

MELITENSIA

Fall 2014

A Newsletter of The Malta Study Center



HILL MUSEUM & MANUSCRIPT LIBRARY



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

Dear Readers,

This year marks several new beginnings for The Malta Study Center and the Hill Museum & Manuscript Library. We are most excited about our newly renovated facilities at HMML, which will enable the Center to continue its important mission to preserve the cultural record of Malta and of the Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of Saint John of Jerusalem of Rhodes and of Malta. These new beginnings perpetuate the vision of The Malta Study Center's founder, Joseph S. Micallef, to create a research center devoted to the preservation and study of Maltese and the Order of Malta's cultural heritage.

In this issue you will read about The Malta Study Center's new partnerships and collaborations with national and international organizations, including a new project at the National Archives of Malta. We were also excited to receive several new donations and acquisitions to the Center that bolster the impressive collection of Melitensia in the Center's Rare Book Collection at HMML. The Center will continue to expand its rare book collection to support the study of microfilmed and digitized materials from Malta.

Each year The Malta Study Center engages in new research and preservation due to the continuing support of individuals and foundations. We are especially grateful for the generous support of Joseph S. Micallef, the Friends of The Malta Study Center, the Cherbec Advancement Fund, and the United States Associations of the Order of Malta for their ongoing generosity and support of The Malta Study Center. We look forward to sharing this success over the next several years.

Sincerely,

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



Above: Dr. Gullo, with Charles Farrugia, National Archivist of Malta (right), and Noel D'Anastas, archivist at the National Archives (left), examine the volumes containing the records of the *Epoca Gallica* Fond.

On the cover: "Grand Master Nicolas Cotoner" from *Volume che contiene li Statuti della Sacra Religione Gerosolimitana*. Borgo Novo: Per Bartolomeo Cotta, 1676.

MELITENSIA

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Filming the Epoca Gallica Fond at the National Archives of Malta

The Malta Study Center signed an agreement with the National Archives of Malta in September to digitize the law court records for the French period, the *Epoca Gallica* Fond, covering the years between 1798-1800. This important collection covers the legal history of Malta during the years when the French abolished the Order of Malta's civil and criminal justice system and the Office of the Inquisition and replaced it with a secular court system based on the French Republic.

The records to be digitized include three meters of law court cases with original pagination and bindings, which were added during the 19th century. This collection will be of great interest to international scholars and historians of that era.

National Archivist, Charles Farrugia stated, "This collaborative project with HMML not only safeguards the preservation of the records, but also helps the archives strengthen their user services."

The *Epoca Gallica* Fond details the history of the imposition of French legal customs and laws upon Malta during their occupation of the island.

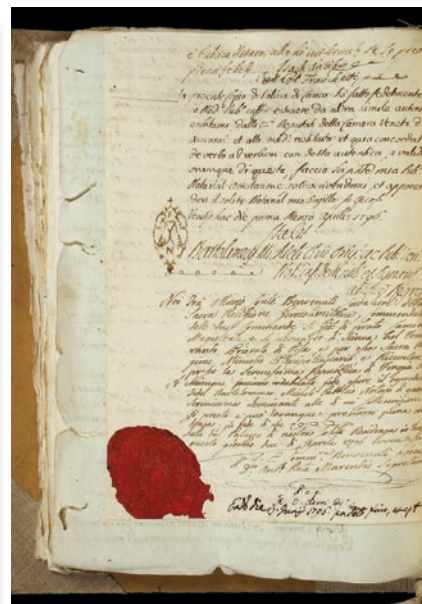
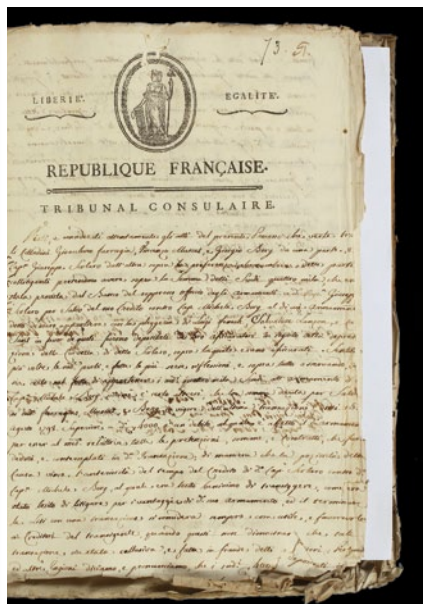
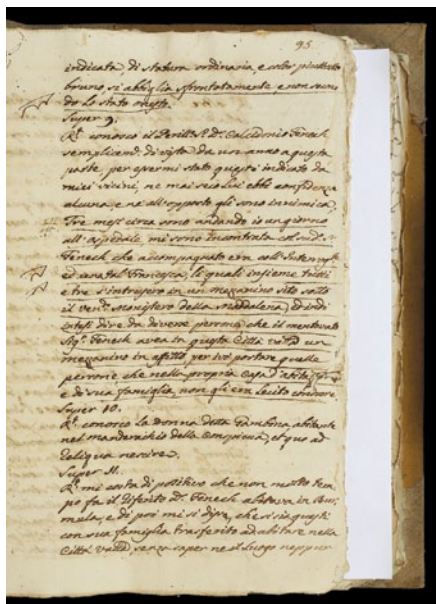
According to the Fond's description: "The Justices of the Peace had a civil and a criminal jurisdiction. They could decide lawsuits on personal rights and on movable property with the right of appeal before the Civil Court where

the value in litigation exceeded 100 francs.

The Justices of the Peace could also give judgment, without any right of appeal, on questions involving the wages of employees, payment of work done, professional fees, and the maintenance suits where the amount did not exceed 100 francs. They were empowered to decree applications regarding appointment of tutors, curators, permission for minors to marry, emancipation of minors, and interdiction of persons. In their criminal jurisdiction they could issue warrants of arrest against anyone suspected of having committed a crime in order to interrogate him before remanding him to the Criminal Court. The judges of the Civil Court exercised jurisdiction in civil matters in first and second instance. Three judges had to preside concurrently in each case."

This agreement initiates the second digitizing studio HMML has established at the National Archives of Malta. The first project, the *Magna Curia Castellania* Fond, began in 2007, and thus far has digitally preserved 1,500 volumes of law court records dating back to the time of the Knights of Malta.

Left. National Archives of Malta, *Epoca Gallica* Fond, vol. 3, fol. 101r. Center. National Archives of Malta, *Epoca Gallica* Fond, vol. 1, fol. 79r. Right. National Archives of Malta, *Epoca Gallica* Fond, vol. 1, fol. 127v.



Guest Curator: Carolyn Purnell Interview

The Malta Study Center asked Dr. Carolyn Purnell (right), Jack Miller Center Postdoctoral Fellow at the Illinois Institute of Technology, to discuss one of The Malta Study Center's new acquisitions, which supports the Center's new project to digitize the *Epoca Gallica* Fond in the National Archives of Malta. Dr. Purnell illustrates the importance of scandalous literature defaming the Order of Malta on the eve of the confiscation of the Order's properties in France and the subsequent invasion of the island in 1798.



MSC: Thank you Dr. Purnell for taking the time to discuss our new acquisition, M. Carasi's "L'Ordre de Malthe dévoilé ou voyage de Malthe," which supports our new digitization project in Malta. What can you tell us about this infamous tract of scandalous literature from the late 18th century?

CP: We should begin with the work's full title, which in English reads *The Order of Malta Revealed, or Voyage to Malta, with historical and philosophical observations and critiques of the current state of the Knights of Malta and their habits; on the nature, the products of the island, religion, and the manners of its inhabitants*. This two-volume text was published in Lyon in 1790. Interestingly, the work is not that of a single writer, but reflects a collaborative effort despite the naming "Carasi" as author. As Alain Blondy argued "Carasi" was a pseudonym used, not by a single author, but a group of authors, some of whom were likely members of the Order of Malta.

The book is a fictional autobiography that levels a scathing critique against the Order. It frequently refers to real people, a tactic that makes its more outrageous allegations all the more credible. The first volume focuses on the adventures of Carasi, a young man from "an upstanding but poor family," while the second focuses on the manners of the Knights and Maltese inhabitants. Carasi's observations often lapse into scandalous accounts and attacks on the religious practices of both the Knights and the Maltese people.

In order to understand some of the context of the work, it is necessary to know that, Lyon was not only a major printing center—the first print shop was set up in Lyon

in 1472, and it quickly became one of the most important publishing centers in Europe—but it was also a booming commercial center, and *The Order of Malta Revealed* emphasizes a number of themes that would have been important to businessmen and the rapidly growing, upwardly mobile bourgeoisie.

MSC: It seems surprising that members of the Order would have written against their own institution.

CP: It may seem surprising, but in this period criticisms of the Order—including ones leveled from the inside—were not infrequent. The Order's *Raison d'être*—fighting the Turks—had become somewhat obsolete, and the government, knights, and Maltese inhabitants alike were re-evaluating the Order's position in the modern world. Thomas Freller has pointed out that by the 18th century the knight had become little more than a cultured aristocrat who wanted to be part of international society. For this reason, living according to the austerity of the medieval statutes had long-since disappeared. Even the knights saw reform as necessary.

MSC: Was such "littérature scandaleuse" unique to the Order of Malta, or were other religious institutions and the monarchy attacked in the same way? They seem quite popular.

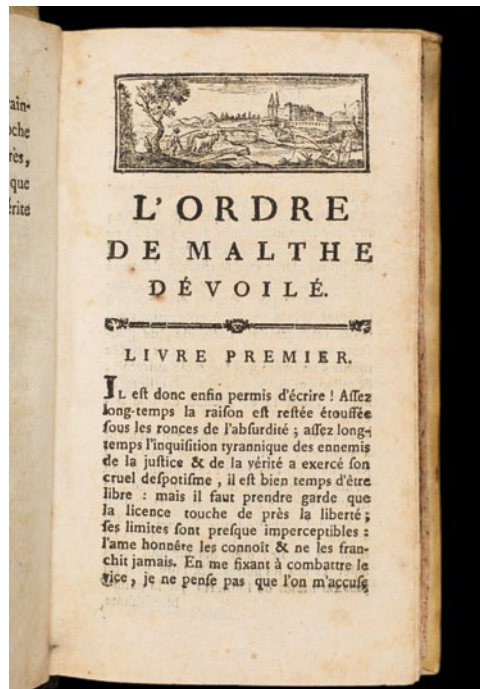
CP: *Littérature scandaleuse* was, in fact, quite popular in the 18th century. Darnton, in his *Forbidden Bestsellers of Prerevolutionary France*, includes a host of examples of philosophical pornography, slanderous political accounts, and anticlerical literature, which he argues were central to the destabilization of the monarchy in the 18th century. The mass media helped form widespread public opinion that was hostile to figures of political and religious authority, and each scandalous text put another crack in the armor of the aristocracy. In France, people would pay top-dollar for copies that had been smuggled from foreign lands. Quite often these texts would be smuggled from Switzerland over mountain trails by men willing to risk a life sentence in prison. These works were also highly popular in other nations. As William Zammit's excellent work has shown, the Knights themselves often brought copies of these books into Malta, contributing to the spread of the literature in Malta even under the eye of the Roman Inquisition.

MSC: What effect did Carasi's work and other similar "littérature scandaleuse" have on the perception of the Order at this time?

CP: After 1750 there was a noted process of secularization in France, and Roger Chartier has noted a weakening in the norms of Catholic morality in the 18th century. These shifts in sociability were accompanied by shifts in literary production, and *littérature scandaleuse* brought these changes to the forefront and also added fuel to the fire. Anti-clericalism was made more acceptable through these works, becoming a form of entertainment, and readers became more familiar with prevalent anti-religious themes. The Order would have been affected by one of the most popular themes of the period: the idea that chastity was an abomination. In the 18th century, there was a prevalent myth that the population was steadily declining, and subjects had every duty to contribute to its flourishing. Monks, Knights of the Order, and libertines all went against this duty by refusing to procreate. Not only were they “less than men” who became degenerate by their improperly channeled lusts; they also withheld their abilities from the good of society at large. It is too simple to say that such works “caused” the revolution, but they certainly went hand-in-hand with new attitudes to religion, and perhaps most importantly, they helped form a sense of “public opinion,” that circulated outside the official political and cultural channels.

MSC: *Were there other works in this genre regarding the Order of Malta at this time?*

CP: This type of portrayal was actually quite typical in the 18th century. Claire-Eliane Engel has convincingly argued that the figure of the rakish Knight, living only for adventure and caring nothing for his vows, was a highly popular literary trope in the 18th century. Writers employed much of the same language about the Knights as they did about monks or court clergy, but the Knight had the added allure of the sword. In France, earlier in the century—1715—the Comte de Caylus wrote about Malta as a “Sodom and Gomorrah,” while the infamous Abbé François Prévost delighted in lampooning the



Above: M. Carasi, L'Ordre de Malthe dévoilé ou voyage de Malthe, 2 vols., Lyons: Chez Berry, 1790. Beauchemin, 1792.

Order. In 1788, the Knight de la Tramblaye, who was in Malta in 1761, wrote an anonymous text in 1788, where he revealed some of the bawdier experiences he had had on the island.

MSC: *In the end, the work ultimately formed part of the overall revolutionary environment in France.*

CP: Carasi's text is an excellent example of the types of arguments that Revolutionaries leveled against the Order. In the halls of the various assemblies and Revolutionary governments, this type of rhetoric pervaded. For instance, the minister for foreign affairs, Eymar, received the following missive in 1793: “The Order of Malta as such does not deserve anything but indifference and scorn at the hands of the Republic; it is a shameful monument, erected by religion and by the

pride of the nobles. Nevertheless, Malta is of interest to the trading notions because it is the key to the East.” It was these two conflicting sentiments—the scorn for the Order and the belief in the necessity of their stronghold in Malta—that ultimately contributed to the idea that the French should take Malta for their own, removing it from the Order's power. Additionally, when Napoleon did take the island in 1798, he was actually aided by Knights of the Order, many of whom hoped to regain their French possessions or escape the death sentence that had been leveled against emigrés. Tracts like Carasi's make it easier to understand the motivations behind those Knights of the Order who were complicit in the French conquest of Malta, and they reveal that even within the ranks of the Order there had been an undercurrent of dissatisfaction with its administration and a growing uncertainty of its position in modern commercial society.

MSC: *This has been a wonderful discussion. Thank you.*

Dr. Carolyn Purnell is a Jack Miller Center Postdoctoral Fellow at the Illinois Institute of Technology and a visiting assistant professor in the Department of Social Sciences. She received her BA from Pomona College in History and English, and her MA and PhD in History from the University of Chicago.

New Rare Book and Manuscript Acquisitions

de Valois, Charles, duke of Angoulême, and Philippe de Bethune, baron and count of Sellessur-Cher. "Collection of papers relating to the Treaty of Ulm." Manuscript on paper in French. First half of the 17th century.

Carasi, M. *L'Ordre de Malthe dévoilé ou voyage de Malthe*. 2 vols. Lyons: Chez Berry, 1790. (Detail shown below, at top right.)

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

"Arrêt notable sur une question d'aubaine," et arrêts sur la question de sçavoir si les Biens de l'Ordre de Malthe peuvent être baillés en Emphyteose du 13. Septembre 1740. & du 16. Mars 1743. Colmar: La Veuve de Jean Henry Decker, 1743.

Arrest du conseil d'etat du roy, qui ordonne qu'en payant par l'Ordre de Malthe la somme de quatre-vingt-dix mille livres, tous les biens appartenant audit Ordre demeurent deschargés de l'execution de la Declaration du 17. Novembre 1733. concernant la levée du Dixieme. Paris: Imprimerie Royale, 1734.

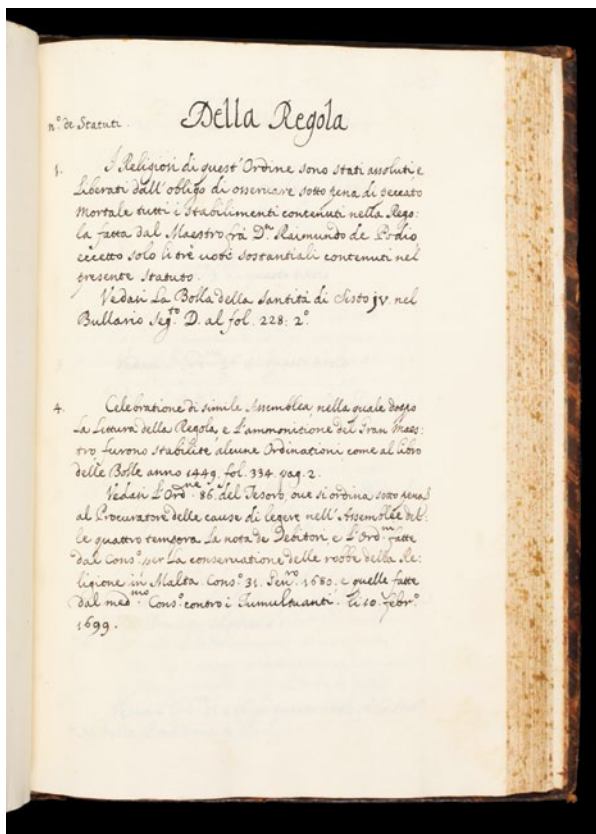
Décret de la Convention nationale qui fixe le mode d'exécution de la loi du 19 septembre dernier, concernant la disposition des biens dont jouissoit le ci-devant Ordre de Malte. Saint-Brieuc, chez J. M. Beauchemin, 1792.

Décret de la Convention nationale qui accorde pour 1793 aux ci-devant titulaires de l'ordre de Malte, la jouissance des revenus des biens qu'ils possédoient en France. A S. Brieuc, chez J. M. Beauchemin, s.d. [1793].

Décret de la Convention nationale qui rectifie une erreur dans la loi du 15 juin 1793, relative aux biens de l'Ordre de Malte. A Saint-Brieuc, chez J. M. Beauchemin, 1792.

Loi du 19 septembre 1792 – Vente des biens de l'Ordre de Malte. A Saint-Brieuc, chez J. M. Beauchemin, s.d. [1793]. (Detail shown below, at bottom right.)

"Della regola." Italy. Manuscript on paper, early 18th century. (Shown below, at left.)



News and Events from The Center

The Friends of The Malta Study Center Annual Meeting

The Friends of the Malta Study Center held their annual meeting at Saint John's University in September. During the meeting, the Chair of the Friends of The Malta Study Center, Joseph S. Micallef, KMOB, and the Friends, welcomed Fra' Thomas Mulligan to the group. Fra' Mulligan, who is a member of the Federal Association of the Order of Malta, has provided leadership in youth education and higher education in the Chicago area. His leadership on the Friends will support The Center's mission to preserve the history and written heritage of Malta and the Order of the Knights of Malta.



Above: Annual meeting with The Friends of The Malta Study Center in September at the newly renovated HMML. Front row, left to right: Robert Shafer, KM; Edmund Luzine, Jr., KM; Joseph S. Micallef, KMOB; Lucy R. Jones; Nicky B. Carpenter, DM. Back row, left to right: Robert Weyerhaeuser; Fra' Emmanuel Rousseau, KJ; Steven Kennedy, KM; Fr. Eric Hollas, OSB; Fra' Thomas Mulligan, KJ; Fr. Columba Stewart, OSB; Dr. Daniel K. Gullo.

The Malta Study Center sponsors HMML Public Lecture

Dr. Jonathan Good, Professor of History at Reinhardt University, presented his paper, "St. George and Al-Khidir: A Case of Middle Eastern Convergence," which discussed the convergence of the Christian worship of Saint George as a patron for knights and warfare with the Islamic figure of Al-Khidir, a popular Muslim "wali."

The Malta Study Center forms partnership with The Mediterranean Seminar

The Malta Study Center became a partner with the Mediterranean Seminar, an international consortium of scholars and universities dedicated to the study of the Mediterranean as a region, in August. The Mediterranean Seminar is based at the Center for Mediterranean Studies at the University of California Santa Cruz, and the department of religious studies at the University of Colorado, Boulder.

The Malta Study Center sponsors a session at the 2014 SEMA Conference in Atlanta, GA

The Center's session, "Conflict, Memory, and Loss in the Medieval Mediterranean" featured papers by Dr. Daniel K. Gullo (HMML), Dr. Philip Handyside (Stetson University), and Mr. Thomas Lecaque (University of Tennessee-Knoxville). Dr. Steven Gill (Columbus State University) chaired the session.

The Malta Study Center co-sponsors conference "The Roman Inquisition in Malta and Elsewhere"

The Malta Study Center, Heritage Malta, the University of Malta, the Metropolitan Chapter in Mdina, and the Archives of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in September, 2014, sponsored the conference on the Roman Inquisition in Valletta, Malta, where 28 leading scholars discussed the impact of the Council of Trent, the Inquisition's social and legal history, and the Archives of the Inquisition in Rome and Malta.

The Malta Study Center Supports Malteser International

In July The Malta Study Center curated the exhibit "900 Years of Faith in Action" at the first annual "Legacy of Hope" benefit for Malteser International in Southampton, NY. Additionally, The Malta Study Center offered a challenge grant, whereby Mr. Martin and Mrs. Jean Shafiroff agreed to donate \$2,000 to Malteser International and an anonymous donor agreed to donate the incunabulum, *De optimo statu* (1497), to The Malta Study Center as a gesture of the common interest in global humanitarian issues and preserving the cultural patrimony of humanity.



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Friends of The Malta Study Center

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

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Wayzata, MN

Lucy R. Jones
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