

MELITENSIA

Spring 2015

A Newsletter of the Malta Study Center





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

Dear Melitensians,

Working in the libraries of Malta provides an unparalleled opportunity to discover unknown treasures. I learned this in February when Francesca Balzan, Curator of the Palazzo Falson, and I discovered medieval manuscript fragments used as binding material in the Palazzo's collection. The serendipitous discovery of these manuscripts provides scholars with new evidence to explore a previously unknown chapter in the history of books and their transmission in Malta.

The discovery of the manuscripts at the Palazzo Falson is an important reminder that HMML's work of digitization is much more than simply photographing rare manuscripts. It offers curators and scholars an opportunity to discover previously unknown works in their collections and to make them available for future research. What Francesca and I found at the Palazzo Falson is an example of the treasures that remain hidden in Maltese libraries.



Our work at the Center is made possible through the generous support of individual donors and foundations. We thank the Gladys Kriebel Delmas Foundation and the Rahr Foundation for supporting our digitization projects in Malta, and the Breslauer Foundation and a private donor for helping us build our own collections at HMML. Finally, we express our continued thanks to Mr. Joseph S. Micallef, KMOB, the Friends of the Malta Study Center, and the United States Associations of the Order of Malta for their continued support of the Center.

Sincerely,

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

Above: Dr. Gullo with Ms. Ellen Beunderman, a volunteer at the Palazzo Falson, sorting manuscripts in the library of the Palazzo Falson Historic House Museum.

On the cover: "Noms et blasons de tous les Grandes Maitres (and) tous les Chevaliers de l'Ordre de St. Jean de Hierusalem du grand Prieure de France." Rome, Magistral Archives and Library, MS 285, f. 3r.

MELITENSIA

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Where We're Working: Palazzo Falson Historic House Museum, Malta

In early 2015, the Malta Study Center signed an agreement with the Palazzo Falson Historic House Museum in Mdina, Malta, in association with Fondazzjoni Patrimonju Malti, to digitize the Palazzo's important manuscripts.

The Palazzo Falson Historic House Museum dates back to the 13th century when it was constructed as a one-story courtyard house on the remains of an earlier building known as La Rocca. Oral tradition places part of the Palazzo in the Jewish section of Mdina, with the refectory and kitchen area possibly part of the old synagogue in Mdina. The building saw modifications in the 15th century, when a second story was added and the façade was reoriented to its current location on Villegaignon Street. The most recent resident was Captain Olof Frederick Gollcher (1889-1962), who purchased the home in 1927. Gollcher was an artist, scholar, philanthropist, as well as an ardent collector of *objets d'art* and historical items.

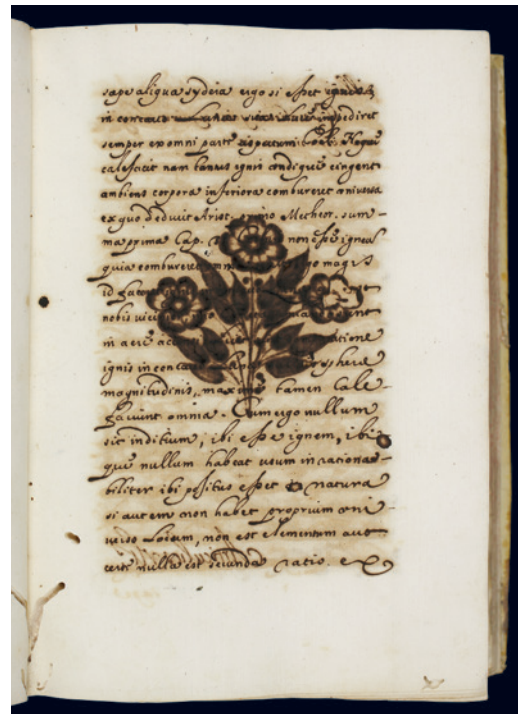
The library at the Palazzo boasts over 3,500 books, consisting mainly of historical titles and renowned literary works in various languages. The collection includes highly valuable manuscripts such as medieval manuscript fragments bound with printed books, one of which likely dates to the 12th century. The library also includes a large collection of works about Malta and the Order of Malta.

Below: "Heraldry and Genealogy of William, Lord Herbert, 3rd Earl of Penbrock," Mdina, Palazzo Falson Museum, Inv. 2614.
Right: *In secundum librum de generatione & corrupt. de elementis.* Mdina, Palazzo Falson Library, E-7 2178, f. 14r.



The Palazzo Falson Museum's collection of over 25 rare manuscripts remains on permanent exhibition. These valuable manuscripts include several large papal documents with lead seals, as well as large drawings of naval battles and sieges. Captain Gollcher's historical and artistic interests led to the important collection of archives and books now held in the museum. The Olof Frederick Gollcher Archives consist of over 60 boxes of archival material dating from the 18th through the 20th centuries. The records include rare materials acquired by Gollcher and his family, records from his service in Malta during World War II, and items from the historian Major Henry Balbi and the International Institute of Mediterranean Archaeology.

The digitization project is funded in part by a grant from the Gladys Kriebel Delmas Foundation, whose philanthropic work provides support for the humanities, arts, and research libraries. Funding from the Delmas Foundation will bring these documents to the world's scholars for the very first time in digital format.



New Acquisitions for the Malta Study Center

A grant from the Breslauer Foundation and a gift from a private donor have underwritten the acquisition of two incunabula and one late 15th-century manuscript for the Malta Study Center's collection of rare books and manuscripts at the Hill Museum & Manuscript Library. The acquisition brings the first incunable computus works and one of the earliest Catalan manuscripts to HMML's Special Collections.

The first work, Bernart de Granollachs' 1491 edition of the *Lunarium ab anno 1491 ad annum 1550*, supports HMML's collection of early printed works dedicated to the intersection of Christian, Jewish, and Islamic cultures, as Granollachs relied on Jacob ben David's astrological tables for calculating the calendar year. The second work, the 1490 printed edition of the *Computus cum commento*, was composed by Anianus, a French Benedictine monk believed to have lived at the monastery of Aniane near Montpellier during the 13th century. HMML has several early works devoted to Benedictine history, and this manuscript attests to Benedictine achievements in mathematics and astronomy.

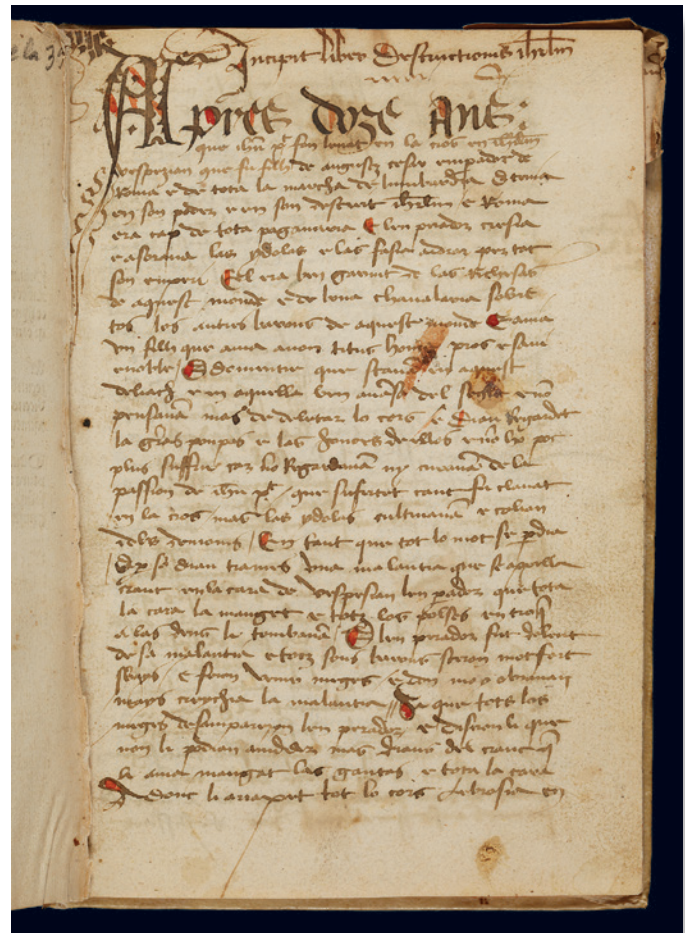
The codex concludes with a rare 15th-century exemplar of the *Liber destructionis Ierusalem*. This manuscript is one of five known copies, but has not been edited or used in any of the modern critical editions of the work. "Because HMML is the home of the Malta Study Center, dedicated in part to the history of the Crusades and the Order of Saint John of the Hospital, the manuscript is a valuable addition to the collection as it shows the longevity of the crusading mentality in the late medieval world," said Dr. Gullo. "The manuscript is also one of HMML's earliest manuscripts written in Catalan. Adding the vernacular manuscript to our collection will be a substantial resource for scholars studying language and paleography."

Technicians at HMML have digitized the codex and the images will be added to the HMML Reading Room, a new online platform currently under development and funded by the Luce Foundation.



Above: Anianus, *Computus cum commento* (Lyons: Jean du Pré, 24 January 1490), sig. cii verso.

Right: "Liber destructionis Ierusalem." Collegetville, MN, Hill Museum & Manuscript Library, MSC MS 4, f. 72r.



Malta Study Center Begins New Digitization Project at the National Archives of Malta

The Malta Study Center has signed an agreement with the National Archives of Malta to digitize archival records detailing the civil legal proceedings related to the Roman Inquisition in Malta.

Known as the *Officium Civile Sacrae Inquisitionis* (OSI) Fond, the collection contains records that date from 1605 to 1798, when the French ended the proceedings of the Roman Inquisition in Malta after their conquest of the island. “Given the increasing academic interest in the history of the Roman Inquisition, the Malta Study Center has made it a priority to preserve the records of the Holy Office,” said Dr. Daniel K. Gullo, Joseph S. Micallef Curator of the Malta Study Center.

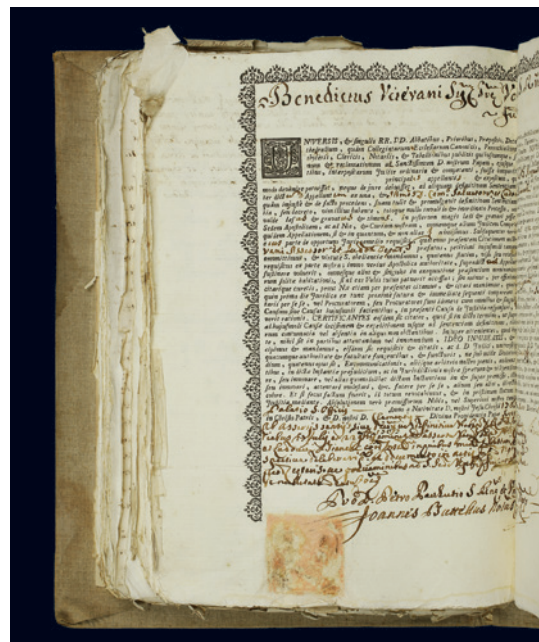
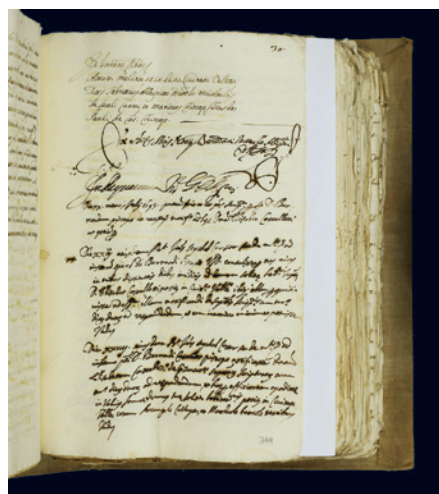
“Digitizing the OSI fond allows the Malta Study Center to unite the Inquisition’s documents held in the National Archives with the larger collection of documents micro-filmed by the Center at the Cathedral Archives and Museum of Mdina during the 1970s and 1980s.”

The digitization of the OSI fond at the National Archives marks the third collaboration between the Malta Study Center and the National Archives.

Top: Mdina, National Archives of Malta, OSI Fond, vol. 1, f. 419r.

Center: Mdina, National Archives of Malta, OSI Fond, vol. 2, f. 193v.

Bottom: Mdina, National Archives of Malta, OSI Fond, vol. 2, 191v.



News and Events from the Center

The Malta Study Center Participates in European Union Cultural Heritage Day in Washington, D.C.

At the invitation of Ambassador Marissa Micallef of the Republic of Malta, the Malta Study Center participated in European Union Cultural Heritage Day in Washington, D.C., on May 9, 2015.



The Center curated an exhibition (shown at left) that was seen by almost 1,200 guests over the day-long event at the Embassy of the Republic of Malta. The exhibition highlighted the history of the Maltese archives and the preservation work of HMML's Malta Study Center, founded by Joseph S. Micallef, the Honorary Consul General of Malta Saint-Paul/Minneapolis in 1973. Dr. Gullo presented mini-lectures to guests throughout the day that described the rich archival heritage of Malta, and the Center's manuscript preservation projects at the Cathedral Archives, National Archives, Notarial Archives, the Archives of the Order of Malta held in the National Library, and the Olof Gollcher Archives at the Palazzo Falson Historic House Museum.

This was the first time HMML and the Malta Study Center participated in the annual event. The celebration of European Union Cultural Heritage Days was launched in 1991 by the Council of Europe. Events at participating European embassies in Washington, D.C., and around the world raise awareness of Europe's cultural diversity and of the need to protect cultural heritage against threats of political turmoil, looting, and neglect.

Hill Museum & Manuscript Library Hosts Hospitaller Scholar

Dr. Jochen Burgtorf of California State University Fullerton was awarded the Nicky B. Carpenter Fellowship in Manuscript Studies at HMML. Dr. Burgtorf's research focused on early papal documents related to the Order of Saint John of the Hospital and the Order of the Temple. During his residence at the library, Dr. Burgtorf delivered a public lecture entitled, "Templars, Hospitallers, and 12th-Century Popes: The Maltese Evidence."

The Nicky B. Carpenter Fellowship in Manuscript Studies is a \$5,000 annual award for senior scholars who will use HMML's microfilm and digital manuscript collections for their research. For more information about the Carpenter Fellowship or other research opportunities, please visit www.hmml.org/scholar-opportunities.html. If you would like to be in contact with a curator, please email hmml@hmml.org.

Malta Study Center Curator Gives Public Lecture at the University of Minnesota's Center for Medieval Studies

In January, Dr. Daniel K. Gullo delivered a public lecture at the Center for Medieval Studies at the University of Minnesota. His lecture, "Friendship, Community, and Literary Exchange in Late Medieval Aragón: The Friends of Bernat Boyl," discussed the importance of literature and gift exchange among friends during the 15th century.

The University of Minnesota's Center for Medieval Studies (CMS) was founded in 1988, and encourages collegial interaction, scholarly collaboration, and community outreach among faculty and graduate students in all areas of medieval studies.

HMML Receives Grant to Digitize Manuscript Collection from the Cathedral Museum and Archives of Mdina, Malta

A grant from the Rahr Foundation will support the Malta Study Center's efforts to digitize, conserve, and catalog a collection of medieval manuscripts at the Cathedral Museum and Archives of Mdina, Malta. This project will be the first digitization project at the Cathedral's archives, building on the major micro-filming project undertaken at Mdina during the 1970s and 1980s by HMML.

"The medieval records of Malta are few in comparison to the period after the occupation of the island by the Order of Saint John of the Hospital," said Dr. Daniel K. Gullo, the Joseph S. Micallef Curator of the Malta Study Center. "Several documents, especially those of Kings Alfonso V and Ferdinand II of Aragón, record the relationship between the island and the Crown of Aragón prior to the arrival of the Knights to Malta in 1530."

The manuscripts include two 12th-century illuminated Aquitanian liturgical music manuscripts, several manuscript codices with

liturgical works, sermons, and music, and many royal letters, papal documents, and charters.

The project began in February 2015 and will be completed over three years. Watch HMML's website, social media, and semiannual issues of *Melitensia* for updates on the project.



Above: Mdina Cathedral, Malta.
Photo courtesy of Elizabeth M. Nordmeyer

The Malta Study Center Sponsors Session at the International Congress on Medieval Studies

HMML's Malta Center hosted a session at the 51st International Congress on Medieval Studies held May 14-17, 2015 at Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo, Michigan. The session entitled, "Slavery and the Slave Trade in Medieval Mediterranean Society," featured papers by Dr. Yasmine Beale-Rivaya, Texas State University-San Marcos, Dr. Oleksander Halenko, Institute of History of Ukraine, and Dr. Daniel K. Gullo, HMML. Dr. Shannon Godlove, Columbus State University, chaired the session.

The congress is an annual gathering of around 3,000 scholars interested in medieval studies. It features more than 550 sessions of papers, panel discussions, roundtables, workshops, and performances. Seventy exhibitors, including publishers, used-book dealers, and purveyors of medieval antiquities also participate in the conference.

The Malta Study Center and HMML Form Partnership with the Renaissance Society of America

HMML and the Malta Study Center were named Associate Organizations of the Renaissance Society of America. The Renaissance Society of America (RSA) is the largest international society devoted to the study of the era 1300-1600 C.E. Founded in 1954, the RSA has over 6,000 international members who are faculty, graduate students, and postgraduate students at colleges and universities, as well as at museums, libraries, and cultural institutions; members also include independent scholars and many others interested in Renaissance studies.

"This new relationship strengthens resources and supports scholarship at HMML in a number of ways" said Dr. Gullo, HMML's representative to the RSA. "RSA offers competitive grant opportunities for scholars and an annual conference with over 3,000 scholars in attendance. We look forward to participating in the annual conference, bringing Renaissance scholars to study our remarkable collections, and aiding the RSA Council."



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

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