

# MELITENSIA

Fall 2017

*A Newsletter of the Malta Study Center*



HILL MUSEUM & MANUSCRIPT LIBRARY



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

Dear Melitensians,

Valletta houses some of the richest archival collections in the Mediterranean. Although the Archives of the Order of Malta in the National Library stand out as the preeminent example of this wealth in documents and history, several other smaller, less well-known archives detail this history of Malta and the Mediterranean in intimate detail. Chief among these are the confraternal archives found in Valletta. These repositories record the charitable works and donations of their members dating back to the 16th century.

I am happy to report that we began our project at the Archives of the Confraternity of Charity in May, 2017. The archive resides in a hidden tower within Saint Paul's Shipwreck Church in Valletta. This preliminary work successfully digitized 90 manuscripts, focusing on the registers, account books, and confraternal foundations. More than half the collection remains to be digitized. Our success at the Confraternity of Charity led to greater interest in the Center from other confraternities of Malta, including the Archconfraternity of the Holy Rosary. Thanks to our partners in Malta, we will soon begin digitizing the Archconfraternity of the Holy Rosary as part of the private archive project co-sponsored by the Fondazzjoni Patrimonju Malti.

We were fortunate to have two distinguished guests from Malta visit the Malta Study Center in August and October. Francesca Balzan, Curator of the Palazzo Falson Historic House Museum, provided insights into the history of jewelry in Malta as part of our continued series of joint events with the Mediterranean Studies Collaborative at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities. In August, our site director from Malta, Cláudia Garradas, spent two weeks at HMML to help add new records to our manuscript collections in vHMML Reading Room.

I extend my personal thanks to Joseph S. Micallef, KMOB UOM, and all the Friends of the Malta Study Center for their support. I wish to extend my welcome to two new members, Fra' Nicola Tegoni, KJ, and Dr. Michael Camilleri, who joined the Friends of the Malta Study Center in September.

Sincerely,

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



*Above: Digitizing the Archives of the Confraternity of Charity in Valletta, Malta.*

*On the cover: "Fleet of the Order of Malta in Action near Jaffa," Valletta, Archivum de Piro. Box A17, bundle 1. 18th-century manuscript on paper*

## MELITENSIA

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## *Where We're Working: The Archconfraternity of the Holy Rosary, Valletta, Malta*

As part of our ongoing partnership with the Fondazzjoni Patrimonju Malti, the Malta Study Center has signed an agreement with the Archconfraternity of the Holy Rosary in Valletta to digitize the Archconfraternity's pre-1815 archives and manuscripts. The Archconfraternity of the Holy Rosary was founded under the auspices of the Dominican Order circa 1575, and is associated with the Church of Saint Mary of Porto Salvo and the Dominican Priory in Valletta, where its chapel is located. Members of the Archconfraternity dedicated themselves to the ministry of those condemned to capital punishment in Malta. This prison ministry extended to Maltese and non-Maltese, who had been convicted of capital crimes by either civil or ecclesiastical courts. By the early 17th century, the Archconfraternity was affiliated with the central Archconfraternity of the Holy Rosary in Rome, recruiting several prominent Knights from the Order of Malta, including Grand Master Manuel Pinto da Fonseca, in addition to several members of the local Maltese nobility.

Records within the archives detail the many ministries and activities of the Archconfraternity. These activities included the care of the condemned, the redemption of captives, care for the poor and the payment for memorial masses for the members of the Archconfraternity and their families. The records also include the history of donations and grants made to the Archconfraternity, providing a window into the history of landholdings, construction of chapels, commission of art works, and other aspects of Catholic devotion in early modern Europe.

The Archconfraternity's archives contain over 300 manuscripts, dating from the 16th through the 20th centuries. Digitizing the archives will contribute to our knowledge of confraternal organizations in Malta, and will be an important addition to the archival records digitized during our previous collaboration with the Fondazzjoni Patrimonju Malti at the Archivum de Piro housed in the Casa Rocca Piccola in Valletta.



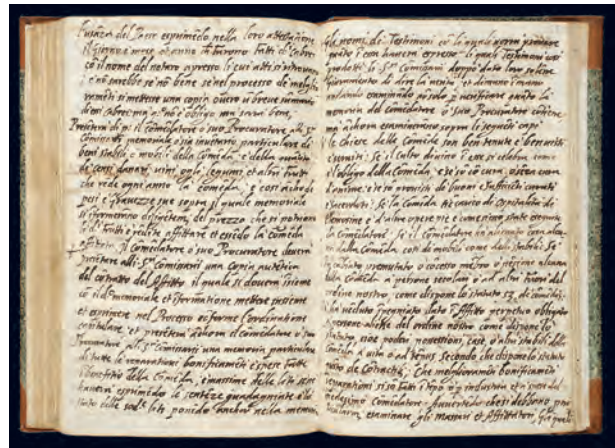
*Top: Armoire of the Archives of the Archconfraternity of the Holy Rosary, Valletta, Malta*

*Below: Records of the membership of the Archconfraternity of the Holy Rosary, Valletta, Malta. 17th-century manuscript on paper*

# Revisiting the Malta Collections at the Catholic University of America

The Malta Study Center completed the digitization of 90 manuscripts and rare Melitensia located at the Catholic University of America (CUA) Rare Books and Special Collections in Washington, D.C. in October, 2016. Over the last year, Dr. Daniel Gullo and Ms. Valeria Vanesio, Ph.D. candidate at Sapienza University of Rome, have begun cataloging the unique collections donated to CUA by former Congressman Foster W. Stearns KM, and Carol Saliba, a notable Maltese-American collector of rare Melitensia.

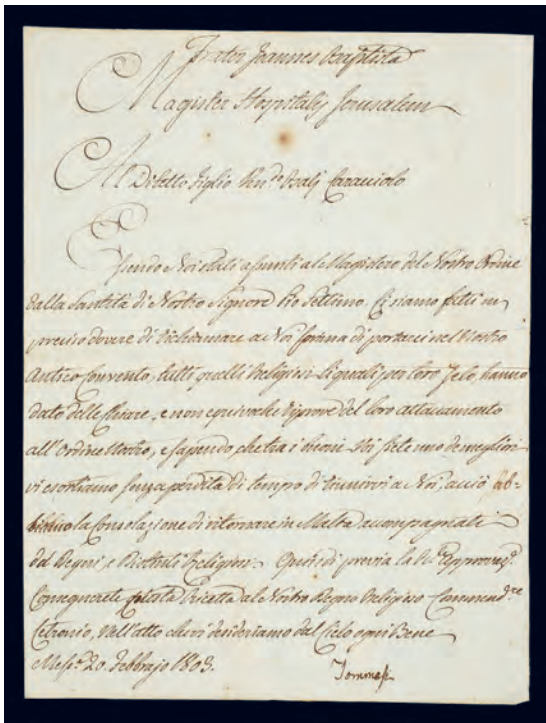
Documents originating from the tumultuous period between 1798 and 1815 (after the expulsion of the Order of Malta) and from the *Language* of Italy are the most frequent manuscripts found in the collection. However, the collection contains a rare, complete 17th-century manuscript detailing the finances and membership of the *Language* of Italy between 1600 and 1640. This manuscript provides a detailed analysis of receipts, payments, and transfer of funds to the convent in Valletta as part of the



Above: “Reports on the finances and membership of the Order of Malta, 1600-1640.” Washington D.C., Catholic University of America, Malta CR 4727 .K71. 17th-century manuscript on paper. HMML project number CUAMAL 00002

*language*'s support of the Order and the defense of Malta. Of note is the detailed list of members of the Order found in the manuscript, which provides historians with evidence of the popularity of the Order among the nobility and crucial information on membership beyond the proofs of nobility that were submitted prior to joining the Order.

The collection also includes seven unique letters associated with Grand Master Giovanni Battista Tommasi (1731-1805), who became Grand Master in 1803. These letters describe the precarious state of the Order's finances and organization as a result of the expulsion from Malta by the French in 1798 and the subsequent British occupation of the island in 1800. The letters also document the struggles to bring the Order back to Malta and the need to acquire funding to maintain the Order's knights, who had lost their main sources of income from Malta, France, and Spain. On the other hand, the letters demonstrate the resilience of the Order of Malta's institutional apparatus, as the Grand Master continued to make appointments to regional commanderies and other official positions within the Order to maintain its organization, especially in Italy where it continued to receive support.



Left: “Letter from Grand Master Giovanni Battista Tommasi, Messina, to Fra’ Giuseppe Caracciolo di Sant’Eramo discussing his election and intention to return to Malta, 1803 February 20.” Washington D.C., Catholic University of America, Malta Saliba MS 20. 19th-century manuscript on paper. HMML project number CUAMAL 00034



## *Lecture on Maltese Jewelry by Francesca Balzan at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities*

In partnership with the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities, the Malta Study Center sponsored a public lecture by Ms. Francesca Balzan on the history of jewelry in Malta. Her lecture, entitled “A History of Jewelry in Malta: Trade, Traditions, Quirks and Quandaries,” focused on the art of jewelry, its social history and its trade from the 16th through the 19th centuries.

Ms. Balzan pointed out how the arrival of the Knights of Malta to the island brought an increased level of cultural sophistication that changed the island’s artistic milieu into one of the most significant art centers south of Rome. According to Ms. Balzan, Malta’s close-knit society brought local and European artists into contact with the Knights, who were drawn from the noble families of Europe. These contacts created a vast network of merchants, artisans, and nobility that dominated the cultural life of Malta and the Mediterranean. The Knights and nobles invested in fine buildings, works of art and jewelry, the latter becoming an increasingly significant ancillary to dress, social status and religious ornament. These traditions changed with time, but were adopted and extended by the British, who claimed Malta as a colony in the early 19th century.

Francesca Balzan currently serves as the curator of the Palazzo Falson Historic House Museum, a 13th-century palazzo which houses the art, library, and archeological treasures of Olof Frederick Gollcher in his home in Mdina, Malta. She is also a visiting lecturer at the University of Malta in the fields of art history and curatorial studies. Her book, *Jewellery in Malta: Treasures from the Island of the Knights (1530-1798)*, published by Fondazzjoni Patrimonju Malti, 2009, won first prize in historic research for the National Book Award in Malta.

In 2014, the Malta Study Center signed an agreement with the Palazzo Falson and the Fondazzjoni Patrimonju Malti to digitize the manuscripts and early printed Melitensia of the Palazzo Falson, including the Olof Frederick Gollcher Archives. The digitization of the archives was made possible through a generous grant from the Gladys Kriebel Delmas Foundation.

*Right: Francesca Balzan and Joseph S. Micallef, Chair of the Friends of the Malta Study Center, at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities*



*Above: Francesca Balzan, Curator of the Palazzo Falson Historic House Museum*



## Site Director of the Malta Study Center Visits HMML

Cláudia Garradas, site director for the Malta Study Center, visited HMML for two weeks of extensive training and study related to the digitization and cataloging of manuscripts. Her trip to the United States was funded in part by a development grant from Arts Council Malta. In addition to learning about the Center and its home at Saint John's University, Ms. Garradas studied the procedures for digital photography and metadata standards used for single folio objects, such as maps and drawings. Part of her trip included a presentation with the curator of the Center, Dr. Daniel Gullo, at Northwestern University's Working with African Arabic Script Manuscripts conference, where she discussed her work preparing manuscripts for digitization in Malta. Along with visiting HMML, Ms. Garradas visited several regional libraries and museums, including the James Ford Bell Library at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities, the Minneapolis Institute of Art, the Chicago Institute of Art and Walker Arts Center in Minneapolis.



Cláudia Garradas and Dr. Gullo investigate the historic microfilm collections from the original MMML project (Malta Series I) at HMML

## New Rare Book and Manuscript Acquisitions

Floriani, Pietro Paolo. *Difesa et offesa delle piazze*. Venice: Francesco Baba, 1654.

*Statuti, e constitutioni dell'Ordine de' Cavalieri di Santo Stefano*. Florence: Nella Stamperia de'Giunti, 1577.

*Dichiarazioni del capitolo generale MDXXXII. Della santissima Religione del beato Santo Stefano Papa*. Florence: Nella Stamperia de'Giunti, 1582.

*Dichiarationi del Capitolo generale 1578. Della santissima Religione del beato Santo Stefano papa sopra alcuni capitoli confermati dal seren. Francesco Medici Gran Duca di Toscana, e gran Maestro dell'Ordine*. Florence: Nella Stamperia de'Giunti, 1583.

Pantaleon, Heinrich. *Militaris Ordinis Iohannitarum, Rhodiorum, Avt Melitensium Equitum, Rerum Memorabilium Terra Marique...gestarum, ad praesentem usq(ue) 1581 annum, Historia Noua: libris duodecim comprehensa*. Basel: Thomas Guarinus, 1581.

*Exposition des droits de l'Ordre de S. Jean de Jérusalem relativement aux impositions et subsides*. [France]: [1790?-1794?].



*Exposition des droits de l'Ordre de S. Jean de Jérusalem relativement aux impositions et subsides*. [France]: [1790?-1794?].

## *News and Events from the Malta Study 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 24 and 25, 2017. During the meeting, the Chair of the Friends of the Malta Study Center, Joseph S. Micallef KMOB UOM, and the current Friends, welcomed Fra' Nicola Tegoni KJ, and Dr. Michael Camilleri as new members to the group. Fra' Tegoni, who is a member of the American Association of the Order of Malta, has provided leadership in service to the Permanent Observer Mission of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta to the United Nations. Dr. Michael Camilleri comes to the Friends via Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota. Among his numerous awards is an honorary doctorate from the University of Malta. Their leadership will support the Center's mission to preserve the manuscript heritage and cultural history of Malta and the Order of the Knights of Malta.



From left to right: Annual meeting with The Friends of the Malta Study Center in HMML's renovated reading room. Fr. Eric Hollas, OSB; Fra' Nicola Tegoni KJ; Fr. Columba Stewart, OSB; Robert Weyerhaeuser; Lucy R. Jones; Fra' Thomas Mulligan KJ; Joseph S. Micallef KMOB, UOM; Dr. Daniel K. Gullo; Steven Kennedy KM; Ambassador Robert Shafer KM.

### **Curator and Site Director invited to speak at Northwestern University's conference on Working with African Arabic Script Manuscripts**

On August 19, Dr. Daniel Gullo and Cláudia Garradas presented at Northwestern University's Working with African Arabic Script Manuscripts Conference. Their presentation, "Digitization Adapted to Local Needs: Best Practices from Malta and Mali," discussed techniques of digital manuscript photography and the relationship of photography to collection organization, metadata harvesting, and preservation. African and Maltese manuscripts have similar problems with climate control and collection management. These problems include incomplete inventories, lack of modern acid-free containers, insect infestation, damp and mold caused by excessive humidity and heat. The weeklong symposium was attended by librarians and curators from over eight different countries, including Nigeria, Mali, Senegal, Portugal, the Ivory Coast, and the United States.

### **Curator Presents at the Annual Association of Commonwealth Archivists and Records Manager Symposium**

Celebrating National Archives Awareness Week in Malta, Dr. Daniel Gullo presented the paper "Digitizing the Empire: New Technologies and Old Historiographies" at the 2017 Association of Commonwealth Archivists and Records Managers symposium held at the National Archives of Malta in Rabat on October 27, 2017. His presentation discussed how digital archives not only inform us about the mechanisms of power of the British Empire, but also provide new post-colonial interpretations of the empire. The paper noted how digital objects allow new, previously inaccessible, sources to be studied across borders. Digital archives create the opportunity to deconstruct borders through trans-regional technologies, helping reveal Orientalist ideology and subaltern voices hidden by the power structures and ideology of imperial narratives developed solely from metropolitan archival collections.





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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.

**Dr. Michael Camilleri**  
*Rochester, Minnesota*

**Dr. Philip Farrugia Randon KM**  
*Valletta, Malta*

**Michael K. Grace Esq. KM**  
*Pasadena, California*

**Fr. Eric Hollas OSB**  
*Collegeville, MN*

**Lucy R. Jones**  
*Wayzata, Minnesota*

**Steven Kennedy KM**  
*Medina, Minnesota*

**Edmund L. Luzine, Jr. KM**  
*McLean, Virginia*

**Joseph S. Micallef KMOB, UOM**  
*Committee Chair*  
*Saint Paul, Minnesota*

**Fra' Thomas Mulligan KJ**  
*Lincolnwood, Illinois*

**Fra' Emmanuel Rousseau KJ**  
*Paris, France*

**Robert Shafer KM**  
*New York, New York*

**Fra' Nicola Tegoni Esq. KJ**  
*New York, New York*

**Robert Weyerhaeuser**  
*Kingston, Massachusetts*

*Ex-officio members*

**Albert Colianni, Jr.**  
*Chair, HMML Board of Overseers*  
*Minneapolis, Minnesota*

**Dr. Daniel K. Gullo**  
*Joseph S. Micallef Curator of the Malta Study Center*  
*Hill Museum & Manuscript Library*  
*Saint John's University*  
*Collegeville, Minnesota*

**Fr. Columba Stewart OSB**  
*Executive Director*  
*Hill Museum & Manuscript Library*  
*Saint John's University*  
*Collegeville, Minnesota*