

NEWSLETTER

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Surviving as a nation

Is Maltese Identity and Cultural heritage standing at a cliff edge?

As a concerned nation loving citizen, I frequently ask this question. Change and technological advancement is a

See - Judge - Act

"It is up to the Christian communities to analyze with objectivity the situation which is proper to their own country, to shed on it the light of the Gospel's unalterable words and to draw principles of reflection, norms of judgment and directives for action from the social teaching of the Church"

~ Pope Paul VI ~

(Octogesima Adveniens par. 4)

necessity; without change we die - it's as simple as that. However, progress and advancement should never come at the expense of who we are. Progress as a tool to grow to a better understanding of who we are absolutely; but never by throwing away that which has given this nation its identity throughout its history.

In one "Star Trek: The next generation" episode, a group of people are transferred by stealth to a different planet as their home planet was no longer habitable. One of these people however realises what is happening and is given a choice. Either go back to your people and never reveal the truth, or leave behind your people and stay with us. The young man realising that his way of life is gone forever makes this interesting comment, "how can we grow when everything that made us who we are is gone?" (S7, E13 - Homeward). Truth be told the science in the franchise is hogwash, but the producers touch on interesting philosophical conundrums from time to time.

Now let's go back to my question. If our culture and identity are lost forever, are stamped out of our collective memory, how can we as a nation grow - grow on what? Growth presupposes a beginning and a past. And I will go further, isn't that then a form of self-inflicted genocide? In her paper 'Identicide - A precursor to genocide' Sarah Jane Megarg (2006) argues that "identicide encompasses the destruction of any or all of the particular qualities that make up, not necessarily the actual elimination of people, but rather, the places which they have constructed over time and in which they habitually live, and their customary and routinised social practices".

Some might find my reference to 'identicide' unpalatable and maybe absurd, but I seriously ask you the reader to give this some thought. We might not be murdering each other but there are troubling traits that have taken root in our collective thinking.

We experience on a daily basis selfish personal agendas that have been adopted by a segment of our society who through a divide and conquer approach seek to erode the fundamentals of who we are as a people. There is a force lobbying to re-invent ourselves independently of our past and heritage. And if 'all that made us who we are is gone' what is the future of our nation if not the whimsical dreams and edicts of those writing the script?

I dare say a sequel to the book by Herbert Ganado "Rajt Malta tinbide!" (I witnessed Malta transformed) is due, but sadly we are witnessing a national rape not transformation to the better.

Maltese society is at a cliff's edge on a number of themes.

Commoditising human life – Solidarity and empathy have been commercialised. We view the unborn and the elderly as a burden, implying that they might have different or no rights as they restrict the rights of the living. We think of workers, especially the lower paid and foreign workers as dispensable. Life in Malta has a price tag, and if you happen to be in the wrong tribe, it is a low-price tag indeed.

Modern day slavery – We have an economy that is built on cheap labour. We have turned whole localities into slums as people working their butts off can barely afford a single bed flat and in some instances must share a bed with a stranger.

Public office – Most people in public office have lost all sense of moral high ground. The truth is twisted to accommodate a point of view, and blatant lies have become the order of the day with politicians openly practicing an 'alternative facts' policy to hide wrong doings and protect their tribe.

Our habitat - Architecture as a profession is central to society. A good architect strives to create spaces in which a society lives, grows, build relationships, builds families, builds an identity, and builds a way of life that is particular to a nation. Sadly, with the take-over of the shoebox architect we experience the reverse, the loss of our cultural heritage, social binding and well-being.

Our environment - Is living surrounded by concrete, glass, and steel what we want? We thirst to be in touch with nature. We need green open spaces where buildings and high rises are out of sight in miles. As an island nation, we cannot leave the city without taking an expensive and polluting plane ride. We need to get back in touch with nature. We need natural spaces that are really protected from the greed of developers and their political sidekicks that see Malta as a playground they will almost definitely not retire in!

Tax evasion and avoidance – Tax is a tool for the well being of the nation. Failing to pay your share, legally or illegally, is an affront to the well-being of the nation.

Abdicating our international duties – It has been noted that Malta in the last 2 years has rarely come to the assistance of any migrants in peril.

An inept education system – an education system that fails to train critical thinkers and responsible mature adults. A system that adulates rights and skims on responsibilities.

The common theme is one of self-focus and rampant individualism were anything goes if 'I am' the winner.

This is not who we want to be as a nation, its self-destructive, short sighted and unsustainable. We cannot grow as a nation if we just look for the convenient.

Be the change you want to see, be that change today!

In the name of justice



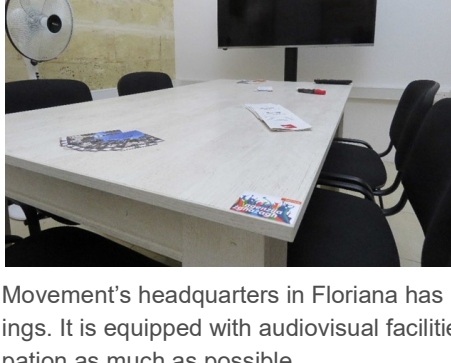
ZHN is proud to openly support the various initiatives seeking to address in a truly independent manner a huge problem that has been afflicting our construction industry — that of serious and deadly workplace accidents. The one death that has come to symbolise them all is that of Jean Paul Sofia, a caring young man full of life that became yet another victim of a sick system.

As an organisation dedicated to work with young workers, we are encouraged by a recent change of heart by the government to launch a public and independent inquiry into this matter but are equally dismayed by the fact that it took a petition and a national rally for this change of heart to come by. ZHN asks, was this change of heart really because the authorities truly care about the well-being of our workers, or was it a result of a close minded 'party before patria' mentality were the ego of the few trumps the well-being of our nation?

We insist that the independent public inquiry that the government has committed to, be allowed to take its course openly, transparently, and independently. The inquiry must be fully objective to succeed in its objectives. No stone must be left unturned to ensure that the whole truth that led to this and similar tragedies be uncovered to ensure that such tragedies are avoided in the future. The system must be fixed, whatever the cost. We cannot have a mob profiting on the blood of the working class backed by the callous lack of empathy of those that can really change things!

Our politicians must stop playing the role of a modern day Gonsalvo Monroy representing a self-serving feudalistic attitude to politics. Politicians must start taking responsibility of what they have been elected for. An elected politician has the moral and ethical duty to vote with his conscience even if that means defying the party whip. Elected representatives, keep in mind that you are elected to serve the nation and all its people, not a political party.

Let's meet



The Żgħażaġh Haddiema Nsara movement regularly organises meetings with relevant organisations and individuals, in line with one of its objective to represent young workers in discussions with the authorities, employers and local, national and international organisations. (Art. 8 of the Movement's Statute).

Through support received from Agenzija Żgħażaġh, under the Assistance For You (A4U) 2023 scheme, one of the rooms at the Movement's headquarters in Floriana has been set up specifically to better facilitate meetings. It is equipped with audiovisual facilities including video-conferencing to widen participation as much as possible.

Interested to collaborate, join or be updated? Send us a message. *Let's meet!*



Prospective member' meeting

ZHN will be hosting in the next couple of weeks its first meeting for prospective members and interested individuals. In this meeting prospective members will be introduced to the Movement's history, principles, and methods. Our aim is to encourage young people to come together and start meeting regularly, putting into practice the Movement's method of [See-Judge-Act](#).

Interested in becoming a member? Get in touch!

ZHN summer barbeque

On the 10th of July, ZHN hosted a free BBQ at its premises in Żejtun, to introduce young people to the Movement and to get to know each other.

Thanks to all those who made it. Other social events are planned for the summer so stay tuned.