



Malta

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Introduction

2004 was a focal year for digitisation of cultural heritage in Malta, since it saw the kickstart of many different aspects relating to policies and projects, and also the continuation and strengthening of other aspects that were already in operation since 2003. It was also a momentous year because our accession in the EU on 1st May, and even here, in our celebrations we never forgot the heritage that surrounds us. In fact for 15 minutes before midnight of the 1st of May we broadcasted all over Europe thanks to satellite, digital images of our heritage projected on the bastions of Fort St. Angelo, one of our fortification jewels in the natural Grand Harbour near Valletta, our capital city.

Policy

Heitage Malta, the National Agency entrusted with the management of national museums and heritage sites and their collections in Malta and Gozo, worked heavily throughout 2004 on the first draft of the National Digitisation Policy for Cultural Heritage. Consultation meetings were held with both the Ministry for Tourism and Culture, and also the Ministry for Investment, Industry and Information Technology with very positive outcomes. The draft policy's main points were also formally launched in the 1st Annual Conference of Heritage Malta with the theme "Investing in Cultural Heritage" that was held on the 24th November at the Valletta Waterfront. The overriding objective of the Maltese policy is "Ensuring that Maltese Cultural Heritage is preserved and therefore appreciated by present and future generations"

The sub objectives of the policy are:

- education – from the child to the pensioner
- research and technological innovation
- accessibility – easier public access to cultural resources
- positive economic factors – new economy, cultural tourism, sale of IPR
- co-ordination of Initiatives concerning the different cultural heritage sectors including even intangible heritage
- uniform approach of different memory institutions (archives, libraries, museums, etc.) for integrated access to cultural heritage

The strategy of the policy will follow as much as possible the Life Cycle approach as follows:

- creation of individual digital resources
- management to make resources accessible and meaningful
- collection Development – databank of resources
- access – for education, research, tourism, entertainment, culture
- repackaging – creating multiple uses of the same resource (e.g. online exhibitions, e-learning etc.).

Malta is following in the footsteps of the more experienced countries and the ideals are all enforced in several European and international based documents amongst which notable to mention are:

- the Lund Principles and Action Plan
- the *Charter of Parma*
- the National Representatives Group (NRG) reports
- the results of the MINERVA and MINERVA Plus European projects.

The next steps in 2005 will be a wider public and stakeholder consultation on the National Digitisation Policy, and the creation of a priority list of both tangible and intangible heritage that would need immediate and urgent interventions of digitisation in order to ensure proper preservation and documentation.

Co-operation and networking

Malta was the focal point of several networking and dissemination events on digitisation of Cultural Heritage. The following are just some of the main events throughout the past year:

28 January 2004: *Access to culture for persons with disability*

A public seminar organised by Heritage Malta in collaboration with the 'Kummissjoni Nazzjonali Persuni b'Dizabilita' and the support of the 'European Commission Delegation in Malta', at the 'Mediterranean Conference Centre', Valletta. The aspects of digitisation were touched upon since they provide one of the means of making particular cultural heritage more accessible.

11 February 2004: *Rethinking Conservation: Does Responsibility for Conservation Begin and End with Cultural Heritage?*

Public lecture by May Cassar (Centre for Sustainable Heritage - University College London) organised by the Institute for Masonry and Construction Research - University of Malta in collaboration with Heritage Malta, at Heritage Malta Head Office, Valletta

5 April 2004: *CulturMed conference*, Catania

On the innovative technologies, communications and marketing techniques for Museums, heritage sites and cultural tourism. Malta was represented by Mrs Antoinette Caruana where she described the current scenario in Maltese museums and collections

1 May 2004-30 June 2004: *Caravaggio - La mostra impossibile*

An exhibition with full-scale digitally printed reproductions of the paintings of Caravaggio, organised by 'The Caravaggio Foundation', RAI and Regione Campania in collaboration with Heritage Malta, 'Ministry for Tourism and Culture' and Cottonera Waterfront on the occasion of Malta's entry in the European Union, at the Caraffa Stores, Vittoriosa.

22 May 2004: *The National Memory Project*

Public Lecture by Charles Farrugia, National Archives, as part of the Half Day Seminar 'Museums and Intangible Heritage' organised by ICOM Malta on the occasion of the 'International Museum Day 2004', at Heritage Malta Head Office, Valletta

15-17 November 2004: *IST Conference*, The Hague, Netherlands

Malta was represented by several delegates from the private and public sector on workshops relating to Digitisation of Cultural Heritage, amongst which "Results and Experiences in digitizing and accessing cultural and scientific resources" and "Access and preservation of cultural and scientific resources"

22 November 2004: *CAMUS - Digitisation in Small Museums*, Ravenna, Italy

Malta was represented by Angele Giuliano during



the discussions for the creation of a pan-European network for the digitisation of artefacts from small museums and collections.

25 November 2004: *New ways of experiencing Cultural Heritage and Cultural Tourism: Market and Marketing Challenges and Solutions*
Public lecture by Prof. Neil G Kotler (University of Chicago), organised by Heritage Malta in collaboration with the 'University of Malta', at the University of Malta, Msida

Current projects and digitisation initiatives

MINERVA Plus

Malta continued to contribute in the 6th Framework Programme Co-ordination Action project MINERVA Plus, with active contributions to events and knowledge transfer, thanks to its member partner Heritage Malta, represented by Antoinette Caruana, the Chief Executive Officer. The knowledge on digitisation gained thanks to MINERVA Plus is being put to good use locally.

TriMED

This Culture2000 project focusing on Mediterranean Islands and the Trilogy of Wine, Oil and Bread, in which the Maltese partner is the Ethnography section of Heritage Malta, contains aspects of Digitisation of intangible heritage, thanks to a set of live video interviews with old Maltese farmers that explain their trade and techniques in the production of olives, wheat and grapes, and in their processing until they become the products that form such an integral part of Maltese (and Mediterranean) cuisine. The other Mediterranean islands participating in the

project are Majorca (Spain), Corsica (France), Naxos (Greece), Sicily (Italy) and Cyprus.

IKONOS

Continuing in its efforts as a Euromed Heritage II project led by the Malta Centre for Restoration, the IKONOS project focused on several pilots of using the advanced methodologies developed by MCR, including Thealasermetry. The latter methodology is a marriage of 3 techniques (theodolite total station, photogrammetry and laser scanning) which was developed by MCR to produce accurate 3-Dimensional models of cultural heritage sites and artefacts.

Thealasermetry has already been successfully applied at Corradino temples in Malta and is currently also being utilised in a survey being carried out by MCR for the Midi consortium at Manoel Island.
www.ikonosheritage.org/

DELTA

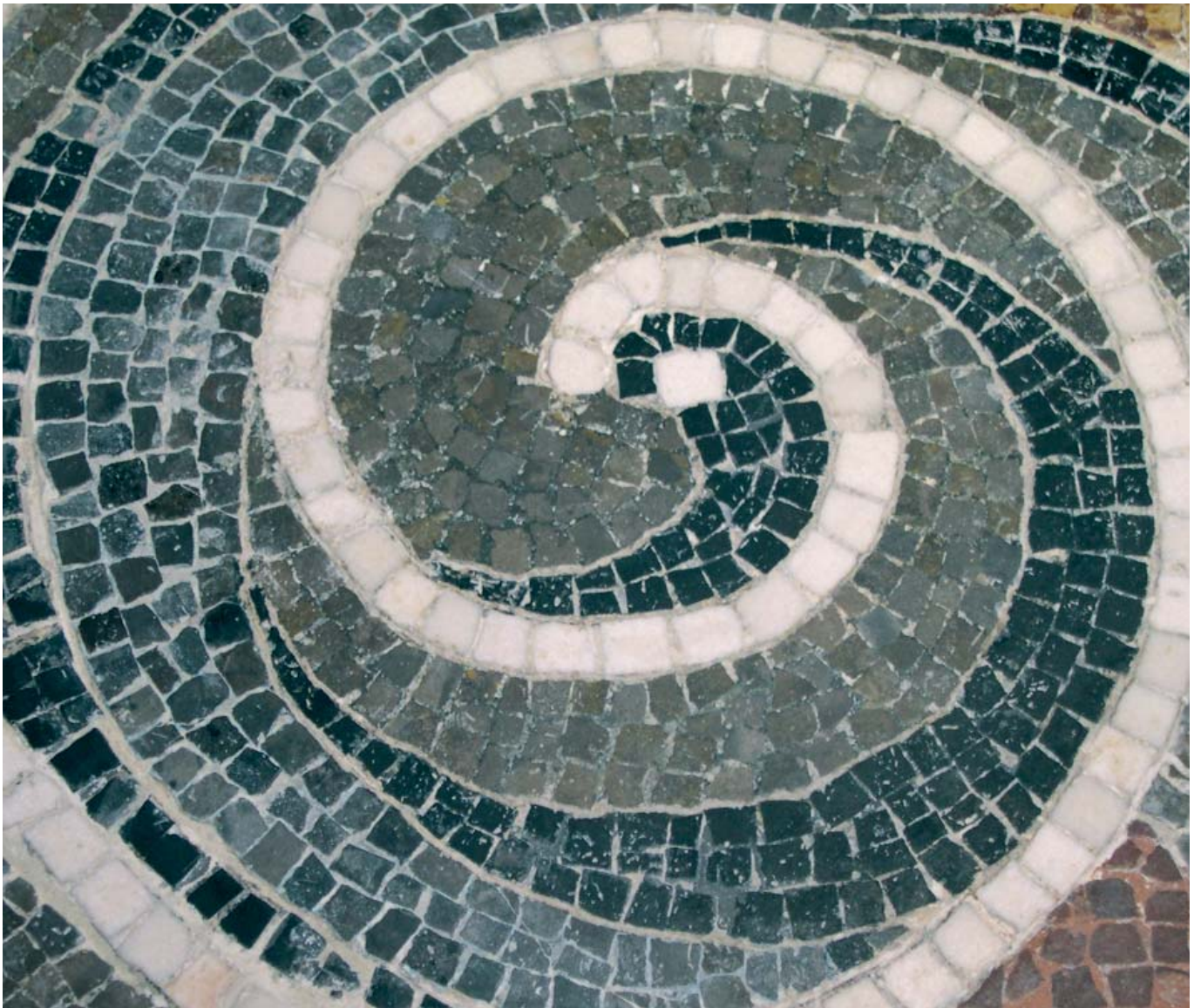
The DELTA Project, funded under the Euromed Heritage II programme, was conceived in order to contribute to the enhancement, in the Euro-Mediterranean region, of the potentialities of integrated development between economic, environment and cultural heritage, which have not yet been wholly exploited. The Maltese partner for DELTA, the Foundation for International Studies, has launched a mini-digitisation project on culture and crafts in the Cottonera area in Malta.
www.imednet.it/delta/

Microfilming and Digitisation of the Consolato del Mare records

During 2004, the National Archives, which is a section



Valletta, old buses, details



Mosaic pavement, detail
Rabat, Museum of the Domus Romana

of the Libraries and Archives Department under the Ministry of Education microfilmed and digitised the records of the Consolato del Mare for the years 1698 up to 1730. The funds for such an initiative came from the Navigation du Savoir project, in which the University of Malta was a leading partner.

Microfilming and Digitisation of Passport Applications

During the year in question the digitisation of passport applications for the years 1813 up to 1923 continued. This is a joint project of the National Archives with the Genealogical Society of Utah.

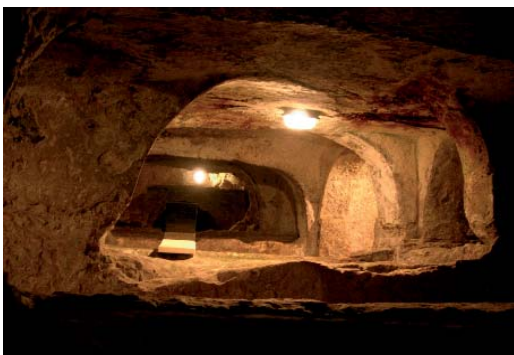
Microfilming and Digitisation of Memorial and Public Secretary Records

Sponsorship from the general public coordinated by the Friends of the National Archives made it possible to microfilm and digitise the series of Memoriali (1800-1814) and the records of the Public Secretary (1800-1814).

Upcoming Initiatives

Several interesting national digitisation initiatives are currently in the very initial phases of inception. During 2005 these will continue to evolve and thanks to direct national, European or international funding, should however start to function. These include:

- digitisation of ethnographic collections
- virtual walkthroughs of national palaces and places of interest
- creation of e-learning packages for children using digitised information
- interactive software for academic research on digitised collections.



St. Paul's Catacombs



Rabat, door handle