

This volume presents sixteen thoughtful essays which address innovative ways to present cultural heritage primarily in ethnographic and social history museums through recent permanent, temporary, and mobile exhibitions. The essays included are taken from the different vantage points they prompt critical debate about new ways of thinking and working in museums of different sizes, with regard for how we might work collaboratively towards a more equitable future. Essential political issues related to power and the strong influences of the museum are addressed in each section, especially with regards to the presentation of particular cultures and communities.

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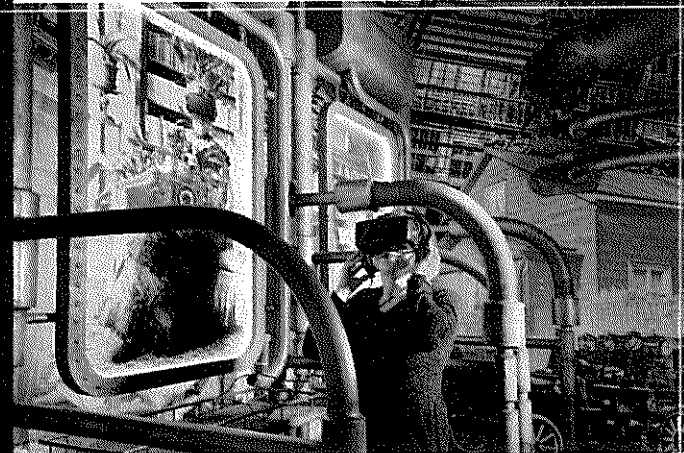


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Museums and Innovations

Z. Antos, A. B. Fromm
and V. Golding



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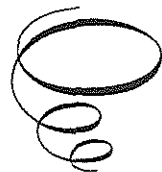
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CHAPTER THREE

SMALL MUSEUMS AND IDENTITY IN SOCIALLY DEPRIVED AREAS

JOHN VELLA AND JOSANN CUTAJAR

Introduction

This chapter analyses the functions of a small museum in a region which has for decades been labelled as socially deprived (Borg 2012; CACRC 2013). According to Watson (2009, 8), small museums “develop directly from the community they serve.” They revolve around the return on investment in the locality in which they are ensconced. Small museums, according to Watson, do not belong to or depend on state or institutional funding, and thus are free to act on the objectives set by their curators. Museums that are non-state or non-institutional face different challenges or limitations, namely challenges of resource self-sufficiency and self-sustainability. In spite of these, they have more impact on the community in which they are embedded since they tend to promote the interests and heritage of the people living in the area.

This chapter will examine the particular effects that Bir Mula Heritage Museum had on the Bormla community and whether it helped improve the community’s idea of itself. The museum was established with the objective of promoting the tangible and intangible culture in the area. The purpose behind this exercise was twofold. On the one hand, the curator felt that residents needed to safeguard the heritage which had not been destroyed during World War II or after this era when huge swathes of land was used to build social housing. A number of initiatives taken by the museum’s staff to promote heritage in the area will be analysed. Some of these projects were created with the goal of enabling residents to appreciate the heritage by which they were surrounded. It was hoped that this appreciation would then lead to investment in themselves and the community. Another objective was to create events to attract tourists and visitors to the area so that they could learn about this tangible and

intangible heritage. The main intention was to use these events to promote tourism in the locality.

Bir Mula Heritage Museum

Bir Mula Heritage Museum, the small museum under discussion, is situated in a residential area of Bormla. The house in which it is located is over a thousand years old, dating back to the Arabic period in Malta. A number of changes have been made throughout the ages and different owners have left their imprint on the structure of the building. The building was restored in the 1990s and during this restoration a number of artefacts were found on site. These include chert tools, red ochre, Neolithic sling stones, animal and marine creature bones, as well as pottery thousands of years old.

From the outside, Bir Mula Heritage Museum appears to be a house typical of the area. The main attractions of this museum consist of atypical architectural features, the graffiti found engraved on its stone, and the collection of artefacts associated with the site. The museum houses other objects which were donated by residents or visitors or bought by the staff.

The museum building is an artefact itself. Different areas demonstrate how stone was cut, trimmed, dressed, and treated to prevent erosion over time. The building consists of three storeys, with the rooms built around a central courtyard. The lower storey, which would now be considered a basement, was at one time a kitchen and a laundry room. There are indications, namely a huge, stone-hewn water container, that these same rooms had previously been used as a farm. The storey above the basement contains a number of rooms, one of which was used as a birthing room, as indicated by the arch placed in the doorway. The third storey consists of a huge room which, in the sixteenth to seventeenth centuries, was a *piano nobile*, or principal floor, used by the upper-class owner of the house. This room has access to an adjoining smaller room with indications that had been used as a chapel. Sometime in the seventeenth century, some rooms on this level were removed to create a patio and look-out platform. When the house was bought by a merchant in the seventeenth century, the belvedere was built so that he could go on the roof to check if his ships had sailed into the harbour. The fortune of the house waxed and waned, depending on the economic situation in the area. After World War II, it fell into disrepair until it was bought and restored in the 1990s.

The people who inhabited or worked in the house often left graffiti etched in the stone. These graffiti include wind roses, an Ottoman Sipahis (soldier), and a number of maritime vessels from different periods, such as

a galley dating from the fifteenth century found in what used to be a chapel. Symbols used by the Knights Templar were also found, as well as coats-of-arms, flags, and names. Some of these graffiti have been preserved thanks to the pomegranate or prickly pear-based tinctures applied to the stone to prevent it from weathering away.

This building now houses a number of exhibits of artefacts which were found on site, donated to the museum, or purchased. These include stoves and ovens dating to the seventeenth century onwards, ice boxes, pots, steamers, irons, bed-pans, and others. A section is devoted to bread-making tools, another to pharmaceutical, electrician, sailmaking, and carpenter tools. There are also spaces devoted to artefacts linked with World War II, the feast of the Immaculate Conception (the titular feast of Bormla), and Bormla across the ages. One of the personages linked with Bormla is highlighted: namely Dom Mintoff, the architect of the social welfare system in Malta.

The museum was founded in 1997 by the Vella family as an independent, private, grassroots museum. As a private museum, Bir Mula Heritage Museum does not have access to state or other institutional funding. It has, however, managed to survive and remain active at a time when national and large institutional museums faced a downward trend in both visitor numbers and event attendance.

The museum management carries out socio-cultural events and activities both at the museum and in locations close to it. These activities include arts and crafts festivals, art exhibitions, guided tours, ghost tours, public lectures, courses, seminars, small conferences, and film festivals. The museum staff work in close cooperation with local groups, residents' associations, the local council, heritage personnel, and academics on social as well as cultural issues related to the area.

Background

Prior to World War II, Bormla was a thriving city where trade, services, and arts and crafts necessary to support maritime activity in the area were rampant. The decolonisation of Malta led to the dismantling of the local dockyard. This, together with de-industrialisation, led to massive unemployment among the population in the area. The community's only pride was expressed through the celebration of various religious events (Cutajar 2014). The small local museum also helped to raise self esteem, as shall be shown. Bir Mula Heritage Museum is, therefore, located in an urban region which has a high component of socially disadvantaged persons and families living there (Borg 2012; CACRC 2013).

The Museum: Exclusive or Inclusive

Individuals or groups who suffer from multiple deprivations and are marginalised are classified as socially excluded (Watson 2009). Museums can be used as vehicles for social inclusion. The role of museums as a means to combat social exclusion was recognised by various entities at international, national, and regional levels. Case studies show that museums are not simply formal educational institutions; they also serve as places which offer visitors the opportunity to socialise and interact with others. They help to increase interest in education and further learning and add value to school curricula which can help to improve the local quality of life and social skills (GLLAM 2000).

Kelly (2006) points out that museums which help to raise appreciation of place and culture can lead to community pride, which is essential when it comes to promoting heritage preservation. The cultural heritage displayed in museums can help people become cognisant of their roots in time and space, which can help to construct individual and community identities (Marcoevic 1996). Dodd and Sandell (2001) argue that museums contribute to an exploration and affirmation of a sense of identity both for the individual and the groups at risk of exclusion or marginalisation.

New museology places an emphasis on education and social inclusion. Shared and common meanings, context, experiences, discourse, and values can help a community come together and act socially and politically and, consequently, facilitate initiatives for local development (Ballesteros and Ramírez 2007). Community identity is largely constructed by and mediated through local heritage, as identities help people to “act, create and communicate,” and through their “symbolic, open, political and dynamic” nature “guide and stimulate [society] as catalysts of social action” (Ibid., 677).

Kelly (2006) argues that small regional and community museums contribute to social capital much more than the larger national museums, since the latter tend to be disconnected from the community element. Small museums give space and place in their narratives, texts, exhibitions, and displays to voices previously excluded and absent from the large institutional museums (Cameron 2003). Nonetheless, the advantage of small local museums according to Bourdieu (1989) is that “the closer the agents, groups or institutions which are situated within this space, the more common properties they have” with the community under discussion.

Museums can also help promote social interaction between locals and visitors. This interaction, in itself, can help attract tourism to the area

which, in turn opens up opportunities for further employment and entrepreneurship (Kelly 2006).

Methodology

For the purposes of this chapter, a qualitative approach was used to find out whether Bir Mula Heritage Museum succeeded in attaining some of the issues mentioned above. To do this, the events and activities in which the museum's staff formally or informally engaged will be examined. The objective of this analysis is to find out how the museum impacted the local community and whether the presence of the museum helped to change residents' and visitors' perception of the area. An analysis of visitors' feedback will be used to determine if the museum succeeded or failed in its mission.

Ethnography was deemed to be the best way of conducting this research. Participant observation and textual analysis were the main means of collecting data. For the textual analysis, various sources referring to the museum were analysed. These included comments left by visitors in the Visitor's Book and others made on tourism/travel blogs and websites such as TripAdvisor and social media. Articles and reports from the print media were also analysed. In addition, note was taken of the programmes, series, newscasts, and documentaries in which the museum was mentioned or featured. The keyword which guided the internet search was Bir Mula Heritage, though some other derivatives (such as, for example Bir Mula Heritage Museum or Birmula) were also used by those leaving comments. Visitors also left comments on the museum's website and in the activity archive where posters and material dealing with specific events and activities were stored. This study takes into consideration the museum's permanent and temporary exhibitions, formal and informal pedagogic activities, and interpretation exercises conducted at the venue and/or the area close to the museum.

Appreciation of the Museum

Bir Mula Heritage Museum was originally established to encourage local community members to become interested in heritage, as noted above. Free admission helped attract a number of residents who visited the museum because it was a place which helped "evoke local pride and identity" (McManus 2006, 6). They did not feel alienated by the artefacts on display because they were familiar with the majority of them. A good number of these visitors had used them or similar artefacts when they were

younger, or they had seen people making use of them. The elderly especially dragged grandnieces and grandnephews along to show them the artefacts on display and explain to them how these were used when they were young. Some of those who visited the museum donated artefacts they had at home because they were afraid that the younger generations would throw them away when they died. These consisted mainly of tools used by carpenters, sailmakers, and pharmacists, or war-related paraphernalia. Others came to ask information about some of the artefacts on display because they happened to have similar objects at home and did not know what they were or how they were used.

Some of the local visitors who came were more interested in the building itself. Stonemasons and architects were especially interested in the way the building was structured, the various interventions that had occurred during the ages, and the ways the stone was dressed or cut to build the house. An architect pointed out that the format of some of the arches used to shore up the building was not very common in Malta, and that this was an engineering feat to enable the stones to respond to earth tremors during earthquakes without causing structural damage. Stonemasons studied the way the stones were dressed and the type of liniment used to help against stone erosion over time.

These interactions between visitors and museum staff meant that the transfer of knowledge was two way. As a museum, Bir Mula Heritage fulfilled its role as a learning tool and a space bringing together individuals (Exell 2013). Some who visit the museum return with a treasured artefact for museum staff to assess, or ask museum staff to visit their characteristic houses because they would like information on certain details/structure.

Legends Tell the Building's History

Local visitors recounted a number of stories about the building and neighbourhood in which the museum is located. Some of the visitors who grew up in the neighbourhood recounted childhood experiences of the house or the neighbourhood. They spoke about the people who used to live in the building and how they used the different storeys. Other information was elicited from people who had actually lived in the house but had migrated to Canada, the United States, and Australia when they were young. They spoke about a "library" in the basement which was reached through a flight of stone steps. Others recalled that there had been a round table made of stone in the middle of the courtyard. This turned out to be a Roman olive mill donated to a priory by the previous owner of the building.

Most of these personal narratives called for further investigation to verify whether there was any truth in these stories. Historiography, cartography,¹ old photographs, and archaeological excavation reports were perused to locate the building in time. Artefacts found *in situ* were a critical source of data to construct a basis for the history of the building. These helped in dating the site and trace developments therein. The onsite finds, together with material recorded in nineteenth century reports, gave the museum staff a strong foundation on which to base interpretation and narratives. Consequently, these experiences led both the museum curator and other academics to revisit historiography about the locality. The discoveries at Bir Mula Heritage Museum demonstrated that certain facets of history of the locality had to be rewritten.

Charles Mizzi, an investigative journalist who conducted research on the neighbourhood, found that local residents referred to the building as “the house of conspiracies.” It seems that in the sixteenth to seventeenth centuries secret meetings were held there. Mizzi learned this story from a house-bound woman who had never visited the museum. The numerous graffiti of a cross purported to be the emblem of the Knights Templar along with a secret drawer hewn in one of the walls were found when the house was being renovated. When this drawer was opened, pieces of parchment, coins minted in 1787, and the wax used to seal messages were found.

A number of legends, some of them backed by evidence, are linked with this house. It is said that secret meetings took place between the Ottomans and the Knights of St. John’s envoys in 1565. Among the narratives that Mizzi heard was that the Knights Templar held secret meetings in the basement to decide which knight would be backed when the reigning Grand Master died. Other stories speak about the clandestine meetings held there between 1798 and 1800, wherein the conspirators sought to find ways to evict the French army ensconced in Birgu and, as a consequence of which, the house was ransacked and set on fire.

Visitors also recounted the tale of a young knight who fell in love with a lady from Bormla who lived in the building which now houses the museum. One day, the knight and the lady disappeared and some say they were killed and their bodies hidden inside the building. Others say that the ghosts of the couple still haunt it. Although attempts were made to verify this story, no skeletons have been found. Residents from the area, however, ask the staff whether they have encountered the ghosts.

Bir Mula Heritage Museum collects this information and narratives and tries to verify them against historical facts. Visitors feel proud when their knowledge is disseminated through the museum.

Written in Stone

As noted above, a number of graffiti were unearthed when the building was being restored. Some of the symbols used were not familiar to museum staff so professional advice was sought. Researchers interested in graffiti were invited to give their expert advice on the images. For example, some graffiti near the front door seemed to be written in Paleo-Hebrew. According to Professor Benjamim Tsedaka, Head of the Israelite Samaritan Information Centre in Israel, the message was not in Paleo-Hebrew but in another language. Another graffiti script contained Phoenician or Neo-Punic letters, but experts could not explain how or why they came to be carved. They conjectured that perhaps people wanted to leave a message and used a language that was not common to the majority population. The fact that these graffiti were so close to the front door might suggest that it might be a prayer to protect the residents from harm.

Another interesting graffiti, which is quite uncommon on the Maltese Islands, was the figure of an Ottoman Sipahis found on one of the stones found in the *sala maggiore*. The design shows that whoever carved it was very familiar with the uniform and accessories used by the sixteenth-century Ottoman Janissaries encamped in Bormla during the siege of Malta in 1565. The graffiti might have been made by Ottoman soldiers themselves. In fact, a notation in a diary of a Knight of the Order of St. John dated 1565 documents that Ottomans occupied the houses in Bormla (Balbi de Coreggio edn. 2005 [1568]).

Some of the graffiti probably depicts events linked with the history of Bormla. Images of fourteenth- to nineteenth-century maritime vessels, the coat of arms of the Grand Masters, Templar Knight crosses, and navigation symbols were carved on the stones. Visitors are intrigued by the graffiti, and often use knowledge acquired from areas of their lives to give them meaning. Though the museum constructed its own interpretation based on research and consultation, visitors are allowed to interact and share their own interpretation, which provides for further learning for all involved. The interaction, opinion sharing, and dialogue between museum staff and visitors provide for a negotiated and accepted narrative about the house.

Publications and the Media

Due to the fact that there is little information about the cultural heritage of Bormla on tourist websites and texts, the museum staff took initiatives to publish tourism-related material and information about a number of

historic sites found in the area. The Bormla brochure and map were published in 2000 by the then Minister for Tourism; the event was covered by the media and helped raise further awareness about the museum and local cultural heritage in the locality. In 2014, Bir Mula Heritage Museum published the first ever set of postcards featuring Bormla since those by Geo Fürst a century earlier.

Previous negative local images and stigmas were counteracted by the appearance of the museum in the media. As a consequence of this publicity, the Malta Tourism Authority offered to promote the museum on its official website. Thus, journalists visited the museum and wrote features about it, which led to a number of visitors from outside the locality also visiting. Through Bir Mula Heritage Museum, the locality began to be listed as a tourist attraction. Kelly (2006) argues that museums have to raise awareness and appreciation of the locality in which they are to be found and this is what Bir Mula Heritage Museum did. It plays an important role as a tourist attraction and acts as a tool to promote tourism within the locality, one of the means needed to revive economic activity and investment in the area.

Inclusive Museum

Bir Mula Heritage Museum's mission is to promote cultural heritage appreciation among local community members and visitors. It is also used as a space where NGOs and concerned individuals meet to promote the area on social, economic, and political levels. A number of NGOs and social groups hold meetings at the museum when they do not have a place of their own. The Cospicua (Bormla) Residents Association (Abela 2005; Attard 2004; Fenech 2006) was one of the groups which initially met at Bir Mula Heritage Museum. The primary objective of the participants who attended these meetings was not to visit the museum, but they often did so prior to or after their meetings (Falk 2009). Eventually, this NGO became known as the *ARC-Assoċjazzjoni tar-Residenti tal-Cottonera* (Cottonera Residents' Association) and helped to safeguard the interests of residents living in Senglea, Bormla and Vittoriosa, the Three Cities. Ballesteros and Ramirez (2007) note that shared and common factors help a community to come together, act socially and politically, and come up with initiatives for local development. These and other groups have met at Bir Mula Heritage Museum to discuss and take action over how the neighbourhood could be improved and keep an eye on so-called government instigated regeneration projects, which have done little to ameliorate the community's standard of living.

The museum also provided the *Fondazzjoni Bormliza ghal Persuni b'Dizabilita* (Foundation for Bormla Disabled Persons) with space to organise activities. Members of this group, supported by relatives and friends, have set up a live Nativity scene and play at the museum for a number of years. This activity permitted disabled persons and their families to interact with the public and gain self-esteem as museum visitors expressed recognition and appreciation of their talent.

These initiatives were possible because the museum was detached from any form of structural pressure and dependency, practices which national and institutional museums may not adopt because of their nature (Coffee 2008). Bir Mula Heritage Museum also promoted social inclusion by collaborating with pressure groups and national agencies concerned with social and community work, including collaboration with *Appoġġ*, a national agency which provides psycho-social welfare services. These joint efforts contributed to what Dodd and Sandell (2001) saw as the identity affirmation of individuals and groups at risk of social exclusion.

Bir Mula Heritage Museum also helps promote the talent of emerging artists and artisans, especially those who cannot afford to exhibit in establishments which charge fees that some of the participants are not in a position to pay. Maltese and foreign established artists exhibit their work at the museum and collect donations for charitable purposes. These and other activities permit interactions with the local community at the museum. Most of the activities held in Bir Mula Heritage Museum were not-for-profit, but for the community's benefit.

Some of the exhibitors and emerging artists benefitting from the free-of-charge space offer were unemployed youths, single parents, elderly, ex-convicts and ex-abusers, disabled persons, and those from local handicrafts and artisan cooperative which had no premises to exhibit. The museum, later used by more established Maltese and foreign artists to collect funds for charitable purposes, allowed "socially disadvantaged" exhibitors to feel proud and gain higher self-esteem, since they were exhibiting on the same level as established national and international artists. Analogous activities permitted the local community to interact with the traditional "exclusive" museum community and feel included in the museum's cultural events. This sort of interaction was impossible at state-owned or other private galleries since exhibiting and participating in them involved paying exorbitant prices, which was not possible to most artists and groups. The functions of Bir Mula Heritage Museum validate McManus's (2006) argument that most of the activities of a museum are not-for-profit but for the community's benefit.

Bir Mula Heritage Museum as a Didactic Tool

Bir Mula Heritage Museum was established for educational purposes. This goal is attained through the object- or history-related activities which lead to interactive and personal pedagogy among visitors. But the staff did not stop there. From the initial school outreach, the museum ventured further and designed certified vocational and specialisation courses for licenced tourist guides to equip them with information about the tangible and intangible cultural heritage in the locality.

Bir Mula Heritage Museum organised a series of public lectures, seminars, and courses about local history, and Japanese culture and craft. Local residents and others who attended these lectures had the opportunity to interact with lecturers, which would not have been possible because of the social divide (GLLAM 2000). These activities helped in the capacity development of different individuals from the locality.

Through its exhibitions and educational programmes, Bir Mula Heritage Museum departed from a “function based model” concentrating on collections, to a “communicative” branch of museology (van Mensch 2004, 4). Formal educational curricula and public museums do not leave space for working-class or socially-excluded individuals to explore their culture (Howard 2003). Small museums have the chance to experiment and create their own methods and approaches to meet the local community’s needs, and reach out to minorities within the community. This can occur because museums serve as a social space presenting the community with shared commonalities (Bourdieu 1989). As an independent museum, it can reach out to the socially excluded by building a personal knowledge base from its community.

Activities are chosen to attract the socially disenfranchised, such as exhibitions dealing with local religious or sporting events, including the annual traditional Passover table and art exhibition during Holy Week and Easter Sunday. Locally known as *Mejda ta’ l-Appostli*, the Last Supper display at Bir Mula Heritage Museum is based on the Essene Passover tradition. One of the goals of setting up this display emerged from the need to attract visitors who would not necessarily visit a museum, such as those with a passion for religious exhibits. The exhibit takes visitors through other exhibits where they could see and interact with historic artefacts. The approach adopted helped undermine the idea that museums are necessarily elitist (Howard 2003; Macdonald 2003). The museum provided the socially disenfranchised with the opportunity to further their learning and in the process build their self-esteem (Marcoevic 1996; Kelly 2006).

In addition, the museum holds a number of external events in the area. These include a series of art, crafts, and culinary festivals. Initially, they were organised with the help of University of Malta students studying tourism. The Malta Tourism Authority through Bormla Local Council eventually funded the art and crafts festivals. Outdoor festivals were used to encourage individuals and community groups to publicly exhibit their talents, crafts, and arts to the general public including tourists who would in turn be invited to join guided tours of heritage sites around the area.² Entertainment and education were the main intentions behind these festivals.

Negotiated Histories

The museum's collection, originally a family collection, has been enriched with donations from local people. The artefacts, utensils, tools, photographs, or other musealia,³ most of which were new to the curator, led to a negotiated form of interpretation and presentation. Local visitors looked at old photographs and identified people and events caught on film. Thus, the museum gathered information about people, places, and events which was not recorded in histories elsewhere. Every interaction between museum staff and visitors is a source of oral history, which should be recorded, preserved, and transmitted for future generations. In fact, most of the building's history as well as the interpretation of the artefacts on display are based on a negotiated process which takes place between visitors and staff as well as research.

Bir Mula Heritage Museum did not back down from its primary objectives to negotiate and mediate the interpretation of the museum content (Desvallées and Mairesse 2010). Oral histories were analysed against documented facts and research conducted by various historians while keeping in mind the fact that historians past and present can be subjective rather than objective. In fact, the museum realised that even the local community's interpretation could be subject to biases and subjectivities.

Museums: Size Matters!

According to Kelly (2006), small community museums contribute to social capital much more than larger national museums. As noted earlier, this may be due to the high degree of agency that small private museums enjoy, when compared to larger institutional and national museums. The fact that Bir Mula Heritage Museum is self-funded means that it is

autonomous. Decisions are not answerable to a central authority. Their agency, however, is affected by lack of funds (Kelly 2006).

Conclusion

This case study about Bir Mula Heritage Museum in Bormla, Malta, shows that the functions and practices of small museums in stigmatised communities can help empower residents by adopting objectives that first and foremost put the needs of the community first. By providing different activities and learning opportunities, small museums in one way or another can help residents build a more positive self-identity, which serves at the same time to assuage the stigma linked with minority groups.

Bir Mula Heritage Museum was capable of providing and facilitating inclusive museum pedagogy which helped to ameliorate the community's identity among the residents and outsiders. The museum achieved these goals by involving the community, giving them a place, and enabling them to voice their needs. Apart from this, Bir Mula Heritage Museum promoted and raised awareness about local heritage among national and international visitors, putting Bormla on the tourism map.

The functions of this particular small museum within a socially deprived area were essentially community-oriented; they revolved around the objective of a return on investment in the locality in which the museum is entrenched (Watson 2009). The museum was free to act on its objectives. It faced various challenges and limitations, but its impact on the community was noticeable. This study, thus, proves that small museums succeed in impacting positively on the communities in which they are located.

Notes

¹ The earliest available cartography collection for the Maltese Islands dates from the Great Siege of 1565. Only a few maps show details before that date.

² In 2008, Bir Mula Heritage Museum and the Youths for the Environment (University of Malta) held the first *Art, Crafts and Cuisine Festival*. Between 2009 and 2012, Bir Mula Heritage Museum in conjunction with the Bormla Local Council organised the *Cospicua Bastions Festival*, the *Bormla Culturefest*, and the *DockFest*. In 2014, Bir Mula Heritage Museum organised the World Tourism Day involving the Malta Tourism Society, the Malta Union of Tourist Guides, the University of Malta, students, artists and crafts persons. This event was supported by the Ministry for Tourism, the UN-WTO, and the Malta Tourism Authority.

³ In the Bir Mula Heritage Museum context, musealia extends to items which are usually discarded as they are no longer useful to the user and includes items which

would not be collected by larger state museums or traditional museums. Bir Mula Heritage Museum collects them because they are not replicable or are rare or obsolete, for example, tickets, receipts, and craft-tools.

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