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MALTESE
POCKET GRAMMAR

BY

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34 Strada Reale, Valletta.

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MAITTE

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Preface.

The present work is an attempt to supply a long felt want in the shape of a grammar for the Maltese language.

The author has chosen Maltese as a type, and perhaps the most ancient, of Semitic languages.

The plan, which is followed throughout, is based on a scientific phonetical system.

The author wishes at the same time to give to his Maltese friends the opportunity of making themselves acquainted with the grammatical constructions of their language.

It is an undoubted fact, that even the best educated classes of Malta do not always understand the meaning of a great number of words, which are used by them constantly and of which they are unable to give the grammatical explanation. As an example we might mention the word "abt" — armpit, which few Maltese would understand, although "taht abti" — under my armpit — is a common expression.

The author would feel satisfied if the present work would stimulate his Maltese friends to the study of the leading rules of their grammar. They would then consider such words as "andaf" "merjùà", "màllém" etc..., which are the comparative of the Maltese "nadif", the passive participle of the Maltese "rajà", and the participle of the Maltese "tállém," respectively as strictly Maltese, since they conform to the Maltese formation. "Akbar", the comparative of "kabir" (or kbir), "mebliùà" and "màllém", the participles of "balà" and "àllém", are similar examples.

THE ALPHABET

The transcriptions that are now used for the Maltese written language have been arranged by foreigners, whose ideas of the Maltese roots and their origin were extremely imperfect.

The first scribes tried to write Maltese words using the Italian characters—the least desirable for a Semitic transcription. For this purpose they used their personal sense of perspicacity and intelligence in capturing Maltese sounds and, by appropriating the Italian alphabet, rendered them without any claim at philological knowledge or scientific system.

Result :

1. one cannot read Maltese correctly, the transcriptions not giving the pronunciation of the words ;
2. one cannot understand Maltese reading, the transcriptions having been made by people who were ignorant of the roots of this language.

Our first efforts should be directed towards giving the Maltese language a true transcription.

The Maltese language, like all Semitic languages, is very rich in vowels.

Of the European alphabets the only one, which lends itself in any way for rendering the rich Semitic sounds, is the French alphabet.

Vowels.

The Maltese have:

6 short vowels :

a	ex :	farda,	darba
é	„	kélb,	émm
i	„	hisér,	kidéb
o	„	ohxon,	omm
e	„	ben,	meblúa, be'l-mwòd
u	(like the latin u)	ex :	suq (= go on:)

5 long vowels :

à	ex :	hàres,	dàr
è	„	ktèb,	slèm
ì	„	nadif,	slima
ò	„	xòr	
ù	„	shq (= a market)	rùh

5 guttural vowels :

â	ex :	bâd,	âdda
ê	„	mêêr,	qééd
î	„	îll,	îlla
ô	„	ôli,	ômor
û	„	ûùd,	ûéyna

2 evasive vowels :

w	ex :	héwa,	dawar
y	„	hal liya,	bahriya, barràniy

Remarks :

1. Short *i* and short *u* become *y* and *w* between two vowels.
2. *w* after *y* becomes *u*; and *y* after *w* becomes *i*.
3. *w* and *y* between two consonants become *u* and *i*.

N.B. The importance of the vowels and the necessity of distinguishing the short, the long, and the guttural vowels in writing is quite obvious if we compare the different meanings of the words :
 suq = go on ! sùq = market ; li = to, for ; lì = to me, for me ; hal = encampment, village ; hâl = state, disposition, condition ; ad = to say, to tell ; âd = although, still, not yet ; qarr = to settle things ; mqâr = probably etc.

Consonants.

Consonants are solar or lunar.

Solar consonants are 8 : d, l, n, r, s, t, x, z.

Remark : consonant *x* has to be pronounced like the English *sh* or the French *ch*.

Lunar consonants are also 8 : b, f, g, h, j, k, m, q.

Remarks: 1. Consonant *g* has to be pronounced like a *grassement*, or light guttural aspiration.

2. Consonant *h* is like the german *h*.

3. Consonant *j* has to be pronounced :

a) like the French *j*

at the end of words ; ex : hawdédj

before all consonants, except before *h* ; ex : âjzénin,

b) like the English *j* in all other cases.

4. Consonant *q* is a guttural *k*.

N.B. 1. The Italian sounds *ci*, *cio* etc. do not exist in Semitic languages. Those few words in which these sounds are heard in Maltese, are either of Italian origin, or corruptions of Semitic words with *x* or *j*. Ex: wicc = wjch (*); cekcek = xékkék etc.

2. *P* does not exist in Semitic languages. Those few words, in which this sound is heard in Maltese, are either foreign words, like Petrus, Paulus etc., or corruptions of Semitic words with *b* or *f*. Ex : dahlet ish-shilep = dahlét ix-xiléf.

Such words as *pxara* (= b'xara = with news), *phàlék* (= b'hàlék = like you), *pitqal* (= bi tqal = with heaviness), *phalkyéku* (= b'hàl kyéku = as if it were), *priklu* (= b'rikhlu = with probability = perhaps) etc. , evidently have no claim to a *p*, since the *p* is only taking the place of the preposition *bi*, which stands for with.

Pgayla is no exception to the rule, being the diminutive of *baqla*, just as *jnénna* is the diminutive of *jénna*, and should be written with a *b*.

Phonetical note. A noun, ending in short *a* takes a euphonic *t*, when it is followed by the article or by a noun, beginning with a vowel.

Ex : tisâa miat élf ;

érbâat éléf ;

érbâat izmna ;

sénâat il-qaysèn

féhmat il-mara

sahhat il-bnédém

sahhat ir-rajel etc. .

(*) The verb *wéjjéh*, coming from *wjch* is always written correctly by the Maltese.

THE ARTICLE

The Maltese article is *il* for all genders and numbers.

N.B. 1. Before nouns, beginning with one of the solar consonants, the *l* of the article is substituted by that solar letter which it precedes.

Ex : ix-xémx (instead of il-xémx)
ir-raġel (instead of il-raġel)
in-nàr (instead of il-nàr)
id-dàr (instead of il-dàr)
it-triq (instead of il-triq)
is-sawm (instead of il-sawm)
iz-zibél (instead of il-zibél)
il-léyl il-léyl.

But it remains unaltered before the lunar consonants as: il-qamar, il-kotba etc. . .

2. After a word, ending in a vowel, the *i* of the article is suppressed

Ex : da 'l-kélb (instead of da il-kélb)
di 'l-libsa (instead of di il-libsa)
âġini 'l-hobz (instead of âġini il-hobz)
darbu 't-tifla (instead of darbu it-tifla)

3. But, when the word preceding the article is a noun and when the last letter of this noun is a short *a*, the *i* of the article does not fall out, but a euphonic *l* is added to the end of the preceding word.

Ex : sēnâat il kaysèn. . . (see phonetical note p.7)

Historical remark. In the primitive language there were two ways of making a noun definite :

1. by prefixing the article *il*
2. by prefixing the old pronoun *he* which is the original form of *hwa* and *huma*.

Ex : *he* q̄s̄us = the pastors; *he* b̄al = the God etc.
There is now no trace of the pronoun *he* used in the Maltese language as an article.

Mistakes. A mistake, which the Maltese always make in writing, is to prefix to the words *ma* (water) *ifâ* (viper), "*item*" (orphanage), *itim* (orphan), *isir* (slave), *anjàs* (pear), *abra* (needle), *bùs* (fine linen), *izàr* (sheet),-- one article, when they are indefinite: *il-ma*, *'l-ifâ*, *'l-itém*, *'l-tim*, *'l-sir*, *'l-anjàs*, *'l-abra*, *'l-bùs*, *'l-izàr*, -- and two articles, when they are definite: *'l-il-ma*, *il-'l-ifâ*, *il-'l-itém*, *il-'l-tim*, *il-'l-sir*, *il-'l-anjàs*, *il-'l-abra*, *il-'l-bùs*, *il-'l-izàr* !

Another mistake is using the article before nouns already defined by affixed pronouns.

Ex: *'l-ibni* — the my son, instead of *ibni* — my son ;

'l-ommħu—the his mother, instead of *ommħu* -- his mother.

The irregularity in the use of *'l-ibni* might be explained by its resemblance to *'l-ibni* — the sons, or *bni*— sons; but *'l-ommħu* cannot be explained.

THE PRONOUN

Personal pronouns.

- Singular 1. *yen*
2. *int'* (instead of *inta, inti*)
3. *hua, hia.*
- Plural 1. *ahna*
2. *intom*
3. *huma*

Affixed pronouns.

- Singular 1. *ni* (to verbs)
i (to nouns ending in a consonant)
ya (to nouns ending in a vowel)
2. *k,* (after vowels) *ok, ek,* (after consonants)
3. *h̄,* *do* *h̄u,* *do*
h̄a (for feminine)
- Plural 1. *nè* or *nā*
2. *kom*
3. *h̄om*

N.B. The affixed pronouns *h, hu, ha* and *hom* should, in my opinion, be written with a line over the *h* thus 'h̄'. I, on account of its very light almost imperceptible aspiration, when it follows a consonant ;
ex : *āndh̄u ; kteb̄th̄u, bih̄* etc.

2, in order to make a distinction between the *h̄* of the affixed pronouns and *h* when it happens to be the last letter of a root.
Ex : *rùh̄h̄u* his soul ; *fèrrah̄h̄a*—he rejoiced her.

At any rate the *h* of the pronouns *h̄u, h̄a, h̄om*, should not be left out in writing, *h* being the root

of these pronouns, and its suppression is liable to cause confusion in the construction of phrases.

Ex :	minna	from us
	minħa	from her
	darbu	they have beaten
	darbħu	he has beaten him
	darbuħu	they have beaten him
	ferrahu	they have rejoiced
	ferrahħu	he has rejoiced him etc. .

Affixed pronouns may be joined to any word.

I **Joined to transitive verbs**—they constitute the objective case : Ex : hudni (= hud + ni) = take me

II **Joined to prepositions**—they constitute the indirect case : Ex : fik (= fi + k)— in you ; ândħu (= ând + hu) = “*chez lui*” = he possesses.

III **Joined to nouns**,—the affixed pronouns have the meaning of possessive adjectives. Ex : dâri (= dar + i) = my house.

Irregularities

1.) Affixed pronouns with the preposition *li* = to, for, are irregular in the following cases:

li	instead of liya	
lék	instead of lik	
lħu	instead of lih	
lħa	instead of liha	
lna	(after vowels)	} instead of “lina”
ilna	(after consonants)	
lkom	(after vowels)	} instead of “likom”
ilkom	(after consonants)	
lħom	instead of liħom	

Remark. One often comes across expressions peculiar to the Maltese language, consisting in the repetition of the preposition *li* before the affixed pronouns.

Ex : *lilħi* = for to me, instead of *lħi* = for me; *lilék*—for to you, instead of *lék*—for you etc.

2.) Affixed pronouns with the preposition *mà* = with, are irregular in the following cases:

miây (*) instead of mâya
miâk (**) instead of mâk (***)
miâw (**) instead of mâh

The rest are regular: mâha, mâna, mâkom, mâhom.

3.) Affixed pronouns with the preposition *âl* = on, over, are irregular: they take an *i* between the *l* and the affixed pronoun:

âliya, âlik, âlih, âliha, âlina, âlikom, âlihom

This construction is evidently regular if we only remember that the Maltese *âl* is a corruption of the regular Semitic *âlay*.

4.) Affixed pronouns with the preposition *min* = of, from, are irregular only in Maltese orthography, where a superfluous *n* is sometimes introduced: Minni = mini; minnék = minék; minnkom = minkom;

In *mi·nu* = minhu,
minna = minha,
minnom = min om,

the second *n* takes the place of the *h* of the affixed pronouns *hu*, *ha* and *hom*.

Unlike the rest, *minna* = from us is regular, but might be mistaken for "*minha* = from her when the latter is written without *h* (*minna*.)

5.) Words, ending in short *a* in the singular, take the affixed pronouns through the intermediary of a

(*) Although this form is not to be found in other Semitic languages, it is, nevertheless, perfectly in accordance with the Semitic spirit of the language, which very often admits of transposition in the order and sequence of sounds. Here, instead of one *i* which should have been between two *a* s (: *mâya* :) the word has been changed so that one *a* comes between two *i* s. (: *miây*.)

(**) *Miâk* and *miâw* are arrangements after *miây*

(***) *Mâk* is sometimes used by country folk.

euphonic *t*; *a* before *t* is then often suppressed or transposed.

Ex: nahla, — nahlati or nahalti
 nahlaték or nahalték
 sida, — sidati or sidti
 sidana or sidna
 māra, — marati or marti
 maraték or marték etc.

6.) Words, in the dual and plural forms ending in *éyn*, *ayn* and *in*, lose the final *n* before the affixed pronouns. Ex: dirâyn—dirâyh, dirâyk; âjzènin—âjzènh, âjzènik, etc.

7.) The words *tâ* and *tiâ*, taking affixed pronouns, have the sense of mine, thine etc.

Tâ is a barbarism; it is an abbreviation of the arabic *mtâ*—belongings.

Tiâ is an original Maltese form, being the adjective from *tâ* or *âta*—to take (: *Tiâ*—what is taken—belonging to:)

The following are pure Maltese forms:

tiây, tiâk, tiâw (instead of tiâh)

The following are adopted from the North African coast:

tahha (= tâha), tahhom (= tâhom), tâna, takom.

Interrogative pronouns

1. *Xi* (‡) = *what*, is generally followed by another word.

Ex: x'hin — what time?

x'ândék — what have you got?

xi trid — what do you want?

x'tâmél bih (or x'tâm'bih):—what do you make of it, or of him?

xinu (= x'inhu) = what is it? etc.

2. *Men* = *who* for all genders and numbers.

(‡ “Xi” is the contraction of “xéyn” (arabic “xéyun)—“small thing” or “thing”).

Men can be affixed to prepositions. Ex: *limen* —to whom? *mimmen* (=min men)—from whom? *mâmen*—with whom etc.

Men can be used with the affixed pronoun *hu*
Ex: *menhu*—who is it? (=who is he?)

In writing, *menhu* must be written as one word, *hu* being an affixed pronoun. If, on the other hand, it is written in two words, then *hu* ceases to be an affixed pronoun and must therefore be written *hua* (: men hua). Both expressions are correct.

Relative pronouns

A. Indefinite.

Ma = that. Ex: koll ma naâfu—-all that we know
Men = who.

Mistakes. In the Maltese *Pater noster* books make the following mistake: *ahna nagfru LILMIN yahti âlina*, although country people and even sometimes those of Valletta pronounce *ahna nagfru LIMEN yahti âlina*. *Men* is indefinite, and prefixing the article to a pronoun, and especially to one which shows the indefinite sense is certainly a mistake and is not excusable on the strength of habit, as this habit does not exist among country folk.

B. Definite.

Illi which is often spelt 'lli and is a barbaric contraction of the regular *illadî, illadàn, illadîn*.

This pronoun can only be used after a definite noun or a personal pronoun.

Ex: yèn hua 'lli — I am the one who..

Allah hua 'lli — It is God who..

PARTICULARS IN USING "ILLI"

1. IN THE NOMINATIVE CASE

— ir-rajel, 'lli darabhu... the man who has wounded
[him]

ir-rajel, 'lli darab da 't-tifèl — the man who has
[wounded that boy *

ir-rajel, 'lli darab...the man who has wounded *

2. IN THE OBJECTIVE CASE

ir-rajel, 'lli darab da 't-tifèl ... the man, whom this
[boy has wounded*

ir-rajel, 'lli darab ...the man, whom he has wounded*

ir-rajel, 'lli drobt... the man, whom I have wounded

ir-rajel, 'lli drobna...the man, whom we have
[wounded

il-kotba, 'lli yisraq...the books, which he will steal

3. IN THE INDIRECT CASE WITHOUT PREPOSITION

ir-rajel, 'lli drobt lhu it-tifèl...the man whose boy
I have wounded

il-jnèn, 'lli bèbħu qoddèm bèb dàrna...the garden,
[the door of which is opposite our house door.

4. IN THE INDIRECT CASE WITH PREPOSITIONS

ir-rajel, 'lli hrejna-miâw...the man with whom we
came out

il-huènet, 'lli dahlu fiħom ... the shops in which
they entered

il-mara, 'lli ktebt lħa ... the woman to whom I
have written

il-jnèn, 'lli harjèt minħu il mara...the garden from
which this woman came out.

N.B. When the relative pronoun refers to an indefinite noun, it is not translated.

Ex: he has a house the rooms of which are big ...
ândħu dàr byùthia kbàr.

he has written a book which I did not understand ...
kitéb ktèb ma fhemthū-x.'

(*) These maltese constructions differ from the modern arabic constructions.

Demonstrative pronouns

masculine: da, dak
feminine: di, dik
plural: daw, dawk

Ex: mqàr ikun dak...probably this will come.
The same are *demonstrative adjectives*, when followed by a definite noun.

Ex: da 'lkélb; di 'libsa; dawk in-nisà.

N.B. The words *dan* and *daun*, which are often found in Maltese books, are unknown to the people of Malta; at any rate *dan* is the dual of *da* and cannot be used in the singular number, although Maltese books always use it for *da* and *di* in the singular.

Daun, which is arranged after *dawk* is entirely unknown to the people of Malta, its meaning in other Semitic languages being *meanness*, *weakness*, *being down*.

Before going any further it is well that we should add a few words about the way in which the sense of *possession* or *belonging* may be expressed in Maltese.

We have already referred to the manner of expressing possession by means of affixed pronouns.

There are yet two other ways:

1. by means of two or several nouns following each other, the last being determinate either by the article or by the affixed pronoun.

Ex: moftèh bèb id-dar...the key of the house door.
moftèh bèb dari ... the key of my house door
bèb id-dàr ... the house door (...door of
the house)
bèb dàri ... the door of my house

Remark. *A house key*, ... undeterminate, ... would be *moftèh dâr*.

This way of determining possession or relation is the old, primitive Semitic way.

2. by means of the word *lâ*, put between two substantives.

Ex: *Is-slâtin tâ Malta* ... the knights of Malta

In Maltese books one comes across expressions, where *ta* is used instead of the euphonic *t* (see page 7). For example: *môdiyat iz-zmèn* is written *môdiya ta 's-zmèn*.

SOME PARTICLES AND SOME CONTRACTIONS
USED AS PARTICLES

I. *âlex* or *âlix*...why? Is made up of *âl éy xi* over...
what...thing.

The educated classes of Malta use *âlex* also for
because, being accustomed to use the Italian *perchè*
both for *why* and *because*

The people say quite correctly *âx* = *ân* + *xi* for because.
In the streets of Malta one hears children sing:

il-lùm (= il-yùm) la tsayar li-x

il-lèyla ma niji-x

âx ommok ma tridni-x

II *éyn* ... where? Is never used alone. It is always
affixed to:

1.) the preposition *fi*: *féyn* ... where in?

2.) the preposition *ila* contracted in *l*: *lèyn* ...
where to?

3.) the preposition *min*: *minèyn* and sometimes
minféyn ... where from, and *where from in*?

Ex: *féyn int'*? ... where are you?

minèyn \ *tiji*? ... where do you come from?
minféyn }

III *ila*—towards. It is used:

1.) in the contracted form of *l* with *èyn* (see above
II, 2)

2.) in the contracted form *il'*: *il' fùq* = upstairs (to-
wards above); *sèir il' béld*...going to town

3.) in the contracted form *'la*, and also in another
form where *'la* is transposed in order to make *al'*.

Ex: *nmur 'la Sliema* ... I go to Sliema

nmur al' tâ Sliema — I go towards what belongs
to Sliema

IV *li* may be:

1. an independent conjunction, corrupted from the Semitic *law* = if.

- a) In conditional phrases it is generally followed by the preterit of the verb *kèn*.

Ex: *li kont niji miák, kyèku ma tibzâ min had*

- b.) sometimes it is followed by *darba* and is then spelt *la*

Ex: *la darba klèmi mux mesmûâa* = if my words are not listened to ..

2. a conjunction prefixed to verbs:

- a) to express a wish, a desire

Ex: *liyitaqaddes ismék* = thy name be sanctified !

- b.) to express a purpose, and it is then preceded in Maltese by the substantive *hâl*.

Ex: *jèyt b'hâl linistâd* ... I have come to fish.

the same phrase in good arabic : *jeyt linistâd*.

the same phrase in vulgar arabic : *jèyt bèx nistâd*.

3. a preposition prefixed to nouns and pronouns, meaning *to, for*.

Ex: *li...to me, for me ; lék...to you, for you ; li 'r-rajel* = to the man etc.

Remark: *li* preposition is sometimes corrupted in *il*

Ex: *ktébt ilkom* = I have written to you

ilâla ma jè-x' = why did he not come ?

ilâla = il (or li) + éy + la = for...what...not

N.B. The form *lima* = why?, which is made up of *li* = for, and the interrogative pronoun *ma* = what is completely forgotten, although Agius de Soldanis pretends that the words of the gospel: *Ilî, Ilî, limâ xabqatani* are intelligible to the Maltese.

4. a preposition preceding the negative particles *ma...x'*; it then has the meaning of *for that* or *as if*.

Ex: yùri li ma yaâfni-x—he pretends that he does
not know me.

N.B. In writing care should be taken not to misuse the words:

- li — to me, for me
- li — prefixe to nouns and verbs
- 'lli — relative pronoun.

V *in*

1. as a particle it is used to amplify the significance of the subject; it is prefixed to pronouns and takes a double *n*.

Ex: kif innĦu? — how does *he* do?
kif innék? — how do *you* do? [*]

2. as a conjunction, it is used :

- a) in the contracted form *yèk* or *ék* meaning *if* [*yèk* = *in* + *yaku* = if it is]
- b) in the contracted form *kyèku* = as if it were (*kyèku* = *ka* + *in* + *yaku*); *kyèku* is used:

(*) The same particle *in* used with affixed pronouns other than *K* and *hu* is not understood by the Maltese, since no attention is paid to the grammatical sense of each word in the phrase. Thus: *inni marid* — *it is I who am ill* is unintelligible and yet grammatical.

Another example may be found in *Kallayamar* = *ka .. Allah..yamar*=as God orders. But if one were to say *ka inni namar* = as I bid, as I order, the Maltese will find it unintelligible.

Yet another example may be found in *taht abti* which means *under my armpit* and yet the word *abt* used isolated is also unintelligible, although a mere repetition of the word *abti* without the affixed pronoun.

As a last example one may quote the following:

b'hâl=like; *âda*=custom. But if one says *b'hâl il âda* = *as it is customary*, the phrase becomes unintelligible, because the Maltese are not accustomed to this construction, the usual phrases being: *b'hâl ma ahna m'dorriin*, or *kif dâri* (*dâri* the active participle of *dara-yidra* to accustom.)

aa) in a conditional phrase, in opposition to the corresponding phrase with *yèk*.

Ex: *yèk il-hmèt tinjeb mâ 'l-kénna*
kyéku 'l-jhéna sèrét jénna

[if the mother in law agrees with the daughter in law it is as if the hell would become a p radise]

bb.) in a conditional phrase in opposition to the corresponding phrase with *li = larw*.

Ex: *li kont niji miák, kyéku ma tibzâ min had*
cc.) in optative phrases, when the wish is unattainable; it has then the meaning of *if only!*

Ex: *kyéku niji miák!* — If only I could come with you! [I wish I could come.]

3. as an independent conjunction, meaning *that*, it always precedes the aorist and is generally not translated at all.

Ex: *yèk in nzid lèk ... if I add to you*
yèk it trid [= yèk in trid]— if you like
*mali in nharsu [**] ... as soon as we look etc.*

N.B. Maltese dictionaries state that *in-nzid, it trid*, in *nharsu* etc. . . are special forms of the Semitic verb, whereas they are morely the simple form used with the conjunction *in*, the *n* being sub stituted by *t* in the 2d. person.

VI *màl* a contraction of *ma zàl* — it did not cease.

This contraction is usually translated as still.

Ex: *màl hayyèn* — he is still among the living
[= he did not cease to be alive]

In a combination with the conjunction *idan = then* *màl* is always wrongly written *mallidana*, although pronounced *mal idan*

Ex: *màl idan wasal fùqna b'la hsèb* = in that interval he came upon us unexpectedly [*màl* = it did not cease ; *idan* = then ; *wasal* = he arrived ; *fùqna* = upon us ; *b'la* = with no ; *hsèb* = warning, cogitation :]

(**) The Maltese Books and the Maltese Newspapers write it *Malli inharsu!*

N. B.—These expressions, in which *màl* is a contraction of *ma zàl* should not be mistaken for others, which, although written in a similar way by the educated classes of Malta, are in reality quite different. Thus:

- 1) *mallidaka belli domna* = *mali daka be'lli domna*
= on account of the time we delayed (*mali* = quantity, as much as; *dàka* = of that; *be'lli* = with what; *domna* = we delayed)
- 2) *malli inharsu* = *mali in nharsu* = as soon as we look (see above V, 3) etc.

In these expressions *mali*, which is wrongly written *malli*, is derived from the verb *mèla yimla* = *to fill up*. In semitic characters it is written: *m + l + a* and is pronounced *mila* = *quantity, as much as*, and is another example of the transposition of sounds already several times referred to.

VII. *àldakshèk* — is a good Maltese contraction, meaning *accordingly* (*àl* = on; *daks* = measuring *hèk* = thus); *àldakstant* which is often used in maltese books, is a mixture of the maltese words *àl* and *daks* together with the Italian *tanto*.

VIII. *f'ost* is not a preposition, as the Maltese think. *F'ost* is made of two words: *fi* = *in* and *ust* = *middle*. The French expression *au milieu* gives exactly the sense of the maltese *f'ost*.

IX. *ìlu*; *zmèn ìlu* = *some time ago*, is a good expression, often used by the people.

X. *bi*—a preposition, retains its *i* only before words, beginning with two consonants; otherwise it is written:

- a) with *e*, when followed by the article;
- b) without a vowel in all other cases.

Ex: *bi tqal*; *be'l-mwòd*; *b'hàl*; *b'la*; *b'rijlèyħ*

XI. *émm* = *here* or *there*. In semitic original writing it is spelt *alif* + *mim* + *mim*. In maltese it is pronounced *émm* (Ex: *kèn émm*). Why then is an *h* used in writing? (*hemm* !!)

XII. *âd* invariable particle. According to constructions it has different meanings:

1) *âd* with affixed pronouns

a) in a phrase without negation it means *still*

Ex : *âdna âl ùrà* = we are still behind
âdhu 'l-hin = there is still time

b) in a negative phrase it means *not yet*

Ex : *âdha ma jèt-x'* = she has not yet arrived.

2) *âd* when alone, has the meaning of *although*

Ex : *âd, ahna midnebla* = although we are sinners
ahna niju âd ma tridnè-x' = we shall come, although you do not want us.

N.B.—*âd* is not to be mistaken for the verb *ad* = *to tell, to say* which has no guttural vowel, being spelt in all semitic languages *alif* + *dal* + *ya* (*ada*).

XIII. *ôdu* (in arabic: *âyn* + *dâd* + *waw*)

a) *ôdu* with affixed pronouns means almost. Ex:

ôduh kèl = he has almost eaten;

ôduh wasal iz-żmèn = it is almost time;

kèn ôduh waqa or } he was almost falling
kèn ôduh sèr yaqa } down;

ôduhom sèirin il'hala = they are almost going to ruin etc.

b) *ôdu* with the article means morning.

Ex : *il-bèrah fi 'l-ôdu* = *yesterday morning* (*il-bèrah* = yesterday, *fi 'l-ôdu* = in the almostness).

XIV *Sa*

1) *Sa*, imperative of the verb *sa-isa* = *to run*, is used with an other imperative.

Ex : *Sa murr* = go and run = go quickly.

2) *Sa*, prefixed to the aorist, indicates the future.

Ex : *yiji* = he comes; *sayiji* = he will come.

3) *Sa*, before nouns and particles, means *as long as*, *until* etc.

Ex : *Sa kém tâix* = as long as you live

sa féyn,
sa hawn
sa henna } as far as
sa émm }

sa 'l-ahhar
sa 'l-anqas } to the last, to the end

sa 'ssa = *sa is-sa* = till now

sa 'd-dar = as far as the house

sa ma yiji = till he comes

N.B. — *sa ma yiji* = till he comes

sayiji = he will come

XV. *ka*—a particle, meaning *like*, *as*; it is always prefixed to nouns, pronouns and particles.

1) *kallayamar* = *ka Allah yamar* = as God orders

2) *kyéku* = *ka in yaku* = as if it were

3) *tráakhom* = there they are
tráakhu = there he is
tráakha = there she is
tráakék = there you are
tráakna = there we are } there, all of a sudden

Tráakhom is made up of *tráa* = *il se montra*,
ka = *comme quoi*, *hom* = *ils*.

Ex : *tráakhom is-slàtin min ix-xrúq jèu urusalim**
u yaïdu: féynhu' l-mulùd sultàn tâ 'l-ihud?

* It would be a pity to use *Gerusalem*, *Annibal* etc., for *Urusalim*, *Hannubal* etc., which are Semitic or Maltse names.

tràakħu 'l-mléyka tâ muléyna déhér lħu f'néwmħu
u qàl: qum, u hu is-sabí u ommħu u ahrab al
Masar u kun émin sa ma néyd lék.

Out of these combinations *ka* is not understood; even *ka ma trid* = *as you like*, is unintelligible to the Maltese, although only a repetition of the word *ka* with the particle *ma* *

XVI. *Malay*—an adverb, meaning *quick*.

Malay is derived from the verb *mala-yamla* which is forgotten in Maltese, and whose meaning is *to advance at a quick pace*. It is difficult to understand why some Maltese books write *malay* with an *r* (*malayr* !!)

XVII. *féys*, meaning *the act of hurrying*, is derived from the verb *fàs-ifs*.

People say: *min actar fis* = *with greater hast*, using *fis* instead of *féys*.

XVIII. *qad*, corroborative particle, preceding the verb, is generally used with *yèk* (=if), and can be translated: ever, should, would

Ex: *yèk qad tsibħu, hudħu miák* = if you ever find him, take him with you; *yèk qad yiji il-léyla* = if he comes to night or should he come to-night; *li (law) kont naáf li qad tismáni* = if I could know that you would hear me etc.

XIX. *qatt*, negative particle meaning never, is always following the verb.

Ex: *Ma rani qatt* = he has never seen me; *atar 'lli ma imut qatt* = a monument which never dies ect.

* Country folk often say *ki yirid* = as he likes, thus using *ki* instead of *ka ma*.

THE VERB

Semitic verbs are defined in two ways:

1. by the third person singular of the preterit, which is the verb's *shortest form* and
2. by the third person singular of the aorist which is the verb's *complementary form*.

If the first vowel in the complementary form is suppressed, the *fundamental form* becomes at once apparent. Ex:

shortest form	complimentary form	fundamental form
jè	yiji	iji
ra	yara	ara
âf	yaâf	aâf
kèn	ikun	kun
bèâ	ibiâ	biâ
lâb	yilâb	ilâb
âdd	yôdd	ôdd
habb	ihobb	hobb
méxa	yimxi	imxi
kitéb	yiktéb	ikteb
kisér	yiksér	ikser
rajâ	yarjâ	arjâ
âmél	yâmél	âmel
waqâ	yaqâ	aqâ
waqaf	yéqaf	éqaf
âllém	yâllém	âllem
tâllém	yitâllém	itâllem
stahréj	yistahréj	istahrej
inféna	yinféna	inféna
infétah	yinfétah	infétah
intésa	yintésa	intésa
intiféd	yintiféd	intifed
hdâr	yihdâr	ihdâr
hdèl	yihdèl	ihdèl etc.

TABLE OF CONJUGATIONS

AORIST *		PRETERIT	
<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>	<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>
n	n u	I t na
t	t u	II t tu
i; y (masc.)	i; y u	III ———	—— u
t (femin.)		——ét; t	

IMPERATIVE

<i>Singular</i>	—	<i>Plural</i> u
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- Remarks
- 1.) The straight lines (———) stand for the verb's shortest form.
 - 2.) The pointed lines (.....) stand for the verb's fundamental form.
 - 3.) The prefix *n* of the first person singular in the aorist is a corruption of the old Semitic prefix *w* (= hamza fatha or hamza damma). Traces of the regular prefix for the first person singular of the aorist may be found in such maltese expressions as: *marrid-x'* = *ma wrid-x'* = I do not want, etc.

Verbs may be divided into four classes:

- I To the first class belong all simple verbs, as contrasted with derived verbs.
- II To the second class belong such derived verbs as are considered simple verbs in Semitic languages. E. g. *habb*, *bèâ*, *waqâ*.
- III To the third class belong all true derived verbs.
- IV To the fourth class belong all verbs, which are not derived, but are made up of two or more different words, so intimately connected with each other by usage, that they may be almost considered as one.

* Aorist = present and future sense.



First Class. The simple verbs are:

1. All verbs of two letters in their shortest form
2. All verbs of three, four or five letters in their shortest form,
 - a) if they have no double consonant
 - b) if they have no long vowels
 - c) if they do not begin with a vowel

The following verbs, although beginning with a vowel, belong to the first class:

awa * = to become populous
aya = to come on
âya = to be wearied, to be tired
êwa = to howl

The roots of these verbs being *a* or *e*, it is obvious that they can have no consonant in their simple form.

First conjugation.

1. With the exception of the third persons of the preterit all the forms of the first conjugation are derived from the fundamental form
2. Verbs, whose fundamental form begins with a short vowel lose this vowel in the preterit's first and second persons.

Ex: *kitéb-yiktéb-îkteb*; preterit *-ktebt, ktebna, ktebtu*; *âm - yaôm - aôm*; preterit *ômt* etc.

Verbs, the fundamental form of which begins with two vowels, lose the first of these vowels in the imperative.

Ex: *âm - yaôm - aôm*; imperative *ôm*.

Verbs, the fundamental form of which begins with *i*, change this *i* into *é* in the imperative, if the last letter is a vowel.

Ex; *samâ - yismâ - ismâ*; imperative—*ésmâ*
talâ - yitlâ - îtlâ; do *étlâ*.

But: *kitéb - yiktéb-îkteb*; do *îkteb*.

* *Awa* is known to the Maltese in its participial form *mawi*
Ex: *xâra mawiya koll xibr yiswâ mia*. (The proverb originated with the foundation of Valletta in 1566).

3. Verbs, the fundamental form of which ends in a short vowel, change this vowel:
into *éy* if the vowel was *i*
into *ay* if the vowel was *a*
before the flexion—affixes of the first and second persons of the preterit. Ex:
méxa-yimxi-imxi;—preterit: mxéyt etc.
ra-yara-ara; —preterit: rayt etc.
4. Verbs, the fundamental form of which ends in *i* lose the *i* before the flexion-affixes of the aorist and imperative. Ex: méxa-yimxi-imxi;
aor.—nimxu, timxu, yimxu (instead of nimxiu, timxiu etc.)
imp.—imxu (instead of imxiu)
5. If a new syllable is affixed to the verbs shortest form, the short vowel of the last syllable is dropped, provided it is not the last letter of the word.

Ex: darab-darbu (instead of darabu); but: raurau, béda-bédau, méxa-méxau etc.

The active participle is formed from the shortest form by the addition of a long *à* or *è* after the first letter and a short *i* before the last letter. Ex: rahab-ràhib; rajâ-râjiâ; kitéb-kètib.

- 1.) Verbs, having the second letter *e* or *i* generally take the suffix *è*
Ex: méxa-mèxi; réma-rèmi; béda-bèdi
nixéf - nèxif; nizél - nèzil
But: rahab - ràhib; haréj - hàrij; dahel - dàhil;
bata - bàti etc.
- 2.) When the second letter of the shortest form is a short vowel, this falls out after suffixes *à* or *è*. Ex: méxa - mèxi; rahab - ràhib etc., instead of mèéxi, ràahib.
- 3.) When a vowel exists before the last letter of the shortest form, it is suppressed after the suffix *i*. Ex: haréj - hàrij, instead of hàreij.

- 4.) In verbs, ending in a short vowel, the vowel is omitted after the suffix *i*, which becomes *y*, when following a vowel

Ex: *rèma* - *rèmi* (instead of *rèmia*); *béda* - *bèdi*
(instead of *bèdia*)

râa - *râây* (instead of *rââia*)

dâa - *dâây* (instead of *dââia*)

nâa - *nâây* (instead of *nââia*)

The passive participle is formed from the fundamental form by the addition of the prefix *m* before the first letter and the introduction of the suffix *ù* before the last letter.

Prefix *m*

- 1.) The prefix *m* is joined to the first consonant of the fundamental form by means of the vowels:
a if the first consonant is guttural. Ex: *mahrùt*, *
e in all other cases.

The *e* having no equivalent in the Italian alphabet, the first Maltese scribes used *i* instead of *e* mute, causing confusion amongst those people who could read and those who could only speak correctly.

Ex: *mefsùd* is written *mifsùd*, etc.

- 2.) If the verb ends in a short vowel, the prefix *m* is joined to the first letter of the fundamental form by means of *i*. Ex: *mibdi*, *mibki*, *mibni*, *midhi*, *midri*, *midwi*, *mifli*, *mifni*, *mihdi*, *miji*, *mijli*, *mijri*, *mijzi*, *mikri*, *miksi*, *mikwi*, *milwi*, *mimli*, *minki*, *minsi*, *mirqi*, *mirgi*, *misbi*, *misfi*, *mishi*, *miswi*, *mitki*, *mitli*, *mitni*, *mitwi*, *mixli*, *mixwi*, *milqi*, ‡ *minqi* ‡ etc.

* The passive participle of *awa* is *mawi*; *awa* having no consonant in the root the suffix *m* is joined to the first letter of the fundamental form (*awa* - *mawi*; *aya* - *mayi*; *êwa* - *méwi*.)

‡ *Milqi* passive participle from *laqa* and *minqi* passive participle from *naga* should not be mistaken for *melquâ* passive participle from *laqâ* and *menquâ* passive participle from *naqâ*.

Suffix *ù*

- 1.) If a vowel precedes the last letter of the fundamental form, the vocal is assimilated to the suffix *ù*. Ex : kitéb - yiktéb - iktéb - mektùb. qâd - yoqôd - oqôd ; maqûd. qaléb - yaqléb - maqlùb. But: laqâ - melquâ; manâ - memnûâ; naqâ - menquâ etc.
- 2.) If the verb ends in a short vowel, the suffix *ù* is left out and the last vowel becomes *i* Ex; béda - yibda - ibda - mibdî; râa - mirâi; nâa - minâi; dâa - midâi etc.

N.B.—Some verbs have the prefix *m* joined by means of the vowel *o*; of such there are in Maltese only 16: mohfi, mohmi, mohxi, mohbi, mohli, mohri, mohsi, mohwi, mohyi, moqdi, moqli, moqri, mogli, mogni, mogwi, mormi.

Remark. Two-letter verbs form the passive participle from their shortest form by prefixing *ma* to its first letter and by changing its vowel: into *i* if the verb ends into a vowel, into *u* if the verb begins with a vowel. Ex: ra - mari, âm - maûm.

Irregular verbs of the first conjugation

1. *ad-yaid* = to say, to tell, is spelt in all Semitic languages: *alif + dal + ya = uda*. In Maltese *ad* is pronounced without any guttural aspiration. There appears then no logical reason for writing it *ghad* as the Maltese books do.

The conjugation of this verb is made up partly from the root *ad* and partly from the root *ada*.

Aorist: naid, taid, yaid, naidu, taidu, yaidu.

Preterit: adt (idt), ad, adét, adna (idna), adtu (idtu), adu.

Imperative: id, idu. This form is pronounced

âid or *éyd* * by some educated maltese, who write it *ghid*. But country folk at Méliha and Musta pronounce it quite correctly *id* (*id* *lhu* = tell him)

Participles: active - *âdi*; *passive*-*mâdi* (from *ada*)

2. *âf*-*yaâf*= to know. *Aorist* and *preterit* regular

Imperative: af, afu. *Participles*—from *âraf*

3. *ha* - *yéhu* = to take. *Aorist* - regular.

Preterit: hadt, ha, hat, hadna, hadtu, hadu.

Imperative: hu, or hud; hudu, passive participle: mohùd, or muhùd or méhùd. The forms *mohùd* and *muhùd*, which are derived from the Semitic *ahad* show clearly that *ahad* is not a simple verb, as usually represented in all Semitic grammars.

4. *kél* - *yékol* = to eat.

Aorist: nékol and *nikol*; *tékol* and *tíkol*; *yékol*;

néklú and *niklú*; *téklú* and *tíklú*; *yéklú*

Preterit: kélt, kél, kélét, kélna, kéltu, kélu.

Imperative: kul, kulu. Passive Participle: mékùl.

Special note on the form "jèb"

Jèb is made up of two words: *jè* = to come, and *bi* = with. It means *to come with = to bring*

In the old books (Agius de Soldanis) one may find such constructions as *gebc sc tahdem*, which grammatically should be written *jè bek xi tahdém* and means *did you bring some work ?* (*jè* = did come, *bek* = with you, *xi* = something, *tahdém* = to work)

In Valletta one often hears now a days *jèbt xi tahdem*, which is the barbaric Algerian construction where *je + bi* is considered as a single word *jèb* = to bring. But country people say:

* *éyd* is the plural of *yed* or *yid* = hand. People say in the country: *éydi* = my hands; *min yédhú* = from his own hand, quite correctly. But the Maltese dictionaries are faithful to the erroneous forms *id* for hand and *éyd* for the imp. of *ad*; *âid* = holiday, feast.

a *jéyt bix tahdem* meaning

a *jéyt* = did you come; *bix* = with something; *tahdem* = to work;

jèi biha mi'l-âyn = I brought it from the well (= I am coming with it from the well);

ara, jèi biha mi'l-âyn;

jeyt b'xara = I have come with news = I bring news, etc.

Second class To the second class belong such derived verbs, as are considered simple verbs in semitic languages. These are:

1. all three-letter verbs with a long vowel in the middle;
2. all four and five-letter verbs, beginning with:
a short vowel
a guttural vowel
a diphthong of short vowels;
3. all verbs ending in a double consonant.

The Arabic grammar considers these verbs as simple verbs because their primitive simple forms have been forgotten.

But this does not appear to be a scientific reason for a grammar of the Maltese language, where some of the primitive simple forms have been preserved unadulterated. (*kél* and *ha* simple forms of *akal* and *ahad*)

In Arabic one might obtain indications of the primitive simple forms of verbs of this class by comparing

- 1.) the imperative forms *kul*, *mur*, *hud* with their respective shortest forms *akal*, *amar*, *ahad* and
- 2.) such verbs as
waka (to lean the back upon . .) *akk* (to be hot and windless) *kaka* (to draw back.)

wata (to level, to soft) *watt* (to creak) *tatu* (to be lower, to be depressed)

wasu (to be defiled) *asa* (to leave a thing) *sa* (to run; to purpose)

wéra (to show) *ara* (to show) *ra* (to see) etc.

Other indications to the same effect are also found:

- 1.) in the aorist of the *assimilated* verbs (*wasal* etc.)
- 2.) in the aorist of the verbs, beginning with a guttural vowel; they have in the second syllable the characteristic *kasra* of the derived verbs,
- 3.) in the aorist of the *hollow* verbs (*verbes concaves*) when they are preceded by the particles of the *jezm.*

Second conjugation.

- 1.) The fundamental form of the verbs of this class is found by suppressing the first vowel of the complementary form.

Ex: kèn-ikun — *kun*; sàr-isir — *sir*;
bèâ-ibiâ — *biâ*; habb-ihobb — *hobb*;
amar-yamar — *amar*; âmel-yâmel — *âmel*
âraf-yâraf — *âraf*; wiléd-yiled — *iléd*
waqaf-yiqaf — *iqaf*; waqâ-yaqâ — *aqâ*

2. The aorist is formed regularly from the fundamental form.
3. The preterit
 - a) Verbs, beginning with a diphthong or with a vowel, form the preterit from the shortest form.
 - b) Verbs, ending in a double consonant take the diphthong *éy* before the affix-flexion of the first and second persons. Ex: habb-habbeyt; médd-méddéyt etc.
 - c) All the other verbs form the preterit regularly from the fundamental form.

4. The imperative

- a) Verbs beginning with a diphthong, form the imperative by suppressing the diphthong.
Ex: waqaf-qaf; waqâ-qâ, etc.
- b) All the other verbs form the imperative regularly from the fundamental form.
- 5) If a new syllable is affixed to the verb, the short letter of the second syllable is dropped provided it is not followed by 2 consonants Ex: wiléd wil(e)du, wil(e)uét: but: wilédna.

The active participle.

- a) Verbs, beginning with a diphthong, form the active participle by changing the second letter of the diphthong into *é*.
The suffix *î* comes regularly in.
Ex: wiléd-wèlid; waqaf-wèqif; waqâ-wèqiâ etc.
- b) Verbs, beginning with a short or a guttural vowel, change these vowels into the corresponding long sounds. Ex: âla-âli; âmel-âmil etc.
- c) All the other verbs form the active participle regularly. Ex: qâm-qâim.

The passive participle.

- a) Verbs, beginning with a diphthong, form the passive participle: by prefixing *m* to the first letter of the diphthong, which then becomes *u*; by suppressing the second letter of the diphthong, and by taking the suffix *û* regularly. Ex: waqaf-muquûf; waqâ-muquâ; wera-muri etc.
- b) Verbs, ending in a double consonant, form the passive participle from their shortest form. Ex: âss mâsûs.

But when the first letter is a consonant, a transportation of letters takes place between the first and the second letters. Ex: *habb - mahbùb; médd—mémduâ*

- c) All the other verbs form the passive participle quite regularly from the fundamental form, but with the following *peculiarities*: the prefix *m* in verbs, beginning with a vowel, is joined directly to the vowel.

Ex: *âraf - mâruf; âlém - mâlùm* ;
the suffix *ù* does not assimilate the *i* of the three-letter verbs, which is only changed into *y*.

Ex: *bèâ-ibiâ - biâ*, passive participle *mebyûâ*; *sàb - mesyùb*; *sàh - mesyùh*; *sàr - mesyùr*; *zèd - mezyùd* etc.

Remark. The Maltese dictionaries, in mentioning the participle form *muûd*, make the mistake of considering this form as the participle of *wèéd*. This is a quite wrong derivation, the participle of *wèéd* being *mwèéd* (3rd conjugation) *Muûd* is in reality the participle of *waâd*, a form which must have been forgotten by the Maltese.

Irregularities of the second conjugation.

These are only found in the passive participle of the following verbs:

âta, êma, gèt, hàn, qâl, and jèâ, which make: *môti* (instead of *mâti*), *mômî* (= *mêmi*), *mogùt* (= *magùt*), *mohùn* (= *mahùn*), *moqùl* (= *maqùl*) *mòjuâ* (= *mejuâ*).

These irregularities are only an evidence that these verbs of the second conjugation are not *simple* verbs, the *o* or *u* after prefix *m* in the participle being characteristic of all semitic derived verbs.

Third class. To the third class belong all other derived verbs.

Derivations are made from the verb's shortest form:

- A. by repeating the simple form
- B. by doubling the middle letter
- C. by introducing new letters.

A. The repeating

This form consists of repeating the primitive three-letter form of simple verbs. Ex: bélbél, karkar, farfar, gargar etc.

B. The doubling

- a) Three-letter verbs of the first conjugation have the second letter doubled. Ex: âya - âyya
- b) Verbs, ending in a double consonant, have the first of these consonants doubled and take a euphonic *a* or *é* after it. Ex: âss - âssas, habb - habbab, médd - méddéd etc.
- c) Verbs of four or five letters, beginning with a consonant, have their third letter doubled. Ex: séwa - sewwa; rajâ - rajjâ; kisé - kissér.
- d) Verbs, of four or five letters, beginning with a vowel or a diphthong, have their first consonant doubled. Ex: amar - ammar; émén - émmén; * waqaf - waqqaf; wébes - wébbes; yasar - yassar.*

N.B. The doubling of the middle-letter gives to the verb the meaning of *to make to do* (in French = faire faire.)

C. The introducing of new letters.

1. The suffixing of letters

Long vowels à or è are introduced after the first letter. Ex: qâd - qèèd; mâr - mèèr; méra; - mèra; jéléd - jèléd; jénéb - jènéb; wiléd - wèléd etc.

* The Maltese have the forms *émmén* and *yassar*, derived from *émén* and *yasar* (arabic *asar*); but they have forgotten *émén* and *yasar*.

Remarks. Short vowels are omitted after long suffixed vowels. (*méra* - *mèra*; *jéléd* - *jèléd*; *wilé*d - *wèléd*).

Guttural *â* becomes *é* after long suffixed vowels (*qâd* - *qèéd*; *mâr* - *mèêr*).

Evasive vowels *y* or *w* †

- a) In three-letter verbs they are put after the second letter and take a euphonic *a* or *é* when followed by a consonant: Ex: *hèa* - *béyâ*; *dèa* - *déwa*; *dar* - *dawar*; *sèr* - *séyér*.
- b) In four or five-letter verbs, beginning with a consonant, *y* or *w* are introduced after the second letter. Ex: *hatél* - *hawtél*; *xélah* - *xéwlah*; *mélaq* - *méyلاق*; *mana* - *mayna*.
- c) In verbs, ending in a double consonant, *y* or *w* are introduced so, as to make a new syllable: either by repeating the first two letters of the original form, or simply interposing a euphonic *é* after the first of the doubled consonants. Ex: *qabb* - *qawqab*; *haxx* - *haxwéx*.

Consonant *n* (sometimes *m*)

- a) The consonant *n* (or *m*) is introduced at the end of the first syllable in five-letter verbs, where three consonants alternate with two short vowels. Ex: *hazar* - *hanzér*;

† I do not keep to the usual artificial divisions, adopted by arabic grammars, which consider the verb *dawar*, *séyér* etc., as redoubled forms. I do not think, that, from a logical point of view, *awa* could be considered as a redoubled *a* or *u*, and *éyé* as a redoubled *é* or *i*. Further, from the point of view of *meaning* these forms do not convey the impression of *faire faire*, but rather of intensity of movement, typical of the suffixed forms.

hédél - héndél; hédém - héndém; hebél-hen-
bél; qazah - qanzah.

- b) To verbs, ending in a doubled consonant,
n or *m* are suffixed by means of repeating
the first two letters of the verb. Ex: sarr -
samsar; qall - qanqal; déll - déndél.

N.B. The suffixes, introduced to the simple verb,
give it a general sense of intensity of ac-
tion.

2. The affixing of letters.

The letters, used as affixes for purpose of deri-
vation, are:

n Ex: qarab - qarben; jéléb - jélbén

m Ex: qatar - qatram; hésér - hésém

q Ex: térat - tértaq; fiséd - fesdaq; zérén -
[zénaq]

They are affixed to three-consonant verbs and
give them a general sense of intensity.

3. The prefixing of letters.

To simple verbs (first and second conjugation)

1. Prefix *st* † (semitic *ist*). Ex: ágéb - stájeb
haqq - sthaqq; mérr - stmérr; edén - stédén
énés - sténés.

Remarks. a) When prefixed to a verb of two syllables,
beginning with a consonant, *st* produces a transposi-
tion between the first consonant and the following
vowel.

Ex: nébah - sténbah; gana - stagna; haya - stahya.

- b) The verbs, beginning with a diphthong,

† *st=ist* is an abbreviation of *ista - yista*=to can, to be
able to (: from the root *sa - isa*=to run.)

have the vowels of the diphthong transposed.

Ex: *waqar* - *stawqar*; *yéqer* - *stéyqér*.

2. Prefix *in*. Ex: *qatâ* - *inqatâ*; *bèâ* - *inbèâ*; *bidél* - *inbidél*.

The prefix *in* gives the verb a passive or reflexive meaning.

To derived verbs (third conjugation).

Prefix *t* is the prefix of the derived verbs.

It gives a general passive meaning to the derived verb, or a sense of reciprocity.

a) prefix *t* to repeated forms (A.)
bélbél - *tbelbel*; *farfar* - *tfarfar*.

b) prefix *t* to doubled forms (B.)
faraj - *farraj* - *tfarraj*

raqq - *raqqaq* - *traqqaq*
waqaf - *waqqaf* - *twaqqaf*

c) prefix *t* to the suffixed forms (C. 1.)
féhém - *fèhém* - *tfèhém*

mèt - *méwét* - *tméwét*

habel - *hambel* - *thambél*

d) prefix *t* to the affixed forms, (C. 2.)

qarab - *qarben* - *tqarben*

fised - *fesdaq* - *tfesdaq*

4. The prefixing and suffixing of letters.

Prefix *i* before and suffix *t* after the first letter of a verb give it a passive or a reflexive meaning. Ex: *xara* - *ixtara*; *xedd* - *ixtedd*; *sa* - *ista*; *xeha* - *ixteha*; *laqâ* - *iltaqâ*; *hèj* - *ihètj*; *hâr-ihtàr*.

N.B. 1. The suffix *t* is changed into *d* when following a *d* or *z*. Ex: *dâ* - *idda*; (for *idta*); *zèd* - *izdèd* (for *iztèd*).

2. In verbs, beginning with a vowel, the *t* is joined as prefix, together with the *i*, and

is then doubled. Ex: âmel - ittâmel (= iâtmel; ad - ittd (iatd); âraf - ittâraf (= iâtraf); âzaq - ittâzaq; âzel - ittâzel; ekel - * ittekel; ehed -* ittehed; esef -* ittesef; ata -*ittata**

Extra derivation.

An extra derivation is made from the comparative form of the adjectives, by suppressing the first vowel and by prolonging the last vowel. Ex: *abyad* - *byâd* - *akbar* - *kbâr*; *hdar* - *hdâr*.

Third conjugation. All derived verbs of this class form their conjugation in the same way.

1. The fundamental form is found by suppressing the first letter of the complementary form.
2. The aorist and imperative are formed from the fundamental form. In the imperative the vowel of the last syllable is changed into *e* mute (*dawar*-*dawer*)
3. The preterit is formed from the shortest form.
4. The rules about the last letter-vowel are to be followed in all cases.
5. If a new syllable is affixed to the verb, the short letter in the last syllable falls out, if not preceded or followed by two consonants. Ex: *hâres* - *nhâr* (e) *su*, *ihâr* (e) *su*; but: *kisser* - *kisseru*.
6. The derived verbs have only one participle form, which is obtained by prefixing *m* or sometimes *mu* to the shortest form. Ex: *werrek* - *mwerrek*; *xarraf* - *mxarraf*; *xètt*-*muxètt*.

* The forms "ékél", "éhé l", "éséf", "ata" do not exist in Maltese, although "ittékel", "ittéhéd", "ittéséf", "ittata" are regular derivations of these forms.

** "ittata" = to befall, to occur, to happen, is often wrongly written "intghata" (sic!)

Remarks on the participle.

1. Derived verbs, beginning with *m* take a euphonic *e* before the prefix *m* of the participle.
Ex: mawar - emmawar, mexxah - emmexxah, meyel - emmeyel, mèri - emmèri, mèêr - emmèêr.
 2. Verbs, ending in a short vowel, change their last vowel into *i*. Ex: idda - middi, wella - mwelli, wikka - mwikki, wissa - mwissi, witta - mwitti.
 3. Verbs of the *doubled form*, ending in a short vowel, change their first short vowel into *o* if it is an *a*. Ex: halla - mholli (= mhalli), darra - mdorri (= mdarri), rabba - mrobbi, gabba - mgobbi, qalla - mqolli, galla - mgolli, qarra - mqorri, naqqa - mnoqqi, saffa - msoffi, tarra - mtorri, âbba - môbbi, âdda - môddi, âlla - môlli, gatta - mgotti, gaxxa - mgoxxi etc.
 4. In the derived verbs of the prefix *st* form, *mi* is substituted for the participial prefix *m*. Ex: stahrej - mistahrej, stâgeb - mistâgeb, stenbeh - mistenbeh etc.
- N.B. It may be mentioned that the participial prefix *mi* is perfectly natural in this form, where *st* is only a corruption of the primitive semitic *ist*.
5. In the *extra-derived form* "mo" is substituted for the prefix *m*. Ex: hyâr - mohyâr; hdâr - mohdâr; hrâr - mohrâr.
 6. The verbs *ihâr* and *ihêg*, although they do not belong to the class of *extra-derivation*, nevertheless form their participles thus: *mohâr* and *mohêg*.

Irregular verbs of the third conjugation.

1. Stenna = stena
2. itka = ittaka (from *wika*)
3. tewaḡ = weḡa (egyptian dialect)
4. ittewaḡ = itteḡa (egyptian dialect)
5. tentex = tnettex
6. lenbeb = lebbeb
7. xemnak = xennaḡ
8. sthayel = sthàl
9. *dèra - yidèra* = tèra or twera.

The sister-verb of *dèra*, *tràa*, is derived from *ra-yara* quite regularly, but is used only in connection with the particle *ka* and the corresponding affixed pronouns, forming with them one single word: tràakna, tràakñom, tràakñu (see *particles*.)

10. In *mistohbi* and *mistogsi* (participles of *stahba* and *staḡsa*) *o* stands for *a*.
11. *staḡsa* and *saḡsa* have both the same meaning to ask; *staḡsa* is regularly derived from *qasa*; but *saḡsa* is a combination of two verbs: *sa + gass* = to run and to tell = to ask.
12. *stahya* and *stha* are both from the root *h*; *stha* = to be achamed, is derived from *ha*; *stahya* = to revive, is derived from the suffixed form of *ha*—*haya*.

Forth class. To this class belong verbs, formed of two or more different words, so intimately connected by usage, that they are almost considered as one word.

1. With the preposition *bi*
 - bahrad = bi + harad (= with disturbance) =
to trifle
 - bəlgen = bi + legem (= with foam) = to foam
 - berfel = bi + refel (= with train) = to trim
 - bixel = bi + xekel (= with doubt) = to em-
broil
 - berkel = bi + rekla (= with green veget-
able) = to flower
 - bermej* = bi + remej (= with spoiling) = to
twirl between the fingers
 - berged = bi + reged (= with free pasturage)
= to become full of flees
 - berbaq = bi + rebaq (= with throwing into)
= to dissipate

2. With the preposition *fi*
 - seksef (= seqsef) = saqsa + fi
 - qartaf = qarat + fi
 - haxlef = haxal + fi
 - fixkel = fi + xekel (= bixel)

3. With the particle *ka*
 - kanfar † = ka + nafar = to reproach
 - karmas = ka + ramas (concealing) = to pro-
duce small abortive fruits
 - kardax = ka + radas (casting stones) = to
speak ill
 - kasbar = ka + asbar (to make something be-
come bitter) = to spoil
 - kaxkar = ka + xakar (tamiser) = to sift much
 - kermed † = ka + ermed (to fall into destitution)
= to blacken, to dirty
 - kerkes** = ka + rekes (reverse) = to disappoint,
to displease

* "bérmeǰ" is wrongly written "bermec"
 † "kanfar" is wrongly written "canfar."
 † "kermed" is wrongly written "germed"
 ** "kérkés" is wrongly written "gérǰes."

4. With the particle *xi*

xenxel = xi + nesel; xandar = xi + andar;
xaqleb = xi + qalab; tenfex (or denfex) = adnaf + xi
ferkex = to scrope something;
harfex = to work rudely (haraf = to bring forth)
harbex = to scratch something.

5. Several words.

zebleh = zey + beleh
xeblek = xebel + xellek
sardan = sâr + dan
sarbat = sâr + batt
qasdar = qass + dar
qarnas = qaran + as
tarbax* = tar + bi + x = to have the belly
swollen with something = to be hydroptic
qabras = alga—bi—ras
mexwar = mexa—wara
saqsa = sa + qass

In their conjugation these verbs follow the rules of the verbs of

- 1) the first conjugation, if they are like the verbs of the first class (e.g. rahal),
- 2) the second conjugation, if they are like the verbs of the second class (e.g. fâs),
- 3) the third conjugation in all other cases;

these can have only one derivation—through prefixing the letter *t*

Ex: belgen - tbelgen
haxlef - thaxlef
kasbar - tkasbar

* "tarbax" is wrongly written "tarbac". In Arabic the corresponding verb is "itrawra" (from "tara")

PASSIVE FORM.

Every active verb can be made into a passive one without using the prefixes *in* and *t* (see third conjugation), but simply by changing the original vowels of its simple form into *o* s.

The Maltese language has five verbs, which have retained both forms, the active and the passive.

- | | | | |
|----|-------|------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. | hataf | = to snatch away | hotof = |
| | | | to become empty |
| 2. | halaq | = to create | holoq = |
| | | | to be created |
| 3. | raqas | = to dance | roqos = |
| | | | to rise and to sink |
| 4. | farak | = to pick out, to husk | forok = to limp |
| 5. | âna | = to mean, to intend | ôni = |
| | | | to be agreed |

Ex: ôni li in imurru (ôni = it was agreed; li = for me; in imurru = that they should go)

Out of these five, the Maltese language has 17 passive verbs, whose original active forms have been forgotten.

1. ôjob ...to please (âjab...to wonder at)
2. ôkos ...to decline (âkas...to change, to reverse)
3. ôrok ...se gratter (ârak...to scrub)
4. ôrox ...to become lame (ârax...to raise)
5. ôtob ...to become paralytic (âtab...to be soft)
6. herom ...to be lustful (haram...to forbid, to prevent)
7. holom ...to be dreamt (halam...to dream)
8. hola ...to become sweet (hela...to be sweet)
9. hobol ...to become pregnant (habal...to conceive)

10. korob ...to be distressed (karab...to tighten)
11. korom...to be productive (karam...to overcome
in generosity)
12. kotor ...to become numerous(katar...to exceed)
- 13.
14. qorob ...s' approacher (qarab...approcher)
15. romol ...to become a widow or to become
sprinkled with sand (ramel...to sprin-
kle with sand).
16. rohos ...to become cheap(: rahas...to be tender)
17. forog ...to become empty (farag...to emptyfy)

MIXED FORMS

1. Some Maltese verbs have the active form in the preterit, and in the aorist—the passive form, although their sense is not really passive.

Ex: harej - yohroj; qâd - yoqôd.

2. Some other verbs have the passive form in the preterit and in the aorist the active form, although their sense is not active.

Ex: xôf - yixôf = to be sorry, to be repent.

3. Other verbs have the active form in the aorist and in the preterit the passive form, although their sense is not passive.

Ex: xorob - yixrob.

4. Lastly some verbs have the passive form in the aorist and the active form in the preterit although their sense is not in any way active

Ex: feraq - yofroq...to be separated.

GENDERS AND NUMBERS OF THE PARTICIPLES.

The feminine is obtained by adding a short *a* to the masculine.

The plural is obtained by adding
in (masculine) or *ét* (feminine)

The dual form is obtained by affixing
éyn to the masculine singular
téyn to the feminine singular.

Remark. Some participles of the simple verbs, by losing their primitive sense of *adjective verbal* become irregular in the plural. Thus, we have:

- a) passive participles:
maqrút, plural - mqàret etc.
- b) active participles:
séheb (sàhib), plural - ashàb**
hàkem (hàkim), plural - ahkàm, ihkàm or
ihkma.

** "ashàb" = friends, is not to be mistaken for "shàb" = cloud: (collective noun).

THE NOUN

Nouns may refer to A) actions, B) qualities, C) persons and things.

In the first case they are *verbal nouns*;
 in the second case *qualifying nouns*;
 in the third *substantive nouns*.

A. Verbal nouns.

Verbal nouns are formed from the verb's shortest form.

I. The following take an additional *y* or *w* to the verb's shortest form.

1. verbs of two letters of the first conjugation,
2. verbs of three letters of the first and second conjugations, beginning with a consonant.

Ex: ât (to shout)	—âyt	
âj (to turn aside)	—awj	
âm (to swim)	—âwm	
dâa	—dâwa	
râa	—râya	
nâa	—nâya	
bêa	—beyâ	
sâm	—sawm	
nâm	—nawm	
sât	—sawt	
sâq	—xawq	
xèk	—xewk	
tâb	—tayb	
tâf	—tayf	
mèd	—meyd	(wrongly written with <i>z</i> .)
xèd	—xeyd	
xèl	—xeyl	
jèz	—jeyz	etc.

II. The following change the vowels of their shortest form:

1. Verbs of three letters, of the first and second conjugations, beginning with a vowel.
2. Verbs of four letters of the first conjugation.
3. Verbs of four letters of the second conjugation: those beginning with a diphthong, and those ending in a double consonant.

Ex: âya êya
 êwa âwi

 êra îra
 âta ôti
 âla ôli
 âdd ôdd
 âss ôss
 êll îll

hela helu
beda {bidi
 {bidu
lewa liwi
tewa tiwi
kewa kiwi
mexa mixi
mela mili
qara qari
sewa siwi
haya hayi

wasâ wisâ
weta witi
wera wiri

weêd	wêda	(with transposed vowels, from <i>waêd</i>)
waqâ	uqiâ	(with transposed vowels from <i>wiqâ</i>)
wajâ	ujiâ	(with transposed vowels from <i>wijâ</i>)
fejj	fijj	
habb	hobb	
baxx	bexx	
jedd	jidd	
gamm	gomm	
berr	barr	
senn	sinn	

III. The following drop the last vowel of their shortest form

1. Verbs of four letters of the second conjugation, beginning with a vowel.
2. Verbs of five letters of the second conjugation, beginning with a dephthong.
3. Verbs of five letters of the first conjugation, whose vowels are: a - a ; i - e ; o - o.

Ex: âtex	âtx	—	darab	darb
êrek	êrk	—	dahak	dahk
âraq	ârq	—	marad	mard
âkes	âks	—	farad	fard
âlef	âlf	—	talab	talb
âjel	âjl	—	fasad	fasd
âjen	âjn	—	qasam	qasm
âmel	âml	—		
amar	amr	—	xorob-xorb	
		—	holom-holm	
		—	qorob-qorb	
		—	hodon-hodn	

wiled	wild	—	kiser - kiser and ksir (trans-
wirek	wirk	—	position of letters)
wiret	wirt	—	bidel - bidl - bdil
wisaq	wisk	—	fised - fisd - fsid
widen	widn	—	kiseb - kisb - ksib
wizen	wizn	—	fired - fird - frid
wahad	wahd	—	rifes - rifs - rfis
waq f	waqf	—	firex - firx - fix
wasal	wasl	—	hireq - hirq

IV. Verbs of five letters of the first conjugation, whose vowels are *a - é; é - e; é - a*, drop the first vowel of their shortest form and change the last one.

Ex: dahel - dhul	fejar - fjir
harej - hruj	fetah - ftuh
qafel - qfil	fetaq - ftuq
	feraq - fruq
xegel - xgol	

Some verbs of this class form the verbal noun by dropping their second vowel, like the verbs of the preceding class.

Ex: halef - half
halej - halj

V. The following verbs of the third conjugation take prefix *l** before the first letter and a long *i*** before the last letter.

1. repeated verbs
2. doubled verbs (they have the doubled letter omitted)

* *l* to vowels; *la*—*ta* guttural consonants; *le* to all other consonants. The first short vowel is dropped after the prefixes *la* and *le*.

** *i* assimilates the short vowel, which precedes it.

3. suffixed verbs

4. affixed verbs

Ex: keskes - tkeskis	qarrab - taqrib
	habbab - tahbib
fèhem - tfèhim	kattar - taktir
hendem - thëndim	qattâ - taqtlâ
hawtel - thawtil	tallâ - tatllâ
kewkeb - tkewkib	sewwa - teswia
	heyya - tehyia
qarben - tqarbin	qawam - taqwim
	âwad - tâwid
	tawal - tetwîl
	hamma - tahmia

VI. Verbs of the third and fourth conjugations, having *t* as prefix, form the verbal noun by suffixing a long *i*** to the last letter.

Ex: tferfer - tferfir	tfehhem - tfehhim
tqabras - tqabris	tkabbar - tkabbir

VII. Verbs of the third conjugation, having *st*, *in* and *i-t* as prefixes form the verbal noun by suffixing long *i*, *è* or *à* to the last letter.

Ex: stâjeb - stâjib	inqasar - noqsâr
	(corrupted from <i>inqsâr</i>)

stahraj - stahrij	intebah - intbih
stenbeh - stenbih	iftehem - ftehim (iftehim)
stagdar - stagdir	intebaq - intbèq
stenna - stennia	

Remarks. 1. The verbal noun in some cases occurs in two forms:

âql } from âqal;	ârf } from âraf
ôql } from âras;	êrf } from âraf
ârs } from âras;	âqd } from âqad
ôrs } from âras;	ôqd } from âqad
âdr (âdra) } from âder	
ôdr (môdria) }	

** *i* assimilates the short vowel, which precedes it.

2. Three verbal nouns are irregular in the Maltese language, although their regular forms are sometimes used:

fis for *féys*. Ex: *min aktar fis!* = with greater hurry
féysa! = quick!

qim for *qéym*

ùra = the state of being behind (not to be mistaken for the adverb *warà* = behind).

The noun of unity. The verbal noun expresses the mere action, state or being of the verb, and is unaffected by subject, object and time.

But should it express number or kind, it is substituted by the noun of unity, which is formed by affixing *a* to the verbal noun.

The dual and the plural are then formed regularly: the dual—by addition of *téym*, and the plural—by changing *a* into *èt*.

Ex: <i>âyt</i>	(crying)	<i>âyta</i>	(a cry)
<i>îll</i>		<i>îlla</i>	
<i>ôdd</i>		<i>ôdda</i>	
<i>âjl</i>		<i>âjla</i>	
<i>darb</i>		<i>darba</i>	
<i>fijj</i>		<i>fijja</i>	
<i>hobb</i>		<i>hobba</i>	
<i>sinn</i>		<i>sinna</i>	
<i>fird</i>		<i>firda</i>	
<i>fisd</i>		<i>fisda</i>	
<i>kisb</i>		<i>kisba</i>	
<i>hirq</i>		<i>hirqa</i>	
<i>xorb</i>		<i>xorba</i>	
<i>holm</i>		<i>holma</i>	
<i>taqrib</i>		<i>taqriba</i>	etc.

Remarks. 1. Verbs of five letters of the first conjugation, whose vowels are: *a - é; é - a, é - e*, form the noun of unity from the shortest form by dropping the second vowel

Ex: *dahel - dahla*

harej - harja

fetah - fetha

2. Verbs of the third conjugation, ending in a double consonant form the noun of unity from the shortest form and not from the verbal noun.

Ex: *stmerr - stmerra* (instead of *stemràra*)

ixtarr - ixtarra (instead of *ixtràra*)

3. Some three-consonant verbs of the first and second conjugations have an independent form for the noun of unity: they drop their first vowel and take a long *à* or *è* before the last consonant.

Ex: *hnèna* = mercy, from *hann* = to be merciful,
to pity

hràfa = fable, from *haréf* = to dote, to talk
nonsense

qbèla = rent from *qabél* = to receive, to accept

The plural of these nouns is formed by dropping the last short vowel and suffixing *i* before the last consonant.

Ex: *hnèna - hnèin; hràfa - hràif;*

qbèla - qbèil etc.

B. Qualifying nouns.

The noun of quality is generally formed from the neuter verbs and takes in Maltese the following forms:

I. Forms resembling the active participle of the simple verbs

1. **Form in *ì*.** This form is obtained from the active participle by changing the va-

lue of the vowels. Thus the long *à* becomes short, and the short *i* becomes long.

Ex: *nàdif* - *nadif*; *màrid* - *marid*; *àmil* - *amil*.

2. **Form in *ù*.** This form is obtained by substituting a long *ù* or *ò* to the second vowel of the shortest form.*

Ex: *âjaz* - *âjùs*; *rasal* - *rasùl*; *fiséd* - *fisùd*

3. **Form with a double consonant.** This form is obtained by doubling the consonant before *i* or *ù* in the preceding forms. This doubling adds power to the noun. Thus *fisùd* = spoiled and *fissùd* = very spoiled; *èlùl* = sharp and *èllul* = very sharp; *zàmìt* = haughty and *zammùt* = very haughty; *qàsìs* = herdsman and *qassùs* = good herdsman = priest.

Remarks. 1. Verbs, ending in a double consonant take a long *i* before the last consonant of the shortest form. Ex: *habb* - *habib*; *tabb* - *tabib*; *âzz* - *âziz*.

2. Verbs, beginning with a diphthong omit the second letter of the diphthong and take the long *i* or *ù* in a regular manner. Ex: *wiled* - *ulid*; *wizèn* - *uzin*; *waqâ* - *uqiâ*; *wajâ* - *ujiâ*; *wahad* - *uhid*.

3. Verbs, ending in a vowel, have no qualifying nouns in Maltese: the active participle is used instead.

4. The difference between the qualifying noun of the form *nadif*, *marid*, etc. and the verbal

* *Adòn* from the punic salutation *hew'adòni* is a regular noun of quality, formed according to the above rules from *aden* (widen) = *to hear*, and means *hearer*; *adòni* = *my hearer*; *hew'adòni* = *be happy my hearer!* The Hebraic *Adonài* is a corruption of the Arabic *adòni* or *adùni*.

noun of the form *nfiħ*, *nħir*, *nfiđ*, *shiq* etc., is in vowel *a* which is omitted in the Maltese verbal noun. This *a* should be invariably written in qualifying nouns, even when not always distinctly pronounced: *kabir* (kbir) *sabih* (shih) *sagir* (sgir) etc.

The feminine is obtained by adding *a* to the masculine.

The feminine plural and dual are obtained regularly, by changing *a* into *et* and by adding *téyn*.

The masculin plural.

1. In qualifying nouns with long *ı*, the masculine plural is obtained by transposing the vowels

Ex: *kabir* - *kibàr*; *nadif* - *nidàf*.

In pronouncing one does not hear the short *i* of this plural form. Talking quickly people always say: *kbàr*, *ndàf*...

2. In qualifying nouns with long *ı* the masculine plural is generally obtained by affixing *in* to the singular

Ex: *rasul* - *rasulin* (arabic *rosol*)

ájuz - *ájuzin* (arabic *ójoz*)

3. In qualifying nouns with double consonant, the masculine plural is obtained by affixing *in* to the singular.

Ex: *qassis* - *qassisin*.

Remarks. 1. The qualifying noun, derived from verbs, beginning with a diphthong, form the masculine plural by changing the long *i* into a long *è*. Ex: *ulid-uled*.

2. When connected with the guttural consonant *h* the short vowel *i* of the masculine plural is often omitted.

Ex: *habib - hbàb* (arabic *ahbàb*)

3. Some qualifying nouns, having lost their primitive qualifying sense, have also a different masculine plural:

a) nouns having a long *i* (*tabib, qabil*) take an *o* after the first letter if it is a consonant, or change the first letter into *o* if it is a vowel; the long *i* is then dropped and a long *à* is affixed to the last letter.

Ex: *tabib - tobba; qabil-qobla* (often transformed into *ogbla*); *amir - omra*;

b) nouns, having a long *ù* form the masculine plural by transposing the *ù* from the end to the beginning of the word; it is changed into *w* before the vowel that follows, which then becomes *è* or *à*. A euphonic *a* takes the place of *ù* at the end.

Ex: *nadùr - nwèder; hanùt - hwènet.*

4. Some qualifying nouns having both the meaning of an adjective and that of a substantive have two plural forms for the masculine gender:

Ex: *nadif* $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{nidàf (ndàf);} \\ \text{and} \\ \text{nodfà} \end{array} \right.$ *qarib* $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{qiràb (qràb)} \\ \text{and} \\ \text{qorbà} \end{array} \right.$

II. An independent form of the qualifying noun is obtained by affixing *èn* or *àn* to the verbal noun.

Ex. férah - férh = férhàn
âtéx - âtx = âtxèn
haya - hayi = hayyèn

The feminine is formed by adding *a*. Ex: férhàna

The plural and the dual forms are regular:

in and *eyn* for the masculine
èt and *téyn* for the feminine.

Remark. Some nouns of this form, having lost their primitive meaning as adjectives, are irregular in the plural; they drop the first short vowel, transpose the long *à* with the consonant which precedes it, and take a euphonic *i* or *e* in place of the transposed *à*.

Ex: Sultàn - slàtin; sikràn - skarin.

The noun of superiority (comparative) is formed from the verb's shortest form by prefixing *a* (or *i*) and omitting the vowel after the first consonant in those verbs, which begin with a consonant; by prefixing *è* and changing the first vowel in those beginning with a vowel.

Ex: kabar { akbar; gana - agna
 { ikbar;
âla - ééla; âzz - éézez

Feminine and plural.

1. In five-letter words the feminine is formed from the masculine comparative by means of the alternation of the vowels with the consonants which follow.

Ex: akbar - kabrà; andaf - nadfà; amrad - mardà.

The plural for both genders is obtained from the feminine by changing the first vowel into *o* and dropping the last vowel.

Ex. *kabra* - *kobr* (or *kobor*) *marda* - *mord*.

2. In the case of words, ending in *a*, the feminine is obtained from the masculine by means of the alternation of the first vowel with the consonant which follows; *y* is then suffixed to the last vowel.

Ex: *agna* - *ganya*; *agla* - *galia*.

The plural for both genders is obtained by changing the first vowel of the masculine comparative form into *o*.

Ex: *agna* - *ogna*; *agla* *ogla*.

3. In the case of words, beginning with two vowels, and ending in a vowel, the feminine is obtained from the masculine by means of changing the first two vowels into *o* and by suffixing *y* to the last vowel.

Ex: *ôlya* (from *éêla*)

The plural for both both genders is formed by omitting the *y* of the feminine singular comparative.

Ex: *ôlya* - *ôla*

4. In the case of words, beginning with two vowels and ending in a consonant, the feminine is obtained from the masculine comparative by changing the first two vowels into *o* and affixing *â*; should there be a vowel before the last consonant it is omitted.

Ex: *éêzer* - *ôzzâ* (from *ôz(a)za*).

The plural for both genders is obtained from the feminine by suffixing a short *o* to the last consonant and dropping the last vowel:

Ex: *ôzza* - *ôzoz*

Remarks 1. In three-letter verbs having a long vowel, the noun of superiority is formed from the verbal noun.

Ex: *hâr* - *hayr* = *ahyar*...

2. Some nouns of quality have the form of the noun of superiority without having its meaning.

Ex: *abyad*; *ahdar*...

3. Three adjectives have irregular nouns of superiority:

ohxon (instead of *ahxon*)
orhos (instead of *arhas*)
ohla (instead of *ahla*)

Of these, *ohxon* has two plural forms: *hoxon* and *hoxnin*.

Mistake. Some Maltese dictionaries consider such regular plural forms as *ogna*, *ogla*, *èëla* as varieties of the singular forms *agna*, *agla*, *èëla* (sic!)

At the same time they do not give any other form for their plural.

Such an error can only be due to an insufficient knowledge of the language and its grammar.

C. Substantive nouns.

I. **Nouns of profession** (nom de métier) are formed from the verbs shortest form by doubling the middle letter,—if it is a consonant or an evasive vowel,—and adding a long *à* or *è*;

the first vowel is *a* if the long vowel is *à*;
and it is *é* if the long vowel is *è*.

Ex: kisér		kassàr	
zibél	—to manure;	zèbbèl	—dustman
habaz	—to make bread;	habbaz	—baker
âxaq	—to love;	âxxàq	—lover
naxar	—to saw;	naxxàr	—sawyer
bazâ	—to fear;	bézzèâ	—fearful

Remarks 1. Verbs, ending in a short vowel, change this vowel into *y*.

Ex: séwa - séwwèy; néda - neddèy; béna - bennèy.

2. Verbs, of three letters whose second letter is a long vowel, do not double this vowel, but change it into *éyyè* or *awwà*.

Ex: bèâ - béyyèâ; qàs - qawwàs.

3. Verbs, whose second letter is a guttural vowel do not double this letter, but follow it by a long *à* or *è*.

Ex: dâa - dâây; nâl - nââl; nâs - nââs.

The feminine is formed by adding *a* to the masculine.

The plural and dual forms are formed regularly for the feminine by changing *a* into *èt* and *atèyn*, for the masculine by adding *in* and *éyn*.

II. **Nouns of places** are formed from both transitive and intransitive verbs by prefixing *ma* to the verb's shortest form; the next short vowel is dropped.

Ex: lata (to take refuge) Malta; talab-matlab; darab madrab; jara - majra; dahal - madhal.

Verbs, whose second letter is a long vowel, verbs, beginning with a vowel and verbs, ending in a double consonant, prefix *m* instead of *ma*.

Ex: kèn - mkèn; jarr - mjarr.

A short *a* is sometimes affixed without any special meaning.

Ex: nadar—*mandar* and *mandra*.

III. **Nouns of instruments** have three forms in Maltese:

1. The first form is obtained by prefixing *mo* to the first and suffixing long *à* or *è* to the last letter; the first short vowel after the prefix is dropped.

Ex: fètah - moftèh; sébah - mosbèh; herat - moh-rèt; harr - mohrâr; tarab - motràb; samar - mo-smâr.

2. The second form is obtained by prefixing *mi*; the short vowel after the prefix is then dropped.

Ex: téraq - mitraq; rifés - mirfés; nizél - minzél; dinéb - midnéb.

3. The third form constitutes nouns of unity, which are obtained from the plural form of these nouns by the addition of an *a*; the last vowel is dropped and the first long vowel changed into a short one.

Ex: migraf pl. mgàraf - *mgarfa* (spoon) mitraq pl. mtèraq - *mtèrqa* (hammer).

Remark. In ordinary language nouns of instruments are sometimes used for nouns of places and vice versa.

Ex: manzil - minzél; madhal - midhal; majra - mijra; mafrad - mifrad etc.

The plural for both nouns of places and nouns of instruments is formed by the transposition of letters: the first vowel takes the place of the consonant, which follows and becomes long *à* or *è*; the last vowel becomes short.

Ex: mosbèh - msèbeh (or msèbah) mijmâ - mjêmâ
moftèh - mfèteh (or mfètah) mitraq- mtèraq
mohrèt - mhàrét mirfès- mréfès
mandar - mnàdar

Remarks 1. Some nouns, which stand for persons acting instrumentally in the production of certain effects, have irregular plurals.

Ex: midnèb = instrumental in sinning = sinner;
pl. midnebin (instead of mdèneb);
misir* = instrumental in generating = father;
pl. misiriyèt etc.

2. Some words have the meaning of nouns of places although they have the form of the "independent" noun of unity.

Some of these nouns keep the final *a* of the noun of unity; others drop it.

Ex: kitèb = to write

ktèb = a place for writing = book;

xamar = to tuck up clothes

xmàra = a place where the clothes are tucked up before crossing = river. etc.

The forms with the final *a* have the plural formed by dropping this letter and suffixing *i* before the last consonant.

Ex: xmàra - xmàir.

* Country folk pronounce sometimes *misèr* instead of *misir*.

The forms without the final *a* form their plural as those qualifying nouns in *ì*, having the meaning of substantives.

Ex: ktèb - kotba; jnèn - jonna.

3. Some words, which in reality are participles take the form of nouns of instruments.

Ex: midyèn = indebted; midyèq = narrowed, grieved;
midlèl = delicate; midwàl = illuminated

These nouns generally form their plural like all participles; their feminine is formed in accordance with the rules for participles.

N.B. miskin = pauper, has two plural forms:
msèken (regular plural for six-letter nouns) and
miskinin (regular plural form for participles:)

4. Some words which in reality are verbal nouns have the form of nouns of instruments.

Their plural is like the regular plural of nouns of instruments.

Ex: mijlès = a sitting (sitting of the court, sitting of the parliament), plural—mjèles.

5. Nouns of places derived from verbs, ending in *a*, form their plural by the transposition of letters: the first vowel takes the place of the preceding consonant and becomes long *à* or *è*; the last vowel becomes *i*.

Ex: rasa = to lay at anchor;
marsa = anchorage, port, pl. mràsi.
jara = to run, to happen;
majra = place of running, mouth of a river,
pl. mjàri.
lata = to shelter;
malta = place of shelter; pl. mlèti or mlàti.

6. Nouns resembling nouns of places are formed from the *verbal noun* (and not from the shortest form) by prefixing *m* or *ma* and affixing *â*, but have the sense of nouns of unity.

Ex: âda (âdda) = to pass, ôdi = passing, môdia = a passing; gafér = to forgive, gafr = forgiving, magfra = forgiveness, pardon; âder = to excuse, ôdr = excusing, môdra and môdriya = an excuse.

These form their plural by changing the last letter *a* into *êt*.

- IV. **Nouns of time.** The only noun of time in Maltese is *milêd* = time of birth, from the verb *wiled*.

- V. **Independent nouns**, although derived from the same roots as the verb, have meanings independent from those of their corresponding verbs.

1. Two-letter words. They have special plurals.

mâ—	{ mawêt; miyêt;	âr (shame)	{ âwra âwrêt
hu ah	} ahuâ		

2. Three-letter words without a long vowel.

They have likewise special plurals.

omm - ommèt	âdu -	{ âdûwa âdêwa
oht - ahwât		
ras - ryûs		
yum - iyèm	ibn or bèn	{ ibni (arabic ibnà) bni
dua - duyèt		
yid or yéd (=hand), dual - yidéyn; pl. - éyd.		

(see pages 31 and 32*)

3. Three-letter words, whose second letter is a long vowel, form their plural by changing the long vowel into *ià* (*iè*) or *uà* (*uè*).

bìr - biàr bèb - buèb tùr - tuàr
ââr - âyâr rih - rièh rùh - ruèh
dàr - diàr

Some nouns of this class simply affix *èn* in the plural and change their long vowel into a short *i*.

Ex: nàr - nìrèn; jàr - jìrèn; fàr - fìrèn.

4. Four-letter words, beginning with and ending in a consonant, form the plural by suffixing a long *è*/or *à* to the last letter, the first short vowel being dropped.

Ex: bent - bnèt
sinn - snèn

qalb - qlùb

5. Four-letter words, beginning with a vowel and ending in a consonant, change their last vowel into a long *ù* in the plural.

Ex: âsar - âsùr; ômor - ômùr; ônoq - ônùq.

6. Four - letter words, whose second letter is a long vowel and whose last letter is a short *a*, form their plural by changing: the long vowel into *wà* or *wè*, and the last vowel into *i*.

Sometimes they only take an additional *l*.

Ex: tèqa - twèqi and tèqàt
nèqa - nwèqi
hàra - hàràt

Remark: hàja *makes* hwèij (instead of hwèji).

7. Four-letter words with a diphthong in the middle transpose, in the plural, the vowels of the diphthong, changing the last one into a long corresponding vowel or into *ù*.

Ex: keyl - kyèl mewt - mwèt
keyd - kyèd beyt - byùt
qaws- qwàs hayt- hyùt
dawr- dwàr séyf - syùf

Remark: leyl makes lyèli; xawn makes xwèn and xini; * qaws makes qvàs and qisi.

8. Four-letter nouns, beginning with a diphthong, form the plural by dropping the second letter of the diphthong and suffixing a long vowel to the last letter.

Ex: wild - ulèd; wjrh - ujèh; wirk - urèk or urùk.

9. Four-letter words ending in *i* take the affix *in* in plural.

Ex: nabi - nabiin. ‡

10. Four or five-letter words with a long vowel before the last letter form their plural by changing this vowel.

Ex: hmàr - hmir; harùf - hrèf.

They have special plural forms, when the long vowel is *è*.

Ex: lsèn - ilsna; zmèn - izmna and zméniyèt.

* The Maltese dictionaries consider *xini* as a singular form. If *xini* were really a singular form, the meaning of the locality *mjarr xini* would become illogical: *landing place of a boat*, whereas it has been always known to be the landing place of boats.

‡ The arabic plural form for *nabi* has been kept in *gàr il-èmbi*=grot of the prophets (sometimes pronounced *gar il-enbya*)

11. Five-letter words (three consonants alternating with two short vowels) form the plural by dropping the first vowel and changing the last vowel into a long one.

Ex. rajel - rjâl; rijel - rjêl; dahar - dhûr.

Besides this regular form, some nouns of this class have also another plural form, which is obtained by prefixing *o* or *i* and affixing *a* to the consonants of the noun. These are:

habar	-	hbâr or ahbâr and ohbra
hatar	-	htâr and ohtra
qamar	-	qmâr and oqmra
qosom	(sometimes <i>qasam</i>)	- qsâm and oqsma
qofol	-	qfâl and oqfla
qabar	-	qbûr and oqbra
bahar	-	bhâr or bhûr and ibhra
satal	-	stâl or stûl and istla
fahal	-	fhûl and ifhla
saqaf	-	sqût and isqfa
jemel	-	jmêl and ijmla
hemel	-	hmêl and ihmla
kefen	-	kfên and ikfna
seger	-	sqêr and isqra

12. Five-letter nouns, the second letter of which is a long vowel, form the plural by taking *w* before the long vowel.

Ex: zêmel - zwêmel
xêreb - xwêreb
hâtem - hwâtem

Should such a noun end into a short *a*, this letter is omitted in the plural and a euphonic *e* is suffixed to the last consonant.

Ex: qâbla - qwêbel.

13. Six-letter nouns, having a long vowel before the last consonant, transfer, in the plural, the accent from the last syllable to the first, and transpose the first vowel with the consonant which follows.

Ex: sendúq - snèdaq hannùs - hnènes
 hartùm - hràtem barmil - bràmel
 fardàl - fràdal sikkin - skèken

14. Independent nouns, ending in a long *à* generally take the affixes *wèt* or *yèt* in the plural.

Ex: sémà - smawèt; mà $\begin{cases} mawèt \\ mayèt, miyèt \end{cases}$

15. Independent nouns ending in a short *a* form their plural by changing this *a* into *èt* in all cases, except those mentioned in number 6.

Ex: jébla - jéblèt
 harifa - harifèt

Irregular plurals.

- | | | | |
|--|--|-------------------|--|
| 1. xawn | $\begin{cases} xini \\ xwèn \end{cases}$ | 2. qaws | $\begin{cases} qisì \\ qwàs \end{cases}$ |
| 3. hàja - hwèij | | 4. ôdda - ôdod** | |
| 5. leyl - lyèli | | 6. qolla - qlèl † | |
| 7. dréà, dual - dirâyn, plural - idrà. | | | |

Mistakes. The Maltese dictionaries give the word *dwèb* as the plural of *debba*. *Dwèb* is the plural of *dib* = wolf; the plural of *debba* = beast of burden, is *debbèt*.

They also give *snèn* as the plural of *sinna*. *Snèn* = teeth, is the plural of *sinn* = tooth; the plural of *sinna* = one tooth, is *sinnèt*.

** *ôdod*, plural of *ôdda*, is not to be mistaken for *édàd*, which is the plural of *édà* (number).

† *qlèl*—the plural of *qolla* is not to be mistaken for *qlàl* (or *qilàl*), the plural of *qalil* = destitute, small.

VI. Relative noun.

Relative nouns are formed from any noun or participle by affixing *y* or *iy* after depriving it of the *a*—feminine termination, and the signs of the dual and plural forms, when present.

Ex: misthoqq — misthoqqiy (wrongly written without *y*)

mistohbi — mistohbiy

misthi — misthiy

mistoqsi — mistoqsiy

xwèn — xwèniy

kbúr — kburiy

hrùx — hruxiy

barràn — barràniy

barr — barriy

qalbèn — qalbèniy

Malta — Maltiy etc.

The feminine and the plurals are regular.

Remarks. 1. The feminine singular forms: mistoqsya, qlubya, etc., have two meanings: that of the feminine singular of mistoqsiy, qlubiy etc., and that of an independent abstracted noun, which, as such, can have no plural.

2. The feminine plural of the relative noun is used for the plural of nouns of action, which, as such, can have no plural.

Ex: xgoliyèt (xgoliy), hsèbiyèt (hsèbiy) etc.

3. Maltese often use the feminine plural of the relative noun for the plural of its corresponding noun: *zmeniyèt* (from *zmeniy*) instead of *ismna* (from *zmèn*), *nhàr* - *nhariyèt*, *dlàm*-*dlaniyèt* (for *nhúr*, *dlùm*).

VII. Nouns of quantity or collective nouns have four forms in Maltese.

1. One implies a multitude and has no singular
Ex: nisà ; dahlét, * mnèher, ** faldèt *** (corrupted into faldetta) etc.

2. The other—implies a multitude and forms the singular by affixing *a*.

Ex: nahal - nahla; toffèh - toffèha

3. A third form is made up from nouns of profession by affixing *a* to the masculine singular:

Ex: masc. s. haddèm (pl. haddèmin)

collective noun haddèma (= f. s. of haddèm)

masc. s. bennèy (pl. bennèyin)

collective noun bennèya (= f. s. of bennèy)

4. The fourth form is obtained from relative nouns by changing the final *y* into a short *a*.

Ex: bahria†-sailors, (from bahriy - bahriyin)

qâqia†*-ravens (from qâqiy - qâqiyin)

hamria = red faced (from hamriy-hamriyin) etc.

* *dahlèt* with a short *e* and the accent on the first syllable is not to be mistaken for *dihlèt* with a long *è* and the accent on the second syllable. *Dahlèt*=shallow water (*dahlèt ix-xilef*); *dahlèt*=entrances (plural of *dahla*).

** *mnèher*=nostrils (nose), is the plural of *minhar*=instrument for snoring, from the verb *nahar-yonhor*, to snore. *Minhar* has been forgotten.

*** *faldèt* is the plural of *falda*=a loose garment with folded pleats (from the Arabic verb *falad*=to fold). The word, which town people use now instead of old *faldèt*, is *ghonella* (corruption of the Italian *gonnèlla*=skirt).

† *bahria*—collective noun of *bahriy* is not to be mistaken for *bahriya* which is the feminine of *bahriy*.

†* *qâqia* has been preserved as surname of one of the old Maltese families, whereas *qâqiy* has been entirely forgotten. *Qâqia*=ravens, is not to be mistaken for *kâka* (= *kâk*)=cake.

Remark. Amongst the collective nouns one may range also the feminine singular of *ahmar* = red, when this adjective is used as an independent noun and takes the article. *Il hamra* has then the meaning of *foreigners in comparison with the semits*, because *the non semits are fair (red) faced* (in opposition to the semits, who are dark faced)

There are still some more adjectives, the feminine singular forms of which must have had independent meanings in by gone days.

As an example one may quote *wèd is-sewda* or *hajar is-sewda*; these names cannot be translated as *the black valley* or *the black stone* which would have been *il-wèd is-sewda* or *il-hajar is-sewda*. They can neither be translated as *black valley* or *black stone*, which would have been *wèd sewda*, *hajar sewda*.

With our still very poor knowledge of the past we can only try to translate these names as *valley of the black* and *stone of the black*, both constructions, having at least the advantage of a grammatically correct translation.

The numerals.

The cardinal numbers from 3 to 10 govern the plural of the objects numbered.

The ordinal numbers are formed in the same way as the active participle for simple verbs and agree in gender with the noun.

Multiplicative numerals—(single, double, triple etc.) are formed from participles of the corresponding *doubled* verb.

The fractions are formed from the corresponding ordinal forms by changing the first vowel into *u* or *o* and dropping the *i* when present.

Special forms exist for: *one, first, single, last, half.*

<i>Cardinal</i>	<i>Ordinal</i>	<i>Multiplicative</i>	<i>Fractions</i>
1. wihad	éwwél (the first = masc. 'l-éwwél femin. 'l-úla pl. { 'l-ulin 'l-ulèt)	mfarrad (sin- gle)	
2. tnéyn	tèni	mtenni (dou- ble)	<i>nusf</i> or <i>nofs</i> (half)
3. tlèta	tèlit	mtellet (triple)	<i>tolt</i> or <i>tult</i> $\frac{1}{3}$
4. érbâa	râbiâ (not to be mis- taken for <i>rabâ</i> = ground, soil land)	mrabbâ (qua- druple)	<i>rubâ</i> $\frac{1}{4}$ etc.
5. hamsa	hâmis	mhammes	
6. sitta	sètt (= sètít)	msettes	
7. sébâa	sèbiâ, some- times sèbâ	msebbâ	
8. tménia	tèmen (= tè- min)	mtemmen	
9. tisâa	tèsâ (= tèsîâ)	etc.	
10. âxra	âxer (= âxir) last = ahhar N. B. The last = 'l-ahhar; not to be mistaken for yèhor-ohra ohrayn = other		

Diminutives.

Diminutives can be formed from every noun or particle (in Arabic even from verbs.)

The diminutive is formed:

1. by suffixing a short *u* to the first letter, if the word begins with a consonant (this *u* is seldom pronounced in Maltese), or by changing the first letter into *u* if the word begins with a vowel;
2. by dropping the second letter, if it is a short vowel.
3. by suffixing *ay* or *éy* to the second letter, if it is a consonant, or by changing it into *ay* or *éy* if it is a long, guttural or evasive vowel; a euphonic *á* is affixed when required.

Ex: tifel — tufayel = tfayel
tiffa — tufayla = tfayla
tfál — tufayal = tfayal
rahal — ruhayal = rhayal
hanex — huneyex = hneyex
mandar — munaydar = mnaydar
mandra — munaydra = mnaydra
âyn — ûayn = ûayna
dâr — duayr = duayra
ismar — usmayar
wiri (verbal noun) — uréy
hdà (preposition) — hdéy etc.

Remarks. 1. Qualifying nouns in *i* or *ù* form their diminutives in a regular manner; they only change the long *i* into *a* and the long *ù* into *e*.

Ex: katir — kutayar
sagir — sugayar = sgayar (wrongly written
sgayar)
shùn — suhayen = shayen

2. Plural forms in *ài* or *èi* (like *xmàir* *hnèin*, *hràif* etc.) form their diminutives in a regular manner; they only drop their *à* or *è*.

Ex: *xmàir* — *xmayir*
hràif — *hrayif* etc.

Mistakes. In the Maltese dictionaries one comes across mistakes in analysing such forms as *hràif*, *hrayef*, *hrayif*; *xmàir*, *xmayar*; *zhayra*, *sgayra* etc.

Grammatically

- a) *hràif* — is the plural of *hràfa*
hrayef — is the diminutive of *harùf*
hreyef — is the diminutive of *hrèf*
hrayif — is the diminutive of *hràif*
- b) *xmàir* — is the plural of *xmàra*
xmayir — is the diminutive of *xmàir*
xmayar — is the diminutive of *xamir* which means in Maltese *expeditious*.
- c) *zhayra* is the diminutive of *zahra* = small flower
- d) *sgayra* — is the feminine of *sgayar*, which is the diminutive of *sagir* = small (= *sàgir*)
sàgir or *sagir* = small
- e) *zayar* — is a verb = to pay calls, to visit (derived form from *zàr* = to pay calls)
zàir — is the act. part. of *zàr*.

CASES.

The cases exist in the Maltese language only in some names:

nom. *bu bakra* = father of a vergin; *bu hajar* = father of stones and all Maltese names, beginning with *bu* = *nom.* of *ab* = father

gen. *bâlbi* = father's God or father's land

These must have been imported by the Saracens, declensions being unknown in the primitive semitic language. Thus *bu bakra* and all the Maltese names beginning with *bu* (nominative of *ab* = father) are distinctly of Mahometan origin. *Bâlbi*—a family name, is believed to be of Spanish (moorish) origin.

Remark: *hiya* = *my brother* (not to be mistaken for *hia* = she) cannot be considered as a genitive, the Maltese using *hiya* in all cases for *huya*, *hiya* and *haya*.

SEMITIC ROOTS.

Semitic roots are made up:

- a.) of vowels only
- b.) of consonants only.

The following are Maltese words, derived from vowel-roots:

root a:

1. *a* = interrogative particle
2. *aw* (=haw) }
awn (=hawn) } here
awnèk (=hawnek) }

3. *awa* = to become populous

mawi, *mawly* = *peuplé*; *mawlya* = *peuplée*"

4. *aya* = to come on
5. *âya* = to be wearied
6. *ya* = exclamation (*ya hasra* !)

root e:

1. *éy* = what; yes.
2. *éw* }
yéw } or
3. *êwa* = to howl

root u:

1. *u* = and; by (in swearing: *éywah* = *éy + wa + ħ*)

With the exception of the above quoted words, all Maltese words are derived from consonant-roots, and take

simple forms,
contracted forms
compound forms



Simple forms are those, where the consonants of the root are combined with vowels

Ex: rajâ, méxa, kitéb, béâ, dawar etc.

Contracted forms are made up of two or more different words, so intimately connected with each other by usage, that they may be almost considered as one.

Ex: sfarjél = asfar + jéll.

Compound forms are those, where the consonants of the root are combined with other consonants, which expand the root.

The consonants, used for this purpose, might be called servile letters. They are: n, m, t, s, k and q.

The servile consonants are used as prefixes, suffixes and affixes.

The consonants *n, m* and *t* are used as servile prefixes, suffixes and affixes.

Ex: sâr; âsar = to press, to compell; ânsâr = origin
qad; âqad = to stick to; ânqûd = bunch of grapes
hazar - hanzér; sarî - samsar
ad (= to say) } adan (widén) = to hear
yé (= hand) }

The consonant *s* is used as servile prefix in connection with *t*.

Ex: stâjeb, sthaqq etc.

The sound *k* (*k* or *q*) is used as servile affix only.

Ex: da, dak
hamba, hambaq

Remarks: 1. Used as affixes, the servile letters are added:

each consonant separately (da—dak)

two consonants one after the other (bu, ben, bent; haw, hawn, hawnèk)

two consonants one after the other with a repetition of the first (hu, oht, hate*n*, htint)

2. Servile prefixes, suffixes and affixes are also combined together. E.g: in participle forms of the verbs with *i - t*.

in the plural for participle forms of the verbs with *i - t* etc. (mixtèq - mixteqin; mixtèqa - mixteqèt)

Transposition of letters. Transposition of letters is a common thing in all semitic languages.—E.g: miáy = máya; ila = al; dʒhal = dàhìl; wiħad = wàhìd; ànìb = ínab; laqx (laqqax) = laxk; fosda = sadfa etc.

APPENDIX

Those few foreign words, which are now constantly used instead of the national semitic expressions in the Maltese language could easily be eliminated by simply applying those maltese rules of deriving words which have been already mentioned. Thus:

1. *hàkim* means *Governor* in Maltese and is the active participle of *hakém* = to govern.

The *place of governing* = the ministry or department would be *màhkam* or *màhkama*.

2. *qàdi* means *judge* in maltese and is the active participle of *qada* = to decide, to judge.

The *place of judgment* = the court, would be *maqda*.

3. *halléf* means *to swear them in*.

A jury would be *mhalléf* = participle of *halléf*.

4. *dàr il-imàra* means *the house of the Government* = government's house, and is a place near *bir zébbùj*.

As a logical consequence of this combination *imàra* appears to be the Maltese word for *government*.

5. *kiteb* = to write.

The *place of writing*, or school, would be *maktab*. etc.

ERRORS.

Page	number	line	written	should be
7	4	1	a guttural <i>k</i>	a heavy guttural <i>k</i>
„	Phonetical note	7	sénâatt	sénâat
10	Affixed pronouns	6	(for feminlthe)	(for feminine)
12	4)	7	min om	minhom
23	2)	2	âd, ahna	âd ahna
25	XIX	5	ect.	etc.
30	1)	3	is guttural	is <i>g, h, or q</i>
38	Evasive vowels	3	bêa	bêâ
39	b)	2	aré	arê
43	7		xemnak	xemnaq
„			Forth class	Fourth class
45	5	9	alga-bi-ras	alqâ bi ras
49	Ex.	11	sâq	xâq
50	3	2	dephthong	diphthong
52	**	1	i	i
53	4	10	tétwil	tetwil
57	The feminine pl. and dual	2	êt	èt
73		12	<i>hajar</i>	<i>hajra</i>
73		14	<i>il-wèd is-sewda</i>	<i>il-wèd il-iswad</i>
73		14	<i>hâjar</i>	<i>hajra</i>
73		16	<i>wèd sewda</i>	<i>wèd iswad</i>
73		16	<i>hajar</i>	<i>hajra</i>

- I. *preceding* and *precedes* have been often written with 2 *e s* after *c*
- II. *the accent aigu* has sometimes been omitted over *e* owing to its scarcety at the typography.

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