

UNESCO Memory of the World Register - Great Siege of Malta Maps by Giovanni Francesco Camocio

In addition to the World Heritage list of cultural and natural sites, UNESCO maintains the 'Memory of the World International Register', established with the aim of preserving and digitizing humanity's documentary heritage.

Maps of the Great Siege of Malta by Giovanni Francesco Camocio (fl. second half 16th century) have recently been recognised as exceptional documentary heritage and inscribed on this register.

This followed the discovery in 2013 of State 2 of this map at the Charles University Map Collection in Prague, which provided the opportunity to link it with States 1, 3 and 4 found in the Cartographic Collection at the National Museum of Fine Arts, Valletta, Malta. This significant merge thus permanently sealed this four-state series of maps, which collectively fill one of the many lacunae in the visual chronicle of the well-known

Great Siege of Malta of 1565. Should one of the states be lost or damaged, the integrity of this series would be irreparably compromised.

It cannot be emphasized enough that Great Siege maps are precious primary sources that act as the visual equivalent to written accounts of this battle, which determined the course of the history of the Mediterranean and Europe in the 16th century.

In view of this, the virtual amalgamation of States 1, 3 and 4 with State 2 is effective in bringing together two overseas institutions sharing the common goal of educating and empowering the public.



Four maps forming a unique narrative of the Great Siege of 1565 have been given world recognition by UNESCO, making it into the Memory of the World Register.

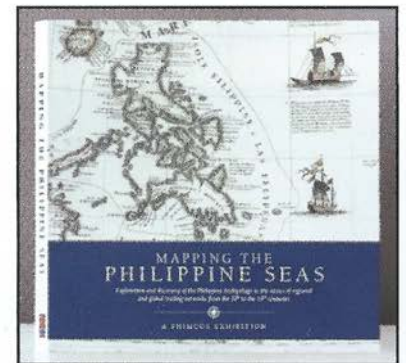
A ceremony took place on 5 April 2018 at the Nostic Palace, Prague, by invitation from the Minister of Culture of the Czech Republic, PhDr. Ilja Šmíd, for the ceremonial handover of the certificates of Memory of the World International Register. Joseph Schiro and Bernadine Scicluna represented the Malta Map Society at this ceremony.

PHIMCOS, the Philippine Map Collectors' Society – Update.

A few years ago we introduced this association to our readers (MiH50, September 2014, p. 29). Since then, PHIMCOS has accomplished a lot, in particular a number of exhibitions were organised. The most recent one was held in 2017 to commemorate their 10th anniversary: *Mapping the Philippine Seas*; it showcased 166 maps and charts of the Philippine archipelago and its surrounding seas from the 16th to the 19th centuries, highlighting the historical importance of the location of the Philippines along

the maritime trade routes through east and southeast Asia; the European exploration of those trade routes; the search for faster and safer sea passages to and within the archipelago; and the use of new, improved charts for the safety of seafarers.

One may get an idea of this exhibition by viewing a nice video, *Philippines maps through time* on their website: www.phimcos.org, which can provide an interesting complement to the history of maps of the Spice Islands (ref. our Conference on Indonesia last



December) or serve as an introduction to the first part of this year's IMCOS Symposium which they organise in Manila (15 – 17 October) – see details on www.imcos-2018-manila.com.