The French Connection in the Defence of Hospitaller Malta (1722-1789)

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The French Connection in the Defence of Hospitaller Malta (1722-1789)

by

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To those who seek the truth and cherish the past, may the lessons of war inspire us to strive for peace for centuries to come.

Abstract

This dissertation examines the extent and the nature of France's role as a protector of Hospitaller Malta during the reigns of Louis XV and Louis XVI, particularly during periods of acute Ottoman threats to the island. France's assistance to Malta was multifaceted, involving the provision of arms, munitions, and military experts, as well as diplomatic efforts to mitigate Ottoman aggression. The scope of this dissertation was to study three significant Ottoman threats (1722-23, 1731-33 and 1761) to illustrate how Hospitaller Malta and France responded to these crises, and to understand whether as, Jacques Godechot claimed, Malta was a dependency of France. In order to provide a complete picture of the extent of France's protective stance, the dissertation has investigated the resourcing of Malta's military even when the Ottoman threat abated, during which time France continued to replenish the islands' armouries and gunpowder stores, including when France's own military stocks were stretched to the limit because of its involvement in continental wars. While France was generally responsive to the Order of St John's military needs, the procurement and delivery of weapons from France was an arduous and complex process, which was only rendered possible by the Order's extensive web of Hospitallers spread throughout France, including grand priors, receivers, agents, and commissioned knights. Central to this extensive network was the ambassador of the Order in Paris, who negotiated with French government officials for the purchase of arms and gunpowder, oftentimes navigating through bureaucratic obstacles and the logistics for the transportation of armaments from across France to Marseille, and thence to Malta. As this dissertation shows, the ambassador was the lynchpin between the knights in France, the court of Versailles, and the Convent in Malta. Divided into seven chapters, this study probes into Hospitaller procedures, those established and those adaptive, for the summoning of knights from the periphery, for reaching out to Europe for assistance, and for the procurement of arms and experts. In chapters 2, 3, 4, and 5, the three Ottoman threats are explored in depth to tease out the dual nature of French assistance in the form of experts and weapons, alongside the diplomatic measures emanating from Versailles that often-placed French-Ottoman relations at risk. Chapter 6 deals with the logistics of procurement, transportation and shipping to Malta in times of stability, and the Order's adaptation to the centralised system of weapons procurement of *ancien régime* France. Chapter 7, on the other hand, focuses on those situations when negotiations in

matters pertaining to the Order's needs were not seamless, especially when the request for manpower intended for the service of the Order had an impact on the navy and the army of France. Conclusions are then drawn on the extent of French protection on Malta, and how both countries benefitted from their mutual support.

Preface

This dissertation builds on my two Masters dissertations, one in Baroque Studies[1] and the other in Hospitaller Studies,[2] during which I investigated the role of three French military engineers in 18th-century Malta. Recognizing that my initial research had only begun to uncover the extent of France's support for Malta in military matters, especially during periods of heightened Ottoman threats, I aimed to explore more deeply the political and diplomatic dynamics behind France's military protection of the island. This dissertation seeks to contextualize the strategic interplay between Hospitaller Malta and France, examining how diplomatic relations and military collaboration with France were organised to bolster Malta's military preparedness during both actual Ottoman threats and the intermittent periods of relative calm.

During my preliminary research on this project, I was daunted by the seeming lack of material concerning solely the military protection offered by France to Hospitaller Malta. I therefore considered widening my scope to include a second part which would venture more into the political side of defence, incorporating Hospitaller interaction with other Christian states and the protection of France in particular political conflicts. However, by expanding my original selection of primary sources I realised that there would be no space for the second part after all. I consulted the diplomatic correspondence of the Ambassador of France to Constantinople, the corpus of letters by the King's *Homme du Roi* in Malta, the correspondence of the Order's ambassador in Paris, volumes from the navy's collection at the National Archives in Paris, letters from France to the Grand Master, and other supporting volumes in the archive of the Order's embassy in Paris, linking up insights from all these. New sources opened new avenues and the complexity and depth of the 'defence' theme became apparent. In light of this, I opted for my original plan of exploring France's contribution to the defence of Hospitaller Malta, basing my decision on my prior work on French military engineers on the island. The political side was reserved for the diplomatic efforts between France and the Order, and occasionally, timely French intervention in Constantinople.

[1] Fleur Brincat, *Bali de Tigné: Knight of Malta, Commissioner of Fortification and Military Engineer (1716-1801)* (Malta, Institute for Baroque Studies University of Malta, 2011).
[2] Fleur Brincat, 'The Military Engineer Fra Antoine Etienne de Tousard (1751-1831),' unpublished MA dissertation, Department of History, University of Malta, 2014.

To assess the degree of France's military support, the research primarily relied on formal diplomatic letters between the Order and France, but also correspondence amongst various Hospitaller officials and between French authorities. It is essential to point out that this dissertation is not a study of diplomacy *per se*, but a work that necessarily relies heavily on the efforts of eight successive ambassadors of the Order based in Paris, who were engaged in the organisation and management of military affairs during times of alarms and also during periods of relative calm.

Divided into seven chapters, the dissertation probes into the contributions of France as the protector of Hospitaller Malta over a seventy-year span during the 18th century. Chapter 1 introduces the study by outlining the core research questions and methodology for examining relations between France and Malta in the context of war. This chapter presents the historical and historiographical framework, emphasizing the multilateral diplomatic dynamics between France, the Ottoman Empire, and Hospitaller Malta. It details the qualitative historical analysis employed throughout the investigation, establishing the historical and historiographical context by delineating the political environments of France, the Ottoman Empire, and Malta during the 18th century, with special emphasis placed on their diplomatic endeavours. This was central to understanding the dynamics of this tripartite relationship. Chapter 2 explores the Ottoman threat to Malta in 1722-23, set against significant events: Louis XV's coronation, the election of a new Grand Master, and a severe French financial crisis that crippled Malta's economy. This economic strain left Malta poorly prepared for a siege, increasing its military reliance on France. Chapter 3 examines a politically significant yet less severe Ottoman threat to Malta from 1731 to 1733. It details the political tension in France following the interception of a French letter *en route* to Malta carrying intelligence on Ottoman fleet movements. This intelligence led to a Hospitaller victory at Damietta in 1732, and subsequent threats of Ottoman retaliation against Malta. This period saw France preparing for an anticipated Ottoman backlash, highlighting the intricate geopolitical dynamics between France, Malta, and the Ottoman Empire. The final Ottoman threat to Malta was the 1761 Corona Ottomana affair, where an Ottoman warship handed over to the Order by rebel Christian slaves led to threats from the Sultan against Malta and France if the ship was not returned. Chapter 4 on this episode delves into the French involvement in defending the island of Malta both diplomatically through France's ambassador in Constantinople and militarily from the corridors of Versailles. This chapter narrates how the final Ottoman

crisis was a large-scale one, involving considerable efforts from France to persuade the Sultan that Hospitaller Malta was an independent sovereign state, with no political hold on it by the King of France. While this was a military crisis for Malta, it was also a trying time for France, which sought to extricate itself from Ottoman pressure by operating under dual pretences. On the one hand, France aimed to appear favourable in the eyes of the Ottomans, exemplified by Louis XV purchasing a ship from Malta and gifting it to the Sultan. On the other hand, France covertly armed Malta with munitions and military experts to defend the island in case French diplomatic efforts fell through. The narrative continues in the second part of this lengthy case study: chapter 5 proceeds to Malta to examine the practical measures taken to ensure the survival of the island in 1761. This chapter focuses on the diplomatic and military contributions of the French while on the island, extending the analysis to the longer-term effects of this crisis.

Although the greatest input from France came during times of fear of an Ottoman onslaught, French assistance continued even during calmer periods. During these intervals, the knights replenished their armoury and gunpowder stores, albeit at a slower pace, demonstrating the ongoing support from France in maintaining Malta's defences. In Chapter 6, the dissertation shifts from the narrative of the three Ottoman threats to an investigation of the resourcing of the island, having the aim of exposing the benevolence of France. This chapter explores the Order's procurement processes and practices, detailing the chain of supply for firearms, artillery and gunpowder. It examines the involvement of ambassadors and representatives of the Order in the logistics of mustering, testing, and shipping military consignments. This detailed analysis includes both direct purchases from the King and transactions with private contractors. To illustrate these practices, two case studies are presented: the substantial firearms deal in 1759 with Saint-Étienne-en-Forez's arms factory, and the procurement of naval masts in 1747 via the King's contractor Babaud de Chaussade. While chapters 2 to 6 illustrate the manner with which France acted as the military protector of Malta, Chapter 7 throws light on the nuance of this protection by investigating manpower issues: the challenges in providing soldiers for the Regiment of Malta in 1777 and in releasing French knights from the royal navy for mandatory caravan duties on the Hospitaller island. These issues reveal the complexities and tensions in the Franco-Hospitaller alliance and underscore the crucial role of the Order of St John's diplomatic corps in sustaining this relationship.

Acknowledgements

This project would not have been possible without the support of a number of academics and friends. My greatest gratitude is directed to my principal supervisor Professor Emanuel Buttigieg for his invaluable academic guidance, for sharing his expertise in the history of the Order of St John and Malta, and for providing much needed moral support during overwhelming and challenging times. His approach is commendable not only for its academic rigour but also for his compassionate recognition of the student behind the project. I am deeply indebted to my co-supervisor, Professor Guy Rowlands, whose transformative guidance illuminated the intricate tapestry of 18th-century France, while his profound insights into the operations of the French military and navy have helped me reveal their connections to the Order of St John, which would have otherwise remained hidden. I am truly fortunate to have had this exceptional mentorship.

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List of Abbreviations

AE	Fonds of documents catalogued under 'Affaires Étrangères' at the Archives Nationales de France, Paris site CARAN.
AIM	Archives of the Inquisition, Mdina, Malta
AMF	Archivio Merenda, Forli
AN	National Archives of France (Paris)
ANOM	Archives Nationales d'Outre-Mer (Aix-en-Provence)
AOM	Archives of the Order of Malta, kept in the National Library of Malta
BNF	Bibliothèque Nationale de France
CP Malte	Correspondence Politique Malte, is a collection of diplomatic documents conserved at the ministry for foreign affairs in La Corneuve, Paris
f/ff	folio/folios
Lib. Ms	Library Manuscript, a collection at the National Library of Malta
M	Series of documents catalogued under the embassy of Malta, and conserved at the Archives Nationales de France, Paris site CARAN.
MAE	Ministères des Affaires Étrangères, is the diplomatic archive of the ministry for foreign affairs in La Corneuve, Paris.
MAR	Marine. Large collection of documents pertaining to the Ministry for the Navy of France, conserved at the Archives Nationales de France, Paris.
NLM	National Library of Malta
r	recto
SHD	Service Historique de la Défence (military archives in Vincennes, Brest, Caen, Cherbourg, Châtellerault, Loreint, Pau, Rochefort, Toulon. Documents used for this dissertation are from the Château de Vincennes).
v	verso

Conversion Tables

Linear measurement

1 French foot = 0.324 metres

1 canna = 8 palmi = 2.095m^2

Rates of exchange used for this dissertation[1]

1 Livre Tournois (France)	=	5 tari 8 grani
1 scudo	=	2.2 livre tournois
1 scudo	=	12 tari

Measurement of weight

1 quintal	=	100 pounds[2]

[1] Anton Quintano, *The Maltese-Hospitaller Sailing Ship Squadron 1701-1798* (Malta, PEG Ltd., 2003), 265-266.
[2] Collins online English Dictionary, retrieved on 5 February 2020, from: https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/quintal#:~:text=noun,weight%20equal%20to%20100%20kilograms

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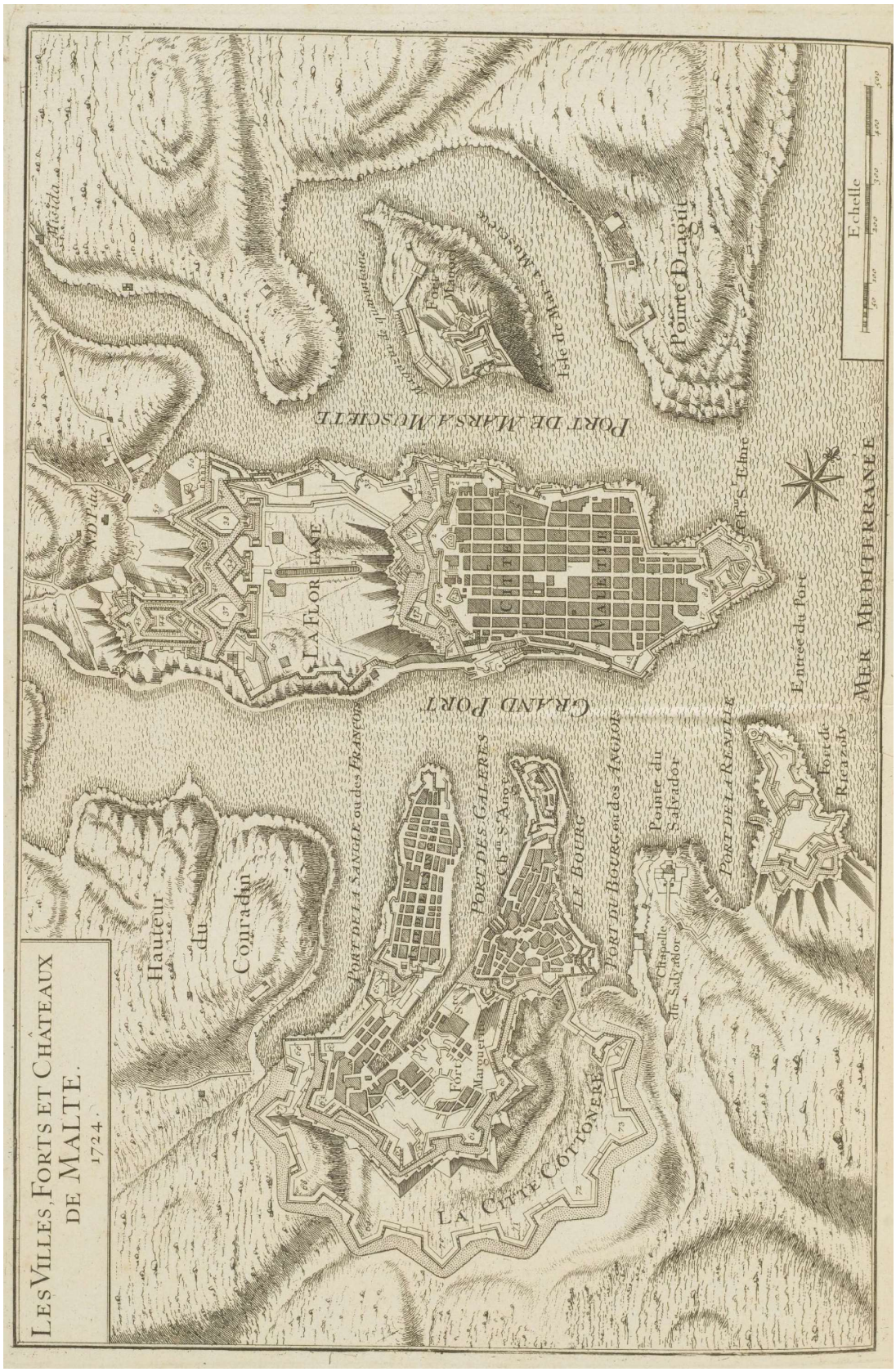
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(Source: https://www.vhmml.org/readingRoom/view/512065)



Map ii Fortifications of the harbour region of Malta in 1724, by René-Aubert de Vertot, *History of the Knights of Malta*, vol. II (London, 1728).
(Source: https://www.vhmml.org/readingRoom/view/512065)

General Introduction : *Nous sommes une milice sainte perpétuelle*

'We are a perpetual Sacred Militia'[1] is how the Order of St John considered itself in the 18th century, decades removed from its engagement in the Holy Wars of the Crusades. By this time, the Ottoman tide that had once threatened to engulf western Europe had receded, and with it, the constant fear of 'the Turk' gradually faded. In this new era of relative tranquillity, punctuated only by occasional episodes of Ottoman threats, the Knights of Malta confronted an unexpected foe: peace itself. Historically forged in the crucible of conflict, the Order's *raison d'être* hinged upon the existence of a palpable non-Christian antagonist to validate its presence within Christendom, rendering the Muslim other a useful enemy.[2] Amidst these changing tides, the knights, alongside the Maltese corsairs, carved out a role as guardians of the seas. Their vigilance against the depredations of Muslim corsairs became a lifeline, not just for their mission but for their coffers as well. By protecting Christian merchant vessels engaged in the maritime trade routes of the Mediterranean Sea, they not only secured a financial stream and reinforced their relevance to Christianity, but also, albeit unintentionally, courted the spectre of war. While Hospitaller Malta was a mere fly in the ointment to the vast Ottoman realm, its maritime pursuits were a constant thorn in the Sultan's side, occasionally pricking the fragile calm which stirred up threats of war. These provocations rekindled the spirit of combat within the knights, but valour and courage, the hallmarks of the knights, were not sufficient safeguards against the periodic threats.[3] The Order on Malta needed all the help it could get.

Surviving an Ottoman siege demanded a robust arsenal of resources – money, arms, defence infrastructure, and men – all indispensable in the theatre of war. From its earliest days, the Order had relied on the benevolence of Christian princes. However, as the sands of time shifted, so too did their reliance, which from the mid-seventeenth century, and more so in the eighteenth, gravitated towards France.[4] The bilateral relationship between France and Malta, and the former's assistance in provisioning the

[1] 'Nous sommes une milice sainte perpétuelle,' AN M992, ff. 220-221, 18th century mémoire by an unknown contemporary author.
[2] See, Noel Malcolm, *Useful Enemies Islam and the Ottoman Empire in Western Political Thought 1450-1750* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2019), xi-xii.
[3] MAE 67 CP vol. 11, f. 151v, 24 February 1761.
[4] Peter Earle, *Corsairs of Malta and Barbary* (London, Sidgewick & Jackson, 1970), 102.

island for war, is captured in the words of a French Commissioner of War at the Department of Artillery in France in 1769:

> Malta, which has become the bulwark of Christendom and the haven for navigators, makes its preservation a necessity for all Princes, and fundamentally to France, with whom the Maltese conduct the most trade; and France is more apt than all other powers at taking advantage of the assistance the situation can offer in times of war. It is these considerations which, at various times, have prompted the King to provide support [to Malta] in the form of all kinds of munitions and artillerists, even up to troops and general officers, whose service in Malta was counted as that given in France during their absence.[5]

Throughout their sojourn in Malta, the Hospitallers sourced their military provisions from various Christian states, not solely from France. However, it was France that emerged as the most steadfast ally, consistently heeding the Order's calls for assistance when other powers, like Rome, Naples, and Genoa, faltered. France routinely opened its royal arsenals, generously supplying the Order with weapons, gunpowder, and naval services at no financial profit and at times offering solutions even when France itself was short of weaponry, particularly when it was engaged in continental and colonial wars. It was as though France entertained an 'open-door policy' for Malta, where the knights could avail themselves of the weapons and naval service they required, as long as this was first solicited by the King.

Needless to say, the Sultan did not appreciate France's military aid to Hospitaller Malta and threatened to sever all political ties. The French King was well aware that his assistance jeopardised the longstanding relationship forged way back in the 16th century, yet Versailles did not shirk its support. Employing skilful diplomacy, France managed to balance Malta's security with the stability of its Ottoman relations. France had valid reasons to uphold Hospitaller Malta, beyond the fact that more than half the knights were French.[6] The island was too strategically important to leave to its fate and too crucial for French trade with the East. Furthermore, the ports of Malta provided France with a naval base. Hospitaller ships policed the seas and frequently

[5] Malte, qui est devenu le boulevard de la Chrétienté et l'asile des navigateurs, rend la conservation nécessaire à tous les princes, et essentiellement à la France avec laquelle les Maltais font le plus grand commerce, et qui est plus apte que les autres puissances à profiter des secours que la situation peut offrir en temps de guerre aux Français. Ce sont ces considérations qui, à différents temps, ont engagé le roi à lui fournir des secours en tous genres de munitions de toute espèce et des artilleurs, jusqu'à des troupes et des officiers généraux dont le service était compté comme présent en France pendant le temps de leur absence.' AN M994, f. 4, 30 December 1769.
[6] Earle (1970),102.

assisted the French fleet against the North African corsairs. As one contemporary noted, 'France is much more interested than any other nation in the preservation of Malta.'[7]

Historiography documents well the contributions of French military engineers in Malta, a practice that dated back to 1645. However, less attention has been paid to the processing of the Order's military requests, both in Malta and France. The Order's procurement activity and its interactions with the bureaucratic system of France has not been studied in depth. No work has yet been done on Hospitaller negotiations with the Ministries for War and the Navy of France, nor the actors and their manoeuvring before consignments reached Malta. This dissertation seeks to address this lacuna by investigating the negotiation processes involved in the acquisitions of arms, munition, gunpowder and in obtaining the services of military experts. This study will also delve into the logistics behind the consignments, the geographical location of the Order's supply chain, and, transporting martial supplies from across French provinces. Furthermore, it identifies the key figures—whether French government officials or Hospitallers—who were instrumental in overseeing these operations. The work of Alison Hoppen, Quentin Hughes, Denis de Lucca, Stephen C. Spiteri and Claude Busuttil, has provided comprehensive insights into the evolution of the defensive infrastructure of the Maltese islands following the arrival of the knights in 1530, as well as the contribution of visiting military engineers to the fortification of the island (including the defence organisation during an alarm). However, significant gaps persist in the literature concerning the general alarms triggered by Ottoman threats and the ensuing responses from the convent in Valletta and the summoning of knights at the periphery and across Christian Europe. To date, no study in the military historiography of Hospitaller Malta has thoroughly examined the Ottoman threats of the 18th century on a diplomatic level. Such an investigation requires a detailed exploration of several critical aspects: the responses and military strategies of the Grand Master and his Council of State upon receiving intelligence about potential Ottoman attacks, the political reactions within Christian Europe, the plans and discussions taking place in the enemy's chambers in Constantinople, the Order's proactive overseas efforts to secure assistance from neighbouring Christian countries, and, the intricate dynamics of the exchanges between the convent in Malta and the court at Versailles. Additionally,

[7] 'La France est beaucoup plus intéressée que aucune autre nation à la conservation de Malte.' AN M992, f. 221, 18th century memoranda by an unknown contemporary author.

the nature and impact of the military assistance as it was happening in France until its dispatch to Malta has warranted a deeper examination to enrich what has already been revealed in the historiography. As a result, this dissertation has uncovered lesser-known aspects of French logistical and diplomatic support in its quest for providing protection. This involved the study of French martial logistics and diplomatic interventions to better understand French willingness in providing support, especially in instances when the Order requested weaponry when France was engrossed in war and the latter needed all the military resources it could get. It also provided diplomatic support, sometimes at the risk of souring Franco-Ottoman relations, a friendship which France had been nurturing since the days of Francis 1 (r. 1515-1547). In its endeavour to elucidate this Franco-Hospitaller connection and address gaps in the existing historiography, the study seeks to answer the following six principal questions: 1. To what extent was France a protector of Hospitaller Malta when it came to the military defence of the island from the threats of the Ottoman Empire in the 18th century, and was France the only one to provide military assistance during climates of war? 2. Did France provide military assistance to Malta only during periods of Ottoman threats, or was its support ongoing even during times of relative calm? 3. How did France contribute to resourcing military equipment and personnel to Malta during the 18th century? What were, if any, the procurement challenges, which the Order of Malta had to face, and how did France facilitate or complicate these? 4. What procedures did the Hospitallers implement to secure the required military supplies, and ensure a cost-effective procurement and the smooth transportation of armaments from France to Malta? 5. Who orchestrated the negotiations and coordination of military assistance from France to Malta, and what were the diplomatic repercussions of these efforts? 6. How important were the ambassadors and the other representatives of the Order in France to the Hospitaller war machine?

The Ottoman threat of 1722-23, the first alarm presented in this dissertation, coincided with the coronation of Louis XV and the year the Portuguese Grand Master Antonio Emanuel de Vilhena (r.1722-1736) assumed his magistracy. The narrative of the alarms continues with the subsequent crises of 1731-33, detailing how the Hospitallers' harassment of Ottoman vessels off the coast of Damietta, based on French intelligence, caused major political concern for France and a resulting Ottoman threat of a siege on Malta. The third and final crisis, in 1761, known as the Corona Ottomana affair, unfolded as Europe was engulfed in the Seven Years' War (1756-1763). These

events underscore the critical role of French support in safeguarding the Order's interests and survival during periods of heightened vulnerability. The French ambassadors in Constantinople, notably Ambassador Jean-Louis d'Usson, marquis de Bonnac (r.1713-24), and Ambassador Charles Gravier, count de Vergennes (1755-68) during the 1731-33 and 1761 alarms respectively, actively worked to thwart Ottoman plans for waging war against Malta by dissuading the Ottoman Viziers from launching an attack. On numerous occasions, the French ambassador acted as a *de facto* diplomat for the Hospitaller institution in enemy territory where the Order could never hope to have its own diplomatic representation. This dissertation stops short of the onset of the French Revolution in 1789, a period marked by ideologies that terminated the French monarchy and irrevocably disrupted the longstanding ties between Hospitaller Malta and *ancien régime* France.

The Franco-Hospitaller ties were, as Jacques Godechot describes, very old and solid,[8] but as in any relationship, this too experienced occasional strains, predominantly when Maltese corsairing activities in the Levant adversely affected Franco-Ottoman commerce and diplomatic relations with the Porte. There were other instances where Hospitaller Malta and France did not always see eye to eye. Whilst the provision of military assistance was generally forthcoming, French support was not as generous when it concerned manpower. The recruitment for the Regiment of Malta in the late 1770s and the release of knights from the royal navy to serve in the Order's naval campaigns in 1748 were such cases. In these situations, where France's naval and war departments were affected, France was less sympathetic to the Order's needs. Nevertheless, it was the very presence and persistence of the ambassador of the Order in Paris that resolved such conflicts between Malta and France, ensuring the preservation of the Order's privileges in France.

Ultimately, the dissertation attempts to take the reader behind the scenes, in the offices of the ambassadors and ministers, shedding light on how France almost unfailingly delivered its protection, despite numerous challenges and setbacks along the way. It highlights how these difficulties made the role of the ambassador indispensable in nurturing a healthy relationship between the two states. It details how the ambassador deftly mediated between the competing needs of the Order of St John and the French court, ensuring that the relationship endured through periods of strain

[8] Jacques Godechot, La France et Malte au XVIIIe Siècle, *Revue Historique*, T. 206. Fasc 1 (1951), 68.

caused by external threats and internal pressures. Overall, the dissertation offers a comprehensive overview of the essential, yet often underrated roles played by both Hospitaller and French diplomats and officials in sustaining the historical alliance between Hospitaller Malta and *ancien régime* France. It showcases how diplomacy was pivotal in shaping the course of the Franco-Hospitaller relationship as a nuanced and strategic connection.

Chapter 1
Framework of a study

1.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to present a historical and historiographical framework for this dissertation. It commences by outlining the pathway chosen to investigate the Order of St John's interaction with France through a seventy-year window on a centuries' old relationship. The study of the relationship between two states has various aspects be they commercial, trading, maritime, military, social or cultural routes, but ultimately all aspects fall under the political and diplomatic dimension. This chapter elucidates the documents which will accompany the reader throughout the entire study. It explains the diversity between them, as well as the similarity shared. Most of these documents have the central figure of the diplomat in the person of the ambassador of the Order in Paris for Malta, or the *chargé d'affaires*, also known as the *Homme du Roi* of the King of France in Valletta, both serving as the link between the Grand Master and the French Monarch. The concluding section of this chapter depicts the political landscape inhabited by the central figures of this study, primarily France and the Order of St John, with a partial focus on the Ottoman Empire. This segment captures the dynamic political shifts of the 18th century, detailing the diplomatic interactions between a major Catholic power and a smaller sovereign state at the crossroads of the Mediterranean Sea.

1.2 Approaches to studying the military protection of Hospitaller Malta by France

This section aims to systematically delineate the methodological framework utilized in this dissertation. The investigation of the military threats to Malta and the ensuing French contribution for the island's military defence have been used as a means to an end: that of understanding the extent to which France assisted the survival of the small Hospitaller state against its perennial Muslim enemy. The timeline of this study starts with the coronation of Louis XV as King of France in 1722, coinciding with a significant Ottoman threat against Malta during 1722-23. The narrative then examines subsequent crises in 1731-33 and 1761. It ends just as the French Revolution broke out

in 1789, an event that was a crucial turning point in French history, disrupting the existing political framework and bringing an end to the centuries-old *ancien régime*.

For this study the term 'defence' is being taken as the military defence of Malta from any Ottoman siege. In the context of the 18th century, the threats to the Knights of Malta consisted of two kinds: Ottoman sieges of Malta itself, and the naval attacks on the Hospitaller fleets. The Hospitallers always worried about an Ottoman siege, even though in the 18th century the military presence of the Ottoman Empire in the Mediterranean, in particular its navy, had significantly diminished.[1] Nonetheless, threats emanating from the Levant continued to menace the Hospitaller islands. This study therefore concentrates on the acute Ottoman threats of 1722-23, 1731-33, and 1761, aiming to elucidate the French contributions towards bolstering Malta's military infrastructure during these periods of heightened military crisis. The responses of France and other Catholic states, as well as the Hospitallers' established practices of defence operations and the procurement of weapons, gunpowder, and military expertise, are extensively analysed and discussed in Chapters 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6. To fully grasp the extent of assistance arriving from France, this study has also examined the island's military needs during periods of relative stability in-between the aforementioned crises, and the subsequent support provided by French monarchs. The knights' logistics in arms procurement, transportation, and shipping from France has been laid out in chapter 6. Additionally, throughout the study, the role of the Order's ambassador in France, alongside other representatives of the Order stationed in Marseille, Lyon and elsewhere, has been emphasized as the crucial network which enabled the relationship between the King of France and the Grand Master for the military preparedness of the island. The Order's ambassador's pivotal role in negotiating and organising the preparation of military equipment and the provisioning of military experts in France was essential for ensuring Malta's adequate defence. Aside from this, the importance of the ambassador's role emerges when he had to navigate his way through a number of complications that arose when procuring weapons, their extractions from France, and other challenges, which the Order had to face in France during the second half of the 18th century. Supporting the ambassador

[1] For the Ottomans, keeping a large navy during times of infrequent warfare was impractical, because the warships, unlike their merchant vessels, would rapidly deteriorate if left docked for a lengthy period. Eyüp Özveren, Onur Yildirim, 'An outline of Ottoman Maritime History', in *New Directions in Mediterranean Maritime History,* G. Harlaftis and C. Vassallo (eds.) Liverpool University Press, Liverpool 2004, 148.

were various members of the Order, including receivers, procurators stationed in Paris, Lyon, and Marseille, grand priors in Paris and St Gilles, and commissioned knights. This structured network facilitated the procurement, inspection of firearms, and overall logistics management of military weaponry and soldiers destined for Malta, thereby ensuring the protection of the Order and the security of the island.

The diplomatic exchanges between the Order of St John's ambassadors in Paris, the King of France's *Homme du Roi*, in Malta, various French political figures—including ministers and cardinals—as well as several officials of the Order of St John, were important in providing valuable insight into the mechanics of the Franco-Hospitaller relations. However, it is important to clarify that this dissertation is not a history of the Order's diplomacy, but rather a study which has probed the manner with which the Order applied its diplomacy for matters of war. This study does not examine the embassy's organisation, the appointment of ambassadors, their reception at the French court, or their privileges in Paris. Instead, it focuses on the history of international relations through the lens of military and naval logistics between France and Malta, using this military dimension to highlight and corroborate France's protective stance toward Hospitaller Malta during times of threat.

Fundamentally, the methodology employed in this dissertation adhered to the principles of qualitative historical research. This approach entailed a rigorous analysis of both primary and secondary sources, meticulously evaluating their content, context, reliability, and potential biases. Such scrutiny supported a substantive thematic analysis aimed at uncovering patterns, practices, and developments within the Franco-Hospitaller relationship. The interpretations gleaned from this diverse array of sources were instrumental in crafting a narrative that includes several case scenarios, thereby providing the dissertation with a comprehensive and coherent depiction of the interactions and exchanges between Malta and France in the context of the island's defence.[2]

Understanding the role of France as protector over Hospitaller Malta cannot be understood in isolation from wider factors, or by simply listing an inventory of arms shipped to the island (though this would provide an indication). The background of France's long-term ties with the Order has to be understood as part of the context within which military support for Malta occurred. The protective attitude of France

[2] Cameron G. Thies, 'A Pragmatic Guide to Qualitative Historical Analysis in the Study of International Relations', *International Studies Perspectives*, 3, 4 (2002), 351-372.

could not have developed unless the Franco-Hospitaller relationship was built on solid foundations which had reached their pinnacle in the 18th century. In the words of contemporary Kings and their officials, as well as several historians, the positive sentiment towards Hospitaller Malta was almost palpable. For example, in a letter of instructions which Louis XV sent to his admiral in 1731, we learn of his intention to treat Malta distinctly by 'once again, in this occasion show signs of distinction towards the island of Malta, above all that shown to the other foreign countries.'[3] When the Order's ambassador the Bailli Jean-Jacques de Mesmes (1715-1741) attended an audience with Louis XV's first minister, the Cardinal André-Hercule de Fleury (1726-1743), the cardinal said, 'I consider and greatly esteem the Grand Master, and I will all my life be attentive to doing things that will be pleasing to him.'[4] In 1729, Ambassador de Mesmes himself confirmed to his Grand Master that the French 'court was very content with the Grand Master and his Religion.'[5]

Franco-Hospitaller loyalty and attachment began much earlier than the 18th century and even before the reign of Louis XIV, who Jeremy Black claims to have taken 'seriously his role as "Protector" of the Order of Malta.'[6] In 1733, Ambassador de Mesmes reminded the *Garde des Sceaux de France* (the Keeper of the Seals) that when Emperor Charles V (r.1519-1556) offered Malta to the Order of St John following the loss of Rhodes in 1522, Grand Master L'Isle Adam (r.1521-1534) had sent his envoy to seek permission and advice from the King of France, Francis I (r.1515-1547) and thus, according to the ambassador the donation of Malta was thus accepted upon endorsement of the French monarch, rather than that of its official patron, the Papacy.[7] Hospitaller Malta responded to France's attention not only

[3] 'vouloir bien encore dans cette occasion donner des marques de distinction à l'île de Malte sur tous les autres pays étrangers.' NLM AOM 1221, f. 175, 4 October 1731.

[4] 'Je considère et estime infiniment le Grand Maître et j'aurai toute ma vie l'attention de faire des choses qui lui seront agréables.' NLM AOM 1221, ff. 859-861, 6 November 1733.

[5] 'que la cour est extrememement contente de V.A.E et de sa Religion.' NLM AOM 1220, ff. 564-565, 4 June 1729.

[6] Jeremy Black, *From Louis XIV to Napoleon. The Fate of a Great Power* (New York, Routledge, 1999b), 17.

[7] NLM AOM 1221, ff. 885-894, 16 December 1733. While Ambassador de Mesmes' letter was written almost two hundred years after Malta was donated to the Order in 1530, it was indeed the case that Grand Master L'Isle Adam went to Madrid to speak with King Francis I while the latter was held captive there. Furthermore, HJA Sire argues that when Charles V offered Malta to the Order, the French knights resisted the idea of having any monarch other than the King of France as their overlord, they in fact protested at the notion of having a Spanish monarch as their feudal lord. Their rebellion, and L'Isle Adam's visit to Francis I in Madrid before the Grand Master accepted Malta, provides adds credibility to Ambassador de Mesmes' claim in 1733, that the Order seeking Francis I's consent for the acceptance Malta by the Holy Roman Emperor. After all, there was the need to reassure the French knights, and maintain good relations with France. See H.J.A Sire, *The Knights of*

through political and commercial matters, but also through symbolic gifts. It was customary for the Order annually to send a falcon to the viceroy of Sicily in recognition of his feudal authority over Malta. As a kind of counter-balance – with a possible dose of exaggeration – the Order sent an average of eleven falcons a year to France.[8] It had also become a custom for the Grand Master to send Maltese oranges to the Queen of France every year, a ritual which persisted until the French Revolution.[9]

The Order's strong ties with France feature prominently in the historiography of the Order in the works of Claire-Elaine Engel, Carmel Testa, Jacques Godechot, Alain Blondy and Charles Xuereb.[10] Others, like Frederick W. Ryan, Roderick Cavaliero, Carmen Depasquale, Claude Petiet, Claude Busuttil, Anne Brogini, and Grégory Woimbée have contributed to this subject through their broad investigation of the Order's history in the 17th and 18th centuries, providing important information which collectively helps in understanding the nature of the relationship between Malta and France.[11] Specific perspectives on Franco-Hospitaller relations can also be found in the war-themed works of Denis de Lucca, Alison Hoppen, Stephen C. Spiteri and Fleur Brincat who have expounded on the influence of French military engineers on Malta's military architecture, particularly that of the late 17th and 18th centuries. However, these accounts focused primarily on the military contributions of the French engineers on the island, neglecting the crucial military negotiations, preparations, and logistical coordination that took place in France even before the arrival of the French

Malta (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1994), 60 and Victor Mallia-Milanes, 'Vol veder di aver Brandizo ovvero Malta': A Hospitaller Odyssey from Rhodes to Malta, 1523-1530', in *The 1522 Siege of Rhodes: Causes, Course, Consequences'*, (ed.) Simon Phillips (Routledge, London, 2022), 13.

[8] NLM Lib. MS. 267, f. 19.

[9] AN M968, f. 156, 19 December 1789.

[10] Claire-Elaine Engel, *Histoire de L'Ordre de Malte* (Switzerland, Les Editions Nagel, 1968); Carmel Testa, *The Life and Times of Grand Master Pinto 1741-1773* (Malta, Midsea Books, 1989); Alain Blondy, *L'Ordre de Malte au XVIIIe siècle. Des Dernieres Splendeurs à la Ruine* (Paris, Editions Bouchene, 2002); Charles Xuereb, *France in the Maltese Collective Memory. Perceptions, Perspectives, Identities after Bonaparte in* British Malta (Msida, Malta University Press, 2014).

[11] Frederick W. Ryan, *The House of the Temple. A study of Malta and its knights in the French Revolution* (London, Burns Oates and Washbourne Ltd., 1930); Roderick Cavaliero, *The Last Crusaders, the Knights of St John and Malta in the Eighteenth Century* (London, Hollis & Carter, 1960); Carmen Depasquale, *La Vie Intellectuelle et Culturelle des Chevaliers Français à Malte au XVIIIeme Siecle* (Malta, Malta University Press, 2010); Claude Petiet, *Ces Messieurs de La Religion. L'Ordre de Malte au dix-huitième siècle, ou le crépuscule d'une épopée* (Paris, Editions France-Empire, 1992); Anne Brogini, *Malte Frontière de la Chrétienté (1530-1670)* (Rome, École Française de Rome, 2006); Grégory Woimbeé, *Princes et Inquisiteurs: Malte, l'Europe et la Mediterranée (1722-1798)* (Toulouse, Les Presses Universitaires, 2014).

experts.[12] Other authors like William Hardman and Carmel Testa dug deeply into the history of the French invasion of Malta in 1798 and the ensuing Republican governance of the archipelago at the closure of the 18th-century. Hardmann has published a valuable collection of documents relating to Malta and its occupation by the French and the British,[13] while Carmel Testa produced a voluminous study of the French occupation of Malta in 1798-1800. However, these two publications cover a later period than the one being studied here.[14]

The historians mentioned above have largely asserted that France was Malta's military supporter throughout the 18th century, particularly through the provision of military experts. However, none have examined the extent of French military provisioning, the logistical intricacies, or the human elements operating behind the scenes, as this dissertation seeks to do. Hence, the period under study was not chosen randomly. Besides the fact that the first alarm of 1722 analysed in this dissertation coincided with the coronation of Louis XV, the ensuing decades offer a great deal of insight into how Malta and France interacted at a moment when the strength of the Ottoman threat was waning but was still appreciable. The decades leading to the French Revolution have been earmarked because of a considerable lack of attention when compared to the two years of French occupation in Malta in 1798-1800. Whenever the phrase 'the French and Malta' is mentioned, popular imagination tends to think of the French period in Malta when the Republicans took hold of the island. Books like Carmel Testa's *The French in Malta* (1997) and Charles Xuereb's *France in the Maltese Collective Memory* (2014) amongst others, have contributed heavily to this stance.[15] However, the extensive studies of this two-year period of the French occupation do not provide a complete picture of the intriguing long-term relationship

[12] Denis De Lucca, 'French Military Engineers in Malta During the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries', *Melita Historica*, 8, 1 (1980), 23-33; Alison Hoppen, *The Fortifications of Malta by the Order of St John 1530-1798* (Malta, Mireva Publications, 1999); Stephen C. Spiteri, *Art of Fortress Building in Hospitaller Malta* (Malta, BDL Publications, 2008); Fleur Brincat, *The Bali de Tigné Knight of Malta, Commissioner of Fortifications and Military Engineer* (Malta, International Institute for Baroque Studies University of Malta, 2011).

[13] William Hardmann, *A History of Malta during the period of the French and British Occupations 1798-1815* (Malta, Midsea Books, 1997).

[14] Testa's other publication the, *Life and Times of Grand Master Pinto 1741-1773* (Valletta, Midsea Books, 1989), provides a wide-ranging history of the Order from 1741 to 1773. Even though it imparts valuable excerpts on Malta's ties with France, it cannot be classified as a study of Franco-Hospitaller relations.

[15] Carmel Testa, *The French in Malta 1798-1800* (Malta, Midsea Books Ltd., 1997); Charles Xuereb, *France in the Maltese Collective Memory. Perceptions, Perspectives, Identities after Bonaparte in British Malt*a (Msida, Malta University Press, 2014).

that had preceded it. For this reason, the decades during the reigns of two Bourbon Kings, Louis XV and Louis XVI merit a detailed investigation to truly understand the relationship between Malta and France in the closing era of the *ancien régime* prior to the rupture caused by the French Revolution. A similar pattern in the historiography of France has been noted by Colin Jones who claims that historians of French history have profusely written on the revolutionary period (1789-1800), isolating it from the former decades, whilst those who have studied the preceding decades did so with a focus on uncovering the origins of the French revolution.[16] This is certainly unsurprising, as Julian Swann points out, since historians are continually seeking critical junctures and watershed moments.[17] However, Colin's observation was made some twenty years ago and since then research on the *ancien régime* has continued to evolve.[18] A similar historiographical scenario as observed by Colin in relation to France, can be observed in the case of 18th-century Malta prior to the arrival of the Republican arm in 1798. Here, studies on Franco-Hospitaller-Maltese relation still tend to be skewed by the event of 1789 to 1800 with little effort to appreciate the long durée dimension of this story. Therefore, this dissertation has sought to look at the period from 1722 to 1789 on its own terms rather than through the prism of hindsight and the developments of the last decade or so of the 18th century.

To date, the main contributor towards the French connection to Hospitaller Malta in the 18th century remains Alain Blondy. In his book *L'Ordre de Malte au XVIIIe siècle. Des dernières splendeurs à la ruine* (2002), he provides a broad overview of the Order of St John during the 18th century, including its relations and politics with France, Venice, Russia, Austria, Great Britain and the United States, as well as Malta's commercial activities in the Mediterranean and its gradual decline until the blow of the French Revolution.[19] Even though this publication leans heavily

[16] Colin Jones, *The Great Nation: France from Louis XV to Napoleon* (London, Penguin Books, 2003) xiv, xv.
[17] Julian Swann, 'Politics: Louis XV' in *Old Regime France 1648-1788*, W. Doyle (ed.) University Press, Oxford 2001, 207.
[18] These are some examples of publications focusing on Old Regime France which were published after Colin's claim in 2003: William Doyle, *The Oxford Handbook of the Ancien Régime* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2012); James B. Collins, *The State in Early Modern France* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2009). Research on *ancien régime* France has increasingly incorporated interdisciplinary approaches, integrating social, cultural, and economic perspectives for a more nuanced understanding of the period.
[19] Alain Blondy, *L'Ordre de Malte au XVIIIe siècle. Des Dernieres Splendeurs à la Ruine* (Paris, Editions Bouchene, 2002). For a review of this book see: Claude Michaud, 'Alain Blondy, *L'Ordre de Malte au XVIIIe siècle. Des dernières splendeurs à la ruine* (Paris, Éditions Bouchene, 2002), [review

towards the French connection with the Order of St John, rather surprisingly it fails to examine the relationship of France with Malta in the defensive aspect of the island-order-state and the safeguarding of the Order's interests both on the island and from offshore. Grégory Woimbée's *Prince et Inquisiteurs. Malte, l'Europe et la Mediterranée (1722-1798)* (2014) too overlaps with the period of this dissertation, however his work sways towards the clerical aspect of Hospitaller Malta, including the presence of the Inquisitor and the Bishop on the island. All the same, it provides valuable insight into French patronage of the Order's diplomacy and Malta's economic activities. Both Blondy and Woimbée have based their work on the various volumes concerning 18th-century Malta which are held in Maltese and Parisian archives. Even though this study makes use of similar *fonds* of documents, the perspective chosen is different from that of Blondy and Woimbée. While these authors studied the general history of Malta in the 18th century, be it in the international, domestic or religious sphere, this dissertation has focused on the study of Malta's connection with France in the military defence of the islands and the Order as institution from a central and peripheral perspective.

1.3 Sources

Studying Hospitaller archival sources means taking into account different factors. First of all, the complex administrative and institutional structure of the Order, with its own Convent and peripheral offices which naturally produced and preserved records, from the central chancery to each remote Hospitaller commandery all over Europe. Indeed, starting from early Hospitaller scholarship, the French scholar Jacques Godechot observes in his research that the documents of the Order of St John are widespread. Some can be found in the archive of the Order deposited at the National Library of Malta, some at the *Archives Nationales de France* in Paris, the diplomatic archives at the *Ministère des Affaires Étrangères*, the departmental archives (notably those of Lyon, Marseille and Toulon), the *Archivio Segreto Vaticano* in Rome, the British Library, the National Archives in London and several other repositories in Europe.[20] However, another factor which completely changed the Hospitaller archival scenario

in] *Annales historiques de la Révolution Française*, October-December 2002, 523: retrieved on 20 June 2019, from https://journals.openedition.org/ahrf/2305.h

[20] Jacques Godechot, 'La France et Malte au XVIIIe Siècle,' *Revue Historique*, Tome 206, Fasc 1 (1951), 67 fn.1.

is the archival dispersion which occurred in different moments between the 18th and 19th century and in different states with the suppression of the religious orders and the disruption of their archives. The complex nature of the Order of St John, being both a religious order and an island state, did not protect it from this fate. Instead, it led to misleading interpretations and the consequent fragmentation of its records across various political contexts and holding institutions. [21] Taking into account these issues, this study was grounded on the analysis of onsite research of archives in Malta and France, and material available on digital finding aids and digitized documents.[22] More specifically, it was largely centred on at least four typologies of correspondence. The first is that received by the Grand Master in Malta from his ambassador based in Paris, forming part of the Archives of the Order of Malta, Section 9, Correspondence (AOM 1219-1226) covering the period from 1721 to 1755, and held at the National Library of Malta. There are eight existing volumes of letters sent by the Order's Ambassador in Paris to the Grand Master in this collection. These span over a period of thirty four years, from 1721 to 1755, covering the offices of ambassadors Bailli Jean-Jacques de Mesmes (1715-1741), and Bailli Louis-Gabriel de Froullay de Thessé (1744-1766). The subsequent correspondence from 1755 till 1789 seems to be missing from the Archives of the Order of Malta as indicated by the 1898 *Repertoire* of the Archives of the Order of St John at the National Library of Malta, leaving a lacuna in the missives sent by the ambassadors during these years.[23] This gap in the correspondence was bridged by letters sent from the Grand Master or other knights based in Malta to the ambassador in Paris. These letters are now preserved in the archive of the Order's embassy in Paris held at the *Archives Nationales de France*.

The second category of correspondence consists of letters sent by the Grand Master, or other high-ranking members of the Order, namely the vice-chancellor of the Order, to the ambassador in France. This diplomatic correspondence of the Hospitallers originally kept at the Order's embassy in Paris until the early years of the French revolution, is now deposited at the National Archives of France under the title,

[21] Valeria Vanesio, 'The Order of St John's archival entanglements: cataloguing experiments at the magisterial archives in Rome,' *Nouvi annalli della Scuola Speciale per Archivisti e Bibliotecari*, 28 (2023), 92.
[22] Digital archives were accessed from the site of the Malta Study Centre: https://hmml.org/research/msc/, and that of BNF Gallica: https://gallica.bnf.fr/accueil/en/content/accueil-en?mode=desktop
[23] See the National Library of Malta's *Repertoire*, Ninth Classification, AOM 1200-1648, which is a collection of volumes containing the original correspondence received by the Grand Master from the courts of Europe and from the ambassadors of the Order attached to the courts of France and Rome.

Archives de l'Ambassade de Malte auprès du government Français (XVII-XVIIIe siècles). The most relevant sections from this collection include the: *Correspondance de l'Ambassade* (M953-M962), *Correspondance avec La Cour et les Ministres Français* (M963), *Correspondance Ministerielle* (M965-M966), *Correspondance avec les Representants Diplomatiques de l'Ordre* (M967), and the *Correspondance du Secretaire d'Ambassade* (M968). The volumes primarily examined for this study and which included the letters which the ambassadors in Paris received from Malta, fall under the division *Correspondance de l'Ambassade* (M953-M962) covering the years from 1736 to 1789. This correspondence holds the original letters received from Malta by the seven ambassadors and the four *chargés d'affaires* who headed the embassy in the absence of an ambassador. The archives in Malta (AOM1219-1226) were utilized to address the missing letters that arrived in Paris between 1722 and 1735 and to corroborate the overlapping years. Furthermore, other correspondence between the Order's ambassador and the ministers at the court of Versailles, and other diplomats of the Order (Rome, Naples, etc.) were also tapped for particular events. Because this study focuses on military aspects, it heavily relied on three critical volumes from the archives of the Order's embassy in Paris. These volumes — M994, M995, and M996 — specifically address the military, maritime, and defence strategies of Malta, and contain military reports, procurement letters, lists of armaments, quotations for arms, and correspondence with war and navy ministers concerning arms negotiations. Another equally important volume from the same archive was a volume titled *Passeports* M902 which provided information on the movement of armaments, ammunition and gunpowder from France to Malta. These dedicated volumes are likely the result of initiatives undertaken by Elzéar de Cibon, the secretary of the Order's embassy in Paris. In the years 1766 and 1774, he undertook a comprehensive reorganization of the embassy's archival documents and produced the inaugural catalogue of the embassy's archives. This information was fortuitously discovered during the investigative phase of this dissertation.[24]

The correspondence mentioned above (both in Malta and Paris) consists of the exchanges of seven ambassadors stationed in Paris: Bailli Jean-Jacques de Mesmes (1715-1741), Bailli Louis-Gabriel de Froullay de Thessé (1741-1766), Bailli Pons-François de Rosset de Fleury (1767-1774), Bailli Claude de Saint-Simon (1775-1777),

[24] AN M1001, f. 163, 15 October 1774; AN M950, f. 133, 23 November 1788.

Bailli Jacques-Laure le Tonnelier de Breteuil (1777-1785), Bailli Pierre-André de Suffren de Saint-Tropez (1786-1788), and Bailli Henri François de la Brillane (1788); and of another four *chargé d'affaires* who took on the ambassador's role during the latter's absence (generally until a new ambassador was appointed following the death of an ambassador). These were the knight Bascle d'Argenteuil (1775 and 1777), the Bailli Charles-Gabriel Dominique d'Harvincourt (1785), the Bailli Louis Marie Auguste d'Estourmel (1789) and the Bailli Jean-Loup de Virieu (1789-1792).

In order to complement the previous Hospitaller sources, the third part of material perused include the letters penned by the Kings' *chargé d'affaires*,[25] also known as the *Homme du Roi*,[26] who was the representative of the French King in Malta. The *Homme du Roi* did not hold the rank of an ambassador but that of a *chargé d'affaires*.[27] Even though this diplomat was commonly chosen from amongst the knights of the three French *langues* of Provence, France and Auvergne, his appointment was given by the King of France. The first *Homme du Roi* on the island seems to have been the Bailli Louis Roger de Blecourt de Tincourt (1706-1715) and after him another seven *Homme du Roi* were successively appointed.[28] However, in 1762, Louis XV altered his traditional selection method. Instead of choosing representatives from among the grand cross and baillis of the Order of St John, he began selecting his *Homme du Roi* based on merit and diplomatic skill rather than Hospitaller rank. Upon the King's envoy was assigned a number of key roles: first, that of preserving the interests of the French knights as the King's subjects, which could have been the soliciting of briefs of dispensation for the delay of the passage money (payment for the admission into the Order),[29] the delay of caravan departures, [30] the issuing of certificates for the arrival

[25] According to the *Macmillan Dictionary of Diplomacy*, the knight representing the interest of the King stationed on Malta on a permanent mission would be the equivalent of the *chargé d'affaires en titre*, an official representing a country in a foreign state on permanent residency. The knights appointed by the Grand Master for the temporary headship of the embassy in Paris, (namely the Bailli d'Argenteuil in 1777, Bailli d'Havincourt in 1785, Bailli d'Estourmel in 1789 and Bailli de Vireu in 1789-1792) would, in 19th-century terms be the *chargé d'affaires ad interim*, the person charged with heading of an embassy of legation in the absence of, or pending the appointment of the new head; Geoff R. Berridge and Lorna Lloyd, *The Palgrave Macmillan Dictionary of Diplomacy*, Third Edition (UK, Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 51-52.

[26] See the Glossary, p.321

[27] Claude Busuttil, 'Une Architecture sous influence -Malte et les Architectes et Ingénieurs militaires Français pendant le règne de Louis XIV (1643-1715). Les choix Politiques de l'Ordre de Saint-Jean de Jérusalem thesis', unpublished PhD thesis, Normandie Université, 2018, 428.

[28] See appendix 2: List of Dignitaries, p.343

[29] Alain Blondy and Jean Berenger, *Documents Consulaires: Lettres reçues par le Chargé d'Affaires du Roi a Malte au XVIII* siècle, volumes 1-5 (Valletta, Fondation de Malte, 2014), *xii*-xiii.

[30] For a definition of caravan, see the Glossary, p.319

and departure of knights from Malta for the purpose of caravan duties and similar favours. In other words, the *Homme du Roi* served as a mediator between French knights and the Grand Master, stepping in when the ambassador in Paris failed to meet his objectives, such as securing admission requests or negotiating delays in the passage fees into the Order. The *Homme du Roi's* second, more substantial role was the safeguarding of the French King's commercial interests in the Levant including French merchants on the island. His deployment on an island in the centre of French trade routes rendered his office indispensable to France.[31] The corpus of correspondence of the *Homme du Roi* is split into two. One holds the letters sent by his office to the Minister for the Navy, which are deposited at the National Archives of France under *Correspondence Consulaire Malte* (AE/B/I/816-824) for the years 1714 to1790, which mainly concern the maritime and commercial interests of France. The other, even more relevant for this study was the set of correspondence of letters sent by the *Homme du Roi* to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, called the *Correspondence Politique Malte* (for this study the relevant volumes were CP Malte volumes 6 to 22 for the years 1720-1792) housed at the diplomatic archives in La Courneuve, Paris). These volumes hold letters concerning a wide array of political issues related to the Order and France.[32] Alain Blondy and Jean Berenger have published a five-volume work titled *Documents Consulaires: Lettres reçues par le Chargé d'Affaires du Roi à Malte au XVIIIe siècle*, presenting some 4,300 translated letters from the original documents stored at the Archives of the Metropolitan Cathedral in Mdina, Malta. However, this correspondence provided little input for the theme of this research because these letters, arriving in Malta from the French consuls, agents and diplomats spread in the Mediterranean ports, concern mainly issues of French shipping and trade.[33] The first mentioned correspondence of the *Homme du Roi* is classified in the catalogues of Parisian archives as 'consular correspondence,' which is misleading because the correspondence belonged to the representative of the King, the *Homme du Roi*, a distinct official to that of the French consul, who was another French representative in Malta.[34] Early modern Malta under the knights had a system of consuls who were,

[31] Blondy, Berenger (2014), *xii*-xiii.
[32] Information obtained by way of communication with Anne Mézin, held on 18 June 2021. Mézin is an archivist at the National Archives of France (Paris) and author of *Les consuls de France au siècle des lumières (1715-1792)* (Paris, P.I.E-Peter Lang S.A, 2007).
[33] Blondy, Berenger (2014).
[34] Mézin (2007), 705.

unlike the *Homme du Roi*, appointed by the Grand Master for the representation of foreign states, a custom which predated the Order's stay in Malta.[35] In the 18th century, there were six consuls for France on the island and these were: François Garcin (1684-1705), Charles Garcin (1705-1733), Raymond Garcin (1747-1752), Jean-Augustin Arnaud (acting consul 1776-1791), Joseph Habela (1782-1783), and Philippe Césaire (1777-1795). Unlike that of the *Homme du Roi*, the consuls' correspondence was sent to the Chamber of Commerce in Marseilles because their role concerned commercial interests.[36]

The fourth type of diplomatic papers consulted concerned the Ottoman threat of 1722, 1731-33 and 1761. These were the exchanges between the ambassador of France to Constantinople and the Minister for the Navy or the court of Versailles itself.[37] The section titled *Correspondence Consulaire de l'Ambassade de France a Constantinople, 1709-1790*, also deposited at the National Archives of France, provided an insight into the Franco-Ottoman relations. Even more importantly, this section was perused for matters concerning the Order being discussed between Versailles and the Porte, to which the Order had no access, considerably enriching this research and stressing its unbiased selections of sources. The volumes from this collection relevant to the research timeframe are AE/B/I/394 to AE/B/I/448, covering the years 1721 to 1790. Some of these documents were specifically consulted to examine particular events and to gain a deeper understanding of the Ottoman military strategies against the Order, as well as the diplomatic protection provided by France within the Ottoman court.

The themes which have emerged from the above documents are various. Some are somewhat secondary, such as news on the happenings of the royal family or noble families including births, marriages and deaths. For instance, Ambassador Jean-Jacques de Mesmes informed the Convent in Malta of births in the royal family, or his going on vacation, or the death of the Order's falconer and other news.[38] Despite their seeming triviality, these small details help to convey a sense of humanisation of the

[35] Victor Mallia-Milanes, *In the Service of the Venetian Republic. Massimiliano Buzzaccarini Gonzaga's Letters from Malta to Venice's Magistracy of Trade 1754-1776* (Malta, PEG Ltd, 2008), 15.
[36] Mézin (2007), 705. The first French consular office in Malta was created on 20 June 1602 with the first consul being Mathieu Bonin, a Frenchmen from Marseille. In the 17th century the French consuls in Malta were exclusively from Marseille or from Provence: Brogini (2006), 357, 582.
[37] AN AE/B/I/395, ff. 99-100v, 12 October 1724.
[38] NLM AOM 1220, f. 652, 4 September 1729; NLM AOM 1221, ff. 243-244, 23 December 1731.

past and offer essential elements for the contextualisation of the diplomatic relationships. Other themes which are of a more substantial nature to the purpose of this study include news on the international scene related to French war activities; various political circumstances in which the Order found itself; the outcome of meetings with French ministers and cardinals; pleas from the French nobility for favours from the Grand Master; gifts donated by the Order to the French King and vice versa; ceremonies and audiences; infringements of the Order's privileges in France; war-related issues involving the Order's preparation for war against the Ottomans and Malta's need of French protection, as well as occasional French intrusion in the Order's affairs (at times even unfavourably). The diplomatic papers of the Order in relation to France are truly a gold mine of information on the Order's domestic and European affairs and remain to be fully exploited.

In the field of diplomatics, the format of the letters penned by the Order's ambassadors in Paris to the Grand Master and other officials followed closely the rules laid down for Italian ambassadors by 1500, which were later adopted throughout Europe.[39] After saluting the Grand Master (generally using the abbreviated form of V.A.E. meaning *Votre Altesse Eminentissme*) or any other addressee, the ambassador made reference to the official correspondence he would have received, including the date of dispatch. The body of the letter typically consisted of paragraphs addressing various unrelated issues. Before concluding, the ambassador would express his zeal toward his master or esteemed colleague with well wishes. Each letter ended with the date and the ambassador's signature. The formal writing style and format adopted by the Order's ambassadors were notably standardized, as evidenced by the uniformity across the communications of all seven ambassadors under study. This consistency, albeit with minor variations in linguistic style sometimes influenced by the secretary, aids researchers in identifying the author, recipient, location, and date of the dispatch.

Additional sources were also utilised, including primary published sources like the *La Gazette* (Paris), a weekly newspaper that reported on international affairs from news arriving from various ports and cities across the Mediterranean. This publication was particularly useful for information on the Ottoman Sultan's preparation for war against Malta. *La Gazette* was compiled into yearly volumes from 1631 to 1761, after which it was renamed *La Gazette de France*.[40]

[39] Garrett Mattingly, *Renaissance Diplomacy* (New York, Dover Publications, 1955), 97.
[40] See the Bibliography, p.372.

1.4 International relations and the balance of power

The Peace of Westphalia (1648) and the Peace of the Pyrenees (1659) were watersheds in the political system of early modern Europe, heralding the rise of the sovereign state as the main player in the political forum. International relations of the ensuing period until around 1750 were dominated by the interest of the state which led to the downgrading of religious ideology from its foreign policy, giving way to a gradual shift towards a policy of sovereign leadership and harsh pursuit of dynastic and to a certain extent national gain.[41] In the century following the Peace of Westphalia, international relations were dominated by efforts to contain the French monarchy, the era's great power. Initially led by the Dutch Republic until its decline by 1713, these efforts were increasingly taken up by Britain and Austria, which remained vigilant in restraining French power despite France's resurgence under Cardinal de Fleury in the 1730s.[42] By the 18th century the European states system took on a modern form whereby a number of states that had dominated the political scene enjoyed a similar, though not equal, scale of power. A 'pentarchy' system of great powers was well formed by the mid-18th century, consisting of France, Britain, Austria, Russia and Prussia, while Spain, the Dutch Republic and Sweden declined but still had to be taken into account.[43] It is in these political and territorial changes that the predominance of Bourbon France in the 18th century is studied in order to comprehend and evaluate French protection and patronage over Hospitaller Malta.

For a state to flourish it had to have a rigorous diplomatic system coupled with military skills and resources, and a strategic reach in order to withstand threats from foreign powers and to profit from any favourable opportunities. Consequently, sovereigns and their ministers had to monitor closely on the political activities of other states.[44] A European sovereign of the early modern era had the faculty of designing his country's foreign policy. More often than not, the ruler's personal and dynastic ambitions featured in the state's foreign policy, having a direct impact on the stability of the international system in a context where the 'balance of power' was becoming a

[41] David Onnekink, 'The 'Dark Alliance' between Religion and War,' in *War and Religion after Westphalia 1648-1713*, D. Onnekink (ed.) Routledge, London 2016, 2.
[42] Hamish M. Scott, *The Emergence of Eastern power, 1756-1775* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2001), 1.
[43] William Young, *International Politics and Warfare in the Ages of Louis XIV and Peter the Great* (New York, Universe Inc., 2004), 5-6.
[44] Jeremy Black, *Eighteenth Century Europe* (New York, St Martin's Press, 1999a), 324.

central issue on the European stage.[45] Such characteristics are frequently noted in Louis XIV's foreign policy, the foundations of which were his ambition for power and influence, but also a marked set of anxieties and insecurities about French security which led to some serious miscalculations in the context of a culture of war in pursuit of glory. In 1715, on his death bed King Louis XIV repented his ambition for war, claiming that he 'loved war too much.'[46]

If, as claimed, the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713 and that of Rastatt in 1714 ushered in a new European pattern of power, then the political scenario of the 18th century cannot be considered in isolation. It still needs to be regarded as a continuation and culmination of developments from proceeding centuries, particularly when it comes to international relations and diplomacy. European international relations in earlier periods, namely those of the 16th and 17th centuries, reveal that the international scenario was dictated by two main dynastic powers, the Habsburgs and the Valois/Bourbons, rather than inter-state struggles in a more modern sense.[47] As Charles Petrie noted, strong states like Britain, France, and Spain emerged through conflicts. Spain, dominant in the 16th century, saw its power wane after its defeat at Rocroi in 1643, continuing a decline that began with the Spanish Armada's defeat in 1588.[48] It was at this time that France started gaining ground in political power; nevertheless, it still had to contend with the Habsburg branches of Vienna and Spain.[49]

The major conflicts between states of the 18th century were predominantly of a dynastic nature, though some religious conflict lingered, and in an age of 'mercantilism' and 'cameralism' trade and colonial issues enhanced friction between states, increasing the complexity of inter-state conflicts, and sometimes even generated *casus belli*.[50] The political style of an absolute monarchy was the rationale behind the prolongation of dynastic wars such as the Wars of Succession over Spanish territory, Poland, Silesia and Bavaria in the eighteenth century.[51] These dynastic concerns and conflicts were a natural progression from the 17th century, spilling over into the 18th

[45] Black (1999a), 323.
[46] As cited by Julian Swann: Julian Swann, 'Politics and the state in eighteenth-century Europe,' in *The Eighteenth Century*, T.C.W Blanning (ed.) Oxford University Press, Oxford 2000, 17.
[47] Peter Wilson, *A Companion to Eighteenth-Century Europe* (Oxford, Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2008), 372.
[48] Robert Stradling, 'Catastrophe and Recovery: The Defeat of Spain, 1639-43,' *History*, 64, 211 (1979), 205.
[49] Charles Petrie, *Diplomatic History 1713-1933* (London, Hollis & Carter Ltd., 1948), 1.
[50] Black (1999a), 324; For a definition of mercantilism and cameralism, see the Glossary, p.323,318.
[51] George Rudé, *Europe in the Eighteenth Century. Aristocracy and the Bourgeois Challenge* (London, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1972), 212.

century, remaining thus an integral feature of European international relations.[52] David Onnekink points out that in the post-Westphalian era, power-seeking interests overtook the religious conflicts and wars of the late 16th and early 17th century, giving rise to secular, commercial and power-driven wars.[53] Jeremy Black explains that struggles between Protestants and Catholics, which had dominated the 16th century, were still far from gone in the first half of the 18th century, mostly in the territory of the Holy Roman Empire, Poland and Habsburg lands. Certainly, where confessional difference could be associated with warring parties, it was highlighted as a way of boosting a cause. Yet, religious animosity was not the main ingredient for European war. Protestant states such as Sweden and Prussia still fought each other in the Seven Years' War (1756-1763). Likewise, Catholic France fought Austria in the War of the Spanish Succession (1701-1713/14), signifying that religion was not the basis of alliance or war at this point.[54] Furthermore, by the 18th century, the Papacy had lost its effectiveness in mediating conflicts between Catholic powers, mostly because the issues of conflict were predominantly secular. Attempts to secure peace amongst European states were made in the 1720s in the form of congresses, namely those of Cambrai (in which Malta under the knights participated) and Soissons. Despite good intentions, both diplomatic meetings failed, leaving the battleground as the only adjudicator of international conflict in the absence of an agreed arbiter (though, at least sometimes, the adjudicating institutions of the Holy Roman Empire could be brought into play for its internal disputes).[55]

The early years of the 18th century were a theatre of war following closely on from the last two major wars of the 17th century: the Nine Years' War (1688-1697) and the Austro-Turkish War (1682-1699).[56] Similarly to the preceding century, the international disputes of the 18th century were settled by wars, where two years in every three were dedicated to war.[57] The first two decades of the 18th century were framed by two important wars, the Spanish War of Succession (1701-1713/14) in the west and the Great Northern War (1700-1721) in the north of Europe. The war which has probably left longer-term political effects on Europe was the Great Northern War,

[52] Black (1999a), 325.
[53] Onnekink (2016), 2.
[54] Black (1999a), 324.
[55] Black (1999a), 326.
[56] Black (1999a), 326-327.
[57] Rudé (1972), 207.

when Charles XII of Sweden succumbed to the combined military forces of Russia, Saxony-Poland and Denmark, resulting in an eastern shift of European power by mid-century.[58] As Jeremy Black points out, it was thus natural that the Seven Years' War attracted much attention.[59] In 'The Emergence of Eastern Powers, 1756-1775' (2001), Hamish Scott thoroughly analyses the shift in European power dynamics resulting from Prussia and Russia's military successes in the Seven Years' War. This pivotal period led to the partition of Poland and territorial gains from the Ottoman Empire, establishing Eastern Europe's prominence by the 1770s. Furthermore, Hamish Scott explains that throughout the 18th century key political changes took place in the periphery of Europe.[60] To the west of France, Britain overshadowed the United Provinces and was coming to dominate commercial and colonial activities, while to the east new powers emerged, with Russia and Austria gaining power following the Great Northern War. Prussia followed in their footsteps by the mid-eighteenth century after the successful acquisition of Silesia, though it was in many ways a state dependent on external support.[61] The Dutch Republic was also a state that had made a leap in political power by the mid-17th century under Johan de Witt, who, in response to English naval supremacy, pushed for a powerful standing navy aimed at protecting Dutch commercial interests and strengthening the Republic's maritime commerce. But, by the 18th century, the once dominant economy of Dutch Republic weakened as a result of fierce competition in trade with France and England and intense investment in a vast army to sustain war against France.[62] The 1770s saw the consolidation of an international order of the five great powers (Great Britain, France, Russia, Austria and Prussia) which had gradually started in the beginning of the century, and continued well into the 19th century.[63]

The Treaty of Utrecht (1713) is an important turning point for any analysis of the states' system which came to be known as the 'balance of power'. The concept behind this diplomatic term was to prevent one power from dominating Europe. It could be achieved in two ways: either weaker states would join one or two very strong

[58] Black (1999a), 326-327.
[59] Black (1999a), 327.
[60] Hamish M. Scott, *The Emergence of Eastern power, 1756-1775* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2001), 1-3.
[61] Hamish M. Scott, 'Europe Turns East: Political Developments in the Eighteenth Century', in *Early Modern Europe: An Oxford History,* Euan Cameron (ed.) Oxford University Press, Oxford 2001, 298-299.
[62] Onnekink (2016), 96.
[63] Scott (2001b), 299.

states to maintain a balance against a potential hegemon, or several weaker states would join against the stronger state or states to the same end.[64] Throughout the 17th century and in the early 18th century, France under Louis XIV was regarded as the greatest threat to Europe's political stability.[65] However, after France's defeat at the close of the War of the Spanish Succession in 1713, no single state could dominate the political scene in Western Europe, that is, once Habsburg Austria had lost its claim to the Spanish throne. With the settlement of Utrecht, the aim was to prevent one state from dominating over all others.[66] In the first decades of the 18th century, balance of power was achieved by having France, Spain, Prussia and Bavaria banded on one side and Austria, generally supported by Britain and sometimes Poland-Saxony, on the other. Meanwhile, Russia made its political presence felt in Eastern Europe, while Prussia, after 1740, emerged as a worthy rival to the Austrian Habsburg monarchy. To the north, Sweden had lost its military might while the Ottoman Empire was apprehensive of Russia's and Austria's expansionist ambitions.[67] By the mid-eighteenth century, while political power gradually shifted eastwards in Europe, France and Britain were drawn by their colonies and open seas. The governing elites of France pushed to maintain power and influence in central and eastern Europe while still pushing for investment in its maritime-colonial power when France's fiscal and military state could only support the country in one of these tasks. In his memoirs, the count de Ségur, as cited by Bailey Stone, noted that by 1756, the balance of power established by the Peace of Westphalia had vanished, and France was no longer a first-rank power. However, Bailey Stone regards this assessment as an exaggeration.[68]

1.5 France, its Absolutist Politics and International Relations

The expansion of central power in France had already started taking shape during King Henri IV's (1589-1610) reign. The state of France progressed in giant strides with the assistance of Maximilien de Béthune, duke de Sully, Superintendent of Finances (1600-1611) and Grand Master of Artillery who undertook major reforms in France,

[64] Wilson (2008), 372.
[65] Wilson (2008), 371.
[66] Rudé (1972), 212.
[67] Rudé (1972), 213.
[68] Bailey Stone, *The Genesis of the French Revolution. A Global-Historical Interpretation* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1994), 63; Guy Rowlands, 'Royal Finances in the Third Reign of Louis XIV,' in *The Third Reign of Louis XIV, c. 1682-1715. Politics and Culture in Europe, 1650-1750*, J. Prest and G. Rowlands (eds.) Routledge, Abingdon 2016, 38-52.

like the restoration of public peace, the lowering of taxes on the lower strata of society, improvement of government finances, and the bolstering of the sales of royal offices.[69] The period between 1562 and 1629 was marred by sporadic religious civil wars, complicating matters significantly for France. However, in the 1630s, the prince and Catholic Cardinal Armand-Jean du Plessis, duke de Richelieu (1622-1642) managed to redirect the focus of his master, Louis XIII (r.1610-1643), outward to engage against the Habsburgs in the Thirty Years' War. From 1629, with intervention in northern Italy, and especially from 1635 when France openly warred against the Habsburg powers of Spain and Austria, Louis XIII and Richelieu entered a period of relentless conflict. This era featured continuous campaigns across multiple theatres, demanding unprecedented military commitment and exerting immense pressure on the administrative and fiscal resources of France.[70] To maintain some degree of royal control, Cardinal de Richelieu, appointed chief minister of France in 1624, worked hard to enhance the strength and authority of the monarchy by limiting the nobility's independence while strengthening the power of the royal officials appointed by the King himself to govern in his name over French provinces. These *intendants* were to support the government in military affairs, collect taxes, administer economic and jurisdictional activities, and ultimately enforce royal decrees. By 1630, most French provinces had one or two resident *intendants,* on whom the Minister for War and the Minister for the Navy heavily relied on even throughout the 18th century.[71] The foreign policy of France under Louis XIII and Cardinal de Richelieu was predominantly set to curtail Habsburg hegemony, which took France into struggles in Italy and Spain and into the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648). Conflict with the Spanish persisted beyond Richelieu's ministry, into that of Cardinal Mazarin, all the way to 1659. However, it was Richelieu who established royal absolutism and increased the power of the Bourbon dynasty.[72]

Following the demise of Louis XIV's chief minister, Cardinal Mazarin in 1661, the King took sole control and decided to rule as his own first minister, taking control

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[69] Christopher Duffy, *Siege Warfare: The Fortress in the Early Modern World 1494-1660* (London, Routledge, 1997), 113-115.
[70] David Parrott, *Richelieu's Army, War, Government and Society in France, 1624-1642* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2001), 1-2.
[71] Sara E. Chapman, *Private Ambition and Political Alliances. The Phélypeaux de Pontchartrain Family and Louis XIV's Government, 1650-1715* (Suffolk, University of Rochester Press, 2004), 70. 81.
[72] Loic Bienassis, 'Richelieu and Britain (1634-1642)' in *'The Contending Kingdoms' France and England 1420-1700,* G. Richardson (ed.) Ashgate, Hampshire 2008, 134.

also of the French foreign policy so that he could protect his state's borders and enhance its European power with his ambitious plans of enlarging French territory. This ushered in a new dynamic in international relations which supported further the form of politics retrospectively termed 'absolutism' where the monarch ruled by divine right. From 1660 until the revolution, just one decade, the 1720s, experienced uninterrupted peace and thus the French state was largely moulded by the necessities of warfare. Throughout Louis XIV's rule, the nation struggled fiercely against progressively stronger alliances.[73] This political system projected into the 18th century with the rule of Louis XV and Louis XVI, only to be heavily challenged from the 1750s, and then severed by revolutionary changes of 1789.[74]

Until the mid-eighteenth century, the foreign policy of France was still largely based on the King's dynastic ambitions. Louis XV's desire for a more effective struggle against the British gave way to the 'diplomatic revolution' where France reversed its long-time hostility towards the Habsburgs, rendering it freer from continental conflict and thus able to turn its military and political efforts against Britain's growing empire. The French chief minister of France, Étienne François de Choiseul (1758-1770) claimed that France had to turn its attention to the seas where the true power was unbalanced towards British domination.[75] France's more pacific foreign policy of the decades immediately after Utrecht was successfully conducted by the Regent, the duke d'Orléans (1715-1723), and subsequently by the chief minister Cardinal de Fleury during the adulthood of Louis XV. This does not mean that Fleury was not active in European affairs in the 1720-1730s, but strategic war aims were limited and carefully defined. Embarking upon a similar governmental style to that of his predecessor, Louis XV decided to take the lead of his state after Cardinal de Fleury's demise in 1743, coinciding roughly with the end of a relatively peaceful phase in French history.[76] Two years prior to the cardinal's death, Louis XV's growing influence in politics and diplomacy, coupled with the rise of a war party at court and in the army, led his country into an intense state of war from 1741. It was at this time that Louis XV took on an active role in his absolutist government by re-involving France in continental affairs. In April 1744, Louis XV declared war on Austria,

[73] Julian Swann, 'The State and Political Culture', in *Old Regime France* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2001), 151.
[74] Wilson (2008), 372.
[75] Rudé (1972), 214.
[76] Guy Saupin, *La France à l'Époque Moderne*, 3rd edition (Paris, Armand Colin, 2016), 179.

involving his army in an eight-year struggle which arose when France, Spain, Russia and Bavaria challenged the right for the throne of the Habsburg archduchess Maria Theresa (r. 1740-1780), adding further strain upon the French military and financial system in the process.[77]

The power and influence of France within the European context suffered a blow when the British targeted French commercial and imperial might during the Seven Years' War (1756-1763). It was only under King Louis XVI, and through his Minister for Foreign affairs, Charles Gravier, count de Vergennes (1774-1787) and the policies of his former minister Étienne François, duke de Choiseul (1758-1761) that France managed to shift gear towards pursuing continental dominance via its support of the rebels in the War of American Independence (1775-1783). France's foreign policy under Louis XVI was to keep Austria as a backstop to protect itself from a continental coalition against her, though all the while seeking not to get involved in Joseph II's entanglements. The approach was to keep peaceful terms with European states and work towards the weakening of Britain's military and political strength.[78] When France was finally recovering some of its military and naval power following the impact of the Seven Years' War (1756-1763), the mounting financial strains of the American War of Independence (1775-1783) and the failure more generally to generate enough tax revenue from the propertied elites under the existing constitutional set-up, led to its collapse in 1789.[79]

Contrary to ingrained perceptions of a relentless Christian-Muslim confrontation, alliances between Latin Christendom and Muslim powers did develop. Ottoman alliances with European states did not start with France. The Ottoman army first crossed European borders in aid of Christian powers in mid-fourteenth century to assist either the Byzantine emperor or the city of Genoa. During the capture of Constantinople in 1453 the Sultan was happily assisting and trading with Florence.[80] Ahmet Nuri Yurdusev points out that modern diplomacy, originally commencing in Italian city-states and later in the wider European system, developed in close liaison with the Sublime Porte. For instance, Venice interacted more with the Ottoman world

[77] John Lynn, 'International Rivalry and Warfare,' in *The Eighteenth Century*, T.C.W Blanning (ed.), Oxford University Press, Oxford 2000, 197-198; Stephen J. Lee, *Aspects of European History 1494-1789* (London, Routledge, 1984), 221.
[78] Lee (1984), 222.
[79] Lee (1984), 217
[80] Philip Mansel, 'Art & Diplomacy in Ottoman Constantinople,' *History Today*, 46, 8 (August 1996), 43.

than its neighbouring Christian European states when it came to matters of trade, despite the fact that the Ottoman Empire was not part of the European diplomatic states system at the time.[81]

The relationship between Europe and the Ottoman Empire began to be formally forged with the establishing of permanent embassies in Constantinople soon after their emergence in Europe in the 16th century.[82] European diplomatic relationships with the Ottoman Empire, through permanent representation, were unique for a long period of time because it was only in the 19th century that European states established permanent embassies or missions outside European borders.[83] Mansel claims that the first permanent embassies in Constantinople were established by the rulers of France, Poland, Genoa, Venice and the Holy Roman Empire and these embassies became so alluring that they were considered to be the hubs of training for future ministers.[84]

The first French permanent embassy in Constantinople was established in 1534,[85] forty seven years before a permanent English ambassador was received.[86] Ironically, this first ambassador was Jean de La Forêt (1535-1537), a knight of the Order of St John.[87] His principle task was to negotiate a Franco-Turkish treaty of alliance and trade between Francis I and Suleiman, which he successfully signed in 1536 and it was this *Capitulation* (*ahdnâmes*/agreements) that paved the way for French political pre-eminence in the Ottoman Empire.[88] Even though this knight served as an envoy of France, his presence in the Ottoman court represented the closest the Order of St John might ever come to diplomatic engagement in its archenemy's territory, given that the Order itself could never establish an embassy there because it was in permanent state of war with the Ottoman Empire.

The close bond between France and Constantinople came out very clearly in the way the French ambassador was given precedence over others; for instance, during the peak of the Franco-Habsburg hostility in 1538 he was allowed to refit French vessels in the port of Constantinople. A few years later the ambassador was personally

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[81] Ahmet Nuri Yurdusev, 'The Ottoman Attitude toward Diplomacy', in *Ottoman Diplomacy: Conventional or Unconventional?,* A. Nuri Yurdusev (ed.) Palgrave Macmillan, New York 2004, 25.
[82] Mansel (1996), 44.
[83] Yurdusev (2004), 27
[84] Mansel (1996), 44.
[85] Mansel (1996), 44.
[86] Yurdusev (2004), 27.
[87] Mansel (1996), 44
[88] Ministère de la Guerre, *Tableau de la situation des établissements Français dans l'Algérie en 1840* (Paris, Imprimerie Royale, 1841), 414.

involved in instructing the Ottoman artillery during the war against Persia and in organising combined Franco-Ottoman naval missions against Spain in the mid-sixteenth century.[89] Throughout the 18th century, the influence of the French ambassador in Constantinople proved instrumental in mediating conflicts between the Order of St John and the Ottoman Empire.[90]

Ahmet Nuri Yurdusev argues that the Ottoman Empire delayed permanent diplomatic exchanges with Europe until the late 18th century, not from mistrust but because unilateralism was convenient. The Ottomans, believing Islam and Christianity were in perpetual conflict, avoided deep European diplomacy until the Treaty of Paris in 1856. Between 1793 and 1821, however, reciprocity was achieved, leading to full integration into the European state system by the mid-nineteenth century. Their belief in Muslim superiority initially hindered equal diplomatic participation.[91] Nineteenth-century historian Ahmed Cevdet noted that during Selim III's reign (1789-1807), the Ottomans sent resident ambassadors to foreign courts due to the political unrest caused by the French Revolution. This turmoil in France led to the establishment of an Ottoman embassy in London in 1793, prioritizing England over their traditional ally, France.[92]

Prior to the Sublime Porte's reforms, known as the 'New Order,' the Ottomans' absence from Europe's diplomatic network was mitigated to a small extent by way of capitulations between the Sultan and Christian rulers. These were vital for mutual gain in trade and commerce, the installation of Christian consuls in Levantine harbours and the compliance of Ottoman officials.[93] The Ottomans considered all capitulations, even those done with France, as being of a temporary nature, requiring renewal by succeeding Sultans.[94] Though France was a favourite in most matters related to the Ottoman world, on several occasions it had to compete with the British and the Dutch to secure privileges, because the latter two also enjoyed a strong presence during the 17th century. In 1740, the Ottomans renewed capitulations with France, marking the

[89] Mansel (1996), 44.
[90] See chapter 2,3,4.
[91] This unilateralism was based on the *Dar al-Harb* policy which followed Islamic laws stating that Christian and Muslim states were not equal: Yurdusev (2004), 6, 9, 14.
[92] Michael Talbot, *British-Ottoman Relations, 1661-1807. Commerce and Diplomatic Practice in Eighteenth-Century Istanbul* (Suffolk, The Boydell Press, 2017), 17.
[93] Jean Mathiex, 'The Mediterranean', in *The New Cambridge Modern History: The Rise of Great Britain and Russia 1668-1715/25*, vol. VI, J.S Bromley (ed.) Cambridge University Press, London 1970, 549.
[94] Yurdusev (2004), 41.

height of French influence in the Ottoman world and securing an unchallenged position in Eastern trade for France. This development made the strategically located harbours of Malta and the preservation of the island as a closer ally to France than to any other Christian state even more crucial by the 18th century.[95] At times, Christian ambassadors in Constantinople pressured the Sultan to block the bestowing of superior privileges to a competing state; therefore it was in France's interest to please the Porte in all things possible and appear favourable in Ottoman eyes and hence maintain its privileges in the East.[96]

Trade with the Ottomans gained France stable revenue. Its trade networks consisted of Ottoman harbours like those of Smyrna, Constantinople, Aleppo, Salonika, Alexandria, Candia, southern Greece and other secondary centres.[97] During the 18th century, France took hold of Smyrna's trade activities, rendering it a hub of Ottoman trade with the Christian Kingdom, having the port of Marseilles as the lynch pin to Levantine trade routes.[98] Jean Mathiex says that by 1715-1720, French trade in the Levant surpassed that of Great Britain and Holland, keeping its leading place until the French Revolution.[99] Yet, French trade and commerce in the East was on several occasions affected by war and disease. For instance, trade with Marseilles suffered a major blow during the outbreak of the bubonic plague in 1720 and it was through the hard work of French ambassadors in Constantinople, like Louis Sauver de Villeneuve (1728-1741), that France managed to renew its trading alliance with the Sublime Porte. Throughout the 18th century, French trade in the East was also heavily shackled because of European wars, like the War of the Austrian Succession (1744-1748) and the Seven Years' War (1756-1763). Conversely, peacetime boosted French trans-Mediterranean commerce, so logically it was in France's interest to avoid any conflict which could have hampered Franco-Ottoman import and export activities.[100] It was because of this reliance and alliance with the Ottoman world that Hospitaller Malta, through its policing activities in Mediterranean waters at times acted as a strain on the Franco-Ottoman relationship, forcing France to play its 'double game' with the Porte

[95] Robert Olsen, 'The Ottoman-French Treaty of 1740: A Year to be Remembered?', *Turkish Studies Association Bulletin,* 15 (September 1991), 347.
[96] Yurdusev (2004), 39-41.
[97] Edhem Eldem, *French Trade in Istanbul in the Eighteenth Century* (Leiden, Brill, 1999), 13.
[98] David Abulafia, *The Great Sea. A Human History of the Mediterranean* (London, Penguin Group, 2011), 500.
[99] Mathiex (1970), 553.
[100] Eldem (1999), 15.

and Malta.[101] For instance, the Corona Ottomana incident of 1761 was one such occasion.[102] Alain Blondy explains that in the Corona Ottomana incident, Malta was abandoned and left to its fate by all European powers except for France. In this circumstance, Blondy depicts the French as the benevolent Christian ally to the Order of St John,[103] but in reality, France acted for its own sake because it needed to preserve its good relations with the Porte for reasons of commerce and trade,[104] while protecting Malta for the same reasons.[105]

1.6 French Diplomacy

Even though this dissertation is not a history of diplomacy, some aspects of French, Ottoman and Hospitaller diplomacy will be addressed here simply because international relations between these states were oiled by diplomacy, without which negotiation, alliance, and conflict resolution was not possible. Though the scope of this section is to introduce French diplomacy of the early modern era, it has to be pointed out that diplomacy is as old as mankind, and will likely, according to the 19th-century French historian Maulde-La-Clavière, survive as long as the world does.[106] The modern European system of resident embassies and continuous political relations began around 1500, with Italian city-states leading the way. By the 16th century, this practice spread to most of western and central Europe, aiding in policy formulation and fostering closer connections. However, progress was uneven and faced disruptions in the 16th and 17th centuries due to religious conflicts between Protestant and Catholic countries. By the late 17th century, Louis XIV of France led the development of a network of embassies and minor missions connecting major European capitals. France set the diplomatic standards and practices for the next two centuries, with other states following its lead to counterbalance French power. Louis XIV's reliance on his

[101] Elisabeth W. Schermerhorn, *Malta of the Knights* (Surrey,Windmill Press,1929), 264.
[102] Testa (1989), 247.
[103] Alain Blondy, 'Malte, enjeu Diplomatique Europeén au XVIIIeme siècle', in *Méditerranée Mer Ouverte, Tome I: Du XVIeme au XVIIIeme siècle*, C. Villain-Gandossi, L. Durteste and S. Busuttil (eds.) International Foundation, Malta 1997, 114.
[104] Orville T. Murphy, *Charles Gravier, Comte de Vergennes: French Diplomacy in the Age of Revolution 1719-1787* (Albany, State University of New York Press, 1982), 125-127.
[105] See chapter 4 and 5.
[106] René de Maulde-La Clavière, *La Diplomatie au Temps de Machiavel*, Volume 1 (Paris, Ernest Leroux, 1892), 1; Françoise Autrand, Lucien Bely, Philippe Contamine, Thierry Lentz, *Histoire de la diplomatie française. Du Moyen Age à l'Empire*, vol 1. (Perrin, 2005), 70; Jeremy Black, *A History of Diplomacy* (London, Reaktion Books, 2010), 19.

ambassadors for foreign policy cemented France's influence in shaping European diplomacy.[107]

Louis XIV, having inherited a corpus of diplomats from Cardinal de Richelieu, had approximately seventy permanent ambassadors (here the term ambassador is used in a broad sense since there was an entire hierarchy of representatives, ranging from resident envoy, extraordinary envoy, plenipotentiary, *chargé d'affaires* and ambassador),[108] scattered throughout the continent. These had characteristic duties and responsibilities that were copied by other European representatives, including the Order of St John's ambassadors. Their role was to represent the will of their monarch to sovereign hosts, as well as to protect their King's interests, safeguard their King's subjects, observe foreign courts and report back to their master.[109] Since Louis XIV's ambassadors acted as 'spies' by sending back home political and military information about the hosting country, it is not surprising that Louis XIV and his ministers relied heavily upon their reports in decision-making and policy-drafting.[110] The Sun King selected his diplomats on the basis of trust and confidence, not on the basis of lineage. Trust and confidence were emphasised by earlier treatises on the ambassador. Both criteria reflected in the writings of the Middle Ages about the 'perfect ambassador', which spoke of the ideal diplomat, who in the case of Louis XIV did not necessitate to be of noble birth, though non-nobles were generally posted on missions to small republics.[111] This is somewhat contrasting to the choice of ambassadors of the Order of St John, who could only be of noble birth since admission into the institution required proof of nobility. These diplomats lacked formal diplomatic training, but they did enjoy an aristocratic formation and a solid network amongst the elite of society.[112]

Robert Balmain Mowat claims that after the War of the Spanish Succession, France retained its pre-eminence in diplomacy inherited from Louis XIV's reign, and remained on top until the French Revolution.[113] During the reign of Louis XV,

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[107] Derek McKay, Hamish M. Scott, *The Rise of Great Power 1648 to 1815* (Essex, Longman, 1983), 201, 202.
[108] Marie-Hélène Côté, 'What Did It Mean to be a French Diplomat in the Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth Centuries?' *Canadian Journal of History/Annales Canadiennes d'histoire*, xlv (2010), 257-258.
[109] William J. Roosen, 'The Functioning of Ambassadors under Louis XIV', *French Historical Studies*, 6, 3 (1970), 312-313.
[110] Roosen (1970), 316.
[111] Côté (2010), 242.
[112] Busuttil (2018), 408.
[113] Robert Balmain Mowat, *A History of European Diplomacy 1451-1789* (United States, Archon Books, 1971), 207.

important developments took place in French diplomacy. The King created a network of permanent embassies in most of the European capitals for the representation of the French monarchy. Other rulers took heed, such that an intricate network of representation developed throughout Europe, leading to the formalisation and a firmer standardisation of the manner in which ambassadors were treated in foreign countries. For instance, ambassadors were given the right to worship according to their own beliefs, regardless of the laws of the country in which the diplomat resided. Further to this, ambassadors were even given diplomatic immunity within the hosting country.[114] This did not mean diplomacy was coherent, nor that French foreign policy was pursued in a clear, effective manner. Under Louis XV, political secrecy had reached new heights, mostly because the French government at this time had split in numerous factions. Wanting to promote his personal dynastic policies, Louis XV adopted a system whereby he held private consultation within a restricted circle of trusted advisors, known as the *secret du roi*, where plans and policies discussed tended to differ from the ones proclaimed by France's ambassadors and secretaries of state.[115] The involvement of the Knights of St John within the French diplomatic system was more intriguing than one would suppose. In fact, two of Louis XV's secret agents working within his secret diplomatic network were also French knights of the Order of St John, namely, the Bailli de Froullay and Louis François de Bourbon Prince de Conti, grand prior of France and cousin of Louis XV, who personally directed the *Secret du Roi* for a time. This alone reflects the closeness of the Order to the King and the top governance of France.[116]

1.7 The Order of St John's embassy in Paris and its ambassadors

On 24 March 1530, the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V, in his capacity as King of Sicily, gave Malta and Tripoli to the Order of St John by an act of donation.[117] This donation rendered Sicily as its feudal overlord, and gave its King rights in the administration of Malta, including the right to choose the Bishop of Malta. The knights were also bound to refuse refuge to any enemy in conflict with Spain and this meant that if France waged war with Spain, the Order had to deny the entry of French vessels

[114] Wilson (2008), 375.
[115] Lucien Bély, *Dictionnaire de l'Ancien Régime* (Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1996), 1146-1148; Rudé (1972), 207.
[116] Blondy, Berenger (2014), xiii.
[117] Petiet (1992), 13.

into Malta's harbour, irrespective of the fact that the majority of the Order's members were themselves French.[118] The donation charter required the knights to gift a falcon annually to the viceroy of Sicily, symbolizing submission and recognition of feudal rights. Grégory Woimbée argues that to contend Sicily's feudal influence, the Order also began gifting falcons to the Pope and France for diplomatic reasons.[119] The vassal status of Hospitaller Malta did at times lead to conflict with other powers. For instance, in 1654, when France was at war with Spain, the knights were bound to prevent refuge or assistance to the French fleet since they were the enemies of Malta's overlord. This attracted the ire of the French government who in retaliation sequestered all the Order's estates in France. It was only by way of grace that the young Louis XIV gave his pardon.[120] Being an international Order, and having the majority of its knights from France, the Order sought to preserve its international interests and European relations by working towards a state of neutrality, whereby its port would be open to all Christian powers but side with no one during wars among Christians. It was during the congress of Cambrai (1722-1725) that Grand Master Antonio Manuel de Vilhena (1722-1736) deployed all diplomatic means to achieve the desired status in an effort to undermine the feudal ties with Sicily. In fact, during the Seven Years War in 1759, Grand Master Pinto declared that during war the harbour of Malta would not receive more than four warships at a time, and this to the advantage of France because Britain had a larger fleet.[121] Despite this status of neutrality it was also widely known that France's interest in Malta was based on the Order's inclination towards France, where 'its ports were always neutral and never neutral, as accused by the enemies of France.'[122] Since France relied heavily on Malta's harbour for its commercial activities in the Levant, and thus it had vested interest in having uninterrupted access, the Order commonly turned to France to influence Spain and other maritime powers in agreeing towards a policy of neutrality for Malta. Furthermore, the Order's diplomatic relations with other sovereigns, such as the Bourbons and the Habsburgs, particularly in the 18th century, facilitated its distancing from Sicily and its progression towards the desired state of full sovereignty.[123] Hospitaller Malta was by the 18th century well connected

[118] Testa (1989), 7.
[119] Woimbée (2014), 34.
[120] Busuttil (2018), 405.
[121] Godechot (1951), 70.
[122] 'ses ports toujours neutres et jamais neutres comme nous le reprochent les ennemis de la France.' AN M992, f. 221, 31 January 1758.
[123] Woimbée (2014), 143.

to France. Of its eight langues, three were French: France, Auvergne and Provence,[124] having 400 out of 600 knights in 1789 being French and out of twenty-eight Grand Masters since the Order settled on Malta in 1530, twelve were of French origin. Additionally, mutual benefits brought the two countries closer together. Malta served as a vital naval base for French maritime activities, offering shelter against bad weather, protection from corsairs and enemy warships, and the supply of provisions and maritime services to French vessels. It also protected French merchant ships as they travelled to and from ports in the Levant and the Hospitaller fleet and Maltese corsairs assisted the royal navy during French conflicts with North African Muslim states. In return, Hospitaller Malta benefitted from the political and military protection of France, especially during Ottoman threats of a siege on the island, receiving continuous assistance with weaponry and expertise.[125] The close-knit relationship between France and Malta evolved and was sustained over the centuries because of a strong diplomatic network between the two states, one which had started even before the 18th century.

The Order of St John's first diplomatic envoy (of unknown identity) to France was officially welcomed and accredited by King Henri III in 1584. This envoy was sent on a temporary mission, following the customary practice of European courts at that time. A number of temporary envoys followed in the early years of the 17th century, including: Emery de Chattes in 1602, commander de Sillery in 1616, commander de Formegèrees in 1617 and 1623,[126] Amador de la Porte from 1624 to 1637 and the commander de Villegaignon,[127] the Bailli Paul-Albert de Forbin-Lambasc, the commander de Voyure,[128] and the Bailli de Medani.[129] It was in 1645 that Bailli Jacques de Souvré, son of Marshal Souvré, took permanent charge of the embassy of Malta until his death in 1670. From Souvré's appointment onwards, the ambassadors nominated by the Grand Master and the Council of State in consultation with the King (the King having already approved a candidate before the Grand Master officially proposed him as the ambassador)[130] retained their post until their demise.

[124] The other five langues were those of: Italy, Germany, Portugal, Aragon and Castille, Anglo-Bavarian.
[125] Godechot (1951), 69-70.
[126] Claude Petiet, *Le Roi et le Grand Maître* (Paris, Éditions Paris-Méditerranée, 2002), 604.
[127] MAE CP Malte, vol. 1, f. 163, 1638.
[128] MAE CP Malte, vol. 1, f. 240, 1641.
[129] MAE CP Malte, vol 2, f. 211, 1667.
[130] Blondy (2002), 37.

The first permanent ambassador was then succeeded by Louis-Étienne Texier d'Hautefeuille in 1670, at which time the Order conferred him the title of Extraordinary Ambassador, a title retained by successive ambassadors, even those appointed in the 18th century. Hautefeuille sat in office for thirty years, during which time he was promoted lieutenant-general of the King's army in 1677 and grand prior of Aquitaine in his final decade as ambassador.[131] By the early days of the 18th century, the Embassy of the Order in Paris was well established, with the ambassador enjoying his own personnel composed of a number of commanders, knights, a secretary and chaplains.[132]

The French archivist and historian, Ferréol de Ferry finds it rather ambiguous that a religious Order under the authority of the papacy had its own diplomatic system for its representation in European courts. This, he believed, was the Order's strategy to render public its sovereign character both as an institution and island-order-state. After all, Hospitaller Malta had a strategic geo-political location, having its own fleet, a small army, its own constitution and ultimately its own leader. As a sovereign state, Hospitaller Malta had its own diplomatic representation installed in the courts of major states, these being France, Spain, Austria, Rome,[133] Venice and Naples (the latter two still on temporary missions), like several European states of the 18th century.[134] The embassy of Malta in Paris was, according to Claire-Elaine Engel, highly regarded by the King and the court of France such that the ambassadors of the Order were well received and generously treated.[135] In 1742, Ambassador de Froullay noted to Cardinal de Fleury that if it were not for the deprived privilege of the *Honneur du Louvre* (entrance into the inner court of Versailles with the carriage), an honour which had already been granted to two preceding ambassadors, the Bailli Jacques de Souvré (1645-1670) and the Bailli Louis-Etienne Texier d'Hautefeuille (1670-1702) by Louis XIV, he was accorded all the privileges enjoyed by diplomats of crowned heads serving at the court of Versailles.[136] Under Louis XV, and in the year he had been appointed ambassador the Bailli de Froullay battled hard to obtain this privilege, yet his effort bore no fruit. It was only when the Order, encouraged by Froullay, provided

[131] Petiet (1992), 206-207; Busuttil (2018), 408- 411.
[132] Busuttil (2018), 409.
[133] Ferréol de Ferry, 'Le Bailli de Suffren, Ambassadeur de L'Ordre de Malte à Paris (1786-1788)', *Provence Historique,* Fascicule, 180 (1995), 195.
[134] Engel (1968), 246.
[135] Claire-Elaine Engel, *Les Chevaliers de Malte* (Paris, Les Presses Contemporaines, 1972), 152.
[136] Testa (1989), 92; Woimbeé, 58.

naval assistance to France during its conflict with Tunis in 1741 that the ambassador garnered the King's attention and successfully reinstated the Order's privilege.[137] The particularity of the Order's representation at the court of Versailles was the fact that its ambassador was a French knight but also a subject of the King of France. This was a privilege which was not conceded to any other Christian crown. In fact, the Order's ambassador was the only French subject representing a foreign sovereign allowed to attend public audiences in the presence of the King.[138]

The diplomatic privileges which the Order enjoyed in France placed it in the same sphere of prestige as the ambassadors of other crowns (even though gradations of privileges existed amongst diplomats of different states) despite its small size and limited political influence.[139] The element of prestige and inclusion within the court of Versailles was vital to the Order not just from an international image perspective, but also because its embassy in Paris represented the majority of its knights hailing from the Order's six large French priories, encouraging further the French knights' sense of prestige in their society. As a matter of fact, Grand Master Emmanuel de Rohan de Polduc (1775-1797) viewed his embassy in Paris as 'the torch of all others'.[140]

Despite the embassy's vast representation in terms of the Order's territory in France, the permanent ambassador was not directly responsible for the running of the grand priories and commanderies and the nomination of commanders, unless under extraordinary circumstances. This was the role assigned to the grand priors.[141] In the manuals and treatises of the 17th century, the role of the ambassador was to negotiate on behalf of his master, represent his sovereign and provide information on all the happenings at the court he was serving in. These were related and distinct tasks which the seven ambassadors of the Order in Paris seem to have successfully fulfilled throughout the 18th century.[142] The Order's ambassador was responsible for negotiating all the political and administrative issues relevant to the Order in France on behalf of the Grand Master and the Council of State. This could range from the cutting of wood from the Order's commanderies needed for the Order's shipbuilding,

[137] Neil Briscoe White, 'Aspects of the International Relations of the Order of St John 1683-1722', unpublished MA dissertation, Department of History, University of Malta, 2011, 27.
[138] François de Callières, *De La Maniere de Negocier avec des Souverains* (Amsterdam, Michel Brunet, 1716), 72.
[139] White (2011), 24.
[140] 'Le flambeau de toutes les autres.' Ferry (1995), 195.
[141] About the Grand Prior, see the Glossary, p.321.
[142] Claire Gantet, *Guerre, Paix et Construction des États 1618-1714* (France, Seuil, 2003), 38-39.

to the safeguarding of the Order's privileges in France. Furthermore, in times of war, the ambassador was expected to facilitate the provision of military engineers, officers, soldiers and supplies, and oversee the citation of knights summoned to Malta to bolster the islands' forces. He also chaired the council of the Order established in Paris for the administration of the Order's wealth in France, but most importantly, his task was to keep regular contact with the King's ministers to facilitate the connection between the Order and the court of France, serving as the lynchpin between the two states.[143]
Choosing the Order's ambassador for France was the prerogative of the Grand Master, yet the choice had to be endorsed by the French King, likely because the post was filled by a French knight, and therefore also a subject of the King, giving him an edge in the matter. This dual loyalty certainly was a potential cause for conflict of interest, since the Order's diplomat had to represent his prince to the crowned head that was also his Sire.[144] Upon the election of successive Grand Masters, the custom was to reconfirm the ambassador's appointment in France. For instance, in 1741 the newly elected Grand Master Manoel Pinto de Fonseca (r.1741-1773) confirmed the Bailli de Froullay in his post as ambassador of the Order to France and this, to the satisfaction of the King and the Cardinal de Fleury.[145] Following the death of ambassador de Breteuil in 1785, Grand Master de Rohan set his eyes on the celebrated vice-admiral the Bailli de Suffren. The French court did not hesitate to approve Rohan's choice but pounced on the opportunity to remind the newly elected ambassador and Grand Master that 'the brave vice-admiral was to uphold the interest of his Order without renouncing the glory of serving his King.'[146] The Grand Master was wise enough to choose French knights of the highest rank with strong political links within the court of France through their family connections. For instance, Jean-Jacques de Mesmes (1675-1741) who joined the Order of Malta as a minor in 1676, came from the old Béarnaise family. He was the son of Jean-Jacques de Mesmes (1630-1688), *Président à mortier* of the Parlement of Paris, and brother to Jean-Antoine de Mesmes (1661-1723), who served as the First President of the Parlement of Paris in 1712, and played a key role in

[143] Ferry (1995), 195.
[144] Ferry (1995), 200.
[145] Testa (1989), 90.
[146] 'notre brave vice-admiral à soutenir les interest de son Ordre sans renouncer à la gloire de servir encore son Roi.' Ferry (1995), 200.

securing Jean-Jacques's appointment as ambassador of the Order to France in 1714.[147] The Bailli de Froullay was the brother of Charles François, count de Froullay (1673-1744) the French ambassador to Venice, a connection which proved essential in the frequent conflicts between Malta and Venice. Additionally, he was also a close friend of Cardinal de Fleury, the chief minister of France, which certainly was a favourable situation for the Order. This close association with the influential Fleury family was shrewdly maintained with the appointment of the cardinal's great nephew, the Bailli de Fleury, as the Order's ambassador to France, following the demise of Froullay in 1766.[148] The Order had also close connections with the influential Saint-Simon family. In 1720, Claude Rouvroy de Saint-Simon returned to France after fleeing to England to escape his religious vows and, during his time there, started a family. Upon returning home, he accused his mother and sister of coercing him into religious vows and seizing his inheritance. Seeking to restore his position, he turned to his cousin, the famous Titus du Rouvroy, duke de Saint-Simon, the author of the *mémoirs* which brought Louis XIV and the Regent's court to life. The duke used his influence, along with the support of the Regent d'Orléans, to secure Claude's entry into the Order of St John. With the Regent's backing and the Saint-Simon family's favour, Grand Master Zondadari granted a rare dispensation in 1721, allowing Claude to take his vows in Paris through special permission. He was appointed ambassador of the Order to Paris in 1775.[149] The Order's effort in seeking political connection with the highest offices in France by way of its links to the French nobility was not a practice the Order exclusively employed for its ambassador to France. For instance, when in 1742 Grand Master Pinto appointed the Bailli Jean Louis de Guerin Tencin as the Extraordinary Ambassador to the Holy See, he selected him both for his diplomatic skills and also because he was the nephew of the French Cardinal de Tencin, who served as the ambassador of France to Rome until 1742. With this manoeuvre Pinto bolstered his influence in Rome.[150]

The Order's ambassadors in Paris utilized their noble connections and diplomatic acumen to influence the French government and advance the Order's

[147] Blondy (2002), 32, fn 3; Astier, Régine, 'Françoise Prévost: The Unauthorized Biography,' in *Women's Work: Making Dance in Europe before 1800*, M. Brooks (ed.) University of Wisconsin Press, Madison 2007, 133.
[148] Testa (1989), 90-91.
[149] Engel (1963), 81-89.
[150] Testa (1989), 89.

interests within the French court. For instance, in 1722, Ambassador de Mesmes sought permission from his Grand Master to lobby other sovereigns and convince the King of France to grant the *Honneur du Louvre* to the ambassadors of the Order; he proposed to do this via the ambassador of Portugal at the court of France.[151] Further to acquiring particular requests, the Order sought to secure equal diplomatic privileges at the court of France, striving hard to gain honours and privilege as a means of asserting its sovereign status, having the Grand Master seen as a ruler of state rather than that of a religious institution. The first step was to install permanent ambassadors, which was by the 18th century an established practise. Chosen knights were appointed to the major courts of Rome, Madrid, Vienna, and Paris. However, true parity with other crowned heads, required recognition by way of diplomatic honours. In 1715, Ambassador de Mesmes achieved a significant victory when Louis XIV granted him a grand entrance to Versailles for the presentation of his credentials. This ceremonial triumph was celebrated in the Council of State in Malta when a long pamphlet written by the ambassador was read out aloud during a council session. However, under the new king, Louis XV, Ambassador Bailli de Froullay faced less favourable treatment and had to lobby for years to secure similar honours, which were only granted after the Order demonstrated loyalty to France during the Franco-Tunisian conflict of 1741.[152] Ambassador Froullay claimed that the first time the Order's ambassador was treated equally as the other diplomats of crowned princes was when the count of Froullay died in 1744. At this time, Louis XV sent his master of ceremonies for ambassadors to the ambassador of the Order to present the king's condolences. On another occasion, during the court ceremony for the mourning of the dauphine, Froullay remained fully covered in the presence of the King and royals, imitating first rank ambassadors, while dukes and envoys of foreign sovereigns kept their hats under their arms.[153] Froullay's claim of this being the first time the Order's ambassadors were treated like top tier ambassadors, was not entirely accurate because even his predecessor, Ambassador de Mesmes, was given a similar treatment to the ambassadors of crowned heads during an audience with Louis XV. In his *Mémoires*, the duke de Luynes provides a detailed narrative of Mesmes' audience with the King

[151] NLM AOM 1219, f. 394, 3 September 1722.
[152] NLM AOM 1224, f.159. See also: Claire-Elaine Engel, *Histoire de L'Ordre de Malte* (Genève, Les Editions Nagel, 1968), 246.
[153] Blondy (2002), 34.

and the Queen, during which he was to announce the death of Grand Master de Vilhena (r.1722-1736) and present them the letter of the newly appointed Grand Master Ramon Despuig (r.1736-1741). During this elaborate ceremony he was even allowed to enter Versailles with an entourage of around seventy-eight knights, all dressed in black velvet, having the white cross of the Order on their chest and left shoulder. Accompanying the ambassador by special permission from the Queen, was her page, a young knight of the Order. On this occasion, Mesmes was also allowed to remain fully covered with mantle and hat, and remove it only in synchrony with the King when the name of Grand Master was mentioned.[154] The ambassadors maintained such a close relationship with the monarchy that, as the Duke de Luynes noted in his *Mémoires*, the Order's ambassador, akin to those of Spain and Naples who were regarded as 'ambassadors of the family,' was granted the privilege of accompanying the King to his residence at Marly.[155]

The need for the Order of St John's presence within the international community was well recognised by the 18th century. For major powers like France, Britain, and Russia, Malta fitted into their strategy for the domination of the Mediterranean. At the outset of the Seven Years' War, Britain lost its naval base at Port Mahon in Minorca to the French, a base held since the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713. Consequently, in 1756 Britain eyed Malta's grand harbour as the alternative port for the launch of its naval operations, but not only. This, as Frans Ciappara explains, would have also been the right opportunity for Britain to destabilise French revenue from their Levantine markets by taking control of the island which facilitated French commerce in the east. While, a plan for the integration of Malta with Great Britain was being covertly hatched with the intention of having Grand Master Pinto's auditor, Fabrizio Grech, and the British consul, John Dodsworth leading the plan, this seems to have been abandoned. However, both Britain and France realized that influencing the island's government would be more cost-effective than taking direct control. Determined to maintain its advantage, France ensured the Hospitaller government

[154] Charles-Philippe d'Albert, *Mémoires du duc de Luynes sur la Cour de Louis XV (1735-1758)*, Tome 1 (1735-1737), (Firmin Didot Frères, Paris), 171-173.
[155] Depasquale, Carmen, 'Bailli de Froullay, Knight, Sailor and Diplomat,' *Melita Historica*, 13, 2 (2001), 221-228.

adopted a policy of neutrality, allowing access to the port in a way that favoured French interests.[156]

In its struggle to maintain its policy of neutrality and sovereignty over Malta, the Order made sure to be diplomatically represented in top political and diplomatic international meetings. When meetings for the negotiation of peace terms were held in Utrecht in the attempt to end the War of the Spanish Succession (1701-1714), a representative of the Order of St John was permitted to participate, unlike the papal nuncio who was excluded from such meetings.[157] In 1720, Grand Master Marc Antonio Zondadari (1722) sent the *Homme du Roi*, Fra Joseph Laval de Montmorency to the courts of Rome, England and France in preparation for the Congress of Cambrai (1722-1725) during which the policy of neutrality of Malta was proclaimed.[158] By deploying its diplomats, the Order of St John was not only staging its presence in the European political scenario but it consolidated a system with which it could ensure the preservation of its privileges and landed wealth in European jurisdictions.

After decades of representation by a series of ambassadors in Paris, the embassy was left in the hands of two successive *chargé d'affaires*, the knight d'Estourmel and the Bailli Jean-Loup de Virieu. The latter shut the doors of his office just before the beheading of Louis XVI in 1793, leaving behind the secretary of the embassy. Cibon, was left to administer the affairs of the Order during the closing years of the French Revolution, at least till 1797 according to the *Almanach Nationales*.[159]

1.8 Conclusion

This chapter has sought to provide a framework within which to better understand the structure and arguments in the rest of the dissertation. The overview of the political

[156] Blondy (1997), 110; Frans Ciappara, Integration with Britain in the eighteenth century?, in *Melitensium Amor : Festschrift in honour of Dun Gwann Azzopardi*, Cortis, Freller, Bugeja (eds.) (Malta, 2002), 239. In mid-eighteenth century, both Britain and France held back from taking control of Malta. For France, the island already met its strategic needs without the costs of direct administration, while Britain considered Malta's potential as an alternative naval base, even though the Admiralty still preferred Port Mahon over the grand harbour : Blondy, (2002), 149. After the Seven Years' War, Britain's hesitation to take Malta remerges in 1792 when the Order, by now financially weakened by France's confiscation of its lands, offered naval support to Britain in exchange for a loan and military protection against a likely French Republican invasion. While Britain's main concern was to prevent Malta from falling into French or Russian hands, its decision to keep hold of the island was only confirmed with Napoleon's growing aggression in Europe in 1802 and 1803: Desmond Gregory, *Malta, Britain and the European Powers*, 1793-1815 (London, Associated University Presses, 1996), 58-67.

[157] White, 23.

[158] Alain Blondy, *Malte et Marseille au XVIIIème siècle* (Malta, Fondation de Malte, 2013), 79.

[159] Catalogue of the Embassy of the Order of St John at the Archives Nationales France (Paris), 1.

context of the 18th century serves to frame the Franco-Hospitaller relationship within which it existed and operated. This, as shall be seen, was not happening in isolation but alongside other early modern political states whose political shifts and challenges at times led to a direct or subtler influence on the relationship between France and Hospitaller Malta. Lastly, the general overview of the primary and secondary sources examined above provides the reader with a clearer understanding of the methodology applied in this work, and the pillars on which it stands.

The words of the Prince de Condé, Louis Henri de Bourbon (1692-1740), President of the council for the Regency, to the Grand Master take us back to the core focus of this study, the protection of Malta by *ancien régime* France. In November 1722, at the peak of an Ottoman threat to Malta, Condé told Grand Master Vilhena:

> I sense all the importance of conserving [Malta] for the religion [Catholicism] for the common interest of Christianity. Your Highness can count on my attention and inclination on what regards the Order.[160]

His intention was to discuss the need to defend Malta from an apparent Ottoman attack during a Council of State meeting. France, its politicians, and its royals were open to lend a hand to the knights in their hour of need.

[160] 'Je sense toute l'importance de la conserver a la Religion pour l'intérèt general de la Chretienté. Votre Altesse peut compter sur mon attention et mon penchant pour ce qui regarde l'Ordre de Malte.' AN M995, f. 66, 26 November 1722.

Chapter 2
War, Diplomacy and Protection: France and the 1722 Ottoman threat to Malta

2.1 Introduction

All your predecessors, Sire, have declared themselves defenders of my Order, and at all times it has received distinguished proof of their royal protection. All my efforts will be in vain if Your Majesty, moved by the misfortunes that threaten us, does not wish to come to our aid.[1]

This was Grand Master Antoine Manoel de Vilhena's (r.1722-1736) plea to the soon to be crowned Louis XV at the peak of an Ottoman threat to Malta in 1722.[2] Similarly to previous Ottoman alarms, particularly those of 1645 and 1714-1715, the Grand Master of the Order turned to France for military assistance. Not disregarding the fact that the Order also reached out to its spiritual authority, Pope Innocent XIII (r.1721-1724), in Rome, and the King of Spain Phillip V (r.1700-1746) for assistance, the Grand Master and his council held the highest hopes in the King of France. This was based on the growing Franco-Hospitaller connection forged throughout the 17th century.[3] The alarm of 1722 was yet another scene in one of several acts of sieges and threats the Ottomans hurled against the Order of St John, dating back to their stay in Rhodes. The newly elected Portuguese Grand Master reminded the French monarch that the 'Order is so intimately connected to you, Sire, through the number of French knights which the French nobility has provided, that the defence of Malta becomes our common cause of the subjects of Your Majesty, which I dare add interests all Christianity.'[4]

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[1] 'tous vos prédécesseurs, Sire, ont daigné se déclarer défenseurs de mon ordre, et en tout temps il a reçu des preuves distinguées de leur protection royale. Tous mes efforts seront impuissants si Votre Majesté, touchée par les malheurs qui nous menacent, ne veut bien nous secourir.' MAE 67 CP vol. 6, ff. 132r-132v, 23 August 1722.

[2] Louis XV became King of France in 1715 at the age of five upon the death of his great-grandfather Louis XIV. Being too young to rule, the duke d'Orléans (1715-1723) took control in the capacity of regent of France until Louis's crowning in 1722. Jean-Christian Petitfils, *Louis XV* (Lonrai, Normandie Roto Impression s.a.s, 2016), 33-35.

[3] Cavaliero (1960), 115. Claude Busuttil, 'Une Architecture sous influence -Malte et les Architectes et Ingénieurs militaires Français pendant le règne de Louis XIV (1643-1715): Les choix Politiques de l'Ordre de Saint-Jean de Jérusalem thesis', unpublished PhD thesis, Normandie Université, 2018, 6.

[4] 'Mon Ordre vous est si intimement attaché, Sire, par le nombre des chevaliers qui lui donne la noblesse françoise, que la defence de Malte déviant la cause commune des sujets de votre Majesté jose adjointer qu'elle interesse tous la chretienté.' MAE 67 CP vol. 6, f. 132v, 23 August 1722.

The general perception regarding the motive behind the 1722 Ottoman threat against Malta was that the Ottomans wanted to free all the Muslim slaves on the island. They were ready to do this both belligerently or diplomatically, the latter through the mediation of the ambassador of France in Constantinople, Jean Louis d'Usson, marquis de Bonnac (r.1713-1724). The Ottoman willingness to sign a truce with the Hospitallers in 1722, for the exchange of Christian and Muslim slaves seems to support this claim. That said, the ambassador of France in Constantinople believed otherwise. To him the real reason for this apparent mobilisation against Malta was as a response to a provocation. In his words the threat 'was the fruit of the Maltese corsairs who sailed right up to within view of the Dardanelles,' provoking the Ottomans to retaliate against them.[5] The Order's corsairing activities were often a frequent cause of friction between Malta, France and the Ottomans throughout the 18th century. At times, the Order's ambassador in Paris had to intervene to placate the wrath of French ministers against Maltese corsairs because the Ottoman Sultan expected France to curtail their activities. Just as it was crucial for France to maintain a strong alliance with the Porte, it was equally important for the Order's ambassador to prevent any hostility between France and the Hospitallers.[6]

The fact that many of the Order's knights residing abroad served the Order or the monarch of their homeland renders the study of its diplomatic papers essential for the understanding of Hospitaller foreign ties.[7] This chapter takes up the task of revealing the workings and dynamics between Malta and France through the support and contribution, or lack of it, provided by France in times of one of the acute Ottoman threats to the island. This is done through an analysis of French and Hospitaller diplomatic correspondence, contemporary newspapers and other relevant documents. Here the focus will be on the alarm of 1722 as a window unto how war, diplomacy and patronage shaped this relationship.

This episode is approached through the office of the ambassador of the Order of St John in Paris, the Bailli Jacques de Mesmes (1715-1740) one of the longest

[5] 'c'est la fruit de la course que les armateurs Maltois viennont faire jusqu'à la vue du Dardanelles.' AN AE/B/I/394, 65-66v, 28 July 1722.
[6] Roderick Cavaliero, 'The Decline of the Maltese Corso in the XVIIIth Century,' *Melita Historica,* 2, 4 (1959), 228.
[7] David F. Allen, 'Charles II, Louis XIV and the Order of Malta,' *European History Quarterly*, 20 (1990), 323.

serving ambassadors in France in the 18th century,[8] whose role was pivotal for the Order's diplomatic representation in one of Europe's most powerful states. It also seeks to shed light on the role of an ambassador active in a European court in the early modern era at a crucial time when the state he represented was at war. Throughout the 1722 alarm, Ambassador de Mesmes's role revolved around the gathering of intelligence and offshore military advice, as well as the co-ordination of a military response in distant territory away from the Convent in Malta. In spite of his pivotal role, particularly in the organising of military assistance from France, it must be pointed out that he rarely acted alone.[9] On occasions when the ambassador needed to sign contracts or conclude deals on behalf of the Order, particularly those involving financial transactions, he collaborated with the receiver of the Order in Paris, commander Eustache de Bernart d'Avernes,[10] and when the ambassador was to send arms consignments to Malta he worked in close liaison with the Order's receiver in Marseille, and at times also with the receiver in Lyon, to organise storage and shipment of military consignments.[11]

In situations which required the permission of the King to allow French knights to leave for Malta in response to a 'general citation' (the term used by the Order to refer to the call-to-arms of knights to hasten to the Convent in times of need),[12] Mesmes would attend audiences with the Regent, sometimes accompanied by the Grand Prior of the Priory of France, Jean Philippe d'Orléans (r.1719-1748), the illegitimate son of the Regent.[13] In most cases, when the Order's ambassador negotiated or asked for anything related to the purchase of weapons, the issuing of passports for their movement across the kingdom, or simply asked for military leave for knights to embark on caravan duties in Malta, the ambassador dealt directly with the Secretaries of State for the Navy and for War, two key government offices that regularly feature in letters

[8] The Bailli Jean-Jacques de Mesmes (1715-1740) served for twenty-six years; he was followed by Bailli Louis-Gabriel de Froullay (1741-1766) who served for twenty-five years. See appendix 1: Short Biographies, p.334, 331.
[9] AN M995, f. 67, 28 November 1722.
[10] NLM AOM 1219, ff. 430-436, 26 December 1722. Eustache Bernart d'Avernes de Thiersanville was the commander of Abbeville, and procurator and receiver of the Order of St John. He published a pamphlet in 1729 titled: *La forme de donner l'habit aux chevaliers de Saint Jean de* Jérusalem. Retrieved on 5 April 2021, from https://books.google.com.mt
[11] NLM AOM 267, f. 235r, July 1724.
[12] René-Aubert de Vertot, *The History of the Knights Hospitallers*, volume 2 (London, 1728), 147.
[13] NLM AOM 1219, ff. 413-420, 12 November 1722.

of the Order's embassy in Paris.[14] In the latter's correspondence and in published secondary sources, the term 'Minister' is used to refer to these officials, as was also a custom by their contemporaries,[15] and for this reason and for practical purposes, this study will be making use of this term in line with the practice among historians of early modern France.[16] The Secretary of State was the head of a government department, roughly equivalent to government ministers today. A *ministre d'état*, a Minister of State, on the other hand was someone who sat on the King's innermost council, the *conseil d'en haut.*[17] Such a figure might or might not be a Secretary of State, though membership of this council was predominantly drawn from their ranks and the *contrôleur général des finances*. Nevertheless, the King sometimes invited onto this council *ministres* who lacked a portfolio but could bring huge personal experience to bear on state affairs.[18] There were four, sometimes five, secretaries of state during the 18th century, though they were briefly eclipsed during the early years of the Regency for Louis XV.[19] The Order's ambassador mostly dealt with those secretaries of state responsible for the Navy, War, and Foreign Affairs.

2.2 France, the Ottomans and the Knights of Malta, c.1720

Molly Greene claims that for the Ottoman Empire, the 18th century starts with the Treaty of Karlowitz in 1699, when the Turks lost against the Holy League, only to emerge victorious again in their final struggle with Venice in 1714-1715.[20] An Ottoman treatise cited by Fatma Muge Gocek, which was penned around the time of the Treaty of Passarowitz in 1718 (which concluded the Ottoman-Venetian wars) refers to the decline of the Ottoman military organisation. The resulting westward shift in Mediterranean power was enough reason for the Ottomans to partake in the world of western diplomacy, having the primary aim of obtaining information on Europe's

[14] The Minister for War in France during the period of the 1722 alarm was: François Victor le Tonnelier de Breteuil and those for the Ministry for the Navy were: Charles Fleuriau d'Armenonville, count de Morville (1722-1723) and Jean Frédéric Phélypeaux, count de Maurepas (1723-1749).
[15] For example, Ambassador de Mesmes referred to the Secretary of State for War, Nicolas-Prosper Bauyn, seigneur d'Angervilliers (1728-1740) as 'Ministre de la Guerre.' NLM AOM 1223, f. 107, 26 June 1738.
[16] To illustrate this point, two book used for the purpose of this dissertation are given: James Pritchard, *Louis XV's Navy 1748-1762* (McGill-Queen's University Press, Canada, 1987), 14; Vergé-Franceschi, Michel, *Toulon Port Royal (1481-1789)* (Paris, Tallandier, 2002), 143.
[17] John Lynn, *The Wars of Louis XIV* (Essex, Longman, 1999), 20.
[18] James Pritchard, *Louis XV's Navy 1748-1762* (McGill-Queen's University Press, Canada, 1987), 3.
[19] The Secretary of State of the Navy oversaw the colonies, except for the period between 1749 to 1754. Retrieved on 6 May 2021 from http//en-academic.com
[20] Greene (2014), 387.

military technology. In order to do this the Ottoman Empire needed allies.[21] In the early 18th century, the Franco-Ottoman alliance reached a new zenith in its long-standing relationship. This partnership was particularly advantageous for France, as it aligned with their ongoing anti-Habsburg policy and mutual antipathy towards Russia.[22] It was on the eve of the 1722 Ottoman alarm in Malta that Sultan Husayn sent his ambassador on a diplomatic mission to France in 1720-1721 to, on paper, inform France of his authorisation for the construction of a Catholic church in Jerusalem, when in reality he was to visit and study France's military establishments.[23]

Molly Greene cited the Ottoman historian Naima (1655-1716) as claiming that the 'age of the warrior' by the early 18th century had ended, and the era of bureaucracy had begun.[24] Since the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648, Europe's diplomatic network had significantly expanded, as had that of the Order, with principal embassies established in France, Rome, Vienna, and Madrid. Concurrently, the Order faced ongoing war and siege threats, regularly confronting these challenges in its role as the defender of Catholicism and Christendom in the Mediterranean. The memory of the Templars' dissolution, though very distant from the 18th century, lingered still in the collective memory of the knights,[25] and if not, reminders came in publications on its history. The Templars' fate kept in fact featuring in 18th century monographs like that of René-Aubert de Vertot on the history of the knights. It was thus imperative for the Order to confirm its *raison d'être*.[26] In the words of Pope Innocent XIII, 'the knights of Malta, [were] always ready to oppose [with] an invincible courage the superstition and barbarism of the Ottomans' a role which stood out in times of fear from an Ottoman onslaught, as those of 1714-15, 1722-23, 1731-33 and 1761, where war waged against Christendom (although in threats were against the Order not Christendom per se) reconfirmed the need for the militant-religious institution.[27]

From the aspect of war, the relationship between France and the Order gradually strengthened ever since the first French military engineering team was sent

[21] Fatma Mugek Gocek, *East Encounters West. France and the Ottoman Empire in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1987), 4.
[22] Molly Greene, 'Islam and Europe', in *A Companion to Eighteenth-century Europe,* P.H. Wilson (ed.) Blackwell Publishing Ltd, Oxford 2014, 388.
[23] Gocek, 4.
[24] Greene (2014), 389.
[25] Emanuel Buttigieg, *Nobility, Faith and Masculinity: The Hospitaller Knights of Malta c.1580-c.1700* (London and New York, Continuum, 2011), 161-62.
[26] René-Aubert de Vertot, *The History of the Knights of St John,* volume I (London, 1728), 192.
[27] 'le chevalier de Malte, toujours prêt à opposer un courage invincible aux superstitions et à la barbarie des Ottomans.' AN M995, f. 56, 23 September 1722.

to Malta during the 1645 Ottoman threat. As part of the defensive strategy, and as a custom of the Order since their stay on Rhodes (1310-1522), the Grand Master of the Order sought military expertise from outside the Order itself. In 1714, when rumour of an impending Ottoman attack reached the shores of Malta, Grand Master Ramon Perellos (r.1697-1720) petitioned the King of France, Louis XIV (r.1643-1715) through his ambassador in Paris, the Bailli de la Vieuville, and the Director General of Fortifications, Michel Le Peletier de Souzy,[28] to send him a team of French military engineers, artillery officers and lieutenants and sergeant of miners to render service in Malta.[29] Louis XIV dispatched a small relief force to Malta of six battalions from the company of miners, 60 gunners, 20 bombardiers and some engineers and artillery officers.[30] Leading the team then was Brigadier René Jacob de Tigné, a prominent engineer whose expertise was sought three times; during the alarm of 1714-15, the following year and again in response to the Ottoman threat of 1722.[31] At the onset of the 1714 alarm, the Minister for War, Daniel François Voysin de La Noiraye (r.1709-1715), instructed the Grand Master of the Artillery of France, Louis-Auguste de Bourbon, duke de Maine (1694-1736), to have 300,000 pounds of gunpowder be taken from the Royal magazines of Paris, Antibes, Grenoble and Marseille in aid of Malta.[32]

The pattern of military assistance noted here continued in subsequent alarms. By this time, seeking military support from France had become a standard practice for the knights, especially after the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713. This treaty marked the end of the War of Spanish Succession (1701-1714) and saw the ascension of the Bourbon Philippe, duke de Anjou (grandson of Louis XIV), as King Felipe V of Spain.[33] Malta's connection with Spain was officially severed by the Treaty of Utrecht, which transferred the Kingdom of Sicily to duke Victor Amadeo II of Savoy, making him the new feudal lord of Hospitaller Malta. The political landscape shifted again when the Habsburgs gained control of Sicily through the Treaty of The Hague in 1720. Therefore, during the 1722 alarm, Malta was technically under Austrian Habsburg rule.[34] Yet, the ties with France grew stronger, and this had to do with the fact that

[28] Busuttil (2018), 588; Lucca, 26.
[29] AN M1013, 16 December 1714.
[30] MAE, Memoires et Documents, Serie Malte, vol. 27, f. 96, 7 January 1715.
[31] Brincat (2011), 39-50.
[32] AN M1013, 23 December 1714.
[33] De Lucca, 26.
[34] Robert Dauber, *The Navy of the Order of Malta at the Danube in the War against the Turks 1736-39* (Vienna, The Author, 2011), 13.

France had by this time become a military and politically powerful state, as well as the fact that the proportion of French knights in the Order was becoming increasingly stronger. Furthermore, the success of French commercial activities in the Levant in the 18th century rendered Malta increasingly valuable to French commercial and trading activities.[35]

2.3 The onset of war, 1722

Alison Hoppen and Roderick Cavaliero claim that news of Ottoman preparations for an attack against Malta arrived on the island in March 1722,[36] but the first rumours about a large Ottoman force preparing at Constantinople for an invasion had already reached the island by the second half of 1721. This, however, seemed to have been dispelled by the newspaper *Le Mercure* published on 14 January 1722, which said that the Ottomans were arming against the Venetians.[37] These conflicting rumours did not seem to trouble Grand Master Marcc Antonio Zondadari (r.1720-22) who, in August 1721, told his ambassador in Paris that the 12 *sultanas*[38] (large battleships of the Ottoman fleet) leaving the Porte were not heading to Malta but to the island of Thasos for the purpose of constructing a fortress for the protection of Ottoman silver mines. Moreover, the Grand Master was pleased that works on fortifications in Malta were moving steadfastly and they were soon to reach a good state; the magazines were full of all types of munitions of war; the militia was well commanded and disciplined and whatever troops the Order needed in case of war would be sent by Catholic princes. Zondadari's confidence in the island's military preparedness contrasts heavily with the situation described by his successor less than a year later. Perhaps his false sense of reassurance came from the fact that the island had invested in an intensive programme of defence during the previous Ottoman threat of 1715. What, however, haunted Zondadari was the financial crisis that had hit France in 1720, a situation which had a direct and negative impact on the Treasury of the Order.[39]

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[35] Carmel Vassallo, 'Consuls and Commerce- the Development of Malta's Consular Service in Eighteenth-Century Spain', *Espacio Tiempo y Forma*, *Serie IV, Historia Moderna,* 28 (2015), 47.
[36] Hoppen (1999), 111.
[37] Joseph Abdilla, 'Aspects of the Relations between Malta and France during the Grandmastership of Vilhena 1722-1736' (Unpublished B.A. honours dissertation, Department of History, University of Malta, 1972), 34.
[38] For the Sultana, see the Glossary, p.325.
[39] NLM AOM 1563, ff. 305-306, 10 August 1721.

Despite these financial setbacks, during his brief magistracy Zondadari still pushed for the construction of a fort at Dragut point at the entrance of Marsamxett harbour, most likely because the knight Rochpierre had offered to design and finance the project himself.[40] Zondadari's plans, however, were wrecked when the Ottoman alarm was raised.[41] By the end of 1721, Zondadari took the precautionary measure to start calling upon members of the Order residing outside the Convent. He wrote to Rome to ask permission to have non-celibate clerics travel to Malta to assist in the manning of the fortifications, even though by this time no citation for the knights to move to the Convent had yet been issued.[42] A few months later, in April 1722, the ambassador of France to the Ottoman Empire, de Bonnac (r.1713-1724) informed the Regent Orléans that the Kapitan Pasha in Constantinople was preparing a fleet of ten to twelve vessels to set off on a campaign to chase the Maltese corsairs from Sicilian waters. Equipped as they were with cannon, ammunition and around 2,000 men, the French ambassador strongly feared they were heading for Malta.[43] Everything seemed to convince Bonnac that this mission was indeed the case. The Grand Vizier had revealed to him that the commander of the Ottoman fleet was given orders to search Maltese waters, and there was a chance that after augmenting their force with vessels from the North African coast, the combined fleet would then proceed to the Maltese islands and attempt a landing on Malta or Gozo. By the time Ambassador de Bonnac was writing to his superiors in Paris, the twelve Ottoman vessels were sailing for Tripoli, Tunis and Algiers to meet with supporting ships.[44] In the end, this fleet was recalled *en route* and never reached the island; shortly after, however, five *sultanas* were spotted on the horizon off the Maltese coast.[45]

[40] NLM AOM 1563, ff. 116-117, 10 June 1720. The identity of this knight is uncertain because there were two knights with the same surname: Joachim Fayn de Rochpierre a guard of the marine (a cadet) and lieutenant of vessels in 1707, and Joachim-Placide de Rochpierre received in the Order in 1694.
[41] NLM AOM 1563, f. 112, 8 June 1720; f. 116, 10 June 1720.
[42] AIM, Correspondence, vol. XXII, ff. 160r-161r, 26 December 1721.
[43] AN AE/B/I/394, ff. 45-47v, 18 April 1722.
[44] AN AE/B/I/394, ff. 65-66v, 28 July 1722.
[45] Cavaliero (1960), 114.



Figure 2.1 Jean-Louis d'Usson, marquis de Bonnac, ambassador of France to Constantinople (1713-1724).[46]

In May 1722, a newspaper in France noted that Malta feared a siege similar to that of 1565, and rumours alleged that some Ottoman vessels had already sailed through the Dardanelles laden with troops and munitions of war. In his final days in office, the gravely ill Grand Master Zondadari gave orders to send four armed frigates of the Order to observe the movements of these vessels, and he set in motion a rapid defence response on the island. The Bailli de Langon was commissioned to distribute the militia in the most vulnerable spots on the shoreline. This seems to have forestalled an uprising by some Greeks on the island who planned to revolt at the sight of the Ottoman flag. Consequently, the Council gave orders against the Greeks in Malta, whom they suspected were secretly conniving with the Ottomans and planning to arm frigates to facilitate the enemy's approach towards the archipelago.[47] It was at this time that coastal batteries began to be prepared and the Order's vessels armed, while roughly 7,000 Maltese peasants were placed under arms within the three corps of militia.[48] The knights at the Convent were in agitation not only because they feared a large-scale

[46] Image sourced from https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/
[47] *Recueil des nouvelles ordinaires et extraordinaires, relations et récits des choses advenues, tant en ce royaume qu'ailleurs, Gazette* of 27 June 1722, Issue 28, Naples 26 May 1722, p.319; Florence 2 June 1722, p.322.
[48] NLM Lib. Ms. 262, ff. 215-218.

siege but they were also expecting the demise of their master who had, on his death-bed, given orders to prepare for the election of his successor.[49] When the inevitable was about to happen, the Council of State closed the harbour for four days so that no vessel could enter or leave port at such a crucial moment when the island was about to lose its Prince and the Order, its Master. This procedure, which seems to have been a custom for the Order, was implemented when the island was at its most vulnerable, without an effective headship, and when invasion from the east was looming on the horizon.[50]

The closing of the harbour is likely to have inadvertently avoided another confrontation with the Ottomans. An Ottoman captain, Dgeanum Codjea, governor of Methoni,[51] wishing to impress the Sultan, captured a French vessel in Tunis. When he was ashore, some Christian slaves on board took control and sailed off with the Codjea's ship, money and valuable belongings which he claimed to reach the value of 125,000 scudi. When the slaves found the Maltese harbour closed, they proceeded to Trapani in Sicily. Adamant to hunt them down and get what he declared to be rightfully his, Codjea sailed straight to Malta with the intention of obtaining a vessel from Fra Montgontier, the interim *Homme du Roi* of Louis XV, for the purpose of embarking some of his men to proceed to Trapani on the trail of his stolen goods.[52] Not finding assistance from Montgontier, Codjea sailed to Constantinople to complain against the *Homme du Roi*'s refusal to provide assistance, without mentioning the reason why he had lost his prize in the first place. This stirred up a diplomatic issue, such that the Grand Vizier sent his Dragoman to the office of the French ambassador in Constantinople to demand an explanation. The French consuls Joseph Bayle (in Tunis) and Pierre Paget (in Messina) reported to Ambassador d'Usson that the stolen ship never stopped at Malta but had sailed straight to Trapani in Sicily, where the slaves and booty (amounting to not more than 40,000 scudi), belonging to Codjea were

[49] *Recueil des nouvelles,* Gazette of 27 June 1722, Issue 28, Naples 26 May 1722, p.319. In his final days Grand Master Zondadari had also sent the cross of the Order to Cardinal Zondadari and the Archbishop of Sienna, his brothers *Recueil des nouvelles,* Gazette of 4 July 1722, Issue 29, Rome 9 June 1722, p. 332.
[50] AN AE/B/I/816, ff. 369-370r, 20 June 1722; ff. 371rv, 15 June 1722.
[51] AN AE/B/I/389, ff. 80-82v, 13 November 1715. See also: Correspondence Consulaire de l'Ambassade de France a Constantinople (1709-1790), https://www.siv.archives-nationales.culture.gouv.fr/
[52] AN AE/B/I/816, ff. 369-370r, 20 June 1722. Fra Mongontier replaced Laval-Montomorency the *Homme du Roi* who was in Malta from 1715 to 1722. While the latter was representing the Order at the Congress of Cambrai in 1722, Montgontier took charge of his office and was paid 1,500 livres per year for his temporary post.

sequestered by the Viceroy of Sicily and the French vessel was then passed to the consul of France, Puget. Irked by the odious behaviour and lies against the French by Codjea and the grandees of Tunis, Bonnac advised the Regent in France to act against the Tunisians.[53]



Figure 2.2 Grand Master Manoel de Vilhena (1722-1736).[54]

These were the circumstances in which Manoel Antonio de Vilhena was elected as the new Grand Master on 19 June 1722. The celebrations for his ascension were promptly overshadowed when five Algerian vessels of war, captained by Abdi Aga, the admiral of the Ottoman Sultan, appeared on Malta's horizon on 28 June 1722. The defence mobilisation intensified when the knights came to fear an attack on Gozo.[55] Wanting to avoid a raid on the sister island, similar to the likes of the 1551 razzia when the majority of the population had been taken into slavery, the newly elected Grand Master gave orders for the evacuation of the old and the infirm.[56] Fortifications were strengthened, the inhabitants apart from able-bodied men were moved from Gozo and

[53] AN AE/B/I/394, ff. 65-66v, 28 July 1722.
[54] Portrait of Grand Master Vilhena, was retrieved on 3 June 2021, from: https://artuk.org/discover/artworks/manoel-de-vilhena
[55] NLM AOM 267, ff. 131r-132r, 3 June 1722.
[56] Cavaliero (1960), 114.

slaves were ordered to return to their prisons in Valletta, Birgu and Senglea.[57] Following the sighting of the hostile fleet, the commissioners of fortifications prepared and presented a report to the council, advising it to arm the coast and increase the presence of armed men, as well as, to despatch artillery to Gozo and Comino, and stock food for the 2,500 men which the Gozitan citadel could take.[58] According to custom, during such situations, knights at the Convent were selected for various military posts. The command of the militia and troops of the island was entrusted to Marshal Charles de la Marc de Panac who was to have four knights, Augustine de Barbantane, Marcello Cavaniglia, Tommaso de Torre and Fra Franz Anton von Schonau assisting him.[59] The Bailli Jacques François de Chambray was given the command of Gozo and Comino in June 1722.[60]

The fleet's commander, Admiral Abdi Aga, anchored outside the harbour and sent a letter to Vilhena, stating that the Ottoman Sultan demanded the release of all Muslim slaves on the island. This was not a mere request but an ultimatum that carried the threat of war if refused, 'in case you make any difficulty in delivering the said slaves, you will soon know it and regret it.'[61] The threat was explicitly stated. Aga concluded his letter by instructing the Grand Master to send his reply to him while he waited in Tunis.[62] A month after receiving this letter Grand Master Vilhena and the Council of State appointed a four-man commission to study Abdi Aga's letter and advise on the way forward.[63] Aga's threat of an attack did not remain only on paper. In their bid to pressure the Order, the Ottomans sent five *sultanas* in August 1722 to approach the grand harbour and fire volleys on the coastal fortifications as a warning sign that the Ottomans meant business.[64] In reaction to this, the appointed commissioners concluded that it was necessary to inform the Pope and the Christian Kings and Princes of Abdi Aga's threat.[65] Ignoring Aga's instructions, Vilhena turned directly to Constantinople and their *de facto* intermediary, the French ambassador Bonnac, to resolve the issue.[66] The Ottoman Sultan proposed a three-year peace treaty

[57] NLM AOM 267, ff. 131r-132r, 3 June 1722.
[58] NLM AOM 267, ff. 137r-138r, 28 July 1722.
[59] NLM AOM 267, ff. 132r, 29 June 1722.
[60] NLM, Lib. Ms. 262, ff. 215-218.
[61] 'In caso che farete qualche difficoltà per consegnare i detti schiavi, appresso lo saprete e vi pentirete.' NLM AOM 267, f. 132v, 29 June 1722.
[62] NLM AOM 267, f. 132v, 29 June 1722.
[63] NLM AOM 267, f. 136r, July 1722.
[64] NLM AOM 1484, no pagination, 4 August 1722.
[65] NLM AOM 267, f. 138rv, 2 August 1722.
[66] NLM AOM 267, f. 138rv, 2 August 1722.

in which both sovereigns would exchange slaves and cease hostilities. Considering this proposal, the Pope appointed a commission to explore the idea of having the Order sign a treaty with the Muslims, a negotiation which was being entirely mediated by Ambassador de Bonnac in Constantinople. However, this was never concluded.[67]

In August 1722, an alarming report read out during a session of the Council of State claimed that another five *sultanas*, each carrying 80 cannon and 600 men, along with another 500 Greeks and slaves, were assembling at the Porte.[68] Soon after, in October, the alarm intensified when French consuls stationed in the Levant began reporting that the Sultan was assembling a fleet of over fifty large vessels and more than 200 galleys. They claimed that the Grand Signor had also written to France and Vienna demanding they refrain from assisting Hospitaller Malta.[69] It was at this height of the alarm that the Convent sent circular letters to all priories in Europe, instructing them to inform the knights and novices in their jurisdiction to be ready to leave for Malta in March of the following year, clearly indicating that the knights were expecting the alarm to persist and an attack to happen.[70] Often called the 'Alarm of 1722' due to the threatening rumours and military responses being at their most intense, yet the fear and military preparations actually persisted until July 1723. Throughout this period of consternation, the Order experienced periods of fear and activity alternating with complacency and sluggishness. This situation lasted over a year, when in July 1723 the knights who had travelled to assist their Religion were allowed to return home.[71]

2.4 The Hospitaller ambassador in Paris

While a military response was being organized in Malta, the Order's ambassador in Paris was busy mobilizing resources and leveraging his connections in the court of France. Ambassador Jean-Jacques de Mesmes had a notably eventful tenure, navigating several significant events: the Ottoman threat of 1714-1715, which coincided with the conclusion of the War of the Spanish Succession (1701-1714); the death of King Louis XIV in 1715; the years of the Orléans Regency (1715-1723); the financial crisis in France precipitated by John Law's schemes; the alarm of 1722; and the coronation of Louis XV in October of the same year. Despite the end of the formal

[67] *Recueil des nouvelles, Gazette* of 19 June 1723, Issue 25, Venice 28 May 1723, p.296.
[68] NLM AOM 267, ff. 153r-154r, 9 August 1722.
[69] NLM AOM 1484, 2 October 1722; AOM 267, ff. 155r, 1 October 1722.
[70] NLM AOM 267, f. 155r, October 1722.
[71] NLM AOM 267, f. 212r, 23 July 1723

Regency in February 1723, the ambassador maintained his diplomatic dealings with Orléans until the latter's demise in December 1723; and these including matters of war.[72]

With the first warnings of an Ottoman assault, the Order of St John's immediate reaction was to gather intelligence from various courts through its diplomatic corps, the ambassadors, but also from its vast network of receivers, consuls and agents stationed in various locations.[73] In June 1722, following the sighting of an Algerian fleet in Maltese waters, Ambassador de Mesmes frantically sounded foreign ambassadors at the court of Versailles for their insights. From the reports he gathered it seemed that the fleet of the Sultan was arming to sail into the Mediterranean, but its destination was still unclear.[74] Meanwhile in France, following Cardinal Dubois' fervent desire to revive the grandeur of Louis XIV's reign, the French court and government relocated its seat of governance from the Palace of the Tuileries back to Versailles. Louis XV arrived at the palace on 15 June, received by a cheering crowd of young people waving blue and white ribbons.[75] It was within the walls of Versailles that Mesmes leveraged his connections, attended audiences with key figures, namely the new chief minister Cardinal Dubois, the former Regent Orléans, high-ranking generals like the duke de Maine (Grand Master of the Artillery), the Chevalier d'Orléans (grand prior of France), and other knights seasoned in warfare. His aim was to gauge their willingness to assist Malta and to seek their military counsel. Dissatisfied with the conflicting intelligence the Order was receiving, Mesmes sought clarification from Dubois. The Cardinal instructed Bonnac, the French ambassador to Constantinople,[76] to approach Yirmisekiz Mehmed Cebi Efendi (who had been appointed as temporary ambassador of Sultan Ahmed to France from 1720 to 1721), and other ministers at the Ottoman court to tease out as much information as he could on the strength and mission of the Ottoman fleet.[77] Meanwhile, the Regent d'Orléans had received news that this fleet consisted of seven heavily armed *sultanas* which were planning to carry 500 Janissaries aboard. Their plan was to strengthen this force by

[72] NLM AOM 267, f. 235v, 4 June 1724.
[73] NLM AOM 1517, this volume stands out as perhaps the best source to observe the unfolding of this practice within a single collection of correspondence, rather than through the dispersed letters of intelligence related to the 1722 alarm. It also includes a comprehensive set of letters from Rome, Venice, Naples, and other locations, all carrying intelligence about an Ottoman threat in 1761.
[74] NLM AOM 1219, f. 353, 26 June 1722.
[75] Petitfils (2014), 93.
[76] NLM AOM 1219, f. 353, 26 June 1722.
[77] NLM AOM 1219, f. 353, 26 June 1722.

joining with vessels from the Barbary States; nonetheless, d'Orléans dismissed this as a light enterprise.

Nevertheless, Ambassador de Mesmes remained vigilant for all the information he could obtain. When in December 1722, he heard of the arrival of the personal doctor of the Grand Vizier in Paris, a Jew fluent in several languages, Mesmes asked the ambassador of Portugal at Versailles to obtain any information he could from him on the arming of the Ottoman fleet. Further to this, Mesmes managed to secure a seat at a dinner in his company with the intention to spy.[78] Four months later, another informant, fluent in Turkish, notified the ambassador that the Jewish doctor had received a letter from Constantinople claiming that, Hali, a Muslim who had been previously taken into captivity but was ransomed for 4,000 *piastres* in 1720 by the Ottoman Ambassador Yirmisekiz Mehmed Çelebi Efendi (during the latter's five day stay on the island before proceeding to France for his diplomatic mission), swore to the Vizier that he knew how to take Malta. The former slave was willing to accept Sultan Mehmet's gift of a caftan on the proviso that he would be involved in the expedition for the taking of the island.[79] The French clergyman and historian, the Abbé de Vertot was convinced that all the Ottoman plans for the taking of the Maltese archipelago were in fact based on the insistence of Hali who had declared that he could easily take Malta with ten armed vessels.[80] Hali's hatred for the Order obviously stemmed from his enslavement, although he was well treated on the island during his ten-year captivity. In fact, he was appointed to what Vertot and Boisgelin termed as 'liman'[81] and Godfrey Wettinger as the 'Cadi' meaning the chief representative and magistrate to all slaves in Malta. Right after his ransoming he persuaded the Ottoman court that Malta could be easily taken if the Muslim slaves were instructed to revolt, because they were close to being as numerous as the island's inhabitants. This was, however, an exaggeration on his part.[82] It seems that his advice to take Malta was heeded not only because he was well acquainted with the defence of the island and the strength of its military, but he was

[78] NLM AOM 1219, ff. 437- 456, 17 December 1722.
[79] NLM AOM 1219, ff. 545-547, 1 April 1723. For a definition of Caftan see the Glossary p.318.
[80] Vertot, volume 2, 111.
[81] Vertot, volume 5, 255; Pierre Maire Louis de Boisgelin de Kerdu, *Ancient and Modern Malta: Containing a description of the ports and cities of the islands of Malta and Gozo*, vol. II (London, G. & J. Robinson, 1804), 232.
[82] For a definition of Cadi see the Glossary p.318; Godfrey Wettinger, *Slavery in the Islands of Malta and Gozo ca.1000-1812* (Malta, PEG, 2002), 59, 61.

also considered 'one of the most capable seafarers in all the Ottoman Empire.'[83] In view of such sensitive intelligence, Mesmes engaged an informant to follow closely the Grand Vizier's doctor, while still in Paris.[84]

Ambassador de Mesmes's primary mission was to solicit French support; however, his influence within the diplomatic circles of various foreign sovereigns, coupled with Versailles serving as a pivotal nexus for international diplomacy, enabled the Order's ambassador to extend his quest for assistance beyond French borders. This strategic positioning within a broad network of diplomats facilitated his engagement with multiple sovereign states, thereby amplifying his influence and outreach in securing support for his cause. Taking immediate action after the first sighting of the menacing fleet, back in July 1722, Mesmes approached the ambassador of Spain to France, M. de Loales, to influence his sovereign to lend a hand to Malta.[85] A month later, he had a private audience with the Regent, who unlike Cardinal Dubois, seemed more forthcoming to the needs of the Order. Orléans still believed that the situation was under control and the knights had nothing to fear because the Ottomans were not prepared to attack that year. Nevertheless, he felt that the Order should prime its defences.[86] Conversely, Dubois adhered to France's customary 'double game,' a strategy described by Elisabeth Schermerhorn in the context of French policy towards both the Order of St John and the Ottomans.[87] Initially, the cardinal was resistant to providing support to the Order because the 'arming of the Grand Sultan did not concern them [France],' and that 'in any case he could only give what [the Order] needed in secret.' France could not risk violating its long-term alliance with the Porte.[88] The Bailli de Mesmes, frustrated by the cardinal's approach and determined to protect Malta's interests, contended with the chief minister that an alliance between the Ottomans and France did not absolve France of its obligation to settle its financial debt

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[83] 'C'est un des plus habiles hommes de mer qui soit dans tout l'Empire Ottoman.' *Nouvelle description de la ville de Constantinople, avec la relation du voyage de l'ambassadeur de la Porte Ottomane & de son séjour à la Cour de France* (Paris, 1721), 217; Retrieved on 8 April 2021, from: https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k1314763/f226.item. For his diplomatic mission in France in 1721, Mehmet Efendi was instructed to pressure the duke d'Orléans to stop the Knights of Malta from attacking Ottoman vessels. For this request, the Regent d'Orléans answered that Malta was sovereign and France had no say in the matter: see, Gocek (1987), 66.

[84] NLM AOM 1219, ff. 545-547, 1 April 1723.

[85] NLM AOM 1219, f. 372, 22 July 1722.

[86] NLM AOM 1219, f. 390, 21 August 1722.

[87] Elisabeth W. Schermerhorn, *Malta of the Knights* (Surrey, Windmill Press, 1929), 263.

[88] 'qui me dit que l'armement du Grand Seigneur ne nous regardait point' ; 'qu'en tout cas il ne pourrait nous donner les choses dont nous avons besoin qu'en secret.' NLM AOM 1219, f. 422v, 26 November 1722.

with Malta. He emphasized that this financial burden was severely hindering the Order's military preparations, especially in these pressing times of war.[89] Cardinal Dubois's hesitation at this critical juncture is somewhat inconsistent with his earlier statements from July 1722. At that time, he had instructed the French ambassador in Constantinople, the marquis de Bonnac, to emphasize that, in the event of an Ottoman assault on the islands of Malta, the King of France was prepared to join the other Christian princes in supporting Hospitaller Malta.[90]



Figure 2.3 Ambassador Bailli Jean-Jacques de Mesmes (1715-1741).[91]

[89] NLM AOM 1219, f. 421, 26 November 1722.
[90] NLM AOM 1219, ff. 355-356, 26 June 1722.
[91] The picture of Ambassador de Mesmes was retrieved on 13 May 1721, from https://timesofmalta.com/articles/view/A-painful-exit-for-the-Bali-de-Mesmes.509090



Figure 2.4 Philippe II duke d'Orléans, Regent of France (1715-1723).[92]



Figure 2.5 Cardinal Guillaume Dubois, First Minister of France (1715-1723).[93]

[92] Image of the portrait of d'Orléans on 13 June 2021, from: https://www.meisterdrucke.uk/fine-art-prints/Jean-Baptiste-Santerre/1004555/Portrait-of-the-Regent-Philip-II-Duke-of-Orleans-(1674-1723)-and-Marie-Magdeleine-of-the-Vieuville,-Countess-of-Parabere-(1693-1750)-Painting-by-Jean-Baptiste-Santerre-(1651-1717

[93] Image of the portrait of Dubois, retrieved 12 June 1720, from: https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/176352058/guillaume-dubois

2.5 The quest for French military aid

In November 1722, a newspaper in Paris, the La *Gazette*, reported that the island was still in a state of alarm, such that the Grand Master was 'repairing all fortifications' and having batteries of cannon deployed in vulnerable areas.[94] During a private audience with the Regent and the grand prior of France, Ambassador de Mesmes learned that an armament of an Ottoman fleet of fifty war vessels and a large number of rowing boats, was likely being armed against Malta,[95] even though an attack in winter time was highly unlikely. By this time, the ambassador had expanded his role from merely gathering intelligence and seeking financial assistance to coordinating the military resources and preparing Malta's defence from France. In August 1722, he had already secured duke d'Orléans' permission to have Brigadier de Tigné and Fra François de Comenge,[96] released from royal service so they could leave for Malta and supervise the defence of the island,[97] as well as, stock the magazines with gunpowder and organise the armament depots.[98] The Regent described Brigadier René Jacob de Tigné as a very capable engineer, well-versed in the island's defensive needs, having already been to Malta twice. Fra Giuseppe Merenda, a knight of Malta and architect from Forli who worked under Tigné in 1723, described him as 'an excellent French engineer and the best in Europe.'[99] Tigné had already gained experience in leading military missions in Malta, with his first in 1715, during which he had led a large-scale military mission with his assistant Charles Gion de Mondion, and returned a year later to supervise works of fortification.[100]

The remoteness and small size of the Maltese archipelago did little to attract reputable foreign military personnel to settle on the island, especially when large-scale armies, like those of France, offered more lucrative opportunities. For ambitious

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[94] 'Le Grand Maistre en a fait reparer toutes les fortifications.' *Recueil des nouvelles,* Gazette of 19 December 1722, Issue 57, Rome 24 November 1722, p.741; Venice 24 November, p.741.
[95] NLM AOM 1219, f. 413, 12 November 1722.
[96] In January 1722, Ambassador de Mesmes had financially aided knight de Comenge in a court case against Charles Lennox, duke of Richmond who allegedly usurped Comenge's commandery; AOM 1219, f. 233, 12 January 1722.
[97] NLM AOM 1219, f. 390, 21 August 1722.
[98] Lucca, 31.
[99] 'bravissimo ingegnere Francese ed il migliore d'Europa.' Archivio Merenda di Forli, busta n. 8, 13 June 1723.This is a copy of Merenda's letter to his father in Forli: Information provided by the Assistant Professor Iacopo Benincampi. Giuseppe Merenda was a capable architect in both civil and military architecture. He joined the Order as knight of justice in 1710 and visited the island twice, in 1714 and in 1723 when he answered the citation to assist in the island's defence, where he met Brigadier de Tigné; See also, Iacopo BENINCAMPI, 'Giuseppe Merenda, 'dilettante in architettura', *Studi Romagnoli LXVII*, (2016), 165.
[100] NLM AOM 1219, f. 390, 21 August 1722.

military experts, Malta had limited long-term employment prospects.[101] To address this, the Order of St John secured an agreement with France allowing military officers, including engineers and artillerists, to retain their French army appointments, while serving on the island and their time in the service of the Order was considered as service give to France.[102] Still, Mesmes found the agreement insufficient to attract masters in the art of war to work on a small island, when they could contribute to larger work on the mainland. Throughout the 17th century the Order traditionally rewarded its visiting engineers in a variety of ways. Some were admitted into the Order as knights of Grace,[103] while others received payment in cash or kind. There were also honouring ceremonies, as well as recommendations from the Grand Master to their respective sovereigns or military superiors.[104] The ambassador recognized that the loyalty of Brigadier de Tigné and the resident engineer Mondion to the Order needed more than the continuation of their seniority in France, given their critical role in the island's defence. He insisted with the Grand Master that they receive adequate compensation for their dedicated service. Grand Master Zondadari's 1720 instructions to act with prudence when securing Mondion and Tigné reveal his eagerness. Although visiting experts were typically summoned during times of alarm, Tigné's significant contribution in 1715 led the knights to seek his return even during peacetime to complete his projects. Mondion, while mostly residing on the island, was formally released from royal service in 1720. However, Tigné was still needed in France.[105] Attracting him to Malta required offering a more lucrative benefit to the respected engineer. In light of this, Ambassador de Mesmes urged the Grand Master to adequately reward Mondion for sacrificing a twenty-year military career in France, along with its associated financial benefits, and to seek ways to encourage Tigné returning to the island.[106] How the Order compensated Mondion at this instance is not yet known, but the arrangements which the ambassador secured for Tigné seemed sufficient to bring him back to the island for the third time within a decade. As soon as the alarm bells tolled again in 1722, Vilhena immediately urged Ambassador de

[101] Alison Hoppen, 'Military Engineers in Malta, 1530-1798,' *Annals of Science*, 38, 4 (1981), 417.
[102] AN M994, f. 5, 1722.
[103] Francesco Bounamici (1635-39), Mederico Blondel (1659-98), Charles François de Mondion (1715-1733) & René Jacob de Tigné (1715-1716, 1723) were introduced in the Order as Knights of Grace as a gesture of recognition for their service to the Order. Hoppen (1999), 269.
[104] NLM AOM 6426, f. 492, List of rewards and ceremonies for visiting engineers from Pietro Paolo Floriani (1635) to Carl von Grunnenburgh (1681, 1687, 1689).
[105] NLM AOM 1563, f. 38, 14 March 1720.
[106] NLM AOM 1563, f. 38, 14 March 1720.

Mesmes to advocate vigorously for Tigné's release, explaining that his services in Malta were indispensable.[107] Recognizing that Tigné had not received an adequate compensation for his visits in 1715 and 1716—apart from a modest sum, the faculty to carry the Order's cross as knight of Grace, and a recommendation by Grand Master Perellos for promotion to Brigadier—Ambassador de Mesmes proposed a more generous reward. He suggested giving Tigné 2,000 scudi before his departure to Malta, double the amount he was given in 1715. Additionally, Tigné was to receive a regular pension from the Order, a privilege he had long hoped to obtain. In December 1722, Ambassador de Mesmes sent his proposal to the Council of State in Malta, to provide Tigné with a pension of 4,000 to 6,000 livres per year. Given the current constraints of the Order's Treasury, he recommended a nominal tax of three livres per commandery in France to secure sufficient funds for Tigné's lifelong pension, emphasizing the importance of retaining such an expert.[108]

In September 1722, a few months into the alarm, the Regent granted the long-sought permission for Tigné's release. Subsequently, Mesmes informed Tigné, who was in Charleville at the time. He also wrote to Tigné's superior, the Director of Fortifications Claude François Bidal d'Asfeld (1665-1743), seeking his approval for Tigné to absent himself from French service so he could leave for Malta.[109] The engineer was to be joined by an assistant, the commander Fra François de Comenge who had already served in Malta with Tigné during the alarm of 1714-15.[110] The Regent also proposed to have an officer of the artillery and one from the miners joining the two-man mission of Tigné and Comenge.[111] On the Regent's advice, the duke de Maine chose two knights from the King's service: knight de Pezeux, a lieutenant general of the army of the King,[112] and the knight de Giuri, a *Maréchal de Camp* (the lowest general officer) who had served in the royal infantry. Despite Pezeux's high rank in the army of France, he was a relatively poor man and could barely afford the journey to Malta. He even requested the Grand Master to host him in a small apartment in his palace, hoping for food and lodging for himself and his three servants. Wanting to expedite the military mission, Mesmes opted to personally pay for Pezeux's voyage

[107] NLM AOM 1219, f. 390, 21 August 1722.
[108] NLM AOM 1219, f. 394, 3 September 1722; f. 456, 17 December 1722.
[109] NLM AOM 1219, f. 413, 12 November 1722.
[110] AN AE/B/III/484, unpaginated, 12 April 1715.
[111] NLM AOM 1219, f. 413, 12 November 1722.
[112] Almanach National for the year 1729: Annuaire official de la Republique Français (Paris, L'Imprimerie du Veuve D'Houry au Saint-Esprit, 1729), 77.

to Malta. Contrary to the latter, the knight de Guisi was quite well-off, but he was still recovering from serious injuries incurred during combat on the battlefield.[113] The initial plan was to send Tigné and Comenge by way of Italy, despite it being costlier and slower, because of the plague ravaging Provence.[114] This epidemic affected French-Maltese trade, resulting in a shortage of clothing for the Maltese and the militia, as well as major difficulties in transporting any requested military consignments and the transport of French knights to Malta.[115] The epidemic which had started in 1720 had abated by the end of 1722,[116] but Tigné and Comenge and all the knights travelling from France to Malta in spring 1723 (in response to a citation), were obliged to quarantine in Naples and Sicily according to the precautionary measures taken by the Order took to prevent contagion, especially when it was about to go to war.[117]

Despite his physical remoteness from the Convent, Mesmes worked tirelessly to provide the Order with military supplies, officers, and valuable expert advice. He held meetings at the embassy with knights versed in the art of war, forming a consultative assembly to discuss news from the Levant, the Order's military affairs, and related decisions. Unwilling to shoulder the responsibility alone, he convened a group of ten knights at the Order's embassy in Paris for military discussions and strategic planning. This team included the grand prior of France, d'Orléans, commander d'Avernes, the receiver of the Order in Paris, the Bailli de Perrot, commander de Commenge (he left with Brigadier de Tigné for Malta in 1723), the knight de Pezeux (chosen by the duke de Maine to go to Malta as expert artillerist), knight de Tiessenville, Knight de Valleron, Commander Chateautiers, M. de Momin and M. de Espason. A meeting was convened on 3 December 1722, just before the ambassador signed a contract for firearms with Louis Maximilien Titon de Villegenon, the inspector of factories and royal magazines of France and the principal small-arms contractor and financier.[118] All throughout, the Regent of France was highly supportive of the ambassador's efforts to organise Malta's defence from France, in fact, it was he

[113] NLM AOM 1219, f. 413, 12 November 1722; MAE, 67 CP vol. 6, f. 161r, 1722.
[114] NLM AOM 1219, f. 413, 12 November 1722; Lucca, 31.
[115] NLM AOM 1484, unpaginated, 29 July 1722; NLM AOM 1219, f. 413, 12 November 1722.
[116] Michel Signoli, 'History of the plague of 1720-1722, in Marseille,' *La Presse Médicale*, 2022, 51 3, 104138.
[117] NLM AOM 267, ff. 199v-200r, 28 April 1723.
[118] NLM AN M995, f. 67, 28 November 1722. Louis Maximillien Titon de Villegenon was the son of Maximilien Titon de Villegenon, a prominent principal small-arms entrepreneur and financier: Guy Rowlands, *The Financial Decline of a Great Power: War, Influence, and Money in Louis XIV's France* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2012), 139, 265.

who instructed Tigné to start preparing Malta's defence while waiting to leave from France. A report describing the state of the Order's artillery magazines and shortages together with intelligence from the Grand Master's spies on the state of magazines and ammunition in Tunis, Tripoli, and Algiers, was requested by the Council of State to have this sent for Tigné's evaluation even before the latter's departure.[119]

Tigné's plan was to tackle pressing shortcomings in Malta which he had not managed to do during his previous visits, namely, the organisation of gunpowder magazines and the re-arrangement of the artillery which he had found to be in disarray. His intention was to create two brigades composed of native Maltese which would be commanded by knights, in a bid to minimise more costly reliance on foreign troops.[120] A similar policy was recommended years later by Brigadier François Charles de Bourlamaque who was called to inspect the island in 1761.[121] Meanwhile, during the military meeting at the embassy, Fra de Pezeux proposed to influence the Order in constructing a number of bomb-proof windmills and invest in a large amount of beams to be mounted onto lines of defence for when covered ways in the fortifications might be breached by the enemy. His concern was that they had little time to prepare, and the sudden rise in the population once the cited knights and relief troops arrived in Malta, on top of the native population, would strain the Order's resources. In view of this, Pezeux advised having all the public and private cisterns fixed and filled. The island also required skilled men like locksmiths, gunsmiths and carpenters, and other skilled men employed for the repair of unserviceable guns and carriages for cannon and mortars.[122] Fra de Guiri's main concern was the vulnerable coast of both the islands of Malta and Gozo. His proposal was to modernise the infrastructure of the island by constructing two main roads, one crossing the island from north to south, and the other traversing its width, which had to be wide enough to allow 50 to 60 soldiers marching in one front so that a large number of men could be mobilised for relief wherever needed. The roads were to be flanked by retrenchments, along which exit areas for sorties and the retreat of troops were to be installed. [123] Mortars were to be deployed in

[119] NLM AOM 1219, f. 390, 21 August 1722.
[120] NLM AOM 1219, f. 394, 3 September 1722.
[121] See NLM AOM 6519, Bourlamaque's report of the fortifications of Malta in 1761.
[122] NLM AOM 1219, f. 430, 6 December 1722.
[123] NLM AOM 1219, ff. 473-478, 22 December 1722.

strategic points on the beaches to ward off approaching vessels, along with the fougasse system[124] implemented in Malta by the resident second engineer Marandon.[125]

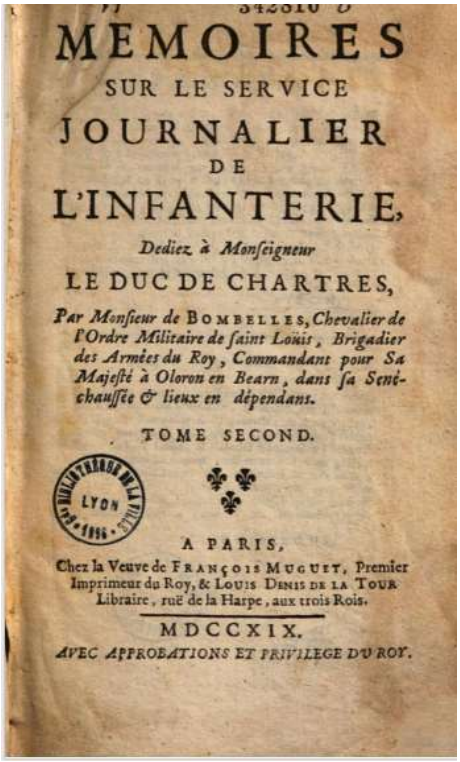

MEMOIRES
SUR LE SERVICE
JOURNALIER
DE
L'INFANTERIE,
Dediez à Monſeigneur
LE DUC DE CHARTRES,
Par Monſieur de BOMBELLES, Chevalier de l'Ordre Militaire de ſaint Loüis, Brigadier des Armées du Roy, Commandant pour Sa Majeſté à Oloron en Bearn, dans ſa Sené-chauſſée & lieux en dépendans.
TOME SECOND.
LYON
A PARIS,
Chez la Veuve de FRANÇOIS MUGUET, Premier Imprimeur du Roy, & LOUIS DENIS DE LA TOUR Libraire, ruë de la Harpe, aux trois Rois.
MDCCXIX.
AVEC APPROBATIONS ET PRIVILEGE DU ROY.

Figure 2.6 Henri-François de Bombelles claimed to have sent this book to Malta to assist in the management of the infantry during the Ottoman alarm of 1722.[126]

Interest in the defence of Malta not only captivated the attention of members of the Order; many non-Hospitallers also showed great zeal in wanting to assist the knights. In May 1723, Henri-François de Bombelles (1681-1760) knight of the Order of St Louis, Brigadier of the Army of the King, colonel of the Infantry and teacher to the Regent's children, approached Mesmes to voluntarily leave for Malta at his own expense, with the intention of disciplining the island's troops. Bombelles, an experienced soldier in combat against the Ottomans, (he participated in the Hungarian campaign in 1717) and author of two seminal works on the infantry, sent copies of his published works to Grand Master Vilhena,[127] offering to compose a similar guide for the infantry of Malta. Although there is no evidence of Bombelles travelling to the

[124] For a definition of Fougasse, see the Glossary, p.321.
[125] Stephen C. Spiteri, *The Art of Fortress Building in Hospitaller Malta, 1530-1798* (Malta, BDL Publications Malta, 2008), xiii.
[126] Image retrieved on 16 August 2022, from: https://books.google.com.mt/books).
[127] An online copy of one of Bombelles' books the, *Memoires sur le service journalier de l'infanterie, Volume 1*, can be found on: https://books.google.com.mt/books.

island or of his works being taken into consideration, his example illustrates the interest and respect that the Order still galvanised among the European elites.[128]

Ambassador de Mesmes collated all military advice emanating from the offices in Versailles and his meetings at the embassy and sent them to the Convent in Malta, even though none of the key points in the mentioned advice seemed to have been effectively implemented. Not only that, the Council of State and the Grand Master admonished the Bailli de Mesmes for having sent two artillerists with the Brigadier de Tigné without the Council's approval because the instructions were specifically for one engineer. He was even ordered to recall these men by all means necessary if they had not yet embarked for Malta. Fra de Pezeux and Fra de Giuri, after being left waiting for instructions to depart, were told to cancel their trip, unless a general citation was issued, this because the Order could not afford extra expenses.[129]

Ambassador de Mesmes now found himself under fire from both sides. Despite the French court's involvement and advice in the preparation of a likely siege, he received a volley of criticism from Versailles about his request for military provisioning for Malta. Ministers reproached him for considering a hefty purchase of weapons when it had been only seven years since the Order bought a large supply of weapons and gunpowder. The only thing they believed necessary was the presence of trained troops and knights at the Convent.[130] Their observations were perhaps legitimate when one considers that the latest firearms purchase of 200 *fusils* from the factory of Saint-Étienne which was delivered to Malta by the engineer Mondion was carried out only a year prior to the alarm.[131] Unwilling to accept France's initial resistance to assist Malta, Ambassador de Mesmes asked Vilhena to inform him of all assistance offered by the Kings of Spain and Portugal and the princes of Italy, in terms of relief troops and military aid, so that he could draw France's attention to this in an effort to shame her, as it were. Although the documents to not reveal any assistance arriving from these Christian states, if there was any, whatever strategy the ambassador

[128] NLM AOM 1219, ff. 619-621, 28 May 1723. Henri-François de Bombelles claims to have sent the following two publications to Grand Master Vilhena: '*Memoires sur le service journalier de l'Infanterie'* in 1719 and *'Extrait du detail du service qui regarde les sergents, caporaux de soldats, tant en paix qu'en guerre, tire du 'journalier de l'infanterie'* in 1722; Retrieved on 8 April 2021 from https://data.bnf.fr/fr/15819833/henri-francois_de_bombelles/.
[129] NLM AOM 267, ff. 187r-188r, 21 December 1722.
[130] NLM AOM 1219, f. 421, 26 November 1722.
[131] NLM AOM 1563, f. 237, 22 January 1721; The purchase of 200 *fusils* was ordered around June 1720; NLM AOM 1563, f. 152, 7 July 1720.

employed seems to have worked,[132] because France did assist the knights in due course, but perhaps not as expeditiously as the Order had expected.

2.6 Financial dependence and procurement of arms

Grand Master Vilhena hoped the Pope would proclaim a jubilee just like Pius V (r.1566-1572) had done for the building of Valletta after the Siege of 1565, and this was because of the dire lack of cash the Order faced as a result of a financial crisis wreaking havoc in France at the time.[133] The paper money fiasco which resulted from John Law's 'System' in the late 1710s, placed the Order in a very precarious situation on the eve of a potential war. After Louis XIV's death in 1715 and his legacy of huge public debt resulting from his extensive wars, the Scottish economist John Law, friend of the Regent d'Orléans, managed to implement a paper/credit system in France which had replaced the gold and silver coin system. The regent gave Law permission to open a bank in Paris, the *Banque Générale*, which could issue paper money, three quarters of which consisted of government *billet d'état*.[134] In 1717, Law merged the bank with the Louisiana Company which enjoyed the sole trading privilege in the Mississippi valley in Louisiana, culminating into a system called the Mississippi Company, whose profits were to go towards national debt.[135] Two years later he scaled things up by converting France's national debt into shares in the company, however, the collapse of the Mississippi System in 1720 led France into a financial fiasco which came about when the paper notes issued by the bank exceeded the value of silver and gold coins.[136] The Order had invested in these shares and was suffering the consequences, making any military expenditure even more precarious. For example, after 1721, the Order was unable to follow the recommendations of the French knight Philibert Bernard Froissard de Broissia to purchase a batch of flintlocks *avec la secret*, a model of musket that the Order still lacked in its armoury, due to financial constraints.[137]

By 1722, the Order had already been three years without adequate income from its French commanderies and this was a critical situation considering it had around 261

[132] NLM AOM 1219, ff. 421-428, 26 November 1722.
[133] NLM AOM 1484, unpaginated, 15 September 1722.
[134] For a definition of *Billet*, see the Glossary, p. 317.
[135] Antoin E. Murphy, *John Law: Economic Theorist and Policy-maker* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1997), 1-2.
[136] John Shovlin, *Trading with the Enemy: Britain, France and the 18-th century Quest for a Peaceful World Order* (Yale, Yale University Press, 2021), 116.
[137] NLM AOM 1563, ff. 318-319, 20 August 1721.

commanderies in France.[138] Moreover, during the alarm of 1714, the Order had borrowed large sums from Rome, France, Malta and Genoa and by the 1722 alarm it still owed the Republic of Genoa 80,000 Genoese lire at 3.5% interest for the purchase of arms.[139] The financial difficulties and the shortage of cash in France created a state of general misery which reigned amongst the nobility and the bourgeoisie, forcing a number of noble families to plead for an extension of the fee for their sons' admission into the Order because they had no means to pay. For instance, Philippe-Claude marquis de Montboissier de Beaufort (a nobleman close to the King) was granted a two-year extension to pay his son's passage fee, and when he failed to honour the agreement, he turned to the Regent to intercede with the Grand Master.[140] Despite its dire situation the Order had to be sensitive to the current crises if it wanted to ensure an uninterrupted admission of knights,[141] yet, its own coffers ran dry at a critical time of war when it required liquid cash and not worthless *billets d'état*, which were promissory notes issued by the Common Treasury of France during the Regency.[142] By 1723 these had a face value of 20 percent. Assisted by the French financier Joseph Pâris-Duverney and the receiver of the Order, the Ambassador de Mesmes embarked on a mission to exempt the Order from having the value of its billets devalued.[143]

So restricted was the situation that the Order allocated only 300 scudi per week for urgent works on fortifications,[144] and a total of 55,800 scudi for the defence of the island at a time when it was still emerging from an Ottoman threat.[145] The knights even considered casting four cannon every month in France over buying a batch.[146] Even the customary calling of the knights to the Convent seemed to have been compromised. The Grand Master and Council delayed the plans to initiate a general citation as customary in such situations, unless it was truly certain that a siege was to materialise. Calling hundreds of knights to Malta, aside from foreign relief troops, would have

[138] Cavaliero (1960), 11. The Abbé de Vertot, cited in Petiet, claimed that in 1726 the Order had 261 commanderies in France and by the dawn of the French Revolution the number fell to 258 commanderies; Petiet (1992), 200.
[139] NLM AOM 1219, ff. 207-208, 8 December 1721; NLM AOM 267, ff. 134r-136v, 1722.
[140] MAE 67 CP vol. 6, f. 109r, 10 April 1722.
[141] NLM AOM 1219, f. 319, April 1722.
[142] These were notes issued in France between 1715 and 1716 when the floating debt of France was converted into bearer notes. With the issuing of these bills, the French state, for the first time, assumed liability for the amount of short-term paper in circulation: Rowlands (2012), 196.
[143] NLM AOM 1219, ff. 549-551, 12 April 1723.
[144] NLM AOM 267, f. 212r, 23 July 1723.
[145] Andrew P. Vella, *Storja tà Malta* (Malta, Klabb Kotba Maltin, 1979), 145.
[146] NLM AOM 1219, ff. 467-478, 22 December 1722.

further stretched the already strained Treasury.[147] Furthermore, a great number of knights coming to Malta would have been from the three langues of France, Auvergne and Provence, who were themselves trying to pull through the financial crises which swept their country, therefore paying the expenses for their journey to Malta was somewhat difficult.[148] Ambassador Giovanni Battista Spinola in Rome drew the attention of Ambassador de Mesmes to the situation: 'we have been reduced to desperation, stripped of our finances, loaded with debt in all accounts and [are] without knights, since France, which is the principal contingent of the Order, has deprived us of them.'[149] The decision to postpone the general citation of the knights was likely a response to the Regent's offer to send relief troops paid for France itself if a siege would actually materialise. This offer came about in the light of the financial impact the French economic crisis was having on the Order.[150] Despite the stalemate situation, the Order did take the preparatory measure to inform all the Priories in Europe to prepare the knights to leave once the call was issued.[151]

While the Order's ambassador in Rome petitioned the Pope for financial and military assistance, Ambassador de Mesmes chased the Apostolic Nuncio in Paris, Bartolomeo Massei (1722-1730), to intercede on behalf of the Order with the French government, especially the duke d'Orléans to have the cash the Order had deposited (presumably forced by John Law when he sought to remove coinage from circulation) in the Royal Treasury returned to it.[152] Spinola was not hopeful that France would come forth, fearing that the Regent was waiting for the situation to be really dire before lifting a finger for Malta.[153] While criticising France, Ambassador Spinola only managed to gain 3,513 scudi from the Pope and 7,500 scudi from the cardinals in Rome.[154] Besides these benefactors, ten Spanish prelates, including Cardinal Pignatelli and the archbishops of Toledo and Saragosa, put their hands in their pockets and collectively deposited the sum of 3,513 scudi with the Order.[155] It was only in the early days of 1723 that the Pope instructed his banks to loan the Order 150,000 scudi at 3% interest,

[147] AN M995, f. 49, 17 December 1722.
[148] NLM AOM 1219, ff. 467 - 478, 22 December 1722; AN M995, f. 63, 23 November 1722.
[149] 'Nous sommes Monsieur ambassador reduit à l'extremité, depouillez de finances, charges de dettés de tous contéz, et sans chevaliers, puisque la France, qui est la principal corps de la Religion en l'a entierement privée.'AN M995, f. 51, 18 August 1722.
[150] AN M995, f. 50, 21 December 1722.
[151] AN M995, f. 63, 23 November 1722.
[152] AN M995, f. 51, 18 August 1722.
[153] AN M995, f. 52, 15 August 1722.
[154] AN M995, f. 76, 12 January 1723.
[155] NLM AOM 267, f. 221v, 10 July 1723.

adding further to the debt the Order had piled up since the 1714-15 alarm.[156] When the knights' expectations of financial assistance from Christian princes, and the long-time patron France, fell short, not just because of the financial crises in France but also because of the closure of Marseille due to the plague, the Order had no choice but to turn to its own resources to fund its war for the protection of Christendom. In November, the Council in Malta decreed that an extraordinary tax over all the Order's estates scattered across Europe was to be imposed in a bid to raise 122,000 scudi, an imposition which was extended till 1725.[157]

Throughout the 1722 alarm, the Order's ambassador in Paris had two main commissions, that of recovering the Order's financial investments in France, and the co-ordination of military assistance.[158] Despite the clarity of his tasks, the ambassador faced a dilemma on how to proceed if France failed to pay the money it owed. His predicament was exacerbated by delays of letters arriving from Malta due to the ravaging plague in Provence. In a letter he wrote to Vilhena in November 1722, Mesmes expressed his dilemma, telling his Grand Master, 'if nothing is provided [money], should I take it upon myself to borrow money for this purchase? Should I risk waiting for Your Eminence's response, which might not arrive until the end of February? And if the Turks were to come to Malta, would there be time to bring in the necessary supplies for the defence?'[159] Knowing a reply from his superiors would have taken long to arrive, Mesmes told the Grand Master that 'I will act according to the information I receive from Your Eminence and will not make any decisions without the counsel of the most zealous and experienced knights, as well as other officers.' [160]

In the ensuing months after the onset of the threat, Mesmes gathered military advice from ministers and officers at the court of Versailles with the intention of involving them in the defence process as much as he could, luring them into agreeing that Malta urgently required a large quantity of muskets and gunpowder in a bid to support his claim with the Regent for the need of a military consignment.[161] The

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[156] *Recueil des nouvelles,* Gazette of 13 March 1723, Issue 11, Naples 13 February 1723, p. 127.
[157] NLM AOM 267, ff. 170v-171r, 16 November 1722.
[158] NLM AOM 267 and AOM 1219.
[159] 'Si on ne donne point, puis-je prendre sur moi d'emprunter de l'argent pour faire cet achat, dois-je hazarder d'attendre la réponse de V.A.E qui peut-être n'arrivera que sur la fin de février, et si le Turc venait à Malte aurait-on le temps d'y faire entrer ce qui serait nécessaire pour la défense?' NLM AOM 1219, ff. 421-428, 26 November 1722.
[160] 'Monsieur, je me réglerai suivant les nouvelles que j'aurai de V.A.E et ne ferai rien sans le conseil des plus zélés et plus expérimentés chevaliers, ainsi que d'autres officiers.' NLM AOM 1219, ff. 421-428, 26 November 1722.
[161] NLM AOM 1219, ff. 430-436, 6 December 1722.

marshals of France and some of the most senior officers of the kingdom agreed that the ambassador had to send the required gunpowder and firearms at his soonest, but according to them the island required around 800,000 pounds of gunpowder, which Mesmes considered insufficient.[162] According to the instructions arriving from Malta, the Order required an even larger quantity of around 1.2 million pounds of gunpowder to render it defensible.[163] However, French stocks were able to supply the requested 20,000 flintlocks, 25,000 flints, and a large number of ramrods. [164] This was in accordance with the report drawn up by the Congregation of War, which detailed all the weapons and ancillary equipment necessary for the defence of the coast and fortresses. By this time the Hospitallers' armoury stocked around 25,000 muskets, nonetheless, it still required the same amount to cover the siege. The Order's three war vessels also required forty 24-pounder cannons, while the fortresses lacked 60 more guns of a smaller calibre. The equivalent number of bombs and bullets were also needed as ammunition for the required ordnance, but the entire island required a minimum supply of at least 500,000 to 600,000 pounds of gunpowder in addition to what it already had if it aimed for an adequate defence.[165] Finally, after Ambassador de Mesmes' tireless efforts, the King's ministers unanimously agreed that France was to settle part of its debt with Malta by supplying the weapons. This worked favourably for the Order, where on the one hand they were ensuring adequate defence for their island, and on the other they were exchanging their useless 'billets d'état' into valuable material in kind.

Acting promptly on the ministers' deliberation, Mesmes secured the Regent and his court's approval for the Order to sign a contract with the King's contractor Louis Maximilien Titon de Villegenon. The contract entailed the supply of firearms worth 400,000 scudi, to be credited and paid by France as part of the debt settlement. In December 1722, Ambassador de Mesmes and the receiver Eustache Bernart d'Avernes de Thiersanville signed the deal on behalf of the Order. The agreement provided for 25,000 *fusils de soldats* with bayonets, 1,000 half-pikes, 2,000 halberds, and 500,000 flints at the same price France paid its royal suppliers, which meant that France made no profit on the Order. This form of agreement was sustained in all arms deals the Order made with France throughout the 18th century. On this occasion, the

[162] NLM AOM 1219, f. 428, 26 November 1722.
[163] AN AE/B/III/484, unpaginated, List of military provisions required for Malta, 1722.
[164] NLM AOM 1219, f. 428, 26 November 1722.
[165] MAE 67, CP vol. 6, ff. 170r-171v, 1722.

knights were required to make a down payment of one-quarter in advance, a sum which the ambassador attempted to coerce France into covering as part of the debt settlement.[166] The weapons were drawn from several royal arsenals, namely that of Paris, Sarrelouis, Phalsbourg, Marsal, Thionville, Neuf-Brisach, Fort Louis du Rhin, Strasbourg, and Maubeuge, while the largest supply of *fusils de soldats* was from the manufacturing centre of Sainte-Étienne, possibly because it was the closest to Lyon and thus the cheapest to transport to Marseille. The commission was dealt with expeditiously: for instance, the 1,940 *fusils* from the magazines of Paris were transported to Lyon in six deliveries within the month of February 1723.[167] All the remaining cargo was to be moved to Lyon and stored there until the receiver of the Order in Marseille, the commander de Ragon and the Bailli de Saint Autaine, the major of the navy in Lyon, could inspect the firearms before they were shipped to Malta from Marseille (see Table 2.1).[168]

[166] NLM AOM 1219, ff. 430-436, 6 December 1722.
[167] AN M995, f. 100, 1723. This document holds a list of the firearms and deliveries made from the magazines of Paris to that of Lyon in February to March 1723.
[168] AN M995, f. 99, 1723. This document holds a list of arsenals, magazines and factories in France from where 25,000 *fusils de soldats* were extracted in 1723.

Arsenal/magazine/factory of extraction	Number of muskets extracted
Magazines of Lyon	1,800
Sarrelouis	1,700
Phalsbourg	1,500
Marsal	370
Thionville	2,580
Brisach	150
Fort Louis du Rhin	1,000
Strasbourg	6,000
Maubeuge	500
Paris	1,940
Manufacturers of Saint-Étienne	7,460
Total	**25,000**

Table 2.1 The list above concerns the extraction of 25,000 *fusils de soldats* from various French arsenals and stores. The batches of firearms were transported to the royal stores at Lyon before all the consignment was transported to Marseille and from there shipped to Malta.[169]

When Mesmes failed to find the originally requested 1.2 million pounds of gunpowder because there was not a grain of gunpowder left in France following the War of the Quadruple Alliance (1718-1720), and the only stocked gunpowder factory could not transact with the Order as it was obliged to replenish the King's stores,[170] he tried his luck with Holland. In December 1722, the ambassador sounded the agent of the Order, Boscheron, based in Brussels, for gunpowder prices until he waited for further instructions from Malta.[171] The island, however, required way more gunpowder than the ambassador was initially instructed to obtain. Another detailed estimate on the gunpowder required to withstand a six-month Ottoman assault was sent to Brigadier de Tigné in October 1722 while he was serving in Charleville. At this time, it was estimated that the 300 coastal cannons, the 1,000 foot soldiers deployed along the coast, and the gunpowder for the artillery of Mdina and the citadel of Gozo required 238,000 pounds, and to also cover the grand harbour extensive lines of fortifications, the island required a total of 4,402,500 pounds, which was an extraordinary amount for a small island. The island possessed a meagre supply of 800,000 pounds in its

[169] AN M995, f. 99, 1723.
[170] NLM AOM 1219, ff. 430-436, 6 December 1722.
[171] NLM AOM 1219, ff. 467-478, 22 December 1722.

stores, which therefore meant that another 3,840,500 pounds of gunpowder needed to be imported. This was a far cry from the amount the ambassador had been originally instructed to procure, and even with this exorbitant estimate Tigné was not convinced that it was enough.[172] Despite all the ambassador's endeavours in co-ordinating the purchase of arms and ammunition, his effort fell short when Grand Master Vilhena sent him a letter with a strong tone of disapproval for having signed the arms deal without his and the Council's consent. The Council explicitly prohibited him from incurring any further expenses unless obtained under the terms of a gift, loan or as compensation for the debt which France still owed the Order.[173] He was also stopped from ordering gunpowder from Holland,[174] because the Bailli de Spinola was about to order 3,000 quintals (300,000 pounds) from Rome.[175] The latter had only managed to secure 1,100 gunpowder barrels when he too was stopped by the Council from ordering a larger supply. The disabling financial situation of the Order was having its toll on the defence of the island and even on its diplomats who after much effort were forced to step back. The financial backlash and perhaps the reassuring news that the Ottoman military build-up was targeted for Russia, curtailed the island's defence preparations.[176]

Wanting to amend for his rushed and unsolicited actions, Mesmes sought to downsize the consignment to three-quarters of what had been contracted.[177] In February 1723 he approached the duke d'Orléans and Cardinal Dubois for their approval, but they firmly refused to renegotiate, flagging the excuse that their intention was to see Malta fully prepared and able to withstand a siege. In a bid to sustain their claim, or at least that is what they tried to make it seem, the Regent and his chief minister offered to send officers, engineers and trained relief troops at the expense of France in case of a likely siege.[178] Whether their insistence for the Order to proceed with the arms contract, despite the Order's insistence to the contrary, had the hidden agenda of settling the Order's debt in kind rather than in gold and silver coins is not clear, but this seems quite likely. Given that France was not financially profiting from the extraction of weapons from the royal arsenals because it sold these to the Order at

[172] AN M995, f. 59, 1 November 1722.
[173] NLM AOM 267, f. 185r, 21 December 1722.
[174] NLM AOM 267, f. 187r, 21 December 1722.
[175] AN M995, f. 84, 2 February 1723.
[176] AN M995, f. 85, 16 February 1723; M995 f. 29, December 1722.
[177] NLM AOM 267, f. 187r, 21 December 1722.
[178] NLM AOM 1219, f. 497, 6 February 1723.

cost price, selling weapons to settle its debt was advantageous both to its coffers and its international standing. In the eyes of the papacy and Christian princes, France fulfilled its Catholic duty by assisting the knights, certainly a winning strategy for France. In Malta, however, the Council went a step further by asking the ambassador to even cancel the contract altogether. To the Bailli de Mesmes this was an impossible task since most of the consignment he had ordered had already been transported to Lyon. He reasoned that even if he managed to cancel this agreement in its entirety or in part, the Order risked not getting what it was owed because the arms purchase had been secured primarily as a negotiating tool to oblige France to pay its dues. In view of this, Mesmes was convinced that if the deal was cancelled the 'happy disposition and goodwill [of the duke d'Orléans] could cool down if he learns that our engagement for the arms was broken,' and with it the chance of obtaining the much needed liquidation of the Order's *billets*.[179] Much to Mesmes' surprise, he did ultimately manage to reduce the 400,000 *livres* deal by half, while still obliging the court of France to pay the 210,000 *livres*, thanks to the assistance of the French financier Paris-Duverney.[180]

The payment, however, lingered till 1724, because, much to the ambassador's disappointment, the Regent dragged his feet. It was only after the duke d'Orléans' death in December 1723, with Louis XV crowned King, that the ambassador and the receiver of the Order in Paris managed to sign an agreement whereby they secured a gratuity of 200,000 *livres* to be paid in weapons, and a further exchange of *billets de liquidation* into 200,000 *livres* in cash. Wanting to avoid complaints by other corporate bodies stuck in a similar financial situation to that of the Order, Louis XV agreed to reimburse the remaining debt over six years, of which 30,000 livres were to cover the yearly capitation tax and the remainder to be paid yearly by the Royal Treasury of France to the Order.[181] The receiver of the Order in Paris, the commander d'Avernes, assured the Grand Master that this was a 'distinguished grace not accorded to others,'[182] apart from the Order. The negotiation for the exchange of *billets* to 200,000 livres in cash was signed on 14 July 1724, between the French government and

[179] 'est dans des dispositions tres heureuses, sa bonne volonté pouroit se refroidir si elle a prenoit que nos engagements pour les armes fussent rompus.' NLM AOM 1219, f. 539, 26 March 1723.
[180] NLM AOM 1219, ff. 919-938, 8 July 1724.
[181] NLM AOM 267, f. 235r, 4 June 1724.
[182] 'c'est une grace toute distinguee qui n'a esté accordeé a personne.' NLM AOM 267, f. 236v, July 1724.

Ambassador de Mesmes, the receiver of the Order in Paris, commandeur d'Avernes, and the knight François de Cugnac de Dampierre (captain in the regiment of Bourbon cavalry), who was instrumental in obtaining lengthy audiences with the King for the purpose of this issue. With the financial issue resolved and the arms deal finally settled, the receiver of the Order in Lyon, commander Jean Joseph de Caissac, was instructed to ship the arms at the first opportunity.[183] In July 1724, Vilhena and his Council finally gave their approval for the weapons deal and its transportation to Malta.[184] This arms deal, which was complicated from its inception, remained idle in Lyon till 1729, despite the re-negotiation and the financial settlement. In January 1728, Vilhena and his Council finally decided to see this deal through.[185] Ambassador Mesmes pressured the *intendant* of arms, Titon de Villegenon, to complete his end of the bargain and supply whatever weapons he had failed to deliver. Yet, Villegenon argued that the full consignment of arms extracted from the arsenals of Paris, Lyon and other arsenals, had all been delivered to the store in Lyon eighteen months before and their shipping had been delayed only because of conflicting messages arriving from Malta. Mesmes reassured his superiors that despite the five-year delivery delay from the signing of the contract, France was still honouring the agreed-upon price for the weapons even though warfare prices had since risen, and the quality of arms was the same as those supplied to the King's troops. Fearing damage from accrued dust and humidity, and wanting to avoid another mishap with the Council, Mesmes invited Titon to visit the arms in Lyon and certify their state prior to shipment. The *intendant* of Arms was indifferent to this request and made it clear that he was not liable for any damage or further expense because of the uncertainties and delays from Malta. As far as he was concerned, he had honoured the agreement over a year before. Nonetheless, he did offer the Order a time-saving measure of keeping a small stock in Lyon in case the knights needed to replace faulty or damaged arms.[186]

The flow chart below outlines the chain of command and the flow of communication amongst Hospitallers and French officials taking place during an Ottoman threat against Malta for the purpose of procuring military equipment and/or provisioning of experts from France. News of Ottoman armament, with Malta being a potential target, was typically the trigger. The Grand Master usually started the process

[183] NLM AOM 267, f. 236v, 5 July 1724.
[184] NLM AOM 267, f. 236v, 5 July 1724.
[185] NLM AOM 1219, ff. 378-379, 7 January 1729.
[186] AN M963, f. 217, 28 December 1729.

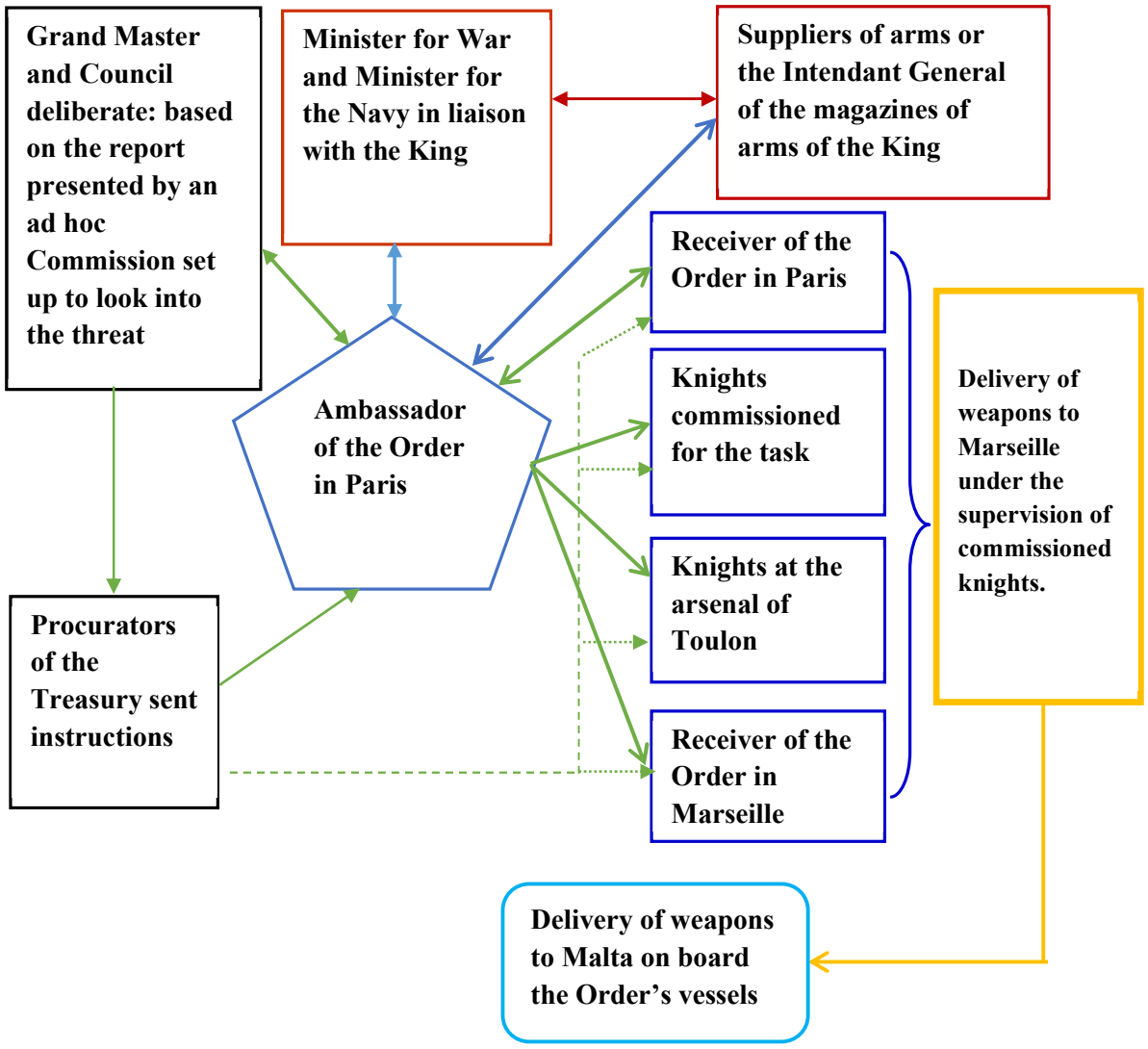
by convening his Council, during which a four-knight commission was appointed to verify the rumours and outline a plan of defence in accordance with the Congregation of War. The report was then presented to the council and the Grand Master. The military report was drafted after the commission inspected the islands' defences and military stores, so that any shortage in artillery, firearms, gunpowder or other ancillary material was identified. The Council would then deliberate on the way forward.[187] Once a strategic plan was formulated the Council would communicate the outcome to the procurators of the Treasury for an established list of armaments and gunpowder required to withstand a siege. The procurators' role was then to communicate and send their instructions specifically for procurement with the Ambassador of the Order in Paris, and/or directly with the receiver of the Order in Marseille or other agents or commissioners in the regions. Meanwhile, the Grand Master would also update his ambassador in Paris on any decision taken. In most cases, the ambassador would then be instructed to approach the King to ask for his protection. The role of the ambassador of the Order for the procurement of arms was daunting but quite clear one; he had the task of either negotiating a deal with the Minister for War or the Minister for the Navy to purchase from royal stocks (it was more frequent with the latter) or else obtain permission from the King through his Minister for the Navy or War (depending on the nature of the weapons) so that the Order could commission French suppliers. One such supplier was the firearms factory of Saint-Étienne, and in the case of the 1722 alarm, the deal was signed with the King's own arms private contractor, Louis Maximilien de Titon. When the Order purchased directly from the King as the supplier to the Order, his ministers would first confirm with the *intendants* general of the royal magazines or arsenals, in most cases that of Toulon, to verify if France could spare any stock for Malta. Once this was confirmed the ambassador would then sign a deal with the Minister for the Navy or that for War, depending on the source of the weapons. If the purchase was made directly from the contractors, the ambassador would communicate with the supplier or by way of commissioned knights in France, so that these would supervise the production until completion and follow the consignment until it was delivered to Marseille. In general, the receiver of the Order in Marseille was involved in the shipping of the military cargo for Malta.

[187] NLM AOM 267, ff. 177r-184r, 1 February 1723.

The procedure presented below relates to times of acute alarms of war, most specifically the threat of 1722, and it shows the process of communication between the Convent in Malta and French and Hospitaller officials in France for the procurement of weapons or gunpowder from royal stocks. A similar procedure for arms procurement from France was followed during relatively more stable times applied, with the only difference when the supply and contracts were made directly with private contractors following the King's approval; two such instances of firearms purchases made directly from contractors were those of 1720 from the firearm factory of Saint-Étienne,[188] and the largest one from the same contactors in 1759.[189]

[188] NLM AOM 1563, ff 152, 169, 170, July 1720.
[189] Stephen C. Spiteri, *Armoury of the Knights* (Malta, Midsea Books, 2003), 93.

Chart 2.1 Chain of command and communication for the procurement of arms in France



Communication and command amongst Hospitallers
Two-way exchanges between the Order and French offices
Communication between French offices
Shipment of weapons consignment to Malta via Marseille
Instructions by the procurators of the Treasury to the Order's officials

Chart 2.1 was built on the basis of information from the following documents: the deliberations of the Council of State (Liber Conciliorum Status), AOM 267 and AOM 268; Correspondence sent by the ambassador of the Order in Paris to the Grand Master, AOM 1219 and AOM 1220; Correspondence between the Order's ambassador

and the court of France, AN M963; military documents in AN M995 and Passport related documents in AN M902.

2.7 The citation of knights

In October 1722, a letter was circulated to the venerable chapters and assemblies of all priories in the four langues of the Order, France, Italy, Spain and Germany, instructing knights and novices to prepare for a summoning to the island—excluding ambassadors, receivers, and procurators. Yet a general citation was never called in 1722, despite the sighting of the enemy's fleet on the island's horizon.[190] However, because of the conflicting rumours that kept channelling to the Convent, defence measures continued unabated, because the uncertainty of an Ottoman assault itself was reason enough for the knights to step into their role as a sacred militia.[191] In fact, in December 1722, the Order held public prayers for the safety of the island; the militia and gunners were engaged in a full swing training programme and the Grand Master aimed to have 4,000 to 5,000 men brought from Sicily and Naples, ready to fight by coming springtime, by which time they expected the Ottoman assault to happen.[192] Meanwhile, the Congregation of War called for the deployment of a combined corps of 10,000 men and an additional three engineering brigades, each consisting of six men. The galleys were to be readied for transporting relief troops and defending the coast. Additionally, they identified the need for 150 French bronze cannons of various calibres and another 300 iron cannons for the navy.[193]

To ensure the manning of all fortifications and the command of the militia, the Order required full participation. A French newspaper published in Paris reported that Grand Master Vilhena had issued a decree on 11 January 1723, summoning all knights over the age of nineteen who had not yet completed their caravans to prepare and leave for Malta in the coming May.[194] Some knights voluntarily embarked from Genoa to join their brethren in Malta even before Vilhena's request. Meanwhile, knights from the Order's four langues prepared to leave for Malta as instructed, while some travelled to Genoa to embark on the four frigates of the Order which had arrived in port, carrying

[190] NLM AOM 267, f. 155r, October 1722.
[191] *Recueil des nouvelles,* Gazette of 2 January 1723, Issue 1, 26 December 1722, p. 42.
[192] *Recueil des nouvelles,* Gazette of 20 February 1723, Issue 8, Naples 23 January 1723, p. 90.
[193] NLM AOM 267, ff. 177r-184r, 1 February 1723.
[194] *Recueil des nouvelles,* Gazette of 13 March 1723, Issue 11, Paris 13 March 1723, p. 132.

much needed cash from the commanderies of Piedmont and Lombardy.[195] Due to the severe shortage of knights arriving at the Convent, resulting from the contagion in Provence, the Council of State called a general citation on 13 March 1723. Instructions were sent to all priors and their lieutenants to have knights in their jurisdiction depart for Malta. The aim was to form a corps of 200 knights drawn from the periphery of the Convent.[196] French knights were required to travel through Italy and undergo quarantine in Naples and Sicily with the permission of the viceroy before embarking for Malta.[197]

As the knights journeyed to the island, news arrived at the Convent in late March 1723 from two brigantines sent on an exploratory mission by the Grand Master near Crete and Cape Matapan. These revealed that the Ottoman vessels arriving in the Dardanelles carried neither troops nor ammunition. Additionally, a French vessel informed the knights that the Ottoman sultanas, frigates, and galleys were not ready to sail for another two months. This delay granted the Order more time to prepare for the anticipated attack.[198] Further intelligence confirmed that the enemy's threat remained imminent, so Vilhena insisted that all knights were to stay in the convent.[199] In April 1723, news arrived in Naples that more than 70 knights from various langues had already arrived on Malta, and a large number were ready to embark from Genoa, Livorno and Messina.[200] Some galleys were also assembling and arming in the Port of Pisa in preparation to sail to Malta should the island be attacked.[201]

[195] *Recueil des Nouvelles,* Gazette of 2 January 1723, Issue 1, Florence 8 December 1722, p.9, Gazette of 17 April 1723, Issue 16, Florence 23 March 1723, p.189.
[196] NLM AOM 267, ff. 192v-193r, 13 March 1723.
[197] NLM AOM 267, ff. 199v-200r, 28 April 1723.
[198] *Recueil des Nouvelles,* Gazette of 24 April 1723, Issue 17, Naples 23 March 1723, p.198-199.
[199] AN M 995, f. 88, 16 March 1723. The correspondence between the ambassador of France to Constantinople for 1723 is mostly missing from the consular collection at the *Archives Nationales* in Paris, so any first-hand news about the Ottoman court, normally sent Bonnac, the ambassador *of France* in Constantinople, could not be verified.
[200] *Recueil des Nouvelles,* Gazette of 22 May 1723, Issue 21, Naples 21 April 1723, p.245.
[201] *Recueil des Nouvelles,* Gazette of 24 April 1723, Issue 17, Florence 30 March 1723, p.201.

Figure 2.7 Fra Pierre de Thomas de Chateauneuf confidentially sent this table of weapons and ammunition stocked at the arsenal of Toulon to the ambassador of the Order in Paris, providing him with an update on what Malta could obtain from the arsenal of Toulon.[202]

[202] AN M995, f. 99, 14 March 1723.

While some of the knights were moving to Malta, one who remained in France proved invaluable to the Order. Commander Pierre de Thomas de Chateauneuf (1684-1759), an officer of the French navy and commander of Toulon, served as both informant and advisor on military matters. He consistently updated the Grand Master on the plague situation in Provence and provided strategic insights to Ambassador de Mesmes in Paris by sending him discerning military advice.[203] In March 1723, Thomas de Chateauneuf drew up a list of officers whom he recommended as suitable to be in charge of the artillery, on land and sea including Etienne Nicholas Grandpré who, like him had served in Malta during the 1715 alarm.[204] Also proposed were M. de Goyon as major of the artillery and the knight Claude Beauharnois de Beaumont (1667-1738),[205] brother to the *intendant* of Rochefort, with the marquis de Montandre as second in command. Chateauneuf maintained direct communication with Tigné in Malta, who informed him of the required number of artillerymen, gunners, and bombardiers needed on the island. This enabled Chateauneuf to coordinate support from France. More importantly, Chateauneuf provided Mesmes with a detailed inventory of the arsenal in Toulon, which included cannons, mortars, gun carriages, bombs, grenades, and other auxiliary siege materials. His intention was to provide the Order's ambassador with secret information on what the Order could procure. It was undoubtedly risky for Chateauneuf to disclose sensitive state data on the contents of an arsenal to a foreign sovereign. Even though this was for the Order of St John, a neutral, friendly state under French protection. Chateauneuf's loyalty seemed to have leaned more with his Grand Master than with his King. Knowing the stakes were high, he asked Ambassador de Mesmes to 'not mention him at all, neither with the admiral nor with anyone else because they would not approve of him giving information.'[206] Chateauneuf's risk in providing sensitive information, as it turned out, boiled down to nothing because the Grand Master held back from calling upon other experts or officers aside from Tigné and the deal for the purchase of arms was already more than the council wanted to get.[207] Nevertheless, his position at the heart of the French state's

[203] NLM AOM 1563, ff. 271, 385, 397. Pierre de Thomas de Chateauneuf, known also as commander de Chateauneuf, came from a family of officers in the French navy.
[204] On Etienne Nicholas Grandpré (1631-1731), see Short Biographies, p.330
[205] On Claude Beauharnois de Beaumont, see Short Biographies, p.324.
[206] 'Je vous supplie de ne pas me nommer en rien, ni à M. l'Amiral, ni à qui que ce soit. Peut-être y aurait-il des gens qui n'approuveraient pas que je vous donne certaines instructions.' AN M995, f. 88, 14 March 1723.
[207] AN M 995, f. 88, 14 March 1723.

military apparatus and his utility for the Order were critical elements that were highly appreciated, and indicative of the ways and means in which the Order nimbly operated the *ancien régime* system.

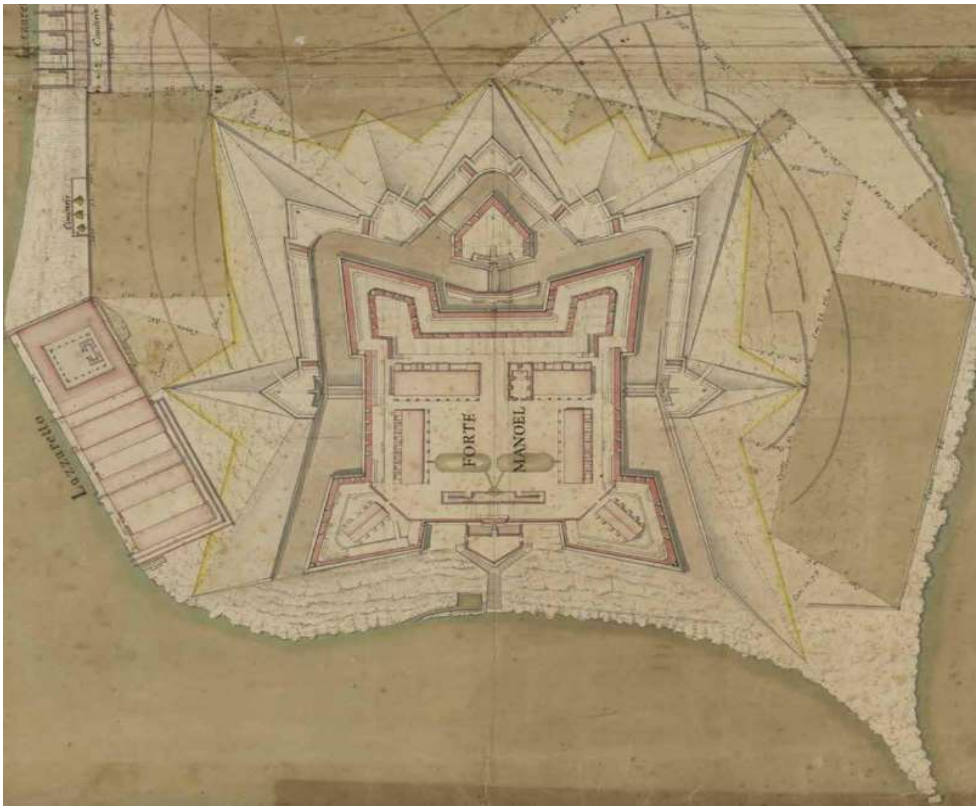


Figure 2.8 Plan of Fort Manoel drafted after its completion in 1733.[208] (Source: Courtesy of the National Library of Malta, NLM Plan M27).

When, by July 1723, no further alarming news trickled to the Convent, the citation was recalled, and those knights in Malta were free to return home, while those in transit could halt their journey.[209] Nonetheless, the training of troops, gunners and bombardiers continued.[210] While knights who had responded to the call were allowed to return home, Brigadier de Tigné and his assistant, Fra de Comenge, prolonged their stay till the end of the year. Tigné's principal task was to implement what he himself had proposed back in 1715, a star-shaped fort on bishop's island (later becoming Manoel Island after the construction of the fort) for the protection of Valletta's northern flank. Its construction had then been shelved because of the Order's financial constraints, until the pressing needs of the 1722 alarm forced the hand of Grand Master

[208] Image courtesy of the National Library of Malta, NLM Plan M27.
[209] NLM AOM 267, f. 212r, 23 July 1723.
[210] *Recueil des nouvelles,* Gazette of 21 August 1723, Issue 34, Naples 20 July 1723, p.402; Hoppen (1999), 144.

de Vilhena to personally finance its construction, leaving his name carved in a bulwark aimed to protect Christendom. [211] Impressed by the design of Brigadier de Tigné, Mesmes told the Grand Master that 'nothing is more glorious to you, nor more useful to [the] Religion.'[212] Curious to see the fort's plans, some military experts in France persuaded Ambassador de Mesmes to procure a copy of Fort Manoel's plans. Upon their return to France in November 1723, Fra de Comenge presented the plans at Versailles. He also showcased a silver coin featuring the profile of Grand Master Vilhena, similar to those buried in the foundations of the fort itself during the laying of the first stone ceremony held on 14 September 1723.[213] Prior to leaving the island, Tigné entrusted the execution of the fort's construction to his old time assistant and resident engineer Mondion. Fort Manoel was completed in 1732, a few months prior to Mondion's demise, leaving behind one of Malta's most prized forts, earning praise not only from contemporaries but also from later engineers. French praise for Fort Manoel extended beyond Tigné's contemporaries: the count de Bourlamaque, head of a military mission sent by Louis XV in 1761, described it as a fort done with utmost care and completed with precision.[214] Encouraged by the French support provided during the 1722 alarm, and the confidence the Order had in the skills of Tigné, the Council of State approved the construction of a new fortress at Ras-et-Tafal in Gozo, based on Tigné's earlier proposal. However, its construction was postponed on Tigné's recommendation, as he deemed it more urgent to protect the central harbour region and the surroundings of the Convent city. The construction of Fort Chambray decades after the alarm of 1722 was brought to fruition thanks to the funding of the French knight, Jacques François de Chambray.[215]

2.8 Conclusion

Ambassador de Mesmes' pivotal role between the two Catholic sovereigns of Malta and France was important in times of peace, but even more invaluable in times of war. The security of the Order's Convent was paramount and for his efforts he was graciously lauded by Grand Master Vilhena who told him that:

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[211] Stephen C. Spiteri, *Fortresses of the Knights* (Malta, Books Distributors Ltd., 2001), 306-307.
[212] 'rien ne vous est plus glorieux, ni plus utile à la Religion.' NML AOM 1219, f. 672, 17 July 1733.
[213] NLM AOM 1219, f. 750, November 1723.
[214] NLM AOM 6557, f. 89, 1761; NLM AOM 6558, f. 83v, 18 October 1761.
[215] Joseph Scicluna, *Jacques François de Chambray: The Order he served, the island he loved, and the fort he built* (Malta, Kite Group, 2023), 274; Spiteri (2001), 313.

with so much zeal in serving the Religion, much to our satisfaction, have you taken all care to obtain from the Court of France all the assistance necessary to us in case of a siege and you have done your utmost to obtain the money owed to us or to procure the munitions [needed] from the arsenals of the King.[216]

His efforts had come at a personal financial cost. Over a year from the lifting of the threat, the Council agreed to pay Mesmes a onetime sum of 9,000 livres for the expenditure he incurred on behalf of the Order.[217] Even though a mere compensation, this was a well-deserved treatment for an ambassador who had managed to convince a somewhat reluctant French sovereign to aid Malta; obtain the military needs required, and bring to an end the Order's financial predicament with France with the collaboration of French knights, receivers and the leading royal financiers.

The legacy of the Franco-Hospitaller relationship during the 1722 Ottoman threat has not just survived in letters which flowed between the Convent in Malta and Versailles, but also in a memorial of stone. Fort Manoel serves as a powerful reminder of the French assistance in 1722, reflecting the expertise of their skilled engineers and the lasting influence of French military architecture on the island. This fort emerged from a time of crisis, compelling the Grand Master, with French support, to revive the plans and recommendations left by the French team in 1715. The construction of this stronghold was crucial for protecting the Convent city from the anticipated attacks in 1722-23 and ensuring its defence thereafter. It took a crisis to spur the Order into action, not due to a lack of interest in fortifying the island, but because of a shortage of funds and manpower to execute the works recommended by the French nearly a decade earlier. The alarm of 1722-23 provided the perfect justification to seek French assistance once again. Despite its government being in transition and grappling with its own domestic crises, France—though initially hesitant and mindful of its relationship with the Ottomans—ultimately fulfilled its role as protector of the Order during these turbulent times.

[216] 'avec combien de zele et d'envie de server la Religion a notre satisfaction vous vous etes donné des soins pour obtenir de la cour de France tous les secours qui nous sont necessaires en cas de siege, et que vous avez fait tout votre possible pour que l'on nous donnat de l'argent a compte de ce qui nous est dû, ou que l'on permis de prendre dans les arcenaux du Roy toutes les munitions.' NLM AOM 267 ff. 187r-188r, 21 December 1722.
[217] NLM AOM 267, f. 248r, 6 November 1724.

Chapter 3
The Ottoman threat to Malta of 1731-1733

3.1 Introduction

The Ottoman threat to Malta of 1731-1733 rarely features in Maltese historiography of the 18th century. Alison Hoppen in her research on the fortifications of Hospitaller Malta claims that 'the threat of attack by Muslim powers was particularly acute on three occasions in the eighteenth century, 1722-23, 1731-33 and 1761,'[1] failing to include the 1714-15 threat which was equally considerable.[2] Despite extensive discussion, deliberation, and correspondence regarding the intelligence, reaction, and defence preparation in response to these threats, there is a notable lack of information about the 1731-33 alarm in the archives of the Order in Malta, when compared to similar scenarios. This situation is ironic, given Hoppen's assertion that this alarm was an equally acute one. At the same time, Hoppen provides no specific details about this alarm, aside from mentioning the rumours of the threat arriving at the convent in early 1731. This omission is likely due to her focus on the fortifications of Malta rather than the alarm itself. Furthermore, since her primary archival sources were the limited ones available in Malta, her narrative was likely shaped accordingly.

By contrast, the correspondence among French diplomats and the Ministry for the Navy, preserved in the French archives and consulted for this dissertation, offers a comprehensive view of the significance of this threat, although arguably more from a political perspective than a military one. These documents highlight its importance for the safety and protection of Hospitaller Malta and France's political interests with the Ottomans. They illuminate the challenges that the Franco-Hospitaller relationship posed to the alliance between France and the Ottomans. Set during the magistracy of Grand Master Vilhena, beginning with the Ottoman threat of 1722-1723 and extending through the crisis of 1731-33, this chapter will discuss how France assisted Malta in resourcing its military during the threat of an Ottoman onslaught, and the diplomatic

[1] Hoppen (1999), 111.
[2] See the works of Stephen C. Spiteri, *Art of Fortress Building in Hospitaller Malta* (Malta, BDL Publications, 2008); Denis De Lucca, 'French Military Engineers in Malta During the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries', *Melita Historica*, 8, 1 (1980), 26-33; Fleur Brincat, *The Bali de Tigné Knight of Malta, Commissioner of Fortifications and Military Engineer* (Malta, International Institute for Baroque Studies University of Malta, 2011), 26-29.

manoeuvres that resolved a political and military crisis, potentially averting long-term damage to both Malta and France.

3.2 Rumours and uncertainty: The first year of the alarm

Despite the three-year fear of invasion, during which time the Order's military defensive mechanism should have been fully operational, the archives of the Order of St John in Malta offer little information on the 1731-33 Ottoman threat. The documentation, particularly in the Liber Conciliarum Status (the minutes of the Council of State), proves paradoxical. It was almost as if the Order did not give particular importance to this situation. The Council's concern is merely shown through its alerting brethren residing abroad of a possible citation to the island.[3] Documents in France seem to paint a different picture. Some of the key primary sources which provide an understanding of the 1731-1733 scenario are the letters exchanged between the French *Homme du Roi* in Malta and the Minister for the Navy in Versailles; the letters of the French ambassador in Constantinople addressed to the Minister for the Navy and the *Homme du Roi* in Malta; the correspondence received by the Minister for Foreign Affairs in France from the *Homme du Roi* in Malta; and the dispatches of the central convent to the Order's ambassador in Paris. This corpus of letters generated in the French correspondence concerning this alarm suggests that it was as sensitive to France as it was for Malta, if not actually more. Other sources, including the French newspaper, *La Gazette* (Paris), have also revealed the interest which this Ottoman threat generated in international arenas.

In March 1731, reports of an Ottoman invasion began to surface. The Order's ambassador to Rome, the Bailli de Schade, informed Pope Clement XII (1730-1740) of this in a private audience.[4] This news was confirmed a month later by the Venetian minister. The latter revealed that preparations were underway at the Porte and a fleet under Kapitan Pasha, grand admiral of the Ottoman navy, was to leave Constantinople for the *Isle de Archipel* (group of islands in the Aegean Sea) and later for Italian waters. Similar to Malta, Venice was on edge because the destination of the Ottoman fleet remained unconfirmed; some believed it was bound for Malta, while others thought it

[3] MAE 67 CP vol. 7, ff. 22r-23r, 1731.

[4] *Recueil des Nouvelles Ordinaires et Extraordinaires Relations et Recits des choses avenues, tant en ce Royaume qu'ailleurs*, *Gazette* of 14 April 1731, Issue 15, Rome 22 March 1731, p.174.

was heading for the Republic,[5] which was unlikely since Venice and the Ottomans had been at peace since the signing of the Treaty of Passarowitz in 1718.[6] According to the weekly French newspaper, *La Gazette* of Paris (a Parisian newspaper supported by the French government and which published current international affairs based on information circulating from various Mediterranean ports) a French captain arriving in Malta from the Levant delivered the news that on 20 April 1731, he came across an Ottoman fleet of twelve warships that had just sailed out of Constantinople. The fleet then separated, six sailing to Chios, three to Rhodes and three to Nafplion (a coastal city in the Peloponnese), where they moored while awaiting further instructions from Constantinople. Meanwhile, Sultan Mahmud I (r.1739-1754) ordered Kapitan Pasha to group all the galleys of the Ottoman maritime provinces and bring them to Constantinople to join his fleet which was already heavily equipped with transport vessels. The same newspaper reported that when this rumour reached the convent, Grand Master Vilhena, fearing that Malta was the Ottoman target, wrote to his ambassador in Rome in May 1731 informing him that indications were that the Ottoman armament was not directed against Venice. In light of this the Convent wrote to the Viceroy of Sicily and Naples to obtain further direction from their overlord, the Holy Roman Emperor, Charles VI (r.1711-1740).[7]

What pushed the Ottoman Sultan to arm a fleet against Malta, if it was really intended for Malta, in the first year of the alarm remains unclear; the sources are silent on this. However, in the context of other Ottoman threats to Malta in the 18th century, it would be plausible to consider that the Sultan was reacting to the plunder of the Maltese corsairs on Ottoman vessels. Despite strong rumours of invasion throughout 1731, no attack materialised, but the fear and a sense of alarm remained, such that it escalated again towards the end of the year. When these rumours intensified at the turn of the year, Vilhena informed the Pope and Venice that a considerable Ottoman force was being once again gathered, and likely heading for Malta.[8] It was at this time that Grand Master Vilhena and his Council of State deemed it fit to call a summoning of

[5] *Recueil des Nouvelles, Gazette* of 19 May 1731, Issue 20, Rome 26 April 1731, p.237.
[6] Johanna Fassl, 'Punchinello meets the Turk: Giambattista Tiepolo's chorus of Oriental spectators and the transformation of cultural Otherness,' in *The Turk and Islam in the Western Eye, 1450-1750: Visual Imagery before Orientalism*, J.G. Harper (ed.) (Surrey, Ashgate, 2011), 95.
[7] *Recueil des Nouvelles, Gazette* of 23 June 1731, Issue 25, Rome 30 May 1731, p.296.
[8] *Recueil des Nouvelles, Gazette* of 1 March 1732, Issue 9, Rome 6 February 1732, p.104.

the knights.[9] The citation list which was drafted by the end of 1731, called upon 200 knights, half of whom were from France (40 from the Langue of France, 40 from the Langue of Provence, and 20 from that of Auvergne) was circulated to the grand priors of the Order.[10] According to news arriving from Venice on 13 February 1732 and published in *La Gazette* (Paris) the Grand Master called upon all his knights from the periphery of the convent to depart for Malta and assist the Order in a defence from a likely Ottoman onslaught.[11] Shortly after, the Order's Ambassador de Mesmes, informed Vilhena that when the knights received the news, they grew particularly concerned, not because of a lack of good will to fulfil their duties and defend the Convent, but because they were not keen to bear the burden of unnecessary travel expenses, unless the Order was convinced that the Ottoman armament was intended for Malta. Ambassador de Mesmes understood and supported this stance, especially in the wake of the severe economic downturn that had affected them and France during the 1720s. In his desire to support them, Mesmes reached out to an ambassador in Venice, most likely the French ambassador there, Jacques Vincent de Languet de Gergy (1723-34), for information, given that intelligence from Venice was typically deemed reliable.[12] In fact, the latter was convinced that the Ottomans were not prepared to launch an attack that year, providing further justification for the French knights to delay their travel to Malta.[13] It was typical for the Order to rely on the Serenissima for military intelligence. For instance, in 1708, Grand Master Perellos had instructed his representative in Venice to report on any military movements in the Levant that might indicate a Muslim attack on the island.[14] Malta, Venice, Ragusa, and the Grand Duchy of Tuscany were integral components of a vast intelligence network which was essential for an island serving as Christendom's bulwark.[15] In addition to

[9] *Recueil des Nouvelles*, *Gazette* of 1 March 1732, Issue 9, Vienna 13 February 1732, p.101.
[10] MAE 67 CP vol. 7, ff. 22r-23r, 1731.
[11] *Recueil des Nouvelles*, *Gazette* of 1 March 1732, Issue 9, Vienna 13 February 1732, p. 101.
[12] The identity of this diplomat remains unknown, but it is more plausible that Ambassador de Mesmes corresponded with a French ambassador in Venice rather than a representative of the Order, as the Order did not have a permanent ambassador stationed there. Instead, the Order appointed extraordinary ambassadors solely for specific missions. Nevertheless, the knights did maintain a permanent position of the receiver in Venice. For information on the role of Venice in the provision of intelligence and communication control, see Filippo de Vivo*, Information and Communication in Venice: Rethinking Early Modern Politics* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2009).
[13] NLM AOM 1221, ff. 62-63, 7 March 1732.
[14] Ivan Grech, 'Getting to Know the Enemy: Hospitaller Malta's Intelligence Network in the Early Seventeenth Century', *Turkish Historical Review*, 9 (2018), 145.
[15] Grech (2018),106.

relying on foreign sources of intelligence, the Order developed its own network. Malta's consulates on strategically important islands such as Zante, Corfu, and Nafplion served as intelligence-gathering hubs, supplying the Convent with crucial information on the movements of the Ottoman fleet.[16] It was critical for the Order to receive timely information so it could adequately arm the island's defences and co-ordinate its defence with Christian states.[17] No document from the Order's archives or that of France seems to indicate that the knights did actually leave for Malta. It is likely that the call for a citation was still at an early stage, giving enough time for the knights to prepare their belongings and personal affairs in case they were formally instructed to leave for Malta.[18]

3.3 A French consul's letter

As the Order of St John grappled with the situation, Louis XV' diplomats exacerbated it by entangling Malta, France, and Constantinople in heightened political and diplomatic strife. In 1731, the consul of France in Cairo, Pierre-Jean Pignon (1729-1734),[19] and the French vice-consul in Alexandria, Nicolas Dez (1728-1735),[20] sent three letters to Malta, two addressed to the *Homme du Roi*, the Bailli Eustache de Bernart d'Avernes de Bocage (1726-56), and the other to Grand Master Vilhena. One of the letters penned by Pignon contained sensitive information concerning the movement and whereabouts of an Ottoman convoy in Egyptian waters. These letters were dispatched to Malta on a Venetian vessel, when around 160 nautical miles from the Maltese islands, it was captured in November 1731 by Tunisian corsairs led by captain Banni and taken to Tunis. Clearly, as the documents reveal, at least one of the letters had been intercepted.[21] When the French diplomats in Malta, Cairo and Constantinople received the news that one of the dispatched letters had fallen into the hands of the Bey of Tunis, Al-Husayn I ibn Ali (r.1705-1735), fear gripped them. They dreaded the potential political fallout between France and the Porte if the contents of

[16] Mallia-Milanes (2008), 14.
[17] Grech (2018),106.
[18] For a more detailed explanation on the citation of knights see chapter 4.
[19] On Pierre-Jean Pignon, see Short Biographies p.334; Mézin (2007), 493; Cornel Zwerlein, *Imperial Unknowns: The French and British in the Mediterranean 1650-1750* (Cambridge, Cambridge Press, 2016), 65.
[20] On Nicolas Dez, see Short Biographies, p.327. Mézin, 242.
[21] The documents speak of three letters sent to Malta from Egypt, but only of one intercepted letter. AN AE/B/I/405, ff. 22r-25v, 20 November 1731.

Pignon's letter, which provided intelligence on an Ottoman fleet, were to be disclosed to Sultan Mahmud I (1730-1754) in Constantinople.[22]

The consul of France in Tunis, Jacques Boyer de Saint-Gervais (1729-1734), was the first to learn of the intercepted letter. He quickly informed the *Homme du Roi* in Malta that the Venetian vessel had been captured and Pignon's letter confiscated. Wishing to prevent the letter from falling into Ottoman hands, Saint Gervais sent his Dragoman to the secretary of the Tunisian Bey to verify if the letter had already reached the Bey's desk. To his dismay, this had already happened. Worried about the potential damage to France's reputation in Constantinople, Saint-Gervais sounded the alarm among French diplomats, beginning with Bocage in Malta.[23]

In the intercepted letter addressed to Bocage, Pignon criticised the Maltese corsairing activities and those operating similarly under the Tuscan flag, complaining of the disruption these were causing in the regions of Alexandria and Rossetta. French traders operating along the Levantine coast expressed frustration with the Maltese corsairs, living in perpetual apprehension of local retaliation because of this. They felt unjustly blamed for the havoc wrought by these corsairs, as if the latter were French nationals, not Maltese.[24] Pignon's grievance was neither baseless nor unprecedented. Before his appointment in Cairo, several French consuls in Levantine ports had been forced to flee from aggrieved Turks or locals victimized by corsairs sailing under the Order's flag. For instance, in 1717, a corsairing vessel flying the flag of the Order, captained by Jaufret, a native of La Ciotat near Marseille, forcibly entered a monastery near Tripoli in Syria, beating the father superior and stealing sacred artifacts, for which the local community convened to protest at the door of the French Vice-Consul.[25] Two years on, Maltese and Livornese corsairs looted Ottoman vessels moored in Tripoli, causing uproar throughout the town. This commotion led some Turks to storm the French consulate, prompting the consul and his staff to flee through a window, inadvertently leaving the consul's wife behind. The consulate was ransacked, and the consul's wife was stripped of her jewellery. When the French consul was finally caught, they dragged him to the Pasha, having to answer for the blunder of the corsairs

[22] AN AE/B/1/405, ff. 14-21v, 25 January 1732.
[23] AN AE/B/I/405, ff. 22r-25v, 20 November 1731.
[24] AN AE/B/I/818, f. 23, 1 September 1731.
[25] NLM AOM 1218, f. 3, April 1717; Cavaliero (1959), 228.

flying the banner of the Order.[26] Despite the sailing prohibition of 1697, which forbade Maltese corsairs from sailing closer than 50 miles off the Palestinian coast, the presence of these corsairs was still very much felt.[27] Pignon expressed his dismay to Bocage, finding it inexcusable that the Grand Master failed to warn those sailing under his flag to avoid the waters near Rosetta and Alexandria. He criticized this oversight not just for the minimal gains from such ventures, but more so for endangering French commerce in Damietta and disturbing other Christian traders in the area, compelling them to seek assistance from French consulates. While Pignon refrained from stating it explicitly, perhaps more inadvertently, then purposefully, conveyed intelligence on the operations of an Ottoman convoy that regularly navigated Egyptian waters. He said that, 'when the convoy leaves Damietta, the caravels escorting it are loaded to their masts, consequently unable to engage in combat,' subtly indicating the vulnerability of these ships in a situation of naval combat.[28] Pignon's insights offered the Order critical intelligence about the optimal moment to launch a successful attack on this particular Ottoman convoy, consisting of saiques and various other transport vessels.[29] It was this very piece of intelligence which risked causing friction, if not a flare-up, between Paris and the Porte. Bocage immediately flagged the issue with his diplomatic counterpart in Constantinople and the Minister for the Navy in France, informing both of the contents of Pignon's letter in December 1731.[30]

The French ambassador to Constantinople, Louis-Saveur de Villeneuve (1728-1741), was worried that if the letter fell into the hands of the Ottomans, France risked being accused of conspiring against the interests of Sultan, and he shared Bocage's anger. As he expressed it, 'it will primarily be up to me to find a way to extricate myself from the consequences that will follow Pignon's imprudence.'[31] Villeneuve was concerned that the divulged information risked being interpreted as a deliberate

[26] Cavaliero (1960), 230-231.
[27] NLM AOM 264, unpaginated, 28 April 1699; Cavaliero (1959), 227.
[28] 'Quand le convoy sort de Damiette les caravelles qui l'escort son chargées jusqu'a le mâts, parconsequans hors d'état de combattre.' AN AE/B/I/818, f. 23, 1 September 1731. This document contains excerpts from the original letter penned by the French Consul of Cairo, Pierre-Jean Pignon to the Bailli d'Avernes de Bocage. This is how the French *Homme du Roi* in Malta got to know of the contents of the original letter intercepted by the Tunisian corsairs.
[29] AN AE/B/I/818, f. 23, 1 September 1731.
[30] AN AE/B/I/818, f. 8r, 18 April 1732; 10r-11v, 26 December 1731.
[31] 'ce sera principalement à moi à chercher le moyen de me tirer d'embarras sur les suites que doit naturellement avoir l'imprudence de Pignon.' AN AE/B/I/818, f. 8r, 18 April 1732; ff. 10r-11v, 26 December 1731; f. 25, 22 January 1732.

act against the Ottomans, especially if the information within the letter was misinterpreted or skewed against France during its translation. Frustration with the consul stemmed from Villeneuve's conviction that a diplomat must exercise utmost caution when addressing matters of sensitivity or pertaining to the state.[32] In fact, it was common practice for ambassadors to encrypt sensitive parts of letters when corresponding with Versailles. Even the *Homme du Roi* of the Order in Malta followed this convention when corresponding with French diplomats in Constantinople or elsewhere. In 1724, the Minister for the Navy, Maurepas, passed a copy of the cypher table to Ambassador de Mesmes, specifying that 'you could use the same numbered [chart] if you have something particular to send them [to Jean-Baptiste Louis D'Andrezel, French ambassador in Constantinople] and it can likewise be used in the correspondence they have with you on what may concern the service of the King or the interest of the Order,' indicating the extent of trust French officials had in the Order's representatives.[33]

In his defence, Pignon explained that the real intention of his writings to the *Homme du Roi* about the Maltese corsairing activities in Levantine waters was only to safeguard his King's subjects, and spare 'our Frenchmen established in Alexandria and Rosetta from running the risk of being insulted by the populace.'[34] He denied providing intelligence to the Maltese, and for him 'nothing is less true than I would have written to you the location where the Maltese vessels should position themselves to ambush the caravels or the Barbary vessels.'[35] At first glance, Pignon's defence appears sincere since he never really revealed the sailing schedule of the Ottoman convoy, and he was after all complaining against Maltese corsairing activities in Levantine waters, which made no rational sense to send information to Malta which could lure more corsairs there. However, perhaps unintentionally, he noted the heavily laden condition of the convoy as it departed from Damietta's harbour on its way to the Golden Horn, rendering it unable to engage in naval combat. This extra piece of information alone

[32] AN AE/B/I/818, f. 25, 22 January 1732.
[33] 'vous pourrez vous servir du même chiffre lorsque vous aurez quelque chose de particulier à leur mander, et qu'ils s'en serviront pareillement dans la correspondance qu'ils auront avec vous sur ce qui pourra concerner le service du roi et les intérêts de la religion.' AN M995, f. 108, 25 March 1724.
[34] 'et nos Français établis à Alexandrie et à Rosset ne couraient plus le risque d'être insultés par la populace.' AN AE/B/I/818, ff. 10r-11v, 26 December 1731.
[35] 'rien n'est moins vrai que je vous aie écrit les endroits où les vaisseaux maltais devraient se tenir pour surprendre les caravelles ou les vaisseaux barbaresques.' AN AE/B/I/818, ff. 10r-11v, 26 December 1731.

could have provided the knights with that enough incentive to orchestrate a successful attack.[36] All the Order needed to determine was the fleet's exact schedule as it journeyed from one Levantine port to another—which intelligence the Order commonly obtained through its extensive spy network,[37] but was on this occasion freely provided by Pignon.[38] The consul's letter of justification served a dual purpose: firstly, to present Villeneuve with an accurate account of his actions, countering any distortions by the Bey of Tunis driven by a vendetta against Pignon for the troubles he had caused him during his tenure as consul in Tunis;[39] and for Villeneuve to prepare a defensive argument if the Grand Vizier ever accused France of colluding with the Order against the Sultan's interest.[40]

In his reaction to all this, Louis XV sent two of his vessels to Tunis under the command of captain de Valette, in a bid to contain the likely damage the consul's letter could cause. The King's envoys had to persuade the Bey of Tunis to hand over the letter to the King of France, and in the meantime his *Homme du Roi* in Malta was to persuade Grand Master Vilhena to refrain from sending his corsairing vessels into Levantine waters, at least until the letter issue was resolved. When rumours of a scheduled corsairing campaign departing from Malta to Egyptian waters in the summer months of 1732 reached Villeneuve's office in Constantinople, the French ambassador urged his colleague in Malta to convince the Grand Master to reconsider his actions, and to consider the impact on France this could have.[41] In July 1732, just before the Order's squadron was about to sail on its bi-annual caravan, Bocage urgently appealed to the Vilhena to suspend or redirect his naval campaign. He cautioned that, in light of the intercepted letter, any significant Maltese capture near Damietta would undoubtedly draw upon France adverse political repercussions.[42] Ambassador de Villeneuve felt convinced that the Grand Master's close connection with Louis XV's diplomats and the Order's ties to France were reasons enough for him to act prudently.[43] However, Vilhena's stubbornness was underestimated. Despite the *Homme du Roi*'s warning, the Grand Master pressed on with his plan. He gave orders

[36] AN AE/B/I/818, ff. 10r-11v, 26 December 1731.
[37] Grech (2018), 105-150.
[38] AN AE/B/I/818, f. 23, 1 September 1731.
[39] Pierre-Jean Pignon was consul of France in Tunis from 1723 to 1729.
[40] AN AE/B/I/818, ff. 10r-11v, 26 December 1731.
[41] AN AE/B/I/818, f. 25, 22 January 1732.
[42] AN AE/B/I/818, f. 21rv, 23 July 1732.
[43] AN AE/B/I/818, f. 25, 22 January 1732.

for his two armed vessels commanded by the French Bailli Jacques François de Chambray (commander of a ships-of-the-line squadron from 1731 to 1736) and the Bailli Bartolomeo Tommasi to set sail for eastern waters to: provide assistance to the Venetians in case their eastern possessions were attacked by the Tunisians (at the time tensions between Venice and Tunis had escalated),[44] but primarily to hunt down and 'ravage' an important Ottoman convoy that was soon to appear in the bay of Damietta in its journey to Smyrna and the Golden Horn.[45] Prior to the Hospitaller corsairing vessels leaving port, Bocage had warned the Grand Master that 'if the nation [France] was compromised in the Levantine ports, the King was holding him responsible,' but Vilhena would not listen.[46]

On 23 July 1732, the *Saint Antoine*, captained by Chambray, and the *Saint Georges* under Tommasi, set sail for the coast of Crete and then for Cyprus. During the voyage they came across two Maltese corsairs installed in the regions as spies of the Order.[47] Chambray was informed about the presence of the Ottoman convoy of some forty ships escorted by two Ottoman warships in the waters at Damietta, one carrying 60 guns, and the other, flying the vice-admiral's flag, referred to as the *Realle Neuve*.[48] The latter carried 70 cannons and a crew of 200.[49] As the Hospitaller corsairing fleet appeared off the coast of Egypt, vice-admiral Khalil Mehmet, with merely a hundred of his crew on his anchored ships, swiftly rallied his men and set sail.[50] On the warm summer morning of 16 August 1732, Chambray launched his attack: the *Saint Georges* under Tommasi headed for the 60-gun warship while he turned the *Saint Antoine* upon the vice-admiral's warship. The two tartanas in the Hospitaller fleet burnt and chased all the other vessels in the Ottoman convoy. The violent conflict lasted until the close of day, by which time the five-year-old *Realle*

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[44] John Scicluna, *Jacques Françoise de Chambray. The Order he served, the island he loved, and the fort that he built* (Malta, Kite Group, 2023), 148-149.
[45] AN AE/B/I/818, f. 21rv, 23 July 1732; André Plaisse, *Le Rouge de Malte* (Rennes, Editions Ouest-France, 1991), 51.
[46] 'si la nation était inquiète dans les échelles du Levant, Sa Majesté l'en rendait responsible.' AN AE/B/I/818, f. 34, 5 January 1733.
[47] AN AE/B/I/408, ff. 207-216, 7 November 1733; Joseph F. Grima, *The Fleet of the Knights of Malta. Its Organisation during the Eighteenth Century* (Malta, BDL Publishing, 2016), 373; *Revue Catholique d'Histoire, d'Archéologie et Litterature de Normandie*, volume 5, book 1 (Évreaux Imprimerie de L'Eure, 1895), 409.
[48] Plaisse (1991), 52-53.
[49] AN AE/B/I/818, f. 30, 4 October 1732.
[50] AE/B/I/818, f. 32, 24 October 1732. This is document is copy of a letter which the *Homme du Roi*, d'Avernes de Bocage sent to the marquis de Villeneuve in Constantinople. It provides a detailed account of the Hospitallers' combat against the Turkish convoy in Damietta in 1732.

Neuve was heavily damaged. Indeed, it was too severely damaged to sail to Malta, so the following day it was ransacked before being set ablaze. The haul was considerable. It yielded 42 bronze cannons, 60 barrels of gunpowder, and over 10,000 gold and silver piastres.[51] The Hospitaller fleet sailed back to their island victorious, with the minimal loss of just one knight, while another fourteen to fifteen sailors sustained injuries. The enemy's three hundred-man vessels were left with only 117 survivors (all taken into slavery),[52] 16 Greek sailors, 14 Christian slaves and another 18 men who managed to flee using small boats.[53] Upon arriving in Malta as a captive, vice-admiral Khalil Mehmet was given a unique reception, being welcomed by Bocage, the *Homme du Roi*. Bocage extended his services on behalf of France to which generosity Khalil responded by handing him a letter for Ambassador de Villeneuve in Constantinople, asking for his intervention with the Sultan.[54]



Figure 3.1 Battle scene between the Hospitaller fleet under the command of the Bailli de Chambray and Tommasi against the vice-admiral of the Sultan at the coast of Damietta. The parchment reads: Chevalier de Chambray, lieutenant-general of the squadron of the Order, cruising against the Tunisians, takes the rear admiral of the Grand Sultan in the waters of Damietta, 16 August 1732.[55]

[51] Plaisse (1991), 52-53.
[52] AN AE/B/I/818, f. 30, 4 October 1732.
[53] AN AE/B/I/818, f. 32, 24 October 1732; Plaisse (1991), 52-53.
[54] AN AE/B/I/818, f. 32, 24 October 1732.
[55] The naval battle scene image was taken from: John Scicluna, *Jacques Françoise de Chambray. The Order he served, the island he loved, and the fort that he built* (Malta, Kite Group, 2023), 157.

3.4 French diplomatic protection and the ire of the Sultan

Despite the escalating tension and the looming threat of Ottoman retaliation following Chambray's victory, the Order did not shy away from publicly celebrating its triumph over the Ottoman enemy. It leveraged the victory for its institutional propaganda. The Order's ambassador in Paris, quickly distributed numerous copies of a letter detailing the Order's naval victory and the capture of the Ottoman Sultana, capitalizing on the moment to bolster the Order's image. He also obtained permission from the Convent to disseminate the account amongst foreign ministers residing at Versailles, with the aim of having all Europe recognise the relevance of the Religion's fight against the 'common enemy,' reminding Christendom of the Order's validity and vitality.[56] Extending his victory further, in 1734, the Bailli de Chambray sent two flags belonging to the Ottoman vice-admiral, one to his brother and the other to the Queen of France. The Queen displayed the 55-foot-long, 25-foot-wide flag of white and green silk, pierced by gunshots during the Battle of Damietta, in a church at Saint-Cyr (likely the chapel of Maison de Saint Louis) as a testament to Christian triumph.[57]

As European newspapers celebrated the magnificent naval victory and the Order revelled in yet another triumph at sea, trouble was brewing in the East.[58] In October 1732, following the Hospitaller's triumph, the Bey of Tunis dispatched his envoy to Constantinople, a move that initially alarmed Ambassador de Villeneuve. He was continually plagued by the fear that the Bey would eventually send Pignon's letter to the Sultan. In light of this, he was momentarily relieved when he learnt that the Tunisian envoy had been sent for matters concerning the Spanish conquest of Oran and not Pignon's letter. Although the Grand Vizier was still unaware of Pignon's letter, and could thus not associate Pignon's intelligence with Chambray's victory, he still held France accountable for the maritime debacle at Damietta. The Ottoman Vizier was convinced that Villeneuve, through the *Homme du Roi* in Malta, must have been aware of the Order's corsairing plans, yet failed to warn the Sultan and spare the Ottomans from such a humiliating defeat. The Grand Vizier reminded the ambassador that the Venetians had stopped arming against the Maltese corsairs for a while now,

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[56] NLM AOM 1221, ff. 536-537, 6 November 1732. Grand Master Vilhena praised Bailli de Chambray's bravery and that of his crew, stating that this victory was a glorious one: NLM AOM 1566, f. 1967, 4 October 1732.
[57] Plaisse (1991), 57.
[58] Revue Catholique d'Histoire (1895), 410.

and this had left the Maltese corsairs with unchecked liberty to pursue Muslim shipping as they pleased. In light of this, the French ambassador's intelligence on the Hospitallers naval enterprises was even more indispensable for the Porte to protect its vessels. The argument that the Grand Master was an independent sovereign, free from any hold from the King of France on his governance, failed to appease the Sultan, who was well aware that the majority of the knights were French. In view of this alone, the Sultan claimed that France was inherently involved in the Order's operations. This Ottoman perceived hold of France over Malta complicated diplomatic relations even further, particularly those for France.[59]

Speaking of his Sultan's perception of the Maltese, the Grand Vizier revealed to Villeneuve that his master did recognise the hardiness of the Maltese corsairs, but he 'has always regarded the Maltese as pirates who had no other profession but that of corsairing.'[60] They were not a real threat to him, yet they were a regular nuisance and had the audacity to disrupt his naval activities and destroy his vessels. For this they needed to be stopped, so 'he took the decision to attack Malta the following spring [1733] and entirely destroy them.'[61] The Hospitallers' victory at Damietta renewed the threat against Malta which had started in early 1731. However, at this time the Sultan's infantry troops, led by a number of his top military leaders (including general Topal Osman Pasha, a ransomed slave from Malta who had risen to the rank of Grand Vizier), had already been mobilised for Persia, to engage in the Ottoman-Persian War of 1730-1735.[62] Consequently, the Sultan needed to muster alternative resources if he wanted to besiege Malta. He therefore gave orders to re-group and mobilise his scattered troops across the provinces of Europe and those at the Greek islands in preparation for an incursion in Malta. Knowing that the Order enjoyed the support of Christian princes, the Sultan instructed Villeneuve to warn Louis XV that, if he truly valued their long alliance, he was to exert his authority over the Order to curb Maltese corsairing activities from preying on his vessels and those of Ottoman merchants on the Levantine coasts. Furthermore, the Sultan expected the King of France to refuse any

[59] AN AE/B/I/406, ff. 214r-226v, 4 November 1732.
[60] 'il avaient toujours regardé les Maltais comme des pirates n'ayant d'autre profession que celle de faire de la course.' AN AE/B/I/406, ff. 287-213v, 7 December 1732.
[61] 'il avait formé la résolution d'aller attaquer leurs îles au printemps prochain et de les détruire entièrement.' AE/B/I/406, ff. 287-313v, 7 December 1732.
[62] AN AE/B/I/818, f. 64, 11 May 1733; *Recueil des Nouvelles, Gazette* of 25 April 1733, Issue 17, St Petersburg 17 March 1733, p.194.

military assistance for the defence of Malta and deny the Order supplies of troops, vessels or military equipment.[63] The Sultan's appeal was not the first to land on the ambassador's desk. Weeks after the victory at Damietta, the Pasha of Rhodes petitioned Villeneuve in Constantinople for French intervention against Maltese corsairs who were harassing the Rhodian coast as well as Egyptian waters. Like his Sultan, he expected France to limit their hunting expeditions as it had already done in the past.[64]

The situation for the ambassador of France to Constantinople was a tense and delicate one. On the one hand, he feared that at any moment Pignon's letter would surface on the Sultan's desk, exacerbating the already volatile circumstance, and on the other, he was already made responsible for failing to provide timely intelligence on the knights' corsairing plans. Above all, his responsibility was primarily to safeguard the interests of France and its strong ties with the Ottomans. At the same time, it still benefitted France to discreetly protect Hospitaller Malta because its Levantine commerce relied heavily on the Maltese harbours, and Malta was serving as a naval base for France in its struggles against Barbary corsairs.[65] In his carefully worded reply to the Grand Vizier concerning the Sultan's developing plan of attacking Hospitaller Malta, the French ambassador emphasised the fact that the Order's attacks on Ottoman vessels in Damietta were not extraordinary ones. The Order of St John had been in perpetual war against the Muslim adversary ever since its inception, adopting an acknowledged and widely accepted role among Christians. The naval policing of the seas against Muslim shipping developed particularly following the Convent's retreat to Rhodes following the loss of Acre in 1291. The ambassador pointed out that despite the corsairs' regular harassment, it was highly unlikely that the Maltese and Hospitaller corsairs were in a position to form a strong naval force to attack the Sultan's warships. Furthermore, the Sultan's demand on France to stop the Maltese corsairs from attacking Ottoman vessels was an unreasonable one. The Grand Master was an independent sovereign, much like any other European monarch, therefore, the King of France 'did not have any more authority than the Emperor of

[63] AN AE/B/I/406, ff. 287r-313v, 7 December 1732.
[64] AN AE/B/I/406, ff. 51-66v, 20 September 1732.
[65] The Hospitaller fleet and the corsairs of Malta assisted the royal fleet of France on a number of occasions during the latter's conflict with Tunis, Tripoli and Algiers, besides offering its grand harbour as a naval base for the provisioning of French warships during these wars. See the General Conclusion.

Germany, the Kings of Spain, Portugal, and the Princes of Italy.'[66] Besides the Grand Vizier, Villeneuve tried to convince the Pasha of Rhodes with the same argument, telling him that 'the Grand Master was an authority independent of the Emperor [and] of France.'[67]

The French ambassador's arguments were challenged by the Sultan who felt certain the King of France was downplaying his authority over the Order, especially when the composition of the Order was predominantly French, and thus the majority of the knights were his direct subjects. Further to this, the Sultan held France directly responsible for the knights' military efforts, because without the King's provision of the military weapons and personnel (that is French knights and military experts) the Order would be unable to withstand the Ottoman. In defence of his sovereign, Villeneuve downplayed the French knights' dual loyalty to the Order and their King by claiming that the knights had taken vows of obedience to the Order, which placed them primarily subjects of the Grand Master. He then went on saying that as an independent sovereign, the Grand Master required no foreign consent to wage war or make peace under the banner of the Order, which was mostly, but not completely true. Villeneuve did conceal the fact that French knights residing in France still required the King's permission to respond to the Grand Master's summoning for war, or to embark on the Hospitallers' naval caravans.[68] The ambassador tried his best to make France's position to the Sultan very clear: it had no jurisdiction over the Order.[69]

Along with protecting the integrity of France, he made every effort to dissuade the Sultan and his Grand Vizier from initiating a war against Malta and reminded them that despite the disparity in Ottoman military strength with that of the Order the Sultan had to consider: the cost of a siege on the Maltese archipelago while he was still waging war with Persia, the difficulty in taking the island because it was heavily fortified, and the few benefits he would in reality gain. Even though France committed to the Sultan to desist from providing militarily assistance to the island, its Grand Master had an endless supply of soldiers from all over Europe, particularly at a time when a relatively long-term peace amongst Christian Princes reigned in Europe. With

[66] 'n'avait pas plus autorité que l'empereur d'Allemagne, que le roi d'Espagne, de Portugal et les princes d'Italie.' AN AE/B/I/406, ff. 287-313v, 7 December 1732.
[67] 'le Grand Maître était une puissance absolument indépendante de l'Empereur de France.' AN AE/B/I/406, ff. 51r-66v, 20 September 1732.
[68] Blondy (1989), 175-176.
[69] AN AE/B/I/406, ff. 287r-313v, 7 December 1732.

a potential stream of soldiers volunteering to join the Order's ranks, the island would be manned not by a few knights and local militias, but by an experienced force sheltered behind impregnable fortifications. Villeneuve's suggestion to resolve this conflict was for the Ottomans to sign a truce with the Order, or to police Levantine waters with a large fleet during the Order's cruises to dissuade offensive or destroy them if they got too bold.[70]

As discussions between the Grand Vizier Hekimoglu Ali Pasha (1732-1735) and Ambassador de Villeneuve on the Ottomans' plan to attack Malta continued, a *de facto* diplomat was employed to mediate. The Jew Daniel de Fonseca was the Sultan's first doctor.[71] He had been attached as a medic to the French embassy in Constantinople for twenty-five years, who by virtue of a Capitulation signed between France and the Ottomans, he was treated in the same manner as all Frenchmen in the Levant, working in Constinatinople under the protection of the French ambassador. Louis XV had issued Daniel de Fonseca's brevet of protection in 1723.[72] Throughout the 1731-33, he went back and forth between the Grand Vizier's office and the French embassy for purpose of negotiation between the two entities. The Vizier had instructed him to obtain as much military intelligence on Hospitaller Malta as he could, including the strength of its local force, the political climate on the island and any obstacles the Sultan's military operation might encounter during a siege. Villeneuve, taking advantage of how poorly the Grand Vizier was informed about the Order and Malta,[73] made good use of the trusted Fonseca to feed the Grand Vizier the right information to have him convinced that an Ottoman attack on Malta was not viable. Villeneuve's instructions to Fonseca were to tell the Vizier that the Order was composed of knights coming from all over Europe, and that once summoned, their vows obliged them to respond and by way of this mechanism the Order's force could easily amass 10,000 to

[70] AN AE/B/I/406, ff. 287r-313v, 7 December 1732.
[71] It was not unusual for Jewish physicians to involve themselves in politics or diplomacy in Constantinople, for instance, Jacob de Gaeta served as physician and Vizier under Sultan Mehemmed the Conqueror (1451-81); George A Russell, Physicians at the Ottoman Court, *Medical History* (August 1990), 257-258.
[72] Daniel de Fonseca was the brother of Jacob de Fonseca, a jew from Bayonee established in Smyrna. He had been captured by a Maltese corsair and was taken to Malta. The French ambassador Andrezol tried to secure Jacob's release on behalf of his brother: AN AE/B/I/396, ff. 124-126v, 6 October 1725; A short biography on Daniel de Fonseca was retrieved on 5 June 2022, from: https://www.encyclopedia.com/religion/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/fonseca-daniel-de; See also Short Biographies, p.328.
[73] AE/B/I/406, ff. 287r-313v, 7 December 1732.

12,000 men hailing from Europe's noble families; this was an exaggeration intended to impress the Vizier. In addition, Fonseca was to say that assistance by foreign troops from Christian lands could easily raise an army of 50,000 men, and this excluding the local militia; the island was heavily fortified and difficult to breach, and even if the Ottomans were victorious, holding onto the island was not without challenges; the island was sterile, with a poor agricultural base to barely sustain the local population and that even the knights themselves struggled to secure food supplies from Sicily, Italy, France and other neighbouring countries. Moreover, Fonseca was to harp on the history of the Order of St John and its successive loss of territory in Acre, Cyprus and Rhodes as indicative signs of the Order's resilience and support by the Christian princes. Therefore, taking away their island did not signify the end of the knights, nor of their naval activities. Just like they did after the loss of Rhodes, they would relocate to another headquarters, and resume their corsairing activities against Muslim shipping in no time, rendering Ottoman efforts and investment in war completely futile. Using his diplomatic wit to offer a solution in lieu of war, Villeneuve instructed Fonseca to propose a more practical alternative to a siege: the Sultan should muster an Ottoman fleet to cruise and operate during the knights' corsairing season, intercepting them as they approached the Ottoman coast. If this were to fail too, and the knights kept appearing on the Ottoman horizon, the Porte would do better in seeking the French ambassador's help in negotiating a treaty with Malta to end this nuisance once for all. France offered diplomacy over war.[74]

Villeneuve informed his superior in Paris that he felt confident that with the assistance of the trusted Fonseca he had managed to dissuade the Grand Vizier from pursuing his military plans. Yet, experience had taught him to never underestimate the Ottomans and their hatred for the knights. In light of this, and for the sake of caution it was thus best to keep considering that the Ottoman arsenal was still preparing an offensive against the island and unless circumstances changed, it was best to leave Grand Master Vilhena and the French *Homme du Roi,* de Bocage, thinking the threat against Malta was still on. Should the situation require it, Louis XV would then discreetly inform Vilhena to ensure that French commerce in the Levant remained undisturbed.[75] Vilhena was clearly left in the dark of the Ottomans' likely change of

[74] AN AE/B/I/406, ff. 287r-313v, 7 December 1732.
[75] AN AE/B/I/406, ff. 287r-313v, 7 December 1732.

heart, such that rumour circulated at the court of Versailles in January 1733 that the Grand Master was considering calling a second citation of knights in preparation of a possible Ottoman onslaught the coming spring.[76]

Villeneuve's acumen seems to have been correct. In April 1733 the Dragoman of the Porte informed him that the 'Turks had seemed to want to pose a threat against Malta, but their plans have vanished and are only reduced to the arming of a few ships.'[77] At the same time, the hatred against the Order and the urge to unleash an attack on the knights still boiled in the veins of some. One such was a certain Dganeum Codjea, the same Ottoman captain who in 1722 had sailed to Malta on board a French vessel seeking the assistance of the *Homme du Roi* of France after his ship was stolen from Tunis.[78] Codjea recalled how warmly the newly elected Grand Master Vilhena had received him back then. Nonetheless, he was of the firm belief that the knights' decimation of the Sultan's warships had to be punished.[79] Codjea, who had cheated death in the Ottoman-Persian wars (1730-1735) and had been promoted to Kapitan Pasha in 1732,[80] swore vengeance on the Order and vowed to personally see to it. Villeneuve once again found himself in the position of persuading yet another Ottoman official. When Codjea calmed down from his heated tirade against the knights, the French ambassador explained that it was in the Hospitallers' very nature to hunt down enemy ships, and contrary to how negatively he was painting them, they still treated their captive, vice-admiral Khalil, with great respect and acknowledged his bravery in naval combat. Needless to say, the *Homme du Roi* de Bocage had made sure of it.[81]

Codjea's threat was the cause of prolonged unrest on the island. The French *Homme du Roi* de Bocage, received news from the east that an armament force of twenty vessels was sailing from the Levant in the direction of Malta. Some French captains sailing from Salonica (Thessaloniki) and another arriving from Tunisia in the early days of February 1733 confirmed the news.[82] Similar intelligence arrived from

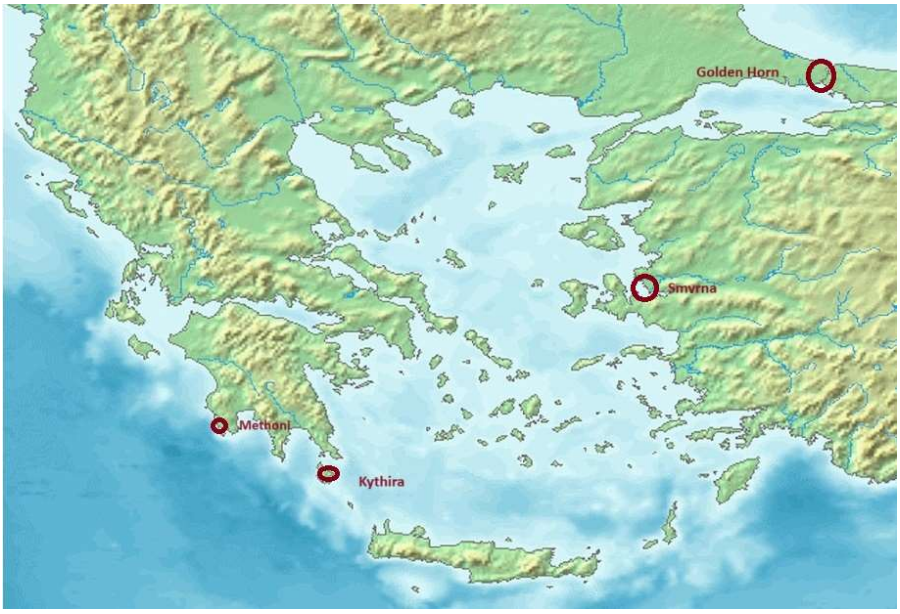
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[76] *Journal de la Cour et de Paris: depuis le 28 novembre 1732 jusques au 30 Novembre 1733*, Henri Duranton (ed.) Université de Sainte-Étienne, Sainte-Étienne 1981, 56.
[77] 'les Turcs avaient paru vouloir former une menace contre Malte, mais leurs plans se sont évanouis et sont réduits à l'armement de quelques vaisseaux.' AN AE/B/I/407, ff. 221-235, 23 April 1733.
[78] See chapter 2.
[79] AN AE/B/I/407, ff. 351-368v, 20 June 1733.
[80] *Recueil des Nouvelles, Gazette* of 17 January 1733, Issue 3, Constantinople 20 November 1732, p.25.
[81] AN AE/B/I/407, ff. 351-368v, 20 June 1733.
[82] AN AE/B/I/818, f. 44, 18 February 1733.

the office of the French ambassador in Constantinople, while information arrived from Smyrna that six Algerian vessels had been sent to Foggia Nova (Turkish coast) and the Sultan had sent another two caravels there to recruit around 3,000 to 4,000 men, purchase arms and join forces with the Algerians to sail towards Malta.[83] In July 1733, the peak of the sailing season, Codjea was reported to be moored with his fleet in Chios, awaiting the return of two galleys which were sent to load a consignment of gunpowder.[84] On 9 August more news arrived from Corfu of an Ottoman fleet of 18 ships, 13 galleys and 22 galeottes sailing in the vicinity of the Morea. In light of all this, the Council of State in Malta dispatched a *speronara* in the region of Corfu to investigate the movement of the enemy's fleet.[85] Meanwhile the Order's galley squadron sailed out of the grand harbour for Cape Passaro in Sicily, under the command of Bailli Ludovico Arias, having the dual task of obtaining intelligence on the movement and whereabouts of the Sultan's fleet and bringing biscuit and provisions.[86] Clearly, the Order was still on high alert, especially since the Sultan's fleet was still moving westwards and was by mid-August, a year from the Hospitaller victory at Damietta, anchored in Modon (Methoni).[87] When Vilhena received news from Corfu that Codjea had appeared near Cerigo (Kythira) (see map 3.1) with his fleet and another four Algerian vessels, the Grand Master and his Council decided to suspend the departure of the Order's sailing squadron commanded by Chambray 'in case the armament [Ottoman] would try to carry out a landing on the island, as was publicly being said in Modon [Methoni].'[88] In November 1733, the newspaper *La Gazette* (Paris) published that Kapitan Pasha's fleet had originally sailed out to escort some Algerian vessels safely to Algiers, and on its return journey to Constantinople, the Pasha had the task of recruiting a large number of men from the Ottoman provinces.[89] Although not confirmed, it is possible that the motives behind these naval manoeuvres throughout 1733 were probably linked to the Sultan's plans to attack Oran again rather than lay siege to Malta. News arriving from Madrid on 4 April 1733 read

[83] AN AE/B/I/818, f. 46, 27 February 1733.
[84] AN AE/B/I/818, ff. 78-79, 31 July 1733.
[85] NLM AOM 269, ff. 14v-15r, 9 August 1733.
[86] NLM AOM 269, f. 17rv, 12 August 1733.
[87] AN AE/B/I/818, f. 80, 14 August 1733.
[88] 'en cas que cet armement eût été pour faire quelque débarquement en cette isle, comme on le disait publiquement à Modon.' NLM AOM 269, f. 18v-19r, 2 October 1733.
[89] *Recueil des Nouvelles, Gazette* of 21 November 1733, Issue 47, Constantinople 13 September 1733, p.554.

that four warships from Malta joined a Spanish fleet 'to block the passage of the Turkish vessels that are destined to transport the troops which the Grand Seigneur is sending to Africa in order to enable the Moors to resume the siege of Oran.'[90] As the winter months approached, the Sultan's fleet sailed back to its Levantine ports and with it the Order's fear of an Ottoman attack receded.[91]



Map 3.1 Map of the Aegean Sea showing the geographical location of Modon (Methoni), Cerigo (Kythira) in Greece, Smyrna and the Golden Horn in Turkey. (Source: author)

3.5 Military preparation in France to defend Malta and the end of the alarm

While Ambassador de Villeneuve in Constantinople was taking great pains to prevent an attack on the Hospitaller island, the Ambassador de Mesmes in Paris was seeking the support of France to arm it. Despite the extended duration of this alert, which began in 1731, intensified after the victory of Damietta in 1732 and peaked in early 1733 with the threats of Codjea, the Order's approach to stocking its military supplies was relatively relaxed compared to the vigorous military preparations observed during the earlier alerts of 1714-15 and 1722-23.

It was in January 1733 that the procurators of the Treasury tried to hasten matters by sidestepping the usual bureaucratic French system of arms procurement by

[90] 'pour fermer le passage aux vaisseaux turcs qui sont destinés à transporter les troupes que le Grand Seigneur envoie en Afrique afin de mettre les Maures en état de recommencer le siège d'Oran.' *Recueil des Nouvelles*, *Gazette* of 25 April 1733, Issue 17, Madrid 4 April 1733, p.198.
[91] AN AE/B/I/818, f. 96v, 19 November 1733.

way of their long-time informer at the arsenal of Toulon,[92] Pierre de Thomas de Chateauneuf, [93] an officer of the French navy and commander of Toulon, who already in 1722 had proved very valuable for his insight about the stocks at Toulon. He was informed that the Order was looking for 1,100 cannon balls and 400 cannon balls for the 18 pounder guns, 500 cannon balls for the 12 pounders, and another 200 for the 8 pounders. Despite his position in the arsenal, Chateauneuf could not access any supplies without his minister's approval, especially since the ammunition was reserved for the French army's campaigns in the War of Polish Succession (1733-1735). Nevertheless, he was confident that Maurepas would approve a modest request. True to his reputation, Chateauneuf passed valuable information on the stocks in Toulon's arsenals to Ambassador de Mesmes in Paris so he could use this information when negotiating with the Minister for the Navy, in case the latter came up with false excuses of empty shelves.[94] For some unclear reason, the procurement process seems to have stalled because it was only in September of 1733 that the procurators of the Treasury in Malta finally decided to dispatch orders to the ambassador to obtain the right of extraction from Maurepas so that Chateauneuf could extract gunpowder and ammunition from Toulon and dispatch them to Malta.[95] Shortly after this, Grand Master Vilhena tasked his ambassador in Paris with the procurement and logistics of arms.[96] Mesmes found it somewhat challenging in completing his task because at the time the arsenals of France were fully committed to the royal army, now engaged in the Polish campaigns, which had just started few months before.[97] Wanting to expedite matters and assist the ambassador, Vilhena instructed the commander of La Rochelle and receiver of the Order, Ferdinand de Langon, to purchase twenty-four 8-pounder cannons and have them shipped to Malta.[98] With the arsenal of Toulon unable to provide the required guns, Langon approached the *intendant* of the marine at

[92] The Order's ambassador usually negotiated with the Minister for War or the Navy, who would typically instruct the *intendant* of Toulon (or other arsenals) to check if the arsenal or other military stores had enough supplies to spare. With Pierre de Thomas de Chateauneuf as an insider in the Toulon arsenal, the ambassador already knew that the necessary weapons for Malta were available, and this speeded up the process. For the full process of weaponry procurement see chapter 6.
[93] On Pierre de Thomas de Chateauneuf, see chapter 2.
[94] Chateauneuf provided a list of cannons stored in Toulon in early 1733. At the time there were 2,700 18-pounder guns, 4,000 12-pounders and 500 of the 8-pounder calibre: AN M902, f. 15, 21 January 1733.
[95] AN M902, f. 16, 19 September 1733.
[96] AN M996, f. 26, 1734.
[97] Woimbée (2014), 150.
[98] NLM AOM 1222, f. 104rv, 25 May 1734. On Ferdinand de Langon, see Short Biographies, p.331.

Rochefort, François de Beauharnais de la Chaussaye to provide him with the artillery from the arsenal there. However, this source also proved inadequate for the Order's needs, offering only a few obsolete and defective cannons. Langon subsequently inquired with Chaussaye about the possibility of manufacturing new cannons at the forge of Rancogne and whether these could be delivered to Marseille by October 1734, in time to meet Vilhena's requirements on the island. The logistics were too complicated for the Order to obtain the artillery from western France. In the fifteen years that Langon had been visiting the French harbours on the Atlantic coast, he only came across one boat leaving directly for Marseille. Moreover, it had become even less likely to find transport facilities at this time because France had started shipping its artillery produced in the Charente region directly to its French colonies in the Americas, becoming more independent for this upon the weapons manufacturers of eastern France.[99] When finally Langon managed to identify six 8-pounder guns in Rancogne, transporting them over the river of the Charente to the port of Rochefort was impossible because the river water was low.[100] Langon also considered having the guns manufactured in the forge of St Gervais because it was geographically closer to the port of Marseille, but the forge was not operating that year. Faced with all these hurdles, Langon appealed to the ambassador in Paris, hoping he could convince the Minister for the Navy, Maurepas to release the necessary guns from the arsenal of Toulon under the pretence that the consignment was intended for the King's forces, not for the Order.[101] Minister de Maurepas, consistently attuned to the Order's needs over the years, consulted with the *intendant* of Toulon, Mithon de Senneville, to assess the feasibility of the ambassador's proposal. He was aware that Toulon's stockpiles were significantly depleted too.[102] But despite the tight situation in the French arsenals and Maurepas' priority for his country's armed forces, he still dispatched an order to have 24 cannons shipped to Malta from Toulon in June 1734, in time for the deadline imposed by the Grand Master.[103]

With the Convent's request for cannons now resolved, the ambassador moved to the next item, that is, gunpowder. Due to France's involvement in the war, it had

[99] AN M996, f. 28, 15 May 1734.
[100] AN M996, f. 26, 1734.
[101] AN M996, f. 28, 15 May 1734.
[102] NLM AOM 1222, ff. 107-109, 4 June 1734; ff. 132-133, 22 June 1734.
[103] NLM AOM 1222, ff. 208-209, 20 October 1734.

barely enough gunpowder for its own troops, let alone to sell to foreign sovereigns. Unlike the procurement of cannons, Maurepas could not provide what France lacked. However, eager to find a solution for the Order's ambassador, he opted to have the gunpowder manufactured at the Saint-Chamas factory,[104] in the precinct of Marseilles, and also have it produced under the guise of supply for the king. Besides gunpowder, he also sent instructions for the manufacture of grapeshot in Franche-Comté, again under the same pretence. Maurepas was keen on supporting the Order, even though France was in desperate need of provisions. His main concern though, was that the Ottomans remained blind to French military support provided to Malta, as this went against the explicit demand of the Sultan to the King of France. Such knowledge would lead to the total breakdown of relations between Paris and the Porte. Taking the necessary precautions to safeguard himself and his King, Maurepas insisted with Mesmes that he should have the gunpowder and gun consignments hidden from the prying eyes of Barbary corsairs and have the powder barrels transported onboard merchant ships and Hospitaller vessels.[105]

The documents in Malta are strangely reticent about the military readiness of the island, giving the impression that there was no cause for alarm. However, other sources paint a different picture. The *La Gazette* published in Paris revealed that in a Council of State meeting held on 9 August 1733 in Valletta, Fra Hermann van Beveren, the Prior of Dacia, was appointed as the commander of the island of Gozo,[106] and had the task of preparing its defence with 3,000 men and all the arms and ammunition that were required.[107] The Council also tasked the Congregation of War to take all necessary measures to forestall the landing of any approaching Ottoman troops,[108] which by this time had become the military strategy of the Order, that of denying the enemy a foothold on the island by way of coastal defence works (batteries, redoubts and entrenchments), concepts which the French military engineers had imported to the island during general alarm of 1714-15. For this, they commissioned the island's resident military engineer, Charles François de Mondion (who was, as it happens in

[104] The gunpowder factory of Saint-Chamas, created in 1690, was a quayside factory located on the Etang de Berre in close proximity to Marseille: Colette Castrucci, *La poudrerie de Saint-Chamas*, retrieved on 13 April 2022, from: https://books.openedition.org/pccj/14507?lang=en
[105] AN M996, f. 27, 1734.
[106] NLM AOM 269, f. 14v-15r, 9 August 1733.
[107] *Recueil des Nouvelles, Gazette* of 10 October 1733, Issue 41, Naples 8 September 1733, p.487.
[108] NLM AOM 269, ff. 15v-17r, 9 August 1733.

his final days since he would die on 25 December 1733), to prepare and arm all coastal batteries and entrenchments.[109] Finally a list of commanding officers for all the regiments and the cavalry was released, somewhat very late in the day.[110]

Meanwhile, the fifty-seven-year-old vice-admiral Khalil Mehmet, hero of numerous campaigns against the Venetians yet shamed by his defeat at the hands of Chambray in 1732, remained captive in Malta for almost eight years.[111] Ambassador de Villeneuve in Constantinople persuaded his superiors in Versailles that while the captivity of the vice-admiral was not of significant concern to France, securing his release would enhance France's standing with the Sultan. This was especially important given the resentment stirred by the Hospitallers' naval victory and the perception among the Ottomans of France's intransigent attitude. Furthermore, Villeneuve sought to restore his favour with the Ottomans, especially after being accused of not informing the Sultan of the Hospitallers' naval campaign against his fleet.[112] Supporting his colleague at the Porte, Cardinal de Fleury in Versailles— who was himself under pressure from the Grand Vizier in Constantinople—pressed the *Homme du Roi* in Malta to ensure Khalil's safe return home.[113] The vice-admiral's wife in Constantinople too went to great lengths to obtain her husband's freedom. She entered in negotiations with Villeneuve for the release of her husband in exchange for a Maltese slave known as Garofalo, a character who for an unknown reason seemed to interest the Bailli de Bocage.[114] Khalil was ultimately released from the Hospitaller island, not through ransom but due to the generosity of Vilhena, likely swayed by Bocage's insistence. In recognition of the Grand Master's benevolence, the Sultan freed Garofalo and four other Maltese slaves.[115] Upon his return to Constantinople, the vice-admiral visited Ambassador de Villeneuve at his *Palais de France*. He provided him with a full account of his experience as a captive on the island of Malta and the kindness with which he was treated by the Grand Master. To his misfortune, the loss

[109] Hoppen (1999), 112. The Order had developed a coastal system of watch towers over the course of the 16th and 17th century, but it was after the general alarm of 1714-15 that the island revised and developed its concept of defence which aimed at stopping the enemy from disembarkation. The plan was to seal the coast with defence works (coastal batteries, redoubts, entrenchments), which continued to be constructed until the final years of the Order's stay on the island.
[110] NLM AOM 269, ff. 15v-17r, 9 August 1733.
[111] AN AE/B/I/407, ff. 370r-380v, 29 June 1733.
[112] AN AE/B/I/408, ff. 207-216, 7 November 1733.
[113] MAE MNESYS 29md27, f. 118v, 18 March 1740.
[114] AN AE/B/I/415. ff. 82r-88v, 9 April 1738; AN AE/B/I/416, ff. 281-284v, 20 November 1739.
[115] AN AE/B/I/417, ff. 69-72v, 25 May 1740; ff. 94r-99v, 25 January 1740.

of the Sultan's warships in Damietta brought him much disdain, even after so many years passed in captivity. Moved by compassion, Villeneuve advocated for the vice-admiral to the Sultan, extolling his courage and tenacity in defending the Ottoman fleet against the knights' aggression. Villeneuve went to great lengths to assist Khalil, organizing meetings with the Grand Vizier to secure him employment. However, the disgrace from the battle of Damietta continued to shadow him for the rest of his days.[116]

3.6 Conclusion

The crisis of 1731-33, while considered as an all-encompassing singular threat, was in reality a succession of three consecutive alarms; the first started in early 1731 for reasons yet unknown, followed by a renewed response after the Hospitaller victory near Damietta in August 1732, and a third phase caused by the Kapitan Pasha Codjea in 1733, at which point the Order seems to have reacted by ordering weapons from France. This consisted of an arms procurement which was processed in 1734, by which time the alarm had ended. This three-year-long succession of threats demonstrates the strong network and co-ordination in the communication exchanges between Hospitaller and French diplomats and officials, including exchanges of intelligence and situations of conflict resolution. Maurepas's sharing of the cypher table with the Hospitaller ambassador in 1724 is a testament to this; a remarkable display of trust in the Order by a French minister in the ambassador of another state, almost as if the Order's diplomat was considered as part of the French diplomatic corps. This event in the history of the Order of St John has also revealed another layer of military protection: the diplomatic efforts undertaken by French diplomats, particularly the ambassador in Constantinople, who vigorously defended Hospitaller Malta as if representing the Order itself, rather than France. This underscored the importance of having a French diplomat at the core of the enemy's headquarter in Constantinople, working on behalf of the Order to manage disputes and dissipate Ottoman rage against Hospitaller Malta. The diplomatic acumen of Villeneuve is evident in his managing the delicate balance of maintaining France's relations with the Ottoman Empire, preserving his monarch's image, and safeguarding Christian lands against potential

[116] AN AE/B/I/417, ff. 69-72v, 25 May 1740.

conflicts, all while upholding Malta as an independent sovereignty distinct from any French control.

Even though it seems that ultimately Pignon's letter never fell into the hands of the Sultan or his Grand Vizier, the ensuing tension amongst French diplomats and ministers after its interception and the Convent's decision to act on the intelligence the letter provided, despite knowing the potential implications for France, shed light on the nuances of Franco-Hospitaller relations. It paints an image of Hospitaller Malta acting not only as a sovereign state invested in its own interests and gains, but also as being at times careless in maintaining its good relations with its long-time protector, France. Furthermore, the events of 1731-33 vividly illustrate how, in the first half of the 18th century, the Hospitallers and Maltese corsairs continued to disrupt the Ottoman world through their naval activities in the Levant. These incursions, while inflicting significant damage on Ottoman shipping, served to renew Ottoman animosity towards the Order and Malta. This deep-seated resentment would resurface most acutely in 1761.

Chapter 4
Politics, Diplomacy, War and the 'most beautiful vessel in Constantinople': The crisis of 1761.

4.1 Introduction

Fear of an Ottoman onslaught was constantly on the mind of the Order, stemming from centuries of conflict and memories of defeat prior to the much-vaunted victory of 1565. With the advantage of hindsight, no Ottoman threat actually materialised throughout the 17th and 18th centuries, but all threats remained real enough for the Order to take the necessary measures. Every military crisis fostered a sense of dread and kindled a sense of duty, and for each threat the Order geared its administrative machinery towards the defence of the institution and Christendom, even though Ottoman strength on the continent declined in relation to that of Austria and Russia, and its presence was felt less in the Mediterranean by late 18th century.[1] The Ottoman's merchant shipping remained strong, but the presence of its navy in the Mediterranean waned after the conquest of Candia in 1669.[2] Since then, Ottoman naval presence gradually waned, and weakened significantly by the late 18th century, also because in this period, the Ottomans were engaged in conflicts with the Habsburgs, Russians, and Persians. Consequently, the Order of Malta was not a priority for the Ottomans as it had been in the 16th century when the knights defended the Christian frontier from Rhodes and later Malta. However, the Order's persistent corsairing activities on Muslim ships continued to be a nuisance.[3] The crisis of 1761, also known as the Corona Ottomana affair, afforded the Order of St John yet another opportunity to promote itself as the defender of Christendom against the common Muslim foe. However, it is important to note that the Ottoman threat in 1761 was specifically directed at the Order of St John rather than Christendom as a whole.

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[1] Gabor Agoston, 'The Ottoman Empire and Europe,' in *The Oxford Handbook of Early Modern European History*, 1350-1750, vol. 2, H. Scott (ed.) Oxford, Oxford University Press 2015, 613; Grech (2018), 105.

[2] Eyüp Özveren, Onur Yildirim, 'An outline of Ottoman Maritime History,' in *New Directions in Mediterranean Maritime History,* G. Harlaftis and C. Vassallo (eds.) Liverpool University Press, Liverpool 2004, 157.

[3] Gabor Agoston, 'Ottoman Warfare in Europe 1453-1836,' in *European Warfare 1453-1815,* J. Black (ed.) Palgrave Macmillan, UK 1999, 132, 139.

The Corona Ottomana affair is a well-researched episode in Maltese historiography, but the tendency has been to present just a narrative of the event. *The Life and Times of Grand Master Pinto 1741-1773*, written by Carmel Testa and published in 1989, remains to date the most in-depth narrative of the Ottoman Empire's final threat to Malta. The goal of this chapter is to build on Testa's contribution and to emphasise the international relationship between France and Hospitaller Malta, as well as the military and diplomatic measures which the Convent and its representatives in France took to repel an impending Ottoman attack.

An important printed account of the Corona Ottomana incident, the *Relazione del sollevamento dei schiavi Cristiani a bordo della Sultana denominata la Corona Ottomana ancorata nell'isola di Stantio li 19 settembre 1760 e dalli medesimi Condotta nel Porto de Malta li 6 Ottobre seguente*,[4] is preserved at the National Archives in Paris, the Diplomatic Archives at La Courneuve in France, and the National Library of Malta. It gives us a thorough narrative of the capture of the Corona Ottomana, Sultan Mustafa III's (r.1757-1774) 'most beautiful warship in Constantinople.'[5] The sources used around this narrative are similar to the ones used for the 1722-23 and 1731-33 alarms, that is, various kinds of letters from and to different players, such as the ambassador in Paris, the Grand Master in Malta, the *Homme du Roi* in Malta and the ambassador of France to Constantinople.

The Ottoman threat to Malta in 1761 marked the final major alarm in Hospitaller history, yet it was as significant as earlier threats in 1645, 1714–15, and 1722–23. From a Franco-Hospitaller perspective, the events of the 1760s are particularly revealing, as shown by the extensive documentation surrounding this alarm. The 1761 threat is explored over two chapters: Chapter 4 examines the knights' response and military preparations, including those organised in France, while Chapter 5 focuses on French contributions to Malta's defence and the resolution of the crisis.

[4] Editions of this report were printed in Malta and Rome in 1760, and Lisbon in 1761.
[5] '*il piu bel vasello di Constantinopoli.'* AN M944, f. 253, 1760; NLM AOM 1118, f. 223, 6 October 1760; MAE 67 CP vol. 11, ff. 109r-110r, Relazione del sollevamento dei schiavi Cristiani abordo della sultana denominate la Corona Ottomana ancorata nell'Isola di Stantio li 19 Settembre 1760 e dalli Medesimi Condotta nel Porto di Malta li 6 Ottobre 1760, published by Gio. Niccolo Muscat (1735-1803), a Maltese lawyer. See also: Frans Ciappara, *Church-state Relations in Late-eighteenth-century Malta: Gio. Nicolo Muscat (1735-1803)* (Malta, Malta University Press, 2018).

4.2 Mutiny and capture of the Corona Ottomana

When the Corona Ottomana, also known as the Sultana, and its escorting vessels were anchored in the harbour of the island of Kos (Stanchio) on 19 September 1760, seventy-one Christian slaves on board, desperate for their freedom, revolted against their masters. Among them was a group of Maltese corsairs who had been captured in Cyprus, including the Montenegrin Pietro de Giovanni Zelalich, who had been captured by a British privateer vessel and enslaved on the Corona Ottomana.[6] On 2 June 1760, the octogenarian Kapitan Pasha,[7] Aptin Xerin, of the Ottoman fleet, had set sail with his son from Constantinople on an annual tribute collection journey for his Sultan, aboard the Corona Ottomana, armed with 74 bronze cannons and 1,100 men. He was accompanied by two ships-of-the-line, the *Padrona* and *La Reale*, two caravels, five galleys and some galliots. The voyage took the fleet to Gallipoli where they stopped at the castles of Teredo (Tenedo), Molvo (Mithymna), Metalino (Mytilene) and La Foggie (Foça). When it reached Chios in the Aegean Sea the convoy split into two: two galleys and two caravelles proceeded to Mykonos and Paros while the Corona Ottomana, three galleys and a galliot sailed close to Kos, mooring in this port on 16 September 1760. Two days later, at around midday, about 300 men from the Ottoman crew disembarked to pray while they waited for the rest of the fleet to join them for the return voyage to Constantinople.[8]

Under the deck, seventy-one Christian slaves hatched a plot to revolt against their oppressors.[9] Daunted at first by the 750-strong crew and the men on the accompanying vessels, they were heartened when the Kapitan Pasha disembarked with half the crew, leaving 240 men to guard the ship.[10] A vessel from Ragusa carrying 20 cannons anchoring close to the poop of the Sultana did not help matters for the Christian slaves. Nonetheless, the slaves decided to go ahead with their plan, deeming themselves too committed to withdraw. Armed with a fiery desire for freedom and some small knives, the slaves took their positions after one last embrace. Pietro

[6] Liam Gauci, *In the Name of the Prince, Maltese Corsairs 1760-1798* (Malta, Heritage Malta, 2016), 62.
[7] See the Glossary, p. 322.
[8] AN M944, f. 253, 1760.
[9] Some of the Christian slaves had previously served as crew members on a Maltese corsair ship. They were enslaved after being captured during a raid on Cyprus; Testa (1989), 247.
[10] AN AE/B/I/821, ff. 235-238r, 9 October 1760.

Giovanni Zelalich[11] had the risky task of giving the signal. At the sound of his feet stamping the deck and the yell of 'Hail Holy Mary,'[12] the slaves set upon their bloody business. Robbed of their weapons, dazed by the unexpected assault, many of the crew jumped overboard or were slaughtered. Only forty Turks survived out of the three hundred men that had remained aboard. The rebels did not lose a single man. The conflict lasted one and a half hours.[13] Confused by the unexpected attack, most of the surviving Turks escaped by jumping into the sea, but most of those that remained on board died of mortal wounds.[14] The now former Christian slaves cut the anchor and set sail to safety, closely followed by four ships. The Christians ranged cannons at the poop but the ship was not obeying the helm and its keel hit a reef, causing it to heel. In the struggle, some Turks had cut rope from the helm, but its repair cost three Christian lives. Under cover of darkness, the Corona Ottomana sailed towards the Barbary Coast, avoiding busy sea routes for fear of engagement with enemy ships and headed towards Malta.[15]



Figure 4.1 The Corona Ottomana entering Malta's grand harbour. Turkish flags were lowered into the water as the ship was escorted into the harbour. Source: Cathedral Museum, Mdina.

[11] On Pietro di Giovane Gelali delle Bocche di Cattaro, see appendix 1: Short Biographies, p,342.
[12] '*Viva Maria Santissima,*' AN M944, f. 253, 1760.
[13] AN M944, f. 253, 1760.
[14] AN AE/B/I/821, ff. 235-238r, 9 October 1760.
[15] AN M944, f. 253, 1760; AN M956, f. 47, 7 October 1761.

On Monday 6 October 1760, while the knights were convened at the Conventual Church and many Maltese thronged along the streets of Valletta, awaiting the celebrations of the crowning of Ferdinand as King of Naples and Sicily, a vessel was seen approaching the grand harbour.[16] As France and Britain were at war, a British man-of-war was suspected at first. However, as the ship drew closer, a white flag with a cross on the central mast and an Ottoman standard beneath it became visible.[17]

Fra Martino de los Rios, commissioner of health on duty, rushed to Grand Master Pinto to inform him that the ship was the Sultana, the Ottoman warship which had set sail under Kapitan Pasha for its annual tribute collection. With the Ottoman ship anchored outside the harbour, Pinto convened his Council of State for deliberation. A decision was taken to send four of the Order's galleys under the command of Bailli Gaetano of Aragon, the general of the galleys, at three in the afternoon to inspect the ship. Three hours later, just as the sun began to set, the Sultana was trailed into Marsamxett harbour to the amazement of the Maltese who had packed rooftops and surrounding bastions.[18] A week later, the Sultana was inspected by the Grand Master and several high-ranking knights. Its splendour raised its status from a prize to almost a divine gift.[19] For their part in its capture, the slaves were allowed to keep the money, supplies and small arms. The ship, its ordnance, and the forty prisoners were considered as the Order's property but this decision would prove to have ramifications for the Order's international relations.[20]

The Christian slaves were delighted to deliver the most exquisite vessel of Constantinople to the Grand Master in Malta, in whose hands their fate now lay. They requested two things from him: first, the construction of a chapel to house a painting of the Virgin Mary they had brought as a token of their gratitude and devotion; second, their own freedom along with that of five Moorish slaves who were also on board. The weapons and goods on the ship were inspected, with the artillery being removed and stored in the Order's arsenals. The furniture, clothes, foodstuffs, and other items deemed unnecessary by the Order were auctioned. The ship was then christened the *San Salvatore* (although it was always better known as the Corona Ottomana)[21] and

[16] AN M944, f. 253, 1760; AN M956, f. 47, 7 October 1761.
[17] AN M944, f. 253, 1760.
[18] AN M944, f. 253, 1760.
[19] AN AE/B/I/437, ff. 159-162v, 14 January 1761.
[20] AN AE/B/I/437, ff. 159-162v, 14 January 1761.
[21] MAE 67 CP vol. 11, f. 133r, 9 January 1761.

joined the Order's ship-of-the-line squadron in November 1760.[22] Clearly, the Order had no intention of returning the Corona Ottomana. Through experience, the Order was fully aware that keeping such a jewel of the Ottoman navy would have serious repercussions. Yet, the concept of keeping up a fight against the Muslim enemy, as logistically and financially burdensome as it may have been, was in itself essential for their validation and survival in a fast-changing world where values were shifting, the Catholic church was under pressure, and the Jesuits were on the brink of destruction.

4.3 Threats and alliances

The first rumours of an Ottoman attack on Malta reached the ambassador of France to Constantinople, Charles Gravier count de Vergennes (1755-1768), towards the end of 1760. He promptly warned the Minister for the Navy, Nicolas Berryer (1758–1761), that if France failed to comply with the Sultan's demand to coerce the knights into returning his warship, the Porte was prepared to attack the island. The Sultan effectively placed the Hospitallers' fate in Louis XV's hands.[23] The principal minister for France and the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Étienne-François, duke de Choiseul (1758-1761), along with the court of Versailles, were utterly convinced that the Porte would not launch an attack on Malta. However, they could not have been more mistaken. On the morning of 7 November 1760, the Sultan's dragoman entered into the French ambassador's office carrying the Grand Vizier's clear directive: France was to intercede and ensure Malta returned the vessel to its rightful owner.[24] This request mirrored the pressures France faced in 1722 and 1731-33. Yet, a more recent event may have also lulled the court of Versailles into thinking that, as on previous occasions, the Porte would not resort to war. In 1748, a group of Christian and Muslim slaves on board the *Lupa*, an Ottoman vessel transporting the Pasha of Rhodes, successfully rebelled and sailed the vessel to Malta, where the Pasha was kept in captivity. Despite the Sultan's fury, no violence, not even threats of attacks, had been hurled against Malta.[25]

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[22] Gauci (2016), 83.
[23] AN AE/B/I/437, ff. 159-162v, 14 January 1761.
[24] MAE CP Turquie vol. 136, f. 243, 7 November 1760; Blondy (2002), 150.
[25] William Zammit, 'A Portuguese Grand Master and the Hospitaller Crises of 1749 and 1761', in *Ordens Militares, Identidate e Mudança,* vol. 1, I. C. F. Fernandes (ed.) Municipio de Palmela, Palmela 2021, 509-510; In 1748, the Pasha of Rhodes alleged that a French vessel had assisted the mutinous slaves who commandeered the Ottoman vessel *Lupa* to Malta, a plot he claimed would have

Meanwhile, in January 1761 in Constantinople, Vergennes faced persistent harassment from the Grand Vizier Mehmet Ragip Pasha (1757-1763). The Vizier's perspective was that a ship captured by mutinous slaves did not constitute a legitimate prize, and so the Order had no claim on it. The Grand Vizier insisted that, 'the King was in a position to oblige the Maltese to return the stolen property,' and that he should do so in the interest of all stakeholders.[26] As in previous alarms, the Grand Vizier capitalised on the Franco-Ottoman relationship, emphasizing that their ties had deep historical roots and that French diplomats in the Levant received preferential treatment compared to other European courts within the Empire. It was this privileged treatment which was indeed at stake. Unless France complied with the Sultan's demands, France risked falling out of favour and jeopardizing its ties with Constantinople; a constant fear for France which the Ottomans were experts at manipulating to try to bend France to their will.[27]

The Sultan's initial demand was that the King of France seize the Corona Ottomana, along with all its equipment, artillery, ammunition, personnel and slaves, and return it as a token of their countries' friendship. France was once more placed in a tight spot, where on the one hand it had to support its close eastern ally who was indispensable for its commerce in the Levant, and on the other it felt obliged to respect the sovereignty of the Grand Master of Malta as an island-sovereign state which was equally important for the facilitation and protection of French merchant vessels *en route* to the Levant. In exchange for French assistance, the Grand Vizier explained that the Sultan promised to consolidate their friendship even more. However, he did warn Vergennes that if the Order remained stubborn, the Sultan was prepared to resort to war. The Vizier did not mince his words: if the Order ignored the request of the Porte, or if France failed to act on his behalf, the Sultan, 'with the assistance of God, would act against the Maltese and given that the residence of the ambassadors and consuls of

likely failed without French involvement. By making these accusations, the Pasha aimed to hold France accountable and secure French intervention for his release from Malta. Subsequently, he was accused of orchestrating a plot to assassinate the Grand Master and seize control of the island, intending to govern it under Muslim rule. Likely heavily damaged during the conflict, the *Lupa* did not come into the Order's possession, unlike the Corona Ottomana; instead, they only captured the Pasha. He remained a prisoner on the island until France insisted on his release: Zammit (2021), 528.

[26] 'l'empereur est dans le cas d'obliger les Maltais à restituer un bien volé.' AN M944, f. 256, undated.

[27] AN M944, f. 256, undated.

the court of France in the states of this Empire serves no dependable purpose, then it follows that they must be sent back to their country.'[28]

Throughout January of 1761, France sought ways to extricate itself from any responsibility for resolving the crisis. Versailles argued that the affair was outside its jurisdiction and that securing the vessel's return exceeded the goodwill of the French King. After all, the Grand Master was an independent sovereign, over whom France had no authority. As a gesture of friendship between France and the Ottoman Empire, the King offered to mediate negotiations between Malta and the Ottomans, and France expected the Porte to appreciate the gesture of goodwill, regardless of whether its efforts were successful or not.[29]

Meanwhile, in the final days of 1760, the Order's ambassador in Paris, the Bailli Louis-Gabriel de Froullay de Thessé (1741-1766) was busy pacing the corridors of Versailles and meeting with the King and his ministers in an attempt to convince them that the Order had the right and duty to keep the Ottoman vessel.[30] Being regularly advised from the central headquarters by the Order's vice-chancellor, Bailli Francisco Guedes de Magalhães,[31] Froullay presented the Order's case. Francisco Guedes was highly trusted by Grand Master Pinto, in part because the two were compatriots, but also because of the vice-chancellor's skills, in fact, Alain Blondy describes Guedes as the principal animator of Pinto's policies.[32] In his letters to Froullay, Guedes justified the Grand Master's decision to keep the Sultana as a fundamental right of the Convent, given that it was a Muslim ship with whom the Order was in perpetual war. The insurgent Christian slaves could have easily declared their own freedom, but they could never lay claim to the Ottoman warship because they lacked the strength to wage war, therefore they had no option but to sail to a power that was in a position to do so. Fundamentally, it was both the right and duty of the Order to engage the Muslim enemy and inflict damage as effectively as possible, whether through their fleet or by other means. Besides their right, it was crucial for the Order to maintain vigilance over the Sultana since it was a well-armed warship. Should

[28] 'avec l'assistance de Dieu, agir contre les Maltois, et dans ce cas, la résidence des ambassadeurs et des consuls de la cour de France dans les États de cet Empire n'étant pas d'une utilité sur laquelle on puisse compter, il en résulte qu'on doit les renvoyer dans leur pays.' AN M944, f. 255, undated.
[29] AN M944, f. 257, undated.
[30] AN M956, f. 82, 9 January 1761.
[31] On Fra Francisco Guedes, see appendix 1: Short Biographies, p. 333.
[32] Blondy and Berenger (2014), 79, fn. 145.

it fall into enemy hands, there was a significant risk that it would be used against Christians.[33] The vice-chancellor reasoned that 'it is certain that they [the Ottomans] would employ the same approach with our vessel the *San Giovanni* if it sailed to Constantinople.'[34]

Even though Constantinople applied considerable pressure on France and the stakes were high, Louis XV and his council refrained from coercing Malta to return the ship. Instead, they chose a strategy that would be advantageous to all parties involved. Louis XV would purchase the Corona Ottomana from Grand Master Pinto and gift it to the Sultan as 'a sign of friendship which reigned for centuries between the Empire of France and the Porte,'[35] while the Knights of Malta would be compensated and spared a brutal siege. This transaction would primarily work in favour of France, which would gain the favour of both through an approach which Elisabeth Schermerhorn calls 'the double game of France.'[36] When Louis XV opened his negotiations with the Sultan, he boldly warned him that if Constantinople were to reject his offer France was prepared to unite its corsairs and those of the Order against him, making him regret ever taking a stance against France.[37] While this exchange of mutual promises and threats between Constantinople and Versailles was unfolding, Louis XV went ahead with his plans of purchasing the Corona Ottomana from the Order, even before Vergennes had successfully concluded negotiations in the East. For this task, the King appointed the Bailli Pons François de Rosset de Roscozel de Fleury (1727-1774),[38] knight of Malta, brother to a reputable nobleman in the court of France and great-nephew of the late Cardinal-Minister André-Hercule de Fleury (1653-1743). His mission was to travel to Malta as his envoy, secure the purchase of the Corona Ottomana on his behalf, and ensure its return to Constantinople, all at the expense of France.[39]

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[33] AN M956, f. 82, 9 January 1761.
[34] 'e di usare dello stesso modo che è certo egli avrebbe usato se il nostro vascello *San Giovanni* fosse andato a Costantinopoli.' AN M956, f. 85, 17 January 1761. This letter includes the arguments which vice-chancellor Guedes provided to Ambassador de Froullay to prompt him for his meeting with the King and his officials.
[35] 'une suite de l'amitié qui règne depuis tant de siècles, entre l'Empire de France et la Porte.' MAE CP Turquie vol. 137, f. 19, 6 January 1761.
[36] Schermerhorn (1978), 264.
[37] Blondy (2002), 151.
[38] On Pons François de Rosset de Roscozel de Fleury, see appendix 1: Short Biographies, p.329.
[39] AN M944, f. 257, undated.

These ongoing Franco-Ottoman negotiations were only disclosed to Grand Master Pinto three months after the ship docked in Malta. On 29 December 1760, the Bailli de Froullay informed his Grand Master about the King's intention to foster a peaceful resolution. However, it was Louis XV's wish to keep this plan concealed from all other European Princes,[40] and from the Order's own Council of State, for fear of objection from the Grand Master's advisors. Until early February 1761, Pinto lived in the hope that France's chosen representative, the Bailli de Fleury, would come to Malta, purchase the warship and spare the Order a huge expense and intense effort in preparing the island for defence,[41] especially when it was still in debt from the previous alarms.[42] However, it took another six months before the French envoy set foot on the island because the Franco-Ottoman negotiations on this matter took longer than expected. In light of such uncertainty and the secretive plans which Pinto was obliged to withhold from his Council, he had no choice but to give in to pressure and prepare for war.[43]

4.4 Europe reacts: Unity or discord?

There were various reactions by other Christian powers to these events. During the first six months of 1761, pressure for the return of the Ottoman warship mounted from all over Europe.[44] By the 18th century, Catholic monarchs had shifted away from their longstanding hostility towards the Ottoman Empire, opting for cordial relations instead of conflict.[45] Fear pervaded among Christian rulers, particularly in Venice and Naples,[46] as they already worried about potential disruptions in their vital trade with the Levant during the turmoil of the Seven Years' War (1756-1763). The last thing European courts wanted was another front in addition to those they were already dealing with.[47] The Court of Vienna showed little concern about the Ottoman mobilisation, but according to the Serenissima, Vienna was trying to convince the Pope to force the Hospitallers to return the warship regardless of the Order's reluctance.

[40] AN M956, f. 89, 26 February 1761.
[41] AN M995, f. 325, 25 February 1761; AN M956, f. 89, 26 February 1761.
[42] MAE 67 CP vol. 11, f. 150rv, 24 February 1761.
[43] AN M995, f. 325, 25 February 1761; AN M956, f. 89, 26 February 1761.
[44] Blondy (2002), 152.
[45] Zammit (2021), 516.
[46] Blondy (2002), 152; Frans Ciappara, 'Malta Napoli e la Santa Sede metà del 700,' *Mediterranea : Ricerche Storiche*, 5, 12 (2008), 173-188.
[47] Zammit (2021), 516.

Venice also took its stand against the Order, and made it widely known to most of the Italian Princes that the actions of the Order jeopardised not only the lives of its own people, but also the safety of Europe.[48] Most likely under the influence of Venice and the Court of Naples, the Pope too sent a letter to Pinto instructing him to return the Sultana to the Porte.[49] The Court of Naples kept insisting that the Order should return the vessel not only to preserve itself and safeguard its inhabitants from the Ottomans' ire, but to spare Europe a useless war with the east.[50] Naples was inclined to lean towards the Ottoman Empire because it had signed two treatises of peace, commerce and navigation with Constantinople in 1740 and with the Regency of Tripoli in June 1741. Nothing came out of the treaties, but strictly speaking, the discussions did not fail, as treaties were signed.[51] Furthermore, the King during this affair, Ferdinand IV of Naples and III of Sicily, was only ten years old, thus the real power was in the hands of a regency council presided by Bernardo Tanucci, who was not a supporter of the religious Order.[52]

Eventually, the Germanic and Italian states, along with France, all helped Malta in war preparations, yet Spain seemed to remain on the sidelines. Carmel Testa attributes King Charles III of Spain's (also Charles VII of Naples from 1735 to 1759) lack of interest in Malta during the alarm of 1761 to a personal retaliation against Grand Master Pinto. This animosity dated back to 1753-54 when Pinto prevailed over Naples and Sicily in a political dispute concerning the Order's sovereignty over Malta.[53] However, an unknown author writing on 24 February 1761 to the Controller General of Finances of France, Henri Leonard Jean Baptiste Bertin (1720-1792), offers a different explanation. He claimed that Spain had great interest in defending Malta, but it had to exhibit restraint because the kingdoms of Naples and Sicily (under the son of the King of Spain) were at the time at peace with the Ottoman Sultan. Therefore,

[48] AN M995, f. 325, 25 February 1761.
[49] NLM AOM 1517, f. 72rv, 25 April 1761.
[50] AN M995, f. 325, 25 February 1761.
[51] Rosita d'Amora, 'The Diplomatic relations between Naples and the Ottoman Empire in the mid-eighteenth century: Cultural Perceptions', *Oriente Moderno,* Nuova Serie, anno 22, 83, 3 (2003), 717.
[52] Ciappara (2008), 177; Zammit (2021), 516.
[53] In 1753, Grand Master Pinto proclaimed that Malta was distinctly independent from Sicily. He declared this when Charles VII (1734-1759), King of Naples and Sicily, wanted to send his apostolic delegate to the island against the will of the Grand Master. The King's gesture ignited a diplomatic conflict between Naples and Hospitaller Malta, in which mostly France (but also Spain and Rome) played a crucial role in the defence of the Order's sovereignty; Ciappara (2008), 178; Testa (1989), 258.

providing military assistance to Malta would have threatened their political ties with the Porte, and also risked a revenge attack on the vulnerable eastern coasts of Sicily, Calabria and Puglia by the Ottoman warships.[54] In contrast to the Spanish Bourbons, it benefited France to protect the very island that secured and protected French commercial activities in the Levant. Malta's harbours provided the necessary naval facilities for French merchants and the royal fleet, while the Hospitallers' fleet ensured their safety in Mediterranean waters as they sailed eastward both in times of war and peace.[55]

Writing to Ambassador de Froullay on 25 February 1761, vice-chancellor Guedes expressed his dismay at the Christian pressure on the Order to have it return the Ottoman vessel, considering it as an intrusion on its honour and sovereignty. To him, the modest size of the archipelago was not an acceptable reason for the international community to disrespect the Order's independence. Ever since its Rhodian days, the knights had consistently shown bravery in confronting the might of the Ottoman Empire in the defence of Christianity, thus Guedes believed that the Order had to convey a strong message to Europe.[56] Hospitaller Malta worked to live up to its obligations towards the international community, but not at the expense of its own interests and independence:

> we must indeed desire the opportunity to demonstrate to Europe that we fulfil what it rightfully expects of us. And it is not without powerful motives of justice and truth, when we object to the prejudices that continually affect our privileges and interests, that we look upon the means to discharge our principal objective.[57]

The Order viewed the Corona Ottomana as a gift from providence, believing itself to be justified in retaining it. Keeping it was not primarily a decision based on financial gain; after all, the Order would have saved twenty-fold its value on military defence had it returned the vessel to its Sultan. Yet, in holding on to it and defying the

[54] MAE 67 CP vol. 11, f. 150rv, 24 February 1761.
[55] MAE 67 CP vol. 11, f. 150rv, 24 February 1761.
[56] AN M995, f. 325, 25 February 1761.
[57] 'nous devons même désirer l'occasion de faire connaître à l'Europe que nous satisfaisons à ce qu'elle a droit d'attendre de nous. Et que ce n'est pas sans de puissants motifs de justice et de vérité, lorsque nous recourons contre les préjugés qui affectent continuellement nos privilèges et nos intérêts, que nous estimons les moyens de remplir notre principal objectif.' AN M995, f. 325, 25 February 1761.

Sultan's demands was itself a symbolic and triumphant act against the perpetual enemy.[58]

The criticism levelled from several Catholic courts against the Order's decision starkly contrasted with that of France, but this leaves little to wonder because Bourbon France was known to be the protector of Malta. Guedes noted how France was the only state to have truly understood the real nature of the Order, and it was clearly reflected in the approach it adopted to resolve the Ottoman-Hospitaller conflict, by which it made sure to respect the political nature of the Hospitaller institution.[59] By April 1761, the court of France had already sent Pinto an undefined agreement concerning the potential purchase of the ship, but as customary, the Order required the Pope's blessing to enter into negotiations with Christian sovereigns, a task which was entrusted to the Order's ambassador in Rome, the French Bailli Jacques Le Tonnelier de Breteuil (1758-1777).[60]

Louis XV's official request for the purchase of the Corona Ottomana arrived in Pinto's office in July 1761. In it the King raised the prospect that the Porte was ready to attack Malta if the matter of the Corona Ottomana was not handled the way France was suggesting. Pinto was convinced that the French King's proposal was the most advantageous solution; by it the Order would save face by not returning the ship to the eternal enemy; it would save the institution from an exorbitant expenditure on war; it would ensure peace in the Mediterranean (on the Muslim front) which would guarantee the continuance of commerce between east and west; and it would restore the Order's harmonious ties with Christian Princes, especially when such a united stance against the Order was being taken. Perhaps even more importantly for Pinto, he would be seen and regarded as sovereign over his lands as all the other Christian Princes.[61]

[58] AN M995, f. 208, 27 April 1761.
[59] AN M995, f. 325, 25 February 1761.
[60] 'per adesso basterebbe concederci a viva voce la facoltà d'entrare nei trattati che si propongono dalli sovrani e venire ad una concluzione che sembrerà ragionevole e decorosa.' NLM AOM 1517, f. 72rv, 25 April 1761. The Bailli de Breteuil was ambassador of the Order to Rome from 1758-1777 and ambassador to France from 1778 until his demise in 1785.
[61] AN M944, f. 254, 6 July 1761.



Figure 4.2 Bernardo Tanucci (1698-1783).[62]

One of the most vehement opponents against the Order's claim on the Corona Ottomana was the marquis Bernardo Tanucci, the secretary of state of Naples. He had the lowest regard for the Maltese archipelago and considered it no more than a Sicilian barony under the rule of religious monks. Pinto loathed the marquis to the extent of claiming that Tanucci was feared in Malta more than all the Muslims put together.[63] Pinto's resentment is not surprising considering his pretence as 'an absolute monarch at home [Malta].'[64] Writing on behalf of the young King of Naples and Sicily, Ferdinand IV, Tanucci articulated his desire that Pinto would understand the precarious nature of the Corona Ottomana situation: that if the Ottomans attacked Malta there would be significant unrest in Europe, mostly in the Italian States. For starters, even if not engaged in combat, the Ottoman navy could physically obstruct the delivery of supplies to Malta, the most part of which came from Sicily. More importantly, European powers were in no position to assist the Order because they were themselves embroiled in the ongoing war that still ravaged the European continent and the American colonies. Tanucci made significant efforts to dissuade and

[62] Image of Tanucci's portrait was retrieved on 3 April 2022, from: https://en.wikipedia.org
[63] Woimbée (2014), 338, 340.
[64] Cited from Ciappara (2008), 175.

discourage Pinto from engaging in war with the Ottomans such that he even attempted to sow doubts in Pinto's mind that Christian powers were not in a position nor willing to offer their support:[65]

> How could assistance be expected from France in its current commitments [war] and in view of the British superiority at sea? How could assistance be expected from Germany if it was troubled and exhausted by the stubborn war? What flattery could be used on the Princes of Italy who witness with disapproval an altered public tranquillity for a commitment which could have been avoided?[66]

The marquis did not beat around the bush, his statements were clear: the peace that reigned between his kingdom and the Porte was not to be jeopardised, and Naples and Sicily were even prepared to shelter the Ottoman fleet in Sicilian harbours if Hospitaller stubbornness persisted. Although it is somewhat unexpected for a Christian state to ally with a Muslim power against a fellow Christian, this was not unprecedented. For instance, during winter of 1543-44, King Francis I of France had hosted the Ottoman fleet in the port of Toulon after a joint Franco-Ottoman assault on Nice to diminish Habsburg dominance in the region. This was part of the broader strategy of the Franco-Ottoman alliance aimed at curtailing the power of Holy Roman Emperor Charles V (r. 1519-1556).[67] In the 18th century, Naples considered similar measures, viewing the Order's stubborn determination as a threat to public safety and a potential disruption of western commerce due to the Barbary states' backing of the Ottomans; all this over a 'miserable ship' obtained in the most 'inglorious' manner.[68] Tanucci considered this situation as nothing more than the 'comedy of the ship.'[69] The vice-chancellor of the Order was astonished to learn that Tanucci was contemplating a public announcement of his plan to host the Muslim fleet in Sicily to spite the knights, particularly given the risk that this fleet could eventually turn against his own

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[65] AN M995, f. 236, 29 January 1761.
[66] 'Come sperare soccorso dalla Francia nei suoi correnti impegni, ed alla vista della superiorità Britannica in mare? Come attenderlo dalla Germania travagliata ed esaurita da una ostinata guerra? Quale lusinga sugli aiuti dei Principi d'Italia, che vedranno con disapprovazione alterata la pubblica tranquillità per un impegno che si potesse evitare?' AN M995, f. 236, 29 January 1761.
[67] Malcolm (2019), 111, 116; Daniel Goffman, *The Ottoman Empire and Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2009), 111.
[68] 'una miserabile nave' and 'ne-glorioso,' AN M995, f. 236, 29 January 1761.
[69] 'comedia della nave,' Bernardo Tanucci, *Epistolario 1761-1762, Introduction by G. Maiorni* (Rome, Istituto Poligrafico e Zecca dello Stato, 1988), 146, 161.

country.[70] Pinto retaliated, cautioning the marquis to avoid any actions that could hinder the Order's defence, which was already in progress.[71]

At this point, the leaders of the Order firmly believed that Malta, as a sovereign state, should govern itself by its own principles, without fear of retribution. However, as a small state with very limited resources, their chances of victory were very slim without the support of the Christian monarchs to provide troops, supplies for the hospital, munitions, and other resources. With the exception of their own knights who obediently flocked to the central Convent when called upon, and the support of its protector, France, the Order felt 'abandoned by all the universe.'[72]

In the final days of February 1761, Pinto's secretarial office went into a frenzy of correspondence. Numerous letters were dispatched, including citation notices to various priories across Europe, a steady stream of correspondence for intelligence gathering from the Order's agents, receivers and consuls, as well as calls for assistance from numerous princes, cardinals, and secretaries of state.[73] Amongst these dignitaries, Pinto appealed to: Pope Clement XIII (1737-1769), the King of Naples Ferdinand IV (1759-1816) and his Secretary of State Tanucci (more of a formality because by now Pinto was aware of Tanucci's sentiment against the Order), the Doge in Venice, the Holy Roman Emperor Francis I and his wife the Habsburg Queen Maria Theresa, the King of Sardinia, and King Louis XV. In his correspondence with the King of France, Pinto articulated a profound sense of vulnerability regarding the looming threat of an attack, underscoring the necessity of French aid. To facilitate this, he sent Ambassador de Froullay to the court of Versailles to delineate the ways in which France could extend military support to Malta.[74]

4.5 Malta in a state of alarm: The Council of State reaches out

On 11 February 1761, news of an Ottoman reprisal first arrived by way of a Ragusan *polacre*, the *Santa Croce*. Three days later a ship sailing from Naples confirmed the same report. This piece of intelligence seems to have arrived somewhat late in Malta because on 16 February, only two days following the arrival of the Neapolitan vessel,

[70] AN M995, f. 325, 25 February 1761.
[71] AN M995, f. 236, 29 January 1761.
[72] 'abandonnés de tout l'univers,' AN M995, f. 325, 25 February 1761.
[73] NLM AOM 1517, ff. 29r-49v, 16-27 February 1761; AN M995, f. 307, 19 February 1761; f. 308, 26 February 1761.
[74] MAE 67 CP, vol. 11, f. 152rv, 26 February 1761.

the *La Gazette* (Paris) publicised that with the support of Tunis and Algiers, the *Grand Seigneur* was arming to attack Malta to forcefully retrieve his Corona Ottomana. Two weeks later, the same newspaper reported that intelligence from Constantinople indicated that the attack on Malta was going to be strong, but the ambassador of France to Constantinople, Charles Gravier, count de Vergennes (1755-1768), 'seemed to be taking action to prevent this.'[75]

In February 1761, Grand Master Pinto convened his Council to analyse the influx of rumours arriving from the Italian states concerning the preparation of an Ottoman armament against Malta. Pinto had managed to delay discussions in the council, trusting in the imminent arrival of the French King's envoy, the Bailli de Fleury, who hopefully would facilitate the purchase of the Ottoman vessel. But knights in Valletta, concerned with the spate of rumours of an Ottoman siege, began to clamour against the Grand Master's sluggishness, adding further agitation in the Convent.[76] Therefore, on 14 February, Pinto was compelled to announce a state of alarm and launch a defensive campaign.[77] The Council was still oblivious to Pinto's secret arrangement with Louis XV and his ploy of buying the Corona, and he persisted in concealing it, fearing objections that would hinder the completion of this transaction. The Grand Master reasoned that avoiding war would also defuse the harsh criticism from Christian powers, most particularly that of Tanucci whose letter had already upset Pinto to the point that he needed to 'contain his emotions aroused by the menacing proposals of this minister [Tanucci].'[78] The latter's missive confounded him enough to cause him to conceal its existence from his Council, in case it would cast suspicion on the ongoing covert negotiations between France and the Porte.[79]

The Council of State promptly responded by appointing a four-knight commission: the grand prior of Germany Johan Baptist von Schauenburg, the Bailli Jean Louis Guerin de Tencin, the Bailli Pier Marcello Cavaniglia and the Bailli Don Michele Doz, to investigate and report on the state of affairs.[80] Together with the

[75] 'paroit se donner quelques movement pour le prévenir.' *Recueil des nouvelles, Gazettes* of 4 April 1761, Issue 14, Constantinople 11 February 1761, p.161.
[76] AN M995, f. 325, 25 February 1761.
[77] AN M956, f. 89, 26 February 1761.
[78] 'contenir l'emotion qu'excitent les propositions menaçantes de ce Ministre.' AN M995, f. 325, 25 February 1761.
[79] AN M956, f. 89, 26 February 1761.
[80] AN M986, f. 101, 16 February 1761; Mallia-Milanes (2008), 248.

Congregation of War, this commission met regularly to examine the rumours, report their deductions to the Council, as well as draft a defensive strategy.[81] The requirements were: provisioning of weapons and ammunition, summoning of knights to bolster the fighting force, and appointing military experts to supervise the defence of the islands. The procurators of the Treasury of the Order embarked on a stock taking exercise of the islands' military equipment in order to procure any lacking supplies of artillery, ammunition and gunpowder from overseas sources and provide a strategic way forward. A report on these was delivered in a matter of days.[82]

The most pressing priority was to request friendly courts to provide financial support for Malta's cause. The Convent was to petition Christian courts to release summoned knights within their jurisdiction, obtain suspension of any imposed taxes on Hospitaller territory, and allow extraction of war provisions without charging customs and tolls. The grand priors were to encourage the commanders within their respective priories to donate a percentage of their tenants' revenue. This was both a symbolic and practical measure aimed at persuading the nobility to contribute to the safeguarding of Christendom. The next step was to provision the island with 40 million *salme* of grain to last until winter (generally sieges were suspended in winter because of the weather and rough seas), stockpiling provisions like biscuits, rice, beans, oil, meat, and other victuals. They identified an urgent need to improve the fortifications, particularly the citadel of Gozo and entrenchments on the eastern and western coasts of Malta. It was also decided to announce a 'small citation,'[83] to consolidate the Hospitaller fighting force and call upon experienced military officers to lead the islands' militia and standardise training regimes. Finally, the Order had to secure low interest loans from local and foreign financiers for the purchase of military provisions, without which the Order could certainly not resist a siege.[84]

On 27 February 1761, the central Convent sent out several letters with instructions for the Order's receivers to purchase gunpowder. These directives were specific to different locations: Bailli Marulli was to buy from Naples, commander Ansaldo Grimaldi from Genoa, and commander d'Albert who was the grand prior of St Gilles, was to buy from Antibes. They were to procure 7,000, 4,000 and 1,000

[81] AN M986, f. 101, 16 February 1761; AN M995, f. 281, 20 February 1761.
[82] AN M995, f. 235, 1761; NLM AOM 1118, ff. 229r-232v, 19 February 1761.
[83] 'piccola citazione,' AN M995, f. 235, 1761; NLM AOM 1118, ff. 229r-232v, 19 February 1761.
[84] AN M995, f. 235, 1761; NLM AOM 1118, ff. 229r-232v, 19 February 1761.

quintals of gunpowder, respectively.[85] The Order collectively aimed to procure 2.6 million pounds of gunpowder during a period of alarm, which is a significant amount given the context. For comparison, the production of gunpowder for the King of France for the year of 1707 was approximately 1.9 million and 1.4 million pounds in 1715, at a peak time when it was still emerging from the War of the Spanish Succession (1701-1714).[86] In the alarm of 1722-23, Brigadier de Tigné had agreed to an estimate of an even larger quantity of 4,640,500 pounds to cover a siege of around six months.[87] Similarly, François-Charles de Bourlamaque and the artillerists of his team arriving in Malta in 1761, estimated a need for 3,870,620 pounds to have the island ready to withstand a siege. These substantial figures, certified by French experts while inspecting the islands' stores and the fortifications works, indicate that the Order's request for gunpowder for the 1761 alarm was not, after all, overinflated.[88] The large quantities of gunpowder needed reflects the extensive fortifications on the Hospitaller island by the 18th century and the Order's resolve to repel any potential enemy threat.

The initial responsibility for procuring most of the provisions fell on the Order's Ambassador de Breteuil in Rome. His tasks included securing weapons—mortars, cannons, cannonballs, and gunpowder—as well as organizing soldiers. He was also tasked with coordinating with the papal fleet to transport knights and provisions. According to his instructions, he was to persuade the Pope to provide these resources as a donation.[89] Should Rome be unable to assist, Breteuil was instructed to contact the receivers in Genoa and Naples, directing them to seek support from their respective courts.[90] If these efforts proved unsuccessful, the contingency plan involved commander d'Albert in Marseille, who had already been forewarned. In such a case, he was obliged to assume responsibility for the tasks his comrades could not complete, in addition to his own duty of securing the designated quota of gunpowder from Antibes.[91] Aside to serving as a backup, the French-based Hospitaller agents were

[85] AN M995, f. 229, 20 February 1761; ff. 282-285, April 1761; f. 349, 24 March 1761.
[86] AN G7/128, 1707-1709; SHD Archives de l'Artillerie, 4w662, 1715: These documents were provided by Professor Guy Rowlands.
[87] AN M995, f. 60, 1722.
[88] NLM AOM 6558, f. 152v, 1761.
[89] AN M995, f. 289, 24 March 1761.
[90] AN M995, f. 229, 20 February 1761.
[91] AN M995, f. 281, 20 February 1761.

commissioned with procuring 29 mortars (10 of 12 inches, 10 of 9 inches, and 9 of 7 inches), 36 low-calibre cannons *à la Suedoise*, and 17,036 cannonballs.[92]

The island was not only short of weapons and gunpowder but it was also in desperate need of military expertise. By the mid-seventeenth century, the Order had started to drift towards French military expertise during potential crises. This had become regular practise by the 18th century.[93] However, the last comprehensive French team of experts had visited the island during the 1715 alarm, leaving behind the celebrated French engineer Charles François de Mondion (1683-1733). Following the death of Mondion in 1733, the Order failed to engage other engineers of similar stature. Although Brigadier de Tigné did return briefly in 1722 to oversee projects, the Order primarily relied on Mondion's assistant, the Italian Francesco Marandon, who then served as the resident engineer for the Order. Therefore, the threat of war in 1761 presented the Order with another opportunity to prioritize military preparedness and consult military advisors, continuing the tradition established during the late Rhodian phase.[94] However, the circumstances in 1761 introduced some variations to this long-standing practice. Instead of turning to France for expertise, as was by now customary, Pinto directed his receiver in Naples to assemble a brigade of engineers and two or three top surgeons from Naples. He specified that the brigade should be led by one of three distinguished figures: Marshal Giovanni Bigotti, Brigadier d'Amato Poulet, or Brigadier Giuseppe Valenzuela.[95] Additionally, he requested four more engineers, a top-tier artillery officer, and several artillerists and bombardiers. To further support this team of experts, he requested to have a regiment of Sicilian soldiers on standby, ready to intervene whenever necessary. Once again, the Convent had a contingency plan in place: if Marulli, the receiver in Naples, failed to assemble the required brigade, the Order would then turn to commander Losa, the receiver in Turin. Should Losa also prove unsuccessful, the next step would involve calling upon Ambassador de Froullay in Paris to undertake the task, which eventually proved to be the case.[96]

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[92] AN M995, ff. 275, 324, undated.
[93] See, Busuttil (2018). This PhD dissertation traces the Order's shift into the French sphere of influence through the study of civil and military architecture which had started in the 17th century, reaching its peak by the 18th century.
[94] AN M995, f. 349, 24 March 1761.
[95] NLM AOM 1517, f. 39r, 27 February 1761.
[96] NLM AOM 1517, f. 39r, 27 February 1761; f. 44rv, 27 February 1761; AN M995, f. 349, 24 March 1761.

Securing the provisions requested by the Order turned out to be more challenging than initially anticipated. This difficulty partly arose from the Christian princes' disagreement with the Order's decision to retain the Ottoman ship, compounded by the relentless conflict in Europe—a war that had persisted since 1756. Although the requested quantities of gunpowder and artillery do not seem excessive in the context of war, the Order's precarious financial situation led the procurators of the Treasury to pressure Ambassador de Breteuil in Rome to secure most, if not all, of the consignment as a gift or loan from the Pope. If the Pope was not as generous, the Order pinned its hopes on France. Ambassador de Froullay and commander d'Albert, the grand prior of St Gilles, were to persuade the French Ministers for War and the Navy and other high-ranking officers, including the *intendant* of Toulon, to lend a hand. Their objective was to secure assistance either through a donation or at least a loan with favourable repayment terms, contingent upon the King's approval. Should their efforts fail, the Order's Treasury would be left with no choice but to make a direct purchase, in which case Froullay and d'Albert had to seek ways to stretch and delay payment terms for as long as they could to allow the Convent enough time to secure military funds.[97] Similarly to the alarm of 1722, the Order's Treasury in 1761 was in no state to sustain war, especially after the heavy financial drain it had incurred during the struggle to contain the Barbary corsairs in recent years.[98] Circumstances forced the Order to melt a quantity of gold and silver pieces from the Order's Conservatory, the Grand Master's Palace and St John's Church, and to sell precious stones by auction.[99] All the while, it should be remembered that Pinto was still concealing from most of those around him what was afoot in the French camp.

A month after the ambassadors and receivers in Italy and France received their instructions from the Council of State, the ambassador in Rome reported back to the Convent, saying that while the Pope had agreed to brief the Catholic Princes and encourage them to assist Malta, he had not yet taken any concrete action on this. However, he did agree to provide the Order with 120 *milliers* (120,000 pounds) of gunpowder, such that he gave his men instructions to pack these in barrels and ship them aboard his frigate the *San Paolo*, but he could only supply a small quantity of

[97] AN M995, f. 229, 20 February 1761.
[98] AN M995, f. 235, 1761.
[99] Testa (1989), 257.

bombs and mortars because Rome's arsenal was poorly stocked and he could only afford to extract a very small quantity from Castel Sant'Angelo. Ambassador de Breteuil was deeply frustrated, feeling that the Pope was abandoning the Order, particularly by his refusal to alleviate the burdens of taxes on the Italian commanderies. Such a gesture could have encouraged other Christian leaders to do the same. To compound the situation, the Papal States were unable to dispatch troops unless the crisis in Malta escalated significantly. However, in a somewhat redeeming move, the Pope did agree to deploy his galley for the transportation of war provisions and the Italian knights who had answered the call to arms. When Breteuil realized that there was nothing more to be gained from Rome, he immediately wrote to Marulli in Naples, urging him to proceed as the Council of State had originally directed.[100]

In March 1761, Marulli relayed to Froullay in Paris that, to the Grand Master's disappointment, he too had failed to secure the brigade of engineers and military officers from the King of Naples. Consequently, the responsibility for this mission now rested squarely on his shoulders.[101] The procurators of the Treasury in Malta sent a long report to the Order's ambassador in Paris, claiming that the most pressing need was to at least obtain 800,000 pounds of gunpowder.[102] Froullay had to persuade the King to reduce the taxes on the Order's assets in France, but if the King resisted, he was then forced to plead for a donation of cannons, ammunition, and gunpowder.[103]

Froullay received regular instructions from the Convent and periodic guidance from the Order's vice-chancellor Francisco Guedes. With the island's 12,000 armed soldiers being insufficient to repel a potential onslaught, Froullay's critical task was to convince the French court to despatch all necessary supplies and military experts to Malta. This urgency was heightened by the uncertainty of any support from Spain and Sicily, and the limited contributions from Italy.[104]

4.6 Summoning the knights: the Order invokes a citation

Although an Ottoman siege remained uncertain in the early days of 1761, rumours were regular enough to keep the Order in a state of alarm. Pinto, faithful towards the

[100] AN M995, f. 289, 24 March 1761.
[101] AN M995, f. 348, 28 April 1761; f. 349, 24 March 1761.
[102] AN M995, f. 275, undated.
[103] AN M995, f. 229, 20 February 1761.
[104] AN M956, f. 90, 25 February 1761.

secrecy of his negotiations with France, was confronted by his Council on 14 February 1761 for being passive. It was during this session that he gave in to his Council for the launch of a defence campaign, including a citation for knights.[105] On 19 February 1761, the Grand Master, with his Council, agreed to call upon 150 knights (the actual list comprises 151 knights) residing at the periphery of the Convent, earmarking those closest to Malta (the list shows that 151 knights were chosen).[106] During the same session they also drafted a degree for a general citation.[107] The rationale behind the 'small citation' or 'limited citation,'[108] was to ensure an adequate supply of knights for the military preparation activities on the island, prior to summoning the rest of the Order's members. In the limited citation of 1761, 64 knight were selected from Italy, 56 from France, 25 from the combined regions of Spain and Portugal, and 6 from the German priories.[109] These knights were to be informed by their respective priories to depart for the Convent in Malta right away, where they were expected to participate in the defence works and in the command of around 12,000-15,000 armed men.[110] The first to respond were 36 of the 64 Italian knights, who set sail from Civitavecchia in May 1761, arriving in Malta nearly two months before their French brethren.[111] It may not be merely a coincidence that at the time of the summoning, a detailed list — including names, birthdates, and status of admission – of all knights in the Langues of Provence, Auvergne, and France – was published in Malta in 1761. Thus far, there is no evidence that the remaining langues of the Order followed suit.[112]

In addition to the selection of 150 knights for a rapid departure, a decree was promulgated through a pamphlet for a general citation, which was published in Malta and disseminated to the grand priors residing at the periphery of the Convent (see appendix 5: 5.2, 5.3, 5.4). This document instructed all knights and novices to prepare

[105] AN M956, f. 90, 25 February 1761.
[106] The knights were summoned from five Grand Priories in France (Auvergne, Provence, France, Champagne, Aquitaine), six Grand Priories in Italy (Rome, Venice, Messina, Capua, Lombardy, Pisa, Barletta), three Grand Priories in Spain (Castellania d'Emposta, Catalogna, Castille), one in Portugal and one Grand Priory in Germany; NLM AOM 6558, ff. 6r-9v, 1761.
[107] AN M995, f. 307, 19 February 1761.
[108] 'Piccola citazione,' NLM AOM 1118, ff. 229r-232v, 19 February 1761; 'limitata citazione,' AN M956, f. 89, 26 February 1761; NLM AOM 1118, f. 234, 19 February 1761.
[109] NLM AOM 1118, ff. 229r-232v, 19 February 1761; f. 234, 19 February 1761; AN M956, f. 89, 26 February 1761.
[110] Engel (1972), 151.
[111] AN M995, f. 317, 18 May 1761.
[112] *Liste de Messieurs de Chevaliers de Trois Vénérables Langue de Provence, Auvergne et France, Faîtes en 1761* (Malta, Nicolas Capaci, 1761). Courtesy of HMML, The Malta Study Centre, Minnesota.

for a journey to Malta as soon as the Grand Master summoned them. The grand priors were ordered to distribute this pamphlet in all the priories within their jurisdiction, and to ensure that all members of the Order were informed. This broader appeal was designed to mobilize support and readiness across all levels of the Order once the Ottoman siege was confirmed.[113] The general citation summoned all members who had reached maturity, were in good health for combat, and had not yet completed their caravans. Those unable to travel because of old age or infirmity were required to direct their commanderies' revenues to the Common Treasury as their contribution for war and compensation for their absence at a time when the Order needed them most.[114] The decree allowed the knights departing for Malta to be accompanied by one personal servant of mature age. Most importantly, the pamphlet warned them that ignoring the citation without formal justification or an official exemption could jeopardize the knight's standing, including losing the habit.[115] Pinto urged his high-ranking knights at the periphery to encourage all exempt members to make voluntary donations, emphasizing that these contributions were not to be imposed in any manner.[116]

Apart from the financial burden, responding to the citation presented other challenges. Knights were subjects of their respective sovereigns, some even employed by their state. In such cases, knights had to obtain their release. Even if not serving one's sovereign, permission was still needed to answer the call of another prince, which is what the Order technically was. The citation procedure therefore obliged the Grand Master to request a formal permission from the Christian sovereigns of the four nations making up his Order.[117] French knights employed in the royal service, particularly that of the army and navy, required a leave permit known as a *congé*, to be able to absent themselves.[118] By 1761, this procedure, in France at least, had been well established. In fact, the abundance of available documentation for the 1761 citation provides a clear picture of the established procedure (see chart 4.1 below).

[113] The same pamphlet was sent to all four nations: NLM AOM 1517, f. 49r, 27 February 1761.
[114] AN M995, f. 307, 19 February 1761.
[115] AN M995, f. 307, 19 February 1761.
[116] NLM AOM 1517, f. 83rv, 16 May 1761; f. 84, 21 May 1761.
[117] Alain Blondy, 'La France et Malte au XVIIIeme siècle: Le Probleme de la Double Nationalite,' in *Malta a Case Study of International Cross Currents*, S. Fiorini and V. Mallia-Milanes (eds.) Malta University Publications, Malta 1989, 175-176.
[118] This was also the case during the alarm of 1722. The regent gave his permission to all knights in the service of the King to respond to the Convent's summoning once it was made official; NLM AOM 1219, f. 413, 12 November 1722.

When the limited and/or general citation was established, the lists of knights and the decree of the Grand Master were sent to the Order's ambassador in Paris. The latter had to obtain permission from the King before announcing either citation (limited or general) so that the French knights, novices and members could respond. On 27 April 1761, Ambassador de Froullay presented the list of knights for the limited citation to Louis XV and his chief minister and Minister for War de Choiseul (Minister for the Navy from October 1761 to 1766),[119] for their approval, at the same time he sought permission to call a general citation.[120] When the King gave his approval, the Minister for War issued instructions to all French army leaders and provincial *intendants* to release the summoned knights under their command, ensuring that their seniority and rank were preserved in their absence. This directive also applied to knights serving in the royal navy.[121] Subsequently, the citation pamphlet was dispatched to all the priories in France, and from there passed to the respective knights.[122] French knights serving in the diplomatic service of a foreign sovereign at the court of France were even obliged to obtain a dual release: one from the foreign employer they represented and the other from the King of France. For instance, Prince-elector Charles Theodore of Bavaria (1724-1799) requested Grand Master Pinto to postpone the summoning of his plenipotentiary minister, the knight Philip François de Fourneaux Cruquenburg, who represented him in Paris, until the Order was absolutely sure that an attack was happening. He refused to have his diplomatic service interrupted on the basis of a rumour.[123] In Italy, the Pope refused to grant leave to the knight Polastron because he was required to command the Papal frigate, the *San Paolo*. Similarly, the Pope also denied his permission of leave to the knight Caros because he was needed to oversee his shipbuilding activities in Civitavecchia.[124]

[119] On Étienne-François de Choiseul, see appendix 1: Short Biographies, p.328.
[120] AN M995, f. 208, 27 April 1761.
[121] AN M995, f. 274, undated.
[122] AN M995, f. 208, 27 April 1761.
[123] AN M995, f. 228, 14 May 1761.
[124] AN M995, f. 318, 17 April 1761.

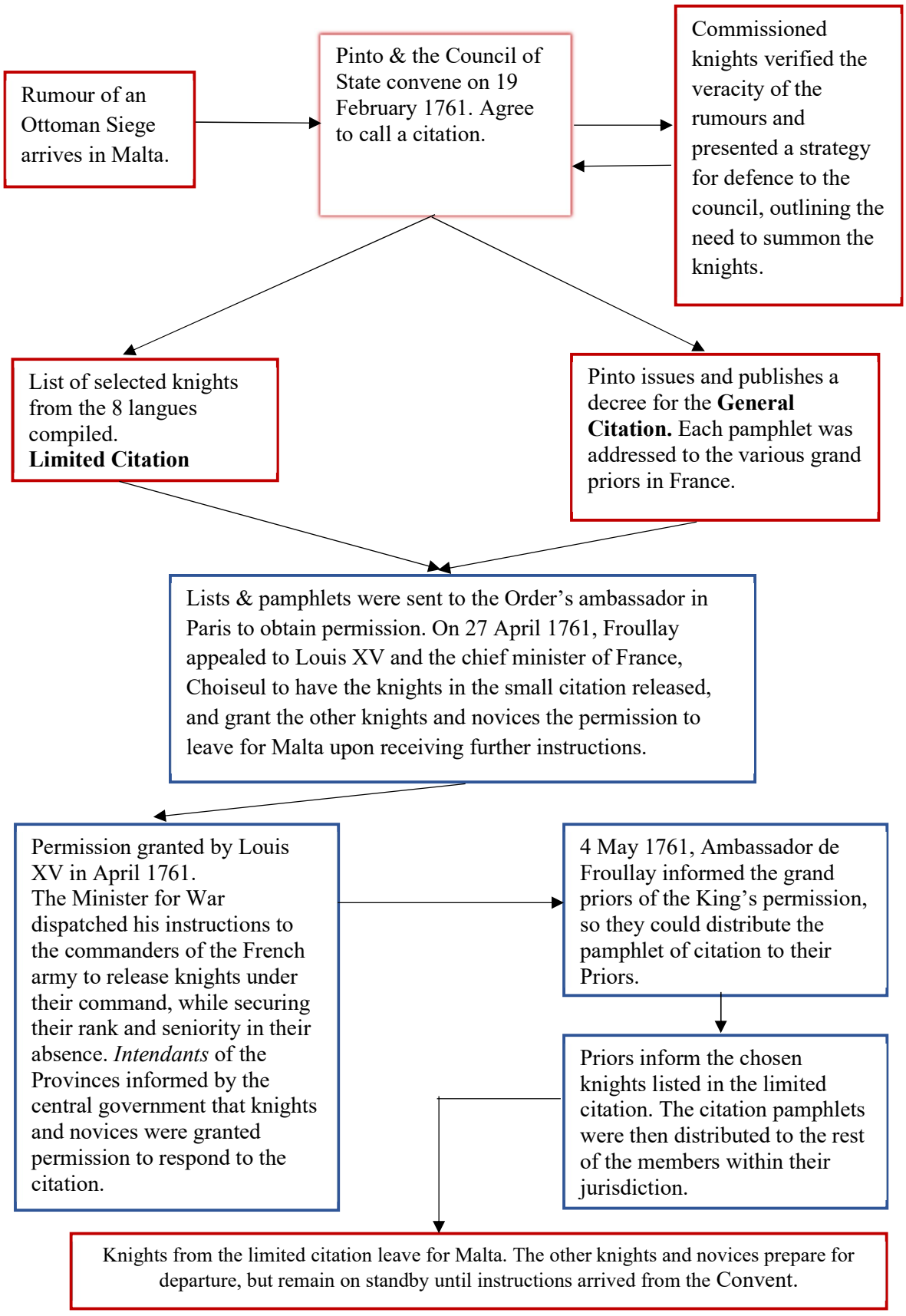


Chart 4.1 A typical procedure for the citation of French knights to Malta, as illustrated during the alarm of 1761. See also, appendix 5, Supporting Documents, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4.

In times of war, the prestige of the Order attracted more than just its formal members. Individuals well disposed towards the Order felt compelled to offer their support either by their presence on the island or by providing troops and ammunition. One such case was that of the grand prior of France, Louis François Joseph de Bourbon, Prince de Conti (1748-1776),[125] who sought permission from his cousin, the King of France, to leave for Malta when the general citation was published. Although the Prince de Conti was the grand prior of the Order for the Langue of France, and thus supposedly a high-ranking member of the Order, in reality he was neither a knight, nor a novice and even less a religious man. He was granted his position solely on the insistence of Louis XV. Therefore, unlike his brethren, he was not tied by the Hospitaller's vow of obedience which would have obliged him to travel to Malta. Nonetheless, he felt it was his duty to assist the Religion.[126] In Malta, the Council harboured reservations about Conti's visit, and this sentiment followed his controversial appointment, more or less imposed by Louis XV in 1749, as grand prior of the Langue de France. Vice-Chancellor Guedes covertly plotted to dissuade Conti from departing, using the disapproval of the French court as a pretext to conceal the Order's disdain for him.[127] Guedes' underhand scheming worked, such that Louis XV rejected his cousin's release for Malta. Nonetheless, Conti contributed from Paris by self-funding 8 howitzers and 4 guns *à la Suedoise* (including their ammunition) manufactured from one of the King's own founders.[128]

Those knights who were unable to respond to the citation, due to health or refusal of leave, contributed in various ways. The knight de Zemps, an officer in the prince de Soubise's army of the lower Rhine, summoned under the Grand Priory of Auvergne, was denied leave by the prince. He therefore proposed to Froullay to muster and train 800 to 1,200 men in France for four months at his own expense. In return, he expected to receive the Order's cross.[129] Others, sympathizers of the Order, like Giovanni Darbord, captain in the *Regiment d'Hainault*,[130] offered Pinto a fully trained

[125] Jean de Montagnac Veores, *Armorial des Grands Prieurs de France* (Paris, Les Éditions de la Chevalerie, 1936), 27.
[126] AN M995, f. 208, 27 April 1761; f. 325, 25 February 1761; f. 333, 22 May 1761.
[127] AN M956, f. 90, 25 February 1761.
[128] AN M995, f. 208, 27 April 1761; f. 325, 25 February 1761; f. 333, 22 May 1761.
[129] AN M995, f. 354, 12 May1761.
[130] The Regiment of Hainault was a French regiment of infantry created in 1684.

and armed German regiment to support the Order's forces, something which Pinto gave considerable thought to.[131]

The Ottoman threat of 1761 highlights the enduring loyalty, devotion, and sense of duty among the knights, irrespective of their distance from the central headquarters and their service to their respective monarchs. An example of this commitment was the knight Gaetan Xavier de Guilien Pascalis St Croix, who served as Brigadier of the King's army and as the French commander of Belle Île during the British assault of 1761. In June of that year, he was at Port Louis when the governor of Brittany, the duke d'Aiguillon, informed him that the Grand Master had summoned him to Malta. At the time St Croix was in very poor physical health, having contracted pneumonia while fighting in Belle Île, and a shot in each leg on the battlefield which confined him to bed. Nevertheless, despite these challenges, he asked Froullay to obtain his *congé* from the court of Versailles so he could travel to Malta once his health permitted.[132]

Some dedicated French soldiers risked their own careers to serve the Order. Commander Baron de Raynac, captain of the grenadiers in the Regiment de Nassau infantry, informed Pinto upon his arrival on Malta about the potential loss of his military rank in France while he was providing service to the Order. Such considerations of rank and seniority were common during periods of caravans or military service in Malta. Many times, the ambassador of the Order in Paris was tasked with resolving these issues.[133] For instance, on 10 December 1761, Pinto informed Froullay that knight de Chalus, who had enlisted in the Montmorency Regiment in 1754, was concerned that his absence from France was affecting his seniority in the army. Despite being given assurances from the government of France, on some occasions Froullay still had to intervene on the knights' behalf with the Minister for War.[134]

Not all knights showed the same dedication to their Order. Certain members capitalised on the vulnerable state of Malta and the Order's need for their service to advance their own careers. They exploited the circumstances to obtain higher military ranks and/or wealthier commanderies. A particular case was that of chevalier de

[131] NLM AOM 1517, f. 64v, 29 March 1761.
[132] AN M995, f. 218, 14 June 1761.
[133] AN M956, f. 107, undated.
[134] AN M956, f. 130, 28 January 1762.

Chantilly, who aspired for the rank *Maréchal de Camp* before being summoned to Malta. Finding it to be the right opportunity to ask for a favour, he solicited Froullay's support to recommend him to the Minister for War. Despite already possessing a recommendation from Marshal de Broglie, he believed the ambassador's endorsement would be pivotal in swaying the minister's decision.[135] Similarly, before his departure for Malta, commander Truchses requested that Marshal de Broglie recommend him to the duke de Choiseul. His goal was to leverage the King's influence over the Order to secure a soon-to-be-vacated commandery of grace in the Langue of Germany.[136]

Concerned about the Order's financial stability, the procurators of the Common Treasury tasked Froullay with persuading secular acquaintances he frequently met at Versailles or Paris to contribute to the Convent's cause by way of donations. After all, individuals like the Bishop of Strasbourg, the count and countess de Noailles, the marquis de Liré, and the abbé de Breteuil, had all been awarded the grand cross of the Order, and not without reason. Others, namely, the Prince and Princess de Beaufremont, the count de Gruigne, the count de Maury, the count de Camur, and the marquis de Chambray, also held this prestigious decoration from the Order, which Froullay was to exploit. Although these decorated Frenchmen were not expected to participate in the summoning, the Order still harboured certain expectations.[137]

4.7 The ambassador in France: mobilising military expertise for Malta's defence

Like his predecessor Bailli Jean-Jacques de Mesmes, Ambassador Louis-Gabriel de Froullay was instrumental in strengthening Malta's defences. His initial directives from the Convent reached him in Paris in early March 1761, when Pinto charged him with securing, coordinating and expediting the deployment of a cadre of military specialists, including engineers, artillerists, gunners, bombardiers, and miners, if the Italian states failed to provide the candidates he had requested. His second role was to procure a significant consignment of ammunition and gunpowder, again depending on what could be obtained from Italy.[138]

Froullay had to navigate through several uncertainties. The scale of the planned Ottoman onslaught was unknown, as was the type and level of assistance that Spain,

[135] AN M995, f. 366, 4 June 1761.
[136] AN 67 CP vol. 11, f. 174, 17 June 1761.
[137] AN M995, f. 220, 20 February 1761.
[138] AN M956, f. 89, 26 February 1761.

Italy and other Catholic countries were willing to provide. Things became clearer, albeit more onerous, for Froullay, when on 18 April 1761, commander de Losa from Lombardy reported his inability to muster the military professionals from Italy, and consequently passed the task on to Froullay. In an audience he had with the King on 27 April, Froullay detailed the weaknesses of the islands and their dire need for military expertise. He emphasized the urgency of the situation, telling Louis XV that 'never have we been in greater need of your majesty's protection.'[139] Froullay informed both the King and Minister for War that the island was short of troops, especially when many sailors had joined the navy of France for the Seven Years' War, many of whom had by 1761 fallen captives of the British, depleting the island of skilled men.[140] There were only a few dozen knights on the island capable of leading troops and training a militia such that a minimum of 150 knights from the Order's four nations were needed to remedy the situation.[141] The astute diplomat skilfully reminded the King, that seven of his warships and twenty merchant ships had been berthed in Malta for four months, all the while being protected from British aggression. The Order had provided lodging, food, and hospitality to a number of French troops and sailors, all at its own expense. The ambassador's deft handling of the situation seemed to pay off when Louis XV, in the presence of his entourage, replied to Froullay that 'the Grand Master, the Religion, and the ambassador could rely on my benevolence and protection.'[142] The ambassador left the King's chambers relieved and with the belief that, despite France's war fatigue, it was ready to support the Order.[143]

France was not relying on Froullay's account alone when it came to the island's shortness of provisions. Henri Leonard Jean Baptiste Bertin, the Minister of Finance (1759-64), launched a covert inquiry on the military state of the island in the early days of 1761. An unidentified author, present on the island in February of that year, compiled a detailed report on the subject. In his memorandum he wrote how he considered the fortifications of Malta nearly impregnable, yet they were full of vulnerabilities, especially the ramparts of the grand harbour region. He also found that

[139] 'jamais nous n'avons eu plus besoin de la protection de Votre Majesté.' AN M995, f. 208, 27 April 1761.
[140] AN M995, f. 208, 27 April 1761.
[141] AN M995, f. 211, undated.
[142] 'Le Roi répondait avec bonté, le Grand Maître, la Religion et l'ambassadeur peuvent compter sur ma bienveillance et ma protection.' AN M995, f. 208, 27 April 1761.
[143] AN M995, f. 325, 25 February 1761.

the gunpowder stored since the previous alarm had deteriorated, and the Order was still paying the debts incurred from previous alarms. Wanting to persuade the Minister of Finance of Malta's desperate need for French support, the unidentified author made a compelling case: Malta was crucial for French commerce in the east and therefore the protection of its harbours during times of peace and war was indispensable for the navy of France and its merchant ships, thus if Malta were to fall into Ottoman hands, the Christian coastlines would be exposed to rampant, uncontained Muslim aggression. He therefore encouraged the minister to help strengthen the islands' defences by sending additional troops, medical supplies, ammunition and artillery.[144]

The reasons behind Pinto's decision to seek military support from Italy during the 1761 crisis, diverging from the 18th century custom of directly enlisting French experts, are somewhat uncertain. It is unclear whether the Convent aimed to shield France from the Ottoman-Hospitaller conflict, recognizing the risks France faced in supporting the knights, or if Pinto sought to alleviate the strain on the French military department, which was already stretched thin by ongoing wars. By late 1758, the French navy's debts had escalated to over 42 million livres, and in 1759, expenditures exceeded revenues by 20 million, leading to a breakdown in its credit system.[145] Ultimately, the Italian states failed to deliver the requested five-man brigade of experts, as well as gunpowder and artillery (only a fraction of what was requested was received from the Italian states). The point is that turning to Versailles if Naples failed was a contingency plan, rather than the first choice. The practice of recruiting French military teams in response to Ottoman threats to Malta was a tradition of over a century. It had begun in 1645 when the first team was sent to Malta, with another team arriving in 1715. Following these events, French engineers either stayed as resident experts or were re-invited to manage fortification projects, notably during the threat of 1722-23. This left a lasting French influence on Malta's military architecture landscape, persisting even after the Corona Ottomana affair. The intensity of the 1761 events mirrored closely those of 1715, necessitating the deployment of prominent military engineers, artillery specialists, and their teams of gunners, bombardiers, and miners.[146] Froullay's first task was to convince the court of France to act swiftly for the release

[144] MAE 67 CP, vol. 11, ff. 143r-151v, 24 February 1761.
[145] Jeremy Black, *From Louis XIV to Napoleon* (Oxon, Routledge, 1999b), 218.
[146] Lucca (1980), 23-33; Fleur Brincat, Two French Military Engineers in Eighteenth Century Malta' *Journal of the Monastic Military Orders*, 4 (2012), 89-107.

of summoned knights, military engineers, artillerists and other officers; then he was to try secure a battalion of soldiers, expedite their embarkation with a consignment of artillery and ammunition, especially now that Bailli Marulli failed his commission in Naples.[147]

The dire need for manpower and the reputation of certain French officers likely convinced Froullay to settle for a group of military officers who had recently returned from the Canadian campaigns (1756-1760) and who were still on parole and considered as 'prisoners of war.' Brigadier Charles François count de Bourlamaque was appointed to lead this military team supported by chief engineer Nicolas Sarrebource Maladre de Pontleroy (1717-1802),[148] alongside engineers Jean-Nicolas Desandrouins (1729-1792),[149] and François de Caire,[150] François Fournier-Verrieres and Desroberts; the chief artillerist Fiacre-François Potot de Montbéliard,[151] Lauvicourt and Despinassy; the captain of cavalry and aide-de-camp, la Rochebeaucourt, Duverny,[152] and Antoine-Louis count de Bougainville amongst others. All were veterans of the Canadian conflicts and had served together under Brigadier General Louis-Joseph Montcalm, the commander-in-chief of the French army from the onset of the war.[153]

It is plausible that Louis XV himself chose these militarily 'inactive' men for the Order. While his other engineers and artillerists were still engaged in ongoing continental conflicts, the unemployed Bourlamaque and his team were immediately available for deployment to Malta. Following the surrender agreement between France and Britain in Montreal on 8 September 1760, all French officers who had served in the Canadian campaigns were listed as prisoners of war, barred from participating in

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[147] AN M956, f. 90, 25 February 1761.
[148] Aegidius Fauteux, *Les Chevaliers de Saint-Louis en Canada* (Montreal, Les Éditions des Dix, 1940), 154-155. On Nicolas Sarrebource de Pontleroy, see appendix 1: Short Biographies, p.336
[149] On Jean-Nicolas Desandrouins, see appendix 1: Short Biographies, p. 328.
[150] Fauteux (1940), 200; On François de Caire, see appendix 1: Short Biographies, p.327.
[151] On Fiacre-François Potot de Montbéliard, see appendix 1: Short Biographies, p.336; Bernard Andrès, Patricia Willemin-Andrès, *Journal du Siege du Quebec du 10 mai au 18 septembre 1759* (Canada, Les Presses Université Laval, 2009), 164; Dictionary of Canadian Biography, retrieved on 17 October 2022, from:
http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/potot_de_montbeillard_fiacre_francois_4F.html
[152] John Romeyn Brodhead, *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York*, vol. 10 (Albany, Weed, Parsons & Co., 1858), 399, 487, 737-738, 763-764, 1124; François Gaston duke de Lévis, *Lettres du chevalier de Lévis concernant la guerre du Canada (1756-1760)* (Montreal, C.O Beauchemin & Fils, 1889), 425-428, 440-441.
[153] AN M995, ff. 320-324, 1761; Retrieved on 16 March 2023, from:
https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/seven-years-war; Lévis (1889), 8-9.

any military operations related to the ongoing Seven Years' War. Britain's strategy was to prevent Louis XV from reactivating experienced soldiers for combat on European or American fronts. Consequently, some of these war prisoners remained in Canada; of the 2,200 land force soldiers, 1,700 were allowed to return to France,[154] while the other 500 were released with the stipulation that they avoid any military engagements against Britain. Among those allowed to return home in November 1760 were the Brigadier de Bourlamaque, the engineer François de Caire, Bougainville, and other officers. They were repatriated at British expense aboard a small merchant vessel, *La Joanha*.[155]

The status of the French team as furloughed prisoners-of-war aligned seamlessly with Froullay's military objectives and his broader goal of safeguarding France's relationship with the Levant. Because these men were effectively sidelined, the ambassador was able to recruit them independently, creating the impression that they were employed directly by him rather than the French government. This arrangement conveniently met the Grand Vizier's stipulation that France refrain from providing military support to the Knights of Malta.[156] Furthermore, the team was cohesive, with all five engineers selected for Malta originating from the same corps in Canada. This unit combined a distinguished reputation and proven battlefield experience, which undoubtedly motivated Froullay to recommend these men to the Order.[157] The military officers, having spent the winter of 1760-1761 resting in France, were well-prepared when they departed for Malta in the summer. Engineer Desandrouins, initially returning to his home in Verdun, was among the first to be granted permission by Louis XV to leave France and serve the Order alongside several of his comrades.[158]

Serving the Order was widely regarded as an honour, but for the Brigadier of the Infantry Bourlamaque, advancing his career in the French army was more of a priority than enlisting for the smaller state of Malta. In March 1761, he petitioned M.

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[154] Archives Nationales d'Outre-Mer (Aix-en Provence), ANOM, COL C11A 105, ff. 183-184v.
[155] Charles-Joseph Panckouke, 'Mercure Historique et Politique de Bruxelles,' *Journal Politique de Bruxelles*, 26 (1774), 79-80.
[156] AN M995, f. 341, 1 July 1761.
[157] Lévis (1889), 453.
[158] Charles-Nicolas Gabriel, *Le Marechal de camp Desandrouins 1729-1792: Guerre du Canada, 1756-1760 & Guerre de l'Independence Américaine, 1780-1782* (Verdun, Imprimerie Renvé-Lallemant,1887), 336.

Charonsend and William Pitt, Leader of the House of Commons and Secretary of State, seeking leniency from the King of Britain to be removed from the list of war prisoners. This would have allowed him to rejoin the French forces fighting in Europe. He hoped for the same clemency previously granted to his superior in Canada, François Gaston de Lévis (1719-1787), and that 'the generosity of the King of Britain would grant him the same grace. His fortune depends entirely on it, [military] service being his sole existence.'[159] On 10 March 1761, in a concerted effort to support his deputy, Lévis petitioned Field Marshal John Ligonier (1680-1770), the acting Minister for War for the Pitt-Newcastle ministry in Britain, advocating for Bourlamaque's reinstatement in the French army. This plea came as Froullay was actively lobbying in Versailles for the swift deployment of French military experts and equipment. Lévis explained to Ligonier 'the unfortunate situation he [Bourlamaque] was in after the capitulation of Canada,' and the financial impact this had left on him, such that, 'he had no other fortune to hope for but through [military] service. If the favour he seeks is denied, he loses all resources, whether for living or for advancement.'[160]

When all other efforts failed, Bourlamaque, left with no alternatives, appealed directly to the Minister for War, the duke de Choiseul, requesting from him an endorsement to the ambassador of Malta to appoint him as commander-in-chief of the brigade and to lead the island's military defence during the expected siege. This request was strategically aligned with the capitulation terms agreed between France and Britain in 1760, which permitted him to engage in combat against the Ottomans since this had nothing to do with the war between Britain and France.[161] To make sure that Bourlamaque's request was granted, Choiseul enlisted the help of the *Homme du Roi* of France in Malta, the Bailli Jacques François Picot de Combreux (1757-1762) to persuade the Grand Master in soliciting Bourlamaque's proposal. Combreux sung him praises with the Grand Master, saying that Bourlamaque was an officer who 'in Canada

[159] 'la générosité de sa majesté Britannique qu'elle voudra bien lui accorder la même grâce. Sa fortune en dépend entièrement, le service étant son unique existence.'AN M995, f. 255, undated. It is likely that this letter was written around the end of March 1761 when Chevalier de Lévis, the first in command of the troops in Canada, had already received letters from general Ligonier and William Pitt confirming his clearance to return to French military service in Europe. Lévis wrote back to Ligonier on 10 March 1761 asking for the same grace for his comrade Bourlamaque; Lévis (1889), 397-397.
[160] 'la situation malheureuse où il se trouve par la capitulation du Canada.'; 'Il n'a d'autre fortune à espérer que par le service. Si la grâce qu'il demande lui est refusée, il perd toutes ressources, soit pour l'existence soit pour l'avancement.' Lévis (1889), 396-397.
[161] MAE 67 CP, vol. 11, f. 165, 12 May 1761.

gave great proof of his valour' and whose 'military talents could be well used by the Grand Master.'[162] Bourlamaque's decision to volunteer for Malta, after making a name for himself in the large-scale French-Canadian wars, was influenced not just by the circumstance of his career, but also by the prestige and renown of the Order. His commander-in-chief in Canada, lieutenant general marquis Louis-Joseph de Montcalm Gozon (1712-1759), once confided in Bourlamaque—somewhat romantically—that he regretted never having become a knight of the Order of St John and longed to have died gloriously in service to the Grand Master, [163] especially when 'the blood of Gozon [a former Grand Master and his distant relative] ran in my veins.'[164] Montcalm had also introduced his son Gilbert François Deodat de Montcalm de Gozon as a minor into the Order of St John in 1744.[165] All the same, the true motivation for Bourlamaque's decision to embark on the Maltese expedition was his desire for combat, glory, and a source of income.[166]

François-Charles Bourlamaque remains an elusive figure, garnering scholarly interest due to his military roles in Malta and the French colonial campaigns, although no comprehensive biography has yet been published. He was born into an Italian family that relocated to France in the 17th century after his grandfather, François Burlamacchi, fled Lucca.[167] His father Jean-François had been a page of the King of France in 1693 and later captain of the *Régiment du Dauphin*.[168] Born in 1722,[169] François-Charles de Bourlamaque was raised at the family home in the Château du Vivier in Crecy, a house bearing Italian influence.[170] He started his military career in 1739 in the *Régiment du Dauphin* and served in Flanders and the Rhineland in the

[162] 'au Canada les plus grandes preuves de valeur'; 'ses talents militaires pourraient être très utilement employés par le Grand Maître.' MAE 67 CP, vol. 11, f. 164r, 12 May 1761.
[163] Massicotte, Edouard-Zotique, *Armorial du Canada français. 1ère série par E. Z. Massicotte et Régis Roy* (Montréal, Librairie Beauchemin Limitée, 1918), 116.
[164] 'c'est le sang des Gozon qui coule dans mes veines.' Edited by abbé H.R Casgrain, *Lettres de la cour de Versailles au baron de Dieskau, au marquis de Montcalm et au chevalier de Lévis* (Québec, Imprimerie de L.J Demers & Frere, 1891), 277.
[165] *Liste de Messieurs de Chevaliers de Trois Vénérables Langue* (1761), 20.
[166] AN M995, f. 255, undated; AN M995, f. 339, 22 June 1761.
[167] Joseph Sevin de Quincy, *Mémoires du chevalier de Quincy. III. 1710-1713* (Paris, Société de l'Histoire de France, 1901), 280.
[168] Quincy (1901), 277-278.
[169] Retrieved on 25 May 2022, from: https://www.ville.quebec.qc.ca/citoyens/patrimoine/toponymie/fiche.aspx?IdFiche=51
[170] Quincy (1901), 277-278.

1742-1744 campaigns and in those of Canada in 1756,[171] where he was the third in command after the marquis de Montcalm and Chevalier de Lévis, serving under the former as colonel of the infantry.[172] Following the demise of Montcalm, Bourlamaque moved up the rank as second in command of the French troops in Canada in 1759.[173] He distinguished himself at the Battles of Oswego, de Carillon and Saint Foy, to the extent that in the early 20th century an avenue in Quebec was named after him.[174] Pleased with his service, the Minister for War, d'Argenson (1743-1757), appointed Bourlamaque to be a commander of the Order of St Louis while he was still serving in Canada,[175] and he was later promoted to *Maréchal de Camp* upon his return from Malta.[176] Four months prior to leaving for the Maltese archipelago, Louis XV formally installed him as commander of the Order of Saint Louis, decorating him with the *Cordon Rouge*, for his service in the French colonies during the Seven Years' War.[177]

Assembling the military team was more challenging than Froullay anticipated, not only because he requested a complete team, but also because of the unfavourable wartime conditions in France and its own need for skilled men. Louis-Hyacinthe Boyer de Crémilles (1700-1768), deputy to the Minister for War Choiseul, assured the ambassador of the qualities of Montbéliard, a renowned artillery officer. Montbéliard had distinguished himself as the chief artillerist of the French army in Canada, bringing great honour to France,[178] and whose talent eventually earned him the rank of Inspector General of the Royal Arms Manufactories in Charleville and Sainte-Étienne in 1762.[179] To secure the enlistment of Montbéliard, a top-ranking artillerist whom the Order insisted on having with the team, the ambassador recommended him for a promotion

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[171] Charles Perry Stacey, 'Bourlamaque, François de' in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 3, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003. Retrieved on July 5, 2020, from: http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/bourlamaque_francois_charles_de_3E.html.

[172] Retrieved on 5 July, 2020, from https://www.ville.quebec.qc.ca/citoyens/patrimoine/toponymie/fiche.aspx?IdFiche=512

[173] Retrieved on 5 July 2020, from http://seine-et-marne-quebec.fr/seineetmarne/lmc/; Gabriel (1887), 86.

[174] Online article on Bourlamaque based on primary sources, retrieved on 25 May 2022, from: https://www.ville.quebec.qc.ca/citoyens/patrimoine/toponymie/fiche.aspx?IdFiche=51

[175] The Minister for War, d'Argenson informed Bourlamaque's superior, the marquis de Montcalm of his intention to decorate Bourlamaque with knighthood in the Order of St Louis: Casgrain (1890), 51.

[176] On François-Charles de Bourlamaque, see appendix 1: Short Biographies, p.326; Stacey (2003), http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/bourlamaque_francois_charles_de_3E.html.

[177] *Recueil des nouvelles, Gazette* of 14 Février 1761, Issue 7, Versailles 12 February 1761, p.82.

[178] AN M995, f. 271, 4 May 1761.

[179] Georges Touchard-Lafosse, *La Loire historique, pittoresque et Biographique: de la source de ce fleuve a son embouchure dans l'océan*, Tome 1 (Paris, Adolphe Delahays Libraire, 1856), 313.

to lieutenant colonel, hoping to boost his interest in the Malta mission. However, the ambassador's request was denied.[180] When Ambassador de Froullay fell ill, Pinto transferred the responsibility of expediting the team's dispatch to Louis de Givodan, the secretary of the Order's embassy in Paris. At a military gathering in Paris convened by the Knight Étienne-François de Turgot, Givodan discreetly approached Bourlamaque to verify if Montbéliard was still engaged in the mission as promised by Choiseul. While confirming that Montbéliard was indeed in Paris awaiting instructions, the brigadier expressed doubts that France was letting him leave for the Malta assignment. Givodan complained to Julien-François Dubois, the premier commis of the artillery bureau, regarding the delay in having the French team dispatched to Malta. According to Dubois, the military experts seemed reluctant to depart from France, a comment which deeply worried Givodan because he feared that, either the team was having second thoughts to serve the Order, or France was stepping back from its agreement, even when arrangements for the preservation of the officers' ranks and seniority while in Malta were already made, and some, like, Desprassy and Desandrouins, had already been granted release.[181] Even Montbéliard's agreement of a monthly pay of 500 livres had already been settled,[182] and the artillerist himself had already prepared a *mémoire* about the artillery required for the island.[183] The team seamed geared and eager to start the mission, however, the truth was that Dubois deliberately misled and confused the embassy's secretary. Even Bourlamaque was very dissatisfied with the progress of military preparations in France and confessed to Givodan what he had learned from Dubois himself, that all these issues stemmed directly from the Minister for War de Choiseul, because he remained sceptical of the Ottoman aggression against Malta. Choiseul perceived 'the Order's alarm unreasonable,'[184] and probably he too, like Pinto found all the effort and expense for warfare needless when they secretly knew that negotiations for a diplomatic solution were underway.[185] Consequently, Choiseul reneged on his previous promises and instructed Dubois to cancel Montbéliard's departure, provide him with a compensation for the inconvenience, and send him back to Charleville. Moreover, he rescinded the

[180] AN M995, f. 271, 4 May 1761.
[181] AN M995, f. 333, 22 May 1761.
[182] AN M995, f. 320, undated.
[183] NLM AOM 6558, f. 16v-20v.
[184] 'que le alarme de la Religion sont deraisonable.' AN M995, f. 334, May 1761.
[185] AN M995, f. 334, May 1761.

engineers' and artillerists' rights to retain their rank and seniority within the French army during their service in Malta. He further ceased the provision of pay and subsistence allowances for the unit's gunners, miners and bombardiers, thereby imposing the financial obligation on the Order, which was compelled to cover these expenses from its Treasury starting from the moment the soldiers assembled in Marseille for embarkation to Malta. Bourlamaque was deeply concerned about the minister's actions, and he feared that his only prospect of military employment was about to be destroyed. What compelled Choiseul to such rough manners remains unclear, but it is possible that striking the officers off the army's list, while they were already considered prisoners of war after the capitulation terms with the British, would have facilitated his position with Constantinople if ever France was accused of assisting Malta against the Ottomans. Despite these uncertainties, Bourlamaque remained convinced that participating in the military mission in Malta was preferable to unemployment, even if it meant receiving no remuneration.[186] It was very evident to the embassy's secretary that Choiseul purposely 'created difficulties with the arrangements that had been made,' and for this reason he urged Ambassador de Froullay, who had by then returned to the embassy, to demand an explanation.[187]

Following the Order's disappointment in losing the service of Montbéliard, Froullay managed to secure Paul de Louvicon[188] in his stead as the expedition's chief artillerist.[189] The latter had served as captain under the command of Montbéliard in one of the two companies of artillery in the colonial campaign.[190] Bourlamaque and the chief engineer Pontleroy were not the only French officers from the Canadian campaigns who volunteered to join the fight in Malta. Louis Antoine de Bougainville, a renowned admiral and explorer, who held a prominent position in the French army by the end of the Canadian campaigns, also offered his services to the Order upon his return to France. Like Bourlamaque and Pontleroy, Bougainville found himself without military employment at the time,[191] but unlike his military comrades, he had a better chance of finding one quickly because of his close relationship with the King's

[186] AN M995, f. 334, May 1761.
[187] 'mettre des entraves aux dispositions qui avaient été faites.' AN M995, f. 334, May 1761.
[188] Fauteux (1940), 216; On Paul de Louvicon see, appendix 1: Short Biographies, p.334.;
[189] AN M995, f. 333, 22 May 1761.
[190] Brodhead (1858), 936.
[191] John Dunmore, *Storms and Dreams: Louis de Bougainville: Soldiers, Explorer, Statesman* (Canada, Read How You Want Ltd., 2010), 122, 142.

former mistress (but still powerful favourite) Madame de Pampadour and the duke de Choiseul. His connections were so close that they threw a feast at Versailles in his honour.[192] Much to his disappointment, Bougainville's plans to join the mission to Malta were also thwarted when he was instead assigned to a diplomatic mission with César Gabriel de Choiseul, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, to negotiate peace terms at the congress of Augsburg. This assignment 'stopped me from accompanying to Malta which was threatened by the Turks, Bourlamaque, La Rochebeaucourt and Desandrouins and a few other officers amongst those who fought in Canada, whom the ambassador of the Order requested on behalf of the Grand Master.'[193] If not Malta, he also desired to accompany Fra Charles d'Arnac de Ternay on a mission to Newfoundland. However, his parole forbade him from participating in military actions until his status was resolved, which occurred a year later in 1762.[194] To the detriment of Malta, by the time the French team was ready to embark from Marseille, Bougainville had lost all hope of obtaining permission to leave his post in London and join the mission.[195]

Even before Froullay gathered the sizeable team, Grand Master Pinto selected his preferred candidates. In February 1761, he personally instructed the grand prior of Aquitaine to ensure the participation of the Fra François René Jacob de Tigné, whose uncle had served the Order during previous alarms in 1714-15 and 1722.[196] Pinto's decision to include Tigné proved invaluable for the Order. Serving as commissioner of fortifications and the *de facto* resident engineer as from 1761, he implemented the proposed plans left behind by the French engineers. Remarkably, Tigné would remain active and fight against the French republican invasion of the island in 1798, even at eighty years of age.[197] By the end of June 1761, the French military team was finally

[192] Like Bourlamaque, Bougainville was obliged to obtain permission from the court of Britain in order to serve in the army of France: Thierry Maurice, *Bougainville, Soldat et Marin* (Paris, 1930), 125.
[193] 'm'empêcha d'accompagner à Malte, menacé par les Turcs, Bourlamaque, La Rochebeaucourt, Désandrouins et quelques autres officiers de ceux qui avaient fait la guerre en Canada, que l'ambassadeur de la Religion demanda au nom du Grand Maitre.' René de Kérallain, *Les Français au Canada. La Jeunesse de Bougainville et la guerre de Septans* (Paris, Imprime de Daupeley-Gouverneur, 1896), 178.
[194] Dunmore (2010), 142-143.
[195] AN M995, f. 340, 29 June 1761.
[196] AN M995, f. 219, 26 February 1761.
[197] Brincat (2011), 98.

assembled and on board the *Saint Jean*, together with the gunners and bombardiers, ready to be ferried to Malta.[198]

Names of the military officers invited to join the military mission for Malta; including their designated role in the team	**Joined the Mission Yes- √ No- X**	**Salary per month while in Malta (Livres)**	**Subsistence per day while in Malta (Livres)**
Charles François de Bourlamaque, Brigadier	√	Unknown	Unknown
Nicolas Sarrebource de Pontleroy Chief of Engineers	√	400	23
Jean-Nicolas Desandrouins Military Engineer	√	300	15
François de Caire Military Engineer	√	200	10
François Fournier-Verrieres Military Engineer	√	200	10
Desroberts Military Engineer	Likely missed the departure	200	10
Fiacre-François Potot de Montbéliard Chief of Artillery	X was needed in France	X	X
Paul de Louvicon Chief Artillery Officer	√	300	18
Duverny Captain of Artillery	√	300	18
Despinassy Captain of Artillery	√	300	18
La Rochebeaucourt Captain of Artillery	√	200	10
Lieutenant de Cazotte Captain of Artillery	√	200	10
Jacob de Fidement Captain of Artillery	X	Unwell, cancelled his trip	Unwell, cancelled his trip

Table 4.1 List of engineers and artillery officers approached by the Order's representatives to join the mission to Malta. They were to receive their salary and subsistence from the Treasury of the Order starting from the day of their arrival in Marseille, before embarkation for Malta. The salary rate was based on what they were already earning in the royal army.[199]

4.8 The ambassador in France: mobilising supplies for Malta's defence

The Order's ambassador in Rome and the receivers in Naples and Rome made little progress in obtaining arms and gunpowder, except for the 30,000 pounds of

[198] AN M995, f. 369, 19 June 1761.
[199] AN M995, f. 320, 1761; f. 322, 1761.

gunpowder provided by the city of Lucca, and the small supply from the Pope.[200] When the grand prior of Lombardy, the Bailli Roberto Ignazio Solaro, also failed to procure gunpowder from Mantua, the procurators of the Treasury gave up on Italy and in April 1761 turned to Ambassador de Froullay in Paris.[201] However, even here Froullay found it challenging to fulfil his task, because the King's arsenals were poorly stocked, and 'unfortunately the circumstance of the present war did not allow me [Froullay] to manage [the task] in its totality, but only a small part of it.'[202] As a result, the arms procurement from France in 1761 was conducted in a piecemeal manner. The ambassador and other agents of the Order had to expand their search beyond the usual arsenals of Toulon and Marseille. They looked into other royal arsenals such as those in Roussillon and Languedoc, and even sought to buy directly from the King's personal suppliers.[203] This commission proved complex and challenging for the officials of the Order in France, as evidenced by the substantial number of letters, reports, and estimates for the weapons and gunpowder.[204]

In early April 1761, Froullay, in cooperation with grand prior d'Albert in Marseille, was actively engaged in acquiring a significant quantity of weapons. He began by seeking the approval and support of Nicolas René Berryer, the Minister for the Navy (1758-1761), to access the needed armaments and gunpowder. Berryer immediately investigated the capacity of the royal arsenals to ensure that helping the Order would not compromise France's own critical supplies during peak wartimes. Although Berryer was highly cooperative, the naval arsenals could only partially meet the demands of the Order. In April 1761, France had just about 350 *milliers* (350,000 pounds) of gunpowder in the storehouse of Toulon, not even enough to supply the King's own ships berthed in port. In fact, d'Albert was unable to secure his own relatively smaller commission of 1,000 quintals (100,000 pounds), let alone the 3,000 quintals (300,000 pounds) which Grimaldi, the receiver of Genoa, had been tasked to

[200] The gunpowder consignment from Lucca arrived in Malta in September 1761: NLM AOM 1517, f. 111v, 6 June 1761; f. 144v, 13 September 1761.
[201] NLM AOM 1517, f. 76rv, 25 April 1761; NLM AOM 1517, f. 110r, June 1761.
[202] 'malheureusement, les circonstances de la guerre présente ne m'ont pas permis de réussir pour la totalité, mais seulement pour une très petite partie.' AN M995, f. 329, 2 May 1761; f. 335, 26 May 1761.
[203] AN M995, f. 305, undated.
[204] AN M994 and M995 are two sizeable volumes containing military correspondence from various sources. These form part of the archives of the embassy of the Order in Paris, now stored at the *Archives Nationales de France, Paris.*

obtain. Before Froullay could directly negotiate with private gunpowder manufacturers, he had to navigate through the French bureaucratic system which primarily required the King's authorisation. Even then, these contractors were still obliged to complete the King's annual supply first before they could start any production for third parties, irrespective if foreign or French.[205] When d'Albert attended a Provincial Chapter on 5 May 1761, he learnt that the stored gunpowder in both the land and naval magazines of Toulon amounted to only 6,370 quintals (637,000 pounds) of gunpowder, while those of Marseille had a maximum of 3,000 quintals (300,000 pounds).[206] Faced with these obstacles, the Order was seriously considering procuring from private suppliers, however, grand prior d'Albert advised to thread with caution considering what had happened in 1757, when the Order had independently approached the *Compagnie Royale de Poudres* and had been quoted at 100 livres per quintal instead of the royal price of 60 livres. This was normal procedure as contractors inflated prices for individual buyers to recoup losses incurred in royal supplies. In view of the Order's financial difficulties, d'Albert advised the ambassador to persist in buying from the government through the ministries for war and the navy to save the Order excessive costs.[207].

Heeding the grand prior's advice, Froullay approached the Minister for War, Choiseul once again. The ambassador's persistence paid off because this time he managed to secure 200 quintals (200,000 pounds) of gunpowder for extraction from the magazines in Dauphiné, Languedoc, and Roussillon. This shipment was to be transported to Marseille, where d'Albert would then arrange for its delivery to Malta. Following this, Froullay made an additional effort by approaching the Minister for the Navy, in a final attempt to secure another 3,000 quintals from the magazine of Toulon.[208] Berryer was again in no position to guarantee this amount from any of the arsenals in France, but in his good will, he sounded Micault de Courbeton, the primary contractor of gunpowder and saltpetre in Paris,[209] to verify if he could manufacture the Order's gunpowder under the false pretext that this was being produced for the service of the King, in this way he could sell it to the Order at the King's price. The contractor

[205] AN M995, f. 329, 2 May 1761.
[206] AN M995, f. 353, 6 May 1761.
[207] AN M995, f. 352, 20 April 1761.
[208] AN M995, f. 329, 2 May 1761.
[209] AN M995, f. 247, 7 July 1761.

agreed to provide the required amounts as rapidly as he could, but he demanded cash on delivery in Toulon because the royal navy had already accrued large debts with him.[210] The shortage of funds in the Ministry for the Marine was a concern that even earlier ministers of the navy, particularly Maurepas who openly lamented about his difficulty in meeting the navy's financial obligations. At the onset of the Seven Years' War, the lack of cannons and other naval supplies had been acutely felt at the three main maritime arsenals in Toulon, Brest, and Rochefort, and by 1761, the situation seems to have remained unchanged.[211] Considering the circumstances, Berryer encouraged Froullay to make a cash payment to the navy's Treasury for the existing stock in Toulon and to take the gunpowder right away. This payment would have enabled the minister to use the Order's funds to replenish Toulon's arsenal with freshly manufactured gunpowder, and in doing so he would not only have saved the Order time and effort in negotiating with private suppliers but would have also helped it save money by selling it to the Order at cost price. While recognising the benefits of this strategy, the Order was unable to make an immediate payment because of its insufficient funds.[212]

A week after Berryer's proposal, the minister informed the ambassador that he had reached an understanding with the contractor general of gunpowder to deliver 200 *milliers* (200,000 pounds) of gunpowder to Toulon within two months. But, in waiting for this, the Order would have lost its defensive momentum. He therefore proposed extracting 100 milliers (100,000 pounds) from Toulon, followed by another 100 *milliers* once the gunpowder consignment arrived.[213] A similar deal was proposed concerning 3,000 cannonballs.[214] Meanwhile, the Minister for War informed the ambassador that he had dispatched his orders to release 200 *milliers* of gunpowder from Grenoble together with some guns, which were being transported to Marseille.[215] In July, around 1,500 quintals of gunpowder (150,000 pounds) were also extracted from the arsenal of Toulon alone, amounting to a cost of 90,000 livres, for which the knights agreed to pay in four instalments of 22,250 livres between 1 September 1761

[210] AN M995, f. 245, 27 April 1761.
[211] Jonathan R. Dull, *The French Navy and the Seven Years War* (Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 2005), 12-13.
[212] AN M995, f. 245, 27 April 1761.
[213] AN M995, f. 246, 2 May 1761.
[214] AN M995, f. 245, 27 April 1761; f. 247, 7 July 1761.
[215] AN M995, f. 241, 30 April 1761.

to 1 June 1762. This was getting closer to covering the requirements of gunpowder as calculated by the Convent at the onset of the alarm.[216]

The procurement of artillery and ammunition followed two main pathways: one directed solely by the ambassador in negotiation with the Minister for the Navy, and in close liaison with Bourlamaque who was already working for the Order even before leaving for Malta; and the other was managed by Bourlamaque himself, in negotiation with the deputy to the Minister for War, Louis-Hyacinthe Boyer de Cremille. Prior to negotiating with both Ministries for War and the Navy, Bourlamaque and the engineer Pontleroy had already notified the Order of the shortage of guns in the royal arsenals, so they directed the Hospitallers to the King's founder, Jean Maritz de Borollière (1712-1790).[217] Maritz was one of the most famous artillery founders in Europe. He was the son of the Swiss Jean Maritz (1680-1743), inventor of the 'Maritz method,' a method of boring bronze cannons with far greater precision, and by the mid-eighteenth century this father and son company had come to dominate all the foundries of France. The younger Maritz became an Inspector General of the Foundries of France in 1755 and was also an associate of the artillery reformer Gribeauval. In fact, it was the Maritz family's method that paved the way for Gribeauval's cannon design, which encompassed greater interchangeability of parts and lighter barrels.[218] However, buying from Maritz could not work out for the Order because the duration of production of six weeks for the cannons and an additional four months for the mortars were too long for the current circumstances.[219] Maritz was no stranger to the Order; the knight Joseph de Lancry-Prompleroy had already witnessed his superior craftsmanship and reported to the Order's receiver in Paris that Maritz had always produced superior mortars, utilizing bronze from Lyon. He was convinced that the Order could not find a better supplier than Maritz, not only because his manufacture was outstanding, but also because he was an honourable man.[220]

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[216] AN M995, f. 290, 30 July 1761.
[217] AN M995, f. 225, undated report.
[218] The Swiss family Maritz dominated cannon manufacture in France in mid-18th century. Their operations were mostly based in Strasbourg, Douai and in the Lyon foundries. The father and son had been operating in Lyon since the 1730s and in a matter of twenty years they controlled all the foundries of France: Ken Alder, *Engineering the Revolution: Arms and Enlightenment in France, 1763-1815* (London, University of Chicago Press, 2010), 40, 360.
[219] AN M995, f. 225, undated report.
[220] AN M995, f. 357, 18 May 1761.

Reluctantly, the knights declined Bourlamaque's proposal,[221] despite his strong recommendations of Maritz. Following this, on 28 April 1761, the brigadier himself drafted a list of ordnance, ammunition and other military paraphernalia for Malta and dispatched it to Pierre Samson Bosquillon, the lieutenant colonel of Artillery in Provence, to prepare the consignment in time for his team's departure.[222] Shortly after, Bourlamaque expanded the order to include an additional 16 cast iron cannons, 8 cast iron howitzers, and 8 cast iron mortars, along with the necessary ammunition for these weapons and an extra 200,000 pounds of gunpowder.[223] The French team's artillery captain, Paul de Louvicon, who was already in Marseille awaiting grand prior d'Albert's announcement of their departure for Malta, believed that the shipment of cannon was insufficient, thus he proposed an additional 12 cannons and 2 howitzers which he was sure Toulon could spare for Malta.[224]

Despite all Froullay's efforts and the assistance of Bourlamaque, by the end of May 1761, Froullay had only managed to obtain a fraction of the artillery that had been on the Treasury's list of arms: a meagre four 8-calibre mortars, four cannons *à la Suedoise* and two howitzers, along with the donation of the grand prior of France, the Prince de Conti.[225] Besides this, Froullay had to contend with internal conflict. commander François Charles Alexandre de Grieu,[226] the procurator and receiver general of the Order in Paris, openly criticized the embassy's secretary, Givodan for failing to secure the number of guns *à la Suedoise* and mortars requested by the procurators in Malta when the latter was in charge of the embassy. Even though the Prince de Conti had already instructed M. Gor, the King's founder, to produce eight howitzers, four cannons *à la Suedoise*, and several cannon shots at his own expense, Grieu remained staunchly opposed to Bourlamaque's suggestion of casting cannons in

[221] Maritz's connection with the Order did not end with the Corona Ottomana episode. In June 1762, nearly a year after the end of the alarm, the *Maréchal de Camp* de Chantilly notified the Order that Maritz had inquired whether the knights were interested in his services for the production of cannon, mortars, howitzers, and ammunition mentioned in the correspondence he had had with the artillery captain Paul Louvicon (chief artillerist of the French team arriving in Malta in 1761). Maritz offered an attractive deal to the Order for the manufacture of iron or bronze cannon of any calibre which also included their transportation to Marseille or Toulon. Commander Chantilly strongly advised the Order to take advantage of Maritz's proposal and sign a deal while the contractor was still in Versailles. To date there is no indication that the Order or its ambassador ever approached Maritz on this matter: AN M995, f. 347, 4 June 1762.
[222] AN M995, f. 276, 10 June 1761.
[223] AN M955, f. 273, 5 May 1761.
[224] AN M995, f. 277, 5 June 1761.
[225] AN M995, f. 335, 26 May 1761.
[226] On François-Charles Alexandre de Grieu, see appendix 1: Short Biographies, p.333.

France.[227] Amidst all this confusion, some assistance seemed to be forthcoming from Venice, despite its disapproval of the Order's decision to hold onto the Ottoman ship. Fra Michele Enrico Sagramosa, receiver of the Order in Venice,[228] managed to secure an undisclosed supply of tax-free extraction of gunpowder and cannons and other military material from the arsenal of Venice, which was an unusual concession considering the cautionary attitude Venice tended to take for fear of conflict with the Ottomans.[229] Ever since the signing of the Treaty of Passarowitz in 1718, the Republic of Venice enjoyed a seventy-nine year peace with the Ottomans until its collapse in 1797,[230] therefore the Serenissima could not risk causing a conflict with the Porte if it became known that it was aiding Malta in a fight against it, especially when the Hospitaller island and Venice did not share a common policy towards the Ottomans. While Venice was tolerant of the Muslim, the Hospital's relevance in the Christian community depended on its perpetual war against Islam.[231] By 1761, Venice's conflict was for reasons of piracy with the Barbary regencies, who were by this time more independent from the Porte.[232] Despite Venice's good intentions, there is no indication in the consulted documents that any weaponry ever arrived from Venice in 1761.

Despite the challenges faced by Froullay, France not only met but exceeded Bourlamaque's initial purchase order. The final consignment, as verified by d'Albert and Bosquillon, surpassed Brigadier Bourlamaque's original request. However, it still did not meet the full expectations of the Treasury's procurators. Once assembled, the French consignment was transported to Marseille (see table 4.2 and 4.3), arriving in time for the French team to embark for Malta on the *Saint Jean II*.[233]

Meanwhile, another significant arms shipment, separate from the Treasury procurators' commission of February 1761, was being prepared for Malta. This consignment included 1,500 muskets with bayonets and 200 boarding pistols from the manufacturers of arms of Saint-Étienne-en-Forez. This dispatch was part of a thirteen-year contract initiated in 1759 between the knights and Saint-Étienne.[234] Fortunately

[227] AN M995, f. 333, 22 May 1761; f. 335, 26 May 1761.
[228] On Michele Enrico Sagramoso, see appendix 1: Short Biographies, p. 338.
[229] AN M956, f. 104, 17 June 1761.
[230] Fassal (2011), 95.
[231] Mallia-Milanes (2008), 8-9.
[232] Maria Pia Pedani, *The Ottoman-Venetian Border c.15th-18th centuries* (Dorsoduro, Edizione Ca Foscari, 2017), 46.
[233] AN M995, f. 266, undated; f. 273, 5 May 1761; f. 276, 10 June 1761.
[234] See chapter 6.

for the Order, the first batch of this agreement was dispatched in time during the peak of the 1761 alarm. On 22 June 1761, the duke de Choiseul ordered the removal of customs fees for the transportation of these firearms from Saint-Étienne to Marseille, ensuring they followed the same route as the other cargo.[235]

1,500 quintals (150,000 pounds) of gunpowder charged at 60 livres per quintal. Price negotiated between Berryer and Froullay.	90,000 livres
15,000 barrels for gunpowder at 2 livres per empty barrel, same price sold to the King.	3,000 livres
3,000 cannonballs of 12 inches weighing 4,495 quintals sold at 15 livres per quintal. Price negotiated between Berryer and Froullay.	67,425 livres
Total sum for gunpowder and ammunition	**160,425 livres**

Table 4.2 List of ammunition extracted from the arsenal of Toulon based on the request made by Ambassador de Froullay. The commission was issued by Berryer, the Minister for the Navy to the *intendant* of the Port of Toulon, Charles-Martin Hurson (1760-1772), on 6 May 1761. The provisions were handed over to the Order on 20 June 1761 before the teams' departure to Malta.[236]

[235] AN M995, f. 257, 22 June 1761.
[236] AN M995, f. 266, 20 June 1761; f. 270, 20 June 1761; f. 290, 30 July 1761.

4 canons à *la Suedoise*	5,005.10.1 livres
4 gun-carriages for the above canons	1,440 livres
2 cast-iron howitzers	6,200 livres
2 carriages for the above howitzers at 460 livres each	920 livres
800 shells for the howitzer	2,560 livres
4 cast-iron mortars of 8 inches at 270 livres each	4,080 livres
5 gun-carriages for mortars of 8 inches	750 livres
200,000 pounds of gunpowder packed in barrels of 100 livres and 200 livres at 20 sous (1 livre per pound) per barrel	200,000 livres
Total sum for the artillery, ammunition and additional gunpowder	**224,155.10 livres**

Table 4.3 Artillery and ammunition transported from various locations to the port of Marseille from where the grand prior of Saint Gilles and procurator general and receiver of the Order, d'Albert, shipped them to Malta in June 1761.[237]

In addition to weapons and ammunition, the Council of State and the procurators of the Treasury requested the purchase of surgical equipment for the provisioning of the Holy Infirmary in Valletta. The last major surgical consignment had been shipped to Malta from France in 1716, as part of the military preparations for the 1715 alarm. However, these instruments had been inadequately stored and were certified obsolete by 1761.[238] The list of medical equipment was drafted under the guidance of brigadier Bourlamaque while he was helping Froullay co-ordinating the military provisions in Paris. Amongst other items, he ordered 1,000 men's briefs for testicular injuries and 2,000 bandages for hernia injuries which Bourlamaque claimed to be common during combat.[239] Having the King's permission for extraction, some nine boxes of surgical equipment including amputation saws, curved knives,

[237] AN M995, f. 267, June 1761.
[238] NLM AOM 634, f. 47, 29 November 1761.
[239] AN M995, f. 225, undated.

tourniquets, needles, and so on, were prepared for Malta,[240] under the direction of Jacques René Tenon, Professor of the Royal College of Surgeons and the *Académie Royale des Sciences.* This was done in close liaison with the receiver of the Order in Paris, de Grieu. Once delivered to Malta, the medical equipment was entrusted to the doctor Joseph Farrugia.[241] To complement the medical team on the island, a surgeon, eight aide-majors, and twenty-four medical students (sent to replace the aide-majors in case of death), were chosen.[242]

4.9 To Malta

While Froullay was gathering troops and equipment, and handling logistics from Paris, conflicting reports arriving from Constantinople and Vienna added to the uncertainty on the island. News from Vienna stated that preparation of the Ottoman armament had come to a standstill, but Sagramoso in Venice claimed that the Ottoman fleet was ready to set sail in May with 4,000 Janissaries and 20,000 troops, each paid 4 zecchini a month. The fleet's destination was still unclear, but a stop in Egypt and the Morea was being expected because of the large-scale stocking of biscuit produced in these two places for the Ottoman navy. Due to this uncertainty, and the fact that Louis XV and Mustafa III had not yet reached formal an agreement on the Corona Ottomana, the Grand Master chose to proceed with his military preparations.[243]

It seems that Grand Master Pinto was very pleased with his ambassador's choice of military officers and was eagerly 'awaiting [Bourlamaque] to see him arrive with his entourage of engineers and artillerymen on the vessel *Saint Jean*.'[244] On 18 April 1761, captain Louis des Roches set sail for Marseille, Genoa, Toulon, Antibes and Nice, with the specific instructions to ferry all the summoned knights, the French military team, and all the weaponry which the receivers and agents in these ports were readying for departure.[245] On 16 May, the *Saint Jean II* and another accompanying vessel berthed in Marseille.[246] Captain des Roches urged the grand prior of St Gilles to

[240] AN M995 f. 287, 1 June 1761.
[241] AN M995 f. 264, 2 May 1761.
[242] AN M995, f. 226, undated.
[243] AN M956, f.104, 17 June 1761.
[244] 'che aspettiamo di vedere qui arrivare con il suo seguito di ingegneri e artiglieri sul vascello di San Giovanni.' AN M956, f. 104, 17 June 1761.
[245] NLM AOM 271, f. 181, 18 April 1761.
[246] AN M995, f. 359, 27 May 1761.

expedite the embarkation of the team and the cargo of weapons without further delay, but the grand prior was forced to delay the embarkation because the French experts, gunners, bombardiers and miners were still arriving in Marseille.[247] Writing from Paris, Froullay reassured the anxious captain, who was already waiting in Provence, that he was taking all responsibility for the unforeseen delay and that the captain would suffer no consequences with the Convent in this regard. The arrival of military officials, gunners, and bombardiers in Marseille was scheduled for 15 June, but many were still in transit.[248] Despite some reassuring news about the Ottoman armament, Froullay still sought ways to expedite the trip of some military experts. In Paris, he asked the assistance of the ambassador of Denmark to urgently ferry to Malta on a Danish vessel, the chief of the engineers Pontleroy, the chief artillerist Louvicon, and the Bailli Jean Antoine de Riquetti de Mirabeau so they could start preliminary works while the rest of the team sorted the logistics for the departure.[249] However, a Danish captain in Marseille refused to ferry them because the Danish ambassador denied Froullay's request.[250]

Meanwhile, d'Albert recorded in a register the arrival date in Marseille of each officer and soldier joining the team for Malta. Once compiled, this information was sent to the Order's embassy in Paris, as France required the Order to pay the men's wages and subsistence from their arrival in Marseille until their return.[251] Froullay emphasised with captain des Roches the importance of treating the French team with utmost respect and to try to foster in them a sense of pride in their service to the Order. Froullay endeavoured tirelessly to sustain the Frenchmen's commitment to their mission in Malta, despite being well aware that the chances of engaging in combat had become increasingly slim.[252] Just days before the *Saint Jean II* left Marseille, additional reports of the diminishing threat reached Paris. The ambassador felt convinced that if this information had arrived a week earlier, it could have led to the postponement, reduction, or even cancellation of the French relief force. While this would have spared the Order significant military expenditure, it would also have deprived the island of a

[247] AN M995, f. 336, 26 May 1761.
[248] AN M995, f. 336, 26 May 1761; f. 337, 26 May 1761.
[249] AN M995, f. 336, 26 May 1761.
[250] AN M995, f. 359, 27 May 1761.
[251] AN M995, f. 337, 26 May 1761.
[252] AN M995, f. 336, 26 May 1761; f. 337, 26 May 1761.

chance to strengthen its military infrastructure.[253] Determined to keep the military plans on track, Froullay wrote to Bourlamaque in Marseille, explaining that even if the siege did not happen, the mission to Malta would still offer him a chance to help secure the 'Christian Bulwark' against future Ottoman campaigns.[254] To engage Bourlamaque even further, Froullay made good use of his diplomatic prowess. While the royal family stayed at Marly, he met with Hans Stanley, a British diplomat and former Lord of the Admiralty, who was in France from May to September 1761 to negotiate the closure of the Seven Years War. Froullay aimed to secure Bourlamaque's release from the imposed restrictions of the capitulation with Britain, so that he could eventually proceed with his career in the French army. Even though Froullay's efforts bore no fruit, the ambassador persisted in the defence of Bourlamaque's case, hoping to have him re-instated in the King's army by the time he returned from Malta.[255]

On 11 June, the *Saint Jean II* set sail from Marseille with four supporting vessels to Toulon to retrieve the remaining military cargo stashed in this port. The plan was to anchor in the port until the arrival of all the remaining officers, soldiers and knights bound for Malta, and then leave all together with the vessels still docked in Marseille. Artillerists Desandrouins and de Cazotte travelled with the captain to Toulon to oversee the loading of the remaining equipment. Bourlamaque remained in Marseille to cross check the list of weapons and ammunition extracted from the magazines of Marseille before loading them. Officers Pontleroy, Louvicon, Despinasi, and Rochebeaucourt stayed with him to assist with the logistics. Bourlamaque observed that some of the ammunition boxes, which the minister had given his permission to extract from Marseille, were missing. In light of this, he made a last-minute agreement with the artillery commander at Marseille to rapidly, but unofficially, extract the missing boxes. Grand prior d'Albert had the task of replacing these boxes quickly because Bourlamaque wanted to avoid any conflict with the authorities in Paris.[256] Grand prior d'Albert had previously arranged for the troop of 40 gunners to be transported from Aix to Toulon between the 14th and 15th of June, and therefore all that remained from this logistical nightmare was for the expert officers to

[253] AN M995, f. 341, 1 July 1761.
[254] 'le Boulevard de la Chretiente.' AN M995, f. 340, 29 June 1761.
[255] AN M995, f. 340, 29 June 1761.
[256] AN M995, f. 368, 12 June 1761.

meet their unit in Toulon.[257] Bourlamaque was concerned about the late arrival of two of his key technical officers, artillerist Duverny and engineer Desroberts, so he directed the Order's grand prior to assist them in reaching Malta if they missed the convoy.[258]

The significant presence of knights in the arsenal of Toulon was beneficial for the Order not only in the logistics phase of military preparation for Malta, but also for their insider information. Just before the convoy sailed from Toulon, commander de Glandevés, the knight overseeing port operations, reported a critical error which was detrimental for the Order. When Berryer, the Minister for the Navy, had negotiated the extraction of gunpowder and bombs from two of the arsenals of Toulon with Ambassador de Froullay, the agreed price was that of 60 livres per quintal for gunpowder and 15 livres per quintal for the bombs (the cost price paid by the King), a rate which at the time seemed agreeable to both parties. However, at the eleventh hour, Glandevés alerted Froullay that the cost price for the cannonballs originally paid by the Royal Treasury was that of 10 livres per quintal and not 15 livres. Glandevés considered this to be a genuine mistake made by Berryer, and he felt certain that France was not trying to take advantage of the Order's urgent and vulnerable circumstances. Still, he encouraged Froullay to revise the price with the minister and save the Order some 23,000 livres. Glandevés confessed to the ambassador that, 'as a member of the Order, I feel I am obliged to tell you about the cannonballs,' yet, as serviceman to the King he lived in the fear that the Minister for the Navy could interpret his actions as undermining the interest of the monarchy. For this reason, he asked Froullay to keep his identity secret.[259]

When all the cargo and the seventy-one passengers were finally embarked, the *Saint Jean II* and its four ships left Toulon on 22 June 1761 at three in the afternoon, for what was to be the final French military mission to Malta under *ancien regime* France.[260] On 5 July 1761, at six in the morning, the French convoy arrived in the harbour of Malta heavily laden with gunpowder, artillery (partly loaded from Marseille

[257] AN M995, f. 365, 11 June 1761.
[258] AN M995, f. 366, 4 June 1761. Duverny managed to arrive in time for departure. Bourlamaque listed him with all the officers of his team on board the Order's ship which was ready to sail for Malta: AN M995, f. 369, 19 June 1761.
[259] 'comme membre de l'Ordre, je crois être obligé de vous dire que, à l'égard des bombes.' AN M995, f. 370, 23 June 1761.
[260] AN M995, f. 370, 23 June 1761.

and partly in Toulon),[261] soldiers and sixty-two knights arriving from various nations (see appendix 3: List of knights arriving in Malta in 1761).[262] The vice-chancellor de Guedes' initial impression of the head of the French mission was surely a positive one: 'the first appearance of count de Bourlamaque corresponded perfectly to the report sent by His Excellency [Froullay].'[263] Guedes had heard of his skills and rare qualities, and the Order had every intention of making good use of his talent on these islands, to adopt 'a military system abreast with modern ways of conducting war.' [264]

4.10 Conclusion

Prior to 1761, the most recent substantial enhancement to the island's defence system had been made in 1715. The sole additions since 1715 were two forts, Manoel (Malta) and Chambray (Gozo), both designed by the French engineer Brigadier René Jacob de Tigné.[265] Vice-chancellor Guedes claimed that since 1715, some knights and military enthusiasts did offer their modern ideas in warfare for the defence of Malta, but more often than not, these pertained to some particular element of the islands' defences and not to the general scheme of defence. He believed that major military reform was impossible to achieve in Malta unless there was a genuine and pressing need, that is, unless 'the common danger animates everyone with the will to make an effort.'[266] Extended periods of relative peace resulted in a widespread reluctance among the knights residing on the island to invest in military endeavours, driven partly by lethargy and partly by the prioritization of other concerns. Senior brethren tended to be accustomed to traditional methods and failed to understand new developments in warfare. The financial burden of large-scale military projects typically deterred the Council of State and the Order's Treasury from pursuing fortification projects until circumstances obliged them otherwise. Despite the Order's regular income from its

[261] NLM AOM 271, f. 195, 5 July 1761; AN M956, f. 108, 11 July 1761; Mallia-Milanes (2008), 252, fn 2.
[262] Mallia-Milanes (2008), 262.
[263] 'La prima comparsa del Sig. Conte di Bourlamaque e tutto quello che sinora si è veduto di lui corrisponde perfettamente alle vantaggiose relazioni di Vostra Eccellenza per la dolcezza e la polizia del suo tratto.' AN M956, f. 108, 11 July 1761.
[264] 'un sistema militare adattato al modo presente di fare la guerra.' AN M956, f. 108, 11 July 1761.
[265] In her monograph Alison Hoppen provides a detailed account of the developments of Malta's fortifications from 1530 to 1798, including the contributions of French engineers (resident and visiting) from 1715 onwards; Hoppen, (1999), 101-103, 141-159, 170-202; Spiteri (2008), 66-83.
[266] 'il comune pericolo anima tutti a concorrere di buonavoglia affinché si faccia uno sforzo.' AN M956, f. 108, 11 July 1761.

European commanderies, it often faced financial shortfalls in the 18th century, necessitating loans to prepare for sieges.[267]

Allowing the contingent of soldiers and arms depart from Marseille for Malta, despite the knowledge among a select group of Hospitaller officials and the Grand Master, that no imminent alarm was expected that year, and that diplomatic negotiations were likely to mitigate the threat, demonstrates a strategic manoeuvre by this small circle of knights. They exploited the perceived Ottoman menace to secure France's intense and dedicated military assistance, a level of support typically reserved for pressing circumstances. Their decision to proceed was good for Malta because even if the siege did not materialise, it provided the opportunity to see some long-term infrastructure issues in Malta's defence be addressed, plus bolstering its magasins and armoury. It was also, at the same time, good for France, since it rendered the archipelago more secure for the Order and its subjects, but especially for the shipping of France that passed through Malta's harbours.

Chance had it that France was in a position to release an entire team of experienced military officers (similar to the 1715 alarm, but unlike that of 1722 when only one military engineer was released) who were in any case unable to serve France because of the impositions made by Britain. Their status of parole protected France from any Ottoman accusation of assisting the Order against the will of the Sultan. It was in a way easier to conceal consignments of weapons arriving on the island from France, than it was to have French soldiers dressed in their uniform circulate around the island, and therefore being visible to locals and foreigners alike. The 1761 alarm is a clear example of how fear of an Ottoman onslaught fuelled the knights with renewed energy for military preparedness and how France responded even when under threat by its traditionally strong ally, the Ottoman Empire. The next step now entailed the Convent seeing that these experts would deliver by sharing their expertise, and for the Grand Master to have the diplomatic mission from France resolve the Corona Ottomana ordeal once and for all.

[267] AN M956, f. 108, 11 July 1761.

Chapter 5
The crisis of 1761: Resolution and Legacy

5.1 Introduction

Building on chapter 4, where the meticulous organisation of Malta's defence from France was explored, this chapter looks at how the defence preparation started in France came into action in Malta. In July 1761, the French military team, dispatched as a living testament to France's commitment, arrived in Malta. Their presence not only fortified the island's defences but also marked a crucial turn in the narrative of military engagement. They were soon joined by Louis XV's diplomatic envoy tasked with the delicate mission of having the Sultan's warship expertly evaluated and negotiating the acquisition on behalf of France. As it delves into the action and impact of the French in Malta, this chapter continues to weave the complex tapestry of defence, diplomacy, and international intrigue that characterized this event in the history of the knights.

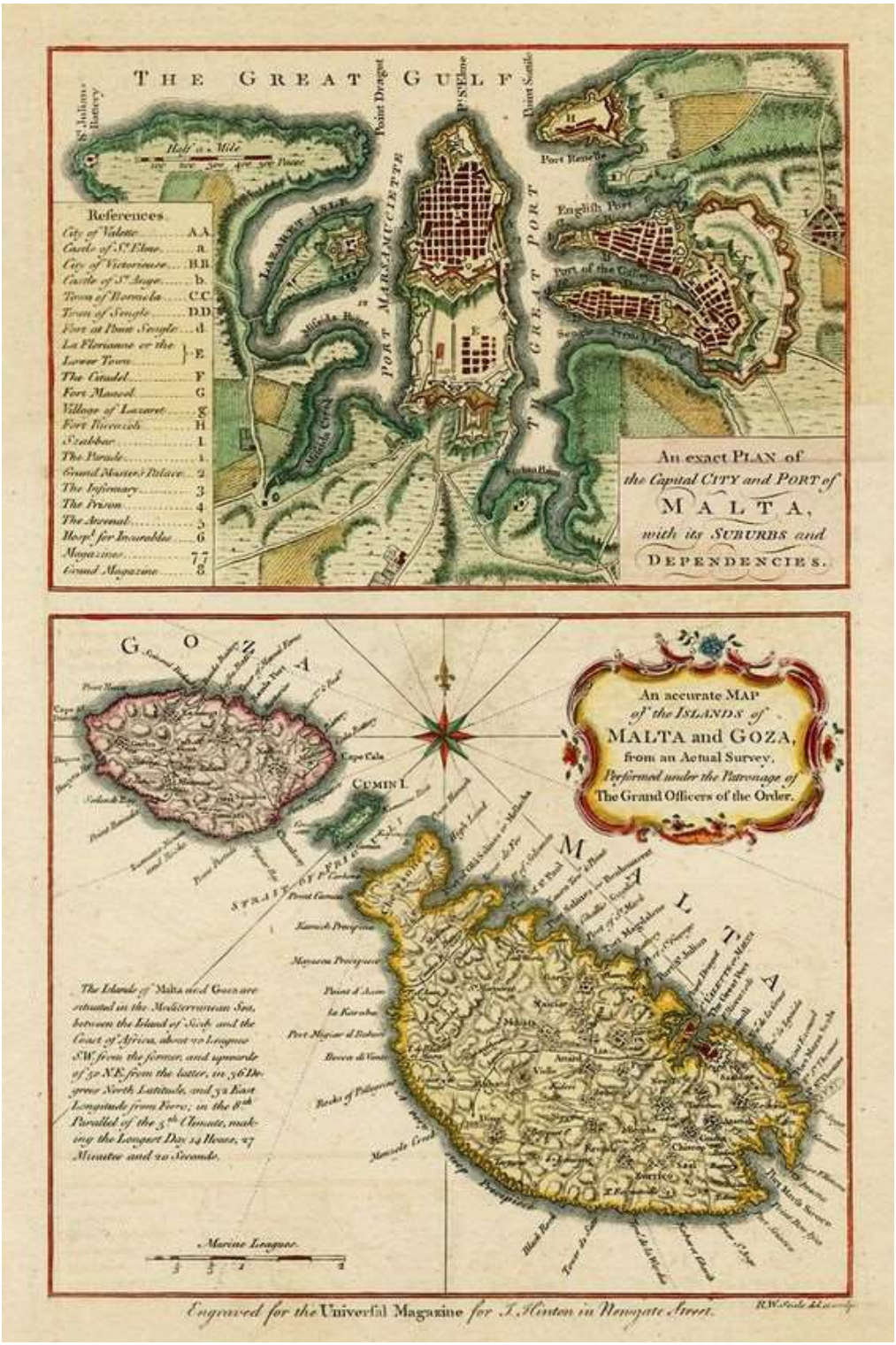
5.2 The French military team in Malta

The military mission on the island started off on the wrong foot. Several military officers, including the chief engineer Pontleroy, had to rest for some days after contracting 'a chest infection' during their voyage.[1] Nevertheless, once recovered they spent a week exploring the island's coast and fortifications and preparing reports for the Congregation of War for the amelioration of the island's defence system. News that the Ottoman siege was not happening in 1761,[2] gave Bourlamaque's team the time to produce elaborate reports and long-term proposals rather than makeshift measures. The head of mission aimed to leave François René Jacob de Tigné (nephew of brigadier de Tigné) in charge of their execution. The younger Jacob de Tigné had sailed to Malta with Bourlamaque and remained behind to serve the Religion as commissioner of fortifications and *de facto* resident engineer.[3]

[1] 'fieri catarri,' AN M956, f. 108, 11 July 1761.
[2] Mallia-Milanes (2008), 262.
[3] The French team's reports and proposals are archived at the National Library of Malta in several volumes, including: NLM AOM 6519; AOM 6555, AOM 6565, AOM 6558. Other volumes and copies of the engineers and artillerists reports can be found at the *Service Historique de la Défense* at the château de Vincennes: GR 1 M521; SHA Yd, 2393.

The French experts visited the northern coast of Malta and spent six days investigating the military system of Gozo and Comino. To their detriment, the Maltese climate aggravated the commander-in-chief's health. Having survived serious injuries during the Canadian campaigns and his chronic asthma,[4] his stay in Gozo gave him a 'constipation of all the body.' This was probably some sort of strong cold with accompanying overall body pains. He also suffered from severe toothache and a swollen face.[5] Pontleroy too contracted a similar sickness while travelling in Gozo, and thus, it is likely that their predicaments resulted from the 'fatigue and the different climate to that of Canada.'[6] Both men had to retreat to Valletta for some rest, which delayed the completion of their reports.[7] Shortly after resuming his duty, Bourlamaque's work got interrupted again when he was forced to rest because of an intestinal infection. When he finally recovered, he proceeded with the inspection of the coast and inland fortifications,[8] only to fall ill once again. This time round he required the medical assistance of the Maltese surgeon, Farrugia,[9] who was well versed in the French language because he had completed his medical studies in Paris.[10] Apart from health issues, Bourlamaque had to contend with opposition from some idle knights who had recently arrived to the island from Provence. These initiated slanderous rumours about a supposed military command assigned to them, with the intention of undermining the efforts of the French team and diminishing the respect that French officers commanded within the Convent.[11]

[4] Retrieved on 12 June 2022, from: http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/bourlamaque_francois_charles_de_3E.html
[5] 'costipazione per tutto il corpo,' AN M956, f. 109, 27 July 1761. This phrase refers to the spoken italian vernacular, meaning, a strong and serious cold accompanied by general body aches: G. Rigutini, Pietro Fanfani, *Vocabolario Italiano della lingua parlata*, vol. 1 (Florence, 1875), 458.
[6] 'il tutto cagionato dalla fatiga, e la clima molto diverso da quella del Canada.' AN M956, f. 109, 27 July 1761.
[7] AN M956, f. 109, 27 July 1761.
[8] AN M956, f. 112, 10 August 1761.
[9] AN Fonds Turgot, 745AP-35 Dossier 2, f. 302, 28 November 1761.
[10] AN M956, f. 80, 7 January 1761.
[11] AN M956, f. 108, 11 July 1761.



Map 5.1 Top section of the map features the convent city of Valletta and the grand harbour defence scheme, while the bottom half shows a map of the island of Malta and Gozo in 1761. Richard William Seale's map was done in 1761 based on a survey approved by the Knights of Malta.[12]

[12] The map was retrieved on 23 January 2023, from: https://www.battlemaps.us

Bourlamaque presented the Convent with a generic report on the islands' military status after a thorough survey of the archipelago. He was awed by Malta's lines of defence, claiming that:

this island, undoubtedly the most magnificent military stronghold in the world and most advantageously located, belongs to the elite of European nobility. The people inhabiting it are of the finest kind; it boasts numerous artillery and significant fortifications. Despite these considerable advantages, it is easy to demonstrate that on its own it could not withstand an attack by a major power if confronted in its current state.[13]

Basing themselves on Brigadier Jacob de Tigné's 1715 masterplan as a framework for the extensive lines of fortification, the French team in 1761 conducted a comprehensive assessment of the progress made on defence works since its inception. They meticulously identified unfinished works which were still essential to achieve an adequate and robust defence, particularly in the region of the grand harbour area.[14] Overall, Bourlamaque considered the fortifications of Valletta as mostly adequate for the standards of war, with the Convent city requiring only minor modification. Similarly to Brigadier de Tigné, who had expressed the same sentiment years earlier, Bourlamaque regarded Floriana's land front as 'the most beautiful part of the fortifications of Malta,'[15] yet some adjustments were nonetheless required. In the Marsamxett harbour right across from the Convent stood the thirty-year-old French-designed Fort Manoel, which Bourlamaque considered as 'a model of fortification executed with care, and completed in all its parts,'[16] requiring only an extension to its covered way. Right across from the Convent city and the grand harbour

[13] 'Cette île est sans contredit la plus belle place d'armes du monde et située la plus avantageusement, elle appartient à l'élite de la noblesse d'Europe. Le peuple qui l'habite est de la meilleure espèce; elle a une artillerie nombreuse et des fortifications considérables et malgré tant d'avantages, il est aisé de démontrer qu'elle ne pourrait résister par elle-même à une grande puissance si elle était attaquée dans l'état où elle est actuellement.' NLM AOM 6519, f. 1r, 1761.

[14] SHD GR 1M521, f. 3, 1789. This document is a compilation of Brigadier de Tigné's proposed fortification works for Malta and Gozo. It includes the evaluations and recommendations given by Bourlamaque and his team for each of Tigné's proposals, as well as an account of the works that remained to be done to completed Tigné's plans of 1715. It is likely that this *mémoire* was taken from Malta by the French republicans in 1798 before the Army of the Orient proceeded to Egypt, because it became part of general Damas's papers after 1798. General Damas was the aide-de-camp to General de Kléber. This document must have been taken from the archives of the Order in 1798, when Napoleon took Malta from the knights.

[15] 'le plus beau morceau des fortifications de Malte.' NLM AOM 6558, f. 75r, 1761.

[16] 'c'est un modèle de fortification fait avec soin, et fini dans toutes ses parties.' NLM AOM 6558, f. 83v, 1761. This long document is titled, *Memoire sur les fortifications des villes de Malte, 1761.*

stood the heavily armed Fort St Angelo with its four-tiered battery aimed for defence against any seaward approach to the Convent city, and this too required only some regular up-keep.[17]

The French team noted a number of defects common to all of the islands' strongholds. In particular, the island lacked bomb-proof cisterns in all its fortresses. They were surprised to learn how the Order ignored earlier recommendations in this regard, considering that the hot climate of the islands could put the besieged at risk of dying of thirst. If the island succeeded in increasing its water supply threefold, then two families arriving from the countryside could easily be placed in one city dwelling during an onslaught. Public cisterns for the troops, bakeries and hospitals were all lacking, while a number of casemates were needed to provide the troops with a resting place away from the chaos of bombs and bullets. The French team were highly critical of most of the fortresses' parapets which they believed ought to be destroyed, rebuilt of earth, and raised to 6 feet and 6 inches above the scarp, as per French convention.[18]

Bourlamaque's extensive report suggests that Vauban's influence on the island's military architecture persisted beyond the contributions of Brigadier de Tigné and Mondion, who both worked under the great fortress expert in the early 18th century. In 1761, Bourlamaque considered necessary the application of Vauban's method of *blindage double* for the protection of deployed gunners and troops vulnerable to ricochet fire (see figure 5.1).[19] Yet, the scarcity of wood on the island made Bourlamaque's suggestion impractical. In these situations, Vauban advocated the use of permanent solid structures,[20] for which reason Bourlamaque advised the knights to build them of stone (instead of wood),[21] known as traverse, along the islands' covered ways and enceintes, in those spots susceptible to ricochet fire.

[17] NLM AOM 6558, f. 83r, 1761.
[18] NLM AOM 6558, f. 86v-87r, 1761.
[19] Royal Military College, *Outline of a Course of Lectures on Fortification, Military tactics and Perspective* (London, 1852), 67-68, 354; NLM AOM 6558, f. 72v, 1761; For a definition of *blindage double*, see the Glossary, p.317.
[20] Sébastien le Prestre de Vauban, *Ouvres Militaire du Maréchal Vauban-Tome 2nd Contenant Le Traité de la Défense des Places* (Paris, Librairie pour l'Art militaire et les sciences et arts, 1794), 53-54.
[21] NLM AOM 6558, f. 72v, 1761.

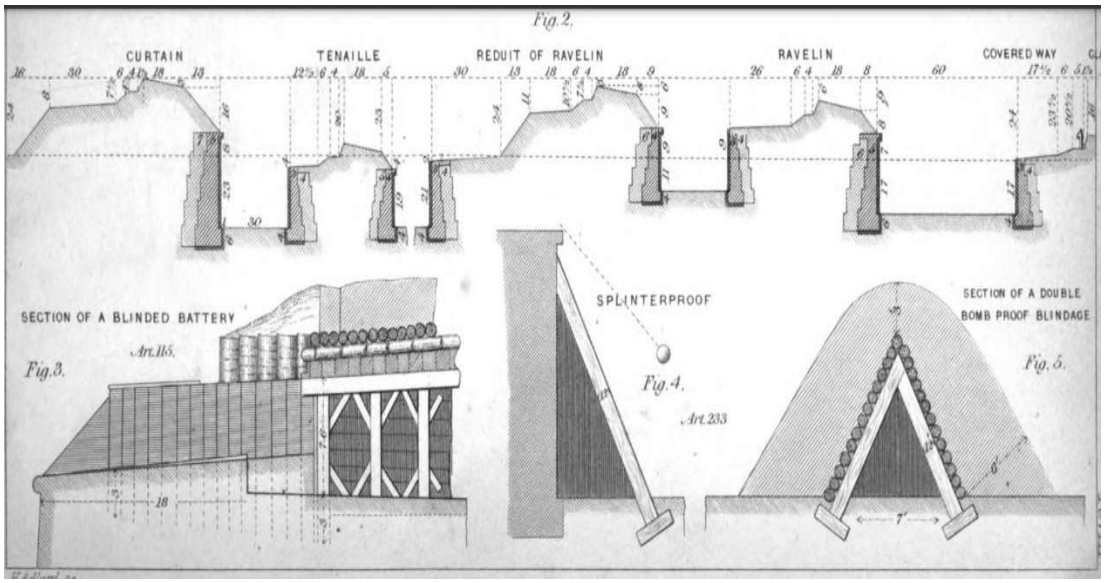


Figure 5.1 Bottom right showing a section of a double blindage structure.[22]

The bulwarks which the French considered to be inadequate for defence were those of Fort Ricasoli, the ramparts of Birgu, Santa Margarita and Cottonera lines, which unless perfected, would leave the Convent city exposed to enemy fire. The mouth of Marsamxett harbour also provided the enemy with an unhindered point of deployment over Dragut's point, leaving Fort St Elmo and Valletta as vulnerable as they had been two hundred years earlier during the Siege of 1565. Besides the extensive list of improvements, Bourlamaque's harsh critique of the knights' defence principles was of considerable importance. This was based on several considerations. First, the knights assumed that the steep scarped cliffs which surrounded a large portion of the Maltese coast were enough to deter an enemy's disembarkation. Second, the number of fortresses on the island provided them with a false sense of security. And third, Bourlamaque felt that the Order's past heroic resistance in the 1565 siege, when most of the Ottoman army was annihilated despite the mediocre system of fortifications of the time, it gave the Convent an illusory sense of security. Further to all this was the knights' confidence that the Christian Princes would protect the Order in times of danger. These attitudes needed challenging. Bourlamaque warned the Congregation of War against over-relying on the inhabitants' courage during a siege, emphasizing that courage without skill was insufficient for victory. He asserted that

[22] Royal Military College, *Outline of a Course of Lectures on Fortification, Military tactics and Perspective* (London, Spottiswoode and Shaw, 1852), 354.

Malta needed a permanent, disciplined force of 10,000-12,000 men, debunking the myth of diminished Ottoman power. Historical examples, like the Ottoman victory in the War of Hungary (1737-1739) after a defeat and a long peace, demonstrated their resilience. He also highlighted the Ottomans' capability to quickly rebuild their fleet using ample resources and warned of potential maritime support from the Barbary regencies and some European princes. Bourlamaque reminded the Convent that reliance on Christian Princes for protection was precarious, citing the 16th century abandonment of Rhodes, and cautioned that Malta could face a similar fate if the Ottomans attacked while European powers were distracted by their own conflicts.[23] The 1761 European scenario was one such reality. A large-scale, widespread struggle between Britain and France left European monarchs distracted by it. Bourlamaque's analysis demonstrates a judgement informed by both historical precedent and current affairs.

To adequately defend the island and withstand a siege, the Order was compelled to intensify its efforts. Bourlamaque and his team outlined five critical steps: exploit the island's coastal geography while securing vulnerable spots with effective coastal fortifications; construct a fort on Corradino Hill to protect the grand harbour region; enhance the St Margarita lines; upgrade Fort Chambray in Gozo; and raze the outdated town-fortresses of Mdina and Gozo, which offered little resistance and could be overrun by a force of 6,000-7,000 Ottomans within days, giving the enemy a fortified position and sufficient time to gather winter provisions.[24]

Citing Brigadier de Tigné, Bourlamaque told the Order that a Prince 'must open his purse and close his eyes' and must invest in his military, irrespective of the state of the Treasury, if he wished to have his country in an ideal state of defence.[25] He was shocked at the mediocre sum the Order invested in the islands' lines of defence on a yearly basis, and felt sure that this approach risked the island having its grand harbour region taken in a matter of five weeks and at best two months before the city of Valletta would come under direct fire. By 1769, despite his advice to invest a sound yearly sum in fortifications, the allocated amount for fortification works did not exceed 10,000 scudi.[26] Bourlamaque contended that if Malta were to fall, future generations

[23] NLM AOM 6519, ff. 2r-8r, 1761.
[24] NLM AOM 6558, f. 81v, 1761.
[25] 'il doivent ouvrir la bourse et fermer le yeux.' NLM AOM 6558, f. 81v, 1761.
[26] NLM AOM 1118, ff. 293r-295r, 18 July 1769.

would squarely blame the Order, a significant organization that should have wisely invested in defences during times of peace. Therefore, it was imperative for the Hospital to allocate a larger, fixed sum for fortification efforts.[27] Equally crucial, the Convent needed to secure the permanent services of a reputable engineer, a role the island had lacked for a significant period, certainly since the arrival of Tigné and the passing of Mondion.[28] Bourlamaque highly valued Brigadier Jacob de Tigné's 1715-1716 reports, frequently referencing his suggestions for modernizing Malta's defences in his own writings. Whether this was because Tigné was a French compatriot, or whether his skills were admirable, cannot be ascertained. However, in contrast, he and the engineer Pontleroy were less impressed with the skills of the current Italian resident engineer, Francesco Marandon, who had assumed the role in 1733 after Mondion's death. Pontleroy reported to Paris that Malta had 'an engineer who understood nothing of his trade. I do not blame him; he has seen nothing but Malta and books, thus he acts accordingly.'[29] Even Bourlamaque indirectly remarked against Marandon by telling the Order in his report that 'Malta is the place in the world that most needs a skilled engineer, and I dare say it hasn't had one for a long time' (the resident engineer Mondion had died in 1733).[30] The French sentiment toward him angered Marandon, so much so that he left the island to return to Turin in 1762, after thirty-five years of service, vacating the position of resident engineer.[31] Coincidentally, or perhaps not, Brigadier Jacob de Tigné's nephew, René Jacob de Tigné filled the vacancy from 1761 to 1789.[32] While the French team endeavoured to improve the island's defences, the King's envoy, concurrently in Malta, employed his skills to eradicate the Ottoman threat entirely.

5.3 The Bailli de Fleury's mission to Malta

Louis XV's secret plan to purchase the Corona Ottomana for the Sultan seems to have leaked before the arrival of the Bailli de Fleury. The news had already reached

[27] NLM AOM 6558, ff. 84v-85r, 1761.
[28] NLM AOM 6519, ff. 2r-8r, 1761.
[29] 'À un ingénieur qui ne comprend rien à sa partie. Je ne l'en blâme pas, il n'a vu que Malte et des livres, aussi agit-il comme tel.' AN Fonds Turgot, 745AP-35, Dossier 3, f. 991, 23 January 1762.
[30] 'Malte est la place du monde qui a le plus besoin d'un ingénieur habile et j'ose à dire qu'elle n'a point d'ingénieur depuis longtemps.' NLM AOM 6519, f. 5v, 1761.
[31] Hoppen (1999), 115.
[32] Brincat (2011), 137.

Massimiliano Emanuele Buzzaccarini Gonzaga, Venice's resident minister to Hospitaller Malta, by late July 1761. News continued to leak through several private letters arriving from France and Italy.[33] Consequently, France had to expedite its plans before it became widely known. In the early days of July, as the French convoy was sailing to Malta, Louis XV and the Minister for Foreign Affairs de Choiseul, handed a detailed *mémoire* of instructions to their chosen envoy, the Bailli de Fleury. This knight's skills in negotiation, his loyalty to the crown as a subject of France, and the esteem he enjoyed amongst his brother knights after serving with distinction as Captain General of the Galleys, made him the best candidate for the King's diplomatic mission. Choiseul instructed Fleury to hasten his departure, deliver Louis XV's letter of proposal for the purchase of the Ottoman vessel to Pinto, have the vessel inspected and evaluated by a French ship builder from Toulon, make an inventory of all the artillery and other valuables on board, persuade the Order's Council of State to sell the Corona Ottomana to France, and finalise the negotiations with a contract of sale. He was specifically instructed to ensure that the validity of the deed would only commence once the ship was safely delivered to Toulon. France took the precaution that if the Ottoman vessel was captured by the British during its voyage, the Order could reclaim it by arguing that the ship belonged to the Order which was a neutral state, totally uninvolved in the Franco-British conflict. Only once safely moored in Toulon would the vessel officially become French property. To prevent any mishaps, the Corona was to sail under the command of a knight until it reached Toulon.[34] Fleury's most challenging task was persuading Pinto's council that selling the ship to France was in the best interests of both parties. He had to be extremely cautious not to disclose that the Grand Master was already aware of the negotiations between France, the Ottoman Empire, and Malta, which had been conducted in secrecy.[35] This task became more difficult when the vessel was being prepared for departure weeks before Fleury's arrival. Some knights grew more suspicious of Pinto's actions, considering the priority was the defence of the island not the refitting of the Ottoman ship.[36]

[33] Mallia-Milanes (2008), 264; On Massimiliano Emanuele Buzzaccarini Gonzaga, see appendix 1: Short Biographies, p.332.
[34] AN M944, f. 254, 6 July 1761.
[35] AN M944, f. 262, 22 August 1761.
[36] Mallia-Milanes (2008), 266.

The increasing rumours that the Ottoman siege would not happen that year and the summoned knights would soon be able to return home helped to create a more positive feeling towards Pinto. The Grand Master also placed great faith in Fleury's diplomatic prowess.[37] Indeed, that was Pinto's plan upon Fleury's arrival, so that he would save the Order's Treasury unnecessary expenses for their lodging and subsistence. Conversely, the French team was barred from returning to France until the sale of the vessel was secured because Pinto and the Congregation of War were adamant to have their reports and recommendations for the defence of the island finalised before their departure.[38] Pinto had full confidence in the success of Fleury's mission, so much so that weeks before his arrival, he had the *Saint Jean II* and the *Saint Antoine* prepared to escort the Ottoman ship to Toulon and transport any knights wishing to return home.[39]

Fleury arrived in Malta on 14 August 1761, accompanied by Blaise Coulomb, a shipwright from the arsenal of Toulon, to estimate the value of the vessel and its armaments.[40] Upon his arrival, Fleury walked straight to the magisterial palace for a private audience with Pinto.[41] Wanting to demonstrate his 'respect for the King [of France],' Pinto invited the Bailli de Fleury to dine at his house in Valletta, which he still kept despite his magisterial appointment. Fleury was lavishly presented with food and anything he required from the palace as a symbol of respect towards the King of France, for 'the generous and honourable manner with which a monarch of such great magnitude had treated him [and the Order].'[42] In his report to the duke de Choiseul, Fleury expressed his admiration for Pinto's ability to uphold the requested secrecy from his own knights, telling Choiseul that, 'the Grand Master, sire, has diligently observed the secret which you demanded of him in this affair,'[43] to the extent that he preferred going along with his Council's wishes of preparing for a military defence against an Ottoman attack (which Pinto knew was not likely to happen), than risk ruining the progress of the ongoing Franco-Ottoman negotiations by being truthful to

[37] Mallia-Milanes (2008), 266
[38] AN M956, f. 109, 27 July 1761.
[39] AN M956, f. 109, 27 July 1761.
[40] AN AE/B/I/821, f. 283, 29 August 1761.
[41] AN M944, f. 262, 22 August 1761.
[42] 'suo rispetto verso SMCima'; 'per la maniera generosa, ed onorifica, con la quale un cosi gran Monarca la tratta.' AN M956, f. 110, 25 August 1761.
[43] 'Le Grand Maître, monsieur, a observé si scrupuleusement le secret que vous lui avez demandé dans cette affaire.' AN M944, f. 262, 22 August 1761.

his Council. Pinto's fear was well founded. When Fleury briefed the Council of State about the negotiations, some knights (likely not French) attacked Pinto's decisions and even considered seeking intervention from European sovereigns. The Council's anger was triggered from Pinto's cover-up of the Franco-Ottoman negotiations, and the fact that the Grand Master could have easily spared the Treasury a massive military expense by directing the Council's efforts towards a diplomatic solution rather than war. This contrasted heavily with the usual ethos of the Convent, which typically involved engaging in war against the Muslim to justify their purpose.[44]

Before the Convent signed the contract with France, the vessel was inspected and appraised by several experts: Blaise Coulomb, the King's shipwright from Toulon; Agostino Scolaro, a Maltese shipwright trained in Toulon; Marco Fiteni, the Order's sail master; Palmo Grech, the master ropemaker; and Giuseppe Triganza, master of the Order's artillery.[45] The Corona Ottomana was a splendid, relatively new vessel of around two years old, measuring 171 feet in length and 51 feet wide, made of timber from the region of the Black Sea. Although a fairly new ship its hull needed repairs, which reduced its value by a quarter from 300,0159.2 livres (when in perfect condition) to 225,119.5 livres in its current state (see table 5.1).[46] Even though the leading expert evaluating the ship was a Frenchman, he appraised the vessel and its contents using Maltese rates because this worked out cheaper and more advantageous to France.[47] The estimate drafted by Coulomb which Fleury submitted to the Council was of an initial 749,068.13.4 livres. [48]

Despite the Council's initial vociferous opposition, and some hostility shown against the Pinto and vice-chancellor Guedes for supporting France,[49] Fleury told Versailles that on 27 August 1761, the Council of State agreed to sell the Corona Ottomana to France for 834,830.6.5 livres, a sum which also included the return of the valuable artefacts of the Kapitan Pasha, his musket, sword, and baton.[50] However, the initial price was revised to include: the purchase of thirty-nine Turkish slaves

[44] AN M944, f. 262, 22 August 1761.
[45] AN M944, f. 264, 21 September 1761.
[46] AN M944, f. 263, 30 November 1761.
[47] AN M944, f. 272, undated.
[48] AN M944, f. 263, 30 November 1761; f. 270, undated.
[49] AN 944, f. 262, 22 August 1761. This is a report which the Bailli de Fleury sent to the duke de Choiseul.
[50] NLM AOM 634, f. 55, 30 November 1761; AN M944, f. 261, 28 August 1761; f. 270, undated.

amounting to 116,844.6 livres, the provisions of food for the crew for the return journey amounting to 20,881.4.10 livres and other expenses incurred at the arsenal of Malta to refit the ship and prepare her for the return journey to Constantinople.[51] Finally, the agreement concluded that France owed Hospitaller Malta the sum of 986,982.1.9 livres for the purchase of the vessel (see table 5.2).

The day after the signing of the deed, Pinto's first move was to write to the Pope, requesting him to convey the Order's gratitude to Louis XV, in a strategic move to consolidate further the relationship between France and Malta, and perhaps indirectly, place France in a good light with the Papacy.[52] On 13 September, with the contract signed and the threat of a siege having evaporated, the Order's galleys left the Maltese harbour for a number of Italian ports carrying groups of knights returning home.[53]

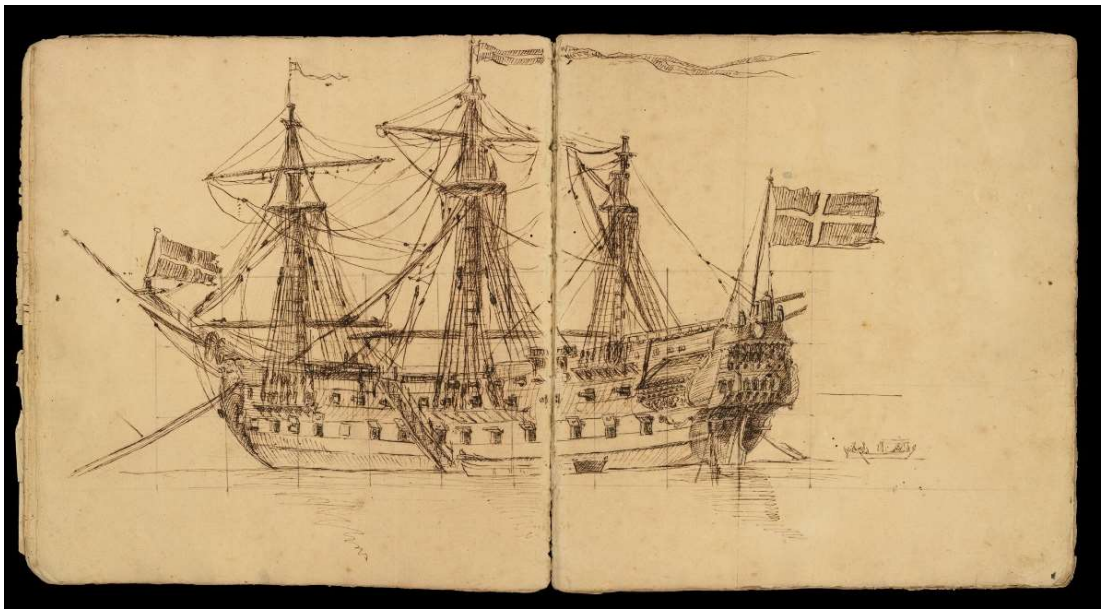


Figure 5.2 Image of the Corona Ottomana, christened as the *San Salvatore*, taken from La Toucheon Album.[54] Image courtesy of Mużew Nazzjonali tal-Arti, Heritage Malta, and HMML's Malta Study Center.

Besides the expense to refit and arm the ship for its return journey, a great deal of funds and manpower were invested. In early 1761, when Pinto secretly learnt of

[51] NLM AOM 634, f. 48r, 30 November 1761; AN M944, f. 270, undated.
[52] NLM AOM 1517, f. 142rv, 28 August 1761.
[53] NLM AOM 1517, f. 144v, 13 September 1761.
[54] Image sourced from: NMFA Inv N. 32307-8. Digital project number (HMZA 00231) and PURL in vHMML.org.https://w3id.org/vhmml/museum/view/3151

Louis XV's plan to buy the ship, he prudently initiated repair works to have it ready in time for the sale, especially since he was unsure of the date. While the poop deck remained untouched, intensive efforts were made with internal repairs and enhancement to the prow.[55] Unsurprisingly, Pinto placed the Bailli de Combreux, the *Homme du Roi* of France in Malta, in charge of supervising the works and when in June 1761, a French warship *La Vestalle* disembarked 18 prisoners of war,[56] Combreaux assigned these to the repair works with some other war prisoners left behind by British warships (between 2 July and 28 November 1761,[57] 160 men were left as prisoners of war, of whom 93 were French). The subsistence of this workforce was partly paid by the King of France and the rest by the Order itself (it is likely France paid for the ninety-three Frenchmen only).[58] According to the *proveditore* Fra de Borsa, the subsistence of the 'disgraced French crew abandoned by the English' amounted to 8,225 scudi (18,277 livres) which bill was passed to the Bailli de Fleury.[59] Further to these Fleury was given two more bills of 4,869.11.8 scudi (10,820.2 livres) and 3,830.9.7 (8,513.1 livres). These covered further victualling costs for the Corona's return journey and provisions such as wood, nails, wax for candles, locks and hinges, lamps and the crew's salary. [60] Before leaving the island, Fleury passed all these bills to the *Homme du Roi* to have them processed in France.

[55] AN M956, f. 90, 25 February 1761.
[56] AN AE/B/I/821, f. 276rv, 27 June 1761.
[57] AN AE/B/I/821, f. 293r, 7 December 1761.
[58] AN AE/B/I/821, f. 283, 29 August 1761.
[59] 'equipaggi francesi degli disgraziati e qui lasciati dagli inglesi.' AN AE/B/I/821, f. 293r, 7 December 1761. The bill was endorsed by the *proveditore*, the knight de Borsa, the secretary of the Treasury commander Vincenti, and the *Homme du Roi* Combreux;
[60] AN M944, f. 267, 6 December 1761; f. 268, 9 December 1761.

The Hull	225,119.5 livres
Artillery	452,814 livres
Masts	35,104 livres
Flags and shields	2,605.2 livres
Ropes	5,380.15 livres
Anchors	16,150 livres
Pulleys	611.11 livres
Cast iron wheels and lead probes	2,443.19.4 livres
Lamps	756 livres
General Estimate	**749,068.13.4 livres**

Table 5.1 Bills for the cost of the ship and other expenses for its arming and preparation for the return journey to Constantinople. Bill presented on 21 September 1761.[61]

General estimate for the purchase of the Corona Ottomana, including its artillery	749,068.13.4
Estimate for the purchase of slaves based on the registers of the Treasury	116,844.6
Costs incurred by the Order for refitting and rendering the Corona in a good state for sailing	100,187.17.7
Costs incurred by the Order for food provisioning for the voyage to Constantinople	20,881.4.10
Global sum which France owed to the Order for the purchase of the Corona Ottomana	**986,982.1.9 livres**

Table 5.2 Breakdown of costs including estimates, expenditure and the sum which France agreed to pay for the purchase of the Corona Ottomana in 1761.[62]

While the signing of the deed went smoothly, Fleury complicated matters. When negotiating payment terms for the Corona Ottomana with the court of France, Fleury had mistakenly proposed a method without first securing approval from the Council of State, which did not sit well with the Order. He suggested offsetting the owed amount by deducting it from the taxes and fees that the Order still owed to

[61] AN M944, f. 264, 21 September 1761.
[62] The documentation for the estimates and bills produced for the refitting and provisioning of the Corona Ottomana, in preparation for its return voyage to Constantinople, can be found in AN M944, ff. 264, 271, 21 September 1761.

France. The duke de Choiseul eagerly supported Fleury's proposal because it only meant that the Royal Treasury of France would not need to pay for the ship from its own funds in lump sums, but rather deduct it from the Order's tax debt to France. Unlike him, the Order's vice-chancellor found Fleury's proposal to be very brash and precipitous, to the extent that he initially instructed Fleury to reverse it.[63] Recognizing the Order's dissatisfaction, Fleury endeavoured to save face. In his communication to Paris after the purchase deed was settled, he encouraged Versailles to extend further the original proposal of granting a privilege of exemption from the *droit d'aubaine* to the Maltese, (a law of medieval origin whereby the King of France had the right to take possession of all the inheritance of foreigners living in France)[64] by also granting them a further exemption in the form of a 20% reduction from the *droit d'entrée* tax, which Maltese merchants were obliged to pay on all their cotton exports to France.[65] While the exemption of the *droit d'aubaine* materialised in 1765, there is no indication that the *droit d'entrée tax* was actually lowered.[66]

The ordeal of the Corona Ottomana did not end with the signing of the contract of sale, nor with the end of the alarm. The payment owed to the Order took long to be settled, stretching up 1767.[67] Eventually, Pinto was informed that Louis XV had consented to have the Order's payments for the *don gratuit* deducted from the sum which France owed the Order. Any other outstanding tax bills of the Order in France were to be deducted from France's outstanding balance, this time at the request of the Order's Council which seems to have changed its plan from its original stance.[68] The *don gratuit* was a voluntary contribution made to the Royal Treasury by the clergy under the *ancien régime,* which the Order, as a religious institution, was also obliged to make to ensure the safeguard of its privileges.[69] Six years down the line, France was still indebted to the Order, such that by 1766, the Hospitallers were still pushing for tax coverage from the Corona's outstanding balance.[70]

[63] AN M956, f. 148, 19 March 1762.
[64] For the *droit d'aubaine,* see the Glossary p.320.
[65] AN M944, f. 262, 22 August 1761.
[66] MAE 67 CP Malte, vol. 11, f. 366, 23 April 1765; f. 384r, June 1765.
[67] Blondy (1989), 181.
[68] AN M944, f. 283, undated.
[69] Bély (1996), 434-435.
[70] AN M944, ff. 273-291.

Throughout the course of the 1761 alarm, the Order accrued a bill of 291,580.10 livres with France for the purchase of ammunition, gunpowder, and other necessities (see table 5.3). Once this was deducted from the sale bill of the ship, France still owed Malta, around 695,401.1.9 livres.[71] Meanwhile, the Order had also accumulated a notable amount of tax arrears which still needed to be paid. According to the *arret d'abonnement* granted to the Order on 19 July 1701 (at which time France put in place a capitation tax),[72] the capitation tax for the Order was fixed to 30,000 livres per year. However, from the year 1759, the Order missed out on payments for this yearly tax (perhaps as a result of the Corona Ottomana affair and the military expense, and the dire financial state of the Treasury), such that by October 1763, the arrears had risen to 296,000 livres.[73] A year later, taking the opportunity of the Order's outstanding tax arrears, the Controller General of France deducted 295,461 livres of tax liabilities from France's outstanding bill with the Treasury of Malta In total, the Order was set to receive the modest sum of 399,940 livres, less than half the selling price of the Corona.[74] However, this amount continued to dwindle. The transfer of funds from the French Treasury was proving to be complex, so Froullay was commissioned by the Convent with the task of negotiating the settlement of another two years' worth of tax arrears using the same method of deduction from France's outstanding balance. Finding no objections, Louis XV gave his approval.[75] However in 1763 Ambassador de Froullay chased the duke de Praslin, the Minister for Foreign Affairs to at least obtain reimbursement for the expenses the Order had incurred for the refitting and provisioning of the ship in time for the return voyage. However, this sum too remained outstanding.[76] To make matter worse, with the *arret* of 27 March 1763, France increased the tax rate, consequently raising the Order's yearly capitation tax rate to 36,000 livres (an additional 6,000 livres from preceding years).[77] In 1766, facing difficulties in paying 219,500 livres in taxes, the Order petitioned the King again to have it deducted from what remained of the outstanding balance, that is around

[71] AN M944, f. 271, undated.
[72] Bély (1996), 200-201. On the capitation tax, see the Glossary, p. 319.
[73] AN M944, f. 274, undated tax breakdown.
[74] AN M944, f. 280, 21 July 1764.
[75] AN M944, f. 282, undated.
[76] AN M944, f. 283, 1763.
[77] AN M944, f. 274, undated tax breakdown.

399,401 livres. All this notwithstanding, that by the end of the year, France still owed the Order around 179,901 livres.[78]

Accrued bill for ammunition and gunpowder ordered for Malta from France in 1761	291,580.10 livres
The Controller General of Finance for France deducted a sum for tax liabilities in 1764	295,461 livres
Another outstanding sum in tax arrears in 1766	219,500 livres
An approximate outstanding balance from the original purchase deed of the Corona Ottomana by 1766	**179,901 livres**

Table 5.3 Sums deducted from the originally agreed bill of 986,982 livres which France committed to pay the Order in 1761 for the purchase of the Corona Ottomana.

5.4 Crosses and recommendations: Rewarding the French experts

On the day the Ottoman vessel departed from the grand harbour, the Council of State convened one last time to discuss the Corona Ottomana. Unanimously, Pinto and his council agreed to reward the French experts for their services. The Order had a tradition of rewarding visiting military experts. Archival documents from Malta detail the privileges, rewards, and ceremonies bestowed upon these visiting engineers as compensation for their service. Notably, the first recorded compensation was to Pietro Paolo Floriani in 1636, underscoring the high esteem the Order held for these professionals.[79] The French engineers of 1715 were likewise showered with recommendations, admissions into the Order as knights of Grace, lucrative gifts like: a diamond-encrusted cross to the head of the mission, money, and particular gifts, like the silver barrel with the coat-of-arms of the Order filled with fine chocolate which was given to the engineer Mondion.[80] As the Council's session drew to a close, Brigadier de Bourlamaque was bestowed with a diamond-encrusted cross, a glittering testament to the invaluable military reports he was leaving behind. Pinto informed Bourlamaque that this honour was also on behalf of the King, who too wished to express his high regard. Previously, in July, when Bourlamaque was preparing to leave for Malta, the duke de Choiseul had informed Ambassador de Froullay of the King's

[78] AN M944, ff. 290-291, 11 September 1766.
[79] For a list of military engineers arriving in Malta in the 17th and 18th century, and the way the Hospitallers' greeted and rewarded them, see NLM AOM 6426, ff. 492-499, undated.
[80] Denis de Lucca, *Mondion: The achievement of a French military engineer working in Malta in the early eighteenth century* (Malta, Midsea books Ltd., 2003), 7.

intention to reward Bourlamaque personally upon the completion of his mission in Malta.[81] In addition to the cross, Bourlamaque was granted the option of securing a place in the Order for one of his nephews, provided the required proofs of nobility were met. Similarly, the artillerist Rochebeaucourt, who had expressed his wish to have his brother knighted, was afforded the same privilege.[82] On 9 December 1761, Pinto wrote two letters to the duke de Choiseul (who was now simultaneously occupying the posts of chief minister of France, Minister for War and Minister for the Navy) recommending Bourlamaque, Pontleroy, Rochebeaucourt, Louvicon and the rest of the French officers for the attention of the King and his 'powerful protection.'[83] Pontleroy and Louvicon were rewarded with a sum of 2,500 livres, each receiving the first down-payment of 1,500 livres in Malta and the rest upon their arrival in Marseille. All the soldiers accompanying the French team were each compensated with 12 livres.[84] News of the Order's gratitude to the Frenchmen hit the press. On 13 January 1762, the *La Gazette de France* reported that Louis XV had granted Bourlamaque permission to carry the Order's cross of devotion which Grand Master Pinto had bestowed on him in a gesture of honour.[85] Though not immediately after their return to France, probably because they had to wait for the conclusion of the Seven Years' War, some of the French officers resumed their military careers and rose to fairly high ranks. The engineer Pontleroy was promoted to major-general by 1780,[86] while Desandrouins was chosen by Choiseul in April 1762 to serve as engineer in Strasbourg and went on to become major-general in 1788.[87]

Bourlamaque seems to have made a lasting impression on the knights. During his stay on the island, 'with his exceptional qualities [Bourlamaque] has gained respect, love and admiration from those who accompanied him in this venture.'[88] The Order's vice-chancellor became particularly attached to Bourlamaque, such that in his letters to Ambassador de Froullay he explained how it was now 'chiselled in my heart

[81] AN M956, f. 127, 10 December 1762; f. 108, 11 July 1761.
[82] NLM AOM 1517, ff. 183r-184v, 9 December 1761.
[83] 'La Potente Protezione,' NLM AOM 1517, ff. 183r-184v, 9 December 1761.
[84] AN M956, f. 127, 10 December 1762.
[85] *La Gazette de France* of 25 January 1762, Issue 8, Versailles 23 January 1762, p.38.
[86] F.J Thorpe, Nicolas Sarrebource de Pontleroy, retrieved on 23 March 2023, from: http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/sarrebource_de_pontleroy_nicolas_5F.html
[87] Gabriel (1887), 337-338, 391.
[88] 'con le sue ottime e sublimi qualità si è reso rispettabile e si è fatto amare ed ammirare da quelli che l'hanno accompagnato in questa corsa.' AN M956, f.109, 27 July 1761.

that I will preserve his memory, and I assure you that these sentiments are shared amongst the sound part of the Convent who had the fortune to meet him.'[89] Pinto and his council were very saddened by Bourlamaque's departure because they all 'admired his talents which he employed so well for our defence and security, and we will always remember his rare qualities that distinguish him.'[90]

As Bourlamaque revelled in his honour and glory on the island, he identified an opportunity to pursue military employment outside of France, where the capitulation terms with the British did not apply. He asked the Portuguese Grand Master to recommend him to King Joseph I of Portugal for a position in his army (possibly because he saw an opportunity to be recommended by a Portuguese Grand Master when Portugal was in conflict with Spain).[91] Seven months after Bourlamaque returned to France, Pinto was still attempting to secure him a position in the Portuguese army, but the Portuguese vice-chancellor Guedes saw little prospect of this happening because the Spanish invasion of Portugal was ongoing and Portugal by then was allied with Britain against Spain and France.[92] Contrary to what Bourlamaque had hoped, his mission to Malta yielded no immediate results, and one year after his return home, he was still unemployed. With time on his hands, he composed an account about the French campaign in Canada hoping to be useful to Choiseul as Minister for the Navy. In his letter to the minister, Bourlamaque spoke of his account of Canada as 'the fruit of my inactivity since I returned from Malta.'[93] Desperate to be reinstated in the army, he hoped his *mémoire*, 'would serve to let you know the desire I feel to be useful and my zeal for all that appertains to the King's service.'[94] Finally, in 1763, Bourlamaque

[89] 'scolpito nel mio cuore, che conserverò finché viva, preferite la di lui memoria, e l'assicuro che questi sentimenti sono quelli della parte sana del Convento, che ha avuto la fortuna di ben conoscerlo.' AN M956, f.149, 26 March 1762.
[90] 'admire les talents qu'il a su si bien employer pour notre défense et notre sûreté, et nous aurons toujours présents à la mémoire les rares qualités qui le distinguent.'AN M956, f. 132, 12 December 1761.
[91] AN M956, f. 138, 10 May 1762.
[92] AN M956, f. 169, 30 June 1762.
[93] 'c'est le fruit de mon inaction depuis mon retour de Malte.' Archives Nationales d'Outre-Mer (France), COL C11A 105, f. 359; Brodhead (1858), 1139: This book provides a translated copy of a letter which Bourlamaque sent to Jean-Augustin Accaron, chief commissioner of the colonies, on 1 August 1762, a year on since his mission to Malta. It also features a translated report he penned about the Canadian campaigns and his military role during his five-year service in Canada.
[94] Brodhead (1858), 1139.

was appointed governor of Guadeloupe, where he served until his death on 25 June 1764. The brigadier is now buried in the Church of Carmel in Basse-Terre.[95]

The French team departed from the island satisfied that their military projects were all approved, and for having received much 'praise from the Grand Master and all the knights.'[96] The team left for Marseille in December 1761, never to return, but their legacy remained alive through the works of the Bailli Jacob de Tigné, who executed a good number of their proposals, especially the coastal defence works.[97]

The Bailli de Fleury took the opportunity for a short break at the rural Maltese village of Casal Nuovo (modern day Paola) once he considered his work done after the Corona Ottomana had left for Constantinople.[98] His reluctance to return to France aboard the Hospitallers' *San Giovanni* and his last-minute change of plans to sail for Naples remain unexplained, but Marulli, the Order's receiver in Naples, did report how Fleury was pompously and ceremoniously received by the marquis Bernardo Tanucci and that they spent long hours discussing the details of his mission in Malta. This could well have been a cause of suspicion at the Convent in Malta, especially when Tanucci had done his best to undermine the Order's interests during this alarm. Whether Fleury was personally acquainted with Tanucci, or whether France or Pinto sent him to restore the relationship with Naples, remains unclear.[99]

5.5 The Corona Ottomana returns to its Sultan

Originally, the Corona Ottomana was to sail to Toulon before the French escorted it to Constantinople. However, Fleury proposed to send the ship to Constantinople under a French flag, because in the winter months the risk of crossing the British fleet *en route* to Constantinople was minimal.[100] Before the change of destination, the Bailli de Combreux had loaded the ship with 66 quintals of biscuit and 17 cannons, which had been left behind by the French frigate, *La Rose*, and which the *Homme du Roi* wanted

[95] Commission française d'histoire maritime, *Chronique d'histoire maritime / Commission française d'histoire maritime* (Paris, Société Française d'histoire maritime, 2005), 64.
[96] 'louer du Grand Maître et de tous les Chevaliers.' AN Fonds Turgot 745AP, Dossier 4, f. 992, 23 January 1762.
[97] For a list of works executed under the supervision of the commissioner of fortifications and *de facto* resident engineer, see: Fleur Brincat, *Bali de Tigné, Commissioner of Fortifications and Military Engineer (1716-1801)* (Malta, International Institute of Baroque Studies, 2011), 81-93.
[98] AN M956, f. 135, 13 December 1761.
[99] AN M956, f. 148, 19 March 1762.
[100] AN M944, f. 262, 22 August 1761.

to send back to Toulon aboard the Ottoman ship, but when the plans changed these had to be unloaded and left on the island.[101] The ship's crew consisted of a mix of Maltese and French sailors, including the celebrated painter Antoine Favray (1706-1798), who left for the Levant after twelve years living on the island.[102] The ship and its accompanying frigates left the grand harbour on 9 December 1761,[103] arriving in Constantinople a month later, 19 January 1762, carrying onboard the invaluable musket, sword and baton of its Kapitan Pasha which Pinto chose to return to the Sultan primarily as a sign of commitment to the French negotiations, rather than any particular respect for the Sultan.[104]

While sailing through the Dardanelles, the French naval officer Pierre de Cheylan de Moriès du Castellet, captain of the 26-gun frigate, the L'*Oiseau,* received news from Ambassador de Vergennes in Constantinople that the Sultan requested to see his vessel sail into the harbour flying the Ottoman flag. As it sailed through the straits of the Dardanelles, the ship and its convoy were received with great fanfare and jubilation. Four castles and two caravelles fired salvos in tribute, and Captain Moriès joined in with a 21-shot salute. A few days after the arrival of the Ottomana, Ambassador de Vergennes and Captain Moriès held an audience with the Grand Vizier at which point the French captain symbolically handed over the Corona Ottomana at the arsenal of the port, bringing to an end the conflict between the Porte, France and Malta.[105]

Whilst the journey to Constantinople fared smoothly, Captain Moriès did not anticipate the complexity of the return trip. His frigate, *L'Oiseau*, was meant to escort back some 380 men, consisting of a mix of Maltese and French crew that had sailed on board the Ottoman ship. However, Moriès did not foresee that he had to ferry back a hundred of these onboard his ship alone, especially when he had no more space. In all there were 250 men wanting to return to Malta or France, and to resolve this the captain asked the French ambassador to lease a merchant vessel at the expense of France.[106] This, in addition to 2,042 piastres for 60 days of provisions,[107] which was

[101] AN AE/B/I/821, f. 285, 13 December 1761.
[102] On Antoine Favray, see appendix 1: Short Biographies, p. 329.
[103] NLM AOM 1517, ff. 185v-186r, 14 December 1761.
[104] AN M956, f. 148, 19 March 1762.
[105] AN AE/B/I/438, ff. 24-25v, 3 February 1762.
[106] AN AE/B/I/438, ff. 24-25v, 3 February 1762.
[107] AN AE/B/I/438, ff. 49-50v, 6 March 1762.

over and above the 566 piastres Louis XV had already paid for the mooring of the *L'Oiseau* and the newly leased vessel, *La Marie*; the return voyage became an expensive one for France.[108] To address the risk of French ships being attacked by British vessels, Vergennes obtained passports for the entire crew and informed James Porter, the British ambassador to Constantinople (1747 to 1762), that the convoy was simply conducting a ferrying voyage, not participating in any commerce or hostilities.[109] Since *La Marie* was not covered by the same passport of the *L'Oiseau*, which had been issued in France,[110] Vergennes requested Porter to provide a British license for the polacre, *La Marie,* to ensure the protection of the Maltese crew and its captain onboard. The French ambassador assured him that the polacre was merely transporting a group of Maltese from a neutral country and would not carry any French merchandise nor weapons. Once the paperwork was finalized, the convoy set sail for Malta and Marseille on 7 March 1762, arriving at the island twelve days later.[111] After disembarking the 254 Maltese crew at the Lazaretto, Moriès's frigate embarked a group of knights who were obliged to interrupt their caravan cruises to return to Toulon. They were needed there to assist in the preparation of an armament against the British, aimed against Portuguese territory. On 24 March 1762, the *L'Oiseau* sailed out of Maltese waters, formally bringing the crisis of 1761 to an end, although the repercussions of this affair lasted for years to come.[112]

[108] AN AE/B/I/438, ff. 53-54v, 6 March 1762.
[109] AN AE/B/I/438, ff. 10-11v, 31 January 1762.
[110] AN AE/B/I/438, ff. 43-44v, 10 March 1762.
[111] AN AE/B/I/438, ff. 45-46, 16 February 1762; ff. 55-57, 26 April 1762.
[112] AN M956, f. 148, 19 March 1762; f. 149, 26 March 1762; AN AE/B/I/821, f. 294, 23 March 1762.



Figure 5.3 The *L'Oiseau* frigate which escorted the Corona Ottomana in its return voyage to Constantinople in 1762.[113]

5.6 The legacy of the Corona Ottomana affair: Consequences and propaganda

Not everything about this affair was as easily settled as the physical handing over of the great vessel. Beneath the ceremonies and honourable behaviour, the 1761 alarm significantly strained the Order's finances. In view of this, the Council of State mandated a financial audit in February 1762 to assess the expenses incurred. However, the final report was not presented until 1765, primarily due to delays in receiving the *Ricette* (account registers) from the priories. The registers from the grand priory of France, for instance, did not arrive until 1764, significantly hindering the audit process. At the onset of the alarm, the Order lacked the financial resources necessary for wartime expenditure, compelling it to seek a loan of 1,304,212.1.7 scudi (2,898,248 livres) from Rome, Genoa, Palermo, and Naples.[114] Consequently, the Order incurred an annual interest payment amounting to 41,301.6.9 scudi (91,780 livres).[115] The report drafted by the Treasury in January 1765, covering the years of 1761-63 stated

[113] This is a detail of John Cleveley the Elder (1712-77) painting showing the *L'Oiseau*, retrieved on 23 October 2023, from: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/
[114] NLM AOM 1118, f. 287r-290r, 31 January 1765.
[115] According to the financial report covering the years from 1761-1765, the Order paid the sum of 165, 206.1.16 scudi in interest; NLM AOM 272, ff. 15v-18v, 7 February 1765.

that the calculated global expenditure for matters of war incurred during 1761 was that of 1,628.582 scudi (3,619,071 livres), of which 19,836.8 scudi (44,080 livres) were paid for the salaries and lodging of the French team and 100, 274 scudi (222,771ivres) on gunpowder alone, excluding that arriving from France and the donated gunpowder from the Pope and the Republic of Lucca. The Convent's income from donations and war impositions for these years was that of 1,921,642 scudi (4,270,315.6 livres), leaving the Order with a net balance of 293,000 scudi equivalent to 651,111 livres. This remaining balance went partly to pay the locals for the food provisions supplied during the citation of knights, and for the construction of a new ship, the *San Zaccharia*.[116] The militia which had been assembled for the purpose of the 1761 threat, and was kept thereafter, was by 1769 costing the Order 8,000 scudi (17,777 livres) annually. Considering all these expenses, the Treasury recommended the Council of State to employ these soldiers on the galleys or have them stationed as coastal guards when not needed aboard the fleet.[117]

The Corona Ottomana crisis dealt a significant blow not only to the Order's Treasury, but also to its international reputation, at least in the short term. Some sovereigns had accused the Order of jeopardizing their country's peace for what they perceived as an illegitimate prize. On 9 December 1761, the day the ship sailed out of Malta, the Grand Master had his secretary dispatched numerous letters to foreign powers and their diplomats in an effort to restore the Order's reputation and its international relations. In these letters he explained the course of action taken by the Order and the outcome of the Hospitaller negotiations with France. These letters arrived at the Order's receivers in Naples, Turin, Venice, Milan, Florence, Genoa, Palermo, Prussia and other states. These letters of propaganda were also sent to some secretaries of state, namely the infamous Bernardo Tanucci in Naples, the knight Osorio in Turin, and other heads of state, including the King of Naples, the King of Sardinia, the Doge of Venice and the Holy Roman Emperor. These were all informed of the Order's successful negotiations and co-operation with France to resolve a political affair that had piqued the interest of several European powers.[118] A month after the ship had left Malta, the Bailli Roberto Ignazio de Solaro, the Order's grand

[116] NLM AOM 1118, ff. 287r-290v, 31 January 1765.
[117] NLM AOM 1118, ff. 293r-295r, 18 July 1769.
[118] NLM AOM 1517, ff. 174r-183r, 9 December 1761.

prior of Lombardy in Turin, held an audience with the King of Sardinia during which he presented him with Pinto's letter. In this context, the Grand Master highlighted Louis XV's recognition and respect for the Order's sovereignty and independence on an international level. Specifically, France's decision to purchase the vessel from the Order affirmed that the Corona Ottomana was a legitimate prize, something that Venice and Naples had refused to acknowledge.[119] Only after the issue was resolved peacefully did Christian monarchs, perhaps hypocritically, start to applaud the Order. The King of Sardinia praised Pinto for his prudence and intelligence in handling the issue while the King of Naples (or rather, the president of the regency council Bernardo Tanucci), hypocritically partook in the success of this affair by claiming that the King of France had strategized a plan based on the shared notions which 'were similar to those I had made since the early days of the vessel's arrival [in Malta].' This was Tannuci's way of saving face, as in reality, Naples had pressured the Order to immediately return the vessel to the Porte, lock, stock, and barrel.[120]

With the Ottoman threat finally over, and a sense of relative peace restored on the island, Pinto could turn his focus to implementing the French experts' defence proposals. Bourlamaque had prompted him enough to have him act and invest in military infrastructure, rather than risk future criticism, to avoid a situation where 'one will have no reproach [against the Order] to make in centuries to come, except that of having neglected, during a very long peace, to procure all the means that human prudence could provide to maintain itself forever.'[121] Pinto even took care to make his intention known to the King of Naples in an attempt to validate the Order's contribution to the Christian community, by telling him that we 'agree among ourselves on the obligation to defend them [Maltese islands] from the ambition of not being useless for the realms [Christian], to which these islands serve as a bulwark.'[122]

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[119] AN M956, ff. 163-164, 27 January 1761.
[120] 'sono stati simili a quelle che io stesso feci farvi fin dai primi giorni dell'arrivo costa di detta nave.' AN M956, ff. 165-166, 13 February 1762.
[121] 'auquel on n'aura aucun reproche à faire dans les siècles à venir, que celui d'avoir négligé pendant une paix très longue de se procurer tous les moyens que la prudence humaine pouvait lui fournir de se maintenir à jamais.' NLM AOM 6558, f. 85r, *Mémoire sur le fortifications des villes de Malte*, 1761. This volume consists of a number of memoires and reports which the French team presented to the Congregation of War in 1761.
[122] 'concordo in noi con l'obbligo di difenderle dall'ambizione di non essere inutili ai domini; ai quali queste isole possono servire da antemurale.' NLM AOM 1517, f. 176rv, 9 December 1761.

Despite the financial burdens caused by the alarm of 1761, Pinto went ahead with some of the defence works as the French experts had suggested. His first steps were taken only a few weeks after the selling of the ship, when he decided to extend the stay on the island of some skilled men who happened to be in Malta as a result of the alarm. Pinto wrote to Gambarana, his receiver in Milan, applauding him for providing the required papers for Carlo de Luskan, a captain of engineers from the Italian states, to serve in Malta. His intention was to exploit Luskan's skills for the benefit of the island's security.[123] On the same day, Pinto wrote to the grand prior of Lombardy, Roberto Ignazio Solaro, asking him to obtain permission from the King of Sardinia to allow Fra Giuseppe Giorgio Valperga di Masino, a Hospitaller and military engineer who had responded to the citation of knights, to extend his sojourn in Malta to serve the Order as director of gunpowder and foundries.[124] In November 1761, barely two months after selling the ship, Pinto commissioned two Maltese brothers, Giacchino and Francesco Triganza, to leave for Turin with their father, under the recommendations of the knight Ossorio, the Secretary of State of Turin and count Bugino, the Minister for War for Turin, to learn the art of artillery production for the service of the Order.[125]

Following the Corona Ottomana affair, projects on the islands' fortifications proceeded gradually and the French team's recommendations, in particular the coastal works, were being executed under the direction of Tigné. When in 1763, the knight Etienne François Turgot was in the process of setting up a French colony in Cayenne on behalf of Louis XV, [126] he invited Pinto to send a group of inhabitants from Malta to join the French colony, but the Grand Master refused because he needed local men to work on the fortification projects. As a matter of fact, in the same year, some 15,000 men aged between fifteen to sixty years were enrolled in the militia,[127] although they still remained 5,000 men short from the size of the troops suggested by Bourlamaque.[128] Two years on from the alarm, the Order embarked on a construction

[123] NLM AOM 1517, f. 148r, 13 September 1761.
[124] NLM AOM 1517, f. 149v, 13 September 1761.
[125] NLM AOM 1517, ff. 167v-169r, 12 November 1761.
[126] Engel (1972), 150-151. On Etienne-François Turgot, see appendix 1: Short Biographies, p.341.
[127] Grand Master Pinto advised Turgot to seek men in the Morea and not in Malta: NLM AOM 1578, f. 61r, 5 May 1763.
[128] In their report on the fortifications of Malta, the French team noted that 20,000 men (including 2,000 slaves and prisoners on the island) were needed for the manning of the islands' fortifications: NLM AOM 6558, f. 84v, 1761.

project which was highly recommended by the French team: that of increasing bomb-proof shelters in the grand harbour cities. In 1763, the Congregation of Fortification and War deliberated that all houses in the cities of Valletta, Birgu, Senglea and Cospicua were to be fitted with rock-hewn and bomb-proof cellars. In the case of existing houses, stone masons were to consult Tigné and his capo maestro, Giuseppe Bonnici, for verification and approval of works. This was a free service being provided by the Order in its effort to provide safer shelter for citizens and families arriving from the countryside in times of a siege.[129] In addition to private residences, public buildings owned by the Order were also to be fitted with a bombproof cellar and a bombproof first floor for the security of knights and members of the Order.[130] The Treasury's financial constraints were a concern for the knights, but the 1761 threat shifted their focus, elevating defensibility to its deserved priority.

The events of the early 1760s can be said to have culminated in 1765, when Louis XV granted an important privilege to the Maltese people, following the successful negotiations of the Corona Ottomana. As a token of gratitude for the support which Malta unfailingly provided to France, Louis XV decreed in a patent letter that every Maltese residing in France would be considered as a French national, enjoying the same privileges as any Frenchman. The King acknowledged the significant role that the Maltese people had always played in French commercial activities, giving decades of service on French merchant and warships. Further to this, the Maltese, alongside the knights, took up arms time-and-time again in defence of Christianity, so they too warranted recognition. A similar privilege had been granted by Louis XIV a century earlier. In the edict of March 1669, Louis XIV had declared that all foreigners in Marseille, including the Maltese community residing there, were to be considered French nationals if they engaged in trade (Louis XIV's intention was to encourage trade in the harbour area).[131] Meanwhile, the Maltese in France sought to obtain naturalisation letters so that they could be eligible to join the Order in one of the three langues: France, Auvergne and Provence, but this attracted the anger of the French

[129] NLM AOM 1118, f. 277-278r, 14 December 1763.
[130] NLM AOM 271, f. 258v-259r, 8 November 1762.
[131] Louis XIV's intention was to promote trade in the free port of Marseille. Widows and children of Maltese established in Marseille could keep the inheritance as long as they engaged in trade: (Blondy, 1989), 176.

nobility who felt threatened that the Maltese could obtain commanderies in France.[132] Receiving opposition from the French nobility and the receiver of the grand priory of France, Louis XV curtailed the letters of naturalisation to the Maltese. It was only with the Corona Ottomana's affair, and Pinto's policy of considering non-hospitaller foreigners residing in Malta as nationals (thus exempt from the *droit d'aubaine)* to the subjects of those states that reciprocated this gesture that has likely encouraged the King of France to consider the Maltese as *regincoles* (natives).[133] Louis XV's decree of 1765 stipulated that all naturalised Maltese were 'to be considered citizens in our Kingdom; we want them to be able to buy furniture, property, pay rent on houses in Paris,'[134] and bequeath their lifetime belongings if they wished, by way of a testament to their children or parents or any other relative born and residing in Malta. The Maltese could therefore finally enjoy an exemption from the *droit d'aubaine*.[135] *Ancien régime* France had made a distinction between natives and foreigners, with the former characterized by a lack of obligations and restrictions, as opposed to the latter, who were subjected to a number of limitations, namely the inability to hold public office or possess clerical benefices, the suffering of special taxes imposed, as well as having to put up with the royal right of escheat.[136] It was only in 1765, through Louis XV's concession, that the Maltese finally rid themselves from the ban on succession and inheritance of their property in France. This privilege had long been coming. In May 1760, the restrictions imposed on the Maltese living in France, despite their letters of naturalisation, left a great disparity between them as Maltese naturalised in France, and native Frenchmen.[137] Prior to his mission to Malta, the Bailli de Fleury considered it wise to offer the Maltese an exemption from the *droit d'aubaine*. It would have certainly helped him in his negotiation with the Council of State for the Ottoman ship. He anticipated that it would be of 'great advantage for the celerity and success of my

[132] In 1749, out of seventy-three priests serving the Order in France, thirteen were Maltese, two of whom became commanders: Blondy (1989), 177.
[133] Blondy (1989), 178.
[134] MAE 67 CP vol. 11, ff. 384r-385v, June 1765.
[135] See the Glossary, p.320.
[136] Peter Sahlines, *Unnaturally French: Foreign Citizens in the Old Regime and After* (New York, Cornell University Press, 2004), 5; In the 13th century, the monarchy had established a tax drawn from feudal lords, which gave it the right to confiscate the property of its foreign residents upon their demise, unless they had native heirs. Bély (1996), 519.
[137] AN M902, f. 404rv, May 1760.

mission.'[138] Contemporarily, he saw this an opportunity for France to show its gratitude towards the Order for trusting her in the negotiations with the Sultan. Additionally, the timing of this decree would have led the Sultan to perceive how the 'King had put to use all he could to engage the Order to make him the sale.'[139]

Even though the historiography of the Order seems to give the impression that the decree of 1765 to the Maltese was an extraordinary gift which France gave as a sign of friendship, this was neither extraordinary nor exclusive because France acted for its own benefit.[140] In a letter sent to Constantinople, likely penned by the duke de Choiseul on 20 July 1761, even before Fleury arrived in Malta, it is revealed that France intended to grant a long-desired privilege to the Maltese residing in France, with the aim of persuading the Council of the Order to sell the Ottomana to France. The author claimed that 'this monarch, to overcome all difficulties, granted the Maltese, independently of the cost of the sultana [Corona Ottomana], a privilege they had long desired.' This grant held little significance for the Sultan; however, it was in France's interest to highlight all the measures it was taking to appease the Sultan with the return of his ship.[141]

This privilege was also not a singular grant which France gave to the subjects of foreign states. From 1753 to 1787, Louis XV and Louis XVI signed a number of reciprocal exemption treatises with several governments, starting with the King of Prussia in 1753, and the last one with Great Britain in 1787, before a number of treaties, encompassing all countries, were issued between 1790-1791.[142] The letter patent exempting Malta from the *droit d'aubaine* was published in Versailles and registered in the *parlement* of Paris in June 1765.[143] This was the fifth exemption of its kind since 1753, but the first to declare an indefinite reciprocal abolition rather than a definite period specifying an exemption from the *droit d'aubaine.* It also gave exclusive

[138] 'grand avantage qu'on pourrait tirer pour la célérité et le succès de ma mission.' MAE, 67 CP vol. 11, ff. 176r-177r, 27 June 1761.
[139] 'Sa Majesté a mis tout en usage pour engager la Religion à lui faire cette vente.' MAE 67 CP vol. 11, f. 177r, 27 June 1761.
[140] Blondy (1989), 175; Jacques Godechot, *Histoire de Malte* (Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1981), 54; Godechot (1951), 71.
[141] 'Ce monarque, pour lever toutes les difficultés, accorde aux Maltois, indépendamment du prix de cette sultane, un privilège qu'ils désiraient depuis longtemps.' AN M944, f. 261, 20 July 1761.
[142] Sahlins (2004), 339-340.
[143] MAE 67 CP vol. 11, ff. 384r-385v, June 1765.

recognition of the Maltese as *regnicole*, that is, equal in rights to French nationals.[144] This comprehensive format of exemptions was firstly used with Malta, until two months after the same treaty was given to Baden-Baden, abolishing altogether the principal civil law which segregated foreigners and citizens.[145] A year on from the publication of the 1765 decree, Ambassador de Froullay chased the duke de Praslin, Minister for Foreign Affairs, to have it registered in all the *parlements* and chambers of commerce in France, most particularly in Provence, where the majority of the Maltese were settled because of commerce.[146] While this decree was advantageous for the Maltese, the Order still benefitted from it because any commandery or financial revenue owned by a Maltese member of the Order would not have fallen into the hands of the state, but it would have remained in the Order's possession. Moreover, the gesture of bestowing an important privilege to the subjects of another sovereign was, in itself a sign of mutuality and recognition of Grand Master Pinto, as the Prince he viewed himself to be.[147]

5.7 Conclusion

France's support for the Order against the political pressures from Venice, Naples, Rome, and Spain transcended the typical French patronage and protection seen in previous crises. In the threat of 1761, France willingly went against the prevailing European sentiment of having the Order bow down to the Sultan's demands. Despite intense pressure from across Europe, Pinto and his Council stood firm in their decision, reaffirming their oath of perpetual war against the Muslim enemy, even if at the risk of knightly bloodshed and financial ruin. The Order's steadfast determination proved advantageous on almost all fronts, except for its Treasury. The reassurance provided by France's covert negotiations with the Porte enabled Pinto to maintain a strong stance against the enemy in the eyes of Europe, confirming his institution's *raison d'être* against the Muslim rival, and demonstrate his sovereignty to all Christian states. Through its adept diplomatic intervention, France positioned itself as the mediator

[144] Peter Sahlins states that the term 'exemption' and 'abolition' become blurry in early 1760s. Sahlines (2004), 227, 335.
[145] Sahlins (2004), 230.
[146] MAE 67 CP vol.12, f. 8rv, 25 May 1766.
[147] Ciappara (2008), 174.

between East and West and the peacekeeper of the Mediterranean, benefiting all parties involved.

Like his predecessors, the Ambassador de Froullay's pivotal role in providing military assistance for Malta from the Convent's periphery was well noted at the central Convent. In the vice-chancellor's words, Grand Master Pinto expressed his gratitude for his ambassador 'in seeing his tasks conducted with wisdom, and such intelligence, in procuring all the necessary relief for the Religion [Order] and the Grand Master.'[148] Froullay's choice of top military officers and the negotiation for their service in Malta proved pivotal for the knights, not only for the immediate and long-term defensive needs of their island, but also to showcase the Hospitallers' investment in their role as a bulwark of Christendom. The ambassador's efforts in obtaining rewards and promotions for Bourlamaque and his team was in itself a marketing exercise 'for the attraction of others [military experts] in similar occurrences [threats].'[149]

That said, the Corona Ottomana proved to be a costly endeavour for the Order. It had to borrow approximately 5,000,000 livres to support war efforts and to partially refit the Ottoman vessel for its departure to Constantinople.[150] Moreover, 'the *don gratuit*, at the time of the doubling of the *Vingtiéme* tax[151] (which the King introduced on the property of the Order in 1750)[152] and the chaos in the *Ricetta* of Paris caused by the ill health of commander de Grieu, (receiver of the Order to the Langue of France), exhausted the Religion's finances.'[153] The Order emerged from the Corona Ottomana affair with drained coffers but with even stronger ties with France, an appeased Europe, and a momentum for the upgrade of Malta's defence system. It also sent a strong message to Naples and Rome that the Order's Grand Master was as independent as any other sovereign, a statement which he explicitly made in 1768, 'I am the Prince and master of the island,' when he decided to expel the Jesuits from the island.[154] It

[148] 'nel vedere le di lei operazioni piene di saviezza, e di somma intelligenza, tendenti a procurare il necessario solievo alla Religione e all S.A.E.' AN M956, f. 98, 6 June 1761.
[149] 'che pui animarebbe altri in occorrenze simili.' AN M956, f. 148, 19 March 1762.
[150] AN M944, f. 282, undated.
[151] AN M944, f. 282, undated.
[152] Godechot (1951), 69.
[153] 'Le don gratuit, à l'occasion du doublement de la Capitation des Vingtièmes et le désordre de la Recette de Paris occasionné par la maladie du Commandeur de Grieu, ont épuisé les finances de la Religion.'
[154] 'Io sono il Principe e Padrone dell'Isola' as cited in Ciappara (2008), 174.

was thanks to the diplomatic tactics of France that the stakeholders of this affair emerged triumphant in what otherwise could have been a calamity for all.

This episode in Hospitaller history reaffirmed France's steadfast military and political support for the Order, even amid threats from the Ottoman Empire, a power with which France needed to maintain good relations. Additionally, this bilateral relationship did not limit the Order's ability to engage in more multilateral approaches, an aspect underexplored in 18th-century historiography of the Order. In the case of 1761, the instructions from the central Convent to the Order's receivers and diplomats were to first seek assistance from Rome, then Naples and Genoa, with France as the fall back if the Italian states failed. This decision was not based on snobbery, mistrust, or a lack of faith in French support, but rather a matter of circumstance. France was deeply involved in a war with Britain at the time and, like Malta, needed to prioritize its own military resource needs, particularly since it had been bleeding its military supplies since the onset of war in 1754. France had all the reasons to bring up the excuse that it was engaged in war elsewhere, or that chances of war in Malta were slim because it was already assisting the island diplomatically with the Sultan, but it did not do so. On the contrary, it risked its ties with the Ottomans to covertly assist the arming of the island, when other Christian states had taken a step back. The legacy of the Corona Ottomana to Hospitaller Malta was initially drafted on paper in the number of military projects left behind by the French experts, until some of these came to fruition in subsequent decades.

Even though no other threat lived up to the magnitude of the Siege of 1565, the memory of the 1761 Ottoman threat outlived the Order's stay on the island. Giananton Vassallo's (1817-1868) poem *Il-Gifen Tork* of 1842, a great epic poem about how Maltese slaves on board the Ottoman galleon emancipated themselves and sought sanctuary in Malta, reflects the significance and relevance of this event in Maltese history.[155] Furthermore, the diplomatic negotiations for the Corona Ottomana served as precedent in future Franco-Ottoman dealings bearing a similar nature. In 1803, France requested the return of a French ship in the possession of the Ottoman Sultan,

[155] A full copy of the 1975 publication of this poem can be found online, on the University of Malta website: https://www.um.edu.mt/library/oar/handle/123456789/19952

on the premise that in 1761 the Corona Ottomana was returned to the Porte because of French intervention, almost as if France was claiming back the favour.[156]

Ironically, the 18th century Ottoman threats proved useful not only in further consolidating the Franco-Hospitaller ties and in showcasing the Order's sovereignty in the eyes of Europe, but also for injecting the island with a renewed momentum for military investment, which tended to follow a sluggish pace in periods of relative stability. While the 1761 alarm, like the preceding ones amounted to nothing, the Order could not allow itself to lower its guard against the Sultan, even though the Ottoman naval offensive was by mid-eighteenth century idle.[157] Bourlamaque was well aware of this, and prior to leaving the island he warned the Convent that 'the Turks have no navy, but they have the money, materials, and men to build one and arm it whenever they want' and 'it may happen that the Sultan finds in some nations of Europe skilled officers and engineers who will serve as guides to his generals.'[158] The very presence of the French team on the island and their expertise left behind in the numerous reports, gave the Grand Master and his Council of State a renewed sense of action even in the absence of other threats. All the same, the successive alarms of the previous half-century had also revealed a logistical problem: the stocks of weapons imported to the island had not been well-maintained nor replenished in a steady way. Despite the slower pace of defensive activities amid threats from the Ottomans, there is compelling evidence that during times of relative calm the knights maintained ongoing communication with France for the replenishment of their military supplies. The Hospitallers' requests for arms procurement from France during periods of relative peace therefore warrant careful examination to accurately assess the extent of French military support.

[156] Presidency State Archives of the Republic of Turkey, Department of Ottoman Archives (BOA) BOA Justice, HAT.,170/7227A, 29 Zilhicce 1217 (22 April 1803). This information was provided by Mr Liam Gauci, senior curator of the Maritime Museum of Malta.
[157] Özveren, Yildirim (2004), 157.
[158] 'Le Turcs n'ont point de marine, mais ils ont l'argent, les matériaux et les hommes pour en construire une et l'armer quand ils voudront'; 'ils peux arriver que le grand seigneur trouve chez quelque nations de l'Europe des officier habiles et des ingenieur que serviront de guides à ses generaux.' NLM AOM 6519, f. 3, 1761.

Chapter 6
Resourcing War:
The Acquisition of Arms for Malta in France

6.1 Introduction

The Military Order of St John was obliged to maintain a brimming armoury and military supplies to sustain its ongoing conflict with Muslim forces. The key to military success lay in its adeptness at delivering a seamless flow of provisions—including victuals, essential supplies, arms, and ammunition—meticulously calibrated in both quantity and timeliness,[1] to fortify its terrestrial and naval divisions after relocating to the island of Malta from Rhodes. The arrival of the knights in Malta in 1530 initiated a two-hundred-year modernization of the island's defensive infrastructure, including the fleet brought from Rhodes, the construction of extensive defensive lines, the reorganization of the island's militia, and the creation of regiments, but all of these needed arming. The construction of fortifications generally kept pace with European trends and developments, however, the production of firearms, artillery, and edged weapons was not the knights' forte. The lack of local resources and skilled craftsmen forced the Hospitallers to rely on donations from Christian Princes, on weapons captured from enemy ships during caravan campaigns,[2] and the procurement of military equipment from various Christian states. This would unavoidably mean difficulties with uniformity and standardisation. Similarly, early modern France depended heavily on foreign importation of arms and artillery, at least until around the 1670s and this, despite its growing military prowess and a far larger treasury. However, while Hospitaller Malta remained mostly reliant on offshore importation until 1798, France under Louis XIV became gradually much more self-sufficient after a reorganisation of the domestic production of armaments and ammunition, giving rise to a reasonably well co-ordinated system of royal manufacturing centres, forges for firearms, artillery, and other military equipment. France remained dependent on other

[1] Anton Quintano, *The Maltese-Hospitaller Sailing Ship Squadron 1701-1798* (Malta, PEG Ltd., 2003), 139.
[2] For more on Caravan or Sea convoy, see Glossary p.319; Simon Mercieca, 'Maritime caravans and the Knights of St John: Aspects of Mediterranean Seaborne Traffic,' *Trade and cultural exchange in the early modern Mediterranean: Braudel's Maritime Legacy*, M. Fusaro, C. Heywood and M.S. Omri (eds.) (London, I.B Tauris, 2010), 157-175.

countries for some raw materials, but this newly found autonomy in armament production and the stocking of arms in France strengthened the knights' prospects of procuring armaments from their protector's armaments industry during times of alarm and relative stability throughout the 18th century.[3] Such support would not have been possible, at least not in any systematic or significant way, prior to the 1680s. This chapter therefore aims to explore the Hospitallers' methods for procuring firearms and artillery from France throughout the reigns of Louis XV and Louis XVI, looking beyond the acquisitions made during general alarms covered in earlier chapters. It will examine the geographical distribution of the suppliers and analyse how the knights' procurement strategies integrated with royal policies and the French arms manufacturing framework in the 18th century.

6.2 Hospitaller military stores and the production of artillery in Malta

The Hospitallers' extensive military experience sharpened their organizational skills, improving both statutory regulations and field operations, including fortification projects, armed regiments, militias, and procedures for procuring and storing weapons. While the knights had had weapons, storehouses, and arsenals in the Holy Land and Rhodes, little is known about these.[4] Conversely, the armoury, weapons and gunpowder magazines and their contents during the Hospitallers' residency on Malta are better documented.

When in 1530 the knights settled in the Castrum Maris in Birgu, a modest armoury was established there.[5] With the construction of the convent city of Valletta following the triumphant Siege of 1565, two storehouses were initially established in St John and St James cavaliers, and by the late 16th century an 'Armeria Pubblica' was established opposite the Magisterial Palace, which later housed the Order's chancery. It was Grand Master Alof de Wignacourt (r.1601-1622) who transferred the military equipment to the new palace armoury in 1604, which by the 18th century was known as the *Sala d'Armi del Palazzo*.[6]

[3] Olivier Chaline, *Les Armées du Roi. Le Grand Chantier XVII^e-XVIII^e siècle* (Paris, Armand Colin, 2016), 249.
[4] Stephen C. Spiteri, *Armoury of the Knights. A Study of its Armoury, its Collection and the Military Storehouses of the Hospitaller Knights of the Order of St John* (Malta, Midsea Books, 2003), 19.
[5] Spiteri (2003), 47.
[6] Spiteri (2003), 69.

Towards the mid-eighteenth century, the Hospitallers went through an intense period of military reorganisation and upgrade, especially when it came to increasing and updating their weapons and their storage.[7] During the 18th century, the Ottoman threat on Malta was not as marked as in the previous one. However, the Order still invested in the weaponry, to the extent that the Palace Armoury halls became too small. It was shortly after the Ottoman threat of 1761 that the knights tried to mitigate this problem. The resident military engineer Bailli François René Jacob de Tigné, and the commissioner of works Don Garcia Xarava, inspected two magazines in Valletta with the intention of clearing the Palace Armoury of obsolete weapons and storing them in the reserve armoury. In addition, there were another six storehouses in Old Bakery Street for the storage of cannon balls, saltpetre, and after 1763, another armoury was organised in St James cavalier for the storage of cannons, gun carriages, gunpowder, and weapons for the country militia. Whilst the majority of the artillery and firearms were stored in the convent city of Valletta, a number of magazines were distributed: in the grand harbour cities of Birgu, Senglea and Cospicua, the old city of Mdina, and a number of smaller village armouries.[8]

There is no evidence that the Order owned a foundry while in Rhodes, yet there is one bronze swivel gun (presently housed in the Grand Master's Palace in Rhodes), which bears a Greek inscription, indicating thus that it was made in Rhodes by Giorgios Lambadis de Rhodo, a cannon founder who normally worked in Venice but resided in Rhodes from 1513 to 1521. It is therefore likely that small artillery pieces were already being manufactured for the Order on Rhodes.[9] While the knights were skilled at procuring armaments from Christian lands, a practice that continued throughout their stay on Malta, they recognized the need to limit their dependence on foreign states and naval booty.[10] It was thus during the magistracy of Grand Master

[7] Stephen Spiteri, 'Bali de Souza's Establishment of a Fondazione for the Production and Supply of Bronze Cannon for the Order of St John, 1770,' in *The Journal of Baroque Studies* 2, 2, F. Ciappara (ed.) International Institute for Baroque Studies, Malta 2018, 181-188.
[8] Spiteri (2003), 119, 134.
[9] Information provided by Kelly Devries, Professor of History at the University of Loyola Maryland. This cannon is dated to the period of Grand Master Carretto and it is the only gun surviving from the siege of Rhodes in 1522: Robert Douglas Smith, Kelly DeVries, *Rhodes Besieged. A New History* (Gloucestershire, The History Press, 2011), Appendix 1: The Artillery Cannon Catalogue number 18, unpaginated.
[10] Emmanuel Magro Conti, 'Surviving Artillery Pieces of the Order of St John dating from the Maltese Period,' in *Between The Battlesword and the Cross, Masterpieces From the Armoury of Malta*, V.A Cremona, O. Renaudeau and J.P Reverseau (eds.) Gutenberg Press Limited, Malta 2008, 191.

Alof de Wignacourt that the knights established their own foundry in Valletta. Because the island was short of skilled local men in artillery manufacture, the first employed Master Founder was the Fleming Bastiano Vos, who served on the island until 1620.[11] After him, a succession of foreign Master Founders were appointed, bringing essential skills to the island. For instance, Aloisio Bouchet studied in Barcelona for five and a half years,[12] while the brothers Francesco and Giacchino Trigance were sent to Turin to refine their bronze casting skills in the 1760s.[13] Not atypically, the founders who worked for the Order had a dual role, that of casting both cannon and church bells. For instance, the bells for the Cathedral in Mdina were cast in the Order's foundry in the 17th century, while Grand Master Pinto commissioned two church bells in 1748. The Master Founder Aloisio Bouchet (1731-1766) alone is known to have cast forty-two bells.[14] The Trigance brothers from Provence, sons of Giuseppe Trigance,[15] the Capo Maestro of Artillery, not only continued producing church bells but also surpassed their predecessor in cannon production. Despite their efforts, the cannon production in 18th-century Malta still fell short of the needs required to fully arm the extensive fortifications and the Hospitallers' fleet,[16] so much so, that it remained heavily dependent on foreign sources, largely France, for the procurement of artillery and firearms.

[11] Magro Conti (2008),191,193.
[12] Magro Conti (2008), 197.
[13] NLM AOM 1527, f. 168rv, 12 November 1761.
[14] Magro Conti (2008), 197.
[15] On the Trigance family, see appendix 1: Short Biographies, p.341.
[16] Magro Conti (2008), 199, 201.



Figure 6.1 The first building on the left is the Order of St John's foundry in Valletta in 1859. It stood on the site of the later Palazzo Ferreria.[17]

6.3 Arsenals, forges and gunpowder factories in 18th-century France

By the 18th century, the King of France was simultaneously producer and buyer of military supplies. Louis XIV had gained some degree of control over production by installing particular contractors or semi-autonomous employees in royal establishments for the production of certain products, largely gunpowder and other equipment produced in the royal arsenals of the navy. The royal arsenals, with their roles in production and maintenance of naval equipment, were intended to minimise the King's reliance on local and foreign suppliers and in the process bolster the monarchy's military strength.[18] By the early 18th century, the King had established a monopoly on the production of military goods and maintained control over the military market through stringent policies. It was, in effect, pretty close to being a monopsony.[19] Local and foreign buyers were required to obtain the French government's approval before placing orders with manufacturers. Additionally, the King dictated both the prices and quantities of military equipment sold within his

[17] The image of a 19th century photo showing the Order's foundry at the entrance of Valletta was retrieved on 25 September 2023, from: https://www.wikipedia.org/
[18] Chaline (2016), 219-220.
[19] On monopsony, see the Glossary, p. 323.

kingdom and beyond.[20] The implementation of this monopoly came about in diverse ways, whether it was for the founding of cannons, manufacture of firearms or the production of gunpowder. The royal monopoly for the founding of cannons started during the reign of Henri IV, who elevated the office of the Grand Master of Artillery in 1599, giving him a prominent role in managing the military resources of France.[21] This was one of the most important great officers of the crown and was based in the arsenal of Paris, from where all royal artillery officers and royal arsenals were supervised.[22] Between the 17th and 18th centuries, France had royal foundries at the arsenal of Paris, on the French frontier, at the ports of war, as well as in areas where primary material was abundant.[23] To enhance the government's control over the military, the new regulations of 4 April 1686 decreed that all the gunpowder produced in France had to be approved by the royal officers of the artillery.[24]

The modernization of maritime arsenals began in 1664-1665, even before the establishment of the Royal Manufactories for firearms. Shortly after, in 1665-66, Louis XIV set up a series of depots for small arms in the Petit Arsenal near the Bastille, designating it as a royal magazine.[25] As of 1666, he appointed Maximilien Titon (1632-1711) as the *Directeur général des Armes et Magasin Royal*. Operating under the direct authority of the King as his primary contractor for firearms, Titon was responsible for overseeing the supply and development of arms for the land forces. This took place at a time when Louis XIV's reliance on private contractors for resourcing of war increased. The contractor-based system made it possible for France to supply a large army, and exert some degree of centralised control over arms circulations and sales, within and outside of France.[26] It was thus imperative for the Order of St John, especially its ambassador, to be well versed with this system when it came to negotiation for arms with one of the ministries or private contractors. Besides the administrative aspect of arms procurement, other factors influenced the Order's choice of suppliers, notably the geographical locations of arms depots,

[20] Chaline (2016), 221.
[21] Chaline (2016), 253.
[22] Chaline (2016), 319, fn 3.
[23] Chaline (2016), 212-222.
[24] Chaline (2016), 320, fn. 6.
[25] Chaline (2016), 244.
[26] Guy Rowlands, 'Merchant of Death: Maximilien Titon (1632-1711) and the Supply of Arms in Louis XIV's France' in *Militärunternehmer in der Frühen Neuzeit: Offiziere, Unternehmer, Karrieremigranten und Diplomaten*, André Holenstein and Philippe Rogger (eds.) Brill, forthcoming, Leiden 2024, 7-8.

arsenals, forges, and arms factories. Typically, factories and forges in France were located close to prime material, ports like those of Marseille and Toulon had arsenals and stores conveniently located for extraction and shipping.[27] The location of suppliers influenced transportation logistics and overall costs due to taxes imposed on consignments crossing internal fiscal boundaries. Therefore, for a cost-effective procurement of arms, it was necessary for the knights to consider both the abundance of stock and the location of factories, forges and arsenals in France for all kinds of weapon and gunpowder.

6.4 Firearms from France and the manufacturers of Saint-Étienne-en-Forez

By the early decades of the 18th century, royal control over military production of firearms continued to expand. In the royal Ordonnance issued on 10 July 1722, two royal manufacturing centres for the production of small arms were recognized, those of Charleville (closed down by Gribeauval in 1769) and Maubeuge on the northern border of France. Saint-Étienne-en-Forez which had been supplying royal stores for an even longer time, was only created a Royal Manufactory in 1765, providing weapons for the King's troops and the colonies.[28] It was from this factory that the Order procured significant amounts of firearms from the late 17th to mid-18th centuries. As a matter of policy, the Ministers for War and for the Navy in France had to be briefed on all the executed commissions of weapons happening in the kingdom. As a measure of central control, the contractors had to subject requests to them for supplying arms to designated 'foreign' regiments, the cavalry, the dragoons, the Company of the Indies (and other trade companies) and foreign sovereigns.[29] Even the King's own regiments could not obtain arms without the minister's permission.[30] The procedures for obtaining permission to supply were not quite straightforward. Commissions for weapons intended for foreign sovereigns had to be first approved by

[27] Chaline (2016), 249.
[28] Louis XV, *Ordonnance du Roy. Portant Reglement pour le bon ordre que sa Majesté veut estre observé dans le Manufacture d'Armes, etablies à Charleville et à Maubeuge- 10 Juillet 1722* (Paris, Imprimerie Royale, 1722), 47-48; Jérôme-Luther Viret, 'L'Industrie des armes portatives à Saint-Étienne, 1770-1810. L'Inévitable Mécanisation?' *Revue d'Histoire Moderne et Contemporaine,* 54, 1 (2007), 176; Alder (2010), 186.
[29] François Bonnefoy, *Les Armes de Guerre Portatives en France, du début du Règne de Louis XIV a la Veille de la Revolution (1660-1789). De l'Indépendence a la Primauté*- Tome 1 (Paris, Librairie de l'Inde, 1991), 227.
[30] In 1720, for instance, the Inspector of Charleville was reminded by the Minister for War that he could not supply French regiments with weapons without his authorization: Bonnefoy (1991), 228.

the King, either through a direct request from the former or via his diplomatic representation in France. For instance, in 1719, Carrier, a firearms supplier from the factories of Saint-Étienne, was approached to produce weapons for Portugal. Carrier had to wait until the Portuguese sovereign secured the Regent d'Orléans's approval before starting the commission. This procedure applied to all foreign states, including Hospitaller Malta. On 7 July 1719, the Inspector of Saint-Étienne was informed that the Regent had approved the production of 1,000 lock plates and 1,000 *garnitures de fusils* by the manufacturers of Saint-Étienne-en-Forez for the Knights of Malta, provided this did not interfere with the King's own production and supply.[31] A similar situation occurred decades later when the Order commissioned Saint-Étienne for their largest order of muskets. On 29 November 1759, Louis Hyacinthé Boyer de Crémilles, the deputy of the Minister for War, 'gave orders to let the entrepreneurs fulfil their commitment towards the Order.'[32]

Firearms for Malta were also procured from the King's own stores, even the one in Paris, despite the long distances often involved for transporting the cargo to Marseille. In September 1714, the procurators of the Treasury in Malta instructed Bailli Jean-Evangeliste de la Vieuville, the ambassador of the Order in Paris, to obtain 2,000 lock plates and other weapons from Louis Maximilien Titon de Villegenon (1681-1758), Inspector General of Arms at the arsenal of Paris, if the *salles d'armes* of Marseille or Toulon were unable to provide.[33]

In 1722, while the Order of St John was preparing for an Ottoman siege, its diplomat in Paris closed a deal with the French government for the purchase of a consignment of arms from numerous depots and the royal magazines in Paris, which were still under the charge of Villegenon.[34] The latter was the grandson of the King's original contractor for firearm (mainly muskets) supply, Maximilien Titon (1632-1711) in the Royal Magasin of Paris.[35] The 1722 consignment, ordered during an alarm, was delayed until 1729 when about 25,000 muskets were finally moved from

[31] Bonnefoy (1991), 228.
[32] 'a donné l'ordre de laisser remplir aux entrepreneurs leurs engagements envers la Religion.' AN M902, f. 33, 1759.
[33] AN M902, f. 1, 31 December 1714.
[34] NLM AOM 1219, ff. 430-436, 6 December 1722; AN M995, f. 99, 1723.
[35] On Louis Maximillien Titon de Villegenon, see appendix 1: Short Biographies, p.332; François Bonnefoy, 'Maximillien Titon, Directeur Génèral des Magasins d'armes de Louis XIV, et le Dévelopment des Armes Portatives en France,' *Histoire, Économie et Societé*, 5, 3 (1986), 353; Rowlands (2012), 139, 142, 210.

Lyon's stores after being stored for eighteen months due to indecision from the central convent. Concerned about potential damage from humidity and dust, Villegenon arranged for an inspection requested by Ambassador de Mesmes before shipping to Malta. To aid the knights, Villegenon reserved muskets in Lyon rather than Paris, ensuring quick replacements if any were found damaged upon arrival in Malta by the Order's commissioners in France.[36]

The Knights of Malta made two forms of armament acquisition from France: those it purchased or borrowed from the King's own arsenals and magazines, from the arsenals of Marseille and more frequently that of Toulon, and those directly bought from private contractors having the permission of the King to sell arms to foreign countries. The Order signed around seven contracts with entrepreneurs from the town of Saint-Étienne-en-Forez between 1687 and 1759 (this last contract with Saint-Étienne was the largest deal, securing a consignment of firearms over a span of fourteen years). Alongside Charleville-Mézières and Maubeuge, Saint-Étienne was a major producer of firearms for the royal army. Its oldest records show that it produced halberds, lances, and other military equipment in the 13th century, expanding to firearms, cannon, culverins and more a century later. The production of arms from Saint-Étienne was in such high demand by the government that a royal arms depot was constructed in Paris in the late 17th century to store all the weapons arriving from the city.[37]

In the latter half of the 17th century, Louis XIV's armoury was run as a monopsony, having only Maximilien Titon as the privileged contractor to purchase and provide the King's stores with muskets from local entrepreneurs. Even though the selling price of a finished firearm was determined by the Minister for War, Titon had the prerogative to set the retail price charged by the merchants selling to the King, leading to a centralisation of firearm purchase and standardisation of the design. In 1666, Louis XIV decreed that muskets of military calibre could only be produced by authorized factories and armorers, a measure that provoked opposition from those excluded.[38] During the Regency, the state implemented laws governing all individuals

[36] AN M963, f. 217, 28 December 1729.
[37] Raymond Dubessy, *Historique de la Manufacture d'Armes de Saint-Étienne* (Saint-Étienne, 1900), 1-26.
[38] Alder (2010), 186.

and entities purchasing or producing arms for the King, ensuring optimal quality.[39] The first laws on arms production obliged the harmonisation of gun barrels and munitions, as well as their testing. Pierre François Girard (1674-1751) an entrepreneur (a state appointed local merchant) of the King was one of the first to set up a proofing house in France, and his family was later involved in the production of arms for the Order of St John.[40] As from the late 17th century, the chosen entrepreneurs for the provisioning of royal stores hailing from Saint-Étienne were Pierre Girard, Robert Carrier, Jean-Louis Carrier, Duchon and Jourjon, winning contract after contract throughout the 18th century. It is therefore no coincidence that the Order procured its firearms from the top entrepreneurs and suppliers of the King. Indeed, several of these suppliers were commissioned by the Order until 1774.[41]

The Order's other option for firearms were Saint-Étienne's competitors in Charleville and Maubeuge, but these were too far away on the northern borders of France to be feasible for the Order.[42] Saint-Étienne was more conveniently located near the southern coast of France, only a few miles from the river Rhône. This route expedited transportation to Marseille, and it was a preferred safer route across provincial boundaries, albeit more expensive.[43]

[39] Alder (2010), 187.
[40] Retrieved on 16 August 2020, from: http://www.banc-epreuve.fr/en/discover-our-history/
[41] Dubessy (1900), 108-109.
[42] Viret (2007), 171-192.
[43] AN M902, f. 57, 1765.



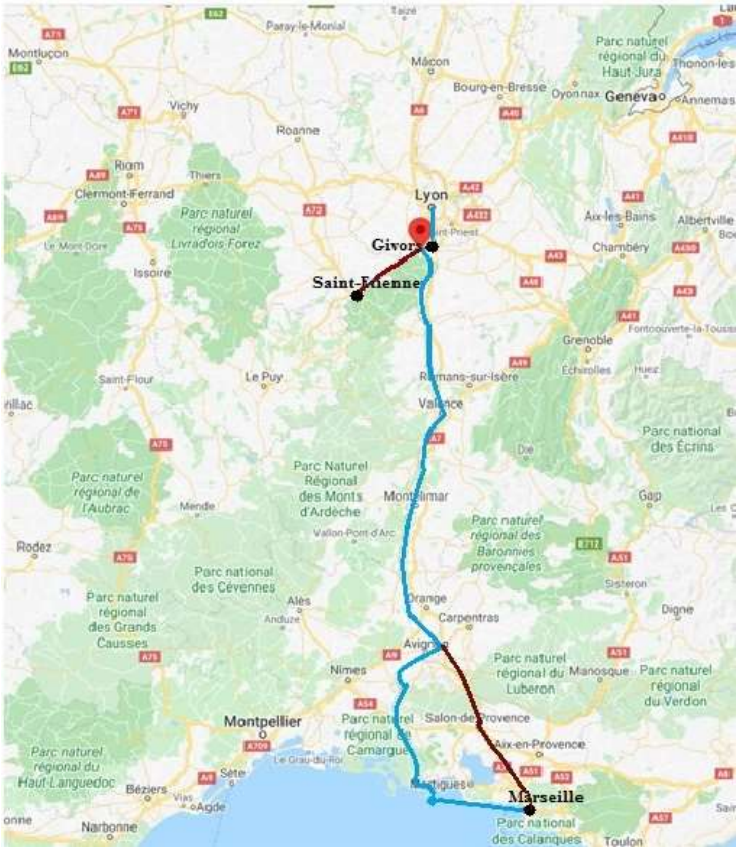
Map 6.1: A map showing the knights' procurement of various weapons from France. The Order commonly acquired armaments from the southeast of France, as it was more convenient and less expensive to transport them to Marseille or Toulon before shipping them to Malta. This information is primarily based on documents from the embassy of the Order of St John in Paris, including volumes on military matters and the issuing of passports.[44] The coloured markings do not indicate the exact location of forges, factories or stores but the region in which these were located.

Records of all procurements made by the Order from the factories of Saint-Étienne are recorded in the account volumes of the Order's receivers, which are conserved in the *Archives Départementales du Rhône et de la metropole de Lyon*.[45] These records show that the Order's interaction with Saint-Étienne started in 1687 and

[44] Information based on the documents from the military and passport volumes of the embassy of Malta in Paris, archived at the *Archives Nationales de France* in Paris: AN M902, M994, M995.
[45] *Archives Départementales du Rhône antérieures* à1790-*Archives Ecclésiastiques* Serie H (1687-1759); Dubessy (1900), 108-109.

coincided with Titon's efforts to reform and centralise the production and storage of arms. On 5 January 1687, the Order paid the sum of 7,500 livres to an unidentified supplier at Saint-Étienne for 1,000 muskets.[46] From the very beginning of its commissions from Saint-Étienne, the Order adopted a procedure whereby the Order's receivers inspected the firearms before these were batched and transported to Marseille. In 1687, receiver Hector de Saint-Georges, and commander de Montferrand inspected the muskets before they were packed in twenty-eight boxes and transported by fourteen servants to Givors,[47] and from there ferried down the River Rhône to Marseille for embarkation to Malta (see map 6.2). On this occasion the Order was charged an extra 1,045 livres in transportation and duty fees. These customs fees, imposed on all merchants transporting cargo from one province to another, became a thorn in the side of the Order, such that successive ambassadors of the Order in Paris continued to seek their exemption throughout the 18th century.[48]

[46] François Bonnefoy, *Les Armes de Guerre Portatives en France, du début du Regne de Louis XIV a la Veille de la Revolution (1660-1789). De l'Indépendence a la Primauté*- Tome 2 (Paris, Librairie de l'Inde, 1991), 594.
[47] Givors lies on the main road between Lyon and Saint-Étienne and it is connected to Marseille via the river Rhône.
[48] Raymond Dubessy, *Historique de la Manufacture d'Armes de Saint-Étienne* (Saint-Étienne, 1900), 108-109.



Map 6.2 A typical route for the transportation of military weapons from the factory of Saint-Étienne-en-Forez to Marseille. This followed a landward route from Saint-Étienne to Givors, then down the river Rhône into the Mediterranean Sea and from there to Marseille. This was a safer and faster route, even though it cost more to transport over water than land (by land 10 livres per quintal, down the river 20 livres per quintal in the 1760s). At times the cargo was moved from Saint-Étienne to the stores in Lyon for temporary storage before being transported down to Marseille.[49] Another slightly different route was that starting from Lyon down the river Rhône, stopping Avignon and from there to Marseille via landward transportation.[50]

Nearly thirty years after the first commission to Saint-Étienne, the Order made a second procurement in 1714, when it was actively preparing for an Ottoman siege. On this occasion, the Order purchased a consignment of firearms worth 1,644 livres from the most senior armourer and entrepreneur in Saint-Étienne, Thézenas, and a batch of swords for 480 livres from the swordsmith Poirier, all meant to arm the guards of Grand Master Perellos. Shortly after the Ottoman threat of 1714-15, the Order made another two arms purchases from Saint-Étienne, over a span of two years. In 1718, the knights purchased 1,000 lock plates and 1,000-gun fittings from the entrepreneur Pierre Girard for the sum of 3,000 livres. The following year, the same purchase of

[49] AN M902, f. 57, 1765.

[50] *Archives départementales de Rhône, Ordre de Malte*, 48H59, unpaginated, 1715-1716. This is a collection of 29 letters of a court case between the receiver of the Order of the langue of Auvergne against the tax farmers at the tolls who had opposed the duty-free passage of Antoine Monroux, who was transporting the Order's munitions from Lyon to Marseille.

lock plates and gun fittings required for the assembly of 1,000 muskets was entrusted to Commander de Thiange, the receiver in Lyon, which was likely delivered to Malta in July 1720.[51] That same year, buying again from Thézenas, the Order procured a batch of muskets with bayonets for the price of 7,600 livres, paid over four instalments in that same year.[52]

The Order seemed to be satisfied with the service and quality of the firearms it received from Saint-Étienne, such that it bought from Saint-Étienne again during more fraught times. In 1723, there was another firearms consignment, but there is no indication of the identity of the entrepreneur manufacturing this batch, nor the sum the Order paid for it, but the documents of the Order's receivers do say that the knights bought a consignment of 1,740 muskets with bayonets, 262 *fusils d'officier* and 91 carbines. These were packed in sixty-eight boxes, moved to the King's stores in Lyon for temporary storage, and later transported to Marseille, likely down the river Rhône as this was an established route. On this occasion the Order was charged 630 livres of custom duty for the movement of the consignment because the ambassador in Paris had not managed to obtain a passport for an exemption from taxes and custom fees. The procurement of firearms from Saint-Étienne in 1726 was the final one for a period of thirty-three years, despite the fact that the Order experienced another Ottoman threat in 1733, clearly indicating that the firearms stored in Malta were adequately stocked.[53] Despite a relatively calm period of twenty-six years for the island after this threat, there was nothing to guarantee that the Ottoman armada would not arm against Malta again. In fact, in the 1750s and 1760s, the Order of St John recognised the need to update its armaments and storage facilities.[54]

The peak of this overhaul in firearm weapons was reached in 1759. Perhaps because no imminent danger was yet in sight, the knights felt they had the right opportunity to invest in a long-term procurement plan of expensive firearms from their traditional suppliers, the manufacturers of Saint-Étienne. A representative from this town, Michel Gaudin, travelled all the way to Malta for the signing of a deal on behalf of the entrepreneurs Pierre Girard, Robert Carrier & brothers and Company who

[51] AN M902, f. 8, 15 September 1719.
[52] Dubessy (1900), 108-109.
[53] Dubessy (1900), 108-109.
[54] Spiteri (2018), 181.

operated in unison as a single association.[55] Gaudin represented them through power of attorney granted to him on 19 May 1759, in the presence of notary Ferrandin in Saint-Étienne, just before Gaudin embarked on his mission to Malta, thereby allowing him to act on behalf of the entrepreneurs and manage their interests effectively in Malta. The subsequent contract between Saint-Étienne and the Order was signed by the procurators of the Common Treasury and Michel Gaudin, in the presence of the secretary of the Common Treasury Silvio Vincentini, the knights François Gabriel de Jarente from the Langue of Provence, Commander Joseph d'Almeyda from the Langue of Castille and Portugal, and notary Joseph Prevost, in Valletta on 18 July 1759.[56] The suppliers of Saint-Étienne committed to producing a substantial array of weaponry for Malta, including 20,000 *fusils des troupes* (infantry muskets), 700 pairs of *pistolets d'Arçon* (cavalry pistols), 700 pairs of *pistolets d'abordage* (boarding pistols), sabres, and *gros trombons à fourchette* (large mounted blunderbuss muskets). The weapons were crafted on sample models sent to Malta prior to Gaudin's arrival.[57] The agreement also stipulated that the entrepreneurs were obliged to deliver a yearly supply of 1,500 muskets to the Order's agent in Marseille, with the understanding that the Order would have managed to 'obtain from the court permission to have them fabricated and removed from the kingdom.' This procedure was to be repeated every year for every manufacturing consignment.[58] The price per musket was fixed at 20 livres 10 sols, which the Order committed to pay in Lyon right after the delivery of the yearly batch. In the eventuality that the Order succeeded in obtaining an exemption on customs and the *droit de sortie*, the sum of 1 livre 5 sols was to be deducted from the original price of each rifle.[59]

Gaudin assured the Order that only high-quality weapons, matching the sample models presented during negotiations, would be dispatched. Once production began, he committed to sending samples for evaluation to commissioner de Brison in France

[55] In Saint Étienne in 1760, nine entrepreneurs were actively engaged in arms manufacturing for the King. These included Girard, Robert Carrier et frère, and Duchon the elder, who formed one association; Jourjon and sons; Burlat; Veuve Grangeneuve et Praire; Veuve Dubois, Simeon et Sauvade; Carrier de Monthieu; and Duchon cadet: L-J Gras, *Historique de L'Armurerie Stéphanoise. Étude sur le Régime Légal et la Situation Economique de L'Industrie des Armes a Saint-Étienne Depuis Les Origines Jusqu'a nos jours* (Saint-Étienne, Société de L'Imprimerie Théolier, 1905), 4.
[56] AN M902, f. 34, 18 July 1759.
[57] Spiteri (2018),181; AN M902, f. 34, 18 July 1759.
[58] 'd'obtenir de la cour la permission de ses fabriquer et extraire du Royaume.' AN M902, f. 34, 18 July 1759.
[59] AN M902, f. 32, 18 July 1759.

and another sent to Malta. This guarantee played a crucial role in securing the Order's confidence in the quality and integrity of the weapons supplied. The *pistolets d'arçon* were priced at 19 livres per pair; however, if the Order succeeded in having export duties waived, the price would be reduced by 8 sols per pair. The contract stipulated the production of 700 *pistolets d'abordage* over the first seven years, followed by another 700 *pistolets d'arçon* in the subsequent seven years, totalling 1,400 pistols over a fourteen-year period.[60]

Besides the rifles and pistols, the Order required a stock of sabres *de grenadiers*. Although the blades for these sabres had to be sourced from Strasbourg, which increased the cost of production for the entrepreneur, Gaudin committed to selling them at their regular price of 8 livres per piece. The twenty-four large, mounted blunderbuss muskets were to be supplied in the first year from the contract date at the price of 75 livres per piece, reduced to 72 livres if the Order secured an exemption from export taxes. The entrepreneurs also agreed to subject the muskets, pistols, and blunderbuss muskets to two independent examinations in the presence of the Order's commissioner knight de Brison. This practice was in line with the standard procedure employed for the King's weapons, aiming to ensure the quality and reliability of the firearms. Once the inspection was positively completed, Brison would then proceed to brand the firearms with the Order's cross as an acceptance mark. One mark was branded on the barrel, just beside the manufacturer's emblem, and the other on the stock (see figure 6.3). After counting the batches, Brison would then oversee their transportation from Saint Étienne to Lyon, passing the cargo to commander de Vatange, for temporary storage and from there to Marseille. Before Gaudin's departure, the commissioners of the Treasury agreed to place a down payment of 1,500 livres, yet everything still depended on the authorisation of the King.[61]

[60] AN M902, f. 34, 18 July 1759.
[61] AN M902, f. 34, 18 July 1759.



Figure 6.2 Girard Pistolet model of 1733-34. The contractor's mark from Saint-Étienne and the cross of the Order of St John branded on the barrel and the stock. Branding was done only after testing and inspection were completed.[62]

In October 1759, three months into the contract, the Order's ambassador in Paris consulted Marshal de Belle Isle, the Minister for War, and his deputy Boyer de Crémilles, to obtain permission from the King to allow the entrepreneurs in Saint-Étienne to begin production. He also appealed for a passport for the tax-free extraction and movement of the consignment to ensure the smooth logistics for the Order's arms supply.[63] The ministerial permission was issued on 28 November 1759,[64] after which Crémilles informed Saint-Hilaire, the Inspector of the Manufacture of Arms (1747-1764) to allow the King's entrepreneurs to honour their agreement with Malta. The initial agreement was to have the manufacture spread over a minum of six years so that the production for the royal army would not be disturbed.[65] Shortly after, the first passport was issued and sent to the Balli de Vatange, the receiver in Lyon and Bailli de Brison, the knight commissioned by the procurators of the Common Treasury for the inspection of the arms.[66] The first consignment was delivered to Malta some time before October 1760, at which time the first payment for 1,500 muskets and 100 pairs of *pistolets d'abordage* was made.[67]

[62] Retrieved on 25 June 2023, from: https://www.lsb-malta.com/en/articles-news/news/24/-girard-pistolet-modle-1733-34-dabordage-order-of-st-john-.html
[63] AN M902, f. 33, undated, f. 35, 16 October 1759.
[64] Dubessy (1900), 24, 108-109.
[65] AN M902, f. 36, 28 November 1759.
[66] AN M902, f. 33, undated; f. 35, 16 October 1759; f. 38, 5 December 1759.
[67] Archives Departmental du Rhône, Archives Ecclésiastiques Serie H 48H570 (1687-1759), 1760.

Shortly after the Hospitallers signed the arms firearms contract, the association of Girard, Robert, Carrier brothers, and other entrepreneurs in Saint-Étienne experienced a period of uncertainty. Some members sought to secure exclusivity for arms production within the town, prompted by the influx of private manufacturers relocating to Saint-Étienne to establish their operations. Their move aimed to protect their local industry from increasing competition.[68] In fact by 1783 there would be 269 suppliers and merchants but only a handful were licensed to supply the King.[69] As a result, in January 1764, the duke de Choiseul instructed the inspector for manufacture, Saint-Hilaire, to halt any unauthorized traders and gunsmiths from supplying weapons to foreign buyers, especially after the visiting inspectors found the arms production activity in a chaotic state. The firearms produced were of inferior quality in comparison to those of northern suppliers. This directive was intended to uphold quality control standards and curb unauthorized arms trading, serving as a regulatory measure to manage the arms industry amidst intensifying competition and growing quality apprehension.[70] All the same, there is no documentary evidence indicating that the Order was unsatisfied with the service and quality of weapons from Saint-Étienne, apart from one occasion in 1761. When knights Lancosme and Almejda inspected a batch of firearms which arrived on the island in May 1761, they noted that the firearms were largely in optimal condition, but they did note some defects. Some of the triggers were faulty, while the ramrods were hard to extract, and the barrels were less smooth and polished than the sample models. The knights requested an improvement on these, but this came at a cost. Brison informed the Convent that the entrepreneurs were asking for an extra 14 sols 6 deniers per musket to implement the changes, but the Order could only afford to pay 7 sols 6 deniers per piece. In March 1762, the entrepreneurs sent two revised sample models for review, but they insisted on an increase in price for the remaining production, which the Order had no choice but to accept.[71]

The archives of the Order in Malta record four consecutive consignments arriving from Saint-Étienne, with the last one being that of September 1763. However, in contrast, the documents of the Order's embassy in Paris provide a more detailed and comprehensive narrative behind the procurement of the largest arms deal of the Order

[68] Dubessy (1900), 24.
[69] Viret (2007), 171.
[70] Alder (2010), 188.
[71] Spiteri (2003), 100.

in the 18th century. Not only did it take fourteen years for Saint-Étienne to complete the Hospitallers' commission, but the logistical issues behind this deal were more complicated than the archives in Malta suggest. A reform in France concerning the hierarchy and centralization of Saint-Étienne's manufacturing activity raised significant concerns within the Order. In 1759, when the knights signed the contract, they opted to collaborate with a recognized association of entrepreneurs rather than a private artisan. This decision was made to ensure the validity of their contract, given the notable distinction between the *ouvriers* (artisans) of firearms and the entrepreneurs. It needs noting that the title of entrepreneur was one formally recognized and granted by the French government, carrying with it the privilege of producing arms for the King's troops, French colonies, and foreign powers. Consequently, it was the entrepreneurs who possessed the authority to negotiate with foreign states, including Malta.[72] However, the situation for the entrepreneurs and artisans of Saint-Étienne changed with the arrival of inspector Fiacre François Potot de Montbéliard, who stayed in Saint-Étienne in 1764-65.[73] Montbéliard spurred a radical reform for Saint-Étienne's firearms production activity, right when the Order was having its yearly consignment manufactured. It was at this time that Saint-Étienne was declared a 'Manufacture Royale des Armes,' a state-owned enterprise functioning under the supervision of the Inspector General of the Royal Arms Manufactory of Charleville.[74] Choiseul conceived the idea of closing down Charleville and Maubeuge and have Saint-Étienne as the central hub for the supply of the King's magazines. The rationale behind this decision stemmed from Saint-Étienne's geographical advantage as the most distant from the borders, making it relatively sheltered from enemy attacks. Acting on Montbéliard's counsel, the entrepreneurs were amalgamated into a consortium of nine, a number reduced to five by 1765. Shortly after, inspector Louis-Alexander Cassier de Bellegarde (1765-1773), Montbéliard's successor, proposed to have a single entrepreneur who was financially powerful to effectively centralise and standardise changes to the industry of Saint-Étienne. His proposal was entertained by the central government. Gribeauval closed down Charleville's activity and granted a

[72] Gras (1905), 41.
[73] On Fiacre François Potot de Montbéliard, see appendix 1: Short Biographies, p.336; He was the same artillery expert whom Ambassador de Froullay tried bringing to Malta as part of the French military team in 1761.
[74] Dubessy (1900), 34.

contract for military production in Saint-Étienne and the faculty of conducting arms deals with the colonies and foreigners, including Malta, to Saint-Étienne's newly appointed royal contractor, Jean-Joseph Carrier de Monthieu.[75] In 1769, Carrier de Monthieu was awarded the privilege of arms production in Saint-Étienne which had been previously granted to the association he formed part of in 1764.[76] Carrier de Monthieu came from a long-established family of arms dealers which was at this time one of the most prominent in Saint-Étienne, having also several warehouses in Nantes and Rochefort, and exported arms via Bordeaux and Marseille.[77] These administrative change in arms production in Saint-Étienne had a direct impact on the Order's contract of 1759, a deal which was still in progress.

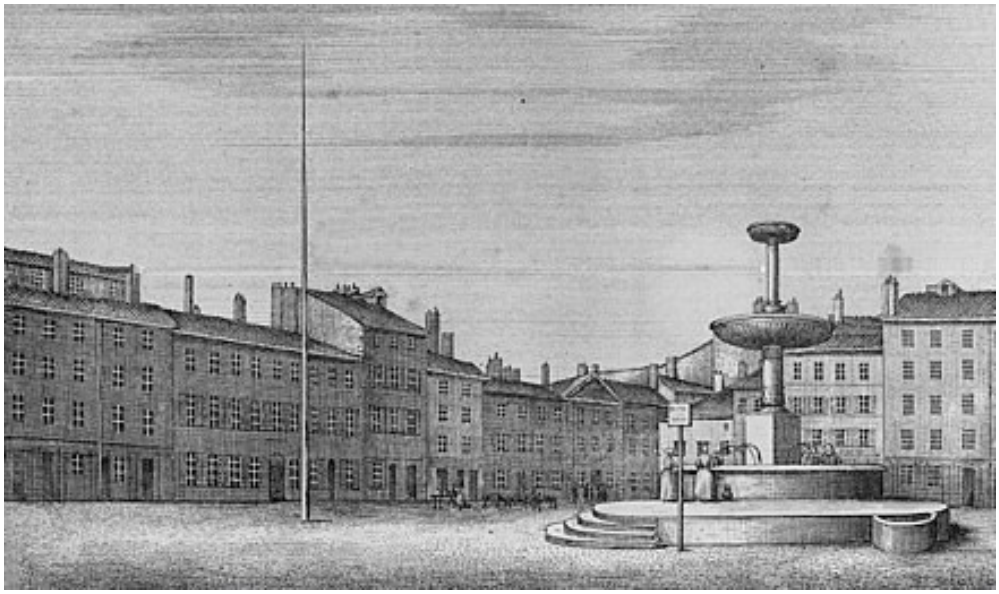


Figure 6.3 Centre for the manufacture of arms at Saint-Étienne, c.1764.[78]

The association of Girard, Robert, Carrier brothers and Company, who had signed the contract with the Order, dissolved sometime in the late 1760s. Following the changes instigated by Montbéliard and Bellegarde, when the headship of arms production passed into the hands of Carrier de Monthieu, the contract of the Order was automatically transferred to him with no forewarning to the Order nor to its

[75] Alder (2010), 188.
[76] Dubessy (1900), 34.
[77] Alder (2010), 188.
[78] The image of Saint-Étienne was retrieved on 30 April 2024, from: https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki

commissioner.[79] Carrier de Monthieu honoured the Order's contract without fail: however matters got complicated when his sister married Bellegarde, the Inspector of the Manufactory of Arms of Saint-Étienne.[80] Bellegarde's decisions and judgement over arms contracts seems to have been biased towards his brother-in-law, such that the contracts for the refurbishing and reselling of the French army's obsolete firearms, cannons and mortars (derived from several French depots) were directed to Carrier de Monthieu's factory in Saint-Étienne. An incident of malpractice in arms production warrants some detail, as it serves to show that arms procurement for the Order was far from straightforward. Carrier de Monthieu was later caught selling old inferior weapons back to the King, disguised as newly fabricated firearms.[81] This practice seemed to continue undisturbed under the duke de Choiseul until the newly appointed Minister for War, Louis François, marquis de Monteynard launched an inquiry leading to a four-month military trial in 1773. Bellegarde was sentenced to twenty years and a day in prison, while Monthieu was imprisoned until all his dues were paid.[82] Both were released before, apparently due to the intervention of Queen Marie Antoinette. According to the Queen both men were the victims of the duke d'Aiguillon's rivalry against the duke de Choiseul (there were two opposing factions in the French government at this time; those supporting the duke de Choiseul, called 'the Austrians', and those who followed d'Aiguillon and Louis XVI's key ministers Maurepas and Vergennes).[83] Monthieu's release, however, came a bit too late for the Order of St John whose firearms contract had by then expired.

With the imprisonment of Jean-Joseph Carrier de Monthieu, the Order feared that the remaining production of firearms ordered (three final instalments of *fusils de soldat* and pistols from the 1759 deal) would be left incomplete. Fortunately, Claire Duchon, Jean-Joseph's mother took over the enterprise in her son's absence by way of a power of attorney. On 17 July 1771, with the permission of the Common Treasury in Malta,[84] the commissioner of the Order and receiver for the Grand Priory of Auvergne, Fra de Laubepin, taking the role of supervisor and quality controller of arms

[79] AN M902, f. 90, 30 August 1773. Brian N. Morton, Donal C. Spinelli, *Beaumarchais and the American Revolution* (Maryland, Lexington Books, 2003), 68-69.
[80] On Alexandre Louis Cassier de Bellegarde, see appendix 1, Short Biographies, p.326.
[81] Alder (2010), 190.
[82] Morton, Spinelli (2003), 68-69.
[83] Jean Louise Henriette Campan, *Memoirs of Marie Antoinette, Queen of France* (The Floating Press, 2008), 274-275.
[84] AN M902, f. 90, 30 August 1773.

after commissioner de Brison's demise, signed two supplementary weapons deal with Monthieu's mother for a relatively smaller provision of military supplies consisting of 500 muskets with bayonets, 100 pairs of *pistols d'abordage*, 500 gun fittings for the *fusils d'officiers* with bayonets, 500 gun fittings for the *fusils de soldats*, 200 gun fittings for pistols and 350 *trombons*, 1,916 dozens of edge weapons blades of various thicknesses and more (see appendix 4: List of weaponry procured from France).[85] The supplementary orders were ready for shipment together with the final yearly consignment of the *fusils de soldat* and *pistolets* in 1773. In light of the intricate legal proceedings between the state and Monthieu, Laubepin sought guidance from Ambassador de Fleury in Paris regarding the payment owed to Madame de Monthieu. Seeking to safeguard the interests of the Order, Laubepin deemed it prudent for the agreement to be formalized by a notary. However, weary of provoking the Minister for War—who had already initiated an inquiry into Monthieu—he urged Fleury to secure Monteynard's approval first.[86] The minister acquiesced Fleury's request because he felt that the Order's agreement was not directly with the accused but with his mother. Consequently, the Order proceeded with the new arrangement, adhering to the original plan of payment totalling 19,736.5 livres for the supplementary consignment.[87]

Finally, the Order's fourteenth and final consignment of *fusils de soldat* and *pistolets*, together with the supplementary order of 1772 and 1773 from Saint-Étienne, were transported to Marseille and shipped to Malta. This was the last recorded transaction between the Order and the entrepreneurs of arms of Saint- Étienne in the 18th century.[88] The firearm purchase of the Order in 1759 amounted to a total of 440,533 livres, which was paid over the fourteen years of production, and this in addition to the supplementary procurement of 19,736 livres; this may well be the largest single such purchase by the Order in its history. In 1759, significant expenditure was planned to prepare the island for potential war, despite no immediate sense of urgency. However, less than two years after the signing of the arms deal, the threat of 1761 emerged rather unexpectedly, leaving the knights with insufficient firearms for

[85] AN M902, f. 83, 1772; f. 84, 23 September 1772; 89, 25 August 1773.
[86] AN M 902, f. 90, 30 August 1773.
[87] AN M902, f. 94, 26 September 1773.
[88] Dubessy (1900), 108-109.

their armouries and having to spend and borrow more funds to finance the purchase of other ammunition, artillery and gunpowder form France, and partially from Italy.[89]

6.5 Cargo, passports and taxes for military consignments: A logistical burden for the ambassador of the Order

Procuring weapons and military paraphernalia from France was not always a straightforward transaction. This was not only because there was an extensive number of people involved in the procurement process (the Council of State, the Congregation of War, the procurators of the Treasury in Malta, the ambassador in Paris, commissioners, receivers, consuls in Marseille, Toulon and Lyon, agents of the Order in the harbour areas, and so on) but also because of the impact French state laws and regulations had on the Order's export activities, in this particular case the military equipment.[90] While previous chapters have examined French support in military matters during the Ottoman alarms, the broader extent and deeper level of French assistance can similarly be examined in the facilitation, or not, of arms procurement and movement within the kingdom itself.

The *traites* were rights levied on imported and exported merchandise which applied to cargo movement across French borders and across internal fiscal frontiers.[91] The knights sought to avoid this additional expense by requesting that passports issued by the government for their cargo contain specific instructions to tax farmers and customs officers. These instructions freed the knights from legal restrictions concerning cargo movement and tax duties, while obliging the tax personnel to allow them free passage without imposing customs and *droit* taxes on the Order's purchases. The earliest record of such passports with tax privileges or exemption notices date to 16 May 1418, when King Charles VI (r.1368-1422) gave permission for the duty-free extraction of armoured harnesses for horses and other weapons for the knights' defence in Rhodes.[92] On 8 April 1568, three years after the siege of Malta of 1565, King Charles IX (r.1550-1574) authorised the knights to export all kinds of artillery and

[89] AN M902, f. 96, 1 October 1773.
[90] There were numerous instances when the Order had to negotiate exemption from this tax imposed on the military cargos being transported out of France. These documents are primarily documented in two volumes of the embassy of Malta in Paris, now archived at the *Archives Nationales de France,* in Paris in the M series collection; AN M902 and AN M956.
[91] Bély (1996), 1221.
[92] AN M902, f. 244, undated.

ammunition 'without paying any passage duty,' [93] and an *arret* of 1579 prohibited the customs officers in Lyon from stopping the cargo of the knights in transit.[94] The next recorded passport was that of 22 December 1577, for the export of duty-free munitions for the arming and provisioning of Malta's fortresses and the Order's fleet. Throughout the 17th century a number of similar passports were issued for gunpowder and ammunition bought in France. By the end of the 17th and throughout the 18th century, passports were regularly being issued for the exportation of firearms, artillery and gunpowder.[95]

These exemptions, bestowed by different French monarchs over time, were not permanent privileges. Whenever the knights needed armaments from France, the ambassador in Paris had to formally request a passport. This passport outlined the Order's authorisation to engage with specific forges or arms manufacturers for a specified production of weapons destined for Malta. Additionally, it detailed the exemption from customs and transit taxes on the specified consignment (refer to appendix 5: 5.5, 5.6).[96] For instance, on 13 February 1723, the Regent d'Orléans issued a passport valid for three months, addressing French governors, lieutenants general, *intendants* and so on, informing them about the Order's purchase of a sizeable consignment of firearms from Saint-Étienne, instructing them to allow unhindered movement. The tax farmers were also instructed not 'to take or demand any duty for the transport and passage of arms.'[97] Besides the Ministry for War, it was equally important for the ambassador of the Order to obtain approval from the Controller-General of Finances.[98] This established practice is evident in the 1741 passport issued by the government, granting the Order permission to procure material from the forges of Bourgogne and Franche-Comté. It authorized the extraction and export of 210,000 grapeshot for the Order's navy, facilitating unrestricted movement across provinces and jurisdictions. The passport included explicit instructions to tax collectors to waive

[93] 'sans payer aucuns droits de passage.' *Archives Départementales du Rhône*, 48H58, 1568-1579.
[94] *Archives Départementales du Rhône*, 48H58, 1568-1579.
[95] AN M902, f. 244, undated.
[96] One notable instance occurred in 1741 when a passport was issued, permitting the Order to extract 200,000 bullets from the forges of Bourgogne et Franche-Comté; AN M902, f. 19, 20 December 1740; f. 20, 14 November 1741.
[97] 'de prendre ni exiger aucuns droits pour raison du transport et passage de armes.' AN M902, f. 10, 13 February 1723.
[98] AN M902, f. 13, 30 October 1726.

any customs duties on the cargo. Additionally, it was countersigned by the chief commissioner of the Office of Passports in Paris.[99]

Securing passports and tax exemptions was at times challenging for the ambassador, even when he adhered to the same procedure for acquiring identical types and quantities of military goods over consecutive years. For instance, in 1726, Maurepas, the Minister for the Navy, informed Ambassador de Mesmes that while he was approving the requested passport for extraction and customs exemption, the Controller General of Finances refused to do the same the *droit de foraine* (tax levied on the circulation of goods across the provinces in France) and other customs taxes on the fifteen cannons bought from Toulon. The Controller General gave the excuse that the Order was only permitted to enjoy an exemption on corn intended to feed its knights in Malta.[100] Despite the bureaucratic process for the issuing of passports and obtaining the necessary exemptions for military cargos, the process was generally a smooth one, except for occasional periods. For example, in the 1760s, when Saint-Étienne was shipping yearly consignments of firearms to Malta, the Order's ambassador was normally notified by the entrepreneurs that the consignment was completed, asking him to send them a passport for its transportation. This happened every year, irrespective of the fact that these shipments were identical to the previous year and one passport could have covered a number of years. There were instances when the issuing of passports got delayed, causing concern amongst the entrepreneurs of Saint-Étienne about having to store the cargo, risking damage to the merchandise if this took too long. On 20 June 1764, the association of Girard, Robert, Carrier brothers & company urged the Ambassador de Froullay in Paris to send them the passport in haste because they feared that the consignment, already in the stores of Givors, risked being damaged.[101] The following year, they petitioned Froullay again, warning him to avoid delays because they planned to ship the cargo immediately after commissioner Brison supervised the testing of the weapons. They refused to take responsibility for the state of the weapons once they were certified following the testing procedure.[102]

In July 1765, an unfavourable situation arose. Despite being in possession of a passport clearly stating instructions for the exemption from customs fees, the

[99] AN M902, f. 20, 14 November 1741.
[100] AN M902, f. 13, 30 October 1726; f. 14, 25 December 1726.
[101] AN M902, f. 50, 20 June 1764.
[102] AN M902, f. 54, 20 May 1765.

entrepreneurs from Saint-Étienne were compelled to pay local duty fees while transporting the Order's cargo through privately-owned lands.[103] The ambassador had to remedy the situation, and rapidly, because the contract of 1759 stipulated that if the *droits* fees were waived by the central government, then the agreed price for each firearm was to be reduced. The entrepreneurs accused the ambassador of obtaining only one passport with the necessary exemptions (including those of the *adjudicaire generale* and local fees) since they started shipping to Malta, and this was for the year 1763. In the preceding three passports (1760-61-62) and the succeeding two consignments (1764-65), an error disrupted the exemption clause from the local/regional duty fees, obliging the suppliers to pay transportation taxes of 10 livres per quintal for transportation on land, or 20 livres over the Rhône, a route preferred by the entrepreneurs for its safety.[104] In collaboration with commissioner Brison, the entrepreneurs exerted pressure on Ambassador de Froullay for reimbursement, but their attempts proved fruitless. Consequently, they approached the Order's Treasury for compensation, arguing that in the absence of a tax-exempt passport, the Treasury was obligated to fulfil the terms of the 1759 agreement. This entailed paying the full price for the rifles and pistols, rather than the reduced duty-free price. Alternatively, in case the knights refused to follow the terms of the contract, the entrepreneurs offered to have the price of muskets and pistols revised and increased by a further 10 sols per musket and 8 sols per pair of pistols to make up for any sort of *droits* imposed on them. This bargaining was no different than that negotiated for French procurement and supply.[105]

Seeking to avoid further financial strain, particularly given the Order's recovery from the 1761 crisis, the Procurators of the Treasury urged Ambassador de Froullay to petition the French court for reimbursement of the paid taxes to the manufacturers and to ensure future consignments were duly exempted.[106] The documents do not reveal whether the entrepreneurs were reimbursed, but the ambassador in Paris did manage to obtain the requested comprehensive passports. In fact, by 1767, under the newly designated entrepreneur of Saint-Étienne, Carrier de Monthieu, two separate passports were issued, one from the King's office and the other

[103] AN M902, f. 56, 20 July 1765.
[104] AN M902, f. 57, 1765.
[105] AN M902, f. 58, 10 July 1765.
[106] AN M902, f. 60, 27 January 1766.

by the office of the Farmers General. These guaranteed that the Order and the manufacturers were fully exempt from duty fees.[107] Documents show that this practice of two passports continued at least until 1773, when the Order's contract with Saint-Étienne was completed.[108]

6.6 Naval assistance and supplies: The case of the masts for the Order's fleet

Throughout their residence in Malta, and even before that, the knights maintained a strong connection with the ports of Marseille and Toulon. The association with the harbour of Marseille has been extensively explored by Alain Blondy, Anne Brogini, Xavier Labat Saint-Vincent, among others, but Malta's interaction with the port of Toulon has received less attention.[109] While ties with Marseille primarily revolved around the services of the Order's galley fleet (for which the Order had adequate facilities even before the 18th century), commercial activities, and the occasional extraction of ammunition from its arsenal, the transactions with Toulon focused mainly on shipwright services (mostly sailing ships), provision of weapons for outfitting Hospitaller vessels, and the replenishment of the armoury and gunpowder stores. While the galley squadron of the Order remained in continuous use, the early 18th century saw the introduction of a sailing ship squadron. However, the initial lack of suitable naval facilities for these new ships drew the Order closer to the shipwright services and facilities available at royal arsenal of Toulon.[110]

Highlighting France's steadfast commitment to the Order's maritime needs in the 18th century, Jean-Jacques Mithon de Senneville, *intendant* of the arsenal of Toulon (1720-1737), shared his thoughts with the Order's ambassador, saying that 'I always consider your [the Order's] vessels as those of the King,' a sentiment which resonated throughout the 18th century.[111] It was indeed France that provided maritime assistance

[107] AN M902, f. 64, 28 August 1767; f. 66, 6 July 1768.
[108] AN M902, f. 73, 17 July 1769; f. 76, 22 September 1770.
[109] *See:* Alain Blondy, *Malte et Marseille* (Malta, Fondation de Malte, 2013)*;* Anne Brogini, 'Une Méditerranée Marseillaise? L'élan des marchands provençaux en Méditerranée occidentale (env. 1590-env. 1660)' in *Le Mer en Partage Sociétés littorales et économies maritimes XVI^e-XX^e siècle*, Daumalin and Faget **(**eds.) Presses Universitaires de Provence, Provence 2016*, 153-163;* Anne Brogini*, Malte, frontière de chrétienté (1530-1670)* (Rome, BEFAR, 2005); Xavier Labat Saint-Vincent, *Malte et le commerce Marseillais au XVIII siècle*, thèse de doctorat d'histoire, Paris IV, 2000.
[110] The archive of the embassy of the Order in Paris, conserved at the *Archives Nationales de France,* Paris*,* contains a wealth of information on this subject.
[111] 'J'ai toujours regardé vos vaisseaux comme ceux du Roi même.' NLM AOM 1231, f. 408, 1 November 1729.

for the Order to be able to launch a new squadron at the turn of the century. In 1701, Grand Master Perellos communicated his project for a squadron of ships-of-the-line to the Council of State. The need to upgrade the Hospitaller fleet arose from the challenges that the galley squadron faced in dealing with the Barbary fleets and corsairs that plagued the Mediterranean. These adversaries subjected hundreds of Maltese to slavery and severely disrupted Christian shipping and trade. As the defender of the Faith, the Order was duty-bound to safeguard Christian waters from Muslim harassment, and French logistical support was indispensable in fulfilling this obligation.[112]

The knights' shipyard in Birgu installed on their arrival in 1530 was only fashioned for the construction and maintenance of galleys, but maritime developments compelled the Order to modernise its facilities or else commission the construction of the sailing squadron offshore. In Europe, after the 1650s, especially in France, governments were rapidly reforming their seaport facilities to support their modern fleets. It was only when Perellos gave orders to commence the construction of a new shipyard in Senglea, intended for the construction, maintenance and storage of the new sailing ships, that the Order was ushered into the modern maritime era.[113] Building a new shipyard from scratch would of course take years to complete, and Perellos was in no mood to wait. Therefore, when the Pope authorised the construction of sailing ships by way of a Brief in 1701, the debate centred on determining the best shipyard for construction of the first two vessels.[114]

With the benefit of a solid supply of timber from the Black Forest and Riga, Dutch shipping was advanced by the standards of the day, but by the 18th century it was starting to lose its edge. Although the Order had been satisfied with the construction of the *Gran Galeone* at the beginning of the 17th century, Holland was at the turn of the 18th century a problematic choice. Besides being distant from Maltese waters, the ongoing wars in Europe made it prone to invasion.[115] Dutch territory was

[112] The offensive operations of the Barbary corsairs in the Mediterranean had been on the rise since the 1690s: Anton Quintano, *The Maltese-Hospitaller Sailing Ship Squadron 1701-1798* (Malta, Publishers Enterprises Group (PEG) Ltd., 2003), 33-34.
[113] Anton Quintano, 'The Malta shipyard: infrastructural developments during the 18th century,' in *Mediterranean seascapes: proceedings of an International Conference held in Malta in conjunction with Euromed Heritage II, Navigation du Savoir Project*, S. Mercieca (ed.) Malta University Publishers Ltd., Malta 2004, 49.
[114] Quintano (2003), 23-25.
[115] Quintano (2003), 33.

in fact invaded in 1747, only to regain its stability in 1748 with the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle.[116] On the other hand, the Hospitaller-Venetian relationship was so strained at this time that the arsenal of Venice was not a viable option. Moreover, Venice would have never allowed to have ships constructed to harass Ottoman vessels.[117] Aside to Perellos' known sympathy towards the French,[118] and the increasing French influence on the Order during the 18th century (400 out of 600 knights were French by 1789), and the skill of the master carpenters in Toulon, Perellos could foresee that the Order would benefit most from French shipbuilding expertise.[119] This, in addition to the convenient location of Toulon's dockyard, the fact that the Saint-Gervais's factory provisioned artillery directly to the arsenal thus ensuring a steady supply to arm the ships, and knowing that France regularly stocked its naval stores, all made Toulon a logical choice. Toulon was also close to Marseille, Lyon, Barcelona and Genoa, all city ports in which the Order had its receivers and agents who could facilitate the movement of money and material for ship building. A year after the Pope issued his Brief in 1701, King Louis XIV gave his permission to Perellos to avail himself of the docks in Toulon for the construction of the Order's sailing ships.[120]

The first two sailing ships of the squadron, the *Saint Jean I* and the *Saint-Jacques* were constructed in Toulon under the direction of François Coulomb (1654-1717), son of the famous Laurent Coulomb. He was assisted by the Maltese master-shipwright of the galleys, Baldassare Scolaro. Coulomb was a renowned shipwright in France,[121] having constructed a total of thirty-four vessels for the monarchy and also directed the naval construction school of Toulon.[122] The Coulomb was a prominent family of shipwrights working mostly at the arsenal of Toulon and contributing significantly to the kingdom's shipbuilding sector for over a century. Their lineage of shipwrights started with Coulomb *père*, Laurent (1622-1696) who constructed no less

[116] Peter Geyl, 'Holland and England during the War of the Austrian Succession,' *History*, 10, 37 (April 1925), 48.
[117] Quintano (2003), 33-34;
[118] Francesc, Amorós i Gonell, 'Malta i els cavallers hospitalers de l'orde militar de Sant Joan de Jerusalem durant la Guerra de Successió (1702-1714). Notícies extretes de la correspondència Diplomàtica', *Pedralbes: revista d'historia moderna*, 26 (2006), 265.
[119] Ami Solange, 'Les Maitres-Constructeurs de la Marine à Toulon au XVIIIe siècle', *Cahiers de la Méditerranée*, 10, 1 (1975), 76.
[120] Quintano (2003), 33-34.
[121] Quintano (2003), 35.
[122] Ayse Devrim Atauz, *Eight Thousand Years of Maltese Maritime History. Trade, piracy, and naval warfare in the central Mediterranean: the maritime history and archaeology of Malta* (Florida, University Press of Florida, 2008), 211.

than twenty-nine vessels for the King of France. Three of his nine children, Antoine, François and Blaise Coulomb, followed him into the shipbuilding business, but it was the latter two who started the family's connection with Malta. The two brothers were commissioned by the Order for the construction of the sailing ships for the new squadron.[123]

Satisfied with François' skilful construction of the *Saint Jean I* and the *Saint-Jacques*, the Order showed its appreciation by making him a donat of the Order, and granting him the faculty to wear the Hospitaller's cross on his arm. The construction was then shifted to Malta and the *Sainte Catherine* and the frigate *Saint Joseph* were completed by the time Perellos launched his four-ship squadron in 1705.[124] By 1716, François's two ships needed repair, while those constructed in Malta were in an even worse state. After the demise of Louis XIV, the Grand Master petitioned the Regent for naval assistance. For the purpose of revitalizing his deteriorating squadron Perellos requested him to send France's finest naval constructors. This request came a year after the frail Louis XIV had dispatched a team of his top military engineers and officers to bolster the island's defences amid the Ottoman menace of 1714-1715. For the naval service to Malta, the Regent chose Blaise Coulomb (brother of François) from the docks of Toulon, taking with him his two sons Pierre and Jacques. Blaise's first task was to inspect the damaged sailing ships and provide a solution. Seeing that the evaluated cost for repair was exorbitant, the Order chose to commission two new ships-of-the-line constructed in the shipyard of Senglea under the direction of the French visiting expert. Blaise was commissioned to construct the *Saint Jean II, Saint George*, and *Saint Vincent*.[125]

Even though the Order's finances were heavily strained after John Law's reforms,[126] Grand Master Vilhena pursued his plan to construct yet another sailing ship. In 1725, he petitioned the young Louis XV to send Blaise again to Malta for a period of at least five months so that he would construct his fourth ship for the Order, the *Saint Antoine*.[127] As willing as the King was to support the Order, his *intendant* at Toulon delayed the shipwright's release because the arsenal was in the middle of

[123] Solange (1975), 76.
[124] Plaisse (1991), 89.
[125] Quintano (2003), 97.
[126] See chapter 2.
[127] AN M963, f. 159, 10 October 1725; Quintano (2003), 97, 109.

constructing a 74-cannon royal ship. In March 1726, Blaise made his way to the island for the second time, but when his leave expired after four months, the *intendant* pressured the Minister for the Navy to summon him back because his absence was delaying the construction of another royal vessel for the King.[128] Not wanting to leave the knights of Malta stranded midway in the construction of the *Saint Antoine*, Maurepas proposed to leave Coulomb's sons on the island to complete the job.[129] This practice was not new to French authorities, who were accustomed to leaving a French engineer after their visiting counterparts returned to France upon completing their missions.

Besides the construction of the Order's sailing ships, the arsenal of Toulon provided the knights with inspection and certification services of their vessels. Shortly after the French bombardment of Tripoli in 1728, at which time Toulon was busy preparing armaments against that same city, the commander of the Hospitallers' fleet, Romagere, sailed into port with the *Saint Jean II* and the *Saint George,* to have them inspected by Blaise. Already in his sixties and with his health deteriorating, Blaise could not travel to Malta, so the Order went to him. Together with his son Pierre and another shipwright Joseph Chapelle, Blaise certified both ships as being fairly seaworthy, requiring only some repair which the shipwrights of Malta were more than capable of doing.[130] Sensing that his time was limited (despite living for another decade), Blaise expressed his dedication to the Order in a letter to the ambassador in Paris, saying that, 'I hope, however, to have the fortune to leave you a good shipbuilder before my death,' a commitment which he duly fulfilled.[131] The ships constructed by French shipwrights were considered of better quality than those done by the Maltese. For instance, the *Saint Jean* and *Saint Jacques* constructed by the French lasted a good fifteen years of navigation, while the *Saint Vincent* launched in 1720 was still in very good condition in 1735, this considering that well-kept ships tended to last not more than ten years. It was therefore natural for the Order to maintain its connection with the Coulomb ship builders in Toulon.[132]

[128] AN M963, f. 163, 3 July 1726; f. 164, 14 July 1726; f. 166, 31 July 1726.
[129] AN M963, f. 166, 31 July 1726.
[130] NLM AOM 1231, f. 373, 29 October 1729.
[131] 'J'espère si pourtant d'avoir le bonheur avant que de mourir de vous laisser un bon constructeur.' NLM AOM 1231, f. 392, 27 April 1729.
[132] Plaisse (1991), 91.

Through Blaise's son, Pierre Coulomb and nephew François (Blaise's nephew, and son of François senior) the naval services of France to Malta were extended way into the 18th century. Besides serving the Order as a shipbuilding facility and maritime services hub, Toulon was also a nautical education centre. François Coulomb junior was responsible for the shipbuilding apprenticeship of the Maltese Agostino Scolaro between 1737 and 1740, in addition to presenting a number of ship models to the Grand Master.[133] In 1781, Grand Master de Rohan sent a young man called Maurin to learn the art of shipbuilding in Toulon as part of his plan of having a handful of Maltese apprenticed in Toulon, who would in time be useful to the Order.[134] This was perhaps Rohan's attempt to bolster the shipbuilding knowledge on the island, an effort which had started a decade earlier under Pinto when a nautical school was integrated in University of Malta, in the former oratory of the Jesuit church in Valletta.[135]

Pierre Coulomb returned to the island in 1747 for a period of fifteen months to direct a general overhaul of the three vessels constructed by his father.[136] The Order was obliged to pay him a salary of 40 sous per day and 24 sous for his subsistence, which was equal to what the King paid to his shipbuilders while fetching wood from the forests for shipbuilding purposes.[137] When Pierre had already resumed his duties in Toulon, the Order called on him for a different issue altogether. He was asked to resolve a complication which had arisen in 1748 between the Order and the King's entrepreneur, Babaud de Chaussade, following a substantial purchase of masts procured through him. When the mast cargo arrived on the island their proportion was found to be inadequate for the Order's ships, therefore both Babaud and Grand Master Pinto commissioned Coulomb as the marine expert to recalculate the mast proportions in the Toulon method, and to price them appropriately.[138]

After Pierre and François junior died in the early 1750s, Louis XV commissioned yet another Coulomb cousin, this time for the pressing matter of the evaluation of the Corona Ottomana before it was sold to France in August 1761. This Coulomb travelled with the Bailli de Fleury, to inspect the ship and its contents to

[133] Quintano (2003), 109.
[134] AN M948, f. 182, 27 March 1781.
[135] Emanuel Buttigieg, Simone Azzopardi, 'L'Università tà Malta: A History,' in *The University of Malta: Legacies & Bearings*, K. Sciberras. E. Buttigieg, M. Anthony Falzon, D. Fenech and G. Martin (eds.) Malta University Press, Malta 2020, 1.
[136] AN M963, f. 76, 23 July 1748.
[137] NLM AOM 1234, f. 27, 7 April 1747.
[138] AN M995, ff. 165-179, June-September 1749.

establish a reasonable value. Though not confirmed, it is likely that this man was either Jacques Luc Coulomb (1713-1791), son of Blaise, or the latter's grandson Joseph Marie Blaise (1728-1803), both of whom worked as shipwrights in Toulon during this specific period.[139] Whatever the case, the family's contribution down the years was highly valued, for the Order's satisfaction can be traced in the various gifts, concessions and recommendations awarded to them. Blaise received the Order's cross in 1717 and his nephew François in 1740, while Pierre Coulomb professed his vows as a servant-at-arms. Further to these privileges, they also gained an exemption from the French capitation tax.[140] Blaise Coulomb received gifts and strong endorsements. In 1721, Grand Master Zondadari recommended him to the French King and admiral for his shipbuilding skills, leading to his promotion to chief constructor at Rochefort.[141]



Figure 6.4 Joseph Vernet's view of the harbour of Toulon in 1756. This painting hangs in the Maritime Museum of Paris.[142]

[139] See chapter 3; Solange (1975), 76.
[140] Solange (1975), 76.
[141] NLM AOM 1563, ff. 214-215, 25 November 1720; f. 289, 19 June 1721.
[142] This painting was retrieved on 25 September 2023, from: https://www.meisterdrucke.ie/fine-art-prints

The Order's reliance on the arsenal of Toulon did not end with the dock facilities and maritime advocacy. Given the amount of artillery, gunpowder, and ammunition that the Order extracted from this arsenal throughout the 18th century (with the largest extractions in 1708, 1716, 1723, and 1761), it is justifiable to conclude that Toulon's arsenal allowed the Order unrestricted access, provided that the Minister for the Navy gave his blessing. Toulon's frequent provisioning of arms to the knights was in part possible because the arsenal was regularly stocked from a number of forges and other royal stores, chief of which was Lyon. To give an illustration of this, the Order, amongst several other purchases, extracted 100,000 pounds of gunpowder, 500 cannon balls and 4,000 grenades in 1708;[143] 1,200 barrels of gunpowder in 1715;[144] 15 iron cannons in 1726;[145] and fifty 24-pounder cannons in 1777 (see appendix 4 for a more detailed list of armament and gunpowder extraction from Toulon and other locations in France).[146]

Given the significant presence of French knights within the arsenal of Toulon, including those in high-ranking positions, the Order wielded considerable influence.[147] Various Hospitaller commanders, bailiffs and grand crosses participated in the command of the fleet at Toulon or in the administration of the arsenal. Suffice to say that during the general alarm of 1714-1715, twelve knights and officers of the maritime department of Toulon (of varying ranks including, *chef d'escadre*, captain, lieutenant, *commandant guard de la marine*) were released from service to assist in the navy of Malta during the defence of the island.[148] Arguably, the most prized asset wielded by the Order in Toulon was its insider connections and extensive knowledge of weapon stock levels. Knights associated with the arsenal would relay this information to the ambassador in Paris, empowering him with crucial insights before negotiating arms deals with the ministers of the marine. Among these individuals, Pierre de Thomas de Châteauneuf stands out, consistently providing the ambassador with detailed lists of available stock on numerous occasions.[149] The Châteauneuf was one of the most

[143] AN MAR/B/3/162, f. 542, 27 May 1708.
[144] AN M963, f. 15, 20 February 1715.
[145] AN M963, f. 168, 11 September 1726; AN M902, f. 14, 25 December 1726; MAR/B/2/278 f. 41, 9 March 1727
[146] AN MAR/B/I/84, f. 220, 3 May 1777; AN M960, f. 30, 21 October 1777.
[147] Plaisse (1991), 75.
[148] AN MAR/B/3/231, f. 34, 21 February 1715.
[149] See chapter 2 for a more detailed analysis of Pierre de Thomas de Châteauneuf's involvement in the procurement of arms from Toulon.

prominent families of Toulon, contributing three knights to the Order: commander Pierre de Thomas de Châteauneuf (1684-1759) who served as squadron commander, along with his two brothers, one of whom served as a *garde de la marine.* Additionally, several Provençal knights held key positions in the command of the navy of Toulon, such as: the Bailli Jacques-Auguste Maynard de Bellefontaine (1720-1721), the commander Ailly (1720), two bailiffs de Vatan (1733-1734), François de Signier Poisin (1750-1751), the two commanders Pierre-André de Glandevès de Castellet and vice-admiral Raymond d'Éoux (1765-1766).[150] Besides the knights serving in Toulon, there were others amongst the Order's naval echelons who were familiar faces in the harbour, notably the knights Valbelle, Forbin, Raymondis; the vice-admiral of the Levant, the knight Pierre de Blouet de Camilly who occupied a prominent position in Malta and Versailles; and the famous French vice-admiral the Bailli Pierre André de Suffren.[151]

Owing to the lack of resources on the island, the Knights of Malta frequently relied on imports to sustain and upgrade their naval fleet. Timber was commonly sourced from Venice, naval armaments from the arsenal of Toulon, and masts from Catalonia.[152] In 1746, when the Order aimed to invest in the repair and enhancement of its naval forces, Grand Master Pinto entrusted his receiver in Genoa, the Bailli de Grimaldi, with the task of procuring a significant quantity of masts and other essential naval supplies from Genoa. These were needed for the Order's war galleys, the *Galere Capitaine* and the *Galere Sensiglies*.[153] When the efforts of Grimaldi to procure masts for the Order were unsuccessful, the convent sought assistance from Portugal and France. Before approaching the French maritime department, Ambassador de Froullay sought the expertise of Jacques Luc Coulomb, to gather information on the mast stock in Toulon.[154] On 25 September 1746, Coulomb informed the ambassador that procuring masts from France was going to be hard because of a widespread shortage

[150] Michel Vergé-Franceschi, *Toulon Port Royal (1481-1789)* (Paris, Tallandier, 2002), 236, 290-291.
[151] Vergé-Franceschi (2002), 236-237; Georges Lacour-Gayet, *La Marine Militaire de La France* (Paris, Honoré Champion Libraire-Éditeur, 1905), 451; On Pierre André de Suffren, see appendix 1: Short Biographies, p.339.
[152] Quintano (2003), 34, 118.
[153] AN M995, f. 189, undated.
[154] Jacques Luc Coulomb (1713-1791) was a servant-at-arms of the Order and master constructor at the arsenal of Toulon: Joseph F. Grima, *The Fleet of the Knights of Malta. Its Organisation during the Eighteenth Century* (Malta, BDL Publishing, 2016), 115.

across the kingdom,[155] and that the small stock in Toulon was designated for the three royal vessels under construction.[156]

France's involvement in the War of the Austrian Succession (1740-1748) and Dutch refusal to provide it with naval equipment compounded the shortage of masts in France. Moreover, the timing of the Order's mast request was unfortunate; had the Convent waited for three more years, they might have found the number of masts they needed in Toulon because in 1750 the French ministry of the marine signed its largest contract for naval stores, (including masts) with suppliers in the north.[157] However, pressure mounted at the Convent, to the extent that the ambassador in Paris was warned that 'if we do not receive the masts soon, the galleys and the vessels [of the Order] will not be able to continue their service.'[158] Rather than waiting for developments from France, the Hospitallers attempted to obtain masts from Lisbon, while still encouraging Froullay to negotiate directly with Versailles. Froullay wasted no time and sought assistance from Jean Frédéric Phélypeaux, count de Maurepas, the Minister for the Navy (1723-1749), who, knowing that France was in no position to provide these, directed him to Pierre Babaud de la Chaussade (c.1710-1792), a designated contractor supplying the French navy and the arsenal of Toulon.[159] Chaussade had strong economic ties with Holland, which helped establish the French navy's commercial links for the provisioning of the royal fleet. In fact, France had been ordering masts from Holland through Chaussade since 1737.[160]

The entrepreneur Chaussade was a timber merchant and naval armaments manufacturer. Coming from a family with a legacy in the arms trade inherited from ex-Protestant families with Dutch links, he also had a history of running forges in eastern France and supplying timber. Well-connected at the French court, he enjoyed Maurepas's protection and favour, receiving generous advances and exoneration from accusations related to wood deliveries for the King's service.[161] As a military entrepreneur for the King, Babaud's primary concern was to have a steady stream of

[155] AN M995, f. 182, 12 November 1749.
[156] AN M995, f. 131, 25 September 1746.
[157] James Pritchard, 'Fir, Trees, Financiers, and the French Navy During the 1750s', *Canadian Journal of History*, 23, 3 (1988), 337.
[158] 'que si on ne recevoit bientôt des mats les galères et vaisseaux ne pourroint plus continuer leur service.' AN M955, f. 182, 12 November 1749.
[159] AN M995, f. 182, 12 November 1749.
[160] AN M995, f. 194, undated.
[161] James Pritchard, 'Privilege and Profit: A Business Family in Eighteenth-century France by P. W. Bamford', *Canadian Journal of History/Annales Canadiennes d'Histoire*, 25, 1 (1990), 105.

orders (mainly for anchors and iron) from his main client, the King of France, whose needs fluctuated according to war.[162] Babaud's business flourished with the ascension of Maurepas to power and his increasing influence with the Pâris brothers, financiers to the King of France.[163] France's decision to rebuild the royal navy in 1748 brought with it a shift from the traditional way of naval provisioning whereby court influence became even more predominant in the awarding of contracts.[164] By 1750, Chaussade monopolized the importation of northern masts and timber, becoming the navy's primary producer and supplier of wrought iron. He even earned the title 'iron King' of 18th-century France.[165]

Not willing to rush into negotiations with Chaussade, Ambassador de Froullay held a meeting in Fontainebleau with Van Hoey, the Dutch ambassador in Paris, for a possible direct procurement from Holland.[166] Van Hoey extended his assistance to the Order under the condition that payment for the consignment would be settled in Holland upon delivery to Malta, and that the leased ships transporting the cargo would be paid in Amsterdam before departure.[167] Direct collaboration with the Dutch rather than employing a French middleman might have been cheaper for the Order. However, engaging Chaussade had its own advantages. He was experienced in managing the logistics and transportation of a sizable consignment of masts, which would have saved the Order time and money, apart from having contacts with suppliers from the Netherlands and Riga. While the documents do not explicitly explain the reason for Froullay's decision for choosing Chaussade over the Dutch ambassador, a possible reason could be that the ambassador of Holland was withdrawn from Paris shortly after their meeting, possibly because Holland and France were still on hostile terms because of their engagement in the War of the Austrian Succession (1740-1748). Van Hoey's absence cut short Froullay's direct contact with Holland.[168] Therefore, it seemed both logical and practical for the Order to take advantage of established French practices and experienced contractors.

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[162] Rafael Torres-Sánchez, Pepijn Brandon & Marjolein 't Hart, 'War and economy. Rediscovering the eighteenth-century military entrepreneur', *Business History*, 60, 1 (2018), 14.
[163] James Pritchard, *Louis XV's navy 1748-1762: A study of Organization and Administration* (Canada, McGill-Queen's University Press, 1987), 168.
[164] Pritchard (1987), 162.
[165] Pritchard (1987), 168; Pritchard (1988), 340.
[166] AN M995, f. 132, undated.
[167] AN M995, f. 149, undated; f. 182, 12 November 1749; f. 193, undated.
[168] AN M954, f. 54, 28 July 1747.

When the Order's negotiations with Lisbon failed, the Procurators of the Treasury in Malta entered a lengthy deliberation, and on 22 April 1747 they instructed Froullay to close the negotiations with Chaussade for the purchase of 70 masts and 40 *mâtéreaux* (spars),[169] and some other naval equipment, on condition that the contract had to follow closely a similar agreement signed between Chaussade and the King of France on 24 August 1744. The intention of the Order was to enjoy the same benefits the contractor gave to the King.[170] Initially, it appeared that Chaussade was not enthusiastic about entering into this negotiation. The relatively small number of masts required by the Order, in comparison to French orders, might not have seemed lucrative to him. However, Froullay proposed to him to pack any empty stowage with maritime supplies, and any of it that was not bought by the Order could be sold to third parties in Malta or in the harbour of Naples on his behalf. However, Froullay did warn him outright that if the delivered masts were found to be of incorrect proportions, Chaussade could 'not demand the Religion [Order] to take masts which would be useless to its navy.'[171] The terms of the Order were laid out very clearly and Chaussade agreed to close the deal.[172] He explained that he planned to buy the masts from Riga, ship them to Amsterdam, and there shape them to the specified proportions.[173] While on the negotiating table in August 1747, Chaussade expressed one main concern that if the War of the Austrian Succession were to persist he would not be in a position to provide French vessels for the delivery of the masts because the Dutch prohibited their ships from entering French waters, and vice versa. In such eventuality, the Order would have no choice but to hire a vessel from a neutral country if it wanted to protect its cargo. Froullay encouraged Chaussade to lease a Danish, Swedish, German, or Russian vessel and have it sail directly to Malta, because these would be safe from any Dutch or British harassment at sea.[174] Chaussade even advised the ambassador to have the cargo insured in case it was captured by the belligerent powers, however, Froullay was confident that the Order's policy of neutrality in inter-Christian wars was enough to

[169] For a description of 18th century masts and nomenclature see: Douglas Sobey, 'The Department of the Marine and the search for Masts on Ile Saint-Jean,' *Le Marin du Nord*, XIII, 1 (2003), 3.
[170] AN M995, f. 149, undated; f. 182, 12 November 1749; f. 193, undated.
[171] 'n'exigéres pas que la Religion prends des mats qui seroient inutiles pour sa marine.' AN M995, f. 146, 4 August 1747.
[172] AN M995, f. 146, 4 August 1747.
[173] AN M995, f. 194. This is an undated receipt/report of the 70 masts bought from Riga and processed in Holland.
[174] AN M995, f. 146, 4 August 1747.

safeguard the consignment, this because Hospitallers' neutrality was a widely recognised policy by all Christian powers.[175]

Maurepas's assistance to the Order on this occasion came at a price. He opportunistically pressed the Order's ambassador to buy 100 bales of hemp from the Dutch and disguise it as a consignment to the Order. He then expected Malta to load the hemp onto French vessels waiting in the grand harbour of the island to deliver it to Toulon. Aware of the serious political implications of this, Froullay refused outright and informed his superior at the Convent, saying that 'I absolutely refused to be involved in this arrangement for fear of causing complaints from maritime powers,' and get the Order involved in an unnecessary diplomatic conflict.[176]

Towards the end of the negotiation Froullay attempted to bargain a better price. Chaussade did promise to try to secure a 30% reduction in price from what the King had paid for the royal orders of 1744-45-46. However, the contractor failed to carry this through.[177] On 16 August 1747, Froullay and Chaussade signed the agreement for the supply of 70 masts and 40 *matereaux* (spars) for the total price of 100,166 livres, paid over three instalments (see table 6.1).[178] On the insistence of the Dutch suppliers, the payments were done in cash in Paris.[179] A downpayment of 25,041.10 livres was to be settled by receiver of the grand priory of France, commander de la Luzerne right after the signing of the contract. A second payment of 25,041.10 livres was made the following year, in August of 1748, and another payment of 40,000 livres on 10 August 1749, leaving as outstanding balance of 10,084 livres which the documents do not indicate if this was ever paid.[180] The initial consignment of 35 masts was planned to arrive in Malta within six months after the signing of the deed, timed to precede the onset of ice formation in northern Europe. The subsequent shipment was scheduled to reach the island in the spring of 1748. According to the terms of the agreement, in the event of theft or damage to the cargo, Chaussade was granted a six-month period to replace the masts.[181]

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[175] AN M995, f. 142, 5 July 1747; M995, f. 146, 4 August 1747.
[176] 'Je refuse absolument de me prêter à cet arrangement de crainte d'occasionner des plaintes de la part de la puissance maritime.' AN M995, f. 186, undated.
[177] AN M995, f. 141, 27 June 1747.
[178] AN M995, f. 203, 16 August 1747, contract signed between Babaud de la Chaussade and Ambassador de Froullay; AN M995, f. 156, undated.
[179] NLM AOM 1225, f. 173rv, 12 August 1748.
[180] AN M995, f. 203, 16 August 1747.
[181] AN M995, f. 203, 16 August 1747; AN M954, f. 54, 14 October 1747.

Grand Master Pinto was hopeful that the first consignment of masts would enter the port by January 1748,[182] but the delivery got delayed because of the ice and cold weather in the north.[183] Angered by the delay, Froullay bypassed the French contractor and contacted the suppliers in Holland himself. They argued that the cargo was completed on time but the delay was out of their control.[184] When it seemed that France could not facilitate this matter any further, Froullay communicated directly with Volkert Van Jever, the merchant and supplier in Amsterdam, on 19 January 1748, telling him that any excuse of the war and agitation in Holland was untenable because the masts were for Hospitaller Malta, a neutral country.[185] Using his diplomatic acumen, Ambassador de Froullay went straight to the source. He addressed the issue to the admiralty of Amsterdam reassuring them that, 'the two cargoes [masts] were solely destined for the arsenals of the Religion [Order], and they had no other destination,' clearing any doubts that France was in any way taking advantage of this.[186] This strategy appeared effective, because the first ship carrying the Order's masts arrived in the early months of 1748, followed by the second consignment in August 1748, aboard the Russian vessel *La Ville d'Archangel* under the command of Captain Martin Bartz. [187] The vessel had set sail from Texel, an island off the coast of the Netherlands in August 1748, laden with the Order's masts and escorted by some Dutch warships.[188]

While the ship was in transit, the Dutch suppliers notified Froullay in Paris that they had done their utmost in producing high-quality masts and meeting the dimensions specified in the purchase order. However, they did pre-warn the ambassador that if the knights were to calculate the mast proportion in the method of Malta, and not the French way, they were likely to find them larger than anticipated.[189] A clause on the mast proportion was also entered in the contract which the Order had signed with Babaud, which had stipulated that in the eventuality that the dimensions of the masts were bigger than that specified by the Order, the difference in size had to

[182] AN M954, f. 64, 24 December 1747.
[183] AOM 1225, ff. 5v-6r, 10 January 1748.
[184] NLM AOM 1225, f. 173rv, 12 August 1748.
[185] AN M995, f. 153, 19 January 1748.
[186] 'ces deux cargaisons sont uniquement destinées aux arsenaux de la Religion, qu'elles n'auront point d'autre destination.' AN M995, f. 153, 19 January 1748. This document is a copy of the letter written by Ambassador de Froullay to the Admiralty in Amsterdam.
[187] AN M995, f. 154, 24 April 1748.
[188] NLM AOM 1225, f. 168v, 12 August 1748.
[189] NLM AOM 1225, f. 173rv, 12 August 1748.

be paid accordingly.[190] Given this, the Dutch suppliers advised Froullay to instruct the knights in Malta against modifying the masts, as it could work against the Order. Consequently, Froullay asked the Ministry for the Navy in Paris for the standardized method of mast measurement in France and the relevant tariffs for any excess in mast dimensions.[191]

[190] AN M995, f. 203, 16 August 1747.
[191] NLM AOM 1225, f. 173rv, 12 August 1748.

An order of masts signed between Ambassador de Froullay and the French contractor Pierre Babaud de la Chaussade on 16 August 1747.[192]			
Quantity	**Dimensions**	**Price per mast in French livres**	**Total price in French livres**
6	19 feet (pied de France) in length 28 inches (pouce) at the wide diameter 27 inches (pouce) at the narrow diameter	3,245	19,470
8	79 feet in length 26 inches at the wide diameter 17 inches at the narrow diameter	2,507	20,056
12	76 feet in length 25 inches at the wide diameter 17 inches at the narrow diameter	2,256	27,072
12	80 feet long 22 inches at the wide diameter 14 inches at the narrow diameter	1,191	14,292
12	76 feet long 20 inches at the wide diameter 12 inches at the narrow diameter	815	9,780
8	74 feet long 17 inches at the wide diameter 10 inches at the narrow diameter	413	3,304
12	70 feet long 15 inches at the wide diameter 9 inches at the narrow diameter	326	3,912
Total of 70 masts amounting to			**97,886 livres**
40 spars	40 feet long 9-10 inches at the wide diameter	57	2,280
Total Sum			**100,166 livres**

Table 6.1. The table shows the commission of masts and spars, including their dimensions and cost price, in accordance to the agreement reached between Chaussade and Froullay on 16 August 1747. [193]

[192] AN M995, f. 203, 16 August 1747.
[193] AN M995, f. 203, 16 August 1747.

Months before Froullay had signed the mast deed, he had received a dispatch from the procurators of the Treasury in Malta, containing pictorial representations of the method of mast measurements used on the island. It clearly depicted how the two mast diameters were measured: the thick diameter, the *grosse diamètre*, was taken at the base of the mast, while the *petit diamètre* was taken at a narrow tapering tip of the mast (see figure 6.5).[194] The procurators' objective was to avoid mistakes in proportioning the masts, especially as France and Holland had their own procedures, and a flaw in proportions risked yielding unusable masts.

When the consignment arrived in Malta, a small group of knights, two master carpenters from the arsenal of Malta, together with Palmier and André who had accompanied the cargo on behalf of Chaussade, inspected and measured the masts.[195] It would have been more logistically sound for the Order to have stationed some knights in Amsterdam to inspect the masts on-site, rather than transporting the cargo to Malta before inspection. However, this was not due to a lack of foresight or experience on the Order's part, but it was simply a matter of procedure. Having the procurement overseen by a French contractor, it obliged the knights to adhere to the French system in naval procurement. Typically, French contracts between the King and its war contractors required that all northern supplies be initially delivered to French arsenals. Subsequently, the naval department would decide whether to accept or return the cargo, with the contractor assuming the risk.[196]

The knights inspected the masts upon their delivery at the grand harbour and reported that the quality was overall satisfactory, even though 31 out of 70 masts and 18 out of 40 spars were found to be mildly to moderately crooked or defective.[197] What they were really concerned about were the discrepancies they noticed in their proportion, not only for reasons of usability, but also because any addition in size had to be paid for as an extra cost.[198] Despite the fact that the unit of measurement was clearly defined in the contract, 'the measurements in feet and inches listed above [list of masts with measurements being ordered] are taken to be the feet and inches of

[194] AN M995, f. 198, undated.
[195] AN N995, f. 160, 9 March 1749.
[196] Pritchard (1988), 341.
[197] AN M995, f. 202, undated.
[198] AN M995, f. 196, 19 February 1749.

France, where each foot consists of twelve inches, and each inch has twelve lines.'[199] The problem with these masts was not the unit measure per se, but the discrepancy in the method of measuring between the Maltese and French systems.[200] Good quality masts and spars had to have a tapering straightness, a mathematical ratio between the mast length and its girth and they had to be supple yet strong and durable.[201] The inspecting knights, in the presence of Chaussade's men, measured each mast in the method of France (that used at the arsenal of Toulon), followed also by the style used at the arsenal of Malta.[202]

[199] 'Les mésures en pieds et pouces ci-dessus, sont entendu être pieds et pouces de France, savoir le pieds contenant douze pouces, et le pouces douze lignes.' AN M995, f. 203, 16 August 1747.
[200] AN M995, f. 203, 16 August 1747.
[201] Sobey (2003), 3.
[202] AN M995, f. 160, 9 March 1749; f. 196, 19 February 1749.

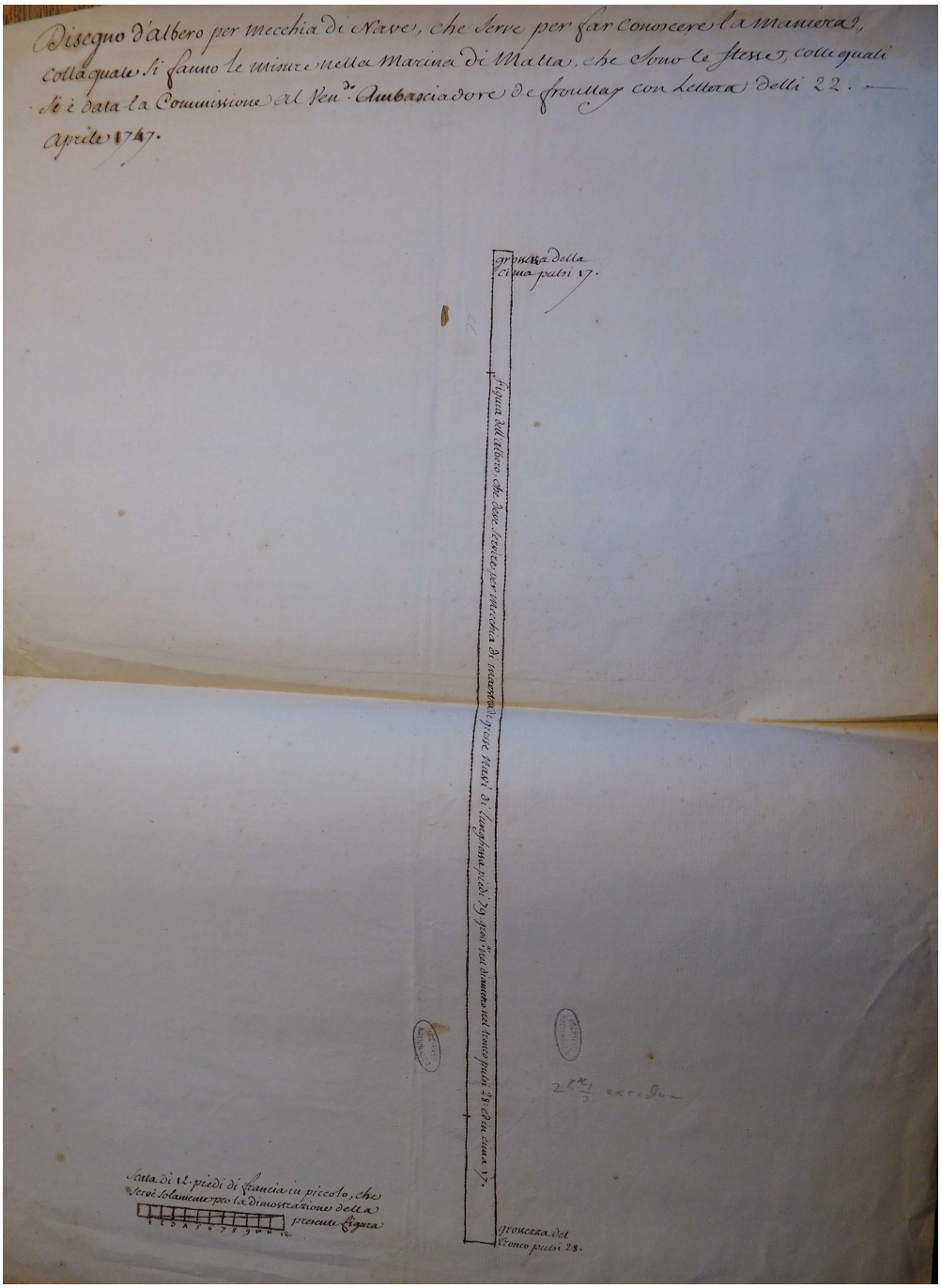


Figure 6.5 Diagram of a mast annotating the manner in which the diameter of the mast was measured in Malta. Writing on top page: Design of the mast for the ship's *mecchia* (the mast on which ropes are tied for the purpose of hauling the sails)[203] that serves to understand the manner in which measurements are taken in Malta, which are the same as those given to Ambassador de Froullay in a letter dated 22 April 1747; On the tip of the mast: Thickness of the tip of 12 inches; On the base of the mast: Thickness of the mast 28 inches; On the trunk of the mast: Diagram of the mast to be used as the mainmast of large ships, with a length of 79 feet, a diameter at the base of 28 inches, and at the top that of 17 inches. [204]

[203] Joseph Caruana, *Termini Nawtici u Taghrif Marittimu Lokali* (Malta, BDL Publishing, 2018), 285.
[204] AN M995, f. 198, undated.

Following the inspection, the commissioned knights prepared a comprehensive list of all the masts and their sizes but left the calculation for additional costs for any excess in the size of the mast in the hands of the ambassador in Paris, since he was the one to negotiate the deal. Further to the dissatisfaction with the mast proportions, the procurators of the Treasury complained about the exorbitant prices of the naval provisions which Chaussade had stowed along with the masts, with the intention to sell these to the Order. From the lot, the Order could only buy the pitch tar and coal because it was in desperate need of these, but as for the rest of the supplies, these were handed back to the contractor's agents, Palmier and André.[205]

In Paris, Babaud de la Chaussade appeared anxious at the procurators' report, because they seemed to suggest that the mast dimensions taken in Malta in the Maltese method were considerably less than those sent to him by the suppliers in Holland. This meant that Babaud's profit margin would be lower than he anticipated after paying the suppliers' bill.[206] He was also perplexed as none of the consignments he had prepared for the King exhibited such discrepancies between the dimensions provided by Dutch suppliers and those measured in the French manner. To further substantiate his claim, Babaud even offered to provide evidence by showing certificates issued by the ports of Brest, Rochefort, and Toulon. In his defence the King's contractor argued that his extensive experience in procuring masts from Holland and receiving them in good order indicated that the fault lay in Malta's mast measuring system.[207] The friction between the Treasury in Malta and the King's contractor needed to be resolved. The Order could not risk jeopardising the King's favour over a contract gone wrong. In a tête à tête with Froullay, Chaussade proposed to appoint a shipbuilding expert to resolve the issue. Both agreed that Coulomb, the King's ship builder in Toulon and servant-at-arms of the Order, should be the one to review the Order's mast sizes and report on any defects and rework the final pricing of the masts.[208] On 9 June 1749, Froullay told Coulomb that 'the purpose of your commission is to set the price of each mast in relation to its proportion according to the manner of France, and to also

[205] AN M995, f. 160, 9 March 1749.
[206] AN M995, f. 164, 23 May 1749.
[207] AN M995, f. 191, undated report.
[208] AN M995, f. 164, 23 May 1749.

determine the reduction in price due to any defects.'[209] Within ten days, Coulomb and his cousin, another master ship builder, had their review report ready and dispatched. In it they observed that the discrepancy in measurements, which prejudiced against Chaussade, resulted from the style of mast measurement employed at the arsenals of Malta, which differed substantially from the method of Toulon, and the latter method was the one agreed upon in the contract. According to the French method, the point for measuring the girth was taken at the sixth part (1/6) from the base of the mast and not from any other point in its entire length. Of course, the two methods yielded different proportions; therefore, the Coulomb cousins concluded that Chaussade had the right to demand another report with the mast dimensions retaken in the French manner, especially since the Order had committed in the contract to follow this method.[210] They argued that since the masts could not be altered, a compromise had to be reached among the three stakeholders. The Coulombs proposed three approaches: the first was to adhere to the report already made in Malta and pay any extras accordingly; the second was to ignore any discrepancies in measurements and stick to the originally agreed contract, disregarding any difference in dimensions; and the third was to remeasure and recalculate the final price based on the French system. The Coulomb cousins refrained from giving their views on the mast defects because they needed to be inspected in person.[211] As a form of surety until the issue of mast pricing was resolved, the procurator of the Treasury, Michele d'Oz, held Chaussade's naval equipment, which had arrived as extra stowage, under his control. This ensured that if the Order had to pay for any discrepancies in mast dimensions, it could retain Chaussade's naval stock as compensation, a somewhat underhanded manoeuvre.[212]

At this stage the Order could either measure the masts in the Dutch method or that of Toulon. Given the even bigger discrepancy between the Dutch system and that of Malta, Toulon's was the natural choice. If it turned out that the revised measurements were closest to the Dutch quote, the Order was obliged to pay in full, over and above the original price. To ensure fairness in the process, a master mast-maker from Toulon was to be employed for the job, and according to the outcome, the

[209] 'que l'objet de votre commission est de régler le prix de chaque mât, relativement à ses proportions pour l'usage de la France, mais aussi de régler les diminutions qui doivent être faites sur le prix en raison de défauts.' AN M995, f. 165, 9 June 1749.
[210] AN M995, f. 167, 19 June 1749.
[211] AN M995, f. 167, 19 June 1749.
[212] AN M995, f. 168, 5 July 1749.

party at fault had to bear the costs for the journey of the mast-maker to Malta.[213] Coulomb recommended Sicard or Claivin. The first was older and more experienced, but he was unavailable so, the commission went to Claivin.[214] After the ambassador took the trouble to obtain Claivin's release and passport, the procurators of the Treasury in Malta went back on their decision, against the better judgement of Froullay and Coulomb. The Order wanted to avoid further unnecessary expenses for these masts.[215] The procurators placed all their trust in Coulomb, telling him that, 'we place the conciliation in your hands,'[216] to finally reach a conclusion to this issue. Coulomb was thus obliged to base his judgement on the report and measurements sent from Malta.[217]

[213] AN M995, f. 169, 4 July 1749.
[214] AN M995, f. 176, 30 September 1749; f. 178, 10 October 1749.
[215] AN M995, f. 170, 4 July 1749; f. 172, 13 July 1749.
[216] 'nous remettons entre vos mains tout conciliation.' AN M995, f. 180, 25 October 1749.
[217] AN M995, f. 180, 25 October 1749.

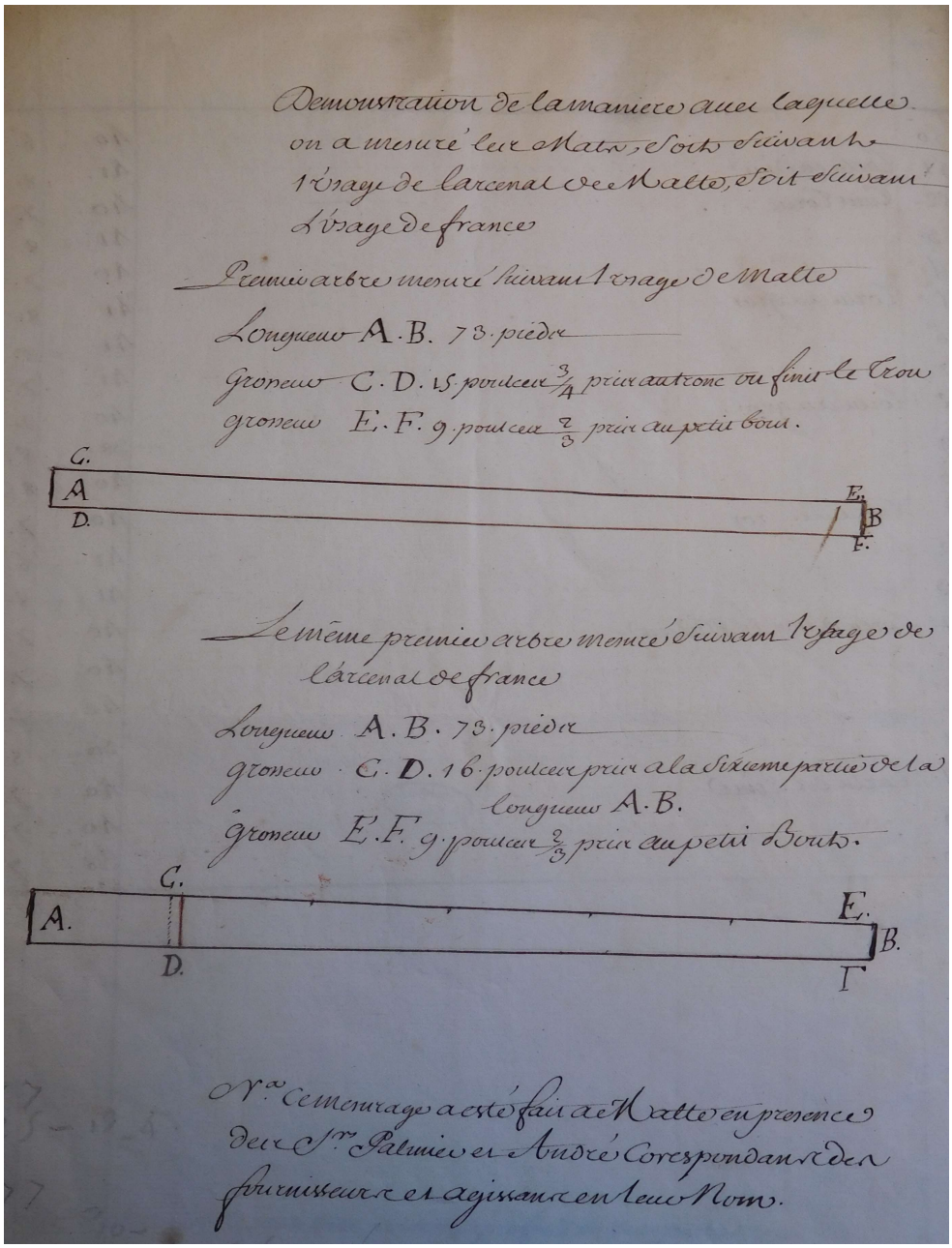


Figure 6.6 Mast measuring methods in Malta (top mast) and in France (bottom mast). The method of Malta measured the thick diameter at the base of the mast, while that of France measured the thick diameter at the 1/6 mark from the base of the mast. This gave rise to discrepancies in mast measurements. Top paragraph: Demonstration of the method used to measure the masts, either according to the practice of the arsenal of Malta or according to the practice of France; Text above the top mast: First mast measured according to the ways of Malta. Length AB- 73 feet, Thickness CD-15 ¾ inches, taken at the base where the trunk ends, Thickness EF- 9 2/3 inches taken at the thinnest end; Text in between masts: The same first mast measured according to the usage of the French arsenal. Length AB-73 feet, Thickness CD-16 inches at one-sixth the length of the mast-AB, Thickness EF-9 2/3 inches taken at the small end; Bottom Text: This measurement was done in Malta in the presence of sirs Palmier and André, the representatives of the suppliers and acting on their behalf. [218]

[218] AN M995, f. 196, 19 February 1749.

The Coulomb cousins concluded that the error happened as a result of a difference in measuring the thick diameter of a mast. Whereas the knights took the base of the mast as the thickest diameter, the French took the measurement at one-sixth from the base as being the thickest diameter, resulting in a discrepancy of around 1 inch. However, the Coulomb cousins still managed to reduce the bill by taking in consideration all those masts found defective.[219] Ambassador de Froullay noted that according to the Coulombs' mast calculations, the total cost was not to exceed 84,098 livres.[220] Despite this, Chaussade and the Dutch insisted on a larger payment. In good faith, the Dutch agreed to lower the accrued bill from 140,000 to 120,000 livres, and after further negotiation by the Order, the Treasury eventually paid an even lower amount of 115,000 livres (though still 14,834 livres more than the agreed price in the contract).[221]

Coulomb's summary of the bill after the re-pricing of the 70 masts and 40 spars	
Sum for 70 masts in livres	77,186.10.0
Sum for the excess in the wide diameter in livres	672.17.0
Sum for the excess at the narrow diameter in livres	745.16.3
Sum for the excess in the length of the masts in livres	2,478.11.2
Sum for the 40 spars including deductions because of defects	3,014.19.2
Total sum in livres	**84,098.13.7**

Table 6.2. Extract from Coulomb's detailed report on the re-calculation of mast measurement in the system of Toulon and Malta, including deductions in price for the mast and spars defects.[222]

Ambassador de Froullay was of the belief that maintaining good relations with Holland's suppliers was more of a priority to the Order than squabbling for a further reduction in price. He took into consideration that the Order was in regular need of naval equipment, and when France could not provide it, the Dutch had proven very forthcoming, even though they themselves were at war and having to negotiate through a French intermediary, despite the tensions between the two countries.[223]

[219] AN M995, f. 181, 8 November 1749.
[220] AN M995, f. 186, undated; f. 187, 26 January 1750.
[221] AN M995, f. 185, 5 December 1749.
[222] AN M995, f. 207, 7 November 1749.
[223] AN M995, f. 186, undated; f. 187, 26 January 1750.

6.7 The last procurement of artillery from *ancien régime* France

Throughout the 18th century, the Order carried out numerous procurements of guns from France, both during and in between Ottoman alerts. By the late 1760s, the military force on the island had grown to 18,000 men, necessitating a robust and well-organized storage system for their arms. In 1769, the Portuguese knight Fra Raimondo de Souza (Sousa) da Silva, Bailli di Lessa and Langone, a member of the Congregation of War and Fortifications, undertook a comprehensive inventory of the Order's equipment and storage conditions. Despite the annual deliveries of firearms from Saint-Étienne in recent years, he discovered that 24,000 muskets in the Order's armoury were rusted and unusable.[224] By contrast, the situation of the artillery was not as critical, yet it was still recommended to replace the worn-out cannons deployed on the coastal fortifications and the Order's fleet. At the time of the 1761 alarm, the knights owned around 721 iron and 498 bronze cannons of varying calibres; these were not enough to fulfil the Order's needs, especially to arm its extensive lines of defence. Bailli de Souza, eager to support Malta's military, invested 50,000 scudi in the island's grain-importing organisation, the *Massa Frumentaria* (which borrowed deposits from the public for the purchase and stocking of grains and other foodstuffs). Any profits generated from this investment were to fund a foundation he established in 1770 dedicated to acquiring cannons. His only condition was that the guns bear decorations at their breech featuring the coat of arms of the Grand Master, the Order, and his (the Bailli de Souza).[225]

[224] Spiteri (2018), 182.
[225] Spiteri (2018), 184.



Figure 6.7 Bailli de Souza's design for the 24-pounder guns which were to be funded from the foundation he set up in 1770 for this purpose. This sketch was part of the deed signed between Souza and the Common Treasury of the Order.[226] Writing on the cannon: Foundation of a capital of 50,000 scudi upon [invested] in the *Massa Frumentaria* of the Bailli de Lessa and Landon and the commander of the commandery of Oliveira do Hospital and commandery of Oleiros, Fra Don Raimondo de Souza de Silva of the venerable Priory of Portugal.

In his work on the Bailli de Souza, Stephen C. Spiteri notes that there are no records to confirm or deny whether the cannons were actually produced. Furthermore, among all the surviving artillery from Hospitaller Malta, none bear Bailli de Souza's coat of arms. This seems to suggest that the 24-pounder guns that Souza strived to provide for the island were likely never manufactured, neither in Malta, nor abroad.[227] Even though there is no indication in the Order's documents of how and when the

[226] Spiteri (2018), 185.
[227] Spiteri (2018), 188.

funds of Bailli de Souza were utilised, there is a chance that the money from his foundation went towards the purchase of a large consignment of cannons made in Toulon seven years after the setting up of Souza's foundation. This final purchase of the Order under the *ancien régime* was made under the newly elected French Grand Master, Emmanuel de Rohan-Polduc (1775-1797).

On 26 March 1777, Rohan commissioned Charles Abel de Loras, procurator and receiver of the Order in Lyon to procure fifty 24-pounder cannons from France.[228] While already commissioned to procure military weapons from Strasbourg, he began searching for iron cannons in French forges. However, the availability of these cannons was limited because iron cannons were no longer in use in France, on top of the fact that the royal navy had ceased procuring iron cannons for the royal fleet. Therefore, he sought the advice of commander de Sague, a respected French artillerist, to guide him to the ideal forges for this commission. De Sague recommended him to Antoine Raymond Juan Gualbert Gabriel de Sartine, the Minister for the Navy (1774-1780), to either direct him to the ideal forge in France or sell to the Order any remaining cannons from the King's existing old stock.[229] In his correspondence with Sartine, the Grand Master explained his need to augment the artillery of the island with another 50 cannons which he wished to acquire at the cheapest price. These guns were destined for the fortifications at the entrance of the main harbours of the island,[230] and were to be manned by the infantry of the island's regiments. Seeking to reduce the expenditure, Rohan explained that he was even willing to purchase used or recast cannons from the forts of France.[231] At this time, Rohan was focused on strengthening the island's military capabilities, which included forming a new regiment. Therefore, opting for more economical artillery was considered a better compromise than not investing in additional firepower at all. Sartine checked with the marquis de St Aignan, the royal commander of Toulon, whether the arsenal could spare the Order's requested amount of cannons since iron cannons were in short supply.[232] Commander Jean-Baptiste de Castellet (nephew of the respected Pierre André de Glandevès du Castellet, commander of Toulon) and Fra de Julien, the consul of Malta in Toulon,[233] attended a

[228] AN M994, f. 91, 26 March 1777; AN MAR/B/1/84, f. 220, 3 May 1777.
[229] NLM AOM 1240, ff. 187-190, 23 February 1777.
[230] AN MAR/B/2/412, f. 143r, 2 May 1777.
[231] AN M994, f. 92, 26 March 1777.
[232] AN M994, f. 94, 1 May 1777.
[233] NLM AOM 1240, f. 414, 17 August 1777.

meeting with the royal commander of Toulon, the *intendant* of the marine and chief officers of the artillery, to inspect the potential cannons for the Order.[234] Fortunately for the Order, Toulon was at this time still well stocked, having around 2,639 guns of various calibres,[235] including a good number of the 24-pounder guns as needed by the Order.[236] Glandevès informed the Convent that the cannons were in a perfect state and he strongly advised the Grand Master to proceed with the transaction. The cannons were sold at a unit price of 15.12.3 livres per quintal, which was the same retail price Louis XV originally paid to his manufacturers, and it also included the post-production testing.[237] The Order's final procurement of artillery from Toulon of 50 iron cannons amounted to 43,396.8 livres, almost equivalent to Bailli de Souza's investment for the cannon he wished to procure for the Order,[238] which was paid in three instalments.[239] By October 1777, the large consignment of 50 cannons was ready to be shipped to Malta, marking the end of the procurement of artillery between the Order and old regime France prior to the outbreak of the revolution.[240] While the cannons did not bear the coat-of-arms of de Souza, likely because the guns had already been manufactured prior the Order's procurement (presuming also that having the arms engraved would have inflated the price), the timing of this procurement and the financial figures strongly suggest that these guns could have been purchased as a result of Bailli de Souza's contribution to his Order.

Even though no records have emerged concerning armament deals after 1777, this does not exclude the possibility that the Order was in communication with France concerning military matters. Few months before the onset of the French revolution in 1789, the Order was seeking ways to improve the status of its artillery, this time not by way of foreign procurement, but by enhancing the quality of gun production on the island. Throughout the 18th century, Malta heavily depended on France for expertise on military architecture, for the restocking of the armoury, the standardization of firearm models and the recruitment of soldiers for its regiment, at least until the very end of the *ancien régime*. In early 1789, the Congregation of War commissioned the

[234] NLM AOM 1240, ff. 66-67, 18 August 1777.
[235] AN MAR/B/2/412, f. 142r, 2 May 1777.
[236] AN MAR/B/1/84, f. 220, 3 May 1777.
[237] NLM AOM 1240, ff. 66-67, 18 August 1777.
[238] AN MAR/B/2/412, f. 216, 20 June 1777.
[239] NLM AOM 1240, f. 102, 12 September 1777.
[240] AN M960, f. 30, 21 October 1777.

Bailli Louis-Marie-Auguste d'Estourmel, procurator general of the Order and its *chargé d'affaires* in Paris (in lieu of an ambassador), to obtain 'a copy of the collection of new tables that the artillery of France has printed for its use.'[241] The technical tables for gun manufacture were published by France's leading artillerist Jean-Baptiste Vaquette de Gribeauval and inventor of the so-called 'Gribeauval system'.[242]

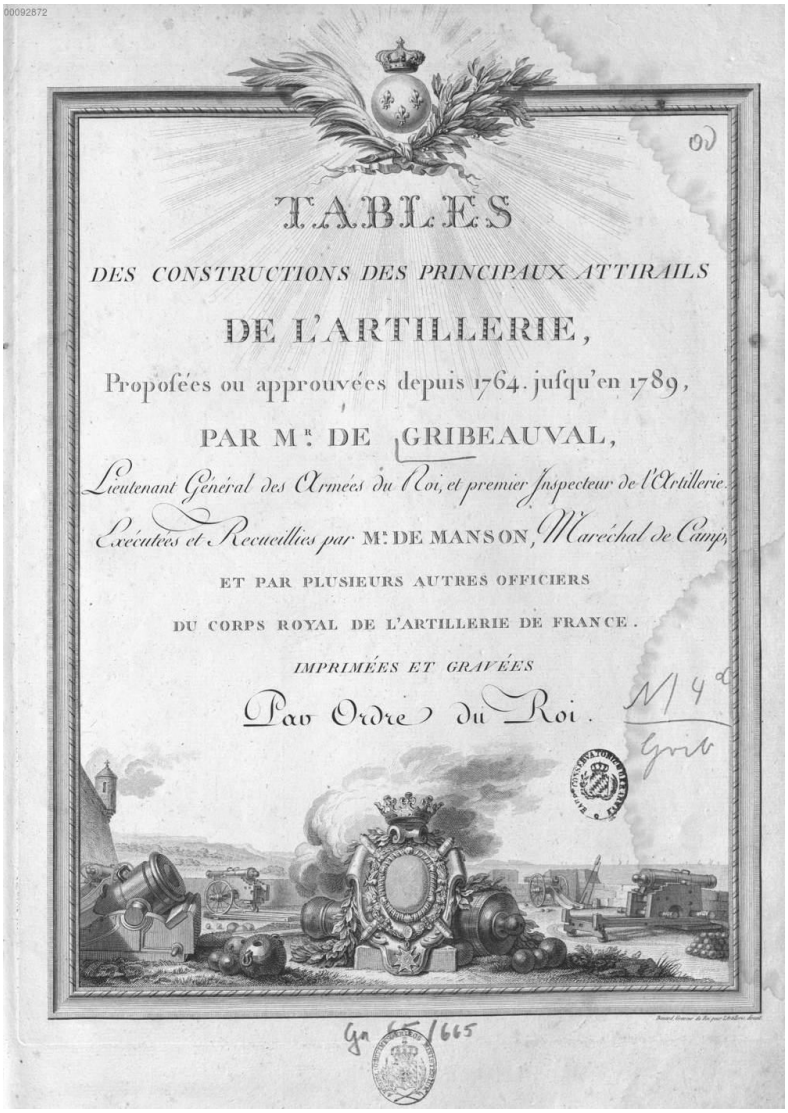


Figure 6.8 Frontispiece of Gribeauval's tables and plans for the casting of artillery. The tables and drawings for the period 1764 to 1789 were compiled and published in 1792.[243]

[241] 'un exemplaire du recueil de nouvelles tables que l'artillerie de France fait imprimer pour son usage.' AN M902, f. 312, 21 February 1789.
[242] AN M902, f. 316, 3 February 1789. The Gribeauval system was a method in gun production introduced by Jean Baptiste Vaquette de Gribeauval, for the casting of lighter and standardised guns for shorter range but more reliable fire power.
[243] BNF NUMM-1509481, Jean-Baptiste Vaquette Fréchencourt de Gribeauval, *Tables des constructions des principaux attirails de l'artillerie proposées ou approuvées depuis 1764 jusqu'en 1789*, par Mr de Gribeauval, Tome 1 (Paris, 1792).

In January 1789, the Bailli d'Estourmel requested the gun manufacturing tables from Louis-Claude d'Angenoust, a high-ranking officer in the royal artillery corps, for use in Malta. However, d'Angenoust declined the request because the tables were a closely guarded secret in the war ministry.[244] When Louis Pierre de Chastenat de Puységur, the Minister for War, also declined access to d'Estourmel, the latter visited the author of the tables, Gribeauval, to have him influence the minister in favour of the Order. D'Estourmel explained how under the magistracy of Grand Master de Rohan, Malta had made significant efforts to secure the island by a substantial investment in its infantry and artillery and thus the Grand Master required his tables to modernise the islands' artillery. He did explain to Gribeauval that Malta's military preparedness was as crucial to France as it was to the locals, in particular for the protection of French commercial vessels and trade routes to the Levant:[245]

Our island, though neutral, is, effectively, a French colony, infinitely useful to France due to its position in relation to Levantine commerce. It is, therefore, in the interest of France that Malta is always in the best possible state of defence.[246]

Gribeauval seemed willing to help, yet he was worried that by assisting the Order, he risked being accused of disobeying the King's demand for secrecy. In light of this, d'Estourmel suggested he send the tables directly to the French knights in Malta who were responsible for the artillery, specifically Henri Desmazis and Charles du Fay. After all, as much as these were members of the Order they were primarily the subjects of the King, thus bound by the same loyalty and secrecy of all French officers serving in France.[247] By the 18th century, the Order had established a practise of entrusting the leadership of its military engineering and artillery divisions to French knights who came from the engineering or artillery corps of France.[248] D'Estourmel assured Gribeauval that the same impositions of strict confidentiality would still apply to these French knights as much as to all royal founders in France entrusted with his

[244] AN M902, f. 316, 3 February 1789.
[245] AN M902, f. 314, 20 March 1789.
[246] 'notre île, en effet, quoique neutre, est pour ainsi dire une colonie française, infiniment utile à la France par sa position relative au commerce du Levant. Il est donc de l'intérêt de la France que Malte soit toujours dans le meilleur état de défense possible.' AN M902, f. 314, 20 March 1789.
[247] AN M902, f. 313, 22 February 1789; On Henri Desmazis, see appendix 1: Short Biographies p.330; AN M960, f. 39, February 1778.
[248] AN M902, f. 313, 22 February 1789.

artillery tables.[249] Despite, the *chargé d'affaires*' efforts in negotiations, he failed miserably when the Minister for the Navy denied the Order's request for the second time.[250] Soon after, with the chaos caused by the outbreak of the French revolution, the Order's attention was shifted to more pressing political matters. To date no document has surfaced that suggests that Gribeauval's tables of artillery were ever brought to Malta, yet given the various examples explored above of how the Order almost always got its way, it is tempting to imagine that had the revolution not changed everything, these tables would have eventually found their way to Malta. Surely, what did arrive to the island was the latest developments in military architecture, imported to the island by the French military engineer Antoine Étienne de Tousard, a servant-at-arms of the Order, arriving in Malta in 1791 to fill the vacancy of resident engineer. With the construction of the Order's last fort in 1793, which was based on the concepts of *fortification perpendiculaire*, a system established in France by Marc-René, marquis de Montalembert in the 1776-1778 and the lunettes of Jean Le Michaud d'Arçon, the Order moved away from the traditional bastioned trace it had long been accustomed to, and this when France itself was still debating the implementation of these developments.[251]

6.8 Conclusion

While earlier chapters addressed responses to Ottoman threats and the rapid mobilization of arms and personnel during crises, this chapter expanded the focus to the Order's procurement system in times of stability. Even in these quieter periods the Convent invested in the defence of the islands, even if the activity was intermittent. If this aspect of the defence of Malta had not been considered, a crucial part of understanding France's role in supporting Malta's military security would be lost. This broader perspective is vital for accurately assessing the full extent of French assistance in preparing Malta for war.

The military procurement process for Malta from France was far more complex and nuanced than a straightforward transaction between buyer and supplier. This involved a sovereign state acquiring munitions from an allied state, accompanied by the myriad of challenges such international agreements typically entailed. The

[249] AN M902, f. 314, 20 March 1789.
[250] AN M902, f. 312, 21 February 1789; AN M902, f. 316, 3 February 1789.
[251] Brincat (2014), 35-40.

Hospital had two main avenues in procuring arms from France. Their preferred track was dealing directly with the Ministry for the Navy or War and obtain supplies from royal arsenals. The other option was to obtain authorization from the King to transact with private entrepreneurs. Purchasing arms directly from the King's stores proved significantly more advantageous for two of key reasons. First, the weapons and gunpowder were readily available, thereby eliminating the delays typically associated with having weapons custom-manufactured by forges or entrepreneurs or having gunpowder being produced. Secondly, the King sold weapons to the knights at cost price, which provided a substantial financial advantage. In France, although there was no standardized pricing for firearms, the government maintained the authority to dictate the prices for muskets it wished to purchase from suppliers, while allowing them to set their own prices for citizens or private clients. Typically, the pricing rate for non-royal commissions was higher.[252] For example, in 1757, when Pinto opted to purchase 200 quintals of gunpowder from Antibes—renowned for its high quality—the Antibes supplier offered to sell the gunpowder at 100 livres per quintal. In contrast, the same supplier provided the gunpowder to the King at a significantly reduced rate of 60 livres per quintal, highlighting the disparity in pricing between royal and non-royal commissions.[253] The Order's Treasury refused to incur unnecessary expenses when it could tap royal stores and obtain gunpowder at a cheaper rate. However, at this time the royal stocks in the arsenal of Toulon were not enough to meet the Order's required quantities; because France was after all heavily engaged in the Seven Years' War at the time. The French commissioner for gunpowder, Corbetton, informed the ministry that assisting the Order would disrupt the King's supply. Consequently, the Order decided to postpone this procurement until the Toulon stores were better stocked.[254]

The complexities involved in weapon procurement meant that the Order's representatives had to be well versed with the network of manufacture, storage and transportation. For maximum efficiency, they also had to be knowledgeable of tax laws, state procedures and regulations. The Order's own procedure in resourcing arms from France followed an adapted model of the 'contractor-state' system of France, which had developed as a result of Louis XIV's reliance on private contractors for the

[252] Rowlands (forthcoming 2024), 11.
[253] AN M902, f. 27, 10 July 1757.
[254] AN M902, f. 28, 6 October 1757.

provision of materials, weaponry and foodstuffs for his land forces. On some occasions, the knights signed deals with the King's chosen contractors, taking advantage of the same terms and prices which were granted to the monarchy. For instance, the mast deal signed with Babaud de la Chaussade in 1747 closely mirrored the contract that the same contractor had previously signed with Louis XV in 1744 for naval supplies. This arrangement allowed the knights to enjoy similar payment terms and other privileges as those granted in the earlier agreement with the French government.

Furthermore, this chapter has also identified the suppliers of arms and their locations, be they royal establishments or private suppliers, primarily in southeastern France. This region, quite understandably, was selected for its logistical advantages and its status as a major hub for arms production and storage, including key sites like the arsenals of Marseille and Toulon, and the stores of Lyon and Saint-Étienne. Notably, throughout the 18th century, the royal arsenal of Toulon regularly supplied the Order with gunpowder and artillery. Meanwhile, Saint-Étienne served as a primary source of firearms since 1687, predominantly muskets, with the Order's largest and final transaction in 1759. The case of the mast procurement in 1747, and that of the firearms in 1759, provide an insight into the Order's approach when dealing with private contractors and the challenges this brought along the way, be it issues of quality, or changes in arms manufacture in France, as was the case with Saint-Étienne's association. All this highlighted the resilience and the problem-solving approach of the Order's representatives and the diplomacy needed.

Chapter 7

Navigating Challenges in French Military Support to Malta

7.1 Introduction

Previous chapters have explained how the French government supported and facilitated the sourcing of men (during alarms) and arms for the Order, despite occasional delays in the supply chain and challenges related to taxation and procurement. However, there were occasions when administrative challenges, or reforms within the French military ministries, significantly shackled the efforts of the Order's ambassador and other members tasked with the military resourcing of Malta. This chapter will dissect the intricacies of these difficulties during times of relative peace, when efforts to boost Malta's defences continued regardless. There will therefore be a particular focus on the recruitment programme of soldiers from France for the *Reggimento di Malta* starting from 1776; and the resourcing of knights in the service of the royal fleet who were customarily released for the *caravane*, the naval cruises of the Order.[1] The works of Frederick W. Ryan, Thomas Freller, William Zammit and J.M. Wismayer have provided in-depth information on the disciplinary actions, the state of the regiment in Malta and its financial dimension, yet its recruitment process from offshore has not been given equal attention.[2] The manual of regulations for the regiment, published by the Congregation of War in 1776 and titled *Regolamenti Militari per lo serviggio particulare de regimento di Malta*, provides a wealth of information on the role of the soldier within the regiment, including the various forms (soldiers' leave, expenses, hospital care, and so on) used for the regiment's administration purposes, but this too sheds no light on the manner in which these foreign soldiers were recruited.[3]

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[1] Grima (2016), 188. For a definition of caravan or *caravane*, see the Glossary, p.319.
[2] J.M Wismayer, *The Fleet of the Order of John, 1530-1798* (Malta, Midsea Books, 1997); J.M Wismayer, *The History of King's Own Regiment and the Armed Forces of the Order of St John* (Malra, Said International, 1989); William Zammit, 'De Rohan's Reggimento di Malta: a source of Religious Unorthodoxy in late Eighteenth-Century Malta, *Sacra Militia*, 4 (2005); Frederick W. Ryan, *The House of the Temple, A study of Malta and its knights in the French Revolution* (London, Burns Oates and Washbourne Ltd., 1930); Alain Blondy, 'Un Pamphlet Scandaleux Contre Malte et L'Ordre de St Jean, 'L'Ordre de Malte dévoilé' du pseudo CARASI', *Melita Historica*, 11, 1 (1992); *Carasi: The Order of Malta Exposed*, Thomas Freller (trans.) (Malta, Guttenberg Press, 2010); Congregation of War, *Regolamenti Militari per lo serviggio particulare de Reggimento di Malta*, (Malta, 1776).
[3] Congregation of War, (Malta, 1776).

This is also the case with the *caravane*. Historiography is quite rich on this topic but lacks an in-depth study of how France looked upon the release of knights serving in the royal fleet or army to allow them to complete their obligatory caravan duties. This chapter will address this lacuna by looking at how reforms to the structure and operations of the royal fleet of 1748 brought this long-term established practice to a standstill. Finally, this chapter provides another facet to show how the knights came to acquire and secure support in various forms for the defence of the islands and their military operations.

7.2 The *Reggimento di Malta* (1777-1798)

The unrest among the Maltese people, which culminated in the (unsuccessful) priests' insurrection headed by Don Mannarino in 1775, spurred the newly elected Grand Master de Rohan (r.1775-1797) and his Council to form a new infantry unit for the island's internal security and defence.[4] In November 1776, Rohan convened a Chapter General, marking the first such assembly in over a century. The Chapter agreed on the need of a local regiment for reasons of security and to enhance the Grand Master's control over the island.[5] Accordingly, the Regiment of Malta was formed in 1777, based on the model of a French regiment of the line, having two battalions totalling 1,200 men. While it was possible to recruit some men locally,[6] these were not sufficient, so the majority of recruits were sourced from European ports, as well as from foreign sailors aboard corsair vessels that sailed through Malta's harbour.[7] They were primarily recruited from Avignon (Papal State), Marseille and Corsica,[8] but also from Italian states, Spain, some German states, and a few from Swiss cantons.[9]

A lack of adequate screening of recruits for the regiment, and the lack of discipline from the first commanding officer, the Frenchman major Ferret, riddled the regiment with vagabonds, troublemakers and deserters. His leadership was harshly criticised for being indulgent and undisciplined, to the extent that some of his men acted inappropriately towards the locals.[10] When the Grand Master heard that the

[4] Zammit (2005), 41.
[5] Gauci (2016), 183; Ryan (1930), 106.
[6] Wismayer (1997), 131.
[7] Gauci (2016), 183.
[8] Wismayer (1989), 29.
[9] Zammit (2005), 42.
[10] Ryan (1930), 106-107.

regiment was planning on deserting the island, the Council of State took steps to enforce discipline, starting by replacing Ferrett and all the officers under his command with another Frenchman, the knight Gabriel-Jean-Baptiste de Freslon de La Freslonnière, appointed colonel of the Regiment of Malta and later Master of the Grand Master's Horse.[11]

Gabriel-Jean-Baptiste was born on 2 May 1732 in Bratz, Brittany.[12] He hailed from an old Breton family which was widely connected to the administration of the province of Brittany since the 17th century. His great-grandfather, Gabriel Freslon, was a councillor in the King's estates and *président à mortier* in the *parlement* of Brittany, and years later, his grandfather, Jean-Baptiste (1640-1705), sat with the nobility in the Estates of Brittany. The family had strong ties with the Order of St John, with three members— an uncle and two nephews—admitted in 1756, 1768, and 1769. Gabriel-Jean-Baptiste was the first to join the Order, as a minor at the age of three. At fifteen, his parents submitted his nobility papers for him to be received as a knight. However, his application was denied in 1747 due to insufficient proofs of nobility, as he did not meet the requirement of four quarters of nobility. Eight years later, a commission reviewed his application again and accepted it, clearing the path for his two nephews. Consequently, Gabriel-Jean-Baptiste was officially received into the Order on 12 July 1756. In his youth he embarked on a successful military career in France. In 1747, he joined the *Régiment Royal des Vaisseaux* as a lieutenant, was promoted to major in the *Régiment de Hainaut* in 1770, becoming lieutenant colonel in the *Régiment du Nivernais* in 1777. Upon reaching the rank of colonel, he left French service to join the Order in the Regiment of Malta.[13]

Colonel Freslon visited the Hospitaller island three times. In 1763, at the age of thirty-one years, he was given his *congé* from royal service to fulfil his caravan duties with the Order. After this, he devoted his time to a mixture of royal military service and attendance at the periodic Breton estates from 1750 to 1778. During a

[11] Wismayer (1989), 29.
[12] Gabriel-Jean-Baptiste de Freslon's older brother was Joseph de Freslon (1720-1759), a councillor in the parlement of Brittany. He was the first to secure the title of count for the family. The title was passed to the eldest brother from one generation to the next. Gustave Chaix d'Est-Ange, *Dictionnaire des Familles Françaises Anciennes ou Notables à la fin du XIXe siècle*, Tome 19 (Évreux, Imprimerie Charles Hèrissey, 1927), 252.
[13] Ryan (1930), 109; On Gabriel-Jean-Baptiste de Freslon de La Freslonnière, see appendix 1, Short Biographies, p.331. Information retrieved on 6 December 2023, from: https://www.palacret.com/2-histoire-dune-commanderie/2c-les-commandeurs/39-alexandre-louis-hugues-de-freslon

crucial session in Rennes in 1776, while the newly elected Grand Master de Rohan and the Chapter General were debating the need for a new regiment in Malta, a pivotal decision reshaped Freslon's career. Following Rohan's accession to Grand Master—who himself was a scion of the esteemed Breton Rohan family[14]—the Estates of Brittany commissioned Gabriel-Jean-Baptiste de Freslon to travel to Malta and congratulate him on their behalf. Arriving on the island on 16 April 1777, Freslon embarked on what appears to have been a successful mission.[15] Rohan immediately took a particular liking to him, offering him the vacant commandery of the deceased ambassador Bailli Claude de Rouvroy de Saint-Simon,[16] along with the rank of Bailli grand cross, if he chose to take the vows.[17] As a token of his appreciation, Rohan presented Freslon with his personal Louis XVI-style gilded snuff box before leaving the island for Brittany. This exquisite piece was adorned with enamel and featured a miniature portrait of himself. Originally gifted to Rohan by Empress Maria Theresa of Austria, the snuff box became a cherished family heirloom. It was subsequently passed down to Alexandre-Louis-Hugues de Freslon, colonel Freslon's nephew, himself a Bailli grand cross and General of the Order's galleys.[18] Satisfied with Freslon's mission to Malta, the Estates of Brittany rewarded him with 15,000 livres.[19]

Accepting Rohan's proposal, Freslon returned to the island and was promptly appointed colonel of the Regiment of Malta on 7 April 1779. He was entrusted with the vital task of revitalizing the corps, which had languished in a pitiful state under his predecessor. Freslon restored non-commissioned officers to their rightful ranks and tackled the rampant duelling among the regiment's soldiers by dismissing disobedient officers and recruiting Maltese men into the predominantly foreign-composed regiment. Additionally, he introduced educational programmes focused on literacy and

[14] Alain Blondy, *Des Nouvelles de Malte. Correspondence de M. L'Abbé Boyer (1738-1777)* (Brussels, P.I.E-Peter Lang, 2004), 251.
[15] *Bulletin de la Sociéte Archéologue de Nantes et du Départment de la Loire-Inférieure*, Tome 32 (Nante, Bureaux de la Société Archéologique, 1893), 42-43.
[16] On Claude de Rouvroy de Saint-Simon, see appendix 1: Short Biographies, p.337.
[17] Gabriel-Jean-Baptiste de Freslon informed the Estates of Brittany of his audience with Grand Master de Rohan and the latter's benevolent gestures in his regards: Information retrieved on 10 October 2023, from: https://www.palacret.com/2-histoire-dune-commanderie/2c-les-commandeurs/39-alexandre-louis-hugues-de-freslon
[18] *Bulletin de la Sociéte Archéologue de Nantes* (1893), 42-43.
[19] Retrieved on 6 December 2023, from: https://www.palacret.com/2-histoire-dune-commanderie/2c-les-commandeurs/39-alexandre-louis-hugues-de-freslon

trades, underscoring his enlightened approach.[20] With his reforms he significantly enhanced the regiment's efficacy, bringing it to the standards of foreign line troops. Worthy of Rohan's trust, the latter promoted Freslon to Master of the Horse in April 1780,[21] but his success was short lived when he contracted a contagious disease at the Holy Infirmary in Valletta, to which he succumbed on 22 May 1782, at the age of fifty-five. The French colonel was buried in the conventual church of St John, under a polychromatic marble tombstone, a resting place befitting a Frenchman who sought to bring reform and change in the military of the Order.[22] Following his demise, command of the regiment was transferred to his closest friend, the knight Antoine de Ligondés de Rochefort. However, the regiment soon faced serious difficulties again due to shortages in funding.[23]



Figure 7.1 Gabriel Jean Baptiste de Freslon, conserved at the Château de la Freslonnière.[24]

[20] Matthias Ebejer, 'Reactions in Hospitaller Malta to the Enlightenment and Revolution in France,' *Sacra Militia,* 13, 2014, 5.
[21] Ryan (1930), 107; Wismayer (1989), 29-30.
[22] Retrieved on 15 March 2021, from: http://www.palacret.com/histoire-d-une-commanderie/2c--les-commandeurs-batisseurs/39---alexandre-louis-hugues-de-freslon
[23] Wismayer (1989), 30; http://www.palacret.com/histoire-d-une-commanderie/2c--les-commandeurs-batisseurs/39---alexandre-louis-hugues-de-freslon
[24] The portrait of Gabriel Jean Baptiste de Freslon was retrieved on 6 December 2023, from: https://www.palacret.com/2-histoire-dune-commanderie/2c-les-commandeurs/39-alexandre-louis-hugues-de-freslon

7.2.1 The Hospitallers' recruitment programme for the *Reggimento di Malta* in France

The plan to establish a regiment for the defence of Malta was already drafted at the end of 1775. However, rumours that Malta intended to form such a regiment had been circulating in Europe for the previous two years.[25] Officially, at least in France, the recruitment programme for the Regiment of Malta began in France on 8 February 1776 even before the meeting of the Chapter General in November 1776, when Louis XVI granted permission to Ambassador Claude de Rouvroy de Saint-Simon (1775-1777) to muster 200 men from France, as long as these men were foreign soldiers who had retired from the King's army and had no intention of returning to French service.[26] *In ancien régime* France, particularly following the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648), foreign troops were recruited to bolster the army's numbers. Under Louis XIV, France enlisted Swiss, Irish, and Savoyard soldiers for its *régiments étrangers*, commonly from the frontier provinces of Roussillon, Alsace, Pignerol, Flanders, Hainault, and Franche-Comté.[27] Louis XVI originally granted the Order permission to recruit retired soldiers from these cohorts, however, when the Order found it hard to raise the number of men it needed, the King eventually conceded to have the knights recruit any retired French soldiers from his army.[28] It is intriguing how the Order did not recruit men from its own estates in France, especially when the French army during wartime did try to abuse of Hospitaller lands for its needs, even though the commanderies were exempt from any contribution to war, an act typically opposed by the Order's ambassador.[29] Given that the Regiment of Malta was a small unit of soldiers compared to the royal army, where both skilled and unskilled men had their roles, the Hospitallers required experienced soldiers to fulfil the regiment's purpose. Since Malta's locally recruited militia handled unskilled tasks, the knights focused on recruiting only skilled men from overseas.[30]

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[25] AN M994, f. 19, 1776.
[26] AN M994, f. 16, 25 March 1776.
[27] Guy Rowlands, 'Foreign Service in the Age of Absolute Monarchy: Louis XIV and his force Étrangères,' *War History*, 17, 2 (2010), 151, 153, 155, 156.
[28] AN M994, f. 36, 18 April 1777.
[29] AN M895, f. 114, 26 January 1750; f. 120, 1769;
[30] For the role of the local militia see: Theresa M. Vann, 'The Militia of Malta,' *The Journal of Medieval Military History*, 2 (2004), 137-148.

With permission from Louis XVI to commence the recruitment programme of 200 men in February 1776, the Order's representatives in France started the process.[31] Marc Antoine Reynaud de Monts, known as the Chevalier de Reynaud,[32] was entrusted by the French government to oversee the administrative aspect of the enrolment of these recruits.[33] Interested candidates were required to sign a contract with the Order, wherein they had to detail their military experience in France, specify the regiment they had served in, affirm their intention not to return to French service, and commit to serving in the Regiment of Malta for eight years (for a draft of this contract see appendix 5: Supporting documents, 5.8).[34] The most daunting task for the Order's recruiting agents in Marseille throughout the recruitment process was the ability to attract experienced soldiers without violating the King's terms (initially to recruit retired soldiers from the *régiment étrangers* and later retired or discharged French soldiers from the royal army). Prospective candidates were assured that the Order's recruitment was legally sanctioned and that they were being recommended by the King for their bravery and experience in French service. Since most of these men had never been to Malta, the Order painted a captivating picture of the island as a form of paradise with pristine air, plentiful resources for their sustenance, and all essential amenities readily available. Arguably the most compelling image they crafted was that experienced soldiers of the regiment were held in the highest esteem by the Grand Master, and it was customary for him to bestow the prestigious habit of the Order, alongside other substantial rewards, in recognition of their service. In 1776, the least experienced soldier was given eight sols per day and upon enrolment a uniform was provided. All interested candidates were invited to approach colonel Charles Abel de Loras (who resigned from the role shortly after),[35] the receiver and procurator of the Order at the commandery of Saint George, for their enlisting, after which they were

[31] AN M994, f. 16, 25 March 1776.
[32] On Marc Antoine Reynaud de Monts, see appendix 1, Short Biographies. p.337.
[33] It is unclear which of the two brothers Chevalier de Reynaud the documents refers since they have similar names: Marc Antoine de Reynaud de Monts, born on 9 July 1730 and admitted as a knight of justice in 1746, or his younger brother Marc Antoine Sérapion de Reynaud de Monts, born on 30 October 1738. He was a page to the Dauphine Marie-Joseph de Saxe, mother of Louis XVI; Louis de Ribier, *Preuves de la noblesse d'Auvergne* (Paris, H. Champion, 1907), 10, 236.
[34] AN M994, f. 18, 25 March 1776.
[35] Charles-Abel de Loras was a Bailli Grand Cross of the Order of St John, procurator and receiver general of the Order in France, a grand prior of Auvergne (1781-1787) and colonel of the Regiment of Malta. Information retrieved on 10 December 2023, from: https://www.hospitalierssaintjean.com/hopitaux/index.php?page=commanderies_F

guided to Chevalier de Reynaud for the signing of the contract.[36] Upon signing, Reynaud was obliged to keep the Ministry for War informed about the men's locations and their travel routes to Marseille, ahead of their departure for Malta. This communication was essential for securing the necessary passports from the ministry, and ensure their free and unhindered passage within the kingdom in their journey to Marseille.[37]

About one year into the recruitment scheme, chevalier de Reynaud struggled to meet the target of enlisting 200 foreign recruits from France.[38] To address this, the Ambassador de Saint-Simon in Paris requested permission from the King to widen the selection criteria and include French recruits who were approaching their retirement from French service. Even with this measure, progress was slow under the Minister for War, Claude-Louis de Saint-Germain (1775-1777), and the count Joseph-Alphonse-Omer de Valbelle (fl.1762-1778) the new commandant of the province, both of whom seemed opposed to the Order's recruitment programme. Operating under the instructions of the war minister, Valbelle decided to consider those men who had deserted the recruitment depot of Marseille after enlisting with the Order, as part of the 300 men contingent which the Order was entitled to enrol from France (the original agreement of 1776 allowed the Order to recruit 200 men, but this was revised to 300 in 1777). Hardened against the Order, Valbelle sent a letter to the Bailli de Saint Gaillard, the receiver of the Order in Marseille, instructing him to remove all the Order's recruitment posters hanging around Marseille.[39] He claimed that these posters violated the King's conditions, because they implied that the Regiment of Malta offered better opportunities than the French army, discouraging potential recruits from enrolling for the French colonies. He also considered this as a deliberate inducement, potentially prompting senior French soldiers to leave the national army for the Regiment of Malta.[40] Saint-Germain was particularly irritated by the opening address of the Order's manifesto, which offered the possibility that, 'senior soldiers who wished to voluntarily quit the service of France and wished to join that of Malta [could

[36] AN M994, f. 19, 1776.
[37] AN M994, f. 22, 19 April 1776.
[38] AN M994, f. 43, 16 May 1777.
[39] AN M994, f. 23, 16 July 1777; NLM AOM 1240, f. 344, 3 May 1777.
[40] AN M994, f. 36, 18 April 1777.

do so] after obtaining their absolute discharge.'[41] The minister interpreted this as blatant invitation for active French soldiers to apply for their discharge from their regiments in France to join that of the Order, rather than inviting veterans who had already retired from French service. This he could not accept.[42] The Bailli de Gaillard rebutted Saint-Germain's claim with the Bailli d'Argenteuil, the *chargé d'affaires* of the Order's embassy in Paris who took charge of the embassy right after Ambassador de Saint-Simon's demise in early 1777, assuring him that he had never recruited soldiers from the *Regiment de Guyenne* as he was falsely being accused of doing. In any case, Gaillard claimed that before hanging recruitment posters he always sought the approval of Alexandre Maire Éléonor de Saint-Mauris de Montbarrey, the deputy war minister in 1777,[43] and that of count Noël Jourda de Vaux, the royal commandant of Provence.[44]

The French suppression of the Order's recruitment efforts went beyond the initial ban on the manifesto. As a result, nine months after the poster ban was enacted, the Order managed to recruit only 157 new members. Faced with all this opposition, Rohan decided to bolster his team in France by adding a sergeant and a corporal stationed in Marseille and Avignon (Avignon was likely chosen because the knights would have been freer of direct French pressure because the city was under Papal control. In 1781, twenty-one foreign soldiers were in fact recruited from Avignon),[45] in an attempt to improve recruitment. However, their actions were constrained as they operated under the strict surveillance of the royal *commandant en chef* in Provence, Charles-François Elzéar de Vogüé (1777-1782),[46] and Charles Jean-Baptiste des Gallois de La Tour (1715-1802), the *intendant* of Provence.[47] Even prior to Rohan's expansion of the recruitment team, the count de Vaux, who seemed the most willing to help them, sought alternative ways to assist the Order. He petitioned Jean-Baptiste-

[41] 'les anciens soldats qui désirent quitter le service de France volontairement et passer à celui de Malte après avoir obtenu leur congé absolu.' AN M994, f. 43, 16 May 1777.
[42] AN M994, f. 43, 16 May 1777.
[43] On Alexandre Maire Éléonor de Saint-Mauris de Montbarrey, see appendix 1, Short Biographies, p.335.
[44] AN M994, f. 40, 30 April 1777. Noel Jourda, count de Vaux was a French general who commanded the royal army during the conquest of Corsica (1769). He was promoted to Marshal of France in 1783: retrieved on 15 March 2021, from: https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/term/BIOG243733
[45] AN M994, f. 81, 19 September 1781.
[46] Louis de la Roque, *Armorial de la noblesse de Languedoc Generalité de Montpellier, Tome 1*, (Paris, Felix Seguin Libraire-Editeur, 1860), 515.
[47] AN M994, f. 40,43, 46. On Charles Jean Baptiste des Gallois de la Tour, see appendix 1: Short Biographies, p. 340.

Joseph de Sahuguet d'Amarzit, Baron d'Espagnac, the governor of Les Invalides (1766-1783),[48] in an attempt to secure at least fifty retired soldiers, aged between forty to fifty years, who were still in adequate shape to serve in the regiment of Malta.[49] The count de Vaux tried selling his idea of having senior-aged soldiers in the regiment of Malta as a guarantee of discipline and control, whereas younger soldiers were prone to disruption and indulgence in pleasures. The salubrious air of the island would in turn rejuvenate and extend the lives of the invalids retired recruits, ensuring a longer service to Malta.[50] The knights were initially reluctant, but the slow pace of recruitment left them with little option, so they eventually agreed to accept a cohort of fifty senior men who were to leave for Malta by the end of 1777.[51] Notwithstanding these measures, two years into the regiment's recruitment process the Order had still not come close to mustering its desired force of 1,200 soldiers. Its receiver in Marseille, the Bailli de Gaillard, petitioned the King to revise the 200 men allowance and raise it to 300 recruits, especially since the 100 soldiers already in Malta were being repatriated to France due to their lack of discipline and inadequacy.[52] In response to the Hospitallers' recruitment difficulties, Louis XVI acquiesced to the Order's requests under specific conditions: no manifestos were to be distributed, and the integrity of his royal troops was to remain intact. This agreement established a quota of 300 men from France, which would be replenished by 50 new recruits each year to offset losses due to desertion and illness. So reluctantly, the Order prepared to accept invalids from France as a contingency plan should they fail to meet the annual recruitment goals.[53]

Still unsatisfied with the progress of recruitment, Rohan appointed the Bailli Bruno-Marie de Foresta, procurator general and receiver of the Order for the Grand Priory of Saint Gilles in Marseilles, as colonel of the foreign troops for the service of Malta and to serve as the new director of the recruitment programme.[54] Foresta swiftly took matters in hand and established a recruitment depot within the citadel of Marseille (Fort Saint Nicolas) to accommodate the recruits pending their departure. He drafted

[48] On Joseph de Sahuguet d'Amarzit, Baron d'Espagnac, see appendix 1: Short Biographies, p.339.
[49] AN M994, f. 44, 3 May 1777.
[50] AN M994, f. 44, 3 May 1777.
[51] NLM AOM 1240, ff. 120-122, 4 October 1777.
[52] AN M994, ff. 49-51, 1777.
[53] AN M994, f. 47, 19 May 1777.
[54] Blondy (2013), 416; François Alexandre Aubert de la Chenaye-Desbois, *Dictionnaire de la Noblesse*, Tome VI, 2nd edition (Paris, Antoine Boudet, Librarie Imprimerie de Roi, 1773), 545; On Fra Marie-Bruno de Foresta, see appendix 1: Short Biographies, p. 330.

detailed instructions and procedures for all the Hospitaller agents, specifying their responsibilities to ensure that recruits—whether from France, Turin, Spain, or other locations—met the King's criteria of having no plans to return to French service. The names of eligible candidates were then sent to the Ministry for War for vetting, then to the Major of Fort Saint Nicolas and the commander of the recruitment depot, de la Roque, for their approval. After which, the names had to be registered with the admiralty of Marseille prior to embarkation. When the Order's list reached the annual quota of fifty men, permission for further recruitment was automatically denied. Conscious of the need to avoid complications with France, Foresta cautioned the recruiters to refer any candidates failing to meet the Order's criteria directly to French recruiting agents. This strategy was crucial if the Order wished to avert any impression that it was depleting France's pool of recruits, and also to emphasis Malta's willingness to support recruitment for royal troops. Once the applicant's enrolment papers were approved by French authorities, they were then accommodated at the depot and granted a daily subsistence allowance of 12 sols for food and 6 sols for drink.[55]

Just as the recruitment process appeared to gain momentum, the Bailli de Foresta received an unexpected revelation. He was covertly informed that the King's recruiters in Marseille were plotting against him and the Order. Their plan was to lodge a complaint with the Ministry for War, alleging that the Order was enlisting young men who had not yet served in France, and that Foresta was exceeding the recruitment limits set by the King.[56] This complaint levied against the Order risked the knights losing their license to continue recruiting soldiers in France.[57] Foresta vehemently denied all this to his superiors at the Convent. In his defence he explained that the young men at the recruitment depot in Marseille came from Italian states (recruited in Franche-Comté and Avignon) and not from France, therefore there was no way that he could be appropriating French soldiers from the King's army.[58] Furthermore, the Order faced significant financial constraints that precluded the possibility of over-recruitment. In recognition of these fiscal challenges, Foresta had proactively approached the war ministry in 1780 requesting a reduction in the annual recruitment quota from fifty to twenty-five recruits, a proposal that the King approved without

[55] AN M994, f. 55, 10 February 1779.
[56] AN M994, f. 59, 27 January 1780.
[57] NLM AOM 1240, ff. 92-95, 30 May 1777.
[58] AN M994, f. 59, 27 January 1780.

hesitation.[59] None of this stemmed the tide of hostility of the French government. With the newly appointed Minister for the Navy, Charles Eugène Gabriel de La Croix, marquis de Castries (1780-1787), the situation got worse. Castries hurled several accusations against the Order: that of allegedly enlisting and failing to register all the recruits, and of lodging the undeclared recruits outside the official depot. Of all the accusations the most serious one was that of Castries. The minister claimed that the Order was poaching prospective French soldiers destined for the French colonies (the colonies fell under the responsibility of the Minister for the Navy) by offering them a recruitment bounty of 140 livres—a sum higher than what France was offering at the time—forcing the King to compete with the Order's remuneration. Furthermore, Castries was annoyed that the Order occupied multiple rooms at the recruitment depot, thereby limiting space needed for French recruits awaiting embarkation to the colonies. Consequently, Castries instructed the Minister for War, Philippe Henri de Ségur (1780-1787), to curb Malta's excesses and restrict the Order to using only one or two rooms in the depot, making it even harder for the Order than it already was.[60]

Not all French officers worked against the interests of the Order. Fortunately for Foresta, the Major of Fort St Nicolas, de la Roque, came to his defence. He assured both ministers that after examining the regiment's accounts sheets, it was evident to him that the Order was complying with the revised annual quota of twenty-five men. Notably, in 1781, the number of recruits totalled only 250, still below the 300 threshold permitted by the French government. De la Roque admitted that the knights had accommodated some recruits outside the barracks, but this measure, he clarified, stemmed not from an intent to obscure unreported recruitment but from spatial constraints. The modestly sized rooms in the recruitment centre, which were shared with recruits for the French colonies, proved insufficient for housing the soldiers of the Malta regiment, particularly given their approximate five-month wait (which was too long for the recruiter who risked having them get bored and leave) for the Order's vessels to ferry them to the island.[61] In support of de la Roque's defence, Foresta invited French authorities to investigate and corroborate the matter with the Fra Eugene Olivier de Seystres-Caumont (1778-1793), the *Homme du Roi* in Malta, to

[59] AN M994, f. 70, 21 June 1780; f. 71, 26 June 1780.
[60] AN M994, f. 83, 6 November 1781.
[61] AN M994, f. 85, 7 December 1781.

verify his claims.[62] As to the 140 livres sum which recruits of the Order received on enrolment, Foresta explained that this had to last them for four to five months subsistence in Marseille, until a Hospitaller vessel arrived to ferry them to Malta.[63] To ensure the safety of these soldiers, the Order used its own vessels or those from other neutral states like Venice, who maintained direct commercial links with Malta at the time. This precaution was necessary due to the ongoing naval conflicts in the Mediterranean because of the Anglo-French War (1778-1783), which significantly limited the availability of ships and delayed the departure of recruits.[64]

Most French recruiters were not like de la Roque; they were relentless and adamant in their efforts at hampering the Order's recruitment programme which competed with their own. In 1781, the accusations against Foresta escalated such that he was accused of endorsing the recruitment of deserters, particularly from the King's *Regiment de Languedoc*. This case involved Jean Baptiste du Pont, a recruit for Malta, who was accused by royal recruiters of deserting his regiment. This accusation significantly jeopardised the survival of the Order's programme. Pont was captured and only under intense interrogation by Major de la Roque did he confess to deceiving the Order's agents, swayed by a French recruiter intent on sabotaging the Hospitallers' efforts. This French recruiter capitalised on the Order's higher pay and had advised Pont to remove his French military uniform and don civilian attire to mislead the agents into unsuspectingly accepting his application. Foresta considered this a calculated conspiracy aimed at obstructing the recruitment activities of the Order of Malta.[65] This incident was neither the first nor the last of such serious manoeuvres. Whether due to mistrust in Foresta's performance or as a strategic shift to resolve the dispute, the Congregation of War informed Foresta that the method of recruitment required a change. They asked him to find a Frenchman of good standing who would help in the recruitment of soldiers, with a fixed budget per man. On Foresta's advice, the Congregation of War appointed the well-connected Tadieu Chambon as one of the recruiters of the Order, working under the supervision of Foresta.[66] The French

[62] AN M994, f. 87, 10 December 1781.
[63] AN M994, f. 85, 7 December 1781.
[64] AN M994, f. 130, 15 December 1781.
[65] AN M994, f. 76, 27 April 1781.
[66] Tadieu Chambon, a knight of Malta, was the brother of the Major of Rochemaure, Joseph Alexandre Chambon d'Espenel (1783-1785); AN M994, f. 110, 26 December 1780; f. 136, 26 September 1783.

recruiters swiftly targeted Chambon as well, setting multiple traps to falsely implicate him as they did to Foresta. In Foresta's own words:

> It is evident that these gentlemen are seeking to wrong us; and it was a matter that I considered resolved if other officers from other corps stationed in Marseille for the semester, who are quite indifferent to this quarrel, had not assured me that despite all the advances, all the amiability, everything I do to please these gentlemen recruiters, there are some who have publicly stated in cafes that they have written to their corps and that we will soon see what will come of it. [67]

The minute Chambon was appointed, French recruiters tried hard to disrupt his operations and entrap him. They sent him soldiers in uniforms from various corps for their enrolment on a daily basis. Foresta reported these men immediately to the Major of the Citadel, who took action by reporting them to their respective corps and had them arrested for desertion. When this tactic failed, the French recruiters sent soldiers dressed in civilian clothes to swear allegiance to the Order, falsely claiming they were not affiliated with any other military regiment. Even commandant de Miran (who was replacing Vogüé in his absence) tried hard to cease such underhanded actions, yet, their hostile behaviour persisted.[68] In response to these attacks and to protect the integrity of the Order's recruitment programme, Foresta introduced a declaration in the enrolment contract. This required recruits to swear before the commander of the Citadel of Marseille that they were neither deserters nor engaged with any other regiments. It also stipulated that any acts of deceit would be punishable under accusations of desertion, according to French law.[69]

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[67] 'il est évident que les messieurs cherchant à nous donner des torts, et c'était une affaire que je regardais comme finie si des officiers des autres corps qui sont à Marseille en semestre, et qui sont fort indifférents à cette querelle, ne m'avaient assuré que, malgré toutes les avances, toute l'aménité, tout ce que je fais pour plaire à ces messieurs les recruteurs, il y en a qui ont dit publiquement dans les cafés qu'ils en avaient écrit à leur corps et que l'on verrait bientôt ce qui en serait.' AN M994, f. 110, 25 December 1780.

[68] AN M994, f. 110, 25 December 1780.

[69] AN M994, f. 110, 25 December 1780.



Figure 7.2 Francesco Zimelli, 'Le Colonel du Regiment de Malte' [ca. 1790]. (Image courtesy of the Malta Maritime Museum, Heritage Malta, and HMML's Malta Study Center.[70]

As is evident, recruitment for the Regiment of Malta was a daunting task made difficult by all the underhand stratagems adopted by those who for various reasons were opposed to such recruitment. In addition to these challenges, the regiment faced further trouble in finding recruits because of stories that began to circulate about conditions therein. The soldiers of the regiment tarnished the reputation of both the recruiters in Marseille and the regiment's authorities in Malta, giving it a suspect aura that persisted beyond the life of the regiment itself. This narrative was notably captured by an author using the pseudonym Carasi, who in 1790 published, *L'Ordre de Malthe dévoillé ou voyage de Malthe,* a two-volume memoir filled with details of his experiences while serving in the Regiment of Malta. In his *mémoir*, Carasi detailed the harsh treatment he endured under colonel Freslon, known for his stringent discipline. Almost as a personal vendetta, the publication came five years after Freslon's death, thus precluding any opportunity for the colonel to defend himself. However, during his lifetime Freslon had the occasion of defending the Order in a letter which he

[70] The image of Francesco Zimelli, 'Le Colonel du Regiment de Malte [ca. 1790], was sourced by Malta Maritime Museum, inventory number 26278; digital reproduction, Malta Study Center, Hill Museum & Manuscript Library, HMAR 00010, accessed July 2, 2024, https://w3id.org/vhmml/museum/view/3750

published in the *Journal de Paris*. This publication was based on a letter of reply he had written to a contemporary unknown author in 1785, in which he countered the slander of Abbé Jacques de Delille (1738-1813) against the Order.[71] Writing from Constantinople, Dellile, a renown poet, recounted his journey to Malta and his observations of the knights, portraying the Order's institution as a peculiar one, noting a shift from a military spirit to one dominated by intrigue and competition amongst the knights for lucrative commanderies which the Grand Master distributed.[72] Alain Blondy describes Delille as one of those who were likely to have contributed to fostering a widespread negative public opinion against the Order through their writings, and one of the most vehement being was Carasi.[73] Besides these publications, there were other vocal critics who accused the Regiment of Malta of various violations. One such critic was Jacques Bertrand, a soldier employed by the regiment since 1780. Allegedly, Bertrand wrote several memoranda expressing his initial frustration with the Order's recruiters in Marseille for not paying him the promised sum. When the recruiters withheld further payments, fearing it might set a precedent for others to demand more, Bertrand's accusations became increasingly severe. He accused the recruiting staff at Fort St Nicolas of mistreatment, alleging they had confined him to a dungeon beneath the depot and subjected him to violence. He claimed he was forcibly embarked on a vessel under the pretence of heading to the French colonies, only to discover that he was actually being taken to Malta.[74]

The Major of the Citadel of Marseille, de la Roque, defended the Order by refuting what were, in this case, baseless allegations. He explained that after falling ill in the colonies, Bertrand had been sent back to France, where he himself approached the Order's recruiting agents to join the Regiment of Malta. De la Roque emphasized that, like all other soldiers in the regiment, he had complete freedom to move around the city and nobody held him prisoner. Despite his physical frailty and dubious reputation,[75] Bertrand continued to send accusatory letters to the provincial commandant and the Minister for War in Paris, aiming to damage the reputation of both the Order and Major de la Roque. In an effort to ensure that justice appeared to

[71] NLM Lib 418, ff. 2r-3r, 25 May 1785.
[72] Friedrich Melchoir von Grimm, *Correspondence Littéraire, Philosophique et Critique de Grimm et De Diderot depuis 1753 jusqu'en 1790*, Tome 12 (Paris, Chez Furne Libraire, 1830), 283-289.
[73] Blondy (1992), 73.
[74] AN M994, f. 127, 16 July 1789.
[75] AN M994, f. 136, 26 September 1783.

be served, de la Roque summoned Bertrand to return to Marseille for a fair hearing. The repatriated soldier arrived on the King's frigate on 15 July 1783, and was placed in the royal prison of Marseille; de la Roque refused to house him at the citadel, and Bertrand himself resisted staying there due to fear of further abuse. Despite never having met Bertrand, the Bailli de Foresta made several overtures to reconcile him, even offering to pay 12 sols per day for his subsistence. Nevertheless, Bertrand continued to pen his writings against him and colonel Freslon in Malta.[76] Jacques Bertrand's hearing was concluded within two months. During the interrogation, he denied all accusations against the depot personnel and claimed he had not written any of the letters he was being accused of. More concerning than Bertrand's guilt or innocence was the potential for rebellion and conspiracy suggested by his writings, and the risk that his influence might incite revolt within the ranks of the Regiment of Malta. The Convent could scarcely tolerate any form of rebellion within the Regiment, given that it lacked any superior force to control it; after all, Rohan had raised the regiment to safeguard the Convent from any local uprising. Perhaps even more importantly, Foresta underscored the potential vulnerability such internal unrest within the Grand Master's guards, and with few knights on Malta, might present to external powers. This susceptibility could lead to the island being easily overrun.[77] Even though the fear of Malta's vulnerability was merely Foresta's own perception of the situation, he had the strong impression that Bertrand's comrades in Malta were waiting for the conclusion of his hearing to strike against the Order. Acting on his concerns, Foresta communicated to the Order's ambassador in Paris, the Bailli Jacques Le Tonnelier de Breteuil (1778-1785), that should Bertrand be convicted of crafting such a detrimental narrative, he ought to face punishment in Malta. This would enable the Order to mete out a punitive example while carefully conveying to potential recruits and France that it governed its subjects with both reasoned discipline and humanity and through the rule of law. There is no documented evidence of the outcome of Bertrand's hearing, but his story and his antagonism towards the Regiment of Malta was reflected in the writing of some of his contemporaries, culminating with Carasi's detailed writings and publication only two years later.

[76] AN M994, f. 127, 16 July 1789.
[77] AN M994, f. 136, 26 September 1783.

Year (1 August to 31 July)	Number of soldiers in the regiment recruited from France	% of French men in the Regiment Per year	Men from various places: Rome, Naples, Malta, Piedmont, Modena, Parma, Bologna, Genoa, Corsica, Spain, Germany, Tuscany, Venice, Avignon	Size of the Regiment of Malta
1779-1780	280	28%	720	1,000
1780-1781	239	22.4%	827	1,066
1781-1782	268	28.75%	664	932
1782-1783	304	28.2%	774	1,078
1783-1784	352	31%	780	1,132
1784-1785	408	37%	693	1,101
1785-1786	missing	Missing	missing	Missing
1786-1787	missing	Missing	missing	Missing
1787-1788	missing	Missing	missing	Missing
1788-1789	365	36.2%	643	1,008
1789-1790	337	33.93%	656	993
1790-1791	missing	Missing	missing	missing
1791-1792	missing	Missing	missing	missing
1792-1793	missing	Missing	missing	missing

Table 7.1 Composition of the soldiers of the Regiment of Malta from 1779 to 1793, with emphasis on those recruited from France. The information has been extracted from the *Rendimenti di Conti* or the accounts tables of the regiment (see appendix 5: 5.9).[78]

[78] Information compiled from the account's sheets of the Regiment of Malta dating from 1779 to 1789, based on AN M994, ff. 138-146. This volume contains a set of printed tables/accounts for the years: 1779-1785 and 1788-1790; Out of a total of fourteen balance sheets only six are available in the National Library of Malta: Zammit (2005), 44, 46-51.

Table 7.1 shows the composition of the regiment, with a particular emphasis of French soldiers every year (not necessarily all of French origin) in between 1 August and 31 July, in comparison to recruited from other cities or states. It is interesting to note that despite Carasi's publication and all the bad publicity the Regiment of Malta had been receiving since the early 1780s, culminating with Bertrand's alleged *mémoires* and Carasi's publication of 1790, the presence and numbers of French soldiers in the Regiment of Malta remained a steady one at almost one-third of all the regiment. It is somewhat ironic that despite the chaos caused by the outbreak of the revolution, the Order's efforts for the upkeep of the *Reggimento di Malta* and its recruitment seems to have remained largely unaffected, at least in the first year of the revolution for which the Order spent 97,213.6 scudi (216,030.2 livres) for the Regiment of Malta alone for the year 1789 to 1790.[79] Prioritizing the recruitment of the regiment, despite the heavy loss of revenue from France, remained a key part of Rohan's strategy to bolster the security of his Convent on the island (instigated by the 1775 revolt on the island). Even though no further balance sheets have survived to indicate the recruitment rate or composition of soldiers from France after 1790, the Regiment of Malta continued operating until 1798.

7.2.2 Complications in provisioning the *Reggimento di Malta* from France

Recruiting men was not in itself enough, for they needed to be armed. And a planned increase in troops for Malta would necessitate an increase in armaments procurement. The last large consignment of firearms purchased by the knights was the arms deal with Saint-Étienne-en-Forez in 1759, when consignments were sent yearly to Malta over fourteen years. The formation of the infantry for the *Reggimento di Malta* (composed of 2 battalions) and the *Reggimento di Cacciatori* (a militia unit of volunteers composed of 6 companies of 100 men each) necessitated the arming and dressing of these soldiers. Stephen C. Spiteri explains that there was a plan in August 1777 and the following year to arm the troops from the armoury of the Order with 1,500 and 400 muskets respectively. Meanwhile, in 1778, the Order sent a commission to the Order's receiver in Naples to purchase a sample from the factory of arms, the

[79] Wismayer (1997), 134.

Annunziata, in that city. However, no document seems to verify that this commission went through.[80]

The first recorded procurement for military equipment for the Regiment of Malta dates to September 1776, when the knights d'Hannonville and the Major of the Regiment of Malta, de Ferret, passed a list of weapons and clothing to the royal Commissioner of War in Strasbourg, Cappe de Carrieres, to have these mustered and sent to Malta (see table 7.2). The consignment's delivery was significantly delayed due to various factors. Despite the Order securing permission for equipment extraction from the French government, Carrieres neglected to inform the war minister of his commission, prompting action against him from the War Ministry.[81] Moreover, the issuance of a passport for extraction and duty-free exemption was delayed, leaving the Order being stuck with the possibility of incurring an extra charge of 40 louis d'or, equivalent to 902 livres for consignment movement.[82] Once again, Saint-Germain demonstrated a degree of antipathy towards the Order by resisting the issuance of the passport. His resistance stemmed from the necessity of disbursing funds from the King's coffers to the tax farmers for a consignment that was not even destined for France.[83]

In his final days as ambassador, Saint-Simon intervened with Saint-Germain, reminding him that the Order had traditionally been exempted from transport duties for military supplies under the ministries of Choiseul, d'Aguillon and Monteynard. He pointed out that from 1763 to 1774, all consignments from the factory of Saint-Étienne-en-Forez to Marseille had been transported duty-free, reinforcing the precedent for issuing a duty-free passport for the Order's current needs.[84] While Saint-Simon was insisting with the minister, the royal commissioner of war in Strasbourg identified a more cost-effective method for transporting the Order's military equipment. Every day carriages laden with oranges and oil were transported from Marseille to Strasbourg so Carrieres proposed to the ambassador to have the Order's equipment transported on these carriages as these made their return journey to Marseille. His intention was to at least spare the Order some costs on transport costs,

[80] Spiteri (2003), 102.
[81] AN M960, f. 10, 10 April 1777.
[82] AN M902, f. 227, 29 September 1776.
[83] AN M902, f. 231, 25 October 1776.
[84] AN M902, f. 231, 25 October 1776.

if not on the tolls.[85] The procurators of the Treasury in Malta gave him their green light, but Saint-Simon, in his role as ambassador and defender of the Order's rights and privileges in France, would simply not have it. He pointedly told Saint-Germain that his predecessors had always been sensitive to the needs of the Order, underscoring the lack of cohesion in the French ministerial system.[86] When Saint-Germain disregarded his communications, the ambassador turned to the minister's deputy, Alexandre Marie Eléonor de Saint-Mauris de Montbarrey, who would later serve as Minister for War from 1777 to 1780. However, he too closed the doors in the ambassador's face.[87] Annoyed by Saint-Simon's persistence, Saint-Germain rebuffed him in a letter dated January 1777, stating that the King had no intention of granting duty-free exemption when he was then forced to pay the exportation taxes to the tax farmers himself, unless the cargo was of course for France. As Saint-Germain explained, Louis XVI regarded this as blatant abuse: [88]

> His Majesty, who is not unaware that this Order had sometimes obtained similar passports, has judged that no decisions could be based on the abuse of a system founded on reason, and that one should recall the ease one had had under previous ministers which these days is being claimed as a right.[89]

Saint-Germain informed the Controller General of Finance that previous duty exemptions granted to the Order were improper, as such exemptions were intended only for goods serving royal needs or in exceptional circumstances like transporting foreign ministers' luggage and equipment into France. He argued that acceding to the Order of St John's request would have legitimized this abuse.[90] Saint-Germain's claim that it was Louis XVI himself that had denied the issuing of passports for the exemption from customs tax seems odd, to say the least. This in view of the fact that a few months earlier the King had reconfirmed all the Order's privileges in letters patent registered in the *parlement* on 21 October 1776. This decree reconfirmed (for

[85] AN M902, 232, 5 November 1776.
[86] AN M902, f. 233, 23 November 1776.
[87] AN M902, f. 235, 4 January 1777.
[88] AN M902, f. 236, 4 January 1777.
[89] 'Sa Majesté, qui n'ignorait pas que cet ordre avait quelquefois obtenu de semblables passeports, a jugé qu'on ne pouvait rien conclure d'un pareil abus contre une règle fondée sur la raison, et qu'on devait d'autant plus se représenter la facilité qu'on avait eue sous les ministres précédents qu'on prétendait aujourd'hui s'en faire un titre.' AN M902, f. 236, 4 January 1777.
[90] AN M902, f. 243, 15 December 1776.

the last time under the *ancien régime*) all the Order's privileges in France, including the 'franchises (exemption from certain taxes), immunity, liberty, honour, exemptions, just as they had been accorded by our predecessors [the Kings].'[91]

1st consignment dispatched c.15-20 September 1777	2nd consignment dispatched c. 1-10 December 1777
Bandoliers with Pouches – 719	Bandoliers with Pouches – 659
Rifle Slings – 719	Rifle Slings – 700
Belts – 719	Belts – 664
Dragoons Sabre -118	Dragoons Sabre – 64
Bear skins for mending – 2	Bear skins for mending – 2
Canvas shirts – 1000	Canvas shirts – 24
	Sabres – 600

Table 7.2 Military provisions for the Regiment of Malta.[92]

The persistent ambassador engaged both the Controller General and the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Vergennes, in his strategy to persuade the Minister for War. He cited the Order's historical exemptions, ranging from the duty-free privileges granted in 1418 to the most recent exemption in 1773, as precedents to influence the decision.[93] Saint-Simon's worst fear was that the Order had fallen out of favour with Louis XVI, aside from the damaging impact on the Order's coffers if they were obliged to pay duty on their exports from France.[94] The procurator general of the Order, the Bailli Bascle d'Argenteuil, temporarily leading the embassy as *chargé d'affaires* in Saint-Simon's absence, noted that France's declaration of the Order's historical duty-free exemptions as being abusive jeopardized the Order's position. He feared that what was being denied for the passports, could also be extended to any other privileges the Order enjoyed in France, or else, each concession would henceforth fall under greater scrutiny. By this time the Hospitallers could strongly perceive an incoherence in the French government's attitude toward the Order: while the King facilitated the recruitment of soldiers for Malta, supporting Grand Master de Rohan's quest to bolster

[91] 'franchises, immunités, libertés, honneurs, exemptions telles qu'elles leur on été accordées par les Rois nos prédécesseurs.' AN M896, f. 42, 21 October 1776.
[92] AN M902, f. 248, 1777.
[93] AN M902, f. 244, undated
[94] AN M902, f. 238, 27 January 1777.

his security, his Minister for War imposed additional costs for outfitting and arming the same regiment, effectively shackling the process. This discrepancy signals a lack of control by the King over his ministers, something that became all too clear as a characteristic of Louis XVI's reign in the Order's regards.[95]

In urgent need of textiles for the regiment's uniform and weapons for two battalions, the first consignment was transported from Strasbourg to Hericourt and Darcy. Evidently, Carries's strategy of using carriages arriving from Marseille was not taken up because the cargo was stopped in Lyon with complications from the customs office. The procurator and receiver, de Loras, who were overseeing the shipment for the cargo, opted to await guidance from the ambassador because the duties levied by Lyon's customs, along with those anticipated in Valence and Florens-en-Cabriès, would surpass the worth of the military provisions.[96] The Order had already paid 933.9.8 livres at the customs of Darcy and 1,820.7 livres at Herincourt,[97] so Loras was hoping the King would give his permission for the Order to join its merchandise with that of the royal troops, and save the Order extra taxes. Regrettably, events did not unfold according to what he hoped because the director of customs in Lyon adamantly demanded a staggering 30% levy on the value of the knights' goods in transit. Faced with this problem, Loras found himself with no other solution but to temporarily store the supplies at the customs depot in Lyon, pending resolution of the matter.[98] On 6 June 1777—nine months after the first procurement was commissioned—the knights received word from the tax farmers that a pivotal decision had been made. Customs offices spanning from Strasbourg to Marseille were now directed by the government to grant unrestricted passage to the Order's merchandise. This ruling applied to both the goods already held in Lyon and those awaiting transit in Strasbourg.[99] As soon as Loras received this news, he released the provisions from Lyon and proceeded to Marseille.[100]

The unwavering determination of Ambassador de Saint-Simon, and his successor the *chargé d'affaires,* Bailli Bascle d'Argenteuil proved crucial, earning them recognition from de Rohan. Saint-Simon not only saved the Order money and

[95] AN M902, f. 245, 27 March 1777.
[96] AN M902, f. 239, 12 February 1777.
[97] AN M902, f. 240, 16 February 1777.
[98] AN M902, f. 239, 12 February 1777.
[99] AN M902, f. 249, 6 June 1777.
[100] AN M960, f. 23, 16 July 1777.

managed to equip its regiment as requested, even if it had taken months of futile delays, but he even safeguarded the Order's privileges for at least another decade or so.[101] His efforts also led to the Order being refunded for all the excessive duties imposed by the tax farmers for transporting military gear in 1777.[102]

Various conclusions may be made. A salient point seems to be that Louis XVI was not as absolute as he liked to believe. Ministers did override his decisions, and despite his favourable disposition towards the Order, French officials did their utmost to foil the Order's recruiting process. Moreover, later ministers of the *ancien régime*, notably Saint-Germain, were sticklers for the rules, adding a certain rigidity to the already cumbersome French bureaucracy. Using an exemption granted to the Order for the exportation of a military consignment from Saint-Étienne in 1762, the Controller General of Finances, Louis-Gabriel Taboureau des Réaux (1776-1777) told Saint-Germain that 'this example is merely the result of disregard to the rules or complacency towards abuse,' and 'exemptions should only be granted for items intended for the service of the King.'[103] All this adversity, and the success in the tenacious attempts of the two ambassadors of the Order against such powerful authority within the government of France highlights the importance and efficacy of Hospitaller diplomacy in late *ancien régime* France.

[101] AN M960, f. 32, 30 November 1777.
[102] AN M960, f. 28, 12 October 1777.
[103] 'Cet exemple n'est que l'effet de l'inattention aux règles ou d'une complaisance abusive,' and 'les exemptions ne doivent avoir lieu que pour les effets destinés au service du Roi.' AN M902, f. 243, 15 December 1776.

7.3 Negotiating the case of military leave for French knights in the Royal Navy

Setting up and maintaining Rohan's regiment was not the only instance of friction the Order faced with France regarding military matters. While recruiting soldiers from France for the regiment was essential for the island's internal security, the release of French knights from the royal navy was equally crucial for the Hospitallers' offensive naval operations. The connection between the navy of the Order and the navy of France was a longstanding one. During the 16th century, the Order's modest fleet of galleys made a significant impact during the siege of Cyprus and the Battle of Lepanto. Their remarkable organizational skills, discipline, and unwavering spiritual integrity left a lasting impression on various Christian nations, notably France. In 1626 Cardinal Richelieu initiated the restructuring and expansion of the French navy, nearly doubling it by 1635,[104] and he is known to have drawn inspiration from the maritime practices of the Order. Later on, Bamford relates how in the late 17th century, Louis XIV rapidly sought to bolster his navy by recruiting officers to staff it, preferring those of noble birth. The Knights of Malta fitted the bill perfectly, not only because they were themselves of noble origin, but they also had invaluable maritime experience sailing on the galleys of the Order. The Hospitaller institution possessed numerous commendable qualities as a training ground for officers, so much so that Catholic maritime nations, particularly France, used it as a source of recruitment for their sailing corps. Malta under the knights was, in fact, regarded as an outstanding training school in naval warfare.[105] Though he later instituted a rudimentary cadet training system, the King's Minister for the Navy Colbert, during his reorganisation of the marine department from 1669, also recognised the importance of employing French knights already capable of commanding galleys, from amongst, what the abbé Vertot called, 'the fighting force' of Christianity. This was necessary to fill the shortage of galley captains of the French fleet.[106]

A French knight honing his naval skills while serving aboard the ships of the Order had a clear path to a successful career. Opportunities within the knights' maritime offices, especially the Captain General of the Galleys, often led to higher

[104] Parrott (2001), 475.
[105] Paul W. Bamford, 'The Knights of Malta and the King of France', *French Historical Studies*, 3, 4 (1964), 431-432.
[106] Colbert's son was received as knight of Malta around 1667. Jean-Baptiste Colbert, *Letters, instructions et mémoires de Jean-Baptiste Colbert*, P. Clément (ed.) III, Paris 1862, 143; Bamford (1964), 431-432.

ranks in the Order, [107] including diplomatic posts and even Grand Master. For instance, Ambassadors de Froullay, de Fleury, de Saint-Simon and Grand Masters Nicolas Cotoner, Gregorio Carafa, and Rohan all advanced from this role.[108] Besides naval careers, the Hospitaller fleet offered the professed knight (and also servants-at-arms and conventual chaplains) the chance of obtaining a commandery or moving up the institution's hierarchical ladder once four naval campaigns, or caravans, were completed. A knight had to be twenty years of age to be able to embark on a caravan, but the age limit was lowered to nineteen years at the turn of the 18th century and eighteen years by the time of the 1776 Chapter General, after which all minors joining the Order had to complete their four caravans between the ages of seventeen and twenty-five years. For those joining the Order at an older age, or who would have failed to complete the four caravan cruises by the age of fifty, all eligibility for commanderies, rank progression, or any related benefits was lost, even if they continued their caravan service after this age.[109] The caravan duties of the Order of St John earned it a commendable reputation for possessing the highest proportion of trained naval officers in the Mediterranean as early as the 17th century.[110] Indeed, numerous French knights, particularly those from the Langue of Provence, distinguished themselves in the French navy during the 17th and 18th centuries. Trained aboard the Order's vessels, several rose to prominence, notably Chevalier Paul, Jean-Louis de Forbin, Jean-Baptiste de Valbelle, and the vice-admiral of the French Navy, the Bailli de Suffren.[111]

This strong Franco-Hospitaller connection was sustained by a harmonious *modus operandi* whereby aspiring knights in the maritime service of the King were granted a two-year fully-paid term of leave for the completion of the four caravans.

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[107] Grima (2016), 383-384; Jonathan Riley-Smith, *Hospitallers, The History of the Order of St John* (London, The Hambledon Press, 1999), 97.
[108] Carmen Depasquale, 'Bailli de Froullay, Knight, Sailor and Diplomat,' *Melita Historica*, 13, 2 (2001), 221; Louis François de Villeneuve-Bargemont, *Monumens des Grands-Maitres de l'Ordre de Saint-Jean de Jérusalem*, volume 2 (Paris, J.J Blaise, 1829), 252
[109] Cavaliero (1960), 16; Grima (2016), 191; *Codice del Sagro Militare Ordine Gerosolimitano Riordinato per Comandamento del Sagro Generale Capitolo celebrato nell anno 1776 sotto gli auspice di sua Altezza Eminentissima Il Gran Maestro Fra Emanuele de Rohan* (Malta, Stamperia del Palazzo di S.A.E 1782), 48, 313. Retrieved on 10 May 2024, from https://w3id.org/vhmml/readingRoom/view/502192
[110] Grima (2016), 187.
[111] Françoise Pérennes, 'Chevaliers de Malte, Provençaux et Marins du Roi au XVIIe siècle,' in *Méditerranée, Mer Ouverte, Tome 1, du XVIe au XVIIIe siècle* (Malta, Fondation Internationale Malte, 1997), 169.

This agreement guaranteed that the knights, or as they were called, caravanists, could finance their own voyage to Malta, knowing that their appointment and rank in France was conserved in their absence. The benefit for France was obvious; its naval officers were provided with the best practical and theoretic formation, even more formally after the introduction of compulsory training at the nautical school, set up in the early years of the 18th century in Malta.[112] The Order benefitted also from this. It was guaranteed a regular supply of knights actively working for the central Convent and for the smooth running of its naval enterprises, especially since each galley carried around 20 to 30 caravanists.[113] However, those who stood to benefit the most were the French caravanists already serving in the King's naval service. They not only participated in the Hospitaller naval expeditions, refining their maritime skills while still employed by the navy of France, but also had the opportunity to gain command positions in the French navy. For instance, if a French knight commanded a ship from the Order's squadron, it was enough to earn him the post of captain in the French naval service. Meanwhile, they worked towards securing lucrative commanderies in France.[114]

The release of knights from royal service for the Hospitaller caravans was neither exclusive to France, nor a novel practice of the 18th century. The origin of the maritime caravans dates back to the knights' Rhodian phase, during which time they were already being released when summoned by the Convent, or to assist the Order with its fleet:

> In all times, in all countries, the Knights of the Order of St John of Jerusalem have been favoured with a special permission to leave for their service in Rhodes, and subsequently in Malta: those who had the honour of being in the service of the King obtained two years of leave while retaining their post.[115]

All the same, while this was the broad situation, the integration of Hospitaller knights in the royal fleet of France was not always seamless. According to Pritchard, the French navy's inability to foster strong bonds among its naval officers stemmed

[112] Grima (2016), 383-384.
[113] Riley-Smith (1999), 97.
[114] Grima (2016), 203.
[115] 'Dans tout le temps, dans tout les pays, les chevaliers de l'Ordre de Sainte Jean de Jérusalem ont été favorisés d'une permission spéciale d'aller faire leur service à Rhodes, et successivement à Malte: ceux qui avaient l'honneur d'être au service du Roi ont obtenu des congés de deux ans avec conservation de leur appointment.' AN M902, f. 200, 12 May 1765.

from the absence of a clear focal point for their allegiance. This was partly due to ongoing social tensions between noble and bourgeois officers, and partly because of tensions between reserve and full-service officers.[116] Cormack also attributes the Grand Corps's disunity to the royal navy's high command, which failed to foster a sense of loyalty and unified leadership, particularly among French knights who navigated dual loyalties. These Hospitaller naval officers considered their obligations to the Order of Saint John on par with their responsibilities to the royal fleet, whereas their two sovereigns, the King and Grand Master, expected priority when it came to loyalty and obedience.[117] The presence and prominent rank of Fra Jean Philippe d'Orléans, Chevalier d'Orléans, grand prior of France (1719-1748), within the royal navy had a substantial influence, not only on the Hospitaller brethren serving with him in the royal galley corps, but also on the entire French navy for he remained General of the Galleys (1716-1748) of the royal fleet until this formation was assimilated into the rest of the navy in 1748. Suffice it to say that his individual effort to maintain the galley corps as a separate and essential unit (particularly in the 1730s), distinct from the sailing ship unit, undermined the push for the integration of these two divisions. The situation only changed after d'Orléans' demise in 1748. With his opposition gone, the galley corps could finally be integrated with the sailing unit, forming one unified officer corps.[118]

This change came into effect only three months after d'Orléans' death when the count de Maurepas, the Minister for the Navy, enshrined naval integration with an ordinance issued on 27 September 1748. This decree imposed the suppression of the ranks of General of the Galleys and that of lieutenant General of the Galleys, while officers from the galleys division were allowed to transfer their seniority to the newly unified corps.[119] In response to this change, the majority of galley officers retired, and only twenty-eight remained who joined the unified officer corps, many of whom were French knights of Malta. In 1755, there were 50 knights in the unified corps, a substantial amount that increased to 73 knights by 1759, amounting to 7% of all the

[116] Pritchard (1987), 57-58.
[117] William S. Cormack, *Revolution and Political Conflict in the French Navy 1789-1794* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1995), 40.
[118] Pritchard (1987), 57-58.
[119] Ordinance du Roi, *Portant reunion du corps des Galères à celui de la Marine*, 27 September 1748: retrieved on 3 March 2021, from https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b86253725/f1.item

officers serving in the officer corps of the royal navy.[120] What was crucial for Malta was that the significant presence of the knights now within the main French navy, coupled with the effects of the 1748 reforms, directly influenced the *congé* of these knights. This development became a source of considerable concern for Grand Master Pinto, particularly when an unsympathetic Minister for the Navy succeeded Maurepas. Consequently, the supply chain of French knights from France for the bi-annual caravan cruises of the Order was heavily affected by the 1750s.[121]

Maurepas' successor as naval minister, Antoine-Louis Rouillé (1749-1754), found the royal navy in a pitiful state, having only twenty-eight vessels fit to sail, the lowest count since 1663. In his endeavour to overhaul the navy, Rouillé pursued various strategies aimed at reorganizing and revitalizing French naval strength. These included the establishment of a marine academy, advancements in cartography and astronomy research, initiatives to boost naval construction, and the implementation of new regulations for the marine corps.[122] Finding low morale and insubordination pervasive within the officer corps, he closely supervised both the *corps de plume* and the *corps d'épée*, where most knights served. Prior to Rouillé's tenure, only a handful of officers were fit for sea duty, a situation that marginally improved by the end of Louis XV's reign.[123] To address this issue, Rouillé stepped up his reforms, and implemented new regulations whereby no officer of the marine could obtain leave from service unless to attend his father's funeral or his own marriage, and on both occasions, the naval officer was denied a salary. These changes significantly affected the French knights, particularly after the demise of the grand prior of France, d'Orléans, who had been instrumental in advocating for the knights' interests within the French navy. Grand prior d'Orléans' successor in 1749, the Prince de Conti, had no such direct connections with—or much interest in—the maritime world. As a result, the longstanding tradition of French knights being released from royal maritime

[120] Pritchard (1987), 56, 57.
[121] See the correspondence between the Minister for War, the Ambassador of the Order in Paris, and Grand Master Pinto concerning the French knights' release from French naval service for the purpose of fulfilling their caravan duties, in AN M902, ff. 163-216.
[122] Antoine-Louis Rouillé became Minister for the Navy on 30 April 1749, succeeding Jean-Frédéric Phélypeaux, count de Maurepas. Michel Allard, 'Antoine-Louis Rouillé, Secrétaire d'État à la Marine 1749-1754,' *Revue d'Histoire des Sciences*, 30, 2 (1977), 97-103.
[123] Pritchard (1987), 8, 56.

service to fulfil their caravan duties with full pay from France and secured seniority, came to an abrupt halt.[124]

On 7 March 1750, the annoyed Grand Master instructed his ambassador in Paris to oppose this injustice, especially when French knights serving in the land forces of France were still enjoying their leave with full income.[125] Pinto was keenly aware of the daunting challenge facing his ambassador; persuading a minister to reverse regulations he had imposed on the naval administration was no mean feat. During an audience with Rouillé, Froullay attempted to sway the minister by emphasising that previous administrations had never granted a blanket privilege of French-funded leave to all knights in the navy. Instead, such permissions had been approved on a case-by-case basis. Froullay implied that despite the minister's reforms, he would not be infringing the new regulations if he continued to grant leave to French knights because there was no rule that precluded him from making exceptions. In essence, as Pinto encouraged his ambassador to convey, the caravanists endured harsh conditions, facing rough climates and rigorous training with strict discipline, and this ordeal also proved beneficial for France.[126] Despite Pinto's efforts to portray it as patriotic, circulating rumours suggested otherwise. In the words of the renowned French lieutenant-general of the Order, the Bailli Jacques François de Chambray, 'those serving on the galley only thought about drinking, eating, sleeping, and having a good time.'[127]

Far from being persuaded, Rouillé rebutted Froullay's argument with the retort that his predecessors' concessions were purely arbitrary, and according to the new regulations, if a knight of the officers' corps was permitted paid leave in the way the Order desired, or used to have it, he would simply be abusing the system.[128] The minister's lack of sympathy towards the Knights of Malta stemmed from his fear that granting preferential treatment to the knights would cause a rebellion among their comrades. He sensed that this scenario could only exacerbate a further divide within the corps of the sword.[129] Furthermore, the notable presence of knights within the French navy posed a potential disruption to its operations if a considerable number of them were absent for a two-year period due to caravan duties. Moreover, the current

[124] AN M902, f. 167, undated.
[125] AN M902, f. 163, 7 March 1750.
[126] AN M902, f. 164, undated; f. 170, 25 December 1750.
[127] Quoted after Wismayer (1997), 246.
[128] AN M902, f. 170, 25 December 1750; f. 172, 8 February 1751.
[129] AN M 902, f. 164, undated.

financial state of the marine department proved inadequate to address its most urgent requirements, let alone allocate funds to knights aiming to progress within the Order. It seems that Rouillé had a short-tempered nature, because he abruptly interrupted Froullay in mid-speech, telling him, 'it's useless for you to press me on this matter since my decision is made, and nothing can make me change it.'[130]

Disheartened by the outcome and the minister's reaction, Froullay changed strategy by turning to the Minister for War, d'Argenson, who was generally favourable towards the Order. He hoped d'Argenson would successfully persuade Rouillé in favour of the Order. However, Froullay's argument, asserting that their predecessors had been more attuned to the Order's needs and that the knights' dedication to its cause was inherently part of their duty to protect Christendom, fell flat. D'Argenson gave the excuse that knights and maritime officers prior to the reform of 1748 were not comparable to those under the new regulations, and the ambassador had no scope in comparing the current administration with the preceding ones. By this time Froullay could make out that both ministers were speaking with the same voice; therefore, he was obliged to seek different avenues.[131]

Froullay did not give up. Five years later, still in his relentless fight to safeguard the Order's interests, he approached the Keeper of the Seals of France and also Rouillé's successor, the Minister for the Navy, Jean-Baptiste de Machault d'Arnouville (1754-1757) for another attempt at swaying the French government. Learning from his experience in negotiating the issue of the *congés* with the previous ministers, Froullay refrained from comparing the current administration with the previous one. Instead, he chose to underline the disparity the current administration created within its own military departments. That is, knights in the naval service were treated in an inferior manner compared to their brethren in the French army. Froullay tried revealing the shortcomings and inconsistencies in the military management. He even asked d'Arnouville: 'Do the knights serving the King in his navy receive less favourable treatment than those serving in his troops?'[132] This line of argumentation proved successful. D'Arnouville agreed to raise the Order's issue with the King, on

[130] 'il est inutile que vous me pressiez sur cet article puisque mon parti est pris, et que rien ne peut me faire changer.' AN M902, f. 170, 25 December 1750.
[131] AN M902, f. 167, 4 May 1750.
[132] 'Les chevaliers qui servant le Roi dans sa marine sont-ils moins bien traités que ceux qui le servant dans ses troupes de terre?' AN M902, f. 178, 2 October 1756.

condition that the Grand Master assured him that French knights would exclusively serve on the sailing ship squadron during all four caravan duties. France failed to see the utility of French knights training on galleys when its fleet had by the 1750s turned to sailings ships.[133] Until 1705, the caravans of the Order were exclusively conducted on the galleys, but, with the introduction of ships-of-the-line, the four obligatory cruises were divided equally: one full year of service on the sailing ships (considered as two caravans of six months each) and two separate six-month stints on the galleys. So d'Arnouville certainly had a point from the French perspective.[134]

After nearly ten years during which the Order's ambassador petitioned the ministers to re-consider their position on supplying knights from the navy of France to that of Malta, the tables finally turned when François Marie Peyrenc de Moras succeeded d'Arnouville as Minister for the Navy in February 1757. The new minister responded favourably to Froullay's request, 'in the most gracious manner and assured me that we would find in him the most favourable disposition in all things concerning the Order.'[135] Moras' intercession with the King in favour of the Order had Louis XV declare in 1763 that the concession of leave to the knights in his naval service was to resume, provided that all French knights in his service, naval or otherwise, were strictly monitored so as to prevent any loitering on the island.[136]

The King's request stemmed from past instances of misconduct by knights and the frequent engagement in wars, therefore France could not afford absenteeism. In 1763, right after the close of the Seven Years' War, many knights took the opportunity of peace in France to apply for military leave to journey to Malta for their caravans. However, departures from France were frequently delayed for various reasons, resulting in several knights missing the scheduled departure of their cruise and having to wait for the next one. The first caravan traditionally departed from the Maltese harbour on the 1st of January, with the second following suit on the 1st of July. Those who missed their departure were therefore faced with the decision to either return home or remain on the island for several months. In such cases, they were required to inform their superiors at the war or naval ministries in France to obtain an extension

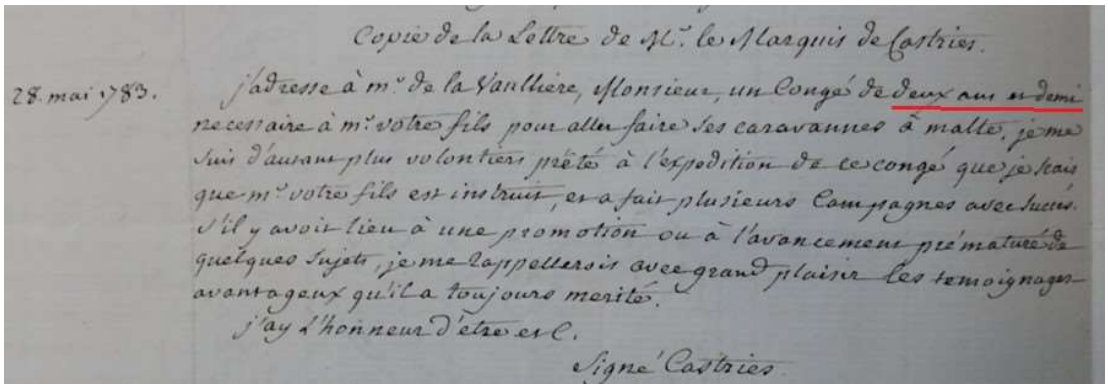
[133] AN M902, f. 178, 2 October 1756; f. 182, 24 February 1757.
[134] Grima (2016), 188.
[135] 'il me répondait de la façon la plus gracieuse et m'assurait que nous le trouverions dans les dispositions les plus favorables sur tout ce qui aurait raport à la Religion.' AN M902, f. 187, 16 February 1757.
[136] AN M902, f. 220, 14 July 1763.

of their leave, leading to unnecessary absences and subsequent disruptions to the King's service.[137]

According to the Order's regulations, all knights were required to complete their four cruises within an effective two years of service, but failure to respect the timeframes would render the caravan incomplete. Displeased with the delays and consequent disruption caused to the royal service, Louis XV imposed a number of conditions on the Grand Master. Before embarking on their caravan adventure, French knights in royal service were allotted three months to prepare, travel to Marseille, and set sail for Malta. Likewise, upon completing their caravan duties and returning to France, they were granted an additional three months. Upon arriving in Malta, French knights were obliged to register their arrival with the Convent, signalling the beginning of their caravan period. It then became their responsibility to forward the certificate they received to their respective minister within three months from the date when their leave was approved. Once a French knight completed his voyages, the Order was required to furnish him with a certificate signed by the Order's chancery and countersigned by the King's *Homme du Roi* stationed on the island. If all this bureaucracy was not enough, the imposed procedure obliged them to obtain another certificate from the port commander of any of the ports in France as witness to their arrival in the country. This strict protocol left the knights in royal service no room for abuse.[138]

Given the considerable effort the ambassador invested in persuading France to endorse the Order's caravan enterprise, Froullay ensured that the King's decision of 1765 was reaffirmed by subsequent ministers. Yet problems remained. The enduring impact of Rouillé's naval reforms of 1748 on the Order's affairs was the establishment of a bureaucratic system and the imposition of rigid timeframes for French knights to complete their caravans. Beginning in 1765, knights were required to complete their caravans and resume French service within two-and-a-half years, if they wished to maintain their seniority.[139]

[137] AN M902, f. 221, 1765.
[138] AN M902, ff. 184, 16 February 1757; f. 200, 12 May 1765; f. 221, 1765; f. 218, 4 October 1776.
[139] AN M902, ff. 204, 29 April 1768; f. 223, 18 October 1765.


Copie de la Lettre de M^r. le Marquis de Castries.

28. mai 1783. J'adresse à m^r de la Vanlliere, Monsieur, un Congé de deux ans et demi necessaire à m^r votre fils pour aller faire ses caravanes à malte, je me suis d'autant plus volontiers prêté à l'expedition de ce congé que je sais que m^r votre fils est instruit, et a fait plusieurs Campagnes avec succes. S'il y avoit lieu à une promotion ou à l'avancement prématuré de quelques sujets je me rappellerois avec grand plaisir les temoignages avantageux qu'il a toujours merités.

J'ay l'honneur d'etre etc.

Signé Castries

Figure 7.3 Extract of a copy of a letter by the Minister for War de Castries in 1783, granting a period of two-and-a-half years of military leave to a French knight under his authority to do his caravan duties in Malta.[140]

Though the caravan issue seemed to have been resolved, problems surfaced again after a couple of decades. A decree published under Louis XVI on 1 January 1786,[141] stipulated that those junior officers in the ranks of the *Gardes de la Marine* (cadets companies) could only advance in their career after completing a minimum of six years of sailing in French royal service. This was a direct blow to the young French knights (by 1785 the officers corps of the royal navy was composed of 1,200 men, of which 80 were Knights of Malta, amounting to 6.6% of the naval corps),[142] who were still at the stage of completing their caravan duty before the age of twenty-five years.[143] Having two-and-a-half years of nautical service in Malta discounted from the knights' naval experience placed them at a great disadvantage with their comrades. The circumstances aroused profound apprehension within the Order, prompting a convocation of the chapter of the Grand Priory of France at the Temple in Paris on 10 June 1787 to deliberate on the matter, with a specific emphasis on the case of knight Montlivault and other knights. Montlivault, having served as a naval cadet since 1780, had obtained leave from the marine department in 1783 to voyage to Malta for participation in the caravan cruises. Adhering to the regulations stipulated by his ministry, Montlivault returned to France in June 1786 after spending two-and-a-half years in Malta, only to discover that his seniority in the royal navy had been interrupted in accordance with the new decree of 1786. The council of the Grand Priory of France,

[140] AN M902, f. 263, 18 June 1787.
[141] *Ordonance du Roi concernant les officiers de la marine, 1 Janvier 1786* (Paris, L'Imprimerie Royale, Paris).
[142] AN M902, f. 261, 30 June 1786.
[143] AN M902, f. 263, 18 June 1787; *Codice del Sagro Militare Ordine Gerosolimitano Riordinato per Comandamento del Sagro Generale Capitolo celebrato nell anno 1776 sotto gli auspice di sua Altezza Eminentissima Il Gran Maestro Fra Emanuele de Rohan* (Malta, Stamperia del Palazzo di S.A.E 1782), 48, 313: retrieved on 10 May 2024, from https://w3id.org/vhmml/readingRoom/view/502192

presided by the Bailli de la Tour, lieutenant of the Grand Priory of France (Louis Antoine d'Artois, duke d'Angoulême was still twelve years old at this time), viewed this as unjust for those knights who during peaceful times in France aimed to improve their maritime skills in Malta. The lieutenant and the council of the Grand Priory entrusted the Bailli Pierre André de Suffren,[144] ambassador of the Order (1786-1788), with the task of bringing this to the attention of the King and persuade the government to consider the unfair situation of the young knights.[145] To the surprise of the Convent, Ambassador de Suffren succeeded in persuading the Minister for the Navy to consider the time the knights were employed on the Hospitaller vessels as service on the King's ships, factoring also the time taken to cross between Malta and France. The two-and-a-half years of service in Malta were once again considered as service to France, provided that the required certificates from the Order's chancery, Louis XVI's *Homme du Roi* in Malta, and the commanders of French harbours, were submitted to the marine department in France in time. Suffren's success with minister de Castries, who had displayed a degree of resistance towards the Order even during the recruitment programme for the Regiment of Malta, could be attributed to either the minister's earlier days at sea serving under the command of vice-admiral Suffren, or from Suffren's notable influence within the court of Versailles, stemming from his heroic status. Whatever the case, Suffren effectively navigated the complexities in securing French knights for the caravans of the Hospitaller fleet in the latter half of the 18th century.[146] The case of the knight Montlivault concluded with his legitimate promotion to *Garde de Lieutenant,* after he submitted the required certificates with which he could prove his time in Malta as a caravanist of the Order.[147] Once again, however, as far as the Order was concerned much time had been lost in wrangling with the French ministries for years on end.

7.4 Conclusion

Despite the willingness of the French monarchy to assist the Order in its military needs, there were times when developments in its own military and naval administration did not align with the established practices and interests of the Order. This was the case

[144] On Pierre André de Suffren, see appendix 1, Short Biographies, p.339.
[145] AN M902, f. 260, 26 May 1787; f. 263, 30 June 1787; Lacour-Gayet (1905), 587.
[146] AN M902, f. 260, 26 May 1787.
[147] AN M902, f. 262, 20 July 1787; f. 265, 10 February 1789.

with minister Rouillé's plans for the French navy. He strived to re-establish the power of the French navy by bolstering its fleet with naval construction, establishing a marine academy and improve the quality of service of its officers, for which he needed a dependable corps of officers.[148] Therefore, his resistance to releasing knights for their caravans was not due to animosity towards the Order, but rather from a need to implement his reforms effectively.

The same generous evaluation cannot be granted to the Minister for War, Saint-Germain and the Minister for the Navy de Castries. Both ministers tried shackling the Hospitallers' recruitment efforts for the Regiment of Malta by withholding tax-free passports for the movement of weapons destined for the regiment and by lodging serious accusations against the Order's recruitment agents. Their manoeuvres risked tarnishing the programme's reputation with King Louis XVI, threatening the shutting down of all operations. Their approach was somewhat shortsighted because, after all, the Order's recruitment, even though in small numbers, attracted the worst kind of vagabonds that lurked around Mediterranean ports and towns, namely Marseilles, Avignon and Corsica, which inadvertently spared France from insubordinate and rebellious soldiers in its own colonial forces.[149]

The challenges created by the central government, either through its administrative reforms, or the zealousness of its administrators distant from the court of Versailles, highlight the great diplomatic acumen, obstinacy and resilient nature of the three leading diplomats at the Order's embassy of Paris in these years. In 1776, Saint-Simon negotiated with Louis XVI to grant the Order permission to recruit soldiers from Marseille, allowing them to initially recruit 200 men for the Regiment of Malta. He also fought against Saint-Germain's prohibition of tax-free passports for consignments to Malta. Not only did he manage to obtain the necessary passport, but he also secured a refund of the overpaid taxes which the Order had paid for the year 1777.[150] But some matters took ages to resolve in the Order's favour. In the case of the French knights of the royal navy, it took the relentless Ambassador de Froullay fifteen years to effectively reverse the prohibition of the *congé* for those knights needing to complete their caravan duties in Malta. Finally, whether through his adept diplomatic

[148] Allard (1977), 7.
[149] Ebejer (2014), 5.
[150] AN M994, f. 16, 25 March 1776; AN M902, f. 231, 25 October 1776; AN M960, f. 28, 12 October 1777.

skills or his renown as vice-admiral of France, the Bailli de Suffren resolved the issue concerning the caravan years and the progression of the French knights' seniority in the navy of France.

The rigid stance of the military administration of the navy and war under Rouillé and d'Argenson and later Choiseul, disregarded decades of established practices rooted in negotiation and mutual cooperation between France and Hospitaller Malta. This cooperation had allowed French knights to effectively fulfil their dual obligations to both their King and Grand Master. In the final decades of the *ancien régime*, the diplomatic role of the Order's ambassador became increasingly crucial in re-establishing a balance, enabling the Order to maintain its deep-rooted practices while preserving strong ties with France.

General Conclusion: *La valeur seule ne suffit pas*

During the 1761 crises, an unknown author who happened to be in Malta at the time reported to the finance minister of France that 'if valour alone was sufficient to defend the place, Malta would be impregnable; however, the example of all times proves that valour alone is not enough.'[1] Indeed, whether in the Holy Land, Rhodes, or Malta, the custom of the Order of St John was to turn to Christian Europe for military and financial assistance. Throughout the latter half of the 17th century and most notably in the 18th century, it was France that provided the bulk of the military support. Still, to assert that all military aid to Malta throughout the 18th century came exclusively from France would be inaccurate. Indeed, military equipment from various Italian states also reached the island, and in 1761 the Order did spend some 222,831 livres for 143,240 pounds of gunpowder bought from various places excluding France (though in a comparative measure of French importance, the Convent did buy around 530,693 pounds from France alone in that same year).[2] Some also made donations to the Order during alarming times, for instance the King of Portugal sent some 12 bronze guns in 1733,[3] and the Republic of Lucca sent a consignment of gunpowder in 1761.[4] Nevertheless, from the Ottoman threat of 1714-15 onwards, a significant proportion of firearms, artillery, gunpowder, and specialists consistently originated from France, primarily in response to the Ottoman threat. This dissertation confirms that from 1722 through to the late 1780s France satisfied the majority of the Order's military needs, with only three exceptions. The first incident involved the Minister for the Navy, d'Arnouville, denying a consignment of 200,000 pounds of gunpowder requested by Grand Master Pinto in 1757 because the arsenal of Toulon was low on stock.[5] There was a further instance in 1769, when Grand Master Pinto sent the Trigance brothers, Francesco and Giacchino, along with their father to France to inspect artillery establishments to enhance their expertise in cannon production for the service of the

[1] 'Si la valeur seule suffisait pour défendre la place, Malte serait imprenable; cependant, l'exemple de tous les temps prouve que la valeur seule ne suffit pas.' MAE 67 CP vol. 11, f. 151v, 24 February 1761.
[2] The sum of 222,831 livres excludes gunpowder bought from France but includes that manufactured and bought from suppliers in Malta and elsewhere: NLM AOM 1118, f. 288v, 31 January 1765. In comparison, the Order bought three times as much of gunpowder from France alone in 1761. See chapter 4, tables 4.2 and 4.3.
[3] *Recueil des nouvelles, Gazette* of 28 November 1733, Issue 48, Venise 8 November 1733, p.572.
[4] NLM AOM 1517, f. 111v, 6 June 1761.
[5] AN M902, f. 27, 10 July 1757.

Order. Louis XV denied them access to his artillery facilities, citing state security concerns and the French policy of prohibiting foreigners from learning about the King's artillery. In this instance, Hospitaller Malta was treated like any other foreign state, and denied any preferential treatment.[6] The third and final instance in which France denied its usual support was on the eve of the political turmoil of the French revolution. In 1789, the Order's request for Gribeauval's artillery construction tables was denied. Twice, then, security issues led the French state to refuse cooperation; but other limits on French assistance to Malta are clearly discernible.[7]

The primary sources consulted for this study have indicated that despite the French government's general willingness to support the defence of Malta, the logistical execution was rarely smooth or seamless, contrary to what might be expected from a powerful state which acted as the protector of its smaller protégé. The cumbersome bureaucratic system for arms procurement in 18th-century France often delayed and complicated the shipment of military consignments to Malta. At an even earlier stage in the procurement process, the Order faced two distinct methods for procuring armaments, ammunition, or gunpowder from France. The first involved negotiating and purchasing directly from the state, which entailed closing deals with French ministries and extracting the military equipment from royal stores or arsenals, most often those of Toulon and Lyon, and occasionally that of Paris. The second method necessitated procurement via a private contractor, but before the supplier could start the commission the French government had to grant its approval. Weapons supply by private entrepreneurs in France was by the 18th century under strict government supervision, which on the one hand limited the suppliers' ability to deal with third parties like the Order, but on the other hand, guaranteed them (to a large extent) exclusive regular state commissions in the form of a near-monopsony.[8] The large 1759 firearms deal signed with Saint-Étienne was a clear example of this. The entrepreneurs from Saint-Étienne could not commence their production before the King's authorisation, even though the Order had already signed the arms contract in Malta.[9] There were, then, a fair number of obstructions to overcome, and the Order adopted a

[6] AN M994, ff. 1-4, 1769.
[7] See chapter 5.
[8] Rowlands (2024); Martin Lundmark, Laurent Giovachini, *The development of French defence industry in the 20th century*. Retrieved on 17 May 2024, from: https://www.foi.se/rest-api/report/FOI-R--1573--SE
[9] See chapter 5.

range of methods for succeeding in this. Despite the ostensible commitment of the French monarchy in fulfilling Hospitaller Malta's requests, its ministers were not always enthusiastically forthcoming with help, and on some occasions, they were even hostile. A prime example is the recruitment of soldiers for the *Reggimento di Malta*. Although Louis XVI sanctioned the recruitment from Marseille, and even extended the allowed quota from 200 to 300 men, his Minister for War, Saint-Germain, and the Minister for the Navy, Castries, not only were unsympathetic towards the Hospitallers' needs, but they actively shackled their operations. While the central government's policy for Hospitaller Malta was one of protection, its ministers, and various components of the government (for instance the French army's recruiters and the commandants of the province) were not always aligned towards the same purpose.

Having an ambassador at the court of France was crucial for the Order, particularly during periods of threats to the island. In 1715, the procurators of the Treasury wrote to Ambassador de Mesmes, unequivocally emphasizing that the security of the Convent depended on his efforts: 'your role as an ambassador places you in a position to provide us with the assistance we need.'[10] Yet, despite having an ambassador deeply embedded in the court of France, obtaining ministerial authorization for armament extraction and exporting consignments remained a time-consuming process. This situation was further exacerbated by recurring complications, notably when the ambassador was frequently compelled to negotiate to secure duty-free passports or to advocate for reimbursements after the Order was compelled to pay taxes on military cargos by tax farmers who would otherwise block their transportation to Marseille. The obstacles encountered in procuring military equipment for Malta from 1722 to 1789 were therefore multifarious and significant. Without the presence and strong influence of the Order's ambassador in Paris, who was typically selected from knights of influential French families with close ties to the court of Versailles—particularly the Froullay, Fleury, and Saint-Simon families—organizing military defence assistance from France would have been extremely difficult, if not impossible. However, the ambassador did not work alone. In France the Order a strong network of knights stationed in crucial areas like Lyon, the port of Marseille and Toulon; it had receivers to affect payments for procured cargo; agents, consuls and grand priors to oversee operations, as well as, knights installed in French royal establishments to

[10] 'Votre caractère d'ambassadeur vous met en position de nous fournir les secours dont nous avons besoin.' AN M995, f. 21, 6 January 1715.

provide intelligence and facilitate matters transaction, this besides connections with influential nobility.

In addition to overcoming logistical hurdles, this dissertation has shown that the ambassador played a crucial role in addressing other military issues, such as securing the release of knights from the royal navy to participate in the Order's caravans, which were significantly affected by Rouillé's reforms in 1748. On this occasion, it required the efforts of two successive ambassadors, Froullay and Saint-Simon, to restore all the benefits that French knights in the royal navy had enjoyed for many years. These benefits, established through Franco-Hospitaller agreements, included securing their seniority and funding while they fulfilled their caravan duties in Malta.

Despite all these challenges, the Order's reliance on France for military assistance proved to be more advantageous than problematic, making it worthwhile for Malta to turn to France for protection. French assistance was provided in two ways: the primary method being the provision of military experts and weaponry. This began in 1645 with the arrival of the first group of highly skilled engineers, and this kind of help gradually intensified over the years. France surpassed its previous efforts in 1714-15, when a formidable and complete team of military officers and soldiers, along with a large consignment of weapons, were sent to the island under the direction of the engineer René Jacob de Tigné. As this research has revealed, this supply chain persisted throughout the century during turbulent times of war (both for France and the Order), as well as during calmer periods, right until around 1777 when the Order's final request of 50 cannons and military paraphernalia for the regiment of Malta was satisfied.[11]

Alongside material and manpower concerns, the diplomatic correspondence reveals that the protection of Malta from Ottoman onslaught extended beyond the resourcing of the island. In fact, the defence of the Hospitaller island began in the diplomatic corridors of the French ambassador's office in Constantinople. There, he actively contested the Grand Vizier's plans and parried his arguments for waging war on Malta, effectively working to prevent a siege. In doing so, the ambassador served not only the interests of France but also acted as a *de facto* representative for the Order. Witness to this is Ambassador Jean-Louis d'Usson de Bonnac's negotiation of a truce

[11] See chapters 6 and 7.

between the Order and the Porte in 1723-24 for the mutual exchange of slaves between the Sultan and the Grand Master, to bring to an end the Hospitaller-Ottoman conflict of 1722.[12]

France's investment in protecting Malta yielded dividends for itself not only for the traditional benefits of commerce, trade, and the prestige of its subjects within the Order of St John, but also through a variety of returns. In an effort to circumvent the threats posed by Maltese corsairs, Ottoman merchants transferred their shipments onto French vessels, which earned France around twelve to fifteen million livres annually.[13] While there is no documented evidence that Malta, as a naval base, played a direct role in supporting France's trans-Atlantic activities, the island was still considered relevant as a possible human resource for the French navy and the French colonies. The Order itself did have some presence in the Atlantic, when it briefly held the Caribbean possessions of St Christophe, St Barthélémy, St Martin, St Croix and the Virgin Islands in the mid-seventeenth century,[14] and Frace did try to take all the advantage it could from its Franco-Hospitaller relations for its activities in the Americas. For instance, in 1753 the marchese de Saint-Contest proposed the populating of Louisiana by slaves and prisoners from the Mediterranean involving the Order in this, and ten years later the knight Étienne-François Turgot, the newly appointed governor of the French colony in in Cayenne, in South America, wrote to Pinto explaining the King's wish was to attract around five to six hundred Maltese families to populate the colony and have the Order send two ships there every year. While Grand Master Pinto refused the offer, this remains a significant example of Malta's potential usefulness to the King's trans-Atlantic projects.[15] More tangibly, under the Hospitallers, Malta became a significant provider of skilled sailors, exemplified by the recruitment of 200 Maltese sailors in 1781 to serve the King in the naval department at Brest (an important arsenal which also served the French colonies),[16] or when in the early years of the Seven Years' War (1756-1763), 300

[12] NLM AOM 1234, ff. 330-333, 1723; AN M995, ff. 110-117, 1723-1724.
[13] AN M992, f. 221, 31 January 1758.
[14] On the subject of the Order's activities in the Caribbean, see: William Zammit and Thomas Freller, *Knights, Buccaneers, and Sugar Cane: The Caribbean Colonies of the Order of Malta* (Malta, Midsea Books, 2015).
[15] Blondy (2002), 52-54.
[16] AN M948, f. 185, 3 May 1781.

injured French sailors were placed in the *Sacra Infermeria* in Valletta and were replaced by another 300 sailors from Malta.[17]

On occasion, the Franco-Hospitaller alliance took on a more active hue. By mid-18th century, most of the European states were at peace with the Barbary regencies, except for Spain, Naples, Venice, France and Malta whose fleets were still being harassed by the regencies' corsairs.[18] On a number of occasions, Hospitaller Malta joined France in military engagements against Tunis and the Barbary States, providing naval assistance to mitigate corsair activities that threatened French maritime interests. In the French conflict against Tripoli of 1728-31, the Grand Master offered his vessels and provided the French force with skilled knights like Fra Pierre de Thomas de Châteauneuf, who was appointed captain of one of the King's vessels in the fleet armed against Tripoli in 1729.[19] Further to providing naval offensive support, the Order could offer the harbours of Malta to serve as France's naval base. In his memoranda, the King's *Homme du Roi*, the Bailli d'Avernes de Bocage (1726-1756), reported to the Minister for War that 'throughout the duration of the war with Tripoli, the port of Malta was never without a French warship.'[20] Bocage fed around twelve French officers a day and spent over 20,000 livres for the arming of French ships while these docked in Malta.[21]

France was, however, steering a delicate course. Ever since the 16th century, the monarchy's policy was to preserve its friendship with the Ottomans, but according to Peter Earle, 'throughout the seventeenth century we find that French capitalists and French captains are the biggest single support of the Maltese corsairs.' In 1729, the French Minister for the Navy allocated funds to Malta for outfitting two corsair ships, but he stressed that the operation was to be conducted in a manner that did not reveal France's involvement. It was not in its interest to completely destroy the Barbary corsairs because they attacked vessels of its commercial rivals, but France did not want too many of them that could prey upon its own vessels.[22] In the 18th century, when France launched several naval assaults on the ports of Tunis, Tripoli and Algiers, Hospitaller Malta provided its squadron, to which Maltese corsairs added firepower.

[17] AN M992, f. 221, 31 January 1758.
[18] Daniel Panzac, *Barabary Corsairs: The End of a Legend 1800-1820* (Leiden, Brill, 2005), 39.
[19] AN M992, f. 103, 20 April 1728; NLM AOM 1231, ff. 178r-179r, 4 October 1728.
[20] 'Pendant tout le temps que la guerre de Tripoli a duré, le port de Malte n'a jamais été sans un vaisseau de guerre français.' AN AE/B/I/817, f. 410, 23 June 1731.
[21] AN AE/B/I/817, f. 410, 23 June 1731.
[22] Peter Earle, *Corsairs of Malta and Barbary* (London, Sidwick & Jackson, 1970), 15,16.

Such help was not reserved exclusively for France. The Order's policy was always to join in any Christian melee against the Muslim, as it had assisted the Holy Leagues of the 16th century, and Spain in its quest of retaining Oran in 1707 and 1732. However, it was France which made most use of the Hospital's naval service.[23] For instance, in 1729, while France was preparing to block and attack the port of Tripoli, the Minister for the Navy, Maurepas, corresponded in secret (unbeknown even to the Order's ambassador in Paris) with the Order's Captain General of the Galleys, the Bailli de Froullay. He instructed Froullay to have Maltese corsairs deployed to the east and west of Tripoli's harbour so they would attack any approaching relief vessels dispatched by the Ottoman Sultan and the Bey of Tunis with provisions. Maurepas proposed a budget of 30,000 to 40,000 livres to Froullay to expand the corsairing fleet by also inviting foreign corsairs to sail under the Order's banner. This strategy enabled French ships to attack Tripoli while clearing France from any suspicion on the Sultan's part that it had anything to do with the assaults on his vessels *en route* to assist Tripoli. After all, it was universally acknowledged that Hospitaller Malta's role was to police the sea against Muslim ships.[24] This tactic clearly supports Elisabeth Schermerhorn's assertion that France played a 'double game' in politics, strategically involving Hospitaller Malta to further its own interests.[25]

In 1741, after the Bey of Tunis seized the French-controlled island of Tabarka (close to Alicante), he also pounced on French ships before declaring war on France. Louis XV responded by suspending commerce and blockading the Tunisian harbour, and for this, he involved the Hospitallers' fleet.[26] On this occasion the Minister for the Navy, Maurepas, turned to Malta for military assistance especially because France's resources were already heavily invested in the War of the Austrian Succession (1740-1748). In any case, by 1745 Maurepas had complained that the navy had no funds.[27] Pinto responded by dispatching his fleet to blockade the harbour of Tunis and starve the Bey of provisions and income by pouncing on Tripoline and other Muslim ships coming to his aid. Of course, the Hospital lost men in this campaign, including three

[23] Claire-Elaine Engel, *Knights of Malta Knights of Malta. A Gallery of Portraits* (London, George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1963), 70, 133.
[24] AN M992, f. 104, 4 January 1729. Louis XV was very pleased with the Hospitallers' naval service and tasked his *Homme du Roi*, the Bailli de Bocage to extend his gratitude to Grand Master Vilhena; AN MAR/B/2/282, f. 166, 9 March 1729.
[25] Schermerhorn (1929), 264.
[26] Gillian Weiss, *Captives and Corsairs: France and Slavery in the Early Modern Mediterranean* (California, Stanford University Press Stanford, 2011), 103.
[27] Dull (2005), 11.

German knights who were captured, one of whom was the nephew of Bailli de Nesselrode, the grand prior of Germany.[28] Still, Hospitaller and Maltese valour (or willingness to serve) earned the admiration of Louis XV, who publicly claimed, 'we must be very grateful to the Gentlemen of Malta; it is for my service that they are currently fighting.'[29] In recognition of Malta's crucial role in France's naval conflict, Louis XV extended the prestigious *Honneurs du Louvre* to Pinto's Ambassador de Froullay in 1742. This honour was typically reserved for the ministers of foreign monarchs, which allowed ambassadors of crowned heads to enter the inner-courtyard of the Louvre in their carriage. Such small 'bump-ups' in privileges were signals of international status craved by lesser European powers.[30]

France had three main conflicts with Tunis: in 1741-42, 1770, and 1798-1802, stemming from French disapproval of Tunisian corsairing activities and the Tunisian war on Corsica (which had by 1768 become a French dominion).[31] During the 1770 conflict, Louis XV turned for Malta for further naval support.[32] When the Grand Master received the news that the French fleet had arrived at the coast of Tunis, he rapidly despatched a galley and a frigate to join the French as a 'renewed proof of his attachment to His Majesty and his crown.'[33] The French monarch recognised that the provisions and service rendered by the Order were instrumental for his fleet to successfully complete the mission.[34] All the same, this was no relationship of equals. The Order therefore never failed in giving proof of its appreciation for French support. Though Franco-Hospitaller relations cannot be described as one-sided, the support provided by a small archipelago could not compare with one of the largest and richest states in 18th-century Europe. Nevertheless, the Order seized every chance to affirm its allegiance, often at great cost. For example, the Hospitallers' involvement in the 1742

[28] AN M992, f. 147, 12 June 1741.
[29] 'Nous devons être fort obligés à Messieurs de Malte; c'est pour mon service qu'ils se battent actuellement.' NLM AOM 1224, ff. 56r-57r, 18 August 1741.
[30] The *Honneurs du Louvre* had been previously awarded to Ambassador de Froullay's two predecessors the Bailli Jacques de Souvré (1645-1670) and the Bailli Louis-Etienne Texier d'Hautefeuille (1670-1702), but not to Ambassador de Mesmes. Louis XV was initially hesitant to grant the same honour to Froullay, however, when Malta demonstrated its loyalty to him during Franco-Tunisian conflict of 1741, Louis XV bestowed the *Honneurs du Louvre* to Froullay as well: Blondy (2002), 33; Testa (1989), 92.
[31] Asma Moalla, *The Regency of Tunis and the Ottoman Porte 1777-1814* (London, Routledge, 2004), 45.
[32] Testa (1989), 173.
[33] 'une nouvelle preuve de son attachement à Sa Majesté et à sa couronne.' MAE 67 CP vol. 13, f. 223, 16 July 1770; f. 224, 22 July 1770.
[34] AN M992, f. 204, 4 May 1772.

Franco-Tunisian war cost the Treasury around 1.5 million livres, the loss of a tartana and significant casualties.[35]

It is accurate to assert that throughout the latter half of the 17th century and predominantly in the 18th century, the Order consistently sought French military support. However, attributing this military reliance solely to France's ascendancy in European politics and military supremacy post-1650,[36] or the fact that the composition of the Order was predominantly French, does not fully capture the nuances of Franco-Hospitaller military dependency. On a number of occasions throughout the 18th century, Grand Masters did not turn immediately to France to obtain military experts or weapons, as perhaps one would have expected. On some occasions the Convent turned directly to French individuals rather than the French government to provide military experts. For example, in preparation for the 1714-15 general alarm, Grand Master Perellos invited Joseph-Gaspard Lambert, a French military engineer in the employ of the Tsar of Russia, to lead military operations in Malta, before even considering petitioning Louis XIV to send him assistance, and this came about only because Lambert declined the invitation.[37] In 1761, during the Corona Ottomana affair, Pinto initially solicited a brigade of engineers from Naples, exemplifying a recurrent trend. Likewise, the Council of State and the procurators of the Treasury initially directed their requests for armaments to Rome, Naples and Genoa, positioning France as a fall back if these failed. This pattern underscores the Order's deliberate strategy to maintain flexibility, never relying exclusively on a single Christian power for military support. Yet, as this dissertation has shown, it was *ancien régime* France that consistently responded to the military needs of Malta. France's responsiveness, in comparison to other powers, stood out, especially when, unlike other Christian states, it continued with its military support despite the Sultan threatening to sever their amicable ties. The Ottoman threats, in particular those of 1722-23 and 1761 exemplify this unequivocally. France benefitted too much from Hospitaller Malta not to take the risk. The risk of Malta falling under the control of another power, whether an Ottoman ally or a Christian state, would have deprived France of all the benefits and services it had been receiving from Hospitaller Malta. Republican France recognized this threat and pre-empted other powers by seizing the island in 1798.

[35] Testa (1989), 92.
[36] Lucca (1980), 23.
[37] AN MAR/B/7/24, f. 191, 13 November 1714.

Nevertheless, the advantages of having a great European state as a protector came at a cost. France's protective attitude over the small state of Malta gave it a sense of entitlement over the Order's internal affairs and over the use of its harbour, oftentimes challenging the Hospitallers' policy of neutrality. Following the demise of the grand prior of France, the Chevalier d'Orléans in 1748, Louis XV wanted to have his cousin Louis François de Bourbon, Prince de Conti, succeed to the office, despite Froullay's and Pinto's opposition. Conti was not a knight, had never done any caravans, never been to Malta and was a widower, and all these characteristics went against the Order's statutes.[38] When the ambassador persisted in his objections, the King, with a pinch of arrogance and a tone of authority wrote to Pinto to have his ambassador desist,[39] and the foreign minister bluntly told the ambassador, 'the King no longer wants to hear or talk about all that.' The Religion bowed its head and went against its statutes to satisfy the King's demands.[40] On numerous occasions, the monarch of France interfered in the Order's diplomatic appointments. Following the demise of Ambassador de Froullay in 1766, Pinto, in agreement with the Council of State, informed the Bailli de Rohan (future Grand Master) of his appointment as his Extraordinary Ambassador to France.[41] Meanwhile, Pinto dispatched letters informing the Queen, some Royal family members, and the Order's representatives in France of his decision to appoint Rohan. Nevertheless, Louis XV compelled him to rescind Rohan's nomination and install his preferred candidate, the Bailli de Fleury.[42] Despite Pinto's pretensions as a sovereign prince, and in order to preserve the continued protection from France, he once again yielded to the King's demand: 'I am ready to obey the King's wishes by revoking the appointment of the Bailli de Rohan in favour of the Bailli de Fleury.'[43] In addition to disrupting Hospitaller appointments, France also meddled in the Grand Master's right to bestow the Order's Cross on French subjects who were not strictly members of the Order. For instance, in 1762, Pinto planned to honour Baron de Wignacourt in view of his old family ties to the Order (Alof de Wignacourt was Grand Master of the Order from 1601 to 1622), and the

[38] Engel (1972), 294-295.
[39] The Prince de Conti (1748-76) was still considered a married man, even though he was by now a widower, therefore the Pope issued a dispensation to have him dispensed from the Order's vows; H.J.A Sire, *The Knights of Malta* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 2005), 134; Engel (1963), 87.
[40] 'Le roi ne veut plus entendre parler de tout cela.' NLM AOM1225, f. 201, 3 September 1748.
[41] MAE 67 CP vol. 12, f. 74r, 29 September 1766.
[42] NLM AOM1578, f. 219rv, 29 September 1766.
[43] 'Sono pronto di ubbidire al regio desiderio, revocando la nomina del Bailli de Rohan a favore del Bailli de Fleury.' MAE 67 CP vol. 12, f. 90rv, 12 October 1766;

marquis de Bauffrement (although the reason for this is not specified). Yet the French court thwarted both honours, accusing Pinto of unjustified awards.[44]

Even more serious was France's interference in the Order's approach towards its prisoners. When the Pasha of Rhodes, prisoner in Malta since 1747, petitioned Louis XV for his intercession, the Pasha argued that France was to blame for his capture, while he hoped that the traditionally-close diplomatic links to the Ottoman Sultan would serve him good. Louis XV did indeed coerce Pinto to have him released and allow him to roam around the island, but unbeknownst to France, the Pasha orchestrated a plot to assassinate Grand Master Pinto. Despite uncovering the conspiracy, and the Order's intent to publicly punish the Pasha, France persisted in defending him. Even after the Pope urged Louis XV to reconsider, France prioritized its diplomatic relations with the Porte, ensuring that the Pasha was freed, and he was ultimately transported to Constantinople aboard a French ship in 1751. In this instance, and concurrently with its traditional role as Malta's military protector, France prioritised its equally traditionally friendly ties with the Ottoman Empire.[45]

The protection granted to Malta by France, coupled with the island's loyalty to the French monarchy, imbued France with a sense of entitlement that occasionally tested the Order's policy of neutrality, especially during Christian wars. In 1733, peace in Europe was shattered because of claims to the throne of Poland which escalated into the War of the Polish Succession (1733-1735), during which Louis XV guaranteed the safeguarding of Hospitaller estates from his army in European war zones.[46] At the same time, he expected the ports of Malta to be at his disposal. On 20 November 1733, just a month after the outbreak of the war, Chevalier de Caylus, commander of the 28-gun French frigate, the *Zephyr*, sailed up to the grand harbour of Malta seeking repairs for his damaged vessel. Grand Master Vilhena, however, denied him entry, citing the Order's strict neutrality policy during conflicts among Christian nations. This decision was particularly influenced by the ongoing hostilities which also included the Kingdom of Sicily, whose ruler at the time was the Habsburg Holy Roman Emperor Charles VI, France's principal adversary throughout the war. When Charles V had granted Malta to the Order of St John two centuries earlier in 1530, he mandated that

[44] NLM AOM 1578, f. 37, 17 July 1762; f. 32rv, 27 November 1762.
[45] MAE 67 CP vol. 12, f. 111r-119r, 9 March 1751; Zammit (2021), 509-520
[46] NLM AOM 1221, f. 869, 12 November 1733. The promise of safeguarding the Order's estates in zones of war by Christian Princes was a shared practise among Christian sovereigns.

the knights should deny harbour access to any adversaries of the King of Sicily. Nevertheless, the Order's affinity to France still guided its decisions, enabling the Convent to circumvent these impositions while maintaining a facade of neutrality. Hence, the *Zephyr* was allowed to anchor at St Paul's Bay—a less prominent port located on the northern coast of Malta, rather than the conspicuous grand harbour—tactically accommodating French interests. This manoeuvre effectively allowed them to support France without explicitly contravening their longstanding policies.[47] Even so, this did not go down well with the court at Versailles. Maurepas was furious, Cardinal de Fleury was irked and the Garde des Sceaux retaliated against the Order's ambassador, rhetorically asking him in an excessive outburst, 'well, sir, so you want to make war on us?'[48] They accused the Order of taking sides with the Holy Roman Emperor, forsaking the Franco-Hospitaller connection. This was a trying moment for the relationship between Malta and France, even if the Order's actions had nothing to do with impartiality in relation to France, but simply with its legal obligation in relation to the King of Sicily on whom the Malta still depended for grain, meat and other food provisions. On the day that France declared war on the Emperor, the viceroy of Sicily declared that no French vessel could enter the ports of Sicily and Malta; therefore, the Order could not risk the Habsburgs' resentment and threat of killing the islands' inhabitants of hunger.[49]

As it so often did when faced with the complex obligations of smaller European states, France rejected this line of reasoning, believing that Malta should decide to either open its port to all nations or none, almost as if it refused to take seriously Malta's legal ties to its feudal overlords. In defence of his Order, Ambassador de Mesmes reminded the French government that France, along with all other Christian princes, had agreed to this arrangement when Malta was donated to the Order in the 16th century. In this situation, Vilhena felt helpless and conveyed to the Minister for the Navy, Maurepas that 'we are painfully affected by the current war; the position we hold dictates perfect impartiality.'[50] Yet, all the Christian courts were well aware of Malta's bias towards France. Even Grand Master Perellos (r.1697-1720), a Valencian

[47] AN M993, f. 11, 25 November 1733.
[48] 'Et bien, Monsieur, vous voulez donc nous faire la guerre?' NLM AOM 1221, ff. 885-894, 16 December 1733.
[49] AN M992, f. 9, 20 November 1733.
[50] 'Nous sommes douloureusement touchés par la guerre présente; la place que nous occupons nous prescrit une impartialité parfaite.' AN M992, f. 9, 20 November 1733.

by birth, had been accused by Spain of being biased towards the French during the War of Spanish Succession (1701-1714).[51] Often, the Order's ambassadors in the courts of Europe were told, 'Malta is always neutral, yet never neutral.'[52] England, for one, had the opinion that Malta was a French naval base, which was somewhat unjust considering that it too benefitted from the same naval facilities as France.[53] In times of war in Christendom, the Hospitaller island was trapped by its own harbour, legally bound to its Sicilian overlords, stuck in old regulations, hampering the knights from freely pursuing their tradition of pleasing the King of France. Once again, it was through the ambassador's painstaking, insistent efforts that the court of Versailles came to understand Malta's precarious situation. As its faithful protector, Cardinal de Fleury and Maurepas consequently ordered the royal navy to sail on and not stop at Malta.[54]

That France and the Order of St John enjoyed special relations was well known by the Christian world and the Ottoman Empire. As this dissertation has shown, during specific Ottoman-Hospitaller conflicts, the Sultan turned to the King of France to oblige the Order to bend to his will, on the assumption that France held a significant sway over Malta.[55] The Order, for its part, openly exhibited its love for France and its monarchy even on the island. In 1744, upon receiving news of Louis XV's recovery from illness, the Order's three French langues organised a thanksgiving service in St John's Conventual Church, displaying the portraits of Louis XV, his spouse, and Grand Master Pinto. Celebrations extended across the port, marked by the sound of salvoes from the harbour's bastions and the ringing of church bells, while the French auberges were illuminated with torches in honour of the King of France.[56] Similarly, in 1751, the sounds of salvoes, muskets and artillery echoed across the port in celebration of the birth of Louis Joseph Xavier, duke of Burgundy (1751-1761), the eldest son of the dauphin of France and thus second-in-line to the throne. The Conventual Church was adorned with the most beautiful ornaments, while the Grand Master's Palace, auberges, churches and private houses were all lit in the most exquisite way. The city brimmed with mirth and merriment as a three-day carnival swept through the streets of Valletta, filling the air with laughter and the vibrant pulse of celebration. The poor

[51] Amorós i Gonell (2006), 265.
[52] 'Malte toujours neutre, et jamais neutre.' AN M958, f. 121, 5 March 1770.
[53] Cavaliero (1960), 48.
[54] NLM AOM 1221, ff. 885-894, 16 December 1733.
[55] See chapter 2,3,4.
[56] Testa (1989), 98.

were served dinner by the knights in their auberges, while the public was invited to a ball at the palace.[57] On 12 June 1770, over a three-day feast in Malta, fifty thousand people joined in the celebrations for the wedding of the dauphin Louis and Marie Antoinette, filling the grand harbour with music, dance and fireworks.[58]

Celebrating French royals was perhaps understandable given that the majority of knights were French, although such celebrations were not exclusive for the nation of France, but, the celebration of a French Archbishop's elevation to the college of cardinals in Rome was stark demonstration of France's revered status in Malta. On 13 May 1739, the Grand Master, the Order's Council, the Bishop, canons and several knights attended a mass at the Church of St Lawrence in Birgu to honour the newly elected Cardinal Pierre Paul Guérin de Tencin (1739-1758).[59] Festivities ensued, with a music festival, fireworks and a banquet of eighty people financed by the cardinal's nephew, the Bailli Jean Louis Guérin de Tencin.[60] The manifestation of Hospitaller Malta's ties with France were not expressed only on the island, but took shape in various ways. As mandated by the 1530 deed of donation of Malta to the Order, the Religion was required to present one falcon annually to the ruler of Sicily as acknowledgement of feudal fealty. Contrastingly, with no obligation whatsoever, the Order presented approximately 9 to 11 falcons per year to the King of France during a ceremonial event for which French knights often vied for the honour of presenting the Order's gift to the King.[61] Moreover, the Convent sent gifts every year to the King and Queen, and to the royal family in the form of boxes of oranges and *eau de fleurs d'oranges*.[62] Even during the early years of the turbulent political events of the revolution, Grand Master de Rohan stressed the importance with his ambassador in Paris, the Bailli Jean Loup de Virieu, to continue with the yearly presentation of

[57] BNF 4-LB38-630-*Relation des fêtes données à Malte, à l'occasion de la naissance de Monseigneur le Duc de Bourgogne- 22 Janvier-7 Fevrier-1752.*
[58] The report of the Fra Toussaint de Vento Despennes, the *Homme du Roi* in Malta from 1762 to 1778, provides a detailed account of the festivities taking place in Malta for the marriage of the Dauphin to Marie-Antoinette: MAE 68 CP Malte Supplement 1, ff. 353r- 355v, 14 July 1770; Carmen Depasquale, 'French Knights and Maltese Inhabitants in the XVIII century,' *Storja 2003-2004* (2004), 57.
[59] Carmen Depasquale, 'Feasts, Celebrations, and Spectacle in Eighteenth-century Malta,' in *Scientiae et Patria, Festschrift in honour of Maroma Camilleri*, G. Farrugia and T. Vella (eds.) Malta Libraries, Malta 2024, 171.
[60] Testa (1989), 89.
[61] MAE 67 CP vol. 13, f. 112, 1769; MAE 67 CP vol. 8, f. 405, 12 December 1741.
[62] NLM AOM 1578, f. 46-47v, 1763; AN M921, f. 112, 16 July 1771.

oranges to the Queen.[63] The orange gifts are perhaps a fitting representation of what was, in many ways, a highly fruitful relationship between Hospitaller Malta and France.

The scope of this study was to investigate the claim that 18th-century Hospitaller Malta was a protectorate of France in relation to its security, and whether this aligned with Godechot's claim that Malta was 'a dependency' of France.'[64] As the three alarms examined in this dissertation have revealed, prior to the French Revolution, 18th-century Malta, in times of pressing need proved to be indeed a protectorate of France. Even when France was militarily or financially strained, and when there were risks to its vital relationship with the Ottoman ally, it still chose to provide Malta with armaments, experts, and the diplomacy it needed. In contrast to the rest of the Christian community throughout the 18th century, France was the most forthcoming, but surely such protection demanded reciprocity. Despite its limited resources compared to one of Europe's wealthiest states, the Order of St John's steadfast loyalty to France reinforced an interdependent and unique diplomatic relationship, positioning Malta as a crucial player in French Mediterranean policy, a situation that lasted until the final days of *ancien régime* France. However, it is important to emphasize that, despite France's status as protector, and on occasion intrusion into the Hospitallers' domestic affairs, the Hospitaller island maintained its autonomy and sovereignty both in matters of internal administration and its foreign affairs and on most occasions, France respected the Grand Master's authority. This is clearly illustrated by the 1761 incident where France categorically refused to compel the Convent to return the Corona Ottomana even when under significant pressure from the Sultan. This event underscores the independent administrative control and decision-making power retained by the Grand Master from the French monarch, despite the overarching French influence. Even though the Order had a policy of pleasing France, it skilfully mastered its boundaries and knew when to refuse French requests which did not serve its interests. A notable example is the Hospitallers' enterprise in Damietta in 1732, when Louis XV implored Grand Master Vilhena to refrain from attacking Ottoman ships off the coast of Egypt because this risked his

[63] Ambrogio A. Caiani, *Louis XVI and the French Revolution, 1789-1792* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2012), 109.
[64] 'une dépendance,' Godechot (1951), 67.

political alliance with the Porte, in view of the intercepted French letter containing intelligence on Ottoman convoys. The Convent ignored the King and went ahead.[65]

That Malta was, as Godechot says, 'a *de facto* colony of France,'[66] or even more strongly in the words of a contemporary, the *chargé d'affaire* of the embassy in France, d'Estroumel, that Malta 'is, so to speak, a French colony,'[67] was in part true when considering that the majority of the knights were French and that a considerable number of French merchants operated on the island and most of Malta's trade was with France, yet again the situation was more nuanced than this. Even Hoppen claims that Godechot must have overestimated Malta's dependency on France. While it is true that in terms of military assistance and resources, Hospitaller Malta relied heavily on France, it cannot be said that this was exclusively the case, for the Order still maintained connections with other Christian states (in particular the Papal States) and still commissioned its representatives to seek assistance from other sovereigns. Yet, aware of the island's crucial commercial and naval value to its influence in the Mediterranean, France became the unwavering supporter of Malta's military needs, establishing itself as the primary investor in the island's defence throughout much of the 18th century. This protective role, which France had assumed from Spain, had traditionally been held by the latter in the 16th and early 17th centuries. Hospitaller Malta, on its part, was naturally drawn to France, not only for its military supremacy or for its larger composition of French knights, but also, and perhaps primarily, by the 1780s almost half of the Convent's revenue came from France. Alison Hoppen claims that typically in the 1780s a yearly income from France alone was that of 1,289,791.1 livres, while that from Spain, Italy, Portugal, Germany and Bavaria together raised 1,440,866.7 livres.[68]

This dissertation's investigation into the Order's procurement system from France has elucidated the procedures originating from the Convent in Malta and has also highlighted the Order's integration into the French government's centralized system for the manufacture and procurement of arms and gunpowder. This system, managed by the Ministers for War and the Navy, relied on the provincial *intendants*, port *intendants* (mostly those of Marseille and Toulon in the case of this dissertation),

[65] See chapter 3.
[66] 'une colonie de fait, de la France.' Godechot (1951), 67.
[67] 'est pour ainsi dire une colonie française,' AN M902, f. 314, 20 March 1789.
[68] Hoppen (1999), 262-264.

the Controller-General of Finances, French tax farmers, and private arms contractors, often blurring the lines between naval and civilian administration.[69] The Order was not only obliged to align with the heavily bureaucratic operations of the French government, but it was also entirely dependent on the King of France to have its members released in response to a call for arms on the island. In 1437, medieval France had declared that no French national could leave France unless with a permission of the King, otherwise he would become an *aubaine* (foreigner). The Order had been granted a special concession allowing French knights to reside long-term in Malta, but this arrangement was not applicable during a Grand Master's citation.[70] Consequently, it was the ambassador's responsibility to obtain permission from the King, enabling all French knights, including those not in royal service, to depart for Malta. Thus, despite the Order's privilege and recognition among the French nobility and its members' deep integration into government establishments, the Hospitaller institution remained bound by Old Regime France's regulations and strictly dependent on the benevolence of the King.

This dissertation contributes to the historiography of the relationship between Malta and France by corroborating and extending the research of prominent historians such as Jacques Godechot, Alain Blondy, and Grégory Woimbée. By introducing a new dimension focused on the military protection of Malta, it affirms that the island functioned as a protectorate of France. As in most protectorate relationships, a close connection between France and Malta was beneficial to both parties, however, as things turned out, this relationship contained within itself the seeds of its own demise: the very state that stood as Malta's steadfast guardian was transformed into its deadliest adversary. The seismic shifts brought about by the French Revolution of 1789 dramatically strained the Order's financial status with the loss of the Hospitallers' extensive landed wealth in France, guillotined by the *Loi Spoliateur* in 1792 when the Hospitaller estates were nationalised.[71] This instigated fear amongst French knights and their families who fled their *patrie* to find refuge on the island as *émigrés*, adding further strain and confusion to Hospitaller Malta. Ultimately, these changes culminated in a profound betrayal when Republican France, under General Napoleon Bonaparte,

[69] Lynn (1999), 83.
[70] Blondy (1989), 175-176.
[71] Victor Mallia-Milanes, 'The Order of St. John, 1793-1797: impending collapse of a glorious heritage. The despatches of Antonio Miari, Venetian Minister in Malta,' *Hyphen,* 3, 3 (1982), 89.

stripped the Order of its centuries-old home, the same island which France had for so long protected. This stark reversal—from protector to usurper—highlights the volatile nature of political alliances, and the risk of dependency on another state, as powerful as this might be. In the case of France and Malta the profound impact of revolutionary change ended the *ancien régime* and with it, the protector of Hospitaller Malta.

The profound character of the historical relation between France and Malta is perhaps best captured through the reflective words of key figures. An enduring testament of Hospitaller Malta's loyalty towards France comes from Bailli Louis Gabriel de Froullay, in his letters to the Minister for the Navy, underscoring the Order's loyalty to France and her King: 'His Most Eminent Highness knows better than I that the Order has no obligations to any prince comparable to those that the Order has to the King.'[72] In 1741, during Malta's naval support for France against Tunis, Ambassador de Froullay conveyed to Louis XV that, 'we consider ourselves fortunate to fulfil the duties of our institution and to do something that might be pleasing to the King.'[73] Recognizing Hospitaller Malta's contributions, Louis XV acknowledged in turn that France was 'greatly indebted to the Knights of Malta,'[74] and directed its ambassador to 'assure the Grand Master, in particular, of my sensitivity and goodwill. The Order, in general, can count on my protection; it will certainly not diminish.'[75] Perhaps encapsulating all the French sentiments were words of affection of the King's *Garde des Sceaux* to the ambassador, telling him that 'you know that I love the Religion.'[76] This steadfast and mutual sentiment, which manifested itself in France protecting Malta, and the Order of St John serving France, persisted until it was abruptly and violently severed by the demise of Louis XVI. The Order loved the monarchy and the monarchy loved the Order; the French Revolution loved neither.

[72] 'Son Altesse Éminentissime sait mieux que moi que l'Ordre n'a d'obligations à aucun prince comparables à celles que l'Ordre a au Roi.' AN M992, f. 107, 10 February 1729.
[73] 'Nous nous estimions heureux de remplir les devoirs de notre institution et de faire quelque chose qui puisse être agréable au Roi,' NLM AOM 1224, ff. 565-567v, 18 August 1741.
[74] '*fort obliges a Messieurs de Malte*,' cited by Testa (1989), 91.
[75] 'assurez le Grand Maître, en particulier, de ma sensibilité et de ma bienveillance. L'Ordre, en général, peut compter sur ma protection ; elle ne diminuera certainement pas.' AN M992, f. 220, 31 January 1758.
[76] 'vous savez que j'aime la religion.' AN M992, f. 14, 19 December 1733.

Glossary

Ancien régime refers to the political and social system in Europe prior the onset of the French revolution in 1789. All French people were subjects of the King of France and each was a member of an estate or a province. The social and political order was divided into three: the clergy (first estate), the nobility (second estate) and the rest (third estate).[1]

Battalion refers to a body of infantry of an undetermined size but usually of 500 to 1000 men.[2]

Bayonet is a knife optionally mountable to the muzzle-end of a rifle or musket to add the function of a spear used for close-range combat and as a last resort when the ammunition is exhausted.

Billet was a bearer bill or promissory note drawn mostly upon fisco-financiers (handling royal revenues) and normally on short-term loans.[3]

Billets d'État were state notes introduced in France on 7 December 1715 for the repayment of the debt bequeathed by Louis XIV. They were termed as state notes because the King took ownership of the country's debt and promised to pay it through state revenues. They were valued about one-third of their face value, such that the owners of these notes found a good way to get rid of them by becoming shareholders in the West India Company (Mississippi Company).[4]

Blindage double is a structure generally made of wood, constructed to shield the troops from enemy fire. It had beams for support and commonly a roof. It was used to shelter troops, stores and to act as retrenchment inside fortifications works.[5]

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[1] Bély (1996), xi; Retrieved on 25 June 2021, from: https://www.britannica.com/event/ancien-regime
[2] William Duane, *A Military Dictionary, or, Explanation of the Several Systems of Discipline of Different Kinds of Troops, Infantry, Artillery and Cavalry* (Philadelphia, William Duane, 1810), 35.
[3] Rowlands (2012), xv.
[4] Retrieved on 25 June 2021, from: https://www.britannica.com/event/ancien-regime
[5] Royal Military College, *Outline of a Course of Lectures on Fortification, Military tactics and Perspective* (London, 1852), 67-68, 354.

Bombardier refers to a skilled officer chiefly employed for the loading and firing of cannon, operate mortars and howitzers. He also had to prepare other weapons such as hand-bombs, fire-sacks etc.[6] Generally, he was well paid because of the technical skills in mathematics needed for the throwing of artillery projectiles with some degree of precision.[7]

Brigadier refers to a military officer in technical and cavalry companies, whose rank was above that of a colonel. He was appointed to command a corps of soldiers made up of several battalions known as a brigade, he was however, a non-commissioned officer.[8]

Cadi was a slave appointed as the chief representative and magistrate for all slaves in Malta, held a unique position within the prison system. He had his own private room and was exempt from forced labour. Although officially representing the slaves, the Cadi appeared to function more as a government apologist. On several occasions, he was compelled to deny reports of mistreatment of Muslim slaves in Malta when questioned by Muslim countries.[9]

Caftan or *qaftan* in Ottoman Turkish was a full-length, loosely-fitted garment having fur lining and embroidery which was worn by the wealthy. This was provided by the Ottoman Sultan as a costume of honour.[10]

Cameralism refers to an economic theory prevalent in Germany in the 18th century, which held that the economy should be steered by a strong public administration for the benefit of the state. It differed slightly from mercantilism, because less emphasis was made on trade and more effort placed on government administration.[11]

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[6] Joseph Muscat, Andrew Cuschieri, *Naval Activities of the Knights of St John 1530-1798* (Malta, Midsea Books Ltd., 2002), 210.
[7] James Charles, *An universal Military Dictionary in English and French in which are explained the terms of the Principal Sciences that are necessary for the Information of an Officer* (London, T. Egerton, 1816), 56-57.
[8] Charles (1816), 68.
[9] Godfrey Wettinger, *Slavery in the Islands of Malta and Gozo ca.1000-1812* (Malta, PEG, 2002), 59, 61.
[10] Ana-Maria Moisuc, 'Court Clothes of the Sixteenth Century in the Romanian Principalities', in *Fashion through History: Costumes, Symbols, Communication Volume 1*, G. Motta and A. Biagini (eds.), Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2017, 27.
[11] Retrieved on 25 June 2021, from: https://www.lexico.com/definition/cameralism

Capitation tax in France was established in 1695 as a measure to raise money for war. The tax had to be paid by every adult depending in which of the 22 classes one belonged to. It was suppressed in 1698 only to be re-instated again in 1701.[12]

Caravan or sea convoy refers to the naval cruises, which every knight was bound to complete. It consisted of four sea cruises lasting six months each. The caravan season was divided into two, the first starting on the first day of January till June, and the second cruise starting from first of July to the end of December. This functioned separately from the Order's maritime campaigns which spanned from April to September. A knight could thus complete his caravan duties over a period of two years. From the time of Grand Master Garzes (1595-1601) onwards, the caravan cruises became part of the obligatory curriculum of a knight. After the launch of the Hospitaller sailing squadron at the turn of the 18th century, the caravans consisted of one year on the sailing ships (considered two caravans of six months each) and two caravans of six months each onboard the galley squadron[13]

Commandery refers to the lands belonging to the knights of St John located within a foreign jurisdiction under the local priory. These provided the knights with their main source of revenue obtained from rents and other activities taking place within the confines of the commandery, namely that of milling. It also served as a centre of religious life, recruitment and training of novices and care for aged knights. By the end of the 18th century the Order had 671 commanderies spread across Europe, of which 258 were in France. The commandery was presided over by a commander, a knight of the Order, with only a few commanderies reserved for the chaplains and servants-at-arms.[14]

Consul refers to an office of representation dating from antiquity, which was originally created by merchants of a country for the protection of their interests in another

[12] Bély (1996), 200-201.
[13] Simon Mercieca, 'Maritime caravans and the Knights of St. John: Aspects of Mediterranean Seaborne Traffic,' in *Trade and cultural exchange in the early modern Mediterranean: Braudel's Maritime Legacy*, M. Fusaro, C. Heywood and M.S. Omri (eds.) I.B Tauris, London 2010, 157-175.
[14] Claude Petiet, *Ces Messieurs de la Religion ou L'Ordre de Malte au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris, Editions France-Empire, 1992), 183-186, 307; Ramona Grech, 'The Hospitaller Commanderies in the Langue of Provence (1634-1754)', unpublished B.A honours dissertation, Department of History, University of Malta, 2012, 145-146.

jurisdiction. It was later taken over by sovereigns for the protection of their commercial and political interests.[15] In Hospitaller Malta, the consul for the representation of foreign countries was chosen by the grand master for the safeguard of the maritime and commercial interest of the country they represented but under the Grand Master's supervision.[16] The consular office for the representation of France in Malta was created in 1602 and was conferred on Mathieu Bonin from Marseille.[17] Despite being a distinct office from the *chargé d'affaires*/*Homme du Roi* appointed by France also for its representation, their role was similar, that of safeguarding the commerce of France with the Levant. The last consul of France in Malta appointment by the Grand Master was Philippe Césaire (1777-1795).[18]

Don gratuit was a voluntary contribution made to the royal treasury by the clergy under the *ancien régime*, which the Order, as a religious institution, was also obliged to make. The yearly amount was decided by the church, and in this case the Order, which was imperative for it to make to ensure the safeguard of its privileges.[19]

Droit d'Aubaine was a legal practice originating in the medieval period, where the king or feudal lord had the legal right to take possession of all the material wealth upon the demise of foreigners in France, whether these had successors or not. In contrast to a citizen of France, the foreigner had no right to draft a will or bequeath his possessions to his successors in accordance with the law. The successors of the deceased foreigners lost their right to inheritance, whether they resided in France or abroad. The exemption from the *droit d'aubaine* was a significant privilege given to diplomats or favoured groups from other countries. This was the case for the Maltese living in France after 1765.[20]

[15] Geoff R. Berridge and Lorna Lloyd, *The Palgrave Macmillan Dictionary of Diplomacy*, Third Edition (UK, Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 74-75.
[16] Mallia-Milanes (2008), 15.
[17] Brogini (2006), 357.
[18] Mézin (2007), 705.
[19] Bély (1996), 434-435.
[20] Bély (1996), 519.

Flintlock was a system of firearms ignition used c. 1660 until 1825. It used a type of lock with a flint which was designed to strike a piece of steel (frizzen) and create a spark to ignite the black powder in the pan.[21]

Fougasse is type of rock-hewn mortar dug into the rocky coast of Malta designed to fire large shrapnel of stone on approaching enemy vessels. There were some fifty fougasses built across the coast of the Maltese archipelago. These were introduced by the Italian engineer Francesco Marandon in 1741.[22]

Fusil à bayonet* or *à l'épée is a musket with long bayonets shaped like a cut-and-thrust sword useful in the rear rank of a battalion.[23]

Fusil is a normal musket with a flintlock mechanism. Such weapons were standard for European infantry by the early 18th century.[24]

Grand Prior was the administrative head of a priory of the Order of St John. He was assisted by the commanders who in turn administered smaller units of lands within the priory. The grand prior was obliged to visit in person all the bailiwicks, commanderies, hospitals and churches within his priory every five years and provide detailed records of the visit to the Grand Master and the council of state.[25]

Homme du Roi* or *chargé d'affaires refers to the knight appointed by the King of France to represent him on Malta. His commission was to safeguard the economic, political and commercial interests of France, especially those with the Levant. Even though in the historiography of the Order of St John the *Homme du Roi* is at times referred to as Consul, his position was distinct from that of the Consul appointed by the Grand Master, mostly because the *chargé d'affaires* was directly appointed and commissioned by the King of France.[26] The office of the *chargé d'affaires*/*Homme du*

[21] Morris L. Hallowell, *Illustrated Firearms Dictionary*. Retrieved on 15 June 2021, from http://www.hallowellco.com/abbrevia.htm
[22] Stephen C. Spiteri, *A Visual Guide to the Fortifications of Malta* (Malta, BDL Publishing, 2017), 139.
[23] Charles (1816), 289.
[24] Charles (1816), 289
[25] Petiet (1992), 200.
[26] Woimbeé (2014), 120-123.

Roi in Malta came into existence after minister Colbert's reform of 1681 which had dictated that all French consuls were to be installed by commission of the King. Even though their diplomatic function was that of an ambassador, the rank was that of *chargé d'affaires*. The last *chargé d'affaires* in Malta was the knight de Caumont whose office terminated in 1793.[27]

Hospitaller Malta refers to the Maltese islands under the sovereignty of the Knights of Malta from 1530 to 1798.

Intendant refers to a royal official chosen and commissioned by the King to oversee much of the administration of a province in France on behalf of the royal council. Army *intendants* were commissioned for the logistics management of field armies.[28]

Kapitan Pasha was the grand admiral of the navy of the Ottoman Empire, typically based at Galata and Gallipoli during winter.

Langue is one of the eight subdivisions of the peripheral properties and members of the Order according to geographic and linguistic criteria.[29] This was established in 1327 during Chapter General meeting in Montpellier for the purpose of the administration of the Order lands in Europe. Originally there were eight languages: Provence, Auvergne, France, Italy, Aragon, England, Germany and Castille. The conflict of Henry VIII with the Pope led to the dissolution of the langue of England, which had reduced the langues to seven. In 1782 an Anglo-Bavarian langue was created, resuming back the eight langues. The head of each langue was the Pilier, and each of these eight was assigned a high administrative position within the Order, that of: Grand Commander for the Langue of Provence, Grand Marshal for Auvergne, Grand-hospitaller for France, Grand Admiral for Italy, Grand conservator for Aragon, Turcopilier for the Anglo-Bavarian, Gand Chancellor for Castille and Grand Bailli for the German langue.[30]

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[27] Woimbeé (2014), 121-122
[28] Rowlands (2012), xvi.
[29] Emanuel Buttigieg, *Nobility, Faith and Masculinity: The Hospitaller Knights of Malta c.1580-c.1700* (London and New York, Continuum, 2011), 19-20.
[30] Petiet (1992), 38-39.

Livre tournois was the unit of account used in the ancient kingdom of France. One *livre* was subdivided in 20 *sols* and each *sol* into 12 *deniers*.[31] In 18th-century French documents examined for this study, amounts were generally written in this format: L20.15s.4d (20 *livres*, 15 *sols*, 4 *deniers*)

Mâtéreaux were spars, or smaller 'sticks' which made up a mast; a mast of a man-of-war consisted of three sticks on top of each other).[32]

Mercantilism refers to an economic theory established in early modern Europe which holds that governments were to control their state's economy and its wealth was to increase by selling more than buying from other states. It was closely linked to doctrines of bullionism.[33]

Millier is a weight unit in the metric system equal to 1,000 times of eg. Pounds or livres units of weight.

Miners are soldiers generally attached to the regiments of artillery whose duty was to work in the mining aspect during a siege or the construction of fortifications.[34]

Monopsony is a market condition with only one buyer. Unless the supply is perfectly elastic a monopsonist has an incentive to exploit the fact that a reduction in the quantity bought will reduce the price. Monopsony in demand functions similarly to monopoly in supply within a market.[35]

Mortar refers to short cannon of large bore with chambers. In the 18th century these were made of bronze or iron and were used to throw hollow bombs filled with powder which when falling on building would burst in fragments.[36]

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[31] Rowlands (2012), xv.
[32] Sobey (2003), 3.
[33] Retrieved on 25 June 2021 from https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/mercantilism
[34] Charles (1816), 503.
[35] John Black, Nigar Hashimzader, Gareth Myles, *Dictionary of Economics* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2012), 269.
[36] Charles (1816), 515.

Musket is a long barrelled smoothbore firearms used by the infantry. They were first used in 1521.[37]

Piastres refers to the monetary unit of states in the Middle East, which equates to a hundredth of a pound.[38]

Priory is one of the peripheral subdivisions of the Langue of the Order of St John composed of a group of Bailiwicks, which were in turn divided into commanderies. In the case of France there were six priories, two for the Langue of Provence (St-Gilles and Toulouse), one for Auvergne (Auvergne) and three for France (France, Aquitaine, Champagne). Each priory was administered by a Grand Prior. Towards the onset of the French Revolution the Order had of 258 commanderies in France.[39]

Quintal is a unit of weight equal to 100 pounds.[40]

Ramrod refers to a long thin rod used for pushing the bullet down the barrel. It is stored under the barrel so it can be easily removed to reload the weapon.[41]

Religion is a term used in Hospitaller historiography to refer to the Military and Hospitaller Order of St John the Baptist of Jerusalem, Rhodes and Malta. It was also used in primary sources, including from the 18th century, as a regular title with which the Order referred to itself.

Regnicole is a French term meaning, native resident, as opposed to a foreigner (*aubaine*).[42]

***Sapeur* or sapper** refers to a soldier who was involved in a variety of military engineering tasks including the demolishing of defence walls and buttresses or the blowing up of rock by means of underground mines.[43]

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[37] Charles (1816), 532.
[38] Retrieved on 22 June 2021, from: https://www.lexico.com/definition/piastre
[39] Petiet (1992), 39, 199.
[40] Retrieved on 22 June 2021, from: https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/quintal
[41] Retrieved on 22 June 2021, from: https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/ramrod
[42] Sahlins (1994), 85.
[43] Charles (1816), 781-782.

Sultana was the leading flagship of the Ottoman fleet.[44]

Traites were rights levied on imported and exported merchandise which applied to cargo movement across French borders and its provinces.[45]

[44] Muscat, Cuschieri (2002), 218.
[45] Bély (1996), 1221.

Appendix 1 Short Biographies

Beaumont, Claude Beauharnois de

Claude Beauharnois de Beaumont was a captain of frigates in 1712 and later captain of the vessels of the King in 1727. He was brother to Francois Beauharnois the *intendant* of Rochefort. Claude captained the King's vessels in several journeys to Canada to transport the King's orders and munitions to the French colonies.[1]

Bellegarde, Alexandre Louis Cassier de

Alexandre Louis Cassier de Bellegarde (1723-?) was the Inspector of Arms Manufacture at Saint-Étienne from 1765-1773. He married Marianne Marie Hélène Carrier de Monthieu in secret and without permission. He was accused of collusion with his brother-in-law, Jean-Joseph Carrier de Monthieu, in affairs pertaining to firearms and artillery taken from French depots at reduced prices and re-sold in America.[2]

Bourlamaque, François-Charles de

François-Charles de Bourlamaque, son of Jean-François de Bourlamaque, began his military career as a volunteer in the Regiment of Dauphin in 1739, achieving the rank of captain by 1745. Although some reports referred to him as a military engineer, he never officially joined the engineering corps, despite being entrusted with numerous engineering tasks. On 11 March, 1756, he was commissioned as a colonel of infantry in Canada under the *maréchal de camp*, the marquis de Montcalm, where he distinguished himself in various campaigns. After completing a military mission to Malta in 1761, he was promoted to *maréchal de camp* and, in 1763, became the governor of the French colony in Guadeloupe, reaching the pinnacle of his career. Bourlamaque died in office in 1764.[3]

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[1] Retrieved on 14 April 1721, from:
http://www.biographi.ca/fr/bio/beauharnois_de_beaumont_et_de_villechauve_claude_de_2F.html

[2] Retrieved on 15 August 2020, from:
https://data.bnf.fr/fr/15601020/alexandre_louis_cassier_de_bellegarde/

[3] Stacey (2003): retrieved on 5 July 2020, from:
http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/bourlamaque_francois_charles_de_3E.html;
Recueil des Nouvelles Ordinaire et Extraordinaire, relations et recits des choses avenues, tant en ce royaume qu'ailleurs, Gazettes du14 Février1761, issue 7, f. 82, 12 February 1761.
Retrieved on 5 July 2020, from
https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k64580676/f96.item.r=Bourlamaque

Breteuil, Jacques-Laure le Tonnelier de,

Jacques-Laure Le Tonnelier (1723–1785), Bailli de Breteuil, was born in 1723. He joined the Langue of France as a page of the Grand Master on 25 May 1736. In 1758, he became the ambassador of the Grand Master to the Holy See, a position he held for nearly two decades, until 1780. Known for his high culture, he was a bibliophile, art enthusiast, and avid collector, and he hosted French artists such as Laurent Pecheux, Etienne de la Vallée, Saint-Non, Hubert Robert, and Jean-Robert Ango. In 1777, he was appointed the ambassador of the Order in Paris, where he remained until his death in 1785.[4]

Caire, François de

François de Caire was born in Grasse, Provence. He joined the French corps of engineers in 1755 and moved to Canada in 1759 in the grade of lieutenant. He returned to France following the Canadian capitulation and got married right away to Elisabeth Lebe in January 1761. Seven months later he embarked for Malta with the French team.[5]

Carrier de Monthieu, Jean-Joseph

Jean-Joseph Carrier de Monthieu was born in 1735 in the town of Saint-Étienne and died around 1799 in Italy. He was a French businessman, arms contractor and slave trader. Jean-Joseph Carrier de Monthieu, from the prominent Carrier arms merchant family in Saint-Étienne, was appointed as the sole royal contractor in 1769, by way of patent letters from Louis XV. He established a centralized factory for arms production, gained rights to sell to French colonies and foreign governments, and oversaw the procurement of components from workshops. In collaboration with Inspector Bellegarde, Carrier de Monthieu took on a business of combing through the army's stockpile of firearms and to refurbish those that could be saved. These were then sold to the colonies at 25 sols per piece and the obsolete pieces were to be thrown for scrap at 10 sols per piece. Between 1765 and 1769 nearly two-thirds of the kingdom's firearms stores were rejected, bought all by Carrier de Monthieu and resold back to the King as new firearms at an exorbitant mark up. Both Bellegarde and Carrier de Monthieu were caught in the illicit business and tried in a military trial

[4] Roger Marchal, *Lécrivain et ses institutions* (Genève, ADIREL, 2006), 232, fn 56.
[5] Fauteux (1940), 200.

at Les Invalides and convicted to imprisonment. Passionate about real estate, his excessive investments led to his ruin and prompted him to exile himself to Italy, where he likely died after 1799.[6]

Choiseul, Étienne-François de

Étienne-François de Choiseul was born on June 28, 1719, in Lorraine, France, was a significant French foreign minister during King Louis XV's reign. In 1752, he secured the lasting favour of Madame de Pompadour, the King's mistress, by thwarting a court plot against her. This favour led to his appointment as ambassador to the Vatican in 1753, where he successfully mediated tensions within the French church. occupied the post of principal minister of France from 1758 to 1770, Minister for War from 27 January 1761 to 1770, Minister for the Marine from 15 October 1761 to 1766 and Minister for Foreign Affairs from 1766 to 1770. His tenure ended in December 1770 when King Louis XV, influenced by other ministers, dismissed and exiled him due to financial constraints and his call for war against Britain.[7] During the Corona Ottomana affair of 1761 in Malta, Choiseul was both the Minister for War and the Navy.

Desandrouins, Jean-Nicolas

Jean-Nicolas Desandrouins born in Verdun in 1729, joined the French engineering corps in 1749. He served with the engineering corps in during the Canadian campaigns 1756-1760 as second in command under the engineer Nicolas de Pontleroy, with whom he was also employed in Malta in 1761. In 1759, while still in Canada Louis XV decorated him as knight of the military Order of Saint Louis. After Malta he was commissioned by the duke de Choiseul to serve in Strasbourg. In 1779 he was promoted to colonel of engineers and was promoted deputy brigadier of the city of Lille. He then fought in the wars of the American Revolution from 1780 to 1783, retiring from the post of Director of Fortifications of Brest in 1791. Desandrouins died on 11 December 1791.[8]

[6] Alder (2010), 175, 189-190, 323.
[7] Retrieved on 15 March 2022, from: https://www.britannica.com/biography/Etienne-Francois-de-Choiseul-duc-de-Choiseul
[8] Fauteux (1940), 171; Gabriel (1887), 269.

Desmazis, Henri

Henri Desmazis born on 3 January 1744, was the son of Pierre-René Desmazis de Fointenailles, a captain of cavalry and Marie Jeanne Gabrielle. He was introduced into the Order of St John at a young age and was made a page of Grand Master Pinto on 8 October 1756.[9] He was a captain in the artillery corps of Auxonne but was employed in Malta as commander of the Infirmary.[10] The introduction of modern embrasure designs at Fort Ricasoli, specifically shaped to accommodate the French styled traversing carriages known as *affût à aguille*, have been attributed to him. He died 1832.[11]

Dez, Nicolas

Nicolas Dez was likely born in Marseille. He married Marie-Magdalene Rougeau in 1729 with whom he had three children. Nicolas was a lawyer at the Parliament of Paris until he was appointed vice-consul of France and was posted in Alexandria around June 1728. Seven years into his post, he was promoted to consul for La Canée on 4 May 1735 having 5,000 Livres salary per year. He died in December 1736.[12]

Favray, Antoine

Antoine Favray lived on Malta from 1744 until his departure on board the Corona Ottomana in 1761. He is likely to have returned to the island in 1771 until his demise in 1798. The celebrated Hospitaller artist lies buried in one of the crypts under the Oratory of the Cathedral of St John.[13]

Fleury, Pons François de Rosset de Roscozel de

Pons François de Rosset de Roscozel de Fleury (1727-1774) was the great-nephew of France's chief minister Cardinal de Fleury. He was born on 18 August 1727 and was received as minor of the Order of St John within the Grand Priory of Saint-Gilles on 22 December 1727. In 1753 he received the grand cross of the Order and was

[9] Nicolas Viton de Saint-Allias, *L'Ordre de Malte ses Grand Mâitres et ses Chevaliers* (Paris, Chez L'Auteur & Chez Delaunay, 1839), 304.
[10] AN M960, f. 39, February 1778
[11] Fleur Brincat, *The Military Engineer Fra Antoine Étienne de Tousard (1751-1813). A Loyal Hospitaller or Traitor?* unpublished dissertation, Department of History, University of Malta (2014), 36-37.
[12] Mézin (2007), 242.
[13] Domenic Cutajar, Antoine de Favray (1706-1798): retrieved on 22 May 2023, from: https://www.um.edu.mt/library.

promoted to Captain General of the Galleys in 1755, and later as Extraordinary Ambassador of Malta to the King of the Two Sicilies.[14] In 1767, as compensation for his efforts in the Corona Ottomana negotiations, he was appointed as Extraordinary Ambassador of Malta to France, following the demise of the Bailli de Froullay.[15] In 1772, at the court of Versailles, he presented the Order of St John's annual gift of falcons to the King of France. Pons François was brother to Jean-André Hercules de Fleury (1726-1781), also knight of Malta and commander of the magisterial commandery of Pieton.[16]

Fonseca, Daniel de

Daniel de Fonseca (1672-c.1740) was a Marrano physician and diplomat from Portugal. He practised Judaism in secret until it reached the Inquisitor's ear and was forced to flee for France where he studied medicine at Bordeaux. He left for Constantinople in 1702 where he could freely practise his religion. In the capital he proved himself as a good doctor and diplomat and was appointed the physician of the French embassy where he lived and served as advisor to the ambassador.[17] He even kept in regular correspondence with the Minister for the Navy in France until 1733. As his fame spread, he became the Sultan Ahmed III's doctor during which time he achieved diplomatic distinction. He remained in the service of the Sultan until his return to Paris, where he remained until his demise.[18]

Foresta, Marie-Bruno de

Marie-Bruno de Foresta, born on 5 February 1735, was the son of Paul de Foresta de Châteauneuf and Nicole d'Entrecasteaux. He was received in the Langue de Provence as minor in 1736.[19]

[14] Blondy (1989), 180.
[15] Blondy (2002), 131.
[16] Testa (1989), 52; Information retrieved on 5 December 2022, from: http://www.palacret.com/histoire-d-une-commanderie/2c--les-commandeurs-batisseurs/36---louis-francois-du-rozel-de-fleury
[17] AN AE/B/I/396, ff. 124-126v, 6 October 1725.
[18] Biographical details retrieved on 5 June 2022, from: https://www.encyclopedia.com/religion/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/fonseca-daniel-de; Russell (1990), 257
[19] Blondy (2013), 416; Chenaye-Desbois (1773), 545.

Freslon de La Freslonnière, Gabriel-Jean-Baptiste

Gabriel-Jean-Baptiste de Freslon de La Freslonnière, was born on 2 May 1732 in Bratz, Brittany. He was the son of René Gilles de La Freslonnière (1686-1749) and Rose Renée de la Chevière (1709-1779). The family had strong ties to the Order of St John, with three members— an uncle and two nephews—admitted in 1756, 1768, and 1769. Gabriel-Jean-Baptiste was the first, joining as a minor at three years old. At fifteen, his parents submitted his nobility papers for him to be received as a knight. However, his application was denied in 1747 due to insufficient proof of nobility, as he did not seem to meet the requirement of four quarters of nobility. Eight years later, a commission reviewed his application again and accepted it, clearing the path for his two nephews. Consequently, Gabriel-Jean-Baptiste was officially received into the Order on July 12, 1756. In his youth he embarked on a successful military career in France and 1747, he joined the *Régiment Royal des Vaisseaux* as a lieutenant, was promoted to major in the *Régiment de Hainaut* in 1770, and became lieutenant colonel in the *Régiment du Nivernais* in 1777. Upon reaching the rank of colonel, he left French service to join the Order in the Regiment of Malta.[20] Alexandre-Louis-Hugues, his younger brother, achieved the distinguished rank of General of the Galleys for the Order of St John in 1782 and was awarded the Grand-Cross of the Order a year later. His prominent military role within the Order has led to some confusion among scholars. Notably, Frederick W. Ryan mistakenly attributed the commandery of Pieton to colonel Freslon in 1785, when it was actually granted to his nephew, Alexander-Hippolyte.[21]

Froullay de Thessé, Louis-Gabriel de

Louis-Gabriel de Froullay de Thessé (1694-1766) was admitted into the langue of France in the priory of Aquitaine in 1710 and rose to the rank of grand cross of the Order. He was twice Captain General of the Galleys in 1728 and 1732.[22] Born in 1694, he was one of the five sons of Philippe-Charles, marquis de Froullay and count of Montfleaux, and Marie-Anne de Megaudais de Marolles. He was made knight grand cross on 1 September 1728. In March 1741, he was appointed ambassador of the Order in Paris, succeeding the Bailli de Mesmes. He died in Paris on 26 August

[20] Retrieved on 6 December 2023, from: https://www.palacret.com/2-histoire-dune-commanderie/2c-les-commandeurs/39-alexandre-louis-hugues-de-freslon
[21] Ryan (1930), 109.
[22] Blondy (2002), 33.

1766, at the age of seventy-four. Contemporary French writers were full of praise for the bailli. He frequently accompanied Louis XV to his hunting residence at Marly, which was a favour generally granted to the ambassadors of Spain and Naples only, who were often considered as the ambassadors of the royal family.[23]

Givodan, Louis de

Louis de Givodan was the secretary of the embassy of the Order in Paris and in Berlin. He served the Order since 1733. Givodan was lord of Maubuy, la Motte, Bréviand and Brion. He married Louise Guillermain des Lauriers by contract on 26 March 1742. Pinto awarded him with a pension of 1000 scudi and the cross of the Order as servant-at-arms in 1753, while he was serving in Berlin with the knight de Pennes. He died in his house in Brion in 1781 at the aged 71. His was succeeded by Cibon as secretary of the Embassy of the Order in Paris in the 1760s.[24]

Gonzaga, **Massimiliano Emanuele Buzzaccarini**

Massimiliano Emanuele Buzzaccarini Gonzaga was born on 22 July 1710 in the Venetian city of Padua to a noble family. Commander Buzzaccarini Gonzaga was received in the Order of St John as a minor in the rank of knight of Justice, on 20 January 1712. At the age of forty years, he was appointed *Uomo del Re*, minister of Venice to Hospitaller Malta, on 25 September 1754, which was equivalent to the capacity of a *chargé d'affaires*. By 4 December of the same year, he took residency in Malta for over twenty years, during which time he kept regular correspondence with the *Cinque Savii alla Mercanzia* (Venice's trade magistracy) and his main role was to look after the interests of the Serenissima in Malta and protect its subject against corsairs.[25]

Grandpré, Étienne Nicholas

Étienne Nicholas Grandpré (1631-1731) was appointed commander general of artillery in France in 1705. In 1728 he was promoted to chief of fleet for the navy of France. In the same year, under his command a French fleet of 12 vessels bombarded

[23] Depasquale, (2001), 221, 225.
[24] AN M955, f. 85, 1 July 1753; Gaston du Broc de Ségange, *Extraits des archives du château de Ségange* (Harvard, É. Auclaire, 1895), 77.
[25] Mallia-Milanes (2008), 30-37.

Tripoli, assisted by two of the galleys of the Order of St John, commanded by knight Hector Leonard de Sainte-Colombe de Laubépin.[26]

Grieu, François-Charles Alexandre de

François-Charles Alexandre de Grieu, born into a noble family from Normandy, began his service in the Order of St John as a page to the Grand Master. He rose through the ranks to become a knight, eventually commanding the posts of Castres and Saint-Maurice. Additionally, he served as procurator general and receiver for the Grand Priory of France. His distinguished career continued until his death in 1769 at the abbey of Saint Victor in Paris.[27]

Guedes de Magalhães, Francisco

Francisco Guedes, the Bailli d'Aquilla, was a distinguished knight of the Order of St John. As a Portuguese knight, he gained significant political influence during the magistracy of Pinto, a fellow Portuguese. Guedes emerged as a key figure in Pinto's faction, holding prestigious positions such as lieutenant to the magistracy and vice-chancellor of the Order of St John. Pinto further entrusted him with the role of the first chancellor of the University of Malta, which was established in Valletta during Pinto's magistracy in 1769.[28]

Langon, Ferdinand de

Ferdinand de Langon was received in the Order of St John as knight of Justice in 1700. He served on the galleys of Louis XIV until he shifted his service to the galleys of the Order. He was promoted to Captain of the Order's ships in 1716 and 1717 during the Ottoman-Venetian wars. The Grand Master rewarded him with the magisterial commanderies of La Rochelle and de Carlat. He was later appointed procurator general and receiver to the Grand Priory of Auvergne of the Order of St John. Ferdinand's brother was the notorious Adrien de Langon, General of the

[26] Retrieved on 16 May 2021 from:
https://www.wikiwand.com/de/Bombardierung_von_Tripolis_(1728)
[27] AN M970 f. 318, 1752; Chenaye-Desbois (1773), 448.
[28] Keith Sciberras, *Baroque Sculpture for the Knights of Malta* (Malta, Fondazzjoni Patrimonju Malta, 2004), 136.

Galleys of the Order, who also distinguished himself during the Ottoman-Venetian wars.[29]

Loras, Charles Abel de

Charles Abel de Loras, born in 1736, was introduced in the Langue of Auvergne. Loras was promoted to Bailli Grand Cross of the Order of St John, procurator and receiver general of the Order in France, colonel of the Regiment of Malta and procurator of the Common Treasury in 1797. In 1784 he was involved in a plot to bring Russia into the Mediterranean, during which time he was the ambassador of the Order to Rome.[30]

Louvicon, Paul de

Paul de Louvicon served in the corps of artillery since 1744. In 1757 he was nominated lieutenant of the first company of bombardiers in the Canadian campaigns. He returned to France following the capitulation in Canada in September 1760. In 1777 he retired as captain of the royal corps of artillery and died in 1789 at the age of 69 years.[31]

Mesmes, Jean-Jacques de

Jean-Jacques de Mesmes (1675-1741) joined the Order of Malta as a minor in 1676. Coming from and old Béarnaise family he was the son of Jean-Jacques de Mesmes (1630-1688), *Président à mortier* of the Parliament of Paris, and Marguerite Bertrand de la Bazinière. His brother, Jean-Antoine de Mesmes (1661-1723), who served as the First President of the Parliament of Paris, played a key role in securing his appointment as ambassador of the Order of Malta to France in 1714. Mesmes was appointed bailli and knight grand cross of the Order in 1715, grand prior of Auvergne in 1718, commendatory abbot of the Royal Abbey of Valleroy in the Diocese of

[29] Chesnaye-Desbois, *Dictionnaire de la Noblesse*, vol. 8, 2nd edition (Antoine Boudet-Libraire-Imprimeur du Roi: Paris, 1774), 448; Archives Départementales du Rhône, Ordre de Malte, 1113-1793, f. 203; Louis-Étienne Arcère, *Histoire de la Ville de La Rochelle et du pays D'Aulnis, vol. 2* (La Rochelle, Imprimeur de Fermes Generale du Roi, 1757), 502.
[30] Albert Ganado, 'The Funeral of Angelo Emo in Malta in 1792: A Pictorial Record', *Melita Historica, Proceedings of History Week* (1993), 151-180; Biographical information retrieved on 10 December 2023, from:
https://www.hospitalierssaintjean.com/hopitaux/index.php?page=commanderies_F
[31] Fauteux (1940), 216.

Reims, and Prior of Saint-Denis de l'Estrée in 1721.[32] Ambassador de Mesmes was well received in Versailles. Louis XIV chose to receive him with extraordinary pomp,[33] and granted him the same honours given to the ambassadors of sovereign princes. In Malta this was perceived as a major diplomatic victory such that the 24-page *mémoire* in large format, which Mesmes wrote in much detail about the ceremony was read during a session of the Council of State.[34] Mesmes made an official entrance into Paris, escorted by fifteen carriages sent by the princes in Paris.[35] Despite his religious vow, Fra de Mesmes had a mistress, whom he accused of infidelity. In revenge, he authored a slanderous work against the dancer Françoise Prévost (1680-1741), which he published in 1726 to disgrace her for alleged infidelity. In this mé*moir,* he included his complaint and her rebuttal, mentioning his failure to pay an annuity and a promised loan of 6000 livres. His vengeance backfired, as Parisian aristocracy mocked Mesmes for his affair and for violating his religious vows. Prévost took him to court and won, receiving the owed money. [36] He was described by the duke de Saint-Simon as a tall man lacking intelligence and presence, notoriously debauched and wasteful, who repeatedly brought shame to his position and risked losing it multiple times. Mesmes died in Paris on 2 February 1741, and his vacant seat of ambassador was given to Bailli Louis-Gabriel de Froullay.[37]

Montbarrey, Alexandre Marie Éléonor de Saint-Mauris de

Alexandre Marie Éléonor de Saint-Mauris de Montbarrey was the Director of War in France (a post created for him) and deputy to the Minister for War, Saint-Germain. Montbarrey was appointed Minister for War in 1778, following Saint-Germain's resignation and was succeeded by Phillippe Henri de Ségur in 1780. Montbarrey left France as an émigré in 1791.[38]

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[32] Claude (2018), 413, fn 371.
[33] Petiet (1992), 207.
[34] Petiet (1992), 207.
[35] Blondy (2002), 32.
[36] Jean-Jacques de Mesmes 'Memoire pour Monseiur l'ambassadeur de Malthe contre la damoiselle Prevot [1726-1750].' Malta Study Center Collection, Hill Museum & Manuscript Library, HMML 00459, accessed July 25, 2024. https://w3id.org/vhmml/readingRoom/view/511719. https://www.vhmml.org/readingRoom/view/511719; Régine Astier, 'Françoise Prévost: The Unauthorized Biography,' in *Women's Work: Making Dance in Europe before 1800*, Lynn Matluck Brooks (ed.) University of Wisconsin Press, Madison 2007, 133-137.
[37] Petiet (1992), 213-214.
[38] Retrieved on 5 December 2022, from:

Montbéliard, Fiacre-François Potot de

Fiacre-François Potot de Montbéliard, was a captain in the *Corps Royal d'Artillerie et de Génie* before he was sent to Canada in 1757, serving in the regiment of Roussillon as second captain in 1756. In 1757 he was nominated commander of the 2nd company of artillery in Canada under Lemercier. Towards the end of 1759 he replaced Lemercier in the command of the artillerists. In the same year he was decorated with the cross of the Order of Saint-Louis and gained fame in the Canadian campaigns. After the signing of the capitulation in Montreal, in autumn of 1760, he returned to France with chevalier de Lévis. In 1761, he was appointed inspector of the Royal Manufacture of Charleville but in 1764 he was sent to Saint-Étienne-en-Forez to reform the manufacturing industry of this town. In 1767, he was promoted to chief-of-brigade and lieutenant-colonel in 1769. Montbéilard died in 1779.[39]

Pignon, Pierre-Jean

Pierre-Jean Pignon was nominated consul of France for Tunis in 1723 with the support of Cardinal de Fleury who had been Bishop of Frejus, the birthplace of Pignon. Pierre-Jean participated in the peace treaty between France and the Regency of Tunis and the Barbary states in 1729, in which the pre-eminence of French consuls was ascertained in these countries, giving France the exceptional privilege of flying the French flag. In the same year he became consul of Cairo on 7 September 1729, until his return to Versailles in 1734, likely after his imprudence with a letter he sent to Malta, and upon the insistence of the ambassador of France in Constantinople Villeneuve. He later became inspector of the échelles, conducting census-type visits to all French nations of the Levant between 1740 and 1742.[40]

Pontleroy, Nicolas Sarrebource de

Nicolas Sarrebource de Pontleroy (1717-1802) joined the French corps of engineers in 1736 and was promoted to captain in 1745. He served in Canada in 1755 and was given the grade of lieutenant-colonel in 1758. Pontleroy returned with François-

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https://www.cincinnatidefrance.fr/biographies/personnages-francais/134-montbarrey-alexandre-marie-leonor-de-saint-mauris-prince-de

[39] Bernard Andrès, Patricia Willemin-Andrès, *Journal du Siege du Quebec du 10 mai au 18 septembre 1759* (Canada, Les Presses Université Laval, 2009), 164; Information retrieved on 17 August 2020, from: http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/potot_de_montbeillard_fiacre_francois_4E.html; Dictionary of Canadian Biography, retrieved on 17 October 2022, from: http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/potot_de_montbeillard_fiacre_francois_4F.html

[40] Mézin (2007), 493; Zwerlein (2016), 65.

Charles de Bourlamaque and others to France after the signing of the capitulation with England in 1760. Two months prior his departure for Malta, he married Abaleste de Melun on 17 April 1761. Pontleroy reached the rank of director of engineers in 1770 and *maréchal de camp* in 1780.[41]

Reynaud-de Pons-du Grippel-de Monts, Marc-Antoine-Sérapion

Marc-Antoine-Sérapion de Reynaud-de Pons-du Grippel-de Monts, known as the chevalier de Reynaud, was born on 30 October 1738. He was the son of Jean-Claude and Charlotte Chappuis de La Goutte. Raynaud was received as page to the Dauphine Marie-Josephine de Saxe, mother of the future King Louis XVI in 1754, and in 1753 his parents submitted the proof of nobility to the Grand Priory of Auvergne to be admitted in the Order as knight of Justice.[42] Marc-Antoine-Sérapion was the younger brother to Marc-Antoine de Reynaud, admitted to the Order as knight of Justice in 1759 (his proofs of nobility were submitted in 1746).[43]

Rios, Martino de los

Martino de los Rios, knight of Malta, and commissioner of health on duty when the Corona Ottomana entered the harbour of Marsamxett for inspection and quarantine.[44]

Rouvroy de Saint-Simon, Claude de

Claude de Saint-Simon was the cousin of the famous Titus du Rouvroy, duke de Saint-Simon, the author of the *mémoirs* which brought Louis XIV and the Regent's court to life. Claude was born in 1694 and, as a young boy, was placed in the Augustinian abbey of St Victor in Paris. However, lacking a religious vocation, he pleaded with his cousin at the age of nineteen to help him join the Order of St John. King Louis XIV sent letters of recommendation to the Pope, but despite this powerful endorsement, the Pope refused to release Saint-Simon from the monastery. Determined, Saint-Simon escaped to England and married there. In 1720, he abandoned his family and returned to France. Shortly thereafter, he took his mother and sister to court, accusing them of forcing him to take his vows and of seizing his

[41] Fauteux (1940), 154-155.
[42] Archives du Rhône-Ordre de Malte, 48H99, f.4,1752-1753. Proofs of Nobility registered at the Langue of Auvergne.
[43] Archives du Rhône-Ordre de Malte, 48H100/01, f. 162, 1750-1758; Louis de Ribier, *Preuves de la noblesse d'Auvergne* (Paris, H. Champion, 1907), 10, 236.
[44] AN M944, f. 253, 1760.

inheritance. Regretting his past mistakes, Claude sought help from his cousin, the duke, who seized the opportunity to secure his position within the Order of St John. Even the Regent d'Orléans insisted that the Grand Master accept his entry. Ambassador de Mesmes also intervened, petitioning the Grand Master to honour the Regent's request, as the Saint-Simon family enjoyed the favour of d'Orléans. On 5 August 1721, Grand Master Zondadari wrote to the Regent, stating he was ready to grant a singular and unprecedented dispensation and soon after, Saint-Simon took his vows in Paris through special permission. When the Pope died in 1730, Saint-Simon left for Rome as an assistant to Cardinal de Rohan. After the new Pope's election, Saint-Simon begged the Pope to assist his destitute family by granting him command of a galley. He then travelled to Malta for the first time, carrying an urgent demand from the Pope, which the Grand Master had to comply with. Upon returning to France in 1732, he petitioned the Grand Master to make him a grand cross. By now, Vilhena grew tired of his unreasonable requests and did not give in, insisting that Saint-Simon complete his caravans if he wanted to rise in rank. In 1735, Saint-Simon was made Captain General of the Galleys and finally granted his long-desired grand cross, and by 1736, he was also promoted to Bailli. In 1755, several grand crosses wrote to Saint-Simon, urging him to leave for Malta quickly because Grand Master Pinto was nearing the end of his life, and they were not keen on the next contender, the Bailli de Tencin. Saint-Simon did go to Malta, but to his regret, Pinto recovered. To keep Saint-Simon occupied, Pinto appointed him as his Ambassador to Naples. After a few years in this post, Saint-Simon returned back to Versailles. When Pinto died in 1772, Saint-Simon hurried to Malta, hoping to become Grand Master, but his rival, Ximenes y Texada, was elected instead. In a gesture of reconciliation, Saint-Simon was appointed as the Order's ambassador to France in 1775, a position he held until his death in 1777.[45]

Sagramoso, Michele Enrico

Michele Enrico Sagramoso (1720-1791), a knight of Malta, obtained his formation in diplomacy in 1741 when he accompanied the marquis de Castellane, a French ambassador, to Constantinople. When he returned to Malta he proceeded to Spain and Portugal. Sagramoso was appointed to receiver of the Treasury of the Order of St

[45] Claire-Elaine Engel, *Knights of Malta: A gallery of portraits* (London, George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1963), 81-89.

John in Venice on 20 October 1760. Soon after he brokered a trade deal between the Order and Venice and over the following ten years, he was deeply involved in the Order's activities in Italy.[46]

Sahuguet d'Amarzit baron d'Espagnac, Joseph

Joseph de Sahuguet d'Amarzit, Baron d'Espagnac, born in 1713, was a lieutenant-general of the royal armies, grand cross of the Order of Saint Louis and governor of Les Invalides. He was born in Brives and died on 28 February 1783.[47]

Suffren, Pierre André

Pierre André de Suffren, the Bailli de Suffren, also known as Suffren de Saint-Tropez, was a French vice-admiral of the King's navy, bailli, commander and ambassador of the Order to France. He was born on 17 July 1729, at the Château de Saint-Cannat near Aix-en-Provence and died on 8 December 1788 at the age of 59 in Paris. Suffren quickly advanced through the ranks due to his exceptional skill and leadership. He is best known for his command during the Anglo-French War in the East Indies, especially the Battle of Sadras in 1782. His strategic brilliance and relentless pursuit of the British disrupted their operations significantly. Suffren's efforts safeguarded French colonial interests and maintained their presence in the Indian Ocean. His career is celebrated for bold tactics and innovative strategies, cementing his legacy as one of France's greatest naval commanders. He was appointed ambassador of the Order to Franc in 1786 until his demise two years after. He held three commanderies of the Grand Priory of Saint-Gilles: Jalès, Puimoisson, and Trinquetaille, which he had obtained a little earlier in exchange for that of Saint-Christol. His correspondence reflects a loyal yet often strained relationship with the Order's administration. Despite his untimely death in December 1788, Suffren's tenure as ambassador and his extensive contributions to the Order's diplomatic and administrative efforts mark him as a pivotal figure in its history.[48]

[46] Darius von Güttner-Sporzyński, 'The life and Career of a Knight of Malta in the age of secularisation: Michele Enrico Sagramoso (1720-1791). The Order of Malta and the first partition of Poland', *Ordines Militares Colloquia Torunensia Historica,* 34 (2019), 305, 309.
[47] Gustave Niox, *The Hôtel Des Invalides* (Paris, Delagrave, 1924), 82, 99.
[48] Ferry (1995), 193-196.

Tanucci Bernardo, marquis de

Bernardo Tanucci (1698-1783) was a Tuscan who attached himself to the Infante Don Carlos when the latter conquered Naples. Tanucci was appointed chief minister when Don Carlos was crowned as King Charles VII of Naples and Charles XV of Sicily. He modernized the country's administration but primarily fought against the power of the Church on two main fronts: the papal power, which he aimed to curb as much as possible, and the Catholic Church's influence within the kingdom. He also attacked the privileges of the nobility. In 1776, Queen Marie-Caroline, assisted by the clergy, forced him to retire.[49]

Titon de Villegenon, Maximilien

Maximilien Titon de Villegenon (1632-1711) was an influential small arms dealer and the first person to advice Louis XIV to set up royal stores for the state in times of war and to standardise the arming of the royal troops. His proposal was taken seriously in 1666 when the first royal armaments store was set up in Bastille in Paris. In the previous year, Titon obtained a monopoly for the production of arms for the army of France and installed his agents at two private arms factories, one in Charleville and the other in Saint-Étienne. Most importantly, Maximilien Titon ensured a bright future to his siblings and grandchildren through the purchase of offices, manors and marriages with influential families.[50]

Tour, Charles Jean Baptiste des Gallois de la

Charles Jean Baptiste des Gallois de la Tour, was born in Paris in 1715. He became a *président à mortier* of the Parliament of Aix (1735-1747) and *intendant* of Provence and first president of the *conseil d'Afrique*. Following the suppression of the *parlements* and the total dissolution of the *magistrature*, he was forced to retire in Burgundy. When he was found, he was transferred to Paris in 1793 where he was imprisoned in the prison of Luxembourg. He died in Paris in 1802 at the age of eighty-seven years.[51]

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[49] Blondy (2002), 117.
[50] Bonnefoy (1986), 353; Rowlands (2012), 139, 142, 210.
[51] 'Société d'emulation du Bourbonnais, Moulin,' *Bulletin de la Societe D'Emulation de Department de L'Allier*, Tome IV (Imprimerie de P.A Desrosiers, 1854), 80, fn.1.

Trigance family

The Trigance family originated from Provence but some of its members came to Malta with the Order of St John in 1530. The family was known for its bronze-founding activities for the Order in Malta. The Trigance got involved with the foundry of the Order in Valletta from 1700 until the arrival of Napoleon in 1798. The first recorded on the island was Francesco Trigance, senior, (c. 1660–1737), who was also involved in the casting of Grand Master Vilhena's bronze statue. His two grandsons, Francesco (junior) and Gioacchino Trigance, gained their fame for their work at the Order's foundry. In 1761, Grand Master Pinto sent the brothers to Turin to enhance their skills in the art of cannon founding.[52] A few years later, in 1769, the same Grand Master sent the brothers Trigance, together with their father, to further their skills in France, but King Louis XV denied them entry to any of his artillery establishments. This was based on a general rule in France which did not allow any foreigner to associate or familiarise with the King's artillery.[53]

Turgot, Étienne-François Turgot

Étienne-François Turgot (1721-1781), marquis de Soumont, was a French knight of the Order of St John and a French statesman. He was the older brother of the economist Anne Robert Jacques Turgot, Minister for the Navy and later Controller General of Finance of Louis XVI. Étienne-François, via the knight Menou, wrote to Ambassador de Froullay in Paris in 1762 informing him that Louis XV offered employment in America to the French knights of the Order, and Cayenne would become a new commandery for the Order of St John. The Order abandoned the idea of participating in this project, but France continued.[54]

Vaux, Noël Jourda, count de

Noël Jourda, count de Vaux was a French general who commanded the royal army during the conquest of Corsica (1769). In 1777, at the time of the Order's recruitment of soldiers for the *Regimento di Malta*, he was the royal commandant of Provence and was later promoted to Marshal of France in 1783.[55]

[52] NLM AOM 1517, f. 169r, 12 November 1761.
[53] AN M994, f. 1-4, 1769.
[54] Engel (1972), 150-151.
[55] Retrieved on 15 March 2021, from: https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/term/BIOG243733

Zelalich, Pietro

Pietro di Giovane Gelali delle Bocche di Cattaro, also known Pietro Zelalich was born in Kotor Montenegro around 1731. He was captured by the Ottomans when sailing on a British privateer's vessel and was enslaved on the Corona Ottomana. When later he was in Malta, he earned Pinto's favour after donating the Corona vessel to the Order, in exchange for protection and freedom. Grand Master Pinto appointed him as captain of the magisterial galley a number of times. Zelalich established himself on Malta and operated as a corsair. He was a great devotee of St Nicholas, yet he was accused of claiming that Islam was better than Christianity, of blasphemy, and of sodomy in front of the Inquisitor of the island. The slave who made himself one of the most prominent corsairs of Malta, died at the age of eighty on 10 December 1811.[56]

[56] Gauci (2016), 62-70.

Appendix 2 List of Dignitaries

Ministers for War of France in the 18th century

Minister for War	Date in office
Louis-François-Marie Le Tellier de Barbezieux	16 July 1691 - 5 January 1701
Michel Chamillart	5 January 1701 - 14 September 1709
Daniel Voysin de La Noiraye	9 June 1709 - 14 September 1715
Claude Le Blanc	1 October 1715 - 24 September 1718
François-Victor Le Tonnelier de Breteuil	1 July 1723 - 19 June 1726
Claude Le Blanc	19 June 1726 - 1728
Nicolas-Prosper Bauyn d'Angervilliers	July 1728 - February 1740
François-Victor Le Tonnelier de Breteuil	February 1740 - 7 January 1743
Marc Pierre de Voyer de Paulmy d'Argenson	7 January 1743 – 1 February 1757
Marc-Antoine-René de Voyer de Paulmy-d'Argenson, marquis de Paulmy	1 February 1757 - 3 March1758
Charles Louis Auguste Fouquet de Belle-Isle	3 March 1758 - 27 January 1761
Étienne-François de Choiseul	3 February 1761 - 24 December 1770
Louis François de Monteynard	26 January 1771 - 27 January 1774
Emmanuel-Armand de Vignerot du Plessis, duke d'Aiguillon	27 January 1774 - 2 June 1774
Louis Nicolas Victor de Félix d'Ollières	5 June 1774 - 10 October 1775
Claude-Louis de Saint-Germain	27 September 1775 - 27 September 1777
Alexandre Marie Léonor de Saint-Mauris-Montbarrey	27 September 1777 - 19 December 1780
Philippe Henri, marquis de Ségur	23 December 1780 - 29 August 1787
Louis Auguste Le Tonnelier de Breteuil	29 August 1787 - 23 September 1787
Louis-Marie-Athanase de Loménie de Brienne	23 September 1787 - 30 November 1788
Louis Pierre de Chastenet, count de Puységur	30 November 1788 - 13 July 1789
Victor François de Broglie	13 July 1789 - 16 July 1789
Jean-Frédéric de La Tour du Pin Gouvernet	4 August 1789 - 16 November 1790

Louis Le Bègue Duportail	16 November 1790 - 7 December 1791

Ministers for the Marine of France in the 18th century

Minister for the Marine	**Date in office**
Louis Alexandre de Bourbon, count de Toulouse & Victor Marie d'Estrées	1 October 1715 -24 September 1718
Joseph Jean Baptiste Fleuriau d'Armenonville	24 September 1718 - 28 February 1722
Charles Jean-Baptiste Fleuriau, count de Morville	24 September 1718 - 16 August 1723
Jean-Frédéric Phélypeaux, count de Maurepas	16 August 1723- 23 April 1749
Antoine Louis Rouillé	30 April 1749- 24 July 1754
Jean Baptiste de Machault D'Arnouville	24 July 1754- 1 February 1757
François Marie Peyrenc de Moras	1 February 1757-31 May 1758
Claude Louis d'Espinchal	31 May 1758- 31 October 1758
Nicolas René Berryer	31 October 1758-13 October 1761
Étienne François de Choiseul	13 October 1761-10 April 1766
César Gabriel de Choiseul-Chevigny, duke de Praslin	24 December 1770
Joseph Marie Terray	24 December 1770- 9 April 1771
Pierre Étienne Bourgeois de Boynes	9 April 1771- 20 July 1774
Anne Robert Jacques Turgot	20 July 1774- 24 August 1774
Antoine de Sartine	24 August 1774- 13 October 1780
Charles Eugène Gabriel de La Croix, marquis de Castries	13 October 1780- 24 August 1787
Armand Marc, count de Montmorin Saint-Hérem	25 August 1787- 24 December 1787
César Henri, count de La Luzerne	24 December 1787- 13 July 1789
Arnaud de Laporte	13 July 1789- 16 July 1789
César Henri, count de La Luzerne	26 October 1790

Ministers for Foreign Affairs for France in the 18th century

Minister for Foreign Affairs	Date in Office
Jean-Baptiste Colbert de Torcy	26 July 1696 - 23 September 1715
Nicolas Chalon du Blé d'Uxelles de Cormatin	23 September 1715 – 1 September 1718
Guillaume, abbé puis cardinal Dubois	24 September 1718 - 10 August 1723
Charles-Jean-Baptiste Fleuriau de Morville,	16 August 1723 - 19 August 1727
Germain-Louis Chauvelin de Grosbois	23 August 1727 - 20 February 1737
Jean-Jacques Amelot de Chaillou	22 February 1737 - 26 April 1744
Adrien Maurice de Noailles	26 April 1744 - 19 November 1744
René Louis de Voyer de Paulmy, marquis d'Argenson	19 November 1744 - 10 January 1747
Louis Philogène Brûlart de Sillery, marquis de Puisieulx	27 January 1747 - 9 September 1751
François-Dominique Barberie de Saint-Contest,	11 September 1751 - 24 July 1754
Antoine Louis Rouillé de Jouy	24 July 1754 - 28 June 1757
François-Joachim de Pierre de Bernis, abbé puis cardinal de Bernis	28 June 1757 - 9 October 1758
Étienne-François de Choiseul-Beaupré-Stainville	3 December 1758 - 13 October 1761
César Gabriel de Choiseul-Chevigny, duke de Praslin	13 October 1761 - 10 April 1766
Étienne François de Choiseul	10 April 1766 - 24 December 1770
Louis Phélypeaux de La Vrillère	24 December1770 - 6 June 1771
Emmanuel-Armand de Vignerot du Plessis-Richelieu	6 June1771 - 2 June 1774
Henri Bertin	2 June 1774 - 21 July 1774
Charles Gravier, count de Vergennes	21 July 1774 - 13 February1787
Armand Marc de Montmorin	14 February 1787 - 13 July 1789

Controllers General of Finance for France in the 18th century

Controller General of Finance	Date in Office
Michel Chamillart	20 September 1699 - 20 February 1708
Nicolas Desmarets	20 November 1708 - 15 September 1715
Marc-René de Voyer de Paulmy, marquis d'Argenson	28 July 1718 - 5 July 1720
John Law	4 January 1720 - 29 May 1720
Félix Le Peletier de la Houssaye	12 December 1720 - 21 April 1722
Charles Gaspard Dodun	21 April 1722 - 14 June 1726
Michel Robert Le Peletier des Forts	14 June 1726 - 19 March 1730
Philibert Orry	20 March 1730 - 5 December 1745
Jean-Baptiste de Machault d'Arnouville	6 December 1745 - 28 July 1754
Jean Moreau de Séchelles	30 July 1754 - 24 April 1756
François Marie Peyrenc de Moras	24 April 1756 - 25 April 1757
Jean de Boullongne	25 August 1757 - 4 March 1759
Étienne de Silhouette	4 March 1759 - 21 November 1759
Henri Léonard Jean Baptiste Bertin	23 November 1759 - 13 December 1763
Clément Charles François de L'Averdy	13 December1763- 1 October 1768
Étienne Maynon d'Invault	22 September 1768 22 December 1769
Abbé Joseph Marie Terray	22 December 1769 - 24 August 1774
Anne Robert Jacques Turgot	20 July 1774 - 12 May 1776
Jean Étienne Bernard Clugny de Nuits	21 May 1776 - 18 October 1776
Louis Gabriel Taboureau des Réaux	21 October 1776 - 29 June 1777
Jacques Necker, Director General of Finances	29 June 1777 - 19 May1781
Jean-François Joly de Fleury	21 May 1781 - 29 March 1783
Henri Lefèvre d'Ormesson	29 March 1783 - 2 November 1783
Charles Alexandre de Calonne	3 November 1783 - 8 April 1787

Michel Bouvard de Fourqueux	10 April 1787 – 1 May 1787
Pierre-Charles Laurent de Villedeuil	3 May1787 - 31 August 1787
Claude Guillaume Lambert	31 August 1787 - 25 August 1788
Jacques Necker, Director General of Finances	25 August 1788 - 11 July 1789
Claude Guillaume Lambert	31 August 1787 - 25 August 1788
Jacques Necker, Director General of Finances	25 August 1788 - 11 July 1789
Joseph François Foullon de Doué	12 July 1789 - 22 July 1789
Claude Guillaume Lambert	22 July 1789 - 4 December 1790

Ambassadors of France to Constantinople in the 18th century

Ambassador of France to Constantinople	**Date in Office**
Pierre Puchot	1711-1713
Jean-Louis d'Usson, marchese de Bonnac	1713-1724
Jean-Baptiste Louis Picon, viscount d'Andrezel	1724-1728
Louis Sauver Villeneuve	1728-1741
Michel-Ange Castellane Esparron	1741-1747
Roland Puchot, count des Alleurs	1747-1755
Charles Gravier, count de Vergennes	1755-1768
Francois Emmauel Guignard, count de Saint-Priest	1768-1784
Marie-Gabriel-Forent-Auguste de Choiseul-Gouffrier	1784-1792

List of the Order's Grand Masters in the 17th and 18th century

Grand Master	Origins	Date in Office
Alof de Wignacourt	French	10 February 1601 – 14 September 1622
Luís Mendes de Vasconcellos	Portuguese	17 September 1622 – 7 March 1623
Antoine de Paule	French	10 March 1623 – 9 June 1636
Giovanni Paolo Lascaris di Ventimiglia di Castellar	Italian	16 June 1636 – 14 August 1657
Martin de Redin	Spanish	17 August 1657 – 6 February 1660
Annet de Clermot-Gessant	France	9 February 1660 – 2 June 1660
Rafael Cotoner	Spanish	5 June 1660 – 20 October 1663
Nicolas Cotoner	Spanish	23 October 1663 – 29 April 1680
Gregorio Carafa	Italian	2 May 1680 – 21 July 1690
Adrien de Wignacourt	French	24 July 1690 – 4 February 1697
Ramon Perellos	Spanish	7 February 1697 to 10 January 1720
Marc Antonio Zondadari	Italian	13 January 1720 to 16 June 1722
Antonio Manuel de Vilhena	Portuguese	19 June 1722 to 10 December 1736
Ramon Despuig y Martinez de Marcilla	Spanish	16 December 1736 to 15 January 1741
Manuel Pinto de Fonseca	Portuguese	18 January 1741 to 24 January 1773
Francisco Ximenez de Texada	Spanish	28 January 1773 to 9 November 1775
Emanuel Marie des Neiges de Rohan de Polduc	French (born in Spain)	12 November 1775 – 14 July 1797
Ferdinand von Hompesch zu Bolheim	German	17 July 1797 – 6 July 1799

Ambassadors and *chargé d'affaires* of the embassy of Order of St John in Paris in the 17th and 18th centuries

Ambassador of the Order to France	Date in Office
Emery de Chattes – Temporary envoy	1602- Temporary mission
Commander de Sillary – Temporary envoy	1616- Temporary mission

Commander de Formegèrees - Temporary envoy	1617; 1623- Temporary mission
Amador de la Porte -Temporary envoy	1624- Temporary mission
Commander de Villegaignon	1637- Temporary mission
Commander de Voyure	Temporary mission
Bailli de Medany	Temporary mission
Bailli Jacques de Souvré – First Permanent Ambassador	1645-1670
Bailli Louis-Etienne Texier d'Hautefeuille	1670-1702
Bailli Jacques de Noailles	1703-1712
Bailli Claude-Louis de la Vieuville de Cermoise	1712-1715
Bailli Jean-Jacques de Mesmes	1715-1741
Bailli Louis-Gabriel de Froullay de Thessé	1741-1766
Bailli Rosset de Rocozels de Fleury	1767-1774)
Fra Bascle d'Argenteuil, *chargé d'affaires*	January-February 1775
Bailli Claude de Rouvroy de Saint-Simon	1775-1777
Bailly Bascle d'Argenteuil, *chargé d'affaires*	April-December 1777
Bailli Jacques Le Tonnelier de Breteuil	1778-1785)
Bailli Charles-Gabriel Dominque d'Havincourt- *chargé d'affaires*	August-December 1785
Bailli Pierre-André de Suffren de Saint-Tropez	1786-1788
Bailli Henri Francois de Brillane	1789
Bailli Louis Marie Auguste d'Estourmel, *chargé d'affaires*	1789
Bailli Jean-Loup de Virieu	1789- ?
Bailli de Ferrette, *chargé d'affaires*	The last diplomat of the Order of St John featured in the Imperial Almanach

Homme du Roi of France in Malta in the late 17th to the 18th century

Homme du Roi/ *chargé d'affaires*	**Period in Office**
Louis Roger de Blecourt, Bailli de Tincourt	1704-1714
Fra Joseph de Laval-Montmorency (in absence he was replaced by Fra Montgontier)	1715-1724
Fra Louis d'Argouges	1724-1725
Bailli François Guillaume Bernard d'Avernes de Bocage	1726-1756
Bailli Antoine Denis d'Alsace d'Hénin-Liétard	1756-1757
Bailli Jacques François Picot de Combreux	1757-1762
Fra Toussaint de Vento des Pennes	1762-1778
Fra Éugene Olivier de Seystres-Caumont	1778-1783
Chevalier de Varax	1784
Bailli de Loras	1784
Fra Éugene Olivier de Seystres-Caumont	1785-1794

List of French Consuls in Malta in the 18th century

French Consul	**Period in Office**
Charles de Garcin	1705-1733
Raymond de Garcin	August 1752
Jean-Augustin Arnaud	1776-1791
Joseph Habela	1782-1783
Philippe Césaire	1777-1795

List of the Order's Grand Priors of France in the 18th century

Grand Prior of the Langue of France	**Period in Office**
Philippe, Chevalier and duke de Vendôme	1678-1719
Jean Philippe d'Orléans, chevalier d'Orléans	1719-1748

Louis François I de Bourbon, Prince de Conti	1749-1776
Louis Antoine Artois, duke d'Angoulême	1777-1789
Charles Ferdinand, duke de Berry	1789-1801

Appendix 3 List of knights and officers arriving in 1761 aboard the *Saint Jean II* bound for Malta on 22 June 1761: AN M995, f. 312, 1761

Langue of Provence	**Langue of Auvergne**
Knight Joseph Mirabeau	Knight Claude S. Colombe de Laubepin
Knight Antoine de Venasque	Knight Ercole du Ligondes
Knight Gaspare Forban Gardana	Knight Gilbert de Chalus
Knight François Glandeve de Castellet	Knight Annabile S. Guiliano
Knight Jean de Gratet de Bouhage	Knight Maria Chattillion
Knight Joseph de Castellan	Knight Jacques de Larochaimon
Knight Pierre de Grasse du Bar	Knight Jean de Mondor
Knight Alesciu Deree	Knight Joseph du Paix
Knight Louis du Puget de Bras	Knight Jean Giacche de Fryssol
Knight François Narbonne	**Langue of France**
Knight Jean-Baptiste Ventemille	Knight Jacques Vitelle Gaucour
Knight Jean Batiste Durand du Partous	Knight Henri Desmazis (future resident engineer 1789-1791)
Knight Jean Federic Duveynen	Knight de Rochebutte
Knight Dionysius de Polastron	Knight Alexis de la Haye
Knight Jean Gaspare de Cubris	Knight Alessio de Moscarani
Knight de Montezet	Knight Maria Auguste du Goursay
Knight Jean-François Francesco de Village	Knight Alois Alessandro Darmah d'Anglisy
Knight de Resignier (left in Marseille due to sickness)	Knight Alois de Chamissot
Knight de Rosan (left in Toulon due to sickness)	Knight S. Ouin (?)

Abbé Comte François Bain	Knight Francois René Jacob de Tigné (commissioner of fortifications and *de facto* resident engineer 1761-1789)
Meifrin	**Langue of Castille**
Langue of Italy	Knight Emmanuele Villavincenzi
Knight Espirite Cravetta	**Langue of Germany**
Knight Guiseppe Pavissera	Knight Benedetto du Reynac
Knight Guiseppe Sappa	Knight Filippo de Schonau
Knight Filippo de Falafse	Knight Ferdinand Hompesch (future grand master 1797-1799)
Knight Luigi Dosarco	**French Officers**
Knight Carlo Dosarco	Charles Francois de Bourlamaque (Brigadier, head of the French team)
Knight Luigi Beretti	M. de la Rochebeaucourt, Captain
Knight Francesco Cannivan	Nicolas de Sarrbource de Pontleroy, chief of engineers)
Knight Luigi Fussatti	M. Desandrieu, Engineer
Knight Lotano Rangoni	M. Fournier, Engineer
Knight Agostino Litta	M. de Caire, Lieutenant
Knight Giuseppe Pomanva	M. de Supierre, Draughtman
Volunteers	M. Bunelli, Draughtman
Marquise du Pulet	M. de Louvicon, Artillery officer
Sir de Ponti	M. Duverny, Artillery officer
	M. de Cazole, Lieutenant artillerist
	M. Dupinassy, Artillery officer
Arrival of the French Team in Marseille in June 1761	
Engineers	**Artillerists**
M. de Pontleroy- 14 June 1761	M. de Louivicon- 16 June 1761

M. de Desandrioun- 7 June 1761	M. Duverny- 13 June 1761
M. Fournier- 13 June 1761	M. Despinassy- 7 June 1761
M. de Caire- 10 June 1761	M. de Cazote- 7 June 1761
M. Desrobert- did not arrive in time for departure	M. de Rochebeacourt- 11 June 1761
Total: 58 knights, 2 volunteers, 12 military officers together with the gunners and bombardiers.	

Appendix 4 List of weaponry procured from France for Malta

Arms, firearms, artillery, ammunition and gunpowder procured from France			
Date	**Source**	**Type**	**Source**
1416	France	Horse harnesses and ammunition for the Order in Rhodes	AN M902, f. 244, undated
1568	Lyon	30 artillery pieces	Catalogue of the Archives du Rhone 48H58 1568-1579, 38
1577	France	Unspecified type and amount of war ammunition and weapons	AN M902, f. 244, undated
1579	Lyon	Unspecified war ammunition	AN M902, f. 244, undated
1603	France	300,000 pounds of gunpowder	AN M902, f. 244, undated
1627	France	100,000 pounds of gunpowder	MAE 67CP/10, f. 292, 1754.
1641	France	250 pieces of textile for the sails of the galleys	MAE 67CP/10, f. 292, 1754.
1642	France	200,000 pounds of gunpowder	MAE 67CP/10, f. 292, 1754.
1687	Saint-Étienne	1,000 muskets	Raymond Dubessy, *Historique de la Manufacture d'Armes de Saint-Étienne (Saint-Étienne,1900),* 108-109.
1708	Toulon	100,000 pounds gunpowder, 500 cannonballs and 4,000 grenades in 1708	AN MAR/B/3/162, f. 542, 27 May 1708.
1714	Saint-Étienne	Unspecified number of firearms for the guards of the Grand Master, worth 1,644 livres	Dubessy (1900), 108-109.
1714	Saint-Étienne	Unspecified number of swords for the guards of the Grand Master, worth 480 livres	Dubessy (1900), 108-109.
1715	Paris	Louis XIV sent a consignment of 12,000 muskets of which 4,000 were from the stores in Paris	NLM AOM 266, f. 142v, 1715.
1715	Toulon	1,200 barrels of gunpowder	AN M963, f. 15, 20 February 1715.
1718	Saint-Étienne	1,000 lock plates, 1,000 garnitures de fusil	Dubessy (1900), 108-109.
1719	Saint-Étienne	Lock plates and gun fittings for the assembly of 1,000 muskets	AN M902, f. 8, 15 September 1719.

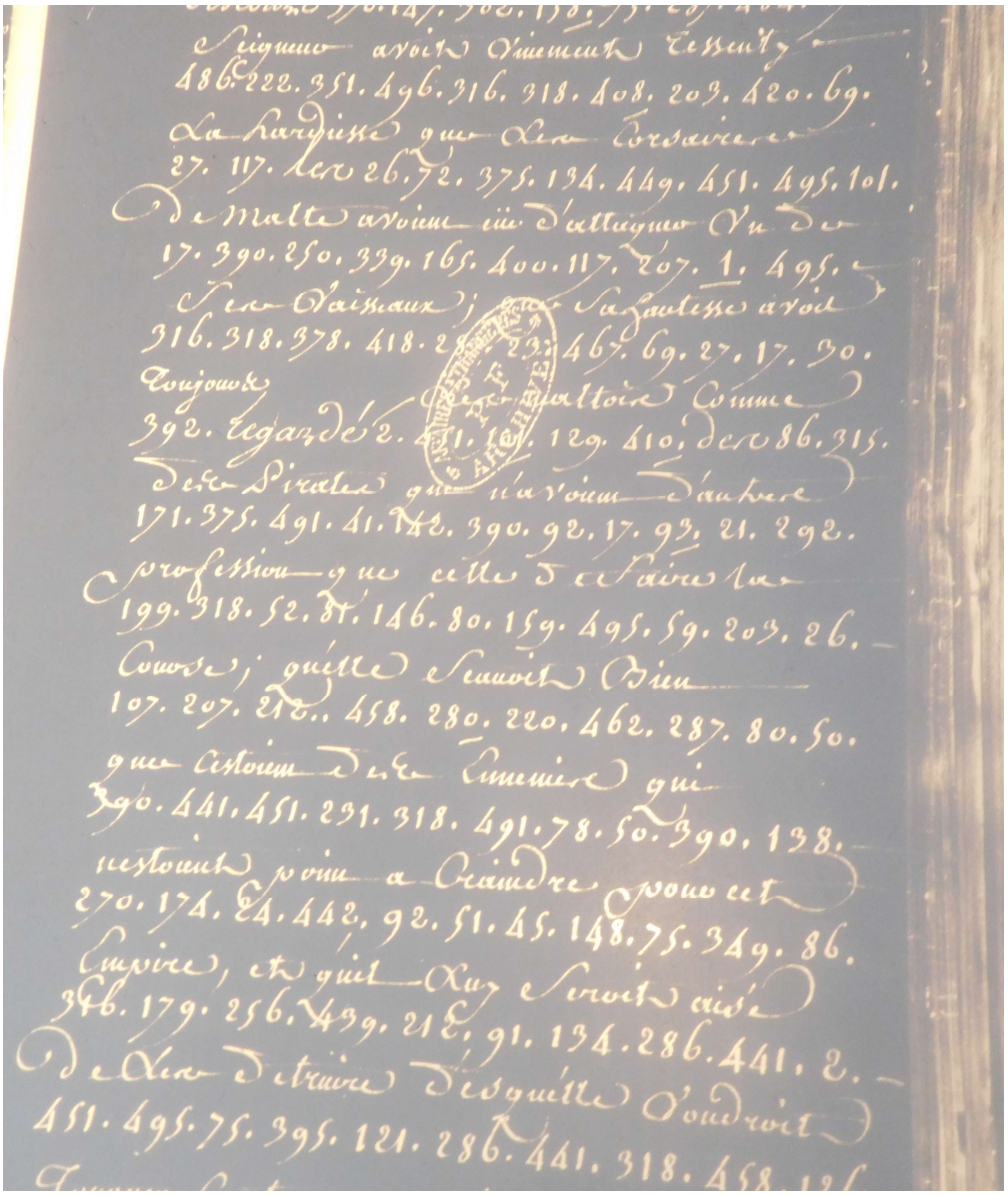
1720	Saint-Étienne	A supply of muskets with bayonets worth 7,600 livres	Dubessy (1900), 108-109.
1721	Saint-Étienne	200 muskets	NLM AOM 1563, f. 152, 7 July 1720. Delivered to Malta by engineer de Mondion
1722	Stores of Lyon	1,800 muskets	Part of the 1722 deal with Titon de Villegenon. AN M995, f. 99, 1723.
1722	Sarrelouis	1,700 muskets	Part of the 1722 deal with Titon de Villegenon AN M995, f. 99, 1723.
1722	Phalsbourg	1,500 muskets	Part of the 1722 deal with Titon de Villegenon AN M995, f. 99, 1723.
1722	Marsal	370 muskets	Part of the 1722 deal with Titon de Villegenon AN M995, f. 99, 1723.
1722	Thionville	2,580 muskets	Part of the 1722 deal with Titon de Villegenon AN M995, f. 99, 1723.
1722	Brisack	150 muskets	Part of the 1722 deal with Titon de Villegenon AN M995, f. 99, 1723.
1722	Fort Louis du Rhine	1,000 muskets	Part of the 1722 deal with Titon de Villegenon AN M995, f. 99, 1723.
1722	Strasbourg	6,000 muskets	Part of the 1722 deal with Titon de Villegenon AN M995, f. 99, 1723.
1722	Maubeuge	500 muskets	Part of the 1722 deal with Titon de Villegenon AN M995, f. 99, 1723.
1722	Paris	1,940 muskets	Part of the 1722 deal with Titon de Villegenon AN M995, f. 99, 1723.
1722	Saint Étienne-en-Forez	7,460 muskets	Part of the 1722 deal with Titon de Villegenon AN M995, f. 99, 1723.
1726	Toulon	15 iron cannons (5 of 18-pounders, 10 of 12-pounders)	AN M963, f. 168, 11 September 1726;

			MAR/B/2/278 f. 41, 9 March 1727; AN M902, f. 14, 25 December 1726.
1726-1727	Saint-Étienne	1,740 fusils de soldat with bayonettes 262 fusils d'officiers with bayonettes 91 carabines	Dubessy (1900), 108-109. Ecclésiastiqués-Serie H- 48H412 1726-1727.
1733	Arsenal of Toulon	1,000 barrels of gunpowder 36,000 lbs mitraille	AN M902, f. 16, 19 September 1733.
1734	Rochefort	Bailli de Mesmes was advised by Maurepas to buy cannons from Rochefort	Archives Departmental du Rhône antérieures à 1790- Archives Ecclésiastiqués-Serie H-48H199, 1734
1734	Forge of Rancogne, Saint-Gervais	24 pieces of 8 calibre cannon-potential order	AN M996 f. 28, 15 May 1734
1734	Besançon	Undisclosed amount of mitraille. The Minister for the Navy, Maurepas ordered grapeshot from Besancon in Franche-Comté for the Order, in pretence that this commission was for the king	AN M996, 27, 1734
1740-41	Forges in Bourgogne et Franchcomté	210,000 grapeshot (Ordered December 1740, passport issued November 1741)	AN M902, f. 19, 20 December 1740; f. 20, 14 November 1741; MAE 67CP/10, f. 293, 1754.
1747-1748	Amsterdam, ordered by Babaud de Chaussade	70 main masts and 40 spars	AN M995, f. 203, 16 August 1747.
1755	France-Commission to de Vantage, Receiver in Lyon	Supply for the navy: 100 Sabres and 260 swords (epee), 400 pairs of gaiters, 400 collars, 1500 buttons	AN M902, f. 26, 4 May 1755
1757	Antibes Commission of gunpowder-not executed	To purchase a yearly consignment of 400 quintals of gunpowder from France- Commission cancelled	AN M902, f. 27, 19 July 1757
1759-1774	Saint-Étienne	Agreement for 20,000 muskets and 1,400 pistols & other arms over 14 year period. Yearly supply of 1,500 musket, 100 pairs of *pistolet d'arbordage*	Dubessy (1900), 108-109.
1761	Arsenals of Toulon and other locations	1,500 quintals (330,693 pounds) of gunpowder and another batch of 200,000 pounds packed in barrels of 100 and 200 livres	AN M995, f. 257, 22 June 1761; f. 266, 20 June 1761; f. 270, 20 June 1761; f. 290, 30 July 1761.

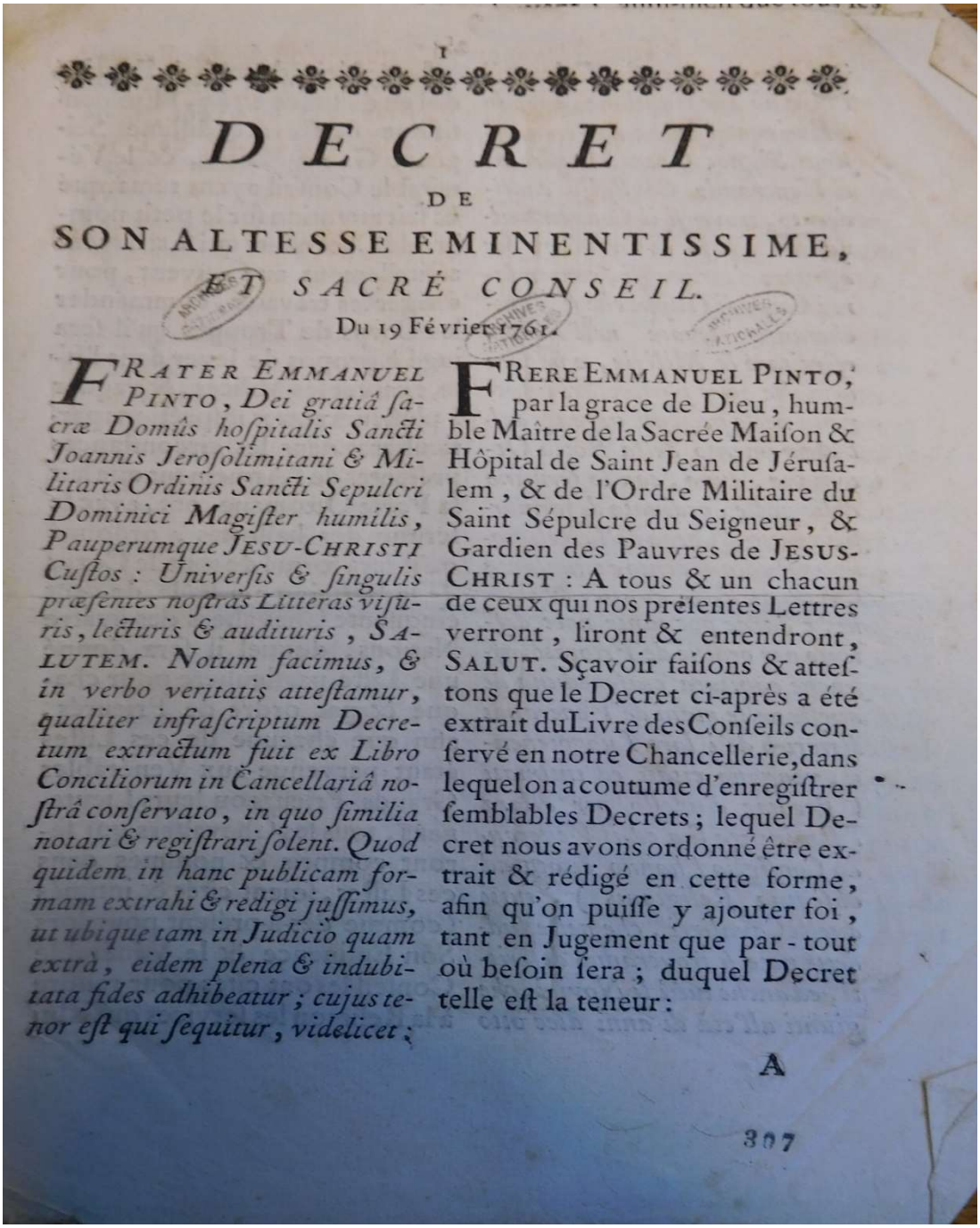
1761	France	3,000 cannonballs, 800 shells for howitzers	AN M995, f. 266, 20 June 1761; f. 270, 20 June 1761.
1761	France	Artillery: 4 canons à *la Suedoise,* 2 cast-iron howitzers, 4 cast-iron mortars	AN M995, f. 267, June 1761.
1761	France	2 carriages for howitzers, 5 gun-carriages for mortars	AN M995, f. 267, June 1761.
1764	Saint-Étienne	1,500 fusils and 200 pistolet d'arbordage	Catalogue of the Archives Departmental du Rhône-Archives Ecclésiastiqués-Serie H-48H587 1764, 356.
1770	France	20,000 bricks for the foundry of Malta.	AN M902, 236, 4 January 1777.
1772	Saint-Étienne	1,958 dozen of sword blades of varying thickness and sizes.	AN M902, f. 83, 1772; M902, f. 84, 23 September 1773.
1772-73	Saint-Étienne	500 *fusils de soldats*, 100 pairs of of *pistols d'abordage*, 50 *trombons a fourche*, 50 trombones a chevalet, 300 trombones a main, 50 gun fittings for officer muskets, 500 gun fittings for fusils de munition, 200 gun fittings for pistols, 500 bayonets, 50 *bayonets d'officiers*.	AN 902, f. 87, 1773 AN M902, f. 89, 25 August 1773.
1772	France	15,000 pounds of gunpowder	AN M902, f. 89, 25 October 1776; f. 244, undated.
1777 September	Likely Strasbourg	Military equipment for the Regiment of Malta including 118 Sabres (see chapter 7 table 7.2 for an detailed list).	AN M 902, f. 227, 248, 1777.
1777 December	Strasbourg	Military Equipment for the Regiment of Malta including 600 Sabres (see chapter 7 table 7.2 for an detailed list).	AN M 902, f. 248, 1777.
1777	Toulon	Supply of 50, 24-pounder guns	AN MAR/B/I/84, f. 220. 3 May 1777; AN M960, f. 30, 21 October 1777.

Appendix 5 Supporting documents

5.1 Extract from a letter sent by the Ambassador of France to Constantinople, Louis-Saveur de Villeneuve to the Minister for the Navy, Jean Frédéric Phélypeaux, count de Maurepas. This part of the letter narrates the meeting which the ambassador had with the Grand Vizier in December 1732. It was encrypted for reasons of safety since this was considered sensitive information about the Porte, France and Hospitaller Malta. The letter was later decrypted by the receiver in France: AN AE/B/I/406, ff. 287r-313v, 7 December 1732.



5.2 Front page of the printed pamphlet for the citation of knights during the Corona Ottomana affair. It was sent to the grand priors of the Order across Europe: AN M995, f. 307, 19 February 1761.



I

DECRET

DE

SON ALTESSE EMINENTISSIME, ET SACRÉ CONSEIL.

Du 19 Février 1761.

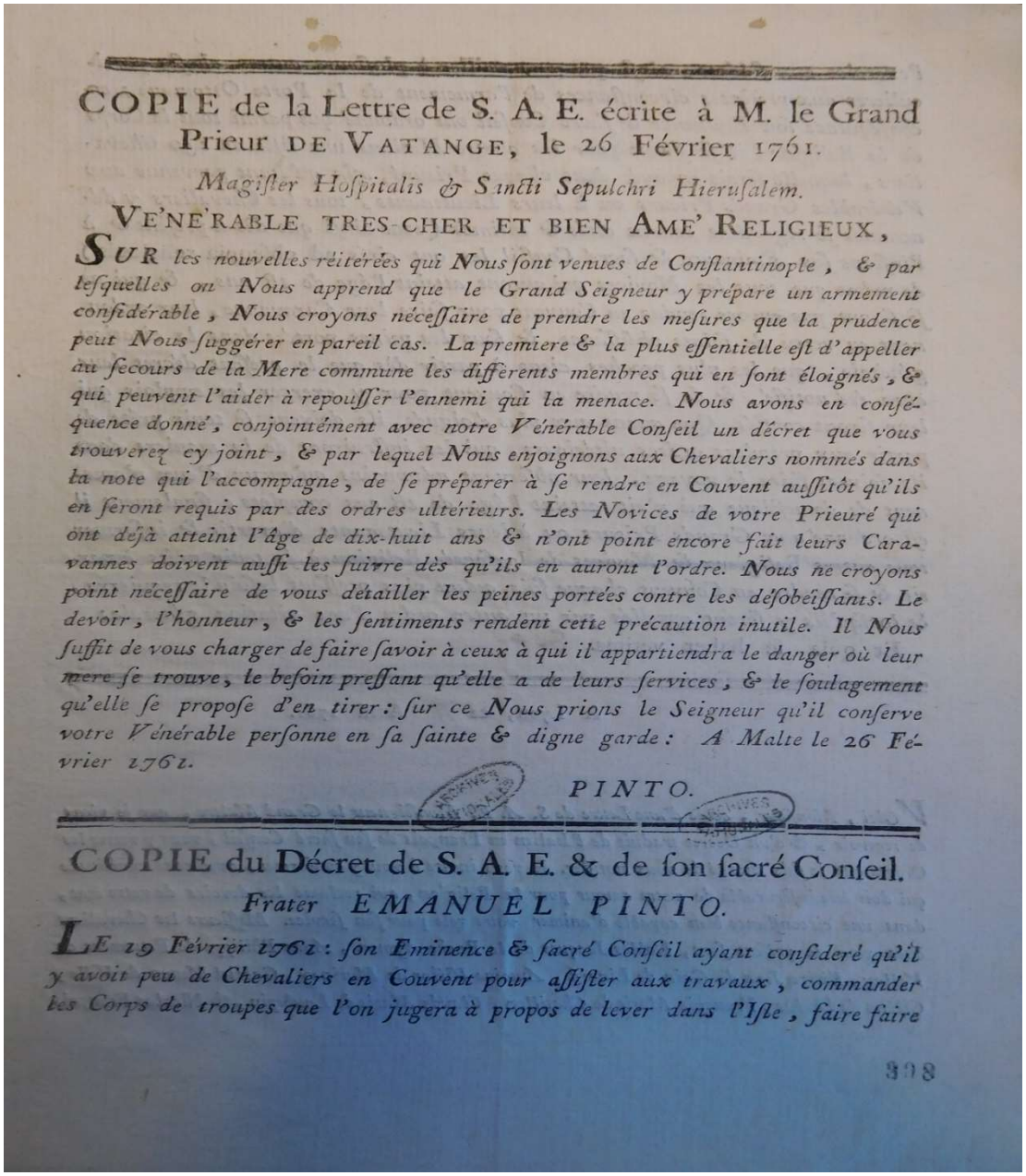
FRATER EMMANUEL PINTO, Dei gratiâ ſacræ Domûs hoſpitalis Sancti Joannis Jeroſolimitani & Militaris Ordinis Sancti Sepulcri Dominici Magiſter humilis, Pauperumque JESU-CHRISTI Cuſtos : Univerſis & ſingulis præſentes noſtras Litteras viſuris, lecturis & audituris, SALUTEM. Notum facimus, & in verbo veritatis atteſtamur, qualiter infraſcriptum Decretum extractum fuit ex Libro Conciliorum in Cancellariâ noſtrâ conſervato, in quo ſimilia notari & regiſtrari ſolent. Quod quidem in hanc publicam formam extrahi & redigi juſſimus, ut ubique tam in Judicio quam extrà, eidem plena & indubitata fides adhibeatur ; cujus tenor eſt qui ſequitur, videlicet ;

FRERE EMMANUEL PINTO, par la grace de Dieu, humble Maître de la Sacrée Maiſon & Hôpital de Saint Jean de Jéruſalem, & de l'Ordre Militaire du Saint Sépulcre du Seigneur, & Gardien des Pauvres de JESUS-CHRIST : A tous & un chacun de ceux qui nos préſentes Lettres verront, liront & entendront, SALUT. Sçavoir faiſons & atteſtons que le Decret ci-après a été extrait du Livre des Conſeils conſervé en notre Chancellerie, dans lequel on a coutume d'enregiſtrer ſemblables Decrets ; lequel Decret nous avons ordonné être extrait & rédigé en cette forme, afin qu'on puiſſe y ajouter foi, tant en Jugement que par-tout où beſoin ſera ; duquel Decret telle eſt la teneur :

A

307

5.3 Printed copy of a letter by Grand Master Pinto sent to the grand prior of Auvergne, the Bailli de Vatange. It was attached to a copy of the decree issued by the Council of State in Malta concerning the general citation: AN M995, f. 308, 26 February 1761.



COPIE de la Lettre de S. A. E. écrite à M. le Grand Prieur DE VATANGE, le 26 Février 1761.

Magiſter Hoſpitalis & Sancti Sepulchri Hieruſalem.

VE'NE'RABLE TRES-CHER ET BIEN AME' RELIGIEUX,

SUR les nouvelles réitérées qui Nous ſont venues de Conſtantinople, & par leſquelles on Nous apprend que le Grand Seigneur y prépare un armement conſidérable, Nous croyons néceſſaire de prendre les meſures que la prudence peut Nous ſuggérer en pareil cas. La premiere & la plus eſſentielle eſt d'appeller au ſecours de la Mere commune les différents membres qui en ſont éloignés, & qui peuvent l'aider à repouſſer l'ennemi qui la menace. Nous avons en conſéquence donné, conjointément avec notre Vénérable Conſeil un décret que vous trouverez cy joint, & par lequel Nous enjoignons aux Chevaliers nommés dans la note qui l'accompagne, de ſe préparer à ſe rendre en Couvent auſſitôt qu'ils en ſeront requis par des ordres ultérieurs. Les Novices de votre Prieuré qui ont déjà atteint l'âge de dix-huit ans & n'ont point encore fait leurs Caravannes doivent auſſi les ſuivre dès qu'ils en auront l'ordre. Nous ne croyons point néceſſaire de vous détailler les peines portées contre les déſobéiſſants. Le devoir, l'honneur, & les ſentiments rendent cette précaution inutile. Il Nous ſuffit de vous charger de faire ſavoir à ceux à qui il appartiendra le danger où leur mere ſe trouve, le beſoin preſſant qu'elle a de leurs ſervices, & le ſoulagement qu'elle ſe propoſe d'en tirer: ſur ce Nous prions le Seigneur qu'il conſerve votre Vénérable perſonne en ſa ſainte & digne garde: A Malte le 26 Février 1761.

PINTO.

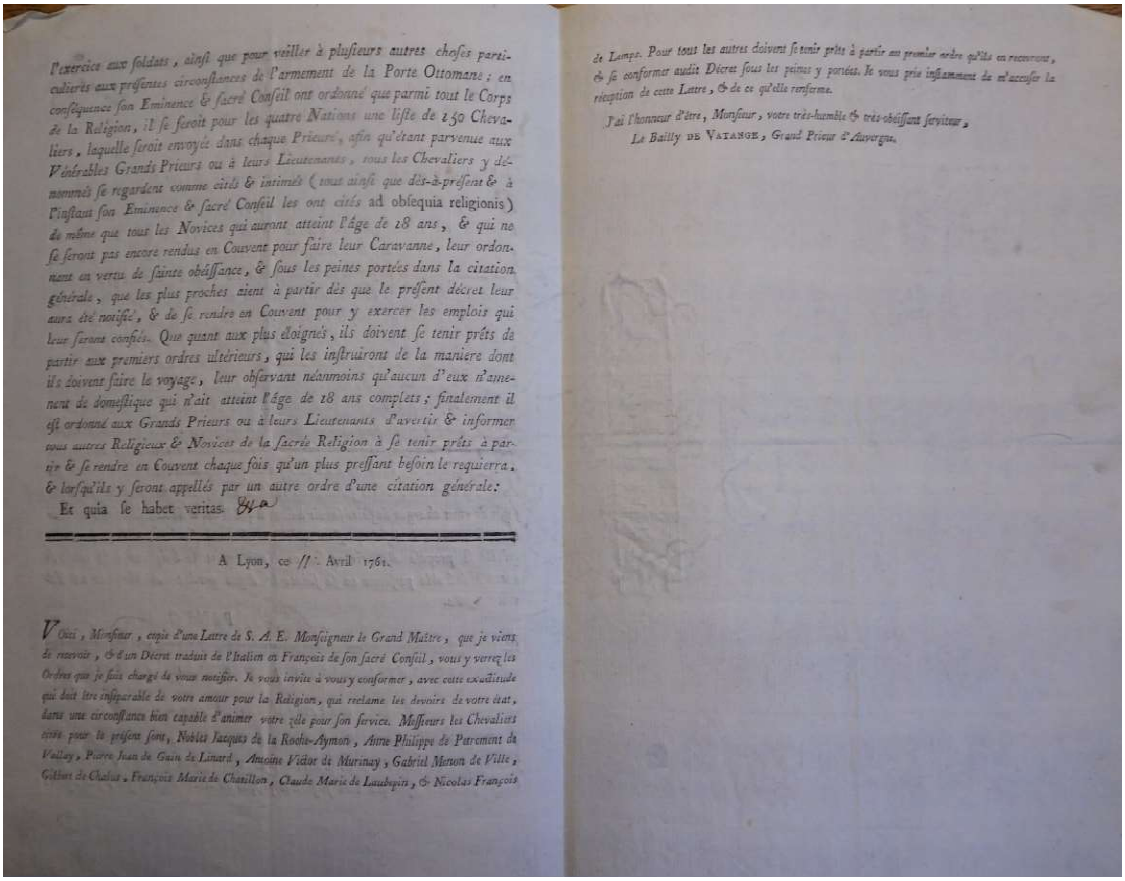
COPIE du Décret de S. A. E. & de ſon ſacré Conſeil.

Frater EMANUEL PINTO.

LE 19 Février 1761: ſon Eminence & ſacré Conſeil ayant conſideré qu'il y avoit peu de Chevaliers en Couvent pour aſſiſter aux travaux, commander les Corps de troupes que l'on jugera à propos de lever dans l'Iſle, faire faire

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5.4 This is an extract from a printed letter of the Bailli de Vatange, grand prior of Auvergne, calling upon the few chosen knights (listed by name) from his priory, which the Council of State in Malta had shortlisted for immediate departure. It also advised the rest of the knights of the langue to be ready to leave for Malta upon instructions. Vatange's letter was attached to the Grand Master's decree which was translated from Italian to French: AN M995, f. 308, 11 April 1761.



l'exercice aux soldats, ainsi que pour veiller à plusieurs autres choses particulieres aux présentes circonstances de l'armement de la Porte Ottomane; en conséquence son Eminence & sacré Conseil ont ordonné que parmi tout le Corps de la Religion, il se feroit pour les quatre Nations une liste de 150 Chevaliers, laquelle seroit envoyée dans chaque Prieuré, afin qu'étant parvenue aux Vénérables Grands Prieurs ou à leurs Lieutenants, tous les Chevaliers y dénommés se regardent comme cités & intimés (tout ainsi que dés-à-présent & à l'instant son Eminence & sacré Conseil les ont cités ad obsequia religionis) de même que tous les Novices qui auront atteint l'âge de 18 ans, & qui ne se seront pas encore rendus en Couvent pour faire leur Caravanne, leur ordonnant en vertu de sainte obéissance, & sous les peines portées dans la citation générale, que les plus proches aient à partir dès que le présent décret leur aura été notifié, & de se rendre en Couvent pour y exercer les emplois qui leur seront confiés. Que quant aux plus éloignés, ils doivent se tenir prêts de partir aux premiers ordres ultérieurs, qui les instruiront de la maniere dont ils doivent faire le voyage, leur observant néanmoins qu'aucun d'eux n'amenera de domestique qui n'ait atteint l'âge de 18 ans complets; finalement il est ordonné aux Grands Prieurs ou à leurs Lieutenants d'avertir & informer tous autres Religieux & Novices de la sacrée Religion à se tenir prêts à partir & se rendre en Couvent chaque fois qu'un plus pressant besoin le requierra, & lorsqu'ils y seront appellés par un autre ordre d'une citation générale:

Et quia se habet veritas.

A Lyon, ce 11. Avril 1761.

Voici, Monsieur, copie d'une Lettre de S. A. E. Monseigneur le Grand Maître, que je viens de recevoir, & d'un Décret traduit de l'Italien en François de son sacré Conseil, vous y verrez les Ordres que je suis chargé de vous notifier. Je vous invite à vous y conformer, avec cette exactitude qui doit être inséparable de votre amour pour la Religion, qui reclame les devoirs de votre état, dans une circonstance bien capable d'animer votre zèle pour son service. Messieurs les Chevaliers cités pour le présent sont, Noble Jacques de la Roche-Aymon, Anne Philippe de Petrement de Valley, Pierre Jean de Gain de Linard, Antoine Victor de Murinay, Gabriel Menon de Ville, Gilbert de Chalus, François Marie de Chatillon, Claude Marie de Laubepin, & Nicolas François de Lemps. Pour tous les autres doivent se tenir prêts à partir au premier ordre qu'ils en recevront, & se conformer audit Décret sous les peines y portées. Je vous prie instamment de m'accuser la réception de cette Lettre, & de ce qu'elle renferme.

J'ai l'honneur d'être, Monsieur, votre très-humble & très-obéissant serviteur,

Le Bailly de Vatange, Grand Prieur d'Auvergne.

The knights listed for the langue of Auvergne were:

Jacques de la Roche-Aymon

Anne Philippe de Petrement deValley

Pierre Jean de Gain de Linard

Antoine Victor de Murinay

Gabriel Menon de Ville

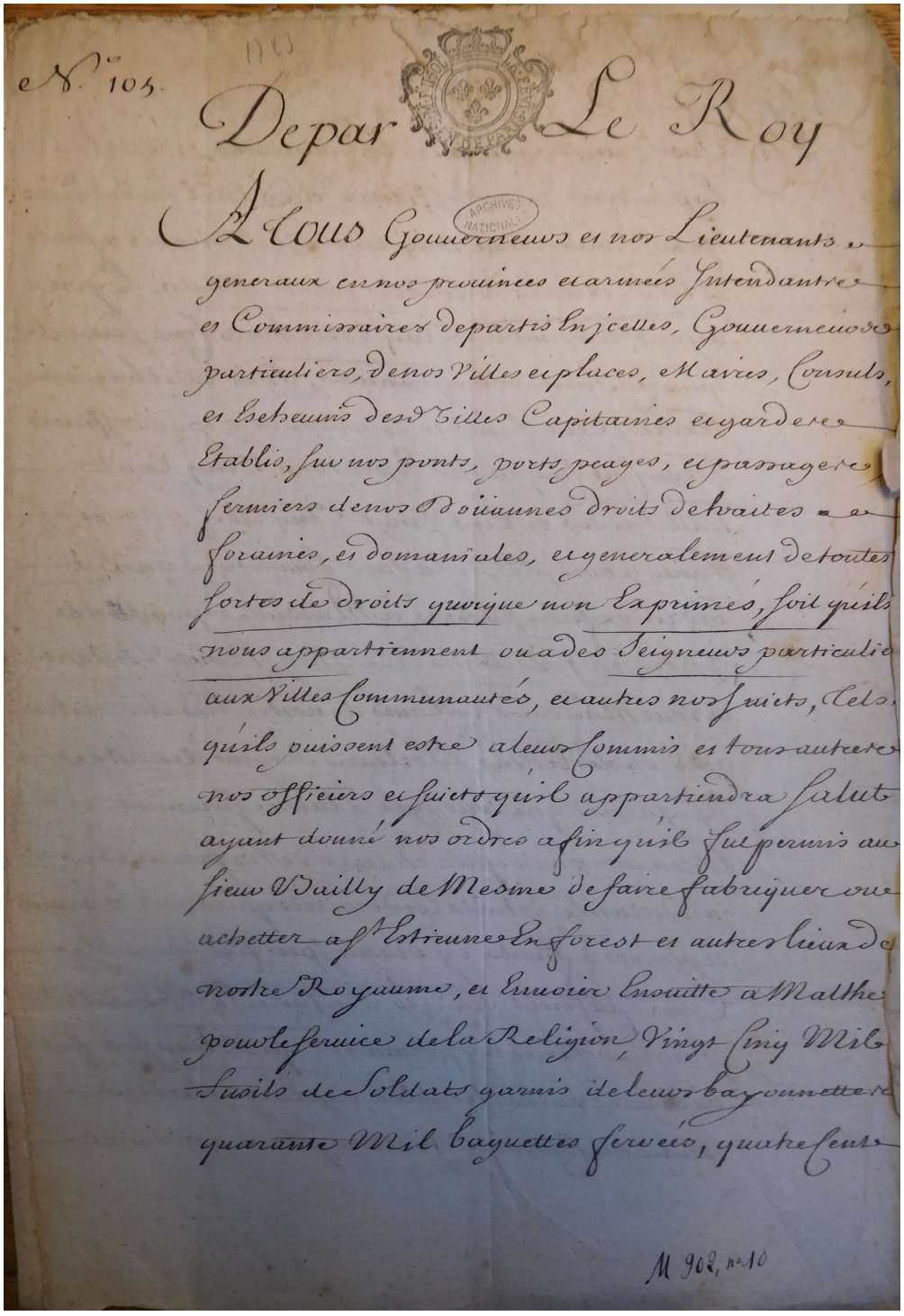
Gilbert de Chalus

François Marie de Chatillon

Claude Marie de Laubepin

Nicolas François de Lemps

5.5 This passport was issued by the French government for the manufacture of armaments in France, granting permission for the manufacturers of Saint-Étienne to supply the Order with a consignment of firearms. It also instructs all relevant parties to ensure the tax-free passage of the cargo to Marseille: AN M902, f. 10 13 February 1723.



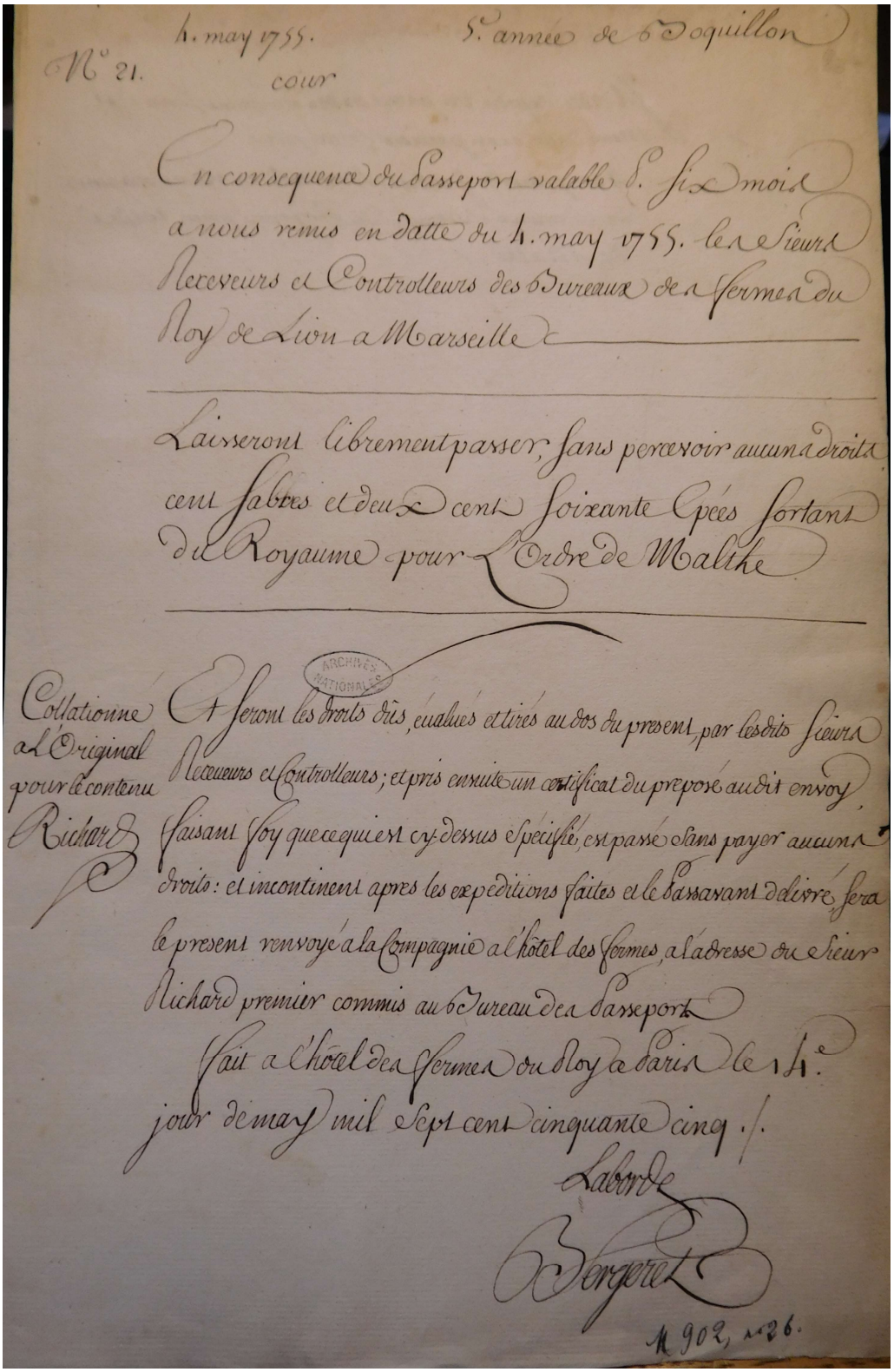
e N.° 103. 1723

Depar Le Roy

A Tous Gouverneurs et nos Lieutenants
generaux en nos provinces et armées Intendantes
et Commissaires departis en icelles, Gouverneurs
particuliers, de nos Villes et places, Maires, Consuls,
et Echevins desd Villes Capitaines et gardes
Etablis, sur nos ponts, ports peages, et passages
fermiers de nos Domaines droits de traites et
forains, et domaniales, et generalement de toutes
sortes de droits quelque non Exprimés, soit qu'ils
nous appartiennent ou a des Seigneurs particuliers
aux Villes Communautés, et autres nos sujets, A Ceux
qu'ils puissent estre a leurs commis et tous autres
nos officiers et sujets qu'il appartiendra Salut
ayant donné nos ordres afin qu'il fut permis au
sieur D'Ailly de Mesme de faire fabriquer ou
acheter a St Estienne en forest et autres lieux de
notre Royaume, et Envoier ensuitte a Malthe
pour le service de la Religion, Vingt cinq Mil
fusils de Soldats garnis de leurs bayonnettes et
quarante Mil bayonettes ferrées, quatre cents

M 902, n.° 10

5.6 Another passport, issued from the office of tax farmers in Paris, directing the receivers and controllers of the tax farmers' offices in Lyon and Marseille to exempt the customs tax on the Order's consignment of 100 sabres and 260 swords destined for Malta in 1755. This notice was also sent to the King's Passport Office for approval: AN M902, f. 26, 4 May 1755.



4. may 1755. 5e année de Boquillon

N° 21. cour

En consequence du passeport valable 6. Six mois a nous remis en datte du 4. may 1755. les Sieurs Receveurs et Controlleurs des Bureaux de la Ferme du Roy de Lion a Marseille

Laisseront librement passer, sans percevoir aucun droits cent sabres et deux cent soixante Epées sortans du Royaume pour l'Ordre de Malthe

Collationné a l'Original pour le contenu Richard

ARCHIVES NATIONALES

Et seront les droits dus, evaluez et tirés au dos du present, par lesdits Sieurs Receveurs et Controlleurs; et pris ensuite un certificat du preposé audit envoy, faisant foy que ce que dessus specifié, est passé sans payer aucuns droits: et incontinent apres les expeditions faites et le passavant delivré, sera le present renvoyé a la Compagnie a l'hotel des Fermes, a l'adresse du Sieur Richard premier commis au Bureau des passeports

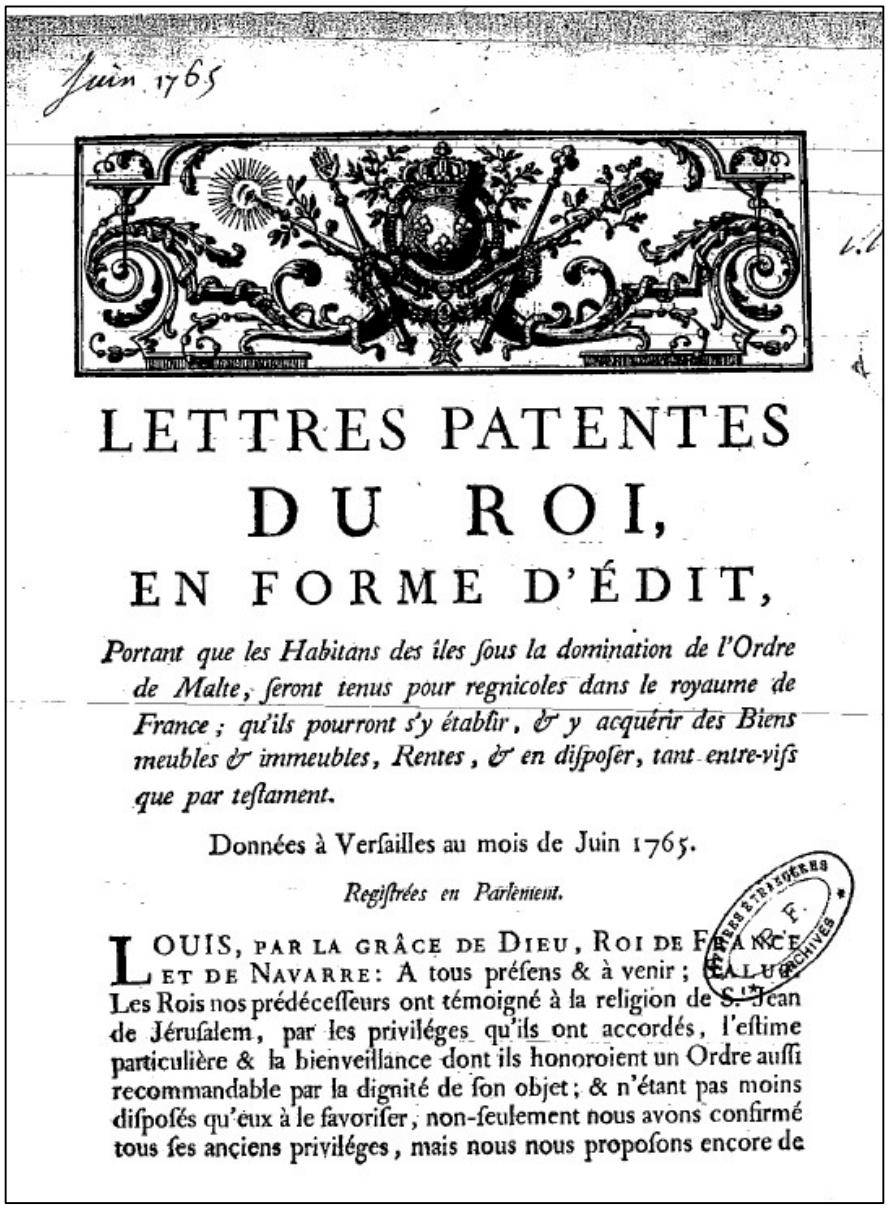
Fait a l'hotel des Fermes du Roy a Paris le 4e jour de may mil Sept cent cinquante cinq /.

Laborde

Bergeret

M 902, n°26.

5.7 Front page of Louis XV's edict of 1765, in which the King of France recognised the Maltese as French nationals, exempting them from the *droit d'aubaine*: MAE 67 CP Malte, vol. 11, f. 384r, June 1765.



Juin 1765

LETTRES PATENTES DU ROI, EN FORME D'ÉDIT,

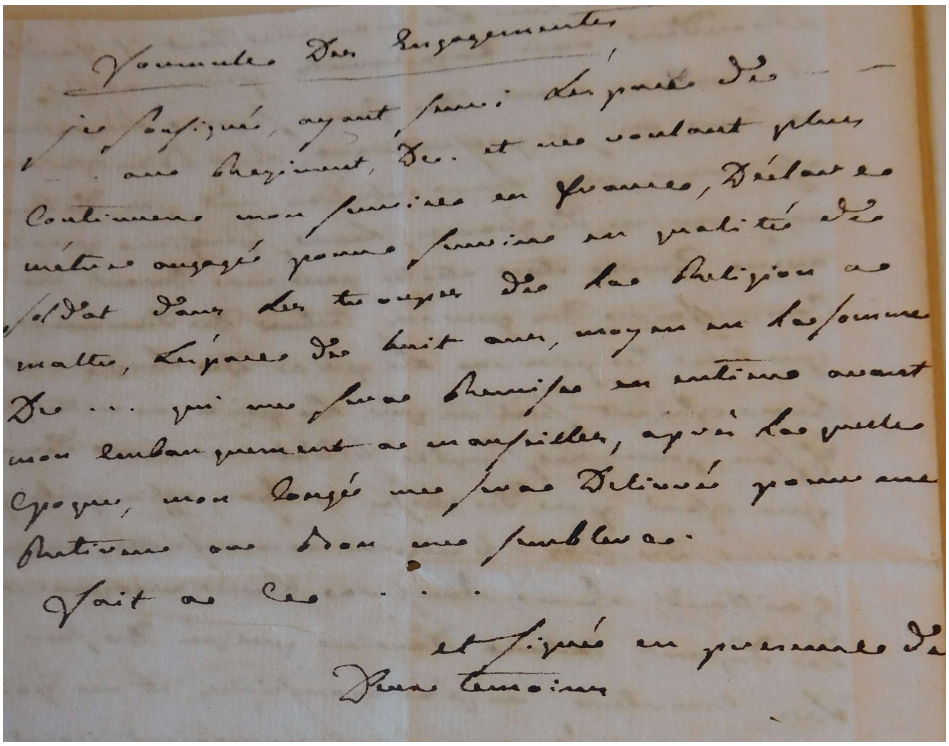
Portant que les Habitans des îles ſous la domination de l'Ordre de Malte, ſeront tenus pour regnicoles dans le royaume de France ; qu'ils pourront s'y établir, & y acquérir des Biens meubles & immeubles, Rentes, & en diſpoſer, tant entre-vifs que par teſtament.

Données à Verſailles au mois de Juin 1765.

Regiſtrées en Parlement.

LOUIS, PAR LA GRÂCE DE DIEU, ROI DE FRANCE ET DE NAVARRE: A tous préſens & à venir ; SALUT. Les Rois nos prédéceſſeurs ont témoigné à la religion de S.t Jean de Jéruſalem, par les priviléges qu'ils ont accordés, l'eſtime particulière & la bienveillance dont ils honoroient un Ordre auſſi recommandable par la dignité de ſon objet ; & n'étant pas moins diſpoſés qu'eux à le favoriſer, non-ſeulement nous avons confirmé tous ſes anciens priviléges, mais nous nous propoſons encore de

5.8 Draft of the contract, *Formule des Engagementes* for candidates interested in joining the Regiment of Malta: AN M994, f. 18, 25 March 1776.



Translation of the recruitment contract (draft) which was presented to interested candidates:

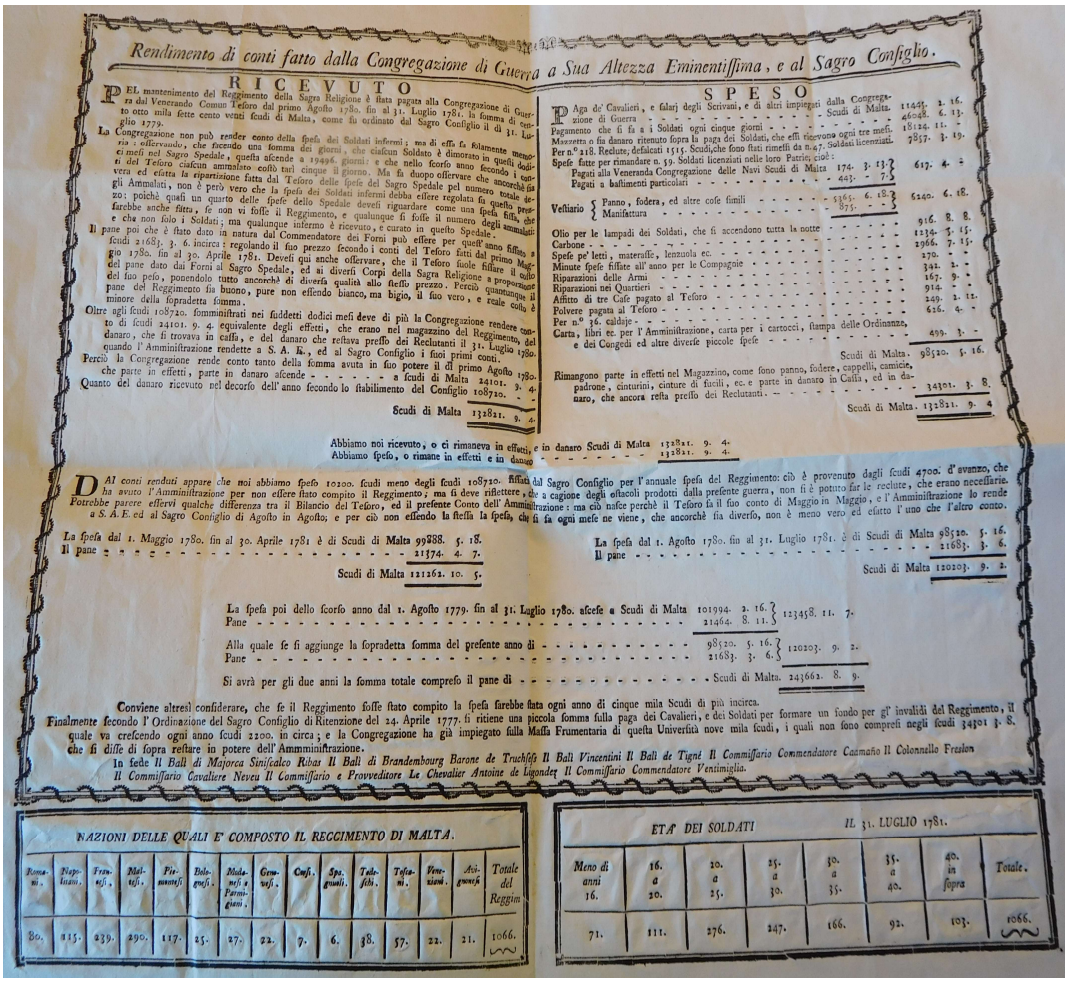
Engagement Form

I, the undersigned, having spent the period of .....and no longer wish to continue my service in France, and declare that I have engaged to serve as a soldier in the troops of the Religion at Malta for a period of eight years, in return for the sum of.....which will be paid to me in full before my embarkation in Marseille. After this time, my discharge will be issued to me, so that I can retire wherever I see fit.

Done at……. on …….

Signed in the presence of two witnesses

5.9 The *Rendimento di Conti*, was a large single balance sheet of accounts printed every year for the accounts of the Regiment of Malta. It provides detailed information on the expenditure, the origins and numbers of recruits, including their ages: AN M994, f. 139, 1781.



Rendimento di conti fatto dalla Congregazione di Guerra a Sua Altezza Eminentissima, e al Sagro Consiglio.

RICEVUTO

PEL mantenimento del Reggimento della Sagra Religione è stata pagata alla Congregazione di Guerra dal Venerando Comun Tesoro dal primo Agosto 1780. fin al 31. Luglio 1781. la somma di scudi otto mila sette cento venti scudi di Malta, come fu ordinato dal Sagro Consiglio il dì 31. Luglio 1779.

La Congregazione non può render conto della spesa dei Soldati infermi; ma di essa fa solamente menzione: osservando, che ricevendo una somma dei giorni, che ciascun Soldato è dimorato in quelli dodici mesi nel Sagro Spedale, questa ascende a 19496. giorni: e che nello scorso anno secondo i conti del Tesoro ciascun ammalato costò tari cinque il giorno. Ma fa duopo osservare che ancorchè fu vera ed esatta la ripartizione fatta dal Tesoro delle spese del Sagro Spedale pel numero totale degli Ammalati, non è però vero che la spesa dei Soldati infermi debba essere regolata di questa proporzione; poichè quasi un quarto delle spese dello Spedale dovesi riguardare come una spesa fissa, che sarebbe anche fatta, se non vi fosse il Reggimento, e qualunque fi fosse il numero degli ammalati e che non solo i Soldati; ma qualunque infermo è ricevuto, e curato in questo Spedale.

Il pane poi che è stato dato in natura dal Commendatore dei Forni può essere per questo anno fissato a scudi 21683. 3. 6. incirca: regolando il suo prezzo secondo i conti del Tesoro fatti dal primo Maggio 1780. fin al 30. Aprile 1781. Devesi qui anche osservare, che il Tesoro suole fissare il sollo del pane dato dai Forni al Sagro Spedale, ed ai diversi Corpi della Sagra Religione a proporzione del suo peso, ponendolo tutto ancorchè di diversa qualità allo stesso prezzo. Perciò quantunque il pane del Reggimento sia buono, pure non essendo bianco, ma bigio, il suo vero, e reale costo è minore della sopradetta somma.

Oltre agli scudi 108720. somministrati nei suddetti dodici mesi deve di più la Congregazione rendere conto di scudi 24101. 9. 4. equivalente degli effetti, che erano nel magazzino del Reggimento, del danaro, che si trovava in cassa, e del danaro che restava presso dei Reclutanti il 31. Luglio 1780. quando l'Amministrazione rendette a S. A. R., ed al Sagro Consiglio i suoi primi conti.

Perciò la Congregazione rende conto tanto della somma avuta in suo potere il dì primo Agosto 1780. che parte in effetti, parte in danaro ascende . . . . . a scudi di Malta 24101. 9. 4.

Quanto del danaro ricevuto nel decorso dell'anno secondo lo stabilimento del Consiglio 108720. - -

Scudi di Malta 132821. 9. 4.

Abbiamo noi ricevuto, o ci rimaneva in effetti, e in danaro Scudi di Malta 132821. 9. 4.
Abbiamo speso, o rimane in effetti e in danaro . . . . . 132821. 9. 4.

SPESO

PAga de' Cavalieri, e salarj degli Scrivani, e di altri impiegati dalla Congregazione di Guerra . . . . . Scudi di Malta. 11445. 2. 16.
Pagamento che fi fa a i Soldati ogni cinque giorni . . . . . 46048. 6. 13.
Mazzetta o sia danaro ritenuto sopra la paga dei Soldati, che essi ricevono ogni tre mesi. 18124. 11. -
Per n.° 218. Reclute, defalcati 1515. Scudi, che sono stati rimessi da n.° 7. Soldati licenziati. 7857. 3. 19.
Spese fatte per rimandare n. 59. Soldati licenziati nelle loro Patrie, cioè:
Pagati alla Veneranda Congregazione delle Navi Scudi di Malta 174. 3. 13. } 617. 4. -
Pagati a bastimenti particolari . . . . . 443. - 7.
Vestiario { Panno, fodera, ed altre cose simili . . . . . 5365. 6. 18. } 6240. 6. 18.
Manifattura . . . . . 875. - - }
Olio per le lampadi dei Soldati, che si accendono tutta la notte . . . . . 916. 8. 8.
Carbone . . . . . 1234. 3. 15.
Spese pe' letti, materasse, lenzuola ec. . . . . 2966. 7. 15.
Minute spese fissate all'anno per le Compagnie . . . . . 270. - -
Riparazioni delle Armi . . . . . 342. 2. -
Riparazioni nei Quartieri . . . . . 167. 9. -
Affitto di tre Case pagato al Tesoro . . . . . 912. - -
Polvere pagata al Tesoro . . . . . 249. 2. 12.
Per n.° 36. caldaje . . . . . 626. 4. -
Carta, libri ec. per l'Amministrazione, carta per i cartocci, stampa delle Ordinanze, e dei Congedi ed altre diverse piccole spese . . . . . 499. 3. -
Scudi di Malta. 98520. 5. 16.
Rimangono parte in effetti nel Magazzino, come sono panno, fodere, cappelli, camicie, padrone, cinturini, cinture di fucili, ec. e parte in danaro in Cassa, ed in danaro, che ancora resta presso dei Reclutanti. . . . . 24301. 3. 8.
Scudi di Malta. 132821. 9. 4

DAI conti renduti appare che noi abbiamo speso 10200. scudi meno degli scudi 108720. fissati dal Sagro Consiglio per l'annuale spesa del Reggimento: ciò è provenuto dagli scudi 4700. d'avanzo, che ha avuto l'Amministrazione per non essere stato compito il Reggimento; ma si deve riflettere, che a cagione degli ostacoli prodotti dalla presente guerra, non si è potuto far le reclute, che erano necessarie. Potrebbe parere effervi qualche differenza tra il Bilancio del Tesoro, ed il presente Conto dell'Amministrazione: ma ciò nasce perchè il Tesoro fa il suo conto di Maggio in Maggio, e l'Amministrazione lo rende a S. A. E. ed al Sagro Consiglio di Agosto in Agosto; e per ciò non essendo la stessa la spesa, che si fa ogni mese ne viene, che ancorchè sia diverso, non è meno vero ed esatto l'uno che l'altro conto.

La spesa dal 1. Maggio 1780. fin al 30. Aprile 1781 è di Scudi di Malta 99888. 5. 18.
Il pane . . . . . 21374. 4. 7.
Scudi di Malta 121262. 10. 5.

La spesa dal 1. Agosto 1780. fin al 31. Luglio 1781. è di Scudi di Malta 98520. 5. 16.
Il pane . . . . . 21683. 3. 6.
Scudi di Malta 120203. 9. 2.

La spesa poi dello scorso anno dal 1. Agosto 1779. fin al 31. Luglio 1780. ascese a Scudi di Malta 101994. 2. 16. } 123458. 11. 7.
Pane . . . . . 21464. 8. 11. }

Alla quale se fi aggiunge la sopradetta somma del presente anno di . . . . . 98520. 5. 16. } 120203. 9. 2.
Pane . . . . . 21683. 3. 6. }

Si avrà per gli due anni la somma totale compreso il pane di . . . . . Scudi di Malta. 243662. 8. 9.

Conviene altresì considerare, che se il Reggimento fosse stato compito la spesa sarebbe stata ogni anno di cinque mila Scudi di più incirca.

Finalmente secondo l'Ordinazione del Sagro Consiglio di Ritenzione del 24. Aprile 1777. si ritiene una piccola somma sulla paga dei Cavalieri, e dei Soldati per formare un fondo per gl'invalidi del Reggimento, il quale va crescendo ogni anno scudi 2200. in circa; e la Congregazione ha già impiegato sulla Massa Frumentaria di questa Università nove mila scudi, i quali non sono compresi negli scudi 34301 3. 8. che si disse di sopra restare in potere dell'Amministrazione.

In fede *Il Bali di Majorca Sinisalco Ribas Il Bali di Brandembourg Barone de Truchsess Il Bali Vincentini Il Bali de Tigné Il Commissario Commendatore Caumaño Il Colonnello Freslon Il Commissario Cavaliere Neveu Il Commissario e Provveditore Le Chevalier Antoine de Lagondet Il Commissario Commendatore Ventimiglia.*

NAZIONI DELLE QUALI E' COMPOSTO IL REGGIMENTO DI MALTA.

Romani.	Napolitani.	Francesi.	Maltesi.	Fiamminghi.	Bolognesi.	Modanesi e Parmigiani.	Germanesi.	Corsi.	Spagnuoli.	Tedeschi.	Toscani.	Veneziani.	Avignonesi.	Totale del Reggim.
80.	115.	239.	290.	117.	25.	27.	22.	7.	6.	38.	57.	22.	21.	1066.

ETA' DEI SOLDATI IL 31. LUGLIO 1781.

Meno di anni 16.	16. a 20.	20. a 25.	25. a 30.	30. a 35.	35. a 40.	40. in sopra	Totale.
71.	111.	276.	247.	166.	92.	103.	1066.

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AOM 1225 (1748-1749)

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The *La Gazette* (Paris) was a weekly newspaper publishing news concerning domestic and international affairs arriving from various ports and cities in Europe, including Venice, Naples, Rome, Florence, London, Paris and Constantinople. It featured a diverse array of content, including political updates, military reports, social events, and cultural happenings, encompassing both routine and remarkable news, and offering a thorough summary of current events. *La Gazette* was founded by Théophraste Renaudot, a French physician and philanthropist, on 30 May 1631 with the support of Cardinal Richelieu. A committee under the latter was set up to supervise the editorial of *La Gazette,* a committee consisting of poets, diplomats, as well as Mézaray, the historiographer of the King of France. The newspaper replaced the *nouvelle à la main* (handwritten news sheets which were used for the circulation of political and military news in France prior the founding of the *La Gazette*). Published every Sunday, the newspaper continued unabated until December 1761, at which time it was renamed *La Gazette de France*. Thirty years later, during the early revolutionary years it passed into the hands of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and after the execution of Louis XVI on 20 January 1793, it was renamed *Gazette Nationale de France* and ran until September 1915. Throughout the *ancien régime*, *La Gazette* was highly influenced and controlled by the state to provide news from far and near, in this order. That said, while the French government was closely supporting and overseeing the editorial of this newspaper, it does not render the information provided unreliable. Most of the information can be corroborated from other sources. The various issues of the *La Gazette,* compiled in a yearly collection of these newspapers, were perused to tease out the diverse information circulating at the time about Ottoman's plans of arming for war against Malta, and other news concerning the alarms of 1722-23, 1731-33 and 1761. It is interesting to note how plans to attack Malta were considered newsworthy information for French society. For further information on the history *La Gazette*, see: Harcourt Brown, 'History and

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La Gazette of 24 April 1723, Issue 17, Naples 23 March 1723.
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Quincy, Joseph Sevin-de, *Mémoires du chevalier de Quincy. III. 1710-1713* (Paris, Société de l'histoire de France, 1901). (This volume offers valuable insights into the political, military, and social events of early 18th-century France, as seen through the eyes of a contemporary observer. It was used to gain insight into Bourlamaque's family background. His military reports significantly contributed to the island's defence, making him a character worthy of in-depth study).

Vauban, Sébastien le Prestre, *Ouvres Militaire du Maréchal Vauban-Tome 2nd Contenant Le Traité de la Défense des Places* (Paris, Librairie pour l'Art militaire et les sciences et arts, 1794). (This source was used to understand the influence of Vauban in Brigadier de Bourlamaque's military recommendations for Malta).

Vertot, René-Aubert de, *The History of the Knights of St John,* volume I (London, 1728). (The abbé de Vertot was a commissioned historiographer of the Order of St John who has produced a detailed history of the institution, although the Order itself felt that certain portions he presented were not entirely correct. This work proved useful for the history of the Order in the 1720s, the institution's *raison d'être* at the time and the knights' memory of the siege of 1565 in the 18th century).

Vertot, René-Aubert de, *The History of the Knights Hospitallers*, volume 2 (London, 1728). (This work was perused for the general context of the Order in the years concerning the 1722 alarm and the influence a ransomed slave from Malta had on the Ottoman plans for the attack of the island. It also provided maps of Malta and its harbours drawn in the 1720s).

Published Secondary Sources

Abulafia, David, *The Great Sea. A Human History of the Mediterranean* (London, Penguin Group, 2011). (This book provides a comprehensive account on the history of the Mediterranean since 22,000 BC to the present times. It contributed to the dissertation's contextual framework of the 18th century, especially the ties of France with the Levant).

Ágoston, Gábor, 'The Ottoman Empire and Europe' in *The Oxford Handbook of Early Modern European History*, 1350-1750, vol. 2, H. Scott (ed.) Oxford University Press, Oxford 2015, 612-637. (This chapter explores the multifaceted interactions between the Ottoman Empire and Europe during the early modern period. It was used to gain insight in the Ottoman military strength in the Mediterranean during the 18th century).

Ágoston, Gábor, 'Ottoman Warfare in Europe 1453-1836,' in *European Warfare 1453-1815,* J. Black (ed.) Palgrave Macmillan, London 1999, 118-144. (This article offers an in-depth examination of the military strategies, and organizational systems used by the Ottoman Empire. It investigates how the Ottomans adjusted to evolving warfare over almost four centuries, emphasizing their influence on European political and military contexts. It was used to understand the military policy of the Ottomans in the 18th century, confirming that Hospitaller Malta was not longer at the centre of its policies).

Alder, Ken, *Engineering the Revolution: Arms and Enlightenment in France, 1763-1815* (London, University of Chicago Press, 2010). (The book delves into the connection between technological advancements and political shifts during the French Revolution. It investigates how progress in military engineering and weaponry affected revolutionary ideas and actions, shaping the trajectory of French history during this crucial time. It also provided information of the arms factory of Saint-Étienne and the entrepreneur Jean-Joseph Carrier de Monthieu who saw to the completion of the 1759 firearms contract of the Order by mid-1760s).

Allard, Michel, 'Antoine-Louis Rouillé Secrétaire d'État à la Marine 1749-1754,' *Revue d'Histoire des Sciences*, 30, 2 (1977), 97-103. (This work provided information on the role of Rouillé as Minister for the Navy and his efforts in the re-organisation of the royal navy, including the changes he made which affected the French knights serving in the navy of France).

Allen, David F., 'Charles II, Louis XIV and the Order of Malta,' in *European History Quarterly*, 20 (1990), 323-328. (This article provides a solid basis for the study of the Order's diplomacy. It highlights the importance and the relevance of the knights' diplomacy in European international relations and its pragmatism in safeguarding the Order's interests in Latin Christendom).

Amorós i Gonell, Francesc, 'Malta i els cavallers hospitalers de l'orde militar de Sant Joan de Jerusalem durant la Guerra de Successió (1702-1714). Notícies extretes de la correspondència Diplomàtica', *Pedralbes: Revista d'Historia Moderna*, 26 (2006), 263-352. (This work explores the role of Hospitaller Malta during the War of

Spanish Succession (1702-1714). It delves into the strategic and political influences that shaped the Order's involvement in this war and it was used for information about the Order's perceived neutrality during the War of the Spanish Succession (1701-1714)).

Andrès, Bernard and Willemin-Andrès, Patricia, *Journal du Siege du Quebec du 10 Mai au 18 Septembre 1759* (Canada, Les Presses Université Laval, 2009). (The journal offers insights into the events, strategies, and personal experiences of those involved in the Seven Years' War (1756-1763), but it was useful to obtain biographical details on some of the experts of the French team sent to Malta in 1761, especially after their return from the Canadian wars in 1760).

Astier, Régine, 'Françoise Prévost: The Unauthorized Biography,' in *Women's Work: Making Dance in Europe before 1800*, M. Brooks (ed.) University of Wisconsin Press, Madison 2007, 123-159. (This chapter outlines the life of the dancer Françoise Prévost, who was the mistress of Ambassador Jean-Jacques de Mesmes. It speaks of the *mémoire* published by the ambassador against her, in revenge for her alleged infidelity. It was useful to understand the character behind the diplomat of the Order).

Atauz, Ayse Devrim*, Eight Thousand Years of Maltese Maritime History. Trade, piracy, and naval warfare in the central Mediterranean: the maritime history and archaeology of Malta* (Florida, University Press of Florida, 2008). (This work covers the extensive maritime history of Malta, focusing on trade, piracy, and naval warfare in the central Mediterranean. The book delves into the archaeological and historical evidence to illustrate how Malta's strategic location influenced its maritime activities over millennia).

Autrand Françoise, Bély Lucien, Contamine Philippe and Lentz Thierry, *Histoire de la Diplomatie Française du Moyen Age à l'Empire*, volume 1 (Paris, Tempus Perrin, 2005). (This work provides an in-depth study of French diplomacy from the middle ages to the Napoleonic Empire. It was consulted for the history and development of European diplomacy).

Bamford, Paul W., 'The Knights of Malta and the King of France,' *French Historical Studies*, 3, 4 (1964), 429-453. (Bamford's study investigates the intricate relationship between the French monarchy and the Knights of Malta. The research highlights political alliances, conflicts, and the reciprocal influence between these two influential powers during the early modern era).

Bély, Lucien, *Dictionnaire de l'Ancien Régime* (Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1996). (This dictionary was instrumental in understanding certain French terminologies of the *ancien régime*. It clarified terms such as *'droit d'aubaine'* and various tax-related terms like '*vingtième*,' both of which are pertinent to the Order and France).

Berridge, Geoff R., Lloyd, Lorna (eds.), *Dictionary of Diplomacy*, Palgrave Macmillan, London 2012. (A useful handbook for definitions in diplomacy, some of which were encountered in the documents).

Bienassis, Loic, 'Richelieu and Britain (1634-1642)' in *'The Contending Kingdoms' France and England 1420-1700,* G. Richardson (ed.) Ashgate, Hampshire 2008, 133-146. (It was perused to understand French policy under Cardinal Richelieu and the long-term effects of his foreign policy against the Habsburgs).

Black, John, Hashimzader, Nigar, and Myles Gareth, *Dictionary of Economics* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2012). (This book is a dictionary of economics. It has been used to understand the term monopsony, which was the arms market system between private contractors and the King of France of the late 17th to the 18th century).

Black, Jeremy, *Eighteenth Century Europe* (New York, St Martin's Press, 1999a). (This provides a good account on Europe and the wider world and on the crises of the French revolution. It explores social, cultural and economic topics but it was mostly used to understand Europe's balance of power in the early modern period).

Black, Jeremy, *From Louis XIV to Napoleon* (Oxon, Routledge, 1999b). (The book explores the profound transformations in military, political, and social spheres that shaped modern Europe, highlighting key developments and conflicts that led from the era of Louis XIV's expansive ambitions to the rise and fall of Napoleon Bonaparte. It provided valuable insights into critical moments when France's involvement in wars could have impacted its ability to offer military assistance to Malta).

Black, Jeremy, *A History of Diplomacy* (London, Reaktion Books, 2010). (This book explores the shift of the monarchic system of the 16th century to the colonial development of European nations. It was used to study the ever-changing role of international relations and the influence of diplomacy in the early modern period).

Blondy, Alain, 'La France et Malte au XVIIIeme siècle: Le Probleme de la Double Nationalite', in *Malta a Case Study of International Cross Currents*, S. Fiorini and V. Mallia-Milanes (eds.) Malta University Publications, Malta 1989, 175-183. (In this chapter, Alain Blondy explores the complex issue of dual nationality between France and Malta in the 18th century. Blondy delves into the historical, political, and social implications of this dual nationality, highlighting its impact on both nations' policies and their citizens' identities. It was used to understand the outcome of the diplomatic resolution of the Corona Ottomana and the benefits this left to the Maltese).

Blondy Alain, 'Malte, enjeu Diplomatique Europeén au XVIIIeme siècle,' in *Méditerranée Mer Ouverte, Tome I: Du XVIeme au XVIIIeme siècle*, C. Villain-Gandossi, L. Durteste and S. Busuttil (eds.) International Foundation, Malta 1997, 109-122. (An important paper for the understanding of Hospitaller Malta's position within the diplomatic network of the 18th century).

Blondy, Alain and Berenger, Jean, *Documents Consulaires: Lettres recues par le Chargé d'Affaires du Roi a Malte au XVIII* siècle, volumes 1-5 (Valletta, Fondation de Malte, 2014). (This five-volume seminal publication provides insights into the

method of communication between French consuls stationed in the Mediterranean ports. It provides useful information on the role of the *Homme du Roi* in Malta).

Blondy, Alain, *L'Ordre de Malte au XVIIIe siècle. Des derniers splendeurs à la ruine* (Paris, Editions Bouchene, 2002). (This book explores the Order of Malta's 18th century history, tracing its rise to opulence and subsequent decline. It analyzes internal and external challenges, such as economic troubles, political pressures, and social changes, highlighting factors that led to the Order's collapse. This work underpinned the dissertation, offering insights into the Franco-Hospitaller connection in the 18th century).

Blondy, Alain, 'Un Pamphlet Scandaleux Contre Malte et L'Ordre de St Jean, 'L'Ordre de Malte dévoilé' du pseudo CARASI,' *Melita Historica*, 11, 1 (1992), 59-75. (Blondy examines the controversial pamphlet 'L'Ordre de Malte dévoilé' attributed to the pseudonymous Carasi. This article delves into the scandalous claims and criticisms made against the Order of St John, shedding light on the broader political and social tensions of the time. It was useful to understand the anti-Hospitaller sentiment of the recruited soldier in Marseille, destined for the Regiment of Malta).

Blondy, Alain, *Des Nouvelles de Malte. Correspondence de M. L'Abbé Boyer (1738-1777)* (Brussels, P.I.E-Peter Lang, 2004). (This book presents a collection of letters from the Abbé Boyer, offering valuable insights into 18th-century Maltese life and politics. The book provides a detailed and personal perspective on the daily affairs, diplomatic relations, and social conditions in Malta during this period).

Blondy, Alain, *Malte et Marseille au XVIIIème siècle* (Malta, Fondation de Malte, 2013). (This book examines the commercial relations between Malta and Marseille in the 18th century. It was useful for identifying ways how the Order tackled its diplomatic issues within the European diplomatic context, such as the neutrality policy issue and the Congress of Cambrai).

Bonnefoy, François, 'Maximillien Titon, Directeur Génèral des Magasins d'armes de Louis XIV, et le Dévelopment des Armes Portatives en France,' *Histoire, Économie et Societé*, 5, 3 (1986), 353-380. (Bonnefoy's paper examines Maximillien Titon's influence on the progression of portable firearms in France. It outlines Titon's significant role in the development of Louis XIV's armouries, emphasizing his impact on 17th century French military technology. This was useful to understand the administration of war in France and how this influenced the Order, especially when the knights made arms deals with Titon's descendants).

Bonnefoy, François, *Les Armes de Guerre Portatives en France, du début du Règne de Louis XIV a la Veille de la Revolution (1660-1789). De l'Indépendence a la Primauté*, Tome 1 (Paris, Librairie de l'Inde, 1991). (This first volume of two, examines the development and evolution of portable weapons in France from the early reign of Louis XIV to the eve of the Revolution. The study provides a detailed analysis of the technological, military, and historical aspects of French portable weaponry during this period. It was useful to understand how the process of

procurement for arms for the Order engaged into the French system of arms production).

Brincat, Fleur, *The Bailli de Tigné, Military Engineer, Commissioner of Fortifications and Military Engineer (1716-1801)* (Malta, International Institute for Baroque Studies, 2011). (This study focuses on two French military engineers commissioned by the Order of St John for the defence of Malta. It sheds light on Hospitaller Malta's interaction with 18th century France for the fortification of the Maltese archipelago).

Brincat, Fleur, 'Two French Military Engineers in Eighteenth Century Malta,' *Journal of the Monastic Military Orders*, 4 (2012), 89-110 (This article provides an overview of the contributions and roles of two French engineers in Malta, the Brigadier René Jacob de Tigné arriving on the island during the 1714-15 alarm, and his nephew Fra François René Jacob de Tigné arriving with the French team during the 1761 alarm. It also highlights the French influence on Malta's military architecture in the 18th century).

Brodhead, John Romeyn, *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York*, volume 10 (Albany, Weed, Parsons & Co., 1858). (This book provides a translated copy of a letter which Bourlamaque sent to the chief commissioner of the colonies, after his mission to Malta. It was used to compile Bourlamaque's biographical details).

Brogini, Anne, *Malte, Frontière de Chrétienté (1530-1670)* (Rome, L'École Française de Rome, 2006). (This published doctorate thesis concerns Malta of the late 16th and 17th century as the frontline of Christianity. The book speaks of the arrival of the Order of Malta, the Hospitallers' presence in the Mediterranean, the fortifications of the island, the corsairing and commercial activities. It was a good source of information on the consular office in Malta).

Brogini, Anne, 'Une Méditerranée Marseillaise ? L'élan des marchands provençaux en Méditerranée occidentale (env. 1590-env. 1660),' in *Le Mer en Partage Sociétés littorales et économies maritimes XVIe-XXe siècle*, X. Daumalin, D. Faget and O. Raveux **(**eds.) Presses Universitaires de Provence, Provence 2016, 153-163. (This chapter investigates the influence of Provençal merchants in the western Mediterranean from approximately 1590 to 1660. The study highlights the commercial expansion and maritime activities of Marseille's traders, showcasing their impact on regional economies and maritime trade networks during this period).

Bulletin de la Sociéte Archéologue de Nantes et du Départment de la Loire-Inférieure, Tome 32 (Nante, Bureaux de la Société Archéologique, 1893). (This book was used for information about the Estates of Brittany, their commission to Gabriel-Jean-Baptiste de Freslon to congratulate Grand Master de Rohan and Freslon's connection to Malta).

Buttigieg, Emanuel*, Nobility, Faith and Masculinity: The Hospitaller Knights of Malta c.1580-c.1700* (London and New York, Continuum, 2011). (This publication examined the process of becoming a knight in the complex hierarchical and

patriarchal systems of the Order. It provides a wide range of sources on the historiography of the Order and was also used for the compilation of the glossary).

Buttigieg, Emanuel and Azzopardi, Simone, 'L'Università tà Malta: A History,' in *The University of Malta: Legacies & Bearings*, K. Sciberras. E. Buttigieg, M. Anthony Falzon, D. Fenech and G. Martin (eds.) Malta University Press, Malta 2020, 1-60. (This chapter provides a historical overview of the University of Malta in Valletta, established under Grand Master Pinto. It was used to trace Pinto's efforts in bolstering Malta's maritime knowledge, which included the setting up of a maritime school at the said university).

Caiani, Ambrogio A., *Louis XVI and the French Revolution, 1789-1792* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2012). (This book examines the intricate aspects of Louis XVI's rule during the crucial period of the French Revolution. It offers an in-depth analysis of the political challenges faced by the King and his reactions to the revolutionary forces. It reveals the Order's Grand Master's interest in retaining the favour with the French royals by way of traditional gifts despite the political turmoil brought about by the revolution).

Campbell, Peter R., *Power and Politics in Old Regime France 1720-1745* (London, Routledge, 1996). (This book delves into the mechanisms of power and the political landscape preceding the French Revolution. It was useful to comprehend the European political shifts of mid-eighteenth century).

Caruana, Joseph, *Termini Nawtici u Taghrif Marittimu Lokali* (Malta, BDL Publishing, 2018). (This dictionary was used for maritime terminology).

Catalogue of the Fonds of the Embassy of Malta 17th - 18th century, Archives Nationales France (Paris). (This catalogue was important for research in primary sources research in the National Archive of France in Paris. It also provides some notes on the history of the archive of the embassy of the Order in Paris).

Cavaliero, Roderick, 'The Decline of the Maltese Corso in the XVIIIth Century,' *Melita Historica*, 2, 4 (1959), 224-238. (This article gives a number of instances where Maltese corsairing in the Levant caused conflict with France, mostly in the first half of the 18th century).

Cavaliero, Roderick, *The Last Crusaders, the knights of St John and Malta in the Eighteenth Century* (London, Hollis & Carter, 1960). (The author provides a good general account of the history of Order of St John in the 18th century. It was particularly useful for the events unfolding during the 1722 alarm).

Celier, Léonce, 'L'Ambassade de l'Ordre de Malte à Paris et ses Archives,' *Revue d'Histoire de l'Église de France*, 22, 96 (1936), 317-337. (This article is an important work on the embassy of the Order in Paris and the archives of the embassy now housed at the National Archives of France, Paris).

Chaix d'Est-Ange, Gustave, *Dictionnaire des Familles Françaises Anciennes ou Notables à la fin du XIXe siècle*, Tome 19 (Évreux, Imprimerie Charles Hèrissey,

1927). (This dictionary for the nobility of France was perused to find the roots of colonel Freslon and his family, as well as, their connection to the Order of St John).

Chaline, Olivier, *Les Armées du Roi. Le Grand Chantier XVII^e^-XVIII^e^ siècle* (Paris, Armand Colin, 2016). (This book examines the development and organization of the French royal armies during the 17th and 18th centuries. The book explores the military reforms, logistical challenges, and strategic innovations that shaped France's military power and influenced European warfare during this period. It was used to understand French military administration and logistics in which the Order's procurement procedures were bound to integrate).

Charles, James, *An universal Military Dictionary in English and French in which are explained the terms of the Principal Sciences that are necessary for the Information of an Officer* (London, T. Egerton, 1816). (This military dictionary was useful to understand military terms and for the compilation of the glossary).

Chapman, Sara E., *Private Ambition and Political Alliances. The Phélypeaux de Pontchartrain Family and Louis XIV's Government, 1650-1715* (Suffolk, University of Rochester Press, 2004). (Focusing on the influential Phélypeaux de Pontchartrain family, the book offers a comprehensive analysis of their role and impact on the French government during this period. It examines Cardinal Richelieu's policies in turning France into an absolutist state, enhancing Bourbon power, and establishing government control through provincial intendants).

Ciappara, Frans, 'Integration with Britain in the eighteenth century?', in *Melitensium Amor: Festschrift in honour of Dun Gwann Azzopardi*, T. Cortis, T. Freller, L. Bugeja (eds.) (Malta, 2002). (This paper sheds light on a covert plan of integrating Malta with Britain during the Seven Years' War, a plan which never materialised. It nonetheless highlights the competing nature of major powers (France and Britain in this case) in the 18th century and their foreign policies concerning the island of Malta, in this case based on naval and commercial needs).

Ciappara, Frans, 'Malta Napoli e la Santa Sede metà del 700,' *Mediterranea: Ricerche Storiche*, 5, 12 (2008), 173-188. (This paper explores the intricate relationships between Malta, Naples, and the Holy See during the mid-eighteenth century. It was useful to understand the context of the relations between Naples in Malta, the position of Bernardo Tanucci on the independence of the island and Pinto's attitude of a sovereign prince, which explains his emphasis on having his right as independent sovereign to keep the Corona Ottomana vessel in 1761).

Ciappara, Frans, *Church-state Relations in Late-eighteenth-century Malta: Gio. Nicolo Muscat (1735-1803)* (Malta, Malta University Press, 2018). (This book delves into the intricate dynamics between religious and civil authorities during Muscat's time in the second half of the 18th century. It provides a detailed analysis of his influence on church-state interactions and the broader implications for Maltese society. It was used to understand the background of the author of the pamphlet written in 1760 about the revolt of the Christian slaves and the taking of the Corona Ottomana).

Clavière, René de Maulde-La, *La Diplomatie au Temps de Machiavel*, volume 1 (Paris, Ernest Leroux, 1892). (The book delves into the diplomatic strategies, political manoeuvres, and international relations of the early 16th century, providing a comprehensive analysis of Machiavelli's influence on contemporary diplomacy. This book was used to understand the origins of diplomacy, and to appreciate the view on diplomacy from a 19th century French historian on the subject).

Collins, James B., *The State in Early Modern France* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2009). (This book provides an in-depth analysis of the political, social, and economic structures of France during the early modern period. The book explores the development of the French state, examining the complexities and dynamics that shaped its evolution from the 16th to the 18th century. It was used to support the claim that studies on the Old Regime continued to evolve since Collins' claim of 2003, which stated that the focus of French history of the 18th century was skewed toward the French Revolution of 1789).

Commission Française d'Histoire Maritime, *Chronique d'Histoire Maritime / Commission Française d'Histoire Maritime* (Paris, Société Française d'histoire maritime, 2005). (This is a comprehensive chronicle of maritime history. This volume compiles scholarly articles, historical analyses, and research findings that explore various aspects of French and global maritime history, including naval battles, trade routes, and maritime policies).

Cormack, William S., *Revolution and Political Conflict in the French Navy 1789-1794* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1995). (This book explores the impact of the French Revolution on the French Navy. It investigates the internal conflicts, mutinies and political upheavals that affected naval operations. It was useful to understand the French knights' difficulty in serving two masters at the same time, that is: the King of France and the Grand Master of the Order, as well as, grand prior d'Orléans influence in the officers' corps of the French royal navy).

Côté, Marie-Hélène, 'What Did It Mean to be a French Diplomat in the Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth Centuries?' *Canadian Journal of History/Annales canadiennes d'histoire*, 45, 2 (2010), 235-258. (This is an important article for the historiography of diplomacy and it was useful for the drafting of the methodology for the dissertation).

D'Amora, Rosita, 'The Diplomatic relations between Naples and the Ottoman Empire in the mid-eighteenth century: Cultural Perceptions,' *Oriente Moderno,* Nuova serie, anno 22, 83, 3 (2003), 715-727. (This article examines the diplomatic interactions and cultural perceptions between Naples and the Ottoman Empire during the mid-1700s. It was used to identify the treatises between the Kingdom of Naples and the Ottoman Empire, which was the fundamental reason why Naples could not side with the Order in the case of the Corona Ottomana affair. Unlike France, Naples took a stand against the Order to safeguard its peace with the Porte).

Dauber, Robert L., *The Navy of the Order of Malta at the Danube in the War against the Turks 1736-39* (Vienna, The Author, 2011). (Consulted for the European political scenario of the 1720s and the political changes involving the fiefdom of Malta).

Depasquale, Carmen, 'Bailli de Froullay, Knight, Sailor and Diplomat,' *Melita Historica*, 13, 2 (2001), 221-228. (This article presents the life and career of Louis-Gabriel de Froullay who rose to the rank of ambassador of the Order from 1741 to 1766. This paper was useful to understand the background and career of this ambassador).

Depasquale, Carmen, 'French Knights and Maltese Inhabitants in the XVIII century,' *Storja 2003-2004* (2004), 45-61. (This study examines the interactions and relationships between French knights and the local Maltese population during the 18th century. The study delves into social, cultural, and political dynamics of the period, providing details on their mutual influences. This was used to understand the closeness of the French knights to the Maltese, and their influence on the islands).

Depasquale, Carmen, *La Vie Intellectuelle et Culturelle des Chevaliers Français à Malte au XVIIIeme Siecle* (Malta, Malta University Press, 2010). (This book studied the wills, diaries, manuscripts and printed works and correspondence of French knights. The author presents a useful aspect of French enlightenment in Malta).

Depasquale, Carmen, 'Feasts, Celebrations, and Spectacle in Eighteenth-century Malta,' in *Scientiae et Patria, Festschrift in honour of Maroma Camilleri*, G. Farrugia and T. Vella (eds.) Malta Libraries, Malta 2024, 161-172. (In this recently published festschrift, Depasquale presents a chapter on the celebrations and religious feasts in 18th-century Malta as related by an unknown diarist in 1791. It was used for information about the celebrations thrown in Birgu in 1739 for the election of Cardinal de Tencin, uncle of the Bailli Guérin de Tencin, a Captain of the Galleys of the Order).

Doyle, William, *The Oxford Handbook of the Ancien Régime* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2012). (This book serves as a comprehensive resource for understanding the complexities and functions of the *ancien régime*. It was used to support the claim that studies on the Old Regime continued to evolve since Colin's claim of 2003, which stated that the focus of French history of the 18th century was skewed toward the French Revolution of 1789).

Dubessy, Raymond, *Historique de la Manufacture d'Armes de Saint-Étienne* (Saint-Etienne, 1900). (This book provides a comprehensive history of the Saint-Étienne arms manufacturing plant. It explores the development, production processes, and historical significance of this prominent French arms manufacturer from its inception. It was used to study the connection between the Order of St John and Malta, including the weapons bought from the entrepreneurs of Saint-Étienne for Malta).

Duffy, Christopher, *Siege Warfare: The Fortress in the Early Modern World 1494-1660* (London, Routledge, 1997). (Though this book focuses on the implications of the fortress and military organisation, it sheds light on the political expansion of France during the reign of Henri IV. It was therefore useful to build on the context leading up to the timeframe of the study).

Dull, Jonathan, *The French Navy and the Seven Years War* (Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 2005). (This monograph provides an in-depth analysis of the role and operations of the French Navy during the Seven Years' War (1756-1763). It examines the strategic, political, and logistical challenges faced by the French naval forces and their impact on the broader conflict).

Dunmore, John, *Storms and Dreams: Louis de Bougainville: Soldiers, Explorer, Statesman* (Canada, Read How You Want Ltd., 2010). (This book reveals the multifaceted life of Louis de Bougainville, highlighting his roles as a soldier, explorer, and statesman. It was useful to understand the relevance and importance of this character and the calibre of French soldiers and well-connected individuals wanting to render service to Malta, which supports the theory that Hospitaller Malta was considered a lucrative place).

Earle, Peter, *Corsairs of Malta and Barbary* (London, Sidwick & Jackson, 1970). (This seminal publication examines the history and activities of the corsairs operating in the Mediterranean, focusing on those based in Malta and the Barbary Coast. The work explores their maritime strategies, economic impact, and the geopolitical implications of their piracy during the relevant period. It was perused to understand the naval engagements of the Mediterranean, especially the corsairing activities of Malta and the Barbarian threat on Christian vessels).

Ebejer, Matthias, 'Reactions in Hospitaller Malta to the Enlightenment and Revolution in France', *Sacra Militia,* 13, 2014, 3-13. (This article examines the response of Malta's Hospitaller Order to the French Enlightenment and Revolution's intellectual and political upheavals. It analyses the Order's ideological, social, and political adaptations, highlighting Grand Master de Rohan's reforms in the Regiment of Malta, particularly through appointing a French Colonel to improve discipline).

Eldem, Edhem, *French Trade in Istanbul in the Eighteenth Century* (Leiden, Brill, 1999). (This book, based on French and Ottoman sources, studies the long-term trends of Franco-Ottoman trade, focusing on French imports. It concludes that 18th century French trade dominance resulted from diplomatic leverage, exploring factors that affected Levantine trade and measures to avoid conflict with the Ottomans. It also highlights the importance of Malta's harbour in maintaining this success).

Engel, Claire-Elaine, *Knights of Malta. A Gallery of Portraits* (London, George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1963). (This book provides biographical sketches and historical context, highlighting the contributions and significance of these individual knights within the Order's history. This was useful to obtain biographical details of knights, some of whom became ambassadors of the Order).

Engel, Claire-Elaine, *Histoire de L'Ordre de Malte* (Genève, Les Editions Nagel, 1968). (This book offers a comprehensive history of the Order of Malta, detailing its origins, development, and key historical events. It explores the Order's religious, military, and political activities, emphasizing its enduring influence on European and Mediterranean history. This is a valid book for the historiography of the Order, and offers insights in the Franco-Hospitaller relations).

Engel, Claire-Elaine, *Les chevaliers de Malte* (Paris, Les Presses Contemporaine, 1972). (This book provides a detailed history of the Knights of Malta, covering their religious, military, and political roles. It examines their influence and significance throughout different historical periods, highlighting their lasting impact on European and Mediterranean affairs. This is an important book for the historiography of Hospitaller Malta).

Fassal, Johanna 'Punchinello meets the Turk: Giambattista Tiepolo's chorus of Oriental spectators and the transformation of cultural Otherness,' in *The Turk and Islam in the Western Eye, 1450-1750: Visual Imagery before Orientalism*, J.G. Harper (ed.) Surrey, Ashgate, 2011, 95-125. (Although this chapter focuses on the influence of Oriental elements in Western art, it also outlines the Ottoman-Venetian relationship and the prolonged peace they enjoyed following the Treaty of Passarowitz in 1718. This context explains Venice's hesitation and fear of conflict with the Ottomans if it were to supply weapons to Malta against the Ottoman Empire in 1761).

Fauteux, Aegidius, *Les Chevaliers de Saint-Louis en Canada* (Montreal, Les Éditions des Dix, 1940). (This book explores the history and contributions of the Knights of Saint Louis in Canada. It was used to compile military biographical detail, of the French engineers sent to Malta for its defence against the Ottomans in 1761).

Ferry, Ferréol de, 'Le Bailli de Suffren, Ambassadeur de L'Ordre de Malte à Paris (1786-1788),' *Provence Historique*, Fascicule, 180 (1995), 193-209. (This is an important article which examines the role of the Order's ambassador through the Bailli de Suffren. It was useful for some details on the Order's embassy in France).

Gabriel, Charles-Nicolas, *Le Marechal de camp Desandrouins 1729-1792: Guerre du Canada, 1756-1760 & Guerre de l'Independence Américaine, 1780-1782* (Verdun, Imprimerie Renvé Lallemant, 1887). (This biographical work details the military career of the *Marechal de camp* Desandrouins in the Canadian campaigns of the Seven Years' War and his participation in the American War of Independence. It was used to compile information on the French engineers just before their decision to join the mission to Malta in 1761).

Ganado, Albert, 'The Funeral of Angelo Emo in Malta in 1792: A Pictorial Record,' *Melita Historica, Proceedings of History Week*, (1993), 151-180. (This study presents a detailed visual and historical account of Angelo Emo's funeral in Malta. It also explores the significance of the event and its portrayal through contemporary illustrations and records. It was perused for information on the role of the knight Charles Abel de Loras in the recruitment process for the Regiment of Malta and for his biographical details).

Gantet, Claire, *Guerre, Paix et construction des États 1618-1714* (France, Seuil, 2003). (Provided useful information on the development of the role of diplomats from the 15th to the 18th century and their contribution to the development of early modern states. It helped identify the role of the Order's ambassador as a representative, negotiator and informer).

Gauci, Liam, *In the Name of the Prince, Maltese Corsairs 1760-1798* (Malta, Heritage Malta, 2016). (This book explores the activities and impact of Maltese corsairs during the late 18th century. It provides a detailed analysis of their operations, legal status, and the broader socio-political context within which they operated. It was useful to gain insights on Malta's corsairing activities of the 18th century. It also provided information on the roles of corsair Zelalich in the taking of the Corona Ottomana in 1761, which precipitated a major Ottoman threat to the island).

Geyl, Peter, 'Holland and England during the War of the Austrian Succession,' *History*, 10, 37 (1925), 47-51. (This article was used to understand the situation of Holland in 1747 at the time the Order had made an order for the purchase of masts through France).

Godechot, Jacques, 'La France et Malte au XVIIIe Siècle', *Revue Historique*, Tome 206, Fasc 1 (1951), 67-79. (This is a very useful paper which provides an overview of the close-knit ties of France and Malta and the impact the French revolution had on this alliance. Godechot's claim that Malta was a dependency and colony of France was used as part of the investigation of the Franco-Hospitaller relationship in this dissertation).

Godechot, Jacques, *Histoire de Malte* (Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1981). (This book provides a generic overview of the history of Malta from ancient times, but it provides useful information of the involvement of Malta in the commerce of France. It was used to provide an example of the historiography that speaks of the 1765 decree as an important gesture by France towards Malta).

Goffman, Daniel, *The Ottoman Empire and Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2009). (This book illustrates how the Ottoman state was integral to European politics, economy, and even culture, presenting a nuanced view that portrays the Ottomans as active participants in the making of early modern Europe. It provided useful insight on the Franco-Ottoman alliance of the 16th century, and it also place Tanucci's threat of sheltering the Ottoman fleet in Sicilian waters in the context of similar previous approaches between Christians and Muslims).

Gocek, Fatma Mugek, *East Encounters West: France and the Ottoman Empire in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1987). (This book gives a historical account of the diplomatic mission sent by the Ottoman Empire to France. It was useful to understand the Ottoman's interest in ransoming their slaves from Malta).

Gras, L-J., *Historique de L'Armurerie Stéphanoise. Étude sur le Régime Légal et la Situation Economique de L'Industrie des Armes a Saint-Étienne Depuis Les Origines Jusqu'a nos jours* (Saint-Étienne, Société de L'Imprimerie Théolier, 1905). (This book provides a thorough historical analysis of the armament industry in Saint-Étienne. The study delves into the legal regulations and economic conditions affecting the arms industry, tracing its evolution from its inception to the early 20th century, and highlighting its socio-economic impact and technological advancements. It was used to gain insight into the production of arms industry of

Saint Etienne which helped in connecting the Order's procurement of firearms from this factory).

Grech, Ivan, 'Getting to Know the Enemy: Hospitaller Malta's Intelligence Network in the Early Seventeenth Century,' *Turkish Historical Review*, 9 (2018), 105-150. (This study provides an examination of the espionage and intelligence operations conducted by Hospitaller Malta during the early 1600s. The study explores the organizational framework, methods of intelligence gathering, and the network's effectiveness in obtaining strategic information on Ottoman forces and armaments against Malta. It provided valuable information on how intelligence was directed to Malta and how this guided the Order's military strategies and its diplomatic relations within the context of early modern Mediterranean geopolitics).

Greene, Molly, 'Islam and Europe,' in *A Companion to Eighteenth-century Europe,* P.H. Wilson (ed.) Blackwell Publishing Ltd, Oxford 2014, 387-400. (This chapter examines the multifaceted interactions between Islamic societies and Europe in the 18th century. It was particularly useful for understanding the Ottoman Empire's relationship with Europe in the early 18th century, highlighting cultural, political, and economic exchanges as well as mutual perceptions and influences).

Gregory, Desmond, *Malta, Britain and the European Powers*, 1793-1815, (London, Associated University Presses, 1996). (This book examines how Malta's position influenced British policy and European diplomatic relations, especially amidst the Napoleonic Wars and the shifting balance of power. It was likewise useful to understand British foreign policy for Malta in the final decade of the 18th century and to compare this Britain's earlier decisions about the island during the Seven Years' War, when Malta's harbour became particularly valuable for Britain after losing its naval base in Port-Mahon in Minorca in 1756-1763).

Grima, Joseph F., *The Fleet of the Knights of Malta. Its Organisation during the Eighteenth Century* (Malta, BDL Publishing, 2016). (This monograph provides a comprehensive analysis of the structure and operations of the Knights of Malta's naval fleet in the 18th century. The study explores the organizational framework, strategic roles, and maritime activities of the fleet, highlighting its significance within the broader context of Mediterranean maritime history. It was useful to understand the caravan and naval procurement practises of the Order in the 18th century).

Grimm, Friedrich Melchoir von, *Correspondence Littéraire, Philosophique et Critique de Grimm et De Diderot depuis 1753 jusqu'en 1790*, Tome 12 (Paris, Chez Furne Libraire, 1830). (This publication compiles the literary, philosophical, and critical correspondences between Grimm and Diderot during 1784-1785. This volume provides valuable insights into the intellectual exchanges and cultural discussions of the enlightenment era. It was used to reveal the slanderous writings of abbé Jacques de Delille against the Order, supporting the slander of the foreign soldiers recruited for the Regiment of Malta).

Güttner-Sporzyński, Darius von, 'The life and Career of a Knight of Malta in the age of secularisation: Michele Enrico Sagramoso (1720-1791). The Order of Malta and

the first partition of Poland,' *Ordines Militares Colloquia Torunensia Historica,* 24 (2019), 301-329. (This paper explores Sagramoso's contributions to the Order of Malta. It also places his career within the context of the first partition of Poland. It was also used to obtain biographical details on Sagramoso).

Hardmann, William, *A History of Malta during the period of the French and British Occupations 1798-1815* (Malta, Midsea Books, 1997). (This book provides a detailed account of Malta's historical landscape during these significant occupations. It was used to illustrate the argument that much attention has been given to the French period in Malta (1798-1800) and not the preceding decades when it comes to the connection of Malta to France).

Hoppen, Alison, 'Military Engineers in Malta, 1530-1798', *Annals of Science*, 38, 4, (1981), 413-433. (This paper provides a detailed account on the military engineers arriving in Malta during the knights' sojourn on the island. It was useful to evaluate their importance for the defence of the island, their provenance and the Order's treatment of these men).

Hoppen, Alison, *The Fortification of Malta by the Order of St John 1530-17*98, 2nd edition (Malta, Mireva Publication, 1999). (This book gives a detailed account of the development of fortifications in Malta. It was useful to understand the extent of French military contribution to the defence infrastructure of Malta, even by those French engineers arriving on the island during the Ottoman threat of 1722 and 1761).

Ionna Iordanu, Ionna, 'What News on the Rialto? The Trade of Information and Early Modern Venice's Centralized Intelligence Organization,' *Intelligence and National Security*, 31, 3 (2016), 305-326. (This article investigates the information trade and the establishment of a centralized intelligence network in early modern Venice. The study analyses how Venice's intelligence organization collected, managed, and utilized information, emphasizing its role in the city's political and commercial activities. This was used in the discussion of the Order's intelligence network and Venice's significant contribution to this).

Kérallain, René de, *Les Français au Canada. La Jeunesse de Bougainville et la guerre de Sept ans* (Paris, Imprime de Daupeley-Gouverneur, 1896). (The study provides detailed accounts of French military strategies and Bougainville's contributions, highlighting the broader context of French colonial efforts in North America during this period. It was useful for the understanding of the calibre of Frenchmen wanting to contribute in the defence of Malta).

Kerdu, Pierre Maire Louis de Boisgelin de, *'Ancient and Modern Malta: Containing a description of the ports and cities of the islands of Malta and Gozo,'* vol. II (London, G. & J. Robinson, 1804). (This book was consulted to understand the behind the scenes in the Ottoman military preparation for the taking of Malta and the involvement of a ransomed slave. Volume II is highly insightful on the general history of Malta during the Hospitaller period).

Lacour-Gayet, Georges, *La Marine Militaire de La France sous le régné de Louis XVI* (Paris, Honoré Champion, Libraire-Éditeur, 1905). (This book provides a

comprehensive history of the French military navy. The work details the development, organization, and significant naval operations, highlighting key strategies and technological advancements from its origins through the early 20th century. It was used to trace the Order's connection with Toulon by way of its knights).

Lee, Stephen J., *Aspects of European History 1494-1789* (London, Routledge, 1984). (This work offers an outline of major political, social, and economic developments in Europe from the late 15th to the late 18th century. It was perused for the understanding of France foreign policy from Louis XIV to Louis XVI).

Lucca, Denis de, 'French Military Engineers in Malta during the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries', *Melita Historica*, 8, 1 (1980), 23-33. (This paper sheds light on the Order's custom of turning to France for commissioning works of fortifications. It reveals how this tendency, which had commenced in 17th century, became a custom by the 18th century).

Lucca, Denis de, *Mondion: The achievement of a French military engineer working in Malta in the early eighteenth century* (Malta, Midsea books Ltd., 2003). (This book is a biography of the military engineer Charles François de Mondion and his contributions to Malta from the year he arrived in 1715 until his demise in 1733. It was used to gain further insight into the esteem the Order had for French military engineers arriving in Malta in the 18th century).

Lynn, John, *The Wars of Louis XIV* (Essex, Longman, 1999). (This book examines the military tactics and campaigns of Louis XIV, emphasizing the influence of his rule on European conflict. It explores the wars' political and social consequences, providing a deeper understanding of the period's geopolitical dynamics. It was perused to understand the hierarchy of the French government under Louis XIV, in particular the function of the *Conseil d'en haut*, its ministers and *intendants*).

Lynn, John, 'International Rivalry and Warfare,' in *The Eighteenth Century*, T.C.W Blanning (ed.) Oxford University Press, Oxford 2000, 178-217. (This chapter gave a good insight into the European wars and conflict throughout the 18th century, and it was particularly useful to understand the role of France in these wars).

Magro Conti, Emmanuel, 'Surviving Artillery Pieces of the Order of St John dating from the Maltese Period,' in *Between the Battlesword and the Cross, Masterpieces from the Armoury of Malta*, V.A Cremona, O. Renaudeau and J.P Reverseau (eds.) Gutenberg Press Limited, Malta 2008, 189-206. (This article examines the surviving artillery pieces from the Order of St John in Malta, providing detailed descriptions and historical insights into their design, use, and significance. It also highlights the development of artillery production in 17th and 18th-century Malta. It proved useful in drawing the conclusion that by the 1770s, domestic production of artillery was still insufficient, such that Malta still depended on France for military supplies).

Malcolm, Noel, *Useful Enemies. Islam and the Ottoman Empire in Western Political Thought 1450-1750* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2019). (The book explores how the Ottomans served as both a perceived threat and a means for Western thinkers to critique their societies, highlighting the Eastern political influence on

Western ideas from 1450 to 1750. It has helped to broaden my understanding of the Hospitallers' view of the Ottomans and the Western concept of the 'Useful Enemy').

Mallia-Milanes, Victor, 'The Maltese Consulate in Venice during the XVIII century. A study in the manner of appointment of Maltese consuls overseas,' *Melita Historica*, 5, 4 (1971), 321-343. (This journal investigates the procedures and criteria for appointing Maltese consuls abroad during the 18th century with particular focus on the Maltese consulate in Venice, providing insights into the diplomatic and administrative practices that shaped Malta's international relations during this period).

Mallia-Milanes, Victor, 'The Order of S. John, 1793-1797: impending collapse of a glorious heritage. The despatches of Antonio Miari, Venetian Minister in Malta,' *Hyphen, 3(3)* (1982), 89-115. (By examining the despatches of Antonio Miari, the Venetian Minister in Malta, the article offers comprehensive insights into the political, social, and economic issues that led to the Order of St John's decline during this tumultuous period. It was used to understand the changes in Malta's relationship to France after the onset of the French revolution in 1789).

Mallia-Milanes, Victor, *Venice and Hospitaller Malta 1530-1798. Aspects of a Relationship* (Malta, PEG Ltd., 1992). (This book explores the multifaceted interactions between Venice and the Knights Hospitaller spanning from the time the Order settled on Malta in 1530 to 1798, at which time the Order lost the island to the French. It provided an in-depth insight of the friction caused by the Maltese corsairs with their harassment on Ottoman and Venetian vessels).

Mallia-Milanes, Victor, 'Vol veder di aver Brandizo ovvero Malta': A Hospitaller Odyssey from Rhodes to Malta, 1523-1530', in *The 1522 Siege of Rhodes: Causes, Course, Consequences'*, (ed.) Simon Phillips (Routledge, London, 2022). (This paper explores the Order of St John's odyssey from Rhodes to Malta after their defeat in 1522. It highlights the strategic choices made by Grand Master L'Isle Adam, who sought either Brindisi or Malta as the Order's new base, emphasizing Malta's strategic benefits despite its challenges. It was useful to provide a foundation to Ambassador de Mesmes's claim that Grand Master L'Isle Adam did seek King Francis I solicitation for accepting Malta from Charles V in 1530).

Mansel, Philip, 'Art & Diplomacy in Ottoman Constantinople', *History Today*, 46, 8, (August 1996), 43-49. (This article was useful for the understanding of the Ottoman foreign policy towards European states and the establishment of a European diplomatic corps in Constantinople. It provided details on the first permanent French embassy and its ambassador, Jean de La Forêt (1535-1537), who happened to be a knight of St John. It also sheds light on the development of Franco-Ottoman relations from the 16th century onwards).

Marchal, Roger, *L'écrivain et ses institutions* (Genève, ADIREL, 2006). (This book examines how institutions shape writers' work and careers, highlighting the impact on literary production and professional life. It was used for biographical information on Jacques-Laure Le Tonnelier, the Bailli de Breteuil, ambassador of the Order to France from 1777 to 1785).

Massicotte, Edouard-Zotique, *Armorial du Canada français. 1ère série par E. Z. Massicotte et Régis Roy* (Montréal, Librairie Beauchemin Limitée, 1918). (This work provides a comprehensive catalogue of the coats of arms and heraldic symbols associated with French Canada. It provided information on Brigadier Bourlamaque's knowledge and prestigous outlook over the Order of St John even before heading the mission to Malta).

Mathiex, Jean, 'The Mediterranean', in *The New Cambridge Modern History: The Rise of Great Britain and Russia 1668-1715/25*, vol. 6, J.S Bromley (ed.) Cambridge University Press, London 1970, 540-571. (This chapter explores the influence of Turkish and European wars between 1683 and 1718 and the great divide between the east and west of the Mediterranean. It proved useful for insights in French commerce with the Levant and the capitulation system embraced by the Ottoman Empire and some European Christian states; France in the case of this study).

Mattingly, Garrett, *Renaissance Diplomacy* (New York, Dover Publications, 1955). (Mattingly explored the origins of modern diplomacy in 15th-century Italy and the emergence of resident diplomats. This book was used to understand the background of early modern diplomacy, especially that for France of 17th and 18th century. Despite it being published for nearly seventy years, authors on diplomacy like Birgit Tremml-Werner and Dorothée Goetze, still recommend its use for interpretation on diplomatic exchange. See their paper, Birgit Tremml-Werner and Dorothée Goetze, A Multitude of Actors in Early Modern Diplomacy,' *Journal of early modern history* 23, (2019) 407-422).

Maulde-La Clavière, René de, *La Diplomatie au Temps de Machiavel*, volume 1 (Paris, Ernest Leroux, 1892). (This 19th century publication was consulted for the history and development of diplomacy).

Maurice, Thiéry, *Bougainville, Soldat et Marin* (Paris, P. Roger, 1930). (This book provides an in-depth biography of Louis-Antoine de Bougainville, focusing on his dual roles as a soldier and a sailor. It provided useful information on the efforts of this well-connected Frenchman to serve in Malta together with the French military mission in 1761. This sheds light on the fact that Hospitaller Malta attracted the attention of scions of the French society).

Mazamet, C. Lourde de, *Histoire de la Revolution a Marseille et en Provence* (Marseille, Senés Imprimeur, 1838). (This work provides a detailed account of the French Revolution's impact on Marseille and the Provence region. It was used to obtain information on the Bailli de Foresta, the leader of the recruitment programme for the Regiment of Malta).

McKay, Derek and Scott, Hamish M., *The Rise of Great Power 1648 to 1815* (Essex, Longman, 1983). (This book provides a comprehensive analysis of the political and military developments that shaped Europe during this transformative period. It examines how various European states emerged as dominant powers through strategic diplomacy and conflict. Even though this source is somewhat dated, it provides a clear outline of diplomatic developments in Europe, particularly France, which was useful for the background to this study).

Mercieca, Simon, 'Maritime caravans and the Knights of St John: Aspects of Mediterranean Seaborne Traffic,' *Trade and cultural exchange in the early modern Mediterranean: Braudel's Maritime Legacy*, M. Fusaro, C. Heywood and M.S. Omri (eds.) I.B Tauris, London, 2010, 157-175. (This study discusses the origins and development of the caravan cruises of the Order of St John, which every knight was obliged to take against the Ottoman or Muslim corsairs before joining the Order or for progression. It was very helpful in understanding the concept of the caravan and in contextualising these cruises and the conflict the Order had with France for the release of knights in mid-eighteenth century).

Mézin, Anne, *Les consuls de France au siècle des lumières (1715-1792)* (Paris, P.I.E-Peter Lang S.A, 2007). (This book examines the role of the consuls of France from early 18th century to the end of the French monarchy. It provided me with archival information on the letters of the *chargé d'affaires* of France in Malta).

Ministère de la Guerre, *Tableau de la situation des établissements Français dans l'Algérie en 1840* (Paris, Imprimerie Royale, 1841). It offers insights into the administrative, military, and socio-economic aspects of French colonial presence in Algeria during that period. It provided information on the negotiations of the first permanent French ambassador to Constantinople who was also a knight of the Order).

Moalla, Asma, *The Regency of Tunis and the Ottoman Porte 1777-1814* (London, Routledge, 2004). (This book was useful because it examines the political and administrative relationship between the Regency of Tunis and the Ottoman central government during the late 18th and early 19th centuries. The study provides insights into the complexities of governance, diplomacy, and regional autonomy within the Ottoman Empire).

Moisuc, Ana-Maria, 'Court Clothes of the Sixteenth Century,' in *Romanian Principalities, in Fashion through History: Costumes, Symbols, Communication* volume 1, G. Motta and A. Biagini (eds.) Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Newcastle 2017, 23-30. (This book was perused for the definition of Caftan, a costume gifted by the Sultan to a former slave in Malta involved in the 1722 alarm).

Montagnac Veores, Jean, *Armorial des Grands Prieurs de France* (Paris, Les Éditions de la Chevalerie, 1936). (This work is an extensive heraldic study that documents the coats of arms and histories of the grand priors of France, providing valuable insights into the chivalric and noble traditions of the era. It provided information on the Prince de Conti, the cousin of Louis XV and the Grand Prior of the Langue of France).

Morton, Brain N. and Spinelli, Donal C, *Beaumarchais and the American Revolution* (Maryland, Lexington Books, 2003). (This study delves into Beaumarchais's political and financial efforts to aid the American cause, highlighting his contributions to the revolutionary movement and the broader Franco-American relations during. It was used to trace the changes taking place in the administration of firearms production to the King at Saint-Étienne. The company with whom the Order

signed the largest contract for arms in 1759, the Girard, Robert, Carrier brothers and Company, dissolved sometime in the late 1760s).

Mowat, Robert Balmain, *A History of European Diplomacy 1451-1789* (New York, Longmans, Green and Co., 1971). (This book surveys European diplomatic relations from the wars of Charles the Bold to the French Revolution. It was useful for its outline on the diplomatic development in early modern Europe).

Murphy, Antoin E., *John Law: Economic Theorist and Policy-maker* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1997). (This book provides a comprehensive biographical approach on John Law and the financial system he implemented in France as a result of the debt bequeathed by Louis XIV's extensive wars. It was useful to understand the process behind this system and the resulting financial fiasco in the 1720s, a situation which directly affected the Order of St John).

Murphy, Orville T., *Charles Gravier, Comte de Vergennes: French Diplomacy in the Age of Revolution 1719-1787* (Albany, State University of New York Press, 1982). (This book is a biography on the count de Vergennes, ambassador of France to Constantinople, Minister for Foreign Affairs and chief minister of France. This book draws the attention to the strong ties between the Ottomans and France and the latter's effort in maintaining a strong alliance with the Porte).

Muscat, Joseph and Cuschieri, Andrew, *Naval Activities of the Knights of St John 1530-1798* (Malta, Midsea Books Ltd., 2002). (This publication deals with the naval history of the Order of St John during its sojourn on Malta. It was useful to comprehend some military and naval terms used in this study).

Niox, Gustave, *The Hôtel Des Invalides* (Paris, Delagrave, 1924). (This was used for biographical details on the governor of the Les Invalides hospital, involved during the recruitment programme for the Regiment of Malta).

Nicolson, Harold George, *Diplomacy* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1988). (This book examines the history of diplomacy and provides definitions related to the field. It was useful to understand the origins of diplomacy in Europe).

Olsen, Robert, 'The Ottoman-French Treaty of 1740: A Year to be Remembered?' *Turkish Studies Association Bulletin*, 15, 2 (September 1991), 347-355. (This article provided information on the Franco-Ottoman capitulations and the unchallenged influence of France in the Ottoman Empire after the Ottoman-French treaty of 1740. It provided this dissertation solid background for the understanding of Franco-Hospitaller relation when the Ottomans featured in Hospitaller-French issues).

Onnekink, David, 'The "Dark Alliance" between Religion and War,' in *War and Religion after Westphalia 1648-1713*, D. Onnekink (ed.) Routledge, London 2016, 1-16. (This edited volume examines the assumption that Westphalia ended an era of religious wars and set the stage for secular power-seeking conflicts. It proved useful for the understanding of concepts of secularisation and the relationship between war and foreign policy, setting the stage for the political framework of the 18th century examined in this study).

Özveren, Eyüp, Yildirim, Onur, 'An outline of Ottoman Maritime History,' in *New Directions in Mediterranean Maritime History,* G. Harlaftis and C. Vassallo (eds.) Liverpool University Press, Liverpool 2004, 147-179. (This chapter offers an examination of the Ottoman Empire's naval development and maritime tactics across the 16th to the 19th century. It was used to understand the Ottoman military and naval presence in the Mediterranean in the 18th century, and that Ottomans had enough resources to assemble a fleet of warships in times of war).

Parrott, David, *Richelieu's Army, War, Government and Society in France, 1624-1642* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2001). (The book analyses the military and administrative reforms implemented by Cardinal Richelieu. It also explores how these changes affected the French state and society during his tenure, highlighting the interplay between war, governance, and social structures in early 17th -century France. It was used to understand the politics of France in the 17th century, and the changes implemented under the term of Cardinal Richelieu).

Panzac, Daniel, *Barbary Corsairs: The End of a Legend 1800-1820* (Leiden, Brill, 2005). (This book examines the decline of Barbary piracy in the early 19th century, by examining the political, economic, and military factors that contributed to the diminishing power of Barbary corsairs. Even though it succeeds the timeframe of the dissertation, its first chapter provides a good background to the state of affairs in corsairing activities and the diplomatic agreements amongst the Barbary Regencies and Christian states in the latter half of the 18th century).

Pedani, Maria Pia, *The Ottoman-Venetian Border c.15th-18th centuries* (Dorsoduro, Edizione Ca Foscari, 2017). (This book examines the intricate and evolving border region between the Ottoman Empire and the Republic of Venice from the 15th to the 18th centuries. It investigates the political, economic, and cultural exchanges that characterized this frontier, illuminating the complexities of Ottoman-Venetian relations throughout this period. It revealed Venice's divergent policy from that of the Order. While the Order was at perpetual war with the Muslim, Venice had a more tolerant policy and sought to protect its peace with the Ottoman empire during the 18th century).

Pérennes, Françoise, 'Chevaliers de Malte, Provençaux et Marins du Roi au XVIIe siècle,' in *Méditerranée, Mer Ouverte, Tome 1, du XVIe au XVIIIe siècle,* Fondation Internationale Malte, Malta 1997, 169-180. (This first volume of this publication explores the roles and interactions of the Knights of Malta, Provençal nobles, and the King's sailors in the 17th century. It was used to obtain insight into their maritime activities, and contributions to the broader Mediterranean geopolitical landscape of the time.).

Petiet, Claude, *Ces messieurs de la religion: L'Ordre de Malte au dix-huitième siècle, ou, le crépuscule d'une épopée* (Paris, Editions France-Empire, 1992). (This publication provides a history of the Order of St John in the 18th century. It furnishes the reader with wide ranging information on the Order's administration, its territorial organisation in France and some aspects of the Order's diplomacy. It was used for both the methodology and the compiling of the glossary).

Petiet, Claude, *Le Roi et le Grand Maître* (Paris, Éditions Paris-Médierranée, 2002). (This work explores the political and diplomatic interactions between Louis XIV and the Order of St John in the 17th century. It was useful for tracing the development of the Order's representation in France and the connection between Louis XIV and the knights, especially the latter's service in the royal marine).

Petrie, Charles, *Diplomatic History 1713-1933* (London, Hollis & Carter Ltd., 1948). (This publication portrays the history of European diplomacy from the Italian Wars to the Treat of Utrecht in 1713. It places special focus on Louis XIV reign; thus it provided the study with the necessary background on the development of French diplomacy).

Pirrie, William, *A Technical Dictionary: (English-French and French-English) of Sea Terms, Phrases and Words* (London, Crosby Lockwood and Son, 1895). (This dictionary of sea and military terms was useful for the compilation of the glossary).

Plaisse, André, *Le Rouge de Malte* (Rennes, Editions Ouest-France, 1991). (This book focuses on the life and contributions of the Bailly de Chambray. It explores his role within the Order of Malta, his achievements, and his impact on the Order's history during his tenure. It was perused for the narrative of the Hospitallers' victory at Battle of Damietta contributing to the 1731-33 Ottoman crises).

Pritchard, James, 'Fir, Trees, Financiers, and the French Navy During the 1750s,' *Canadian Journal of History*, 23, 3 (1988), 337-354. (This article concerns the largest contract of mast by the French naval department from the northern naval suppliers. It was useful to understand French procedures in mast procurement and connect these with the mast procurement which the Order made through France in 1747).

Pritchard, James, 'Privilege and Profit: A Business Family in Eighteenth-century France by P.W Bamford,' *Canadian Journal of History/Annales Canadiennes d'Histoire*, 25, 1 (Spring 1990), 105-106 (This review highlights Bamford's exploration of how privilege and entrepreneurial activities intersected to shape the family's success and influence within the broader context of French society. It proved useful to understand the background and role of Babaud de Chaussade as Louis XV's contractor, who was ultimately commissioned by the Order for the purchase of masts from Holland).

Pritchard, James, *Louis XV's navy 1748-1762: A study of Organization and Administration* (Canada, McGill-Queen's University Press, 1987). (This book examines the structural and administrative aspects of the French Navy during the reign of Louis XV. The study provides detailed insights into the organizational strategies, bureaucratic challenges, and operational management that defined the navy's effectiveness in the mid-eighteenth century. This book was used for two reasons: to understand the administration of the royal navy and aspects on the knights of Malta serving in the navy of France).

Quintano, Anton, *The Maltese-Hospitaller Sailing Ship Squadron 1701-1798* (Malta, PEG Ltd., 2003). (This book provides an in-depth analysis of the sailing ship squadron operated by the Hospitaller Order in Malta between 1701 and 1798. It also

explores the organization, operations, and strategic significance of the squadron, highlighting its contributions to maritime defence and commerce during the 18th century. It was used to explore the French contribution in the navy of the knights, including French maritime service for the construction of Hospitallers' ships-of-the line).

Quintano, Anton, 'The Malta shipyard: infrastructural developments during the 18th century,' in *Mediterranean seascapes: proceedings of an International Conference held in Malta in conjunction with Euromed Heritage II, Navigation du Savoir Project*, S. Mercieca (ed.) Malta University Publishers Ltd., Malta 2004, 45-62. (The journal examines the shipyard's evolution and technological advancements, emphasizing its strategic importance in supporting Malta's maritime and economic activities. This was used to study the naval services provided by France during the construction of Malta's arsenal for the sailing ship squadron launched by Grand Master Perellos in the early 18th century).

Rapport, Mike, 'Unnaturally French: Foreign Citizens in the Old Regime and After,' *The English Historical Review*, Volume CXXII, Issue 496, (April 2007), 555-557. (Rapport's review of Sahlins' book offers a detailed outline of Sahlins' main points on foreigners and citizenship in France. It provided an overview of the naturalisation of foreigners in France, a practise known to the Maltese in mid-eighteenth century).
Revue Catholique d'Histoire, d'Archéologie et Litterature de Normandie, volume 5, Book 1, (Évreaux Imprimerie de L'Eure, 1895). (This work is a scholarly journal focused on the history, archaeology, and literature of Normandy from a Catholic perspective. It was useful for the account it provides on Bailli de Chambray's victory at the battle of Damietta in 1732).

Ribier, Louis de, *Preuves de la noblesse d'Auvergne* (Paris, H. Champion, 1907). (This work documents the noble lineage of the Auvergne region. It was used to trace the family connections of the Freslon family to the Order of St John. This family had a number of its members Knights of St John. It was also used for biographical details of Marc-Antoine-Sérapion de Reynaud-de Pons-du Grippel-de Monts, who was involved in the recruitment process for the regiment of Malta).

Rigutini, Giuseppe and Fanfani, Pietro, *Vocabolario Italiano della lingua parlata*, vol. 1 (Florence, Tipografia Cenniniana, 1875). (This source was used to find the meaning of a vernacular phrase 'constipazione per tutto il corpo,' which inflicted Bourlamaque in his early days on Malta).

Riley-Smith, Jonathan, *Hospitallers: The History of the Order of St John* (London, The Hambledon Press, 1999). (This book provides a thorough historical account of the Order of St John, detailing its origins, development, and significant contributions. It was used as a general account of the history of the Order and to specifically trace the origin of the caravans of the Order).

Roosen, William J., 'The Functioning of Ambassadors under Louis XIV,' *French Historical Studies*, 6, 3 (Spring 1970), 311-332. (The author examined the practices of Louis XIV's diplomats including their practices and their lack of diplomatic training. This study, based on seventy permanent ambassadors of the Sun King,

outlined the diplomats' roles in the interest of the state. It served as a good model with which the Order's ambassadors could be compared).

Roque, Louis de la, *Armorial de la noblesse de Languedoc. Generalité de Montpellier, Tome 1*, (Paris, Felix Seguin Libraire-Editeur, 1860). (This volume documents the coats of arms and genealogies of the nobility in the Languedoc region. It was used to obtain some background on the French characters involved in the recruitment issues of the Order in Marseille).

Rowlands, Guy, 'Foreign Service in the Age of Absolute Monarchy: Louis XIV and his Forces Étrangères,' *War History*, vol. 17, n. 2 (April 2010), 141-165. (This paper explores the structure and significance of foreign military forces under Louis XIV's reign. It examines how these forces contributed to the monarch's military and political strategies. It was used to understand the composition of the French army, and the recruitment of foreign soldiers for the royal regiments, from which the Order was given permission to recruit retired soldiers for the Regiment of Malta).

Rowlands, Guy, *The Financial Decline of a Great Power: War, Influence, and Money in Louis XIV's France* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2012). (The author provides a detailed insight on the financial decline of France during Louis XIV's final years (1700-1715) and the shortcomings within royal finance. It was consulted for the way paper money was introduced in France, and for the identification of the fire-arms entrepreneur, Titon de Villegenon, with whom the Order signed a contract in 1722).

Rowlands, Guy, 'Royal Finances in the Third Reign of Louis XIV', in *The Third Reign of Louis XIV, c. 1682-1715: Politics and Culture in Europe, 1650-1750*, J. Prest and G. Rowlands (eds.) Routledge, Abingdon 2016, 38-52. (This chapter establishes the changes in France's royal finances during the later years of Louis XIV's rule. It provided the study with a clear picture of France's fiscal-military constitution which echoed way into the 18th century, thus covering the timeframe of this study. It provided solid reasons that had led France, under the Regency, to adopt John Law's system. It contributed to the understanding of what led to the pitiful state of the Order's treasury in 1720s).

Rowlands, Guy, 'Merchant of Death: Maximilien Titon (1632-1711) and the Supply of Arms in Louis XIV's France', in *Militärunternehmer in der Frühen Neuzeit: Offiziere, Unternehmer, Karrieremigranten und Diplomaten*, André Holenstein and Philippe Rogger (eds.) Brill, Leiden (forthcoming 2024). (This seminal article was crucial for the understanding of the role of the contractor of arms production in France, and the Order's connection to these).

Royal Military College, *Outline of a Course of Lectures on Fortification, Military tactics and Perspective* (London, Spottiswoode and Shaw, 1852). (This source was perused for military terms, such as *Blindage Double*, and others used in this study and defined in the glossary).

Rudé, George, *Europe in the Eighteenth Century. Aristocracy and the Bourgeois Challenge* (London, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1972). (This work provided a good

understanding of how dynastic powers influenced war and European politics in the 18th century).

Russell, George A., 'Physicians at the Ottoman Court,' *Medical History*, 34 (August 1990), 243-267. (This paper provides an in-depth look at the practices and contributions of physicians to the court Ottoman court. It was used for biographical information on Daniel de Fonseca, a Jewish doctor in the service of the Sultan who acted as a diplomat and negotiator between the ambassador of France and the Grand Vizier during the Ottoman threat of 1731-33).

Ryan, Frederick W., *The House of the Temple: A study of Malta and its knights in the French Revolution* (London, Burns Oates and Washbourne Ltd., 1930). (This book explores the impact of the French Revolution on Malta and the Knights of St John. This work was used to understand the challenges and transformations faced by the Order during this tumultuous period and also to obtain information on the influence and the reforms of colonel Freslon made to the Regiment of Malta).

Sahlins, Peter, 'Frictions of a Catholic France: The Naturalization of Foreigners, 1685-1787,' *Representations, Special Issue: National Culture before Nationalism,* 47 (Summer, 1994), 85-110. (This article examines the processes and challenges of naturalizing foreigners in France between 1685 and 1787. This study was used to gain insights into the complexities of French citizenship policies and their impact on foreign residents, including the Maltese, during this period).

Sahlins, Peter, *Unnaturally French: Foreign Citizens in the Old Regime and After* (New York, Cornell University Press, 2004). (This book provided insights into the naturalisation of foreigners as French nationals, including that of the Maltese residing in France. It helped contextualize Louis XV's 1765 edict of a privilege granted to the Maltese, which came about following the knights' cooperation in selling the Corona Ottomana to France in 1761).

Saint-Allias, Nicolas Viton de, *L'Ordre de Malte ses Grand Mâitres et ses Chevaliers* (Paris, Chez L'Auteur & Chez Delaunay, 1839). (The book provides a general history of the Order of Malta, focusing on its Grand Masters and knights. It was used for biographical details on particular knights).

Saint-Vincent, Xavier Labat, *Malte et le commerce Marseillais au xviii siècle*, thèse de doctorat d'histoire, Paris IV, 2000. (This research investigated the trade relations between Malta and Marseille in the 18th century. It was perused to understand the economic interactions and commercial networks that connected Malta with one of France's major port cities during this period).

Saupin, Guy, *La France à l'Époque Moderne*, 3rd edition (Paris, Armand Colin, 2016). (Consulted for the foreign policy of France during the final years of the Regency and the shifts in government following the demise of Cardinal Fleury).

Sciberras, Keith, *Baroque Sculpture for the Knights of Malta* (Malta, Fondazzjoni Patrimonju Malta, 2004). (This book examines the Baroque sculptures commissioned

by the Knights of Malta, highlighting their artistic and historical importance. It was however, used for biographical details on vice-chancellor Francisco Guedes).

Ségange, Gaston du Broc de, *Extraits des archives du château de Ségange* (Harvard, É. Auclaire,1895). (This book was used for biographical details on Louis de Givodan, the secretary of the embassy of Malta in Paris).

Schermerhorn, Elisabeth W., *Malta of the Knights* (Surrey, Windmill Press, 1929). (This book provides a detailed history of the Knights of Malta, focusing on their influence and activities on the island. This work was used to gain a comprehensive understanding of the Order's governance, military engagements, and cultural contributions during their tenure in Malta, and most importantly, Schermerhorn's theory of France playing the double game with Malta and the Ottoman Empire, a claim that has been confirmed in this dissertation, even though the reasons behind this were not as capricious as Schermerhorn seems to imply).

Scicluna, Joseph, *Jacques François de Chambray: The Order he served, the island he loved, and the fort he built* (Malta, Kite Group, 2023). (This book delves into the life and legacy of Jacques François de Chambray. It explores his dedicated service to the Order of St John, and his significant contribution to its military architecture through the construction of Fort Chambray. It was used for information on the 1722 alarm and the Order's decisions taken at the time for the building of fortifications. It was also a source for pictorial images of the naval Battle of Damietta in 1732).

Scott, Hamish M, *The Emergence of the Eastern Powers, 1756-1775* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2001a). (This book examines the rise of Eastern European states as significant powers during the mid-eighteenth century. The book explores the political, military, and diplomatic developments that contributed to the increasing influence of Eastern Europe in the broader European context. It was useful to outline the 18th century political developments and the shifts of the balance of power, including the status of power of France at this time).

Scott, Hamish M., 'Europe Turns East: Political Developments in the Eighteenth Century,' in *Early Modern Europe: An Oxford History,* Euan Cameron (ed.) Oxford University Press, Oxford 2001b, 298-344. (The chapter was useful for the understanding of the political influence of Britain, France, Austria and Russia in the 18th century).

Shovlin, John, Trading *with the Enemy: Britain, France and the 18th century Quest for a Peaceful World Order* (Yale, Yale University Press, 2021). (This book focuses on British and French politics and their efforts in channelling their rivalry into peaceful commercial competition. It proved useful for the understanding of John Law's System, the Mississippi Company and the devastation caused to France's treasury after their collapse).

Signoli, Michel, 'History of the plague of 1720-1722, in Marseille,' *La Presse Médicale*, 51, 3 (2022), 104138. (This paper provides a detailed history of the plague that struck Marseille from 1720 to 1722. It was utilised to confirm whether the

plague had subsided by the time military engineer Brigadier de Tigné and the summoned knights were scheduled to depart for Malta in 1723).

Sire, H.J.A, *The Knights of Malta* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 2005). (This book offers an extensive history of the Knights of Malta, detailing their origins, military exploits, their lands in Europe and their enduring legacy. It was useful to gain insights into the Order's organizational structure, key historical events, and their impact on European and Mediterranean history).

Sobey, Douglas, 'The Department of the Marine and the search for Masts on Ile Saint-Jean,' *Le Marin du Nord*, XIII, 1 (January 2003), 1-18. (This article examines the efforts of the French Department of the Marine to procure ship masts from Ile Saint-Jean. It was useful to gain insights into the naval logistics, most particularly in masts procurement, which contributed to the understanding of France difficulty in supplying the Order with the consignment of masts it required).

Solange, Ami, 'Les Maitres-Constructeurs de la Marine à Toulon au XVIIIe siècle,' *Cahiers de la Méditerranée*, 10, 1 (1975), 69-77. (This article investigates the master shipbuilders of the French Navy in Toulon during the 18th century. It was useful in providing details in the craftsmanship, organization, and contributions of these shipbuilders to the naval power and maritime infrastructure of France during this period. This contributed to the study of the services which French shipbuilders, namely the Coulomb, provided to the Order).

Smith, Robert Douglas and DeVries, Kelly, *Rhodes Besieged. A New History* (Gloucestershire, The History Press, 2011). (This book delves into the complex military, political, and cultural aspects of the sieges, providing a nuanced understanding of how Rhodes under the Knights of St John withstood and responded to its numerous challenges during the Ottoman sieges of 1480 and 1522. This was perused to track the Hospitaller organisation in weapon stores and artillery production before the military institution settled on Malta in 1530).

Spiteri, Stephen C., *Fortresses of the Knights* (Malta, Books Distributors Ltd., 2001). (This study concerns the fortifications of Malta during the Hospitaller period. It provided useful information on the design of Fort Manoel executed by the French engineer Tigné that was the product of the 1722 alarm defence efforts).

Spiteri, Stephen C., *Armoury of the Knights. A Study of its Armoury, its Collection and the Military Storehouses of the Hospitaller Knights of the Order of St John* (Malta, Midsea Books, 2003). (This book contains extensive lists and inventories detailing the armoury of the Knights of Malta in the 18th century. It was instrumental in identifying occasions when Malta acquired firearms and artillery from France or other sources).

Spiteri, Stephen C., *A Visual guide to the Fortifications of Malta* (Malta, BDL Publishing, 2017). (This illustrated and detailed guidebook to the fortifications of Malta provides definitions of military structures mentioned in this study. It was helpful in the compilation of the glossary).

Spiteri, Stephen C., 'Bali de Souza's Establishment of a Fondazione for the Production and Supply of Bronze Cannon for the Order of St John, 1770', in *The Journal of Baroque Studies,* 2, 2, F. Ciappara (ed.) International Institute for Baroque Studies, Malta 2018, 181-188. (This article explores the creation of a foundation by Bailly de Souza to produce and supply bronze cannons for the Order of St John in 1770. It was used to develop a theory that the money from this foundation was used to buy a consignment of 50 cannons from France in 1777).

Spiteri, Stephen C., *The Art of Fortress Building in Hospitaller Malta, 1530-1798* (Malta, BDL Publications Malta, 2008). (This in-depth study on the building of fortifications in Malta in the time of the knights examines their development from the planning to the construction stage. It provided this study with useful information on the French military engineers' contribution to Malta following the Ottoman threat of 1714-1715 and 1722, 1761).

Stone, Bailey, *The Genesis of the French Revolution. A Global-Historical Interpretation* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1994). (This book offers a comprehensive analysis of the complex global and historical factors that contributed to the outbreak of the French Revolution. It was used to gain a general overview of 18th century politics of Europe, the balance of power and the European wars).

Stradling, Robert, 'Catastrophe and Recovery: The Defeat of Spain, 1639-43,' *History*, 64, 211 (1979), 205-219. (This article sheds light on Spain's gradual decline in military supremacy by late 16th-century. It provided useful insight into the power shifts of European states throughout the 17th century and gave a clear picture of the ascendancy of France in the same period).

Swann, Julian, 'Politics and the state in eighteenth-century Europe,' in *The Eighteenth Century*, T.C.W Blanning (ed.) Oxford University Press, Oxford 2000. (In this chapter Swann explores the political culture and governance of pre-Revolutionary France, focusing on the absolute monarchy of Louis XIV and his successors, the divine right of kings, and the court's role at Versailles in securing aristocratic loyalty. Despite the monarchy's seemingly absolute power its authority was limited by established laws, intermediary bodies like the *parlements*, and a politically aware public, leading to the eventual demand for representation that sparked the Revolution. It was used to understand Louis XIV's foreign policy and the political background during his reign).

Swann, Julian, 'Politics: Louis XV' in *Old Regime France 1648-1788*, W. Doyle (ed.) Oxford University Press, Oxford 2001a, 195-222. (This chapter explores the political environment of France under Louis XV's rule. Swann examines the complexities of Louis XV's administration and the challenges faced by the monarchy in maintaining authority and stability amidst evolving political dynamics. It was used to understand the politics of France during Louis XV's reign).

Swann, Julian, 'The State and Political Culture,' in *Old Regime France 1648-1788*, W. Doyle (ed.), University Press, Oxford 2001b, 139-168. (This chapter explores the symbolic and authoritative nature of the French monarchy, focusing on the King's divine right and absolute power. It details how French Kings, especially Louis XIV,

maintained control through a stable ministerial system and symbolic acts. Swann also discusses the critical balancing role of *parlements* and judicial bodies in the complex relationship between the monarchy and governance. It was used to understand the function of the *conseil d'en haut*, and to construct the framework of the study, particularly the political landscape of France).

Talbot, Michael, *British-Ottoman Relations, 1661-1807. Commerce and Diplomatic Practice in Eighteenth-Century Istanbul* (Suffolk, The Boydell Press, 2017). (This book examines the intimate relation between the commercial interest and diplomatic practice played by British ambassadors within the Ottoman court. It provides a useful methodology in the study of Ottoman-Christian diplomacy).

Tanucci, Bernardo, *Epistolario 1761-1762, Introduction by G. Maiorni* (Rome, Istituto Poligrafico e Zecca dello Stato, 1988). (The *Epistolario* is a collection of letters by Bernardo Tanucci, an influential advisor to the King of Naples, offering insights into 18th century political, social, and economic issues. The introduction by G. Maiorni provides context and analysis, highlighting Tanucci's impact on Neopolitan policies and European interactions. This was used for the understanding of Tanucci's views on the Order's decision of keeping the Corona Ottomana in 1760-61).

Testa, Carmel, *The French in Malta 1798-1800* (Malta, Midsea Books Ltd., 1997). (This book concerns the taking of Malta in 1798 and the governance of the island by the Republican French. It is a useful to understand the aftermath of the revolution in Malta ad the events unfolding with the arrival of Napoleon Bonaparte in Malta in 1798).

Testa, Carmel, *The Life and Times of Grand Master Pinto* 1741-1773 (Valletta, Midsea Books Ltd., 1989). (This book provides a detailed account of Malta under Hospitaller rule in mid-eighteenth century. It provides aspects of the knights' international relations during the magistracy of Grand Master Pinto and the latter's interaction with France. It was also useful for the discussion of the historiography on the French connection with Malta and other events, including the account of the Corona Ottomana affair).

Thies, Cameron G., 'A Pragmatic Guide to Qualitative Historical Analysis in the Study of International Relations,' *International Studies Perspectives*, 3, 4 (2002), 351-372. (This article provides a practical framework for conducting qualitative historical research within the field of history and especially international relations. It emphasizes methodological approaches and techniques for analysing historical data to understand and explain international phenomena. The approach of qualitative historical research was applied to this study).

Torres-Sánchez, Rafael, Brandon, Pepijn, and Marjolein 't Hart, 'War and Economy. Rediscovering the eighteenth-century military entrepreneur,' *Business History*, 60, 1 (2018), 4-22. (The article highlights the essential role of military entrepreneurs in the economic growth of the 18th century, challenging traditional views that warfare was detrimental to pre-industrial economies. It shows how war and the rise of the central state created new opportunities for capital investment and economic expansion).

Touchard-Lafosse, Georges, *La Loire historique, pittoresque et Biographique: de la source de ce fleuve a son embouchure dans l'océan*, Tome 1 (Paris, Adolphe Delahays Libraire, 1856). (This book provides a historical, picturesque, and biographical account of the Loire River from its source to its mouth. However, it was only used to obtain biographical information on Montbéliard).

Vanesio, Valeria, 'The Order of St John's archival entanglements: cataloguing experiments at the magisterial archives in Rome,' *Nouvi annalli della Scuola Speciale per Archivisti e Bibliotecari*, 28 (2023), 89-107. (This paper gives an overview of the dispersion and recovery of the archives of the Order of St John in three key moments: in 1798 with the Convents' loss of Malta, 1801 with the recovery of the archives of the langue of Italy and the arrival of the Hospitaller archive in Rome in 1834. It was used to understand the reasons behind the widespread dispersion of the archives of the Hospitaller institution).

Vann, Theresa M., 'The Militia of Malta,' *The Journal of Medieval Military History*, 2 (2004), 137-148. (This paper examines the structure and operations of the Maltese militia. It provides insights into the militia's role and significance within the broader context of medieval military practices. It was used to understand the nature of the soldier recruited for the Regiment of Malta).

Vassallo, Carmel, 'Consuls and Commerce- the Development of Malta's Consular Service in Eighteenth-Century Spain,' *Espacio Tiempo y Forma*, *Serie IV, Historia Moderna,* 28, (2015), 45-69. (This article deals with the development of the consular service in Malta for Spain. It provided useful information on Malta's disengagement from Spain and its shift towards the French sphere of influence, particularly after the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713).

Vella, Andrew P., *Storja tà Malta* (Malta, Klabb Kotba Maltin, 1979). (This book delves into the island's political, social, and cultural evolution, offering a detailed narrative of its historical significance. It was used for an overview of the history of Malta in the 1720s, in particular, the years of the alarm of 1722).

Vergé-Franceschi, Michel, *Toulon Port Royal (1481-1789)* (Paris, Tallandier, 2002). (This publication offers an in-depth history of the naval port of Toulon, tracing its development from its founding to just before the French Revolution. The study explores Toulon's strategic, economic, and military importance as a primary port for the French Royal Navy across three centuries. It provided valuable insights into the complex network of the Knights of St John associated with the royal arsenal of Toulon, which was vital for the Order's supply of weaponry).

Viret, Jérôme-Luther, 'L'Industrie des armes portatives à Saint-Étienne, 1770-1810. L'Inévitable Mécanisation?' *Revue d'Histoire Moderne et Contemporaine,* 54, 1(2007), 171-192. (This article investigates the progression of portable arms production in Saint-Étienne from 1770 to 1810. It highlights the unavoidable transition to mechanization in the industry and explores its effects and advancements. It was particularly useful to understand the operations of the manufacture of firearms in France in the 18th century).

Villeneuve-Bargemont, Louis François de, *Monumens des Grands-Maitres de l'Ordre de Saint-Jean de Jérusalem*, volume 2 (Paris, J.J Blaise, 1829). (This two volume work provides a history of the Order with detailed account of the monuments erected by the Grand Masters of the Order of St John Malta, as well as historical testimonies about the Grand Masters themselves. It was used to obtain some detail on Grand Master Cotoner, Carafa and Rohan, to illustrate an example that the position of Captain General of the Galleys and a career in the navy of the Order could lead to prominent positions).

Vivo, Filippo de*, Information and Communication in Venice: Rethinking Early Modern Politics* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2009). (This book explores the intricate networks of information and communication in early modern Venice, emphasizing their crucial role in political governance and decision-making. The book highlights how intelligence and information management were pivotal in negotiating and maintaining political power during this period).

Weiss, Gillian, *Captives and Corsairs: France and Slavery in the Early Modern Mediterranean* (California, Stanford University Press Stanford, 2011). (This book explores the complex relationships between France, slavery, and corsair activities in the Mediterranean during the early modern period. It was useful for an insight into the French combats against Tunis and the Regency of Barbary States, with the assistance of the knights and Maltese corsairs).

Wettinger, Godfrey, *Slavery in the Islands of Malta and Gozo ca.1000-1812* (Malta, PEG, 2002). (This work concerns slavery in Malta from the middle ages to the modern period. It gave useful details on the manner the knights treated a prominent Turkish slave in Malta who was ransomed by an Ottoman ambassador and who later contributed to the 1722 Ottoman threat).

Wilson, Peter, *A Companion to Eighteenth-Century Europe* (Oxford, Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2008). (This book deals with various aspects of European society, including the international political context, which coincided with the purpose of chapter 1 of this study. It was particularly useful to understand the dynastic power struggles in Europe in the 18th century).

Wismayer, Joseph M., *The Fleet of the Order of John, 1530-1798* (Malta, Midsea Books, 1997). (This book provides a comprehensive history of the naval forces of the Order of St John, detailing their operations, ship designs, and maritime strategies from their establishment in Malta until their decline at the end of the 18th century. Even though it is predominantly based on the Order's navy, it provides some insights on the Regiment of Malta, including the regiments accounts which has been useful for the discussion on the regiment).

Wismayer, Joseph M., *The History of the n Own Regiment and the Armed Forces of the Order of St John* (Malta, Said International, 1989). (This work chronicles the history of the military forces of the Order of St John and the British regiment, the King's Own Regiment. This work provided essential insights into the military strategies and operations of the Order and its connection to broader historical military contexts. It provided information on the history of the Regiment of Malta).

Woimbeé, Gregory, *Princes et Inquisiteurs: Malte, l'Europe et la Mediterranée (1722-1798)* (Toulouse, Les Presses Universitaires, 2014). (This book concerns the history of the Order mostly from its clerical perspective, focusing particularly on the office of the Inquisitor. It was consulted for the historiography and methodology, particularly because it covers the timeframe of this dissertation).

Xuereb, Charles, *France in the Maltese Collective Memory. Perceptions, Perspectives, Identities after Bonaparte in British Malt*a (Msida, Malta University Press, 2014). (This book examines how French influence, particularly during and after Napoleon's era, has shaped the collective memory and identity of Malta under British rule. It was used to illustrate the current historiography of France and Malta, however, the book goes beyond the timeframe of this study).

Young, William, *International Politics and Warfare in the Ages of Louis XIV and Peter the Great* (New York, iUniverse Inc., 2004). (This book was perused for the understanding of the international relations system after the Peace of Westphalia. It was used as guide to historical literature concerning war and diplomacy in the early modern period).

Yurdusev, Ahmet Nuri, 'The Ottoman Attitude toward Diplomacy', in *Ottoman Diplomacy: Conventional or Unconventional?* A. N. Yurdusev (ed.) Palgrave Macmillan, New York 2004, 5-35. (This work provides a general understanding of Ottoman diplomacy in relation to the European system. It was perused to gain insight on the Franco-Ottoman diplomatic dynamic and the French embassy in France, which was an office whose service was unofficially used by the knights).

Zammit, William and Freller, Thomas, *Knights, Buccaneers, and Sugar Cane: The Caribbean Colonies of the Order of Malta* (Malta, Midsea Books, 2015).

Zammit, William, 'A Portuguese Grand Master and the Hospitaller Crises of 1749 and 1761,' in *Ordens Militares, Identidate e Mudança,* vol. 1, I. C. F. Fernandes (ed.), Municipio de Palmela, Palmela 2021, 509-534. This chapter examines the challenges faced by Grand Master Pinto during two crucial events: the first in 1749 when Muslim slaves plotted to assassinate Pinto and take over the island and the second in 1761 when the Corona Ottomana was sailed to Malta by some Christian slaves. It was used to build on the narrative of the Ottoman threat of 1761, while highlighting the Grand Master Pinto's role in navigating the 1761 turbulent event in Malta).

Zammit, William, 'De Rohan's Reggimento di Malta: a source of Religious Unorthodoxy in late Eighteenth-Century Malta, *Sacra Militia*, 4 (2005), 41-52. (This paper explores the influence of Rohan's regiment by providing insights into issues within the regiment and the undisciplined attitude of the foreign recruits. It was used to understand the link with French recruitment and the finances of the regiment).

Zwerlein, Cornel, *Imperial Unknowns: The French and British in the Mediterranean 1650-1750* (Cambridge, Cambridge Press, 2016). (This book examines the interactions and rivalries between French and British imperial powers in the Mediterranean from 1650 to 1750. It was useful to understand the role of the French

consul Pierre-Jean Pignon in Egypt, as part of the investigation of the intercepted letter he sent to Malta containing information on the movement of the Sultan's fleet).

Unpublished Dissertations

Abdilla, Joseph, 'Aspects of the Relations between Malta and France during the Grandmastership of Vilhena 1722-1736,' unpublished B.A dissertation, University of Malta, 1972. (This research was highly useful in contextualising my study and in understanding the French interaction with Malta over these two decades).

Fleur Brincat, 'The Military Engineer Frà Antoine Etienne de Tousard (1751-1831),' unpublished MA dissertation, Department of History, University of Malta, 2014. (This dissertation examines the contributions of the Order's final French military engineer in Malta during the upheaval of the French Revolution, as well as his alleged treason of the Order by aiding Napoleon in the capture of Malta in 1798. As noted in the Preface of this study, Tousard's narrative inspired the author to explore the French military influence in Malta even further. The study is currently in the publication process by the Fondation Française de L'Ordre de Malte).

Busuttil, Claude, 'Une Architecture sous influence. Malte et les Architectes et Ingénieurs militaires Français pendant le règne de Louis XIV (1643-1715). Les choix Politiques de l'Ordre de Saint-Jean de Jérusalem thesis,' unpublished PhD thesis, Normandie Université, 2018. (This doctorate thesis gives a good insight in the development of the Franco-Hospitaller relations in the 17th century and the French influence on Malta's architecture. It is also a good source for the historiography).

Grech, Ramona, 'The Hospitaller Commanderies in the Langue of Provence (1634-1754),' unpublished B.A honours dissertation, Department of History, University of Malta, 2012. (This study was useful to understand the function of the Order's Commanderies in France, particularly those of the Langue of Provence. It also contributed to the compiling of the glossary for the study).

White, Neil Briscoe, 'Aspects of the International Relations of the Order of St John 1683-1722,' unpublished MA dissertation, Department of History, University of Malta, 2011. (Even though this work concerns a timeframe earlier to that of this study, it has nonetheless provided a useful insight in European politics and the Order's diplomacy in the early modern period).

Online Resources

Britannica Encyclopaedia
https://www.britannica.com/event/ancien-regime

Biographical information on Claude de Beauharbois de Beaumont et de Villechauve
http://www.biographi.ca/fr/bio/beauharnois_de_beaumont_et_de_villechauve_claude_de_2F.html

Biographical information on Daniel de Fonseca
https://www.encyclopedia.com/religion/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/fonseca-daniel-de

Bibliographical and geneological information on François-Charles de Bourlamaque
https://www.ccbn-nbc.gc.ca/en/history-heritage/battles-1759-1760/soldier-details/?id=11629&page=1&qs=%26termes%3Dbourlamaque%26type%3Dsimple

Biographical information on Nicolas Sarrebource de Pontleroy by F.J Thorpe:
http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/sarrebource_de_pontleroy_nicolas_5F.html

Biographical information on Alexandre-Louis Hugues de Freslon and the family Freslon:
https://www.palacret.com/2-histoire-dune-commanderie/2c-les-commandeurs/39-alexandre-louis-hugues-de-freslon

Biographical information on Charles-Abel de Loras, Bailli Grand Cross of the Order of St John:
https://www.hospitalierssaintjean.com/hopitaux/index.php?page=commanderies_F

Biographical information on Noel Jourda, Comte de Vaux, a French general and Marshal of France: https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/term/BIOG243733

Bombardment of Tripoli in 1728
https://www.wikiwand.com/de/Bombardierung_von_Tripolis_(1728)

Cambridge Dictionary
https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/

Canadian Encyclopaedia on the Ministry for the Navy of France:
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Canadian Encyclopaedia on the Seven Years' War (1756-1763):
https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/seven-years-war;

Castrucci, Colette, *La poudrerie de Saint-Chamas*:
https://books.openedition.org/pccj/14507?lang=en

Collins online English Dictionary:
https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english

Dictionary of Canadian Biography
http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/potot_de_montbeillard_fiacre_francois_4F.html

Girard Pistolet Modèle 1733-34 ‘d’Abordage’, Order of St John:
https://www.lsb-malta.com/en/articles-news/news/24/-girard-pistolet-modle-1733-34-dabordage-order-of-st-john-.htm

Hill Museum & Manuscript Library
https://www.vhmml.org/readingRoom/

Image of a colonel of the Regiment of Malta in uniform by Francesco Zimelli:
https://w3id.org/vhmml/museum/view/3750

Image of Richard William Seale’s map of Malta in 1761:
https://www.battlemaps.us

Martin Lundmark, Laurent Giovachini, *The development of French defence industry in the 20th century*:
https://www.foi.se/rest-api/report/FOI-R--1573--SE

Morris L. Morris, Illustrated Firearms Dictionary:
http://www.hallowellco.com/abbrevia.htm

Online article on Bourlamaque based on primary sources.
https://www.ville.quebec.qc.ca/citoyens/patrimoine/toponymie/fiche.aspx?IdFiche=51

Oxford Dictionary
https://www.lexico.com/definition/

Painting of the harbour of Toulon by Joseph Vernet in 1756.
https://www.meisterdrucke.ie/fine-art-prints

Perrin Eric, The Tradition activity of the past serving the innovation of the future, Musée d’Art et d’Industrie, Saint-Etienne:
http://www.banc-epreuve.fr/en/discover-our-history/

Portrait of Philippe II duke d’Orléans, Regent of France (1715-1723)
https://www.meisterdrucke.uk/fine-art-prints/Jean-Baptiste-Santerre/1004555/Portrait-of-the-Regent-Philip-II-Duke-of-Orleans-(1674-1723)-and-Marie-Magdeleine-of-the-Vieuville,-Countess-of-Parabere-(1693-1750)-Painting-by-Jean-Baptiste-Santerre-(1651-1717

Privitelli, Guilia, A Failed and Final Attempt: A Historical Account of the Ottoman Incursion of 1614
https://www.academia.edu/

Stacey, Charles Perry, ‘Bourlamaque, François Charles de,’ in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 3, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003. http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/bourlamaque_francois_charles_de_3E.html.