

Book Review: A Magna Maxima. Rabat – Città Victoria

Various Authors

Gozo: Samuel Azzopardi (publisher) (2019)

REVIEWED BY GEOFFREY G. ATTARD

A Magna Maxima. Rabat – Città Victoria is the name of a recent publication by outgoing Victoria mayor Dr Samuel Azzopardi featuring exquisite photographs by renowned Gozitan photographer Daniel Cilia and with contributions by four Gozitan writers and academics. Gozo's town has in the past decade inspired various authors to write books and historical articles inspired by its history, geography, archaeology and similar themes. Now, at the end of his ten-year term in office as Victoria's seventh mayor, lawyer Samuel Azzopardi is bequeathing us a magnificent publication, another book in the long list of coffee-table books that feature the island of the three hills. Dr Azzopardi wrote a short introduction to the book which he considers as a 'symbol of deep gratitude towards his fellow citizens, staff and people' of Victoria. Rev. Dr Joseph Bezzina wrote the section about the history of the ancient town which is crowned by the medieval citadel known by one and all as the *Gran Castello* or *Cittadella*. It is followed by Edward Scerri's chapter entitled

Victoria's Streetscapes and Urban Texture; Scerri is a sought-after architect who hails from Victoria itself. Notary Paul George Pisani, son of the late Gozitan poet Ġoġ, writes about 'Art in Victoria' and introduces the reader to the artistic heritage of the city. Last but not least, Dr Maria Frendo, a lecturer in the Department of English at the University of Malta writes the last entry entitled *A Siren's Song* concluding the sumptuous publication on a musical note. Only fifty copies have been published of *A Magna Maxima*, the publication commemorating Dr Samuel Azzopardi's ten-year service to his native town as mayor; the publication carries no date or place of publication but Azzopardi signs his *preamble* at the beginning of the book on the 1st of June 2019. On the 10th of June 2019, Victoria commemorated the 132nd anniversary since Queen Victoria bestowed on it city-status. Incidentally, the 24th of May 2019 was the bi-centenary of Queen Victoria's birth, an anniversary that was duly commemorated at *Il-Haġar* complex a few weeks ago.

