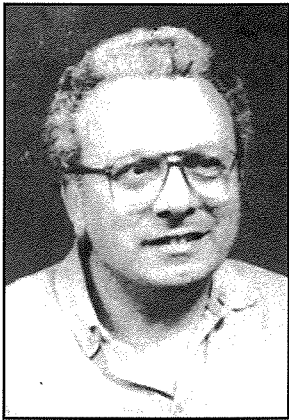


Ġużeppi Cali (1846–1930)

L-AĦJAR XOGHLIJET TIEGHU FIL-PARROĊĊA TAGHNA

MINN TONY TERRIBILE



Din is-sena qeghda tfakkar il-mija u hamsin sena mit-twelid tal-pittur Malti Ġużeppi Cali li twieled il-Belt Valletta fl-14 ta' Awissu 1846.

Cali ta sehem kbir lil arti Maltija lejn tmiem is-seklu dsatax u fil-bidu tas-seklu taghna, kemm hu hekk nistghu nghidu li ftit huma dawk il-knejjes Maltin li fihom ma niltaqghux ma' xoghljiet ta' dan il-pittur.

B'xorti tajba fil-Knisja Parrokkjali taghna insibu ftit xoghljiet ta' dan il-pittur. Fl-imghoddi kien hemm ukoll il-kwadru ta' San Ġużepp li dan kien inqered fl-ahhar gwerra dinjija iżda fil-Parroċċa taghna jeżisti kwadru iehor li jjarreb hafna lil dan il-pittur. Dan huwa l-kwadru ta' San Pawl li

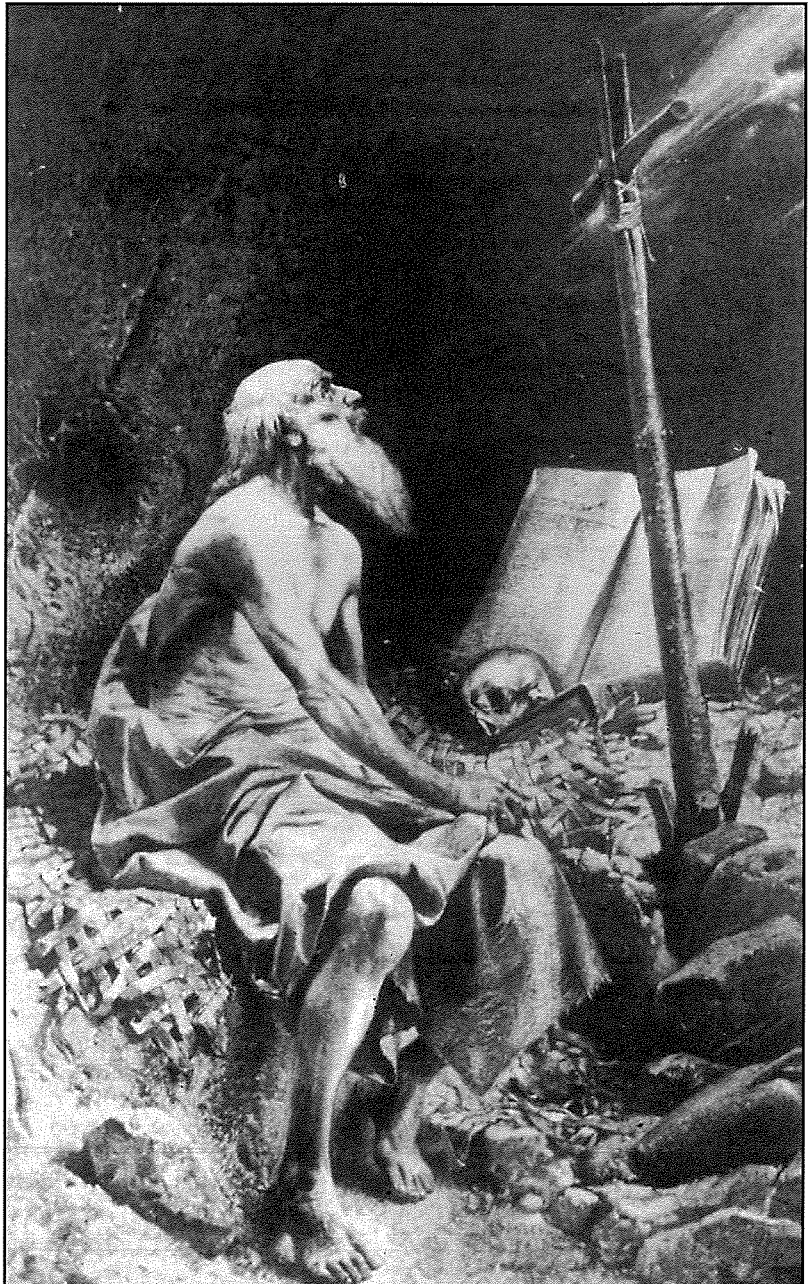
jinsab fuq in-niċċa ta' San Franġisk. Ghal-kemm ma fih ebda firma tin-hass fih l-id tal-Cali, iżda dwar ix-xoghljiet l-oħra ta' Cali ninsabu ċerti li huma xoghol tieghu.

Liema huma x-xoghljiet ta' Cali li illum insibu fil-Parroċċa taghna? Dawn huma l-kwadri ta' San Lawrenz, San Ġirolmu, San Pietru u San Pawl, San Vincenz Ferreri, il-Madonna tal-Karmnu u l-Apside. Fost dawn jispikkaw l-ewwel tlieta. Dawn huma meqjusa fost l-ahjar xoghljiet ta' Cali u ghalhekk il-Parroċċa taghna ghandha ghax tkun kburiya bihom, ghax huma parti mill-Wirt artistiku ta' dawn il-gzejjer.

Il-kwadru ta' San Ġirolmu

Dan il-kwadru sar bi spejjeż il-Konti Ġirolmu Taglaferro u fl-1881. Kien kwadru li mill-ewwel ġibed l-attenzjoni, kemm hu hekk ftit wara li sar dehru boġta kummenti dwaru fil-ġurnali ta' dawk iż-żminijiet. Fil-ġurnal *Malta e sue Dipendenze* (nru. 5729) insibu dan il-kumment: "Dan hu wiehed mix-xoghljiet li rnexxew u hu tassew sabih".

Fl-1946 Malta fakkret għeluq il-mitt sena mit-twelid ta' Cali u barra li saret wirja, il-pittur Rafel Bonnici Cali stampa wkoll katalogu li fih wera kif il-hidma artistika ta' Cali hi maqsuma fi tlett partijiet u Bonnici Cali jghid hekk dwar dan il-kwadru: "The well known St. Jerome of the Sacred Heart church in Sliema, which was highly praised by Chev. F. Jacovacci, President of the Associazione Artistica, may be considered as the best altar piece of the first period".



San Ġirolmu – il-kapulavur ta' Cali

Fl-1953 hareġ wiehed mill-ewlenin kotba dwar l-arti Maltija. L-awtur Dr. E. Sammut meta kiteb dwar Cali qal hekk: "One of the first altar pieces was the painting of St. Jerome (1881) in the church of the Sacred Heart Sliema is still generally considered his master-piece".

Dan il-kwadru ġibed ukoll l-attenzjoni ta' l-awtur tal-ktieb "Iconography of Maltese Islands (1987) Mario Buhagiar li kiteb hekk dwar dan il-kwadru: "The St. Jerome, painted in 1881, is a thickly impasted work which like Dragut, shows the influence of the French Romantic Movement. The mat, on which the parched old penitent sits, is painted with such an inimitable response to the rough, straw texture that it seems to be on the point of taking life. Usually considered Cali masterpieces, this canvas is painted with a vigour and sureness of touch that makes it outstanding".

Fl-1990 fl-okkażjoni tal-miġja tal-Papa Ġwanni Pawlu II f'Malta, fil-Kurja Arċiveskovili saret wirja dwar l-arti Maltija tas-seklu għoxrin u l-kwadru ta' San Ġirolamu kien hemm u ġibed l-attenzjoni ta' bosta ammiraturi tal-pittura. Fil-katalgu ta' din il-wirja insibu din id-deskrizzjoni "Rich in painterly qualities, the canvas



San Lawrenz (1881)

betrays the influence of the neapolitan Master Domenico Morelli who dominated Neapolitan painting at the time of Cali's sojourn in Italy".

Is-sena 1991 rat il-hruġ ta' żewġ kotba sbieh dwar Ġuzeppi Cali. Fl-ewwel ktieb Louis Grasso u Emmanuel Fiorentino wara li jaghtu deskrizzjoni ta' dan il-kwadru u jfakkru kif Francesco Jacovaci kien fahhar dan ix-xogħol, kitbu: "The monochromatic patine of the setting, cluttered with odd bits, sets out the whole into an unsurpassable rendering of the different materials woven together in diffused physical lighting thus bringing into relief the spiritual relief illumination which the hermit sought in Christ own birthplace. One writer even judged the canvas as something to be seen but not described".

Fil-ktieb l-iehor, Dominic Cutajar li huwa l-kuratur tal-Mużew ta' l-Arti, kiteb kif f'dan il-kwadru, Cali reġa' uża t-teknika u l-influwenza tal-pittur Teofilo Patini, li bħalu kien studja ma' Mancinelli f'Napli.

Il-kwadru ta' San Lawrenz

Dan il-kwadru kbir u sabih li jinsab fil-kappellun tal-lemin jirrappreżenta lil dan il-qaddis liebes id-dalmatika, qabel il-martirju tiegħu. Cali pitter dan il-kwadru fl-1881 u thallas minn Lorenzo Vassallo li kien devot kbir ta' dan il-qaddis.

Fl-1960, fl-okkażjoni tal-festi ċentinarji Pawlini fl-Istitut Kattoliku l-Furjana kienet saret wirja dwar l-Arti Sagra f'Malta u l-kwadru ta' San Lawrenz kien wiehed minn dawn il-kwadri. Fil-katalgu ta' din il-wirja, il-kritiku ta' l-arti Ċensu Bonello kiteb hekk dwar dan il-kwadru: "A painting of unusual cool Tiepolesque feeling, planned with simplicity and delicate sense of colour, from a painter who usually had little restraint when colouring his numerous compositions".

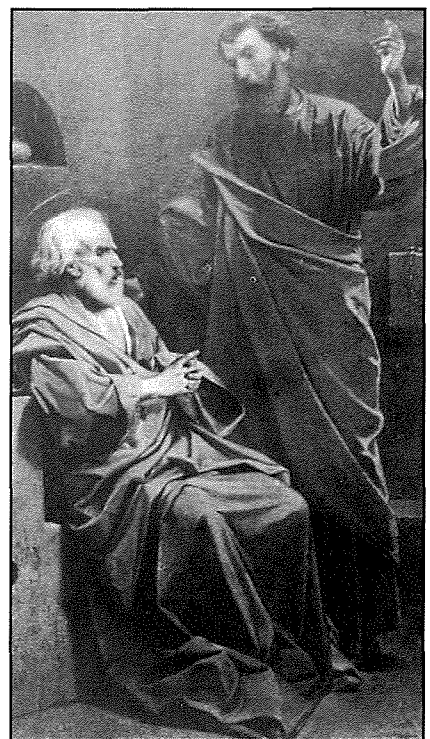
Il-kwadru ta' San Pietru u San Pawl

Dan hu kwadru iehor li tpitter minn Cali fl-1881 u fih naraw lil dawn iż-żewġ qaddisin fi djalogu bejniethom. Dan il-kwadru ġibed ukoll l-attenzjoni

ta' l-awtur tal-ktieb *Iconography of the Maltese Islands* għaliex kiteb dwaru: "It is a contemporary work in which the pigment is applied in equally thick layers probably with a palette knife. The two saints stand out almost as a sculptural relief against a black wall that contains only a niche for an oil lamp, the old St Peter, who sits down on a step to rest his arching limbs is especially memorable as a study for an old age".

Dan il-kwadru wkoll fl-1990 kien ešebit fil-wirja li saret fil-Kurja Arċiveskovili. Il-kumment dwar dan il-kwadru fil-katalgu ta' din il-wirja kien jgħid hekk: "The composition is academic in conception and shorn of all unnecessary details. A small niche containing a jar and a protudin stone with a chain complement the soberly rendered figures".

Il-kummenti magħmula minn esperti tal-pittura huma l-isbah ċertifikat fuq dawn it-tlett kwadri. Għalhekk huwa d-dmir tagħna lkoll napprezzawhom aktar u nkunu kburin bihom u fuq kollox min hu responsabbli tagħhom għandu jara li dawn ikunu mharsa tajba biex ma jġirlihomx hsara għax huma l-isbah wirt tan-nies li għamluhom biex isebbhu l-Knisja tagħna.



San Pietru u San Pawl (1881)