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'Not enough benches in the *pjazza*':

Forced Migrants, Integration, and Maltese Identity

by

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ABSTRACT

Immigration to the European Union is on the rise and the island of Malta is no exception. During the last decade, Malta has had one of the highest rates per capita in Europe of forced migrants arriving in an irregular manner. These forced migrants, and other sub-Saharan Africans that have migrated to Malta through regular channels, are forming a growing ethnic minority of sub-Saharan Africans in Malta.

This dissertation analyses how sub-Saharan African immigrants are integrating at the community level, and how this is challenging the Maltese identity, by exploring the social interactions between the established population and immigrants, especially forced migrants. Including the perspectives of African Maltese and established African immigrants brings a new perspective to the discussion of immigrant integration in Malta since EU immigrant integration polices are particularly targeting them.

This qualitative study utilizes semi-structured interviews and participant observation with sub-Saharan African immigrants (both established immigrants and forced migrants), Maltese local councillors, and local experts in the field of migration. The fact that the researcher is both a cultural 'insider' and 'outsider', gives this dissertation an alternative and unique perspective on the phenomenon of social integration in Malta.

This research found that the Maltese are not actively seeking ways to integrate with the newly arrived forced migrants, which is resulting in a lack of social cohesion and fostering separation. It is also fuelling racism with detrimental effects on the integration of all sub-Saharan Africans in Malta. In fact racial discrimination encroaches on all the domains of Ager and Strang's (2008) Integration Framework, especially in access to services, creating meaningful social connections, and the feeling of safety and stability.

In conclusion, migration theory suggests that immigration to Malta will continue to happen because of global relations, migrant networks, and the increasing need for labour, and will therefore inevitably have an effect upon the island diversity. In fact this dissertation demonstrates that Malta is already a multi-ethnic country. The Maltese government should embrace this diversity and adopt an integration policy instead of fostering 'parallel lives' by allowing a policy vacuum. An integration policy should focus primarily on combating racial discrimination and emphasising a 'two-way process of change'.

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DECLARATION OF AUTHORSHIP

I, Amanda Jane Muscat Moulton

declare that the thesis entitled

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and the work presented in the thesis are both my own, and have been generated by me as the result of my own original research. I confirm that:

- this work was done wholly or mainly while in candidature for a research degree at this University;
- where any part of this thesis has previously been submitted for a degree or any other qualification at this University or any other institution, this has been clearly stated;
- where I have consulted the published work of others, this is always clearly attributed;
- where I have quoted from the work of others, the source is always given. With the exception of such quotations, this thesis is entirely my own work;
- I have acknowledged all main sources of help;
- where the thesis is based on work done by myself jointly with others, I have made clear exactly what was done by others and what I have contributed myself;
- none of this work has been published before submission

Signed: ....A.J Muscat Moulton......................................

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Acknowledgements

Abbreviations

AWAS   Agency for the Welfare of Asylum Seekers

CEAS   Common European Asylum System

CPT   European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment

EASO   European Asylum Office

EESC   European Economic and Social Committee

ETC   Employment Training Centre

EU   European Union

EURODAC   European Automated Fingerprinting Regulation System

FRA   European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights

Frontex   (*Frontières extérieures*) European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union

IOM   International Organisation for Migration

TCN   Third-country nationals

UNHCR   United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

UNPD   United Nations Department of Economics and Social Affairs, Population Division

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Chapter 1   Introduction

Malta, an island in the middle of the Mediterranean, has for the past decade seen a significant increase in forced migration from the African continent. These forced migrants arrive in an irregular manner, crossing the Mediterranean in fishing vessels from Libya. Most of these migrants, originally intended to reach mainland Europe, but because of difficulties at sea, navigational errors, or interception by the EU agency for border control (Frontex) in Maltese waters, they arrived in Malta. As Europe tightens its borders, Malta being a strategic island in the Mediterranean at the periphery of 'Fortress Europe', is becoming a stepping stone to Europe.

The research aim of this dissertation is to examine how sub-Saharan African immigrants and especially the newly-arrived forced migrants, are integrating at the community level, specifically by analysing the social interactions being formed at this level, and how, in the process they are re-articulating the Maltese identity. This dissertation also investigates the main barriers to integration with particular focus on racial discrimination and the mandatory detention policy.

This Chapter provides the context of this dissertation by giving an overview of the phenomenon of forced migration to Malta and the government's response to migration in general. This Chapter includes the aims of the study and where it fits within academic literature, including contribution to new knowledge. It ends with an overview of the dissertation.

Forced Migration to Malta

Between 2002 and 2011, 14,756 forced migrants arrived in an irregular manner (National Statistics Office, 2012a; Ministry for Justice and Home Affairs, Third Country Nationals Office, 2010) (see Appendix 1). Irregular migration meaning,

> *Migration that takes place outside the norms and procedures established by States to manage the orderly flow of migrants into, through, and out of their territories.* (International Organisation for Migration, 2010)

The boats arriving in Malta generally leave from the Libyan coast, however most of the forced migrants start their journeys elsewhere (see Appendix 2). The majority of those that go on this dangerous journey are young men, but women and children have also arrived. Unfortunately, not all that attempt the journey arrive, and many have lost their lives trying to cross the Mediterranean, in 2011 alone, 1,500 people have died en route (Human Rights Watch, 2012). The majority of the forced migrants originate from Somalia and Eritrea, two conflict zones, followed by Egypt and Nigeria (see Appendix

3). The rest come from all over the African continent, and a few come from India, Pakistan, Iraq, and Palestine (Ministry for Justice and Home Affairs, Third Country Nationals Office, 2010). This phenomenon practically came to a halt in 2010, when only one boat arrived during that year due to intensified coastguard patrols in the Mediterranean by Frontex and the declaration of the Treaty on Friendship, Partnership, and Cooperation between Italy and Libya (Ronzitti, 2009). The Maltese welcomed this move, uninterested in the plight of asylum seekers. But then, beginning again in 2011, 1,579 forced migrants arrived (National Statistics Office, 2012a).

There has been a growing trend for forced migrants arriving in an irregular manner to apply for asylum. In 2002, only 36% applied for asylum but in 2009, 89% submitted applications for asylum (Office of the Refugee Commissioner, 2010). Between 2002 and 2011, 12,187 individuals applied for asylum in Malta, and only 341 obtained statutory refugee status. 6,674 were granted some form of protection, while 5,172 had their application rejected (see Appendix 4). Generally, those coming from war torn countries such as Somalia have a higher probability of getting international protection status while those from North or Western Africa, such as Egypt and Nigeria, are considered economic migrants and have their applications denied, and proceedings for repatriation are started.

Malta's Response to Forced Migration

Back in 2002, nobody in Malta predicted this new immigration route from Africa to Europe, and therefore no one was prepared. There was no infrastructure in place, and politicians especially were caught off guard. To protect their own interests against this unenforceable, uncontrollable phenomenon, soon after immigrants began arriving they adopted the 'crisis' rhetoric. They labelled it a problem, named the forced migrants illegal immigrants, and classified the entire situation as a 'burden' on society. Immigrants were no longer seen in terms of their economic benefits but rather associated with all sorts of social ills such as terrorism, crime, and unemployment (Bigo, 2002). This increased prejudice against immigrants and anyone perceived as the 'other' (Cheong, et al., 2007).

The media and far right groups helped to spread the panic further and soon the Maltese public was panicking. There were rumours that the immigrants were going to take over Malta and that soon, Malta was going to become Black and Muslim. Seemingly overnight, people became less tolerant and there was a clear increase in xenophobic attitudes and racial discrimination (European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance, 2008). This strained the relationship between the Maltese and the sub-Saharan immigrants at the community level; it especially affected the lives of those

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African immigrants that were already residing in Malta before the crisis, who I refer to as established African immigrants in the dissertation.

Considering that Malta is only 316 sq km with a population of 413,609 (National Statistic Office, 2009), one of the most densely populated countries in Europe, the arrival of so many immigrants is considered a huge problem. Especially since joining the European Union (EU) in 2004, Malta is bound by the Dublin II regulation which stipulates that asylum seekers must stay in the country they first apply for asylum (European Commission, 2011b). This presents a challenge to the over-stretched economic, social, and environmental resources of Malta (Ministry for Justice and Home Affairs (MJHA) and Ministry for the Family and Social Solidarity (MFSS), 2005). A statistical analysis in the MJHA and MFSS's (2005) policy document shows that the arrival of one irregular immigrant in Malta is the pro rata equivalent to the arrival of 114 immigrants in Italy, and of 150 immigrants in the United Kingdom. To highlight the disproportionate pressure on Malta, Appendix 5 shows the number of asylum applicants per 1000 inhabitants in different industrialized countries including ones from the Mediterranean region.

This unwanted pressure from forced migration resulted in Malta using deterrent measures, most notable of which is detention. All forced migrants arriving in Malta are detained as per the 1970 Immigration Act, until either their asylum claim is processed or for a maximum of 18 months, with the exception of vulnerable people including minors (MJHA and MFSS, 2005). After their detention, all immigrants are allowed to live freely within the community and are provided with free government housing in so-called Open Centres. There are seven Open Centres run by the government Agency for the Welfare of Asylum Seekers (AWAS). In 2011, a total of 1,289 immigrants were residing in Open Centres and other institutional households, 1076 adults; 833 males and 243 females, and 213 minors; 120 males and 93 females (National Statistics Office, 2012a) (see Appendix 6).

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) proposes three durable solutions for refugees: resettlement, local integration, and repatriation (Hathaway, 2006). Malta has put a great deal of effort in resettlement, especially through its 'burden sharing' rhetoric at the European level, and repatriation. Between 2008 and June 2011, 664 beneficiaries of international protection (mostly Somalis and Eritreans) were resettled in the USA through the US resettlement programme in collaboration with the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) (International Organisation for Migration, 2011a). Within the EU, there is also the Reallocation Directive 2004/83/EC. Malta lobbied extensively at the EU level for the reallocation of beneficiaries of

international protection, this resulted in a pilot project, called Intra-EU Re-allocation from Malta (EUREMA). Around 255 beneficiaries of international protection have been re-allocated to France, Germany, Hungary, Luxemburg, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, and the UK (International Organisation for Migration, 2011a). Altogether, 1,702 beneficiaries of international protection have been relocated or resettled to various other countries since 2005 (*The Times of Malta*, 2012b). Those for whom the asylum application did not have a positive outcome, the main policy mandate is forcible repatriation. Between 2004 and 2012, 3,699 immigrants were repatriated to a third country (*The Times of Malta*, 2008; *The Times of Malta*, 2012a; National Statistics Office, 2012a; National Statistics Office, 2011a). There is also an effort for voluntary repatriation; the IOM manages such a projects. Between January 2010 and June 2011, 49 migrants decided to return to their country of origin (International Organisation for Migration, 2011b). But not much has been done in terms UNHCR's other durable solution, local integration. The EU directives call for appropriate integration measures for those with a refugee or humanitarian protection status, yet Malta still does not have a migrant integration policy.

The following is the European Union's definition of integration used in this dissertation:

> *Integration is a dynamic, long-term, and continuous two-way process of mutual accommodation, not a static outcome. It demands the participation not only of immigrants and their descendants but of every resident. The integration process involves adaptation by immigrants, both men and women, who all have rights and responsibilities in relation to their new country of residence. It also involves the receiving society, which should create the opportunities for the immigrants' full economic, social, cultural, and political participation. Accordingly, Member States are encouraged to consider and involve both immigrants and national citizens in integration policy, and to communicate clearly their mutual rights and responsibilities.*

 (Council of the European Union, 2004, p. 19)

Gaps in research and addition to new knowledge

I became interested in exploring integration at the community level in Malta when I worked as a researcher with an EU funded project titled; *IntegraRef Local Communities and Refugees: Fostering Social Integration*. This research looked at the integration of immigrants in Italy, Germany, and Malta (Strang & Losi, 2008). The Maltese team focused only on the newly arrived forced migrants, all of whom lived in Open Centres. In this dissertation, I wanted to focus on the social interactions happening at the community level because the scope of this report (Farrugia, 2008) was not able to

explore the topic to the extent that I thought it deserved. I wanted to use more rigorous methodology and spend more time in the field.

When I first started this research in 2008 there was not any published work about the newly arrived forced migrants. Since then, however, quite a number of research projects have been done (Lutterbeck, 2009; Gerard & Pickering, 2012; Mainwaring, 2008; Xuereb, 2012; Farrugia, 2009; SOS Malta, 2011), but only the IntegraRef's Malta study (Strang & Losi, 2008; Farrugia, 2008; Farrugia, 2009) and the SOS Malta (2011) looked at social integration. Both of these studies were based on short projects and the analysis is mostly descriptive, and unlike this study, which uses in-depth semi-structured interviews in conjunction with participant observation as its method of data collection, they used either questionnaires (SOS Malta, 2011) or short interviews based on structured questions (Farrugia, 2008)[1].

African Maltese and established African immigrants in Malta, populations that this study considers vital for a better understanding of the complexity of the integration process, are not represented in the academic research on immigration. They are important people when discussing integration because EU immigrant integration polices are particularly targeting them. Therefore, including their voices in a discussion on immigrant integration in Malta is a new contribution to knowledge. Another new contribution to knowledge is the emphasis on the voice of the Maltese people, through the interviews with local councillors.

A Note on Language Use

I specifically chose to use the words forced migration and forced migrants, instead of irregular migration or illegal migration, because forced migration (which is explained in more detail in the next chapter) describes why migrants had to leave their country and imparts more information about the migrants. While irregular migration/illegal migration is indicative of how migrants entered a country and does not give any information about the migrants themselves; it only represents migration from the state's perspective.

Of the three countries I am familiar with: Malta, the UK, and the US, acceptable terms describing ethnicity and nationality vary distinctively from country to country. In this dissertation I chose to refer to sub-Saharan African as Black persons when the colour of the skin is relevant to the argument. In Malta when people are trying to be polite and respectful, when referring to a Black person they prefer to use the word 'coloured' in

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[1] I did the analysis of the data collected for this project.

English. This is used instead of the word *Suwed*, the Maltese for Black, which some Maltese believe might be offensive. Knowing that in Britain 'coloured' has long since fallen out of favour, it made me uneasy every time I heard it. Gaine (2005, p. 91) argues that white people should not use this term, as in the UK people of Caribbean and African descent find it offensive. In the USA, one of the most acceptable terms is *people of color*; however, in Malta we usually follow British English. The 'political correctness' debate in Malta is clearly lagging behind, as sometimes I even heard Maltese people using the word 'negro'. It is also not uncommon for the politicians and media to refer to forced migrants as *klandestini*, a Maltese word meaning clandestine people.

Overview of the Dissertation

This dissertation presents an analysis of the lived experiences of migration, both on the part of the migrants and of the receiving society. Chapter 1 sets the scene for the dissertation; it provides the context of migration to Malta, the reaction of the Maltese, and the aims and the rationale of the study. Chapter 2 analyses the existing literature on migration theory in relation to Malta and argues why forced migrants deserve special rights as migrants. It also includes a discussion on asylum policy within the European Union and Malta. Chapter 3 presents a discussion on the increase in ethnic diversity in Malta, specifically looking at the different groups of sub-Saharan African immigrants in Malta. In addition, it contains two detailed sections on female forced migrants and unaccompanied minors. Chapter 4 is a literature review on the main inclusion theories; assimilation, multiculturalism, social cohesion, and integration, with examples of policies in different countries, in particular a discussion of integration policy in the European Union and Malta. Chapter 5 provides a detailed account of the methodology used, including the research questions, a discussion on the qualitative research framework, and the research methods (semi-structured interviews and participant observation) used. Furthermore it contains a discussion on the ethical considerations and biases. Chapter 6 examines the social interactions between the sub-Saharan African immigrants and the Maltese. This Chapter includes separate accounts from local councillors and forced migrants about their perspectives on the social bridges being formed. There is a discussion on social bonds, before ending the chapter with an analysis on whether integration is possible in Malta. Chapter 7 argues that racism and the detention policy are the main barriers to immigrant integration in Malta. It starts with a selection of narratives of racism, and continues with an analysis of the detention policy as an example of institutional racism. It further contains a discussion on how immigrants respond to racism, how the Maltese rationalise racism, and finally offers examples of how racism is being contested. Lastly, Chapter 8 argues that forced migration and migration in general are part of Malta's present and

future, and even though this challenges the Maltese identity, it is important that the changes migration brings are addressed. It concludes that it is crucial for Malta to focus on an integration strategy instead of focusing solely on border control and deterrent measures.

Chapter 2   Migration, Forced Migration, and Asylum Policy

Introduction

As the world becomes more globalised and interconnected through a combination of free market economy, media (especially the internet), and affordable travel, migration is becoming an integral part of the modern nation state. In 2010, the United Nations Department of Economics and Social Affairs, Population Division (UNPD), estimated that there were 214,200,000 people living outside their country of origin (UNPD, 2012). This is around 3% of the total world population, a number which academics regard on the conservative side especially since they do not include undocumented migrants (Castles & Miller, 2009), and yet countries are still resistant to change and unwilling to open their borders; with the tightening of borders becoming the norm.

The first section of this Chapter explores a variety of migration theories derived from various academic disciplines that offer different levels of analysis. These theories not only explain what causes migration but also why migration pathways perpetuate themselves. Since migration theories focus mostly on labour migration, the second section provides a discussion on forced migration and the refuge regime. The third and final section continues with an overview of asylum policy in the European Union and Malta, with regards to the rights of beneficiaries of international protection.

Migration Theories in Relation to Malta

In Malta, a question one often hears regarding forced migrants is, "Why are these Africans coming here?" This next section attempts to answer this simple yet complex question, while exploring different migration theories and how they are relevant to the migration pathway from Africa to Malta. In migration studies there is no one model that explains how an international migration pathway starts or how any one pathway is perpetuated; instead there are several theories originating from different disciplines (Massey, et al., 1993, p. 432). There are three levels of analysis in migration research: the micro-, macro-, and meso-level, each linked with different academic disciplines. At the micro-level of analysis, it is the decisions and motives of the individual migrants, the households, or the communities that are studied; while at the meso-level of analysis, it is the social ties; and at the macro-level, it is the overarching political, economic, and legal structures of states that are the focus of discussion (Brettel & Hollifield, 2008, p. 9). Some theories, namely the network theory and the migration system theory, specifically focus on how migration perpetuates itself.

According to the neo-classical economic model based on the geographer Ravenstein's work (1889, p. 286), people migrate to "better themselves" financially. The differentials in wages and employment conditions between the sending and receiving countries create what are known as "push and pull factors" (Portes & Rumbaut, 2006, p. 15; Castles & Miller, 2009, p. 22). The pull factors in the case of Malta and the rest of Europe are higher wages and better working conditions. Whereas the push factors for sub-Saharan Africans include political persecution, generalized violence, and lack of livelihoods. Even though this model explains to some extent the migratory process from Africa to Malta, the neo-classical model is infrequently used nowadays because it assumes that migration will lead to economic equilibrium between countries, without considering that migration does not work like the free market and that nation states put effort in protecting their borders and implement measures to deter unwanted migration (Castles & Miller, 2009, p. 22). This model is further limited in that it can neither predict the origin of migration nor how it changes over time (Boyd, 1989, p. 640). This micro-level theory assumes that the potential migrant decides, carefully taking into consideration migrating costs, whether migrating will produce a personal financial gain (Massey, et al., 1993, p. 432; Borjas, 1989, pp. 457-461). It is also implied that migrants have full information about the country of destination before leaving and that they are able to make an informed choice. Often this is not the case (Castles & Miller, 2009, p. 23).

In contrast to the neo-classical economic theory, the new economics of migration theory argues that the decision to migrate is not taken at the individual level but at the household level in order to diversify family income and therefore minimize risks (Stark & Lucas, 1988; Massey, et al., 1993, pp. 436-440; Portes & Rumbaut, 2006, p. 16; Zlotnik, 1992). A young male is often sponsored to migrate, with the expectation that he send remittances back to the country of origin (Portes & Rumbaut, 2006, p. 16). This is the case in Malta, where over 88% of migrants are male, most of whom travel on their own (Ministry for Justice and Home Affairs, Third Country Nationals Office, 2010). Perhaps in part family strategy, the migrant's wife and children, who are usually left back home, act as an additional security to ensure that the migrant will send the remittances. For the farming family left behind, the remittances act as a form of insurance, especially in developing countries with non-existent welfare systems (Massey, et al., 1993, pp. 436-440).

The dual labour market theory moves away from the micro-level analysis of the neo-classical model and the new economics of migration, and suggests that migration takes place because of market forces in industrialized countries (Massey, et al., 1993,

pp. 440-444). This macro-level theory predicts that as residents of industrialized countries are unwilling to partake in low-wage labour, it creates a demand for cheap labour, which means that migrants who are willing to do the dirty, menial, temporary work with no benefits or social status attached to it will have access to employment (Portes & Rumbaut, 2006, p. 17). Although forced migrants in Malta were not actively recruited in their countries of origin, they are nonetheless filling the jobs that the Maltese prefer not to do, such as garbage collection, sweeping streets, construction, and cleaning hotel rooms (Office of the Refugee Commissioner, 2011a). As Malta's population continues to age, there is an increasing demand for labour and the Maltese Economic Policy Department (2011) is already suggesting labour migration as a possible solution, which would attract more African migrants.

Another macro-level analysis of migration, the world systems theory, states that migration is "a natural consequence of economic globalisation and market penetration across national boundaries" (Massey, et al., 1993, p. 432). Globalisation refers to the

> *inexorable integration of markets, nation-states, and technologies to a degree*
> *never witnessed before - in a way that is enabling individuals, corporations and*
> *nation-states to reach around the world farther, faster, deeper and cheaper*
> *than ever before . . . . the spread of free-market capitalism to virtually every*
> *country in the world.* (Friedman, 1999, pp. 7-8).

In the world systems theory, the world is divided into three regions: the core countries, whose economy relies on the service industry; the semi-periphery countries whose economy is based on manufacturing; and the periphery countries whose economy relies primarily on raw materials (Betts, 2009, p. 34). This creates a system of exploitation by the core countries of the periphery countries, with multinational corporations (in the past aided by colonisation) searching for cheap labour, land, and natural resources and spreading the free-market economy in search of new consumer markets (Massey, et al., 1993, p. 447). This has the unintentional consequence of displacing the local population and undermining their culture and sense of belonging, creating a "mobile population" (Massey, et al., 1993, p. 447). Massey et al. (1993, p. 446) then argue that

> *the international movement of labor generally follows the international*
> *movement of goods and capital in the opposite direction,*

especially since the market of those in periphery countries has been flooded with the commodities and culture of core countries (Massey, et al., 1993). Globalisation has also resulted in a widening economic gap between the core countries and those on the periphery, which causes economic insecurity and poverty in developing countries; leading to migration. In addition, in some countries, rapid decolonialisation has resulted in armed conflict, which has proven to be a major contributor to forced

migration (Castles, 2000, p. 271). Regardless of Malta's small size and non-direct involvement in the spread of the free-market economy, as a core-country that is part of Europe and the European Union, Malta has also started to experience the displacement of people caused by globalisation. The world systems theory is criticized because it pays "inadequate attention to human agency" (Castles & Miller, 2009, p. 27) and because it is "heavily sociological and structural and discounts the role of politics and the state in social and economic change" (Brettel & Hollifield, 2008, pp. 9-10).

In response to the criticism of the world systems theory, the migration systems theory links economic models with sociological models of migration. This theory is based on the idea of a migration system which is "two or more places linked by flow and counter flows of people" (Fawcett, 1989, p. 671). Between the sending and receiving countries, in addition to individuals there is also the exchange of goods, capital, and information, amongst other things. Castles and Miller (2009, p. 27) argue that these migration patterns began because of historic ties in the migration system, such as colonisation.

There are several "linkages" that are involved in the formation, stability, and continuity of a migration system. Fawcett identified four categories of linkages: "state-to-state relations, mass culture connections, family and personal networks, and migrant agency activities." (Fawcett, 1989, p. 673). The multi-players involved in these linkages can be divided into the macro-, micro-, and meso-structures; the macro-structures being states, international institutions, and global financial organisations; the micro-structures are the networks amongst migrants; while the meso–structures are the relationships between migrants and non-migrants which includes recruitment agencies, lawyers, and smugglers, all collectively termed the "migration industry" (Castles & Miller, 2009, p. 28). This relationship between the sending and receiving countries is vulnerable to the economic and political changes in the other country (Fawcett, 1989, p. 673), and as Massey, et al. (1993, p. 454) argue, a migration system is stable but not permanent and "social change, economic fluctuations or political upheaval" can alter the migration pathway.

Analysing the macro-structures and state-to-state relations, Lutterbeck (2009, pp. 122 - 123) partly attributes the spike of forced migration Malta experienced after 2004 to the successful attempts at stemming the Adriatic migratory pathway from Albania to Italy, and the pathways from Mauretania and Senegal to the Canary Islands. These border control strategies pushed migrants to use Libya as a transit to Italy, with Malta being in the middle of this particular migratory pathway. Spain's control of forced migration off the Canary Islands and along the West African coast has meant that more West Africans started arriving in Malta. It is also important to mention here the Dublin

II regulation, another example of how a macro-level structure has changed the nature of migration in Malta. As for the migration industry in Malta, outside the several non-governmental organisations that have formed since 2002 to service the needs of forced migrants, not much is known about it although two Maltese were caught trying smuggling migrants to Italy (*The Times of Malta*, 2011b). Whether this was opportunistic or part of organized crime, there is no conclusive evidence.

Boyd (1989, p. 642) focuses on personal networks, moving the theories of migration away from economics to anthropological and sociological aspects. The basis of network theory is the study of the relationships between the migrant and his kin, friends, and other migrants, especially those from the same country of origin, both in destination and receiving countries (Castles & Miller, 2009, p. 28; Massey, et al., 1993, p. 449). These social ties provide information about the migratory process and help reduce risks and provide support during the settlement period (Massey, et al., 1993, p. 449; Boyd, 1989, p. 642). Portes and Rumbaut (2006, pp. 40-41) argue that indeed networks are very powerful, especially in the decision to migrate, and in-country they are particularly effective at creating ethnic communities. In fact, forced migrants decide to leave Malta illegally towards mainland Europe based upon the information given by their network of friends and family: that social services offered in other countries are better (Gerard & Pickering, 2012, p. 523). The network theory offers a meso-level analysis to why migration perpetuates itself - once a network is established, it is "self-sustaining" (Boyd, 1989, p. 641), what Massey, et al. (1993, p. 448) call the "cumulative causation of migration". This theory explains why migrants keep coming to Malta regardless of the deterrent measures put in place by European governments. Recently, unlike the majority that wanted to reach Italy, a small percentage of the forced migrants who arrived actually intended Malta to be their destination, showing that networks of forced migrants are building up in Malta (Lutterbeck, 2009, p. 123; Mainwaring, 2008, p. 13).

Transnational theory builds upon the network theory (Castles & Miller, 2009, p. 31) and the world systems theory (Schmitter Heisler, 2008, p. 91) and is the theory that most reflects the realities of migration today. Transnationalism occurs because efficient communication methods and faster and cheaper transport brought about by globalisation, "facilitate the growth of circular or temporary mobility, in which people migrate repeatedly between two or more places where they have economic, social or cultural linkages" (Castles & Miller, 2009, p. 30). For example during my fieldwork in Malta I met with a pastor representing an Evangelical Church that was setting up a branch of the church in Malta. Before coming to Malta he and his family lived in the Netherlands and other European countries before that. The same goes for Nigerian

football players in Malta, who before coming to Malta were part of football clubs in other European countries. A transmigrant can therefore have multiple allegiances and/or citizenships (Schmitter Heisler, 2008, p. 92) because of tighter "social and symbolic ties" with one's ethnic and religious background and country of origin (Faist, 2009, p. 44). So the pastor's main allegiance is to his religion, but also to his native country Nigeria, and to the country he and his family have lived in for a number of years.

In addition, transnationalism has resulted in more remittances, which are not only crucial for the economy of the sending country, but also have the effect of elevating the status and political power of the migrants (Portes & Rumbaut, 2006, p. 132), this has been the case with forced migrants in Malta. I have personally observed forced migrants at local post offices sending wire transfers. One migrant shared with me that his wife was waiting for his remittances[2].

Transnationalism has been criticised because it can lead to 'deterritorialized nation-states', which challenge the 'national identity and international politics' (Castles & Miller, 2009, p. 31). However Castles (2003) argues that only a small number of migrants form transnational communities and that most still fall under the traditional models of temporary migration or permanent settlement. For migration studies, transnationalism has meant that the nation-state is no longer seen as the analytical level for 'belonging' because people can belong to multiple countries at once (Castles, 2003).

In summary, because of the growing economic disparities between the North and South that globalization has created, immigration to Malta will continue to happen. Furthermore, the networks that migrants form further increase Malta's chance of becoming a permanent immigration country, considering also the fact that Malta's aging population and bifurcation of the labour market will increase the demand for cheap labour. Malta therefore should take responsibility for its role in the global economy and accept immigration as an integral part of its present and a key component of its successful future. This section has given the reasons why forced migration happens and why migration patterns are perpetuated. The next section focuses more on the causes of forced migration, the asylum process, and the needs of beneficiaries of international protection.

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[2] I did communicate with one wire transfer company (which have proliferated since 2004) with regards to the amount of Euros being remitted from Malta but did not get a reply.

Forced Migration and Refugees

Besides leaving their homes to better themselves, a high percentage of migrants that arrive in Malta in an irregular manner were forced to leave their homes. People around the world are driven to leave their homes for a variety of reasons, including political persecution, conflict, environmental disasters, development projects, lack of livelihoods, and extreme poverty. These people, known as forced migrants, deserve humanitarian protection because migrating is necessary for their survival. However, in an effort to redirect the flow of migration, policy-makers and academics classify forced migrants depending on the reason and where they flee from, and if they enter another country, how they enter that country.

Depending on these more or less arbitrary categorizations, the rights of forced migrants vary tremendously. Some categories of forced migrants, such as Convention Refugees, are protected by international law, others are recognized as needing humanitarian assistance, such as Internally Displaced People, while other categories are altogether disputed and therefore refused status protection, such as Climate Refugees. These classifications and categories are far from clear cut, and are highly debated. This section examines the definition of refugee, and argues that this definition needs to be broader than the strict legal definition to include what Zolberg et al. (1989, p. 30) classifies as the 'victim refugee'.

In everyday language, people who are politically persecuted, affected by conflict, or forced to leave their homes are known as refugees. However, only a small percentage of these refugees are recognized as Convention Refugees. A Convention Refugee according to the 1951 Geneva Convention and its 1967 Protocol is a person

> *who is outside his or her country of nationality or habitual residence; has a well founded fear of persecution because of his/her race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion; and is unable or unwilling to avail himself/herself of the protection of that country, or to return there, for fear of persecution* (UNHCR, 2010a).

There is an ongoing debate in refugee studies on whether the definition of a refugee should be based on this strict legal definition, or whether it should include other forced migrants that also require protection on a humanitarian basis.

Price (2009, p. 4), who views asylum from a political approach, argues that it is the "persecution element", especially persecution by the state, that is the fundamental difference between Convention Refugees and the broader definition of refugees. He (2009, p. 13) argues that

> *Persecuted people face a distinctive kind of harm that sets them apart from other people who need protection abroad. They do not merely experience insecurity; they are targeted for harm in a manner that repudiates their claim to political membership. They are thus not only refugees, but also exiles – people who have been expelled from their own political communities.*

Price (2009) proposes that refugees who are not personally persecuted should be helped in their countries or in neighbouring countries since this is more economically efficient[3], and also safer, as it avoids possible asylum seekers from being smuggled or trafficked to industrialized countries.

Those that view asylum from a humanitarian approach, however, debate for an expansion of the Convention. Firstly, the Geneva Convention was written to address a very specific group of refugees (Jews in Nazi Germany), which makes it very context specific, and Black (2001) and Chimni (2009) question if the convention is still valid after 50 years. Black (2001, pp. 63-64) specifically argues against the use of this narrow legal definition in academic research. He suggests that moving beyond this definition will help demonstrate the needs and rights of the majority of forced migrants that are not covered by the convention but equally deserving of protection (Black, 2001).

Secondly, since only a small percentage of forced migrants classify as Convention Refugees and can benefit from all the rights described in the UNHCR Convention, using the legal definition of Convention Refugees when determining humanitarian aid is problematic (Chimni, 2009). The convention definition is a politically motivated and constructed term, and using it reinforces the states' propaganda about who to accept and who to reject (Zolberg, et al., 1989, p. 4; Chimni, 2009). For example, the definition gets narrower for populations which have huge numbers of people fleeing, as in the case of Somalis, and yet is flexible when a political statement needs to be made with regards to worldwide concerns, such as accepting persecuted homosexuals, or girls and women facing female genital cutting.

Thirdly, if people need protection, the reason for needing protection is irrelevant (Zolberg, et al., 1989, p. 269). The refugee as a political activist and the refugee as a target belonging to a particular group, both of whom fall under UNHCR 1951

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[3] "In 2003, for example, Britain spent more than $1.5 billion to support 93,000 asylum seekers. Meanwhile, the entire UNHCR budget, meant to provide relief for over 20 million refugees and internally displaced persons, amounted to $1.17 billion in that year, of which the UK donated about $47 million." (Price, 2009, p. 12)

convention, are only the minority (Zolberg, et al., 1989, p. 30). The majority of forced migrants in the world today are what Zolberg et al. (1989, p. 30) classify as 'the victim refugees', meaning

> *persons displaced by societal or international violence that is not necessarily*
> *directed at them as individuals but makes life in their own country impossible.*

'The victim refugees' are usually the poor, the less-educated masses, who often endure the brunt of conflict, displacement, loss of livelihoods, and poverty. They are the ones who do not fit in the asylum system criteria set up in Western countries for the elite and prosperous few, those who had the means and connections to flee abroad (Zolberg, et al., 1989, p. 11). This category, where the 'well-founded fear' element is applied to a whole group, is only protected by the UNHCR 'good offices' doctrine, and at an interstate level in the 1969 Organization of African Unity Convention on Refugee Problems in Africa, and in the 1984 Latin America Cartagena Declaration (Zolberg et al. 1989, p. 29). Even though 'victim refugees' are not covered by the Geneva Convention and its Protocol, there is a growing trend in industrialized countries to give this group a form of temporary protection, which respects the principle of non-refoulement but does not offer the same protection and rights as the Geneva Convention and its Protocol (Price, 2009, p. 7).

This section argues for the need of the Geneva Convention to be redrafted to include the majority of those currently seeking and equally deserving of international protection, that is the 'victim refugee' category. The next section gives a detailed explanation of the Asylum Policy Framework that shapes the lives of forced migrants in Malta, especially in terms of their rights.

The European Union's and Malta's Asylum Policy Framework

Introduction
The Pact on Immigration and Asylum emphasised the European Union's commitment to protect asylum seekers within its border and to provide them with the necessary aid, as per the 1951 Geneva Convention and its 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees (Council of the European Union, 2008, p. 11). This commitment, that everyone has the right to claim asylum in the European Union, is enshrined in Article 18 of the EU Charter on Human Rights, along with two other articles related to asylum and immigration: Article 1 on respecting and protecting human dignity and Article 4 on protecting people against torture, inhuman or degrading treatment, or punishment. Consequently, the Charter became legally binding when the Lisbon Treaty came into force in 2009 (European Commission, 2010a). This means that the EU and Member

States' asylum policy now have to adhere to the basic legal framework of the Charter. This section describes the European Union's and Malta's asylum policy framework and the right of beneficiaries of international protection in Malta.

European Union Asylum Policy

Beginning in the 1970's, there has been a push towards harmonization of asylum policies within Europe (Levy, 1999, pp. 22-23). In the 70's and 80's European Union Member States were already working together to protect their borders through the Terrorism, Radicalism, Extremism and Violence International (TREVI) programme (Levy, 1999, pp. 22-23). Then in 1985, the Schengen group was formed, although it was not until 1995 that the Schengen Convention came into force (Levy, 1999, p. 23) defining a borderless area, initially four countries within Europe with a common visa system. Currently, 25 European countries except Britain and Ireland are part of the Schengen zone. The Schengen Convention is supported by two electronic databases, the Schengen Information System[4], and the European Automated Fingerprinting Regulation System (Eurodac) (Council of the European Union, 2012). Eurodac is a biometric database that stores fingerprints of people who have either applied for asylum or who have been apprehended crossing a border illegally (European Commission, 2012a). The Schengen Convention imposed several restrictions on asylum seekers. It interfered with their ability to apply for asylum in different European countries, which had been the only way to appeal their asylum decision taken by a particular state, and it imposed sanctions on air carriers who allowed passengers on board without the appropriate visa (Levy, 1999, p. 24). The freedom of movement of asylum seekers was further curtailed by the ratification of the Dublin Convention in 1997. Under the Tampere Programme, the Dublin Convention was strengthened and became the Dublin Regulation in 2003 (Council Regulation No 342/2003). In order to restrict asylum shopping and make states accountable for asylum seekers in their territory the Dublin Regulation stipulates that the country is responsible for a particular asylum application (Commission of the European Communities, 2007). It is facilitated by Eurodac, and gives countries the option to send asylum seekers registered in other countries back to where they first registered. The Commission of the European Communities announced the amendment to the Dublin Regulation in order to ascertain that asylum seekers' rights are protected, and to help those countries that are disadvantaged by the Regulation

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[4] According to its website the database allows "place alerts concerning persons or property"

because of their geographic location or demographic restrictions (Commission of the European Communities, 2008).

Common European Asylum System

The most coordinated effort to harmonize asylum procedures in the European Union was with the introduction of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS), agreed upon under the Tampere Programme (European Parliament, 1999). The goal of the first phase of CEAS (1999 – 2005), was to harmonise the Member States' legal frameworks on asylum by introducing four core directives to establish common minimum standards (Commission of the European Communities, 2008).

The four directives are:

1) Council Directive 2003/9/EC of 27 January 2003 - Laying down minimum standards for the reception of asylum seekers (European Commission, 2003)

2) Council directive 2005/85/EC of 1 December 2005 - On minimum standards on procedures in Member States for granting and withdrawing refugee status (European Commission, 2005)

3) Council Directive 2004/83/EC of 29 April 2004 - On minimum standards for the qualification and status of third country nationals or stateless persons, as refugees or as persons who otherwise need international protection and the content of the protection granted (European Commission, 2004)

4) Council Directive 2001/55/EC of 20 July 2001- On minimum standards for giving temporary protection in the event of a mass influx of displaced persons and on measures promoting a balance of efforts between Member States in receiving such persons and bearing the consequences thereof (European Commission, 2001)

Levy (1999, p. 14) warned that promoting minimum standards amongst Member States could lead to a decrease in rights and benefits, as Member States would only provide the "lowest common denominator". And in fact, the Green Paper (Commission of the European Communities, 2007) criticised all of the above directives because they left a lot of room for interpretation by individual Member States, which did not result in a harmonised system. In response, the Commission of the European Union (2008) planned to propose modifications to the Reception Conditions Directive, the Qualifications Directive, the Procedures Directive, and the Dublin System. The Commission formally proposed to amend the Asylum Procedures Directive in June 2011, following the 2010 Evaluation Report (European Commission, 2011a).

The second phase of the Common European Asylum System, decided under the Hague Programme (2004-2009), continued to ensure that the asylum process and service provisions were similar throughout the European Union, and further harmonised protection standards and asylum legislation. It focused on increasing cooperation

between Member States, and increased communication between countries of origin, transit countries, and third countries (Commission of the European Communities, 2008). In order to do this, proposed in the European Pact on Immigration and Asylum (2008), and established under the Stockholm Programme, the Commission agreed to set up an office – the European Asylum Office (EASO) – to be responsible for CEAS (European Commission, 2010a). Under the current Stockholm Programme of 2009 – 2014, high on the agenda are i) a common migration policy which includes channels for legal immigrants, ii) integration of immigrants, iii) fighting 'irregular immigration' while respecting the Charter of Fundamental Rights, iv) paying close attention to unaccompanied minors, and v) more coordination with third countries on issues of immigration (European Commission, 2010a).

EASO

The European Asylum Support Office (EASO) was established according to Regulation No 439/2010 (European Parliament and the Council, 2010). EASO is a regulatory, independent body of the Union which has "legal, administrative and financial autonomy" (European Parliament and the Council, 2010). Robert Visser was chosen as the Executive Director of EASO for the next 5 years and started his position on the 1st of February 2011 (*The Times of Malta*, 2010; EASO Monitor, 2012). He is in charge of the everyday running of the office, while the overall planning and monitoring is in the hands of the management board. Every Member State has a seat on the board, with an additional, non-voting seat for a UNHCR representative. The budget allocated to EASO for 2010-2013 is of €40 million (EASO Monitor, 2012). EASO was officially inaugurated on the 19th of June 2011 (EASO Monitor, 2012). Its physical premises are in Marsa, Malta, not far from the Marsa Open Centre, a government run residential housing for forced migrants. Malta lobbied extensively to have the office in Malta in order to shed light on its plight for burden sharing.

Mandate of EASO

The mandate according to EASO Regulation (EU) No 439/2010 (European Parliament and the Council, 2010) is to:

1) Facilitate and increase the cooperation between Member States.
2) Support and facilitate Member States in implementing the CEAS, especially to address discrepancies in the asylum process and service provision between Member States.
3) Be a source of information and expertise on asylum issues in Europe and offer support with policy, legislation, and management of the asylum and reception systems. Coordinate research on countries of origin, transit countries, etc, and

> in general, help eliminate duplication of research by various key players in asylum.

4) Establish the European asylum curriculum and offer adequate training to Member States' asylum staff.

5) Provide and coordinate support to Member States that are experiencing pressure on their asylum and reception systems because of geographical position and demographic limitations.

6) Deploy Asylum Support Teams made up of interpreters and experts in various fields of asylum, to countries that are experiencing difficulties with their asylum system (The first deployed team is currently in Greece (EASO Monitor, 2012)).

7) Facilitate voluntary burden sharing mechanisms, such as relocation of asylum seekers.

EASO has to coordinate with other relevant EU bodies, such as Frontex, the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), and the European Migration Network (European Parliament and the Council, 2010). EASO also has to work closely with Member States' Asylum Authorities, the European Commission, UNHCR, and civil society (European Parliament and the Council, 2010). In order to facilitate the dissemination of information, coordinate together, and share resources such as expertise, EASO is in charge of organising a consultative forum in which civil society is invited. The first one was on 15th December, 2011 in Malta (UNHCR, 2011).

Having an EU body in charge of taking the role of coordinator between the different players on issues of asylum fits with the UNHCR's 10-Point Plan of Action on Refugee Protection and Mixed Migration (UNHCR, 2007); however, it is important to note that EASO does not have a legal right regarding Member States' individual asylum decisions. Also, finding and facilitating durable solutions for asylum and beneficiaries of asylum is not currently part of its mandate.

Malta's Asylum Policy Framework

The Maltese asylum policy framework is based on the Refugee Act of 2001 and the Procedural Standards Regulation (European Migration Network Malta, 2009, p. 7). Malta signed the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol in 1971, five years after independence. In 2001, it lifted several reservations including its geographical reservation. And after Malta's accession to the European Union in 2004, all reservations were lifted (Government of Malta, 2008). The Geneva Convention was only transposed into Maltese law in 2001 as part of the Refugee Act. The Refugee Act of 2001 was amended in 2004, 2005, 2007, and 2008 to incorporate the Qualification Directive 2004/83 and the Procedures Directive on granting and withdrawing refugee and subsidiary status (Government of Malta, 2008). Parts of these directives were

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further transposed into the *Procedural Standards in Examining Applications for Refugee Status Regulations* of 2008 as part of Article 25 (h) of the Refugee Act 2001 (Government of Malta, 2008).

Asylum seekers in Malta can obtain two types of international protection: Convention refugee status and subsidiary protection status, as per the Qualifications Directive 2004/83.

According to Council Directive 2004/83/EC subsidiary protection can be given to

> *a third country national or a stateless person who does not qualify as a refugee but in respect of whom substantial grounds have been shown for believing that the person concerned, if returned to his or her country of origin, or in the case of a stateless person, to his or her country of former habitual residence, would face a real risk of suffering serious harm...and is unable, or, owing to such risk, unwilling to avail himself or herself of the protection of that country.*

 If an applicant does not qualify for either of these two statuses, then they can be considered for temporary humanitarian protection status which was introduced in 2008 (European Migration Network Malta, 2009, p. 3). This is a non-EU harmonised form of protection granted in Malta, it is mostly given to minors, on medical grounds, or other humanitarian reasons (European Migration Network Malta, 2009, p. 11). The status is based on policy initiative rather than legislation so it is given at the discretion of the Office of the Refugee Commissioner, and according to the European Migration Network, offers more flexibility in providing protection (European Migration Network Malta, 2009, p. 11). Prior to 2008, Malta had humanitarian protection status instead of subsidiary protection status and temporary humanitarian protection status (European Migration Network Malta, 2009, p. 8)

Asylum Process
In Malta "the Refugee Commissioner is responsible for receiving, examining, and determining asylum applications" (European Migration Network Malta, 2009, p. 12). According to the European Migration Network, help is provided on how and where to fill out the application, asylum seekers are informed regarding their rights and duties (especially that they have a right to legal advice and to UNHCR), and that interpreters can be provided (European Migration Network Malta, 2009, p. 12). The application must be submitted within 60 days of arrival in Malta. (European Migration Network Malta, 2009, p. 12; Government of Malta, 2008, p. B 3356).

Beneficiaries of subsidiary protection and temporary humanitarian protection have the right to appeal within 15 days in order to be reconsidered for the Convention refugee status (Government of Malta, 2008). Free legal aid is provided, and an interpreter is arranged by the Refugee Appeals Boards if needed during the hearing (Government of Malta, 2008). The decision of the board is final; however, if their appeal is not successful, they can still submit another application if they can demonstrate new information on their case (European Migration Network Malta, 2009, p. 13). The application must be submitted within 15 days of when the applicant learns of the new information (Government of Malta, 2008).

Rights of Beneficiaries of International Protection
Depending on which status asylum seekers are given, they are entitled to different rights and benefits. The rights of beneficiaries of international protection in Malta are based on the Qualification Directive 2004/83/EC (European Commission, 2004). This section reviews the differences in benefits and services Convention refugees receive compared to beneficiaries of subsidiary protection status, according to Articles 20 to 32 of the Qualification Directive. For the purpose of the Directive, vulnerable persons, who have special rights include:

> *minors, unaccompanied minors, disabled people, elderly people, pregnant women, single parents with minor children, persons who have been subjected to torture, rape or other serious forms of psychological, physical or sexual violence* (Government of Malta, 2008, p. 20).

Vulnerable persons are under the responsibility of AWAS, which has specific Open Centres for them, albeit with limited capacity (UNHCR Malta, 2010b).

Article 21 Protection from refoulement
All beneficiaries of international protection are protected from deportation (Government of Malta, 2008).

Article 22 Information
According to the UNHCR Malta (2010b), people with international protection are given a copy of Article 14 of the Procedural Standards Regulations. Information sessions on rights, obligations, and other necessary information, for example how to get in touch with UNHCR, are held at Hal-Far Open Centre.

Article 23 Maintaining family unity
A major difference in rights are those associated with family reunification. Convention refugees have the right to family reunification while persons with subsidiary protection do not. For Convention refugees to exercise the right to family reunification, they must

provide documented proof of their relationship. They must also have been living in Malta for at least two years and have a permanent residence valid for a minimum of a year. In addition they must be employed and able to support and provide housing for their family members (UNHCR Malta, 2010a).

Article 24 Residence permits

Convention refugees are granted a residence permit valid for three years, while persons granted subsidiary protection are granted a residence permit of one year which is renewable (Government of Malta, 2008, p. B 3361).

Another major difference between Convention refugees and persons with subsidiary protection is their right to citizenship. Convention refugees have the right to citizenship while persons with subsidiary protection do not. Still, the path to citizenship for Convention refugees is not straightforward. Citizenship is given to Convention refugees after they have lived in Malta for 10 years at the discretion of the government, and is based on the self-sufficiency of the individual (UNHCR Malta, 2010b). Children born to either category of persons have the same status as their parents; that is, children of persons with subsidiary protection still have no right to citizenship (UNHCR Malta, 2010a).

Article 25 Travel document

Convention refugees can apply for a Convention travel document, while persons with subsidiary protection can apply for an alien passport (UNHCR Malta, 2010b).

Article 26 Access to employment

Convention refugees have the same rights as Maltese citizens. Therefore, they are eligible for all employment vacancies and have access to all related benefits; including the national insurance and unemployment benefits (UNHCR Malta, 2010a).

While persons with subsidiary protection are allowed to work "subject to labour market considerations" (Government of Malta, 2008, p. B3362). They however, do not have access to unemployment benefits (UNHCR Malta, 2010b). Unemployed persons with subsidiary protection are entitled to a fixed sum of €65.22 fortnightly, for which they have to sign three times a week at their Open Centre or AWAS's office (UNHCR Malta, 2010b). All beneficiaries of international protection have access to training programmes at the government's Employment Training Centre.

Article 27 Access to education

All children have to attend compulsory school between the ages of five and 16 years. They can either attend free state schools or fee-paying private and church schools, the same as Maltese children. Beneficiaries of international protection can apply to tertiary

education programmes, however there is no set admissions policy and each application is ad hoc. Certificates from country of origin are considered, each on its own merit (UNHCR Malta, 2010a; UNHCR Malta, 2010b)

Article 28 Social welfare

Convention refugees are entitled to social welfare, the same as Maltese nationals. For persons with subsidiary protection there are different provisions, for instance Article 26 access to employment, Article 27 access to education, and Article 29 access to health care.

Article 29 Health Care

Convention refugees are entitled to all free health services provided by the National Health Services, on the same basis as Maltese citizens. In contrast, persons with subsidiary protection are only provided with emergency health care. Any other medical services are provided on an ad hoc basis (UNHCR Malta, 2010a; UNHCR Malta, 2010b).

Article 30 Unaccompanied minors

According to the Refugee Act, unaccompanied minors should be treated the same as Maltese children under the Care Orders Act (Government of Malta, 2008).

Article 31 Access to accommodation

Individuals who have international protection can live for free in Open Centres, as long as they renew their contract. Additionally, those living in AWAS run Centres have to sign a "service agreement", a contractual agreement (UNHCR Malta, 2010a). Convention refugees are able to access government subsidized housing after they have lived in Malta for a year and if they have an income (UNHCR Malta, 2010a).

Article 32 Freedom of movement within the Member State

If beneficiaries of international protection are still in detention when a positive decision is taken, they are immediately released and can move freely within Malta.

Article 33 Access to integration facilities

Malta does not have an integration policy and it is currently not a political priority, even though a refugee is entitled to integration programmes as per Act 14 of Legal Notice 243 of the 2008 Refugee Act. Some integration programmes are offered by civil society and AWAS, but these are by no means comprehensive. According to (Government of Malta, 2008, p. B 3362) "persons enjoying subsidiary protection are also entitled to integration programmes".

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<u>Article 34 Repatriation</u>
Beneficiaries of international protection can apply for resettlement to other countries.

Conclusion

This Chapter argues that once a migration pathway is in existence it is difficult to dismantle, although a route can sometimes be altered. This means that Malta is likely to keep experiencing immigration, especially considering the networks migrants are forming and Malta's ageing population that is increasing the demand for cheap labour. It also analyses the world's refugee regime, and argues for the inclusion of the 'victim refugee' category. Lastly, this Chapter examines the EU's and Malta's Asylum Policy Framework to clarify the rights of beneficiaries of international protection.

Chapter 3   Profile of sub-Saharan African Immigrants in Malta

Introduction

This Chapter captures the diversity of the sub-Saharan African population living in Malta. It starts by offering an overview of migration to Malta and of the country's ethnic diversity. This is followed by an analysis of the different categories of sub-Saharans living in Malta. This Chapter also includes an analysis of two vulnerable groups of forced migrants: female forced migrants and unaccompanied minors in order to draw attention to their specific circumstances and needs. Laced throughout the Chapter are seven vignettes to humanise the narratives of sub-Saharan Africans. They are an amalgamation of interviews and participant observation that I conducted during my field work and do not necessarily represent one particular individual.

Migration to Malta

The population of Malta is by no means static and in 2008 alone 9,031 individuals immigrated to Malta, while 6,597 emigrated, putting the net migration at 2,434 individuals (European Migration Network Malta, 2011, p. 4). The foreign-born population was 4.4% of the total population in Malta, which at of the end of December 2008, stood at 413, 607 people (European Migration Network Malta, 2011, p. 7). According to Lutterbeck (2009, p. 124) this is considerably lower than the average for Western Europe, where the rate of the foreign-born varies between 7 and 15% of the population.

Of the 18,100 foreign-born individuals in Malta, 8,245 (2% of the country's total population) were citizens of other EU Member States while 9,883 (2.4%) were third-country nationals (TCN) (European Migration Network Malta, 2011, p. 7). In 2008, 4,984 first-residence permits were issued to TCN, mainly to citizens of Somalia, Russia, and China (European Migration Network Malta, 2011, pp. 21-22) (see Appendix 7). In all, 3,073 TCN were from highly-developed countries, 3,916 were from medium-developed countries, and 2,248 were from less-developed countries (European Migration Network Malta, 2011, p. 7). Since the European Migration Network Report does not break down its statistics according to countries, I am assuming that most countries from sub-Saharan Africa fall in the category of least-developed countries and for convenience and out of a lack of better statistics, I am extrapolating that there were at least 2,000 persons from sub-Saharan Africa living in Malta in 2008. However, considering that in 2008, 2,775 individuals arrived in an irregular manner alone, this is

an extremely low estimate[5] and it is entirely possible that since the report does not stipulate who was counted, it could well be that forced migrants were not counted as residents.

Ethnic Diversity in Malta

Although not present in political rhetoric, Malta is and always has been ethnically diverse. The geographical location of Malta, in the middle of long-established trade routes has strongly contributed to this diversity and if one goes back in history to explore family genealogy even those who consider themselves ethnic Maltese are in fact the end result of relationships caused by centuries of trade and conquest involving the entire Mediterranean and in some cases even further afield. In fact, during the middle ages and until 1814, there were Black African and Jewish slaves living in Malta (Wettinger, 2002).

There are Maltese people with African, American, Australian, British, Canadian, Chinese, Italian, Indian, Jewish, and Libyan decent, to name a few, all of which currently reside in Malta. In addition, the roughly 2.4% of the population that are third-country nationals (European Migration Network Malta, 2011, p. 7) also contribute to the ethnic diversity of the island. Castles and Miller (2009, p. 35) define ethnic minorities as groups which

1) *have been assigned a subordinate position in society by dominant groups on the basis of socially constructed markers of phenotype (that is, physical appearance or 'race'), origins or culture;*
2) *have some degree of collective consciousness (or feeling of being a community) based on a belief in shared language, traditions, religion, history and experiences.*

With regards to Malta, the term ethnic minority is starting to be used by policy makers and academics, mostly in EU-funded reports, for example Calleja, et al. (2010) and Gauci (2012). However, the government denies their presence and states that there are no ethnic minorities in Malta as described in the definition of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities that Malta signed in 1995 (Government of Malta, 2004). This statement is reflected in the lack of official statistics on ethnic minorities in Malta (Vallejo & Dooly, 2008). Indeed, I was unable to find official statistics on Maltese citizens' ethnicity, details of persons with mixed

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[5] A note on statistics in general: I found a few discrepancies in statistics where different sources did not match up or do not add up, as in this case.

heritage, or any information regarding first and second generation migrants; the only statistics available are based on nationality.

Therefore in order to get a picture of the different ethnic minorities in Malta, I had to compile information from different non-official sources. The following list is by no means comprehensive and at best it is a rough estimate of the ethnic minorities residing in Malta. This effort is simply meant to demonstrate that there are a substantial amount of ethnic minorities in Malta that to varying degrees merit policy-makers attention.

One of the oldest and smallest ethnic minorities in Malta is the Jewish population. According to Attard Bezzina's (2012) website, there are 120 persons of Jewish decent living in Malta. Another small ethnic minority is *l-Indjani*, the Indians as they are known in Malta, estimated to be at 300 individuals. They originated from the town of Hyderabad in Sindh (now in Pakistan), and came through the British Empire to start businesses in Malta. A majority of them are in fact still shop owners (Vallejo & Dooly, 2008, pp. 7-8; Falzon, 2001). A larger, more visible ethnic minority is the Arab-Muslim population, comprised of people from Libya, Palestine, Tunisia, and Egypt (Vallejo & Dooly, 2008, pp. 7-8). The Arab-Muslim population is estimated at 3,000 individuals and is large enough to have their own school in Malta where instruction is mainly in Arabic. Considering Malta's colonial history and its ties to Britain, another large ethnic minority is the British. In addition to those who have obtained Maltese citizenship, there are around 4,000 British expatriates and retirees living in Malta (Vallejo & Dooly, 2008, p. 8). Maltese with Italian heritage is another European minority. This minority is strongly represented, and each year a contestant from Malta takes part in a beauty pageant called Miss Italia nel Mundo (Miss Italy in the World).

Of those considered Maltese nationals, there are those who have acquired citizenship but were born elsewhere. In 2006 and 2008 an average of 5,666 migrants per year obtained Maltese citizenship (Eurostat - European Commission, 2011, p. 76). Some of these have obtained their citizenship through marriage with Maltese citizens while others are adopted from abroad. For example between 2001 and 2010, 116 children were adopted from Africa, mostly from Ethiopia, Kenya, and Malawi (National Statistics Office, 2011b).

Other ethnic minorities are more transitional. In the 90's, a few thousand refugees from Iraq and then-Yugoslavia arrived in Malta (National Statistics Office, 2002, p. 61; Vallejo & Dooly, 2008, pp. 7-8). Some decided to stay in Malta, and at the end of 2008, 806 Ex-Yugoslavians either had residence permits or are long-term third-country

national residents (European Migration Network Malta, 2011, pp. 21-22). There are also a number of Nigerians who come to Malta to play in the local football teams (Vallejo & Dooly, 2008, pp. 7-8), and who settle in Malta for a number of years. And a substantial amount of Maltese emigrated, primarily to Canada, Australia, England, and the USA, but also to Egypt and Nigeria, in the last century. These people and their children have access to Maltese citizenship, and some do return to Malta. In their research on ethnic minorities in schools Calleja, et al. found (2010, p. 19) found 555 students of ethnic minority background, representing 76 countries in primary and secondary state schools in Malta (one school district did not participate). Of these, 43 students were from sub-Saharan African countries. With the rise of forced migration from sub-Saharan Africa, this ethnic minority, if it is not already, has the potential to become one of the largest ethnic groups in Malta. This ethnic minority is discussed in detail in the next section.

Sub-Saharan Africans in Malta

As mentioned in the Introduction Chapter, people from sub-Saharan Africa can be divided into different categories according to their legal status in Malta. The most stable are the African Maltese, those who have obtained Maltese citizenship through marriage with Maltese citizens. Maltese citizenship can also be obtained after living in Malta for 5 years (Department for Citizenship and Expatriate Affairs, 2010). In 2009 and 2010, 51 males and 42 females from the southern part of the African continent, mainly from Nigeria and South Africa, got naturalized (National Statistics Office, 2011b; National Statistics Office, 2010). George is an example of an African Maltese who obtained Maltese citizenship through marriage:

> As part of a Commonwealth programme, George came to Malta as a secondary school student from Nigeria. He managed to stay in Malta and attend the University of Malta and graduated in Law before marrying a Maltese woman and having three children. He says he works hard at his managerial-level job to provide for his family and be able to send his children to private school, which he thinks is better than state schools. He disclosed to me, "I have lived here for 18 years in Malta so I'm practically a Maltese in all things...an African who has integrated into Maltese society."

George and others like him, strive to be included and treated as Maltese. Within the circle of people that know them, they manage to go about their day without disrupting this reality but it is different for the average Maltese who does not recognize that a black person can be Maltese, as discussed in Chapter 7, Racism - The Main Barrier to Integration.

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Established African immigrants also came to reside in Malta through legal channels. The people I encountered from this group have a temporary residence and/or a work permit that they obtained through their employment. The types of jobs my participants have included: chef, teacher, footballer, Pentecostal preacher, and business owner. The following vignette is about Nyoni, a chef from East Africa.

> *Nyoni is from East Africa and works in a hotel as a chef. He came to Malta to learn more about the tourism and hospitality industry because professionals receive a higher salary in his country if they have international experience. In addition to working full-time, he is also doing an online course in hospitality management at a foreign university and attends short courses provided by the Employment Training Centre (ETC). He plans to return to his country and open his own restaurant.*

Established African immigrants are less stable than the African Maltese because their residence permit depends first upon work availability and then on the government's willingness to renew it. Some established immigrants like Nyoni, are in Malta to learn specific skills and save money before returning to their country of origin, while others, like the following vignette of Blessings, really want to settle in Malta, but find it exceedingly difficult to obtain Maltese citizenship.

> *Blessings is an established-female immigrant originally from Nigeria. Once her husband established himself in a professional job in Malta she joined him. This is where she has been living for the past 10 years and where she has had her only son. She is educated, speaks English fluently and works in an office. Blessings gives the impression of having an outgoing personality and this is reflected in her social network; during our conversation she talked about her many Maltese and African friends, as well as the other influential people she knows from the American Embassy and the University of Malta. Our conversation ranged from food (she likes to cook Nigerian food), to marriage and the physique of Maltese women before focusing on migration. She clearly distinguished herself from 'the poor immigrants'- meaning the forced migrants that arrive in an irregular manner in Malta- and to emphasize the distinction, did not identify herself as an immigrant. Blessings has always been careful not to bring attention to herself; she has not, for example been overly vociferous in criticising how forced migrants are treated in Malta. She reasons that the Maltese do not want things to change. She did share; that the arrival of the forced migrants has made it harder for her family to renew their visa.*

The largest group of sub-Saharan immigrants in Malta, (those that get the most attention from the media, politicians, public, and researchers) are forced migrants that enter Malta in an irregular manner. In public rhetoric they are divided between the 'refugees' and the 'economic migrants'. 'Refugees' are those who obtain some form of international protection status, while 'economic migrants' are usually denied asylum and become failed asylum seekers. The following story is of Ahmed, a forced migrant who obtained international protection.

> *Ahmed is from Somalia, from a small tribe that faces discrimination from other tribes, and for this reason was only ever able to get menial jobs. One day militant Islamists forced him to become a soldier. He dared to refuse and went into hiding. That evening, members of the militant Islamist group fired a missile into the house where he was hiding and after a narrow escape from death, Ahmed managed to get away but concluded that he was no longer safe in Somalia. He crossed the Sahara desert with the help of smugglers but while on the jeep he fell off and broke his legs badly. The smugglers wanted to leave him for dead but the rest of the forced migrants wanted to save him. He arrived in Libya and needed surgery. The Somali community in Libya helped collect money for the operation and after a few years working in Libya, and with help of friends in Europe, he made enough money to cross the Mediterranean with the intention of reaching Italy. A storm mid-journey cost a few of those on board their lives, but luckily they were intercepted by Maltese coastguard officials, who brought them to Malta. Ahmed had never heard of Malta and spent a year and half in detention before he could see the island where he was living. He was hoping to get refugee status but as Ahmed put it, "they give me humanitarian and that is small a thing." He was fortunate enough to find work, and dreams of one day making it to the USA, getting full refugee status, and bringing his family over.[6]*

For this study I have used only data from those who have been forced to leave their countries and have thus obtained international protection like Ahmed. Yet I did meet and talked with failed asylum seekers such as Jason, who do make up a substantial percentage of sub-Saharan immigrants in Malta and therefore deserve to be mentioned.

> *Jason is originally from Nigeria. He told me, "I'm not here for money, my father is not poor, not rich. I just want to travel, see something else". Yet, he was unable*

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[6] This vignette is based on real accounts of two forced migrants.

to travel through legal channels; he claimed that his Nigerian passport is rubbish, not good for anything, so Jason, who is in his mid-twenties decided to take a rickety boat from Libya to Europe to try his luck. This resulted in him being detained for 1 year and 7 days. He still applied for asylum and his application was rejected. As a failed asylum seeker his future is precarious, but he has now been in Malta for three years. He works as an electrician, a well-paying job compared to the other jobs forced migrants regularly find in Malta. He does however have problems with his boss, as Jason doesn't think his boss treats him right. He dreams of starting to work on his own. He confessed that he is lonely in Malta and badly wants to make Maltese friends. He has even tried different churches, including an African Evangelic Church in order to find a place where he belongs. He hopes he can travel to other countries in Europe before settling again in Nigeria.

Forced migrants are the least stable of the sub-Saharan Africans in Malta. Most of them are either resettled in other countries, continue their journey to mainland Europe, or return to their countries, while failed asylum seekers are constantly threatened with deportation.

Forced migration to Malta and the rest of the Mediterranean is a gendered migration: more males than females attempt to cross the borders in an irregular manner. This is due to the fact that the journey from sub-Saharan Africa to Europe is a notoriously dangerous, long, and expensive one. The majority of forced migrants in Malta are young males in their 20's to early 30's. Only 12% of all forced migrants that arrived in Malta between 2002 and 2009 were female; a total of 1,260 women and girls (Ministry for Justice and Home Affairs, Third Country Nationals Office, 2010). My data represents this difference in gender ratio since all of the forced migrants interviewees were men. Yet, female forced migrants do represent a percentage of the forced migrant population. They face different circumstances and have particular needs and in order to address and highlight these differences, the next section discusses the experience of female forced migrants in Malta.

Female forced migrants

The lived experience of refugee women is very different from that of men: women bear children, are usually the main caregivers in the family, and are more likely to be sexually assaulted in the complex emergencies that cause forced migration, and indeed, during the migration experience itself. In addition, female forced migrants are also less likely to have had an education that would enable them to speak the European languages, and overall, they are less experienced in public life which results

in having fewer skills to access employment and therefore be self sufficient. All of these factors have an impact on their social integration.

Female forced migrants are at risk of sexual assault, exploitation, and of being trafficked for sex work during their flight to seek safety, which is on the increase as borders get tighter (Martin, 2004, pp. 45-46). Vulnerability of female asylum seekers does not, unfortunately, end when they arrive in a country of asylum. In the case of Malta, even though female asylum seekers might be categorized as 'vulnerable persons' according to the Council Directive 2004/83/EC (2004) because they have been raped en route, are pregnant, or have children with them, they are still detained. After a period of detention, the AWAS Vulnerable Adults Assessment Team, in collaboration with Detention Services, then finds alternative accommodation for those deemed 'vulnerable'. Until this Council Directive came into effect, pregnant women were detained for a much longer time, some until they gave birth.

Especially before 2009, when some men and women were detained in the same compounds due to overcrowding, Gerard and Pickering (2012, p. 520) refer to cases of "sexual violence and forced pregnancies in detention centres". They (2012, p. 520) argue that the perpetrators acted with impunity because of "the extensive system of gendered social control in Malta". They posit that female forced migrants are at an extreme disadvantage for a number of reasons: Malta is predominantly Catholic and the Catholic Church is a major lobbyist in keeping abortion illegal. The Catholic Church was also a major player behind the 'no for divorce' campaign (The Times of Malta, 2011a). Malta is a conservative country, one where women are expected to attend to the family instead of participate in the labour market – this is especially so in decision-making positions (National Statistics Office, 2012b). And lastly, Malta is a country, where rape is not considered a serious crime.

However, Gerard and Pickering overlook the fact that rape happens in detention centres in other industrialized countries as well, for example, Martin (2004, pp. 49-50) quotes incidences of rape in American detention centres. So rather than the gendered social control stemming solely from the Catholic Church and conservative Malta, sexual violence and forced pregnancies on women are also rooted in the policy of detention, the set-up of the detention centres, the lack of accountability in the Detention Services, especially with regards to the guards, and the lack of voice and power refugee women have, especially when imprisoned.

In their research Gerard and Pickering (2012, p. 519) found anecdotal evidence (no statistics exist) that a substantial percentage of the women in detention get pregnant.

This has led some service providers to come to the conclusion that refugee women use pregnancy as a strategy to get out of detention quicker, be given better accommodation in Open Centres (Gerard & Pickering, 2012, pp. 519-520), and get resettled elsewhere, since bigger families and single women with children have a higher chance of being selected for resettlement programmes. Rash conclusions such as these stigmatize pregnant refugee women. A common derogatory remark amongst Maltese people about female forced migrants is that they all get pregnant. I have even come across a female doctor who complained about this. Women get pregnant for a variety of reasons, including rape, and if the pregnancy is unwanted in Malta they have no access to abortion.

Childbirth is more complicated in women who have undergone Female Genital Cutting, and doctors and midwives in Malta are unlikely to have knowledge and experience of this (Gerard & Pickering, 2012, p. 520). When female forced migrants need medical assistance, it can often be traumatic. During previous research, I interviewed a doctor who recounted how he had had a difficult time explaining to a female refugee that she had suffered a miscarriage and needed a Dilation and Curettage, a medical procedure which is needed after some miscarriages. Language barriers made it impossible for the doctor to explain what was happening to his patient and it did not help the situation when she did not want to remove her veil and long dress to put on a hospital gown. This experience probably made the patient feel isolated and violated. The doctor and his team were exasperated and I might surmise that this experience negatively influenced their future interactions with refugee women.

According to Gerard & Pickering (2012, p. 521) female forced migrants find it difficult to "survive" in Malta. Martin (2004, p. 134) classifies the barriers refugee women face as twofold: "barriers within the host society," and "personal barriers". "Barriers within the host society" include racism, which in the case of refugee women, is compounded with sexual and cultural discrimination. Not employing a refugee woman because of her *hijab* or by making its removal a condition for employment, practices found by Gerard and Pickering (2012, p. 522), is an example of cultural discrimination. "Personal barriers" can include family problems (there can be an increased incidence of domestic abuse especially so if there is a change in gender roles) dealing with trauma from country of origin and voyage, and unfamiliarity with the language and culture of the host country (Martin, 2004, p. 134). Further limiting their employment options, the majority of the female forced migrants in Malta do not speak English or Maltese. The most common employment for female forced migrants in Malta is within the tourism industry as maids (Gerard & Pickering, 2012, p. 522); however this type of employment tends to be part-time and seasonal. Another personal barrier is in finding affordable

child-care, which in Malta is problematic in general. For those women who have young children, who do not have a basic command English or Maltese, and who have no professional skills; they are locked for years of uncertainty in limbo, stuck with few prospects of becoming independent, as is the case of Saleema.

> *I had a hard time communicating with Saleema, a beneficiary of international protection, because she speaks very little English or Maltese. Since I did not want to use a male forced migrant as an interpreter (the only interpreters available), we had to rely on a limited vocabulary and non-verbal communication. Saleema arrived in Malta in an irregular manner, she travelled all the way from Ethiopia with her young daughter. She referred to herself as a 'single mother' which is how social workers refer to women who come to Malta without a partner. I did not ask her if she was married or not, but the term 'single woman/male,' is used locally to refer to forced migrants that have travelled on their own and does not necessarily indicate their marital status. In fact, most of the 'single males' I interviewed have wives either in their country of origin or elsewhere in Europe.*

> *Saleema lives in a small church-run Open Centre where she shares a communal living area and kitchen with several other 'single mothers' and families. The communal area is always buzzing with women and children, and the TV is always on a Somali station for the purpose of either entertaining the children or informing the adults. Saleema prepares her meals alongside other women. Individually they cook their own food in a small communal kitchen adjacent to the living area. She shares a private room with her daughter. In the room they have a double bed and a single mattress on the floor, a chest of drawers, a wardrobe, a small fridge, and a TV. Both the mother and the daughter are very proud of their room. The girl showed me her toys and shared some sweets. Like her daughter, Saleema was generous and on my visits, though I sensed that she had little to share, always offered food and drink. Considering her language barriers, it is hard for her to find employment so she does not work and lives on subsistence from the government, the church, and the Maltese people who have befriended her. The first time I went to visit she was excited to show me a mechanical food processor that her Maltese friend gave her. She spends most of her days inside the centre and goes to the local biweekly outdoor market to do her shopping.*

Female forced migrants that have difficulty finding employment can easily face destitution, which leads refugee women to resort to sex work to sustain themselves (Martin, 2004, pp. 52-53). According to Martin (2004, pp. 52-53) sex work "involves

primarily single refugee women, women and girls who are unaccompanied, as well as female heads of household." I was informed by two of my interviewees that prostitution is happening at both the Marsa and Hal-Far Open Centres. Gerard and Pickering (2012) were also informed of this through third party sources. One of my Maltese interviewees even speculated that prostitution was happening in the closed centres. I reason that the uneven gender ratio of male to female forced migrants supports the demand for sex workers. The clients of the sex workers are usually refugee men who, similar to the practices of male migrant workers within Africa (Campbell, 2003), sometimes partner up with a woman available locally even though they are married. But prostitution in the Hal-Far area has also drawn Maltese clients. As with all sex work, the risk of sexual abuse, sexually transmitted diseases, and unwanted pregnancies increases and considering that there is a lack of sexual health education and access to birth control, not only in general within Malta but more importantly within the closed/open centres, this is an area where policy and good practice needs further development.

Gerard and Pickering (2012, p. 521) argue that female forced migrants are in a more vulnerable position because in Malta most female forced migrants get subsidiary protection instead of refugee status, what they call a "diluted legal protection". Once women register as asylum seekers in Malta they cannot apply for asylum elsewhere and because of the Dublin II regulation have to reside in Malta. Gerard and Pickering (2012, p. 525) argue that the Dublin II regulation affects women more acutely than men since they are more likely to value social networks and migrate to be with family members. In addition, other European countries have specific benefits and services for women that are unavailable in Malta (Gerard & Pickering, 2012, p. 525). During their fieldwork, one in five of the women they interviewed was returned from other European countries under the Dublin II.

Gerard and Pickering (2012, p. 527) argue that female forced migrants are not finding the protection they deserve and are looking for. They are simply being "contained" in Malta, away from mainland Europe (Gerard & Pickering, 2012, p. 527). Gerard and Pickering (2012, p. 519) concluded that female forced migrants in Malta are unduly punished for arriving in Malta illegally. I second their conclusions and suggest that there is an urgent need for creating gender specific policies (as opposed to the gender blind policies currently in place), that would benefit female asylum seekers and beneficiaries of international protection. There is also a crucial need for programmes designed and managed by refugee women that empower refugee women (Martin, 2004, pp. 141-144). Finally, there is a dire need of a gendered analysis on immigration and refugee integration in Malta. Another vulnerable group that is under represented

in research are unaccompanied minors, and so the next section discusses their experiences and needs.

Unaccompanied Minors

Unaccompanied minors are defined as persons under 18 years of age who are travelling without a relative. Between 2002 and 2008, 223 individuals were identified as minors by the Maltese Government (Pace, et al., 2009, p. 13). Individuals accepted as minors are generally given some a type of international protection, most commonly subsidiary protection status (Refugee Commissioner, 2010).

When unaccompanied minors land or are brought to Malta, they are first questioned by the police in order to determine the details regarding their journey. The presence of a guardian is not permitted, and as pointed out by Pace, et al. (2009, p. 15) in the European Migration Network Report on Unaccompanied Minors, this is an infringement of the UN's Convention on the Rights of the Child. The police disregard this right because it conflicts with Maltese laws to have "legal assistance at police interrogations" (Pace, et al., 2009, p. 15).

After being interrogated, unaccompanied minors are taken to detention centres where they are placed in sections, depending on space availability, with vulnerable adults and families (Pace, et al., 2009, p. 19). In order to facilitate their release from detention the police notify AWAS if they suspect any noticeable minors have arrived, but in order to be released from detention, minors have to be interviewed by the Age Assessment Panel, and if their age is disputed, there are other steps, including the Tanner and Whitehouse Hand and Wrist Test, that will be utilized (Pace, et al., 2009, p. 20). Between 2002 and 2008, from a total of 1,197 individuals, 974 were not accepted as minors because the age determining tests mentioned above concluded that they were not minors (Pace, et al., 2009, p. 10).

Once the status of a minor is determined they are issued a care order, and provided that they clear a medical examination, will be released and housed in residential hostels (Pace, et al., 2009, p. 20). There are currently three hostel residences, two managed by the government agency AWAS (Dar is-Sliem and Dar il-Liedna), and another by the Catholic Church. Dar is-Sliem is a mixed hostel for those under 16 years of age, while Dar il-Liedna is specifically for male youth over 16. In each of these residences, there is a care coordinator overseeing one social worker and a number of care-workers, some of whom are forced migrants (Pace, et al., 2009, p. 22). The Church-affiliated home is for those who for various reasons need extra care or have difficulties in the other hostels (Pace, et al., 2009, p. 22).

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While providing information about the lived experiences of minors in Malta, the following vignette details the challenges and rewards of attending to unaccompanied minors in one of these hostel residences. Ideally, this vignette would have been from the perspective of an unaccompanied minor. Since I did not get permission from the senior hostel coordinator to visit and directly observe or interview the young persons, the best I could do was to talk informally to Jude[7], a care-worker in one of the residences for unaccompanied minors.

> *Jude talks about the minors in a very motherly, protective tone. She recalled how one of the minors suffered from a bout of TB; how she herself had to call the ambulance and accompany him to the hospital. She tells me that the young persons under her care treat her as someone special to them. They ask her to sit and eat with them, and when they call home (their country of origin), they ask her to talk to their mothers.*

> *The young persons have chores in the house; besides cleaning their rooms they also have to attend to a roster of other cleaning duties. Jude said that she is very strict with them since they are not always keen to do their chores. With a smile, she recounted how they once dropped oil all over the floor while cooking. She made sure they cleaned it up. Food items and cooking supplies are delivered directly to the house and the young persons are encouraged to make their own meals. As any mother might, sometimes Jude relents and cooks and cleans for them.*

> *Jude recounted, in a disappointed tone how a private Catholic school had admitted a few unaccompanied minors on scholarships, and even provided the minors with uniforms and books, yet these young people stopped wanting to go. Rather than the school environment being unwelcoming she concluded that the minors were ungrateful for the opportunity. Jude went on to say that the temptation to work is of utmost priority in their minds since some want to continue their journey to Italy. Those who are older than 16 find work at The Hard Rock Café and at a bakery called Maypole. Jude told me that they are paid less than Maltese workers and that she tries to make them aware of the minimum wage they should be paid.*

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[7] Name changed for anonymity.

> *As a native-born Maltese, Jude tries to understand the minors' culture and religion. For example, she tries not to interrupt when they are praying because she has come to understand that Muslims, if they are interrupted, have to start all over again, and she respects their effort. On the other hand, Jude did disclose to me that sometimes she is apprehensive that they might hurt her, especially when minors are aggressive towards her. Some of the minors, especially the older ones who do not want to be in residential homes, have escaped. Jude is worried that they will run away while under her care so she prefers to lock them in their room at night.*

I do not know if locking boys in their rooms at night is usual practice in the residential homes or if it is a technique that only this particular care worker employs. But the action, when noted alongside the additional security concerns, which are evidently an issue in the residential homes since Pace, et al. (2009, p. 22) recommended additional security measures to be placed there, does indicate inconsistency and seems more in line with detention practices rather than being part of a caring home where minors are understood and embraced as community members. As for the education of minors, according to Pace et al. (2009), schools are having a hard time providing the right environment for ethnic minorities and this makes it more likely for unaccompanied minors to drop-out. This is of concern since Malta already has a high percentage of early school leavers compared to other EU countries (Vallejo & Dooly, 2008, p. 11).

When compared to other forced migrants groups, policy and practice toward unaccompanied minors has received a lot of attention and resources (especially considering that the Maltese government built specific residences for them), but there is still a lot of work to be done to help unaccompanied minors integrate in Malta. Most importantly, there is a need for change both in the education policy and in the schools' set-up, so that young forced migrants do not drop out. And perhaps more appropriate than additional security in the residential hostels, there is greater need of trained personnel to meet the needs of different age groups since one social worker for 16 young people is hardly enough. I recommend programmes that target minors' psychosocial issues, others programmes that provide entertainment, and still others that help with the transition to adulthood. Lastly, minors should be treated as such and as soon as they land, not when their age is formally assessed. As Pace, et al. (2009, p. 21) argue, minors are staying in detention for far too long, especially when their age is disputed. They, as well as I, advise the policy on detention for minors to change.

Conclusion

This Chapter argues that Malta is a multi-ethnic country and that it is arguably time that Malta started celebrating its rich and changing heritage. It demonstrates the diversity within one of these ethnic groups – the sub-Saharan Africans. They arrive in Malta in different ways, for different reasons, have different needs and different aspirations. Aside from the forced migrants which are quickly changing the ethnicity of the Maltese islands, it is people like George, Nyoni, and Blessings that the Maltese political rhetoric ignores when it denies the ethnic diversity within the Maltese Islands. Yet, the voice of African Maltese and established African immigrants, although not currently represented in academic research, is invaluable in strengthening the argument that Malta needs an integration policy and a stronger race-relations policy, especially since it is these people that the EU immigrant integration polices are particularly targeting. This Chapter also discusses two vulnerable groups – female forced migrants and unaccompanied minors, whose experiences and needs vary from those of the majority of male forced migrants.

Chapter 4   Theories and Policies of Inclusion and Settlement

Introduction

Countries of destination are weary of the social consequences immigration can have on their country and therefore governments and policy-makers try to control the social changes that are created with the arrival of new immigrants (Cheong, et al., 2007). Over the years and depending on how social scientists and policy-makers think immigrants should behave and be treated, destination countries have introduced different inclusion and settlement policies to address these social changes, namely assimilation, multiculturalism, and integration. These models vary from policies that expect immigrants to deny their culture and language of origin and adopt those of the destination country, a one sided process of change, such as assimilation, to integration, a two-way process of change, a policy where both the immigrants and the local population are expected to adapt.

In this Chapter, models of inclusion and settlement, specifically assimilation, multiculturalism, social cohesion, and integration are discussed. These models of inclusion are difficult to abstract from the policies they have informed as their meaning is tied to a specific country and a specific time, and therefore, it is difficult to have one universal meaning for each of these terms. For this reason, they are also discussed in relation to specific periods of time within the countries in which they occurred. Assimilation is discussed within the context of the USA in the early 20th century, multiculturalism and social cohesion in the UK context of the 1970's onwards, and finally integration, in the context of the European Union since the 1990's.

Assimilation

Assimilation is the first model of immigrant inclusion used in migration studies; it was made popular in the USA in the early 20th century. The word assimilation means "to compare" or "to make like", and originates in biology, where it is part of the digestive process, where broken down food is absorbed and incorporated into the body (Park, 1914, p. 606). Academics studying assimilation had a different interpretation of assimilation; most assimilationists believed that immigrants should adapt and become like the established population while some argued that assimilation should involve changes in both the immigrants and the established community (Bernard, 1967; Gordon, 1961). However this latter view of assimilation, is often known as integration (Bernard, 1967) and therefore, for the purpose of this Chapter, assimilation will be

discussed as a one-sided process of change where immigrants are expected to become like the majority of the population.

There are two stages of assimilation, the first stage being the acquisition of language, culture, and habits of the established community (Park, 1914). This stage is known as behavioural assimilation, with the adoption of culture specifically referred to as acculturation (Gordon, 1964). The second stage refers to the ability of the migrants to access civic and political organisations and become incorporated into a host population (Park, 1914), referred to as structural assimilation (Gordon, 1964). Gordon (1964) argues that behavioural assimilation can only lead to structural assimilation if immigrants form secondary relationships, that is, relationships formed at work, through political participation and community engagement. But most immigrants form only primary relationships: those between family and friends, at religious congregations and in leisure activities within their own ethnic enclaves, even though they have gone through behavioural assimilation (Gordon, 1964). Moving outside the ethnic enclave has been a major barrier for assimilation and for producing a common "national type" that acts towards "national solidarity", a common aim of assimilation (Park, 1914, p. 608).

Assimilation – The case of the USA

In the USA a number of immigrant inclusion policies directed mainly towards immigrants of European descent, resulted from the debates of assimilation. Assimilation was then used as a collective term to indicate different policies including, Anglo-conformity, Americanization, the Melting Pot model, and Cultural Pluralism (Gordon, 1961). In these policies, assimilation was mostly understood in its more conservative definition, as a one-sided process of change (Bernard, 1967).

According to Gordon (1961), Anglo-conformity, the idea that European immigrants should adopt the English language and customs, was the first policy of inclusion used in the USA. Americans that fought the American Revolution did not want their way of life to change by the arrival of other immigrants from Europe. They believed that English blood was superior, and therefore wanted the English language and the Anglo-Saxon culture to be the norm for their new nation. This also resulted in them treating others (that is non-English, non-White) as their inferiors.

As America built itself as a nation, it branched away from identifying itself as Anglo and instead, being American took precedence, which shifted the inclusion policy to Americanization. What was important in the early 20th century, especially before World War I, was that immigrants' allegiance was to America. Kallen (1915, p. 4) describes

Americanization as "adoption of English speech, of American clothes and manners, of the American attitude in politics," where the effort was mostly on the second generation (Bernard, 1967). This policy was fairly effective, and most Americans of this second generation became indistinguishable from native born (Park, 1914). However, this generation became so American that sometimes it resulted in ethnic self-hatred as young people blamed their exclusion from institutions on their ethnicity and shunned their own culture and family in order to fit in (Gordon, 1964). Americanization was effective only for immigrants from Northern Europe, the experience of immigrants from Southern Europe and other countries, and that of European Jews, was altogether different, not to mention the experiences of African Americans and other ethnic minorities.

Another alternative to the Anglo-conformity model was the Melting-Pot argument. In 1909 Israel Zangwill, in his play titled 'The Melting-Pot' described America as:

> *America is God's crucible, the great Melting-Pot where all the races of Europe are melting and reforming.* (Zangwill, 1909, p. 37)

Zangwill, in an attempt to describe how the nation of America became as it is, points out that Americans are a new people, forged from many immigrants into a distinct people with their own culture and biology. The Melting Pot model was such an influential term that it is still used today.

Kallen (1915) refutes Anglo-conformity, Americanization, and the Melting-Pot as good models for inclusion of immigrants because, although immigrants showed Anglo-conformity, the different ethnic groups still kept their languages, traditions, and religions alive, and lived in separate neighbourhoods resulting in an America that was still divided according to ethnicity and along class lines. He remarked that this was due to exclusionary practices in the USA that forced immigrants to become conscious of their own differences in terms of nation of birth, ethnicity, and skin colour. This led to the immigrants holding on more tightly to their language and religion and preferring to remain in ethnic enclaves where they had the support of each other. Similarly, Gordon (1964) argues that immigrants in the USA were only experiencing behavioural assimilation, mainly acculturation, as immigrants faced multiple barriers when accessing the Anglo-Saxon organisations, impeding them from structural assimilation. In contrast, Park (1914) noted that once immigrants and their second generations managed to accomplish behavioural assimilation they were able to move in any circle that they wanted and thus obtain structural assimilation. In response, Kallen (1915) promoted the policy of cultural pluralism, where different cultures could contribute to the American culture, which is the reality nowadays.

Multiculturalism

Multiculturalism has three interrelated yet distinctive meanings. The demographic-descriptive meaning refers to a society formed of people from different ethnic backgrounds, termed "circumstances of multiculturalisms" by Kelly (2002, p. 3). In the programmatic-political sense, multiculturalism refers to those political programmes and policy initiatives responding to and managing ethnic diversity in society. While, in the ideological-normative sense, multiculturalism is a political theory that defends and protects ethnic diversity in society and ensures that rights of ethnic minorities are respected (Inglis, 1996; Kelly, 2002). This section focuses on the ideological-normative meaning of multiculturalism.

Kelly (2002) divides multiculturalism into two main camps of thought. There are multicultural theorists that argue for "an equal recognition of culture" (Parekh, 2000; Young, 1990, p. 5) and those that argue for a more liberal approach to social equality and participation (Kymlicka, 1995; Raz, 1994). Liberal multiculturalists believe everyone should have equal opportunities, and "equality is a distributive criterion for rights, welfare, and resources" (Kelly, 2002, p. 10). Kelly (2002) argues that if culture is considered to be a part of one's self-identity then not respecting that culture or not allowing the practice of it means not treating that individual equally. Liberal multiculturalists argue that immigrants and ethnic minorities need to participate in all aspects of state and social institutions to gain equality. Therefore for everyone in a multicultural society to have equal opportunities or equal protection of the laws, exceptions to accommodate differences in culture have to be allowed. Kymlicka (1995), unlike Young (1990) and Parekh (2000), argues that practising one's cultures does not exclude liberal values because culture gives people moral guidance. Those in favour of cultural recognition believe that migrants have the right to pursue their own culture and language to establish communities; this helps the group be united and self-protective against discrimination (Vasta, 2008). However, cultural recognition without equality seems to echo the segregation of ethnic communities rather than promote inclusion.

Young (1990) and Parekh (2000) argue that culture is part of our identity and it cannot be separated from who we are as persons. Cultures are after all, what makes social groups different from one another. However Kelly (2002) argues that using the protection of cultural differences in arguments, for the protection of migrants and the ethnic minorities' rights, is not a strong argument. Far right nationalist groups can argue against diversity by stating that it dilutes the majority's culture and that in order to protect their own culture they should control diversity.

Parekh (2009) describes two sets of values, universal moral values, that allow diversity and which everyone should respect, regardless of cultural background or cultural specific values. If cultural values undermine universal values then they can no longer be respected. Similarly, Turner (1993) argues that if we want equality for all cultures in a multicultural state, then that state has to make sure that its institutions are not representing a cultural tradition. For example, the state cannot support the celebration of Christmas but not that of Hanukkah, otherwise it reflects inequality and preferential treatment since the majority are Christians. To ensure this equality, "different and targeted political responses" are required by the state (Kelly, 2002, p. 13). Such equality and neutrality is difficult to achieve however, but a balanced respect towards all cultures is feasible.

Irrespective of the differences between the two camps of multiculturalism, Modood (2007) and Parekh (2000) argue that policies of inclusion should respect cultural recognition, social equality, and participation. Kelly (2002) argues that neither the political right nor the political left protect the rights of minorities. The multiculturalists' focus on culture blinds them from the real issues of unequal treatment and injustice:

> What minority groups really want are the rights and resources enjoyed by those in positions of dominance and power, rather than the protection of cultural hierarchies that benefit those who enjoy the position of cultural entrepreneurs. (Kelly, 2002, p. 13)

Multiculturalism – The case of the UK

Britain, like the USA, also had an assimilationist approach to migrant inclusion. Britain's shift toward multiculturalism started in the 1960's and was adopted from similar policies that Canada and Australia were implementing at the time (Vasta, 2009). A policy of multiculturalism that addressed the needs of ethnic minorities featured most prominently in policies of education, health, and social services.

In recent years multiculturalism has been attacked from a political philosophy stance, as discussed in the previous section, but it has also been attacked in practice. The following are some prevailing arguments against immigrants and multiculturalism in Europe:

> Too much diversity undermines cohesion; immigrants do not take the responsibility to integrate; the receiving country has been too lenient or generous; multiculturalism leads to segregation; it leads to welfare dependency; multiculturalism, by concentrating too much on ethnic cultures, identities and religions, prevents immigrants from integrating into the dominant culture and

national identity; multiculturalism undermines western democratic values; it allows an inflated tolerance to cultural and religious difference; multiculturalism is too focused on cultural rights of groups rather than on the rights of the individual. (Vasta, 2008, p. 9)

The attack of the World Trade Towers September 11th 2001, in conjunction with the London bombing and the trouble in northern cities, gave the necessary excuses to change policies affecting ethnic minorities, immigrants, and asylum seekers. Multiculturalism in Britain was seen to have allowed for separatism rather than cohesion between ethnic minorities and the dominant group, which allegedly lead to ethnic minorities living "parallel lives" (Vasta, 2008). On the contrary, Finney & Simpson (Finney & Simpson, 2009, pp. 91-110) challenge the idea that minorities do not want to integrate and are leading "parallel lives". From their research they show that it is in fact the majority white population that secludes itself, and immigrants and minorities should not have to suffer the consequences of one-way assimilation policies. And Cheong et al. (2007) argue that Britain's move away from multiculturalism to a focus on assimilation and social cohesion is only shifting away the attention from what is important - economic inequality.

Social Cohesion

The meaning of social cohesion is contested and it varies in how it is used in policy from country to country. Social cohesion is an important term to the sociology of social organization (Putnam, 1993). Kearns and Forrest (2000) define a cohesive society as one that

'hangs together'; all the component parts somehow fit in and contribute to society's collective project and well-being; and conflict between societal goals and groups, and disruptive behaviours, are largely absent or minimal.

While Chan et al. (2006, p. 289) define social cohesion is as

a state of affairs concerning both the vertical and the horizontal interactions among members of society as characterized by a set of attitudes and norms that includes trust, a sense of belonging and the willingness to participate and help, as well as their behavioural manifestations.

In order for there to be social cohesion Chan et al. (2006) argue that access to services such as employment, housing, health-care, and education need to be equal. And in order to ensure fairness, there also need to be mechanisms in place for civic participation.

Although they were not specifically discussing ethnic minorities and immigrants, Kearns and Forrest (2000) did an intensive study on social cohesion. They conceived of

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five components which are necessary for a cohesive society: common values and a civic culture, social order and social control, social networks and social capital, social solidarity and reductions in wealth disparities, and place attachment and identity.

Common values and a civic culture, is probably the most contested of the five components. Kearns and Forrest (2000) similarly to Parekh (2000) believe that a socially cohesive society is one based on common values and a common set of moral principles. The difficulties lie in deciding the common values that will direct the aims of the society. Especially when the society is not homogenous, there is the problem that the voice of the minorities will go unheard, and the values and moral principles of the dominant groups will be enforced (Parekh, 2000; Young, 2000). In addition, focusing solely on values and moral principles has not yet brought peace to the world; instead it would be better to focus on common political values since supporting political institutions and the act of participating in political discourse is considered vital for social cohesion (Kearns & Forrest, 2000).

Another aspect of social cohesion is social order (the lack of conflict within a society) and social control. In a cohesive society, social control would be kept to a minimum and social order would be achieved and maintained through tolerance rather than coercive methods (Kearns & Forrest, 2000). Therefore Kearns and Forrest (2000) point out that cultural tolerance, both between different ethnic groups and between generations, is an important aspect of social order. They warn that people who do not form part of the social network and fall through the cracks of society are at a higher risk of breaking social order.

 Social solidarity and reduction in wealth disparities, the third component, is about achieving equal standards of economic and social development, where everyone has "equal access to services and welfare benefits" (Forrest & Kearns, 2001, p. 2129). Social solidarity happens to be one of the founding principles of the European Union. It is widely spread in its politics and is used to achieve the EU goals of common economic, social, and environmental standards which are met through the redistribution of financial resources and opportunities between and within the different countries (Kearns & Forrest, 2000). Kearns and Forrest (2000) are careful to point out that social solidarity should not only be left to the state but should also occur at the societal level.

A cohesive society would be characterised by a "high degree of social interaction within communities and families," and "civic engagement" (Forrest & Kearns, 2001, p. 2129). Several layers of social networking have been identified: bonding between community

members, bridging between different communities, and linking the community with state institutions (Ager & Strang, 2008; Woolcock, 1998). An integral part of social networks formation is the concept of social capital, defined by Putnam (1996, p. 56) as

> *features of social life – networks, norms and trust – that enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives.*

Putnam's theory of social capital has been used by researchers to explain steps necessary for integration of immigrants at the community level (Ager & Strang, 2008).

The last component of social cohesion is place attachment and "intertwining of personal and place identity" (Forrest & Kearns, 2001, p. 2129). Kearns and Forrest (2000, p. 1001) argue that having a connection to the place where you live leads

> *to social cohesion through its positive effects upon such things as the adherence to common values and norms and a willingness to participate in social networks and build social capital.*

However, Kearns and Forrest (2000) caution that people can become territorial about a place and form a closed community having different values than that of the wider community, or worse, that it becomes an enclave of poverty and disadvantaged groups. It is important to note that all five components of social cohesion identified by Kearns and Forrest (2000) are all connected together and affect each other.

Social Cohesion in Practice – The case of the UK

In the UK there was a shift in inclusion policies from supporting multiculturalism to ones supporting social cohesion. According to Cheong et al. (2007) this policy change is highlighted in the Denham (2001) Report; *Building Cohesive Communities: A Report of the Ministerial Group on Public Order and Community Cohesion,* the Cantle (2001) Report; *Community Cohesion: A Report of the Independent Review*, and the Home Office (2004) Report; *Strength in Diversity - Towards a Community Cohesion and Race Equality Strategy*. Policies based on social cohesion have been criticised because they encouraged 'cultural homogeneity' through the use of citizenship courses and ceremonies to publically 'baptise' non-British as British and ultimately reduced the freedoms of ethnic minorities (Home Office, 2002; Vasta, 2009; Cheong, et al., 2007). Analysing similar policies introduced in France which failed to achieve cultural homogeneity, it has been speculated that this push towards social cohesion and away from multiculturalism in Britain will also not achieve the homogeneity and social order desired (Simon, 2006; Vasta, 2009). For social cohesion to succeed there needs to be less of a focus on shared values and increase in social order, and more of a focus on building social networks and reducing wealth disparities.

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Integration

The term integration was first used at a UNESCO Conference in 1956 in Havana, titled *Cultural Integration of Immigrants*. It has been since then used by sociologists like Bernard (1967) who believed that cultural differentiation is important for the unity of a state made up of immigrants like the United States of America. Bernard (1967) highlights that while immigrants in the USA accepted the American language, culture, and customs, they also held on to customs from their homeland, and this integration has enriched the American culture and nation.

Integration has become the inclusion policy of use within the European Union (EU), where it is defined as:

> *Integration is generally characterised as a dynamic and long-term two-way process of mutual accommodation of the society of destination and the migrants who should reach an active participation in social, economic, political and cultural life* (European Integration Forum, 2011).

Inherent in this definition of integration is multiculturalism. In fact (Rudiger & Spencer, 2003, p. 15) coin the term "multicultural integration", where

> *Multicultural integration policies support neither the crossing of boundaries from one culture to another, as do assimilation policies, nor the preservation of those boundaries, as does segregation, but aim to foster their permeability. By facilitating participation of all groups in all social, economic and political spheres, such policies foster the continual development and cross-fertilisation of cultures and identities and can therefore help overcome divisions and segregation.*

Ager and Strang (2008) identified eleven domains of integration, which are further divided into four levels, that they deem crucial for successful integration of immigrants (or third-country nationals as referred to in EU language) (see Figure 1). The 'Foundation' level encompasses the domains of rights and citizenship, and safety and stability. At the 'Facilitators' level are the domains of language acquisition and cultural knowledge, and safety and stability. Next comes the 'Social Connection' level, divided into the domains of social bridges (relationships between ethnic groups), and social bonds (relationships within ethnic groups), social links (relationships with state entities). Lastly is the 'Markers and Means' which includes the domains of employment, housing, education, and health.
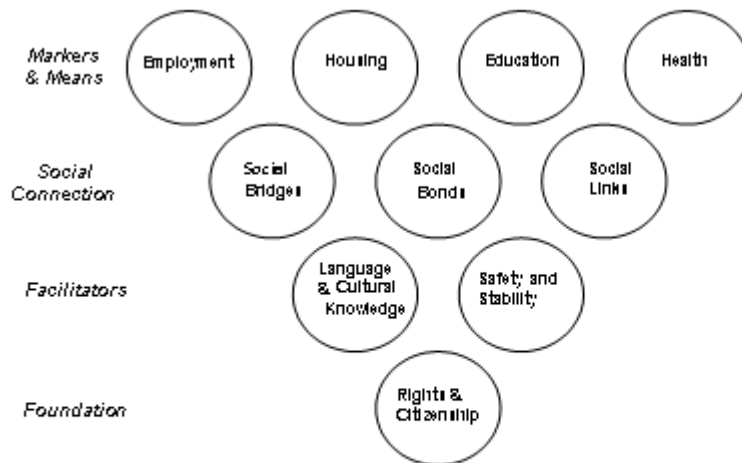
Figure1. Integration Framework (Ager & Strang, 2008)

Ager and Strang's (2008) integration framework was based on qualitative interviews conducted in the United Kingdom. For each of the domains they identified a number of indicators to measure integration of refugees. The aim of this Integration Framework is to help service providers and policy-makers plan and evaluate integration programmes, specifically for refugees, but it can also apply to the integration of third-country nationals. Castles (2003), and Spencer and Cooper (2006) offer comprehensive literature reviews on immigrant integration in Europe.

Integration Policy – The case of the European Union
As with the asylum policies discussed in Chapter 2, the European Union has been working towards harmonization of integration of third-country nationals between its Member States (Schain, 2009; European Economic and Social Committee, 2008).

Promotion of integration in the European Union is evident in several treaties, European Council Multiannual programmes, and the European 2020 Strategy (European Commission, 2012b). Reference to the rights of third-country nationals appeared first in the Treaty of Amsterdam (European Communities, 1997) but it was not until the Treaty of Lisbon (adopted in 2007, entered into force in 2009) that promotion of integration was mandated within the EU. Article 63a.4 states:

> The European Parliament and the Council, acting in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure, may establish measures to provide incentives and support for the action of Member States with a view to promoting the integration of third-country nationals residing legally in their territories, excluding any

> *harmonisation of the laws and regulations of the Member States.* (European Commission, 2007, p. 62).

The Charter of Fundamental Rights (became legally binding in 2009) also refers to the protection of the rights of third-country nationals (European Commission, 2000). At the Tampere European Council (1999), European leaders agreed that an integration policy should be in place to ensure that the rights and obligations of third-country nationals are similar to EU citizens (European Commission, 2012b). While at The Hague Programme in 2004, a concrete step towards the coordination of national integration policies within the EU was taken with the proposal of a framework based on *Common Basic Principles* (Council of the European Union, 2004). The *Common Basic Principles* were further solidified by the European Commission's, *A Common Agenda for Integration Framework for the Integration of Third-Country Nationals in the European Union* and *The Hague Programme: Ten Priorities for the Next Five Years* of the in 2005 (European Economic and Social Committee, 2008).

It wasn't however until 2009, at the European Council in Stockholm that an integration programme in which employment, education, and social inclusion were central, was proposed. Europe 2020 adopted in 2010, which is the European's Union vision for this decade, has five EU-wide targets, three of which reference immigrant integration in relation to promoting access to employment, increase in education levels, and social inclusion (European Commission, 2010b). The second part of the set of guidelines for the Europe 2020 strategy specifically addresses integration of immigrants, in terms of increasing labour participation of migrants (European Commission, 2010b). In July 2011, a new policy for the Integration of Third-Country Nationals that set the agenda for the next five years in the European Union was adopted (European Economic and Social Committee, 2012).

With specific regards to beneficiaries of international protection, the Qualification Directive clearly states the need for integration measures for this group, especially with regards to development of integration programmes (Council Directive 2004/83/EC, 2004). This need is reiterated in the Green Paper (2007), which further emphasises access to employment.

The European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) is the European Union's authority on immigrant integration, it is in charge of the European Integration Forum, the network of National Contact Points, and of management of the European Integration Fund (European Economic and Social Committee, 2012). The EESC values the collaboration that "civil society and social partners have in promoting European Integration policies" (European Economic and Social Committee, 2008, p. 5).

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Integration policies within the EU have been strengthened by anti-discrimination policies which mandate the monitoring and prosecution of racial discrimination in Member States (Schain, 2009). The two main directives are the Racial Equality Directive, Council Directive 2000/43/EC "implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin" (Council of the European Union, 2000a) and the Council Directive 2000/78/EC "establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation" (Council of the European Union, 2000b).

However, Schain (2009) points out that some current integration programmes put the workload of integration solely on the immigrants, especially in countries with obligatory citizenship tests and language learning programmes. And as already discussed in the social cohesion section, such programmes are contradictory to the two-way process of integration and multiculturalism, and their aim is more directed towards cultural homogeneity. It is important to note that this drive for such integration programmes was the strongest after September 11th 2001 as part of security measures against terrorism (Schain, 2009; Joppke, 2007).

Integration Policy in Malta
The Maltese government has not yet issued an integration policy. The only policy documents that mention integration are the *Irregular Immigrants, Refugees and Integration* (Ministry for Justice and Home Affairs (MJHA) and Ministry for the Family and Social Solidarity (MFSS), 2005) and the *National Reform Programme and Strategy for Growth and Jobs* (2005) (Ministry for Competitiveness and Communications, 2005). Key legislation related to integration are the Immigration Act (amended 2007) (Government of Malta, 1970), the Subsidiary legislation 217.04 Immigration Regulation, and the Maltese Citizenship Act 188, 1964 (amended 2007).

The lack of an integration strategy is reflected in the dispersal of Ministries and Government entities in charge of immigration and integration affairs. Immigration and asylum affairs and the Citizenship Division are within the Ministry of Justice and Home Affairs. The Ministry for Family and Social Solidarity is responsible for some integration related issues such as education, while affairs concerned with beneficiaries of international protection are within the government agency known as the Organization Welfare of Asylum Seekers (AWAS). Other government entities in charge of different aspects of integration are the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality and the Employment and Training Cooperation.

Civil society in Malta, albeit small does fill some of the gaps by doing integration projects, public outreach, and research. The main organisations are Jesuit Refugee

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Service Malta, SOS Malta Solidarity Overseas Service, Red Cross Malta, Malta Emigrants Commission, Integra Foundation, and the European Antipoverty Network Malta.

Conclusion

This Chapter provides a literature review of the main theories of inclusion and settlement, and a discussion on the policies that they have influenced. What assimilation, multiculturalism, social cohesion, and integration have in common is that the policies and practices they influence often vary from the theoretical discussion. Interestingly, some policies and practices remain the same even though the term for inclusion in *vogue* at the moment changes. In the end, all inclusion policies seek some degree of conformity, with the level of tolerance for cultural diversity changing depending on the political scene at the time. Also, in practise most inclusion policies expect the immigrants to change and make the effort to fit in, and rarely, if ever, do policies encourage the established population to adapt to the immigrants and ethnic minorities.

Chapter 5   Methodology

Introduction

The aim of this chapter is first to give a detailed description of how research was carried out in order to answer the research questions, and then secondly discuss the assumptions in the chosen methodology. Research on forced migration has been criticized for its lack of precision when it comes to describing its methodology (Jacobsen & Landau, 2003). Therefore this Chapter highlights the details of research design and methodology used and it explores issues that Jacobsen and Landau (2003, p. 186) consider crucial to the rigour of a study, such as

> how many people were interviewed ... where the interviews took place, how the subjects were identified, selected, and how translation and local security issues where handled.

The chapter starts by stating the research questions and discussing the qualitative research framework informed by the constructionist epistemology chosen for this research. This is followed by the sampling criteria, a description of participants, and an explanation of the methods employed (semi-structured interviews and participant observation). It also explains how the data was analysed using Ager and Strang's (2008) Integration Framework as the basis for the initial coding. Lastly, there is a section on the ethical considerations taken and my biases.

Research Questions

The research questions were designed using the guidelines by Creswell (2009, pp. 129-144) in which he advises to have one general question and several sub-questions. As stated in the introduction the central research question that this study answers is,

> How are sub-Saharan African immigrants, especially the newly-arrived forced migrants, and the established Maltese population integrating in terms of social interactions at the community level?

And the related sub-questions which narrow the central question are:

> Who are the sub-Saharan African immigrants living in Malta?
>
> What are the views of the established Maltese population and sub-Saharan African immigrants on each other, and what kinds of social interactions are happening?
>
> What are the main barriers to integration for sub-Saharan African immigrants in Malta?

These questions are appropriate for qualitative research; they are open-ended and use 'non directional language', which does not suggest causality ((Creswell, 2009). Also, these questions were not my original research questions but as Creswell (2009, p. 131) suggests they evolved and changed throughout in order to narrow down the research and make them fit within the chosen methodology.

Why Malta?

My decision to study the situation of migration in Malta stems from a personal reason. Since I'm Maltese, I have had an interest in how one of the smallest states of the European Union is tackling and adapting to the rise in forced migrants arriving in an irregular manner. I chose to focus only on Malta because I wanted to become as familiar as possible with the situation in one place - Malta and its migrants. I made this decision in spite of the advice of Castles (2003, p. 30) who argues that to truly understand forced migration and international migration, researchers should focus on "transnational research networks", involving both sending and receiving countries, and in research that compares different countries instead of focusing on one. Yet, others like Rodgers (2004, p. 48) believe that "small-scale qualitative approaches" are in fact more appropriate to understand the lived experience of forced migrants. This local level of analysis argues Rodgers (2004, p. 49), is as informative as the global level of analysis Castles (2003) suggests, because research at the local level that explores the lived experience of forced migrants has the potential to be "linked to relationships and processes of global significance".

Qualitative Research Framework

In social science a phenomenon can be studied from several perspectives using different methods of collecting and analysing data (May, 2001). It is therefore useful to have a particular framework to direct ones methodological choices (Creswell, 2009). For this research, the phenomenon of sub-Saharan African immigrants' integration is best studied using a qualitative research framework because I am aiming for a "detailed view of a topic" that still "needs to be explored", where participants are appropriately studied "in their natural setting" (Creswell, 1998, p. 17). In fact this is why the questions chosen for this study are 'how' and 'what' questions; research questions that signify the need for a methodology that provides depth into the phenomenon rather than breadth (Creswell, 1998). Qualitative methodology was also chosen because I wanted my role to be that of an "*active learner* who can tell the story from the participants' view" rather than as an "*expert* who passes judgment on participants" (Creswell, 1998, p. 18). This next section explores my chosen research framework; starting with a discussion on the chosen epistemology of constructionism, and continuing with a discussion on the qualitative methodology used.

Constructionism

According to Crotty (1998) and Bryman (2008) it is the researcher's epistemological position that informs the methodology and the methods chosen. My epistemological position is one of constructionism because the only reality that can be known is the individual's construction of reality since there is no definite proof that an objective reality exits (Corbetta, 2003). Constructionist epistemology assumes that meaning is constructed through the relationship of the object and the subject; this implies that social reality is a construct of different meanings (Crotty, 1998). Therefore by exploring the social interactions at the community level between sub- Saharan African immigrants and the established population, this dissertation attempts to construct the social reality in Malta.

A limitation with this epistemology is that meanings constructed are not static but are continuously being constructed and revised (Bryman, 2008), which means that the social reality constructed in this dissertation only reflects present time. Another limitation is that constructionists do not believe in a *true* objective interpretation that is somehow independently accessible to the researcher, so the researcher's interpretation is simply another perspective (Crotty, 1998). This is because meanings are shaped by the social, political, and economic values of both the object and the subject (Jones, et al., 2006, p. 6). However, if there are several interpretations of the same social phenomenon, then by gathering these different interpretations a clearer picture of that social reality or of that particular phenomenon will be obtained. This is why I interviewed a wide range of participants, including recently-arrived forced migrants, established African immigrants, and Maltese local councillors, and used participant observation in order to gather different interpretations of the phenomenon of immigration to Malta. A constructionist epistemology supports a qualitative research methodology because qualitative research collects rich data that emphasize words which describe phenomena rather than quantification (Bryman, 2008, p. 366).

Definition of Qualitative Research

There is no consensus as to the definition of qualitative research and there isn't a particular research strategy (Bryman, 2008, p. 366). There are, however, certain characteristics that are pervasive to qualitative research. Denzin and Lincoln (1994, p. 2) note that qualitative research has to be "multimethod in focus, involving an interpretive naturalistic approach to its subject matter". Creswell (1998, p. 15) defines qualitative research as

> an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human problem. The researcher builds a

> *complex, holistic picture, analyses words, reports detailed views of informants, and conducts the study in a natural setting.*

And Bryman (2008, p. 378) adds that "qualitative research typically entails the intensive study of a small group, or of individuals sharing certain characteristics". A qualitative research methodology enables me to construct a multifaceted answer to the research problem by bringing together different perspectives (Creswell, 1998, pp. 15-16). It allows for a specific and focused approach to studying of a problem in contrast to a broader approach typical of quantitative studies (Creswell, 1998, p. 16).

However, data from small-scale, in-depth qualitative research has been criticized by researchers for not being able to be validated and replicated (Jacobsen & Landau, 2003). Instead Jacobsen and Landau (2003) advocate for large, representative survey data collection that can be analysed quantitatively and therefore validated and replicated, since such data they argue, is more methodologically sound. In fact, as already mentioned, past research on forced migrants in Malta has been based on survey methodology (SOS Malta, 2011). In contrast, Rodgers (2004, p. 48) expresses caution on the use of surveys with forced migrants because their lives are often characterized by instability and uncertainties, making survey an unsuitable and an insufficient methodology to understand the lived experience of forced migrants, especially since surveys claim to gain knowledge through pre-set questions based most often on what the researchers deem important, instead of upon the forced migrant's perceptions. Surveys, Rodgers (2004, p. 49) continues, create a barrier between the researchers ("us") and the participant ("them"). Instead qualitative research uses open-ended questions to "explore" what the research participants have to say and how they define their problems and hopes (Creswell, 1998, p. 19). This is because qualitative research values words and the meaning participants attribute to the research problem rather than the ability to do statistical analysis (Bryman, 2008, p. 366).

Theory Generation

Qualitative research methodology supports the inductive approach, which means that the role of the research is to generate theories, usually 'theories of middle-range' rather than validating hypotheses associated with deductive positivist research (Bryman, 2008). Yet Silverman (1993, p.24 in Bryman, 2008) acknowledges that qualitative research in our present time is "born out of accumulated knowledge of interaction and greater concern with issues of reliability and validity." In fact, I did not go to the field with a *tabula rasa* and part of my analytical framework that also informed some of the questions I asked in my research came from the Ager and Strang's Integration Framework (2008), a theory of middle-range (Strang & Ager, 2010).

Evaluation of Qualitative Research

One way to evaluate qualitative research is through the use of triangulation. "Triangulation entails using more than one method or source of data in the study of social phenomena" using more than one method increases the reliability and validity of the research (Bryman, 2008, p. 379). In this research, semi-structured interview and participant are the two methods used in order to double check the data that I was collecting. For instance, the interviews gave me the opportunity to confirm that my observations were similar to those of the interviewees and vice versa. This approach will hopefully increase the credibility of the data presented. Still, a drawback of qualitative research is that it is almost impossible to replicate (another potential tool for evaluation) because the researcher herself is the source through which all the data is interpreted, and therefore always subjective in nature (Bryman, 2008, p. 391). However the use of triangulation is meant to reduce some of this subjectivity.

Benefit of Qualitative Research

A benefit that emerged with the use of qualitative methodology is flexibility, and within this, the option to change the initial research design (Bryman, 2008, p. 389). In this case, initially I had planned to interview only the forced migrants living in the community; however, sampling this population proved to be exceedingly difficult logistically, but also slightly inappropriate since most forced migrants live in Open Centres. I therefore decided to be less stringent with my sampling requirements and in addition to interviewing three forced migrants that lived in the community, I also interviewed two forced migrants that lived in Open Centres. On a positive note, due to the flexible and responsive nature of this methodology I discovered a new sub-group of sub-Saharan Africans – the established sub-Saharan African immigrants, that I had not even been aware of prior to starting my fieldwork.

Research Methods

The two methods of inquiry used in this research are semi-structured interviews and participant observation. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with sub-Saharan African immigrants, local councillors (elected officials that volunteer to serve their village or town), and local experts such as service providers and policy-makers. Participant observations were conducted throughout the duration of the fieldwork. I am considering non-formal interviews, impromptu conversations on the street or on the bus where no written consent was taken, as participant observation. This section gives details about the fieldwork experience, the sampling strategy, and a list of the participants. It also includes the rationale and detailed description of the procedures of data collection used in this research.

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Fieldwork

The main fieldwork took place on two occasions; during three months in the spring of 2009 and another three months in the spring of 2010. However, it must be noted that I was living in Malta during parts of 2011, and some observations and interviews were done during this time. Conducting fieldwork dispersed over three years led to some valuable insight into how the integration of sub-Saharan African immigrants in Malta changed over this period. However, the main problem of not conducting field work over a continuous time period was that relationships with participants were not always possible to sustain.

Sampling

The participants for this research were purposely sampled since I wanted "to interview people who are relevant to the research questions" (Bryman, 2008, p. 458). Specifically, I used snowball sampling and convenience/opportunistic sampling in order to find willing participants, who I have divided in three categories: sub-Saharan African immigrants, local councillors, and local experts in the field of immigration. May (2001, p. 132) argues that "this form of non-probability sampling is very useful in gaining access to certain groups" and it definitely proved useful to find participants for my research. To get in touch with sub-Saharan Africans immigrants, I initially contacted service-providers and asked if they could introduce me to immigrants that would be willing to be interviewed. Very few service providers were willing to do this as I was not in the field long enough to build sufficient trust with any one organisation.

However, after realizing the effect my request had upon the first few participants I sampled in this manner, I discovered that this was not the most ideal way of finding participants. This method was heavily packed with obligation for the immigrants, especially since they were forced migrants, as they felt obliged to agree to an interview with me so that they could preserve their relationship with the provider. Therefore, to further sample forced migrants, I asked these participants if they knew other immigrants that I could interview. In this case as well, I found that they were reluctant to introduce me to their friends and when they did introduce me, their friends were from their same country and all worked as translators. Since I wanted my data to represent the different realities forced migrants experienced and not a particular cohort of forced migrants, snowball sampling was not enough (May, 2001, p. 132).

I therefore decided to directly contact immigrants by going to places where they gather or work; what I refer to as 'cold calling', a form of opportunistic sampling. This sampling technique required a lot of effort and time on my part, for instance finding

particular events that were specifically catered for migrants, and it was also uncomfortable at times, especially when I was met with rejection. It would have been easier to recruit immigrants for interviews had I built a rapport with a particular organisation that worked with immigrants, but the 'cold calling' sampling technique significantly broadened the diversity of the sub-Saharan participants with whom I met. In fact, it was through this technique that I came across established sub-Saharan immigrants and African Maltese.

A slightly different strategy was employed to set-up interviews with local councillors and experts in the field of Immigration, since these people have well-established public profiles and their contact details were easily available online or in the phonebook. I specifically targeted local councillors living in localities where high numbers of immigrants live and contacted them initially via email or phone. Personal networks were also relied upon to make initial contact and ensure acceptance. Networking was strengthened by participant observation and by attending local events covering migration issues, such as lectures and conferences, and by being present in activities organised for migrants.

Participants

The participants were sub-Saharan African immigrants, local councillors, and local experts in the field of immigration. The sub-Saharan African immigrants are divided into two sub-groups based on their citizenship status and how long they have been in Malta. The first group are the forced migrants that arrived in the last ten years, known locally as irregular immigrants or illegal immigrants. I interviewed five male forced migrants, originally from Somalia, Eritrea, and Sudan. The second group are the established sub-Saharan African immigrants that came to Malta via regular migration channels and are established, having lived in Malta for ten years or more, and some even have Maltese citizenship. I interviewed four men from this group. They were originally from three different countries, one in West Africa and two in East Africa. Pseudonyms were chosen for each in order to keep their identity anonymous. One of the established immigrants is also a service provider, and I conducted two interviews with him, one about his personal experience of integration as an immigrant and another about his role as a service provider.

The fact that only immigrant men were interviewed does to an extent bias the data, although the sample is indicative of the reality, as demonstrated in Chapter 3. I did come in contact with both, female forced migrants and established immigrants, but I found it difficult to set up interviews with them because of language barriers.

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For instance, when I approached a female forced migrant about an interview, she could not understand the fact that I was a researcher and that I was conducting a study. This made it impossible to obtain consent and conduct a formal interview. As for the established female immigrants, although I could communicate with them, the few I interacted with were not keen on a formal interview and I did not push the matter. It seemed to me that I was less successful at gaining the confidence of female migrants with my methodological approach of going in, doing an interview and going out. This was further curtailed by the fact that there were always men present, and they would approach me first. As stated in Chapter 3, female forced migrants are at risk of sexual assault along their journey to Europe. Swiss and Giller (1993) warn that asking females that have experienced trauma about their experience, could lead to retraumatization. They suggest that in the case it would be appropriate to have a support system in place, something which I did not have access to. Therefore, I was aware that interviewing female forced migrants would create this other layer of sensitivity and ethical boundaries. Therefore participant observation was a more appropriate method to use to find out about the lived experiences of female migrants. Probably, a more extensive ethnographic research that focuses solely on women would be more appropriate to doing research with female immigrants.

Ten interviews were conducted with local councillors to gather their views, and those of the established population in their locality, about immigration and immigrants in Malta. In this dissertation I use the term local councillor as a collective term, since four of them are mayors and one a council administrator. Three female councillors were interviewed; this is representative of the sex ratio of local councillors. Nine different localities were represented; these localities were chosen because they have a high proportion of immigrants, either because there are cheap apartments available for rent or because there are institutional residential housing centres for forced migrants in the locality. In Malta local councillors have much less responsibility, when compared with other Western countries, due to Malta's small size and extensive centralisation of services and power. Local councillors, with exception of the mayors, volunteer their time and most have full-time employment in addition to the council work. Their full-time employment differs; a lawyer, a doctor, a retiree, a school teacher, and tradesmen were amongst those interviewed. The councillors' names are also not disclosed and all were given pseudonyms.

Semi-structured interviews were also conducted with Maltese experts in the field of migration - religious workers, service providers, and policy-makers. The religious workers included two Catholic priests who work with immigrant organisations, an Imam, and a pastor from an Evangelic Church. The religious community of the latter is

made-up mostly of immigrants. The service providers interviewed are Ahmed Bugri, the manager of an Open Centre; Sarah Borda Bondin, the service manager at the government's Agency for the Welfare of Asylum Seekers, and Terry Gosden, the person in charge of the third country nationals unit at the General Workers Union. The policy-maker interviewed is Dr. Simon Busuttil, a Member of the European Parliament. He was contacted for an interview because he has commented and written extensively on the topic of immigration in Malta. If in any way I thought the information given compromised the position of the experts or if they chose to, I did not disclose their name but only identified them by their position.

Informal interviews conducted with six other experts in the field of migration were considered participant observation, because no consent was obtained and they were not recorded. These informal interviews were with a case worker in charge of unaccompanied minors, a Jesuit working with immigrants, two UNHCR officials, a health policy maker, and a volunteer with Doctors without Borders.

Semi-Structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were an appropriate method for this research because the research questions are concerned with immigrants' and the established population's lived experiences and not about quantifiable facts in their lives; questions asked of the interviewees were of a sensitive nature, and some of the data needed was considered "privileged information" (Denscombe, 2010, p. 174). I used a different interview guide according to the interviewee's category (see Appendices 8 and 9). An interview guide was utilized for interviews with immigrants and local councillors in order to compare the responses on some aspects of immigrant integration. Specifically, the immigrant's interview guide was influenced by the Ager and Strang's (2008) Integration Framework. For interviews with local experts, a separate interview guide, with a few basic questions, depending on their field of expertise, was designed for each of them. The interview guides were fine-tuned as suggested by Madison (2005, p. 26) the longer I spent in the field and as I gained interview experience and knowledge about the immigrant integration. Furthermore, the more comfortable I became with the interview method, the less I relied on the interview guide, to allow the interviewee to develop their own concepts (May, 2001). This semi-structured interviewing technique allowed me to be flexible with the interview guide, and to ask clarifying questions, and to have almost a conversation with the interviewee (May, 2001, p. 120). The questions asked were open-ended in nature to prompt more in-depth answers (Denscombe, 2003, p. 167).

I noticed that typically, interviews shifted from semi-structured to unstructured interviews, especially towards the end of the interview session. Denscombe (2003, p. 167) comments that this shift occurs because "semi-structured and unstructured interviews are really on a continuum" and it is difficult to separate the two styles. I was more satisfied with interviews where the interviewee needed fewer prompts to talk, because I felt they were able to answer using their own "frame of reference" and bring new concepts into the discussion that I had been unaware of or was biased about (May, 2001, p. 124). In order to allow more space for unstructured answers, my last question always was, "Is there anything else you would like to add?" I considered this as a form of a trump card, giving all the power of the conversation to the interviewee, and in some cases it allowed the interviewee to relax and just summarize their views on the topic of immigration and immigrant integration. My goal was to make the interviews be similar to a conversation, rather than rigid, question and answer format, in fact some of the interviewees did remark that it was more of a conversation than other interviews they did in the past.

The interviews varied according to the knowledge and experiences of the interviewees, their English language skills, and how much they chose to share with me (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). It also depended upon how much control they wanted or how much control they felt they had. For instance, one particular policy-maker barely left space for me to ask questions, perhaps to avoid potentially controversial issues, while a recently arrived immigrant gave few-word answers necessitating me to constantly prompt. This was most likely due to him being new to the interview experience and complicated by poor English skills. These two examples are the extremes, most of the respondents were somewhere in the middle of this range.

A positive aspect of using semi-structured interviews was that the interviewees were more assertive; they had opportunity to direct their answers and had a more active role in the interview (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). Even though the methodology is interpretative in nature, the interviews took a more critical stance. The interviewees were not treated as passive individuals; instead they were there to be heard and for some, actively wanted this chance.

Interview Procedures

The interviewing method used was similar to the qualitative interview style described by Corbetta (2003). Consent was always obtained before the semi-structured interviews (see Appendix 10). When obtaining consent with forced migrants, extra attention was given to ensure that they understood their rights. An information sheet with the details of the research, the rights of interviewee, my contact details, and those of my research

supervisor was also given (see Appendix 11). Interviewees were also asked if they could be recorded in order to allow me to better focus on the conversation (Corbetta, 2003). It was explained that the recording would be transcribed, and only shared with the research supervisor and exam board if needed. Only one forced migrant and one expert objected to being recorded, in these two cases extensive notes were taken instead. The recordings were then transcribed in full to help me analyse the interviews. Permission was also obtained on how interviewees wanted to be identified in the research. A substantial number preferred to be anonymous, which ultimately prompted me to decide that everyone should be anonymous except some of the experts who have a public profile and who would be identifiable via their occupation title, especially if only one person in Malta has that occupation. To start off the interview I asked general questions about the interviewee before moving to potentially sensitive questions. This was done to help the interviewee feel at ease and comfortable while also establishing a relationship that would allow an openness of communication in the interview setting. On average each interview lasted approximately 30 minutes to an hour.

Most of the interviews with local councillors and experts took place in their offices. Interviews with immigrants were done in public spaces, usually coffee shops due to comfort and a lack of a researcher's office space in Malta. When interviews occurred in coffee shops I offered to buy a drink for the participants but no other financial remuneration was given. Conducting interviews in public spaces resulted in poor recording that sometimes affected quality to the extent of making content indecipherable.

Interviews with immigrants were conducted in English. The established immigrants have a good command of English as this is one of their primary languages. However, at times I still had trouble understanding because of a difference in our accents. As for the newly arrived forced migrants, using the English language for the interviews was a barrier in communication. Their abilities varied, but overall there was a lack of vocabulary which hindered in-depth expression of feelings and experiences. In fact, language is the biggest barrier in doing qualitative research with this group of participants. Inevitability there was not much I could do about it since all of the forced migrants interviewed worked as interpreters and were therefore considered to have the best English skills of all the forced migrants on the island. Interviews with Maltese people were mostly in Maltese but some were conducted in English. This depended on the individual's preference and some suggested it would be easier for me to transcribe the interview if it was in English. I am fluent in both languages, and hence any

translations from Maltese to English were made by me during the transcription process.

To clarify, I interviewed the local councillors early on in my fieldwork and asked questions only on forced migrants and did not refer to the established sub-Saharan African Immigrants. This is because when I started this research, the main focus was the forced migrants themselves, and only after being in the field for a few months did I decide to add the perspective of established African immigrants.

Reflections on the Interviews

Denscombe (2003) draws attention to the fact that the role of the interviewer is vital and controls the results of the conversation. I did my best to be professional; every effort was made to be "polite and punctual, receptive and neutral, in order to encourage the right climate for an interviewee to feel comfortable and provide honest answers" (Denscombe, 2003, p. 170). I engaged with the individual and responded accordingly. For example if an interviewee was looking for empathy and agreement, I nodded and made gestures with my body language to demonstrate that I was receptive, even if what they were saying was something in conflict with my personal values. This was done to encourage the interviewees to express their own thoughts without feeling judged. I tried not to influence the interviewee and refrained from sharing my opinions. However, for some clarifying questions, it was necessary for me to share my views on the topic being discussed. Sometimes I found that it also helped if I shared some of my personal story. It made a difference to immigrants to hear that I was also in the process of migrating and that I have personal experiences of living in foreign countries. Most of the time after the recorder was switched off, another conversation took place where the interviewee would ask personal questions about me, and I felt it was only fair to reciprocate with information about my personal life.

There were times when my emotions affected my ability to conduct the interviews. For example, there were times when I was nervous, anxious, or simply out of curiosity, I did not listen intently and therefore did not follow-up on something, or worse, I interrupted them. Sometimes the interviews got intensely emotional and I was lost for words. For example, I did not know what to say after one of the immigrants said 'my problem is my black skin'. I felt ashamed at what other Maltese people's actions had led this immigrant to conclude. Another time, an immigrant told me about his experiences back home and these upset me so that I had to hold back my tears. There were other times when I was frustrated that some of the immigrant interviewees declared that they hated Malta and that the Maltese were ignorant and upset at the local councillors for being prejudiced. I did my best to hide these personal emotions

from the interviewees and learned to suppress my emotions during the interviews as time went on. Being professional at all times also helped me be in control of my emotions during the interviews. I always dressed appropriately depending on who I was interviewing and where the interview was taking place; generally, I dressed more formally when interviewing the councillors or service providers, and when interviewing immigrants, I dressed in a way that I hoped would be considered 'modest' by the men I was interviewing.

I often mused over why interviewees would give up their time to be interviewed and so I asked them. Some considered it a part of their job description, others saw it as an opportunity to socially interact with someone that was listening to them, and others saw it as doing me a favour. I had several interviewees tell me that they themselves or someone close to them had done a research project and therefore they sympathized with me being a student and wanted to help out. Some did it out of personal curiosity. Most of the interviewees, especially the immigrants, were interested in the research that I was doing, and they congratulated me. This made me and my work feel appreciated. Several of the interviewees asked for a copy of the dissertation when it was ready.

In my role as a researcher, I ventured to places I normally would not have gone and talked to people that I would not have otherwise encountered. It did make me more self-confident knowing that I had a purpose for going to a certain place or talking with someone; however, most of my interviewees were male and at times this created uncomfortable situations, especially when interviewing young sub-Saharan African men. I felt as though I had to be very clear about my intentions in asking for an interview. And even though I wanted to spend a lot of time with forced migrants and get to know their world, especially so when they shared that they really wanted to make friends, I did not want my role as a researcher to be misunderstood, and being the same age as the participants, at times I felt vulnerable. This reluctance on my part probably limited my research, but at least all of my interviewees understood my intentions and fully respected me as a researcher. Interviewing male experts or male local councillors was not usually a problem, except for one interview which made me question my safety since we were in an empty office building after hours and the interviewee was getting worrisomely emotional.

In conclusion, semi-structured interviews were the appropriate tool to use to collect the data required. The interviewees felt comfortable and safe enough to share their experiences and knowledge with me, with some sharing very sensitive information. All of the interviews produced very rich data that contributed greatly to the study. Overall,

conducting these interviews was a fulfilling experience and an opportunity for personal growth.

Participant Observation

Rodgers (2004, p. 48) advocates "hanging out" with forced migrants, a term he defines as

> a kind of shorthand for participatory approaches but also as a reminder of the informal and everyday nature of the interactions and processes that allow us to generate information.

Therefore, one of the methods chosen for this research is participant observation,

> a method in which a researcher takes part in the daily activities, rituals, interaction, and events of a group of people as one of the means of learning the explicit and tacit aspects of their life routines and their culture. (DeWalt & DeWalt, 2010, p. 1)

Since I was studying a particular social phenomenon – immigrant integration – and not a particular culture, the participant observation I employed was slightly different from the classical definition of DeWalt and DeWalt. The following is a description of when and how I used participant observation to inform this research.

Participant observation took many forms; doing informal interviews with experts that were specifically set-up, going to lectures, conferences and events related to immigrants, going to places that I knew immigrants hang out or live, and having informal conversation both with immigrants and Maltese people about immigration. Basically I immersed myself completely in the environment to learn as much as possible about the situation being studied. However, I did not carry the ethnographic tools of the recorder and notebook with me at all times, but I did take diligent notes when the opportunity presented itself and when it was needed.

I used participant observation to get more information about specific topics from experts in the field of migration, by using informal interviews as suggested by DeWalt and DeWalt (2010). I am not implying that when I conducted informal interviews with experts I had not previously set a date and time. I recognized that they would have busy schedules so scheduling was necessary, but when I refer to informal, I mean the essence of the interview was as described by DeWalt and DeWalt (2010, p. 137) "like a casual conversation among acquaintances". I refrained from asking too many questions and I left it up to the individual to direct the conversation/interview (DeWalt & DeWalt, 2010, p. 137).

Participant observation also took place where immigrants hang out. I specifically sought out local bars and places of worship where I knew immigrants frequented. I also sought out events organised for immigrants, such as a party at one of the Open Centres, and lectures and conferences related to migration where I knew that either immigrants or experts or both would be attending in order to increase my chance of meeting them, observe, and have conversations with them. Importantly, when I attended such places I made sure that I identified myself as a researcher and did "not engage in covert research" (DeWalt & DeWalt, 2010, p. 226).

Participant observation was specifically used to get to know and 'hang out' with the female migrants since, as mentioned before, no interviews were conducted with this group because of the barriers of language and trust, and ethical considerations. Using participant observation; however, I could observe and talk with these women while they continued with their daily lives; for example I watched Somali news with a group of women and observed another preparing a meal, which she then shared with me. These observations, although they did not produce the data I was specifically after, still produced rich data and gave me valuable insight into their lives.

I also used participant observation to get to know more about what the Maltese people think and feel about immigration and the newly arrived immigrants. The observations happened everywhere and spontaneously, for example overhearing a conversation on a bus between two Maltese regarding the newly arrived immigrants, or observing the interactions between my driving instructor and his Nigerian student while I was in the back seat being driven back home after my lesson.

Overall, participant observation complemented the interviews in multiple ways; firstly it helped me look deeper into particular aspects of the research, secondly it allowed for an initial contact with participants and introduced me to participants that I was not actively looking for, and thirdly it offered a flexible tool when interviews were not possible. Participant observations also allowed me to obtain a wider, general perspective of the phenomenon of immigration in Malta and the social interactions happening all the time in the community.

Data Analysis

The data analysis was facilitated using the analytic procedure described by Marshall and Rossman (2006). This procedure includes firstly familiarisation with the data, secondly, generation of categories and themes, and thirdly, coding the data and sorting it according to the themes. The analysis was iterative, with the main categories representing the research sub-questions identified first and then broken down into sub

categories (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Since the Integration Framework (Ager & Strang, 2008) served as the initial analytical framework for this dissertation, the sub-categories were based on the eleven domains of integration identified in this framework, although some different themes emerged from the data. These categories were then re-coded according to the themes that had emerged. Quotations from the interviews were chosen to illustrate particular points. A critical perspective was adopted while analysing the data in order to produce findings that challenge the 'status quo' and to try to bring about change (Jones, et al., 2006). From the analysis, theories of middle range, "explanations of observed regularities," were induced from the data (Bryman, 2008, pp. 6-8). When writing up the analysis sections, I tried to write in a way as to give the reader the experiences of "being there" (Creswell, 1998, p. 21). The software Nvivo 8 and Weft QDA were used to facilitate the analysis.

Ethical Considerations and Biases

Ethical Considerations

The three main ethical considerations of informed consent, rights to privacy, and protection from harm were observed (Fontana & Frey, 1998). Ethical approval for this research was granted by the University of Chichester in 2008. The interviewees were asked to sign a consent form before being interviewed, and while conducting participant observation I tried as much as possible to let the people know that I was a researcher. Oral consent was again asked before starting the recorder: "The recorder is now on, is this fine with you?" All data gathered is confidential and pseudonyms were used when appropriate. According to the consent form, the voice recordings and the transcripts are meant only for my personal use. However interviewees are aware that some of their quotes will be used in the main text of the dissertation.

Forced migrants were considered a vulnerable group, since all those interviewed were beneficiaries of international protection and came from countries with a recent history of conflict. I was therefore conscious not to cause unnecessary anxiety and/or remind them of bad experiences, so I did not ask questions about their past or their journey to Malta. However, some offered the information voluntarily and others mentioned that by talking about their experiences it helped them heal. I did ask about detention, a distressing experience for them, as this was relevant to the research. I tried to listen as emphatically as possible and gave them my full attention.

The participants were properly informed about the nature of the study prior to the interview. It was made clear that their participation was voluntary and that I was unable to take on an advocacy, support, or counselling role. After the interview respondents

had my contact number and were asked to contact me if they wanted to make any changes. None made use of this opportunity.

Biases

It is important to point out that "methods are not simply neutral tools" (Bryman, 2008, p. 1). The way this research was designed, the sampling of the participants, the way they were interviewed, and how the data was analysed, all reflect my worldview. In fact the overarching assumption about this dissertation is that, it is written from a Western perspective and it utilizes Western philosophical ways of inquiry.

Nonetheless, not everything about this research is biased, or at least the biases are limited through good research practices (Bryman, 2008). In this section I account for my positionality in relation to my ethnicity, gender and age, and my values. By alerting the reader to the potential biases in this research I hope to demonstrate research credibility.

Research on interviewing has demonstrated fairly conclusively that people respond differently depending on how they perceive the person asking the questions (Denscombe, 2003, p. 169). The age, sex, race and accent are all phenotypes that an interviewee would notice and behave accordingly (Denscombe, 2003, p. 169; May, 2001, p. 128; Bryman, 2008, p. 391). May (2001, p. 128) suggests that the more the interviewer and the interviewee have in common, the more valid the information obtained is. This argument assumes that if the interviewer has similar qualities to the interviewee, then more trust is built and in return interviewees give more insightful and honest answers. However, if I were to conduct interviews with Maltese women my age about sensitive topics, I think they might be less willing to open up with me than they would to a female foreigner. This is because in small countries like Malta, gossip is often used as a tool of social control and therefore people protect themselves by being careful to whom they relate sensitive information (O'Reilly Mizzi, 1994).The dynamics between the interviewee and interviewer are very complex, and interviewees use different criteria to determine who has the most power; and then respond to the interview questions accordingly. Returning to my hypothetical example of interviewing Maltese women, they would probably also judge me on the basis of my speaking accent, physical beauty, clothes, educational attainment, marital status, etc. This power debate must not be confused with control of the interviews, this power is power within society in general. As a researcher and as the interviewer, one always has some degree of control over the interview proceedings.

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My ethnicity

As a Maltese that has lived abroad for the last ten years, I am neither a cultural 'insider' nor an 'outsider'. By being a cultural 'insider', Ganga and Scott refer to "researchers and participants who share a similar cultural, linguistic, ethnic, national and religious heritage" (2006, p. 2). The Maltese consider me one of them; I speak Maltese and have the same mannerisms. Speaking Maltese was very crucial in gaining access to the Maltese participants, and conducting interviews in Maltese was beneficial in allowing the interviewees to express themselves in their native language. Although most Maltese can speak English, not all of them are comfortable using it and I was also aware that people express themselves differently in different languages and wanted to offer this insider context. The other advantage of being Maltese was that I was able to pick on "idiosyncratic cultural references" used during the interviews (Ganga & Scott, 2006, p. 6).

On the other hand, being a cultural 'outsider', in this case meaning not being considered Maltese, was beneficial when interviewing immigrants. Most of the immigrants did not realize I was Maltese until I told them that I was. Then they remarked that my English accent was different from the average Maltese and my style of dress different. I then had to explain that I do not live in Malta. This, to my advantage, put me in a different category than the average Maltese, as Mr. Ajiboye explained:

> You would not accept some things in Malta, you wouldn't because you wouldn't do them in Canada or you wouldn't do them in England. Wider perspective, you have learned how to deal with other people, the Maltese never had to deal with anybody, other than themselves.

This helped when interviewing forced migrants because they know that some foreigners are more sympathetic to their cause than the Maltese are. Of course, it varied in how much immigrants thought of me primarily as Maltese or as an international traveller with a wider perspective, but I think being both a cultural 'insider' and 'outsider' helped me bond on some level with all the interviewees. I was not a foreign researcher removed from the situation nor was I the Maltese who had always lived in Malta with little experience of being a foreigner in another country. I inhabited a bit of everyone.

My gender and age

Being a female in my late twenties played a major role in how I was viewed as a researcher. Most of the Maltese, male interviewees who were all middle-aged, perceived me as a non-threatening young female and therefore were very open and

conversant in their manner. This is congruent with the paternalistic nature of Maltese middle-aged men (O'Reilly Mizzi, 1994). I also felt that the established immigrants were in a more authoritative position than me, because they were older, male and professionally stable, and labelling myself as a student lowered my perceived social status. This power dynamic was reversed when interviewing and observing forced migrants. They most likely saw me as coming from a privileged background, considering that at my age I was still studying and travelling. However, I was very aware of this power dynamic and I did my best not to have it interfere.

As a researcher, one cannot avoid being judged by the interviewees and I could not stop this judgement from having an affect on our interaction. My approach to this was that I always tried to emphasize my similarities with each interviewer because in reality humans have more similarities than differences. For example, with immigrants I emphasised the fact that I had lived in foreign countries, that I was applying for an American residency permit, and that because of visas and bureaucracy I was separated from a loved one; while with the Maltese I emphasized my 'Malteseness'.

My values

Bryman (2008) argues that in social research it is difficult for one to be objective and value free, but as long as these values are declared, the research is still valid. The following are some of my values and ideals that have had an impact on all parts of this research (Bryman, 2008). I consider myself a liberal person in most aspects of life. I believe first and foremost that all individuals are equal and therefore do not believe that people should be bound to the country of birth and denied the right to better themselves. On the other hand, I am Maltese and proud of my cultural heritage. In order to achieve some degree of objectivity in this research I followed Bryman's (2008) advice and partook in constant self-reflection.

Conclusion

This Chapter gave a detailed description of the methodology chosen for this research. It argues that a qualitative methodology combined with semi-structured interviews and participant observation were appropriate research tools to use for the nature of this study. However, if similar research is to be undertaken I would recommend using participatory research methods in order to give "an active role" and voice power to my participants, as suggested by (Castles, 2003, p. 30). It also concludes that being both a cultural 'insider' and 'outsider', gave me an advantageous, if not exceedingly unique position in doing this research.

Chapter 6   Social Interactions

People are fed up with migrants, so migrants have a feeling that they are not welcome.

Manager of Marsa Open Centre

Introduction

Social interactions at the community level, meaning both social bridging and social bonding, are critically important to the integration process of immigrants (Ager & Strang, 2008; Kearns & Forrest, 2000; Strang & Ager, 2010; Atfield, et al., 2007). Many European Union countries are in support of building social bridges between immigrants and the established population in order to increase social cohesion and avoid 'parallel lives' (Cheong, et al., 2007). However in Malta, not much is being done to increase forced migrants' social capital or help them with the integration process.

This Chapter begins with the views of the local councillors on the increasing diversity within their community with regards to the newly arrived forced migrants, and moves on to the everyday difficulties forced migrants face in having meaningful social interactions. The Chapter then looks at social bonding and how the lack of social bridges and integration prospects increases the need for social bonding between forced migrants. Finally, the Chapter ends with a debate on the feasibility of integration in Malta.

Social Bridges – The Maltese Perspectives

The prevailing sentiment of the Maltese with regards to forced migrants is a negative one. It is a sentiment that is based on fear, one that echoes the Government and the Opposition's concerns that Malta is 'overburdened'. It is also fuelled by journalists and the media who favour sensational stories and who do not appear to value the goal of fostering integration. The Maltese express their negative sentiments by complaining against and by avoiding interaction with forced migrants. For forced migrants, this has a detrimental effect on building social bridges and ultimately, on the prospects of integration.

'Fear' of Forced Migrants

A recurring and overwhelming theme that I heard expressed in my interviews with local councillors is that the Maltese people are afraid of forced migrants. The types of fear and paranoia that the Maltese have with regards to forced migrants are diverse. Some

fears are related to immediate harm, as with the example that forced migrants are carriers of contagious diseases such as HIV and tuberculosis. Mr. Vassallo emphasized,

> *[They] bring ... diseases. If you read, HIV originated from there, from these countries. They say it was a disease that came from monkeys, HIV. They bring a lot of disease, there were cases of tuberculosis.*

Other fears are related to what can simply be called 'fear of the unknown'. Maltese people warn that you simply do not know who they are or where they come from. Suggested in this is the understanding that the Maltese negatively view forced migrants as bad people, criminals; people that should not be trusted. Mr. Pace observes,

> *They are scared of them. Because you don't know where they are coming from, from Algeria, Morocco, from this and that, they are mixed. You find good and you find bad...The first thing that takes over people is fear; the people are scared of them.*

Ms. Degabriele also reflected on the 'fear of the unknown':

> *The population has an idea that the illegal immigrants are completely different, they come from cultures that have nothing to do with ours. So it creates a certain fear... Because they are of a different ethnicity than us and people don't know them. This is like when you get a new neighbour and you start asking questions, I wonder who he is? And if you see tattoos you start thinking, who knows if he is a killer?*

Forced migrants are often portrayed as a 'burden' and treated as criminals, which adds to this sense of fear. The mayor of Safi described an incident where forced migrants escaped from the detention camp close to town. The way the army hunted them down made the forced migrants hide in people's back yards, which of course terrorized the locals. It is interesting to note the racial nuance in his metaphor, "like cats". By associating migrants to an animal, he is emphasizing the difference between 'us' and 'them'.

> *They come to our village and scare people when they escape. When some of them escape, they start searching for places to hide, and every place where there is a corner where they can hide; they have even jumped into people's gardens. This is when people get scared. From then on, people keep being scared that they will escape at night and go anywhere. Who knows how many times we see a helicopter go around searching. They escape under trees; they will hide, wherever they find a place to hide. And the people are scared.... And do you know how they jump the walls? They are like cats. I have seen them jumping. They are in the best years of their life, so it is hard to catch them. But one of*

> *them got found out, a woman told on him, I sent the report in, he was on the top*
> *of a carob tree. He climbed on top, and she saw him climb and she called me and*
> *I reported him. They came and caught him from there.*

Other fears are related to the fundamental changes that such immigration might bring to a small island. These fears are often related to the main twin fears embedded in racism; biological and cultural changes. The Maltese are scared that Malta will change, and in their eyes change for the worse, if forced migrants are not stopped from coming to Malta. They are afraid that the different ethnicities and religions of the forced migrants could lead to tension and conflict on the island. To make their point clear, a few local councillors referred to other countries that had recently experienced race riots, and also to countries where there is conflict due to ethnic and religious differences. They believe that country-wide peace can only be achieved if people are of the same ethnicity and religion. Mr. Pace, one of these councillors admits,

> *Not long ago I read that more are coming than children are being born in Malta,*
> *so what is going to happen in the long run, the Maltese race will become a black*
> *race, like what happened to England, France, Italy, America and everywhere. We*
> *are full of blacks.*

On the same issue, Mr. Pisani reflects;

> *We are talking about issues of cultures. We are talking about issues of religion, a*
> *lot of people worry that this is the silent invasion of Europe, meaning, they are*
> *coming here with their cultures, with their religions and sometimes even when we*
> *hear what has happened when they wanted to remove the crucifix (in classrooms,*
> *and other public spaces). In the end they will have an effect on our culture and*
> *religion. We need to remove the idea that we are going to affect them, there*
> *could be some but they are so strong in their beliefs about their traditions, more*
> *than us, that they can affect us.*

This type of fear was further reinforced by the fact that the migration pathway seemed unstoppable, especially in 2009, when I conducted the fieldwork. Mr. Vassallo's comment exemplifies the hopelessness the Maltese were feeling with regards to forced migration:

> *We can't continue to go on like this, they are always coming. You have to*
> *consider that, if we are not the first stop, we are the second stop from North*
> *Africa where there are millions dying of hunger.*

Obviously, Maltese people are not afraid of every stranger, nor are they especially anti-social. An interesting comparison to forced migrants is tourists and European expatriates. Malta gets more tourists per year than forced migrants, tourists come from all over the world, and while some have different ethnicities and religions, people

are not scared of them and enjoy interacting with them. On any given day a casual observer in Valetta will see throngs of tourists snapping pictures of the harbour, strolling the cobbled streets in search of a cappuccino, or enjoying any one of the many art museums. The unstated fact is that they have money to travel. Otherwise, no one knows anything about them. The difference lies in how the media and politicians portray them, how they are defined as good for the economy, and how the tourism industry creates jobs.

Fear and myth are propagated because of lack of contact, as is the case of the local councillors I interviewed. Only one councillor tried to make direct contact with forced migrants. Two other councillors came across forced migrants because of their personal work, but most did not know any. This evidence suggests that the local councillors' opinion on forced migrants is not based on their personal relationships with forced migrants living in their locale, but instead on the rhetoric of politicians, policy-makers and other influential people, rumours, and what they see on the news and read in the newspapers.

The Maltese media does an excellent job of exacerbating the situation. The main headline on the front page of the March 1st 2009 edition of *The Sunday Times of Malta* reads, "50% of HIV cases involve African Immigrants" (*The Sunday Times of Malta*, 2009). This article is blatantly stigmatizing as it clearly singles out one particular racial and social group - African Immigrants. When they collect health statistics in Malta they do not usually have a box indicating ethnicity or national origin, so how reporters might claim that they know the ethnicity of HIV positive people is debatable, but worst of all, the overarching message that it sent to the general readership is that most African forced migrants have HIV. Around 50 individuals commented on the online version of the article, some comments even suggested that the infected people should be isolated. I might submit that this would amount to a human rights violation that resonates with a similar practice used in the past in Cuba, where people of known HIV status were hunted down and kept in prison-like conditions. Below the headline, the article continues to say that there are only 100 people seeking treatment in Malta, 50 of which are African immigrants, but the damage is as irreparable as it is intentional.

In addition to such articles, people are bombarded by daily images of police and army wearing gloves and facial masks whenever they are accompanying forced migrants. This is done in part to protect police and army from possible exposure to tuberculosis and scabies, but when seen regularly, such visual stimulation is enough to raise concerns about the health risks forced migrants pose, even amongst the most open-minded of individuals. Further compounding the reaction to these images is a lack of

public knowledge about how infectious diseases are transmitted and what public health measures are being taken to avoid the spread of such diseases. These inactions do not help dismiss the myths but instead create more fear.

Other perspectives

Besides 'fear', another common Maltese sentiment is motivated by a sense of charity toward the forced migrants, what Duncan (2002) refers to as 'false empathy'. The Maltese who refer to forced migrants as *imsiken or miskien* (an expression of sympathy similar to 'poor them' or 'poor him'), are often confused when forced migrants have mobile phones and cars because in their minds, charity should be given to starving African children since these are the images they are used to seeing in the pamphlets asking for donations by Maltese missionaries. This confusion was demonstrated by Ms. Degabriele who finds some forced migrants arrogant because "You give them as much as you give them and they are never content." This type of charity is often contingent upon forced migrants behaving in ways that those who give charity approve of. So in reality this is a form of oppression, and as Mr. Farah explains, it is certainly not empowering,

> *When they keep telling you 'miskien,' you are under him. How can you go have a drink with him?*

For forced migrants, charity creates unequal power and therefore it is not beneficial to integration.

I encountered only one Councillor, Ms. Degabriele who considers multiculturalism beneficial for Maltese society, and that is, only because she thinks it will help the Maltese be more proud of their identity.

> *I think the more you have a wide spread of different cultures the better, because you learn from other cultures. I think at this point in time, it is important to learn to respect different ethnicities. We are not a closed box, just us. We have to accept that around us we have a different world going on and obviously it really helps to have different cultures in your country. The fact that you have different cultures in your locality helps you also to appreciate your own culture. Because if you know that you have different cultures, you are going to do your best to show them what you have. Everybody is happy with his own feathers [a Maltese saying]. You are going to do your best so that yours seems the best.*

So it is difficult to find people who genuinely care about the forced migrant population in Malta. The manager of the Open Centre confessed that when his Maltese staff get upset at the forced migrants their true feelings come out. The negative sentiment associated with migrants is so wide-spread in Maltese society that it is hard for people

who work with forced-migrants to keep an open-mind. One might expect that workers in these roles would be caring and empathetic, but since these jobs are almost considered unpatriotic, it is not uncommon for workers to use the word 'charity' in defence of their job.

The viewpoints and feelings depicted above are the lens through which the Maltese view forced migrants. The cumulative effect of this viewpoint results in the Maltese peoples' negative feeling toward forced migrants: they are easily annoyed with any inconvenience, and especially so when the forced migrants 'infringe' on what the Maltese consider theirs. This could be anything, from a public bus to a public bench, benefits, jobs, or women. Unfortunately, since Malta is a small, overpopulated country with limited space, it is impossible for the forced migrants not to 'infringe' on the Maltese's people territory. Ms. Degabriele explains that "There are those [Maltese] that are still annoyed by them."

Complaints

In fact, Maltese people complain a lot against forced migrants. Below is a range of complaints I heard throughout my fieldwork; this list is by no means exhaustive.

- Buses are full of forced migrants, especially early in the morning, in towns near open or detention centres
- Farmers get annoyed when forced migrants walk through their fields to go visit their friends in the Detention Centre in Safi, as they think forced migrants are going to steal the produce
- They harass young women
- They throw garbage outside the balcony
- They have smelly feet
- Where they move, they lower the prices of property
- They do not use deodorant
- They will use (marry) our women to obtain citizenship
- We can't help them or take care of them
- They act arrogantly
- They are dirty
- They bring and spread disease
- They don't sit properly on the benches
- They drive recklessly
- They smell
- They take the benches
- They are a problem
- They take the garbage out whenever they want

- ·   They take the few parking spaces
- ·   No matter how much you give them, they are never content
- ·   Malta cannot absorb all these people

In the same way as the Maltese, Park (1914, p. 611) noted a century ago, that Americans focused more on the annoying traits rather than on the positive aspects of the newly arrived migrants in the United States. These complaints "accumulate and so gain strength and volume," especially if the immigrants are physically different (Park, 1914, p. 611). In fact, the complaints the Maltese have of forced migrants are not serious violations of the law nor are they infringing on the Maltese people's personal property; however, harbouring negative feelings towards migrants and focusing on their annoying traits unconstructively affects the level and kind of interactions they have with forced migrants.

Avoiding Interaction - The *Pjazza* Metaphor

The *pjazza* of Balzan is a good metaphor for what is happening on the island in terms of relationships between the forced migrants and the Maltese population. Balzan is a small village in the middle of Malta. It is based on the old village design, one with a typical *pjazza*, or town square, in the centre of the village surrounding the Catholic church. The *pjazza* in Balzan features a set of benches around the perimeter; there are a couple of phone boxes toward one corner of the square, the police station and the bank are within sight, and in the centre, behind the church, is a swing park. Last decade, a former Catholic nun's monastery a block away from the *pjazza* was converted into an Open-Centre for forced migrants. This now hosts families and vulnerable adults. The forced migrants living in this predominantly Maltese, white, village had a significant impact on the social dynamics of the village. A local councillor interviewed from this town specifically emphasized the social dynamics of the *pjazza*.

> *The pjazza is divided, there are benches that the blacks – let me call them that – sit on, those near the telephone box. And we, the 'Balzanin' stay on the other side...They are taking the few benches that there are, some of them lay down on the benches, they don't sit down properly... They take half of the pjazza, so part is theirs and part is ours.*

He tried to explain the level of interaction between the Maltese and the forced migrants:

> *Not because the people hate them but because they don't want to mix with them as such. There are a few that talk to them but being friends no. We have places here, the playing fields in the pjazza, they sit there in the summer. Nobody tells them anything, nobody tells them to go away, they have a certain respect but there isn't a kind of closeness between them and the people.*

In Balzan, the local population is not overtly hostile to the forced migrants but they are clearly establishing boundaries.

Enforced segregation

The dynamics in the *pjazza* symbolize how the Maltese people are segregating forced migrants from their lives. They want to continue with their life as it was prior to the arrival of the migrants, and they are satisfied when the migrants do not affect their lives. This segregation was echoed by several of the other local councillors, like for example Ms. Gatt's and Mr. Caruana's comments: "You can go on with your work and not let them bother you"; "The immigrants tend to keep themselves aloof, and the Maltese don't really socialise with them." In other words, they are more interested in leading 'parallel lives'.

Some Maltese are specifically taking action to avoid interactions with forced migrants. The following is an example of such segregation. Forced migrants enjoy 'hanging out' in the local squares and swing parks; they use these places to socialize and since a portion of them do not work, many spend quite a lot of time in these squares. This stops the Maltese from using these public spaces, especially the swing parks because according to Ms. Degabriele, "It is not that safe to leave your children running in the Fluer-De-Lys' swing park." Therefore, parents are avoiding the swing park because they are afraid of what the forced migrants might do to their children. This is linked with the criminalization of forced migrants, where the Maltese automatically consider the worst of possible outcomes and in the process dehumanise the forced migrants.

The actions of the Maltese, such as those described above, hinder integration and create unnecessary, and often unintended, tension. When Maltese parents consider not taking their children to a swing park where there are forced migrants, even as a form of protection, they are in actuality, transmitting their fear to the next generation. They are disadvantaging not only the forced migrants who feel discriminated by these behaviours, but also their children who as adults will probably have to live in a more diverse country.

The established Maltese population has not suggested that they have any inclination to encourage integration, there are even those that simply do not want forced migrants to be in Malta, for instance as Mr. Pace comments on the people of his constituency, "People don't want them, they don't want them! (louder) By no means do they want them." Ms. Degabriele made the argument that even though EU directives can enforce laws on Malta and force the migrants to stay in Malta, they cannot force friendship. She then gives an example of children at school,

This is how we talk about children at school, you can't tell her to be friends with the person sitting next to her, if she doesn't like her, she doesn't like her. There is no way that you can force her to be friends.

She extrapolates typical child behaviour and relates it to the general population's relationship with forced migrants.

Even organised events that try to encourage integration have met with little success. Mr. Pisani gave me an example of an event planned by the local Catholic Church to increase integration between the forced migrants and the people of Balzan.

Nobody moved, nobody came out of their houses, the immigrants or the refugees, both were left on their own, and none of the mixing happened, none of the becoming friends happened.

I have been to a similar integration event at one of the Open Centres, where they had several bands playing, attempting to set an engaging social scene. The only non-migrants that came were either researchers like myself or people that worked with forced migrants and their friends. It is also interesting to note that a significant proportion of the non-forced migrants were themselves not Maltese. This unwillingness to interact with forced migrants creates animosity between the two groups, and as Ager and Strang (2008, p. 180) argue, such polarization leads to conflict. Ultimately, these sentiments foreshadow the forced migrants' integration prospects.

Social Bridges – Forced Migrants' Perspectives

The forced migrants are aware of the negative feelings the Maltese people have towards them. The self-imposed segregation and general cold-shouldering attitude of the Maltese towards forced migrants hurts, as Mr. Abudullahi explains:

If now I am in Malta I know I cannot say something bad about Malta, you know, but when people put me on the side and ignore me, I am human like them.

Mr. Abudullahi is diplomatic in his approach to exclaiming that the behaviour of the Maltese is discriminatory and makes him feel inferior. Many forced migrants are also careful to avoid generalizing the behaviour of the Maltese. They are aware that there are a variety of sentiments, as Mr. Ahmed observes;

Actually also people are not the same. Some are racist, some are good, some are normal.

Given the situations I have described, not surprisingly forced migrants find it difficult to interact with Maltese people, especially when starting and developing friendships. First of all, there aren't a lot of opportunities for forced migrants to meet with Maltese as the Maltese do their best to segregate the migrants. But when they do meet Maltese, for example at work, the Maltese are for the most part in a position of power acting as supervisors. As one might imagine, this further limits their possibilities for casual

friendship. Forced migrants reported that their conversations with Maltese are few and tend to be very basic, as in the case of Mr. Mohamed; "I know only that man we bought a drink from and another." Mr. Ahmed also finds it difficult to interact with Maltese people, "Before, I used to go to the gym ... I didn't talk to anybody. The owner would say 'Good morning, Ciao.'"

Most of the forced migrants are male, young, and single, and are interested in meeting women, as in the case of Mr. Mohamed, "Even the Maltese ladies I don't know. I tried to know something about them but it is difficult for me." Mr. Mohamed was really excited to tell me about his encounter with a young woman:

> I saw last week a girl, a Maltese girl, her name Christina, she is staying in Sliema, she told me like that. Still she is in school but she did not (give me) her phone and I did not give (her mine) ...but she asked where are you from, and I said Somalia, and she said, that is good yeah. When I was there I feel good, happy, yeah.

This sort of interaction can be interpreted as harassment by young Maltese females; it is especially disconcerting for women when a group of male forced migrants try to speak to just one woman, especially when they are seen as being too eager to make friends. Considering that most forced migrants are male, making contact with Maltese females is a priority, but it is difficult for them to figure out the cultural nuances of dating in Malta. I did notice; however, that some young forced migrants do have Maltese girlfriends and as in the case of Mr. Mohamed, Christina symbolized a breakthrough in his relationships with the Maltese. As Ager and Strang (2008, p. 180) noticed in their research, "Small acts of friendship appeared to have a disproportionately positive impact." A casual 'hello' that turns into recognition and then a question in response can be the first hint of integration for many people. Newly arrived immigrants are so keen to make friends and interact with Maltese people that when any Maltese engages them in conversation they appreciate it.

However, "small acts of friendship" are not always indicative of integration. Mr. Abdullahi considers that,

> I have a lot of friends...because they help me, even our staff; they will help me how to manage.

But his co-workers, the ones he considers his friends because they help him out, are not genuinely helping him integrate, and he still has a hard time feeling like he belongs:

> I like to go to enjoy myself, to feel like I am one of this community that lives together, but no one invites me. Even the place, I am sorry, the place that I work, they give me to work for them when they are going for the festa or to celebrate

> *something, they give me to work for them. So I am all the time working. So for*
> *that, no one invites me.*

In summer in Malta, every village and town has what are known as *festas,* religious celebrations of the patron saint of the town. So when his colleagues want to be together outside of work, for example to go to a *festa* or a wedding, they do not invite him in order that he cover their shift; in the process they build boundaries between themselves and Mr. Abdullahi. Overall, Mr. Abdullahi is really upset that he cannot connect with Maltese people, including his co-workers, who still do not understand the reasons why he had to flee his country. Given the opportunity he emphasizes that he had no choice but to leave his home, hoping that this significant fact will make his Maltese co-workers reach out to him.

> *Sometimes when I am at my workplace, even they start talking about immigrants*
> *and they say why you came here? How come you came here? If I have a place to*
> *stay, I won't come here, you know. I lost a lot of things; I lost my life to cross the*
> *desert, to cross some country border and the water of the sea, the Mediterranean*
> *Sea. So in my background, I was concerned about problems but at least you know*
> *it will be a safe place, on the safe side.*

These social conditions make it hard for forced migrants to integrate, and it is not uncommon to hear a comment like Mr. Ahmed's, "I don't feel part of the community." Sometimes their work contributes to the isolation they feel. For example, Mr. Farah is caught in a no-man's land between both Maltese and immigrant friendships. Mr. Farah works at one of the Open Centres and through his work meets Maltese people, yet he does not have Maltese friends. And since he is in a position of authority in the eyes of his immigrant peers, he does not find it relaxing to hang-out with them either, because they "Keep telling me about their problems, or ask for favours." He lamented that, "Mostly I am isolated." Mr. Abdullahi on the other hand, admits that he does not have friends outside of work because he works a lot and does not have time to socialize.

> *I only have my staff, or the people that I work with that is my friends, but I have*
> *no other Maltese because all the time I am in the work. And when I am going to*
> *my home, even I don't like to talk with the neighbour.*

Not all of the immigrants are isolated, nor do they interact with Maltese in the same manner. Mr. Ahmed said he has Maltese friends that he met at an integration event, and they have shown him around the island,

> *I travel around with friends, my Maltese friends and some other European*
> *students who are here. So we're going around the island, we going around the*
> *Dingli Cliffs, Mellieha, going around walking.*

The only group of Maltese Mr. Abdullahi connects with is,

The young generation, they like to know exactly what is going on all over the world and they are positive with the goodness that I saw in them.

He is studying part-time at the University of Malta, and this is the only environment where he feels he belongs; where he can be himself and is treated as an equal. He attributes this shift in attitude to the difference between the young and older generations of Maltese. He appreciates that his student-peers are curious about his experience as a forced migrant and often ask him questions to try to understand his experience.

I am not driving, so they give me lift, sometimes when I finish my course I go to my work or I go to somewhere else and they will ask me, please Mr. Abdullahi, you need some lift, and I say yes. And go, where are you going today? They give me books, novels to read to develop my English. I saw the young generation. It is better than before, I am sorry about that, they will ask you about the detention, when we are in the break we use all the time, all the time to know something, and they ask me to tell them, or to teach them how.

Forced migrants from sub-Saharan Africa have noticed that the Maltese are treating them differently than refugees and immigrants from other countries. Some have concluded that the negative sentiments and social exclusion are related to the colour of their skin. Mr. Abdullahi said,

In Malta there is a lot of refugees or a lot of immigration from Bosnia, China, from Yugoslavia, a lot of places, I mean what I saw is, when you are white immigration or white refugee no one [bothers you].

African Maltese and established sub-Saharan African immigrants face the same challenges as forced migrants, especially with people who do not know them personally, because immediate reactions are based on the colour of the person's skin. The Maltese do not make a distinction between forced migrants, African Maltese, and established sub-Saharan African immigrants. Mr. Adaji states that despite residing in Malta for the past 20 years, he encounters people on a regular basis that ask him where he is from and how he got to Malta. He does, however, pick on a cultural nuance that distinguishes between the Maltese from the North with those from the South, and he feels it is much easier for him to connect with someone from the North than from the South.

If you are Maltese from the South, maybe they come live in another part of Malta, it wouldn't be any different, even with that, even if they go to the disco, or something, their language, the way they speak, is different from the ones from the North. You take someone from Sliema, she is exposed to a lot of things, so seeing you as a foreigner is not like a threat, but if you look at someone from the southern part of Malta, I mean, I am talking about the Three Cities now, maybe

> *he is without job, because these cities have a lot of problems. Someone who is*
> *without job, who is not educated, basically will see you as a threat to the society.*

In reference to the south of Malta (also referred to as the Three Cities) Mr. Adaiji argues that Maltese from a low socio-economic background are more likely to racially discriminate against immigrants with black skin. Mr. Adaiji's statement also shows that African Maltese and forced migrants can be prejudiced against the Maltese as well, suggesting that the reasons for lack of social interaction are not always one-sided. Racial discrimination is further discussed in the next Chapter.

Social Bonds

Considering that the Maltese are not welcoming the newcomers, and sometimes even avoid social interactions with migrants, forced migrants tend to aggregate towards each other and form social bonds, connections made amongst the migrants themselves. As Mr. Ahmed explains, "Most of the time I spend with my fellow migrants at the centre." While others prefer to socially bond only with people of their own ethnicity as Mr. Mohamed describes. He spends most of his time with other

> *Somalis because we understand each other, because our culture is the same, our*
> *language the same.*

During the day at the Marsa Open Centre, there are usually groups of men sitting around having conversations with their fellow sub-Saharan Africans while listening to the radio. The manager of the Open Centre says that the immigrants do "Nothing. [They] just sit around, play cards, drink tea, talk to each other." Forced migrants living in the community and those living in other centres, often visit the Marsa Open Centre to hang out and eat at the restaurants there. Mr. Ahmed explains,

> *When I am not working sometimes I go look for a job, if I don't find one I go back*
> *to the centre, stay there, chat with my friends, sometimes play cards or watch*
> *the news or film... That is all that we do. We don't have any other things.*

The Marsa Open Centres provides a refuge, where they can feel safe, and where they can find things that are familiar, such as food. It is also a place where they can learn from each other about jobs, what types of benefits they are entitled to and how to get them, and other general strategies and information necessary for their survival.

In Malta, forced migrants do not have the necessary financial or human resources to have refugee community organisations as they do in other industrialized countries, although some grass-roots organisations are beginning to form. So most of the social bonding and network building happens in the Open Centres and other places that they frequent: outside the City Gate in Valletta, their own religious establishments, a mini supermarket in Msida called *Taste of Africa*, and a bar in Bugibba called *The African Pub* where they can go to watch a game of football, drink a beer, or play a game of

pool. This last establishment is run by an established Nigerian couple, and it offers home-cooked meals, smiles, and understanding. These places provide a respite from the racial divisions of the rest of the island and are the much-needed spaces where they can interact with one another.

Spending time with other forced migrants is not the preference of all migrants. For instance, forced migrants who work as interpreters for other forced migrants prefer to spend their free-time without their company, because otherwise they will continue working when they should be resting. One such interpreter prefers to spend time

> *In my home, to drink something and to take rest, little bit, yes because when I go out I saw a lot of problem, so I will be the one people will tell to take part in how to solve [a problem]. So they will try to take me, please come with me, I want to go for work or print CV. You know, when I am not working... I will go to my home.*

One particular forced migrant does not particularly see the benefit in bonding with others of his nationality. He emphasized that he didn't make the long journey from his country to Malta just to hang out with his compatriots as he can do that back home. He focuses his energy on making Maltese friends, even though he finds this rather difficult for the reasons already mentioned.

Is integration in Malta possible?

This complex portrayal of the island leads one to ask the question, 'Is Integration in Malta possible in the foreseeable future?' To begin with, most Maltese agree that forced migrants should not stay in Malta. Mr. Pace, who insists that countries that "talk about integration [such as] England and France, have a lot of racial problems", concludes that it is best if forced migrants do not stay in Malta. This argument was echoed by other councillors as well and emphasised by the government's effort to relocate forced migrants.

The Maltese are not positive about the forced migrants integration prospects, partly because forced migrants have a different ethnic background and come from a different culture, and partly because they do not contribute to society. The Maltese put a lot of emphasis on the differences in culture and religion and how there is an inherent clash. Mr. Caruana argues;

> *The immigrants are not all coming from the same country so they themselves are coming from different cultures, from countries, from environments, and from different religions. So you can't even integrate the immigrants between themselves, let alone, it would be much more difficult to integrate them with*

>*the rest of the Maltese community...It is my belief that it is nearly impossible, from what I am seeing, that you integrate people that are Islamic.*

Ms. Degabriele and Ms. Gatt both argue that prospects of integration are low because forced migrants are not contributing equally to society. Ms. Degabriele points out that even though they do not contribute to society in the same way, they still expect the same benefits and want access to the same services as the Maltese.

>*The Maltese people are feeling that our resources, because of the influx of illegal immigrants, are reducing. So there is always going to be that tension, how are they coming here, not paying taxes, some of them access the same services that we use, and we pay taxes. So you have these two tensions at the same time.*

Similarly, Ms. Gatt observes that it is difficult for the Maltese to accept forced migrants when they come to Malta with nothing and

>*Just come and load [themselves] on a country... [They] can't even go to the cinema and pay tax on the ticket or buy food.*

Ms. Gatt also argues that people reject forced migrants because they lack what she considers, a sense of self respect.

>*The thing is about these immigrants, the illegal ones, they don't belong, they don't have a job. When you have a job and a family, you have decency, you brought yourself respect and people respect you because they are not afraid of you.*

Having their family with them and getting jobs are those things that forced migrants have absolutely no control over. Most of the forced migrants in Malta do not have the right for family reunification, and some do not even have the right for employment. Both Ms. Gatt and Ms. Degabriele do not seem to understand that the primary reason forced migrants are coming to Malta is to escape violence; often leaving hurriedly and in fear of their lives, and when combined with the large sums paid to traffickers, most of them are left financially poor.

The overall sense that I got from the local councillors is that the anti-integration movement is very much stemming from the bottom-up. However the situation is not all negative and Mr. Farah has noticed that things in Malta have improved in the last couple of years (interview was conducted in 2009), and Mr. Pisani commented that he sees local and migrant children playing together at school and in the local playing fields, "There are children [immigrant children]; there are five I think, the other children play with them normally." Mr. Pisani also noted that the neighbours living next to an Open Centre do not have any particular issues.

> *The residents, some of them because I haven't talked to all of them, say that they have no trouble from them, they say that they are quiet people and don't bother anyone.*

And Mr. Pisani even reiterated that, "These [forced migrants] never bothered anyone in our village."

What seems to be missing in Malta is a positive drive towards integration; for example an organisation that makes it their goal to help in this regard. Local councils have the potential to be one of the missing links in the chain, but unfortunately the local councils have not taken any initiative to increase integration. Unlike local governments elsewhere in Europe which have the authority to facilitate integration, the Maltese local councils are small and operate with little overall authority. Still, the local councils could be used as a link between government services and as a source for information, but this is not currently the case. According to Ms. Abela, neither the locals nor the immigrants use the council as a liaison for services that they need.

> *People that are not from the locality [meaning immigrants] or that have a social problem don't come near the council. Most of the time they go to the parish priest of that area... when they want to know anything, or need anything... Maybe they are scared that someone will report them, I don't really know the reason, but they don't feel close to the council.*

It is worth noting that in Malta, the Catholic Church plays a crucial role in helping those parishioners that are in need, but this extremely important source of help is inaccessible to the majority of the forced migrants that are not Catholic. The councils therefore need to do more in regards to advertising their services and in inviting forced migrants to local events, especially ones that have a higher percentage of forced migrants living in their locality. As Ms. Degabriele describes, no additional effort is made to invite forced migrants or to even inform them about special events.

> *The events that the council organizes are open for everybody, it is so because, for example, for all the cultural events we advertise in the leaflets both in English and in Maltese and then it is up to the public to decide whether they want to come or not. If you are asking me if we organize events specifically catered for illegal immigrants, the answer is no... I have been doing this for three years and the three years I have been here I have never seen any of them in cultural activities at the council.*

One of the main problems is that the government does not provide financial incentives to local councils to help with integration projects in their locality. Since integration is not a policy in Malta, obviously no funds are allocated to it. Nor is there any extra money allocated to help with higher demand for services (such as garbage collection)

to localities that have a higher concentration of forced migrants, which increases the bitter feelings towards the migrants.

Regardless of the reality, the community level is an important place for integration projects to occur. Two local councils that I know of have taken some initiative in this regard. They have each organised multicultural events, where people from different ethnic backgrounds are encouraged to present their food, traditional clothing, and their heritage. Although these particular events were focused on the established immigrant population rather than on the forced migrant population, they are nonetheless a start in the right direction. Ms. Gatt stated that

> *When you make a great effort to include...people of different cultures and to encourage dialogue, then we have a good response.*

She encouraged this multicultural event, because she is as second generation immigrant and

> *If you are coming from a mixed background yourself, you can appreciate the need of a person to belong.*

This is a very positive sign that there are some good practices stemming from the local councils that encourage integration.

Conclusion

On a community level, the Maltese are not actively seeking ways to integrate with the newly arrived forced migrants and do not envision integration as a possibility. They are afraid of what they do not know about a population of people that are of a different ethnicity, who have a different culture and religion from them. On the other hand, forced migrants are upset by the reaction of the Maltese and find it hard to integrate in Malta. This is leading to a lack of social cohesion and fostering separation, and also negatively effects the integration of African Maltese and established sub-Saharan immigrants.

On a policy level, the European Union is pushing for policy on integration for both third country nationals and beneficiaries of international protection. However, as seen from the lack of interaction between the Maltese and forced migrants this is going to be a difficult policy objective to achieve. By not actively supporting and adopting an integration policy, the Government is indirectly fostering 'parallel lives'. I would further argue that leaving a policy vacuum is a strategy in itself, one that is helping exclude forced migrants from Maltese social life, possibly deterring them from coming, but especially discouraging those who might want to stay and invest in Malta.

Chapter 7   Racism: The Main Barrier to Integration

If I am white no one compare me from the other race, but my problem is my black skin. Mr. Abdullahi

Introduction

The main barrier for forced migrants in having meaningful social interaction and ultimately of becoming integrated in Malta is racism. The interviews, frequent conversation, and the sub-text in some media reporting suggest that the Maltese consider and treat forced migrants as inferior because of differences of skin colour, ethnicity, religion, culture, and poverty. Racial discrimination is persistent in forced migrants' lives, it starts when they are intercepted in international waters, it is emphasized by the policy of detention, and it is recurrent throughout their interactions on the island.

Racial discrimination is defined by the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (United Nations, 1965) as

> *Any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life.*

Solorzano (1997, p. 8) further argues that there are three crucial elements to the definition of racism

> *1) one group believes itself to be superior, 2) the group which believes itself to be superior has the power to carry out the racist behaviour, 3) racism effects multiple racial/ethnic groups.*

This Chapter argues that racism urgently needs to be addressed because firstly, it is wide-spread in Malta, and secondly, not only does it hinder newly arrived forced migrants from integrating, but it also affects African Maltese, long-established African immigrants who arrived before the recent influx, and anyone with dark skin, in a negative manner. The first section of this chapter offers a collection of narratives of racism experienced by sub-Saharan African immigrants in Malta. The second section focuses on the detention policy as an example of institutional racism, while the third section compares how forced migrants and African Maltese cope with racism. This is

then juxtaposed with the analysis of the established population's response to racist incidents in the fourth section. The final section concludes with some examples of how racism is being challenged in Malta.

Narratives of Racism

This section provides a series of diverse narratives to illustrate and analyse the experiences of racism in Malta.

Black people in Malta, regardless of their citizenship status, experience different forms of racism that vary from the subtle, such as disparaging looks or a second-party conversation between local people against forced migrants, to the extreme, such as physically damaging racist attacks that result in death. This discrimination, even in its most subtle of forms, is a constant reminder of the migrant's racial differences and of their non-belonging. Mr. Musoni, an African Maltese felt that,

> *Even if you are a legal or regularly established here, automatically you are classified as an illegal immigrant and it is up to you … you have to prove that you are not. Which is not comfortable at all.*

The established population does not differentiate between the African Maltese, the established immigrant on a work visa, or the recently arrived forced migrants, unless they personally know them. They make their judgements based only upon exterior physicality. This is especially hard for the established immigrant since it negates their feeling of belonging despite their network of family and friends in Malta.

Both forced migrants and African Maltese share that they experience racism on a daily basis. Mr. Ajiboye, an African Maltese, describes this ever-present feeling of racism,

> *I have lived here for many years and the feeling is real, whether you meet a professor at University or whether you meet the average person on the street and in the village. I speak Maltese and when I enter a bus and they see you they start, 'ah these people they are coming here taking our country'.*

Migrants experience racism in Maltese attitudes and body language, and through behaviours such as changing seats on a public bus, holding a child closer, or holding their hand tighter when walking past, or more verbal demonstrations, such as grunts and complaints against forced migrants while in their presence. The perpetrators reinforce the sentiment that migrants are not welcome in Malta and that they should not get comfortable. The Maltese are using racism as a form of social control: to control their space and exclude forced migrants from it. In the example given by Mr. Abdullahi, the Maltese talk negatively about immigrants amongst each other, in Maltese, within earshot of forced migrants in order to emphasize their displeasure. Most Somalis like Mr. Abdullahi speak Arabic, which is similar to Maltese, and after

living in Malta for a few years they can easily understand the basics of a conversation. This kind of social control elicits anxiety in forced migrants:

> *They are talking against you, and they shouting or something like that, but I have two choices: to shut my mouth or to leave the place. I will compare if some place that I am standing at is important ... [like] an appointment it is better to close my mouth. If it is something normal, I try to change the location to another place.*

Migrants are also intimidated by some of the Maltese people's behaviours; specific examples were given of bus drivers. Mr. Dagnew, an established African immigrant who doesn't have personal transportation and relies on public transport, recounts how bus drivers treated him:

> *Several times, when the bus is just about to leave the station ... the driver says "It is too late, you catch the other bus."... But [then] he took another person ... Some of [the bus drivers] don't respect you because of the colour ... One day I was missing 4 cents [from the bus fare of 0.47 Euros], I was from Msida to Valletta, and I had 5 Euros, I gave it to the driver ... The driver say "no, no, no" [5 Euros is considered too much to give change back], so a Black man who is from Ethiopia he paid for me instead. So if it wasn't for the Black man I think, I would be left at Msida. That is a very, very bad experience. So since then I always try to find the change, but tourists pay 5 Euros and [the bus drivers] give them change.*

Mr. Dagnew feels disrespected by bus drivers because they treat him differently than other people, the reason for which he cites as skin colour. Mr. Abdullahi, who has to use public transport to get to work, also recounted negative experiences with bus drivers who intentionally do not always stop for him.

> *When I went to stop the bus, he [the bus driver] will just give me any care and he will not stop for me.*

I have personally witnessed bus drivers who do not stop for African immigrants waiting at designated bus stops. In effect, the bus drivers are publically humiliating and shaming these migrants as if they are less deserving than other people waiting for the bus. These feelings are further complicated by the nuisance of having to wait longer at a bus stop and potentially arrive late for work or an appointment. Bus drivers in Malta are notorious amongst the Maltese for being everything other than law abiding, and most often any complaints or prosecutions result in nothing. This is changing, as in the summer of 2011 the public transport was privatized and the new bus company, Arriva, takes the training of drivers and courtesy more seriously.

Besides buses, another social space that Black people are refused entry is nightclubs. Some nightclubs have an unwritten policy of not admitting Black people, specifically forced migrants, in order to appease Maltese people's fear of them and to not lose their regular clientele. This racist policy is further exacerbated by the practice of having bouncers racially profile all potential clientele as Mr Adaji, an African Maltese described when he and another African Maltese went out for a men's night at a club called Feugo.

> *Once we went to Feugo, the old bouncer who used to check us in was no longer there, they had a new guy coming in and this guy was trying to show his skill. We have been here long, we have good jobs. We walk in there and he is like 'where is your passport?' My friend said 'you are asking for my passport you don't even look at my face?' Because this guy is a footballer and he is well known. 'They don't even look at my face,' and I knew there was going to be a problem...*

In the past, the previous bouncer who knew them treated them respectfully, and differently, from the newly arrived forced migrants because he knew they had money to spend in the club. Bouncers will usually ask for an Identity Card (ID) if they think someone is underage; however, in this case, these Nigerian men were definitely older than 18. The bouncer asked specifically for a passport, which means that he assumed that they were not Maltese since foreigners do not usually have a Maltese ID. This new bouncer racially profiled for black skin and did not take into consideration citizenship or length of residence, presumably because the majority of the Maltese do not realize that there is diversity in Malta and that there are, for example, African and Asian Maltese.

When African Maltese are racially discriminated against, it 'unintegrates' them. Such a scenario reminds them that no matter how many years they have lived in Malta, how well established they are, what profession they do; it is all irrelevant because what the bouncer sees is only black skin. The discriminatory actions of this bouncer made these Nigerian men feel as though they did not belong, that they had no place in this club or in Malta. Being barred from nightclubs is actually one of the biggest complaints of the young male forced migrants who want to socialise and entertain themselves in just the same way as any other young person. The club owners have been able to continue with this discriminatory practice with impunity.

There have been incidences of racially motivated physical attacks in Malta. Mr. Ahmed, who lives and works at Marsa Open Centre, recounts how he is scared of going out at night because of racial attacks that befell other immigrants in the Centre's neighbourhood:

> *I'm scared to come out at night. There has been people that have been sprayed in the eyes … Somebody comes with a can, "hey come" and they just bend your head like that "pshpshpsh".*

These forced migrants were probably sprayed with pepper spray; it was Mr. Ahmed who had been on the night shift at the Centre and had had to call for medical assistance. Mr Ahmed observed that the attacks would increase when boats of forced migrants arrived. Again, the Maltese were using these attacks as a form of social control to try to drive migrants away from Malta by removing their sense of 'safety and stability'. Unsurprisingly, such attacks have created an uneasy fear in the lives of forced migrants.

Mr. Adaji also witnessed forced migrants being the victims of physical racist attack:

> *I have witnessed two or three occasions where an African was beaten and that is not the right way, if one is drunk you don't need to start calling all the security to come. That is not the right way.*

This occurred in Paceville, the town where most of the nightclubs are in Malta. As I already mentioned, this area in Malta is already a source of tension between migrants and nightclub bouncers. Not all forced migrants accept the blatantly discriminatory policies of the nightclubs and they keep trying to get in. During my fieldwork in the summer of 2009, Suleiman Abubakar died after a beating such as the one Mr. Adaji described. Mr. Abubakar was refused entry to a club in Paceville and then 'allegedly' beaten by a bouncer and police, left in the street unconscious and without anyone who could identify him. I happened to be at the Marsa Open Centre where he lived when they found out who he was. It was quite a tragedy for the Africans in Malta, and during my fieldwork in 2010 migrants were still shocked by this incident. In memory of Mr. Abubakar I want to go more in depth about this case, especially since the bouncer was acquitted of murder in 2012 (The Times of Malta, 2012c). A service provider that knew Mr. Abubakar made the following comments the day after he went to his funeral, when there was still a lot of mystery surrounding the case:

> *He wasn't violent. Never offered violence, he would always step back if someone offered violence to him. He was murdered clearly, he wasn't welcomed to go in a club, whether it was because he was drunk or because he is Black, it doesn't matter. He was killed. It was unnecessary. The fact that the chap who struck the blow hasn't been charged with murder is extremely strange because he died as a result of being hit. Now, whether as was claimed, he was kicked by somebody else, which I find very strange because when people fight, normal people step back, or if the bouncer starts going berserk people step back. More likely that he got hit so hard that he was unconscious when he went and down and therefore couldn't defend himself with his hands to break the fall…*

> *Probably Abubakar didn't even see it coming which would have made him more susceptible to becoming unconscious. So it is a sad loss, the African community see it as racist-motivated because people who do go to Paceville have all been thrown out of the clubs. The fact that he was in hospital for 10 days and nobody found out is also [intriguing]. When people are in intensive care, when I was in Marsa, we knew within 6 hours. As soon as they were hospitalized people would be ringing around trying to find friends, family, history. So I don't understand how that gap occurred. I don't know, there is a lot of anger from the community about it. I simply don't know the reality so I can't comment on that. It is obscure. Worrying as well. So whether it was the first racist murder in Malta or not, I don't know.*

When I brought up this case with the agency responsible for beneficiaries of international protection AWAS, I got a short technical response:

> *I can't really give details about his death because there is a magisterial inquest that is ongoing. I can't give any details about it. We can't tell because it is not clear.*

It is true that the interview was only a few weeks after the incident but I expected in the very least some form of empathy, and maybe a condemnation of racism or a realization that more needs to be done to combat it, especially considering that the organisation is in charge of asylum seekers' welfare. Dr. Busuttil, a member of the European Parliament, on the other hand, clearly linked the murder of Mr. Abubakar to race and stated that "the murder of Mr Abubakar … was shocking"

The final narrative is an example of institutional racism. It concerns Mr. Dagnew, who is originally from Eastern Africa and who now lives and works in Malta. He obtained his permanent residency through his employment and works with several other people from East Africa. Throughout his narrative he refers to his experiences and those of his colleagues. This narrative describes racial profiling at the International Airport of Malta. Mr. Dagnew explains how when he arrives in Malta and goes to passport control, he is singled out by the Immigration Officer, unlike all the other passengers, presumably White people. He is singled out and questioned at length even though he has all the appropriate documentation with him, a valid passport, a work permit, a Maltese Identity Card, and a residence permit.

> *It was difficult to me when I first did passport control. [They] had a lot of questions, [they] spent like two hours questioning me, and I had legal papers to come in … When I have annual leave to go back home come, to return and come in, I face sometimes the same problem, when I have a work permit, ID card and resident permit. It is everybody difficult, for us Black people to be trusted by the Immigration … it is difficult to determine for The Immigration, who is the right*

person to come in unless they question you until they got enough information to allow you to come in, but sometimes it terrified us and we get upset. We get upset, you have all the paper, and they just want to keep you, individual when we are at Immigration and all people coming through, and they pick you from the rest, you feel a bit discriminated ... so in general it is very hard, even if we have a right to come, you got all the papers but to come in they don't allow you easy, they will not let you come in easy.

Being singled out in a crowd of people because of the colour of your skin sends a negative message to the people who witness it, as it criminalizes Mr. Dagnew in the eyes of others, and he is made to feel inferior, which as he clearly states really upsets him. Immigration is assuming that all Africans are forced migrants with no 'real' rights to be there. This is an example of how racism is becoming institutionalized in Malta, and how it goes unquestioned, because it is rationalized as part of national security and therefore part of the job description of immigration officers. The other obvious example of institutional racism in Malta is the detention policy which will be discussed in the next section.

It is clear from these narratives that racism is widespread in Malta. With the exception of Mr. Suleiman's case, it is unlikely that any of these racist incidents have been reported to the police or the Commission, largely due to the understood rhetoric among the migrant community that since, as in the case of Suleiman, perpetrators are let go with impunity, incidents of racism are not worth reporting.

The Detention Policy – An example of institutional racism

The detention policy is the most overt example of institutional racism facing forced migrants in Malta. It was adopted in order to control and deter forced migrants from coming to Malta and Europe, yet resulted in a system that discriminates against Black forced migrants who are regularly, and without exception, detained. By contrast, Eastern Europeans from outside the EU who overstay their visa are not taken to these detention centres. The detention policy is cruel; it criminalises the forced migrant, it further traumatizes them, and ultimately it limits their prospects of integration. The majority of forced migrant interviewees who arrived between 2005 and 2007 stayed in detention for an average of six to nine months. Several human rights organisations have criticised the deplorable conditions of the detention centres, depicting the human rights abuses committed against forced migrants and potential beneficiaries of international protection inside them (European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT), 2005; European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT), 2007). The 2004 report from the European Committee for the

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Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) (2005), claims that the detention centres fall short of the European Union Reception Conditions Directive (Council Directive 2003/9/EC). Detention camps have somewhat improved because of these condemning reports; however, this is not meant to make light of the realities facing forced migrants in detention centres. Detention centres are not a desirable place to live, and forced migrants are incarcerated in deplorable conditions. In fact, two service providers with whom I spoke remarked that the conditions inside the detention centres are worse than the prisons, even though detention is supposedly administrative and prison punitive.

All forced migrants who arrive in an irregular manner are detained, regardless of whether they file for asylum or are considered 'vulnerable' migrants. As soon as they land and are cleared from needing emergency hospital treatment, forced migrants are taken straight to detention. This means that forced migrants are criminalized as soon as they enter Malta. Mr. Abdullahi escaped Somalia after his father and sister were killed, thinking that in Europe he would find safety and respect for human rights. Yet after a dangerous journey, he found himself in detention.

> *When I came to Europe I saw the detention and had a hard life because I think that . . . people how they live in Europe, there is human rights, there is a lot of things but when I saw myself and my family inside the detention, all my mind is changed. We are fingerprint[ed], so that make a separation between us.*

Mr. Abdullahi refers to Eurodac, and how the practice of fingerprinting forced migrants emphasized the differences between him and Europeans. The practice is discriminatory because it treats forced migrants (read Black and poor) differently than other migrants (read White); it criminalises them and limits their freedom of movement.

Time in detention is difficult for forced migrants. The following are three forced migrants' experiences of detention:

> *Detention time hurt mentally. I was in Safi C block, we didn't get out to see the sun. Detention for one year was very stressful. I wasted a year of my life, I could have learned a language.* Mr. Farah

> *It was a very hard experience because when you are locked in for nine months doing nothing, it felt much.* Mr. Ahmed

> [In detention there is] *nothing to do, there is not freedom, there is no something to say... I was lucky because I was four months but those four months it was, it was very hard for me, it changed all my life. But the other people before they would stay one year, one year and a half.* Mr. Abdullahi

All forced migrants agree that detention had a very negative impact on their well-being. This is congruent with a longitudinal study done in American detention centres that found that most detainees had symptoms of anxiety, depression, or post-traumatic stress disorder, all of which improved upon release (Keller, et al., 2003, p. 1721). In fact, detention aggravates any physical or mental health problems that migrants may have experienced in their home countries and during their journey (Silove, et al., 2000, p. 604). And additionally, detention makes forced migrants anxious about their future.

These health problems are aggravated by practices such as separating family members. Mr. Abdullahi came with his then pregnant wife. They were separated from each other for the entire year of detention; he describes how hard it was for them.

> *The difficult thing is that I am out [away from] of my family. You can feel it how it's very hard because even the women, as usual when they are pregnant, they need a lot of things, a lot of care . . . [it was] so hard for her.*

Compounding the physical and emotional hardships in detention centres, there are no efforts to organize psychosocial programmes that would help alleviate Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. Regular visitors to the detention centres are highly controlled and the only people forced migrants come in contact with besides police and army personnel, who are in charge of the detention centres, are the few NGO workers that are allowed in.

Further exacerbating institutional racism is the fact that detention policy is extremely popular with the Maltese, and the popularity has the effect of legitimizing and fuelling institutional racism. Ms. Degabriele had two arguments why she agrees with detention. Her first argument is that,

> *If I go to Libya without a visa and without a passport, as soon as I step my foot on Libyan soil, they are going to arrest me, and with all their rights, because I have no right to go to someone's country as if it is my home … The same way I expect that if they come in Malta without a passport, let alone visa, the same way, they should be arrested. It is already enough that they are free to go after 18 months. If I go to Libya I won't be so fortunate, I guarantee you because probably Gaddafi will kill me and bury me and leave me there … You have to consider that you are entering a country without documentation; you are doing an illegal act. An illegal act equals an act of imprisonment … So these that are coming from Africa and entered in an illegal way, the same way, they should end up in prison.*

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In her first argument she is agreeing with detention as a justified punishment for entering a country illegally. That she chooses to compare forced migrants fleeing to Malta with a personal account of entering Libya, a country famous for its human rights violations, without papers is inequitable. It seeks to equate a tourist or business person travelling from a European democracy to a poorer country ruled at that time by a dictator, with a refugee fleeing for his life; a superficial but spurious equivalence. However, the detention policy is becoming more common in Western countries, nations that at least in theory, highly regard human rights.

Her other argument is that

> All illegal immigrants apply for asylum. That is why I told you there is no difference between asylum seekers and illegal immigrants. In reality there is a difference but because they all apply as asylum seekers, you can't just let all of them go? The whole issue is that there isn't a difference between an irregular migrant and an asylum seeker because in the end they will all apply. I remember cases of Tunisians that had their visa expire. Somehow, 5 weeks before their visa expired you see them applying for asylum, for the obvious reason that their visa couldn't be renewed. So they tell you, 'to stay here longer let us try this route'.

In her second argument she again justifies detention because she has witnessed other migrants taking advantage of the asylum process; this makes them fraudsters and therefore deserving of punishment. Ms. Degabriele is not alone in her discriminatory views; her opinions are echoed by my other Maltese interviewees and by the Maltese who contribute to the *Letters* and *Opinions* sections of the local newspapers. And despite their historical differences on all other major issues, even the two main political parties largely agree on the current detention policy.

The policy of detention should be revoked because it hinders the integration process of newly arrived forced migrants. Detention worsens their physical and mental well-being and breaks down their humanity so that when they start living in the community, they feel inferior rather than empowered. Detention skews their impression of the island and of the Maltese people before they get a chance to experience them since they base what they know of the Maltese from the treatment they receive from the soldiers that guard them. Furthermore, the policy of detention criminalises forced migrants in the eyes of the Maltese and encourages the Maltese people to perceive forced migrants as a people deserving of imprisonment for no reason, as a people who have different rights than them. This feeds a mutually reinforcing cycle of beliefs about the undesirability of Africans in Malta. It is understandable that there needs to be initial reception areas where immigrants are taken to perform necessary health checks and to help determine who is seeking asylum; however, once the necessary paperwork is done, there is no justifiable reason why they should be imprisoned further. Despite

all of its intentions, between 2002 and 2009, the policy of detention did not achieve its aim of deterring the smuggling of forced migrants to Malta. Considering the harmful effects of detention on forced migrants and their integration prospects, and knowing that the detention policy failed to deter migrants, it is time to rethink the detention policy.

Response mechanisms

African Maltese and forced migrants respond differently to racism. Their reactions vary depending on their personality but it is also influenced by how long they have been in Malta. Racism is likely to make some feel inferior and self-conscious, while others are able to either ignore it or confront the offender. I noticed that the longer my participants had lived in Malta the more resilient they were. Still, whether direct or indirect, acts of racism have the effect of reiterating that the migrants do not belong.

Racism can create a sense of inferiority amongst migrants. Mr. Abdullahi shared, "When I came illegal I feel something, I feel I am small than the others." Concurring with Mr. Abdullahi, Mr. Ahmed said that "Even sometimes I feel shy to walk even, you know, somebody look like that, you feel hurt." Even though they are both beneficiaries of international protection, they have internalized the discriminatory dialogue that criminalizes the way asylum seekers enter Malta. Mr. Abdullahi, a beneficiary of international protection still describes himself as 'illegal'. Policy and practice, especially to beneficiaries of international protection, is failing to empower forced migrants, resulting in feelings of inferiority and marginalization.

Others cope with racism differently. Some of the migrants and African Maltese who have lived in Malta for an extended period of time, are not easily challenged by the racist behaviour of a portion of the established population like Mr. Ajiboye;

> *I don't think the Maltese are racist. I personally have studied here from 1990 until now. I have been given equal opportunities as any other Maltese. I am respected, I have worked at different places and I have many Maltese friends.*

However, he acknowledges that he is still treated like a 'foreigner' even though he is a Maltese citizen. He rationalises this by arguing that this is the norm for any foreigner in any country.

> *Of course do they look at me as a foreigner? Of course yes, but that is everywhere. Even an English person who lives here would get that same treatment. So it is not because the Maltese are racist. I wouldn't get a treatment here that I wouldn't get that same treatment in Germany or in England or in any other place. So Malta as a country is not different from any other country. I mean … it is not racism but it is racism.*

Similarly, Mr. Adaji made it clear that he does not like the word race or racism:

> *When I came in there were not many Blacks, I don't like using the word Blacks so I don't … I don't like to talk about race you know.[8]*

He believes that some immigrants, specifically the non-educated, use racism as an excuse to victimize themselves:

> *If you meet an African who is not really educated, this issue of racism comes in immediately and that is the worst thing because they say look, these people don't want me to do it, they are against us. No. I've got ten Nigerians working with me, I took them to work with me part-time and the first thing I used to say to them … I don't want to hear the word racism because you are going to piss me off. If there is [a problem] we will try to see a way to iron it out but I don't want to hear the word racism. Why? Because once you have that in mind you are going to block all your thinking. And that is going to affect you for the rest of your life. I've got friends who are married and they have this problem, I know friends who have been here seven to ten years and they don't have good work, they don't have work, because (imitating whiny voice) 'when we go here they don't accept us, when we go do this'. I say, do you try, do you try.*

Mr. Adaji is aware that racial discrimination exists because he shared personal experiences of it with me, yet he still denies racism as a concept, and links admitting to the concept of racism to being uneducated and from a low-class background. His strategy of ignoring the issues of race and racism could be in part to resist racism and also in an effort to repress painful memories. Primarily, Mr. Adaji's personal strategy is to avoid situations of potential discrimination, as in the case of public transport:

> *Let me give you an example of the public buses. The bus drivers are not really educated. Sometimes it depends on their mood… maybe they are tired. Prevention is better than cure … so when I go to the public transport, the first thing, I already got my change with me. So that means I do my things at the right time. If I go into the public transport and the bus driver, I mean if it is full up basically I don't go in.*

The most effective strategy employed by some migrants, especially established immigrants, that demonstrates their resilience is when they confront the offender directly and stand up for themselves, as in the case of Mr. Adaji and a bank clerk:

> *It is like going to the bank, you go the bank and you are trying to find out some question, sometimes you get embarrassed. One time I went to the bank, I walked in the bank, I was trying to find some information. Immediately I sat down, I*

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[8] I had not introduced the word race or black in the interview. He said this during the introductory questions.

> *didn't introduce myself, I didn't even ask, I just wanted to ask questions … (high pitched voice) "no, no, no this is not for foreigners, this is not" She was just saying a lot of things and I looked at her and after said, are you finished with what you are saying. She said yes. I said pity, if I am one of the auditing officer coming to audit the bank, I would dismiss you. Because customer-care you are zero. These people give a bad impression of all the Maltese.*

Dealing with the situation promptly and with composure probably made Mr. Adaji feel satisfied; content that next time the bank employee would think twice before jumping to conclusions about somebody's nationality based solely on skin colour. Mr. Dagnew also used this method of standing up for his rights with a bus driver:

> *There is another day also, I was taking the bus from Valletta to Rabat, and the driver said to me "No, you don't need to take this bus". I said to him, "Why?" He said, "This is not going to Hal Far"[9] … and I said "You know that you are talking to a mature person, an adult person, I know where I am going so don't tell me that this is not the right bus." I asked him a question, "Does this bus go to Rabat?" he said "Yes,'" I said "So who is confused you or me? I am on the right track to take the bus from Valletta to Rabat."*

Mr. Musoni also had an interesting way of dealing with racial discrimination; this is his story about a policeman who discriminated against him after he was involved in a car accident.

> *The guy had reversed into my car, and of course I stuck to the rules and I reported him to the police, the traffic police, to have him as a witness … and one of the policemen came. The guy who had hit me, he did not know that I do understand a bit of Maltese.… It was about 50 Maltese pounds expenses. I don't know how they made the report. I never heard about anything, I never got paid for the expenses. The point about is, that while I didn't pursue it, I went to the policeman, who had made the sketch and I asked him to give me a copy of the sketch because I knew the procedure. When he showed me the sketch, ha-ha I saw that he had done it wrongly. This were in the early 90's, mid 90's, when cameras were not very common or vigorous, not like now, you can take a video, you know, record what is happening and use it as evidence to defend yourself. So when I went to him, listen this was not the case, how it was, I was adamant. So he told me, listen this is how I saw it. I mean, there is nothing I can do, you have to go to court and that. I said I'm not going to court, you can keep it for yourself, but this is not how it was. The guy [the policeman] happened to be living in the same village that I was, and as time went by I would meet him very often, so*

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[99] Hal Far, a town in Malta that has a big Open Centre for forced migrants.

> *every time his eyes met mine, it is very, very bad ha-ha, he felt very, very bad. So much so, as time went by I assured him that for me it was nonsense. It was a non issue and we became friends, and believe me, now when we meet, we go sit down and have a drink or a coffee, and one time I mentioned it to him, he told me that day, "I did it because I didn't want problems for me or for myself, because he is one of those thugs, rough people who could easily do something wrong against you and against me." So he ended up giving more insight, info on certain people whom I should be careful and how I should do things and so on.*

Having the inside knowledge that not much could have been achieved if he had filed a report against the policeman, Mr. Musoni waited patiently and used his social capital to his advantage, as he now is on friendly terms with the policeman. Mr. Musoni didn't languish on how he was victimized but rather emphasized that by knowing the Maltese language, culture, and social systems, as well as having a support system, he was able to resolve his own feelings about the injustice he had suffered.

Overall, African Maltese were less willing to talk about the negative effects of racism and instead focused on how they were resistant to it, therefore reinforcing their belief that they are integrated members of the established population. This was a very different strategy than that of forced migrants who were generally disempowered by racism because they didn't have the necessary social capital nor the social networks to combat it.

Rationalised Racism

This section argues that racism is ever-present in Malta and regardless of the fact that some of the local councillors maintain that the Maltese are not concerned about the race and ethnicity of forced migrants, racism is a reality. The local councillors who claim this belief justify the Maltese people's xenophobic and racialized sentiments with arguments on religious difference and cultural change. They also refer to the strain on social services, population increase, and the uncontrolled manner in which the forced migrants arrived in an effort to deflect their discrimination and avoid being held accountable.

In reality, racialized sentiments are so common in the established population that people have internalized and normalized them. Some of the local councillors were actually comfortable sharing their racialized comments as in the case of Mr. Vassallo, who desires 'racial purity' to remain in Malta.

> *If we are not going to be careful we are going to become a Dalmatian island, meaning Dalmatian, a white and black dog, are you understanding? I am not a racist but then I'm Maltese foremost, are you understanding ... My fear is that*

> *Maltese girls, some will get mixed, this you can't stop. If they don't change the citizenship law again, because he will do five years here. They have to be careful of marriages of convenience.*

Rattansi (2007, p. 95) argues that considering Black people inferior, referring to racial purity, and expressing an aversion to "racial mixing" are all examples of 'strong racism' or 'old racism'.

Other local councillors' justifications for the Maltese attitude toward forced migrants moved away from the arguments about biological differences and colour of the skin embedded in 'strong racism'. Rather they built their arguments on cultural and religious difference, and fear of change. All of these are elements of 'new racism', defined as

> *a more covert racism which attempts to escape the opprobrium of open racism by omitting issues of biology altogether and focusing instead on questions of culture and ethnicity ... The emphasis is on cultural difference and the genuine fears of ordinary citizens that their national character and, by implication, way of life may be in danger of being overwhelmed and marginalized* (Rattansi, 2007, pp. 95-97).

Mr. Caruana refers to the majority of the forced migrants' religion, Islam, and how it is impossible for Muslims to coexist with Catholics considering the history of the Crusades.

> *The facts are showing that after what happened in America and England, first and foremost they consider themselves as Islamic, so you are not considering yourself as a Canadian citizen or American citizen or an English citizen. It is a militant religion and I think it is dominating the world. Because, if you pay attention to the history of Christianity, there was a time when there were Crusades, where the Templar Knights went to fight in Jerusalem against the Turks about issues of religion.*

There are clear elements of Islamophobia (fear of Islam) in his statement, especially when he refers to the Muslim's exclusive loyalty to the *ummah*, the international Muslim community, rather than to the state. According to Rattansi (2007, p. 108), Islamophobia has a part of its origins in the medieval crusades; this is evident in the case of Malta and how Maltese view Islam, especially considering the importance that the Knights of St. John and the Great Siege have in Maltese history. The Great Siege is often recounted as the event in which the 'infidel Turks' were defeated for the salvation of the Catholic religion. Mr. Ajiboye, an African Maltese tried to explain to me why Maltese people are apprehensive of Islam.

> *Just to paint the picture for you to see that it is not simplistic. Some people try to make it simple. It is this, and this and that. It's not that at all. Even I when I hear*

> *the mosque, I have lived in Africa most of life till I was a teenager, seeing the speakers and call out for prayer. Even nowadays sometimes I sit here and they go "allah" and I go "aah" because I am not used to it anymore. So imagine the reaction I get when I hear that, imagine a Maltese hearing that. They are coming here invading our country and then their religion is not ours. Everything the Maltese does is his religion ... You have a clash between two communities ... When you deal with Black people, people think it is only the colour of the skin but it is not. It is sometimes what lurks behind the colour is culture. The fear of the culture, the change of culture, change of understanding.*

Fear, the other element of 'new racism' is often quoted as a reason for the Maltese hesitation in welcoming and accepting forced migrants. Dr. Busuttil, member of the European Parliament explains:

> *Here is a society which was taken by surprise and it is a very delicate situation...They are shocked by the sheer numbers and there is a lot of fear. Fear of the silent invasion, you know, anger and fear which are part of the ingredients that leads to xenophobia and racism. I think it is easy to condemn racism but really, if you want to do something about it, you need to understand where it is coming from.*

Here Dr. Busuttil implies that Maltese racism stems from shock and fear because of the way forced migrants were smuggled to Malta. Between 2002 and 2009, when the arrivals of so-called 'irregular immigrants' or 'illegal immigrants' were the highlight of the daily news, a common word used in the media was 'invasion', a metaphor that is deeply tied to Malta's history of being conquered. There is a profound fear amongst the Maltese that their way of life is going to change, and that they are powerless to stop this change. In addition, the government argues that the arrival of forced migrants strains the Maltese social services, services that are already overstretched and underfunded, as Mr. Caruana states;

> *Those that are against the immigrants in Malta, it doesn't mean that they hate them or that they are racist, there could be some that are like that ... Malta is not a rich country and then on the other hand, how can it absorb this inflow of people and you have to help them and take care of them. We are not rich enough as a country to provide food, provide clothing, provide education, provide social services, provide shelter; we need these ourselves. There are a lot that are suffering, so if you are suffering yourself and to add insult to injury, more people come, we already have the argument that we are too many people.*

This is true to some extent, and since most of the forced migrants are beneficiaries of international protection, there is the need for aid. However, in Malta there is a general rhetoric that states that forced migrants are a helpless people that can survive only on

aid and free handouts, resources that the Maltese do not have. Maltese people do not envision integration, employment, or self-sufficiency. There is a need for Maltese to realize that beneficiaries of international protection are able to work, and for the most part able to take care of themselves, especially if the barrier of racism is dismantled.

Racism in Malta is not something new, so it cannot simply be excused for the reasons mentioned above. Ms. Said, ethnically Indian by descent and married to a Maltese national, recounted how her family was discriminated against because of their darker skin colour and for her mother's choice in wearing a sari.

> *My mother was stoned for wearing an Indian costume in the 1930's and 40's she tells us.*

She also mentioned how in her own childhood in the 70's Maltese children picked on she and her peers.

> *They used to fight with us, based on the colour of our skin. They used to fight with us; we were a group of friends, Indians living mostly in Valletta and Floriana.*

Ms. Gatt argues that forced migrants are being discriminated against based solely on their race because they are treated differently than other immigrants who are also undesirable, here she gives the example of Russian and Bulgarian white female migrants who come to Malta to work as sex workers and how they are treated differently.

> *Nobody makes such a big halabalua [deal] about them. I mean there have been people talking about immigrants from Russia and Bulgaria who have been lured into different professions that are impacting on our families [referring to sex work]. And there are people talking, but the amount of people talking about the immigrants who loiter about doing nothing around Marsa and around Balzan... and who are the typical immigrants that we are talking about. They are not talking about the Russians and the Bulgarians, they are talking about the Black immigrants.*

In effect, forced migrants are becoming scapegoats, and Mr. Caruana admits:

> *People are edgy, it is not fair to say that the immigrants are raping the young Maltese woman, you have to examine the social fabric. [The town] is changing, and because [the town] is going backwards, is going backwards in terms of social class, not because of the immigrants, it is going backwards because of the social cases, drug addicts.*

Besides, the Maltese do not have an argument against multiculturalism and diversity. Mr. Busuttil points out:

> *But I think this is a sad irony because not only do we have a history of immigration but we are a population of immigrants. If you look at my family tree, and probably if you did the same with yours, you'd find that I have my surname is of Syrian origin, Busuttil, on my mother's side, my grand grand father was French, on my grandmother's side they were Italians, on my father's side they had Italians and Spanish. It is a mixture and we are all of a mixed blood. So the idea that we should be racist or xenophobes presumes that we are a pure race which we are not ha-ha we are of mixed race.*

Mr Busuttil recalls that Maltese history is varied. Malta is a country of immigrants. And, even though we are not proud of this history and do not particularly celebrate it, especially the Arab period (870-1249 A.D.), a way to debunk the myth of invasion and challenge racism, which at the moment is so widespread and normalized, is to celebrate our multicultural past, as well as our present, and accept and learn from it.

Combating racism

Racism is so prevalent in Malta because 1) there is a lack of checks in place against it, offering protagonists impunity, 2) there is a lack of education about the plight of forced migrants and about the different forms of racism and its effects, 3) in general there is a lack of rhetoric about and against racism, and 4) racism within the Maltese context has not been investigated appropriately. There are a few NGOs attempting to offer programmes that address racism. The Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) was the first to plan such programmes and started the dialogue against racism. The director of JRS explains their outreach programme,

> *There is a school outreach programme, out of which we have three people working and they carry out school visits … They carry out information sessions about people who are reaching Malta as irregular migrants, about asylum seekers, about people who are refugees, about situations in the countries of origin which lead people to forced migration. So we try and address forced migration from the reality back at home. There is a team of three members of staff including people who are themselves, people who have protection… So what would be the causes of forced migration and then there would be personal testimonies … It is not like we do the talking on behalf of others but we try to enable others to do the talking for themselves. We try to present the, to present the positive aspect, of being able to share the presence of such people among the local population. So we try to engage … in something that could be interesting to them … culture. So sometimes there could be some kind of cultural presentation with audio visuals, in some schools we organise a drum circle … a third country*

> *national who is here and who is a music teacher in his country of origin to join us, then we have ten drums which are taken to the schools and among the students in a small group, he creates a drum circle that people can, students can learn different beats and rhythms and also get a hint of what certain essential African rhythms would sound like and if they could possibly reproduce. On previous occasion we had food sampling sessions where we used to ask refugees or immigrants to prepare a particular dish, which at the end of the given presentation, the students themselves could sample so they could get an idea of not only the cultural and historical taste, but really of taste of food of different countries. In many cases we realized that students are initially apprehensive, either because of what they would have heard already, that is at home or because of what, what they could have perceived as the general images among the broader population, what they see from the media, and so forth ... in a couple of cases it was even hostile. They do make some effort to pay attention during the personal testimony. We realized that the attitude changes a lot when people can make contact with somebody as a person, as a person and not as a liability or as a threat. Which is how third country nationals have often been presented, either in terms of liability or a security threat or a cultural threat which is of course defamatory, that is defamatory. So we realized that a number of students would have, by the end of these sessions, I would say a slightly more open position then on the outset.*

Mr. Adaji is familiar with the programme and thinks that, it "helps a lot," because as the director of JRS stated, it starts to change students' perspectives about forced migration and about diversity in Malta.

Another project that the JRS does is the Pedro Arrupe Award which encourages schools to take the initiative and have discussions about race and forced migration.

> *The Pedro Arrupe award is an award which JRS Europe organises for schools and invites schools to present a project on refugees and asylum seekers in their given country. [It asks that] they try to come up with a project that is informative and at the same time creative and artistic.*

Combating racism should be at the core of any integration programme targeted at the local population since most of the barriers facing forced migrants in accessing services and integration, are related to racism.

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Conclusion

Racism has detrimental effects on the integration of sub-Saharan Africans in Malta. It has devastating effects on forced migrants who are looking for a country to lead a peaceful life, and for African Maltese, for whom racism has negative effects to their sense of belonging in Malta. This is the first time in Malta's modern history that it has reached a tipping point where the need to address the issue of race and racism is paramount. Since racism affects all Black people in Malta, regardless of their citizenship status, it should be taken as impetus for the drastic need of an integration policy. Malta cannot ignore this need and continue to argue that forced migrants are a transitory group because obviously, African Maltese and their children are not temporary and it is inconceivable that all the forced migrants will leave the island in the foreseeable future. Besides facilitating integration via the domains of the Ager and Strang's (2008) Integration Framework, an integration policy also needs to address the barriers to integration. As discussed in this Chapter the main barrier to integration is racial discrimination; it encroaches on all the domains of the Integration Framework, especially access to services, creating meaningful social connections, and the feeling of safety and stability.

The first step towards eliminating racism should be the repeal of the detention policy. Since the criminalization of forced migrants creates an unequal dynamic between forced migrants and the Maltese established population, making the Maltese feel superior and in-control of the forced migrants' lives, the detention policy should be rejected since it feeds the latent racism that I have argued exists within the Maltese society. Secondly, racial discrimination absolutely cannot continue to be exercised with impunity. There need to be mechanisms in place to advocate against it, and when situations occur, they need to be dealt with efficiently and appropriately in order to prevent its acceptance and recurrence.

Chapter 8   Discussion and Conclusion

Introduction

When forced migration to Malta began in 2002, Malta was going through a lot of change, both economically and socially. Primarily, Malta was preparing for the accession to the European Union in 2004. This had a dramatic effect on the identity of the Maltese, who now were expected to see themselves more as Europeans than as Maltese, and whose value system was challenged; did they truly want divorce and abortion to be legal? This is in line with Castles and Miller's (2003, p. 15) argument that

> *Immigration often takes place at the same time as economic restructuring and far-reaching social change. People whose conditions of life are already changing in an unpredictable way often see the newcomers as the cause of insecurity.*

This defines the Maltese government and the general public's approach in dealing and interacting with forced migrants in Malta. As discussed in Chapters 6 and 7, this resulted in poor social interaction, and racial discrimination that impedes the social inclusion of these newly arrived immigrants. This dissertation also argues that it was not just this group of forced migrants that were affected but also long-term established African immigrants; in short, anyone with Black skin became a scapegoat for all the changes and insecurities these changes were causing.

This final chapter argues that this present situation makes it imperative that Malta address the changes to its community and implement an integration policy, along with other policies of inclusion, to help include migrants as an integral part of its future.

Forced Migration

Migration is sometimes the only choice, albeit the most dangerous, for people to survive. Zolberg et al. (1989, p. 256) declare that "exit constitutes one of the most effective weapons that poor people can wield against an exploitative state." This dissertation argues against border control and other deterrent measures such as detention, because they are not in actuality deterrent measures, but punitive policies against asylum seekers (Marfleet, 2006, p. 3). The tightening of borders leads to human trafficking, which increases human exploitation and even death of potential asylum seekers. Furthermore indiscriminate tightening of borders goes against the Geneva Convention and the responsibility states have toward asylum seekers, since in effect, it closes the channels for asylum. In addition to leaving borders open for asylum

seekers, this dissertation also argues that international protection should be offered to those fleeing from conflict, and that migration channels should be opened for those that who fall into the 'victim refugee' category but who are not covered by the Geneva Convention; that is, those that face extreme poverty and lack of livelihood in their country of origin.

As argued in Chapter 2, migration, especially migration from South to North will keep happening because evidence shows that it is difficult to control migration, especially forced migration, and border control and deterrent measures have little influence (Castles, 2000). As discussed in the Migration Systems Theory, migration cannot be controlled at the state level because mechanisms that lead and sustain migration are above the state, including "regional networks of trade, production, investment and communication" (Massey et al., 1998 in Schmitter Heisler, 2008, p. 91). In addition, as the network theory suggests, "what starts as a movement of "pioneers", mostly young males, comes to encompass the general population, including women and entire families" (Portes & Rumbaut, 2006, p. 18).

Yet, the Maltese government responded to the arrival of forced migrants by adopting the victimisation discourse, a legacy from the colonial period, when Malta had been the victim of the British empire's policies. The Maltese governement argues that Malta is a victim of the irregular arrival of migrants, and furthermore, that it is a victim of the European Union's stringent border control measures and policies, including the Dublin II regulation. In proclaiming Malta the victim, it implies that Malta cannot help either the forced migrants or itself and therefore requires the assistance of others, mainly the European Union, what Mainwaring (2008) refers to as the "impotency discourse".

The Maltese government also often argues that forced migrants did not plan to come to Malta and most want to live somewhere else, therefore by claiming that they are only a transient population, it avoids talking about integration. The fact forced migrants did not intend to come to Malta was emphasised by service providers and local councillors during the interviews, which shows government rhetoric has trickled down and affected the views of the established population. This has negative consequences for integration because as Castles (2000, p. 278) argues, "Governments which reject the idea of permanent settlement also oppose pluralism, which they see a threat to national unity and identity." To some extent the established population is using negative social control to exclude immigrants in the hopes that they will not settle in Malta. But the fact is, that from a sample of 730 interviewed by the Office of the Refugee Commissioner, 26% want to remain in Malta (Office of the Refugee Commissioner, 2011b). As Castles (2000, pp. 277-278) remarks, "Migration, almost

inevitably leads to settlement of a certain proportion of the migrants". Even though only a minority will settle, it still amounts to a sizeable group that will continue changing migration patterns, ethnicity of the Maltese island, and the Maltese identity.

Changes in the Maltese Identity

Malta has a long history of being ruled by others, it belonged to each of the major powers of the Mediterranean including the Phoenicians, the Arabs, the Roman Empire, and the Knights of St. John before being colonized by France and Britain. Having only gained independence from Britain in 1964 and becoming a Republic in 1974, Malta is technically a country that is still in its infancy. Since Independence, Malta has been preoccupied with building the nation-state which traditionally, is based on "ethnic homogeneity, defined in terms of common language, culture, traditions and history" (Castles & Miller, 2003, pp. 15-16). At the same time, Malta has been grappling with major changes including the liberalization of the market and the entrance into a globalised world economy during the late 1980's and 90's, accession to the European Union in 2004, and most recently with the rise in immigration. All these changes have had an impact on Maltese identity.

The rise in immigration has specifically challenged the "common culture at the heart of [Malta's] nation-building process" because diversity and multiculturalism are often seen to contradict "the aim of nation-building" (Castles & Miller, 2003, pp. 15-16). As discerned from the level of social interaction discussed in Chapter 6, the Maltese are refusing to accept diversity and multiculturalism, especially from Southern countries. In fact, the local councillors interviewed did not even want to make an exception for beneficiaries of international protection, despite knowing that they have escaped war and human rights violations. Yet, research shows that not accepting diversity is counterproductive to the goal of community cohesion, and can lead to "marginalized ethnic minorities" (Castles & Miller, 2003, p. 15). When the Maltese think that Malta belongs only to the 'real Maltese', they are creating divisions, and if the sub-Saharan Africans do not feel welcomed into the community, the most natural reaction is to focus on social bonding which can result in ethnic enclaves. According to the manager of the Marsa Open Centre this is already happening:

> Africans in Malta live in small little pockets with the Open Centre being 'mini Africa', the black ghetto.

As already argued, migration will continue so Malta does not have a choice but to adapt its identity to a fast changing social and cultural context. This transition in identity will be easier to manage if the Maltese government changes its rhetoric to one

that is accepting of diversity and introduces the appropriate policies, as discussed in the next two sections.

Integration

Recently arrived forced migrants have already become part of the Maltese social fabric regardless of the lack of state policies and the Maltese negative attitude towards diversity. They are dating Maltese women, finding employment, and, those with families are taking their children to sit alongside Maltese students in the country's schools. They are opening businesses such as mini supermarkets and bars, forming their own places of worship, such as an Evangelic Church, and establishing their own social rights groups. This demonstrates that migrants are resilient, self-sufficient, and resourceful, and that possibilities for integration do exist if a concrete pathway exists.

In this dissertation I use the term integration to refer to the process of immigrant settlement (this is the term currently used within the European Union). As described in Chapter 4, in practice, models of inclusion put the burden of integration on the migrants, and do not necessarily invoke the two-way process of change, because they are usually put in place to protect the identity and the rights of the majority rather than that of the minority.

But as seen from other European countries, such policies are not successful in achieving their aims so instead of assimilation and integration, Parekh (2008, pp. 87-89) proposes a "moral contract". Here the focus is on how immigrants can "become equal citizens and be bound to the rest by the ties of common belonging" (Parekh, 2008, p. 87) rather than how social change can be controlled in favour of those in power. By common belonging, Parekh (2008, p. 87) refers to the

> *broadly shared feeling among the citizens that they form part of the same community, belong together, share common interests, are bound to each other by a common system of rights and obligations, depend on each other for their well-being, and wish to live together in peace for the foreseeable future.*

The moral contract still requires immigrants to learn the language and obtain some degree of "cultural competence," but it emphasises in particular, the responsibility and obligations of the established population (Parekh, 2008, p. 89).

This means that Malta, one of the least tolerant countries toward migration in the European Union, needs to actively work to include immigrants because "immigrants cannot belong to a society unless it is prepared to welcome them" (Parekh, 2008, p. 87). One of the obligations of the established population in terms of Parekh's moral contract is to help migrants "transition, and help them feel and become its full and

legitimate members" (Parekh, 2008, p. 89). A first step in legitimizing the contributions of immigrants in the Maltese society is to remove the main barriers to integration.

Chapter 7 discussed the main barriers to integration focusing on the systematic racial discrimination against the newly arrived forced migrants. Mestheneos and Ioannidi (2002, p. 318) found that the "widespread but often covert institutional racism common throughout Europe" is also one of the biggest barriers to social integration for refugees in fifteen other EU Member States they studied.

Racism in Malta is not only directed at the new comers but also affects the established ethnic minorities, especially if they have a dark skin colour. This has severe implication on the social cohesion of Malta; as Castles and Miller (2003, p. 15) argue, "racism is a threat, not only to immigrants themselves, but also to democratic institutions and social order." Therefore differences in ethnicity have to be treated similarly to differences in class, age, gender, and religion and become a variable that policies on equality include. The Maltese "not in my back yard" attitude toward immigration and ethnic diversity leads to racism; this has to change, starting with a stronger race relations policy. It is especially crucial to embark upon this now rather than later because it is the second generation migrants that really feel the brunt of the injustice; as there is a 'gap between these young people's expectations of economic and legal equality, and the realities of racism and exclusion that they experience in their everyday lives', affecting their sense of belonging (Cheong, et al., 2007, p. 12).

Integration Policy

An integration policy that includes a path to citizenship is urgently needed, not just for the newly arrived immigrants but also for the immigrants that have been living in Malta for an extended amount of time. There must be a pathway for refugees and people with subsidiary protection, especially their children, toward citizenship. Considering the direction of the conflict in Somalia it is going to take an indefinite amount time before Somali refugees can return to their country. In addition, failed asylum seekers should not be allowed to live in a legal limbo, and if they cannot be repatriated, then they should first be given a status and then given a residency permit. Otherwise these people will be creating an underpriveleged underclass, one that would most likely result in ethnic tension in the near future. Lastly, third country nationals arriving and settling in Malta should benefit from a citizenship program, or at least have access to a more secure residence permit system.

Policies regarding education, health, social services, and access to the labour market all need to be re-analysed and re-written to take into consideration the increase and diversity of the ethnic and religious minorities now residing in Malta. Ethnic minorities should be welcomed into mainstream society and not pushed aside, left with no alternative but to build their own services. For example, the way that the Libyan's dealt with the fact that public schools in Malta teach the Catholic faith was to build their own private school where Arabic and Islam are taught. With the rise of ethnic minorities, education policies should change to encompass diversity, so that appropriate services are available to all and not only to parents who have money to pay for private schooling.

The first step in accepting ethnic diversity and cultural change is for Malta to recognize the possibility of permanent settlement of forced migrants and other immigrants (Castles & Miller, 2003, p. 14). Most of the European Union's policies on immigration and asylum, as for example in the European Pact on Immigration and Asylum discussed in Chapter 4, specifically refer to "immigrants who are likely to settle permanently" (Council of the European Union, 2008, p. 6). The Maltese government's emphasis on the fact that forced migrants did not intend, nor do they want to settle in Malta could be interpreted as an excuse to avoid talking about integration; however, in no way should this redirection negate that integration should be treated as a viable and durable solution.

Conclusion

This dissertation adds three main contributions to knowledge: it discusses the challenges to the Maltese identity by exploring social interactions with migrants at the community level, it refers to African Maltese and established African Immigrants, and analyses how this new immigration pathway is affecting them, and thirdly, it argues that a push for an integration policy and more positive race relations is not only beneficial for newly arrived forced migrants but especially for the established immigrants, their children, and second generation immigrants.

As discussed in this dissertation, Malta is a country in flux, with changes coming from the North in terms of EU policies and legislation, and from the South through immigration. These changes shape our Maltese identity; Malta has a choice, to either open up for diversity, knowing that migration is an uncontrollable force, or continue with its repressive policies. With this research I want to be critical of the situation in Malta with the hope to inspire change.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 - The number of forced migrants that arrived in Malta in an irregular manner

Year	Number of boats that arrived	Number arriving in an irregular manner
2002	21	1686
2003	12	502
2004	52	1388
2005	48	1822
2006	57	1780
2007	68	1702
2008	84	2775
2009	17	1475
2010	2	47
2011	9	1579
Total	370	14756

(National Statistics Office, 2012a, pp. 2-3)

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Appendix 2 - Map of key migrant routes from Africa to Europe
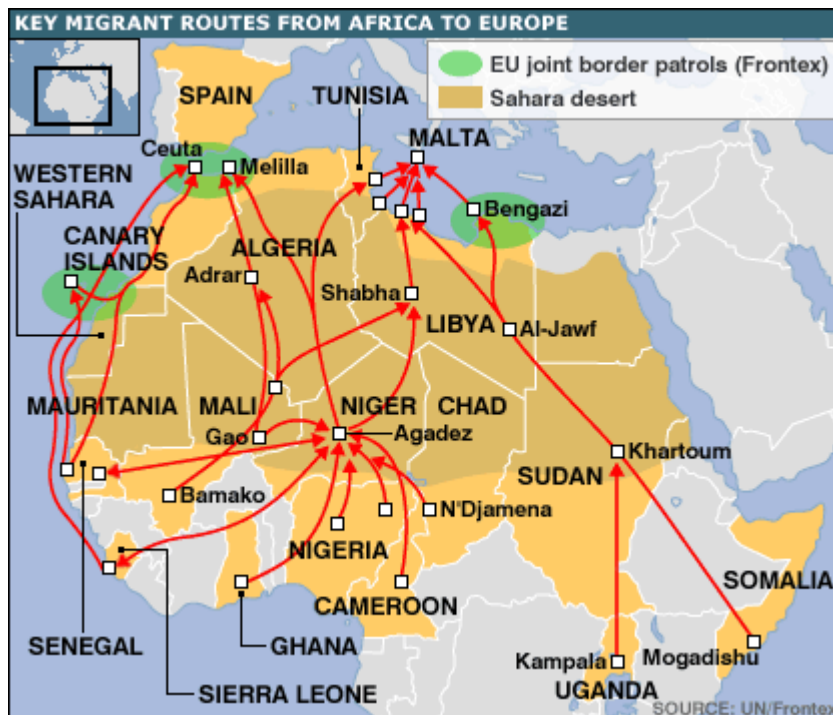
(British Broadcasting Corporation , 2007)

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Appendix 3 - The number of immigrants that arrived in Malta in an irregular manner from top 10 country of origin

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	Total
Somali	249	86	533	146	311	613	1443	898		455	4738
Eritrea	334	1	199	372	368	211	152	156		280	2073
Egypt	307	198	208	381	312	4	21	37		10	1478
Nigeria	49		4	45	55	136	338	78		239	944
Sudan	25	42	64	420	67	46	60	3		54	781
Iv.Coast	5	28	53	75	58	162	159	10		114	664
Ethiopia	63		53	99	143	107	28	9		103	605
Ghana	115		2	24	85	84	157	3		76	546
Mali	7	1	1	2	40	123	187	42		86	489
Morocco	89	12	1	23	158	2	1	15		0	301

(Ministry for Justice and Home Affairs, Third Country Nationals Office, 2010; National Statistics Office, 2012a, p. 3) Breakdown by country of origin from 2010 is not available.

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Appendix 4 - Asylum decisions taken by the Office of the Refugee Commissioner

Year	Total Applications Submitted	Granted refugee status	Granted other forms of international protection	Rejected
2002	419	22	111	286
2003	568	53	328	187
2004	868	49	560	259
2005	1102	36	510	556
2006	1045	22	481	542
2007	959	7	623	329
2008	2697	19	1397	1281
2009	2575	20	1671	884
2010	348	43	179	126
2011	1606	70	814	722
Total	12187	341	6674	5172

(National Statistics Office, 2012a, p. 6)

Appendix 5 - The number of asylum applicants per 1000 inhabitants in industrialized countries

Country	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	Total Per 1,000 inhabitants '05 - '09
Malta	1,170	1,270	1,380	2,610	2,390	21.6
Cyprus	7,750	4,550	6,790	3,920	3,200	30.1
Italy	9,550	10,350	14,050	30,320	17,600	1.4
Spain	5,250	5,300	7,660	4,520	3,000	0.6
France	49,730	30,750	2,930	35,400	41,980	3
Germany	28,910	21,030	19,160	22,090	27,650	1.4
UK	30,840	28,320	28,300	31,320	29,840	2.4
Canada	19,740	22,910	28,340	36,900	33,250	4.2
USA	48,770	51,880	50,720	49,560	49,020	0.8
Australia	3,200	3,520	3,980	4,770	6,170	1.0

(UNHCR, 2010b)

Appendix 6 – Number of forced migrants residing in Open Centres and other institutional households between 2009 and 2011

	2009	2010	2011
Total Residing in Open Centres	2783	1992	1289

(National Statistics Office, 2012a, p. 7)

Appendix 7 - First time residence permits issued in 2008 by country of citizenship

Somalia	1119
Russia	449
China	274
Eritrea	264
North Korea	232
Libya	223
Turkey	202
Serbia	178
Philippines	172
India	160

(European Migration Network Malta, 2011, pp. 21-22)

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Appendix 8 - Interview Guide for sub-Saharan African immigrants

When you left your country what was your idea of life in Europe?

How do you want your life to be here?

What can you tell me about your experiences living in Malta?

What is it like living here, in Malta?

How long have you lived in Malta for?

Where are you living right now?

Do you feel part of a community here in Malta?

Are there groups of people you identify with here? Do you feel close to any people here? Do you have friends? Are most of them immigrants? Do you have any Maltese friends? Religion?

Do you feel safe here? Do you have any particular stories about your experiences with Maltese people?

How do you spend your day?

What do you like to do when you are not working?

If you have been to a health centre can you tell me what you thought of this?

If you require educational service, what do you think of these?

What can you tell me about your experience of dealing with the police?

Have you ever experienced any difficulties in Malta?

Are there any difficulties you have experienced or that maybe you've heard other immigrants say?

How would you like to be treated?

Do you feel Malta is your home?

Can you understand the culture here?

How's their Maltese language?

How do they feel about learning it?

Is there anything positive about living in Malta?

Where hope to be in five years time?

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Appendix 9 – Interview guide for local councillors

What is your position in the council?

How long you have been working here?

Do you live here?

What can you tell me about the immigrants that live in St. Paul's Bay?

How many immigrants live here?

What are the different groups that live here?

Is there a place where they gather?

What do the locals think of the immigrants?

How is the life of the immigrants different from that of the locals?

What do you understand by 'integration of immigrants'?

Do you think integration of immigrants is possible?

What can be done so that immigrants are better integrated?

What can the government do to help the local council deal with the issue of immigrants?

If you were an immigrant in a different country what would you like the local council to do to help you?

Amanda J. Muscat Moulton

Appendix 10 – Consent Form

"What does immigration of third country nationals mean to Malta?"

I have read and understood the information sheet and this consent form. I have had an opportunity to ask questions about my participation.

I understand that I am under no obligation to take part in this study.

I agree to being interviewed and I understand that I have the right to stop the interview and ask to have the recording erased. Also I can withdraw from this study at any stage without giving any reason.

I understand that the contents of the interview will be used for a PhD submitted to the University of Southampton.

Name of participant: _____

Signature of participant: _____

Signature of researcher: _____

Date: _____

Contact details of the researcher

Name of researcher: Amanda Muscat

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Amanda J. Muscat Moulton

Appendix 11 – Information Sheet

Research Title: "What does immigration of third country nationals mean to Malta?"
Researcher:Amanda Jane Muscat

I am a doctoral researcher from the University of Chichester and I am undertaking this research as part of my PhD.

Immigration to Malta is a recent phenomenon, and related policies and service provision are still in their infancy. There has been little interview-based research on integration of immigrants in Malta, the most recent study being part of the IntegraRef project[1] on which I was also a researcher. It is important to get the perspective of third country nationals living in the communities, local councillors, and service providers to help inform policy makers.

I am looking for third country nationals living in the community, local councillors, and possibly service providers that are willing to contribute to this research. There are no criteria for being included or excluded. If you agree to contribute you will be asked to be interviewed. The data from these interviews will be anonymous; my private research notes and the research report will use initials or pseudonyms, and you will also be given the opportunity to ensure that any contextual information that might indicate your individual identity will be altered. I am not aware of any potential risks associated with your participation in this research, although some might find it distressing to share their experiences. The length of the interview will vary but you can decide how long it should be. You are free to withdraw from this research at any stage without giving a reason.

The results will be presented in my PhD at the University of Chichester and the University of Southampton. Recorded material and raw data will only be used by me and if requested by my supervisor in the UK (who will not know your identity). These will be stored in a secure place at the University for the next three years.

If you would like to contact an independent person, who knows about this research but is not involved in it, you are welcome to contact Dr. Chris Gaine. His contact details are given below.

If you have read and understood this information sheet, any questions you had have been answered, and you would like to participate please read the consent form.

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1 http://www.serviziocentrale.it/pdf/documenti/finalReport.pdf

Amanda J. Muscat Moulton

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