ABSTRACTS OF HISTORY DISSERTATIONS SUBMITTED IN 1995 *


The dissertation discusses the structure, powers and workings of the Chapter-General of the Order of St John, focusing especially on that held in 1631, under Grand Master de Paule.

The Chapter-General was the sole legislative body within the Order of St John; it was also responsible for electing the senior officers of the Order, and could act as a high court of justice. Its decrees were final and could be revoked only by a succeeding assembly.

The 1631 Chapter-General presents an ideal case-study or account of the comprehensive ordinances drawn up by the elected representatives, as well as the detailed ruolli, or petitions, submitted by those attending, or represented at the assembly.

The dissertation has four chapters. Chapter One discusses the origins and development of the Chapter-General, its role, authority and jurisdiction within the structure of the Order.

Chapter Two highlights some aspects of its historical development in its relations with the Convent and the provincial administration.

Chapters Three and Four then focus on the 1631 Chapter-General through its ruolli and ordinances.

* This list excludes dissertations for which no abstracts were submitted to the editor by the graduates concerned.

This dissertation deals with aspects of crime in Valletta and the Three Cities, the commercial hub of early modern Malta, during the first years of Pinto’s magistracy. The urban environment provided enough occasions, but also motivations for the proliferation of crime in every possible form.

The main primary sources that have been consulted are the National Library Manuscripts 638 and 666, which contain reports on every daily occurrence in the Harbour area, the jurisdiction of the Magna Curia Castellania. The sources were then supposedly to be sent weekly to the Grand Master. The other primary sources are Vilhena’s code of laws and the Bandi, issued every now and then to enforce control on other matters, especially commerce.

Chapter 1 discusses the general situation of Malta in the eighteenth century with particular emphasis on the economy. Another section deals with the administration of justice and jurisdictional problems. Chapter 2 deals with insults and the important function they perform in society, with special reference to the Mediterranean code of honour. Chapter 3 discusses the high incidence of violence in Maltese society, especially in family relationships.

Chapter 4 concentrates on theft and how long-lasting criminal ties were set up, even ignoring the bonds of religion. Chapter 5 is concerned with other forms of deviancy, including illicit sexual relationships, gambling, alcoholism and commercial infractions.

In the conclusion I have tried to discuss Pinto’s role in the administration of justice with reference to current European thought on absolutism. Comments on European developments have duly been made in every chapter. Finally, the Appendices contain prices of various vegetables and fruits together with a list of nicknames.

Rita Azzopardi: The use of political cartoons in history teaching:
World War II cartoons as a case study (B. Educ., 1995).

This work attempts to show the usefulness of political cartoons as a historical source of evidence for both the historian and the history teacher. Chapter 1 presents a literature review about the effectiveness of cartoons as a communication medium, cartoon technique, the effect of visual perception and propaganda. It also provides a short history of the development of cartooning from pre-history to modern times and an analysis of how cartoons work on children.

In the consequent chapter, an analysis of the political cartoon in war time, and in particular of the political cartoons in World War II Malta, is presented. Chapter 2 describes the need of propaganda as a valid medium to elicit a psychological conditioning for support of a total war. It also includes an evaluation of the effectiveness of the cartoon as a visual medium of propaganda and an analysis of cartoon content in Maltese newspapers. Chapter 2 identifies the role of the cartoonist and investigates the effort contributed by individual cartoonists in Maltese newspapers during the period 1939-1945. It also discusses the link between cartoon content and Maltese national identity and the value of symbolism in wartime cartoons. Chapter 3 submits arguments in favour of the use of political cartoons in the history classroom. Finally, after the epilogue for the main text, a workbook is presented which puts forward a set of questions based on topics which can be used as an extended scheme for the teaching of World War II in the history classroom.

The appendices that follow include an interpretation of the story told by war cartoons in Maltese newspapers, and a selection of wartime cartoon material from the local newspapers. Besides, Appendix 3 includes a sample set of questions linked to cartoons which can be used in a history classroom as an isolated source of evidence.
Between the advent of the Order in 1530 and 1718, the social universe of the Maltese changed radically. The Order had Europeanized the island and turned the harbour area into a cosmopolitan centre. The ordinary folk gave great importance to religion in their daily lives but continued to deviate from the doctrinal norms. The Inquisition acted as a watchdog over such transgressions.

The Maltese tribunal of the Roman Inquisition was an integral part of the Counter-Reformation movement. The Inquisition helped to create a gulf between popular and learned culture in such a way that popular religious beliefs were labelled as 'heresies'. However, despite the attempt of the Inquisition to eliminate 'unethical behaviour', the mass of the people continued to relate with the supernatural without ordination and approval of the church. This is evident in the use of elements of official religion for unorthodox magical purpose. Another popular form of unethical behaviour was blasphemy. Blasphemy was directed against the major ingredients of Post Tridentine religiosity. The Inquisition dissected these emotional outbursts of anger in order to find heretical beliefs in them.

Finally, one cannot fail to mention Malta's role as a frontier society whose culture was influenced by the continuous war against the Ottoman Empire. This conflict left a deep imprint on the social memory of people. Slavery and corsairing were the net result of this conflict. A direct consequence of such activities was the role of slaves in transmitting magical beliefs.

Unethical behaviour and heresy in early eighteenth century Malta cannot be studied in isolation, since popular culture in early modern Malta followed many of the trends then prevalent in southern Europe.
This dissertation deals with the role played by the elector under the 1921 Constitution. Attempts have been made to answer questions such as why did the number of electors increase considerably from the first election held in 1921 to the last one held in 1932; the geographical distribution of the electors; to what extent were the electors willing to transfer their vote to another party after giving their first preference to their favourite party, and how these cross-party transferable votes were distributed; what was the relation between the occupations of the electors and the support received by the political parties; which were the main issues which created sharp divisions among the electors; and what was the role of the church in the political life of the elector. The main sources made use of are found in the National Library at Valletta, in the Melitensia section in the University Library, and in the National Archives of Santo Spirito at Rabat.

The dissertation has three chapters. Chapter 1 tries to detect who were the electors and looks at their electoral behaviour between 1921 and 1932. The 1921 Constitution extended the franchise in a way far more extensive than any other previous constitution. Undoubtedly this left its impact on the political parties which from now onwards had to adopt policies which attracted a wider spectrum of electors, if they wanted to be successful in electoral terms.

The extension of the franchise enabled the formation of a party which addressed and hoped to get its support from the new working classes constituency. Initially many were those who believed that the Labour party had a crucial role to play in the Maltese political scene. However the more time passed the more Labour started to lose electoral support.

Chapter 2 tries to show how two main issues, the class struggle and the language question, divided the Maltese electors in the 1920s and 1930s. Under the 1921 Constitution electors tended to oppose each other along either class or language divisions. The L.P was mostly accused of working to introduce class hatred in Malta, but it replied that its only intention was to eradicate the cause so that there would be no effects. The language question originating back in the 1880s still dominated the Maltese political scene in the 1920s and 1930s. Furthermore the whole issue became more serious when in Italy Mussolini took over power. Mussolini made it clear that his aim was to build an empire in the Mediterranean Sea and Malta was to become part of that empire.

Chapter 3 deals with the role played by the Church under self-government, its attempts in various ways to influence the electors in their choices, and effects of self-government on the Church's status among the Maltese. The Church was conscious that political parties were influential competitors but obviously it could not oppose their formation. So the strategy adopted by the Church was to infiltrate them. In case of the Nationalists this proved to be a relatively easy task but the same cannot be said in the case of the other two parties. The main aim of this dissertation is to throw a new light on certain aspects of the Maltese political life during the inter-war period.

This dissertation attempts to study some aspects of popular culture during the inquisitorship of Ercole Visconti in Malta, 1677-1678. The main information has been obtained from Volume 79 of the Criminal Proceedings of the Archives of the Maltese Inquisition at the Cathedral Museum of Mdina.

The dissertation is divided in six chapters. The introductory chapter deals partly with the situation in Malta in the 1670s, and partly with the Inquisition. The 1670s were marred by two great difficulties for the Order's government of Malta. Scarcity of grain in Sicily, in fact, led to constant food shortages in Malta. And, as if this was not enough, plague broke out in 1676 and 11,300 persons died as a consequence. On its part the Holy Office by the late seventeenth century did not regard heresy as the primary threat for orthodox Christianity any more, and now concentrated more on 'popular superstitions'.

In fact, although the reforms of the Council of Trent were largely successful by the end of the seventeenth century, irreverence and sometimes outright reaction to official religion was far from rare. Chapter two shows that there was a constant flow of defections, forced or voluntary, to Islam. Other forms of unethical behaviour like bigamy as well as blaspheming against the use of sacraments also ranked high among the religious crimes committed by the Maltese.

Chapter three discusses education which was rather controlled and was limited to a privileged few. Generally speaking, literacy was alien to the common sectors of society, and was considered necessary only when it was regarded as a prerequisite for particular professions, like that of priests. The latter, infact, used literacy as a tool with which to control the faithful who were expected to conform to Catholic ritual.

The church advocated the use of sacraments as the only orthodox method with which to deal with the various adversities of life. But as it is discussed in chapter four this was not enough for early modern folk who wanted more spontaneous access to the supernatural so as to overcome all sorts of misfortunes. This was why they often made recourse to magic whose 'superstitious' motives were often brilliantly disguised by prayers and invocation to saints, to the extent that the clergy participated.

On some occasions such as plague, however, not even magic proved to be of any help and therefore other forms of communication with the divine had to be invented.

Chapter five discusses the case when during the plague of 1676 the people of Valletta created a local saint of their own so as to represent them directly in front of God. This devotion, however, was not shared by the official Church which considered local saints as a threat to traditional hierarchical religious authority. Their claim at sainthood was therefore rejected as false.

The concluding chapter deals on how the Inquisition documents studied enable us to catch a glimpse into the eternal battle between 'official' and 'popular' cultures, between the central authority of the Catholic Church based on the Tridentine decrees and ancient religious beliefs which lingered on among the masses who were often illiterate and did not care less about official Church dogma. On its part the Inquisition in Malta, as elsewhere in Catholic Europe, did its utmost to control transgressors by forcing them to conform with the precepts of the Council of Trent.
Russo-Maltese relations began tentatively in 1770 between the Czarina Catherine II and Grand Master Pinto de Fonseca. The Czarina wanted Pinto's help in attacking the Turks and wished to send a Charge d'Affaires to Malta. The Order had since mended its fences with the Turks and could not accept a Charge d'Affaires from Orthodox Russia. Nevertheless, Catherine's representative Cavalcabo functioned as de facto Charge d'Affaires. His letters to Count Panin are an excellent first-hand account of Russo-Maltese relations between 1770-76.

On Catherine's death in 1796, her son Paul became Czar. Obsessed with the idea of becoming Grand Master of the Order, Paul achieved his aim through the 'good offices' of the unscrupulous Count Giulio Litta, his Maltese Charge d'Affaires at St Petersburg, but his title was soon abolished.

After a dreadful two-year interregnum under the French, the Maltese clamoured for British rule. At the 1802 Treaty of Amiens, Britain, France, Russia and Naples decided that the island should be returned to the Order. The situation became a debacle when the Maltese continued to clamour for British rule and the new Russian Czar Alexander I insisted on the ratification of Article X of the Treaty of Amiens. Harsh words followed between Pitt the Younger and the Czar. The Czar's dilemma lay in choosing between retaining Malta and expending men and capital to keep Napoleon out of the Mediterranean. He opted for a tacit withdrawal. Malta had no real connection with Russia until she served as a supply depot and military hospital during the 1854-56 Crimean War.

The early twentieth century saw Malta again receiving Russian visitors, refugees from the October 1917 Revolution, invited and aided by the British authorities, among them the Dowager empress Marie Feodorovna who stayed at San Anton. Various aristocratic refugees made their way to Malta, numbering roughly 600. Among them were Princess Nathalie Poutiatine who married a Maltese and established the first ballet Academy and General K. A. Voyensky de Breze', whose diaries provide a vivid account of the life of a Russian refugee in Malta in the 1920s. Thereafter, Russo-Maltese relations come to a stop of fifty-odd years, until diplomatic relations are established in 1982. In 1989, Malta hosts the Bush-Gorbachev Summit.

This dissertation deals with the major economic, social and constitutional developments in Malta during the years 1933-39. When in 1933 the Constitution was withdrawn, the administration of the Island fell under direct Crown Colony Government, under the Governorship of General Sir David Graham Campbell and General Sir Charles Bonham-Carter successively. Because of their lack of political activity due to the suspension of the Constitution, these six years are often overlooked in history writing. However, considerable development occurred in the economic, social and constitutional spheres. Education and health were improved, while in 1939 another Constitution was awarded. The imminent war boiling in Europe made the British Government take precautions to safeguard the Islands' well-being.
AN OVERVIEW OF BOOKS ABOUT MALTA PUBLISHED BETWEEN 1978 AND 1987

By Claire Zammit, Mark Aloisio, Stefan Cachia, Kenneth Gambin and Marcia Young.

To carry forward the work started in Storja '78 we are including an update of Melitensia books published from 1978 to 1987. Storja '96 has taken care to include most of the books published during the decade under review which we most consider to be of substance, especially in the area of Maltese studies. It may fairly be said that about two of the books published each year are of superior and lasting value, although others can be valuable per se or as source material.

Works in this category would include those by:
Oliver Friggieri (1978) on the influence of Italian culture on Maltese literature;
Henry Frendo (1979) on the formation of Maltese political parties and national identity;
Mario Vassallo (1979) on changing socio-religious attitudes;
Carmelo Testa (1979 et seq) on the Maltese insurrection against French rule;
Alison Hoppen (1979) on the Order's fortification of Malta;
John Attard Montalto (1980) on the Maltese aristocracy;
Adrianus Koster (1981) on the role of ecclesiastics in political affairs;
Alexander Bonnici's two volume De Piro biography (1982 - 85);
Harrison Smith's biography of Lord Strickland as revised by Adrianus Koster (1983);
Lawrence E. Attard's first volume on migration history (1983);
Edward Zammit's sociological enquiry on class and labour (1984);
Joseph Bezzina (1985) on religion and politics in Gozo 1798 - 1864;
Marc Donato's historical survey (1985) of Maltese settlement in Algeria in the nineteenth century;
Herbert Ganado's two volumes of journalistic writings (1985);
Philip Vella's illustrated account on Malta during the Second World War (1985);
Godfrey Wettinger (1985) on the Jews in Malta during the Late Middle Ages;
Roger de Giorgio's study on the origins of the city of Valletta (1985);
Edgar Soler's autobiography (1986) concentrating on the years of his exile in Uganda;
Mario Buhagiar (1986) on Roman and Byzantine catacombs;
Alfie Guillaumier's compendium on Maltese towns and villages (1987), and

We are also including a short list of some journals and reviews which were published usually intermittently. Books are also being separated by categories for easier reference, including a section on bibliographical sources. The key to the abbreviations is:

BS: Bibliographical Sources
GH: General History
AAA: Artistic / Architecture / Archaeology
BGA: Biographical / Genealogical / Autobiographical
PM: Parochial / Municipal
NM: Naval / Military
RE: Religious / Ecclesiastical

1978

BS: 
Joseph Mizzi: Catalogue of the records of the Order of St John in the National Library of Malta, Vols 1 - 13; University press, 1964 - 
Anthony F. Sapienza: A checklist of Maltese periodicals and newspapers in the National Library of Malta and the University of Malta Library. Royal University of Malta; unpaginated.

GH: 
Antonio Menna: Storia dell'isola e dell'Ordine di Malta 1798 - 1815; Napoli; Societa' Editrice Napoletana; 237pp.
Arrigo Pecchioli: Storia dei cavalieri di Malta; Roma; Editalia; 125pp.
Anthony Luttrell: The Hospitalers in Cyprus, Rhodes, Greece and the West 1291 - 1440; London; Variorum Reprints; various pagings.
Oliver Friggieri: La cultura italiana a Malta; Firenze; Olschki; 168pp.

AAA: 

PM: S. Borg: Ir-Xewkija fi grajjiet il-kappillani u l-arciprieti taghha; Progress Press; 101 pp.


Joseph Micallef: Rahal fi gwerra; Il-Hajja; 113pp.

Walter R. Zahra: Storja taz-Zejtun u l-inhawi tieghu vol.1; Veritas Press; 152pp.

1979

BS: Carmel Cuschieri: Index Historicus; Malta; the Author; 151pp.

Anthony Attard: Index of notaries 1465-1894; Malta (s.n.); 22pp.

Carmel Bonavia: Bibliography of Maltese textbooks 1651-1979; University Press; 76pp.


Henry Frendo: Party politics in a fortress colony: the Maltese experience; Midsea Books; Maltese social studies series; 243pp.

Andrew P. Vella: Storja ta’ Malta, vols 1-2 (1974-79); KKM.

Carmelo Testa: Maz-Zewg nahat tas-swar: zmien il-Franciz f’Malta. 3vols. (1979-1982); KKM.

Mario Vassallo: From lordship to stewardship: religion and social change in Malta; Hague; Moatan; 270pp.

AAA: Alison Hoppen: The fortifications of Malta by the Order of St John; Edinburgh; Scottish academic press; 221pp.

1980

PM: Emanuel Brincat: Senglea during the Second Great War 1940-1944; Progress Press; 107pp.

NM: George Hogan: Malta - the triumphant years 1940-1943; London; Robert Hale; 208pp.

GH: Paul Bartolo: X’kien gara sew fis-Sette Giugno; KKM; 231pp.


Ray Bondin: Deportation 1942; Independence Print; 139 pp.

John Montalto: The nobles of Malta 1530 - 1800; Midsea Books; 415pp.

H.C.R. Vella: Jean Quintin d’Autun: The earliest description of Malta (Lyons 1536); De Bono Enterprises; 102pp.

Winston L. Zammit: Malta under the Cotoneers 1660-1680; Lux Press; 97pp.

BGA: Robert Jackson: Malta victory: Yeoman on the George Cross Island; London; Barker; 137pp.


Lawrence Mizzi: Ghall-holma ta’ hajtu; KKM; 102pp.


Joseph Micallef: L-istorja ta’ Hal Safi; Indepence Print; 80pp.

NM: Peter Elliott: The cross and the ensign: a naval history of Malta 1798-1979; Cambridge; Stephens; 217pp.

1981

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<th>Author</th>
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<td>Michael Galea and Emmanuel Tonna</td>
<td>L-Arcisqof Gonzi</td>
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<td>Charles A. Gauci</td>
<td>The genealogy and heraldry of the noble families of Malta</td>
<td>Gulf Publications</td>
<td>309pp.</td>
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<td>Anton Buttigieg</td>
<td>Mill-album ta’ hajti. Fil-morsa tal-gwerra, 3 vols</td>
<td>Lux Press</td>
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<td>Anton Buttigieg</td>
<td>Grajjiet il-Qala</td>
<td>San Gwakkin Press</td>
<td>100pp.</td>
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<td>Alexander Bonnici</td>
<td>L-Isla fi grajjiet il-Bazilika ta’ Marija Bambina, 2 vols</td>
<td>Printwell</td>
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<td>Alexander Bonnici</td>
<td>Mons.Guzeppi de Piro 1877-1933, 2 vols</td>
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<td>Remembrance, published by the Fsobian on the occasion of the blitz on Floriana in 1942</td>
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<td>Edward L. Zammit</td>
<td>A colonial inheritance: Maltese perceptions of work, power and class structure with reference to the labour movement</td>
<td>Malta Univ. Press</td>
<td>195pp.</td>
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<td>Oliver Friggieri</td>
<td>Gwann Mamo - il-kittieb tar-riforma socjali</td>
<td>Interprint</td>
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<td>R. De Giorgio</td>
<td><em>A city by an Order</em></td>
<td>Progress Press</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Marc Donato</td>
<td><em>L’émigration des Maltais en Algérie au XIXe siècle</em></td>
<td>Montpellier Africa nostra</td>
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<td>T. Johnston</td>
<td><em>Tattered battlements: a fighter pilot’s Malta diary D-Day and after</em></td>
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<td>P. Vella</td>
<td><em>Malta: Blitzed but not beaten</em></td>
<td>Progress Press</td>
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<td>1986</td>
<td>Remig Sacco</td>
<td><em>L-elezzjonijiet generali, 1849-1986: il-grajja politika u kostituzzjonali ta’ Malta</em></td>
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<td>Barry York</td>
<td><em>The Maltese in Australia</em></td>
<td>AE Press</td>
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<td>Anthony Bonanno</td>
<td><em>An illustrated guide to prehistoric Gozo</em></td>
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<td>Michael J. Schiavone</td>
<td><em>L-elezzjonijiet f’Malta, 1849-1981</em></td>
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<td>Frans Ciappara</td>
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<td>Joseph M. Pirolta</td>
<td><em>Fortress colony: the final act, 1945-1964</em></td>
<td>Studia Editions, Social Action Movement</td>
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<td>Michael Galea</td>
<td><em>Monsinjur Enrico Dandria, 1892-1932</em></td>
<td>Vertias Press, Zabbar</td>
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<td>C. J. Jaccarini</td>
<td><em>Don Mauro Inguanez, 1887-1955: Benedectine of Montecassino</em></td>
<td>Mdina, Cathedral Museum</td>
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<td>Christopher Shores</td>
<td><em>Malta: the hurricane years</em></td>
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<td>Bill Rolls</td>
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A list of journals concerning Malta published during the period under review.


*Biblioteca Melitensia* (Mediterranean Studies Group, University of Toronto).

*Civilisation* (P.E.G.)

*Heritage: An encyclopaedia of Maltese culture and civilisation* (Midsea Publications).

*Hyphen: A journal of Melitensia and the Humanities* (G.F. Abela Upper Lyceum).

*L-Imnara* (Malta Folklore Society).

*Mediterranean Studies* (Faculty of Arts, University of Malta).