UNIVERSITY OF MALTA GAZETTE

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Convocation

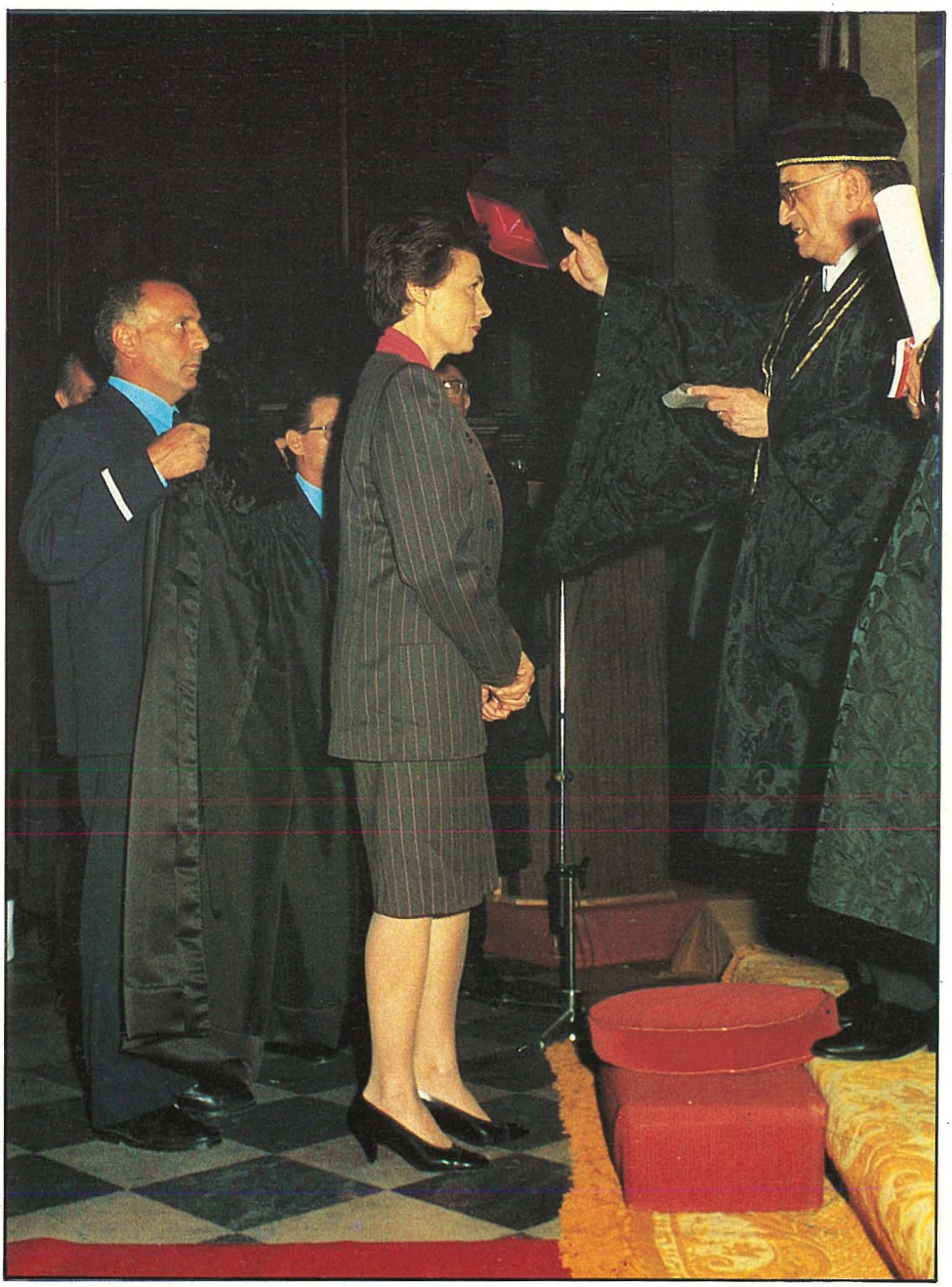
for the

CONFERMENT OF HONORARY DEGREE

on

Madame CATHERINE LALUMIÈRE

The Church of the University
Valletta
Wednesday, 1st November, 1989



Professor E.J. Borg Costanzi, Rector, placing the biretta on Mme. Catherine Lalumière.

Convocation for the Conferment of Honorary Degree on Madame CATHERINE LALUMIÈRE

The Convocation for the Conferment of an Honorary Degree – Doctor of Laws (Honoris Causa) – on Madame Catherine Lalumière, Secretary-General of the Council of Europe, was held at the Church of the University, Valletta on Wednesday, 1st November, 1989.

The ceremony, presided by the Pro-Chancellor Dr. Paul Heywood, was attended by the Hon. Prime Minister Dr. Edward Fenech Adami, by the Hon. Minister of Education, Dr. Ugo Mifsud Bonnici, officials of the Council of Europe, and members of the staff of the University.

The Rector, Professor Edwin J. Borg Costanzi, conferred the degree on Mme Catherine Lalumière in a traditional and impressive ambience. The honorary graduand was sponsored by Professor Joseph Max. Ganado, Dean of the Faculty of Law.

The resolution approved by the Council of the University read as follows:

> "Whereas a resolution has been passed by the Senate that the Degree of Doctor of Laws (Honoris Causa) be conferred on:
>
> **Madame CATHERINE LALUMIÈRE**
> *Secretary-General of the Council of Europe*
>
> And this in recognition of her distinguised academic, political and diplomatic career culminating in the recognition of her steadfast pursuit of the goal of European unity by her election to the prestigious office of Secretary-General of the Council of Europe on the auspicious occasion of the fortieth anniversary of its Foundation.
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> We, the Council of the University of Malta do hereby approve this resolution and order that this distinction be conferred on
>
> **Madame Catherine Lalumière**
>
> on the first day of November, 1989."

Universitas Studiorum Melitensis

Domina CATHERINA LALUMIERE, Concilii Europae a Secretis, mulier eximio academico politico diplomatico curriculo praecellens, cum plures annos sedulam atque indefessam contulerit operam ad consilio ut unio inter Europae nationes promoveatur firmoque pacto instauretur, quam ob causam ad praestantissimum eiusdem Concilii Europae a Secretis munus designata sit, a sodalibus Senatus Universitatis Melitensis digna existimata est quae inter Doctores Iurisprudentiae honoris causa inscriberetur. Quamobrem ab eisdem Senatus sociis notum est Concilium Universitatis statutum est ut insignibus Doctoris Iurisprudentiae honestaretur Kalendis Novembribus MCMLXXXIX fausto recurrente quadragesimo anno ab eiusdem Concilii Europae institutione.

a Libellis

Rector

The Scroll of the Degree of Doctor of Laws (Honoris Causa) presented to Mme. Catherine Lalumière.

The Hon. Minister of Education, Dr. Ugo Mifsud Bonnici extending his congratulations to Mme. Catherine Lalumière.

ORATION BY REV. PROFESSOR PETER SERRACINO INGLOTT, PRO-RECTOR

The following oration was delivered by the Pro-Rector, Rev. Professor Peter Serracino Inglott at the Conferment Ceremony of the Degree of Doctor of Laws (Honoris Causa) on Madame Catherine Lalumière:

Last May, when it had become known that Catherine Lalumière, Member of Parliament for the Gironde, would be elected Secretary-General of the Council of Europe, she was interviewed, among others, by a journalist from the leading Catholic French newspaper, *La Croix*. The first question she was asked was couched in the somewhat prickly and almost taunting manner that seems to have become the common style of journalists when addressing statesmen, or even more stateswomen, since the time when ordeals by television have come to replace in our society the bearbaiting or cockfighting sessions of previous centuries. The question rang as follows: You made a speech in Parliament last week, Catherine Lalumière, on the teaching of ballet. One would rather have expected you to speak of Europe.

She replied by quoting a statement once made by Jean Monnet, generally recognised now as the principal founding father of the European Economic Community. Monnet said that if he had to plan now, with hindsight, a strategy for the unification of Europe, he would not begin, as he actually did, with economics: he would rather begin with culture.

The article is, in fact, entitled in big headline letters: *Catherine Lalumière; or how to make humanism live in European style.* In fact, all the coverage I have seen of the historic election for the first time, of a woman, to head the Council of Europe, or indeed any international organisation of analogous importance, has the structure of a diptych. On the one side, the outside observers of Catherine Lalumière stress the steel-sharp, deeply scrutinizing eyes and the professional rigour which she brings to her task; on the other side, she herself stresses humanism, and indeed human warmth, as her driving force.

In the interview, I began by quoting, she says, "In order to live happily, it is necessary that a philosophy of life, the arts, the sciences, and spiritual values be not considered luxuries. There must be no confusion of rôles, but the Council of Europe, set up in order to represent the pluralist democracies, must naturally deepen and dispense the values common to all the European peoples, that is what is called the Judeo-Christian civilisation, and it is such as to include the secularisation of the State as part of its heritage. Europe has need of it."

It is, therefore, doubly fitting that it should be the University of Malta, to express the wish of the Government and people of Malta, and make a public and official gesture of homage to the Lady, so well chosen to embody and symbolize the larger Europe of the Twenty-three. This is the Europe of which culture, or rather a plurality of cultures united in a common dialogue on the basis of a common heritage, is indeed the hallmark; the Europe where intellectual values are a consideration which is prior to, although not exclusive of or hostile to, the economic dimension highlighted in the foundation of the smaller Europe of the Twelve.

Doubly-fitting; because Catherine Lalumière is not only a kind of incarnation of the cultural and spiritual ideal of Europe, but she is also a gift of the University to the political world. The doctorate in Laws she will be receiving is not her first; for after her graduation and specialisation in political science and the history of legislation, the first part of her career was devoted to university work first in her small native town of Rennes, then in the larger town of her marriage, Bordeaux, to which she is deeply attached and has served richly as a town councillor, and finally in Paris, at the Sorbonne, in the very same section at the Place du Panthéon where I have the honour of being a member of the Visiting Staff, and with which I hope the University of Malta will soon be concluding a twinning agreement.

In her teaching of public administration, Catherine Lalumière brought to bear that combination of both the juridical and the sociological perspectives that is the characteristic of the contemporary approach to the subject and which the University of Malta is seeking to introduce here through the recent setting up of a Bachelor's degree in Socio-Legal Studies.

In France, it is not possible, as it has become here and has always been in Italy, for a Minister in the Government to retain University commitments; and when Catherine Lalumière became a Minister in 1980, responsible for a short spell for the Civil Service and Administrative Reform, and then for Consumer Affairs, she had to resign her University post. But I have no doubt that the professional rigour which everybody is struck by in her approach to her political work owes much to the severe discipline and methodicity, in the best Cartesian tradition, that she acquired as she climbed rung after rung of the academic ladder from Rennes to the Sorbonne. In private conversation, she has told me of the affinity which she has always felt to exist between the juridical mind and that of the mathematical logician.

Indeed, it is difficult for me not to be somewhat envious of her professional skills and technical know-how in both public administration and consumer affairs, as they happen to be both an actual need in our country. However, with her passage to the service of European institutions, we will, and indeed already have begun to, benefit from the rare combination of intellectual vision and close familiarity with the minute workings of daily life affairs that she represents.

Indeed, it is principally on the grounds of our confident anticipation of the impetus that she will give and the success that we are sure she will obtain in European Affairs that we wish to honour her. Madame Lalumière has made it clear, and repeated yesterday in our Parliament, that one of the great tasks facing the Council of Europe in her turn of office is responding to the new openings now appearing in Eastern Europe in the way most conducive to their effective joining of the community of pluralist democracies. This is a challenging task, in which all of us, each at his station, will want to give her all our support. The University of Malta, indeed, already has several links of collaboration with sister institutions in Eastern Europe and these are being developed in various areas from engineering to music, and from gerontology to linguistics. Most notable perhaps has been our rôle in promoting open agreements in the field of environmental protection with which countries from the East can be associated.

Nevertheless, we believe that the increase of attention to the neighbouring countries on the East of the present constituency of the Council of Europe should not imply any decrease of attention to the neighbouring countries to the South. More precisely, Europe has a Mediterranean shore, as well as a continental reach. Sharing a sea, especially an almost enclosed sea, with very dense networks of communication, implies a community of interests of a different, but not less important kind than sharing a peninsular land mass. If Malta as a country has historically been an outpost of Europe in the Mediterranean, with the trials and sufferings as well as, and often more prominently than, the joys and glory which such a situation implies, the University has played and is playing its appropriate part. This year we have introduced, for the first time, as part of an International Affairs area of studies in the Faculty of Arts, European Studies as a first option. But we also offer Mediterranean Studies as a complementary area, with the opportunity for both local and foreign students to deepen their understanding of the cross-cultural exchanges, skill in which is so essential a part for European development itself.

Most notably, with reference to the Council of Europe, of which our distinguished honorary graduand is now placed at the guiding helm, the University of Malta has taken the lead, within the context of the Council of Europe's Transfrontier University Collaboration Scheme, in initiating programmes of collaboration with other interested universities in the fields of cultural tourism and in the systematic study of the management of islands and small states. I mention these programmes, because I believe it to be of as indispensable import for the future of Europe to be attentive to its Mediterranean periphery as to its Eastern sector. In particular, the great demographic changes which are occurring in a few years will result in the majority of the inhabitants of the Mediterranean region ceasing to be, as at present, on its Northern coasts, and in a few more years, the inhabitants of its Southern and Eastern shores will be in a two-thirds majority. Aggravated by the big shift of population from the rural areas to the towns, lack of development is bound to result in the growth of those phenomena of fanaticism and pressures upon Europe that produce effects diametrically opposed to the values which the Council of Europe, as expressed so clearly and cogently by its Secretary-General, wishes to uphold.

The clearer development of the Mediterranean policy and programmes, in the fields of the Council of Europe's competence, culture, human rights and social problems, in complementation of its Eastern oriented initiatives, is both a dire, pressing need, and a prospect in which Malta and particularly its University are particularly anxious to offer their services and collaboration. I am sure that, with Catherine Lalumière's leadership, the need will be met and the project realised.

There was another occasion when Madame Lalumière was interviewed by another reporter of the same species as the one I quoted at the beginning, this time about her speeches at the Bordeaux Town Council and this time she replied: "I do not like to talk much in that setting. I prefer to act." I should, perhaps, follow that hint and, exceptionally for me, allow you to relish the charms of brevity. So I now leave the stage open for the action we have really come here to perform. It does not have the beauty of a ballet by Béjart, such as both Madame Lalumière and myself would have greatly enjoyed. But it has for us, the members of the University and the citizens of Malta, nonetheless a great, symbolic significance.