The Value of Special Collections in Academic and Research Libraries: The

Case Study of the Godfrey Wettinger Bequest

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A Dissertation presented to the Faculty of Media and Knowledge Sciences of the University of Malta in part fulfillment for the degree of Master of Arts in Documentary Heritage and Melitensia Studies (M.A.Doc.Mel.)

April 2018

DECLARATION OF AUTHENTICITY

L-Università ta' Malta

FACULTY/INSTITUTE/CENTRE/SCHOOL _MEDIA & KNOWLEDGE SCIENCES_

DECLARATIONS BY POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to explore the niche area of special collections within research libraries. Some libraries combine special collections within their archives. The topic of special collections and their value is under-explored, particularly within the Maltese context. Such a study is important as it begins to bridge the gap that exists in this field of research. This dissertation looks at elements of special collections (typically acquired through a bequest or donation rather than compiled by the institution), which add value to their respective academic or research library. A qualitative approach was taken, with interviews held with special collections librarians and users of special collections. The University of Malta library's Godfrey Wettinger collection was also examined in detail in order to demonstrate how donations are assessed for their research value. Following the interviews, it was clear that the elements most prized by researchers, and thus add the greatest value, are saving of time, knowledgeable staff and convenience in terms of accessibility. It can be concluded that special collections which provide these elements are more likely to be used, and in turn, cited in published research. This in turn acts as publicity for the library and its parent institution, boosting visibility and visitor traffic.

Keywords: academic libraries, special collections, Wettinger Godfrey, libraries and scholars

Word count: 22, 640 words

Student: Antida Mizzi

Supervisor: Dr Oleksandr Pastukhov LL.B., LL.M., LL.D., Ph.D.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to first thank my supervisor, Dr Oleksandr Pastukhov, LL.B., LL.M., LL.D., Ph.D. for accepting the invitation to supervise my research, the door to Dr Pastukhov's office was always open whenever I had a query about my research. He consistently allowed this research to be my own work.

Sincere appreciation goes to Mr. Kevin J. Ellul, my director and director of reader services at the University of Malta Library for his support and for making sure that I have unlimited access to the Godfrey Wettinger collection for the duration of this study.

I would also like to thank all the researchers for giving up precious time to give me an interview, without their passionate participation and input the interviews could not have been successfully conducted.

I would like to acknowledge Ms. Karen Watson and her team at the University of Sussex for sharing with me their knowledge and expertise during my stay with them at "The Keep".

Finally, I must express my very profound gratitude to my daughter Sara for providing tech support and for her endless proof reading, and to my husband Michael for his continuous encouragement and support throughout my studies. This accomplishment would not have been possible without them. Thank you.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ESRC   Economic and Social Research Council

HMML   Hill Museum and Manuscript Library

IMLS   Institute of Museum and Library Services

PACSCL   Philadelphia Area Consortium of Special Collection Libraries

RLUK   Research Libraries UK

SAA   Society of American Archivists

UM   University of Malta

US   University of Sussex

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Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The Association of College and Research Libraries defines 'Special Collections' as "The entire range of textual, graphic and artifact primary source materials in analog and digital formats, including printed books, manuscripts, photographs, maps, artworks, audiovisual materials, and realia." (Rare Books and Manuscripts Section, n.d.) In layman's terms, Special Collections in academic and research libraries are those collections accumulated through a purchase, donations, or material bequeathed to the institution by professors, alumni or other researchers who at some point researched or used the services of the same institution. Collections are typically a legacy left by prominent scholars or alumni, showcasing the individuals' particular topics of interest. These are kept separately from the rest of the library's material, possibly due to their limited scope: they are mainly of interest to researchers studying the same subject area rather than of general interest (Dobreva et al., 2009). These collections typically consist of notes, research papers, photocopies of manuscripts from other institutions consulted in the course of their research, and audiovisual material. Collections may also include donors' personal library and other material accumulated during their lifetime.

This research study will focus on special collections held within academic institutions' libraries, regardless of provenance, and the added value these provide to the parent institution. This study will therefore consider the special collections held at the University of Malta library as an academic research institution, with particular emphasis on the recently-acquired Godfrey Wettinger

collection. The special collections department at the University of Malta is formally referred to as "the Archives and Rare Books" section, but during the course of this study it will be referred to as the special collections department in order to use standard terminology.

1.2 Research aim and objectives

The research being presented will try and determine the value of special collections, specifically the elements which add value to a collection, from the perspective of both special collections librarians and their service users. The value of special collections has not yet been been explored within the Maltese context. No research institution, academic or otherwise, has ever attempted to determine the value of their holdings and to establish attributes of a special collections library or archive which are prized by researchers. The value which is being discussed in this study is not the monetary value of the collections but their research value, their impact on the research community and how all of this affects the parent institution. This study will also take into account the measures that a research institution might take to enhance the visibility of collections within its holdings in order to be able to measure their research value. Special collections cannot exist on their own: their value cannot be measured unless they are accessed and used - inaccessible collections are often referred to as "hidden collections" and have virtually no research value. Therefore this study will take into account the end users of these collections, what their expectations of special collections are and what they perceive as value in a special collection. A case study approach will be taken, with end users also questioned about their perceptions and expectations of the University of Malta's Godfrey Wettinger collection in order to paint a picture of this eminent researcher and obtain an indication of the value being placed on this collection.

1.3 Limitations of Research

One of the original purposes of this study was to present the reader with metrics on how to measure the value of special collections at the end of this research study. However, as seen throughout the study value has different meanings for different stakeholders and it was therefore not possible to quantify value, but only to extract qualitative definitions of added value. It became evident throughout the whole study that special collections librarians themselves are still not certain how to measure the return on investment of material in their custody, although the advent of citation tracking tools may serve to assist in this regard.

An additional limitation of this study was the difficulty in obtaining details of the work done within special collections at the University of Malta. Much less detail was given during this interview than during the interview conducted at the University of Sussex. This meant the researcher was not able to obtain an idea of the way the department works and thus compare it with the perceptions and experiences of researchers. It also hampered the recommendations which could be made for the special collections department at the University of Malta.

1.4 Archival terms

Below is a list of terms that have been used in the process of writing this study. They are being supplied for ease of reference and to ensure a common framework between the author and readers. Some terms are used interchangeably throughout the study. These are indicated where applicable.

Access: The permission to locate and retrieve information for use (consultation or reference) within legally established restrictions of privacy, confidentiality, and security clearance (Society of American Archivists, 2016).

Accession: To transfer physical and legal custody of documentary materials to an archival institution (Daniels, 1984).

Analog: Analog material is typically distinguished from digital, which represents a process through a sequence of discrete measurements over time. Examples of analog formats include photographs and films made with light-sensitive media, NTSC and PAL video recordings, and phonograph records and older magnetic sound recordings on tape (Society of American Archivists, 2016).

Appraisal: The process of identifying materials offered to an archive that have sufficient value to be accessioned (Society of American Archivists, 2016).

Archivist: An individual responsible for appraising, acquiring, arranging, describing, preserving, and providing access to records of enduring value, according to the principles of provenance, original order, and collective control to protect the materials' authenticity and context (Society of American Archivists, 2016). This term is used interchangeably with special collections librarian throughout this study since in one institution the person responsible is referred to as special collections librarian.

Born digital: Information created in electronic format, (e.g. e-mails) (SAA, 2016).

Collection: In a manuscript repository, a body of historical materials relating to an individual, family, or organization (Daniels, 1984).

Collection development: The function within an archive or other repository that establishes the policies and procedures used to select materials that the repository will acquire, typically

identifying the scope of creators, subjects, formats, and other characteristics that influence the selection process (SAA, 2016).

Copyright: A property right that protects the interests of authors or other creators of works in tangible media (or the individual or organization to whom copyright has been assigned) by giving them the ability to control the reproduction, publication, adaptation, exhibition, or performance of their works (SAA, 2016).

Digitization: The process of transforming analog material into binary electronic (digital) form, especially for storage and electronic use (SAA, 2016).

Finding aids: A description of records that gives the repository physical and intellectual control over the materials and that assists users to gain access to and understand the materials, also referred to as descriptive tools (SAA, 2016).

Holdings: The whole of a repository's collections (SAA, 2016). All documentary materials in the custody of an archival institution comprise their holdings, including both accessioned and deposited materials (Daniels, 1984).

Outreach: The process of identifying and providing services to constituencies with needs relevant to the repository's mission, especially underserved groups, and tailoring services to meet those needs (SAA, 2016).

Unique and distinctive: A collection that, regardless of format or location within an institution, derives significance from its interest to research, teaching or society through its association with a person, place or topic, enough to distinguish the constituent items from similar items which may exist elsewhere (Research Libraries UK [RLUK], 2014).

User: An individual who uses the collections and services of a repository; also referred to as a patron, a reader or a researcher (SAA, 2016).

1.5 Structure of the study

Chapter One: Introduction

This chapter defines special collections and provides the reader with an introduction to special collections and the research focus. It will also introduce the reader with terminology which will be used throughout the study.

Chapter 2: Literature review

This chapter provides a brief historical background to libraries and their evolution into research institutions. It discusses how special collections found their way into academic institutions. The impact these collections have on research are also tackled in this chapter. Wherever possible, themes are discussed in terms of the Maltese context. However, since the subject of special collections is under-researched locally, some other elements can only be discussed as they currently pertain to overseas institutions.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Chapter Three outlines the research strategy taken and explains the rationale behind the qualitative data collection techniques employed. The data collection process is described, with supplementary material included in the Appendix, followed by the approach taken to the analysis of the data collected. It concludes by discussing any limitations encountered during the research that might in any way impinge on the results achieved.

Chapter 4: Findings and discussion

This chapter presents the interview results, separated into themes for both special collections librarians and users of special collections. These findings are also discussed in light of the earlier literature review, attempting to interpret results within the Maltese context. A case study approach to the Godfrey Wettinger collection is taken, providing an overview of the contents of the collection, its extent and its research potential as perceived by research participants. Interviewees' perceptions of Professor Wettinger in order to present the man and the work behind the collection bequeathed to the University of Malta library.

Chapter 5: Recommendations and conclusion

In this chapter the findings are summarized and suggestions for a way forward for the special collections department at the University of Malta are put forward, taking into consideration identified best practice and researcher perceptions. The conclusions of the research study are linked to the research objectives and based on the conclusion, recommendations are made for further study.

Efforts have been made to take the Maltese context into consideration throughout this study, particularly through the choice of a special collection with significance to Maltese historical research, however one must also bear in mind that this is a relatively new offshoot to the field of Maltese archives and special collections. The literature review which follows presents pertinent overseas research which may also be significant in future to the further development of special collections in Maltese archives and libraries.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction to Research Libraries' Historical Background

One of the earliest known libraries in the world was the great library of Alexandria. It was founded at around 300 B.C. by Ptolemy I at the suggestion of Demetrius of Phalerum to set up a universal library (Krasner-Khait, 2001). The aim of the library was to purchase, or in any other way possible, acquire every book written in Greek. Books were bought in Athens, Rhodes and other established places of Greek culture, with older material being considered the most trustworthy. The Ptolemies went to great lengths to purchase books, even as far as confiscating books found on ships unloading in Alexandria in their zeal to acquire as many books as they possibly could. In establishing the library Ptolemy I also established a research library for scholars in all branches of learning. What is nowadays termed as literary scholarship began in Alexandria, with this library setting the stage for future research libraries (Krasner-Khait, 2001).

Another civilization from the ancient world that can claim themselves as pioneers of the library as we know it today are the Romans. Scholars in ancient Rome (e.g. Atticus and Cicero) would have had their own libraries. It is said that Cicero's library was so big and complicated that it required its own organizational system. These scholars went to Athens and Rhodes to acquire their books, and then had them translated from Greek into Latin (Casson, 2001). Julius Caesar wanted to give Rome a library that would be available to everyone, thus improving Rome's cultural status. This dream was short lived due to Caesar's assassination, but one of Caesar's disciples, Asinius Pollio made the dream his own mission and acquired enough funding to open Rome's first public library. The library was divided into two sections: one section for Greek works and one section for works

in Latin. This served as the model for future Roman libraries. Although libraries remained domains attributed to scholars, libraries continued to flourish in Rome and were even known to be found in the imperial baths and the public baths (Krasner-Khait, 2001). By the middle ages monasteries in Europe established their own humble libraries thanks to Benedict and the monastery he set up in Monte Cassino in 529 A.D. Benedict had laid down rules regarding the monks' use of books and the library:

> "In the period from Lent to October, at the time from the fourth hour to the sixth, the monks should be   free so as to devote their time to reading. From October to Lent, up to the second hour they are to be free to read. At the beginning of Lent each monk should be given a book from the library (bibliotheca) which he is to read straight through by the end of Lent, and on Sundays all except those who are assigned other duties should spend the day reading."

<div align="right">(Casson, 2001, p. 143)</div>

This gives an indication that monasteries had a supply of books, probably not an extensive supply, but enough to distribute among the Order. It also shows that books and reading were held in high regard. Monastery libraries were originally meant to supply monks with spiritual reading material. Initially the selection was limited, but gradually these humble libraries went on to become research libraries. As scriptoria were set up, monasteries resorted to inter-library loans and started borrowing books from other monasteries and had their scribes make copies. Monasteries were looted sometimes burnt, manuscripts from these monasteries were sold or gifted to scholars and sometimes ended up being owned by nobles who had a passion for collecting and building up their own private libraries. The essential requirement for book collecting was for that person to be significantly wealthy, so the first book collectors were the princes of the Church and the nobility.

A library of sacred books was not only a source of pleasure, wisdom and insight, it was also a shrine to the word of God. To the nobility a fine library was a display of their majesty and it was also a status that served as a political and personal interest. The Popes' collections were merged into the Bibliotheca Vaticana and Kings' libraries very often evolved into National libraries. Books and libraries collected by scholars underwent similar transformations. Some collections did not become public upon the demise of the collector who accumulated the library throughout his life, being sold off to settle debts and eventually finding their way to other collectors or donated to institutions as part of later collections (Lerner, 2013).

As libraries continued to grow and Universities began to open across Europe, these institutions too developed their own libraries. These were often the result of personal donations by distinguished benefactors. One such case is Duke Humfrey's library at the Bodleian library. Humfrey Duke of Gloucester donated his extensive collection of over 281 manuscripts to Oxford University, eventually forming the Bodleian library, thanks to Sir Thomas Bodley who saved the library from destruction in the late 1500s. The Bodleian library continued to grow through donations and bequests (Bodleian Library, 2017). Harvard University took its name from one such benefactor, Clergyman John Harvard. In 1638 he bequeathed his entire library to the institution to enable it to begin its own library. The new University later went on to honour him by adopting his name (Harvard University, 2017).

Later donations and bequests by scholars and distinguished personalities eventually became the basis for the Archives and Special Collections and Rare Books sections in the academic research library.

2.2 Impact of Special Collections

Special Collections in research libraries help to promote scholarship, they are there to inspire the inquisitive-minded, the curious. Researchers bring these collections to life through their publications and professors bring these collections to life during lectures. Special collections librarians help promote these collections through online exhibitions and other outreach activities. All those who use special collections in one way or another are contributing towards making these collections special (Howarth, 2000). Sharon Gray Weiner, director of the Peabody library at Vanderbilt University Nashville Tennessee, believes that the status of the academic library improves vis-à-vis its relation with its parent institution, in the way it attracts gifts and donations and how it amasses its collections and integrates and promotes knowledge and research. Gray Weiner (2005) refers to the academic research library as the "heart of the University", serving to facilitate the work of students, lecturers and outside researchers. Cullingford (2016) argues Special Collections can be found everywhere, with institutions including museums, cathedrals, societies, universities, etc., will develop their own special collections in the process of conducting their day to day business. These collections will include early printed material, such as photographs, ephemera, books, etc., which over time will become harder to find elsewhere. This lends credence to RLUK's description of special collections as being "unique and distinctive" (2014), able to contribute and add value to the institutional mission. In effect, one can consider the special collection of an organisation as its own historical archive, charting the organisation's growth and progress.

2.3 Accessibility of Special Collections within Research Institutions

A significant number of students display what is commonly referred to as "library anxiety," (Gross and Latham, 2007; Onwuegbuzie et al., 2004) giving their institution's library a wide berth even to the detriment of their assignments and research projects. Special collections and archives may be seen as particularly daunting, considered as reserved only for scholars and professors (Seal, 2012). Due to the uniqueness and fragility of materials held within special collections, staff may be extra vigilant over handling of the materials and may monitor users very closely. This level of scrutiny could deter users from visiting and researching the collection (Harris and Weller, 2012). Seal (2012) describes perceptions of special collections librarians as guarding secrets, with the materials in their custody intended only to be viewed behind showcases and direct access only granted to particular dignitaries.

Special collections are gradually changing, with material no longer kept under lock and key. Seal (2012) describes the trend as moving from "preservation versus access" to "preservation and access" (p. 231), and increased encouragement for students to use the archives and special collections department of their respective institution to conduct research. Digitisation projects have greatly assisted this trend, with full text documents and images now available online to students and researchers for downloading and printing. As well as being more convenient, this also allows fragile materials to be consulted without fear of damage through handling (Seal, 2012).

2.4 The concept of value

There is no agreed upon definition of the value of collections within a library and archival environment, much less any hard and fast rules for determining value in special collections. Du Pont and Yakel (2013) insist that there is no place for measuring metrics of special collections in

academic and research libraries. The uniqueness, often rarity, of their materials surely suggests that such collections should be viewed qualitatively rather than quantitatively. However, this makes it difficult to estimate the value and impact of what special collections can contribute to the research community at large. In 1960 there was an attempt to initiate archival institutions to start collecting statistics, with a committee set up by the Society of American Archivists to oversee uniform archival statistics. The main functions of this committee were to:

"Collect and analyze information about existing archival statistical systems with a view towards (a) isolating and describing these aspects of archival activity which are measurable, i.e., can be expressed in numerical terms; (b) defining these characteristics with a precision that will eliminate confusion wherever a particular term is used; (c) developing standards for archival statistics that will permit meaningful comparisons and studies of archival institutions throughout the country; and (d) encouraging general adoption of these standards by archival agencies." (Du Pont and Yakel, 2013, p. 12)

This initiative has not had lasting impact, with a research study conducted by RLUK finding great inconsistency between research libraries in the U.K. regarding collecting data on user use of collections -so much so that there were also inconsistencies with the terminology used. The lack of information when collecting data, whether it is user data in the reading room or the amount of clicks per website visit, poses a problem when it comes to promote impact of use of the collections. (RLUK, 2014). These inconsistencies mean any comparisons between institutions or studies must be made with great care and interpretations of data punctuated with a disclaimer that like is not necessarily being compared with like.

One can conclude that no standardization and neither any success in measuring metrics in the archival community emerged from this initial attempt at organizing and measuring value of special

collections. However, the archival community continued and continues still to feel the need to measure the value of their collections. A more recent attempt to apply quantitative measurements of value within special collections is described below.

2.5 The Lib-value Project

The Lib-value project was a three-year initiative (starting January 2010), funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services [IMLS]. The aim of this study was to find ways to 'measure and express' the value that academic libraries bring to their respective Universities, examining how these libraries meet their users' needs which are constantly changing and also how they justify funding from administrators. It was hoped that this project would eventually lead to the development of metrics to help academic and research libraries to measure their value. The project was entitled "Lib-value: measuring value and return on investment of academic libraries."

The Lib-value team, made up of information specialists from a number of disciplines, explored various facets of academic libraries in the United States of America, examining what value different collections bring to their parent institution, to researchers looking for primary sources and to other stake holders such as students, lecturing staff and administrators of the respective universities. The areas which were studied included e-books and online resources and how these facilities can help universities improve access for their patrons, who would then be able to access collections from their homes. This would also help save collections from too much handling, as described by Seal (2012). One other study measured the impact of student success and learning outcomes and how the library environment affects students. A third team looked at the role special collections play in attracting donations from alumni, their usefulness in attracting faculty staff and students to the university, and otherwise generating prestige for the university (Tenopir, 2011).

When presenting the Lib-value project results, Tenopir (2011) indicated that the project had focused mainly on the monetary value the library's collections bring to the University - essentially, for every dollar spent on strengthening the library, the university received this amount back plus X more. While patrons did not pay for access, they were asked to express what they would have spent, in terms of time and money spent travelling, to obtain the required information if online access was not available. Online access saves users commuting and photocopying costs. The time saved through not having to travel to the library was for the most part used productively by patrons, with output increasing and more resources consulted than would have been in person. Citations and publications also increased. Kingma and McClure (2015) claim that apart from being beneficial to patrons, patrons' publications give the academic library more prestige, which in turn helps to generate further funding from stakeholders and which may be used to further strengthen the library and its special collections.

2.6 Users: Accessibility and impact

Elizabeth Yakel in her paper, "Listening to the user" (2002) interviews users of special collections to learn about their experiences when researching primary sources. She speaks of the lack of communication between archivist and researcher and that these (user-archivist) need to find "common ground" between them as most often the lack of communication puts the special collections department at a disadvantage. The archivist/special collections librarians take it for granted that all their patrons know all about conducting research and how to research primary sources, but this is not always the case. She says that archivists need to build a relationship with their respective users. Lack of communication with users and the fact that her interviewees had

difficulties defining archives and what constitutes an archive she says that this is jeopardizing the archival profession. (Yakel, 2002)

This view of special collections is common also among undergraduates also as Torre (2008) claims students struggle with the lack of accessibility to collections, and that although special collections departments are meant to enhance their learning experience at the same time handling of such material is discouraged.

Students/patrons get frustrated at the paperwork one has to go through to get access to material even more so is that special collections librarians and archivists fail to give proper information to them. Users are dependent on the librarian or archivist to guide them and help make their research less stressful. Researching primary sources should not be an unpleasant experience. Users may not be familiar with archival terminology, as there is a difference between searching and conducting research in a library as opposed to conducting research in an archive or in a special collections department (Yakel, 2002).

The scene in special collections is changing gradually as material is no longer kept under lock and key, there is a new approach towards more accessibility to material. Collections are there to be viewed by anyone of goodwill who wishes to conduct research not reserved for the few (Seal, 2012). In improving access and usability special collections librarians can use the internet to share their collections online, by sharing their material online they not only improve access but can also use this as a means of promoting their collections. Online tools increase usability and visibility of special collections for research learning and teaching (Ress, 2015). Material put on the World Wide Web not only improves accessibility but also helps in the preservation of material through digitization, and collections are available to a wider audience (Seal, 2012).

Access to special collections has been defined as

> "A means of discovery, through such surrogates as descriptive metadata, word of mouth, and reference in the literature – that a particular body of information exists. This is coupled with the means of looking at the materials, either directly or virtually. Access encompasses the process followed to make material available to users, the tools to publicise materials to potential users, and the openness with which we allow our collections to be used by the public"
>
> (Jones, 2004, p. 90-91)

Access is crucial to special collections. What use are these collections if they cannot be seen, and thus not available to researchers, scholars and students? Special collections librarians/archivists have a mission towards scholarship. Users rely on special collections librarians to provide them with the proper tools such as finding aids, if possible online so as to help them in their research. We all want information available at the click of a button. Researchers want to access material from the comfort of their homes or from wherever it is that they are working. Researchers don't want to waste time and money in travel on some wild goose chase. Researchers don't visit an archive in the hope of discovering something, they discover through the finding aids and the catalogues, after which they visit the archive. This is the way collections are promoted once they have been catalogued. Outreach plays an important role not just when it comes to making collections visible online. Special collections librarians should be the bridge between collections and the researcher.

Special collections librarians in academic libraries need to 'widen access and build relationships'. These organisations are publicly funded and so they need to demonstrate the added value they bring to their parent institution (Cullingford, 2016). In their introduction to the Rare Books and Manuscript Section [RBMS] task force on metrics and assessment final report, Conway and Fisher (2003) write about the change in the manner with which librarians and archivists feel the need to collect and analyze the data and also the impact of the services which they manage. Yakel and Chapman (2012) argue that collecting data for the sake of collecting it is a common occurrence in Special Collections and libraries. Data collecting should be done with scope and purpose, as such data can improve the overall operations of the day to day running of the department as well to justify resources and expenditure, however many institutions have problems obtaining information from their management systems through lack of knowledge on how to extract such data from their systems (Yakel and Chapman 2012). The use of 'Webometrics' is suggested by Eccles et al. as part of a study on how to trace and measure online impact of digitized scholarly resources, through citation indexes and hyperlinks, as researchers seem to be using these resources on a regular basis (2011).

2.7 Hidden Collections

Hidden collections, as the name implies, are collections that are still awaiting sorting and processing. Items within these collections may still be in boxes, sometimes stored offsite where the environment is not exactly ideal. These holding sites pose a danger not just to the collection itself due to humidity, mould and dust but also to the library and the University as an institution. Given that at this point no listings of the materials are held (special collections staff may not yet

have gone through all material), there is high potential for items to be lost or misplaced (Yakel, 2005).

Jones (2004) concedes that this issue of 'hidden collections' hinders research as researchers are dependent on staff, as these become the only source of expertise to guide users. When these members of staff no longer form part of the special collections team for many reasons such as retirement, their knowledge of the contents of these collections is lost - staff and researchers are once again left in the dark about these collections until these can be properly catalogued. If there exists a list (possibly prepared by the donor) this would be handwritten or type scripted, and unless the collections are sorted and accessioned this material is unavailable, therefore depriving the researcher from accessing information and hinder scholarship. (Jones, 2004).   Undocumented collections also increase the risk of the institution purchasing or otherwise acquiring duplicates.

However, many institutions have a backlog problem with under-processed and unprocessed collections, some institutions more than others. This was revealed in a survey conducted by the Philadelphia Area Consortium of Special Collections Libraries [PACSCL] in which 22 libraries, archives and museums participated and approximately 2,000 previously hidden collections identified. (O'Hara Conway and Proffitt, 2012). The problem of backlogged hidden collections was also tackled by an Association of Research Libraries task force in 2002. This team involved special collections professionals from across the United States whose role was to study the problem of backlog of unprocessed special collections material. Many of the participants in this study believed that, it is better to provide some level of access, albeit limited, to all material, than to provide comprehensive access to some material and no access at all to others. (Jones, 2004). In

their article "More product, less process: Revamping traditional archival processing" Green and Meissner (2005) insist that:

> "it must be our aim to provide sufficient physical and intellectual access to collections for research to be possible, without the necessity of processing each collection to an ideal or arbitrary standard. We should be paying more attention to achieving basic physical and intellectual control over, and thus affording research access to, all our holdings, rather than being content to process a few of them to perfection. What this means is that all collections should have collection-level intellectual control before any collection receives folder-level intellectual control. More importantly, researchers cannot come to do research if at least minimal information about the collections is not available to them."
>
> (Green and Meissner, 2005, p. 237)

Whereby they are suggesting that priority should be given to collections as a whole and at least an indication of its content and extant so that researchers can have an idea of material available and they also suggest that archivists need to think more towards a user-centric approach than a collection-centric approach, which means the archivist or special collections librarian purpose should be that of making more material available for research rather than going into detail about every item (Green and Meissner, 2005). Yakel (2002) makes another point and argues that special collections ought to inform their users about uncatalogued material on their websites, she concedes that this might further expose the extent of the problem of uncatalogued material and reflect badly on the institution. This brings into perspective collections assessment as it becomes crucial when it comes to prioritizing backlogs of unprocessed, uncatalogued collections. (O'Hara Conway and Proffitt, 2012). Decisions regarding prioritisation should be made on a case by case basis.

2.8 Digitization

Digitization, as described by Bulow, Ahmon and Spencer (2011) is not just about capturing an image of a document but it also involves a selection process, the preservation of the original documents during the digitization process, and the digital preservation of the image after scanning, as well as making provisions for access. A properly digitized collection broadens access and protects the original materials from damage, whether intentional or accidental (Mills, 2015). Cullingford (2016) describes digitized material as the 'representation of an analogue original in a digital format', while Mills (2015) favours the term "digital surrogate" (pg. 161). Digitization of a special collection is not a straightforward task, with Prochaska (2009) describing it as a "complicated picture" (pg. 13), due to a number of factors including limited resources, legal tangles due to issues with ownership and copyright. Rapid advancements in technology may further complicate the digitization process (Prochaska, 2009).

The trend towards using primary sources in teaching and research is creating a push for this material to be made available online (Prochaska, 2009), both for patrons' convenience and for the protection of original, often irreplaceable, materials. Graham (1998) had earlier spoken out on the issue of digitizing special collections, claiming that this trend will not negatively impact special collections librarians. He sees collections as artifacts, which cannot exist on the internet. He argues that digital surrogates enhance the preservation of the collections and allow them to be accessed and studied without handling, but in no way can they replace the original materials (Graham, 1998).

The aforementioned Lib-value project (mentioned earlier) undertook another study entitled 'Digitized Special Collections' whereby the goal of this study is to see how the value of digitized material from special collections helps the academic institution reach its teaching targets and how these images enhance the University's prestige through research. Another issue which this study aims to assess is how the digitization of these collections help with outreach, and how they are being used by users both from within the University and also from outside of the premises. Data and results for this project are still being collected.

User needs studies should be carried out before, during and after digitization projects in order to improve access to collections. The importance of such studies should not be overlooked. Gorman (2006) emphasizes that the targeted audience should be consulted in a digitization project so as to address issues regarding user needs such as access whereby users can search with a specific keyword across a range of documents (Gorman, 2006). Therefore an institution should know its users and their needs. Dobreva et al. (2012) also argue in favour of user-centric digitization where users are involved in policies as different users have different needs. Unfortunately very often digitization takes place without any consultation, which will limit the eventual impact and value of the digital resource.

2.9 The User

The use of digital technology with regard to special collections is intended to enhance patrons' experience of a special collection (Heyliger et al., 2016), particularly as a tool to speed up research (Keeling and Sandlos, 2011). Digitization broadens access, allowing discoveries from anybody with online access to collections and removing the need to be physically present. As more and more material is made available online, it is becoming increasingly common for scholarly research

to be conducted solely through digital searches. Kingma and McClure (2015) point out that the removal of the need to travel from one institution to another allows consultation of more material. They conclude that this facilitates the reading of more material than would otherwise have been possible and leads to increased publications for the researcher.

A research study carried out by JISC and the British Library (referred to as the "Researchers of Tomorrow Project", carried out with 17,000 doctoral students and postgraduate researchers) found that so-called "Generation Y" researchers (born between 1983 and 1992), are not comfortable with and do not make use of analogue primary sources. Researchers found that such users are unlikely to consider, much less recommend, the use of analogue materials (JISC and British Library, 2012). While this digital revolution allows the use of a wide variety of sources and facilitates collaboration (Keeling and Sandlos, 2011), thus enhancing scholarship, it also suggests that any special collections which are not digitised and made available online will be accessible only to an ever-shrinking pool of researchers. Hirtle's (2002) research found that researchers will only visit special collections to consult materials which are not available online. As digital-only research becomes more and more common, one can surmise that researchers will become less willing to do this: more used to the convenience of online-only research, they are likely to decide such material is not worth the trek to the institution and discount the collection from their analyses.

Specialists in this field point out that, convenient though online access is, historians stand to lose the magic feel of an archive and the experience of handling original documents (Keeling and Sandlos, 2011). Hirtle agreed with this assessment, arguing that nothing beats the pleasure of

handling original manuscripts and pointing out that certain information, such as the age of a piece of parchment, cannot be obtained from a digital version (2002).

Having seen the benefits of digitization to the users, one cannot overlook that the preservation of the collections can be beneficial in many ways. It improves care of the originals by safeguarding the physical collections and protects them from excessive handling (Cullingford, 2016).

A number of recent digitization initiatives prove what the researchers above have concluded. Szajewski (2013) reviewed the digitized collection known as "The Hague Sheet Music Collection" held at the Ball State University archives. In an attempt to enhance the visibility of this collection, staff improved links from collection level to item level and linked these to Wikipedia. Data regarding online access to the collection was conclusive: within a year of commencing this initiative, page views had trebled (Szajewski, 2013).

The Making of America, a collection of nineteenth century serials and monographs, digitized by Cornell and The University of Michigan, experienced a similar spike in access following digitization. Before the monographs were digitized only a few volumes would be consulted each year. In the initial stages of the project, only page images were uploaded, which alone resulted in approximately 4,000 separate views per month. When searchable text was added to the images the views increased to 5,000 page views per day, and requests for something or other related to the volumes increased each day. Hirtle concluded that material may seem obscure in an analogue form but when digitized it becomes a core resource (Hirtle, 2002). Researchers are dependent on the availability of material in digital format, expecting to find all they require online. If the material is available, researchers, historians and academics will maximize their research potential

(RLUK, 2014). Various institutions in Malta have over the years embarked on digitization projects through co-operation agreements with international institutions and manuscript libraries (Farrugia, n.d.).

2.10 Digitization – Malta

The Malta Study Center at the Hill Museum & Manuscript Library [HMML] pioneered the digitization of archival material in Malta. In 1973 they embarked on a project to microfilm manuscripts held at the Cathedral archives of Mdina, which was completed in 1989 (HMML, n.d.a).

Other digitization projects sponsored by the centre have been undertaken since then, which include the archives of the Order of St. John, with over 1,500 digitized manuscripts from the National Archives of Malta and the Palazzo Falson Museum library. Through these digitization projects the Malta Study centre seeks to preserve and promote the accessibility of the Maltese written heritage (HMML, n.d.b).

The latest digitization project undertaken by the Malta study center at HMML is the digitization of the Casa Rocca Picola documents, referred to as the Archivum de Piro (Vella, 2016). The Archives and Rare books section at the University of Malta library has begun making current exhibitions available in digital format (University of Malta, 2008) but no work has yet been started on digitizing previous exhibitions or existing collections.

The National Archives of Malta are using digital technology to capture the nation's memory in a project entitled the National Memory Project, whose aim is to collect images and audio-visual content from different groups and organisations which represent everyday life in Malta through the ages (Farrugia, n.d.).

2.11 Outreach

Cullingford (2016) describes outreach as 'widening access' (p. 193) and looks at how special collections personnel relate with users and how they help patrons engage with the collections in their custody. She also describes how nowadays special collections are seen as an integral part of the academic institution. Yakel (2002) writes about 'User education' (p. 119) as part of outreach, whereby the archive in question provides educational sessions to new users as part of their 'Building bridges' to promote use of their collections.

In promoting special collections, librarians need to focus on making access to collections and material as user-friendly as possible in such a way that patrons from all walks of life can access these collections, not merely scholars (Whittaker, 2006).

Priddle (2005) suggests that inter-relations within the library should be fostered. Staff within special collections departments should focus their outreach within the academic institution and work with internal collegaues and within the library, referred to as an in-reach exercise, as these people will be able to properly guide students and researchers to the special collections department. Harris and Weller (2012), claim that enhanced visibility on campus can also result in a positive outreach activity. In this manner, people unable to visit the institution can still appreciate some of its holdings.

Traister (2003) also agrees with the above mentioned approach of outreach in special collections, but adds that libraries can publicise newly-acquired material or 'air' (p. 89) older collections through exibitions in an attempt to entice new patrons. However, Traister also cautions that showcasing one's collections is not enough. Special collections professionals

need to make material available to users, who must be made to feel they are welcome to use these resources.

More and more archives, museums and libraries are appreciating the advantages online resources bring to their institutions. As people interact better with images these institutions are digitizing their collections and uploading them online and exhibiting them there, such as the work undertaken by the Bodleian Library (n.d.). This not only serves as a tool to promote one's collections but serves as part of the conservation of material.

During the IFLA General Conference and Assembly, Green (2012) presented a study on how special collections currently use, and can further use new tools to promote their collections, concluding that different social media networks can be tapped into to reach previously inaccessible audiences, suggesting in particular the use of Twitter, Facebook and vlogs.

2.12 Legal and ethical issues

When donations, bequests or deposits are made to an institution, it is of the utmost importance that these are accompanied by the proper paperwork describing the nature of the transfer. This form of agreement between donor and institution is referred to as the 'Deed of Gift,' intended to avoid any problems which might arise in future. This agreement/contract will reassure the donor (or his/her heirs) that the library will care for the collection. (SAA, 2013)

Cullingford (2016) lists 7 important points that should feature in this documents, beginning with the 'Transfer of ownership,' which should indicate whether the ownership of the donation will be retained by the donor or transferred to the library. Proper identification records of the person

making the donation, the type of material being deposited should also feature (e.g. distinguishing between movable or immovable property). Another significant point is how the collection should be referenced as some donors might have strong preferences about this. The library should also outline how it will manage the collection in terms of access, preservation, cataloguing, exhibitions and copying. This is important as it will avoid future misunderstandings. The library should ensure that the donor understands that material will be made available to researchers unless there are legal restrictions. The weeding and disposal of material should also be made clear, such as that weeding will take place according to professional policies and that no material will be disposed of without the donor's permission. Copyright issues should also be addressed, with the donor encouraged to pass any licensing rights to the library, to use the material for educational purposes and also for promotional purposes. The worst case scenarios, such as the possibility of the cessation of existence of the library, should be taken into consideration and the donor asked to indicate preferences for the subsequent transfer or disposal of their bequeathed material (Cullingford 2016). Cullingford also highlights the importance of quantifying the collection (specifying the type of material transferred, its provenance and the name under which the collection should be referenced - it is recommended that this name is selected by the donor).

Apart from potential legal issues, copyright is often seen as an ethical issue. The remit of copyright covers an exhaustive list of material and works, such a artistic works, literary works, films, sound recordings ect. protecting these from unauthorised reproduction. Coyright does not apply to non-fixed material such as improvised speech/music or ideas unless these have been documented in some way (Padfield, 2015). Tessler (2014) describes the matter of copyright as an unclear situation especially where access to material is concerned. Valge and Birgit (2017) state that the concept of privacy and copyright varies considerably between countries. Ronald L. Becker

(1993) also writes how archivists are faced constantly with these ethical vs legal dilemmas, whereby they need to make decisions of providing access and yet keep their legal obligations to copyright holders. On the other hand, Carson (2007) argues that libraries and archives have the right to copy material that is under copyright for patron use, because when material is given to an archive or library some of the copyright which was originally owned by the donor or creator is transferred to the archive or library. The archive assumes the right to reproduce any material given to them. Carson adds also that archives are not liable for infringments made by their patrons, as long as staff in the archiveare not aware that the material will be used in an infringing manner (Carson, 2007).

The issue of copyright covers an exhaustive list of materials and works, such as artistic work, literary work, films, sound recordings ect, protecting these from unauthorised reproduction. Copyright does not apply to improvised speech/music or ideas, unless these have been documented in some way (Padfield, 2015). Apart from potential legal issues, copyright is often seen as an ethical issue. Tessler (2014) describes the matter as a 'blurred' situation especially where access to material is concerned. Becker (1993) describes how archivists are faced constantly with these ethical and legal dilemmas, whereby they need to make decisions of providing access and yet abide by their legal obligations to copyright holders. In a digital age where more and more material is disseminated online, these legal and ethical issues become more complicated (Tessler, 2014).

2.13 Summary

Special collections have been shown to add value to an academic institution, however care must be taken with regard to access, preservation, outreach and the implementation of

appropriate policies to safeguard the collection while at the same time using it to both aid and attract researchers from within and outside the institution.

Chapter Three will outline the steps taken in order to examine how the points raised throughout this literature review are tackled in practice, with particular reference to the Godfrey Wettinger collection held at the University of Malta.

Chapter Three

Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the methodological approach used for data and information collection used for this study. Two components of a mixed methodology approach were used in this study, interviews and fieldwork. The fieldwork component consisted of collecting empirical data from the Godfrey Wettinger collection, by evaluating its research potential, and through a week's internship at the University of Sussex through observation of day to day work within Special Collections of the said University. The second component was made up of a series of semi-structured interviews with researchers and special collections librarians. Within this chapter, the research strategy used will be discussed and the approach towards data collection and analysis explained.

3.2 Epistemological Considerations

The research method proposed uses an inductive approach which means that the data collected will form the theory, as opposed to using a deductive approach whereby the theory pre-defines the data. All the findings of this research depend on what is said during the interviews and also through observation. The reality is dependent on the perceptions and actions of social actors, in this case the librarians and also the researchers. Essentially, the value of the library is dependent upon the meaning placed upon it by researchers (Bryman, 2016).

3.3 Research Strategy

This research study takes a mixed-methodology approach to data collection and analysis. Two separate interview guides were prepared, a structured interview schedule for special collections librarians and a semi-structured interview guide for researchers. Copies of recruitment letters and consent forms can be found in Appendix A. The reason behind the structured interview for librarians was to enable direct comparison between special collections in two different academic institutions. Due to Malta's insularity and also due to the fact that there is only one University on the island it was decided that an academic institution overseas would also be considered for inclusion within this study to gain a broader perspective. The institution chosen was the University of Sussex, United Kingdom. The aim of this part of the study was to understand the handling and processing of incoming special collections, and to outline the processes behind making these special collections available to researchers.

The reason for semi-structured interviews with researchers was to enable the author of this study to collect as much data as possible with regard to researchers' needs and to ascertain how special collections in academic institutions are viewed by users and also to obtain narratives about the collection selected under research described as composition research (Journet, 2012). Semi-structured interviews, just under an hour in length, with four researchers from different fields of study, all with a particular interest in the Godfrey Wettinger collection, were interviewed for this part of the study. The focus of these interviews was to understand what researchers expect from the special collections librarian and the academic library.

3.4 The Case Study Approach

A case study focuses on one case and is considered a very good method for an exhaustive investigation. Yin (2014) defines a case study as "An empirical enquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon (the case) in depth and within its real world context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context may not be clearly evident" (p. 16).

Following the location of the proposed research within the qualitative paradigm, a bounded case study was selected after consideration of the possibility of exploring special collections at the University of Malta in general. The inclusion of a specific collection would allow the research to demonstrate quantification of a collection, and, following the development of a model to ascertain the value of special collections, apply the model to that specific collection. The purpose of a case study is for the researcher to reveal the uniqueness of the case (Bryman, 2016).

Empirical research was carried out to collect the case study data by viewing the documents held in the collection as these are of major importance in data collection for case study research (Yin, 2014). Going through the collection item by item proved to be essential in order to get a general idea of its contents and its research potential. However, although no comprehensive inventory of the Godfrey Wettinger collection has yet been found or compiled (some items in the collection do appear as though an index had been attempted or possibly completed), it is not the purpose of this study to provide a comprehensive listing of the contents of the collection. Godfrey Wettinger was a distinguished researcher and respected scholar. His collection was selected for two reasons: it is one of the University's most recent collections, so was uncatalogued at the time of acquisition and likely to remain uncatalogued for the duration of the research study, therefore making it a hidden collection. It is also the largest collection held at the University library Special Collections and it

also contains unpublished material. Additionally, researchers visiting the special collections department had already expressed great interest in the collection and enquired about its potential availability. It was therefore decided that questioning researchers about a specific collection which they had indicated was perceived to have value would be more likely to elicit indications of what could be considered 'valuable' in special collections.

3.5 Data Sources

In line with Tellis' (1997) identified best practices for case study research, multiple perspectives were sought in order to ascertain both what the unique value of the Godfrey Wettinger collection is, what principles could be extracted for application to special collections held within the University of Malta Library and how these compare to the experience of special collections at overseas institutions. In addition to the perspectives of a number of researchers using special collections, an interview was sought with a member of management involved with Special Collections at the University of Malta Library. An interview using the same interview schedule was conducted with a Special Collections librarian/archivist at the University of Sussex. The perspective of librarians were sought in order to triangulate their views with those of researchers and further strengthen the conclusions being drawn about the characteristics underlying "value" in special collections. These interviews also provided an overview of the handling and processing of special collections from receipt of collection through to making it available to researchers - a part of the process which is unseen by researchers. The model presented in section 4.4 highlights themes common to both researcher and librarians, while sample interview transcripts for librarians and researchers are presented in Appendices D and E respectively.

3.6 Development of the Research Instruments

Two separate interview schedules were developed for use with special collections librarians and researchers. These were drawn up following a search of the relevant literature. The librarians' interview guide was pilot-tested with a colleague within the University of Malta library, and who also provided feedback on the proposed interview guide for use with researchers. Given the small pool of researchers interested in the Godfrey Wettinger collection, the first interview was treated as a pilot interview and the wording of some questions altered. This interview was also used in data analysis given that the alterations made did not affect the data gathered. Interview guides for special collections librarians and researchers can be found in Appendices B and C respectively.

3.7 Data Collection

The advantages with interviews is that there is a personal side to them as interviewer and interviewee establish a relationship even if it is for a very short period of time. The benefit of this direct contact is that questions can be explained or rephrased for the benefit of the respondent. The respondent can express him/herself better and sometimes at length, which gives the researcher the opportunity for more information and at the same time gain further insight through observation (Rubin, 2012). All researchers interviewed at some point in their lives crossed paths with Professor Wettinger, from ex-students to ex-colleagues and long-time friends. Researchers were also asked to recount anecdotes from personal experiences with Prof. Wettinger. All researchers had stories to recount in this regard and these will be discussed in Chapter Four. Researchers were also asked if they would take the opportunity to research his collection as soon as it was made available. Interviews were also sought with Special Collections personnel both at the University of Sussex and at the University of Malta. The interview with Special Collections archivist at Sussex was held

at the end of a week's stay during which the day to day processes of the special collections department were observed.

3.8 Fieldwork

Empirical data was collected from the academic library of the University of Sussex special collections, "The Keep," whereby the researcher spent one week observing and also participating in the day to day running of the Special Collections department and observing how collections are evaluated, housed and processed and made available to researchers. At the end of the week an interview was held with the assistant archivist during which practices and collection development were touched upon. Empirical data was also collected from the University of Malta whereby the researcher had access to the Godfrey Wettinger collection. This collection is still being held in storage at the University of Malta library and is still waiting to be processed. The researcher was granted special permission by the Director of Library Services at the University of Malta to have full access to the collection so as to be able to quantify it, give an overview of the collection and also its research potential. Several attempts were made to contact the manager of the special collections department at the University of Malta for an interview, in person and also via email. The questions were also sent via email. A short interview was eventually granted to the author of this study which took seven minutes as opposed to 45 minutes for all the other interviews included in this study. The interviewee also requested that the interview not be recorded. While comprehensive notes were taken during the interview, this hampered the researcher's ability to revisit the interview.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

Although the topic of special collections is not one likely to cause distress to participants, the use of human subjects as a source of information necessitated that the proposed research be vetted by the University of Malta's Faculty and University Research Ethics Committees prior to approaching potential participants. The Committees were assured that no harm could come to interviewees as a result of their participation and that no deceptive practices would be utilised.

Detailed recruitment letters and consent forms were drawn up to ensure that participants' consent to interviews was truly informed consent. Prior to commencement of interviews, participants were assured that confidentiality would be respected: all findings would be presented using pseudonyms. Given that special collections in Malta are a very niche field, interview recordings were stored in password-protected files and all transcription carried out by the researcher to minimise the chances that participants could be identified by their voices. Participants were also informed they had the right to withdrawn from the study at any point during or after the interview, in which case recordings would be deleted.

The size of the pool of potential participants necessitated that direct contact had to be made by the researcher rather than issuing an invitation requesting that potential participants make contact with the researcher. Contact was made by email, specifying that participation would be voluntary and confidentiality maintained. Some of the participants asked for a copy of the questions before interviews were held.

The above steps ensured that all the ethical principles specified by the Economic and Social Research Council [ESRC] (n.d.) for research involving human subjects were respected, and the ethics committees' approval confirmed this.

3.10 Limitations of scope

The use of one case study, although necessary due to time constraints, limits the generalisability of this study's results. This research study focuses only on special collections held within academic research institutions libraries, regardless of provenance, and the added value these provide to the parent institution. Accessing the Godfrey Wettinger collection also proved to be problematic as the collection had not yet been properly sorted due to limited resources and limited space. No index or preliminary listing of the collection is available making it vulnerable to theft and also the risk of material getting lost or misplaced (Yakel, 2005).

The inability to secure a proper interview with a member of staff involved in special collections at the University of Malta library also hampered the study. Answers to many of the questions were not forthcoming, and that limited the ability to gain an understanding of the specific practices employed at the UM library vis a vis special collections.

3.11 Conclusion

This chapter explains that the mixed method approach used for this research project was the best one for the research question as it is the only way to obtain the level of detail needed to understand the value that special collections bring to the parent institution. The next chapter will present Godfrey Wettinger, as described by interviewees and as extrapolated from his collection, which forms the basis for this case study.

Chapter 4

Findings and Analysis

4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to answer the research question through the findings, and to discuss them in a systematic manner along with themes that have emerged in the process of conducting the research. This chapter is divided into three sections.

The first section presents findings from the interviews held with special collections librarians, one from the University of Sussex (special collections department at the University of Sussex is known as, "The Keep") and one from the University of Malta. As explained in Chapter Three, the interview pertaining to the University of Malta's special collections was very brief and not all questions could be answered – as a result, these findings present a clearer picture of how a special collections department outside Malta works, although all information obtained with regard to the University of Malta library has been included. During these interviews, collections development, donation policies, accessibility, user data collection and outreach services, were discussed as particular areas of interest in the field of special collections.

The second section of this chapter will discuss interviews held with researchers who use the services of research institutions both locally and abroad. Recurring themes from interviews held with researchers at the University of Malta will be assessed to extract the other side of the scenario of the archive reading room, i.e. the needs of the end users, their expectations and their overall experience of the institution.

The structure of these two sections has been guided by the themes extracted from the interviews as a result of thematic analysis. Following the second section, the themes are presented in a diagram.

The third section of this chapter will introduce the reader to the man behind the collection being studied, i.e. 'The Godfrey Wettinger Bequest.' An overview of the collection is also provided, including a discussion of its research potential.

All discussion of interview findings is supplemented by verbatim quotes from research participants and linked to material already presented in Chapter Two.

4.2 Special Collections Librarians' Perspective – University of Malta [UM] and the University of Sussex [US]

4.2.1 Resources

> "Libraries usually strike a delicate balance between attaining optimal conditions for caring of special collections versus preserving and promoting such collections to the best of their abilities given limited resources." (Darbey & Hayden, 2008)

As resources keep shrinking in academic libraries, their departments together with their special collections work with increasingly limited human resources and limited budgets. It was established that the University of Sussex has *"12 persons in Special Collections,"* compared with *"3 persons"* at the University of Malta. While institution size and volume of collections held is proportionately

larger at US, one does need to consider that personnel need to cover back office processing and upkeep of special collections in addition to being available to assist researchers[1].

Research institutions very often need to seek funding outside their allocated budgets. The assistant archivist at the University of Sussex explained that when acquiring collections, they have to think in terms of how much in resources (both human and financial) a collection will cost the institution. They also consider how long a collection will take before it is made available to researchers. Interns are sometimes engaged according to their area of specialization for the duration of a project, or funding sought from external sources to supplement institutional funds.

"We don't have a lot of resources to catalogue them [collections]. On one occasion that academic has raised funding for it [the collection] to be catalogued and made available" (US)

The University of Sussex's German/Jewish collection is a case in point, whereby the academic who was responsible for its transfer raised funding for the collection to be catalogued and made available, thus alleviating the costs. An intern is currently working on this collection. The Notarial Archives in Malta, which relies mainly on volunteers, also introduced a funding scheme in 2015. Thanks to this initiative entitled 'Adopt a notary', organizations and individuals can sponsor a volume or a whole collection of volumes pertaining to a particular notary to be restored and eventually made available for research (Camilleri, 2015). Librarians are custodians of the special collections within their care. Librarians should not be discouraged due to limited resources, but they should take the challenge and think in a proactive way to secure resources to manage their special collections (Fazal and Murphy, 2015). The University of Sussex archivist explained that *"We very rarely buy things but when we have it's been at auctions"*. In other instances, outside

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[1] Later on in this chapter, researchers indicate that accessibility of staff at UM special collections is an issue – limited human resources may be one of the reasons for this

help is sought, such as *"help from organisations like 'Friends of the National Libraries' or the V&A purchasing fund"*

Interns and internships can be a way of adding resources without the financial burden. During a long term internship the intern can have their own project to complete. The benefits of internships are twofold as it serves as a learning curve for the intern and added help for the institution, it can also form part of an outreach programme at the library. Outreach will be discussed later in this chapter.

4.2.2 Collection Development (Donations)

Both institutions were in agreement that most of the time *"people come to us" (US)* wishing to bequeath their collections, though the librarian at the University of Malta acknowledged that it was a case of *"Both …. Some donors contact us, sometimes I run after a collection if it is relevant to the target audience."* At the University of Sussex, it was explained that *"occasionally there's an academic in the University who knows the collection and that is something that they study and they want to make sure it's kept."* This suggests a level of proactivity on the part of researchers in assisting with the acquisition of collections of particular interest to them.

With regard to the University of Sussex, it is common practice to visit the donor to appraise the material prior to agreeing to house the collection. Appraising collections is a very important process in the acquisition of collections. This was noted by both representatives of UM and US respectively as collections need to fit in with the institution's collection policy and the target audience. Material has to be relevant and important for the collective memory. No matter how valuable a collection is, if it doesn't fit in with the scope of the institution the appraiser will be doing a disservice to the donor of the collection, the parent institution and to potential users (Millar, 2010). For this reason special collections departments have acquisition policies, described by the

University of Sussex representative as *"We like to get things that are strengths of the University"* *(US)*. In this policy the department outlines the role of the department within the parent institution and the acquisition focus of the Special Collections department (Millar, 2010). However, turning down a collection is not easy for the institution to do, *"It is hard to say no and you don't have anywhere to suggest"* (US) – particularly knowing that refusal may result in eventual dispersion of the collection.

4.2.3 Legal Issues

Both institutions have procedures and policies in place to cover donations and bequests:

"We do have a policy of ownership… every donation is different from the other, they all come with their baggage" (UM)

"We have got a collection policy" (US)

"We have a donation agreement" (US)

Whilst a policy is a document drawn up by the institution, with no legal obligations binding it, the Special Collections department cannot function without a donation's agreement or the 'Deed of gift' discussed in Chapter 2. This is a lengthy document and has to cover legal issues such as access, copyright and disposal (Cullingford, 2016). Both interviewees said that both institutions together with legal experts within the University have drawn up these documents, although both admitted that these documents are amended according to donation and the donor's wishes, described as *"there's a template and we adjust accordingly […] It is a bit ad hoc" (US)*. They also work within legal frameworks of their respective countries. Special collections librarians are also increasingly aware that they *"have to work within the Data Protection Act" (US)*.

Data protection is taken into consideration where sensitive, personal data of people who may still be alive, feature in the collections. Institutions approach copyright in a different manner. At the University of Malta, the interviewee said *"Copyright is ours",* describing the process as *"When a patron donates a collection, ownership of the collection changes automatically to U.M."* - the approach taken is very one-size-fits-all, whereas, on the other hand, at the University of Sussex, the copyright issue is discussed and with the donor and it is the donor who then decides if he/she is willing to give ownership to the University or not. *""I give over ownership to the University or I don't […] This is where we outline the copyright. So if they have the copyright and they want to give it to us, we will take it".*

However, one must bear in mind that ownership of the artifacts within the collections and copyright over the collection are two separate issues, with the possibility of ownership and copyright being held by separate institutions/individuals. This is one area where a full legal document, referred to by Cullingford (2016) as the "Deed of Gift" is vital in order to pre-empt possible dilemmas which may arise in future. Other areas which need prior agreement with the donor include access and eventual disposal.

4.2.4 Accessibility

Hidden collections are a common occurrence in Special Collections as has been seen during interviews held with both library professionals, and as seen in the survey of 22 librarians, archives and museums in Chapter 2 (O'hara Conway et al., 2012). It was interesting to note that both interviewees had a different approach regarding hidden collections within their custody.

"I can't really say, but there is a presence online in the holdings" (UM)

The University of Malta librarian said that as long as there is an online presence on the web she doesn't consider such collections as hidden collections, which tallies with Jones' (2004) view that it is better to have some level of access to material instead of comprehensive access to some and no access at all to some other collections. The archivist from the University of Sussex however admitted openly that [they] *"have collections that are not accessible because they are not catalogued yet and we have some which can be more accessible"*. She also pointed out another type of hidden collections, which is standardization of terms, like abbreviations. When cataloguers use these abbreviations, the material is not searchable, and also when the library changed to a new library management system, due to preceding shortcomings, some of the material lost its visibility. This experience is common to both, with the librarian at the University of Malta also explaining that *"ever since the library upgraded to Alma some material is not visible anymore."*

4.2.5 Finding Aids

With regard to finding aids and retrieval tools, the University of Sussex have about "*98% online*" for the collections that have been processed, which helps and saves time and travel for researchers, who know what they are looking for, rather than travelling to The Keep, and asking whether or not something is available. Having finding aids (often called descriptive tools) and catalogues of content of material online and available for researchers helps to make life easier for users to determine what material is relevant for their research areas. Compiling listings and indexes to collections ought to be high on the agenda when acquiring material. Having an inventory of a collection helps to avoid material being misplaced or even stolen as seen by (Jones 2004) in Chapter Two.

Online finding aids increase usability and make collections more visible (Ress, 2015). This is limited at the University of Malta, which has *"no retrieval tools online, but some collections have printed preliminary listings."*

4.2.6 Metrics and Statistics

Both librarians agreed on the importance of keeping statistics of reader use and reader attendance in their respective reading rooms as seen by Conway & Fisher (2013) earlier in chapter 2, regarding librarians and archivists and their need to collect data of the services they provide. The University of Malta keeps *"statistics of patrons who actually visit our reading room, at item level"* however have "*no way of knowing how many patrons use our online facilities."* The situation is very similar at the University of Sussex, where staff "*keep note of how many people come to the reading room and had something issued to them, I collect these monthly."* When it comes to their online presence, "[they] *can use google analytics to see how many website hits we have"* however *"I don't think I can tell you how many are looking at our catalogue pages [...] I can tell you what their research terms are.... But I haven't done it."* Another, potentially forgotten issue is *"How many things we got out but that person didn't turn up, cause that is still work getting it from the store and taking it to the production room, so we measure that as well"* (US)

While all of this is very commendable Special Collections need to think beyond numbers of patrons in the reading room and the number of items they looked at. Internal metrics are easy to keep – *"I've done statistics for our business planning"* (US) – and they are crucial; with these figures managers can measure progress when compiling reports and, to justify resource requests as seen by (Yakel and Chapman 2012) in chapter 2. Archivists have to keep in mind the material which is available online, and who is looking at it. Keeping track of the use of digital content complicates

matters for Special Collections. Library management systems, digital libraries and social media have simplified the keeping of such statistics as they collect that data for you. Librarians and archivists also need to measure the impact of their services. This is even more difficult to define and collecting the data is more problematic. Special Collections impact is measured through scholars and academics using their collections and who eventually publish their research (Cullingford, 2016).

4.2.7 Feedback from patrons

When asked whether or not the department does any follow up regarding what people have done with the research conducted within their respective archives both interviewees responded that patrons are not expected to supply them with feedback or what they have done with the research conducted within their repository:

"Sometimes people often send us their research papers …. But we don't follow it up" (US)

"No" (UM)

The interviewee from the University of Sussex admitted that there is a need for follow up in this regard as to who is using what and what was the outcome of their research, acknowledging that, *"I'd like to formalize it because it's really useful to know, who's looking at stuff and what they did with it."* It is easy to get feedback from a researcher who was physically in the reading room than from a researcher who used digital collections and had no personal contact in the reading room. 'Quantitative metrics' (Cullingford 2016), need to be a continuation of the aforementioned metrics. This is how archivists can start to measure the impact of their collections. These can come in the form of acknowledgements in books and reviews on websites. This helps to show the effectiveness of policies and also to demonstrate the research value of collections (Cullingford 2016).

4.2.8 Outreach

Outreach is what one might call marketing, and this aspect is highly regarded in both institutions, but the approach which is adopted towards this 'Widening access' (Cullingford, 2016) is different. At the University of Sussex more emphasis is placed on 'User education' as part of outreach (Yakel, 2002) with tailor made education programmes, typically:

"We have a good relationship with tutors at the University and they regularly come and bring the students with them"

"It could be their tutor or embedded in their course or they just come and see how to use the archive to sort of demystify that!" (US)

"Susan and her team do a lot of outreach with schools and community groups and people who wouldn't normally come here"

Formal advertising is minimal although, *"Sometimes the press communications at the University might do a little art column or a weekly newsletter" (US)*

The author of this research project had the opportunity to shadow these learning and teaching programmes as part of a work placement at the University of Sussex. Lecturers contact the Special Collections personnel and together discuss an approach for their particular class and the subject that will be tackled during the session. The session or lecture will take approximately 2 or 3 hours. At this point the subject of the lecture will be discussed and the material which the students will handle will also be identified. The lecturers can opt to deliver the lecture themselves or leave everything in the hands of the Special Collections staff. A date and time is set for the lecture. Lectures take place at The Keep. When the students (undergraduates or postgraduates) arrive for their session the material is already on display for them. They are given a show around of the

archive and a brief introduction to the material which they will be handling later on in the session. Through a short video they are instructed on how to handle manuscripts. Through these educational sessions special collections are promoted and students no longer feel that archives are daunting places reserved for scholars but welcoming and user-friendly and above all accessible (Whittaker, 2006) in Chapter Two. It is interesting to note that one of the researchers interviewed at the University of Malta specified that he'd like to collaborate on such initiatives with the Special Collections department at the University of Malta. Students can see the material and as they would have visited the archive with a lecturer, they might find it easier to return and conduct research for their assignments. Another option would be to bring students to the archive who are in the process of finding a research project for their thesis. This would be an opportunity for them to find out about unexplored niches in the field.

The approach taken by the Special collection department at the University of Malta regarding outreach is more of a traditional way of conducting outreach as seen by (Traster, 2003) by a rotation of exhibitions:

"We advertise through library announcements, exhibitions, Facebook, press articles, and Newspoint."

Collections are advertised on social media and other online resources. Falbo (2000), who is an assistant professor and assistant director of the college writing programme at Lafayette College Easton Pennsylvania, writes how she encourages her students to go to the archives to research assignments, as seeing a digital document is not quite the same as seeing an original document. Scrolling through a page on a computer the student misses the concept of the size of the document and also the material integrity of the text. Students need to have the opportunity of handling and experience the textuality of the document (Falbo, 2000) An interesting philosophy adopted by the

University of Sussex is to invite people to come to The Keep, rather than enticing them with a collection they want them to visit:

"We tend to talk more about The Keep, come to The Keep we don't tend to say come to The Keep because we've got 'X' (US)

4.2.9 Physical vs Digital Resources

The physical vs digital debate continues as special collections personnel gave their comments with regard to this issue:

"It depends on the researcher, older ones prefer analogue and younger ones prefer online" (UM)

"There is a certain romance to go to the reading room and look at the real thing [but] some people doing their research don't care, they just want to read what that thing says" (US)

It may not necessarily be an age issue as all the researchers that were interviewed have used online resources in the course of their conducting research especially in view of the fact that one of these researchers is an octogenarian. Although all researchers preferred online resources for the sake of convenience, given the chance they would all prefer to look at the original source. The romance of handling the original document was mentioned by the archivist at the University of Sussex, is also mentioned by Cotton (2011) *"to scroll through an online book is not quite as romantic as the sensual experience of working with a physical remnant of an old text"* (p. 45). This gives credence to what she said regarding the fact that the number of patrons in the reading room has not declined even when one considers that material is available online - corroborated by staff at the University of Sussex:

"Our visitor figures at The Keep are fairly constant" (US)

Finding aids are descriptive lists of the contents of a particular collection. These can be paper based printed catalogues kept by the librarian or archivist to be consulted by patrons who are in search of possible material which is relevant to their research. Most institutions have now moved these lists online. Digital finding aids give more visibility to these collections and to special collections. Maximizing visibility adds awareness which in return results in an increase in research using these collections.

4.3 Special Collections Researchers' Perspective

This section presents the themes drawn from interviews with researchers within special collections. The four researchers whose views are presented in this section were identified as users of special collections in Malta, and approached by email to invite them to participate in this study.

4.3.1 Multiplicity of purpose

There is no one profile of a researcher in their need of special collections: user needs and user profiles are different in Special Collections as shown in the answers given by the interviewees.

"I think more out of curiosity" (Researcher 1)

"because it is expected of you to produce and publish these papers as it is required" (Researcher 3)

"an important part of my job description is to publish" (Researcher 4)

"I am doing it just because I want to get my doctoral degree" (Researcher 2)

User demographics vary from academic staff to undergraduate and postgraduate students to independent scholars, thus Special Collections need to cater for different stakeholders. Scholars and academics, remain the core users for Special Collections and their relationship with Special

Collections librarians increases as they are required to publish as part of research excellence framework and teaching excellence framework (Cullingford, 2016). Researchers bring their own ideas and excitement when conducting research and enhance and contribute towards making these collections special through their publications and lectures (Howarth, 2000).

4.3.2 Passion and creativity in the research process

Participants stressed the need for researchers to approach research material with an open mind and be willing to engage critically rather than taking material acceptingly at face value. This is of particular importance for material found within special collections, due to the chance of finding under-researched material or material which provides scope for further study.

"give importance to interpretations" (Researcher 3)

"Tigix b'mohhok lest[2]" (Researcher 3)

"We rely too much on the documentation we find in the archives" (Researcher 3)

Researchers spoke about how they initiate their research, and their strategy when they encounter limitations to access. They spoke how one needs to think outside the box and be creative when faced with apparent dead ends: *"I would ask those individuals that I think know something about it […] start with secondary sources and consult their references" (Researcher 4)*

 One needs the ability to think strategically and work around limitations. One also needs to have a passion, (*"You need to have a passion for it, amor propju, so to say" (Researcher 3)),* and this passion for research needs to be nurtured and instilled in students as seen in Harris and Weller

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[2] "Don't come in with your mind already made up"

(2012) through outreach programmes. Outreach forms an integral part of Special Collections and collaboration between academic and special collections librarians.

4.3.3 Research using special collections

4.3.3.1 Ability to draw from other disciplines

Researchers emphasized the need for a broad education, particularly awareness of and the ability to make use of other disciplines when using archival material, with knowledge of *"gender history or material culture history […] influences from anthropology and sociology" (Researcher 4)* being essential to one's interpretation of archival material.

It is not enough to be aware of say, history but one also needs additional knowledge to understand the bigger picture and to be able to put material into context - this shift is also reflected in academic subjects. Researchers also noted that research is not about theory anymore and the evolution in research methods has moved towards a more social discipline. It is not enough for a researcher to know what is out there. Researchers also need to be well read in their research area. They also need to be able to draw information from other disciplines:

" I think social theory today (dahlet) is present as much as it is in anthropology and secondly and this is where it has changed the most and we have seen this in the last 20 years especially of research in history is the approach of transdisiplinary. Nowadays transdiscliplinary is everywhere. If you don't have a basis of anthropology, geography, you will be weak in history" (Researcher 3)

This enables researchers to assess material critically and take a position which considers a number of perspectives on the subject. The user of special collections, according to interviewees of this

study, needs to be able to consider the contribution which different disciplines can make to the subject under study and use these to present balanced work for publication.

4.3.3.2 Evolvement of the research field

Following on from the above section, researchers also indicated that the way in which research is carried out has changed, with work presented for publication/examination being held to much more rigorous standards.

"Methodology has become much more serious and stringent and up to international standards as it should be" (Researcher 4)

"increase of professionalisation in the way historical research is conducted" (Researcher 4)

"I am referring to the academic – academic research, we are too empirical." (Researcher 3)

While one researcher praised this shift, another suggested that his field, historiographic research, may be emphasizing empirical research over all other research, including that carried out within special collections. This may result in seeing research within special collections as a preliminary step towards collecting primary data, rather than research in its own right.

Publishing scholarly work nowadays requires the writer to properly reference material that has been consulted, including archival material. Researchers are held to increasingly higher standards; this in turn gives credence to their publications which will carry more weight in the academic scenario. Keeping up to date with research which is being carried out and emerging fields of research would be beneficial to archivists and librarians when they are assessing potential collections so as to be able to guide patrons and also for when queries arise in the reading room.

Librarians also need to know what is being published and to make sure their sources are being properly referenced.

4.3.4 Material within special collections

4.3.4.1 Physical vs Digital Resources

Participants also discussed their preference between physical and digital material within special collections, with consensus amongst the participants towards a preference for physical rather than digital, albeit with acceptance that digital material is becoming increasingly common and does have certain advantages:

"I think I got used to both, mind you a person my age is used very often to printed form" (Researcher 1)

"However I think after quite a few years now I've got used to using online sources" (Research 1)

"Ultimately digital copies cannot capture everything, always the possibility of finding something which is not catalogued or listed anywhere" (Researcher 4)

"In the end you need to see the document" (Researcher 3)

"I would prefer to handle the original document, but the digital online does give you a certain amount of flexibility" (Researcher 4)

"My preference would be the physical when possible" (Researcher 4)

"when they are available I use digital, even though I do still prefer to look at the primary source" (Researcher 2)

Whether this preference was affected by researcher age remains debatable. It would be interesting for further studies in the future to obtain the perspective of the younger users, and whether younger researchers are even aware of and use special collections, as seen in the literature review (Cotton, 2011). Online material is seen as a convenient way to conduct research and also as a time and money saving in the way of travelling abroad. One of the researchers interviewed travels very frequently to conduct research, but also those who research locally admitted that online facilities save time as they do not have to face traffic and parking issues:

"Online you cannot find everything [but] you will save time and money" (Researcher 3)

"online if the photos are in good quality, you can enlarge and zoom" (Researcher 4)

"online you can see it anywhere even from home" (Researcher 2)

"Being able to consult an archive from the comfort of my own home is certainly a splendid idea" (Researcher 1)

The issue of time and money saving was also discussed by Tenopir (2011) in the results of the Lib-Value project. When the convenience of online documents is removed from the equation respondents prefer to travel to the research institution to see the original document as one can derive more information from handling the original document which the digital cannot give, like the age of the paper or parchment, the ink used or any other markings that would otherwise not be visible.

4.3.4.2 Use of material

Apart from their preference for physical over digital material, researchers also prefer accessing material themselves and making their own digital copies rather than requesting them. When

researchers take photos of material with their own digital camera, it means that they can continue to work after opening hours from home.

" Every year I go there once or twice.There today... you can take photographs there so you are bringing back with you document, reproduction of the original document" (Researcher 3)

"London.. eh you go on the computer and you have everything online and you order material it comes you have your camera and start to take photos or make notes" (Researcher 3)

"Doing it yourself rather than writing down and having someone else doing it" (Researcher 4)

"When there is permission to take digital pictures I appreciate that" (Researcher 2)

"When it's possible... I know some material would damage" (Researcher 2)

This was discussed both in terms of local institutions and abroad. Most institutions abroad let researchers make their own digital copies where as in Malta one has to request copies to be made by the institution, not to mention the bureaucracy and paperwork attached to obtaining permission to have them done. This was also discussed in chapter 2 (Yakel, 2002) referring to the frustration felt by users at all the paperwork they need to go through to get access to material. Librarians are constantly faced with dilemmas regarding copying of material always stating copyright issues as discussed by Becker (1993) in chapter 2. Although if material is copied for scholarship and research purposes, librarians and archivists are within their right to do so within certain limitations (Carson, 2017).

4.3.4.3 Barriers to accessing material

Researchers explained that it is not always possible to get access to desired material, whether due to issues with physical access to the institution/archive or problems with being given access to a particular document. Researcher 3 explained that gaining access sometimes needs creative thinking to find a *"strategic way to get what you want, to go around to get the documents."*

However, such barriers do result in frustration for users:

"I can understand if it is being restored it is not accessible, but if something is in a showcase and nobody is looking at it I cannot see the huge problem of actually giving the material to the researcher for an hour to look at" (Researcher 4)

Some respondents encountered problems accessing material at some point in their researching careers. This was mostly evident in local archives where they couldn't get access to sources, either due to material not being available *("I wanted to consult something and it was not found for a while […] Things are lost and it takes time for them to be found again" (Researcher 2),* or, due to it being on loan or in an exhibition cabinet. There was also a period when ecclesiastical archives in Malta were closed to researchers and considered private. *"In the beginning for example there was also a problem with with the curia and with the cathedral these houses were considered private archives so you couldn't say anything but yes there was a problem not just for myself." (Researcher 3)* These delays cause researchers to abandon projects due to deadlines or else seek information from secondary sources. Researchers and scholars need to consult primary sources in order to be able to give credence and integrity to their research.

4.3.4.4 Accessibility

Only two out of the four researchers interviewed have used the services of the Special Collections department at the University of Malta. All agreed that a move towards more flexible hours is warranted, similar to the National Archives who have extended opening hours on a specific day of the week, indicating that the restricted opening hours are a great limitation, as is the availability of staff:

"convenience of opening hours… institutions locally are quite restricted in their opening hours" (Researcher 4)

"when we go it is often closed… hopefully you find someone there" (Researcher 2)

As not all researchers work on campus, some might need to travel and juggle research with their working hours. Researchers need to feel that they can go to the reading room and consult material rather than having to take staff away from other duties to attend to their needs. This may, however, be due to insufficient human resources within the department.

Researchers would welcome more information on the contents of collections, especially if this information is available online.

"Indexes are very useful" (Researcher 4)

"More detailed online description of collections" (Researcher 4)

Online catalogues or indexes save time for researchers as they will go to the reading room with an idea of what they need to consult. If they don't know the content of collection they cannot research it and this would be a missed opportunity to publish scholarly work. This is particularly valid in

light of the fact that the special collections department at UM has no online finding aids at the moment.

4.3.4.5 Outreach

Introductory sessions for undergraduate students in collaboration with faculty members would be welcome, especially when students are in the process of choosing a research area for their thesis: *"Department of history and archives department in the library... we might even work more closely together, even have introductory sessions" (Researcher 4).*

From the interview held at the University of Sussex, it resulted that outreach is a vital part of their work, and may serve as a potential avenue for the University of Malta special collections department to explore in collaboration with relevant faculties or departments.

4.3.4.6 Need for expert on the collections

All respondents were in agreement that a research institution should have qualified members of staff who would be knowledgeable on the holdings and their contents. These people can guide a researcher towards other holdings that might be relevant to their area of research:

"I was made aware of other things which I was missing before, that would not happen usually if you stay at home" (Researcher 2)

"if he or she is somebody really good... can suggest other things I can look at" (Researcher 1)

"having a member of staff who will point out something related to that source" (Researcher 1)

Sometimes when catalogues are not available online and someone with insight of the collections and a disposition to help will enhance the experience of the users, who might not be seasoned researchers. The special collections librarian/archivist needs to be aware of their holdings together with their research potential. Very often researchers rely on the expertise of members of staff regarding contents of collections, who are able to indicate items of particular interest and related material:

"if it's research in special collections, then you need somebody who is familiar with that collection, its limitations and its special attractions" (Researcher 1)

"Having thumbnail appreciation of all there is and able to guide" (Researcher 4)

4.4 Summary

The following image illustrates the themes resulting from all six interviews in graphic form, indicating in the centre the three overlapping items. While it was possible to extract both themes and sub-themes from the interviews held with researchers, it was not possible to do so for interviews held with special collections librarians given that only two were held, one of which yielded very limited information.
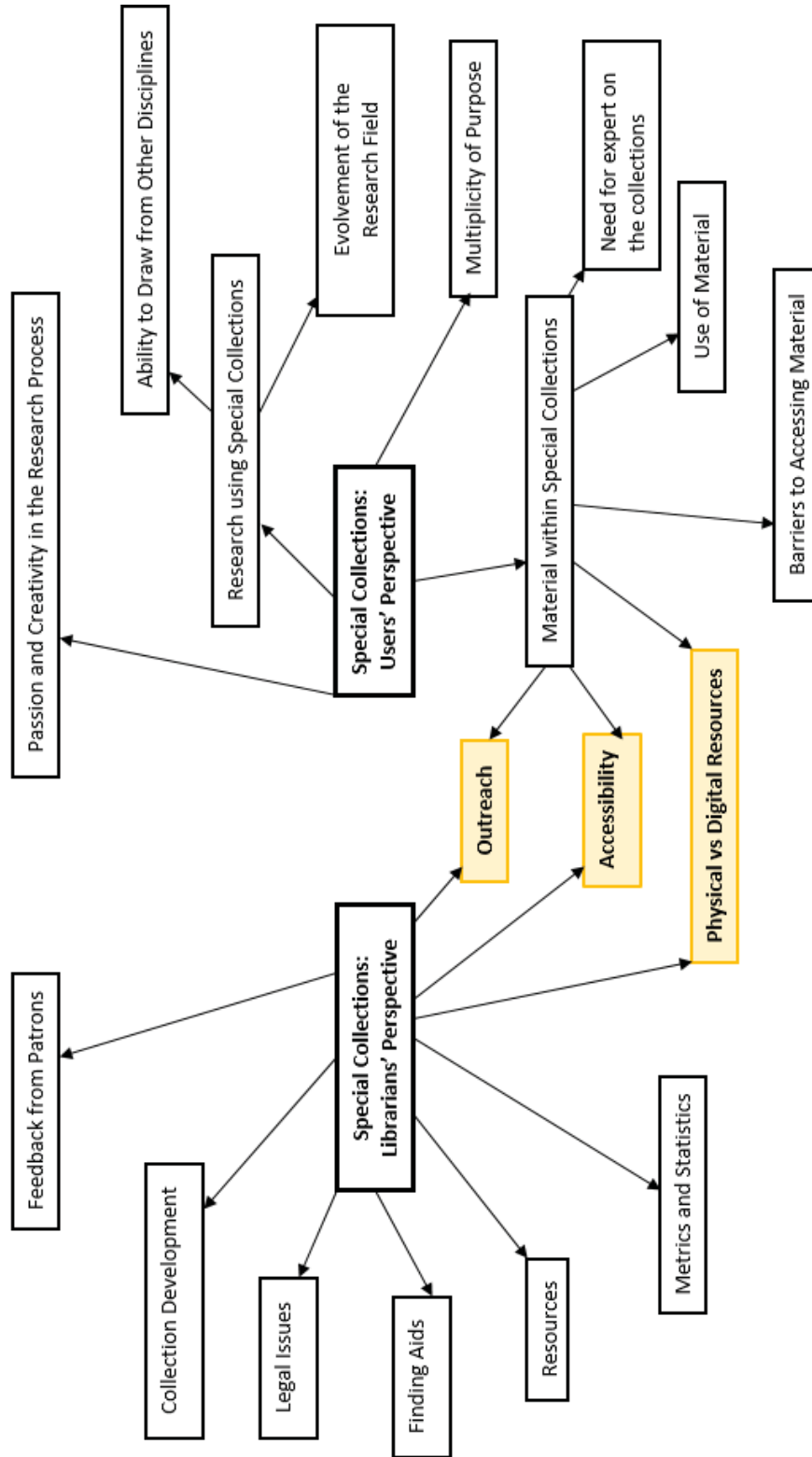
Figure 1: Overlap of Themes

Three themes in the above diagram (physical vs digital resources, accessibility and outreach) were found through the interviews to be of relevance to both special collections librarians and users of special collections. All of these offer potential courses of action for special collections departments, not solely that affiliated with the University of Malta, to add to the value they offer to patrons by saving them time and money - however given that they all require substantial resources, the costs and potential benefits of each option would need to be considered on an individual basis.

The final section of this chapter which follows presents a case study of the Godfrey Wettinger bequest, illustrating the life that went into creating this collection and what its research value is composed of. Quotations from the four researchers, all of whom had some level of contact with Prof. Wettinger and his research, are included where applicable.

4.5 The Case Study

4.5.1 Godfrey Wettinger

Godfrey Wettinger was born in Mosta on the 22nd December 1929 to Joseph Wettinger and Esther Wettinger nee Tomlin. His father was assistant headmaster at the Gharghur primary school and later headmaster at the Mellieha primary school. His father continued to occupy this position until he passed away at the age of 53. Prof. Wettinger describes these as hard times for him and his family (Mercieca, 2015). Prof. Wettinger together with his four brothers grew up in Mellieha. He continued to live in Mellieha with his mother following his brothers' emigration to Australia. When his mother passed away Wettinger moved to an apartment in St.Julians.

Godfrey Wettinger comes from a family of scholars, with one of his ancestors a professor at the Royal University of Malta in the 1850s and 1860s; Professor Giuseppe Wettinger was an engineer and lectured mathematics and physics at the Royal University of Malta (Universita' e liceo di Malta, 1860). Godfrey Wettinger always had a passion for books, learning and teaching. As a young boy he attended the Mellieha primary school, and later the Lyceum and at St. Michael's Teaching College. He enrolled at the London University as an external student and he graduated with a BA in history in 1953. In 1965 he obtained his Masters degree and his Ph.D. in 1971 (Schiavone, 2009).

4.5.2 Godfrey Wettinger – Scholar and Researcher

Godfrey Wettinger has been described as "Malta's greatest historian ever," dedicating many hours to studying history. Scholars agree that he was not afraid to challenge the 'Myths' and 'Dogma'

instigated by the establishment for centuries. He was not afraid to stand alone and challenge the distortion of history (Camilleri, 2015).

Prof. Wettinger started lecturing at the University of Malta in 1972, and went on to become Head of the Department of History and later Dean of the Faculty of Arts. His career at the University of Malta was also not lacking in controversy, when in the late 1970s the then Labour government deemed that the Arts and Theology were a waste of time and useless subjects and had them removed from the University curriculum. He was not afraid to go against his socialist leaning and stand together with his fellow lecturers against the 'Mintoff reforms' . He used the media and television to express his opinion that the soul of the University was being shut down .

Researcher 3 : "When the labour party was in government, and he felt he had to... although he was a secular and of certain politics and when on the other hand the government... he still took a stand."

In 1987 with the change in government the Faculty of Arts and the Faculty of Theology were re-established, whereby Godfrey Wettinger was re-appointed Dean of the Faculty of Arts. Professor Wettinger was an avid researcher and would often be seen researching at the National library and the Notarial Archives.

 Professor Wettinger together with Fr Michael Fsadni will forever be remembered for their discovery of the first known poem in Maltese language. The discovery was purely accidental, however this discovery of the medieval poem revolutionized the way scholars looked at how the Maltese language evolved, was spoken and written in medieval times. Prof. Wettinger and Fr. Fsadni stumbled on what is to this day referred to as the oldest piece of Maltese literature in the Maltese language, the 'Cantilena'. Prof. Wettinger was at the time in the final stages of researching

for his Ph.D. thesis, entitled " Aspects of Slavery in Malta 1530 to 1800" which he went on to publish in 2002 as 'Slavery in the Islands of Malta and Gozo ca. 1000-1812'. On the other hand, Fr Fsadni was researching the history of the Dominican Order in Malta. They both made a habit of meeting in Valletta every Saturday morning and together made their way to the Notarial Archives, which at the time was situated in Strait Street, Valletta. On the fateful day of 22nd September 1966 one of them was leafing through the folios of a particular volume of deeds pertaining to Notary Rev. Brandano de Caxario (Fsadni, 1994). The deeds covered the period between 4th December 1533 and 26th May 1536 and the folios were numbered 4 to 271. The first three pages were missing. At the end of the volume were eight unnumbered blank pages, except for page six on which there was a brief introduction in Latin to the poem by Brandano de Caxari, where Brandano writes that the poem was penned by Peter Caxaro a relative of his. The 'Cantilena' is made up of twenty lines and divided into three paragraphs of six, four and ten lines respectivley. (Wettinger & Fsadni, 1968).

Prof. Wettinger was a historiographic researcher whose main area of research was the early to late Medieval period. He not only visited local archives, particularly the Notarial Archives and all ecclesiastical archives in Malta for his research, but also travelled to archives abroad notably the Archivio di Stato di Palermo, but also Barcelona, Oxford, the Middle East, Iran and Lebanon. Initially he would visit archives and copy whole pages by hand, but in later years, thanks to the advancement of technology he would have whole volumes of manuscripts photocopied and sometimes sent to him by post. Many of these form part of the collection bequeathed to the University of Malta, evidencing his approach towards conducting research. Researcher 3 acknowledged that *"he was one of the earliest researchers in Malta that methodologically knew what he was doing."*

His students had immense respect for him and they enjoyed his lectures and his wealth of knowledge, his wit and his sense of humour. He would encourage them to ask questions and instilled in them an attitude to 'never say never' in history research.

Researcher 1 : "I found him a very intelligent man and also with a good sense of humour"

Researcher 2: "I have fond memories of his lectures […] after my graduation... he always stopped for a chat"

His students also reflected upon his willingness to assist budding researchers

Researcher 2 : "I told him about my research and he even said something, he said, suggested eh, eh, a reference I should look at […] A few weeks later a colleague of mine came up and said listen, Wettinger asked me to tell you that you should consult this author"

Researcher 3 : "We went to his house many times both in Mellieha and his house when he moved to St.Julians. He used to lend us books on a personal basis... something that you wouldn't consider today"

Researcher 4 : "Just being in the presence of someone like that, who had so many stories to tell, that in itself is such an important learning experience"

On the other hand Prof. Wettinger was very often described as a loner amongst his peers, who was jealous and secretive about his research. So much so that Fr. Michael Fsadni in his book 'Esperjenzi ta' kittieb' describes the moment when he and Prof. Wettinger discovered the Cantilena and how they would ask the archivist for different volumes in order to be able to keep

the discovery secret in the initial stages and until they could have more information in its regard (Fsadni, 1994).

Godfrey Wettinger's major publication is the transcription of the University (Univ.) 11. These are manuscripts held at the National library which were published under the title of Acta Juratorum et Consilii Civitatis et Insulae Maltae. These are made up of 330 sessions of the town council held between 1450 and 1499. Other publications include: The Jews of Malta in the late middle ages, Slavery in the Maltese Islands, Placenames of the Maltese Islands. He thought himself classical Arabic and Latin (Camilleri, 2015). He was also self-taught in paleography in order to help himself decipher manuscripts, which is evidenced in material and notes in his collection.

Godfrey Wettinger was famous for challenging whole establishments and schools of thought, but he didn't do this out of spite or for the sake of it, or to challenge rival researchers and historians. He did this through research and he would substantiate his findings through his own research and discoveries. A case in point was the theory set by a long time rival researcher, regarding the depopulation of the Maltese Islands and whether or not there was an unbroken continuity of Christianity in Gozo during and following the Arab conquest of the Maltese Islands. According to Wettinger there is nothing to indicate the continuity of Christianity from the late 9th century to the early 11th century on the Maltese islands, in fact, he was of the opinion that Christianity is likely to have died out during the Arab occupation of the Islands and the local Maltese integrated with the Arabs and became Muslims (Wettinger, 1986). This challenged Gian Francesco Abela's idea that Maltese Christianity can be traced back to the arrival of St Paul in an uninterrupted manner. Furthermore, in a paper presented on the 7th December 2010 at the Auberge de Castille entitled "Malta in the high middle ages" Prof. Wettinger further reinforced these theories as a result of further research and more resources, claiming not only that Christianity had ceased to be practiced

on the Islands but also that the Islands were uninhabited for over a century. The Maltese Islands were visited by ships to gather honey and to hunt wild donkeys, goats and sheep. Fisherman fished in the nearby coves for the 'Tasty fish of its waters' (Wettinger, 2011). Stanley Fiorini takes Wettinger to task in his publication "Tristia ex Melitogaudo," disagreeing with Wettinger's depopulation theory and with the discontinuity of Christianity of the Maltese Islands during the Arab rule, at least on Gozo (Fiorini, 2010).

Researcher 1: "There was an occasion at the Auberge de Castille where eh ... who was speaking? ... I think it was ah yes Godfrey speaking and eh Stanley was there and at the end as we were going out of the castille, Stanley went up to him with open arms, sort of... let's, let's and Godfrey shushed him off!"

 Oxford Scholar Jeremy Johns gave a lecture in the Aula Magna at the Old University in Valletta at the invitation of the Archaeological Society of Malta on 20th May 2015, just two days before Godfrey Wettinger passed away, where he said that Wettinger had been right in his assumptions and "wholly vindicated" through his findings. During the lecture Prof. Johns said that Prof. Wettinger was already aware of the contents and conclusions of the lecture as he had visited him in hospital the day before the lecture where both scholars discussed at length the passions that drove them to research.

Researcher 3 : "One thing that impressed me in Godfrey is that we saw him about five to six hours before he died and he was all smiles because he had just been informed, there was the issue with Johns, he had just confirmed to him and as soon as he saw us he was saying my student,my student......"

Whole theses can be dedicated to myths debunked and discoveries made by Godfrey Wettinger and it is not the purpose of this study to go into detail about these instances. However the afore mentioned episodes were chosen for two reasons. The first being the discovery of the 'Cantilena', which put Prof. Wettinger in the limelight and is still discussed today vis-a-vis who really discovered it? Was it Wettinger or Fsadni? Whoever it was, they both took that secret to the grave. The second episode has been cited as proof of a theory that Wettinger had researched and was challenged about, but in the last hours before he died, he was proved right by Jeremy Johns and so died a happy man. These instances and episodes in Godfrey Wettinger's life kept cropping up during interviews held with researchers. The anectodes recounted above are all first hand accounts recounted by researchers during the respective interviews.

4.5.3 The Collection – Scope and Content

Reasearcher 1 : "There are research files still unpublished there which should be invaluable to future historians"

Researcher 1 : "He knew that if he did nothing about it ... it could end up on the auction room floor and be dispersed"

Researcher 1 : "He wanted this great instrument, research instrument and ofcourse his private library to remain there as a whole and be of aid to future historians"

Assessing collections is an essential part of any collection development policy in academic libraries. Special Collections within these institutions need to serve the University community such as students, faculty members and professors. They also serve other bodies beyond the campus like researchers and other scholarly comunities through their collections. When a donation or bequest

arrives at the library archivists or special collections librarians need to evaluate and describe the collection before this is made available to researchers. They need to ask how this collection came to be, that is, what has led to its creation. A collection give us a glimpse of the life behind whoever accumulated this collection. As the archivist gets to know the collection he or she also gets to know its creator in a personal way, and to create his life through his collection. The description of the collection which is an integral part of an archivist's job will be the first contact a researcher will have with the collection. The Godfrey Wettinger bequest consists of material created and collected by Godfrey Wettinger in the course of his personal and professional life. Godfrey Wettinger bequeathed his collection in its entirety to the Archives and Special Collections department at the University of Malta library. He passed away on the 22nd May 2015 and the news of his demise spread like wildfire at the library, with management making immediate arrangements for the transfer of his collection. It was transferred from his home to the library in October 2015. Four members of staff from the library were involved in the packing and transfer of the collection, one of which is the author of this study.

4.5.4 Date(s) of material found in collection : CA [1400 – 2015]

The bequest consists of Wettinger's personal library, which totals over 7,000 titles with subjects including sociology, literature, economics, demography of nations, religion, linguistics and history, these can be sub divided into muslim history, medieval islam, medieval history, philosophy of history, European history and history of the Middle East. Maltese, Arab and Latin linguistics also form part of his library. The collection of books consists of journals, multi volume works, dictionaries and monographs. One also finds a very rich collection of Melitensia publications. The books in the collection are marked in pencil on the inside as G.W.C. and given a number. G.W.C. stands for, 'Godfrey Wettinger Collection'. In the collection there are 60

pamphlet boxes all clearly marked on the outside. These pamphlet boxes were also numbered by the donor. Some of these pamphlet boxes also have a list of items that are to be found inside the respective pamphlet box. Pamphlet boxes with list of items inside total 40 with an average total of 3,000 items. Three filing cabinets which hold pocket files. Two of the cabinets hold 400 pocket files between them as these are organised in an alphabetical order according to subject, with a total of approximateley 6,500 items. Items include personal research notes, press cuttings and correspondence with individuals or organisations with whom he had ongoing contact. Wettinger kept items together in folders with the respective subject as written on the outside of the folder. Each pocket file may contain from one item which can be either one letter, one folio with a note or a newspaper cutting, to as much as 36 items in one folder depending on the subject. The pocket files are marked and numbered, eg. G.W.C P.F. 100. The third filing cabinet holds four drawers with pocket files marked G.W.C. A.S.P. which stands for Archivio di stato di Palermo. In this filing cabinet there are a total of 162 pocket files. Within these pocket files one finds photocopies of manuscripts from volumes held at the Archivio di Stato di Palermo. There is also Correspondence between Godfrey Wettinger and the administation of the archives together with his working notes. There are approximateley 7,000 items in these pocket files.There are also 30 index drawers filled with card indexes. These cards and papers are full of references which relate to his publications. The Godfrey Wettinger bequest consists also of a number of maps in various sizes of locations in Malta and the Mediterranean region, videos, cassettes and his personal music collection comprising of Long playing albums (LPs) and singles. There is also a collection of local newspapers from the early 20th century, in Italian, English and Maltese. As happens in many collections there are quite a few miscellaneous items or, as the author of this study prefers to call, loose items such as rough notes and loose papers, loose diaries with rough entries, stamps (held in

boxes), and arch lever files with documentation pertaining to Wettinger's years in Mellieha both as a child and as an adult. Also in the collection one finds material relating to Wettinger's tenure as head of the history department and also as Dean of the faculty of Arts at the University of Malta. Ephemera also forms part of this collection some of which can also be found as book marks marking pages in the books. The ephemara in the collection includes postcards, invitations, airline, train and bus tickets and other items that he might have kept as momentos or souveniers of his travels and/or events he might have attended.

This is a rich and eclectic collection. Through this collection, Godfrey Wettinger comes across as a very meticulous and organised person it also emerges that at some point in his life he was organising and indexing this collection and so there must also be an index to this collection. If not for all of the collection, then for most of it as evidenced in the numbering of most of the material. If such an index to the collection exists it was not made available to the researcher of this work.

4.5.5 The Collection – Its Research Potential

Professor Dominic Fenech, Dean of the Faculty of Arts, described Godfrey Wettinger as the first true medieval historian of the Maltese Islands, who set standards for future historians and was held in high regard by scholars and historians from around the world (Dalli, 2015). His collection is testimony to this. Prof. Wettinger used archives as a primary base for his reseach. The genius in Wettinger lies in the fact that he expanded the horizon of historical research through a careful analytical approach to medieval documentation in this proccess exercising his philological knowledge and eventually cross-checking his sources with different documentation to double check reliability. His passion for Maltese history is evident in the documentation which he accumulated throughout his lifetime. The Godfrey Wettinger bequest is as rich as his publications.

It is packed with his notes and annotations on his research and his sources. Often these sources would lead to further sources for research. Any researcher worth his salt would want to research or at least look through his collection. When Jeremy Johns visited Prof. Wettinger in hospital on the 20th May, prior to his lecture, he said that during the visit in hospital he had spoken with Wettinger about the research he had conducted with regard to the 'Place-names' in Malta and that Wettinger had told him how there is room for further research in this field. In this statement it seems as if Wettinger was imploring someone to continue his work in this regard. Anyone interested in his research methodology and how he conducted or went about collecting information for his research will not be disappointed. The same thing can be said about anyone who is interested in medieval history in Malta and the historical demography of the Maltese Islands. While researching this case study there was one question that came to mind: Has the passing of Godfrey Wettinger created a lacuna in the field of early to late medieval research? There is room for plenty of research papers in this collection waiting to be discovered. Godfrey Wettinger has bequeathed to future researchers a collossal wealth of historical research through his books, some of which are filled with annotations, his correspondence and notes and let us not forget photocopies of whole volumes from different archives.

Researchers gave the following answers when asked if they would be interested in researching Wettinger's collection :

Researcher 4 : "The subject of slavery, so that would be one area in his collection that might be of interest to me"

Researcher 3 : " Methodologically and historiographically especially historiographically and this is where I am interested..." "Absolutley his method"

Researcher 2 : "I would love to - just to browse even if I don't need anything from it, just to have a look"

4.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, the author had the opportunity to see both sides of special collections: that of the researcher whose main aim is to get access to material to be able to conduct his research and, on the other hand, the special collections personnel who are meant to give the access to material to researchers but are at times unable to do so due to legal and ethical restraints and also due to back logs and lack of resources, among other issues.

This chapter also gives an idea of what a collection/holding or bequest may consist of and the processes a collection from donor to archive. It also gives a humane look at Godfery Wettinger as a person and researcher and how others percieved him - be it his peers, as in scholars and researchers, and also his friends and collegaues. In the next chapter the author will recommend best practices that might be implemented so as to attract researchers who in turn will publish their work. This will enhance and add value both to the academic library and also the academic community.

Chapter Five

Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Introduction

The main objective of this research study was to determine the value of special collections in academic reseach institutions and how these add value to their respective parent institution. This chapter will summarize the findings of the study to determine how value is perceived in academic institutions and also by the research community. This chapter also presents recommendations for the way forward with regard to special collections in research institutions within the Maltese context, with special emphasis on how the special collections department at the University of Malta can enhance its visibility and services so as to add value to the library and to the University of Malta as its parent institution.

5.2 The value of special collections – The users' perspective

The interviews with researchers as part of this study were used to determine what the end user (the researcher/scholar) expects from a special collections department. The interviews also served to assess researchers' perceptions of special collections and how they engage with them, in order to identify the elements which add value to a collection. It transpired from interviews held with researchers that value for researchers is time. Time well spent conducting research, and time spent in travel. As part of their portfolio, academics are expected to carry out research and turn this research into journal articles or books. Apart from having material available online in the form of full text documents, which would help them work from the comfort of their homes or offices,

researchers would also prefer to be able to access online indexes and catalogues of collections as this will save them time in locating appropriate material.

Researchers also expect a certain amount of reliability from their institution. Reliability, for the researcher, means convenient, consistent opening hours, with competent personnel available who are able to help and guide the user. This point is especially true for the novice researcher rather than the seasoned researcher, who might initially feel apprehensive at the thought of conducting research in an archive. Reliability for the researcher also means clear policies. All the researchers interviewed unanimously agreed that they prefer to make their own digital copies than have to complete paper work for the research institution make copies for them, as this can delay their work especially when they are bound by deadlines. This bring us back to time and how valuable this is to the researcher. In other words, the researcher expects the special collections librarians or archivists to be efficient when giving their services in the reading room.

When a researcher conducts research within the special collections department and goes on to publish his research, through citing the library's material, he is adding value to the library and helping to put the library and the parent institution on the map by flagging material which may attract future researchers to the department.

5.3 The value of special collections – The librarians' perspective

The interviews held with special collections librarians helped to determine the difficulties that they encounter in the course of their work and how they overcome them. Both staff members interviewed indicated their perceptions of value within their department, and what initiatives they undertake to add value to their collections. It emerged both from interviews held and also from the literature reviewed that these departments work with limited budgets and resources. Both

institutions involved in this research study work with limited human resources; the University of Malta Library in particular works with only 3 members of staff in the special collections department . Having said that, at the University of Sussex, who also claim limited human resources, interns are engaged through sponsorships. These interns specialize in a particular field and are engaged to work on a particular project which would have been identified beforehand. One example at the University of Sussex is a German-speaking intern with Jewish ancestors who was engaged to work on the German/Jewish collection.

Another interesting point which came out of these interviews was the fact that special collections professionals have to work with numbers. Statistics are crucial on many accounts. Librarians need to justify resources to their stakeholders. They are obliged to prepare reports and business plans whereby they need to explain how they are using the resources that are made available to them, and how they plan to move forward. Librarians and archivists have to aknowledge that the time has come for them to know what is happening with the material which they put online. Through online material they are reaching new audiences beyond their respective campuses and this adds value to their collections.

Another important factor regarding the value special collections bring to their parent institution is the way staff in special collections interact with their patrons, not just in the reading room but also through outreach activities. Outreach is the most important activity for any librarian but special collections librarians have a bigger challenge due to the fact that this section is percieved by some persons as an out of bounds section. Having outreach programms specifically designed for students and novice researchers will not only strengthen the use of the collections and increase citations, but will also ensure long term use of services as these people will become tomorrow's researchers and scholars.

5.4 The way forward for special collections at the University of Malta

Rebrand - Rename – Relocate

Would the author of this study be bold if she were to suggest that special collections at the library of the University of Malta needs rebranding? It is suggested that this section in the library is totally restructured. This section has a reputation, evident through interviews with researchers who use it as their primary data collection source, for being closed most of the time and necessitating that users look for someone able to open for and accompany them, and then the reseacher feels uncomfortable that people have to leave other tasks to open the section for them . At no point should a researcher be made to feel uncomfortable. One would not dream of going to the library reference department and finding that it is closed and then having to look for someone to open the section for them, so why should special collections be different? There should be clearly marked opening hours and an open door policy adopted with clear spaces for researchers to carry out their research.

It is also suggested that special collections embark on an extensive outreach programm. Outreach needs to start at faculty level, whereby academics are encouraged to work closely with staff to prepare sessions for undergraduate and post graduate students, who in turn are given assignments to be carried out in the archive where students directly handle material. This will help de-mystify this part of the library for them, and possibly increase the number of patrons in the reading room. It would also benefit users and librarians alike if listings of content of collections are put online, which would increase visibility for the library. It would also serve to market collections. Researchers claimed that they don't know the kind of material which is held in special collections.

Clear copying policies, should ideally be on the University website so as to avoid embarrasing episodes in the reading room.

With rebranding comes renaming; at the University of Sussex the special collections department is known as 'The Keep'. At the library at the University of Malta one finds the 'Melitensia Special Collections' department, and what over the course of this study was referred to as special collections is known as the 'Archives and Rare Books' section. In an inreach initiative, the library management can involve all members of the library staff to come up with a name for this section, in an attempt to foster a sense of ownership of this department.

Relocation is a huge undertaking but necessary as this archive is very much alive and growing on a daily basis. Bigger premises where all collections can be kept in one place would be an ideal solution. It is suggested that this section relocates to a more central site, possibly closer to other research institutions. This way, in addition to University of Malta researchers, this section can also serve the wider research community outside the campus walls, who would be able to discover the rich collections within this section which are still waiting to be discovered.

5.5 Recommendations for further research

The study of Special Collections and their impact is still in its infancy, locally. Further studies should include other institutions who also benefit from donations and bequests as part of their collection development, such as the National Archives and the National Library and identify lacunae in collection development and digitization impact in the hope that eventually national standards could be developed and then be able to measure the value of these collections.

5.6 Conclusion

> "The inability of institutions to quantify their success, let alone describe them qualitatively, stems from a lack of standardized metrics for measuring special collections usage and or even commonly agreed upon values."
>
> (Dupont and Yakel, 2013)

This research study sought to answer several questions which relate to this study,

- What is the value of special collections?

- How do we measure their value?

- How do these collections add value to the library and to the parent institution?

Over the course of the six interviews it emerged that the concept of value varies between end users and those providing the service. From the literature reviewed it has emerged that there is still much work to be done with regard to special collections before one can measure their value, particularly in terms of quantitative value. There needs to be a move from collection-centric to a user-centric approach and standardized metrics need to be developed before the real value of special collections and their impact can be measured (Dupont and Yakel, 2013).

This research study has identified an under-studied area where documentary heritage is concerned, that of collections bequeathed or donated by personalities who have contributed scholarship and research to society who choose to leave their collections in the custody of research institutions to be used for further research. These scholars would have accumulated the material in the course of their lifetime, with much of it possibly still untapped at the time of their demise. The Godfrey Wettinger collection is a clear example of a collection which researchers would like to access and use as the basis for scholarly work. This would generate interest in other, possibly younger,

researchers and result in a net increase of visitors. If all collections were properly publicised and knowledgeable personnel available to direct researchers to possible collections of interest, this would be of benefit to both the researchers on a personal basis, as well as to the institution adopting this approach.

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Appendix A

Recruitment Letter and Consent Form

Dear Sir/Madam

My name is Antida Mizzi and I am currently reading for a Master's degree in Documentary Heritage and Melitensia Studies at the University of Malta. I am now in the phase of writing my dissertation, entitled, 'The value of special collections in academic research libraries: A case study of the Godfrey Wettinger bequest.' The aim of this study is to explore the niche that form Special Collections, within academic research libraries and the value that they add to their respective institution. The concept of value especially in the library environment is still under-explored. This study will explore how bequests and donations of professorial papers enhance and add value to 'Special Collections' in academic research libraries, with the final aim of determining how the value of special collections is measured.

As part of this research project I would greatly appreciate it if you would spare 45 minutes to 1 hour for an interview with me. This interview will be recorded. I am attaching the consent form which will need to be signed.

Thank you in advance

Kind Regards

Antida Mizzi

Consent for Participation in Interview Research

University of Malta, Faculty of Media and Knowledge Sciences

Library Information and Archive Sciences

I volunteer to participate in the research project being conducted by Ms. Antida Mizzi as part of her dissertation. The aim of the dissertation is to explore the niche that forms Special Collections in academic research libraries and how these collections add value to their respective institutions.

My participation is voluntary.

I understand that the interview will last between 45 minutes and 1 hour. Notes will be taken during the interview, and that the interview will be recorded.

I can withdraw from the interview at any time should I feel uncomfortable in any way, I have a right to decline to any question or to end the interview, and request that my data be removed from the study.

I understand that this research study has been reviewed and approved by the Faculty Research Ethics Committee.

I have read and understand the explanation provided to me. I have had all my questions answered to my satisfaction, and I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

I have been given a copy of this consent form.

_____   _____

Participant Signature   Date

_____   _____

Participant Name   Researcher

Appendix B

Interview Guide – Special Collections Librarians

How long have you been working within the University Special Collections department?

How many people work in Special Collections?

Can you give a brief description of the department and kind of material it holds?

Can you quantify the collections? (For example: the amount of collections/donations/bequests, linear meters of shelving.)

Do patrons or researchers come forward with donations of their private collections or do you (as an institution) seek to buy or entice potential researchers to donate their respective collections to the university library?

With regard to donations and bequests do you have acquisitions policies in place? For example do you appraise a collection before accepting it or do you accept a collection as a whole and then weed during the sorting of material?

Can you describe the process and policies surrounding acquisitions?

How about embargos? Do you have any embargoed material? And if so, what policies are in palce so as to avoid extended time of unavaileble material?

When a patron donates a collection, does the owner ship of the collection change automatically to the university?

Do you have a policy that fits all or do you prepare donor policies according to a particular donations or bequest?

How about digitization of material? On what criteria do you digitize material? For preservation purposes or for accessabilty purposes?

Can you estimate in % how much of the holdings is visible online?

How much of the holdings can you describe as "Hidden collections"? *(hidden collection are un processed or under processed collection)*

Are retrieval tools available online? Or are they in an analog format?

Do you have a way of finding out how many patrons use online facilities?

Do you keep records /statistics of patrons who actually visit your reading room?

On what level do you keep such statistics? E.g. item level statistics or at collection level?

Do you think researchers prefer to research primary sources in an analogue format or do they prefer a digital format? Do you think that there has been a shift towards digital research?

Are patrons obliged to provide a copy of any work in which research was carried out in your archive/special collections?

Can you describe briefly the type of outreach that is used in your department? How do you advertise new collections?

Do patrons just show up in the reading room or do they need to make an appointment to consult the material and also to have the material prepared for their use?

Appendix C

Interview Guide – Special Collections Researchers

Do you research to publish or do you research out of a passion and curiosity?

How many times (per week) do you visit a research institiution? (library/archive) – do you prefer to use digital primary sources or analogue?

What do you look for most when you use the services of a research institiution?

Have you ever had a situation where you needed to consult material but the material was not available?

What did you do in that case?

Do you prefer to find material readily available online or would you rather visit an archive to conduct research onsite? Why?

Do you feel that there has been a change in methodology in history research? If yes, what is the change?

What search strategy do you use to find out about material that is available for research? (analogue/digital)

How do historians/lecturers introduce their students to research collections and primary sources?

Have you ever met Prof. Godfrey Wettinger in person? Under what circumstances?

Do you think you would want to research his collection of manuscripts and books which he has bequeathed to the University of Malta library? (Can you indicate what would be of greatest interest to you?)

Have you ever used the services of the University of Malta library archives and special collections department?

How would you like this section, which forms part of an academic research facility to further promote material within its holdings?

Appendix D

Sample Transcript – Special Collections Librarian

abreviations, lots of em initials and so they are basically shut, like if you are looking for Virinia Woolf you type in Virginia you're not gonna find something that calls her V.W. so we are fightingagainst that sort of thing and alot of this was catalogued ages ago. When we got our system we just transferred it. So in terms of percentage ….	Standardization of terms
Antida: No No I don't want percentage of that … but	Hidden collections Accessability
Karen: No No but they exist… yes they exist in our collections	
Antida: You do have collections that are not accessable you mean?	
Karen: We have collections that are not accessable because they are not catalogued yet and we have some which can be more accessable wre basically are just up there. They might have a collection decription and then it says, box 1, box 2 that kind of thing.	
Antida: Are retrieval tools available online or in an analogue format?	Visibility Finding aids
Karen: So I would say 98% of it is online.	
Antida: Do you have a way of finding out how many patrons use online facilities?	
Karen: We can use google analitics to see how many website hits we have, but I don't think I can tell how many are looking at our catalogue pages. I think I can see what their search terms are but I haven't done it.	Metrics, user visits
Antida: So if you want you can do it.	
Karen: I think I can do something around that. Yeah Yeah.	
Antida: Do you keep records/ statistics of patrons who actually visit your reading room?	

Karen: Yeah, Yeah.

Appendix E

Sample Transcript – Special Collections Researcher

Antida: Do you research to publish or do you research out of passion or curiosity? **Researcher 4**: Can I say both? Ehe… So obviously I research to publish because after all I am a fulltime academic and an important part of my job description is to publish but being a historian and I have always been interested in the subject so I do also research out of passion, and and the two really come together quiet seamlessly for me. **Antida:** How many times per week do you visit a research institution, that is a library or archive? Researcher 4: I try at least once a week. I try to spend half a day every week. Whether it's an archive or a library. Sometimes it is one and sometimes it's the other. Antida: Do you prefer to use the digital primary sources or do you prefer using the ones in an analogue form? **Researcher 4**: Em I prefer physical documents if I can but I do find the often digital ones are practical either because I might not have the time to go during the opening hours or also because online if the photos are of good quality you know you can enlarge and zoom in and that allows for certain facilities which you can't have with the physical. But my first preference would be the physical when possible. **Antida**: What do you look for most when you use the services of a research institution? **Researcher 4**: Em well the convenience of opening hours is very important not just for me as a researcher but also who supervises the work of students doing dissertations. Not so much for undergrad students but when they start moving into MA's and so on and they might have a job and the fact that institutions locally are quiet restricted in their opening hours there is very little idea of the evening an open evening or so on. That becomes a challenge and that's when it would be nice if there was more material online in digital form for these individuals. The possibility of taking photos if ideally myself of material that would interest me. I don't mind having to pay a fee but having the facility of doing that especially of doing it myself rather than writing down and having someone else doing it.	Multiplicity of purpose Required to research in order to publish Need for passion and creativity Preference for physical documents Convenience of online access Opening hours Making own digital images

That is something that I always look out for, although of course I understand that certain material needs to be handled by professionals but often it can be done by the individual. Em.. AM: So for you this bureaucracy of paperwork having to send emails and approvals it is a hindrance. EB: It is hux because it is all time that could be used more fruitfully and enjoyably. Em… another thing that I would look out for in an institution that I visit is that if I want to publish material, and say maybe a photo of a document or an actual image its nice if that institution has a clear policy and cooperates quickly when you when I make that request… AM: It is important especially if you have deadlines EB: Ezatt, exactly, so those are the three things that I think that are important… AM: Would you say if I may also suggest also, that the person in charge is knowledgeable with the collections	