

# GOZO AND ITS CULTURE

Proceedings of the 1995  
Löwenbräu Seminar  
held at L-Imgarr Hotel, Gozo  
on 3 March 1995.

Edited by  
**Lino Briguglio**  
and  
**Joseph Bezzina**

**Published by Formatek Ltd**  
in collaboration with the University of Malta Gozo Centre  
and the Foundation for International Studies.  
Malta - June 1995

214002

© The University of Malta Gozo Centre.  
All rights reserved. No reproduction, copy or transmission of this publication may be made without the prior permission of the copyright owners.

Produced in 1995 by  
**Formatek Ltd**  
4, Spencer Building  
Dun Gorg Preca Street  
Blata l-Bajda  
Malta.

**ISBN 99909-49-02-6**

Front cover: Lace-making in Gozo. *Photo Gino Galea*

# CONTENTS

<b>Preface</b>	1
<b>Introduction</b> Peter Serracino Inglott	3
<b>The Prehistory of Gozo</b> Anthony Bonanno	5
<b>Gozo in Classical Literature</b> Horatio C. R. Vella	13
<b>The Gozitan Milieu During the Late Middle Ages and Early Modern Times</b> Stanley Fiorini	49
<b>The Development and Consolidation of the Village Unit in Gozo after 1575</b> Joseph Bezzina	60
<b>The Folklore of an Island</b> Anton F. Attard	83
<b>The Church and Gozitan Culture</b> Nicholas J. Cauchi	97
<b>Language and Village Dialects</b> Joseph Aquilina	106
<b>The Artistic Heritage of Gozo</b> Mario Buhagiar	115
<b>The Cultural Impact of Economic Conditions in Gozo</b> Lino Briguglio	128
<b>Seminar Inauguration and Closing Speeches</b> H.E. Ugo Mifsud Bonnici, President of Malta	151
Dr Paul Debattista, General Manager, Löwenbräu Malta	155
Hon. Anton Tabone, Minister for Gozo	157
<b>The Authors</b>	160



The opening session of the 1995 Löwenbräu Seminar on the theme “Gozo and its Culture”. H. E. Ugo Mifsud Bonnici, President of Malta (third from right) and Dr Paul Debattista (second from right) inaugurated the seminar. The opening session was also addressed by Rev. Professor Peter Serracino Inglott, Rector of the University of Malta (second from left). The seminar was concluded by a speech by the Minister for Gozo, the Hon. Anton Tabone (third from left). Also in the picture are the joint convenors of the seminar, Rev. Dr. Joseph Bezzina (first from left) and Prof. Lino Briguglio (first from right).



A section of the audience at the 1995 Löwenbräu Seminar

## **Preface**

**T**he history of human settlement in Gozo goes back seven thousand years. It could be said that Gozitan culture started to develop with the arrival of the first settlers from nearby Sicily, and reached a zenith during the Temple period as evidenced by the monumental Ġgantija temples. Subsequent historical phases left their mark on the Gozitan way of life, and this has led to the development of contemporary Gozitan culture with its own distinct identity and character.

The purpose of this book is to present, in one volume, a number of papers on Gozitan culture, originally presented during a seminar "Gozo and its Culture" held at L-Imgarr Hotel, Gozo, on 3 March 1995.

The themes of the papers can be grouped into three. The first four papers look at Gozitan culture from a historical perspective, and cover the prehistoric period (Bonanno), the Greek and Roman times (Vella), the Middle Ages (Fiorini), and the period during which the islands were ruled by the Knights of Malta and by the British (Bezzina).

The second group of papers relates to the Gozitan cultural heritage, and the topics dealt with are folklore (Attard), religion (Bishop Cauchi), language (Aquilina) and art (Buhagiar).

The final paper (Briguglio) examines the impact of economic conditions on the culture of Gozo, and looks at the contemporary Gozitan way of life.

The book is introduced by Rev. Prof. Peter Serracino Inglott who presents some philosophical observations prompted by the classical references to Gozo and the later development of its distinct cultural identity.

The book also includes three papers based on the inauguration and closing speeches at the seminar, which, as can be seen, do not contain

## *Preface*

mere ceremonial words, but make an important contribution to the discussion.

Some of the opinions expressed in the book are open to debate, and we would like to state that we do not necessarily agree with everything that is written in the papers. We anticipate that some of the arguments presented here will give rise to a degree of controversy, and it is hoped that this will help to shed more light on the development of Gozitan culture.

We would like to thank H.E. Ugo Mifsud Bonnici, President of Malta, for accepting to inaugurate the seminar and to participate in the proceedings, and to the Hon. Anton Tabone, Minister for Gozo, for his support in the organisation of the seminar and the publication of this book.

Thanks are also due to Professor Peter Serracino Inglott, Rector of the University of Malta, for the initiative he took some years ago to establish the Gozo Centre and for the backing he extends to the activities of the Centre.

We would also like to express our gratitude to Dr Paul Debattista, General Manager of Löwenbräu, for sponsoring the seminar during which the papers included in this book were presented and discussed.

We would like to acknowledge the support for this publication extended by Professor Salvino Busuttil, Director-General of the Foundation for International Studies.

We are very grateful to Mrs Maryrose Vella for her secretarial assistance in the preparation for the seminar and in the editing of this book.

Finally, but not least, we would like to thank the authors of the papers, for their contribution to the seminar and to this book.

**Lino Briguglio**  
**Joseph Bezzina**  
June 1995