

The Tradition of Religious Translations in Malta

Since we do not enjoy the availability of a pulpit, I will be using the written text. Even this adaptation forms part of the art of translation. While preaching the Word of God from the pulpit takes place from a podium that is presumably closer to the source of the Word, that we are using a written text is a way of saying that the Word is one, but now it is being preached from the place that is closer to its addressees.¹

How would one have understood what the priest was mumbling during Mass at 5.00 in the morning if the only Latin that one knew was some garbled word that one had heard during the Litany at the end of the Rosary? And how would one acquaint oneself with the story of Job if one could only have heard some part of it at the catechism classes after school hours at the parish centre, since lay people could never have access to it by themselves? No one could handle the Word of God by themselves, especially with a low level of education. And how would one have access to Italian in order to read translations of the Bible in Italian, if the only Italian one could hear was that murmured by the pharmacist behind the opaque glass pane behind the counter?

* Paul Sciberras pursued his studies at the University of Malta, and the Pontifical Biblical Institute, Rome; he obtained his Doctorate in Theology from the University of Malta with a thesis on Mgr Prof P.P. Saydon's Maltese version of 1 Thessalonians. He is currently head of the Department of Sacred Scriptures, Hebrew and Greek at the Faculty of Theology, University of Malta; he is also active in the Malta Bible Society, and various European Biblical associations.

¹ This article is an adapted version of a paper delivered during the Conference on the tradition of translations in Malta, organised by the voluntary cultural organisation Inizjamed and the Department of Maltese within the General Directorate of Translation of the European Commission, held on 16 October 2015 at the Wartime Museum in Birgu, Malta.

Translations of Liturgical and Prayer Texts

Although the small size of the Island of Malta, the low level of education among the people, and the lack of appreciation of the Maltese Language by the educated elite, never allowed a wide circulation of printed publications, popular religious translations in Maltese abounded. It seems that the translation of the *Ordo Missæ* or excerpts from the Missal into Maltese were most popular, even more than translations of the Divine Office. The latter was bread and butter only of priests and the random lawyer.

Before Vatican Council II, permission was granted for the use of the vernacular language during parts of ritual celebrations. In 1955, with the New Order of the Liturgy for Holy Week, the Maltese language was used during parts of the Easter Vigil.² It was the merit of foreign societies and groups, such as the *American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions*, the *British and Foreign Bible Society*, and the *Church Missionary Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge*, that liturgical literary material received a boost. Thus, in 1844, the first bishop of Gibraltar, the Very Reverend George Tomlinson, engaged the Rev. Michael Angelo Camilleri, a former Catholic priest, to translate into Maltese the *Book of Common Prayer*, that was published in June 1845, as *Ktieb it-Talb ta' Għalenija*.³ Such an endeavour to translate a liturgical book that included the Psalms, the celebration of the rites and the ordinations of bishops, priests and deacons would have been unimaginable had it not been ascertained that a mass exodus of believers from the Catholic to the Anglican Church was envisaged. With the translation of this Book of Rites, one would have planned to translate many more books into the language of such a small island such as Malta, especially the biblical text.

The Rev. Michael Angelo Camilleri, the former Catholic priest, must have been well-aware that the Maltese population would not have accepted such a book, even less read and used it for their prayers! However, Camilleri wholeheartedly believed in the importance of mass education, at least to be able to read and write in its own tongue. It might have been the case that Camilleri would have wanted to demonstrate to sceptics and adversaries alike that the Maltese language deserved respect, attention, and cultivation. It might have

² Jesmond Manicaro, *Liturgical Renewal in the Maltese Islands. A Historical Study (1840-1963)* (Rome: Pontifical Athenaeum St Anselm, 2004), 65.

³ *Ktieb it-Talb ta' Aalenia, u tal äoti tas sacramenti u tar riti u chirimonyi obra tal knisya fuq id-drawa tal knisya mwahhda ta' l'ingilterra u ta' l'irlanda: flimkien mas-salteryu ew is Salmi ta' david, ukoll il äamla u kif äandhom ikunu ordnati u ikkonsagrati l'Isqfijiet, il-Qassisin u id-Dyakni* (Malta: M. Weiss, 1845). See also Paul Sciberras, *Mgr Prof. P.P. Saydon's Version of 1 Thessalonians: An Exegetical and Translation-Critical Study* (Malta: University of Malta, 2013), 56-57.

been that the offer by Bishop Tomlinson provided Camilleri with a golden opportunity to demonstrate what he so vehemently believed in.

It must be said that the translation of *Ktieb ta' Għalenija* (the Book of Common Prayer) into Maltese indirectly served many other Catholic translators. A thorough examination of the first Catholic liturgical books in Maltese shows that translators heavily relied on Camilleri's translation for their works. For example, Richard Taylor, in his *Offiziu tal Gimgha il Cbira, Latin u Malti* (1848), *The Office for the Holy Week*,⁴ makes heavy use of Camilleri's translation, especially in the translation of the Psalms and parts of the New Testament. A comparative grid of Taylor's and Camilleri's works shows only very minute changes in the Maltese orthography.⁵ It seems that Camilleri had been planning to develop a Maltese orthography as a tool for educating the local population.⁶

The Roman Missal was translated into Maltese by several translators. As an example one can mention Canon Fortunato Panzavecchia's work, in 1849. However, though this was an excellent endeavour, it was unfortunately never published. The Rev. Ludovico Mifsud Tommasi translated *L'inni imkadsa, l'antifoni tat-tmiem tal breviariu Ruman u sequenzi tal missal*,⁷ a collection of hymns, so that "those who know no Latin, can understand, savour and learn" them. The local population could now have a handy tool of what it had been singing already for so long. Mifsud Tommasi prepared a translation of parts of the Mass in poetical garb between 1853 and 1870.⁸ This collection was never published: it was made known by our National Poet, Dun Karm Psaila, who refers to it in his article "Ktieb iehor tal-Qassis Dr Ludoviku Mifsud Tommasi," in *Il-Malti* (1930): 102-106.⁹ It had been passed on to Dun Karm by Ġużè Gatt. Mifsud Tommasi addresses this work: "To all those who know no other language except Maltese, but who wish to love God, source of infinite wisdom. I did my best to explain the prayers that our Mother Church wants us to use. I have put these prayers in verse form so that it would be easier for the readers to remember, and with the hope that the faithful would not need to use profane songs during

⁴ *Divine Office for Holy Week in Latin and Maltese*.

⁵ See Manicaro, *Liturgical Renewal*, 65.

⁶ See Sciberras, *Mgr Prof. P.P. Saydon's Version of 1 Thessalonians*, 56.

⁷ The sacred hymns, the antiphons to the Roman Breviary and Sequences to the Missal, published in Malta by F. Cumbo in 1853.

⁸ *Il-Għana tan-Nisrani* (Chants for the Christian).

⁹ See also "Il-poeżija Maltija fl-iskejjel ahjar minn kull wahda oħra," *Il-Malti* (1930): 34.

their work or rest, and learn how to savour the beauty of voices that are lifted up in praise to God.”¹⁰

The Dominican Vincent Schembri translated into Maltese the liturgical texts for the Easter Triduum, for which the local population attended in great numbers.¹¹ Schembri, however, added a detailed commentary to the prayers and the liturgical rites, with historical, theological, ceremonial, moral and liturgical backgrounds. Reading this work, one cannot miss imagining the participating crowds.

Ġużè Muscat Azzopardi translated the Vespers of the feasts of the Virgin Mary.¹² As expected, since it contained prayer material to the Virgin Mary, the book was soon sold out, even though it went through three editions from 1886 to 1915. Muscat Azzopardi prefaced his work in a very personal way: “Who knows how many times you were in church while priests were chanting Vespers, and you wished you could participate. Now, with this book, you have the possibility to do so. Take it up in your hands and follow the priest while he is praying. Do not hold back.”¹³

In 1902, Muscat Azzopardi published the Mass in the vernacular language (*Il Kuddiesa bil Malti*), the translation of the entire Mass according to the *Ordo Missæ*.¹⁴ It is interesting to note the aim he proposed for his work: “The Church teaches that we do not need to utter even one word during Mass. It suffices to look at and follow the priest with due devotion so that our Mass would be valid. But since we feel the need to pray, which prayers are best to make use of if not those used by the priest? This booklet is nothing but a translation of all that the priest says during Mass.”¹⁵

¹⁰ “Għal dawk li ma jafu bl-ebda lsien iehor hlief bil-Malti, imma li jixtiequ jhobbu 'l Alla, għajn ta' gherf infinit. Għamilt li stajt biex infisser it-talbiet li tridna nużaw Ommna l-Knisja. Użajt il-vers biex dawn it-talbiet ikun hafna iktar hafif li wiehed jiftakarhom u bit-tama li l-fidili ma jkollhomx għalfejn jinqdew b'kant profan waqt li jahdmu jew jistrieħu, u jitgħallmu jduqu l-ġmiel tal-ilhna merfugħa 'l fuq f'tifhir lil Alla” (from the Preface to the book).

¹¹ *Offiziu tal Ġimgha il Cbira chif jingħad fl'Ordni Domenican mil-Latin miġiub fil Malti minn sacerdot ta l'istess Ordni. Fih it-tifsir fuk il misterji u in-noti fuk il Passiu tal Hatt u tal Ġimgha* (Malta: A. Aquilina & Co., 1883).

¹² *Il Għasar tal Madonna. Poeżija bil Malti - Traduzzjoni mil Latin ta' G. Muscat Azzopardi* (Malta: Stamperija Dar S. Ġużèpp, 1915).

¹³ “Min jaf kemm il-darba kont il-knisja waqt li l-qassisin kienu jkunu jkantaw l-Għasar u xtaqt tifhem u tieħu sehem. Issa tista', b'dan il-ktejjeb. Ħudu f'idejk u imxi mal-qassis jitlob u tibqax lura.”

¹⁴ *Il Kuddiesa bil Malti meħuda minn fuk il Missal chelma b'chelma* (Malta: S. Formosa, 1902).

¹⁵ “Il-Knisja tgħalliem li m'għandniex għalfejn illissnu mqar kelma waħda fil-Quddiesa. Huwa biżżejjed li nħarsu u nsewgu l-qassis b'devizzjoni biex il-quddiesa tagħna tkun tgħodd. Imma

In 1918, Muscat Azzopardi translated the entire Missal of the Mass. His aim for this work focused on the principle that there should be one focus for both priest and assembly during the sacrifice of Mass: "In order for you to participate at Mass, you need to concentrate fully on what is being said. The Rosary and any other prayers should be said at some other time. Those who cannot read and write would better say nothing than mumble other prayers that have nothing to do with the Mass and distract themselves from it."¹⁶

There were several others who, besides the words of the Mass, wished to help the faithful to better understand and savour the Word of God as proclaimed during Mass, especially on Sundays and on Feast Days. In 1927, the Rev. Peter Paul Grima published *Il Vangeli tal Hdud u il Btajjel: Imfissrin fil Kasir* (The Gospels for Sundays and Feast Days, briefly explained).¹⁷ He wished that the faithful take the book home, understand and enjoy the Gospel proclaimed in Latin during Mass, and meditate on the spiritual reflections added by him.

Particular occasions within parish life were occasions for several translations. In 1939 the Rev. Gejtu Mifsud published a twenty-three page booklet containing the ceremony of the consecration of the Parish Church of Saint Cajetan, in Hamrun.¹⁸ Mifsud's intention was to prepare the parishioners for the consecration of their parish church. Thus, in addition to the rite of consecration, he also included an explanatory catechesis, in which he highlighted the consecration of the living body of the parishioners themselves, of which the building of the church was a symbol.

A highly practical initiative by the laity was that entitled *Il Quddiesa tal-Hdud u l-Festi tas-Sena Kollha*, published in sixty-four fascicles by Ċensu Cassar and then repeated in 1940. This initiative was also lauded by Pope Pius XII.¹⁹

A very useful work by different priests and lay people appeared in the translations of the rites of the Sacraments. In 1944, the Rev. Ġużeppi Borg published two booklets with the rites of the Anointing of the Sick, the Viaticum

billi nhossu l-bżonn li nitolbu, liema talbiet jista' jkun hemm ahjar minn dawk li jghid il-qassis? Dan il-ktejjeb mhu xejn hlief traduzzjoni ta' dak kollu li jghid il-qassis waqt il-Quddiesa," *Il Quddiesa bil Malti*, 7.

¹⁶ The translator quotes the *Orate, fratres*, with which the priest exhorts the assembly after the preparation of the offerings, in which the dual participation is highlighted: "Pray, brethren, that my [the priest's] and your [the faithful's] sacrifice..."

¹⁷ *Il Vangeli tal Hdud u il Btajjel: Imfissrin fil Kasir* (Malta: Andolfo & Lombardi, 1927).

¹⁸ *Ic-Cerimonji tal-Consagrazzjoni tal-Cnisja miġjuba bil-Malti u stampati għall-oċċasjoni tal-Consagrazzjoni tal-Parroċċa ta' S. Ghejtanu tal-Hamrun* (Malta: Empire Press, 1930).

¹⁹ *The Mass on Sundays and Feastdays throughout the year* (Malta: Lux Press).

and other prayers for the moribund.²⁰ A year later he also published the extremely practical rite of marriage, together with the preparation of the couple for a fruitful reception of the sacrament.²¹ Together with systematic formation meetings concerning the sacraments, the Catholic Action movement published translations of the rites and catechetical aids for the reception of the sacraments.

On the threshold of Vatican Council II, that decreed the use of vernacular languages in the liturgy, concessions were being given for official translations of the Roman Rite of the Mass and the Sacraments. One of the pioneers in this endeavour was Monsignor Professor Karm Sant, who can be acknowledged as the man behind the translation of the whole Bible from the original languages into Maltese by the Malta Bible Society. Sant was also the translator of the Byzantine Christological and Marian Hymn *Akathistos*.²² He adamantly held that the Maltese language should be used in liturgical celebrations, so that a deeper sense of belonging of the faithful within the Church takes root among the Maltese. Sant was an admirably practical scholar: he was of the opinion that using the vernacular language during liturgical celebrations would also help in eradicating idle and distractive chatter during baptisms, confirmations, and marriage celebrations.²³

In a letter he published on 17 October 1956 in the local weekly *Lehen is-Sewwa*, Sant aired his views in no unclear terms: “No one gives any consideration anymore to the dated illogical and unfounded objection, that the Maltese language is not worthy nor appropriate of the administration of sacraments and prayer contexts... In such matters... preparing and educating the people should be a priority...” If the addressees of such initiatives are still unaware of the profit, what benefit would that be to them?

When Pope Pius XII promulgated the Rite for the Holy Week in vernacular languages,²⁴ and a year after the renewal of the baptismal promises in Maltese was used during the Easter Vigil, Monsignor Joseph Lupi translated into Maltese the entire liturgy for Holy Week, from Palm Sunday through Easter Vigil.²⁵

²⁰ *L-abħhar Sagramenti u talb għall-agunizzanti – L-ewwel taqsima* (Malta: Empire Press 1943); *L-abħhar Sagramenti u talb għall-agunizzanti – It-tieni taqsima* (Malta: Empire Press, 1944).

²¹ *It-tiegħ w il-Quddiesa ta' l-għarajjes* (Malta: Għaqda ta' Qari Tajjeb, 1945).

²² *Akathistos. Innu liturgiku Bizantin f'għieħ il-Verġni Marija, Omm Alla* (Rome: Centro di Cultura Mariana “Madre della Chiesa”, 1990).

²³ Manicaro, *Liturgical Renewal*, 83-84.

²⁴ General Decree by the Sacred Congregation of the Holy See for the Discipline of the Sacraments, *Maxima Redemptionis Nostrae*, 16 November 1955.

²⁵ Manicaro, *Liturgical Renewal*, 86.

One of the major hitches in these translations was the use of the Bible texts as had been translated by Monsignor Professor Peter Paul Saydon. The latter refused to make use of any word of Romance origin in Maltese, and construed words from already existent roots or even made use of archaic words in his translation.²⁶ In so doing, Saydon produced a translation that did not reflect a biblical text in spoken Maltese. Maltese scholars who have critically analysed Saydon's text have concluded that he had produced a translation for the scholar's desk, where one would have dictionaries and grammars at hand in order to correctly understand Saydon's translation.²⁷ In the rest of the translation of these liturgical texts, Lupi used a more colloquial Maltese. The finished work resulted in a mixture of two forms of Maltese diction.

Work on the liturgical texts continued with the translation of the Mass for the First Fridays of the month, a devotion that is widely spread on the Islands, the *Kyrie*, *Gloria* and *Agnus Dei* in Maltese as well as the other responses by the assembly during Mass. The Epistle and Gospel for the day were read aloud in Maltese but the celebrant priest still used to read them in a low voice in Latin.²⁸

Catechism Textbooks

In its fifth and twenty-fourth sessions, the Council of Trent (1545-1563) had decreed that every Sunday, in the morning, parish priests are to explain the Gospel to their parishioners, while in the afternoon they were expected to teach catechism to children. In its last session, the Council had ordered the publication of catechism books. Consequential upon this last resolution, in 1566, and with the approval of Pope Pius V, the Roman Catechism was published.²⁹

²⁶ See the prefatory introduction he himself penned for his translation of the Bible at the beginning of *Ktieb il-Ġenesi maqlub mill-Lhudi u mfisser minn Dun P.P. Saydon* (Malta: Empire Press, 1929), viii.

²⁷ See Sciberras, *Mgr Prof. P.P. Saydon's Version of 1 Thessalonians*, 9. In an interview on 17 September 2009 with the present author, Monsignor Karm Attard, editor and reviewer of the three-volume edition by the Society for Christian Doctrine (MUSEUM), commenting his own article: "It-tieni edizzjoni tal-Bibbja ta' Saydon," *Kalendarju Museum* (July 1991): 208-213, confirmed this opinion. Sant had already viewed this idea in his articles "Fact and myth," *The Times of Malta* (22 June 1977): 11, and "Mons. P.P. Saydon u l-hidma Biblika f'Malta," *Sjion* 6 (1973): 7.

²⁸ Manicaro, *Liturgical Renewal*, 87.

²⁹ *Catechismus romanus seu catechismus ex decreto Concilii Tridentini ad parochos PII V Pontificis Maximi Iussu Editus* (Romæ: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1566).

In 1570 the Vicar General of the Cathedral Chapter of Malta, the Rev. Anton Bartolo, ordered that all priests and parish priests were to teach catechism, using the *Roman Catechism*.³⁰ Bishop Paolo Alpheran de Bussan acknowledged the progress made in the teaching of catechism as promoted by the Council of Trent and locally by his predecessors Thomas Gargallo, Balthasar Cagliares, Michael Hieronymus Molina, and David Coccopalmieri.³¹ As a result, on the 9 June 1752, Bishop Alpheran de Bussan presented the official Catechism, *Compendio della Dottrina Cristiana*, also known as the *Migemgha ta Tagħlim Nisrani* or *Id-duttrina ta' San Pawl* in Italian and Maltese, translated by the Rev. Francesco Wizzino and published in Rome in 1752.³²

Forty years later, Bishop Vincenzo Labini (1735-1807), decreed the revised publication of the Roman Catechism. Further editions of this catechism were published during the nineteenth century and even state schools adopted it as their textbook.³³

In 1839, the Jesuit priest Maximilian Ryllo founded the *Istituto maltese d'educazione cattolica* for the teaching of catechism in Valletta. In six years, with the expert help of Monsignor Salvatore Cumbo and Professor Lawrence Pullicino, a new edition of the official Catechism by Wizzino, with adaptations for younger children was published. The new edition contained explicatory notes to facilitate learning.³⁴

Initiatives to teach the catechism to Maltese emigrants abroad were also undertaken. The *Compendio della Dottrina Cristiana* (*Migemgha ta Tagħlim Nisrani*) found itself being used also abroad by Maltese emigrants. Since in 1886 the Maltese Community in Egypt published an edition, tailor-made for its needs, in *Taħriġ ta' Tieba jew Tagħlim Nisrani*. During the last decade of the nineteenth century, Malta was enriched by a number of catechism books. Of

³⁰ See Arturo Bonnici, *History of the Church in Malta* (Malta: Veritas Press, 1968), 2:50.

³¹ See Tony Sciberras, *Attivitajiet kateketiċi f'Malta* (Malta: Segretarjat għall-Katekezi, 2008), 17-23.

³² *Ibid*, 26.

³³ See *La Diocesi: Bollettino Ufficiale Ecclesiastico di Malta*, 4 (1918): 97.

³⁴ *L'alunno provveduto del Catechismo Cattolico ossia Compendio Progressivo della Dottrina Cristiana compilato sopra i migliori catechismi approvati da Sua Eccellenza Rev.ma Monsignor F.S. Caruana, Arcivescovo di Rodi e Vescovo di Malta e prescritto ad uso degli alunni dell'Istituto Maltese di Educazione Cattolica nella Chiesa di San Giacomo nella Valletta sotto il patrocinio dell'Immacolato Cuor di Maria* (Malta: P. Cumbo, 1845). See also Guido Lanfranco, "It-Tagħlim tad-Duttrina fil-Għejjer Matin Matul iż-Żminijiet," in *Il-Festa tal-Madonna tad-Duttrina Hal-Tarxien* (Malta, 1999), 12.

particular mention is the *Compendio della Dottrina Cristiana*, in Maltese and Italian, that took the form of question and answer, published in 1890.³⁵

When writing about the history of religious translation works in Malta, we need to mention the myriad of works by Alphonse Maria Galea. His contributions were mainly translations of works already existent in Italian. His aim was always to enhance the formation of his readers, be they children or adults, Maltese in Malta or emigrants in Egypt, Algiers, Tunis, or Gibraltar, lay people or even members of the clergy.³⁶ Immediately after the publication, in 1905, of the shorter version of the *Compendio della Dottrina Cristiana*, Bishop Pietro Pace sought permission from the Vatican Press to publish its translation into Maltese, and eventually even into English. The translation was made by Monsignor Salvatore Grech and published in 1906.³⁷ A year later, Bishop Pace promulgated this Catechism with a Pastoral Letter to the diocese. It was adopted by the state schools as well. This edition did not meet the desired success, since the *Miġemgħa ta' Tagħlim Nisrani* had been in use for more than a century, and was much more popular among the Maltese in Malta and abroad.³⁸

In 1907, the edition of the Catechism by Canon Dr Paolo Pullicino, then Director of Education, was translated into English and expanded into the *Duttrina jew Tagħlim Nisrani* by a commission of priests and lay people experts in the educational fields.³⁹ Two other catechisms followed in 1911: *Duttrina jew Tagħlim Nisrani*, a second impression of the smaller catechism of Pius X, accompanied by an English translation, and the *Tagħlim Komplit tar-Religjon Nisranija jew Spjegazzioni u Tifsir Storiku, Dommaticu, Morali, Liturgicu, Difensiv, Filosoficu u Sociali tar-Religion mil Bidu tad-Dinja saż-Żmienijet Tagħna*, a translation by the Rev. Xand Cortis of the widely accepted catechism by Monsignor Jean Gaumme: *Catechism of Perseverance: an Historical, Doctrinal, Moral and Liturgical Exposition of the Catholic Religion* (1849). In 1942, C. Diacono published the *Catechismu tal Cbar ordnat minn Papa Piu X Miġiub bil Malti... Traduzzioni għat tfal tal iscola Elementari Governativa*.⁴⁰

³⁵ *Compendio della Dottrina Cristiana, corretto e ristampato per ordine di Sua Ecc. Revma Mons Don Pietro Pace* (Malta: Giovanni Muscat), 1890 see See Sciberras, *Attivitajiet kateketiċi*, 43.

³⁶ *Ibid*, 44-45.

³⁷ See the introduction to the Maltese translation: *Dottrina Nisranija Ordinata mill-Papa Pio X għad-Djoċesi ta' Ruma u min Mons P. Pace, Arcisqof Isqof għad-Djoċesi Tighu ta Malta bl-Ittra Pastorali tal 11 t'April 1907* (Malta, 1907), 3.

³⁸ See Anthony J. Borg, *The Reform of the Council of Trent in Malta and Gozo* (Malta: Il-Hajja Printing Press, 1975), 57-58.

³⁹ See *La Diocesi: Bollettino Ufficiale Ecclesiastico di Malta*, 4 (1918): 98.

⁴⁰ See Sciberras, *Attivitajiet kateketiċi*, 51.

We can in no way overlook one of the very first translation editions in the world of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* by Monsignor Joseph Lupi, published in French in 1992, and in Maltese only a year later in 1993. Its *editio typica* in Latin was published only in 1997. A revised edition was published in 2014, under the editorship of Rev. Dr John Berry and Rev. Dr Hector M. Scerri.

Translations of the Bible

Undoubtedly, the most significant body of translations into Maltese in the religious area is that of Bible translation: from the Latin of the Vulgate initially, from the original languages - Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek - later on.

The Situation of Bible Translations in Malta

Vatican Council II, in 1965, in its encouraging translations of the Bible into the vernacular languages, was not sowing on completely new soil in Malta. The first Chair of Scriptures was established in 1915, and the Rev. Michael Gonzi was its first holder, when he, some two years before, had offered to freely teach a two-year course on the Bible at the Royal University of Malta.⁴¹ Translations of the Bible had already been appearing since 1811! The Rev. Peter Paul Saydon had commenced his translation of the entire Bible from the original languages since 1929, and brought it to termination in 1959, six years prior to the promulgation of the Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation *Dei Verbum*. The Malta Bible Society, founded in 1958, worked tirelessly to publish a revised edition of Saydon's translation. The Rev. George Preca had, since 1907, already officially founded the Society of Christian Doctrine (MUSEUM). This Society was well-established on Scriptures that Rev. Preca had himself translated from the Latin Vulgate, whenever he did not make use of Ġużè Muscat Azzopardi's translation.⁴²

Initial Attempts at Translating the Bible into Maltese

There were numerous translations of the New Testament from the Latin Vulgate - thus, a translation of a translation - by pioneers who were not at all prepared for the art of translating the Bible into Maltese.

⁴¹ See Minutes of *Special Council of Theology, 1898-1919*, ff.101-101; University of Malta Library, Archives and Rare Books Department, Ms 157, Session Number 9, held on Monday, 6 October 1913. See also ff.131-132 of Session Number 9, held on Thursday, 18 July 1916.

⁴² John Formosa, personal communication (Saturday, 4th April 2009; Saturday, 18th June 2011).

Back in 1811, Cleardo Naudi, Experimental Chemistry and Natural History professor at the University of Malta, translated the Gospel of John as part of the translation of the entire Bible for the Anglican *Church Missionary Society*. In 1832, Naudi also published *Ktieb il-qari fuq bosta hwejjeġ mahtura minn Kotba Kattolici*, a translation of nine psalms in Maltese.⁴³ This means that this science professor's preparation and formation for translation work of the Bible was hardly adequate. When he translated the New Testament, he did not have the necessary expertise in languages so as to be able to do a translation from Greek into Maltese. Likewise, he did not have the necessary experience in Hebrew and Aramaic (and other languages) for translating the Old Testament into the vernacular.

Later on, Naudi enrolled with him Giuseppe Cannolo, a knife-grinder by profession. In 1822 the latter translated *Il Vangelo secondo Giovanni in lingua italiana e maltese*. The manuscript of Dr Giuseppe Grima of the *Correzione della traduzione maltese* by Cannolo is housed in the National Archives of Gozo and is catalogued as NAG/ZM/03/149.⁴⁴

A few years later, in 1829, Mikiel Anton Vassalli published the Four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles.⁴⁵ Vassalli made use of an alphabet that was somewhat alien to that spoken and written in Malta. Vassalli, much more linguistically prepared, was to elbow out Cannolo in translations made for Protestant Churches in Malta. It must be repeated that Vassalli's translation was not made from the original Greek but from the Latin Vulgate, a translation of another translation.

In 1847, the aforementioned Michael Angelo Camilleri revised the Four Gospels and Acts of the Apostles by Vassalli, and published them as *Il-Għaqda l-Ġdida ta' Sidna Ġesù Kristu*, under the auspices of the *Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge*, at the printing press of R. Weiss, where Gabrijel Vassalli, son of Mikiel Anton, was managing director. Camilleri also published *Ktieb it-Talb ta' Għalenija* in 1845, a translation of the prayer book used by Protestant Churches, whose last part contains forty *Psalms of David*.

In 1844, another pioneer, Richard Taylor, from Cospicua, published *Il-Passjoni tas-Sinjur Tagħna Ġesù Kristu, miktuba minn San Matthew, S. Mark,*

⁴³ See Sciberras, *Mgr Prof. P.P. Saydon's Version of 1 Thessalonians*, 51-53.

⁴⁴ This manuscript was thoroughly analysed by Nadine Said, in her dissertation for the Honours Bachelor Degree in Maltese in 2010, entitled *Il-vanġelu ta' San Ġwann tradott minn Dr Giuseppe Grima (c.1822-1829)*.

⁴⁵ *Quatuor Evangelia, et Actus Apostolorum, juxta Vulgatam, Romæ A.D. MDXCII editam: necnon eorundem versio melitensis* (London: R.Watts, 1829).

S. Luqa, S. Ġwann. Only two years later, he published *Ktieb is-Salmi tas-Sultan David u l-Kantiċi*. Strictly speaking that was not a translation inasmuch as it was a paraphrase of these psalms. In 1848 he published *L-Uffizzju tal-Ġimgha l-Kbira - Latin u Malti*, a slightly revised edition of the first forty psalms in the *Book of Common Prayer*, together with some explicatory notes.⁴⁶

Between 1895 and 1924, Ġużè Muscat Azzopardi translated the Four Gospels and Acts of the Apostles, accompanied by notes taken from the Italian Bishop Antonio Martini's translation.⁴⁷ Peter Paul Saydon himself praises the Maltese translation by Muscat Azzopardi as being of very high standards.⁴⁸

Yet another Dominican Friar, Ġeraldu Marija Paris, translated the Four Gospels, Acts of the Apostles, the Letter to the Romans and the Letters of John. He also translated the Letter of James.⁴⁹ It is the current author's opinion that as a renowned preacher and member of the Order of Preachers, Paris must have probably translated the Letter of James so as to serve – especially its second chapter – as a tool against those who, in Protestant Churches, held that salvation is acquired only by faith in Jesus Christ.

From 1926 to 1932, Alphonse Maria Galea, the Rev. Peter Paul Grima and the Rev. Peter Paul Saydon translated the entire Bible from the Latin Vulgate into our language, except for the first five books, the Pentateuch. The latter were translated by Saydon from the original Hebrew. Saydon's translation was based on the translation principle that the Maltese language can be used for scientific work, such as the translation of the Bible from the original languages, Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek.⁵⁰

Prior to Saydon, only two other translators had attempted to translate small parts of the Bible from Hebrew. Michael Angelo Camilleri had translated forty psalms in the *Book of Common Prayer* (*Ktieb it-Talb ta' Għalenija*) in 1845.

⁴⁶ See Sciberras, *Mgr Prof. P.P. Saydon's Version of 1 Thessalonians*, 56-57.

⁴⁷ *L-Imqaddes Evangeġju ta' Ġesù Kristu kif kitbu San Matthew* (Malta: Menu Busuttil, 1895); *L-Evangeġju Mqaddes ta' Ġesù Kristu miktub minn San Matthew* (Malta: Andolfo & Magro, 1914); *L-Evangeġju Mqaddes ta' Ġesù Kristu miktub minn San Mark* (Malta: Andolfo & Magro, 1915); *L-Evangeġju Mqaddes ta' Ġesù Kristu miktub minn San Luqa* (Malta: Andolfo & Magro, 1916); *L-Evangeġju Mqaddes ta' Ġesù Kristu miktub minn San Ġwann* (Malta: Andolfo & Magro, 1917); *Ktieb tal-Atti tal-Appostli* (Malta: Empire Press, 1924).

⁴⁸ Peter Paul Saydon, "History of the Maltese Bible," *Melita Theologica* 10 (1957): 12-13.

⁴⁹ *L-Erba' Vangeġi ta' Sidna Ġesù Kristu* (Malta: Giovanni Muscat, 1963; 1968); *L-Atti ta' l-Appostli* (Malta: Giovanni Muscat, 1965); *L-Ittra ta' l-Appostlu San Pawl lill-Insara ta' Ruma* (Malta: Giovanni Muscat, 1967); *L-Ittri ta' San Ġwann l-Evangelista* (Malta: Giovanni Muscat, 1967); *L-Ittra ta' San Ġakbu* (Malta: Giovanni Muscat, 1969).

⁵⁰ Pietru Pawl Saydon, "The Maltese translation of the Bible," *Melita Theologica* 16 (1965): 12.

Saydon himself has demonstrated that Camilleri had translated the psalms from the original Hebrew, and not from English.⁵¹ In 1924, the Rev. Carlo Cortis had translated the Book of Ruth from the original Hebrew into Maltese and Italian.⁵² The most significant failure in Cortis' work was that he had used Maltese words homophonic to the Hebrew equivalents, but which turn out to be extremely bad translations of the original. For instance, in the Hebrew text of Ruth 1:9 we have the word *qôlân* ('their voice'); Cortis translated this to *qawlhom*, since *qôl* is homophonic to the Maltese *qawl*. However, the meaning of "qawl" differs from that of "qôl." In Ruth 2:14, Boaz exhorts his future wife, Ruth, who had been gleaning ears of grain behind Boaz's reapers, not to hold back from drinking from his reapers' water jars, and to eat of their parched grain. In the original Hebrew, the word for parched grain is *qali*, homophonic to the Maltese word "qali," which refers to fried food. In translating *qali* for "qali" Cortis thus changed the meaning of the original parched grain to fried food.

Monsignor Professor Karm Sant, student and close friend of Saydon, and who succeeded him at the Chair of Scriptures at the Royal University, in an interview by Professor Ġuzè Aquilina,⁵³ states that translating the Bible into Maltese up to the times of Saydon did not make much sense, since the literacy standards in Malta were abysmal. Up to 1822, less than 10% of the population knew how to read, and the Bible was read in Italian or in Latin by those who had had some kind of schooling. By the end of the nineteenth century, the standard rose to 23%; Saydon began his translation some time later, in 1929.

Saydon's translation had been brought to termination in 1959. It was the only translation that was complete and that had been translated from the original language. The more serious hurdle with this translation cropped up when, following the liturgical reform that Vatican II had promulgated, it was chosen to be used for public reading in the liturgy. However, Saydon had prepared a translation that was "literary and literal."⁵⁴

⁵¹ Saydon, "The Earliest Biblical Translation from Hebrew into Maltese," *The Sundial* 10-12 (1937): 526-536.

⁵² *Il Libro di Ruth trascritto e tradotto dall'Ebraico con note* (Malta: Giovanni Muscat, 1924).

⁵³ *Meeting People*, Part I & II, *Sunday Times of Malta* (10 and 17 November): 20.19.

⁵⁴ Saydon's definition of a good translation is one that is literal and literary: literal, that is, a word-for-word rendering; literary, that is, pleasing just as any other literary work; confer *Qlib il-Korba Mqaddsa bil-Malti*, a lecture delivered at the University Theatre on 2 May 1943 and published in *Lehen il-Malti* 15/170-172 (1945): 37-44.

Let us now consider what is needed to translate it [*the Bible text*] after one has understood it. Firstly, a translation is, or should be, a literary work, and thus should abide by the rules of literary writing. A good translation should be *literal* and *literary*. A literal translation is a word-for-word rendering; literary, means that it should be made so as to please [*the readers*] just like any other literary work. It is in the intermingling of these two qualities together that the merit of a translation lies, and at the same time the greatest obstacle that the translator encounters. One either sticks too strictly to the Hebrew word, become enslaved to it and thus would not be well understood, or else, in order to clothe the Maltese word in attractive garb, one distances himself too much from the Hebrew word. It is in the middle road that the art of translation lies, but to steer this course consistently, without straying even a little, is not an easy task.⁵⁵

However, this meant that the audience, during the actual reading, had to tarry for a moment to work out what a substantial amount of words meant. But if one had to do so, the reader would be already singing the acclamatory Alleluia before the Gospel! It would suffice to say that Saydon himself, after translating the five books of the Pentateuch, published a short dictionary containing two hundred and twenty-two difficult words that one would come across therein.⁵⁶ Furthermore, Saydon's syntax followed the Verb-Subject-Object order of constituents (and this exclusively in his translation works⁵⁷), whereas spoken Maltese follows primarily the syntactical structure of Subject-Verb-Object.⁵⁸

The Society for Christian Doctrine (MUSEUM) published a three-volume edition of Saydon's translation, known as *Bibbja Saydon*, revised and edited by the

⁵⁵ "Issa naraw x'jahtieg biex wara li tkun fhimtu taqilbu għall-Malti. L-ewwelnett traduzzjoni hi, jew għandha tkun, xogħol letterarju, u għalhekk għandha toqghod għal-liġijiet tal-kitba letterarja. Traduzzjoni tajba għandha tkun *letterali* u *letterarja*. Letterali, jiġifieri magħmula kelma b'kelma; letterarja, jiġifieri magħmula b'mod li toghgħob bħalma toghgħob kitba oħra letterarja. L-għaqda ta' dawn iż-żewġ kwalitajiet hija l-akbar mertu li jista' jkollha traduzzjoni, u fl-istess hin l-aqwa tfixkil li jiltaqa' miegħu kull traduttur. Ghax jew toqghod iżżejjed għall-kelma lhudija, titjassar lejha u ma tiftihemx sewwa jew biex tagħti libsa sabiha lill-kelma Maltija titbiegħed iż-żejjed mill-kelma Lhudija. Fit-triq tan-nofs qieghda s-sengħa, imma li timxi dejjem dritt fin-nofs bla ma tgħawweġ xi ftit mhix haġa hafifa", *Qlib il-Kotba Mqaddsa*, 41.

⁵⁶ *Tifsir il-Kliem fil-Kotba Genesi, Ezodu, Levitiku, Nûmri, Dewteronomju* (Malta: The Empire Press, 1931).

⁵⁷ Besides the Bible, Saydon has three other translation works: 'Is-Seba' Reqqdin', translated by P. Cheiko (*Louis Sheekho*), *Magāni 'l ādab*, vol. II, 236-247, *Il-Malti* 6 (1930): 69-75; 'It-tieni safra ta' Sandabad il-Bahri', from *Kitāb 'alf layla wa-layla*, *Il-Malti* 10 (1934): 134-136; 'Is-sehwi', *Lehen il-Malti* 3/28 (1933): 60, where he uses the same syntactical structures.

⁵⁸ For a thorough study of this problem, see Anthony Abela's dissertation for the Master's Degree in linguistics, carried out at Reading University, United Kingdom, and published as "Word Order in the Clauses of the Narrative Sections in P.P. Saydon's Bible Translation in Maltese," *Melita Theologica* 53/1 (2002): 3-26; and 53/2 (2002): 107-131.

Rev. Karm Attard.⁵⁹ In this edition, however, the orthography and some aspects of Saydon's translation were altered.⁶⁰

When it was evident that a substantial amount of words had to be changed - and Saydon would not have given his consent - a group of scholars, led by Monsignor Joseph Lupi, began hastily translating the biblical texts that were needed for the liturgy into more spoken Maltese.⁶¹ Once this body of texts was brought to an end, the *Malta Bible Society*, under the stewardship of Monsignor Professor Karm Sant, began a fresh translation of the entire Bible from the original languages into spoken Maltese, a one-volume work that was published in 1984.

Up to the present day, four editions have been published: in 1984, 1996, 2004, and in 2011, with the last three having Rev. Dr Anthony Abela as editor. The latter scholar founded the Commission for the Revision of the Bible, with the aim of an ongoing process of editing and updating in mind.

At the end of this article mention must be made of two other translations that have a very particular character and that are deeply treasured by the present author: the first is the Bible in Maltese in Braille in 2005, with the thorough editing work of Charles Borg, from the National Commission for Persons with Disability and the current author. The second initiative is the Research Project on Maltese Sign Language at the University of Malta, with the collaborative work by Professor Marie Alexander and Maria Galea from the Department of Linguistics, and the present author from the Department of Scriptures of the Faculty of Theology. The birth of Jesus stories in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke were translated into Maltese Sign Language, a project that began in April 2008 and was inaugurated in DVD format in December 2009.

⁵⁹ *Bibbja Saydon, It-Testment il-Qadim*, I, Il-Kotba Storiċi (Malta: Edizzjoni Societas Doctrinae Christianae [M.U.S.E.U.M.], 1982); *Bibbja Saydon, It-Testment il-Qadim*, II, Il-Kotba tal-Għerf u l-Kotba tal-Profeti (Malta: Edizzjoni Societas Doctrinae Christianae [M.U.S.E.U.M.], 1982); *Bibbja Saydon, It-Testment il-Ġdid*, III (Malta: Edizzjoni Societas Doctrinae Christianae [M.U.S.E.U.M.], 1977).

⁶⁰ In the Preface ("Kelmtejn qabel") to *Bibbja Saydon, It-Testment il-Ġdid*, III, the Commission that prepared the revised edition for publication states that the orthography rules by the Akkademja tal-Malti have been followed. In cases where Saydon's version followed different views, the Commission still followed the Akkademja. "Għal dik li hi ortografija zammejna r-reguli ta' l-Akkademja tal-Malti (Għaqda tal-Kittieba tal-Malti) li llum, nistgħu nġid, huma milqugħa minn kulhadd. Billi l-tqajna ma' xi kliem li dwarhom Saydon kien jaħsibha xort'ohra, u hu kelli r-raġunijiet tiegħu, aħna min-naha tagħna rajna li jkun aħjar li nżommu l-ortografija ta' l-Akkademja."

⁶¹ The group was made up of Fr Joseph Agius OP, Valent Barbara, Fr Egidio Mizzi OFMConv., Monsignor Professor Karm Sant, and Fr Donat Spiteri OFMCap.

To complete this overview, one must also mention the large amount of church documents that were translated into Maltese by Monsignor Joseph Lupi and published in the *Bullettin tal-Arċidjoċesi*, the Archdiocese of Malta's official publication. A very substantial work of translating church documents, encyclical letters, speeches and homilies by the Pope is being carried by the Secretariat for the Laity of the Archdiocese of Malta and published online on *www.laikos.org*. It is the fervent wish of the present author to see research into the translations of the hymns sung by Maltese believers in churches and during religious meetings which were translated from other languages into Maltese. A question is here in place: would this work be a testimony that we can indeed have a theology and religious discourse in Maltese, in an established language in this area? All these translation endeavours should also be considered as a source of Maltese theology and spirituality.

Conclusion

Translating religious texts into Maltese, as is the case in many other types of translation, has the aim to transform the readers - and listeners, at that - into more participative agents. The obstacle that unknown languages, such as Latin, Hebrew, Greek, and even Italian or English for some chunks of the Maltese population in different times, of the original texts present to the readers/listeners barred them from more active participation. Furthermore, translations opened up possibilities for more adaptations of the original liturgical, catechetical and biblical texts to the local milieu. Translations provided more immediacy of the original texts to the readers/listeners. As Manicaro has very aptly written: "The "monologue" character of the liturgy [*and I add the catechism and the Bible*] was slowly replaced by a meaningful dialogue and the altar came closer to the congregation. The books which were once the priest's prerogative were now given to the people of God."⁶² However, although "Knowledge of the Scriptures and the liturgy [*together with the catechism*] increased as a result... the faithful's lack of biblical and liturgical formation was also revealed."⁶³

Religious translations in Malta - as abundant as this short and selective overview has revealed - have served the providential and positive aim of deepening the largely Catholic population's religious knowledge and faith, but also its linguistic baggage.

⁶² Manicaro, *Liturgical Renewal*, 88.

⁶³ Ibid.

In the particular area of Bible translations, the pioneers - mainly Mgr Prof. Saydon and the Malta Bible Society equipe - have contributed widely to the linguistic area as well. The single-handed monumental translation of the Bible from the original languages into a language that was still in its formative stage as a literary language served as a landmark in the history of Maltese literature and linguistic studies.

This notwithstanding, this overview has shown that a formal translation such as Saydon's was not adequate enough for contemporary Christians as regards Bible study, in its liturgical and public use, as well as its spiritual purposes. Furthermore, the translation lessons and criteria resulting from the analysis of the translation of the Bible from the original languages into Maltese have provided us with clearer principles in the ongoing process of Bible translation.

Translation in general is not simply a matter of finding equivalent words in two languages. It is the complex endeavour of transporting material from one world of thought and language to another. The three main areas of religious translations that have been analysed have shown that an acceptable translation is produced only when an excellent background of the source language is mastered by the translator. At the same time, the translator must have complete control over the resources of the language into which they are translating. The art of translation consists of re-creating in a new linguistic form and context the contents expressed in the source language.⁶⁴ The ideal translator is thus the one who is completely bilingual in source and receptor languages, and should translate into one's mother tongue.

The religious translations mentioned in this article reflect the two chief characteristics that distinguish a translation of merit, namely, its accuracy and faithfulness to the original, and its merits as a literary work of art. The mainly formal translations in the three different areas of religious literature explored are both literal - a true reflection of the original - and literary. They preserve the two characteristics in a balanced manner; while not adhering slavishly to the original text, thus being defective, if not unintelligible, they do not carelessly steer away from the original. The translations attempt to reproduce as faithfully as possible the original content of the Latin, Italian, English, Hebrew and Greek source texts into the mainly Maltese receptor language, and at the same time try to retain the literary artistry in a new form.

Three principal aims were achieved in these religious translations: providing a translation of the religious texts for the Maltese people; giving a high standing to

⁶⁴ See Sciberras, *Mgr Prof. P.P. Saydon's Version of 1 Thessalonians*, 110.

the Maltese language by means of these translations; and making religious literature available for the service of the Maltese people within the Catholic Church along the years. The balance struck between the formal translations and the literary standard achieved by the translators makes these translations worthy of praise. The history of religious translation works in Malta can never do without giving due mention of the aims that they were set to achieve, mainly to enhance the religious, catechetical, biblical and even linguistic formation of the readers, from whatever walks of life they came, of whatever age, lay people or even members of the clergy.

No translation is perfect; every translation is limited. On the other hand, translation is a must. On the strength of liturgical use, even though from Romance roots, specific meanings in the religious jargon have been created. Thus, a specific lexical legacy is built within the specific religious framework. This objective should not be abandoned by any new translation, which tries to maintain as far as possible this specific religious terminology (like “Verb” instead of “Kelma,” “Paraklitu” [Paraclete, Consoler], “Spirtu s-Santu” [Holy Spirit] instead of “Ruħ il-Qodos,” “fidil” [faithful] instead of “emin”...), correcting only where the interpretation of the words is not acceptable or the words do not carry specific theological value.⁶⁵

One cannot do away with the fact that embarking on a translation project of the Bible inevitably means that one has to come to terms with *the* Bible translation par excellence of the Western World. This is not to make ambitious improvident dreams of comparisons, but because every translation dutifully places itself in the context of faith and culture that the *Vulgate* has generated. Therefore, it was not relevant to present the readers with an equal number of words as in the original, but rather to offer to them their meaningful value. It is not therefore a matter of rendering oneself independent of the original text, but on the contrary, putting oneself at its service, with the aim of favouring the maximum communicability of its meaning. In translating, one has to avoid the temptation of strict literalism because of the conviction that translating is reproducing the sense according to the forms peculiar or proper to the language that one uses. Bible translations should seek to offer a surer text as regards the original texts, more coherent in its internal dynamics, more communicative as far as the contemporary culture is concerned, and more suitable to proclamation in liturgical contexts. An effort is to be made to obtain a major adherence to the tone and style of the original languages, orienting oneself towards a more literal translation, without compromising the intelligibility of the text as from

⁶⁵ See *ibid.*, 116-117.

the moment of reading and listening. Care is given to the rhythm of the phrases so as to render the text correspondent to the demands of liturgical proclamation, especially where poetic texts are to be put to music and chant. It is unthinkable to present to the people of God a psalter, for example, that cannot be sung.

A Bible translation should propose itself as a suitably stable point of reference for liturgical, catechetical and spiritual use, so as to enhance the growth of the Christian religious language. The biblical text reflects a cultural world that is different from ours, that in some way should be made to transpire in translation. It is up to exegesis and preaching to know how to grasp the cultural, theological and spiritual meanings in that language that in turn should be put in confrontation with contemporary sensibility.

Particular care should be shown in rendering the text in a good modern language, with modalities of expressions of immediate and communicative comprehension in relation to the contemporary cultural context, avoiding archaic and obsolete forms of lexicon and syntax.

On the contrary, if one looks for “the perfect translation,” some sort of blueprint of the original, one ends up sacrificing the flow and comprehensibility of the translation and the “readability” of the text. In the efforts made to hold to this criterion, translators and revisers are always constrained to sacrifice something in translation: either faithfulness to the text or clarity of style. With regard to the literary aspect of translation, one could say that religious books are not only a receptacle of religious thoughts but a true literature in their own right, that entrusts the potentiality of their message even to the aesthetic appreciation that they can provoke in the readers/listeners. Saydon’s statement in his biographical article *Kif tghallimt il-Malti* is so relevant in this case: “The author had in mind not only to teach but also to please.”⁶⁶

Paul Sciberras
Department of Sacred Scripture, Hebrew and Greek
Faculty of Theology
University of Malta
Msida MSD 2080
Malta

paul.sciberras@um.edu.mt

⁶⁶ “[I]l-kittieb kellu f’ moħħu mhux biss li jgħallem imma wkoll li joghġob”: “Kif tghallimt il-Malti,” in *Ward ta’ qari Malti*, III, ed. Peter Paul Saydon and Joseph Aquilina (Malta; 1940), 3; 255.