A comparative analysis of the implementation of the European Landscape Convention within an archaeological framework:

Grassroots engagement in the protection of archaeological resources in Malta

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Abstract

The contemporary relevance of archaeology has become increasingly prominent in academic discourses of the discipline since the late 1980s. This post-processual direction in archaeological theory has led to much debate on the relationship between the public and archaeology. This paradigm shift is reflected in archaeological theory, and in the aims and objectives of international heritage conventions that ultimately form the backbone of archaeological practice. Two of the more relevant heritage conventions are the European Landscape Convention and the Faro Convention, today considered to be significant milestones in the redefinition of what constitutes cultural heritage, as well as setting the bar for the role of the public in heritage issues.

The present study examines the relationship between archaeology and the public in Malta, and public engagement in the protection of archaeological heritage. Changing trends in the literature and in the international heritage conventions are considered. This is explored on a broader, international scale in the archaeological literature, as well as on the more specific scale of the situation in Malta. The interface between public and protagonists in Malta is explored through a number of qualitative in-depth interviews, conducted with key professionals from within heritage NGOs and members of the public from citizen-led heritage awareness groups. The data gathered from these interviews informs a thematic analysis of grassroots public engagement with archaeological resources in Malta, and its protection. The direct engagement of civil society in the protection of archaeological heritage resources is found to be in a state of flux. New forms of citizen engagement are emerging, spurred by a low level of confidence in institutional frameworks, and facilitated by social media. It is argued that a divide between the views and perspectives of the professional archaeological community and the wider Maltese public still persists today.
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Chapter 1: Introduction
1.1 Scope and Aims

The scope of this study is to investigate how grassroots engagement with cultural heritage has evolved in terms of its representation in heritage discourse and in international heritage conventions, with a focus on the situation in Malta. The study set out to examine how international conventions, the European Landscape Convention (Florence 2000, European Treaty Series No. 176) in particular, affect the practice of archaeology. As research proceeded it was decided to narrow the focus to specific aspect of this wider question, namely that of public participation.

Central to this area of investigation is the understanding that archaeology cannot be defined simply as ‘the study of past human societies and their environments through the systematic recovery and analysis of material culture’\(^1\), but needs to be understood within the wider context of the relationship between people and the past. This means that for the purpose of this study, archaeology is being understood as a concept and not merely as a process of recovering and analysing material remains. The study of the relationship with the past in the present, often referred to as heritage studies, is a relatively young enterprise, driven by the post-modern and post-structuralist debates of the 1980s. Its roots, however, can be traced to the late 18\(^{th}\) and early 19\(^{th}\) centuries and the development of heritage management and practices as public activities, entailing an increasing valorisation of the past as well as a growing concern with the conservation of material remains.\(^2\) This growing interest was underpinned by the socio-political climate of the 19\(^{th}\) century, and rested on concepts such as the citizen and the middle class. In other words, it was the creation of the public as an entity separate to the state that fanned the flames of interest in the past, coupled with an increasing valorisation of material remains in the wake of the industrial revolution and the destruction of large swathes of landscape that it brought in its wake.\(^3\) As result of these developments, engagement with the past largely became the remit of two groups, namely the public as an audience and the professional practitioner, a model that was later exported across the globe in the colonial climate of the 19\(^{th}\) century. The changing relationship between the public and the expert has been reflected in the development of archaeology throughout the course of the discipline’s history, and is still evident today, in both practice and academia. The European Landscape Convention provided the initial interest in the topics of the present study, particularly since Malta has signed but not ratified the

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1 Darvill 2002: 22-23
2 Stig Sørensen & Carman 2009b: 13
3 Stig Sørensen & Carman 2009b: 14-15
convention. Thus, the scope was narrowed down to a focus on the element of public participation in international heritage conventions, of which the landscape forms an important part, its development within the realm of archaeological practice and theory, and how such a grassroots engagement may or may not be occurring in Malta.

The aims of the present study, therefore are:

1. A comprehensive literature review of the development of the public role within archaeological discourses as well as international heritage conventions;

2. Developing a deeper understanding of the role of the public within heritage management, planning and policy-making;

3. The use of a qualitative method to investigate the grassroots public engagement with cultural heritage in Malta.

Chapter 2 will provide the main theoretical framework for the study in the form of a comprehensive literature review, and sets the scene for the Maltese context through a review of the development of heritage management in Malta, with a specific emphasis on the public. The choice of research methodology is presented in Chapter 3. The development of the role of the public both in archaeological discourses and in international heritage conventions is presented in Chapter 4, where international instruments and archaeological discourses are compared. Chapter 5 presents the results and analysis of the chosen qualitative approach. The final chapter, Chapter 6, provides the discussion of the results as well as the concluding remarks of the study.
Chapter 2: Literature Review
2.1 Preamble

The current study revolves around the notion that heritage forms an integral part of the quality of life and social well-being of individuals and communities, as outlined in the European Landscape Convention (ELC), as well as the Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (Faro 2005, European Treaty Series No. 199). The setting for the current study is the island of Malta, part of an archipelago located in the central Mediterranean, which has been shaped by millennia of human activity, creating a landscape that is dense with archaeological heritage. The study aims at gaining an understanding of how public engagement in the protection of archaeological resources in Malta has developed, within the wider context of the European Landscape Convention. This grassroots approach, rather than a top-down one, reflects both the current trends within heritage studies as well as the aims and articles of the aforementioned international conventions. A comparative analysis of countries that have adopted such approaches will provide the framework against which the situation in Malta will be compared.

At the time of writing (February to August 2018) the current heritage climate in Malta is considered by many to be at a critical point, resulting in frequent and widespread news coverage of the increasing destruction of cultural heritage, be it the loss of landscape or built heritage. In light of the aims and principles of both the landscape convention and Faro convention, with their insistence on cultural heritage contributing to the quality of life of everyone, it has become a legitimate and pressing question to ask how the increasing destruction of cultural heritage in Malta, is affecting the rights, interests and quality of life of the general public.

2.2 Review of the relevant literature

In the realm of archaeology and other heritage related disciplines, archaeology has traditionally been taken to signify surviving material and tangible places or sites and physical artefacts from the past. However, there is a difference between archaeological remains and heritage. The former represents those tangible places or things, whilst the latter signifies something that cannot be limited to that which can be physically handled, but is also something that is created and perceived. This is reflected in the differences between tangible and intangible heritage. The 1972 Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, has influenced how cultural and natural heritage is perceived and understood, and created a

\[4\] Stig Sørensen & Carman 2009a: 3-4
static concept of cultural and natural heritage. This meant that only monuments, sites and geological and biological formation that were of outstanding value were considered. In addition to this, there was much debate over the perceived Eurocentric preferences of the conventions, with scholars such as Bryne (1991) Pocock (1997), Cleere (2001) and Sullivan (2004) all arguing that the 1972 convention focused on Western European heritage, both in terms of policy and practice. However, by the 1980s the focus of heritage studies was starting to shift and to move away from the traditional perceptions of what constitutes heritage. One of the fundamental changes was the recognition that meaning was imbued in the tangible aspects of heritage by its relation to the present. This shift in perception led to the creation of the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, which defines heritage as the ‘expressions, knowledge and skills that communities […] recognize as part of their cultural heritage’. Fairchild Ruggles and Silverman argue that this distinction between the tangible and the intangible has led to much debate over the past decade since it represents the shift from the ‘objective nature of material culture to the subjective experience of the human being’.

Academic interest in heritage related issues has a long history, however, it was not until the late 1980s that heritage as a concept became the centre of theoretical debates across the archaeological community. The same can be said for public participation in matters relating to heritage, with much of the paradigm shifts that occurred within archaeology and heritage studies having a profound effect on how the role of the public is perceived and accepted. In order to properly understand these concepts it is necessary to delve into the theoretical foundations that underpin them.

2.2.1 Theoretical foundations

Heritage studies as a discipline appeared in archaeological discourses in the late 1980s. This appearance needs to be set against the wider theoretical changes that were occurring at the time. In order to explain these developments in context, some earlier developments will be outlined below.

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5 Smith & Akagawa 2008: 1; Fairchild Ruggles & Silverman 2009: 6
6 Stig Sørensen & Carman 2009a: 3-4
8 Fairchild Ruggles & Silverman 2009: 11
9 Stig Sørensen & Carman 2009a: 3-4
10 Stig Sørensen & Carman 2009a: 3-4
The rise of the so-called ‘New Archaeology’ movement has its origins in the early 1960s, and can be linked to the wider political unrest found across Europe in the late 1960s. This political turmoil found its way into the universities of the Anglo-Saxon world resulting in paradigm shifts in a multitude of academic disciplines. Archaeology was not exempt from this ideological conflict, with young scholars becoming dissatisfied with the direction in which archaeology had been heading, resulting in much debate on ‘what archaeology might, what it could and could not do’. The archaeological investigations of the early 20th century had taken place within a culture-historical framework, which emphasised the creation of regional chronologies and sought to describe cultures found within these chronologies. Thus, when the political turmoil of the 1960s found its way into the archaeological discipline, criticisms aimed at this type of investigation became prevalent. On the forefront of this new movement was David Clark and his seminal article *Archaeology: The loss of innocence* (1973), which today is considered to be a founding text for the New Archaeology movement. Clarke describes a discipline that was in the midst of a paradigm shift, of a loss of innocence, in which the ‘strength of the new archaeologies, or New Archaeology, is that it introduces a variety of questions where only answers were formerly proclaimed’. On the other side of the Atlantic it was Lewis Binford and his work *New Perspectives in Archaeology* (1968) which pushed for this new approach, describing the new movement as ‘a testing period, and exploration of the external world for the purpose of evaluating the utility of the assumptions made about the world by traditional archaeologists’. One of the main aims of this new exploration of the external world sought to achieve, was an archaeology that was inherently scientific, in terms of the methods used and the interpretations provided. Binford believed in creating an archaeology that utilised scientific methods in order to make proper interpretations of material remains, and argued that ‘our knowledge about some phenomena is more dependable than about others’, and thus making reference to Christopher Hawkes’ ‘ladder of inference’, originally published in 1954. Like Hawkes, Binford believed that it was possible to make inferences into certain topics (such as site distribution and site formation) but not others (such as symbolism). Thus, one can argue that the archaeologists of the mid-20th century sought an etic approach to archaeological interpretation, an approach rooted on the lower levels of Hawkes’ ladder of inference and as

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11 Shanks & Tilley 1987: 30
12 Renfrew & Bahn 2004: 41; Gkiasta 2008: 19
13 Clarke 1973: 11
14 Binford 1989: 44
15 Binford 2002: 16
such focused on the description of material remains, the processes of site formation and the modes of production. Essentially this meant that archaeologists remained on the outside, and use positivist methods to reach the past.17

These theoretical underpinnings had much in common with Marxist archaeology. The processual interest into how people produced and how they organised their societies in the past, has much in common with Marxist interests, in particular when processual archaeologies ‘recognize that relations of exploitation and power are embedded in […] social relationships’.18 However, one of the main differences between the two is the acknowledgement by Marxist archaeologies that ‘scholars must live in society and that for this reason […] scholarship will always have a political dimension because it exists to serve the interests of social groups within society’.19 By the early 1980s processual approaches to archaeology started to be questioned, with many scholars within the Anglo-American world disagreeing with the evolutionary deterministic approach that defined the New Archaeology movement. Many of these dissatisfied archaeologists turned to Marxism as an alternative.20 Therefore, Marxist archaeology can be considered as a bridge between the processual movement of the 1960s and 1970s and the alternative archaeologies that would define the last decade of the 20th century.

The so-called post-processual movement of the 1980s and 1990s arose out of a challenging of the positivist approaches that dominated the archaeology of the mid-20th century. Scholars such as Christopher Tilley and Ian Hodder argued that it was not possible to separate ‘one’s social self’21 from the practice of archaeology. This realisation was influenced by the emergence of alternative archaeologies such as feminist, indigenous and post-colonial archaeologies. What these ideological perspectives had in common was the undeniable relevance they had for contemporary society, highlighting social issues such as gender biases, colonial and post-colonial disparities and the refusal to maintain the illusion of objectivity. Instead these new archaeologies chose a direction with ‘less reliance on empirical approaches and more standing given to non-empirical sources, including histories, folklore, traditional knowledge and religious beliefs’.22 Essentially this shift to a more socially aware archaeology represents a climbing of Hawkes’ ladder of inference to levels that acknowledged the social, political and

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17 Shanks & Tilley 1992: 12
18 McGuire 2008: 79-80
19 McGuire 2008: 80
20 McGuire 2008: 82
21 Hodder 2008: 29
22 Nicholas 2008: 1666
spiritual elements and implications of archaeological interpretation. This can be referred to an emic approach to archaeology, where scholars are no longer the detached observers but are concerned with the experienced world. This approach is most succinctly embodied in a phenomenological approach to archaeology. Phenomenology can be defined as a means ‘to describe the character of human experience, specifically the ways in which [humans] apprehend the material world through directed intervention in our surroundings’.  

The publication of Christopher Tilley’s 1994 work *A Phenomenology of Landscape* led to much debate within the archaeological community. Tilley’s work utilised phenomenology to criticise the traditional understandings of landscape which portray ‘landscape as a quantifiable resource that can be mapped, measured, bought and sold’. Thus, Tilley argues that archaeologists need to immerse themselves in the ‘qualitative aspects of landscape by exploring the ways in which social and cultural meanings are ascribed to places [since] human experience and understanding of the world are mediated through the body’. Thus, what now emerged were works such as Ian Hodder’s 1986 work *Reading the Past: Current Approaches to Interpretation in Archaeology*, Michael Shanks’ and Christopher Tilley’s two publications *Reconstructing Archaeology* and *Social Theory in Archaeology*, both appearing in 1987, along with, which all agreed that archaeology was ‘not a value-free and neutral social science’.

A parallel debate was unfolding in heritage studies, with the recognition that heritage plays an integral role within contemporary society. Central to this recognition were two publications, namely David Lowenthal’s 1985 *The Past is a Foreign Country* and Patrick Wright’s 1985 *On Living in an Old Country*, which looked beyond interpretations of the past to the ideologies behind them, and thus allowed for a critique into the modern uses of the past. These works went on to spark a debate into the meanings of heritage as a concept and what it meant to its audiences. Nick Merriman’s 1991 publication *Beyond the Glass Case* that identified different pasts, arguing that there was no single interpretation of the past that was more valuable than another. Thus, this signified a cognitive move away from viewing heritage as limited to ancient monuments, to acknowledging that heritage of a year ago may be no less valuable. This is linked to the wide variety of potential interpretations of the past and the many roles it plays within contemporary society, resulting in the realisation that everything has the potential to be

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23 Brück 2005: 46  
24 Brück 2005: 47  
25 Brück 2005: 47  
26 Diaz-Andreu  2007: 4  
27 Carman & Stig Sørensen 2009b: 18-19
In addition, this paradigm shift led to fundamental changes in the ways in which archaeologists perceive and interact with the public, with public engagement, heritage management and cooperation and collaboration with the public becoming the subject of much scholarly attention, as discussed below. The socio-political and economic realities of archaeological research are also embedded in the above mentioned realizations. Where once the contemporary consequences of archaeology were not deemed important or relevant, today, the relationship of archaeology to modern society is a main concern. These self-reflective discussions on the social role of archaeology, the possibility of multiple interpretations and the subjective nature of heritage led to not only accepting non-expert input but also collaborating with the affected publics, and as such acknowledging the role that archaeology plays in society.

An important focus of the ensuing debate has been the wider landscape. ‘Landscape is heritage; heritage is landscape’ is a phrase taken from John Schofield’s 2014 edited volume *Who needs Experts? Counter-mapping Cultural Heritage* which was instrumental in setting the parameters of the present study. Such a broad characterisation of cultural heritage results in the acknowledgment that everything can be considered as heritage. Schofield argues that people have always taken an interest in their surroundings and local places, and that ‘places form the punctuation marks of human experience’, resulting from the notion that places are made of stories and that these stories make memories. Schofield goes on to argue that these memories create people’s perceptions of what heritage is, and that heritage is a mental construct rather than a physical entity. This mental construct is something that is created by the individual and the community resulting out of specific values, memories and meanings being attached to places and things. Sara McDowell’s 2008 chapter in the edited volume *The Ashgate Companion to Heritage and Identity*, posits that ‘places’ are sites which have been imbued with meaning, which may represent the heritage of an individual or whole community. Therefore, McDowell argues, people connect to these places through feelings of belonging and ownership, and as a result, through identity.

\[\text{References}\]

\[28\] Lowenthal 1993: 3; Carman & Stig Sørensen 2009b: 21-23
\[29\] Atalay 2012: 1
\[30\] Schofield 2014: 2
\[31\] Schofield 2014: 2
\[32\] Schofield 2014: 3
\[33\] McDowell 2008: 38
2.3 International heritage conventions

The profound shifts in perceptions of what constitutes archaeology and heritage that took place during the late 1980s and 1990s also shaped, and came to be enshrined in international heritage conventions and charters. Two main entities responsible for the creation of such international instruments are the Council of Europe and the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS). The main aim here is to highlight the role that a selection of the more relevant conventions have had in setting international standards for the public’s participation and engagement with cultural heritage. International conventions reflect the current trends and paradigms, as discussed in later chapters. The two conventions that will be focused on played a pivotal role with their insistence on redefining the parameters of what constitutes cultural heritage, the central role given to the public in matters relating to heritage, and the legislative acknowledgment of the relevance of archaeology and heritage to contemporary society. These are the European Landscape Convention and the Faro Convention.

2.3.1 The European Landscape Convention (Florence 2000)

The European Landscape Convention (ELC) was launched by the Council of Europe, which is an intergovernmental organisation founded in 1949. The main objectives of the Council of Europe are the promotion of democracy, human rights and the rule of law, in addition to advocating for the freedom of expression, media, assembly, and equality.34 The ELC must be understood within this framework, and was launched as a response to the growing concerns across Europe brought about through the increasing scale and character of landscape change.35 The ELC was adopted in Strasbourg by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on 19th July 2000, and was opened for signature in Florence on 20th October 2000, eventually coming into force on 1st March 2004.36 To date (February 2018) thirty-eight countries have signed and ratified the convention, three countries having signed and not ratified, (Malta, Iceland, Estonia) and six countries have neither signed nor ratified (Albania, Austria, Germany, Liechtenstein, Monaco, Russian Federation).37 The ELC is a ‘genuine innovation compared with other international documents on cultural and natural heritage’38, and it stands out as the first international convention to consider ‘landscape’ in its entirety, and not only those areas or

35 Déjeant-Pons 2006: 364
36 Déjeant-Pons 2006: 364; Déjeant-Pons 2017: 2
38 Council of Europe 2008
regions that have some form of outstanding natural or cultural value.\textsuperscript{39} In addition to this, the ELC returns the concept of landscape to the local and away from the elitist and outstanding notions that dominated landscape politics for much of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century. What is seen here is a return to the ordinary, present-day and local experiences of landscape, very much in line with changing notions of heritage.\textsuperscript{40}

Apart from this paradigm shift, the convention’s insistence on the importance of people’s participation in all issues relevant to landscape made it integral to cultural heritage management across Europe, reflecting the increasing value placed on public perception and participation within archaeological discourses. One of the main reasons for the creation of the ELC was the acknowledgement that landscape forms an integral part of individual and therefore social well-being and quality of life:

‘Landscape contributes to the formation of local cultures and that it is a basic component of the European natural and cultural heritage, contributing to human well-being and consolidation of the European identity’.\textsuperscript{41}

But what exactly is landscape? Article 1 of the ELC defines landscape as an ‘area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors’.\textsuperscript{42} What this means is that the opinions and views of all people concerning landscape should be taken into consideration, and not just those of the scientific and political elite. Fundamental to this notion is the realisation that all landscapes are worthy of recognition, regardless of whether they are listed as being of outstanding value, since they all play a role in influencing people’s perceptions of the world around them. This reflects a shift in the ways in which landscapes are perceived, namely moving away from valuing and protecting the physical elements and components of a landscape, to placing the onus on experiencing and perceiving the landscape.\textsuperscript{43} Furthermore, the ELC places a high importance on sustainable development, arguing that:

‘the concern for sustainable development expressed at the 1992 Rio de Janeiro conference makes landscape an essential consideration in striking a balance between preserving the natural and cultural heritage as a reflection of European identity and diversity, and using it as an economic resource capable of generating employment in the context of the boom in sustainable tourism’.\textsuperscript{44}

\textsuperscript{39} Prieur 2002: 3
\textsuperscript{40} Fairclough & van Londen 2010: 656
\textsuperscript{41} Council of Europe 2000a
\textsuperscript{42} Council of Europe 2000a
\textsuperscript{43} Déjeant-Pons 2002: 16; Scott 2011: 2755
\textsuperscript{44} Council of Europe 2000b
What this essentially means is that landscape plays a pivotal role in linking people, development, space and place. The convention connects sustainable development to the concept of well-being, both individual and social, for both current and future generations. Sustainable development is at the centre of the convention’s aim to create a balanced relationship between well-being, the economy and the landscape.45

The ELC is also inclusive of the public’s voices, and encourages individual and societal appropriation of their surroundings, and on the sustainable development of the area. Secondly, the convention aims at organising European co-operation on landscape matters since the landscapes of Europe are of value to all Europeans.46 These aims are translated into four general measures:

- Recognising landscape in the law as an essential part of people’s surroundings, as well as an expression of the diversity of their shared natural and cultural history, and as a foundation of their identity.
- Establishing and implementing policies that are aimed at landscape management, planning and protection,
- Establishing procedures for the participation of the public, as well as, local and regional authorities, and
- Integrating landscape in local and regional planning policies.47

Central to these aims and general measures is the establishment of ‘procedures for the participation of the general public, local and regional authorities, and other parties with an interest in the definition and implementation of the landscape policies’.48 In addition to this, the role of the public is repeatedly emphasised, with Article 5c stating that parties are required to ‘establish procedures for the participation of the general public’49 while Article 6d requires parties to ‘define landscape quality objectives for the landscapes identified and assessed, after public consultation’.50 Thus the ELC intends to create an environment where the community and the wider public is involved in the creation and implementation of policy frameworks for the protection and management of landscapes. This includes creating tools that allow the public

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45 Prieur 2006: 13; Scott 2011: 27
46 Council of Europe 2000b
47 Déjeant-Pons 2006: 370
48 Council of Europe 2000a
49 Council of Europe 2000a
50 Council of Europe 2000a
to understand and actively contribute to the interpretation of the characteristics and values of the landscape within which they live and work.\textsuperscript{51}

Whilst as mentioned, there has been progress in terms of acknowledging the importance of including the public in matters relating to landscapes, there are still some difficulties and challenges in implementing this. However, what can no longer be denied is the integral role the public should be playing in matters relating to heritage.

\subsection*{2.3.2 The Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (Faro 2005)}

This convention, more commonly known as the Faro Convention, is different from the ELC in that it is a framework convention providing principles and highlighting areas for action, providing a framework for signatory parties to decide on the most convenient ways to implement the convention.\textsuperscript{52} The Faro Convention was created by a committee of experts drafted by the Council of Europe and was adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 13\textsuperscript{th} October 2005, eventually opening for signature on 27\textsuperscript{th} October 2005 at Faro. To date only 17 states have signed and ratified the convention, with a further 6 having signed but not ratified.\textsuperscript{53} What this particular convention aims to do is to call on heritage workers and policy makers to think on a local scale, moving away from an ‘authorised heritage discourse’, a term coined by Laurajane Smith to define a discourse that is nationalistic, elitist and monumental in its views on culture.\textsuperscript{54} Instead it calls on heritage discourse to acknowledge the multiple perceptions of heritage that exist and that all individuals have a right to be involved with heritage, in other words, it emphasises why heritage should be protected and not how.\textsuperscript{55}

Schofield argues that the Faro Convention is similar to the ELC in calling for greater public involvement, in addition to placing heritage at the centre of individual and social well-being. However, Schofield maintains that Faro places a higher importance on viewing heritage as ‘everyone’s heritage’.\textsuperscript{56} Accordingly, Faro recognises:

- The need to place people and their values at the centre of heritage related discourses;

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\textsuperscript{51} De Montmollin 2006: 83-85
\textsuperscript{52} \url{https://www.coe.int/en/web/culture-and-heritage/faro-convention} (accessed on 14.05.2018)
\textsuperscript{53} \url{https://www.coe.int/en/web/culture-and-heritage/faro-convention} (accessed on 14.05.2018)
\textsuperscript{54} Smith 2004: 11
\textsuperscript{55} Wolferstan 2014: 50; Fairclough \textit{et al.} 2014: 10
\textsuperscript{56} Schofield 2014: 6
That every individual has the right to engage with the cultural heritage of their choice, whilst respecting the choice of others, as outlined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and

Acknowledges the need to include every individual constituting civil society in the process of defining and managing cultural heritage.\(^{57}\)

In essence, what is being argued here is that a more democratic and grass-root approach to heritage is required. This stems from the realisation that in most European countries it is the state that makes important decisions of what constitutes national heritage, with little to no input from the public. Starting with the ELC, there was a desire to place people and all their different values and perceptions at the centre of heritage discourses, creating the environment for a bottom-up approach to heritage management, rather than the top-down approaches that scarcely involve the public.\(^{58}\) In order for such a widespread involvement in matters of cultural heritage to be feasible, the very definition of what constitutes cultural heritage needed to be redefined. Accordingly Article 2 of the Faro conventions defines cultural heritage in the broadest possible way:

\[(2a) \text{cultural heritage is a group of resources inherited from the past which people identify, independently of ownership, as a reflection and expression of their constantly evolving values, beliefs, knowledge and traditions. It includes all aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time;}
\]

\[(2b) \text{a heritage community consists of people who value specific aspects of cultural heritage which they wish, within the framework of public action, to sustain and transmit to future generations.}\]

The above definition of cultural heritage has no boundaries in the sense of what can be defined as heritage, and embraces the possibility that there may be multiple perceptions. Both the ELC and the Faro Convention place the interface between people and their perceived world at the centre of what defines landscape and/or cultural heritage.\(^{60}\) Keeping in mind the aims of the present study, how does the Faro Convention relate to landscape? In a contribution to a volume published in 2009 by the Council of Europe entitled *Heritage and Beyond*, Graham Fairclough argues that places are the ‘ultimate cultural product because they are created by people but also frame people’s lives’.\(^{61}\) According to this reading, places are a perceptual as well as a physical entity, and more importantly they are the product of individuals and communities,

\(^{57}\) Council of Europe 2005; Schofield 2014: 6  
\(^{58}\) Fairclough 2014: 11  
\(^{59}\) Council of Europe 2005  
\(^{60}\) Fairclough 2009: 37  
\(^{61}\) Fairclough 2017: 153
rather than heritage experts and government officials. Fairclough goes on to question whether it would even be possible for planners, developers and other experts to create places, since he argues that these are created organically by the people who move within them. Just as the ELC argues that the definition of landscape should include the everyday and the ordinary, Faro, argues that heritage is a vital component of the ordinary and the local.\textsuperscript{62}

The concept of sustainable development runs through the ELC as well as Faro. Sustainability is woven through the ELC’s very definition of landscape and its role in the social, cultural and economic well-being of individuals and society as a whole.\textsuperscript{63} Faro focuses on how cultural heritage is the remit of everyone and not just experts, and as such the responsibility towards that heritage should be shared by all individuals and communities who share a perceived landscape, for themselves and for future generations.

The very definition of landscape and heritage, has been turned upside down by these two conventions. Both conventions place people at the centre of their main aims and principles, advocating a grass-roots approach to heritage in which the general public, including both marginalised communities and mainstream society, are not just integrated into heritage discourses, but are also actively engaged in planning decisions and policies that aim at protecting and managing heritage, within a sustainable framework. In addition to this, fostering awareness amongst the public leads to a public that is informed, and an informed public can be considered as the biggest ally of archaeological heritage.

\textbf{2.4 Archaeology and the public}

Public participation and engagement in archaeology has been present for centuries. This includes activities ranging from looting and the illegal trafficking of antiquities, to the creation of antiquarian societies that organised excavations for its members and the public.\textsuperscript{64} The paradigm shift mentioned above has led to the increasing interaction between archaeologists and multiple publics, and commitments to this interaction and collaboration are even enshrined in the ethic codes of various archaeological institutes and organisations. The European Association of Archaeologists states that:

\textsuperscript{62} Fairclough 2017: 153-154; Fairclough et al. 2014: 11
\textsuperscript{63} Fairclough 2017: 151
\textsuperscript{64} Thomas & Lea 2014: 1
archaeologists will take active steps to inform the general public at all levels of the objectives and methods of archaeology in general and of individual projects in particular, using all the communication techniques at their disposal".  

Put simply public archaeology refers to the interface of where archaeology meets the world. It was Tim Schadla-Hall who first defined public archaeology in this way, arguing that it is ‘concerned with any area of archaeological activity that interacted or had the potential to interact with the public’. This simple working definition was endorsed by Gabriel Moshenska in his edited volume *Key Concepts in Public Archaeology* published in 2017. Moshenska argues that a multitude of things can be included within this definition, amongst which he lists: local communities campaigning to protect local heritage sites, archaeologists collaborating with various media outlets, metal detector users, and analysing modern depictions of cultural heritage. Nevertheless, defining the concept of public archaeology is something that has been at the centre of theoretical debates for the better part of two decades, with a number of different approaches falling beneath the umbrella term.

The term ‘public archaeology’ first entered mainstream archaeological discourse in 1972 with Charles McGimsey’s volume entitled *Public Archaeology*, at a time where heritage in the United States was under threat from development and destruction, due to the lack of legislation. McGimsey argues for the need to involve the public in matters relating to heritage in order to ensure that the past would be preserved for future generations. However, McGimsey’s volume needs to be seen in the light of the time it was published in. The 1970s represent a period in the history of archaeology where archaeologists were seeking to distance themselves from the world of the humanities, and were firmly establishing archaeology as a scientific endeavour- a scientific discipline which, as such, had no reason to be relevant to contemporary political and social issues. A number of scholars have argued that this led to the professionalization of archaeology, which in turn led to the creation of a divide between the public and heritage. One could even argue that the modern discipline of archaeology contributed to the divide between heritage and the public. Joanne Lea and Suzie Thomas, in their 2014 edited volume *Public Participation in Archaeology*, argue that this realisation led to a refocusing of what public participation in archaeology actually means, and they set this

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65 https://www.e-a-a.org/EAA/About/EAA_Codes/EAA/Navigation_About/EAA_Codes.aspx?hkey=714e8747-495c-4298-ad5d-4c60c2bcbda9#practice (accessed on 25.06.2018)
66 Schadla-Hall 1999: 147
67 Moshenska 2017: 3
68 Schadla-Hall 2006: 80
69 Kohl & Fawcett 1995: 15
70 Daniel 1975: 152; Bray 2003: 41; Smith 2004: 41
refocusing within the wider paradigm shifts that were occurring within archaeology at the time. The post-processual movement sought to place personal agency at the centre of discourses, along with emphasising the subjective nature of archaeological interpretation, and the contemporary political and social relevance of archaeology.\textsuperscript{71} Central to this is the acceptance that heritage matters to a variety of people, and that their perceptions and attitudes are as important as that of the heritage expert, which is ultimately embodied in the defining of how archaeology or heritage relate to the modern world. A ramification of this paradigm shift was the recognition that the public had the right to be involved in the interpretation, management, and protection of archaeological remains.

One of the first publications to concern itself entirely with matters relating to the public is Merriman’s 2004 edited volume \textit{Public Archaeology}, published over thirty years after McGimsey’s volume. Merriman’s edited volume highlights the shift in perceptions that has occurred between the public and matters relating to heritage, across the globe. One of the questions that this volume grapples with is the definition of the term ‘public’. Merriman associates the term with (1) the state and its institutions, and (2) with a group of individuals, that are ‘external to that of the state’.\textsuperscript{72} The first definition deals with things like public bodies, public office and public buildings, and according to Merriman, utilising this definition of the public would lead to the exclusion of minority groups within society. The second definition deals with the public as an entity comprised of individuals who consume cultural products and create public opinions. This definition includes the multitude of opinions and viewpoints that move the public away from being a ‘faceless mass’\textsuperscript{73} to being a diverse community, capable of creating change.\textsuperscript{74} Merriman describes the difficulty in reconciling these two definitions, arguing that it is reflected in a

\begin{quote}
‘state apparatus for archaeology which does not reflect the diversity of views and interests held by the public, and a public which is disenchanted with the archaeology provided by the state, feeling that is does not reflect their interests, and preferring to explore other ways of understanding the past’.\textsuperscript{75}
\end{quote}

Whilst a shift in academic perceptions towards the role of the public in archaeology has undeniably occurred, the ways this has been approached is somewhat schizophrenic. Some heritage professionals are reluctant to allow more than the most basic contact between the

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\textsuperscript{71} Richardson & Almansa-Sánchez 2015: 196  \\
\textsuperscript{72} Merriman 2004: 1  \\
\textsuperscript{73} Merriman 2004: 1  \\
\textsuperscript{74} Merriman 2004: 1  \\
\textsuperscript{75} Merriman 2004: 2
\end{flushleft}
public and their heritage, whilst, other practitioners believe that the idea of having a more active public entity involved in the heritage sector is exciting and promising. Merriman cogently explains this through two different models of public archaeology.

The first is the ‘Deficit Model’, which resulted out of the professionalization of archaeology and the desire for a more scientific discipline. The groundwork for it comes out of the Royal Society’s 1985 publication of *The Public Understanding of Science*, which sought to provide reasons for why the public should have a better understanding of science. Merriman argues that strands of this reasoning can be found within public archaeology, in particular within that sector of archaeology which sees heritage professionals as educating the public on how to correctly appreciate and interpret the past, and consequently accept the interpretations provided to them.\(^{76}\) In essence, this can be considered as an inherently top-down approach, in particular since this model allows public participation only when it suits the archaeological agenda, and rejects any other interpretations or viewpoints. The second model put forward by Merriman is the ‘multiple perspectives model’, which places people at the centre and not the material archaeology. This approach seeks to ‘encourage self-realisation, to enrich people’s lives and stimulate reflections and creativity’.\(^{77}\) Merriman argues that the process of creating meaning and value is just as important as the archaeological resource itself. Acknowledging that no matter what interpretation is put forward by archaeological practice, individuals and communities will always ‘re-appropriate, re-interpret and re-negotiate meanings of archaeological resources’\(^{78}\) to fit their own political and social realities.

Cornelius Holtorf’s 2007 publication *Archaeology is a Brand! The Meaning of Archaeology in Contemporary Culture*, also provides models of public archaeology: (1) public relations model, (2) education model and the (3) democratic model. The first model argues that archaeologists need to better their public image in order to garner more public support. The second model states that the public needs to see past the occupation of the heritage professional the same way that the latter does. Lastly, the third model provides an approach where everyone has their own interest in heritage, looking at it from a grass-root perspective.\(^{79}\) These different models have continued to be refined in a number of other works providing various approaches to public archaeology, namely Moshenska’s 2010 article *What is Public Archaeology?*, and Akira

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\(^{76}\) Merriman 2004: 5  
\(^{77}\) Merriman 2004: 7  
\(^{78}\) Merriman 2004: 7  
\(^{79}\) Holtorf 2007: 109-119
Matsuda and Katsuyuki Okumara 2011 edited volume *New Perspectives in Global Public Archaeology*. A persistent theme in this debate is the need for a more reciprocal relationship between knowledge created by the academic community and popular culture. Reuben Grima argues that a unilinear transfer of information between heritage professionals and the public results in a poor and flat narrative. Grima goes on to argue that attitudes and perceptions towards the past are experienced and expressed differently by cultures across the globe, which results in defining consequences for the role of and contribution that archaeology makes to the wider public. It is these relationships, Grima argues, that define the ‘role and responsibilities of archaeology today’. This avenue of investigation can also be linked to the issue of sustainability. When discussing the relationship between archaeology and sustainability there is a need to look beyond the material scope of the discipline to the more contemporary issue of the social relevance of archaeology. The issue that is being raised here is whether archaeology can even have a future without relating directly to the various communities or publics that it affects. Therefore, discussions on why archaeology should be public archaeology need to be set within the wider context of why do archaeology at all, and how archaeology is relevant to today’s societies, with important questions being raised, such as ‘who should have access to archaeology and heritage research?’, ‘Who benefits from such research and why benefit at all?’ This ties into questions of access to knowledge since its often restricted nature has led to a public disassociation with heritage, as argued by Vella. The need to share the results of archaeological research is accepted and more often than not also implemented. However, what these paradigm shifts have brought to the surface is the need to not only share information with the public, but, also include the public in knowledge production. Whilst including the public in knowledge production is an important point, another issue that can be raised is one that was brought forward in the 1999 edited volume *Managing Historic Sites and Buildings* by Gill Chitty and David Baker, where it is argued that there is a mutually beneficial ‘relationship between preservation and presentation’ (Fig. 1). The theoretical basis for this has already formed part of much heritage discourse, however, the active implementation of it remains a concern of archaeological practice.

80 Grima 2016: 56
81 Grima 2016: 56
82 Carman 2016: 147
83 Atalay 2012: 3
84 Vella 2013
85 Atalay 2012: 3
86 Baker 1999: 7
Today all those involved in the heritage sector are aware of the need to include and accept the public and the diversity of attitudes and perceptions that comes with it. However, the heritage sector also needs to recognise that the dissemination of archaeological information to the public is not only their right, but also creates a public that is informed and allows for a sense of heritage stewardship to develop.

Fig. 1: Figure highlighting how a properly managed relationship between presenting heritage and preserving it can result in a productive and beneficial relationship. (Reproduced from Baker 1999: 7)

2.5 Heritage in Malta

Malta’s landscape has been entirely shaped by human activity and this island’s archaeological record is rich and complex. This has resulted in a wealth of heritage that ranges in form from standing buildings to subterranean constructs, spread all over the island. An obvious consequence of the richness and density of this cultural landscape is the continuous discovery
of archaeological remains and the scheduling of many of these sites and monuments (fig. 2). In addition to the millennia of human activity that are visible on the island, Malta has experienced an expansion in its infrastructure, leading to even more profound changes to the island’s landscapes. This has resulted in a number of archaeological sites being lost and necessitating the introduction of legislative measures to safeguard what remains of Malta’s heritage. A central theme here, as in the conventions and archaeological discourse discussed above, is the issue of sustainability, which Arturo Escobar argues has often been used as interchangeable with economic development and progress that pays little attention to sustaining the environment or cultural heritage.

![Fig. 2: Map (1:250 000) of Malta. The areas marked in blue indicate all the scheduled cultural heritage sites. http://geoserver.pa.org.mt/publicgeoserver (accessed on 07.02.2018)](image)

**2.5.1 Malta’s heritage legislation**

The Museums Department was created in 1903 and the first museum opened its doors in 1905 as a result of the increasing interest being expressed by both antiquarians and the general public. The first piece of protective legislation was the Antiquities Ordinance issued in 1910, created for the ‘protection and preservation of monuments and other objects of local antiquarian or

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87 By the end of 2013 there were some 3000 entries in the Malta Scheduled Property Register, which includes buildings, sites and areas.

88 Escobar 1991; 667
archaeological importance’. This was enacted as a result of growing concerns that the island’s heritage was being expropriated by private individuals and exported across Europe. This eventually led to the creation of the Antiquities Protection Act of 1925 which gave the government exclusive rights of excavation. In addition the Antiquities Committee was set up in order to regulate and ensure the enforcement of the Act, which in conjunction with the police force being given new powers to enforce the law. The 1925 Act prohibited the sale, exportation and destruction of movable or immovable items deemed to be of archaeological importance. This meant that the then so-called Museums Department also became the superintendent of Malta’s heritage. This Act remained the only legislation for the protection of Malta’s cultural heritage right until 2002 and the introduction of the Cultural Heritage Act.

However, even prior to introduction of the Cultural Heritage Act, there were some important developments in the planning legislation of Malta, meant to curb and regulate the extensive construction projects that had been steadily growing in the post-war decades. The 1991 Environmental Protection Act and the 1992 Development Planning Act widened the scope of heritage protection in Malta for the first time in decades. The former act placed heritage within an environmental context and introduced the concept of conservation areas, whilst the latter act introduced the principle of scheduling of historic buildings and sites, as well as creating Urban Conservation Areas.

Whilst the introduction of these policies was a leap forward in terms of cultural heritage management in Malta, it was still very much based on monument or site specific philosophy.

In an article published under the auspices of the Council of Europe in 1999, Anthony Pace and Nathaniel Cutajar criticize this system, arguing that a more holistic approach is required, noting that

> ‘archaeological evidence cannot be contained solely within the bureaucratically defined boundaries of a scheduled or protected monument [since] archaeological significance runs beyond any such predefined parameters, to merge into the buried sequence of superimposed landscapes’.

Pace and Cutajar go on to argue that the Antiquities Act of 1925 and the Development Planning Act of 1992, the two main legislative frameworks for heritage, need to be re-structured. They claim that the superimposition of new laws onto antiquated ones creates a
management vacuum, as well as no clear direction as to which institution is ultimately responsible for cultural heritage in Malta.\textsuperscript{94} Pace and Cutajar propose legislative and institutional reforms, which included the creation of a superintendence unit within the Museums Department, responsible for locating, recording and evaluating of archaeological remains. The much needed legislative and institutional reform eventually came in the form of the Cultural Heritage Act of 2002, which finally made ‘provisions in place of the Antiquities (Protection) Act, Cap. 54 for the superintendence, conservation and management of cultural heritage in Malta’.\textsuperscript{95} What was remarkable about this act was the fact that the instruments for the superintendence and management of heritage were separated. This resulted in the creation of the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage, responsible for the management of excavation and documentation works, as well as dealing with the importation and exportation of cultural goods, consulting with heritage related NGOs and the implementation of international conventions.\textsuperscript{96} Meanwhile the operative responsibilities of conservation, management and presentation of cultural sites became the responsibility of Heritage Malta.\textsuperscript{97}

\subsection{2.5.2 The Maltese public and heritage}

In a contribution in the edited 2013 volume entitled Protecting the Cultural and Archaeological Heritage of the Mediterranean Region: Legal Issues, Nicholas Vella states that the Maltese public is somewhat alienated from its heritage, stemming from decades of elitist heritage practices, which characterized archaeology in the 20\textsuperscript{th} century in Malta. However, Vella goes on to argue that the situation is not much better entering the first decade of the 21\textsuperscript{st} century, stating that not much is being done in terms of disseminating archaeological information to the grass roots of society.\textsuperscript{98} In addition to this, the informing of the public on matters of heritage is, or should have been, enshrined within Maltese law with the signing and ratification of the 1992 Valletta Convention, along with the Cultural Heritage Act of 2002 and the various national strategies published since then. However, to date, the publication of relevant information remains an elusive ideal, even though much heritage related work is being conducted. Between 2008 and 2011 alone, 550 archaeological investigations were carried out, yet not a single one of these was published. Vella argues that this leads to the creation of yet another boundary separating the public from its heritage, which

\textsuperscript{94} Pace & Cutajar 1999: 148
\textsuperscript{95} Cultural Heritage Act 2002
\textsuperscript{96} Mifsud Bonniċi 2008: 67-68; Stubbs & Makaš 2011: 356
\textsuperscript{97} Mifsud Bonniċi 2008: 67-68; Stubbs & Makaš 2011: 356
\textsuperscript{98} Vella 2013: 94-95
in turn contributes to a disassociation from that same heritage. In light of the ELC and the Faro Convention, the importance of this point cannot be stressed enough, since it is the individual and the community which imbues heritage with values. This brings to the forefront the question of whose heritage is really being protected and managed in Malta, and for whom.

In an article entitled _Jurisdictional Capacity and Landscape Heritage: A Case study of Malta & Gozo_, published in 2007 in the Journal of Mediterranean Studies, Godfrey Baldacchino argues that heritage in Malta is only considered in relation to the tourism industry, and is not relevant to contemporary life. Baldacchino goes on to state that heritage is only considered as an asset in terms of money generated, but ‘insufferable if it clashes with private and individual interest, foremost amongst which is construction’. Baldacchino insists that there is a disconnect between the Maltese public and their heritage, brought about through centuries of foreign rule and appropriation of that same heritage, and through what Baldacchino calls a ‘nagging concern for the short-term and the present, as well as by a weak sense of national consciousness’. He justifies this by stating that (1) much of what is broadcasted as Maltese history is actually the history of imperial activities, (2) the manner in which history is taught in school, which does not allow for an experiential engagement with heritage and (3) the political system of Malta does not allow for a unified consensus. Thus, according to Baldacchino, what is needed is a better understanding of the attitude and perceptions of the Maltese public towards cultural heritage, from the grass-roots and not from the state.

The stance of anthropologist Jeremey Boissevain echoes that of Baldacchino. Boissevain explores the changes in attitude that have occurred towards heritage in the latter half of the 20th century. Boissevain argues that the post-war construction boom and the advent of mass tourism led to the destruction of the Maltese landscape. However, Boissevain differs from Baldacchino with the argument that by the 1980s, the Maltese public had a growing sense of nostalgia for the island’s heritage, as attitudes towards landscape shifted from a state of detachment and disinterest, a certain amoral familism, in the post-war period, to one of nostalgic longing for a landscape untouched by the dredges of modern human economy and society. This state of disinterest did not extend to churches, which were seen as symbols of

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99 Vella 2013: 97
100 Baldacchino 2007: 95
101 Baldacchino 2007: 96
102 Baldacchino 2007: 98
103 Boissevain published an article in 2006 entitled _Changing Attitudes to Maltese Landscapes_
104 Boissevain 2006: 87
105 Boissevain 2006: 90
community and collective memory. This warranted a fierce upkeep of churches and chapels across the Maltese islands, whilst many of the archaeological remains were left to deteriorate, seen simply as a curiosity to show to foreigners but not much more. Boissevain argues that this started to change in the 1980s, with the rise of nostalgia, which he argues can be seen in the popularisation of rustic motifs, old stones being incorporated into newer structures, old farming implements as decorative motifs and the increasing popularity of living in a house of character.

On the economic side of this movement, Boissevain argues, there was a move from mass tourism to quality tourism, which required increasing areas of Malta’s landscape, ultimately leading to much conflict between particular social groups. A powerful example provided by Boissevain was the redevelopment of the Hilton Hotel in St Julians, which led to the destruction of a unique fortification, and the limiting of public access to the coastline, both sacrificed to ‘his majesty the economy’. This project sparked a nationwide criticism and brought to light the power that contractors and developers wield(ed) over the government. The shift to quality tourism is particularly clear in the number of proposed developments for golf courses in both Malta and Gozo, intended to attract tourists with a higher spending capacity. Three cases come to mind to highlight this shift, the first being the proposed golf course at Verdala, Rabat in 2004. This particular development was on the agenda since 1991 and had some political support. The proposal entailed the destruction of some 7.2km² of agricultural land, as well as a permanent change to the values attached to the cultural landscape of the area.

This proposal was met with much resistance from the public as well as most of the island’s NGOs, resulting in the creation of a grassroots activist group known as Front Kontra l-Golf Kors. Through successful awareness raising and campaigning from the bottom-up, the application was rejected by a unanimous planning board decision, with the NGO Moviment Graffitti stating that ‘the MEPA decision shows that civil society has a role to play in the defence
of Malta’s environment. Whilst this proposal was unanimously voted against, it did not take long for a new proposal to become the focus of the media’s attention. A new application for a golf course at Ta’ Ċenċ in Gozo was submitted in the 1990s. However, whilst the Verdala project would have meant the loss of a significant area of agriculturally valuable land, the Ta’ Ċenċ proposal put at risk areas of natural and cultural heritage, as well as affecting the public’s right to appreciate public space. This proposal was also eventually rejected through the addition of the Ta’ Ċenċ plateau to the Natura 2000 network as a Special Area for Conservation, due to the important flora and fauna found in the area. This situation was effectively mirrored in the proposed development of another golf course at Xagħra l-Ħamra in the north of Malta, which would have meant the sacrifice of 120,000m² of land. This proposal was also opposed by virtually all of Malta’s NGOs, as well as a large percentage of the public which attended informational walks about the area, leading to the rejection of the proposal and the creation of the Majjistral national park instead in 2006. Another case in point was the proposed construction of a yacht marina at Hondoq ir-Rummien in Gozo, and the more recent case of Żonqor point. The latter case revolved around the proposed development of the American University of Malta on ODZ land in the south of Malta, which is in direct contradiction to the South Malta Local Plan. This case sparked widespread media attention and a large reaction from the Maltese public, which can be considered as the largest environmental protest in Maltese history.

What these cases highlight on the one hand is the point made by Boissevain on the shift towards high-quality tourism would lead to the sacrifice of more landscapes, and on the other hand the rise in a sense of nostalgia amongst the Maltese public. What Boissevain set out to showcase were the different and changing Maltese perceptions of the landscape. Boissevain asks whether the Maltese public values its heritage, or whether the profit-driven attitude described by Baldacchino, is the prevailing perception. The current climate in Malta is charged with debates, discussions and criticisms concerning the state of cultural heritage. This is an issue which is increasingly in the limelight due to the high amount of planning applications which are obtaining planning permission, often at the expense of the country’s heritage. In response to these pressures, new forms of citizen activism are emerging, and the situation is presently in

112 Malta Independent 2004b
113 Times of Malta 2005a
115 Times of Malta 2006b
116 Times of Malta 2015
flux. The present study will examine the rapidly evolving role of the public in the stewardship of heritage in Malta today, while comparing the situation to contexts elsewhere.
Chapter 3: Methodology
3.1 Rationale

The devising of a methodology needs to be in keeping with the aims of the study, which in this case are the investigation into how (1) the role of the public in archaeology has changed, (2) how this is reflected in international heritage conventions, and (3) how public participation in Malta has changed, in the context of these conventions. The theoretical foundation for this was laid out in the literature review, where the various paradigm shifts relating to the role of the public were explored, along with the international heritage conventions that have articulated, codified and propagated more participatory and citizen-led models. The cultural heritage situation in Malta was also explored, in order to properly understand the position of heritage management on the island, and to lay the groundwork for the analysis and discussion to be conducted in later chapters. What follows is an overview of the various methodological avenues that were considered for this study, and the rationale behind the choice of the ones that have been used.

The term ‘methodology’ in essence describes the ways in which research can be conducted. Whilst many would argue that a methodology should be free of personal biases and opinions, the reality is that our beliefs, interests and purposes shape the methodologies that are chosen. Two major theoretical paradigms have been particularly influential in the creation of methodologies over the course of the last couple of centuries. The first theoretical perspective, namely, positivism, can be traced back to the early 19th century and is often associated with the natural sciences and is based on the notion that facts can be sought out separately from subjective influences.117 The second perspective is the phenomenological or interpretive one, which can be traced back to the late 19th century and is committed to understanding how the world is experienced, and how different people perceive it. The central argument here is that there are multiple ways in which the world can be experienced and interpreted, and that these vary from one person to the next, in contrast to positivistic endeavours, where one world view is imposed.118 These two theoretical perspectives seek answers to different questions, and require different methodologies. In the case of positivist methodologies a quantitative approach is favoured, one that gathers hard data in the form of numerical information that allows statistical analyses. In the case of the interpretive theoretical paradigm a more qualitative approach is often preferred, where soft data (photos, drawings, words) are gathered through the

117 Neuman 2015: 97
118 Neuman 2015: 105; Taylor, Bogdan & DeVault 2016: 3
use of methods such as participant observation and in-depth interviews, with the aim of gaining
an understanding of the ways in which people perceive their world. Such qualitative
approaches are usually inductive, and aim to gather an understanding from patterns that can be
found in the data, rather than gathering data in order to test a preconceived hypothesis. Thus,
the researcher gathers first-hand knowledge from people through their words, drawings, or
writings, which can be considered to be an often largely unfiltered viewport into their different
perceptions of the world.

The exploration of people’s attitudes, impressions and values towards heritage is not a novelty,
and a variety of methods and approaches have been applied to this problem. It is necessary to
note that whilst a number of volumes have been published dealing with heritage studies in
general or particular topics such as, its role in politics or in the public, relatively little has
been published in terms of methodologies for heritage studies. This has resulted in a lacuna
of discussions and debates on how heritage phenomena may be systematically investigated, or
how particular methodologies may affect our understanding of heritage. One volume which
went a long way towards addressing this lacuna is Carman and Sørensen’s 2009 edited volume
Heritage Studies: Methods and Approaches, which in its introductory chapter makes the reader
aware of the position of heritage as being in an ‘interdisciplinary space’.

What this shows is that the different meanings, roles and values attached to heritage result in a situation where there is no single methodology that can be borrowed from other disciplines, but rather, a
multitude of different approaches may be applied. Carman and Sørensen created three broad
categories for possible methodological approaches namely; (1) textual analysis, (2)
investigations into attitudes and behaviour and (3) analyses into the material qualities of
heritage. As part of all these method categories case studies are an integral technique, with
Carman and Sørensen arguing that the use of case studies has become the ‘trope of publication’ in heritage fields. This is due to the fact that case studies provide a unique
approach to investigating those areas of research that are not easily reduced to statistical data,
and are ideal in analyses that seek to answer the questions how and why, in frameworks that

119 Neuman 2015: 167-168; Taylor, Bogdan & DeVault 2016: 4
120 Taylor, Bogdan & DeVault 2015: 20-23
121 Lowenthal 1993; Smith 2004
122 Jameson 1997; Merriman 2004, Díaz-Andreu and Champion 1996
123 Carman & Stig Sørensen 2009a: 4
124 Carman & Stig Sørensen 2009a: 9
125 Carman & Stig Sørensen 2009a: 5
126 Filippucci 2009: 322
can be descriptive, explanatory or exploratory in nature.\textsuperscript{127} The advantage of using a case study approach is the ability to use a number of different types of data such as documents, archival data, artefacts, and interviews. It is also ideal when ‘a how or why question is being asked about a contemporary set of events over which the investigator has little or no control’.\textsuperscript{128} When applying a case study methodology to public archaeology or heritage studies, the most obvious applicable technique is often a comparative approach. The rationale for such an approach is usually to highlight the similarities and differences in the way people experience archaeology, and the reasons for that similarity or dissimilarity.\textsuperscript{129}

3.2 Devising a methodology

Having established the interdisciplinary space within which heritage discourse takes place, it is now necessary to delve into the different methods that were utilised for this study, along with a look into those approaches that were also considered, but were in the end rejected. The initial research for this study indicated that an interesting avenue of investigation could be the use of subjective or cognitive mapping, which is a valuable tool for perception studies. The initial direction of the study called for a method that allowed for the most complete understanding of public perceptions, and making them, the public, draw seemed to be a very useful tool in this respect. The next section explains why this method was considered, and why it was eventually rejected.

3.2.1 Cognitive mapping: Making them draw

During the preliminary consideration of which research methodologies could be suitable for the present study, subjective or cognitive maps were noted as being a cogent way of portraying how and what the public perceives their cultural heritage and historic environment to be and have become a favoured avenue of investigation.

The basis for this came from intensive research into the uses of subjective maps in areas such as human geography, urban planning and landscape studies. Kevin Lynch’s 1960 pioneering study \textit{The Image of the City} can be considered as a founding study in the area. Lynch’s premise was that people in cities orient themselves according to their individual mental maps, and in order to highlight this notion he compared data from different cities; Boston, Jersey City and

\textsuperscript{127} Rowley 2002: 16; Gould 2016: 6  
\textsuperscript{128} Yin 1994: 9  
\textsuperscript{129} Filippucci 2009: 322
Los Angeles. Building on the work done by Lynch, Roger Downs and David Stea (1973) went on to suggest that people organise the images they have of the space around them into cartographic form, meaning they construct ‘cognitive maps’, in which they place important locations, landmarks and the routes they use. Downs and Stea define cognitive mapping as:

‘a process composed of a series of psychological transformations by which an individual acquires, codes, stores, recalls, and decodes information about the relative locations and attributes of phenomena in his everyday spatial environment’.\textsuperscript{130}

Cognitive mapping has since been adapted to a number of different studies and projects, ranging from being an added element in perception studies of landscapes, to informing land use and land characterisation studies. The initial idea to utilise subjective mapping for the present study was inspired by study by an article published in 2017 by Gemma Tully and Thomas Moore entitled \textit{Connecting Landscape: examining and enhancing the relationship between stakeholder values and cultural landscape management in England}. Tully and Moore utilised subjective maps in order to determine how stakeholders define and value their cultural landscape, and to later on compare the results to the current heritage strategies. A satellite image was provided to participants, who were then asked to draw the boundary of what they considered their cultural landscape to be, thus making an understanding of these individual boundaries easier than it would be through just an interview.\textsuperscript{131} The application of this method seemed to fit perfectly into the aims and objectives of the present study, since it sought to document the perceptions of the public towards their cultural heritage and historic environment.

Further research revealed that a similar project was already underway, as part of the Valletta 2018 European Capital of Culture events programme. The project is entitled ‘Subjective Mapping’ and consisted of a number of workshops that were carried out in order to allow people to come together and to draw their own map of the places that they live and work in. The ultimate aim of the project was to create an interactive map that can be used by visitors, providing a type of counter-mapping experience. The main aims of the projects were thus:

1. The promotion of the successful integration of minority groups within Maltese society
2. Identifying diversity in people-place relations and to map these relationships
3. Capturing visual narratives and,

\textsuperscript{130} Downs & Stea 1973: 9
\textsuperscript{131} Moore & Tully 2017: 4
4. Providing a new and different representation of the towns selected, creating a representation that is free of cultural branding and focused on the individual experience instead.132

Whilst the aims of the project were not directly relatable to this study, the methodology was thought to be remarkably similar. Thus, it was decided to contact the creator of the project, Glen Calleja, in order to discuss in more detail the type of work being done, and to avoid any unintentional duplication. On discussion with Mr Calleja on the various workshops conducted, it was noted that the body of data generated throughout the workshops had the potential to provide the raw material for the current study and it was decided to have a look at the maps in person, in order to verify their viability.

A total of around 60-70 maps were examined from workshops in Valletta, Ħamrun, Gżira, St Pauls Bay, Birżebbuġa, and Victoria (Gozo). What immediately became clear was the fact that the vast majority of the maps were not suitable for the purpose of the present study, in the sense that they were highly schematic, and often difficult to read. Some maps did however, stand out, in particular those from Valletta. When looking at the subjective maps from Valletta, it was obvious whether one was drawn by someone who commutes into Valletta every day for work, or by a person who actually lives in the capital. The main difference between the two was the inclusion of famous landmarks such as Triton’s Fountain, the new parliament building and Wembley’s store, in the maps of daily commuters (fig. 3), whilst the maps drawn by Valletta residents did not include any of these things, rather annotating butchers, grocers, barbers and churches (fig. 4). Another interesting element in the maps drawn by the residents was the inclusion of the sea in almost every single one of them, along with the bastions of the city (fig. 5).

Fig. 3: Map of entrance into Valletta, highlighting Triton’s fountain, the new parliament building, and Wembley’s store. (Photo taken with permission from Glen Calleja 2018)

Fig. 4: Map drawn by a resident of Valletta. (Photo taken with permission from Glen Calleja 2018)
Another workshop which yielded a few subjective maps that were promising for the present study was the one held in Birżebbuġga. Two of the maps studied highlighted historical landmarks, with one of the maps even drawing out Ta’ Kaċċatura, and noting the geographic position of Ghar Dalam and Borġ in-Nadur (fig. 6). The other map highlighted old buildings, and in comparison to most of the other maps, the creator also annotated the map by stating that the houses were appreciated, and how they invoked a feeling of nostalgia, and remorse for their destruction (fig. 7). In this case the maps were drawn by residents of Birżebbuġga, and in contrast to the Valletta maps, they did mark out major cultural heritage landmarks.
Fig. 6: Map of the Birżebuġga area with the inclusion of archaeological sites. (Photo taken with permission from Glen Calleja 2018)

Fig. 7: Map from the Birżebuġga workshop highlighting old buildings, and the comments on what value is attached to them. (Photo taken with permission from Glen Calleja 2018)
Whilst the subjective maps from Valletta and Birżebbuġa were promising, they were not substantial enough to warrant a significant inclusion in the current study, in particular since almost none of the maps from the other workshops were usable. In addition to this, the lack of a narrative accompanying the subjective maps meant that much of their subjective nature was inaccessible. The low number of usable subjective maps also meant that in order to use this methodology for the current study, the exercise would have to be started from the beginning, which time constraints did not permit. However, what this exercise did confirm is that the use of subjective mapping as a methodological tool is a valid avenue of investigation of the way different individuals perceive their heritage.

3.3 Refocusing

At this stage in the research, it was decided to refocus the objective of the study, in light of unfolding events in Malta. The main focus now became how the public is actively engaging itself with the protection of archaeological remains in Malta. It was decided to examine how grassroots approaches to archaeology were evolving in Malta, through the use of interviews, along with an inquiry into how public participation is reflected in international heritage conventions and Malta’s local legislation. The backdrop of this investigation is the impact of construction taking place in, which has attracted much media attention over the last months. It was decided to investigate three of these unfolding cases, and to interview key persons in the cases, in order to gain an understanding of how the public perceives these developments, and to explore how the patterns and attitudes identified by Baldacchino and by Boissevain, reviewed in Chapter 2, have continued to evolve.

3.3.1 Public participation in international heritage conventions

This exercise was aimed at tracing the development of how the role of the public has changed in heritage management within the context of international heritage conventions. The conventions and charters which were of interest here were the Council of Europe conventions as well as the charters of the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS). In addition, Malta’s lack of ‘interest’ in signing and ratifying some of these international conventions had sparked the initial curiosity in this topic. In order to explore this aspect, a comparative analysis of the various international heritage conventions and charters, and their effect on archaeological practice, was carried out. The texts of the conventions provided the
main material for analysis, as well as a parallel focus on the paradigm shifts that occurred in heritage studies.

3.3.2 The Maltese context

As mentioned in section 2.5, a shift in awareness and engagement with cultural heritage in Malta can be witnessed, in particular through the work being done by established NGOs as well as new forms of citizen activism. Representatives of seven organisations, some long-established and others newly formed, were chosen as interview participants. The more established group is composed of The Archaeological Society of Malta (ASM), Din L-Art Helwa (DLH), Flimkien Għal Ambjent Aħjar (FAA), Wirt iż-Żejtun and Moviment Graffitti, whilst the latter group is composed of Malta ARCH and Temple Rescue.

**The Archaeological Society Malta** was set up in 1993 as a non-profit NGO concerned with matters relating to archaeology. Its principal objective is to promote the study of archaeology which the organisation states can only be done ‘when there is a sufficient interest in, and understanding of, our archaeological heritage among the public at large’. In addition to a regular programme of seminars and site visits, the ASM also publishes Malta’s only peer-reviewed journal in the field of archaeology, the Malta Archaeological Review.

**Din L-Art Helwa** was established on 9th July 1965 making it Malta’s oldest NGO still active today. The group was founded in the aftermath of independence and should be understood within the context of the post-war rise in nostalgia and enthusiasm for matters relating to the past and the natural environment. At the time it was reported that ‘if only the ardour and energy of this Association’s beginning are kept up and if the public can be made to awaken more and more to an awareness of the need to preserve the beauty around it’. The main aims of the organisation have not changed in the half century since it was founded are to:

- Promote interest in the protection and preservation of cultural and natural heritage, as well as, of town and village characters, in particular when it comes to the strains arising out of modern development
- Educate the public
- Stimulate the implementation of new and existing laws
- Lead by example

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134 Times of Malta 1965
Hold properties on trust, on lease, or through a management agreement

Act as watchdog

Wirt iż-Żejtun was founded in 2010, through the initiative of a group of people mainly hailing from Żejtun, aiming to

‘Foster interest and respect towards the natural, cultural, environmental, historical, ethnographical and archaeological, tangible and intangible heritage, passed over by former Żejtun people. [Their] aim is to protect, value and hand over this heritage to the generations to follow, at all levels of society, in the best possible state whilst acknowledging its sustainable development’.  

Whilst mainly focused on the heritage of Żejtun, the group is still active in promoting heritage awareness across the island. In addition to advocating for the proper management and protection of the island’s heritage, Wirt iż-Żejtun also actively publishes material for the wider public, with the aim of providing a comprehensive overview of the heritage of the area, and fostering a greater awareness amongst the public. Wirt iż-Żejtun also organises a regular programme of events, including biannual symposia and is active in the publication of works relating to the general south-east area of Malta. Whilst Wirt iż-Żejtun is considered to be one of the more established NGOs, much of the work conducted by the group centres on community-led projects which sets it apart from the other established heritage NGOs.

Moviment Graffitti was founded in 1994 by a group of university students that were dissatisfied with the situation of the environment and associated policies. The group was once associated with the Malta Communist Party but a factional split in 2000 resulted in a refocusing of activities for Moviment Graffitti. In contrast to other NGOs in this study, Moviment Graffitti does not have a fixed organisational structure. The main administrative activity of the organisation revolves around weekly meetings where issues are raised and decisions are taken. The organisation engages in two types of activity, namely, (1) direct actions such as demonstrations, and (2) ideological actions through public lectures, press releases and open letters in local media. Whilst many of the organization’s activities are of little relevance to the present study, its most recent campaigning on land use issues has a definite relevance here. Particularly noteworthy is the organisation’s insistence on the role of the public in planning procedures and the significance of public participation. Since the group’s official founding in

136 https://wirtizzejtun.com/about/mission-statement/ (accessed on 22.03.2018)
137 https://wirtizzejtun.com/about/mission-statement/ (accessed on 22.03.2018)
138 Malta Today 2018
139 Boissevain & Gatt 2011: 101
140 Boissevain & Gatt 2011: 101
1994, a number of situations relevant to this study have arisen in Malta which resulted in public outcry and the involvement of the group. Most prominent amongst these were the extension of the Hilton Hotel in St Julians and the proposed construction of a golf course in Verdala, outside Rabat. More recently, Moviment Graffitti has been on the forefront of tensions between the planning authorities and the Maltese public.\textsuperscript{141} This issue was in the limelight in April 2018 when members of the public were barred from attending a Planning Authority board meeting that should have been open to the public.

\textbf{Flimkien Għal Ambjent Aħjar} was set up in 2006 in the wake of the rationalisation scheme that saw much previously protected land being included in the development zone and led to a number of individuals publishing open letters in the media about their concerns and the various threats that the heritage of Malta was facing.\textsuperscript{142} The FAA is a non-political group of citizens that are concerned by the increasing threats to the island’s cultural and natural heritage, and ‘committed to protecting and campaigning for Malta and Gozo’s environmental and cultural heritage for a socially inclusive and sustainable quality of life’.\textsuperscript{143} In addition to campaigning and lobbying, the FAA also acknowledges the need to include the public, making specific reference to the Aarhus Convention of 1988 on their website.

Among recently formed citizen-led groups two in particular stand out, namely, \textbf{Temple Rescue} and \textbf{Malta ARCH}. The former was founded in May 2017 to ‘raise awareness on the lesser known archaeological sites on the Maltese Islands, in hope to inspire the public to take action in favour of preserving them’.\textsuperscript{144} Temple Rescue encourages the public to visit archaeological sites in order to create ‘those happy memories today, [which] might be the fuel needed to save these sites tomorrow’.\textsuperscript{145} ‘Thus, by encouraging people to involve themselves with their cultural landscape, the group is trying to foster a sense of belonging with the past which would encourage people to stand up for their right to actively engage with their cultural heritage. Malta ARCH was also founded in 2017 as ‘a group of citizens that are deeply concerned about the future of the Maltese archaeological heritage and environment’.\textsuperscript{146} The aims of Malta ARCH include making archaeological reports available to the public, protecting

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{141} Malta Today 2018
\item \textsuperscript{142} Times of Malta 2006a
\item \textsuperscript{143} http://dev.faa.org.mt/homepage/ (accessed on 26.04.2018)
\item \textsuperscript{144} Temple Rescue Facebook Page 2017
\item \textsuperscript{145} Temple Rescue Facebook Page 2017
\item \textsuperscript{146} Malta ARCH Facebook page 2017
\end{itemize}
archaeologically sensitive sites from development and ensuring the proper monitoring of archaeology in a development context.\footnote{147}{\url{https://savemaltesearchaeology.weebly.com/the-law.html} (accessed on 05.04.2018)}

3.3.3 Three case studies: choice and rationale

The effect that increased development has had on the archaeology and heritage of Malta has become the focus of much media attention over the course of 2017, and particularly so in the opening months of 2018. Three sites that attract particular attention were Tal-Qares, Tal-Wej and Bulebel. What separated these three cases was the high level of citizen engagement and active participation that went into raising awareness about these sites, which was a deciding factor in the choice of interview participants. Whilst the interviews conducted did not revolve exclusively around these three sites, they nevertheless provide an insight into how citizen engagement with archaeological resources in Malta has changed. The Tal-Qares site is located on the outskirts of Mosta and Naxxar and was included in the development zone during the rationalisation of development zone boundaries undertaken in 2006\footnote{148}{\textit{Times of Malta} 2012}, when the Tal-Qares area was earmarked for inclusion in the development zone on condition that an archaeological evaluation be carried out prior to inclusion (fig. 8). In 2015 the Planning Authority approved the Planning Control Permit for an area of Tal-Qares that belongs to AX Holdings, which opened the area up for development as well as establishing the type of development that may occur. AX Holdings set out to construct a showroom, five maisonettes, seven apartments, four penthouses and 18 garages (fig. 9).\footnote{149}{Development application PA 3770/16; \textit{Malta Today} 2017} An archaeological investigation was carried out prior to the start of development. Meanwhile this case attracted widespread media coverage, with much criticism being directed at the PA and at the SCH. The eventual destruction of the site was the catalyst behind the creation of Temple Rescue group. This was an important reason for choosing this site as one of the case studies.

Fig. 9: Photomontage of the proposed development by AX Holdings at Tal-Qares, Mosta. [http://www.maltatoday.com.mt/environment/townscapes/76946/showroom_proposed_on_archaeological_site](http://www.maltatoday.com.mt/environment/townscapes/76946/showroom_proposed_on_archaeological_site) (Accessed on 15.02.2018)
The second site is Tal-Wej, located between Naxxar and Mosta. Public awareness of the archaeological and natural heritage of this area can be traced back to the 1980s, when there was much protest against the building of the Santa Margerita housing estate and other planning permits and developments that encroached on this cultural landscape.\textsuperscript{150} The site is similar to Tal-Qares in terms of the known archaeology in the area as well as its inclusion in the rationalisation scheme of 2006. However, in contrast to Tal-Qares, the archaeological remains at Tal-Wej are much better understood and were even scheduled in 2011, and this area is considered to be an important landscape, which contains a largely intact contextual setting for a number of different archaeological features, ranging in date from the Bronze Age to the Early Modern Period (fig. 10).\textsuperscript{151}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{tal-wej-area.png}
\caption{Map of Tal-Wej area between Naxxar (right) and Mosta (left), highlighting archaeological sites. Source: \url{http://geoserver.pa.org.mt/publicgeoserver} (Accessed on 16.02.2018)}
\end{figure}

In addition, Tal-Wej also contains important natural heritage which is characterised by karstland and rock-pools, which have also been granted protection as areas of scientific and ecological importance.\textsuperscript{152} Despite the scheduling, in 2017 a PA application was submitted for an archaeological investigation through the removal of top soil. Whilst such an investigation is

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{150} Times of Malta 1986 & 1987
\item \textsuperscript{151} Grima 2000: 36-38, 61-64
\item \textsuperscript{152} \url{http://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/national/12909/mepa-schedules-tal-wej-area} (accessed on 16.02.2018)
\end{itemize}
not necessarily damaging to the archaeological features found at Tal-Wej, the reasons behind it potentially are, especially since it has been reported in the media that ‘the site has presumably already been advertised commercially (as a building site)’. Similar to Tal-Qares, the threat of development led to the creation of another citizen-led group called Malta ARCH, which actively campaigned and sought to raise awareness about the site. Therefore, Tal-Wej is another example of public engagement in matters relating to heritage, and the grass-root efforts being put into protecting Malta’s cultural heritage.

The third site is Bulebel located on the outskirts of Żejtun in the south of Malta. Bulebel is an industrial zone of a little under 600,000m² and is operated by Malta Industrial Parks Ltd which is responsible for all government owned industrial estates (fig. 11). In January 2018 it was announced that actively worked agricultural land covering an area of 120,000m² would be earmarked for the expansion of the industrial estate, which would result in the loss of ‘mature carob trees and working farms, possible Roman remains and a building linked to Grand Master Ramon Perellos’. Temple Rescue and Malta ARCH have been very outspoken in their objection against the development of the area, which is echoed by various environmental NGOs as well as Wirt iż-Żejtun. The case of the Bulebel industrial expansion is another prime example of a bottom-up approach to heritage, with citizen-led groups actively engaging in the process of conserving and protecting Malta’s cultural heritage.

Fig. 11: Map of Bulebel highlighting the location of the industrial estate. Source: https://www.google.com.mt/maps/place/Bulebel,+1%C5%BC-%C5%BBejtun/@35.8675847,14.5337934,3986m/data=!3m1!1e3!4m5!3m4!1s0x130e5b1c1b3fba8b:0xdb9d41e7486f2e1!8m2!3d35.8666884!4d14.5236722?hl=en (Accessed on 16.02.2018)

153 Times of Malta 2018b
155 Times of Malta 2018c
3.4 Interviews

The Maltese public’s perception and attitude towards cultural heritage, as portrayed by Boissevain and Baldacchino, can be considered to be negative, with short-term gains superseding the protection of the island’s vast cultural heritage. However, the work being done by NGOs like DLH, ASM, FAA, Moviment Graffitti and Wirt iż-Żejtun, as well as the creation of citizen-led groups like Temple Rescue and Malta ARCH, seems to point to a growing awareness within the wider public of the significance of their cultural heritage. Therefore, merely investigating these groups and the archaeological-heritage they campaign for was not enough. It was decided to carry out in-depth interviews with key persons from all the groups. In-depth interviewing is used widely in qualitative research methodologies, where it may be the sole strategy or just one of the tools being utilised. In the present case the in-depth interviews were the main method of data collection. The type of in-depth interview may also vary, with Michael Patton describing three main approaches in his 2002 volume *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods*, which are: (1) the informal interview, (2) the interview guide and (3) the standardized interview. The first method refers to what may almost be called a casual conversation in an informal setting, the second approach is slightly more structured, with the interviewer preparing questions beforehand but keeping flexibility to follow up with unscripted questions, and the third method is highly organized with specific, predefined questions being asked in a specific sequence.\(^{156}\)

The approach chosen for the present study was the interview guide, as it was more suitable to elicit the participant’s viewpoint on the subject investigated, even in directions that may not have been anticipated when drafting the questions. An interview guide was created where general questions were put to all participants, followed by more specific ones tailored to the particular participant being interviewed. This allowed for cross-comparison across the interviews at a later stage. Another important element that needed to be kept in mind was the role of the interviewer. One could consider an interview to be a short-term social relationship, created between two individuals with the sole purpose of gleaning information.\(^{157}\) One could also argue that this relationship is guided by social norms, just like any other relationship and that the interviewer has a certain role and responsibility in ensuring that the participant has all the necessary information, understands what is wanted and provides the relevant answers.\(^{158}\)

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\(^{156}\) Patton 2002: 341-347
\(^{157}\) Neuman 2007: 190
\(^{158}\) Marshall & Rossman 2011: 190-191
Therefore, it is not unusual to state that an in-depth interview is the ‘joint production of researcher and participant’\textsuperscript{159}, where the thoughts and insights of both are an integral part of the study. By its very nature this type of interviewing is qualitative, which Bridget Byrne describes as a way to explore people’s experiences, perceptions, attitudes and values at a depth of understanding that would not be achievable through quantitative surveys.\textsuperscript{160} However, the researcher must take precautions not to lead the participant in certain directions with the questions asked, since the focus should remain on the participant’s experiences and perceptions. Furthermore, while in quantitative studies it is not prudent to divert from the questions, in qualitative interviewing deviation is not seen as a problem. This is due to that fact that interviewees respond differently and the researcher needs to be prepared to adjust as necessary.

3.4.1 Sampling

It has been stressed that the choice of method for a qualitative study should reflect those elements of social life that are being investigated. When it comes to sampling techniques, the researcher must be careful to choose those participants that are most relevant to the research questions and that will provide a deeper understanding of the social questions being asked.\textsuperscript{161} In such studies it is normally non-probability sampling techniques that are used, which essentially entails the choosing of a case based on its content and relevance. There are various types of non-probability sampling, however, the one that was most relevant in this study is purposive sampling. Neuman defines this type of sampling as one that uses the judgement of the researcher in selecting cases with a definitive purpose.\textsuperscript{162} Since this is a study concerned with gaining an understanding of how the Maltese public engages with its cultural heritage and its protection, the participants were chosen for their particular role.\textsuperscript{163} This type of sampling is theoretically based and not statistically oriented, and aims at gaining an understanding of the why rather than the how much or how many.\textsuperscript{164} Even though when investigating public attitudes and perceptions it may seem more prudent to seek a large sample size in order to gain a higher number and wider range of insights, in this case it was more considered a more sensible strategy

\textsuperscript{159} Marshall & Rossman 2011: 192
\textsuperscript{160} Byrne 2004: 182
\textsuperscript{161} Neuman 2007: 141
\textsuperscript{162} Neuman 2007: 141
\textsuperscript{163} Byrne 2004: 187; Neuman 2007: 142
\textsuperscript{164} In the glossary to the edited volume Researching Society and Culture, Clive Seale defined theoretical sampling as ‘choosing a sampling element (e.g. a person, a social setting) on the basis of its likely contribution to a theory emerging during the course of a study’; Seale 2004: 511
to limit the sample small size but investigate it in greater depth since it was a specific shift in perception that was being investigated. This type of interviewing is time-consuming compared to more statistically oriented and non-personal data collection methods. The participants had to be contacted personally and an interview had to be structured to tackle the particular case. Once contact was established, a date for the interview itself had to be set, which often proved more difficult than expected. Following each interview, a transcript of what was said needed to be transcribed from the recording (Table 3.1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Heritage Group</th>
<th>Number of interviewees</th>
<th>Duration of interviews</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Archaeological Society Malta</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>106 minutes</td>
<td>17.05.2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Din L-Art Helwa</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>34.49 minutes</td>
<td>17.05.2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wirt iż-Żejtun</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>33.97 minutes</td>
<td>04.05.2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temple Rescue</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>38.39 minutes</td>
<td>30.04.2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malta ARCH</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>54.51 minutes</td>
<td>11.05.2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flimkien Għal Ambjent Ħarar</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>30.38 minutes</td>
<td>15.05.2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moviment Graffiti</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>27.39 minutes</td>
<td>08.06.2018</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.1: Interview details

3.4.2 Data collection

The main data collection technique was qualitative interviews. The merits of such a technique have been outlined above. What must be mentioned is that a pilot interview was conducted, as often suggested in the literature, especially when it is the researcher’s first experience at qualitative interviewing, as is the present case. In order to ensure the most efficient data
collection the interviews were recorded, which not only allowed more of a focus on the interviewee’s body language but also facilitated later data analysis.  

3.4.3 Data processing

A system of coding was used to analyse the data gathered throughout the interviews. Data from qualitative research are often sorted or organised into groups on the basis of themes or concepts that allow them to be grouped into conceptual categories. The system used here followed a series of steps, each of which helped in ordering and interpreting the data, as outlined briefly below.

1. The first step was organising the raw data in order to make it more manageable.
2. The next stage involved being immersed in the data in order to become intimately acquainted with it. At this stage it was possible to create a listing of likely themes and to already take note of the relationships between these themes and the data.
3. The third stage was the coding of the data into themes and categories. These codes may take several forms, such as numbers, colour schemes or shortened key words, and may originate from a number of sources. It is normally the literature review which provides the basis for the coding themes. The researcher immersed herself in the data and marked passages according to the themes identified, and it was at this stage that patterns in the data become more evident.
4. The fourth stage was the interpretation, which essentially brought meaning to the coding procedure. It was up to the researcher to select the most relevant and suitable data to answer the research questions.

Through the use of such a coding procedure it was possible to transcribe the raw data from the qualitative interviews into a manageable body of data, which through the creation of themes and categories, could be compared and analysed. This was particularly important since the very nature of qualitative interviews meant that each interview would be different from the other, which became more readily comparable following the coding procedures.

165 Silverman 2013: 207-208; Marshall and Rossman 2011: 95
166 Neuman 2007: 330
3.5 Ethics

Concerns or conflicts may arise when conducting research involving human subjects. This entails the responsibility that every researcher has to conduct studies at the highest possible level of integrity and professionalism. Most research communities adhere to a code of practice that determines and ensures professional standards and provides guidelines when needed. The University of Malta research adheres to a Research Code of Practice, which was followed in this. In addition, the Code of Practice of the European Association of Archaeologists was also consulted and adhered to, in order to ensure that the research fulfilled the responsibilities to the professional of archaeology in general as well as to the wider community. Informed consent was obtained by preparing an information sheet on the study which included: (1) a brief description of the study, (2) the uses of data, (3) the identity of the researcher, (4) a guarantee of anonymity if warranted and (5) the assurance that participation may be withdrawn. This information sheet was provided to the participants together with a consent form that was signed prior to the interviews, of which each participant was given a copy (see appendix I). Each interview was transcribed not only for ease of analysis but also in order to allow the participants to overview what was discussed and retract any information they wished. Additionally, anonymity was provided when requested through written correspondence between the author and interviewees.

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168 Neuman 2007: 48
170 https://www.e-a-a.org/EAA/About/EAA_Codes/EAA/Navigation_About/EAA_Codes.aspx?hkey=714e8747-495c-495d-4c60c2bcda9#practice (accessed on 26.03.2018)
Chapter 4: The concept of public participation in international conventions and Maltese legislation
4.1 Preamble

This chapter is aimed at gaining an understanding of how the concept of public participation evolved within the context of international heritage conventions and charters, and in tandem with the heritage discourse of the late 20th century and early 21st century. This evolution is then compared to Malta’s national legislation, to ascertain to what extent public participation is enshrined in the country’s laws and policies. A signatory party to an international convention implements the aims and objectives of these according to its own national administrative system, which may need to be amended to transpose the international instrument. In addition, it must be remembered that a plethora of different heritage(s) co-exist within these signatory states and that the heritage discourse must be matched to these. The present purpose is to investigate the changes that have occurred in the role of the public in the field of heritage.

4.2 Setting the scene

Any discussion of the evolution of heritage discourse and heritage legislation rests on the concept of heritage values. Díaz-Andreu defines heritage values as ‘meanings and values that individuals or groups of people bestow on heritage’.171 The earliest publications on such values, was Alois Riegl’s 1903 Modern Cult of Monuments: Its Character and its Origin’ which focused on two types of heritage values, the historic and artistic, but left the public as a ‘silent guest’.172 In the wake of the Great War and the widespread scale of destruction, the 1931 Athens Charter for the Restoration of Historic Monuments was created at the First International Congress of Architects and Technicians of Historic Monuments. This charter was a milestone for heritage management since it represented the first communal responsibility for cultural monuments.173 Whilst representing a turning point in heritage legislation, the Athens Charter continued to regard the public as a silent guest, stating that ‘the question of the conservation of the artistic and archaeological property of mankind is one that interests the community of states, which are wardens of civilisation’.174

This type of heritage value assessment remained the dominant paradigm until the end the Second World War, the creation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and concurrently, the creation of the United Nations and one of its arms UNESCO, in 1945. The

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171 Díaz-Andreu 2017: 2
172 Díaz-Andreu 2017: 2
173 Harrison 2015: 300
174 Athens Charter 1931
philosophies embedded in these organisations and declarations was founded on Western Euro-centric principles that may be traced to the socio-political developments of the 18\textsuperscript{th} and 19\textsuperscript{th} centuries, as has been well documented.\textsuperscript{175}

In addition to influencing heritage management, these events led to protest movements that would sweep through Europe and the West throughout the 1960s and 1970s. These protests were rooted in university campuses across the world and arose out of a deep dissatisfaction with ‘existing lifestyles and cultural assumptions’,\textsuperscript{176} the opposition of which resulted in paradigm shifts across the board in the world of academia. The discipline of archaeology was not exempt from this phenomenon which led to the New Archaeology movement, as outlined in Chapter 2. Concurrently the terms Cultural Resource Management or Archaeological Resource Management began to be widely used, which Schadla-Hall argues, can be tied to the increasing creation of national legal instruments and international conventions and charters, all relating to the protection and management of archaeological resources.\textsuperscript{177} Examples of these are the European Cultural Convention 1954 which set the nation as the main protector of cultural heritage, the Hague Convention of the same year that created a platform for the protection of cultural heritage in the advent of armed conflict, the Venice Charter of 1964 which set down guidelines for restoration and conservation, the Paris Convention of 1970, which dealt with the illicit trade of cultural property and the World Heritage Convention of 1972, with its focus on outstanding universal value.\textsuperscript{178} All of these conventions and charters can be assumed to be in the interest of the public, yet the public remains the silent guest throughout, as a result of the prevailing theoretical climate at the time they were written.

The rise of postmodernist theories in the late 1980s allowed for the first time the possibility of alternative interpretations of the past, witnessed mainly in the writings of post-colonial, feminist and indigenous archaeologies, and the advent of the post-processual archaeological paradigm (see chapter 2). Acknowledging the notion that ‘archaeology is inappropriate for a rigid positivism’\textsuperscript{179} led to an acceptance of a multitude of interpretations rather than focusing on scientific and testable hypotheses, that allowed for the productions of an archaeology that focused on context and the human dimension. This new diversity and openness within

\textsuperscript{175} Kohl & Fawcett 1995; Díaz-Andreu & Champion 1996; Hunter 1996; Carman & Sørensen 2009
\textsuperscript{176} Barker 2008: 83-84
\textsuperscript{177} Schadla-Hall 1999: 148
\textsuperscript{178} http://www.getty.edu/conservation/publications_resources/research_resources/charters.html (accessed on 08.06.2018)
\textsuperscript{179} Hodder 1984: 67
archaeology led to the creation of the *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, first issued in 1994, and led to the birth of heritage studies, which was and is concerned with ‘aiming to understand how heritage becomes constituted, what it is and does, and how different groups engage with it’.\(^ {180}\)

Acknowledging that not only archaeologists engage with cultural heritage led to discussion on the contemporary role of archaeology in modern society,\(^ {181}\) first acknowledged on a supranational scale with the Burra Charter, as revised in 1999. It can be argued that the Burra Charter, first adopted in 1979, was a deciding element in this shift of perceptions, since it focused the attention of heritage professionals more clearly than ever towards social values and the role of the public.\(^ {182}\) Once archaeology was brought into the public sphere, archaeologists had to contend with the socio-political realities of contemporary society. The emerging discipline of public archaeology explored the interface between the public and archaeology, which has slowly led to the realisation that public interest in and engagement with the past is a vital element of the discipline. Thus, the adoption of an approach that included social values ultimately brought about the development of community archaeology as well as a redefining of public archaeology.\(^ {183}\) The administrative undertones of McGimsey’s public archaeology primarily aimed at archaeological professionals and legislators, made way for an archaeology that Schadla-Hall defined as ‘any area of archaeological activity that interacted or had the potential to interact with the public’,\(^ {184}\) and such sought to create an archaeology that was participatory and open.\(^ {185}\) On the receiving end of these changes is a public whose levels of awareness towards archaeology and heritage has seen a steady increase, which has led to increased communication between heritage professionals and the public. However, one can argue that this communication has been steadily top-down, or expert-led, in its approach, with little thought being given to what the public, or publics, perceive of their heritage and how they want to interact with it, leading to many debates on grassroots approaches to heritage.\(^ {186}\)

It is within this context that the role of the public in heritage must be viewed, since it is these developments that led to the adoption of further national and international legal instruments. These not only recognised the social value of heritage, but also acknowledged the need to move

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\(^ {180}\) Carman & Sørensen 2009: 17; Khafajah & Badran 2015: 105
\(^ {181}\) Conkey & Spector 1984; trigger 1984; Shanks & Tilley 1987; McGuire 2008; Bernbeck &McGuire 2011
\(^ {182}\) Díaz-Andreu 2017: 2
\(^ {183}\) Carman & Sørensen 2009: 16-17
\(^ {184}\) Schadla-Hall 1999: 147
\(^ {185}\) Díaz-Andreu 2017: 3
\(^ {186}\) Olivier 2016: 13
beyond expert-led perspectives towards an inclusive and two-way engagement between the public and the heritage professional, where the public is seen as an active agent in the construction and curation of archaeological knowledge.

4.3 International heritage conventions and the public

When discussing what public participation entails it is important to first define what is meant by participation. With the world of heritage studies this is generally defined as ‘the active involvement of stakeholders within a range of processes and projects’.  

A seminal discussion of the issue of public participation can be found in Sherry Arnstein’s 1969 *Ladder of Citizen Participation*, which was one of the most important early contributions. Many subsequent publications utilised Arnstein’s model to scale public participation on a ladder of bad to good. The realm of international heritage conventions is no different, with the level of and emphasis on public participation traceable within the conventions themselves.

The Burra Charter was initially created in 1979 as an Australian version of the 1964 Venice Charter, which the Australian heritage community felt was too Eurocentric to be applicable on the continent. Waterton argues that the Venice charter can be:

> ‘understood as the international repository of the authorised heritage discourse [where] heritage is conceived as an immutable, bounded entity, most likely to take the form of a site, building or monument, which is valued for its intrinsic qualities of age, rarity, beauty or historical importance’.

The 1999 revision of the Burra Charter introduced the concepts of social values and the participation of communities, as well as normalizing the role of the public within the processes of conservation and management. In Europe, the conventions of the Council of Europe offer an insight into the development of bottom-up approaches to archaeology and heritage, and an insight into how expert-led perspectives have given way to including public values and opinions.

One of the first Council of Europe conventions to explicitly recognize the social values of archaeology and heritage, was the Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe, adopted on 3rd October 1985 in Granada. In defining ‘architectural heritage’, the Granada Convention includes ‘social or technical interest’ amongst its heritage values, moving

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187 Neal 2015: 340
188 Waterton 2006: 341
189 Waterton *et al.* 2006: 340
away from an approach that was previously focused exclusively on historical or artistic value. In addition to recognizing social values, the Granada Convention also made provisions for establishing mechanisms during the decision-making process that are inclusive of the public.\textsuperscript{190} The revision of the Granada Convention, led to the Convention for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage of Europe, adopted on 16\textsuperscript{th} January 1992 in Valletta. In line with the increasing public awareness of archaeology and heritage, the Valletta Convention acknowledged the ever-increasing risk of destruction of Europe’s cultural heritage due to, on one hand, the ‘increasing number of major planning schemes, natural risks, clandestine or unscientific excavations’\textsuperscript{191}, and on the other hand ‘insufficient public awareness’.\textsuperscript{192} Whilst the Valletta Convention can be seen as an important step in the direction of acknowledging that public awareness is a vital part of heritage management, the majority of the text of the convention deals with the scientific and research concerns of archaeology as a discipline, and its approach is top-down in its execution.

This top-down mentality was explicitly challenged in the European Landscape Convention adopted in Florence on 20\textsuperscript{th} October 2000. This landmark convention for the first time took a more integrated approach where the public is actively involved in not only defining landscape, and thus also heritage, but also participating in the decision-making and policy-implementation process, and consequently, represents the start of a bottom-up approach to heritage management. The ELC can be considered as the first international legal instrument to specifically require public participation at the centre of its focus on landscape management, planning and protection.\textsuperscript{193} Much literature has been published since the adoptions of the Landscape Convention by the Council of Europe, much of which focused on this element of public participation\textsuperscript{194} and how it may be put into practices.\textsuperscript{195}

The Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society was adopted in Faro on 13\textsuperscript{th} October 2005. The convention’s definition of heritage is the broadest in any of the heritage conventions, with its acknowledgement of ‘intangible as well as tangible, perceptual as well as physical, action, performance, custom and behaviour as well as objects and buildings’\textsuperscript{196} The Faro Convention treats heritage as a process of values that reflect the customs, beliefs and

\textsuperscript{190} Council of Europe 1985: Article 14
\textsuperscript{191} Council of Europe 1992
\textsuperscript{192} Council of Europe 1992
\textsuperscript{193} Conrad \textit{et al.} 2011: 24; Olivier 2016: 16
\textsuperscript{194} Olwig 2003; Prieur & Durosséau 2006; Jones 2007; Jones 2011c
\textsuperscript{195} Jones & Stenseke 2011b; Spencer 2011; Clemetson \textit{et al.} 2011; Conrad \textit{et al.} 2011
\textsuperscript{196} Fairclough \textit{et al.} 2014: 11
values of people, and not the just the physical manifestation of past human cultures. Thus, this convention aims to make archaeology and heritage socially relevant, going a step further than the Landscape Convention, in the sense that its entire approach is centred on social inclusion by ‘putting people and human values at the centre of an enlarged and cross-disciplinary concept of cultural heritage’. It is found on the notion that every person in society has to the right to participate in heritage, whatever that heritage may be, as part of their fundamental human rights. As a result the Faro Convention enshrines the culmination of paradigm shift which is already evident in the later iterations of the Burra Charter and the ELC, with the expert’s notions of what constitutes heritage value no longer being seen as exclusively valid, but acknowledging the complex reality of multiple heritage communities and their values. The people-centred approach of the Faro Convention does not stop at arguing that everyone has a right to heritage, but also insists that this basic human right is manifested in the participation of all, in the heritage of their choice. This participation is expressed in the public involvement in heritage evaluations, national discussions, the access to information, the inclusion of heritage in education programmes, as well as ensuring the participation of NGOs. Whilst reconciling these multiple values is a challenge, accepting and integrating such a people-oriented approach, can create an atmosphere where links may be created between ‘archaeological practice and social cohesion’.

The Landscape Convention may be considered as a conceptual stepping stone between the expert-led principles of the Valletta Convention and the grassroots approach put forward in the Faro Convention. The principles found within the Valletta Convention reflect the preoccupations of heritage professionals at the time, and can today be considered restrictive in that they did not pay adequate attention to citizen empowerment and participation. The ELC and Faro strive to address this lacuna. The challenge for both convention lies in integrating multiple voices into this notion of public participation. Regardless of these challenges, the development of these international heritage conventions makes it clear that there is a sea-change in attitudes towards the relationship between archaeology and the public. What is most clear is the recognition of archaeology as a socially relevant discipline that is rooted in the concerns of today’s public.

197 Olivier 2016: 16
198 Wolferstan 2014: 43
199 Council of Europe 2005
200 Olivier 2016: 17
4.4 Putting people first

A brief discussion on the principles of public participation as enshrined in the Landscape and Faro Conventions is useful to provide a backdrop to the topic under discussion. The aim of implementing a bottom-up approach in these conventions is not to replace the formal decision-making process, but to complement it. The objective is to create a framework that allows for the values, views and opinions of all concerned individuals and groups, be they ‘local communities, residents, visitors, landholders, deprived groups or specialists’, 201 to become part of the discourse and decision-making process of heritage management.

Jones lists five reasons to justify public participation, which are:

1. Democratisation: moving from an exclusively expert-led approach to a grassroots approach;
2. Legitimacy: enabling cooperation between the various stakeholders, involving all strata of society contributes to a higher degree of legitimacy;
3. Information exchange: ensuring that knowledge and experience are shared between the public and the relevant authorities, allowing for the public’s perceptions to be included, and a two-way avenue of communication to be opened;
4. Tackling conflicts: is made easier since a higher level of understanding is being reached and;
5. Heterogeneity and social justice: is implied since the definition and implementation of policies is an expression of society’s diversity. 202

Jones argues that in order for the above justifications to be met, certain elements need to be present within society, such as freedom, an open and transparent political system, as well as stakeholders that are willing to self-mobilize in order to insist on their right to contribute, in addition to providing the possibility of opposition to the decision-making process.203 Various studies have been conducted regarding the implementation of public participation at a national level. Such studies have typically taken the form of local or national case-studies. These include Spencer’s investigation into the use of group discussions and workshops aimed at understanding local values in order to integrate them into policy decisions. In another study, Clemetson et al. use a similar approach to advocate the use of phenomenological methods in

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201 Jones 2007: 616
202 Jones 2007: 618
203 Jones 2011c: 32-33
policy-making. Other studies have focused on the use of visual aids such as sketches, photos, maps and 3D sketches.\textsuperscript{204} In addition to providing methods and approaches aimed at promoting the discussion on how values and opinions held by different sectors of the public can be incorporated into policy-making and implementation, there are studies that have investigated the levels of public participation in select countries. One such study was conducted by Conrad \textit{et al.}, whose aim was to use what they termed the ‘five dimensions of good practice’\textsuperscript{205} to ascertain the levels of participation. The dimensions are the scope of public participation, the representativeness of those involved, the timeliness of public involvement, the convenience of participating, and finally the degree of influence the public actually has on the final decision-making process.\textsuperscript{206} The results of the study, part of which was conducted in Malta, found that although measures had been put in place to incorporate public values the main onus was still being placed on the expert. When it came to the situation locally the \textit{Landscape Assessment Study of the Maltese Islands}, initiated by MEPA in 2004, was used as an example. Conrad \textit{et al.} found that whilst the Landscape Assessment Study acknowledges the importance of the public’s perception, it does not go beyond this. The execution of the entire study is top-down in its approach and the engagement of the public was limited to consultation, which resulted in this Maltese model scoring ‘relatively low on all five evaluation criteria’ (Table 4.1).\textsuperscript{207}

\textsuperscript{204} Eiter & Lange Vik 2015: 45
\textsuperscript{205} Conrad \textit{et al.} 2011: 23
\textsuperscript{206} Conrad \textit{et al.} 2011: 29
\textsuperscript{207} Conrad \textit{et al.} 2011: 39
Table 4.1: A summary of the evaluation results of the situation of public participation in the Landscape Assessment Study of the Maltese Islands. Source: Conrad et al. 2011: 40.

As a result, Conrad et al. argued, these initiatives remain largely top-down, rather than bottom-up as the Landscape Convention, and, the Faro Convention advocate for.

4.5 Moving from the expert to the grassroots

The challenge of incorporating multiple voices reflecting different heritage values into national, regional and local systems has been repeatedly stressed. However, the move from expert-led approaches to the grassroots is no longer a process that can be restricted to academic debates. Over the course of the past two decades the archaeological literature has been flooded with calls for a more public archaeology, an archaeology that integrates the social value of heritage into its aims and objectives, which simultaneously reflects the growing awareness of the public of their rights to cultural heritage. The early charters such as the Athens and Venice charters, were products of their time and very much represent a top-down approach to heritage preservation and conservation, dominated by the historic and the art-historical values of heritage.
However, at the time of writing (July 2018) the Faro Convention had only been signed by 23 of the Council of Europe’s 47 member states, and had only been ratified by 17 of the 23 signatory parties, of which five are Western European countries while the rest are nation-states born out of the collapse of the Eastern Bloc. What this reflects is a change in society, whereas in previous decades the heritage debate was intimately linked to the idea of nationalism and national identity, the progressively shrinking and globalised world is now transforming societies, from single homogenous groups of individuals to a much more multicultural and multivocal reality with multiple publics, who all have different perceptions of what constitutes heritage. It is the reconciliation of these perceptions that creates challenges in the practical implementation of these conventions.

4.6 The Maltese context

The island-state of 316 km² in size, with a total population of 434,403, making it the most densely populated state in Europe with an average of 1,378 people per square kilometre in 2015. This has made land, which is the island’s primary non-renewable resource, a valuable commodity that is undergoing rapid change. This comes into sharp focus when looking at the Eurostat land cover statistics, most recently updated in July 2017, and the figures for artificial land cover. Eurostat defines artificial land cover as land that is used for ‘settlements, production systems and infrastructure’.

Malta was classified as having 23.7% artificial land cover, almost double that of the Netherlands which is the second most densely populated country in Europe (fig.12). One of the greatest contributing factors to this is urbanisation, coupled with a population boom and an ever increasing number of tourists (a record 1.988 million in 2016). This has led to one of the biggest construction booms in the modern history of Malta, exerting unprecedented pressures on the Maltese landscape and on the island’s heritage. This combination of finite land resources and a dense population has led to a situation where the management of cultural heritage is particularly challenging.
The development of Malta’s heritage legislation was traced in section 2.5.1 and need not be repeated here. The focus here is to consider how the role of the public is defined in the island’s heritage legislation.

Currently the legislative framework for cultural heritage in Malta is enshrined within the Cultural Heritage Act of 2002. This act replaced the 1925 Antiquities Protection Act and brought 21st century methods of cultural heritage management to Malta. This included the acknowledgement of intangible heritage as important as tangible heritage (Article 2), a concept that would later be enshrined in a UNESCO convention in 2003. In addition to clearly defining what falls under the umbrella of heritage in Malta, the Cultural Heritage Act clearly places the public at the centre of any interaction with heritage, as set out in Article 4(2). In

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addition, the 2002 Act recognized the close links between the spiritual, cultural, social and economic value of heritage and the quality of life of individual citizens in Malta.213

The elements of social values and public participation are even more explicitly stated in Malta’s National Cultural Policy published in 2011, and currently under review. The key principles of the National Cultural Policy are: (1) empowering the public to participate in cultural activity through a people-centred approach, (2) enabling relationships between all stakeholders, and (3) knowledge-building and sharing.214 This cultural policy also states that ‘culture [is a] fundamental right which should be enjoyed by all individuals’,215 echoing the core principles of the Faro Convention. This begs the question why Malta remains a non-signatory party and also leads one to wonder to what extent this policy has actually been put into practice. Other aspects highlighted in the policy include the relationship between stakeholders, amongst which the public is not included, as well as the dissemination of information. This sharing of information is approached from a top-down perspective, where decision-makers and policy-makers are alerted to the need to be informed about the impacts of culture on society. It is acknowledged that the proper access to information is ‘pivotal in ensuring that cultural heritage is considered a privileged and essential factor of [Malta’s] identity’.216

The only participatory measures that are currently found in the legislation, be it planning or heritage legislation, revolves around access to information and the promotion of public awareness, and the extent of public participation is limited to consultations, as stated in the National Strategy for Cultural Heritage:

‘Allowing the public to express views and to contribute ideas towards the implementation of common objectives of this national strategy is part of an important cultural dialogue that enhances the value of cultural heritage. Public consultation ensures support for, and ownership of, cultural heritage resources’.217

This can however, still be construed as top-down in its approach.

213 Cultural Heritage Act 2002
214 National Cultural Policy 2011: 9
215 National Cultural Policy 2011: 86
216 National Cultural Policy 2011: 30
217 National Strategy for the Cultural Heritage 2012: 20
4.7 Conclusion

The role of the public in the protection and management of cultural heritage in Malta is evident in cultural heritage legislation and policies. Nevertheless, even though a people-centred approach is being advocated in the cultural policy, its implementation is still expert-led rather than community-driven. However, it must be mentioned that the policy actively recognizes the need to bridge the gap between governments and communities, and in turn between the experts and the public. Ultimately, in order for such policies to be realised they need to be enshrined in the legislation and actively adopted, not only by the government but also across the heritage sector in its entirety, and most crucially, by communities and individuals at the level of the general public. In recent years, the public appropriation of the more empowered role advocated in the ELC and the Faro Conventions has witnessed interesting developments. The next chapters will document and examine the way this process is unfolding, often at a rapid pace, and in unexpected ways.
Chapter 5: Public engagement with archaeological resources in Malta


5.1 Preamble

The present study has been conducted against the backdrop of a construction boom, which has gripped Malta over the last few years, placing cultural heritage at the centre of much controversy as well as threatening its preservation. The following five key themes have been identified running through the seven interviews conducted:

1. International heritage conventions
2. Contemporary relevance
3. Knowledge or information
4. Social media
5. Sustainability and the economy.

The results obtained for each of these five themes are presented and analysed below.

5.2 Results and analysis

The results and analysis of raw data from the interviews will be split according to the five key themes. The participants are referred to by organisation rather than name or anonymous, and transcripts of all interviews are provided in appendices II to VIII.

5.2.1 Theme 1: International heritage conventions

It was initially expected that the organisations and groups interviewed would be familiar with the ELC and the Faro Convention, in particular due to the conventions’ aims and objectives. This assumption was laid to rest after the first couple of interviews, when it became clear that the ELC, or any other international convention for that matter, were not mentioned by the participants, unless prompted (Table 5.1). The Valletta Convention and UNESCO seemed to feature primarily in the participant’s knowledge on international heritage conventions, without being prompted by the interviewer. The notable exception was the ASM which brought up the Landscape Convention without being prompted by the author. However, similar to the other groups and organisations, the ASM showed little knowledge about the aims and objectives of the convention, stating that:

‘Some time has passed, but I think that it refers to the importance of landscape in a wide sense, urban landscape, and not just landscape in the sense of rural landscape’. (See appendix VI)
Table 5.1: Table indicating the familiarity of participants with international heritage conventions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Valletta Convention</th>
<th>European Landscape Convention</th>
<th>Faro Convention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Temple Rescue</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malta ARCH</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASM</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DLH</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes (but only after being specifically asked about it)</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wirt iż-Żejtun</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes (but only after being prompted about ratifications)</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moviment Graffitti</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAA</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes (but only after being specifically asked about it)</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The FAA, DLH and Wirt iż-Żejtun all indicated they knew of the ELC after being asked outright by the author. However, none of them could provide a clear answer on what the aims of the convention were. The FAA was only aware that ‘we signed it but did not ratify it’ (see Appendix V), DLH thinks ‘that it said that landscapes should be preserved and protected’ (see Appendix VII), and Wirt iż-Żejtun gave a short ‘not much’ (see Appendix III) as an answer. When it comes to the citizen-led groups, namely Temple Rescue and Malta ARCH, it was not expected that they would be familiar with the conventions. Nevertheless, when the author prompted Temple Rescue about the ELC, the response revolved around ‘taking a united front to protect what is left from our landscape’ (see Appendix II). Temple Rescue was also relatively familiar with the Valletta Convention, which it states was created in order to ensure ‘that developers on certain sites are going to be held accountable for damages or loss against our own heritage’.
Participants were also asked what comes to mind when they hear the words landscape and archaeology. What became immediately clear is that landscape is most often associated with the natural environment and scenery. A minority of participants included the human and cultural elements in their answers. This suggests a narrower perception of what constitutes landscape than the ELC definition, which includes the cultural as well as the natural, the urban as well as the rural. When it came to defining archaeology, all the participants identified material remains as the focal element of the discipline. This ranged from an entire site, individual features, stones and layers, to historical artefacts. A notable exception is Malta ARCH who argued that there is a ‘technical understanding of the term’ but feels that:

‘The meaning needs to open up a little more to incorporate the modern and contemporary landscape as well because we do get attached to it. And there is a lot related to what we see today, the sense of community, the sense of identity and memories’. (See appendix IV)

This suggests that Malta ARCH, a citizen-led group, is crucially aware of both the technical understanding of what constitutes archaeology, even if this was not explicitly mentioned, and of the more contemporary relevant elements of the discipline, and acknowledges the need to broaden the definition of archaeology. The two NGOs known for their militant activities in the field of heritage, namely FAA and Moviment Graffitti, both provided answers that were somewhat vague. FAA defined archaeology as an ‘archaeological site, generally, with some stones showing’, and Moviment Graffitti stated that ‘ruins maybe [pause], artefacts, historical artefacts’ (see Appendix VIII). There was more agreement amongst all the organisations and groups regarding what values they attach to both landscape and archaeology, which mainly centres around identity which is succinctly put by Temple Rescue as ‘without heritage how do you know what you are and who you are?’.

Participants were asked whether they were aware what the ELC states on public participation. The response was negative from all the participants, which may be considered as peculiar since all of the organisations and groups interviewed, apart from Moviment Graffitti, signed the Wirtna Declaration in April 2018 (see Appendix IX), which explicitly mentions the need to ratify the ELC and to sign and ratify the Faro Convention. Participants were also interviewed on the state of public participation in Malta. All respondents agreed that there is not enough public participation in Malta, with Temple Rescue arguing that there is ‘close to none or if they are involved, involve me in that ‘public’. Wirt iż-Żejtun even argued that ‘very few dare to give their views at this stage’ which hints at a growing division between decision-makers and the public. DLH has a slightly more positive outlook:
‘No that is very easy. The only thing is sometimes what isn’t very straightforward is that you have to look for the applications because they are published on the Government Gazzette and you have to sift through them. You need to be aware that something is going to be published, or do it on a regular basis and when you see that it is ODZ you pick it up straight away and you check what it is all about. But then there is a certain amount of having to be accustomed to using the Map server and the website of the PA. But I think that the public is becoming better at it’

This comment may need to be viewed within the context of DLH being an actively lobbying organisation that is accustomed to using the systems involved. The same may not be said for the general public. As may be noted from Table 5.2, public consultation or representation is the only avenue of public involvement available to the Maltese public. When it comes to public consultation it is often difficult for members of the public to find out about the location or time of a public consultation meeting, which according to ASM and DLH, are published in the Government Gazzette. It is noted that today there is an online public consultation platform for the government and its various institutions. Nevertheless, it was also noted that even when members of the public have taken part in consultation, they often have very little influence on the decision-makers, however, a number of organisations noted that the potential for it is there.
Table 5.2: Overview of the levels of public participation as perceived by the NGOs and citizen-led groups interviewed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels of public participation</th>
<th>Temple Rescue</th>
<th>Malta ARCH</th>
<th>ASM</th>
<th>DLH</th>
<th>Wirt iż-Żejtun</th>
<th>Moviment Graffitti</th>
<th>FAA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early Phase</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>×</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publication of notices</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedure</td>
<td>Consultation</td>
<td>Consultation</td>
<td>Consultation</td>
<td>Representations</td>
<td>Representations</td>
<td>Representations</td>
<td>Public consultations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to information</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Only if on social media</td>
<td>Only if on social media</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influence</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Very little</td>
<td>The public should know</td>
<td>Yes when there is a lot of public participation</td>
<td>The potential for a strong influence is there but only if paired with expert advice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What should public participation really look like?</td>
<td>Throughout the whole process, and not just a group of people deciding for everyone</td>
<td>Proper public consultation</td>
<td>Proper public consultation</td>
<td>Proper public consultation</td>
<td>Proper public consultation</td>
<td>Creating an educated public that is involved throughout the process</td>
<td>Informed democratic voices</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.2.2 Theme 2: Contemporary relevance

The concept of contemporary relevance was another key theme that emerged from the interviews.

The interview results revealed a difference between the citizen-led groups and the heritage NGOs when it comes to the topic of contemporary relevance. On the one hand Temple Rescue and Malta ARCH immediately make it clear that the topics of social inclusion and social interaction are of utmost importance. In fact one of the main motivations behind the founding of the group Temple Rescue was ‘the lack of social interaction and social inclusion in the archaeological world in Malta’. Malta ARCH stated that its intention is to ‘create awareness that people realize they can do something about it’, as well as labelling the heritage sector in Malta as ‘fragmented’. This suggests a perceived schism between the public, the heritage institutions and the heritage itself. Temple Rescue and Malta ARCH both place a lot of weight on awareness. In fact the main issue brought up by Temple Rescue is that archaeology in Malta has remained the domain of the expert since ‘for the last hundred years the archaeological awareness in Malta was non-existent’. In fact Temple Rescue stated that ‘Tal-Qares is always going to be the main catalyst’ behind the founding of the group since it is a ‘perfect example of a victim of no awareness’. If the archaeological value of the area had been known, the campaign against the construction of showrooms, garages, apartments and penthouses would have appeared much earlier. Thus, Temple Rescue argues that the responsibility for this does not rest with the public:

‘How can the public be involved in sites that they do not know, how can the public be involved in archaeological excavations that archaeological societies are not giving information about? The public cannot be held responsible for the lack of interest because for the last ten years they were not involved, [pause] and not through their own fault’.

Malta ARCH views the lack of social interaction and social inclusion as not wanting ‘them [the public] to interfere. It’s all about the money, its business. Right now construction is one of the main businesses that we have’. Malta ARCH links this to a variety of other points that are also relevant to the present discussion, such as the economy and in particular cultural-tourism. This became most evident when discussing how the Maltese engage with their heritage. The participant presented an image of Maltese heritage that revolved around ‘the staging effect for the foreigner and not the Maltese’.

On the other hand the heritage NGOs, namely FAA, ASM, DLH, and Wirt iż-Żejtun, did not allude to the contemporary relevance of heritage. ASM stated that it would ‘like to think that
people find it [archaeology] relevant’. One of the reasons for this that resonated through multiple interviews was the fact that the very nature of archaeology works against it being seen as relevant. The FAA stated that ‘archaeology is very hard to appreciate for many people because when all people see are fragments and pieces of stone, when it comes to archaeology it’s really hard to raise awareness’. The ASM agreed and stated that ‘because it cannot be seen, and it’s not an old house or palace threatened with demolition or whatever, it’s hidden and therefore, unseen and not understood’. The heritage NGOs differ from the citizen-led groups in their acknowledgement that, as Malta ARCH states: ‘archaeology [needs to be] a little bit more sexy’, rather than the mute acceptance of archaeology’s unattractiveness to the non-expert public. Essentially this entails the recognition that in order to create a greater public awareness and appreciation for cultural heritage, that same heritage has to be made attractive to the public, as laid out in Chapter 2.

The notion of NIMBYism (Not in My Back Yard) was brought up in all the interviews conducted, where the participants agreed that the general Maltese public only engages with heritage ‘when it’s going to affect them’, in the words of the FAA. However, whilst many would argue that this NIMBYism is negative because it portrays a society that is very self-centred and not community oriented, others such as the Wirt iz-Żejtun, would argue the opposite. In fact when it came to the case of the proposed expansion of the industrial estate at Bulebel, the local NGO, Wirt iz-Żejtun, capitalised on people’s greater readiness to mobilise to safeguard their own locality:

‘People didn’t want industrial development next to their door and we [Wirt iz-Żejtun] managed to get people to appreciate the need for open space and the fact that agricultural land will be taken up for industrial purposes means a loss of open space’.

This extremely localised focus led to a completely bottom-up approach to raising awareness about the cultural and natural value of the area being proposed for development. Whilst NIMBYism is mostly perceived as a negative trait due to its complete focus on the immediate surroundings, in the case of Bulebel it provided the fuel for community involvement.

Interview participants were also asked to what extent collaboration in heritage issues occurs, ASM, DLH, FAA and Malta ARCH all referred to the recent Wirtna Declaration. The more established organisations such DLH and the ASM, as well as the FAA, regularly referred to each other when it comes to collaboration, and generally referred much less often to the citizen-led groups. This became evident when the same question was posed to Temple Rescue and Malta ARCH. The latter group was more diplomatic by arguing that whilst not much
collaboration has occurred, Malta ARCH was still asked to come and sign the declaration. In contrast Temple Rescue states that in

‘The first six months of Temple Rescue we were bridging with entities, because the main thing of an organisation that is grassroots is that you need to be open and spread out. So with the archaeological society we started sending emails to each other about sites, this, that and the other, and then along the way communication stopped and emails stopped being answered by leading archaeologists, which made me think that they feel threatened and they don’t want to participate’.

Whilst it is not possible to provide concrete evidence of Temple Rescue’s claims, the response of the ASM towards these citizen-led groups is rather cautious, with the organisation arguing that ‘there is a place for them’ and that the interest generated through them is a good thing. However, the ASM supplements this by stating that ‘they need to get their facts right’.

5.2.3 Theme 3: Dissemination of archaeological knowledge

Such a statement leads onto the next major theme that emerged from the interviews, namely that of knowledge and its dissemination. The main elements that feature here are the growing need for a more modern approach to disseminating archaeological information, the ways in which heritage NGOs and awareness groups collaborate and communicate between themselves and with the wider public, the state of heritage publication and transparency, feedback links and two-way flows of information, as well as the status of public outreach and heritage education in Malta.

It has already been noted that a widely held view is that the nature of archaeology works against it being easily understood by anyone who is not an expert, and that this may contribute to the disinterest that is often shown towards archaeological heritage in Malta. The ASM however, argued that this lack of interest does not stem from a lack of understanding or awareness but is due to the fact that ‘people are feeling annoyed because archaeology is getting in the way of development’. All the interviewees agreed that the Maltese are generally more interested in short-term economic gains than long-term sustainability, and whilst the FAA argues that this is not necessarily a negative thing, it has led to the loss of much heritage.

The ways in which information and knowledge is spread by the participant NGOs and citizen-led groups varies. Temple Rescue argues that the heritage NGOs in Malta ‘do not use and adopt modern techniques’, and are not adopting a modern mentality in their approach to archaeological outreach, resulting in daily socio-economic concerns taking precedence. One of the main examples brought up by both Temple Rescue and Malta ARCH was that of lectures, with both groups arguing that lectures are an outdated means of reaching the public. Temple
Rescue stated that what made the group different to the NGOs was the fact that they ‘adopt modern techniques of social media-Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram [that ] reach the world with one post in a matter of seconds’. Another argument brought up by Temple Rescue and Malta ARCH was that lectures are the realm of experts and should not be used to attract public attention, with Malta ARCH stating that ‘lectures don’t appeal to the public, to the everyday person, it might appeal to me [Malta ARCH] or to you because you’re doing your Masters, but not to the layperson, they might not understand’. Such an approach is reminiscent of Merriman’s ‘Deficit Model’ of public archaeology, which sees the public needing to be correctly educated on heritage related issues. This is an interesting point since when asked whether a top-down or a bottom-up approach is best suited to the challenges being faced by heritage in Malta, top-down was not mentioned by any of the groups of organisations and an entirely bottom-up approach was favoured by the majority of the participants. Moviment Graffitti cogently describes this as ‘bottom-up because when you have something that starts from the grassroots you have people who are genuinely interested, there are no ulterior motives and it’s more organic and authentic’.

The ASM stated that they ‘have a programme of activities, of monthly lectures from October to May and […] a number of site visits’. What this author feels is important to note at this stage is the fact that not every lecture organised by the ASM is open to the public, while site visits are only open to paying members, which propagates an essentially top-down approach and may have prompted Temple Rescue’s view

‘that people with a certain responsibility to bring awareness forward must learn contemporary techniques […] you’re not going to attract people to archaeology with the same old systems from 40 years ago. So adopting a modern mentality and properly including people [is more effective].’

DLH also stated that their main avenue of public outreach revolve around monthly lectures. Wirt iż-Żejtun is a notable exception among established NGOs since it does not exclusively rely on lecturing as a means of reaching the public. In fact this NGO arguably shares several characteristics with the citizen-led groups, since much of the work it conducts revolves around the local community:

‘The local people and the public, especially in local communities are much closer to heritage identity than the national authorities. So it is important that there is a good feedback link from the local communities to the national policy-makers’.

This fundamentally grassroots approach to heritage is reflected in the outreach conducted by the group which
organised a number of events, heritage trails mainly, and heritage walks, discussions and seminars [...] some weeks ago we [Wirt iż-Zejtun] organised a clean-up, we organise walks, nature walks, and even outside Żejtun [...] information panels in front of historical buildings and historical sites [...] a biannual symposium’.

Thus, much of the activities revolve around informing and engaging the public with the heritage of Żejtun, be it natural or cultural. This engagement was experienced first-hand by this author during an informative walk organised in order to raise awareness about the possibility of industrial expansion in Bulebel. A large number of people attended this informative walk, attesting the success of such a people-centred approach (fig. 13). The FAA also organises cultural and natural walks and events, which are however, mainly aimed at highlighting ‘what is being lost through bad decisions [since] it is quite tricky for people to understand the implications of planning decisions until they’ve seen the result’. Therefore, the events created by the FAA tend to originate within a reactive framework of opposing some form of development.

A crucial issue that was emphasised during the interviews was that of access to information. The citizen-led groups both argued that access is often difficult and sometimes impossible. The vast majority of archaeological information is published in journals that are aimed at scholars and students of archaeology, and not the wider public. Malta’s international obligation to publish archaeological reports is laid down in the signed and ratified Valletta Convention, yet Temple Rescue stated that when it came to accessing information on the case of Tal-Qares, the Freedom of Information Act had to be used, with no information given out freely by the Superintendence. This is a concern shared by Malta ARCH who stated that it is ‘very hard. I mean you only come across something if someone points it out. But otherwise it is hard’. The interview conducted with the ASM seemed to validate this point. The ASM publishes the Malta Archaeological Review, the only peer reviewed archaeological journal in Malta. Whilst the journal is a staple in the production of archaeological knowledge in Malta, the public rarely features. This is coupled with the fact that it is not easy to buy the journal unless one is a member of the society. It also became clear from the ASM interview that when it came to the sharing of information and collaboration with citizen-led groups like Temple Rescue, the ASM characterised them ‘in a Lovin Malta kind of way’, and insinuated that the work being done by grassroots organisations is not serious work.
This was further exemplified when the ASM stated that they ‘need to sort of look at what they produce and sometimes they do give a bit of guess work which perhaps is not based on […]’. It also seems that the will to openly share information has not yet arrived in the archaeological world of Malta, with the island’s one archaeological society stating that ‘These people that say that knowledge is being hugged close to the bosom […] why are they bothered by the fact that they don’t have access to information? They want it to fall into their laps. They don’t want to ferret it out, and as we know the discipline of archaeology is ferreting out information, analysing it, it does not fall into your lap’.

The limited collaboration between organisations and citizen-led groups became apparent throughout the interviews. The more established NGOs like ASM and DLH often collaborate with each other and release press releases together, yet neither mentioned any of the citizen-led groups. The FAA, Wirt iż-Żejtun and Moviment Graffitti all expressed an interested in increasing communication and collaboration between organisations. The general feeling from all the interviews was that collaboration is on the increase, especially evident through the signing of the Wirtna Declaration. Whilst this declaration is a milestone effort in needing ‘to step it up’, in the words of Din L-Art Ħelwa, much still remains to be done in order to firmly establish proper communication and collaboration in the heritage management of Malta.
A topic that was raised independently of the questions asked throughout the interviews is that of education. Particular emphasis was placed on education by the ASM which argued that ‘there are certain principles about archaeology that need to be taught in school. Archaeology is not taught in school’. The argument rests on the notion that if heritage principles and values were taught and ingrained into individuals from a young age, their perception of heritage would be different to those individuals who were not educated in such a manner. The outcome of such an approach would lead to what the ASM defines as an ‘informed democratic voice’ which is willing and able to participate in the processes of policy making and implementation. FAA goes so far as to state that without a properly informed public, public participation should not take place, arguing that there is no value in having an uninformed public participate. Therefore FAA is in agreement with ASM that ‘education needs to be strong for the public to have a deeper appreciation for these things and in that form also given a chance to participate’. Even though the ASM places a high importance on education, the organisation itself does not engage itself with Maltese youth, mainly due to a lack of resources. However, the society did bring up the fact that students of archaeology are always invited to their monthly lectures, and lamented that few students actually turn up. This may again be linked to the perception that lectures are not the most stimulating means of delivering knowledge.

The general consensus in the interviews seemed to be that the level of public outreach in an entity like Heritage Malta has increased, however, that of the SCH remains practically non-existent. All the interview participants mentioned the open days being conducted by Heritage Malta at various sites, and all agreed that these are currently the most popular form of engagement with heritage in Malta. However, these open days were also criticized by Temple Rescue, who stated that it propagates the continued focus on only a handful of sites, what they define as ‘mainstream heritage’, and build on this by stating that the public ‘don’t go to visit because it’s too expensive for them. They have to wait for an open day where the entrance is two or three euros’.

Wirt iż-Żejtun in particular has a programme of events that is entirely people-centred in its approach, be it for the youth or the adult public of Żejtun. A most striking example is a heritage-themed interactive board game for primary school children which

‘…actually takes the players through four heritage routes within Żejtun, ending up at the Roman villa, which we consider as the node from where the town started. Along the route they get a play card with questions on a number of points to get knowledge about historical sites and other buildings within the town. And we’ve distributed this game to all Year 4 and 5 students in the Żejtun primary school every year’.
Such an interactive approach to engaging the younger public is instilling the value of heritage from a young age, and attests to the high levels of engagement with heritage that can occur on a local community level. DLH is the most established of all of Malta’s heritage voluntary organisations, and has had a well-established youth programme for some time, which most recently also involves weekly clean-ups with school children.

The type of informative measures conducted by Temple Rescue are almost entirely centred on the group’s Facebook page. This citizen-led group aims to promote lesser known sites to the public, in fact:

‘So far we’ve documented 138 lesser known sites that people don’t know about […] their [public’s] attitudes to the lesser known sites which are freely accessible is that they’re in love. Because they are seeing sites and pieces of the jigsaw puzzle that they didn’t know about before’.

Temple Rescue is aiming to give heritage back to the public by introducing them to sites and landscape that they did not know about before, since

‘Only when people are aware of sites, that memory that they have of that site will become the fuel that saves it. So if they don’t go to sites, how can you expect them to sign a petition to save it? […] if you spent a day at a site, and took your kids and family to a site, you’re going to have that memory. It is this memory that is going to help fuel preservation’.

A recent symposium entitled ‘Malta’s Archaeological sites at risk: Seeking solutions – Synthesizing public engagement, academic activism, and political response’, hosted by the Department of Classics and Archaeology at the University of Malta, included a section on encouraging student participation in heritage. The issue of student participation, or lack thereof, was raised multiple times by ASM throughout the interview and attests to the important nature of the topic. A point that was raised during the symposium was that of hands-on participation, which could either involve students interacting with actual artefacts rather than photos on a PowerPoint slide, or could entail participating in an excavation. Temple Rescue sees the latter option as a perfect

‘… opportunity to put 20 chairs, sitting down, and invite 20 people from the public to observe a live excavation. Because archaeologists are the ones who experience this […] you guys [archaeological community] don’t understand how beautiful it is for us’.

Malta ARCH agrees on this point and can easily envision a participatory approach that involves the more vulnerable members of society, arguing that they ‘think it is a good idea to have public interaction and specific groups of people, like people with mental health issues or [who] are struggling. It could be something exciting’.
5.2.4 Theme 4: Social media

Throughout the interviews the need to make archaeology relevant to contemporary society was raised, and central to this is the use of social media. In fact grassroots engagement with heritage, in the form of the groups Temple Rescue and Malta ARCH, exists almost exclusively through the use of social media platforms like Facebook. The success of using such platforms through the use of photos and videos was evident in the awareness-raising campaigns conducted by Temple Rescue, Malta ARCH and Wirt iż-Żejtun for the Tal-Qares, Tal-Wej and Bulebel cases respectively. The three cases are a prime example of how such online interactions can lead to the protection of archaeological resources from the grassroots. To put this into perspective, Temple Rescue states that their Facebook page has ‘1,000 interactions per day’ (fig. 14). In fact the video created by Temple Rescue for the Tal-Qares site was viewed by almost 2,000 individuals, and the accompanying photo album was seen by 10,000 people. Whilst the site was destroyed and is currently under construction, it provides an example of how the actions of individual members of the public can raise awareness about sites which the wider public is not aware of.

![Fig. 14: Temple Rescue’s Facebook interactions, views, likes, videos, followers, engagements and the individuals reached from the period 19-25 June 2018. (Kindly provided by Temple Rescue for the purpose of the present study).](image-url)
Temple Rescue argues that this reflects a Maltese ‘people [who] are in love with archaeology’. In fact Temple Rescue goes so far as to argue that:

‘From other pages there isn’t enough involvement on social media which is the number one tool to reach people, to reach the majority of people. So more has to be done and more awareness has to be promoted and boosted by the archaeological societies’.

In the case of Tal-Wej, the online campaign wielded by Malta ARCH led to a positive outcome. A graphic guide on how to submit objections to planning proposals was disseminated to the public (fig. 15). This effective means of sharing information on social media led to the submission of over 400 objections to the planning application that was submitted for Tal-Wej, and ultimately resulted in the withdrawal of that same application. In fact, the success that Malta ARCH had with such an approach led to the FAA taking a step back since they ‘were seeing how strongly the residents’ campaigns were doing […] and that was a perfect example of how strong they can be on their own’. This forms part of what Malta ARCH aims to accomplish which is empowering and mobilizing individuals so that ‘people realize they can do something about it’.

Fig. 15: The visual guide created by Malta ARCH in order to facilitate the submission of objections to a planning application at Tal-Wej. Source: https://www.facebook.com/pg/MaltaARCH17/photos/?ref=page_internal (Accessed on 12.07.2018)
In the case of Bulebel, Wirt iż-Żejtun led the campaign against the industrial expansion of the Bulebel industrial estate. In addition to this, the organisation focused on getting local community support rather than protesting the proposed development at government level. This grassroots approach resulted in the public:

‘[…] approaching us [Wirt iż-Żejtun] with snippets of information and then through those snippets of information we’ve [Wirt iż-Żejtun] managed to get the story out […] and I think that it is the good route, rather than organising protests and being militant. There is no room for militancy now. It’s best to invest in research and information and to get the information out’.

The organisation also launched a traditional petition by providing a printable version online that anyone could download, print and circulate. An awareness campaign was launched on Facebook and the NGOs website in collaboration with Temple Rescue and Malta ARCH. A video created and posted online by Temple Rescue had approximately 2,500 views and is considered to be a pivotal element in why the campaign was so successful, heightening awareness about the areas surrounding Żejtun, even for the present author. This culminated in an informative walk organized by Wirt iż-Żejtun, which saw a large group of individuals gather for the sole purpose of learning about the area, as well as submitting the signed petition (fig. 16). The traditional formula of gathering signatures on a petition, was deliberately chosen to allow for a greater amount of community involvement and engagement, with each other as well as their heritage. Ultimately this grassroots effort was also successful in reversing the government’s decision to expand the Bulebel industrial area. This demonstrates that feedback from local communities to national policy makers can be successful, and that a two-way flow of information is vital.
Grassroots organisations such as Temple Rescue have argued that the heritage knowledge holders in Malta, organisations such as the ASM and DLH, do not utilize modern means of communicating with the public, and that this contributes to the disinterest many Maltese have towards their heritage.

However, it must be said that the ASM has recently started utilizing its Facebook page to share snippet views of archaeological sites, which they are calling ‘Archaeo-Info posts’, which the ASM states is about ‘trying to show the lesser ones [sites]’. The ASM also warns about possible pitfalls:

‘This is the danger as well that if you do not have real awareness, if you do not have real information, proper information, then people will jump into the breach with the most outlandish exaggerations which do nothing for the cause in archaeology, on the contrary, they make it worse. The construction industry is against you immediately, and they already are, so imagine you start making all sorts of claims which are not correct. In general people get sort of hysterical, you know was Facebook is like’.

Another phenomenon that can be witnessed is what the FAA state is ‘a growing number of Facebook groups dedicated to heritage and there are some for houses, some for temples […] people do care’. The FAA argues that this increase of citizen-led heritage groups on social
media indicate that the public has an interest in its heritage. Nevertheless, the FAA continues to define heritage as needing ‘to be an archaeologist to understand what you are seeing’. However, the present author would argue that the use of social media platforms like Facebook is making the dissemination of archaeo-information more digestible and approachable to the wider public.

5.2.5 Theme 5: Sustainability and the economy

The theme of sustainability is one that resonates in the ELC and the Faro Convention as well as with the current economic climate in Malta, and it comes as no surprise that it featured prominently in the interviews. It came as no surprise that all of the interview participants linked this economic and construction climate to the concept of NIMBYism, be it positively or negatively. Temple Rescue had more of a negative stance towards this phenomenon, however, the group also linked this to the growth of citizen-led groups:

‘Malta in general right now is going through a phase where they want to save their own space and be safe in their space. The element of community has gone and everybody wants to save his own space or piece of the world […] only a few people, what we call grassroots, are thinking about the other people in the public. So we need more grassroots organisations’.

The ASM links NIMBYism to the success of the Tal-Wej campaign, albeit this author is unsure whether in a negative or positive way:

‘Many of the objectors were people who lived on the street that actually gives onto this field they were requesting the removal of soil for archaeological investigations. Most of the people who actually bothered to go to the PA site were residents’.

This is particularly evident in the case of Bulebel where Wirt iż-Żejtun argued that it ‘was the reason of the NIMBY’s, people didn’t want industrial development next to their door’, that made the campaign so successful.

In fact, FAA argued that ‘it is quite tricky for people to understand the implications of planning decisions until they’ve seen the result’, and as such the NGO argues that these results are now starting to penetrate the perceptions of the Maltese public since ‘a lot of places [are] being demolished and so they’re [the public] feeling a kind of appreciation for what they’re losing’. Similarly, Moviment Graffitti argues that these new perceptions have led to many new grassroots efforts to protect what remains of Malta’s resources, including heritage. Whilst not every interview participant made the connection between the growth of grassroots organisations and the current situation in Malta, all interviewees recognized the recent shift in perceptions and a growing awareness towards heritage.
The widespread construction activity currently being experienced in Malta has resulted in increasing pressures on the cultural and natural heritage, and as FAA has argued has resulted in:

‘Many changes in policies that have weakened the protection of heritage buildings, of green areas, of the environment and natural landscapes, and very much in favour of more development [through] one of the biggest booms in construction the country has seen in decades’.

All interviewees agreed that this unsustainable development can be linked to a widespread mentality, which Moviment Graffitti states is a focus on materialism: ‘short-term is kind of always in the mentality of the Maltese […] I think short-term gains and financial gains are what the Maltese prioritize’. Malta ARCH connected this prioritizing of short-term gains with the fact that there are no ‘town planners, they don’t exist. So when we build we don’t build with the community in mind […] right now we’re moving towards individualism’. The FAA argued that the sustainability should be woven into proper planning ‘which will include the preservation of our cultural assets [and] the retention of open spaces which would contribute to the landscape’. This highlights the fact that cultural assets, are a big part of sustainable planning for FAA, as set out in the ELC and the Faro Convention. Moviment Graffitti and Temple Rescue had similar opinions, both linking the loss of heritage in the present to needs of future generations. Temple Rescue argued that ‘the most important thing to think about is the generations that are coming. Future generations do not have any idea about the sites that are being lost right now’. Therefore, the focus is on preserving Maltese heritage for future generations, which as expressed by Moviment Graffitti is a matter of ‘urgency and emergency. We’ve destroyed so much of our heritage that if we don’t protect what we have left in a couple of years there won’t be anything’.

Whilst the FAA, Moviment Graffitti and Temple Rescue are on the same page regarding sustainability, they approached the matter from a different angle. ASM recognises that archaeology and heritage are not being utilized to their highest economic potential, namely tourism, and argues that if heritage were to have a higher economic output, then perhaps the Maltese public would show more interest:

‘… we could be selling our shoulder months of tourism very much based on archaeology and that is something we are talking money here, and archaeology can give a lot to the economy […] think there is a lot to be said about developing the economic side of it […] if you took this [heritage tourism] to people then perhaps they will listen harder than if you just tell them there is a field there which has a kiln’.

Whilst the ASM was not the only organisation to bring the topic of cultural tourism to the attention of the present author, it was the only group to do so positively. The ASM view reflects
some of the major points of the ELC and Faro Convention, namely that culture is a vital part of sustainable development. On the other hand, Malta ARCH argued that the increasing association of heritage with tourism has led to a disassociation of the Maltese public from its own heritage, which is similar to Vella’s argument on foreign vs. local appreciation of heritage in Malta.218 Malta ARCH argues that:

‘They become staged, that’s what I was getting to, and the staging effect is for the foreigner and not the Maltese […] yes, this comes with tourism, as it happens in Venice and Rome. The Venetians are not there anymore, it is like a theatre, like a stage, you can’t go about you’re daily life. But in Malta you probably can’t look at it like that. Perhaps that is why the Maltese don’t engage as much’.

Thus, Malta ARCH equates tourism attractions to stages that are for the benefit of the foreigner and not the local.

Contrary to expectations, few participants made any explicit reference to the threat to the quality of life of the Maltese public posed by the current construction boom. The present author would however argue that such a sentiment was nevertheless present throughout the interviews whenever reference was being made to the unsustainability of the current situation. This concern is also reflected in the media with questions of economic ‘growth of what and for what purpose and for whose benefit’219 permeating the recent news headlines. This also resonates with current debates within the wider heritage field, where questions are being asked as to whom heritage is beneficial, and in what ways does it relate to society.

Some of the wider implications of these five key themes will be discussed in the next chapter.

218 Vella 2013: 94
219 Times of Malta 2018e
Chapter 6: Discussion and conclusion
6.1 Discussion

The five main themes identified in the previous chapter need to be placed within the broader context of heritage and archaeology literature in order to make better sense of the results of the present research, data and their wider implications. The following discussion considers these implications in the context of the principles and objectives of the ELC.

6.1.1 The expert-public divide

Unless archaeologists find ways to make their research increasingly relevant to the modern world, the modern world will find itself increasingly capable of getting along without archaeologists.

(Fritz and Plog 1970: 412)

The notion that archaeology is a relevant discipline with an important contribution to make to contemporary society is today accepted within the professional community, and recognized by the wider public. This is corroborated by a recent survey conducted by a European cooperation programme, NEARCH, endorsed by the European Commission.\(^{220}\) The survey revolved around gaining an insight into the European perception of archaeology and archaeological heritage. When it came to the purpose of archaeology, 90% of participants felt that the discipline was useful.\(^{221}\) It is also accepted that members of the public have a vested interest in the archaeology of their communities, reflected both in academic discourses and international heritage instruments. However, significant divergences have long been noted between the general public and the professional community in their views of what is considered important and what is not.\(^{222}\) The importance of bridging this gap became more evident with the rise of public archaeology as a discipline, as well as the introduction of the ELC and the Faro Convention as international heritage instruments, outlined in Chapter 2.

This divide is also evident in Malta, where the professional community is often distant from the wider public. This separation is often attributed to the largely negative picture of a Maltese society not interested in its heritage, painted by Boissevain, Baldacchino, and Vella, as discussed in the literature review. This must be viewed in the context of the current economic

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\(^{220}\) NEARCH is a Europe–wide cooperation network that is focused on exploring the scientific and professional developments of archaeology and cultural heritage management. In particular NEARCH focuses on the element of public participation and exploring ways in which the public can be brought into archaeology. For more information: http://www.nearch.eu/what-is-nearch (Accessed on 15.10.2018)

\(^{221}\) Marx et al. 2017: 5

\(^{222}\) Hauptman 2015: 74
situation in Malta which has resulted in an unprecedented number of new construction projects and an increase in ‘high-rises, petrol stations in outside development zones, destruction of town houses, obliteration of age-old streetscapes, unauthorised possession of land in the countryside’, and has had little regard for Malta’s cultural heritage. A similar economic boom occurred in the early 1990s and also threatened to impinge on the island’s cultural heritage. Boissevain argues that this led to a shift in the perceptions of the Maltese towards their heritage, and attributes this to the rise of activist groups, like Moviment Graffitti, and NGOs. It can be argued that the situation in Malta today has also led to a shift in the perceptions of the Maltese, this time at the grassroots level, as attested by the rise in citizen-led heritage awareness groups. These developments must be discussed within the context of the ELC, a convention which introduced the concept of public participation into heritage management. The ELC sought to enshrine public participation at a legislative level, and insisted on collaboration between the various stakeholders, including the public, as being the foundation of landscapes more conducive to individual and social well-being. The rise in community-based archaeological projects attests to this concept having been accepted on a wider scale.

Malta has not ratified the ELC and is not yet obliged to implement its aims and objectives and thus, the reality on the ground may not necessarily reflect the principles of the convention.

Interviews were conducted with heritage awareness groups as well as with established NGOs in Malta, with the intention of exploring grassroots approaches to cultural heritage, where the public is actively engaged in defining, protecting and managing its heritage, as advocated in the ELC. Several of the themes to emerge from the interviews deal with this issue of expert vs. public, and reflect the argument that there is pressing need for more ‘archaeology that is engaged, relevant, ethical, and, as a result, sustainable’. The move away from a purely expert-led approach to methods that are more inclusive of the ‘involved population’ is one of the main aims of the ELC. The move away from an authorised heritage discourse is also found in the Faro Convention, which followed the ELC on the path of greater public participation in heritage, and even expanded on it. Additionally, Faro stressed the need to recognize the enjoyment of heritage as a basic human right and provides a framework for understanding why heritage should be protected, rather than how. Thus, Faro is an important

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223 Times of Malta 2018g
225 Atalay 2012: 3
226 Jones 2007: 615
mechanism for understanding why the public should be placed at the centre of heritage related discourses, and essentially implementing a grassroots approach. Nevertheless, as outlined in Chapter 4, the practical reality is often not a reflection of these conventions, and that a ‘carefully choreographed dance between archaeological expertise and public co-curation and creation’\(^{227}\) is lacking. This is also the case in Malta where the island’s cultural policy reflects the importance of public participation, but the practical implementation is almost non-existent, a narrative that is confirmed in the interviews conducted.

This may be attributed to what Vella argues is a certain alienation between the Maltese public and Malta’s cultural heritage, stemming from decades of elitist practices, and one that Olivier argues is ‘deeply embedded not only in archaeological management structures, but also in the attitudes of so many archaeologists’.\(^{228}\) This point was raised by Temple Rescue on numerous occasions, posing the question ‘how can the public be involved in archaeological excavations that archaeological societies are not giving information about?’ Malta ARCH also noted this alienation, however, the group attributed it to the often foreign expert-led heritage work that defined much of the 20\(^{th}\) century of Maltese archaeology, that has resulted in a ‘Master-slave syndrome […] the foreigners know best’. Whilst many could and would argue that archaeology in Malta has come into its own with a new crop of local archaeologists graduating each year and entering the workforce, others such as Vella, would argue that the alienation of the public towards its heritage persists: ‘The general feeling, however, is that the narratives based on scientific or specialist knowledge produced as a result of archaeological practice are not filtering down to the grassroots’.\(^{229}\)

The recent signing of the Wirtna Declaration, by both established NGOs and citizen-led groups, indicates there is a will to present a united front to address the current situation in Malta. Whilst the Declaration is a positive and needed step in the right direction, the interviews conducted with established NGOs, namely DLH and ASM, revealed that when it came to collaborative efforts between organisations, the established NGOs only referred to each other and did not mention the citizen-led groups. In fact the NGOs did not appear fully aware of the work being done by citizen-led groups, with DLH stating that they ‘have no idea how they portray heritage’. However, the divide that is evident between established NGOs and citizen-led groups does not apply to all NGOs interviewed. Moviment Graffitti, FAA and Wirt iż-Żejtun can be

\(^{227}\) Richardson 2014: 11  
^{228} Vella 2013: 95; Olivier 2016: 15  
^{229} Vella 2013: 95
considered as a distinct group of heritage NGOs that actively support grassroots efforts. This is evident through collaborative work with Temple Rescue and Malta ARCH, as well as the acknowledgement that grassroots organisations are an important element in the protection and better management of archaeological resources in Malta. Thus, it would seem that whilst grassroots efforts are often reflecting the principles of the ELC and Faro Convention, albeit unknowingly, established heritage institutions have yet to acknowledge the importance of citizen-led contributions to heritage.

6.1.2 Dissemination of archaeological knowledge

The importance of access to information was already noted by McGimsey in the early 1970s, where he stated that ‘no individual may act in a manner such that the public right to knowledge is unduly endangered or destroyed’. Since the publication of this first volume on public archaeology, much discourse has been dedicated to exploring the relationship between Baker’s preservation and presentation. Consequently the need to publish archaeological knowledge has also found its way into international heritage conventions, as reflected in the 1992 Valletta Convention. One of the main aims of this convention is Article 7 (ii), which states that:

‘For the purpose of facilitating the study of, and dissemination of knowledge about, archaeological discoveries, each Party undertakes: to take all practical measures to ensure the drafting, following archaeological operations, of a publishable scientific summary record before the necessary comprehensive publication of specialized studies’.

The element of publication is not explicitly mentioned in the ELC. Nevertheless, the specific measures of the convention acknowledge the need to raise awareness, establishing a close link between the well-being of landscapes and the level of public awareness. In contrast to the ELC, the Valletta Convention was ratified by Malta, and should have resulted in mandatory publication of archaeological investigations that are a direct results of developer-funded excavations, which form the bulk of archaeological work in Malta. However, this does not seem to be the case. The importance of this was also picked up by Vella who made the connection between disseminating information and having an informed public: ‘… a lack of

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230 McGimsey 1972: 5
231 Council of Europe 1992
232 Council of Europe 2000b
233 According to the State of the Heritage Report 2015, a total of 223 cases of archaeological investigation, some resulting in excavation and others not, occurred in Malta (State of the Heritage Report 2015: 13
available information was leading the public to ill-informed conclusions’, reflecting the ELC’s connection between public awareness and landscape/heritage well-being.

This is particularly evident when discussed in the context of the Tal-Qares site. Tal-Qares received much media attention in the days leading to its destruction, with much of the focus on the lack of publications available for the site. This is exemplified through Temple Rescue’s use of the Freedom of Information Act in order to gain access to any form of archaeological information on the site, with the group maintaining that if information had been made available to the public sooner, the site could have been saved.

A related aspect of dissemination of archaeological knowledge is Merriman’s Deficit Model of public archaeology which ‘sees the public as needing education in the correct way to appreciate archaeology’ and presents a one-way flow of information, where specialised knowledge, created and maintained by the professional community, is filtered down to the grassroots of society. This is also reflected in the NEARCH survey, where 56% of the participants state that TV documentaries, news and radio bulletins are their main source of archaeological information, which is far more than through printed or social media. Public understandings of archaeological heritage are thus reliant on what is presented by the specialist community, or on what can be found on social media or other platforms, which may often be prone to misinformation. Grima cautions that:

‘Public misunderstanding of the past is often the subject of humour amongst archaeologists. This should be no laughing matter however, but an indictment of our [professional community] failure to communicate with the public’.

Statements such as the ASM’s comment that citizen-led groups ‘need to get their facts right’ and ‘sometimes they do give a bit of guess work’ also need to be considered in this light. The perception that the work being done by citizen-led groups is not serious, highlight the extent of the division between the professional community and the wider Maltese public. Temple Rescue also establishes a connection between the unavailability of information and social inclusion. In essence the group is arguing that the perceived lack of interest in heritage often shown by the wider Maltese public can be attributed to a lack of inclusion in the processes of heritage that can be traced to a dearth in the dissemination of information. The concept of social inclusion is central to the ELC and the Faro Convention. The ELC exemplifies this through its

234 Times of Malta 2017b
235 Merriman 2004: 6
236 Marx et al. 2017: 27
237 Grima 2004: 2
emphasis on public participation, and Faro further underlines the importance of heritage for individual and social well-being. Thus, it can be argued that Temple Rescue’s arguments and actions are unknowingly reflecting the principles and goals of the ELC and Faro Convention, and represents a paradigm shift in heritage in Malta, albeit one that is growing from the grassroots.

An increased focus on publications reaching beyond the heritage community appears imperative in order to better disseminate archaeological information. It must be mentioned that there has been a significant increase in publications aimed at disseminating information on the archaeology of Malta since the beginning of the 21st century. This is in no small extent thanks to the photographer and book designer Daniel Cilia, and the more than a hundred books he has contributed to on the history and archaeology of Malta. Nevertheless, Temple Rescue stated that Malta’s heritage institutions and NGOs ‘do not use and adopt modern techniques’, alluding to the heavy reliance on lectures as the main means of communicating archaeological information. The use of modern techniques alludes to the theme of social media, and was also raised by Malta ARCH. The latter argues that lectures don’t appeal to the public and that heritage-linked events should be ‘organised with the community’ in mind. The latest State of the Heritage Report, published in 2014, lists Public Lecture/Special programme events as the highest number of events organised within the heritage sector. The graph shown below, taken from the report indicates that lectures, underlined in red, remain the most popular means of involving and educating the public (fig. 17).
Such a reliance on lectures reflects an essentially top-down approach to bridging the gap between the professional and the public. This is in direct contrast to what established NGOs stated as their preferred means of interaction with the public, which centred on a mix between top-down and bottom-up. This resonates with Hauptman’s argument that ‘communication is much more than simply spreading knowledge. Interaction is a necessity […]’. The importance of interaction is recognized in the Faro Convention, along with a framework for a more active public involvement. In fact both citizen-led groups agree that a continued reliance on outdated means of communication are a contributing factor why the wider Maltese public is perceived to be disinterested in the island’s archaeological heritage. Both groups agree that

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238 Hauptman 2015: 75
more modern means of communication such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube should be used in order to create a system ‘where people other than archaeologists participate in processes of knowledge’, and thus create more viable opportunities of engaging the grassroots in heritage.

One established NGO that can be distinguished from the others is Wirt iż-Żejtun, which places much value on the participation of the local community of Żejtun. In the case of the proposed industrial expansion of Bulebel, the NGO adopted an entirely community-led approach to opposing the proposals, reported in the previous chapter. The participation and involvement of the Żejtun community led to the withdrawal of the proposals. The group argues that a ‘good feedback link from the local communities to the national policy makers’ is a vital part of policy creation and management. This two-way process of sharing information is also adhered to by Temple Rescue. A recent (May 2018) event organised by the group, entitled ‘Archaeolotea: An Afternoon with Temple Rescue and Friends’, is a prime example of this. The event was designed as a collective exploration of the heritage that the Xemxija plateau has to offer, and included short talks by a variety of individuals, professional as well non-professional. The aim was to promote awareness about the archaeological heritage of Malta, and also to highlight public interest in heritage. Several of the talks held at the event were given by members of the public who actively engage themselves with heritage, or use it as an inspiration. This included an individual who is exploring ancient fire-making techniques (fig. 18), another who uses prehistoric Malta as his creative inspiration, and yet another who conducts workshops exploring and experimenting with ancient pottery production (fig. 19). The present author attended the event and can attest to the success of such an interactive approach, as was the case with the informational walk organised by Wirt iż-Żejtun.

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Hauptman 2015: 76
The theme of disseminating archaeological information includes the important topic of education. The need to introduce archaeological topics into the education system in Malta was acknowledged by all interview participants, without being prompted by the present author, particularly by DLH, ASM and Wirt iż-Żejtun. In fact the NEARCH survey revealed that 64% of the participants believe that archaeology should be thought in school.240 Thus, the general

240 Marx et al. 2017: 29
consensus is that exposing the public to heritage from a young age would result in more widespread appreciation and awareness of heritage, to become the norm, rather than the exception. This is already being put into practice by Wirt iż-Żejtun through their interactive board games.

Thus, the argument being made here is the fact that even though archaeological publications have increased over the course of the last decade, a lacuna in the dissemination of information is still evident, particularly when it comes to new discoveries being made. It also appears that citizen-led groups have made the practical connection between an informed public and the well-being of heritage, while established NGOs continue to adhere to outdated means of communication, which are less effective in eroding the existing alienation between the Maltese public and cultural heritage in Malta. Nevertheless, this lacuna in co-curation and creation of archaeological knowledge, which has arguably led to the marginalisation of archaeology in Malta in relation to other more contemporary relevant concerns, has not been lost on the archaeological community of Malta. A recent (June 2018) symposium held at the University of Malta targeted this danger and included the participation of many heritage experts, albeit the hope was to also attract members of the public, which it did not. It was acknowledged that new means of communicating and collaborating with the public were needed, and evolving projects with just such aims were presented. The archaeological community of Malta is evidently beginning to recognize the need for more participatory approaches that reintroduce the public to its heritage and increase awareness and ultimately protection of archaeological resources.

6.1.3 Shifting paradigms: From ‘NIMBYism’ to local stewardship

The discourse on sustainability is a dominant theme in academic dialogues and international heritage conventions. Paradigm shifts within the discipline of archaeology have reflected the need to integrate the public into heritage mechanisms as well as creating a discipline that is socially responsible and reflective of its role in contemporary society. This concern with sustainability is also found in the ELC and Faro Convention, with the added responsibility of establishing heritage as an important part of social well-being, along with other economic and political concerns. The current situation in Malta, one which the FAA describes as ‘one of the biggest booms in construction the country has seen in decades’ and what Moviment Graffitti refers to as ‘hyper-capitalism’, has prompted an increase in debates on sustainability on the island.
It is being argued here that sustainability is often used as a front for construction and one that oversteps the ‘boundaries that would have kept Malta in economic and social balance with the natural world, that is our life support system and that could provide us [Maltese public] with a high quality of life’.\textsuperscript{241} Thus, what is being argued here is that the balance between economic and social well-being has been lost, with recent statements made by government reflecting ‘the idea of pressing the pause button is not realistic. There is no pause in economics’.\textsuperscript{242} However, the imbalance between economic and social well-being is often also attributed to the priorities of the Maltese public, with the ASM arguing that:

‘If we take the situation in Malta in a general sense, I think people are feeling annoyed because archaeology is getting in the way of development. So in some contexts it has a negative projection of what archaeology means. I shouldn’t generalise but I don’t think that people in Malta are so interested in archaeology and possibly archaeology to them tends to be about temples’.

Whilst Baldacchino shared this sentiment, it was Boissevain who argued that it also brought about a shift in perceptions and led to the rise of activist groups in the early 1990s. Here it is argued that such a shift is also emerging from the current situation in Malta, demonstrated through the creation of grassroots efforts to protect Malta’s archaeological resources, with Temple Rescue and Malta ARCH representing such an effort. Temple Rescue also argues that such a shift is also evident in the wider Maltese public, and states that through their Facebook page:

‘There are 1,000 interactions per day so we know that people are in love with archaeology. From other pages there isn’t enough involvement on social media which is the number one tool to reach people, to reach the majority of people. So more has to be done and more awareness has to be promoted and boosted by the archaeological societies’.

This sentiment is shared by the Malta ARCH interviewee, who argues:

‘That people are becoming more aware, more self-aware […] where you will find the older generation that might not care, and is this amoral familism, but at the same time, you have five generations co-existing in a locality, and you have this group of people that are thinking differently and claiming their heritage’.

Discussions on shifting perceptions amongst the wider Maltese public can be linked to the topic of NIMBYism, mentioned by all the interview participants. The term normally refers to those members of the public who only get involved in a situation when it affects them personally, such as a development occurring in their street or neighbourhood. Consequently, more often than not NIMBYism carries a negative connotation, and is linked to the public’s lack of interest in heritage matters when not directly affected. A significant distinction needs to be made here.

\textsuperscript{241} Times of Malta 2018a  
\textsuperscript{242} Times of Malta 2018f
The term NIMBYism is also being used to refer to genuine interest in what happens in one’s locality. Schofield argues that NIMBY publics are ‘experts at living where they do’, and as experts of their surroundings are aware of what matters. This resonates with Temple Rescue’s argument that NIMBYism can be attributed to the public’s need to ‘save their own space and be safe in their space’, and argues that it has led to the creation of grassroots organisations, a sentiment shared by FAA and Moviment Graffitti. Thus, it can be argued that it would be prudent to listen to the concerns and perceptions of NIMBY publics, in order to implement heritage policies that reflect the needs of the local community. Consequently, one of the main principles of the ELC, local community involvement and public participation, is often spearheaded by the NIMBYism of the Maltese public, as succinctly highlighted throughout the unfolding events of the Tal-Wej and Bulebel cases.

This shift towards local stewardship of heritage, reflected in the creation of grassroots efforts to protect archaeological resources, bears witness to the public appropriation of a more empowered role, a role which is advocated for in the ELC and the Faro Convention. Thus, whilst Malta has not ratified either convention, the emerging paradigm visible on the ground today is one of local stewardship, initiated from the grassroots. Consequently, whilst many can and do argue that public engagement with heritage should be happening across the board and not just from affected localised communities, the present author would argue that this move reflects the emergence of a more vocal NIMBY public becoming the leading stewards and champion of its heritage.

6.2 Summary of main findings

One of the challenges facing the discipline of archaeology today is to remain relevant to contemporary concerns. The present study has focused on an aspect of this challenge, specifically the relationship between the wider public and archaeology in Malta, and the public’s engagement in the protection of archaeology, against the backdrop of the European Landscape Convention and related instruments.

The aims of the present study were:

243 Schofield 2014: 208
244 Schofield 2014: 208
1. A comprehensive literature review of the development of the public role within archaeological discourses as well as international heritage conventions;

2. Developing a deeper understanding of the role of the public within heritage management, planning and policy-making;

3. The use of a qualitative method to investigate the grassroots public engagement with cultural heritage in Malta, and how this coheres with the principles and objectives of the European Landscape Convention.

These main aims have largely been achieved.

The comprehensive literature review on the development of the public’s role within firstly, archaeological discourses (Chapter 2) and secondly, international heritage conventions (Chapter 4), highlighted the notion that archaeology as a practice cannot be separated from its contemporary setting. Chapter 2 outlined the key paradigm shifts that have occurred, with particular focus on the development of public archaeology and the rise of public voices within the field of heritage, since as Schofield states ‘heritage, one might suggest, is as much about people as it is about place’. Chapter 4 examined how the role of the public has changed and evolved in international heritage conventions, locating the European Landscape Convention in its wider context. It was shown that paradigm shifts within archaeological discourses were also reflected in the international conventions. This also holds true for the role of the public. The emergence of the public as a significant protagonist in cultural heritage management was traced from the 1999 revision of the Burra Charter, which for the first time included social values, to the 2005 Faro Convention and its insistence on embedding cultural heritage into sustainable development, human rights and quality-of-life discourses.

Malta’s heritage legislation was also examined, in order to identify what provisions it makes for public participation and engagement. This revealed various acknowledgments of the centrality of public engagement and participation. Nevertheless, whilst the principles may reflect the international heritage conventions and contemporary archaeological discourses, the daily practical reality is that the only form of public participation that occurs in Malta is usually consultations, with little influence on decision-making.

245 Schofield 2014: 2
The second key aim of the study was a deeper understanding of the role of the public within heritage management, planning and policy making. This was partially achieved in Chapter 4. The results obtained have revealed how the implementation of a system that actively incorporates the public also brings its own challenges, the most basic of which is implementing changes within national systems. A review of case studies revealed the types of public participations measures that are mainly utilised, as well as tools to measure the levels of public participation. A main finding from one of these case studies is Malta’s low levels of public participations, attributed to the type of public participation that is available on the island, namely, public consultations.

The third aim of the study revolved around an investigation into grassroots public engagement with archaeological resources in Malta, through the use of in-depth interviews. Chapter 4 provided the backbone for a better understanding of how public participation has evolved in the literature as well as in international heritage conventions. This provides a framework against which the situation in Malta can be compared. This is particularly important since Malta has not yet ratified the ELC, and has yet to sign the Faro Convention. Chapter 4 highlighted how the presence of public participation aims are present in the Maltese heritage legislation, in particular the Cultural Policy. The interviews conducted with both established heritage NGOs and citizen-led groups, the results and analysis of which are presented in Chapter 5, revealed a scenario where the Maltese public is not actively included by the professional community in the curation and creation of heritage matters.

In synthesis, most of the themes that emerge from the interviews revolve around the need to bring archaeology in Malta into the public sphere, exemplified through the themes of Contemporary Relevance, Dissemination of archaeological information, and Social Media. The fact that a properly functioning interface between archaeology and the Maltese public is lacking is also reflected in the theme of International heritage conventions, where a lack of familiarity with heritage conventions was revealed. Whilst this was the case for both established NGOs and citizen-led groups, the fact that established heritage institutions in Malta are not sufficiently familiar with conventions could indicate that the level of archaeological practice is not on a par with international expectations. However, in spite of the delay in ratification of the ELC and the signing of the Faro Convention, and the limited awareness of their contents, it can be argued that some of the grassroots actions that have been witnessed have embraced the principles enshrined in the conventions, sometimes even unknowingly. The
cases of Tal-Qares, Tal-Wej and Bulebel, and the widespread support and involvement of the public in these cases, bear witness to this.

Interlinked with heritage conventions and contemporary relevance is the theme of *Sustainability and the economy*. Whilst heritage has been acknowledged as an important part of the sustainable development of communities in international conventions and heritage discourses, the reality in Malta is one where the rhetoric of economic concerns is taking precedence, often resulting in the destruction of archaeological heritage. A direct result of this is the emergence and intensification of grassroots efforts to protect that heritage, often reflecting the principles of the ELC and the Faro Convention. However, it must be mentioned that the NEARCH survey revealed that only 10% of the participants were of the belief that archaeology could contribute to the economy, or had any economic value.\(^{246}\) Thus, this reflects the need to integrate archaeology into the economic sector, a point which was also raised by the ASM.

### 6.3 Limitations of the study and future research

A limitation that was set at an early stage of the present research was to focus on a specific element of public participation. The wider questions of public participations at a legislative level, though they could not be addressed here, remain pressing, and deserve further research.

The method chosen for the present study, the in-depth interviews, also came with a number of limitations. First and foremost is the issue of bias, which is unavoidable when conducting in-depth interviews with open-ended questions. Another limitation is that of the limited number of interview participants, which may be considered as small, especially for the type of study conducted. Time constraints did not allow for more interviews to be conducted. Interviews with Heritage Malta and the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage, should be useful in providing a perspective that complements that of the NGOs and citizen-led groups that were interviewed. This also applies to the inclusion of members of the general public in a future study, which may provide another interesting perspective.

A number of possible directions may be suggested for future research on public engagement with archaeological resources in Malta. Foremost amongst these is an in-depth investigation into the current state of public participation in Malta, from the legislation downwards, as well

\(^{246}\) Marx *et al.* 2017: 17
as a systematic investigation into how ratification and implementation of the ELC and Faro Conventions would translate into reforms of the existing policy framework. Additionally, the inclusion of members of the wider Maltese public in such a study, be it through in-depth interviews, focus groups or other forms of participatory methods, would allow for a much more complete understanding of how heritage is perceived and in what ways engagement and interaction is understood. A final point is that this field is in an unprecedented state of flux. As the present work has shown, the way the public in Malta engages with archaeology and its protection is going through rapid and significant changes. Only an ongoing programme of research can successfully continue to document and shed light on this rapidly evolving reality in a timely manner.
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Times of Malta. NGOs plead for protection for the nation's heritage in stone: “Our Legacy” declaration signed by 22 organisations, 18 April 2018d.


Times of Malta. PM not willing to see economy slow down, 5 June 2018f, pg. 7.

Times of Malta. Attack on cultural heritage, 15 January 2018g, pg. 15.

Times of Malta. The only value is money-Paul Cardona, 16 September 2018h.


Appendix I: Information sheet and consent form
Title: A comparative analysis of the implementation of the European landscape convention within an archaeological framework: Public engagement in the protection of archaeological resources in Malta

Thank you for reading the information sheet about the interview. If you are happy to participate then please complete and sign the form below. Please initial the boxes below to confirm that you agree with each statement:

Please tick box:

I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet dated [22.03.2018] and have had the opportunity to ask questions

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without there being any negative consequences. In addition, should I not wish to answer any particular question or questions, I am free to decline.

I agree for this interview to be tape-recorded. I understand that the audio recording made of this interview will be used only for analysis and that extracts from the interview, from which I may choose to not be personally identified, may be used in any conference presentation, report or journal article developed as a result of the research. I understand that no other use will be made of the recording without my written permission, and that no one outside of the original researcher will be allowed access to the original recording.

I agree that my anonymised data will be kept for future research purposes such as publications related to this study after the completion of the study.

I agree to take part in this interview.

________________________ ________________         __________________
Name of participant Date                                     Signature

_________________________ __________________         _____________________
Principal Investigator Date                                     Signature
To be counter-signed and dated electronically for telephone interviews or in the presence of
the participant for face to face interviews

Copies: Once this has been signed by all parties the participant should receive a copy of the
signed and dated participant consent form, and the information sheet. A copy of the signed and
dated consent form should be placed in the main project file which must be kept in a secure
location.

Participant Information Sheet

You are being invited to take part in a research study that is aimed at gaining an understanding
of how public engagement with archaeological resources in Malta has changed, in particular
when it comes to the protection of cultural heritage.

Before you decide it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and
what it will involve. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part. Thank you for
reading this.

Who will conduct the research?

Research is being conducted by Maja Sausmekat, a student at the University of Malta.

Title of the Research

A comparative analysis of the implementation of the European landscape convention within an
archaeological framework: Public engagement in the protection of archaeological resources in
Malta

What is the aim of the research?

The study aims at gaining an understanding of how public engagement in the protection of
archaeological resources in Malta has developed, within the wider context of the European
Landscape Convention. This reflects a grassroots approach, rather than a top-down one, which
ultimately reflects both the current trends within heritage studies as well as the aims and articles
of the aforementioned international conventions. An overview of countries that have integrated
such approaches will provide the framework against which the situation in Malta will be
compared.

Why have I been chosen?

You have been chosen since you have created/or active in a heritage awareness group that has
actively campaigned for the protection of archaeological resources in Malta.

What happens to the data collected?

The data collected will be analysed as part of the study and stored by the researcher. The data
will be stored for a year after the completion of the dissertation.
How is confidentiality maintained?

The data will be stored by the researcher. The interviews will be audio-taped, and these will also be kept by the researcher.

What happens if I do not want to take part or if I change my mind?

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason and without detriment to yourself.

What is the duration of the research?

30-60 minute interviews

Where will the research be conducted?

Location to be decided by the researcher and participant

Will the outcomes of the research be published?

Possibly

Who has reviewed the research project?

The University of Malta research ethics committee.

Contact for further information

Mobile: N/A

Supervisor: Dr Reuben Grima
Appendix II: Temple Rescue

interview transcript
Interviewee: Edward Hamilton
Interviewer: Maja Sausmekat
Date: 30.04.2018
Venue: Mosta
Duration: 38.39 minutes

Background:
Edward Hamilton spent many years working in real estate as well as a youth worker and educator with the National Agency for Youth Services. In addition to this Mr. Hamilton has spent many years as a social media manager and content creator, which have enabled him to create a platform for Maltese archaeology, Temple Rescue, that is widely known and seen across the Maltese Islands. A defining element in Mr. Hamilton’s work is his enthusiasm for and enjoyment of Maltese heritage, which have led him on the path of raising awareness amongst the Maltese public as well as ensuring the protection of Malta’s cultural heritage.

Author: What comes to mind when you heard the word landscape?

Hamilton: [pause], Open spaces, green, [pause] horizontal and Malta’s countryside really.

Author: What comes to mind when you hear the word archaeology?

Hamilton: The study of the people who came before us, the study of features, our past, studying our heritage, and [pause] discovering more about the people who came before us.

Author: What values do you attach to heritage?

Hamilton: so, I think the most important thing to think about is the generations that are coming. Future generations do not have any idea about the sites that are being lost right now, so my intention would be to safeguard these sites and to add value to this heritage in order to preserve them. [Pause] without heritage how do you know what and who are you if you don’t know the past.

Author: Are you aware of any international conventions protecting landscapes or cultural heritage?

Hamilton: Yes.
Author: can you name them?

Hamilton: Valletta Treaty, which is the European convention of Archaeological Protection. There is also supposed to be ICOMOS, which is the institute for Monuments and Sites, but I don’t know much about them. I think those two.

Author: Are you aware whether Malta has signed or ratified any of these conventions?

Hamilton: Yes, Malta has signed the Valletta Treaty and has also created an extension on it recently, saying that developers on certain sites are going to be held accountable for damages or loss against our own heritage.

Author: If not, what do you think the reasons for this are?

No Answer since interviewee was not aware of any conventions that Malta did not sign or ratify related to heritage.

Author: Have you heard of the European Landscape Convention?

Hamilton: Yes. I came across it during some research on European preservation efforts and researching the Valletta Treaty.

Author: What do you know about the convention?

Hamilton: First thing that came to mind is that it is a treaty or agreement that promotes landscape preservation in Europe, including archaeological sites. Taking a united front to protect what’s left from our landscape.

Author: If yes, are you aware what the convention states on public participation and perception?

Hamilton: Not totally. But I’m always willing to learn really.

Author: When it comes to the European Landscape Convention, are you aware whether Malta has signed or ratified the convention?

Hamilton: Yes. I think Malta has signed the treaty.

Author: In terms of public participation, do you think the heritage sector in Malta does enough to advocate for the involvement of the public?
Hamilton: When you say Malta you’re referring to HM or?

Author: The heritage sector in general, so SCH, HM, DLH or any heritage institution.

Hamilton: No.

Author: To what extent do you think that public ‘voices’ should be able to inform policy and management?

Hamilton: The public should have the majority of the say because we cannot leave decision making to a group of ten-fifteen people that will affect the whole country. When decisions are being made that affect the whole country, the public has to be involved more and the awareness needs to be boosted on what they are trying to achieve. We need to involve the public.

Author: What do you think the role of the public is in planning procedures?

Hamilton: I think the public has no real role ‘during’ planning procedures. The public is usually involved or rather, gets to know about any planning it is too late or when the procedures have actually started or been completed.

Author: What do you think the role of the public should be in planning procedures?

Hamilton: The public is the one that is being affected by it, so why not include them in the planning? Just like Jury Duty abroad, members of the public should be called in to give in their valuable opinions and feedback or at least be part of the proceedings. Having a ‘random’ Jury Duty system that summons the public, will also make it hard for corruption and will assure that the public has a voice and say in the decisions that are affecting their lives.

Author: To what extent do you think that public participation occurs in planning procedures in Malta?

Hamilton: Close to none or if they are involved, involve me in that ‘public’.

Author: To what extent is the public involved early on and throughout the process?

Hamilton: Same answer, close to none.

Author: How easy is the process of public participation made for the public?

Hamilton: It is not easy at all. It’s a race against time and the public are not empowered with enough knowledge, yet, to stand up to the Planning Authority.
Author: How much of an influence does the public have on planning decisions?

Hamilton: Close to none.

Author: How important do you think public participation is?

Hamilton: It is the most important, beyond what is being built, destroyed, planned or constructed, the public is the ‘end user’ of everything that is built around them. They should be involved and most of all educated and aware.

Author: What do you think the Maltese public’s opinion is on public participation?

Hamilton: They think they do not have a say or at least, the ones who care enough don’t have a say. I think the Maltese have a mentality of ‘now we see what happens’ and the majority tend to either not get involved because of the lack of empowerment or education or just gave up.

Author: What do you think is being done to encourage the public to engage with its heritage?

Hamilton: To be honest with my page, the Temple Rescue page, there is a very high involvement. There are 1,000 interactions per day so we know that people are in love with archaeology. From other pages there isn’t enough involvement on social media which is the number one tool to reach people, to reach the majority of people. So more has to be done and more awareness has to be promoted and boosted by the archaeological societies.

Author: Do you think a top-down or a bottom-up approach is more appropriate for these challenges?

Hamilton: Top-down, bottom-up you mean, [pause], management or?

Author: So top-down is what you were saying, this group of 10-15 experts who have all the say, and a bottom-up approach is the grass-roots, from the public up to management.

Hamilton: My educated decision and statement would be it has to be a mix of both. What I mean by that is, rather than have 15 people command all the decisions for the whole of Malta, have representatives of the public within this group to give the different perceptions of the people who are being affected. But until that is done then we are going to be led and people don’t like being led this way so we need to keep on working on it, you know.

Author: How do you think the Maltese public engages with its heritage?
So this is my statement that I keep on using. For the last hundred years the archaeological awareness in Malta was non-existent, hundred years yes. And now in the last ten years when online marketing came in and social media came in, the amount of awareness should be tenfold but it’s not. So not enough is being done in this area as well.

**Author:** What are the main activities that the Maltese public engage in when it comes to heritage? (Museum visits, exhibitions, open days, public lectures etc…)

Hamilton: The majority of the public interacts with Malta’s heritage through social media and open days. Lectures are the least popular and outdated means of connecting to the public.

**Author:** What do you think about the attitudes of the Maltese public towards their heritage?

Hamilton: If the public is aware of a site then it is up to us to create value on that site and to involve the public.

**Author:** and when you say ‘us’ what do you mean?

Hamilton: with ‘us’ I mean grassroots, organizations who want to raise awareness on archaeological findings and all that. But how can the public be involved in sites that they do not know, how can the public be involved in archaeological excavations that archaeological societies are not giving information about? The public cannot be held responsible for the lack interest, they lost interest because for the last ten years they were not involved, [pause] and not through their own fault. I think the Maltese public has 10% knowledge of what Malta has to offer prehistorically. I would say there are the main seven sites that people all know. But then you have 138+ sites, because so far we’ve documented 138 lesser known sites that people don’t know about. So their attitude towards the mainstream heritage is largely positive, but then they don’t go to visit because it’s too expensive for them. They have to wait for an open day where the entrance is 2-3euros. 7, 000 people visited the Roman Domus last month because it was free. So their attitude, without blaming them, is not very good towards the current heritage. Vice versa, their attitudes to the lesser known sites which are freely accessible is that they’re in love. Because they are seeing sites and pieces of the jigsaw puzzle that they didn’t know about before and also same thing when something is found in a locality, the people of that locality, like Qormi with the Tal-Istabilal site, will have a high pride in it. Marsa, for example, cannot be considered the most elitist place on the island, however, when you go and speak to the people, the residents, the neighbours, where they found the site, they are completely proud...
and at the same time destroyed knowing the site will be destroyed. At the same time there are those people who condemn those members of the public for only visiting heritage sites on open days, arguing that the only reason they do so is because it is free. So it is mixed. Good luck putting that in one answer.

**Author:** Do you think there has been a shift in the attitudes of the Maltese towards heritage in recent times?

Hamilton: Yes. There has been a shift in awareness and perception towards the local archaeology and heritage. Many people lost interest in archaeology simply because they weren’t involved in it. Once they became involved, interest and perceptions changed.

**Author:** What do you think the Maltese public values more and why – of the following: money, convenience, environment, health, culture or heritage?

Hamilton: Malta in general right now in general is going through a phase where they want to save their own space and be safe in their space. The element of community has gone and everybody wants to save his own space or piece of the world. Society has now made life so fast and impossible to take a moment to relax that people are only self-involved. Only a few people, what we call grassroots, are thinking about the other people and the other people in the public. So we need more grassroots organizations.

**Author:** What do you know about the heritage legislation of Malta?

Hamilton: The laws? [Laughs] I know the laws. The people who are destroying the sites do not know the laws or they know them so well that they find loop holes to get around.

**Author:** Are you familiar with how the heritage sector is organized? Do you know the different roles that the regulators and operators play?

Hamilton: No I’m not interested really in that. All I am interested in is that the heritage organizations do their job. So regardless of what legislations there are around, if we do not know about them they how can we be informed, you know?

**Author:** Why did you start this group? What was the motivation behind it?

Hamilton: I started this group because there was a need for it, because there was a lack of social interaction and social inclusion in the archaeological world in Malta. I also started this group because the world knows close to nothing about Malta. They do know about the main temples
like Haġar Qim and Mnajdra and all this. But when you say it-Tumbata, Xajghra Tal-Qallejja, Tal-Qadi, nobody knows.

Author: so we’re saying UNESCO world heritage sites is what people are more aware of?

Hamilton: yes, the lazy aspect of it, because these places bring revenue so they’re more valued. This is why I wanted to create a space where public inclusion is number one, archaeo-information is delivered easily and simply, you need to bridge the gap between the average Joe and the archaeological societies of Malta, since the average Joe does not understand this, that and the other. He/she understands bones, cave and this. So I wanted to create a platform to reignite the love for Maltese archaeology and to inspire the current knowledge holders to adopt a modern mentality, because you cannot keep on delivering the same information with the same systems that you did forty years ago. You need to be modern and contemporary, and I am that.

Author: Your Facebook page states that Tal-Qares was the catalyst that started the group. Why Tal-Qares when there are so many other sites that have been threatened over the years?

Hamilton: So I am the perfect example of a victim of no awareness about Tal-Qares site. I lived in Mosta for fourteen years, 5 minutes away from it. I did walk past year by year, played guitar there, walked the dog there and never knew the value of it. I got to know that it was going to be destroyed two days before the works started. At that time there were four people from past NGOs who were trying to make a movement and they were complacent. I had this fire inside me that was burning and I said ‘I need to do something, I need to do something’, and I didn’t. The day after the whole surface of Tal-Qares was levelled, it was dug, the tombs were gone, the silos were gone, the hypogeum or the underground chamber was gone, and I felt guilty. I felt guilty because I am good at social media, I had a skill and if I didn’t listen to these three people who were of the old mentality, I would have managed to gain a bit of public awareness and maybe save the site like we did with Bulebel and like we did with Tal-Wej, because those two were save due to the social media presence. So I wanted to change my anger and my guilt into something productive. The first post on the Facebook page was against the SCH for example, or against not enough awareness from the archaeological societies of Malta. However, then I realized that nobody will follow someone who is against, someone will follow someone who leads with their heart and with transparency. Within a matter of the first two days of Temple Rescue’s launch everything fell into place, we got our identity and we knew that a social media with a positive approach providing inclusion is the way to go. But all this was yes,
because of Tal-Qares and the helplessness that I felt personally because I didn’t do anything to change it. I think I want to live my life inspiring people and my main mission was to inspire people to use their skill to save it [archaeology]. Because there were people with the skill who could have saved it [Tal-Qares] and they didn’t even bother pitching in. Unfortunately in Malta we have a mentality of ‘uwijja let it happen and then we tackle it later’. When it comes to archaeology and ecology this is particularly true. [Pause] so yes Tal-Qares is always going to be the main catalyst and it is a pinch in my heart because I am positive I could have made some change.

Author: The fact that it was destroyed, does it motivate you even more to be out there and present?

Hamilton: When it was destroyed the three people who were trying to campaign on this literally gave up. They said ‘oh my god, we can never win this, my god it’s been 15 years of us fighting, we don’t want’. As soon as I heard this it motivated me to instil hope in these old school guys and girls who have the knowledge. We don’t have the knowledge, my generation doesn’t have the knowledge, and the younger generation does not have the knowledge. It’s the knowledge holders who have the knowledge and have to contribute their skill. So what I want to do is instil hope in the hearts of people and we did. Because people who were fighting 10 years ago and gave up are now back in full force and have adopted this positive approach and are learning the Temple Rescue way. People do come up to me and tell me ‘how do you do it? Why don’t you give up?’, and I do give up but I change that into motivation by turning something negative into something positive.

Author: Do you think the Maltese public only becomes concerned with archaeology when it is under threat?

Hamilton: No. I think that most of the time they are aware because of a site being under threat because many people prefer sharing something is horrible rather than something that is beautiful. Our Tal-Qares photo album had over 10,000 views, because it was a horrible thing to witness. Maltese people, and everywhere really, prefer sharing something that is angry or hateful because they want to vent their frustration. [Pause] however, I believe that they are more involved with a beautiful approach like Temple Rescue, showing other sites that they can visit freely without being on the Heritage Malta list.

Author: What are the aims of TR and what do you hope to achieve?
Hamilton: The most important thing for me is to bridge the gap between the regular Joe and the archaeological information that is not being given out right now. Only when people are aware of the sites, that memory that they have of that site will become the fuel that saves it. So if they don’t go to the sites, how can you expect them to sign a petition to save it? This is what we call emotional triggers. If you spent the day at a site, and you took your kids and family to a site, you’re going to have that memory. It is this memory that is going to help fuel preservation.

Author: What makes TR different from other heritage awareness groups?

Hamilton: We are totally transparent, we are uncondescending, we have a lot of knowledge but we don’t act like we do. We actually do this thing where we ask questions to acquire more knowledge. What makes us different is that we also adopt modern techniques of social media—Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram etc…We can reach the world with one post in a matter of seconds. And we listen to the public, we listen to the Mcast students, we listen to the university archaeological students, we listen to what the public wants and what the public wants is to be involved. So what makes us different is that [pause] we want to approach archaeology in a simplified manner in order to increase the awareness globally. That’s important because our work is global.

Author: Have you been approach or received any feedback from heritage institutions (Heritage Malta or Superintendence of Cultural Heritage)?

Hamilton: Oh yeah. So SCH surprisingly enough started sharing our posts, our campaigns, our photo’s, and our research videos. And also one time we received a comment on the Temple Rescue page and what we do, we interact with the public, so every comment we reply. We didn’t know we were replying to the new CEO of Heritage Malta. And after a while I looked him up and said ‘oh my god, this guy is the Heritage Malta CEO’. So I commented publicly with congratulations to his new post and he replied with ‘we’re a big fan of yours, I want to meet you’. Two days later I was in the office of Heritage Malta in Bighi. What he was said was that what ‘you are doing is what the other organizations were supposed to have been doing over the last 50 years’. One sentence that also came up is ‘you’ve done more work for archaeology than was done in the last hundred years’. Having said that it doesn’t mean we were more in the field studying because we don’t have the knowledge of archaeology in that way, but we’ve given a gift of archaeology back to the local community. Those were the two main entities that helped us. However, we are linked as well with 14 NGOs who always constantly...
share our things because they feel that we are leading a movement. We don’t feel that we are but [pause] they feel that our approach is the way to go. So we are having a lot of feedback and international entities also to be mentioned, have shared. UNESCO shared our post, we have over 15 different countries. And what makes us different as well is that when people email us telling us ‘listen can you take us to this site?’, we tell them ‘yes’. We don’t organize tours, but what we do with friends, like let’s meet for tea on this site. We go around and we tell them listen if you want more information ask the archaeological societies of Malta or Heritage Malta. But this is another thing, people are coming down to Malta to meet us. So far 7 people came down to Malta.

Author: and these are members of the public or people who work in the heritage sector?

Hamilton: this is super interesting because there are people who are archaeologists who left Malta because they couldn’t find a job, went to Spain, Portugal and the UK, and are now coming back to Malta because they are inspired by it. Then we had Hollywood producers coming down, someone by the name of Fred Fuchs, he directed The Godfather series. He came down to Malta to meet me and he wants to produce a documentary about the Maltese temples, the way that it is supposed to be done. Not that Heritage Malta didn’t, but the last video of Heritage Malta is five years ago on YouTube. There is no relevance anymore. The rest are all normal humble people who are wanting to see these sites because they’ve never heard about them. 20 years visiting Malta and they’ve never heard of Tal-Wej or other lesser known sites.

Author: What feedback have you gotten from the public?

Hamilton: The public love us, 99.9% love what we do, the other 0.1% feel threatened, which are basically the archaeological societies, and because they think we are trying to encroach on their work. [Pause] which is very far from the truth because the first six months of Temple Rescue we were bridging with entities, because the main thing of an organisation that is grassroots is that you need to open up and spread out. So with the archaeological society we started sending emails to each other about sites, this, that and the other, and then along the way communication stopped and emails stopped being answered, by leading archaeologists. Which made me think that they feel threatened and they don’t want to participate. So we try to do more inclusion, but it doesn’t work. The rest, when you see the quotes on the comments…yesterday someone said ‘this is the most educational page I’ve ever come across’. Other people say ‘we love this page’. Other people commend our transparency and how we can interact humbly with the average Joe, the archaeologists and all this.
We also get a lot of feedback from archaeologists. Archaeologists who are in societies right now, who do not like the approach and they are more inclined to join us than continue with what they are doing, because they love the way that people are interacting with us and they love what the archaeology is doing for the Maltese people. The Maltese people are finally inspired again to study and learn about Maltese archaeology. The interest has never been this high.

Author: What do you think about public access to information when it comes to archaeology/heritage?

Hamilton: I say there is always space for more and right now there isn’t enough. The only benefit that I see from social media nowadays, from the Temple Rescue movement is that Heritage Malta for example made more Facebook pages for each individual site, like Ta’ Bistra, which never had one surprisingly enough. And they’re seeing the value of it. However, there is still not enough from even Temple Rescue. I am one person doing this alone, if we were five people there would be much more.

Author: And how do you find accessing information about specific sites?

Hamilton: It is horrible. From the public and from peers of mine, if you go and look at a study or some information about site X, if they’re rare sites you don’t find anything. Then when I started talking to the archaeological societies I started receiving a lot of pdfs, but these pdfs are photocopies or scans of studies done in the 1950s, 60s and 70s, which are from archives that the public does not have access to. [Pause] There is not enough information online. With all the power in your hand on your mobile phone right now, if you want to look for it-Tumbata, thanks to Temple Rescue you can see exactly where and what it is. But there isn’t enough because the current ones [archaeological societies] do not use and adopt modern techniques. When you have a lack of 25 year olds and under within any organisation you’re missing out a very valuable part of modern sharing technology. Even I don’t know everything, don’t ask me to do Snapchat or this and that and the other, but I am connected and I believe that people with a certain responsibility to bring awareness forward must learn contemporary techniques, like social media, like events without PowerPoint presentations. Ten years ago when I used to work in sales we used to pitch to our [pause] employees to never do a PowerPoint presentation because the attention goes to the PowerPoint and if you are not capable of holding a room of 400 people with just your presence then this is not for you. You need to embody archaeology
and you need to be able to transfer information within a second and this is not being done. An exception would be Heritage Malta who have improved.

**Author:** And what about archaeological reports from all the on-going excavations?

Hamilton: [Pause] I’m an online social media manager, I was born without internet and I learnt how to use it, and I’m very good at finding information. There are sites that it is impossible to find information about, then when you speak to an archaeologist they give you a link to a private database where you have to sign in first, and then when you download the material it isn’t contemporary. The material is just recycled and regurgitated from the 1930s, 40s and 50s, they go and visits the sites and adapt it to a modern time. But is pdf the modern way? The most modern way is video and photo, and interactive blogs. People need to follow a story and there is no passion without a story.

**Author:** we were talking about the Valletta convention which specifically stipulates that any archaeological investigation that is done by a signatory party needs to be made available to the public. Which as we know aren’t.

Hamilton: [Pause] when it came to Tal-Qares we were the ones who asked for a freedom of information so they release the studies. They were 11 days late with that. And we didn’t know about it.

**Author:** so you had to approach them over it? With the freedom of information act?

Hamilton: yes of course. But at that time I did not know about a freedom of information act to get the reports public. If we knew that from before then we could have saved that site, because it is written that there are several different classes of importance of archaeology and ecology. In the SW corner the features were supposed to be protected but they were destroyed. Who is accountable for this? Who can bring people to justice? Not a Temple Rescue page, but the people with the skill, and these people need to enhance the treaty. It is information that empowers people. What I believe is that if 10 people know about this system where you can get information easily against the freedom of information act and keep the developer accountable, they would make a bit of a change. When you have 5, 000 people knowing this you have a nation that is empowered. So developers will stop doing this, if the whole nation is empowered with the law, but we’re not. The people aren’t aware, and the law courts are not going to listen to a social media page, they have to listen to a lawyer or an archaeological society. This is very dangerous and high pressure situation and one day everything is going to
explode, when the people of today are not working anymore, and you are going to keep on doing this by blaming the people from 10-20 years ago, and nobody is every going to take accountability. The only people who can do something about it, who have the skills, are the archaeologists, the institutions and NGOs. They need to propagate and empower news and laws and things that we can do with the masses. They cannot keep trying to change a system on their own. We also need to start adhering to the Valletta treaty, because we [Malta] are looking stupid internationally.

Author: How do you think archaeology should be presented to the public?

Hamilton: So who am I to say what the right way is? But I am the social media manager of a Facebook page that has inspired thousands of people. So it works. The approach is to share information, be relevant, be humble and promote social inclusion. You need to promote with photos, you need to promote with videos and you need to attract people to archaeology. You’re not going to attract people to archaeology with the same old systems from 40 years ago. So adopting a modern mentality and properly including people, humbly ta, and not like ‘come and share a space with me because I am the most intelligent archaeologist in Malta’, but more of ‘come with me, I have the knowledge, let me share with you’. [Pause] knowledge is one of the most important things that people can do, because I’ll remain stupid if you don’t share knowledge, and I could go to the library or spend four years studying archaeology, but that’s not my life, that’s you’re [the archaeologist’s] life, so I believe the only approach that will work is by inspiring people, by being transparent and by making it your own story.

Author: What about the public visiting and participating in excavations?

Hamilton: So Temple Rescue has taken a stand when there is a live excavation not to promote the site, although sometimes we need to, to save it. We are not publicizing because people will go and loot and vandalize. Once the excavation is done and the site is covered by eight inches of rubble and tarmac then I will publish it, which doesn’t make sense because we won’t be able to save it. However, it should be shared. Without giving out too much information you can give snippets of what is being discovered to the public. I can [pause] understand that you don’t want to disclose a site because of its sensitivity. [Pause] you can give an education to people to say listen this is a live site, if you do this or that then we won’t be able to work. Like me personally, at the beginning I used to pick up pottery and then a friend of mine once told me ‘why are you picking this up?’ and I said ‘because I like feeling connected to it etc…’, he said ‘but what if we need to evaluate its archaeological importance, without pottery we cannot?’ That same day
I went to put the pottery back in the same place I found it, because it clicked. We just weren’t educated about it. I think excavations should be [pause] publicized but with intelligence. You’re not going to say it’s located in Marsa and is this, that, and the other. However, you know how easy it is for people to see on the road archaeological sites rights now. You pass from Marsa you can see it from the street. That for me is an opportunity to put 20 chairs, sitting down, and invite 20 people from the public to observe a live excavation. Because archaeologists are the only ones who experience this. You go abroad, Göbekli Tepe for example, there is a hall for looking at excavations, constantly coming in, buying refreshments, being totally silent and just looking and you see the people fall in love with archaeology, the same way I did watching [an archaeologist] unearth seven bodies from a Roman tomb. You guys [the archaeological community] don’t understand how beautiful it is for us.

**Author:** The University of Malta conducts an annual excavations on a yearly basis, and does also open the site up to the public on one of the days. What do you think about that?

Hamilton: you have 20-30 days digging in summer, 30 days. Those are 30 events, holding a space for people to fall in love with archaeology. You do one-hour sessions, you do six hours a day, you have 480 hours of people interacting with local archaeology and falling in love again [laughs]. And then you have the archaeologists, you guys, who become empowered because after the session you go and share your experience, saying ‘what did we find?’ Okay you don’t have to share everything but entice the people and inspire the people on current excavations you know. Żurrieq for example is so proud that they found these catacombs, now these are going to be covered in tarmac and a piece of their character will be taken away. And their pride is going to diminish, you know.

**Author:** and what about actively involving the public in an excavation?

Hamilton: Yes. Consider my answer properly. Yes, but with limits. You’re not going to get someone into a tomb to brush something or you might as well show them how for two seconds. But the involvement of the public doesn’t have to be moving stones or brushing bones. It can be filtering soil or taking photos. [Pause] the osteoarchaeologist that I witnessed was doing everything herself. If you involve two people from the public, for example, give them a semi-internship and you give them simple jobs that anyone can do. But they will go home with a sense of belonging. Obviously this depends on the site. You’re the most intelligent people in Malta, you can come up with 30 events to involve the public. I can and you can.
Appendix III: Wirt iż-Żejtun
interview transcript
Author: What comes to mind when you hear the word landscape?

Abela: Well, landscape is both the natural and the manmade landscape. Well, locally we don’t really have the natural landscape [laughs] because there is human intervention everywhere. It is the land formation with all its vernacular aspects and natural aspects, and being ecological or natural in this sense and other manmade structures. It’s a composition of all actually.

Author: What comes to mind when you hear the word archaeology?

Abela: Well archaeology is the study of our past mainly through [pause] layers and [pause] archaeological features which are unearthed and it leads to the anthropological study of our society.

Author: What values do you attach to heritage?

Abela: It is our identity and it is the value that leads us to our ancestors and the people of the past and it is actually part of our culture.
**Author:** Are you aware of any international conventions protecting landscapes or cultural heritage?

Abela: Yes I know that they exist but I don’t know the details of them.

**Author:** can you name any?

Abela: I’m familiar with the ICOMOS conventions, which are the Venice charter, the Athens charter and the Burra charter, which regulate conservation and the protection of our heritage.

**Author:** Are you aware whether Malta has signed or ratified any of these conventions?

Abela: The Landscape hasn’t been signed, [pause] the others we are signatories of most of them.

**Author:** If not, what do you think the reasons for this are?

Abela: I think its reluctances from the decision takers. Well [pause] it’s the reluctance actually, there isn’t enough pressure to get [pause] the issue as a top priority.

**Author:** Have you heard of the European Landscape Convention?

Abela: Yes.

**Author:** If yes, what do you know about the convention?

Abela: Not much

**Author:** Are you aware what the convention states on public participation and perception?

Abela: No I do not.

**Author:** Are you aware whether Malta has signed or ratified the convention?

Abela: Yes Malta has signed the convention.

**Author:** In terms of public participation, do you think the heritage sector in Malta does enough to advocate for the involvement of the public?
Abela: Yes with regards to Heritage Malta, the fact that the sites are open to the public on random days, I think is creating awareness and even the projects that are being led by HM. With regards to SCH I think there is room for improvement.

**Author:** To what extend do you think that public ‘voices’ should be able to inform policy and management?

Abela: I think it is very important. The local people and the public, especially in local communities, are much closer to heritage identity than the national authorities. So it is important that there is a god feedback link from the local communities to the national policy makers.

**Author:** What do you think the role of the public is in planning procedures?

Abela: Most often this is strongest when the public is affected directly (NIMBYs) although lately national causes such as green land take-up is picking up.

**Author:** To what extent do you think that public participation does occur in planning procedures in Malta?

Abela: This could be much better especially in the forward planning process i.e. policy making. Most often people realise something is going to happen in their neighbourhood when someone put the subject up onto the media. There are very few watchdogs around.

**Author:** To what extent is the public involved early on and throughout the process?

Abela: Although legally the process provides for public participation at the early stages of the planning process (i.e. policy making), from experience I can tell that very few dare to give their views at the stage. Most probably because the public fails to understand the policies and their implications unless the same policies are used as a means to obtain development permission, which is the process which people are most aware of.

**Author:** How easy is the process of public participation made for the public?

Abela: Policy making is considerably difficult for lay people to understand and visualise its implications because at this stage no development plans exist.

**Author:** How much of an influence does the public have on planning decisions?
Abela: If the public is well organised and professional and expert advice is sought to build up valid arguments, the public can have strong influence. If on the other hand objections are based on superficial and superfluous arguments there will be very little if at all influence.

Author: How important do you think public participation is?

Abela: The planning and development process ends up in a decision to on the use of a particular site and most often a building. Once a site is committed with a use or development it is impossible to return it to its original state. It is the general public living in the locality, more than the planners or architects (leaving developers out of the equation), who are the most acquainted to the needs of their neighbourhood, and it is through their participation that such needs can be highlighted to the policy maker and decision taker.

Author: What do you think the Maltese public’s opinion is on public participation?

Abela: The perception varies depending on success or otherwise. Lately the public is getting more involved although the NIMBY’s syndrome still persists.

Author: What do you think is being done to encourage the public to engage with its heritage?

Abela: Although on the legislation and on paper it appears that public participation is encouraged, in real terms there is room for improvement. There isn’t enough public participation, from the public side and even from the public authorities and the facilitation of public participation.

Author: Do you think a top-down or a bottom-up approach is more appropriate for these challenges?

Abela: I think it is a bottom-up approach.

Author: How do you think the Maltese public engages with its heritage?

Abela: There are various aspects when we speak about heritage, because there is the tangible and the intangible. With regards to the intangible, especially the traditions, feasts, etc...There is good public engagement with them since they are local, there is competition between the different societies, bands, saints, and everything. When it comes to the tangible heritage, most [pause] often there are cases where it is synonymous with the NIMBY syndrome. So if it is something that will affect me, affect me negatively, then heritage is one of the important issues.
If it is in the reverse, it is going to affect me positively, in the sense there is an issue if I got a historical building or site or an [pause] ODZ site and I want to develop it then I forget about heritage. But if I live in a farmhouse or [pause] close by then I will use heritage to press my point on.

**Author:** What are the main activities that the Maltese public engage in when it comes to heritage? (Museum visits, exhibitions, open days, public lectures etc…)

Abela: Open days mainly.

**Author:** What do you think the Maltese public values more and why? (Money, convenience, short-term gratification, environment, health, quality of life, culture and heritage)

Abela: Convenience, short-term gain, and health. I think heritage is lower on that list.

**Author:** What do you know about the heritage legislation of Malta?

Abela: Well I’m quite conversant with it. The 2002 Cultural Heritage Act took on board from the 1925 Antiquities legislation and unfortunately the legislation [pause] was not that active in the sense that it require a number of regulations that had to be done, but someone failed to follow that up. Most of the articles in the legislation where inactive simply because the legal notices were not set up.

**Author:** Are you familiar with how the heritage sector is organised? Do you know the different roles that the regulator and operator play?

Abela: Yes. [Pause] there is the SCH which is the regulator and HM is an operator. There is also the Committee of Guarantee (CoG) and other private museums and private sectors which are regulated by the SCH.

**Author:** I keep hearing about the CoG, but I don’t really know what they do.

Abela: The CoG is entrenched in the cultural heritage act and its role was meant to be a committee which is used as a consultative committee and coordination committee at the same time. There are representative from the PA and HM and a number of experts. [Pause] Its role was similar to the Antiquities committee, but it wasn’t that active.

**Author:** I was going to say, is it active at all?
Abela: [Pause] it used to organise the annual heritage forum, it used to be organised once a year, whereby all sectors meet and for example the church commission of Sacred Heart, HM and SCH present their reports. The last time it met was in 2015 at Fort St Angelo, and 2016/2017 they haven’t met, and no state of the heritage report has been published either.

**Author: Why did you start this group? What was the motivation behind it?**

Abela: It started way back in 2010, and I was the main motivator. It was started on Facebook first, I tested the waters first to see if there was public support for it. It was aimed to be a local organisation, to promote the cultural heritage, and the appreciation of its protection and as a local community of Żejtun, but there was interest even from people outside of Żejtun and we have members even who do not live in Żejtun. The idea was to have an organisation with a setup of membership and committee so that we organise events, and more than a pressure group, it’s an organisation to promote the appreciation of cultural heritage, mainly of Żejtun. But as time passed we started seeing Żejtun as not just the town on its own but in its context. We are very keen on what happens in the surrounding areas of Żejtun. After all after 1615 Żejtun, or the parish of St Catherine, covered from the Vittoriosa fortification, the outside fortifications, so from Xaghjra to Birżebuġga, to St Georges Bay. All the south-east of Malta was under that parish and eventually new parishes were being set up and Żejtun as exists today takes back from 1897/8, when Marsaxlokk was the last parish to separate.

**Author: Was there a specific catalyst for the creation of this NGO?**

Abela: Yes there was. I was the conservation architect who started or at least created awareness about the need to restore the main parish church of Żejtun. I highlighted presentations on its state way back in 2005, [pause] I have managed to convince the parish to start the process of restoration and the process started but at a certain point they stopped everything and I was a bit disappointed on that so I said if I was setting an organisation it might help to get this thing to move on. But then there as too much to do and to create awareness and everything and [pause] this issue didn’t feature as a top priority anymore.

**Author: What are the aims of Wirt iż-Żejtun? What does the NGO hope to achieve?**

Abela: Well its aim is to promote the appreciation and protection of both tangible and intangible heritage linked to our locality, in the national context. And the objective and main aim is to create this awareness amongst most people as much as possible and people including young people and the older generation. We also have activities involving young children.
Author: How important is involving the public of Żejtun in the work of this NGO?

Abela: It’s important, and [pause] in fact there was another Wirt iż-Żejtun way back in the 1960s and early 1970s and the way it was set at that time was to have a representative from the band clubs, from the parish and from the civil society of Żejtun. And it was just like a committee and it didn’t have any membership or members, it wasn’t an organisation, it was just a committee. They’ve made a lot of work at that time. Walter Żahra who was at that point the secretary of DLH and a founding member of DLH, and was involved in this setting up of this Wirt iż-Żejtun. However, since it included the members of the civil society and the band clubs [pause] there was some form of misunderstanding between them and everything stopped. So the main motivator to create another Wirt iż-Żejtun was the 1970s Wirt iż-Żejtun, because as a child I remember the activities they used to hold at that time. But I had two options, it’s either having a foundation or an organisation and then after calling the first meeting and setting up a working group, and on that working group we had Dr Joe Buttiġieġ, who up until yesterday was the chairman of HM, we went into the legal matters of setting up on or the other. Setting up a foundation required a number of legal procedures and legal steps, which in a way did not include necessarily the community. Whereas having an organisation with a membership and members paying a fee, an annual fee, that would have something that was owned or led by the public. So we went to that option. So we have members paying annual fees, we have annual general meetings, we have a committee which is elected by the members and it’s a normal organisation. [Pause] we have an average of about 90-100 paid up members annually. Since our setting up of this organisation we’ve had about 200 members paid at one time or another, but we’ve got about 100 regular members, which is quite a lot for a small organisation such as ours.

Author: just a small side note because I did not know about the 1960-1970s organisation, were they involved in the excavations of Żejtun at all?

Abela: No but I think, [pause] yes, they were mentioned when the discovery of the skeletons in the passage of the old parish church, there was an article written by Mario Buhaġiar last Sunday on it. Walter Żahra [pause] went to investigate on it and him in his articles at that time, when the discovery was in media reports, they referred to Wirt iż-Żejtun.

Author: What does Wirt iż-Żejtun as a group do to encourage public participation and engagement with heritage?
Abela: We have a number of activities as I said earlier. Let’s start with the children. Way back in 2012 we’ve designed a game board, we have applied for funds from the small initiative scheme of the voluntary organisations council, and we’ve designed this board game which actually takes the players through four heritage routes within Żejtun, ending up at the Roman villa, which we consider as the node from where the town started. Along the route they got a play card with questions on a number of points to get knowledge about historical sites and other buildings within the town. And we’ve distributed this game to all year 4 and year 5 students in the Żejtun primary school every year. And it was part of the social studies curriculum and we still are distributing these on a yearly basis and they will be distributed for the following two or four years. And then we see what we can do. That’s for children. Then with the general public we organised a number of events, heritage trails mainly, and heritage walks, discussions and seminars. In fact yesterday we had one about the opera L’Alpina which was conducted by Carlo Diacono, who hails from Żejtun, and yesterday we had the 100 year anniversary since it was last performed at the royal theatre in Valletta. We had a very good seminar here in the Piazza Royal. That’s something intangible. Some weeks ago we organised a clean-up, we organise walks, natural walks, and even outside Żejtun, we consider the south-east now as our territory [laughs]. Two years ago we went for a walk along the coast of Delimara. Last year we went a walk through Wied Dalam and the archaeological areas there, and this year went through the Bulebel area. That’s another thing. We organise at least one annual exhibition, ranging from photography to archaeological artefacts, in fact, we had about two exhibitions related to archaeology. One of them was about the 1614 Turkish raid and we try to set them up during the Żejt iż-Żejtun event. One of our photographic exhibitions and with photographs taken by one of our members who is engineer Charles Mifsud, found its way also in the FAO general secretariat office in Rome, so we managed to set-up the exhibition there. We apply for local funds to support our activities. In fact, our latest grant, on which we are working now, was through the VOPs, the voluntary organizations projects, and we’ve managed to gain 20,000 euros and we’ll be setting up informational panels in front of historical buildings and historical sites in Żejtun, and we’ll be collaborating with the local council on that. And then, we’ve organised a bi-annual symposium, and we’ve already organised three since 2012, and the first one was on the Żejtun Roman Villa, the second one was on the Turkish raid of 1614 and the last one was discovering south-east Malta.

Author: These there are the publication of it right?
Abela: Yes, yes. And this year it’s on a national level and will be focusing on the Maltese village and we’ve managed to get Prof Brian Lewis as one of the speakers from the US so we’re quite organised in that way. We get sponsors to support our publications and, as you said, all the papers presented at the symposium will be published.

**Author: When it comes to the recent case of proposed industrial expansion at Bulebel, what do you think the main reasons for public outcry were?**

Abela: There was the reason of the NIMBYs, people didn’t want industrial development next to their door and we managed to [pause] get people to appreciate the need for open space and the fact that agricultural land will be taken up for industrial purposes means a loss of open space, and throughout the campaign we’ve managed to remain as calm as possible and rather than organising protest marches and getting political issues in it, we’ve invested our time in research and community involvement. The people started approaching us with snippets of information and then through those snippets of information we’ve managed to get the story out. Someone told us ‘well I remember that in a farmhouse somewhere in Bulebel there was a coat of arms of GM Perellos’, and other people told us ‘well when we plough our fields we find pieces of pottery’, others told us ‘I remember when I was a child we found these types of shells’-the murex. And people from outside Żejtun as well. The lost chapel story was brought to my knowledge from one of my colleagues at HM, which is Kenneth Cassar, who is the curator of the Inquisitors Palace, who hails from Kirkop, he’s the secretary of the St Leonards Band Club and it happened that a year before he wrote an article about chapels and churches of St Leonard, and he told me ‘well I found this piece’ and it traversed that there was a chapel somewhere in Bulebel, and I never read or never heard about it. From that information I managed to find the location, the site, where possibly the chapel was.

**Author: do you think there has been a change in Malta from this protesting to now taking a more grassroots or community based approach?**

Abela: Well I’ve tested the ground and when I had media interviews, I’ve pressed on that point make it clear that we don’t want protests and that we don’t want politicians joining us or making political statements which are void and not useful. Maybe others who saw our success will follow us and that route, and I think that it is the good route, rather than organising protests and being militant. There is no room for militancy now. It’s best to invest in research and information and to get the information out.
Author: What was the motivation behind actively calling for public engagement and using a community approach and participation in the case of Bulebel?

Abela: I think, in hindsight there was the political issue. If we went politically fronting the government, because after all it was the government who was making the proposal, we wouldn’t have found the support of the community, because everyone knows that Żejtun is a PL core. So we were walking on a very fine line and it was an informed decision that we took in that sense so we manage to get as much as possible public support. The media was behind us and they took up the story, particularly from Illum, mainly, the media house of MaltaToday, which their video, the interview with the farmers went viral. So that was the first change in direction from the decision takers, when they saw that the video went viral. And then the discoveries which were done and coming out, and we’ve planned the way to get out discoveries to the public knowledge, [pause] there was a plan in it. For example the chapel, the site of the chapel, was discovered two weeks before it went public. So the aim was to have a certain build-up and to have the momentum going on. And we used a lot our website, and published the information there, and linked it to Facebook rather than the other way round. So that the website had a number of clicks in it. And then again the walk in itself, which was an informative walk, and you’ve experienced that, it wasn’t a protest, although the number of people attending was something quite impressive for us. We had 150 participants, which normally our cultural walks range between 50 and at most 80. So it was the way we went about it.

Author: there weren’t only people of Żejtun there, it attracted a lot of outsiders.

Abela: No, no, no.

Author: and have you seen a change in this as well? Where before you started only with the people of Żejtun and now you have a broader audience.

Abela: well when it comes to cultural walks and events, we have a lot of participants coming from outside Żejtun. [Pause] we have the usual number and people coming from Żejtun, but a lot of people from outside Żejtun. That is another important role in our NGO, the fact that locals see non-locals taking interest in their locality. They start asking questions, like why are these people coming here? What is so important about it? So that helps us.

Author: Do you that is the reason why this awareness campaign was successful?
Abela: Yes I think [pause] the way that we’ve managed it, [pause] the calm way, and the presentation that we made at the parliamentary committee was another important stepping stone.

**Author:** I’ve been noticing that since let’s say, November of last year, there have been so many other cases, not only Bulebel, Tal-Qares or Tal-Wej, that have been coming up in the media, and I’m noticing that people, the public are taking much more of an interest. *Why do you think this is happening?*

Abela: I think there is a particular sector in the public that are fed up with this overdevelopment. We cannot keep on going, developing open spaces, and ruining our heritage.

**Author:** So you think it’s reached a boiling point now?

Abela: yes, yes. And certain comments by the developers such as the MDA [laughs], will further aggravate the issues.

**Author:** even what has been happening at the public consultations at the PA recently and barring the public from attending.

**Author:** What do you think about the collaboration between the heritage sector, heritage awareness groups and the Maltese public?

Abela: I think there is an important route of engagement there. The regulators [pause] have a role to protect our cultural heritage, be it archaeological, be it built up and be it intangible heritage, and they’ve got a legal role to protect, but do not have the resources to do that. So for example if it comes to scheduling and protection of sites and built up sites, I think the public, the NGOs, have a very important role in gathering and collecting that information, and handing it over to the regulator, but then the regulator should be expedient in protecting these sites. We’ve been forwarding proposals for scheduling, well myself I’ve been forwarding proposal since 2006 to MEPA. But, the HPU is made up of 2/3 people and they are responsible to monitor Irestawrarek Scheme, restoration works, all sites with regards to development and cultural heritage. And the SCH is again a void. Unless the GOV starts employing and arming these people there.

**Author:** Have you heard of Temple Rescue and Malta ARCH?

Abela: Yes.
Author: If yes, what do you think about the work being done by these groups?

Abela: Well the work being done is tremendous in a way when you consider they are all volunteers and are doing this in their free time, especially TR, [pause] the video productions which they produce, takes up a lot of time.

Author: Do you agree with how archaeology/heritage is being portrayed through heritage awareness groups like these?

Abela: Yes.

Author: Does Wirt iż-Żejtun interact or collaborate with other heritage awareness groups?

Abela: Yes of course. We set up a good relation since Bulebel and even after the case was won. We’ve met together and did a post-mortem exercise on how we worked together and what should be improved and to share the experience.
Appendix IV: Malta ARCH interview transcript
**Interviewee:** Anonymous  
**Interviewer:** Maja Sausmekat  
**Date:** 11.05.2018  
**Venue:** Valletta  
**Duration:** 54.51 mins.

**Author:** What comes to mind when you hear the word landscape?

Participant: Landscape. [Pause] a very loaded term. I think as a Maltese person what is interesting is that you asked the term ‘landscape’ and not ‘seascape’. So when I lived abroad and I left for the first time I had gotten accustomed to seeing the sea so much that when I was living in the UK, I thought that at the far end of the horizon I was seeing the sea. And in fact it is part of who we are, part of our identity, and even the fact that we don’t have much space, the sea creates that sense of space, space and freedom I guess. So to me I can’t separate the sea from the actual land, for me it’s one. It’s very important to me as a person, as a Maltese person, as my identity. I need to see it, see the colour. This sense of water to me is crucial, creates a sense of calmness amidst all this chaos that we have, construction and everything. And at the same time landscape, the Maltese landscape, the actual tangible aspect of it [pause] is the built environment I guess. We have countryside, it’s shrinking more and more, but yes that’s what comes to mind.

**Author:** What comes to mind when you hear the word archaeology?

Participant: I can’t tell you what comes to mind, I would be lying. [Pause] you have the technical understanding of the term, the study of our past, societies, remains, heritage, and all of that. I think at this point, to me, the meaning needs to open up a little more, to incorporate the modern or contemporary landscape as well, because we do get attached to it. And there is a lot related to what we see today, the sense of community, the sense of identity and memories.

**Author:** What values do you attach to heritage?

Participant: [Pause] they’re part of who we are, of our past and our present, the here and now. As I said the sea is such a big part of your history and I always joke and say that we’re truly pirates and of course pirates need the sea to go and travel from one place to another and to create chaos and whatnot, or be Robin Hood pirates, depends. It’s part of our national identity.
Author: Are you aware of any international conventions protecting landscapes or cultural heritage?

Participant: I hear about a lot but I can’t think of specific ones right now.

Author: Are you aware whether Malta has signed or ratified any of these conventions?

Participant: As far as I am aware no.

Author: If not, what do you think the reasons for this are?

Participant: [Pause] I am not sure now if I’m going to give you the right answer or not. [Pause] We’re part of larger international ones, but what I think I’m getting to is that we might have signed the UNESCO ones, so we are aware, but not as much as we would like. It’s something about the Maltese when it comes to landscape that I don’t think that much of awareness of what we really own and what it’s all about.

Author: Have you heard of the European Landscape Convention?

Participant: No.

Author: What do you know about the convention?

Participant: Nothing.

Author: If yes, are you aware what the convention states on public participation and perception?

Participant: No.

Author: When it comes to the European Landscape Convention, are you aware whether Malta has signed or ratified the convention?

Participant: No.

Author: In terms of public participation, do you think the heritage sector in Malta does enough to advocate for the involvement of the public?

Participant: I think it’s starting to. Not long ago, when was it, three weeks ago, when there were the NGOs that signed the declaration that was headed by the Kamra Tal-Periti. So there were many different NGOs, including Malta ARCH that actually signed. So as I said there is a shift,
from different kinds of NGOs, we never had a third sector, it was never needed. Not because we’re not aware of it, or not emancipated and civilised, as people like to call us, it just wasn’t needed at that point, so I yes think they are, they’re even using social media, they’re more visible. Some may be a bit more conservative than others, and some are realising that you need to have a combination of the conventional, petitions and the conventional stuff, but also doing social media to reach everybody.

**Author: To what extent do you think the public ‘voices’ should be able to inform policy and management?**

Participant: It should be a big part of it, of course. But always if there is the right information outside, otherwise no because you could screw up the whole process and people in Malta can be a bit self-centred in the sense that if I don’t gain from it I’m not going to do it. We don’t have that national identity of justice. So yes you have to be careful, but if you put the right information out there, you create consultation periods that are truly informative and people know exactly what they are going in for and what they’re signing, then yes.

**Author: and you think it should stop at consultation?**

Participant: they need to be active, they need to disseminate the information and create meetings and focus groups and use an ethnographic methodology or community participatory methods. Where you can listen to people and sometimes you need to the analysis for them.

**Author: the local laws in Malta, are you aware whether they state anything about public participation?**

Participant: as far as I know, yes they do. You can actually, and we’ve been doing it at Malta ARCH, and I didn’t know how it worked, and there was Wirt iż-Żejtun [pause] and Reuben Abela is an architect and he knew exactly the system and the procedures.

**Author: but you need to be aware of these things?**

Participant: yes you need to be aware, and it’s not easy, no. if you don’t know that something like is going on, if it’s kept very low, then you miss out.

**Author: and you think there is a reason for why they don’t make it easier for the public to find out about these things?**
Participant: obviously they don’t want them to interfere. It’s all about the money, its business. Right now construction is one of the main businesses that we have. So many foreigners, I mean, from the Eastern Bloc, Italians and the south of Europe, they’re all working in the construction industry here.

**Author: What do you think the role of the public is in planning procedures?**

Participant: [Pause] No, [pause] I think it’s very minimal.

**Author: What do you think the role of the public should be in planning procedures?**

Participant: [Pause] I think it should be, as with the situation in Pembroke, where the people got together it has to be intentional, it has to be bottom-up, [pause] where people can get together, form a community and speak up.

**Author: but there always seems to be reactional rather than?**

Participant: I think they can’t at the moment think like that because even the way we build we left everything in the hands of the developer, we don’t have town planners, they don’t exist. So when we build we don’t build with the community in mind, and that is a big, it is something that I am really fighting against at the moment and making sure that it enters housing policy, making sure that when we build we build in a certain way where enhance communication. Then when you do that, then people will talk to each other and it’s more of a community. But right now we’re moving towards individualism and it’s something that I am very worried about and I sometimes say that I don’t sleep at night because of it.

**Author: To what extent do you think that public participation does occur in planning procedures in Malta?**

Participant: Yes sometimes nobody even sends in anything. [Pause] I think it alerted people, in fact, they did backtrack and I think they redesigned the whole case [Luqa petrol station]. I think it’s very normal, I don’t see anywhere else being any different, [pause] I mean if you go to the UK there are issues with how housing was built in the first place and you hear about it all the time, you go to London and the Roman wall you cannot even see it, it’s amidst all these huge buildings, iconic phallic buildings, and people are always reactionary.
Author: To what extent is the public involved early on and throughout the process? There is a widespread view that participants should be involved early on in the process, the opposite extreme is when the public is involved in the final stages.

Participant: Not really.

Author: How easy is the process of public participation made for the public? Notice, timing, location and methods of involving the public

Participant: I don’t think it’s very easy because as I said you need to know the bureaucratic parts of it. That’s what the problem of the 21st century is, bureaucracy. It really stops people from actually changing things, because if you don’t know how to fill in certain forms, then you don’t have a right to say something because you haven’t followed the rules and the guidelines. [Pause] so that is a barrier.

Author: How much of an influence does the public have on planning decisions?

Participant: It can have a lot of influence, [pause] the potential is there for it. There are individuals who are having a lot of influence but in a negative way.

Author: How important do you think public participation is?

Participant: As I said before, very.

Author: What do you think the Maltese public’s opinion is on public participation?

Participant: I wouldn’t know. But I can speculate. [Pause] when there was Wirt iż-Żejtun the public really engaged. There is Pembroke where the public is engaging and there is the protest coming up soon, next week on Tuesday or Wednesday. When you look at social media I think there is a lot of activity, [pause] but maybe it is not enough. But I can’t tell you what the national consensus is, as I said I do feel that there is a shift though. If people find a leader, or somebody that can organise, then yes.

Author: What do you think is being done to encourage the public to engage with its heritage?

Participant: [Pause] I think things like Valletta 2018 and the legacy it’s leaving behind. They’re doing a lot of things, a lot of activities, social activities and there are smaller NGOs that are doing a lot of work, so there are a lot of small activities going on.
Author: but do you feel like it needs an event like Valletta 2018 to bring something like that about? What is being done on a normal scale to bring this engagement about?

Participant: I think maybe that it goes through education with children and children are becoming more aware and I think that schools are doing a lot with children. [Pause] and of course when it comes to these activities they always involve the family. They give them an activity to go on a site visit during the weekend, and they have to take it back. So there are things.

Author: Do you think a top-down or a bottom-up approach is more appropriate for these challenges?

Participant: Bottom-up obviously. [Pause] it’s more powerful because you see what the people want and what the people need and their concerns, and then you have something which is designed appropriately. That is my mantra, I’m an anthropologist, that’s how I work.

Author: What are the main activities that the Maltese public engage in when it comes to heritage? (Museum visits, exhibitions, open days, public lectures etc…)

Participant: Main activities? You know what cause we’ve been talking. When I grew up Ħaġar Qim was not barred, actually when I think about it we did have a sense of ownership and landscape, it’s just now cause we have the experts coming from Germany or the Scandinavians, those are the experts that tell us how to go about actually protecting our heritage, but I grew up playing hide and seek in the temples. [Pause] so to me the fact that they are covered has taken away a big part of our national identity and our landscape. I know why they are doing it, but then again shouldn’t temples and monuments be seen. Now that they are covered you don’t see it in their entirety. It’s not just about that small, you know, area that is covered, it’s the whole part that you are able to walk, explore, imagine, and see the visibility from one to the other, and I mean now they are removed. So what I am saying is that we did engage with these sites on a daily basis. Even the Tarxien temples they’re not free anymore, again there are barriers.

Author: and do you think that is the reason why people don’t visit anymore?

Participant: I don’t know if people are going or not, do you have any statistics?

Author: No I do not, that statement is based on what I’ve been told by people and discussions I’ve had in the past.
Participant: I think they become staged, that’s what I was getting to, and the staging effect is for the foreigner and not the Maltese.

**Author: so you think there is a certain disassociation happening?**

Participant: yes, this comes with tourism, as it happens in Venice and Rome. The Venetians are not there anymore, it is like a theatre, like a stage, you can’t go about you’re daily life. But in Malta you probably can’t look at it like that. Perhaps that is why the Maltese don’t engage as much.

**Author: but there are the open days, for example, I would say in the last few years, they have become very popular. Like the Roman villa, which was the latest one, something like 7000 people visited.**

Participant: because it’s free. Yes and no, everyone wants something which is free.

**Author: but even attending public lectures or seminars or activities that HM might do at a site?**

Participant: but I don’t think that lectures appeal to the public, to the everyday person, it might appeal to me because it’s my world, or to you because you’re doing your masters, but not to the lay person, they might not understand or they feel intuited. Why not hold these in a public square or be organised with the community. Wirt iż-Żejtun is very good at it and they have a symposium every two years which is well attended, because it is community led, and they are doing something for their locality. Maybe that is how it should be approached.

**Author: What do you think about the attitudes of the Maltese public towards their heritage?**

Participant: I think it’s about the community, [pause] and I think what happened with Żejtun is that there is a really strong sense of community and social cohesion. If you go to Gżira the likelihood is that this is not going to happen and you’re not going to find it. And I think that where there is a festa, like Ħal Qormi, which is still very active, then you find that sense of loyalty towards your own heritage.

**Author: is that not focusing only on the intangible though? The religious and traditional aspects?**
Participant: Yes. But it’s still a physical thing, they prepare for it all year round and they pay money. They have to invest in a costume and a costume will cost you roughly two thousand euros by the end of it. This is pride and identity again, it’s attachments to the land and the built environment. What I was going to get to is that to me buildings if they are not planned properly they can be barriers. So I believe that the way we’re buildings these, you know, blocks, these tiny match boxes, act a separation to the community. Where is the open space? You know, Tal-Wej, for me, yes it’s an archaeological site, but it’s about open space and a green space that people use. You can walk down the street and meet someone and talk to them. If you don’t have that type of space, in the village, town or city, you create [pause] an atomized community and then [pause] you can’t organise and feel attached.

Author: Do you think there has been a shift in these attitudes in recent times?

Participant: Yes as we said in the beginning.

Author: What do you think the Maltese public values more and why- of the following: money, convenience, environment, health, culture, and heritage?

Participant: It’s a complex question.

Author: This goes back to readings I’ve done by Jeremy Boissevain, and he is one of the only people I’ve found who’s written about this association of the Maltese with landscape and heritage, which he calls it this ‘amoral familism.’

Participant: I have to be quite honest, and I was writing about this amoral familism in an article, where I was trying to even analyse through it, this new niche of the rental market, why did it thrive so much? It is about business, but not only about business, it’s also about kinship and family. Now with amoral familism it goes back to the anthropology of the Mediterranean, with honour and shame and this whole idea that we all think about self-interest that we’re cunning human beings. [Pause] but I think there is a little bit more to it. The family is still very important, and also the kinship network, so we do value the landscape as long as the whole, so when you think about the amoral familism you cannot think about the one person, but the unit and the network. So if that unit is gaining, but within that unit you find a sense of morality. [Pause] I’m hesitating because I’ve thought a lot about this and I still haven’t put a finger on it. On the one hand I want to say yes we are like this, it’s all about us and the concept of fairness does not exist, when it comes to a national understanding of what is fair. Because even when you think about the buildings and the high rises, it’s like if that person can take from it then I
will as well. That’s how fairness is understood and to me that is very selfish and not moral at all. [Pause] but at the same time [pause] it also needs to be put in a historical perspective, trajectory, where on the one hand we are this island full of pirates, and at the same time, we’ve had a succession of colonisers, till not long ago and now part of the European Union which is still acting as a coloniser, and we’re finding our feet as, as can I say nation-state? Maybe, I don’t know if we’re there, I have no idea. [Pause] so I think as we go back to what we were saying in the very beginning, you have a shift of people, of a new cohort of people, who left the island came back and are finally realising what we have, we have a history, we have heritage, lets preserve it. If you think about it, it is people our age who are doing something about things. In the younger generation as well, if you talk to them, they are aware and they don’t want, and sometimes I think that they think they can’t do much about it. But if you give them a way and a means they will do something about it. And the fact that you find a lot of young groups gathering together, all the alternative scene which is quite bubbly at the moment, and the trance movement and vegetarianism, and you can tell me it’s about class and many people might do it for no reason. But I think that people are becoming more aware, more self-aware, so that might answer part of this question where you will find the older generation that might not care, and is this amoral familism, but at the same time, you have five generations co-existing in a locality, and you have this group of people that are thinking differently and claiming their heritage.

Author: I feel that before archaeology in Malta, from the beginning of the 20th century till the end of the 20th century, was a lot about foreigner archaeologists coming here and maybe the local population started feeling a dissociation with it because it was about the foreigners.

Participant: yes because it ties in with this master-slave syndrome that we have. The foreigners know best. Now we’re getting our own expertise. [Pause] to be quite honest, not to put credit to myself or anything, but I am the first anthropologist that is employed in a ministry, and I am bringing about changes by telling them that ‘we can do this, and we go into the community and lets think about good practices, let’s not be negative’. [Pause] there is a change, I think yes. It is complex and not quite there yet, but it is happening. Sorry it was a long winding answer.

Author: Do you think the Maltese public only becomes concerned with archaeology when it is under threat?
Participant: No not necessarily. I think it celebrates as well. When something new is found I think we celebrate.

Author: I find that when you read about archaeology in the media only when it is being destroyed. You do not really read about a new discovery happening. Now I am starting to see it with Temple Rescue.

Participant: yes, yes. As you said it was something which perhaps belonged to the experts and not to the public.

Author: What do you know about the heritage legislation of Malta?

Participant: I think it says that, I don’t know too much about, but I am aware of it. But I think we have rights when it comes to participate and to have a say.

Author: Are you familiar with how the heritage sector is organized? Do you know the different roles that the regulator and operator play?

Participant: Are you talking about the SCH and HM? I don’t know a lot about it but since I’ve become involved through activism but before no I wasn’t aware about these differences.

Author: do you know the specific roles they play?

Participant: yes. Because we had to go through them in order to kind of come up with Malta ARCH. And one of the things we looked into was why isn’t the SCH functioning, why is not happening. So the lack of management and the lack of resources was a big part of it. And still is, but there was a change, and I’ve been told that it is for the positive. And I think that the SCH also needs to start talking to the other organisations as well, they can’t work on their own and that is was I am realising. We are so fragmented, the SCH needs to work with the PA, they need to work with the NGOs, they need to work with ministries, and they need to work with education. All of it. They need to wake up. If you show that things are backed up by proper research and that you’re doing a good job they [ministries] will listen. [Pause] it is the first time that I’m working in government, it’s only been 6 months and I’m loving it and I think it is possible, so far.

Author: Why did you start this group? What was the motivation behind it?
Participant: [Pause] I think that we all felt that there was a need to mobilise ourselves, you know? We call ourselves a group of concerned citizens, so I think the need was there. Things are going crazy, there is no control, we’re losing and we need to put ourselves out there.

Author: Your Facebook states that your focus is on the future of Maltese archaeology, heritage and environment, can you expound on this?

Participant: Yes and I think that is an important part because we have Michael and previously Dawn that were more about archaeology and I was like archaeology is not my background, yes landscape is important, but we need to make archaeology a little more sexy, basically, and we all agreed. [Pause] we saw the relationship between these three different aspects and so when in order to cater for the everyday person you can’t always talk about heritage because you would only target a very small sector of the people. So you need to turn it around a little bit and say heritage is also about the environment. So I think that is why we chose to put it like that. So sometimes you need to play upon this. With Tal-Wej, to me it was, we have to play upon the open space, the attachment to landscape, looking out of your window and seeing that there is open space, and a sense of health attached to that as well, and well-being. I think that wasn’t there before and I think that’s how we wanted to move forward as well.

Author: What are the aims of Malta ARCH, what do you hope to achieve?

Participant: We’re very new so I think we’re still in a very charismatic phase at moment. So we are organised and we do want to create awareness. That is for sure. We want to create awareness that people realise that they can do something about it and we are using social media as a tool to create that mobilisation for the time being. I think in the future, and we are starting to do that, is that want to be more visible. [Pause] We had a public meeting once and it went well and made contact with some of the local communities, and we’re also supporting other NGOs, not just Temple Rescue but Wirt iż-Żejtun, we are fans of Wirt iż-Żejtun, so we support them a lot and eventually, we are only 3 people at the moment and we have members, but there is only so much we can do.

Author: What makes Malta ARCH different from other heritage awareness groups?

Participant: I think we’re interdisciplinary so that’s quite different and I think that the difference is that we use social media as opposed to HM, for example. [Pause] so it creates a bit of action, and I think that other groups felt threatened, and maybe it is because they are snobs, and I was told that archaeologists are snobs and they don’t want interlopers, but we are
all professionals so we shouldn’t be seen like that and I guess we are the voice of the people as well.

Author: Much of the focus of the group has been on Tal-Wej, why is this the case?

Participant: I think it is how it started but it was Tal-Qares that brought us together. I think we follow [pause] what the need is to be quite honest.

Author: Why do you think the Tal-Wej site attracted so much attention when so many other sites have been destroyed over the years?

Participant: I think as I said before, it came at the right time. [Pause] awareness, conscious raising [pause] and I think that is why it gathered so much attention. Since then, in fact, most of planning applications are gaining a lot of attention since Tal-Qares and Tal-Wej. With Tal-Qares it was heart breaking because we lost the site really and truly, the part that they’ve built and that was a let-down. At the same time it was a starting point, so yes, I think that there are these elements that are creating a lot of awareness.

Author: Have you received any feedback from heritage institutions? (SCH, HM, UoM, ASM, DLH)

Participant: Not really, but we were contacted when they were creating the declaration so they asked us to come in and sign.

Author: but what about the heritage institutions?

Participant: no not yet, but I think we are still too small as well.

Author: Have you been approached by any heritage institution about the work you’re doing?

Participant: No we haven’t.

Author: What feedback have you gotten from the public?

Participant: Positive, very positive. And people do actually contact us and we do receive messages in our inbox, saying this is happening and can we do something about it. And we do get likes every week and you know for a couple of months it’s not bad and you know we do this on the side, everyone has a full-time job and everyone is active. So when we have an extra
hour we do it in our own time and there is only so much you can do. [Pause] but it is gaining a lot of attention and every week we get 3 or 4 likes and for me that is great.

**Author:** What do you think about public access to information when it comes to archaeology/heritage?

Participant: [Pause] it’s not easy. You need to talk to Michael since he has his own contact.

**Author:** because he has his own contacts though?

Participant: exactly, because otherwise it’s almost impossible.

**Author:** And how do you find accessing information about specific sites?

Participant: Very hard. I mean you only come across something if someone points it out. But otherwise it is hard.

**Author:** And what about archaeological reports from all the on-going and past excavations?

Participant: They are made public but how I don’t know.

**Author:** they are not made public

Participant: that is what i thought as well. When I asked last time we had a debate about it. It is not right.

**Author:** What about the public visiting and participating in excavations?

Participant: [Pause] yes it could be an idea and we have lots of it and I think labour is always needed. I think it is a good idea to have public interaction and specific groups of people, like people with [pause] mental health issues or are struggling. [Pause] it could be something very exciting.

**Author:** What impact do you think that public participation and engagement with heritage can/will have/has on the Maltese public?

Participant: I think it can have a lot of impact, it can be very positive because first of all the people feel hurt, and [pause] you can actually come up with something, a programme, a design, something that works for us, by listening to the people, for real. [Pause] And that is a way of
appreciating our heritage process as well. [Pause] It’s a two-way process, and that is what I believe in.
Appendix V: Flimkien Għal Ambjent Aħjar interview transcript
Author: What comes to mind when you hear the word landscape?

Cassar: I saw a landscape [laughs]. You know like a picture of vast land and a horizon.

Author: What comes to mind when you hear the word archaeology?

Cassar: An archaeological site generally, with some stone showing [laughs] and the potential for more.

Author: What values do you attach to heritage?

Cassar: What’s so important about heritage? It’s a link to history and understanding human development and basically heritage is a link to showing you who you were, what you’ve been and what man has achieved in order to understand where you’re going and who you are.

Author: Are you aware of any international conventions protecting landscapes or cultural heritage?

Cassar: Slightly yes.

Author: can you name any?
Cassar: [Laughs] I forgot their names but there are two that I know exist and I can’t remember their names.

Author: Are you aware whether Malta has signed or ratified any of these conventions?

Cassar: I believe they signed but did not ratify them.

Author: If not, what do you think the reasons for this are?

Cassar: A lack of commitment from government to really take them on.

Author: Have you heard of the European Landscape Convention?

Cassar: Yes.

Author: What do you know about the convention?

Cassar: That we signed it but did not ratify it [laughs].

Author: If yes, are you aware what the convention states on public participation and perception?

Cassar: No, I did not read into it.

Author: When it comes to the European Landscape Convention, are you aware whether Malta has signed or ratified the convention?

Cassar: Yes.

Author: In terms of public participation, do you think the heritage sector in Malta does enough to advocate for the involvement of the public?

Cassar: I think the heritage sector does all it can, is it enough? Is another thing. But I think I wouldn’t put the onus on the heritage sector to do more, I mean [pause] they really do all they can and if it’s a shortcoming it’s not one from their end.

Author: To what extent do you think the public ‘voices’ should be able to inform policy and management?

Cassar: [Pause] a little bit complicated. Let’s say the public needs to be thought, so education needs to be stronger for the public to have a deeper appreciation for these things and in that
form also given a chance to participate. For their participation to be, and I do believe in public participation for sure, absolutely, and for it to have more value they need to be more informed.

**Author: What do you think the role of the public is in planning procedures?**

Cassar: Often it is to put pressure, but it depends which members of the public. Is it those members of the public that are opposing a development or in favour of it, or pushing for more development? So I think they do play a part, generally, it depends, but I can’t answer the question.

**Author: What do you think the role of the public should be in planning procedures?**

Cassar: I think that they should have, they should be involved at initial stages which currently they are not. They’re asked to participate after things have been put together already and it’s too late because often the planning authority or whoever would be behind the policy would be very unwilling to change it, and not out of evilness but out of, they’d be working on it for a long time and have their own ideas and objectives, and then if people come on-board at the end then obviously they’re contribution is going to be minimal.

**Author: To what extent do you think that public participation does occur in planning procedures in Malta?**

Cassar: It supposed to happen and on paper it happens, but like I said before, I don’t think it has a lot of value or has a big influence when they’re asked to participate so late.

**Author: To what extent is the public involved early on and throughout the process? There is a widespread view that participants should be involved early on in the process, the opposite extreme is when the public is involved in the final stages.**

Cassar: Very limited.

**Author: How easy is the process of public participation made for the public? Notice, timing, location and methods of involving the public**

Cassar: I don’t think it’s easy enough. I think they might underestimate how complicated it is for the public to participate. The authority is familiar with all its lingo and terms and all these policies that exist but the public aren’t. Certain people are becoming aware of decisions that were made in 2006 today so […]
Author: so access to information is what is hard

Cassar: […] it is not easy. It’s there but finding it is hard.

Author: How much of an influence does the public have on planning decisions?

Cassar: It changes. Sometimes it can be strong and sometimes quite weak. [Pause] it changes a lot. I mean when there is a case like the Paceville Master Plan where the public’s voice was heard because it was strong enough. So there need to be numbers, there is definitely strength in numbers, which sometimes is unfair because it means unless you can rally a crowd you can’t have your say. There are many small cases that deserve just as much attention.

Author: How important do you think public participation is?

Cassar: It’s critical because you cannot design for people without involving the people.

Author: What do you think the Maltese public’s opinion is on public participation?

Cassar: I think they do feel that it is pointless, there is a lot of […] I think one of the biggest problems that they had with ITS initially was trying to convince people that it is worth trying. And now this case is really in its time, but it took the people and organisation that pushed it, they had to kill a defeatist attitude. And this was actually one of their biggest initial obstacles. So it’s a problem when don’t believe that they can make a difference.

Author: What do you think is being done to encourage the public to engage with its heritage?

Cassar: I think many new NGOs, and not even NGOs, organisations who are trying to get people involved and raise awareness, definitely, and I think people are afraid that not enough is being done and I mean [pause] things are being done, even the PA hosts heritage walks but it’s a bit of a half-baked solution because at the same time they would demolish something vernacular. [Pause] I think people are conscious of their heritage, I’m not necessarily sure that it’s a problem, I think there is stuff being done.

Author: Do you think a top-down or a bottom-up approach is more appropriate for these challenges?
Cassar: How to decide [laughs]. It needs to be more inclusive. So let’s say you need the top to kind of manage it but you need the bottom to have a voice and they wouldn’t be able to necessarily manage it without any direction. So it’s like a bit of both.

Author: What are the main activities that the Maltese public engage in when it comes to heritage? (Museum visits, exhibitions, open days, public lectures etc…)

Cassar: I think they do visit, I mean the open days are very successful and I think HM is going to have one now and I’m sure a lot of people will show up. People get very excited when a place that’s been closed for a long time gets opened, people enjoy it and people want to see.

Author: but there are a lot of people who also argue that they only go because it’s free on the open days.

Cassar: but clearly they’re interested, they just don’t want to pay [laughs]. I think they do care and maybe it’s because I’m on this circle but as time passes I meet more and more people who are interested and you find these Facebook groups, a growing number of Facebook groups, dedicated to heritage and there are some for houses, some for temples and it’s very, [pause] people do care. I think it is there.

Author: What do you think about the attitudes of the Maltese public towards their heritage?

Cassar: I think they’re very proud of it and sometimes I think they’re too proud of the later periods, the bit more obvious ones. [Pause] there is the least respect for the simple heritage like townhouses, which are all part of the story. I mean how can you see the history of Msida, or understand how it grew if you don’t have the townhouses defining where people settled when it was becoming a town. They don’t really care about them, and I think is lacking over all, but maybe the more intricate is it, but I don’t think this is only a Maltese problem. The parts of history that are a bit less black and white, which is most of it, is what people aren’t really aware of.

Author: the people of Malta are often more focused on the Knights of Saint John and everything that came before is a bit overlooked.

Cassar: it’s glorified excessively.

Author: Do you think there has been a shift in these attitudes in recent times?
Cassar: [Pause] I wonder if it’s growing because people are seeing a lot places being demolished and so they’re feeling a kind of appreciation for what they’re losing. I think it is having an effect, and now that certain things are changing, for example even on just places being demolished and new places being built and engulfing the old village centres. I think people are starting to appreciate what they’re losing.

Author: What do you think the Maltese public values more and why- of the following: money, convenience, environment, health, culture, and heritage?

Cassar: Usually the priority is money. So can I say this is right or wrong? I mean if you have a family wouldn’t you are about how well you can take care of them? And comfort, the Maltese people prize comfort. It shouldn’t kind of, it shouldn’t compromise preservation of heritage and the environment.

Author: there are those that would argue that heritage and landscape and the environment are an integral part of someone’s quality of life.

Cassar: yes so exactly, so it shouldn’t, it’s a bit of a short sighted pleasure. It’s a short sighted comfort. We’re a very family oriented and I think that’s really the heart of Maltese society and how we interpret things and how we think. So what do you always chose? You chose your family and how to protect them, whatever it takes to make your family safe. Sometimes you need to step out of it and kind of say okay fine protect that, protect your family, take care of it, but also appreciate what there is around you, what makes it part of the whole community.

Author: Do you think the Maltese public only becomes concerned with archaeology when it is under threat?

Cassar: Usually. I think archaeology is very hard to appreciate for many people because when all people see are fragments and pieces of stone, when it comes to archaeology it’s really hard to raise awareness. When you find something that is still whole like some tomb that obviously people are impressed because they can see something and they can visualise it, but the problem with archaeology is that it is very hard to appreciate because you really need to be an archaeologist to understand what you’re seeing.

Author: What do you know about the heritage legislation of Malta?

Cassar: I work in planning so I’m familiar with issues related to planning which have a big impact on heritage.
Author: Are you familiar with how the heritage sector is organized? Do you know the different roles that the regulator and operator play?

Cassar: I think I do, and have a general understanding of it.

Author: FAA was founded in 2006, what do you think the motivation behind it was?

Cassar: From what I was told it was the rationalisation of the local plans. So it was very big, it had a very big influence on why the FAA formed. 2006 saw this massive, kind of, it was a disaster for the environment.

Author: and we’re still seeing the consequences today

Cassar: just yesterday I had a person calling me about an application saying but it’s in a green area. But no it is not a green area it was included in the Development Zones 2006. So it was a very big and I think it pushed them to act.

Author: What are the aims of FAA, what does the group hope to achieve?

Cassar: Generally it is to raise awareness. We focus mostly on land-use, so we’re an environmental organisation and we fight for the environmental and the preservation of heritage but within the context of land-use. So what we’re trying to do is push for sustainable planning, which will include the preservation of our cultural assets, which would include the retention of open spaces which would contribute to the landscape. It is generally that idea, so we’re trying to push for better policies and the implementation, or the proper implementation, of policies that exist and should be respected.

Author: What do you think has changed since the founding of FAA in 2006?

Cassar: There are many, let’s say, different waves. After a while things got a bit better, because I think government realised that they had to take a step back and in 2008-2009 things got better in terms of heritage. There was less demolition of buildings and the attitudes changes, MEPA became much stricter which is a positive thing. Although it was excessive at times. Now after certain changes in legislation with the new government […]

Author: such as the split of MEPA into the PA and ERA…

Cassar: […] with the split of MEPA, and there have been changes in policies that have weakened the protection of heritage buildings, of green areas, of the environment and natural
landscapes, and very much in favour of more development. So there has been, it’s really the, in 2012-2013, it was really quite, the construction industry was slow, now it’s a completely different ball game. I think one of the biggest booms in construction the country has seen in decades.

Author: How important is involving the public in the work of the FAA?

Cassar: it is critical because we, what we’re trying to do is give the public a voice. So there are many applications because, since we focus on applications that is what I’m going to refer to, you have many applications that will have a negative impact on the public and they’re not aware of them. Because. Okay sure they can participate but it is not easy for them participate. So what we’re trying to do is stand up for, fight for the rights of the public, which are rights that often the public aren’t even aware that they are losing. We represent the public’s interest and the more people we have supporting us then the strong our voice and the more work we can carry out.

Author: What does the FAA do in order to encourage public engagement with heritage?

Cassar: [Pause] we host a lot of events about heritage, about raising awareness about sites that are often closed and to introduce people to that. Through our work we try to raise awareness generally by raising awareness of what is being lost through bad decisions. It is quite tricky for people to understand the implications of planning decisions until they’ve seen the result so that is a bit difficult. And in general we try to give a more platform to more positive initiatives, and it is usually a mix of that.

Author: What do you think about the collaboration between the heritage sector, heritage awareness groups and the Maltese public?

Cassar: well it increases. Usually the public participates, or a sector of the public who generally like really engage all the time. They become volunteers and members and are very active. Then you have the public who tend to participate when it is going to affect them. Which is fine people have limited time and different interests. But people do call us and I’m sure people call other organisations as well. So the public are aware of our work, but obviously it is still limited because there are still many people who don’t know who we are. It would be better if we managed to get out there more just so the public can understand that listen if you’re stuck, or you think there is a cause worth fighting for and you need help.
Author: what about you and the public, but then also the regulators? What relationships are there if any?

Cassar: I think that SCH I don’t think many people know it exists, maybe a small sector of the public are aware of that…the people who bother to read the full article. And then when it comes to the PA I think that most people’s attitude is that they don’t care, I think the PA tries really hard to save their reputation and I think that is not going to happen, people hate them and sometimes fairly [laughs]. The communication between them is zero, there is a massive conflict, and they don’t understand each other.

Author: intentional?

Cassar: I think to some extent, but it is the public that has the disadvantage of not understanding what is happening because it goes to show that it is too complicated. The impact on heritage are often beyond the public, it is hard for them to grasp, and they’re not specialists in these fields, so why should they be able to understand?

Author: you could argue that they shouldn’t have to be specialists to understand something like that, it should be more informative

Cassar: yes it should be. It does need to be simplified. The PA is a mess, policies are all over the place. I do think that certain things will remain complicated in the sense that you don’t expect anyone to understand the law. So there are still certain things which require special understanding but the base of it should be simpler and more accessible and it isn’t.

Author: What do you think about the recent cases of Tal-Qares, Tal-Wej and Bulebel? Was the FAA actively involved in the awareness raising?

Cassar: specifically no because we were seeing how strongly the residents campaigns were doing so for example we had spoken to RA, advice we’d give and contribute how we can, but we didn’t participate directly because they were doing so well as residents. And that was a perfect example of how strong they can be on their own. The Tal-Qares we had objected, we had worked on the objections, but that was again a problem of rationalisation so when that passed and when in that case residents started campaigning it was too late, it was after the decision had come out and legally it was an empty, it wasn’t going to get anywhere. And that is why I say it is important that the public understands the process. In the case of Tal-Wej it was great, they were on time, they did it the right way, they had the objections and raised
awareness when they could act, and that was fantastic. And then with the one of Bulebel again it was the person who coordinated a large part of that campaign knows his stuff, works at HM, he was CEO at ERA, he understands. They approached it fantastically, it wasn’t attacking, and his approach was purely about raising awareness about the value of this place. It was good.

Author: for me it seems that there is a difference to how people used to approach things before with anger and protests, whereas this time the approach was completely different.

Cassar: they had even prepared a presentation to the environmental planning committee, and it was just really strong, it wasn’t negative at all.

Author: a good example of the balance between bottom-up and top-down?

Cassar: yes exactly. Involve the public but you have to understand how the system works in order to be affective, so you gather the troops and you go to fight only to realise that the battle’s already been lost like two weeks ago [laughs].

Author: Why do you think these particular cases received so much attention?

Cassar: the Tal-Qares one shocked people a lot because I think they took it for granted that that area couldn’t be built because again there was no understanding and they weren’t aware of the local plan changes from 2006. 12 years later and it still wasn’t, people still weren’t aware and so that shocked many people. Which I think is happening a lot, there are lot of things that are taken for granted and we didn’t understand, we didn’t realise that the changes happening in policies that sound very distant were going to have a direct impact on our lives. In the case of Tal-Wej it was a successful approach, the campaign online was very strong, it was very good, it was well executed, and the people behind it were bothered. [Pause] they managed to make it digestible which is very important, that it is easy to grasp the key issues and to obviously have your approach on Facebook has a lot to do with it. The photos and that the information is always easy to digest, and making it easy to act.

Author: like the flowchart?

Cassar: yes that was very good. There are ways of making things and strengthening your position.

Author: Do you think this is linked to a change in attitudes towards heritage in Malta?
Cassar: I am not sure if it is a change in attitude or a shock because there are things we always took for granted and expected them to always to be there. I don’t think people did not care, I just think they took them for granted. I am not blaming the public at all because you wouldn’t expect such decisions to be coming from a planning authority [laughs], I mean, where is the planning? You know what people say then? Because we have so much and a foreigner once told me that we so many old buildings in Malta it doesn’t matter if one is destroyed, we need development, new buildings, new apartments. What they are not appreciating is that once you demolish this then you can keep on demolishing and it is like a chair reaction that keeps on going.

Author: Are you aware heritage awareness groups are on the rise on social media?

Cassar: I’ve seen for sure [laughs].

Author: Have you heard of Temple Rescue and Malta ARCH?

Cassar: yes.

Author: If yes, what do you think about the work being done by these groups?

Cassar: I was thinking about them in fact. These are groups that are not NGOs who are really doing a lot to raise awareness. It is a lot and people become, it is a very good approach, it’s not too detached, it is not too technical, it’s really good.

Author: Do you agree with how archaeology/heritage is being portrayed through heritage awareness groups like these?

Cassar: for sure. They’re doing their utmost to make people appreciate what is often hardest to sensitize people about, so definitely.

Author: Does the FAA interact or collaborate with other heritage awareness groups?

Cassar: directly we haven’t, I mean there was the, we haven’t had the opportunity, but obviously is there is something that we would need each other’s expertise then yes we’d work together.

Author: and there was the declaration that was signed?

Cassar: yes. You could consider that our first collaboration, but I didn’t actually peak to the people behind it. And I mean yes we have the same aims.
Appendix VI: The Archaeological Society of Malta interview transcript
Author: What comes to mind when you hear the word landscape?

Participant 1: I think of it terms of an urban landscape as well as a rural landscape and we’ll probably go into it later but a historical and archaeological one as well.

Author: What comes to mind when you hear the word archaeology?

Participant 1: Archaeology is for me the pleasure of looking at the past, the far past, not necessarily prehistoric of course, but because nowadays we have industrial archaeology as well. Certainly the interest in looking at how people functioned in the past, in prehistory of course how they functioned without writing, their buildings, finding out how they looked upon their world which fascinates me. And anything, from looking at a cooking pot to a megalithic temple. I suppose I’m just curious to know how it all functioned.

Author: so curiosity is a big motivator?

Participant 1: yes curiosity and interest in comparisons as well.

Participant 2: I’ll take the typical definition of archaeology, which is searching for the material remains to try and build up a picture of the past, and that is my starting off point. I would agree that curiosity is a big part of it. I think that unless you have this important asset that you’re curious to dig up and recover, you shouldn’t go into archaeology, because you would have a dead mind really. Which makes me wonder about archaeology students who don’t come to lectures and are not interested in broadening their horizons. Take the seminar last Saturday about fragments [pause], why were the students not there? For me it is essential, archaeology needs curiosity, you need to have the thirst for it. It’s a wonderful sense of discovery when you’re in the field, when you find something and the jigsaw puzzle of putting it together, putting it within the context, the stratigraphy and everything else. So yes that is what archaeology is about to me.

Author: and what about its relevance to contemporary society?
Participant 2: I’d like to think that people find it relevant. But if we take the situation in Malta in a general sense, I think people are feeling annoyed because archaeology is getting in the way of development. So in some contexts it has a negative projections of what archaeology means. I shouldn’t generalise but I don’t think that people in Malta are so interested in archaeology and possibly archaeology to them tends to be about temples.

Author: What values do you attach to these (heritage, archaeology and landscape)?

Participant 1: Well I think we’ve covered a little bit of it, because if you’re looking and you don’t attach much meaning to the past you can’t really know your present and you certainly can’t plan for your future. I think it is interesting to see that people have always had the same desires really at the end of the day, physical ones, and also perhaps some spiritual ones, expressed in different ways of course, from the Aztecs to the much earlier manifestations like our own. So I think it is humbling for us to look at people in the past and say yes we’re very similar. The technologies have changed of course, but the human spirit really does remains the same. And I think there is also value in looking at how they cared about their buildings, that they built them to last, they didn’t have short-term gains, but they had long term ambition. So I think that there is always a value in looking at the past, I mean the historians work is speaking for the dead and I think that archaeologists also have a duty really to speak for the people who came before us, after all we haven’t been on this world for very long in earth terms and so I think that we should look at the past and see what we can, with humility, see what we can recognise and gain from that.

Author: Are you aware of any international conventions protecting landscapes or cultural heritage?

Participant 1: there is the landscape convention and there are a couple that we have signed up for.

Participant 2: there is the Valletta convention, which I believe we haven’t ratified and it’s been there since the 1990s. That is a very serious lacuna.

Author: Are you aware whether Malta has signed or ratified any of these conventions?

Participant 1: Malta has singed conventions but not really ratified.

Author: If not, what do you think the reasons for this are?
Participant 1: well the landscape one, if you read the clauses of the landscape one you can see very well, can see very clearly why Malta has not signed up, because you sign up to controlling certain aspects of the landscape. In fact it isn’t as radical as one might think actually, when you read it, in my opinion and it’s been some months now since I had a look at it, but I remember thinking at the time, this is going to be ever more controlling, but in actual fact it is not, it is more of a principle rather than laying down the law. So I don’t see why we shouldn’t. Obviously here in Malta land is at a premium, it always was and it always will be, and the vested interests in that land have always been and will always be, and those vested interests and when they are in government, being in opposition is one thing and being in government is something else, happen to haven’t made that step yet because I think they feel that it doesn’t give them enough leeway.

Participant 2: enough leeway for what?

Participant 1: for the construction industry

Participant 2: yes okay! Just said that land is a premium, so all the more reason that we should ratify that convention. Does that means that for the last 26 years we have been held to ransom by the interests of people who want to destroy the landscape. In fact that is what’ve we done, we’ve been pandering to their interests rather than in the interests of the country. 26 years for that not to be ratified is just shocking and there isn’t enough awareness. I mean I have never read the convention myself, in fact, I’ll probably go back to it today and read it because you’ve intrigued me by saying its principles and why didn’t they ratify the convention.

Author: Have you heard of the European Landscape Convention?

Participant 1 and Participant 2: yes.

Author: What do you know about the convention?

Participant 1: If I remember rightly, some time has passed, but I think that it refers to the importance of landscape in a wide sense, urban landscape, and not just landscape in the sense of rural landscape.

Author: or outstanding landscapes that you find with UNESCO, which the convention refers to and states that it is not just those of outstanding beauty that we need to be protecting, it’s the empty lot next door or the field across the road that we need to be protecting.
Participant 1: exactly yes. Giving importance to urban landscapes which would perhaps normally fall outside people’s pictures of what landscape is. I think that is something that has caught on as an idea, convention or not, amongst many groups of activists who have really prioritized the importance of even a storeroom or something of a rather lowly nature. Also the idea of landscape as something that you look at and should not be broken up, if I remember rightly, correct me if I’m wrong. I seem to remember the idea of landscape as looking at it holistically, in its entirety, rather than just landscape here, here and here. An example of a broken landscape for me, and I don’t know where this would fall into the convention of course, but as you go down the Birkirkara bypass there used to be the Redlong building, now its Vodafone, and at a certain point you’re on the brow of the hill and you’re just going down and in the old days from the brow of that hill, you would have been able to see the whole skyline of Rabat and Mdina. But you can’t now, because there is this huge building, and right next to it they’re building. So the viewscape has gone, and I think that landscape and also viewscape is important because old landscapes and viewscapes are extremely important for Neolithic people and for the people that came after as well. And that idea of viewscape and the importance of landscape has actually been totally ignored for many years. Obviously people tell me that before in the old days there wasn’t the Birkirkara bypass so you wouldn’t have seen it anyway. Well I say maybe there was a field there or a country road and you could have seen it.

Participant 2: it is interesting that you would mention that particular viewscape, because I pass that way once a week and only recently I looked at that hideous building to the right and I tried to remember the view as it used to be. I remember when the building started coming up and saying I’m going to lose that view, I’m going to lose that view, and I had to make a real effort to remember I used to see Rabat and Mdina, and now you’re confirming it. I mean in our living memory I remember that view, but many people have only seen that big blot on the landscape. Of course, one must remember that somewhere around there, there is also the remains of a megalithic temple. So nobody knows about these things because they’ve lost their contexts.

Participant 1: we’ve highlighted it in our Archaeo-Info posts on our Facebook page recently. Also one more point about that, we miss it, we knew it before and now we don’t. It’s gone for future generations. It is not just a question of aesthetics, because people say because everyone has different aesthetics and things change, but it isn’t just aesthetics, it is something that goes beyond that, it is almost philosophical, I think. Just the idea of keeping that ridge, again you
might say that originally there was no Mdina, etc…there is something very visceral about being to see that kind of landscape, that I think does go beyond the aesthetic.

**Author: it has more of an impact than people realise I think, when people lose a view like that, or a perception like that.**

Participant 1: and that is why it is important that this should be very much at the base of any legislation and regulation, because one might say you know, when you give permission to people to build on top it is not really that it not fair on the neighbours, but I think that it should be policy that views and landscapes, visuals, are retained. And I think that there would have to be limits, someone shouldn’t really get permission to build an extra floor if it is going to block the view. Not because I feel sorry for those people whose view got blocked, but just it should be part and parcel of regulations, and that so people know where they stand. What is bad is, when people don’t know where they stand, because the regulations are very often written so that they can be bypassed. They have to be written flexibly to a certain extent, but also they have to be there so that people know that it is not because your neighbour complained and that you are not allowed to do it. But because it just isn’t done, because it has been decided that this is the core of the village for example, and from the roofs of the core of the village which remain you would be blocking, I’m trying to use another word because that sounds sort of parochial, distinguishing a viewpoint for the whole of the village.

Participant 2: using another analogy, I learnt yesterday that the permit to build at Mrieħel has been approved and we haven’t heard anything about it, we haven’t seen any publicity at all, nothing. Now take the view down from Mdina, ruined forever. And it is not only there. There are going to be 4 towers, and that is going to be a business hub and that is going to be the first four of a whole concentration of high-rises plonk in the middle of the island.

**Author: If yes, are you aware what the convention states on public participation and perception?**

Participant 2: I haven’t read the conventions.

Participant 1: I don’t remember the details.

**Author: When it comes to the European Landscape Convention, are you aware whether Malta has signed or ratified the convention?**

Participant 1 and Participant 2: Yes Malta has signed but not ratified.
Author: In terms of public participation, do you think the heritage sector in Malta does enough to advocate for the involvement of the public?

Participant 2: the heritage sector as in the official heritage sector:

Author: yes the official heritage sector including NGOs working in the heritage sector.

Participant 2: it is quite a broad sweep.

Author: let me give you a bit of context. One of the defining points of the convention is that not the expert should define what a landscape is, but that the public’s perceptions of what their surroundings are and as such the public should have a say as to what they perceive as important in their surroundings. In addition to this, public participation should be the foundation of all policy decisions, any management that goes into landscape and its protection. This is one of the most important articles of the convention.

Participant 1: now it is coming back to me that bit.

Participant 2: so you’re asking what? That I feel that there is enough? That they are being consulted for participation? I suppose one can say that they pay lip service to the idea of consultation. I can’t really think, can I think of projects where the public has been consulted and the wishes of the public are taken into account? We can see the protest in Pembroke as a case in point. It was landed on the residents of Pembroke more or less, did we hear of that before?

Participant 1: we’ve been talking about, I don’t know, who would be the ones to actually ask people for consultation? The PA? Occasionally there will be a public meeting to discuss but that is it. There is a bit of that?

Author: but is that really involving the public?

Participant 1: No. now that you are mentioning this clause I remember smiling when I read it actually, because I do not think that anybody that who really wants to push a project through, is going to want to advocate for public involvement. It has to come from the voluntary sector or those people involved, and unfortunately the activism of local residents can be important because they are voters, but on the other hand they can always be accused of the NIMBY syndrome. So you know, I remember when there was the case of the Tal-Wej many of the objectors were the people who lived on the street that actually gives onto this field they were
requesting to remove soil for archaeological investigations. Most of the people who actually bothered to go to the PA site were residents, and obviously as the Archaeological Society we forwarded ours and there were others as well. But people tend to not take the NIMBY syndrome seriously enough.

Participant 2: if you could see from yesterday’s protest, according to today’s paper, there were about 200 residents of Pembroke and maybe Swieqi. I didn’t go, I had other things to do yesterday. I shrugged my shoulders, which is not a way to be but, I didn’t want to go, I didn’t want to go, apart from the fact that I had other things to do.

Participant 1: personally, I also had other things to do yesterday so I didn’t go. But I think that it is, they have a very valid concern, and that they should be supported. The ASM is an archaeological society, having said that, we have made representations for other more [pause] we’ve sort of widened our remit. Very much because we are interested in the landscape being looked at in a holistic manner, but yes it is difficult to get people out on the streets, and also people say well I don’t know if anyone is going to listen to what we have to say, are we being seen as a pain in the neck and stopping progress, whatever definition you’re going to use for progress. I feel very much that the things that should be taken into account with development, again I don’t like the word development myself and am using it since what I want to say is at the tip of my tongue at the moment and I am trying to use. Because it is not development, it is construction. If it is, it should be looked with a much wider lens than it is at the moment, and that lens should include definitely views, landscape, and archaeological landscape as well, I mean we’ve never been asked ‘what do you think about this building, do you feel that we shouldn’t be building on top of this ridge because there is an archaeological landscape, Bronze Age villages, siting between one and the other, I’m inventing, but nobody really asks us that, because you know, obviously because people in construction are not interested in knowing about it. So obviously looking at it from their point of view, the last thing they want is a whole load of people who are, some of us on the committee are professional archaeologists, most of us have archaeological training, so you’re not going to go and ask the experts, because their fear is that they’ll put the stoppers on their construction.

Participant 2: to again use Pembroke as an example, the senior official of DP Group, addressed Pembroke residents a few days ago, and he said that they are no longer going to build over Ħarq il-Ħamiem, and that I think is a victory, that they have listened. So yes, they have gone up in the estimation of people, yes they have actually listened. But most people haven’t heard
of that natural wonder there, and on Monday the CEO said they will no longer build, and public participation, your views count, but we’re going to be proposing the tunnel. But what about the tunnel and the underground lake? Giving with one hand and proposing a tunnel with the other.

Participant 1: I didn’t have a look at the map to see where this tunnel was supposed to lead to.

Participant 2: I don’t know that we have a location for the tunnel.

Author: I don’t think that they provided that at the public meeting. They just said that it was for traffic management.

Participant 2: and when they were asked who would foot the bill for the tunnel they couldn’t answer.

Author: To what extent do you think the public ‘voices’ should be able to inform policy and management?

Participant 2: a great extent.

Author: so you think it is an important aspect of policy making and policy implementation.

Participant 1: as we were saying before, there is, I think that, the democratic way of doing things is to ask peoples opinion, and clearly there would be publics that are NIMBY publics and just don’t want construction next to them because they prefer things how they are, there will be people who are genuinely interested in landscapes, there would be people who are genuinely interested in a Malta that is driven not by construction, but by other economic means because there is this space premium, there are experts, there are people who are geological experts. There are different voices, and it doesn’t mean to say that every voice really at the end of the day has the same weight.

Author: that is the challenge of this particular article of the convention, how do you combine all these different opinions or publics.

Participant 2: and vested interests, those are really important and need to be taken into consideration.

Participant 1: I think that awareness is something that is, awareness is important when it comes to the democratic process, the first question about do you think enough is done to inform people
about heritage, I think this is something that should come from the schools, and it should be presented in an interesting fashion because you cannot expect voluntary organisations to do all the work. We have our part to play and we have recently started to use, in our case, DLH have been doing it much longer than us, and other people, we try to use social media. But really it is something that needs to be instilled from a very young age. It is important because for example, until very recently, it was always a dilemma when something was discovered whether we, or whoever, was going to advertise it or not, because if you start advertising and people do not have an awareness of the importance or context, you would have people going there, and might mess it up, take pottery, shards, whatever. So there was always this dilemma…this is wonderful people should know about it.

Participant 1: I understand that something like that requires protection, even in the UK, where there is more awareness perhaps, but they do it, if they discovered a mosaic it was covered quickly. It is unfortunate that there isn’t that awareness or understanding of context, I mean, I don’t think even I, until I started studying archaeology at university really had, would have been able to say why just having a pot that is roman, genuine, standing on a shelf but no provenance and knowing where it came from and its history, what layer it was in and all the others thing associated with a find, I probably wasn’t even aware of it myself, and I’ve always taken an interest in that kind of thing. Let al. one somebody who has had no particular interest at all, and therefore, their moving find, they don’t realise. I think we need, there are certain principles about archaeology that need to be thought in school. Archaeology is not thought in schools, but these kinds of principles which concern the public and therefore, if you have public consultation and if you have a public which is aware of this kind of thing and sensitive to archaeology and reasons for the context, let’s take Tal-Qares, as an example. You’ve got an area which was unfortunately included in the rationalisation plan of 2006, it should never have been in there. But that is a whole example of how landscape is so very important, because you’ve got that continuity and if you start building that continuity is lost.

Participant 2: on stilts remember? They told us they would build on stilts

Participant 1: on stilts, yes whatever. And pigs will fly. There was an outcry but mostly from people like us and DLH and other people. I do not think there was a general understanding on why we were making such a fuss. You can’t see anything that is the problem with archaeology. It was mentioned the other day, that our problem with archaeology is that very often it cannot be seen. So because it cannot be seen, and it’s not an old house or palace threatened with
demolition or whatever, it’s hidden and therefore unseen and not understood, neither in its local context or its wider context.

Participant 2: in order to see it you have to destroy and that is the paradox of archaeology.

Author: someone recently also told me that how can you expect people to value archaeology or understand it if all they are looking at is a fragment. They are not experts. Whereas when it is a standing structure like a building or palace, then it is much easier for the public to visualise.

Participant 1: that is where education comes in. This is an issue.

Participant 2: DLH I believe is very active with this, and doing outreach in schools.

Author: yes they have a very active youth programme.

Participant 2: we have floated the idea ourselves, but who was going to go to the schools? We don’t have the resources.

Participant 1: it is the maintenance of such a programme that is important. It is alright to do for a term or a couple of them, but then to actually go on to do it again and again and again is taxing. But certainly it is needed, most definitely it is needed. Otherwise we are never going to be able to have that informed democratic voice which is needed and I totally agree that it is very unfortunate that there is this lack of awareness of the import of archaeology in Malta, from every angle, never mind the aesthetics. Also for the economic point of view because we have so much and we could selling our shoulder months of tourism very much based on archaeology and that is something we are talking money here, and archaeology can give a lot of the economy. If it is well looked after and there are some successes and our shoulder months tourism has improved, and these are important months for the economy. If we don’t develop that kind of, if you were to stop someone in the street in London and ask them if they know anything about Malta, they will probably tell you that they went on a really good package holiday, that their pool is beautiful and that they had a wonderful couple of weeks. Asking them if they went to Valletta, the answer is no, or did you go to Mdina? They went on one of those buses and probably never got off. I’m sure that there are thousands and millions of people like that by now. But to find someone who went to the hypogeum and say it was something out of this world. Obviously there are other reasons for why there should be a lot of people here, conservation mainly. I think there is a lot to be said about developing the economic side of it
and if you took to people then perhaps they will listen harder than if you just tell them there is a field there which has a kiln, for example. It is difficult to enthuse people but you can enthuse people if they know about it.

Participant 2: if they know about it and feel proud of it. I think that is part of this feeling of value, pride in what we had and have and as a value that could be inculcated in schools. Values are not just about loving your friends and being kind to others. Value is also being proud of your heritage and in order to do that you need to know about it.

**Author:** Wirt iż-Żejtun created a board game that they distribute to primary schools, which is a heritage board game. So even they feel that tackling this aspect of heritage is important. It is about the heritage of Żejtun and they have to move around with their board game and interact.

Participant 2: that is an excellent initiative.

Participant 1: a number of village have information boards, not just outside churches or chapels, but also near the cuttings of the railway to explain what you are looking at it. There are 40 of them so you can tick them off a map of something.

**Author:** interactive heritage.

Participant 1: yes people love that kind of thing.

**Author:** Do you think a top-down or a bottom-up approach is more appropriate for these challenges?

Participant 1: bottom-up is great, if you mean by bottom-up a voluntary organisations, then yes I don’t think without that kind of approach things are really going to happen. Clearly endorsement at least by the authorities is important. Local council level, as you mentioned with Żejtun, can do an awful lot, there are local councils here who applied for EU funds. So at that level, at a local level, it is important that there is endorsement and action where possible. Also endorsement from the authorities, from the top as well. HM, which after all is a government agency, do now have an office which has a director, where they deal with outreach.

Participant 2: on Facebook I am seeing that they are really reaching out to school children, taking them to catacombs.

Participant 1: I think they had a sleepover at the Inquisitors Palace?
Participant 2: in the prison cells actually.

Participant 1: which is great, I think it is great. You bring them in to something where they are really going to have fun with and then you add the historical element.

Participant 2: there is something coming up at Ghar Dalam soon?

**Author: wasn’t there the breakfast at Ghar Dalam?**

Participant 1: that is really great, I really like that kind of thing. It is thinking of everyone and is very democratic. But I think there has to be endorsement at every level, and at grassroots it is important that there are going to be people who are catalysts and it is important that organisations such ourselves, I think we have a role to play as well.

Participant 2: we have a role to play but the authorities should lend an ear to what we have to say, they should listen more carefully. Because sometimes you get the feeling you’re a voice crying alone in the wilderness, so why bother?

**Author: this defeatist mentality again?**

Participant 2: exactly.

**Author: what people don’t realise however, is that everyone keeps thinking like that nothing is ever going to change.**

Participant 1: you have to keep going. I mean we as a society keep going, we little sponsorship, we are very grateful, but we don’t have funding. We have our enthusiasm and the little expertise, others in the group have more than we do, and we do what we can within our limitations. We make objections.

Participant 2: objections by us and other people may have a bearing on the architect and the plans that have already been submitted.

Participant 1: something that we as a society have done is that we have appealed to the minister back in 2015, by writing a letter, to him, which we then published in the MAR, which is another thing we do for archaeology in Malta. It is the only peer reviewed journal that we have in this subject. We asked specifically at that time that the SCH be given the teeth that it deserves and the autonomy that is deserves because it is useless to have people there and not give them the
resources to do things and also not giving them the teeth when they do actually say something. This is something that god-willing might change now.

Participant 2: three years down the line and nothing has changed. I was told by an employee by email from the SCH about holding our lecturers over there, ‘Why are you coming here, we have nothing to do with archaeology over here, go to the museum of archaeology’. [Pause], I got not comeback from reporting and I did report.

Participant 1: well the SCH is a very wide remit for a start. In a way it was not put well in the letter, and I don’t agree with what was said, but they are dealing with archaeology and cultural heritage in its broadest sense. We are talking about lace making, archaeology, buildings, ephemeral, intangibles, it’s a huge remit.

Participant 2: and with just a handful of people.

Participant 1: and now with this construction frenzy that is going they are obviously finding a lot of stuff, so they need archaeologists to go and to the monitoring and the rescuing of archaeology. Who is going to write the reports?

Participant 2: the reports. We still don’t have the Tal-Barrani 1992 written.

Participant 1: the issue with reporting is absolutely key.

**Author:** and this is where the Valletta treaty comes in. One of the most important articles of the treaty states that developer funded archaeology has to publish reports.

Participant 1: this is the danger as well that if you do not have real awareness, if you do not have real information, proper information, then people will jump into the breach with the most outlandish exaggerations which do nothing for the cause in archaeology, on the contrary, they make it worse. The construction industry is against you immediately, and they already are, so imagine you start making all sorts of claims which are not correct. In general people get sort of hysterical, you know was Facebook is like. Questions should be answered immediately and efficiently. I can say may piece if it something that I am sure about, but if it is about a piece of information that SCH has and I don’t have, I can make my suppositions about it but the archaeologists of SCH are told don’t give out any information, it belongs to SCH, but then SCH has the duty and obligation to tell people what is going on, immediately. It does not need to be a full report of twenty pages, that can come and should come within a time limit, but a little information can be provided. This would put a lid on things immediately.
Author: What do you think the role of the public is right now in planning procedures?

Participant 1: at the moment the only opportunity is public consultation occasionally. I am not quite sure on what grounds they choose which project should be open to public consultation, I would not know what the criterion are for that to happen.

Participant 2: how selective are they?

Participant 1: how selective are they? Obviously what you can have and what they do have is representation which means you have to go on the PA site and find the PA number, and very often on the paper I notice that they don’t put the PA number so that makes it more difficult. I am somebody who has access since I have an e-account and everybody in Malta can do what I do, but you have to be bothered to do it. Once you get there then you can make your representation [pause], obviously you have to be prepared to put your head above the barricade. Sometimes we do that as a society, as the ASM, so it comes officially from us. Nowadays as you will have notices, the FAA, and not only the FAA, have devised a method by which you can actually just sort of submit your own, you put your name and e-mail, and you can adjust what they said, and they give you the template, and you just send it. This has obviously increased enormously the number of representations that there are.

Participant 2: in actual fact there was a comment from official [pause], quarters saying that they were quite overwhelmed by the number of applications refusing, what was the word I want? Objections! That they got for particular application. I was going to say that that use of social media in this respect is really very important because it is true, I myself have used that facility, you just click, get an email and that is it.

Participant 1: the latest one of the FAA, there are so many I forget which one I clicked on last time. I then went on the site to see how many [pause], thousands.

Participant 2: but do they take any notice of them? Or they do they cock a snook at them?

Participant 1: that is the question I asked when I went to the meeting of the declaration 180418, ‘do you all feel that it is useful that there is this facility available? Or does it mean that they don’t take notice?’ Before there used to be maybe 25 representations and perhaps they used to read them. These obviously are all coming from the same source and the comment that came back to me to my surprise really was, ‘yes, because’, and in a way we are talking politics here, because you know, and people take notice of numbers. I am not saying that, I mean I don’t
know, the PA obviously shouldn’t be political, but those are all, and what I was trying to say was that there have been cases where large numbers have changed their minds. One was a car park that was inundated with representations, and don’t forget it was a car park, not one of these petrol stations. And [he] mentioned it and said it was a side-line.

Participant 2: it is not fair that they are swayed by sheer numbers because objections of a 100 should carry as much weight as those of 5000. But then yes you have to consider as you said, for political reasons with a small p ‘we better not alienated 5000 people, but we can afford to alienate just a 100’. It is true numbers are important, which is why the public needs to be very well informed about how to set about.

Participant 1: and I think that there are people who are anxious about the situation, they might not be terribly keen about the archaeology, and keener about not pulling down all the vernacular architecture. There are many different voices coming from the public, [pause], and I think there are people of all shades of politics also who are concerned about it, and it gives everybody a chances to say their piece. There is not much the public can do apart from these representations because the ballot box doesn’t really make a difference, so we have to concentrate more on doing something tangible every single time and not letting things slip. I think the concentration of complaints about petrol stations acreage, has actually changed the mind of the PA.

Participant 2: there are two applications of petrol stations that are about to be turned down.

Participant 1: there are still legal challenges whether the ones that have been accepted already whether they can actually leally stop them at this point, [pause].

Participant 2: based on the legislation [pause], the way it was when they applied or the new legislation today?

Participant 1: what they are saying is that it is not retrospective, but somebody is now challenging that legally. But I think yes in that case there was such a public outcry and it was obviously a very general public outcry, it was not […]

Author: a specific sector of the public?

Participant 1: […] it wasn’t the tree hugger’s only [pause], I think it was very generalised.

Author: even MG got a lot of hits with their protest at the PA board meeting. That is something that people will click on and inform themselves about.
Participant 2: but they said they are ready to do it again.

Author: and I cannot even say that I disagree with how they [MG] approached it.

Participant 1: this is a free world so as long as they didn’t hurt anybody while they were doing it. I mean please.

Participant 2: at least 10 policemen were brought to hustle them out.

Author: is that not alienating the public?

Participant 2: frightening them more than alienating.

Author: and banning them from a public consultation and only allowing the media. That is not what a public consultation is, and in Malta, that is the only platform that the public has right now.

Participant 1: I always thought that MG should go and ahead as long as nobody is hurt. As far as I know this is a free country with freedom of expression.

Participant 2: I think we cannot really say that this is a free country. If somebody wants to protest at the PA, which you rightly said is the only way to get their voice heard, then why should they be stopped because it is a free country.

Participant 1: when you think of Britain with all its faults, and at the moment I am very [pause] I am not very pleased with at the moment. They have a tradition of people turning up at council meetings and that they bring out all sorts of posters and say their piece. That is what democracy is all about and there will be people on the other side trying to stop them, and there should always be a way of getting around that, always within civilised limits. Getting in there and saying your piece is extremely important especially if there is a whiff of [pause] an anti-democratic stance on the part of the authorities.

Author: How much of an influence does the public have on planning decisions?

Participant 1: the potential is there and definitely there should not be a defeatist attitude [pause] perhaps I may be not the kind that walks into a meeting a puts a poster up, maybe I am a bit old for that [laughs] but maybe that is not my style. There are other people who are very happy to do and bless them. I perhaps can write and use my talents to write good press releases about certain issues and hold seminars. We had one about Ghar Gerduf in Gozo, and we took this site...
from all the different angles and you know quite, and I mean obviously there were certain things that could have been considered as polemic and there were people who didn’t want us there, they wanted to organise things in their own way. You cannot keep things under wrap, and what we wanted to do was to go as the ASM and go there and give people information about this Għar Gerduf, not from the historical point of view, from the archaeological point of view and what can be done with the site. So it is not all ‘no don’t touch it or you can’t do that’ and more of ‘what are we going to do about it, and how are we going to conserve it?’ This is the kind of information we need, it was a full room, and I don’t know what impact we made, but I am not waiting for the full report which we will then publish on our website. So that is our remit.

Participant 2: the other thing that is being done by the ASM is the feeding of particular journalists. There is a particular journalist that […] has contact with [pause]

Participant 1: yes, yes […]

Participant 2: […] feeds […] with information so that […] can write a good assessment of what the particular polemic of the time is.

Participant 1: puts in our information and obviously […] own, quotes us and the editor has their own say. Once you go to the media you can’t have it all your way, but we have a good relationship. The media is extremely important, Facebook is important, the media is important. The Maltese language newspapers, and we really should be sending our press releases in Maltese […]

Participant 2: I know, but we have to translate them and that is the problem.

Participant 1: […] and it is a question of time and human resources. At university everything used to come out in English and Maltese, so perhaps that is a bit our fault. I always found L-Horizont ready to carry, with in-Nazzjon politically didn’t have much of a cultural thing. But anyway, that said, that is the sort of bit that we feel that we are competent to do. We’ve occasionally given lectures […]

Participant 1: […] So you know we’ve tried to do that and write articles and academic papers. We try to do our bit within our competence and where our talents lie, and I think more people should be doing the same [laughs]. I do not say that in any self-satisfied way because I think there is so much more that can be done.
Participant 2: we are thinking of making a seminar, at the end of this year, for our anniversary.

Participant 1: we could do the outreach a bit more for the young people, which is something that I feel quite strongly about.

Participant 2: you want me to go to the schools? Am I twiddling my thumbs all the time?

Author: even for budding archaeologists who are there on site, you are encouraging this divide between archaeologists and the public and I’ve gotten the impression from a lot of people who are not archaeologists that there is an elitist mentality.

Participant 1: there is that attitude, definitely. First of all […] and you’ve been at Żejtun, and I hope you didn’t have the same experience, but at the Xaghra circle people were getting territorial big-time. They would discuss what they were doing with the director but not with anyone else and we’re talking about the same archaeological dig, and these were people who were in my course.

Participant 2: yes I did get that impression as well. The ones who were down there in Tarxien Cemetery area, they were such snobs.

Author: and I think that members of the public realise this about archaeologists, they see this elitist mentality going around.

Participant 1: there is very much that attitude which needs to stop. But again going back to this awareness [pause], one of the reasons they are like is because everyone has a bit of expertise and is quite proud of it and wants to feel himself or herself perhaps a little bit special. [pause], but it is also because if people understand more what you are doing and they don’t want you to jump into trench for X, Y and Z, then perhaps there would be a better understanding between the two. At the moment there is no osmosis going on, there is just the barrier, there is no membrane, and that is very said. We get back to the same old thing which is education, education and education.

Author: ASM was found in 1993, what do you think the motivation behind it was?

Participant 2: if you get the MAR or our website you’ll find it in the front.

Author: yes obviously, but I was hoping there was a bit more […]

Participant 1: we weren’t there.

Author: okay so who is behind the founding of the ASM?

Participant 2: it was actually a medical doctor not an archaeology. Dr Tony Debono and I don’t even know who he founded it with.

Participant 1: there was an Englishman […]

Participant 2: what was his name? I can’t remember, not Kirkpatrick?

Participant 1: no I can’t remember, we should have the previous years but we don’t have.

Participant 1: it sounds a bit pretentious but [reading from website] it is concerned with all matters pertaining to archaeology. One of its objectives is to promote and enhance the study of archaeology at all levels [stops reading] which is something we try to do, [continues reading] it is not a pressure group […]

Participant 2: it is becoming a bit of a pressure group.

Participant 1: […] it believes that only when there is a sufficient interest and understanding of archaeological heritage amongst the public at large that this priceless heritage can be protected and preserved [stops reading]. Which is basically what we’ve just said [laughs]. [Pause] [Continues reading] The society organises meeting and seminars some of which are open to the public, and endeavours to maintain close relations with the SCH, Heritage Malta and the Department of Classics and Archaeology and to support the activities of all these. It also maintains a network of relations with the archaeological societies abroad and it publishes the MAR [stops reading]. When it started off in 1993 I think what Professor Debono had in mind was, remember that [pause] he is a generation older than us, anyway he wasn’t young, and he wanted it more to be and imagined it somehow as an informed conversation venue, where people of like-minded interest would gather to talk about archaeology and bring in innovation, talk about what is happening abroad, even take trips abroad. He specifically put it in the statute that it is not a pressure group […]

Participant 2: Fairclough was his name.

Participant 1: […] and the reason for that was that at the time DLH, which has always been a pressure group in a way because they were the ones that stood on top of the fortifications above the Excelsior with banners in their hand, and we’re talking about the 1970s here.
Author: DLH was set up in the 1965.

Participant 2: 1960s because in the 1970s there was a labour government and that came up under a nationalist government so that was the 1960s.

Participant 1: so yes they were a pressure group. He [Professor Debono] did not see himself in that role, and he didn’t really think that the ASM needed to be in that role because perhaps it was being fulfilled by others who had by that time especially, many more resources than we did and many more members. We have about 90 members?

Participant 2: hovering around the 90 members.

Participant 1: but [pause] DLH must have hundreds?

Participant 2: they’ve got actually only 1, 000 paid up but thousands on their books and database, as we have hundreds on ours.

Participant 1: 1,000 in Malta is a good number who actually pay.

Participant 2: I think it should be more for DLH.

Participant 1: no for sure but we are not talking about 100 like us.

Participant 2: […] yesterday told me that considering they have about 1,000, 100 is good.

Author: then the Facebook page of DLH has over 10, 000.

Participant 1: the business of the pressure group, stop me if you don’t agree with what I am saying, I think carried on while he had the presidency. When he relinquished the presidency […]

Participant 2: he was an absentee president because he lived abroad and that was the reason why we changed president

Participant 1: […] and I think even then we weren’t really thinking about pressure group.

Author: maybe there wasn’t really a need for it?

Participant 1: the need was there but voluntary organisations at the time didn’t have a commission ad it was all very liquid and fluid. In these last years there has [pause] and when I say years I mean the last 10 years.
Participant 2: but we have around the committee table there have been instances where people said ‘don’t forget we’re not a pressure group’. But now we are no longer saying that, we have kind of taken on the mantle of being a pressure group, through changing circumstances.

Participant 1: through necessity rather than volition to be honest, and also not only with archaeology which is obviously our main remit. Even in other areas where you can talk about archaeology in its widest context. We have set up and said things and written things and we have protested and sent representations etc… we set up the Facebook page as well to diffuse information out there about certain things. So we have become a bit of a pressure group or at least a group that looks beyond the conversation with a glass of wine in our hand [laughs].

**Author: How important is involving the public in the work of ASM?**

Participant 2: we have a programme of activities, of monthly lectures from October to May and we also have a number of site visits.

**Author: and those are open to all members of the public?**

Participant 2: the public is invited to all lectures, but the public is not invited to site visits.

Participant 1: It is not like they would turn up in the hundreds.

Participant 2: we have a blanket rule that we don’t invite the public. The reason why, I think, we don’t invite the public on site visits is possibly, I think space, you don’t want to have too many people. When we have a good site visit I think we recon about 25 people.

**Author: and these are all members of the ASM?**

Participant 2: they are all members and when I notice that there are people who are coming and I don’t know their faces and they’ve come a number of times to site visits because they’re brought by somebody, I sort of go up to them discreetly and I say ‘are you a member?’ and if they say no then I say ‘if you want to carry on coming to the site visits you need to be a member’.

**Author: and you don’t think people get alienated like that?**

Participant 2: no come on they can pay 15euros and have the privilege of attending.

Participant 1: and they get the MAR
Participant 2: and they get the MAR for free.

Participant 1: so really they’re just paying for the MAR.

**Author:** from listening to people talking and coming back to this elitist mentality, I do believe there are people who think the ASM is not inclusive

Participant 1: the amount of abuse that we get.

Participant 2: I did not know this, on the Facebook page? Well you are the administrator so you know what is going on. So we want to be democratic taking the literal meaning of the Greek origin of democratic, taking the people […]

Participant 1: the landed people, who own a house.

Participant 2: […] so we should reach out to everyone. We do not deliberately exclude people.

Participant 1: and it’s a hangover from the previous idea of we are a not a pressure group but more for conversations.

**Author:** even when it comes to student, I get the impression a lot that they do not feel invited

Participant 1: what? To the ASM?

Participant 2: what a cheek. I send our posters to the secretary […]

Participant 1: what do you want us to do? As someone said famously before me, they want a lobotomy, they want us to infiltrate their brains? I mean we give them and send them the posters, I have gone myself in the past on the first lecture of the year to explain what the ASM is, and nobody ever joined, and it’s even half price if you please, and they get the MAR. Our lectures are open to everybody and I know they tell the students about them. If you see an interesting title and you see open to the general public, I mean what else? We get and use our sponsorship to get foreign academics, I mean its cutting of your nose to spite the face by not attending.

Participant 2: […] so why should anybody take it upon themselves to be abusive to a society the aims of which are in the public interest? It shows a frame of mind and a lack of education in a broader sense. It is like somebody who yesterday said about the poor policeman who was
battered, it is all about education, and there was quite a reaction. We need more education to stop this sort of thing happening. It is true that a lot of it is down to education.

Participant 1: I did archaeology at university and we were three and used to have lectures with older students, so we were about 4 or 5. This year there is the same number.

Participant 2: I mean that is just sad.

Participant 1: this is indicative of the importance given to archaeology also by the authorities, because there should be work for archaeologists if SCH functioned as it should be, there should be work for many archaeologists. I remember going to the first lecture and them telling us ‘I’m very glad you joined the course, but I am telling you now there is no guarantee of a job. If you want to stay you are more than welcome’.

Author: a lot of archaeologists even approach us and tell us that it is not even worth it to work as an archaeologists and to choose a different path. It is very disheartening.

Participant 1: about the students, point taken, we will try and do more. What I was going to say was that I studied Italian and I remember one particular occasion where Roberto Pazzi, a best-selling author, was invited and they managed to get him to come and give us a lecture. We were about 15 studying Italian at the time, and I remember speaking to one of my colleagues, and I said ‘see you tomorrow at Roberto Pazzi’ and he said ‘I don’t know if I am coming’ and I said ‘Roberto Pazzi! He’s just written a new book’ and it was all in the news and we were studying Italian literature. Honestly it was the nearest I got to hitting anybody, they managed to get this author and we had the privilege of listening to an author who has just written this successful book and you’re studying contemporary Italian literature and you’re telling me that you’re going to stay at home? It was always the same story, every time, and they used to get us good people. The only time there was a good crowd, and only because it was compulsory, was a famous one, anyway, he was very famous on his lecture on Paulo Francesco Dante. The students never came, and that was true from 1988-1991 and I suggest that is still true today.

Participant 2: now it is even worse probably because as […], when suggestions are made to the students the answers are because they have jobs and shifts and whatever. So now it is even worse.

Author: how is that not a legitimate reason?
Participant 2: but as a Masters students are you obliged? Undergraduates should not work, it is part of the conditions and when they use work as an excuse not turn up at something organised by the Department of Archaeology that is just not on.

**Author:** What do you think about the collaboration between the heritage regulators and operators, heritage awareness groups and the Maltese public?

Participant 2: if by collaboration you mean [pause] they are non-existent.

Participant 1: yes I was waiting for that, it is non-existent.

Participant 2: when I see HM […] so how will HM and SCH have time to collaborate with heritage organisations and the general public? There is outreach now at HM and they have their open days, and last year we even give a talk about St Pauls Catacombs. But they do not have the time and it’s the human resources they lack.

**Author:** and I would consider HM to be one of the more resource rich heritage organisations in Malta

Participant 2: we read about the new CEO of HM, did you see who it is?

Participant 1: I don’t know about the new CEO, but I know about the executive.

Participant 1: the new CEO has just been appointed, Dr Anton Refalo, and he’s got an application pending for his ODZ hotel in Gozo. So how do you appoint someone like him? And how do you have faith in an organisation who before it was Joe Buttiġieġ, I don’t know if he was CEO but he was at the top, so when you think about it, how can I as an organisation which is interested in preserving and conserving have faith in somebody like that? So it puts me on my guard. [Pause].

**Author:** What do you think about the recent cases of Tal-Qares, Tal-Wej and Bulebel? Was ASM actively involved in the awareness raising?

Participant 1: Tal-Qares and Tal-Wej yes. We had newspaper articles that were based on our press releases so yes we made representations, and I think that is about it.

Participant 2: and Bulebel? No, and I don’t think there was archaeology there.

Participant 1: it was more nature oriented.
Author: Why do you think these particular cases received so much attention?

Participant 2: because they were more outrageous.

Participant 1: people in the know knew it was an area of archaeologist interest and Tal-Wej as well. And Tal-Qares it’s a bit of a difficult […]

Author: I think a lot of people would argue that the features of Tal-Qares, archaeologically speaking, are maybe not of as high of a value as Tal-Wej.

Participant 2: not in the field but in the one next to it.

Author: yes but they didn’t built there.

Participant 1: they had promised to retain the vine trenches and the silos, and the only thing that survives is the rubble wall. They just moved in and destroyed. Then Temple Rescue screamed and we screamed, but then in the other fields if you see the map, there are two fields, and one of them in particular has a lot of things. But again lots of hypogeum talk […]

Participant 2: that was just hype.

Participant 1: so that is what I mean by we wanted to create, and I mean we wrote in the paper quite a bit, and we were told by the SCH that the one with the, and there were no PA applications yet, but he had been negotiating with the owner of the land and he had said that yes we’ll do it on stilts and you’ll be able to have access. But then AX moved in and destroyed everything, so obviously you lose your faith in that. My argument was when I met up with the Declaration 180418, was why SCH having to negotiate terms with constructors.

Author: SCH should be the ones issuing them.

Participant 1: why should the superintendent be talking to for example, AX, and negotiating.

Participant 2: that is what they have been reduced to. They do not want to alienate anymore.

Participant 1: and they keep on going with impunity. The little teeth that SCH had wasn’t used and so they ended up in a position of absolute impotence. I mean even ERA which is an autonomous self-financing entity is ignored, so you can only imagine the SCH.
Participant 2: I don’t know if I am remembering this correctly, in the saga of the demolition of Villa St. Ignatius, as far as I know the SCH said ‘it can go’. I do not think it had the status to be protected, and people’s minds were boggles. How can a place like that not be protected?

Participant 1: what we had suggested in the declaration is that the scheduling passes to the SCH, because how can you have a PA that makes the choices of scheduling?

Participant 2: who schedules the Hal Tarxien as Grade 1?

Participant 1: depends when. Now?

Participant 2: this week Mintoff’s house in Hal Tarxien was schedules as Grade 1 and now has the equivalence with St John’s Co-Cathedral, because it’s an example of the vernacular mixed with the modern [pause], what about the true vernacular houses which have gone down?

Participant 1: unfortunately one of the differences of what is happening now as opposed to before, when many sins were committed, is that somebody’s told me the other day that everybody’s become a little bit Angelo Xuereb. If you give someone the permission for two more floors, they will build two more floors. I remember wanting to record in an article I wrote a long time ago, many years ago, in a journal, I wanted to record a small theatre which was built in a private garden in St Julians and I spoke to the daughter of the owner, and I said ‘I’m going to mention this because I know that certain theatre companies had used it’ and she said ‘yes, yes, yes’. The next day she came hurrying to my office telling me that she spoke to her father who said ‘make sure she doesn’t mention it at all’. Because obviously he was terrified that it was going to be scheduled, and this was somebody who is educated, but when people see that they might have the opportunity to make money for themselves or their families, this amoral familism, even though they don’t want to lose that opportunity they will put their education and their principles on the side and I was told not to mention it. I don’t know what happened to house now and I don’t even want to know, but that could happen because the regulations are not clear enough. This is what I mean by there has to be clear legislation and I’m not saying it has to be, what’s the word, [pause], draconian, but there has to be clear legislation based on certain principles [pause], and enforcement. Actually the regulations that we had, or had before the [pause] documenting thing about the ambiguity of levels of houses and things, the regulations are not bad, if you look at the law they’re not bad, it is the enforcement. People know they can get away with something. Very few people are prepared to say [pause], ‘no this is a beautiful piece of land, I own it but in a way it also belongs to Malta’. Who thinks like that? This altruistic. If
we are going to have a Malta that is sustainable in any sense at all, economically, aesthetically, environmentally, I’m sorry there has to be some control, you have to send your children to school, it’s an imposition, but you have to do it. This is something that [pause] should be regulated, and where there are issues, if you have a property owned by 101 siblings and cousins and there is a lot of argument about it, it should be requisitioned by the government and market price paid. It should be the last resort, I don’t agree with the government buying up the island.

**Author:** well there are probably so many properties on the island that are tied up in court for the very reason of a large number of siblings fighting over the property, that something needs to be done.

Participant 1: now the law has changed. If you get a certain percentage of the people involved to agree to one thing then they all have to abide by it. It changed recently but it is still very difficult. I think 95% of the work of the lawyers of Malta is about inheritance. We have this case in Ħal Ghaxaq […]

Participant 2: yes the garden and the house.

Participant 1: I was told in no uncertain terms by people, not the family, but ‘why did you sign it, it’s not your property, it is someone else’s’. Yes but I think there has to be regulation that says you can sell it how it is to be lived in but you cannot build two large five story apartment blocks in the garden.

**Author:** and this should apply to every vernacular structure of townhouse.

Participant 1: absolutely […] But one must understand that when you take an old house [pause] you have to adapt it to be liveable [pause]

**Author:** Are you aware heritage awareness groups are on the increase on social media?

Participant 1 and Participant 2: yes.

**Author:** Have you heard of Temple Rescue and Malta ARCH?

Participant 1 and Participant 2: yes.

**Author:** If yes, what do you think about the work being done by these groups?

[Pause]
Participant 1: there is a place for them

Participant 2: as long as they don’t bad-mouth us.

Participant 1: there is a place for them and absolutely I am a friend of the members on Facebook, that’s fine, and I am very happy that they are young and enthusiastic and go out and see things. [Pause], we need to sort of look at what they produce and sometimes they do give a bit of guess work which perhaps is not based on […]

Author: can this maybe be linked to the fact that access to information for people who don’t have a university account or are not academics, can often be very difficult?

Participant 1: that is one of the reasons of the archaeo-info posts, trying to show the lesser ones, like the Menhir, where was it? I forgot. But like the dolmen and the cart ruts. Yes fine.

Participant 2: we were invited to Temple Rescue. […] had gone, we had asked […] to go […]

Participant 1: it is a free world, absolutely. I wold definitely not like to be recorded saying […] there is room for everybody.

Author: Do agree with how archaeology/heritage is being portrayed through heritage awareness groups like these?

Participant 1: in a LovinMalta kind of way you know, it is not our style but if it’s theirs fine and brings in more interest from people […]

Participant 2: they need to get their facts right.

Participant 1: […] then great, absolutely fine, but yes they need to get their facts right [laughs].

Author: I think it comes back to lack of information and that a lot of the time information is not forthcoming from the people that hold the information

Participant 1: [pause] well we’re very happy to give out information if anybody asks us [laughs]. They see us […]

Participant 2: there are books.

Participant 1: […] as a bit of stuck up.
Author: academic books are often unaffordable, or at least for the average person on the street, and in today’s world people are used to having everything at their fingertips with the internet.

Participant 2: because they want it easier than it was in the past. They can have access to information through the traditional sources and then try to look for it on the internet.

Participant 1: and that is one of the reasons why we did about four different archaeo-info posts giving the Google Books links to [pause] the traveller documents, all these people, because we realised that it is part of our remit to give out information to people and we really felt that we weren’t doing it enough.

Participant 2: we saw it as an opportunity.

Participant 1: so now you can go on lists of things if you want to find out about things. Even about iċ-Ċirku for example, [pause], I did not know anything about it and it’s for sale about it, and we wanted to write about it, which we didn’t in the end. But I was interested in it, I did not know anything about it, I started looking up GG and I found when it had been scheduled, in 1934, that Żammit had written about it in his notes, you know, I found it all.

Participant 2: and that was through your judicious use of the internet […]

Participant 1: absolutely.

Participant 2: […] so these people that say that knowledge is being hugged close to the bosom are not […]

Participant 1: people at Temple Rescue should know that the scheduling is the GG

Author: it is not only about scheduling, it’s about finding out more about the sites, the GG will only give you the scheduling details, there is no information about what the so-called experts are saying about the site.

Participant 1: Żammit’s notes are in the, well I consulted in them at the library.

Participant 2: so why are they bothered by the fact that they don’t have access to information? Because they want it to fall into their laps. They don’t want ferret it out, and as we know the discipline of archaeology is ferreting out information, analysing it, it does not fall into your
lap. So when Temple Rescue and Malta ARCH come, we say listen we’ve got this information, go to the sources, and look for it.

**Author:** in today’s day and age a lot of people argue in favour of open access.
Appendix VII: Din L-Art Ħelwa

interview transcript
Interviewee: President Ms. Maria Grazia Cassar

Interviewer: Maja Sausmekat

Date: 17.05.2018

Venue: Din L-Art Ħelwa Headquarters, Valletta

Duration: 34.49 mins.

Background:

Ms. Maria Grazia Cassar became the Executive President of Din L-Art Ħelwa in 2015.

Author: What comes to mind when you hear the word landscape?

Cassar: [Pause] views, countryside, villages, towns, in the distance, that’s it. An open space.

Author: What comes to mind when you hear the word archaeology?

Cassar: Archaeology I think of something dug up, that’s the first thing that comes up. Obviously things from a very long time ago, usually fragments and things which have to be interpreted, you know, [pause] and put together and understood.

Author: What values do you attach to these (heritage, archaeology and landscape)?

Cassar: For me landscape I think has the highest value, in my range of values, [pause] because I feel very affected by what surrounds me, so I give it a lot of importance, and as much as I give the environment I live in, I give the external environment as much importance as the internal one. And archaeology, [pause] I give it a lot of importance, but I haven’t studied it enough, so I don’t always understand enough, I wish I could understand it more.

Author: Are you aware of any international conventions protecting landscapes or cultural heritage?

Cassar: Well, a lot of conventions. Starting from the Venice Charter and every couple of years another one comes out. I know a bit about the Narra Convention and on authenticity, and they, UNESCO, is always going into more detail and more specifics of very different areas. Even the intangible heritage has been identified, and preserving that has been identified.

Author: Are you aware whether Malta has signed or ratified any of these conventions?
Cassar: I know that there is the Valletta Convention that Malta obviously [laughs] signed and ratified. I believe that, I’m not sure, but I believe that we have ratified a few. I’m not sure if it is about 4 or 5, something like that.

Author: If not, what do you think the reasons for this are?

Cassar: I think the reasons [pause] are that there isn’t political will to abide and implement them. They would have to change all the laws and planning laws to fit them. And I don’t think, I think the problem is, that even if there is a political party in power who maybe agrees with them, they don’t want to be ones to have to be put down in history that they have stopped this type of development and progress in Malta.

Author: Have you heard of the European Landscape Convention?

Cassar: Yes.

Author: What do you know about the convention?

Cassar: I had read it a long time ago, I forgot what it said, but I think that it said that landscapes should be preserved and protected.

Author: yes, they don’t make a distinction between the outstanding landscapes of let’s say Hagar Qim and Mnajdra to the empty field across the road. For the convention, like you were saying, what is outside your home is just as important as what is inside your home.

Author: If yes, are you aware what the convention states on public participation and perception?

Cassar: No.

Author: When it comes to the European Landscape Convention, are you aware whether Malta has signed or ratified the convention?

Cassar: Signed but not ratified.

Author: just to fall back on public participation since it is one of the main articles of the convention. They basically say that it is not just the experts who have a right to define what a landscape is, the people who are living in or around it have just as much of a right, since it is their perception really that matters. And the ELC also stresses this element of
public participation, that we cannot have proper policy implementation, protection or management if we are not involving the people who are actually being affected by these decisions. So when it comes to that, do you think the heritage sector in Malta does enough to advocate for the involvement of the public?

Cassar: It is doing more, [pause] because in the NGOs in the heritage sector are also lobbyist and we have found that we are increasingly calling on the public to join in and back us, and the public is increasingly finding its own voice as well, and we’re seeing that a lot of spontaneous protests and public outcries are happening even though not led by a heritage organisation. So all in all, the organisations, at least I can speak for DLH which has been around for over 50 years, have had an influence on public participation. We started lobbying against the ruination of the landscape from the very beginning, from the first Excelsior was planned in 1969 and it was going to, and they demolished, part of a bastion to build it. And this was one of the first public movements against ruining the landscape. [Pause] and up to today, in fact I just came from a meeting, evaluating our decision to not uphold our appeal against the Mrieħel project. We were successful in the Town Squares, and this is going to have a very big impact on the landscape.

Author: To what extent do you think the public ‘voices’ should be able to inform policy and management?

Cassar: I think they should definitely participate, I think they should be heard and then serious informed evaluation should happen. And we should have the results of these evaluations, because sometimes when we have public consultations and the public is invited and a lot of input is given but we don’t see the result of the input. I know that on the PA website for every case you have every representation and you can see, and then you have the case officer report, which sort of makes a summary of it. But on big public consultations on policies etc… you don’t have the results published, and we’ve asked for it.

Author: What do you think the role of the public is in planning procedures?

Cassar: I think the planning procedures are good up to the decision-making stage. [Pause] so we’re talking about the public’s role. The public is allowed to speak if they have made a representation, but very often the decisions are made regardless, so you’re talking and it’s falling on deaf ears. I mean the public isn’t always informed and technical, you know, many times it is emotional and it is how it affects them directly.
Author: What do you think the role of the public should be in planning procedures?

Cassar: But I think that alongside the public there should be a public technical, autonomous [pause] review, you know, in the process. The case officer should be that. But I think that it should be somebody external as well.

Author: To what extent is the public involved early on and throughout the process? There is a widespread view that participants should be involved early on in the process, the opposite extreme is when the public is involved in the final stages.

Cassar: At the beginning when the notice goes up for development they are allowed one month to send in a representation, and then that is taken up and a summary is made. And then the case officer will present the case at the PA. First the developer will present his case, then the case officers and then the public is allowed to comment. And then they talk and discuss amongst themselves and they decide.

Author: and how is this made for the public? This process of sending in a representation?

Cassar: no that is very easy. The only thing is sometimes what isn’t very straightforward is that you have to look for the applications because they are published on the GG and you have to sift through them. You need to be aware that something is going to be published, or do it on a regular basis and when see that it is ODZ you pick it up straight away and you check what it is all about. But then there is a certain amount of having to be accustomed to using the Map server and the website of the PA. But I think that the public is becoming better at it.

Author: do you think this can act as a deterrent to the public?

Cassar: no now everybody. They phone up DLH to tell us about things [laughs].

Author: How easy is the process of public participation made for the public? Notice, timing, location and methods of involving the public

Cassar: Notices are published in the GG of which you need to be aware, or you have to sift through it on a regular basis to see what is happening and to pick up on anything.

Author: How much of an influence does the public have on planning decisions?
Cassar: As I said sometimes it feels as if it is falling on deaf ears. But then when there is a lot of public participation and there is a feeling of public anger, you know, then it does have an influence.

**Author: How important do you think public participation is?**

Cassar: Well, I think it is important that everybody cares about what is going on around them. The only thing is that sometimes it is a case of not […]

**Author: this NIMBY syndrome of not wanting something in my backyard?**

Cassar: […] exactly, not wanting anything to happen in my backyard but then I want to be able to have the option to do it.

**Author: What do you think the Maltese public’s opinion is public participation?**

Cassar: The Maltese are becoming better at speaking out, at one time it was nothing. They’re becoming quite outspoken, that’s what I feel insomma. The Maltese character is a bit of a fighter, so they want to go out.

**Author: What do you think is being done to encourage the public to engage with its heritage?**

Cassar: To engage. To participate in heritage events? Even local councils have a very good role in creating awareness about heritage and you know there is an increase, but more can be done. I think more can be done in education, about heritage, really instilling love of heritage from a young age.

**Author: Do you think a top-down or a bottom-up approach is more appropriate for these challenges?**

Cassar: I mean the best would be a bottom-up, I think that would be the most efficient, because if you educate and sensitise, I think that is the best way. But then ultimately decisions, good decisions, have to be taken from the top. So it has to be both ways.

**Author: How do you think the Maltese public engages with its heritage?**

Cassar: I think they love these open days, they’re very good. Festivals, and things where you can take out your family. [Pause] so I think the public is becoming more interested, even
museums when there are the open days. Museums are becoming more visitor friendly, they engage a bit more, they do things for children, so it is very good.

Author: What are the main activities that the Maltese public engage in when it comes to heritage? (Museum visits, exhibitions, open days, public lectures etc…)

Cassar: Open days, festivals, museums.

Author: Do you think there has been a shift in these attitudes in recent times?

Cassar: Yes I think so, there has been a shift, but then on the other hand I see that there is also an increase in ignorance. I don’t know, there is maybe some, I don’t if it has to do with today’s times, where internet or no not internet, where there is more entertainment, and there is a drive to having fun but in a certain way, and this doesn’t always appeal to everyone. I mean heritage would not appeal to certain people, to a lot of them, unfortunately.

Author: What do you think the Maltese public values more and why- of the following: money, convenience, environment, health, culture, and heritage?

Cassar: Well I think short-term gain is always top [laughs], unfortunately, they want to make hay while the sun shines or let’s say have a good life now. Before it was the opposite, leaving for your children was normal, you suffer but your children don’t, it was this mentality, up to my parent’s mentality. Since then, I don’t know, it’s been all about, maybe because there was more affluence and comfort, no struggle, everybody wants to have it easier. But then we don’t realise just what quality of life means, the focus on materialism, for me, destroys quality of life. And even sounds, noise, excessive noise, those all affect quality of life.

Author: Do you think the Maltese public only becomes concerned with archaeology when it is under threat?

Cassar: Sometimes. Yes. But I don’t know how to answer that actually, because I feel that we need to be able to identify and care for our heritage from before and really look after it. Like you said, not at the end when it is threatened. For example last time someone stopped me in the road, and this person I know was a gardener, a simple person, and he told me ‘they’re going to knock down the oldest houses in Swieqi’. Now Swieqi everything is relatively new, now there are a couple of post war houses, either before the war or straight after. So even he was considered, and it shows that everyone is affected.
Author: What do you know about the heritage legislation of Malta?

Cassar: The Cultural Heritage Act I know is being updated, reviewed and hasn’t been implemented yet. I know that there is the CoG which has been reconvened. What is it about? It hasn’t met for about 3-4 years, and basically it is representatives from all heritage bodies, including the SCH, HM, DLH, the church commission, Wirt Artna, and they discuss legislation and topics of relevance to cultural heritage of the moment, even things like illegal trafficking of antiquities.

Author: Are you familiar with how the heritage sector is organized? Do you know the different roles that the regulator and operator play?

Cassar: More or less yes.

Author: Din L-Art Ħelwa was founded in 1965, what do you think the motivation behind it was?

Cassar: Back then I think it was a sense of okay now we’re independent and we need to look after ourselves and do something about it. In wanting this great desire to create a volunteer movement and to do something physically, you know, they used to go on sites every weekend, groups of teenagers of DLH, and actually clear the site from all the overgrown weeds, trees, prickly pears and things like that, and recover monuments which were abandoned and nobody looked after them. So that is what I think was the greatest motivation, wanting to do something tangible for our own country, which was ours now, and being part of it.

Author: do you think this had something to do with wanting reclaim Maltese heritage?

Cassar: no not only, but wanting reclaim Maltese heritage and be involved in it, doing something and not just complaining, but taking up responsibility, our own responsibility.

Author: Are the reasons for its creation still valid today?

Cassar: Yes, very much. In fact we still have the same mission, it has grown, the organisation has grown a lot, but the values and ideals are still the same.

Author: Dutch anthropologist Jeremy Boissevain, once argued that DLH was created at a time where a shift in public perceptions towards their heritage was on the rise, do you agree with this statement?
Cassar: Yes that is what I think.

Author: he writes about this amoral familism and how the Maltese are very concerned with their family units but that there was shift that was happening in the 1960s and the 1970s that people were starting to become more aware of their surroundings, and he specifically mentions DLH as one of the products.

Author: What do you think has changed since the founding of DLH in 1965?

Cassar: Definitely the size. The level of professionalism, not saying that it wasn’t professional back then because when we look at records and see how detailed everything is, it was always that the foundations were very solid and strong. But what has changed was that first of all it’s grown, we have 150 volunteers, I mean we have more sites to look after, we have restored nearly 50 monuments, and the guardianships. We have 19 that are in guardianship or trust with the church or the government and we open them, and we have 150 volunteers doing that. Plus the office has grown, the work of the office has grown and then we have the side of heritage and environment protection which is lobbying side which has grown. It is a job on its own, and we have to employ professionals to keep up with the objections.

Author: What are the aims of the NGO? What does the group hope to achieve?

Cassar: Well our mission statement says to promote the protection and safeguarding of natural and cultural heritage, landscape, towns and villages. I think our biggest challenge is just that, at the moment. We’ve saved a lot of monuments but a lot of monuments remain undiscovered, but if we are going to continue bulldozing our own heritage, our even humble heritage. Our biggest challenge is making authorities understand that a house, an old house, which is medieval and which has no features, nothing, is worth preserving because of its age. And because we are not going to replace it. We cannot replace it. It is decreasing so much at such an alarming rate and also we are ruining the traditional, apart from the medieval and the vernacular, we are ruining the traditional [pause] style, we’re actually our losing our traditional style. Not only the village cores, image even these town likes Fleur de Lys, and Santa Venera, where you have streets of townhouses, which have very traditional period architecture, they’re not that old, but they’re pre-war, you know, built in the traditional style, proportions, everything is the same, and we’re just wiping them out. We’re not going to recognise what is Maltese architecture anymore, and that is really sad.

Author: you think this is why the Chamber of Architects came up with the declaration?
Cassar: yes, we did it together, but they took a quite a leading role.

Author: How important is involving the public in the work of DLH?

Cassar: Very important and in fact we do have a lot of outreach, and public lectures. It is very important and we do our best.

Author: What does DLH do in order to encourage public engagement with heritage?

Cassar: We’re doing for example, at the moment, a lot of clean ups with school children, almost every week. We have GC who is taking care of that. We have our magazine, okay it is not so often, but we write in the papers, we get our articles out, and we have our monthly lectures which are always quite well attended, about different topics.

Author: and the youths? DLH is well-known for its youth programmes.

Cassar: Yes. We could be more active, but we still have things. This year we’re going to have another restoration camp. In fact yes, we’re doing that again.

Author: What do you think about the collaboration between the heritage sector, heritage awareness groups and the Maltese public?

Cassar: In general it’s good, but we need to step it up.

Author: What do you think about the recent cases of Tal-Qares, Tal-Wej and Bulebel? Was DLH actively involved in the awareness raising?

Cassar: Yes we were. We had joined press releases with the ASM.

Author: Why do you think these particular cases received so much attention?

Cassar: Well I think in Tal-Wej I think there was a very obvious and good grounds attempt at trying to get something that he[the applicant] wasn’t supposed to, so that archaeological dig was a real case of fraud almost you would say, you know. Besides it’s an area which is surrounded by a built up area where the public really likes that open space.

Author: Do you think this is linked to a change in attitudes towards heritage in Malta?

Cassar: Yes, definitely. It does.

Author: Are you aware heritage awareness groups are on the increase on social media?
Cassar: Yes for sure.

Author: Have you heard of Temple Rescue and Malta ARCH?

Cassar: Yes I have.

Author: If yes, what do you think about the work being done by these groups?

Cassar: I don’t know much about them to tell you truth, but I’m sure it will be good. I mean whatever they do I’m sure it’s good. It is better to speak up and something than do nothing at all.

Author: Do agree with how archaeology/heritage is being portrayed through heritage awareness groups like these?

Cassar: I have no idea how they portray heritage.

Author: Does DLH interact or collaborate with other heritage awareness groups?

Cassar: Yes we do, I mean we collaborated and still do with the 22, and we’re one of the 22 that signed the declaration. We collaborate with other groups yes, with the FAA, ASM, [pause] can’t think at the moment but we do, yes.
Appendix VIII: Moviment Graffiti

interview transcript
Interviewee: Erica Schembri
Interviewer: Maja Sausmekat
Date: 08.06.2018
Venue: Valletta
Duration: 27.39 mins

Background:
Erica Schembri is a member of the NGO Moviment Graffitti.

**Author: What comes to mind when you hear the word landscape?**

Schembri: landscape, [pause], I guess the first thing that comes to mind would definitely be the natural environment, like fields, but I would also say part of the built environment, what you can see. The first thing would definitely be natural though.

**Author: What comes to mind when you hear the word archaeology?**

Schembri: [Pause], ruins maybe [pause], artefacts, historical artefacts.

**Author: What values do you attach to these (heritage, archaeology and landscape)?**

Schembri: I think there is definitely cultural value, and historical values, knowing where people came from and giving a sense of identity.

**Author: Are you aware of any international conventions protecting landscapes or cultural heritage?**


**Author: Are you aware whether Malta has signed or ratified any of these conventions?**

Schembri: No

**Author: If not, what do you think the reasons for this are?**

Schembri: No

**Author: Have you heard of the European Landscape Convention?**

Schembri: No
Author: What do you know about the convention?

Schembri: Nothing.

Author: If yes, are you aware what the convention states on public participation and perception?

Schembri: No

Author: When it comes to the European Landscape Convention, are you aware whether Malta has signed or ratified the convention?

Schembri: No

Author: In terms of public participation, do you think the heritage sector in Malta does enough to advocate for the involvement of the public?

Schembri: I don’t think that you can put the sector all in one bag. The PA, I think that, don’t do anywhere near enough. As for the SCH I believe that yes they are trying, but they are very limited. When it comes to policies I believe they need more power.

Author: To what extent do you think the public ‘voices’ should be able to inform policy and management?

Schembri: I think one of the major problems is that for examples the PA when it comes to scheduling doesn’t even have public consultations, the public doesn’t really have a chance to voice their opinion.

Author: To what extent should the public be allowed to have an opinion though?

Schembri: I think they should have throughout. Maybe not right from the get-go, when you have people conducting studies, again, not commissioned by interested parties but by people who really just care about heritage and there is no money and profit and business involved. [Pause] so when they are conducting research the public can wait and then the research can be presented to the public and they should have access throughout.

Author: What do you think the role of the public is in planning procedures?

Schembri: I think the role is quite limited, first of all there is this thing of a public hearing which is a bit of a problem. Even when it comes to NGOs, they usually do work with the public,
I mean more or less, [pause] but I don’t think they have enough resources either, even financially it costs a bit to have some outreach. I don’t think there are enough resources.

**Author:** What do you think the role of the public should be in planning procedures?

Schembri: [Pause]. I think unfortunately there is not enough dissemination of information and I don’t think the public, and I speak for myself as well when it comes to this, [pause], I don’t think anyone finds it easy to find information, so I think when it comes to education it should be a bit more widespread when it comes to these things.

**Author:** To what extent do you think that public participation does occur in planning procedures in Malta?

Schembri: in planning procedures? [Pause] to be honest other than public consultations I don’t know about anywhere else where the public is involved.

**Author:** To what extent is the public involved early on and throughout the process? There is a widespread view that participants should be involved early on in the process, the opposite extreme is when the public is involved in the final stages.

Schembri: are they? [Laughs]

**Author:** How easy is the process of public participation made for the public? Notice, timing, location and methods of involving the public

Schembri: not easy at all, [pause], I think the problem is not just with this. Information from the PA in general, because it is not the first time that I’ve met people who did not know where to find the consultations and notices, than people who actually knew.

**Author:** so you need to know where to look?

Schembri: yes. They changed the website and it is more user friendly than it used to be, but it is still not where it should be.

**Author:** How much of an influence does the public have on planning decisions?

Schembri: not much unfortunately [laughs].

**Author:** How important do you think public participation is?
Schembri: well I think it should be very important, I mean at the end of the day when it comes to cultural heritage, it should belong to everyone, basically. [Pause] and I think if people were more directly involved they would appreciate it more.

**Author:** What do you think the Maltese public’s opinion is public participation?

Schembri: I think it’s a mix of not caring and having a defeatist mentality unfortunately.

**Author:** What do you think is being done to encourage the public to engage with its heritage?

Schembri: I think some things are being done from small NGOs, but again they don’t have the legal standing or the resources.

**Author:** so we’re saying grassroots?

Schembri: exactly. There was that declaration from Wirtna that will hopefully give some more power to the SCH, but still.

**Author:** Do you think a top-down or a bottom-up approach is more appropriate for these challenges?

Schembri: I always believe in bottom-up because when you have something that starts from the bottom, is from the grassroots you have people who are genuinely interested, there are no ulterior motives and it’s more organic and more authentic.

**Author:** How do you think the Maltese public engages with its heritage?

Schembri: I think natural heritage is a bit underappreciated in the Maltese Islands and especially amongst the Maltese population. With other sites, historic sites, I think it depends as well. For example, if you get a historic building in Valletta, they would be against its destructions, they would care about it. [Pause] if a historical townhouse in Sliema was about to be destroyed they wouldn’t care. I don’t think we have a general appreciation for heritage.

**Author:** What are the main activities that the Maltese public engage in when it comes to heritage? (Museum visits, exhibitions, open days, public lectures etc…)

Schembri: I think that those are the most popular ones. I was happy to see that there are more of these open days, and I’ve only been twice actually but I was surprised at the turnout. [Pause]
in Rome you always need to pay except for the last Sunday of the month, and I think that is okay if you’re a family or student, you know?

**Author:** What do you think about the attitudes of the Maltese public towards their heritage?

Schembri: [Pause] I think [pause], I think unfortunately like everything else, some things are very politicised [pause], I’d say they are on polar opposites and we don’t really get the general idea. I think sometimes we dismiss things too easily, like we don’t realise that if it’s gone it’s impossible to get back.

**Author:** Do you think there has been a shift in these attitudes in recent times?

Schembri: I do think it is getting better, not at the planning level, but the grassroots level yes.

**Author:** What do you think the Maltese public values more and why- of the following: money, convenience, environment, health, culture, and heritage?

Schembri: so [pause[, I think [pause], short term is kind of always in the mentality of the Maltese, but unfortunately I think in recent years, due to the political situation, I think short term gains and financial gains are what the Maltese prioritise.

**Author:** Do you think the Maltese public only becomes concerned with archaeology when it is under threat?

Schembri: if I think of society at large, and I don’t want to generalise because I know there are people who work all year round, but I think it is something. I think we tend to [pause] appreciate things when we’re on the verge of losing them.

**Author:** What do you know about the heritage legislation of Malta?

Schembri: [pause], so there are the grading’s right? The way they are termed in the law I don’t think is bad. I think the problem comes with the interpretation of that grading.

**Author:** Are you familiar with how the heritage sector is organized? Do you know the different roles that the regulator and operator play?

Schembri: not much no.

**Author:** Moviment Graffiti was established in 1994, what do you think the motivation behind it was?
Schembri: [Pause], there were various reasons, but mainly something that we still hold today, is that we did not want to focus on just single issues but on a much wider perspective. Because we believe that if you just focus on single issues without changing the underlying system it will just manifest itself in something else. We don’t believe in ranking importance, is it human rights, women’s rights or the environment that is the most important? MG was invented in a way to tackle the underlying problem, which we believe is a hyper-capitalist system, which puts wealth at the forefront.

Author: What are the aims of Moviment Graffitti? What does the group hope to achieve?

Schembri: well, I guess fighting this [hyper-capitalism] is our main aim. On more tangible issues right not we have, well the environment, trying to safeguard the little there is left. We are all working on women’s rights because we believe that they are still quite lacking in Malta especially when it comes to reproductive rights and even just knowledge. [Pause] we also have the campaign on rent, it’s a problem now, but it’s going to become a huge problem in the near future. Legalisation of Marijuana is another issue that we have. So basically we always look at putting people, empowering people with this bottom-up approach, but then we also have I guess more specialised campaigns.

Author: What do you think has changed since the founding of Moviment Graffitti in 1994?

Schembri: MG I think has definitely changed in terms of thinking more long-term, in fact, before there used to be a lot of protests, they were necessary but they were more reactionary. Whereas now I think we’re working on more campaigns rather than single actions here and there, and becoming more proactive rather than reactive. I think what is also good is that we work with more NGOs and with more residents which is a much more organic and grassroots approach and its getting all these people together at the end of the day which is what we want, a community.

Author: and what do you think has changed in Malta?

Schembri: [Pause]. Even though I said we are still working with women’s rights and we are, I still think it has gotten better. I remember MG was one of the first organisations that started talking about this and the backlash was much bigger before. There is the animal circuses that MG really helped ban in Malta. it was the origin of Front Harsien ODZ, it was MG, Kamp
Emergenza Ambjent at Manuel Islands, which kind of took a life of its own, but it was the brain child of MG.

Author: but even there, you took the approach of involving the community

Schembri: I think you need to do that, it’s useless just having a couple of people doing something without involving the residents, it is what we want and it is to empower people and make them realise that they don’t need to rely on others or going to a representative.

Author: How important is involving the public in the work of Moviment Graffitti?

Schembri: as we’ve said, very important [laughs].

Author: What does Moviment Graffitti do to encourage public engagement with heritage, be it natural or cultural?

Schembri: so I think one of the things we always keep in mind is not to do things alone. [Pause] anything we work on, more so now, we try to involve the public. The most recent case is Pembroke, the ITS things, where logistically we helped, and we’re still have meetings with the Pembroke residents, we let them, obviously we have experience and we give advice, but we try to let them do their thing. I mentioned the Gżira residents. What else? There was Bulebel, even though it wasn’t our site, we contact Wirt iż-Żejtun and you know we always try to reach to people involved and if they need our help, we’re always there.

Author: What do you think about the collaboration between the heritage sector, heritage awareness groups and the Maltese public?

Schembri: to different extents I would say. In the sense that the planning sector is still a bit cut off from the public, maybe there is this disconnect, and part of it comes from the public not having enough awareness. I would say that for example HM do work with the public so I don’t think there a problem with that I do believe that they [heritage] could be doing more if there were changed regarding legislation. I mean even having more resources at hand could make a huge difference.

Author: What do you think about the recent cases of Tal-Qares, Tal-Wej and Bulebel? Was Moviment Graffiti involved in the awareness raising?

Schembri: Tal-Wej and Bulebel yes, but Tal-Qares?
Author: Tal-Qares was the case in Mosta, next to LIDL?

Schembri: yes okay. I didn’t know that was Tal-Qares. So Bulebel definitely, MG but more so Kamp Emergenza Ambjent, although it is a separate thing all the members of MG are also in Kamp Emergenza Ambjent. Tal-Wej I think, I couldn’t say we were really involved, there were a couple of shares definitely, and I don’t know if one us tried to get in touch, I know there was a lot of interaction on social media. Tal-Qares we weren’t involved though.

Author: Why do you think these particular cases received so much attention?

Schembri: I think one thing that really helped was a lot of exposure on social media. For example with Bulebel there wasn’t a time where I would open Facebook and not find something, even just a post or a mention. I don’t think protesting should be the go-to, if you had to have one every week it wouldn’t work. I mean it’s a been-there-done-that, it should be the last approach and if there are other means, then go ahead. Even historically, I don’t think the Maltese understand what protesting is, it’s like this big thing which might be off putting at times, which is something we would like to change. I think it was a good approach they [Wirt iż-Żejtun] took, and there are other ways of getting to the public which we need to realise and recognize.

Author: Do you think this is linked to a change in attitudes towards heritage in Malta?

Schembri: I don’t it’s just exposure, I also think that we’ve come to a point where it’s almost a matter of urgency and emergency. We’ve destroyed so much of our heritage that if we don’t protect what we have left in couple of years there won’t be anything. So yes, I do think that people are becoming aware because of this reason.

Author: Are you aware that heritage awareness groups are on the increase on social media?

Schembri: actually yes [laughs]. Sometimes we get this mention in a comment or something and it would be a new group which appeared.

Author: If yes, have you heard of Temple Rescue and Malta ARCH?

Schembri: that was the one I was actually thinking of, yes.

Author: If yes, what do you think about the work being done by these groups?
Schembri: [Pause], I think it is quite positive in the sense that, I’ve some videos which I think are very informative and I think that they, if you give information to people they will be more interested, and if you give out information that isn’t this technical jargon that doesn’t engage people. So I think when it comes to engaging people they are doing really well.

**Author:** Do you agree with how heritage is being portrayed through heritage awareness groups like these?

Schembri: in what sense?

**Author:** like you were saying, its jargon free?

Schembri: it depends on what their aims is. If there aim is to sort of change legislation and talk with authorities than you need to have the jargon, and unfortunately with some of these people that is the only way to get through. However, if you want to involve the public it is important to use layman’s terms, so I think they’re doing well. Unfortunately I think that the approach in Malta is always either or, and I don’t think that people realise that you need both. I would try to have basically both targets, have the technical documents because you might need that but also if I’m going to go and talk to a regular person on the street, those documents are useless. Its heritage, our heritage, and I don’t think that only specialised people should be allowed to speak about it.

**Author:** Does Moviment Graffitti interact or collaborate with other heritage awareness groups?

Schembri: yes definitely. I don’t think we’ve ever collaborated in other ways than social media, but yes if the chance arose, yes why not. Some of them actually are, we are starting, planning a campaign, which does work on not just the natural environment but heritage is included and we have approached some, we’ll see if they accept to be part of the campaign, but it is still in the pipeline.
Appendix IX: Wirtna Declaration
The Wirtna Declaration was signed on the International Day for Monuments and Sites, 18th April 2018, by 22 organisations, in a bid to provide a united front in favour of enacting new measures to ‘address the state’s ‘intolerable’ failure to safeguard the country’s patrimony as guaranteed by the Constitution’. Amongst these 22 signatories are Malta’s more established NGOs such as Din L-Art Ħelwa, Flimkien Għal Ambjent Aħjar, The Archaeological society, and Wirt iż-Żejtun, as well as University of Malta departments, and citizen-led groups such as Temple Rescue and Malta. ARCH. The declaration was created in order to address the rapid changes that have occurred in Malta as a direct result of the most recent construction boom, and has resulted in much of the island’s heritage facing the threat of destruction.

The proposals of the declaration include:

- An inventory of assets scheduled or identified for scheduling,
- Conservation experts and NGOs to be actively involved in the decision-making processes,
- Ratification of international cultural heritage conventions,
- Government to ensure developer-funded archaeological investigations are fully published and recorded,
- Public Heritage Property Fund to allow the State to intervene and acquire key properties of strategic cultural significance in exceptional circumstances.

These are just some of the points raised by the Declaration, however, they reflect the current status of archaeological practice in Malta. This includes the lack of publication as well as the need to sign and ratify key international heritage conventions, such as the ELC and the Faro Convention. The fact that the Declaration was signed by citizen-led groups as well as established NGOs also reflects a change in public awareness, and the need to further integrate the public into the management and protection of cultural heritage in Malta. The full Declaration, including the signatory parties, can be found below.
DECLARATION

We, the undersigned, representing entities active in the field of cultural heritage in Malta and Gozo,

Refer to the Declaration of Principles of the Constitution of Malta, and in particular Article 9 which stipulates that “the State shall safeguard the landscape and the historical and artistic patrimony of the Nation”;

Conscious of the fact that we all spend most of our lives within the built environment, be it at home, at a place of work, or whilst participating in education, business or relaxation, and that the state of the built environment has a major impact on the quality of life of all citizens of these islands;

Concerned about the rapid changes that are taking place, dramatically and irreversibly transforming the distinctive architectural character, streetscape and skyline of our towns and villages, which have evolved harmoniously over several generations, and which are now being severely compromised and even at risk of being lost;

Alerted by the unprecedented construction pressures that have recently intensified, even within our Urban Conservation Areas, to the extent that we are now witnessing indiscriminate demolition of built and other cultural assets in these areas, and a general impoverishment of the quality of our urban areas;

Concerned about the fact that planning systems have often favoured speculation, rather than the more fundamental needs of society, and concerned about the ever-increasing incidence of permits granted for demolition of heritage buildings, without any regard given to their architectural significance, nor to the cultural and social considerations that are important to the community;

Convinced that our heritage buildings, and the wider cultural landscape, are irreplaceable assets that also have a real economic value that can contribute to the creation of wealth when positioned within a planning framework that aims for sustainable development;

Aware of the importance of archaeological remains that represent a unique and invaluable part of Malta’s cultural heritage, and of their significance within a broad Mediterranean context;

Aspiring to promote a built environment which constitutes a healthy synergy and balance between the existing built fabric and new urban developments of high quality, as opposed to short-sighted speculation;

HEREBY DECLARE THAT WE CAN NO LONGER TOLERATE THE CURRENT FAILURE OF THE STATE TO SAFEGUARD THE PATRIMONY OF THE NATION AS GUARANTEED BY OUR CONSTITUTION

Therefore, calling upon Government to shoulder its responsibilities for the upholding of the Constitution, we propose and demand:

- That a single integrated Public Inventory of Cultural Assets that are scheduled or identified for scheduling, or worthy of scheduling, be urgently compiled, and maintained, under the Cultural Heritage Act, and not under the Development Planning Act, and that such inventory be binding on planning decisions;

- That conservation experts and heritage NGOs are invited to be actively and genuinely involved in policy-making in the legislative processes relating to development planning;

- That the protection status of Urban Conservation Areas, and the areas immediately surrounding Urban Conservation Areas, as well as the significance of Grade 2 scheduling, be urgently redefined, so as to give effective protection to the cultural assets therein, rather than promote “façadism” or token, and effectively meaningless, preservation of fragments, such as niches, plaques, and sculptural features;

- That special attention be given to the protection of traditional skylines of historic towns and villages, and that permissible building heights as designated in the Local Plans do not compromise these skyline views;

- That the current, rather ineffectual, protection of heritage assets within Urban Conservation Areas be strengthened by a blanket presumption against the demolition of buildings, or parts of buildings and gardens, as well as by a blanket presumption against the building of additional floors above the existing, unless it could incontrovertibly be demonstrated that no additional damage to the character of the Urban Conservation Area would result;

- That the European Landscape Convention (Florence, 2000) be ratified by Malta, without further delay;

- That the Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (Faro, 2005), be signed and ratified by Malta, without further delay;

- That Government takes suitable measures to ensure that provision is made in the budget of developer-funded archaeological investigations to ensure a timely publication of a summary scientific record, as well as the full publication and recording of the findings, as required by the European Convention on the Protection of Archaeological Heritage (Valletta, 1992), to which Malta is a party;

- That Government provides its agents, primarily the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage, with the necessary tools and resources to safeguard our cultural heritage in an effective and lasting way, within a strong legislative framework;

- That, in addition to schemes such as Inretawwa Dawk, public funds be made available to allow investment in public infrastructure, including pavement and street quality, especially in Urban Conservation Areas, so that these are truly given life again, to the social benefit of existing residents;

- That a public Heritage Property Fund be created, which could be used in exceptional circumstances by the State, to intervene and acquire key properties, at market value, which have strategic cultural significance, so that these properties can be restored and redeveloped in an appropriate way, before being put back on the market to recover some, if not all, of the funds expended, or otherwise to be put to communal or societal use.

Valletta, 18th April 2018

OUR LEGACY - WIRNTA