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RE-IMAGINING HOSPITALLER VALLETTA AND THE MEDITERRANEAN
IN FOUR EARLY MODERN MAPS FROM THE ALBERT GANADO
MALTA MAP COLLECTION (MUŻA)¹

The late seventeenth-century Adriatic and Ionian Seas saw the martialing of Venetian and Hospitaller forces to contest the Ottoman presence in the Balkans and Greece. General Francesco Morosini (1619-1694), commander-in-chief of the expeditionary force sent by Venice, and Fra Giovanni Battista Brancaccio (1611-1686), Captain General of the Hospitaller galley squadron, met at Corfu to prepare their advances against the Ottomans in early July 1684. The two military leaders, together with their advisors, pored over plans and maps of their intended targets: Santa Maura (Leukas) and Prevesa (Preveza)². This subtle vignette describing the planning of military actions by the two generals and their staff reminds us of what Braudel called the «significance of anecdote», where such «apparently trivial details tell us more than any formal description about the life of Mediterranean man»³. Yet, while these maps and plans provided the Venetian and Hospitaller forces with essential information for their assault, they also provided an imaginative space to project their worldview on lands and peoples. For maps, with their place names, illustrations, and decoration, are more than an objective, one-dimensional representation of geographic space on paper: they are a window into a time, place, and mentality of their creators. Maps depict a geographic area

¹ We want to thank Joseph Schirò of the Malta Map Society for reviewing the essay and providing important information about the maps of Johannes Janssonius, Matteo Perez d'Aleccio, and Pierre Aveline.

² National Library of Malta, Valletta, Archives of the Order of Malta, Series 3, AOM 262, c. 179r.

³ F. BRAUDEL, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1995, pp. 758; 901-903; M. FUSARO, *After Braudel: A Reassessment of Mediterranean History between the Northern Invasion and the Caravane Maritime*, in *Trade and Cultural Exchange in the Early Modern Mediterranean: Braudel's Maritime Legacy*, (ed.) ID., C. HEYWOOD, M-S. OMRI, London-New York, I.B. Tauris, 2010, pp. 8-9.

as well as a cultural framework shaped by ambitions, imaginations, fears, and anxieties, these being historic emotions and views represented in four early modern maps of Valletta and the Mediterranean that are the subject of this article.

The four maps selected here come from the Albert Ganado Malta Map Collection held in MUŻA, Malta's National Community Art Museum (AGMMC-MUŻA) in Valletta.⁴ One map depicts the Mediterranean while the other three focus on the city of Valletta. Each provides an example of early modern cartographers capturing the Mediterranean and Malta through a Hospitaller imagining of geographic space and time. While hundreds of maps of Malta and the Mediterranean were produced during the early modern period, we have selected these early modern maps to illustrate the perception and creation of Hospitaller space in the early modern Mediterranean. These examples help illustrate the intersection between the creative mentalities of the print-makers and their ability to produce objects reflecting the desires of their patrons and consumers⁵. Taken together, these maps attest to an arch of interest in the political and geographic concept of Christendom spanning the late sixteenth to the early eighteenth century, even as this concept was increasingly an ideal type rather than a concrete political reality.

The first two maps, a map of the Grand Harbor from the *Civitates orbis terrarum* (Map 1) and a map of the Mediterranean entitled *Le Theatre des Belles Actions de Chevaliers de l'Ordre de St Jean de Jerusalem dit de Malthe* (Map 2), acknowledge the loss of Christian territories in the Mediterranean to the Muslim Ottomans, while emphasizing their continuing European and Christian dimensions. Their blend of political reality and erstwhile claims of Christian dominion are a heady mixture of anxiety and ambition. The third and fourth maps of the city of Valletta, by Johannes Janssonius (Map 3) and by Pierre Aveline (Map 4) respectively, play to a refined European audience in their presentation of the city of Valletta as a renaissance Christian bastion on the boundary of Christendom. Here Valletta is a city on the frontier, a fortress-city, born from the ashes of war, its inhabitants ever ready

⁴ cf. A. ESPINOSA RODRIGUEZ, *Paintings at the National Museum of Fine Arts in Malta*, Malta, Said International Ltd, 1990.

⁵ L. NUTI, *The Perspective Plan in the Sixteenth Century: The Invention of a Representational Language*, in «The Art Bulletin», LXXVI/1 (1994), p. 107.

to face the enemy on land and at sea. At the same time Valletta is presented as an elegant, organized place, an epitome and last outpost of Europe's faith and culture⁶. The role of the Order of Saint John as producer or sponsor of such representations is not evident in all four maps, but each attest to a significant ability on the part of the Hospitallers to maintain a healthy Europe-wide interest in their island and their activities, as well as to the existence of a keen audience. The maps existed in relation to each other, and in a sense developed in conversation with one another as printmakers exchanged or became aware of other works when creating their own map. It is striking that although each map presents a congenial picture, Valletta and the Mediterranean are clearly and unambiguously underscored by strife associated with the dangers of the maritime cultural landscape. What we are seeing is not a flat surface, but a dynamic story that lent itself to varied interests and many interpretations.

The atlas of Abraham Ortelius (1527-1598), the *Theatrum orbis terrarum* (Theater of the World, Amsterdam 1570), revolutionized early modern cartography by abandoning the imagined landscapes, maps, and urban settings found in medieval and renaissance books⁷. The novelty and success of Ortelius' *Theatrum orbis terrarum* prompted two associates, Georg Braun (1541-1622) and Frans Hogenberg (1535-1590), to propose a companion atlas to Ortelius' work, the *Civitates orbis terrarum* (Cities of the World), which would focus on the description and depiction of urban centers rather than on kingdoms, countries, islands, or other geographic areas found in Ortelius' atlas⁸. Braun, the primary writer, and Hogenberg, the primary artist, emulated Ortelius' method of gathering information from scholars, merchants, soldiers, and travelers throughout Europe to provide accurate depictions of cities. With the aid of Joris Hoefnagel and Abraham Ortelius, Braun and Hogenberg began printing the six volume Latin edition of the *Civitates* in 1572, completing the last volume in 1617. Two other editions were

⁶ Q. HUGHES, *Give Me Time and I Will Give You Life: Francesco Laparelli and the Building of Valletta, 1565-1569*, in «The Town Planning Review», XLIX/1 (1978), p. 61.

⁷ W. RISTOW, *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum 1570-1970*, in «The Quarterly Journal of the Library of Congress», XXVII/4 (1970), p. 317; E. CHETCUTI, *The Abraham Ortelius Miniature Map of Malta*, in «Treasures of Malta», XXVIII/1 (2021), pp. 34-43.

⁸ J. KEUNING, *The "Civitates" of Braun and Hogenberg*, in «Imago Mundi», XVII (1963), p. 41.

printed during this period, one in German and one in French, between 1574 and 1618 (though the French edition only included volumes I and VI)⁹.

Volume I of the *Civitates orbis terrarum* contains a map of four Mediterranean fortified port-cities printed on a single sheet with accompanying explanatory text on the verso, an innovative strategy used by Ortelius and adopted by Braun and Hogenberg¹⁰. Each city is depicted in a bird's-eye view and is framed by two-lines within a second two-line frame that extends around the four cities to unite the composite map. The views allowed one to take in a more complete knowledge of the towns, perceiving differences in architectural spaces and landscapes¹¹. For the 1574 German edition, presented here, Braun and Hogenberg reused the plates from the first Latin edition printed in 1572.¹² Each city retains its Latin name, «Calaris, Malta, Rhodus, Famagvsta», denoting the modern cities of Cagliari (Sardinia), Valletta, Senglea, and Vittoriosa (Malta), Rhodes (island of Rhodes), and Famagusta (Cyprus) (Map 1). The printers created a new state of the original engraving for the German edition by including the text «Cum Priuilegio», which now appeared between the maps of Malta and Famagusta denoting the imperial printing privilege granted to the print-makers on 5 August 1572, and again on 22 November 1574 and 24 August 1576¹³.

⁹ Ibid., pp. 42-43.

¹⁰ L. NUTI, *The World Map as Emblem: Abraham Ortelius and the Stoic Contemplation*, in «Imago Mundi», LV (2003), pp. 39-40; M. VAN DEN BROECKE, *The Significance of Language: The Texts on the Verso of the Maps in Abraham Ortelius, Theatrum orbis terrarum*, in «Imago Mundi», LX/2 (2008), p. 203.

¹¹ L. NUTI, *The Perspective Plan in the Sixteenth Century*, pp. 108-109.

¹² G. BRAUN, F. HOGENBERG, *Calaris, Malta, Rhodus, Famagusta*, in *Civitates orbis terrarum*, Cologne, 1574; MUŻA - Mużew Nazzjonali tal-Arti, Valletta, Albert Ganado Malta Map Collection, 31137-8.

¹³ A. GANADO, J. SCHIRÒ, *German Maps of Malta*, Malta, BDL Publishing, 2011, p. 42.



Map 1. Georg Braun, Frans Hogenberg, *Calaris, Malta, Rhodus, Famagusta*, in *Civitates orbis terrarum*, Cologne, 1574; MUZA - Mużew Nazzjonali tal-Arti, Valletta, Albert Ganado Malta Map Collection, 31137-8. Image: Courtesy of Heritage Malta - MUZA - the National Community Art Museum, Valletta, and HMML's Malta Study Center.

Braun and Hogenberg's depiction of these Mediterranean port cities demonstrated their interest in providing an up-to-date view of each city derived from correspondence with scholars, as well as exemplars they acquired to produce their edition¹⁴. «Malta», for example, is based on Hieronymus Cock's depiction of the Great Siege of Malta published in Antwerp on 24 October 1565, which in turn was based on Mario Cartaro's map of the Great Siege published in Rome on 20 June 1565¹⁵. Braun and Hogenberg, however, removed the original imagery of the Great Siege from Cock's and Cartaro's maps, including the Turkish encampments, fleet, and battle scenes. Instead, the printers added the newly fortified walls of the recently built city of Valletta, founded one year after the Great Siege by Grand Master Jean de Valette (1494-1568). The map is striking for its inclusion of Baldassarre Lanci's (1510-1571) design

¹⁴ L. NUTI, *The Perspective Plan in the Sixteenth Century*, pp. 107-108.

¹⁵ A. GANADO, *Valletta Città Nuova: A Map History (1566-1600)*, Malta, PEG Publications, 2003, p. 426; ID., M. AGIUS-VADALÀ, *A Study in Depth of 143 Maps Representing the Great Siege of Malta of 1565*, Malta, PEG Publications, 1994, vol. I, pp. 86-87, 92-93.

of Valletta from 1562, which was ultimately rejected by the Order of Saint John of Jerusalem in favor of the design by Francesco Laparelli da Cortona (1521-1570)¹⁶. It may be that Braun and Hogenberg included Lanci's plan for the city to distinguish their depiction of Valletta from other cartographic representations of the city that used Laparelli's plan, or that their design derived from information passed on to them from those who had travelled from Rome to Amsterdam who only had knowledge of Lanci's plan for the city.

Braun and Hogenberg's *Civitates orbis terrarum* was not the first published atlas about European cities, but it did venture into areas of interest outside of Europe, including cities like Cuzco in the Americas and major Mediterranean cities not traditionally discussed in European atlases. The appearance of Valletta and Malta with three other Mediterranean cities demonstrates their importance to European history, expansion, trade, and empire, even empires now lost to European powers due to the expansion of the Ottomans in the fifteenth and sixteen centuries. Rhodes, for example, was captured by the Ottomans in 1522, while Famagusta fell to the Turks in 1571. Here we can see Braun's and Hogenberg's desire to provide the most current information to their readers, while at the same time projecting the yearning to maintain these cities within Christendom¹⁷. Both Rhodes and Famagusta are described as being under Turkish rule in the panels describing the cities that accompany the maps. However, both cities were depicted as Christian cities rather than those now under Muslim rule. Rhodes, formerly governed by the Order of Saint John, retained its crosses and churches, while Famagusta, recently lost to the Turks, still shows Venetian galleys in the harbor. Malta's map panel, on the other hand, celebrates the 1565 victory over the Ottomans, while Cagliari's panel emphasizes the rest and protection afforded by its numerous walls and harbor. In all four cases, the cities reside squarely within the European world, even if two were in fact under the control of the Ottomans.

The 1661 *Le Theatre des Belles Actions de Chevaliers de l'Ordre de St Jean de Jerusalem dit de Malthe* by Estienne Vouillemont (fl. ca. 1662-1672) and Pierre Duval (1619-1682), is an intricately detailed map that condenses the vibrant history of the Order of Saint John

¹⁶ A. GANADO, *Valletta Città Nuova*, p. 427.

¹⁷ D. COSGROVE, *Globalism and Tolerance in Early Modern Geography*, in «Annals of the Association of American Geographers», XCIII/4 (2003), p. 859.

from the late eleventh century, when the Order was founded in Jerusalem, down to the reign of Grand Master Rafael Cotoner i d'Olesa (1601-1663)¹⁸. The *Theatre des Belles Actions de Chevaliers* (Map 2) belongs to a genre of Hospitaller-sacred cartography which perceives the world through the eyes of a brother knight. Its purpose was to educate its viewer-reader on the nature and utility of the Order of Saint John to Europe and Christendom. The map was a portable object, one that could be handled and taken around with ease¹⁹; its purpose was to be shown and appreciated with others who valued the long history of the Order and its role in defending Christendom. The value accorded to the Order's history was augmented by the individuals behind the publication of the map. Vouillmont, who engraved the map, was the royal engraver of King Louis XIV (*Graveur Ordinaire de sa Majesté*), while Pierre Duval, the map's inventor, served as the royal geographer (*Geographe Ordinaire du Roi*). The Order of Saint John's imprimatur can be found in the sumptuous coat of arms of the map's patron, Fra Jacques de Souvré (1660-1670), Prior of the Langue of France and Grand Hospitaller in the Order of Saint John, located in the lower left-hand corner of the map. The map was dedicated to Fra de Souvré, who belonged to a distinguished French noble family. His father, Gilles de Souvré (ca. 1542-1631), was Marquis de Courtanvaux, Marshal of France, and *Gouverneur du Dauphin*, the future Louis XIII (1601-1643). Following his father's service to the French crown, Fra de Souvre served as ambassador of the Order to King Louis XIV (1638-1715), being made a member of the elite culinary *Ordre de Coteaux* for his service to the king²⁰.

¹⁸ P. DUVAL, E. VOUILLEMONT, *Le Theatre des Belles Actions de Chevaliers de l'Ordre de St Jean de Jerusalem dit de Malthe*, Paris, 1661; MUŻA - Mużew Nazzjonali tal-Arti, Valletta, Albert Ganado Malta Map Collection, 30781-2.

¹⁹ L. JARDINE, *Wordly Goods: A New History of the Renaissance*, New York, W.W. Norton, 1996, p. 17.

²⁰ J. TOFFOLO, *Image of a Knight: Portrait Print and Drawings of the Knights of St John in the Museum of the Order of St John*, London, Museum of the Order of St John, 1988, p.43; C. PETIET, *Le Roi et le Grand Maître: L'Ordre de Malte et la France au XVII^e Siècle*, Paris, Paris Méditerranée, 2002, p. 20.



Map 2. P. Duval, E. Vouillemont, *Le Theatre des Belles Actions de Chevaliers de l'Ordre de St Jean de Jerusalem dit de Malthe*, Paris, 1661; MUŽA - Muzeum Nazjonalni tal-Arti, Valletta, Albert Ganado Malta Map Collection, 30781-2. Image: Courtesy of Heritage Malta - MUŽA - the National Community Art Museum, Valletta, and HMML's Malta Study Center.

Like other presentation maps, the *Theatre des Belles Actions de Chevaliers* employs both text and image to bring the narrative of the Order's history in the Mediterranean to the reader. The historical summary at the top of the map provides a brief history of Malta from the Carthaginians and Romans, through to the Arabs and Normans. The *translatio imperii* to the Order of Saint John is confirmed by Emperor Charles V's (1500-1558) grant of the island of Malta to the Order in 1530. This short history, likely composed by Duval, quickly turns to the history of the Order, stressing how most Grand Masters hailed from France, including the highlighted reference to the Great Siege of 1565 and its protagonist and founder of Valletta, Grand Master «Jean de la Valette dit Parisot». The map highlights those places that had served as residence for the Order. An amusing mistake crept into the map, which notes that the Order had been in Malta since 1550, rather than 1530. It also notes that the Order and Malta had «resisted the Turks» twice, in 1551 and in 1565, overlooking the disaster that befell the islands, especially Gozo, in 1551.

The description remarks that Malta, once known as *Melite*, was part of Africa because it is closer to that continent and because the mores and language of the Maltese were closer to Africans. The narration of Carthaginian and Roman history, along with the Order's ties to France, would not have been lost on French readers of the map, particularly the nobility. They would have instinctively understood that Malta logically would have fallen under French influence, since the French monarchs, who traced their origin to the Trojans, were the heirs of Carthage and Rome, thus legitimizing the Order's claims to territory in North Africa and the Roman, now Ottoman Empire. The legend of the Trojan origin of the French kings, «already popular among French noblemen, was used by crusaders to justify the division of the territories of the former empire, which would have gone to the rightful heirs, the descendants of the Trojans»²¹.

These sovereign pretensions are highlighted by elements of frontier fancy. The cartographers labeled the Balkans as «Turkey in Europe», thus acknowledging Ottoman power while using colored lines to retain the pre-Ottoman frontiers of Greece, Hungary, Crete, and other European territories. The French/Hospitaller goal was to portray things as they should be, not as they are. In so doing, they mask the fact of the Ottoman border on Vienna's doorstep, while claiming a Gallo-Christian understanding of European sovereignty over former Roman imperial lands.²²

Johannes Janssonius (1558-1664) inherited the Dutch tradition of atlas and map making from Abraham Ortelius, Georg Braun, and Frans Hogenberg. In 1657, he not only purchased the plates of his predecessors, but also adopted their methods of design, research, and publication.²³ Like Braun and Hogenberg, whose *Civitates orbis terrarum* (1572) built on Ortelius' earlier publication, the *Theatrum orbis terrarum*

²¹ A. MADGEARU, *The Asanids: The Political and Military History of the Second Bulgarian Empire (1185-1280)*, Leiden, Brill, 2017, p. 6; T. SHAWCROSS, *Re-inventing the Homeland in the Historiography of Frankish Greece: The Fourth Crusade and the Legend of the Trojan War*, in «Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies», XXVII (2003), pp. 120-152.

²² cf. P. BRUMMETT, *Mapping the Ottomans: Sovereignty, Territory and Identity in the Early Modern Mediterranean*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2015; N. B-A. DEBBY, *Crusade Propaganda in Word and Image in Early Modern Italy: Niccolò Guidalotto's Panorama of Constantinople (1662)*, Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 2016.

²³ A. GANADO, *Valletta Città Nuova*, pp. 428-429.

(1570), Janssonius sought to capture the new lucrative market of atlas publications by printing selected series of atlases devoted to individual countries. His 1657 *Theatrum celebriorum urbium Italiae, aliarumque in insulis maris Mediterranei* focused on the cities of Italy and the islands of the Mediterranean, including Valletta, providing vivid bird's-eye perspective views of each urban setting with contemporary illustrations, fashionable in the emerging Dutch market for printed atlases²⁴.

While reusing earlier copperplate engravings, Janssonius also included newly commissioned or re-engraved maps based on older publications once their printing privileges had expired. In both cases, the publication of the *Theatrum celebriorum urbium Italiae* showed Janssonius' preference for detailed and visually gripping bird's-eye perspective maps, where the spacing and design allowed for subsequent emendation and addition. These features can be seen in the engraving *Valetta civitas nova Maltae olim Militiae* as published in the *Theatrum celebriorum urbium Italiae*²⁵ (Map 3). Here the printmaker opted for bold lines found in the bird's-eye view of the city that offered an outside perspective approaching Valletta's harbor. This itself was not novel. It derived from a version found in Johann Ludwig Gottfried's (ca. 1584-ca. 1633) *Neuwe Archontologia Cosmica* printed in Frankfurt by Matthäus Merian (1593-1650) in 1638 and 1649²⁶. The Merian map was in turn based on a drawing created by the Florentine knight Fra Francesco dell'Antella (1567-1624), who desired to illustrate Valletta as a center of the Order of Saint John's power²⁷. Dell'Antella sent the drawing to Fra Giacomo Bosio (1544-1627), who was planning the publication of the third volume of the *Dell'istoria della sacra religione et illustrissima militia di San Giouanni gerosolimitano*. Bosio, impressed by Fra dell'Antella's

²⁴ J. KEUNING, *The Novus Atlas of Johannes Janssonius*, in «Imago Mundi», VIII (1951), p. 72; J. KEUNING *XVIth Century Cartography in the Netherlands: (Mainly in the Northern Provinces)*, in «Imago Mundi», IX (1952), pp. 35-63; P. MARTENS, *Cities under Siege Portrayed ad vivum in Early Netherlandish Prints (1520-1565)*, in *Ad vivum? Visual Materials and the Vocabulary of Life-Likeness in Europe before 1800*, a cura di T. Balfe, J. Woodall, C. Zittel, Leiden and Boston, Brill, 2019, pp. 151-99.

²⁵ J. JANSSONIUS, *Valetta civitas nova Maltae olim Militiae*, in *Theatrum celebriorum urbium Italiae, aliarumque Insulis maris Mediterranei. illustriorum Italiae urbium tabulae, cum Appendice Celebriorum in Maris Mediterranei Insulis Civitatum*, Amsterdam, 1657; MUŽA - Mużew Nazzjonali tal-Arti, Valletta, Albert Ganado Malta Map Collection, 31459-60.

²⁶ A. GANADO, *Valetta Città Nuova*, p. 341; A. GANADO, J. SCHIRÒ, *German Maps of Malta*, p. 106.

²⁷ A. GANADO, *Valetta Città Nuova*, p. 455.

work, commissioned Francesco Villamena (ca. 1566-1624) to engrave the drawing, which was printed in Rome by Guglielmo Facciotto (ca. 1560-1632) in 1602²⁸. Dell'Antella's map emphasized the structural integrity of Valletta's fortifications and captured the city's piety by naming the numerous churches within its walls. He also highlighted the Orders' European membership by listing the numerous *auberges* and structures built and owned by the Order. Hospitaller sovereignty of the island was emphasized by including a grand illustration of the coat of arms of Grand Master Alof de Wignacourt (1547-1622) with a crown in the top left corner, encompassing a small cartouche containing a map of the Maltese archipelago²⁹.



Map 3. Johannes Janssonius, *Valletta civitas nova Maltae olim Militariae*, in *Theatrum celebriorum urbium Italiae, aliarumque Insulis maris Mediterranei. illustriorum Italiae urbium tabulae, cum Appendice Celebriorum in Maris Mediterranei Insulis Civitatum*, Amsterdam, 1657; MUŽA - Mužew Nazzjonali tal-Arti, Valletta, Albert Ganado Malta Map Collection, 31459-60. Image: Courtesy of Heritage Malta - MUŽA - the National Community Art Museum, Valletta, and HMML's Malta Study Center.

²⁸ Ibid., pp. 456-457.

²⁹ Ibid., p. 556.

Janssonius map of Valletta captured the intensity Dell'Antella's original drawing by vividly incising the angles and corners of the main fortifications of the renaissance city. However, Janssonius' re-engraving reduced the cluttered legends and secondary panels found in Merian's and Villamena's engravings. Instead, Janssonius combined the coat of arms of the Grand Master with the cartouche of the archipelago accentuated by the addition of trophies of war. He correspondingly placed the detailed legend in a smaller, more discreet position in the upper right corner of the map. The reallocation of space allowed the Dutch cartographer to add a vivid naval battle scene of warring galleys absent from the original engraving. The scene is witnessed by a rowboat and part of a galley whose spectators nonchalantly admire the battle scene at a distance. This discreet viewing of the merchants, perhaps marketing to the seaborne clientele of Amsterdam, may have been a way of reassuring them of the protection of their merchandize through the valiant actions of the fleet of the Order of Saint John. Janssonius also placed the title of the engraving on a crate carried by workers in the lower left corner of the map in order not to distract the viewer from the fortifications³⁰. One is left with an impression of a city in its monumentality, governed by a military-religious Order defending the sea, tactfully placed in relief against the aesthetic tastes of the emerging Dutch bourgeoisie of the seventeenth century. Referred to as the Dutch Republic's Golden Age, the seventeenth century saw unprecedented levels of prosperity in one of Europe's tiniest states which generated an affluence that was both welcome and dreaded as potentially corrosive of morality.³¹

The success of Matteo Perez d'Aleccio's (1547-1615?) panoramic bird's-eye view of Valletta originally printed in 1582 led other artists to envision ways to capture the new city's stunning fortified geometric plan designed by the architect and engineer Francesco Laparelli.³² Artists were captivated by Perez d'Aleccio's horizontal rendering of the omnipresent fortifications that protected the urban center and the inclusion of people

³⁰ The cartouche in Janssonius' map was copied from a design by Stefano Della Bella. See E. CHETCUTI, *The Cartographic Cartouche in Maps*, in «Malta Map Society Journal», II/2 (2021), pp. 52-59.

³¹ S. SCHAMA, *The Embarrassment of Riches: An Interpretation of Dutch Culture in the Golden Age*, London, Collins, 1987.

³² J. SCHIRÒ, *The Discovery of a Rare Perez d'Aleccio Copperplate of the Great Siege of Malta*, in *A Timeless Gentleman: Festschrift in honour of Maurice de Giorgio*, Malta, Fondazzjoni Patrimonju Malti, 2014, pp. 179-180.

and activities showing the vivid reality of the new city. Later artists also admired and replicated the naming of buildings within the map as well as the detailed legend identifying the major buildings, physical features, and geography of the new renaissance city. Yet, Perez d'Aleccio's plan of Valletta retained a flatness in its rendering of the urban space and fortifications; its three-dimensional perspective, displayed more like a top-view, did not fully capture Laparelli's orthogonal plan and trigonometric design that provided lines, angles, and corners that could be engraved by a skilled artist to magnify the city's geometric plan³³.

An attempt to enhance the three-dimensional depth of Perez d'Aleccio's original design can be found in the undated broadside *La nouvelle ville de Malte, nommée Vallette, capitale de l'Isle de Malte* printed in Paris ca. 1690-1700³⁴ (Map 4). The undated map was engraved by Pierre Alexandre Aveline (ca. 1654-1722)³⁵ and was likely printed by Gabriel Bodenher the Elder in the second half of the seventeenth century. The Aveline family produced prolific engravers and draftsmen who contributed to the growing interest in cartography in the French *ancien régime*. Pierre Aveline had a reputation for engraving cities, though his son Antoine Aveline (1691-1743) was more prolific in his urban vistas, including a distinct engraving of Valletta, entitled *Les villes forts et châteaux de Malte capitale de l'isle de ce nom située en la Mer Méditerranée entre la Sicile et l'Afrique* printed between 1733 and 1743. This later map included the additions of the fortified walls of Floriana and Cottoner Lines, along with the newly constructed Fort Ricasoli and Fort Manoel, not found in the earlier *La nouvelle ville de Malte* engraved by his father Pierre³⁶.

³³ T. JÄGER, *The Art of Orthogonal Planning: Laparelli's Trigonometric Design of Valletta*, in «Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians», LXIII/1 (2004), pp. 7-8.

³⁴ P. AVELINE, *La nouvelle ville de Malte, nommée Vallette, capitale de l'Isle de Malte*, Paris, Fait par Aveline avec Privilège du Roy, ca. 1690-1700; MUŽA - Mužew Nazzjonali tal-Arti, Valletta, Albert Ganado Malta Map Collection, 31505-6.

³⁵ A. GANADO, *Valletta Città Nuova*, p. 287. The printer and dating of the map have remained a bit of an enigma. It has been assigned to Gabriel Bodenher the Elder and dated between 1665 and 1700 by most cartographic historians, some favoring ca. 1665 and others 1690-1700. Gabriel Bodenher the Elder is the most enigmatic of the Bodenher family of engravers. His father, Johann Georg Bodenher, was born in 1631 and died in 1704. He had two brothers Moritz (1665-1749) and George Conrad (1673-1710). Gabriel the Elder's dates have been given as 1673-1765, 1664-1758, and 1634-1727.

³⁶ A. AVELINE, *Les villes forts et châteaux de Malte capitale de l'isle de ce nom située en la Mer Méditerranée entre la Sicile et l'Afrique*, Paris, 1733-1743.



Map 4. P. Aveline, *La nouvelle ville de Malte, nommée Vallette, capitale de l'Isle de Malte*, Paris, Fait par Aveline avec Privilège du Roy, ca. 1690-1700; MUŻA - Mużew Nazzjonali tal-Arti, Valletta, Albert Ganado Malta Map Collection, 31505-6. Image Courtesy of Heritage Malta - MUŻA - the National Community Art Museum, Valletta, and HMML's Malta Study Center.

Aveline's *Nouvelle ville de Malte* differed in several important ways from the original Perez d'Aleccio engraving. Here the engraver tilted the map by several degrees, allowing for deeper perspective into the city rather than the dominant top-down view afforded by its sixteenth-century source. While the new perspective of the Aveline map gained depth and created the possibility of a horizon, the viewer lost the ability to fully comprehend the intricate grid-plan for Valletta as designed by Lapa-relli and illustrated in the Perez d'Aleccio engraving. The Aveline map also put significant attention on maritime activity around the city, while removing the dynamic military life found in the Perez d'Aleccio map. Moreover, the identification of Malta with the Order of Saint John has largely been removed from the engraving. While Perez d'Aleccio's engraving emphasized the Order's claim to the island with multiple Hospitaller coats of arms and the martialing of the Order's military forces, whether through the galley fleet exercising its guns, or the promenade of knights in formation or manning the city's artillery, the Aveline map, in contrast, illustrated a somewhat fanciful scene of maritime activity

filling an imagined harbor space around the city. This imaginary maritime space, which removed the wider and complementary sites of Grand Harbor and Marsamxett Harbor, placed Valletta as the center of Maltese maritime life and power. The illustrations surrounding Valletta now show a dynamic harbor filled with life and action. Numerous, but seemingly unrelated battle scenes dominate the lower margin of the map, while merchant vessels sail peacefully away from the naval conflicts. The viewer is given a sense of the military importance of the Order of Saint John's navy to protect the merchant convoys, calling attention to Valletta's role as a safe harbor between Europe and the North African coast. Indeed, the garden area outside the walls, where residents stroll in peace, accentuates the protection afforded to the inhabitants and visitors of Valletta, not only through the force of arms at sea, but the fortifications deliberately facing the sea to show the military and economic might of the new capital of the Order of Saint John in relation to the burgeoning trade between Marseilles, Toulon, and Valletta in the eighteenth century.

The four early modern maps presented here show how Valletta and the Mediterranean were portrayed by printmakers through a Hospitaller lens, where the history of the Order of Saint John and the foundation of Valletta as the capital of their new island-order-state served as a bastion of European stability and strength against the encroachment of the Ottomans³⁷. At the same time, the display of continuous naval actions over time, the heavy fortifications of the city of Valletta, and the representation of lost territories as still Christian, underpin the anxiety and reality of the conflict between the major powers in the Mediterranean. Each of these printmakers used the fortress city of Valletta and the knights of the Order of Saint John with different accentuations as a reminder of efforts to maintain the frontier defense, projecting confidence in this defense through the fortified port and naval power of the knights. The maps, in this sense, reimagined a Hospitaller geography in the Mediterranean shaping the viewer's understanding by balancing the anxiety of Ottoman expansion against Christendom's Mediterranean ambitions.

³⁷ J. ABELA, E. BUTTIGIEG, *The Island Order State on Malta and its harbour, c.1530-c.1624*, in *The Harbour of Malta*, (ed.) C. Vassallo and S. Mercieca, Malta, Progress Press, 2018, pp. 49-74.

