishop Emanuel Galea would have acted differently from Archbishop Gonzi and “would have adopted more refined ways to convince the faithful.”²¹⁶ Labour leader Mr Mintoff also mentioned in his memoirs Dr Paul Farrugia, referred to earlier on, and described him as having “a grudging respect for me personally which came in useful when events made possible the reconciliation of the Maltese Catholic Church with the socialists.”²¹⁷

Archival Material in Malta and Abroad

A key and a valuable primary source for this research was the *Fondo Gonzi* at the Archbishop’s Curia in Floriana. The *Fondo* is currently closed to researchers since Church Archives have a seventy-year closure rather than the thirty-year rule as the practice goes in several European States’ archives. The local Church follows the practice adopted by the Vatican Archives which prohibits the public viewing of material after the year 1939. Still, Archbishop Charles J. Scicluna gave access to the present author to the *Fondo Gonzi*. The *Fondo* consists of Archbishop Gonzi’s correspondence stretched over a period from 1943 to 1976 meaning that over the mentioned years thousands of documents had accumulated. The present writer went through all these files. A batch of documents pertaining to the Integration period, though listed in the index of the respective volume, was missing from the collection.

The sources in the Archivio Storico della Segreteria di Stato (Sezione per i Rapporti con gli Stati, ASRS, Vatican) proved to be an essential tool to construct a proper evaluation of the

²¹² Ibid., 3.

²¹³ Ibid.

²¹⁴ Ibid.

²¹⁵ Ibid., 247.

²¹⁶ Ibid., 183.

²¹⁷ Ibid., 247.

changing role of religion in Malta, and the political complications of the pre-World War Two era. Through the mentioned archives, the succession struggle for Archbishop Caruana's successor emerged very clearly and confirmed that Archbishop Gonzi was not only interested in the Malta bishopric seat but wanted the office at all costs.

The present writer also consulted Bishop Emanuel Galea's papers which are kept at the Archives of the Cathedral of Malta (ACM). These documents were transferred from the Bishop's Palace in Valletta to the mentioned institution. The cited palace served too as the Bishop's Curia and there could also be found Bishop Galea's office. The documents were gathered together by the late Mgr Aloysius Deguara, the Vice-Postulator for the canonisation process of Bishop Emanuel Galea. The Galea papers were catalogued by the staff of the ACM, mainly by Noel D'Anastas and Mario Gauci. Bishop Emanuel Galea, from Senglea, was a close collaborator of Archbishop Michael Gonzi. In fact, Archbishop Gonzi confirmed Mgr Galea as his vicar-general when he commenced to administer the Maltese diocese. Mgr Galea was ordained bishop by Archbishop Mauro Caruana on 5th July 1942. Mgr Caruana, during the mentioned bishopric ordination ceremony, was assisted by Mgr Gonzi, Bishop of Gozo. Bishop Galea participated in a number of sessions of the Second Vatican Council that lasted from 1962 to 1965. Truly so, he addressed the plenary and the individual specialised sessions on the Episcopal Collegiality and on the role of the Church in the modern world. Bishop Galea was a confidant to Archbishop Gonzi and different sources point out that Archbishop Gonzi looked for Bishop Galea's advice in crucial paths.

The ACM Galea Fondo consists of fourteen boxes, the majority of which consist of Bishop Galea's speeches and published writings. His speeches, delivered mainly in English, Italian and Maltese, focused on the role of the bishop in society, catechism, the role of the laity in the Church, the sacraments, social questions, and other relevant matters. His writings covered more or less the same areas. For instance, Fondo 7 contains 129 speeches about saints. Two particular boxes were of interest for this study.

Box 1 contains 112 items which represent certificates, diplomas, private correspondence and some letters exchanged between Archbishop Gonzi and Bishop Galea. In October 1964, Archbishop Gonzi was in Rome and through letters bearing that date, he sent his instructions to Bishop Galea regarding the administration of the Maltese Church while also sparing some comments about the peace process that was going on between the Church and the Labour Party

and commented too on the Apostolic Delegate who resided in London. Archbishop Gonzi stressed out the point that during that phase “*il riposo qui a Roma sar  scarso.*”²¹⁸ From these few letters, it transpired that Archbishop Gonzi had not changed his opinions about Mintoff. In fact, Archbishop Gonzi made it clear once again that he mistrusted Mr Mintoff.²¹⁹ Archbishop Gonzi used Italian to write his letters, and all his letters were handwritten. Box numbered 2 contains documents used by Bishop Galea during Vatican Council II. Once the council was over, he made it his mission to propagate the Council’s teachings.

An attempt to research documentation at the Gozo Curia Archives pertaining to the Bishop Gonzi’s episcopate in Gozo proved futile as according to Bishop Mario Grech, the Gozo Curia has no documentation from Archbishop Gonzi’s epoch as bishop of Gozo (1924-1943).²²⁰

The Malta Cabinet Papers were also consulted for this research project. During the year 2014, the Cabinet Papers were made available to researchers. But documents covering the nineteen-seventies were not found and, according to a Department of Information’s Press Release, only notes rather than minutes were found. Those latter documents were also made available.²²¹ Still, the Church-State issue did not figure in the mentioned minutes.

The present researcher was also given access to the Anthony Mamo Collection housed at the National Archives of Malta. The collection was donated to the mentioned institution in October 2017. The donation consisted of “letters, notes, photos, footage and articles, all of which shed more light on Malta’s political, legal and social history... The items in the collection span from January 1924... to May 2008... (and this collection) testifies Sir Anthony’s personality, his legal scholarship, his warm ties to Birkirkara, his hometown, as well as his statesmanship.”²²² But no documentation relevant to the present researcher’s area of study was found.

²¹⁸ Letter from Archbishop Michael Gonzi to Bishop Emanuel Galea dated 5th October 1964, ACM Fondo Galea, Box I.

²¹⁹ Letter from Archbishop Michael Gonzi to Bishop Emanuel Galea dated 24th October 1964, ACM Fondo Galea, Box I.

²²⁰ Correspondence Bishop Mario Grech to Prof Henry Frendo, Director Institute of Maltese Studies, University of Malta, 20th June 2015.

²²¹ ‘Cabinet Papers 1962-1981 (except for the 1970s) available for Research Purposes,’ *The Malta Independent*, 23rd January 2013, Retrieved on 5th September 2015, [https://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2014-01-23/local-news/Cabinet-papers-1962-1981-\(except-for-the-1970s\)available-for-research-purposes-3764781060](https://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2014-01-23/local-news/Cabinet-papers-1962-1981-(except-for-the-1970s)available-for-research-purposes-3764781060).

²²² ‘A Donation of Items related to Sir Anthony Mamo (1909-2008),’ *Arkivju*, 8, (2017), 1.

Attempts to retrieve the archives, if any, of the *Partit tal-Haddiema Nsara (Christian Workers Party)* proved futile. During a conversation with Mr Renè Zahra, the son of Mr Walter Robert Zahra, who was the party's secretary, it transpired that Mr Renè Zahra, following his father's death, burnt a number of documents that had pertained to that particular phase of history. But he failed to specify the sort of documents that he had burnt.²²³ The minutes of the Catholic Workers Party were neither to be found with the stack of documents that Mr Walter Robert Zahra himself had deposited in 1985 in the Malta Cathedral's Archives. The box file consists of *circa* 100 folios. Most of the documents were 'created' by Mr Zahra himself when he was active within the Malta Workers Party, then led by Dr Paul Boffa, after Mr Dom Mintoff managed to win over the Malta Labour Party's leadership from the mentioned Boffa and the period during which the *Christian Workers Party*, under the leadership of Mr Anthony Pellegrini, operated. Documents deposited range from correspondence originating from the Boffists' side with the Mintoff's group to form one new partnership between the two opposing factions to letters sent to the Nationalist Party regarding the coalitions that came of the early nineteen-fifties. The box file also include some press articles written by Zahra during the mentioned period – usually employing different *noms-de-plume* – Constitutional Party political propaganda material, and the mission statement of the *Christian Workers Party*.

The present writer was given access to the minutes of Dr Herbert Ganado's *Partit Demokratiku Nazjonalista (Democratic Nationalist Party)* that the latter had founded in 1961. The party's archives are deposited at the *Archives and Rare Books* division within the *University of Malta Library*. Those minutes unmistakably showed that the party was being supported by Archbishop Gonzi, and that quite a good number of local priests even enrolled as party members. For instance, Patri Ġorġ Debono, Patri Gabriel Farrugia, Patri Fulgenzio Galea, Patri Lawrence Gambin and Patri Serafin Borg were all members of the mentioned party. According to Emanuel Scicluna, Patri Debono was very active in Rabat (Malta) where he canvassed a lot for Ganado's party.²²⁴ So far, the present writer's requests, addressed to the *Strickland Foundation*, to go through the minutes of Mabel Strickland's *Progressive Constitutional Party*, have remained unanswered. During the past years, Mabel's nephew has pressed charges against the mentioned foundation to have access to his aunt's documentation. In 2019, the Court of Appeal "overturned an earlier decision by the courts on the refusal by the Strickland

²²³ Taped interview Mr Renè Zahra, Private Residence, Ghaxaq, 21st May 2020, Sergio Grech Private Collection.

²²⁴ Letter from Emanuel Scicluna to the present author dated 29 April 2004, Sergio Grech Private Collection.

Foundation, to release documents of the late Mabel Strickland to her heir, Robert Hornyold-Strickland.”²²⁵

The present author was denied access to the archives of M.U.S.E.U.M. and *Żgħażaġh Haddiema Nsara*. But for his Master of Arts’ degree,²²⁶ he was given the possibility to consult the archives of *Malta Catholic Action* and *Cana Movement*. During that phase, the present researcher was also given access to the archives of the Nationalist Party and the Labour Party. In the case of the Nationalist Party, the earliest documentation goes back to 1965. During that time, “the state of the party’s organisation in every respect left much to be desired... initially, there were hardly any headquarters where to operate from at all... the PN’s ... *sede* was in the old Valletta club. Files were held in one or two cabinets which were kept in the club’s wooden balcony...”²²⁷ The Labour Party was far more organised than the Nationalist Party. It had its headquarters in Valletta and it also had a publishing arm. In the case of the Nationalist Party, “plans to start a printing press and to build their headquarters... only came to fruition before the crucial 1971 general elections.”²²⁸

A very useful source for this work was the *Monsignor Luigi G. Ligutti Papers* that are archived at the *Raynor Memorial Libraries* within Marquette University, a tertiary educational institution in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.²²⁹ Archbishop Luigi Ligutti himself donated the files to the mentioned library in 1976. The present author was given access to a fraction of the whole collection. From evidence collected, it transpired that Archbishop Luigi Ligutti, who was chosen by Pope Paul VI to investigate the management of Church property in Malta, was being kept abreast of what was happening locally, especially within the Malta Church circles and the Archbishop’s Curia by a local priest who was employed with the Nuncio residing in Malta. The mentioned documentation also sheds new light on the terse relationship between Archbishop Gonzi and Archbishop Emanuel Gerada – a situation that characterised the penultimate years of Archbishop Gonzi’s very long episcopate.

²²⁵ ‘Strickland Heir’s Right to Secret Files confirmed by Appeals Court,’ *Malta Today*, 25th February 2019, Retrieved 1st March 2019, https://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/court_and_police/93229/Strickland_heir_right_to_secret_files_confirmed_by_Appeals_Court#.XrEYXExuJZU.

²²⁶ See Sergio Grech, *Church and Politics in Malta: 1955-1970* (MA, University of Malta, 2009).

²²⁷ Henry Frendo, *Ċensu Tabone: The Man and His Century* (Malta, Standard Publications Ltd, 2000), 145.

²²⁸ *Ibid.*, 145.

²²⁹ *Malta Folder 63 (1) (2) (3) and Malta Folder 72*, Monsignor Luigi G. Ligutti Papers Archives of the Raynor Memorial Libraries Marquette University, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

The National Archives of the United Kingdom offered a varied array of documentation concerning Archbishop Gonzi. As stated, several of those documents have been analysed by Henry Frendo and Joseph M. Pirotta in their respective research. The documents under CO 926 were the most useful articles in the present writers' research. The section included the documentation of the Records of the Colonial Office, the Foreign and Commonwealth Offices, the Empire Marketing Board, and related bodies. As stated, the Malta Church was often mentioned in those reports. Among the issues that emerge from this source is the distrust that Archbishop Gonzi had vis-a-vis Mintoff, his conviction that Mr Mintoff was an apostate and a lost sheep, and his fears that Mintoff would turn Malta into a Communist satellite once he was elected to power. At one particular moment, Archbishop Gonzi was quoted as describing Nationalist Leader Borg Olivier as "a broken reed."²³⁰

Articles that were published in local newspapers were quickly translated into English, when in vernacular, and promptly despatched to Great Britain.²³¹ There were whole reports in that regard of the April 1958 riots.²³² Pastoral letters were included. Text of political meetings were translated and sent to London. Anthony Pellegrini's *petite révolte* within the Labour Party in 1961 was followed very closely, and information about the case was regularly posted to Her Majesty's Government.²³³ The British were surely following the case very attentively since some implied that Mr Anthony Pellegrini would end Mr Mintoff's career in politics. In 1968, it was reported that the Partit Nazzjonalista was in a minority and that it would lose the following elections if it ended losing out on the Church's support.²³⁴

It would be a gross mistake to assume that the mentioned archives possess all the solutions for this work. As Frendo argued, "several documents were misplaced, taken out or simply destroyed and are today unavailable..."²³⁵ One has to bear in mind the particular owner of the archives and their very nature. This is a colonial archive. Burton warned against the idea of

²³⁰ CO 926/657, *Political Situation in Malta: Interest of Archbishop in Malta (1958-1959)*, The National Archives of the United Kingdom.

²³¹ CO 926/1142, *Attitudes of the Malta Labour Party (1960-1961)*, The National Archives of the United Kingdom.

²³² CO 926/792, *Resignation of Dom Mintoff Prime Minister of Malta (1958)*, The National Archives of the United Kingdom.

²³³ CO 926/1142, *Attitudes of the Malta Labour Party (1960-1961)*, The National Archives of the United Kingdom.

²³⁴ FCO 27/195, *Maltese Labour Party and Dom Mintoff (1967-1968)*, The National Archives of the United Kingdom.

²³⁵ Henry Frendo, *The Origins of Maltese Statehood: A Case Study of Decolonization in the Mediterranean* (Malta, Book Distributors Ltd, 2000), 17.

colonial archives as simple repositories of documents. She insisted that they are also repositories of “whispering galleries, land mines, and crime scenes.”²³⁶ Nicholas Dirks was even more acute. He sharply described his anxious sense when accessing a location that “mirrors and amplifies colonialism’s own distortions.”²³⁷

Use of Newspapers and Magazines

As the bibliography section of this research work shows, newspapers and magazines, but mostly the former, were a useful source for this research work. In fact, the author not only consulted newspapers that were published during the epoch under study but also referred to recent and not so recent newspapers that contained articles of relatively historical interest regarding themes that were discussed in this research project. Newspapers owned by the Labour Party and the General Workers’ Union kept commemorating annually the main events of the Church-Labour Party disputes by publishing articles about particular issues of the debate. The list included, among other subjects, the imposition of the interdiction on delegates of the Malta Labour Party in April 1961,²³⁸ the General Elections of 1962,²³⁹ the ‘Six Points’ issue,²⁴⁰ the building of the Freedom Press,²⁴¹ Labour’s electoral success in 1971,²⁴² and the 1972 Revision of the Finance and Defence Agreement.²⁴³ Each of those occasions was considered a milestone in Labour’s history, and every party disciple was expected to be aware of those occasions and to be proud of them.

In order to make a proper use of newspapers, and to form an adequate picture of the period of time under scrutiny, a researcher is advised to refer to a wide selection of printed matter rather than limit himself or herself to one sole source. On consulting various sources, a researcher may properly make his or her own assessment without yielding to a particular newspaper’s implicit or implied prejudice. Some researchers tend to mistakenly discredit newspapers and label them all as biased. This is especially the case of newspapers which are owned by people

²³⁶ Antoinette Burton, *Archive Stories: Facts, Fiction and the Writing of History* (Durham, Duke University Press, 2005), 94-95.

²³⁷ Nicholas B. Dirks, “Annals of the Archive: Ethnographic Notes on the Sources of History,” in Brian Keith Axel, (ed.), *From the Margins: Historical Anthropology and Its Futures* (Duke, Duke University Press, 2002), 47.

²³⁸ ‘L-Interdettjati,’ *It-Torċa*, 27th March 2011, 22.

²³⁹ Corey Formosa, ‘L-Elezzjoni tad-Dnub il-Mejjet,’ *It-Torċa*, 17th February 2011, 8.

²⁴⁰ Grezzju Mercieca, ‘Mintoff inehhi l-Liġi Kanonika mil-Liġi Maltija,’ *KullHadd*, 26th June 2011, 21.

²⁴¹ Felix Agius, ‘Tifkiriet tal-Freedom Press,’ *KullHadd*, 8th January 2017, 12.

²⁴² René Monseigneur, ‘Gvern Laburista 1971,’ *KullHadd*, 19th June 2011, 8.

²⁴³ Joseph Mangani, ‘Il-Preludju għall-Ħelsien,’ *It-Torċa*, 1st April 2012, 44.

or organisations who directly or indirectly finance the enterprise that controls those newspapers. In dismissing what the latter newspapers have to communicate, one is unable to form an objective and equitable idea of the situation or the circumstance or the event that is being researched. Folke Dahl, the Swedish librarian, affirmed that such schools of thought tend to promote the reasoning that newspapers “contain mostly lies, false reports and the like,” while their editors and their publishers are termed “newsmongers, news-scribblers, or gossip writers.”²⁴⁴

On the contrary, as Knudsom argued, “history is concerned – or should be concerned – not only with what actually happened in any given time or place, but also with what people *thought* was happening, as revealed to them through the means of mass communication which may have conditioned their subsequent actions. Thus, the perception of events as filtered through the press may have changed the historical outcome. According to this concept, it does not matter if the news is false or distorted as long as readers believed it and acted on their belief.”²⁴⁵

In Malta’s case, press freedom triumphed in 1839 and as Portelli²⁴⁶ and Frendo²⁴⁷ showed in their respective books from that point onwards, the excitement for printing never really faded. Of course, not all ventures lasted long. Some died even after one issue or two, but the urge to print and to pass across a message stimulated diverse projects. Organisations soon learned that newspapers were a good vehicle to sell their ideas and thoughts. Newspapers became a determining feature in society.

Over the years, the owners of newspapers and magazines included political formations, political parties, lay Catholic movements, the Church itself, religious orders, trade unions, and so on. So, as suggested by Knudsom, newspapers had a very significant role in developing perceptions. In fact, “newspapers inspired discussions that were held in coffee shops, bars, groceries, cinemas, band clubs, on buses, at work, in the clubs of political party’s, in church

²⁴⁴ Folk Dahl quoted in *Jerry W. Knudson, ‘Late to the Feast: Newspapers as Historical Sources,’* Retrieved 16th December, 2021, <https://www.historians.org/publications-and-directories/perspectives-on-history/october-1993/late-to-the-feast>.

²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁶ Sergio Portelli, *La Stampa Periodica in Italiano a Malta* (Malta, Malta University Press, 2010), 57.

²⁴⁷ Henry Frendo, *Maltese Journalism 1838-1992: An historical Overview* (Malta, Press Club Publications, 1994), 9.

squares, and so on. Newspapers even dominated the course of a confession.”²⁴⁸ Catholic organisations like Cana Movement, Catholic Action, M.U.S.U.E.M., Legion of Mary and the Appostolat tat-Talb published their respective magazines. The most read magazines included *Lil Hutna*, *Il-Ħuġġieġa*, *The Faith*, *Militia Christi*, *The Crusader*, *Regina et Mater*, *Kana*, *Problemi tal-Lum*.

It is curious to note that, irrespective of a high degree of illiteracy, there was a certain amount of readership going on. In this case, figures quoted refer to the sixties of the twentieth century and were supplied to the present author by people like Piju Spiteri, Lino Spiteri and J.G. Vassallo who had a finger in the pie. The *Malta News* owned by the General Workers’ Union sold around 3,000 copies.²⁴⁹ *Il-Haddiem*, published by the Maltese branch of Cardinal Cardijn’s organisation Young Christian Workers, sold between 28,000 and 35,000 copies.²⁵⁰ *Lehen is-Sewwa* owned by Catholic Action sold around 10,000 copies.²⁵¹ Lino Spiteri shared an argument with the present author that, within the sixties case scenario, when the relationship between the Labour Party and the Malta Church was at its lowest, Labour supporters used to buy newspapers as a sign of support, irrespective of their reading skills.²⁵²

According to Mgr John Dimech, chaplain to Archbishop Gonzi, the latter followed the local press and read regularly *The Tablet*, *The Universe* and *L’Osservatore Romano*.²⁵³ It is also known that the mentioned archbishop financially supported *Lehen is-Sewwa* and *Il-Ħajja*.²⁵⁴ One of Archbishop Gonzi’s public relations officers commented that the archbishop rarely refused an interview by the international press.²⁵⁵

Pamphlets, Flyers and Booklets

Pamphlets, flyers, posters and booklets were another source read by the present author. By nature, the mentioned items are easily lost or difficult to trace. They were important tools to influence perception and conquer public opinion. In the world of academia, the study of pamphlets is relatively recent even though, already by the end of the seventeenth century,

²⁴⁸ Sergio Grech, *Church and Politics in Malta 19550-1970* (MA, University of Malta, 2008), 57.

²⁴⁹ E-mail by Mr Lino Spiteri to the present author dated 7th April 2007, Sergio Grech Private Collection.

²⁵⁰ Sergio Grech, *Patri Felicjan Bilocca: Ħajtu u Ħidmietu 1914-1987* (Malta, Outlook, 2004), 145.

²⁵¹ Ibid.

²⁵² E-mail by Mr Lino Spiteri to the present author dated 7th April 2007, Sergio Grech Private Collection.

²⁵³ Letter from Mgr G. Dimech to the present author dated 5th July 2000, Sergio Grech Private Collection.

²⁵⁴ ‘Il-Papiet juru l-Qima tagħhom lejn l-Arcisqof Gonzi,’ *Lehen is-Sewwa*, special edition 22 Jan. 1984, 10.

²⁵⁵ C.G. Vella, *Sinjali Maltin ta’ Żmienna*, op.cit., 156.

countries like England, the Netherlands and France had a strong pamphleteering culture.²⁵⁶ The importance of such items does not lie in the composition, typesetting or print quality but in the message they bounce off. The advantage of these publishing items was the relatively short span of time to produce and publish them. As stated above, the agenda was to conquer and influence the public opinion.

The following case study shows examples of pamphlets, flyers, posters and booklets that were published during different phases of the politico-religious struggle of the early nineteen sixties.²⁵⁷ Front page articles from *Il-Haddiem* or *Lehen is-Sewwa* were reprinted on a single leaf and circulated.²⁵⁸ The Ġunta Djoċesana tal-Għaqdiet Kattoliċi published several communication sheets which either highlighted a directive or encouraged the Maltese Catholics to attend one of its rallies. Important speeches during the mentioned rallies were edited and published in a booklet format.²⁵⁹ The Social Action Movement (MAS) published a booklet about the Labour Party joining AAPSO.²⁶⁰ The Labour leader Mr Mintoff too very regularly used the booklets vehicles to express his policies. In *Priests and Politicians in Malta*, Mintoff disputed the argument that “since the advent of St. Paul... the clergy had been by far the most powerful local group and the undisputed leader of our people.”²⁶¹

Besides printed pamphlets, posters were also hung in arresting places, and placards were used during demonstrations and meetings.²⁶² Out of necessity, posters and placards used a very limited word count but a strong capturing vocabulary. Posters could be fixed in specific places. One of the most controversial posters hung was *Mintoff il-Qattiel tal-Erwieħ*.²⁶³ A famous poster showed Archbishop Gonzi expressing a stern look with the caption *Il-Harsa tiegħu lejn il-lemin tagħmlilna kuragg fil-ġlieda*. Party clubs’ façades were plastered with posters. Such items were also sometimes fixed to Church façades. In Naxxar, placards were even “hung inside a cemetery.”²⁶⁴ To a certain extent, these tools furthered detachment within society.

²⁵⁶ Raymond Joad, *Pamphlets and Pamphleteering in Early Modern Britain* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2003), 7.

²⁵⁷ Sergio Grech, *Church and Politics in Malta: 1955-1970* (MA, University of Malta, 2009), 38.

²⁵⁸ Salv Bartoli Galea, *Biex Infakkru L-Istorja ta' Mintoff* (Malta, Empire Press, 1962).

²⁵⁹ Kunsill tal-Provinċjali u Kulleġġ tal-Kappillani, *Il-Protesta ta' Malta Kattolika* (Malta, Empire Press, 1961).

²⁶⁰ Moviment Azzjoni Soċjali, *Il-Verità dwar l-AAPSO* (Malta, Empire Press, 1961).

²⁶¹ Dominic Mintoff, *Priests and Politicians in Malta, A Brief Analysis* (Malta, Union Press, 1961), 1.

²⁶² Sergio Grech, *Church and Politics in Malta: 1955-1970* (MA, University of Malta, 2009), 38.

²⁶³ Ibid.

²⁶⁴ Paul Xuereb, ‘Naxxar Mass Meeting, Papal Encyclical and MLP,’ *The Voice of Malta*, 13 August 1961, 3.

The Use of Oral History

Archives do not provide historians with the total documentation required. A tool to fill gaps in evidence-collecting might be Oral History. Besides possibly filling lacunae in evidence, Oral History is also important for one to preserve collective memory. At this stage, one should correct the impression that conducting an oral interview is equivalent to gathering sensational sound bites.

Italian Alessandro Portelli, the doyen of oral history interviews, argued that “as oral historians, we must do three jobs at the same time. We must do the historian’s job of trying to understand what happened, the anthropologist’s job of understanding how people tell their stories, and then move back and forth between these two levels.”²⁶⁵ The present writer opted to interview personalities who occupied key positions rather than the man in the street who may have remembered Archbishop Gonzi. Although the Curia’s top brass that served the Malta Church during the bishopric of Mgr Gonzi, and several of the old-guard politicians have passed away, the present author, in an effort to gain a closer insight, conducted more than one hundred interviews with personalities from different backgrounds who might have had a connection with Archbishop Gonzi.

The interviews took place at three particular instances: the period leading to the resignation of Mgr Pawlu Cremona from the role of Metropolitan Archbishop of Malta, the span of time when Mgr Charles J. Scicluna was given the role of Administrator *sede vacante*, and the period after Archbishop Scicluna was appointed to run Malta’s diocese. These circumstances conditioned the narratives of the priests interviewed.

A detailed research about the personalities’ relations to Archbishop Gonzi was undertaken. Ethical issues were given priority. Participants were given details as to how the data they shared with the present author would be processed. They were given an opportunity to review, correct or withdraw the material they had previously provided. That way, they were in a better position to decide whether the information shared could be made public or otherwise. An important challenge that the present author had to face was to listen attentively without moving hastily

²⁶⁵ Quoted from Alexander Stile, ‘Prospecting for Truth in the Ore of Memory,’ *The New York Times*, 10th March 2001, Retrieved 19th November 2016, <http://www.nytimes.com/2001/03/10/arts/prospecting-for-truth-in-the-ore-of-memory.html>.

from a question to an answer. Another issue that created problems was the one regarding the required recording apparatus which was looked at as a threat by some of the interviewees.

The majority of the members of the ecclesiastical field found great difficulty in replying to a standard question about interdiction even if in his introduction the present researcher exhorted them to feel free not to answer questions that might upset them. Those interviews were conducted in private residences, sacristies, cafés, homes for the elderly, convents, and also at the Dar tal-Kleru at Fleur-de-Lys. Since the interviews involved renewal of memories, there were some emotional responses. In fact, some were nostalgic about the subject and argued that Mgr Gonzi's tenure as archbishop of Malta was a golden age for Malta's Church, contending that, though being a disciplinarian, he was in effect a true leader, the right one for his times, having at heart pastoral mission. In some cases, it was evident that memory was playing tricks on them. This issue had led to some historians like Hobsbawn to question the reliability of Oral History.²⁶⁶

Mr Michael Galea gave to the present author the interviews that he and Mr Tonna had held with Archbishop Gonzi at the latter's palace in Valletta whilst they were preparing for their publications mentioned earlier on. It was evident whilst listening to recordings that, at a certain point in time, Archbishop Gonzi's memory was swiftly fading away. During other instances, he himself commented about this. At times, he also had auditory issues and the interviewers had to shout their questions or comments. Sometimes, they simply stopped hammering on unanswered questions. There were instances during the interviews when authors ended up discussing among themselves. Repeatedly, Archbishop Gonzi kept asking questions about the number of pages that the biography would contain once it was published. Archbishop Gonzi was also keen to know who the publisher would be. Ultimately, the biography project was not financed by the Malta archdiocese but by an independent new publisher.

Still, interesting were the comments that Archbishop Gonzi pronounced during these encounters regarding Bishop Emanuel Gerada, Sir Harry Luke, Prime Minister Dominic Mintoff, the state of religion in Malta, and other topics. From these interviews, one could safely conclude that Archbishop Gonzi was very cautious in his assessments of Mintoff. Archbishop Gonzi was very attentive not to disrupt Church-State Relations. Definitely the BICAL scandal

²⁶⁶ Eric Hobsbawn, *On History* (London, Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1997), 206.

– discussed in detail in the fourth chapter – affected him very badly and every time it was brought up, Archbishop Gonzi outright blamed Archbishop Gerada for the mishap and made it clear that he had no knowledge at all of the mentioned bank. Archbishop Gonzi believed that Sir Harry Luke was his main opponent to be chosen as Malta’s archbishop. For him, Mintoff was a hard-headed politician who believed that he was always right. Furthermore, Archbishop Gonzi was very critical of historian Dominic Fenech for not asking him to comment about his book. Other points that emerge from those interviews will be highlighted in subsequent chapters.

Professor Henry Frendo gave access to the present author to his interviews for the TVM series *L-Istorja minn Wara l-Kwinti* that was axed by the mentioned station after the airing of ten episodes. The series focused on Malta’s process of decolonisation, and Frendo together with the producers interviewed key personalities that in the period between 1955 and 1970 were in key positions in the area of politics, economics, religion, art and other fields. In fact, around sixty personalities were interviewed for the series. The present author had also access to those parts of the interviews that were never aired. One of such interviews was with Lord Carrington. The latter, in an interview he gave to Frendo at Carrington’s residence in London, referred to both Premier Mintoff and Archbishop Gonzi. Surprisingly, Lord Carrington had full praise for Mr Mintoff describing him as “never dull.” He further commented that Mintoff “usually sprung some surprise.”²⁶⁷ According to Lord Carrington, Mr Mintoff obtained from the British during those negotiations more than he deserved. For Carrington, Mr Mintoff “personally was a nice man... he was quite fun.”²⁶⁸ Carrington blamed the Italians for interfering in the process and maintained that this fact had led to longer negotiations. Still, Lord Carrington believed that Mr Mintoff was “a master for getting money out of people... a great success.”²⁶⁹

Lord Carrington described Archbishop Gonzi as a powerful figure and “slightly one of the Italian faction.” Carrington believed that Archbishop Gonzi “interfered quite a lot.”²⁷⁰ Carrington was extremely careful not to comment when Frendo argued that there were records that showed that Archbishop Gonzi had even suggested a sum that Malta deserved during those particular negotiations. At that point, Lord Carrington shifted the argument on the bishop’s

²⁶⁷ Transcript of an interview by Prof Henry Frendo with Lord Carrington at his residence in London, 10th January 2006.

²⁶⁸ Ibid.

²⁶⁹ Ibid.

²⁷⁰ Ibid.

power in Malta and asked if Mabel Strickland was interdicted or not. These reactions about Archbishop Gonzi, coming from Lord Carrington's perspective, are novel since in his memoirs Carrington had referred to his negotiations with Mintoff but had passed no remarks about Archbishop Gonzi's participation in the talks.

In 2014, SKS, the publication arm of the Labour Party, issued *L-Elf Lewn ta' Mintoff*. The book edited by Claire Borg Xuereb, a teacher by profession, consisted of around fifty-five transcripts of interviews she had carried out with politicians, bureaucrats, political canvassers, trade unionists and others who had shared their experience about Mintoff. One has to acknowledge that this sort of book is not the norm in Malta and provides an interesting exercise in oral history. The editor chose to interview not only Labour Party stalwarts but also politicians who were militant in the Nationalist Party and who politically opposed Labour leader Dom Mintoff during their career. Some of the persons interviewed have passed away. Others have spoken about Mr Dom Mintoff for the first time.

Archbishop Gonzi was mentioned by various interviewees. A good number of responses tended to be opinionated, and the grudges stemming out of the interdict sanction in 1961 were obvious. Of course, they lack Mintoff's statement that by 1959 Labour had decided to confront the Church head on. A valid contribution, albeit a mirror image of the Labour Party's position on the subject, was Borg Xuereb's interview with Joe Camilleri which focused on the interdict and the trail for peace. Mr Camilleri confirmed that he was John Rizzo the writer of the article that had led to the interdict.²⁷¹ The interview with Mgr Arthur Said Pullicino filled gaps in literature about the 1969 peace treaty between the Labour Party and the Church.²⁷²

Unpublished Work

As shown before, locally, the availability of academic works that dealt specifically with the relationship between the institutional Church and party politics in the twentieth century has been a rather recent development. The unavailability of primary sources due to timeframes imposed by archives, both locally and abroad, limited the possibilities of such works. To be fair, there were some long essays and theses presented by the Department of History at the University of Malta in the 1960s, 1970s, 1980s and 1990s that tried to analyse such matters of

²⁷¹ Claire Borg Xuereb, *L-Elf Lewn ta' Mintoff* (Malta, Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti, 2014), 33.

²⁷² *Ibid.*, 235.

religion and politics, but these works did not reach the final target since the authors made use of limited printed primary sources mostly published by Labour, and newspapers of the period.²⁷³

Mgr John Dimech, one of Archbishop Gonzi's chaplains, was planning to write a book about Archbishop Gonzi and to share his personal experiences with him, but he passed away in 2009 before completing the work. The present author was given access to the manuscript by Perit Joseph Dimech of Victoria who died in 2021. The manuscript was still in its earliest stages of preparation. From the document, it transpired that Mgr Dimech relied heavily on Michael Galea and Emanuel S. Tonna, mentioned above, as his main sources to recall certain episodes in the life of Archbishop Gonzi. One of the points that Mgr Dimech regarded crucial in understanding Archbishop Gonzi was the fact that Archbishop Gonzi believed that the working classes should have more rights, better wages and a sound education.²⁷⁴ Considering the role Mgr Dimech played and his closeness to Archbishop Gonzi, one is bound to conclude that the unfinished manuscript breaks no new ground.

Reflections about Literature Discussed

While researching, it was becoming evident that writing about Archbishop Gonzi was not going to be an easy enterprise. As stated earlier, his episcopacy was a long one and to add insult to injury, Archbishop Gonzi was anything but a passive bishop and his presence was felt both in the religious and the secular domain, sometimes perhaps exposing himself too much. His old age was far from a stumbling block in his endeavours and in fact he retired from the episcopal role when he was ninety-two years old. Archbishop Gonzi spent seventy-five years as a priest and more than fifty years as a bishop. During this period, the Roman Catholic Church experienced bout of changes and renewal. The same happened in the realm of politics and economics. There were two world wars and, as time went along, new states came into being after dumping their colonial past. Inevitably, Malta, albeit a tiny island, experienced changes too.

²⁷³ See Michael Borg, *Integration or Closer Union with Britain* (BA Gen, University of Malta, 1968), Maria Camilleri, *Ġużè Ellul Mercer: Hajtu, Fehmietu u Hidmietu* (BA Hons, University of Malta, 1974), Raymond Galea, *Independence: The Climax of various Political and Constitutional Developments* (BA Gen, University of Malta, 1968), Anna Zarb, *Mintoff versus the Ecclesiastical Authorities* (BA Hons University of Malta, 1971).

²⁷⁴ Manuscript belonging to Mgr John Dimech, Perit Joe Dimech Private Archives, Victoria, Gozo.

Archbishop Gonzi Malta's episcopate commenced in an era when the country was devastated by the Second World War. The toll of that war included also social and moral devastation and as a bishop he had to play his share in rebuilding society not merely from a moral point of view. Archbishop Gonzi kept a jam-packed diary and he was not the type to run his diocese from his office at the Curia. He routinely visited parishes and held regular meetings with his parish priests. Contrary to what one may assume, he was accessible. His contemporaries picture him as a perfectionist and a man of action and discipline. By far, Archbishop Gonzi had a sense of adaptation or of what may be termed as *realpolitik*, even if at times his actions in the short term could be seen as an exercise in matter of convenience.

As a leader, Archbishop Gonzi not only influenced the Church he was chosen to lead but also the country's fate. But his legacy was conveniently politicised to reap votes and therefore the historian who seeks to analyse this complex personality and Archbishop Gonzi's role in history is always walking on a tight rope. Moreover, when the contemporary man in the street discusses Archbishop Gonzi, this is done very passionately, and often Archbishop Gonzi gets castigated since the man in the street has a poor command of the historical context and, as if that were not enough, political bias kicks in the equation too.

Besides these considerations, a historian must be alert not to create myths while discussing personalities who at the end of the day contributed to historical change. As Frank McDonough put it, "the myth of individuals rising above society to shape the course of history is pervasive and based on two assumptions. First, the actions of leaders are taken in isolation from their position within society. Second, the study of leaders is justified because they did act independently of any restraint."²⁷⁵ In fact, as history shows, the majority of the people are lost in history and remain unknown, but this does not imply that they were not catalysts for change.

Gaps in Research

While reading the above-mentioned texts, the present writer identified a number of gaps that will be addressed in subsequent chapters. A common mistake that tends to prevail is that within society a particular epoch is valued or judged with today's benchmarks and values, thereby ignoring completely the context of the period in question. It, therefore, follows that Archbishop

²⁷⁵ Frank McDonough, 'The Role of the Individual in History,' *History Today*, 24th March 1996, Retrieved 15th March 2022, <https://www.historytoday.com/archive/role-individual-history>.

Gonzi and his episcopate require to be studied in the context of what the Roman Catholic Church expected from its bishops during that very specific era which also happened to be an epoch when Communism was marching on and bishops in Eastern Europe were put to jail or tortured. As will be explained, one of the bishopric duties of the period in question included the vigilance of the respective diocese which in itself was an old duty demanded by the Church. The author distinguishes between Archbishop Gonzi's character traits like being a man of action and in some cases reacting quickly to arising matters, and the Church's magisterium which left no stone unturned with regard to the duties of a bishop. Attention is also given to his formation and Mgr Gonzi's period as bishop of Gozo which was characterised by key reforms.

This research project focuses also on the social dimension of Archbishop Gonzi's episcopate – a theme that tends to be neglected at times. Some texts, employing Marxist perceptions, even presented Archbishop Gonzi as a politician who wanted to control the workers' movement and if possible keep them in bondage with a low income. In fact, his generally good relationship with the coloniser, and his opposition and reluctance to Integration and Independence were interpreted as pillars meant to halt progress and better working conditions. On the other hand, one notices an energetic archbishop who had the families at heart and supported even financially from his own pocket initiatives taken by the Church like Cana, Caritas and other charitable institutions that worked within the Church's wings to see an improvement in the socio-economic conditions of the families. In fact, the fourth chapter challenges this position and shows that the social dimension of Archbishop Gonzi's episcopate was a continuation of the Catholic social tradition, and must therefore be interpreted within the context of the conflicting opinions and within the distinction between religion and politics. Archbishop Gonzi's vision of economics was limited, and perhaps irrelevant, but his sense of charity was very strong.

Another gap noted in the above-mentioned literature is that Archbishop Gonzi's episcopate was not assessed on its response to the social and cultural changes that emerged after World War II, particularly the Church renewal required by Vatican Council II. There was an evolution in the episcopate and this tends to be disregarded. After all, he had spent fifty-two years in office – an exceptionally long time indeed which witnessed great leaps forward in all spheres of life and which in turn affected the episcopate. Vatican Council II was in itself a paradigm shift and brought up new pastoral possibilities, and Malta was not an exception in this regard, irrespective of the fact that the reforms that Vatican II introduced in Catholic thought and

practice had reached Malta rather too late in the day to be fully grasped and implemented by Archbishop Gonzi.

This work focuses also on the relationship between Archbishop Gonzi and the imperial organisation, and the author presents the ‘type’ of Archbishop Gonzi’s ‘imperialism’ in the light of the various ramifications relating to the colonial experience. It is true that the British opted to shield the local Church albeit in the interests of its imperial policy. However, the privileges bequeathed to the Church, and guarded so much by Archbishop Gonzi, cannot be interpreted as a pure and simple form of collaboration, as it is generally held. Most of the privileges enjoyed were of immemorial custom and indeed prescribed by long-standing traditions. But in a society which was becoming increasingly more secular, the Church, including Archbishop Gonzi, could no longer await that the law should necessarily follow the teaching of the Church, especially on matters that were ethically controversial.

Recommendations and Suggestions

A point that surfaced in the course of this author’s research was that there was a trend to contrast and compare Archbishop Gonzi with local or foreign bishops, the most quoted being most probably the Irish Archbishop Daniel Mannix, the Archbishop of Melbourne for 46 years. Others would contrast and compare Archbishop Gonzi with his Vicar-General, Bishop Emanuel Galea. Bishop Galea deserves to be studied furtherly irrespective of his beatification and canonisation. Moreover, the period when Archbishop Gerada was chosen as an Auxiliary bishop to Archbishop Gonzi merits to be considered further. The Gerada Archives, if available, remain unscrutinised, and studies about that particular phase are based on hearsay and memories and newspapers of the epoch which fail to tell the real story.

The present writer also noted a dearth of literature focusing specifically on the Malta Church and the Second Vatican Council. To be fair, the magazine *Pastor*, that was issued by Christus Rex, in the period under study, focused a lot of energy on the Council and continuously discussed the reforms that it was aiming for. But that’s not enough. Undeniably, the documents that emerged out of the Council were translated into Maltese. But still there is no volume that focuses systemically on this theme. A booklet titled simply *Konċilju* by Lawrenz Cachia, one of former *Pastor*’s editors, briefly referred to the way Archbishop Gonzi reacted to the reforms

demanded by the Council.²⁷⁶ During this phase Cachia was first parish priest of Gudja and then moved on Haż-Żebbuġ. The Second Vatican Council was briefly discussed in J.M. Ghigo's personal memoirs *Miexi lejn id-Dawl*. Ghigo's memoirs were published by APS Bank. The mentioned Jesuit expressed his uneasiness when Archbishop Gonzi issued directives to his confessors to refrain from giving absolution to supporters of the Malta Labour Party between May 1961 and March 1962, and also traced his efforts in updating the magazine *Problemi tal-Lum*, the mouthpiece of the Jesuit Community, with the spirit of the Second Vatican Council.²⁷⁷ Ghigo showed how Pope John XXIII's call for *aggiornamento* became his mission statement in this period. Ghigo narrated his experiences of assisting Rev Tonna during the fourth session of the Council when he was director of the CCCC, the Information Office of the Council which acted independently of the Vatican's *Ufficio Stampa*.²⁷⁸ Otherwise, the topic remains superficially discussed. On the other hand, the book is not an analysis of the Second Vatican Council but a memoir of a particular Jesuit. It follows that a detailed analysis of how the Second Vatican Council, described by Fantappiè as a paradigm shift, affected the Malta Church, is desirable. In fact, a chapter within this research will be dedicated to this particular theme but once again the theme deserves much more attention.

Conclusion

In this chapter, the present writer mapped and analysed the primary and secondary sources that he employed for his research project. The widest array of sources available has been used. The present author was also given access to the *Corrispondenza Gonzi*, which had been so far closed for researchers. The author also visited the Vatican Archives to consult previously unscrutinised material. From this analysis, it transpired that recent biographies of Archbishop Gonzi, published in Malta, were mostly based on printed primary sources and secondary sources and tended to be either sympathetic and all-praise for Archbishop Gonzi's episcopate or, on the other hand, too negatively critical often omitting and neglecting the basic notions of how an episcopate functions. In this latter case, actions and decisions taken by Archbishop Gonzi have slipped away or have simply been misunderstood as typical measures of a pompous bishop who craved for power and control. Generally, Maltese academic historians seem like being interested in merely developing and studying Archbishop Gonzi's role in Malta's

²⁷⁶ Lawrenz Cachia, *Konċilju* (Malta, The Author, 2012).

²⁷⁷ J.M. Ghigo, *Miexi lejn id-Dawl: Ġabra ta' Tifkiriet Personali* (Malta, APS Bank Ltd, 2006). 116

²⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 120.

decolonisation process. International academics seem to have taken the same course as their main interest seems to lie on the relationship between the Holy See and Great Britain, and also on Malta's process of decolonisation. Moreover, this referred to analysis took one direction, that is to say the conflicts between Archbishop Gonzi and Labour leader Mr Mintoff that paralysed the Maltese colony. Furthermore, the mentioned studies seem to rely too much on the National Archives of the United Kingdom. Agreeably, the Church archives remain closed but what is available from the mentioned archives seems to have been neglected. Not enough work has been done on the social and cultural changes that emerged after the Second World War. Very little has been written about the social dimension of the episcopate under consideration in the present process. This thesis will address such gaps and others.

CHAPTER TWO

THE BISHOP AND HIS ROLE IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Once the sources for this research project have been established, it makes sense to focus on the role that the Catholic Church has played in the Maltese society in the period under study, the dynamics she created and the way she proved to be an essential feature in keeping the community bound and cemented together. Furthermore, the historical development of the role of the Roman Catholic bishop in a diocese, his duties as defined by Canon Law, and the various Church councils held over the centuries, which included the Second Vatican Council, together with the theological argumentations upon which the bishop's position of authority and oversight was based, will also be analysed here. Given that, we are here discussing a hierarchical organisation, made up of different offices which however depend on one another to ensure the continuation of the Church's mission. This chapter will also focus on the parish unit, its leader (the parish priest), and the administration of rituals and sacraments. After all, the parish priest served as a bridge with the upper management organisation whilst the rituals and sacraments connected the community of believers with their spiritual leaders in what is called a Church communion.

Knowledge regarding this context is required since this research project is set in a particular time and space, that is to say the pre-Vatican Council II. One must keep in mind that Archbishop Gonzi's formation and practically two-thirds of his fifty-two-year-old episcopate coincided with the period preceding the Second Vatican Council held in the nineteen-sixties. Prior to that Council, the dominant model of the Church was that of a perfect society. Referring back to the bull *Unam Sanctam* of Pope Boniface VIII (1302), the Catholic Church always claimed that all power came from God and hence that the temporal power of the State is to submit to the spiritual power of the Church that represented God.

During the pre-Vatican II period, the Church had argued that in the case of the State, power “is determined by the people according to time, place and customs of a country and rests on the natural right and on the natural order established by God, whereas the power of the Church is supernatural in its origin... it is therefore independent of the people, and is moreover by Divine right independent, in its own particular sphere, of the temporal power.”¹ It, therefore, followed that “both great and small, prince and peasant, must humbly submit to her authority because her teaching is infallible.”² Pope Pius X had claimed in 1906 that the Catholic Church was an uneven social order; a society made up of two groupings, “the pastors and the flock: those who occupy a rank in the different degrees of the hierarchy and the multitude of the faithful... the one duty of the multitude is to allow themselves to be led and like a docile flock to follow the pastors.”³ The Catholic Church was always seen as divided into the “teaching” and the “learning” Church and according to the Code of Canon Law of 1917, the laity, the common faithful, were considered exclusively from the standpoint of those who had the right to be led by the pastors and to receive their teachings. This was still the dominant model of the Church during the episcopate of Archbishop Gonzi. In fact, during the 1947 elections, at a time when self-government was again restored, Archbishop Gonzi issued a pastoral letter in which he declared that “the Church keeps herself out of political parties and does not condemn them as long as they do not go against the principles or the interests of religion.”⁴ The Church “only wants and requires that politics should be based on the teachings of Christ.”⁵

So, this chapter will show that a bishop could not just act independently of the laws that governed his office even if his responsibilities were quite high within the hierarchical Church. Therefore, it follows that Archbishop Gonzi’s behaviour in certain uneasy circumstances cannot be dismissed simply as the result of his intransigent character or his leading traits but must be considered in the light of what Canon Law established in a given situation. Still, one should also acknowledge the argument that on the other hand, episcopates depended also on the character and the vision of the presiding bishop. In fact, during the period under review, there were bishops who had a different vision of the Church and they developed a particular model of the Church and the role of the bishop. One such bishop was Cardinal Emmanuel

¹ C. Hart, *The Students’ Catholic Doctrine* (London, Burns and Oats, 1961), 87.

² *Ibid.*, 86.

³ Pope Pius X, *Vehementer Nos*, Retrieved 10th April 2022 in <https://www.papalencyclicals.net/pius10/p10law.htm>

⁴ *Volume Mons Gonzi Pastoralis e Circolari 1943-1962*, AAM.

⁵ *Ibid.*

Suhard, the Archbishop of Paris, who in 1947 had published the pastoral letter *Essor ou déclin de l'Église (Growth or Decline? The Church Today)*. In an epoch before the Second Vatican Council, the mentioned document “comprised a see-judge-act on the situation facing the people and Church of France after the war. In this sense, it prefigured *Gaudium et Spes* and certainly served as a model for many French bishops at the Council.”⁶ For instance, Bishop Suhard complained of “a gulf between the workers and Christianity.”⁷

The Role of Religion in Malta

In the Maltese *forma mentis*, the term “religion” signified “Roman Catholicism.” Roman Catholicism is a monotheistic world religion that had spread all over the world. Catholics believe that their Church was instituted by Jesus Christ in the first century and that it was One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic. The head of the Roman Catholic Church is the Pope. The Pope, who resides at the Vatican, is considered by Catholics as Christ’s Vicar, the successor of St. Peter, the Bishop of Rome, and the head of the College of Bishops. The Pope “oversees matters of faith and morals and is an influential figure on the world stage.”⁸ As Reese put it, “in the Catholic form of Christianity, Church organisation is based on the episcopal leadership of dioceses, the geographical units into which the Church divides the world.”⁹ The Pope appoints the bishops to govern local or diocesan churches. In one of his speeches celebrating the anniversary of the solemn coronation of Pope Pius XI, Archbishop Gonzi referred to the Pope as the common father of the members of the Catholic community.¹⁰

Canon 216 of the 1917 Code of Canon Law established that “the territory of every diocese is to be divided up into distinct territorial parts; to each part, a specific church and determined population are assigned, with its own rector as its pastor, who is over it for the necessary care of souls. § 2. In an equivalent manner, an apostolic vicariate and an apostolic prelate should be divided where this can be done conveniently. § 3. The parts of the diocese mentioned in § 1 are parishes; the parts of the apostolic vicariate and apostolic prelate, if a specific rector has been assigned, are called quasi-parishes. § 4. Parishes based on diversity of the language or

⁶ Stefan Gigacz, *The Leaven in the Council: Joseph Cardijn and the Jocist Network at Vatican II* (Melbourne, Australian Cardijn Institute Cooperative Ltd, 2022), 86.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Michael N. Kane, and Robin J. Jacobs, ‘Catholic Priests’ Beliefs of the Use of Power by Their Bishop,’ *Journal of Spirituality in Mental Health*, 4, (19), (2017), 269.

⁹ Thomas J. Reese, *Inside the Vatican: The Politics and the Organisations of the Catholic Church* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003), 1.

¹⁰ Michael Galea and E.S. Tonna, *L-Arcisqof Gonzi, Vol. I., op.cit.*, 112.

nationality of the faithful found in the same city or territory cannot be constituted without special apostolic indult, nor can familial or personal parishes; as to those already constituted, nothing is to be modified without consulting the Apostolic See.”¹¹

The Maltese Church traced its origins to the year 60 AD when St. Paul was shipwrecked in Malta “on his way to Rome.”¹² Contrary to most European countries, religion in Malta experienced no Reformation.¹³ The setting up of an Inquisition tribunal was a strong force in combatting heresy and correcting malpractices.¹⁴ As early as 1575, the Maltese Church already had 430 churches, chapels and shrines in Malta and Gozo.¹⁵ Even on Filfla, an uninhabited barren islet five kilometres south of Malta, a chapel was built.¹⁶

Loyalty to the Church was transmitted from one generation to the next. Once an individual was baptised, the process of becoming religious took off. The individual, through both formal and informal mechanisms, was trained and in turn internalised the norms. Johnstone defined this process as “religious socialisation.”¹⁷ Furthermore, he argued that an individual “internalises the religion of his group essentially the same way he learns the language of his culture, or his sex role, or the lifestyle of his social class.”¹⁸ The family had an important share in this process.¹⁹ Archbishop Gonzi firmly believed that the state of religion in Malta depended on the family.²⁰ Once the mentioned process of “becoming religious” reached its climax, a sense of belonging sunk in the individual. At that stage, religion became one of the factors that moulded a person’s identity. As Tabone contended, “it was the Church that gave Malta its identity and constructed much of its culture.”²¹ Religion not only gave the individual a sense of identity with the distant past but also with the limitless future.²²

¹¹ Edward N. Peters, *The 1917 Pio-Benedictine Code of Canon Law* (San Francisco, Ignatius, 2008), 106.

¹² Felix Sammut, *Saint Paul in Malta* (Malta, Religjon u Hajja, 2005), 11.

¹³ Henry Frendo, “National Identity,” in Henry Frendo and Oliver Friggieri, *Malta Culture and Identity* (Malta, Ministry of Youth and Sport, 1994), 3.

¹⁴ Alexander Bonnici, *Storja tal-Inkiżizzjoni ta’ Malta, Vol 1* (Malta, Religjon u Hajja, 1990), 19.

¹⁵ Joseph Bezzina, “The Church in Malta: An Indelible Imprint upon the Nation’s History and Character,” in Kenneth Gambin, (ed.) *Malta: Roots of a Nation* (Malta, Heritage Malta, 2004), 256.

¹⁶ Arthur Bonnici, *History of the Church, Vol. 2, Period III 1530-1800* (Malta, The Author, 1967), 31.

¹⁷ Ronald L. Johnstone, *Religion and Society in Interaction* (New Jersey, Prentice Hall Inc., 1988), 81.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 88.

¹⁹ G.W. Allport et al, ‘The Religion of the Post-War College Student,’ *Journal of Psychology*, 25, (1), (1948), 12.

²⁰ See for instance Pastoral letter issued 10th February 1971. The theme of the family is addressed on different occasions during Archbishop Gonzi’s episcopate.

²¹ Carmel Tabone, “Secularisation,” in Ronald G. Sultana and Godfrey Baldacchino, (eds.), *Maltese Society: A Sociological Inquiry* (Malta, Mireva Publications, 1994), 294.

²² Thomas O’Dea, *The Sociology of Religion* (New Jersey, Prentice Hall, 1966), 15.

For Archbishop Gonzi, Malta's history was intimately tied with the Catholic faith. Truly so, he maintained that "the history of our country during the last nineteen centuries of Christian life is known to all. Neither the persecution of the Roman Emperors, nor the Eastern heresies; neither Saracen barbarism nor the cruel and terrible hatred of the Crescent succeeded in compelling Malta to deny Christ and the Religion taught by him."²³ Archbishop Gonzi frequently referred to or commented that "the people of Malta wish to remain faithful to the catholic traditions inherited from our forefathers."²⁴

Religion provided the Maltese with values, visions and purposes. It ordered the rhythm of their lives and outlined the moral borderline of their conduct.²⁵ The people's principal enjoyment and amusement were connected with their religion.²⁶ The annual village patron festivals illustrate this point vividly. The solemn entry of Archbishop Gonzi into his Cathedral Church in Mdina, symbolising the taking over of the diocese, was a source for public social events apart from the ritual involved.²⁷ Horse races were organised on the day.²⁸ As sociologist Émile Durkheim reasoned, religion strengthened human communities.²⁹ As Protestant pastor Henry Seddall noted in 1870, religious identity was one of the characteristics of the Maltese and "it discovers itself in the building of churches and chapels, and in the erection of images at street corners meant to be devoutly worshipped by the populace."³⁰ Similar conclusions were also reached ninety years later by *The Guardian's* correspondent Geoffrey Moorhouse who observed that in the Maltese islands, "... divine and saintly figures are moulded into every street corner, where every taxi has a religious icon on the dashboard, every other bus shows a scriptural quotation in place of the customary restriction on overloading, and where each dockyard workshop has a shrine to the Virgin tricked out in coloured lights..."³¹ A.J. Brown,

²³ 'Pastoral Letter of His Grace Mgr Michael Gonzi Archbishop of Malta,' in *Souvenir Programme of the XIX Centenary Celebrations of St Paul's Shipwreck on Malta, 3 -25 July 1960* (Malta, Giovanni Muscat, 1960), 13.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ Jeremy Boissevain, *Hal Farruġ: A Village in Malta* (New York, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1969), 56.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 57.

²⁷ Nicholas Joseph Doublet, 'First Solemn Entry of the Archbishop of Malta into Mdina Cathedral in 1944,' *Timesofmalta.com*, 29th March 2015, Retrieved 2nd April 2016, <https://timesofmalta.com/articles/view/first-solemn-entry-of-the-archbishop-of-malta-into-mdina-cathedral-in.562072>.

²⁸ Albert Ganado, *Judge Robert Ganado: A History of the Government Departments from 1815 and Lawyers from 1666* (Malta, Book Distributors Ltd, 2015), 101.

²⁹ Kenneth Thompson, *Émile Durkheim* (Herts, Ellis Horwood, 1982), 125.

³⁰ Quoted from Carmel Cassar, *A Concise History of Malta* (Malta, Mireva Publications, 2000), 176.

³¹ CO926/1142, Geoffrey Moorhouse, 'Mr Mintoff and the Church: The Future of Malta,' inserted in *Attitudes of the Malta Labour Party (1960-1961)*, The National Archives of the United Kingdom, Kew.

an official working at the British High Commission noted in 1967 that “since the Church here plays such a large part socially and politically, the Church’s affairs cannot be ignored.”³²

This state of affairs stemmed from the fact that in Malta’s case the inhabitants, over the centuries, forged a unique relationship with their Church to the effect that in several occurrences it became a challenging matter to discriminate between the sacred and the profane. In such a scenario, the interlacing between politics and religion was inevitable. But, as we shall see in the next chapter, not everybody accepted the interlacing between religion and politics. Niccolò Muscat,³³ an eighteenth-century Maltese secularist philosopher, Dr Goffredo Adami,³⁴ an elected member of the Council of Government in the second half of the nineteenth century, Manwel Dimech,³⁵ a left-wing nationalist and social reformer, and Dom Mintoff, a Fabian and a laicist, all advocated separation between religion and politics. What was curious was that when such personalities clashed with the Church, they still expected to have access to sacraments, sacramentals and other spiritual benefits that the Catholic institution reserved exclusively for its members. This pattern was also noted by Kerzter who studied Bologna’s Communists.³⁶

Meanwhile, over the years, the Malta Church, like its counterpart in Italy, Spain and Ireland, provided schools, hospices, hospitals, and other welfare institutions like orphanages and crèches, before the concept of a welfare state took root. It was an age when insecurity haunted people. In Malta, to quote an example, the religious confraternities were not only after the organisation of the liturgical feast of their respective titular saint or of Holy Masses for their deceased members but were the forerunners of trade unions. As Azzopardi demonstrated, there was a charitable role for these confraternities.³⁷ By the year 1960, the Malta Church led by Archbishop Gonzi had on its roll four houses for the aged with 250 inmates, three hospitals with 186 patients, and fifteen orphanages caring for almost 1,000 orphans.³⁸ The social

³² FCO 27/195, Letter from A.J. Brown to C.E. Diggins, *Maltese Labour Party and Dom Mintoff (1967-1968)*, The National Archives of the United Kingdom, Kew.

³³ Francis Ciappara, *Church-State Relations in late Eighteenth-Century Malta: Gio. Niccolò Muscat (11735-1803)* (Malta, Malta University Press, 2018), 112.

³⁴ Henry Frenzo, *Party Politics in a Fortress Colony: The Maltese Experience* (Malta, Midsea Books, 1979), 77.

³⁵ Henry Frenzo, *Europe and Empire: Culture, Politics and Identity in Malta and the Mediterranean* (Malta, Midsea Books, 2012), 102.

³⁶ David L. Kerzter, ‘Participation of Italian Communists in Catholic Italy: A Case Study,’ *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 14, (11), (1975), 4.

³⁷ Jonathan Azzopardi, *Religious Confraternities in Naxxar between 1800 and the 1970s: A Social and Religious Perspective* (BA Hons, University of Malta, 2006), 73.

³⁸ Ġużeppi Lupi, *Catholic Life in Malta* (Malta, Empire Press, 1960), 50.

dimension was a strong facet of Archbishop Gonzi's episcopate as this research project will show.

The Role of the Bishop in the Catholic Church

At this stage, a definition of the term 'bishop' is required. The word bishop derives from the Greek term *episkopos* which means overseer. The bishop, possessing "the fullness of the priesthood" is "the highest order of ministers in the Church."³⁹ The bishop of the diocese is charged with its governance. He is responsible for parishes, priests who are incardinated into his diocese, properties and assets of the diocese, lay employees, and the spiritual welfare of the faithful under his watch. Contrary to what is commonly claimed, the bishop is not a representative of the Pope in his diocese but the Vicar of Christ in the diocese he was appointed to lead.⁴⁰

In his first pastoral letter issued on 20 July 1924 addressed to his Gozo diocese, Archbishop Gonzi rejected the common perspective that the life of a bishop was easy and comfortable. Instead, he described the Ordinary's office as being hectic, bitter and dangerous.⁴¹ On taking Malta's bishopric seat, Archbishop Gonzi claimed that the bishop's role was the most difficult and dangerous task.⁴² Furthermore, he employed the metaphors of father/shepherd when describing the office of the ordinary.⁴³

The bishop wears a different attire from his flock and the rest of his clergy. The bishop's ring is regarded as an emblem of the mystical engagement of the Ordinary to his Church.⁴⁴ The Synod of Toledo held in 613 AD referred to the bishop's episcopal ring as a sign of authority.⁴⁵ The crozier symbolises the governing office of the bishop⁴⁶ but also "the staff of authority, the rod of defence against evil, the spike to spur on the weak, and the support of the Gospel for the

³⁹ E.A. Livingstone, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1986), 68.

⁴⁰ Hector Scerri, 'Id-Digriet tal-Konċilju Vatikan II dwar l-Uffiċċju Pastoral tal-Isqfijiet Christus Dominus,' *Knisja 2000, l-Isqof Sejha u Missjoni, Numru 111*, 59.

⁴¹ Pastoral letter quoted in Michael Galea and E.S. Tonna, *L-Arċisqof Gonzi, Vol. 1., op.cit.*, 78.

⁴² *L-Ewwel Ittra Pastoral ta' Mons. Mikiel Gonzi Arċisqof ta' Malta lill-Kleru u lill-Poplu tad-Djoċesi ta' Malta* (Malta, Empire Press, 1944), 3.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ Ġużeppi Lupi, *Ordni Sagri, Professjoni Reliġjuża, Żwieġ, Barkiet u Purċissjonijiet* (Malta, Kummissjoni Liturġika, 1992), 92.

⁴⁵ Charles Buttigieg, 'It-Teoloġija tal-Episkopat,' *L-Isqof Sejha u Missjoni, Knisja 2000*, Jan-Marzu 2015, 52.

⁴⁶ Ġużeppi Lupi, *Ordni Sagri, Professjoni Reliġjuża, Żwieġ, Barkiet u Purċissjonijiet, op.cit.*, 92.

Christian life.”⁴⁷ The pectoral cross reminded the bishop “to keep the cross of Christ before him.”⁴⁸ The bishop’s mitre signified his authority, dignity and wisdom.⁴⁹ The bishop’s throne in the cathedral represented his spiritual and ecclesiastical authority. The consecration of a new church was the most important religious ceremony conducted by a bishop.⁵⁰ The bishop is in due submission to the Pope’s primacy. Christians are expected “to be in union with their bishop as the Church is in concurrence with Christ.”⁵¹ As Vallier put it, the bishop “in the broadest sense of the term, [was] a local religious king.”⁵²

In 1958, the Malta Catholic Church organised for the first time the Bishop’s Day. The idea behind the initiative was to honour the bishop publicly. For instance, during the 1960 Bishop’s Day event held at St. John’s Co-Cathedral and organised by the Diocesan Junta, Professor George Xuereb contended that whenever the Bishop pronounced himself about a topic, he did not do that to provide small talk to his flock. Xuereb invited the Maltese people to obey whatever the bishops said.⁵³ During his speech, Archbishop Gonzi remarked that in society some were poisoning a section of the people against him and this segment was the category that most benefited from him.⁵⁴ The reference was to the working classes.

The Historical Development of the Mission of the Catholic Bishop

At this stage, it is essential to analyse briefly how the concept of a bishop within the Catholic Church had developed and evolved over the centuries. In the first century, Jesus (c. 4 BC-AD 30/33) preached a new religion in Judaea- a province that formed part of the Roman Empire. By the second century, thanks to political, social and cultural factors, Christianity had flourished along the Mediterranean and the more distant regions of the Roman Empire.⁵⁵ In less than two centuries, Jesus’ religion became the official religion of the said empire.

⁴⁷ Barbara Dee Baumgarten, *Vestments for all Seasons* (New York, Morehouse Publishing, 2002), 24.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 23.

⁴⁹ Charles Buttigieg, ‘It-Teoloġija tal-Episkopat,’ *L-Isqof Sejha u Missjoni, Knisja 2000, op.cit.*, 52.

⁵⁰ Anon, *Il-Knisja ta’ Hal Ghaxaq: 200 Sena Kkonsagrata* (Malta, Parroċċa Hal Ghaxaq, 1984), 29.

⁵¹ Charles Buttigieg, ‘It-Teoloġija tal-Episkopat,’ *L-Isqof Sejha u Missjoni, Knisja 2000, op.cit.*, 53.

⁵² Ivan Vallier, *Catholicism, Social Control and Modernization in Latin America* (Prentice-Hall, Eaglewood Cliffs, 1970), 86.

⁵³ *Lehen is-Sewwa*, 30th January 1960, 5.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 18.

“After the death of the founding apostles, the early Churches adopted a number of different leadership structures.”⁵⁶ Apostle Paul of Tarsus, who spread Jesus’ teachings in the first century AD, had expanded on the qualities that a bishop should possess. The right candidate “must be blameless, not arrogant, not hot-tempered, not an excessive drinker, not a bully, not greedy for money. (Titus 1:7). He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also rebuke those who contradict it. (Titus 1:9).”⁵⁷

Bishop Ignatius of Antioch, who was executed around the year 110 AD, put forward the argument that the office of the bishop was superior to the other two offices of priests and deacon.⁵⁸ Leadership was to be vested in the bishop’s hands. Therefore, Ignatius had urged Christians to “do nothing without the bishop.” (*Letter to the Trallians* 2:1–3 [A.D. 110]).⁵⁹

In the year 256 AD, Cyprian, the bishop of Carthage and an early Christian writer, referred to bishops elected through a sort of a voting system.⁶⁰ The Apostolic Constitution which was compiled by the end of the fourth century insisted that a bishop must be chosen by the people through an election.⁶¹ Fantappiè maintained that up to the fifth century the election of the bishop was a complex procedure requiring the people’s *suffragium*, the clergy’s *testiminium*, the nearby bishops’ *judicium*, and the metropolitan’s or the bishop of the mother church’s *consensus*.⁶²

Meanwhile, the Church continued to evolve, and the idea of a hierarchical organisation was taking root. Ernst Troeltsch, who studied deeply the relationship between the Church and society, had maintained, that during the Middle Ages, the Church had developed “a hierarchical structure with differences in status between the various grades of the clergy, all of whom derive

⁵⁶ Richard R. Gaillardetz, *Teaching with Authority: A Theology of the Magisterium in the Church* (Minnesota, The Liturgical Press, 1997), 35.

⁵⁷ Paul D. Feinberg, ‘The Christian and the Civil Authorities,’ *The Master's Seminary Journal*, 10, (1), (1999), 93.

⁵⁸ Carlo Fantappiè, *Storia del Diritto canonico e delle istituzioni della Chiesa, op.cit.*, (Bologna, Il Mulino, 2011), 35.

⁵⁹ ‘Ignatius to the Trallians,’ *Early Christian Writings*, Retrieved 28th August 2021, <http://www.earlychristianwritings.com/text/ignatius-trallians-hoole.html>.

⁶⁰ J. Patout Burns Jr, *Cyprian the Bishop* (London, Routledge, 2002), 156.

⁶¹ Richard R. Gaillardetz, *Teaching with Authority, op.cit.*, 37.

⁶² Carlo Fantappiè, *Storia del Diritto canonico e delle istituzioni della Chiesa, op.cit.*, 36.

their authority from the office they hold...⁶³ But another distinction on another level was also taking shape, a sharp distinction between the clergy and laity.

In 1073, Pope Gregory VII took over the leadership of the Church and pushed forward the idea of a papal monarchy asserting that the Pope can be judged by no one and that, since the Roman Church was founded by Christ, it can never err.⁶⁴ Another important development that emerged from that pontificate was that only the Pope could depose bishops and set up new bishoprics.⁶⁵ At this stage, the Popes still did not appoint the bishops themselves. During medieval times, the bishop besides his religious tasks, influenced the everyday affairs of the state. As Silvestri maintained, “in addition to his religious leadership, the bishop also had military and political power and some vassals directly under his control.”⁶⁶ By the fourteenth century, the Popes reserved to themselves the right to make all episcopal appointments.

The Council of Trent and the Role of the Bishop

The Council of Trent held between 1545 and 1563, in three different intervals, was a dramatic chapter in the history of the Catholic Church. Partially it was held as a reaction of the Catholic Church to the spreading of Protestantism in Catholic Europe but this nineteenth ecumenical council also spearheaded reform in the inner experiences of the Church and sought to curb abuses in an epoch when Christian-inspired morals needed to be restored. The Council of Trent ended simony, nepotism and pluralism. It gave particular attention to the clergy’s education establishing in every diocese the seminary. Priests could not be ordained before they reached twenty-five years of age. Men interested in joining the priesthood were to be selected and scrutinised by the bishop.

“The decisions made at Trent remained in force until Vatican II.”⁶⁷ Archbishop Gonzi’s commitments to defending the depository of faith,⁶⁸ his sense of precision in the execution of

⁶³ Quoted from Robert Towler, *Homo Religiosus: Sociological Problems in the Study of Religion* (London, Constable, 1974), 111.

⁶⁴ Michael Richard Tivey, *Defending Ideology in the Pontificate of Gregory VII* (Master of Philosophy, University of Birmingham, 2011), 89.

⁶⁵ Michael Richard Tivey, *Defending Ideology in the Pontificate of Gregory*, *op.cit.*, 105.

⁶⁶ Angelo Silvestri, *Power, Politics and Episcopal Authority: The Bishops of Cremona and Lincoln* (Cambridge, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014), 262.

⁶⁷ Anthony Grafton, Glenn W Most, and Salvatore Settis, *The Classical Tradition* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 2010), 514.

⁶⁸ Archbishop Michael Gonzi, Pastoral Letter Number 81 issued 6th February 1931.

liturgical rituals,⁶⁹ the emphasis on the Eucharist and other sacraments,⁷⁰ the priority he gave to the Seminary,⁷¹ his insistence on the catechism,⁷² and the regular cycles of pastoral visitations⁷³ were themes and issues addressed at the Council of Trent. Furthermore, the canons formulated at Trent were included in the 1917 Code of Canon Law.

Meanwhile, the Council of Trent increased the responsibilities of the bishops. The bishop was presented as the guardian of the depository of faith. His responsibilities included the interpretation of texts, the definition of morality, the performance of rituals and the anointing of new leaders in his community. Bishops, who were expected to reside in their dioceses, were to stop clerical corruption, greed, and nepotism. Bishops were never to be absent from their diocese for more than three months and not at all during the periods of Advent and Lent. To address this problem, the participants at the Trent Council demanded bishops to assign substitutes and provide them with “the appropriate part of the revenue” derived from the church when the pastor was absent.⁷⁴

The Council of Trent noted that bishops were “shepherds not oppressors, and they are to preside over their subjects but not lord it over them; they are to love them as children and as brothers and take pains by exhortation and counsel to deter them from what is unlawful so they may not be obliged, when they do wrong, to restrain them by inappropriate penalties.”⁷⁵ Trent argued that the choice of good bishops guaranteed the future of the Catholic Church and therefore that became a key prerequisite. No person was to be promoted to a bishopric position if not “born of lawful wedlock, of mature age and sober customs.”⁷⁶ Moreover, the Council of Trent warned bishops not to accept for the priesthood men who were “unsuitable, untrained, and ignorant, who have been rejected by their own bishop as incapable and unworthy.”⁷⁷ Bishops were expected to “punish the difficult and incorrigible and those who spread bad habits with severity, and expel them if need be.”⁷⁸ It was the responsibility of the bishop to see that the parish priest

⁶⁹ Taped interview Mgr Carmelo Bonavia, 5th July 2014, Birkirkara Residence, Sergio Grech Private Collection.

⁷⁰ Archbishop Michael Gonzi, Pastoral Letter Number 138 issued 20th February 1938.

⁷¹ Taped interview Mgr Aloysius Deguara, Mġarr Residence, Sergio Grech Private Collection.

⁷² Archbishop Michael Gonzi, Pastoral Letter Number 123 issued 21st February 1936.

⁷³ Michael Galea and E.S. Tonna, *L-Arċisqof Gonzi, Vol. 1, op.cit.*, 114.

⁷⁴ Robert Fastiggi, ‘The Contribution of the Council of Trent to the Catholic Reformation,’ *Perichoresis*, 18, (6), (2020), 11

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 12.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 15.

explained the power and benefit of the sacraments to the people.⁷⁹ Deep knowledge of Theology and Canon Law was also expected in a bishop to rule his diocese properly. Indeed, a University degree in these subjects was required.

The First Vatican Council and the Role of the Bishop

Three centuries after the Council of Trent, in 1869, Pope Pius IX convened the First Vatican Council in a period of “fear and insecurity wrought by the traumas emanating from the ecclesial, political and philosophical spheres.”⁸⁰ Pope Pius IX’s Council was expected to deal with the issues that troubled the Church and other governing bodies, that is to say anarchism, rationalism, communism, materialism, socialism and liberalism. In fact, the Council’s purpose was two-fold: to condemn contemporary error and to define “catholic doctrine concerning the Church of Christ.”⁸¹

Pastor Aeternus, or the *First Dogmatic Constitution on the Church of Christ*, emerged from the First Vatican Council presenting “papal primacy as of divine origin, passed from pope to pope, requiring every local Church to agree with Rome, and be under papal ‘leadership.’”⁸² All Christians had to believe “in a worldwide papal primacy which governs the universal Church.”⁸³ It was also declared that when speaking *ex-cathedra* in matters of faith or morals, the Pope was infallible.⁸⁴

Pastor Aeternus also clarified that the bishops were chosen by the Holy Spirit and that they took up the role of the apostles, a role of tending and governing their dioceses. It was added that “both clergy and faithful [...] are bound to submit to this power by the duty of hierarchical subordination and true obedience [...] [in matters concerning] the discipline and government of the Church throughout the world.”⁸⁵ This was Archbishop Gonzi’s vision of the role of a bishop. During his Episcopal Silver Jubilee feasts held in 1949, Archbishop Gonzi declared

79 Ibid., 16.

80 Kristin M Colberg, *Vatican I and Vatican II: Councils in the Living Tradition* (Minnesota, Liturgical Press, 2016), 30.

81 Peter Long, *The Rights and Responsibilities of Bishops and Theologians within the Teaching Function of the Church* (Licentiate in Canon Law, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, 2003), 73.

82 Peter Long, *The Rights and Responsibilities of Bishops and Theologians within the Teaching Function of the Church*, *op.cit.*, 73.

83 Ibid., 45.

84 Joseph Francis Kelly, *The Ecumenical Councils of the Catholic Church: A History*, *op.cit.*, 171.

85 Peter Long, *The Rights and Responsibilities of Bishops and Theologians within the Teaching Function of the Church*, *op.cit.*, 49.

that “the bishop has the duty to protect the souls from the destruction of misleading learning, to illuminate the path of heaven, and to bind and unwind.”⁸⁶ He added that his office carried the “duty to always show what is right without looking at anyone’s face.”⁸⁷ Additionally, the bishop lamented about people without conscience who were sowing the division between the flock and their shepherd.⁸⁸

The 1917 Canon Law and the Role of the Bishops

The 1917 Code of Canon Law (*Codex Iuris Canonici*) was a historic breakthrough in the history of the Catholic Church. It was promulgated on 27 May 1917 and took legal effect on 19 May 1918. It remained in force until 1983 when a new version was published by Pope St. John Paul II. The 1917 Code of Canon Law is a must to understand Archbishop Gonzi’s episcopate and his contemporary bishops. Archbishop Gonzi had obtained a doctorate in Canon Law from the Gregorian University and according to one of his chaplains Mgr John Dimech, Archbishop Gonzi kept the Canon Law books close to him on his desk for continuous reference.⁸⁹

The Pio-Benedictine Code, as it was also known, “represented the most radical revision of law that the Church had ever affected. While the Code presented an abstract and a distilled version of the Church’s juridical system, a book of principles rather than cases and details, it was rooted in the Church’s lengthy and complex history. Its critical apparatus contained over twenty-five thousand citations of former texts. At the moment of its promulgation, the Code was the most centralised and clearest system of universal legislation the Church had ever known.”⁹⁰ In fact, “the new collection of canons represented the synthesis of the Catholic Church’s long tradition of legislation, indeed spanning nearly one thousand years of legal texts.”⁹¹ Previously, the *iuris canonici* had been flexible and could be developed by the local bishop. The 1917 corpus contained “the canons of the ancient Councils, patristic sources, decretals by popes, customary usages, particular or regional law that had been received more widely, etc.”⁹² Also included were the canons of the Council of Trent and subsequent papal and Roman curial

⁸⁶ Quoted from Michael Galea and E.S. Tonna, *L-Arcisqof Gonzi, Vol, 2., op.cit.*, 88.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

⁸⁹ Letter from Mgr. G. Dimech to the present author dated 5 Jul. 2000, Sergio Grech Private Collection.

⁹⁰ Peter Long, *The Rights and Responsibilities of Bishops and Theologians within the Teaching Function of the Church, op.cit.*, 100.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

⁹² *Ibid.*

pronouncements.⁹³ In total, the 1917 code was made up of 2,414 canons arranged into five books.

Canon 336 detailed some of the duties of the bishops: “They shall be vigilant lest abuse appears in ecclesiastical discipline, especially concerning the administration of Sacraments and Sacramentals, the cult of God and of the saints, preaching the word of God, sacred indulgences, and the implementation of pious wills; they shall take care that the purity of faith and morals among the clergy and the people is preserved, and that the faithful, especially children and the unlettered, are offered the *pabulum* of Christian teaching, and that, in schools for children and young people, instruction is handed on according to principles of the Catholic religion.”⁹⁴ The bishop was also entrusted to teach and preach. According to Canon 1327, “Bishops are bound by the office of personally preaching the Gospel unless they are prohibited by a legitimate impediment; and moreover, besides pastors, they should also take help from other suitable men in pursuing the correct fulfilment of these duties in this sort of teaching.”⁹⁵

To be suitable for the post of a bishop, the candidate must be “born of a legitimate marriage..., be at least thirty years of age, be constituted in the sacred order of the presbyterate for at least five years, be of good morals, pious, zealous for souls, prudent, and outstanding in those other qualities that will make him apt for the governance of a diocese and the things that concern it,” and “have a doctoral degree or at least a licentiate [degree] in sacred theology or canon law, preferably from an athenaeum or institute of studies approved by the Holy See, or at least be truly expert in these disciplines...” (Canon 331).⁹⁶

The 1917 Code also established that a bishop could use his ordinary power to absolve somebody who would have been excommunicated (c.2314 §2).⁹⁷ Those who “perniciously” do not obey the local ordinary, or conspire against him, will be punished with the appropriate penalties and censures (c.2331 §1-2).⁹⁸

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 139.

⁹⁵ Ibid., 397.

⁹⁶ Ibid., 137.

⁹⁷ Edward N. Peters, *The 1917 Pio-Benedictine Code of Canon Law, op.cit.*, 629.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 663.

Religious education was part of the jurisdiction of the bishop. Canon 1381 dwelt upon the bishop's right to approve teachers of religion and books of religious instruction. The same canon also invoked the right and duty of the bishop to be vigilant over all schools in his territory.⁹⁹ The bishop not only had to see that doctrine contrary to faith and the moral regime was not taught in schools but he was also entitled to request the removal of teachers or books that harmed religion or morals.¹⁰⁰ The bishop was also responsible to see that there is a functioning seminary in his diocese and that he vets the candidates for the priesthood (Canon 241).¹⁰¹ This theme about Archbishop Gonzi and the role of education will be discussed in the next chapter.

Rituals, Cults and the Institutionalised Church before Second Vatican Council

Religion was manifested to the faithful through the employment of various ceremonies, manifestations, processions, pilgrimages, feasts and holidays, rituals and rites that were performed regularly. As Durkheim concluded, rituals were the rules of conduct that prescribed how a man should behave in the presence of sacred objects and how humans may reach out to all that is sacred through prayer, liturgy, dance or song.¹⁰² Rites, rituals and sacraments united the congregations with their spiritual leaders. There were rules on how these were to be performed and in specific scenarios. As shown earlier, through the 1917 Code of Canon Law, the duties of the bishop included corrective measures in the case of infringements of such regulations. Furthermore, as Bonnici noted, "bishops showed solicitude towards the sanctification of the people of God by applying the Sacrifice of the Mass *pro populo*. Bishops celebrated liturgical functions in the cathedral church, parish churches and other churches wearing the mitre and carrying the crosier... bishops visited the parishes to administer the sacrament of Confirmation to adolescents..."¹⁰³ The Counter-Reformation had restated the usefulness of invoking saints.¹⁰⁴ Cassar argued that by the early seventeenth century, the cult

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 411.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 113.

¹⁰² Catherine Bell, *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1997), 24.

¹⁰³ Francis Bonnici, *The Academic Formation of Maltese Priests in the University of Malta 1838-1938* (Malta, Book Distributors Ltd, 2019), 437.

¹⁰⁴ Carmel Cassar, 'The Maltese Festa: A Historical and Cultural Perspective,' in George Mifsud Chircop, (ed.), *First International Conference of the SIEF Working Group on the Ritual Year in Association with the Department of Maltese, University of Malta Junior College, Msida, Malta: Proceedings, Malta, March 20-24, 2005* (Malta, Publishers Enterprises Group, 2006), 46.

of St. Paul developed into a symbol of Maltese identity.¹⁰⁵ By the early eighteenth century, in Malta, the patrons of various parish churches were venerated at the parochial level.¹⁰⁶

In order to meet the demands imposed by religious rituals, several articles needed to be produced. As Sagona showed in the case of Malta, the period between 1850 and 1900 witnessed a massive production of decorative works for churches manufactured both locally and abroad, intended to be used during titular feasts and specific functions.¹⁰⁷ During the pastoral visitations, the bishop was obliged to examine the state of the objects that were used during the liturgy.¹⁰⁸ Archbishop Gonzi observed rites and rituals very attentively to the minutest detail. According to Mgr Bonavia, one of Archbishop Gonzi's masters of ceremonies, on a particular ordination rite, Archbishop Gonzi called a deacon back since, during the laying of hands, he was distracted and he, therefore, repeated the action.¹⁰⁹ On 3 August 1962, Archbishop Gonzi scolded the Lija parish priest Reverend Benedett Fsadni that "*la processione nella festa titolare del SS Salvatore faccia ritorno in Chiesa non più tardi delle nove di sera.*"¹¹⁰ Through his secretary, Archbishop Gonzi had rebuked Mr Karm Agius, the organiser of the secondary feast of St Joseph in Ghaxaq, for turning the statue of the saint to face the crowd whilst the procession was making its way back into the Church. Turning statues in such a manner were not allowed in the case of secondary feasts.¹¹¹

Most of the rites and rituals were held in a church. The village's most important property was the parish church. Villagers felt extremely possessive and proud of their parish church.¹¹² But there were instances when rites and rituals were held outside. For instance, impressive crowds attended the annual Christ the King manifestations and the period of Archbishop Gonzi's episcopate was not an exception in this regard. Other occasions that attracted massive crowds included the Eucharistic Congress of 1913, the St. Anthony of Padua Manifestation in 1946,

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 68.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 47.

¹⁰⁷ Mark Sagona, *The Ecclesiastical Decorative Arts in Malta 1850-1900: Style and Ornament* (Ph.D., University of Malta, 2014), 9.

¹⁰⁸ Taped interview Patri Diego Theuma, Capuchin Priory Xemxija, 18th September 2015, Sergio Grech Private Collection.

¹⁰⁹ Taped interview Mgr Carmelo Bonavia, Private Residence, Birkirkara, 5th July 2014, Sergio Grech Collection.

¹¹⁰ Letter from Mgr Arturo Bonnici dated 3rd August 1962 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza Gonzi 1962, Vol. LVI*.

¹¹¹ Letter from Mgr Arturo Bonnici to Mr Karm Agius dated 15th April 1969 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza Gonzi 1969, Vol. LXIII*.

¹¹² Jeremy Boissevain, *Hal Farruġ: A Village in Malta, op.cit.*, 63.

and the Pauline Centenary Celebrations in 1960. Church dignitaries from abroad presided over these manifestations. But there were other sorts of manifestations. Demonstrations were also organised when Archbishop Gonzi came from abroad¹¹³ or when he was visiting parishes.¹¹⁴

Such events proved Durkheim correct when he asserted that ritual produced and maintained solidarity. Rituals reinforced social integrity and the collective sentiment and, as a result, it was the right avenue for the maintenance of the *status quo*.¹¹⁵ It was “through ritual that the group became conscious of itself, and therefore whenever the group came together in ritual celebration through symbols or collective representations, the community was reconstituted.”¹¹⁶ Furthermore, rituals and rites contributed to the enforcement of an individual’s identity. Festas, Good Friday processions, coronation ceremonies of statues and sacred images and other ceremonies were instrumental in boosting this identity factor. For instance, Archbishop Gonzi did not shy away when the Marsa community showed interest to have a statue figuring the Holy Trinity. In fact, Archbishop Gonzi wrote and presented a design to the Sacred Congregation of Rites, showing “*il padre eterno come un uomo anziano, il figlio come un uomo di circa 40 anni e lo Spirito Santo come una colomba, poggiate le tre figure sopra il globo mondiale.*”¹¹⁷ Archbishop Gonzi added that in the parish church of Senglea, “*una statua come la su descritta si porta da moltissimi anni in pubblica processione annualmente.*”¹¹⁸

Rituals demanded particular vocabulary, vestments, settings, strategies and procedures that every Church leader was keen to preserve. Priests wore the cassock with thirty-three buttons down the front representing the years of Christ’s life. For the celebration of mass, the priest wore the alb, the chasuble and the stole. Before Vatican Council II, priests also wore the maniple. The entire set of priestly garments included the burse to incorporate the corporal and a veil for covering the chalice. Archbishop Gonzi insisted that the priests wore the hat as part

¹¹³ ‘Il-Qalb tal-Veru Malta: Id-Dimostrazzjoni ta’ nhar il-Hadd,’ *Lehen is-Sewwa*, 7th October 1959. 1.

¹¹⁴ ‘Dimostrazzjoni Kolossali lill-Arcisqof fil-Hamrun,’ *Il-Berqa*, 17th July 1961, 1.

¹¹⁵ Robert Bellah, *Émile Durkheim on Morality and Society* (Chicago, Chicago University Press, 1973), 159.

¹¹⁶ Kristin Norget, “Ritual,” in Raymond Scupin, (ed.), *Religion and Culture: An Anthropological Focus* (New York, Prentice Hall, 2000), 83.

¹¹⁷ Letter from Archbishop Michael Gonzi to Cardinal Benno Walter Gut dated 17th March 1968 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza Gonzi 1968, Vol. LXII*.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*

of their daily attire and he would reprimand those who defied that order.¹¹⁹ To be fair, when Vatican II demanded that some attire that had to do with the liturgy be removed, Archbishop Gonzi did not persist in using it.¹²⁰

Churches were expected to have some basic pieces of furniture to enhance the liturgy and rituals. Ultimately the life of a churchgoer was organised around the altar, the pulpit, the tabernacle, the baptismal font, altars, and confessionals. The tabernacle was the most important piece of furniture. It occupied a prominent place within the church. It was placed in the middle of the altar. It had to be “securely closed on all sides... and guarded so well that there was no danger of profanation.”¹²¹

The bells were another prominent feature in a church. It was commonly believed that bells had the power to stop winds, tempests and storms.¹²² Bells had a timekeeping function and called for prayers at Pater Noster, Angelus, Ave Maria, Tal-Imwiet, and so on.¹²³ Even in distant Russia, bells had their political implications to the point that “Bolshevik activists detested bell ringing because it encouraged villagers to organise their work and leisure around a resounding proclamation of Christian liturgical time, rather than the regime's own calendrical schemas and conceptions of time.”¹²⁴ Bishop Gaetano Pace Forno in 1865 issued a decree indicating when bells could be rung, abolishing ringing for the Viaticum, early morning and late evening ringing and the so-called “*suoni detti di convenienza*.”¹²⁵ The people protested and saw this as an interference with their traditions. They argued that the bishop had no jurisdiction over the bell towers since bells were bought with their own money.¹²⁶ During Archbishop Gonzi's episcopate, the Curia published a circular letter dated 20 January 1945 detailing no less than eighteen occasions when bells could be pealed.¹²⁷

¹¹⁹ Taped interview Fr Marius Zerafa, Dominican Convent, Sliema, 7th June 2016, Sergio Grech Private Collection.

¹²⁰ Taped interview Mgr Victor Zammit Mckeon, Office of Church Homes, Valletta, Sergio Grech Private Collection.

¹²¹ Callistus Smith, *A Practical Commentary on the Code of Canon Law, Volume One, The Second Book, op.cit.*, 75.

¹²² Anton Buttigieg, *L-Isbah Żmien ta' Hajti* (Malta, Klabb Kotba Maltin, reprint 2013), 111.

¹²³ Robert Cassar, *The Bells of Malta Vol. 1* (MA, University of Malta, 2005), 11.

¹²⁴ Richard L. Hernández, 'Sacred Sound and Sacred Substance: Church Bells and the Auditory Culture of Russian Villages during the Bolshevik Velikii Perelom,' *American Historical Review*, 12, (2004), 11.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 13.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*

¹²⁷ 'Regolamenti Ġenerali għad-Daqq tal-Qniepen,' Ċirkulari 27, 20 ta' Jannar 1945.

The Role of the Parish Priest within the Catholic Hierarchy before Vatican II

An important role within the Catholic Church in the period under study was that of the parish priest who was the bridge between the faithful and the diocesan bishop and an important personality within society. The role of the parish priest was determined by Canon Law but his role was not limited only to the spiritual realm. As Bezzina put it, “the parish priests, as official representatives of the bishop, occupied a position of great importance in the community. In the spiritual field, the bishop held all authority affecting parishioners... he was also the informal leader in the secular field.”¹²⁸ For his parishioners, the parish priest was the lawyer, the banker and the business advisor. For instance, Parish Priest Rev. Joseph Zarb of Żabbar put pressure on the authorities to open a school and a police station in nearby Xgħajra.¹²⁹

It transpired that there was a strong link between Archbishop Gonzi and his parish priest’s cohort. Archbishop Gonzi regularly met the parish priests at his Curia in Valletta. Moreover, Archbishop Gonzi conducted regularly the canonical visitations in the parishes which were intended “for the preservation of healthy orthodox doctrine, the protection of good morals, the correction of the deprived and the promotion of peace, innocence, piety and discipline among the people and clergy...” (Canon 343).¹³⁰

Canon 460 of the 1917 Code of Canon Law defined the parish priest as the one who cared for souls.¹³¹ “The pastor must celebrate divine offices, administer sacraments to the faithful... know his sheep and prudently correct the erring, assist with paternal charity the poor and destitute, and apply the utmost care in the Catholic instruction of the young (Canon 467).”¹³² Canon 469 listed other duties to the parish priests: “the pastor shall be diligently vigilant lest anything that is contrary to faith and morals be given in his parish, especially in public and private schools, and he shall foster or start works of charity, faith and piety.”¹³³

¹²⁸ Joseph Bezzina, *Religion and Politics in a Crown Colony. The Gozo-Malta Story. 1798-1864, op.cit.*, 101.

¹²⁹ Letter from Rev J. Zarb to the Lieutenant Governor dated 6th October 1945, *Ġrajjet, Attivitajiet, Opri, Vol. 111*, Żabbar Parish Church Archives, Żabbar Sanctuary Museum.

¹³⁰ Edward N. Peters, *The 1917 Pio-Benedictine Code of Canon Law* (San Francisco, Ignatius, 2008), 138.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, 117.

¹³² *Ibid.*, 180.

¹³³ *Ibid.*

The parish priest was expected “to produce a book on the status of the soul.”¹³⁴ This book or register was also known as the *status animarum*. As Fiorini put it, “the purpose of this register was and still is the keeping by the parish priest of a record, literally, of the “state of the souls” of his parishioners. In particular, information is sought as to the marital status of each and every one of his flock and whether the precept of yearly confession and communion during Paschal tide is adhered to... Canon Law imposes severe penalties by the Ordinary for parish priests who neglect to keep parish records. Furthermore, given that the parish priest is exercising the function of a notary public, it is understandable that the Law exacts that an authentic copy of the books be sent yearly to the Curia. Exception, however, is made in the case of *status animarum*. This is perhaps due to the confidential nature of its contents or, more probably, because it is of more immediate use to the parish priest himself than to anybody else.”¹³⁵

The parish priest “through his preaching and admonition, defines, interprets, and enforces the moral code of the Church, which has become that of his parishioners.”¹³⁶ His residence was to be near the parish church.¹³⁷ In one of his early letters, as archbishop of Malta, Archbishop Gonzi instructed Bormla’s Vice-Parish Priest “*vada ad abitar in una casa vicino al centro della città.*”¹³⁸ The post of the parish priest was so significant that there were periods when the British authorities had a say in the approval of parish priests.¹³⁹ There was a particular ritual, usually presided by the Vicar-General, to be conducted when a parish priest took possession of his new parish.¹⁴⁰

Parish priests were chosen through concours. For instance, in December 1962, there was a vacancy for the post of archpriest of Żejtun, a village in south-east Malta. Three members of the clergy were interested to fill that role. The candidates were Reverend Pantaleone Orland, who was then parish priest of nearby Marsaxlokk, Reverend Carmelo Bianco, who had a doctorate in Sacred Theology, and Rev Lorenzo Mifsud, a lecturer in Theology. The last two contenders lacked experience in the pastoral area. Reverend Pantaleone Orland scored eight

¹³⁴ Ibid., 181.

¹³⁵ Stanley Fiorini, ‘Status Animarum I: A unique Source for 17th and 18th-century Maltese Demography,’ *Melita Historica*, 8, (4), (1983), 327.

¹³⁶ Jeremy Boissevain, *Hal Farruġ: A Village in Malta, op.cit.*, 63.

¹³⁷ Callistus Smith, *A Practical Commentary on the Code of Canon Law, Volume One, The Second Book, op.cit.*, 192.

¹³⁸ Letter from Archbishop Michael Gonzi dated 9th February 1944 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza Gonzi 1944, Vol. XLII*.

¹³⁹ Joe Abela, *Marsaxlokk: A Hundred Years Ago* (Malta, Marsaxlokk Kunitat Festi Ċentinarji, 1997), 43.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

out of ten points in doctrine matters whilst the other two candidates were given nine marks. In *idoneità*, Pantaleone Orland scored the highest marks. The examining board recommended Reverend Pantaleone Orland for the post concluding that the latter was “*molto ben visto dal clero di Żejtun.*”¹⁴¹ The parish of Żejtun yielded for its archpriest the sum of £400, a considerable amount considering that parishes like Marsaxlokk returned very low incomes for their spiritual leaders.¹⁴² Reverend Orland had spent ten years as parish priest of Marsaxlokk.

Lay organisations like the Catholic Action, the M.U.S.E.U.M., the Legion of Mary, and so on, which were all active within the parish domain, were important co-partners of parish priests. As Poggi argued, these ‘lay apostles’ took personal responsibility for the Church’s welfare, helped the clergy to spread God’s word, and asserted and defended the truth vested in the Church.¹⁴³ Within these lay groups, close links to the hierarchy were stressed, often through the person of a spiritual or moral advisor appointed to each group by the bishop. For Archbishop Gonzi, the M.U.S.E.U.M. organisation was “an active, public, highly-spirited participant in the moral and civic progress of our country... a constructive and moral force that deserves our support...”¹⁴⁴ In this case scenario, the archbishop asked Governor Laycock for conversion “from temporary lease to a perpetual long lease of their (M.U.S.E.U.M.) headquarters at Blata l-Bajda.”¹⁴⁵

The Second Vatican Council’s Position on Bishops

The Second Vatican Council was indisputably the major theological event of the Roman Catholic Church in the twentieth century. From the Second Vatican Council emerged a Church that wanted to engage with the world that was changing fast politically, socially, economically and technologically.

A century before Vatican II, the Catholic Church had itself been seen as a fortress against the world. As O’Malley argued “after the definitions of papal primacy and infallibility at Vatican Council I, some theologians predicted that there would never be another council because it

¹⁴¹ Letter from Archbishop Michael Gonzi in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza Gonzi 1962, Vol. LVI.*

¹⁴² Taped interview Mgr Lawrenz Mifsud, Private Residence, Siġġiewi 30th June 2015, Sergio Grech Private Collection.

¹⁴³ Gianfranco Poggi, *Catholic Action in Italy: The Sociology of a Sponsored Organisation* (Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1967), 11.

¹⁴⁴ Letter from Archbishop Michael Gonzi to Governor Robert Laycock dated 8th November 1960 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza Gonzi 1960, Vol. LIV.*

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

seemed to them that now the pope would solve all the problems.”¹⁴⁶ Pope John XXIII, who called the Council, made it clear that this exercise “was not principally to be concerned with repeating what was already secure Catholic doctrine, and neither was it to propose condemnation of errors. The bishops were urged not to indulge in an attitude of gloom towards the modern world but to consider whether God was not introducing a new moment of human history.”¹⁴⁷ Vatican II decided that the Church should relinquish “the claim of being the one true Church and officially renounce its claims to power in relation to nation-states.”¹⁴⁸

The Second Vatican Council’s main teachings about the call and the mission of the bishop are to be found in the constitutions *Lumen Gentium* and *Christus Dominus*. In both documents, the mission of the bishop was summed up as a three-fold ministry: to teach, sanctify and govern. That was a distinct shift from the past. In *Lumen Gentium*, the following text was employed whilst referring to the bishop’s three-fold office: “teachers of doctrine, priests for sacred worship and ministers of government.”¹⁴⁹ This meant that the bishops teach and defend faith, impel the Church towards Christ and “guide and govern the Church in ways that draw people together around the Truth that is Christ and at all times in love.”¹⁵⁰ Rush maintained that this three-fold ministry meant that “the preaching and teaching office of the hierarchy must serve to facilitate the participation by all the faithful in the preaching and teaching of “the faith once delivered to all the saints” (Jude 3, quoted in LG 12). The sanctifying office of the hierarchy must serve to facilitate the participation by all the faithful in the church’s mission to be a sacrament of Christ’s sanctifying presence in the world. The kingly office of the hierarchy must serve to facilitate the participation by all the faithful in the reign of Christ who came to serve and not to be served.”¹⁵¹ In *Lumen Gentium*, it was also declared that the three-fold office is not restricted only to the bishops but priests and deacons participate too.¹⁵²

¹⁴⁶ John W., O’Malley, *What Happened at Vatican II* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2008), 17-18.

¹⁴⁷ Peter Long, *The Rights and Responsibilities of Bishops and Theologians within the Teaching Function of the Church*, *op.cit.*, 25.

¹⁴⁸ Melissa Wilde, ‘Who Wanted What and Why at the Second Vatican Council,’ *Sociologica*, 1/2007, 1.

¹⁴⁹ *Lumen Gentium*, para 20. Retrieved on 13th April 2022, https://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19641121_lumen-gentium_en.html. *Christus Dominus* para 12-14, 15, 16. Retrieved on 13th April 2022.

https://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decree_19651028_christus-dominus_en.html.

¹⁵⁰ ‘Teach, Govern And Sanctify The Lord’s People,’ *Archbishop of Atlanta Wilton D. Gregory*, *Published October 1, 2009*, <https://georgiabulletin.org/commentary/2009/10/teach-govern-sanctify-lords-people/>

¹⁵¹ Ormond Rush, *The Vision of Vatican II: Its Fundamental Principles* (Minnesota, Liturgical Press, 2019), 294.

¹⁵² *Lumen Gentium*, Paragraph 28, *op.cit.*

According to *Lumen Gentium*, bishops had to govern “by counsel, persuasion and example [as well as] by authority and sacred power which they make use of only to build up their flock in truth and holiness.”¹⁵³ Still, “the papacy must keep watch that every bishop fulfils his task dutifully and that the papacy as such (therefore, not as the bishop of that diocese) has the right and the duty to interfere in a diocese if a bishop is incapable of acting or if there is some other necessity to do so.”¹⁵⁴

The constitution *Christus Dominus* stipulated that “as legitimate successors of the Apostles and members of the episcopal college, bishops should realise that they are bound together and should manifest a concern for all the churches. For by divine institution and the rule of the apostolic office, each one together with all the other bishops is responsible for the Church... They should especially be concerned about those parts of the world where the word of God has not yet been proclaimed or where the faithful, particularly because of the small number of priests, are in danger of departing from the precepts of the Christian life, and even of losing the faith itself (para 6).”¹⁵⁵ Bishops were also expected “to devote themselves to those who have strayed in any way from the path of truth or are ignorant of the Gospel of Christ and His saving mercy until finally, all men walk “in all goodness and justice and truth” (Eph. 5:9) (Para 11).”¹⁵⁶

At this stage, one should comment on Vatican II’s three-fold ministry of the bishop as envisaged by Archbishop Gonzi. As will be explained in more detail in the sixth chapter, the Malta Church, under Archbishop Gonzi’s watch, embraced the renewal spirit of the Second Vatican Council and the main changes demanded by the mentioned Council were enacted. Not only the new structures in the administration of the Church were introduced, but Archbishop Gonzi also founded new parishes, a pastoral plan for the diocese was drawn, the bulettini tat-tqarbin – a source of division - were discarded, and new methods of evangelisation were adopted. His commitment to the teaching role, as defined by *Lumen Gentium* (para. 25) and *Christus Dominus* (para. 13) never wavered and this could be observed during the different phases of his more than fifty years episcopate employing from time to time different vehicles like pastoral letters, homilies, speeches in various occasions, pastoral visitations, and so on. Through his example and the administration of the sacraments, Archbishop Gonzi sanctified his Church.

¹⁵³ Branson Shaffer, ‘Vatican II: The Radical Shift to Ecumenism,’ *CLA Journal*, 2, (2014), 62.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

Undeniably, Archbishop Gonzi was a shepherd of his flock. But his model of governing the Church after Vatican II was ambiguous and complex. On one hand, along his episcopate, Archbishop Gonzi made essential reforms for the Church he was asked to lead both in Gozo and Malta. “In Malta, he worked for the moral progress of the clergy and the people through his piety and doctrine and his organisation had the effect of nurturing a wise and disciplined clergy, aware of its mission and decided to overcome all obstacles to the continuation of the said mission.”¹⁵⁷ Archbishop Gonzi championed the rights of the working classes and in terse and tense moments, he was their spokesperson. Truly so, he was a man of action. For instance, Archbishop Gonzi noticed the lack of adequate homes for the working classes and he provided one hundred apartments to address that gap in social housing. He was a catalyst for the reforms in the area of managing the Church’s property. As stated, Archbishop Gonzi enacted the major reforms requested by Vatican II.

But it seems that he could not understand the concept that, since Vatican II, the Church had stopped regarding herself as the hierarchical *societas perfecta*. He did not want to leave his bishopric office. Archbishop Gonzi opposed the bishop’s retirement age of 75 during the Second Vatican Council. In fact, Archbishop Gonzi stayed on to lead the diocese but to be fair with papal consent. But managing change at this particular juncture became a difficult ordeal. This explains for instance the reasons why in issues like the forging of the Independence and the Republic constitutions and in matters like the introduction of civil marriage, the Vatican took over and negotiated in his stead. As this thesis will argue, Archbishop Gonzi’s episcopate occurred in a transitional era where change ran through the whole period of his episcopate but there were bouts of time where change seemed uncontrollable. Those particular points in local and international history in the period were evolving fast and that was also putting pressure on the episcopate rather than the episcopate influencing the course of history. The people’s table of values was changing and secularisation was leaving its mark.

Conclusion

This chapter created the ambience and the context in which Archbishop Gonzi mostly led the Malta Church. It was a period of time when religion, institution and religious practice were

¹⁵⁷ Unpublished manuscript Mgr John Dimech, Perit Joe Dimech Private Collection.

organised to the minutest detail through the Code of Canon Law. Canon Law expanded on the duties of a bishop but in some cases, it also happened that some bishops had a diverse model of what the Church envisaged even if they ‘toed’ the line. The historical approach outlined how over the centuries the role of the bishop evolved and how meanwhile the Church evolved into a hierarchical organisation. This was the only arrangement that Archbishop Gonzi knew and was expected to hold to. He felt duty-bound to defend the ecclesiological model that his formation had directed him to defend. But this was also a transitional period. The Church’s role in society commenced being questioned not only locally but also on the international scene where liberal waves transformed themselves into governments that were hostile to the Church. The Church itself would embrace change thanks to the Second Vatican Council, changing also the way it considered that she and her ministers should execute the bishopric office.

CHAPTER THREE

RELIGION, POLITICS, IDEOLOGY AND ACTIVISM: POINTS OF CONSENT AND DISSENT

Political scientist David H. Levine described the relationship between religion and politics in Latin America as “both mutual and multifaceted; mutual because religion and politics have evolved together over the years, taking material and symbolic support from each other, and multifaceted because it embraces inter-institutional conflict and accommodation as well as more subtle and elusive exchanges whereby religious and political orders gave legitimacy and moral authority to each other. In this process, religious notions of hierarchy, authority and obedience reflected and reinforced the pattern of existing social and political arrangements to such an extent that the two orders often seemed indistinguishable.”¹

Levine’s analysis could be easily employed for investigating religion and politics in Malta where both domains have developed on and influenced each other to the point that, as Boissevain argued, “in Malta it was quite impossible to classify many institutions as either religious or secular.”² As stated, during the course of Maltese history, very few had disputed the intertwining of religion and politics. The alliance between the two domains was generally accepted, encouraged and seen as a fruitful exercise. What surprised observers was the fact that generally the Malta Church’s active role in Maltese civilian society was accepted, encouraged and seen as a norm even by the educated class. In fact, a survey carried among Maltese university students as late as 1968 – a period when European university undergraduates were daily being mobilised to protest against the establishment – showed that 86% of the respondents still agreed that “the Church... has the right to speak out on scientific, cultural and political matters.”³

Daniel H. Levine, ‘Religion and Politics, Politics and Religion: An Introduction,’ *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs*, 21, (1), (1979), 5.

² Jeremy Boissevain, *Hal Farrug: A Village in Malta*, *op.cit.*, 61.

³ *Malta News*, 1st April 1968, 12.

The Place of Religion in Malta

Over the years, diverse models of Church and State relationship were articulated. But these models depended on time and space and were far from fixed points. Scholars advanced several explanations for these changes but, as Mayrl argued, “there is little consensus about how and why Church-State relations change, and the mechanisms leading to these changes remain substantially undertheorised.”⁴ Reasons forwarded for change included economic development, political growth, the rise of anticlerical societies and conservative movements.⁵

Eberle, for instance, presented three models regarding Church and State relations. The first model was that of the established Church where faith was the official religion of the State.⁶ The second was the cooperation model where the State provided “the structure to help religion.”⁷ Under the third model, Church and State maintained their independence from each other and religion was seen as only a private matter.⁸

In the case of Malta, there could be only one model: the established Church model. Lutheran Protestant theologian Paul Tillich’s description of Germany in 1959 in his *Theology of Culture*, that is to say that the culture of the people is their religion and religion is their culture, fits for Malta also.⁹ In Malta’s case, the efficiency or failure of the model was also subject to a number of other facts that conditioned the environment. First of all, Malta was not a State up to 1964 and it depended on the will of the mother country as to which model fitted most its imperial ambitions. In this circumstance, the position advantaged the Malta Church since religion itself was not a priority for the British coloniser. In fact, the British never encouraged, at least on an official level, the spread of Protestantism in Malta.¹⁰

But there were some questions like the choice of a new bishop when the seat became vacant which were of interest to the British Empire. For instance, in 1880, Governor Arthur Borton (1878-1884) blocked the accession of Mgr Antonio Buhagiar as bishop of Malta since the latter

⁴ Damon Mayrl, ‘Why do Church-State Relations Change? Politics, Institutions and Federal Funding for Parochial Schools in Australia and America, 1945-1985,’ Retrieved on 10th January 2017, <http://www.irle.berkeley.edu/culture/papers/mayrl09.pdf>, 2.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Edward Eberle, *Church and State in Western Society: Established Church, Cooperation and Separation* (Surrey, Ashgate, 2011), 3.

⁷ Ibid., 3.

⁸ Ibid., 4.

⁹ Peter Tillich, *Theology of Culture* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1959), 42.

¹⁰ Frans Ciappara, *M.A. Vassalli 1764-1829: An Enlightened Maltese Reformer* (Malta, Midsea Books, 2014), 118.

was a *protégé* of Cardinal Charles Lavigerie, the primate of Africa.¹¹ In his stead, pro-imperialist Mgr Pietro Pace (1889-1914) was transferred from the See of Gozo to that of Malta.¹² But, generally speaking, good relations prevailed and the Malta Church, unlike Maltese politicians, felt protected. Miss Mabel Strickland, the Progressive Constitutional Party's leader, observed that, unlike the one in Cyprus, the (Catholic) Church in Malta was "completely loyal."¹³ Archbishop Gonzi himself had told Governor Robert Laycock (1954-1959) that the Malta Church's loyalty to the mother country was "unshakeable."¹⁴ This loyalty theme will be discussed in the fifth chapter of this research project.

In Malta's case, the role played by the clergy in politics was another key factor in designing the Church and State model. In 1885, when Archbishop Gonzi was born, as will be shown later, the Malta Church played an active role in politics. Her ministers were free to contest the political elections for the Council of Government when the electoral principle was introduced in the Maltese colony. In fact, in the first election held in Malta in 1849, three ecclesiastics were elected by the thin minority which had the right to vote.¹⁵ A convincing majority of those allowed to vote in the 1870 referendum voted in favour of priests contesting the elections.¹⁶ The British's response to the result was a letter patent stipulating that no more than two men of religion could be members in the council at the same time. Other factors that influenced the Church-State model also included the ideological belief of the respective political parties. Over the years, it became a custom for the local political parties to insert a clause in their political manifestos declaring their religious inspiration and vocation as also their commitment not to harm the Church and its interests.¹⁷

On the eve of an election, the Maltese bishops felt the need to issue a pastoral letter by virtue of which they instructed their flock on voting procedures. For the 1947 elections, which were

¹¹ Henry Frendo, *Party Politics in a Fortress Colony: The Maltese Experience* (Malta, Midsea Books, reprinted 2013), 40.

¹² Francis Azzopardi, 'The Appointment of Bishop A.M. Buhagiar as Administrator Apostolic of Malta,' *Proceedings of History Week, The Malta Historical Society*, (1981), 97.

¹³ CO 926/296, Letter from Miss Mabel Strickland to Prime Minister Harold Macmillan dated 9th February 1957 in *Attitudes of the Roman Catholic Church to Integration in Malta*, The National Archives of the United Kingdom, Kew.

¹⁴ CO 926/296, Telegram from Governor Robert Laycock to the Secretary of State for the Colonies Alan Lennox-Boyd dated 28th June 1956 in *Attitudes of the Roman Catholic Church to Integration in Malta*, The National Archives of the United Kingdom, Kew.

¹⁵ Arthur Bonnici, *History of the Church in Malta, Vol. 3, op.cit.*, 267.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 268.

¹⁷ See for instance '1953 MLP Electoral Programme' in *Malta Elections: A Collection of Electoral Data for the Maltese Islands*, Retrieved on 28th February 2017, http://www.um.edu.mt/__data/assets/pdf_file/0006/180483/MLPElectionManifesto1953.pdf.

the first of their sort after the Second World War, Archbishop Gonzi more or less repeated the universal Church's teaching about the role of the Church in politics and appealed to voters to consider the candidates' "private lives, as well as their religious and moral qualities" before casting their vote.¹⁸ Voters were also reminded that they had an obligation to vote. The elected team was expected by the Church to "safeguard in all sincerity the morality of the public in a way worthy of a Catholic country..."¹⁹ Archbishop Gonzi insisted that "the Church keeps herself out of political parties and does not condemn them as long as they do not go against the principles or the interests of religion."²⁰ The Church "only wants and requires that politics should be based on the teachings of Christ."²¹

Archbishop Gonzi's Formation Period

At this stage, a consideration of Archbishop Gonzi's formative years is mandatory since it was during that period that his future visions about religion and politics were formed. Historians and philosophers over the past centuries have debated the role, if any, played by the individual in determining the course of history. Ultimately, one cannot deny the fact that Archbishop Gonzi influenced the fate of society as a result of his dominant position. But it was also true that the forces that operated within the society in which he was born and bred were key arbitrators to influence his course of actions. So Archbishop Gonzi was also a product of his own times.

Archbishop Gonzi was born and bred in a working class family in 1885. At this point in time, the British were then adamant in pursuing an Anglicisation policy. The mentioned issue divided the colonised Maltese in two factions: the pro-British and the pro-Italians. In 1880, the Partito Nazionale was born. According to Bezzina, the language question, resulting from the mentioned Anglicisation policy, and the foundation of the Partito Nazionale were two factors that had led to an increase in clerical participation in politics.²²

As Frenzo remarked, between 1888 and 1898, "dramatic leadership took changes."²³ Advocate Fortunato Mizzi retired from politics but came back in 1898, one of his very first acts being the

¹⁸ Special Diocesan Commission, *The Quarrel of the Malta Labour Party with the Church* (Malta, Empire Press, 1966), 24.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 23

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² Joseph Bezzina, "Church and State in an Island Colony," in Victor Mallia Milanese, *The British Colonial Experience 1800-1964: The Impact on Maltese Society* (Malta, Mireva Publications, 1998), 63.

²³ Henry Frenzo, *Party Politics in a Fortress Colony*, *op.cit.*, 61.

suggestion of an ordinance stating that Italian was to be “the language of communication in every public educational system.”²⁴ Gerald Strickland became chief secretary and acted as if he were the *de facto* governor of Malta. He was aided by the fact that “he had to work with governors whose stay in Malta was limited.”²⁵ Mgr Pietro Pace was chosen as Malta’s Archbishop. During his tenure, the Vatican and Great Britain had discussed two important issues that had divided the opinions of the Malta Church and the British administrators – the episcopal appointments and mixed marriages. From the Simmons-Rampolla agreement it transpired that “the Pope... accepted to consult Britain before making episcopal appointments” and it was agreed that in Malta mixed marriages “would be invalid unless celebrated in accordance with Tridentine decrees.”²⁶ The agreement disappointed Dr Mizzi as Governor Lintorn Simmons was an enemy of his, and he, therefore, campaigned against it in his newspaper. This led Archbishop Pace to excommunicate the newspaper, but Mizzi quickly changed the newspaper’s name to go on with his criticism.²⁷

Archbishop Gonzi’s father Giuseppe (1840-1935) was employed at the Dockyard with “maximum wages, 5 shillings a day.”²⁸ The upbringing ambience of Archbishop Gonzi was very religious and, as a young child, he was a dedicated altar boy giving his services even at the 4 a.m. mass on Sundays.²⁹ Archbishop Gonzi was baptised in St Lawrence Collegiate Church at Vittoriosa but his family attended religious services at the Dominican Community in the mentioned locality.³⁰ His mother’s prayer book accompanied him throughout his life.³¹ When Archbishop Gonzi was five years old, the Gonzi family had moved from Vittoriosa to Kalkara because his father suffered from Maltese fever (“deni rqi”).³² When Archbishop Gonzi was ordained a priest, Kalkara was his first pastoral field and this maritime city would remain close to his heart till the very end. When Archbishop Gonzi was nine years old, he received the confirmation sacrament from Archbishop Pietro Pace. During this period, he used to say mass, organise processions for his peers, and his “toys” were catholic saint statues.

Archbishop Gonzi knew his formation to post-Risorgimento seminaries and universities during the pontificates of Popes Leo XIII (1878-1903) and Pius X (1903-1914). That was an epoch

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid., 62.

²⁸ Michael Galea and Emmanuel S. Tonna, *L-Arcisqof Gonzi, Vol 1., op.cit.*, 13.

²⁹ Ibid., 14.

³⁰ Unpublished manuscript Rev. John Dimech, Perit Joseph Dimech Private Collection.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

when the Roman Catholic Church, because of the Italian unification, had lost the Papal States whilst “it was battling on against a liberal, nationalist, materialistic and scientific age.”³³

When Archbishop Gonzi was twelve years old (1897), he was enrolled as a student at the (minor) Seminary in Floriana. In 1897, Malta joined the rest of the British Empire and celebrated the sixtieth anniversary of Queen Victoria’s accession to the throne. It was the first time in the history of the British crown that a monarch celebrated a diamond jubilee. The parish priest of Kalkara Rev. Ġużeppi Ciangura, was the catalyst for the young Archbishop Gonzi to study at the Seminary.³⁴ During Archbishop Gonzi’s stay, as a secondary student, the Seminary’s rector was Rev Paul Galea, JCD. Seeing that the route from Kalkara to Floriana was not an easy trip in those days, the rector had suggested that Archbishop Gonzi should reside permanently at the Seminary.³⁵ Rector Galea generously halved the expenses involved for the boarding student. Archbishop Gonzi came first in his Matriculation exams.³⁶ Albert V. Laferla, the future Director of Education, came second. Later on, the two personalities graduated B.Lit from the same course at Malta’s university.

During his stay at the (minor) Seminary, Archbishop Gonzi’s teachers included Rev. Karm Psaila, Malta’s National poet popularly known as Dun Karm, Rev. Pawl Gauci, Mr Patrick O’Shea and Mr Cyril Leach.³⁷ Later on, Archbishop Gonzi after finishing his studies at Rome, was appointed lecturer at the Faculty of Theology at the Seminary. One of his colleagues there was Rev. Karm Psaila who taught History of the Church and Catholic Archaeology to the seminarians preparing themselves for the priesthood. Archbishop Gonzi taught Biblical Studies.³⁸ Dun Karm joined the Seminary as a student in 1885 when he was fourteen years old³⁹ – the year Archbishop Gonzi was born. In 1885, the Seminary was in Mdina, near St Paul’s Cathedral, in a building that presently houses the museum of the mentioned cathedral. The edifice was built by Bishop Alphéran de Bussan. 1885 was also the year when Mgr Antonio Buhagiar was chosen as Bishop Administrator in Malta but his connections with Cardinal Charles Martial Allemand Lavigerie “made him *persona non grata*.”⁴⁰ In 1895, Dun Karm

³³ Thomas Bokenkotter, *A Concise History of the Catholic Church* (New York, Doubleday, 2004), 317.

³⁴ Michael Galea and Emmanuel S. Tonna, *L-Arcisqof Gonzi, Vol 1., op.cit., 23.*

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 17.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 18.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ Mikiel Gonzi, ‘Tifkiriet dwar Dun Karm, Dun Karm 1871-1961.’ *Numru Speċjali ta’ Lehen il-Malti*, (1962), 9.

³⁹ Oliver Friggieri, *Dun Karm: Il-Bniedem fil-Poeta* (Malta, Klabb Kotba Maltin, 1980), 26.

⁴⁰ Victor Mallia Milanese, *De La Salle College: Volume One: 1903-1938, A Study in Growth* (Malta, De La Salle College, 1975), 11.

commenced his teaching career at the Seminary teaching the minor students Italian, Latin, geography, English, cosmography and arithmetic.⁴¹ During this period, the Anglo-French relations were strained owing to the Egyptian question.

According to Archbishop Gonzi, Dun Karm had told his mother Margherita Gonzi that one day his student Michele Gonzi would be bishop.⁴² In 1910, the Holy See demanded reforms at the Malta Seminary and Archbishop Pietro La Fontaine was sent to implement those reforms. In fact, he forbid the professors to live at the Seminary as the practices ran. Several reasons were advanced for this mission but what really triggered the mission is still unknown.⁴³ The eminent prelate decided that only the rector, his deputy and the bursar could reside permanently at the Seminary.⁴⁴ In fact, Archbishop Gonzi had told Mgr John Dimech that the Seminary was not only the place where the seminarian would discover literature and philosophy but the location where the candidate for the priesthood met God, and these studies would incur more appreciation of the Church's role in society.⁴⁵

Archbishop Gonzi commenced his university studies in 1904 by enrolling in the preparatory course for theology.⁴⁶ The duration of the course was of three years and covered the study of three languages, philosophy, history and mathematics. In the second year, physics was added to the course subjects. Students had the option to follow the course at the Seminary but they could sit for the University exams. In fact, Archbishop Gonzi studied history and physics at the University and the rest of the subjects at the Seminary. During this period of time, the Malta Governor Sir Francis Grenfell authorised the opening of a Lasallian school in Malta.⁴⁷ In 1904, Pope Pius X inserted the feast of St John Baptist De La Salle, the founder of the Lasallian community, in the Catholic Church liturgical calendar.⁴⁸ Furthermore in 1904, the Salesians of Don Bosco opened the St Patrick's Institute in Sliema.

During the period from 1906 to 1910, the Theology lecturers at the Royal University of Malta included Carmelite philosopher Anastasju Cuschieri,⁴⁹ who was appointed to teach Philosophy

⁴¹ Ibid., 36.

⁴² Oliver Friggieri, *Dun Karm: Il-Bniedem fil-Poeta*, op.cit., 35.

⁴³ Ġużè Cardona, *Dun Karm: Hajtu u Hidmietu* (Malta, Klabb Kotba Maltin, 1972), 70.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 74.

⁴⁵ Unpublished Manuscript Mgr John Dimech, Perit Joe Dimech Private Archives.

⁴⁶ Michael Galea and Emmanuel S. Tonna, *L-Arcisqof Gonzi, Vol 1.*, op.cit., 19.

⁴⁷ Victor Mallia Milanes, *De La Salle College*, op.cit., 12.

⁴⁸ Charles Briffa, *The Fruits of the Mind in the Writings of Br Louis Camilleri FSC Servant of God* (Malta, De La Salle Brothers Publications, 2019), 2.

⁴⁹ Michael Galea and Emmanuel S. Tonna, *L-Arcisqof Gonzi, Vol 1.*, op.cit., 20.

in 1901,⁵⁰ Professor Carmelo Grima, who lectured in Moral Theology,⁵¹ Mgr Emmanuel Vassallo, whose area of studies was Canon Law⁵² and Professor Giovanni Formosa who specialised in Dogmatic Theology.⁵³ Professor Cuschieri was also Archbishop Gonzi's spiritual director during the latter's formation period. In an exchange with Mgr John Dimech, Archbishop Gonzi had described Professor Cuschieri as "devot tal-Madonna (devout of Our Lady)."⁵⁴ Mgr Vassallo held several prestigious positions within the Malta Church. He was chaplain to Archbishop Caruana, presided over the *Giunta Diocesana per la buona stampa*, directed the St Joseph Children's Home and was a member of *Missjoni ż-Żgħira*.⁵⁵ His writings, the majority of which were not published, focused on sin, death, the reasons behind man's creation, and so on. Mgr Formosa hailed from Bormla and his bibliography was quite extensive. He had a doctorate in Canon Law and another doctorate in Theology. Montebello classified Formosa's philosophy within the Aristotelian-Thomist umbrella.⁵⁶ His books include *Il Sacrificio nella Storia e nel Dogma*, *La Madonna nel Sopranaturale e nell'arte* and *La Chiesa e venti secoli di storia*.⁵⁷ Formosa wrote and published quite a good number of sonnets. Archbishop Gonzi's colleagues at the University included Nerik Mizzi and Ugo Mifsud, two future Nationalist Party leaders and Prime Ministers of Malta. According to Dimech, Archbishop Gonzi during this period preferred reading biographies of saints.⁵⁸ The texts written by St John of the Cross and St Theresa of Ávila motivated him to employ meditation frequently during his life time.

According to Galea, Archbishop Gonzi was ordained as a priest two years before he had finished his Theology studies since the Kalkara parish priest had pressured Archbishop Pace to provide him with assistance to fulfil his ministry, and had also pointed out that Archbishop Gonzi would be the right candidate.⁵⁹ This detail was also confirmed by Bonnici who quoted the university's annual reports showing that three priests, one of them Archbishop Gonzi, graduated BLCan and DD in 1910.⁶⁰ Archbishop Gonzi came first in that course. The other

⁵⁰ Francis Bonnici, *The Academic Formation of Maltese Priests in the University of Malta 1838-1938*, *op.cit.*, 249.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 252.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 255.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 254.

⁵⁴ Unpublished Manuscript Mgr John Dimech, Perit Joe Dimech Private Archives.

⁵⁵ Robbie Mifsud Bonnici, *Dizzjunarju Bijo-Biblijografiku Nazzjonali*, *op.cit.*, 510.

⁵⁶ Mark F. Montebello, *Il-Ktieb tal-Filosofija f'Malta: l-Ewwel Volum* (Malta, PIN, 2001), 180.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ Unpublished Manuscript Mgr John Dimech, Perit Joe Dimech Private Archives.

⁵⁹ Michael Galea and Emmanuel S. Tonna, *L-Arcisqof Gonzi, Vol 1.*, *op.cit.*, 24.

⁶⁰ Francis Bonnici, *The Academic Formation of Maltese Priests in the University of Malta 1838-1938*, *op.cit.*, 400.

two students were Paul Buttigieg, a future confessor, preacher and master of ceremonies at St Paul's Shipwreck, and Gaetan Muscat, a future well-known preacher, promoter of the Missjoni l-Kbira and author of short stories in the series *Xewk u Ward* published in *Lehen is-Sewwa*.⁶¹ The homily at Archbishop Gonzi's first mass was done by Rev. Anton Vella, a missionary from the town of Lia. Archbishop Gonzi was ordained as a priest by Archbishop Pietro Pace in December 1908. Archbishop Pace, a graduate from the Faculty of Theology of La Sapienza, in Rome, contributed to the setting up of the Gozo diocese. Archbishop Pace was bishop of Gozo from 1877 to 1889 when he was selected as Malta's archbishop.⁶²

Since Archbishop Gonzi came first in his 1910 course, he benefitted from the opportunity given by the government to study Theology at Rome and he went to the Gregorian University. The Gregorian University was founded by St Ignatius who also set the base of the Society of Jesus. This was the only university founded by the mentioned saint. 72 saints and blessed were students at this university. 17 popes were former alumni. At Rome, Archbishop Gonzi studied Canon Law from where he obtained a doctorate in the subject.⁶³ Archbishop Gonzi was the third student from Malta studying at the Gregorian University, his predecessors being Carlo Cortis and Giuseppe Psaila Cumbo.⁶⁴ One of Archbishop Gonzi's lecturers in Canon Law was the famous Rev. Benedetto Ojetti. Ojetti assisted Cardinal Gasparri in preparing the Canon Law Codex (1917). Ojetti was also secretary of the Congregation responsible to interpret the code. Different congregations consulted him when in dire straits. Ojetti started his teaching career with the Pontificia Università Gregoriana in 1895. His teaching career spun to 1932 until his death. *Synopsis rerum moralium et iurus pontificii: alphabetico ordine digesta et novissimis SS. RR. Congregationum decretis Aucta in subsidium praesertim sacerdotum* was his magnum opus.⁶⁵

During Archbishop Gonzi's stay, the Gregorian University had 1,077 students. 77 of them taking Canon Law. The rest chose the Theology Course. Whilst attending the course at the Gregorian University, Archbishop Gonzi enrolled also at the Pontificio Istituto Biblico that had just been founded by Pope Pius X. The Institute's first rector was Rev. Leopold Fonck who

⁶¹ Ibid., 402.

⁶² Tony Terribile, 'L-Arcisqof Pietro Pace: Benefattur Kbir tal-Kalkara,' *Festa ta' San Ġużepp Kalkara – 1994*, 22.

⁶³ Michael Galea and Emmanuel S. Tonna, *L-Arcisqof Gonzi, Vol 1., op.cit.*, 34.

⁶⁴ Francis Bonnici, *The Academic Formation of Maltese Priests in the University of Malta 1838-1938, op.cit.*, 246.

⁶⁵ Benedetto Ojetti, *Synopsis rerum moralium et iurus pontificii: alphabetico ordine digesta et novissimis SS. RR. Congregationum decretis Aucta in subsidium praesertim sacerdotum* (Rome, Giachetti, 1904).

from 1901 to 1907 was a professor of New Testament exegesis at the University of Innsbruck. After contacting the Istituto, it transpired that “there is not much information about Mons. Gonzi in our archives. It appears that he was an alumnus of the Institute in 1911-12 (the Institute had been established for two years) but did not earn an academic degree. This suggests that he was not an ordinary student. There is no information on courses/exams taken.”⁶⁶ Therefore, Archbishop Gonzi attended extra lessons for his own interest rather than following the course leading to a degree.⁶⁷ Valentino explained that “this lack of documentation makes me think that he attended the Biblical Institute as a student from the Pontifical Gregorian University (in this case there was no separate registration at the Biblical Institute).”⁶⁸ To add insult to injury, the archives of the early years are not very accurate.⁶⁹ From the syllabus, it emerged that the course was quite engaging and extensive.⁷⁰ One of the students in Archbishop Gonzi’s *Biblicum* course was Ernesto Ruffini who was later appointed as Secretary of the Congregation of Seminaries and Universities and was Palermo’s Archbishop between 1945 and 1967. In the mid-1930’s, Archbishop Gonzi corresponded with the mentioned congregation headed by Ruffini with the intention to reform the Faculty of Theology, at the Malta University.⁷¹

Bonnici noted that Archbishop Gonzi completed his course at Rome in 1913 while Galea had given the termination year as 1912.⁷² In 1911, Canon Ignazio Panzavecchia was chosen as leader of the Partito Nazionale whilst in 1912, Gerald Strickland was kicked upstairs and appointed Governor in the Leeward Islands, in the West Indies. In 1915, Archbishop Gonzi was appointed lecturer in Holy Scripture and Hebrew and three years later a Professor of Holy Scripture and Hebrew.⁷³ Meanwhile, in 1914, both Archbishop Pace and Pope Pius X died and that year saw the commencement of the First World War that was expected to be short but which lasted four years. In 1915, Alfons Maria Galea was appointed as the Curia’s manciple of the bishop’s mensa.⁷⁴ In 1917, the Roman Catholic Church published its *Codex Iuris*

⁶⁶ E-mail from Carlo Valentino, Secretary General of the Istituto Biblico dated 21st June 2021.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ ‘Acta Pontificii Instituti Biblici 1911-1912.’ E-mail from Carlo Valentino, Secretary General of the Istituto Biblico dated 21st June 2021.

⁷¹ Francis Bonnici, *The Academic Formation of Maltese Priests in the University of Malta*, *op.cit.*, 279.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 436.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 437.

⁷⁴ Louis A. Grasso, *Alfons Maria Galea* (Malta, SKS, 1992), 82.

Canonici which regulated the government of the institutional hierarchy and set up regulations for its subjects. This code would be a driving force in Archbishop Gonzi's episcopate.

There were also some international events that left their mark on Archbishop Gonzi's formation. The period between 1890 and 1914 witnessed the proliferation of a Catholic Modernist Movement which by 1907 was denounced by Pope Pius X as "the synthesis of all heresies."⁷⁵ The mentioned Christian intellectuals were accused of disseminating "certain liberal, anti-scholastic and historico-critical forms of thought."⁷⁶ George La Piana – a Catholic modernist originally from Palermo, and considered the "dominant force in Church History at Harvard from the 1920s to 1947" – recorded in his diaries, Pope Pius X reacted to Modernism by excommunications and disciplinary measures carried out in "a spirit of brutality worthy of Prussia."⁷⁷

Archbishop Gonzi's perception of society and his position about the role of the Church in society were inspired not only by these anti-modernist campaigns but also by the teachings of Pope Leo XIII and his successor Pope Pius X. Pope Leo XIII "imposed the philosophico-theological system of St Thomas Aquinas on the whole Church"⁷⁸ and objected to the principle of separation between Church and State.⁷⁹ St Thomas Aquinas reasoned out that in spiritual matters, the State had to listen to what the Church had to teach.⁸⁰ Pope Leo XIII described Church and State as two principal societies. Each society was free to pursue its ends.⁸¹ The civil society was responsible for the temporal good while the Church had to work for spiritual well-being. But this autonomy factor did not imply a complete separation between the two societies. As a matter of fact, Church and State needed to work together for the well-being of mankind.⁸² The separation of Church and State was also condemned by Popes Gregory XVI (1831-1846) in *Mirari Vos* and Pius IX (1846-1878) in the *Syllabus of Errors*.⁸³ The latter

⁷⁵ *Pascendi Dominici Gregis, Encyclical of Pope Pius X: On the Doctrines of the Modernists*, Retrieved on 3rd January 2017, http://w2.vatican.va/content/pius-x/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-x_enc_19070908_pascendi-dominici-gregis.html.

⁷⁶ Elizabeth A. Clark, 'From Italy to Harvard: George La Piana and Catholic Modernism,' *Church History*, 83, (1), (2014), 147.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 150.

⁷⁸ Gabriel Daly, 'Catholicism and Modernity,' *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, 53, (1985), 775.

⁷⁹ Timothy G. McCarthy, *The Catholic Tradition: Before and After Vatican II: 1878-1993* (Chicago, Loyola University Press, 1994), 48.

⁸⁰ Lawrence E. Attard, 'The Core of the Middle Ages: St Thomas Aquinas and the Background in his Writings,' *San Tumas d'Akwinu: Ilbierah u Llum, Knisja 2000, Vol. 61* (Malta, Publikazzjonijiet Dumnikani, 2002), 12.

⁸¹ Leslie Griffin, 'The Integration of Spiritual and Temporal Contemporary Roman Catholic Church-State Theory,' *Theological Studies*, 48, (1987), 227.

⁸² *Ibid.*

⁸³ J.H. Whyte, *Church and State in Modern Ireland: 1923-1970, op.cit.*, 13.

envisaged as “insanity” the idea that liberty of conscience and worship should be considered as a man’s personal right.⁸⁴

In 1891, Pope Leo XIII issued the revolutionary encyclical *Rerum Novarum*. The Pope had argued in favour of a living wage and of the right of workers to form trade unions and to strike.⁸⁵ He supported the formation of Catholic-inspired trade unions and affirmed the right of the individual to own private property, but he did not endorse Socialism which was regarded as a threat to the Church. In the meantime, a Socialist Party was formed in Italy in 1892.⁸⁶ *Rerum Novarum* caused a stir across Europe and the Catholic world. But in the case of Malta, there was no real enthusiasm for the mentioned document. A published version of the text in Maltese was only available in 1921.⁸⁷ As Agius observed, the Malta Church in 1891 “did not succeed in giving due importance to this social document. The local Church was absorbed in other matters which took up most of her attention and energy.”⁸⁸

There were at least three other international events that influenced Archbishop Gonzi’s perception of politics: the setting up of the *Partito Popolare* by Don Luigi Sturzo (1871-1959) in 1919, the relaxation of the *non expedit* by Pope Benedict XV (1914-1922), which limited Catholic participation in politics, and the signing of the Lateran Pacts in February 1929 between the Vatican and Italy, represented respectively by Pope Pius XI and Benito Mussolini. The subjects of the Lateran Pacts were the themes that partly dominated the episcopacy of Archbishop Gonzi: the role of Catholicism as the sole religion of the State, the banning of divorce, and the handling of religious instruction by ecclesiastics.⁸⁹ The pacts brought to an end a conflict “between church and state in Italy that had been frozen since 1870 when Italian troops seized Rome.”⁹⁰ The Church relationships with Benito Mussolini deteriorated when the Italian dictator supported Adolf Hitler, Germany’s dictator between 1933 and 1945.

The *Magisterium* regarding the Church’s role in society developed further during the pontificates of Pope Pius XI (1922-1939) and Pope Pius XII (1939-1958). During that epoch,

⁸⁴ *Quanta Cura, Condemning Current Errors, Encyclical of Pope Pius IX promulgated on 8th December, 1864*, Retrieved on 3rd January 2017, <http://www.papalencyclicals.net/Pius09/p9quanta.htm>.

⁸⁵ *Rerum Novarum, Encyclical of Pope Leo on Capital and Labour*, Retrieved on 3rd January 2017, http://w2.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_15051891_rerum-novarum.html.

⁸⁶ John Foot, *Modern Italy* (New York. Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 198.

⁸⁷ P.F. Bellanti, *Itra Enċiklika tal-Papa Ljun XIII ‘Rerum Novarum’ tal 15 ta Mejju, 1891, Fuk chif jinsabu It-Tfal tax-Xoghol* (Malta, Unione Cattolica San Giuseppe, 1921).

⁸⁸ Emanuel Agius, *Social Consciousness of the Church in Malta: 1891-1921* (Malta, Media Centre Publications, 1991), 173.

⁸⁹ Dennis Mack Smith, *Mussolini* (London, Phoenix Giant, 1993), 161.

⁹⁰ Daniela Sarasella, ‘The Movement of Catholic Communists, 1937-1945,’ *Journal of Contemporary History*, 53, (3), 645.

Archbishop Gonzi was bishop of Gozo and later archbishop of Malta. It was also the time when the local Church crossed swords with imperialist politician Gerald Strickland (1924-1932). The crux of the dispute rested on whether the members of the ecclesiastical body had the right or not to contest parliamentary elections. Pope Pius XI had identified the Church as “the moral guide and teacher of all nations.”⁹¹ Furthermore, Pope Pius XI founded the Catholic Action, a lay organisation which Archbishop Gonzi referred to as “the apple of his eyes.”⁹² As we shall see later, the Catholic Action (AC), “took the form of a conservative project, intending to impose the Catholic worldview against the new secularisation rooted in the values of the French Revolution... the AC had already begun to regard fascism with suspicion in the early 1930s: this was due in particular to the aggressive efforts by educational organisations linked to the regime to monopolise the socialisation of the younger generations, which had traditionally been under the auspices of the Church.”⁹³

Trade unionism in Malta led to the establishment in 1921 of the Malta Labour Party. That was a move that irked the Malta Church. In fact, the Malta Church took immediate measures so that the new party would fall directly under its influence.⁹⁴ Mgr Gonzi himself had confirmed that he was obliged to contest the 1921 elections for the Senate on behalf of Labour by Archbishop Mauro Caruana.⁹⁵ Rather than a Socialist Party, the Malta Church wanted a moderate party versed in Catholic doctrine. In 1921, a Communist Party was founded in Livorno, in Italy. The Italian Communist Party appeared “as the most organised force in fighting against fascism during the years of dictatorship.”⁹⁶ The Communist movement attracted supporters as it was seen as the only alternative “capable of building a new society after the moral and material disruption caused by fascism.”⁹⁷ To add insult to injury, Italy was “the only country west of the Balkans where the Second World War became a civil war.”⁹⁸

In one sense, Archbishop Gonzi was one of the founders of the Malta Labour Party since he was one of the first members to join. Archbishop Gonzi’s “official political experience” ended

⁹¹ Leslie Griffin, *The Integration of Spiritual and Temporal Contemporary Roman Catholic Church-State Theory*, *op.cit.*, 230.

⁹² Arturo Bonnici, *L-Ingress tal-Arcisqof Mikiel Gonzi* (Malta, Empire Press, 1944), 23.

⁹³ Daniela Sarasella, ‘The Movement of Catholic Communists, 1937-1945,’ *op.cit.*, 646.

⁹⁴ Michael A. Sant, ‘*Sette Giugno*’ 1919: *Tqanqil u Tibdil* (Malta, Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti, 1989), 154.

⁹⁵ Michael Galea and Emmanuel Tonna, *L-Arcisqof Gonzi: L-Ewwel Volum* (Malta, Klabb Kotba Maltin, 1981), 50. Andrew Vella and George Attard, ‘L-Arcisqof Gonzi: Intervistat mir-Rivista Storja,’ *Storja* 78 (Malta, MUHS, 1978), 125.

⁹⁶ Daniela Sarsella, *op.cit.*, 645.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 651.

⁹⁸ Rosario Forlenza, ‘The Enemy Within: Catholic Anti-Communism in Cold War Italy,’ *Past & Present*, 235, (1), (2017), 21.

in 1924 when he was appointed as bishop of Gozo. Six years later, Bishop Gonzi returned to the political arena when, together with Archbishop Mauro Caruana, he prohibited the Maltese Catholics to vote for Lord Gerald Strickland.⁹⁹ Meanwhile in 1918, Anglican pastor William Temple (1881-1944) joined the British Labour Party but resigned three years later on being appointed bishop of Manchester. In his youth, Bishop William Temple had believed that ‘socialism is the economic realisation of the Christian gospel.’¹⁰⁰

The newly-formed Maltese Labour Party benefitted from the presence in Malta of Jesuit Fr Charles Plater who was a strong supporter of Pope Leo XIII’s *Rerum Novarum*. Rev. Plater came to Malta after Archbishop Caruana had requested the archbishop of Westminster to send a priest qualified in resistance to Socialism, and Plater was involved in the setting up of trade unions.¹⁰¹ Archbishop Gonzi was a member of Fr Plater’s association which aspired to “spread among all classes of the population the social teachings of the Catholic Church and thus pave the way for a sound Christian Democracy.”¹⁰² But there was another issue that troubled the Church in the epoch under review: Communism.

The Threat of Communism

At this stage, the Catholic Church’s reactions to Communism and the development in the mentioned institution’s teachings about this subject area require to be discussed in depth since the decisions taken and the positions adopted over the years have influenced the course of action taken by Archbishop Gonzi at a time when there was a widespread fear locally that Labour politician Mr Dom Mintoff would paint Malta red and transform it into a communist base. Within that scenario, Archbishop Gonzi was following the Catholic Church’s doctrine rather than playing a political move as he is always portrayed to have done. Moreover, in Archbishop Gonzi’s formation period, the Church was sharpening its position of contention regarding Communism.

Two years after Karl Marx had described religion as the opium of the people, Pope Pius IX in his encyclical *Qui pluribus* (1846), responded that communism was “most opposed to the very

⁹⁹ Dominic Fenech, *Responsibility and Power in Inter-War Malta, Book One: Endemic Democracy (1919-1930)* (Malta, Publishers Enterprises Group, 2005), 422.

¹⁰⁰ J. C. Cort, *Christian Socialism* (New York, Orbis Books, 1988), 16

¹⁰¹ John Chircop, *The Left within the Maltese Labour Movement*, (Malta, Mireva Publications, 1991), 15.

¹⁰² Emanuel Agius, *Social Consciousness of the Church in Malta, op.cit.*, 151.

natural law” and warned that it would destroy men’s rights, their property and fortune.”¹⁰³ By the 1930s, the Vatican had denounced “Bolshevik communism as a more militant and destructive version of socialism.”¹⁰⁴ During the Second World War, the “Catholics and the Communists cooperated in the Resistance.”¹⁰⁵ Pope Pius XI had asserted that Catholics could not be Socialists at the same time and denounced Communism as inhuman and atheist.¹⁰⁶ Furthermore, he declared that totalitarianism promoted the total control over a society, “the monopolisation of power by the party or the ruler, and the elimination of any opposition and independent organisation.”¹⁰⁷

During the Cold War era, a period when the United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) and their followers waged war on political, economic and social issues, “Catholic anti-communism moved into the public sphere as a political priority, as a lexicon of terms and concepts, as a model of cultural practices, and as a marker of political identity held both collectively and individually.”¹⁰⁸ The fact that the Partito Comunista Italiano made big strides with the Italian electorate, could not be neglected to the point that the Holy See tried to halt the progress of the Communist Party in that country. By the end of the 1940s, “one of every three Italians was Communist.”¹⁰⁹ In 1944, the American ambassador in Rome reported to his President Franklin D. Roosevelt, that Pope Pius XII feared not only the Russian dictator Josef Stalin’s religious programmes but also the Italian Communists.¹¹⁰

It is interesting to note that until 1946-1947, the *Democrazia Cristiana* was not yet the option preferred by Pope Pius XII to the Communist threat. The *Democrazia Cristiana* was formed in 1943. During the year 1946, Pius XII had declared that the clergy had both a duty and a right to instruct “from all places, including the pulpit.”¹¹¹ Within a month, the Pope appealed to the Presidents of the Catholic Action “to fight as never before against the anti-christian forces in politics and society.”¹¹² In December 1946, Pope Pius XII contended that “Either with Christ

¹⁰³ *Qui Pluribus: On Faith and Religion*, Pope Pius IX, Retrieved on 13th November 2021, <https://www.papalencyclicals.net/pius09/p9quiplu.htm>.

¹⁰⁴ Rosario Forlenza, ‘The Enemy Within: Catholic Anti-Communism in Cold War Italy,’ *op.cit.*, 219.

¹⁰⁵ Daniela Sarasella, ‘The Movement of Catholic Communists, 1937-1945,’ *op.cit.*, 644.

¹⁰⁶ *Quadragesimo Anno, Encyclical of Pope Pius XI On Reconstruction of the Social Order*, Retrieved on 3rd January 2017, http://w2.vatican.va/content/pius-xi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xi_enc_19310515_quadragesimo-anno.html.

¹⁰⁷ Blandine Chelini-Pont, ‘Papal Thought on Europe and the European Union in the Twentieth Century,’ *Religion, State and Society*, 37, (2009), 135.

¹⁰⁸ Rosario Forlenza, ‘The Enemy Within: Catholic Anti-Communism in Cold War Italy,’ *op.cit.*, 207.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 233.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 217.

¹¹¹ Daniela Sarasella, ‘The Movement of Catholic Communists, 1937-1945,’ *op.cit.*, 647.

¹¹² *Ibid.*

or against Christ, either with His Church or against the Church.”¹¹³ He repeated the same position two weeks prior to the 1948 elections. That year, the Communists took control of Czechoslovakia. The year before, the Pope had declared that Italian voters should refrain from voting Communists and opt for “candidates and parties respectful of the divine law, religion and the rights of the Church.”¹¹⁴

In 1948, the Communists in Italy were defeated at the polls after Pius XII’s *Avviso Sacro* excommunicated all Communists on the eve of an election. His “excommunication move not only affected directly the Communists in Italy, since they were isolated from the rest, but also crushed any hope of survival for the left-wing group of Christian Democrats and the Catholic Action leaders of leftist inclination.”¹¹⁵ According to Carrillo, the involvement of the Church in the 1948 elections was unprecedented. “As early as February, the three hundred bishops and 125,000 other clergy began to counteract and refute the propaganda of the Popular Democratic Front, the electoral alliance of the Communists and left wing socialists.”¹¹⁶ The Consistorial Congregation and the Sacred Congregation of the Affairs of the Religious stressed the importance of voting. The Pope “cautioned against abstention.”¹¹⁷

The fact that the Second World War defeated Fascism and Nazism encouraged Pope Pius XII to put forward “a predominantly federal project of unity, directed towards counteracting the advance of Communism.”¹¹⁸ Already in 1945, *L’Osservatore Romano*, the newspaper of the Vatican City, shot down the concept of a Party of the Christian Left.¹¹⁹ Meanwhile, in Rome a movement of Catholic Communists known as *cattocomunisti* was emerging. According to the mentioned newspaper, this movement’s principles, in spite of the fact that the movement employed the word Catholic in its name, “were not in line with the Church’s doctrine.”¹²⁰ A few months before, the same newspaper had declared in the issue published on 23rd July 1944 that “no one could be a Catholic and a Communist at the same time.”¹²¹ Pope Pius XII insisted that the Catholic Church should take part in politics that promoted the common good and that

¹¹³ Rosario Forlenza, ‘The Enemy Within: Catholic Anti-Communism in Cold War Italy,’ *op.cit.*, 219.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 223.

¹¹⁵ Norman Kog, ‘Italian Communism, the Working Class and Organised Catholicism,’ *The Journal of Politics*, 28, (3), (1966), 534.

¹¹⁶ Daniela Sarasella, ‘The Movement of Catholic Communists, 1937-1945,’ *op.cit.*, 647.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 649.

¹¹⁸ Blandine Chelini-Pont, ‘Papal Thought on Europe and the European Union in the Twentieth Century,’ *op.cit.*, 132.

¹¹⁹ Daniela Sarasella, ‘The Movement of Catholic Communists, 1937-1945,’ *op.cit.*, 654.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 654.

¹²¹ Rosario Forlenza, ‘The Enemy Within: Catholic Anti-Communism in Cold War Italy,’ *op.cit.*, 217.

it should abstain from party politics which were of a divisive nature.¹²² Ideologies that contradicted Catholicism had to be refuted.¹²³ In 1949, the Congregation of the Holy Office demanded that Catholics all over the world “could not enlist or show favour to the Communist Party. Neither could they publish, read or disseminate books, newspapers or periodicals or leaflets in support of a Communist doctrine.”¹²⁴

One should stress the point that Archbishop Gonzi was not alone in opposing Communism. That sort of position was demanded by the Catholic Church in the pre-Vatican Council II era. The biographies of Cardinal Ruffini and Cardinal Lercaro illustrate this point well. Cardinal Ruffini, the archbishop of Palermo, firmly believed in the concept of a Christian society in which religious and civil affiliations were not distinct and that the sacral city coincided with the secular one. According to Ruffini, “a Catholic people had to have a Catholic government, and laws were not to differ from the demands of Catholic morals. The enemies of the Church had also to be declared enemies of society. At a time considered particularly difficult, the task of the hierarchy was therefore not only religious but also civil and political so as to guarantee the religious freedom of the Church and Christian society that they considered in danger.”¹²⁵ The demand for guarantees in writing were frequently asked by Archbishop Gonzi during the Integration phase. On 9 February 1956, Archbishop Gonzi addressed the nation through Rediffusion service and he declared that in absence of written guarantees, he could not say that from the religious aspect there is nothing against Integration”¹²⁶ Archbishop Gonzi assured that “if there were not serious dangers for Faith and Morals, the bishops would not have taken such attitude and be at the same time supported by the Holy See.”¹²⁷

Cardinal Giacomo Lercaro, another contemporary bishop of Archbishop Gonzi, was known in the Catholic world for his resistance to Communism in his “red” diocese, Bologna. Lercaro had previously served as Ravenna’s archbishop. The latter city also was a Communist stronghold. *Time* magazine had described Ravenna in 1953 as “one of the reddest cities in Italy.”¹²⁸ During that year, Cardinal Lercaro competed with the local Communist authorities by organising a Carnival festival which comprised forty floats and two-hundred walking

¹²² Leslie Griffin, ‘The Integration of Spiritual and Temporal Contemporary Roman Catholic Church-State Theory,’ *op.cit.*, 230.

¹²³ *Ibid.*

¹²⁴ Daniela Sarasella, ‘The Movement of Catholic Communists, 1937-1945,’ *op.cit.*, 650.

¹²⁵ Arnaldo Nesti, *La Scomunica: Cattolici e Comunisti in Italia* (Italy, EDB, 2018), 40.

¹²⁶ Edith Dobie, *Malta’s Road to Independence*, *op.cit.*, 112.

¹²⁷ Special Diocesan Commission, *The Quarrel of the Malta Labour Party with the Church*, *op.cit.*, 40.

¹²⁸ ‘The Cardinal’s Comeback,’ *Time*, 30th March 1953.

masks.¹²⁹ According to Franciscan monk Tommaso Toschi, one of Lercaro's collaborators, Cardinal Lercaro had instructed his team *Fraternitas* to form a "pattuglia" whose members would go around in their Fiat 1100 in areas where no churches existed and would say mass through megaphones.¹³⁰ He also demanded their full commitment and participation during electoral campaigns and also encouraged them to take part in debating sessions with Communist Party militants. The mentioned group welcomed refugees from Hungary who fled during the Soviet invasion of 1956.¹³¹ During Lercaro's tenure, the Christian Democrats tried to unseat Mayor Giuseppe Dozza in the 1956 local elections by campaigning for and promoting Giuseppe Dossetti who was Archbishop Lercaro's close associate and advisor. Dozza had been one of the founders of the Italian Communist Party, while Dossetti was the leader of Bologna's Christian Democratic faction. Dozza won the contest and this led Dossetti to abandon politics and enter the priesthood. By 1960, Cardinal Lercaro's language vis-à-vis the Communist world had changed. He had declared that Communists were Children of the Mother Church, "*anche se prodighi e ribelli.*"¹³² Furthermore, Lercaro contributed for change in the Church's liturgy at the Second Vatican Council.

During this epoch, various countries like Poland, Lithuania, Croatia and Hungary – all countries where the Catholic Church had long traditions – fell under Communist regimes. In Hungary, the schools were nationalised and, as a reaction, Cardinal Joseph Mindszenty "forbade Catholic teachers to accept the salaries under pain of excommunication."¹³³ The Cardinal was later arrested and after a three-day trial sentenced to life imprisonment. Hungary was again in the news in 1956 when the people revolted against Communism. In Malta, the Hungarians' case aroused a lot of sympathies. The Movement of Social Action led by Mgr Fortunato Mizzi founded the Pro Free Hungarian Committee.¹³⁴ Their aim ultimately was the provision of material aid. During the 1956 Christ the King manifestation, the Maltese Catholics were urged to pray for the Hungarians and the Poles.¹³⁵ By August 1957, local newspapers were reporting "mass arrests of priests" in Hungary.¹³⁶ In 1953, in Poland, came the show trial of Bishop Kaczmarek and the arrest of Cardinal Wyszyński. Pius XII reiterated in the

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Arnaldo Nesti, *La Scomunica: Cattolici e Comunisti in Italia, op.cit.*, 38.

¹³¹ Ibid., 39.

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Anthony Rhodes, *The Vatican in the Age of the Cold War 1945-1980* (London, Michael Russel, 1992), 27.

¹³⁴ 'Pro-Free Hungary Committee,' *Times of Malta*, 31st October 1956, 9.

¹³⁵ 'Feast of Christ the King, Malta prays for Poland and Hungary,' *Times of Malta*, 29th October 1956, 7.

¹³⁶ 'Hungary strikes at Catholic Churches,' *The Bulletin*, 1st August 1957, 1.

Christmas message of 1956 that it was inconsistent to sit at the same table with God and his enemies, the communists.¹³⁷

But not only Communist regimes were hostile to the Catholic Church. For instance, things were getting from bad to worse for the Church in Argentina. President Juan Perón's anti-Catholic Church measures included the elimination of religious holidays. In May 1955, "the overnment announced a plan to introduce a constitutional amendment to establish a formal separation of Church and State; soon after Perón began imprisoning priests. On 11 June the annual Church procession in Buenos Aires to celebrate Corpus Christi attracted an estimated 100,000 participants, a multitude that marched silently through the streets while bearing the papal flag."¹³⁸ This celebration was reported very graphically by *Leĥen is-Sewwa*. Perón was objecting particularly to Catholic trade unions and the Church's control of education. The Argentinian case prompted *Leĥen is-Sewwa's* opinion leader Baruk to insist that "the state should protect the Church."¹³⁹ Maltese Prime Minister Mr Mintoff was even compared to Perón and he complained about this to the Governor. *Is-Sebĥ*, the Labour organ, quickly noted that Mintoff contrary to Perón, had employed several priests as teachers, salaried the nuns working as nurses, and gave land and money to the Church.¹⁴⁰ Portugal was taking the same route. "From 1958 onwards, the government attempted to demobilise and confront the different Catholic groups that entered into ideological and programmatic conflict with the regime, not hesitating to resort to the repressive mechanisms of the state, such as prior censorship and the use of the political police."¹⁴¹

The present writer believes that here lies the true explanation for the political activities of Archbishop Gonzi in the period between 1955 and 1970. As will be seen, the issues between Archbishop Gonzi and Mr Mintoff assumed an overly dramatic and a socially, politically and religiously divisive character as fear came in that Malta might become a communist country, a sort of "Cuba in the Mediterranean." Socially, this idea captured the imagination of people who sided with the Church. There is a tendency to dismiss the complex reality that resulted as a story of religion (represented by Archbishop Gonzi) competing with politics (embodied in Mr Mintoff) for power. Those who draw such conclusions tend to dismiss that in most Latin

¹³⁷ Arnaldo Nesti, *La Scomunica: Cattolici e Comunisti in Italia op.cit.*, 124.

¹³⁸ David Rock, *Argentina 1516-1987, From Spanish Colonisation to Falklands War and Alfonsin* (California, University of California Press, 1987), 314.

¹³⁹ Baruk, 'Nitgħallmu mill-Argentina,' *Leĥen is-Sewwa*, 18th July 1955, 1. Baruk was Friar Felicĥjan Bilocca.

¹⁴⁰ Korrispondent Speċjali, 'Fejnu s-sens ta' Ġustizzja?,' *Is-Sebĥ*, 29th February 1956, 1.

¹⁴¹ Paula Borges Santos, 'The Question of the Political Organization of Catholics under the Portuguese Authoritarian Regime: The 'Bishop of Porto Case' (1958), *Portuguese Studies*, 30, (1), (2014), 94.

countries, liberalism advocated a kind of adverse separation that not simply sought to limit the Church to the private sphere but also gave root to regimes that actively persecuted the Church. The idea of Archbishop Gonzi as some kind of medieval figure, who held to his alliance between Altar and Throne, typical of Absolutist regimes, is false and unfair. Moreover, Archbishop Gonzi was defending the model of the Church as a perfect society. He believed that, in a Catholic State, it was the task of the state rulers to defend the Church. Archbishop Gonzi was defending the ecclesiological model that his formation had directed him to defend. So the Mintoff factor needs also to be scrutinised within this scenario. Mintoff attacked or seemed to have attacked the mentioned model. In fact, the Malta Church mobilised its flock, as we shall see later.

The Dominic Mintoff Factor

In 1955, Mr Mintoff was elected to power becoming the youngest Prime Minister in the British Empire.¹⁴² Friends and foes soon noticed his striking characteristic of making enemies. As Labour's Deputy Leader Anton Buttigieg observed, Mintoff "likes being obstinate and he enjoys displeasing others; instead of trying to court sympathy, he tries to impose."¹⁴³ Conciliation was not part of Dom Mintoff's vocabulary.

In 1936, Mintoff, aged twenty, had revealed his plan of action for Malta's future. In a memorandum he sent to the International Secretary of the British Labour Party, William Gillies, Mintoff argued that "the workers still hope for the day when they will regain the freedom from the influence of the old clique of legal and clerical elements."¹⁴⁴ Three years later, Dom Mintoff travelled to Britain after having received the Rhodes scholarship. Here he met leading left-wing radicals such as Dick Crossman and Nye Bevan.¹⁴⁵ One should also consider the fact that Archbishop Mauro Caruana was a member of the board that had approved Mintoff's choice for the Rhodes scholarship.¹⁴⁶ This meant that for the time being, the Malta Church was not suspicious of Mr Mintoff, otherwise Archbishop Caruana might have blocked the scholarship.

¹⁴² *The Bulletin*, 22nd March 1955, 1.

¹⁴³ Anton Buttigieg quoted from Henry Frenco, *The Origins of Maltese Statehood: A Case Study of Decolonization in the Mediterranean*, *op.cit.*, 42.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 42.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 42.

¹⁴⁶ NAM/CSG01/2520/1938 in

https://www.flickr.com/photos/national_archives_malta/7871018606/in/photostream/lightbox/, Retrieved on 28th February 2017.

At times, Mr Mintoff was rude but definitely impertinent enough to challenge the archbishop of Malta for a public debate at San Ġwann t'Ġħuxa.¹⁴⁷ But Mintoff's fatal mistake was his impatience. He expected separation between Church and State instantly. As Zammit put it, "Mintoff never missed any opportunity of laying blames on the clergy for his Party's electoral defeats both after the split with Boffa in the early fifties and even more so during the politico-religious dispute of the sixties..."¹⁴⁸

Mintoff conferred his Socialism as if it were preached by Christ himself, and this position furthered the rift between him and the Church. Mintoff even declared that Christ was Socialist.¹⁴⁹ Furthermore, the Labour leader claimed at one stage that Labour drew its inspiration "in our struggle to free our homeland from foreign power" from the teachings of Jesus Christ.¹⁵⁰ "Some of Mr Mintoff's arbitrary declarations had boomeranged, damaging his prospects in the process. Such speech about imprisoning or taxing the archbishop, while sounding like sweet music to anti-clericals, created a hornets' nest in an ultra-Catholic country like Malta."¹⁵¹ One may conclude that Mintoff was influenced by laicist ideas which emphasised the subordination of the Church to the State in matters that were not religious.¹⁵² But at the time, this credo also reflected the Communistic doctrine. For Mintoff, it seems that religion was a private matter.

Archbishop Gonzi mistrusted Mr Mintoff. In 1947, Deputy Leader Mintoff was taken to task for attending a dinner party at St Paul's Bay during which the participants were accused of having sung the *Red Flag Hymn*. That incident had left Mr Mintoff "bruised" since, as Pirota argued, that case convinced Archbishop Gonzi that Mintoff had Communist tendencies.¹⁵³ Documentation preserved at the National Archives of the United Kingdom clearly exposed that for Archbishop Gonzi, Labour Leader Mr Mintoff was an anti-clerical,¹⁵⁴ and "an agnostic who has the impression that the Church is against progress."¹⁵⁵ During the Integration campaigns, the Malta Church, with the approval of Vatican officials, kept demanding written guarantees

¹⁴⁷ Dominic Mintoff, *Priests and Politicians*, *op.cit.*, 57.

¹⁴⁸ Edward L. Zammit, *A Colonial Inheritance: Maltese Perceptions of Work, Power and Class Structure with Reference to the Labour Movement* (Malta, Malta University Press, 1984), 57.

¹⁴⁹ Carthago, *Duminku Mintoff: Ghalliem u Professur tad-Demokrazija* (Malta, Penprint, 1981), 75..

¹⁵⁰ *Voice of Malta*, 18th December 1960, 1.

¹⁵¹ Sergio Grech, *Church and Politics in Malta 1955-1964* (MA, University of Malta, 2009), 254.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, 254.

¹⁵³ Joseph M. Pirota, *Fortress Colony: The Final Act 1945-1964, Vol. 1., op.cit.*, 150.

¹⁵⁴ PREM 11/2745, 'Note about Archbishop Gonzi,' in *Meeting between Prime Minister and Monsignor Gonzi, Archbishop of Malta*, The National Archives of the United Kingdom, Kew.

¹⁵⁵ CO 926/296, Letter from Archbishop Michael Gonzi to Lord Perth dated 7th November 1955 in *Malta Attitudes of the Roman Catholic Church to Integration in Malta*, The National Archives of the United Kingdom, Kew.

although Archbishop Gonzi was even convinced that Dom Mintoff would not play straight, not even “if guarantees and undertakings had been given.”¹⁵⁶ Assessing the situation in late October 1960, Archbishop Gonzi claimed that so far “*il pericolo del comunismo esiste a Malta sebbene dico io finora in proporzione minima.*”¹⁵⁷ Archbishop Gonzi also revealed that the month before he had discussed the Communism matter with Pope John XXIII.¹⁵⁸

Once the Labour Party resigned from power in 1958, it adopted a stricter stance against the coloniser but also versus the Malta Church and its leaders. In order to gain support for his Independence claim, Mintoff established contacts with international politicians and organisations with the hope that they would exert pressure on the British authorities to give Malta its Independence. But Mr Mintoff chose to build contacts with dictators like Egypt’s Gamal Abdel Nasser or Algeria’s Ahmed Ben Bella as well as with Communist organisations like the Afro-Asian People’s Solidarity Organisation (AAPSO). As Frendo remarked, through those contacts, Labour “was distancing itself markedly from its earlier pro-British and hence pro-western alignment to a position in the murkiest waters of neutrality and non-alignment at the height of the Cold War.”¹⁵⁹ Mintoff contended that “in order to get freedom, we will enter into agreements and request the help of all.”¹⁶⁰ Such a comment led only to mistrust and fear. Even the British authorities were following closely and assessing the “possibility of Malta turning to Russia or Egypt.”¹⁶¹

Mr Mintoff’s joining of AAPSO coincided with Fidel Castro obtaining power in Cuba. Fidel Castro changed Cuba into a Communist country and made it an ally of China and Russia.¹⁶² At first, the Cuban Episcopal reaction was to approve Fidel Castro’s social and agrarian reforms, but soon the bishops warned that “Catholics should not be misled by the cunning which Communism displays in extending the hand which so ingeniously knows how to toast Catholics...”¹⁶³ The fate of the Cuban Catholic Church in the early 1960s stimulated panic and fear within the Malta Church since when Castro assumed dictatorial powers, he resorted to

¹⁵⁶ FO 371/124260, Letter from Minister to the Holy See Douglas Howard to D. Luard, Southern Department dated 15th January 1956 in *Views of Vatican on Possible Integration of Malta and U.K.*, The National Archives of the United Kingdom, Kew.

¹⁵⁷ Letter from Archbishop Michael Gonzi to Cardinal Pietro Palazzini dated 30th October 1960 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza Gonzi 1960, Vol. LIV.*

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ Henry Frendo, *Ċensu Tabone: The Man and his Century* (Malta, Maltese Studies, 2000), 131.

¹⁶⁰ *Forward*, 4th December 1959, 4.

¹⁶¹ CO 926/687, Letter from Air Commodore D.J.P. Lee in *Possibility of Aid from Soviet Union and Egypt*, The National Archives of the United Kingdom, Kew.

¹⁶² Ġużeppi Delia, ‘It-Tragedja ta’ Kuba,’ *Problemi tal-Lum*, November 1961, 324.

¹⁶³ Peter H. Marshall, *Cuba Libre breaking the Chain?* (London, Victor Gollancz Co, 1987), 235.

techniques of imprisonment, show trials and executions. Parallelism was drawn with Mintoff who on several occasions spoke about taking the bishop to court, peoples' courts, and so on. Newspapers like *Il-Haddiem*, published by *Żgħażaġħ Haddiema Nsara*, closely followed Castro's misdeeds.¹⁶⁴

Archbishop Gonzi followed the Cuban bishops' strategy by condemning materialistic and atheistic Communism and declaring that it was incompatible with Maltese society. The 1961 Pastoral Letter for Lent focused specifically on the Malta Labour Party's decision to join AAPSO. As the Labour youth organ contended, the subject of the pastoral letter was not Lent itself even though the letter was issued during that period.¹⁶⁵ Archbishop Gonzi condemned the AAPSO affiliation and argued that the Malta Labour Party was "dishonouring the name of Malta most Catholic and most noble before the Catholic world and before the democratic world."¹⁶⁶ As stated, Mr Mintoff's declaration that he was ready to accept assistance from countries with a Communist profile like China and Russia led Archbishop Gonzi to panic. In fact, on 6th June 1963, Archbishop Gonzi sent to the Vatican's Curia a translation of a speech delivered by Mintoff during a public meeting in which the Labour leader categorically declared that once Malta had attained independence, he intended to seek assistance from all countries, and that included China and Russia. Archbishop Gonzi added that the extract sent was faithfully translated by his public relations officer.¹⁶⁷ For Archbishop Gonzi, the Malta Labour Party was "opening the door to Communist infiltration into Malta and into the Mediterranean. That was what Russia had long been wishing and working for..."¹⁶⁸ Archbishop Gonzi stressed that Russia had never given anything for free. The most classic example for Archbishop Gonzi was Castro and Cuba.¹⁶⁹

Russia was seen as the Communist superpower *par excellence* eager to eradicate Christianity. It was claimed that Russia was interested in Malta to continue furthering its influences in Africa and Europe.¹⁷⁰ Archbishop Gonzi was convinced that contacts with Russian tourists or businessmen were to be avoided as much as possible as, in Russia, Christian churches were being either taken over by the government or destroyed. To put everything into perspective,

¹⁶⁴ See for instance *Il-Haddiem* 31st August 1964, 1, 22nd October 1964, 1, 28th October 1964, 1.

¹⁶⁵ Joe Camilleri in Claire Xuereb Grech, (ed.), *L-Elf Lewn ta' Mintoff* (Malta, Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti, 2015), 33.

¹⁶⁶ 'Il-Pastorali tar-Randan 1961,' *Problemi tal-Lum*, April 1961, 123.

¹⁶⁷ Letter by Archbishop Michael Gonzi dated 6th June 1963 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza Gonzi 1963, Vol. LVII*.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁰ *Forward*, 14th July 1961, 1.

one should note that in January 1960 Cardinal Alfredo Ottaviani, the Secretary of the Congregation of the Holy Office, condemned Italian President Giovanni Gronchi's visit to Moscow.¹⁷¹

Mobilisation Factor

Religion can serve “as the means by which the masses become politicised.”¹⁷² This was achieved by “providing sacred symbols that acquire political significance. Clerical organisations, lay interest groups, and religious political parties find in these sacred symbols an important key to mass support.”¹⁷³ The “drawing of people into active participation in the political process” took place when the people became conscious of “conflicts” which were conceived as being relevant to their lives.¹⁷⁴

This meant that, for the reasons explained above, the Malta Church, especially between 1958 and 1962, took an active role in politics believing that the Labour leader if elected to power would “*relegare la chiesa alla sacrestia.*”¹⁷⁵ This clerical activism in society was much more evident in the early 1960s than the 1930s when Lord Gerald Strickland and Archbishop Mauro Caruana were at loggerheads. This did not mean that the thirties' dispute was calm. The July 1928 anti-Archbishop Caruana demonstrations, during which cries of “Down with Christ the King” and “Long live Calles” were shouted, clearly prove this.¹⁷⁶ But a missing aspect in the nineteen-thirties' society was the *Ġunta tal-Għaqdiet Kattoliċi* which literally fuelled the enthusiasm of Catholic masses “to defend the heritage brought to Malta by Apostle Paul.”¹⁷⁷ This led to a change in the style of discourse, and theology was mixed up with political addresses. The *Ġunta tal-Għaqdiet Kattoliċi* led the Catholics to believe that, as in 1565, their forefathers had fought and won over Islam, and that now, in 1962, they were obliged to oppose Mr Mintoff. The elections were turned into a crusade. Instead of the “Infidel,” there were the “Mintoffian devils.”¹⁷⁸ This led to an inflated performance on both sides of the divide. Archbishop Gonzi was portrayed as God's gladiator, keen to stop the advance of Socialism.

¹⁷¹ Elizabeth Wisekmann, *Italy since 1945* (London, St Martin Press, 1971), 39.

¹⁷² Donald E. Smith, *Religion and Political Development* (Boston, Little Brown, 1970), 124.

¹⁷³ Donald E. Smith, *Religion and Political Modernization: Comparative Perspectives*, in Donald E. Smith, (ed.), *Religion and Political Modernization* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1974), 17.

¹⁷⁴ Donald E. Smith, *Religion and Political Development, op.cit.*, 145.

¹⁷⁵ Letter from Archbishop Michael Gonzi to Cardinal Domenico Tardini dated 7th March 1961 published in Sergio Grech, *Patri Felicjan Bilocca: Hajtu u Żminijietu, op.cit.*, 141-143.

¹⁷⁶ Calles was the exterminator of nuns and priests in Mexico.

¹⁷⁷ Ġunta Djoċesana tal-Għaqdiet Kattoliċi, *Alla Magħna u Rbaħna* (Malta, Empire Press, 1962), 2.

¹⁷⁸ Lino Spiteri, *Jien u Għaddej fil-Politika* (Malta, Publishers Enterprises Group, 2007), 54.

Socialism was represented as a dragon that had to be eliminated.¹⁷⁹ The dragon was a familiar representation with local Catholics since they had experiences of St George and Archangel Michael battling against the mentioned beast. The dragon represented evil.

In this manner, religion acted as a “political resource.”¹⁸⁰ Wald qualified these resources as “qualities possessed by religiously motivated people that can prove valuable in political action.”¹⁸¹ He identified three sets of religiously based resources that were required for political mobilisation: motivation, organisation and social interaction. Religious motivation might work in two ways. It “might encourage political activism by fostering personal and group efficacy. Political actors might feel that with spiritual guidance they can be effective in “these worldly pursuits” including politics. Second, religion might stimulate action through morally perceived political issues. This is likely to occur when political issues... are articulated in moral terms, mobilising religiously motivated actors for or against issues or candidates that promote the moral perspective.”¹⁸² Wald asserted that “human beings will make enormous sacrifices if they believe themselves to be driven by a divine force.”¹⁸³

The organisational side of religion, either through the Church itself or the organisations within it, provided assets favourable to collective exploit. Church-based resources involved “both the social interaction of congregants and other elements that are indigenous to organisations in the mobilisation process.”¹⁸⁴ As Wald implied, Churches even had “organisational advantages” over many secular groups. “In terms of access and communication, Churches are powerful organisations with formal membership, headquarters, regularly scheduled group meetings, publications, and full-time professional leadership.”¹⁸⁵

In Malta’s case, this led to the employment of an infinite array of resources: newspapers like *Lehen is-Sewwa* and *Il-Haddiem*, rallies, pastoral letters, whistles, confessionals, posters, statues, bells, homilies, corner meetings, conferences, “purification ceremonies,” and so on. As a consequence of mobilisation, cooperation with the “enemy” was unheard of. Loyal to its Mediterranean characteristics, society was divided in two essentially distinct camps: those siding with Archbishop Gonzi and those loyal to Mr Mintoff. Individuals were expected to

¹⁷⁹ Ġunta Djoċesana tal-Għaqdiet Kattoliċi, *Alla Magħna u Rbaħna*, *op.cit.*, 16.

¹⁸⁰ Kenneth D. Wald, *Religion and Politics in the United States* (New York, St. Martin's Press, 1987), 29.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, 29.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, 30.

¹⁸⁴ Fredrick C. Harris, ‘Something Within: Religion as a Mobilizer of African-American Political Activism,’ *The Journal of Politics*, 56, (1), (1994), 48.

¹⁸⁵ Kenneth D. Wald, *Religion and Politics in the United States*, *op.cit.*, 38.

choose a side, but the choice – as Bishop Giovanni Battista Bosio told his Vasto diocese in 1953 – “was not between differing political views, but between God and Satan, Christ and the Antichrist, civilisation and barbarism, liberty and slavery.”¹⁸⁶

The end result was the triumph of polarisation. Wilson defined polarisation as the “intense commitment to a candidate, culture, or an ideology” that finds expression in the denial and demonisation of the contrasting angle. “That commitment is revealed when a losing candidate is regarded not simply as wrong but as corrupt or wicked, when one culture is regarded as morally superior to every other one, or when one set of political beliefs are thought to be entirely correct and a rival set as wholly wrong.”¹⁸⁷

Archbishop Gonzi in his active role to defend the model of the Church as a perfect society attempted to block Mr Mintoff by imposing an interdiction. That constituted a new scenario in Maltese history since during the Strickland days the strategy of mortal sin had been employed. Those two spiritual penalties differed in nature because, while a mortal sin could be absolved by a priest, an interdiction could only be exonerated by an authoritative representative of the Church, such as a bishop. For Archbishop Gonzi, Labour’s Policy Statement of 1961 was the straw that broke the camel’s back.¹⁸⁸ In the mentioned document, the Labour Party asserted that if Malta aspired for Independence, “we cannot look down upon anybody’s help.”¹⁸⁹ Archbishop Gonzi was accused of being more interested “to safeguard first and foremost good diplomatic relations between the Vatican and the United Kingdom.”¹⁹⁰ The archbishop expected a public reparation from Labour’s side following the issuance of the above mentioned document but the party refused to apologise and, as a result, an interdiction was imposed on the Labour Party’s delegates in April 1961.¹⁹¹ In May of the same year, the Malta Catholic Church declared that the selling or reading of Socialist newspapers, as well as attendance at Labour meetings, were to be considered mortal sins, as was the act of voting for the Labour party in the 1962 general elections.¹⁹²

¹⁸⁶ David Kertzer, *Comrades and Christians: Religion and Political Struggle in Communist Italy*, *op.cit.*, 107.

¹⁸⁷ James Q. Wilson, ‘Lecture 1: Politics and Polarisation,’ Edmond J. Safra Centre for Ethics, Harvard University, Retrieved on 28th December 2016, <http://ethics.harvard.edu/event/lecture-i-politics-and-polarization>.

¹⁸⁸ ‘Malta Labour Party Stqarrija tal-Policy tal-Partit,’ inserted in Anton Cassar, *Meta l-Għawdxin kienu Mxewxa* (Malta, Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti, 1982), 105.

¹⁸⁹ Dominic Mintoff, *Malta: Church, State Labour*, *op.cit.*, 8.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 5.

¹⁹¹ ‘Stop Press: Interdiction Mintoff and Labour Party Executive,’ *The Bulletin*, 8th April 1961, 1.

¹⁹² ‘Il-Knisja tikkundanna l-Gazzetti u l-Appoġ tal-Mexxejja tal-MLP,’ *Forward/’Il Quddiem*, 2nd June 1961, 1.

While on the research trail, it became evident to this writer that not all the members of the “old-guard priests” shared the same narrative regarding the 1961 interdiction. A minority were in fact claiming that the idea of employing the interdiction was not originally Archbishop Gonzi’s. They claimed that Mgr Charles G. Vella, the Curia’s Public Relations Officer, had indeed suggested that course of action. Mgr Carmelo Xuereb was present for a meeting held for the priests in the presence of Archbishop Gonzi at the Catholic Institute, when Mgr Charles G. Vella had stood up and insisted on the prohibition of Labour-leaning newspapers.¹⁹³ But according to Mgr Lawrence Cachia, Mgr Carmelo Xuereb had not narrated the facts correctly. According to Mgr Lawrence Cachia, Archbishop Gonzi’s original intention was to interdict the editors of the Labour organs. But Mgr Charles G. Vella managed to change the decision and Labour delegates were interdicted instead.¹⁹⁴ Mgr Charles G. Vella always held the position that Archbishop Gonzi wanted to interdict all Labour supporters, but that he himself had managed to revert that decision by virtue of which delegates were the only ones interdicted.¹⁹⁵ But a document discovered by the present author showed that on 10th April 1961, Rev. Charles G. Vella wrote to his friend Rev. Wistin Azzopardi who resided in Australia, and argued that the interdiction “has been coming for a long time but Providence has certainly shown us how much it guides the Church and its bishops, for a better case than this could not have been found.”¹⁹⁶ Franciscan friar Alphonse Sammut confirmed to the present author that the meeting had proceeded on the lines narrated by Mgr Lawrence Cachia, but he refused to divulge names.¹⁹⁷ Mgr Said Pullicino maintained with the present author that the idea of imposing the interdict did not originate from Archbishop Gonzi’s end.¹⁹⁸ But Mgr Said Pullicino declined too to comment further when asked to point out names.¹⁹⁹

In a period of discord between religion and politics, the media industry was affected by polarisation. Even newspaper pages for children or housewives were tinged with partisan politics. The pamphleteering instrument was efficiently used when documentation regarding major *Ġunta* manifestations was required both for contemporary propaganda purposes as well

¹⁹³ Joseph M. Pirotta, *Fortress Colony: The Final Act 1945-1964, Vol. 3., op.cit.*, 782.

¹⁹⁴ Taped interview Mgr Lawrence Cachia, 24th February 2015, Private Residence, Msida, Sergio Grech Private Collection.

¹⁹⁵ Charles G. Vella, *Sinjali Maltin ta’ Żmienna* (Malta, Klabb Kotba Maltin, 2000), 167.

¹⁹⁶ Letter from Rev. C. G. Vella to Rev. W. Azzopardi dated 10th April 1961, Mgr Charles G. Vella Private Collection.

¹⁹⁷ Taped interview Fr Alphonse Sammut, Franciscan Convent, Birkirkara, 1st June 2016, Sergio Grech Private Collection.

¹⁹⁸ Taped interview Mgr Arthur Said Pullicino, Private Residence, Sliema, 23rd October 2016, Sergio Grech Private Collection.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

as for posterity.²⁰⁰ Articles from *Il-Haddiem* and *Lehen is-Sewwa* were reprinted on a single leaf and circulated.²⁰¹ Theological points against Communism and Socialism,²⁰² as well as the Church's position on voting,²⁰³ were also printed from time to time to remind voters of their duties.

Newspapers and other types of media practised the technique of framing. As Fowler argued, “anything that is said or written about the world is articulated from a particular ideological point.”²⁰⁴ Framing involved only one interpretation, and this choice of one particular frame was considered as a political act in itself. Therefore, framing was an effective propaganda act since the truth was presented from a deliberate angle. Parenti argued that framing depended on the manner how the news was packaged, the placement of the item, the headlines, the visuals included and the tone.²⁰⁵

But polarisation had another effect: the success of the role of dissent. Polarisation led to some people in a congregation to protest verbally – or in other ways like coughing during the reading of pastoral letters from the pulpit – through political innuendoes. A commotion resulted after a man told the Tarxien Parish Priest to “cut it out” while referring to “the present situation.”²⁰⁶ But more important was the fact that one third of the population simply refused to adhere to the voting instructions issued by the *Ġunta* prior to the 1962 general elections. That act was irreversible and at that point the seeds for further secularisation were sown. One should also add that there were some members of the clergy who were not toeing the line, and who therefore chose to ignore the directives given to confessors regarding voting intentions, or disregarded the canonical obligations that resulted from the imposition of the interdiction.²⁰⁷

The mobilisation strategy also included women whose realm, technically speaking, was not the political scene. Maltese women had started voting only in 1947.²⁰⁸ But, when writing of the dispute of the 1960s, one cannot refrain from noticing new roles that started being played by women. Some women found enough courage to contest the elections with the local parties even with interdicted Labour. Others disrupted electoral campaign meetings organised by Labour.

²⁰⁰ See for example, Don Camillo, *Twegiba għall-Attakki li qegħdin isiru kontra l-Knisja fil-Kwistjoni Politiko-Reliġjuża li qegħdin Fiha* (Malta, Empire Press, 1961).

²⁰¹ *Appell lill-Laburisti* (Malta, Empire Press, 1962).

²⁰² *Kont Taf? Komunikat Nru. 3* (Malta, Empire Press, 1962).

²⁰³ *Kif għandek Tivvota skond id-Direttiva tal-Ġunta* (Malta, Empire Press, 1962).

²⁰⁴ Roger Fowler, *Language in the News: Discourse and Ideology in the Press* (London, Routledge, 1991), 10.

²⁰⁵ Michael Parenti, ‘Methods of Media Manipulation,’ *The Humanist*, 57, (4), (1997), 6.

²⁰⁶ *Times of Malta*, 7th February 1956, 3.

²⁰⁷ Sergio Grech, *Church and Politics in Malta, 1955-1970* (MA, University of Malta, 2009), 169.

²⁰⁸ See Maria Caruana, *Women in Maltese Politics: 1945-1958* (BA Hons, University of Malta, 2013).

For the first time, cloistered nuns left their respective convents for the polling booths and cast their vote in the 1962 elections. There were 164 cloistered nuns who were eligible to vote.²⁰⁹ That was a very rare scene in Malta but was not a first in history as Labour apologists held. In 1928, cloistered nuns had voted for the first time in America's national elections.²¹⁰ Also, Italian cloistered nuns were given instructions by the Catholic Church authorities to vote in the April 1948 elections. The elections were won by the Christian Democratic Party led by Alcide de Gasperi and were held "in the aftermath of a Communist coup in Czechoslovakia the previous February, in which Communist Prime Minister Klement Gottwald ended a troubled 19-month partnership with moderate middle-class parties and took complete control of the Czech government. President Edvard Beneš was forced to resign, and the non-Communist foreign minister, Jan Masaryk, died under mysterious circumstances. Under Gottwald, Czechoslovakia became a Soviet-style State."²¹¹ During that period of time, the Italian Catholic Action was mobilised as part of the Church's campaign to prevent the Communists from gaining power. It reacted by the foundation of thousands of parish committees that were instructed to assist the Catholics to exercise their franchise and to campaign against the Marxists. Those committees, which were coordinated by Luigi Gedda – who, as was said earlier, was brought to Malta during the dispute to encourage the Maltese to defend their faith – were responsible for the preparation of posters, handbills, films and newspapers for the campaign and for devising transportation.²¹² Such terms of reference were an inspiration to the local action leaders who campaigned hardy during the 1962 electoral appointment.

A month before the 1962 elections were held, Archbishop Gonzi had asked Cardinal Valerio Valeri, Prefect of the Sacred Congregation for the Religious Orders in the Roman Curia, to give permission to the cloistered nuns to leave their convent in order to cast their vote in the February elections.²¹³ The Maltese archbishop drew the Prefect's attention to the fact that such a measure had already been adopted in Italy, as mentioned above.²¹⁴

²⁰⁹ Joe Fino, *B'Saħhet il-Hidma*, *op.cit.*, 120.

²¹⁰ Margaret M. McGuinness, *Called to Serve: A History of Nuns in America* (New York, New York University Press, 2013), 147.

²¹¹ Stefano Lucconi, 'Anticommunism, Americanisation and Ethnic Identity: Italian Americans and the 1948 Parliamentary Elections in Italy,' *Historian*, 62, (2000), 288.

²¹² Peter C. Kent, *The Lonely Cold War of Pius XII: The Roman Catholic Church and the Division of Europe* (Montreal, McGill University Press, 2002), 197.

²¹³ Letter from Archbishop Michael Gonzi to Cardinal Valerio Valeri dated 15th January 1962 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza Gonzi 1962*, Vol. LVI.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*

Four weeks prior to the elections, Archbishop Gonzi pictured the situation in Malta as follows: the voting camp was divided in two segments, those siding with the Malta Church, which was divided in four different divisions, referring to the four political parties that pledged loyalty to the Church, and the rest, siding with Mr Mintoff, whom Archbishop Gonzi once again described as an apostate.²¹⁵ This appellation surfaced also several times in Archbishop Gonzi's correspondence and in documents housed at The National Archives of the United Kingdom at Kew. One of the arguments that Archbishop Gonzi kept harping on was that the leaders of the Labour Party had succeeded in deceiving many people and in poisoning the minds and the hearts of many, particularly among the younger generation.²¹⁶

Archbishop Gonzi, whilst speaking of Labour leader Mintoff, and backing his argumentation for the need of the cloistered nuns to vote, argued that “*questo demagogo è intelligentissimo ed ha una parola magica ed è riuscito ad attirare al suo partito i cattolici non praticanti e gli anticlericali oltre parecchie migliaia di ignoranti da lui ingannati con false promesse di un impossibile benessere.*”²¹⁷

In fact, Archbishop Gonzi summed up the issue between the Church and the Labour Party as a war waged by the mentioned political party since the Maltese bishops were condemning “*la rovina religiosa e sociale che detto partito sta facendo a Malta... avvelenando particolarmente una sezione della gioventù operaia maschile e femminile.*”²¹⁸ Archbishop Gonzi was convinced that Mr Mintoff would never bow his head to the Church. Nine months prior to the elections, Archbishop Gonzi felt that the Labour leader had “lost a great amount of support he had enjoyed before, both from the people here and from the British government. When elections are held here, he will not have an absolute majority of votes. Unfortunately on our side there are four parties and so the majority of the votes will be divided among them all.”²¹⁹ To a certain extent, Archbishop Gonzi's political assessment was correct. In fact, once the *Ġunta* realised that the distribution of votes among the four parties would mean a substantial amount of wasted

²¹⁵ Ibid,

²¹⁶ Ibid.

²¹⁷ Letter from Archbishop Michael Gonzi to Cardinale Prefetto della Congregazione dei Sacramenti 23rd September 1960 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza Gonzi 1946-1947, Vol. LIV.*

²¹⁸ Ibid.

²¹⁹ Letter from Archbishop Michael Gonzi to Cardinal Geoffrey dated 21st May 1961 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza Gonzi 1961, Vol. LV.*

votes, they encouraged a vote for the most popular party, a strategy that for instance had irritated Dr Herbert Ganado.²²⁰

Another proof that the mobilisation factor had succeeded was the fact that the Malta Church found ways and means to infiltrate into the two main political parties to the effect that from them two splinter parties emerged. Archbishop Gonzi was not impressed with Borg Olivier's performance and the latter had even backed Mintoff's Break-with-Britain Resolution.²²¹ The choice for the new enterprise fell on Dr Herbert Ganado and Mr Anthony Pellegrini who were active in the Nationalist Party and in the Labour Party respectively. As regards Ganado, "it was believed that he was encouraged to do so by the Church Authorities in order to strengthen the anti-Mintoff element in the Nationalist Party under Borg Olivier. Thus, the party could have somebody who based politics on Catholic Social principles."²²² Both in the case of Dr Herbert Ganado and in the case of Mr Anthony Pellegrini, Capuchin Friar Felicjan Bilocca did his utmost to see their respective parties founded.²²³ Bilocca affirmed that he had met Ganado a number of times to discuss the formation of a new political party. But Dr Ganado never referred to those meetings in his memoirs.²²⁴ In the meantime, an attempt was made by Malta Church officials to convince Dr Paul Boffa to resurrect his old party, but to no avail.²²⁵ Mr Anthony Pellegrini was asked to fill Boffa's vacuum.²²⁶ The reader should note that Pellegrini was taking part in meetings to organise a new party before actually resigning from his post of Labour's Secretary-General.²²⁷ The Malta Church's move to create splinter parties aimed directly at the Labour and the Nationalist votes was effective. For instance, in a span of merely eleven months, Anthony Pellegrini's Christian Workers' Party had garnered 9.5% of the vote.²²⁸ Advocate Herbert Ganado's party had obtained similar results.²²⁹

²²⁰ Herbert Ganado, *Rajt Malta Tinbidel, Volume 4* (Malta, Il-Hajja, 1977), 364.

²²¹ Joseph M. Pirotta, *L-Istorja Kostituzzjonali u l-Isfond Storiku: 1942-2004* (Malta, Pubblikazzjonijiet Indipendenza, 2005), 80.

²²² Letter from Walter R. Zahra, General Secretary of the Christian Workers' Party to the International Federation of Christian Trade Unions dated 18th July 1960, Trevor Zahra Private Collection.

²²³ *Patri Felicjan Bilocca's diary*, entry 12th June 1958, Sergio Grech Private Collection.

²²⁴ As a result, the presentation of this new documentation by the present author way back in May 2005 led to protests from Dr Ganado's sons, Vanni Ganado and Tonio Ganado, who were present for the event. This 'outcry' was also reported by one of the main English newspapers in Malta. See 'Outcry at a Meeting discussing Herbert Ganado,' *The Malta Independent on Sunday*, Retrieved on 25th February 2017, <http://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2005-05-01/news/outcry-at-meeting-discussing-herbert-ganado-74843/>

²²⁵ *Patri Felicjan Bilocca's diary*, entry 29th April 1958, Sergio Grech Private Collection.

²²⁶ Sergio Grech, *Patri Felicjan Bilocca: Hajtu u Żminijietu, op.cit.*, 123.

²²⁷ *Ibid.*, 156.

²²⁸ Michael J. Schiavone, *L-Elezzjonijiet f'Pajjiżna fi Sfond Storiku: 1800-2013, op.cit.*, 418.

²²⁹ *Ibid.*

Archbishop Gonzi and Independence

As was reported in *The Daily Express*, the Prime Minister of Malta Borg Olivier demanded Independence “after aid snub” from the British coloniser.²³⁰ Initially, Archbishop Gonzi opposed Independence since he was convinced that it would usher in disaster.²³¹ According to Reverend Charles G. Vella, Archbishop Gonzi believed that “*jitalqu l-Ingliżi u mmutu bil-ġuħ.*”²³² Furthermore, Archbishop Gonzi refused to encourage a positive vote in the Independence referendum even though High Commissioner Wakefield favoured that move.²³³ Archbishop Gonzi, aged 80, could not understand how Malta, a dependent colony, could live on its own steam. He realised that Independence would change the special relationship that the Church had forged with the British. Moreover, Archbishop Gonzi was aware that a new constitutional system would possibly limit the Church’s role in society, revise its position and curb its spheres of influence. The fear of an anti-Catholic constitution was possible since Mr Mintoff was continuously proposing measures intended to loosen the Church’s role in society. And the British Parliament could not really be trusted as to when it would come to legislate on matters regarding religion and politics. In fact, there were different instances when the members of the British Parliament showed their dissatisfaction about “the so-called privileges” enjoyed by the Malta Church, irrespective of the fact that these were rooted in traditions and customs (as we shall see in the fifth chapter). Moreover, as Frendo noted, the Roman Catholic Church in Great Britain had experienced a history of discrimination “at least until the Catholic Emancipation Act of 1829.”²³⁴ The issue of parity between various denominations was logical to the British Parliament but unacceptable to the Malta Church.

The proposal of a clause in the constitution stating that the Roman Catholic Religion was to be the established religion of Malta did not satisfy the Malta Church. Archbishop Gonzi warned that if a non-Catholic constitution ensued, he was ready “to suffer like so many other bishops who were suffering behind the Iron Curtain.”²³⁵ The Malta Independence Conference held in July 1963 was almost hijacked by the Church clause. To win the Church, Borg Olivier proposed

²³⁰ Quoted from Henry Frendo, *The Origins of Maltese Statehood*, *op. cit.*, 91.

²³¹ *Ibid.*, 98.

²³² ‘The British would leave and we will die of hunger.’ Mgr Charles G. Vella interviewed by Henry Frendo in *L-Istorja minn Wara l-Kwinti*, Blaze Productions/TVM, 2006.

²³³ *CO 926/1946*, Letter from British High Commissioner Edward Wakefield to the Secretary for the Colonies Duncan Sandys dated 6th April 1964 in *Referendum and Concerns over Influence of Roman Catholic Church*, The National Archives of the United Kingdom.

²³⁴ Henry Frendo, *The Origins of Maltese Statehood*, *op. cit.*, 266.

²³⁵ *Ibid.*, 223.

to put the Church above the Constitution, but the proposal was unanimously rejected by the stakeholders involved. Lawyer Edgar Mizzi, at the time Deputy Crown Advocate General, put all the blame on Fr Joseph Bernard for the attempts supposedly he had made to put the Church above the Constitution.²³⁶

At the other end of the spectrum, Labour leader Mintoff pushed forward a secular state agenda.²³⁷ For instance, the Labour Party was suggesting the introduction of civil marriage, and also the freedom of parents to decide if they wanted their children to have religious instruction at school. Mintoff insisted that the archbishop and priests, like all citizens, could be taken to court. He even requested to have a guarantee that the Church would not attempt to influence general elections and, for that purpose, introduced the idea of a Corrupt Practices Act which would prohibit the Church from imposing mortal sin and interdiction during the period of elections. Labour wanted that the law would treat all religious denominations in an equal manner. Another of Labour's proposals stated that "the police are empowered to enter places of worship even during the performance of sacred functions to stop the ringing of bells or other nuisance that may disturb public order during public meetings."²³⁸

A few days before the commencement of the Independence Conference, the Vicar-General, Bishop Emanuel Galea, wrote two letters to Archbishop Gonzi who was in Rome attending the Second Vatican Council. In the first communication written from his Żejtun residence on 10 July 1963, he referred to a meeting that had been held between Fr Salv Galea, Fr Joseph Bernard, Fr Salv Bartoli Galea (*Lehen is-Sewwa's* editor) and "un altro." During that meeting, they had argued that a clause stating that the Catholic faith would be the State's religion "significa troppo poco."²³⁹ They also believed that there was the need to enshrine clauses in the Constitution that dealt with marriage, education and censorship.²⁴⁰ As a consequence, Mgr Galea sent a letter to Prime Minister Borg Olivier demanding the insertion of three clauses in the Constitution: Catholic education in schools in conformity with Papal encyclicals, religious marriage in the case where at least one of the parties was Catholic, and the right of the Church to censorship.²⁴¹

²³⁶ Edgar Mizzi, *Malta in the Making, op.cit.*, 23.

²³⁷ Joseph M. Pirota, *Fortress Colony, Vol 4., op.cit.*, 887.

²³⁸ Henry Frendo, *The Origins of Maltese Statehood, op. cit.*, 171.

²³⁹ 'Means very little.' Letter from Bishop Emanuel Galea to Archbishop Michael Gonzi dated 10th July 1963 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza 1963, Vol. LVII.*

²⁴⁰ Ibid.

²⁴¹ Ibid.

The following day, another letter was sent by Bishop Galea to Archbishop Gonzi reporting a meeting he had had with Nationalist Prime Minister Borg Olivier and his assistant Dr Victor Ragonesi. Borg Olivier had agreed that censorship could remain in the Church's domain but had further added that no need was felt to put the clause in the Constitution. Borg Olivier also argued that canonical marriages were to apply only for baptised parties.²⁴² Bishop Galea insisted that the United Nations Human Rights Charter was not in its entirety approved by the Roman Catholic Church.²⁴³ It was also mentioned that Borg Olivier would seek the assistance "*di un consigliere*."²⁴⁴

In a meeting Archbishop Gonzi had with the Colonial Secretary Duncan Sandys in February 1964, Archbishop Gonzi warned him that if the Church's realms were intruded, "then he, the clergy and the vast majority of the Maltese would firmly resist it."²⁴⁵ Archbishop Gonzi showed his disagreement regarding Mintoff's constitutional proposals but highlighted the fact that he held no objection to civil marriage in the case of non-Catholics, atheists and certified apostate Catholics. Furthermore, Archbishop Gonzi explained that he was against the opportunity for parents to withdraw their children from religion classes in schools. Archbishop Gonzi added that *Privilegium fori* should not be affected. Archbishop Gonzi agreed with Mr Sandys that Prime Minister Borg Olivier's amendments of putting the Church above the constitution were to be left out.

Compromise regarding the clause was reached thanks to the participation in the talks of the Apostolic Delegate Archbishop Cardinale who disagreed with Borg Olivier's original proposal to put the Church above the constitution. Archbishop Cardinale had the support of Pope Paul VI himself. The Independence constitutional religious clause issue was finally solved in July 1964 when, in agreement with the Vatican and the Archbishop of Malta, Borg Olivier "agreed to the introduction of a standard form of non-discrimination clause and to the deletion of the provision which exempted the Church from the human rights chapter of the Constitution." The Independence Constitution stipulated that Malta's religion was to be Roman Catholic, and that Catholic religion was to be taught in schools. Mr Sandys had commented in the House of

²⁴² Letter from Bishop Emanuel Galea to Archbishop Michael Gonzi dated 11th July 1963 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza 1963, Vol. LVII*.

²⁴³ Ibid.

²⁴⁴ Ibid.

²⁴⁵ Henry Frendo, *The Origins of Maltese Statehood, op.cit.*, 220.

Commons that the Malta Church deserved a special position in the Constitution as Malaya, which was given a Constitution that recognised its Muslim faith.²⁴⁶

The Malta Church on 19th April 1964 issued a circular-letter declaring that the issue of “independence can only effect the Church indirectly” and that the guarantees “depend on a good Constitution and on the religious sentiments of those in whose hands is entrusted the leadership of the Nation.”²⁴⁷ Archbishop Gonzi described the gaining of Independence as a “great important historical fact.”²⁴⁸ He asserted that the Church could not ignore the natural right of a country to achieve Independence.²⁴⁹ The archbishop agreed that politicians had the right to decide when Independence should be attained.²⁵⁰ The Independence Constitution, the Archbishop pointed out, recognised the freedom that the Church required to carry out its vocation.²⁵¹

But there is another issue that here needs to be stressed and which once again showed that Archbishop Gonzi did embrace change contrary to what others have asserted or assumed. The Malta Church raised absolutely no objection against the inclusion of the right to freedom of conscience and religion among the fundamental rights of the individual enshrined in the Constitution. This point is of crucial importance as Archbishop Gonzi’s action preceded the famous Decree of Vatican Council II on religious freedom. As Sandys noted, the Malta Independence Constitution “contains a large chapter on fundamental human rights.” In fact, it also guaranteed “freedom of conscience, of expression and of peaceful assembly and association.”²⁵²

Conclusion

As this chapter shows, one of the themes that dominated Maltese politics after the Second World War was that of the role of religion within a political system, in practice to what extent the teachings of the Catholic Church influenced the political decisions taken by the elected majority. The Catholic elements believed that the island of Malta should progress along

²⁴⁶ 'X' qalu dwar Malta fil-House of Commons,' *Il-Haddiem*, 25th July, 1961, 1. 'Il-Knisja fil-Kostituzzjoni,' *Il-Haddiem*, 25th July, 1964, 4.

²⁴⁷ 'Bishops' Circular Letter on Referendum,' *The Bulletin*, 20th April 1964, 1.

²⁴⁸ 'Il-Pastorali ta' l-Indipendenza,' *Il-Haddiem*, 7th September 1964, 1.

²⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁵¹ *Ibid.*

²⁵² Duncan Sandys, *Malta Independence, House of Commons Debate* 21st July, 1964, Vol 699, 276-81.

Christian lines. The point of dissent was evident when religious leaders were interpreted as abandoning their role in favour of political punditry while, on the other hand, politicians wanted to unchain their actions from the religious institution. Archbishop Gonzi's episcopate coincided with the rise of Communist and Liberal regimes which not only side-lined the Church but often depicted the Church itself as an enemy of the state and was consequently made to suffer. In fact, in most Latin countries, liberalism endorsed a kind of hostile separation that, besides seeking to limit the Church to the private sphere, a status described by Archbishop Gonzi as the relegation of the Church to "the sacristy", also gave birth to establishments that ardently persecuted the Catholic Church. Therefore Archbishop Gonzi, in his resolved position against Integration and Independence, was only defending the model of the Church as a perfect society, together with the belief that in a Catholic State, it was the duty of its rulers to defend the Church. Furthermore, Archbishop Gonzi was defending the ecclesiological model that his formation had directed him to defend. Still, notwithstanding his old age and his previous positions, and determined by the duties demanded by his office, the archbishop made an important stride forward during the forging of the Independence Constitution that later would be championed by the Second Vatican Council, that is to say the acceptance of a clause relating to freedom of conscience.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE TENSION BETWEEN SECULAR AND RELIGIOUS VIEWPOINTS IN ADDRESSING THE SOCIAL QUESTION

During the year 1891, the Catholic Church issued the encyclical *Rerum Novarum*. The content of that papal document was revolutionary. The Church wanted to give a voice to most of the people working in the newly established industries and proposed a plan of political and social action that could liberate them from the miserable conditions in which they were being kept by a powerful capitalistic regime. To be fair, the Church, out of its very calling, had always taken care of the downtrodden and the socially outcast, but now its voice through *Rerum Novarum* was more vociferous.

The Church's adequate response to social ills showed the capability of religion to adapt to the issues at hand. Moreover, thanks to this document, the Catholic Church ensured that it remained a social force in society, especially in the face of the rising ideologies – and more specifically Communism - that set out to destroy this very role, and the institution behind it. As Chadwick contended, “it was the duty of Marxist governments to get rid of religion. In their eyes, religion was backward-looking, provided erroneous views of the world, divided society by unnecessary internal barriers, drew young people into unproductive work, discouraged the real improvements of society by turning minds to a dream world, was an expression of bourgeois attitudes, and acted as a brake upon justice for the proletariat. Ideally, it should vanish from the minds of humanity.”¹ The main planks of this doctrine were abolition of private property, elimination of the rights of inheritance, confiscation of property rights, ownership of communication and transportation and control of factories, agriculture, labour, corporate farms, regional planning and education.

Thanks to *Rerum Novarum*, the movement of Catholic Social Teaching was born. *Rerum Novarum* emphasised the dignity of the worker, the common good and subsidiarity, enlisting in trade unions, and the resort to strike as part of the rights that the working class should enjoy.

¹ Owen Chadwick, *The Christian Church in the Cold War* (London, Penguin Books, 1993), 19.

The Papal document in question also took Socialism to task. The Church also campaigned for social justice.² Moreover, the Catholic Church claimed that “all the institutions of public and social life must be imbued with the spirit of... justice.”³ Therefore, the Church offered remedies to the ills resulting from the new industrial organisation of labour, as a result of industrialisation, and marked the appropriate boundaries of power of the concerned stakeholders, that is to say employees, employers and the State.

The Church Fathers contended that the Social Question, that is the effects of industrialisation and the strategies employed to deal with it, was not only an economic issue “but it is primarily bound up with religion and morality.”⁴ Therefore, the Church was not interested only in issues resulting from working contracts but was also concerned with the employees’ social well-being that, as the Church sustained, was under attack from pagan values emanating from literature, cinematography, magazines, and so on.⁵ All in all, in embracing the causes of the lower classes, the Church had “demonstrated a remarkable capacity for survival and rejuvenation.”⁶

In addressing the Social Question, the Church had different viewpoints and debates from those of the capitalists and the Communists, as will be explained here. Both spheres were equally condemned by the Church. At this stage, understanding the foundations of Catholic Social Teaching is key to comprehend the social dimension of Archbishop Gonzi’s episcopate which was a continuation of the Catholic social tradition and in the context of the conflicting opinions and where to draw the line between religion and politics.

The Church’s Social Teaching in Malta

During the early decades of the twentieth century, some limited initiatives were taken to introduce the Church’s social teaching in Malta in order to put pressure on the stakeholders to address the Social Question. It is true that, at this stage, industrialisation was limited and much depended on the Dockyard, but social conditions ranged from bad to worse. The fate of the

² Adam Sasiadek, ‘Varieties of Catholic Social Justice: Initiatives since Rerum Novarum and their Implications for Contemporary Labour and Employment Policy,’ *Journal of Catholic Legal Studies*, 50, (1), (3), (2017), 258.

³ Gerald Seaston, *Social Reconstruction: The Catholic New Order* (Malta, Malta Catholic Social Guild, 1941), 11.

⁴ *Permoti Nos*, Encyclical of Pope Leo XIII, On Social Conditions in Belgium, Retrieved on 9th June 2017, http://w2.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_10071895_permoti-nos.html.

⁵ Edward Coleiro, *Kors ta’ Soċjoloġija* (Malta, Għaqda ta’ Qari Tajjeb, 1947), 7.

⁶ David Blackburn, ‘The Catholic Church in Europe since the French Revolution,’ *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 33, (4), (1991), 2.

Maltese economy depended on the military investments of the colonial master, and a pattern could be observed – the island prospered in times of war. In fact, the economic boom resulting from the First World War was short-lived and was followed by stagnation and price inflation culminating in the *Sette Giugno* riots.⁷

Another hard blow to the island's fate resulted from the Second World War that ultimately disrupted life and ruined the island's economy. Reports drawn by Wilfrid Woods and Thomas Balogh in 1946 and 1955 respectively had concluded that in Malta's case the matter at stake was "whether existing circumstances can be changed so that the Maltese economy can be expanded independently of the UK expenditure in Malta."⁸

In 1921 Fr Charles Plater founded in Malta the Catholic Social Guild with the scope to train potential leaders for social action and to spread Catholic Social Thought.⁹ In 1935, Jesuit Thomas Agius founded the *Għaqda ta' Qari Tajjeb* whose mission was similar to the Catholic Truth Society that operated in England and Ireland.¹⁰ One of the latter's aims was the promotion of the Church's social teaching. Philanthropist and Labour Senator Alfons Maria Galea was one of the first local publishers that issued Catholic social texts.¹¹

After the Second World War, when reconstruction was on Malta's cards, Catholic Sociology was "introduced" in Malta. Local members of the priesthood like Capuchin Felicjan Bilocca,¹² Reverend Edward Coleiro,¹³ Dominican Paul Galea¹⁴ and others took the plunge and disseminated the contents of the mentioned discipline through their homilies, press articles, pamphlets, booklets, books, and courses organised by the Maltese Catholic lay movements.

⁷ Paul A. Bartolo, "The Sette Giugno: How the Imperial Government pushed the Maltese into Rebellion," in Henry Frendo, (ed.), *The Sette Giugno in Maltese History: 1919-2019* (Malta, Midsea Books, 2019), 47.

⁸ Edward J. Spiteri, *An Island in Transition: The Economic Transformation of Malta from a British Crown Colony to an Independent Democratic Republic* (Malta, The Author, 1997), 13.

⁹ Philip E. Said, "Social Studies Education in Malta: A Historical Outline," *The Educator*, 5, (2019), 68.

¹⁰ Victor Fenech, *Il-Ktieb Malti* (Malta, Pubblikazzjonijiet Indipendenza, 2003), 158. Sergio Grech, 'L-Għaqda ta' Qari Tajjeb,' *L-Immara*, 3, (42), (2019), 14.

¹¹ See for example Alfons Maria Galea, *Von Ketteler* (Malta, Kotba tal-Mogħdija taż-Żmien, 1914).

¹² See for example Felicjan Bilocca, *Gwida Ġenerali għall-Haddiem Kattoliku* (Malta, Dar ta' San Ġużepp, 1946).

¹³ Edward Coleiro, *Kors ta' Soċjoloġija* (Malta, Għaqda ta' Qari Tajjeb, 1947).

¹⁴ See for example Paul Galea, *Jeddijiet il-Haddiema u Dmirijiet il-Gvern* (Malta, Dar ta' San Ġużepp, 1947). There were occasions where Rev. Galea delivered lectures at Malta Labour Party village clubs.

Their initiative must be understood as the introduction of a possible route to the solution of the problems being faced by the working class rather than the setting up of an academic enterprise. In the 1950s, Archbishop Gonzi had introduced the Commission for Social Studies with the agenda to study social problems in Malta and to organise courses on the subject.

From time to time, Catholic Social Teaching texts were also published by lay organisations like the *Żgħażaġh Haddiema Nsara (ŻHN)* and the *Azzjoni Kattolika (Malta Catholic Action)*. For example, the *ŻHN* had published a number of social encyclicals which had been translated into Maltese.¹⁵ Meanwhile, a Department of Social Studies was set up at the Malta University in the mid-1970s. The first Maltese to obtain an academic qualification in the field of Sociology was the Rev. Canon Benjamin Tonna who had studied sociology at the University of Louvain in Belgium in the late 1950s.

The Social Conscience of the Malta Church

During the episcopate of Archbishop Gonzi, the Malta Church, in the absence of welfare initiatives taken from time to time by the colonial government or the Maltese politicians in power, continued to practise the principles of charity and solidarity and even ventured on new projects like the building of social accommodation units in Blata l-Bajda and Kalkara for low income families. The Blata l-Bajda project cost £100,000. A total of ninety-two units were made available. Archbishop Gonzi inspired the setting up of the Blood Bank which was a joint project between the Cathedral Chapter and the Order of St. John.¹⁶ Dr Paul Farrugia maintained that it was he who came out with the idea to set up the Blood Bank and not Archbishop Gonzi.¹⁷ For the latter, there was nothing alien in suggesting that there should be a “*traghetto*” (a ferry boat) between Sicily and Malta, organised by the Italian administration.¹⁸ Archbishop Gonzi was also convinced that the Italians were duty bound to assist the Maltese in the reconstruction of the Royal Opera House that had been bombarded during the Second World War.¹⁹

¹⁵ See Papa Giovanni XXIII, *Ittra Enċiklika Mater et Magistra: Fuq l-aħħar Żviluppi tal-Kwistjoni Soċjali fid-Dawl tat-Tagħlim Nisrani* (Malta, *Żgħażaġh Haddiema Nsara*, 1961).

¹⁶ Taped interview Dr Paul Farrugia, 20th September 1979, Michael Galea Archives.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ Letter from Archbishop Michael Gonzi to Cardinal Amleto Cicognani dated 9th June 1965 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza 1965, Vol LIX*.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

In this regard, the Church was a leading force in the social sector setting an example for the legislator, providing “a sort of a welfare state based on voluntary offerings and a dedicated service.”²⁰ Bonnici grouped the social activities of the Church in the nineteenth and the twentieth century in three categories: institutions that cared for the sick and the aged, children’s homes, and sundry charitable institutions.²¹ The Malta Church was also a catalyst in teaching trades to children under its protection. For instance, the Salesians of Don Bosco taught the trade of printing to children in their custody. Since the second half of the nineteenth century, the efforts to open institutions for the less fortunate, children and orphans were increased since different congregations of nuns provided free teaching services, nursing, and social work. Sisters of Charity like the St. Vincent de Paul and St. Jeanne-Antide Thouret congregations came to Malta to open orphanages.²² In 1898, the Dominican Nursing Sisters began to offer their services to patients hospitalised at St. Catherine’s in Attard, St. Peter’s in Lija, and Trijonfi in Gozo.²³ In 1878, the Little Sisters of the Poor set up a house for the elderly at Ħamrun.²⁴ Various virtuous personalities like Fra Diego Bonanno²⁵ and Adelaide Cini²⁶ set up establishments for the poor. Mgr Isidor Formosa founded the Ursoline Sisters congregation with the intention of taking care of the Crèche at Guardamangia.²⁷ In 1875, the Conservatorio Vincenzo Bugeja was set up in Santa Venera. Mgr Giuseppe de Piro, besides setting up the Missionary Society of St. Paul, also took care of St. Joseph’s Institute for boys (1888).²⁸ Other centres included the Jesus of Nazareth Institute at Żejtun²⁹ (1934) and the Conservatorio St. Joseph at Cospicua.³⁰

²⁰ Joseph Bezzina, “The Church in Malta: An Indelible Imprint upon the Nation’s History and Character,” in Kenneth Gambin, (ed.), *Malta: Roots of a Nation* (Malta, Heritage Malta, 2004), 261.

²¹ Arthur Bonnici, *History of the Church in Malta, Volume 4, op.cit.*, 136.

²² Conrad d’Amato, ‘Santa Giovanna Antide Thouret u s-Sorijiet tal-Karità f’Birżebbuġa,’ *Festa 2008*, Soċjetà Filarmonika San Pietru Banda Birżebbuġa, 93.

²³ Charles Savona Ventura, *Contemporary Medicine in Malta: 1798-1979* (Malta, Publishers Enterprises Group, 2005), 142.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 156.

²⁵ Ġorġ Aquilina, *Fra Diegu Bonanno OFM: Franġiskan li ħaseb fil-Fqir* (Malta, Publishers Enterprises Group, 2006), 54.

²⁶ Pawlu Mizzi, ‘Adelaide Cini,’ *Heritage: an Encyclopaedia of Maltese Culture and Civilisation*, 22, (1979), 422.

²⁷ Alexander Bonnici, *Mons. Sidor Formosa (1851-1931): Fundatur tal-Orsolini Maltin ta’ Santa Angela Merici* (Malta, Reliġjon u Hajja, 1991), 118.

²⁸ Alexander Bonnici, *Giuseppe de Piro, 1877-1933: Founder of the Missionary Society of St. Paul* (Malta, Missionary Society of St. Paul, 1988), 199.

²⁹ Alexander Bonnici, *L-Istituti ta’ Hajja Kkonsagrata* (Malta, Pubblikazzjonijiet Indipendenza, 2000), 184.

³⁰ Charles Galea Scannura, ‘Ordnijiet Reliġjużi Femminili f’Bormla,’ *Festa 2008*, Ċentru 19 ta’ Novembru, Bormla, 131.

Archbishop Gonzi had declared in 1959, thereby echoing Pope Pius XII, that “the Church’s policy was to create a social conscience grounded in Catholic principles.”³¹ Charity was one of the strongest points of Archbishop Gonzi’s episcopate. According to his chaplain Rev. John Dimech (1922-2009), on a daily basis, the Archbishop, together with his documentation portfolio, carried also with him his wallet in order to distribute money to the poor who went to his palace asking for help.³² The same source argued that there were instances when the money he brought with him needed to be topped up and there were even occurrences when the Archbishop borrowed some money from Rev. Dimech to donate to the poor.³³ According to the same source, Archbishop Gonzi even helped communities that were not Catholic and he frequently gave money to parish priests to aid the poor souls in their parish.³⁴ The latter fact was also confirmed to the present writer by Mgr J. Mifsud Bonnici.³⁵

The Archbishop received his own income from the mensa (“*il-mensa tal-Isqof*”). According to Mgr Carmelo Xuereb, one of his closest collaborators, Archbishop Gonzi used to keep the amount required for his daily necessities and the rest would be donated for welfare initiatives.³⁶ From 1965 to 1968, Archbishop Gonzi donated, from his mensa, the sum of £4,000 to the Secretariat for Social Assistance, a wing of the Malta Catholic Action. Financial contributions were made for the building of churches in new residential communities, to cover expenses of the Catholic press owned by the Church, and for the running of the orphanages.³⁷ According to Busuttil, who acted as a financial consultant to Archbishop Gonzi, the funds in the bishop’s mensa were quite substantial.³⁸

Although Archbishop Gonzi lived either in the Valletta palace or in the one at Mdina, his contemporaries noted that he led a frugal life.³⁹ In fact, there was no heating system in place in the mentioned palaces and he often rebuked the Curia’s staff for using electric heating devices

³¹ ‘Church, Clergy and People: Archbishop concludes Social Week at Valletta,’ *Times of Malta*, 25th June 1959, 5.

³² Rev. John Dimech, Unpublished Manuscripts, Perit Joe Dimech Private Collection.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Taped interview Mgr Joseph Mifsud Bonnici, Hamrun Parish House, 23rd November 2016, Sergio Grech Private Collection

³⁶ Carmelo Xuereb, “Korrispondenza,” *Pastor*, Jannar 1968, 28.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Taped interview Professor Salvinu Busuttil, Jesuits Retreat House, Mosta, 10th September 2015, Sergio Grech Private Collection.

³⁹ Taped interview Mgr Victor Zammit McKeon, Office for the Running of the Church Children’s Homes, Valletta, 14th September 2015, Mgr. Charles G. Vella, Private Residence, Sliema, 20th October 2016, and Mgr Aloysius Deguara, Private Residence, Mġarr, 1st September 2015, Sergio Grech Private Collection.

in winter.⁴⁰ Additionally, Archbishop Gonzi always refused to instal a lift.⁴¹ He ate small portion meals and during Lent he refused invitations to receptions.⁴² When in Rome, Archbishop Gonzi opted to use trams rather than taxis and he resided with the Franciscan Nuns rather than in lucrative hotels.⁴³

The reader must appreciate the fact that in Malta this was a period of time when the social benefits regime was fragile and extremely limited. During the first four decades of the twentieth century, arguably the most notable development was the 1929 Workers Compensation Act which made insurance obligatory, in case any worker was injured at his working place.⁴⁴ Injured workers were awarded £1.40 weekly and the widows, whose husbands had passed away while on duty, were awarded £1.16 weekly.⁴⁵ Before that initiative, much depended on the mutual help societies whose efforts concentrated only on the respective members.⁴⁶ The next big improvement was in 1948 when the Old Age Pensions Act was approved by the Malta Legislative Assembly. Other improvements in the history of the Maltese social security system included the National Assistance Act (1956), the lowering of pensionable age from 65 to 63 (1963), the amendment of the National Insurance Scheme which covered the self-employed (1965), the lowering of pensionable age to 61 (1965-1971), the introduction of an annual bonus to pensioners and those in receipt of social assistance (1972) and the introduction of Children's Allowance and disability pensions. Emigration was seen as the only solution to this stagnant situation. Societies like the St. Vincent de Paul Society (1850) assisted the poor workers and their families. It was claimed that Archbishop Gonzi donated from his own income £30 monthly to the St. Vincent de Paul Society.⁴⁷

During Archbishop Gonzi's episcopacy, the local Church set up a number of institutions intended to provide specialised services to different clients residing in Malta and abroad. This included the establishment of the Emigrants Commission (1950) to aid and assist prospective

⁴⁰ Taped interview Mr Alfred Farrugia, Private Residence Floriana, 14th September 2015, Sergio Grech Private Collection.

⁴¹ Taped interview Mgr Victor Zammit McKeon, Office for the Running of the Church Children's Homes, Valletta, 14th September 2015, Sergio Grech Private Collection.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Taped interview Mgr. Charles G. Vella, Private Residence, Sliema, 20th October 2016, Sergio Grech Private Collection.

⁴⁴ Karmenu Ellul Galea, *Pijunieri tas-Sigurtà Soċjali* (Malta, Il-Hajja, 1982), 358.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Karmenu Ellul Galea, *It-Trejdunjonizmu f'Malta: L-Ewwel Volum* (Malta, Pubblikazzjonijiet Indipendenza, 1993), 246.

⁴⁷ Paul Saliba, *L-Arcisqof Gonzi* (Malta, Malta Catholic Action, 1963), 32.

emigrants,⁴⁸ the Diocesan Orphanage Commission (1956), to upgrade and coordinate the organisation of orphanages,⁴⁹ the Adoption Society, to assist families who were interested to adopt children, and Caritas (1968),⁵⁰ intended to coordinate various activities such as homes for the elderly, drug prevention and rehabilitation centres for addicts. In March 1968, Archbishop Gonzi abolished all begging in streets by children residing in orphanages. Funeral attendances by orphans was also stopped.⁵¹

In a brief report drawn in 1946 by the Archbishop's Curia, it became known that the Malta Church homed the following number of residents:⁵² St Joseph Institute (Ħamrun) 174 males, Cini Institute (Ħamrun) 70 females, Jesus of Nazareth Institute (Żejtun) 73, Birkirkara 36, Ħamrun 26, Crèche (Sliema) 23, St. Joseph (Żabbar) 38 females, Good Shepherd Convent (Balzan) 78 adults and 65 children, Fra Diego (Ħamrun) 99 females, and St. Theresa (Żurrieq) 12 females.

From Social Action to Catholic Action

One of the most active organisations that promoted, practised and gave a vigorous meaning to the term *social action* was the Catholic Action Movement that in the case of Malta dated back to 1921. During that epoch, the Papacy “made a sustained attempt to impose the Italian model of Catholic Action in as many countries as possible, as the “template” for the organisation of Catholic laity, especially social activism in defence of the Church and the advancement of its mission.”⁵³ Therefore, as stated earlier, Catholic Action developed into an institution of lay militants under the command of the ecclesiastical hierarchy in defence of the Church from its enemies.⁵⁴ During that epoch, the Holy See was responding to the advance of Communism in the Soviet Union. According to the Church, “the most persistent enemies... from Moscow are directing the struggle against Christian civilisation.”⁵⁵ “Communism was

⁴⁸ Lawrence E. Attard, *L-Emigrazzjoni Maltija* (Malta, Pubblikazzjonijiet Indipendenza, 1999), 139.

⁴⁹ *Id-Djar tat-Tfal: 25 Sena ta' Hidma għat-Tfal Iltiema fl-Arċidjoċesi Maltija* (Malta, Printex, 1981), 2.

⁵⁰ George Grima, “Il-Kariżma ta' Monsinjur Victor Grech,” in Sergio Grech, (ed.), *Monsinjur Victor Grech: Bejn Storja u Miti* (Malta, Horizons, 2014), 92.

⁵¹ Press release dated 18th March 1968 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza Gonzi 1968, Vol. LXII*.

⁵² Letter from Mgr Arturo Bonnici to Mr Thomas Agius Ferrante dated 9th March 1946 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza Gonzi 1946-1947, Vol. XLIV*.

⁵³ John Pollard, ‘Pius XI’s Promotion of the Italian Model of Catholic Action in the World-Wide Church,’ *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 10, (2012), 758.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 763.

⁵⁵ *Divini Redemptoris, op.cit.*

{also} seen to be behind the persecution of the Church in Mexico and the driving force of anti-clerical Republicanism in Spain.”⁵⁶

Over the years, the Maltese branch of the Catholic Action had developed into a strong militant organisation made up of four sections catering for men, women, young men and young women promoting social engagement. It also had a movement for graduates and another one for teachers. After the Second World War, thanks to the energy of Mgr Michael Azzopardi, the Catholic Action was organised literally from ground zero as many of its centres over the island had been either shattered or totally destroyed.⁵⁷

As expected, the mentioned organisation worked in direct collaboration with the Maltese Catholic hierarchy. Archbishop Gonzi considered the organisation as “his right hand man” and its members were often asked to fill “vacancies” within the Church, the Catholic organisations or parish structures. Members were also decorated with Papal honours for their dedicated service to society and were made members of the Order of St. Gregory the Great or the Order of St. Sylvester. Dr Herbert Ganado (1969), contractor Angelo Grima (1960), and Vincenzo Bonello (1963) were made members of the Order of St. Gregory the Great. Salvu Gatt (1968), a Director within the Department of Education, and Emanuele S. Tonna (1968), one of Archbishop Gonzi’s biographers, were made members of the Order of St. Sylvester. At times, the bestowal of such honours were the source of discontent amongst these lay organisations. For instance, in 1972, Dr Paul Mallia, the President of Cana Movement, resigned from his position after Archbishop Gonzi had decided to honour four members of the lay apostolate in Malta while no one from the Cana Movement was honoured. After the announcement of the awards, Dr Mallia decided to step aside claiming that “either the bishops are averse to the Movement as such or are not happy with its present lay leadership.”⁵⁸ It said a lot that part of Archbishop Gonzi’s first speech to the diocese was directed at Catholic Action members. On that occasion, he demanded their aid in the running of the diocese.⁵⁹ In the case of Gozo, one of his very first acts as a bishop of the mentioned diocese was the introduction of the Catholic Action.⁶⁰

⁵⁶ John Pollard, ‘Pius XI’s Promotion of the Italian Model of Catholic Action in the World-Wide Church,’ *op.cit.*, 770.

⁵⁷ Lino Cuschieri, *Monsinjur Mikiel Azzopardi* (Malta, The Author, 1995), 1.

⁵⁸ Letter from Dr Paul Mallia to Reverend Charles G. Vella dated 4th September 1972, Reverend Charles G. Vella Private Collection.

⁵⁹ *Leĥen is-Sewwa*, 22nd January 1984, 6.

⁶⁰ Joseph Bezzina, *Anton Tabone il-Principali* (Malta, Gaulitana, 1999), 25.

The Malta Catholic Action's schedule was impressive. It organised broadcasts and summer camps for the children of large families, ran over a hundred and fifty parish centres, held liturgical and choir activities in various parishes, prepared catechism contests, and screened films inspired by Catholic themes. It opened in Siggiewi the Dar tal-Provvidenza which homed disabled persons.⁶¹ Furthermore, it assisted prospective emigrants, collected money for the needy, the sick and the missions, campaigned in favour of decency and morality, published *Leĥen is-Sewwa*, and organised Social Studies classes. As Mgr. Philip Calleja, who for several years ran the Emigrants' Commission, told the present author, "the Catholic Action was Malta."⁶² All this striking and inspiring activity was carried out on a voluntary basis.

Archbishop Gonzi's episcopate also witnessed the birth of other lay organisations like Moviment Azzjoni Soċjali (MAS, 1955) and Żgħażaġĥ Haddiema Nsara (ŻHN, 1945) whose aims were inspired by catholic social action. MAS also became an active agent in the field of trade unionism, and organised courses in Social Studies. It also set up two unions: the Workers and Family Union and the Women Employers Union (1957).⁶³ The interest of MAS ventured as well in the sectors of housing, agriculture and fishing development.⁶⁴ The ŻHN was originally born in Belgium and the movement was introduced in Malta by the Jesuits. For a brief period of time, it provided workers with hot meals at very low prices.⁶⁵ The ŻHN had representatives in the Joint Advisory Committee on Employment, Beverages Industries Wages Council, Construction Industries Wages Council, Woodwork Industries Wages Council, Public Transport Wages Council, Transport, Equipment, Metal and Allied Industries Wages Council and the Kumitat Arċidjoċesan Assistenza Soċjali.⁶⁶ The movement tried to remedy the unemployment situation in Malta by setting up a Youth Employment Bureau. The Żgħażaġĥ Haddiema Nsara also wrote to the President of the United States, J.F. Kennedy, whereby they asked for an amendment to the Walter McCarran Act which regulated emigration quotas.⁶⁷

⁶¹ Lino Cuschieri, *Monsinjur Mikiel Azzopardi, op.cit.*, 17.

⁶² "L-Azzjoni Kattolika kienet Malta," Mgr Philip Calleja, *Kont Hemm*, Programme 2, Radju tal-Università, Accessed from <https://www.um.edu.mt/library/oar/handle/123456789/10242>.

⁶³ Taped interview Joe Felice Pace, Private Residence, Balzan, 7th August 2016, Sergio Grech Private Collection.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵ Taped interview Mr Piju Spiteri, Blata l-Bajda Private Residence, 18th March 2016, Sergio Grech Private Collection.

⁶⁶ Żgħażaġĥ Haddiema Nsara, *Rapport Amministrattiv 1960-1961: Konferenza Ġenerali Annwali Kullegġ Mater Admirabilis, Rabat, 03.12.1961*, 6.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 9.

Man and Society

In the first section of this chapter, the significance and the main themes of the Catholic Social Teaching were explained. In the following pages, these viewpoints emerging from the Catholic Social Teaching will be compared and contrasted to secular positions and applied to the local scenario.

Such a reading will help us understand and determine Archbishop Gonzi's commitment to social action. The reader must also appreciate the fact that after the Second World War and in some cases even before, issues like possession of private property, payment of taxes, wealth distribution, class struggle, size of families, training and role of educators, and other themes divided the local Church from a segment of fellow Maltese politicians and activists in the social field notwithstanding the fact that the latter were baptised as Catholics and considered themselves as practising individuals.

As noted in the third chapter, the Malta Church 'sniffed' traces of Communism in such situations. The fear that Malta would be changed into a Mediterranean Cuba was strongly felt in the early 1960s. After all, the red scare was travelling fast not only on the continent but also in distant America.⁶⁸

The Catholic Church contended that not only Catholics were expected to follow its social teaching but that "civil corporations, governments and States" also had to follow suit.⁶⁹ Catholics were expected to correct the evils of the social system and restore them to Christian order.⁷⁰ It was maintained that when society was injected with Christian instructions, "the respective classes will not only be united in the bonds of friendship but also in those of brotherly love."⁷¹

⁶⁸ Adam J. Berinsky and Gabriel S. Lenz, 'Red Scare?,' *Public Opinion Quarterly*, (2014), 2.

⁶⁹ T.J. O'Kane, *A Catholic Catechism on Social Questions* (Oxford, The Catholic Social Guild, 1961), 7. The book was used as a textbook for the Religion class at the Malta Lyceum.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 105.

⁷¹ *Quadragesimo Anno, Encyclical of Pope Pius XI, On the Reconstruction of the Social Order*, Retrieved on 8th June 2016, http://w2.vatican.va/content/pius-xi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xi_enc_19310515_quadragesimo-anno.html.

A 1936 Irish Jesuit magazine claimed that “only the Social Order based on God’s fatherhood and on Man’s brotherhood in the kingdom of Christ can give man lasting happiness.”⁷² The Catholic Church insisted that only God had to be man’s end.⁷³ Man was considered as God’s noblest creature and was advised that supernatural life could only be obtained through the Church.⁷⁴ On the other hand, Communism saw no space for religion and labelled it as “the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless conditions. It is the opium of the people.”⁷⁵

But as Kula put it, “although Communism always fought against religion, paradoxically, it came to resemble it in a number of ways... Even the fight against religion was surprisingly religious in its nature. After all, one of the points of this conflict was to ensure that the people should have no other gods but those approved by the system. The Communist philosophy of history was constructed around the concept of the struggle of good against evil... Communist ideology held that history was preordained, just as a religious perspective insists that our fate is the manifestation of God’s will.”⁷⁶

The Catholic Church argued that God had created society for man where the latter was expected to share his life with his fellow companions. This implied that man and society could not be “exempted from their correlative obligations, nor deny or diminish each other’s rights.”⁷⁷ But society was to be for man and not the other way round. This meant “that by means of an organic union with society and by mutual collaboration, the attainment of earthly happiness is placed within the reach of all.”⁷⁸ Communists dreamt of a society that was a “free association of completely free men, where no separation between “private and common interest” existed.”⁷⁹ In this arrangement, “man would be given the possibility to do this today, and then tomorrow to hunt in the morning, to go fishing in the afternoon, to do cattle breeding in the evening, to criticise after dinner as he chose.”⁸⁰

⁷² ‘Catholic Social Order,’ *The Irish Monthly*, 64, (3), (1936), in http://www.jstor.org/stable/20513901?read-now=1#page_scan_tab_contents.

⁷³ *Divini Redemptoris*, *op.cit.*

⁷⁴ T.J. O’Kane, *A Catholic Catechism on Social Questions*, *op.cit.*, 17.

⁷⁵ *Works of Karl Marx 1843: A Contribution to the Critique of Hegel’s Philosophy of Right*, Retrieved on 8th June 2016, <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1843/critique-hpr/intro.htm>.

⁷⁶ Marcin Kula, ‘Communism as Religion,’ *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions*, 6, (3), (2005), 371.

⁷⁷ *Divini Redemptoris*, *op.cit.*

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹ Daniel Norman, ‘Communist Society according to Marx,’ Retrieved on 8th June 2016, <https://www.marxists.org/archive/norman/marx-reality/ch02.htm>.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

Furthermore, the Catholic Church argued that inequality emanated “from the Author of nature Himself.” But this state of affairs called for a “moderation... on the appetite for power.”⁸¹ Whilst the Church emphasised the natural inequality among men, it upheld the spiritual equality of all men as “brothers of one another and sons of a common father.”⁸² Communists blamed capitalism for inequality highlighting the fact that the distribution of profit and surplus was unfair.

Therefore, it was not a coincidence that in his first pastoral letter to the Maltese diocese Archbishop Gonzi maintained that no new social order was required since the Catholics had the gospel as their guide.⁸³ He asserted that legislation should be based on Catholic truths, otherwise the story of the foolish man who built his house on sand would repeat itself. As Bishop Luigi Civardi (1886-1971), a Catholic Action member, confessor to Pope John XXIII, writer of numerous books with social themes, and a contemporary of Archbishop Gonzi, claimed, the “secular” social order was sick and called for the need of an order resulting from a clever evolution rather than from a violent revolution.⁸⁴ Mgr Civardi wrote a manual for Catholic Action members that set out in clear terms the principles on which the mentioned organisation was expected to work.⁸⁵ The manual was translated in various languages.

Authority, Justice and the Law

Pope Leo XIII argued that the Church was “not an association of Christians brought together by chance, but divinely established... She has her fixed laws, special spheres of action, and a certain method... of governing Christian peoples.”⁸⁶ The Catholic Church maintained that the State arose from nature and added that it was part of God’s design.⁸⁷ Civil authority also

⁸¹ *Libertas, Encyclical of Pope Leo XIII on the Nature of Human Liberty*, Retrieved on 7th June 2017, http://w2.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_20061888_libertas.html.

⁸² T.J. O’Kane, *A Catholic Catechism on Social Questions*, *op.cit.*, 79.

⁸³ *L-Ewwel Itra Pastoral ta’ Mons. Mikiel Gonzi Arċisqof ta’ Malta lill-Kleru u lill-Poplu tad-Djoċesi ta’ Malta* (Malta, Empire Press, 1944), 11.

⁸⁴ Luigi Civardi, *Lejn Ordni Soċjali Ġdid: Tliet Riforimi* (Malta, Għaqda ta’ Qari Tajjeb, 1952), 8.

⁸⁵ John Pollard, *The Papacy in the Age of Totalitarianism 1914-1958* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2014), 236.

⁸⁶ *Sapientiae Christianae, Encyclical of Pope Leo XIII, On Christians as Citizens*, Retrieved on 7th June 2017, http://w2.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_10011890_sapientiae-christianae.html.

⁸⁷ T.J. O’Kane, *A Catholic Catechism of Social Questions* (Oxford, The Catholic Social Guild, edition 1961), 91.

emerged from God and not from the people.⁸⁸ Pope Leo XIII in *Immortale Dei* quoted St. Paul in claiming that “there is no power but from God.”⁸⁹ The Catholic Church argued that the State’s purpose was to “secure the welfare of the people at large, or the common good.”⁹⁰ Therefore, the Church had the right and duty to intervene or interfere in the conduct and actions of its subjects when the common good required, but “may not interfere in those rights which are essential and fundamental to human nature.”⁹¹

This implied that States like individuals were subject to the Natural Law which man had to follow unconditionally. The individual had “to do good and avoid evil, and to use his reason to learn what is good and what is evil.”⁹² The Church insisted that Natural Law was universal and it embraced “infants, the feeble-minded, the physically defective, the incurable, (and) the insane.”⁹³ Anyone who attempted to tamper with Natural Law, “violates man’s nature and sets oneself up against the Divine Will.”⁹⁴

Rulers were entrusted to govern “not as masters, but rather as fathers...”⁹⁵ They were to employ justice whose aim was to “maintain all social groups or classes in the social harmony which properly belongs to a well ordered State.”⁹⁶ Laws were “the guide of man’s actions; it turns him toward good by its rewards, and deters him from evil by its punishments.”⁹⁷ But the Church’s hierarchy quickly pointed out that unjust laws were not to be followed.⁹⁸ It resulted that the State had the responsibility to foster religion. It was considered “a sin for the State not to have care for religion as something beyond its scope, or as of no practical benefit.”⁹⁹

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 92.

⁸⁹ *Immortale Dei*, Encyclical of Pope Leo XIII, *On the Christian Constitution of States*, Retrieved on 7th June 2017, http://w2.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_01111885_immortale-dei.html.

⁹⁰ T.J. O’Kane, *A Catholic Catechism of Social Questions*, *op.cit.*, 93.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 95.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 20.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 21.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 22.

⁹⁵ *Immortale Dei*, *op.cit.*

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷ *Libertas*, Encyclical of Pope Leo XIII *on the Nature of Human Liberty*, Retrieved on 7th June 2017, http://w2.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_20061888_libertas.html.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹⁹ *Immortale Dei*, *op.cit.*

The Catholic Church argued that the right to practise religion was supreme.¹⁰⁰ Denying man the freedom of conscience was regarded as immoral and unjust.¹⁰¹ Civil society had to acknowledge God “as its Founder and Parent, and must obey and revere His power and authority. Justice therefore forbids... the State to be godless...”¹⁰² In a godless State, “men will greedily and without restraint seek the things of earth, vehemently covet their neighbour’s goods, and even take them by force as often as occasion or opportunity is given. Hence hatred, envy, discord and rivalries arise among men.”¹⁰³ This situation started with the State “taking over religious schools, by dissolving church organisations, by muzzling the Church Press, and so on. Bishops and priests are condemned for their alleged activity against the State. The Church is represented as an organisation of commercial and political speculators who fatten on the ignorance and simplicity of the people to increase and consolidate their political hegemony.”¹⁰⁴

As stated before, Russia was regarded as the classic example of a godless State and the Maltese were continuously bombarded by the Malta Church against having any connection whatsoever with that Communist nation. A 1945 booklet published in Malta warned that in Russia “the practice of religion in public affairs (newspapers, propaganda, school, literature, films, and so on) was not free but only tolerated in private and in churches, and religion cannot defend itself from State propaganda.”¹⁰⁵ As late as 1967, in the case of Malta, as we shall see later, establishing an embassy with Russia was still a thorny issue.¹⁰⁶

The Functions of the Family in a Catholic Society

Both secular and religious viewpoints stressed the importance on the theme of the family when addressing the Social Question. Pope Leo XIII described the family as “no less than a State.”¹⁰⁷ For the Catholic Church, the family was “instituted directly by God for the generation and formation of offspring. For this reason it has priority of nature and therefore of rights over civil

¹⁰⁰ T.J. O’Kane, *A Catholic Catechism of Social Questions*, *op.cit.*, 81.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 82.

¹⁰² *Libertas*, *op.cit.*

¹⁰³ T.J. O’Kane, *A Catholic Catechism of Social Questions*, *op.cit.*, 83.

¹⁰⁴ *Forward*, 25th May 1956, 5.

¹⁰⁵ Albert Busuttill, *Il-Kostituzzjoni tas-Soviets* (Malta, Għaqda ta’ Qari Tajjeb, 1945), 20.

¹⁰⁶ *It-Tarka*, 7th December 1967, 1.

¹⁰⁷ *Rerum Novarum*, *Encyclical of Pope Leo XIII, On Capital and Labour*, Retrieved on 8th June 2016, http://w2.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_15051891_rerum-novarum.html.

society.”¹⁰⁸ The Church considered the family as sacred in nature and the cradle not only of children but also of the nation.¹⁰⁹

This explains the havoc that Mr Aneurin Bevan’s remark, made during the Integration Round Table Conference held in 1955, in the sense that “the Maltese bred like rabbits”, created in the Maltese Catholic scenario.¹¹⁰ Mr Bevan was a British Labour Party politician who had served as Health Minister between 1945 and 1951. That comment enticed several observations from different quarters in the Church, among them the College of Parish Priests and committed lay Christians like Advocate Herbert Ganado. According to the Labour activist Ġiġi Gauci, Mr Bevan was joking when he passed that remark.¹¹¹ For the Church this joke was in bad taste because families with many children were considered a sign of God’s love.

The family played an important role in Archbishop Gonzi’s episcopate. Several policies were taken in favour of the family like the formation of the Cana Movement which offered on a voluntary basis family-related and counselling services. The mentioned organisation introduced a new discourse about sexuality, presented intercourse as God’s gift,¹¹² and encouraged young girls to safeguard their virginity before getting married.¹¹³ Archbishop Gonzi argued in conjunction with the Church’s magisterium that the children received their first education at home.¹¹⁴

Archbishop Gonzi was genuinely concerned about the family which over the years experienced continuous transformation. During his episcopacy, after the Second World War, and most notably in the period following the 1964 Independence, industrialisation reached Malta and one of its effects was the gradual disappearance of the rural and non-industrial family.¹¹⁵

¹⁰⁸ *Divini Illius Magistri, op.cit.*

¹⁰⁹ José M. Sánchez, *Pius XII and the Holocaust: Understanding the Controversy* (Washington, Catholic University of America, 2002), 56.

¹¹⁰ Anton Buttigieg, *L-Isbaħ Żmien ta’ Hajti* (Malta, Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti, reprint 1990), 32.

¹¹¹ Ġiġi Gauci, *Xieħda ta’ Seklu* (Malta, Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti, 2001), 137.

¹¹² Emilio Camilleri, *X’Jistaqsukom Uliedkom?* (Malta, Moviment ta’ Kana, 1961), 13.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 14.

¹¹⁴ Circular Letter from Archbishop Michael Gonzi, Number 42, dated 10th February 1946 in AAM, *Mons. Gonzi Pastoral e Circolari: 1943-1962*.

¹¹⁵ Mario Brincat, ‘The Birth of the “Maltese Model” of Development, 1945-1959,’ *Journal of Maltese History*, 1, (2), 2009, 2.

Archbishop Gonzi had been commenting since 1946 that the Maltese families were losing their Catholic nature.¹¹⁶ He lamented that too much leisure was taking over other values like responsibility and sacrifice.¹¹⁷ According to him, the rosary was losing ground among Maltese families.¹¹⁸ During the last phase of his episcopacy, Archbishop Gonzi was alarmed about the young ones and remarked that they were losing their faith. He concluded that they were the victims of film and fashion industries which, according to him, were emphasising negative values.¹¹⁹ He also observed that married couples were attending events that in the past they had not been invited to.¹²⁰ Archbishop Gonzi complained that young women were not as honest as they used to be.

Archbishop Gonzi called on the local police to give a helping hand in controlling immorality and he even suggested to Premier Borg Olivier to establish a morality police wing, an advice which the Nationalist leader did not take up. On 28 June 1969, Archbishop Gonzi wrote to Borg Olivier arguing that there was a “deterioration in Maltese public morals, and that, during the past decade, the deterioration has been beyond anything thought possible... it is my belief that much can be achieved in this field if a special branch of the police force is set up with the exclusive function to safeguard public morality. Its members would be properly instructed as to their duties, both in regard to the standard of morality, which they should seek to protect, and in regard to a tactful approach to the problem in individual cases.”¹²¹ Two days later Borg Olivier promised that “the number of police officers on duty at police stations at summer resorts shall be strengthened.”¹²² In the pastoral letter, published on 10 February 1971, Archbishop Gonzi contended that the family as a protective unit was being eroded.¹²³

Marriage was seen by the Church as the “preservation and increase of the human race.”¹²⁴ In the late fifties, Archbishop Gonzi reported to the Papal Nuncio that, in the case of Malta, there

¹¹⁶ Circular Letter from Archbishop Michael Gonzi dated 10th February 1946, Number 42, in AAM, *Mons. Gonzi Pastoral e Circolari 1943-1962*.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Pastoral Letter from Archbishop Michael Gonzi dated 19th September 1969 in Tony Terribile, *op.cit.*

¹¹⁹ Pastoral Letter from Archbishop Michael Gonzi dated 28th August 1972 in Tony Terribile, *op.cit.*

¹²⁰ ‘Tifkira tal-Kungress Ewkaristiku 1913, Il-Hadd 28 ta’ Ottubru 1973,’ in Tony Terribile, *op.cit.*

¹²¹ Letter from Archbishop Michael Gonzi to Prime Minister Ġorġ Borg Olivier dated 28th June in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza 1969, Vol LXIII*.

¹²² Letter from Prime Minister Ġorġ Borg Olivier to Archbishop Michael Gonzi dated 30th June 1969 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza 1969, Vol LXIII*.

¹²³ Pastoral Letter from Archbishop Michael Gonzi dated 10th February 1971 in Tony Terribile, *op.cit.*

¹²⁴ *Arcanum, Encyclical of Pope Leo XIII On Christian Marriage*, Retrieved on 7th June 2017, http://w2.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_10021880_arcanum.html.

were few cases of broken families and of illegitimate birth, but complained that continual vigilance and warnings were necessary with regard to public entertainment and, in the summertime, to immorality in attire and to abuses on the beach.”¹²⁵ The Church made it clear that marriages could not be dissolved by divorce and by legalising divorce; the State was accused of legalising adultery.¹²⁶ The Church considered itself as the sole custodian and legislator of Christian marriage.¹²⁷ Its authority extended over all Christian marriages “that is, over marriages of baptised persons, whether they actually submit to her authority or not.”¹²⁸ The Catholic Church prohibited purely civil or non-sacramental marriage between Catholics.¹²⁹ The State “has no authority over Christian marriage, but has authority to regulate the purely civil effects of Christian marriage. The State has authority to regulate the marriages of non-baptised subjects since theirs is a purely natural contract.”¹³⁰

Archbishop Gonzi was adamant on following the rule set by Canon Law that Catholics could not attend marriages of Protestant spouses. In fact, Archbishop Gonzi had an argument with Governor Robert Laycock on his daughter’s invitation marriage list as far as Maltese guests were concerned. In an exchange with the Governor, Archbishop Gonzi noted that “I cannot draw a line between friends and non-friends among the persons mentioned in the list... I cannot give the said licence to so big a number of persons with no official position... Had you adhered to the understanding arrived at between us, that is to say the grant of the licence to a small number of friends before the issue of the invitation, the embarrassing position I have found myself in would have been avoided... some may not even know that they cannot attend without the approval of their Ordinary. Naturally, I am not speaking of those who have an official position in the government or in the forces and NATO...”¹³¹ This was a pre-Vatican Council Two scenario.

¹²⁵ Report on the Conditions within Territory dated 27th January 1958 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza 1958, Vol LII*.

¹²⁶ T.J. O’Kane, *A Catholic Catechism of Social Questions, op.cit.*, 51.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 47.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, 48.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 50.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*

¹³¹ Letter from Archbishop Michael Gonzi to Governor Sir Robert Laycock dated 11th April 1955 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza 1954-55, Vol. XLVIII*.

The Church, Private Property and Investments

The Catholic Church held that it enjoyed the right to possess private property. It argued that the mentioned right arose “from Natural Law and is sanctioned by Divine Law.”¹³² Since Pope Leo XIII, the Catholic Church had asserted that “the right to possess private property was derived from nature, not from man; and the State has the right to control its use in the interest of the public good alone, but by no means to absorb it altogether.”¹³³

Additionally, Pope Pius X maintained that “the Church has the right of ownership since, being a society of men and not of angels, it needs material goods given to it by the piety of the faithful and enjoys this legitimate possession for the accomplishment of her mission, for the exercise of external cult, for the erection of shrines, for the works of charity confided to her and in order to live and perpetuate itself till the end of time.”¹³⁴

The Church was one of the largest landowners on the island. From time to time, Mr Mintoff hammered on the point that the Malta Church had a yearly income of two million pounds thanks to its property regime.¹³⁵ The Church responded that Mintoff’s numbers were “grossly exaggerated.”¹³⁶ Financial issues seemed to have loomed over other matters during the last phase of Archbishop Gonzi’s episcopate. In 1969, the Holy See sent Archbishop Luigi Ligutti to Malta on Archbishop Gonzi’s request for assistance in the reorganisation of the Church’s property establishment in Malta. As Vassallo argued, “the internal administration of the Church, particularly in financial affairs, remained antiquated and unreformed and was a source of continuing concern to many in the priesthood.”¹³⁷

Archbishop Ligutti was of the opinion that any Church unit had a right to own property. But he insisted that the Church ought to use the property for the benefit of the people of God. He added that the people of God should know how the money gained from the sector of property

¹³² T.J. O’Kane, *A Catholic Catechism of Social Questions*, *op.cit.*, 56.

¹³³ *Rerum Novarum*, *op.cit.*

¹³⁴ Cyril C. Clump, *A Catholic’s Guide to Social and Political Action* (Oxford, Catholic Social Guild, 1955), 45.

¹³⁵ Dominic Mintoff, *A Reply to the Diocesan Commission’s Pamphlets* (Malta, Freedom Press, 1966), 17.

¹³⁶ Special Diocesan Commission, *The Quarrel of the Malta Labour Party with the Church in Malta* (Malta, Empire Press, 1966), 16.

¹³⁷ Mario Vassallo, *From Lordship to Stewardship: Religion and Social Change in Malta* (The Hague, Mouton, 1979), 123.

was earned and spent. Assets had to be managed efficiently and honestly.¹³⁸ In Malta's circumstances, Archbishop Ligutti found confusion in the organisation and management of the scheme to the point that administration texts were even written in Greek, Latin and Arabic, besides English, Maltese, French and Italian.¹³⁹

One should note that three years before the Ligutti mission, an Auxiliary Bishop, that is to say Mgr Emanuel Gerada, had been appointed to the Maltese See. The move, rather than strengthening the Church, led to personal pique between Archbishop Gonzi and his auxiliary Bishop Gerada. It became evident to the point that those siding with Archbishop Gonzi argued that Bishop Gerada was behaving as if he were the archbishop of Malta. On the other hand, Archbishop Gonzi wanted to relinquish his post on his death bed and seemed uncomfortable with the fact that Archbishop Gerada had failed to ask him to consecrate him as bishop.¹⁴⁰ Those members of the clergy who believed in the need of change in the administration of the Church welcomed Bishop Gerada "as if he were the Messiah."¹⁴¹ By 1971, it was claimed by Rev Francis X. Schembri, a local priest employed with the Vatican's Nunciature, that Bishop Gerada "has completely lost the confidence of the clergy."¹⁴² It emerged that the relationship between the two bishops had not always been that bad. Archbishop Gonzi had expressed more than once that it was he who had asked for Bishop Gerada to be consecrated as a bishop and to have him sent to Malta as an aide in the running of the diocese.¹⁴³ Bishop Gerada himself, in a letter sent to Archbishop Gonzi, described the latter as his "mentor" – the author's emphasis. Bishop Gerada commented that thanks to Archbishop Gonzi "*mi ha fatto amare tanto la storia della Chiesa, sempre tanto paterno e vicino a noi studenti.*"¹⁴⁴

Occasionally, this pique even verged on ridicule to the point that, according to Salvinu Busuttill, Bishop Gerada had told him that he had asked for the family history of Archbishop Gonzi's

¹³⁸ Vincent A. Yzermans, *The People I Love: A Biography of Luigi G. Ligutti* (Minnesota, Liturgical Press, 1973), 280.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, 283.

¹⁴⁰ Taped interview Mgr Aloysius Deguara, Private Residence, Mgarr, Malta, 1st September 2015, Sergio Grech Private Collection.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁴² Letter from Rev. F.X. Schembri to Archbishop Luigi Ligutti dated 3rd April 1971 in *Malta Folder 63 (3)*, Monsignor Luigi G. Ligutti Papers, Archives of the Raynor Memorial Libraries Marquette University.

¹⁴³ Taped interview Mgr Aloysius Deguara, Private Residence, Mgarr, Malta, 1st September 2015, Sergio Grech Private Collection.

¹⁴⁴ Letter from Archbishop Emanuel Gerada to Archbishop Michael Gonzi dated 22nd March 1967 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza 1967, Vol. LXI*.

parents to calculate when he would approximately die so that he would take over the diocese.¹⁴⁵ The Gonzi-Gerada pique was also referred to during the Ligutti mission.¹⁴⁶

To make the situation even more complex, Bishop Gerada was not convinced of the outcome of the mentioned Archbishop Ligutti mission. In a report compiled by a representative of McKinsey, it was stated that although Mgr Gerada “was in agreement with the fundamental principles of the report... was afraid of the many difficulties he saw in the implementation.”¹⁴⁷ When Archbishop Gonzi remarked during the same meeting that it was “essential that Bishop Gerada fully endorsed the proposals since... it would be his responsibility to implement the changes, Bishop Gerada responded that this so far has never been expressed.”¹⁴⁸ Archbishop Ligutti reported Mgr Gerada’s behaviour to Pope Paul VI claiming that the Auxiliary Bishop was “*inetto, insincero, ambizioso, privo di ogni dote pastorale, in continuo disaccordo con l’Arcivescovo Mons. Gonzi...*”¹⁴⁹

At a point in time, Archbishop Ligutti was replaced by the French-Canadian Archbishop Lemieux.¹⁵⁰ Still, Archbishop Ligutti continued to be informed on what was happening in the local Church thanks to Fr F.X. Schembri. It transpired that Fr Schembri was corresponding with Archbishop Ligutti in his personal capacity and he was not informing the Nuncio about the letters that both ends were exchanging. Fr Schembri claimed that Bishop Gerada was alleging that Archbishop Ligutti had been involved in a serious scandal and that this explained the termination of the mission.¹⁵¹ Fr Schembri maintained that “Archbishop Gonzi would like to take a strong stand against his Coadjutor (Bishop Gerada) but is afraid because he might lose his throne because of his age.”¹⁵²

¹⁴⁵ Taped interview Professor Salvinu Busuttil, Jesuits Retreat House, Mosta, 10th September 2015, Sergio Grech Private Collection.

¹⁴⁶ Letter from James G. Lee from McKinsey & Company Inc to Archbishop Luigi Ligutti dated 16th July 1970 in *Malta Folder 63 (2)*, Monsignor Luigi G. Ligutti Papers, Archives of the Raynor Memorial Libraries Marquette University.

¹⁴⁷ Summary of Meeting on Monday 14th November in *Malta Folder 63 (2)*, Monsignor Luigi G. Ligutti Papers, Archives of the Raynor Memorial Libraries Marquette University.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ Letter from Archbishop Luigi Ligutti to Pope Paul VI dated 25th February 1972 in *Malta Folder 63 (2)*, Monsignor Luigi G. Ligutti Papers, Archives of the Raynor Memorial Libraries Marquette University.

¹⁵⁰ Charles Buttigieg, *Mikiel Gonzi: Hamsin Sena fit-Tmum, op.cit.*, 171.

¹⁵¹ Letter from Rev. F.X. Schembri to Archbishop Luigi Ligutti dated 29th March 1971 in *Malta Folder 63 (3)*, Monsignor Luigi G. Ligutti Papers, Archives of the Raynor Memorial Libraries Marquette University.

¹⁵² Letter from Rev. F.X. Schembri to Archbishop Luigi Ligutti dated 20th April 1971 in *Malta Folder 63 (3)*, Monsignor Luigi G. Ligutti Papers, Archives of the Raynor Memorial Libraries Marquette University.

In the early seventies, the Church suffered two major setbacks in its financial area. Archbishop Gonzi was deceived by Mr Charles Lovett known as “*Il-Kanadiż*” who promised to invest a hefty sum of money given to him by the Maltese Archdiocese in Canada, but he simply ran away with the money.¹⁵³ Archbishop Gonzi asked economist Salvinu Busuttil and lawyer Joe Ganado to travel to Canada to try and fetch Lovett and demand the money back, but it transpired that no documentation was registered in respect of the deed.¹⁵⁴ Mr Lovett had promised to invest the capital in Bahamas at a five per cent interest rate.¹⁵⁵

To add insult to injury, in 1973, the BICAL bank went bankrupt and, in the process, the Malta Church lost a large amount of money. There is consensus on the fact that Archbishop Gonzi was denied official government correspondence about the bad conditions of the bank’s affairs.¹⁵⁶ Mgr Deguara even claimed that there were two letters sent by Premier Mintoff in this regard that never reached Archbishop Gonzi.¹⁵⁷ The documents were secretly kept by Bishop Gerada.¹⁵⁸ The Church had Lm700,000 deposited with the BICAL bank.¹⁵⁹ Archbishop Gonzi blamed Bishop Gerada and Mr Doublesin, the Curia’s financial officer, for depositing money in the mentioned bank without his prior permission. The fact that there existed friendship between Bishop Gerada and Mr Cecil Pace, the bank’s owner, was also highlighted.¹⁶⁰ In a letter sent to Mgr Mario Brini, Secretary of the Congregazione per le Chiese Orientali on 5 July 1974, Archbishop Gonzi referred to Mr Doublesin, “*costui è stato – insieme con un’altra persona che non è più a Malta – la rovina economica della Chiesa di Malta.*”¹⁶¹ The *altra persona* was Bishop Gerada.

On 23 November 1972, Archbishop Gonzi informed the Holy See that he had deposited more than £840,000 in four banks: Cassa delle Pie Amministrazioni, Barclays Bank, National Bank

¹⁵³ More than two sources pointed out to the present author that the person who convinced Archbishop Gonzi to trust Mr Lovett was Mgr Karm Sant of Tarxien, a Biblical scholar who was related to Labour activist Lorry Sant.

¹⁵⁴ Taped interview Professor Salvinu Busuttil, Jesuits Retreat House, Mosta, 10th September 2015, Sergio Grech Private Collection.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

¹⁵⁶ Charles G. Vella, *Sinjali Maltin ta’ Żmienna, op.cit.*, 226. The same claim was repeated by Mgr Aloysius Deguara to the present author.

¹⁵⁷ Taped interview Mgr Aloysius Deguara, Private Residence, Mgarr, Malta, 1st September 2015, Sergio Grech Private Collection.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ Charles Buttigieg, *Mikiel Gonzi: Hamsin Sena fit-Tmun, op.cit.*, 163.

¹⁶⁰ Taped interview Mgr Aloysius Deguara, Private Residence, Mgarr, Malta, 1st September 2015, Sergio Grech Private Collection.

¹⁶¹ Correspondence from Archbishop Michael Gonzi to Cardinal Mario Brini dated 5th July 1974 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza 1974, Vol. LXVIII.*

and Scicluna's Bank. The text that hereby follows shows that there might have been someone at the Roman Curia who was suspicious of Archbishop Gonzi's handling of the Church's revenue: "*se mai questa informazione non sembra soddisfacente, io oso suggerire a Vostra Eccellenza di mandare sul posto qui a Malta una persona di fiducia a studiare i registri dell'Ufficio delle Sante Messe o di incaricare il Nunzio Apostolico che si trova sul posto.*"¹⁶² In April 1972, the Malta Church had £7,462.50 deposited in the Apostleship of Prayer Savings Bank.¹⁶³

In 1977, when he was 92 years old, Archbishop Gonzi discussed the BICAL matter with his biographers Mr Galea and Chev. Tonna. Archbishop Gonzi was unsure whether the topic had to be included or not in the biography, but Mr Tonna argued that reference had to be made to the mentioned theme since Mgr Gonzi had been unjustly blamed for the losses that the Church had suffered.¹⁶⁴ The archbishop contended that he had no idea what the BICAL was all about when he was told about it. Archbishop Gonzi argued that at a certain point Mr Cecil Pace, one of the bank's owners, had tried to appease him by offering some lucrative offers, but that he had simply refused to comply.¹⁶⁵ Archbishop Gonzi noted that in his case he was offered no cars and was not taken out at sea on Mr Cecil Pace's boat ("bastiment").¹⁶⁶ The sarcastic remark was about Bishop Gerada. Archbishop Gonzi also added that although he was alerted that the financial enterprise was in dire straits, Bishop Gerada and Mr Doublesin insisted on depositing money in the concerned bank.¹⁶⁷ Archbishop Gonzi argued that he was informed that Mr Doublesin was given 0.5% of the sum every time he deposited cash.¹⁶⁸ The archbishop continued to explain that Bishop Gerada was removed from Malta because of this malpractice.¹⁶⁹ At the end of the day, the Malta Church lost the equivalent of €1.6 million.

¹⁶² Correspondence from Archbishop Michael Gonzi dated 19th September 1972 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza 1972, Vol. LXVI*.

¹⁶³ Letter from Mr John Soler, Director of Apostleship of Prayer Savings Bank Ltd dated 18th April 1972 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza 1974, Vol. LXVIII*.

¹⁶⁴ Taped interview Archbishop Michael Gonzi by Michael Galea and Emmanuel S. Tonna, 16th November 1977, Michael Galea Private Collection.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

The Church's Perspectives towards Wages and Trade Unions

Pope Leo XIII argued that the employer “is not bound to pay a wage which the business cannot afford.”¹⁷⁰ But he held that there was “a just minimum and that, in the event that wages fell below that minimum, an injustice would be committed.”¹⁷¹ Besides paying a just wage, the employer was bound to provide proper working conditions for his employees.¹⁷² The Church expected employers to respect the dignity of the worker which, the Church held, “cannot be bought and sold like any piece of merchandise.”¹⁷³

The wage-earner had the right “not to receive as alms what is his due in justice.”¹⁷⁴ For the Church, the wage system was a just apparatus.¹⁷⁵ But all wage contracts must conform “to the fundamental principles of natural justice and human dignity.”¹⁷⁶ A living wage allowed a workman to live in reasonable comfort.¹⁷⁷ If not, social injustice would be the outcome. The employer was not to tax the worker's physical powers beyond endurance.

In 1946, Archbishop Gonzi defended the introduction of a minimum wage for Maltese workers.¹⁷⁸ Pope John XXIII later expanded on the theme of a just wage and argued that “the remuneration of work is not something that can be left to the laws of the market place; nor should it be a decision left to the will of the more powerful. It must be determined in accordance with justice and equity; which means that workers must be paid a wage which allows them to live a truly human life and to fulfil their family obligations in a worthy manner.”¹⁷⁹ On the First of May 1968, Archbishop Gonzi “appealed to the people who had good jobs not to take on other jobs, but to leave them for the jobless.”¹⁸⁰ He also appealed to employers to give their employees a paid holiday on the First of May.¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁰ T.J. O’Kane, *A Catholic Catechism of Social Questions*, *op.cit.*, 69.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 70.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, 71.

¹⁷³ *Quadragesimo Anno*, *op.cit.*

¹⁷⁴ *Divini Redemptoris*, *op.cit.*

¹⁷⁵ T.J. O’Kane, *A Catholic Catechism of Social Questions*, *op.cit.*, 66.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 67.

¹⁷⁸ Paul Saliba, *L-Arcisqof Gonzi*, *op.cit.*, 32.

¹⁷⁹ Pope John XXIII, *Mater et Magistra*, Retrieved 8th June 2017, http://www.vatican.va/content/john-xxiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_j-xxiii_enc_15051961_mater.html.

¹⁸⁰ *Malta News*, 2nd May 1968, 12.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*

The issue of the rundowns attracted the interest of Archbishop Gonzi to the point that he himself had corresponded with Reginald Maudling, Secretary of State for the Colonies, and noted that if a programme of rundowns was to be effected, “there is bound to be unrest in Malta to the detriment of the social and moral wellbeing of the people.”¹⁸² The Archbishop even issued a press release in which he pleaded with the British government “to help Malta in the most critical transitional period of the general conversion of Maltese economy from an almost entire dependence on the Defence Departments to a system of industrial enterprise.”¹⁸³ After all, as *The Knight*, a Labour mouthpiece, had noticed, “there is no comparison between a Briton’s pay and allowances and those of a Maltese worker who were both doing the same job at the local Dockyard.”¹⁸⁴

One should also add that in 1957 a Diocesan Commission, under the auspices of Archbishop Gonzi, was set up to help the family of discharged workers hit by the rundowns in the Dockyard and the cuts in the Armed Forces.¹⁸⁵ In 1961, Archbishop Gonzi acted as a mediator between the colonial government and the Mechanised Quarry Owners.¹⁸⁶

Meanwhile, the Catholic Church maintained that even wage-earners themselves had duties to adhere to. They had to give an honest day’s work and to refrain from all types of violence. They were “never to injure the property, nor to outrage the person of an employer; never to resort to violence in defending their own cause.”¹⁸⁷ No work was allowed by the Catholic Church on Sundays or on days of obligation, to the point that even knitting was not allowed in those days.¹⁸⁸ Working on Sundays at the Freedom Press by the Labour Party supporters was condemned outright by the Malta Church. In fact, the Vicar-General, Bishop Galea, in a letter addressed to the Reverend Adolph Agius, Parish Priest of Paola, retained that these works

¹⁸² Correspondence by Archbishop Michael Gonzi to the Secretary of State Reginald Maudling dated 18th June 1962 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza 1962, Vol. LVI*.

¹⁸³ Press Release from the Archbishop’s Curia dated 22nd June 1962 in AAM, *Mons. Gonzi Pastoralis e Circolari 1943-1962*.

¹⁸⁴ ‘The Axe for the Poor’s Man Neck,’ *The Knight*, January 1952, 3.

¹⁸⁵ Paul Saliba, *L-Arcisqof Gonzi, op.cit.*, 32.

¹⁸⁶ Letter from Mechanised Quarry Owners to Archbishop Michael Gonzi dated 20th March 1961 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza 1961, Vol. LV*.

¹⁸⁷ *Rerum Novarum, op.cit.*

¹⁸⁸ Circular Letter from Vicar-General Bishop Emmanuel Galea, Number 22, dated 22nd November 1944 in AAM, *Mons. Gonzi Pastoralis e Circolari 1943-1962*.

“were condemned by God’s Law and those of the Church.”¹⁸⁹ Bishop Galea described the act as a public scandal.¹⁹⁰

The Catholic Church defended the workers’ right to join trade unions. It argued that they had a natural and a sacrosanct right to strike, but that “the use of that right must be lawful.”¹⁹¹ In fact, the Church was very specific about the *strike weapon*. That measure was to be employed only “when there is hope of success, and when other satisfactory solutions have failed.”¹⁹² Trade unions had to have a religious and a social basis.¹⁹³ The Church expected trade unions to end class struggle and to establish Christian harmony among all classes. They were also to further the interests of the whole group and to promote the common good of the community.¹⁹⁴

The Catholic Church wanted to see employers’ associations and workers’ trade unions work together, if possible through joint committees. Cooperation was seen as the right way to social justice.¹⁹⁵ In *Mater et Magistra*, Pope John XXIII even insisted that “large and medium-sized productive enterprises... should grant workers some share in the enterprise.”¹⁹⁶

On the other hand, the adherents of Communism campaigned in favour of class struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat whilst the Church crusaded for harmony and co-operation. While addressing the Maltese workers in 1944, in one of his first speeches, Archbishop Gonzi argued that history showed that blood revolutions never conveyed the serenity that the worker looked for.¹⁹⁷ He added that the Malta Church did not want to see a repetition of the events of the Spanish Civil War during which workers were involved in the destruction of churches.¹⁹⁸ This position explained Archbishop Gonzi’s condemnation of the April 1958 riots. Meanwhile, in a communist society, everyone would give according to their abilities and would receive according to their needs. Thus, the needs of a society would be put above and beyond the specific needs of an individual.

¹⁸⁹ Letter from the Vicar-General Bishop Emanuel Galea to Reverend Adolph Agius dated 10th December 1962. AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza 1962, Vol LVI*.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

¹⁹¹ T.J. O’Kane, *A Catholic Catechism of Social Questions, op.cit.*, 73.

¹⁹² Ibid., 74.

¹⁹³ Gerald Seaston, *op.cit.*, 16.

¹⁹⁴ T.J. O’Kane, *A Catholic Catechism of Social Questions, op.cit.*, 78.

¹⁹⁵ Gerald Seaston, *op.cit.*, 17.

¹⁹⁶ J.C. Cort, *Christian Socialism* (New York, Orbis Books, 1988), 307.

¹⁹⁷ *Ir-Ragħaj lill-Merħla Tiegħu: L-Ewwel Ktieb, op.cit.*, 9. “Ir-rivoluzzjonijiet tad-demm, l-istorja turina li dawn ma giebu qatt is-serħan li jkun fittex il-ħaddiem.”

¹⁹⁸ Ibid.

On an international level, the Catholic Church tried to affect the Communist and Socialist manifestations by introducing in 1955 the feast of St. Joseph the Worker. By introducing that feast, the Catholic Church was to a certain extent changing the *raison d'être* of the First of May. It was moving apart from the idea of workers in chains fighting against their employers to obtain decent wages and better conditions. The St. Joseph the Worker feast, together with the feast of Christ the King, became annual celebrations that the Maltese Catholics attended *en masse*. The fact that after 1956 relationships between the Labour government and the Malta Church were strained turned the event into another occasion for mass hysteria on both sides of the divide rather than into a joint effort in highlighting the strength of the working class. For instance, the speaker addressing the crowds for the Christ the King main celebration held in 1955 condemned the liberal market economy¹⁹⁹ and its effects on society and fired cannons against communism.²⁰⁰

The Church in Malta implanted spiritual directors within the unions' council to see that its beliefs in this regard were respected. For instance, Latinist Mgr Edward Coleiro acted for several years as spiritual director to the General Workers' Union (GWU).²⁰¹ In the case of Malta, generally, trade unions were of a Catholic creed and usually toed the line of the Church. The idea of a staunch leftist trade union was unheard of in Malta.

The only union which defected from this trend was the General Workers' Union, but its deviance, later on in the late fifties, was not really about ideology but rather regarding support it meant to give to Mintoff and his political group. But before this, Archbishop Gonzi had fully supported the General Workers' Union and in fact, the latter had been very Catholic on an operational level. In fact, Archbishop Gonzi took part in the ceremony of the laying of the foundation stone of the union's headquarters. After all, as the archbishop had told the General Workers' Union's members, trade unions were founded in medieval times under the Church's inspirations. In its foundation programme, the union made a commitment that its action would be inspired by the social encyclicals *Rerum Novarum* and *Quadragesimo Anno*.²⁰² They aspired for social justice and Christian charity and insisted that the relationship between "capital and

¹⁹⁹ *Diskors mill-W.R.P. Luigi ta' Kristu Re O.C.D., Provincjal tat-Tereżjani: Festa ta' Kristu Re* (Malta, Dar ta' San Ġużepp, 1955), 7.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 3.

²⁰¹ Pawlu Saliba, *Taw Ġieħ lil Artna* (Malta, The Author, 2011), 104.

²⁰² Edward Mizzi, *Elements of Religious Values in the Formation of the General Workers' Union* (BA Hons Public Administration, 1989), 48.

labour are not to be inimical.”²⁰³ The union even took an official position in 1948 against Communism and promised no support to this movement.²⁰⁴ The union regularly participated in religious manifestations organised by the Malta Church and even urged workers to attend events which involved the archbishop’s participation.²⁰⁵

One should add that during the establishment phase of the union, Archbishop Gonzi defended the union from foul suspects.²⁰⁶ In a homily, delivered on the first anniversary of the General Workers’ Union, the archbishop advised that he would support the union only on the condition that the latter would follow the principles as established by the Popes.²⁰⁷ Four years after the birth of the General Workers’ Union, Archbishop Gonzi praised the union for basing its goals on the teaching of Jesus.²⁰⁸ Mizzi mentioned two examples where strikes conducted in the formative period of the General Workers’ Union were administered in a Catholic spirit: the 1946 One Day National Strike and the 1952 strike which lasted for three weeks.²⁰⁹ Moreover in 1960, just a few months before the interdict was imposed on the Malta Labour Party, Archbishop Gonzi had blessed the new headquarters in South Street, Valletta.²¹⁰

At this stage, it is relevant to add that during this period, France and Belgium experienced the birth of the Workers-Priest Movement. Its members had no parish duties and laboured directly in the working places “by evangelising the workplace, helping the workers encounter God in their work.”²¹¹ Even in Malta, this idea took root even if under different conditions. During the sixties and the seventies, seminarians during their summer months were asked to opt for carpentry and other skilled trades in order to familiarise themselves with the workers’ community, and their needs realities at the end of the day intended to serve as a background for when they took the holy orders and commenced working in the pastoral field.

²⁰³ Ibid., 49.

²⁰⁴ Ibid., 50.

²⁰⁵ Ibid., 52.

²⁰⁶ Paul Saliba, *L-Arcisqof Gonzi, op.cit.*, 32.

²⁰⁷ *Ir-Ragħaj lill-Merħla Tiegħu: L-Ewwel Ktieb, op.cit.*, 13.

²⁰⁸ *Lehen is-Sewwa*, 10th July 1946.

²⁰⁹ Edward Mizzi, *Elements of Religious Values in the Formation of the General Workers’ Union, op.cit.*, 53-57.

²¹⁰ Richard A. Matrenza, *L-Istorja tal-Workers’ Memorial Building* (Malta, General Workers’ Union, 2010), 87.

²¹¹ Adam Sasiadek, ‘Varieties of Catholic Social Justice: Initiatives since *Rerum Novarum* and their Implications for Contemporary Labour and Employment Policy,’ *op.cit.*, 266.

The Catholic Church, Taxation, Cost of Living and Casinos

The Catholic Church maintained that the State was to refrain from placing crushing taxes on the people.²¹² Regarding the introduction of Income Tax in Malta in 1948, Archbishop Gonzi had exchanged correspondence with the Apostolic Delegate Archbishop Godfrey William and put forward the argument that “Income tax is too heavy for a poor country like Malta. Some thought that the bishops should refuse the exemption and share the burden together with the rest of the people. Exempted were the Governor and the mensa of the bishops. Cardinal Tardini, the Vatican’s Secretary of State, could not see why we bishops should refuse the proposed exemption which was after all an act of respect to our position as bishops and to Canon Law. The government has exempted all ecclesiastical institutions, including orphanages and hospitals. But otherwise no one is exempted. Priests possessing ecclesiastical benefices have to pay the tax. Bishops concluded that it was not a case of insisting on the exemption of ecclesiastical benefices because we were sure that the majority of the people would be against us, the more so when the government had declared in parliament that the income derived from the proposed tax would be devoted to old age pension and health insurance... the introduction of the income tax here has nothing to do with the Colonial Office.”²¹³ Mario Vella claimed, without disclosing his sources, that Archbishop Gonzi had a meeting with Prime Minister Paul Boffa and put pressure on him to moderate the income tax rates.²¹⁴

In March 1961, Archbishop Gonzi corresponded with Governor Grantham regarding the issue of the introduction of new taxation.²¹⁵ Archbishop Gonzi advised that the imposition of new taxation “immediately after the imposition of taxes less than a year before... create a wave of indignation and protest.”²¹⁶ Furthermore, the archbishop noted that tax on sugar would hit all sections of the community, rich and poor. The imposition of taxes would make the government

²¹² *Quadragesimo Anno, op.cit.*

²¹³ Letter from Archbishop Michael Gonzi to Apostolic Delegate Archbishop Godfrey William dated 4th July 1949 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza 1948-1949, Vol. XLV.*

²¹⁴ Mario Vella, *Lejn Gvern Laburista: 1944-49* (Malta, Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti, 1989), 156.

²¹⁵ Letter from Archbishop Michael Gonzi to Governor Guy Grantham dated 22nd March 1961 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza 1961, Vol. LV.*

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*

unpopular.²¹⁷ On that particular occasion, Archbishop Gonzi had asked what had happened to the increase in salary of police officers.²¹⁸

A month later, Archbishop Gonzi once again complained to the Governor and remarked: “I very much regret that I have to repeat to you what I have already told you, that is to say that in case of new taxation I will have to publicly oppose the imposition, the more so now that Mintoff said last Sunday – and published it in the Resolution passed in the General Conference of his Party – that my attitude towards the discharges is the result of an understanding with the government. He will say the same thing in case I remain silent in the face of the new taxation.”²¹⁹

There were instances when Archbishop Gonzi felt the need to draw the attention of the Governor when there were increases in the cost of living.²²⁰ In a pastoral letter issued during Lent in 1939, Archbishop Gonzi censored direct taxation.²²¹ The British administration’s decision in 1939 to reduce drastically the wheat tax and to introduce instead other forms of direct taxation faced the Church’s ire. “The Church had condemned the proposed taxes as “not in accordance with Christ’s doctrine” and although it was not directly affected, these taxes fell “on the rich” who supported the institutes of the Church and the poorer classes.”²²²

During his campaigns of the fifties and the sixties, Mr Mintoff kept harping on the issue that in 1948 the Malta Church had opposed the introduction of Income Tax in Malta, and that in 1957 it had also opposed the setting up of a casino. Mintoff explained that the aim behind the opening of casinos was “to attract tourists to our sunny islands... Participation by Maltese residents at the games was to be legally forbidden.”²²³ For Archbishop Gonzi, casinos were immoral.²²⁴ The position regarding the casino adopted by Archbishop Gonzi divided, for instance, the administrative Council of the Malta Chamber of Commerce. Mr Degiorgio had

²¹⁷ Ibid.

²¹⁸ Ibid.

²¹⁹ Letter from Archbishop Michael Gonzi to Governor Guy Grantham dated 10th April 1961 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza 1961, Vol. LV*. The term government refers to the British coloniser.

²²⁰ Circular Letter from Vicar-General Bishop Emmanuel Galea, Number 40 dated 17th October 1945 in *Mons. Gonzi Pastoral e Circolari 1943-1962*, AAM.

²²¹ Dominic Fenech, *The Making of Archbishop Gonzi* (Malta, The Author, 1976), 24.

²²² Jonathan Camilleri, ‘Maltese Industrial Development: 1933-1939,’ *Journal of Maltese History*, 4, (2), (2015), 34.

²²³ Dominic Mintoff, *Priests and Politics in Malta, op.cit.*, 4.

²²⁴ “Catholic Women’s League Annual Meeting,” *Times of Malta*, 14th March 1957, 12.

expressed his wish that the council consider “his proposal that representations be made to government for the grant of a licence to operate a casino.”²²⁵ For Degiorgio, “a casino would increase the flow of tourists.”²²⁶ But another member contended that “the Archbishop had not made a definite pronouncement on the matter.”²²⁷ According to the secretary, the meeting proceeded as follows: “Mr Tayar said that he would approve the idea if the moral harm envisaged by the Archbishop would not result... Bartoli said that the time was inappropriate to sponsor such a project in view of the present crisis between Church and State.”²²⁸

The Role of Education in a Catholic Society

For Catholics, education was considered as a milestone to address the Social Question. The Catholic Church believed that the responsibility for the rearing of children belonged to parents.²²⁹ Education was seen as “the information of mind and the formation of character.”²³⁰ She asserted that “education belongs pre-eminently to the Church, by reason of a double title in the supernatural order, conferred exclusively upon her by God himself, absolutely superior therefore to any other title in the natural order.”²³¹ The State had no absolute right over the education of children but only a relative and qualified one.²³²

The Catholic Church opposed “every system of education which had its foundation and inspiration in naturalism” and above all rejected co-education.²³³ The Church forbade Catholic parents from sending their children to non-Catholic schools whether those schools were neutral (from which religion was excluded) or mixed (open to Catholics and non-Catholics).²³⁴

Religious studies had to be part of the academic formation of a student. The Church maintained that it was a grave violation of natural and divine law to hamper or hinder or reject the teaching of religion in schools. “Those who attempt such a policy violate the rights of God, the rights of the Church, the rights of the parents, and the rights of the child.”²³⁵

²²⁵ Minutes of the Council of the Chamber of Commerce held at The Exchange, Valletta, on 18 April 1956 at 4:30 p.m., 2.

²²⁶ Ibid.

²²⁷ Ibid.

²²⁸ Ibid.

²²⁹ T.J. O’Kane, *A Catholic Catechism on Social Questions*, *op.cit.*, 35.

²³⁰ Ibid.

²³¹ *Divini Illius Magistri*, *op.cit.*

²³² T.J. O’Kane, *A Catholic Catechism of Social Questions*, *op.cit.* 38.

²³³ T.J. O’Kane, *A Catholic Catechism of Social Questions*, *op.cit.*41.

²³⁴ Ibid., 42.

²³⁵ Ibid., 40.

A teacher had to be Catholic independently of his or her subject. He/she “undertakes a grave responsibility, performing a service to God, to the child, to the family, to the Church, and to the State.”²³⁶ The Church classified good teachers as “those with a clear professional Catholic conscience, a soul burning with apostolic zeal... Good teachers... are careful to educate rather than merely to instruct. They are capable, above all, of forming and moulding souls chiefly through contact with their own.”²³⁷

At a university level, the Church mounted pressure against Protestant lecturers. In fact, in March 1962 Archbishop Gonzi reported to Cardinal Giuseppe Pizzardo that the Royal University of Malta was employing non-Catholic professors to teach English Literature, Chemistry, Biology and “*qualche altra materia*.”²³⁸ Furthermore, teachers in Malta were trained by two religious congregations, the Sacred Heart Nuns and the Brothers of Christian Schools.²³⁹

Since the medieval period, the Church in Malta had its own schools.²⁴⁰ By 1974, the Malta Church had on its roll sixty-eight schools catering for 17,642 students.²⁴¹ But one should add that a Catholic spirit prevailed also in Maltese government schools. In fact, from time to time, these schools were “scrutinised” by the inspector of religious instruction. The latter’s duties included the supervision of the teaching of religion by the class teacher which was held on a daily basis and the work being done by the Spiritual Directors who were responsible to hear confession, say mass and supervise religious teaching. In some schools there were adequate spaces so that a chapel could be organised.

The issue of Catholic education was a controversial affair which was prevalent in other countries also. In France, for instance, it “remained controversial during the inter-war period, with the Vatican solemnly denouncing the neutral or secular school as irreligious in the encyclical *Divini Illius Magister* of 1929. During the Second World War, the Vichy Regime

²³⁶ Ibid., 43.

²³⁷ *Divini Illius Magistri*, *op.cit.*

²³⁸ Letter from Archbishop Michael Gonzi to Cardinal Giuseppe Pizzardo dated 26th March 1962 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza 1962, Vol. LVI*.

²³⁹ Arthur Bonnici, *History of the Church in Malta, Vol. 3., op.cit.*, 164.

²⁴⁰ Charles Dalli, “Education in Malta before the Knights” in Ronald G. Sultana, (ed.), *Yesterday’s Schools: Readings in Maltese Educational History* (Malta, Xirocco Publishing, 2017), 6.

²⁴¹ Arthur Bonnici, *History of the Church in Malta, Vol. 3., op.cit.*, 165.

clearly indicated its support for the Church by re-introducing optional religious instruction in state schools, by lifting the ban... on religious teaching orders, and by providing state aid for private schools...”²⁴² Russia in 1918 prohibited religious instruction.²⁴³

In Malta’s case, each time the syllabus of religious instruction was updated, the archbishop, or his delegate, was involved, as this was enshrined in the Constitution of Malta. Pope Pius XI had argued that the syllabi had to be designed with the Church’s guidance.²⁴⁴ Furthermore, during his pastoral visits, Archbishop Gonzi made it a point to literally examine students in religious knowledge and to rebuke their teachers in the event that religious knowledge was not being delivered in the correct manner. In fact, the archbishop recorded in Qrendi Primary School’s Visitors’ Book on 20 November 1970 that “during my third pastoral visitation of the archdiocese, I had the pleasure of visiting this school in connection with my visit to the parish of Qrendi. I personally examined many of the pupils in Religious Instruction and was satisfied with the way most of the pupils answered my questions. Naturally I had to take into consideration the fact that the visit took place at the beginning of the new scholastic year.”²⁴⁵

On the other hand, Archbishop Gonzi rebuked Mr Piju Spiteri, a school teacher at Għaxaq Primary School, for failing to cover certain aspects of the Religious Instruction syllabus thereby limiting his students’ knowledge in matters of faith. It later transpired that the teaching to which the archbishop had referred did not in actual fact form part of the syllabus.²⁴⁶

For instance, on 26 September 1955, Rev. Arthur Bonnici, secretary to Archbishop Gonzi, informed the secretary of the Minister of Education, Agatha Barbara, that the Archbishop “has thoroughly examined the new syllabus for religious instruction in secondary schools prepared by the government instruction board and is glad to be able to authorise it as archbishop... he wishes to recommend an addition to the syllabus of an item about the Blessed Virgin: her immaculate conception, virginity, maternity with Assumption.”²⁴⁷ That same year, Archbishop Gonzi protested with the same Minister of Education and argued that free books and milk

²⁴² D.L. Hanley, *Contemporary France: Politics and Society since 1945* (UK, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1979), 249.

²⁴³ Nikol G. Cauchi, *It-Tagħlim Soċjali tal-Papiet Piju XI u Piju XII, op.cit.* 16.

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 63.

²⁴⁵ Qrendi Primary School’s Visitors Book, Qrendi Primary, St. Benedict College.

²⁴⁶ Taped interview Mr Piju Spiteri, Blata l-Bajda Private Residence, 18th March 2016, Sergio Grech Private Collection.

²⁴⁷ Letter from Archbishop Michael Gonzi to Minister of Education Agatha Barbara dated 26th September 1955 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza 1959, Vol. LIII.*

should also be given to Church schools. He added that if Church schools were not to benefit from such concessions, parents – particularly those with a low income – would be deterred from sending their children to private schools... the present policy is obviously contrary to Catholic principles which should be upheld by a government elected by Catholics...”²⁴⁸ The University of Malta specified in its statutes that no inconsistent teaching with the Catholic religion was allowed.²⁴⁹

In March 1944, the Governor corresponded with Archbishop Gonzi on new bills that dealt specifically with the theme of education: a bill to amend the Compulsory School Attendance Act 1924, and an ordinance to make provisions for the arrangement and control of the Royal Malta University and of other educational establishments, making primary education compulsory upon parents and guardians.²⁵⁰

During a meeting held on 27 March 1944, between Governor Lord Gort, the Lieutenant Governor, and Archbishop Gonzi, it transpired that the latter had no comments or objections to the bill amending compulsory education and the draft education ordinance. Archbishop Gonzi had asked that the words Roman Catholic should be inserted before the words religious doctrine at the third line of the clause.²⁵¹ He also asked that the second proviso should be amended to read as follows: “the provisions of this section regarding Roman Catholic religious instruction shall not apply to non-Catholic children.”²⁵² Furthermore, the archbishop asked whether it would be possible to incorporate in the bill a clause or a definition making it clear that religious instruction should be subject to the guidance and control of the ecclesiastical authorities.²⁵³

It emerged that the Malta Church and the Malta Governor were on different wavelengths on certain issues. The British were afraid that Archbishop Gonzi’s demands would infringe religious toleration. For the British, religious toleration was key whilst the Church expected supremacy in control of imparting religious knowledge. A year later, the stake holders were

²⁴⁸ Letter from Archbishop Michael Gonzi to Minister of Education Agatha Barbara dated 2nd December 1955 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza 1959, Vol. LIII*.

²⁴⁹ Arturo Bonnici, *A History of the Church in Malta: Vol 3, op.cit.*, 162.

²⁵⁰ Letter from Governor Sir David Campbell to Archbishop Michael Gonzi dated 17th March 1944 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza Gonzi 1944, Vol. XLII*.

²⁵¹ Document entitled *Note of a meeting held on 27th March 1944* in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza Gonzi 1944, Vol. XLII*.

²⁵² *Ibid.*

²⁵³ *Ibid.*

still disagreeing on an acceptable terminology. In fact, Mgr Bonnici, the Secretary to the Curia, insisted with Mr David Campbell that “His Grace is still of the opinion that specific reference to the Roman Catholic Religion in clause 3 of the bill does not constitute an infringement of religious toleration since no disability of any kind is involved, while full liberty of conscience is provided for by exempting non-Catholic children from attending classes in religious instruction.”²⁵⁴

Archbishop Gonzi discussed the matter with his superiors at the Holy See. The instructions were very clear – “*Clause 3 rimanga come è stata formulata inizialmente*: it shall be the duty of the parent of every child between the ages of five and fourteen to cause the child to receive efficient primary instruction in religious doctrine, in the Maltese and English languages, in reading and writing the same, and in arithmetic, and if such parent fails to perform such duty, that parent shall be liable to such orders and penalties as are provided by this ordinance.”²⁵⁵

The Holy See also asked Archbishop Gonzi “to take official note of the declaration... by the Lieutenant Governor on behalf of the government in his letter of April 1945. That does not of course imply that the government has any intention whatsoever of altering the present policy and practice of ensuring that children should receive regular and efficient religious instructions in schools, and that such instruction, in the case of Roman Catholic children, should be under the general supervision of the Church.”²⁵⁶

One of Archbishop Gonzi’s first speeches was dedicated to the teachers’ community. He made it clear that theirs was not an easy profession since it carried a lot of responsibilities. He referred to them as one of the biggest moral forces in Malta.²⁵⁷ Archbishop Gonzi expected teachers to lead an exemplary private life.²⁵⁸ His message was very clear: the Catholic principles had to set in all pores.²⁵⁹

²⁵⁴ Letter from Mgr Bonnici to Archbishop Gonzi dated 25th April 1945 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza Gonzi 1945, Vol. XLIII*.

²⁵⁵ Letter from the Sacra Congregazione degli Affari Ecclesiastici to Archbishop Michael Gonzi dated 14th June 1945 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza Gonzi 1945, Vol. XLIII*.

²⁵⁶ Ibid.

²⁵⁷ *Ir-Ragħaj lill-Merħla Tiegħu: It-Tieni Volum* (Malta, Għaqda ta’ Qari Tajjeb, 1949), 8.

²⁵⁸ Ibid. 12.

²⁵⁹ “Il-principji Kattolici jidhlu fil-pori kollha tagħha. Kollox mela għandu jkun Kattoliku.”

In the sixties, Labour leader Mintoff was objecting to the Malta Church having a final word in the education sector. During the Independence talks, he raised the point that parents should have the right to decide if their children should attend religion classes or not.²⁶⁰ Such comments were not welcomed by Catholic factions. Catholic Action responded that the children of non-Catholic parents were exempted from catechism classes in Maltese schools.²⁶¹ The same pattern was respected in schools administered by religious orders, and students who were not of a Roman Catholic creed were not obliged to sit for examinations.²⁶² But Catholic parents were obliged to give religious education to their children and this was more important than civil education.²⁶³ Catholic Action posed the question why parents were not given the option to remove from their obligatory lessons the other subjects namely Maltese, English, Mathematics or Geography.²⁶⁴ The Labour Party was arguing that lessons in religion were being used to counterattack arguments that Labour was bringing up from time to time.²⁶⁵ One should add that Catholic Action agreed with the notion that the State should provide religious instruction in government schools.²⁶⁶

University students asked permission from the bishop of their diocese to be able to consult books that were on the *Index Prohibitorum*, a list of books deemed as immoral and heretical by the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith. For instance, Mr Godfrey Zarb Adami had written to Archbishop Gonzi claiming that “whereas your predecessor had been pleased to grant permission to the undersigned to read and retain books and newspapers condemned by the Church, and whereas the period cover said permission is now over, petitioner, whilst professing himself a faithful son of the Holy Mother the Church, most humbly begs the same reason expressed in his first petition, that is to say for areas of study that said permission be renewed.”²⁶⁷ Mr Joseph Zammit Tabona was given the permission to read Charles Darwin’s *The Origins of the Species* on condition that the book would not be in reach of other readers

²⁶⁰ *L-Emendi li jolqtu l-Knisja proposti mill-MLP fl-Abbozz tal-Kostituzzjoni ta' Malta* (Malta, Empire Press, 1966), 5.

²⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 9.

²⁶² *Ibid.*

²⁶³ *Ibid.*, 10.

²⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 11.

²⁶⁵ *Il-Helsien*, 16th August 1963 quoted in *ibid.*, 13.

²⁶⁶ Meeting MLP National Executive and Parliamentary Group on 19th March 1965, *Minutes MLP National Executive and Parliamentary Group 18th March 1964 to 10th June 1969*.

²⁶⁷ Letter from Godfrey Zarb Adami to Archbishop Michael Gonzi dated 8th February 1945 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza Gonzi 1945, Vol. XLIII*.

while he was perusing it.²⁶⁸ Advocate Michele Tufigno had petitioned Archbishop Gonzi to be allowed to keep in his personal library a copy of Ugo Foscolo's *Le Opere*, Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables*, and Antonio Fogozzaro's *Leila*.²⁶⁹ Mr Giuseppe Zammit appealed to Archbishop Gonzi to be granted permission to read *Messianic Prophecy and Aramaic Approach to the Gospels*.²⁷⁰

Conclusion

In an epoch when insecurity was the order of the day, when wages were meagre, when education was a rarity and when political rights were non-existent, the Catholic Church was a major active agent in a society that worked hard to uplift the status of the vulnerable and the poor lot. To be fair, other Christian Churches along the Catholic Church also gave their share to reach the mentioned goals. The Catholic Church preceded the concept of the welfare state by providing institutions intended to better the individual's state in different circumstances. Meanwhile, as this chapter demonstrated, the Church had developed a corpus of teaching intended to balance the social instability that industrialisation and the wave of progress in fields like science, medicine and technology had created. In Malta, as in other Catholic countries, the Church, together with a good number of philanthropists, invested heavily in institutions that offered care, custody and tutelage to the subservient. Truly so, its contribution in the social field was envious. There were instances when the Church responded even before the state in addressing the ills of society, like for example in the issue of drug addiction. In such cases, the Church showed once again a great sense of adaptation and forceful vision. This social grounded conscience was a strong facet of Archbishop Gonzi's episcopate. The encyclical *Rerum Novarum* and subsequent social documents were a continuous source of inspiration and part of Archbishop Gonzi's programme and plan of action. For the Church, social action was an opportunity to put in practice the word of the Gospel. Issues became controversial when competing powers like politicians regarded the Catholic Church's social action policy as a pure political act which in fact they believed should be in their domain and not in the Church's area of work and was therefore seen as intended to compete with them or cause harm to their influence in society. This inevitably led to tension that was also caused as a result of the type

²⁶⁸ Letter from Joseph Zammit Tabona to Archbishop Michael Gonzi dated 23rd May 1947 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza Gonzi 1946-1947, Vol. XLIV*.

²⁶⁹ Letter from Michele Tufigno to Archbishop Michael Gonzi dated 7th June 1948 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza Gonzi 1948-1949, Vol. XLV*.

²⁷⁰ Undated letter from Giuseppe Zammit to Archbishop Michael Gonzi in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza Gonzi 1948-1949, Vol. XLV*.

of solutions that the two blocs – the secular and the Church - believed in. For the Church, the amelioration of society could not be based on class hatred, and capitalists were expected to respect their workers and pay fair wages. Therefore, the Church was a prime promoter in the movement of rights. As this chapter has underlined, the social dimension of Archbishop Gonzi's episcopate should be interpreted as a continuation of the Catholic social tradition and in the context of the conflicting opinions and where to draw a line between religion and politics.

CHAPTER FIVE

RELIGION, NATIONALISM, LANGUAGE AND IDENTITY IN COLONIAL AND INDEPENDENT MALTA

A tourist guidebook, published in post-independent Malta, claimed that “the Maltese may seem more British than the British. That is the result of their long association with the United Kingdom which has profoundly influenced their cultural and other attitudes.”¹ But the Maltese colonial experience was much more complex than that. Colonialism “was neither a natural nor a neutral process, but one which involved displacement, coercion and violence, strongly affecting the lives of the colonised.”² As Memmi contended, colonialism promoted misery and ignorance.³ Within a colonial setup, the colony inhabitants’ cultural values and ways of life faced challenges to the point that their own identity was devalued. As Baldacchino put it, “colonial penetration has been deep, total and millennial: the Maltese cannot envisage a time when they were not located within the economic and political circuitry of a larger, regional power. Benevolent dictatorship or fiscal sponsorship has been typically preferred in relation to the dangerous risk of “going it alone.””⁴

The British Empire possessed massive territory. It was described as the empire on which the sun never set. The empire was also a hub of trade, communications, naval supremacy, military power and migratory patterns. This implied that “various methods of accommodation and repression were adopted to ensure the territories remained under imperial control.”⁵ The empire’s bureaucratic organisation created cohesion between the disparate areas and created continuity and permanence.⁶ Huge sums of money were mandatory since “the upkeep of an

¹ John Best, *Holiday Guide to the Maltese Islands* (Malta, Cathedral Library Limited, 1968), 19.

² Mariavita Cambria, ‘Is it English what we Speak? Irish English and Postcolonial Identity,’ *Studi Irlandesi: A Journal of Irish Studies*, 4, (2014), 22.

³ Albert Memmi, *The Coloniser and the Colonised*, Retrieved on 5th October 2017, <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/589fa7aaa5790a7c3fba1f34/t/5aedff898a922d5e605957ff/1525546890470/Albert+MemmiThe+Colonizer+and+the+Colonized.pdf>.

⁴ Godfrey Baldacchino, ‘Recent Developments in Higher Education in Malta,’ *Mediterranean Journal of Educational Studies*, 4 (1), 1999, 205.

⁵ Kevin Colclough, *Imperial Nationalism: Nationalism and the Empire in late nineteenth Century Scotland and British Canada* (Doctor of Philosophy, The University of Edinburgh, 2006), 57.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 203.

empire was a drain upon the Public Exchequer.”⁷ This heavy burden was supported by taxation.⁸ Since Archbishop Gonzi was tagged as an imperialist, this chapter will study the ‘brand’ of Archbishop Gonzi’s ‘imperialism’ in light of the various issues relating to the colonial experience.

The Consequences of a Fortress Colony

Malta’s strategic value in the Mediterranean Sea at a crossroads between North Africa, Europe and the Middle East meant that it would be administered as a fortress, even if the island was never conquered or invaded. The Maltese became subordinates, as Bhabha put it, a subaltern, excluded from the logocentric power and therefore silenced.⁹ Malta was regarded as “one of the master keys of the British Empire.”¹⁰ This led to a relationship “of constantly shifting borders and social negotiations, of dialogue, collaboration and the renegotiation of the terms of consent, and simultaneously, of hidden and not so hidden conflicts, defiance and dissent.”¹¹ As Frenzo argued, “the conflict between civil rights and military needs was at the heart of Maltese politics: every time the Maltese petitioners invoked the “Melitensium Amor” argument – the idea that Malta had been freely ceded to Britain by the Maltese – the British reiterated the fortress formula: the strategic value of Malta made it unlikely that it could be treated as an ordinary colony.”¹² Still, the Maltese did not shy away from participating in colonial celebrations like the ones held for the 1935 Jubilee or the 1937 Coronation.¹³ In colonies like Malta and Cyprus, political and military control preceded economic considerations. Truly so, “the Maltese islands were first and foremost a military post and a naval base. All turned on this premise and nothing was done unless the imperial interests were considered and evaluated.

⁷ Joshua Peter Hill, *The Agency Problem of Empire: British Bureaucracy and Institutional Path Dependence* (Master of Arts, George Mason University, 2007), 28.

⁸ Iliia Xypolia, ‘Divide et Impera: Vertical and Horizontal Dimensions of British Imperialism,’ *Critique*, 44, (3), (2016), 227.

⁹ Homi K. Bhabha quoted after Benedict Binebai, ‘Voice Construction in the Postcolonial Text: Spivakian Subaltern Theory in Nigerian Drama,’ *African Research Review*, 9, (4), (39), (2015), 207.

¹⁰ Douglas Austin, *Malta and British Strategic Policy: 1925-1943* (London, Frank Cass, 2004), 118.

¹¹ John Chircop, “Colonial Encounters in Multiple Dimensions: Collaboration, Defiance, Resistance and Hybridity in the Making of Maltese History,” in John Chircop, (ed.), *Colonial Encounters: Maltese Experiences of British Rule 1800-1870s* (Malta, Horizons, 2015), 14.

¹² Henry Frenzo, “Maltese Colonial Identity: Latin Mediterranean or British Empire?,” in Victor Mallia Milanes, (ed.), *The British Colonial Experience 1800-1964: The Impact on Maltese Society* (Malta, Mireva Publications, 1988), 192.

¹³ Simone Azzopardi, ‘Imperial Policy in Malta, 1934-9: Britain’s need for benevolent Despotism,’ *Melita Historica*, 16, (2), (2013), 108.

Political, social and economic contemplations hinged on the strategic value of Malta and its role in the global reality.”¹⁴

Archbishop Gonzi was bred in Vittoriosa where since his infancy he could observe several Royal Navy vessels stationed at the Grand Harbour and the Dockyard. Vittoriosa residents were “in daily contact with the might of the British Navy and the Empire.”¹⁵ Pro-British feelings could be detected in bars in Vittoriosa named *England’s Glory*, *Rose Shamrock and Thistle*, *Coronation Bar* and *Empire Bar*.¹⁶ Since 1840, Malta had served as “one of the Empire’s premier naval bases and the headquarters of its Mediterranean fleet.”¹⁷ It followed that for Archbishop Gonzi and his contemporaries, the Royal Navy was a source of secure employment unless Britain opted to restructure. During the First and the Second World Wars, two-thousand Maltese were enlisted in the Royal Navy.¹⁸ Archbishop Gonzi’s father worked with the Dockyard whilst Labour leader Dom Mintoff’s father was employed with the Royal Navy. Dominic Mintoff recounted that his father Wenzu Mintoff used to tell him without rancour that “despite reaching the highest rank in my trade, our family would have lived like paupers if I had relied solely on my service pay and pension. Maltese ratings are not given even half the English salary.”¹⁹ Maltese Trade Unionist Reginald Miller had noted in 1954 “that there is discrimination in every place where English and Maltese workers meet.”²⁰ In fact, a British and a Maltese were paid different wages for the same kind of job. Governor Charles Bonham-Carter (1936-1940) believed that the Maltese would become “more “enthusiastically British” if the British ended their racism in Malta.”²¹

The Maltese had no access to high-ranking jobs but those “serving onboard Royal Navy ships, particularly as stewards and cooks, were considered by fellow Maltese as *la crème de la crème*

¹⁴ George Cassar and Noel Buttigieg, ‘Victorian and Edwardian Malta (1837-1910): change and continuity,’ in George Cassar and Noel Buttigieg, *Proceedings of History Week 2019: Victorian and Edwardian Malta (Malta, MHS, 2022)*, 20.

¹⁵ Lino Bugeja, *Vittoriosa: An Ancient City of Culture* (Malta, The Author, 2014), 111.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ Mario Brincat, ‘The Birth of the “Maltese Model” of Development, 1945-1959,’ *Journal of Maltese History*, 1, (2), (2009), 2, Retrieved on 23rd July 2015, in <https://www.um.edu.mt/arts/history/jmh/docs/2009/brincat-34-53-1.pdf>.

¹⁸ Carmel Vassallo, ‘Servants of Empire: the Maltese in the Royal Navy,’ 6, Retrieved on 23rd July 2015, in http://home.um.edu.mt/medinst/mmhn/1_servants_of_empire.pdf.

¹⁹ Daniel Mainwaring and Yana Mintoff, (eds.), *Mintoff, Malta Mediterra: My Youth, op.cit.*, 30.

²⁰ Yvonne Micallef Stafrace, *Reggie Miller and the Post-War Socio-Political Challenges* (Malta, General Workers Union, 1998), 7.

²¹ Charles Bonham-Carter, “Address by H.E. the Governor to the Officers of Units Arriving in Malta,” in Victor Bonham-Carter, *In a Liberal Tradition: A Social Biography 1700-1950* (London, Constable, 1960), 248.

of those lucky enough to be employed in the service of the Empire.”²² In fact, Royal Navy employees had better wages than Dockyard workers. Such a situation led the average Maltese to believe that “*L-Inglizi għamluna nies.*”²³ Such an argument fitted perfectly in Fanon’s thesis. The colonialists wanted their subjects to believe that if they “were to leave, the colonised people would fall back into barbarism, degradation, and bestiality.”²⁴ As Michael Kim put it, “the colonial public sphere openly excludes or discounts the voices of the colonised, for colonialism by definition assumes the political infantilism of colonised populations, and strict censorship prevents any meaningful challenges to the state’s authority.”²⁵

Features in Governing a Fortress Colony

During their occupation, the British generally looked down on the Maltese. Such positions were based on racial attitudes and on their belief that the Maltese were politically inexperienced. The 1813 Royal Commission dubbed the Maltese as unfit to govern themselves.²⁶ Twenty years later, Sarah Austin, the wife of Royal Commissioner John Austin, concluded that the Maltese “were far behind us in civilisation.”²⁷ Indeed, there were some British bureaucrats who gave access to the Maltese to prominent positions, but few crowned their careers because of their sound preparation in the subject area. Several were collaborators. Besides civil servants, the alliance of collaborators included “the top merchants, the upper echelon of the Catholic Curia, the *nouveau riche* caste of contractors, and a group of landowning families from the nobility.”²⁸ At this juncture, the Malta Church’s role as a collaborator needs to be qualified since Archbishop Gonzi was not an ordinary yes-man. The Integration chapter, that is to say Labour leader Mintoff’s proposal to integrate Malta into the United Kingdom, was a case in point. As was said earlier, Archbishop Gonzi opposed Integration tooth and nail notwithstanding the closeness that existed between the Church and the British Empire. For him, religious considerations outweighed everything else. Moreover, Archbishop Gonzi was adamant in defending the Church’s *status quo* at all costs.

²² Carmel Vassallo, ‘Servants of Empire: the Maltese in the Royal Navy,’ *op.cit.*

²³ This could be translated as “The British civilised us.”

²⁴ Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (London, Penguin Books, 1990), 169.

²⁵ Michael Kim, *The Colonial Public Sphere and the Discursive Mechanism of Mind*, Retrieved on 27th April 2022,

https://www.academia.edu/2764862/_The_Colonial_Public_Sphere_and_the_Discursive_Mechanism_of_Mind_o_in_Michael_Kim_Michael_Schoenhals_and_Yong_Woo_Kim_eds._Mass_Dictatorship_and_Modernity_Palgrave_2013_178-202.

²⁶ Albert V. Laferla, *British Malta Volume 1* (Malta, Progress Press, 1947), 82.

²⁷ Sarah Austin as quoted in John Chircop, “Colonial Encounters in Multiple Dimensions: Collaboration, Defiance, Resistance and Hybridity in the Making of Maltese History,” *op. cit.*, 15.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 14.

But as Marovich-Old contended, “at times the collaboration was indeed opportunistic, and where it was altruistic and ideologically driven, it could be counter-productive as when enthusiastic British proxies took more radical positions than the British themselves.”²⁹ Lord Gerald Strickland was an example of the latter category. A significant strategy that the coloniser employed was the *divide et impera* (divide and rule) policy. Intelligently, Imperial governments divided populations on various grounds like linguistics, religion, ethnicity and race affecting in the process their identity.

The Relationship between the British Empire and the Malta Church

Malta became a British colony at a time when Europe was struck by an anti-clerical wave and most countries were legislating and implementing secular and anti-clerical laws. But, “to secure their position on the island, the British were increasingly conscious of the need to acknowledge an interdependence between the civil and religious authorities”³⁰ To achieve that status, the British gave protection and cooperation to the Church and as a result, the Malta Church expanded and became a strong institution in society.

As Hilda Lee showed, in embracing such a philosophy, the British were not really adopting an exception. Such policies were undertaken in Canada, Martinique and Santo Domingo, the Cape and other colonies. Lee contended that “the principle of preserving local privileges, particularly in respect of religion and ancient laws and customs, was in the early 19th century firmly established as an imperial necessary feature.”³¹ Furthermore, in 1829 the British Empire adopted the Catholic Emancipation Act which in Malta had never been in force since Maltese “Roman Catholics had been eligible to all offices except that of the Governor.”³² In Malta, the British “went slightly further. They not only respected the liberty of the Church: to some extent, they also protected her from proselytism.”³³

²⁹ John Marovich-Old, *Challenges to British Imperial Hegemony in the Mediterranean: 1919-1940* (Doctor of Philosophy, Flinders University, 2017), 13.

³⁰ Joseph Bezzina, “Church and State in an Island Colony,” in Victor Mallia Milanese, (ed.), *The British Colonial Experience 1800-1964: The Impact on Maltese Society* (Malta, Mireva Publications, 1988), 48.

³¹ Hilda L. Lee, ‘British Policy towards the Religion, ancient Laws and Customs in Malta 1824-1851,’ *Melita Historica*, 3, (1963), 1.

³² Joseph Bezzina, “Church and State in an Island Colony,” *op.cit.*, 48.

³³ *Ibid.*, 49.

Thanks to the good relationship that existed between the British and the Malta Church, the latter commenced enjoying a number of privileges that continued to be availed of during the long episcopate of Archbishop Michael Gonzi. These privileges included that Church paid no taxation and that religious teaching in schools and charitable institutions were under her wings. The Co-Cathedral of St. John, built by the Hospitallers, was owned by the government but it was to be run by the Church. Additionally, the Bishop was ranked second after the Governor in precedence and was given military honours which were declined to other leaders of other religious denominations in Malta.³⁴

Meanwhile, a loyal Church to the British Empire emerged. Archbishop Gonzi had told Governor Robert Laycock, two years prior to the 28th April 1958 riots, that the Malta Church's loyalty to Britain was unshakeable.³⁵ As Mabel Strickland remarked to Great Britain's Prime Minister Harold Macmillan, the Malta Church differed from the one in Cyprus in so far as loyalty was concerned.³⁶ The Cypriot institution was anti-colonial in nature. Moreover, the Cypriot Church leader had political responsibilities tied to his office which were absent in a Roman Catholic bishop's portfolio. Therefore Mr Mintoff's contrasts of Archbishop Gonzi with Archbishop Makarios were theologically and historically misleading. Being politically inclined, Mr Mintoff wanted to prove that Archbishop Gonzi was a coloniser's puppet. But there was another facet to keep in mind. The Maltese bishop "unlike Ireland... had not been persecuted by the occupying regime, so he was not a rebel."³⁷

On the other hand, for the Church, the major concern had been to have a large enough space to carry out its social mission. But in a society that was becoming increasingly more secular, the Church, including Archbishop Gonzi, could no longer expect that the law should necessarily follow the Catholic Church's teaching, especially on ethically controversial matters. The British, even if Protestant, had gained – through the Simmons-Rampolla agreement (1890) – the right to propose Malta's bishop whenever the seat became vacant.³⁸

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ CO 926/296, *Malta Attitudes of the Roman Catholic Church to Integration in Malta*, The National Archives of the United Kingdom, Kew.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Henry Frendo, *The Origins of the Maltese Statehood*, *op. cit.*, 238.

³⁸ Joseph Bezzina, "Church and State in an Island Colony" in Victor Mallia Milanes, (ed.), *The British Colonial Experience: 1800-1964* (Malta, Mireva Publications, 1988), 59.

Emigration: An Example of Good Relations between Church and Empire

The British regarded emigration as a solution to Malta's ills. Governor Laycock had even declared that "the standard of living in Malta and Gozo cannot continue to improve unless large-scale emigration is also maintained."³⁹ For Archbishop Gonzi, emigration was a safety valve and he always saw that the communities of Maltese abroad were spiritually catered for and had an adequate cohort of priests.

Over the years, the Malta Church had its representatives on the Board of Trustees of the Papaffy Emigration Fund,⁴⁰ the Emigration Standing Committee⁴¹ and the Emergency Unemployment Loan Scheme Board.⁴² One should keep in mind that in 1952, Pope Pius XII had published the apostolic constitution *Exsul Familia*. The document came to be considered as the *magna carta* of the Catholic Church's commitment to the field of migration.⁴³ The Pope put the responsibility on the diocesan bishop for the pastoral care of migrants. A year earlier *Exsul Familia* was published, Pope Pius XII founded the International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC).⁴⁴

The welfare, materially and spiritually, of the Maltese emigrants, was persistently on Archbishop Gonzi's agenda. In February 1948, Archbishop Gonzi corresponded with Cardinal Griffin of Westminster to check about the religious climate at Dudley Road Hospital in Birmingham since the Malta National Nursing Association intended to send there six women to be trained as nurses.⁴⁵ Archbishop Gonzi continued the trend that the emigrants' communities had the services of Maltese clergy.⁴⁶ Archbishop Gonzi asked the archbishop of Toronto, Mgr James McGuigan, to increase the number of Maltese priests in his diocese.

³⁹ Candle Mass Speech by Governor Robert Laycock, 1957 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza Gonzi 1957, Vol. LI*.

⁴⁰ Letter from Secretary to Government to Archbishop Michael Gonzi dated 23rd June 1945 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza Gonzi 1945, Vol. XLIII*.

⁴¹ Letter from Head of Ministry to Archbishop Michael Gonzi dated 2nd December 1947 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza Gonzi 1946-1947, Vol. XLIV*.

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ Kevin L. Flannery, "The Moral Principles governing the Immigration Policies of Politics," in Gerard V. Bradley and E. Christian Brugger, (eds.), *Catholic Social Teaching: A Volume of Scholarly Teaching* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2019), 366.

⁴⁴ Lawrence E. Attard, *The Safety Valve (A History of Maltese Emigration from 1946)* (Malta, Publishers Enterprises Group, 1987), 112.

⁴⁵ Letter from Archbishop Michael Gonzi to Cardinal Griffin of Westminster dated 25th February 1948 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza Gonzi 1948-1949, Vol. XLV*.

⁴⁶ Lawrence E. Attard, *Mill-Moħħ għall-Fomm* (Malta, Pubblikazzjonijiet Dumnikani, 2015), 103.

According to Archbishop Gonzi, "Maltese emigrants are coming over to Canada in great numbers... Many of the Maltese migrants are rather limited in their spoken English. They therefore have to call on a Maltese priest for confession. The absence of Maltese priests is keeping away many Maltese from the sacraments. In Australia, Maltese settlers have been looked after fairly well in Melbourne since I inaugurated a house for the Maltese congregation. In Adelaide, the archbishop accepted my plea to open a house for the Maltese friars minor. In Sydney, I have two Maltese priests."⁴⁷

Archbishop Gonzi even obtained permission from the Vatican to have a priest to accompany Maltese emigrants on long-distance voyages.⁴⁸ In *Exsul Familia*, the Pope had also spelt out the duties "of the missionaries to emigrants and chaplains aboard ships."⁴⁹ Occasionally, Archbishop Gonzi even visited the Maltese communities abroad.⁵⁰ For instance, in 1953 he visited Australia. According to *Cairns Post*, Archbishop Gonzi was to visit the Maltese settlers during his trip and was to "discuss immigration matters with the Australian authorities."⁵¹

While Mr Mintoff was preparing to visit Australia in 1965, Archbishop Gonzi sent a letter to the archbishop of Canberra Mgr Eris M. O'Brien and to Cardinal Norman Thomas Gilroy by virtue of which he insisted that they should not accept the Maltese Labour leader's invitation to meet with him.⁵² Archbishop O'Brien had tertiary training in Europe. Indeed, he had studied at the National University of Ireland in Dublin and at the Catholic University of Louvain in Belgium. He wrote two books on Catholicism in nineteenth-century Australia. Furthermore, Mgr O'Brien sustained the 1962 strike in Goulburn Catholic schools and was instrumental in the attainment of state aid in favour of the schools owned by the Church.⁵³ Cardinal Norman Thomas Gilroy had the reputation of an "iron man" since he was a strict disciplinarian on his clergy. During the split of the Australian Labour Party in 1954, he was of the opinion that the

⁴⁷ Letter from Archbishop Michael Gonzi to Archbishop James McGuigan dated 10th July 1951 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza 1950-1951, Vol. XLVI., Vol. LIX.*

⁴⁸ Letter from Mgr Giuseppe Ferretto to Archbishop Michael Gonzi dated 23rd January 1956 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza Gonzi 1956, Vol. L.*

⁴⁹ *Exsul Familia. Apostolic Constitution of Pope Pius XII*, Retrieved on 14th August 2018 in <https://www.papalencyclicals.net/pius12/p12exsul.htm>.

⁵⁰ Michael Galea and Emmanuel S. Tonna, *L-Arcisqof Gonzi Vol. 2, op. cit., 97.*

⁵¹ *Cairns Post*, 25th August 1953, 3.

⁵² Letter from Archbishop Michael Gonzi to Archbishop of Canberra Mgr Eric M. O'Brien dated 22nd February 1965 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza Gonzi 1965, Vol. LXV.*

⁵³ Elizabeth Johnston, "O'Brien Eris Michael (1895-1974),"

Church should abstain from involving itself in politics.⁵⁴ This was in sharp contrast with the opinion held by Archbishop Daniel Mannix of the Melbourne diocese.⁵⁵

Archbishop Gonzi was writing these letters just a few months after Malta became a sovereign country. One should keep in mind that on Independence Day, that is to say on 21 September 1964, Archbishop Gonzi had removed the interdict that he had imposed in 1961 on the Executive members of the Malta Labour Party. Those members included Mintoff. Meanwhile, the first attempts for peace between him and Mr Mintoff had also kicked off.

Archbishop Gonzi argued that Mr Mintoff was a lapsed Catholic who had stayed away from the sacraments for many years. For Mr Mintoff, religion and the Church were merely a private concern. Archbishop Gonzi explained that “A personal interdict had to be imposed on some members of Mintoff’s Executive Committee... in order to facilitate better relations with the Church, but then, on the occasion of Malta’s Independence, the archbishop spontaneously withdrew the interdict. However, the gesture was received with contempt. During a public meeting, Mr Mintoff boasted that he had never asked for the lifting of the interdict, and that he had never changed ideas and never would.”⁵⁶ Archbishop Gonzi remarked that when Mr Mintoff had been Prime Minister of Malta, in the period between 1955 and 1957, he had asked to be received by Pope Pius XII. “But the audience was not granted to him.”⁵⁷ Archbishop Gonzi continued to expand that about two years earlier, that is to say in 1963, Mintoff “had sought to be received by the Secretariat of State of the Vatican in order to discuss the situation, but he was refused an audience and was asked instead to expose in writing what he had to state.”⁵⁸

Archbishop Gonzi updated the Australian Church dignitaries with the meetings that the Apostolic Delegate Monsignor Iginio Cardinale was holding between the stakeholders with peace as the end result. Archbishop Gonzi assessed the situation as follows: “The first talks were followed by others in Rome last November but there is as yet no definite conclusion. The

⁵⁴ John Luttrell, “‘Australianizing’ the Local Catholic Church: Polding to Gilroy,” *Journal of Religious History*, 36, (3), (9), (2012), 348.

⁵⁵ Patrick Mannix, *The Belligerent Prelate: An Alliance between Archbishop Daniel Mannix and Eamon de Valera* (Cambridge, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2012), 58.

⁵⁶ Letters from Archbishop Michael Gonzi to Archbishop of Canberra Mgr Eris M. O’Brien and Cardinal Norman Thomas Gilroy dated 22nd February and 15th February 1965 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza 1965, Vol. LIX*.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

matter is now being dealt with by the Apostolic Delegate and the Holy See... the Holy See admitted that some of Mintoff's points are against the Catholic faith."⁵⁹

Arguments with the Protestants' Community

British "preferential treatment" for the Malta Church angered other religious denominations. Considering its strategic position, Malta promised a fertile terrain for Protestant activities. In effect, by time, it became an operations centre and their "efforts yielded a good harvest at first."⁶⁰ By 1831, the Protestant community amounted to 700, excluding the garrison.⁶¹ In 1961, Archbishop Gonzi observed that, in Malta, the Protestant community was rather quiet, and added that the Maltese who had lost their faith never joined the Protestants.⁶² At that particular time, Archbishop Gonzi noted that Protestant propaganda was inexistent in Malta.⁶³ By 1962, Archbishop Gonzi estimated that there were 12,000 non-Catholics – members of Protestant Churches and Greek Schismatics.⁶⁴ Theological and canonical considerations dictated opposition to the Protestant world.

Archbishop Gonzi was fervent in blocking outside Protestant manifestations in Malta. During the 1954 Royal Visit, a Memorial to the Commonwealth Air Force was unveiled.⁶⁵ That occasion led to a polemic.⁶⁶ Governor Gerald Creasy was insisting that the memorial should be blessed by the Senior Anglican Chaplain of the Royal Air Force, but Archbishop Gonzi asserted that the blessing fell within his domain since Malta's dominant religion was Roman Catholic.⁶⁷ Additionally, Archbishop Gonzi quoted an 1848 agreement that specified that Anglican ceremonies were to be held inside an Anglican Church. Archbishop Gonzi not only boycotted the event but demanded the Maltese Cabinet, the clergy and the Maltese population to follow

⁵⁹ Letters from Archbishop Michael Gonzi to Archbishop of Canberra Mgr Eris M. O'Brien and Cardinal Norman Thomas Gilroy dated 22nd February and 15th February 1965 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza 1965, Vol. LIX*.

⁶⁰ Frans Ciappara, *M.A. Vassalli 1764-1829: An Enlightened Maltese Reformer* (Malta, Midsea Books, 2014), 117.

⁶¹ Hilda L. Lee, *op. cit.*, 2.

⁶² Letter from Archbishop Michael Gonzi to Cardinal Pietro Palazzini 26th February 1961 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza Gonzi 1961, Vol. LV*.

⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ "Basic Statistical Questionnaire" filled and sent by Archbishop Michael Gonzi to Nuncio Gerald O'Hara dated 31st March 1962 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza Gonzi 1962, Vol. LVI*.

⁶⁵ Michael Galea, 'Queen Elizabeth's stays in Malta over the Years,' *Timesofmalta.com*, 15th Nov 2015, Retrieved 5th November 2018, in <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20151115/life-features/Queen-Elizabeth-s-stays-in-Malta-over-the-years.592305>.

⁶⁶ Letter from Archbishop Michael Gonzi to Cardinal Domenico Tardini dated 3rd May 1954 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza Gonzi 1954-1955, Vol. XLVIII*.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

suit – “*Io chiamai il Primo Ministro Maltese e lo informai della situazione e questo mi assicurò che nessuno dei ministri avrebbe presenziato a una eventuale funzione protestante.*”⁶⁸ For Archbishop Gonzi, that was “*una vittoria per la Chiesa cattolica qui.*”⁶⁹ On the issue Archbishop Gonzi had received feedback from the Catholic Archbishop of Liverpool arguing that “the Papal Envoy in London never goes into the Abbey for a ceremony and some people take it a miss. I have always replied that the head of the Catholic Church could not possibly take part in Protestant worship. Likewise in Rome when the British minister to the Holy See died, resentment was strong in some quarters that the Pope was not represented in the Anglican Church Funeral.”⁷⁰

But such events were not singular. In July 1949, Archbishop Gonzi was asked for a visit by the Anglican Bishop of Gibraltar.⁷¹ Archbishop Gonzi responded that “it is not customary for the Archbishop of Malta to return visits. The only exception to the rule is the representative of His Majesty the King.”⁷² But the Apostolic Delegate William Godfrey encouraged Archbishop Gonzi to return the visit either personally or through the vicar-general or his chaplain.⁷³ To avoid returning the visit, Archbishop Gonzi opted instead to go to the Vatican.⁷⁴ Incidentally, Cardinal Tardini, the Vatican’s Secretary of State, backed Archbishop Gonzi rather than the Apostolic Delegate Godfrey.⁷⁵

Archbishop Gonzi and Freemasonry

Archbishop Gonzi was also keen to block freemasonry in Malta. This resistance was dictated by the Church’s canonical and theological positions. Since 1738, the Catholic Church had officially opposed freemasonry.⁷⁶ The 1917 Code of Canon Law stated that “those giving their

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Letter from Archbishop Michael Gonzi to Cardinal Domenico Tardini dated 3rd May 1954, in AAM: *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza Gonzi 1954-1955, Vol. XLVIII.*

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Letter from Archbishop Michael Gonzi to Bishop Harold Buxton dated 18th July 1949, in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza Gonzi 1948-1949, Vol. XLV.*

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Letter from Archbishop William Godfrey to Archbishop Michael Gonzi dated 14th July 1949 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza Gonzi 1948-1949, Vol. XLV.*

⁷⁴ Letter from Archbishop Michael Gonzi to Cardinal Domenico Tardini dated 6th September 1949 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza Gonzi 1948-1949, Vol. XLV.*

⁷⁵ Letter from Cardinal Domenico Tardini to Archbishop Michael Gonzi dated 24th September 1949 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza Gonzi 1948-1949, Vol. XLV.*

⁷⁶ Ed Condon, ‘The real Reason Catholics can’t be Freemasons,’ *Catholic Herald*, 10th August 2017, Retrieved 17th March 2018, in <https://catholicherald.co.uk/issues/august-11th-2017/the-real-reason-catholics-cant-be-freemasons/>.

name to masonic sects or other associations of this sort that machinate against the Church or legitimate civil powers contract by that fact excommunication simply reserved to the Apostolic See. (Canon 2335).”⁷⁷ Moreover, “if a cleric commits the delict mentioned in Canons 2334 and 2335, besides the penalties established in those referenced canons, he can be struck with penal suspension or with privation of benefices, offices, dignities, pensions, and responsibilities, if by chance he has any in the Church; religious likewise [suffer] the loss of office, of active and passive voice, and other penalties according to the norms of the constitutions (Canon 2336).”⁷⁸ The case of Ettore Bono – who signed an affidavit declaring that he had seen Lord Gerald Strickland at a freemasons’ dinner wearing the masonic regalia⁷⁹ – surely left an impact on Archbishop Gonzi. Professor Walter Ganado was reported as having repeated on various occasions the claim that Archbishop Gonzi himself was a freemason. In 2007, *Ibn Campusino* alleged that Walter Ganado, “in his time was well known also for his imaginative expositions on those who, in his opinion, or perhaps even in real life, belonged to a masonic group, and these included a good number of public figures and academics.”⁸⁰

Meanwhile, two sources, an anonymous journalist⁸¹ and Reverend Alexander Bonnici,⁸² had pointed out that there was a secret pact between Archbishop Gonzi and the Grand Master of the District Grand Lodge De Wolff which stipulated that no Maltese would be accepted as a member of the Lodge. Rediffusion personalities like Hamilton Hill and Graham Binns were believed to be Lodge members.⁸³

Honours for the Collaborating Élite

For the collaborating élite, the coloniser bestowed honours like the *Order of the British Empire* (OBE).⁸⁴ “Applied across the whole empire, the system had a double edge: it produced loyalty and kept different social groups in their place.”⁸⁵ Several Maltese have been decorated with

⁷⁷ Edward N. Peters, *The 1917 or Pio-Benedictine Code of Canon Law, op.cit.*, 376.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹ Victor Aquilina, *Strickland House Book 1, 1921-1935* (Malta, Allied Publications, 2010), 168.

⁸⁰ “Doctors Plus,” *The Sunday Times*, 9th December 2007, 109. Two sources have pointed out to the present author that Anthony Serracino Inglott, Professor at the University of Malta and brother of ex Rector Professor Peter Serracino Inglott, was Ibn Campusino.

⁸¹ *L-Orizzont*, 6th September 1990, 12.

⁸² Alexander Bonnici, *Storja ta’ Malta fi Ġrajjet il-Knisja* (Malta, Reliġjon u Hajja, 1996), 69.

⁸³ *L-Orizzont*, 6th September 1990, 12.

⁸⁴ Tobias Harper, *Orders of Merit? Hierarchy, Distinction and the British Honours System, 1917-2004* (Doctor of Philosophy, Columbia University, 2014), 3, in

<https://academiccommons.columbia.edu/doi/10.7916/D8G44NFZ>.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

the *Order of the British Empire* but only three were admitted to the *Class of Knight Commanders*.⁸⁶ Archbishop Gonzi was the last one to be admitted. The reader must bear in mind that although in retrospective such honours may look trivial these decorations and privileges were the results of immemorial customs and long-standing traditions. In 1946, Archbishop Gonzi was knighted by King George VI. He was later decorated as Brigadier General of the British Army.⁸⁷ The military honour of Brigadier General was given originally to Bishop F.X. Caruana (1831-1847) and subsequently to all his successors.⁸⁸ In 1842, the Secretary of State for War and the Colonies Edward Smith-Stanley had demanded the discontinuation of such honours after Bishop F.X. Caruana's demise. But such directive was never abided by.⁸⁹

The anomaly was addressed in 1967 when Archbishop Gonzi has been bestowed the honour of Major General.⁹⁰ Archbishop Emeritus Gonzi kept using that title until his death. Gauci claimed that this went against the established protocol since his successor had the right to inherit the honour.⁹¹ His successor Archbishop Joseph Mercieca (1976-2006) was not interested in such honours. Honours were also conferred on members of the clergy. In 1948, it was announced that Fr Serafin Zarb OP was given the Order of the British Empire medal, Fr Aurelius Borg OSA and Fr Giles Galea were given the MBE decoration (Most Excellent Order of the British Empire) while Fr Ugolin Gatt OP was given the King Commendation for Brave Conduct.

The Order of Precedence

The order of precedence was scripture for Archbishop Gonzi to the point that he loathed a possible revision. It was also a source of litigation between Archbishop Gonzi and the Protestant churches. On the occasion of the Jubilee Celebrations (1935), Archbishop Gonzi, who was bishop of Gozo at the time, was invited to a state dinner organised by Governor David Campbell. The bishop of Malta, Mgr Mauro Caruana, declined the invitation since he was in hospital. Informed that the bishop of Gibraltar would also be attending, Mgr Gonzi refused the invitation since, according to the protocol of the time, the bishop of Gibraltar – who had

⁸⁶ A.E. Abela, *The Order of St. Michael and St. George in Malta and Maltese Knights of the British Realm* (Malta, Progress Press, 1988), 169.

⁸⁷ Mario Felice, 'I Remember... I Remember,' *The Times of Malta*, 17th March 2007, 8.

⁸⁸ Charles A. Gauci, *Of Maltese Generals and Admirals* (Malta, Midsea Books, 2015), 48.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 48.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 52.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 54.

confirmed his attendance – preceded the bishop of Gozo in the hierarchy. Mgr Gonzi made it clear that he would not attend unless “he were given precedence over him.”⁹² In a secret note drawn up by the Defence Security Officer, it was stated that “this incident is typical of Bishop Gonzi’s attitude...”⁹³

On another occasion, Archbishop Gonzi protested with Governor Edmond Schreiber that during the event “of the unveiling of two tablets at the Palace Square recording His Majesty the King’s message bestowing the George Cross Island on Malta and the citation of the President of the United States, commemorating his visit to the island in December 1943, held on 8 September 1944, at the conclusion of the ceremony, immediately after Your Excellency’s departure the regiment present marched off, without giving me time to follow Your Excellency, as it has always been done on similiar occasions. I am not in a position to know the officer responsible for the fact, but I hope whoever he is, he will be called to order, and that the thing will not happen in the future.”⁹⁴

Following the Labour government’s resignation in 1958, the Lieutenant-Governor of Malta Trafford Smith informed Archbishop Gonzi, on the latter’s request, that the “positions of Prime Minister, Ministers, members of Nominated Council, Speakers, Members of the Assembly and the Secretary to the Maltese Imperial Government had lapsed as these offices no longer existed. Members of the new Executive Council, below the Lieutenant-Governor, will be included in the council order at number 10 in place of Ministers.”⁹⁵

Malta’s Independence brought a revision in the precedence list and the amendment meant that Malta’s Prime Minister, and not the Archbishop, was the second most important person after the Governor. Whilst Archbishop Gonzi was in Rome attending the Second Vatican Council, Mr Edgar Cuschieri, the Government’s Administrative Secretary, informed Mgr Arturo Bonnici, the Archbishop’s Secretary, of the adjustments and informed him that “it is the practice in all Commonwealth countries that after the Governor-General, the Prime Minister

⁹² Letter from Sir David Campbell to Sir Philip Cunliffe-Lister dated 28th May 1935. Document deposited at the National Archives of Malta and given to author by Mr Giorgio Peresso.

⁹³ Unsigned document marked Secret dated 10th May 1935. Document deposited at the National Archives of Malta and given to author by Mr Giorgio Peresso.

⁹⁴ Letter from Archbishop Michael Gonzi to Governor Edmond Schreiber dated 10th December 1944, AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza 1944, Vol. XLII.*

⁹⁵ Letter from Lieutenant-Governor Trafford Smith to Archbishop Michael Gonzi dated 16th April 1959, AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza 1959, Vol. LIII.*

takes precedence over all others.”⁹⁶ Archbishop Gonzi instructed Mgr Bonnici, “*dica al sig. Cuschieri essere mio desiderio che la questione in parola rimanga sospesa fino al mio ritorno a Malta, onde poter aver l’occasione di dire una parola sul riguardo al Primo Ministro.*”⁹⁷

Archbishop Gonzi reported the case to the Vatican: “*protestai con tutta la prudenza e pregai il Primo Ministro di lasciare le cose come erano stati per molti anni. Pubblicamente io non mi mossi e da alcuni il mio silenzio fu criticato.*”⁹⁸ Prime Minister Borg Olivier maintained that the Prime Minister of Ireland had precedence over the Irish Primate.⁹⁹ Archbishop Gonzi contended that the archbishops of Canterbury and York had precedence over the British Prime Minister.¹⁰⁰

The Apostolic Delegate to Malta, Archbishop Cardinale, backed Archbishop Gonzi’s claims and responded that “I am really amazed that this should happen under a government that owes so much to the Church. I often wonder just how reliable politicians – whoever they may be – are when we come to practical matters. I cannot forget the discussions we had at the Delegation during the Constitution talks. It was not always easy to explain the Church’s standpoint even to men who were so close to us!”¹⁰¹

This may partially explain the reason for Prime Minister Borg Olivier’s indifference to Archbishop Igino Cardinale being promoted to the post of Malta’s Nuncio as a result of Independence. According to Koster, for the Nationalists, Archbishop Cardinale was Mr Mintoff’s collaborator and it was thanks to him that the interdict had been lifted.¹⁰² Archbishop Gonzi had exerted pressure on Premier Borg Olivier and Mr Frederick Amato Gauci, his aid

⁹⁶ Letter from Mr Edgar Cuschieri to Mgr Arturo Bonnici dated 7th November 1964, AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza 1964, Vol. LVIII.*

⁹⁷ Letter from Archbishop Michael Gonzi to Mgr Arturo Bonnici dated 9th November 1964, AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza 1964, Vol. LVIII.* For a profile regarding Mgr Bonnici see Fabian Mangion, “Honouring a dedicated Priest: Mgr Prof. Arturo Bonnici,” *TimesofMalta.com*, 21st October 2018, Retrieved 10th November 2018.
<https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20181021/life-features/honouring-a-dedicated-priest-mgr-prof-arturo-bonnici.692200>.

⁹⁸ Letter from Archbishop Michael Gonzi to Cardinal Amleto Giovanni Cicognani dated 20th June 1964, in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza 1964, Vol. LVIII.*

⁹⁹ *Ibid.* The Primate was an archbishop ranking first among bishops or archbishops.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁰¹ Letter from Archbishop Igino Cardinale to Archbishop Michael Gonzi dated 20th July 1965, in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza Gonzi 1965, Vol. LVIV.*

¹⁰² Adrianus Koster, *Prelates and Politicians in Malta, op. cit.*, 201.

within the Foreign Affairs Ministry, that Archbishop Cardinale was the right candidate.¹⁰³ Borg Olivier did not want the Vatican's Nuncio to Italy to represent Malta. He also objected to Malta being included with the African's Vatican embassy.¹⁰⁴ Mgr Cardinale felt uneasy about Borg Olivier's indecisiveness to approve the Vatican's Nuncio. In actual fact, Mgr Iginio Cardinale noted to Archbishop Gonzi that "*come uno stato non Cristiano come Zambia stia per arrivare prima della Cattolicissima Malta a stabilire rapporti diplomatici con la Santa Sede.*"¹⁰⁵

Italy and Britain in Maltese History

One of the debates that characterised pre and post-independent Malta was the labelling of two distinct groups of Maltese nationals as either pro-Italian or pro-British. In post-colonial studies, this position was defined as the construction of reality in binary opposition.¹⁰⁶ Being pro-Italian was interpreted as holding pro-Fascist ideas, whilst adopting a pro-British stance meant championing imperialism. This issue left a key impact on people's identity. On various occasions, Mr Mintoff had addressed the *Italianità* issue and he equalled that segment of the Maltese Nationalists of the inter-war period who were sympathisers of Italy's culture, as siding with Benito Mussolini or Fascism.¹⁰⁷ However, Mr Mintoff's criticism spared Dr Nerik Mizzi, a staunch *Italianità* crusader. Upon Dr Mizzi's death, Mintoff described him "as the greatest of the Maltese."¹⁰⁸ Still, Mizzi's bust in Valletta was the subject of regular vandalism by Mintoffian thugs.¹⁰⁹

However in 1999, it was revealed that Mr Mintoff had contemplated the idea of a "union" with Italy similar to the one envisaged by Dr Nerik Mizzi in the early twentieth century.¹¹⁰ In fact, whilst in 1963, Borg Olivier was in London negotiating Malta's Independence, Mintoff was in Italy deliberating such an option.¹¹¹ One may interpret that decision as a U-turn but this resulted

¹⁰³ Letter from Archbishop Iginio Cardinale to Archbishop Michael Gonzi dated 6th October 1965, AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza Gonzi 1965, Vol. LVIV*.

¹⁰⁴ Letter from Archbishop Michael Gonzi to Archbishop Iginio Cardinale dated 1st September 1965, AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza Gonzi 1965, Vol. LVIV*.

¹⁰⁵ Letter from Archbishop Iginio Cardinale to Archbishop Michael Gonzi dated 6th February 1965, AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza Gonzi 1965, Vol. LVIV*.

¹⁰⁶ Josienne Said, "A.V. Laferla and Education: A Post-Colonial Approach," in Ronald G. Sultana, (ed.), *Yesterday Schools: Reading in Maltese Educational History* (Malta, Publishers Enterprises Group, 2001), 176.

¹⁰⁷ Dom Mintoff, *Din hi l-Istorja* (Malta, Pubblikazzjoni Notice Board, 1989), 12.

¹⁰⁸ Joseph M. Pirotta, *Fortress Colony: The Final Act 1945-1964, Vol 1 1945-1954* (Malta, Studia Editions, 1987), 237.

¹⁰⁹ Michael Galea, 'Monument lil Nerik Mizzi,' *In-Nazzjon*, 15th October 2012, 24.

¹¹⁰ Regarding Nerik Mizzi's Vision see Austin Sammut, *The Court Martial of Enrico Mizzi* (Malta, Midsea Books, 2005), 61.

¹¹¹ Henry Frendo, *The Origins of Maltese Statehood, op. cit.*, 332.

from the fact that, as Frendo argued, “Italian and British sensitiveness – both cultural and strategic – crossed repeatedly in Malta during the past two centuries.”¹¹² Thus comprehending the role played by Italy and Britain in Malta’s history is a must to understand Archbishop Gonzi’s leanings, if any. This theme calls for a detailed investigation. Otherwise, one will easily resort to distorted conclusions and simply limit Archbishop Gonzi to one faction or another.

Malta’s association with Italy could be traced back to the second century BC when the Romans subordinated the small Mediterranean island to Sicily.¹¹³ Italian – in its Tuscan variety – was the Hospitallers’ *lingua franca*.¹¹⁴ Until the twentieth century, the judicial system in Malta was written in Italian.¹¹⁵ By the nineteenth century, Malta had “a thoroughly Italianate culture.”¹¹⁶ Furthermore, in the mentioned century, Malta served as a home base for the refugees expelled from Italy as a result of the attempts to unify Italy.¹¹⁷ Italian was employed by the administration, the Malta Church, commercial groups and the professional classes. Even pro-British Gerald Strickland, a fervent anglicisation promoter, received some of his education in Italy, and he could speak Italian fluently.¹¹⁸

By the year 1870, the British embarked on an irreversible Anglicisation programme. This policy rejected the 1836 Austin and Lewis Commission’s conclusion which favoured the use of Italian over English.¹¹⁹ In the British Empire, colonised people were often obliged to use English. “Forced passages from one language to another often caused cultural suffering as people tried to deal with problems of identity; often a fractured one.”¹²⁰ Davis argued that “to

¹¹² Henry Frendo, *Europe and Empire: Culture Politics and Identity in Malta and the Mediterranean (1912-1946)* (Malta, Midsea Books, 2012), 198.

¹¹³ Anthony Bonanno, “The Romans in Malta,” *Treasures of Malta*, 1, (1994), 48.

¹¹⁴ Sandro Caruana, “Italian in Malta: A socio-educational Perspective,” *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 16, (5), (2013), 602.

¹¹⁵ See for instance *Ġabra ta’ Formoli bil-Malti u bl-Ingliż għall-Qrati ta’ Malta bi Glossarju ta’ Kliem u Frazzjiet legali bit-Taljan kif kienu qabel użati miġjuba bil-Malti u bl-Ingliż/Collection of Forms in Maltese and English in Use in the Malta Law Courts with a Glossary of Italian legal Words and Phrases in former Use rendered into Maltese and English* (Malta, Malta Government Printing Press, 1935).

¹¹⁶ Henry Frendo, “Maltese Colonial Identity,” *op. cit.*, 197.

¹¹⁷ Vincenzo Bonello, Bianca Fiorentini, and Lorenzo Schiavone, *Echi del Risorgimento a Malta* (Italy, Cisalpino, 1982), 179.

¹¹⁸ Harrison Smith and Adrianus Koster, *Lord Strickland and Servant of the Crown Vol I* (Malta, Progress Press, 1984), 8.

¹¹⁹ Godfrey Hull, *The Malta Language Question* (Malta, Said International Ltd, 1993), 15.

¹²⁰ Mariavita Cambria, ‘Is it English what we Speak? Irish English and Postcolonial Identity,’ *op. cit.*, 20.

lose your native tongue and learn that of an alien, is the worst badge of conquest – it is the chain on the soul.”¹²¹

The Italian culture supporters reacted vehemently to the proposed plot and did their utmost to reverse the Anglicisation programme to the point that two political opposing groups were born. “Claims of disloyalty to the Crown were rebutted by counter-claims of clear attempts at denationalisation and assimilation.”¹²² Ultimately, it was not only the issue of which language was to be used on a national scale but also a question of Nationalism versus Imperialism.¹²³ As Frendo maintained, by the nineteenth century, at least on a social level, Malta had all factors required for nationhood.¹²⁴ It had a unity of religion and language (Italian) and, unlike the case of Cyprus or Ghana, there were no divisions of race, culture, religion or tribes.

Italianità became the symbol of anti-Britishness. Therefore, a Maltese Nationalism movement emerged as a cultural resistance against the British Anglicisation process. Exponents of the movement claimed that Malta was already part of the civilised classical world when Britain was still in its stone age.¹²⁵ As Hull argued, “if the culture were purely Maltese, it would have been assimilated or eradicated by the British as they had done in Ireland.”¹²⁶ On the other hand, imperialist Augustus Bartolo, whose ancestors were Sicilian, was arguing that “there never can be a great imperialist unless he is a great nationalist. I do not know a citizen of the Empire who does not love his people, and who does not point with feelings of pride to his language, his creed, and his country.”¹²⁷

Notwithstanding the Anglicisation movement, the command of English still lagged behind Italian by the beginning of the twentieth century. In 1901, 27,805 Maltese knew how to read Italian while English could be read by 20,336. 17,053 inhabitants wrote in English whilst

¹²¹ Thomas Davis quoted after Joshua Fishman, “Language and Nationalism,” in Stuart Woolf, (ed.), *Nationalism in Europe; 1815 to the Present: A Reader* (London, Routledge, 1996), 162.

¹²² Victor Aquilina, *Strickland House Times of Malta at War and Labour Party's sweeping Victory* (Malta, Allied Publication, 2015), xiv.

¹²³ Joseph M. Brincat, *Maltese and Other Languages: A Linguistic History of Malta* (Malta, Midsea Books, 2011), 273.

¹²⁴ Henry Frendo, *Maltese Colonial Identity, op.cit.*, 187.

¹²⁵ George Cassar, “Politics, Religion and Education in Nineteenth Century Malta,” *Journal of Maltese Education Research*, 1, (1), (2003), 97.

¹²⁶ Godfrey Hull, *The Malta Language Question, op.cit.*, 3.

¹²⁷ Augustus Bartolo quoted after Chandrika Kaul, “Malta, Media and Empire in the Twentieth Century,” in Sergio Grech, (ed.), *Mabel Strickland Bejn Storja u Miti* (Malta, Horizons, 2018), 139.

23,724 were capable of writing in Italian.¹²⁸ The lower classes had no option but to employ Maltese, a language without a literary tradition, undervalued (referred to as *Lingwa tal-kċina*) which until 1931 lacked a standard orthography.¹²⁹ Even before the Second Vatican Council, during which it was decided that the vernacular was to be the liturgy's language, the Malta Church, though employing Italian in its administration and Latin for worship, contributed its share in using Maltese through catechisms,¹³⁰ sermons,¹³¹ prayers,¹³² devotional booklets, festas' sonnets,¹³³ holy pictures, newspapers,¹³⁴ magazines, missals,¹³⁵ pastoral letters,¹³⁶ papal encyclicals,¹³⁷ "primitive theological books"¹³⁸ and so on. In the 1950s, that is to say prior to the Second Vatican Council, the vernacular commenced being used during parts of ritual celebrations.¹³⁹

By the inter-war period, Malta resembled an Italian satellite rather than a British possession. In 1923, Mabel Strickland, daughter of Sir Gerald, blamed British indifference to the Maltese as the reason for the proliferation of Italian sentiments.¹⁴⁰ Still very few of those who championed the Italian culture wanted Britain out. The majority would comply with Ġan Anton Vassallo, a Maltese pro-Italian writer, who had declared: "*Inghilterra per sempre.*"¹⁴¹ This did not imply that during the inter-war period there were no Maltese who were *irredentisti* or Fascists. Nerik Mizzi was an irredentist believing that Malta formed part of the Italian territory.¹⁴² He twice contacted Italian dictator Benito Mussolini in 1934 and in 1938.¹⁴³ What was rarely mentioned was that both Gerald Strickland and Augustus Bartolo had praised

¹²⁸ Joseph M. Brincat, *Il-Malti: Elf Sena ta' Storja* (Malta, Pubblikazzjonijiet Indipendenza, 2000), 176.

¹²⁹ Carmel Cassar, 'Malta: Language, Literacy and Identity in a Mediterranean Island Society,' *National Identities*, 3, (3), (2001), 270.

¹³⁰ See Salv Grech, *Duttrina Nisranija* (Malta, Giovanni Muscat, 5th edition 1907).

¹³¹ See Joe Zammit Ciantar, *Il-Prietki bil-Malti ta' Ignazio Saverio Mifsud* (Malta, The Author, 2008).

¹³² See *Ctieb tal Cnisja jeu Talb Mehtieg ghal Cull Nisrani* (Malta, Lombardi Press, 1934).

¹³³ *Il-Habbar Malti*, 6th December 1878, 2.

¹³⁴ Henry Frendo, *Maltese Journalism, op.cit.*, 26.

¹³⁵ See *Il Kuddiesa tal Hdud u il Festi tas Sena Collha: L-Ghid il Cbir mahrug mill-Azioni Cattolica* (Malta, Dar ta' San Ġuzepp, 1937).

¹³⁶ See *Ittra Pastoral ta' l-Iskfijiet ta' Malta u Ghawdex fuk l-Ewwel Concilju Reġjonali* (Malta, Għakda ta' Kari Tajjeb, 1936).

¹³⁷ *L-Ewwel Enciklika tal-Q.T. Piju XII Summi Pontificatus* (Malta, Għaqda ta' Qari Tajjeb, n.d.).

¹³⁸ *Familja Maltija, Familja Nisranija* (Malta, Catholic Action, 1950).

¹³⁹ Jesmond Manicaro, *Liturgical Renewal in the Maltese Islands: A Historical Study (1840-1963)* (Rome, Pontificio Istituto Liturgico, 2004), 63.

¹⁴⁰ Andre P. Debuttista, "Mabel Strickland: Il-Battalji Politiċi, it-Twemmin Politiku u l-Kuntest Tagħhom," in Sergio Grech, (ed.), *Mabel Strickland Bejn Storja u Miti* (Malta, Horizons, 2018), 54.

¹⁴¹ Joseph M. Brincat, *Il-Malti: Elf Sena ta' Storja, op. cit.*, 144.

¹⁴² Henry Frendo, "Nerik Mizzi in Italia Prima della Guerra Mondiale Gli Anni della Formazione," in <http://ojs.uniurb.it/index.php/studi-A/article/view/149/141>.

¹⁴³ Henry Frendo, *Malta's Quest for Independence: Reflections on the Course of Maltese History* (Malta, Valletta Publishing, 1987), 200.

Mussolini publicly, and the latter had even expressed a wish to meet him.¹⁴⁴ Once he was fired from his University post and later from his ministerial position, Professor Carlo Mallia spent the war years in Italy working for the Fascist cause.¹⁴⁵ In Italy, Mallia “became a confirmed Fascist official who pressured the Maltese in Italy to hand in their British passport in return for a monthly allowance and, more importantly, being saved from the Prisoner of War “concentration” camps.”¹⁴⁶

During this period, relations between Britain and Italy were stressed. With the advent of Fascism, Italy’s expansionist foreign policy and its claims on Malta clashed with Britain’s Mediterranean interests. Italy became the first power other than Britain to have a Mediterranean colonial presence east of Malta.¹⁴⁷ Britain feared that this could lead to a restriction in its communication to India, Singapore and the Far East. As a reaction, the British in Malta took up a number of de-Italianisation measures including the suspension of the 1933 Constitution, the illegal dismissal of the Nationalist Cabinet, the choice of English and Maltese as Malta’s national languages and the unlawful exile of forty-nine Maltese citizens to distant Uganda.

Undoubtedly, “the anti-Italian noose was tightening at the Governor’s palace, at police head quarters, at Lord Strickland’s Constitutional Party clubs and newspapers, the naval dockyard, the admiralty and the War Office, in Whitehall, and in Westminster.”¹⁴⁸ For instance, there was a mystery to whom Colonel Olaf Gollcher (1889-1962), an OBE holder and resident at Mdina, was sending his reports. According to Francesca Balzan, the former curator of *Palazzo Falson*, the previous Gollcher home, “his connections with Rome and his Italian wife may have been uncomfortable facts that necessitated his declaration of whose side he was on.”¹⁴⁹ For instance, Gollcher recommended to the authorities to watch carefully a certain Joseph Micallef who was in Milan dealing in silverware. According to his judgement, Joseph Micallef was “a doubtful man.”¹⁵⁰ Gollcher accused Rector Robert Galea of delaying British policy at the Royal Malta

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Paul Knepper, “La Scuola Lombrosiana and the Beginning of Criminology in Malta,” *Journal of Maltese History*, 1, (2008), 6 in <https://www.um.edu.mt/library/oar/handle/123456789/17919>.

¹⁴⁶ Henry Frendo, “The Post-War Treason Trials,” *Storja*;98, (1998), 118.

¹⁴⁷ Philip John Carabott, “The temporary Italian Occupation of the Dodecanese: A Prelude to Permanency,” *Diplomacy and Statecraft*, 4, (2), (1993), 294.

¹⁴⁸ Henry Frendo, *Europe and Empire*, *op. cit.*, 567.

¹⁴⁹ E-mail from Francesca Balzan to Sergio Grech dated 29th October 2018, Sergio Grech Private Collection.

¹⁵⁰ Archives, Palazzo Falson, Mdina.

University since he was allowing the pro-Italian element to expand their influence.¹⁵¹ In fact, Gollcher suggested his transfer to another Government department.¹⁵²

Archbishop Gonzi: A Pro-British or a Pro-Italian?

As explained earlier, Italy and Britain crossed each other in the inhabitants' life and affected their identity. As we shall see, Archbishop Gonzi was not an exception in this regard. Both Italy and Britain influenced his career path. So one cannot really put him strictly in one category or another.

Archbishop Gonzi, whose family surname originated in Genoa, was born in Vittoriosa which was, as stated earlier, a pro-British zone. His father, Giuseppe Gonzi (1840-1935), was employed with the naval dockyard, another pro-British area, although one should also acknowledge the fact that forty employees out of 12,000 were deported to Uganda during the Second World War¹⁵³ Mr Giuseppe Gonzi spoke no English and had some knowledge of French.¹⁵⁴ Giuseppe followed Sigismondo Savona, the teacher who for some years turned a staunch pro-British politician.

As stated, Archbishop Gonzi was ordained a priest in 1908. Italian and Latin were a must for those who chose that route. He studied at the local University, whose language of administration was Italian, and furthered his studies at the Gregorian University and the *Pontificio Istituto Biblico* in Rome, but he resided in an English college, the Beda College. On returning to Malta, for a brief span of time, Mgr Gonzi lectured at the training school for teachers set up by his friend, the Director of Education Dr Albert V. Laferla who was pro-British, a 'stricklandjan' and an Order of the British Empire decoration holder.¹⁵⁵ Mgr Gonzi was also a lecturer at the Royal University of Malta where the two cultures, British and Italian, met and often caused heated argumentations.¹⁵⁶

¹⁵¹ Ibid. The remark was strange considering that Galea was a senior member of the Constitutional Party when Gerald Strickland was in government.

¹⁵² Ibid. Archives, Palazzo Falson, Mdina

¹⁵³ Max Farrugia, *L-Internament u l-Eżilju matul l-aħħar Gwerra* (Malta, Pubblikazzjonijiet Indipendenza, 2007), 211. For statistics related to employment in the dockyard see Richard King, "The Changing Role of Malta's Dockyards," *Geography*, 11, (1978), 364.

¹⁵⁴ Taped interview Archbishop Michael Gonzi, December 1977, Michael Galea Private Collection.

¹⁵⁵ Josienne Said, "A.V. Laferla and Education: A Post-Colonial Approach," *op.cit.*, 176.

¹⁵⁶ George Cassar, *Student Representation at the University of Malta: A History 1901-1971* (Malta, Kunsill Studenti Universitarji, 2011), 65.

Archbishop Gonzi was totally absent from the 7 June 1919 riots which were not only food related riots but were also anti-British in nature.¹⁵⁷ On the contrary, prominent members of the Maltese clergy like Mgr Enrico Dandria¹⁵⁸ and Mgr Joseph de Piro worked hard to calm down the protestors. In his university days, Archbishop Gonzi was the Treasurer of the *Comitato Permanente Universitario*, the body representing students.

During the First World War, Archbishop Gonzi served as a military chaplain at the Mtarfa Hospital conducting his mission with soldiers pertaining to the empire.¹⁵⁹ Military chaplains' duties included "caring for the wounded, encouraging the living, and writing to the relatives of those killed or wounded. They provided the sacrament of Holy Communion as regularly as possible and in particular sought to minister to the dying."¹⁶⁰

Pro-Italian Nerik Mizzi was one of Archbishop Gonzi's university colleagues but it clearly emerged that their political paths never met. In fact, later on in 1950, Archbishop Gonzi was afraid of a possible coalition between Dr Mizzi and Mr Mintoff, regarding both of them as extremists.¹⁶¹ On the other hand, Archbishop Gonzi tolerated a coalition between Dr Mizzi and Dr Boffa who was a pro-British.¹⁶² Dr Paul Boffa's pro-Britishness was evident in his voting consenting the *internati*'s deportation.¹⁶³ Mizzi was an anti-imperialist though his anti-imperialism was different from that envisaged by Ignazio Panzavecchia or Manwel Dimech. The latter was exiled by the British, and Archbishop Gonzi had told historian Henry J. Frendo that he had confronted Mr Dimech at the Vittoriosa Gates with other seminarians.¹⁶⁴ Canon Panzavecchia was the leader of the Unione Politica Maltese. The mentioned party was pro-Church, anti-government but not anti-British.¹⁶⁵

¹⁵⁷ Paul A. Bartolo, *X'kien ġara sew fis-Sette Giugno* (Malta, Klabb Kotba Maltin, 2019), 395.

¹⁵⁸ Max Farrugia, *Enrico Dandria: Qassis, Kattoliku, Patrijott* (Malta, Kite Publishing, 2017), 65.

¹⁵⁹ Michael Galea, "L-Ewwel Gwerra Dinjija 1914-1918: Kappillani Militari Maltin," *Lehen is-Sewwa*, 31st December 2017, 15. In 1978, Archbishop Gonzi revealed to *Storja '78* that for several years after the events he used to pay homage to victims by visiting their effigy at the Addolorata Cemetery at Paola.

¹⁶⁰ Peter Houston, "South African Anglican Military Chaplains and the First World War," *South African Historical Journal*, 68, (2), (2016), 217.

¹⁶¹ S.C. Smith, *op.cit.*, 25.

¹⁶² Paul Boffa's nephew Fr Marius Zerafa told the present writer that Boffa "was pro-British *sa għadmu*" – "was pro-British to the hilt." Taped interview Fr Marius Zerafa, Dominican Convent, Sliema, 7th June 2016, Sergio Grech Private Collection.

¹⁶³ Desmond Zammit Marmara, *Pawlu Boffa: L-Ewwel Prim Ministru Laburista* (Malta, Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti, 2010), 73.

¹⁶⁴ Henry Frendo, *Story of a Book*, Retrieved on 23rd July 2015, in <https://www.um.edu.mt/library/oar/bitstream/handle/123456789/23897/OAStory%20of%20a%20book%20by%20Henry%20Frendo.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>.

¹⁶⁵ Henry Frendo, "Plurality and Polarity: Early Italian Fascism in Maltese Colonial Politics," Retrieved 7th July 2020, <http://maltahistory.eu5.net/cc/CC15.html>.

In 1921, Archbishop Gonzi was elected Senator on Labour's ticket.¹⁶⁶ The mentioned party was born under an Italian name – *La Camera del Lavoro* – which later was amended to *Malta Labour Party*.¹⁶⁷ When the party was officially launched, the two main speeches were conducted in Italian and English.¹⁶⁸ A few years after its birth, Labour struck a compact with pro-British Gerald Strickland. There was nothing strange in Mgr Gonzi's political choices since British Catholics tended to vote for the mentioned Labour party in Britain.¹⁶⁹ Archbishop Gonzi addressed the Senate either in English or in Italian.

Archbishop Gonzi's mentor, Archbishop Caruana, was undoubtedly pro-British but he ended up defending the pro-Italian priests. His first Pastoral Letter in Italian, including a Maltese translation, was an unwelcomed move to the pro-Italian faction since it was interpreted as a joint effort between the Church and the British to oust Italian.¹⁷⁰ On another occasion, Archbishop Caruana's decision to deliver a homily in English led to "most of those present" walking out.¹⁷¹ According to Harrison Smith, Archbishop Caruana "was most certainly afraid of the consequences of the Strickland Party in public office. He noted with fear that the party had some Protestants and freemasons within its confines."¹⁷²

From secondary sources, we know that Archbishop Caruana's sickness paved the way for a successor, and the coloniser set the ball rolling in favour of a collaborator. Meanwhile, Mgr Gonzi was bishop of Gozo and very undiplomatically, he made it clear that he wanted at all costs the Maltese See. In fact, during a particular instance, when the die seemed cast against Bishop Gonzi, he declared that owing to seniority "whether in Malta or in Gozo, I would enjoy the rank and the position that Archbishop Caruana at present enjoys."¹⁷³ Imperialists like Sir Harry Luke and the Stricklands (Lord Gerald and his daughter Mabel) were doing their utmost to block Bishop Gonzi's nomination for the Maltese See. Gerald Strickland was convinced that Archbishop Gonzi was the culprit for the 1930 mortal sin. Instead, Strickland supported

¹⁶⁶ Michael J. Schiavone, *L-Elezzjonijiet f' Malta 1849-1992* (Malta, Pubblikazzjonijiet Indipendenza, 1992), 62.

¹⁶⁷ Francis Galea, *L-Istorja tal-Partit Laburista (1920-1940): Minn qabel it-Twelid sal-Bidu tat-Tieni Gwerra Dinjija* (Malta, Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti, 2017), 65.

¹⁶⁸ Gerald Azzopardi, *Il-Fundaturi tal-Partit tal-Faddiema* (Malta, Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti 1984), 2.

¹⁶⁹ Neil Riddell, "The Catholic Church and the Labour Party, 1918-1931," *Twentieth Century British History*, 8, (2), (1997), 168.

¹⁷⁰ Joseph M. Brincat, *Il-Malti: Elf Sena ta' Storja*, *op.cit.*, 144.

¹⁷¹ Adrianus Koster, *Prelates and Politicians in Malta*, *op. cit.*, 83.

¹⁷² Harrison Smith quoted in Adrianus Koster, *op. cit.*, 106.

¹⁷³ Dominic Fenech, *The Making of Archbishop Gonzi* (Malta, Union Print, 1976), 29.

Dominican monk Serafin Zarb for the post.¹⁷⁴ The latter edited the magazine *Scientia* and provided articles supporting Lord Strickland's claims that there were direct connections between the Phoenicians and the Maltese.¹⁷⁵ According to Fr Lawrence E. Attard, Fr Zarb was pro-British "*di natura*."¹⁷⁶ Strickland asserted that appointing Mgr Gonzi as the Archbishop of Malta was like giving the fortress to dictator Mussolini.¹⁷⁷ Lord Strickland accused Mgr Gonzi of forming part of the Mussolini clique at the Vatican.¹⁷⁸ According to Governor Bonham-Carter, Italian dictator Benito Mussolini himself was interested in the appointment of the bishop of Malta.¹⁷⁹ Most probably Governor Bonham-Carter preferred Mgr Gonzi as archbishop of Malta for strategic reasons. In fact, when the appointment of a bishop coadjutor became necessary, he noted in his diary that "if we object to him, he will be our very strong opponent and the Vatican might appoint someone much more objectionable."¹⁸⁰ Eight days later Governor Bonham-Carter acknowledged that "if a local man was to fill the post, there are others whom we should dislike more."¹⁸¹ But the idea of landing someone more unreasonable than Mgr Gonzi, who at the time was bishop of Gozo, was a constant concern.¹⁸² In one of his latest diary entries (29 February 1936), Governor Bonham-Carter observed that "looking back on the whole business, I feel that it has been a great mistake to oppose the appointment of Monsignor Gonzi who, though a fanatical churchman, is not anti-British. However, his own actions of lobbying everyone have ruined the chances as much as the influential Strickland and other outsiders."¹⁸³

Documents archived at the Archives of the Secretariat of State of the Holy See fill in the gaps, mentioned above, in the behind scenes of Archbishop Gonzi's choice for Malta's bishopric seat and therefore deserve to be treated at some length. It is striking to note that Archbishop Gonzi was not on Archbishop Caruana's original shortlist of June 1931 when the latter suggested three possible names so that one of them might be chosen as his auxiliary bishop. Archbishop

¹⁷⁴ Andre de Battista, "Mabel Strickland: Il-Battalji Politici, it-Twemmin Politiku u l-Kuntest Tagħhom," *op.cit.*, 63.

¹⁷⁵ See for instance Serafin M. Zarb, "The Maltese Language: Phoenician or Arabic?," *Scientia*, 10, (1944), (4), 185-190.

¹⁷⁶ Taped interview Fr Lawrence E. Attard, Dominican Convent, Sliema, 20th February 2016, Sergio Grech Private Collection.

¹⁷⁷ Adrianus Koster quoting Dominic Fenech, *op. cit.*, 123.

¹⁷⁸ Henry Frendo, *Europe and Empire*, *op. cit.*, 587.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 36.

¹⁸⁰ John Manduca (ed.), *The Bonham-Carter Diaries 1936-1940* (Malta, Publishers Enterprises Group, 2004), 71.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 73.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, 83.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, 460.

Caruana's choice included his Vicar General Mgr Paolo Galea, Mgr Giuseppe dei Marchesi Apap Bologna and Mgr Giuseppe dei Marchesi de Piro.¹⁸⁴ Both Mgr Galea and Mgr Apap Bologna served as Senators. But it was decided, that for the time being the *Sacra Congregazione Concistoriale*, responsible for the process to select bishops should suspend the mentioned choice in order to wait for “*il risultato della inchiesta svolta all'isola della Commissione Reale.*”¹⁸⁵ Afterwards, as by procedure, information about the candidates was collected from different quarters followed by an examination of the evidence collected where not only the merits of the nominees in the various fields were analysed, but also their health portfolio was scrutinised to ensure that the best candidate possible was chosen for the post. For instance, the nomination of Mgr Paul Galea was refused since he was regarded as “*amicissimo del segretario di Strickland Dr Bartolo*”¹⁸⁶ and “*si vede con gli stricklandiani... per le pubbliche vie in compagnia dei più noti stricklandiani.*”¹⁸⁷ Archbishop Gonzi, whilst administering the Gozitan diocese, sent his views regarding Mgr Apap Bologna describing him as “*ottimo, pio, intelligente, colto, molto eccentrico, salutista all'eccesso, ombroso*”¹⁸⁸ adding that “*tempo fa doveva stare alcuni giorni a Roma, ripartì perché erano le tempora e non voleva aver l'aria di chiedere negli alberghi cibi di magro.*”¹⁸⁹

From time to time, as the situation became complex, Archbishop Caruana kept writing regularly to Cardinal Raffaele Carlo Rossi, Prefect of the *Sacra Congregazione Concistoriale*, about the important matter to select an auxiliary bishop for the diocese, and there were occasions when he himself was in “*Roma per avere un Vescovo Ausiliare*” and discussed the matter with either the Cardinal of State or with other important prelates.¹⁹⁰ Along the way to Archbishop Gonzi's nomination of *coadiutore cum iure futurae successionis*, several names were mentioned at different points in time. The list included Augustinian monk Adeodato Schembri, Dom Mauro Inguanez (archivist at Montecassino), Mgr Giuseppe Bonanno (a member of the Cathedral Chapter), Rev. Carmelo Farrugia, Rev Alberto Pantallaresco (Seminary Rector and

¹⁸⁴ Letter from Cardinal Raffaele Rossi to Cardinal Eugenio Pacelli dated 9th June 1931 in AA.EE.SS., *Inghilterra IV*, 1930-1944, Pos. 230, fasc. 74, fol. 24.

¹⁸⁵ Letter from Cardinal Raffaele Rossi to Cardinal Eugenio Pacelli dated 11th June 1931 in AA.EE.SS., *Inghilterra IV*, 1930-1944, Pos. 230, fasc. 74, fol. 26. Reference here is to the 1931 Royal Commission.

¹⁸⁶ Alcuni documenti intorno a Monsignor Galea Vicario Generale di Malta, in AA.EE.SS., *Inghilterra IV*, 1930-1944, Pos. 230, fasc. 74, fol. 27.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸⁸ Informazioni circa Mgr Apap Bologna date del Vescovo di Gozo dated 26th July 1932, in in AA.EE.SS., *Inghilterra IV*, 1930-1944, Pos. 230, fasc. 74, fol. 34.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid.

¹⁹⁰ Letter from Cardinal Raffaele Rossi to Cardinal Eugenio Pacelli dated 16th December 1932 in AA.EE.SS., *Inghilterra IV*, 1930-1944, Pos. 230, fasc. 74, fol. 36.

one of the internati to Uganda), Mgr Luigi Caruana, Fr Giovanni Mifsud (Malta's Seminary Rector), Mgr Emaniël Galea (Vicar General of the diocese), Mgr Joseph Pace from Gozo, and scholar Fr Seraphin Zarb.

By December 1932, Cardinal Rossi felt that Malta at that stage required a coadjutor bishop not an auxiliary concluding that: *“Date le condizioni di salute di Monsignor Caruana, data la sua debolezza di carattere, data la necessità che Malta si inizi presto un energico lavoro per rimediare abusi, migliorare la disciplina del clero e la vita religiosa del popolo, sembrerebbe opportuno di dare a Monsignor Arcivescovo non già un ausiliare ma un coadiutore sempre che non si credessi possibile... persuadere Monsignor Caruana alla rinunzia.”*¹⁹¹ Cardinal Rossi was convinced that Mgr Gonzi, the bishop of Gozo, was the right candidate for the post since he *“durante il periodo della così detta questione maltese si è portato veramente bene.”*¹⁹² Archbishop Gonzi was described as *“attivo, colto, prudente, zelante.”*¹⁹³ Padre Carta, who played a crucial role in the dispute between the Malta Church and Lord Strickland, was in favour of Archbishop Gonzi being transferred to Malta believing that *“non sarebbe difficile trovare un altro candidato per la piccola diocesi di Gozo.”*¹⁹⁴

Cardinal Eugenio Pacelli, Secretary of State, was sceptic about the reaction of the British government regarding Archbishop Gonzi's nomination, as per the Simmons-Rampolla Agreement, believing that Archbishop Gonzi would not be a *persona grata* considering that *“A questo proposito occorre tener presente che durante le note divergenze tra la Santa Sede e la Gran Bretagna circa Lord Strickland, ed anche in seguito, quel Governo aveva fatto qualche rilievo sulla persona di Mgr Gonzi.”*¹⁹⁵ By the first quarter of 1936, Archbishop Caruana presented his fourth candidate for the office, Mgr Enrico Bonnici, the Rector of the Seminary of Malta.¹⁹⁶ But that nomination was not even considered.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹¹ Appunto, undated in AA.EE.SS., *Inghilterra IV*, 1930-1944, Pos. 230, fasc. 74, fol. 37.

¹⁹² Document entitled “Ordinario di Malta,” Undated in AA.EE.SS., *Inghilterra IV*, 1930-1944, Pos. 230, fasc. 74, fol. 38.

¹⁹³ Ibid.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁹⁵ Letter from Cardinal Eugenio Pacelli to Cardinal Raffaele Rossi dated 11th February 1936 in AA.EE.SS., *Inghilterra IV*, 1930-1944, Pos. 230, fasc. 74, fol. 50.

¹⁹⁶ Letter from Cardinal Raffaele Rossi to Cardinal Eugenio Pacelli dated 2nd April 1936 in AA.EE.SS., *Inghilterra IV*, 1930-1944, Pos. 230, fasc. 74, fol. 54.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.

As expected by Cardinal Pacelli, the British's *nulla osta* for Archbishop Gonzi's nomination to the See of Malta was negative.¹⁹⁸ A note by Cardinal Rossi suggested that the *Sacra Congregazione Concistoriale* was at a loss to the point that "*non si sarebbe quale candidato suggerire.*"¹⁹⁹ As Cardinal Rossi had minuted in his file, "*Nel 1924 in occasione della nomina del medesimo Mons Gonzi a Vescovo di Gozo, Mons Segretario ha interpellato oralmente e confidenzialmente la Legazione Inglese... e... dopo circa 20 giorni ha risposto nella medesima forma che il governo inglese non solo non ha nulla da osservare, ma vedeva anzi tale nomina con vivo piacere.*"²⁰⁰ But in the case of the Malta bishopric office, the opposition for Archbishop Gonzi's nomination was "*sfavorevole al massimo grado possibile.*"²⁰¹

There is no doubt that Archbishop Gonzi was not only interested in the role but "*aspetta tale nomina.*"²⁰² Archbishop Gonzi sent different letters to claim the nomination to the relevant personnel at the Holy See but also went in person to the Secretariat of State and the *Sacra Congregazione Concistoriale* at the Vatican to put pressure to obtain promotion to the Malta See.²⁰³ One of the mentioned letters was hand written and eleven pages long. Archbishop Gonzi came to know that "*la Santa Sede intende nominarmi coadiutore con futura successione*" and, being aware of the British's opposition, he wrote to Cardinal Domenico Tardini at the Secretariat of State explaining that the resistance from the British side was coming from Sir Harry Luke and not from Governor Sir Charles Bonham Carter's side who "*È un militare e un perfetto gentiluomo ma evidentemente dipende dal suo luogotenente ed assistente Sir Harry Luke. Questo è un tipo di giudeo (underlined) autentico. Egli è la causa di tutti i nostri guai costituzionali.*"²⁰⁴

The next day, Archbishop Gonzi again wrote to Cardinal Tardini arguing that Mgr George Caruana, "*il candidato di Sir Harry Luke,*" could not be the right candidate since "*Egli non visse mai a Malta negli anni della sua fanciullezza e quindi non conosce bene le cose nostre e*

¹⁹⁸ Nota dated 19th June 1936, in AA.EE.SS., *Inghilterra IV*, 1930-1944, Pos. 230, fasc. 74, fol. 56.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰⁰ Nota dated 6th April 1936, in AA.EE.SS., *Inghilterra IV*, 1930-1944, Pos. 230, fasc. 74, fol. 57.

²⁰¹ Nota dated 11th June 1936, in AA.EE.SS., *Inghilterra IV*, 1930-1944, Pos. 230, fasc. 74, fol. 65.

²⁰² Nota, Nomina di Mons Gonzi a coadiutore di Malta dated 30th May 1936 in AA.EE.SS., *Inghilterra IV*, 1930-1944, Pos. 230, fasc. 74, fol. 62.

²⁰³ For instance on 12th June 1936 he went twice to Cardinal Giuseppe Pizzardo to discuss with him Archbishop Caruana's succession.

²⁰⁴ Letter from Archbishop Michael Gonzi to Cardinal Domenico Tardini dated 25th May 1936 in AA.EE.SS., *Inghilterra IV*, 1930-1944, Pos. 230, fasc. 74, fol. 60.

la mentalità del nostro popolo."²⁰⁵ Archbishop Gonzi contended that if somebody else got the post besides him, it would appear as "*riprovazione della mia condotta come vescovo nella questione politico-religiosa.*"²⁰⁶ Writing to Cardinal Pizzardo, Secretary of the Congregation for Extraordinary Affairs, Archbishop Gonzi argued that if Mgr George Caruana were to be selected as Malta's archbishop, the latter would be demoted in his rank since he served the Catholic Church as a Nuncio.²⁰⁷ By December 1936, Archbishop Mauro Caruana "*venuto recentemente nella Segreteria di questa Sacra Congregazione ha espresso il desiderio di avere per coadiutore il suddetto Monsignor Gonzi ed ha confermato che l'attuale Governatore inglese di Malta sarebbe ben disposto verso di lui.*"²⁰⁸

A year later, the British suggested Father Seraphin Zarb describing him as one "who had never any connections with Maltese politics... he is a man of great learning and of saintly character."²⁰⁹ The objections for Archbishop Gonzi not only remained unaltered but it was argued that "the institution of the new constitution in Malta has served to add further points to these objections, for the appointment of Mgr Gonzi would be bitterly opposed by the political party holding a majority of the elected members of the legislature and would result in a church questioning becoming a vital issue of the local politics of the island."²¹⁰ It was also suggested that Mgr Gonzi would be transferred "to some position outside the island."²¹¹ But according to Archbishop Caruana, even Governor Bonham Carter was not impressed regarding Fr Zarb describing him as "*niente adatto perché troppo fanciullo.*"²¹²

Tension was building up between the two sides to the point that, at a particular instance, Sir D'Arcy Osborne from the British Legation wrote to Cardinal Tardini in what may be termed as an undiplomatic letter complaining that "*Le scrivo in italiano. Spero che potrà capire. Per quanto concerne l'affermazione di Mgr Caruana che i maltesi sono stufo di vescovi che sono*

²⁰⁵ Letter from Archbishop Michael Gonzi to Cardinal Domenico Tardini dated 26th May 1936 in AA.EE.SS., *Inghilterra IV*, 1930-1944, Pos. 230, fasc. 74, fol. 61.

²⁰⁶ Ibid.

²⁰⁷ Letter from Archbishop Michael Gonzi to Cardinal Giuseppe Pizzardo dated 7th November 1936 in AA.EE.SS., *Inghilterra IV*, 1930-1944, Pos. 230, fasc. 74, fol. 80.

²⁰⁸ Letter from Cardinal Raffaele Rossi to Cardinal Eugenio Pacelli dated 4th December 1936 in AA.EE.SS., *Inghilterra IV*, 1930-1944, Pos. 230, fasc. 74, fol. 84.

²⁰⁹ *Malta Nomina di un Ausiliare: Carte sciolte Padre Serafino Zarb candidato vescovile a Malta*, AA.EE.SS., *Inghilterra IV*, 1930-1944, Pos. 230, fasc. 78, fol. 30.

²¹⁰ Ibid.

²¹¹ Ibid.

²¹² *Malta Nomina di un Ausiliare: Parere e Giudizi di S.E. Mons M. Caruana circa la nomina di un Vescovo Ausiliare di Malta*, AA.EE.SS., *Inghilterra IV*, 1930-1944, Pos. 230, fasc. 78, fol. 100.

religiosi, non è possibile che la verità sia che i Maltese sono stufo del vescovato Caruana? E che egli, volendo opporsi alla candidatura di Zarb, nella speranza di promuovere la candidatura di Gonzi, si serva delle sue proprie debolezze e mancanze come propaganda contro un possibile successore? Forse questo pensiero è indegno – troppo machiavellista, troppo Maltese? Ma la possibilità non è completamente da escludersi.”²¹³

In a meeting held in early March 1940, between the Nuncio William Godfrey and the Minister of the Colonies Malcolm MacDonald, the latter expressed his preference for Fr Zarb and argued that Mgr Gonzi’s nomination “*causerebbe discordia politica e risentimento.*”²¹⁴ Meanwhile, it was decided to adjourn the process till the end of the war with the British showing preference for Zarb and still maintaining “*fortemente*” the opposition to Mgr Gonzi.²¹⁵ In April 1940, Archbishop Caruana proposed Mgr Emanuel Galea for the bishopric office describing him as “*ottimo spirito sacerdotale, molto intelligente, ed assai benvisto dal clero.*”²¹⁶ The Nuncio also drew the attention of the Secretary of State Cardinal Luigi Maglione that the Foreign Office would see the nomination of Archbishop Gonzi as “*un gesto di simpatia per l’elemento Italiano fascista.*”²¹⁷ In January 1941, the mentioned Secretary of State noted that from the candidates examined so far no one except Archbishop Gonzi was “*idoneo a ricoprire l’importante ufficio.*”²¹⁸ The day before, the Nuncio informed him that Governor William Dobbie was in favour of Reverend Zarb²¹⁹ a nomination Archbishop Caruana was not sharing, arguing that Rev. Zarb was a member of the Order of the Preachers which according to him “*ha una grande propensione a creare e fomentare partiti*” and were supportive of Lord Strickland. On Archbishop Gonzi, Archbishop Caruana wrote “*è ben visto dall’attuale governatore.*”²²⁰

²¹³ *Malta Nomina di un Ausiliare: Carte Sciolte (P. Serafino Zarb) Candidato Vescovo a Malta*, AA.EE.SS., *Inghilterra IV*, 1930-1944, Pos. 230, fasc. 78, fol 172.

²¹⁴ *Malta Nomina di un Ausiliare: Appunto di SE Mons Tardini circa la nomina di un Coadiutore a Malta e consegnato anche a S.E. Osborne*, AA.EE.SS., *Inghilterra IV*, 1930-1944, Pos. 230, fasc. 78, fol 150.

²¹⁵ *Malta Nomina di un Ausiliare*, AA.EE.SS., *Inghilterra IV*, 1930-1944, Pos. 230, fasc. 78.

²¹⁶ *Malta Nomina di un Ausiliare: Carte sciolte (appunti, telegramma, lettera per il Cardinale Segretario di Stato, notizie di giornata)*, AA.EE.SS., *Inghilterra IV*, 1930-1944, Pos. 230, fasc. 78, fol 229.

²¹⁷ Letter from Apostolic Delegate Godfrey William to Cardinal of State Maglione dated 10th December 1940 in AA.EE.SS., *Inghilterra IV*, 1930-1944, Pos. 230, fasc. 78, fol 268-295.

²¹⁸ Letter from Cardinal of State Maglione to Apostolic Delegate Godfrey William dated 25th January 1940 in AA.EE.SS., *Inghilterra IV*, 1930-1944, Pos. 230, fasc. 78, fol 268-295.

²¹⁹ Letter from Apostolic Delegate Godfrey William to Cardinal Domenico Tardini dated 24th January 1941 in AA.EE.SS., *Inghilterra IV*, 1930-1944, Pos. 230, fasc. 78, fol 333-338.

²²⁰ Letter from Archbishop Mauro Caruana to Cardinal Luigi Maglioni dated 1st October 1941 in AA.EE.SS., *Inghilterra IV*, 1930-1944, Pos. 230, fasc. 78, fol 339-353.

On 23 October 1943, the Holy See informed Archbishop Gonzi that he had been chosen as bishop coadjutor with rights of succession. Two months later, Mgr Gonzi was conferred with the title of Archbishop. When the diocese of Malta was elevated to a Metropolitan See on 1st January 1944 by Pope Pius XII, Mgr. Gonzi became the first Metropolitan archbishop of Malta.

A development that might have led the British to rehabilitate their perspective about Archbishop Gonzi was the episode of collection of wheat from Gozitan farmers. According to Archbishop Gonzi's narrative, Lord Gort had called a top secret meeting in which it was revealed that the wheat deposit would not last for long. Bishop Gonzi, who at the time was Gozo's bishop, offered his disposition, "being the time of the harvest" to convince Gozitan farmers to sell their wheat. In doing so, Archbishop Gonzi saved Malta from being taken by the Axis but also saved himself since he had won the coloniser's trust. In fact, during a meeting with King George VI, Lord Gort praised Archbishop Gonzi's aid and, as a result of that meeting, the British High Commissioner was instructed to inform immediately the Vatican that "the King is sorry to say that he made a mistake, because he was badly informed. He withdraws the opposition and the veto and wishes to appoint Mgr Gonzi as Archbishop of Malta."²²¹ Archbishop Gonzi highlighted also the role played by Cardinal William Godfrey in convincing the British High Commissioner in Rome that Archbishop Gonzi was never anti-British. In fact Archbishop Gonzi criticised historian Dominic Fenech for leaving out that consideration in his booklet about Mgr Gonzi's rise to Maltese episcopacy.²²²

The Role of the Imperial Tools in a Colony Administration

As was stated earlier, imperial powers engaged in various strategies to keep a colony running. Education, civil service and technological means were crucial imperial tools. All mentioned elements targeted people's identities too.

Along with political power, education was the mechanism through which the coloniser rid himself of the natives' characteristics.²²³ These include language, values, religion and other features that were cherished by the natives themselves. Through education, the coloniser

²²¹ Andrew Vella and George Attard, 'L-Arċisqof Gonzi intervistat mir-Rivista Storja,' *Storja* 78 (Malta, MUHS, 1978), 129.

²²² *Ibid.*, 127.

²²³ Gail P. Kelly and Philip G. Altbach, 'Introduction: the Four Faces of Colonialism,' *Education and the Colonial Experience* (New Brunswick, New York, 1984), 1-5.

secured mental control.²²⁴ Viswanathan argued that “cultural assimilation was the most effective form of political action, and that cultural domination worked by consent and often preceded conquest by force.”²²⁵ In New Zealand, from 1878 to the 1930s, the British Empire was presented in “textbooks primarily as an exemplar of racial superiority.”²²⁶

The Empire Day celebrations in schools were a yearly important event celebrated all over the empire. Originally it was conceived as “an opportunity to nurture imperial mentalities and collective identity among young citizens of the empire.”²²⁷ According to Jim English, such festivities were able to “traverse class lines and establish an imperial consciousness in the minds of working-class children” that performed a “socialising role that upheld a belief in racial superiority and righteousness of the British Empire.”²²⁸

Malta was not an exception and Empire Day was celebrated in local schools also. The *Ġabra ta' Ward*, a series of seven readers, which indirectly encouraged values inspired by the Catholic religion, intended for primary schools edited by E.B. Vella, had a specific story focusing on loyalty to the Royal Family.²²⁹ Malta's national anthem, which originally was intended for school children, bore the colonial imprint referring to the *sid* (owner) and *ħakkiem* (ruler) vis-à-vis *ħaddiem* (worker).²³⁰ Teaching of history at the secondary level was limited to those accounts which emphasised the empire's grandeur. A.V. Laferla's protagonists in *British Malta* were not the Maltese but the Governors. Giorgio Mitrovich's effort to see political advancement in colonial Malta was limited to a footnote.²³¹ Laferla's series ended with Sir Filippo Sceberras, a prominent front-runner of the Maltese, kneeling “at the foot of the young Sailor Prince.”²³²

²²⁴ Royce M. Victor, ‘Colonial Education and Class Formation in the Early Judaism: A Postcolonial Reading,’ *Journal of Postcolonial Theory and Theology, Library of Second Temple Studies*, (2010), 35.

²²⁵ Gauri Viswanathan, ‘Currying Favor: The Politics of British Educational and Cultural Policy in India 1813-1854,’ *Social Text*, 19/20, (1988), 85.

²²⁶ Hugh Morrison, “‘Little Vessels’ or ‘Little Soldiers:’ New Zealand Protestant Children, Foreign Missions, Religious Pedagogy and Empire, c.1880s–1930s,” *Paedagogica Historica*, 47, (3), (2011), 331.

²²⁷ Saheed Aderinto, ‘Empire Day in Africa: Patriotic Colonial Childhood, Imperial Spectacle and Nationalism in Nigeria, 1905-60,’ *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, (2018), 3.

²²⁸ Jim English, ‘Empire Day in Britain, 1904-1958,’ *Historical Journal* 49, (1), (2006), 248, 275.

²²⁹ E.B. Vella, *Ġabra ta' Ward: It-Tieni Ktieb* (London, Oxford University Press, edition 1966), 7.

²³⁰ Oliver Friggieri, “L-Istorja tal-Innu Malti: Kif sar u xi Jfisser” (Malta, Klabb Kotba Maltin, 2014), 31.

²³¹ A.V. Laferla, *British Malta, Vol. 2* (Malta, A.C. Aquilina & Co., edition 1947), 288.

²³² Henry Frendo, “Malta in 1921,” Charles J. Farrugia, (ed.), *Guardians of Memory: Essays in Remembrance of Hella Jean Bartolo Winston* (Malta, National Archives of Malta, 2008), 293.

At a university level, in the nineteen-thirties, students were lectured in history by Owen J. Fogarty, a Northern Irish, whose area of expertise was literature. Fogarty was “more English than the Queen... and (he) “clearly enjoyed the backing of the colonial regime.”²³³ Dr Giovanni Bonello was one of Fogarty’s alumni and, according to him, the Professor “had set his history students only one solitary textbook, revealingly called: *Ideas and Ideals of the British Empire*, authored by Sir Ernest Barker, a sad 1941 booklet written to justify the rape by one perfect nation of others less perfect.”²³⁴

Archbishop Gonzi participated regularly in the Empire Day celebrations. It is interesting to note that in 1951, the Governor shifted the Empire Day from 24 to 25 May since on the former day the Catholic Church was to celebrate the Feast of Corpus Christi which was a holy day of obligation.²³⁵ Once the relations between the Church and the Labour Party inevitably broke down in the late fifties, Prime Minister Mintoff attacked that friendship. The 1958 Empire Celebrations followed the strikes and the riots. Archbishop Gonzi’s decision to take part in the Empire Day Celebrations while one hundred Labour supporters were imprisoned was the crux of Mr Mintoff’s attacks. Archbishop Gonzi was only interested in education with Catholic ethos and, as stated earlier, he encouraged respect to the imperial authorities.

The civil service in Malta was born under the Knights of St. John even if the islanders were generally excluded from this sector.²³⁶ By time, the British launched some avenues for the Maltese educated middle class in the public service. A Civil Service post was considered a blessing and an asset. It was a path to “silence” some political rebels.

Within the imperial setup, the police played a significant part in the construction of the colonial social order. They were among the first institutions established by the colonial state. “Policing lay very much at the centre of ideologies of imperial rule that informed social construction as well as political domination.”²³⁷ Malta’s Criminal Code stipulated that no priests could be taken

²³³ Henry Frendo, *Censu Tabone: The Man and His Century*, *op. cit.*, 45.

²³⁴ Giovanni Bonello, ‘Malta and Me: Gozo, Maltese Politics and British Settlers,’ *TimesofMalta.com*, 21st September 2014, Retrieved 25th June 2017, <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20140921/life-features/Malta-and-Me-Gozo-Maltese-politics-and-British-settlers.536812>.

²³⁵ NAM, OPM 280/1951.

²³⁶ Godfrey A. Pirotta, *The Maltese Public Service, 1800-1940: The Administrative Politics of a Micro-State* (Malta, Mireva Publications, 1996), 28.

²³⁷ David M. Anderson and David Killingray, “Consent, Coercion and Colonial Control,” in David M. Anderson and David Killingray, (eds.), *Policing the Empire: Government, Authority and Control, 1830-1940* (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2017), 9.

to court without the archbishop's permission. For instance in 1958, the local police asked for permission to take legal action against Canon Joseph Burlò of Cospicua who had failed to carry out repairs at 139/1, Merchants Street, Valletta after having been duly warned by the police to do so.²³⁸ The same happened in the case of Fr Victor Grech Dimech who had contravened parking regulations, and of Fr Prof Tabone who had been involved in a collision with a bus.²³⁹ One other example was that of Fr Joseph Ellul for having created a disturbance and for having attempted to strike Mary Vella.²⁴⁰

During the April 1958 riots, Prime Minister Mintoff directed Police Commissioner Vivian de Gray to withdraw his men from Valletta after they had baton-charged demonstrators. But de Gray answered that he only served the Crown.²⁴¹ Mintoff called for de Gray's resignation but the latter refused to leave. Mintoff argued that "until 1958... de Gray was one of the most loyal collaborators of the Maltese Government. When the Anglo-Maltese relations took a turn for the worse, he chose to side with Britain and stabbed his own government in the back. He was publicly heard to say that Labour ministers made a mistake because the enemy was not Britain but the Catholic Church."²⁴² India provided a different context since, by the late forties, "Indian soldiers and policemen openly expressed their support for the nationalist leaders, heedless of the reaction of their British officers. Mutinies broke out in the Air Force and in the British Indian Navy."²⁴³ In 1967, Labour deputy leader Anton Buttigieg accused Police Commissioner de Gray of being a spy.²⁴⁴ Incidentally, there was no known reaction from Archbishop Gonzi regarding the confrontation between Mintoff and de Gray. In March 1961, Archbishop Gonzi drew the British authorities' attention to the fact that they had promised an increase in police wages and that those promises had not been kept.²⁴⁵

According to Eddie Attard, the relationship between Police Commissioner de Gray and Archbishop Gonzi was excellent. The archbishop used to celebrate Holy Mass at the Police Headquarters every year on the occasion of the Feast of the Cross which fell on 14

²³⁸ AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza 1958*, Vol. LII.

²³⁹ Ibid.

²⁴⁰ Ibid.

²⁴¹ Edward Attard, *Mintoff u de Gray: Il-Ġrajjet ta' April 1958 u dak li ġara Wara* (Malta, Book Distributors Limited, 2008), 61.

²⁴² Dominic Mintoff, *How Britain Rules Malta* (Malta, Union Press, 1960), 11.

²⁴³ Shashi Tharoor, *Inglorious Empire: What the British did to India* (London, Scribe, 2017), 108.

²⁴⁴ Stephen Crauss, *Anton Buttigieg: Bijografija, 1912-1983* (MA, University of Malta, 1998), 95.

²⁴⁵ Letter from Archbishop Michael Gonzi to Governor Guy Grantham dated 22nd March 1961, AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza Gonzi 1961*, Vol. LV.

September.²⁴⁶ Besides, members of the police force would be sent regularly to the *Ġunta tal-Għaqdiet Kattoliċi* rallies to maintain order and to protect speakers.²⁴⁷ Also, during the politico-religious struggle, de Gray collected money from the Corps which was then donated to the Church. The sum collected exceeded £1,200.²⁴⁸

But there was another episode regarding Police Commissioner de Gray that tends to be forgotten. The conspiracy trials held in 1946-47 showed unmistakably de Gray's affiliations. Together with two other police officials, after the Second World War, Police Commissioner de Gray went to Rome and arrested nationals who had been in Italy during the war. They were dragged to Malta for trial and accused of disloyalty to the British king. In the case of eleven of them, the Maltese prosecution had asked for death by hanging as had happened in the case of Carmelo Borg Pisani.²⁴⁹

Among the arrested persons was Mr Giuseppe Gonzi, Archbishop Gonzi's nephew, who was in Rome on behalf of the *Banco di Roma*, which had a branch in Valletta before the Second World War.²⁵⁰ Mr Giuseppe Gonzi informed the Maltese courts that he had settled one year before in Rome where he worked as a bank employee.²⁵¹ Mr Gonzi denied being a member of *Comitato d'Azione Maltese*. Giuseppe Gonzi blamed Dr Carlo Mallia for convincing him to give up his British passport.²⁵² Dr Mallia had promised him that giving up his passport would exonerate him from being conducted to a concentration camp. As it happened, Giuseppe Gonzi was taken up as a soldier with the Italian army.²⁵³ Mr Gonzi had fetched assistance from the Vatican to avoid being taken as soldier but was instructed by Vatican officials to obey and join the army.²⁵⁴ It is not known whether Archbishop Gonzi had exerted any pressure in favour of his nephew. For the record, it is to be said that Giuseppe Gonzi was unanimously found not guilty of treason. According to Albert Ganado, who was reporting the court cases for *Il-Berqa*, the most difficult case was that of Ivo Leone Ganado.²⁵⁵ During his university studies, Mr

²⁴⁶ Edward Attard, *Mintoff u de Gray, op.cit.*, 120.

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 120.

²⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 120.

²⁴⁹ Laurence Mizzi, *Il-Każ Borg Pisani: Sittin Sena Wara* (Malta, Publishers Enterprises Group, 2002), 72.

²⁵⁰ Laurence Mizzi, *Mixlija b'Kongura u Tradiment* (Malta, Publishers Enterprises Group, 1996), 192.

²⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 192.

²⁵² *Ibid.*, 193.

²⁵³ *Ibid.*, 193.

²⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 193.

²⁵⁵ Taped interview Dr Albert Ganado, Valletta Private Residence, 29th October 2018, Sergio Grech Private Collection.

Leone Ganado resisted the suppression of the Italian language from the mentioned institution.²⁵⁶

Broadcasting was an efficient tool in an imperial organisation. As Watson argued, radio “offered not only a unique outreach opportunity but a powerful propaganda tool that could promote imperial ideals, particularly among the commonwealth’s white populations.”²⁵⁷ By 1932 – ten years after its institution – the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) presented a service intended for Empire consumption, “directed at keeping expatriates in touch with the homeland by replaying material developed for the domestic audience.”²⁵⁸ The mentioned service was also transmitted in Malta.²⁵⁹ In fact, the naval authorities were broadcasting BBC news and also translating the texts of the mentioned broadcasts into the vernacular.²⁶⁰ Nancy and Peter Calamatta’s father, who was “as imperial as the king” – in fact to many he sounded more British than the Brits themselves – insisted that his sons should listen to the BBC every single morning. “Anything else was not just rubbish but almost morally wrong. The British way was the right way in all we breathed and thought.”²⁶¹

The rise of Fascism in nearby Italy, the easy availability of Italian radio service reaching Malta, and the vibrant Italian culture in Malta led to the opening of Rediffusion in 1935. Over the years, programmes in Maltese came to be introduced, and Rediffusion experienced a dramatic increase in its subscribers. Soon the Malta Church realised that broadcasting indeed complimented its aims and mission. Between 1964 and 1970, an average of 4.77% of the weekly programming schedule was dedicated to religious material.²⁶² Archbishop Gonzi exerted pressure to see that the programming schedule included religious productions. For instance, Archbishop Gonzi had asked Mr Frans Said, the producer of *Il-Magazine għat-Tfal*, a very popular radio programme for children, to include a religious slot in his radio show.²⁶³ Even in this area, the British were attentive not to create foes. From time to time, they would

²⁵⁶ George Cassar, *Student Representation at the University of Malta*, *op. cit.*, 142

²⁵⁷ Joe Watson, ‘How the British Broadcasting Corporation Shaped an Empire,’ Retrieved 15th March 2017, <https://www.h-net.org/reviews/showpdf.php?id=38757>.

²⁵⁸ Daniel Ryan Morse, ‘Only Connecting? E.M. Forster, Empire Broadcasting and the Ethics of Distance,’ *Journal of Modern Literature*, 34, (2011), 90.

²⁵⁹ Toni Sant, *Remembering Rediffusion in Malta: A History without Future?* (Malta, Midsea Books, 2016), 38.

²⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 44 and 46.

²⁶¹ Peter Calamatta, *Me and My Mentors* (Malta, The Author, 2017), 11.

²⁶² Joseph Borg, *Religion and the Mass Media in Malta* (MSTH, University of Malta, 1977), 187. Different Maltese Catholic movements had weekly, fortnightly or monthly broadcasts.

²⁶³ Taped interview Frans H. Said, Private Residence St Paul’s Bay, 17th September 2015, Sergio Grech Private Collection.

even take the advice of Archbishop Gonzi regarding material imported from Britain. Once the Broadcasting Authority was founded in 1961, the Archbishop obtained the right to nominate a member on the Authority's Board.²⁶⁴

“Mintoff's refusal to postpone the (Integration) referendum provoked Gonzi into making a broadcast on the eve of the vote in which he not only claimed that the Maltese premier and his Cabinet had declared “war” on the Church, but also advised the populace not to vote for integration.”²⁶⁵ The guarantees in writing that the Church was expecting never arrived, so Archbishop Gonzi appealed for a no vote. Following the 28 April 1958 riots, during which violence was systematically employed, Archbishop Gonzi used broadcasting to condemn the event which had originally been organised by the GWU but which ended up being hijacked by Labour. One should add that originally the Malta Church had refrained to comment about the merits of the strike. During the broadcast, Archbishop Gonzi insisted that rights were achieved through justice and treaties and not through violence.²⁶⁶ Archbishop Gonzi's act of condemning violence had also the approval of Lennox Boyd, Secretary of State for the Colonies, who described it as “eloquent and moving.”²⁶⁷ Meanwhile, the Papal encyclical *Miranda Prorsus* (1957) spoke about the “positive potential use of these media.”²⁶⁸

Archbishop Gonzi described the April 1958 riots to Nuncio O'Hara as follows: “Today we have had riots organised by the Labour Party and the General Workers' Union. Mr Mintoff was going by car from place to place directing the strike. He might have stopped the riots, if he wanted. And the UK government put trust in the man. Poor Malta.”²⁶⁹ In the same letter, the Archbishop added that Cardinal Tardini, the Vatican's Secretary of State, had advised him to conclude peace, at least an apparent one.²⁷⁰

²⁶⁴ *The Sunday Times of Malta*, 28th April, 1963, 8.

²⁶⁵ Simon C. Smith, “Priests and Politicians: Archbishop Michael Gonzi, Dom Mintoff and the End of Empire in Malta,” *Journal of Mediterranean Studies*, 23, (2014), 116.

²⁶⁶ Alfred Sant, *28 ta' April 1958: Il-Hobż u l-Helsien* (Malta, Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti, 1988), 406.

²⁶⁷ CO 926/776, *Attitude of Roman Catholic Church to Integration in Malta*, The National Archives, Kew.

²⁶⁸ Carl-Mario Sultana, *Radio at the Service of the Church* (S.TH.L., University of Malta, 2008), 45.

²⁶⁹ Letter from Archbishop Michael Gonzi to Nuncio Gerald O'Hara dated 28th April 1958 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza 1958, Vol. LII*.

²⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

Mr Mintoff had revealed that Labour had demanded a broadcasting licence so that it could “run its own wireless broadcasting station.”²⁷¹ But the application had been refused.²⁷² According to Mintoff, broadcasting in Malta had “degenerated into a naked instrument for partisan politics under the guise of religious ceremonies... hybrid supporters of the colonial *status quo* masquerading as academic debaters...”²⁷³ A few weeks before the Independence referendum, Labour, through Lorry Sant, one of its deputies and a dockyard workers’ leader, broadcast through *Cairo Radio* thanks to Gamal Abdel Nasser, Egypt’s President, who in the early fifties overthrew the Egyptian monarchy.²⁷⁴ Years later, when in government in 1979, Prime Minister Mintoff refused an application by the Nationalist Party to set up a private radio station referring to the application as “a joke.”²⁷⁵

The chapter about the hacking down of Rediffusion poles by the Labour government in 1956 proved the importance that the broadcasting medium had for Mr Mintoff. The Labour government had clashed with the British company over an announcement by British authorities by virtue of which fishermen residing in Marsaxlokk and St. Paul’s Bay were urged to keep the bays clear for six consecutive days since flying boats were to land during that period.²⁷⁶

It emerged that in June 1959 the crown colony government in Malta had consulted Archbishop Gonzi about the possibility of opening a television station in Malta. Archbishop Gonzi had argued that the station should “as a social service be placed on par with education and other public services... the Church in the past had been denied the right to use Rediffusion to counteract misinterpretations and lies made by some Malta Labour Party politicians over the Rediffusion system, and I was also obstructed by the Prime Minister of the time when I wanted to use Rediffusion to make a public statement and, had it not been for the personal intervention of Laycock, I would have been prevented from making my opinion and giving my answer to misinterpretations known to the clergy and to the faithful.”²⁷⁷

²⁷¹ Dominic Mintoff, *op. cit.*, 13.

²⁷² *Ibid.*

²⁷³ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁴ Joseph M. Pirota, *Fortress Colony, The Final Act 1945-1964, Vol IV 1961-1964* (Malta, Midsea Books, 2018), 1008.

²⁷⁵ Francis Zammit Dimech, *The Untruth Game: Broadcasting under Labour* (Malta, Progress Press, 1986), 24.

²⁷⁶ Joseph M. Pirota, *Fortress Colony, Vol. 2, op.cit.*, 275.

²⁷⁷ Letter from Archbishop Michael Gonzi to Governor Guy Grantham dated 11th June 1959 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza 1959, Vol. LIII.*

Dependence and Decolonisation

Four months after the acquisition of Malta's Independence in 1964, Commissioner Edward Wakefield noted that "the change from dependence to independence appears to have been one of form rather than of substance. Before independence, the Maltese were managing – or mismanaging – their own internal affairs. They are still doing so. Before independence, their economy was sustained by British Services' expenditure on the island... It is still being sustained by the same means... The only apparent differences are that Malta's status at international assemblies is higher than it was... the Maltese flag flies in Malta in place of the Union Jack, and the Hymn of Malta has taken the place of *God Save The Queen*."²⁷⁸

In a nutshell, Commissioner Wakefield was referring to the issue of newly decolonised and sovereign states which failed to unlock their dependence. Researchers in the study area not only insisted on political decolonisation but also discussed the concept of decolonisation of the mind. Such a stage was a priority. At that juncture, the ex-colonised individual unchained what Memmi described as the "implacable dependence" resulting from the colonial relationship.²⁷⁹ That was hardly an easy phase. In fact, Fanon contended that only violence was the prerequisite for successful decolonisation.²⁸⁰ This position was diametrically opposed to Archbishop Gonzi's views who loathed violence.

There were four stages in Malta's path to decolonisation, these being Independence (1964), discussed in the third chapter, the revision of the Independence financial agreement and the defence treaty (1972), the move from a constitutional monarchy to a republic (1974) and the closure of the British base in Malta (1979). During the Independence talks, it became evident that to achieve decolonisation, Malta required financial and defence assistance. Britain had agreed to give Malta £50 million in loans and grants over ten years.²⁸¹ In 1971, Mr Mintoff was returned to power and wanted those agreements revised. One of the first decisions taken by the new Labour government was to allocate the governorship role to a Maltese citizen. In fact, Archbishop Gonzi commented that he was one of the first to learn that Governor Maurice

²⁷⁸ S.C. Smith, *British Documents on the End of Empire Project*, *op.cit.*, 354.

²⁷⁹ Albert Memmi, *The Coloniser and the Colonised*, Retrieved 5th October 2017, in <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/589fa7aaa5790a7c3fba1f34/t/5aedff898a922d5e605957ff/1525546890470/Albert+MemmiThe+Colonizer+and+the+Colonized.pdf>.

²⁸⁰ Franz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, Retrieved 5th October 2017, in <http://abahlali.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/04/Frantz-Fanon-The-Wretched-of-the-Earth-1965.pdf>.

²⁸¹ Christine Coleiro, *A Propitious Partner* (Malta, Publishers Enterprises Group, 1997), *op. cit.*, 22.

Dorman was to be expelled from Malta.²⁸² Sir Anthony Mamo, Malta's Chief Justice between 1957 and 1971, was Dorman's successor. Meanwhile, Archbishop Gonzi's fear and mistrust of Mr Mintoff persisted. For instance, during his involvement in the 1972 talks, Archbishop Gonzi confided with Alec Douglas-Home, Foreign and Commonwealth Office Secretary, that he still regretted Independence "rueing the day when Malta had been granted Independence."²⁸³

Negotiations regarding the mentioned agreements lasted from July 1971 to March 1972. According to Coleiro, at that stage, Mr Mintoff "embarked on a series of bargaining tactics which shocked the Maltese people and utterly baffled Britain and her NATO partners."²⁸⁴ Those discussions were grim to the point that Mintoff imposed an ultimatum insisting that the British counterpart either paid (the sum to be paid was fixed by Prime Minister Mintoff himself) or would be withdrawn from Malta by 15 January 1972. The withdrawal period as stipulated by Mintoff was seen by the British as impossible considering that "a smaller withdrawal operation from Libya had taken four months."²⁸⁵

Five days before the ultimatum elapsed, D.J.C. Crawley from the British Legation to the Holy See sent to Cardinal Giovanni Benelli, the Vatican's Deputy Secretary of State, an in-depth analysis of the situation and a plea to Pope Paul VI to persuade the Maltese side that it was in everybody's interest "that withdrawal should take place peacefully."²⁸⁶ British diplomats were afraid that Mintoff was "contemplating some sort of physical harassment thereafter."²⁸⁷ The British warned that "we have no wish to leave a legacy of bitterness. But for obvious reasons, if physical harassment were attempted against us, a most serious situation would arise. We would have no alternative but to take whichever defensive measures were necessary to deal with it so that the withdrawal would continue."²⁸⁸

²⁸² Taped interview Archbishop Michael Gonzi, 30th December 1977, Michael Galea Private Collection.

²⁸³ FCO 9/1534, Telegramme by Douglas-Home dated 11th January 1972, in *Intervention of Archbishop Gonzi in Malta Withdrawal Negotiations*, The National Archives of the United Kingdom.

²⁸⁴ Christine Coleiro, *A Propitious Partner* (Malta, Publishers Enterprises Group, 1997). *op. cit.*, 33.

²⁸⁵ FCO 9/1534, Correspondence from Robert Armstrong to J.A.N. Graham dated 11th January 1972, *op.cit.*

²⁸⁶ Telegramme by D.J.C. Crawley dated 10th January 1972 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza 1972, Vol LXVI*. FCO 9/1536, Telegramme No 12, 7th January 1972, *op.cit.*

²⁸⁷ Telegramme by D.J.C. Crawley dated 10th January 1972 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza 1972, Vol LXVI*.

²⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

Lawyer Herbert Ganado claimed that he had encouraged Archbishop Gonzi to travel to London and discuss the matter with British Prime Minister Edward Heath.²⁸⁹ Archbishop Gonzi intervened in the talks with Mintoff's permission and the Pope's consent. That was a daring step considering that Archbishop Gonzi went to London for talks at the age of 82. Evidence proved that the Vatican was caught unprepared when Archbishop Gonzi had decided to fly to Rome to meet Pope Paul VI to seek his permission for the mission he intended to undertake.²⁹⁰ Vatican officials knew only about the Maltese archbishop's intention when the aeroplane landed at Rome's airport.²⁹¹ Cardinal Benelli had also confirmed to Mr Crawley that the Vatican was not aware of Archbishop Gonzi's visit and that he personally was very irritated that he came to know about it when Archbishop Gonzi had already arrived in Rome.²⁹²

Documentation preserved at the National Archives of the United Kingdom and released in March 2013 suggests that not even the British authorities in Malta were informed that Archbishop Gonzi was prepared to be a mediator in the issues between Mr Mintoff and the British government. The same source argued that they learnt of Archbishop Gonzi's intentions from the press in Malta describing them as "speculation."²⁹³ The British embassy in Rome confirmed that Archbishop Gonzi did arrive in Rome and that he had met with Cardinal Benelli and Cardinal Villot and was given an appointment with the Pope.²⁹⁴ Archbishop Gonzi met Mr Crawley at the British embassy in Rome on 7 January 1972 explaining that his role was not of a negotiator and added "that he, however, will not go to London unless he can be assured that the Prime Minister... will receive him."²⁹⁵ Mr Crawley suggested that an audience with Prime Minister Heath should be fixed maintaining that Archbishop "Gonzi had no specific offers nor proposals to make and he admits that he is not authorised to negotiate. It would be a matter of listening patiently and sympathetically to a very old and troubled man."²⁹⁶ Mr Crawley was afraid that refusing such a meeting would turn the press against them considering the fact that the Pope "has already seen him at short notice."²⁹⁷

²⁸⁹ Taped interview Dr Herbert Ganado, no date, Michael Galea Private Collection.

²⁹⁰ Steve Mallia, 'Vatican assumed that Calls were tapped,' *TimesofMalta.com*, 10th February 2005, Retrieved on 8th December 2015, in <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20050210/local/vatican-assumed-calls-to-malta-were-tapped.99565>.

²⁹¹ Ibid.

²⁹² *FCO 9/1534*, Telegramme by Crawley dated 9th January 1972, *op.cit.*

²⁹³ *FCO 9/1534*, Telegramme by Watson dated 6th January 1972, *op.cit.*

²⁹⁴ *FCO 9/1534*, Telegramme by Hancock dated 7th January 1972, *op.cit.*

²⁹⁵ *FCO 9/1534*, Telegramme by Watson dated 8th January 1972, *op.cit.*

²⁹⁶ *FCO 9/1534*, Telegramme by Crawley dated 8th January 1972, *op.cit.*

²⁹⁷ Ibid.

In reply to Mr Crawley, Mr Douglas-Home, the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary, added that all necessary arrangements for the meeting will be done and “it might be possible for the Archbishop to see Lord Carrington as well.”²⁹⁸ It also transpired from a meeting between Mr Crawley and Cardinal Benelli that in regards to Archbishop Gonzi, the Vatican “had only been sympathetic and non-committal.”²⁹⁹ Archbishop Gonzi “had merely expressed the hope that the Pope would do everything he could to intercede with the British and the Americans about the evacuation of Defence Forces by the former...”³⁰⁰ Cardinal Benelli denied that Archbishop Gonzi had asked the Vatican to aid Malta financially.³⁰¹ But Archbishop Gonzi believed that “the Americans will produce the extra amount which Mintoff is requesting and that both the Maltese and the US governments will let the British stay on.”³⁰²

Archbishop Gonzi’s meeting with Prime Minister Heath lasted three hours. It was minuted that Archbishop Gonzi told Mr Heath that he was there not “as a representative of Mintoff or to negotiate on his behalf. But the people of Malta looked to him for help and comfort.”³⁰³ According to Archbishop Gonzi, Britain’s offer was £10 million but what changed the bid was Archbishop Gonzi’s remark that that sum – Mintoff wanted £18 million – would lead the Russians to control the Mediterranean.³⁰⁴ Archbishop Gonzi was reported as telling Prime Minister Heath that Mr Mintoff “is ruining the country and Malta will be taken over by the Soviet Union if we (the British) leave possibly after a shortish Libyan interregnum.”³⁰⁵

That remark, implying Russian infiltration, according to Archbishop Gonzi, led Prime Minister Heath to add another £4 million.³⁰⁶ But according to the meeting’s minutes, it was registered that “the British government did not accept that Soviet access to Malta would turn the Mediterranean into a Russian sea.”³⁰⁷ During the meeting, Prime Minister Heath noted that

²⁹⁸ *FCO 9/1534*, Telegramme by Douglas-Home dated 8th January 1972, *op.cit.*

²⁹⁹ *FCO 9/1534*, Telegramme by Crawley dated 9th January 1972, *op.cit.*

³⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

³⁰¹ *Ibid.*

³⁰² *Ibid.*

³⁰³ *FCO 9/1534*, Document entitled “For the Record Malta” dated 11th January 1972, *op.cit.*

³⁰⁴ Michael Galea and Emmanuel S. Tonna, *L-Arcisqof Gonzi, Vol. 3, op.cit.*, 98.

³⁰⁵ *FCO 9/1534*, Telegramme by Douglas-Home dated 11th January 1972, in *FCO 9/1534, op.cit.*

³⁰⁶ Michael Galea and Emmanuel S. Tonna, *L-Arcisqof Gonzi, Vol. 3, op.cit.*, 98.

³⁰⁷ *FCO 9/1534*, Document entitled “For the Record Malta” dated 11th January 1972 in *FCO 9/1534, op.cit.*

Mintoff was behaving as if “Malta were still a colony and had to fight the British government as if it were a colonial power.”³⁰⁸

What Archbishop Gonzi never said was that during that meeting he had attempted to strike a deal with Prime Minister Heath behind Mintoff’s back. Archbishop Gonzi told Prime Minister Heath that he was in a position to convince the Maltese people to accept a £15 million deal instead of £18 million. It is interesting to note that no reference was made to Archbishop Gonzi’s discussions with Heath in Lord Carrington’s autobiography.³⁰⁹ This may be owing to the fact that for the British side the meeting was “unsuccessful” and yielded no results.³¹⁰ But after this meeting, Archbishop Gonzi tried to get a second meeting with Prime Minister Heath but the offer was gently refused.³¹¹

Archbishop Gonzi corresponded at least three times with Cardinal Giovanni Benelli about Prime Minister Dom Mintoff’s negotiations. *Time*, the American news magazine based in New York, published for the first time in 1923, published a story in 1969 regarding Cardinal Benelli and Archbishop Gonzi. Its correspondent had claimed that “not knowing that the Pope had asked Archbishop Michael Gonzi of Malta, then 82, to stay on in office, Benelli sent word asking the prelate to vacate his See within two weeks. Gonzi stormed to Rome. “You have been a bishop two years,” he said indignantly when Benelli finally received him. “I have been a bishop for forty-four years, and you want to throw me out in two weeks!”³¹²

Corresponding with Cardinal Benelli on 25 January 1972, Archbishop Gonzi reported that the situation was not as desperate as it seemed. Archbishop Gonzi was hoping that “*con buona volontà da tutte le parti e un sacrificio finanziario da parte del Governo Britannico, dell’America e di altre nazioni della NATO, si spera di poterla risolvere e risparmiare a Malta un disastro economico.*”³¹³ According to Archbishop Gonzi, Prime Minister Mintoff was ready

³⁰⁸ S.C. Smith, “Conflict and Co-operation,” *Journal of Maltese Studies*, 17, (1), (2007), 130.

³⁰⁹ Lord Carrington, *Reflect on Things Past* (Glasgow, William Collins, 1988), 242-246.

³¹⁰ *FCO 9/1534*, Telegramme by Douglas Home dated 14th January 1972, *op.cit.*

³¹¹ *FCO 9/1534*, Telegramme by Watson dated 17th January 1972, *op.cit.*

³¹² ‘The Pope’s Powerful No. 2,’ *Time*, 14th March 1969, Retrieved 4th July 2017, <https://web.archive.org/web/20080605062707/http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,839846-1,00.html>.

³¹³ Letter from Archbishop Michael Gonzi to Cardinal Giovanni Benelli dated 25th July 1971 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza 1972, Vol LXVI*.

to accept £14 million instead of £18 million. The Maltese archbishop asked Cardinal Benelli to verify a possible Papal intervention in the matter.³¹⁴

Three weeks later, Archbishop Gonzi informed Cardinal Benelli that Malta was experiencing a difficult and dangerous situation.³¹⁵ A financial disaster was leaving its mark on the country. Commerce was suspended, hotels were empty (“*deserti*”) and the factories started to pension off the workers.³¹⁶ Archbishop Gonzi noted that Prime Minister Mintoff was trying to get an improved deal (“*condizioni più favorevoli*”) and he was also pressurising different governments in order to get better conditions.³¹⁷

A month later, Archbishop Gonzi told Cardinal Benelli that Mr Mintoff was ready to accept a sum of fourteen million Maltese liri annually for the following seven years and that he wanted that amount specifically in Maltese currency.³¹⁸ Archbishop Gonzi also remarked that Prime Minister Dom Mintoff “*insiste sulla speranza che il Vaticano non mancherà di dare il suo valido appoggio – confidenzialmente – alle aspirazioni di lui. Si potrà fare qualche passo presso le autorità americane?*”³¹⁹ By March 1972, a new agreement replacing the 1964 financial packet was signed.

The movement from constitutional monarchy to a republic was another step in the decolonisation process. Once the Financial Agreement with Great Britain was revised, Mintoff moved on to amend Borg Olivier’s Independence Constitution and enact laws that ultimately loosened the Church’s grip on society. The main bones of contention were the role that the Church played in influencing electoral results, and the citizens’ right to refuse religious education. As Edgar Mizzi noted, Mintoff could not deny the Church the right to “teach which principles are right and which are wrong” since the parties had already agreed on that principle

³¹⁴ Ibid. Between 1971 and 1972, Mintoff and Paul VI met twice. According to Fr Dijonisju Mintoff, brother of Dom Mintoff, the Pope asked the Maltese premier to intercede, on his behalf, with the Romanian President Nicolae Ceauşescu to free an arrested bishop. On another occasion, the Pope wished to find a channel from which to air the rosary in Chinese to reach Catholics in China. Mintoff suggested the use of the *Deutsche Velle Radio* that meanwhile had commenced broadcasting from Malta. See Robert Aloisio, ‘Papa San Pawlu VI u Malta,’ *It-Torċa*, 28th October 2018, 33.

³¹⁵ Letter from Archbishop Michael Gonzi to Cardinal Giovanni Benelli dated 16th February 1972 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza 1972, Vol LXVI*.

³¹⁶ Ibid.

³¹⁷ Ibid.

³¹⁸ Letter from Archbishop Michael Gonzi to Cardinal Giovanni Benelli dated 18th March 1972 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza 1972, Vol LXVI*.

³¹⁹ Ibid.

in 1969.³²⁰ A change in the Constitution envisaged the removal of a sub-clause which concerned the Church's right to manage its own affairs. Sub-section 57 (2) prohibited corrupt practices during elections. On such matters, the government was dealing directly with the Vatican.³²¹ As expected, these amendments led to some ineffective and sporadic protests but, as we shall see in the next chapter, by this time Malta had undergone rapid changes in its value system, and a *laissez-faire* policy was in the air. As a result of the Second Vatican Council, the Malta Church underwent reforms and by that period the Catholic Church had redefined its role in society and its relationship with the world of politics. It seemed that on the day when the Republic's official ceremony was held, Archbishop Gonzi was irked that notwithstanding his status he was not given a seat in the front row.

Two years after the Republic was established, Archbishop Gonzi relinquished his bishopric seat ending his more than fifty years episcopate and he was given the title of Archbishop Emeritus. In 1979, the contract for the British military use of Malta expired and the base was closed down. At that stage, the challenge of living without economic ties – with the mother colony – became more pressing and demanding for Malta. The sixties had witnessed bouts of emigration but also a boom in the tourism and the building sectors. In the seventies, new local ventures were introduced, but the economy rested on government interventionism. Bulk buying became the official policy. The dependency on foreign investment, which had been evident in the sixties, continued in the seventies, and the government did its best to diversify the sources of foreign investment.

Conclusion

As this chapter has shown, Archbishop Gonzi witnessed the decolonisation process of Malta. After the Second World War, the colonies which formed the British Empire including Malta aspired for independence even if Malta, at first, had explored also the possibility of Integration believing that, in doing so, it would reach equivalence with the British. The Independence process was far from easy and some new states turned their back on colonialism and slipped into a military dictatorship. The position taken by Archbishop Gonzi with regard to

³²⁰ Edgar Mizzi, *Malta in the Making, op.cit.*, 162.

³²¹ *Ibid.*

Independence showed ambiguity especially when one considers his stance in the early stages of the process. His attitude changed as the months went by, but this ambiguity can be explained and appreciated. Archbishop Gonzi knew what the situation of the Church in Malta under British rule had been, but he was not at all confident that it would remain the same under a Maltese government with socialist inclinations and a hostile sentiment towards the Malta Church. Notwithstanding all this, Archbishop Gonzi went to London at the age of 82 and put pressure on the British government regarding the new financial agreement which Premier Mintoff wanted to sign with Britain even if the prospects of success were limited. This intervention speaks volumes. Archbishop Gonzi sidelined the mistrust he had in Mintoff and the fears that he had expressed during the process of Malta's Independence and participated instead in the talks in an hour of need. Moreover, one has to remember that in 1969 the Church and the Malta Labour Party had signed a truce, and this may have affected the course of action taken by Archbishop Gonzi from that point onwards even if, at a later stage, Labour in government – as we shall see in the next chapter – would rock once again that relationship, most probably taking advantage of Archbishop Gonzi's poor state of health. Still, these episodes present an old archbishop, with a hands-on-deck attitude, imbued with a spirit of *realpolitik*, and ready to adapt according to what the circumstances required. Once again, the Church showed this unique sense of flexibility which at the end of the day historically explains the Church's long existence.

CHAPTER SIX

THE CHALLENGE TO RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY, PRACTICE AND BELONGING

The 1960s were characterised by change and transformation. It was an era when historical change seemed to have progressed much more rapidly than in previous decades. The Cold War, civil rights marches, students' revolts and political upheavals erupting from Chicago to Prague, the Cuban Missile Crisis, the Vietnam War, women's movements demanding equal rights, political assassinations, and the Flower Power movement were some of the main events that marked the nineteen-sixties. Other crucial happenings of the era included the introduction of the birth-control pill, the movement in favour of sexual permissiveness and experimentation, the first-ever landing on the moon and the "space race" between the superpowers, the "generation gap" separation and the availability of new technological home appliances.

Tom Hayden put forward the argument that "there were at least two sixties, the utopian period from 1960 to 1964, when all things seemed possible, and the bloody denouncement between the beginning of the Vietnam War and the fall of Richard Nixon."¹ The Roman Catholic Church itself, as a result of the Second Vatican Council, as we shall see later, had experienced a golden era during this epoch characterised by a strong spirit of renewal and reform. Sceptics dubbed the sixties as an age of irresponsible excess, and most probably believed that the nineteen-fifties were the "last age of morality, patriotism, law and order, respect for the family, tuneful music and a popular culture which was pleasing, not shocking."² But undeniably, the nineteen-sixties were an epoch of sweeping political, social and cultural change. The youngsters of the baby boom generation (born in the mid-to late 1940s) were protagonists of that particular period of the sixties. As Donnelly noted "in outlook, values and expectations, the baby boomers were to show themselves to be less like their parents than any previous generation in modern times... A new mentality developed as the young calculated that postponing pleasure, as their

¹ Tom Hayden in Walter Cronkite (ed.), *The Sixties Chronicle* (Illinois, Legacy, 2004), 9.

² Arthur Marwick, *The Sixties: Cultural Revolution in Britain, France, Italy and the United States* (London, Bloomsbury, 2011), 43.

parents had done, was a pointless trade, not least as there was a declining faith in the promise of an afterlife.”³

Inevitably, such winds of change reached Malta although geographically the island was cut off from the rest of the European mainland. Therefore, this chapter will assess the effects, of the above-mentioned events on Malta, the Maltese Church, and religion. The main debates arising from the promoters of change, being social or cultural change, and those upholding the preservation and conservation of certain trends and values will also be included. Moreover, this chapter will also consider the way that the teachings and reforms emanating from the Second Vatican Council were implemented by the Malta Church led by Archbishop Gonzi. Indeed, the reforms that Vatican II introduced in the Catholic thought and practice reached Malta rather late in the day to be fully grasped and implemented by Archbishop Gonzi, but the latter surprisingly opened the doors for such reforms, once again confirming his strong sense of adaptation notwithstanding his very old age. In 1965, Archbishop Gonzi was 85 years old.

A Sketch of Malta of the Sixties

By the beginning of the 1960s, “the Cold War had practically reached freezing point. The ideological confrontation between the Soviet Union and the West was evident in the propaganda that they both promoted, the massive build-up of armaments, the space race, the frequency of nuclear weapons tests and the increase in the proxy war. The unabated tension between the two blocs gradually began to give rise to a spectrum of movements that objected to the continued nuclear weapons testing and the legitimacy of the Cold War itself. This wave of dissent spread to other areas with the eventual questioning of custom and convention in different fields from fashion to music, to politics and to religion, among others.”⁴ Malta was not an exception in this regard.

The nineteen-sixties in Malta witnessed change in different spheres, the most notable being the acquisition of Independence from Great Britain in 1964 without recourse to bloodshed as had been the case of other colonies that chose the independence route in the period under review. As Bonello contended, “all the other countries which had obtained their Independence at that

³ Mark Donnelly, *Sixties Britain: Culture, Society and Politics* (Harlow, Great Britain, 2005), 2.

⁴ Louis A. Farrugia, *Forty Years at Helm* (Malta, Kite Group, 2019), 37.

time had very shortly turned into a communist or other dictatorships.”⁵ All in all, Independence meant an enormous challenge for a country like Malta which had no natural resources at all and whose past had seen a long chain of colonial ties.

Independence also meant that there was an urgent necessity for Malta to roll up its sleeves and acquire the necessary skills to live autonomously without strong British direct investment. This sense of urgency continued to put pressure after 1967 when the second wave of rundowns within a few years hit the Maltese islands. There was a strong need for the local economy in that period to be restructured and diversified. As Spiteri put it, “for the first time in history, Malta started to look forward to solve her internal and external problems herself.”⁶

Malta gave a further push to tourism and this meant the opening of new hotels and other related facilities. This was a sector that the Maltese investors themselves entered into, apart from foreign investment like that of Sheraton and Hilton.⁷ Up to 1969, there were 89 hotels in Malta.⁸ The idea of international publicity on Malta as an alternative tourist destination also began. A number of new factories started operating and the Borg Olivier government established the Malta Development Corporation and the Central Bank of Malta. Minister Giovanni Felice played a key role in the transformation of Independent Malta.

In July 1965, the Dragonara Casino was inaugurated.⁹ The Casino project had drawn Archbishop Gonzi’s disapproval. The latter had resisted the idea body and soul when Prime Minister Mintoff wanted to open a casino during his 1955-1958 administration. During that period, Mr Mintoff defended his casino project with Archbishop Gonzi, describing it as a stock exchange.¹⁰ Mintoff also commented that “the participation of Maltese residents at the games was to be legally forbidden.”¹¹ On the other hand, Archbishop Gonzi regarded the concept as immoral and one which would ruin Maltese families. As stated earlier, the period following Independence witnessed prosperity for Malta. More foreigners chose Malta as their permanent home base. According to Richard England, an architect and an academic, by 1970, “thousands

⁵ Giovanni Bonello, *Histories of Malta: Figments and Fragments, Volume 2* (Malta, Fondazzjoni Patrimonju Malti, 2001), 241.

⁶ Edward J. Spiteri, *An island in Transition: the economic Transformation of Malta from a British Crown Colony to an independent democratic Republic, 1959-1974* (Malta, The Author, 1996), 34.

⁷ *Malta in Brief* (Malta, COI, 1968), 113.

⁸ Sergio Grech, *It-Tabib Sandy, Bijografija ta' Alexander Cachia Zammit* (Malta, Kite Publishing, 2013), 157.

⁹ 'Casino for Malta,' *Malta Review*, August 1964, 16.

¹⁰ 'Prime Minister's Statement,' *The Bulletin*, 6th May 1955, 2.

¹¹ Dominic Mintoff, *Priests and Politicians, op.cit.*, 4.

of strangers have settled in this sun-drenched land since 1962.”¹² This fact together with the demands of an economy that was booming led to more land speculation.

Up to 1971, when the Labour Party was returned to power, the emigration movement had dwindled significantly.¹³ Dr Victor Ragonesi, Secretary of the Nationalist Party between the years 1954 and 1962, and a close collaborator of Nationalist politician Ġorġ Borg Olivier, maintained with the present researcher that in 1969 there had been a discussion within the Nationalist Cabinet so that workers would be brought from abroad “because there are not even enough workers.”¹⁴ According to Joe M. Zahra, a Nationalist Party journalist and an assistant to Borg Olivier, there were so many projects in Malta after Independence that it was obvious that “those who were unemployed did not want to work.”¹⁵

Once Malta gained Independence, and sovereignty ushered in, the new Maltese sovereign nation acquired the right to join important international organisations and fora like the United Nations and the Council of Europe, amongst others. Prime Minister Borg Olivier read a letter he received from the Secretary-General of the Council of Europe Peter Smithers during the Cabinet meeting held two days after Christmas in 1964 in which Smithers informed him that Malta could begin the procedure for membership in the mentioned Council.¹⁶ A few days after it obtained Independence, Malta was invited to attend the ceremony in which Independence was granted to Zambia.¹⁷ During the year of Independence, Malta was invited to follow the political elections in the British Guinea.¹⁸ In 1970, Malta signed an association agreement with the European Economic Community.¹⁹ On obtaining Independence, Malta started organising a Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the first time and, as stated above, began joining international organisations like GATT,²⁰ the ILO,²¹ the FAO²² and the WHO.²³

¹² Richard England, *Uncaged Reflections: Selected Writings 1965-1980* (Malta, MRSM, 1980), 59.

¹³ Lawrence E. Attard, *L-Emigrazzjoni Maltija: Is-Seklu Dsatax u Ghoxrin* (Malta, PIN, 1999), 179.

¹⁴ Sergio Grech, *It-Tabib Sandy, Bijografija ta' Alexander Cachia Zammit, op.cit.*, 158.

¹⁵ *L-istorja minn wara l-Kwinti* (History from behind the scenes), Programme 9, broadcast on TVM.

¹⁶ Minutes of the Cabinet of Ministers, 27th December 1964, The National Archives of Malta.

¹⁷ Minutes of the Cabinet of Ministers, 29th September 1964, The National Archives of Malta.

¹⁸ Minutes of the Cabinet of Ministers, 9th November 1964, The National Archives of Malta.

¹⁹ Christopher Pollacco, *Malta-EEC Relations* (Malta, Mireva Publications, 1992), 30.

²⁰ ‘Diary of the Month – November,’ *Malta Review*, December 1964, 30.

²¹ ‘Malta at ILO Conference,’ *Malta Review*, August 1964, 19.

²² ‘Diary of the Month – November,’ *Malta Review*, December 1964, 31.

²³ ‘Malta joins W.H.O.,’ *Malta Review*, April 1964, 21.

The point at which Malta gained independence coincided with a time of great cultural upheaval resulting in notable changes in the local fields of theatre,²⁴ art, architecture and literature. According to the doyen of Maltese twentieth-century playwriting Francis Ebejer, the 1960s produced “the rapid overall flowering of the main arts.”²⁵ The Moviment Qawmien Letterarju (1967) promoted a totally different literature from the preceding Maltese Romantic poets. One of the new poets Mario Azzopardi had even declared that metaphorically Dun Karm, Malta’s national poet, ought to be killed. With that statement, he meant to emphasise the change in direction which, in his view, the Maltese literature required. According to Charles Flores, one of the agents of the new wave literature, “a literary revival was not only required, but was definitely a prerequisite for the times that were fast a-changing... Modern Maltese and international literature was presented down in the early Christian catacombs, on the bastions of the Knights and along the colourful seafronts of Marsaxlokk and Senglea to ever-growing audiences. Radio programmes such as “Beat u Letteratura” on the old Rediffusion network became a delight to produce and listen to.”²⁶ Innovative architectural ventures of the period in Malta included the various projects signed by Richard England, amongst them the St. Joseph Church of Manikata, the Paradise Bay Hotel in Ċirkewwa, and the Villa Maltija at San Pawl tat-Targa.²⁷ Incidentally, Archbishop Gonzi was not that enthusiastic about England’s Manikata church and he seemed to have commented that the Church looked like “a German war submarine.”²⁸ The mentioned Church was being built between the years 1964 and 1972.

But, on the other hand, it is interesting to note that student revolts were non-existent in Malta and, according to a study conducted by the Pastoral Research Services (PRS), a wing of the Malta Church, 86% of Maltese university students believed that the Church had a right to speak “on the morality of scientific, cultural and political affairs.”²⁹ This highly contrasted with the 1968 international student revolutionary movement. Fücks argued that “the protest movement of 1968 was never a uniform phenomenon” and that “its fall-out took different forms: hippies

²⁴ Alfred Sant, *Confessions of a European Maltese* (Malta, SKS, 2003), 96.

²⁵ Francis Ebejer quoted from Charles Briffa, *Travelling between Shadows: Social Comedy and Narrative in Mario Azzopardi* (Malta, Progress Press Ltd, 2007), 19.

²⁶ Charles Flores, The Malta Independent Online, Retrieved 31st December 2021, <https://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2006-10-15/opinions/the-malta-independent-online-98160/cookie-declaration>.

²⁷ Conrad Thake and Quentin Hughes, *Malta and Peace: An Architectural Chronicle 1800-2000* (Malta, Midsea Books, 2005), 179.

²⁸ Conrad Thake, ‘Architecture in Post Independent Malta, Past Present and Future,’ *Melita Historica*, 16, (3), (2014), 97.

²⁹ ‘Students for Church Involvement in Politics,’ *Malta News*, 1st April 1968, 12.

and spiritualists, Maoist groups and orthodox leftists, citizens' action groups, feminist projects, third-world groups, pacifists and militants."³⁰

Visanich contended that the Maltese youth segment of the sixties, "fully immersed into the religious dogma, showed less signs of rebellion than in other European countries."³¹ Still, on the occasion of the self-immolation by dissident Jan Palach from Czechoslovakia in protest against the Warsaw Pact's invasion of his country, flowers were placed in Valletta in his honour by Maltese students, but these were immediately removed by the police.³² One must also acknowledge the input given by Maltese university students in the late sixties regarding housing problems in Malta. University students, led by Henry Frendo, set up the *Kampanja Djar għall-Maltin* which managed to formulate a petition signed by 74,000 people demanding a housing policy and housing opportunities for the Maltese.³³ A delegation from the group even met Prime Minister Borg Olivier and Archbishop Gonzi. The latter gave the group a cheque for £20 to meet organisational expenses. Fr Charles G. Vella, a strong campaigner for housing opportunities for Maltese engaged couples, described the situation as follows: "local architects are very much engaged in building but mainly for foreigners. They pay better and provide more money. Government has done very little to cope with the pressing needs and it was only after our campaign that some moves have been made."³⁴

Secularisation in Malta

By the nineteen-sixties and the nineteen-seventies, secularisation featured in Malta. But it is erroneous to regard the secularisation feature in Malta as a strict phenomenon of the sixties. In fact, when analysing deeper, one notices that secularisation was a thread that ran through the long episcopate of Archbishop Gonzi (1944-1976). Since the very beginning of his administration of the Maltese See, Archbishop Gonzi was conscious and realised that the traditional bondage between the Catholic Church and the people of Malta, once described as

³⁰ Ralph Fücks, '1968 and the Discoveries of Politics,' speech published in *Heinrich Böll Stiftung; The Green Political Foundation*, Retrieved on 24th February 2019, <https://www.boell.de/en/democracy/contemporary-history-2844.html>.

³¹ Valerie Visanich, 'Generational Habitus of Youth during the 'swinging' Sixties: A Case Study in Malta,' *Journal of Maltese History*, 3, (1), (2012), 42.

³² 'Palach imfakkar fid-Dinja, F'Malta l-Pulizija tneħhi Kuruna,' *Il-Qawmien*, 26th January 1969, 1.

³³ Henry J. Frendo, 'Djar għall-Maltin Housing Campaign, 1969-2019,' *TimesofMalta.Com*, Retrieved on 4th March 2019, <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20190317/opinion/djar-għall-maltin-housing-campaign-1969-2019-henry-frendo.704750>.

³⁴ Letter from Charles G. Vella to T. Mathias, 1969 (full date unavailable). Fr Charles G. Vella Private Collection.

Cattolicissima, was changing. In fact, his first assessment of the Maltese society as a bishop of the diocese was that Malta was ill and required spiritual cure.³⁵

In addition to this, during the episcopates of Archbishop Pietro Pace (1889-1914) and Archbishop Mauro Caruana (1915-1943), one can already smell and trace concepts of deviance, or to a certain extent “primitive” secular trends that were distancing away from the established teachings of the Roman Catholic Church. At that stage, one cannot really attribute the term secularisation to define these novel concepts but the seeds of secularisation were being firmly planted. For instance, the self-educated Manoel Dimech was presenting avant-garde arguments inspired by the Enlightenment movement that disagreed with the Church’s teachings to the point that he was excommunicated by the mentioned institution. As Chircop put it, Dimech embodied “a radical ideology: an amalgamation of revolutionary jacobinism, classical nationalism and anti-colonialism with a heavy socialist imprint.”³⁶ These ideas continued to flourish in Dimech’s “disciples” referred to “id-dimekkjani” who were also anti-colonial masters in nature.

The nineteen-twenties witnessed a complicated politico-religious dispute which, as stated before, revolved around the notion whether the Malta Church could participate in politics or not. During a very tense moment of the dispute, that is in July 1928, protesters met in Valletta, before the Senate was to discuss the Church’s representatives block to the fiscal measures in the General Assembly, and shouted blasphemous cries including *Abbasso Kristu Re!*, *Viva Calles*, *Abbasso l-Arcisqof u l-Kleru*.³⁷ That was a completely new scenario for *Malta Cattolicissima* and a shock to the local Church authorities³⁸ considering the fact that just a few years before, in 1913, Malta had hosted one of the largest Catholic festivals that had ever been organised – the Eucharistic Congress. As a commemoration of that event, the Antonio Scortino’s Christ the King sculpture was erected at Floriana. During that particular occurrence, “thousands of visitors came over from the whole of the Catholic world ...”³⁹

³⁵ Arthur Bonnici, *History of the Church in Malta, Vol. 3*, (Malta, Lux Press, 1974), 24.

³⁶ John Chircop, *The Left within the Maltese Labour Movement, op.cit.*, 7.

³⁷ Henry Frendo, *Europe and Empire: Culture, Politics and Identity in Malta and the Mediterranean* (Malta, Midsea Books, 2012), 215.

³⁸ See the circular letter issued by Archbishop Mauro Caruana in Henry Frendo, *Europe and Empire, op.cit.*, 251.

³⁹ J.R. Busuttil, *Salesian Boys’ Brigades: Golden Jubilee 1910-1960* (Malta, Salesian Press, 1960), 19.

Moreover, in the nineteen-thirties, a number of police raids were conducted in houses and offices of certain Maltese leftists. Invoking the Seditious and Propaganda Ordinance, the British Government in Malta set to dismount the Socialist League and “destroy its influence especially in the most delicate area of the Dockyard.”⁴⁰ These leftists were accused of illegally keeping texts the majority of which were about Russia, Bolshevism, Fascism, Communism and Socialism.⁴¹ During the same period of time, Archbishop Caruana was also worried about bathing costumes that were being used by the British residents in Malta and also by Maltese women.⁴²

As we shall see, the Second World War itself and the period which followed that war witnessed a momentum of social, cultural and political changes that at times were impossible to halt or to postpone and which ultimately would put in doubt concepts like the traditional role of the Church in society. In the pastoral letter issued during Lent 1974, Archbishop Gonzi tackled this theme and argued that the industrialised society that had developed in Malta after the Second World War had led the Maltese family members to daily move away from their parish territory for the majority of the day. Archbishop Gonzi consented that this evolution had its fruitful advantages but he also argued that this situation led to the “clash” of different beliefs. At the end of the day, this situation had led to disengagement from the Church, and people would lead their own life irrespective of the mentioned institution.⁴³

Vassallo contended that “as long as culture, tradition, national lifestyle, and religion were intertwined in a complex set of mutually supportive attitudes and values, the Church was the dominant indigenous institution. Once the connections were broken, the way was open for a process of secularisation which had occurred in most of the rest of Europe up to a century earlier.”⁴⁴ Lechner defined secularisation as “the historical procedure in which religion loses social and cultural significance... In secularised societies, faith lacks cultural authority, religious organisations have little social power, and public life proceeds without reference to the supernatural.”⁴⁵

⁴⁰ John Chircop, *The Left within the Maltese Labour Movement*, *op.cit.*, 93.

⁴¹ See the whole list of the publications ‘discovered’ during the raids in Appendix E, in Francis Galea, *Is-Sedizzjoni* (Malta, SKS, 1999), 184.

⁴² John Manduca, *The Bonham-Carter Diaries: 1936-1940* (Malta, Publishers Enterprises Group, 2004), 68.

⁴³ *Pastorali tar-Randan*, 1974, Stamperija Il-Ħajja, 8.

⁴⁴ Mario Vassallo, *From Leadership to Stewardship: Religion and Social Change in Malta* (The Hague, Mouton Publishers, 1979), 45.

⁴⁵ Frank Lechner, ‘Secularisation,’ Retrieved on 20th January 2019, <http://sociology.emory.edu/home/documents/profiles-documents/lechner-secularisation.pdf>.

Frendo demonstrated that during the Second World War, Malta had suffered no less than 3,343 air raids. 16,000 tons of bombs were dropped and “at least 4000 buildings were destroyed.”⁴⁶ But, there were other effects of the war which affected the people’s mentalities and lifestyles. Boissevain maintained, that the Second World War “gave to men, many of whom were conscripted, an experience of discipline and the regular hours of wage labour.”⁴⁷ Moreover, “male labour lost through conscription was supplemented by the employment of women.”⁴⁸ In both case scenarios, this gave the advantage of regular cash income. Additionally, “most Maltese expected, if not demanded, that the deprivation, carnage and general suffering of the war years would be replaced by an improved standard of living.”⁴⁹

Moreover, Vassallo argued that the Second World War “produced lasting changes for the Maltese population. The increased interactions of the Maltese among themselves, especially as a result of the organised evacuation of 55,000 people from the bombed towns to the villages, established new and more intimate relationships between the various strata. Ascribed status differences diminished in significance in the common conditions of warfare: and the society which emerged after the war already showed indications of confirming to new patterns. The introduction of universal suffrage was a sign of the new principles of equality and of the new opportunities for personal and individual advancement... and although old patterns of male dominance, deference, and tradition persisted in many areas of life, the political and the legal basis for change was now laid, and already there were those who based their ideological appeal to the electorate on the premise of radical reform.”⁵⁰ Mr Mintoff’s policies in the fifties, the sixties and the seventies were a vivid illustration of this radical strategy. But Mr Mintoff openly attacked the Church in the most open and vulgar manner.⁵¹ His character resembled that of Gerald Strickland. Like the latter, Mintoff was obstinate, aggressive and lacking respect.⁵² As Pirota argued, one of Mintoff’s prime target, in his political career, was secularisation.⁵³

⁴⁶ Henry Frendo, *Europe and Empire*, *op.cit.*, 738.

⁴⁷ Jeremy Boissevain, *Hal Kirkop: A Village in Malta* (Malta, Midsea Books, 2006), 9.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 9.

⁴⁹ Joseph M. Pirota, “Quest for Secularisation Triggers second politico-religious Struggle,” in Michael Schiavone, and Leonard Callus, (eds.), “*Inservi*,” *Hidma Politika 1969-2009* (Malta, PIN, 2009), 459.

⁵⁰ Mario Vassallo, *From Leadership to Stewardship: Religion and Social Change in Malta*, *op.cit.*, 40.

⁵¹ Paul Galea, ‘Il-Konfront bejn is-Setgħat,’ *Religjon u Kultura, Knisja 2000*, Issue 9, 30.

⁵² Henry Frendo, ‘It-Twelid tas-Socjetà Sekulari Maltija u t-theddida għall-Fidi tal-Maltin fis-Snin Hamsin u Sittin,’ *Religjon u Kultura, Knisja 2000*, 18.

⁵³ Joseph M. Pirota, ‘Quest for Secularisation Triggers second politico-religious Struggle,’ *op.cit.*, 458.

Mintoff aspired, using his own terminology, to decolonise Malta from the grip of the Vatican. His Integration project was not only a political and an economic package that ultimately would end strife from Malta. As Vassallo pointed out, Integration was “a departure from traditional insularity to direct participation in the fate of a larger nation.”⁵⁴

The electoral and the Integration referendum results that surfaced especially after the year 1955 showed that quite a good number of Maltese, the majority being generally of a Labour creed, were no longer afraid to defy the Church’s directives on how to vote. 44% had voted in favour of Integration irrespective of Archbishop Gonzi’s dissatisfaction and disapproval of the Integration plan. In the case of the 1962 elections, one third of the electorate (33%) had voted for Mr Mintoff’s secular policies and this implied that for them faith came second to their political beliefs. It emerged unmistakably that the people’s allegiances were far from fixed and nothing could be taken for granted anymore as to a certain extent had happened in the previous decades. The bondage that tied the Church to its people was loosening.

The dispute between Archbishop Gonzi and Labour leader Dom Mintoff paved the way further for secularisation. Boissevain argued that, following the 1962 and the 1966 electoral appointments, many Labour supporters boycotted Church functions.⁵⁵ According to Fr Charles G. Vella, there were a considerable number of Labour supporters who drifted away from the Church and never went back to the fold. He argued that a policy of re-integrating the ones who had left the fold was never attempted by the local Church.⁵⁶ Capuchin Donat Spiteri was of the opinion that owing to the political religious dispute, the Malta Church had lost a lot of its “*uliedha l-haddiema* (her children workers).⁵⁷

After the Second World War, women’s suffrage was introduced in Malta and this also had its share in shaping new mentalities and lifestyles.⁵⁸ Meanwhile, a more literate population was growing steadily in Malta thanks to the revision of the Education Act in 1946 which established compulsory education for the Maltese people.⁵⁹ Moreover, progress in socio-economic conditions and transport facilities reduced the occasion for dependency on the Church. As

⁵⁴ Mario Vassallo, *From Leadership to Stewardship: Religion and Social Change in Malta*, *op.cit.*, 40.

⁵⁵ Jeremy Boissevain, *Factions, Friends and Feasts: Anthropological Perspectives on the Mediterranean* (New York, Berghahn, 2013), 264.

⁵⁶ Micheala Muscat, 'The Interdett through a Foreigner's Eyes,' *Malta Today*, 25th September 2005, 9.

⁵⁷ Donat Spiteri, 'L-Apostolat pastorali tal-Knisja fost il-Massa tal-Haddiema,' *Pastor*, Mejjju 1968, 11.

⁵⁸ Carmen Sammut, *The Road to Women's Suffrage and Beyond* (Malta, Central Bank of Malta, 2017), 51.

⁵⁹ Joseph Zammit Mangion, *Education in Malta* (Malta, Studia Editions, 1992), 57.

Boissevain contended, progress redefined the parish priest's role in a village and the role of the Church in social functions.⁶⁰ The parish priest's social role and other functions were no longer required as lay bureaucratic personnel filled such roles and provided the services that had once been given by the Church. The village festa was not any more the villagers' only option for social gatherings. Public and private means of transportation changed the way people spent their free time. For instance, "improving public transport was enabling young men to meet friends in Valletta instead of spending their evenings in the local brass band clubs..."⁶¹ Moreover, by ceding many of its powers to the State, the Church had become less dominant.⁶²

Meanwhile, thanks to diverse factors, some of them referred to above, like literature imported from abroad, education, women's suffrage and so on, Maltese families were shrinking in size. Less children were born in wedlock. The 1948 Census had reported that "a quarter of the completed families still had over ten children."⁶³ By the year 1963, "the average family size was from three to six children."⁶⁴ According to Mercieca, this situation led women to care more about their respective body.⁶⁵ In order to achieve smaller families, the international community was pushing forward the birth control programme. In 1968, the *Toronto Daily Star* argued that "it is estimated that 750,000 Canadian women are taking oral contraceptives. The pill has proven to be the most effective means of birth control that science has yet discovered. Some fourteen million women around the world rely on it for their family planning."⁶⁶

By the end of February 1964, Catholic Church bishops were asked by the Vatican Secretary of State Cardinal Amleto Giovanni Cicognani to fill a questionnaire about birth control in their respective dioceses. Archbishop Gonzi responded that in Malta birth control was being increasingly resorted to by all classes. Contraceptives were no longer a misnomer (author's emphasis) and were finding their way into Malta notwithstanding that this act was prohibited at law.⁶⁷ According to Archbishop Gonzi, contraceptives in the case of Malta were sold under

⁶⁰ Ibid., 152.

⁶¹ Jeremy Boissevain, 'On Predicting the Future: Second Thoughts on the Decline of Feasts and Patrons,' *op.cit.*, 263.

⁶² Carmel Tabone, *The Secularisation of the Family in Changing Malta*, *op.cit.*, 218.

⁶³ Charles Tabone, *The Secularisation of the Family in Changing Malta*, *op.cit.*, 86.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 87.

⁶⁵ Simon, Mercieca "Fejn Tmur il-Qalb fl-Isfond Demografiku Malti," in Sergio Grech, (ed.), *Monsinjur Victor Grech: Bejn Storja u Miti* (Malta, Horizons, 2014), 123.

⁶⁶ Betty Stapleton, 'The Pill,' *Toronto Daily Star*, 18th May 1968, 81.

⁶⁷ Archbishop Michael Gonzi, Questionnaire about Birth Control filled on 22nd April 1964 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza Gonzi 1964, Vol.LVIII*.

the counter or through “the British services.”⁶⁸ He quoted a sample survey conducted by Cana Movement in March 1964 among 311 young couples who had been married for one to eight years. Of those, 149 had children, 85 desired not to have more children, 59 fancied more children, 12 wanted one child, 10 craved for two, 7 preferred to have 3, while 29 would welcome any number. Archbishop Gonzi noted that the birth rate was expected a decrease in the near future even if at that particular point in time it was still high. Furthermore, he concluded that among the educated class, the contraceptive pill was being discussed and he was sure that “it will not be long before it will be used.”⁶⁹ One should note that in June 1949, Archbishop Gonzi condemned pharmacists for making contraceptives available for sale.⁷⁰ In 1968, Pope Paul VI’s *Humanae Vitae* reacted in favour of natural family planning. The pope maintained that this birth control method promoted self-discipline and chastity, whereas artificial contraception “could open wide the way for marital infidelity and a general lowering of moral standards.”⁷¹ The papal document divided the Catholic world. On the other hand, Archbishop Gonzi published a pastoral letter on the way the encyclical should be read and its teachings implemented in line with what was then the latest thinking in moral theology.

As suggested before, secularisation seeped in thanks to trends that were imported from abroad. On numerous occasions, Archbishop Gonzi kept referring to trends emanating from abroad which he believed were contributing to the ruining of certain national traditions.⁷² By national traditions, the Archbishop was not referring only to the country’s tangible cultural heritage but was observing that elements like tourism, fashion styles, magazines, filmography, music and so on were leading to Malta’s insularity to whittle down and at the end of the day change the people’s tables of values and acceptable norms and behaviour.

As shown earlier, during the nineteen-sixties, tourism became a sound contributor to Malta’s economic regeneration and brought about a boom which resulted in the building of hotels, swimming pools, aquatic centres, discotheques, and so on.⁷³ But tourism also meant the mixing up with foreigners who brought with them a cultural baggage which conflicted with the

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Circular Letter from Archbishop Michael Gonzi dated 22nd June 1949 in AAM, *Mons. Gonzi Pastoralis e Circolari 1943-1962*.

⁷¹ Pope Paul VI, *Humanae Vitae*, Retrieved on 23rd November 2016, http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-vi_enc_25071968_humanae-vitae.html.

⁷² *Pastorali tar-Randan*, 1974, II-*Hajja*, 8.

⁷³ E.J. Spiteri, *An island in Transition, op.cit.*, 154.

indigenous culture. As Boissevain put it, tourism led to the destruction of traditional values by commercialising social relations and cultural manifestations.⁷⁴ In fact, owing to tourism, “new types of knowledge at all levels broke the narrow focus of interests that had for so long directed the interaction and the behaviour of the Maltese.”⁷⁵

Of course, there was an element of the Maltese population that mixed with the “British foreigner” in Malta very regularly and irrespective of tourism. The British foreigner in Malta “constantly rubbed shoulders with the local population in the many bars and darts clubs which dotted the harbour areas or which were in close proximity to army barracks and air force stations, at functions organised at Service messes, and in NAAFI canteens. Hundreds of service families lived in rented furnished flats, or rented space in large houses occupied by Maltese families. British newspapers and magazines were increasingly read.”⁷⁶ Emigrants, returned migrants and those who opted for holidays abroad experienced new lifestyles and values and exported them to Malta. Meanwhile, more Maltese commenced to leave Malta for vacations to Sicily, Italy and Britain. Archbishop Gonzi had blessed the first Air Malta aeroplane that had left for Rome on 1st April 1974.⁷⁷

Television was an important innovation in the period in question. The new medium presented a wide array of values and lifestyles which were not always inspired by the Church but which encouraged secularisation. In fact, Archbishop Gonzi had noted that thanks to this medium, the Maltese were receiving news that were unworthy and unnecessary. In the late nineteen-fifties, the Italian national broadcaster RAI started to relay its television programmes through a repeater mounted on Monte Lauro in Sicily and this meant that the Maltese could now also receive this novel service.⁷⁸ As businessman Louis A. Farrugia noted in his autobiography, “within a short span of time Italian television personalities became household names... the advent of Italian television also generated a level of moral and political debate. For the first time, even though modestly clad in black tights, showgirls like the Bluebell Girls and the Kessler Twins entered the sitting rooms of morally strict families. Apart from generating discomfort in grown-ups, they often gave rise to heated discussions between adolescents and

⁷⁴ Jeremy Boissevain, ‘Tourism and Development in Malta,’ *Development and Change*, 8, (4), (1977), 527.

⁷⁵ Mario Vassallo, *From Leadership to Stewardship: Religion and Social Change in Malta*, *op.cit.*, 67.

⁷⁶ Joseph M. Pirotta, “Quest for Secularisation Triggers second politico-religious Struggle,” *op.cit.*, 459.

⁷⁷ R.J. Caruana, *L-Istorja tal-Avjazzjoni f’Malta* (Malta, PIN, 2002), 171.

⁷⁸ Sergio Grech, ‘Failed Attempts by Prime Minister Dominic Mintoff to open a national Television Station (1955-1958),’ *Arkivju*, 2020, 55.

their parents.”⁷⁹ In the sixties, owning a television set was still a symbol status but, sooner or later, ownership of a set became a must.⁸⁰ The first television sets were imported to Malta in 1957 and, by the end of that year, there were more than 2,400 sets in Maltese households.⁸¹ According to Kenneth Brown, the Chief Executive of the Malta Broadcasting Authority, five years later Malta had “nearly 15,000” sets.⁸² By 1964, Malta had more than 25,000 sets.⁸³ Ten years after that, the number of television sets in the Maltese islands rose 58,435.⁸⁴

Archbishop Gonzi insisted that the role of television should be to entertain, educate and to encourage people to always put God in the forefront.⁸⁵ According to one of Archbishop Gonzi’s aids, the archbishop “was not very fond of television broadcasts, and only followed the Pope’s blessings on New Year’s Day and Easter Sunday.”⁸⁶ Incidentally, Archbishop Gonzi was one of the first Maltese personalities to have appeared on the local national television station that commenced its broadcasting venture in 1962. According to Mgr Lawrenz Cachia, the priests were the first amongst the different members of the local population to buy a television set.⁸⁷

For the sixties’ youth generation, fashion was a sort of a religion and dress codes were becoming an anachronism.⁸⁸ For Fr Charles G. Vella, the new generation (as the generation of the sixties was commonly referred to) was influenced by imported ideas, fashions and culture that often confronted their ideas with those of the clergy whose discourse focused too much on sin, sexuality, hell and God’s punishments.⁸⁹ During that period, “long-accepted ways and received wisdom were increasingly questioned.”⁹⁰ It followed that for instance, “the quest for entertainment was voracious” and the mentioned pursuit was not always in line with the

⁷⁹ Louis A. Farrugia, *Forty Years at Helm*, *op.cit.*, 36.

⁸⁰ Valerie Visanich, ‘Generational Habitus of Youth during the ‘swinging’ Sixties,’ *op.cit.*, 44.

⁸¹ Joseph Borg, *Religion and the Mass Media in Malta* (M.STH, University of Malta, 1977), 34.

⁸² Letter from Kenneth Brown to Donald Stephenson dated 4th April 1962, Fr Charles G. Vella Private Collection.

⁸³ *Il-Haddiem*, 12th November 1964, 4.

⁸⁴ Joseph Borg, *Religion and the Mass Media in Malta*, *op.cit.*, 34.

⁸⁵ *Times of Malta*, 30th September 1962.

⁸⁶ Sarah Carabott, ‘Unchanged since 1984,’ *TimesofMalta.com*, 25th December 2011, Retrieved 4th February 2019, <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20111225/local/Unchanged-since-1984-Archbishop-Gonzi-s-home.399805>.

⁸⁷ Letter from Mgr L. Cachia to Sergio Grech dated 29th July 2001, Sergio Grech Private Collection.

⁸⁸ Lara Farrugia, *The Evolution of Clothing in Malta after World War II till the 1980s* (BA Honours, University of Malta, 2013), 41.

⁸⁹ C.G. Vella. *Sinjali Maltin ta’ Żmienna* (Malta, Klabb Kotba Maltin, 2000), 58.

⁹⁰ Joseph M. Pirotta, “Quest for Secularisation Triggers second politico-religious Struggle,” *op.cit.*, 459.

Church's teachings. The same generation confronted the idea of chaperones by couples that was recommended by the Church.⁹¹

The Catholic Church's position towards fashion was based on the belief that the values of purity and modesty had to be encouraged. The Church stated that the way one dressed showed respect, or disrespect, for oneself and others. Its critics were calling the Church to review its understanding of the human body and sexuality. By the year 1921, the Roman Catholic Church had developed a clear policy on this theme. As a matter of fact, Pope Benedict XV contended that "one cannot sufficiently deplore the blindness of so many women of every age and condition. Made foolish by desire to please, they do not see to what a degree the indecency of their clothing shocks every honest man, and offends God."⁹² By 1930, the Catholic Church entrusted parish priests, parents and educators with the responsibility to protect modesty.⁹³ Modesty was seen as an important virtue to be proud of. The Catholic Church expressed its reservations to miniskirts, bikinis, briefs, and so on. Archbishop Gonzi regarded beauty contests as "a reflection of the weakening of morality."⁹⁴ Shorts or briefs, worn by men or women, were not regarded as a proper attire for church-going. Women wore veils in churches, even when reading the epistle.⁹⁵ During summer, the Church also insisted that a bride and a bridegroom could not swim together.⁹⁶

Bikinis brought strong reactions in the Maltese community.⁹⁷ For instance, in October 1964, Christine Adams, aged 21, was set free by the Maltese courts after being charged of being indecently dressed in public because she was wearing a bikini.⁹⁸ Initiatives were taken by the Malta Catholic Action when in 1953 it presented, during the annual Trade Fair, its own bathing costumes specifically to be worn by women.⁹⁹ It also introduced the Marylike Fashion Contests and Parades in Malta. The term Marylike had originated after Clemente Micara, the Cardinal

⁹¹ Jesmond Manicaro, *Liturgical Renewal in the Maltese Islands, op.cit.*, 16.

⁹² Pope Benedict XV, *Sacra Propediem*, Retrieved on 20th February 2019, http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xv/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xv_enc_06011921_sacra-propediem.html.

⁹³ Uxía Otero-Gonzalez, 'Catholic Dressing in the Spanish Franco Dictatorship (1939–1975): Normative Femininity and Its Sartorial Embodiment,' *Journal of Religious History*, 45, (4), (2021), 585.

⁹⁴ *Malta News*, 4th March 1968, 1.

⁹⁵ 'Ċirkolari Nru 430,' in AAM, *Mons Gonzi Pastoral e Circolari 1943-1962*.

⁹⁶ Bishop Emanuel Galea, 'Jistghu l-Għarajjes jghumu Flimkien?' *Kana*, July-August, 1960, 5.

⁹⁷ Piera Camilleri, *Tourism in Malta: History and Perspectives 1959-1988* (BA Honours, University of Malta, 1999), 96.

⁹⁸ 'Bikini Girl Christine Freed,' *Malta News*, 24th October 1964, 8.

⁹⁹ *Minuti tad-Direttorju Azzjoni Kattolika*, 24th June 1953, Catholic Action Archives, Catholic Institute, Floriana.

Vicar of Pope Pius XI, had declared that the Holy Mary condemned “clothing which is cut deeper than the two fingers” breadth under the pit of the throat, which does not cover the arms at least to the elbows, and which scarcely reaches a bit beyond the knees.”¹⁰⁰

Meanwhile, the Malta Church had to react also to another reality that was not prevailing in the period preceding the Second World War: several youth clubs were sprouting all over the island. Youth clubs were of two types. There were those which were run by religious organisations like the Malta Catholic Action or the Żgħażaġġ Ħaddiema Nsara and those whose aim was purely of a leisurely nature and had absolutely no ties with religion. Some of the religiously-oriented youth centres combined the religious aims with the leisure element. For instance, the Hamrun Azzjoni Kattolika club was popular for its billiard tables.

In *Divini Illius Magistri*, the Catholic Church had maintained that boys and girls had to be educated separately.¹⁰¹ That model was adopted in Malta’s educational system and prevailed also in the *modus operandi* of Catholic lay organisations. Organisations like the M.U.S.E.U.M. and the Malta Catholic Action had their respective branches for boys and girls and for men and women. For instance, on 21 May 1959, the Catholic Action’s Direttorju, the highest authority within that organisation, was against its Tarxien Male Section to involve female actors in a theatrical production.¹⁰² More than ten years later, the same organisation did not change its frame of mind and maintained that mixed youth clubs under its umbrella should neither be formed nor allowed.¹⁰³ Furthermore, the Direttorju defined mixed youth clubs as an entertainment venture whilst its centres, referred to as *circoli*, had a religious profile.¹⁰⁴ During another Catholic Action’s Direttorju meeting, it was stated that Archbishop Gonzi had sent for the Gzira parish priest and told him “bluntly” that he did not want mixed youth clubs in that particular parish.¹⁰⁵ It was contended that Archbishop Gonzi was “suspicious” of the Youth Travel Circle¹⁰⁶ and the Teens and Twenties Talent Trust (the 4T’s), two very active mixed

¹⁰⁰ ‘The Catholic Church speaks about Modesty,’ Retrieved on 20th February 2019 in <http://www.catholicmodesty.com/PFPopesonmodesty.html>.

¹⁰¹ Pope Pius XI, *Divini Illius Magistri*, Retrieved on 20th February 2019, http://w2.vatican.va/content/pius-xi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xi_enc_31121929_divini-illius-magistri.html.

¹⁰² *Minuti Direttorju Azzjoni Kattolika*, 21st May 1959, Malta Catholic Action, Catholic Institute Floriana.

¹⁰³ *Minuti Direttorju Azzjoni Kattolika*, 12th June 1970, *op.cit.*

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁵ *Minuti Direttorju Azzjoni Kattolika*, 18th February 1970, *op.cit.*

¹⁰⁶ Taped interview Rev Maurice Mifsud, YTC Premises, Valletta, 14th April 2016, Sergio Grech Private Collection.

youth groups during the period under study.¹⁰⁷ Still Archbishop Gonzi expressed positive reactions for the Lent Spiritual Exercises for unmarried couples organised by the Cana Movement.¹⁰⁸

From the above narratives, one may easily deduce that Archbishop Gonzi was against the concept of youth centres. But on the other hand, Archbishop Gonzi's real issue does not seem to have been the youth centre itself. Undeniably he had to follow what the Catholic Church demanded in that area, but in this case scenario, he was sincerely concerned with the consequences of the mixing of sexes and with what he termed as the corruption of youth and the dismantling of the traditional family. Truly, Archbishop Gonzi was adhering to the teachings of the Church in the subject matter but when one goes through his pastoral letters, one notices warnings from his end that the Maltese traditional family was "attacked" by various actors. In fact, this theme is recurrent during Archbishop Gonzi's episcopate. The following are concrete examples that prove this point.

For instance, in his 1957 pastoral letter for Lent, Archbishop Gonzi rejected what he termed as "the exaggeration of mixing sexes" during the summer months, "talkies", and carnival balls held in hotels and band clubs.¹⁰⁹ For him, the family, and particularly the youngsters, were under constant attack from the media, cinema, fashion, bad literature, and so on. In August 1972, Archbishop Gonzi noted that religious indifference was taking over especially within the youth band.¹¹⁰ He correctly observed that youth organisations with a religious profile in Malta were on the dying line. Instead, immorality was winning souls. More youth were choosing the criminal life and the Maltese girl was losing the restraint element. Cinemas and television were teaching the wrong values. Two years later Archbishop Gonzi also referred to the use of drugs that was causing harm to the youth generation.¹¹¹

In May 1969, the Maltese bishops in a pastoral letter addressed the issue of social classes in Malta and indicated the papal encyclical *Populorum Progressio* by Pope Paul VI as the right vehicle for married couples to lead their children by example and to invest more energy in

¹⁰⁷ Taped interview Joe Felice Pace, Private Residence, Balzan, 7th August 2016, Sergio Grech Private Collection.

¹⁰⁸ Charles G. Vella, 'L-Arċisqof Gonzi riedhom l-Eżerċizzi,' *Il-Ġens*, 15th March 1996, 13.

¹⁰⁹ Pastoral Letter Number 177, 24th February 1957.

¹¹⁰ Pastoral Letter, Archbishop Michael Gonzi, August 1972.

¹¹¹ Pastoral Letter Archbishop Michael Gonzi dated 26th July 1976.

prayers in an effort to erase the prevalent social imbalances arising out of illicit businesses which were creating inequalities in the standard of living.¹¹² The bishops on the mentioned occasion condemned those sectors of society that were making money from illicit business like prostitution and argued that married couples had to lead their children by example and invest more energy in prayers. The same source argued vociferously that some were using the excuse of tourism, tolerance, liberty of conscience and progress to justify different abuses. The employment of morality was seen as the alternative. On the eve of the 1971 elections, the Maltese bishops, including Archbishop Gonzi himself, expressed the importance that voters elect candidates with values to parliament. The bishops insisted that spiritual values should not be sacrificed for material welfare.¹¹³

Archbishop Gonzi firmly believed that education was a key pillar for a better life. In a context where it was rumoured that the Labour government intended to remove religion from the primary school curriculum, Archbishop Gonzi argued that every human being had a sacred right to receive education, and the parents had an obligation to educate their children.¹¹⁴ He insisted that parents have the first right (“l-ewwel dritt”) and the first obligation (“l-ewwel dmir”) to educate their children. Education was a part of the process which established that those who gave birth took on their shoulders the responsibility to cater for the physical, intellectual and moral upbringing of the newly-born. The archbishop insisted that the parents had another responsibility to shoulder, that is to see that their family resembled to a small church and therefore they should educate their children’s by acting as their first faith educators. Archbishop Gonzi also argued that the schools run by the Church deserved to be financially sustained by the state for their work. Parents have the right to choose their schools for their children. The archbishop acknowledged that all Maltese governments supported the Church’s role in education, and church schools were not closed by governments as happened abroad. After the Second Vatican Council, according to D’Anastas, the Malta Church revised its position regarding the mixed youth clubs by opening such mixed youth centres in Paola, Msida, San Ġwann, Gżira and Hamrun.¹¹⁵

¹¹² *Il-Hajja Kattolika f’Malta* compiled by Toni Terribile, p. 76, NAM.

¹¹³ Pastoral Letter Archbishop Michael Gonzi dated 31st May 1971.

¹¹⁴ Pastoral Letter Archbishop Michael Gonzi dated 24th February 1973.

¹¹⁵ Noel D’Anastas, ‘Il-Mixed Youth Clubs: Il-Qawmien ta-Żgżażaġ fis-Sittinijiet,’ Festa San Gejtanu, Hamrun, Għaqda tal-Mużika San Gejtanu 2015.

Another factor that evidenced that secularisation had reached Malta was the fact that by the year 1970, a staggering 18% of the Maltese Catholics were not attending the Sunday mass. Nunzio Gaetano Alibrandi, while in Ireland “in an interview with Joseph Carroll in *The Irish Times* on 17 December 1988, had recalled that when he was secretary to future Pope Montini, the latter had told him that Sunday mass attendance was a good gauge of a country’s spiritual health.”¹¹⁶ Maltese men according to the above mentioned survey tended to abstain from mass more than women. The majority of those who failed to attend were in the age bracket between 30 and 34 years. The majority of those who went to mass were in the 50 and 54 years age bracket.¹¹⁷

The Labour Party whilst in office in the seventies embarked on a decisive secularisation programme to counteract the Catholic Church’s influence in Malta. Once the Republic was firmly enshrined and the financial package with Great Britain was agreed upon, Prime Minister Mintoff moved on to enact the ‘*sitt Punti*’ (Six Points) on which he based his 1962 electoral pledges. His previous attempts to include such measures in the Independence Constitution had yielded no result.¹¹⁸ Therefore, “while in power the MLP embarked on a programme of secularisation of structures and persons helped in the secularisations of values by allowing the importation of films and magazines and other pornographic material which project a world view alien to the Christian one. Secular value systems such as socialism were also propagated.”¹¹⁹ One of the first decisions taken by Mr Mintoff was that all citizens were entitled to be buried at the government-owned Santa Marija Addolorata Cemetery in Paola.¹²⁰ Burials in the “unconsecrated” area of the mentioned cemetery were to stop once and for all. Meanwhile in 1970, when the Nationalists were in office, the “unconsecrated” area of the Addolorata cemetery, cunningly tagged by Mintoff as “*il-miżbla*,” (rubbish dump site), was blessed.¹²¹

The Labour government tightened its control over the University of Malta. Religion stopped being an entry requirement to attend a University course.¹²² The Candlora ceremony, to

¹¹⁶ Dermot Keogh, *Ireland and the Vatican* (Ireland, Cork University Press, 1995), 360.

¹¹⁷ ‘In-Numru ta’ dawk li ma jissimgħux Quddies huwa 43, 756,’ *Iż-Żmien*, 24th February 1970, 1.

¹¹⁸ See *Malta Independence Conference 1963* (London, Her Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1963).

¹¹⁹ Joseph Borg, *Religion and the Mass Media in Malta*, *op.cit.*, 31.

¹²⁰ Adrianus Koster, ‘Church and State Intervention in Feasts and Rituals in Independent Malta,’ *Economic & Social Studies*, 4, (1987-1988), 4.

¹²¹ Joe Borg, *Imkasbrin fil-Miżbla* (Malta, Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti, 1984), 23.

¹²² Adrianus Koster, ‘Malta’s Relations with the Holy See in Postcolonial Times,’ *Melita Historica*, 11, (3), (1994), 314.

Archbishop Gonzi's disappointment, was discontinued. The Education Department took over the training of prospective teachers which had previously been in the hands of the Church. Exemption of bishops, religious orders and Church institutions from taxation was annulled, the immunity of the bishops was removed and the *Privilegium fori* was abolished. The local bishops tried to change Premier Mintoff's views regarding the *Privilegium fori* by describing the law as an offence to the Catholic sentiments of the people, but the Prime Minister was not moved by that plea.¹²³ The law concerning homosexuality was amended so that homosexuality was no longer considered a crime.

A decisive bold step from Prime Minister Mintoff's end was the introduction of civil marriage in 1975. Archbishop Gonzi strongly believed that civil marriage would lead to Malta's destruction.¹²⁴ Archbishop Gonzi's position was that marriage was a sacrament governed by Church laws only, and that "the State had no power on Catholic marriages, but only on the civil effects of marriage."¹²⁵ Additionally, Archbishop Gonzi made it clear that in marital issues, sentences delivered in a civil tribunal had no value for the Church.¹²⁶ Mintoff's civil marriage law provided for annulments in certain case scenarios, but no provisions for divorce were made within that law. In the report sent to the Vatican authorities in 1975, Archbishop Gonzi told his superiors at the Vatican that in Malta's case, "*L'opinione pubblica non patrocina il divorzio.*"¹²⁷ For the period 1971-1975, the ecclesiastical tribunal had forty-one pending cases. In the last quarter of 1975, eight civil marriages were celebrated in Malta.¹²⁸ In the last year of Archbishop Gonzi's episcopacy, the number of civil marriages went up to fifty-one.¹²⁹ Ten years before the introduction of civil marriage, the Cana Movement's Director Fr Charles G. Vella had declared that "our orphanages are housing more children of broken homes than orphans."¹³⁰ Koster noted, that such reforms – though revolutionary for Catholic Malta – were not "spectacular from a world-wide point of view."¹³¹ Mr Mintoff kept harping on the point that the secularisation programme implemented by his end was beneficial to the Church in

¹²³ Letter from Archbishop Michael Gonzi, Auxiliary Bishop Joseph Mercieca, Bishop Nikol J. Cauchi to Prime Minister Dominic Mintoff dated 5th March 1975 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza 1975, Vol LXIX.*

¹²⁴ Arthur Said Pullicino in Claire Xuereb Grech, *L-Elf Lewn ta' Mintoff, op.cit.*, 241.

¹²⁵ Circular Letter from Konferenza Episkopali Maltija, dated 29th July 1975, Fr Charles G. Vella Private Collection.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*

¹²⁷ 'Malta Relazione Quinquennale 1971-75' in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza 1976, Vol LXX.*

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*

¹²⁹ Lawrenz Cachia, 'Il-Ligi Ċivili taż-Żwieg,' *Pastor*, April 1980, 22.

¹³⁰ Charles G. Vella, 'Broken Marriages are on the Increase,' *Malta News*, 9th January 1965, 6.

¹³¹ Adrianus Koster, *Prelates and Politicians in Malta, op.cit.*, 315.

Malta. In fact, during a speech he delivered at the University of Athens, Prime Minister Mintoff put forward the argument that “our religion is now stronger because it had been purged from any materialistic ties with the establishment.”¹³²

The Malta Church in the Period of the Second Vatican Council

Before we analyse the effects of the Second Vatican Council on the Malta Church, it makes sense to see the main episodes that concerned the Church in Malta in the period before and after the Council. Some of these events were a consequence of the political, economic and social changes that were discussed in the fifth chapter. Besides this, within the Malta Church itself, there were a number of developments and events that happened irrespective of the politico-religious dispute between Archbishop Gonzi and Labour leader Mintoff that dominated the late fifties and sixties. Of course, some events were a direct consequence of the mentioned dispute. The reforms resulting from the Vatican Council deserve to be analysed in a separate section in this chapter.

One of the most important events of the sixties was the Archbishop Ligutti’s mission which as stated earlier on in this work had the objective to put in order the administration of the Church property in the dioceses of Malta and Gozo. Archbishop Ligutti was suspended from the mission in March 1971 and Archbishop Lemieux was given the new task to continue with the reforms.¹³³ Inguanez argued that a strong element within the Lemieux group was the Maltese Jesuit Arthur Vella, who in his opinion, was catalyst for the team to bring and move forward the necessary reforms revolving around the concept of the Church as a beacon of social justice and poverty.¹³⁴ The mentioned team ended its mission in just four months and then it was the turn of Canon Mason to implement the reforms as asked in the *Documento di Base*.¹³⁵ According to Inguanez, the referred to document was more radical than the McKinsey report produced by the Ligutti mission.¹³⁶

Following Malta’s Independence, the Nuncio’s office was permanently established in Malta. The first one to occupy the seat full time was Archbishop Giuseppe Mojoli from Bergamo.

¹³² Joseph Borg, *Religion and the Mass Media in Malta, op.cit.*, 32.

¹³³ Charles Buttigieg, *Mikiel Gonzi: Hamsin Sena fit-Tmum, op.cit.*, 171.

¹³⁴ Joe Inguanez, ‘B’Xejn Hadtu, B’Xejn Aghtu,’ Joseph Borg et al., (eds.), *Arthur G’ Vella, S.J. F’Kollox inħobb u Naqdi* (Malta, Klabb Kotba Maltin, 2021), 127.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, 128.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*

Whilst in office, it emerged that Archbishop Mojoli “felt sad, solitary, lonely and often demotivated with little work to do... In fact, he came to the conclusion that there was no need for a full time Nuncio for Malta.”¹³⁷ Furthermore, Archbishop Mojoli wrote that during his Malta stay “*non ne potevo più.*”¹³⁸ Archbishop Mojoli was very critical of the Maltese politicians and the Maltese bishops.¹³⁹ According to Nuncio Mojoli, Archbishop Gonzi showed great respect to the Pope and the Holy See and had a great sense of duty but the reforms demanded by Vatican II were making slow process.¹⁴⁰

During this period, two new Maltese bishops were appointed by the Vatican – Mgr Emanuel Gerada from Żejtun was appointed as an Auxiliary Bishop to Archbishop Gonzi and Mgr Nikol Cauchi from Għarb was chosen as Gozo’s Apostolic *Administrator sede plena*.¹⁴¹ Bishop Gerada, before the Malta appointment, had served the Church within its diplomatic wing. Meanwhile, Archbishop Gonzi was also facing pressure to relinquish his episcopal seat. When the issue was raised, Archbishop Gonzi would quote the instructions given to him by Pope Paul VI – “*Usque ad finem*” (To the very end).¹⁴² During Bishop Day held in 1968, Archbishop Gonzi claimed that he had twice tendered his resignation to Pope Paul VI, and that on each occasion, the Pontiff had refused it. “Paul VI advised me to stay where I was, and offered me the help I might need.”¹⁴³ From a meeting between Sir Maurice Dorman, the Governor of Malta, and the Pope, it transpired that Pope Paul VI referred to Archbishop Gonzi as that great tiny man.¹⁴⁴

A key event in the nineteen-sixties was the peace treaty between the Malta Church and the Malta Labour Party. By April 1969, when a truce between the two parts was signed, as we shall see later, a number of reforms were enacted within the Malta Church as a result of the Second Vatican Council. Furthermore, on Archbishop Gonzi’s initiative, the interdict was lifted a few days after the granting of Independence.¹⁴⁵ That move was a great leap forward. On 17th June 1966, the Malta Church lifted the ban on the Labour newspapers that had been issued in May

¹³⁷ Sergio Grech, ‘Nuncio Giuseppe Mojoli’s Malta Experience,’ *Arkivju* 2019, 3.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, 6.

¹³⁹ Sergio Grech, ‘Malta f’Għajnejn in-Nunzju Mojoli,’ *Kultura* 4, 37.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁴¹ ‘Titwiliet tal-Ġimgha – Isqof Awżiljarju Ġdid,’ *Lehen is-Sewwa*, 7 Mar. 1967, 4.

¹⁴² Arthur Said Pullicino in Claire Xuereb Grech, *op.cit.*, 242.

¹⁴³ *Malta News*, 22nd Januaray 1968, 1.

¹⁴⁴ *FO 371/1472045*, Peter Scarlett, from the British Legation to the Holy See to E.E. Tomkins, Foreign Office dated 15 Nov. 1963 in *Church and State in Malta*, The National Archives of the United Kingdom, Kew.

¹⁴⁵ ‘Rigal tal-Knisja fl-Indipendenza: L-Arèisqof jaħfer l-Interdett,’ *Il-Haddiem*, 24 Sep. 1964, 1.

1961. The Labour Party in its annual report for that year declared that the ban had been lifted without any apology or submission from the party's end.¹⁴⁶ During the peace talks, Archbishop Gonzi spoke once again of his mistrust of Mr Mintoff.¹⁴⁷

The peace process was far from an uneasy enterprise and involved several Church dignitaries like Archbishop Cardinale and Nuncio O'Connor, apart from Bishop Gerada and other local personalities. In fact, "various attempts were made, between 1962 and 1969, to reconcile the Malta Church and the Malta Labour Party following the tense relationship that had resulted from the Integration issue and subsequently by Labour leader Mr Dominic Mintoff's decision in 1959 to confront head-on the local Church institution which, in his view, had been hindering the fulfilment of his policies."¹⁴⁸ Different sources pointed out that Archbishop Gonzi was not being briefed by Bishop Gerada about his negotiations with Mr Mintoff.¹⁴⁹

Behind closed doors, according to Mgr Said Pullicino, who was involved in the discussions which led to the accord, Archbishop Gonzi was objecting to the agreement.¹⁵⁰ It seemed that the Holy See was not convinced of the clause "*Il-Knisja ma timponix id-dnub il-mejjet bhala ċensura*" since from a canonical point of view that position meant absolutely nothing for the said institution.¹⁵¹ Mgr Lawrence Gatt shared the same opinion with the present author regarding the significance of the clause.¹⁵² Mgr Arthur Said Pullicino confirmed with the present author that he himself had written the text of the agreement and that Mr Mintoff had expressed a wish to have included in the peace treaty a reference to mortal sin.¹⁵³ In a letter sent to Cardinal Cicognani four days after the deal was struck, Archbishop Gonzi commented that "*la lunga dolorosa questione così chiamata politico-religiosa... è stata in un certo senso chiusa.*"¹⁵⁴ He also added that "*Io sarò a Roma il giorno 16 del corrente mese e mi farò premura di far visita a Vostra Eminenza, quando darò anche spiegazioni dell'aggiunta nella*

¹⁴⁶ *Konferenza Annwali: Rapport Annwali 1966/67* (Malta, Malta Labour Party, 1967), 13.

¹⁴⁷ Letter from Archbishop Michael Gonzi to Bishop Emanuel Galea dated 24th October 1964 in ACM, *Fondo Galea, Box 10*.

¹⁴⁸ Sergio Grech, 'The Road to the Malta Church – Labour Party Peace Accord (1969),' *Arkivju 2021*, 37.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 42.

¹⁵⁰ Taped interview Mgr Arthur Said Pullicino, Private Residence, Sliema, 23rd October, 2016, Sergio Grech Private Collection.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁵² Taped interview Mgr Lawrence Gatt Archbishop's Curia, Floriana, 5th July 2015, Sergio Grech Private Collection.

¹⁵³ Taped interview Mgr Arthur Said Pullicino, Private Residence, Sliema, 23rd October 2016, Sergio Grech Private Collection.

¹⁵⁴ Letter from Archbishop Michael Gonzi to Cardinal Amleto Giovanni Cicognani dated 8th April 1969 in AAM: *Fondo Gonzi, Corrispondenza 1969, Vol. LXIII*.

*dichiarazione delle parole: LA CHIESA NON IMPONE IL PECCATO MORTALE COME CENSURA.*¹⁵⁵ The clause was typed in capital letters. Archbishop Gonzi further maintained that Archbishop Gerada's role in the process had been sanctioned by himself and by Apostolic Administrator for Gozo Mgr Nikol Ġ. Cauchi.¹⁵⁶

The Significance of the Second Vatican Council

The Second Vatican Council was an important chapter in the history of the Catholic Church in the twentieth century. It met in St Peter's Basilica in Rome for four sessions, each sitting lasting between two and three months, from 1962 to 1965. The council was opened on 11 October 1962 by Pope John XXIII and was brought to an end on 8 December 1965 by Pope Paul VI. The Vatican Council was the brainchild of Pope John XXIII.¹⁵⁷ Vatican II provided the Church with the opportunity of reflecting on its original vocation and mission, including the imperative route to discern carefully the meaning of the changes that were going on, rather very rapidly, throughout the world. As Faggioli reasoned out, the Second Vatican Council was not only a religious event but also an institutional event.¹⁵⁸ Furthermore, Vatican II presented the Church as "shaped by poverty not in the sense of material deprivation, but of deprivation of unnecessary cultural and ideological baggage, which is a real burden for a pilgrim community."¹⁵⁹

Archbishop Gonzi attended the Vatican Council's sessions on a regular basis. It is interesting to note that Archbishop Gonzi's initial impressions of Pope John XXIII were poor. In fact, according to Fr Joseph Pace, Archbishop Gonzi had followed the election of Pope John XXIII at the seminary with the seminarians undertaking the course for the priesthood thanks to the television set that Rector Reverend Pantalleresco had bought for the seminary. The same source goes on explaining that Archbishop Gonzi's reactions regarding the new Pope was "lil dan għażlu?"¹⁶⁰ To be fair, that feeling was commonly felt within the Catholic world when Pope John XXIII took over the leadership of the Church. But at the end of the day, John XXIII's pontificate, albeit being brief, left a long legacy. "Since he (Pope John) was not Roman, he sought to shift power away from the Roman Curia and towards the local Bishop. He named the

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

¹⁵⁷ Lawrenz Cachia, *Konċilju* (Malta, The Author, 2012), 11.

¹⁵⁸ Massimo Faggioli, 'Vatican II: The History and Narratives,' *Theological Studies*, 73, (2012), 750.

¹⁵⁹ Massimo Faggioli, 'Vatican II and the Church of the Margins,' *Theological Studies*, 74, (2013), 811.

¹⁶⁰ Ġużeppi Pace, *X'ma qalx il-Konċilju* (Malta, KQN, 2002), 22.

conservative but independent (Cardinal Domenico) Tardini as his Secretary of State, much to Tardini's surprise."¹⁶¹

The grand novelty of the Second Vatican Council was that “from the beginning of the nineteenth century up until John XXIII's pontificate, the Popes and the Holy See had usually formed public statements in negative terms of warning and condemnation, even when proposing a positive solution...”¹⁶² The Second Vatican Council, by altering this plan of action and embracing change, created a paradigm shift. As Kelly noted, Pope John XXIII, supposedly a transitional pope and not a vanguard, did not call the council “to deal with specific errors but in the awareness that the Church was living in a new time when the world was rapidly changing.”¹⁶³ As a result of the new wave, the Catholic Church no longer looked at the world as an antagonist.¹⁶⁴ The Catholic Church had also recognised the progress which was taking place in the scientific field after having over the years developed a terse relationship with science and with other aspects of the post-modern world. “The choice made by Pope John was in stark contrast with the siege mentality (enemy culture) which had been prevalent in the Church for a number of years. This new attitude prepared the Church to be what it was meant to be, that is to say a sign and instrument of unity.”¹⁶⁵ The Council produced a more humble Church.¹⁶⁶ As stated in the second chapter, Vatican Council Two argued that the office of the bishop was of a threefold nature – to govern, to teach and to sanctify.

Of utmost importance was the fact that after the Second Vatican Council, the Catholic Church stopped regarding itself as the hierarchical *societas perfecta* par excellence. The term ‘societas perfecta’ is used here in the sense as employed by Pope Leo XIII who had described Church and State as two principal societies. The pope argued that each society was free to carry out its mission.¹⁶⁷ Civil society was responsible for the temporal good while the Church had to work for the individual's spiritual well-being. Still, this independence between the two realms did

¹⁶¹ Patrick McCarthy, *Italy since 1945* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2000), 142.

¹⁶² John W. O'Malley, *What happened at Vatican II* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 2008), 18.

¹⁶³ Gerard Kelly, ‘The impact of the Second Vatican Council,’ *Australasian Catholic Record*, 91, (2), (4), (2014), <https://search-proquest-com.ejournals.um.edu.mt/docview/1547876457/fulltext/EEC6BFFB04B94D2CPQ/1?accountid=27934>.

¹⁶⁴ Edward Farrugia, ‘Vatican II: An Exchange of Gifts,’ *Melita Theologica*, 64, (1), (2014), 69.

¹⁶⁵ Jimmy Bonnici, “The Understanding of “Renewal” in Pope John XXIII,” in Emanuel Agius and Hector Scerri, (eds.), *The Quest for Authenticity and Human Dignity, A Festschrift in honour of Professor George Grima on his 70th Birthday, Melita Theologica Supplementary Series 6* (Malta, University of Malta, 2015), 131.

¹⁶⁶ Patrick McCarthy, *Italy since 1945, op.cit.*, 143.

¹⁶⁷ Leslie Griffin, ‘The Integration of Spiritual and Temporal Contemporary Roman Catholic Church-State Theory,’ *Theological Studies*, 48, (1987), 227.

not signify a total or complete separation between the two societies. As a matter of fact, Church and State needed to work together for the well-being of mankind¹⁶⁸ and the latter was obliged to protect and not hinder the former. The new bend emphasised that the Church was the aggregation of the People of God: the communion of those united in Christ through baptism. From that point onwards, the Church's main concern had to be the salvific mission of Christ which was not limited to a particular creed, as the pre-Conciliar Church had preached but was universal to mankind.

The religious freedom position that the Second Vatican Council embraced was one of the most crucial achievements of the council, if not the most important. In fact, the Vatican Council declared "that the human person has a right to religious freedom. This freedom means that all men are to be immune from coercion on the part of individuals or of social groups and of any human power, in such a way that no one is to be forced to act in a manner contrary to his own beliefs, whether privately or publicly, whether alone or in association with others, within due limits."¹⁶⁹ The council further stated that "the right to religious freedom has its foundation in the very dignity of the human person as this dignity is known through the revealed word of God and by reason itself. This right of the human person to religious freedom is to be recognised in the constitutional law whereby society is governed and thus it is to become a civil right."¹⁷⁰ As Shields noted, "up to the early 1950s the "official" attitude of the Catholic Church, as represented in its text-books of Canon Law and even in the unthinking spontaneity of the faithful in general, was, at best, one of religious tolerance. It never countenanced the right of religious freedom in general. The Declaration on Religious Freedom of Vatican II marked a significant stage in the development of the Catholic Church's doctrine on the subject. Especially, it was in *Dignitatis Humanae* that for the first time a Church document proclaimed the fundamental and equal right of all men to freedom in religious matters. It was this document as well which in 1965, for the very first time, stated that the reason why all men had this right was because of their dignity as human persons."¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹ *Declaration on Religious Freedom: Dignitatis Humanae, On the Right of the Person and the Communities to Social and Civil Freedom in Matters Religious*, Retrieved 31st December 2021, https://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decl_19651207_dignitatis-humanae_en.html.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ Victor Shields, 'Religious Freedom: Doctrinal Development in Vatican II,' *Melita Theologica*, 34, (1), (1983), 12.

Thanks to Mgr Salvino Bartoli Galea,¹⁷² Mgr Carmelo Sant, Bishop Nicholas J. Cauchi,¹⁷³ Ġwann Frendo OP,¹⁷⁴ Valentin Barbara OP,¹⁷⁵ and the Maltese branch of the Order of Preachers, the documents emerging from the Second Vatican Council were translated into Maltese. Furthermore, Mgr Joseph Lupi, a lecturer in Patristic and Liturgy Studies at the Faculty of Theology at the University of Malta, translated amongst others the “biblical texts that were needed for the liturgy into more spoken Maltese.”¹⁷⁶

Archbishop Gonzi and the Second Vatican Council

Although Archbishop Gonzi attended nearly all the meetings held during the Second Vatican Council, it emerged that he addressed the plenary session only once. On that particular instance Archbishop Gonzi argued against the retirement of bishops on their seventy-fifth birthday. Archbishop Gonzi was reported of having insisted that the bishops were not civil servants and should not be pensioned off when they reach the retirement age of 75.¹⁷⁷ Archbishop Gonzi argued that the episcopal office was of divine right and therefore it was perpetual.¹⁷⁸ According to Mgr Lawrenz Cachia, Archbishop Gonzi had as well intended to address the sessions discussing the religious freedom theme but, for some unknown reason, this never materialised.¹⁷⁹ One should keep in mind that Archbishop Gonzi’s frame of mind was formed by the doctrine that was enacted at the Council of Trent and the First Vatican Council. Of course, he was not solitary in his criticism. For instance, Cardinal Ruffini was very critical of the Schema 13 that later was to be named *Gaudium et Spes*.¹⁸⁰

Still, when the time was ripe to implement changes, Archbishop Gonzi did not shy away or hesitate. As Mgr Lawrence Cachia explained, Archbishop Gonzi’s sense of duty and his infinite love for the Catholic Church were the main explanations for his not resisting changes, and thus key reforms demanded by the Second Vatican Council were enacted.¹⁸¹ In fact, Canon Benny Tonna, a priest-sociologist who graduated from the University of Louvain, was aiding the

¹⁷² *L-Apostolat tal-Lajċi: Id-Digriet Apostolicam Actuositatem tal-Konċilju Vatikan II* (Malta, Azzjoni Kattolika Maltija, 1966).

¹⁷³ *Id-Dmirijiet Pastorali tal-Isgfijiet: Id-Digriet Chritus Dominus tal-Konċilju Vatikan II* (Malta, Azzjoni Kattolika Maltija, 1970).

¹⁷⁴ *Il-Kostituzzjoni Sacrosanctum Concilium Dwar il-Liturġija* (Malta, Lux Press, 1966).

¹⁷⁵ *Id-Digriet Optatam Totius fuq il-Formazzjoni Saċerdotali* (Malta, Lux Press, 1969).

¹⁷⁶ Paul Sciberras, ‘The Tradition of Religious Translations in Malta,’ *Melita Theologica*, 68 (1), (8), 59.

¹⁷⁷ Arthur Said Pullicino in *L-Elf Lewn ta’ Mintoff, op.cit.*, 243.

¹⁷⁸ Michael Galea and Emmanuel S. Tonna, *L-Arċisqof Gonzi, Vol. 3, op.cit.*, 25.

¹⁷⁹ Lawrenz Cachia, *Konċilju* (Malta, The Author, 2012), 23.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 15.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*

archbishop in that matter. Archbishop Gonzi himself had commented to Mgr Ġwann Dimech, his chaplain, that there were instances when he felt awed whilst following the speeches at the Second Vatican Council.¹⁸² According to Galea, Archbishop Gonzi's biographer, even before the date of the Council was announced, Archbishop Gonzi had founded a commission with the *raison d'être* to promote the Council's teachings.¹⁸³ One should also add that during Archbishop Gonzi's sojourn in Rome for the Council, talks were being held between Mr Mintoff and Archbishop Gonzi presided by Archbishop Cardinale.¹⁸⁴ Benny Tonna was of the opinion that the Vatican at this stage was pressing Archbishop Gonzi to arrive at a settlement with Mr Mintoff.¹⁸⁵

This period was also characterised by the input in favour of reform given by the priestly organisation *Christus Rex* through its magazine *Pastor*. The majority of the contributors in this local clergy magazine was adamant on reform and renewal and, from time to time, kept harping the point that a spirit of lethargy rather than restructuring was present in the Malta Church. According to Mgr Lawrence Cachia, *Pastor's* board was not independent of the Church and Archbishop Gonzi asked Bishop Galea to go through the articles that the magazine directorship intended to publish. But it seemed that there were only two occasions that Bishop Galea asked for corrections.¹⁸⁶

Still, the mentioned society acted independently from the Archbishop's Curia, and one also gets the impression from the reading of their magazine that at times *Christus Rex* was expecting the implementation of Vatican II's theology overnight. Here there is another point that needs to be underlined. The fact that these members of the clergy could voice their concerns and arguments in public was a clear sign of freedom of expression within the Malta Church and contradicted the idea that Archbishop Gonzi was a sort of a tyrannical leader.

New Structures promulgated within the Malta Church

In 1966, the Maltese diocese set up the Pastoral Council. Its members represented the clergy and the laity and these were chosen directly by the bishop of the diocese. Malta was one of the

¹⁸² Ġwann Dimech, 'Hekk kont narah lill-Arċisqof Gonzi,' *Pastor*, Frar 1994, 20.

¹⁸³ Michael Galea and Emmanuel S. Tonna, *L-Arċisqof Gonzi, Vol. 3, op.cit.*, 19.

¹⁸⁴ Henry Frendo, *The Origins of the Maltese Statehood, op.cit.*,

¹⁸⁵ Lawrenz Cachia, *Konċilju, op.cit.*, 16.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 22.

first dioceses in the Catholic world to have instituted such councils.¹⁸⁷ The decree *Christus Dominus*, one of Vatican II's key documents, defined the roles of the Pope and the bishops as teachers and pastors and referred to the importance of the setting up of a pastoral council in the diocese. It stated that "in every diocese, a special pastoral council be established, over which the diocesan bishop himself presides and in which clergy, religious and laity specially chosen for the purpose will have a part. It will belong to this council to investigate, to consider, and to formulate practical conclusions about those things which pertain to pastoral works (*Christus Dominus*, 27)."¹⁸⁸ The pastoral council's main task was to prepare a pastoral plan for the diocese every five years. According to Tonna, a plan consisting of "eighty projects, each targeted at a particular dimension of the life of the People of God and proposing a series of initiatives for Clergy, Religious and Laity" was devised.¹⁸⁹ Their importance was also emphasised by the Synod of the Bishops held in 1971.¹⁹⁰ But according to Mgr Pace that plan was never implemented.¹⁹¹ At one point, Union Press journalist Anton Cassar, an active supporter of Mr Mintoff's policies, was appointed by Archbishop Gonzi to serve on the Council and that was a clear sign that change was in fact happening.

The Pastoral Council should not be mistaken with the Presbyterial Council which was founded in Malta in 1967. This was another key organ expected by the Second Vatican Council and mentioned in the decree *Presbyterorum Ordinis*.¹⁹² The document stipulated that priests had to be advisors and helpers to their bishops, and insisted that "a group or senate of priests should be set up in a way suited to present-day needs and in a form and with rules to be determined by law. This group should represent the body of priests and by their advice should effectively help the bishop in the management of the diocese."¹⁹³ On 21 October 1966, Archbishop Gonzi wrote to Cardinal Palazzini to clarify the roles that the Cathedral Chapter and the Presbyterial Council would play after the Second Vatican Council.¹⁹⁴ Incidentally the 1917 Code had

¹⁸⁷ M.A. Camilleri, 'Biex il-Kunsill Presbiterjali jiffuzzjona aħjar,' *Pastor*, June 1976, 14.

¹⁸⁸ John A. Renken, 'Diocesan/Eparchial Pastoral Councils: Historical Development, Canon Law, and Practical Considerations,' Retrieved 4th February 2019, http://uscce.org/about/laity-marriage-family-life-and-youth/laity/upload/Historical-Development-Canon-Law-and-Practical-Considerations_09-25-2017.pdf.

¹⁸⁹ Benjamin Tonna, 'Pastoral Planning in Malta,' University of Malta Library, Retrieved on 10th January 2019, [https://www.um.edu.mt/library/oar/bitstream/handle/123456789/37332/MT_46\(1\)_A1.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y](https://www.um.edu.mt/library/oar/bitstream/handle/123456789/37332/MT_46(1)_A1.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y), 4.

¹⁹⁰ M.A. Camilleri, 'Biex il-Kunsill Presbiterjali jiffuzzjona aħjar,' *Pastor*, June 1976, 14.

¹⁹¹ Ġużeppi Pace, *X'ma qalx il-Konċilju* (Malta, Klabb Qari Nisrani, 2002), 20.

¹⁹² *Id-Dokumenti tal-Konċilju Ekumeniku Vatikan II* (Malta, Edizzjoni Studia, 2003), 301.

¹⁹³ *Id-Dokumenti tal-Konċilju Ekumeniku Vatikan II*, *op.cit.*, 309.

¹⁹⁴ Letter from Archbishop Michael Gonzi to Cardinal Michele Palazzini dated 21st October 1966 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza 1966, Vol. LX*.

established a number of minimal circumstances that required the bishop to get the consent or counsel of the Cathedral Chapter.¹⁹⁵ As a result of this reform, that is the setting up of the Presbyterial Council, the Maltese diocese had been divided into twelve districts, and each district fielded its respective representatives that this time round were elected and not handpicked. And that was an absolute innovation. There were twenty-two seats to be filled. Members included the local bishops and the representatives of other bodies within the Church like the College of the Parish Priests, the Cathedral Chapter and the religious orders.¹⁹⁶ In 1976, *Christus Rex* lamented that this particular body achieved very little.¹⁹⁷ It strongly believed that this unit was far from a discussing forum. According to the mentioned organisation, decisions were taken at a higher level before being discussed by members of the council, and the board was expected to be a rubber stamp.¹⁹⁸ It seemed that even in the diocese of Gozo the exercise did not do particularly well.¹⁹⁹ Mgr Arthur Said Pullicino sustained with the present writer that the mentioned council was not a plain-sailing initiative since Archbishop Gonzi was of a different school of thought. As a pre-conciliar bishop, Archbishop Gonzi used to decide and impose rather than discuss.²⁰⁰ Mgr Lupi maintained that the mentioned council was not conveyed in the last two years of Archbishop Gonzi's episcopate. Moreover, Lupi was taken to task by the council when he mentioned that the new funerary rites, demanded by Vatican II, would remove differences between bishops, priests, and the poor lot.²⁰¹ Lupi also added that Archbishop Gonzi did not like this arrangement.²⁰²

In 1974, it was the parish councils' turn to be launched by the Malta Church. Vatican II's *Decree on the Laity* had recommended councils at the parish level (para 26).²⁰³ This instrument was to be purely consultative in nature, and the council members were to be chosen by the parish priest. For instance Żabbar's pastoral council, during the leadership of Reverend Joseph Zarb, had members representing the clergy, village educational institutions, band clubs and the

¹⁹⁵ John E. Okosun, *The Collaborative Role of the Presbyterial Council in the Governance of a Diocese* (Doctor of Canon Law, Faculty of Canon Law Saint Paul University, Canada, 2012), https://ruor.uottawa.ca/bitstream/10393/30176/1/Okosun_John_2012_thesis.pdf, 44.

¹⁹⁶ Karm Cassar, 'Il-Presbyterium u l-Consilium Presbyterale,' *Pastor*, June 1967, 33.

¹⁹⁷ 'Is-Senat Presbiterali,' *Pastor*, January 1971, 7.

¹⁹⁸ 'Il-Kunsill Presbiterali,' *Pastor*, April 1976, 494.

¹⁹⁹ Albert Curmi, 'Il-Presbyteria Parrokkjali f'Għawdex,' *Pastor*, September-October 1979, 2.

²⁰⁰ Taped interview Mgr Arthur Said Pullicino, Private Residence, Sliema, 23rd October, 2016, Sergio Grech Private Collection.

²⁰¹ Ġużeppi Lupi, *Tifkiriet u Stqarrijiet: Awtobijografija* (Malta, Publishers Enterprises Group, 2002), 263.

²⁰² *Ibid.*

²⁰³ *Decree on the Laity*, Retrieved on 3rd February 2019,

https://w2.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decree_19651118_apostolicam-actuositatem_en.html.

locality's football club.²⁰⁴ But according to Vassallo, the parish councils encouraged “the diffusion of religious ideology as constructed” by the parish's religious leader.²⁰⁵ A statute that guided the prospective members of the parish councils was also published.²⁰⁶

A laudable move was the setting-up of the Pastoral Research Services (PRS). According to Archbishop Gonzi, “this centre will furnish pastoral action with the data required for that diagnosis which puts Diocesan Authorities in a position to issue practical and adequate directives and to obtain timely forecasts of situations and developments of special interest to the religious life of the Archdiocese.”²⁰⁷ During 1965, the Malta Church founded the Kummissjoni Liturgika Nazzjonali. Amongst the commission aims, one finds the explanation to the public of the new rites as promulgated by the Church.²⁰⁸

Vatican II emphasised the optimal size of a parish. After 1964, Archbishop Gonzi had founded no less than thirteen new parishes.²⁰⁹ These were Fgura (1965), San Ġwann (1965), Marija Reġina Marsa (1967), Kuncizzjoni Hamrun (1967), St Augustine Valletta (1968), Ta' Xbiex (1969), Santa Luċija (1969), Burmarrad (1971), San Ġużepp Haddiem Birkirkara (1973), Nazzarenu Sliema (1973),²¹⁰ Balluta (1974), Fleur-de-Lys (1974) and Lourdes Paola (1974). The establishment of the Santa Luċija parish was an important project for Archbishop Gonzi. According to the first parish priest of Santa Luċija, Mgr Joseph Bugeja, the archbishop himself took a lot of interest in the parish's development.²¹¹ It was Archbishop Gonzi who brought the building plan for the village church from Italy and it is believed that it was Archbishop Gonzi himself “who, besides the money forfeited by the Curia, contributed a large sum of money the amount of which he never wanted to be disclosed.”²¹² The new church was expected to cater for one thousand persons. In the pastoral letter announcing the foundation of the parish, Archbishop Gonzi referred to the Vatican II's document *Christus Dominus* which emphasised

²⁰⁴ Ġużeppi Zarb, *Żjara lill-Parroċċa ta' Haż-Żabbar* (Malta, Parroċċa Haż-Żabbar, 1972), 36.

²⁰⁵ Mario Vassallo, *From Leadership to Stewardship: Religion and Social Change in Malta, op.cit.*, 235.

²⁰⁶ *Il-Kunsill Parrokjali* (Malta, Kulleġġ tal-Kappillani, KDAL, 1974).

²⁰⁷ See back cover of *Religious Values among University Students* (Malta, PRS, 1968).

²⁰⁸ Ġużeppi Lupi, *Xi jfissru r-Riti ġodda tal-Magħmudija u l-Griżma* (Malta, Kummissjoni Liturgika Nazzjonali, 1973).

²⁰⁹ Adrianus Koster, ‘*The Kappillani: The Changing Position of the Parish Priest in Malta*,’ Offprint from Eric R. Wolf (ed.), *Religion, Power and Protest in Local Communities: The Northern Shore of the Mediterranean* (Mouton Publishers, Berlin, 1984), 192.

²¹⁰ Pastoral Letter Archbishop Gonzi dated 18th August 1973.

²¹¹ Taped interview Mgr Joseph Bugeja, 7th March 2018, St John's Co-Cathedral, Sergio Grech Private Collection.

²¹² Retrieved 6th March 2021, http://www.santalucijaparishmalta.com/church_history1.php.

that parish units were founded to sanctify the souls. The parish priest was expected to sanctify, teach and lead.²¹³ The first parish priest of the mentioned parish had served Archbishop Gonzi for a brief period as his chaplain.

The setting up of new parishes occasionally led to disappointments. For instance, the setting up of the St Augustine parish in Valletta led to protests by the Carmelite community. In a letter that the community sent to Archbishop Gonzi, the Carmelite community clearly manifested its disappointment arguing that theirs was the first sacramental church in the city and that theirs was one of the most popular churches in Valletta.²¹⁴ The community sustained that they gave communion to 186,000 persons annually and that, on the first Friday of each month, they distributed the sacrament to sixty ill people in private homes.²¹⁵ The Carmelites further argued that even during the Second World War, their community had continued to do its best in the given circumstances.²¹⁶

Vatican Council II expected the parish priest to work in tandem with his clergy. The parish priest had to be a man of authority without being an autocrat, “be able to listen, show empathy, and be merciful like a family father...”²¹⁷ The Vatican Council II’s *Christus Dominus* established that the parishes were to be founded for salvation of souls. *Christus Rex* introduced another important topic, that is to say the system of distribution of priests in local parishes. It believed that in the case of Malta, the system of distribution of priests was inefficient with the result that, according to the organisation, this was hindering evangelisation in Maltese society. That system, in the organisation’s view, badly needed to be adjusted. This went hand in hand with the fact that Malta’s population was on the increase. Therefore, a call for smaller parishes was inevitable since, given the circumstances, priests were not reaching all their parishioners.²¹⁸

Chiaramonti, a leading local columnist in *Malta News*, himself a member of the clergy cohort,²¹⁹ had argued that “the new housing estates occupied mostly by young couples need a

²¹³ Pastoral Letter Archbishop Gonzi dated 8th July 1969.

²¹⁴ Letter from Fr Manwel Gatt and Fr Tumas Gatt to Archbishop Michael Gonzi dated 25th January 1968 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza 1968, Vol. LXII*.

²¹⁵ Ibid.

²¹⁶ Ibid.

²¹⁷ Joseph Calleja, *op.cit.*, 10.

²¹⁸ Elija Vella, ‘Forum tax-Xahar,’ *Pastor*, May 1970, 344.

²¹⁹ This fact was confirmed to the present author by Mr Lino Spiteri who at the time was the editor of the newspaper. When asked for the name, Spiteri correctly refused to comment.

different approach from the old established communities. In industrial estates, the territorial parish is no use at all. Even in villages, many spend the greater part of the day away from their parish area and return only to sleep.”²²⁰ According to Reverend Alwiġ Deguara, a parish should not cater for more than 1,100 families.²²¹ In such a scenario, a parish would require the services of a parish priest and five other priests.

In the late sixties, Reverend Antoine Said Pullicino was of the opinion that even after the Second Vatican Council, the prevailing parish model in Malta was the medieval set-up in which the parish priest was the feudal lord, the vice parish priest was the servant, and the rest of the clergy were those who lent a helping hand.²²² Instead, he recommended the introduction of the curates’ model which entailed that, besides the parish priest, a number of priests would be assigned particular roles and would cater for the needs of a specific number of dwellers, having collegially a share in the parish’s administration.²²³ An issue that seemed to preoccupy Archbishop Gonzi in the last phase of his episcopate was the decreasing number of priests. It was estimated that in 1911 there was one priest for every 220 persons. By the year 1964, there was one priest for every 314 persons.²²⁴ Another reform was that the Ġunta Djoċesana tal-Għaqdiet tal-Lajċi was disbanded in 1968 and was replaced by KDAL.²²⁵ A lay president was chosen to lead it.

Wide-ranging Reforms in the Area of the Liturgy

Among the most engaging reforms demanded by the Second Vatican Council were those conducted in the fields of liturgy. Within the new scenario, the role of the priest during the celebration of mass was dramatically altered. The new arrangement meant that the priest would face the congregation, entering in dialogue and praying with the congregation as co-partners in faith in their own language. In pre-conciliar times, the priest would say mass in Latin giving the congregation his back, and people would spend the time reciting the rosary and would be totally distracted from what was occurring on the altar. At times, it also happened that more than one mass was said at the same time from different altars within the church.²²⁶

²²⁰ Chiamonti, *Malta News*, 20th February 1968, 7.

²²¹ Alwiġ Deguara, ‘Id-Daq tal-Parroċċa,’ *Pastor*, Ottubru 1987, 11.

²²² Antoine Said Pullicino, ‘Struttura Medjevali li qed tgħarraġ lill-Knisja,’ *Pastor*, June 1968, 15.

²²³ *Ibid.*, 16.

²²⁴ Carmelo Xuereb, ‘Forum tax-Xahar,’ *Pastor*, Mejju 1970, 347.

²²⁵ Charles Buttigieg, *Mikiel Gonzi: Hamsin Sena fit-Tmun, op.cit.*, 72.

²²⁶ George Cassar, *Minn tigris il-Qedem: Il-Mosta tfassal Ġrajjietha* (Malta, Kunsill Lokali Mosta, 2008), 30.

Therefore, this new way of saying mass involved two revolutionary deeds. The altars were turned around, and the ritual was to be expressed in the vernacular and not anymore in Latin. Mass was said in Maltese for the first time on Sunday 29th November 1964. This key development led to other developments including the translation into Maltese of the mass missal and of the biblical texts read during mass and the singing of hymns in Maltese. These were considerable challenges. By 1965, the mass missal was available in Maltese. Three years later it was the turn of the breviary to be translated into the Maltese language. Mgr Dimech noted that once the breviary in Maltese was available, Archbishop Gonzi disposed of the Latin version and commenced to use the Maltese version.²²⁷ By 1971, the liturgical texts were translated into the Maltese language.²²⁸ By the end of 1975, the New Testament was available in Maltese in a revised version by Mgr Sant.²²⁹ Oliver Friggieri and Augustinian Albert Borg collaborated together to produce new hymns in Maltese.²³⁰

According to Christus Rex, ninety-three per cent of the local population in 1968 appreciated the reforms and agreed with the decision that the Maltese language would be employed for mass and other rituals.²³¹ Still there was resistance from some local parish priests and other members of the local priesthood to turn around the altars, and some priests still preferred to use Latin and the pre-Conciliar form of the mass.²³² Christus Rex was also encouraging its priest members to change the way they preached in a way as to limit their homily at most to ten minutes.²³³

Another reform with everlasting effects was the decision to have the Saturday evening mass fulfilling the Sunday obligation. Archbishop Gonzi at first was sceptical about this.²³⁴ But by 1976, the archbishop noted that the Saturday evening mass was very popular with the local population.²³⁵ Inevitably, such reforms called for the use of new technological devices to be implanted in churches and chapels and were a crucial tool in the process of evangelisation.

²²⁷ Ġwann Dimech, *Unpublished Manuscript, op.cit.*

²²⁸ Ġuzeppi Lupi, *Tifkiriet u Stqarrijiet: Awtobijografija, op.cit.*, 254.

²²⁹ Paul Sciberras, 'The Tradition of Religious Translations in Malta,' *op.cit.*, 59.

²³⁰ Oliver Friggieri, *Fjuri li ma Jinxfix* (Malta, KKM, 2008), 384.

²³¹ 'Il-Predikazzjoni f'Malta,' *Pastor*, January 1968, 14.

²³² 'Nimitawhom,' *Pastor*, May 1967, 3.

²³³ Vincent Cilia, 'Il-Predikazzjoni f'Malta,' *Pastor*, Jannar 1968, 13.

²³⁴ Taped interview Mgr Arthur Said Pullicino, *op.cit.*

²³⁵ 'Malta Relazione Quinquennale 1971-75' in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza 1976, Vol LXX.*

Archbishop Gonzi felt hesitant about folk masses, and in January 1968 the members of the University Students Catholic Guild (USCG) were informed that, before giving a final decision on the matter, Archbishop Gonzi was still waiting for an answer from Rome concerning folk masses with the singing of folk-songs to the accompaniment of guitars.²³⁶ According to Peresso, Archbishop Gonzi was against the use of guitars in churches and was not so keen on poetry recitals in churches.²³⁷ Archbishop Gonzi rejected the concept of rock masses.²³⁸ One must also point out that Archbishop Gonzi often when in doubt sought the advice of the various Congregations within the Catholic Church. Other reforms included the withdrawal of the *bulletini tat-tqarbin*, the delivery of the first holy communion to children at the age of six and a half years,²³⁹ and the decrease in the fasting period.

Reforms in the Priestly Vestments

Other reforms demanded by the Second Vatican Council touched on the clergy's vestments and accessories. Deacons were to wear the dalmatic on the alb and the stole. The cappa was to be worn only by priests and not anymore by deacons and seminarians.²⁴⁰ Notwithstanding Vatican Council II, some local traditional priests still persisted to include in their attire "*bokkli*" (buckles), '*slaleb*' (pectoral crosses) and "*muzzetti*." (capas)²⁴¹ In 1971, the Vicar-General Bishop Galea announced that:²⁴²

1. "È assolutamente proibito l'uso della seta nelle loro vesti canonicali;²⁴³
2. È abolito l'uso della cappamagna;²⁴⁴
3. È abolito l'uso del cappuccetto nella mozzetta."²⁴⁵

²³⁶ Letter from Archbishop Michael Gonzi to USCG Committee dated 30th January 1968 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza 1968, Vol. LXII*.

²³⁷ Taped interview George Peresso, Private Residence, Fleur-de-Lys, 18th October 2017, Sergio Grech Private Collection.

²³⁸ Taped interview Arthur Said Pullicino, *op.cit.*

²³⁹ Circular Letter No 388 dated 23rd November 1971.

²⁴⁰ Circular 419 dated 9th October 1973.

²⁴¹ SAV, 'Riforma fl-Estrem,' *Pastor*, May 1968, 28.

²⁴² Letter from Archbishop Michael Gonzi dated 23rd November 1971 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza 1971, Vol. LXV*.

²⁴³ 'The use of silk in religious vestments is strictly prohibited.'

²⁴⁴ 'The use of the cappamagna (great cape) has been abolished.'

²⁴⁵ 'The use of the hood when wearing the mozzetta has been abolished.'

According to Zammit McKeon, Archbishop Gonzi followed such instructions without any hesitation.²⁴⁶ But it seems that the situation did not last long. When Mgr Zarb was appointed canon of the Cathedral Chapter, he appeared on his first public occasion wearing a mitre, an old practice which had been abolished by the Second Vatican Council. According to Koster, Archbishop Gonzi had somehow negotiated permission with the Vatican for his Cathedral Chapter to wear the mitre.²⁴⁷ In fact, in April 1975 a number of monsignors from the Mdina Cathedral Chapter demanded “*l’uso della mitra e se è possibile anche della croce pettorale soltanto in quelle circostanze quando formiamo un quid unum coi nostri colleghi.*”²⁴⁸

Archbishop Gonzi had approved the use of the clergyman which according to Lupi was not welcomed with enthusiasm by the local priests cohort. The same source goes on explaining that Archbishop Gonzi was not that supportive of the gothic chasubles.²⁴⁹

Dramatic Reforms in the Field of Evangelisation

An interesting development in the period after Second Vatican Council was the decision by the Malta Church to invest in print technology, firmly believing that the mentioned media had more everlasting effects than the pulpit. Besides, the newspaper *Il-Hajja* was introduced to serve, as originally meant, as an independent voice. A new printing project was established in Blata l-Bajda and it was estimated that £60,000 were needed to cover the expenses to set up a printing press.²⁵⁰ In this period, Avery Dulles, theologian and cardinal of the Catholic Church, insisted that the Church "cannot wall itself up in a cultural ghetto at a time when humanity as a whole was passing into the electronic age."²⁵¹

In line with the Catholic Church’s document *Communio et Progressio*, the Church in Malta not only launched the mentioned printing press, but increased its input in the other media sources like radio and television. The latter was an innovative medium but as stated elsewhere radio service had been available in Malta since the nineteen-thirties. The Church described the new

²⁴⁶ Taped interview Mgr Victor Zammit McKeon, Office for the Running of the Church’s Children’s Homes, Valletta, 14th September 2015, Sergio Grech Private Collection.

²⁴⁷ Adrianus Koster, *Church and State Intervention in Feasts and Rituals in Independent Malta* (Netherlands, Free University, 1982), 13.

²⁴⁸ Letter to Archbishop Michael Gonzi dated 1st April 1975 in AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza 1975, Vol. LXIX*.

²⁴⁹ Gużepi Lupi, *Tifkiriet u Stqarrijiet: Awtobijografija, op.cit.*, 282.

²⁵⁰ *Hajja Kattolika*, Album Tony C. Terribile, NAM, 164,

²⁵¹ William F. Fore, “Television and Religion: The Shaping of Faith, Values and Culture,” Retrieved 23rd April 2021, <https://www.religion-online.org/book-chapter/chapter-three-a-theology-of-communication/>.

media “as gifts of God.”²⁵² The Church argued that “the total output of the media in any given area should be judged by the contribution it makes to the common good. Its news, culture and entertainment should meet the growing needs of society. The news of something that has happened must be given and so too must the background of the event so that people can understand society’s problems and work for their solution. A proper balance must be kept, not only between hard news, educational material and entertainment but also between the light and the more serious forms of that entertainment.”²⁵³ In the history of the church, “Pope Pius XI was the first to speak about radio explaining both the positive and the negative aspects of this new means of social communication.”²⁵⁴ “During the 42 years which preceded the Second Vatican Council there were 42 documents or pronouncements on the broadcasting media in which 16 topics were treated.”²⁵⁵

The Malta Church also focused its energy on the training of its personnel to make good and effective use of the media. The local Church was feeling that radio, television and the press were the modern pulpit. During 1968 “the weekly average of religious broadcasts on sound was 4.92 hours while the output for television was 0.69 hours.”²⁵⁶ *Djalogu* in 1967 was discussing topics like “ecumenism, the sizes of the parish in the Maltese Islands, housing and gambling.”²⁵⁷

In 1971, MTV (the national TV station) offered 25 minutes a week for religious material while Rediffusion offered almost six hours.²⁵⁸ Borg showed that under the Labour government of the seventies, when the government took control of state broadcasting, the time allocated to religious programmes was heftily decreased.²⁵⁹ Labour in government in the seventies was perusing a policy in favour of secularisation but this was also the period when the Labour Government took over the broadcasting from the Rediffusion’s company. Furthermore, Mr

²⁵² *Communio et Progressio*, Retrieved 23rd December 2021, https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/pccs/documents/rc_pc_pccs_doc_23051971_communio_en.htm

²⁵³ Ibid.

²⁵⁴ Carl-Mario Sultana, *Radio at the Service of the Church* (S.T.H.L., University of Malta, 2008), 41.

²⁵⁵ Ibid.

²⁵⁶ Janet Debrincat, *Religious Broadcasting in Malta: A History of Religious Broadcasting in Malta on Rediffusion, Xandir Malta and PBS with particular attention to how it was affected by political, constitutional, organizational and technological Changes* (B.A. Communications, University of Malta, 1994), 20.

²⁵⁷ Ibid., 19.

²⁵⁸ C.G., Vella, ‘A Centre for Sound and T.V. Religious Broadcasting,’ *The Sunday Times of Malta*, 12th March 1972, 8.

²⁵⁹ Joseph Borg, *Religion and the Mass Media in Malta, op.cit.*, 187.

Mintoff never forgot Archbishop Gonzi's radio speech in the fifties in which the latter condemned Integration and encouraged instead a no-vote against Integration. This might explain partially this decrease.

In Malta, by 1971 "one priest was fully trained at the BBC, while four clergymen, one layman, and one nun took short courses at the Catholic Radio and Television Centre in London Training Centre."²⁶⁰ When MTV was inaugurated in 1962, Rev. C.G. Vella was responsible "to organise, produce and supervise all religious programmes on its network."²⁶¹ Fr Vella had a course at the British Broadcasting Corporation and also worked for a month with Fr Agnellus Andrew OFM, the BBC's Catholic religious Adviser."²⁶² Fr Agnellus Andrew had "a full scale television training centre in London where priests and laymen from many countries are trained by BBC broadcasters."²⁶³ David Azzopardi was among the first local priests who was trained in television technical handling.²⁶⁴

On 21st October 1966, the national station MTV launched the religious programme Djalogu. A press release issued by the station informed that the programme's goal was "to bring about a dialogue between the Church and the world in the aggiornamento spirit of the Vatican Council. The programme will seek to integrate religious belief with everyday life, while presenting modern religious thought and trends in the church."²⁶⁵ The programme also reserved a section for the viewers who asked their questions and put in their doubts about faith and the Church's views on various aspects of daily life. Fr Maurice Eminyan was responsible for this section. These sections were then published in a book format. For instance the 1970 edition, of which five books were published, included topics like boxing,²⁶⁶ the marriage of Our Lady,²⁶⁷ the priestly vestments,²⁶⁸ the *Humanae Vitae*, the safe period,²⁶⁹ the Curia's money²⁷⁰ and so on.

²⁶⁰ C.G., Vella, 'A Centre for Sound and T.V. Religious Broadcasting,' *The Sunday Times of Malta*, 12th March 1972, 8.

²⁶¹ Ibid.

²⁶² Ibid.

²⁶³ Ibid.

²⁶⁴ Ibid.

²⁶⁵ Laurence Mizzi, 'Forty Years Ago Djaologu was Born,' *The Sunday Times*, 22nd October 2006, 30.

²⁶⁶ Maurice Eminyan, *Dejjem Tiegħek* (Malta, Problemi tal-Lum, 1970), 56.

²⁶⁷ Ibid., 33.

²⁶⁸ Ibid., 43.

²⁶⁹ Ibid., 105.

²⁷⁰ Ibid., 112.

Conclusion

As discussed, the nineteen-sixties were a period of change. In Malta's case, currents like fashion trends, filmography, tourism, and television programmes emanating mostly from abroad had their share in challenging the Church's authority, people's religious practice and perspectives, and their sense of belonging. As shown, these winds of change took to task the traditional values of the islanders and thus a process of secularisation sunk in. To a certain extent, secularisation was an inevitable and natural process. On the other hand, the emergence of a secular society did not automatically mean the demise, disappearance or irrelevance of religion, but the new scenario provided a novel context and fresh challenges for evangelisation. Thanks to the Second Vatican Council, the Catholic Church itself had undergone a period of transformation that dramatically changed its structures and modus operandi. Ultimately, the reformed Church embraced important positions like religious liberty, more space for laity and the use of the vernacular in its rites. The Malta Church did its renewal share too and it also arrived at a truce with the Labour Party thus increasing the latter's possibilities to make it to power. Labour priorities in government were the secularisation programme intended to dilute the power of the Church. But the Malta Church went on notwithstanding that policy.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE EVOLUTION OF ARCHBISHOP GONZI'S EPISCOPATE (1924-1976)

The life of Archbishop Gonzi spanned over nearly a century. He passed away in 1984 at the age of 99 after having retired from Malta's bishopric seat eight years earlier.¹ His episcopate in Malta had lasted thirty years. Furthermore, the archbishop had also served as bishop of Gozo for a period of nineteen years between 1924 and 1943, succeeding Bishop Giovanni Maria Camilleri. Therefore, Archbishop Gonzi spent more than half a century in office. His Malta predecessor Archbishop Mauro Caruana had been in office for twenty-eight years, three more than Archbishop Pietro Pace whom Archbishop Caruana had succeeded in 1915.

Given that Archbishop Gonzi's episcopate was a long one, it is necessary to assess how the mentioned episcopate had changed over the half-century that he administered Malta's Church. Since so many political, economic and socio-economic changes took place both in Malta and abroad during the period from 1924 and 1976, it is impossible not to speak of an evolution within the Archbishop Gonzi's episcopate. In fact, the present writer is suggesting that in order to comprehend such an evolution, Archbishop Gonzi's episcopate should be divided and analysed in four different historical phases being the following:

- 1924 to 1943: the period when Archbishop Gonzi was bishop of the diocese of Gozo but in the last leap of this phase he was nominated as bishop coadjutor to Archbishop Caruana with the right of succession.
- 1943 to 1955: the epoch following the end of the Second World War when Archbishop Gonzi succeeded Archbishop Caruana with Malta entering another period of self-government including a period when Labour politician Mr Dom Mintoff was promoting a secular agenda which pushed for a complete separation between the realms of politics and religion.

¹ 'Miet l-Arcisqof Gonzi,' *Lehen is-Sewwa*, 22 ta' Jannar 1984, 1.

- 1955 to 1962: the phase when Malta had to decide whether to integrate with Great Britain or to opt for political Independence from the mother colony.
- 1962 to 1976: the time when the Malta Church took the challenge for rejuvenation following the demands of the Second Vatican Council and responded to challenges and priorities set by Maltese politicians within the context of a newly independent country.

What follows is an evaluation of the episcopate in those four periods. By taking this route, one can analyse and comprehend better the evolution of Archbishop Gonzi's episcopate.

Phase One: 1924 to 1943

During the year 1924, Mgr Gonzi, aged 39, was chosen as Gozo's fifth bishop – a diocese of 67 square kilometres which had been inhabited for the past 7,000 years. Gozo had been an independent catholic diocese from Malta since 1864 with the Matrice of the Assumption, within the Citadel, as the Cathedral Church.² The establishment of the new Gozo diocese had also led to the opening of a seminary two years later “which offered both secondary and tertiary education.”³ The earliest reference to a church in Gozo goes back to 1299.⁴ During this particular period of time, Gozo had a population of 16,038.⁵ According to a census held in 1921, the population of Gozo had risen to 20,003.⁶ By the time of the Eucharistic Congress organised in Gozo in 1929, the population of the island had increased to 23,000.⁷

The episcopate of Archbishop Gonzi in Gozo commenced in the era between the two world wars and progressed on during the Second World War. At the time of Bishop Gonzi's appointment, Gozo was, under all aspects, a poor and neglected island.⁸ For instance, the electricity service was introduced in Gozo thirty years after it was launched in Valletta, Malta's

² Joseph Bezzina, *Gozo: A Historical Glimpse* (Malta, Bugelli Publications, 1988), 11.

³ Joseph Bezzina, *The Sacred Heart Seminary* (Gozo, Sacred Heart Seminary – Gaultitana, 1991), 43.

⁴ Joseph Bezzina, *Marian Shrines in Gozo* (Malta, Bugelli Publications, 1989), 9.

⁵ Joseph Bezzina, *Religion and Politics in a Crown Colony: The Gozo-Malta Story 1798-1864* (Malta, Pubblikazzjonijiet Bugelli, 1988).

⁶ Mario Saliba, *Hajja u Mewt: Il-Mard u s-Saħħa f'Għawdex fi żmien l-Arcipriet Dun Martin Camilleri 1910-1921* (Gozo, The Author, 2021), 15.

⁷ Joseph Bezzina, *Il-Kungress Ewkaristiku ta' Għawdex 1929* (Gozo, Lumen Christi, 1979), 19.

⁸ Sergio Grech, *Anton Tabone: Il-Pont bejn Għawdex Regjun u Malta Nazzjon* (Malta, Kite, 2017), 58.

capital city.⁹ Before the Second World War, besides the tilling of land, the opportunities for employment in Gozo were extremely limited. People could only aspire to become teachers, policemen or priests.¹⁰ According to Archbishop Joseph Mercieca, himself a Gozitan, Gozo in the nineteen-thirties lacked the services and the facilities that were available in Malta during the same period.¹¹ In 1885, ‘a reliable’ steam ferry service came into operation between Malta and Gozo and this created a ‘bridge’ between the two islands even if the timetable of the ferry’s operating service was restricted and the service was halted by inclement weather.¹² As Refalo put it, during the period in question, life in Gozo evolved around land and the Church. “The latter preached forbearance and provided such entertainment as the yearly village festa and the other religious festivities could provide.”¹³ Meanwhile, by the year 1924, the diocese of Gozo had 14 parishes, 50 churches, and five congregations of friars and two of nuns.¹⁴ In 1909, the Jesuit community left Gozo negatively impacting the quality of teaching at the Seminary.

Mgr Gonzi succeeded Bishop Giovanni Maria Camilleri following the resignation of the latter, due to illness and poor health, at the end of a long episcopate of 35 years. At this juncture, bishops were not demanded by the Catholic Church to resign at a specific age. That concept emerged later on from the Second Vatican Council. Bishop Camilleri’s achievements in Gozo included the reorganisation of the diocese’s seminary, the building of new churches in Rabat, Munxar and Fontana,¹⁵ the consecration of newly built churches like those of Ghajnsielem, Kerċem, Qala, Fontana and Imġarr¹⁶ and the establishment of new parishes like San Lawrenz, Għasri and Fontana.¹⁷ The parish priests of Xewkija, Xagħra, Ta’ Sannat and Nadur were promoted to archpriests.¹⁸ Bishop Camilleri was particularly known for his homilies which were described by a local newspaper, reporting his funeral in November 1924, as “masterpieces in holy writings.”¹⁹ Mgr Camilleri also launched the first Gozo Synod and introduced the

⁹ Joseph Bezzina, “125 Sena Hídma għall-Progress ta’ Ghawdex,” in Joe Cassar (ed.), *Album ta’ Tifkira* (Malta, Pubblikazzjonijiet Indipendenza, 2006), 51.

¹⁰ Sergio Grech, *Anton Tabone, op.cit.*, 58.

¹¹ Charles Buttigieg (ed.), *Ilkoll Aħwa fi Kristu, op.cit.*, 5.

¹² Joseph Bezzina, *The Gozo-Malta Ferry Service* (Malta, Bugelli Publications, 1991), 35.

¹³ Michael Refalo, *Giuseppe (De)Brincat: A Gozitan Wine Merchant 1890-1930* (Malta, Kite Publishing, 2018), 19.

¹⁴ Mario Saliba, *Hajja u Mewt: Il-Mard u s-Saħħa f’Ghawdex fi żmien l-Arċipriet Dun Martin Camilleri 1910-1921, op.cit.*, 40.

¹⁵ Serafin Borg (ed.), *Mons. Ġwanni M. Camilleri OSA: Isqof ta’ Ghawdex (1889-1924)* (Malta, Progress Press, 1973), 7.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 7 and 8.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 59.

Dominican nuns in the diocese of Gozo. Bishop Camilleri was one of Archbishop Gonzi's principal co-consecrators.²⁰ Mgr Camilleri wrote a total of twenty-four pastoral letters during his bishopric, and it was during his episcopate that the founding stone of the Ta' Pinu sanctuary, in the limits of Għarb, was laid.²¹ That was a major project that was finished during Bishop Gonzi's tenure of Gozo's bishopric.

Before the Gozo appointment, Archbishop Gonzi served the Malta Church and the Maltese colony in different roles, that is to say as a priest at Kalkara, a lecturer at the Malta Seminary and at the University of Malta, a Director at St. Paul's School, a military chaplain, as the *kappillan tal-Isqof* (private assistant to the bishop), as Canon Theologian, and as Senator on behalf of the Malta Labour Party. During the period that he was serving as a Senator, priests were voted to and elected in the Legislative Assembly. The list of priests-politicians included, among others, Mgr Enrico Dandria, Mgr Giuseppe Apap Bologna, Mgr Paolo Galea, Mgr Joseph Depiro, Mgr Ignazio Panzavecchia, and Mgr Achille Ferres. "Malta's was not an isolated case during the inter-war period and one example in that sense was Fr. Ignaz Seipel who served as Chancellor of Austria."²² One of the first actions taken by Archbishop Gonzi during the first phase of his Gozitan bishopric was to prohibit the priests in his diocese from contesting political elections. Another crucial decision was that lawyer Nerik Mizzi was stopped from chairing the parish priests' meetings. Those were courageous decisions which were meant to draw boundaries between religion and politics.

But here one must draw a clear distinction. It was not the same philosophy of achieving separation between Church and State, as for instance it was envisaged later on by Mr Mintoff. It was instead the vision as enshrined in *Rerum Novarum* and *Immortale Dei*, both documents being the brainchild of Pope Leo XIII. In *Rerum Novarum*, the Pope focused his attention on the right of freedom of religion as a fundamental right. In the second document, which was issued "at the end of the Papal States, during the suppression of religious orders in Spain and Portugal, and during a period when several other conflicts between civil and ecclesiastical authorities raged," Pope Leo XIII referred to both the temporal and ecclesiastical domains as "supreme powers, each one in its own field, with specific limits following from the finality and

²⁰ In case of Archbishop Gonzi, his Principal Consecrator was Archbishop Mauro Caruana and the second consecrator was Bishop Angelo Portelli.

²¹ Serafin Borg (ed.), *Mons. Ġwanni M. Camilleri OSA, op.cit.*, 39.

²² Ivan Vassallo, *Enrico Mizzi: Between Nationalism and Irredentism, A Comparative Study on Irredentism in Malta, the Mediterranean and the British Empire* (MA, University of Malta, 2012), 126.

nature of each.”²³ Therefore, the Church was regarded as a *societas iuridice perfecta*. “Under this conception, the Church is a society ordered to the good, sufficient, and autonomous. The basic idea is that the Church is not a society created inside a specific state or by this same state’s juridical system, and is therefore not like other societies created under civil law ...”²⁴

It is interesting to note that some of the themes discussed by Archbishop Gonzi in the Senate forum, like social issues, were to be strong features during his episcopate in both Gozo and Malta. During the period as Senator, Archbishop Gonzi made an important declaration – “*Ħadd aktar minni ma għandu għal qalbu l-ġid tal-klassi tal-ħaddiema. Jien bin il-ħaddiema u naf xi jfisser tkun ħaddiem.*”²⁵ Archbishop Gonzi had pointed out that hospital nurses were working long hours without decent breaks.²⁶ He also seconded the motion in favour of obligatory education for twelve-year-old Maltese boys and girls.²⁷ As a Senator, Archbishop Gonzi had seconded the proposal of a law which established an eight-hour working day for the local working force. He based his arguments on Pope Leo XIII’s *Rerum Novarum*, referring to the Pope as the “Workers Pope.”²⁸

The reader must bear in mind that for a period of three years, Archbishop Gonzi was Archbishop Caruana’s *kappillan tal-isqof* (private secretary to the bishop) and this position had left a bearing on Archbishop Gonzi’s episcopate. It also emerged that both Archbishop Caruana and Bishop Gonzi were taken by surprise when they were appointed to administer the Malta and Gozo dioceses.²⁹ Mgr Gonzi had received the news of his appointment as bishop of Gozo from Archbishop Caruana.³⁰ In the last seven years of Archbishop Caruana’s episcopate, Bishop Gonzi was the effective administrator of the Malta diocese as Archbishop Caruana was

²³ Evaldo Xavier Gomes, ‘Church-State Relations from a Catholic Perspective: General Considerations on Nicolas Sarkozy’s New Concept of Laïcité,’ *Journal of Catholic Legal Studies*, 48, (2), 2009, 205.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ Manuscript Rev John Dimech.

²⁶ Louis A. Cilia, *op.cit.*, 80.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 85.

²⁹ Archbishop Caruana, who was a member of the Benedictine Order, had decided to spend some time with his family before returning to Fort Augustus Abbey in Inverness-shire, Scotland. During his Malta sojourn, Archbishop Caruana was asked to visit the Vatican where he got the bishopric appointment. In fact, Mgr Caruana was consecrated bishop by the Secretary of State of the Holy See, Cardinal Rafael Merry del Val on 10th February 1915. The day and month chosen for the event had their significance. In Malta, the shipwreck of Apostle St Paul of Tarsus is celebrated with pomp on 10th February and the Benedictine Order celebrates on the same day the feast of St Scholastica, the sister of St Benedict, the founder of the Benedictine Order.

³⁰ ‘*L-Arcisqof Gonzi intervistat minn Storja*,’ *op.cit.*, 128.

very ill. That being the period of the Second World War, Archbishop Gonzi maintained that there were instances when air raids occurred whilst he was crossing from Gozo to Malta.³¹

Even though Gozo was a tiny diocese, it is still relevant for one to understand the context in which Archbishop Gonzi's episcopate in Gozo was operating. During the first phase of his episcopate, Europe went from a period of apparent peace, resulting from the First World War, which was supposed to be a short interval of six months, to the Second World War that devastated Europe. The consequences of the Versailles Treaty which had humiliated Germany, the seeming success of the League of Nations, the 1929 world economic crisis, the failure of the World Disarmament Conference, the Italian invasion of Abyssinia, and the rise of Adolf Hitler in Germany ultimately led to a failure in keeping the international relations at peace, and war was the result.

During Archbishop Gonzi's period as bishop of Gozo the Catholic Church had two Popes, Pius XI and Pius XII. As stated in the fourth chapter, Pope Pius XI in his encyclicals articulated a strong message against the capitalistic greed, highlighted the dangers of communism and socialism, and instead suggested social justice as the way forward for a peaceful co-existence. It was a time when the Catholic Church had concluded several concordats. During Pius XI's pontificate, the Lateran Treaty of 1929 was signed creating the independent state of the Vatican. As said earlier, it was also a period of time when the Church was persecuted and Catholic clergy were killed in countries like Mexico, Spain and the Soviet Union. Through the Catholic Action movement, the Pope encouraged an active participation of the laity in the Church's life. Pius XI openly criticised dictators Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini.

This meant that during Archbishop Gonzi's first phase of the episcopate, same as in his second phase, as will be illustrated later, "the (Malta) Church was increasingly finding itself in the midst of a society not immune to the winds of change, remnants of a militant liberalism and laicism, an emerging communism, and rampant nationalism that was sweeping the continent."³² In the case of Malta and Gozo, self-government had been introduced in 1921, but the final text of the constitution concerned raised eyebrows since a religious clause had not been included, and the then Secretary of State for the Colonies was arguing that "the

³¹ Ibid., 127.

³² Nicholas Joseph Doublet, 'An Evaluation of the Episcopate of Archbishop Mauro Caruana through his Pastoral Letters (1915-1943),' *Melita Theologica*, 70, (2), (2020), 163.

Constitution was not the proper document to declare what is the religion of the country.”³³ This had its effect on the way the episcopate functioned, especially in difficult instances like the dispute between Lord Strickland and the Malta Church. Under that circumstance, the position of the episcopate was unequivocal: “*l’obbligo di coscienza... di dare il loro voto soltanto a quei candidati che diano sufficienti garanzie che, per quanto da loro dipende, saranno rispettati e tutelati gli interessi religiosi del cattolico popolo maltese, interessi che sono la base di ogni civile e sociale prospettiva.*”³⁴

For his Gozo episcopate, and later on for his Malta’s episcopate, Archbishop Gonzi chose the motto *Dominus Illuminatio Mea* (Psalm 26). On a particular occasion, Archbishop Gonzi, during his bishopric office in Gozo, described the bishop’s mission as follows: “*troverete in lui un cuore che batte, più che per spinta di sangue, per sollecitudine, che si piglia per Voi innanzi a Dio.*”³⁵ On the same day, he was consecrated as a bishop, that is on 24 July 1924, Archbishop Gonzi in his role as bishop of Gozo issued his first pastoral letter which was addressed to his Gozo diocese and which clearly expressed the course that his episcopate would take. In fact, the novel bishop appealed to archpriests and parish priests to prepare themselves to resist the enemy who, according to his assessment, had vowed to crush the harmony that had existed in the past between the clergy and the people.³⁶ Archbishop Gonzi argued also that the life of a bishop was uneasy. He contended that the enemies of the Catholic Church were striving hard to uproot the faith given to the Maltese people by St Paul. The bishop repeated the same argument for the 1926 Lent period arguing that “*vi sembrerà forse strano che un Vescovo senta il bisogno di insistere su questo argomento nel nostro paese, dove fino a ieri il rispetto e l’amore alla Chiesa ad ai suoi ministri era proverbiale.*”³⁷ During his episcopate, Bishop Gonzi condemned the newspaper *L’Idea Socialista* and accused its editorial line of disseminating what he termed as poison in the religious and social order.³⁸

The reader must bear in mind that these documents were emanating from “a strongly ultramontane Church, proud of its apostolic tradition as much as it was conscious of its authoritative

³³ George Grima, ‘The Constitution and Religion in Malta between 1921 and 1974,’ *Melita Theologica*, 36, (2), (1985), 27.

³⁴ Pastoral Letter No 92 Archbishop Caruana and Bishop Gonzi dated 3 rd June 1832.

³⁵ Pastoral Letter No 12 Bishop Michael Gonzi dated 1st January 1925.

³⁶ Entire pastoral letter published in Michael Galea and Emmanuel S. Tonna, *L-Arcisqof Gonzi, Vol. 1, op.cit.*, 77.

³⁷ Pastoral Letter Bishop Michael Gonzi dated 10th February 1926.

³⁸ Pastoral Letter No 36, Bishop Michael Gonzi, dated 3rd November 1926.

role, indeed responsibility, in safeguarding the catholic identity of this people. In an island colony, it was the truly nationalistic institution, conscious of its patriotic calling, especially so in an island governed by a non-Catholic power.”³⁹ Besides this, as explained earlier, in 1917 the Catholic Church had introduced the *Codex Juris Canonici* which had defined the role of the members making up the Catholic Church from the Pope downwards and this document articulated the behaviour and norms expected in all circumstances that had to do with religion.

Discipline was therefore a strong feature of the episcopate. The Regional Council organized in 1935 between the two dioceses of Malta and Gozo was a vivid example of the disciplinary attitude of the episcopate. The Regional Council was an opportunity for the episcopate to put its house in order spelling out the Church’s position on various themes like the preservation and propagation of faith, the religious life of priests, nuns and laity, the administration of sacraments, the observation of feast days, the respect to holy places and shrines, and so on. In fact, the episcopate left no stone unturned and showed how a Catholic should behave in his religious life. The episcopate targeted four special areas of concern: faith, discipline, cult and temporal wealth. To a certain extent, there was some urgency to call the council as the last diocesan synod had been held in Malta during the Knights’ stay (1530-1798) whilst in Gozo’s case, the most recent synod had been organised after Gozo became a separate diocese in 1864.⁴⁰ When the Council was announced, it was explained that “*jiġu... mwettqa d-dispożizzjonijiet li wieħed iridhom isehħu, oħrajn jinbidlu biex nadattawhom għaċ-ċirkustanzi tal-lum; jiżdiedu wkoll oħrajn ġodda biex nilhqu mal-bżonnijiet ta’ żminijietna biex jinqerdu l-abbużi u jirregulaw ruħhom xogħlijiet ġodda ta’ apostolat qalb il-poplu.*”⁴¹ In a pastoral letter published soon after the publication of the new decrees enacted during the mentioned Regional Council, the Malta and Gozo bishops explained that the Council was not only a solemn exhibition of the bishops’ power but also a difficult compilation of laws that Catholics were expected to follow scrupulously with all their conscience.⁴² The bishops described their mission as protectors of the rights of souls against corruption. They also argued that they had an obligation to make their voices heard “to oversee and set free.” Already at this stage, the bishops were noticing a dwindling trend in vocations although for the time being they preferred not to comment about

³⁹ Nicholas Joseph Doublet, ‘An Evaluation of the Episcopate of Archbishop Mauro Caruana through his Pastoral Letters (1915-1943),’ *op.cit.*, 162.

⁴⁰ Ġużeppi Lupi, *Tifkiriet u Stqarrijiet*, *op.cit.*, 97.

⁴¹ Pastoral Letter No 113, Archbishop Caruana/Bishop Gonzi dated 21st April 1935.

⁴² *Ittra Pastorali ta’ l-Iskfijiet ta’ Malta u Għawdex fuk l-Ewwel Concilju Regjonali* (Malta, Għakda ta’ Qari Tajjeb, 1936), 4.

the shortcomings that were leading to that state.⁴³ In fact, the bishops proceeded to ask parents to be generous with God if their children felt the priestly vocation. Both bishops appealed to the parish priests to see that the Catholic Action was well established and rooted in their parish. Parish priests were reminded to give their share in teaching catechism to adults on Sundays.⁴⁴ In fact, Archbishop Gonzi instituted the Catholic Action in Gozo. That was also the Pope's will.

Nevertheless, it was an episcopate close to the people thanks to different religious initiatives. During his bishopric, Bishop Gonzi conducted four cycles of pastoral visitations in every parish in Gozo every five years. These pastoral visitations were an opportunity for the bishop to enforce the laws of the Church as regards church rites and parish life, and to correct any shortcomings. But, pastoral visitations were also an opportunity for the people to meet their bishop and cohere their relationship with him. For the 1930 cycle, the bishop informed his subjects that *"come Gesù, Noi visiteremo città e castelli, grideremo senza cessare ed esalteremo come una tromba la nostra voce, annunciando la legge e il consiglio, la pena e il premio, la giustizia e la misericordia."*⁴⁵ Moreover, the pastoral letters were another key source for a bishop to propagate the Church's teaching within his diocese. As bishop of Gozo, Archbishop Gonzi issued 196 letters of such nature.

Irrespective of the size of the diocese, the Church in Gozo under Bishop Gonzi managed to organise a number of large-scale manifestations that continued to enhance the people's faith and showed the people's allegiance to their bishop and their Church. The Eucharistic Congress held in Gozo was one of such manifestations. Furthermore, it was also an unmistakable sign that there existed an affinity between the episcopate and its people. Religion and faith created a bond between the two sides. In fact, fifty years later, during an interview with *Storja '78*, Archbishop Gonzi recalled that event as one of his major achievements of his episcopate.⁴⁶ In the pastoral letter that announced the Eucharistic Congress event, the bishop argued that the event should be an opportunity for spiritual reawakening. The bishop drew the attention of his flock to the fact that the dispute with Lord Strickland, and other shortcomings like fashion trends and the printed press, were contributing to an unhealthy environment that was ultimately

⁴³ Ibid., 8.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 10.

⁴⁵ Pastoral Letter Bishop Michael Gonzi dated 1st October 1930.

⁴⁶ *L-Arcisqof Gonzi intervistat minn Storja, 'op.cit., 127.*

affecting the faith of the people.⁴⁷ According to Bezzina, the success of the Eucharistic Congress, which lasted four months, included 528,331 masses, 22,436 hours of adoration of the blessed sacrament and 3,065,899 visits to the blessed sacraments.⁴⁸ During his ninth year as bishop of Gozo, Archbishop Gonzi celebrated the 25th anniversary of his ordination to priesthood which once again confirmed the affinity between the episcopate and its flock.

The Seminary, being the training school for future priesthood, was an important pillar for the episcopate. In fact, the Seminary underwent a thorough reform during Archbishop Gonzi's stay in Gozo. He insisted in being present during the annual examinations at the Seminary and he himself used to verify whether the seminarians kept themselves clean by inspecting their hands and their shoes.⁴⁹ Bezzina noted that "during the bishopric of Gonzi, the number of Maltese Seminarians studying in Gozo rose rapidly. It reached its peak during the Second World War."⁵⁰ Moreover, Archbishop Gonzi, in his role as bishop of Gozo, prohibited altarboys to serve mass without wearing shoes. Children were also not allowed to receive Holy Communion barefooted. This sense of reform was a strong element within the episcopate. It also transpired that as a bishop of Gozo, Archbishop Gonzi led his diocese with no Vicar General only leaving an Apostolic Delegate when "*assente della diocese ... lascia ... un delegato apostolico.*"⁵¹

Another project which Archbishop Gonzi as Bishop of Gozo spearheaded was the finalisation of the building of the Ta' Pinu Sanctuary, in the limits of Għarb. Archbishop Gonzi increased the wages of the builder Vitor Vella.⁵² The climax of the project was the coronation of Our Lady of Ta' Pinu's titular painting in June 1935. Archbishop Gonzi also restored the Palazzo Bondi which served as the bishop's Curia. It was he who introduced electricity in that *palazzo* which also served as his private residence and a home for his parents.

The first phase of Archbishop Gonzi's episcopate was also a time when Bishop Gonzi visited regularly the Maltese/Gozitan emigrant communities abroad although this trend continued in the second and the third phase of the episcopate. That was an important statement from the episcopate's side. At that stage, the episcopate was not interested only in those living in its

⁴⁷ Joseph Bezzina, *Il-Kungress Ewkaristiku ta' Għawdex* (Gozo, Orphan Press, 1979), 24.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ Michael Galea and Emmanuel S. Tonna, *L-Arcisqof Gonzi, Vol 1, op.cit.*, 116.

⁵⁰ Joseph Bezzina, *The Sacred Heart Seminary, op.cit.*, 43.

⁵¹ Letter by Archbishop Mauro Caruana dated 24th April 1930 in *Pareri e Giudizii di SE Mons M. Caruana circa la nomina di Un Vescovo Ausiliare di Malta, op.cit.*

⁵² Michael Galea and Emmanuel S. Tonna, *L-Arcisqof Gonzi, Vol 1, op.cit.*, 146.

restricted territory but also fetched the spiritual and the material welfare of the Maltese and Gozitans living abroad in faraway countries. The episcopate felt the need to keep following the fate of those Maltese emigrants who had left their country to make a living abroad. In fact, priests were sent to live in those communities and to offer their services which ranged from spiritual needs to catering and, where necessary, attending also material requirements. The peaceful period after the First World War was characterised by hefty unemployment, and around 20,000 workers were unemployed. This situation led to Maltese migratory movements in Europe and North America. From 1922 to 1967, 157,468 Maltese had emigrated to fetch a decent future.⁵³

These ventures had their difficulties as some countries were employing a quota system which established the maximum number of emigrants that they were ready to take each year.⁵⁴ In fact, during his stay at Gozo, Bishop Gonzi visited the Maltese residing in Detroit, Québec, Montréal, Toronto and New York. He also led different pilgrimages abroad. For instance in 1925, he led a group of 200 Gozitans to Rome for the *Anno Santo*.⁵⁵ Archbishop Gonzi attended international conferences and Eucharistic Congresses in Poznań (1927), Dublin (1932), Manila (1937) and Budapest (1938). The Eucharistic Congress in Manila, during which he took an active part, impressed him a lot.⁵⁶ Therefore the episcopate had also an international dimension in an era when travelling abroad was necessarily limited.

It was also an episcopate that encouraged the people to give money to support the missionary movement. In 1926, Pope Pius XI launched the encyclical *Rerum Ecclesiae* described by Bishop Gonzi as the “*magna charta, alla quale dovranno ispirarsi le Missioni Cattoliche*.”⁵⁷ One should also add that during 1926 Archbishop Gonzi was asked to fill the role of an Apostolic Delegate in Albania, but he declined the invitation.

One may conclude that it was also a patriotic episcopate considering the collection of wheat that Gozo managed to organise during the Second World War. As shown, the prime mover for the collection was Archbishop Gonzi, and that initiative saved Malta from succumbing to the enemy. Either together with Archbishop Caruana or on his own, Archbishop Gonzi issued a

⁵³ Charles Buttigieg, *Mikiel Gonzi: Hamsin Sena fit-Tmum*, *op.cit.*, 21.

⁵⁴ Lawrence Attard, *L-Emigrazzjoni Maltija: Is-Seklu Dsatax u Ghoxrin*, *op.cit.*, 58.

⁵⁵ Pastoral Letter Bishop Michael Gonzi dated 21st February 1925.

⁵⁶ Michael Galea and Emmanuel S. Tonna, *L-Arcisqof Go.nzi, Vol I*, *op.cit.*, 87.

⁵⁷ Pastoral Letter No 45, Bishop Michael Gonzi dated 14th February 1927.

number of pastoral letters during the Second World War appealing to the flock to pray for peace, to support the local authorities when difficult directives like bread rationing were announced, to practise charity, and to aid financially those who had lost their personal belongings owing to heavy bombardment.⁵⁸

Archbishop Gonzi's first stage of the episcopate was characterised by the need to safeguard the catholic identity of the inhabitants of his diocese. The people were after their bishop and proud of their Pauline heritage, and believed that their Catholic patrimony needed to be protected. The episcopate was appealing to the people *"svegliarci perché non venga il lupo a divorare il gregge; occorre vigilare e portare ovunque lo sguardo per spiare le mosse e impedire che esso avanzi a dare l'assalto alla sua preda. Occorre opporre il male sul nascere, combattere l'errore mentre è ancora nascosto, seguirlo senza tregua e smascherarlo, perché i fedeli non ne vengano condannati."*⁵⁹ Being a *societas iuridice perfecta*, the episcopate believed that the Church had "the right to exist, the right to announce and proclaim the gospel, the right to teach the Christian faith, the right of worship, the right to have and build communities, and others."⁶⁰ Therefore the bishop *"dev'essere dunque il difensore della verità, della giustizia, dei diritti delle anime di fronte alla falsità, alle ingiustizie, alle sopraffazioni da parte di uomini perversi e qualche volta anche potenti. Spetta al vescovo allora di alzare la sua voce a contraddire ed a salvare, anche a costo d'incontrare l'ira dei presenti."*⁶¹

Phase Two: 1943 to 1955

The second phase of Archbishop Gonzi's episcopate spanned from his transfer from the diocese of Gozo to the See of Malta up to the turn of elections of 1955. Archbishop Gonzi, aged 58 "was... appointed bishop assistant with the right of succession to Dom Mauro Caruana, on October 14, 1943, after a very long process which extended well through the previous decade. Given this appointment, Gonzi automatically succeeded Caruana on the latter's demise on December 17, 1943."⁶² As shown in the fifth chapter, Archbishop Gonzi wanted the post at all costs.

⁵⁸ Frank Bezzina/Charles Bezzina, *Il-Qilla tal-Gwerra fuq Ghawdex 1940-1943*, *op.cit.*, 367.

⁵⁹ Pastoral Letter No 69, Bishop Michael Gonzi dated 1st January 1930.

⁶⁰ Evaldo Xavier Gomes, 'Church-State Relations from a Catholic Perspective,' *op.cit.*, 205.

⁶¹ Pastoral Letter No 126, Bishop Michael Gonzi dated 30th April 1930.

⁶² Nicholas J. Doublet, 'First solemn entry of the Archbishop of Malta into Mdina Cathedral in 1944,' *op.cit.* See Chapter 5.

On announcing Archbishop Gonzi's appointment as Malta's Archbishop, the Holy See also declared that the Maltese Ecclesiastical Province was being established and that the diocese of Gozo thus became subjected to Malta as a Suffragan See.⁶³ During this phase of the episcopate, Archbishop Gonzi became an important national figure whose influence was also felt in the political and social spheres, besides the religious domain. The Maltese people recognised in him a national leader with the ability to lead especially when in dire strait moments. His action of collecting wheat during the Second World War was of a huge importance for Malta's survival. As Pirotta put it, on choosing Mons. Gonzi for Malta's archbishopric "the right choice had been made on the part of the Church."⁶⁴ Meanwhile Archbishop Gonzi had won the respect of those who in the previous years had opposed his nomination to the bishopric seat in Malta, and who had included the British coloniser and the Stricklands. It is interesting to note that Archbishop Caruana did not believe that Archbishop Gonzi was the right candidate when it was evident that a Bishop Coadjutor was needed to administer the Malta diocese since Archbishop Caruana's health was poor.⁶⁵ On the other hand, according to Mgr Ġwann Dimech, Archbishop Caruana had promised Archbishop Gonzi that he would succeed him once the former passed away.⁶⁶

The reader must bear in mind that Malta was not only a diocese but was also the seat of authority of the British colonial government. The Maltese diocese was bigger than the Gozo diocese since Malta was the largest island within the Maltese archipelago. In fact, in 1948, soon after the Second World War, a population census was held in Malta and "the population exceeded the 300,000 mark to stand at 305,911. Between 1948 and 1957, the population increased by 13,629 persons, of whom 11,186 were females, but due to high emigration trends the average rate of population increase remained less than 0.5% per annum."⁶⁷ In the case of the Maltese diocese, as Archbishop Gonzi would tell the members of the Round Table Conference which discussed Malta's Integration proposal, religion was "intimately connected with all other aspects of domestic and social life."⁶⁸

⁶³ Circular Letter Number 3 dated 28th December 1943.

⁶⁴ Joseph M. Pirotta, *Fortress Colony Vol. 1, op.cit.*, 13.

⁶⁵ Nicholas J. Doublet, 'An Evaluation of the Episcopate of Archbishop Mauro Caruana through his Pastoral Letters (1915-1943),' *op.cit.*, 162. See Chapter 5.

⁶⁶ Unpublished manuscript Rev John Dimech.

⁶⁷ Marvin Formosa, 'Measuring and Modelling Demographic Trends in Malta: Implications for Ageing Policy,' *International Journal on Ageing in Developing Countries*, 2019, 4 (2), 80.

⁶⁸ Joseph M. Pirotta, *Fortress Colony Vol. 2., op.cit.*, 105.

Briefly, the following was the international and local context of the second phase of Archbishop Gonzi's episcopate which is key to understand the evolution of the episcopate in this particular epoch. By the year 1945, the Second World War was ending but Europe was in a catastrophic state. Meanwhile the partnership between the Soviet Union and the other Allied nations began to disintegrate and the world shifted to another war, known as the Cold War, splitting in two blocs, the capitalist and the communist, leaving the USA as the most industrial and military power and their alliances. Furthermore, a movement of decolonisation followed the Second World War and this not always resulted in a brighter future for the new-born nations as they instead drifted to military dictatorships.

Prima facie, the second phase of Archbishop Gonzi's episcopate was a relatively calm period for the episcopate but, as we shall see, it was more a case of the calm before the storm since a tempest was fast brewing up and would eventually erupt in the third phase of Archbishop Gonzi's episcopate. Following the Second World War, the episcopate faced the challenge to re-establish the Church's role in society asserting the values of the institution and seeing that the parishes provided the sacraments and other services to their parishioners. In this regard, the episcopate found the assistance of the Catholic lay organisations which became, after the war, energetic partners in the Church's mission of evangelisation. As early as 1944, Archbishop Gonzi had made his roadmap clear during an event organised by the Malta Union of Teachers, insisting that the episcopate expected that in Malta "the atmosphere must be wholly Catholic."⁶⁹ In one of his pastoral letters published for Lent, Archbishop Gonzi had put forward the argument that everyone had to be in tandem with the Church and to think how the Church thought.⁷⁰

At least three principal themes seemed to be of special concern during this phase of the episcopate – the loosening of morals, the growth of materialism and the infiltration of Communism. The episcopate highlighted the changes that the Maltese family was experiencing. Acknowledging that the majority of the Maltese families stuck to their catholic character, the episcopate noticed that some families were in the peril of losing this identity.⁷¹ According to the episcopate, certain Maltese families were losing the religious sentiment, and

⁶⁹ Joseph M. Pirotta, *Fortress Colony Vol. 1, op.cit.*, 17.

⁷⁰ Pastoral Letter Number 82 Archbishop Michael Gonzi dated 20th February 1949.

⁷¹ Pastoral Letter Number 42 Archbishop Michael Gonzi dated 10th February 1946.

the spirit of duty and sacrifice.⁷² The episcopate argued that the divine law prohibited the individual from putting his soul at risk. It was also maintained that the marriage sacrament was intended by God to bear children, and that religious teaching had to commence at home from early years.⁷³

Inter alia, the episcopate insisted on a morality regime emphasising the use of decent clothing in churches and on the beaches and reserved the right to shy away men and women who were improperly dressed for church functions.⁷⁴ Parish priests were reminded that Canon Law prohibited the participation of sponsors in the marriage sacrament who were not Catholics.⁷⁵ The episcopate also condemned work on Sundays, and that included hobbies like knitting which were to be refrained from. Also regulated was the ringing of bells.⁷⁶ As in Gozo, the Archbishop conducted pastoral visitations. It was an epoch when the religious lay formations were given a share in evangelisation. In 1945, the movement of the *Żgħażaġh Ħaddiema Nsara* was established in Malta.⁷⁷ Catholic Action commenced regular broadcasts on Rediffusion in 1947.⁷⁸ In 1952, the Movement *Azzjoni Soċjali* was founded.⁷⁹ In 1954, Archbishop Gonzi blessed the foundation stone of the MUSEUM headquarters in B'Bajda, the area which was previously used as a cemetery.⁸⁰

A novel aspect for the episcopate in this particular phase was the consolidation of the use of print and broadcast technologies to convey the Church's message, besides homilies and catechism classes. It is true that the Church's newspaper *Lehen is-Sewwa* was born in the late nineteen-twenties but thanks to the end of the Second World War and more investments in education facilities, newspapers became stronger and the proliferation of periodicals became wider. Rediffusion had introduced in Malta the concept of broadcasting, and religious programmes were regularly included in the weekly schedule of transmissions, targeting different age groups.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Circular Number 22 dated 22nd November 1944.

⁷⁵ Circular Number 22 dated 22nd November 1944.

⁷⁶ Circular Number 27 dated 20th January 1945.

⁷⁷ Taped interview Mr Piju Spiteri, Blata l-Bajda Private Residence, 18th March 2016, Sergio Grech Private Collection.

⁷⁸ Mgr Philip Calleja, *Kont Hemm*, Programme 2, Radju tal-Università, Accessed from <https://www.um.edu.mt/library/oar/handle/123456789/10242>.

⁷⁹ Taped interview Joe Felice Pace, Private Residence, Balzan, 7th August 2016, Sergio Grech Private Collection.

⁸⁰ Sergio Grech, *Patri Felicjan Bilocca: Hajtu u Żminijietu*, op.cit.,52.

Malta emerged out of the Second World War in a bad shape. A hefty reconstruction programme was badly needed. This included several ecclesiastical buildings that had been damaged by war. A 10th April 1942 update noted that 70 churches and 18 convents and nunneries were destroyed by the heavy bombing of that period.⁸¹ Archbishop Gonzi's *ingress* was an opportunity for the inhabitants to rejoice after the devastation brought about by the Second World War. In the course of the war and particularly during the final stages of the war, the episcopate was a beacon of hope to the Maltese and a right hand to the administration.

During this period, the British authorities in Malta developed a good relationship with the episcopate. Indeed, on several occasions, especially when there were no elected Maltese governments, the episcopate was asked by the different governors to nominate representatives on administrative boards like the Archives Advisory Committee, the Committee about Policy of Censorship in Malta,⁸² the Board for Education,⁸³ the Committee responsible for the 8th September festivities,⁸⁴ and the Juvenile Advisory Committee.⁸⁵ Archbishop Gonzi was invited to share his ideas with Governor Schreiber on an amendment of the 1924 compulsory school attendance act, control of the university and other educational establishments and compulsory primary education.⁸⁶ A copy of Governor Creasy's Candlera speech was sent to Pope Pius XII by Archbishop Gonzi and in a covering letter the sender emphasised "*l'armonia attualmente esistente tra clero e Stato a Malta dopo la bufera degli anni passati.*" Through such initiatives, the episcopate was given a share in administering the colony. The issue became thorny when lay people began to question and doubt such interventions.

The Governor's Office discussed with the episcopate, especially when there was no Maltese government, the list of feast days that were to be considered as full holidays. For the year 1944, following peace time, it was decided that the number of holidays should be eight. On those days, "public offices should be closed."⁸⁷ On the feasts of St. Paul Shipwrecked, St. Joseph, the Ascension of Our Lord, and St. Peter and St. Paul, "offices will be kept open... with full

⁸¹ John A. Mizzi and Mark Anthony Vella, *Malta at War Vol 5* (Malta, Wise Owl Publications, 2021), 1742.

⁸² Letter from Archbishop Gonzi to Governor Laycock dated 14th May 1955, *Corrispondenza Gonzi, Vol. XLIX*.

⁸³ Letter to Archbishop Gonzi dated 5th January 1955, AAM, *Corrispondenza Gonzi, Vol. XLIX*.

⁸⁴ Letter to Archbishop Gonzi dated 17th April 1956, AAM, *Corrispondenza Gonzi, Vol. L*.

⁸⁵ Letter to Archbishop Gonzi dated 21st April 1947, AAM, *Corrispondenza Gonzi, Vol. XLIV*.

⁸⁶ Letter to Archbishop Gonzi dated 17th March 1944, AAM, *Corrispondenza Gonzi, Vol. XLII*.

⁸⁷ Letter to Archbishop Gonzi dated 10th February 1944, AAM, *Corrispondenza Gonzi, Vol. XLII*.

staff.”⁸⁸ Following peace, Archbishop Gonzi was asked by Lord Gort to give his views about “a central body which would examine and endorse or otherwise all proposals for the reconstruction of ancient monuments.”⁸⁹ On his silver jubilee, Archbishop Gonzi had appealed to the Governor to “reduce sentence to all prisoners.”⁹⁰ The Governor agreed to “reduce to twenty years hard labour the sentence of imprisonment for life and to reduce the term to all by two months for every year or fraction of a year.” Archbishop Gonzi was also regularly invited for the Empire Day festivities. His presence at that event would be used by Mr Mintoff during the third phase of Archbishop Gonzi’s episcopate to drive home the point that the mentioned archbishop was a puppet of the coloniser.

The relationship between Archbishop Gonzi and Governor Schreiber was rather good. In fact, Mgr Gonzi addressed him on diverse occurrences as *My Dear Sir Edmund*. Governor Schreiber consulted Archbishop Gonzi on the appointment of the Island Commissioner for the Scouts.⁹¹ Mr Schreiber had asked for the support of the parish priests “to bring down the cost of living.”⁹² On another occasion, Governor Schreiber told Archbishop Gonzi that he preferred to have him, rather than anybody else, on the board of the Malta Relief Fund.⁹³ The two agreed that, in the case of representatives of the Church on governmental boards, the choice of the individual would be left to the Archbishop subject to the Governor’s approval.⁹⁴

In 1947, self-government was reinstated in Malta but with a new provision: the Senate was abolished. This meant that the Church had lost the previous rights as stipulated by the 1921 constitution to appoint two clerical senators.⁹⁵ Self-government also meant the holding of elections, and the episcopate, between one election and the next, always encouraged the electors to vote for candidates who had a catholic profile. It also expected that political parties declare in their political programme their allegiance to the Church and that, when in power, they would not legislate against the Church. For the 1947 turn of elections, the episcopate stated

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Letter from Lord Gort to Archbishop Gonzi dated 19th January 1944, AAM, *Corrispondenza Gonzi*, Vol. XLII.

⁹⁰ Letter from Archbishop Gonzi dated 21st October 1949, AAM, *Corrispondenza Gonzi*, Vol XLV.

⁹¹ Letter from Governor Schreiber to Archbishop Gonzi dated 25th July 1945, AAM. *Corrispondenza Gonzi*, Vol. XLIII.

⁹² Letter from Governor Schreiber to Archbishop Gonzi dated 8th October 1945, AAM, *Corrispondenza Gonzi*, Vol. XLIII.

⁹³ Letter dated 28th November 1945, AAM, *Corrispondenza Gonzi*, Vol XLIII.

⁹⁴ Letter from Governor Schreiber to Archbishop Gonzi dated 4 December 1945, AAM, *Corrispondenza Gonzi*, Vol. XLIII.

⁹⁵ Adrianus Koster, *Prelates and Politicians in Malta*, *op.cit.*, 131.

that the elected government was duty bound to “safeguard in all sincerity the morality of the public in a way worthy of a catholic country.”⁹⁶ The episcopate explained that the Church “keeps herself out of political parties and does not condemn them as long as they do not go against the principles of the interests of religion.”⁹⁷ The episcopate’s advice was that voters should “examine the qualities of the candidates.”⁹⁸ That position was not political discourse but was consonant with the teaching which emerged from papal encyclicals. Those on favour of separating religion and politics would interpret them as political material.

The relationship between the episcopate and the Labour Party, which was led by Prime Minister Paul Boffa, were generally good. Dr Boffa was described by one of his collaborators as “not the Mintoff type... (Mintoff) would have a point of view and fight for it.”⁹⁹ Boffa’s character had helped to keep stability and order between the religious and the political aspects even though, during the Lord Strickland era, Dr Boffa was known for his extremist takes. During the second phase of Archbishop Gonzi’s episcopate, the Church made herself heard on a number of economic and social issues that dominated the Maltese society. Some regarded those acts as improper and put the argument that the Church instead of doing religion was interfering in politics even though declaring itself apolitical. For instance, the episcopate was critical of the proposed income tax bands “describing them as exaggerated in the same way as the original rates for the Succession and Donations Duty Bill had been.”¹⁰⁰ The Church also opposed a national health scheme proposed by the Labour government bringing in the issue of moral principles. Incidentally, in 1947, a health act was the source of collision between Church and State in Ireland.¹⁰¹

As shown above, it was an episcopate oriented towards the working class. Another proof for this claim was the Church’s direct investment in the building of flats in Guardamangia during the second phase of Archbishop Gonzi’s episcopate. Those apartments were intended for working class families who lived on a low income. Besides, in the period in question, the Archbishop intervened to halt the strikes that were about to be held at Bailey’s (dockyard), and those that were being planned by the cohort of bakers. At this stage, it is pertinent to refer to

⁹⁶ Pastoral letter of the 1947 General Elections in Anon, *The Quarrel of the Malta Labour Party with the Church* (Malta, Empire Press, 1966), 27.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 28.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹⁹ Joseph M. Pirotta, *Fortress Colony Vol I, op.cit.*, 149.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁰¹ J.H. Whyte, *Church and State in Modern Ireland* (Dublin, Gill and Macmillan, 1971), 122.

the homily that Archbishop Gonzi held on 25th June 1944 whilst addressing the members of the General Workers' Union during the latter's first anniversary. On that occasion, Archbishop Gonzi explained that he would support the working classes on condition that they based their action on Papal encyclicals.¹⁰² In the interval, the emigration figures were on the increase and the episcopate continued to support the scheme also by providing spiritual care for the new Maltese communities abroad.

The episcopate was seriously perturbed, and it sounded its alarm bells after the 1st May 1948 incident during which some youths intoned the Red Flag anthem during a dinner held in St. Paul's Bay to which Mr Dom Mintoff, at the time the deputy leader of the Labour Party and Minister of Works and Reconstruction, was present. From that point onwards, the episcopate mistrusted and distrusted Mr Mintoff believing that he was a communist and that he intended to paint Malta red. The position taken by the Pope in the forties vis-à-vis Communism in Italy left their bearings on the Malta episcopate too.

Just two months after the St. Paul Bay's incident, the episcopate published the position of the Supreme Sacred Congregation of the Holy Office as regards Communism. It contended that Catholics could not enrol in the Communist Party or aid Communists in their activities or publish, disseminate or read literature that defended Communism.¹⁰³ Those Catholics who supported Communism would be regarded as apostates. The episcopate called for the need to "*jifgħu l-mostru Komunista.*"¹⁰⁴ These measures would be taken during the third phase of the episcopate.

Meanwhile, in 1949, Mr Mintoff had managed to snatch the leadership of the Labour Party from Dr Boffa. In the early nineteen-fifties, Mintoff was claiming "either we are treated on equal footing with the English or we become part of England." By 1955, it was evident that Mintoff and Archbishop Gonzi had a different point of view for the solution of Malta's ills. For Mintoff, the episcopate was a hurdle to his secular project. For the episcopate, Mintoff's target was "*relegare la chiesa alla sacrestia.*"¹⁰⁵

¹⁰² *Ir-Ragħaj lill-Merħla Tiegħu: L-Ewwel Ktieb* (Malta, Ghakda ta' Qari Tajjeb, 1944), 11.

¹⁰³ Pastoral letter Number 87 dated 31st July 1949.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁵ Sergio Grech, *Patri Felicjan Bilocca, op.cit.*, 141.

Phase Three: 1955-1962

The third phase of Archbishop Gonzi's episcopate ranged from 1955, when Labour leader Mr Mintoff won the elections with a convincing majority, to 1962, when the Nationalist Party was elected to power. The international context, as explained earlier, was characterised by a cold war between the superpowers and their respective satellites which turned the world into a class of two, that is to say the Communists and the champions of the free market. Meanwhile, three possible political routes had emerged in the immediate post-war era – Communism, Socialism and Christian Democracy, the Catholic Church preferring the third option while it tried to convince its flock that the other two mechanisms were to be avoided as much as possible since their philosophy was in disagreement with the Catholic Church's teaching. Thanks to Pope John XXIII, whose short pontificate began in 1958 and ended five years later, the Catholic Church not only experienced change and reform on an institutional level but also sought dialogue with the outside world. In international affairs, the new Pope promoted dialogue with Eastern Europe which was characterised by Communism. He even dialogued with the Soviet leaders, and that was by far a radical measure.¹⁰⁶ John XXIII also worked to reconcile the Vatican with the Russian Orthodox Church and to relieve tensions between the respective churches. His brainchild, the Second Vatican Council, did not condemn Communism.

His encyclical *Pacem in terris* discouraged nuclear war and sought an improvement in the relationship between the two superpowers. John XXIII championed human rights arguing that "Man has the right to live. He has the right to bodily integrity and to the means necessary for a proper development of life, particularly food, clothing, shelter, medical care and rest, as also the necessary social services. In consequence, he has the right to be looked after in the event of ill-health, including disability stemming from his work, widowhood, old age, enforced unemployment, or whenever through no fault of his own he is deprived of the means of livelihood."¹⁰⁷ Pope John XXIII increased the college of cardinals naming the first ever cardinals from Japan, the Philippines and Africa. He eliminated the term *perfidius* when referring to the Jews in the prayer for the conversion of the Jews in the Good Friday liturgy.

¹⁰⁶ Marco Roncalli, *Giovanni XXIII: Angelo Giuseppe Roncalli: Una Vita Nella Storia* (Milano, Mondadori, 2006), 520.

¹⁰⁷ John XXIII, *Pacem in Terris*, Retrieved 20th March 2022, https://www.vatican.va/content/john-xxiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_j-xxiii_enc_11041963_pacem.html.

In 1955, the Labour leader Mr Mintoff was successful at the polls promoting Integration as his government's main milestone. Meanwhile Archbishop Gonzi was seventy years old and his contemporaries noted his vividness and energetic character in administering the Malta Church notwithstanding his advanced age. Both Archbishop Gonzi and Mr Mintoff were "capable of inspiring passion, belief and devotion in their followers."¹⁰⁸ In a letter sent to Prefect of the Congregations of Sacraments, Archbishop Gonzi at this juncture described himself as "*io correggo e qualche volto punisco tutti gli abusi del mio clero senza guardare in faccia a nessuno.*"¹⁰⁹

During the third phase of the episcopate, the Church in Malta still yielded a lot of influence in society. Archbishop Gonzi gave the following picture of his diocese in 1962: 286,000 Catholics, 12,000 non-Catholics, 410 diocesan priests, 58 seminarians, 49 male religious houses, 87 religious houses for Malta, and 311 churches.¹¹⁰ During this phase of the episcopate, the Church in Malta continued to further her spectrum of services to specific sectors inhabiting society by founding key initiatives like the Kummissjoni Djoċesana Films (1958) which directed cinema viewers which films to watch, and by supporting the launch of the Cana Movement and Caritas, two bold institutions whose target and services were directed to families. Thanks to Mgr Mikiel Azzopardi, id-Dar tal-Provvidenza, a specialised home catering for disabled people, was opened during this phase of the episcopate at a time when the Maltese used to literally hide their disabled children from the outside world. Inspired by the encyclicals, the archbishop also took interest and adopted initiatives to see that Malta's social milieu was bettered. During this phase of the episcopate, Archbishop Gonzi reorganised the sector of charitable institutions for children¹¹¹ and he also supported the *Segretarjat Assistenza Soċjali* of the Catholic Action to aid the poorer class. Thanks to him, the strike that was organised by mechanised quarry owners was suspended.¹¹² In 1960, "(Malta's) seminary students have been granted permission to finish their theological studies in Latin America to start exercising their priesthood there."¹¹³ During the same period of time, the Church was responsible for four

¹⁰⁸ Joseph M. Pirota, "*Quest for secularisation triggers second political religious Struggle,* ' *op.cit.*, 453.

¹⁰⁹ Letter from Archbishop Gonzi to Cardinal Prefect of the Congregation of Sacraments dated 23rd September 1960 in *AAM, Corrispondenza Gonzi 1960, LIV*.

¹¹⁰ Annual Questionnaire dated 31st March 1962.

¹¹¹ Charles Buttigieg, *Mikiel Gonzi: Hamsin Sena fit-Tmum, op.cit.*, 30.

¹¹² Letter from Mechanised Quarry Owners to Archbishop Gonzi dated 20th March in *AAM, Corrispondenza Gonzi 1961, LV*.

¹¹³ Ġużepi Lupi, *Catholic Life in Malta* (Malta, Empire Press, 1960), 48.

houses for the aged with 250 inmates.”¹¹⁴ In 1962, the Church had 56 schools and these provided the educational experience for 14,000 Maltese pupils.

It was a period of time when demonstrations were held regularly for instance to welcome the archbishop from abroad. Participants in the event would accompany him all the way to his palace in Valletta. In a way, it was an exercise to show the bond that existed between the people and their religious leader.

Prime Minister Mintoff’s act of not visiting the archbishop with his team of cabinet ministers after winning the 1955 general elections, which had been a standard practise in colonial Malta, raised eyebrows and critics commenced to put in doubt the true identity of the new government and the actual roadmap that the mentioned government would take especially as to the way that relationships between church and state would evolve. This turned out to be quite a hectic period for the episcopate, to a certain extent more intense than the first phase of the episcopate characterised by a period of dispute with Lord Strickland. This time, Archbishop Gonzi was in charge of the diocese and Mr Mintoff was not ready to compromise or offer an apology. There were moments of climax during the episcopate like the Pauline celebrations of 1960 where literally masses packed the events and where the people’s faith was clearly underlined. But there were other factors like tourism, television service, and increase in literacy rates that in the long term would contribute to the emergence of new ideas, concepts and trends, but above all secularisation. Furthermore, those who experienced the Second World War wanted a better standard of living and less ties with the establishment. Such developments will commence to leave their mark in society during the third phase of the episcopate.

During this period of Archbishop Gonzi’s episcopate, the relationship between the Malta Church and the Malta Labour Party led by Mintoff, contrary to what had happened during the Boffa era, went from bad to worse. Prime Minister Mintoff’s failing in not giving assurances and guarantees to the episcopate that Integration would not harm religion in Malta, led the Church to join the opposition movement against the Integration project. The episcopate’s fears that a future Maltese government could legislate on issues that touched the Church’s role in society, especially the role of education and family, was unacceptable. The fear of Protestantism breaking new grounds in Malta was always present in the episcopate’s frame of

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 50.

mind and Integration was seen as an opportunity for the Protestants to spread their wings in Malta and even taking over. Meanwhile, the episcopate was taken to task and accused of meddling in politics but Archbishop Gonzi insisted that he was only reacting because the politician was invading the Church's role in society. The episcopate was opposing Integration with the backing of the Holy See.

To add insult to injury, British reluctance after the Suez crisis to move on with the Integration enterprise, accompanied by a radical defence review which included also rundowns, led to a disruption in relations between Labour and the British government. This led to the episcopate strengthening its relationship with the British as Labour leader Mr Mintoff was regarded as an enemy of the Catholic Church since, as Vicar-General Emeritus Mgr Carmelo Xuereb had commented to historian Joseph M. Pirotta, the British were a "safeguard" for Archbishop Gonzi,¹¹⁵ a safeguard from Mintoff and his policies of separation between church and state and secularisation. Mintoff accused the Malta Church of being in collusion with the foreigner who was keeping the island in bondage.

Mintoff expected Archbishop Gonzi to join his freedom cause quoting the example of Archbishop Makarios in Cyprus. The Labour leader in his speeches began to refer to Archbishop Gonzi as Sir Michael Gonzi to underline the episcopate's intense relationship with the colonial masters. On different occasions Archbishop Gonzi was reported of declaring the Malta's Church loyalty to the British crown. But that loyalty needs to be qualified since, as said earlier in this section, Archbishop Gonzi regularly felt the need to defend the workers' rights. For instance, amidst the 1962 rundowns, he wrote to the Queen showing his concern regarding "the increasing figures of unemployment... and... the mounting threat of further unemployment through the change in Britain's defence needs or policy."¹¹⁶ A press release condemning the rundown exercise was also issued by Archbishop Gonzi. He protested against new taxes that would badly affect the Maltese family. Archbishop Gonzi constantly defended the Dockyard's workers from being discharged.

Naturally, the British government benefitted from the widening gap resulting between the Church and the Labour Party. Mintoff's discourse in favour of separation between Church and

¹¹⁵ Joseph M. Pirotta, '*Quest for secularisation triggers second political religious struggle*,' *op.cit.*, 591.

¹¹⁶ Letter from Archbishop Gonzi to Queen Elizabeth II dated 10th July 1962 in *AAM, Corrispondenza Gonzi 1962, Vol. LVI*.

State, and his declarations to “*istituire il tribunale del popolo come fanno i comunisti*”¹¹⁷ made a rapprochement between the two sides impossible. The April 1958 violent events convinced the episcopate that “Mintoff’s tactics in pursuit of power posed a serious threat to the islands’ social fabric. He was totally convinced that there could be no sure peace in Malta until Mr Mintoff was eliminated.”¹¹⁸ In fact, when Mintoff resigned from power, the Archbishop commented to a Colonial Office civil servant that he was “relieved.”¹¹⁹ Pirotta is convinced that at that stage Mintoff “was trying to remove the possibility of having to fight a war on two fronts,”¹²⁰ the Church and the British. But as stated earlier, by 1959 Mintoff had changed tactics and decided to fight the two fronts to task. The thaw between the two was much more than a personal argument between the two sides. Mr Mintoff’s resignation was followed by four years of direct colonial rule to which the episcopate did not object to. Mintoff used this period to organise his party and strengthen it and above all used international contacts to press on his vision.

During the third phase of Archbishop Gonzi’s episcopate, one notices an extensive use of the media available in the period in question which gave a bigger share to the Church to send across its messages and positions. During the Mintoffian legislature between 1955 and 1958, Archbishop Gonzi, thanks to the British administration in Malta, twice used the broadcasting medium to communicate his views that took to task the Labour government’s plan on Integration. The guarantees and assurances that Labour gave to the episcopate were never in writing. Newspapers like *Lehen is-Sewwa* and *Il-Qawmien* and periodicals like *The Faith*, as stated earlier, promptly carried across the episcopate’s message, sometimes too passionately, gaining up a momentum for the 1962 turn of elections which was turned into a crusade against Communism and against having Mintoff’s return to power. In the process, readers were reminded of Mintoff’s early writings which he had penned in his youth when he had placed Christ and Karl Marx on an equal footing.¹²¹ The episcopate’s view was not limited to newspapers published by Catholic lay organisations. It was also supported by other organisations like the political parties which were Catholic in nature, or the independent press like the newspapers from Mabel’s stable which also regarded Mintoff as a threat and which

¹¹⁷ Letter from Archbishop Gonzi to Cardinal Prefect of the Congregations of Sacraments dated 31st October 1960 in *AAM, Corrispondenza Gonzi 1960, Vol. LIV*.

¹¹⁸ Joseph M. Pirotta, ‘*Quest for secularisation triggers second political religious Struggle*,’ *op.cit.*, 587.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 589.

¹²⁰ Joseph M. Pirotta, *Fortress Colony, Vol 3, op.cit.*, 587.

¹²¹ *Lehen is-Sewwa*, 15th February 1962, 2.

were contrary to loose ties with the mother colony. In fact, it says a lot that after the imposition of the interdict, the episcopate prohibited Labour Party newspapers whose writing, reading, selling or buying amounted to a sin.

The sequence of events following the 1958 revolts were seen by the episcopate as dramatic. These included Labour joining the AAPSO organisation which was based in Cairo and was commonly believed to be Peking backed, the Labour's Statement of Policy (March 1961) which was harsh in nature vis-à-vis the Church, Mintoff's challenge to the bishops of the dioceses of Malta and Gozo for a public debate, the meetings between Mintoff and Egypt's Nasser, Labour's broadcasts from Cairo, the Socialist delegation's visit in Malta (November 1961), the Labour Party's different contacts with communist leaders, the Labour's 1962 electoral manifesto which made no reference to religion, Mintoff's objections to the Church having a role in education and censorship, his declarations of getting material aid from the Russians and Chinese, and the publication of the booklet *Priests and Politics in Malta* led the Church to panic to the extent that the episcopate introduced the interdict penalty on Labour's National Executive. The implications of this spiritual penalty were wide since at that stage the practising Catholic would be denied sacraments. Most probably, the episcopate was comparing his diocese with what happened in Spain or in Mexico in the nineteen-thirties, or in nearby Italy in the forties where the Communists were seen by the Church as a threat and where Catholic Italian voters were encouraged to vote the Communists out or face spiritual penalties.

The reader must also bear in mind that when in government Mintoff had prohibited Catholic Church organisations to use schools to teach catechism, and to organise lotteries to boost their income. Mintoff, contrary to the Church, insisted of having Protestant teachers in secondary schools and he stopped the bishop from granting a public holiday to students on the morrow that he visited their school. Besides, there was also the Caravaggio chapter which deepened the bad relationship between Church and Labour. Through the interdict action, the episcopate most probably believed that the archbishop could halt the Mintoff threat. But on the contrary, the latter would not budge. On the other hand, documentation shows that the episcopate was misreading the times as it was believing that Mintoff was loosing ground. According to Archbishop Gonzi, Mintoff has "lost a great amount of support he had before, both from the

people here and from the British government.”¹²² Furthermore, one notices that the interdict penalty, owing to fanaticism by some members of the local cohort of priests, led to the restrictions incurred by the mentioned spiritual sanction to also be imposed on the families of the members of the Labour Party National Executive which also involved the Parliamentary Group, Labour’s active members in party committees and other staunch Labour supporters.¹²³

At least three pastoral letters in this period issued for Lent between 1959 and 1961 reacted to Mintoff’s vision and politics. In 1959, the episcopate felt that Malta, both spiritually and temporally, was in crisis and therefore the islanders were called to revive their true Christian spirit. Such a claim differed from the archbishop’s very first pastoral letter in which Archbishop Gonzi lamented that Malta was only sick and not really in a bad shape. In 1959, the episcopate stated that religion was not only for the private part of the individual’s life, but it had the right to figure out also in the social and political life. Therefore Catholics were called to see “that politics should not be independent of moral law and that the Church should not be considered other than a liturgical organisation.”¹²⁴

The episcopate condemned class hatred and argued that religion should not be subordinated to the interests of the state. The pastoral letter also insisted that Catholics could not support a party which “goes covertly or openly against the faith, the Church, and the Christian morality as reflected in the customs of the country, and which does not recognise the necessity of the harmony between Church and state, which is essential for the peace and unity of the people.”¹²⁵ Voters were encouraged to kick out those whose activities were based on the materialistic concept of life. In the opinion of the present writer, the pastoral letter issued for Lent in 1960 was one of the most important documents emanated by the Malta Church during the third phase of the episcopate. The episcopate closed its shutters and set out clearly its roadmap for a possible future conflict with the Labour Party which, as stated, was meanwhile battling two fronts: the Church and the colonial master. The pastoral letter was also signed by the bishop of Gozo, Mgr Joseph Pace. Both bishops argued that Socialism and Catholicism were not bed-fellows. Pope Pius XI had contended that “no one can be at the same time a sincere Catholic and a true Socialist.” The episcopate explained that Socialism led to secularism whose

¹²² Letter from Archbishop Gonzi to Archbishop of Westminster Cardinal Godfrey dated 21st May 1961 in *AAM, Corrispondenza Gonzi 1961, LV*.

¹²³ Sergio Grech, ‘Contextualising the 1961 Interdict in Malta,’ *Melita Historica*, 18, (1), (2020), 83.

¹²⁴ Joseph M. Pirotta, *Fortress Colony, Vol 3, op.cit.*, 593.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 594.

intentions were to stop the Church from participating in public life. The pastoral letter for Lent 1961 was more specific than the previous two by condemning labour's joining AAPSO. The episcopate argued that through that move a door was opened to Communist infiltration "into Malta and into the Mediterranean."¹²⁶ A few months later, in a letter to Mgr Pietro Palazzini, Secretary of the Sacra Congregazione del Consiglio, Archbishop Gonzi noted that "*il pericolo del comunismo esiste a Malta sebbene dico io finora in proporzione minima.*"¹²⁷ The archbishop added that he had attended a meeting with the Pope on 17 September 1961 during which he had discussed this matter, even claiming that "*I Maltesi iscritti al comunismo internazionale si contano sulle dita.*"¹²⁸

The 1962 electoral results gave some breathing space to the Church, but that was shortlived as Nationalist leader Borg Olivier demanded Independence a few months after he was elected to power. On the last day of March 1962, the archbishop commented that "the leader of the Nationalist Party... is a good catholic... we have nothing to fear from this government. On the contrary, the economic situation is worrying us."¹²⁹ Later, as we shall see in the next section, the forging up of a Constitution for independent Malta led the archbishop to participate directly in the process to protect the Church's role in society. An important conclusion from this phase of the episcopate is that the values of the people were changing, and what the Church expressed could be challenged. The results emanating from the Integration referendum and the 1962 general elections show that a considerable number of people were shifting their beliefs, and that the number would increase to a point that in the near future they would return Mintoff to power and thus give him the mandate to redefine the role of the Church in society.

Phase Four: 1962-1976

The fourth phase of Archbishop Gonzi's episcopate ranged from 1962, when the Nationalist Party was returned to power with the attainment of Independence as its major objective, to 1976, when Archbishop Gonzi resigned his bishopric, thereby terminating an episcopate of more than fifty years. In 1962, Archbishop Gonzi was 77 years old but his contemporaries speak of a very active archbishop who was very much in control of the Church, endowed as he

¹²⁶ Pastoral letter published in *Problemi tal-Lum*, April 1961, 123.

¹²⁷ Letter from Archbishop Gonzi to Cardinal Palazzini dated 26th February 1961 in *AAM, Corrispondenza Gonzi 1960, LIV*.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*

¹²⁹ Annual Questionnaire dated 31st March 1962 in *ACM, Corrispondenza Gonzi 1962, LVI*.

was with a strong sense of pastoral mission and perennially following closely the position of the Pope.

The period under review was quite vibrant and agitated considering the events that had happened within the universal Catholic Church, on the international scene, and within Malta itself thus affecting the way the episcopate functioned and reacted to. Some of the main episodes of the period included the attainment of Malta's Independence (1964), the promulgation of Malta as a republic (1974), the 1972 Revision of the Financial Agreement and Defence Treaty, four general elections and a referendum, the 1969 peace treaty between Church and State, Prime Minister Mintoff's secularisation programme, the Second Vatican Council, and the First Extraordinary Synod for Bishops. The majority of the referred to events witnessed the participation of an active archbishop who was more than ever seeing his role as a defender of a community that was being attacked by a wolf, a position regarding the bishopric that the Second Vatican Council was not upholding any longer, as we shall see.

In this phase, the episcopate had to face the consequences of developments in education and literacy, media technology, the entertainment industry, and the Labour government's secularisation policies in the nineteen-seventies, as also the increasing contacts with the outside world that partially encouraged those developments. The politico-religious dispute between Archbishop Gonzi and Mr Mintoff impacted some of the general public's faith. Archbishop Gonzi himself in 1962 had noted this shift. His argument was that "up to a year or two very few Catholics omitted the fulfilment of Easter duties. But these first two years the number has greatly increased in connection with the politico-religious question... the leaders of the Labour Party have succeeded in deceiving many people and in positioning the minds and hearts of many, particularly among the younger generation."¹³⁰

Changes led a substantial percentage of the local population to choose to live independently of the Church's teaching, opting for mundane philosophies and secular lifestyles that were contrary to the Church's teachings. This was also a period when some European countries introduced divorce and abortion, both contrary to the Church's teachings. Italy had introduced divorce and later also abortion in the mentioned period.¹³¹ Britain had launched divorce in 1969

¹³⁰ Archbishop Michael Gonzi, Questionnaire for Nuncio dated 31st March 1962.

¹³¹ Abortion was introduced in Italy by the Andreotti governments of 1976-1979 which were backed by the Italian Communist Party.

and Austria in 1978. Such currents also impacted on the mentality of the Maltese people. In fact, by the year 1968, the abstentions from Sunday mass reached nearly 17% of those who were expected to attend. In this epoch, the episcopate would notice that the means of communication were creating contacts with larger countries that, in its assessment, “have forgotten God and instead were choosing permissiveness.”¹³² The period also saw the emergence of the Jehovah’s Witnesses in Malta who spread their belief, which did not run in line with that of the Catholic Church, by going door to door. For the episcopate, such associations posed a ‘challenge’ to the Church even if their success rate was limited.

The pastoral letters that were published in the seventies focused on this issue of change, and Archbishop Gonzi believed that a sound Catholic education was the right alternative.¹³³ Change in this regard was regretted since the archbishop was observing a decadent trend in values that was threatening the very existence of the traditional Maltese catholic family. On different occasions, the episcopate regarded the cinema and the entertainment industry as agents of corruption of the youth segment and the families.¹³⁴ The episcopate was also noticing that the difference between the social classes in Malta was sharpening and becoming more evident. For the episcopate, the family was losing its catholic spirit, the concept of authority as vested in the father’s role and the significance of a true catholic marriage.¹³⁵ The episcopate noticed that youths were being passive in their faith¹³⁶ and besides materialism,¹³⁷ dishonesty in fashion trends and prostitution, Archbishop Gonzi also mentioned the consumption of drugs as one of society’s maladies.¹³⁸ Meanwhile, the episcopate lamented that its flock “lacked knowledge of religious affairs”¹³⁹ and therefore immorality was taking over.¹⁴⁰

At the same time, the episcopate was faced with the challenge to renew the Church in line with what the Second Vatican Council had demanded. This required a radical shift in the episcopate’s vision since the Catholic Church stopped regarding itself as the hierarchical *societas perfecta*. The episcopate did not oppose the reforms demanded by the said Council even though, as has been stated before, the Archbishop did not fully grasp the new vision as

¹³² Pastoral Letter by Archbishop Michael Gonzi dated 3rd November 1973.

¹³³ *Pastorali tar-Randan*, Stamperija Il-Hajja, 1974, 8.

¹³⁴ Pastoral Letter by Archbishop Michael Gonzi 12th July 1975. Pastoral letter dated 26th July 1976.

¹³⁵ *Pastorali tar-Randan*, 1971.

¹³⁶ Pastoral Letter by Archbishop Michael Gonzi dated August 1972.

¹³⁷ Pastoral Letter by Archbishop Michael Gonzi dated 12th July 1975.

¹³⁸ Pastoral Letter by Archbishop Michael Gonzi dated 26th July 1976.

¹³⁹ Tony Terribile, *Il-Hajja Kattolika f’Malta fl-1975*, NAM, 188.

¹⁴⁰ Pastoral Letter by Archbishop Michael Gonzi dated 28th August 1976. n

adopted by the Catholic Church. The fact that the episcopate was surrounded by progressive priests, like Canon Benjamin Tonna of Rabat, helped to achieve the key reforms. The use of the vernacular in the liturgy, the turning around of the main altar, the introduction of the new rite for holy mass and the novel rites for the sacraments of baptism and confirmation, as well as the funeral mass, gave a new dimension and significance to the participation of the laity in the Church and were important achievements for the episcopate.¹⁴¹

As a consequence of the Second Vatican Council, the system of the bulettini tat-tqarbin was also discarded.¹⁴² A total of thirteen new parishes were founded during this phase of the episcopate and that was a positive aspect of the episcopate itself. It speaks volumes that out of fourteen parishes that Archbishop Gonzi had instituted, thirteen were founded after Vatican II. This climate of reform led to a movement of priests debating the new currents in print, an aspect that had been missing in the previous years. The Council also led the episcopate to explore diverse paths for the evangelisation mission by investing in the media sector. Such an investment provided a constant voice for the episcopate addressed to a population that, as stated before, was changing its lifestyle and commitment to faith. New texts for religion classes at government schools were published. Another positive aspect was the emergence of a pastoral plan through which the episcopate intended “to implement the recommendations of the Vatican Council in Malta.”¹⁴³ Besides those reforms, the episcopate held important other reforms in its administration wing in the property management section, thanks to the input of Archbishop Ligutti and Archbishop Lemieux and their respective staff. A valuable step was the setting up of the Pastoral Research Services, and work was also done to see that priests would receive an appropriate remuneration.

Through Vatican II, the Catholic Church took a firm position in favour of democracy and human rights, condemned antisemitism and embraced the philosophy of religious freedom. The Church as well made it clear that she would refrain from asking for political support for her ecclesiastical exigencies. Furthermore, it added, “*Communitas politica et Ecclesia in proprio campo ab invicem sunt independentes et autonomae*,” (“The political community and the

¹⁴¹ *Il-Quddiesa mas-Saċerdot bir-Rit il-Ġdid* (Malta, Empire Press, 1969). Ġużeppi Lupi, *Xi jfissru ir-Riti l-Godda tal-Magħmudija u l-Grizma* (Malta, Kummissjoni Liturġika Nazzjonali, 1973).

¹⁴² Circular Number 352 issued by Vicar-General Mgr Emanuel Galea.

¹⁴³ Benjamin Tonna, ‘Pastoral Planning in Malta,’ *Melita Theologica*, 46, (1), (1995), 3.

Church in their fields are autonomous and independent from each other”).¹⁴⁴ At the same time, the Church asserted that “the Church should have true freedom to preach the faith, to teach her social doctrine, to exercise her role freely among men, and also to pass moral judgement in those matters which regard public order when the fundamental rights of a person or the salvation of souls require it” (*Gaudium et Spes*, 76).¹⁴⁵

In such areas, it seems that the Maltese episcopate was finding it hard to participate in the new vision. Being a man of eighty years, formed as he was in post-Risorgimento seminaries and universities during the pontificates of Leo XIII and Pius X in an era when the Church was battling against a liberal, nationalist, materialistic and scientific age, can explain this limitation in sharing and practising the vision.¹⁴⁶ To be fair, the different structures or councils within the diocese that were aimed at wider participation in the leadership of the institution for the priestly cohort but also for the laity were set accordingly. But, as Mgr Arthur Said Pullicino observed, Archbishop Gonzi was “accustomed to a different system of administrating the Church and it was not always easy for him to shift to the new mentality. People used to kneel every time the bishop passed. For instance, instead of the Senate of the Priests or the Presbyteral Council, Archbishop Gonzi had the Cathedral Chapter which he used to nominate. After Vatican II, he had to preside over a body whose representatives were elected and not selected by him. The archbishop kept hold of his Cathedral Chapter and what the bishop said was final. At first, it was difficult to persuade him to approve holy mass in the vernacular but, over time, he was persuaded. Civil marriage was difficult for him to accept even for those who were non-Catholics.”¹⁴⁷

This argument also raises another related argument. It had been decided by the Second Vatican Council that bishops were to leave their seat on their seventy-fifth birthday. Archbishop Gonzi disagreed with that and he carried on his episcopate with papal approval. That brought bad blood with Bishop Emanuel Gerada, the auxiliary bishop, especially when the latter was promoted to coadjutor bishop. According to Mgr Arthur Said Pullicino, who was secretary to Bishop Gerada, such a promotion made Archbishop Gonzi believe that he was going to be removed, and that belief put his relationship with Bishop Gerada in jeopardy and rendered the

¹⁴⁴ Agnieszka Romanko, ‘The Principle of Independence and Autonomy of Church and State in the Social Teaching of the Roman Catholic Church,’ *Teka Komisji Prawniczej PAN Oddział w Lublinie*, 14, (1), 2021, 329.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁶ See Chapter 3.

¹⁴⁷ Taped Interview Mgr Arthur Said Pullicino, Private Residence Sliema, Sergio Grech Private Collection.

peace process with Labour, which was getting difficult because Mintoff kept pressing for demands that the Church could not compromise with, even more difficult. Mgr Said Pullicino confirmed to the present author that Pope Paul VI wanted Archbishop Gonzi to stay in office “*alla fine*”.¹⁴⁸ Said Pullicino once had a meeting with the mentioned Pope who asked him to take good care of Archbishop Gonzi. The Pope added to Said Pullicino that “irrespective of his age, Archbishop Gonzi was a good bishop.” Mgr Lawrenz Cachia believed that “the idea that a bishop resigned from office was a novelty for him and no one had prepared him for the eventuality. And within that big age that he had spent more than half a century as bishop, no one could speak to him as a friend: we were all subjects and much smaller. But slowly he was recognising that he had lost contact with reality and that his forces were decreasing considerably.”¹⁴⁹

Undeniably, the period was politically far from an easy one for the episcopate. In fact, during this phase of the episcopate, the relationship between Church and State had to endure a difficult test since Malta had achieved Independence which had been a great leap forward for a country whose political destiny, since immemorial times, had seemed to be that of a colony. But the episcopate during this phase had to analyse and work around the consequences of a possible future Labour government headed by Mr Mintoff in a context of an independent country. Archbishop Gonzi knew well what the situation of the Church in Malta under British rule had been, but was not at all confident that it would remain the same under a Maltese Labour government that publically confessed socialist leanings and was promoting non-friendly sentiments for the Church.

Mintoff’s brusque remarks of creating people’s courts and imprisoning Maltese high church prelates in case they infringed the law, or his arguments in favour of the removal of the crucifix from school classes, created reminiscences of Communist governments and episodes of the Church’s persecution in countries like Spain, Mexico, Argentina and Cuba. This inevitably led the episcopate to react and to defend the Church’s role in society. In the running for Independence, Mintoff argued that he was ready to get financial help from Russia or China. In fact, in 1966 Archbishop Gonzi was working on “*un nuovo sistema economico per il clero, prima che, salito al potere, il partito politico capitanato dal sig. Mintoff confischerà tutta la*

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ Lawrenz Cachia, ‘Ismu Ntiseġ ma’ Hajjitna,’ *Pastor*, February 1984, 14.

proprietà della Chiesa di Malta e di Gozo."¹⁵⁰ At this stage, the role of the Vatican which, through its emissaries Archbishop Iginio Eugenio Cardinale and Archbishop Agostino Casaroli in the Independence and Republic issues respectively, formulated the constitutional clauses that dealt with religion, speaks volumes. The role of the Church in society and its connection with the world of politics, as explained earlier, had changed. The idea of putting the Church above the constitution of a country was no longer acceptable to the Church. In the case of the republican status, all discussions were strictly held between the Maltese government and the Vatican representative. In the matter of the Republic constitution, "Casaroli had... been kept informed of developments and... it took only a couple of meetings in Rome to have the changes blessed by the authorities in the Vatican."¹⁵¹

Cardinal Casaroli also took part in the talks leading to the introduction of civil marriage in Malta in 1975.¹⁵² That was the climax of Mintoff's secularisation programme. Besides introducing civil marriage, during that year, the Malta Church became subject to the payment of income tax. The Church's exemption from income tax in 1947 had been introduced by a Labour government. But Dr Mizzi argued that such exemption within a Republican context did not make sense any longer since "a Republic does not look favourably on similar privileges."¹⁵³ Mintoff's reforms were peacefully carried out with no crusading spirit from the episcopate. In 1975, Archbishop Gonzi was 90 years old and "no longer the fighter of the nineteen-sixties. He had mellowed considerably... while the Vatican had for some time been insisting on his retirement."¹⁵⁴ To assist him, Archbishop Gonzi was given an auxiliary bishop. It is true that at this stage, the Vatican took over but one should also note that the episcopate was loyal to the 1969 peace accord that was signed with the Labour Party. It was not a coincidence that once the episcopate of Archbishop Gonzi became history, the Church-State relations in Malta took a turn for the worse.

Still, the *Arcidiocesi di Malta Relazione Quinquennale 1971-1975* showed an active and dynamic episcopate notwithstanding the experience of secularisation and the mentioned limitations and events. A year before the episcopate of Archbishop Gonzi came to an end,

¹⁵⁰ Letter from Archbishop Gonzi to Mgr Pietro Palazzini dated 21st October 1966 in *AAM, Corrispondenza Gonzi 1966, Vol. LX*.

¹⁵¹ Edgar Mizzi, *Malta in the Making, op.cit.*, 163.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, 234.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, 232.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 238.

Malta was divided into sixty-three parishes and had ten sanctuaries. During the said period, fifty-three priests were ordained, and the cohort of friars was 481.¹⁵⁵ From the questionnaire, it emerged as well that the Malta Church was made up of different structures which eventually shared the running of the Church. The list of this mechanism included the Pastoral Council, the Presbyteral Council, the Commission for Films, the Commission for Emigrants and Tourists, the National Commission for Catechism, the Ecumenic Commission, the Justice and Peace Commission, and the National Commission for the Liturgy. A good number of those bodies resulted from the Second Vatican Council. According to the same report, the episcopate noted that during the mentioned period, not one of the priests resigned from his ministry, the Church in Malta had sixty-four schools and there were more than five-thousand baptisms. It was to the episcopate's satisfaction that holy masses held on Saturday evening in Malta were "*molto frequentate*."¹⁵⁶ In several parishes, youths were organising masses for their age groups, and the public opinion was against divorce, while abortion was still "*un reato*."¹⁵⁷

Conclusion

As shown, the episcopate of Archbishop Michael Gonzi was one of the longest in Maltese history, lasting more than fifty years. This meant that Archbishop Gonzi not only experienced directly the main historical events of the twentieth century but, on certain occasions, influenced their course too. It is impossible to analyse Malta in the twentieth century without referring to his standpoints in different epochs. Archbishop Gonzi witnessed Malta passing from a key strategic British stronghold to an independent republic that also closed down the British military base. Since the period of the episcopate of Archbishop Gonzi was so long, one can safely speak of an "Archbishop Gonzi era." His sphere of influence was not limited only to the ecclesiastical dimension. The Church was an institution that transcended politics and in such a climate, the bishop's word had weight. Archbishop Gonzi considered himself as the spiritual leader of the Maltese people. This meant that although the bishop's primary task was to defend the Church and its faith in his diocese, it also implied that Archbishop Gonzi also felt responsible for Malta's socio-political and temporal welfare, regularly supporting the working class. Thus during the episcopate of Archbishop Gonzi, the Church was one of the main pillars of Maltese society. Archbishop Gonzi's approach was that of a *paterfamilias* but a benevolent,

¹⁵⁵ *Archdiocese di Malta Relazione Quinquennale 1971-1975*, AAM, *Fondo Gonzi: Corrispondenza Gonzi 1975*, Vol. LXIX.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

concerned and protective one. His was strong leadership, sanctioned by the duty to lead and defend his flock in an era when the power to run the local Church was centralised in his office. The Church's teachings of the period, regulated by the Council of Trent and the 1917 *Codex Iuris Canonici*, underlined the point that the bishop was married to his church and the implications of that statement in that particular context were profound. Archbishop Gonzi was completely dedicated to his Church.

During the episcopate of Archbishop Gonzi, Malta could be compared to a fortress. Society was a closed one and cut off from the continent. The Church was an active agent within society. But such a situation could not last forever. It was part of the episcopate's duty to preserve and protect that status as his predecessors did whilst they were in office. One of his main targets was to eventually keep Malta *cattolicissima*. But underlying currents were prompting change that could not be held from budding and eventually disperse. Archbishop Gonzi's achievements were impressive. But still Archbishop Gonzi was not appreciating the fact that his bishopric was happening in a transitory phase, an epoch following the Second World War during which socio-economic changes were in collision with traditional values, and this change would go on during the second, third and fourth phases of his episcopate. But there was another transition that tends to be forgotten. Archbishop Gonzi's episcopate happened between the Canon Law of the period and the Canon Law that had to be revised in the light of the Second Vatican Council. To add insult to injury, his bishopric happened in an era when the Communist Party was gaining ground and Communist dictators were persecuting the Church. Mintoff's programme of separation between Church and State caused scaremongering and the Labour leader was perceived as a threat to the hegemony that the Church had managed to create. Mr Mintoff wanted to change Malta from a fortress to an open public square, but he wanted that change overnight, creating alarms and shocks in the process. The interdict and the pastoral letters which assumed a clear position about Socialism and Communism, and which recommended which newspapers one was to buy and read, were all attempts to block Mr Mintoff. But it is fair to add, that on the other hand, the reforms demanded by Vatican Council II were indeed implemented. Both Archbishop Gonzi's formation and the fact that the episcopate was so long made change difficult to appreciate. For him, change was a hurdle in safeguarding the model which he believed was the best suited for Maltese society, essentially being made of families who were well versed in practising their Catholic faith. Archbishop Gonzi found it difficult to leave his bishopric seat preferring to continue with his line of defence employing the siege mentality, the very opposite of Vatican II.

CONCLUSION

This thesis attempted to present a new reading and understanding of Archbishop Gonzi and also a consideration of Archbishop Gonzi's pivotal role in post-war Malta, an aspect that in local historiography has not been given enough attention. In fact, Archbishop Gonzi was so far presented as a competitor in society wielding absolute power over every one of his subjects. He was therefore often compared to a father who refused to allow his children to develop an independent life. In this doctoral study, religion was not presented as a competitor with other forces operating in society as local literature tends to do when analysing episcopates and their effect on Maltese society.

The thesis has moved away from portraying Archbishop Gonzi as a sort of a paternal and conservative ruler of Catholic Malta. It contradicted the image often presented of a medieval man of religion who held firmly to his absolute beliefs of keeping an alliance between altar and throne, rigidly employing authoritarian tactics and opposing any possible reforms. A wide array of primary and secondary sources were used in the process, the main archives employed being those of the (Malta) Archbishop's Curia, the National Archives of the United Kingdom, the Archives of the Secretariat of the State of the Holy See, the Malta Labour Party Archives, Archives of the Metropolitan Cathedral, the Archives of the Raynor Memorial Libraries Marquette University and the Malta National Archives. A critical reading of these and other sources was instrumental to dispel myths that have accumulated over the years. The literature on the topic published by the Malta Labour Party fell short of adequate analysis and instead only repeated the claims made by Mr Dom Mintoff regarding Archbishop Gonzi whom Mintoff regarded as in collusion with the British to keep Malta in colonial bondage and a prelate who distinguished himself in meddling in politics eager to see Labour in opposition.

Religion in Malta, identified with Roman Catholicism, has been a key factor in the historical evolution of the island since immemorial times. Truly so, until a few years after the Second World War, the Catholic religion was well rooted in the islanders to the point that it was a

direct contributor in society and, in several cases, it was an uneasy enterprise to draw boundaries between the sacred and the profane, and very few contested this fact or tried to modify the cited affinity. Therefore, in those days, the Catholic faith was not simply the religion of the majority who inhabited the island but in the case of Malta, to a certain extent a crowded speck in the Mediterranean in the period reviewed, the adherents to the Catholic Church were practically everybody. During the era of the Hospitallers, one can safely conclude that religion was the state, a situation that the British would change as Malta, a geographically secluded barren island from the continent, was for them a strategic imperial outpost that generated huge financial rewards.

Therefore, the idea of defecting from the Catholic fold was unlikely until a few years after the Second World War. Before this term, questioning beliefs or adopting a different lifestyle from the established framework provided by the Catholic Church was not common. A plausible explanation for this might be the consequences of Malta's geographical limitations. Being cut off from the continent made the winds of change arrive late, leading instead to the adoption of conservative attitudes and ways of living, and mentalities shaped by parochialism. For instance, the eighteenth-century movements which favoured nationalism and secularism emerged in Malta only in the twentieth century, during the period between the two world wars, during the dispute between the Malta Church and Lord Gerald Strickland, and in the fifties when the Malta Church crossed swords with Prime Minister Mr Dom Mintoff over the latter's Integration plan which was not merely an economic proposal for a better and decent living. In fact, the Integration plan also impeded repercussions on the role of the Catholic Church in society.

But the Church not only provided rules of conduct but also furnished leaders both in the ecclesiastical and in the political field. Maltese history offers diverse examples of priests in different epochs who were leaders of the people in key historical moments. There were times when priests could contest general elections to represent the plea of their community of believers and to see that the rights of the Church were not usurped. But to a certain extent, there was a contradiction at that stage. The Church, by contesting the elections, became a competitor with the other political agents as she tried to convince that her policies were better than those proclaimed by its political rivals. To be fair, the 1917 Canon Law was mute on this theme and therefore there were really no wrongdoings in contesting the elections. The parish priest was another level of leadership that the Church offered. But he was not an autonomous agent. He

was answerable to the bishop of the diocese. In the case of Malta, the whole island, because of its small size, was one whole diocese.

One of the first themes that emerged in this thesis was that episcopates need to be studied in the context of what the Catholic Church expected from its bishops, and Archbishop Gonzi is not an exception in this regard. In the ecclesiological model of the Church, the bishop was the overseer of his diocese. In a sense, the bishop was married to his Church and was a father to his community. The bishop was expected to defend his flock. To a certain extent, he was the first citizen of the island. His word was law. The bishop was the Church and the Church was the bishop. The bishop was bound by papal encyclicals and Canon Law.

The Church was a self-sufficient organisation. She depended on no other institutions to exist and to go on with her mission. Only the Church could embrace the worldly and the non-worldly, a position that was often refuted and disputed by its competitors and seen as an attempt to keep the people chained away from progress. The Church was capable of injecting an inclusive 'brand' of Catholicism based strongly on the notion of social solidarity. Employing natural law, the Church had a definite code of morality establishing clear standards of right and wrong. Morality, unlike politics, was non-negotiable. Furthermore, it was an institution with a strong sense of the historical past demanding in the process the protection of its traditions, patrimony, identity, values and truth. It was a Church that organised triumphant manifestations that celebrated her faith and her mission but also her history and her institutional grandeur. She identified herself as a moral guide and the teacher of all nations. Liberty of conscience was not on its cards and the temporal wing was expected to protect the Catholic faith, especially in eras and countries where persecuting the Church became a policy. It was a Church that argued that Catholics could not be Socialists and condemned and excommunicated all Communists. She was guided by the teachings of the Council of Trent and Vatican I, both giving weight to the primacy of the bishop. This was the ambience of three-quarters of Archbishop Gonzi's fifty-two-year-old episcopate. Believing that the Church was a perfect society, *Extra ecclesiam nulla salus*, was the prevalent philosophy. That was the model that Archbishop Gonzi was trained to defend.

It followed that within this scenario, religion inspired and influenced not only the rhythm of daily life but also the mechanism of doing politics. This intimacy between the two spheres could be explained by the fact that both religion and politics dealt with "broad questions of the

meaning of life, offering symbolic models and organisational structures to articulate and shape it.”¹ Having its own organisational structure, based on the concept of hierarchy, that over the centuries had experienced change, reform and transformation, being an institution backed by a strong corpus of laws and a body of theology, the Church took it upon its shoulders to lead in the spiritual realm but also to cater and provide for the poor and to be a voice against the exploitation of the lower classes in an era when the idea of intellectual independence lagged behind and the social services regime was either inadequate or poor. In fact, she had a strong social vocation.

The interventions of Archbishop Gonzi in the social sphere should be assessed in terms of what the Catholic Church in the given period taught on the limits of civil power; the rights of workers to have a just wage and to join a trade union of their own choice; the rights of the family and its responsibilities; the right to own private property, including the use and administration of Church property; taxation and education; and particularly religious education in the context of the Catholic social tradition and the particular social circumstances in Malta at the time. The Catholic Church believed that Catholics were to correct the evils of the social system and restore them to Christian order. The Church argued that everybody was subject to the natural law and those who attempted to tamper with it went against the Divine will. Governments had the right to legislate but unjust laws were to be disobeyed. The Malta Church under Archbishop Gonzi was among the first to provide social housing after the Second World War. Her feat at that stage was towering. The Catholic Church was transnational and universal but at the same time also capable of adapting to the particular social needs imposed by the geographical space it was functioning within it. The Malta Church’s voice was a trusted one, a key promoter of social order.

The Church was the nucleus of all social life and achieved what Durkheim had defined as the “collective conscience” that resulted only from shared values and beliefs. The Church preceded the concept of the welfare state and in Malta, her array of mundane services was quite impressive. For instance, she offered education in an epoch when the coloniser’s share to educate was shameful, and education was valued from a purely utilitarian perspective. The Maltese society was based on a system of classes which had managed to coexist together. The Church had the merit here as she condemned and rejected class warfare. At the end of the day,

¹ Daniel H. Levine, *Religion and Politics in Latin America, op.cit.*, 6.

the Church shaped the values that framed Maltese society and its social fabric. The issue became complicated when it was felt necessary to draw the boundaries between religion and politics. The lavishly and beautifully decorated churches in the villages and the chapels in the countryside were not only the meeting place for the Catholics to pray, but a symbol of the strong position that the Catholic Church had in society. At times, the relationships with civil society were difficult and perhaps overreactive but these acts should be read within the context of the period under review. Judging Archbishop Gonzi by the contemporary values would distort the whole picture and thus limit the analysis.

After the Second World War, the mentioned debate on the necessity of drawing boundaries between religion and politics was hotly contested even in Malta where religion impacted society. The hegemony on which the Church built its vision and mission could not last forever and was 'threatened' by these contestations. The models of church and state as envisaged and articulated by popes Leo XIII and Pius X were put in doubt, especially by the representatives of the left under Mr Mintoff's baton. In the international scenario, movements like communism, secularism and laicism were also making inroads persuading and winning more souls to their cause. Mr Mintoff's mission and Archbishop Gonzi's vision could never meet as the former wanted a clear-cut separation overnight between religion and politics where the latter would not be subject to or slightly even influenced by the former. Mintoff argued that Malta should not be a colony of the Vatican since the legal system's backbone was Canon Law, the law of the Church. Mintoff's criticism of the Church and the clergy was aimed to diminish the esteem of the mentioned institution's authority. Labour Mr Mintoff sowed fear and, to assert his political independence from both the Church and the Empire, he even made contacts with international anti-British regimes.

In counterattacking his line of arguments, Mintoff blamed the Church for being anti-progress, intolerant, resistant to change and an obstacle to the process of democracy and social change. In Malta's case, the bishop was expected to defend the concept of *Malta Kattoliçissima*. The Great Siege of 1565 had offered a pattern of action when it was felt that the people's faith was being attacked. At least that was the model of the episcopate as portrayed by the 'lay apostles' and their religious groups in their discourse and press articles. The end result was that the Church mobilised its forces for political ends. That very act has to be interpreted as an act of defence of the model of the Church as a perfect society, together with the belief that in a Catholic State, it was the duty of its rulers to defend the Church. Archbishop Gonzi, even he

appeared as an agent of militancy, was simply defending the ecclesiological model that his formation had directed him to defend. On the other hand, in a society which was becoming increasingly more secular, the Church, including Archbishop Gonzi, could not expect any longer that the law should necessarily pursue the Church's body of teaching, especially on ethically controversial subjects. The idea that the bishop would express his opinion on how his flock should vote became an obsolete concept as time went by.

In the absence of Maltese administrations, the bishop was consulted by the coloniser and given a share in minor governing decisions. Meanwhile, the bishop was the second most important personality in the colony, preceded only by the Governor. Military honours and other privileges were also reserved for the bishop. Since Archbishop Gonzi did not support the Integration plan and condemned the April 1958 revolts, Mr Mintoff cunningly tagged Archbishop Gonzi as an imperialist, and therefore this study analysed the 'brand' of Archbishop Gonzi's 'imperialism', and this was explained in the light of the various issues relating to the colonial experience. Over the years, the relationship between the British and the Church had been oversimplified when a fairly common view, namely that it was in the interest of both Britain and the Church to have friendly relations with each other – the former to safeguard smooth governorship and the latter to keep its privileges and ensure that the Roman Catholic religion remained the dominant religion in Malta – has been expressed over and over again. This thesis, however, shows that the matter should not be simplistically explained in those terms.

Truly so, first of all, there was an imperial policy in the early nineteenth century intended to respect the traditions and privileges of the local religion in the colonies so this excludes the idea that there was a sort of 'alliance' between the Church and Britain so that the Church would expand its influence in society thus reaching parity with the coloniser. It is true that the British opted to protect the local Church albeit in the interests of British imperial policy. However, the concessions advanced on the Church, and guarded by Archbishop Gonzi, cannot be rendered as measures of collaboration. Most of the privileges enjoyed were of immemorial custom and indeed dictated by long-standing traditions.

Undeniably, the Malta Church could expand in society thanks to the coloniser's disinterest in turning the island Protestant and at first the non-embracing of the anglicisation policy. Nevertheless, the coloniser was the source of the daily bread for thousands of Maltese that it employed in its military department at a time when the options to choose an occupation were

limited either to the field of agriculture or to the British forces or the civil service, but in the latter case jobs were mostly for the collaborators of the regime and also required some degree of education and literacy. The remaining alternative was emigration. To add insult to injury, factories evolved only in the sixties and the seventies of the twentieth century when the British colonial experience had ended. Furthermore, the coloniser had also its own particular agenda often employing the divide and rule philosophy in administering the Malta fortress which was never conquered. Nonetheless, it was a benevolent colonial experience but it still had the effect of creating dependencies and of revising and dislocating identities.

It was maintained that Archbishop Gonzi had been selected for the post of archbishop because of his pro-British sentiments. On one side, it is true that he could not envisage a future without the British in Malta but, when Integration was proposed, his emphasis was on guarantees in writing that the Church would lose nothing of its present status. The idea of accusing Archbishop Gonzi as an imperial agent was invented by Mintoff whose strategy was confronting two strong blocs at one go, the British and the Church. Documentation archived at the Holy See's Secretariat of State showed that at least from the Vatican's side there were other considerations besides the pro-British or the pro-Italian leanings that characterised society so much in the period reviewed, those being Archbishop Caruana's evident growing inadequacy to fulfil his role and the fact that several potential candidates had been proposed for the post throughout the 1930s. Archbishop Caruana himself initially had objections to the nomination of Mgr Michael Gonzi, his former secretary, for the post.

The position that was taken by the Malta Church as regards Independence was ambiguous, but Archbishop Gonzi was aware that this new political scenario would give the right to successive Maltese governments to redefine the Church's activism in society. The episcopate was not at all confident that a future Maltese Labour government that publically confessed socialist leanings and that was promoting non-friendly sentiments towards the Church, even recommending people's courts in public, reminiscent of communist governments would not redefine legally the Church's role in society. In fact, the Mintoffian governments that were elected after Independence enacted a secularisation programme which included the introduction of civil marriage, withheld training for teachers formerly offered by the Church, introduced taxation in respect of the Church, and also decreed that bishops could be taken to court and sentenced to prison like any other citizen. The Labour Government's secularisation programme of the seventies was intended to counteract the Catholic Church's influence in

Malta and proved to be an opportunity for the Prime Minister to enact the “*Sitt Punti.*” Still, the Malta Church raised no objection against the inclusion of the right to freedom of conscience and religion among the fundamental rights of the individual within the Independence constitution. This point is of crucial importance as it was specified before the famous Decree of Vatican Council II on religious freedom. Still, Archbishop Gonzi participated without hesitation in the 1972 talks regarding the new financial agreement which Prime Minister Dom Mintoff wanted to agree with Britain, taking the rather daring step (at the age of 82) to go to Britain himself and try to persuade the British Prime Minister to substantially increase Britain’s financial aid to Malta. Archbishop Gonzi even asked the Vatican to intervene.

The tenure of Archbishop Gonzi’s episcopate was during a period of transition. World War Two itself and the era that followed the mentioned war, especially the 1960s, witnessed an impressive momentum of social, cultural and political changes that were impossible to withhold or defer. At the end of the day, these strong movements of change would put in doubt the traditional role of the Malta Church in society. In fact, that period witnessed the seeping in society of the ever-growing secularisation trend and the cultural and social changes that had continued to develop further during the episcopate of Archbishop Gonzi. A great political leap forward for Malta was the achievement of Independence which concurred also with a time of great cultural upheaval resulting in notable changes in the local fields of theatre, art, architecture and literature. Women’s suffrage and a more literate population, thanks to the revision of the Education Act in 1946, also had their share in shaping new mentalities and lifestyles that distanced the people from their religion. Other factors that motivated such distancing included the general progress in socio-economic conditions and transport facilities, television broadcasts, and tourism which by the sixties became an important contributing factor towards the economy. Such developments wiped out traditional values. In the new climate, the parish priest’s social role and other functions were no longer required. Another factor that proved that secularisation had reached Malta was the fact that by the year 1970, a staggering 18% of the Maltese Catholics were not attending Sunday mass.

But there was another reality that was progressing slowly but surely. The electoral and the Integration referendum results that surfaced especially after the year 1955 showed that quite a good number of Maltese voters, the majority of whom voted Labour, were no longer afraid to defy the Church’s directives on how to vote. 44% had voted in favour of Integration irrespective of Archbishop Gonzi’s dissatisfaction and disapproval of the Integration plan as

proposed by Mintoff. In the case of the 1962 elections, an astounding one-third of the electorate (33%) had voted for Mr Mintoff's secular policies irrespective of the spiritual penalties that such a vote incurred. For this segment that would grow in the following few years, faith came second to their political beliefs.

The universal Catholic Church itself had undergone change and renewal thanks to the Second Vatican Council called by Pope John XXIII. Vatican II provided the Church with the opportunity to reflect deeply on its original vocation and mission, including the imperative to discern carefully the significance of the changes going on, rather very rapidly, in the world. Indeed, the reforms that Vatican II introduced in the Catholic thought and practice reached Malta rather late in the day to be fully grasped and implemented by Archbishop Gonzi, but the latter opened the doors for such reforms, once again confirming his strong sense of adaptation notwithstanding his very old age. In 1965, Archbishop Gonzi was 80 years old. The new reforms included the introduction of the new councils within the church structure that is to say the pastoral council, the presbyterial council and the parish council, the composition of a pastoral plan for the diocese, the setting up of thirteen new parishes, the turning around of the altar, and the reform in the liturgy dimension which included the translation of the mass in the vernacular, a clear sign that the Church was near its people. Another successful reform was the introduction of the Saturday evening mass which fulfilled the Sunday obligation. Besides these reforms, the Malta Church, through Archbishop Ligutti and Archbishop Lemieux and their respective staff, reformed the management of its property asset, removed the interdict penalty, allowed the reading, printing and selling of Labour organs, and signed a truce with the Labour Party.

Although the thesis attempted to offer a new reading of Archbishop Gonzi, the present author feels that his work also has certain limitations. This author would therefore like to suggest some routes for future academics who might be interested in the theme of church and state. For instance, the issues that regard the relationship between Archbishop Gerada and Archbishop Gonzi, although tallying with other secondary sources, seem to analyse the story from one particular angle, that of Archbishop Ligutti. There seems to be a dearth of literature about the particular chapter when Archbishop Gonzi was refusing to leave his bishopric seat. The relative sources seem to be limited to Archbishop Gonzi's take on the subject matter. The present author feels that there is a need for a study that would focus deeply on the effects of the Second Vatican Council on the Malta Church. Presently, limited secondary sources do indeed give a glimpse

of the reforms that were enacted, but those sources are too generic. This work fills some void but by far it is not exhaustive. A historical biography of Bishop Emanuel Galea is also commendable at this stage, given the relationship the latter managed to build with Archbishop Gonzi during the period that the former served as Vicar General and the long years of service Bishop Galea gave towards the Malta Church.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources

The National Archives of the United Kingdom, Kew:

CO 926/293 *Malta Attitudes of Free Churches and Anglican Church towards Integration in Malta (1955-1956).*

CO 926/294 *Malta Attitudes of Free Churches and Anglican Church towards Integration in Malta (1956).*

CO 926/295 *Malta Attitudes of the Roman Catholic Church to Integration in Malta (1955).*

CO 926/296 *Malta Attitudes of the Roman Catholic Church to Integration in Malta (1955-1956).*

CO 926/297 *Malta Attitudes of the Roman Catholic Church to Integration in Malta (1955).*

CO 926/298 *Malta Attitudes of the Roman Catholic Church to Integration in Malta (1956).*

CO 926/299 *Malta Attitudes of the Roman Catholic Church to Integration in Malta (1956).*

CO 926/312 *Malta Round Table Conference Papers (1955).*

CO 926/313 *Malta Round Table Conference Papers (1955).*

CO 926/314 *Malta Round Table Conference Papers (1955).*

CO 926/315 *Malta Round Table Conference: Records of Meetings between Representatives of HMG and Labour and Nationalist Parties Malta (1955).*

CO 926/316 *Malta Round Table Conference: Records of Meetings between UK and Maltese Government Delegations (1955).*

CO 926/317 *Malta Round Table Conference: Records of Meetings between UK and Maltese Nationalist Party Delegations (1955).*

CO 926/318 *Malta Round Table Conference: Official Committee on Malta (1955).*

CO 926/319 *Malta Round Table Conference: Official Committee on Malta (1955).*

CO 926/320 *Malta Round Table Conference: Records of Meetings (1955).*

CO 926/321 *Malta Round Table Conference: Records of Meetings (1955).*

CO 926/322 *Malta Round Table Conference: Records of Meetings (1955).*

CO 926/323 *Malta Round Table Conference: Records of Meetings (1955).*

CO 926/324 *Malta Round Table Conference: Records of Meetings (1955-1956).*

CO 926/325 *Malta Round Table Conference: Records of Meetings (1956).*

CO 926/326 *Malta Round Table Conference: Records of Meetings (1956).*

CO 926/327 *Malta Westminster Round Table Conference: Records of Meetings (1956).*

CO 926/328 *Malta Round Table Conference: Records of Meetings (1956).*

CO 926/329 *Visit of Malta Round Table Conference to Malta (1955).*

CO 926/330 *Malta Round Table Conference: Memoranda Minutes and Verbatim Reports (1955).*

CO 926/331 *Malta Round Table Conference: Memoranda Minutes and Verbatim Reports (1955).*

CO 926/332 *Malta Round Table Conference: Memoranda Minutes and Verbatim Reports (1955).*

CO 926/333 *Malta Round Table Conference: Memoranda Minutes and Verbatim Reports (1955).*

CO 926/334 *Malta Round Table Conference: Memoranda Minutes and Verbatim Reports (1955).*

CO 926/335 *Malta Round Table Conference: Memoranda Minutes and Verbatim Reports (1955).*

CO 926/336 *Malta Round Table Conference: Memoranda Minutes and Verbatim Reports (1955-1957).*

CO 926/337 *Malta Round Table Conference: Publication of Report (1955-1956).*

CO 926/338 *Malta Round Table Conference: Reaction of Maltese Press (1955-1956).*

CO 926/652 *Political Situation in Malta: Interests of Mrs Josephine De Bono (1958).*

CO 926/653 *Political Situation in Malta: Attitude of Nationalist Party (1958-1959).*

CO 926/655 *Political Situation in Malta: Attitude of Maltese Labour Party (1958-1959).*

CO 926/656 *Political Situation in Malta: Attitude of Maltese Labour Party (1959-1960).*

CO 926/657 *Political Situation in Malta: Interest of Archbishop in Malta (1958-1959).*

CO 926/658 *Political Situation in Malta: Attitude of Progressive Constitutional Party (1958-1959).*

CO 926/687 *Possibility of Aid from Soviet Union and Egypt from Malta (1958).*

CO 926/774 *Integration of Free Church and Anglican Church in Malta (1957-1958).*

CO 926/775 *Integration of Free Church and Anglican Church in Malta (1957-1958).*

CO 926/776 *Malta Attitudes of the Roman Catholic Church to Integration in Malta (1957-1958).*

CO 926/778 *New Constitution based on Report by Malta Round Table Conference (1957).*

CO 926/779 *New Constitution based on Report by Malta Round Table Conference (1957).*

CO 926/780 *New Constitution based on Report by Malta Round Table Conference (1957).*

CO 926/781 *New Constitution based on Report by Malta Round Table Conference (1957-1958).*

CO 926/782 *New Constitution based on Report by Malta Round Table Conference (1958).*

CO 926/792 *Resignation of Dom Mintoff, Prime Minister of Malta (1958).*

CO 926/797 *Proposed Dominion Status for Malta (1958-1960).*

CO 926/819 *Maltese Integration Talks (1957).*

CO 926/1136 *Malta Political Situation (1960-1962).*

CO 926/1137 *Malta Political Situation (1962).*

CO 926/1142 *Attitude of the Malta Labour Party (1960-1961).*

CO 926/1143 *Attitude of the Malta Labour Party (1961-1962).*

CO 926/1144 *Attitude of the Malta Labour Party (1960-1961).*

CO 926/1145 *Attitude of the Malta Labour Party (1960-1961).*

CO 926/1148 *Attitude of Malta Democratic Nationalist Party (1960-1962).*

CO 926/1151 *Attitudes of the Roman Catholic Church (1960-1962).*

CO 926/1153 *Attitude of Malta Christian Workers' Party (1961).*

CO 926/1170 *Censorship of Mails in Malta (1960).*

CO 926/1171 *Censorship of Mails in Malta (1960).*

CO 926/1172 *Transmission of Mails to Malta (1960).*

CO 926/1281 *Television and Radio Broadcasting Guarantees under new Constitution (1961).*

CO 926/1498 *Religious Discrimination in Malta (1960-1962).*

CO 926/1501 *St. Paul's Nineteenth Centenary Celebrations (1960).*

CO 926/1539 *Disputes between the Malta Labour Party and the Roman Catholic Church (1961-1962).*

CO 926/1540 *Disputes between the Malta Labour Party and the Roman Catholic Church (1961).*

CO 926/1541 *Disputes between the Malta Labour Party and the Roman Catholic Church (1961).*

CO 926/1559 *Disputes between the Malta Labour Party and the Roman Catholic Church.*

CO 926/1568 *Discussions between UK Commissioner in Malta, Maltese Political Leaders and His Grace the Archbishop of Malta (1962).*

CO 926/1621 *Malta General Elections 17-19 Feb. 1962 (1962).*

CO 926/1692 *Speeches and Statements by Maltese Prime Minister Dr Borg Olivier (1962).*

CO 926/1816 *Malta Labour Party (1963-1964).*

CO 926/1818 *Roman Catholic Church (1963-1964).*

CO 926/1819 *Roman Catholic Church (1964).*

CO 926/1876 *Malta Labour Party Attempts to create Association with Italy; Dom Mintoff's Use of Czech Embassy to contact Soviets during his Visit to Rome (1962-1964).*

CO 926/1882 *Difficulties over Civil Marriages and poor Relations between Roman Catholic Church and Malta Labour Party (1963-1964).*

CO 926/1883 *Daily Express inserted in Discussions and Reports on Maltese Independence (1963).*

CO 926/1884 *Discussions and Reports on Maltese Independence (1963).*

CO 926/1885 *Discussions and Reports on Maltese Independence (1963-1964).*

CO 926/1886 *Discussions and Reports on Maltese Independence (1964).*

CO 926/1887 *Discussions and Reports on Maltese Independence (1964).*

CO 926/1888 *Discussions and Reports on Maltese Independence (1964).*

CO 926/1889 *Discussions and Reports on Maltese Independence (1964).*

CO 926/1907 *Malta Independence Conference (1963).*

CO 926/1946 *Referendum and Concerns over Influence of Roman Catholic Church (1964).*

CO 926/1947 *Independence for Malta Referendum 1964 (1964).*

CO 926/1995 *Disputes between the Malta Labour Party and the Roman Catholic Church (1963-1964).*

CO 926/2076 *Plans to deal with deteriorating Security Situation in Light of Dom Mintoff's stated View on use of Violence to achieve Political Ends (1964).*

CO 1027/350 *Article on Malta by Dom Mintoff published by New Statesman (1958).*

FCO 9/918 *Malta Labour Party (1963-1964).*

FCO 9/919 *Malta Labour Party and Dom Mintoff (1968).*

FCO 9/1536 *Intervention of Archbishop Gonzi in Malta withdrawal negotiations*

FCO 27/192 *Maltese Labour Party and Dom Mintoff (1967-1968).*

FCO 27/193 *Maltese Labour Party and Dom Mintoff (1968).*

FCO 27/195 *Relationships between the Roman Catholic Church and Dom Mintoff (1967-1968).*

FCO 141/8521 *Malta: Monsignor Gonzi, Bishop of Gozo.*

FCO 141/10984 *Malta: illness of the Archbishop, Monsignor Gonzi.*

FCO 141/11365 *Malta: Archbishop Gonzi's visit to London, July 1959; points discussed with UK Government.*

FCO 141/11842 *Malta: Michael Gonzi, Bishop of Gozo: Appointment as Bishop of Malta.*

FO 371/124260 *Views of the Vatican on possible Integration of Malta and UK (1956).*

FO 371/124266 *Visits by Mr Dom Mintoff, Prime Minister of Malta (1960)*

FO 371/136192 *Negotiations with the Vatican and Malta (1958).*

FO 371/1472045 *Church and State in Malta (1963).*

FO 371/147466 *Visits by Mr Dom Mintoff, Prime Minister of Malta (1960).*

FO 371/153461 *Visits by Yugoslav Naval Ships to Malta (1960).*

FO 371/172044 *Soviet Influence in Malta (1963).*

FO 371/172045 *Church and State in Malta (1963).*

FO 371/178757 *Roman Catholic Church (1964).*

HO 364/2 *Malta Round Table Conference 1955: Report and subsequent Consideration; Home Office and Colonial Office Memoranda on Future Departmental Responsibility and Constitutional Status (1954-1955).*

HO 290/82 *Roman Catholic Mass in Malta: Attendance by HRH The Prince Philip Duke of Edinburgh (1964).*

PREM 11/2745 *Meeting between Prime Minister and Archbishop Gonzi Archbishop of Malta 29 Jul. 1959 (1959).*

PREM 11/4912 *Malta Independence: Correspondence from Lord Boyd and Lord Perth (1964).*

PREM 11/4913 *Malta Independence: Correspondence from Miss Mabel Strickland, Leader of Progressive Constitutional Party (1963-1964).*

Parliamentary Archives - Archives of the House of Commons and the House of Lords, London

HC/CL/OO/1/361 *Malta: Association of Malta with the United Kingdom Parliament (1955-1956).*

Archives of the Raynor Memorial Libraries Marquette University, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Monsignor Luigi G. Ligutti Papers

Malta Folder 63 (1).

Malta Folder 63 (2).

Malta Folder 63 (3).

Malta Folder 72.

National Archives of Malta, Rabat, Malta

Minuti tal-Kabinett, 1960-1970.

Accession 2017-01, Kollezjoni Mamo.

MFA 01, 11983/1939: Passport Application, Mgr Michael Gonzi (14 August 1933).

OPM 280/1951.

Terribile Tony, Il-Hajja Kattolika f'Malta fl-1974, (unpublished album with photographs, author's notes and remarks, cuttings from newspapers and pamphlets).

National Archives of Gozo, Rabat, Gozo

CP/02 - Bishops Circulars.

Archivium Archiepiscopale Melitense (A.A.M.), Archbishop's Curia, Floriana

Corrispondenza Gonzi 1944, Vol. XLII.

Corrispondenza Gonzi 1945, Vol. XLIII.

Corrispondenza Gonzi 1946-1947, Vol. XLIV.

Corrispondenza Gonzi 1948-1949, Vol. XLV.

Corrispondenza Gonzi 1950-1951, Vol. XLVI.

Corrispondenza Gonzi 1952-1953, Vol. XLVII.

Corrispondenza Gonzi 1954-1955, Vol. XLVIII.

Corrispondenza Gonzi 1956, Vol. L.

Corrispondenza Gonzi 1957, Vol. LI.

Corrispondenza Gonzi 1958, Vol. LII.

Corrispondenza Gonzi 1959, Vol. LIII.

Corrispondenza Gonzi 1960, Vol. LIV.

Corrispondenza Gonzi 1961, Vol. LV.

Corrispondenza Gonzi 1962, Vol. LVI.

Corrispondenza Gonzi 1963, Vol. LVII.
Corrispondenza Gonzi 1964, Vol. LVIII.
Corrispondenza Gonzi 1965, Vol. LIX.
Corrispondenza Gonzi 1966, Vol. LX.
Corrispondenza Gonzi 1967, Vol. LXI.
Corrispondenza Gonzi 1968, Vol. LXII.
Corrispondenza Gonzi 1969, Vol. LXIII.
Corrispondenza Gonzi 1970, Vol. LXIV.
Corrispondenza Gonzi 1971, Vol. LXV.
Corrispondenza Gonzi 1972, Vol. LXVI.
Corrispondenza Gonzi 1973, Vol. LXVII.
Corrispondenza Gonzi 1974, Vol. LXVIII.
Corrispondenza Gonzi 1975, Vol. LXIX.
Corrispondenza Gonzi 1976, Vol. LXX.
Mons Gonzi Pastoralis e Circolari 1943-1962.
AAS, Acta Pii pp. XII, Constitutio Apostolica Melitensis, An. et Vol. XXXVI, 26-6-1944 (Ser. U, v. XI num. 6), 161-163.

Sacra Congregazione degli Affari Ecclesiastici Straordinari, Città del Vaticano
Fondo Affari Ecclesiastici Straordinari (Ingilterra)

Posizione 230, fasc. 74: *Malta Nomina di un ausiliare o Coadiutore*
 Posizione 230, ff. 4-12: *P. Addeodato Schembri candidato vescovile per Malta (n. 1891)*
 Posizione 230, ff. 13-20: *Monsignor Giuseppe Bonanno candidato vescovile per Malta*
 Posizione 230, ff. 21-36: *Carte sciolte Padre Serafino Zarb candidato vescovile a Malta*
 Posizione 230, ff. 37-64: *Carte sciolte Padre Serafino Zarb candidato vescovile a Malta*
 Posizione 230, ff. 65-98: *Carte sciolte Monsignor Giuseppe Bonanno Candidato Vescovile a Malta*
 Posizione 230, ff. 98-115: *Parere e giudizi di S.E. Mons. M. Caruana circa la nomina di un vescovo ausiliare di Malta*
 Posizione 230, ff. 116-138: *Sac. Carmelo Farrugia (c. 40 anni) candidato vescovile di Mons. Caruana*
 Posizione 230, ff. 143-166: *Appunto di SE Mons. Tardini circa la nomina di un coadiutore a Malta e consegnato anche a S.E. Osborne*
 Posizione 230, ff. 167-178: *Carte sciolte (P. Serafino Zarb) Candidato vescovile a Malta*
 Posizione 230, ff. 179-219: *Mons. Giuseppe Pace Candidato vescovile*
 Posizione 230, ff. 223-228: *Colloquio Sir Charles Bomham Carter Governatore Di Malta e il Sacerdote Enrico Hughes circa la nomina di un Coadiutore o Ausiliare e le eventuali intromissioni politiche*
 Posizione 230, ff. 229-242: *Carte sciolte (appunti, telegramme, lettere per il Cardinale Segretario di Stato)*
 Posizione 230, ff. 243-260: *Nuove insistenze del Governo Britannico per la nomina del Coadiutore di Malta*
 Posizione 230, ff. 261-275: *Londra Delegazione Apostolica Nuove insistenze del Governo Inglese per una sollecito nomina di un coadiutore del vescovo di Malta. Colloquio tra Lord Lloyd e Mons Delegato*
 Posizione 230, ff. 276-295: *Carte Sciolte*
 Posizione 230, ff. 301-303: *Richiesta d'informazione su Mons Emanuele Galea*
 Posizione 230, ff. 324-330: *Londra Delegazione Apostolica nuove insistenze inglesi per avere a Malta un vescovo forte e attivo 1941*

Posizione 230, ff. 331-332: *Gozo vescovo conviene che la Sua Santita non provveda sia in maniera defenettiva alla successione di Mons. Caruana*

Posizione 230, ff. 333-338: *Carte sciolte*

Posizione 230, ff. 339-353: *Malta SE Mons Caruana circa la trasmissione delle informazioni tra candidato a coadiutore o ausiliare del vescovo di Malta*

Posizione 230, ff. 354-356: *Malta Mons Vescovo Arcivescovo parere sfavorevole alla nomina di Zarb OP a coadiutore al Malta*

Posizione 230, ff. 357-363: *Appunto d'Ufficio su Mons Emanuele Galea Richieste del'Sant'Uffizzio*

Posizione 230, ff. 364-375: *Appunto d'Ufficio su Mons Emanuele Galea Richieste del Sant'Uffizzio*

Posizione 230, ff. 376-389: *Accettazione di Monsignor Galea (1942)*

Posizione 230, ff. 390-401: *Carte aciolte (Telegrammi, appunti, L'Osservatore Romano, Gratitudine di S.E. Mons Galea)*

Posizione 276, ff. 57-125: *Dipendenze delle 'Arcidiocesi di Malta e dei vescovi di Gibilterra e Gozo della Delegazione Apostolica in Ingilterra, 1946*

Posizione 288: *Mons. Mazzoni della Delegazione Apostolica di Londra*

Posizione 289: *Malta Azione Cattolica di Malta, 1939*

Posizione 295: *Situazione politica e religiosa dopo la scoppio della guerra 1940-1943*

Posizione 298: *Malta situazione politica religiosa, 1940-1955*

Posizione 298, ff. 3-10: *Malta Arcivescovo difesa del diritto Cattolico nella questione religiosa in occasione della visita della Regina Elizabetta a Malta*

Posizione 323: *Irlanda Relazione Triennale di Mons Pasquale Robinson OFM Nunzio Apostolico, 1943*

Posizione 326: *Malta Nomina di un coadiutore Mons Michele Gonzi Vescovo di Liribe, Erezione della Provincia Ecclesiastica di Malta, 1943-1958*

Posizione 330, *Gozo Provista della diocesi Nomina del Mons G. Pace (1943-1958)*

Posizione 340: *Malta Questioni, 1945*

Posizione 341: *Malta Relazioni, 1944*

Posizione 357, ff. 90-97: *Situazione Politica Religiosa, 1947-1953*

Posizione 359: *Lettere e allocuzione pastorali*

Posizione 368, ff. 2-78: *Carte sciolte Rapporti di Sua Eccellenza Mons Godfrey con allegata la Relazione per il Triennale 1946-1948*

Archives of the Diocese of Gozo

A.E.G., (20) [A]cta [E]piscoporum – Gonzi [1924-1944].

Santa Maria Addolorata Cemetery Registers of Burials, Paola

Vol. 1: 22nd January 1872 to 6th August 1873.

Vol. 76: 3rd January 1949 to 31st December 1949.

Vol. 88: 3rd February 1960 to 8th January 1962.

Vol. 93: 16th January 1965 to 18th February 1966.

Vol. 97: 24th August 1969 to 26th October 1970.

Archives of the Cana Movement, Catholic Institute, Floriana

Correspondence Fr Charles G. Vella.

Archives of the Catholic Action Movement, Catholic Institute, Floriana

Minuti tad-Direttorju tal-Azzjoni Kattolika 1955-1970.

Archives of the Metropolitan Cathedral, Mdina

ACM MISC 517, Karti mġhoddija lill-Arkivji tal-Katidral minn Walter Zahra.

ACM Fondo Galea Box 1.

ACM Fondo Galea Box 2.

ACM Fondo Galea Box 3.

ACM Fondo Galea Box 4.

ACM Fondo Galea Box 5.

ACM Fondo Galea Box 6.

ACM Fondo Galea Box 7.

ACM Fondo Galea Box 8.

ACM Fondo Galea Box 9.

ACM Fondo Galea Box 10.

ACM Fondo Galea Box 11.

ACM Fondo Galea Box 12.

Archives of the Parish Church of Żabbar, Żabbar Sanctuary Museum

Ġrajjet, Attivitajiet, Opri Vol. I.

Ġrajjet, Attivitajiet, Opri Vol. II.

Ġrajjet, Attivitajiet, Opri Vol. III.

Archives of the Council of the Chamber of Commerce, The Exchange, Valletta:

Minutes of the meeting held on 18 Apr. 1956 at 4.30 p.m.

Archives of the Malta Labour Party, Hamrun

Konferenza Annwali tal-MLP li saret nhar il-Hadd 21 ta' Diċembru 1958, fir-Radio City Opera House Hamrun – Minuti.

Resolution entitled Konferenza Ġenerali Straordinarja tal-Malta Labour Party miżmuma fil-Comet Theatre il-Furjana nhar il-Hadd 9 ta' April 1961 (signed by Dom Mintoff, Anton Buttigieg, Ġużè Zerafa).

Konferenza Ġenerali tal-MLP li saret fit-Tivoli Theatre Paola nhar il-Hadd 18 ta' Ġunju 1961 - Minuti.

Konferenza Ġenerali Straordinarja tal-Malta Labour Party li saret fit-Tivoli Theatre nhar il-Hadd 7 ta' Jannar, 1961 - Minuti.

Minutes of the Malta Labour Party National Executive and Parliamentary Group, 16 Aug. 1957 to 24 Oct. 1958.

Minutes of the Malta Labour Party National Executive and Parliamentary Group, 10 May 1961 to 20 Dec. 1961.

Minutes of the Malta Labour Party National Executive and Parliamentary Group, 29 Dec. 1961 to 29 Aug. 1962.

Minutes of the Malta Labour Party National Executive and Parliamentary Group, 18 Sep. 1962 to 12 Mar. 1964.

Minutes of the Malta Labour Party National Executive and Parliamentary Group, 18 Mar. to 10 Jun. 1969.

Minutes of the Malta Labour Party National Executive and Parliamentary Group, 10 Jun. 1969 to 2 Nov. 1973.

Qrendi Primary School – St. Benedict College

Visitors' Book

Private Collections

Canon Joseph Abela
Ms Emily Barbaro Sant
Mr Jerry Bilocca
Dr Steve Borg
Bishop Nikol J. Cauchi
Perit Joe Dimech
Mr Max Farrugia
Prof Oliver Friggieri
Mr Michael Galea
Rev. Hugh Mallia
Dr Daniel Micallef
Mr Giorgio Peresso
Speaker Emeritus Anton Tabone
Mgr Charles G. Vella
Prof William Zammit
Mr Winston L. Zammit
Mr Trevor Zahra

Political and Religious Pamphlets, Leaflets, Encyclicals, and other Publications

Anastasi Pace, J., *The Meaning of Social Welfare* (Malta, University Students Catholic Guild, 1946).
Anon, *Ir-Ragħaj lill-Merħla Tiegħu: L-Ewwel Ktieb* (Malta, Għaqda ta' Qari Tajjeb, 1944).
Anon, *Ctieb tal Cnisja jeu Talb Mehtieg għal Cull Nisrani* (Malta, Lombardi Press, 1934).
Anon, *Il Kuddiesa tal Hdud u il Festi tas Sena Collha: L'Ghid il Cbir mahrug mill'Azioni Cattolica* (Malta, Dar ta' San Ġużepp, 1937).
Anon, *Familja Maltija, Familja Nisranija* (Malta, Catholic Action, 1950).
Anon, *L-Ewwel Enciklika tal-Q.T. Piju XII Summi Pontificatus* (Malta, Għaqda ta' Qari Tajjeb, n.d.).
Anon, *Tivvotax għall-Partit tat-Torċa* (Malta, Empire Press, 1961).
Anon, *Appell lil-Laburisti* (Malta, Empire Press, 1962).
Anon, *Kont Taf? Komunikat Nru. 3* (Malta, Empire Press, 1962).
Anon, *Is-Siegħa tal-Klassi tal-Haddiema: Ġabra ta' Diskorsi ta' Mons. Ġużeppi Cardijn, Fundatur tal-Moviment taż-ŻHN* (Malta, ŻHN, 1963).
Anon, *Kif għandek Tivvota skond id-Direttiva tal-Ġunta* (Malta, Empire Press, 1962).
Anon, *Malta Independence Conference* (London, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1963).
Anon (ed.), *Seminar Pastoral 1968* (Malta, Kullegġ tal-Kappillani, 1968).
Anon, *Religious Values among University Students* (Malta, Pastoral Research Services, 1968).
Anon, *Il-Kunsill Parrokkjali* (Malta, Kullegġ tal-Kappillani, KDAL, 1974).
Anon, *Taħlit bejn Xebbiet u Ġuvintur* (Malta, Religjon u Hajja, 1972).
Anon, *Id-Dokumenti tal-Konċilju Ekumeniku Vatikan II* (Malta, Edizzjoni Studia, 2003).
Anon, *Id-Djar tat-Tfal: 25 Sena ta' Hidma għat-Tfal Iltiema fl-Arċidjoċesi Maltija* (Malta, Printex, 1981).
Bartoli Galea, Salvin, *Biex infakkru l-Istorja ta' Mintoff* (Malta, Empire Press, 1962).
Bartoli Galea, Salvin, *L-Apostolat tal-Lajċi: Id-Digriet Apostolicam Actuositatem tal-Konċilju Vatikan II* (Malta, Azzjoni Kattolika Maltija, 1966).
Bellanti, P. F., *Ittra Enciklika tal-Papa Ljun XIII "Rerum Novarum" tal-15 ta' Mejju, 1891, Fuk chif jinsabu It-Tfal tax-Xogħol* (Malta, Unione Cattolica San Giuseppe, 1921).

Bilocca Felicjan, *Gwida Ġenerali għall-Ħaddiem Kattoliku* (Malta, Dar ta' San Ġużepp, 1946).

Busuttil, Albert, *Il-Kostituzzjoni tas-Soviets* (Malta, Għaqda ta' Qari Tajjeb, 1945).

Calleja, Joseph, *Edukazzjoni Sesswali Nisranija* (Malta, Moviment ta' Kana, 1979).

Camilleri, Emilio, *X'Jistaqsukom Uliedkom?* (Malta, Moviment ta' Kana, 1961).

Caruana, Mauro and Gonzi, Mikiel, *Ittra Pastorali ta' L-Iskfijiet ta' Malta u Għawdex fuk l-Ewwel Concilju Reġjonali (Imfissra bil-Malti)* (Malta, Għakda ta' Kari Tajjeb, 1936).

Cauchi, Nicholas Ġ., (trad.), *Id-Dmirijiet Pastorali tal-Isqfijiet: Id-Digriet Christus Dominus tal-Koncilju Vatikan II* (Malta, Azzjoni Kattolika Maltija, 1970).

Civardi, Luigi, *Lejn Ordni Soċjali Ġdid: Tliet Riforri* (Malta, Għaqda ta' Qari Tajjeb, 1952).

Coleiro, Edward, *Kors ta' Soċjoloġija* (Malta, Għaqda ta' Qari Tajjeb, 1947).

Concilium Regionale Melitense: Decreta (Malta, Empire Press, 1926).

Decree on the Laity, Retrieved on 3rd February 2019, https://w2.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decree_19651118_apostolicam-actuositatem_en.html.

Diskors mill-W.R.P. Luigi ta' Kristu Re O.C.D., Provincjal tat-Tereżjani: Festa ta' Kristu Re (Malta, Dar ta' San Ġużepp, 1955).

Don Camillo (Felicjan Bilocca), *Twegiba għall-Attakki li qegħdin isiru kontra l-Knisja fil-Kwistjoni Politiko-Reliġjuża li qegħdin Fiha*, Empire Press, Malta, 1961.

Eminyan, Maurice, *Il-Miżżewġin u l-Ippjanar tal-Familja* (Malta, Moviment ta' Kana, 1973).

Eminyan, Maurice, *Dejjem Tiegħek* (Malta, Problemi tal-Lum, 1970).

Galea, Alfons Maria, *Von Ketteler* (Malta, Kotba tal-Mogħdija taż-Żmien, 1914).

Galea, Paul, *Jeddijiet il-Ħaddiema u Dmirijiet il-Gvern* (Malta, Dar ta' San Ġużepp, 1947).

Gonzi, Mikiel, *L-Ewwel Ittra Pastorali ta' Mons. Mikiel Gonzi Arċisqof ta' Malta lill-Kleru u lill-Poplu tad-Djoċesi ta' Malta* (Malta, Empire Press, 1944).

Gonzi, Mikiel, *Ittra Pastorali tar-Randan tas-Sena 1960 fuq is-Socjalizmu* (Malta, Empire Press, 1960).

Grech, Salv, *Duttrina Nisranija* (Malta, Giovanni Muscat, 1907).

Grech, Victor, *Problemi taż-Żgħażaġħ* (Malta, Empire Press, 1962).

Grech, Victor, *X'Jistaqsu ż-Żgħażaġħ* (Malta, Empire Press, 1962).

Ġunta Djoċesana tal-Għaqdiet Kattoliċi, *Alla Magħna u Rbaħna* (Malta, Empire Press, 1962).

Ġunta Djoċesana tal-Għaqdiet Kattoliċi, *Jum l-Isqof* (Malta, Salesian Press, n.d.).

Korrispondent Speċjali, *Malta Mintoff u l-Knisja: Artikolu fil-Ġurnal Kattoliku The Tablet* (Malta, Union Press, 1963).

Kumitat Saċerdoti Żgħażaġħ, *Id-Dinja thares lejn Malta*, Empire Press, 1956.

Kunsill tal-Provincjali u Kullegġ tal-Kappillani, *Il-Protesta ta' Malta Kattolika*, Empire Press, Malta, 1961.

Lehen is-Sewwa, *Il-Gvern Malti u l-Pastorali*, Dar San Ġużepp, Ħamrun, Malta, 1956. (extract from *Lehen is-Sewwa* but author unidentified).

Lehen is-Sewwa, *Prinċipji tas-Socjalizmu Kkundannat u Prinċipji tal-Malta Labour Party*, Lehen is-Sewwa, 1962.

Lupi, Ġużeppi, *Xi jfissru r-Riti Ġodda tal-Magħmudija u l-Griżma* (Malta, Kummissjoni Liturgika Nazzjonali, 1973).

Marċell (Anġ Seychell), *Appell lill-Ex Mintoffjani, Żgħażaġħ Ħaddiema Nsara*, Empire Press, Malta, 1962. (Extract from *Il-Ħaddiem* 21 Jan. 1962).

Moviment Azzjoni Soċjali, *Il-Verità dwar l-AAPSO*, Empire Press, Malta, 1961.

Moviment Azzjoni Soċjali, *It-Twegiba lil Dr Anton Buttigieg dwar l-AAPSO*, Empire Press, Malta, 1961.

Moviment Azzjoni Soċjali, (Information Section), *Fil-25 ta' Jannar il-Moviment Azzjoni Soċjali xandar dan il-Komunikat: Twegiba lil Dr. Anton Buttigieg dwar l-AAPSO*, Empire Press, Malta, 1961.

Moviment għar-Rebħa ta' Malta, Komunikat Numru 2, *Nivvotaw ta' Kattoliċi Maltin*, Empire Press, Malta, 1962.

Moviment għar-Rebħa ta' Malta, Komunikat Numru 3, *Kont Taf?*, Empire Press, Malta, 1962.

Mintoff, Dominic, *Malta Demands Independence* (Malta, MLP, 1959).

Mintoff, Dominic, *How Britain Rules Malta* (Malta, Union Press, 1960).

Mintoff, Dominic, *Priests and Politics in Malta* (Malta, Malta Labour Party, 1961).

Mintoff, Dominic, *Il-Kalvarju tal-Haddiema* (Malta, Malta Labour Party, 1964).

Mintoff, Dominic, *Malta: Church, State, Labour* (Malta, Freedom Press, 1966).

Mintoff, Dominic, *Malta: Il-Knisja, L-Istat, Il-Partit tal-Haddiema* (Malta, Freedom Press, 1966).

Mintoff, Dominic, *A Reply to the Diocesan Commission's Pamphlets* (Malta, Freedom Press, 1966).

Mintoff, Dominic, *Din hi l-Istorja* (Malta, Pubblikazzjoni Notice Board, 1989).

Montanaro Gauci, A., *Il-Propjetà Privata* (Malta, Għaqda ta' Qari Malti, 1945).

Moviment għar-Rebħa ta' Malta tal-Ġunta Djocesana tal-Għaqdiet Kattoliċi, *Ivvota Ivvota Ivvota Skond il-Ġunta* (Malta, Empire Press 1962).

O'Kane, T.J., *A Catholic Catechism on Social Questions* (Oxford, The Catholic Social Guild, 1961).

Ojetti, Benedetto, *Synopsis rerum moralium et iurus pontificii: alphabetico ordine digesta et novissimis SS. RR. Congregationum decretis Aucta in subsidium praesertim sacerdotum* (Rome, Giachetti, 1904).

Papa Giovanni XXIII, *Ittra Enciklika Mater et Magistra: Fuq l-aħħar Żviluppi tal-Kwistjoni Soċjali fid-Dawl tat-Tagħlim Nisrani* (Malta, Żgħażaġh Haddiema Nsara, 1961).

Partit Nazzjonalista, *Il-Partit Nazzjonalista Rebbieħ – Malta Tifraħ* (Malta, Partit Nazzjonalista, 1962)

Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World "Gaudium et Spes" Promulgated by Pope Pius VI on 7th December 1965, Retrieved on 28th December 2016, http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_cons_19651207_gaudium-et-spes_en.html.

Pope Benedict XV, *Sacra Propediem*, Retrieved on 20th February 2019, http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xv/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xv_enc_06011921_sacra-propediem.html.

Pope Leo XIII, *Arcanum: On Christian Marriage*, Retrieved on 7th June 2017, http://w2.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_10021880_arcanum.html.

Pope Leo XIII, *Immortale Dei: On the Christian Constitution of States*, Retrieved on 7th June 2017, http://w2.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_01111885_immortale-dei.html.

Pope Leo XIII, *Libertas: On the Nature of Human Liberty*, Retrieved on 7th June 2017, http://w2.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_20061888_libertas.html.

Pope Leo XIII, *Permoti Nos: On Social Conditions in Belgium*, Retrieved on 9th June 2017, http://w2.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_10071895_permoti-nos.html.

Pope Leo XIII, *Rerum Novarum*, *Encyclical of Pope Leo on Capital and Labour*, Retrieved on 3rd January 2017, http://w2.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_15051891_rerum-novarum.html.

Pope Leo XIII, *Sapientiae Christianae*, *Encyclical of Pope Leo XIII, On Christians as Citizens*, Retrieved on 7th June 2017, http://w2.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_10011890_sapientiae-christianae.html.

Pope Paul VI, *Humanae Vitae*, http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-vi_enc_25071968_humanae-vitae.html.

Pope Pius IX, *Quanta Cura: Condemning Current Errors*, Retrieved on 3rd January 2017, <http://www.papalencyclicals.net/Pius09/p9quanta.htm>.

Pope Pius X, *Pascendi Dominici Gregis: On the Doctrines of the Modernists*, Retrieved on 3rd January 2017, http://w2.vatican.va/content/pius-x/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-x_enc_19070908_pascendi-dominici-gregis.html.

Pope Pius X, *Urbi Arcano dei Consilio: On the Peace of Christ in the Kingdom of Christ*, Retrieved on 6th June 2017, http://w2.vatican.va/content/pius-xi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xi_enc_19221223_ubi-arcano-dei-consilio.html.

Pope Pius XI, *Quadragesimo Anno: Encyclical On Reconstruction of the Social Order*, Retrieved on 3rd January 2017, http://w2.vatican.va/content/pius-xi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xi_enc_19310515_quadragesimo-anno.html.

Pope Pius XI, *Divini Illius Magistri*, Retrieved on 20th February 2019, http://w2.vatican.va/content/pius-xi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xi_enc_31121929_divini-illius-magistri.html.

Pope Pius XI, *Divini Redemptoris*, Retrieved on 20th February 2019, https://www.vatican.va/content/pius-xi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xi_enc_19370319_divini-redemptoris.html.

Pope Pius XII, *Exsul Familia*, Retrieved on 14th August 2018 in <https://www.papalencyclicals.net/pius12/p12exsul.htm>.

Pope Pius XII, *Questa grande vostra adunata*, Retrieved on 23rd January 2021 in <http://catholictradition.org/Encyclicals/questa1.htm>.

Pro Sacerdotibus Christi, *Isqof li ma Jintesiex: L-Eċċellenza Tiegħu Reverendissima Mons. Sir Mikiel Gonzi: L-Ewwel Arcisqof Metropolita tal-Provinċja Maltija fil-Ġublew Episkopali Tiegħu (1924-1949), Fl-Għaqda l-Qawwa*, Settembru-Diċembru 1944.

PRS, *Religious Attitudes and Behaviour of University Students in Malta* (Malta, Pastoral Reserach Services, 1968).

Saliba, Paul, *Is-Socjalizmu* (Malta, Malta Catholic Action, 1962).

Saliba, Paul, *Min hu l-Isqof* (Malta, Malta Catholic Action, 1961).

Saliba, P., *Il-Papa*, Empire Press, Malta, 1963.

Saliba, P., *L-Arcisqof, Ġrajjet mill-Hajja u Hidma Tiegħu*, Lux Press, Malta, 1965.

Sant, K., and Busuttil, S. (trans.), *Mater et Magistra, Żgħażaġġ Ħaddiema Nsara*, Malta, 1961.

Sapiano, Giuseppe, *Għala l-Knisja ma taċċettax il-Paċi ma' Mintoff* (Malta, Empire Press, 1963).

Sapiano, G., Leaflet Nru 5: *Il-Prinċipji Fondamentali tal-Malta Labour Party u l-Filosofija Kattolika Kuntrarja*, Lehen is-Sewwa, Empire Press, Malta, 1961.

Seaston, Gerald, *Social Reconstruction: The Catholic New Order* (Malta, Malta Catholic Social Guild, 1941).

Seychell, Angelo, *Marcell Callo* (Malta, Żgħażaġġ Ħaddiema Nsara, 1963).

Special Diocesan Commission, *The Quarrel of the Malta Labour Party with the Church* (Malta, Empire Press, 1966).

Vella, C.G., *X'Jistaqsu l-Għarajjes? Mitt Problema ta' l-Għerusija*, Moviment ta' Kana, Malta, 1970.

Vella, Charles G., (ed.), *Souvenir Programme of the XIX Centenary Celebrations of St. Paul Shipwreck on Malta* (Malta, Empire Press, 1960).

Vella, Charles G., (ed.), *The Catholic Directory of Malta and Gozo* (Malta, Empire Press, 1963).

Vella, Charles G., *Thejjija għaz-Żwieġ* (Malta, Moviment ta' Kana, 1969).

Vella, Charles G., *Fiz-Żwieġ fl-Imħabba* (Malta, Moviment ta' Kana, 1970).

Vella, E.B., *Ġabra ta' Ward: It-Tieni Ktieb* (London, Oxford University Press, edition 1966)

Vella, Elija, *Infasslu flimkien il-Parroċċa Maltija* (Malta, Reliġjon u Hajja, 1970).

Żgħażaġh Haddiema Nsara, *Rapport Amministrattiv, 1961, 1962*, Typed Manuscript, 1962.

Newspapers and Magazines

L-Anti Kommunist, Lega Anti-Kommunist, 1961-1962.

L-Anglu tal-Paċi, Franciscan Friars Minors, 1955-1970.

The Bulletin, Lux Press, 1955-1970.

The Capuchin Mind, Capuchin Friars, 1959.

The Catholic Owl, U.S.C.G. , 1957-1959.

The Crusader, Apostleship of Prayer, 1960.

Dawl, Għaqda Żgħażaġh Laburisti, Żurrieq, 1961-1962.

D.F.C. Newsletter, Diocesan Film Commission, 1963-1964.

Dominion, Nationalist Party Youth Movement, 1961-1962.

Encounter, Young Nationalist Movement, 1956.

The Faith, Circolo Apologetico, Rabat, 1955-1965 (fragmented).

Ferment, Society for the Thought of Independent Expression, 1966-1969.

Il-Fjamma, Għaqda Żgħażaġh Laburisti, 1962-1964.

Forward, Progressive Constitutional Party, 1955-1970.

In-Tagħna, Nationalist Party, 1984.

Il-Ġens, Malta Church, 1988-2009.

Humanitas, Journal of the Faculty of Arts, 1999-2003.

Il-Habbar ta' Sant'Antnin ta' Padova, Franciscan Friars Minors, 1947-1968.

Il-Haddiem, Żgħażaġh Haddiema Nsara, 1955-1969.

Il-Helsien, Malta Labour Party, 1959-1967.

Il-Huġġieġa, Malta Catholic Action, 1947.

Lil Hutna, Kummissjoni Emigranti, 1955-1968, (not published between 1965 and 1967).

Ideal, Għaqda Żgħażaġh Laburisti, 1966-1973.

Inizjativa Kattolika, Azzjoni Kattolika (Gozo), 1964-1966.

Kana, Cana Movement, 1954-1970.

Il-Karmelu, Carmelite Fathers, 1956-1960.

Il-Kokka, Students' Union, 1960.

The Knight, Malta Labour Party, 1955-1957.

KullHadd, Malta Labour Party, 2010-2011.

L-Orizzont, General Workers' Union, 1962-1970, 2001.

Lehen is-Sewwa, Malta Catholic Action, 1955-1970.

Lucerna: Rivista del Clero di Malta e Gozo, 1955-1960.

The Malta Independent on Sunday, Standard Publications, 1992-2008.

Malta Missjunarja, Opri Pontifiċji Missjunarji, 1955-1970.

Malta News, General Workers' Union, 1964-1970.

Malta Tagħna, Partit Demokratiku Nazzjonalista, 1961-1963.

Malta Review, Information Office, 1962-1977.

Malta Today, Media Today, 1998-2008.
The Maltese Observer, Malta Church, 1964-1969.
Il-Malti, Għaqda tal-Kittieba tal-Malti, 1955-1970.
Manic! Standard Publications Ltd, 1999-2008.
Militia Christi, Fratellanzi ta' l-Isem t'Alla u ta' Ġesu, 1955-1970.
Il-Mument, Nationalist Party, 1971-2008.
In-Nazzjon, Nationalist Party, 1970-2008.
Il-Poplu, Nationalist Party, 1958-1962.
Il-Polz, Moviment Qawmien Letterarju, 1962-1970.
Pastor, Christus Rex, 1967-1984.
Problemi tal-Lum, Jesuit Community, 1961-1970.
The Knight, Malta Labour Party, 1954-1956.
Il-Qawmien, Social Action Movement/Moviment Azzjoni Soċjali, 1960-1970.
Il-Quċċata, Nationalist Party Youth Movement, 1969-1970.
Regina et Mater, Kongregazzjonijiet Marjani, 1955-1970.
Scientia, 1955-1962.
Is-Sebħ, Malta Labour Party, 1955-1959.
The Struggle, Labour League of Youth, 1959-1960. *The Sunday Times of Malta*, Allied Publications, 1955-1978, 2017.
The Times of Malta, Progress Press, 1955-1970.
It-Tarka, Partit tal-Ħaddiema Nsara, 1961-1967.
It-Torċa, General Workers' Union, 2011.
Tribuna, Nationalist Party Youth Movement, 1962-1963.
The Voice of Malta, Malta Labour Party, 1959-1970.
The Whip, Labour League of Youth, 1960-1962.
Xehda Għasel, M.U.S.E.U.M., 1956
Iż-Żmien, Malta Labour Party, 1967-1970.

Oral Testimonies

(Interviews conducted by Sergio Grech)

Canon Joe Abela
 Canon Mario Agius
 Rev Tony Agius
 Mgr Carmelo Aquilina
 Fr Nikol Aquilina
 Fr Carmel Attard
 Mgr Edgar Attard
 Patri Lawrence Attard, O.P.
 Patri Timotju Azzopardi, O. Carm
 Mgr Karmenu Bonavia
 Patri Silvestru Bonavia
 Judge Giovanni Bonello
 Dr Gawdenz Borg
 Mr Paul P. Borg
 Mr Gaetano Brimmer
 Mgr Joe Bugeja
 Mr Lino Bugeja
 Prof Salvinu Busuttil
 Mr Mario Cacciattolo
 Patri Damian Cachia, O.Carm

Mgr Lawrence Cachia
Mr Narcy Calamatta
Mgr Guido Calleja
Mgr Philip Calleja
Mgr Mikelang Camilleri
Mgr Joe Carabott
Mr Charles Caruana
Archbishop Paul Cremona
Mgr Alwig Deguara
Patri Ambrog Delia, OSA
Perit Michael Falzon
Mr Alfred Farrugia
Mgr Joseph Farrugia
Mr Joe Felice Pace
Mgr Ġużepp Fenech
Prof Oliver Friggieri
Fr Joe Fsadni
Mgr Anthony Galea
Mr A.V. Galea
Mr Michael Galea
Dr Albert Ganado
Mgr Lawrence Gatt
Mgr Ġużeppi Gauci
Cardinal Prospero Grech
Mgr Victor Grech
Mr Noel Grima
Mr George Lewis
Dr Carmelo Lia
Mr Franco Masini
Mr Joseph Mercieca
Dr Joseph Micallef Stafrace
Rev Frans Mifsud
Mgr Lawrence Mifsud
Rev Maurice Mifsud
Mgr Joseph Mifsud Bonnici
Dr Vincent Moran
Mgr Joseph Pace
Mr George Peresso
Dr Victor Ragonesi
Prof John Rizzo Naudi
Mgr Arthur Said Pullicino
Mr Paul Saliba
Patri Alfons Sammut, O.F.M. Conv
Dr Austin Sammut
Patri Martin D. Schembri, O.Carm
Rev Angelo Seychell
Mr Karmenu Spiteri
Mr Piju Spiteri
Rev Ġużepp Sultana
Mr Anthony J. Tabone

Mr Anton Tabone
Patri Hilary Tagliaferro. O.S.A.
Patri Diego Theuma, O.F.M. Cap
Mgr Kalçidon Vassallo
Canon Angelo Vella
Mgr Anton Vella
Mgr Charles G. Vella
Mr Charles Xuereb
Mr Frans Zahra
Mr Renè Zahra
Mr Winston V. Zahra
Perit Andre Zammit
Canon Joseph Zammit
Mgr Victor Zammit McKeon
Patri Marius Zerafa, O.P.

**Prof Henry Frendo Minn wara l-Kwinti Oral Interviews
(Transcripts)**

Mr Rokku Abdilla
Mr George Agius
Mr Frederick Amato Gauci
Ms Josephine Amato Gauci
Mr Frank Attard
Ms Karmen Azzopardi
Mr Alfred Bonnici
Dr Joe Brincat
Prof Salvino Busuttil
Dr Alexander Cachia Zammit
Mro. Charles Camilleri
Mr Joe Camilleri
Ms Evelyn Carachi
Mr Paul Carachi
Lord Carrington
Mr Anton Cassar
Chief Justice J.J. Cremona
Mr John Dalli
Ms Cecilia Darmanin
Prof Guido de Marco
Dun Ġwann Dimech
Prof Richard England
Mr Vincent Esposito
Dr Joe Fenech
Dr Eddie Fenech Adami
Prof Oliver Friggieri
Mr Silvio Galea
Dr Albert Ganado
Mgr Anton Gauci
Mr Godfrey Grima
Dr George Hyzler
Dr Daniel Micallef

Mr Lino Micallef
Dr Joe Micallef Stafrace
Mrs Yvonne Micallef Stafrace
Dr Ugo Mifsud Bonnici
Mr John Mizzi
Dr Vincent Moran
Mr Josie Muscat
Mr Paul Naudi
Dr Iris Pace
Dr Victor Ragonesi
Mr Evarist Saliba
Mr Paul Saliba
Dr Philip Saliba
Mr Frans Sammut
Rev Peter Serracino Inglott
Mr Mike Seychell
Dr Ġuži Spiteri
Mr Lino Spiteri
Mr Piju Spiteri
Dr Ċensu Tabone
Mr Grezzju Tabone
Patri Leopoldu Tabone
Ms Maria Tabone
Mr J.G. Vassallo
Mgr Charles G. Vella
Mr Joe Vella
Mr Joe M. Zahra

Electoral Programmes

Malta Labour Party Electoral Programmes: 1953, 1955, 1962, 1966 at *Elections in Malta: The Single-Transferable-Vote System in Action, 1921 – 2008* at www.maltadata.com owned by John Lane.

Nationalist Party Electoral Programmes: 1962, 1966 at *Elections in Malta: The Single-Transferable-Vote System in Action, 1921 – 2008* at www.maltadata.com owned by John Lane.

Democratic Nationalist Party Electoral Programmes: 1962 at *Elections in Malta: The Single-Transferable-Vote System in Action, 1921 – 2008* at www.maltadata.com owned by John Lane.

Christian Workers' Party Electoral Programmes: 1962 at *Elections in Malta: The Single-Transferable-Vote System in Action, 1921 – 2008* at www.maltadata.com owned by John Lane.

Secondary Sources

Papers in Academic Journals

Allport, G. W., et al, 'The Religion of the Post-War College Student,' *Journal of Psychology*, 25, (1), (1948), 3-33.

Attard, Lawrence E., 'The Core of the Middle Ages: St. Thomas Aquinas and the Background in his Writings,' *San Tumas D'Akwinu: Ilbieraħ u Llum, Knisja 2000, Vol. 61* (Malta, Pubblikazzjonijiet Dumnikani, 2002), 5-19.

Azzopardi, Francis, 'The Appointment of Bishop A.M. Buhagiar as Administrator Apostolic of Malta,' *Proceedings of History Week, The Malta Historical Society*, (1981), 94-107.

Azzopardi, Simone, 'Imperial Policy in Malta, 1934-9: Britain's need for benevolent Despotism,' *Melita Historica* 16, (2), (2013), 93-112.

Bach-Golecka, Dobrochna, 'Catholic Religion and Social Capital: The Case Study of Poland,' *Universitas Gedanensis*, 22, (40), (2010), 115-128.

Baldacchino Godfrey, 'Recent Developments in Higher Education in Malta,' *Mediterranean Journal of Educational Studies*, 4, (2), (1999), 205-214.

Berinsky, Adam J. and Lenz, Gabriel S., 'Red Scare? Revisiting Joe McCarthy's Influence on 1950s Elections,' *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 2, (2014), 369-391.

Binebai, Benedict, 'Voice Construction in the Postcolonial Text: Spivakian Subaltern Theory in Nigerian Drama,' *African Research Review*, 9, (4), (39), (2015), 206-220.

Blackbourn, David, 'The Catholic Church in Europe since the French Revolution,' *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 33, (4), (1991), 778-790.

Boldt, Andreas, 'Ranke: Objectivity and History,' *Rethinking History*, 18, (4), (2014), 1-18.

Bonanno, Anthony, 'The Romans in Malta,' *Treasures of Malta*, 1, (1994), 48-53.

Borges Santos, Paula, 'The Question of the Political Organization of Catholics under the Portuguese Authoritarian Regime: The Bishop of Porto Case' (1958),' *Portuguese Studies*, 30, (1), (2014), 94-111.

Brien, James, 'The Role of Causation in History,' *History in the Making*, 2, (1), (2013), 77-81.

Brincat, Mario, 'The Birth of the 'Maltese Model' of Development, 1945-1959,' *Journal of Maltese History*, 1, (2), (2009), 34-52.

Buttigieg, Charles, 'It-Teologija tal-Episkopat,' *L-Isqof Sejha u Missjoni Knisja 2000*, Nru 111, Jannar-Marzu 2015, 49-54.

Cambria, Mariavita, 'Is it English what we Speak? Irish English and Postcolonial Identity,' *Studi Irlandesi: A Journal of Irish Studies*, 4, (2014), 19-33.

Camilleri, Jonathan, 'Maltese Industrial Development: 1933-1939,' *Journal of Maltese History*, 4, (2), 23-36.

Carabott, Philip John, 'The Temporary Italian Occupation of the Dodecanese: A Prelude to Permanency,' *Diplomacy and Statecraft*, 4, (2), (1993), 285-312.

Carrillo, Elisa A., 'The Italian Catholic Church and Communism, 1943-1963,' *The Catholic Historical Review*, 77, (4), (1991), 644-657.

Caruana, Salvino 'Magħkom jiena Nisrani, għalikom jiena Isqof,' *L-Isqof Sejha u Missjoni Knisja 2000*, Nru 111, Jannar-Marzu 2015, 15-47.

Caruana, Sandro, 'Italian in Malta: A socio-educational Perspective,' *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 16, (5), (2013), 602-614.

Cassar, Carmel, 'Malta: Language, Literacy and Identity in a Mediterranean Island Society,' *National Identities*, 3, (3), (2001), 257-275.

Cassar, George, 'Politics, Religion and Education in Nineteenth Century Malta,' *Journal of Maltese Education Research*, 1, (1), (2003), 96-118.

Chelini-Pont, Blandine, 'Papal Thought on Europe and the European Union in the Twentieth Century,' *Religion, State and Society*, (37), (2009), 131-146.

Chelini-Pont, Blandine, 'Religion in the Public Sphere: Challenges and Opportunities,' *Brigham Young University Law Review*, (3), 2005, 611-628.

Ciappara, Frans, 'Translating "Holy Bodies" (*Corpi Santi*) in Malta, 1667-1795,' *Historical Reflections/Réflexions Historiques*, Winter 2017, 1-17.

Clark, Elizabeth A., 'From Italy to Harvard: George La Piana and Catholic Modernism,' *Church History*, 83, (1), (2014), 145-153.

- Cole-Arnal, Oscar, 'Shaping Young Proliterians into Militant Christians: The Pioneer Phase of the JOC in France and Québec,' *Journal of Contemporary History*, 32, (4), (1997), 509-526.
- Dagnine, Jorge, 'The Intellectuals of Italian Catholic Action and the Sacralisation of Politics in 1930s Europe,' *Contemporary European History*, 21, (2012), 215-233.
- Daly, Gabriel, 'Catholicism and Modernity,' *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, 53, (1985), 773-796.
- Dawes, Helen, 'The Catholic Church and Woman Question: Catholic Feminism in Italy in the Early 1900's,' *Catholic Historical Review*, 97, (3), (2011), 484-526.
- DeBattista, Andre P., 'Planning one Side against the Other, Malta's Foreign Relations in the Age of Détente (1969-1979),' *Melita Historica*, 17, (1), (2016), 57-86.
- De Bhaldraithe, Eoin, 'Bishops and Presbyters in Early Christian Ireland,' *Irish Theological Quarterly*, 75, (1), 2010, 56-74.
- Delicata, Nadine, 'Humanae Vitae taħt Lenti ġdida ħamsin Sena Wara,' *Knisja 2000*, 127, January-March 2019, 63-78.
- Dobbelaere, Karel, 'Religion and Politics in Belgium: From an Institutionalized Manifest Catholic to a Latent Christian Pillar,' *Politics and Religion*, 4, (2), (2010), 283-296.
- English, Jim, 'Empire Day in Britain, 1904-1958,' *Historical Journal* 49, (1), (2006), 247-276.
- Dreyer, Jaco S., 'Religion in the Public Sphere: What can Public Theology Learn from Habermas' Latest Work,' *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies*, 66, (1), (2010), Art. # 798, 7 pages. DOI: 10.4102/hts.v66i1.798.
- Eusebio, Enrico C., 'The Evolution of Christus Dominus and of its Teaching on the Catechetical Duties of Bishops,' *Landas*, 23, (2), 2009, 29-66.
- Faggioli, Massimo, 'Vatican II: The History and Narratives,' *Theological Studies*, 73, (2012), 749-767.
- Faggioli, Massimo, 'Vatican II and the Church of the Margins,' *Theological Studies*, 74, (2013), 808-818.
- Fantappiè, Carlo, 'Dal Paradigma Canonistico Classico al Paradigma Codificatorio,' *Ius Ecclesiae*, 29, 1, (2017), 39-50.
- Fantappiè, Carlo, 'Spirito e Istituzione,' *Politica e Religione* (2010/2011), 57-94.
- Farrugia, Edward, 'Vatican II: An Exchange of Gifts,' *Melita Theologica*, 64, (1), (2014), 59-74.
- Fastiggi, Robert, 'The Contribution of the Council of Trent to the Catholic Reformation,' *Perichoresis*, 18, (6), (2020), 3-20.
- Feinberg, Paul D., 'The Christian and the Civil Authorities,' *The Master's Seminary Journal*, 10, (1), (1999), 87-100.
- Fenech, Dominic, 'Divorced from Political Reality: The New Limits of Ecclesiastical Power in Malta,' *The Round Table*, 101, (3), (2012), 221-234.
- Fiorini, Stanley, 'Status animarum I: A unique Source for 17th and 18th-Century Maltese Demography,' *Melita Historica*, 8, (4), 1983, 325-344.
- Forlenza Rosario, 'The Enemy within: Catholic Anti-Communism in Cold War Italy,' *Past & Present*, 235, (1), (2017), 207-242.
- Frendo, Henry, 'The Post-War Treason Trials,' *Storja '98*, (1998), 118-120.
- Galea, Michael, 'An Interview with Sir Harry Luke,' *Melita Historica*, 18, (1), 2020, 186-193.
- Gellel, Adrian and Sultana, Mark, 'A Language for the Catholic Church in Malta,' *Melita Theologica*, 59, (1), (2008), 21-36.
- Gilje, Paul A., 'The Crowd in American History,' *The American Transcendental Quarterly*, 17, (3), (2003), 135-159.

Gilmore, D.D., 'Anthropology of the Mediterranean Area,' *Annual Review of Anthropology*, (11), (1982), 175-205.

Gomes, Evaldo Xavier, 'Church-State Relations from a Catholic Perspective: General Considerations on Nicolas Sarkozy's New Concept of Laïcité,' *Journal of Catholic Legal Studies*, 48, (2), 2009, 201-218.

Grech, Sergio, 'L-Element ta' Konfront f' Monsinjur Pietru Pawl Saydon,' *Il-Malti*, (2007), 63-78.

Grech, Sergio, 'Nuncio Giuseppe Mojoli's Malta Experience,' *Arkivju*, (2019), 3-10.

Grech, Sergio, 'Proża Popolari Maltija kontra l-Komuniżmu,' *Il-Malti*, (2019), 78-96.

Grech, Sergio, 'Failed Attempts by Prime Minister Dominic Mintoff to open a National Television Station (1955-1958),' *Arkivju*, 2020, 51-62.

Grech, Sergio, 'The Road to the Malta Church-Labour Party Peace Accord (1969),' *Arkivju*, 2021, 37-48.

Grech, Sergio, 'Contextualising the 1961 Interdict in Malta,' *Melita Historica*, 18, (1), 2020, 66-91.

Gregory, Andrew, '1 Clement: An Introduction,' *The Expository Times*, 117, (6), 2006, 223-230.

Griffin, Leslie, 'The Integration of Spiritual and Temporal Contemporary Roman Catholic Church-State Theory,' *Theological Studies*, 48, (1987), 225-257.

Grima, George, 'The Constitution and Religion in Malta between 1921 and 1974,' *Melita Theologica*, 36, (2), 1985, 20-40.

Grzymala-Busse, Anna, 'Why Comparative Politics Should take Religion (More) Seriously?,' *Annual Review of Political Science*, 15, (2012), 421-442.

Habermas, Jürgen, 'Religion in the Public Sphere,' *European Journal of Philosophy*, 14 (1), 1-25.

Hagstrom, Aurelie, 'The Catholic Church and Censorship in Literature, Books, Drama, and Film,' *Analytic Teaching*, 23, (2), (2004), <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.487.7205&rep=rep1&type=pdf>.

Halter, Nicholas, 'The Australian Catholic Church and the Public Sphere: World Youth Day 2008,' *Journal of Religious History*, 37, (2), (6), (2013), 261-282.

Harris, Fredrick C., 'Something Within: Religion as a Mobilizer of African-American Political Activism,' *The Journal of Politics*, 56, (1), (1994), 42-68.

Haskins, Cheryl Y., 'Gender Bias in the Roman Catholic Church: Why Can't Women be Priests?' *The University of Maryland Law Journal of Race, Religion, Gender & Class*, 3, (1), (99), (2003), 99-124.

Hayden, White, 'An Old Question Raised Again: Is Historiography Art or Science? (Response to Iggers),' *Rethinking History*, 4, (3), (2000), 391-406.

Heinrich Böll Stiftung, *The Green Political Foundation*, Retrieved on 24th February 2019, <https://www.boell.de/en/democracy/contemporary-history-2844.html>.

Hellema, Duco, 'The Relevance and Irrelevance of Dutch Anti-Communism: The Netherlands and the Hungarian Revolution, 1956-57,' *Journal of Contemporary History*, 1, (30), (1), (1995), 169-186.

Hermida, Ranilo B., 'The Catholic Church in the Public Sphere,' *Kritika Kultura*, 24, (2015), 28-43.

Hernandez, Richard L., 'Sacred Sound and Sacred Substance: Church Bells and the Auditory Culture of Russian Villages during the Bolshevik Velikii Perelom,' *American Historical Review*, (12), (2004), 1475-1504.

Heubel, E.J., 'Church and State in Spain: Transition toward Independence and Liberty,' *The Western Political Quarterly*, 3, (30), (1), 1977, 125-139.

Houston, Peter, 'South African Anglican Military Chaplains and the First World War,' *South African Historical Journal*, 68, (2), (2016), 213-229.

Itçaina, Xabier, 'The Spanish Catholic Church, the Public Sphere, and the Economic Recession: Rival Legitimacies?,' *Journal of Contemporary Religion*, 34, (1), (2019), 153-172.

Kane, Michael N., and Jacobs, Robin J., 'Catholic Priests' Beliefs of the Use of Power by Their Bishop,' *Journal of Spirituality in Mental Health*, (4), 19, (2017), 268-286,

Kelly, Gerard, 'The Roman Catholic Doctrine of Papal Infallibility: A Response to Mark Powell,' *Theological Studies*, (2), (2013), 129-137.

Kelly, Gerard, 'The Impact of the Second Vatican Council,' *Australasian Catholic Record*, 91, (2), (4), (2014), 146-159.

Kerzter, David L., 'Participation of Italian Communists in Catholic Italy: A Case Study,' *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 14, (11), (1975), 1-11.

King, Richard, 'The Changing Role of the Malta Dockyards,' *Geography*, 11, (1978), 363-366.

Kog, Norman, 'Italian Communism, the Working Class and Organised Catholicism,' *The Journal of Politics*, 28, (3), (1966), 531-555.

Korstanje, Maximiliano E., 'Ideology and Prejudices: Exploring the Roots of Religion,' *Antrocom*, 6, (1), (2010), 101-113.

Kortti, Jukka, 'Religion and the cultural Public Sphere: the Case of the Finnish liberal Intelligentsia during this Turmoil of the early twentieth Century,' *History of the European Ideas*, 44, (1), (2017), 98-112.

Koster, Adrianus, 'Malta's Relations with the Holy See in Postcolonial Times,' *Melita Historica*, 11, (3), (1994), 311-323.

Koster, Adrianus, 'Church and State Intervention in Feasts and Rituals in Independent Malta,' *Economic & Social Studies*, 4, (1987-1988), 1-28.

Kula, Marcin, 'Communism as Religion,' *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions*, 6, (3), (2005), 371-381.

Laitinen, Aappo, 'Religion and Politics in Malta during the Inter-war Years: Between Protestant Britain and the Holy See,' *Kirchliche Zeitgeschichte*, 30, (2), (2017), 376-382.

Lee, Hilda L., 'British Policy towards the Religion, Ancient Laws and Customs in Malta 1824-1851,' *Melita Historica*, 3, (1963), 1-14.

Lenard, Max, 'On the Origin, Development and Demise of the *Index Librorum Prohibitorum*,' *Journal of Access Services*, 3, (4), 51-63.

Levine, Daniel H., 'Religion and Politics, Politics and Religion: An Introduction,' *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs*, 21, (1), (1979), 5-29.

Luconì, Stefano, 'Anticommunism, Americanisation and Ethnic Identity: Italian Americans and the 1948 Parliamentary Elections in Italy,' *Historian*, 62, (2000), 285-302.

Luttrell, John, 'Australianizing the Local Catholic Church: Polding to Gilroy,' *Journal of Religious History*, 36, (3), (9), (2012), 335-350.

Luxmoore, Jonathan and Babiuch, Jolanta, 'The Catholic Church and Communism, 1789-1989,' 27, (3-4), 1999, 301-313.

Luxmoore, Jonathan, 'Still Building Bridges: Eastern Europe's Church in the World Church,' *Concilium*, 35, (3), (2000), 106-114.

Morana, Martin, 'The Genesis of Tourism to Malta: An Overview (1800-1964) *Melita Historica*, 18, (1), 2020, 103-122.

Mainwaring, Scott, 'The Catholic Youth Workers' Movement and the Emergence of the Popular Church in Brazil,' *Working Paper December 1983*, Kellogg Institute for International Studies.

Mayo, Peter, 'Social Democracy in a Postcolonial Island State: Dom Mintoff's Impact, Socialism and Democracy,' *Socialism and Democracy*, 27, (2), 130-139.

Mayo, Peter, 'Higher Education, Socialism and Industrial Development: Dom Mintoff and the 'Worker-Student Scheme.' ' *International Journal of Sociology of Education*, 2, (1), (2013), 1-25.

McCullagh, C. Behan, 'Bias in Historical Description, Interpretation, and Explanation,' *History and Theory*, 39, (1), (2000), 39-66.

McQuade, Joseph, 'The Catholic Church and the Challenge of Modernity in 19th Century Europe,' *Saeculum Journal*, www.saeculumjournal.com/index.php/saeculum/article/view/11312/13011.

Mifsud Bonnici, Giuseppe and Mifsud Bonnici, Ugo, 'The Fr Carta Incident and Freedom of Expression 1928-1932,' *Melita Historica*, 4, (2015), 7-25.

Morrison, Hugh, "'Little Vessels" or "Little Soldiers:" New Zealand Protestant Children, Foreign Missions, Religious Pedagogy and Empire c.1880s-1930s,' *Paedagogica Historica*, 47, (3), (2011), 303-321.

Morse, Daniel Ryan, 'Only Connecting? E.M. Forster: Empire Broadcasting and the Ethics of Distance,' *Journal of Modern Literature*, 34, (2011), 87-105.

Nilsson DeHanas, Daniel and Shterin, Marat, 'Religion and the Rise of Populism,' *Religion, State and Society*, 46, (3), (2018), 177-185.

Ogden, Josyln, 'Religious Liberty, Vatican II, and John Courtney Murray,' *Case Studies in Ethics*, The Kenan Institute for Ethics, Retrieved on 28th December 2016, <https://kenan.ethics.duke.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/Case-Study-Vatican-II.pdf>.

Otero-Gonzalez, Uxía, 'Catholic Dressing in the Spanish Franco Dictatorship (1939–1975): Normative Femininity and Its Sartorial Embodiment,' *Journal of Religious History*, 45, (4), (2021), 582-602.

Parenti, Michael, 'Methods of Media Manipulation,' *The Humanist*, 57, (4), (1997), 5-7.

Polidano, David, 'Democratic Elements in the early Church,' *Melita Theologica*, 55, (1), (2004), 27-48.

Pollard, John, 'Pius XI's Promotion of the Italian Model of Catholic Action in the World-Wide Church,' *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 10, (2012), 758-784.

Portier, Philippe, 'Religion and Democracy in the Thought of Jürgen Habermas,' *Culture and Society*, 48, (2011), 426-432.

Regoli, Roberto, 'L'élite cardinalizia dopo la fine dello Stato Pontificio,' *Archivum Historiae Pontificiae*, 47 (2009), 63-87.

Regoli, Roberto, 'Merry del Val e l'Accademia dei Nobili Ecclesiastici,' *Archivio della Società romana di storia patria*, 139, (2016), 145-163.

Regoli, Roberto, 'Dal mito all'archivio: il pontificato di Pio XI. Il dibattito tra gli studiosi dopo l'apertura degli Archivi vaticani,' *Archivum Historiae Pontificiae*, 49, (2011), 155-188.

Renken, John A., 'Diocesan/Eparchial Pastoral Councils: Historical Development, Canon Law, and Practical Considerations,' Retrieved 4th February 2019, http://usccb.org/about/laity-marriage-family-life-and-youth/laity/upload/Historical-Development-Canon-Law-and-Practical-Considerations_09-25-2017.pdf.

Riddell, Neil, 'The Catholic Church and the Labour Party, 1918-1931,' *Twentieth Century British History*, 8, (2), (1997), 165-193.

Romanko, Agnieszka, 'The Principle of Independence and Autonomy of Church and State in the Social Teaching of the Roman Catholic Church,' *Teka Komisji Prawniczej PAN Oddział w Lublinie*, 14, (1), (2021), 329-335.

Royce, Victor M., 'Colonial Education and Class Formation in the Early Judaism: A Postcolonial Reading,' *Journal of Postcolonial Theory and Theology, Library of Second Temple Studies*, (2010), 18-47.

Saheed, Aderinto, 'Empire Day in Africa: Patriotic Colonial Childhood, Imperial Spectacle and Nationalism in Nigeria, 1905-60,' *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, (2018), 731-757.

Said, Philip E., 'Social Studies Education in Malta: A Historical Outline,' *The Educator*, 5, (2019), 61-86.

Saresella, Daniela, 'The Dialogue between Catholics and Communists in Italy during the 1960s,' *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 75, (3), (2014), 493-512.

Saresella, Daniela, 'The Movement of Catholic Communists, 1937-1945,' *Journal of Contemporary History*, 53, (3), 644-661.

Sasiadek, Adam, 'Varieties of Catholic Social Justice: Initiatives since Rerum Novarum and their Implications for Contemporary Labour and Employment Policy,' *Journal of Catholic Legal Studies*, 50, (1), (3), (2017), 257-278.

Savona Ventura, Charles, 'The Influence of the Catholic Church on Catholic Midwifery,' *Medical History*, 39, (1995), 18-34.

Segal, Jérôme and Mansfield, Ian, 'Contention and Discontent surrounding Religion in Noughties' Austria,' *Austrian Studies*, 19, (2011), 52-67.

Semidyorkin, N.A., 'Family Law Reform in Russia after the October Revolution (1917),' *The Journal of Legal History*, 9, (1), (1988), 87-97.

Scerri, Hector, 'Ecumenism in the Archdiocese of Malta during the Episcopate of Archbishop Joseph Mercieca (1976-2007),' *Roczniki Teologiczne*, 63, (7), (2016), 7-19.

Scerri, Hector, 'Id-Digriet tal-Konċilju Vatikan II dwar l-Uffiċċju Pastoral tal-Isqfijiet Christus Dominus,' *L-Isqof Sejha u Missjoni Knisja 2000*, Nru 111, Jannar-Marzu 2015, 55-68.

Scerri, Hector, 'Id-Digriet tal-Konċilju Vatikan II dwar l-Uffiċċju Pastoral tal-Isqfijiet Christus Dominus,' *L-Isqof Sejha u Missjoni Knisja 2000*, Nru 111, Jannar-Marzu 2015, 55-67.

Scerri, Hector, 'Il-Papa Pawlu VI: Tmunier tal-Konċilju Vatikan II,' *Knisja 2000*, 127, January-March 2019, 35-52.

Sciberras, Lawrenz, 'Il-Missjoni tal-Isqof,' *L-Isqof Sejha u Missjoni Knisja 2000*, Nru 111, Jannar-Marzu 2015, 3-13.

Shaffer, Branson, 'Vatican II: The Radical Shift to Ecumenism,' *CLA Journal*, 2, (2014), 62-83.

Shields, Victor, 'Religious Freedom: Doctrinal Development in Vatican II,' *Melita Theologica*, 34, (1), (1983), 12-28.

Smith, Simon C., 'Conflict and Co-operation,' *Journal of Mediterranean Studies*, 17, (1), (2007), 115-134.

Smith, Simon C., 'Integration and disintegration: The attempted integration of Malta into the United Kingdom in the 1950s,' *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 35, (1), 2007, 49-71.

Smith, Simon C., 'Priests and Politicians: Archbishop Michael Gonzi, Dom Mintoff and the End of Empire in Malta,' *Journal of Mediterranean Studies*, 23, (2014), 113-124.

Staheli, Urs, and Saboth, Eric, 'Seducing the Crowd,' *New German Critique*, 38, (3), (2011), 63-77.

Thake, Conrad, 'Architecture in Post Independent Malta, Past Present and Future,' *Melita Historica*, 16, (3), (2014), 89-100.

Tonna, Benjamin, 'Pastoral Planning in Malta,' *Melita Theologica*, (1), (1985), 3-17.

Urbaniak, Jakub, 'Religion as Memory: How has the Continuity of Tradition produced Collective Meanings? – Part One,' *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies*, 71, (3), (2015), 1-8.

- Verhoest, Pascal, 'Seventeenth-Century Pamphlets as Constituents of a Public Communications Space: A Historical Critique of Public Sphere Theory,' *Theory, Culture & Society*, 36, (1), (2019), 47-62.
- Vassallo, Mario, 'Pageantry and Secularization – the Malta Case,' *Melita Theologica*, 32, (1-2), (1981), 50-58.
- Vella, Andrew, and Attard, George, "L-Arcisqof Gonzi: Intervistat mir-Rivista Storja," *Storja '78*, (1978), 121-133.
- Visanich, Valerie, 'Generational Habitus of Youth during the 'swinging' Sixties: A Case Study in Malta,' *Journal of Maltese History*, 3, (1), (2012), 33-45.
- Viswanathan, Gauri, 'Currying Favour: The Politics of British Educational and Cultural Policy in India 1813-1854,' *Social Text*, 19/20, (1988), 85-104.
- Watson, Joe, 'How the British Broadcasting Corporation Shaped an Empire,' <https://www.h-net.org/reviews/showpdf.php?id=38757>.
- White, Timothy J., 'The Impact of British Colonialism on Irish Catholicism and National Identity: Repression, Reemergence, and Divergence,' *Études irlandaises*, 35, (1), (2010), 21-37.
- Wilde, Melissa, 'Who wanted what and Why at the Second Vatican Council? Toward a General Theory of Religious Change,' *Sociologica*, 1, (4), 2007, 1-42.
- Wilson, James Q., 'Lecture 1: Politics and Polarisation,' Edmond J. Safra Centre for Ethics, Harvard University, Retrieved on 28th December 2016, <http://ethics.harvard.edu/event/lecture-i-politics-and-polarisation>.
- Xypolia, Ilia, 'Divide et Impera: Vertical and Horizontal Dimensions of British Imperialism,' *Critique*, 44, (3), (2016), 221-231.
- Yates, M., 'Rawls and Habermas on Religion in the Public Sphere,' *Philosophy & Social Criticism*, 33, (7), (2007), 880-891.

Books Published in Malta and Abroad

- Abela, A.E., *The Order of St. Michael and St. George in Malta and Maltese Knights of the British Realm* (Malta, Progress Press, 1988).
- Abela, Anthony M., *Secularised Sexuality: Youth Values in a City Island* (Malta, Social Value Studies, 1998).
- Abela Ignatius, *Lejn l-Irgulija* (Malta, Moviment ta' Kana, 1972).
- Abela, Joe, *Marsaxlokk: A Hundred Years Ago* (Malta, Marsaxlokk Kumitat Festi Ċentinarji, 1997).
- Agius, A.J., *History of Freemasonry in Malta 1730-1998* (Malta, Progress Press, 1998).
- Agius, Emanuel, *Social Consciousness of the Church in Malta: 1891-1921* (Malta, Media Centre Publications, 1991).
- Agius, George, *Tradition and the Church* (Illinois, Tan Books and Publishers, reprint 2005).
- Alexander, Joan, *Mabel Strickland* (Malta, Progress Press, 1996).
- Anon, *Episcopal Jubilee of His Grace Mgr Michael Gonzi Metropolitan Archbishop of Malta, 1924-1949* (Malta, no publishing details, 1949).
- Anon, *Kostituzzjoni tar-Repubblika ta' Malta* (Malta, Dipartiment tal-Infommazzjoni, 1975).
- Anon, *L-Interdett: Ġrajja ta' 20 Sena Ilu* (Malta, Union Press, 1980).
- Anon, *Il-Knisja ta' Hal Ġhaxaq: 200 Sena Kkonsagrata* (Malta, Parroċċa Hal Ġhaxaq, 1984).
- Anon, *Almanakk tad-Dar ta' San Ġużepp tal-Hamrun 1960* (Malta, Dar ta' San Ġużepp, 1960).
- Apap Bologna, Peter, *Memories* (Malta, The Author, 2015).
- Aquilina, Ġoġ, *Fra Diegu Bonanno OFM: Frangiskan li haseb fil-Fqir* (Malta, Publishers Enterprises Group, 2006).
- Aquilina, Victor, *Strickland House: Book 1, 1921-1935* (Malta, Allied Publications, 2010).

- Aquilina, Victor, *Strickland House: Times of Malta at War and Labour Party's sweeping Victory* (Malta, Allied Publication, 2015).
- Aquilina, Victor, *Lord Strickland: Plots and Intrigue in Colonial Malta* (Malta, Kite Publishing, 2019).
- Aquilina, Victor, *Black Monday: A Night of Mob Violence* (Malta, Kite Publishing, 2019).
- Attard, Edward, *Mintoff u de Gray: Il-Ġrajjet ta' April 1958 u dak li ġara Wara* (Malta, BDL Publishing, 2008).
- Attard, Lawrence, *Għall-Ġieħ t'Ismek Mulej fl-Okkażjoni tas-Sittin Kunġress Internazzjonali tax-Xirka tal-Isem Imqaddes ta' Alla, 1929-1993* (Malta, Xirka tal-Isem Imqaddes ta' Alla, 1993).
- Attard, Lawrence E., *Profiles in Maltese Emigration* (Malta, Publishers Enterprises Group, 2003).
- Attard, Lawrence E., *L-Emigrazzjoni Maltija* (Malta, Pubblikazzjonijiet Indipendenza, 1999).
- Attard, Lawrence E., *Mill-Moħħ għall-Fomm* (Malta, Pubblikazzjonijiet Dumnikani, 2015).
- Attard, Lawrence E., *The Safety Valve: A History of Maltese Emigration from 1946* (Malta, Publishers Enterprises Group, 1987).
- Aunesluoma, Juhana and Kettunen, Pauli, *The Cold War and the Politics of History* (Helsinki, University of Helsinki, 2008).
- Azzopardi, Anthony, *Il-Qawmien tal-Ħaddiem Malti* (Malta, Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti, 1986).
- Azzopardi, Anton, *Jesuit Schools in Malta, Vol. 4: St Aloysius College, 1965-2007* (Malta, The Author, 2007).
- Azzopardi, Ġeraldu, *Il-Fundaturi tal-Partit tal-Ħaddiema* (Malta, Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti, 1984).
- Azzopardi, Ġeraldu, *Ir-Rieda tal-Kotra: Il-Ħsibijiet ta' Ċensu Bugeja, Pijunier tal-Moviment tal-Ħaddiema* (Malta, Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti, 1988).
- Azzopardi, Mario, *Dun Karm: Bejn il-Vatikan, id-Duċe u l-Kuruna* (Malta, Publishers Enterprises Group, 1993).
- Barber, Robert, *The Penguin Guide to Medieval Europe* (London Penguin, 1984).
- Bartolo, Paul A., *X'kien ġara sew fis-Sette Giugno* (Malta, Klabb Kotba Maltin, 2019).
- Baum, Gregory, *Catholics and Canadian Socialism: Political Thought in the Thirties and the Forties* (Toronto, James Lorimer & Company, 1980).
- Baumgarten, Barbara Dee, *Vestments for all Seasons* (New York, Morehouse Publishing, 2002).
- Bell, Catherine, *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1997).
- Bellah, Robert, *Émile Durkheim on Morality and Society* (Chicago, Chicago University Press, 1973).
- Bello, Tonino, *Il-Knisja tal-Fardal: Antoloġija ta' Ħsibijiet* (Malta, Klabb Qari Nisrani, 2000).
- Bellitto, Christopher M., *The General Councils: A History of the Twenty-One Church Councils from Nicaea to Vatican II* (New York, Pualist Press, 2002).
- Berger, Peter, L., (ed.), *The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion* (New York, Doubleday, 1967).
- Best, John, *Holiday Guide to the Maltese Islands* (Malta, Cathedral Library Limited, 1968).
- Bezzina, Frank, *F'Għawdex fi Żmien il-Gwerra* (Gozo, The Author, 1981).
- Bezzina, Frank, *Il-Qilla tal-Gwerra fuq Għawdex 1940-1943: L-Edizzjoni l-Ġdida Mkabbra minn Charles Bezzina* (Gozo, Charles Bezzina, 2020).
- Bezzina, Joseph, *Il-Kunġress Ewkaristiku ta' Għawdex* (Gozo, Lumen Christi, 1979).

- Bezzina, Joseph, *Religion and Politics in a Crown Colony: The Gozo-Malta Story 1798-1864* (Malta, Pubblikazzjonijiet Bugelli, 1988).
- Bezzina, Joseph, *Gozo: A Historical Glimpse* (Malta, Bugelli Publications 1988).
- Bezzina, Joseph, *Marian Shrines in Gozo* (Malta, Bugelli Publications, 1989).
- Bezzina, Joseph, *The Sacred Heart Seminary: The Heart of Gozo* (Malta, Gaulitana, 1991).
- Bezzina, Joseph, *Church History including an Account of the Church in Malta* (Gozo, Gaulitana, 1994).
- Bezzina, Joseph, *Francesco Masini: Founder of the Gozo Party* (Gozo, Gaulitana, 1995).
- Bezzina, Joseph, *Anton Tabone il-Principali* (Gozo, Gaulitana, 1999).
- Bezzina, Joseph, *L-Istorja tal-Knisja f'Malta* (Malta, Pubblikazzjonijiet Indipendenza, 2002).
- Biever, Bruce Francis, *Religion, Culture and Values: A Cross Cultural Analysis of Motivational Factors in National Irish and American Irish Catholicism* (New York, Arno Press, 1976).
- Boissevain, Jeremy, *Hal Farruġ: A Village in Malta* (New York, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1969).
- Boissevain, Jeremy, *Hal Kirkop: A Village in Malta* (Malta, Midsea Books, 2006).
- Boissevain, Jeremy, *Saints and Fireworks: Religion and Politics in Rural Malta* (Malta, Allied Publications, 1993).
- Boissevain, Jeremy, *Factions, Friends and Feasts: Anthropological Perspectives on the Mediterranean* (New York, Berghahn, 2013).
- Bokenkotter, Thomas, *A Concise History of the Catholic Church* (New York, Doubleday, 2004).
- Bonello, Giovanni, *Histories of Malta: Mysteries and Myths, Volume 8* (Malta, Fondazzjoni Patrimonju Malti, 2007).
- Bonello, Giovanni, *Histories of Malta: Figments and Fragments, Volume 2* (Malta, Fondazzjoni Patrimonju Malti, 2001).
- Bonello, Vincenzo, Fiorentini, Bianca, and Schiavone, Lorenzo, *Echi del Risorgimento a Malta* (Italy, Cisalpino, 1982).
- Bonham-Carter, Victor, *In a Liberal Tradition: A Social Biography 1700-1950* (London, Constable, 1960).
- Bonnici, Alexander, *Giuseppe de Piro, 1877-1933: Founder of the Missionary Society of St. Paul* (Malta, Missionary Society of St. Paul, 1988).
- Bonnici, Alexander, *Storja ta' Malta fi Ġrajjet il-Knisja* (Malta, Reliġjon u Ħajja, 1996).
- Bonnici, Alexander, *Mons. Sidor Formosa (1851-1931): Fundatur tal-Orsolini Maltin ta' Santa Angela Merici* (Malta, Reliġjon u Ħajja, 1991).
- Bonnici, Alexander, *Storja tal-Inkiżizzjoni ta' Malta, Vol 1* (Malta, Reliġjon u Ħajja, 1990).
- Bonnici, Alexander, *L-Istituti ta' Ħajja Kkonsagrata* (Malta, Pubblikazzjonijiet Indipendenza, 2000).
- Bonnici, Arthur, *History of the Church in Malta, Vol. 2, Period III: 1530-1800* (Malta, The Author, 1967).
- Bonnici, Arthur, *History of the Church in Malta, Vol. 3, Period IV: 1800-1975* (Malta, The Author, 1975).
- Bonnici, Arturo, *L-Ingress tal-Arċisqof Mikiel Gonzi* (Malta, Empire Press, 1944).
- Bonnici, Francis, *The Academic Formation of Maltese Priests in the University of Malta 1838-1938* (Malta, BDL, 2019).
- Borg, Frank, *Liturgy and Time: The Liturgical Year and the Liturgy of the Hours* (Malta, The Author, 2007).
- Borg, Joseph, *Imkasbrin fil-Miżbla* (Malta, Dipartiment tat-Tagħrif Partit Laburista, 1989).
- Borg, Joseph, *Bandiera Ħamra: L-Ewwel ta' Mejju* (Malta, Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti, 1990).

- Borg, Joseph and Lauri Mary-Anne, *Navigating the Maltese Mediascape* (Malta, Kite Publishing, 2019).
- Borg Joseph et al., *Arthur G. Vella, S.J. F'Kollox Inħobb u Naqdi* (Malta, Klabb Kotba Maltin, 2021).
- Borg, Karm, *Il-Lunzjata ta' Ġhawdex* (Gozo, Knisja tal-Lunzjata, 2020).
- Borg, Serafin, *Mons. Ġwanni M. Camilleri O.S.A. Isqof ta' Ġhawdex (1889-1924)* (Malta, Progress Press, 1974).
- Borg, Tonio, *Hekk Nafhom Jien* (Malta, Kite, 2015).
- Borg, Tonio, *Disa' Krizijiet* (Malta, Kite, 2017).
- Borg, Vincent, *Il-Knisja Parrokkjali ta' Hal Lija* (Malta, Parroċċa Hal Lija, 1982).
- Boyle, John P., *Church Teaching Authority: Historical and Theological Studies* (Notre Dame, University of Notre Dame Press, 1995).
- Briffa, Charles, *Travelling between Shadows: Social Comedy and Narrative in Mario Azzopardi* (Malta, Progress Press, 2007).
- Briffa, Charles, *The Fruits of the Mind in the Writings of Br Louis Camilleri FSC, Servant of God* (Malta, De La Salle Brothers Publications, 2019).
- Brincat, Joseph M., *Il-Malti: Elf Sena ta' Storja* (Malta, Pubblikazzjonijiet Indipendenza, 2000).
- Brincat, Joseph M., *Maltese and Other Languages: A Linguistic History of Malta* (Malta, Midsea Books, 2011).
- Bugeja, Lino, *Vittoriosa: An Ancient City of Culture* (Malta, The Author, 2014).
- Burton, Antoinette, *Archive Stories: Facts, Fiction and the Writing of History* (Durham, Duke University Press, 2005).
- Busuttil, Frank, and Spiteri, Piju, *Ġublew tad-Deheb tal-E.T. Mons. M. Gonzi Arcisqof Metropolita ta' Malta* (Malta, Kumitat Organizzattiv tal-Festi Ġubilarji, 1974).
- Busuttil, Joseph, Fiorini, Stanley and Vella, Horatio Caesar Roger, *Tristia ex Melitogaudio: Lament in Greek Verse of a XIIth Century Exile on Gozo* (Malta, The Authors, 2010).
- Buttigieg, Anton, *Mill-Album ta' Ħajti: Fil-Morsa tal-Gwerra* (Malta, Klabb Kotba Maltin, 1981).
- Buttigieg, Anton, *L-Isbaħ Żmien ta' Ħajti* (Malta, Klabb Kotba Maltin, reprint 2013).
- Buttigieg, Charles, *Ilkoll Aħwa fi Kristu: Ġużeppe Mercieca, Memorji* (Malta, Klabb Kotba Maltin, 2014).
- Buttigieg, Charles, *Mikiel Gonzi: Hamsin Sena fit-Tmun* (Malta, Klabb Kotba Maltin, 2015).
- Cachia, Lawrenz, *Konċilju* (Malta, The Author, 2012).
- Calamatta, Peter, *Me and My Mentors* (Malta, The Author, 2017).
- Calleja, Joseph, *Augustus Bartolo* (Malta, Pubblikazzjonijiet Indipendenza, 1999).
- Calleja, Victor, *Where's my Brother and Other Confessions* (Malta, Kite Publishing, 2016).
- Camilleri, J.J., *Malta li Ġhexx Fiha* (Malta, Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti, 2014).
- Camilleri, Mark, *Il-Ħelsien: Il-Mixja Lejn il-31 ta' Marzu 1939* (Malta, Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti, 2014).
- Camilleri, Mark, *Kalċidon Agius* (Malta, Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti, 2019).
- Carachi, Pawlu, *Il-Ġurnalista u l-Politiku* (Malta, Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti, 2002).
- Cardona, Ġużè, *Dun Karm: Ħajtu u Ħidmietu* (Malta, Klabb Kotba Maltin, 1972).
- Carr, E. H., *What is History?* (London, Palgrave Macmillan, 1990).
- Carr, Raymond, *Modern Spain 1875-1980* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1980).
- Carthago, *Duminku Mintoff: Ġhalliem u Professur tad-Demokrazija* (Malta, Penprint, 1981).
- Caruana, John, *The Maltese Missionary Experience: Go and teach all Nations* (Malta, The Author, no date).
- Caruana, Michael, (ed.), *Leħen is-Sewwa: 85 Sena ta' Storja u Esperjenzi* (Malta, Leħen is-Sewwa, no date).

- Caruana, Richard, *L-Istorja tal-Avjazzjoni f'Malta* (Malta, Pubblikazzjonijiet Indipendenza, 2002).
- Casanova, José, *Public religions in the modern world* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1994).
- Cassar, Anton, *Meta l-Għawdxin kienu Mxewxa* (Malta, Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti, 1982).
- Cassar, Anton, *Il-Compact* (Malta, Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti, 1991).
- Cassar, Anton, *Il-Konkordat* (Malta, Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti, 2004).
- Cassar, Anton, *Ħajti mhix kollha Ward u Żahar* (Malta, Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti, 2009).
- Cassar, Carmel, *A Concise History of Malta* (Malta, Mireva Publications, 2000).
- Cassar, George, *Student Representation at the University of Malta: A History 1901-1971* (Malta, Kunsill Studenti Universitarji, 2011).
- Cassar, George, *Minn Tigris il-Qedem: Il-Mosta tfassal Ġrajjietha* (Malta, Kunsill Lokali Mosta, 2008).
- Cassar, George and Cutajar, JosAnn, *Social Transitions in Maltese Society* (Malta, Agenda, 2009).
- Cassar, Joe, *Album ta' Tifkira* (Malta, PIN, 2006).
- Catania, Cesare, *Strickland, Britain and the Vatican 1929-1932* (Malta, Agius and Agius, 2011).
- Cauchi, Nikol Ġ., *L-Ewwel Żviluppi fid-Duttrina Soċjali tal-Knisja* (Gozo, Gozo Press, 2001).
- Cauchi, Nikol Ġ., *It-Tagħlim Soċjali tal-Papiet Piju XI u Piju XII* (Gozo, Gozo Press, 2004).
- Chadwick, Owen, *Britain and the Vatican during the Second World War* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1986).
- Chadwick, Owen, *The Christian Church in the Cold War* (London, Penguin Books, 1993).
- Chircop, John, *The Left within the Maltese Labour Movement* (Malta, Mireva Publications, 1997).
- Chircop, John, *Revisiting Labour History* (Malta, Horizons, 2012).
- Ciappara, Frans, *M.A. Vassalli 1764-1829: An Enlightened Maltese Reformer* (Malta, Midsea Books, 2014).
- Ciappara Frans, *Mill-Qiġhan tal-Istorja: Il-Kappillan fis-Seklu Tmintax* (Malta, Il-Ħsieb, 1987).
- Ciappara, Francis, *Church-State Relations in late Eighteenth-Century Malta: Gio. Nicolò Muscat (1735-1803)* (Malta, Malta University Press, 2018).
- Ciarlò, John, *Il-Kardinal Mindszenty* (Malta, Il-Ħajja, 1975).
- Cilia, Louis, *"Kollni Kemm Jien għalikom: " Il-Ħajja Mqanqla ta' Mikiel Gonzi u Żminijietu (1885-1984)* (Malta, Klabb Kotba Maltin, 2017).
- Clump, Cyril C., *A Catholic's Guide to Social and Political Action* (Oxford, Catholic Social Guild, 1955).
- Coleiro, Christine, *A Propitious Partner* (Malta, Publishers Enterprises Group, 1997).
- Cooren, François and Létourneau, Alain, (eds.), *(Re)presentations and Dialogues* (Amsterdam, John Benjamins Publishing Co, 2014).
- Coriden, James A., *An Introduction to Canon Law (Revised)* (New York, Paulist Press, 1991).
- Cort, J. C., *Christian Socialism* (New York, Orbis Books, 1988).
- Crawford, Sue E.S., and Olson, Laura R., (eds.), *Christian Clergy in American Politics* (Maryland, The John Hopkins University Press, 2001).
- Cremona, Paul. *The Concept of Peace in Pope John XXIII* (Malta, Dominican Publications, 2007).
- Cronkite, Walter, (ed.), *The Sixties Chronicle* (Illinois, Legacy, 2004).
- Cuschieri, Lino, *Monsinjur Mikiel Azzopardi* (Malta, The Author, 1995).

Cutajar, Mario, (ed), *Il-Pinna Setghana: Mintoff minn The Knight 1951-1955* (Malta, Partit tal-Ħaddiema, 1979).

Cutajar, Mario, (ed), *Mintoff: Il-Bniedem u l-Istorja* (Malta, Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti, 2012).

Day, Juliette, and Gordon-Taylor, Benjamin, *The Study of Liturgy and Worship: An Alcuin Guide* (Pueblo Books, 2014).

Debrincat, Saviour, *Church and Family in Malta* (Gozo, Lumen Christi, 1985).

De Marco, Guido, *The Politics of Persuasion* (Malta, Allied Publications, 2007).

Deschouwer, Kris, *The Politics of Belgium: Governing a Divided Society* (London, Palgrave; Second Edition, 2012).

Dimech, Ġwann, *Hal Balzan: Ġrajjetu sal-1999* (Malta, Kunsill Lokali Balzan, 2004).

DISCERN, *Malta Sunday Mass Attendance Census 2005* (Malta, DISCERN, 2009).

Dobie, Edith, *Malta's Road to Independence* (1967).

Donnelly, Mark, *Sixties Britain: Culture, Society and Politics* (Harlow, Great Britain, 2005).

Doublet, Nicholas, *A Politics of Peace: The Congregation for Extraordinary Ecclesiastical affairs during the Pontificate of Benedict XV (1914-1922)* (Rome, Edizioni Studium, 2019).

Douglas, Austin, *Malta and British Strategic Policy: 1925-1943* (London, Frank Cass, 2004).

Earle, John, *Italy in the 70's* (UK, Charles and David, 1975).

Ebejer, Elizabeth, *Agatha: Il-Mara tal-Azzar* (Malta, Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti, 2002).

Eberle, Edward, *Church and State in Western Society: Established Church, Cooperation and Separation* (Surrey, Ashgate, 2011).

Eden, Anthony, *Full Circle: The Memoirs of Sir Anthony Eden* (London, Cassell, 1960).

Ellul Galea, Alfred, *Antonio Nicholas: Difensur tal-Ilsien Malti u l-Klassi tal-Ħaddiema* (Malta, 2020).

Ellul Galea, Karmenu, *It-Trejdunjonizmu f' Malta: L-Ewwel Volum* (Malta, Pubblikazzjonijiet Indipendenza, 1993).

Ellul Galea, Karmenu, *Pijunieri tas-Sigurtà Soċjali* (Malta, Il-Ħajja, 1982).

England, Richard, *Uncaged Reflections: Selected Writings 1965-1980* (Malta, MRSM, 1980).

Evans Clements, Barbara, *A History of Women in Russia: From Earliest Time to the Present* (Indiana, Indiana University Press, 2012).

Fantappiè, Carlo, *Storia del diritto canonico e delle istituzioni della Chiesa* (Bologna, Il Mulino, 2011).

Fantappiè, Carlo, *Ecclesiologia e canonistica* (Italy, Marcianum Press, 2015).

Fantappiè, Carlo, *Per un cambio di paradigma: Diritto canonico, teologia e riforme nella Chiesa* (Bologna, Dehoniane, 2019).

Fantappiè, Carlo, *Introduzione Storica al Diritto Canonico* (Bologna, Il Mulino, 2003).

Farrugia, Louis A., *40 Years at the Helm* (Malta, Kite Publishing, 2019).

Farrugia, Max, *L-Internament u l-Eżilju matul l-aħħar Gwerra* (Malta, Pubblikazzjonijiet Indipendenza, 2007).

Farrugia, Max, *Enrico Dandria: Qassis, Kattoliku, Patrijott* (Malta, Kite Publishing, 2017).

Fenech, Dominic, *The Making of Archbishop Gonzi* (Malta, Union Press, 1976).

Fenech, Dominic, *Responsibility and Power in Inter-War Malta, Book One: Endemic Democracy (1919-1930)* (Malta, Publishers Enterprises Group, 2005).

Fenech Dominic, *1921: Self Government in Malta 1921-1933* (Malta, Midsea Books, 2021).

Fenech, Victor, *Il-Ktieb Malti* (Malta, Pubblikazzjonijiet Indipendenza, 2003).

Fenech Adami, Edward, *My Journey* (Malta, Allied Publications, 2014).

Fino, Joe, *B'Saħħet il-Ħidma* (Malta, Union Print, 1986).

Fletcher, William C., *The Russian Orthodox Church Underground, 1917-1970* (London, Oxford University Press, 1971)

Foot, John, *Modern Italy* (New York. Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).

- Fowler, Roger, *Language in the News: Discourse and Ideology in the Press* (London, Routledge, 1991).
- Fox, Jonathan, *An Introduction to Religion and Politics: Theory and Practice* (London, Routledge, 2018).
- Frantz, Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (London, Penguin Books, 1990).
- Frendo, Henry, *Lejn Tnissil ta' Nazzjon: It-Twemmin Soċju-Politiku ta' Manwel Dimech* (Malta, Klabb Kotba Maltin, 1972).
- Frendo, Henry, *Birth Pangs of a Nation: Manwel Dimech's Malta (1860-1921)* (Malta, Mediterranean Publications, 1972).
- Frendo, Henry, 'Nerik Mizzi in Italia Prima della Guerra Mondiale, Gli Anni della Formazione,' in <http://ojs.uniurb.it/index.php/studi-A/article/view/149/141>.
- Frendo, Henry, *Story of a Book*, Retrieved on 23rd July 2015, in <https://www.um.edu.mt/library/oar/bitstream/123456789/23897/1/OAStory%20of%20a%20book%20by%20Henry%20Frendo.pdf>.
- Frendo, Henry, *Malta's Quest for Independence: Reflections on the Course of Maltese History* (Malta, Valletta Publishing, 1987).
- Frendo, Henry, *The Origins of Maltese Statehood: A Case Study of Decolonization in the Mediterranean* (Malta, Book Distributors Limited, 1999).
- Frendo, Henry, *Maltese Journalism: 1838-1992, An Historical Overview* (Malta, Malta Press Club, 1994).
- Frendo, Henry, *Ċensu Tabone: The Man and his Century* (Malta, Maltese Studies, 2000).
- Frendo, Henry, *Patrijott Liberali Malti: Bijografija ta' Ġorġ Borg Olivier, 1911-1980* (Malta, Pubblikazzjonijiet Indipendenza, 2005).
- Frendo, Henry, *Europe and Empire: Culture, Politics and Identity in Malta and the Mediterranean* (Malta, Midsea Books, 2012).
- Frendo, Henry, *Party Politics in a Fortress Colony: The Maltese Experience* (Malta, Midsea Books, reprint 2013).
- Frendo, Henry, (ed.), *The Sette Giugno in Maltese History: 1919-2019* (Malta, Midsea Books, 2019).
- Friggieri, Joe and Busuttil Salvinu, *Interfaces: Essays in Philosophy and Bordering Areas in honour of Peter Serracino Inglott* (Malta, University of Malta, 1997).
- Friggieri, Oliver, *Il-Kultura Taljana f'Dun Karm* (Malta, Klabb Kotba Maltin, 1976).
- Friggieri, Oliver, *Dun Karm: Il-Bniedem fil-Poeta* (Malta, Klabb Kotba Maltin, 1980).
- Friggieri, Oliver, *Fjuri li ma Jinxfux: Tifkiriet 1955-1990* (Malta, Klabb Kotba Maltin, 2008).
- Friggieri, Oliver, *L-Istorja tal-Innu Malti: Kif sar u xi Jfisser* (Malta, Klabb Kotba Maltin, 2014).
- Gaillardetz, Richard R., *Teaching with Authority: A Theology of the Magisterium in the Church* (Minnesota, The Liturgical Press, 1997).
- Galea, Francis, *Is-Sedizzjoni* (Malta, Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti, 1999).
- Galea, Francis, *L-Istorja tal-Partit Laburista (1920-1940): Minn qabel it-Twelid sal-Bidu tat-Tieni Gwerra Dinjija* (Malta, Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti, 2017).
- Galea, Francis, *L-Istorja tal-Partit Laburista, It-Tieni Volum (1940-1960)* (Malta, Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti, 2020).
- Galea, Ġwann, *L-Istitut Kattoliku: Hamsin Sena ta' Hajja u Hidma* (Malta, Istitut Kattoliku, 2010).
- Galea, Michael and Tonna, Emmanuel S., *L-Arċisqof Gonzi, Vol. 1* (Malta, Klabb Kotba Maltin, 1981).
- Galea, Michael and Tonna, Emmanuel S., *L-Arċisqof Gonzi, Vol. 2* (Malta, Associated News Malta, 1982).

- Galea, Michael and Tonna, Emmanuel S., *L-Arċisqof Gonzi, Vol. 3* (Malta, Associated News Malta, 1984).
- Galea, Michael, *Malta: Diary of War, 1940-1945* (Malta, Publishers Enterprises Group, 1994).
- Galea, Michael, Spiteri Stanley, and Zammit Michael, *Gioventù Cattolica* (Malta, Gioventù Cattolica, 1995).
- Galea, Paul, *L-Isqfijiet ta' Malta għand id-Dumnikani tar-Rabat qabel id-Daħla Solenni fil-Katidral* (Malta, The Author, n.d.).
- Ganado, Albert, *Judge Robert Ganado: A History of the Government Departments from 1815 and Lawyers from 1866* (Malta, Book Distributors Ltd, 2015).
- Ganado, Herbert, *Rajt Malta Tinbidel: Volum 4* (Malta, Klabb Kotba Maltin, 1977).
- Gauci, Anton, *Ħwejjeġ li Rajna Vol. 1 and Vol. 2*, (Gozo, A&M Printing Ltd, 1981).
- Gauci, Charles A., *Of Maltese Generals and Admirals* (Malta, Midsea Books, 2015).
- Gauci, Ġiġi, *Xhieda ta' Seklu* (Malta, Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti, 2001).
- Gellel, L., *Il-Films u l-Problemi Tagħhom* (Gozo, Lumen Christi, 1972).
- Ghigo, Joseph M., *Miexi lejn id-Dawl* (Malta, APS, 2006).
- Gill, Anthony, *Rendering unto Caesar: The Catholic Church and the State in Latin America* (Chicago, University of Chicago, 1998).
- Gordon-Taylor, Benjamin and Day, Juliette. *The Study of Liturgy and Worship: an Alcuin Guide* (Minnesota, Liturgical Press, 2016).
- Gouder, Anton and Schembri, Kevin (eds.), *Annetto Depasquale: Wirt għażiż tal-Knisja f'Malta* (Malta, Klabb Kotba Maltin, 2021).
- Grant, Michael, *The Fall of the Roman Empire* (London, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1990).
- Grasso, Louis A., *Alfons Maria Galea* (Malta, Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti, 1992).
- Grech, Josef, *Duminku Mintoff u Mons. Mikiel Gonzi* (Malta, Dom Communications Ltd, 2014).
- Grech, Sergio, *Patri Feliċjan Bilocca: Ħajtu u Żminijietu 1914-1987* (Malta, Outlook Coop, 2004).
- Grech, Sergio, *It-Tabib Sandy: Bijografija ta' Alexander Cachia Zammit* (Malta, Kite Publishing, 2013).
- Grech, Sergio, *In-Nisġa tal-Indipendenza minn Rakkonti ta' Victor Ragonesi* (Malta, Il-Mument, 2014).
- Grech, Sergio, *Anton Tabone: Il-Pont bejn Għawdex Reġjun u Malta Nazzjon* (Malta, Kite Publishing, 2017).
- Grech, Sergio, et Sammut, Austin, *Albert Ganado: Ħajja Mhux tas-Soltu* (Malta, Klabb Kotba Maltin, 2020).
- Grech Xuereb, Claire, *L-Elf Lewn ta' Mintoff* (Malta, Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti, 2015).
- Grima, Noel, *Mintoff: The Malta Independent Articles* (Malta, The Malta Independent, 2013).
- Guth, James L., Green, John C., Smidt, Corwin E., Kellstedt, Lyman A., Poloma, Margaret M., (ed.), *The Bully Pulpit: The Politics of Protestant Clergy* (Kansas, University Press of Kansas, 1997).
- Habermas, Jürgen, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Square: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (Cambridge, MIT Press, 1989).
- Hammond, Colleen, *Dressing with Dignity* (North Carolina, TAN Books, 2005).
- Hanley, D.L., *Contemporary France: Politics and Society since 1945* (UK, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1979).
- Hanson, Eric O., *The Catholic Church in World Politics* (New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1987).
- Hart, Charles, *The Students' Catholic Doctrine* (London, Burns and Oats, 1961).

Hay, Denys, *Europe in the Fourteenth and the Fifteenth Centuries* (Singapore, Longman, 1995).

Hebblethwaite, Peter, *The Runaway Church* (London, Collins, 1975).

Hebblethwaite, Peter, *The Christian-Marxist Dialogue and Beyond* (London, Darton, Longman and Todd Ltd, 1977).

Hobsbawm, Eric, *On History* (London, Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1997).

Holborn, Martin and Haralambos, Mike, *Sociology: Themes and Perspectives* (London, Collins, 2000).

Hull, Godfrey, *The Malta Language Question* (Malta, Said International Ltd, 1993).

Iannaccone, Mario Arturo, *Persecuzione: La Repressione della Chiesa fra Seconda Repubblica e Guerra Civile (1931-1939)* (Italy, Lindau, 2015).

Joad, Raymond, *Pamphlets and Pamphleteering in Early Modern Britain* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2003).

Johnstone, Ronald L., *Religion and Society in Interaction* (New Jersey, Prentice Hall Inc., 1988).

Kent, Peter C., *The Lonely Cold War of Pius XII: The Roman Catholic Church and the Division of Europe* (Montreal, McGill University Press, 2002).

Keogh, Dermot, *Ireland and the Vatican* (Ireland, Cork University Press, 1995).

Kertzer, David, *Comrades and Christians: Religion and Political Struggle in Communist Italy* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1980).

Kirk, John M., *Between God and the Party: Religion and Politics in Revolutionary Cuba* (Florida, University of South Florida, 1989).

Knepper, Paul, *Joseph Semini and the Beginning of Criminology in Malta* (Malta, Institute of Forensic Studies University of Malta, 2008).

Koster, Adrianus, *Church and State Intervention in Feasts and Rituals in Independent Malta* (Netherlands, Free University, 1982).

Koster, Adrianus, *Prelates and Politicians in Malta: Changing Power-Balances between Church and State in a Mediterranean Island Fortress (1530-1976)* (Assen, Van Gorcum, 1984).

Koster, Adrianus, *The Kappillan: The Changing Position of the Parish Priest in Malta* (Berlin, Mouton Publishers, 1984).

La Due, William J., *The Chair of St. Peter: A History of the Papacy* (Maryknoll, Orbis Books, 1999).

Laferla, Albert V., *British Malta Volume 1* (Malta, Progress Press, 1947).

Laitinen, Aappo, *The Holy See, Britain and the Crisis of Malta, 1927-1933* (Helsinki, Kopio Niini Oy, 2013).

Levine, Daniel H., *Religion and Politics in Latin America: The Catholic Church in Venezuela and Colombia* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1981).

Livingstone, E.A., *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1986).

Lord Carrington, *Reflect on Things Past* (Glasgow, William Collins, 1988).

Lord Longford, *Pope John Paul II: An Authorised Biography* (Scotland, Papal Visit Council, 1982).

Luke, Harry, *Malta: An Account and Appreciation* (London, Corgi Edition, reprint 1970).

Lupi, Ġużeppi, *Catholic Life in Malta* (Malta, Empire Press, 1960).

Lupi, Ġużeppi, *Ordni Sagri, Professjoni Religjuża, Żwieġ, Barkiet u Purċissjonijiet* (Malta, Kummissjoni Liturgika, 1992), 92.

Lupi, Ġużeppi, *Tifkiriet u Stqarrijiet: Awtobijografija* (Malta, Publishers Enterprises Group, 2002).

Lussana, Fiamma, *L'Italia del divorzio: La Battaglia fra Stato e Chiesa e Gente Comune* (Italy, Carocci Editore, 2014).

Mack Smith Denis, *Mussolini* (London, Phoenix Giant, 1995).

Mainwaring, Daniel and Mintoff, Yana, (eds.), *Mintoff, Malta, Mediterra, My Youth* (Malta, The Association for Justice, Equality and Peace, National Archives of Malta, 2019).

Mainwaring, Scott, *The Catholic Church and Politics in Brazil: 1916-1985* (Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1986).

Mallia, Filipp, *L-Isqof li ħabbu Kulhadd* (Malta, Lux Press, 1982).

Mallia Milanese, Victor, *De La Salle College, Volume 1: 1903-1938, A Study in Growth* (Malta, De la Salle College, 1979).

Manduca, John, *The Bonham-Carter Diaries, 1936-1940* (Malta, Publishers Enterprises Group, 2004).

Mangion, Raymond, *Il-Partit Laburista 1920-2020* (Malta, SKS, 2021).

Manicaro, Jesmond, *Liturgical Renewal in the Maltese Islands: A Historical Study (1840-1963)* (Rome, Pontificio Istituto Liturgico, 2004).

Mannix, Patrick, *The Belligerent Prelate: An Alliance between Archbishop Daniel Mannix and Eamon de Valera* (Cambridge, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2012).

Marshall, P. H., *Cuba Libre Breaking the Chain?* (London, Victor Gollancz Co, 1987).

Martin, David, *The Religious and the Secular: Studies in Secularization* (New York, Schocken, 1969).

Martin, David, *A General Theory of Secularization* (New York, Harper & Co, 1978).

Martin, David, *On Secularization: Towards a Revised General Theory* (UK, Ashgate, 2005).

Martos, Joseph, *Doors to the Sacred: A Historical Introduction to Sacraments in the Catholic Church* (Missouri, Liguori/Triumph, 2001).

Marwick, Arthur, *The Sixties: Cultural Revolution in Britain, France, Italy and the United States* (London, Bloomsbury, 2011).

Massa, Daniel, *PSI Kingmaker: Life, Thought and Adventures of Peter Serracino Inglott* (Malta, The Author, 2013).

Matrenza, Richard A., *L-Istorja tal-Workers' Memorial Building* (Malta, General Workers' Union, 2010).

McCarthy, Patrick, *Italy since 1945* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2000).

McCarthy, Timothy, *The Catholic Tradition: Before and After Vatican II: 1878-1993* (Chicago, Loyola University Press, 1994).

McGuinness, Margaret M., *Called to Serve: A History of Nuns in America* (New York, New York University Press, 2013).

McLeod, Hugh, *Religion and the People of Western Europe: 1789-1970* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1981).

Memmi, Albert, *The Coloniser and the Colonised in*
<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/589fa7aaa5790a7c3fba1f34/t/5aedff898a922d5e605957ff/1525546890470/Albert+MemmiThe+Colonizer+and+the+Colonized.pdf>.

Mendieta, Eduardo and Vanantwerpen, Jonathan, *The Power of Religion in the Public Sphere* (Columbia, Columbia University Press, 2013).

Mercieca, Arturo, *The Making and Unmaking of a Maltese Chief Justice* (Malta, The Author, 1969).

Mercieca, Arturo, *Il-Mixja ta' Hajti* (Malta, PIN, 2010).

Micallef Stafrace, Joseph, *Mill-Ħażna tat-Tifkriet* (Malta, Klabb Kotba Maltin, 2017).

Micallef Stafrace, Yvonne, *Reggie Miller and the Post-War Socio-Political Challenges* (Malta, General Workers' Union, 1998).

Mizzi, Edgar, *Malta in the Making, 1962-1987: An Eyewitness Account* (Malta, The Author, 1995).

Mizzi, John and Vella, Mark Anthony, *Malta at War, Vol. 5* (Malta, Wiseowl Publications, 2021).

Mizzi, Lawrence, *Ix-Xandir tal-Kelma* (Malta, ISC, 1976).

Mizzi, Lawrence, *Il-Każ Borg Pisani: Sittin Sena Wara* (Malta, Publishers Enterprises Group, 2002).

Mizzi, Lawrence, *Minn wara l-Mikrofonu* (Malta, Klabb Qari Nisrani, 2004).

Mizzi, Lawrence, *Il-Knisja u Malta fil-Gwerra* (Malta, Publishers Enterprises Group, 2005).

Mizzi, Lawrence, *Mixlija b’Kongura u Tradiment* (Malta, Publishers Enterprises Group, 1996).

Mola, Aldo A., *Storia della Massoneria in Italia* (Italy, Bompiani, 2020).

Montebello, Mark, *Manwel Dimech (1860-1921): Bijografija* (Malta, Publishers Enterprises Group, 2004).

Montebello, Mark, *The Tail that wagged the Dog: The Life and Struggles of Dom Mintoff, 1916-2012* (Malta, Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti, 2021).

Munslow, Alun, *Deconstructing History* (London, Routledge, 1997).

Muscat Reno, *Pawlu VI: Papa li qadef fil-Maltemp* (Malta, Dom Publications, 2014).

Nesti, Arnaldo, *La Scomunica: Cattolici e Comunisti in Italia* (Italy, EDB, 2018).

O’Callaghan, Joseph, *Electing Our Bishops: How the Catholic Church should choose its Leaders* (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2007).

O’Dea, Thomas, *The Sociology of Religion* (New Jersey, Prentice Hall, 1966).

O’Grady, John, *The Roman Catholic Church: Its Origins and Nature* (New York, Paulist Press, 1997).

O’Malley, John W., *What happened at Vatican II* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 2008).

Pace, Ġużepp, *X’ma qalx il-Konċilju* (Malta, Klabb Qari Nisrani, 2002).

Park, Hendrick, *The Roman Catholic Church: A Critical Appraisal* (USA, Xulon Press, 2008).

Patout Burns Jr, J., *Cyprian the Bishop* (London, Routledge, 2002).

Peters, Edward N., *The 1917 or Pio-Benedictine Code of Canon Law in English Translation with Extensive Scholarly Apparatus* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2001).

Pettinaroli, Laura and Valente, Massimiliano, *Il Cardinale Pietro Gasparri, segretario di stato 1914-1930* (Heidelberg, Heidelberg University Publishing, 2020).

Phillipps, Roderick, *Putting Asunder: A History of Divorce in Western Society* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1988).

Phillips, Jessica, *The Educational System in Romania: An Overview of how Communism has influenced current Aspects and Programs* (Honors Program, Liberty University, 2010).

Pirotta, Godfrey A., *The Maltese Public Service, 1800-1940: The Administrative Politics of a Micro-State* (Malta, Mireva Publications, 1996).

Pirotta, Joseph M., *Fortress Colony: The Final Act 1945-1964, Vol. 1, 1945-1954* (Malta, Studia Editions, 1987).

Pirotta, Joseph M., *Fortress Colony: The Final Act 1945-1964, Vol. 2, 1955-1958* (Malta, Studia Editions, 1991).

Pirotta, Joseph M., *Fortress Colony: The Final Act 1945-1964, Vol. 3, 1958-1961* (Malta, Studia Editions, 2001).

Pirotta, Joseph M., *Fortress Colony: The Final Act 1945-1964, Vol. 4, 1961-1964* (Malta, Midsea Books, 2018).

Pirotta, Joseph M., *L-Istorja Kostituzzjonali u l-Isfond Storiku: 1942-2004* (Malta, Pubblikazzjonijiet Indipendenza, 2005).

Poggi, Gianfranco, *Catholic Action in Italy: The Sociology of a Sponsored Organisation* (Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1967).

- Pollacco, Christopher, *Malta-EEC Relations* (Malta, Mireva Publications, 1992).
- Pollard, John, *The Papacy in Age of Totalitarianism 1914-1958* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2014).
- Portelli, Sergio, *A Bibliography of Nineteenth-century Periodicals in the National Library of Malta Collection* (Malta, National Library of Malta, 2000).
- Portelli, Sergio, *La Stampa Periodica a Malta* (Malta, Malta University Press, 2010).
- Ramet, Pedro, *Catholicism and Politics in Communist Societies* (Durham, Duke University Press, 1990).
- Reese, Thomas J., *Inside the Vatican: The Politics and the Organisations of the Catholic Church* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003).
- Refalo, Michael, *Giuseppe (De)Brincat: A Gozitan Wine Merchant 1890s-1930* (Malta, Kite, 2018).
- Refalo, Michael, *Fragments: Essays on Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century Malta* (Malta, Kite, 2019).
- Regoli, Roberto, (ed.), *San Pio X. Papa riformatore di fronte alle sfide del nuovo secolo. Atti della Giornata di Studi in occasione del centenario della morte di san Pio X (1914-2014). Città del Vaticano, 12 giugno 2014* (Città del Vaticano, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2016).
- Richer, Klement, *The Meaning of the Sacramental Symbols* (Minnesota, The Liturgical Press, 1990).
- Romano, Sergio, *Libera Chiesa. Libero Stato?, Il Vaticano e l'Italia da Pio IX a Benedetto XVI* (Italy, TEA, 2005).
- Sacco, Remiġ, *Ix-Xandir f'Malta* (Malta, Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti, 1985).
- Saliba, Mario, *Hajja u Mewt: Il-Mard u s-Saħħa f'Għawdex fi Żmien l-Arcipriet Dun Martin Camilleri 1910-1921* (Gozo, A & M Printing Ltd, 2021).
- Saliba, Paul, *L-Arcisqof Gonzi: Ġrajjet mill-Ħajja u mill-Ħidma Tiegħu* (Malta, Malta Catholic Action, 1965).
- Saliba, Paul, *Taw Ġieħ lil Artna* (Malta, The Author, 2011).
- Sammut, Austin, *The Court Martial of Enrico Mizzi* (Malta, Midsea Books, 2005).
- Sammut, Carmen, *Media and Maltese Society* (Lanham, Lexington Books, 2007).
- Sammut, Carmen, *The Road to Women's Suffrage and Beyond* (Malta, Central Bank of Malta, 2017).
- Sammut, Felix, *Saint Paul in Malta* (Malta, Reliġjon u Ħajja, 2007).
- Sánchez, José M., *Pius XII and the Holocaust: Understanding the Controversy* (Washington, Catholic University of America, 2002), 56.
- Sanks, Howard T., *Authority in the Church: A Study in Changing Paradigms* (Missoula, Scholar's Press, 1976).
- Sant, Alfred, *It-28 ta' April 1958: Il-Hobż u l-Ħelsien, Kronaka u Analizi* (Malta, Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti, 1988).
- Sant, Alfred, *Is-Soċjalizmu fi Żminijietna* (Malta, Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti, 2004).
- Sant, Alfred, *Confessions of a European Maltese* (Malta, Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti, 2003).
- Sant, Alfred, *Confessions of a European Maltese – The Middle Years* (Malta, Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti, 2021).
- Sant, Michael A., *"Sette Giugno" 1919: Tqanqil u Tibdil* (Malta, Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti, 1989).
- Sant, Salvu, *Ħajti, Familja, Politika u Sport* (Malta, Kite Publishing 2021).
- Sant, Stella, *Fuq il-Passi ta' Fr Charles Dominic Plater SJ* (Malta, Malta Social Guild, 1971).
- Sant, Toni, *Remembering Rediffusion in Malta: A History without Future?* (Malta, Midsea Books, 2016).

- Sarti, Roland, *Italy: A Reference Guide from the Renaissance to the Present* (USA, Facts on File Inc., 2008).
- Savona-Ventura, Charles, *Contemporary Medicine in Malta: 1798-1979* (Malta, Publishers Enterprises Group, 2005).
- Savona-Ventura, Charles, *History of Gynaecology in Malta* in https://www.um.edu.mt/__data/assets/pdf_file/0012/111216/history_gynae.pdf15.
- Savona-Ventura, Charles, *Devotees of Venus: History of Sexuality in Malta*, in <http://discern.org.mt/mt/posts/67890/devotees-of-venus-a-history-of-sexuality-in-the-maltese-islands>.
- Scerri, Dominic, *The Saga of the Church Schools in Malta (1970-1986): A Historical Portrayal of Events* (Malta, Malta Union of Teachers Publications, 2000).
- Scerri, Hector, *The Gentle Breeze from the Peripheries: The Evolving Role of Episcopal Conferences* (Malta, Horizons, 2018).
- Schiavone, Michael J., (ed.), *Ġorġ Borg Olivier: Ġabra ta' Kitbiet Dwaru* (Malta, Pubblikazzjonijiet Indipendenza, 1989).
- Schiavone, Michael J., *L-Elezzjonijiet f'Malta 1849-1992* (Malta, Pubblikazzjonijiet Indipendenza, 1992).
- Schiavone, Michael J., *L-Elezzjonijiet f'Pajjiżna fi Sfond Storiku: 1800-2013* (Malta, Pubblikazzjonijiet Indipendenza, 2013).
- Sciberras, Tony, *The Incarnational Aspect of the Spirituality of Joseph de Piro* (Rome, Pontificia Universitas Lateranensis, 2006).
- Sheehan, Michael, *Apologetics and Catholic Doctrine* (Dublin, M.H.Gill and Son Ltd, 1962).
- Silvestri, Angelo, *Power, Politics and Episcopal Authority: The Bishops of Cremona and Lincoln* (Cambridge, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014).
- Smith, Callistus, *A Practical Commentary on the Code of Canon Law, Volume One to Four, The Second Book* (New York, Joseph F. Wagner Inc., 1957).
- Smith, Donald E., *Religion and Political Development* (Boston, Little Brown, 1970).
- Smith, Donald E., *Religion and Political Modernization* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1974).
- Smith, Harrison and Koster, Adrianus, *Lord Strickland and Servant of the Crown Vol 1* (Malta, Progress Press, 1984).
- Spiteri, E.J., *Malta: An Island in Transition: Maltese Economic History 1954-1974* (Malta, The Author, 1977).
- Spiteri, E.J., *An Island in Transition: The Economic Transformation of Malta from a British Crown Colony to an Independent Democratic Republic* (Malta, The Author, 1997).
- Spiteri, Lino, *Jien u Għaddej fil-Politika* (Malta, Publishers Enterprises Group, 2007).
- Stark, Gary D., *Banned in Berlin: Literary Censorship in Imperial Germany, 1871-1918* (New York, Berghahn Books, 2009).
- Tabone, Carmel, *The Secularisation of the Family in Changing Malta* (Malta, Dominican Publications, Malta, 1987).
- Tabone Vassallo, Mario, *Godfrey Pirotta: Il-Politika ta' Hajti* (Malta, Horizons, 2021).
- Taylor, Charles, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, Cambridge MA, 2007).
- Thake, Conrad and Hughes, Quentin, *Malta and Peace: An Architectural Chronicle 1800-2000* (Malta, Midseabooks, 2005).
- Thake Vassallo, Clare and Callus, Ivan, *Malta at War in Cultural Memory: Representatives of 'The Madonna's Chosen People'* (Malta, Malta University Press, 2008).
- Tharoor, Shashi, *Inglorious Empire: What the British did to India* (London, Scribe, 2017).
- Thompson, Kenneth, *Émile Durkheim* (Herts, Ellis Horwood, 1982).
- Tillich, Peter, *Theology of Culture* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1959).
- Tonna, Benny, *Malta Trends* (Malta, Media Centre Publications, 1993).

- Tonna, Emmanuel S., *The Besieged Citadel and Other Lasting Memories* (Malta, Penprint, 1082).
- Towler, Robert, *Homo Religiosus: Sociological Problems in the Study of Religion* (London, Constable, 1974).
- Uhalde, Kevin, 'Pope Leo I on Power and Failure.' *The Catholic Historical Review*, 95, (4), (2009), 671-688.
- Vallier, Ivan, *Catholicism, Social Control and Modernization in Latin America* (Eaglewood Cliffs, Prentice-Hall, 1970).
- Vanezis, P.N., *Makarios: Faith and Power* (London, Abelard-Schuman, 1971).
- Vassallo, Mario, *From Lordship to Stewardship: Religion and the Social Change in Malta* (The Hague, Mouton Publishers, 1979).
- Vella, Charles G., *Sinjali Maltin ta' Żmienna* (Malta, Klabb Kotba Maltin, 2000).
- Vella, Charles G., *A Vision and a Mission with Families: From Malta to Other Lands* (Milan, The Author, 2015.).
- Vella, Mario, *Lejn Gvern Laburista: 1944-49* (Malta, Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti, 1989).
- Vella, Mario, *Reflections on a Canvas Bag: Between Politics and History* (Malta, Publishers Enterprises Group, 1989).
- Von Klemperer, Klemens, *Ignaz Seipel: Christian Statesman in a Time of Crisis* (Princeton, Princeton Legacy Library, 1972).
- Wald, Kenneth D., *Religion and Politics in the United States* (New York, St. Martin's Press, 1987).
- Walsh, Michael, *Roman Catholicism: The Basics* (London, Routledge, 2016).
- Weinstein, Donald and Bell, R.M., *Saints and Society: The Two Worlds of Western Christendom, 1000-1700* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1982).
- Whyte, J. H., *Church and State in Modern Ireland: 1923-1970* (Ireland, Gill & Mcmillan, 1971).
- Wisekmann, Elizabeth, *Italy since 1945* (London, St. Martin Press, 1971).
- Woodcock Tender, Leslie, *The Church confronts Modernity* (Washington, Catholic University of America, 2007).
- Xuereb Charles, *France in the Maltese Collective Memory: Perceptions, Perspectives, Identities after Bonaparte in British Malta* (Malta, Malta University Press, 2014).
- Yzermans, Vincent A., *The People I Love: A Biography of Luigi G. Ligutti* (Minnesota, Liturgical Press, 1973).
- Zammit, B.A., *The Power of the Cross* (Malta, The Author, 1999).
- Zammit, E.L., *A Colonial Inheritance: Maltese Perceptions of Work, Power and Class Structure with Reference to the Labour Movement* (Malta, Malta University Press, 1984).
- Zammit, Karmenu, *Għad-Demokrazija u l-Helsien* (Malta, Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti, 1989).
- Zammit, Lorenzo, *St. Paul's Envoy to Malta* (Malta, Giovanni Muscat Ltd, 1960).
- Zammit Ciantar, Joseph, *Il-Prietki bil-Malti ta' Ignazio Saverio Mifsud* (Malta, The Author, 2008).
- Zammit Dimech, Francis, *The Untruth Game: Broadcasting under Labour* (Malta, Progress Press, 1986).
- Zammit Mangion, Joseph, *Education in Malta* (Malta, Studia Editions, 1992).
- Zammit Marmara, Desmond, *Pawlu Boffa: L-Ewwel Prim Ministru Laburista* (Malta, Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti, 2010).
- Zarb, Ġużeppi, *Żjara lill-Parroċċa ta' Haż-Żabbar* (Malta, Parroċċa Haż-Żabbar, 1972),
- Zerafa, Ġużi, *Brigata Laburista 'Il Quddiem Imxi* (Malta, Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti, 1984).

Chapters in Books

Abela, Anthony M., "Young Catholics in Malta: Similar Origins, Multiple Destinations," in Fulton, John, (ed.), *Young Catholics at the New Millennium: The Religion and Morality of Young Adults in Western Countries* (Dublin, University College of Dublin Press, 2000), 27-49.

Anderson, David M., and Killingray, David, "Consent, Coercion and Colonial Control," in Anderson, David M., and Killingray, David, (eds.), *Policing the Empire: Government, Authority and Control, 1830-1940* (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2017), 1-15.

Bezzina, Joseph, "The Church in Malta: An Indelible Imprint upon the Nation's History and Character," in Gambin, Kenneth, (ed.), *Malta: Roots of a Nation* (Malta, Heritage Malta, 2004), 249-264.

Bezzina, Joseph, "Church and State in an Island Colony," in Mallia Milanes, Victor, (ed.), *The British Colonial Experience: 1800-1964* (Malta, Mireva Publications, 1988), 47-90.

Bonnici, Jimmy, "The Understanding of "Renewal" in Pope John XXIII," in Emanuel Agius and Hector Scerri (eds.), *The Quest for Authenticity and Human Dignity, A Festschrift in Honour of Professor George Grima on his 70th Birthday, Melita Theologica Supplementary Series 6* (Malta, University of Malta, 2015), 117-133.

Cassar, Carmel, "The Maltese Festa: A Historical and Cultural Perspective," in Mifsud Chircop, George (ed.), *First International Conference of the SIEF Working Group on the Ritual Year in Association with the Department of Maltese, University of Malta Junior College, Msida, Malta: Proceedings, Malta, March 20-24, 2005* (Malta, Publishers Enterprises Group, 2006), 45-87.

Chircop, John, "Bell Ringing in Maltese History: 1800-1870s," in Xuereb, Paul, (ed.), *Karissime Gotifride* (Malta, University Publishing, 1999), 147-158.

Chircop, John, "Colonial Encounters in Multiple Dimensions: Collaboration, Defiance, Resistance and Hybridity in the Making of Maltese History," in Chircop, John, (ed.), *Colonial Encounters: Maltese Experiences of British Rule 1800-1870s* (Malta, Horizons, 2015), 13-66.

Dalli, Charles, "Education in Malta before the Knights," in Sultana, Ronald G., (ed.), *Yesterday's Schools: Readings in Maltese Educational History* (Malta, Xirocco Publishing, 2017) 1-14.

Debattista, Andre P., "Mabel Strickland: Il-Battalji Politiċi, it-Twemmin Politiku u l-Kuntest Tagħhom," in Grech, Sergio, (ed.), *Mabel Strickland Bejn Storja u Miti* (Malta, Horizons, 2018), 45-98.

Debattista, Andre P., "Dom Mintoff and Eddie Fenech Adami: Portraits of Persuasion and Charisma," in Vassallo, Mario (ed.), *Public Life in Malta: Essays on Governance, Politics and Public Affairs in the EU's Smallest Member State* (Malta, Department of Public Policy, University of Malta, 2012), 31-50.

Debattista, Andre P., "Centred in self yet not unpleased to please - The Arts of Political Leadership in Post-Colonial Malta (1964-1979)" in Vassallo, Mario and Tabone, Carmel, (eds.) *Public Life in Malta II: Essays on Governance, Politics and Public Affairs in the EU's Smallest Member State* (Malta, Department of Public Policy, University of Malta, 2017), 25-51.

Debattista, Andre P., "The 'Mighty Pen' as a Political Tool: Some insights from the Writings of Dom Mintoff," in Vassallo Mario and Tabone, Carmel (eds.) *Public Life in Malta III: Essays on Governance, Politics and Public Affairs in the EU's Smallest Member State* (Malta, Department of Public Policy, University of Malta, 2020), 75-100.

Dirks, Nicholas B., "Annals of the Archive: Ethnographic Notes on the Sources of History," in Axel, Brian Keith (ed.), *From the Margins: Historical Anthropology and Its Futures* (Durham, N.C., 2002), 47-66.

Fishman, Joshua, "Language and Nationalism," in Woolf, Stuart Joseph, (ed.), *Nationalism in Europe; 1815 to the Present: A Reader* (London, Routledge, 1996), 155-170.

Flannery, Kevin L., "The Moral Principles governing the Immigration Policies of Politics," in Bradley, Gerard V. and Brugger, Christian E., (eds.), *Catholic Social Teaching: A Volume of Scholarly Teaching* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2019), 366-386.

Frendo, Henry, "Plurality and Polarity: Early Italian Fascism in Maltese Colonial Politics," in Fiorini, Stanley and Mallia-Milanes, Victor, (eds.), *Malta: A Case Study in International Cross-Currents* (Malta, University of Malta, 1991), 227-240.

Frendo, Henry, "Malta in 1921," in Farrugia, Charles J., (ed.), *Guardians of Memory: Essays in Remembrance of Hella Jean Bartolo Winston* (Malta, National Archives of Malta, 2008), 285-294.

Frendo, Henry, "Maltese Colonial Identity: Latin Mediterranean or British Empire?," in Mallia Milanes, Victor, (ed.), *The British Colonial Experience 1800-1964: The Impact on Maltese Society* (Malta, Mireva Publications, 1988), 185-214.

Frendo, Henry, "National Identity," in Frendo, Henry and Friggieri Oliver (ed.), *Malta Culture and Identity* (Malta, Ministry of Youth and Sports, 1994), 1-25.

Grech, Mario, "Sehem in-Nisrani fil-Hajja Pubblika," in Grech, Sergio, (ed.), *Marie Louise Coleiro Preca President ta' Malta: Bejn Storja u Miti* (Malta, Horizons, 2019), 71-79.

Grima, George, "Il-Karizma ta' Monsinjur Victor Grech," in Grech, Sergio, (ed.), *Monsinjur Victor Grech: Bejn Storja u Miti* (Malta, Horizons, 2014), 83-98.

Howell, Clifford, "From Trent to Vatican II," in Jones, Cheslyn, Wainwright, Geoffrey, Yarnold, Edward, and Bradshaw, Paul, (eds.), *The Study of Liturgy* (London, SPCK, 1992), 285-294.

Kaul, Chandrika, "Malta, Media and Empire in the Twentieth Century," in Grech, Sergio, (ed.), *Mabel Strickland Bejn Storja u Miti* (Malta, Horizons, 2018), 123-150.

Komonchak, Joseph A., "The Council of Trent at the Second Vatican Council," in Raymond P. Bulman and Frederick J. Parrella (eds.), *From Trent to Vatican II* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2006).

Mercieca, Simon, "Duminku Mintoff u l-Immakolata," in Grech, Sergio, (ed.), *Duminku Mintoff: Bejn Storja u Miti* (Malta, Horizons, 2012), 59-78.

Mercieca, Simon, "Fejn Tmur il-Qalb fl-Isfond Demografiku Malti," in Grech, Sergio, (ed.), *Monsinjur Victor Grech: Bejn Storja u Miti* (Malta, Horizons, 2014), 101-138.

Moyser, George, "Religion and Politics," in Hinnells, John, (ed.), *The Routledge Companion to the Study of Religion* (New York, Routledge, 2005), 423-438.

Norget, Kristin, "Ritual," in Scupin, Raymond, (ed.), *Religion and Culture: An Anthropological Focus* (New York, Prentice Hall, 2000), 80-105.

Pace, Paul, "Adult Education in the Maltese Church," in Baldacchino, Godfrey and Mayo, Peter, (eds.), *Beyond Schooling: Adult Education in Malta* (Malta, Mireva Publications, 1997), 39-54

Peresso, Giorgio, "Herbert Ganado: Ġurnalista, Opinjonist u Storiku," in Grech, Sergio, (ed.), *L-Avukat Herbert Ganado Bejn Storja u Miti* (Malta, Horizons, 2011), 191-200.

Pirotta, Godfrey A., "The Malta Labour Party and the Church: Building the Democratic State: 1921-1976," in Chircop John, (ed.), *Revisiting Labour History* (Malta, Horizons Publications, 2012), 85-121.

Pirotta, Joseph M., "Il-Bidu tat-Triq lejn Stat Sekulari Malti," in Cortis, Toni, (ed.), *Oqsma tal-Kultura Maltija* (Malta, Ministeru tal-Edukazzjoni u l-Intern, 1991), 171-204.

Pirotta, Joseph M., "Quest for Secularisation Triggers second politico-religious Struggle," in Schiavone, Michael J., and Callus, Leonard, "Inservi," *Hidma Politika 1969-2009* (Malta, PIN, 2009), 452-570.

- Regoli, Roberto, "Decisioni cardinalizie ed interventi papali: Il caso della Congregazione degli Affari Ecclesiastici Straordinari," in Laura Pettinaroli (ed.), *Le gouvernement pontifical sous Pie XI. Pratiques romaines et gestion de l'universel*, École française de Rome, Rome 2013 (Collection de l'École française de Rome, 467), 481-501.
- Regoli, Roberto, "Il ruolo della Sacra Congregazione degli Affari Ecclesiastici Straordinari durante il pontificato di Pio XI, in *La sollecitudine ecclesiale di Pio XI. Alla luce delle nuove fonti archivistiche*," *Atti del Convegno Internazionale di Studio, Città del Vaticano, 26-28 Febbraio 2009* (Pontificio Comitato di Scienze Storiche. Atti e Documenti, 31) a cura di Cosimo Semeraro, Città del Vaticano LEV, 2010, 183-229.
- Ryan, Christopher, "The Theology of the Papal Primacy in Thomas Aquinas," in Ryan, Christopher, (ed.), *The Religious Roles of the Papacy, Ideals and Realities, 1150-1300* (Ontario, Pontifical Institute and Medieval Studies, 1989), 193-225.
- Said, Josienne, "A.V. Laferla and Education: A Post-Colonial Approach," in Sultana, Ronald G., (ed.), *Yesterday Schools: Reading in Maltese Educational History* (Malta, Publishers Enterprises Group, 2001), 175-201.
- Tabone, Carmel, "Secularisation," in Sultana, Ronald G., and Baldacchino, Godfrey, (eds.), *Maltese Society: A Sociological Inquiry* (Malta, Mireva Publications, 1994), 285-300.
- Wolff, Robert P., "The Conflict between Authority and Autonomy," in Raz, Joseph, (ed.), *Authority* (New York, New York University Press, 1990) 20-56.

Bibliographical Materials

- Berg, W.C., *Historical Dictionary of Malta* (London, The Scarecrow Press, 1995).
- Borg Marion et al, *A Directory of Libraries Information Units and Archives in Malta* (Malta, MALIA, 2013).
- Calleja, Joe, *Ordinazzjonijiet Saċerdotali* (Malta, The Author, 2001).
- Camilleri, N. and Petrocochino, R., *Supplement to A Checklist of Maltese Periodicals and Newspapers covering the Years 1974-1989* (Malta, Malta, University Publications, 1990).
- Cuschieri, Carmel, *Index Historicus* (Malta, Malta University Press, 1979).
- Ellul, Godwin, *Indiċi Ġenerali Rajt Malta Tinbidel* (Malta, Klabb Kotba Maltin, 1999).
- Farrugia, Charles J., *L-Arkivji f'Malta* (Malta, Pubblikazzjonijiet Indipendenza, 2006).
- Galea, Francis, *Mexxejja, Hassieba u Deputati Laburisti 1920-2000* (Malta, Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti, 2000).
- Galea, Michael, *Dizzjunarju ta' Kittieba Maltin u Għawdxin* (Malta, Pubblikazzjonijiet Bugelli, 1995).
- Magnusson, Magnus, *Chambers Biographical Dictionary* (Scotland, Chambers, 1990).
- Mangion, Giovanni, *Melitensia 1900-1975: A Classified List of Books and Articles on Maltese History printed between 1900 and 1975* (Malta, Malta Historical Society, 1975).
- Mifsud Bonnici, Robbie, *Dizzjunarju Bijo-Bibliografiku Nazzjonali* (Malta, Central Office of Information, 1960).
- Montebello, Mark F., *Il-Ktieb tal-Filosofija Maltija* (Malta, Pubblikazzjonijiet Indipendenza, 2001).
- Sacco, Remiġ, *L-Elezzjonijiet Ġenerali: 1849-1986* (Malta, Klabb Kotba Maltin, 1986).
- Sapienza, Anthony F., *A Checklist of Maltese Periodicals* (Malta, Malta University Press, 1977).
- Schiavone, Michael J., and Scerri, Louis, *Maltese Biographies of the Twentieth Century* (Malta, Pubblikazzjonijiet Indipendenza, 1997).
- Schiavone, Michael J., *Dictionary of Maltese Biographies, Vol 1* (Malta, Pubblikazzjonijiet Indipendenza, 2009).
- Schiavone, Michael J., *Dictionary of Maltese Biographies, Vol 2* (Malta, Pubblikazzjonijiet Indipendenza, 2009).

Smith, Simon C., *British Documents on the end of the Empire: Malta, Series B, Volume 11* (London, TSO, 2006).

Xuereb, Paul, *Melitensia: A Catalogue of Printed Books and Articles in the Royal University of Malta Library Referring to Malta* (Malta, Malta University Press, 1974).

Unpublished Dissertations and Theses

Agius, Peter, *Manifestations of the Council of Trent in Malta* (MA Baroque Studies, University of Malta, 2014).

Andreicut, Gavril, *The Church's Unity and Authority: Augustine's Effort to Convert the Donatists* (Doctor of Philosophy, Marquette University, 2010).

Azzopardi, Jonathan, *Religious Confraternities in Naxxar between 1800 and the 1970s: A Social and Religious Perspective* (BA Hons, University of Malta, 2006).

Borg, Joseph, *Religion and the Mass Media in Malta* (M.STH., University of Malta, 1977).

Borg, Michael, *Integration or Closer Union with Britain* (BA Gen, University of Malta, 1968).

Briffa, Hilary, *War of the Words: A Study of Pro-British Propaganda during the First World War and its Implementation in Maltese Newspapers* (BA Hons, University of Malta, 1994).

Buttigieg, Christopher, *The Kappillan: Case Study of the Birkirkara Parish Provost* (BA Hons, University of Malta, 2013).

Camilleri, Maria, *Ġużè Ellul Mercer: Hajtu, Fehmietu u Hidmietu* (BA Hons, University of Malta, 1974).

Camilleri, Piera, *Tourism in Malta: History and Perspectives 1959-1988* (BA Hons, University of Malta, 1999).

Caruana, Maria, *Women in Maltese Politics: 1945-1958* (BA Hons, University of Malta, 2013).

Cassar, Robert, *The Bells of Malta* (MA, University of Malta, 2005).

Colclough, Kevin, *Imperial Nationalism: Nationalism and the Empire in late nineteenth Century Scotland and British Canada* (Doctor of Philosophy, The University of Edinburgh, 2006).

Crauss, Stephen, *Anton Buttigieg: Bijografija, 1912-1983* (MA, University of Malta, 1998).

Cutajar Vassallo, Cynthia, *Moral Reasoning in Catholic Sexual Morality* (BA Hons, University of Malta, 2012).

Farrugia, Lara, *The Evolution in Clothing after World War Two till the 1980s* (BA Hons, University of Malta, 2013).

Gadie, Paul G., *The Bishop's Role of Pastoral Governance: Its Interpretation and Reception by the Magisterium since Vatican II* (Doctorate in Philosophy, Mary Immaculate College, The University of Limerick, 2015).

Galea, Raymond, *Independence: The Climax of Various Political and Constitutional Developments* (BA Gen, University of Malta, 1968).

Grech, Anthony, *Is-Seminarju Minuri ta' Għawdex: 150 sena ta' Formazzjoni u Tagħlim Edukattiv* (B.Ed Hons, University of Malta, 2008)

Grech, Sergio, *Church and Politics in Malta 1955-1970* (MA, University of Malta, 2009).

Harper, Tobias, *Orders of Merit? Hierarchy, Distinction and the British Honours System, 1917-2004* (Doctor of Philosophy, Columbia University, 2014).

Hill, Joshua Peter, *The Agency Problem of Empire: British Bureaucracy and Institutional Path Dependence* (Master of Arts, George Mason University, 2007).

Long, Peter, *The Rights and Responsibilities of Bishops and Theologians within the Teaching Function of the Church* (Licentiate in Canon Law, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, 2003).

Mallia, Michael, *The Role of the Opposition in a Democratic Society: Labour in Opposition, 1962-1966* (BA Hons, University of Malta, 1989).

- Marovich-Old, John, *Challenges to British Imperial Hegemony in the Mediterranean: 1919-1940* (Doctor of Philosophy, Flinders University, 2017).
- Meli, Maria Pia, *Secularisation in Malta: Civil and Religious Tension* (MA, Maltese Studies, 2011).
- Mizzi, Edward, *Elements of Religious Value in the Formation of the General Workers' Union* (BA Hons Public Administration, University of Malta, 1989).
- Mizzi, Paul Joseph, *Parishes, Parishioners and Parochialism: A Survey of the Parochial Controversies taking place in Gozo – with particular Reference to the last twenty Years* (BA Gen, University of Malta, 1973).
- Mizzi Ronald, *Malta's Foreign Policy in the 70s: Mintoff Opening to the East* (BA Hons, University of Malta, 2001).
- Okosun, John E., *The Collaborative Role of the Presbyterian Council in the Governance of a Diocese* (Doctor of Canon Law, Faculty of Canon Law Saint Paul University, Canada, 2012).
- Pullicino, Evelyn, *The Influence of the Church in Malta: Social and Political Aspects, 1798-1829* (MA, University of Malta, 1996).
- Sagona, Mark, *The Ecclesiastical Decorative Arts in Malta 1850-1900: Style and Ornament* (Ph.D., University of Malta, 2014).
- Sultana, Carl-Mario, *Radio at the Service of the Church* (S.TH.L., University of Malta, 2008).
- Sultana, Walter, *Newspapers' Coverage of the Religious Aspects of Integration and the European Union Debates* (B.Comm, University of Malta, 2005).
- Tivey, Michael Richard, *Defending Ideology in the Pontificate of Gregory VII* (Master of Philosophy, University of Birmingham, 2011).
- Vassallo, Ivan, *Enrico Mizzi between Nationalism and Irredentism: A Comparative Study on Irredentism in Malta, the Mediterranean and the British Empire* (MA, University of Malta, 2012).
- Vella, Marco, *Evangelii Gaudium in the Light of Vatican Council II* (BA Hons, University of Malta, 2017).
- Zarb, Anna, *Mintoff versus the Ecclesiastical Authorities* (BA Hons, University of Malta, 1971).

Online Non-Academic Periodicals and Newspapers

- Anon, 'Abused Children Migrants to give Evidence in Australia Inquiry,' *Timesofmalta.com*, 27th April 2014, Retrieved on 20th February 2017, <http://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20140427/local/abused-maltese-child-migrants-to-give-evidence-in-australia-inquiry.516524>.
- Anon, 'The Pope's Powerful No. 2,' *Time*, 14th March 1969, Retrieved on 20th February 2017, <https://web.archive.org/web/20080605062707/http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,839846-1,00.html>.
- Anon, 'Malta's Prelate Reports to the Pope,' *The New York Times*, 9th January 1972, Retrieved on 6th July 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/1972/01/09/archives/maltas-prelate-reports-to-pope-political-situation-is-subject.html>.
- Bader, Mary, 'James Shannon loved the Church all his Life: Bishop who resigned over Humanae Vitae and married is laid to Rest with Others,' *National Catholic Reporter*, 19th September 2003, Retrieved on 20th February 2017, http://natcath.org/NCR_Online/archives2/2003c/091903/091903s.htm
- Bonello, Giovanni, 'Malta and Me: Gozo, Maltese Politics and British Settlers,' *TimesofMalta.com*, 21st September 2014, Retrieved on 20th February 2017, <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20140921/life-features/Malta-and-Me-Gozo-Maltese-politics-and-British-settlers.536812>.

Borg, Joseph, 'Bishops are not the Proverbial Monkeys,' *Timesofmalta.com*, 20th September 2016, Retrieved on 12th January 2017, <http://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20160920/blogs/bishops-are-not-the-proverbial-monkeys.625610>.

Busuttill, John, 'Kont niġbor it-Tfal tal-Laburisti li kienu mkeċċija mill-Knisja – Fr Hilary,' *Illum*, 4th January 2015, Retrieved on 4th January 2017, http://www.illum.com.mt/ahbarijiet/intervisti/39846/kont_nibor_ittfal_tallaburisti_li_kienu_mkeija_millknisja_fr_hilary#.WKsvy4-cEcQ.

Carabott, Sarah, 'Unchanged since 1984,' *TimesofMalta.com* website, 25th December 2011, Retrieved on 4th February 2019, <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20111225/local/Unchanged-since-1984-Archbishop-Gonzi-s-home.399805>.

Condon, Ed, 'The real reason Catholics can't be Freemasons,' *Catholic Herald*, 10th August 2017, Retrieved on 20th February 2017, <https://catholicherald.co.uk/issues/august-11th-2017/the-real-reason-catholics-cant-be-freemasons/>.

Debono, James, 'Cabinet Papers: When Contraceptives were obscene Articles,' *Malta Today*, 5th February 2014, Retrieved 18th January 2019, <https://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/national/35768/when-contraceptives-were-obscene-articles-20140205#.XJqO2kxFwcQ>.

Doublet, Nicholas Joseph, 'First Solemn Entry of the Archbishop of Malta into Mdina Cathedral in 1944,' 29th March 2015, Retrieved 2nd April 2016, <https://timesofmalta.com/articles/view/first-solemn-entry-of-the-archbishop-of-malta-into-mdina-cathedral-in.562072>.

Frendo, Henry J., 'Djar għall-Maltin Housing Campaign, 1969-2019,' *TimesofMalta.Com*, Retrieved on 4th March 2019, <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20190317/opinion/djar-għall-maltin-housing-campaign-1969-2019-henry-frendo.704750>.

Galea, Michael, 'Queen Elizabeth's stays in Malta over the Years,' *Timesofmalta.com*, 15th November 2015, Retrieved on 20th February 2017, <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20151115/life-features/Queen-Elizabeth-s-stays-in-Malta-over-the-years.592305>.

Grima, Noel, 'Outcry at a Meeting discussing Herbert Ganado,' *The Malta Independent on Sunday*, 1st May 2005, Retrieved on 25th February 2017, <http://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2005-05-01/news/outcry-at-meeting-discussing-herbert-ganado-74843/>.

Mallia, Steve, 'Vatican assumed that Calls were Tapped,' *TimesofMalta.com*, 10th February 2005, Retrieved on 20th February 2017, <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20050210/local/vatican-assumed-calls-to-malta-were-tapped.99565>.

Mallia, Steve, 'Archbishop Gonzi's Secret Deal Offer,' *TimesofMalta.com*, 7th February 2005, Retrieved on 20th February 2017, <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20050207/local/archbishop-gonzis-secret-deal-offer.99851>.

Mallia, Steve, 'When Mgr Gonzi met Harold Macmillan,' *The Times*, 8th February 2005, 15.

Mallia, Steve, 'Mounbatten launches at L-Gharix,' *The Times*, 11th February 2005, 15.

Muscat, Michaela, 'Taking Politics to the Grave: the undignified Miżbla,' *Malta Today*, 4th September 2005, Retrieved on 18th December 2016, <http://www.maltatoday.com.mt/2005/09/04/t15.html>.

Smith, Richard Upsher, Jr., 'How Paul VI abolished the Index of Prohibited Books: 50 Years Ago Today,' *Catholic Herald*, 14th June 2006, Retrieved on 20th February 2019,

<https://catholicherald.co.uk/commentandblogs/2016/06/14/how-paul-vi-abolished-the-index-of-prohibited-books-50-years-ago-today/>.

Thorpe, Vanessa, 'Attention-grabber: how Burgess Novel's Opening 'catamite' tryst almost fell foul of the Censors,' *The Observer*, 17th May 2020, Retrieved on 19th May 2020, <https://www.pressreader.com/article/281543703113513?fbclid=IwAR3wbolpJIUubvmyWASmtDSjLfS9WjIRV-su9-bE5HfBv4qPPKJtv2pQGUK>.

Blogs and Miscellaneous Online Sources

Cacopardo, Carmel, 'Dom's Legacy,' in *Blog ta' Carmel Cacopardo*, Retrieved on 28th February 2017, <https://carmelcacopardo.wordpress.com/tag/mintoff-dom/page/2/>.

Dizionario storico tematico La Chiesa in Italia, diretto da p. F. Lovison, I - Dalle origini all'unità nazionale,

<http://www.storiadellachiesa.it/glossary/giurisdizionalismo-e-la-chiesa-in-italia/>.

Diritto canonico, in *Dizionario storico tematico La Chiesa in Italia, diretto da p. F. Lovison, II - Dopo l'unità nazionale*, <http://www.storiadellachiesa.it/glossary/diritto-canonico-e-la-chiesa-in-italia-2/>.

Early Christian Writings, www.earlychristianwritings.com

Fücks, Ralf, '1968 and the Discoveries of Politics,' speech published in *Heinrich Böll Stiftung; The Green Political Foundation*, Retrieved on 24th February 2019, <https://www.boell.de/en/democracy/contemporary-history-2844.html>.

La Puma, Vincenzo, *Libro 1: Norme Generali, Sommario del Codice del Diritto*, www.cdirittocanonico1917.it/CIC1917ITA.PDF

Lechner, Frank, 'Secularisation,' <http://sociology.emory.edu/home/documents/profiles-documents/lechner-secularisation.pdf>, Retrieved on 20th January 2019.

Vassallo, Carmel. 'Servants of Empire: the Maltese in the Royal Navy,' in http://home.um.edu.mt/medinst/mmhn/1_servants_of_empire.pdf.

Other Miscellaneous Sources

Anon, 'The Catholic Church speaks about Modesty,' Retrieved on 20th February 2019 in <http://www.catholicmodesty.com/PFPopesonmodesty.html>.

Anon, 'Dak li dejjem berren f'Moħħu l-Arcisqof Gonzi... il-Fedeltà tal-Poplu lejn it-Tradizzjonijiet Kattolici,' *Il-Mument*, 11 ta' Frar 2018, 28.

Anon, 'A Donation of Items related to Sir Anthony Mamo (1909-2008), *Arkivju*, 8, (2017).

Arthur, Linda B., 'Religion and Dress,' Retrieved on 20th February 2019, <https://fashion-history.lovetoknow.com/fashion-history-eras/religion-dress>.

Borg, Joseph, The Cathedral Chapter of Mdina, Retrieved 20th June 2020,

<https://www.um.edu.mt/library/oar/bitstream/123456789/41803/1/The%20cathedral%20church%20of%20Malta.pdf>.

Callus, Toni, 'Meta d-Djoċesi ta' Ġhawdex tilfet l-Awtonomija u saret Suffraganja ta' Malta,' *Il-Korpus: Lehen mill-Parroċċa tal-Ġhasri* 36, (2011), Camilleri, Alfred, 'Ġrajja ta' Tmenin Sena Ilu – Il-Konċilju Reġjonali,' *Soċjetà Filarmonika Lourdes Qrendi, Festa, 2015*, 95.

D'Amato, Conrad, 'Santa Giovanna Antide Thouret u s-Sorijiet tal-Karità f'Birżebbuġa,' *Festa 2008, Soċjetà Filarmonika San Pietru Banda Birżebbuġa*, 93-94.

D'Anastas, Noel, Il-mixed Youth Clubs – Il-Qawmien taż-Żgħażaġħ fis-Sittinijiet, *Festa [San Gejtanu, Ħamrun] Għaqda tal-Muzika San Gejtanu 2015*.

Farrugia, Max, 'Fil-Ħamrun, int tista' tkun bħal Dawn,' *Festa San Gejtanu 2005, Ħamrun*, 22-23.

Galea Scannura, Charles, 'Ordinijiet Religjużi Femminili f'Bormla,' *Festa 2008, Ċentru 19 ta' Novembru, Bormla*, 123-139.

Gonzi Michael, 'Tifkiriet dwar Dun Karm,' *Dun Karm: 1871-1961, Numru Speċjali, Lehen il-Malti*, 1962, 8-9.

Inguanez, Joe, 'Ligutti-Mckinsey Reform Revisited,' *The Sunday Times of Malta*, 27th September, 2021, 46.

Lehen is-Sewwa, Harga Speċjali, 'Miet l-Arcisqof Gonzi,' 22 ta' Jannar 1984.

Mizzi, Pawlu, 'Adelaide Cini,' *Heritage: an Encyclopedia of Maltese Culture and Civilisation*, 22, (1979). 422.

Mizzi, Pawlu, 'Portrait Gallery: Mgr Archbishop Gonzi,' *Heritage: an Encyclopedia of Maltese Culture and Civilisation*, 66, (n.d.), 1301.

Stapleton, Betty, 'The Pill,' *Toronto Daily Star*, 18th May 1968.

Terribile, Tony, 'L-Arcisqof Pietro Pace: Benefattur Kbir tal-Kalkara,' *Festa ta' San Ġużepp Kalkara – 1994*, 22-24.

Zammit Gabarretta, A., 'The Council of Trent and the choice of the Bishops of Malta,' *Malta Yearbook 1965*, 325-332.

Żgħażaġh Haddiema Nsara, *Rapport Amministrattiv 1960-1961: Konferenza Ġenerali*, 3.12.1961.

Recorded Sound and Film

First of May Speech delivered by Piju Spiteri on 1st May 1961 at the Granaries, Floriana.

Meetings by Dom Mintoff:

Suldati ta' l-Azzar, Sensiela Kassetts Soċjalisti, Numru 3.

Il-Qniepen tad-Dnewwa, Sensiela Kassetts Soċjalisti, Numru 4.

L-Isfida ta' l-Interdett, Sensiela Kassetts Soċjalisti, Numru 5.

L-Ewwel tat-Taqtigħa, Sensiela Kassetts Soċjalisti, Numru 6.

Malta l-Ewwel u Qabel Kollox, Sensiela Kassetts Soċjalisti, Numru 7.

Kontra Kull Jasar, Sensiela Kassetts Soċjalisti, Numru 8.

Tmiem il-Kolonjalizmu f'Malta presented by Joseph Borg and Joseph M. Pirotta, *Campus FM* (20 series of 17 programmes each).

L-Istorja minn wara l-Kwinti, produced by Henry Frendo and presented by Mark Fenech, *Blaze Productions* (12 one-hour programmes) screened on PBS, 2006.

Taħt Lenti presented and produced by Sergio Grech, *Campus FM*. (A series of 39 interviews with Alexander Cachia Zammit featuring his political career.)

Wirtna, an interview with Lino Spiteri regarding the publication of *Jien u Għaddej fil-Politika* by Sergio Grech, broadcast on *Radju Malta* 27th April 2007.

Wirtna, an interview with Piju Spiteri about Archbishop Michael Gonzi by Sergio Grech, broadcast on *Radju Malta* 26th December 2004.

Dakinhar, produced and presented by Sergio Grech, *Campus FM*. First programme: The Imposition of the Interdict. Interview with Lino Spiteri.

Kont Hemm, produced and presented by Sergio Grech, *Campus FM*, First programme: Archbishop Michael Gonzi. Interview with Mgr Philip Calleja.

Il-Mixja għall-Indipendenza, produced and presented by Eric Montfort, *Radio 101*. (Available on You Tube Channel).

Ġorġ Borg Olivier, produced and presented by Eric Montfort, *Radio 101*. (Available on You Tube Channel).

Il-Ġganti tas-Seklu, produced and presented by Reno Bugeja, *PBS*. Programme about Mgr. Michael Gonzi (Comments by Mgr. Carmelo Xuereb, Dominic Fenech, Joe M. Pirotta). Programme about Dom Mintoff (Comments by Joe M. Pirotta, Edgar Mizzi, Dominic Fenech).

Bijografiji, produced and presented by Peppi Azzopardi, *PBS*. Programme featuring Dom Mintoff (Comments by Reno Calleja, Joe Grima, Vincent Moran, Joseph M. Pirotta, Lino

Spiteri). Programme featuring Archbishop Michael Gonzi. *Maltin fil-Gwerra: Miti, Fatti u Propaganda*, produced and presented by Mario Xuereb and Martin Debattista, *PBS*. Programme 3, Mgr Michael Gonzi's choice as Malta's Archbishop (2020).

Two Trumpets for St Andrew: Village Life, National Politics, Malta G.C., a documentary produced by Australia Broadcasting Commission.

Ra Malta Tinbidel, produced and presented by Sergio Grech, slot in magazine programme *Omnibus, Education 22* (a series about Dr Herbert Ganado). Guests: Pawlu Aquilina, Maria Grech Ganado, Carmel Farrugia, Guido de Marco, Carmel Cassar, Piju Spiteri, Joe M. Pirotta.

Episodji, produced and presented by Sergio Grech, *Ir-Radju tal-Università*, especially interviews with Joseph Attard Kingswell, Anton Cassar, Mgr. Philip Calleja, and Victor Ragonesi.

Id-Dinja Rota, produced and presented by Ruben Gauci and Simon Micallef Stafrace, *Campus FM*, Interview with Guido de Marco.

Żgħażaġh tas-Snin Sittin, produced and presented by Tony Micallef, *Radio Malta*.

Soċjologu u Teologu Jiltaqgħu, produced and presented by John Inguanez, *Campus FM*, Programme 8: Il-Knisja u l-Politika. Programme 17: Is-Sekularizzazzjoni.

50th Anniversary of the Priesthood of Mgr Charles G. Vella, (documentary) screened on 8th December 2004 at St. Gregory's Parish Church, Sliema, Produced by Charles Xuereb.

Mill-Interdett għall-Internet, a Poeżijaplus event held on 25th February 2002 at Café Diva, Manoel Theatre, Valletta. Speakers: Lino Spiteri, Anton Cassar, Victor Fenech, Charles Flores and Charles Briffa.

L-Ewwel Konferenza Herbert Ganado, a Poeżijaplus event held on 25th March 2005 at Café Diva, Manoel Theatre, Valletta. Speakers: Henry Frendo, Maria Grech Ganado, Carmel Cassar, Carmelo Abela, Paul Saliba, Piju Spiteri, Martin Vella and Sergio Grech.

It-Tieni Konferenza Herbert Ganado, a Poeżijaplus event held on 29th January 2007 at the Floriana Local Council Offices. Speakers: Publius Agius, Albert Ganado and Max Farrugia.

L-Indipendenza, a Poeżijaplus event held on 26th September 2005 at Café Diva, Manoel Theatre, Valletta. Speakers: Ċensu Tabone, Henry Frendo, Daniel Micallef and Evarist Bartolo.

L-Indipendenza, a Poeżijaplus event held on 25th September 2006 at Café Diva, Manoel Theatre, Valletta. Speakers: Victor Ragonesi, Alfred Bonnici, Frans Camilleri and Alex Sceberras Trigona.

Launch of *Patri Feliċjan Bilocca's Hajtu u Żminijietu* written by Sergio Grech, November 2004, Corinthia Hotel, Paceville. Speakers: Charles Dalli, René Camilleri, Lino Spiteri, Adrian Grima, John Buttigieg, Daniel Micallef and Sergio Grech.