



The Rise and Rise of the Female Graduate: Some milestones in tertiary education for women in Malta

Ms Patricia Camilleri

In October 1991 the number of female students at the University of Malta surpassed the number of male students¹. We have become so used to the idea of equal educational opportunities that this statistic hardly created a ripple in the University of Malta's corridors and merited only brief mention in the media. The fact that a sizable female presence on campus had been a reality for less than thirty years was largely unappreciated.

An historical background

The events leading up to the creation of a university in Malta make an interesting story, full of intrigue, jealousy and blatant self-interest on the part of some of the protagonists, many of whom were also driven by a genuine desire to see Malta on the European educational map. While this is not the place for a history of the University of Malta² it is worth giving a brief outline of events.

On November 12, 1592, the deed for the building of a Jesuit College in Valletta was signed in the Magisterial Palace. The College was erected within two years and provided schooling in grammar and the humanities while mathematics was added to the curriculum in 1656. The College had to double as grammar school and seminary and, when endowments increased, teachers in different branches of Theology were employed. In parallel with the College, the Holy Infirmary provided courses in the study of anatomy and surgery. Following the great plague of 1675, the Grandmaster Nicolò Cotoner appointed Fr. Joseph Zammit as 'reader' in surgery and anatomy. In 1679, Zammit oversaw the setting up of Malta's first Medical Academy, later incorporated into the University.³ During the eighteenth century, this tradition of quality medical teaching continued with the appointment in 1723 of Gabriele Henin as head of the Medical School.⁴ Giorgio Locano was the first professor of medicine and Michelangelo Grima was appointed as the first professor of surgery.

The power to confer degrees had been obtained from the General of the Jesuit Order in 1727 and, while the Collegium Melitense lacked the title 'university', it was an institution of tertiary education, as were many similar institutions in Europe at that time. In 1769, following the expulsion of the Jesuits from Malta, Grandmaster Manoel Pinto de Fonseca, obtained a decree from Pope Clement VIII to erect a Public University of General Studies. Except for a brief period, during the French *Interregnum*, the University has functioned continuously down to the present day.

While none of the University's several statutes prior to 1915 (among them the Constitutions, promulgated by Pinto in 1771, including that written by Costaguti,⁵ and the *Statuto Fondamentale* written by Sir Ignatius Bonavita⁶ in 1838) specifically denied access to females, one can presume that it simply was inconceivable that a woman should desire to enter or be accepted.

The admission of women into universities in the United Kingdom began in 1869 with the setting up of Cambridge University's first women's college, Girton. Newnham College followed in 1871. The University of St. Andrews in Scotland opened its doors to female students in 1892; Queen's College, Belfast in 1882; Queen's College, Galway (now UCG) in 1888. The conferring body for the Irish colleges was the Royal University of Ireland and it conferred its first degrees on women in 1884. Trinity College, Dublin did not admit women students until 1904 and University College, Dublin was the last to do so in 1908.⁷

19th century

The second half of the 19th century was a time of great political and social upheaval all over Europe and Malta shared in the atmosphere of the time. This was reflected in the development of the University of Malta. This fascinating period is really a story of the desire to reform the University along Anglo-saxon lines on the part of the British and a determination to retain the status quo on the part of many professors and General Council members. This was further enlivened by the anglophilia of certain members of Council and the italophilia of others.

In 1838, when the General Council of the University was experiencing a period of discontent, Sir Ignatius Bonavita was asked to compile, on the recommendation of the Commissioners of Inquiry, a 'Statuto Fondamentale' which Professor Andrew Vella recounts 'was for nearly seventy years to exercise a deadening effect (on the University)'.⁸ However, Vella also admits that, given the contentions of the time, it is unlikely that anyone could have done better.

Women first got the chance to enter the University of Malta when Rev. Thaddeus O'Malley replaced Rev. Emmanuele Rossignaud as Rector in 1841. O'Malley, by all accounts a maverick priest with a deep interest in educational and clerical reform, wrote his '*Progetto*' which encompassed some of his radical ideas. Article X allowed for the admission to the University of females wishing to follow a course in midwifery. The course for midwives was, at that time, held at the Lyceum.⁹ Unfortunately for the female midwives, O'Malley seems to have had a knack of putting everybody's back up both here and in the U.K.¹⁰ The first enthusiastic letters of introduction from Governor Sir H.F. Bouverie, K.C.B. soon changed tone and by 1842 O'Malley was forced to resign. Needless to say, his '*Progetto*' was unceremoniously scrapped and with it, until the following century, any idea of women following courses at the University of Malta.

The first woman student

The School of Midwifery was founded in 1869 but the course in midwifery did not come under the auspices of the University until 1915. This diploma course lasted two years but candidates could not enter without having already attended a preliminary period of training at the Central Hospital. The programme of studies was sanctioned by the Special Council of the Faculty of Medicine.¹¹ Professor Vella states that Ms Lucia Levanzin Inglott was the first Maltese woman to attend a course at the University of Malta where she gained her diploma in midwifery.¹²

In the first years of the twentieth century, under the rectorship of Professor E. Magro (1904-1920), there were significant reforms in the structure of the University as well as improvements to its physical environment.¹³ It was inevitable that Magro should wish to introduce a new statute that would include these reforms. The Statute of 1915, however, was destined never to gain the full support of the University's students who, by this time were gathered in a group called the *Comitato Permanente Universitario*, founded by Dr Arturo Mercieca (knighted in 1925 and elevated to the post of Chief Justice). The Statute attempted to regroup the C.P.U. into the Student Representative Council and also to change the regulations appertaining to the degrees of Laws, Medicine and Divinity.

Chapter One, Article 8 of the Statute of 1915 stated:
"Sex shall not be a ground of disqualification".

This article, so significant for the women of Malta, was lost amid the arguments concerning the loss of the doctoral status of the LL.D., M.D. and D.D. degree courses which were to change to LL.B., M.B. and D.B. The C.P.U. was incensed and spoke out and wrote in loud complaint. The issue went beyond the academic and developed into a political one. June 7, though no one could have known it at the time, was looming. In fact, after the events of June 7¹⁴, the General Council of the University

voted to ignore the 1915 Statute regulations concerning the changes and to continue to award LL.D., M.D., and D.D. degrees to the 1919 graduates. Article 8, which was seen by the University authorities as one which simply brought it in line with U.K. academic practice, was probably not taken very seriously by any of the stakeholders involved.

In the new Statute of February 26, 1921, signed under the new rector, Themistocles Zammit (later Sir), the General Council was given autonomy concerning the Regulations in connection with the Examinations for degrees and the three doctoral courses reverted to their previous form. However, one aspect of the 1915 Statute remained in force albeit with a change in format. Article 4, Chapter I, stated:

“The University examinations, degrees, diplomas and certificates shall be open to all without distinction of sex.”

The first female graduate

In June 1919, two women who are important to the story of females in tertiary education, matriculated. Tessie Camilleri and Blanche Huber entered the University together in October 1919.¹⁵ The first choosing the Arts and the other Medicine. As her course was the shorter one, Miss Tessie M. Camilleri, was destined to become the University of Malta’s first female graduate. Miss Camilleri followed courses in English Literature, Philosophy and Latin Literature which culminated in her graduation, B.Litt., on May 2, 1922.¹⁶ At this private ceremony, Professor Temi Zammit dedicated his graduation speech to the importance of female participation in tertiary education.

He congratulated Miss Camilleri and her “fellow lady-students who have joined this University” and echoed the idea prevalent in England in the 19th century, that the study of English Literature was conducive to the development of a ‘homogeneous society with healthy aims and aspirations’.

Miss Camilleri was born on 6 January, 1901 into an educated Sliema family. Her aunt, Giulia Camilleri, was an inspector of schools while three other aunts ran a well-respected private school in Valletta. The fact that she had these female role models must surely have influenced her decision to take this unusual step. Shortly after her graduation, she married Mr Edgar Staines, who worked in the Administration of the University, and had four children in quick succession. Sadly, she died aged only 29 on 2 October, 1930.



Ms. Tessie Camilleri

This excerpt from an article in *The Daily Malta Chronicle*, 2 May 1922, records her graduation:

“Miss Camilleri has greatly distinguished herself in the Course of Literature, revealing intellectual endowments and attainments of no mean order, and we heartily congratulate her on her well-deserved success which has gained for her the distinction of being the first lady graduate of the University of Malta.”

Malta’s first female medical student started her five- year course in October 1919 and on 1 October 1925, Miss Blanche Huber became the first female to graduate in Medicine at the University of Malta. Born in Birkirkara, the daughter of Hon. Joseph Huber, Treasurer to Government, Dr Huber subsequently married a medical colleague, Dr Joseph Caruana, and worked throughout her life as a pharmacist in Zejtun. She died on 19 July 1942 aged 40.¹⁷



Ms. Blanche Huber

Although Miss Camilleri and Miss Huber were among the first female students at the University of Malta,¹⁸ there were other women who, around the same time or slightly before, gained university qualifications from institutions overseas. One of these, Miss Blanche Tonna Barthet, held an L.L.A. (Lady Literate in Arts) from St



Ms. Tonna Barthet (centre)

Andrew's University in Scotland and was Headmistress of Sliema Primary School. She is mentioned in a letter of March 1919 from the Rector of the University to the Governor in which she is said to have offered to give a lecture at the Aula Magna entitled 'Women's Action Through the Century'. There is no record of this lecture ever actually taking place and, with the events of June of that year, it is likely to have been postponed. We do know, however, that during the academic year 1920-1921, Miss Tonna Barthet delivered a lecture, the first woman to do so, in the Aula Magna entitled 'Maltese Ideals' - an interesting title given the events of 1919. This was followed, on 25 May 1922, by a talk entitled 'Man and His Work'.

This fascinating lady took a correspondence course between 1915 and 1918 through an establishment in London called the Normal Correspondence College. She studied various subjects gaining honours in Italian and passes in the other necessary subject areas and was awarded her diploma by St Andrews University in Scotland in 1918.¹⁹ Later, Miss Tonna Barthet further distinguished herself when she gave a talk in St. John's Co-Cathedral in Valletta (probably the first woman to do so). As first president of the female section of Catholic Action Movement in Malta, she spoke to the First Maltese Diocesan Eucharistic Congress on the subject: *L'Azione Cattolica nel Pensiero del Pontefice*.²⁰

Miss Tonna Barthet was probably not the only Maltese woman at the time to have a diploma or a degree from a foreign university. In fact, Vella mentions four ladies who were seriously considered for the Chair of English Literature and General History in 1923.²¹ One cannot be sure just how 'seriously' these applications were taken as the minutes of the General Council state:

"Sixteen applications had been received four of which from ladies. Although sex did not debar persons from applying, for obvious reasons these ladies were considered to be 'hors concours'."²²

As the report with the names and qualifications of the applicants is not available, it is not possible to ascertain whether the ladies were not qualified enough and therefore not eligible for the Chair or whether the 'obvious reasons' were that it was inconceivable that a woman should obtain a Chair. The Chair was actually given to Owen J. Fogarty.

Among those who started the medical course but continued their studies abroad, is Irene Condachi. Born in Malta on 7 June, 1899, daughter of Costantino, referred to in the University roll as 'merchant', Ms Condachi was to make her mark on the medical profession. Her family had recently emigrated from Greece and formed part of a thriving Greek community on the island. Her uncle, an engineer, was responsible for the placing of the Greek inscription above the 'classical' entrance to the University in Valletta (Learning is the gateway to distinction). Dr Condachi commenced her studies in 1916²³ at the University of Malta but decided to abandon them after only a year.²⁴ Some time later, she determined to take them up again and travelled to Naples where she graduated M.D. in 1926. Two years after her graduation, she obtained a Special Degree in Paediatrics from the University of Pavia. She became Assistant to the Professor of Obstetrics and between 1938 and 1959 was the Government School Medical Officer. As such, she was the highest paid woman, at the time, in government employ.²⁵ She was also a member of the Professional Branch of the local Catholic Action Movement. Dr Condachi died in 1970 but is still remembered today for her tireless medical work.

In the early years of the 20th century, up until the 1960's, University of Malta graduations took place every three years. In 1931, there were two more female graduates, one a B.Sc., Cettina Bajona, who went on to graduate M.D. in 1935, and the other a B.A., Mary Christine Tufigno.

It is difficult today to imagine just what it was like to be one of the very few female students amongst a group of over a hundred males. One might suspect that it was not such an unpleasant experience for either group. Dr Mary Grech Marguerat, Malta's fourth female doctor (1943)²⁶, whom the author interviewed, said that she did not recall feeling 'different' or looked down upon during the course. One suspects that, on the contrary, they probably commanded respect and admiration. Each young woman probably had her own reason for daring to push the boundaries of convention. Mary Christine Tufigno, has, however, left us a short account of her personal reasons for wanting to follow what was an unusual life path for a 19 year old in 1928. In an essay, written right at the start of her course, she recounts her intellectual development, her joy at the discovery of literature, her plans for the future. Her idealism is touching, her warmth and intelligence transparent in this delightful piece of writing.

"Intanto, io studierò e cercherò di raffinare il mio gusto estetico in modo ch'io possa comprendere i grandi uomini ed elevare la mia mente al bello ed al puro perché fra di me e loro vi sia una tacita corrispondenza d'affetti."²⁷

After gaining her degree in 1931, Miss Tufigno taught Italian at the government's Higher Central School before her marriage and after that at the Convent of Sacred Heart.

There was a fairly regular intake of small numbers of female graduates over the next twenty five years and the male:female ratio remained virtually the same. The first females to obtain the Pharmaceutical Chemist (Ph.C.) diploma were Maria Caruana and Ondina Tayar in 1933 and these were followed by five others in 1945 and ten in 1948.

The Ph.C. diploma course was followed by those wishing to work as pharmacists. In the late Forties, however, the trend was to upgrade those courses that lead to professional qualifications and the Ph.C. diploma was upgraded to a three year Bachelor in Pharmacy (B.Pharm.) course. The first such degree was conferred on eight lady graduates in 1952: Carmen Borg, Joan Antida Borg, Mary Agnes Borg, Antoinette Caruana Montaldo, Joan Farrugia, Cettina Mifsud Bonnici, Elsa Vella,²⁸ Maria Rosa Vassallo.²⁹ The profession of pharmacist has always been perceived as 'appropriate' for women. Most of the early professionals would have worked in a pharmacy and could choose hours that fitted in with family commitments. As the job of medical representative for pharmaceutical firms became established it was also recognised as a convenient occupation for females. The course remains popular with women to this day.

A similar attempt at upgrading the teaching profession came about in 1943 when plans were made to entrust the training of women teachers to the Sisters of the Sacred Heart while the men's training college was to be run the La Salle Brothers. In 1950 there was one attempt at introducing a Bachelor in Education degree course at the University which produced the first graduates in 1953, among whom were Mary Caruana, Josephine Mangion, Mary C. Mangion and Juliana Zammit. However, this change was short lived and the degree was not reintroduced until 1980.

The one year course was increased to two years in 1954 and the St Michael's Training College opened in 1956. The Malta College of Education was set up in 1973 and this moved from Ta' Giorni to the Malta College of Science and Technology in 1975. With the setting up of the Faculty of Education in 1978 the first B.Ed. (Hons) course commenced in 1980.³⁰ An area of growth for women professionals has undoubtedly been in the paramedical area. The Institute of Health Care of the

University of Malta has upgraded the field of nursing studies. The vision behind its setting up in 1987 was to give academic standing to the courses initially run by the Department of Health and to build upon existing disciplines. The focus is now firmly on teamwork amongst health care professionals and the new ethos has proved extremely popular among female students.

The first graduates in B.Sc. Nursing were in 1992 when 10 women and 10 men graduated B.Sc. (Hons) Nursing Studies and 2 women and 2 men graduated B.Sc. Nursing Studies.³¹ At the start of the academic year 2000 - 2001 the I.H.C. student body stood at 715 (475 females and 240 males) making the overall percentage of women students at the Institute a respectable 66.44%.

If pharmacy and nursing were always considered an area of female professionalism there were other professions that were solidly male. The first female to graduate LL.D. was Joanna Degiorgio in 1949. Dr Degiorgio became a practising lawyer and spent all her working life in the Chambers of leading commercial lawyer, Professor Felic Cremona. However, the female lawyer remained a *rara avis* for many years, with only three women graduating LL.D. between 1949 and 1976. Ena Vella³² in 1958 and Jeanette Saliba (later Laferla Saliba) in 1975. Dr Saliba was actually the first female to obtain the warrant of Notary Public on 28 January 1976. The Law had not categorically denied women the right to hold a warrant of Notary Public. However, up until the changes in the Law of 1963, women were debarred from acting as witnesses on public deeds.³³ Act XXX of 1973 removed the minimum age of 25 years. The first LL.D. course after the coming into effect of these Acts, that included women, was that of Jeanette Saliba.³⁴ The first female Legal Procurators were Vera Muscat Azzopardi Mary Victoria Galea and Ena Vella who graduated in 1954. Other male domains, such as Dentistry and Architecture, were breached in 1960, by Carmen Attard, and in 1961, by Isabel Delia, respectively. Engineering, perhaps the final male stronghold, got its first female graduate, Catherine Zerafa, in 1973.

From the early years, right up until the Sixties, the degree courses (B.Sc., M.D., B.A.) had an average of one or two females per course. The General Council minutes during the early years do not contain many references to the female undergraduates but their presence did begin to be felt as this extract from the University's Annual Report of 1932 – 1933 indicates:

“As a number of young ladies have for some time joined the University and as it is likely that the number will be increased in the near future, a private sitting room has been provided for such lady-students.”³⁵

After the introduction of the ‘Compulsory Education Act’ in January, 1925, the average number of children in Elementary Education did increase. However, the number of females in primary and secondary education, as a percentage of the total number of students, remained stable in the period 1919 – 1938. In 1938, females at the University of Malta were 12.03% of the total student body (21 females and 149 males).³⁶ By 1972 the number of female graduates reached 30 (21.13% of the total number of graduates for that year). By 1980 the percentage of female graduates was still under 33% (45 females, 137 males) and the number remained the same into the late Eighties. By 1991, however, the percentage increased beyond the 50% mark. Today it stands at 55.02%. The number of females graduating in 2000 was 889.

Clearly, there are many different elements that have contributed to the increase in female student numbers. Among them social mores which now allow much greater freedom of choice for women; acceptance that women have a right to a career; greater confidence on the part of girls in their ability to perform well in the Sciences as well as in the Humanities. The introduction of Physics, in the Eighties, as a compulsory O-Level probably contributed much to this awareness.³⁷ The enormous increase in the number and in the diversity of degree, diploma and certificate courses, has obviously widened the educational horizons of women in Malta. The growth has not, however, been equal in all the faculties. Engineering remains a male stronghold with female

numbers standing at less than 20%. The Faculty of Laws, on the other hand, is now dominated by female students who make up almost two-thirds of every six year course (three years Bachelor of Laws (LL.B.) + three years Doctor of Laws (LL.D.).

Many of these students now go on to further studies with the number of female Master's students on the rise. So far, Malta does not have a graduate unemployment problem but, to be sustainable, the synergy between University, Industry and Business must be enhanced. These graduate numbers must also be monitored closely as tracer studies will tell us what is happening to them in the long term. This is particularly important with regard to women graduates who may not take up and sustain permanent employment immediately after graduation. There are also areas in which women have yet to make their mark – the B.Sc. (Hons) Information Technology³⁸ course has yet to be 'discovered' by female students. Maximising the work force is an economic necessity and the contribution of women will be key to the islands' future. Much has been done since the first female stepped over the University of Malta's threshold and the University has, without doubt, contributed enormously to the enhancement of the perception of women in the workplace by providing opportunities for professional qualification.

References

- ¹ 680 males - 684 females.
- ² For a history of the University of Malta, see Andrew Vella, *The University of Malta*, (Malta, 1969). References to the early history of the University in this article, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from this volume.
- ³ Roger Ellul-Micallef, "The Maltese Medical Tradition: overseas contacts that have influenced its development", in *Malta A Case Study in International Cross-Currents*, S. Fiorini and V. Mallia Milanese (eds.), (Malta 1991), 187-198, 190.
- ⁴ *Ibid*, 191.
- ⁵ Roberto Ranieri Costaguti O.S.M. was the first Rector to be appointed after the setting up of the *Università degli Studi Generali* (1771–1773).
- ⁶ Ignatius Bonavita (1792–1865) became the first President of the Court of Appeal in 1839. The papers of the Bonavita family were given to the University Library by Capt. John Bonavita in the 1970's.
- ⁷ In the meantime there had been two government commissions on university education - the Robertson Commission of 1901-3 and the Fry Commission of 1906-7. Among the matters investigated by these commissions was the admission of women to universities. They resulted in the Irish Universities Bill of 1908 which stipulated that, if a college wanted government funding, it must admit women students. In many ways what U.C.D. enacted at the eleventh hour was something that they would have been compelled to do anyway.
- ⁸ Vella, 80.
- ⁹ The University of Malta and the Lyceum occupied the same building and, at that time, the Rector was also head of the Lyceum.
- ¹⁰ David Murphy, "Thaddeus O'Malley" in *Dictionary of Irish Biography* (5 volumes, CUP, 2005).
- ¹¹ Paul Cassar, *Medical History of Malta*, (London 1965), 416.
- ¹² Vella, 97.
- ¹³ *Ibid.*, 87.
- ¹⁴ On June 7, 1919 there were disturbances in Valletta, ostensibly connected with an increase in the price of bread, during which some rioters were killed by British soldiers.
- ¹⁵ Blanche Huber appears in the University's Roll of Students 1918-1921 under *List of students attending the Academical Course of Science and the Preparatory Course for Medicine and Surgery*. Strangely, Tessie Camilleri is included in the same list but her name appears to be crossed out. She also appears under the list of students attending the Academical Course of Literature in the same volume.
- ¹⁶ *The Acts of the University, 1883 – 1924*, University of Malta archives no. 78. Miss Camilleri's progress can be followed throughout her years at UoM through the attendance sheets and the Acts clearly state that this graduation ceremony took place. The dated and signed speech made by Professor T. Zammit is glued into the volume. Also, Miss Camilleri's original diploma still hangs on the wall in the house of one of her sons, Dr Robert Staines. There is, however, no record of

this graduation ceremony in the *Liber Aureus* of the University. This may be because it was a private ceremony.

- ¹⁷ A.E. Abela, *Grace and Glory. Malta: People, Places and Events*, (Progress Press. Valletta, 1997), 94-95.
- ¹⁸ There was one other woman who started University at the same time but did not complete her studies.
- ¹⁹ The L.L.A. scheme was a pre-cursor in higher education for women, that is, before they were admitted as graduates to the University of St Andrews in 1892. The prime author of the whole scheme was William Knight, Professor of Moral Philosophy 1879-1903 at St Andrews University. The scheme continued until 1932, by which time over 11,000 candidates from all parts of the world had presented themselves for examination, over 5,000 being awarded the complete certificate. Other graduates from Malta, between 1909 and 1931, were: Ellen T. MacCarthy (1909); Olivia Patten (1921); Carmela Imbroll (1926); Concetta Sammut (1928); Concetta Borg-Calleja (1931); Carmela Galea (1931). I gratefully acknowledge the assistance of the Department of Rare Books and Muniments of St Andrews University in obtaining information about Ms Tonna Barthet's graduation and about the L.L.A. course. I thank also the various members of her family who kindly provided information about their relative.
- ²⁰ *Primo Congresso Eucaristico Diocesano Maltese*, (Aprile 1939, Malta), 90.
- ²¹ *General Council Minutes*, November 12, 1923.
- ²² *General Council Minutes*, sitting no. 6 of 12 November, 1923.
- ²³ Miss Condachi appears in the University's Roll of Students 1916-1917 under *List of students attending the Course of Science and Preparatory Course of Medicine*.
- ²⁴ Grateful thanks go to Mr John Agius Condachi for his help in providing valuable information about Dr Condachi.
- ²⁵ Personal communication from Mr J. Agius Condachi.
- ²⁶ The third female M.D. was Marcelle Galanopoulo (1940).
- ²⁷ Grateful thanks go to Mrs Cecilia Xuereb for providing me with information about her mother, Marie Christine Tufigno and for allowing me to include a quote from her essay.
- ²⁸ Elsa Vella went on to graduate M.D. in 1955 when she was placed 2nd in a course that included some of Malta's best known medical practitioners.
- ²⁹ The Ph.C. was briefly reintroduced (14 female graduates in 1970). However, there was a change of heart and the B.Pharm. course was soon reinstated (12 female graduates in 1971).
- ³⁰ Raymond Camilleri, *Teacher Training and Teacher Education in Malta: an historical perspective*, unpublished M.Ed. thesis, (October 1994).
- ³¹ B.Sc. (Hons) Nursing Studies, lady graduates in 1992: Margaret Abela, Doreen Agius Cutajar, Isabelle Avallone, Donia Baldacchino, Salvina Maria Bonanno, Therese Bugeja, Norma Josephine Buttigieg, Catherine Dalmas, Odette Grixti, Catherine Sharples. B.Sc. Nursing Studies lady graduates in 1992: Mary Rose Grima, Helen Zammit.
- ³² Ena Vella, later Cremona, was placed first in her course. She became a well known figure at the courts and is still a practising lawyer.
- ³³ *The Revised Edition of the Laws of Malta 1942* Vol. V. Chapter 92 Notarial Profession and Notarial Archives Part II of Notaries, art. 27, Qualifications of witnesses and attestors.
(1) No person shall be competent as witness unless such person is of the male sex ... (later amended by Act XXIX.1963).
- ³⁴ My thanks to Notary Jeanette Laferla Saliba, Notary Philip Saliba and to Notary Joseph Sciriha for discussing this issue with me.
- ³⁵ Reports of the University, 1920–1933, *Annual Report 1932–1933*, UoM.
- ³⁶ Anthony Cremona, *Aspects of Maltese Society between the two World Wars*, Unpublished dissertation for B.A. (Hons) History, (May 2001).
- ³⁷ Comment made by Dr Mary Darmanin, Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Education, University of Malta, during an interview with the author in 2000.
- ³⁸ Now B.Sc. (Hons) Information & Communication Technology.

MS PATRICIA CAMILLERI is Director of the Communications and Alumni Relations Office at the University of Malta. She holds a BA and a MA.