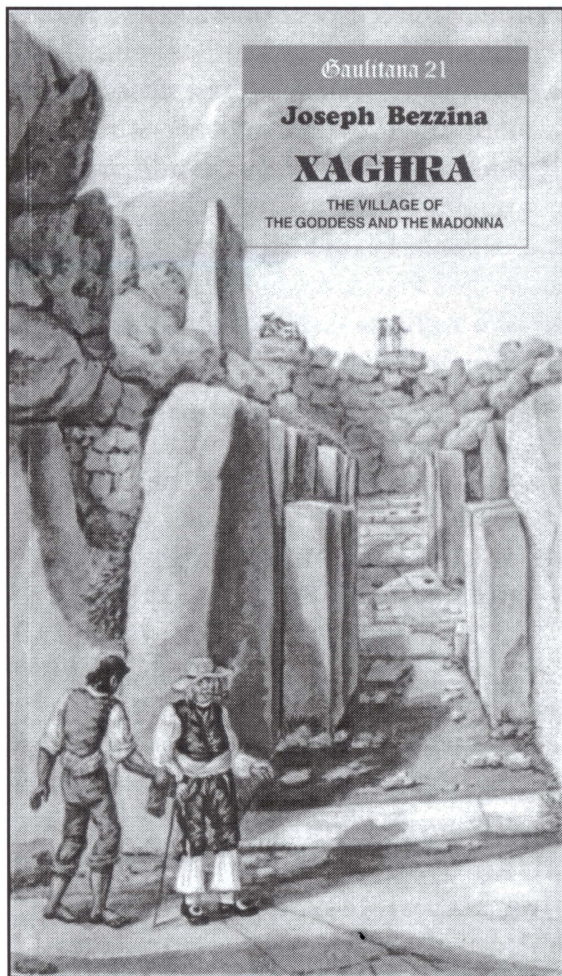


## Book Review:



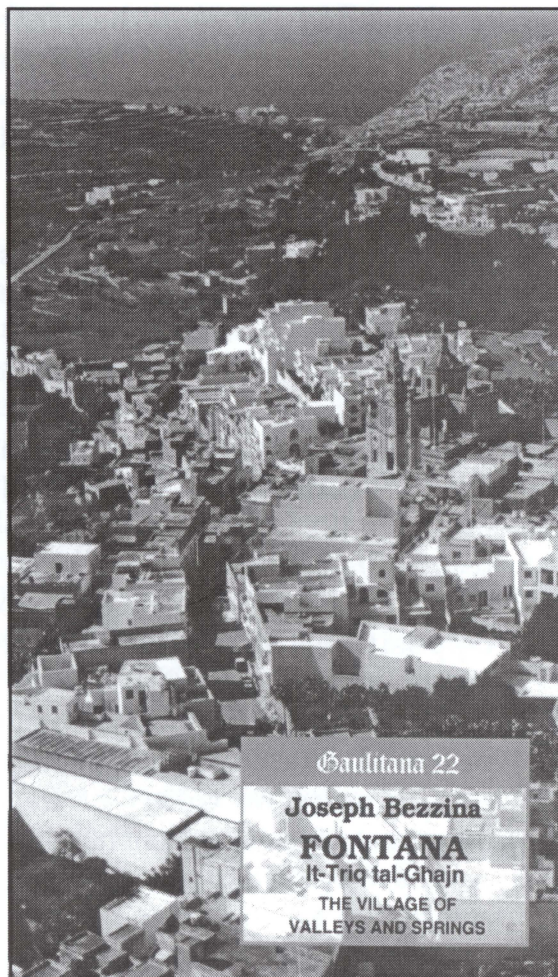
Rev Dr. Joseph Bezzina is well known for his writings of Maltese (mainly Gozitan) history. He is Senior Lecturer in History in the Faculties of Theology and Arts in the University of Malta, the Sacred Heart Seminary, Gozo, and the Interdiocesan Seminary of Albania.

His publications include a series of booklets, published under the general rubric of *Gaultitana*, dealing with separate aspects of life in Gozo, past and present. Two of the latest in the series (No 21 and 22) deal respectively with the village of Xaghra, and that of Fontana in Gozo.

The book on **Xaghra - The Village of the Goddess and the Madonna** gives a general introduction to the historical and demographic aspect of this village. It then covers the prehistoric sites which make this village so unique in Malta. These include not only the Ggantija temples, but a number of other lesser known sites, including the Santa Verna Temple, the Gozo Stone Circle, the Roman baths at Ramla Bay etc. It also describes other landmarks of interest. Another chapter deals with the churches, chapels and niches in this village.

Another of Dr Bezzina's books deals with the village of **Fontana (It-Triq tal-Ghajn)**. This booklet gives us a historical introduction to the village, and then proceeds to a description of the principal attractions, including the *Ghajn il-Kbira*, the well-known *Wied Il-Lunzjata*, *Xlendi Bay*, as well as a reference to some Punic tombs and Roman wrecks. There is also a chapter on the churches and chapels of the village, as well as other relevant information.

This series of publications provides a useful and growing encyclopaedia of information about Gozo and its history. The books are well-presented, easy to read, and fully illustrated.



# EUGÈNE FENECH, A RENOWNED SURGEON BORN IN LATE 18th CENTURY GOZO

Eugène Fenech, *Mémoires d'un officier de santé maltais dans l'armée française. (1786-1839).* Texte établi, présenté et annoté par Richard Spiteri, éd. La Vouivre, Paris, 2001, ill., bibl., 201p. ISBN 291243114X. 42,53.

Attention to the Eugène Fenech papers was first drawn by Marc Donato in his *L'Emigration maltaise en Algérie au XIXe siècle* (1985). In his memoirs, Eugène Fenech relates his life as well as that of his father Calcedonio. In 1798 Dr Calcedonio Fenech was an activist of the pro-French party. He served as Advocate of the Poor at the Valetta lawcourts during the brief administration by General Vaubois.

The Fenech family was from Cospicua. Eugène, though, was born in Rabat, Gozo, where he spent his childhood. Throughout his life he was to proclaim with pride his Gozitan origins. With the surrender of the French garrison in 1800, the Fenech family suffered the fate of hundreds of other Maltese who were supporters of Republican France in exile.

Eugène joined the French army as a medical officer in which post he somehow managed to survive the Peninsular War (1807-1812). In 1813, as a fully-fledged surgeon in the ranks of the French Fifth Army, he braved the savagery of the War of Nations fought mainly in Saxony and Silesia (modern day Poland) where Napoleon reeled under the onslaughts of Russians, Prussians and Austro-Hungarians.

Eugène lived in Malta during the governorship of Sir Thomas Maitland. Later on he preferred to emigrate. In the 1830's, in North Africa, he witnessed the arrival of hundreds of Maltese all desperate to eke out a living there.

Eugène Fenech was probably the brightest Maltese surgeon of his day. He obtained his degree from the Paris Faculty of Medicine by defending a thesis about surgery on the battlefield.

---

## THE CLASSIQUE FOUNDATION

The idea of forming a foundation to organise concerts in Gozo was born on April 28, 2000 when a vocal and orchestral Celebrity Concert was organised at the Gozo Cathedral. This concert was so successful that it was thought it would be good to organise such musical events from time to time during the year. So The Classique Foundation came into being.

The Classique Foundation, the first of its sort in Gozo, is a non-profit cultural organisation whose main aim is to promote culture by organising musical concerts from time to time during the year. The foundation's other mission, while keeping a professional standard as much as possible is to encourage and promote local artists especially those who are at the beginning of their musical career.

The Foundation was founded by the present artistic director Joseph Debrincat. It was officially launched on May 11, 2001 with a vocal and orchestral concert: Verdi in concerto, commemorating the first hundred years from the great opera master's death. This concert was held in Gozo's capital, Victoria, at the Don Bosco Oratory Theatre.

The Classique Foundation is funded annually by local institutions who contribute in no small measure towards the realisation of such musical activities.