

MALTESE HISTORY


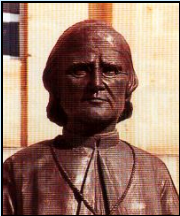
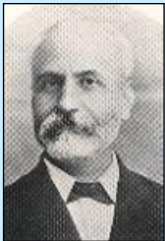
I. Education Reforms

The Early Political Parties

The Language Question

Form 4

Unit I.1 Education and Schooling in Malta, 1800-1900

1	<p>The years 1800-1836</p>	<p>Very little was made in primary education because the Government did not want to enter into a costly programme of educating the people. The Royal Commission of Inquiry of 1836 reported this on the level of education of the Maltese: <i>‘There are no schools in the villages, no tolerable education for the middle classes.</i></p>
2	<p>The Royal Commission of 1836</p> 	<p>In 1836 the Commission found only three primary schools. The Commissioners criticized the widespread illiteracy because working class families were too poor to send their children to school. The Commission suggested the opening of more schools in the towns and villages. It advised the Government to increase the teachers’ pay and to double the annual expenditure on education. Monsignor Fortunato Panzavecchia was appointed Inspector of Primary Schools in 1840.</p>
3	<p>Paolo Pullicino</p> 	<p>Between 1850 and 1880 Canon Paolo Pullicino was <i>Chief Inspector of Primary Schools</i>. Pullicino left six reports on primary education. Pullicino set at once to organize primary education. He asked village parish priests to use their sermons to persuade parents send their children to school. He tried to persuade the Government to increase the pay given to teachers and opened the Model School at Valletta to train teachers. As long as Pullicino was in charge, the Italian language was given first preference over everything else.</p>
4	<p>Patrick Keenan’s Report on Education</p>  <p><i>Sigismondo Savona Director of Education (1880-1887)</i></p> <p><i>Gerald Strickland Chief Secretary (1889-1902)</i></p>	<p>In 1878 another Royal Commissioner, Patrick Keenan, came to investigate possible reforms in education. He concluded in his report that teachers were not badly paid and not properly trained. In most schools there were no playgrounds for re-creation. Classrooms were small and badly ventilated. The Government rented houses instead of building new schools. Discipline was poorly kept and pupils made a lot of noise. Textbooks were too difficult for the pupils to understand. The level of pupils’ writing, reading and spelling was very poor. Many pupils repeated the same class or left school at the age of 11 to find work.</p> <p>Keenan suggested the setting up of a separate <i>Department of Education</i> headed by a Director of Education. To encourage pupils to learn, prizes were to be distributed every year. Schools were to be administered by a committee of four persons with the parish priest as chairman. Teacher had to receive better training by the Government. He suggested that parents should pay a small fee for sending their children to school for he was of the opinion that <i>‘what people get for nothing they esteemed to be of little or no value’</i>. Children from poor families were to be admitted to school free of charge. Keenan proposed to start teaching pupils English before Italian in primary schools. Italian was to be taught after school hours. The persons who tried to put into practice these reforms were Sigismondo Savona and Gerald Strickland.</p>

Unit I.1 Education and Schooling in Malta 1800-1900

1. Why did the British did very little to improve education and schooling in Malta before 1836?
_____ (1)
2. Why did the British Government change its mind on education after 1836?
_____ (1)
3. Mention **two** measures taken by Canon Pullicino to improve schooling in Malta.

_____ (2)
4. What major criticism did Keenan put forward about the way schools were run when Pullicino was in charge?
_____ (1)
5. Identify **three** factors which made learning in schools very poor in Malta in 1878?

_____ (3)
6. Mention **two** suggestions put forward by Keenan to improve schooling in Malta.

_____ (2)
7. How did Keenan's report effect the development of Maltese politics after 1880?




_____ (2)
8. How was Sigismondo Savona involved in Maltese education in the 1880s?
_____ (2)
9. Write **true** or **false** for these statements on Maltese education in the 19th century:

a	The University was closed down by the French Government in 1798-1800.	
b	Gov. Maitland appointed the first Director of Primary Education in Malta.	
c	The Royal Commission of 1836 was in favour of compulsory education.	
d	Keenan wanted to increase the teaching of English at the expense of Italian.	
e	Keenan's reforms caused the beginning of Maltese Language Question.	
f	Canon Pullicino was in favour of the teaching of English in primary schools.	

(6)

(Total = 20 marks)

Unit I.2 Education and Schooling in 20th Century Malta

5	<p>Compulsory Attendance Act of 1924</p>   <p><i>Albert V. Laferla Director of Education (1920-1943)</i></p>	<p>In the early 1900s more educated people in Malta wanted to see compulsory primary education introduced. The Director of Education F.J. Reynolds said that Malta was the only country in Europe with no compulsory primary education. He said that parents had the liberty to educate or leave their children ignorant. This attitude could only be changed if school attendance became obligatory. The Government however decided that such a law had to wait until that war was over.</p> <p>An important development took place when the 1921 Constitution placed education under the Maltese Government. Albert V. Laferla (Director of Education) complained of poor attendance because many parents still were against sending their children to school. For this reason, the Compulsion Attendance Act became law in 1924. But this law still left pupils free to be absent from school for 25% of the school days without a medical certificate. Parents were still left free to choose whether to enroll their children to school or not.</p>
6	<p>Compulsory Education Act of 1946</p>	<p>After World War II John Brennan (Director of Education, 1943-48) remarked that the war experience had made the people more eager to learn. The prospects of emigration made parents more eager to register their children in schools. The Government saw that the time has now arrived to introduce a new education act, known as the Compulsion Attendance Ordinance of 1946 until the age of 11. Parents now became obliged, under penalty of a monthly fine, to send their children to school on reaching the age of five.</p>
7	<p>Secondary School for All Act of 1970</p>  <p><i>Joseph P. Vassallo Director of Education (1948-1967)</i></p>	<p>The basis of Malta's modern education were laid down when Joseph Vassallo was Director of Education. During the 1950s and 1960s more primary and secondary schools were built in many towns and villages. St Michael's Training College for teachers was opened in 1952. The new University at Tal-Qroqq was inaugurated in 1964. In 1970 the Secondary School for All Act made secondary education compulsory from 11 to 14 years. With the Education Act of 1974, the school leaving age was extended to 16. By the end of the 1970s, both state and private schools in Malta had reached the level of some of the most advanced countries in Europe.</p>

Unit I.1 and I.2 - Education and Schooling in Malta, 1800-1974

1. Complete this chronological list of events connected to education and schooling in Malta since 1800:

- (a) 1836 _____
- (b) 1840 _____
- (c) 1850 _____
- (d) 1878 _____
- (e) 1924 _____
- (f) 1946 _____
- (g) 1970 _____
- (h) 1974 _____ (8)

2. How did the Compulsory Schooling Acts of 1924 and 1946 differ from each other?

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____ (4)

3. State briefly the contribution that these gave to the development of education and schooling in 19th and 20th century Malta: (8)

- (a) John Austin and Cornwall Lewis: _____

- (b) Paolo Pullicino: _____

- (c) Patrick Keenan: _____

- (d) Albert V. Laferla: _____

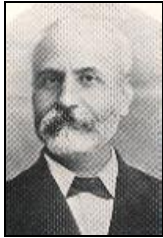
- (e) Joseph P. Vassallo: _____

(Total marks = 20)

Unit I.3 - The Early Maltese Political Parties, 1879-1921

1. The Reform Party

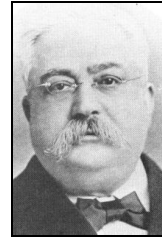
In 1879 **Sigismondo Savona** set up the **RP** and served as **Director of Education** (1880-87). He retired from politics in 1898. The *Riformisti* wanted to change the education system by introducing the teaching of English in the primary classes, substitute Italian for English at the University, in the Council of Government and in the Law Courts. They aimed at abolishing the bread tax, open more schools and continue the underground drainage system. These measures were intended to improve the living conditions of the working classes. The party was supported mostly by the civil service employees, the dockyard workers and the businessmen.



Sigismondo Savona



A Reformist mass meeting of 1879



Fortunato Mizzi



Panzavecchia

2. The Partito Nazionale

Fortunato Mizzi was a lawyer and President of the Chamber of Advocates. In 1880 he set up the *Partito Anti-Riformista* to oppose the education and language reforms proposed by Keenan and Savona. In 1884 the name of the party was changed to *Partito Nazionale*. The supporters of the party from *Anti-Riformisti* started to be called *Nationalisti* (*Nationalists*). The greater support for the party came from the pro-Italian Maltese, the greater part of the clergy, the landowners, the professional class and the peasants.

It strongly attacked the language reforms to substitute Italian with English. They wanted self-government in local matters. They opposed the abolition of the bread tax and the undertaking of expensive public works projects.



A Popular Party mass meeting in Floriana, 1896



A Nationalist mass meeting at Blata l-Bajda, 1901

3. The Partito Popolare (Popular Party)

Monsignor **Ignazio Panzavecchia** was a Canon of the Cathedral Chapter and he represented the clergy in the Council of Government in 1891-2. In 1895 he set up the *Partito Popolare* to oppose the Mixed Marriage Law proposed by the British Government. In 1911 he set up the *Comitato Patriottico* to continue Mizzi's policy of opposition against the British Government. After the war he set up a new party, the **Unione Politica Maltese** (UPM) and won the 1921 elections. The party received its greater support from the clergy and the peasants. For this reason the British often called it the 'clerical party'.

The Popular Party stood for Malta's Italian and Catholic culture and traditions and in this respect they were similar to the *Anti-Riformisti*. They opposed the Civil Marriage Law of 1892. Like the *Anti-Riformisti*, they wanted a self-governing constitution.

Unit I.3 - The Early Maltese Political Parties, 1879-1921

1. Give the full name of the following political party abbreviations and their respective leader.

P.R. of 1879 _____

P.A.R. of 1880 _____

P.N. of 1884 _____

P.P. of 1894 _____

(8)

1. *What aspect of British policy in Malta brought about the formation of the first political parties?*

_____ (1)

2. *How did the first Maltese political parties made their ideas known to the people? Mention two examples.*

_____ (2)

3. *How did the Maltese Church get involved in party politics in Malta in the 1890s and later?*

_____ (1)

4. *Name two issues which involved directly the political parties between 1880 and 1921?*

_____ (2)

5. *Which political party did most of these people support in late 19th century Malta?*

(a) *the professional class (lawyers, doctors, notaries etc.)* _____

(b) *the greater part of the clergy (priests and friars)* _____

(c) *the civil service (government) employees* _____

(d) *the businessmen and the merchants* _____ (4)

7. *Why it is very important to have different political parties in a democratic country?*

_____ (2)

(Total 20 marks)

Unit I.4 - The Maltese Language Question, 1880 - 1903

1. How did the Language Question begin?

In the 1870s there was in Malta a pro-British group of people who wanted to substitute the Italian language for English as the language of education and culture in Malta. The Royal Commissioner Patrick Keenan in his report on the education system proposed that English was to be taught in primary schools and Italian was to be studied as an optional subject after school. In the Lyceum and the University lecturing in Italian was to remain only in the Faculty of Theology.

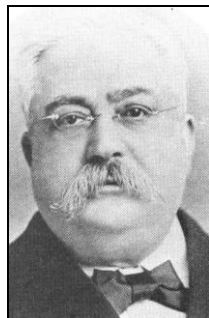
Knowledge of English was more common in the harbour towns than in the villages and in Gozo. Italian was the language of culture, the administration, the Law Courts, and the University.

These proposals brought a storm of protests from all those in Malta who preferred the Italian language (known as italophiles). Those supporting the English language became known as the Reformers, and those supporting the Italian language as anti-Reformers. But the majority of the elected members strongly opposed Keenan's education reforms. This division led to the formation of the first two political parties in Malta.

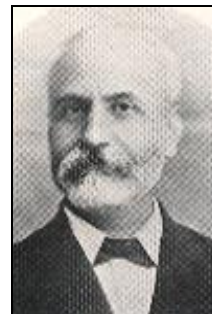
Sigismondo Savona, the new pro-British Director of Education tried to introduce in 1881 the *pari-passu* system of teaching English and Italian simultaneously in the primary and secondary schools. The Anti-Reformers members in the Council of Government refused to vote money for Savona's education reforms. These developments marked the beginning of a long dispute known as the Maltese Language Question, a dispute that lasted for nearly 60 years.



1. Governor Borton



2. Fortunato Mizzi



3. Sigismondo Savona



4. Gerald Strickland in 1889

1. Why did the Language Question become a hotter issue between 1898 and 1903?

When Gerald Strickland (1869-1940) became Chief Secretary to the Government in 1889 he introduced the free choice (*libera scelta*) by which parents were to choose the language of instruction for their children between English and Italian. The Government launched a propaganda campaign in favour of English, stressing how important it was for the lower classes to know English to find work or to emigrate in other English-speaking countries.

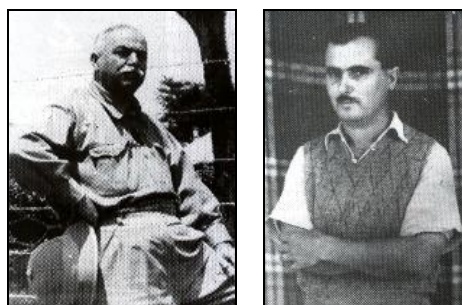
The pro-Italians started holding public demonstrations and mass meetings in Floriana against the Government's language policy. Mizzi and Savona joined the protests and blamed the crisis on Strickland and asked for his removal from Secretary to the Government. At this point, the British Government, who wanted to keep friendly relations with Italy, postponed the language reforms in the law courts. Joseph Chamberlain, the British Secretary of State went to Rome for talks with the Italian Government on the Maltese Language Question. In 1902 King Edward VII put pressure upon the British Government to cancel the reforms in the law courts. Strickland left Malta when he was appointed Governor in the West Indies.

But the Nationalists continued to demand the withdrawal of all language reforms made by Strickland. In June 1903 the crisis reached a deadlock when the Nationalist elected members refused to vote money for education. Thus Chamberlain suspended the Constitution of 1887.

Unit I.5 - The Maltese Language Question: 1921-1940



A patria et religio meeting in 1901



Nerik Mizzi and Herbert Ganado in Uganda.

1. Why did the Language Question flare up again in the 1920s and 1930s?

When the Maltese were given responsible government in 1921, the Constitution declared English and Italian as the official languages. When Gerald Strickland became PM in 1927 his language policy was supported by the Labour Party. The Government started giving more importance to English and Maltese. Italian was removed from post-office notices, government notices and documents and street names. English was made more important than Italian for those seeking promotion in the Civil Service or employment in the dockyard. The urban working class had no choice but to accept English as their second language. The prospect of emigration to English speaking countries encouraged the working classes to learn English rather than Italian. In 1929 the Government permitted for the first time the use of Maltese in the Law Courts. The Malti Safi movement was set up by some Maltese writers with the aim of removing Italian loan words from the Maltese language

2. How did the British Government restricted the influence of the Italian language after 1933?

When the Nationalists were in government again in 1932-33, they tried to put the clock back and reintroduce Italian in the primary schools. The British Government became concerned with the spread of Italian Fascist propaganda in Malta. The Italian Government had opened the *Istituto di Cultura* to lend Italian books and arranged for famous Italian scholars to visit and hold talks in Malta. Thus, the British Government decided to stop Italian scholars from holding public lectures in Malta. In November 1933, when the Maltese Government tried to vote money for the teaching of Italian in primary schools, the Governor suspended the Constitution. Recent evidence however shows that the British Government used the language question to suspend the Constitution because they feared a future war with Italy.

From 1933 onwards the British Government took decisive steps to eliminate the remaining influence of the Italian in Malta. English, Italian and Maltese were declared the official languages of Malta. English was to be the only official language of the administration. Knowledge of English and Maltese only were necessary for employment in the Civil Service. Maltese became the language of the Law Courts. In 1935 a law sanctioned the use of Maltese in all legal documents. The Government opened a private cable radio station known as *Rediffusion* to diffuse BBC programmes in English among the people.

In 1936 relations between Britain and Italy moved closer to war. By 1939 the Governor had closed down the *Istitutio Italiano di Cultura*, set up the British Council and banned the importation of Italian newspapers and magazines and abolished Italian as one of the official languages of Malta.

In June 1940 Italy declared war on Britain. The first Italian bombing of Malta signaled the end of the Language Question as far as the Italian language was concerned. In 1942 Roger Strickland 43 pro-Italian Maltese were interned (exiled) to Uganda until the duration of the war. Among those exiled there were **Enrico Mizzi, Herbert Ganado** and **Sir Arturo Mercieca**, all three leading Nationalists.

Unit I.4 & I.5 - The Maltese Language Question

1. Mention **two** causes that brought about the Language Question in Malta?

_____ (2)
2. What language did the majority of the Maltese speak at the time of the Language Question?
_____ (1)
3. Which category of Maltese people spoke English or Italian at that time?
_____ (1)
4. What effects did Keenan's proposal on language reforms have in Malta?

_____ (2)
5. Why did Gerald Strickland's actions intensify the Language Question?

_____ (2)
6. Italian influence was strongest in Malta at the time of the language question in **three** of the following. Underline the correct ones.
(law courts, university, local government, the Church, the village people, newspapers) (3)
6. (a) What was the aim of the Nationalist Government of 1932-33 on the Language Question?
_____ (2)
- (b) What did the British Government do to stop this language policy of the Nationalists?
_____ (1)
- (c) Mention **three** measures of the 1930s aimed at reducing the influence of Italian in Malta.

_____ (3)
7. How did the British Government use the Language Question to reduce Malta's Constitutional developments in the 1930s?

_____ (2)
8. In what way did the outbreak of World War II effect the Italian language in Malta?
_____ (1)

(Total marks = 20)