Language, Literature and the Maltese National Imaginary

Sandro Caruana & Adrian Grima

0. Introduction

The interdependence between language and literature plays a major role in shaping a nation's identity and intertwining linguistic developments and literary contributions cannot be isolated from the historical and sociocultural context of which they ultimately are the very representation. This is indeed the case of Malta, as the size of the island and its history have led to the formation of a language, Maltese, and to a literary production which can both only be studied objectively once they are also examined in the light of foreign or external influences to which they were subjected, with which they interacted and through which they adopted their present shape. In this chapter we briefly trace the linguistic history of Malta and how this led to the standardization of the Maltese language and we reflect on how this process was heavily conditioned by literary figures and their works. We will focus mainly on events that took place in the early decades of the 19th century, as during this era Maltese was standardized and in 1934 it became an official language of the island. While mentioning the contribution of literati, such as the national poet Dun Karm Psaila, whose works heightened the status of Maltese and who had a major influence on decision-taking regarding the language, we will also consider the role of literary figures who may have been less acclaimed, but who nonetheless contributed in order to make the use of Maltese more widespread in a historical period which was characterized by colonization and by political tension.

1. Malta's languages and literatures

Located at the centre of the Mediterranean Sea, the Maltese islands have always represented a crossroads between Europe and North Africa. Maltese is the only Semitic language written in Latin characters and also the only official language of Arabic roots which is geographically part of Europe. Furthermore, since Malta's full accession in 2004, it is also an official language of the European Union. Whereas the morphology of the Maltese language has extensive Semitic characteristics, its lexical composition has been largely influenced by contact with Sicilian, Italian and, more recently, English. As far as frequency of use is concerned, words of Arabic etymology feature very regularly in spoken Maltese, since most invariables (including prepositions, conjunctions, pronouns and articles) originate from Arabic, but the actual amount of words from Italian and English in present-day Maltese lexicon is indeed higher than words from Arabic[1]. This is especially evident in technical and sectorial languages as Maltese often draws heavily from Italian and from English in these varieties. For example, the

[1] Through a computation based on Aquilina's (1987) Maltese-English dictionary, Brincat (2003:360 & 2011:407) reveals that the words of Arabic etymology amount to approximately 33% of the Maltese lexicon.

Maltese legal variety is influenced strongly by Italian[2] whereas any reference to modern technological means features inevitably a large number of loanwords from English.

From a sociolinguistic perspective, Maltese is currently the mother tongue of the vast majority of the population and is spoken all over the island. Figures from a 2005 census reveal that out of 362,376 of Maltese aged 10 years and over, 326,703 (90%) speak Maltese most regularly at home, 21,636 (6%) English[3], 3,344 (1%) another language and 10,693 (3%) more than one language (National Statistics Office, 2007:180). These raw figures might suggest that the linguistic situation in Malta is closer to monolingualism than to bilingualism, although practically all official documentation, including the Constitution of the Maltese Islands, refers to both Maltese and English as the official languages of Malta which may both be used by local administration. However, the role and the use of different languages in Malta, described by means of the figures presented earlier, must be interpreted within the light of the local sociolinguistic context as Maltese is used extensively as a spoken variety but to a somewhat lesser extent as a written medium, although this situation is subject to dynamic change. Maltese is therefore used to communicate orally in most circumstances, especially at informal levels.

Maltese is also very widely used on local media, though in this domain the presence of English is also considerable. On television, local programmes are transmitted in Maltese but there is no dubbing when foreign transmissions are screened. Generally radio programmes are in Maltese but music radio stations (which attract a largest amount of listeners) transmit practically only songs in English. Newspapers, on the other hand, are published in both languages. There are a number of Internet websites in Maltese although most computer browsing is done on websites in English. Maltese is also used very frequently in modern means of communication which require a written variety, such as Internet Relay Chat (Brincat & Caruana, 2011) and mobile phone texting. Maltese is also used regularly in most institutions and work-places, both in the public and in the private sector. Official governmental and legal documentation is written in both Maltese and English.

English is used very frequently in writing and gains ground over Maltese in certain contexts, including higher education. Proficiency in both spoken and written English constitutes an advantage to those Maltese students who pursue their studies beyond Secondary school level and, as a direct consequence of this, regular use of English in Malta, especially as a spoken medium, is often associated with families having a higher socioeconomic background. These considerations point to the fact that in a number of instances the bilingual situation of Malta is heavily characterized by diglossia – especially scholastic diglossia.

[2] For further information on this variety one may refer to Chircop (2000 & 2002).

[3] The variety of English spoken in Malta, known as Maltese-English has been the subject of a number of publications and students' dissertations amongst which Mazzon (1992), Vella (1994), Bonnici (2009) and Thusat et al. (2009).

Despite the widespread use of English as the written medium, it seems that Maltese literature has always been mainly identified with the Maltese language and it has been credited with spreading nationalist ideals both among the rather elite group of local literati and, eventually, among the majority of the largely illiterate population. Indeed, for the leading scholar of the history of Maltese literature, Oliver Friggieri, writing in his seminal work, *Storia della letteratura maltese* (Friggieri, 2009), the birth of Maltese literature coincides with the publication of poems written in Maltese by writers who were inspired by the romantic movement that landed on the island of Malta when exiles of the Italian Risorgimento started to seek refuge in Malta during the early 19th century. The number and influence of these political refugees, many of whom were also journalists and writers, increased substantially when the British colonial authorities granted freedom of the press to those living on the Maltese Islands in 1839. According to Friggieri (2009:22):

> L'attività creativa ebbe inizio in sostanza quando il maltese cominciò ad essere utilizzato e coltivato come mezzo letterario, anzi come lo strumento più adatto, in contrapposizione all'italiano come la lingua culturale della tradizione, per lo svolgimento di una identità nazionale[4].

Friggieri maintains that it was the Maltese language that allowed Maltese writers to be truly creative, rather than follow a literary and cultural tradition that was ultimately Italian, and therefore foreign, and to develop a national identity. This explains why he and other critics before and after him have equated "Maltese literature" with literature written in Maltese, even that, for example, written by Maltese emigrants in Australia. Friggieri does not define literature by Maltese writers in Italian, or any other language for that matter, as "Maltese literature" precisely because it is not charged with a nationalistic vocation, or at least it is not seen as a living symbol of the national identity. Arnold Cassola disagrees with this position as is evident in the title of a paper of his, "*La letteratura maltese in lingua italiana dalle origini a tutto il secolo diciassettesimo,*"[5] which traces the story of Maltese literature written in Italian across many centuries up until the 19th century, at a time when Italian was regarded by Italian exiles and Maltese Italophiles as the national language of Malta, a view that only lost favour when Malta and Italy found themselves on opposite sides during the Second World War. Until 1936 Italian was still an official language in Malta, alongside Maltese and English.[6] Cassola (2000b:31) states that when one talks about Maltese literature, one must keep in mind the fact that apart from Maltese literature written in Maltese there has also been "*una letteratura maltese in lingua araba, italiana e inglese*." It was practically only

[4] Creative initiative mainly started when Maltese began to be used and nurtured as a literary means, or rather as the best means for the development of a national identity, in a counter-position to Italian as the traditional language of culture.

[5] First published in "La letteratura maltese in lingua italiana dalle origini a tutto il secolo diciassettesimo", *I Quaderni di Gaia*, Roma, II, 1, (1991), 57-82. Here reproduced from *Quaderno italo-maltese* (Cassola, 2000: 31-54).

[6] In 1934, Maltese became an official language alongside English and Italian. Subsequently, in1936, Italian lost this status of an official language in Malta. For further details on this issue one may refer to Hull (193-239-265) and Cassola (1998:109-121).

in the 18th century that Maltese started to be considered as a medium for literature; between the fall of the Roman Empire and the 18th century the Maltese used Arabic, Latin, Sicilian and Tuscan to write literature (Cassola, 2000c:22).

2. The unfolding of historical events which influenced the development of Maltese

Historical developments concerning the Maltese language, as well as its standardization which increased its use to a number of written domains, are certainly among the major factors that contributed to the formation of the Maltese identity. When the Arabs conquered Malta in 870 A.D, possibly in a violent manner, they introduced their vernacular which took over any pre-existing language (Brincat, 1995; 2003:53-64 & 2011:33-46). However, it is likely that the Maltese language originated in 1048 when the Arabs brought a new community from neighbouring Sicily which spoke a variety of Arabic which eventually developed into present-day Maltese. Maltese can typologically be classified as a Maghrebi dialect, which developed as "a brand of Sicilian Arabic[7]" (Mifsud, 2008:146). The Romance element started reappearing consistently in the language following the colonization of Malta by the Normans in 1090 A.D. and Malta's subsequent inclusion in the Kingdom of Sicily.

During these early stages of its development Maltese was used as a basilect, largely limited within conversational contexts, and it was rarely used in any form of written documentation. The oldest literary text, entirely in Maltese, dates to the 15th century: 'il-Kantilena', a poem written by a public notary named Pietru Caxaro (c. 1410-1485)[8]. An aspect which distinguishes this text is that it is almost entirely composed of terms of Arabic origin, which contrasts quite markedly with texts in Maltese of subsequent historical periods in which terms from Sicilian were very frequent. Subsequently, during the rule of the Hospitaller Knights of the Order of St. John (1530-1798), documents were mainly published in Latin, although Italian (in its Tuscan variety) and Sicilian were also used in writing. Maltese was present in everyday conversations, as testified by historical documentation regarding the language[9], probably more extensively in rural than in urban areas. The very presence of the local idiom was viewed as an important testimony of the local identity and was also the object of attention of a number of

[7] Agius (1996, 2007) provides an in-depth description of Siculo-Arabic (or Sicilian Arabic), which "would have been a variety which emerged during the Islamic period and continued to exist during the Norman reign at least until 1300." (Agius, 2007:26). Further information on this variety may also be found in Brincat (2011:47-63)

[8] This text was discovered in the late Sixties and was first described in Wettinger & Fsadni (1968).

[9] Among the most notable documentation one may include Ġan Franġisk Abela's (1582-1655) reference to Maltese in *Della Descrittione di Malta Isola nel Mare Siciliano* (1647), some etymological references provided by Domenico Magri (d. 1672) and Carlo Magri (d. 1693) in the *Hierolexicon* (1677) and Ġan Franġisk Agius de Soldanis's publication *Della lingua punica presentamente usata da maltesi* (1750). The first book written in Maltese, with a parallel text in Italian, is a catechism entitled *Tagħlim Nisrani ta' Dun Franġisk Wizzino* (1752), 'Father Francesco Wizzino's Christian Teachings'.

highly influential Maltese figures and patriots, amongst whom one of the most prominent was Mikiel Anton Vassalli (1764-1829). Vassalli's lifetime was characterized by a historical spell during which Malta underwent the rule of three different major European powers – the Knights of the Order, the French and the British. Following 268 years of governance by the Knights, in 1798 the islands passed under French rule. This occupation, however, was short-lived as, after repeated conflicts with the local population, the French lost possession of the islands which fell into the hands of the British in 1800. During these turbulent times Vassalli stands out as a figure who strived to educate the lower classes, also by attempting to bestow more prestige on the Maltese language:

> La cultura adunque della lingua maternal è necessario in primo luogo per l'educazione. Questa è il principal oggetto, che deve avere una nazione, perchè da lei la comune felicità dipende[10].
>
> (Vassalli, 1796 [2002:xxi])

Despite the efforts of Vassalli and other patriots, Maltese was still largely overshadowed by other languages as Latin was still used extensively by the Church and Italian appeared in most written documentation. Furthermore, during the British colonial period (1800-1964), English was introduced in Malta, eventually replacing Italian as the country's official language after a lengthy struggle known as the 'language question'. The British Colonial Government slowly but surely placed English alongside Maltese and Italian on the linguistic map of the island, and the language question during the first decades of the 20th century led to a political confrontation between pro-English and pro-Italian parties.

> While the British tried to oust Italian culture and language by using Maltese as a lever, the cultured Maltese class desperately clutched at the positions where Italian was still in vigour, such as the Law Courts and the Church. A series of rapid changes in the legislation of Malta in the first decades of the century, culminated in Maltese and English becoming the official languages of the islands (1934) with Maltese as the national language.
>
> (Mifsud 1995: 26).

The colonial influence continued to gain ground during the years preceding the Second World War and although both English and Italian were jointly proclaimed as official languages of the island in 1921, within the educational sphere more importance started to be given to English. The unfolding of political events which led to the Second World created a number of struggles which eventually would see the end of the above-mentioned language question. In fact, the British government, in an attempt to sever ties with Italy started adopting a number of anti-Italian measures which culminated politically with the exile of a number of pro-Italian Maltese (Soler, 1986). Within this tense political scene the British government slowly proceeded to reduce the influence

[10] Nurturing the language which one learns from one's mother is therefore necessary primarily for education. This is the first goal that a nation should have, as everybody's well-being depends on it.

of Italian in Malta and, in order to do so, it also encouraged and promoted the use of the Maltese language.

Ironically, therefore, the Maltese language gained ground locally because it was used as a political instrument by the British in order to eliminate Italian. This state of affairs proceeded during the post-war years, until English and Maltese were confirmed official languages by the Constitution of 1961 and 1964, reiterated by the Constitution of the Republic of Malta in 1974. As time passed, the status of Maltese improved and the language acquired a standardized written form, as we will document below. Notwithstanding this progress, up to the 1930s Maltese was called "*il-lingwa tal-kċina*" [the language of the kitchen]. After World War II pressures to obtain Independence (achieved in 1964) mounted slowly and use of the language became more widespread among individuals of all social classes and from different educational backgrounds.

3. The standardization process

The standardization process of the Maltese language must be seen in the light of developments related both to the oral and to the written varieties. Whereas the latter can rely on various forms of documentation the former is obviously more problematic to reconstruct. Brincat (2003:216-220 and 307-310 & 2011:229-235 and 337-341), however, outlines two fundamental historical phases which led to major developments regarding spoken Maltese which eventually led to a language variety which became more widespread than others, thereby initiating a standardization process. The first coincides with the construction of Malta's present capital city, Valletta, by the Knights of the Order (the foundation stone of which was placed in 1566 by Grandmaster Jean de la Valette) as this led to a number of demographic changes. Within the space of 200 years (between 1530 and 1760) the area beside the Grand Harbour, in proximity of Valletta, became an important urban zone. The first indications of a standard variety of Maltese were therefore accounted for as:

> "Convergence took place on a large scale when the Order of St. John settled in Borgo and attracted the first influx of countrymen towards the southern headlands that embraced the creeks of Grand Harbour. The original inhabitants were not many and they were overwhelmed by the arrival of hundreds and then thousands of internal immigrants. If they had their own regional variety it did not attract the newcomers, and so the whole community dropped the marked features and stuck to the elements they all had in common, forming a new koine. (…) Therefore the new capital city did not possess a linguistic tradition of its own but developed one *ex novo*".
>
> (Brincat 2011:230)

This early phase of the formation of a standard variety of Maltese is strongly linked to the spoken language and is seemingly unrelated to any contact with the written literary variety.

The second phase of manifestation of standard Maltese is related to the period of British colonization (1800-1964). During the first decades of colonization demographic growth also led to frequent contact of Maltese with the acrolect, which at that time was Italian. As a result of this, especially in urban zones, certain traits of what eventually would become standard Maltese started appearing. This could have created a variety of Maltese which distanced itself from other more regional (especially rural) forms thereby leading to the consolidation of a more widespread form, which would certainly have been influenced by Sicilian and Italian. In this way Maltese gained a more distinct semblance from its original Maghrebi Arabic forefather and the language started taking on the shape and structure which are presently in use[11].

The above processes were only accompanied at a much later stage by official initiatives in order to standardize the written variety[12]. A milestone in this respect is represented by *L-Għaqda tal-Kittieba tal-Malti* [The Association of Maltese Writers] which was founded in 1920 by a group of highly-esteemed literary figures[13]. These included those literati involved both in linguistic developments and decisions regarding Maltese, as well as in the use of the language for literary purposes (as we will elaborate in the following section). The aims of this *Għaqda* were both to initiate the process of standardizing Maltese writing and to promote Maltese literature and language. This led to the publication, in 1924, of the *Tagħrif fuq il-Kitba Maltija*[14] [Information on Maltese Writing] which is still today considered a major reference point for standard Maltese and which enabled the language to find its way out of what Aquilina (1961:101) describes as "the jungle of Maltese letter-making". By means of the *Tagħrif*, a standardized Maltese alphabet was devised based on the principle that "*il-kitba Maltija jeħtiġilha tkun mibnija fuq Alfabett li fih kull ittra għandha tidher għal leħen wieħed, u fejn kull leħen għandu jiġi miftiehem b'ittra waħda*" [it is necessary that Maltese writing be built on an alphabet in which every letter is to represent a sound (*leħen*, literally 'voice'), and in which every sound is interpreted through a single letter] (*L-Għaqda tal-Kittieba tal-Malti*, 1924:85-86). This principle was adopted to eliminate inconsistencies present at the time (e.g. Italian < ch > and < sc > were officially replaced respectively by < k > for the voiceless velar plosive and by < x > for the voiceless postalveolar fricative; the < j > was introduced as a palatal approximant to be used in diphthongs) and also served as a basis for the adoption of the characters ċ, ġ, ħ and ż which are included in the Maltese alphabet.

[11] Mifsud (2008:146) states that: "Maltese has lost no fewer than eleven consonantal phonemes, seven of which are recorded in old Maltese documents. Positionally, five of the lost phonemes lie from the velum backwards. Maltese has added seven new phonemes from non-Arabic sources, of which only one lies in this rear area. The changes have brought the general sound of the language closer to that of its languages of contact, from which now only the glottal stop now sets it apart."

[12] Some of the information regarding the standardisation of Maltese reproduced herein was originally published in Caruana (2011: 16-22).

[13] Including the National Poet, Dun Karm Psaila (1871-1961), and other prominent literary figures such as Ninu Cremona (1880-1972) and Ġużè Muscat Azzopardi (1853-1927).

[14] L-Għaqda tal-Kittieba tal-Malti (1924).

The decisions regarding Maltese orthography included in the 1924 *Tagħrif* were often subject to controversy[15], based on whether the spelling of Maltese words should be adapted in order to represent graphemes and digraphs present in the Italian alphabet or whether the alphabet suggested by the *Ghaqda*, which reflected more closely the etymological features of Arabic present in Maltese, was to be retained. Although the writing system proposed in the 1924 *Tagħrif* has, by and large, been retained, a number of changes had to be implemented in recent years in order to integrate English loanwords. The integration of these terms into Maltese occurs mainly on the grounds of whether they fit into phonetic patterns of the language and whether they are also morphologically integrated. This occurs both in the case of verb morphology (e.g. *ipparkja* 'he parked'; *ibbukkja* 'he booked'; *startja* 'he started the car'; *illandja* 'he landed the plane'[16]) and of nominal morphology (e.g. *kejk* 'cake' and *kowt* 'coat' are morphologically integrated as it forms the plural through the Maltese suffix: *kejkijiet* 'cakes'; *kowtijiet* 'coats'). Policies regarding the integration of English terms into the Maltese orthographical system are not always met favourably and sometimes lead to inconsistencies[17].

One may draw a number of parallels between Malta and Italy regarding the development of language and national identity. In Italy:

> lo standard si è formato prima dell'Italia stessa, anzi in certo modo i limiti della nazione sono stati identificati nei limiti geografici dell'uso dello standard italiano: la nazione si è riconosciuta attraverso la lingua standard e lo stato ha mirato ad essere coestensivo ad essa[18].
>
> (Varvaro, 1978:50)

Just as Italy recognized its unity as a mirror of its language use, even before becoming a State politically, in Malta the standardization processes of Maltese preceded by several years the political process which eventually led to Independence. However, if the standardized form of Italian had a well-established literary form to model itself upon, the same cannot be said for Maltese. In this sense it can be said that the opposite happened as the standardization processes of written Maltese led to a considerable increase in literary productions which elevated the status of the Maltese language. This, in turn, became an important political tool as well as a major symbol of identity, and was instrumental in the struggle for Independence.

---

[15] In some cases the *Għaqda*'s proposals were refused outwardly and, as Aquilina (1961:76) illustrates: "from 1921 to 1934 the Għaqda's orthography was limited to its own organ Il-Malti, Leħen il-Malti". In other cases there were outright counterproposals such as the one made by the pro-Italian 1932 Minister of Education, Dr. Enrico Mizzi (1885-1950) who: "ordered the suppression of the letter j in such words as pulizija ('police'), burokrazija ('bureaucracy') etc., the change of the letter j to i in such words as Kummissarju ('Commissioner'), uffiċċju ('office') etc." (Aquilina, 1961:76).

[16] See Mifsud (1995:236) for further elaboration regarding the morpheme < ja >.

[17] Brincat (2003:378), for example, highlights a number of difficulties when English terms are integrated into Maltese and Caruana (2011:22-26) also deals briefly with this issue.

[18] The standard variety was formed before Italy itself, and in some way the limits of the nation were identified according to the geographical limits of the Italian standard variety: the nation identified itself through the standard language and the State aimed to extend itself according to it.

4. Narrating the Nation

It was only during the 19th century, when the Maltese came in touch with the romantic ideals of the Italian Risorgimento activists, that "Maltese really started developing into the first language of Maltese literature," Cassola (2000a:31). The first major figure of this new literature was the poet, historian and biographer Giovanni Antonio Vassallo (1817-1868), a lawyer by profession who became a professor of Italian literature at the University of Malta in 1863, and was the author, amongst other books, of *Storja ta' Malta miktuba għall-poplu Malti*, [a history of Malta written for the people of Malta] published in 1862. Cassola (200a, 31-33) reports that at a time when 80% of the adult population of the Maltese Islands could not read or write, Vassallo believed that the local vernacular was a vital instrument for the education of the common people and this encouraged him to write in Maltese, apart from Italian. His best-known literary work is the patriotic *Il-Ġifen Tork* [The Turkish Caravel], the first epic poem in Maltese, written in 1842 and published ten years later in 1852, which tells the story of how some sixty Maltese and four non-Maltese slaves mutinied aboard the Turkish vessel known as the "Corona Ottomana" in 1760 and sailed to Malta. The fact that the poem was included in a book of poems in Maltese for primary school children published in 1864, *Poesie Maltesi ad uso delle Scuole Primarie*, (as referred in Aquilina, 1975) confirms Vassallo's belief in the educational role of literature in Maltese. This patriotic poem sings the praises of the heroic Maltese slaves whose "victory" is not only that of a group of Maltese against their "brutal" Turkish masters but also that of Christianity against a much-loathed Islam. The effect on its Maltese audience must have been that of stirring both ethnic and religious fervour and pride, two of the mainstays of Maltese romantic literature.

A major figure in the romantic literary creation of the nation was the priest poet Dun Karm Psaila (1871-1961) who is Malta's national poet. Oliver Friggieri, author of the aforementioned history of Maltese literature (Friggieri, 2009), argues that Dun Karm Psaila's decision in 1912 to write poetry in Maltese, when he was 41 years old and already highly respected poet writing in Italian, was a watershed for Maltese literature, "a major landmark in the island's literary evolution" (Friggieri, 1992:48). The fact that a romantic poet sharing in "the wealth of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Italian poetry" decided to start writing in Maltese, "the downtrodden spoken 'dialect' of the people," meant that "a traditionally uncultivated language" like Maltese had finally won the attention of a serious writer who could influence other writers to make the same choice. Friggieri sees this as a choice that reflected one of the basic principles of romanticism, namely, that:

> literature is bound to reflect the aspirations and the sentiments of the people and to establish a direct, effective rapport with them. The ideals of democracy, both political and cultural, could not be realized except through the adoption of Maltese as the principal medium of communication and instruction.
>
> (Friggieri, 1992:48)

In the early decades of the 20th century, the literary language of Dun Karm was used to establish a model for all those writing in Maltese, especially for those writing literature. Having made a name for himself as a man of letters and refined poet writing in Italian, he had the added advantage, in Malta's highly conservative pre-World War II society, of being a respected priest who taught at the Archbishop's seminary and then held a leading position at the prestigious National Library of Malta, a veritable treasure trove of unique and priceless books and manuscripts dating back hundreds of years. Dun Karm Psaila did his best to steer clear of party politics, and avoided engaging in the bruising conflict between the pro-British reformists and the pro-Italian anti-reformists. This is perhaps best portrayed in his patriotic poem "Lil Malta" in which he proclaimed his love, in equal measure, for Great Britain and Italy, but above all for Malta, his one true motherland.

Dun Karm's concept of language is therefore tied to the educational and political role of poetry and forms an integral part of his poetics, but it also has a historical and cultural role. Friggieri (1980:46) identifies five reasons given by Dun Karm to justify his choice of the native language as the foremost symbol of a healthy national identity. Like many Italian writers Dun Karm sees the native language as an ideal unifying factor among the people because it offers living proof of the "psychological and historical continuity that was to lead inevitably to the maturation of the contemporary need for constitutional freedom." One of the fundamental characteristics of his concept of language, inspired by De Amicis' belief that there cannot be a nation without a language, is that Maltese is that which distinguishes the Maltese from other peoples; it was also "the language of the fathers of the nation," and "an authentic document of the story of the nation." All this makes of Maltese the best possible means for the individual and the community to express themselves, and for the achievement of a democratic unity.

Friggieri (1992:49) maintains that Dun Karm's poetic language "is not much removed from the most typical idiomatic and syntactic patterns of common speech, and his vocabulary rarely departs from the popular stock," thus giving the language aesthetic dignity without in any way obstructing direct communication with the common people. It was thanks to Dun Karm, writes Friggieri, that the Maltese language attained in a relatively short time the cultural status that it had lacked for centuries. The public image Dun Karm created as "*poeta Malti*," a Maltese poet writing in Maltese, "contributed considerably to official recognition of the language." The literature and status of Dun Karm were an important asset for those contemporary politicians and intellectuals who argued that the only true language of the Islands was Maltese and that it therefore "had a historical and a political right to be the principal medium of communication at all levels."

Friggieri (1992:49) believes that Dun Karm used the popular language because his creative faculties and the "European orientation" he followed beckoned such a choice, but there was also the island's cultural and political situation to contend with, and his choice of Maltese did not bring him any extra privileges but it allowed him to steer clear of the pro-Italian, pro-British divide. Dun Karm and his contemporaries showed both the ruling elite and the common

people that the vernacular could transform itself into a respectable and inspirational literary language.

This is not to say that the language of Dun Karm and other romantic poets and novelists was not stylized, because although these writers were engaging with the language of the common people, those who communicated almost exclusively in Maltese, but they were also committed to a romantic aesthetic inspired by a rather old, perhaps out-of-date Italian tradition that scorned more contemporary developments in Italy and other European literatures. Even the Maltese literary language they constructed in their poetry and narrative, most notably that of the so-called "Father of Maltese literature," Ġużè Muscat Azzopardi, a highly influential conservative figure, reflected their own homegrown romantic preconceptions about the more authentic nature and superior quality of the language spoken, or supposedly spoken, in the rural villages and the need to purge their work of all "impurities" present in the Maltese language spoken in the more cosmopolitan urban areas. The Maltese romantics pushed a strongly conservative Catholic agenda that demonized the Other, the non-Maltese and especially the non-Catholic, and more often than not refused to challenge the unjust colonial status quo and the privileges of the local powers that be. So while on the one hand, the Maltese romantics gave dignity to the marginalized language of the majority by using it to write a refined and dignified literature, the very conservative, non-confrontational nature of their purist and puritan literary and ideological creed all but excluded other forms of literary Maltese, more linguistically, stylistically and thematically audacious than theirs, from their self-styled canon.

While the transgressive, unpredictable narrative of Juan Mamo (1886-1941) was treated with a degree of condescension by some and with contempt by others within the dominant literary milieu, the far less engaging narrative of his contemporary Ġużè Aquilina, arguably the leading linguist of his time and a respected intellectual, was soon accorded canonical status by winning, in 1935, the first national prize for novels written in Maltese for his romantic historical novel which expressed the *religio et patria* sentiments of many literati but declared unflinching admiration and support for the British empire, thus reflecting a stance which was unequivocally pro-British, while at the same time sharing the staunchly Catholic and conservative worldview of the Italophiles. Aquilina's "classic" *Taħt Tliet Saltniet* steers clear of controversy and seems to make no enemies while plotting Malta's cultural, spiritual and political rejuvenation inspired by the patriotic figure of the Maltese linguist and intellectual Mikiel Anton Vassalli, the texts of the Gospels proclaiming social justice, and the benign order brought about by the British Empire. His novel is thematically predictable, his characters are types, and his narrative style rather stilted, but not in the way that all literature is, inevitably, "stilted": Aquilina attempts to give a classical ring to an "uncouth" Maltese language and this, for many literati, like Chetcuti, who adored his novel, he managed to do admirably. In the November 1938 issue of the respected literary journal *Leħen il-Malti,* that is, in the same year of publication of the novel, the young writer Ġużè Chetcuti described it as a "great novel" because of its "original subject, it's elevated thoughts expressed in unadorned language," and the fact that it does not pander

to the baseness of "uncultured people." Aquilina's places and characters are "painted clearly" and his writing has a "high style," a "pure" choice of words, and a "wide vocabulary," and his characters are "imbued with great life." (Chetcuti, 1998:136) Likewise in 2003, Charles Briffa provided a positive outlook towards the novel and wrote about how the writer's opposition to communism gave the protagonist the "dimension of a political hero who combats the communist ideology intellectually" and "promotes, popularizes, or invokes Christian ideology" (Briffa 2003:30-31).

Although the director of Education at the time, Dr. A. V. Laferla, who was also the president of the jury that awarded the first prize to Aquilina, wrote to the British governor of the Maltese Islands in 1936 to tell him that the novel "cannot be prescribed as a text in higher schools as it savours of socialism and class rivalry and we must be very careful," (Cassar Pullicino, 1974:97) this did not dent the novel's stature in the eyes of Maltese literati and teachers, probably because the accusation was blatantly false. The perceived literary merits of the novel, with its high-flown language; its preference for a linguistic "purity" or "puritanism" that reflects the dominant romantic creed about privileging the semitic elements in the Maltese language and excluding as much as possible the non-semitic "impurities;" its weaving of patriotic ideals and moral themes into the very fabric of the plot and narrative; and its ultimately non-controversial, somehow bi-partisan political and ideological stance soon made of it a highly successful novel, a staple of the undeclared Maltese literary canon established by those works that made it into schools and University. According to the 1978 and the 2003 editions, there were no less than five reprints of Aquilina's novel, in 1945, 1969, 1978, 1997, and 2003, a rather unusual achievement for a Maltese literary work of its size.

The postcolonial critic Elleke Boehmer notes that during the first half of the twentieth century, across the British Empire, "colonized élites, articulate though embattled, began to organize cultural revivals, or raised their voices in protest at imperial power" (Boehmer, 1995:99). In Malta this did not quite happen, at least not on a wide scale. Manwel Dimech (1860-1921) was one of the most outspoken critics of the British Empire, but he was also an admirer of its more positive sides. "In reality, from the earliest times, there was both resistance to *and* co-operation with the colonial presence" (Boehmer, 1995:91).Unlike Dimech, many of those who were openly critical of the British colonial authorities were Italophiles who would have readily replaced the Britons with the Italians.

"Across the colonized world," observes Boehmer, "writers were speaking vehemently, with new confidence, about the validity of their own experience," and this clearly happened in Malta too, and the Maltese language was a vital medium because it allowed the writers to create a new discourse in the imaginary of the people. "Members of small, highly educated and committed élites, they cast their message across a wide textual spectrum" to promote their cause, (Boehmer, 1999:99-100) and in the Maltese Islands this included journalism, poetry and fiction. The message they communicated, writes Boehmer,

> was distinguished by a strenuous defence of the virtues of native culture, characterized as rich, pure, and authentic (hence the term nativist). The idea was that a people's identity, though long suppressed, lay embedded in its cultural origins and was recoverable intact, unadulterated by the depredations of colonialism.
>
> (Boehmer, 1999:100)

The final chapter of the Maltese romantic "classic" *Taħt Tliet Saltniet* deals with the triple wedding of Alessandru and Pawlina; Ġanni and Ester; and De Flores, one of Alessandru's dearest friends, and an English woman, the widow of one of the officers of Captain Ball who led the British forces that helped the Maltese to drive out the French forces in 1800,[19] called Mrs. Flemington who went to Church regularly and was therefore most probably a devout Catholic (not a Protestant). This Englishwoman is treated with great respect and admiration by the (overt) narrator and the main characters in the novel. Unlike the Arab, Muslim slave Il-Ħalwenija, she not only has a name, but she is referred to as *Mrs.* Flemington. There are no comments about her skin being too dark (as is said about Il-Ħalwenija); on the contrary, the protagonist's friend De Flores is enchanted by the smart widow's "blue eyes, golden hair, and white skin."[20] In the novel, the arrival of the British colonial father figure, who resembles the stereotypical self-confident, male doctor of Maltese romantic historical novels, restores the health of the ailing nation-mother and re-establishes order in the nation-home. Towards the end, the narrator points out that the newly-wed protagonists have raised the "English" (probably meaning "British") flag on the roof of their home, the ideal Maltese home.[21]

In an editorial entitled "What About Our National Identity?" published in the *Journal of the Faculty of Arts* forty years after writing his novel, Aquilina (1974) put forth some of his ideas about Maltese cultural identity, which he saw as "clearly defined by the context of its multicultural history." But although he acknowledges that the Maltese do well to befriend their North African neighbours, he warned that "we shall feel grievously wronged if that will ever mean the dismantling and pulling down of the older bridges that linked us with Europe where we belong by birthright." The Maltese are the heirs of a nearly 2,000 year old Christianity, he noted, "a much older civilization than Islam." Intellectually and socially, the Maltese are also "the joint heirs of the heritage of European creative, scientific genius." This meant that the Maltese were as European as their "friends in the free West," with whom they shared "a common heritage."

Aquilina's contemporary Juan Mamo shared his enthusiasm for Northern European culture and especially for the British. Both lived in London for some time in the 1930s and, despite the colonization of the Maltese Islands, or perhaps partly because of that colonization, both were impressed by what they saw as the superior civilization they met. Their way of writing Maltese literature, however, was profoundly different, and so were their ideologies and standing in society.

---

[19] Aquilina, *Taħt Tliet Saltniet*, 369.
[20] Aquilina, *Taħt Tliet Saltniet*, 370: "*li minn persunitha kienet tinqala' ħafna*."
[21] Aquilina, *Taħt Tliet Saltniet*, 378, 381.

Aquilina wrote precisely the type of literary prose that Mamo parodied in his daring novel *Ulied in-Nanna Venut fl-Amerka* (Grandma Venut's Children in America) published in numbers between 1930 and 1931, a no holds barred social and political commentary that challenged the literary language of the time and showed people that Maltese narrative need not restrict itself to romantic historical or popular Gothic novels .

Mamo's unforgettable and sometimes unforgivable cheeky first-person narrative, often in the plural,[22] constantly reminds the reader of the creative process itself, with comments like, "you would expect to find a love story in a novel."[23] Like Mamo himself in relation to Malta, the self-conscious narrator is both inside and outside the story, observing from a distance and poking fun at the extraordinary ignorance of the poor people that he depicts and getting involved in a "personal" way by referring to Juan Mamo as if he were someone else and also as the narrator (and author). The extensive use of the dialect of Luqa, a first in Maltese literature, albeit in a generally derogatory way, is a direct result of the informal, discursive style adopted by the narrator; so too are the use of vulgar language and the references to real people and incidents that his audience of both prominent citizens and common people must have known. But despite their sympathetic (or condescending) comments, Maltese literati did not see Mamo's literary language as an example to follow but rather as an entertaining break from more a serious literature that granted dignity to the language. Mamo's irreverent style must have seemed too close for comfort, too similar to what was spoken in the street.

And yet, judging from comments by some of his contemporaries in the press, lexically speaking, Mamo, at least to some, came across as a "purist," seemingly opting for words of Semitic origin. In the newspaper *Il-Ħmar* ("Ittra miftuħa lill-kittieb Ġwann Mamo minn politiku," 8th March 1922), the anonymous writer criticized Mamo for using "purist" words and expressions, that is of Arabic origin ("Malti Safi, Safi") instead of adopting what people in the streets were saying (influenced by Italian or English). In 1927, "ix-Xellej" ("Eżempju ta' Kritika a la Ġwanmamwija ta' kif għandha ssir dwar ir-Reċita," *Il-Ħmar*, 24th December), tried to ridicule him for proposing creative alternatives to the current theatrical terms of Italian origin: "*is-sefsief*" or "*qawwal*" for "*suġġeritur*" (prompter); "*tal-Megħmiel*" for "*opra*" (opera); and "*l-għattej*" for "*separju*" (curtain).[24] Zammit (2006) sees these creations, inspired by his mentor Manwel Dimech, as part of Mamo's nationalist project, which was social, cultural and political in nature.

Nineteenth century nationalists often saw their notion of their language in a state of "purity" as the linguistic model for the elaboration, codification and cultivation of the standardized vernacular. Although both Dimech and Mamo spoke a number of languages and promoted the learning and use of foreign

[22] As in, "*Inħallu 'l dawn ilabalbu u jħawdu bejniethom u aħna nieqfu nieħdu nifs*." Juan Mamo, *Ulied in-Nanna Venut fl-Amerka*. 3rd ed., Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti. Malta: Partit tal-Ħaddiema, [1930-31] 1984, 5. All quotes from this edition.
[23] Mamo, *Ulied in-Nanna Venut fl-Amerka*, 11.
[24] These examples are quoted from Zammit, 2006.

languages so long as these did not take the place of Maltese, (Zammit, 206:31) they wrote about the need to avoid needless borrowing from other languages when using the Maltese language. In "Biċċa Vokabularju Malti" (*Il-Bandiera tal-Maltin*, 15th March, 1902) Dimech argued that those Maltese who love their language should, wherever possible, use pure Maltese words, *"il-kelma [...] Maltija safja, safja,"* and to create them where they do not exist or to replace words of foreign origin that people may already be using. Mamo proposed the noun of Arabic origin "*ġabbar*," for example, to replace the word of Romance origin "*każin*," meaning club, which everyone used. Mamo derived "*ġabbar*," from the verb "*ġabar*" > "to collect or gather" the place where people gather (Zammit, 2006:19). In the press Mamo criticized those who claimed that it is not possible to write properly using "*Malti Safi*" (pure Maltese), by which he meant a Maltese language not littered with words of Italian or English origin (Zammit, 2006:19). In the short-lived newspapers he edited, *Il-Ljun* (1922) and *Il Fkir Malti* (1923), Mamo spoke out against the way the language of the people was mistreated by the powers that be while Italian was held in high esteem.

The "problem" of "philological nationalism," writes Hobsbaum, that is, "the insistence on the linguistic purity of the national vocabulary," is "more acute in languages which have not been the major carriers of culture, but wish to become subtle vehicles for, say, higher education and modern techno-economic communication" (Hobsbaum, 1990 [2004:56]). While there is an element of, albeit creative, "linguistic purity" in Mamo's Maltese, unlike some of his contemporaries in the literary field like Dun Karm he does not view the non-Maltese as a threat to the emancipation of the Maltese, quite the contrary. As can be seen from his great admiration for the northern Europeans and Americans on one hand, and his passionate love for the Maltese language on the other, Mamo's autochthonous, non-exclusivist "nationalism" is of a rather open, creative nature, and he doesn't seem to subscribe to what Hobsbaum calls the "obvious" links between racism and nationalism, and the confusion between race and language. Hobsbaum sees "an evident analogy between the insistence of racists on the importance of racial purity and the horrors of miscegenation, and the insistence of so many – one is tempted to say most – forms of linguistic nationalism on the need to purify the national language from foreign elements" (Hobsbaum, 1990 [2004:108]). But this fear of or oppostion to the outside world does not appear in Mamo's brand of "philological nationalism," if that is what it is. Manwel Mifsud believes that Mamo's perceived linguistic "purism" is, in fact, nothing of the sort but rather a creative attitude towards the Maltese language that allows him to use the resources that exist within the language, whether they are of Arabic, Italian or English origin, to create words and expressions that respond to his needs as a speaker and writer of the language (Grima). Mamo was also very much aware of the need to communicate with the common people by using the language they spoke, and this is why he explained, in the preface to his novel, that the language he used was not quite "pure Maltese," *"mhix b'dak il-Malti Safi,"* but rather the language as spoken by the people. In her study of Dimech and Mamo's linguistic project, Maria Zammit concludes that these two writers chose to make the best use of the resources of Maltese, "old and new," to increase the vocabulary of the language, rather than simply to borrow from other languages, as other writers chose to do (Zammit, 2006:135).

Mamo created new words from Arabic roots to replace so-called "foreign" words, those with a non-Arabic etymology, but at the same time he sometimes seemed to distance himself or even smile at this creative conservatism by explaining his neologism in brackets using the version people used, as in *"maħżnet-il-flus (safe, kaxxaforti)*."[25] He also broke with literary tradition by using English words and expressions that had worked their way into the language of the common people, like *"iffrankajna ftit trabil"* (we avoided some trouble) which 80 years later is still considered unacceptable in standard written Maltese.[26]

Mamo's parody of the Maltese romantic literature of the time is another element that shows how his novel transcends popular stereotypes and binary oppositions and deals with the pressing issue, for a national group that was becoming aware of itself, of the creative process itself. The narrator targets the superficiality of the stock phrases and high-flown language of bourgeois romantic novelists of the time that ignored the plight of the common people and the way they had been dispossessed of their culture and country by the ruling elite.[27] In one passage he pokes fun at heroes of Maltese romantic historical novels, like Dun Mikiel Xerri, Dun Gejtan Mannarino, Toni Bajada and Luqa Briffa.[28] Mamo also re-evaluates the metaphor of Malta as mother which he himself used in a conventional way in writings like "Malta hija Omm; il-Maltin ta' Barra" of 1938 (Friggieri, 1984:41). In his novel, "L-omm ħallieqa Maltija" (literally: the creative Maltese mother) is hardly the almost divine figure of Maltese romantic literature: she is the uneducated national mother who is unable to educate her children.[29]

In recovering their autonomous and separate destinies, writes Albert Memmi, (1957 [1990]) the colonized "immediately" go back to their own tongue. It is pointed out to them that its "vocabulary is limited" and syntax "bastardized," that they should "go on using Western languages to describe motors or teach abstract subjects" (Memmi, 1957 [1990:200]). But like Mamo they stick to their language because it is theirs and it's the only way they can reach the common people. Many colonized people tend to be nationalistic as against internationalistic, and therefore they run the risk of "falling into exclusionism and chauvinism," of sticking to the most narrow principles, and of "setting national solidarity against human solidarity." Memmi regards this as natural, because the colonized are "still regaining possession" of themselves; they are still examining themselves with "astonishment, passionately demanding the return," literally and metaphorically, "of their language" (Memmi, 1957 [1990:201]) But Mamo is both nationalistic and internationalistic; he is interested in what is going on outside Malta – he is not locked inside his own little world, even though he has been described, in the unsigned introduction to the second, posthumous edition of his novel, as a "loner" and a "reserved person," ("*bniedem ta' għalih*

[25] Mamo, *Ulied in-Nanna Venut fl-Amerka*, 207.
[26] Mamo, *Ulied in-Nanna Venut fl-Amerka*, 81.
[27] Mamo, *Ulied in-Nanna Venut fl-Amerka*, 44, 60, 122, and 254.
[28] Mamo, *Ulied in-Nanna Venut fl-Amerka*, 254.
[29] Mamo, *Ulied in-Nanna Venut fl-Amerka*, 145.

waħdu u ftit kien iħobb juri ruħu").[30] To speak means above all "to assume a culture, to support the weight of a civilization," writes Fanon; to speak a language is "to take on a world, a culture;" (Fanon, 1952 [1986:38]) every dialect is a "way of thinking." (Fanon, 1952 [1986:25]). A person who has a language "consequently possesses the world expressed and implied by that language." Language has the marvellous characteristic of being both a component of identity and a means of communication. According to Maalouf, it is neither possible nor desirable to separate language from identity, for "it is bound to remain the mainspring of cultural identity, and linguistic diversity the mainspring of all other diversities" (Maalouf, 2000:109). And Mamo makes the most of both these roles of language: he produces a novel that speaks the common language of the large majority of the population of the Maltese Islands,[31] and at the same time he represents them creatively through his language. He has mastered his idiom to the full and "mastery of language," or what Paul Valéry calls "the god gone astray in the flesh," affords "remarkable power" (Fanon, 1952 [1986:17-18]).

Language affords Juan Mamo the freedom that his protagonists lack because they are unable to reproduce the standard language that both reflects and wields literary, social and political power. Mamo can write in the style of the established writers of the day, as his parodies in the novel show,[32] and he knows a number of foreign languages, but he chooses to create his own literary language. He regains control of his language in much the same way that the colonized, according to Memmi (1957 [1990:198]) must regain self-control. On the contrary, Gajton, who masterminds the massacre of the remaining returned migrants, uses language to undermine language, to undermine communication and identity, to kill.[33]

Like Fanon, Mamo will not make himself "the man of any past;" he refuses to exalt the past at the expense of his present and future, and this is evident in the creative, transgressive way in which he uses the Maltese language. The fact that he pokes fun at the "constructed" heroes of romantic historical novels is not a sign of disrespect towards these idealized figures but rather a concrete gesture of respect towards the oppressed people of his time, and an invitation to his contemporary writers to focus more on the realities of the present than on the legends of the past.[34] Fanon believes that he should not seek the meaning of his destiny in history, because "the real *leap*," true freedom one might add, "consists in introducing invention into existence. In the world through which I travel," writes Fanon, "I am endlessly creating myself. I am a part of Being to the degree that I go beyond it" (Fanon, 1952 [1986:229]). He feels that he does not have the right to allow himself to "be mired in what the past has determined" (Fanon, 1952 [1986:230]). Mamo endlessly creates himself in his literary personality, not

[30] Juan Mamo, *Ulied in-Nanna Venut fl-Amerka*. Serialised in *Ix-Xewka* between 1971 and 1972. Malta: Freedom Press, 1971.
[31] The introduction to the second edition of *Ulied in-Nanna Venut fl-Amerka*, dated 28 January, 1971, claims that the first edition of the novel was a great success and that bound copies of the first edition are very rare and many were sent to Maltese emigrants.
[32] See, for example, Mamo, *Ulied in-Nanna Venut fl-Amerka*, 122.
[33] Mamo, *Ulied in-Nanna Venut fl-Amerka*, 130, 134.
[34] As in Mamo, *Ulied in-Nanna Venut fl-Amerka*, 44.

least in the way he uses language, proposing ways of using the resources within the language to expand its vocabulary, to enhance its communicative and expressive power and to raise its status as the respected language of a community, of a nation.

5. Conclusion

The emergence and standardization of Maltese, through the works of Malta's literati, contributed in no small way to the political developments. At the same time, the very notion of monolingualism is not a reality in Malta, and has never been, and the presence of other languages besides Maltese has served both in the process of the formation of the Maltese language itself as well as in the formation of a national identity.

The Maltese language spoken today, like many other languages, has gone through a process of language contact which shaped it internally. Furthermore throughout its history it has had to face struggles to survive alongside other languages which were considerably more widespread and which, in the past, were locally also considered to be more prestigious than Maltese. Linguistic and consequently cultural differences are at the very heart of the nature of humankind and Maltese itself is the result of a series of linguistic processes which in themselves are the result of contact and diversity. Literary contributions led to the development of the language which therefore gained prestige and shed the prejudice that the local vernacular could only be used in spoken, informal and immediate contexts. Once this was acknowledged and accepted, first and foremost by the Maltese themselves, the language started being used more extensively in specialized sectors such as legal, scientific and economic fields, although the use of English in these specialized areas is still extensive. The vitality of the Maltese language is also evident because of its capability to co-exist in contact with other languages and because of its very nature which allows it to integrate terms from different sources into its own structures. The significant increase in the number of young writers who produce literary works in Maltese today is symptomatic of this vitality.

Bibliography

Agius, Dionisius. *Siculo-Arabic*, London-New York, Kegan Paul Int., 1996.

Agius, Dionisius. *Who spoke Siculo-Arabic?* in, *XII Incontro Italiano di Linguistica Camito-semitica (Afroasiatica)*, edited by Moriggi, Marco, 2007, pp.25-33.

Aquilina, Ġużè. "L-Awtur," introductory note (signed by "Ġ. A.") to *Il-Ġifen Tork. Epika tal-Professur Ġananton Vassallo*. Malta: Veritas Press, 1975.

Aquilina, Ġużè. *Taħt Tliet Saltniet*. Malta: A. C. Aquilina, 1978.

Aquilina, Joseph. *Papers in Maltese Linguistics.* Valletta: University Press, 1961, (4th Reprint, 1988).

Aquilina, Joseph. "What About Our National Identity?", in *Journal of the Faculty of Arts*, Vol. VI, Number 1, 1974.

Aquilina, Joseph. *A Maltese-English dictionary, vols I and II*. Malta, Midsea, 1987.

Boehmer, Elleke. *Colonial and Postcolonial Literature. Migrant Metaphors* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995.

Bonanno, Anthony. *Roman Malta, the Archaeological Heritage of the Maltese Islands / Malta Romana, il Patrimonio Archeologico delle Isole Maltesi,* Rome: Confederazione Mondiale degli Exallievi ed Exallieve di Don Bosco, 1992.

Bonnici, Lisa. *Maltese English: History of use, structural variation and sociolinguistic status*, in *Introducing Maltese Linguistics*, edited by Comrie, Beranard, Fabri, Ray, Hume, Elizabeth, Mifsud, Manwel, Stolz, Thomas & Vanhove, Martine. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2009, pp. 393-414.

Briffa, Charles. "Ir-Rumanz Storiku f'Idejn Aquilina," f'Ġużè Aquilina, *Taħt Tliet Saltniet.* Malta: KKM, 2003.

Brincat, Giuseppe. *Malta. Una storia linguistica.* Genova: Le Mani, 2003.

Brincat, Giuseppe. *Malta*, in *Encyclopedia of Arabic Languages and Linguistics, Volume III*, edited by Versteegh, Kees, Leiden-Boston:Brill, 2008, pp. 141-145.

Brincat, Joseph. *Malta 870-1054 Al-Himyari's account and its linguistic implications*. Valletta: Said International, 1995.

Brincat, Joseph. *Malta 870-1054 Al-Himyari's account and its linguistic implications*. Valletta: Said International, 1995.

Brincat, Joseph. *Maltese and other languages. A linguistic history of Malta.* Malta: Midsea, 2011

Brincat, Lara & Caruana, Sandro. *Il-Malti Mgħaġġel: Maltese in computer-mediated chat conversations*, in *Variation and Change: The dynamics of Maltese in space, time, and society* edited by Caruana, Sandro / Fabri, Ray & Stolz, Thomas. Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2011, pp. 65-88.

Caruana, Sandro. *Bilingualism and language policy in Malta*, in, *Language contact and language decay. Socio-political and linguistic perspectives*, edited by Ramat, Paola and Miola, Emanuele. Pavia: IUSS Press, pp. 11-46.

Cassar Pullicino, Ġużè. *Aquilina u l- Malti.* Malta: Klabb Kotba Maltin, 1974.

Cassola, Arnold. *L'italiano di Malta*, Malta: Malta University Press, 1998

Cassola, Arnold. *The Literature of Malta: an Example of Unity in Diversity*. Malta, European Commission and Minima, 2000a.

Cassola, Arnold. *La letteratura maltese in lingua italiana dalle origini a tutto il secolo diciassettesimo*, first published in *I Quaderni di Gaia*, Roma, II, 1, (1991), 57-82. Reproduced from *Quaderno italo-maltese* edited by Alfredo Luzi. Pesaro, Italy: Metauro, 2000b. pp. 31-54.

Cassola, Arnold. "La lingua maltese fra '400 e '700," in *Quaderno italo-maltese*, edited by Alfredo Luzi. Pesaro, Italy: Metauro, 2000c. pp. 19-30.

Chetcuti, Ġużè. *Hbiebi, l-Awturi Maltin. Ġrajja Awtobijografika fuq il-Letteratura Maltija*, Malta: PEG, 1998.

Chircop, Joseph. "Il lessico italiano nella lingua della giustizia a Malta*", Lingua nostra*, LXI:3-4, 2000, pp. 85-94.

Chircop, Joseph. *L'italiano scalfito : resistenze, cedimenti e recuperi dell'italiano nella lingua della giustizia a Malta*, in *Ecologia linguistica : atti del XXXVI Congresso Internazionale di Studi della Societa di Linguistica Italiana (SLI)*, Bergamo, 26-28 settembre 2002 edited by Ada Valentini, Piera Molinelli, Pierluigi Cuzzolin and Giuliano Bernini [et al.], Roma: Bulzoni, 2003, pp. 247-260.

Fanon, Frantz. *Black Skin, White Masks*. [1952] Translated by Charles Lam Markmann [1967]. London: Pluto Press, 1986.

Friggieri, Oliver. *Dun Karm. Il-Poeżiji Miġbura. Edizzjoni kritika.* Malta: Klabb Kotba Maltin u Karmen Mikallef Buħaġar, 1980.

Friggieri, Oliver. *Ġwann Mamo: Il-Kittieb tar-Riforma Soċjali*. Malta: Mid-Med Bank, 1984.

Friggieri, Oliver. *Storia della letteratura maltese*. Milazzo, Italy: Edizioni Spes, 1986. Facsimile Edition, Malta: Malta University Press, 2009.

Friggieri, Oliver. *Dun Karm, the National Poet of Malta: A Lyric Interpretation of Life and Citizenship*, in *World Literature Today*, Vol. 66, No. 1 (Winter, 1992), pp. 47-50.

Grima, Adrian. *L-Amerka ta' Mamo*, Campus FM, Programme 8. http://www.campusfm.um.edu.mt/Convertedaudio/Autumn_10/amerka_mamo/mamo8.wma.

Hobsbaum, Eric John. *Nations and nationalism since 1780: programme, myth, reality*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990 (2004 edition).

Hull, Geoffrey. *The Malta language question*. Valletta: Said International, 1993.

L-Għaqda tal-Kittieba tal-Malti. *Tagħrif fuq il-Kitba Maltija.* Government Printing Press: Malta, 1924. Available online:

http://www.akkademjatalmalti.com/filebank/documents/Taghrif_rivedut.pdf

Maalouf, Amin. *On Identity*. Trans. Barbara Bray. London: Harvill, 2000.

Mamo, Juan. *Ulied in-Nanna Venut fl-Amerka*. 3rd ed., Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti. Malta: Partit tal-Ħaddiema, [1930-31] 1984.

Mamo, Juan. *Ulied in-Nanna Venut fl-Amerka*. Serialized in *Ix-Xewka* between 1971 and 1972. Malta: Freedom Press, [1930-31] 1971.

Mazzon, Gabriella. *L'inglese di Malta*. Napoli: Liguori, 1992.

Memmi, Albert. *The Colonizer and the Colonized*, translated by Howard Greenfeld; introduced by Jean-Paul Sartre; new introduction by Liam O'Dowd, London: Earthscan Library, 1990 [French edition, 1957; first English edition: 1965].

Mifsud, Manwel. *Loan verbs in Maltese: A descriptive and comparative study*, Leiden, New York, Köln: Brill, 1995.

Mifsud, Manwel. *Maltese*, in *Encyclopedia of Arabic Languages and Linguistics, Volume III*, edited by Versteegh, Kees, Leiden-Boston:Brill, 2008, pp. 146-159.

National Statistics Office. *Census of Population and Housing 2005. Volume 1: Population.* Valletta: NSO, 2007.

Soler, Edgar. *The King's guests in Uganda. From internment to independence 1939-1964*. Malta: Lux Press, 1986.

Thusat, Joshua, Anderson, Emily, Davis, Shante, Ferris, Mike, Javed, Amber, Laughlin, Angela, McFarland, Christopher, Sangsiri, Raknakwan, Sinclair, Judith, Vastalo, Victoria, Whelan, Win & Wrubel, Jessica. "Maltese English and the nativization phase of the dynamic model", in *English Today*, 2009:25, pp. 25-32.

Varvaro, Alberto. *La lingua e la società. Ricerche sociolinguistiche.* Napoli:Guida, 1978.

Vassalli, Mikiel Anton, *Lexicon*, Rome, 1796 [here reproduced from Sammut, Frans, *Lexicon ta' Mikiel Anton Vassalli bi preżentazzjoni u annotamenti ta' Frans Sammut*, Malta:Sensiela Kotba Soċjalististi, 2002].

Vella, Alexandra. *Prosodic structure and intonation in Maltese: Influence on Maltese-English*, unpublished Ph.D dissertation, University of Edinburgh, 1994.

Wettinger, G. & Fsadni, M. *Pietru Caxaro's Cantilena. A poem in Medieval Maltese.* Malta: Lux Press, 1968.

Zammit, Maria. *Il-Kreattività Lingwistika: Proposta mill-Kitbiet ta' Manwel Dimech u Ġwann Mamo*, unpublished BA Hons. dissertation, University of Malta, 2006.