

# Archaeology and politics in Post-Independence Malta

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## *Abstract*

The political nature of archaeology has been part of the theoretical discourse of the discipline since the early 1970s. This post-processual direction in archaeological theory has led to many historiographies on the development of archaeology being written. The study of Malta's archaeological history and the role that politics has played in its development in the years following post-Independence, has received limited attention. This study focuses on the relationship of archaeology and politics and the manifestation of that liaison through the presentation of three separate but linked case studies: (1) definitive stamp sets, (2) a documentary production entitled *Malta and the Phoenicians: The Phoenician Presence and Influence which Shaped and Influenced History*, and (3) the planning of a foreign archaeological mission to Malta. The case studies were approached through an analysis of the relevant material and literature in order to explore the relationship between archaeology and politics in Malta from 1964 till 2004. The data gathered allowed for an appraisal of the ways in which post-Independence administrations have utilised archaeology; from the discipline's use as a tourist attraction, the practice of using an archaeological culture for nationalist propaganda, to the involvement of the government in the planning and execution of an archaeological mission. It is argued that the intrinsically political nature of archaeology manifests itself in nation-building initiatives.

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# Chapter 1

## Introduction

## **1.1 Scope and Aims**

The scope of this study is to investigate the relationship between archaeology and politics in the post-Independence years of Malta leading up to the island's accession to the European Union (1964-2004). This particular topic was chosen due to the lacuna in similar studies conducted on the years following Independence. There is a lack of histories of archaeology available for Malta, with the existing ones concentrating on the first half of the twentieth century, but not exceeding 1964. The exception to this is Anna Maria Rossi's doctoral thesis, where she delves into the history of archaeology, surrounding the site of Tas-Silġ.<sup>1</sup> The interest for the topic came about after attending a lecture held at the University of Malta by Dr Nicholas Vella on the topic of Archaeology and Nationalism in Malta in the 1930s.<sup>2</sup> This study departs from the premise that in order to investigate the role of archaeology in the politics and nationalistic aspirations of the post-Independence administrations, the political nature of archaeology has to be ascertained first. This investigation led to the following three main aims, namely: (1) whether or not archaeology was utilised as a political tool in post-Independence Malta, (2) the role that nationalism may have played in the use of archaeology for political purposes, and, (3) the role that archaeology may have played in the fostering of a national identity.

The general lack of studies available on the history of archaeology of the Maltese Islands, especially for the 1970s and 1980s, provided a further impetus for this dissertation. Therefore, this dissertation also aims to contribute to the wider field of archaeology and politics, and the interplay between them.

## **1.2 Review of the relevant literature**

Archaeology has been a valuable asset in the uncovering of any nation's history and as such has often become part of nationalist agendas. However, the discipline's

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<sup>1</sup> Rossi 2015

<sup>2</sup> In 2011 Professor Vella gave a lecture to the International Relations department concerning politics and archaeology in Malta between the two World Wars. More specifically the lecture was about the Italian archaeologist Maria Luigi Ugolini and his work in Malta, studying the island's prehistoric remains and the ramifications for the nationalist cause in Malta.

socio-political role has not always been accepted among scholars of archaeology, and is still heavily debated today. In Michael Shanks' and Christopher Tilley's seminal publication *Reconstructing Archaeology* (1987), Ian Hodder's words in the foreword on whether or not archaeology is an 'ideological practice which sustains and justifies a capitalist present',<sup>3</sup> provide a fitting starting point for this literature review. Shanks' and Tilley's work aimed to challenge the practices of both traditional culture-historical and New Archaeology, and to propose an alternative. It was however, by no means the first work to question the socio-political character of archaeology. In the 1970s there were several movements which were challenging the theoretical constructs of the New Archaeology movement.<sup>4</sup> However, the new archaeologists of the 1960s sought to distance themselves from an overly political approach to archaeology, and the post-processualists mainly differentiated themselves from a Marxist approach by moving away from a stance towards social conflict.<sup>5</sup> Thus, how do these different approaches tie into a discussion on the socio-political reality of archaeology?

### *1.2.1 Theoretical background*

In order to completely comprehend the extensive theoretical literature on the relationship between archaeology and politics, an understanding on the origins of the debate is necessary. The 'New' archaeology movement of the 1960s arose in an environment of political upheaval throughout Western Europe, a phenomenon which also reached universities across the western world. Probably one of the most important features to emerge from this new movement within archaeology was that debates were being held amongst the whole community of scholars on themes such as 'what archaeology might be, what it could and could not do'.<sup>6</sup> The main goal of the new archaeologists 'was no longer to describe the past but to explain it'.<sup>7</sup> David Clark's *Archaeology: The loss of innocence* (1973) is considered to be one of the founding texts for the 'New' archaeology movement. In his article he describes a

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<sup>3</sup> Shanks & Tilley 1987: xvi

<sup>4</sup> Karlsson & Olsen 2008: 30

<sup>5</sup> Bernbeck & McGuire 2011: 40-42

<sup>6</sup> Shanks & Tilley 1987: 30

<sup>7</sup> Shanks & Tilley 1987: 32

discipline in the midst of a paradigm shift, from a loss of innocence to a critical self-consciousness, meaning ‘the strength of the new archaeologies, or New Archaeology, is that it introduces a variety of questions where only answers were formerly proclaimed’.<sup>8</sup>

However, this concept led to an immediate split within the archaeological community. In the late 1970s and 1980s scholars such as Tilley and Hodder started to realize that the separation of ‘one’s social self’<sup>9</sup> from the process of archaeology was no longer possible. This shift was accompanied by the general trends of globalization and the emergence of different archaeologies, such as Indigenous, Post-Colonial and Feminist archaeologies. Feminist archaeology first entered the theoretical scene in the 1980s through the work of Margaret Conkey and Janet Spector entitled *Archaeology and the study of Gender* (1984). This work set out to create a ‘gender mythology’, that is, provide insight into the relationship between archaeology and gender. In doing so it intended to highlight how archaeology has contributed to a gender bias and culture-specific beliefs about what it means to be masculine and feminine and thus their respective roles within society. This does not only have implications for archaeological interpretations but also for contemporary politics,<sup>10</sup> and for archaeology in general since the feminist approach has been the most integral in forcing contemporary socio-politics into the theoretical battlefield.<sup>11</sup>

Intimately linked to a discussion on feminist archaeology is indigenous archaeology. This emerged in the USA in the late 1970s and can be defined as an archaeology done with, for, and by indigenous communities (though not necessarily so).<sup>12</sup> The term was first used in John Dewhirst’s 1980 monograph *The Indigenous Archaeology of Yuquot*. However, it was not until Joe Watkin’s 2001 volume *Indigenous Archaeology: American Indian Values and Scientific Practice* that the term started to gain some consistency.<sup>13</sup> The main point to highlight here that is relevant to our discussion is that indigenous archaeology refused to be objective,

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<sup>8</sup> Clarke 1973: 11

<sup>9</sup> Hodder 2008: 29

<sup>10</sup> Conkey & Spector 1984: 1-2

<sup>11</sup> Conkey & Tringham 1995: 8

<sup>12</sup> Conkey 2005: 7

<sup>13</sup> Nicholas 2008: 1660

but rather reveals in its socio-political reality with ‘less reliance on empirical approaches and more standing given to non-empirical sources, including oral histories, folklore, traditional knowledge, and religious beliefs’.<sup>14</sup> Thus, in doing so it attempts to steer the wider discipline of archaeology into a more relevant and responsible direction.<sup>15</sup>

The aforementioned works are not only ones that have brought about a shift in the way archaeological research is conducted. This notion that archaeological interpretation is influenced by the socio-political context of the contemporary world is not an entirely recent phenomenon. In *A History of Archaeological Thought* published in 1950, Glyn Daniel was already stating that there was a ‘perversion of facts of prehistory for national and political ends’ in the context of Germany and Italy during the Second World War.<sup>16</sup> However, it was not until the late 1980s that this became an intensely debated topic, with publications such as Bruce Trigger’s 1989 work *A History of Archaeological Thought*, Michael Shanks’ and Christopher Tilley’s two publications *Reconstructing Archaeology* and *Social Theory in Archaeology*, that appeared in 1987, and Ian Hodder’s 1986 work entitled *Reading the Past: Current Approaches to Interpretation in Archaeology*.

Along with Shanks and Tilley, Bruce Trigger has been on the frontline of advocacy in favour of a more politically and socially aware archaeology. Whilst Shanks and Tilley have argued that archaeology is an interpretive endeavour since it involves the creation of a past in a contemporary setting, Trigger has delved into the more politically active role of archaeology.<sup>17</sup> All three authors agree on the ideological element in archaeological interpretation, namely that a considerable part of archaeology ‘is not a value-free and neutral social science’.<sup>18</sup> Trigger argues that the relationship between archaeology and society is a complex one since the results of archaeological investigations are relevant to concerns on human nature and thus also for economic, social and political issues of modern societies. Trigger continues the argument by stating that archaeology is often an expression of a middle class

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<sup>14</sup> Nicholas 2008: 1666

<sup>15</sup> Nicholas 2008: 1665

<sup>16</sup> Daniel 1950: 323

<sup>17</sup> Shanks & Tilley 1987: 103-104; Trigger 1989: 14-15

<sup>18</sup> Diaz-Andreu 2007: 4

ideology and thus stresses the need to ‘discover to what extent changes in archaeological interpretation reflect the altering fortunes of that group’.<sup>19</sup> On this point Shanks and Tilley elaborate further when they state that archaeology is a ‘passive function of the past, producing pasts relevant to and/or in support of particular interest groups’.<sup>20</sup> Trigger maintains that archaeology should be seen as a tool used by specific groups within society to achieve their goals. This, he argues can be achieved through: (1) the use of archaeology to make success appear natural, (2) to justify their actions, and (3) to create a myth of origin. He states that the contemporary context of archaeological research also needs to be taken into consideration, i.e. what type of resources are available to sustain research and what type of research is being pushed specifically by governments. This type of argument is also made by Randall McGuire, in his monograph *Archaeology as Political Action* published a few years ago.<sup>21</sup>

McGuire argues that when discussing the socio-political context of archaeology the communities involved should be identified, their interests should be ascertained, along with their internal and external relationships. This, McGuire argues, will define the type of archaeological research being done, the questions that are asked and the answers given.<sup>22</sup>

### *1.2.2 Nationalism and Archaeology*

Since the purpose of this study is to determine how or if at all archaeology was utilized as a political tool by post-Independence administrations in Malta, the relationship between archaeology and nationalism needs to be brought into this review.

It is argued here that if a non-political archaeology does not exist, then nationalism is the ideology that influences the development of the discipline the most. Margarita Diaz-Andreu and Timothy Champion in their edited volume *Nationalism and*

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<sup>19</sup> Trigger 1989: 14

<sup>20</sup> Shanks & Tilley 1987: 245

<sup>21</sup> McGuire 2008: 88

<sup>22</sup> McGuire 2008: 88, see also Trigger 1987: 16

*Archaeology in Europe* (1996) argue that the very creation of archaeology as a discipline is intimately linked to the appearance of nationalism in Europe in the nineteenth century. They state that the close relationship between the two is based on the notion of the nation, which by its very nature implies the existence of a past.<sup>23</sup> On this topic Trigger has also written extensively and in his 1984 article *Alternative Archaeologies: Nationalist, Colonialist, Imperialist*, he explores the diversity of archaeological traditions throughout the world.<sup>24</sup> More specifically he examines how the social setting influences the way(s) in which archaeology is practised, and thus ‘raised an awareness regarding the influence of politics in archaeology’.<sup>25</sup> Relevant here is the fact that Trigger states that most archaeologies are probably nationalistic, and he traces this back to the post-Napoleonic rise in nationalism, where most of the archaeological work was being done in order to strengthen patriotism, and that towards the end of the nineteenth century it was used to promote and glorify the national past.<sup>26</sup>

Trigger is not alone in this theoretical venture. Don Fowler also maintains that nation-states utilize archaeology for political purposes.<sup>27</sup> Trigger argues that the aim of nationalist archaeology is to boost the image of a nation-state, and Fowler discusses how the past is used to legitimize power and authority in pursuit of nationalistic goals.<sup>28</sup> Fowler goes on to demonstrate how nation-states and their leaders have manipulated the past for their own purposes, and how the material record and theoretical debates have been used. In order to highlight his argument, Fowler used three case studies: Mexico, Britain and China. In the case of Mexico he stresses how a single site, namely the Temple Mayor, and the adjoining cathedral, have been used by the government in their nationalistic agenda of combining the pre-colonial and colonial pasts of Mexico. This becomes extremely evident in the wording of a plaque erected in 1964, which ends with ‘it was neither a triumph nor defeat, but the painful birth of the mestizo people that is Mexico

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<sup>23</sup> Diaz-Andreu & Champion 1996: 2-3

<sup>24</sup> Trigger 1984: 355

<sup>25</sup> Diaz-Andreu 2007: 10

<sup>26</sup> Trigger 1984: 357-360

<sup>27</sup> Fowler 1996: 229

<sup>28</sup> Trigger 1984: 360; Fowler 1987: 229

today'.<sup>29</sup> In the case of Great Britain, Fowler argues that archaeology was unofficially utilised as a tool to glorify the past particularly through the use of myths, taking the Druids and their past glorification.<sup>30</sup> His last case study concerned China and here Fowler shows how the changing ideologies of governments can affect the way archaeology is practised and interpreted.<sup>31</sup> The situation here becomes particularly evident when comparing the practice of archaeology prior to and after 1949, the year which marks the change of government in China. Prior to 1949 archaeology in China was a well-developed discipline, influenced by Japan and the West, however, after 1949 archaeology assumed, in the words of Fowler, a 'privileged political position stimulated by a government policy to [...] include archaeology as an important part of the political education of the people'.<sup>32</sup> Thus, archaeologists were no longer independent researchers but became directly under the control of the central government. The most profound change that can be witnessed in the practice of archaeology in China with a change in the ideology of the governments, is that whereas prior to 1949 the past was seen as the domain of the bureaucrats and rulers of the country, now it is the people's past completely reflecting the Marxist ideological paradigm.<sup>33</sup>

Central to McGuire's thesis is how nationalist movements use culture and history to create a sense of nationalism, and how archaeology is the source for the raw material of this creation. This means that archaeology produces the symbols, knowledge and heritage that are used to propagate a sense of national unity.<sup>34</sup> At the centre of his argument lies the concept that archaeology can be used to construct histories for various communities or groups, and that archaeology is inherently political. However, he maintains that archaeology is a weak tool for political action, but a rather strong one for political ideology.<sup>35</sup> Therefore, if politics is essentially about how groups advance their interests within a society, and archaeology is essentially political in nature, then the question becomes how is archaeology

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<sup>29</sup> Fowler 1987: 231-234. The term 'mestizo' is used to for a person of both European and South American descent.

<sup>30</sup> Fowler 1987: 235

<sup>31</sup> Fowler 1987: 237-239

<sup>32</sup> Fowler 1987: 237

<sup>33</sup> Fowler 1987: 238

<sup>34</sup> Fowler 1987: 229; McGuire 2008: 151-152

<sup>35</sup> McGuire 2008: 17-21

political?<sup>36</sup> He answers this question by stating that archaeology ‘produces symbols, knowledge and heritage’<sup>37</sup> that allow for the creation and maintenance of group identities. Therefore the ways in which an archaeological investigation is conducted and the questions sought and answered, all have political relevance for issues of identity. In a more recent edited volume by McGuire and Bernbeck, *Ideologies in Archaeology* (2011), a similar position is taken where the focus is on how ideology turns ideas, interest and expectations into belief systems that are weaved into ‘notions of everyday opinions’.<sup>38</sup>

Symbols and myths lead to the pioneering work on nationalism by Anthony Smith, in particular his 1986 publication *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, where he attaches importance to the use of ‘symbols, myths, memories’<sup>39</sup> as the core constituents of national identity. He also argues that nationalism draws on the past in order to construct a sense of shared identity and history. Smith uses the myth of descent as the main tool for this construction, and turns to archaeology as the most useful tool for the uncovering of the ‘collective past’.<sup>40</sup>

The use of artefacts as symbols of nationalism can also be linked to what Michael Billig has termed ‘Banal Nationalism’. In Billig’s book the concept of unconscious reminders of national identity is introduced. The term ‘banal’ is used in order to show how nations ‘reproduce’ their nationalism, meaning how these reminders are portrayed to the citizens.<sup>41</sup> Nevertheless, for some reason citizens of nation-states are constantly being reminded that they belong to a certain group, in a form of aptly termed ‘banal nationalism.’<sup>42</sup> How is this done? Everyday depictions such as flags, sporting events, songs, representations on money and the language used in the media are all ways and means through which nationalism is projected towards citizens.<sup>43</sup> These all contribute to the creation of a shared national identity, and as such to the idea of a shared history. Therefore, both Smith and Billig agree that

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<sup>36</sup> McGuire 2008: 223-225

<sup>37</sup> McGuire 2008: 236

<sup>38</sup> McGuire 2008: 236; McGuire & Bernbeck 2011: 167

<sup>39</sup> Smith 1986

<sup>40</sup> Smith 1986: 180

<sup>41</sup> Billig 1995: 6

<sup>42</sup> Billig 1995: 6

<sup>43</sup> Billig 1995: 6, 71

every nation-state has its symbols and its collective memory used to propagate the idea of a shared unifying history. However, the purpose of Billig's work is to highlight the continued relevance and centrality of nationalism in today's globalized societies, whereas Smith explores the origins of national identity.

The relationship between nationalism and archaeology is investigated from an archaeological perspective in Margarita Dìaz-Andreu and Timothy Champion's edited volume *Nationalism and Archaeology in Europe* (1996), arguing that the relationship between archaeology and nationalism has become so naturalised that one is hardly aware of it, effectively bringing Billig's Banal Nationalism into the archaeological sphere.<sup>44</sup> Dìaz-Andreu and Champion argue that there are various avenues of investigation for this topic, and the most relevant are: (1) the role of archaeology in the construction and preservation of national identities, (2) the relationship between the construction of a nation-state and the institutionalization of archaeology, i.e. when and why museums were founded, when archaeology became a discipline at universities; and (3) a possible analysis into the territorial, ethnic and religious origins and identifications of a nation-state.<sup>45</sup>

### *1.2.3 Archaeology and Politics of Malta*

As mentioned above, the link between archaeology and nationalism is a long and intimate one, with the rise of nationalism in Europe being tied to the intellectuals of the continent trying to find a place in a system dominated by the church and the monarchy.<sup>46</sup> The role of nationalism (and thus archaeology) in the construction and maintenance of national identities can also be witnessed in the case of Malta during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Even though this period falls outside the remits of this dissertation, it still provides a solid foundation for any discussion on politics and archaeology in Malta.

In a recent publication Reuben Grima has presented one aspect of this link through his work on the rise of early archaeological resource management in the twilight of

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<sup>44</sup> Diaz-Andreu & Champion 1996: 8

<sup>45</sup> Diaz-Andreu & Champion 1996: 5-6

<sup>46</sup> Diaz- Andreu & Champion 1996: 4; Daroogheh-Nokhodcheri 2014: 3

the nineteenth century.<sup>47</sup> He traces the beginnings of this tradition to the increasing interest in archaeological monuments in Western Europe, mentioning Britain in particular. In 1882 this interest was reflected in the 1882 Ancient Monuments Protection Act. This rise in awareness spread from Britain to the colonies, with the colonial offices issuing a number of reports. Initially the rise in interest is reflected in Antonio Annetto Caruana's survey of Phoenician and Roman remains on the islands.<sup>48</sup> However, in Malta this wider general current of interest is contrasted against another stream of interest, the one of nationalism, and this was to define the direction that preservation of heritage sites in Malta took during these years, which is reflected most prominently in the debates surrounding the Language Question.<sup>49</sup> The connection between this and archaeology is reflected in the use of archaeological remains by the relevant political parties in order to promote their idea of a Maltese national identity. Similarly, in their 2001 publication, *The Lure of the Antique: Nationalism, Politics and Archaeology in British Malta (1880-1964)*, Nicholas Vella and Oliver Gilkes strive to show the development of archaeology in Malta within its socio-political context. The scope of their paper covers the period 1880-1964 and, therefore, touches upon what is normally taken to be the very beginnings of Maltese nationalism and archaeological practice at the time. Vella, Gilkes and Grima all highlight how archaeology barely had an impact on the construction of Maltese national identity during the nineteenth century. Grima argues that the intense interest shown by the colonial element towards Malta's material remains led to a 'progressive erosion of the identification of local communities to those sites'.<sup>50</sup> Vella and Gilkes on the other hand are inclined to use Paul Sant Cassia's argument that the inability of the Maltese to identify with a pre-Christian era may have been responsible for the lack of archaeological influence on Maltese national identity.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Grima 2011

<sup>48</sup> Grima 2011: 343-345

<sup>49</sup> Vella and Gilkes 2001: 360-362. The Language Question was the most prominent issue of political debate in Malta during the final decades of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century. The formation of Malta's political parties can be traced back to the pro-Italian and pro-English lobbies that vied for political, social and cultural dominance.

<sup>50</sup> Grima 2011: 364

<sup>51</sup> Sant Cassia 1999: 3357-377; Vella and Gilkes 2001: 355

Whilst Grima's work ends with the beginning of the twentieth century, Vella and Gilkes on the other hand delve into the first half of the century right up to Independence. They argue that the first decades of the twentieth century witnessed the rise of Maltese nationalism and the wielding of archaeology as a nationalist tool.<sup>52</sup> This is reflected in the makings of the pro-Italian and pro-English lobbies of the Language Question with all its connotations. The former lobby utilised propaganda bureaus and individuals, such as the Italian prehistorian Maria Luigi Ugolini, to further the cause. However, Ugolini did not manage to further Latin irredentism; instead he focused his attentions towards Malta's megalithic monuments.<sup>53</sup> Ugolini's account on Malta's prehistory effectively prompted the British to redirect their attentions towards the island's megalithic remains, reflected in the activities and eventual publication by John Evans in the seminal work *The Prehistoric Antiquities of the Maltese Islands* (1971).<sup>54</sup>

The redirection of British interest towards prehistory can also be seen in the light of an Italian archaeological mission which started in 1963 and went on until 1970 with major excavations at Tas-Silġ, San Pawl il-Milqi and Ras il-Wardija. In her doctoral thesis Anna Maria Rossi investigates the role of the Italian archaeological mission in the political milieu of post-Independence Malta. The permission granted to the *Missione archeologica a Malta* by the newly elected Nationalist government in 1963 was viewed by many at the time as an entirely political endeavour.<sup>55</sup> Thus, the fieldwork undertaken by Evans in Malta, and the publication of the results, needs to be seen within the political context of the British trying to reassert their dominance when it came to the study of the island's material remains and their interpretation. The effect that the political situation in Malta had on the Italian archaeological mission can be traced through the successive changes in government, as Rossi has convincingly shown.

Therefore, through the works of Vella and Gilkes for the first half of the twentieth century, and Rossi's thesis on the work at Tas-Silġ, it is possible to ascertain that archaeology was a playing field for political agendas. During this time the British

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<sup>52</sup> Vella and Gilkes 2001: 360-362

<sup>53</sup> Vella and Gilkes 2001: 371

<sup>54</sup> Rossi 2015: 137

<sup>55</sup> Rossi 2015: 141-143

were in control of Maltese archaeology, something that in 1963 was challenged by the democratically elected Nationalist Party, which invited an Italian research team to Malta for which the basic motivation, according to Rossi, came from a need to challenge the colonial British projects.<sup>56</sup> Even though Rossi does trace the actions, developments and socio-political effects of the Italian mission right up to the turn of the twenty-first century, she does so only for one specific site, namely Tas-Silġ.

As may have already been noticed there is a lacuna in the research available for the relationship between archaeology and politics in Malta, with the post-independence years (1964- ) boasting only a single work, namely the recent doctoral thesis completed by Rossi, thus, this dissertation is intended to tackle this dearth in material available for the period. More specifically, the post-Independence years of Malta witnessed a number of developments in terms of politics, economics and, social issues.<sup>57</sup> Added to this is the fact that archaeological work in Malta became more frequent in the late 1980s, with a number of foreign and local excavations and projects taking place such as, for instance the 1985 conference on *Archaeology and Fertility Cult in the Ancient Mediterranean*, organised by Anthony Bonanno of the University of Malta, which was a catalyst for the setting up of the Anglo-Maltese Cambridge Gozo Project in 1987. The birth of the Classics and Archaeology department at the University of Malta in 1990 also plays a significant role, both archaeologically and politically, since its creation came about with a change in government and the reinstating of the Faculty of Arts effectively laying the foundations for professional archaeological practice in Malta.<sup>58</sup> Therefore, the period covered in this dissertation (1964-2004) should prove to be fruitful grounds for analysis.

### **1.3 Post-Independence Malta: a historical synopsis**

The political situation in Malta after 1964 requires a brief overview in order to provide a context for the analysis that will follow.

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<sup>56</sup> Rossi 2015: 320, 32

<sup>57</sup> Cassar 2000: 244

<sup>58</sup> Bonanno 2008

Malta gained Independence from Great Britain in 1964 under the leadership of George Borg Olivier and his Nationalist Party (PN), who continued to govern after the 1966 elections. The immediate concern of the PN administration was the economic well-being of the island, who had until then almost completely relied on the British services for national income. In fact, the services accounted for one-third of the national income and employed some 19,000 people.<sup>59</sup> The PN addressed issues through the policies that would integrate Malta even further into the European and Western world, such as through the 1964 application for United Nations membership, joining the Council of Europe in 1965 and the 1970 association agreement signed with the European Economic Community (EEC).<sup>60</sup> These policies reflected the deeper cultural identity of the PN, which always portrayed itself as having ‘Maltese, Christian and European traditions’.<sup>61</sup>

In 1971 the Malta Labour Party (MLP) won a one-seat majority in the general elections and from then onwards a radical shift in the policies of Malta can be witnessed. The MLP was led by Dom Mintoff, an architect and civil engineer, who was leader of the MLP from 1958 till 1984. Mintoff’s policies revolved around non-alignment and securing Malta’s neutrality. To this effect he closed NATO’s headquarters in 1971, declared the island a republic in 1974 and secured the departure of the British services in 1979. According to Mintoff, when he took office,

We had an English governor general, an English queen, English currency, a Bank of England man as the head of our central bank [...] we had a police force run by a commissioner who stated openly that his loyalty was to the British crown and nobody else. This was only eight years ago. Now Malta is a republic. Everything has changed. Nothing is British anymore.<sup>62</sup>

However, in order to counteract the inevitable economic deficiency that came about with the departure of the British, the MLP sought a policy direction that would promote greater regional integration within the Mediterranean. Thus, their policies resulted in the MLP promoting itself and Malta as socialist, non-aligned and Mediterranean orientated, practically the polar opposite of the more

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<sup>59</sup> Alshinawi 2014: 18

<sup>60</sup> Alshinawi 2014: 17; Harwood 2014: 32

<sup>61</sup> Mitchell 2012: 323

<sup>62</sup> McFadden 2012

Eurocentric identity of the PN.<sup>63</sup> In order to achieve its goal of an economically independence Malta, the MLP engaged in relations with the Eastern Bloc countries, the Soviet Union and China, with the idea of opening up the Maltese market to unexploited sources.

The MLP also sought deeper relations with the nation-states of North Africa, in particular Libya, where during the course of the 1970s and 1980s relations between Malta and Libya would progress to the point of the two nations portraying themselves as 'blood brothers'. Mintoff first engaged with Libya in order to secure funds for the immediate aftermath of the British departure, and this evolved into a lasting relationship between the MLP and Libya, one that resulted in the compulsory teaching of Arabic in Maltese schools during the 1980s, the building of a Mosque in Corradino in 1978, and favourable oil prices for Malta.<sup>64</sup>

In 1987 the PN was re-elected into government under the leadership of lawyer Eddie Fenech Adami, who became head of the party in 1977. He immediately sought to undo many of the policies initiated by the MLP. Of the highest priority was rekindling Malta's relationship to Northern Europe, which resulted in the island's application for European Union (EU) membership in 1990. This marked the beginning of Malta's road to EU membership, with an intermission in 1996 when the MLP was re-elected briefly, which led to the freezing of the application. In 1998 the PN was re-elected to power and this resulted in the eventual admission of Malta to the EU in 2004.<sup>65</sup> Table 1 provides a general overview of the changes that occurred in the Maltese government and events associated with them.

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<sup>63</sup> Alshinawi 2014: 17; Harwood 2014: 32

<sup>64</sup> Cassar 2000: 245

<sup>65</sup> Cini 2000: 12

Table 1.1: Overview of key dates and associated events in the political history of Malta (adapted from Azzopardi 2009) PN-Nationalist party; MLP-Malta Labour Party

Year	Political Party	Events
1955-1958	MLP	Suspension of constitution, negotiation for integration with Great Britain
1962-1966	PN	Negotiation for Independence, granting of independence in 1964
1966-1971	PN	United Nations membership, Council of Europe and European Economic Community association agreement
1971-1976	MLP	Declaration of Republic of Malta in 1974 and the negotiation of British departure.
1976-1981	MLP	Social reforms and restricting of the Maltese economy
1981-1987	MLP	Growth stagnation, signing of Friendship and Cooperation agreements with Libya, 1984
1987-1992	PN	1990 application of EU membership and reversal of many prior MLP policies, such as the reinstatement of the Faculty of Arts and Theology at the University of Malta
1992-1996	PN	PN returns to office after a campaign of liberalisation and public investments following the official application for EU membership in 1990
1996-1998	MLP	Suspended EU application
1998-2003	PN	Reopen EU application
2003-2008	PN	Member of EU in 2004, adoption of the Euro in 2008

This tug-of-war between pro-European and anti-European sympathies is a reflection of the identity politics propagated by the MLP and PN. It can be compared in a sense to the pro-British and pro-Italian Language Question that dominated Maltese politics at the beginning of the twentieth century and heavily influenced the direction of Maltese archaeology. However, when faced with the recent Maltese historiography such as Joseph Gravina's chapter entitled *So Close*

*and yet so far: the Malta Labour Party: cultural politics during the 1970s and 1980s*, found in Chircop's, *Revisiting Labour History* (2012), little is mentioned on the topic of cultural identity. Gravina's primary concern is the rise and decline of the MLP's influence over the working class sector of Malta's society. He does not however, mention the role of national identity in the politics of the time (1970s and 1980s), choosing instead to focus more the reasons for the 'MLP's loss of a majority of votes during the sixteen years in government'<sup>66</sup> and arguing that it was the total focus on the economic regeneration of the island's economy that led to the loss of votes.<sup>67</sup> An exception is Geoffrey Hull's work *The Malta Language Question: a case study in cultural colonialism* (1993). He chooses to focus almost entirely on the cultural elements, a point which reference is made to below.

Therefore, as has been seen in this short synopsis of Maltese political history for the period under discussion, the role of the political parties and their projections on what Maltese identity is played an important role in the policies implemented. As such, these political developments are of prime importance when discussing the relationship between archaeology and politics in Malta since they provide the impetus for how and why archaeology may have been utilised as a political tool. It is the aim of the following chapters to show precisely how this may have been achieved.

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<sup>66</sup> Gravina 2012: 276

<sup>67</sup> Gravina 2012: 278

# Chapter 2

## Methodology

## 2.1 Devising a methodology

As has been seen in the introduction, this study has a number of aims. The first aim, namely that of arguing whether or not archaeology is inherently political, was tackled in the literature review. The other three aims focus on the Maltese context, namely, (1) whether or not post-Independence government administrations utilised archaeology as a political tool, (2) if nationalism played a role in this utilisation of archaeology for political purposes, and (3) if the discipline was used in order to foster a national identity. These three research aims will be tackled through the use of separate case studies, their subsequent analysis and interpretation.

The literature earmarked for the review has made it clear that there are certain sources that allow for the most instructive insights to be drawn on the topic of whether or not archaeology can and is used as a political tool by a class of politicians in government. Amongst these sources myths, symbols, coins, postcards and stamps feature prominently. Various scholars have investigated how archaeology is nationalistic and how it can be used to legitimize power and authority and boost the national image of a nation-state.<sup>68</sup> For example, Fowler uses a number of case studies to highlight his argument by investigating the use of national symbols, the creation of myths, and the use of ideology, in the search of a relationship between archaeology, nationalism and state legitimacy. Therefore, through the use of case studies it becomes possible to investigate the research questions of this study.

Three case studies have been chosen after careful deliberation, each used to portray a different aspect or element in which the relationship between archaeology and politics in post-Independence Malta can become evident or not. The case studies chosen are: (1) postage stamps, (2) a documentary called *Malta and the Phoenicians: The Phoenician Presence and Influence that Shaped History*, produced by Arcane films in Geneva and (3) an American archaeological excavation that took place in Malta between 1983 and 1984.

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<sup>68</sup> Trigger 1984; Fowler 1987

## 2.2 Case study design

When choosing the case studies special care had to be taken that they would fulfil their specific function in this research exercise, namely, that of providing evidence for the use or non-use of archaeology as a political tool by Maltese government administrations in the period 1964-2004.

### 2.2.1 Case study 1: Postage Stamps

The first case study relates to the issue of postage stamps. As argued by Donald Reid, a postage stamp is a carrier of symbolic messages issued by the governments of nation-states, which are however, often overlooked, ignored and taken for granted.<sup>69</sup>

According to Billig the national symbols and slogans of a nation are displayed and portrayed in almost every context of a citizen's everyday life. These national flaggings are continuous messages designed to 'remind individuals about the existence of a nation'.<sup>70</sup> Even though postage stamps are not mentioned by Billig, it can be argued that as symbols that fall into this category, they are nonetheless 'useful ideological and cultural artefacts, and a means for governments to [...] promote certain images at home or abroad'.<sup>71</sup> However, despite this inherently political nature of postage stamps and the vast amount of collections and philatelists found all around the world, they have received relatively little attention from the academic world. The first scholar to recognise this was Donal Reid in 1984, who published an article addressing the validity of postage stamps as a primary source for historians. Since then only a minimal amount of work has been published on the topic, and those that have appeared, have dealt with country and topic specific issues.<sup>72</sup> This is peculiar since stamps are essentially issued by the state and depict what the government, through an appointed board, wishes its citizens to remember about their nation. The people or committees responsible for the creation of postage stamps consider carefully what message should be portrayed.<sup>73</sup> The 'often ignored

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<sup>69</sup> Reid 1984: 223

<sup>70</sup> Billig 1995: 6; Hoyo 2010: 76

<sup>71</sup> Altman 1991: 4

<sup>72</sup> Hoyo 2010: 68, among others see, Altman 1991, Brunn 2001, and Cusack 2005.

<sup>73</sup> Brunn 2001: 316

piece of coloured paper on the edge of the envelope'<sup>74</sup> is thus an important primary source for anyone interested in understanding the type of nationalism and national identity propagated by states.

There are two types of postage stamps, the everyday ones that are continuously sold and available to the public, known as the definitive stamps, and the commemoratives ones, issued for various special occasions and only available for a limited amount of time. Along with these types, one important element of postage stamps must be noted, namely that they are created, designed and approved by the government making them an official document.<sup>75</sup> For this case study it is the definitive stamp series that will be analysed since these are the stamps that have been more readily available and the ones that are bought and used on an everyday basis by the public.

Malta has had five definitive stamp sets issued in the period under investigation that were analysed. These are: (1) the 1965 definitive series designed by Emvin Cremona that marks independence (Fig. 1); (2) the 1973 definitive series which was also designed by Emvin Cremona (Fig. 23); (3) the 1981 definitive series of postage stamps entitled 'History of Maltese Industry', designed by Frank Portelli (Fig. 39); (4) the 1991 definitive stamps entitled 'Natural and Artistic Heritage of the Maltese Islands', also designed by Frank Portelli (Fig. 56). A series of definitive stamps were issued first in 1999 and early in the twenty-first century featuring endemic Maltese Flora (Figs 69, 70, 71, and 72). The next definitive series after this was issued in 2009, and as such both series fall outside of the scope of this dissertation, however, the set will be included in the case study (Fig. 73). Table 2 provides an overview of the relevant definitive sets, their topics and the political party that was in power when they were issued. The conclusion to be derived from this is to ascertain the possible relationship between them.

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<sup>74</sup> Altman 1991: 3

<sup>75</sup> Hoyo 2010: 73

Table 2.1: key dates, themes and political party in government when the definitive sets were issued

Definitive Stamp Issue	Elections	Government	Topic
1965	1962	Nationalist	History of the Malta
1973	1971	Labour	Decimal definitive
1976	1976	Labour	Emblem of the Republic
1981	1981	Labour	History of Maltese Industry
1989	1987	Nationalist	Official seal of Malta
1991	1987	Nationalist	Natural and artistic heritage of the Maltese Islands
2000	1998	Nationalist	Maltese flora

Therefore, borrowing Billig’s phrase, the very nature of the definitive postage stamp is the most ‘banal’ and able to provide evidence on whether or not archaeology was valued as a political tool in Malta. In order to assess whether or not there is an element of political involvement in the creation of these definitive stamp series it would be important to ascertain to what extent government is involved in the process of their production. Thus, postage stamps provide an ideal miniature window in the messages that nation-states wish to convey about the nation’s history and national identity and as such are an ideal case study for this dissertation.

### 2.2.2 Case study 2: Documentary on the Phoenicians and Malta

The next case study relates to a documentary production on the Phoenicians entitled *Malta and the Phoenicians: The Phoenician Presence and Influence that Shaped History*, a twenty-six minute long video created in English in 1984 by the Ministry of Culture, the Museums Department, the Information Division and Xandir Malta.

This production was chosen since it portrays a period of Maltese history in which politics and its associated propaganda was particularly evident. Thus, the choice of this documentary production is intimately linked to the question of national identity and the origin myths propagated by government administrations. The Phoenicians

in particular have featured often in Western historiography, their roles changing according to the socio-political contexts of the time, as Champion has cogently argued.<sup>76</sup> This evolution of interpretation can also be found in Malta with regards to the Phoenicians and their role in the history of the island.

It was during the nineteenth century that the rise of nationalism brought about a quest for the origin of Maltese ethnic identity. Throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, cultures that did not belong to the grand civilisations of ancient Greece and Rome were largely ignored. However, with the advent of the nineteenth century these hitherto forgotten cultures were now being used as the foundations for the struggling nationalistic sentiments of populations all around Europe. Grima argues that the situation in Malta was no different, with the Phoenicians suddenly being seen as the foundations of Maltese national identity, and this needs to be seen against the backdrop of the contemporary debate on the Maltese language, known as the Language Question.<sup>77</sup> Here, the Phoenicians as the originators of the Maltese language became a highly politicized topic, and created a distinct Maltese national identity constructed on the foundations of Phoenician archaeology and language.<sup>78</sup> However, with the beginning of the twentieth century and the discovery of the prehistory of the island the separation of the megalithic remains from the Phoenicians required a restructuring of how archaeological discourse could be used for the quest for Maltese national identity. Grima poses the question as to whether the political elite would continue to use the Phoenicians as their mythical origins or whether it should be sought further back in the newly discovered prehistory of the island.<sup>79</sup> It is precisely in this period, from the early 1920s onwards that the Phoenician origin of the Maltese populations found disfavour amongst the academic community and became largely disused in popular narratives, with a more ancient origin being propagated in the search of origins of Maltese ethnic identity.<sup>80</sup>

As Grima has convincingly argued, the Phoenicians played a major role in the construction of a Maltese national identity manifesting itself primarily in the

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<sup>76</sup> Champion 2001: 451

<sup>77</sup> Grima 2014: 107

<sup>78</sup> Grima 2014: 108

<sup>79</sup> Grima 2014: 108

<sup>80</sup> Grima 2014: 109-110

debates on language. Even though the Phoenician origin myth was already widely disputed by the time of Independence, it was nevertheless promoted throughout the 1970s and early 1980s by the Labour party in government, in particular through the use of the so-called ‘compromise Punic theory’ in which the Maltese language was seen as a hybrid of Arabic and Punic.<sup>81</sup> Throughout Europe the Phoenicians were probably sought as ‘a suitable role model for a modern industrial and mercantile people’<sup>82</sup>, a concept that may be applied to Malta during the Labour Party administration(s). Therefore, through the use of the documentary produced in 1984, the extent to which archaeological narratives were used towards wider political agendas will be ascertained.

### *2.2.3 Case study 3: American archaeological mission to Malta*

The third case study consists of an archaeological excavation conducted in Malta by the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) from 1983 to 1984. This particular excavation was chosen due to the fact that a foreign team was working in Malta during a highly politicised time.<sup>83</sup> The idea is that an analysis of the relevant material pertaining to this excavation, should allow an investigation into whether or not the archaeological aspect was utilised as a tool for higher political purposes. This archaeological mission was carried out in Rabat at the site of the Domus Romana museum esplanade in 1983 and 1984. The first spark for this project was lit by Joseph Galea, Maltese consul in Los Angeles, who in July 1982 approached the UCLA Institute of Archaeology and proposed a joint project between the university and the Maltese government. In December of that same year Leslie Aguis, ambassador of Malta to the United States, issued an invitation to UCLA, which resulted in Professor Merrick Posnansky’s March 1983 visit to Malta, and Dr Ernestine Elster’s two-week survey in September of that year.

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<sup>81</sup> Hull 1993: 299-300

<sup>82</sup> Champion 2001: 453

<sup>83</sup> A visit by Professor Vella to Los Angeles in 2007 led to the examination of a box containing documents pertaining to the 1983-1984 excavations.

### 2.3 Sources

In order to prepare for the analysis of the materials that make up the case studies extensive background research had to be conducted. For this a number of sources were used. The preparatory reading for this dissertation was conducted in the course of the literature review (chapter 1), however, due to the different nature of each case study the research was varied. For the postage stamps and the documentary production on the Phoenicians, comprehensive and general reading had to be conducted on the topics themselves. In the case of postage stamps their use for archaeological research had to be ascertained and evaluated, and the Phoenician element in Maltese archaeology and history had to be properly understood. When it came to the third case study, namely the investigation of an archaeological excavation, the first step to be undertaken was the choice of excavation. After careful deliberation with my tutor, the 1983-1984 University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) excavation in Rabat, was chosen.

For the postage stamps, non-archaeological source material had to be assessed. Firstly, it needed to be determined who or what body was responsible for the choice of designs. Once it was established that the Stamp Design Advisory Board (S.D.A.B.) made these decisions, it had to be ascertained whether the minutes from the board's meeting could be accessed. Through a B.A. (Hons) History of Art dissertation by Davina Brincat it came to my attention that the minutes of the S.D.A.B. are found in the Government Gazette, which however, was not the case, and had to be sourced from the National Archives and Maltapost. The most recent *JB Catalogue of Malta Stamps and Postal History* provided a comprehensive overview of all stamps issued in Malta since 1860, and for the period under discussion six definitive postage stamp series were issued: 1965, 1973, 1981, 1991, 1999-2003 and 2009. The minutes of the S.D.A.B. provided the important information on the decision making process behind the issuing of a new definitive set. The minutes of the S.D.A.B. pertaining to years 1965 and 1973 were located at the National Archives in Rabat, and those for the years 1991, 1999-2003 and 2009 were located through Maltapost, however, those for the 1981 definitive set no minutes were found.

For the documentary video on the Phoenicians the primary source is the video itself which is found in the media library of the Faculty of Media and Knowledge Sciences at the University of Malta. This primary source was supplemented by general background reading on the Phoenicians and their appropriation in Maltese politics throughout the twentieth century. The book by Geoffrey Hull entitled *The Malta Language Question: a case study in cultural imperialism* (1993) provided the backbone for this research since it delved exclusively into the use of language and cultures in Maltese politics. The politics of the Malta Labour Party also needed to be comprehended in order to understand fully the possible use of the Phoenicians as industrial role models. Timothy Champion's article *The Appropriation of the Phoenicians in British Imperial Ideology* (2001) was most useful in understanding the 'various and often quite ambivalent roles in Western historiography'<sup>84</sup> that the Phoenicians have played.

The sources used for the UCLA 1983-1984 excavations in Rabat were not as accessible as those used for the other two case studies. The lack of material available becomes evident when looking at main textbooks, such as Anthony Bonanno's *Malta: Phoenician, Punic and Roman* (2005).<sup>85</sup> The excavations are not excluded completely from the book but they are only mentioned in passing, with a few lines alluding to what was excavated. The reference to excavation reports of this project in publications such as Claudia Sagona's *The Archaeology of Malta: From the Neolithic through the Roman Period* (2015) raised an awareness that a report on this excavation does indeed exist.<sup>86</sup>

A visit to the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage in Valletta allowed for the study of a Museum Department file 'MUS 6/82' containing letters, reports, bills and correspondence between the parties involved in the execution of this excavation, namely Merrick Posnansky and Ernestine Elster, and doctoral students James Lander and Martha Molitor from UCLA. The Maltese side of the correspondence included Dr Tancred Gouder, curator of the National Museum of Malta, John Galea,

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<sup>84</sup> Champion 2001: 451

<sup>85</sup> BONANNO, A. 2005. *Malta: Phoenician, Punic and Roman*. Malta: Midsea Books Ltd. pp. 214-215

<sup>86</sup> Found on page 390 of Sagona's publication.

the Maltese consul in Los Angeles, Leslie Agius the Maltese Ambassador to the United States and John Levy, the director of the American Centre in Malta.

## **2.4 Data collection**

The collection of data for the case studies also varied in nature. When it came to the postage stamps the permission granted to me by a personal friend to use their private stamp collection, allowed for a more intensive study of the stamps since they were readily available and more tangible to me. The journals of the Malta Philatelic Society also provided valuable insights into the postage stamps and the Sliema Stamp Shop allowed for interaction with stamp enthusiasts. The Government Gazette was used in order to access the minutes of the S.D.A.B, which was a crucial part of the investigation since it provided awareness as to how certain designs were chosen. The dissertation by Davina Brincat already included minutes of the S.D.A.B. and as such confirmed their existence, however, it was a visit to the National Archives in Rabat that led to the discovery of the minutes for the definitive sets of 1965 and 1973. In the case of the 1984 documentary on the Phoenicians, access to the video had to be given by the media library of the University of Malta and technical difficulties did not always allow for immediate viewing. The investigation into the production of the video was done in order to find out who was responsible for its production and at whom it was aimed. Along with the video the data used were collected for the this case study involved in-depth research into the various roles given to the Phoenicians, the role they played in the construction of Maltese national identity and the Malta Labour Party's promotion of the 'compromise Punic theory', to which I shall return.

The collection of data involved in the UCLA excavations involved understanding to what extent it has been covered in recent publication on the archaeology of Rabat, any newspaper coverage pertaining to duration of the excavation, and the files kept at the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage, which include all manners of correspondence between participating members and institutions. As mentioned in the previous section, the lacuna in material available to the public on this excavation, made the acquisition of information difficult.

# Chapter 3

## Postage Stamps

### 3.1 Symbols, politics and archaeology

As mentioned in chapter two, postage stamps are more than just pieces of paper stuck to the edge of envelopes. Ever since the Penny Black was issued in 1840, the secondary function of postage stamps, as carriers of ‘miniature messages’, has often been ignored by the academic world.<sup>87</sup> These messages can often be political in nature, involving issues such as national identity and the projection of that identity to the outside world. Postage stamps may also be used as carriers for propaganda, which may also be domestic or international, using themes such as history, politics, art, and economics.<sup>88</sup>

Carlos Stoetzer published what many consider the first publication dealing with the political nature of stamps, in his 1953 monograph *Postage Stamps as Propaganda*. In a brief manner Stoetzer puts an emphasis on the inherently political nature of stamps by stating that:

The stamp itself is ideal propaganda. It goes from hand to hand and town to town; it reaches the furthest provinces and corners of a country and even the furthest countries of the world. It is a symbol of the nation from which the stamp is mailed, a vivid expression of that country’s culture and civilisation and of its ideas and ideals. By the use of symbols, slogans, pictures, even loaded words, it conveys its message far and wide.<sup>89</sup>

Dennis Altman’s *Paper Ambassadors: The Politics of Stamps*, which appeared almost forty years later, is a comprehensive overview of every facet of postage stamps, particularly their political nature. One of the facets that Altman tackles is the fundamentally invisible nature of stamps as something ‘we all possess, use and receive’ and ‘they are so common they are hardly recognised’.<sup>90</sup> Altman is not the only author who argues this point. Stanley Brunn in his paper *Stamps as Iconography: Celebrating the independence of new European and Central Asian states* (2000), also argues that there is more to postage stamps than being ‘small pieces of paper that are affixed on envelopes. They convey messages through the use of symbols, colours, words, drawings or a combination thereof’.<sup>91</sup> This idea can be linked to Billig’s theory of ‘Banal Nationalism’ where he propagates a

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<sup>87</sup> Child 2008: 1

<sup>88</sup> Child 2008: 2-3

<sup>89</sup> Stoetzer 1953: 1

<sup>90</sup> Altman 1991: 1

<sup>91</sup> Brunn 2000: 316

nationalism that is not conscious and visible but rather so commonplace, familiar and banal that it is barely registered.<sup>92</sup> The fact that postage stamps are often taken for granted, their designs overlooked and their secondary function as political carriers not acknowledged, the messages they carry may thus be unconsciously conveyed to the citizens of a nation-state.<sup>93</sup> Therefore, postage stamps can be considered as forming part of the symbolism of ‘banal nationalism’, with the general idea being that states use symbolism as a way to promote identities, and many of these symbols form the root of nationalism. The symbols employed by the state can be used to influence public opinion, and postage stamps form part of this since they are issued by government agencies and thus depict what the state wishes ‘to commemorate, honour, or display’.<sup>94</sup>

### *3.1.1 Stamp Design Advisory Board*

When considering the topic of this dissertation, namely the relationship between politics and archaeology in Malta, postage stamps become an interesting avenue of investigation since the symbols they carry and their choice of subjects may reflect the dynamics of this relationship. This point becomes particularly important when taking into consideration the agencies charged with the creation and publication of postage stamps. In most countries around the world it is government agencies that make the decisions as to what is to be depicted on stamps.<sup>95</sup> This situation also applies to Malta, where the Stamp Design Advisory Board (S.D.A.B.) currently forms part of the Ministry for the Economy, Investment and Small Businesses, and makes the decisions as to what is issued on postage stamps.<sup>96</sup> The role of Maltapost must also be briefly touched upon. Maltapost was created in 1998 as a government entity, in 2002 the company was partially privatized, and in 2008 it was fully privatized.<sup>97</sup> Even though it is Maltapost that issues the postage stamps, it is the

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<sup>92</sup> Billig 1995: 9

<sup>93</sup> Child 2008: 4

<sup>94</sup> Brunn 2000: 315

<sup>95</sup> Altman 1991: 3

<sup>96</sup> <https://www.gov.mt/en/Government/Government%20of%20Malta/Ministries%20and%20Entities/Officially%20Appointed%20Bodies/Pages/Boards/Stamp-Design-Advisory-Board.aspx> (accessed on 21.04.2016)

<sup>97</sup> Times of Malta 2008. Maltapost privatisation latest red-letter day in postal history.

S.D.A.B. that makes the design decisions and as has been mentioned the board is appointed by government.

Today, the S.D.A.B. is composed of seven members, including the secretary and the chairman. However, during the course of the 1970s and 1980s the board was composed of anywhere between eight and eleven members, including the postmaster general who acted as the chairman of the board.<sup>98</sup> The procedure by which certain designs were chosen involved a series of stages, and it must be made clear that the board was responsible for suggesting ideas and themes and for consultations. The final decision, however, would be made by the minister.<sup>99</sup> Today, the process is similar, with the theme being chosen by Maltapost and then the artist is chosen according to the particular skills required. The eventual designs are presented to the S.D.A.B. who will consult on the choice of design. However, as was the case between the 1960s and 1980s, the minister makes the final decision.<sup>100</sup> Today, the board is a ministerial one, meaning the members are appointed by the minister for a term of three-four years. The S.D.A.B. holds meetings up to four or five times a year, remarkably less than in the 1960s and 1970s, and the board is susceptible to changes in government, meaning when there is a change in power from one party to another the members of the board change.<sup>101</sup> The board's primary and major priority is the choosing of the subject matter, and once this is established the process of either commissioning the work or creating a public competition begins.<sup>102</sup>

Therefore, as posited by both Altman and Child the agency behind the choice of stamp design is inherently political, since the creation and issuing of the postage stamp is executed by an officially appointed board under the auspices of the government. This comes as no surprise since 'postage stamps, after all, are official government documents, and their release implies approval by responsible officials'.<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> Brincat 2004: 16

<sup>99</sup> Brincat 2004: 16

<sup>100</sup> Personal communication Mary Grace Simpson, secretary to the S.D.A.B.: 08.04.2016

<sup>101</sup> Personal communication Mary Grace Simpson, secretary to the S.D.A.B.: 08.04.2016

<sup>102</sup> Brincat 2004: 17

<sup>103</sup> Child 2008: 1-2

### 3.2 Maltese definitive stamps

As has been discussed in section 2.2.1, definitive stamp sets are those stamps which are intended for everyday use and ‘carry the mails for an extended period of time, which can be several years’.<sup>104</sup> Therefore, these are the stamps marked for frequent use, the ones the citizens of a nation-state would be most unconsciously exposed to, and thus, amongst the most ‘banal’ (to follow Billig) symbols of nationalism. In the case of Malta there are five definitive stamps sets that were issued in the period under investigation, namely in 1965, 1973, 1981, 1991 and 1999-2003, with the latest set being issued in 2009. The themes carried by these postage stamps range from a wide variety of topics, from symbols of national history, to symbols of industry and to the floral species of the island. The different themes in each set will be briefly described in order to facilitate the discussion that will follow.

#### 3.2.1 1965 stamp set

The *Malta Government Gazette* issued a notice for the release of a new definitive stamp set on 22<sup>nd</sup> December 1964.<sup>105</sup> This new set was issued on 7 January 1965 and was designed by leading artist and stamp designer Emvin Cremona (Fig. 1).<sup>106</sup> Table 3.1 provides an overview of the stamps, including denomination, theme and subject represented.

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<sup>104</sup> Child 2008: 16

<sup>105</sup> *Malta Government Gazette* December 1964, No. 686, pg. 3420

<sup>106</sup> The verbal communication cited in the dissertation of Davina Brincat, with Anna Azzopardi Cremona (Emvin Cremona’s daughter) indicates that Cremona was invited to design the stamps by then Minister of Education, Agatha Barbara, and thus in 1957 Cremona designed his first set of stamps commemorating the fifteenth anniversary of the award of the George Cross to Malta. Whilst still a British colony, philatelic design was often in the hands of the British, however, once Independence was secured, Cremona became the premier stamp designer of Malta, issuing 62 sets over a period of 23 years, amongst which was the first definitive series to be issued by a newly Independent Malta (Brincat 2004: 21, 32).

Table. 3.1: 1965 definitive stamp set

Stamp	Theme	Depiction	Figure
½ d*	Neolithic	Sleeping lady	2
1 d	Phoenician/Punic	Cippus inscription	3
1 ½ d	Roman	Statue, border of mosaic and a capital	4
2 d	Proto-Christian	North African red slip ware	5
2 ½ d	Saracen	Maimuna's tombstone	6
3 d	Siculo-Roman	Norman window	7
4 d	Knights of Malta	Breast plate from palace armoury and the Order's escutcheon	8
4 ½ d	Maltese Navy	Knight's galleys	9
5 d	Fortifications	Fortification and gardjola	10
6 d	French occupation	Mdina cathedral and the fasces of the French coat of arms	11
8 d	British Rule	British Royal coat of arms and inscription found at the Main Guard in Valletta	12
10 d	Naval Arsenal	British Navy and harbour facilities	13
1/-	Maltese corps of the British Army	Emblems of the Royal Malta Artillery, the Kings Own Malta Regiment, and a reference to the Anglo-Egyptian war of 1882, in which Maltese soldiers partook	14
1/3	International Eucharistic congress	Religious symbolism superimposed over a map of Malta	15
1/6	Self-government	Tapestry chamber	16
2/-	Gozo civic council	Bianca Giuratale	17
2/6	State of Malta	Reference to the 1961 Blood constitution	18
3/-	Independence	United Nations logo, doves, and the British crown. The last stamp to depict Queen Elizabeth's II profile	19
5/-	Allied Forces Mediterranean	Headquarters Allied Forces Mediterranean	20
10/-	The Maltese Islands	Map of the central Mediterranean	21
£1	Patron saints	St Paul, St Publius and St Agatha	22

\*the pre-decimal penny used the symbol 'd' from the Roman Denarius

The minutes from the S.D.A.B. reveal that the planning for a new definitive set was already in motion in 1961.<sup>107</sup> The minutes from the meeting held on 20 October 1961 show that the theme for the set was already partially chosen with artists advised in ‘forming their subjects on Roman, Neolithic and other periods and subjects with historical connections’.<sup>108</sup> Since these minutes refer to a letter that was read out from the Financial Secretary of the Executive Council, it may be inferred that the choice of theme was included in that letter. The minutes from 26 October 1961 disclose the choosing of sites/monuments ‘which are typical of various periods’<sup>109</sup> and thus, the artefacts or scenes depicted on the individual stamps were considered to be the most recognizable for the particular phase of Maltese history that is being represented, following a discussion as to whether historical periods of local activities should be portrayed.<sup>110</sup> During this meeting it was also pointed out that the S.D.A.B. did not agree with a new definitive set being issued on the eve of a new constitution. However, ‘official instructions were received to proceed with arrangements for the issue of a new definitive set’.<sup>111</sup> A list of values and subjects for the new set recommended by the S.D.A.B. from 6 November 1961 portrays the almost complete final set with the potential subjects for the different values, an example being whether the carved stone screen at Tarxien or the Sleeping Lady from Ħal Saflieni should be depicted on the Neolithic ½ d stamp. On 15 December 1961,

The chairman stated that the matter of the New Definitive Set was discussed in Executive Council and [...] it was felt that in view of the present drive to attract tourists to Malta, the board could find it possible to make recommendations for the issue of these stamps with subjects definitely related to tourism [...] the Executive Council suggested for the consideration of the Board that historical and archaeological subjects [...] could be incorporated.<sup>112</sup>

The next set of minutes date to 12 November 1962 and deal with the possibility of postponing issuing the stamps in the light of the possible grant of Independence to Malta. However, the Minister of Agriculture, Power and

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<sup>107</sup> The minutes from the S.D.A.B. from 20 October 1961 reveal that on 12 October 1961 the Financial Secretary of the Executive Council issued an order that ‘a new full definitive issue of stamps should be put out in the course of the next year’ (minutes of the Stamp Design Advisory Board: 20 October 1961)

<sup>108</sup> Minutes of the Stamp Design Advisory Board: 20 October 1961

<sup>109</sup> Minutes of the Stamp Design Advisory Board: 26 October 1961

<sup>110</sup> Minutes of the Stamp Design Advisory Board: 26 October 1961

<sup>111</sup> Minutes of the Stamp Design Advisory Board: 26 October 1961

<sup>112</sup> Minutes of the Stamp Design Advisory Board: 15 November 1961

Communications, Carmelo Caruana ‘directed that the work on the issue of this set should proceed as planned’.<sup>113</sup> On 8 February 1963 the minutes indicate that the minister desired that stamps for the granting of Independence should be included in the new definitive set to commemorate ‘this important occasion’.<sup>114</sup>

### 3.2.2 1973 stamp set

The *Malta Government Gazette notice* no. 196 from 13 March 1973, announced the ‘Issue of a New Definitive Set of Postage and Revenue Stamps’ (Fig. 23).<sup>115</sup> This new definitive series was again designed by Evin Cremona and was issued on 31 March 1973, in the wake of the Malta Labour party electoral victory of June 1971. With the change in administration also came a change in the monetary system in Malta, with the adoption of a decimal system, where one pound was divided into one hundred cents and a cent into ten mils. This definitive set is the first to be issued with the new decimal notation. As a result this set became known as the ‘decimal definitive’.<sup>116</sup>

The first meeting available for the S.D.A.B. related to the issuing of this definitive set is from 29 January 1970, where proposals on the subject of the new set were discussed. These ranged from scenes of Maltese life, local views and costumes to political development and tourism. However, it was also expressed that some members were ‘against anything that referred to Malta’s history because he [Dr Aquilina] felt that we have had enough of history on our stamps’.<sup>117</sup> Unfortunately the minutes from the decisive meeting concerning the choice of topic was not found at the National Archives. What can be discerned from the succeeding meetings is that ‘Malta in the seventies’<sup>118</sup> was the theme chosen, with topics of folklore, crafts, industry, sports, education, voluntary services, and the new Coat-of-Arms, all

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<sup>113</sup> Minutes of the Stamp Design Advisory Board: 12 November 1962

<sup>114</sup> Minutes of the Stamp Design Advisory Board: 8 February 1963/3 June 1963

<sup>115</sup> Malta Government Gazette March 1973, No. 196, pg. 759

<sup>116</sup> Times of Malta March 1973

<sup>117</sup> Minutes of the Stamp Design Advisory Board: 29 January 1970; Dr Aquilina was a member of the board

<sup>118</sup> Minutes of the Stamp Design Advisory Board: 23 July 1970

approved by the minister. The meeting held on 21 October 1970 implemented the use of Maltese on stamps instead of English due to ‘prevailing government policy’.<sup>119</sup> On 20 December 1971 the Minister of Development directed that three of the formerly approved designs (horticulture, seascape and Good Friday) were to be replaced ‘by three other subjects depicting industry, archaeology and pottery’.<sup>120</sup> Table 3.2 provides an overview of the stamps depicting ‘Malta in the Seventies’.

*Table 3.2: 1973 definitive stamp set*

<b>Stamps</b>	<b>Theme</b>	<b>Figure</b>
2m	Arkeologija <sup>121</sup>	24
4m	Storja	25
5m	Folklor	26
8m	Industrija	27
1c	Sajd	28
1c3	Fuħħar	29
2c	Biedja	30
3c	Sport	31
4c	Qlugh	32
5c	Festa	33
7c5	Regatta	34
10c	Għajnuna	35
50c	Edukazzjoni	36
LM1	Religjon	37
LM2	Malta	38

<sup>119</sup> Minutes of the Stamp Design Advisory Board: 21 October 1970

<sup>120</sup> Minutes of the Stamp Design Advisory Board: 20 December

<sup>121</sup> Evans 1971; 129; blocking slab carved with two plain spirals separated by a wedged-shaped motive, found at the Tarxien temple complex.

### 3.2.3 1981 stamp set

This definitive series is a set of 16 postage stamps entitled ‘Maltese Industry’ and designed by Frank Portelli, who was considered one of the pioneers of modern art in Malta, distinguishing himself as a painter, stamp designer, interior designer and sculptor, with much of his work being highly influenced by cubism (Fig. 39).<sup>122</sup> In the *Malta Government Gazette* from October 1981 two announcements for the ‘Issue of a new set of definitive postage stamps’ were made.<sup>123</sup> It is a time-line of Maltese industry, with various themes chosen to represent the ‘activities of the island and its people since prehistoric times’,<sup>124</sup> Table 3.3 highlights the main choices. These range from the cotton industry (Fig. 40), coin minting (Fig. 42) and agriculture (Fig. 45) to stone quarrying (Fig. 46) and grape processing (Fig. 47). These are juxtaposed against the emerging industries of ship building (Fig. 48), telecommunications (Fig. 50), and air transport (Fig. 54). The postage stamp with the highest denomination (Lm 5) depicts prehistoric buildings, depicting the spirals from the altars at Tarxien, the colossal statue found in the entrance of the Tarxien south temple and the main entrance of the lower temple at Mnajdra (Fig. 55).<sup>125</sup> Thus, this set of definitives is a depiction of the main sectors of employment in Malta, ranging from prehistoric work and traditional economies to the modern emerging industries of the early 1980s. It must be mentioned that for this definitive set the minutes from the S.D.A.B. were not found at the National Archives.

Table 3.3: 1981 definitive stamp set

Stamp	Theme	figure
1c	Qoton	40
2c	Mriekeb	41
3c	Zekka	42
5c	Arti	43
6c	Sajd	44
7c	Biedja	45

<sup>122</sup> Brincat 2004; Borg 2006

<sup>123</sup> *Malta Government Gazette* October 1981, pg. 2840; No. 582, pg. 2917

<sup>124</sup> Mizzi 1981

<sup>125</sup> Pace 2004: 53, 55, 141

8c	Barrieri	46
10c	Għasir l-gheneb	47
12c	Tarznar	48
15c	Energija	49
20c	Telekomunikazzjoni	50
25c	Industrija	51
50c	Thaffir għal ilma	52
Lm 1	Ġarr bil-baħar	53
Lm 3	Ġarr bl-Ajru	54
Lm 5	Bini Preistoriku <sup>126</sup>	55

### 3.2.4 1991 stamp set

This series is entitled ‘The Natural and Artistic Heritage of Malta’ and consists of 12 individual stamps also designed by Frank Portelli, issued on 9 December 1991 (Fig. 56). For this new definitive set there is no announcement in the Malta Government Gazette. These stamps depict the artistic and natural heritage of the Maltese islands through the use of local scenes and prominent monuments, with denominations ranging from 1c to Lm 2.<sup>127</sup> The minutes from the S.D.A.B. reveal that the planning for the new definitive issue was set in motion in the summer of 1990. The minutes from 31 August 1990 divulge that the Parliamentary Secretary for Transport and Communication, Francis Żammit Dimech, had approved the issuing of a new set and that the choice of subjects should ‘reflect government policy to attract more tourists from the upper end of the market’.<sup>128</sup> Thus, the title chosen was ‘The Natural and Artistic Heritage of the Maltese Islands’, and a list of suggested themes also accompanies these minutes. The minutes from 30 January 1991 disclose that the Hon. Żammit Dimech needed to approve the initial designs

<sup>126</sup> Evans 1971: 129; the stamp depicts various scenes of prehistoric remains found in Malta such as the partial impression of a stone screen from Tarxien which is decorated with four spirals in the corners, the entrance to Mnajdra (Evans 1971: 95) and the colossal statue unearthed at Tarxien, which was heavily damaged by quarrying (Evans 1971: 120).

<sup>127</sup> Times of Malta 1991

<sup>128</sup> Minutes of the Stamp Design Advisory Board: 31 August 1990

before the final artwork could proceed.<sup>129</sup> The minutes from 20 February 1991 indicate the inclusion of new subjects into the set, including the Independence monument by Ġanni Bonnici. The final approval for the new set was given by the Hon. Żammit Dimech on 17 July 1991.

As seen from Table 3.4, these include examples from prehistory, illustrating the façade of the temple of Ta' Hagraġ (Fig. 57), prominent architecture such as Bieb is-Sultan in Vittoriosa (Fig. 58) and Palazzo Spinola (Fig. 60), natural features and bays such as Bajja tal-Mellieħa (Fig. 62), Wied iż-Żurrieq (Fig. 63), and Mġarr in Gozo (Fig. 64), to artistic pieces by local artists such as Antonio Sciortino's Arab Horses (Fig. 67) and Ġanni Bonnici's Indipendenza Statue (Fig. 68).

*Table 3.4: 1991 definitive stamp set*

stamp	Theme	Figure
1 ċ	Ta' Hagraġ Temple <sup>130</sup>	57
2 ċ	Bieb is-Sultan	58
3 ċ	Sur ta San Mikiel	59
4 ċ	Palazz Spinola	60
5 ċ	Knisja l-Qadima	61
10 ċ	Bajja tal-Mellieħa	62
12 ċ	Wied iż-Żurrieq	63
14 ċ	Mġarr	64
20 ċ	Yacht Marina	65
50 ċ	Flieġu ta' Ghawdex	66
Lm1	Antonio Sciortino's Arab Horses	67
Lm2	Ġanni Bonnici's Indipendenza statue	68

<sup>129</sup> Minutes of the Stamp Design Advisory Board: 30 January 1991

<sup>130</sup> Evans 1971: 30; depicts the entrance to Ta Hagraġ temple in Mġarr which was first discovered in 1916 and excavated first in 1923 by Temmi Żammit, in 1954 by John Evans and in 1961 by David Trump. The entrance consists of a 'megalithic doorway and short corridor [...] flanked on either side by the remains of a concave façade composed of large irregular slabs' (Evans 1971: 30).

### 3.2.5 1999-2003 stamp set

Between 1999 and 2003 a series of definitive sets was issued illustrating Maltese flowers designed by Maurice Tanti Burló, who is famously known as the cartoonist of the *Times of Malta*, Nalizperla. The table below provides an overview of the postage stamps of this series, divided into Definitive part I, II, III and additional values. In the case of these definitives there are no minutes of the S.D.A.B. available, except for one dated to 11 December 2000, where the chairman of the board laid ‘emphasis on the concept that a stamp reflects National pride’.<sup>131</sup>

Table 3.5: 1999-2003 definitive stamp sets

Definitive I (1999) Figure 69		Definitive II (2000) Figure 70		Definitive III (2001) Figure 71		Definitive (Additional Values, 2003) Figure 72	
2ċ	Pankrazju	1ċ	Sempreviva ta’ Għawdex	5ċ	Peprin	7ċ	Siġret il- Virgi
4ċ	Bellus	3ċ	Ċistu Roża	11ċ	Lsien l-Għasfur	2ċ	Ġenista Safra
6ċ	Narċis	10ċ	Girlanda tal- Wied	19ċ	Bebuna tar-Raba’	28ċ	Għanzalor
16ċ	Żagħfran salvaġġ	12ċ	Qaqoċċ tax- Xewk	27ċ	Fidloqqom	37ċ	Siġra ta’ Ġuda
25ċ	Halib it- Tajr kbir	20ċ	Orkida Piramidali ta’ Malta	50ċ	Lellux	45ċ	Riħan
46ċ	Tulipan salvaġġ	Lm2	Għallet is-Serduq	Lm1	Hobbejża Kommuni	76ċ	Deru

### 3.2.6 2009 stamp set

The latest definitive set is the one issued in 2009, designed by Edward D. Pirotta and Paul Psaila, depicts the entire history of the Maltese Islands, from the Pleistocene period right down to accession of Malta to the European Union (Fig.

<sup>131</sup> Minutes of the Stamp Design Advisory Board: 11 December 2000

73), as shown in Table 3.6. The minutes from the S.D.A.B. with regards to this set start on 4 June 2007, where the stamp programme for 2008 was discussed along with the planning of a new definitive set. On 26 July 2007 the suggestion of a historical theme by Maltapost was made, which the board agreed to. On 11 October 2007 the stamp programme for 2008 was approved, along with the new definitive set, and on 20 October 2007 the board agreed that the theme would depict subjects from prehistory to the present.<sup>132</sup> A letter from 14 November 2007 (attached to the minutes of 19 November 2007) by a member of the board who did not attend, Dominic Cutajar, reveals the intention to avoid using historic themes that have been used before, however, ‘some are so obvious that I [Cutajar] felt compelled to include them’.<sup>133</sup> The list attached to this letter highlights the suggested choice, which include many of the most recognizable artefacts for each period. Attached to the minutes from 13 March 2008 is a letter from the secretary of the S.D.A.B to the Maltapost with the approved stamp programme for 2008, and the need for a new definitive set since ‘once Malta joins the Eurozone it will be necessary [...] it is envisaged that this will be based on a historical theme spanning prehistory to the present’.<sup>134</sup> The minutes from 4 September 2008 disclosed that since the theme was Maltese history, each stamp should represent a different period. On 2 March 2009 it was decided that the coat-of-arms should be the last image in the set and that the Maltese cross ‘is a Maltese identity mark’.<sup>135</sup>

Thus, the symbols chosen for each period are seen as ‘iconic images’<sup>136</sup> and ones which are most likely to represent a ‘landmark period or event in the history of Malta’.<sup>137</sup> These include artefacts such as the Horus and Anubis amulet for the Phoenician period (Fig. 78), juglets dated to the Bronze Age from Tarxien (Fig. 77), Muslim period tombstone found in Rabat (Fig. 81) and a gold coin depicting Constantine IV found at Tas-Silġ (Fig. 80), amongst others. The stamp with the highest denomination is the one depicting the national emblem of Malta. This emblem was designed by Adrian Strickland and prepared graphically by Yves Cali

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<sup>132</sup> Minutes of the Stamp Design Advisory Board: 20 October 2007

<sup>133</sup> Minutes of the Stamp Design Advisory Board: 19 November 2007

<sup>134</sup> Minutes of the Stamp Design Advisory Board: 13 March 2008

<sup>135</sup> Minutes of the Stamp Design Advisory Board: 4 March 2009

<sup>136</sup> Times of Malta 2009, pg. 17

<sup>137</sup> Times of Malta 2009, pg. 17

in 1988, a year after the Nationalist party returned to government, thus replacing the emblem that appeared in the 1973 definitive set. Therefore, ‘this remarkable set [of] small postage stamp can succinctly tell a major story’.<sup>138</sup> This stamp set was accompanied by a publication entitled *The Historical Collection: Celebrating Malta’s Heritage through Stamps*, which provided a short description of each stamp depicted.

Table 3.6: 2009 definitive stamp set

Postage Stamp	Theme	Symbol	Figure
€0.01	Pleistocene Period	Dwarf elephant	74
€0.02	Early Temple Period	Ġgantija <sup>139</sup>	75
€0.05	Late Temple Period	Tarxien temple spirals <sup>140</sup>	76
€0.07	Bronze Age	Juglets, fused into a double vessel <sup>141</sup>	77
€0.09	Phoenician & Punic Period	Horus and Anubis amulet <sup>142</sup>	78
€0.10	Roman Period	Roman Villa mosaic <sup>143</sup>	79
€0.19	Byzantine Period	Gold coin from Tas-Silġ	80
€0.26	Arab Period	Limestone tombstone	81
€0.37	Norman & Hohenstaufen Period	Geoffrey Malaterra and Duke Robert Guiscard	82
€0.50	Angeovin & Aragonese Period	Tomb slab from Gozo	83
€0.51	Knights of St John	Eight pointed cross	84

<sup>138</sup> Times of Malta 2009, pg. 17

<sup>139</sup> Evans 1971: 173; Ġgantija consists of two buildings set side-by-side with their façades almost in line and a combined outer wall which surrounds the complex in an arc.

<sup>140</sup> Evans 1971: 123; s-shaped spirals in high relief carved onto a threshold block in court 4 of the Tarxien temple complex

<sup>141</sup> Evans 1971: 159; a double vase from Tarxien cemetery phase, decorated with parallel horizontal and vertical incised grooves, zig-zags and triangles

<sup>142</sup> Gouder 1991: 13; Sagona 2002: 284; gold amulet depicting the Egyptian gods Horus and Anubis found in a tomb in Ġħajn Klieb, dated to the seventh-sixth century BC.

<sup>143</sup> Gouder 1983: mosaic from room E at the Roman Villa in Rabat, the threshold of which is depicted on the stamp. It consists of fruit and flowers with a comic mask on each corner and a tragic mask in the centre.

€0.63	French Period	'Prise de Malte' engraving showing Napoleon being rowed to the <i>L'Orient</i> from Malta	85
€0.68	British Period	George Cross	86
€0.86	Independence	Ġorġ Borġ Olivier	87
€1.00	Republic	Dom Mintoff	88
€1.08	EU Accession	Valletta	89
€5.00	Emblem of Malta	Shield made up of a heraldic representation of the Maltese flag, above which is the mural crown, and surrounded by an olive branch and a palm fond, underneath which are the words 'Repubblika ta' Malta'	90

### 3.3 Discussion of data

The study of postage stamps as miniature messages conveying political messages and as banal symbols of nationalism is the foundation of this case study. Thus, the definitive sets of Malta from 1965-2009 need to be discussed in that context, meaning the political undertones need to be examined through the themes depicted on the stamps and more importantly from the minutes of the S.D.A.B, for which however, not all the minutes were available. The practice of issuing stamps after Independence is common amongst newly independent nation-states since it is one of the first acts that announces sovereignty.<sup>144</sup> In this regard the newly independent Malta was no different, and a year after Independence the first definitive stamp set was issued. As such this series depicts a timeline of Maltese history, from the Neolithic down to the modern periods, culminating in Independence, thus a fitting reconstruction of a 'young nation but with a millennial history',<sup>145</sup> an image of Malta which was often broadcasted.

In the case of the first definitive set issued post-Independence, the minutes from 1961 reveal that the plans for the issuing of a new definitive set were already in motion prior to the granting of Independence and as such the set cannot be seen

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<sup>144</sup> Altman 1991: 16; an example of this can be found in the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Turkish and Russian Empires, as a result of the First World War. It can also be traced to the end of the Second World War and the resulting break-up of the colonial empires of Asia, Africa and the Pacific region, creating a multitude of newly independent states.

<sup>145</sup> Gambin 2003: 30

solely as the work of a newly Independent nation-state wishing to highlight its achievements. Nevertheless, the minutes also reveal that the Executive Council had a major role to play and made the decisions as to what themes should be depicted, leaving the choice of design to the S.D.A.B. Unfortunately, the letter that is indicated as having contained the initial choice of themes, dated 12 October 1961, was unavailable to the writer, and as such the process of theme choice cannot be analysed. What can nonetheless be inferred is that the political direction of the time *did* have an impact on the choice of theme, as witnessed in:

- (1) The meeting of 26 October 1961 in which it is suggested that ‘a full definitive set should not be issued on the eve of a new constitution’. This must be referring to the Blood Constitution which came into effect on 24 October 1961.<sup>146</sup>
- (2) The 15 December 1961 meeting demonstrates that the political directives of the time do influence the choice of stamp design. In this case it was the drive to attract tourists to Malta that led the Executive Council to initially suggest subjects related to tourism, such as historical and archaeological subjects.
- (3) The minutes of 8 February and 3 June 1963 reveal that the granting of Independence did have an impact on this definitive set, since it was initially designed without any Independence affiliated topics, but was now changed in order to include postage stamps ‘representing this important occasion’.<sup>147</sup>

Thus, the inclusion of archaeological and historic subjects in the 1965 definitive set was not a random choice but one that was specifically directed by the Executive Council. Even though direct evidence for the use of archaeology as a symbol of national identity was not forthcoming, the use of archaeology as a political tool clearly was, evident in the choice of subjects made ‘definitely related to tourism [...] as these no doubt are of attraction to tourists’.<sup>148</sup>

The 1973 definitive set was also in preparation prior to the change in the government in 1971, as ascertained by the minutes of the S.D.A.B. dating to 29 January 1970, which is the first mention of the new definitive issue. In this meeting

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<sup>146</sup> Frendo 2012: 42

<sup>147</sup> Minutes of the Stamp Design Advisory Board: 8 February 1963

<sup>148</sup> Minutes of the Stamp Design Advisory Board: 15 December 1961

several subjects were considered, as mentioned in section 3.2.2, all of which were centred on the general theme of ‘Malta in the Seventies’. The prevailing attitude that is perceptible from these minutes is the lack of interest in issuing another stamp depicting scenes from Malta’s history. However, by the end of the year on 20 September 1971 the Minister of Trade, Industry and Agriculture informed the board that subjects of industry, archaeology and pottery should be included in the set. This also included the use of the Maltese language instead of English (21 October 1971) which was changed due to the prevailing government policy. This can be examined in the light of Malta’s ever increasing relations with Libya, and the role that the Maltese language played in the cultural politics played by the two nation-states.<sup>149</sup> Thus, even though the members of the S.D.A.B. did not agree with more subjects portraying phases of Maltese history, the Minister (and thus the government) again felt the need to include an archaeological subject (Fig. 24). It may also be added that the theme of ‘Malta in the Seventies’ is a reflection of the growing economic sectors that the government was hoping to create.

The 1981 stamp set depicts a timeline of Maltese industrial development ‘ranging from modern activities to prehistoric work’.<sup>150</sup> Even though the minutes of this definitive set were not located at the National Archives or at Maltapost, it is still possible to postulate on the wider socio-political context. The post-1979 period was characterised by the need for economic diversification in order to wean the Maltese economy away from British military establishments, in conjunction with giving the island a new economic identity.<sup>151</sup> Thus, the depiction of different sectors of the emerging Maltese economy can be seen as the most relevant topics of Malta in the 1980s. The 1991 stamp set was issued under a nationalist government, the first since Independence, and depicts scenes of Malta’s artistic and natural heritage. The Nationalist Party centred its politics on a western European Christian foundation, and often argued that Labour policies were ‘a denial of European roots’.<sup>152</sup> The minutes of the S.D.A.B. pertaining to this set reveal the political agenda behind the choice of theme, where ‘the choice of subjects for stamps is to reflect government

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<sup>149</sup> Mizzi 1995: 188-189

<sup>150</sup> Times of Malta 1981, pg. 13

<sup>151</sup> Mizzi 1995: 188

<sup>152</sup> Mitchell 2010: 382

policy to attract more tourists from the upper end of the market',<sup>153</sup> as requested by the Parliamentary Secretary for Transport and Communication, Hon. Francis Żammit Dimech. This can be likened to the issuing of the 1965 definitive stamp set, which also saw the attraction of tourists as the main political agenda behind the issuing of the set. The role of the government also becomes evident in the minute of 30 January 1991 and 20 February 1991, when the designs needed to be approved by the Parliamentary Secretary before the final artwork could be completed. Thus, the subjects chosen for the individual stamps are those that are thought to attract the more wealthy tourists to the island, which provides an explanation for why themes such as the yacht Marina in Msida (Fig. 65) and Mellieħa bay (Fig. 62) were chosen.

The issuing of sets depicting flowers, animals and nature is a widespread practice and can be found in the postage stamps of almost every nation-state, forming part of what Donald Horne terms 'public culture', as non-political symbols.<sup>154</sup> Malta is no exception, with three sets of definitive stamps being issued depicting Maltese flora between 1999 and 2003. This was also the first set issued by the then newly created Maltapost. Nonetheless, even though the theme is non-political, the depiction of endemic flora that is unique to Malta, may be seen as a form of 'banal nationalism'. For the issuing of these definitives, the only minutes available are dated 11 December 2000, and disclose that the role of a stamp is to 'reflect national pride'.<sup>155</sup> Thus, the depiction of endemic flora can be seen as a reaffirmation of national pride through the portrayal of something that is entirely Maltese. These minutes also revealed the change in the decision making structure of the S.D.A.B. due to the commercialisation of Maltapost. It is noted that the S.D.A.B. would make 'the final decision on designs and stamp programme',<sup>156</sup> rather than merely advise the government. However, through personal communication with Maltapost it was ascertained that the Minister still makes the final decision, even if this role is rarely invoked.<sup>157</sup>

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<sup>153</sup> Minutes of the Stamp Design Advisory Board: 31 August 1990

<sup>154</sup> Horne 1986; Altman 1991: 98; Public culture can be taken to mean a set of images which are used to depict pictures that are taken-for-granted

<sup>155</sup> Minutes of the Stamp Design Advisory Board: 11 December 2000

<sup>156</sup> Minutes of the Stamp Design Advisory Board: 11 December 2000

<sup>157</sup> Personal communication Mary Grace Simpson, secretary to the S.D.A.B.: 08.04.2016

The next and latest definitive set was issued in 2009 and is a time-line of Maltese history divided into the main prehistoric and historic periods. As mentioned above accompanying this stamp set is a Heritage Malta publication with contributions from various authors on the individual stamps. In the foreword of the book Joseph Said, chairman of Maltapost, writes that:

Since the 1900s our [Malta's] definitive postage stamp issues have sought to depict the history and culture of our islands. The issue of seventeen stamps included in this book also does so by portraying iconic images each related to a specific age, period or event. It offers a comprehensive representation of the experiences of these islands between pre-history and today [...] the result is a remarkable set of stamps that offers a philatelic and historic timeline while also confirming that a small postage stamp can succinctly tell a major story.<sup>158</sup>

The minutes relating to this stamp set, dated 13 March 2008, reveal that the issuing of a new definitive set came about as a result of Malta joining the Eurozone in 2008. The minutes also disclose that the set was to depict a historic chronology of Malta, from prehistory to the present. Thus, even though the S.D.A.B. had more authority in the choice of subject and design, the wider political events still had an influence on the definitive issue, and specific subjects were still being chosen due to their position as a 'Maltese identity mark',<sup>159</sup> such as the coat-of-arms.

Thus, through the minutes made available for the 1965, 1973, 1991, 2009, and indirectly, the 1999-2003 sets, the role of the government in the process of stamp design and issuing of definitives sets, has been ascertained. Even though for many of these sets the actual design choice process was not disclosed, and therefore, the reasons for the choice of archaeological and historical topics, the political agenda behind the theme *was* made clear. This thread will be picked up in the final concluding chapter.

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<sup>158</sup> Heritage Malta 2009: 5

<sup>159</sup> Minutes of the Stamp Design Advisory Board: 2 March 2009

## Chapter 4

Malta and the Phoenicians:

The Phoenician Presence and

Influence that Shaped History

#### 4.1 The Phoenicians: Archaeology and politics

As has been noted briefly in chapter two, the Phoenicians have played a long and varied role in the historiography of Malta. The Phoenicians as a culture have in particular been the subject of various western historiographies, changing their role according to the ideological climate prevailing at the time. This point has succinctly been argued by Champion (2001) by portraying the different roles assigned to the Phoenicians from the seventeenth century up until the twentieth century in Britain. Champion's brief account allows for the analysis of how archaeological material can be utilised for nationalistic purposes, such as the use of an ingot found in the River Fal in 1812 that was used to provide clear evidence for a Phoenician presence in Britain, and by extension 'proof' of the mercantile nature of both the ancient Phoenicians and the modern Britons.<sup>160</sup>

When investigating the situation in Malta it becomes clear that the Phoenicians also played an important role in the development of Maltese political history during the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The use of past cultures for political agendas becomes particularly evident when taking into consideration the rise of nationalism and the ensuing search for national identity that occurred in the nineteenth century.<sup>161</sup> This also reflects wider trends throughout Europe, with nationalistic struggles using past cultures in order to provide an affirmation for the political agendas.<sup>162</sup> Similar events have been witnessed for Malta, where the Phoenicians were taken to provide the foundations of Maltese national identity, at a time where the political landscape was highly energized and in the midst of a linguistic conflict.<sup>163</sup> An early attempt at preserving the cultural memory of the Phoenicians in Malta was by Gian Francesco Abela in the seventeenth century. Abela set up a commemorative inscription at a cemetery close to where a terracotta sarcophagus was discovered at Għar Barka in 1624. This can be considered as the first recorded attempt at using the material culture of Malta to define an identity.<sup>164</sup> The rise of modern archaeology and scientific methodologies led to the academic

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<sup>160</sup> Champion 2001: 457

<sup>161</sup> Diaz-Andreu 2007: 349-350

<sup>162</sup> Diaz-Andreu & Champion 1996: 4-6

<sup>163</sup> Grima 2010: 107

<sup>164</sup> Vella 2014: 26

disfavour of this Phoenician origin notion, and by the mid-twentieth century, it had taken the status of a myth.<sup>165</sup> However, even though this myth had been discredited by academics, it had become part of Maltese popular nationalism,<sup>166</sup> with the MLP in particular continuing to use it for its political propaganda, as shall be argued below.

Therefore, the relationship between archaeology and the use of the Phoenicians for political purposes is an association that has been part of the Maltese political discourse for the better part of two centuries, and it is the purpose of this case study to ascertain whether or not and in what way, the Phoenicians continued to be used as a political tool throughout the late 1970s and 1980s.

## 4.2 The documentary

*Malta and the Phoenicians: The Phoenician Presence and Influence that Shaped History* is a twenty-nine minute long video, in English, that was produced in 1984 by the Ministry of Culture, the Museums Department, the Information Division and Xandir Malta.<sup>167</sup> This documentary was selected as a case study due its creation at a time where Malta's relations with its European and North African neighbours were reaching a peak, with the island's foreign policy reflecting this, a synopsis of which has been provided in section 1.3. Prior to embarking on a discussion of the documentary and its wider socio-political context, a description of the data in the video is necessary.

The first six minutes of the documentary start with a general introduction to who the Phoenicians were and where they came from, with the rise of the first

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<sup>165</sup> Brincat 2011: xxxv; after the Second World War studies focusing on the stratigraphy of the Maltese language revealed that there was so perceivable eldest level, and as such could only be traced back to the Arab invasion of 870 AD.

<sup>166</sup> Brincat 2011: 30

<sup>167</sup> In 1975 the Telemalta Corporation was created and under its auspices, Xandir Malta became responsible for all broadcasting (<http://www.rediffusion.info/Malta/history/> Accessed on 06.05.2016). In the case of this documentary it was a co-production between Arcane Films and the various departments mentioned above. However, time constraints did not permit research in the archives of the Public Broadcasting Services, in order to ascertain who or by what entity the script was written. Attempt to access the archives at PBS (Public Broadcasting Services) through its archivist, Mr Ray Libreri, was not successful.

civilisations in the Near East, the Akkadians, Amorites and Canaanites. It is claimed that it is from the latter that the Phoenicians are descended, ‘occupying a narrow stretch of land between the sea and chains of mountains’<sup>168</sup> (Fig. 91). A brief introduction of the western expansion of the Phoenicians follows, using the iconography of a ship carved into a Roman sarcophagus from Lebanon (Fig. 92).

About 1200 BC the Middle East was invaded by a confederation of several tribes known as the peoples of the sea [...] thereby causing a wave of mass migration [...] this era marks the actual beginning of Phoenicia, consisting of a new group of people and the start of their trade activities in the Mediterranean region [...] the Phoenicians, a nation of navigators, have to brave the immensity of the ocean.<sup>169</sup>

The westward routes of expansion are mentioned in conjunction with the setting up of trading posts along the way, highlighted through the use of maps in the documentary (Fig. 93): ‘sailing along the African coast [...] as they travelled the Phoenicians set up the basis for future trading posts and spread more and more their influence on the coastal areas’.<sup>170</sup> The role of Carthage in the western Phoenician diaspora is highlighted and ‘while the Phoenician cities in the east lose their supremacy to the domination of the Assyrians, in the west the richness and influence of Carthage increases [and] set up their own trading posts’.<sup>171</sup> It is from this point onwards that the documentary turns its attention towards the Maltese Islands: ‘situated in the middle of the Mediterranean Sea, the island of Malta was undoubtedly one of the earliest posts in the west on the maritime route to Spain, North Africa and Sicily’ (Fig. 94).<sup>172</sup> This is set against a backdrop of the national airline, Air Malta, and the international airport (Fig. 95). It is emphasised that ‘the island’s historic destiny was to be drastically influenced by the Phoenician presence in Malta’,<sup>173</sup> and using the material remains unearthed as evidence for this. The documentary places much emphasis on the Phoenician invention of the alphabet and how the ‘discovery in Malta during the seventeenth century of two Cippi dedicated to the god Melqart with an inscription in Greek and Phoenician has made it possible to decipher the writing of that time’<sup>174</sup> (Fig. 96). These are mentioned in conjunction

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<sup>168</sup> Junod 1984: 00:01:05

<sup>169</sup> Junod 1984: 00:02:33-00:03:00

<sup>170</sup> Junod 1984: 00:03:27-00:03:48

<sup>171</sup> Junod 1984: 00:04:44

<sup>172</sup> Junod 1984: 00:05:32

<sup>173</sup> Junod 1984: 00:07:10

<sup>174</sup> Junod 1984: 00:08:00; it was the discovery of these Cippi that allowed Jean-Jacques Barthèlèmy to decipher the Phoenician script in 1758 (Vella 2013: 589).

with the lack of Phoenician remains that survive on the island, with the exception of tombs and the material remains that have been found within them (Figs 97 and 98):

The earliest pottery found in the tombs of Malta evoke despite its form and colour the Phoenician homeland of the eighth and seventh century BC [...] alongside old Phoenician pottery Greek earthenware from the late eighth and seventh century BC was discovered in several tombs, undoubtedly brought from abroad.<sup>175</sup>

According to the documentary it is the tombs that have allowed for a reconstruction of the location of the possible Phoenician settlements, along with the sanctuary of Astarte in the south-east of the island. The harbour settlement of Vittoriosa is singled out in relation to ‘the first Phoenician trading posts have developed in creeks which form ideal natural harbours’ (Fig. 99).<sup>176</sup> Unfortunately Vittoriosa ‘has erased any remains of former settlements [...] However, the place has preserved the magical memory of its origin’.<sup>177</sup>

The craftsmanship of the Phoenicians is highlighted with reference to works in ‘alabaster, polychrome glass and ivory [and] the introduction of precious metals’<sup>178</sup> (Figs 100 and 101). The Micallef amulet and the Ghajn Klieb amulet are singled out as examples of Phoenician craft in Malta (Figs 102 and 103).<sup>179</sup> All this is portrayed against a backdrop of the ‘platform of mercantile activity’,<sup>180</sup> namely the Grand Harbour. This commentary is set against a scene of Sea Malta containers (Fig. 104).<sup>181</sup> The content of the ships included ‘silk, cotton, jewellery, precious

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<sup>175</sup> Junod 1984: 00:09:06-00:09:21

<sup>176</sup> Junod 1984: 00:12:27

<sup>177</sup> Junod 1984: 00:12:11

<sup>178</sup> Junod 1984: 00:13:06

<sup>179</sup> The Micallef amulet consists of a bronze figurine in a strong Egyptian style with the iconography pointing towards the Egyptian solar divinity Horus. This amulet contained a Phoenician inscription and a representation of the goddess Isis in the middle. An analysis of the inscription dates this amulet to the sixth century BC, and thus provides valuable evidence for the funerary practices of Phoenician Malta. The Micallef amulet is so called due its discovery in a tomb on the property of Dr Daniel Micallef at Tal-Virtù, in 1969. The amulet was immediately turned over to the Museum of Archaeology (Gouder 1991: 20). The Ghajn Klieb amulet consists of two miniature figurines, namely Horus and Anubis, standing back-to-back and welded together. Notwithstanding the clear Egyptian influence, the amulet was probably produced by Phoenicians in the Levant sometime during the seventh-sixth century BC (Żammit 1906a: 101-105; Żammit 1906b: 48).

<sup>180</sup> Junod 1984:00:16:04

<sup>181</sup> Sea Malta Company Limited was established in 1973 as the national shipping company of the Maltese Islands, with the Malta Development Corporation holding 51% of the shares, with the main aim of positing the Maltese Islands as a transshipment and distribution centre. (Times of Malta. 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Supplement: Sea Malta Company Limited. 26 November 1983, pg. 6)

articles and wood',<sup>182</sup> which would be bartered for luxury objects. The commentary returns to the historical narrative with the arrival of the Roman period of Maltese history and how:

During the Punic Wars Malta becomes a strategic point. It is finally annexed to the Roman Empire in 218 BC, at the beginning of the Second Punic War [...] the mosaics of a Roman house [Fig. 105] discovered on the island evoke this period.<sup>183</sup>

The centrality of the Grand Harbour throughout the successive periods of Maltese history is stressed, set against a backdrop of the harbour itself and the facilities available there. The contemporary role of the Grand Harbour, with its various creeks, facilities and dockyard (Fig. 106), is brought into the picture, and furthermore is portrayed as having rediscovered its role from the Phoenician period, and 'with its various creeks, its ship building yard and dockyard which can accommodate the largest ships [...] has become one of the principal dockyards of the Mediterranean'.<sup>184</sup> Scenes of the facilities available at the Grand Harbour and the type of work being done there, provide the setting for this commentary (Fig. 107).

Malta's lack of natural resources is portrayed as being a past and present concern, with the island requiring the importation of raw material. The importation of coal is highlighted as a modern concern, particularly since it is needed to fuel the power station that provides the island with electricity. However, this is portrayed in the light of new industries and an export orientated economy being created, set against a backdrop of shipbuilding, ship repair, and the drydocks (Fig. 108). The strategic value of Malta is stressed and how:

Up to the end of the Second World War Malta is involved in conflicts between powerful nations. Malta becomes Independent in 1964. Ten years later it is proclaimed a Republic, at that time Malta's Prime Minister was Dom Mintoff [...] in the midst of these camps the Maltese have erected a peace laboratory to express and confirm their neutrality and have friendly relations with everyone.<sup>185</sup>

The last minutes of the documentary focus on the crafts of the Maltese: 'fishing like the majority of local crafts; ceramics, goldsmith, glass and textiles goes back to the

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<sup>182</sup> Junod 1984: 00:16:25

<sup>183</sup> Junod 1984: 00:17:37-00:17:52

<sup>184</sup> Junod 1984: 00:20:00

<sup>185</sup> Junod 1984: 00:23:54-00:25:05; the Peace Laboratory was set up by Dom Mintoff's brother, Fr. Dionysus Mintoff, and is non-government organisation that focuses on adult education. <http://peacelab.org/about-us/> (accessed on 13.05.2016)

origins of Malta'.<sup>186</sup> Thus, 'the Phoenician imprint is still evident in everyday life in the traditions of the island [...] even of the Maltese language of Semitic structure, Punic word roots that have been preserved up to this very day'.<sup>187</sup>

### 4.3 Discussion

As has been portrayed in the overview of the documentary, the primary focus are the Phoenicians, their remains on the Maltese Islands and the imprint left on Maltese society, with all its modern implications. The discussion to follow will first outline the Phoenician archaeology of Malta, in order to juxtapose it against the narrative in the documentary. This will be followed by a discussion in the socio-political context surrounding the production of the documentary and its relation to archaeology.

#### 4.3.1 *The archaeology*

The sources available for a study of the Phoenician period of Maltese history are not plentiful, both when it comes to literary and to archaeological evidence, a point which the documentary stresses when discussing the remains 'on the island there remain very little vestiges of Phoenician times, undoubtedly destroyed to make way for later buildings'.<sup>188</sup> The presence of the Phoenicians in Malta can be explained through the geographical position of the island (Fig. 94) which is particularly important since compared to other locations settled by the Phoenicians, Malta had little to offer in terms of raw materials including restricted agricultural resources.<sup>189</sup> Thus, it can be posited that Malta was settled early on, evidence for which is provided in the grave goods unearthed which can be securely dated to the eighth century BC. More specifically, burial finds from a tomb in Għajn Qajjet containing two inhumation burials, a cremation and imported proto-Corinthian cups (Fig. 98)

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<sup>186</sup> Junod 1984: 00:26:08

<sup>187</sup> Junod 1984: 00:27:30

<sup>188</sup> Junod 1984: 00:08:25

<sup>189</sup> Markoe 2000: 180; Bonanno 2005: 20

provide the earliest evidence of Phoenician presence in Malta.<sup>190</sup> Phoenician settlement in Malta was centred on a highland plateau in the north of the island, namely Rabat, and in the south-east around the harbour of Marsaxlokk. This is substantiated through the numerous tombs found on the outskirts of Rabat and the sanctuary dedicated to Astarte (south-east), discovered by the Italian Archaeological Mission in the 1960s.<sup>191</sup> The inland settlement at Rabat attests to a Phoenician element in Malta that intermingled closely with the native inhabitants, a fact that is evident in the ceramic repertoire at Tas-Silġ and the location of the tombs, however, no single securely identifiable Phoenician farmstead has been identified in Malta or Gozo.<sup>192</sup>

The material evidence of the late eighth and seventh centuries BC points towards a thriving eastern Mediterranean connection, and little in the way of western Mediterranean contacts.<sup>193</sup> The rising economic and political influence of Carthage started to be felt across the central and western Mediterranean during the sixth century BC. The Egyptian influence was evident in the type of trade conducted from Carthage, which mainly involved the reproduction of Egyptian style products which were used for commercial and religious purposes. The Egyptian influence in Malta is also evident through the type of jewellery found in the various Phoenician tombs on the island.<sup>194</sup>

The sanctuary at Tas-Silġ is an important source of information on the Phoenician period. The remains of a temple dedicated to the Phoenician goddess Astarte was discovered there by the Italian Archaeological Mission, through the abundant dedications to the goddess incised on potsherds.<sup>195</sup> The *Missione Archeologica Italiana a Malta* commenced works at the site of Tas-Silġ in 1963 and was

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<sup>190</sup> Baldacchino & Dunbabin 1953: 39-40; Said-Žammit 2001: 133; The imported Greek wares allowed for the secure dating of the Phoenician vessels, and provided an eight-century BC context for the inhumation burials. The cremation burial is a first-century BC intrusion (Baldacchino & Dunbabin 1953: 22, 39).

<sup>191</sup> Moscati 1993: 288; Markoe 2000: 180

<sup>192</sup> Gouder 1995: 4; Vella 2007: 74; the intermingling of early Phoenician ceramics with considerable quantities of final Bronze Age potsherds, indicates, according to Italian archaeological mission excavating at Tas-Silġ, a peaceful relationship between the native inhabitants and the arriving Phoenicians (Ciasca 1970: 4-5).

<sup>193</sup> Bonanno 2005: 55-56; Sagona 2008: 510-511

<sup>194</sup> Bonanno 2005: 58; Bonanno 2011: 44

<sup>195</sup> Gouder 1991: 4

Organized by the Institute of Studies of the Near Orient of Rome University under the auspices of the Italian Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Education, and in cooperation with the Malta Government, particularly of the Ministry of Education and the National Museum Authorities.<sup>196</sup>

The material remains unearthed at Tas-Silġ are the richest repertoire of Phoenician material on Malta, including artefacts such as ivory (Fig. 100), and carved limestone. However, it must be mentioned that Tas-Silġ does not feature in the documentary, begging the question as to why such an important site was excluded. It is to the harbours that one must look in order to understand the initial Phoenician settling of Malta, since ‘there is no doubt that the harbours played a very significant role in making commercial activity possible’.<sup>197</sup> The centrality of the Grand Harbour in the documentary leads to the impression that extensive Phoenician activity took place there. However, the lack of Phoenician remains in the Grand Harbour area is an enigma, with one explanation posited by Anthony Bonanno being the lack of beaches available for berthing, which would have led to Phoenician settlers and traders choosing a different location.<sup>198</sup> However, Timothy Gambin argues that there may have been a beach or marsh present, particularly due to the high rate of siltation in the area.<sup>199</sup> Due to the urban development of the Grand Harbour area, investigations into port structures and accompanying features has been difficult. However, there have been a number of discoveries since the eighteenth century that confirm intense harbour activity during the Roman period.<sup>200</sup> The presence of settlements in the area surrounding the Grand Harbour can be ascertained through the presence of various tombs dating from between the fifth and first century BC, discovered during the late nineteenth and early twentieth

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<sup>196</sup> Times of Malta 1963; it was the Nationalist Minister of Education, Dr Antonio Paris and Michelangelo Cagiano de Azevedo from the Catholic University of Milan who orchestrated the Italian Archaeological Mission, along with the support of the Italian consul in Malta, Onofrio Messina (Rossi 2015: 151)

<sup>197</sup> Bonanno 2005: 59

<sup>198</sup> Bonanno 2005: 60-61

<sup>199</sup> Gambin 2004: 159-161

<sup>200</sup> Gambin 2004: 171; in 1768 Count Barbaro discovered extensive structures on the Kortin promontory which consisted of three building complexes, rooms and water storage chambers. In the late nineteenth century harbour works revealed several marble columns and the torso of a small statue, leading to the conclusion that a prominent building must have stood in the area (Caruana 1882: 90). Dredging activity during the late 1860s led to further structures being discovered, and in the early twentieth century a Roman building and another large structure, thought to be a warehouse, were unearthed (MAR 1955-1956, p. 7).

centuries.<sup>201</sup> Thus, whilst the presence of various tombs dating to the Punic period are attested in the area, no harbour remains dating to earlier than the Roman period have been discovered. Having said this, on the basis of the evidence provided by the tombs, listed in Table 4.1, it may be possible to assume that a harbour complex of Phoenician/Punic origin existed.<sup>202</sup>

*Table 4.1: tombs in the Grand Harbour area<sup>203</sup>*

<b>Site</b>	<b>Number of tombs</b>
Tal-Ħorr (Addolorata cemetery)	6
Tal-Liedna	6
Għajn Dwieli	11
Kordin	3
Paola	4
Marsa	11

#### *4.3.3 The Grand Harbour, Libya and the Phoenicians*

There is quite an interchange between past and present, ancient and modern, in the documentary, with various material artefacts used in order to substantiate the narrative being told. It can be noted that when the material remains are shown much of the narrative concerns Malta's Phoenician past. In addition, a substantial amount of time is dedicated to the maritime past of the Phoenicians and this is set against a

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<sup>201</sup> Gambin 2004: 171; a number of shaft and chamber tombs have been discovered throughout the first half of the twentieth century in the harbour area such as in Marsa and Qormi. Thus, the location of the tombs provide a possible indication for the area most likely chosen for settlements and the exploitation of natural resources available (Said-Żammit 1993: 69), which in this case would be the Grand Harbour with its various creeks.

<sup>202</sup> Gambin 2004: 171

<sup>203</sup> Said-Żammit 1992: 7; in 1918 several tombs were discovered in the Marsa and Qormi areas during the course of Admiralty works being carried out for the construction of airship sheds. An example being a shaft and chamber tomb discovered on 6<sup>th</sup> September 1918 on the west end of Marsa, which revealed a few human bones, a broken blue glass bead and small sherds of Punic pottery. According to Temmi Żammit 'this is a tomb of an early Punic type which may be of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC' (Żammit 1918).

backdrop of the Grand Harbour. Therefore, the centrality given to the Grand Harbour in terms of its modern and ancient role, becomes clear. However, whether this was the case or not requires further discussion. There are four main criteria that determine the choice of harbour for maritime activity, namely: (1) situation, (2) site conditions, (3) overall layout and, (4) harbour structures.<sup>204</sup> The Phoenicians preferred to set up harbours in protected bays where there would be sufficient shelter regardless of the weather conditions or vessel size.<sup>205</sup> On the Maltese archipelago there are two sites that would fall into this category, namely the Marsaxlokk bay and the Grand Harbour. In the case of the former site the use of the anchorage is attested by the presence of the Phoenician sanctuary at Tas-Silġ (Fig. 109).<sup>206</sup> However, in the case of the latter it is predominantly the geomorphology of the harbour and the known later Roman use of the site that allows for an inference into whether or not it was used during the Phoenician period (Fig. 110).<sup>207</sup>

As mentioned above, the presence of numerous Punic tombs in the Marsa and Qormi areas may allude to a Phoenician presence in the area. It must also be mentioned that the documentary does not differentiate between the Phoenician and Punic periods of Maltese history, but rather treats it as one period.<sup>208</sup> Regardless, no definite harbour structures or related material has been discovered that could substantiate a Phoenician harbour infrastructure.

Even though the evidence from Tas-Silġ provides much more secure data for the presence of a harbour at Marsaxlokk, with all its implications for connectivity, the

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<sup>204</sup> Marriner 2007: 110; these four criteria can be considered to be the determining elements in the choice of harbour location. The situation refers to the harbours position in relation to the hinterland, the site location deals with the natural elements such as rocky or clastic coasts, the overall layout depends on the navigational conditions, wind and waves, that may be present within the harbour and the type of harbour structures will be determined by the size of the vessels and the raw materials available.

<sup>205</sup> Markoe 2000: 69

<sup>206</sup> Bonanno 2011: 54-55

<sup>207</sup> Gian Antonio Ciantar describes extensive Roman remains at the Grand Harbour in his *Malta Illustrata*. The remains consisted of a rectangular buildings with rows of rooms, with one of these rooms containing 260 complete amphorae and a quay (Ciantar 1772)

<sup>208</sup> It must be noted that the terms 'Phoenician', 'Punic' and 'Carthaginian' are often used without proper chronological definition for the Phoenician presence in the western Mediterranean. In particular 'Punic' and 'Carthaginian' are used interchangeably and thus refer to the post-sixth century BC, when Carthage assumed political and economic power of the central and western Mediterranean. Thus, the term 'Phoenician' is allocated to the earlier periods of western contact, namely the eighth to sixth centuries BC (Aubert 2001: 12-13).

site is not mentioned in the documentary, and the Grand Harbour remains the focus.<sup>209</sup> This alludes to the use of the harbour to tie the contemporary Maltese situation, particularly that of the drydocks, with the ancient Phoenician one. The drydocks featured prominently in the politics of the 1960s-1980s due to the high number of Maltese employed there.<sup>210</sup> The political and economic situation in Malta cannot be discussed without mention of the relationship the island cultivated with Libya, a topic which will be discussed in more detail in section 5.1.1. What can however, be mentioned are the various solutions sought in order to keep the drydocks up and running. The drydocks were nationalised under the leadership of Dom Mintoff after the failed attempts by the Nationalist government and the British company C.H. Bailey Ltd to create a commercial ship-building facility.<sup>211</sup> In 1976 the Shipbuilding Company Ltd was created, which was jointly owned by the Maltese government (35%), the Libyan Maltese Holding Corporation (50%) and some funding from Algeria (15%).<sup>212</sup> Further enlargements were implemented at the drydocks in the early 1980s, resulting in them becoming the largest drydocks in the Mediterranean, a feat which however, did not ensure their continued survival.

The Malta Handbooks from 1976 till 1984 place a heavy influence on the drydocks, with a segment in each book dedicated to the topic.<sup>213</sup> The intensive work put into the continued success of the drydocks attests to the Maltese government's perception of its vital role in the Maltese economy of the 1970s and 1980s, and would thus provide a fitting explanation as to why the drydocks feature so prominently in the documentary. In 1984, the year the documentary was aired, Malta and Libya signed the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation which resulted in even closer relations in areas concerning the economy, security, culture and the

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<sup>209</sup> The location of Tas-Silġ is often taken to be the main reason for the large scale activity witnessed there during the Phoenician and Roman periods. Its position allows for a connection and interaction between the inland communities and the sea. Furthermore, it is the fact that Tas-Silġ is connected to the sea via three routes that may be the 'most important single explanatory factor in the choice of location' (Grima and Mallia 2011: 243).

<sup>210</sup> Mizzi 1995: 59-60

<sup>211</sup> Mizzi 1995: 63

<sup>212</sup> Mizzi 1995: 60-64, 216-217

<sup>213</sup> The Malta Handbooks provide an overview of the works carried out at the drydocks such as 'repairs on a full range of hull engine, electronic, and electrical repairs, voyage and accident repairs, surveys, conversions and jumboizing' (Malta Handbook 1981: 66).

military.<sup>214</sup> Thus, it is reasonable to argue that the documentary may be seen as a reflection of these socio-political and economic realities.

The role of the Phoenicians in the documentary is to provide the link to the past as the connecting symbol between Malta's presumed past economic vitality and its present situation. An element in the relations between Malta and Libya which highlights the use of the Phoenicians is the repeated emphasis made from the mid-1970s onwards on the Maltese and Libyans being portrayed as 'blood brothers'. An address by Mintoff to the Congress of the Libyan people dated to 31 October 1978 clearly reflects this:

We and you [the Libyans] belong to the same race; both are descended from the Phoenicians. We have the same tongue [...] we are brothers who were separated by foreign rulers more than eight hundred years ago. Now we have awakened, now we are breaking the chains, which bound us and we want to be together once again.<sup>215</sup>

Therefore, the Phoenicians are used as symbols of a national past and consequently of a national identity, constructed in order to legitimize and validate modern political concerns. As has been mentioned in section 4.3.1 the evidence for a Phoenician harbour complex is only securely attested through the remains of the sanctuary of Tas-Silġ and its close proximity to the Marsaxlokk harbour, which is not touched upon in the documentary. It is only the presence of tombs in the Grand Harbour area which may allude to a Phoenician settlement, and thus archaeologically there is not enough evidence to support the Phoenician origin of the economic centrality of the Grand Harbour. The archaeological evidence that is portrayed in the documentary regarding a Phoenician presence on Malta such as the pottery, tombs and accompanying grave goods, are accurate and are today still used as secure sources of information. However, these are also portrayed as providing evidence for the economic vitality and maritime role of the Maltese Islands and the consequent centrality of the Grand Harbour, even though the archaeological evidence for the Phoenician use of the harbour is missing.

In chapters 1 and 2 it was argued that the use of the past for present political purposes is a widespread phenomenon and features regularly in the nationalistic

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<sup>214</sup> Borġ 1991: 52

<sup>215</sup> Borġ 1991: 22; The primary source for this speech could not be located at the archives of the Foreign Ministry.

aspirations of nation-states.<sup>216</sup> This can be witnessed in Malta where throughout the course of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the myth of the Phoenicians as the foundations of the Maltese national identity became institutionalized in the framework of Maltese historiography.<sup>217</sup> By the mid-twentieth century this was no longer the case in the Maltese academic world, however, the myth survived in popular nationalistic narratives.<sup>218</sup> Therefore, the Grand Harbour is used as a symbol to portray this nationalistic sentiment, along with the drydocks, which can be seen as the contemporary materialisation of past economic activities that provide a direct connection to the foundations of Maltese national identity.

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<sup>216</sup> Trigger 1984: 357-360; Fowler 1987: 229; McGuire 2008: 151-152

<sup>217</sup> Grima 2014: 107

<sup>218</sup> Hull 1991: 297

## Chapter 5

# UCLA American Archaeological Mission

## 5.1 The politics of excavations

Archaeology is inherently political and since the aims of this dissertation are to ascertain to what extent the Maltese government used archaeology as a political tool, an essential component of archaeology as a discipline, namely excavations, needs to be discussed. Excavations often have a popular association with archaeology, where one cannot be conducted without the other.<sup>219</sup> However, even though this may not always be the case, excavations often form part of the political element within archaeology. Trigger cogently argues this point by stating that governments often invite and subsidise archaeological excavations as part of their political agenda, citing examples from nineteenth-century France, the Masada excavation in Israel, and German archaeology in the early twentieth century.<sup>220</sup> Thus, excavations are used as the material justification of much political activity, with different states having different mechanisms in place for the protection and study of their material past.<sup>221</sup>

Thus, the purpose of choosing an archaeological excavation as a case study becomes clear, and in the case of Malta, the choice of a foreign archaeological mission provides even further avenues of investigation into the aims of this dissertation. This is due to the fact that the inviting of a foreign archaeological team to the island during a highly politicised domestic and international period raises questions of interest. An American archaeological team from the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) was invited to Malta between 1983 and 1984 under the auspices of the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Culture, during a period where Malta was stressing its international neutrality but at the same time seeking closer relations with its southern African neighbours.

Another matter pertaining to this case study is the contact between Professor (then Dr) Nicholas Vella from the University of Malta and Professor Merrick Posnansky in Los Angeles in 2007, a meeting which inspired the inclusion of the UCLA archaeological mission in Malta in this study. Whilst at the Getty Villa as a visiting scholar, Vella was introduced to Posnansky by Ernestine Elster, resulting in a

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<sup>219</sup> Kristiansen 2008: 8

<sup>220</sup> Trigger 1984: 358

<sup>221</sup> Kristiansen 2008: 5

discussion concerning the 1983-1984 UCLA excavation in Malta, in which both Posnansky and Elster participated. The discussions held between Vella and Posnansky resulted in Vella's examination of the contents of a box containing documents on the excavation, which led to the creation of a box file of documents that was used by the writer for this case study. More specifically, according to Vella, the box contained a letter from the U.S. Under Secretary of State stating that 'the presence of an American archaeological mission to Malta would help offset Libyan influence there'.<sup>222</sup> However, prior to embarking on a discussion of the significance of the letter, a brief overview of the relations between Malta and Libya is required, in order to place the excavation within its wider context.

### *5.1.1 Malta-Libya relations*

During the late 1970s and early 1980s the main political focus of the island, both in terms of domestic and foreign relations was centred on relations with its southern neighbour Libya. Dom Mintoff and his Malta Labour Party won the general elections of 1971 and soon thereafter fundamental changes started to be implemented in Malta. The first of these, and the one that started Malta on its path to neutrality, was the termination of the Allied Forces Mediterranean headquarters on the island.<sup>223</sup> This was to be one of the first of a series of policies that departed from those of the previous administration. The most profound of these policy changes was Mintoff's relationships with the Eastern Bloc, China and Libya, along with the reduction of Maltese dependence on Western Europe.<sup>224</sup> The Malta Handbooks published by the then Information Division describe Malta's policies in the following way:

Malta's international relations are conducted on two basic principles, first that Malta should contribute her fair share towards the attainment of a durable peace in the world generally and in the Mediterranean in particular and secondly, that Malta's foreign policy should serve as an instrument for the improvement of the country's standard of living.<sup>225</sup>

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<sup>222</sup> Personal communication Professor Vella: 17.12.2015

<sup>223</sup> Mizzi 1995: 96

<sup>224</sup> Mizzi 1995: 183

<sup>225</sup> Malta Handbook 1976: 31

The withdrawal of the British led to the need for a monetary cushion that would soften the blow to the Maltese economy, and a soft landing was ensured by the rise in Libyan investment on the island. Thus, by 1978 several jointly owned companies were in operation, with the Maltese economy increasingly relying on its southern neighbour.<sup>226</sup> From the late 1970s onwards a cultural connection was being forged between the two nation-states, providing a platform from which a stronger economic relationship could be created:

Friendly relations between Malta and Libya have deep roots. Historically and geographically the two countries have always been close. Today these ties have resulted in practical cooperation between the two countries. Covering cultural, economic and social activities.<sup>227</sup>

Amongst other things, this cultural rapprochement was materialized through the construction of a Mosque in Paola, the creation of a Libyan Arab cultural institute in Valletta, and the various appearances made by Gaddafi during the course of the late 1970s and early 1980s. Apart from this, the teaching of Arabic in Maltese secondary schools became compulsory and Libyans and Maltese were being portrayed as ‘blood brothers’. Table 5.1 provides an overview of the key relations between Malta and Libya throughout the 1970s and 1980s.

*Table 5.1: Malta-Libya Relations*

<b>Year</b>	<b>Events</b>
1969	King Idris is deposed in Libya led by the army captain Muammar Gaddafi, dismantling the monarchy and establishing the Great People’s Libyan Arab Socialist Jamahiriya.
1971	Dom Mintoff becomes Prime Minister in Malta and establishes relations with Libya
1972-1979	The NATO base is dismantled and Libyan government loans Malta three million pounds, on departure of the British
1973-1976	Cultural rapprochement between the two countries is at its peak

<sup>226</sup> Borg 1999: 25; the companies created included the Maltese-Libyan Arab Fishing Company Ltd, Air Mediterranean Airlines Company and the Libyan-Arab Maltese Joint Holding Company, which included the Malta Shipbuilding Company Ltd.

<sup>227</sup> Times of Malta 1977

1980	First signs of tension between Malta and Libya due to an incident involving an oil rig hired by the Maltese government being approached by Libyan gunboats and a submarine
1982	Continental shelf issue handed over to the ICJ
1984	<i>Friendship and Cooperation Treaty</i> signed between Malta and Libya

Relations with Libya were already on the rise during the early years of the Labour administration of 1971, with trade between the two countries increasing, visa agreements being signed, and pledges for future investments being made.<sup>228</sup> This is not to say that relations between the two nation-states were never strained. A dispute arose when in 1980 armed Libyan vessels hindered Maltese oil drilling on the Medina Bank.<sup>229</sup> However, this matter was referred to the International Court of Justice and in 1984 the court ruled on a line between Malta and Libya. Coincidentally in the same year that the *Friendship and Cooperation Treaty* was signed between the two nation-states.

Another factor that must be kept in mind is the possibility that highly publicised relations with Libya and the Eastern Bloc were cultivated in order to refocus American and European attentions towards the central Mediterranean.<sup>230</sup> It is thus, in this socio-political framework that the UCLA excavation must be investigated.

### 5.1.2 *The excavation*

The University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) excavations that occurred in Malta between 1983 and 1984 at the Domus Romana Museum Esplanade in Rabat, are usually mentioned in conjunction with the Roman phase of Maltese history. As mentioned in section 2.3 the sources for a study of this excavation are not easily accessible, and those that are, are of limited information, as the dig remains essentially unpublished.<sup>231</sup> In Bonanno's publication on Malta's Phoenician, Punic and Roman periods the UCLA excavation is mentioned briefly:

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<sup>228</sup> Times of Malta 1973

<sup>229</sup> Blake 1987: 215

<sup>230</sup> Montalto 2012

<sup>231</sup> See now in the analysis of pottery in Anastasi 2015

In that year and in 1984 a small team of archaeologists from the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA), with the collaboration of local archaeologists and volunteers, conducted a limited excavation in Museum Esplanade, the wide open space in front of the Domus Romana.<sup>232</sup>

What is relevant to the topic under discussion is the reason/s why the excavation was conducted, and more specifically the reason why it was an American archaeological team that undertook the research. However, in order to discuss the archaeological excavation in its proper context a brief introduction to the individuals involved (Table 5.2) and the events leading up to the first UCLA visit to Malta in August 1983 (Table 5.3) are required, the source for which was the Museum File 6/82 found at the offices of Superintendence of Cultural Heritage, Malta.

*Table 5.2: individuals involved in the UCLA archaeological mission to Malta*

<b>Name</b>	<b>Role</b>
Joseph Galea	Maltese consul in Los Angeles. First contacted the Institute of Archaeology at UCLA in July 1982
Leslie Agius	Maltese non-resident ambassador to the United States, Greece, Italy and France (1981-1983)
Tancred Gouder	In 1970 Tancred Gouder joined the Museums Department in the position of assistant curator at the national museum of archaeology. In 1990 he became the Director of Museums. In relation to the UCLA project, Gouder was the liaison between the American team and the Museums department in Malta
Stephen Spiteri	Director of Museums Department during the early 1990s
Alex Sceberras Trigona	Minister of Foreign Affairs and Culture under the Malta Labour Party administration of 1981-1987
Andrew Vella	Personal secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Culture
Agatha Barbara	President of the Republic of Malta from 1981-1987
Anthony Bonanno	Roman specialist at the University of Malta, and was part of the Maltese team participating in the archaeological mission
Merrick Posnansky	Faculty coordinator and Professor of history and anthropology at UCLA and in 1983 he became Director of Institute of Archaeology. Posnansky was first contacted by Joseph Galea about the possibility of an American mission in Malta,

<sup>232</sup> Bonanno 2005: 214-215

	and later visited Malta in March 1983 in order to conduct preliminary investigation about the choice of site.
Ernestine Elster	Director of Publications at the Institute of Archaeology at UCLA. Elster's research interests centred on the Mediterranean, and she acted as project director in the August 1983 season. Elster had also previously visited Malta in 1980 during which a brief interview with Gouder was conducted.
James Lander	Doctoral candidate in the Archaeology program with research interests on Roman military installations. From 1980-1985 Lander taught at Harvard School in Northern Hollywood, California and in 1984 obtained a PhD from UCLA. In August 1983 Lander formed part of the three-strong team that conducted the preliminary excavations at the Museum Esplanade in Rabat as the field supervisor
Joel Levy	United States Foreign Service officer stationed in Malta as the director of the American Centre, forming part of the United States Information Service (USIS), and the official liaison between the Maltese government and the American team
Martha Molitor	Doctoral student in the archaeology program student of European Archaeology, under Professor Marija Gimbutas. Molitor acted as assistant field and lab supervisor and she was also exploring the possibility of a dissertation topic in Malta.
Patricia Hickey	Formed part of the 1984 American team and was interested in the Classical period.

*Table 5.3: Dates and events leading up to the August 1983 UCLA visit*

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>
24 July 1982	Joseph Galea, Maltese consul in Los Angeles, writes to Leslie Agius, Maltese non-resident ambassador to the US, informing him about his 15 <sup>th</sup> July meeting with Merrick Posnansky, in which he proposes an American archaeological mission in Malta. In this letter he alludes to Ernestine Elster having been in Malta in 1980. <sup>233</sup>
27 August 192	Tancred Gouder writes to Leslie Agius about the shift away from prehistoric studies, and the possible location for an American archaeological mission being Museum Esplanade in Rabat. <sup>234</sup>

<sup>233</sup> MUS 6/82: no.1

<sup>234</sup> MUS 6/82: no. 2

11 November 1982	President of the Republic of Malta, Agatha Barbara, writes to Alex Sceberras Trigona, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Culture, about meeting American archaeologists and informing them that she 'could never understand by Americans have been excavating sites all over the world but never in Malta'. <sup>235</sup> Barbara ends the letter by stating that the Americans will take up the issue on their return to the United States.
23 December 1982	Galea writes to Agius discussing the possible American archaeological mission, resulting in the invitation of Posnansky to Malta. <sup>236</sup>
9 January 1983	Agius writes to Tancred Gouder about the proposed visit to Malta by Posnansky, and the issue of financing the visit. <sup>237</sup>
20 January 1983	Agius replies to Galea about Posnansky's visit and wants to forward the details to Gouder. <sup>238</sup>
1 February 1983	Gouder applying for funds for Posnansky's visit. <sup>239</sup>
11 February 1983	Gouder receives no objections for the funding of the visit. <sup>240</sup>
21 February 1983	Gouder informs Galea that financing has been approved, leading to some communication regarding air tickets and hotel reservations. <sup>241</sup>
15 April 1983	Posnansky writes Gouder thanking him for the Malta visit, which occurred from 26 to 29 March. Posnansky also mentions meetings held at UCLA and future proposals for the archaeological mission. <sup>242</sup>
24 April 1983	Posnansky writes to Gouder again about the report (no 21) of his March visit to the island and informing him that copies sent to Joseph Galea, John Levy (director of the American centre) and Ernestine Elster. The report included recommendations on the possibility of a UCLA archaeological mission. <sup>243</sup> These included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Proposing a joint UCLA-Malta project</li> <li>(2) Reconnaissance visit planned for later in the year, surveying the Rabat area and conducting bibliographic research and sondages</li> <li>(3) Funding</li> <li>(4) Duration of archaeological mission and training of Maltese archaeologists</li> <li>(5) Site organisation and equipment</li> <li>(6) Reasons for why funding would be feasible</li> </ul>

<sup>235</sup> MUS 6/82: no.3B

<sup>236</sup> MUS 6/82: no.7A

<sup>237</sup> MUS 6/82: no.7

<sup>238</sup> MUS 6/82: no.7

<sup>239</sup> MUS 6/82: no.10

<sup>240</sup> MUS 6/82: no.11

<sup>241</sup> MUS 6/82: no.7-16

<sup>242</sup> MUS 6.82: no.18

<sup>243</sup> MUS 6/82: no.19

10 May 1983	Levy writes to Posnansky and informs him that the United States Information Agency (USIA) has approved two travel only grants to UCLA researchers. <sup>244</sup>
1 June 1983	Posnansky writes to Gouder introducing him to Elwin Svenson and professor James Coleman, both influential UCLA officials, along with Elster and James Lander as those to be in charge of impending activities in Malta. <sup>245</sup>
27 June 1983	Elster writes to Gouder introducing herself and the plans for the August visit. <sup>246</sup>
15 July 1983	Gouder writes to the Minister of Finance, Lino Spiteri (1981-1983), on the issue of funding the accommodation for the August visit, resulting in the placing of the UCLA team at the Xara Palace Hotel in Mdina. <sup>247</sup>
4 August 1983	Gouder writes to Andrew Vella, personal secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Culture, about the impending arrival of the UCLA team. Gouder also writes a brief introduction about the visiting Americans and what plans have been made for the two week visit. <sup>248</sup>

Thus, between 11 and 26 August 1983, UCLA conducted a preliminary investigation at the Museum Esplanade in Rabat. Elster led the team, which consisted of herself, James Lander as field supervisor and Martha Molitor as finds lab supervisor. The aim of this was to use sondages in order to plan for future larger-scale excavations and the compilation of a bibliography on the archaeology of the Mdina area, all executed in collaboration with the National Museum of Archaeology, and volunteers from the Grupp Arkeologiku Malta. According to the preliminary report written by Elster the two-week excavation attracted much attention in the local news. In an article carried in the Times of Malta on 12 August 1983, the day after the arrival of the Americans, it was noted that:

<sup>244</sup> MUS 6/82: no.22; The USIA functioned from 1953 to 1999 and the mission of the institution was to 'understand, inform and influence foreign publics in promotion of the national interest, and to broaden the dialogue between Americans and U.S. institutions, and their counterparts abroad' (USIA: an overview 1998).

<sup>245</sup> MUS 6/82: no.23; Elwin Svenson was the Vice Chancellor of Institutional Relations (<http://www.anderson.ucla.edu/faculty/faculty-directory/svenson>, accessed on 26.04.2016), and James Coleman was on the chair of the UCLA council for International and Comparative Studies (CICS) from 1978 until 1985 ([http://abc.eznettools.net/D300015/X329586/Alumni\\_A\\_to\\_E/Coleman/James-Smoot.html](http://abc.eznettools.net/D300015/X329586/Alumni_A_to_E/Coleman/James-Smoot.html), accessed on 26.04.2016)

<sup>246</sup> MUS 6/82: no.24

<sup>247</sup> MUS 6/82: no.26

<sup>248</sup> MUS 6/82: no.33

The team from UCLA came here as a result of collaboration between Maltese Foreign Ministry and the Department of Archaeology at the University of California’ and that ‘the project was started on the initiative of Dr A. Sceberras Trigona, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Culture.<sup>249</sup>

The correspondence between Levy and Elster in October of 1983 followed this sentiment:

The good vibrations from your brief Malta sojourn are still echoing around the island and the officials with whom I have been in contact are, if anything, even more enthusiastic than before I left about the prospects of a complete excavation being conducted under the UCLA auspices.<sup>250</sup>

The excavation of 1983 yielded promising results with Punic, Roman, Medieval and Muslim sherds being unearthed, the majority being Late Roman in date. A floor, large stone blocks and a cistern were also discovered, along with what was interpreted as a street or yard.<sup>251</sup> The recommendation from this two-week venture was the creation of a larger excavation season for the next three years. The correspondence found in the museum file starts again in May of 1984, where Posnansky informs Gouder of the intention to send a team to Malta. An overview of the correspondence leading up to the 1984 season is shown in Table 5.4.

*Table 5.4: Preamble to 1984 excavation season*

29 May 1984	Posnansky writes to Gouder about the intention of sending a team to Malta that summer. <sup>252</sup>
6 June 1984	Gouder write to the personal secretary Andrew Vella, in order to inform the minister of the UCLA visit in July, and requesting approval (reply no 49). <sup>253</sup>
11 June 1984	Posnansky writes to Gouder about the finalisation of plans for the summer and informs Gouder of his appointment as director of Institute of Archaeology UCLA. <sup>254</sup>
27 June 1984	Hotel reservations for the UCLA team, which includes; (1) James Lander, (2) Martha Molitor, and (3) Hickey. <sup>255</sup>
17 August 1984	Personal secretary of Trigona, Pierre Mallia, writes to Gouder requesting a progress report on the excavation. <sup>256</sup>

<sup>249</sup> Times of Malta 1983

<sup>250</sup> UCLA excavations Melita esplanade 1983-1984: no.16

<sup>251</sup> UCLA excavations Melita esplanade 1983-1984: no.15

<sup>252</sup> MUS 6/82: no.38

<sup>253</sup> MUS 6/82: no.37 & 49

<sup>254</sup> MUS 6/82: no.41

<sup>255</sup> MUS 6/82: no.46

<sup>256</sup> MUS 6/82: no.55

The details of the 1984 season can be viewed in ‘A Report on the 1984 Season of Excavation at Melita, The Ancient Capital of Malta’ which was submitted by James Lander to Posnansky.<sup>257</sup> According to the report two structures, a street and the rest of the cistern were unearthed, along with scores of pottery and small finds.<sup>258</sup> The report indicates the successful interaction and partnership, ‘with excellent cooperation at all times amongst the participants’<sup>259</sup> along with anticipation of successive excavation seasons. However, separate correspondences, between Elster and Posnansky, indicate that these relations were rather strained, and stressed that a member of UCLA team, namely James Lander who ‘did not want to work closely with his colleagues but only with volunteers who are willing to follow orders’,<sup>260</sup> even though:

The first objective [...] is to work as closely as possible with [the] Maltese hosts and to be ambassadors, as it were, or both UCLA and American enterprise and scholarship.<sup>261</sup>

However, even though the relationship between the Maltese and the American team seems to have been strained, the correspondence between Elster and Posnansky in October 1984 indicates the continued significance of the joint mission.<sup>262</sup> Nevertheless, the correspondence, found within the museum file, and dated to 1985, paints a different picture. Table 5.5 provides an outline of the correspondence following the 1984 season. Thus, from the correspondence it can be surmised that the joint project was hastily cancelled. However, the letters do not allude as to why this occurred.

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<sup>257</sup> Lander 1984

<sup>258</sup> UCLA excavations Melita esplanade 1983-1984: no.25

<sup>259</sup> UCLA excavations Melita esplanade 1983-1984: no. 15

<sup>260</sup> UCLA excavations Melita esplanade 1983-1984: no. 27

<sup>261</sup> UCLA excavations Melita esplanade 1983-1984: no.27; in confidential correspondence between Elster and Posnansky the behaviour of James Lander is discussed, along with a letter written by Patricia Hickey, part of the UCA 1984 team, describing this behaviour in greater detail.

<sup>262</sup> UCLA excavations Melita esplanade 1983-1984; the letter includes the various discussions that Elster held while in Malta, with the University of Malta rector and staff, with Tancred Gouder and with Joel Levy. The situation that can be inferred from these is the recommendation for further excavation seasons in Malta.

Table 5.5: correspondence of post-1984 excavation season

11 October 1984	Personal secretary Mallia still awaiting a reply to the request for a progress report on the 1984 excavation season
17 October 1984	Gouder replies to Mallia and informs him on the works and findings of the 1984 excavation season
7 January 1985	Elster writes to Gouder and elaborates on talks held with Galea and the hope to solve all problems. At this stage the problems which are mentioned only relate to practical matters.
8 February 1985	Posnansky writes to Gouder and informs him that no excavations would be taking place in 1985, but with the hope that they would resume in 1986.
9 February 1985	Along the same lines as the letter written to Gouder, Posnansky informs Levy that UCLA researches would not be applying for funds since excavations would not be taking place that year.
19 March 1985	Personal secretary to the minister, Vella, writes to Gouder and stresses 'that field work should be terminated this year'. <sup>263</sup>
4 April 1985	Molitor writes to Gouder asking for permission to carry out field work in Malta, including the details as to her plans and her intention to keep a low profile since 'Libya is too close for comfort'. <sup>264</sup>
12 May 1985	Gouder denies Molitor's request to carry out research individually due to the withdrawal of UCLA from the joint-project in Rabat
2 October 1985	Gouder writes to Stafrace from the Ministry of Culture and Foreign Affairs, and refers to the project as still ongoing with the possibility of the resumption of fieldwork in 1986

## 5.2 Discussion

Through the documents found within the MUS 6/82 file an atmosphere of initial cooperation and partnership can be ascertained, with the Maltese government being portrayed as the initiators of the Melita project with Joseph Galea, Maltese consul in Los Angeles, extending an invitation to the Institute of Archaeology at UCLA. What must be kept in mind when discussing this is the wider socio-political context of the time, and how this reflects a Maltese foreign policy that was rekindling its

<sup>263</sup> MUS 6/82: no.58

<sup>264</sup> MUS 6/82: no.56

relations with its southern neighbour Libya. Thus, this begs the questioning of why an American archaeological mission was invited to conduct a project in Malta.

As has been seen in the overview of the documents pertaining to the UCLA archaeological mission in Malta, the initiation of the project involved not only scholars from both the United States and Malta, but also Maltese government officials:

- (1) Joseph Galea, Maltese consul in Los Angeles
- (2) Leslie Aguis, Maltese non-resident ambassador to the United States
- (3) Dr Alex Sceberras Trigona, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Culture
- (4) Agatha Barbara, President of the Republic of Malta

Representing the American interests in Malta was Joel Levy, a United States Foreign Service officer, who was stationed in Malta as director of the American Centre, which formed part of the United States Information Service (USIS). This organisation was created in 1953 and was operational until 1999 with the sole intention of promoting U.S. national interests to foreign nationals and to increase the interaction between U.S. institutions and their counterparts abroad.<sup>265</sup> Consequently the involvement of government officials and departments cannot be denied, and the excavation project must be seen within this political framework. The foreign policy of Malta during the early 1980s reflects a fluctuating relationship between the island state and Libya, and increasingly hostile relationship between the U.S. and Libya. As discussed in section 5.1.1, relations between Malta and Libya started to deteriorate in 1980 over a dispute on the delineation of the continental shelf on the Medina Bank. This dispute took on the nature of a conflict when in 1980 armed Libyan vessels hindered Maltese oil drilling on the Medina Bank.<sup>266</sup> However, relations between the two countries were soon restored, thus, providing an interesting political background to the UCLA excavation.

In section 5.1 the contact between Professors Vella and Posnansky in 2007 was briefly mentioned, along with the contents of a box on the archaeological mission in 1983-1984. According to Vella one of the papers he was allowed to see but not

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<sup>265</sup> USIA 1998

<sup>266</sup> Blake 1987: 215

photocopy, was a letter from the U.S Under Secretary of State which stated that an American archaeological mission in Malta would be welcomed by the administration in order to counteract or balance out the increasing Libyan presence in Malta.<sup>267</sup> When juxtaposed against the information in the museum file a paradox becomes evident, since the museum file indicates the archaeological mission was initiated by the Maltese government, whilst the letter seen by Vella indicates something else. It was Posnansky's wish in 2007 that this particular letter would not be photocopied and correspondence between Posnansky and Vella in March 2016 did not lead to any further information on its contents. According to Posnansky the Under-Secretary of State contacted Elwin Svenson (Vice Chancellor of External Affairs at UCLA) indicating that the Department of State would be encouraged to support the creation of an archaeological mission in Malta. According to the Under-Secretary of State this would show that non-governmental institutions in the U.S. could help kindle cooperation between Malta and the U.S.<sup>268</sup>

“The Under-Secretary of State (a State Department employee as opposed to a political appointment) called our UC Vice Chancellor for External Affairs, Elwin Svenson and said that the Department of State would be encouraged in its diplomacy if UCLA could actively become engaged in archaeological activities in Malta. It was felt that this would indicate that non-governmental bodies in the US were interested in Malta and would help stimulate fruitful cooperate with Malta”.<sup>269</sup>

Posnansky told Vella that neither the Maltese government nor the Department of State were involved in the UCLA archaeological plans in Malta. However, this does not concur with the information contained in the museum file found at the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage. Section 5.1.2 provides an overview of the documents found in the file and the events leading up to the 1983 excavation, the excavations itself, the report and the 1984 excavation season. There are various letters between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Culture and Tancred Gouder (Director of the Museums Department) and between Gouder and Leslie Aguis (Maltese non-resident ambassador to the U.S.), all elaborated on in Tables 5.3, 5.4 and 5.5. This type of correspondence does not present a government *not* involved in the planning and execution of the UCLA archaeological mission. From the American side Joel Levy (Director of the American Centre) was the official liaison

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<sup>267</sup> Personal email correspondence between Professors Vella and Posnansky 2016

<sup>268</sup> Personal email correspondence between Professors Vella and Posnansky 2016

<sup>269</sup> Personal email correspondence between Professors Vella and Posnansky2016

between the Maltese and the visiting American archaeological team, and there are also various letters here that attest to the governmental importance attributed to the joint project:

The good vibrations from your brief Maltese sojourn are still echoing around the island and the officials with whom I have been in contact are, if anything, even more enthusiastic than before [...] about the prospects of a complete excavation being conducted under UCLA auspices.<sup>270</sup>

In another letter between Elster and Posnansky the objectives of the American team in Malta are highlighted. Primary amongst these is the objective ‘to work as closely as possible with Maltese hosts and to be ambassadors [...] of both UCLA and American academic enterprise and scholarship’.<sup>271</sup> This coincides with what Posnansky states, when he claims that, the Under-Secretary of State would be encouraged in its diplomacy, since an American archaeological mission in Malta ‘would help stimulate fruitful cooperate [*sic*] with Malta’.<sup>272</sup> The letter that Vella states was from the Under-Secretary of State and concerns the increasing Libyan presence in Malta, would fit into the international political paradigm of the time, particularly since the political relationship between Libya and the U.S. was deteriorating.<sup>273</sup> This is something that is also evident in correspondence between Martha Molitor and Tancred Gouder dated 4 April 1985, in which Molitor clearly states that she intends ‘to keep a low profile [since] Libya is too close for comfort’.<sup>274</sup>

Therefore, even though it is not possible to ascertain whether the initiation for the joint project came from Malta or from the U.S., the interests of both governments were involved, as shown through the letters found in the museum file. Consequently the UCLA archaeological mission to Malta in 1983-1984 was subject to, if not directly initiated by, the wider political currents.

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<sup>270</sup> UCLA excavations Melita esplanade 1983-1984: no. 16

<sup>271</sup> UCLA excavations Melita esplanade 1983-1984: no. 27

<sup>272</sup> Personal email correspondence between Professors Vella and Posnansky: 03.03.2016

<sup>273</sup> In 1979 the U.S. embassy in Tripoli was attacked by violence protests, which resulted in 1980 in the expulsion of Libyan diplomats from the U.S. and the proclamation by the U.S. that Libya was a state sponsor of terrorism. In 1981 two Libyan jets were shot down by the U.S. flying over the Gulf of Sirte which was claimed by Libya as part of its territorial waters, which was disputed by the U.S. (Aljazeera 2008)

<sup>274</sup> MUS 6/82: no. 56

# Chapter 6

## Concluding remarks

The scope of this study is the relationship between archaeology and politics in post-Independence Malta. More specifically, the research was aimed at ascertaining whether or not archaeology was utilised as a political tool by post-Independence administrations, coupled with the role that nationalism and the fostering of a national identity play in the utilisation of archaeology for political purposes. Thus, this study began with an inquiry into the nature of archaeology, which revealed that archaeology was not divorced from its socio-political surroundings, but rather immersed in the on goings of modern society. Meaning that archaeology is often used to create a past that is relevant to the interests and concerns of modern communities, as posited by various scholars. Thus, nationalism is often taken to be the most influential ideology in the development of archaeology as a discipline, a theme which is picked up by various authors. Central to the relationship between archaeology and nationalism is the use of symbols which are used to create a sense of national unity and to foster nationalism. This is tied into the idea of 'banal nationalism' first put forward by Billig (1995), who argues that there are certain unconscious markers of nationalism which act as reminders of national unity such as flags, anthems, songs, and language. Thus, the aims of this dissertation are to reveal whether any symbols, more specifically archaeology, have been used by the post-Independence administrations for political purposes and the consolidation of a national identity.

An inquiry into the archaeological developments in Malta has revealed a lacuna in archaeological historiographies for the years following the granting of Independence, with the notable exception being a doctoral thesis, defended last year, which investigated the effect that the changing political climate in Malta had on the setting up and makings of the Italian archaeological mission of the 1960s. Consequently, three case studies were chosen to address the relationship between archaeology and politics namely: definitive stamp sets (chapter 3), the study of a documentary entitled *Malta and the Phoenicians: The Phoenicians Presence and Influence that Shaped History* (chapter 4), and an American archaeological mission that took place between 1983 and 1984 in Malta (chapter 5).

The definitive stamp sets have revealed a political agenda that utilises the most prominent symbols of Malta's national past in order to project an image that would

attract the outside world to Malta. In conjunction with an analysis of the minutes of the S.D.A.B. the essentially political process behind the choice of stamp design became clear. Since the minutes revealing the initial choice of themes were not available, it was not possible to ascertain the role that nationalism played in the design choices. However, for the 1965 definitive stamp set the minutes did make it clear that the granting of Independence was to be commemorated in the set, thus, indicating the use of the definitive stamps in memorializing the historic event. The celebration of historic events can also be witnessed in the 2009 definitive stamp set, consisting of a miniature message carrying a long historical timeline. However, even though an explicit reason for the choice of archaeological and historical themes is not given, their intentional use for political purpose can be ascertained.

The documentary on the Phoenicians presented a situation where the archaeology of the Phoenicians was exploited for a modern political agenda. This becomes evident through the interplay of ancient and modern and more specifically through the centrality of the Grand Harbour in the documentary. The political and economic climate of the 1980s centred on the Grand Harbour and the various facilities found within it. Thus, the documentary utilised the Phoenicians and their supposed presence in the Grand Harbour in order to portray a sense of continuity between past and present. As was discussed in chapter 4, the archaeological evidence does not tally with the narrative, since there are no Phoenician structural remains that could indicate their use of Grand Harbour, although it must be kept in mind that absence of evidence is not evidence of absence. The use of the Phoenicians to justify modern political agendas is also evident in the claim that the Maltese language is derived from the Phoenician one, a concept which has academically been completely disproven, but which was still utilised by Dom Mintoff and his government in the 1970s and 1980s in order to facilitate, encourage and justify closer relations with Libya. Thus, the documentary highlights the political nature of archaeology, even if indirectly, and how the island's ancient past was adopted to foster a national identity, since archaeology was used to validate the modern socio-political and economic concerns.

The information that was available for an investigation into the UCLA archaeological mission to Malta in 1983-1984 provided evidence for the initiation,

support and diplomatic interest of both the Maltese government and the U.S. Department of State. The letters found in Malta and the one seen by Vella in 2007 in Los Angeles present a situation where an American scholarly presence in Malta is deemed important to offset the rising Libyan presence on the island. Even though it has not been possible to ascertain whether the project was initiated by the Maltese or U.S. government and for what reasons, the role that both played in the initiation and implementation of the excavation is undeniable, with government support being extended from both sides for the successful execution of an American archaeological mission to Malta, which created an interesting juxtaposition with the political situation in the early 1980s.

The three separate case studies reveal a political elite that are aware of the political use of archaeology, and as such there are common elements that may be found in the case studies. The centrality of the Grand Harbour and its facilities, as portrayed in the documentary, is reflected multiple times in the definitive stamp sets of 1973 and 1981, and can thus be seen as a reflection of the economic and political concerns of the 1970s and 1980s, where the creation of an independent Maltese economy was the highest political priority. The depiction of workers (*ħaddiem*) on both 1973 and 1981 definitive stamp sets, and the scenes dedicated to industrial and harbour workers in the documentary need to be seen in the light of the political party that was in power namely, the workers party (*Partit tal-ħaddiem*). Therefore, it is expected that a high amount of emphasis would be placed on the workers. The focus on the Phoenicians in the documentary also needs to be seen in the light of Maltese-Libyan relations in the 1970s and 1980s. This becomes evident when the documentary states that the Maltese language has its roots in the Phoenician one, a concept not supported by academia, but propagated by the Mintoff administrations of the 1970s and 1980s. This was done through the ‘Compromise Punic theory’ and the presentation of Malta and Libya as ‘blood brothers’, in order to justify and foster closer relations with Libya, which is a theme that may be picked up in the analysis of the UCLA archaeological mission to Malta. In both cases the relations with Libya are central to the argument that archaeology was being used as a political tool. The documentary utilised the Phoenicians as a means of justifying modern political concerns whilst the excavation was initiated on the grounds of offsetting Libyan presence in Malta, which it did not, of course. In all three cases the role of

government institutions is central, from the Minister appointed Stamp Design Advisory Board, the Ministry of Culture, Museums Department and Information Division creation of a documentary on Malta's Phoenician past, to the initiation, by the Maltese or U.S. government, of an American archaeological mission at Museum Esplanade Rabat.

# Figures



Fig. 1: The complete 1965 definitive stamp set

Private collection. Robert Pace



Fig. 2: Neolithic Sleeping Lady discovered at the Hal Saflieni Hypogeum.

*Private collection. Robert Pace*



Fig. 3: One of the two Cippus candelabrum containing a dual inscription in Greek and Punic.

*Private collection. Robert Pace*



Fig. 4: Bottom half of a Roman statue, the border of one of the mosaics and capital

*Private collection. Robert Pace*



Fig. 5: An oil lamp typical of the Palaeochristian period with the Chi-Rho symbol

*Private collection. Robert Pace*

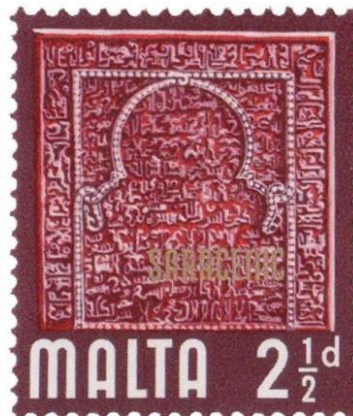


Fig. 6: Maimuna's Tombstone

*Private collection. Robert Pace*



Fig. 7: Sicilo-Norman window  
*Private collection. Robert Pace*



Fig. 8: Breastplate from palace armoury and  
the Order's escutcheon  
*Private collection. Robert Pace*



Fig. 9: Old galleys  
*Private collection. Robert Pace*



Fig. 10: Fortification and Gardjola  
*Private collection. Robert Pace*



Fig. 11: Mdina cathedral and fasces of the French  
Coat-of-Arms  
*Private collection. Robert Pace*



Fig. 12: British royal coat-of-arms and inscription found at the Main Guard in Valletta

*Private collection. Robert Pace*



Fig. 13: British navy and harbour facilities

*Private collection. Robert Pace*



Fig. 14: Emblems of the Royal Malta Artillery, Kings Own Malta Regiment, and a reference to the Anglo-Egyptian war of 1882

*Private collection. Robert Pace*



Fig. 15: The international Eucharistic congress which occurred in Malta in 1913

*Private collection. Robert Pace*



Fig. 16: Tapestry chamber which functioned as the council chamber of the Order of St. John and from 1921 till 1976 it was the seat of Malta's parliament

*Private collection. Robert Pace*



Fig. 17: Bianca Giuratale representing the inauguration of the Gozo Civic Council

*Private collection. Robert Pace*



Fig. 18: Reference to the Blood Constitution of 1961 which made Malta a state

*Private collection. Robert Pace*



Fig. 19: United Nations logo, doves, and the British crown. The last stamp to depict Queen Elizabeth's II profile.

*Private collection, Robert Pace*



Fig. 20: Headquarters of the Allied Forces Mediterranean

*Private collection. Robert Pace*



Fig. 21: Map of the central Mediterranean

*Private collection. Robert Pace*



Fig. 22: St Paul, St Publius and St Agatha

*Private collection. Robert Pace*

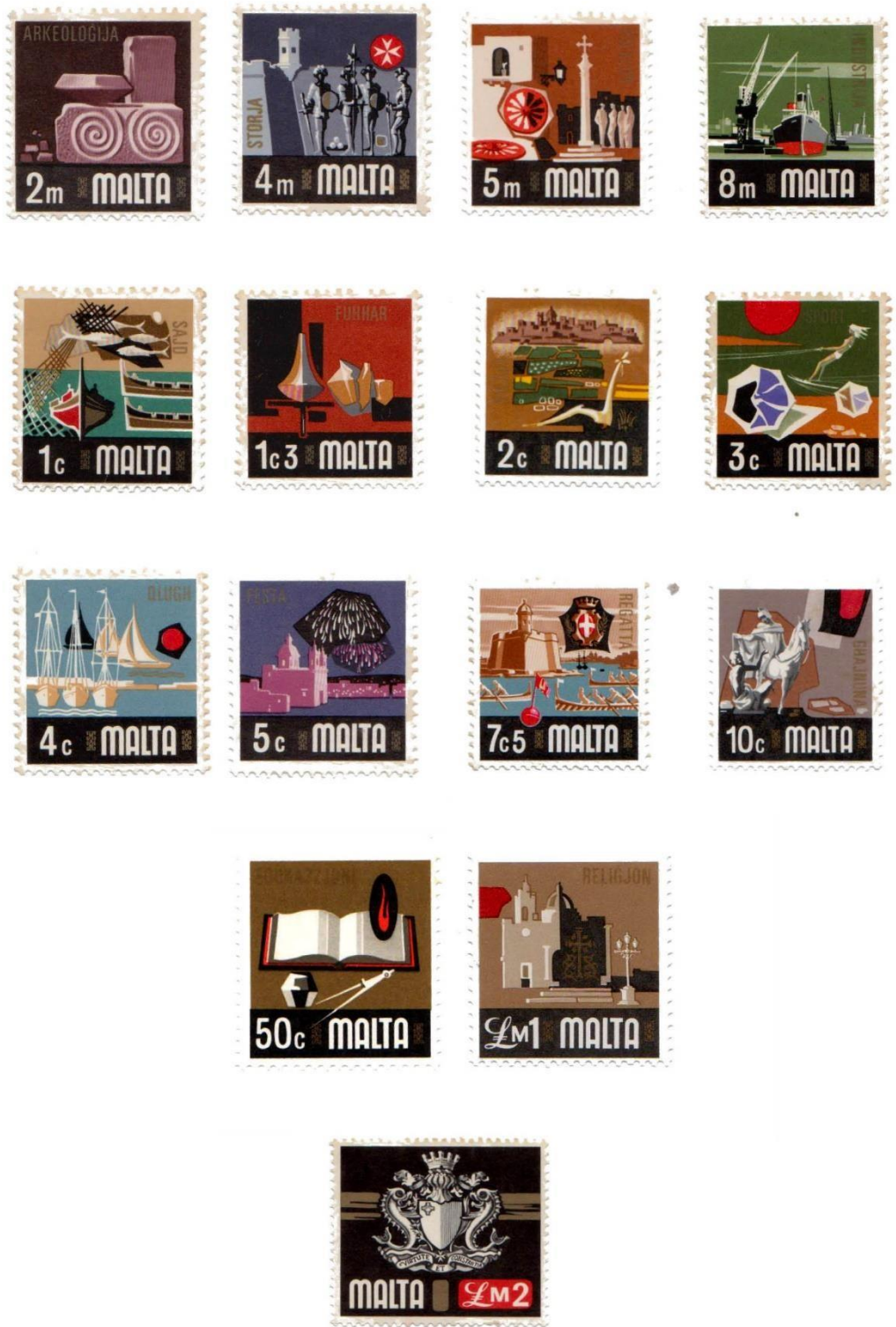


Fig. 23: The complete 1973 definitive stamp set

*Private collection. Robert Pace*



Fig. 24: Blocking slab from Tarxien

*Private collection. Robert Pace*



Fig. 25: Maltese eight pointed cross, fortifications, knights

*Private collection. Robert Pace*



Fig. 26: Familiar symbols of Maltese folklore such as the 'Karozzin', and the village feast

*Private collection. Robert Pace*



Fig. 27: Drydock and shipbuilding facilities

*Private collection. Robert Pace*



Fig. 28: Fishing scene with the local 'dghajsa' in the background

*Private collection. Robert Pace*



Fig. 29: Pottery production as an example of local craft

*Private collection. Robert Pace*



Fig. 30: Farming scene with Mdina in the background

*Private collection. Robert Pace*



Fig. 31: Sport scenes

*Private collection. Robert Pace*



Fig. 32: Sailing

*Private collection. Robert Pace*



Fig. 33: Scenes of a festa with fireworks

*Private collection. Robert Pace*



Fig. 34: 8 September Regatta

*Private collection. Robert Pace*



Fig. 35: Voluntary service

*Private collection. Robert Pace*



Fig. 36: education

*Private collection. Robert Pace*



Fig. 37: religion

*Private collection. Robert Pace*



Fig. 38: the post-Independence emblem of Malta

*Private collection. Robert Pace*

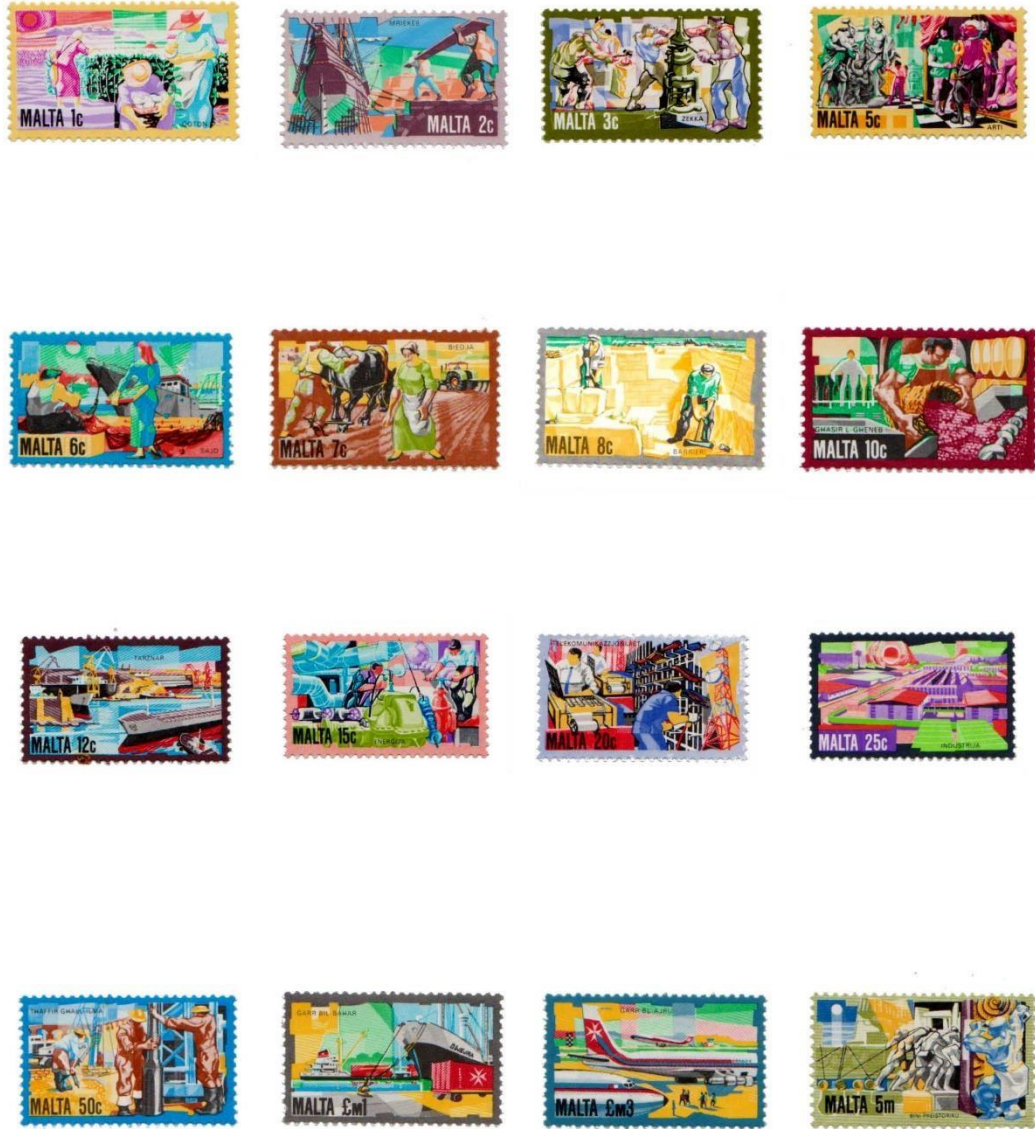


Fig. 39: 1981 complete definitive set

*Private collection. Robert Pace*



Fig. 40: Cotton industry  
*Private collection. Robert Pace*



Fig. 41: Mriekeb  
*Private collection. Robert Pace*



Fig. 42: Coin minting  
*Private collection. Robert Pace*



Fig. 43: Art  
*Private collection. Robert Pace*



Fig. 44: Fishing  
*Private collection. Robert Pace*



Fig. 45: Farming  
*Private collection. Robert Pace*



Fig. 45: farming

*Private collection. Robert Pace*



Fig. 46: stone quarrying

*Private collection. Robert Pace*



Fig. 47: grape processing

*Private collection. Robert Pace*



Fig. 48: shipbuilding

*Private collection. Robert Pace*



Fig. 49: Energy sector

*Private collection. Robert Pace*



Fig. 50: telecommunications

*Private collection. Robert Pace*



Fig. 51: Industrial estates

*Private collection. Robert Pace*



Fig. 52: Digging for water

*Private collection. Robert Pace*



Fig. 53: Sea transport

*Private collection. Robert Pace*



Fig. 54: Air transport

*Private collection. Robert Pace*



Fig. 55: Prehistoric construction

*Private collection. Robert Pace*

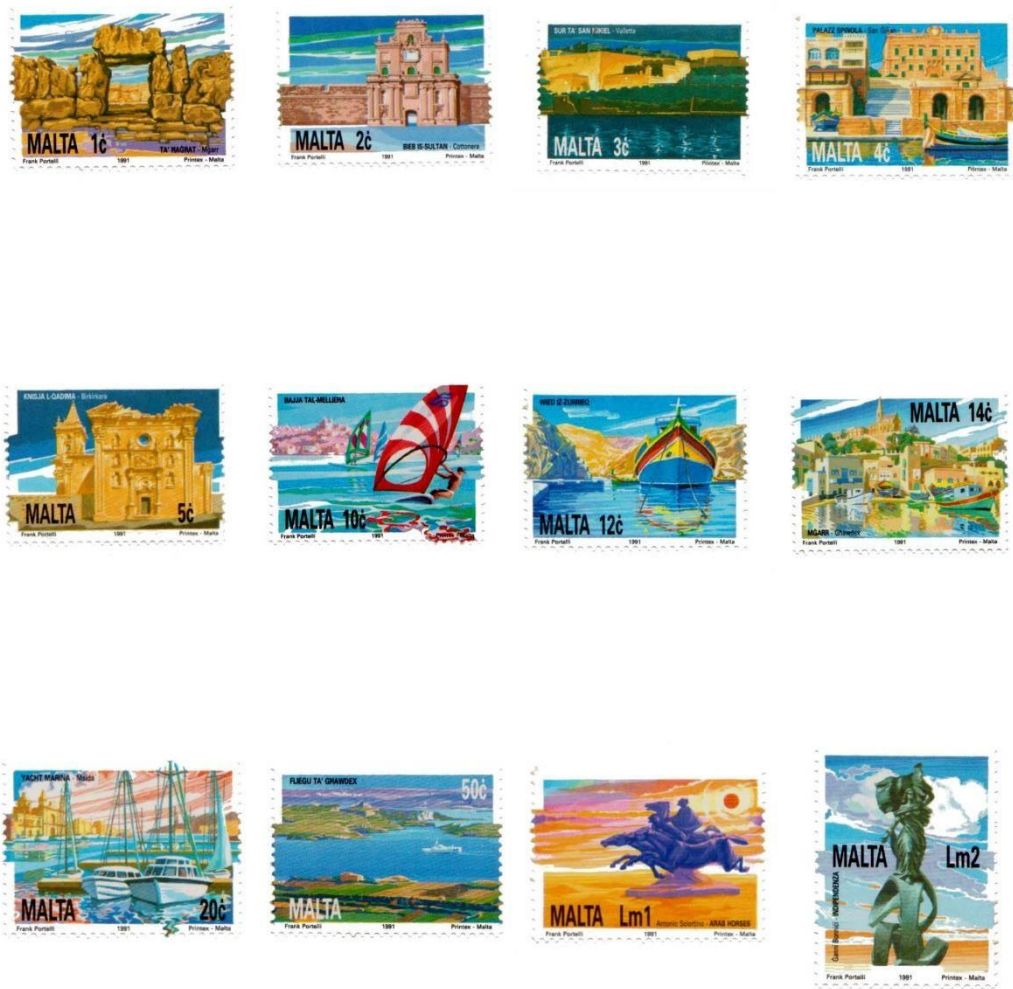


Fig. 56: The complete 1991 definitive set

*Private collection. Robert Pace*

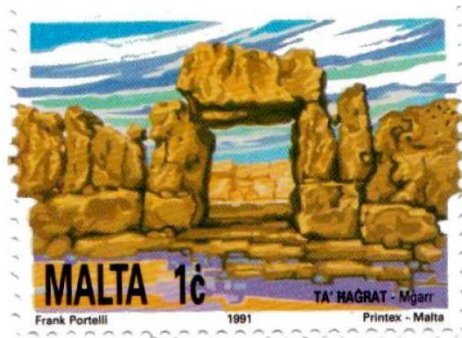


Fig. 57: Façade of Ta Haġrat temple

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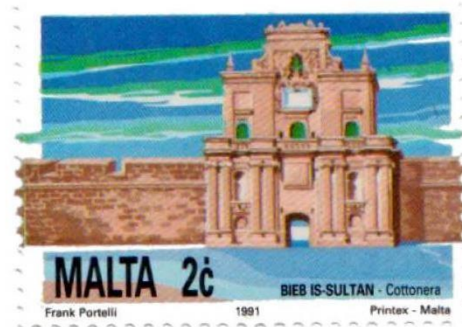


Fig. 58: Notre Dame gate constructed by the Order of St John

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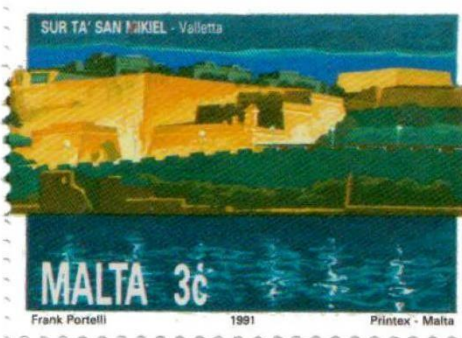


Fig. 59: St Michael's bastion

*Private collection. Robert Pace*

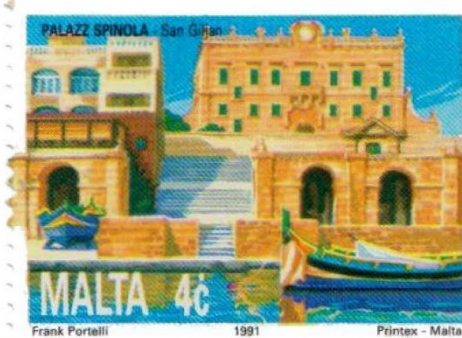


Fig. 60: Palazzo Spinola, a seventeenth century construction build by the Order of St John

*Private collection. Robert Pace*



Fig. 61: Knisja L-Qadima in Birkirkara

*Private collection. Robert Pace*



Fig. 62: Mellicha bay

*Private collection. Robert*



Fig. 63: Wied iż Żurrieq  
Private collection. Robert Pace



Fig. 64: Mġarr harbour in Gozo  
Private collection. Robert Pace



Fig. 65: Msida yacht marina  
Private collection. Robert Pace



Fig. 66: Gozo channel  
Private collection. Robert Pace

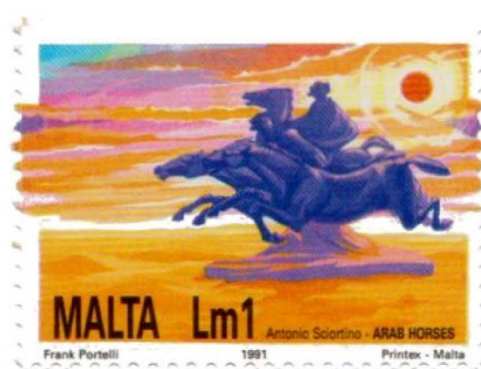


Fig. 67: Arab Horses by Antonio Sciortino  
Private collection. Robert Pace



Fig. 68: Independence statue by Ganni Bonnici  
Private collection. Robert Pace



Fig. 69: The complete 1999 definitive stamp set

Private collection. Robert Pace



Fig. 70: The complete 2000 definitive II (2000)

Private collection. Robert Pace



Fig. 71: The complete definitive III (2001)

Private collection. Robert Pace



Fig. 72: Additional values definitive 2003

Private collection. Robert Pace

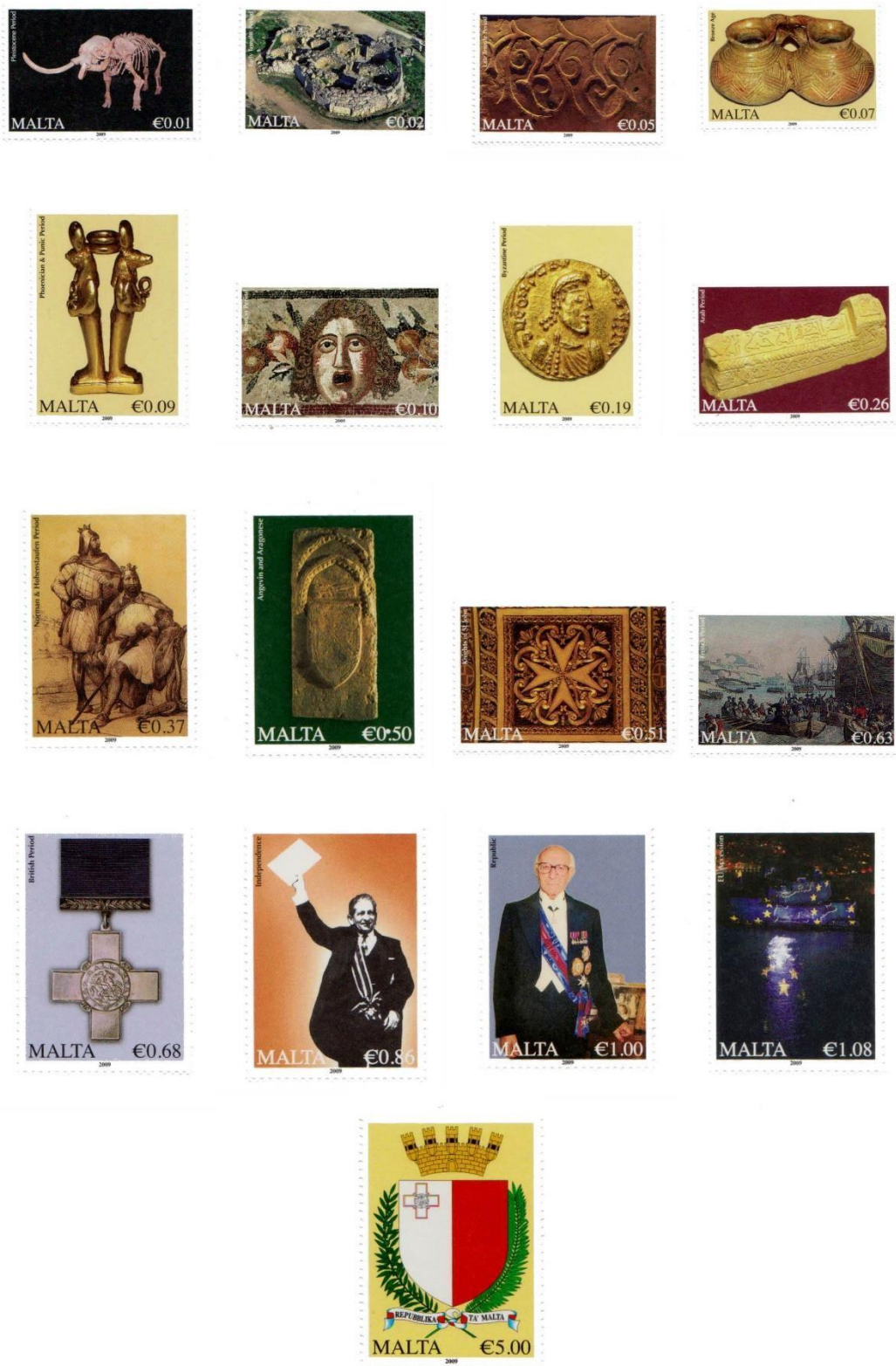


Fig. 73: The complete 2009 definitive stamp set

*Private collection. Robert Pace*

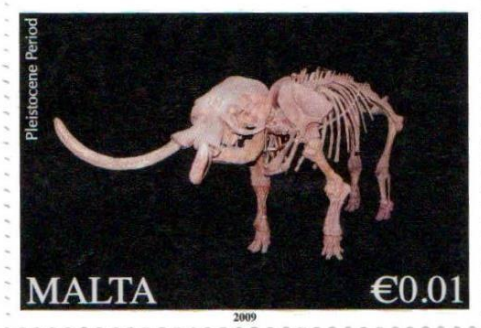


Fig. 74: Dwarf elephant skeleton from Ghar Dalam, representing the Pleistocene

*Private collection. Robert Pace*

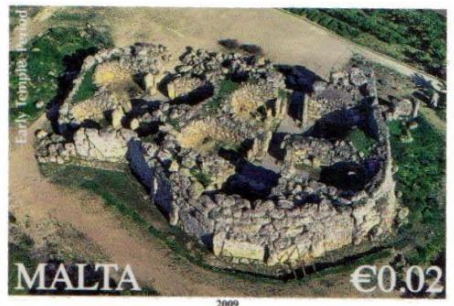


Fig. 75: Aerial view of Ġgantija temple. Representing the Early Temple Period

*Private collection. Robert Pace*



Fig. 76: Spirals in high relief from the Tarxien, representing the Late Temple Period

*Private collection. Robert Pace*

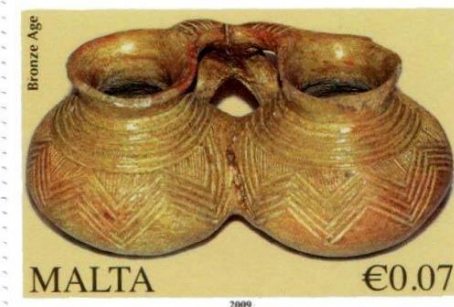


Fig. 77: Double vase from Tarxien, dating to the Tarxien cemetery phase, and representing the Bronze Age

*Private collection. Robert Pace*



Fig. 78: Horus and Anubis amulet representing the Phoenician period

*Private collection. Robert Pace*



Fig. 79: Mosaic from the Roman Villa in Rabat, representing the Roman period

*Private collection. Robert Pace*

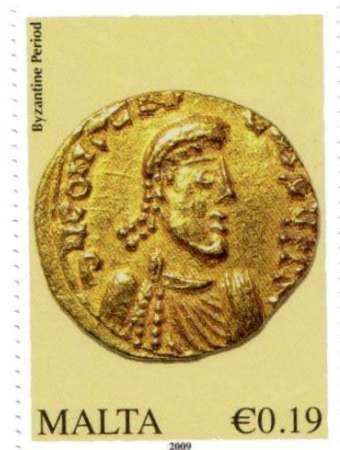


Fig. 80: Gold coin from Taş Silğ, representing the Byzantine period

*Private collection. Robert Pace*



Fig. 81: Tombstone representing the Arab Period

*Private collection. Robert Pace*

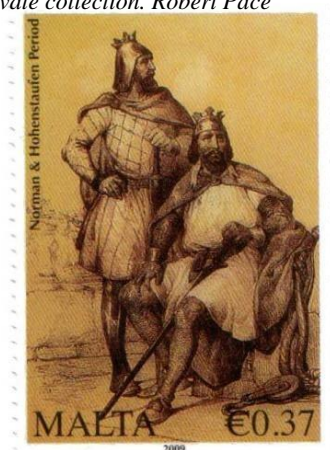


Fig. 82: Norman and Hohenstaufen period

*Private collection. Robert Pace*

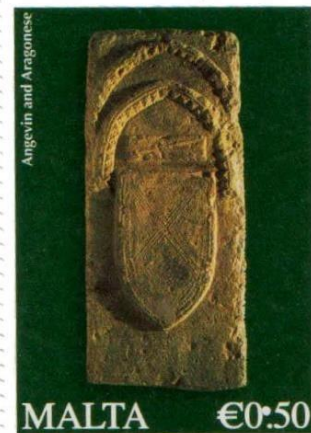


Fig. 83: Tomb slab from Gozo representing the Angevin and Aragonese Periods

*Private collection. Robert Pace*

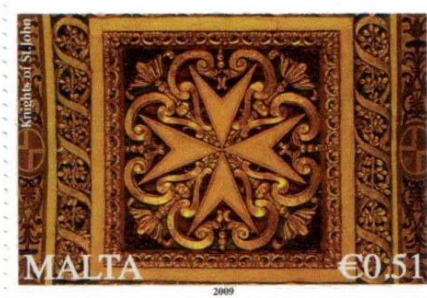


Fig. 84: Eightpointed cross, representing the Order of St John

*Private collection. Robert Pace*



Fig. 85: Engraving of Napoleon being rowed from Malta to a French vessel, representing the French Occupation of Malta

*Private collection. Robert Pace*



Fig. 86: George Cross, representing the British Period

*Private collection. Robert Pace*



Fig. 87: George Borg Olivier and the declaration of Independence

*Private collection. Robert Pace*



Fig. 88: Dom Mintoff, representing the creation of the Maltese Republic

*Private collection. Robert Pace*



Fig. 89: Valletta and the ascension of Malta to the European Union

*Private collection. Robert Pace*



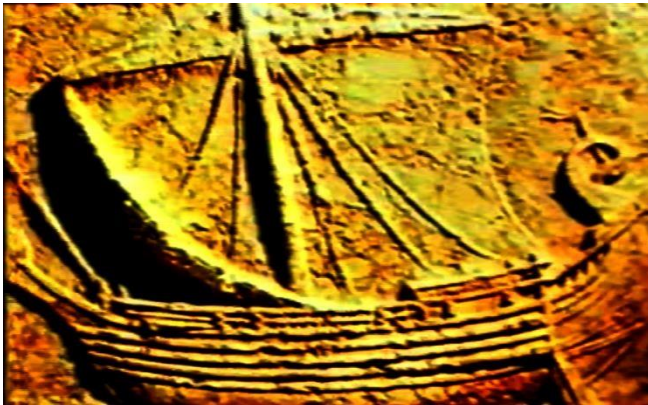
Fig. 90: Emblem of Malta

*Private collection. Robert Pace*



*Fig. 91: Map of the Levant and the location of the Phoenician homeland*

Blaise Junod, J. 1984. Malta and the Phoenicians: The Phoenicians Presence and Influence that Shaped History. (Motion picture). Malta. Arcane Films Corporation. 00:01:13



*Fig. 92: Boat of Tarsus. Carving of a ship on sarcophagus dated to the second century BC and found at the Beirut National Museum*

Blaise Junod, J. 1984. Malta and the Phoenicians: The Phoenicians Presence and Influence that Shaped History. (Motion picture). Malta. Arcane Films Corporation. 00:02:51



*Fig. 93: Phoenician routes of expansion*

Blaise Junod, J. 1984. Malta and the Phoenicians: The Phoenicians Presence and Influence that Shaped History(Motion picture). Malta. Arcane Films Corporation. 00:03:27



*Fig. 94: Location of Malta in relation to the Central Mediterranean region*

Blaise Junod, J. 1984. Malta and the Phoenicians: The Phoenicians Presence and Influence that Shaped History. (Motion picture). Malta. Arcane Films Corporation. 00:05:16



*Fig. 95: Air Malta*

Blaise Junod, J. 1984. Malta and the Phoenicians: The Phoenicians Presence and Influence that Shaped History. (Motion picture). Malta. Arcane Films Corporation. 00:06:06



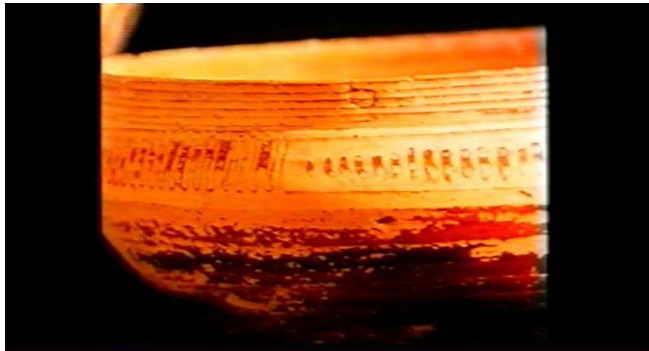
*Fig. 96: Cippus inscription*

Blaise Junod, J. 1984. Malta and the Phoenicians: The Phoenicians Presence and Influence that Shaped History. (Motion picture). Malta. Arcane Films Corporation. 00:07:52



*Fig. 97: Examples of Phoenician pottery, more specifically pitchers with globular bodies, high necks and expanded rims. This type of pottery has a particularly close relationship to the pottery of the early Phoenician westward diaspora (Gouder 1991: 9)*

Blaise Junod, J. 1984. Malta and the Phoenicians: The Phoenicians Presence and Influence that Shaped History. (Motion picture). Malta. Arcane Films Corporation. 00:08:56



*Fig. 98: Proto-Corinthian kotyle dated to the late eight century BC discovered in a tomb in Ghajn Qajjet and thus making it the earliest Greek pottery in Malta.*

Blaise Junod, J. 1984. Malta and the Phoenicians: The Phoenicians Presence and Influence that Shaped History. (Motion picture). Malta. Arcane Films Corporation. 00:09:10



*Fig. 99: View of the Grand Harbour from Upper Barraka Gardens, highlighting the natural creeks*

Blaise Junod, J. 1984. Malta and the Phoenicians: The Phoenicians Presence and Influence that Shaped History. (Motion picture). Malta. Arcane Films Corporation. 00:10:48



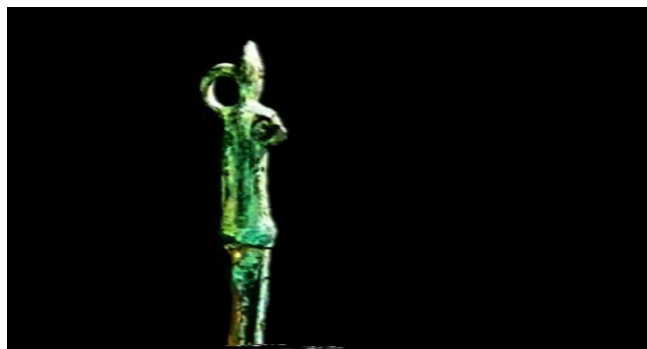
*Fig. 100: Carved ivory from Tas-Silġ, dated to the seventh/sixth century BC (Gouder 1991: 6)*

Blaise Junod, J. 1984. Malta and the Phoenicians: The Phoenicians Presence and Influence that Shaped History. (Motion picture). Malta. Arcane Films Corporation. 00:13:04



*Fig. 101: Glass perfume phials frequently found at sites that are related to Phoenician trade (Gouder 1991: 10)*

Blaise Junod, J. 1984. Malta and the Phoenicians: The Phoenicians Presence and Influence that Shaped History. (Motion picture). Malta. Arcane Films Corporation. 00:13:00



*Fig. 102: Micallef amulet discovered in a tomb at Tal-Virtu in Rabat. The amulet consists of a bronze sheath with a strong Egyptianizing style, and contained a Phoenician inscription and a depiction of the Egyptian goddess Isis (Gouder 1991: 13-14)*

Blaise Junod, J. 1984. Malta and the Phoenicians: The Phoenicians Presence and Influence that Shaped History. (Motion picture). Malta. Arcane Films Corporation. 00:13:55



*Fig. 103: Gold amulet found in a tomb at Ghajn Klieb depicting the Egyptian gods Horus and Anubis  
(Gouder 1991: 12)*

Blaise Junod, J. 1984. Malta and the Phoenicians: The Phoenicians Presence and Influence that Shaped History. (Motion picture). Malta. Arcane Films Corporation. 00:14:10



*Fig. 104: Sea Malta*

Blaise Junod, J. 1984. Malta and the Phoenicians: The Phoenicians Presence and Influence that Shaped History. (Motion picture). Malta. Arcane Films Corporation. 00:16:04



*Fig. 105: Mosaic found at the Roman Villa in Rabat*

Blaise Junod, J. 1984. Malta and the Phoenicians: The Phoenicians Presence and Influence that Shaped History. (Motion picture). Malta. Arcane Films Corporation. 00:17:19



*Fig. 106: The Grand Harbour and its modern facilities*

Blaise Junod, J. 1984. Malta and the Phoenicians: The Phoenicians Presence and Influence that Shaped History. (Motion picture). Malta. Arcane Films Corporation. 00:18:39



*Fig. 107: Scene of work in progress at the drydock in the Grand Harbour*

Blaise Junod, J. 1984. Malta and the Phoenicians: The Phoenicians Presence and Influence that Shaped History. (Motion picture). Malta. Arcane Films Corporation. 00:20:20



*Fig. 108: The facilities available at the Grand Harbour*

Blaise Junod, J. 1984. Malta and the Phoenicians: The Phoenicians Presence and Influence that Shaped History. (Motion picture). Malta. Arcane Films Corporation. 00:19:12



Fig. 109: Map showing the proximity of Tas-Silg to the Marsaxlokk harbour

<https://www.google.com/maps/place/Malta/@35.8425884,14.5500517,711m/data=!3m1!1e3!4m2!3m1!1s0x130e45281d8647c5:0xf582d86136be4239> (accessed on 30.04.2016)

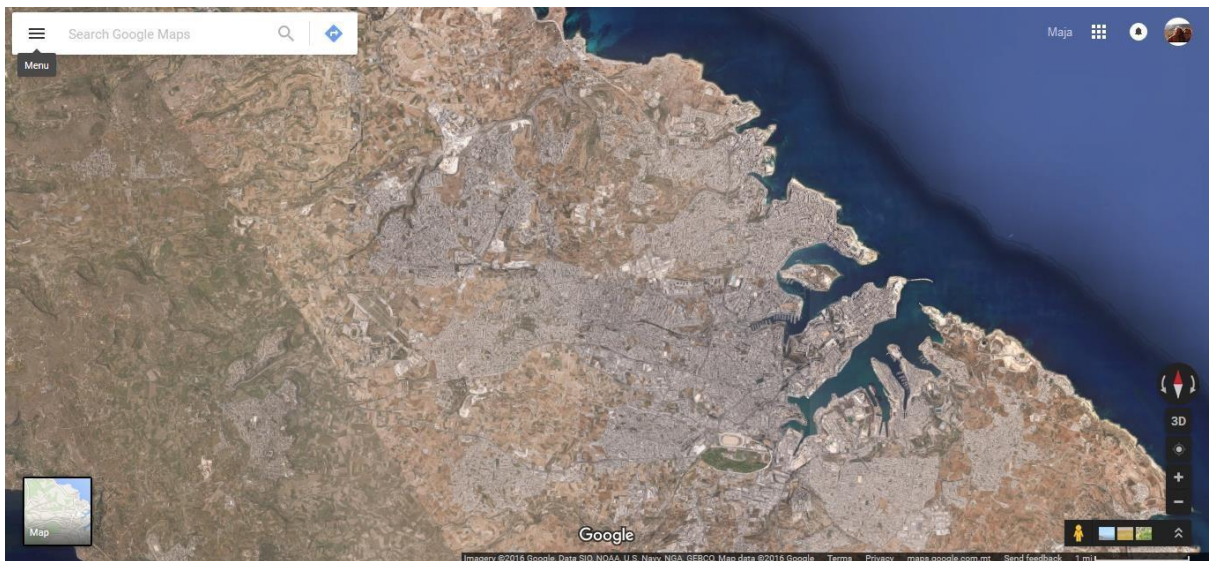


Fig. 110: Map of the Grand Harbour and its various creeks and highlighting the location of the Roman remains

<https://www.google.com/maps/@35.902244,14.4632924,9574m/data=!3m1!1e3> (accessed on 30.04.2016)

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