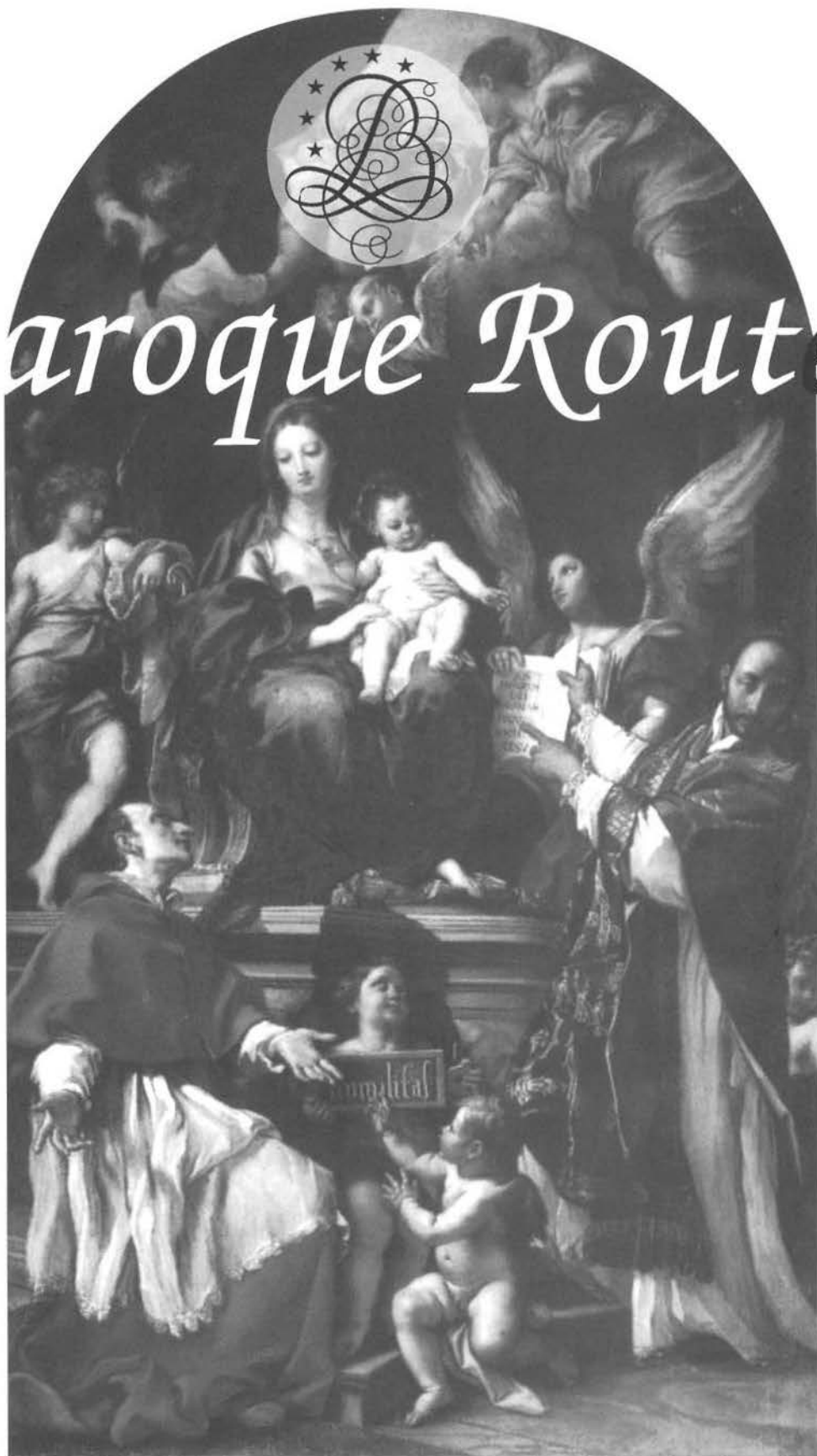




Baroque Routes



Newsletter

Foreword

The seventh issue of the Baroque Routes Newsletter is being published at a time when the study of Baroque is internationally being promoted with an unprecedented sense of commitment, as the basis of research activity in several institutions of higher learning and, particularly, as the basis of its potential to be marketed for wider cultural and touristic purposes.

The recent publication of a monumental work on the Baroque architectural heritage of Sicily is one example of such praiseworthy initiatives. Thoroughly researched and well written by Professor Maria Giuffrè of the University of Palermo and full of excellent illustrations by the renowned photographer Melo Minella, the book *Barocco in Sicilia* is now available in all leading bookshops in Italy and is also promoting the remarkable visual splendour of Sicilian Baroque architecture in the newly refurbished airport of Fontanarossa in Catania, the main touristic gateway to Sicily. A second equally praiseworthy initiative is the recent inauguration of a new online journal on the military architecture of the Baroque age called ARX (www.fortress-explorer.org). According to its author, Dr Stephen Spiteri, who has been lecturing on the subject in the academic courses of the International Institute for Baroque Studies since 2002, this new online journal contains academic papers, articles and illustrations that can be downloaded for research purposes thus contributing to the promotion of Malta's rich heritage of military architecture in the Baroque age. Dr Spiteri will shortly be also publishing a new book and has held an exhibition under the auspices of the International Institute for Baroque Studies entitled 'The Art of Fortress Building in Hospitaller Malta'. In late November, the Institute collaborated with the French Embassy in Malta to convene an international symposium on Sebastien Le Prestre de Vauban. This conference attracted a number of international experts on fortification building in the Baroque age and also included presentations by renowned architects who have been involved in the creative restoration of cities and fortresses associated with the great French military engineer of *Le Roi Soleil*.

The International Institute for Baroque Studies (IIBS) at the University of Malta was set up to promote the pursuit of interdisciplinary, academic studies on various aspects of Baroque culture. It organises symposiums, public lectures, exhibitions and other activities leading to a greater appreciation of Baroque culture, with particular reference to Malta, and networks with similar centres for Baroque studies overseas. It is currently engaged in research projects concerning Baroque art and architecture of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The Institute organises MA courses on Baroque studies and short courses on the Baroque heritage of Malta and its conservation, and is also engaged in giving assistance to various bodies concerned with the restoration of Baroque buildings and artefacts. It also runs a pre-tertiary Certificate course and a Diploma course in Baroque architecture, commissioned by the Ministry for Resources and Infrastructure of the Government of Malta.

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As mentioned above, all this is happening within the context of several other initiatives which are being taken in Malta and Sicily to promote the Baroque architectural heritage. After a long period of neglect, the Baroque churches and palaces of the Val di Noto in Sicily are finally receiving the attention and interventions they deserve with heavy UNESCO funding, while in Malta the Baroque buildings and fortifications of the main urban centres are being systematically studied and restored through the efforts of three very active Rehabilitation Committees in the Ministry for Resources and Infrastructure. In this respect and in the wake of two masterplans that have already been drawn up for Mdina and Cottonera, the International Institute for Baroque Studies has been commissioned by the Ministry to prepare a third masterplan for the fortress city of Valletta. Needless to say, this masterplan, when completed shortly, will provide the much needed reference points for all future research and active restoration works regarding Grand Master De Vallette's city, built in 1566 to commemorate the great siege of Malta by Suleyman's Turkish forces.

Professor Denis De Lucca

Director - International Institute for Baroque Studies

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Front Cover: *SS. Carlo Borromeo e Ignazio di Loyola ai piedi della Vergine*, by Carlo Maratta (1625-1713), S. Maria in Vallicella, Roma.

Exhibition

The Art of Fortress Building in Hospitaller Malta

Stephen C. Spiteri

The religious and military Order of the Knights of St. John sought to affirm its destiny in stone. Its long military history can be said to have been moulded by ramparts of stone. Indeed, the one constant feature of the Hospitaller war machine throughout its long six hundred-year history was its heavy reliance on formidable strongholds and forts. In all the theatres of war in which the Order established its convent - the Latin East, Rhodes, and Malta - fortifications were the Order's prime instrument of war.

Without their fortified bases, the Knights would not have been able to take the war to their enemies, nor defend themselves from the heavy retaliatory blows that were sure to follow. The castles and fortresses of Syria and the Latin East such as Crac de Chevaliers, Marqab and Belvoir, together with the fortresses of Rhodes and the Dodecanese islands and the bastioned enceintes and towers of Malta all stand monument to the importance that the Hospitaller Knights assigned to the design and construction of their fortifications. Nowhere was this commitment to build fortresses, however, so manifestly evident as during the Maltese period of the Order's long military history. In the two-and-a-half centuries that the Knights occupied the Maltese islands, they transformed them from a barren outpost on the fringes of the European mainland, that was then a dependency of the Spanish crown, into a front line bulwark for all Christendom and one of the heaviest defended islands anywhere in the world - literally an island-fortress in the centre of the Mediterranean.

This prodigious fortress-building effort was made possible by the Order's singleminded purpose and the huge financial resources that the Knights were able to muster and funnel into their ambitious building programmes. Equally important was the Order's highly efficient form of government, run on a relatively stable constitution that had been developed and perfected very early in its formation and one that allowed it continuity and consistency in its actions. By the time of the arrival of the Order in Malta in 1530, the Hospitallers had acquired a long fortress-building tradition. Their administrative and organizational mechanism, geared towards perpetual warfare, had developed, over the centuries, into a highly efficient structure.

"The Art of Fortress Building in Hospitaller Malta" was an exhibition that drew attention to this unique building process. Organized by the National Library and myself with the assistance of the Fortress Explorer Society and the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage under the auspices of the International Institute of Baroque Studies, UOM, it focused on the issues that military engineers had to contend with in the implementation of fortress schemes, following the construction of a complex work of fortification throughout its many



stages and also examining the organization of the workforce, the workings of the fortification atelier, and the roles played by military engineers, commissioners, surveyors, draughtsmen, master-masons and the various skilled craftsmen and labourers.

A crucial aspect of this exhibition was how the Knights themselves and their contemporaries recorded this extensive building activity. The end product was a synthesis of contemporary engineers' and commissioners' reports, original architectural plans and maps, building contracts and 'appalti', minutes of the meetings of the Order's council and the Congregation of War and Fortification, testimonials, notarial deeds, and numerous *supplici* by master-masons, skilled craftsmen, and other individuals involved in the building industry. The story was also told by means of specially designed panels, detailed scale models of fortifications, building tools and replica instruments. (An online catalogue can be downloaded from www.fortress-explorer.org/exh_catal.html)

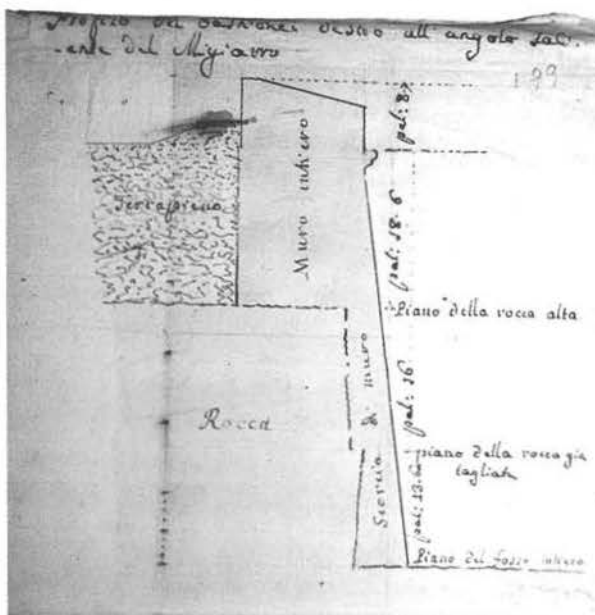
The art of fortification in the Maltese islands throughout the Order's rule was a complex and multifaceted activity that grew to impinge upon many aspects of the Knights' organizational, military, and technical capabilities. The numerous and ongoing schemes of fortification impressed themselves not only upon the Order itself but also, inevitably, upon Maltese society in general. The extent to which the whole fortification enterprise affected the Maltese milieu was considerable. Aside from the financial benefits derived from the large sums of money drawn from abroad, which filtered down into the economy in general, the fortification works provided wide employment, generating in the process a prosperous quarrying and building industry. On the other hand, the imposition of taxation and other financial burdens did lead to a growing sense of resentment among the inhabitants which, coupled with other long-standing grievances, eventually resulted in the downfall of the Order. But there is no denying the fact that the fortifications did provide the inhabitants with an increasing sense of security, especially from 1566 onwards. At no time in their past history had the Maltese inhabitants been so well protected against invasion

and predatory piratical raids as they were throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The population explosion which the Maltese islands witnessed throughout the two hundred years or so of the Order's rule must have been, to some extent, ascribable to the effects of fortress-building activity.

Within the military and technical sphere, the building of fortifications throughout the period under review was characterized by an effort aimed at establishing an all-encompassing defensive strategy designed to cover the whole of the island (including Gozo). This, in turn, dictated an ever-broadening span of projects and a parallel increase in organizational and logistical commitments. The whole process reached its climax by the middle of the eighteenth century with the erection of works such as Fort Manoel, Fort Chambrai and the coastal defences of St Julians, Birzebbuga and Armier. The effort becomes all the more impressive when one realizes that it was accompanied by a similarly huge investment designed to bring to completion many of the monumental, yet largely unfinished, seventeenth-century Baroque schemes around the harbour area – the enceintes of Floriana, Firenzuola and Cottonera.

In terms of military architecture, however, the eighteenth century cannot be viewed in isolation from the previous epochs, particularly the 1600s, when the basic fundamental strategy and many of the processes that were to condition the final configuration of the fortifications were laid down by the Order. Indeed, a considerable part of the building effort invested during the 1700s was intended to bring to completion and rationalize the seventeenth century monumental schemes. This was no mean task in itself especially since most of these vast enceintes had still to be fitted with outerworks and many of the other necessary elements of defence such as retrenchments, magazines, and barracks.

If one can identify any characteristic difference between seventeenth and eighteenth century defensive works, this must surely be the fact that the monumental Baroque schemes of vast and continuous bastioned enceintes projected during the 1600s, such as the Floriana, Sta Margherita and Cottonera lines, had begun to give way to a preference for a system of smaller detached works as the eighteenth century wore on. With the exception of the overtly ambitious schemes of the coastal lines of entrenchments, which were designed to envelope the shores within miles-long stretches of ramparts, a scheme which, however, was quickly abandoned, the defences erected during the 1700s comprised



mainly small batteries, redoubts, and detached forts. Although it can be argued that this development was somewhat dictated by the state of the Order's dwindling financial resources, it also reflects the increasing trend in military circles towards a new style of military architecture – a shift from the traditional bastioned enceintes to the new polygonal systems that was to become the fashion throughout later centuries. This evolution is best illustrated at Fort Tigné, the last significant work of fortification erected by the Knights and one which was influenced by the writings of Marc Rene, Marquis de Montalembert. Ironically, Montalembert's pioneering ideas found little favour in France since most French engineers clung to the traditional concepts established by Vauban.

And it is largely to Vauban's influence that the Order's defensive works in the Maltese islands during the eighteenth century owe much of their shape and appearance. Indeed, the second important characteristic feature of the Order's eighteenth century fortifications is that they are all a product of French military architecture, as opposed to the previous two centuries where the fortifications were invariably of Italian design. This was no coincidence, for by the late 1600s the Order found itself shifting from the imperial into the French sphere of influence, lured by France's growing military might and prestige in the world. And in military architecture, France was then undisputedly the leading exponent.

The real connection began with Grand Master Perellos' request to King Louis XIV for military assistance following the emergency of 1714, when Malta was once again threatened with attack by the Turks. The generous French response was as much a case of political alliance as it was a calculated act of propaganda. For along with French guns, cannon, and munitions came also a corps of French military advisors. Brigadier René Jacques de Tigné, who headed the mission, was then one of the most experienced engineers in France with 26 years of service. Assisting him was Charles Francois de Mondion, and a troop of lesser engineers. Between them, these two military experts would effectively reshape the Order's military establishment, dictating the course of the development and design of military architecture in the Maltese islands throughout the rest of the century. Mondion would eventually go on to serve the Order as resident engineer until his death in December 1733. His eighteen years of service represent the most intense period of fortress-building activity in the Island's history wherein some of the best and most beautiful examples of forts and fortifications were erected and where most of the existing fortifications were either remodelled or finished with all the modern adjuncts of defence that eighteenth century French military architecture could offer.

During this seminal period, the ensuing imprint of French ideas extended to cover all aspects of military architecture, from the planimetric design of a fort down to the decorative elements of Baroque gateways. Not surprisingly, many of these new elements, such as the purposely-built pulveriste and drawbridge mechanisms introduced by Mondion were described in the Order's documents as being à la Vauban.

It was not simply new devices, however, that the French military engineers brought over with them to the Malta. They also helped usher in a new sense of professionalism in the field of military architecture. The prima donna attitude of many earlier haughty Italian military engineers, such as Floriani and Laparelli, was replaced by disciplined men who were the product of a controlled system and a formalized school of engineering¹. The systematical and methodical approach of the French military mind is perhaps best reflected in the many well-prepared and beautifully executed plans of the fortifications projects still to be found preserved in the National Library in Valletta together with their accompanying analytical reports. These scaled, meticulously detailed

technical drawings and sectional elevations, drawn to an established convention, contrast markedly with the relatively crudely-executed designs of the earlier Italian engineers.

The Order's documents also reveal a fortress-building activity that followed very closely the contemporary technical practices, consonant with the conventions of the profession at the time – from the techniques of surveying to the geometric configuration of plans; from the design of countermine tunnels and gunpowder magazines to the working mechanisms of drawbridges; from the gradient of ramparts walls to the ornamentation of Baroque gateways. Indeed, the close resemblance of some of the adopted solutions to designs featured in various illustrated treatises of the period, such as those of Bernard Forrest de Belidor's treatise *La Science des Ingénieurs dans la conduite des travaux de fortification et d'architecture civile*, stand witness to how instrumental printed material had become in exporting ideas and standardizing patterns. The attempts to introduce the Gribevaux carriage in the late 1780s, for example, also stands witness to the desire to remain in line with all the latest technological developments.

The Knights and their military engineers, however, did not simply keep abreast of developments but were at times even able to lead the field. The development of the fougasse-pierrier, the bonded-merlon reinforced against displacement (at Fort Chambrai), and most importantly, the construction of Fort Tigné, one of the first truly polygonal forts, were important contributions to the art of fortification – they were to exert a profound influence on the British military throughout the course of the nineteenth century.

The stimulus of foreign ideas was balanced by the local building practices, dependent as these were on the nature of building materials and long-established traditions, and by the idiosyncrasies of native expertise. Above all, the Order's builders were constrained to operate within a long-established administrative and organizational framework that had changed little from the time of the Order's early years in Rhodes. This structure was primarily designed to retain direct control over the whole process securely in the hands of the Knights – from the selection of the engineer down to the distribution of materials and supplies, at all levels of the building process. The only notable development throughout the 1700s was that the whole apparatus became somewhat larger and more bureaucratized, a trend common to most of the other institutions of the Order throughout this period.

The official to emerge most in charge of the fortification building process during the eighteenth century was the resident engineer. Mondion, Marandon, the Bali de Tigné and Tousard acquired a freedom of operation, particularly in designing and conceiving new projects, that would have been the envy of their seventeenth-century counterparts. Hitherto, such a privilege had generally rested solely with the visiting experts invited over to advise on specific projects. Reliance on direct foreign expertise in the earlier Hospitaller tradition is largely conspicuous for its absence throughout the 1700s. To a large degree this is explained by the fact that Tigné's scheme was adopted by the Order as the definitive master plan for the defence of the fortifications in 1715 in an attempt to prevent a recurrence of the needless expenditure and changes of plan that had resulted from an over-abundance of conflicting advice from numerous foreign experts during the late 1600s². Although, in reality, Mondion, Marandon, and the Bali de Tigné were simply working within the plan originated and masterminded by Tigné, they were still able to achieve more than just the supervision of the day-to-day



The Art of Fortress Building in Hospitaller Malta

EXHIBITION

organized by the
National Library and
Dr Stephen C Spiteri
together with the assistance of the
Fortress Explorer Society and the
Superintendence of Cultural
Heritage under the auspices
of the International Institute of
Baroque Studies,
University of Malta

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Dates: 17 Sept. to 30 Nov. 2007
Entrance: Free

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the product of 22 years
of ongoing research
over 110 exhibits:
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military treatises
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fortifications
powerpoint display

accompanied by
a 650-page colour publication*
an exhibition catalogue CD-ROM
public lectures
a short course with organized
site visits*

*publication, and attendance for course of lectures
(MUS) by payment and registration

works. Marandon, for example, invented and introduced the fougasse³, and Mondion redesigned Fort Manoel and built various gateways among other projects. The sole exception to this pattern was the visit of the French military mission, headed by Bourtoulmaque, which was called in during the emergency of 1761. Even so, this brief interlude did not lead to the implementation of any substantial new works.

The eighteenth-century building effort was driven by a locally raised workforce. The labour shortages of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries had given way to a surplus of manpower by the 1700s and at least one documented instance has been encountered where fortification schemes were purposely used as an opportunity to provide work for hard pressed inhabitants. The smaller scale of the eighteenth-century building projects, when compared to the massive seventeenth-century schemes meant that although the actual size of a work force at any one site was considerably much smaller, there were usually many more building projects going on at the same time. In one of his reports, for example, Tigné records that during the final phases of the works on the Floriana lines there were only two masons working on the left branch of the hornwork and on the construction of some traverses in the ditch⁴. Again, the building of Fort Chambrai in the 1750s never saw more than 200 persons labouring on site. This contrasts sharply with the 4,000 or so men toiling on mount Sciberras in 1566. Yet in the years 1715-1720 there were over fifty separate building projects materializing all across the archipelago. There is then the fact that there was never the same sense of urgency during the 1700s as there had been during the construction of Valletta. Fortifications built in times of peace progressed much more slowly than those put up in times of war.

The late eighteenth century also saw the Order attempt to introduce and maintain squadrons of sappers for use in times of siege, in imitation of the practice which was being introduced in most European armies of the time. These were generally based on a system of volunteers, recruited from the various guilds and comprised a company 200-strong by the time of the French invasion in 1798⁵.

In terms of building methods and materials, the eighteenth century saw little divergence from earlier practices. The fortress-building activity remained a predominantly labour-intensive one where tools and equipment employed had not changed much from earlier medieval and Roman times. No complex mechanical devices seem to have ever been employed for shifting large volumes of earth or lifting of huge weights. The one notable introduction was the use of explosives (*fomelli*) to facilitate the quarrying and clearing of rocky sites, a practice which was used extensively during the construction of the coastal entrenchments in the second half of the eighteenth century⁶.

Stone was the basic building block of fortress construction, its quarrying, transportation, and dressing similarly unchanged from earlier

epochs. The size of the stone blocks was still that which was introduced in the earlier days of Hospitaller rule (course height of 41cms). The only development was the application of rustication, but this was largely limited to the smaller coastal works and was added mainly for aesthetic rather than military purposes. The sandwiched form of rampart construction, with earth filling, remained the standard form of wall building, though outer face walls were given a steeper gradient in line with the formula established by Vauban and later engineers. Earth retained its importance as the best effective shock absorber in the formation of ramparts and continued to form the body of terrepleins and glacis, though the scarcity of soil in the Maltese islands usually meant that the terreplein had largely to be composed of the rock and stone chippings generated during the quarrying of the ditch. The splintering qualities of this type of debris made its use in parapets and other breastworks quite dangerous to the guncrews and defending troops sheltering behind parapets. As a result, local parapets continued to be revetted with dressed stone and designed to resist displacement rather than absorb the momentum of incoming shot. Although the French engineers found little merit in such a manner of construction they tended to recommend the strengthening of the existing breastworks (by raising their height) rather than their substitution for earthen ones, given the magnitude of such a task.

The scarcity of earth also meant that even the usually more ephemeral field defences, as introduced in the shape of coastal and inland entrenchments during the course of the eighteenth century, had to be built of stone in the manner of permanent fortifications rather than in earth. In such cases, however, a dry-stone walling technique, known as '*à pietra à secco*', was employed without the use of mortar although at times wet soil was used to provide a degree of binding strength to such works. The use of earth as a binding mortar, even in normal ramparts, was a practice which remained in widespread use throughout the 1700s. Many engineers decried this habit as earth did not produce very strongly bonded walls, especially in repair works. Others believed it was a good cost-effective substitute that could be resorted to in order to cut down on expenses, for the production of lime consumed vast amounts of wood fuel. Although wherever possible dry brushwood collected from around the countryside was used to fire the kilns, the pressure of ongoing works meant that there was also a heavy reliance on imported timber⁶, inevitably raising the cost of production of this important material and at times causing difficulties in meeting the required production quotas⁹.

The scarcity of timber can also be gauged from the fact that even as late as 1782 many fortress gateways were still lacking their wooden doors and drawbridges, some which had to be walled up¹⁰. The list of building materials present on site during the building of Fort Chambray, for example, shows how every single piece of timber was inventoried and accounted for. Col. Morshead, Commanding RE in Malta in 1832, records how the woodwork of most coastal towers and redoubts around the island had been 'stolen and carried' away by the public¹¹.

The eighteenth century also witnessed the need for greater control over all building materials and supplies. New, and firmer, regulations were laid down by the Chapter General of 1776 in order to ensure greater accountability over the resources, particularly the supplies of wood, metal, lime and *pozzolana* held in various magazines, with consignments of new stocks having to take place in the presence of auditors and detailed records kept of all provisions¹².

The eighteenth century saw ever-increasing burdens imposed by an ever-growing system of fortifications. By the latter half of the 1700s, it was no longer possible to give attention to all the elements in the defences and inevitably some areas went neglected for many a decade. Even so, the Order exerted great effort to maintain the fortifications

in a reasonable state of repair and even when impoverished by the confiscation of its European revenues towards the end of the 1700s, it always sought to allocate some funds towards the upkeep of the fortifications. By 1795, however, many repair works had to be suspended and subsequently abandoned for a lack of funds.¹³

Like today, most of the causes of decay resulted from erosion, torrential rains and vegetation, and even the inhabitants were not lacking in contributing to the spoliation of parapets and walkways. The Knights were also not impartial to allowing considerable sections of the fortifications to serve as private orchards and gardens, and even as a form of social housing for the poorer sections of the Maltese society – an unmilitary practice that did little to contribute towards the overall upkeep and good state of repair.

The picture that emerges of the fortifications during the eighteenth century is that of a complex network of defences where nearly all of the defensive components had been laid out according to the defensive master plan established earlier at the beginning of the century by Tigné. Some areas such as the Corradino heights and Ta'Xbiex, however, still lacked any fortifications and even Dragut Point had only just been fortified with a small new work that was completed in 1795. Many, though not all, of the forts and fortresses had been fitted with all basic adjuncts of defence – outerworks and countermines, glacis, powder magazines, drawbridges, sally-ports etc. Yet the whole system, although generally depicted quite neatly on contemporary maps and plans of the harbour was still not quite so complete in all its details. Bourlamaque's remark, in 1761, that Fort Manoel was a 'model of fortification' could not be said of all the other fortifications, including those on the nearby island of Gozo, and of the system of coastal defences.

This state of affairs emerges very clearly from the early reports of the British military in the nineteenth century. The British documents show that even though the fortifications were hardly tested in action during the French blockade and were, therefore, inherited in a relatively undamaged state, they appear in a prevailing state of unreadiness, and sometimes disrepair¹⁴. Notably lacking were infantry banquettes and firing platforms while many ditches, scarps, countermines, and glacis were on the whole uncompleted. Indeed, they echo in a way many earlier reports prepared by the Order's engineers and help bear out the fact that the Knights lacked the resources during their last years on the Island to enable them to maintain and finish all the defensive works.

Yet this was not the reason why the whole network of defence works succumbed to Napoleon's troops when finally put to the test in 1798. Ironically, neither the well-thought out and engineered design solutions adopted by the Order's engineers nor the carefully chosen building materials and time-proven methods employed by the local builders played any part at all in the drama of the Order's capitulation. It was the Order of St John itself, and not the walls with which it had sought for centuries to surround itself, that had collapsed.

- 1 D. de Lucca, Mondion, The achievement of a French military engineer working in Malta in the early eighteenth century (Malta, 2003), 1.
- 2 Alison Hoppen, 'The Fortification of Malta by the Order of St John (2nd edn. Malta 1999), 107.
- 3 S. Spiteri, The Fougasse – The Stone Mortar of Malta (Malta, 1999), *passim*.
- 4 NLM, Lib Ms 1301, 153; Hoppen (1999), 108.
- 5 C. Testa, The French in Malta, 29, cited from C. de La Jounquiere, L'Expedition d' Egypte, i (Paris, 1899), 591, n.1.
- 6 AOM 6546, *passim*.
- 7 NLM Lib. Ms 590, no pagination.
- 8 AOM 646, f.134 (1687).
- 9 AOM 648, f.300v-307.
- 10 AOM 1015, f.276 1781.
- 11 Public Records Office, Kew, WO 95/910.
- 12 AOM 309, f.92.
- 13 AOM 1015, f.437 (1795).
- 14 S. Spiteri, British Military Architecture in Malta (Malta, 1996), 23; Public Records Office, Kew, MR 529/0; Royal Engineers Museum RE 4501-133/1.

The Importance of Conserving Originality: the Editing of Neo-Latin Baroque Texts

Dane Munro

Texts found on inscriptions and in archives contain a wealth of information for historians, archaeologists, philologists, linguists and other scholars and interested persons. Sooner or later, nearly everyone engaged in Baroque studies is confronted with inscribed texts on tombstones or manuscripts. Editors of such texts must render them in an intelligible manner and use a standard format, such as that established by the Leiden Convention of 1931.

The idea behind establishing an accepted convention is naturally to avoid confusion. Prior to the Leiden Convention, numerous methodologies and individual styles existed, which were only intelligible to a very small circle. Publications often lacked explanations of the editorial principles employed therein. Reference materials to the individual styles remained largely unpublished, making it quite a puzzle for outsiders to comprehend the purpose of the editor.

A bigger challenge lay in overcoming the pervasive influence of the neo-classical movement, which tried to 'correct' previous expressions of art, such as the Baroque, into what was perceived to be truly classical proportions - thereby destroying the original character of works belonging to a different era.

Classical scholars influenced by these principles had an incorrigible urge to 'amend' Neo-Latin texts (all Latin written from the Renaissance onwards) to the standards of the classical era. They regarded Neo-Latin as Latin gone astray and therefore in dire need of correction. In short, their ideal was to have Cicero as their editor-in-chief. This tendency to put hundreds of years of language development through the blender of classical correctness in order to produce works of conjecture has been frowned upon since the 1930s.

One can neither 'correct' the works of William Shakespeare to the standards of Chaucer, nor the other way around. Any attempt to 'correct' the spelling in Neo-Latin texts must therefore be regarded as a grave mistake, since orthographical and

morphological customs reflect contemporary ideas of etymology and relations between words.¹

The Leiden Convention strives to avoid such editorial malpractice. Every era has its own peculiarities, which must be appreciated, respected and conserved. The essential qualities of Neo-Latin lie in its differences to classical Latin, and certain fundamental issues should not be open to any kind of dispute.

Editing practice

The importance of producing a *strict diplomatic*, or *semi diplomatic* edition, respecting and conserving the originality of all aspects of the text, cannot be stressed enough.

Besides providing an accurate version of what is preserved, an editor must also try to restore text that is not preserved - while making a clear distinction between restored text which is reliable, and that which is conjectural and unsupported. Restored text must conform to stylistic features such as orthography, grammar and spelling, and to the peculiarities of the period, region, function and social context.

It stands to reason that when transcribing a text, the spatial organisation, such as the original line and word order, should be kept. The spelling of the text has to be preserved, so that it does not lose its authenticity and value, even when it is regarded as 'wrong'.² For a correct appreciation and understanding of Neo-Latin texts, and of course of any other languages found in archives or on inscriptions, it is always sensible to refer to

The Leiden Convention of 1931

The Leiden Convention of 1931 introduced a system of editing epigraphical or palaeographical texts using a convention of diacritical signs which has gradually developed into an auxiliary science.³ From the 1930s onwards, papyrologists, epigraphists and, to a lesser extent, palaeographers, were zealous advocates for an academic standard in this field.

The Leiden Convention is now regarded as the standard in editing in the international academic community.⁴ All major periodicals in these fields require authors to edit their articles for peer-reviews and publication accordingly. Important collections of Latin inscriptions, such as the *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* (CIL) have adopted a scientific approach with help of diacritical signs.⁵

Prof Sterling Dow was one of the moving forces behind the development of the Leiden System in the 1960s. According to him, proper editing is to *render in print, by use of regular, understood and agreed upon conventions, which shall be as simple and clear as possible, an unambiguous and correct representation of the original text, so that both academics and non-specialist readers may comprehend such texts with the minimum of difficulty.*⁶ The proper recording of texts is an aid to their conservation and restoration, due to their appearance on perishable materials.

dictionaries of the period in question, especially regarding the use of orthography, morphology, syntax and vocabulary.

The editor in charge is responsible for the delivery of a complete and intelligible text. To achieve this task, editors are faced with a large number of decisions, using diacritical signs as their tools. In this decision-making process, all the epigraphic and palaeographic findings within the original text must be taken into consideration before the text is transcribed.

These findings normally comprise ligatures, hyphenation, tildes, abbreviation signs, special signs, palimpsests, corrections, additions, writer's or stone-cutter's mistakes, omissions, dittography, haplography, *litera*, *rasura* and *damnatio memoriae*.

When a text is being published for the first time, a description should be given of the text's physical qualities, such as material, dimensions, detailed information on lettering and iconography, state of preservation and condition, binding, numbering, material, function and locality. Previous editions and sources of comparison ought to be also listed.

A photograph should accompany the publication of an inscription, to give the reader an overall impression. In palaeography, a facsimile of the original pages is often offered. When only part of a work is published, photographs or facsimiles are not always necessary.

In epigraphy it is customary to first render a transcription in capital letters, in imitation of the original, whereby sentences are rendered line for line according to the original spatial requirements. Neo-Latin palaeography is less complicated in this respect, as one often encounters handwriting only in miniscule. Obviously, the page numbering or page order of the manuscript's present state should be adhered to. In both epigraphy and palaeography, the sentence lines are numbered with an interval of five at the left (5,10,15 etc).

The editor's real work starts with the creation of the *exemplum*, that is, the edited text in miniscule italics in a continuous manner, whereby the lines are divided by a vertical divider called a *solidus*, followed by a superscript line division number (1⁵ | 10 | 15 etc). Footnotes should be avoided in the *exemplum* - instead, in the commentary a lemma can introduce whatever has to be remarked.

The text of the *exemplum* may be reconstructed from a comparison of various other sources. Introducing modern punctuation marks to replace or complement the existing punctuation marks of the original text may prove to be a hazard, as the editor thus assumes that he has fully understood the text and that there is no room for ambiguity.

Epigraphic and palaeographic findings must be marked with a diacritical sign (see page 8 & 9). All abbreviations are to be expanded according to the typical usage of the work in question, including regionally typical solutions. However, interventions of the editor in the *exemplum* should be kept to an absolute minimum and recorded properly in the *apparatus criticus* and the commentary.

When a text has been published before, the editor has more freedom to decide how the text is displayed in relation to the *exemplum*. Budgetary constraints will play a role here, according to the available pages. Finally, a translation complements the transcription. Although the translator needs to know exactly what each word means in the source language, the translation into the target language must be idiomatically correct. After all, we need to translate meaning, not words.

Diacritical signs

Diacritical signs are the tools of the editor, who must always offer the best solution in line with the purpose of the edition. The diagram on pages 8 and 9 hereafter contain a number of such diacritical signs. It is up to the editor to decide which sign brings out the state of the text most truthfully and precisely.

Should the editor reconstruct part of the text from other sources, it is not absolutely necessary to mark all such text in the *exemplum* with a critical sign. In the *apparatus criticus* a lemma will indicate such prior observations and compare the actual text with the other sources. Further details may be given in the commentary.

The *apparatus criticus* and the commentary

The *apparatus criticus* follows the *exemplum*. The Leiden Convention requires that there should be no modern punctuation marks in the *apparatus criticus* other than those found in the original text. All instances which warrant the use of a critical sign (whether actually used or not) deserve to be mentioned in the *apparatus criticus*.

The latter's organisation, in smaller font than the *exemplum*, comprises a line number (bold) followed by a lemma (normal), the original source indication (bold) and the referred source indications (italics). A legend will explain the abbreviations. The source indications are best kept as short as possible. The bold capital letter **A** refers to the source, while an italic capital, often the first letter, refers to the comparative sources. An interpunctuation separates the lemmas, for example:

9 morte **A** morti *B C* • **25** sollertia **A** solertia *B* sollertiam *C*.

A commentary should not contain more information than is strictly necessary, and follows the order of organisation of the text. A line number followed by a lemma, indicating a particular word or words, starts each commentary. The lemma is followed by a single square bracket, for example:


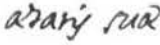


25 *âtatis suâ*] Follows commentary.

References

- Dow, S. *Conventions in editing*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1996.
 Gordon, A.E. *Illustrated Introduction to Latin Epigraphy*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983.
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 Krummrey, H. and Panciera, S. "Criteri di edizione e segni diacritici", in *Miscellena*. Rome: 1980: pp.205-15.
 Schmidt, M.G. *Einführung in die lateinische Epigraphik*, Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2004

Notes

- 1 Helander, p.44.
- 2 *ibid.*, p.21.
- 3 The Leiden system of critical signs was the result of a meeting of the Papyrological Section of 18th International Congress of Orientalists at Leiden, 1931. The adopted conventions were published first by the Union Académique Internationale, *Emploi des signes critiques, disposition de l'apparat dans les éditions savantes de texte grec et latin, conseils et recommandations*, by J. Bidez and A.B. Drachman, Paris 1932, pp.46ff.
- 4 The Leiden system of critical signs can be regarded as matured and undisputed among peers. See Schmidt, p.23f and Krummrey and Panciera, pp.205ff.
- 5 CIL Vol. VI, Pars VIII, Fasc.3, *Titulus magistratum populi Romani ordinum senatorii equestrisque*. Alföldy, G. (ed.), and Caldelli, M. L. et al, 2000, XXXII, pp. 4667-5294.
- 6 Dow, p.2.

Diacritical sign	Application abc represents here the text of the <i>exemplum</i> .	Examples From inscriptions and manuscripts.
<i>ab c</i>	<i>Solidus</i> . Single vertical stroke marks a line division	<i>navibus</i> ⁵ <i>praefectus</i> (including an example of a line number in superscript).
<i>ab c</i>	Double <i>solidus</i> . Double vertical line division to mark text outside the cartouche of an inscription or notes in the margin of a manuscript. Also used to mark the end of a text colon.	<i>Frà. Agos- ultra simile. Altra simile</i> is written in the right margin, while the next line continues with <i>tino Morando</i> .
<i>(vac.)</i>	To indicate an empty line.	
<i>v, vac or vacat</i>	To indicate empty letter spaces; vac or vacat can be used to fill up larger spaces.	PRÆvSSET, (<i>præssset</i>).
<i>a^obc</i>	Open interpunctuation. To mark both <i>punctum</i> (interpunctuation) and <i>hedera</i> (ornamental or floral design serving as interpunctuation). Classical inscriptions usually do not have punctuation marks. They may have interpunctuation between each word instead of spaces. Neo-Latin inscriptions and manuscripts have both spaces between words and modern punctuation marks. The interpunctuation on an inscription is often inserted by the engraver for lay-out purposes.	<i>donat, dicat, consecrat^o</i> for DONAT, DICAT, CONSECRAT 
<i>âbc</i>	A circumflex indicates joined letters, such as ligatures, or in palaeography some strokes indicating ligatures (<i>æ, œ</i> etc.).	<i>âtatis suâ</i> for 
<i>abc(!)</i>	To indicate an original writing or cutting mistake, slip of the pen, incorrect grammar, unusual variation.	SPLENDORVM(!) in the plural when <i>splendorem</i> in the singular should have been written.
<i>abc</i>	Underdotting occurs when a letter is so dim or doubtful due to damage or erosion, that in isolation it cannot be read. The context may give the solution, but it may not be decisive whether or not underdotting should be applied.	<i>benemerentibus</i>
<i>a'bc'</i>	Period related insertion.	'obiit die III ivlii' <i>accepta et avcta</i> Gloria 'MDCLXXXVII'
<u><i>abc</i></u>	Letters read by previous editors which are at present lost.	<i>reparatae salutis</i>
<i>ab(c), (abc)</i>	Round brackets are used to expand abbreviations and for the rendering of special usages. When, as a personal taste, too many brackets appear, one may also chose italics instead. When abbreviations appear in the original inscription within brackets, the abbreviations will be in italics. Special signs are rendered in letters and placed within brackets. A tilde is rendered in letters and placed within brackets. Often a tilde replaces an <i>m, n</i> or indicates a longer abbreviation Some use of ligatures and tildes needs to be clarified within brackets.	D(EO) O(PTIMO) M(AXIMO). DEO OPTIMO MAXIMO (QUAM OLIM FRATER DOMINUS) (<i>Novem</i>)bris for 9bris moru(m) for morū (<i>itidem</i>) for  Ven(eran)dae for 
<i>ab(c?), (abc?)</i>	Indicates that the reading or the expansion of the abbreviation is not certain.	p(ri?)us for p:us

<abc >	<p>Angle brackets have a wide use. They indicate accidentally omitted letters or for correct letters inserted by the editor.</p> <p>Haplography is the unintentional writing of a letter once, while it should have been repeated.</p>	<p><p>raeclaris for braeclaris pos<i>tum for postum</p> <p>e.g. PRÆ<E>SSET</p>
<<abc>>	<p><i>Litura</i>. Double angle brackets indicate a period related insertion on an erased field.</p>	<<BONAPARTE>>
{abc}	<p>Brace brackets mark superfluous letters inscribed on the stone or manuscript, <i>i.e.</i> too many letters, repeated letters or words.</p> <p>Dittography is the unintentional repetition of a letter.</p>	<p>e.g. Imp{p}eratori</p> <p>e.g. æ/ehtatis. Attention is needed here. Knowledge of the local habits is indispensable, e.g. there is, in Neo-Latin Maltese context, no dittography in <i>re pubblica</i>, as the reduplicated <i>b</i> is typical for Italian writers of Latin, related too <i>la repubblica</i>.</p>
[abc]	<p>Square brackets indicate letters lost due to damage or erosion, but which can be restored with certainty by the editor.</p>	[An]no Dom[ini]
[\\ \\ \\ \\]	<p>Letters deleted on the stone while restoration is unsure.</p>	Each \ represents one letter.
[---]	<p>Square brackets with three dashes indicates a gap within a sentence line, with an uncertain number of letters missing, but for which restoration may be suggested from other sources.</p>	anno [---]
[-----]	<p>Square brackets with six dashes indicates a whole lost sentence line, but for which restoration may be suggested from other sources.</p>	anno [-----]
[~ ~ ~]	<p>Square brackets with dashes and a number indicates how many letters approximately are missing from a sentence line, but for which restoration may be suggested from other sources.</p>	anno [~ ~ ~] e.g. Suggested restoration: salutis
-----	<p>Six dashes indicates a lost part, often at the periphery of a stone or document</p>	anno -----
[...]	<p>Square brackets with dots for letters presumably lost and not restorable.</p>	It may also appear as e.g. [.8.] when the number of missing letters can be given, or as [...8...] when an estimated number of letters can be given.
+++	<p><i>Cruces</i> indicate that the rest of the letters cannot be read with certainty and cannot be restored.</p>	lemoc+++ (here four letters)
[[abc]]	<p>Double square brackets indicate a period related <i>rasura</i> or <i>damnatio memoriae</i>.</p>	[[NERO]]
[]	<p>Square brackets in English are an editor's tool in order to be more specific. In translation it is used to facilitate understanding in the target language what is understood in the source language.</p> <p>To attract the reader's attention to a mistake or an apparent mistake by the following insertion of <i>[sic]</i>.</p>	He [William Shakespeare] was a successful writer
		William Shakepeare [sic].

Studies on Caravaggio and the Maltese context

Peter Serracino Inglott

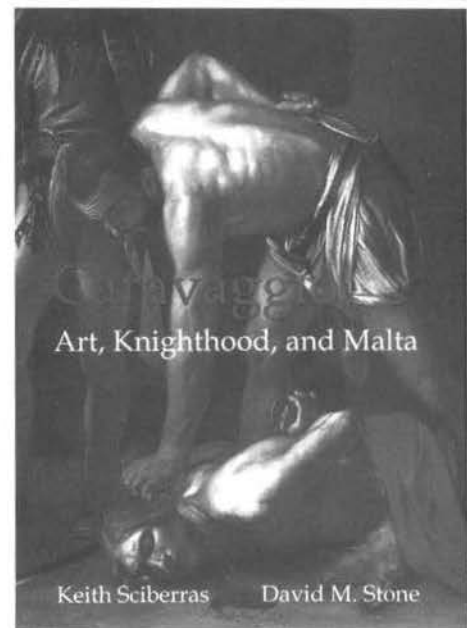
This 138-page book is a revised and expanded version of the essay "Caravaggio in Black and White" by the same authors that was published in the catalogue of the extraordinary exhibition held at the *Museo di Capodimonte*, Naples, and at the National Gallery, London, in 2004 and 2005.

Sciberras and Stone note in their preface that, in 2004, a book was published by Philip Farrugia Randon *Caravaggio Knight of Malta* (Audio Visual Centre, Malta), in which the author put together a discussion of the copious studies of Caravaggio's Malta period, mostly published since the mid-70s, but prior to the great exhibition which allowed new perceptions to be achieved.

Before the mid-70s there hardly existed any extensive and comprehensive studies of Caravaggio's last four years of life in which he produced his greatest masterpieces. Over the last thirty years a surprising variety of studies have been published – containing unpublished documentary sources for Caravaggio's biography and the chronology of his works, and also fresh analyses both of his iconography and of his technique, with accounts showing the correspondence between his equally revolutionary content and style.

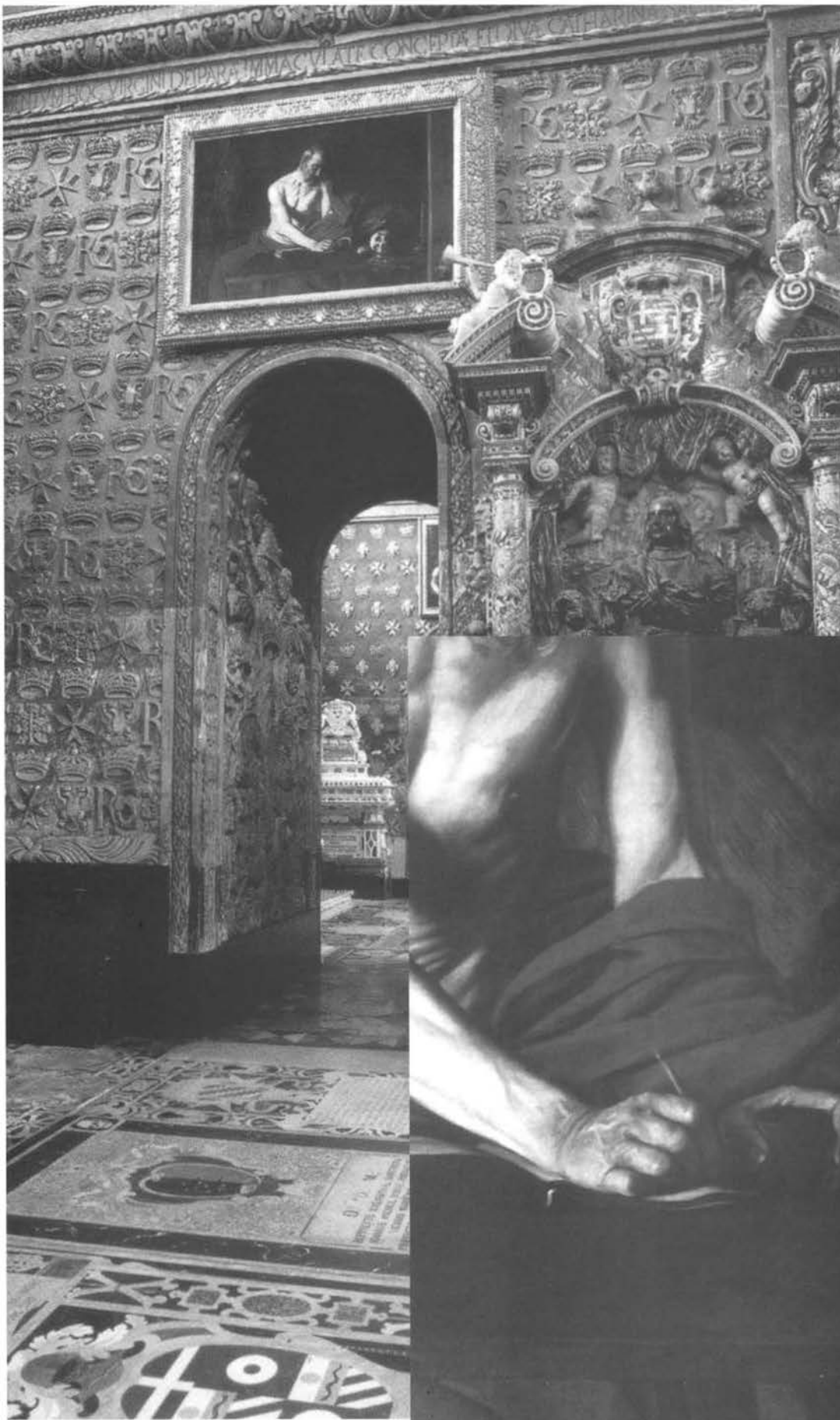
Just to mention a few of the major contributors to this veritable profusion of critical material on the 'Maltese' Caravaggio:

- Azzopardi published documents showing that Caravaggio was in Malta earlier than had previously been assumed. In that way, he set up a new problem for Caravaggio scholars; how could Caravaggio have managed to produce all the works that he did in Naples? Attempts to resolve this new problem gave way to the very dubious hypothesis that he might have returned to Naples between two Malta sojourns. Azzopardi also published documents proving beyond question that the Grand Master was fully aware of the crime that Caravaggio had committed in Rome before his admission to the Order.
- Macioce published documents which illustrated the importance of the Sforza-Colonna as patrons of the painter (whose birth registration has incidentally only this year been discovered in a Milan Parish). She also showed in particular the friendly relationship between Grand Master Wignacourt and the Sforza Colonna; several speculative hypotheses that have not been generally accepted, but have certainly aroused discussion.
- Very importantly, Mina Gregori has published studies of Caravaggio's techniques and methods of painting that have proved to be most illuminating both for the understanding of Caravaggio's message, intimately bound up with the medium, and for establishing criteria with which to ascertain the autography of the works. Gregori has indeed thrown new light on almost all aspects of Caravaggio's oeuvre.



Keith Sciberras & David M. Stone, *Caravaggio: Art, Knighthood and Malta*. Midsea Books, Malta: 2006

- Equally interesting are the books and articles by Maurizio Calvesi. He has in particular brought out the spiritual message of Caravaggio in relation to the counter-reformation in general, and the social vision of the Borromeo Cardinals in particular. Calvesi has also put forward very acute intuitions with regard to the understanding of the most enigmatic aspects of Caravaggio's life, even though some of his boldest hypotheses, such as those identifying the painter Minnetti as his companion at most of the crucial moments of Caravaggio's career, can only be taken to be nothing more than very intelligent guesswork. Calvesi's combination of historical (theological as well as artistic) erudition and a detective imagination equalling that of Agatha Christie, is unparalleled.
- John Gash contributed to the identification of the Knight of Malta, now at the Pitti Gallery in Florence, first attributed to Caravaggio by Mina Gregori but mistakenly considered by her to be a portrait of Wignacourt himself. Gash showed that in fact it is Fra Marc Antonio Mortelli.
- A practically complete list of many other contributors to the knowledge of the (Maltese) Caravaggio are mentioned in Farrugia Randon's book, with supplementation in the Sciberras-Stone book, which also takes into account important works that Farrugia Randon was not in time to assess, such as full-scale biographical studies by Helen Langdon and Catherine Puglisi.
- Neither Farrugia Randon nor Sciberras-Stone make any reference to the debate started by David Hockney (*Secret Knowledge*, Thames & Hudson, London: 2001) in which scientists like David Stork and M.J. Gorman and art



Chapel of Italy with 'St. Jerome Writing' by
Caravaggio, and detail
Valletta, St. John's Co-Cathedral

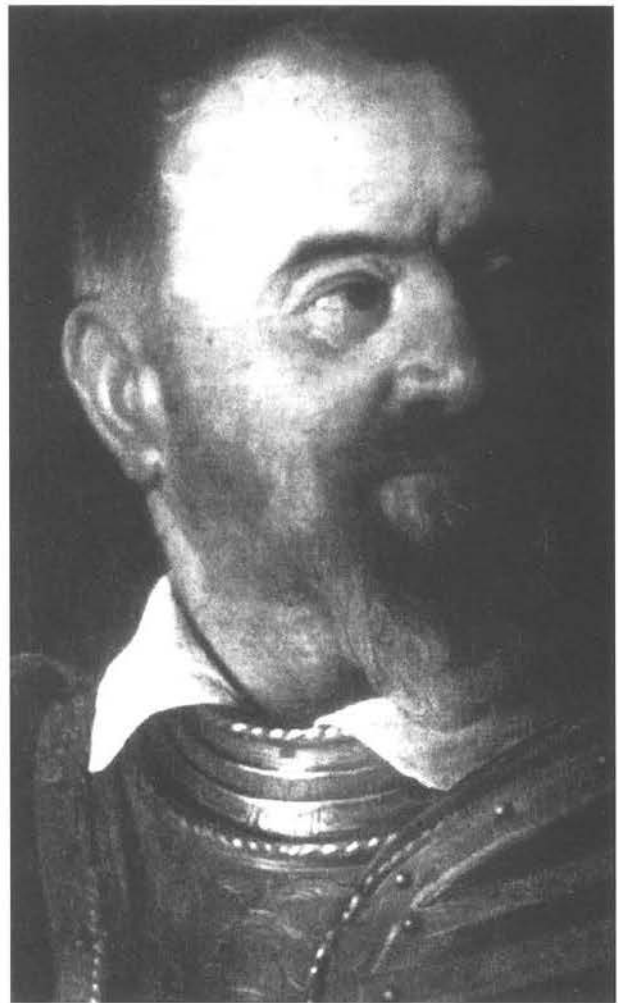
historians like Roberta Lapucci and Susan Grundy have participated, alleging that Caravaggio used a *camera oscura* in paintings such as *The Supper at Emmaus*, and possibly even in the *Beheading*. Two of the most authoritative Caravaggio scholars, Keith Christiansen (curator of the Metropolitan Museum) and Catherine Puglisi (Rutgers University), the assistance of both of whom is acknowledged by Sciberras and Stone in their book, have dismissed the claim that Caravaggio used *camera oscura* technology ("blurry, upside down images"), but John T. Spike has admitted the possibility that Caravaggio explored the optical effects of the alleged projective device in order, for example, to leave areas of his canvasses purposefully out of focus.

Farrugia Randon, who is by profession a lawyer, presents the first part of his book as if it were a series of court cases in which the many puzzles still unresolved about Caravaggio are examined judicially in turn. First one thesis is presented (eg. that the Grand Master connived Caravaggio's escape), then the opposite thesis (eg. that the Grand Master was keen on the recapture of any fugitive Knight), and finally the author pronounces his own personal judgement after weighing the adversaries' opinions, sometimes concluding that none had proved his case, or even at times that all of them were partly right.

The book by Sciberras and Stone differs not only through the addition of the later material that cropped up in the very eventful last few years in Caravaggio studies, but mainly by aiming at being less encyclopaedic and more essential in their approach.

Farrugia Randon had noted that Sciberras himself had discovered the documentary evidence which proved that Caravaggio was disgraced in Malta really because of the incident the relevance of which to Caravaggio Calvesi had merely suspected; and that Stone had provided what is undoubtedly the most enriching account of the 'Sleeping Cupid' story.

In this book Stone provides what I consider to be the most concise but penetrating account of Caravaggio's achievements that I have ever read (eg. "the creation of a new vocabulary for depicting moments of divine revelation, conversion or ecstasy by immersing his scenes in bold *chiaro scuro* (transparent shading) penetrated by a wave of bright light entering the composition from a high unseen source"). The same qualities of succinctness



Detail of Portrait of Alof de Wignacourt and a Page by Caravaggio, Paris, Louvre

and acuteness characterise his comments in the chapters on the last works of Caravaggio, no less than those in the chapter on the earlier works.

Sciberras covers the historical background both in relation to the Maltese context and to the chronology of the works in a very down-to-earth style, marked by the good sense of a scholar who values reliability as a supreme virtue.



Detail of Sleeping Cupid by Caravaggio, Florence, Pitti Palace

An Architect in Context – Francesco Buonamici

Keith Sciberras

When, in September 1635, the famous Italian military engineer Pietro Paolo Floriani arrived in Malta to undertake and implement his plans for the extension of fortification works outside the city of Valletta, he had with him as his assistant Francesco Buonamici, an architect and painter from Lucca who was then in his late thirties.

The Floriani mission, which commenced at the request of Grand Master Antoine de Paule, enjoyed the protection of Cardinal Francesco Barberini, the powerful nephew of Pope Urban VIII. Cardinal Barberini had rallied experts who were close to him and instructed the Papal Legate and Inquisitor in Malta, Mgr Fabio Chigi, to extend his protection directly over them while they were on the island.

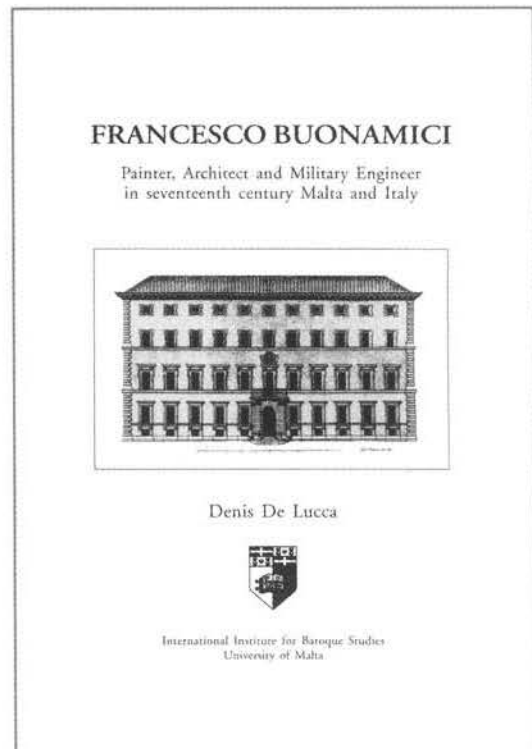
Floriani returned to Italy in October 1636 but Buonamici remained in Malta to serve the Order of St John for more than two decades until his return to Italy in 1659. During this period, he directed a number of projects in the fields of military, religious and secular architecture; for his services, but also through direct Papal intervention, Buonamici was elevated Knight of Grace in 1638.

The architect's main works in Malta include the milestone remodelling of the Ta' Giezu church and the Jesuit college in Valletta, the parish church of St Paul and the Wignacourt College in Rabat, and the church of St Nicholas in Valletta.

Throughout his stay in Malta, Buonamici played a major role in bringing Maltese architecture in line with contemporary



Façade of the church of St Paul, Rabat



Denis De Lucca, *Francesco Buonamici: Painter, Architect and Military Engineer in 17th Century Malta and Italy*. International Institute for Baroque Studies, University of Malta, Malta: 2006.

developments in mainland Italy; he is, in many ways, the father of Baroque architecture in Malta.

Notwithstanding this role as a key player in the development of a Baroque idiom, Buonamici only resurfaced from relative oblivion (or mistaken identity) in the past two decades and his real contribution was, until recently, not properly surveyed.

Modern scholarship on the subject has been restricted and a cursory look at the bibliography of Maltese architecture shows only a few studies on architect. While credit should go to the late Leonard Mahoney for having pointed research in his direction, the first real contribution on the artist is a short monograph published by Denis De Lucca and Conrad Thake in 1994 and an article by Giovanni Bonello on the subject published in 2005 in *Treasures of Malta*.

Denis De Lucca's *Francesco Buonamici: Painter, Architect and Military Engineer in 17th Century Malta and Italy* is a much awaited continuation of the author's research work on the subject. This follows De Lucca's books on other foreign military engineers and architects who worked in Baroque Malta, Giovanni Battista Vertova, Charles Francois de Mondion, and Romano Fortunato Carapecchia.

Professor De Lucca's *Francesco Buonamici* is not a book about architectural descriptions, but a book about architectural history, a book that delves into the important questions of art and context, of patronage and the mechanics of its process.

It is a book about the cultural and political context of Rome and its overspill onto the island of Malta. It is a book that discusses Buonamici as both man and artist, and that seeks to understand his wide interests and his personality.



Interior view of Francesco Buonamici's Cappella dell SS. Sacramento in the cathedral of Siracusa

In nine neatly written chapters, De Lucca surveys Buonamici's career in Lucca, Rome, Malta and Sicily, and seeks to place his Maltese phase within the wider context of the Italian Baroque. De Lucca uncovers the exciting details that set the stage for Buonamici's artistic ventures and discusses the architect's excursions into painting; particularly impressive were his inventions for theatre scenes for Stefano Landi's opera *Sant' Alessio*, performed in Rome in 1634 and sponsored by Cardinal Francesco Barberini.

In its unpretentious format, this book does not seek to impress through photography and lavish binding. Its size and format is more in the nature of an academic journal, of a scholarly publication that seeks primarily to attract a specialised audience.

Yet its fluent writing and coherent flow in both 'storyline' and argumentation is also aimed at the general reader. Its photographs, largely in black and white, provide a wonderful companion to the Italian context in which this book is so interested.

For this work, De Lucca has trailed Buonamici and worked in a number of archives and libraries in Malta, Rome, Lucca, and Sicily; this remarkable research activity is compressed into the 85 pages of this book.

The author's methodology is clear and his arguments and hypotheses are all strongly backed by documentation, wide bibliographic capture, and contextual analyses. The general reader should thus not only read this work for its 'content' but should follow the references and try to understand the working structure of disciplined scholarship.

As a university academic and as Director of the International Institute for Baroque Studies, Professor De Lucca clearly spells out his aim in that this work seeks primarily to be a source of inspiration to students and scholars interested in furthering research on an architect who has "been grossly underestimated". The book is thus a reference work that suggests areas for future research; this work is not a 'finished project' but one that is meant to generate research activity on and around the subject.

One of these areas for further research, I believe, is that of better understanding the role that Buonamici played in the Baroque 'remodelling' of the interior of St John's Conventual Church (now Co-Cathedral), a remodelling which is, in simplistic terms, generally given to the inventive genius Mattia Preti – who was its great propagator but which, in reality, commenced before Preti settled on the island.

Another is that of studying Buonamici's relationship with Lorenzo Gafà, the most important native architect of the second half of the 17th century, who most probably began his studies in architecture as Buonamici's apprentice.

Denis De Lucca's *Francesco Buonamici* is a very significant addition to the ever-growing library to which the International Institute for Baroque Studies has added much in both published and unpublished form (long essays and dissertations at Diploma and Post-Graduate levels).

This book is, indeed, a must for all Melitensia lovers and for students of the Italian Baroque.

International Conference

Sebastien Le Prestre de Vauban

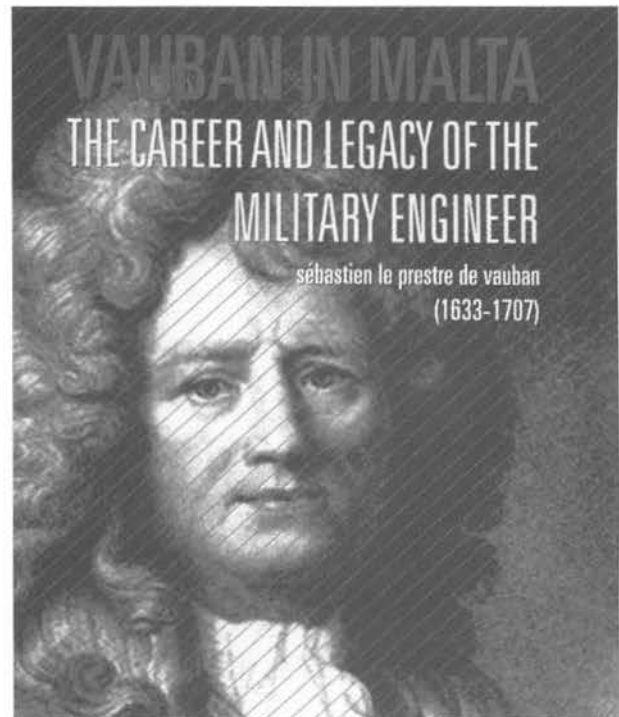
Maria Grazia Cassar

On 22-23 November 2007 Malta joined those European countries who throughout the year commemorated the trecentenary of the death of Sebastien Le Prestre De Vauban in 1707. To mark this occasion, a two-day conference was organised by the Embassy of France in Malta and the International Institute for Baroque Studies of the University of Malta, in collaboration with the Ministry for Resources and Infrastructure, the Malta Tourism Authority and the *Kamra tal-Periti*, together with a number of other entities which supported this event. The venue was the Phoenicia Hotel which is interposed between the Valletta and Floriana landfront fortifications brought to perfection by the 1715 French military mission to Malta, working on the guidelines inherited from Vauban.

The conference was chaired by Dr Claude Busuttill, a conservation architect who lectures in the Department of Architecture and Urban Design. The Hon Ninu Zammit, Minister of Resources and Infrastructure, opened the conference with a depiction of the situation in Malta in 1714, when the fear of invasion spurred the Grand Master of the Order of St. John to seek assistance from France to upgrade the defences. Louis IV responded by sending a military mission to Malta, headed by Brigadier René Jacob de Tigné who assessed and made plans for the improvement of the fortifications. What followed was an intense building spurt of defences and fortifications, which were a direct result of Vauban's school. Thus the designs of the many Baroque gateways, the gunpowder magazines, coastal batteries and redoubts, as well as Fort Manoel and Fort Chambrai are examples of the French influence on military engineering in Malta. These, together with the other secular buildings designed by the military engineer François de Mondion, are testimony to Malta's rich architectural legacy indebted to French expertise. The Minister concluded by mentioning the current restoration projects of these fortifications which are part of our common European legacy.

The next speaker was the Ambassador of France, H.E. Jean Marc Rives, who said that the works of Marshal Vauban were a uniting factor in the diversity and complexity of the European Union. This was manifested in the oeuvre of this great military engineer which is still present with us today, and thanks to which, many countries were able to live in peace and tranquillity within their borders. Vauban was a great personality, a patriot and a military man, whose preoccupation was to improve the lives of his compatriots. The Ambassador augured that the main protagonists of the Mediterranean region would endeavour to restore and suitably re-use these fortifications through mutual co-operation and pooling of resources and expertise.

The first paper to be presented in the conference was by Professor Denis De Lucca of the University of Malta, entitled "French Military Engineers in Malta in the Baroque Age". This portrayed the comings and goings of French military engineers in Malta between 1650 and 1750, when France ascended as leader in European politics. Thus, in 1645 Blaise François Conte de Pagan made a detailed report on the fortifications, joined by other visiting French military engineers. Mederico Blondel was a resident engineer in Malta during the 1660s. Claude de Colongues visited in 1703 and in 1714, and the Grand Master



Ramon Perellos y Rocaful asked for protection from the King of France. This led to the dispatching of a military mission to Malta in 1715, led by René Jacob de Tigné and seconded by François de Mondion. After assessing the situation and drawing up plans for the strengthening of Malta's defences, further help was sought and four other engineers were sent. These were Philippe Maigret, Victor Hyacinthe d'Artus, Lafon and Guillor. The mission was soon recalled to France, but Mondion was given leave to remain and during his stay managed to convert the Floriana landfront "into one of the most beautiful and feared in Europe". Throughout the course of his 20 years of service to the Order, into which he was admitted as a Knight of Grace, Mondion carried out numerous defensive works as well as designing palaces, gateways, hospitals and a theatre in Valletta. Malta greatly benefited by the presence of these military engineers and was pushed to the forefront as a laboratory for their ideas.

The next paper at the conference was by the President of the Association Vauban, Professor Alain Montferrand, who reiterated that this commemoration was being held in many places in Europe and likewise Malta, the "outermost frontier" was also giving Vauban his due. He mentioned that Vauban's fortifications have been proposed as candidate Unesco World Heritage Sites. Malta is unique in that it harbours a condensation of all the different styles of the history of fortification in a limited space, even if these are unfortunately not well protected. Montferrand went on to give a portrayal of Sebastien Le Prestre De Vauban, mainly outlining the three facets of his personality: the builder of fortresses, the conqueror of towns, and the visionary. He talked about his achievements and the places he fortified, as well as explaining the innovations he introduced, always with the main aim of dissuading the enemy from attack.

Dr. Claude Busuttill's paper was entitled "Condition of

the Fortifications – an Assessment” He briefly outlined the French influence on architecture and military engineering in 18th century Malta, which reached all spheres of culture and the arts, and mentioned the damage caused by aerial bombings during World War II - which was surpassed during the past fifty years by neglect and unrestrained building development. He supported his argument by showing a series of photographs of various parts of the fortifications which spoke for themselves. Busuttill stated that this immense legacy of fortifications should be appreciated as one whole, and many parts are in a precarious state of conservation. This is due to the intrinsic nature of the stone used to build them, which is very susceptible to decay. Many restoration interventions of the past were not based on scientific criteria, and this further contributed to their deterioration. He also said that the present situation with regard to development gave little or no assurance for the protection of heritage. Furthermore there existed a conditioning of heritage for cultural consumption, which excluded certain groups and led to its gentrification. He ended by mentioning problems such as a leisure society’s demand for construction and the frustration of the public and NGOs at this situation.

Professor Maria Giuffé from the University of Palermo spoke about the influence of Vauban in Sicily. She began by stating that Vauban was very well known and appreciated in Sicily, especially in the town of Messina. Carlos de Grunenberg, in the employ of the Viceroy of Sicily, was a military engineer who had connections with Louis XIV and wrote about Sicily. Moreover, two famous Sicilian architects of the 18th century, Giovanni Amico and Tommaso Maria Napli, were known to have had treatises relating to Vauban’s works in their libraries. In the designs for the fortification of Palermo of 1722, outworks in accordance with Vauban’s school were incorporated, and the regular polygonal trace was adopted in 1733 because it was the simplest and most effective method of fortification “*del Signor Vauban*”. Sicily was indeed a land of towns, with a long history of construction, starting from the Roman Castrum to the feudal towns. Carlentini and Nuova Avola which was the property of the Dukes of Terranova, as well as Nuova Noto were built to a grid design and a modular layout of piazzas. Avola, being close to the coast, had walls which defined the town and opened it out to the sea, which allowed for an exchange of ideas and experiences. In 18th century Sicily, French culture truly laid its roots, and this may be epitomised by the painting on the panel of a Sicilian cart, which juxtaposed a view of the dome of Florence with the flower market in Paris.

Dr. Stephen C. Spiteri, the Superintendent of Fortifications and author of several books on the subject, spoke about the French influence on the fortifications in Malta. Mondion’s stay in Malta was a seminal period in all aspects of the military arts. The Baroque gateways with their symbolic sculptural details were brought to completion during this time, and much of the final shape and character of Malta’s fortifications is a product of the French school of military architecture. New elements such as drawbridge mechanisms, polveristas, the addition of covered ways and outworks, lunettes and retrenched lunettes were all introduced effectively, as well as the inclusion of countermines in the design of fortresses. The standardisation of forms, the introduction of orders, the use of rustication, the details of the slopes of the ramparts, as well as the building of barracks were all due to the French military engineers who worked here. The French did not simply impart new ideas, but also a new sense of professionalism in architecture and military engineering. They established a surveying department, documented all existing fortifications, and with their methodical, disciplined approach,

raised the standard of technical drawing. This finesse reached its apex in the designs of Fort Manoel and Fort Chambrai, the latter sadly never completed.

Professor Michele Virol, Maitre de Conférences I.U.F.M., Paris Sorbonne, presented a paper on “*Les Oisivetés de Monsieur De Vauban*”. Vauban was an exact contemporary of the French King Louis XIV, and is best known for his teachings in the art of military engineering, of building techniques, mathematics and hydro engineering. He was the first to conceptualise frontiers through a geographical demarcation line. He went through all the stages of his military career from cadet in 1651, to Marchal de France in 1703 and was pronounced Chevalier des Ordres du Roi in 1705. His writings, preserved in the Vauban archives, contain facets of his personality which are not so well known, and portray him also as a political man and a free thinker. He wrote about diverse subjects such as nobility, the economical reflections of the navigability of the canals and rivers of France, forestry, pig farming, the economy of Canada and the reform of the army. Not all his ideas found favour with the King, but nonetheless he spoke out and heralded philosophies of the future. Virol ended the first day of the Conference by stating that Vauban was ‘*un homme de lumière*’.

The second day of the conference began with a presentation by architect Dr. David Mallia, who holds a doctorate in conservation from the *Polytecnico di Milano*. He is a diplomat and a Council Member of the non-governmental organisation *Din l-Art Helwa*, Malta’s National Trust, whose restoration works he oversees. *Din l-Art Helwa* is a member of Europa Nostra and is also affiliated to other international organisations. Mallia outlined the history of the coastal towers, both of the first generation and those built later through the influence of the French military engineers, which included batteries and redoubts. These were situated in the centre of the bay and formed part of the strategy to prevent enemy landings. Mallia said that today many of the minor fortifications are in a state of decay and abandonment and risk being lost. He explained the various types of restoration interventions, making comparisons through the use of photographs between the British period type of plastic repair and the more recent methods of restoration, such as those adopted by *Din l-Art Helwa*. Restoration projects of military structures carried out by *Din l-Art Helwa* include St. Agatha’s Tower in Mellieha (the Red Tower), Torri Mamo in Marsascala, Wignacourt Tower in St. Paul’s Bay, Dwejra Tower and Isopu Tower in Gozo, Ghallis Tower and Qalet Marku Tower in Bahar ic-Caghaq, and St. Mary’s Tower and Battery on Comino.

Emilie D’Orgeix, military historian and lecturer at the University of Paris, presented a paper on the subject of the profession of the French military engineer, reminding us that it was also previous periods that were instrumental to the catalytic effect which Vauban had in this sphere. She mentioned the many treatises which opened the way to a long-lasting French school of fortification, such as those by Antoine de Ville and Blaise de Pagan. These strong roots of military education in mathematics and geometry were the starting point of Vauban, who rationalised, balanced and organised them into a veritable method of schooling for the young engineer who was to excel both on the battlefield and on the building site. This dual aspect of the French military engineer, who had to be competent both in warfare as well as in building, was what gave them a cutting edge. She explained that the duties of the French military engineers in Malta varied from the alteration and modification of existing fortifications to estimating costs, hiring contractors and the supervision of construction sites. This multi-disciplinary nature of the military engineer was a necessity and Vauban’s genius was

to recognise and organise it, pin-pointing specific problems such as the enormous cost of the transport of earth carried by forced peasant labour, and seeking adequate solutions.

Philippe Prost, conservation architect and lecturer at the *Ecole de l'Architecture* of Paris, spoke about the conservation and restoration of military structures and forts, posing many questions one must ask when looking at a fortification today, regarding its setting in the landscape, whether natural or entirely modelled by man. He said that fortifications were inextricably linked to their landscape, which often formed part of the defences, and it was imperative during the process of their restoration to rediscover these links. Sometimes it was only by seeing them from the air that they could be appreciated in their entirety, since they often became overridden by vegetation. In the restoration and conservation of structures which ceased having a military function, it was important to give them a new life, and one had to be imaginative in finding suitable re-uses. Very often these large open interior spaces were taken up for industrial purposes, and alternative functions, such as their conversion into museums were sought today. The ditches, the forms of the orillons, flanks and escarpments could also be enjoyed as spaces of aesthetic meditation, opening up other possibilities for their re-use.

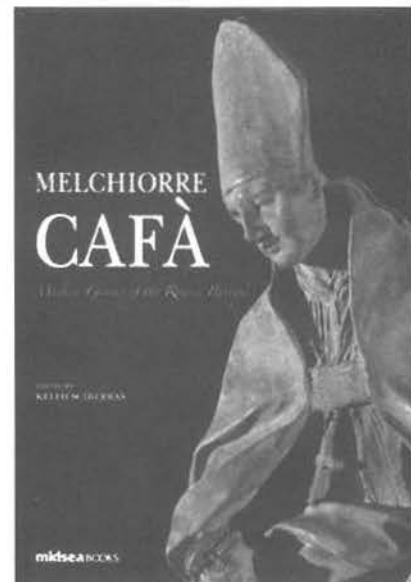
Architect Hermann Bonnici from the Restoration Unit and lecturer at the International Institute for Baroque Studies, spoke about the factors affecting the present state of the fortifications in Malta. Much of their modification and destruction, apart from war damage and erosion, was due to the introduction of roads for vehicular access through their walls. He presented a very interesting series of photographs showing the fortifications in the past, and the changes made to them up to this present day. He gave a detailed picture of the principles and factors governing a restoration and/or conservation project, and how these were applied in the works undertaken by the Restoration Unit, namely in Fort Ricasoli, in the Birgu Cuvre Porte, and the Senglea landfront. He concluded by saying that the MRES was at present undertaking the task of drawing and mapping all the fortifications before embarking on their restoration through EU funds.

Professor Alex Torpiano, Head of the Department of Building and Civil Engineering the University of Malta, presented the project of the restoration of Fort Manoel, which was currently underway for his clients MIDI. He showed photographs of the fort before the damage caused by bombing in WWII, and said that the philosophy behind this project was to recover as much as possible of the 'memory' of the fort. He explained that, after careful documentation the works commenced in 2000, first by propping up those parts that were falling down, and clearing tons of debris. It was decided not to rebuild those parts, such as the polverista, which had been removed for a military purpose, that is, to install a gun emplacement. A modern building which had replaced a part of the damaged casemates was demolished, and the casemates reconstructed to their previous Baroque design, in order to provide integrity to the rest of the building. It was a very complex exercise, since the fort had undergone many changes throughout the years and in some cases it was difficult to decide which parts to leave and which to remove in order to uncover an earlier feature. A steel bridge of the British period was dismantled and repaired, and rebuilt on site. Torpiano concluded by remarking that this project required the use of building skills which were almost obsolete today, and the chapel of St. Anthony of Padua was being reconstructed.

Prof. Alain Monferrand concluded the conference with an account of the lengthy process that the Association Vauban had undergone to have the works of Vauban listed as Unesco World Heritage Sites, viewing this as the best way of safeguarding this heritage for posterity. This involved studying all the fourteen sites, and above all the drawing up of a protection plan for the future. Various experts in the field were appointed by Unesco and this process will finally soon be coming to a successful conclusion. He strongly recommended that Malta does the same for the Grand Harbour fortifications because they are unique in that they contain examples of all the styles of fortification from all the centuries up to the present day, in one condensed area.

Melchiorre Cafà: Maltese Genius of the Roman Baroque

Melchiorre Cafà must be counted as one of the most talented Maltese artists of the 17th century, honoured to have been recognised as a great sculptor by the brilliant Gianlorenzo Bernini himself, who worked in Rome as his contemporary. This volume is a worthy tribute to an artist of exceptional talent. It is the first full-scale study dedicated to this artist, well-illustrated and finely produced, edited by Keith Sciberras of the University of Malta with contributions by an eminent group of international scholars working in the field of Baroque art. These include the art critic Jennifer Montagu, who was instrumental in forming this team of researchers together with Keith Sciberras, Maria Giulia Barberini and Elena Bianca di Gioia. The other contributors are Angela Cipriani, Gerhard Bissell, Alessandra Anselmi, John Azzopardi, Tomaso Montanari, Louise Rise, Tuccio Sante Guido and Tony Sigel. Apart from the articles themselves, the comprehensive bibliography and list of known works by Cafà that are included at the end of the volume will surely prove to be an indispensable tool for future research.



Keith Sciberras (ed), *Melchiorre Cafà: Maltese Genius of the Roman Baroque*. Midsea Books, Malta: 2006.

Notes

Seminar on Valletta

An international seminar 'Valletta: Town, Architecture and Construction between Faith and War', was held at the Embassy of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta in Valletta on 1-3 June 2006.

Exhibition - 'Albrecht Dürer and Italy'

10 March - 9 June 2007

In the Spring of this year, the *Scuderie del Quirinale* in Rome hosted an important exhibition featuring one of the great personalities in European art history, Albrecht Dürer (1471-1528). The exhibition featured over 200 works by Dürer, and analysed the relationship between Dürer and Italy, highlighting his receptiveness to and influence on Italian art.

Exhibition - 'The Urban Development of Valletta'

In an extensively researched project exhibited at the *Istituto Italiano di Cultura* in Valletta in 2006, the students of the Faculty of Architecture of the *Politecnico di Bari*, Italy, conducted a study of the urban fabric of Valletta, focusing on its historical development. The project was titled: '*Il processo formative della città di La Valletta: lettura e progetto*'. The project was carried out under the supervision of Professor Giuseppe Strappa and Architect Matteo Ieva of Bari, supported by the International Institute for Baroque Studies of the University of Malta. Architect Grazia Nanna coordinated the setting up of the exhibition in Malta. The exhibits included an extensive ground floor plan of the urban spaces and buildings of Valletta, and numerous plans of individual buildings and sections of the city. The project studied both domestic buildings and monumental or public buildings, mainly the auberges and churches of Valletta. To achieve this wide vision, the project employed a methodology that focused on the formative development of urban spaces, following similar research already carried out on Italian cities such as Venice, Rome, Florence and Como.

Exhibition - 'Caravaggio: l'immagine del Divino'

30 September - 30 November 2007

Organised by Heritage Malta and Romartificio Eventi at the National Museum of Archaeology, Valletta.

Exhibition - 'Caravaggio and Paintings of Realism in Malta'

11 October - 16 December 2007

Organised by the St John's Co-Cathedral Foundation at the St John's Co-Cathedral Annex, Valletta.

Lectures on Alessandro Algardi

On 7-9 March 2007, Dr Jennifer Montagu gave a series of lectures on the sculptor Alessandro Algardi to History of Art students and the general public at the University of Malta, as part of the course ART2010 Roman Baroque Sculpture. The 3 lectures were titled "Early Years in Bologna, Mantua and Rome", "Maturity and Pamphili Patronage", and "Reliefs, Portraits and Smaller Works". Dr Montagu (The Warburg Institute, University College, London) is a leading authority in the field of Roman Baroque sculpture. She has published extensively on the subject, curated major exhibitions and is the recipient of numerous prestigious awards and fellowships. Dr Montagu acted as External Post-Graduate Examiner for the History of Art Programme at the University of Malta.

Conference on the reconstruction of fortified towns

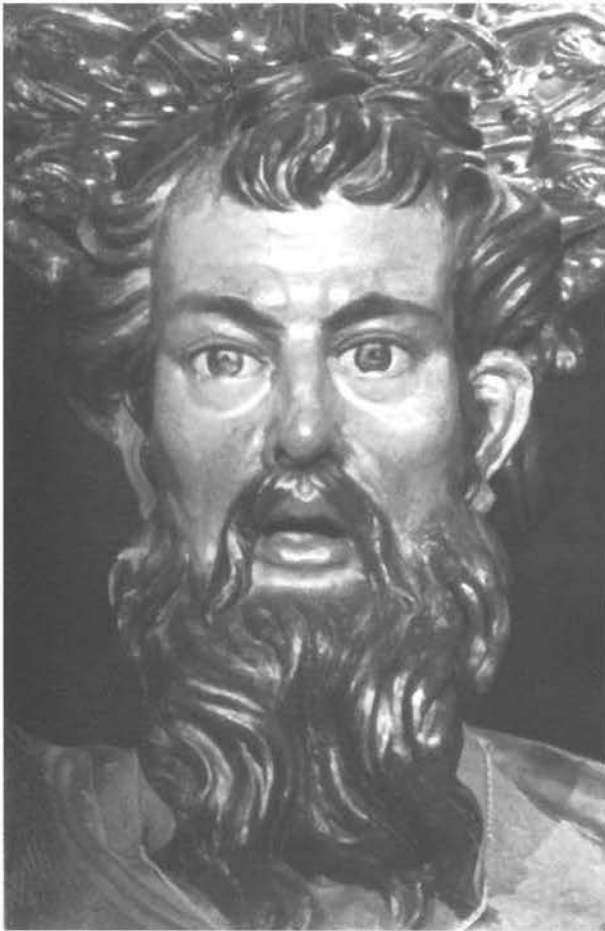
In October 2006, an international conference on the reconstruction of fortified towns in Sicily, Dalmatia and Malta, was hosted by the research doctorate in the History of Architecture and Conservation of Architectural Assets programme of the Faculty of Architecture at the University of Palermo.

The conference was inaugurated by the Rector of Palermo University, Prof Giuseppe Silvestri, in the grand hall of the medieval Palazzo Chiaramonte, a magnificent building close to the port of Palermo. The conference was held in the Caracciolo hall of Palazzo Landeria, and was attended by leading researchers from the universities of Palermo, Catania, Calabria, Chieti-Pescara, Madrid, Coimbra, Malta, Berkeley, the Heckscher Museum of Art in New York, and the ICCU in Dubrovnik, Croatia.

In their presentations, due to be published shortly, all the participants communicated updated information, based on primary source research, on a variety of subjects related to the theme of the conference.

Among the contributions there were five papers which directly concerned Malta - *Il Progetto di Floriani per le fortificazioni di Malta* by Prof Tommaso Scalesse; *Residenze fortificate in Sicilia e Malta tra cinquecento e seicento* by Fulvia Scaduto; *Don Carlos de Grunenbergh tra Sicilia e Malta* by Prof Gabriella Cianciolo Cosentino; *Fortificazioni delle città costiere nel Regno di Sicilia: l'opera dell'ingegnere Pietro Antonio Tomasello da Padova al tempo del vicere Monteleone* by Dr Maurizio Vesco, and *Alcuni riflessi sulla ricostruzione del luogo forte di Mdina a Malta* by Prof Denis De Lucca.

As a follow-up to the Palermo conference, a group of 30 conference participants, mainly post-graduate students from the Faculty of Architecture at the University of Palermo, visited various sites in Malta, mainly in Valletta and Mdina. The group was introduced to the post-1693 earthquake military and civil architecture of Malta as seen in its local and European context. This 5-day visit was organised by the University of Palermo in collaboration with the International Institute for Baroque Studies at the University of Malta.



*St. Paul, by Melchiorre Cafà,
Church of St Paul Shipwrecked, Valletta. Detail.*



*Charity of St. Thomas of Villanova, by Melchiorre Cafà, National
Museum of Fine Arts, Valletta :*

M.A. and Diploma Theses 2006-2007

Recent theses by students at the International Institute for Baroque Studies include:

M.A. in Baroque Studies

Vincent Zammit, *Cum Magna Pompa: Pageantry and Ceremonies in Baroque Malta 1697-1736*

Tanya Formosa, *The Science of Baroque Art: an Enduring Relationship*

Holly Knowles, *Baroque Cinema*

Yvette Sciberras Mifsud, *Rosario Gagliardi and Ecclesiastical Buildings in Sicilian Towns*

Diploma in Baroque Studies

Nicholas Aquilina, *The Auberges of Valletta*

Anthony David Brincat, *The Baroque Palace and Gardens of Villa D'Aurel in Gudja*

Jeremy Cachia, *The Iconography of St Catherine of Alexandria in Painting during the Baroque Era in Malta*

Emmanuel Camilleri, *The Contribution of Lorenzo Gafà to the Development of Baroque Architecture in Malta*

Mark Cassar, *The Aging Baroque City*

Charlò Dalli, *The Remodeling of the Jesuit Gesu Church, Valletta*

Mario Debrincat, *The Fougasse: a Baroque Weapon of Mass Destruction*

Martin Farrugia, *A Study of Escutcheons and other Heraldic Elements in Baroque Military Architecture in Malta*

Frank Fenech, *Evaluation of Past Restoration Interventions on Baroque Buildings in Valletta with Particular Reference to the Restoration of the Church of Sta Caterina d'Italia*

Joseph Fenech, *Salvu Psaila and Seven of his Wooden Carved Statues*

Alexander Formosa, *Conservation Methodology for Notre Dame Gate, Zabbar*

Joseph Grech, *The Parish Church of Hal Ghaxaq from its Origins to the Baroque Period*

George Grima, *Verdala Palace*

Kenneth Incorvaja, *The Study of Building Practice in Hospitaller Malta with Special Reference to Mason's Marks*

Ivan Mercieca, *The Conservation of the National Library's Façade, Valletta*

Stephen Scicluna, *The Chapel of Italy in St. John's Co-Cathedral*

Martin Zammit, *Perceptions and Attitudes of Maltese Society towards Archaeological Discoveries during the Baroque Era*