

Remembering Ġorġ Mifsud Chircop (28.6.1951-18.12.2007). Author and folklorist. Member of the editorial board of *Symposia Melitensia*.

Born in Qormi, Mifsud Chircop studied at St Aloysius College and the University of Malta where he graduated BA (Hons), MA, and Ph.D., and obtained the PGCE. He taught in government schools (1972–95), and in 1995 was appointed lecturer and later on senior lecturer with the Department of Maltese at the University of Malta Junior College, and with the Departments of Maltese Studies and of Anthropology, in the University of Malta.

He specialized in the theory and practice of Maltese folklore, particularly its narrative element. His 'Type Index of the Maltese Folktale within the Mediterranean Tradition Area' (1978), was awarded the Karmen Mikalleg-Buhaġar Prize for the best MA thesis. Ethnographic research and assiduous fieldwork in Malta and Gozo, narratology, riddles, paremiology, crafts, and folk singing were his special areas of study.

Mifsud Chircop has contributed material related to the Maltese language and folklore to radio and television programmes. He was instrumental in popularizing the traditional folktale among children and adults.

Mifsud Chircop was very active in publishing. His *Fommu bil-Ghasel* was a text-book for matriculation students, with *Fommu bil-Ghasel II* for advanced students. For the upper forms he published a series of notes dealing with major Maltese poets. For the primary schools he had a series of comprehension tests, readers, and examination booklets. He also edited various important publications.

In 1998 Mifsud-Chircop organized the first National Folk Singing Festival (*Ghana*). His involvement in Maltese folklore helped the Maltese to appreciate much more the folk singing as part of Maltese culture. He researched and presented papers in various conferences held both locally and abroad.

Mifsud Chircop was a very active member of the Editorial Board of *Symposia Melitensia*, the journal published by the University of Malta Junior College.



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Publications

All published in Malta, except where otherwise stated

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What colleagues have said about Ġoġ:

- Mario Cassar: ‘Ġoġ was an exemplary man, a devout father, an assiduous scholar, a serious linguist, and a very clever folklorist.’
- Adrian Grima: ‘Ġoġ believed that the knowledge of different aspects of our popular culture and of the peoples who live around us in the Mediterranean would help us appreciate and understand the qualities of each individual and every community.’
- Bernard Micallef: ‘Ġoġ ... a man who used his talents to show that the cultural values of talents, trades, and pastimes of others. With his incessant work he built a national respect towards the endeavours which embody the characteristics of our (Maltese) society.’