



The Order of St John

The HOLY PLACE was a site for pilgrimage, where Christians visited from all over Europe. It was a long and dangerous journey and thus soon after their arrival help, clothing and shelter were needed.

The PILIGRANS were the Christians who ought to travel to the Holy land despite the attacks of the Muslims. Some were killed, injured or robbed. To prevent or lessen such attacks the order opted to extend their "hospitality" throughout their route.

➤ 1085: Origins of the Order. Their aim was to:

- ✓ To nurse the Christians
- ✓ To extend evangelical charity
- ✓ Provide military service

Charity Function ---- ---- -- > Military Function

- ✓ Built Hospitals: were best in Europe.

➤ This Monastic order honored 3 vows:

1. Poverty → they weren't the owners of the property & thus couldn't dispose any of it.
2. Obedience
3. Chastity

- A Western Christian military order that originated during the middle Ages. Founded around 1023 to provide care for poor, sick or injured pilgrims to the Holy Land. After the Western Christian conquest of Jerusalem in 1099 during the First Crusade, the organization became a religious and military order under its own charter, and was charged with the care and defence of the Holy Land. Following the conquest of the Holy Land by Islamic forces, the Order operated from Rhodes, over which it was sovereign, and later from Malta where it administered a vassal state under the Spanish viceroy of Sicily.

➤ 3 Phases of the Order:

1. Jerusalem: Been expelled from the Holy land by the Muslims by 1291 & later took refuge on Cyprus.
2. Rhodes (1306-1319): In 1309 they conquered Rhodes & became known as the Knights of Rhodes. The order was driven from Rhodes in 1522 by the Turkish sultan Suleiman I.



3. Malta: In 1530 the Emperor Charles V gave the knights Malta, which they ruled until they were overcome by Napoleon in 1798. The order moved later to Rome by 1834.

➤ Requirements of the Knights:

- A. Land Ownership
- B. Great path protection: from Spain & Portugal

NO LANDS NO PROTECTION

As long as these two factors survived the knights could eventually overcome any loss of countries. (when a country reformed its religion from Christian) However, by the French revolution when their land here was confiscated. From here onwards, it was spread the idea of abolishing of those who own land. As a result, several properties of the knights across the world were banished, especially the Monarchy in Spain. Consequently by the time the French arrived to Malta, the order was defenseless and thus lost Malta. It then started to be a charitable institution. Wh

➤ The Orders administrative structure.

- ➔ CHAPTER CHANEL : was above the order: Legislative & Curriculum (taxes & decisions)
- ➔ GRANDMASTER: the head of the Order
- ➔ COMMANDER : head of the commendery

The only estate of administration was the commandry(was the smallest division of the European landed estate or manor under the control of a commander (or commendator), of an order of knights.)All the commandry within the village would make the Priory & they later were grouped into larger units called the Langues. Thus, EACH PRIORY WAS MADE OF A NUMBER OF COMMANDERS.

Priory

- ➔ *Every priory Had a Treasury official known as the receiver. His function was to collect all the dues which belonged to the Order to be collected in the Common Treasury.*



- The annual income was known as the ANNATE, this was taken to the Convent (common treasury). Which was the headquarters of the Order were one finds a church, hospital & treasury.

Treasury official

- Since he was the head of the institution he was chosen by votes.

The Order's Expeditions

The Holy leagues, was an expedition organized by the papacy which united other Christian states to defend Christianity. Since the pope was the head of the Order those asked to be involved had no option and thus were automatically included in such expeditions. Their role was to provide gullies such as ships, which were at that time the best due to their experience.

Expeditions:

- Spanish military against Muslims.
- Lonely adventurous expeditions: it was a seasonal cruise in search of Muslims which in the process harassed Muslims in land and sea.

Corsairing : It was either →

- × Illegitimate
- ✓ Legitimate

In Malta:

In Malta it was allowed to develop and become one of the leading industries of the island. It employed a large amount of people and brought a lot of revenue. By 1605 the Grandmaster Wigna Court set up the " TRIBUNALE DEGLI ARNAMENTI" which was an area to set boats for corsairing. It regulated the way booty was disposed of and the activity method. The 10% booty would go as income for the Grandmaster.

Origin of the Confrontation between Ottomans & Habsburgs

A. Conquest of Constantinople;

The Fall of Constantinople was the capture of the capital of the Byzantine Empire, which occurred after a siege by the Ottoman Empire, under the command of Sultan Mehmed II, against the defending army commanded by Emperor Constantine XI. The siege lasted from Friday, 6 April 1453 until Tuesday, 29



May 1453 (according to the Julian Calendar), when the city was conquered by the Ottomans.

- The Fall of Constantinople marked the end of the Byzantine Empire, an empire which had lasted for over 1,100 years, and was a massive blow for Christendom. After the conquest Mehmed made Constantinople the Ottoman Empire's new capital. Several Greek and non-Greek intellectuals fled the city before and after the siege, migrating particularly to Italy. It is argued that they helped fuel the Renaissance. Some mark the end of the Middle Ages by the fall of the city and empire.^[14]

B. *Lutheran Reformation:*

The Protestant Reformation (1517) , also called the Protestant Revolt or simply The Reformation, was the European Christian reform movement that established Protestantism as a constituent branch of contemporary Christianity. It was led by Martin Luther, John Calvin and other Protestants. The self-described "reformers" (who "protested") objected to the doctrines, rituals and ecclesiastical structure of the Roman Catholic Church, and created new national Protestant churches. The Catholics responded with a Counter Reformation, led by the Jesuit order, which reclaimed large parts of Europe, such as Poland. In general, northern Europe turned Protestant, and southern Europe remained Catholic, while fierce battles that turned into warfare took place in the center. The largest of the new denominations were the Anglicans (based in England), the Lutherans (based in Germany and Scandinavia), and the Reformed churches (based in Germany, Switzerland, the Netherlands and Scotland). There were many smaller bodies as well. The most common dating begins in 1517 when Luther published The Ninety-Five Theses, and concludes in 1648 with the Treaty of Westphalia that ended years of European religious wars.

- C. *The siege of Rhodes:* The Siege of Rhodes of 1522 was the second and ultimately successful attempt by the Ottoman Empire to expel the Knights of Rhodes from their island stronghold and thereby secure Ottoman control of the Eastern Mediterranean. The first siege, in 1480, had been unsuccessful.
- D. *Wars on the Continent of Europe " War of coursers " ;* Charles V abdicate as Emperor of the Spanish Empire after a series of wars with the Ottomans . This gave the order breathing space and thus time to design their own ambitions & naval military traditions. These tiny wars disturb for a while the Ottoman Empire's expansion in north African coasts.
- E. *War against Africa (East of Tunisia) aka Mahdiya :* In Djerba (in Tunisia) was set the operation base of Dragut a famous coarser at that time. Dragut's fleet was growing rapidly and as though Djerba served him well, he needed a bigger base. He put his eye on Mahdiya and soon afterwards he conquered it. As a result the Christians attacked here and Dragut had to surrender. The Order however decided not to take over here as they were still recovering from Rhodes.



- F. *Tripoli in 1551*: The Muslims later attacked Tripoli and won. The Siege of Tripoli occurred in 1551 when the Ottomans besieged and vanquished the Knights of Malta in the fortress of Tripoli, modern Libya.^[1] The Spanish Habsburgs had established a fort in Tripoli in 1510 under Charles V, and remitted it the Knights in 1530.^{[2][3]} The siege culminated in a six-day bombardment and the surrender of the city on August 15.
- G. *Siege of Malta 1565*: The Muslims later opted to gain their revenge by attacking the Maltese island. The siege of Tripoli succeeded an earlier attack on Malta in July, which was repelled, and the successful Invasion of Gozo (1551), in which 5,000 Christians captives were taken and brought on galleys to the location of Tripoli.

The Knights in Malta

The Knights ought to drive out the Muslims from certain territories, thus continued to fight and confront the Muslims in:

- *1531 : The Island Of Modom :been occupied with the Turks. Here, Muslims were slaughtered and the village was devastated. It received criticism from the papacy.*
- *1532: The Island of Coron.: A lot of different Christian squadrons. (this showed the need of other forces.) The Knights succeeded to take over such island from the Muslims, but became under the Habsburgs and when it was offered to them they declined since they had already Malta to take care of and thus no split power.)*

Such expeditions were daring but were necessary, as they distracted the Ottomans away.

- ✓ Built fortifications to resist gun powder.
- ✓



About History:

History is a continuous process of change. It is a widest context that determines that particular phenomenon and gives importance to a wider context.

- ❖ *By Braudel* : During the 15th century the Conquest of Constantinople seems to be the major cause of the Ottoman & Habsburg confrontation.
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- ❖ *By Braudel* : about the island of Coron. " Since the Knights of Malta were unwilling to be responsible for it, the little corporate was dismantled a few years later"



❖ *By Monedini* : Origen of their expeditions against Muslims:

- Spanish Golden Age : The Spanish Golden Age (Spanish: *Siglo de Oro*, Golden Century) period of flourishing in arts and literature in Spain, coinciding with the political rise and decline of the Spanish Habsburg dynasty.

Problems the knights Faced in Malta

The knights had not yet recovered from the loss of Rhodes until the late of the 16th century. It had several weaknesses.

Prior to the loss of Rhodes:

- * The military squadron had participated in every expedition which might have lessened their strength & stability.
- * Process of Protestants: suppression of the land in England resulted in the constant loss of Revenue. The property of the Order in England was confiscated by Henry VIII because of a dispute with the Pope over the dissolution of his marriage to Catherine of Aragon, which eventually led to the dissolution of the monasteries. Although not formally suppressed, this caused the activities of the English Langue to come to an end.

After the loss of Rhodes:

- * In 1522 an entirely new sort of force arrived: 400 ships under the command of Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent delivered 200,000 men to the island.^[7] Against this force the Knights, under Grand Master Philippe Villiers de L'Isle-Adam, had about 7,000 men-at-arms and their fortifications. The siege lasted six months, at the end of which the surviving defeated Hospitallers were allowed to withdraw to Sicily.
- * Treasures inability to collect its due: after the loss of Rhodes, the knights had not yet recognized themselves.



- * Hunger on islands: In both Malta & Gozo there was a great scarcity of Bread.

The Loss of Tripoli (1551)

Dragut, after escaping cleverly from Gerba, was invested with the command of the Ottoman navy, thus renewing the formidable combination that had earned Turkey its triumphs in the time of Barbarossa. He sought to avenge himself for his loss of Mehedia by taking Malta from its knights, and fell upon the island in July 1551. The defences were too strong for him, however, and he found an easier prey in Gozo, where he seized most of the inhabitants as slaves. Not content with this, he headed immediately for Tripoli, subjecting the fortress to a close siege with all the military power of Turkey behind him

The construction programme in Malta

The knights decided to settle on the Maltese Island, and thus started planning a construction programme to prevent them from further loss of territory. They built the Fort of St Michael & St Elmo. A new town known as Senglea was formed. The Old fortifications of Mdina, Cittadella (gozo) & St. Angelo were repaired. All this re-construction made Malta much more safer than ever.

The Great Siege of Malta

At this time, attacks from the Eastern power were inevitable. In 1565 Suleiman sent an invasion force of about 40,000 men to besiege the 700 knights and 8,000 soldiers and expel them from Malta and gain a new base from which to possibly launch another assault on Europe.^[8]

At first the battle went as badly for the Hospitallers as Rhodes had: most of the cities were destroyed and about half the knights killed. On 18 August the position of the besieged was becoming desperate: dwindling daily in numbers, they were becoming too feeble to hold the long line of fortifications. But when his council suggested the abandonment of Il Borgo and Senglea and withdrawal to Fort St. Angelo, Grand Master Jean Parisot de la Valette refused.

The Viceroy of Sicily had not sent help; possibly the Viceroy's orders from Philip II of Spain were so obscurely worded as to put on his own shoulders the burden of the decision whether to help the Knights at the expense of his own defenses. ^[citation needed] A wrong decision could mean defeat and exposing Sicily and Naples to the Ottomans. He had left his own son with La Valette, so he could hardly be indifferent to the fate of the fortress. Whatever may have been the cause of his delay, the Viceroy hesitated until the battle had almost been decided by the unaided efforts of the Knights, before being forced to move by the indignation of his own officers.



Re-enactment of 16th century military drills conducted by the Knights. Fort Saint Elmo, Valletta, Malta, 8 May 2005.

On 23 August came yet another grand assault, the last serious effort, as it proved, of the besiegers. It was thrown back with the greatest difficulty, even the wounded taking part in the defence. The plight of the Turkish forces, however, was now desperate. With the exception of Fort St. Elmo, the fortifications were still intact.^[9] Working night and day the garrison had repaired the breaches, and the capture of Malta seemed more and more impossible. Many of the Ottoman troops in crowded quarters had fallen ill over the terrible summer months. Ammunition and food were beginning to run short, and the Ottoman troops were becoming increasingly dispirited at the failure of their attacks and their losses. The death on 23 June of skilled commander Dragut, a corsair and admiral of the Ottoman fleet, was a serious blow. The Turkish commanders, Piyale Pasha and Mustafa Pasha, were careless. They had a huge fleet which they used with effect on only one occasion. They neglected their communications with the African coast and made no attempt to watch and intercept Sicilian reinforcements.

On 1 September they made their last effort, but the morale of the Ottoman troops had deteriorated seriously and the attack was feeble, to the great encouragement of the besieged, who now began to see hopes of deliverance. The perplexed and indecisive Ottomans heard of the arrival of Sicilian reinforcements in Mellieħa Bay. Unaware that the force was very small, they broke off the siege and left on 8 September. The Great Siege of Malta may have been the last action in which a force of knights won a decisive victory.

Observation of the GREAT siege of Malta

Its greatness is hard to define. It must be tackled in 3 ways:

A. International: It is said that the Siege of Malta ended the advance of the Ottomans. However, 5yrs later the Ottomans faced an other humiliation at Lepanto & yet it survived.

→ Battle of lepanto: The **Battle of Lepanto** took place on 7 October 1571 when a fleet of the Holy League, a coalition of Spain (including its territories of Naples, Sicily and Sardinia), the Republic of Venice, the Papacy, the Republic of Genoa, the Duchy of Savoy, the Knights Hospitaller and others, decisively defeated the main fleet of the Ottoman Empire.

The five-hour battle was fought at the northern edge of the Gulf of Patras, off western Greece, where the Ottoman forces sailing westwards from their naval station in Lepanto (Turkish: *İnebahtı*; Greek: Ναύπακτος, *Naupaktos* or *Επαχτιος*, *Épahtos*) met the Holy League forces, which had come from Messina.^[4] The Victory of the Holy League



prevented the Mediterranean Sea becoming an uncontested highway for Muslim forces, protected Italy from a major Ottoman invasion, and prevented the Ottomans from advancing further into the southern flank of Europe. Lepanto was the last major naval battle fought almost entirely between oar-powered galleys, and has been assigned great symbolic importance since then.

→ Conquest of Tunis: The **Conquest of Tunis in 1574** marked the final conquest of Tunis by the Ottoman Empire over the Spanish Empire. This was an event of great significance as it decided that North Africa would be under Muslim rather than Christian rule, ended the Spanish *Conquista* of Northern Africa started under Isabella I of Castile and Ferdinand II of Aragon.^[1] The capture of Tunis in 1574 "sealed the Ottoman domination of the eastern and central Maghrib".

B. Knights of Malta: It marked the revival of the Order after their loss of Rhodes & Tripoli. Here they once again victorious with the Ottomans.

C. On Malta: The Knights had brought great change to the island, in terms of economy, industry, agriculture..

End of the Knights

By the early 19th century, the order had been severely weakened by the loss of its priories throughout Europe. Only 10% of the order's income came from traditional sources in Europe, with the remaining 90% being generated by the Russian Grand Priory until 1810. This was partly reflected in the government of the Order being under Lieutenants, rather than Grand Masters, in the period 1805 to 1879, when Pope Leo XIII restored a Grand Master to the order. This signalled the renewal of the order's fortunes as a humanitarian and religious organization.

In 1834, the Order established a new headquarters in Rome.^[28] Hospital work, the original work of the order, became once again its main concern. The Order's hospital and welfare activities, undertaken on a considerable scale in World War I, were greatly intensified and expanded in World War II under the Grand Master Fra' Ludovico Chigi Albani della Rovere (Grand Master 1931-1951).

The Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of Saint John of Jerusalem, of Rhodes and of Malta, better known as the Sovereign Military Order of Malta (SMOM), is a Roman Catholic religious order and the world's oldest surviving order of



chivalry.^[29] Its sovereign status is recognised by membership in numerous international bodies and observer status at the United Nations and

QOUTATIONS

Paul Lacroix: (about the Order and its loss of true purpose)

"Inflated with wealth, laden with privileges which gave them almost sovereign powers ... the order at last became so demoralised by luxury and idleness that it forgot the aim for which it was founded, and gave itself up for the love of gain and thirst for pleasure."

Ernle Bradford:

"By the middle of the 12th century the Order of St. John had combined its functions, and had become a mixture of hospitallers and warriors. "

Braudel:

" Another way of being integrated into the Mediterranean life in the sixteenth century was to be constantly harassed by the attacks of the barbary pirates"

