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## Volume 8 of the Grand Master L'Isle Adam Manuscript Collection: an Example of Degradation and Pre-treatment Testing

### Abstract

The subject of this research paper is about a particular volume, volume 8, which forms part of the collection of the L'Isle Adam manuscripts. The collection consists of ten illuminated graduals that were commissioned by the Grand Master L'Isle Adam (1521–1534) for the Order of the Knights of St. John in Malta. The manuscripts, which date from 1533, are housed in the Museum of St. John's Co-Cathedral, Valletta, Malta. Due to liturgical reforms following the Council of Trent (1545–1563), the manuscripts were revised, amended and in some cases even rebound. Successive interventions carried out in the 18<sup>th</sup> century on volume 8, when the manuscript was used as support material to introduce new liturgical chants, are also discussed. Owing to the complexities of various parchment and paper reactions, together with the degrading of poor quality inks used in the 18<sup>th</sup> century interventions, volume 8 was selected for research, and is, therefore, quoted in this paper as an example of the issues that conservators encounter when, as part of their work, they assess and treat manuscripts. Scientific analysis and pre-treatment testing on materials such as iron gall ink, pigments and paper have been conducted. Moreover, a discussion on the extent and method of treatment, if at all necessary, is also presented. The scientific study and observations made on this particular volume, within the collection of the L'Isle Adam graduals, can be considered as a strong buttress for the conservation treatment proposals that have been put forward as part of this project.