

MELITENSIA

Fall 2015

A Newsletter of the Malta Study Center



HILL MUSEUM & MANUSCRIPT LIBRARY



THE MALTA STUDY CENTER *at the* HILL MUSEUM & MANUSCRIPT LIBRARY

Dear Melitensians,

High above the streets of Mdina sits a small room in the Cathedral Archives that faces the formidable façade of the Banca Giuratale, the home of the legal section of the National Archives of Malta. In this room resides a dark wooden cabinet containing treasures of Malta that have been on the island for more than five centuries. These include some of the earliest written documents in Malta: rare instances of the medieval manuscript heritage that is too often obscured by the more famous early modern writings left behind by the Knights of Saint John of Jerusalem who ruled the island after 1530.

Over the last several months the Malta Study Center has worked diligently with Monsignor John Azzopardi, Curator and Archivist of the Cathedral Archives, to inventory and digitize the rare and important medieval manuscripts found in the collection. Many of these documents, little more than fragments themselves or remnants of now lost libraries, remind us of the slender physical ties that unite our present circumstances with our historical past. With the help of the Rahr Foundation, the Center will be working closely with Fr. Azzopardi over the next year to digitally preserve this important historical collection.

This fall, the Friends of the Malta Study Center met for their annual meeting. The Friends, led by Joseph S. Micallef KMOB, the founder of the Malta Study Center, welcomed Steven Kennedy KM, as a new member of the group. I want to express my continued thanks to the Friends for their support, and to all the generous individuals whose donations help make our digitization efforts possible.

Sincerely,

Dr. Daniel K. Gullo
Joseph S. Micallef Curator of the Malta Study Center



Above: Mr. Stephen Busuttil, photographer, and Mr. Mario Gauci, Assistant Archivist of the Cathedral Archives, Mdina, preparing to digitize the Royas choral books in Mdina.

*On the cover: "L'assalto per mare e per terra al isola di s. Michele a di XV di Iulio." Anton Francesco Lucini, *Disegni dell guerra, assedio et assalti data dall'armata turchesa all'isola di Malta l'anno MDLXV. Sotto il governo di Fr. Gio. Parisotto di Valletta Gran Maestro* (Rome: Nicolò Allegri, 1631).*

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Where We're Working: The Cathedral Archives, Mdina

In September 2015, the Malta Study Center began a new project to digitize and catalog a collection of medieval manuscripts, parchments, archival material, and choral books at the Cathedral Archives in Mdina. This project is the first digitization project at the Cathedral Archives, building on HMML's legacy microfilming project undertaken at the archives during the 1970s and 1980s.

The new project focuses on the items not filmed during the first period of collaboration between the Cathedral Archives and HMML. The Malta Study Center originally microfilmed the bulk of the archival collections of the Cathedral Archives under the direction of Monsignor John Azzopardi between 1973 and 1989. Filming concluded in 1989 after over 8000 objects had been photographed, including books, music manuscripts, and archival materials from other ecclesiastical institutions and private collections in Malta and Gozo. The microfilmed materials date from the 12th to the 20th century.

The new project will digitize several volumes of the Archives of the Inquisition in Malta held in Mdina and Vittoriosa, about 450 medieval and early modern Papal bulls, briefs, and charters in the archives of Mdina and Valletta, the famous choral books of the Cathedral Museum, including the Royas manuscripts, and several uncataloged medieval manuscript fragments in the archives. Most importantly, the project will digitize the rare complete medieval manuscripts held in the archives and museum, including the precious twelfth-century antiphonaries and the *Codex Evangeliorum Melitensis*.

Thanks to a generous grant from the Rahr Foundation, the Malta Study Center will be able to complete the digitization of the manuscripts over the next year. In addition to supporting the digitization of the documents, the Foundation's grant also provides funds to support the preservation of the documents and local Maltese staff to inventory the collection.



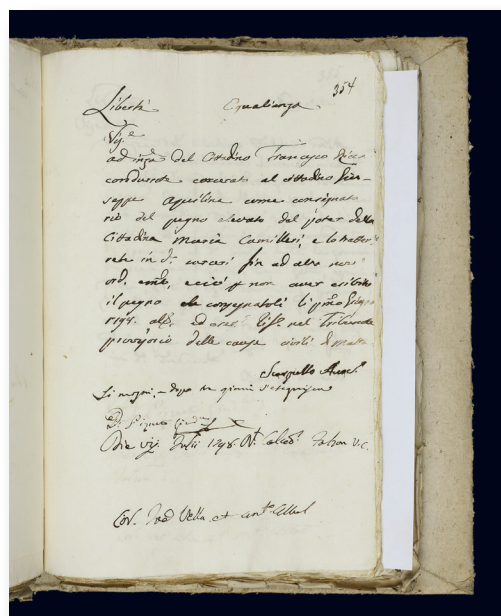
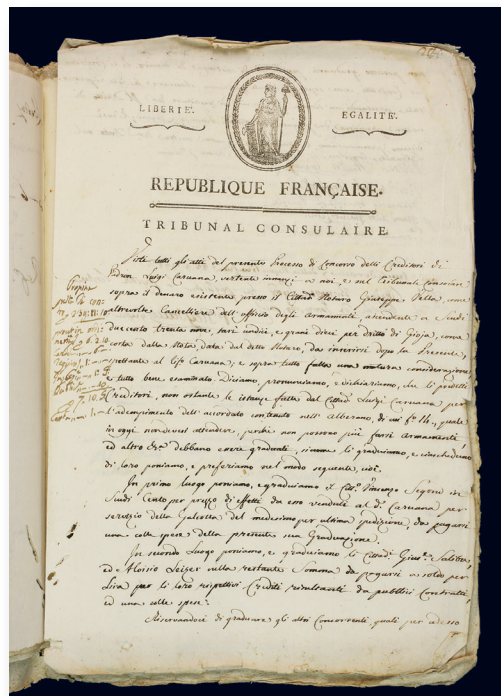
Top: Mdina, Cathedral Museum, "Dominica resurrectionis domini introitus" Royas Choral Books, vol. 1, f. 1r. Italian, 16th century.

Below: Mdina, Cathedral Archives, Archives of the Inquisition of Malta, *Processi Criminali*, vol. 151, 1r.

Filming at the National Archives of Malta

In July, the Malta Study Center completed the digitization of the *Magna Curia Castellaniae Acta Originalia* series (MCC AO) at the National Archives of Malta facility in Mdina. The project, which began in 2007, digitized 1411 volumes of legal documents dating from 1543 to 1798. The *Magna Curia Castellaniae* was the largest secular tribunal in Malta during the time of the Knights (1530-1798), being under the jurisdiction of the Grand Master of the Order. The seven-year project funded by the Center eventually included over two million digital images of important Maltese legal history.

In addition to the MCC AO series, the Center also completed the digitization of the *Epoca Gallica* fonds (EGA) at the National Archives. The EGA fonds cover the legal history of Malta between 1798-1800, when the French abolished the Order of Malta's civil and criminal justice system and the Office of the Inquisition and replaced it with a secular court system based on the systems adopted by the new French Republic. The National Archives also agreed to digitize the miscellaneous records from the French period of Maltese history found in the Law Courts Miscellaneous fonds (LCM) in Rabat. Previously listed under the accession number 92/04, these documents were salvaged from Fort Saint Elmo in 1992, whence they were transferred to the National Archives.



Above: Rabat, National Archives of Malta, LCM Collection, 1798 vol. 1.

Center: Mdina, National Archives of Malta, MCC *Acta Originalia*, vol. 1411.

Left: Filming that last folio of the *Magna Curia Castellaniae Acta Originalia*, vol. 1411 at the Banca Giuratale in July, 2015.

1565 Great Siege of Malta Exhibition at HMML

On September 9, 2015, the Malta Study Center opened a month-long exhibition marking the 450th anniversary of the Great Siege of Malta at HMML. The exhibition *Knights, Memory, and the Siege of 1565* featured over twenty rare books and manuscripts narrating the military history of the Order of Saint John of Jerusalem and the Ottoman Turks from the 1480 Siege of Rhodes through the Great Siege of Malta in 1565. Items on display came from the James Ford Bell Library and O. Meredith Wilson Library at the University of Minnesota, the Rare Books and Special Collections of the Catholic University of America, and the Malta Study Center Collection at HMML. Highlights from the exhibition included two fifteenth-century publications recounting the 1480 Siege of Rhodes, Pierre Gentile de Vendôme's earliest history of the Great Siege of 1565, and Mederico Blondel's notes on the construction of the fortifications of Valletta.

The exhibition, curated by Dr. Daniel Gullo, Joseph S. Micallef Curator of the Malta Study Center, was on display from September 9th through November 10th in HMML's Reading Room. To open the exhibition, Dr. Emanuel Buttigieg of the Department of History at the University of Malta provided a public lecture titled, *The 1565 Great Siege of Malta: Knights-Maltese-Memory*. The well-received talk began with a historic overview of the Great Siege, then focused on how the Order of Saint John and later the Maltese people remembered the siege as part of their cultural heritage. The exhibition opening was preceded by a reception at HMML, along with interviews of Drs. Gullo and Buttigieg broadcast by Mario Xuareb of TVM, National Television of Malta.

Left above: Dr. Emanuel Buttigieg's lecture "The 1565 Great Siege of Malta: Knights-Maltese-Memory" opening the exhibition.

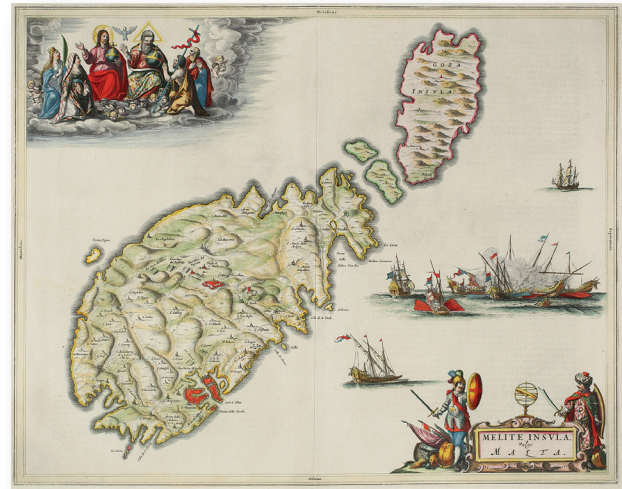
Left below: Panels and rare books from the Malta Study Center Collection and The Catholic University of America on display in HMML's Reading Room.

Below: Photograph of the rare books from the Malta Study Center Collection and James Ford Bell Library on display during the Great Siege exhibition.



Malta Study Center Co-Sponsors Mediterranean Symposium

In conjunction with the James Ford Bell Library, the Center for Medieval Studies, the Consortium for the Study of the Premodern World, and the Mediterranean Collaborative, the Malta Study Center invited Dr. Brian Catlos, University of Colorado, and Dr. Sharon Kinoshita, University of California-Santa Cruz, to lead the one-day “Introduction to Mediterranean Studies: A Symposium” at the University of Minnesota. Drs. Catlos and Kinoshita, the founders and co-coordinators of the Mediterranean Seminar, engaged students and faculty with discussions about the methodology of Mediterranean Studies and its usefulness for literary and historical investigations. The event, which took place on November 12th, 2015, also included an introduction to Mediterranean digital and microfilm resources at HMML by Dr. Gullo of the Malta Study Center. The Mediterranean Seminar is an international consortium of scholars and universities dedicated to the study of the Mediterranean as a region, with an emphasis on the pre- and early modern periods and includes over 500 worldwide scholars.



J. Blaeus Grooten, “Malta” in *Atlas, oft Werelt- Beschryving, in welke 't Aerdryck, de Zee, en Hemel, wort vertoont en beschreven* (Amsterdam: J. Blaeu, 1664).

New Rare Book and Manuscript Acquisitions

Boufflers, Stanislas de. *Oeuvres du chevalier de Boufflers*. La Haye: Chez Detune, Libraire, 1781.

Statvta ordinis domvs Hiervsalem. Rome: Apud Antonium Bladum, 23 June 1556.

Sastachs y Costas, José. *Memoria sobre el archivo prioral de Cataluña de la Orden de San Juan de Jersualén redactada por el presbítero de la iglesia de este nombre en la presente ciudad*. Barcelona: Tipográfico-Editorial de Daniel Cortezo, 1885.

Privat de Fontanilles M. *La Maltiade ou l'Isle-Adam, dernier Grand-Maitre de Rhodes, et premier Grand-Maitre de Malte – Poème – Nouvelle édition exactement revue, corrigée & considérablement augmentée par l'auteur*. Arles: Jacques Mesnier, 1770.

[François Prévost, Antoine]. *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de Malte, ou, Histoire de la jeunesse du commandeur de ****. Amsterdam, François des Bordes, 1741.

Manuscript. “Recueil intéressant sur les guerres du XVIII^esiècle et sur l'Ordre de Malte.” Manuscript on paper, 18th century.

Manuscript. “Journal de la campagne de la Frégate l'Iris commandée par Mr. le Commandeur Ligoudés Capitaine des vaisseaux du Roi...Commencé 13 Juillet 1789 et fini le 12 mai 1790.” Manuscript on paper, 18th century.



Statvta ordinis domvs Hiervsalem. Rome: Apud Antonium Bladum, 23 June 1556.

News and Events from the Center

The Friends of the Malta Study Center Annual Meeting

The Friends of the Malta Study Center held their annual meeting at Saint John's University on September 20th and 21st, 2015. During the meeting, the Chair of the Friends of the Malta Study Center, Joseph S. Micallef KMOB, along with the other members of the Friends, welcomed Steven Kennedy KM, as a new member to the group. Steven Kennedy has provided years of service and leadership at HMML, recently ended his three-year term as Chair of HMML's Board of Overseers. The group also welcomed Mr. Albert Colianni to the meeting as a member ex-officio in his role as the incoming Chair of HMML's Board of Overseers.

Agenda items included discussions about current preservation activities in Malta, as well as plans for expanding the Center's activities to manuscript repositories holding the Order of Malta's records in other parts of Europe. The meeting also included an exhibition of recent acquisitions to the Malta Study Center's rare book and manuscript collection and a tour of the 1565 Great Siege of Malta exhibition. The exhibition and acquisitions prompted an important discussion on how to best use the collections at HMML to improve the outreach of the Center and promote knowledge about the history of the Order of Malta.



Annual meeting with the Friends of the Malta Study Center in September at HMML. *Front row, left to right:* Steven Kennedy KM; Fr. Columba Stewart OSB; Joseph S. Micallef KMOB; Nicky Carpenter DM; Edmund L. Luzine, Jr. KM. *Back row, left to right:* Albert Colianni; Fra' Thomas Mulligan KJ; Michael Grace, Esq. KM; Robert Weyerhaeuser; Robert Shafer KM; Dr. Daniel K. Gullo; Fr. Eric Hollas OSB.

The Malta Study Center Sponsors Session at the Sixteenth Century Society Conference

HMML's Malta Study Center hosted a session at the Sixteenth Century Society Conference held October 22th-25th, 2015 in Vancouver, British Columbia. The session titled, "Malta at the Center of the Mediterranean," featured papers by Dr. Molly Greene, Princeton University, Dr. Eric Dursteller, Brigham Young University, and Dr. Daniel K. Gullo, of HMML. Dr. John Hunt, Utah Valley University, chaired the session. The conference is an annual gathering of around 500 scholars and features more than 200 sessions of papers, panel discussions, roundtables, workshops, and performances. The Sixteenth Century Society and Conference (SCSC) promotes scholarship on the early modern era, broadly defined (ca. 1450 – ca. 1660).

Curator participates in the International Medieval Congress in Leeds, UK

In July, Dr. Gullo presented the paper "The 1440 Reform of Santa Maria de Montserrat by the Congregation of Santa Giustina de Padua" at the 2015 International Medieval Congress organized by the Institute of Medieval Studies at the University of Leeds. The paper formed part of a panel titled "Observance and Its Discontents: Case Studies from the Iberian Lands" organized by Dr. James D. Mixson, University of Alabama, and chaired by Dr. Kathryn Beebe, University of Texas-Arlington. The session included important interventions by Dr. Robin Vose, St. Thomas University, and Dr. Timothy Schmitz, Wofford College.



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Friends of The Malta Study Center

The Friends of the Malta Study Center is an advisory group that meets annually to support the mission and vision of the Center. The Friends provide oversight in financial matters and ensure that the organization has the resources it needs to fulfill its cultural preservation mission.

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