

Gijón Granados, Juan de Á., **The Order of Malta in the Kingdom of Spain during the Eighteenth Century**¹.

The writer Samuel Dashiell Hammett (1894-1961) published a novel (The Maltese Falcon, 1930) where he made specific reference to the strong Spanish presence in the creation of the state of Malta, although it was John Huston who a decade later made the plot popular in the American film noir movie (The Maltese Falcon, 1941). The script of the movie created a mysterious statue of a hawk with gemstone incrustations of an incalculable value which was the coveted target of the protagonists.

Supposedly the statue was the payment made by the Knights of Malta to Emperor Charles V in exchange for the isle where the Order of Saint John of Jerusalem knights would move after leaving Rhodes to find a new suitable location for their headquarters. In fact, it was Pope Clement VII himself who played a key role in granting the isle of Malta to the Order and it was him who in 1528 interceded with Emperor Charles V to get help for the Order of Saint John and in 1530 he asked for tax concessions to further stabilize the Order.² The fictitious film episode mixed historical facts and fiction making the Pope's political maneuver popular through the king of Spain to whom the territory belonged after its annexation to the Crown of Aragon in the late 13th century. Truth is that in 1522 the knights of Saint John of Jerusalem were expelled from the isle of Rhodes by the Ottoman Empire, and in 1530 Charles V made the decision to divest the Isle of Malta to the Order in exchange for a symbolic payment of a hawk every year on All Souls' Day to the Viceroy of Sicily, his representative in the area. But this hawk was not an adorned round sized statue, but the ablest of all the prey birds in the art of falconry, where trained falcons are used for hunting. In the 16th century it was a sign of refinement and leadership since hunting with hawks had become limited for an elite few, like kings and the highest nobility while the ordinary folk or the nobility used hunting weapons. The Grand Master of the Order of Malta presented every year a goshawk or a hawk to the dynasty of Spanish Hapsburgs

¹ Traducción de José Fernández Bueno (Thank you very much for your word dear friend).

² Papal Brief from Pope Clement VII to the Chancellor Mercurino de Gattinara, sent along with the papal envoy Antonio Bosio, to request Emperor Charles V's help Carlos V in matters concerning the Order of Saint John of Jerusalem. 1528. General Archive of Simancas (AGS.), PTR., Leg. 62, Doc. 47. Papal Brief from Pope Clement VII to the Emperor Charles V, requesting h attend to the Master of Rhodes and to Antonio Bosio to whom His Holiness entrusted matters of the Order of Saint John of Jerusalem. 1528. AGS, PTR., Leg., 62, Doc. 46. Papal Brief from Pope Clement VII to the Emperor Charles V, requesting that the Order of Saint John of Jerusalem be relieved of paying him the fourth part of the benefits and ecclesiastic dignities. 1530. AGS, PTR., Leg. 62, Doc. 62.

recognizing thus their vassalage to the Emperor. The Grand Master was Sovereign Prince in Malta and he had under his command a strong navy respected across the Mediterranean. Although he was subject to the Pope in spiritual matters, in temporal matters he exercised jurisdiction over all the individuals of the Order of Saint John distributed throughout the eight 'Lenguas' or priories into which the territories of the religious military Order were divided.

Along with the dynastic change from the Austrian Hapsburgs to the Bourbons in Spain the privileges of the Order were renewed in 1701 by King Philip V, who had then recently acceded to the throne. But by the Treaty of Utrecht (1713) the isle of Sicily, to which Malta was linked, was ceded to Victor Amadeus II of Savoy. Some trade privileges, like tax exemptions, were suppressed for Malta under the pressure of France on Victor Amadeus II³. R. Quirós points out that according to the terms set out in the treaty the feudal agreement seemed broken in 1530 between the Order of Malta and the Spanish Monarchy when sovereignty was transferred to the House of Savoy and, from 1720 to the Hapsburgs until in 1734 the appropriation of the Kingdom of Two Sicilies by the Bourbons left things as they were before⁴. Nevertheless, irrespective of the initial disputes, a Malta ambassador was maintained at the Spanish Court throughout the 18th century and direct relations continued with the Spanish Monarchy as proves the collaboration among both navies in the defence of the Spanish possessions in the North African shores against Moslem attacks⁵.

The political map in the Modern Age was like a chess board on which sovereigns skillfully and strategically moved their pieces while attentively observing the adversary. This reality contrasts with the image that we have of constant wars between European powers. Reflections of the people in the Enlightenment Age focused around a dynamic and secular Europe, based on law and science characterised by a political international order thanks to the closing of the northwest Russian border, a system of common interests and the strengthening of relations which not only interested sovereign princes but also individuals motivated by the expansion of trade, travellers and printed books.

³ Jeremy Black, *La Europa del siglo XVIII, 1700-1789*, Akal, Madrid, 1990, p. 417.

⁴ Roberto Quirós Rosado, "Estratégicos anacronismos. Malta, la Orden de San Juan y la Corona española a finales del Antiguo Régimen (1795-1802)", *Cuadernos de Historia Moderna*, Madrid, 2009, Vol. 34, pp. 127-128.

⁵ Jaime Salvá, "Los embajadores de Malta", *Boletín de la Real Academia de la Historia*, CLXXXI, n° 2, Madrid, 1984, pp. 207-208.

It was basically a preventive system intended to avoid possible conflicts but it was based on force when drawing limits and establishing areas of influence which were not included in the treaties. This politics created a subtle dependence play between big and small sovereign states⁶. The balance of power will remain balanced thanks to a policy of marriages and the agreements signed after the war confrontations.

Abbé Saint Pierre tried to set up a big supranational assembly to regulate the future conflicts defending peace from a utilitarian point of view. By the middle of the Enlightened century Hume was reflecting on this same idea, as well as Bentham (1789) with his *Plan for an Universal and Perpetual Peace*.

The War of the Spanish Succession, at the beginning of the century, did not create a system of balance but it went to a great length to definitely implementing it by making Spain the needle of the scales. The Treaty of Utrecht accepted French King Philip V to the Spanish throne, after modifying his territorial limits, in order to create a new system of balance to solve the tensions among political powers counterbalancing each other⁷.

The Spanish Monarchy envisaged a plural Europe where she should have relations with only a few states and at the same time keep good neighbourly relations with all. Malta was an allied sovereign state since Emperor Charles V ceded it to the knights of Saint John. To that end, it was quite common to see ambassadors and consuls regularly visiting the Spanish Hapsburg Court at Madrid and, later, with the change of dynasty, also at the Bourbon Court. In the 18th century Malta was a watchtower for the European commercial safety in the Mediterranean, since her fleet guaranteed peace in those waters keeping the Berber pirates at bay. Having become the key to Spanish trade peace in the Mediterranean, the Spanish-Maltese diplomatic relations grew fluent, the ports of Malta became aid posts for ships and her important hospital provided free assistance to the sailors of the time.

Knight Commander Pedro Dávila y Guzmán was appointed Ambassador of Malta at the Madrid Court in 1717⁸, being Grand Master Raimundo de Perellós and Rocafull. This ambassador organized the interests of Malta in Spain at the beginning of

⁶ María Victoria López-Cordón Cortezo, "Entre Francia e Inglaterra. Intereses estratégicos y acuerdos políticos como antecedentes de Trafalgar", Agustín Guimerá-Alberto Ramos-Gonzalo Butrón (Coords.) *Trafalgar y el Mundo Atlántico*, Marcial Pons, Madrid, 2004, pp. 20-21.

⁷ María Victoria López-Cordón Cortezo, *op. cit.*, pp. 22-24.

⁸ En 1713 died Frey Manuel de Arias y Porres who in 1690 had been appointed ambassador of Malta in Madrid. José María Carmona Domínguez, *Libro de privilegios de la Encomienda de Tocina, 1242-1692*, Universidad de Sevilla, Carmona (Sevilla), 1999, p. 24.

the 18th century⁹. In 1738 Grand Master Raimundo Despuig appointed ambassador José de Tapia and Beaumont, Marquis of Claramonte, who was also awarded the rank of Lieutenant General to the Royal Forces as it was the custom with the ambassadors of Malta in Spain. In addition to the title and military honours, this included an important economic allocation. He would be later removed from his office by the Grand Master in 1742 because of a problem with Prince Philip (son of Philip V), Grand Prior of Castile and Leon of the Order of Malta in Spain. It was best to keep good relations between both parts and in this way, for diplomacy's sake, the envoy to Spain was sacrificed. That same year Grand Master Pinto de Fonseca appointed Francisco de Frías and Haro new ambassador until the he died in 1756.

Later Fernando de Aguilera was named new ambassador and he obtained the privilege of arriving on horseback for the ceremony of taking up of his duties as other ambassadors did it in the convention of the time, in the same way as the ambassadors of Malta in Rome, France, Germany and Portugal did by mid 18th century. The next one was Fernando de Melgarejo y Puigmarí (1771)¹⁰, Knight Commander de Trebejo (Order of Malta, Spain), who completely overstepped the mark at the taking of his office by trying that the other ambassadors in Madrid paid an official visit to him and not the other way round, as it was the custom, fuelling some mistrust towards him by all of them¹¹. When this ambassador died, the Grand Master Manuel de Rohan named in 1777 the noble naval officer and Lieutenant General Pedro Mejía (Messía) de la Cerda, Fifth Marquis de la Vega de Armijo, who had been Viceroy of New Granada (America) between 1761-1773. In 1784 Francisco de Sousa and Portugal was the last appointed ambassador of Malta at the Spanish Court up to the invasion of the isle by Napoleon.¹² Francisco Alfonso de Sousa was the holder of the Encomienda Magistral (the territory belonging to a Knight Commander) de El Viso de San Juan (Toledo)¹³ granting him an

⁹ A question on an office of Pedro Dávila y Guzmán, Ambassador of Malta, requesting that the Consuls of his nation in Spain were excused of the condition to be natural subjects of the isle. National Historical Archive. Estado, 612, Exp. 42. (1723). A question on the request from the ambassador of Malta, Pedro Dávila y Guzmán, on being able to have consuls in the ports of Spain, and that these are of Maltese nationality. AHN. Estado, 605, Exp. 16. (1724).

¹⁰ Fernando Agustín Melgarejo Puxmarín Jondes and Carcelén, native of Murcia, appointed Knight of the Order of Malta in 1736. AHN. OOMM. Saint John of Jerusalem, Exp. 23.472.

¹¹ Rafael Olaechea Albistur, "A Venetian ambassador in the Spain of Charles III", *Cuadernos de Historia* nº 9, Madrid, 1978, pp. 185-186.

¹² Jaime Salvá, "Los embajadores de Malta", BRAH. CLXXXI, nº 2, 1984, 207-222.

¹³ Enforcement proceedings on the lawsuit sued by Francisco Alfonso Sousa y Portugal, Ambassador of Malta, Knight Commander an holder of the Magistral de El Viso de San Juan (Toledo), of the Order of Saint John of Jerusalem, with Domingo Esquibias and spouses, neighbour of Titulcia (Madrid), on

economic and honorary benefit. In addition to the ambassadors there were also consuls who watched over the Maltese trade interests in the Iberian peninsula. The function of the consuls was to facilitate the commercial activity of the Maltese who were welcomed in Spain and in the rest of European catholic countries through patronage networks, whereas Jews, Greeks and Armenians¹⁴ were looked on with suspicion. In addition to their strong presence in Cadiz and the American trade interests throughout the 18th century, we know that Bartolomé Mitre, was Consul of Malta in Cartagena, in 1713¹⁵.

This ambassador tried to obtain privileges like tax exemptions from the monarchy which were refused from the Court Administration calling him “*a vassal and a merchant*”¹⁶. This personage, who had already submitted a legal brief to gain access to his office in 1708¹⁷, had clashed with the Chief Magistrate of Cartagena in 1723¹⁸. Francisco Marabeuf succeeded him in the post in 1725¹⁹. Esteban Fleuri Vareylles was also appointed Consul of Malta in Malaga in 1711²⁰. We preserve papers of Juan Esteban de Astrecarena declining the appointment as Consul of Malta in Cartagena in 1745²¹.

eviction of a pasture. Archivo de la Real Cancillería de Valladolid, Registro de Ejecutorias (Register of Enforcement proceedings, Box 3.574, 6.

¹⁴ Carmel Vassallo, “Diaspora entrepreneurial networks. The Maltese in eighteenth-century Spain: a comparative perspective”, M. B. Villar García-P. Pezzi Cristóbal (ed.), *I Coloquio Internacional Los extranjeros en la España Moderna*, Málaga, 2003, Tomo I, pp. 670-671. Sobre el comercio maltés en la España del XVIII ver el trabajo de Carmel Vassallo, *Corsairing to comerce. Maltese Merchants in XVIII Century Spain*, Malta, 1997.

¹⁵ Consulta del Consejo de Guerra sobre instancia de Bartolomé Mitre, Cónsul de Malta en Cartagena, solicitando se le diese despacho de Cónsul expresando sus exenciones y privilegios. 1713. AHN. Estado, 619, Exp. 3. Autos formados por el Gobernador de Cartagena, Francisco Ibáñez, en virtud de real orden de 13 de febrero de 1713, con motivo del conflicto existente entre Bartolomé Mitre, Cónsul de Malta en Cartagena y dicha ciudad sobre los privilegios y exenciones del Cónsul. AHN. Estado, 619, Exp. 1.

¹⁶ Consulta del Consejo de Guerra sobre el conflicto entre Bartolomé Mitre, Cónsul de Malta en Cartagena, y esa ciudad sobre los privilegios y exenciones que debía gozar el Cónsul, acordando la Junta que debía quedar sujeto a la jurisdicción real por ser vasallo y comerciante. AHN. Estado, 619, Exp. 4.

¹⁷ Memorial de Bartolomé Mitre solicitando Real Cédula de aprobación de su nombramiento como cónsul de la religión de San Juan en Cartagena. AHN. Estado, 611, Exp. 48.

¹⁸ Bartolomé Mitre, cónsul de Malta, contra el Conde de Rivier, Corregidor de Cartagena (Murcia), sobre la aprobación de una administración contable a cargo de B. Mitre. AHN. Consejos, 26.796, Exp. 3.

¹⁹ Consulta sobre petición de Real Cédula de aprobación del nombramiento de Francisco Marabeuf como Cónsul de Malta en Alicante. Patente de Cónsul de Malta en Alicante expedida por Antonio Manuel de Vilhena, maestre de la Sagrada Casa Hospital de San Juan de Jerusalén y orden militar del Santo Sepulcro, a favor de F. Marabeuf. Sello de placa. Latín. 11 diciembre 1725. AHN. Estado, 622, Exp. 53.

²⁰ Real Cédula de aprobación de Cónsul de Malta en Cartagena, a favor de Bartolomé Mitre, expedida el 24 de agosto de 1711. AHN. Estado, 610, Exp. 12.

²¹ Consulta sobre petición de Real Cédula de aprobación del nombramiento de Juan Esteban de Astrecarena como Cónsul de Malta en Cartagena, expedido por el Gran Maestre de la Orden de Malta, Manuel Pinto. Traducción de la patente de Cónsul de Malta en Cartagena a favor de Juan Esteban de Astrecarena, 19 mayo 1745. AHN. Estado, 607, Exp. 57.

After that, we know there was an ambassador in Majorca at least from 1784²². But undoubtedly the close relationship between the Grand Masters and the Spanish Monarchy made the relations to be those corresponding to allied sovereign states. Between the 17th and 18th centuries nine Grand Masters were Spanish: Martín Garcés (1595-1601), Luis Mendes de Vasconcelos (1622-1625), Martín de Redin (1657-1660), Rafael Cottoner (1660-1663), Nicolás Cottoner (1663-1680), Gregorio Caraffa (1680-1690), Raimundo Rabasa de Perellós (1697-1720), Raimundo Despuig (1736-1741) and Francisco Jiménez de Texada (1773-1775)²³, always making collaboration between both parties easy. The presence of territories belonging to the Knights of Malta in the Iberian Peninsula and the economic interests that were constantly flowing from these areas towards Malta, made the Grand Master of the Order of Malta a key personage who was an ally in defending their interests in the Mediterranean and a lord in Spanish territories. The residents of these Spanish dominions were subjects to the King of Spain and the Sovereign of Malta in secular matters, and exclusively to the Grand Master of the Order of Malta in spiritual matters.

The relationship between Spain and Malta in that time has not yet been studied in depth²⁴. The presence of institutional figures from Malta in Spain was frequent. Thanks to that fact, we know the case of the soldier Juan Pheliz, native of Malta, punished by the Court of the Holy Inquisition of Majorca for “renegado” (abjuring from his faith), he served his ten years sentence as a prisoner in the galleys in the Mediterranean. After his sentence had expired, the soldier was still doing time and for that reason, and he requested to be set free in 1741. Nevertheless, the king had ordered that those who were “*abjurers of the Saint Catholic Faith*” should remain “*slaves*” after they had served their sentence depriving them of their freedom. The slow moving bureaucracy at the Court claimed not to find the order of slavery in cases like these, and because of it, Juan Pheliz was still a prisoner in the galleys of His Majesty²⁵.

In spite of the isolated ill treatment of this Maltese subject the relations with the Knights of the Order of Malta were friendly during the 18th century. Not all of the

²² Consulta sobre petición de Real Cédula de aprobación del nombramiento de Joaquín Bosch y Barceló como Cónsul de Malta en Mallorca. 1785. Traducción de la patente de cónsul de Malta en Mallorca a favor de Joaquín Bosch y Barceló, expedida por fray Manuel de Rohan, Gran Maestre de la Orden de Malta. 29 octubre 1784. AHN. Estado, 631, Exp. 33.

²³ Major Whitworth Porter, *A history of the knights of Malta or the order of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem*, Vol. I, London, Longman, Brown, Green, Longmans & Roberts, 1858, pp. 481-483.

²⁴ Es de gran interés analizar la documentación contenida en Archivo Histórico Nacional, OO. MM. 8.113, Exp. 7, 8, 9, 10 y 8.115, Exp. 18, 19 y 26, que por falta de espacio no desarrollo en este trabajo.

²⁵ AHN. Inquisición, 3.733, Exp. 311.

Maltese natives who were in the service of Spain were treated that way, not even the Knights of the Order of Malta. The Maltese Juan Bautista Bonet y Arniaud, a soldier who became Squadron Commander of the Royal Navy in Havana, was a Knight of the Order of St. James²⁶. This Order had interests all over Spain since the 12th century and was always present in the governing in the different peninsular kingdoms. In its evolution from the Middle Ages to Modern Age, the Order of Malta maintained a certain independence from the other Orders in peninsular Spain sticking to a pattern with a special character.

Domínguez Ortiz claimed that the properties of the Military Orders were patrimony of the high nobility, although the habits reached the different noble Orders. However, the most important dominions fell to the hands of the high nobility at the Court. They were replaced by delegates who accumulated these dominions by taking advantage of the government and the revenues without actually being residents in those territories. Benefits did not decrease through devaluation since most of the revenues came from tithes which followed the rise in prices²⁷. This was mainly the case in a territory belonging to the Order of Malta, the Grand Priory of Castile and Leon. This dominion generated the highest income for the Order of Malta in Spain and it was linked to a member of the House of Bourbon throughout the 18th century. For Europe's nobility in the countries where there were territories belonging to the Order of Malta, it was of the utmost importance to link some of those benefits to a member of their family, but this fact additionally represented an economic decline caused by a continuous flight of capital towards Malta. The territories of this Order in the 18th century were spread across Europe. At that time, The Order of Malta was organised in "Lenguas" (Priories) with a few "Dignidades Priorales" or Grand Priors that were set up inside these territorial demarcations and whose holder was a "a Grand Prior". These Grand Priories or Priories ruled the spiritual lives of the Knights who administered a series of dominions linked to these Orders because of their geographical proximity.

The "Priory of Provence" had two priories, the "Great Priory of St. Gil", with 54 "encomiendas" or dominions and the "Great Priory of Toulouse", with 35. The "Lengua of Auvergne" had only one priory which was called "Priory of Auvergne", with 48 encomiendas. The "Priory of France" had three: the "Priory of France", with 45

²⁶ Pruebas para la concesión del Título de Caballero de la Orden de Santiago de Juan Bautista Bonet y Arniaud, natural de Malta, Jefe de Escuadra de la Real Armada en la Habana. AHN. OOMM., Caballeros, Santiago, Exp. 1.146.

²⁷ Antonio Domínguez Ortiz, *Sociedad y Estado en el siglo XVIII español*, Ariel, Barcelona, 1976, p. 352.

encomiendas, the “Priory of Aquitaine”, which had 65, and the “Priory of Champagne, with 24 dominions. The “Lengua” of Italy was divided into seven priories: the “Priory of Rome”, with 19 delegations”, the “Priory of Lombardy”, with 45, the “Priory of Venice”, with 27, the “Priory of Pisa”, with 26, the “Priory of Barleta”, with 25, the “Priory of Messina”, with 12 dominions belonging to the Order of St. John, and the “Priory of Capua”, which did not have any. The “Lengua of Germany” had four: “Priory of Germany”, “Priory of Bohemia”, “Priory of Hungary” and “Priory of Dacia”, altogether they made 67 dominions of the Order. The “Prior of Aragon” had three: “Priory of Aragon” (also called “Castellanía de Amposta”), which ruled over 29 dominions, the “Priory of Catalonia”, with 28, and the “Priory of Navarre”, which had power over other 17. The “Priory of Castile” had two, the “Big Priory of Castile and León”, ruling over 45 delegations, plus the “Priory of Portugal”, which comprised 22 dominions of the Order.²⁸ These administrative regions came from medieval times and they had not been reformed during the Modern Age, hence Castile and Aragon appear to be independent priories. Portugal, in turn, was included within Castile due to its geographical location.

According to Belando, in the 18th century the “Priory of Castile” had 45 dominions in Castile and 22 in Portugal, a “conventual dignity”, two “Grand Priors”, five “Bailwicks” or Lordships, some Knights of the “Gran Cruz de Gracia”, approximately 150 Knights and about a dozen chaplains and arm servants²⁹. Within the Spanish Monarchy the Maltese priories received an unequal revenue³⁰ and it was not happenstance that the Crown chose the Grand Priory of Castile and Leon to be allocated to the Infant Princes since it generated the highest revenues, with a substantial difference over those of the rest of the peninsula.

The Regalian doctrine of the House of Bourbon turned this dominion of the Order of Malta into a primogeniture in 1785, maintaining only religious personnel of the Order of Malta in its churches as a kind of spiritual monopoly but losing the

²⁸ AHN. OOMM. Libros 1.276. Fol. 14rº. También Alain Blondy, *L'Ordre de Malte au XVIII siècle. Des dernières splendeurs à la ruine*, Editions Bouchene, París, 2002, pp. 20-21.

²⁹ AHN. OOMM. Libros 1.276. Fol. 18rº.

³⁰ El Gran Priorato de Portugal tenía 40.000 escudos de renta anual [411.764 reales] y el Gran Priorato de Castilla y León 80.000 escudos [823.529 reales]. En la “Lengua de Aragón”, el Gran Prior de Aragón (Castellanía de Amposta) gozaba de 7.200 escudos [74.117 r.], el de Cataluña 4.800 escudos [49.411 r.] y el de Navarra 2.400 escudos [24.705 r.]. AHN. OOMM. Libros 1.276. Fols. 19vº-20rº. Existe un interesante estudio sobre heráldica y genealogía para los sanjuanistas de Aragón. Eduardo García-Menacho y Osset, *Caballeros aragoneses de la Soberana Orden Militar de Malta en el siglo XVIII*, Prensa y ediciones iberoamericanas, Madrid, 1995.

revenues that were definitely attached to the Bourbon Princes. In the Enlightened Century there were many projects and ideas to adapt the medieval guilds to the new age. A manuscript document found in the archives of the Real Biblioteca de Palacio (Madrid, Spain) is most useful to understand the difficulties of obtaining the interesting economic and honorary dividends attached to being a holder of an Encomienda or dominion in a Military Order³¹. Director and Captain General of the Royal Navy Don Juan José Navarro de Viana y Búfalo (1687-1772), I Marquis of la Victoria³² and Knight of the Order of St. Gennaro (Kingdom of the Two Sicilies), was a well-known man in 18th century because of his contribution to the Navy.³³ He proposed a finance reform by centralizing and unifying the delegations in Spain, which were run by the General Treasury of the Military Orders, where concentration and unification of the Knight Commanders was also envisaged so that they could no longer be independent and have power over their dominions. This was an important problem, since revenues from the “Encomiendas” of the Order were shipped to Malta because the Knight Commanders did not benefit from all the revenues from these dominions, and they were but mere administrators of part of these benefits at the service of the Grand Master.

From the 800 dominions of the Order of Malta distributed throughout Europe three types can be established: “Encomiendas Magistrales” (e.g., Encomiendas o dominions belonging to the Grand Master, which were hardly more than twenty), “Encomiendas de justicia” (dominions of justice) which Knights of the Order could only attain through seniority (after proving their nobility), and “Encomiendas de Gracia”, which were awarded as a reward for services to the Order. The lands of the dominions of the Order of Malta in Spain were farmed by vassals of the Order of Saint John and, in addition to other revenues, it was the economic sustenance of the Knights and the Prior.

33% of the benefits (from responses at mass) was destined for their Headquarters in Malta and there were also special contributions imposed from the top hierarchy of the Order. The Grand Master had under his direct control: an encomienda of every priory (“Encomienda Magistral”), the “encomiendas priorales” or priory

³¹ RB. Mss. II/492, fols. 65 r^o-69 r^o.

³² Se le concedió el título de Marqués de la Victoria, en sustitución de otro anterior como Vizconde de Viana que quedaba cancelado, en 1744. AHN. OOMM. Consejos, 8.978, Exp. 822.

³³ Sobre este ver la obra de Hugo O'Donnell, *El Primer Marqués de la Victoria. Personaje silenciado en la reforma dieciochesca de la Armada*, Real Academia de la Historia, Madrid, 2004.

dominions remained under the authority of a prior, and the chapter bailiwicks were administered by members of the Order after being agreed at the General Chapter³⁴.

In the other dominions of the Military Orders in Spain (Santiago, Calatrava, Alcántara, Montesa) there were three types of revenues and dominions. The so called “maestral” territories or revenues (pertaining to a Grand Master) had in the past directly belonged To the Grand Master of the Order and eventually in the Modern Age, through evolution, became the property of the King of Spain as “Perpetual Administrator of the Order”, together with priories or bailiwicks, which supported the prior, or the bailey, and encomiendas which belonged to a Knight Commander.

In the 18th century these encomiendas were split into two types: royal encomiendas, which were the property of the Princes of the Royal House, and encomiendas belonging to individuals, granted to people attached to the army and the Court administration in most cases. This rent appropriation for the second sons of the Royal Family will also come about in territories of the Order of Malta in the 18th century with the case of the Grand Priory of Castile and Leon³⁵.

According to Belando, the Knight of the Order of Malta who was a Knight Commander in the Spanish dominions of the Order was not the owner of his encomienda but merely an administrator for the Order³⁶ applying in a different way the vow of poverty that the Knight Commanders of Santiago (St. James), Calatrava, Alcántara and Montesa had relaxed in the Modern Age. If the Knight Commanders of the Order did not acquire their patrimonial property it was because of their dependence on the Grand Master on Malta.

This meant a flight of capital from Spain through those encomiendas towards Malta until the Order was dismantled at the end of century. That unusual capital loss was not the case with the other encomiendas of the Spanish Military Orders. An exception for the Order of Malta in the way of administering its dominions was the

³⁴ Rafael Pérez Peña, *La Soberana Orden de Malta a través de diez siglos de historia y su relación con la acción humanitaria*, Tesis Doctoral, Departamento de Ciencia Política, Derecho Internacional Público y Derecho Procesal, Universidad de Málaga, 2009, pp. 71 y 166.

³⁵ Juan de Á. Gijón Granados, *La Casa de Borbón y las Órdenes Militares durante el siglo XVIII (1700-1809)*, E-Prints Complutense, Universidad Complutense de Madrid, 2009. [<http://eprints.ucm.es/9506/>] [*The House of Bourbon and the Military Orders during the Eighteenth Century (1700-1809)*]. Juan de Á. Gijón Granados, *El reformismo de las Órdenes Militares (1700-1809). Las Reales Encomiendas de la Casa de Borbón*, Círculo Rojo, El Ejido (Almería), 2011. [*Reform of the Military Orders in the Enlightenment (1700-1809). The Royal Commnderies of the House of Bourbon*].

³⁶ Esta misma idea se manifiesta en el trabajo de Pedro García Martín, “El patrimonio de la lengua de Castilla y León de la Orden de Malta o “todo lo que adquiera el religioso es para su religión”, *Hispania*, Vol. 59, nº 201, Madrid, 1999, pp. 251-268.

Grand Priory of Castile and Leon because during almost all of this period it was attached to the Royal Family and in 1785 it became a primogeniture.

This tradition came from the 18th century through the intervention of the Hapsburgs in this Grand Priory of Castile and Leon of the Order of Malta. With the Bourbons the figure of the Infant Princes and their economic needs transformed the structure of the dominions of the Military Orders in Spain splitting the encomiendas of Santiago, Calatrava, Alcántara and Montesa into two types: those which belonged to the Infant Princes like “Reales Encomiendas” and those of “private” personalities rewarded for services to the monarchy. The encomiendas of the Order of Malta stayed out of this intervention except the Grand Priory of Castile and Leon.

As regards religious matters, the territories of the Military Orders in Spain maintained a limited group of priests for their religious services belonging to different Orders like Santiago (St. James), Calatrava, Alcántara, Montesa and Malta; the servants of the dominions; priests occupied with the formation of new religious members, and the Royal Chapel in the Court. The religious training of these priest-knights took place in the conventual houses of the Order of St. James in Uclés (Cuenca) and San Marcos (León), the convent-castle of Calatrava La Nueva, in La Mancha, also in the convent-castles of Alcántara and Extremadura, the convent of Montesa (Valencia) and the convent of Santa Maria del Monte, near Monsuegra (Toledo), which belonged to the Order of Malta.

In the evolution of the patrimonial appropriation of the dominions of the Military Orders by the Royal Family, the conversion of the Grand Priory of Castile and Leon pertaining to the Order of Saint John into a primogeniture in 1785 and the absorption of the rest of the territories of this Order in Spain in 1802 marked the end of this process, which was completed with the allocation of the fourth part of the encomiendas of St. James, Calatrava, Alcántara and Montesa to the Infant Princes, representing more than half of the revenue benefits perceived by the Bourbon Princes.

At the beginning of the 20th century Suárez de Tangil reflected on the administration of the property of the Order of Saint John of Jerusalem in Spain in the Modern Age³⁷:

³⁷ Las rentas anuales, según los datos de este autor sobre un año indeterminado del siglo XVIII, eran las siguientes: Gran Priorato de Navarra, 3.637 escudos [37.439 r.]. Priorato de Cataluña, 14.336 escudos [147.576 r.]. Castellanía de Amposta, 31.771 escudos [327.054 r.]. Gran Priorato de Castilla y León, [tenía unos dividendos anuales que estaban en torno a 800.000 reales]. Fernando Suárez de Tangil y de

Lengua of Aragon:

- *Grand Priory of Navarre*³⁸. It was divided into the Priory of the Santo Crucifijo de Puente la Reina, the encomiendas of Zizur, Ribaforada, Fustiñana, Tudela and Cavanillas, Magistral de Calcetas, Villafranca, Indurain and Santa Catalina, Cugullu and Melgar, Alberín, Leache, Aparia and Irisarri.

-*Grand Priory of Catalonia*. It consisted of a bailiwick in Majorca and the encomiendas of Masdeu, Bajoles, Orla, Aviñonet, Barcelona, Lerida, Alguayre, Villafranca, Espluga, Vallfogona, Cervera, Grañena, Barbens, Termens, Torres de Segre, Susterris, Selma, Tortosa, Ciscar, Corbius Barberá, Sardeny, Espluga Calva and, finally, Aguaviva.

Castellanía of Amposta (Grand Priory of Aragon). It consisted of the Priory of Monzon and the Abbey of Alcocer, the Bailiwick of Caspe and Chiprana and the encomiendas of Saragossa, Monzon and the Carboneras, Magistral de Aliaga, Villel, Encinacorta, Castellote, Arcos, Calatayud, Añon and Talamantes, Cantavieja, Alfambra, Tronchón, San Juan de Huesca, Villarluengo, Uldecona, Torrente, Orta, Villalba, Chalamera and Valonga, Ambel and Alberite, Barbastro, Temple de Huesca, Castiliscar, Novillas, Samper de Calanda and Fatiel, Almunia, Mirambel, Chamera, Bolaña and, finally, Alcolea del Cinca.

Lengua of Castile:

-*Grand Priory of Castile and Leon*.

*Jurisdiction of Madrid*³⁹. Bailiwick of Lora, in addition to the encomiendas of the jurisdiction of Madrid: Viso, Yébenes, Calasparra, Tocina, Poyos, and Peñalem, Peñalem, Alcolea, San Martin de Trebejo, Frexenal, Bodonal, Higuera, Almazán; in addition to the conventual encomiendas of justice (those obtained through seniority), Talavera, Villar del Pozo, Valdevida, San Bartolomé of Queto.

Jurisdiction of Valladolid. Bailiwick of Santo Sepulcro de Toro, and Nuevevillas, in addition to the encomiendas of Quiroga, Osoño, Incio, Benavente,

Angulo, "Encomiendas de las cinco Órdenes Militares", *Revista de Historia y Genealogía Española*, nº 1, Madrid, 1912, p. 393. Estas rentas no tienen una fecha concreta dentro del siglo XVIII.

³⁸ Sobre este priorato, Eufrasio Munárriz Urtasun, "El Gran Priorato de Navarra de la Orden de San Juan", *Boletín de la Comisión de Monumentos Históricos y Artísticos de Navarra*, Segunda época, Pamplona, 1925, Tomo XVI, nº 61, pp. 47-57. Durante el siglo XVIII los Grandes Priors de Navarra fueron Joseph Galdiano, 1709, Francisco Barragán y Novar, 1720, Antonio Escudero, 1755, Sebastián de Sarasa, 1780, y Pedro de Azedo, 1793.

³⁹ Conocemos los comendadores sanjuanistas del partido de Madrid en 1761 por un listado realizado en la petición de donativo por el asedio de los turcos a Malta: Gran Prior, D. Felipe de Borbón; Baylio de Lora, Gonzalo Adorno; Viso, Fernando de Bargas; Almazán, Juan de Auñón; Poyos, Antonio Auñón; Frejenal, Manuel Madariaga; Trebejo, Fernando Melgarejo; Tocina, Fernando Aguilera; Bodonal, Francisco Zurita; La Higuera, Pedro Zarzaza, Yébenes, Vicente Aguilera; Talavera y Villar del Pozo, Clemente Sánchez de Torres. AHN. OOMM. Leg. 8.038, nº 18.

Puertomarín, Fresno and Torrecilla, Cubillas, Bamba, Beadem, Zamayón, Salamanca, Zamora and Valdemimbre, Villaescusa and Cañizal, Paradinas, Puenteorvigo, Pazos de Arrenteiro, Fuente de la Peña, Castronuño, Cerecitos, León and Mayorga, la Boveda, Vallejo, Ciudad-Rodrigo, Villela, Burgos and Buradón, Badillo and, finally, Reinoso. In addition to the conventual encomiendas, there were: Zamarramala, Puenteórvido, Villapadaña, Villaescusa and Cañizal, San Juan de Soria, Vega of Toro and Puente Itetero.

Corruption was frequent in the accounts of the encomiendas and there is plenty of documentary evidence attested in the archives⁴⁰. The properties of the Order of Malta were widely scattered throughout peninsular Spain and along with those of Portugal, made up a kind of administrative unit. From the Iberian Peninsula up to territories in Eastern Europe, the Order carried out its work in full economic heyday what led to some monarchies to look with mistrust at its properties and territories. Forced by Ottoman pressure, they organised a strong defence in the isle of Malta under the protection of their fleet in the 16th and 17th centuries⁴¹. In the 18th they wielded a remarkable military control in the Mediterranean⁴² over Berber pirates by strengthening and making maritime trade safer.

The Order of Malta modernised their ships and when the Grand Master Raimundo Perellós created the Maltese fleet, he set out his mind to acquiring for the Order all the sailboats which could outrun galleys with favourable winds, turning them into real mobile floating batteries. In 1700 the Grand Master entrusted a commission to equip the Order of Malta with a navy of large tonnage sailing ships adopting the best warship. The two-decker warship was the star of the English, Dutch, French and Spanish navies. Until 1705 galleys and vessels acted jointly but due to their big seaworthy difference they sailed independently or forming a joint fleet. By mid century,

⁴⁰ Petición de Francisco de Avellaneda, comendador de la encomienda de [San Juan de] Barbalos de Salamanca de la orden de San Juan de Jerusalén, para que Eugenio Hernández de Luna rinda cuentas de la administración de la misma. Archivo de la Real Chancillería de Valladolid, PL. Civiles, Pérez Alonso (F), C. 3340, 1.

⁴¹ Bertrand Galimard Flavigny, *Histoire de l'ordre de Malte*, Perrin, France, 2006, p. 157.

⁴² Victor Mallia-Milanes señala que los mejores trabajos sobre la historia naval de la Orden de San Juan son los de E. Rossi, *Storia della marina dell'Ordine di S. Giovanni di Gerusalemme, di Rodi e di Malta*, Roma-Milán, 1926, y U. Mori Ubaldini, *La marina del Sovrano Militare Ordine di San Giovanni di Gerusalemme di Rodi e di Malta*, Roma, 1971. Victor Mallia-Milanes, "Introduction to Hospitaller Malta", Victor Mallia-Milanes (ed.) *Hospitaller Malta 1530-1798. Studies on Early Modern Malta and the Order of St. John of Jerusalem*, Mireva Publications, Malta, 1993, p. 17. Aunque existen otros títulos más recientes como Roland Courinat, *La piraterie barbaresque en Méditerranée. XVI-XIX siècle*, éditions Jacques Gandini, France, 2002.

two-decker warships were replaced with frigates since the former proved to be absolutely disproportionate to its functions and extremely uneconomical⁴³.

Maltese galleys were a magnificent school for the practical training of sailors. To complete the theoretical and scientific instruction a Higher School of Navigation was founded in La Valletta (1765) and later these studies were further extended by opening the Professorship of Higher Mathematics and Navigation at the University of Malta where the European powers sent their sailors to further their education⁴⁴. Vicente Calvo and Julián stresses that from the military point of view it was the only Order of medieval tradition that operated like a “*military religion*” in this century. At the beginning of the 18th century they successfully fought the Tunisian corsairs and the pirates from Tripoli, drove Algerian vessels away and accomplished other outstanding and heroic feats in the Mediterranean. For this reason, the Knights had been authorised to celebrate mass on their ships provided that the sea was calm (Papal Bull of 1706)⁴⁵. Blondy points out that between 1739 and 1801 more than 600 ships of the Order, of very different types, sailed the Mediterranean waters and claims that the Order had evolved “*de la Croisade à la police des mers*”⁴⁶.

Michel Fontenay states that it was the Orders of Santo Stefano (Tuscany) and the Order of Malta which took responsibility for fighting the pirates in the Mediterranean⁴⁷. In 1783 there was an earthquake that fatally struck Messina and all the galleys of the Order of Malta moved there setting up a field hospital to help the victims⁴⁸. The knights of other Military Orders with presence in Spain were also part of the army of the Spanish Monarchy in the 18th century although they did not fight together as a military corps in spite of the fact that some regiments held their legendary names.

The ritualistic ceremony in which the Knights of Malta⁴⁹ took their oaths in the 18th century was carried out with a religious officiant sitting in a chair and the Knight-

⁴³ Hugo O'Donnell y Duque de Estrada, “Aportaciones de la Orden de Malta a la navegación del siglo XVIII”, Ángela Madrid y Medina- Hugo O'Donnell y Duque de Estrada (comp.) *Actas de las II Jornadas de la Orden de San Juan*, IEM., Ciudad Real, 1999, pp. 210-213.

⁴⁴ Rafael Pérez Peña, *op. cit.*, p. 172.

⁴⁵ Vicente Calvo y Julián, *Ilustración canónica e historial de los privilegios de la Orden de San Juan: dedicada a S. A. R. el Serenísimo Señor Infante D. Gabriel Antonio de Borbón, Gran Prior de la misma Orden en los Reynos de Castilla y León*, Joaquin Ibarra, Madrid, 1777, pp. 205 y 372.

⁴⁶ Alain Blondy, *op. cit.*, pp. 45 y 47

⁴⁷ Michel Fontenay, “Les chevaliers de Malta dans le corso méditerranéen au XVII^e siècle”, *Las Órdenes Militares en el Mediterráneo Occidental (s. XII-XVIII)*, Casa de Velázquez-Instituto de Estudios Manchegos, Madrid, 1989, p. 370.

⁴⁸ Rafael Pérez Peña, *op. cit.*, pp. 641-642.

⁴⁹ Sobre estos caballeros, Fernando Suárez de Tangil y de Angulo-Fernando del Valle y Lersundi, “Adición al Índice de Pruebas de los caballeros que han vestido el hábito de San Juan de Jerusalén (Orden

to-be kneeling, in long not tight-fitting clothes as a sign of freedom, and he was asked a series of questions to enter the Order with “*the dual purpose of hospitality and knighthood, in defence of the Faith against her enemies*” under the auspices of the Grand Master of Malta. The Knight was warned that if he committed a serious crime his habit would be removed from him and he would not receive riches but “*bread and water, and humble garbs*”. The oath of these Knights was taken before Jesus Christ, Virgin Mary and Saint John the Baptist, patron saint of the Order. The habit of the Order had eight ends which represented the eight evangelical beatitudes in which the spirituality and the values a Knight should have were contained under the appearance of his white cloak.⁵⁰

In connection with this ceremony it was said that “*this mantle with these ends, that we have put on your shoulders, represents the skin of the camel, which our glorious Patron Saint John the Baptist wore in the desert, despising the vainglories from this world; and this is our habit which we must wear in certain days of the year, according to the custom of our religion: and when we depart from this life, we will be buried with it; and the mysteries of the passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, which are held in this drawstring (to bind the mantle with) make us try harder to imitate our glorious Patron Saint John the Baptist; because the drawstring that binds this mantle represents the ropes with which our Lord was imprisoned and bound, and the other mysteries are the column, and the scourges with which he was flogged, and the sponge with which bile and vinegar was given him, and the cross in which he received death and passion*”.

According to Belando, in the 18th century the ceremony to become a Knight had to do, in the first place, with the position all the participants held in the temple. The Knight-to-be knelt down and the sword was blessed by spilling holy water on it. After saying the common prayers, the “master of the ceremonies” handed over the sword to the new Knight, who after cleaning it on his arm, sheathed and girded it on his waist. The Knight, standing, would draw his sword and theatrically struck three blows at the air, cleaned the sword on his arm again and sheathed it. The “Master” who conducted

de Malta) en el Gran Priorato de Castilla y León”, *Revista de Historia y Genealogía Española*, nº 1, Madrid, 1912, [Apéndice final]. Este trabajo completa la obra de Alfonso Pardo y Manuel de Villena-Fernando Suárez de Tangil y de Angulo, *Índice de pruebas de los caballeros que han vestido el hábito de San Juan de Jerusalén (Orden de Malta) en el Gran Priorato de Castilla y León desde el año 1514 hasta la fecha*, Librería de F. Beltrán, Madrid, 1911.

⁵⁰ 1^a. Amar la pobreza voluntariamente. 2^a. Ser manso y humilde. 3^a. Llorar los pecados. 4^a. Vivir justamente, y amar la justicia. 5^a. Ser misericordioso. 6^a. Tener limpia la conciencia de pecado. 7^a. Amar la paz y procurar la tengan todos. 8^a. Padecer trabajos con gusto por amor a la virtud. AHN. OOMM. Libro 1.276.

the ceremony, with the Knight's naked sword "softly" tapped his should three times saying: "*I make you a Knight in the name of God, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and Saint John the Baptist, protector and defender of the Knighthood's honour*". After this the Master gave the Knight his golden spurs which were fitted onto him by two other Knights. Kneeling and with a burning torch, the Knight waited for the priest to end the mass to receive his habit. After getting it, he would remain in the altar "*and kneeling he would be given bread, salt and water as he had been offered*" initiating in this humble way his life in the Order. Once the ceremony was over, he was embraced by the other Knights, who joined the new Knight on his way to the sacristy to take communion.⁵¹

Unless otherwise authorised by the Holy See, the badges of the Military Orders were incompatible on a Royal Attendant's chest. The Order of Charles III was incompatible with the Order of the Golden Fleece, with the bands of Sancti-Spiritus and Saint Gennaro, with the Cross of Malta and with all the other badges that kings across Europe granted as Military Orders. But that incompatibility did not include Kings or the Royal Family. Kings and Princes displayed together some badges which were incompatible on other chests.⁵² Princes had a right to show any of them together as members of the House of Bourbon, and it was also possible to overcome this problem for some personalities not belonging to the aristocracy, with Bulls signed by Rome.

Ferdinand VII went so far as to exhibit together badges corresponding to the Order of Charles III, Order of the Golden Fleece, the English Order of the Garter, the Order of Christ (Portuguese) and the Order of the Black Eagle (Prussian). Count Fernán Núñez praised the Order of Charles III for its defence of the Blessed Virgin's Immaculate Conception and he claimed that it was very important in a nation "... *where there are other Military Orders so ancient and so rich*". Dalmiro de la Válgoma spoke about the "*ancient Military Orders*" as being useful to reward individual merits, of services to the throne, either in the colonies or in the metropolis. It was the King who handed over the habit to the Knight, and therefore it all depended on the knowledge he had over the Knight-to-be. There was a zeal in the then emerging Order of Charles III to look the same as the other existing Orders, which at that time were valued and respected.⁵³

⁵¹ AHN. OOMM. Libro 1.276

⁵² Dalmiro de la Válgoma y Díaz-Varela, "La Orden de Carlos III", Ministerio de Cultura, *Carlos III y la Ilustración*, Tomo I, Lunwerg, 1988, p. 74.

⁵³ Dalmiro de la Válgoma y Díaz-Varela, *op. cit.*, pp. 74-77.

A Royal Decree of 1796 to revoke exemptions and privileges refers to the Military Orders of Saint James, Calatrava, Alcántara, Montesa and “*even that of Saint John of Jerusalem*”⁵⁴. Thus the four Spanish Orders were unified at the end of the century along with this international Order in the same group considering that they were of the same type, with the only difference of being national or international. In the Marquis of Grimaldo’s view (1724) a clear distinction was made between the Order of Malta that depended on the Pope and the Spanish Military Orders that depended on the King⁵⁵. But it was more a desire than a reality and, juridically speaking, he was not right. The five Military Orders had more things in common than differences, although it must be said that the peninsular dominions of the Order of Saint John had not been territories acquired by a Knight Commander for his own gain. Those Knights were simple administrators who provided cash to the Grand Master of Malta.

The Knights of the Order of Malta in 1690 possessed more than 600 encomiendas and were scattered throughout Germany, Italy, France, Spain and Portugal with an estimated value of over 900.000 ducats⁵⁶, generating annual revenues of more than ten millions of reales in Spanish currency. Considering the economic needs of the European political systems, it was not strange that about a hundred years later these revenues were assimilated by all the kings who ruled over the kingdoms where their dominions were located benefiting from the invasion of Malta by Napoleon. Alain Blondy claims that by 1710 there were 1.495 Knights of the Order of Saint John. Their nationalities were as follows: 37% were French Knights, 42% Italian Knights and 17%

⁵⁴ AGP. IDG. Secretaría. Leg. 763. Real Cédula impresa en Madrid, Imprenta Real, 1796. O también puede servir de ejemplo la circular sobre como se debía hacer la leva en los territorios de Órdenes. AHN. OOMM. Libro 1.490, nº 76 (año 1779).

⁵⁵ Real Biblioteca [Madrid]. Mss. II/1431. Vol. I. Fols. 306rº-308rº.

⁵⁶ En Francia las tres lenguas francesas tenían 235 encomiendas, divididas entre el Priorato de San Gil, con 44 encomiendas que valían 50.000 ducados, Priorato de Tolosa, con 23 encomiendas con un valor de 30.000 escudos, Priorato de Aubernia, con 61 y un valor de 50.000 escudos, Priorato de Francia, tienen 50 y con un valor de 70.000 escudos, Priorato de Aquitania, con 34 y un valor de 30.000 ducados, Priorato de Campania, con 23 y un valor de 25.000 ducados. En Italia, la lengua italiana tuvo 144 encomiendas, divididas en Priorato de Roma, tiene 21 encomiendas con un valor de 20.000 ducados, Priorato de Lombardía, tiene 37 y valen 35.000 escudos, Priorato de Barleta, tiene 18 y valen 30.000 ducados, Priorato de Capua, tiene 20 y valen 32.000 escudos, Priorato de Pisa, tiene 20 y valen 15.000 escudos, Priorato de Venecia, tenía 20 y valen 30.000 escudos, Priorato de Mecina, tenía 7 y valían 15.000 escudos. En la península Ibérica había 129 encomiendas, divididas en la Lengua de Aragón, Castellania de Amposta, tiene 31 encomiendas que valen 70.250 escudos, Priorato de Cataluña, tiene 23 y valen 20.000 escudos, Priorato de Navarra, tienen 12 y valen 9.000 ducados, Lenguas de Castilla, León y Portugal, Priorato de Castilla y León, 43 y 200.000 escudos, Priorato de Portugal, con 25 y 70.000 escudos. En Centroeuropa las Lenguas de Alemania: Alemania la Alta, Priorato con 42 encomiendas que valen 50.000 escudos. Alemania la Baja, Priorato con 19 encomiendas que valen 40.000 escudos. Bohemia, Priorato con 39 encomiendas que valen 40.000 escudos. El total de todas las encomiendas eran 608 y valían anualmente 911.255 ducados. Biblioteca Nacional [Madrid]. Mss. 12.939/12. (Año 1690).

Knights from the Iberian Peninsula (altogether 248 Knights including Knights from Portugal and Spain). The remaining 4% (56 Knights) of this group were Germans. In addition, the chaplains and servants of arms represented 50% in the French territories, 27% in Italian soil, 25% in the Iberian Peninsula and 8% in the German lands⁵⁷.

A manuscript from the 18th century written by Brother Nicolás Jesús de Belando, deals with the history of this Order. In this manuscript he states that in this century the main purpose of the Order was charity⁵⁸, in reference to the welfare organization that this Order always was and still is today⁵⁹. In connection with this, professor Madrid y Medina sees in this enlightened century, a renewed welfare concern in the territory of the Order in La Mancha desperately trying to keep up the old hospitals of the Order of Saint John⁶⁰. At the end of the 18th century a major effort was made by the Grand Priory of Castile and León supervised by architects such as Juan de Villanueva (author of the Prado Museum, Madrid), who applied revenues to improve hospitals and also to build cemeteries outside the city walls to ward off epidemics for the servants of the Order. The new cemeteries were organised making use of a chapel far from the towns and walls were also built around them forming a new sacred space in the towns of the Order of Malta in Spain⁶¹.

In the 18th century the Knight Commanders of the Order of Saint John of Jerusalem in Spain should have taken part in four “*caravanas*” or missions (they set off for six months in galleys of the Order to clean “*Turk and Moor pirates*” from the seas), they should have resided in Malta for five years and they should not have outstanding debts with the Order. To obtain another encomienda, the Knight Commander had to

⁵⁷ Alain Blondy, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

⁵⁸ “*En estos tiempos ha mantenido sus ojos en el principal objeto de su instituto, que es la caridad,...*”. AHN. OOMM. Libros 1.276. Nicolás de Jesús Belando, *Historia resumida de la Militar Orden de San Juan de Jerusalén, generalmente llamada de Malta, con una noticia cierta de sus Gran Maestres, y soberanía*. Fol. 3^o. (Está catalogado con fecha de 1774). Se trata de un resumen manuscrito de 160 folios, preparado para imprimirse, de otras obras estudiadas por el autor y, parece, acabado en 1774. En su texto hay una referencia “*al año presente de 1749*” por lo que intuimos que el texto estuvo mucho tiempo esperando su publicación que finalmente no se produjo.

⁵⁹ Luis Guillermo de Perinat y Elio, “La Orden de San Juan en la actualidad”, Ricardo Izquierdo Benito-Francisco Ruíz Gómez-Jesús Molero García (coord.) *La Orden Militar de San Juan en la Península Ibérica durante la Edad Media. Actas del Congreso Internacional celebrado en Alcázar de San Juan los días 23, 24 y 25 de octubre de 2000*, P. M. C. Alcázar de San Juan, 2002, pp. 249-260.

⁶⁰ Ángela Madrid y Medina, “La Orden de San Juan de Jerusalén en La Mancha: su proyecto hospitalario”, Á. Madrid y Medina-H. O’Donnell y Duque de Estrada (Comp.) *Actas de las II Jornadas de la Orden de San Juan*, I. E. M., Ciudad Real, 1999, p. 46.

⁶¹ En un formulario impreso de 1796 sobre los hospitales sanjuanistas del Gran Priorato se consignaban los gastos hechos en la curación de enfermos, servidumbre, conservación del hospital, socorros dados fuera de este, caudal percibido y existencias. De todo ello daba cuenta un mayordomo administrador al servicio de un director del hospital. Se trata de un formulario impreso, a rellenar, sobre los hospitales del Gran Priorato. AGP. IDG. Secretaría. Leg. 710.

prove that the management of the previous encomienda had been improved while under his authority. In the Kingdom of Aragon an inspection of the encomienda was called “*cabreo*”. It was done every 25 years, and it consisted in a registration memory on the dominion lands. The Grand Master of the Order⁶² granted the encomiendas to the Knights, usually by retaining funds for two years (exactly as it happened in other Military Orders in Spain when the encomienda was considered “*vacante*” or vacant). The Grand Master could grant an encomienda for five years and he could extend this term for an additional five-year term. To grant his authorization for this, he benefited from revenues called “*annatas magistrales*”. He also benefited from another income, the “*mortuorio*” or death fee, which was the revenue from the encomiendas starting from the day of the Knight’s death until next May 1. From this date until the following year the encomienda was considered to be vacant and the movable property that the Knight had at the time of his death (“*expolio*”) became part of the Order.

The Knights of Saint John who ran an encomienda, loyally served the Order and did not seek to make a profit from their dominion⁶³, although obviously they received a sufficient economic amount for their support, as it happened with other Orders in the Middle Ages. Nevertheless, the Knight Commanders of the Spanish Military Orders were not entitled to these rights and would only get paid, as a kind of annual pension, the liquid funds of their encomiendas after settling the corresponding duties. For the courtiers at the Madrid Court, The encomiendas of the Military Orders of Saint James, Calatrava, Alcántara and Montesa had become a way of ennoblement and also of obtaining an annual pension. Conversely, the encomiendas of the Order of Malta in Spain did not have this function since they depended on the Grand Master of Malta.

According to Belando, minors younger than 16 years could not enter the Order until in the General Chapter of 1631 it was decided to build a house in Malta for them, called “*Collachium*”, and a seminar for the priests. Its price amounted to 100.000 escudos [1.029.411 reales] which the Treasury of the Order could not pay and because of this, an economic formula was sought. The solution was found in the exemption that the minors had to pay to be admitted into the Order (“*passaje*”). Although the architectural project did not prove a big success, nevertheless exemptions were paid to

⁶² Tan solo la Orden de San Juan de Jerusalén tenía este título de “Gran Maestre” y el resto de Órdenes Militares tuvieron “Maestre”.

⁶³ Sobre ello ver: Pedro García Martín, “El patrimonio de la lengua de Castilla y León de la Orden de Malta o todo lo que adquiriera el religioso es para su religión”, *Hispania*, LIX, nº 201, 1999, pp. 251-268.

finance the works⁶⁴. In fact, they even went so far as to knight minors if the influence of the most powerful families could overcome some details like a Knight's minority with a special document timely drafted. We have the examples of Francisco Juan Téllez Girón in 1732⁶⁵ or Pascual de la Cerda in 1767⁶⁶, although these were exceptional situations.

Every Knight Commander belonged to a Priory and from this religious and territorial institution they were controlled to preserve their spiritual and administrative life. When from Malta they needed to get in touch with a Knight it was done through the Priory. The Knight was not an owner of the encomienda but a mere manager for the Order, what is easily understandable bearing in mind his vow of poverty⁶⁷. The situation was very different from the reality of the Knight Commanders of Saint James, Calatrava, Alcántara and Montesa. For that reason, some authors from Modern Age considered the Order of Saint John to be a true religion, whereas they had serious doubts about the other Spanish military-religious Orders. The vows of chastity, poverty and obedience differed substantially in practice between the Maltese Knights and other Crusader Knights adorning with their habits the territories of the Spanish Monarchy.

The administrators of the properties in the territories of the Order of Malta in Spain had to "increase and preserve" the rights on the property and the "mayordomos de tercias" (administrators who collected a third of the earnings) were at their service to control the administration of the tithes and other rights in each of the towns of the Order of Malta in Spain. The main tithes were those of wheat, barley and rye that were collected in the "paneras" or "casas tercias" (administrators' offices) from every place run by the "mayordomos" (or third party administrators) who lived in the areas nearby. The advantage of this was that they also knew their neighbours and made more exact tithe registers (tazmías) every year. According to these registers, there were "jueces de rastra"(judges) who were sent by the "contador" (tax collector) to those places. There were other tithes for adult lambs, one year-old lambs, cheese, wool, wine, olives, and some lands called "sernas" and the orchards belonging to the Order, in addition to their notary's office which was rented, revenue was obtained from mills⁶⁸, fulling machines and tolls. Some posts and rights on the property were usually leased to private

⁶⁴ AHN. OOMM. Libro 1.276. Manuscrito de Nicolás Jesús de Belando.

⁶⁵ Dispensa de edad a Francisco Juan Téllez Girón para ingresar en la Orden de San Juan de Jerusalén. AHN. Nobleza, Frías, C. 280, D. 4.

⁶⁶ Bula del Maestre y Guarda de los Pobres de Jesucristo de la Orden de San Juan de Jerusalén, concediendo a Pascual de la Cerda, menor de edad, el nombramiento de Freyle militar de Justicia de la Castellanía de Amposta. AHN. Nobleza, Parcent, C. 190, D. 18.

⁶⁷ AHN. OOMM. Libro 1.276. Manuscrito de Nicolás Jesús de Belando.

⁶⁸ AGP. IDG. Secretaría. Leg. 211.

individuals from those towns. A Treasurer managed the incoming revenues and handed over the deeds so that the tax collector could collect from the lessors.

Every five years the Grand Priors appointed religious inspectors to visit the priories⁶⁹, bailiwicks⁷⁰ and encomiendas. After the death of the Grand Prior of Castile and Leon Prince Filibert (1624), religious governors of the Order of Malta had been appointed and since they were subject to the laws of Malta, this had caused some problems to the Monarchy and on account of it, it was advisable to appoint lay men⁷¹. In the 18th century the situation remained much the same, although there were significant structural and administrative changes within the territories of the Spanish Order of Malta which had fallen into the hands of the Bourbon Princes where a greater control was maintained over their administrators in Madrid who also kept the accounts of other Spanish territories belonging to Military Orders.

From the religious point of view churches in the lands of the Order of Saint John in Spain belonged to the Grand Master and the Convent of the Military Order in Malta. The religious members of the Order of Malta did not recognise other bishop than the Pope. The Grand Priors, Baileys and Knight Commanders could appoint conservative judges to look after their privileges. The Royal Council of the Military Orders had authority over the parish priests in the lands of the Spanish Military Orders and the same applied to the members of the religious alliance of Saint John in the different European territories. According to the testimony of Vicente Calvo (1777) the Knights and Commanders of Malta sometimes prevented the inspection of their churches. This was considered an insult to the dignity of the Grand Priors of Castile and Leon, to the Castellanes de Amposta (or Grand Priory of Aragon), and to the Priors of Catalonia and Navarra. The Grand Priors of the Military Orders were a sort of *exempted Abbots*, whose power in their territories could match the powers of Bishops⁷². In fact, a proposal was made in 1815 to establish a bishop in the Grand Priory of Castile and Leon⁷³ which was unsuccessful.

⁶⁹ Territorio señorial a cuyo frente estaba un prior de la Orden de Malta y organizaba espiritualmente un grupo de territorios señoriales denominados bailíos y encomiendas.

⁷⁰ Territorios señoriales cuyos bienes y rentas pertenecían al Gran Maestre de forma patrimonial. Estaba dirigido por un baile y se pueden comparar a los territorios maestres de las Órdenes Militares españolas.

⁷¹ Existían la figura del vicario y del gobernador en los prioratos (jurisdicción espiritual y temporal). AGP. IDG. Secretaría. Leg. 764.

⁷² Vicente Calvo y Julián, *op. cit.*, 1777, pp. 1, 120, 180 y 368. [He consultado el ejemplar que fue propiedad de Antonio López Villalobos, Comendador de Rubiales, y que se conserva en Archivo General de Palacio. Infante D. Gabriel. Secretaría. Leg. 713].

⁷³ AGP. IDG. Secretaría. Leg. 891 (fin).

In the Grand Priory of Castile and Leon, in addition to the spiritual monopoly in the parishes of the villas of Campo de San Juan, its religious architecture is also remarkable. In their temples, sanctuaries and shrines we can see economic and social activity that is a part of the personality of those towns of the Order of Saint John. The churches that the Order of Malta possessed in the Grand Priory of Castile and Leon corresponded to each villa, or smaller population, within the limits of the Campo de San Juan. The parish carried out its functions through the religious men of the Order of Malta, called "priors". In the 18th century some tensions developed with the interests of the Archbishop of Toledo⁷⁴, although with time these issues were overcome thanks to the work of those in charge. In connection with this conflict, King Philip V issued a Royal Warrant in 1717 for the Knights of Saint John to keep the peace agreement from 1699, in spite of the fact that they wanted to invoke a previous pact (1597). In this conflict royal authority prevailed, but in 1758 the conflict flared up again while the seat of the Archbishop of Toledo was vacant and the previous peace was restored. In 1789 the "Assembly of Dubios" declared that the dispute had been settled and printed in 1746⁷⁵. In 1793 Cardinal Lorenzana, Archbishop of Toledo, could travel as normal to

⁷⁴ *Defensa jurídica por la Dignidad Arzobispal de la Santa Iglesia de Toledo, primada de las Españas en el pleyto con la Dignidad del Gran Prior de la Sagrada Religión de San Juan, en estos Reynos de Castilla y León. Pleito sobre diezmos en el priorato, S, XVIII. Por la Dignidad de San Juan, en los reinos de Castilla y León. Con la Dignidad Arzobispal de Toledo. Sobre las diferencias de jurisdicción eclesiástica en las villas de los prioratos de San Juan, Castilla, y León.* Fernando Suárez de Figueroa, *Concordia, Decisiones, y Declaraciones, sobre jurisdicción, y diezmos del Gran Priorato de San Juan de Castilla y León*, Madrid, Imprenta Real, 1733. Manuel Corchado Soriano, "Comentario al pleito trabado en 1756 entre el Arzobispado de Toledo y el gran Priorato de Castilla y León de la Orden de Malta por cuestiones de jurisdicción eclesiástica", *La Mancha*, nº 6, 1962, pp. 129-179. Reproduce un plano de Tomás López sobre el Gran Priorato, el pleito, algunos planos y contiene una bibliografía de 1962; Florencio Huerta García señala los enfrentamientos entre el Arzobispo de Toledo y los derechos de San Juan. Estos últimos estaban exentos de pagar diezmos en algunas poblaciones. Las disputas de finales del XVII se plasmaron en un acuerdo de 1698, aunque durante el XVIII siguió habiendo problemas. Florencio Huerta García, *op. cit.*, 2003, p. 454. Se llegan a enfrentar los infantes D. Luis y D. Felipe. [Andrés Rodríguez]. *Por la dignidad de Gran Prior del Orden de San Juan. Con la dignidad Arzobispal, y Arcedianato de Toledo. Sobre el tercio de diezmos mayores, y menores, que se causan en los territorios del Gran Priorato,...* . [Impreso con fecha posterior a 1743]. [Joseph Prudencio de Villar.] *Adición al papel en derecho que se escribió por la dignidad de Gran Prior de San Juan, en el pleyto pendiente en la junta de dubios con las dignidades arzobispal, y archidiaconal de Toledo: sobre el tercio de los diezmos, que se adeudan en los pueblos del Gran Priorato, y se expresan en las portadas del Memorial ajustado, y del dicho Papel en derecho.* Viuda de Ibarra, hijos, y compañía. Madrid. 1788. [Joseph Cayetano Lindoso] *Memorial Ajustado con citación, y asistencia de las partes, conforme a lo resuelto por la Junta de Dubios, de quanto resulta de los Autos, del que , como principal, y de los tres, que ocmo agregados a el, penden en la Junta, se han suscitado y siguen entre la parte del Serenísimo Señor Infante D. Phelipe de Borbón, Gran Prior de la Sagrada Religión de San Juan, de Castilla, y León: con la de el Serenísimo Señor Infante Don Luis de Borbón, Cardenal de la Santa Iglesia de Roma, y Arzobispo de Toledo, por la representación, y derechos de sus respectivas Dignidades...* [Madrid, 1744].

⁷⁵ Ventura Leblic García, "Cronología del pleito sostenido por los arzobispos de Toledo y los priores de San Juan en Castilla (siglos XIV-XVIII) sobre percepción de diezmos", *Actas del Primer Simposio*

the Spanish territories of the Order of Malta to give the sacrament of confirmation to the towns⁷⁶.

In 1769 there were plans to renew the interior decoration of the churches belonging to the Order of Saint John and in 1771 a Royal Decree attempted to reduce the members of the Order to the strict minimum to ensure worship in the temples built in the Grand Priory of Castile and Leon⁷⁷. Infant Prince Don Gabriel of Bourbon addressed a written request to his subjects to encourage them to respect the religion of the Order of Malta and the text was read in all the temples of the Grand Priory⁷⁸.

The Deputy Gran Prior, in the absence of the Grand Prior, handled spiritual matters. In 1750 Luis Arias was the bailey who reached an agreement by which the Archbishop of Toledo could administer the sacraments⁷⁹. The Convent of Santa Maria del Monte was a home for the priests of Malta, a place for religious training, a hospital for the sick and for pilgrims, a farming exploitation centre and a small village, the Puebla de Santa María (Toledo) that depended on the Order. As a privilege, this village became charter of a town in mid 14th century. The prelate of this convent, having civil and criminal jurisdiction, had the right to appoint Governing Mayors. It was the only parish house of the Order in Spain with a monastic constitution in 1611⁸⁰. The legend of the Convent of Santa Maria del Monte says two leagues from the town of Consuegra tradition holds that the image of the Virgin had appeared in a nearby valley, *Las Víboras*. It seems that it was a custom that adulterous women were thrown to the snakes in this place and, as a result of an injustice against an innocent woman who had been accused of adultery, Virgin Mary appeared and saved her from death. Tradition has it that the convent was built where the miracle took place⁸¹. García Ortiz points out that

Histórico de la Orden de San Juan en España. Madrid-Consuegra, 1990, Diputación Provincial de Toledo-Soberana Orden Militar de Malta, Toledo, 2003, p. 558.

⁷⁶ AGP. IDG. Contaduría, Leg. 147.

⁷⁷ AHN. Diversos. Cédulas Reales, nº 222. Despacho del Baylio de San Juan (1769) sobre proveer de ornamentos a las iglesias de su religión. AHN. OOMM. Libro 14.86, nº 29. Real Cédula, 1771.

⁷⁸ Luis de Arias, *Carta Pastoral dirigida a todos los súbditos, y religiosas del sagrado, y militar orden de San Juan de Jerusalén, por el serenísimo Señor D. Gabriel Antonio de Borbón, Infante de España, y Gran Prior de Castilla*, Joachin Ibarra, 1768. Carta para leerse en las comunidades para que se respete la religión de la Orden de Malta.

⁷⁹ AHN. OOMM. 8.038, nº 11. Luis Arias, *Facultades del Lugarteniente de la Orden de San Juan de Jerusalén en caso de menor edad del Gran Prior*. AHN. Códices 1.393.

⁸⁰ José Cano Valero, "Gobierno y administración del territorio. Órganos e instituciones político-administrativas", Francisco García González (coord.) *Castilla-La Mancha en la Edad Moderna*, Almad, Ciudad Real, 2004, p. 178.

⁸¹ Jesús Martín-Dávila de Burgos, *Soberana, militar y hospitalaria Orden de San Juan de Jerusalén, Rodas y Malta, en España. (Resumen histórico)*, editado por el autor, Madrid, 1984, p. 26.

the Convent of Santa Maria del Mount is placed close to the Sierra de los Morrones, today a municipality of Urda (Toledo)⁸².

The first attempt from the Order to approach the Crown had already taken place with the previous dynasty. The Spanish Hapsburgs had made D. Juan de Austria Grand Prior of Castile and León, although later other members of the Spanish nobility who were not part of the Hapsburgs controlled this priory as well. After the War of Spanish Succession and with the Bourbons already in power in their new Kingdom only Infant Princes of the Royal Family would hold the title of this Grand Priory. (Toledo).

King-to-be Ferdinand VI (1716-1725) was Infant Prince till he became Prince of Asturias when he was first in the succession line to the throne, due to the rapid ascent and death of his brother Luis I. During his rule a direct conflict broke out with the Archbishop of Toledo⁸³, and as a result, payment of the third part of the tithes which belonged to him in the Gran Priory, was refused to him. Philip V tried to mediate through a few Royal Decrees from 1717 and 1718, but the Grand Prior intended to break away from the jurisdiction of Toledo to avoid payment. The arrival of the Bourbons in lands of the Military Orders entailed a substantial tax reduction in the dominions of the members of the Royal Family thus providing greater benefits in those territories. But the Archbishop of Toledo had huge political weight in the Monarchy. In 1753 on account of the many problems raised, a concord project was designed so that the two Dignities could collect their part of the tithes without difficulties (Archbishop of Toledo and Prior of Malta). The Prior was requested to collect all the Priory taxes and give its annual part to the Archbishop⁸⁴. Accounting problems were frequent and they were a cause for litigation in the territories of Military Orders.

Philip V wrote to the Grand Master of Malta to ask for his consent in the granting of the vacancy of the Grand Priory of Castile and León for one of his sons after the death of Prince Charles of Lorraine, Prince-Elector of Trier, whose revenues had been confiscated (1703-1716) for having supported the opposite side in the War of Spanish Succession. The appointment of Grand Prior was granted to Infant Prince Ferdinand VI, but since he had been “*promoted to Prince of Asturias*” and he had waived his right to this post, he was succeeded by his brother Philip who by papal Bull

⁸² Julio García Ortiz, *La villa de Turleque*, D. P. Toledo, 1995, p. 70. Existen un plano de división de los términos de Urda y Consuegra de 1788. AGP. IDG. Secretaría. Leg. 297 (cont.). [Plano 6.436].

⁸³ Pedro Guerrero Ventas, *El Gran Priorato de San Juan en el Campo de La Mancha*, CSIC., Toledo, 1969, p. 260.

⁸⁴ AGP. IDG. Secretaría. Leg. 771.

from Pope Benedict XIII was appointed by the resignation of the new Prince of Asturias (1724)⁸⁵. The Marquis of Olías, Chief magistrate of Toledo, took office of the Grand Priory on behalf of the Infant Prince Philip in October, 1725⁸⁶ when the Infant child was five years old. Infant Prince Ferdinand was succeeded by his stepbrother Don Felipe (1720-1765) as Philip V was granted a papal Bull from Pope Benedict XIII in 1724 that entitled him to appoint his son for this position⁸⁷. He remained being a Grand Prior of Castile and León (Order of Malta) despite obtaining the Duchy of Parma and conducting administrative matters from Italian soil. When he died, Gabriel Antonio (1766-1788), second son of Charles III, received this title and its revenues and he turned it into a primogeniture in 1785 and later it was inherited by his first-born son Infant Prince Pedro Carlos (1789-1809). After the war, in 1814, Carlos Maria Isidro of Bourbon took over this Priory, not without disputing it with his own family until Infant Prince Sebastian, son of Pedro Carlos, finally asserted his rights in 1822 being him the last Grand Prior.

In the year 1785 the Grand Priory of Castile and León became a “Mayorazgo-Infantado⁸⁸” (dominion belonging to the Infant Princes of the King). This project was carried out by Charles III for his son Gabriel and his heirs under the approval of Rome, since “... for some time now they have got accustomed to appoint an Infant Prince of their Royal Family ...”⁸⁹. Don Pedro Carlos de Bourbon and Bragança would inherit

⁸⁵ AGP. IDG. Secretaría. Leg. 766.

⁸⁶ ⁸⁶ Francisco Domínguez Tendero, “Acta, memoria y crónica de la toma de posesión de la dignidad de prior de San Juan en los reinos de Castilla y León, del Infante Don Felipe, hijo de Felipe V, representado por el Marqués de Olías, Corregidor de la Ciudad de Toledo”, Actas del Primer Simposio Histórico de la Orden de San Juan en España, Madrid-Consuegra, 1990, Diputación Provincial de Toledo-Soberana Orden Militar de Malta, Toledo, 2003, pp. 507-509.

⁸⁷ Existe copia de 1728 sobre la bula de 1724 de Benedicto XIII. AGP. IDG. Secretaría. Leg. 762.

⁸⁸ “Roma, 17 agosto de 1784. Madrid, 26 de marzo de 1785. Breve de S. S. Pío VI autorizando la creación de un Mayorazgo Real sobre el Gran Priorato de Castilla y León en La Mancha y Real Cédula por la que se erige dicho Mayorazgo”. El documento indica que era costumbre nombrar un infante para este cargo y el actual poseedor quería casarse, el motivo de esta transformación es la boda del infante Gabriel. Se concede este mayorazgo para él y sus sucesores varones legítimos que residan en España. Pedro Guerrero Ventas, *op. cit.*, pp. 380-383. Cédula de Carlos III de 26 marzo de 1785. Esta constituye para los bienes del Gran Priorato un mayorazgo para su hijo D. Gabriel y sus hijos legítimos, domiciliados y residentes en España. Pese a esto al morir, su hijo de dos años Pedro lo heredará aunque se le destine para ser educado a Portugal. Florencio Huerta García-Nieves Esther Muela Fernández-Irene Poveda de Campos, *Herencia y la Orden de San Juan (siglos XIII-XX)*, B. A. M., Ciudad Real, 1991, p. 42. Cédula de S. M. con inserción del Breve en que previo el Real Consentimiento concede S. S. la administración perpetua del Gran Priorato en la Orden del Hospital de San Juan de Jerusalén al Serenísimo Señor Infante D. Gabriel y sus sucesores, como en él se expresa. Madrid, Joachin Ibarra, impresor de Cámara de S. M., 1784.

⁸⁹ Domingo Aguirre, *Descripción histórica del Gran Priorato de San Juan Bautista de Jerusalén, en los Reynos de Castilla y León. Origen de esta sagrada milicia en la santa ciudad y su antigüedad en España con un suplemento para comprobación de cuanto en la obra se trata y contiene un catálogo muy completo de los grandes comendadores y priores de España hasta el presente y otras particularidades,*

this dominion after his father died and with the confiscation of his property in the Spanish War of Independence this primogeniture went to the hands of a daughter of King Joseph I, Charlotte Bonaparte, although at that time it did not belong to the Order of Malta but to a private primogeniture which transferred the spiritual monopoly of its parishes to the Order of Saint John on account of their traditional presence in these lands from the Middle Ages. Count of Cabarrús tried that this “Primogeniture and Infant Prince’s Mastership” was not expropriated by the government of Joseph I since it was not an encomienda, but the King declared that its revenues belonged to the Dirección General de Bienes Incorporados⁹⁰ (Department of movable assets). Its annual benefit in those years was between 700.000-1.000.000 reales per year, due to many expenses that were entailed in maintaining nearly a score of churches, chapels, storehouses for tithes and some military strongholds. The potential of the revenues of these 14 towns, in addition to another “odd towns” attached, resulted in the annual benefit being similar to the benefits generated by a dozen encomiendas of the Spanish Military Orders.

In 1785 Carlos III granted to D. Gabriel of Bourbon and his heirs perpetual administration of the Grand Priory of Castile and León belonging to the Order of Malta. The document was signed by the King and his minister Campomanes. Pious VI granted this honour (August 17th, 1784) as gesture of goodwill because “... *Charles III, ... imitating the example of his ancestors, not only in the previous year, but also in the present, with big naval forces at the cost of very large sums has restrained and humiliated the adventurousness and insults of the barbarian nations ...*” Another appointment from Rome for Don Gabriel had been a Papal Brief from Clement XIII in 1765 so that he could marry. His descendants should reside “*in the kingdoms of Spain*” to enjoy this primogeniture and obtain encomiendas from other Military Orders. If the first-born son of Don Gabriel did not live in Spain or had no male descendant, the primogeniture should pass to the first son of the Infant Prince Don Carlos (King-to-be Charles IV), Prince of Asturias. But if eventually there was no male descendant the title would fall back to the King⁹¹.

dedicadas al Serenísimo Señor Infante de España Gran Prior Don Gabriel Antonio de Borbón, Consuegra, 1769, p. 381.

⁹⁰ AGP. IDG. Anexo. Leg. 39.

⁹¹ AGP. Reinados. Gobierno José I. Caja 26/16.

It seems that Charles III encouraged Infant Prince Don Gabriel to maximise the yields from the lands of the Grand Priory by using irrigation⁹², obtaining thus greater benefits. To that end, a big channel was planned (Channel of the Grand Priory) to take water to the fields in La Mancha⁹³. Works, directed by Juan de Villanueva, started in a first stage in 1779-1789 with an initial budget of one million reales. After the project was briefly stopped (1790-1792) due to the many activities in which Villanueva was engaged, works were resumed until 1802 when they were suspended again as a result of lack of budget and in 1807 management problems made the project come to a halt for lack of money. War and the death of Villanueva (1811) definitely buried a further development of the works⁹⁴.

Reforms in the Grand Priory were linked to the patrimonial appropriation of the dominion as primogeniture of Infant Prince Don Gabriel. This happened a few years before the appropriation of the dominions in Europe by the Kings, who disassociated the territories of the Maltese Order from their Headquarters in Malta. But much more important was the plot that the French were preparing to invade Malta. T. Egido claims that the Spanish Prime Minister Manuel Godoy was tempted with ruling a small state in 1796. Revolutionary France promised to make him a Grand Master of the Order of Malta. Manuel Godoy refused it because he claimed he was not a priest, he did not have the “talent” for the position and because he was loyal to the Kings of Spain⁹⁵. With this diplomatic solution, the King’s favourite avoided to be ousted from ruling over the Spanish politics which probably was the French aim. But it seems that he did not need to go that far to have his own state and he may have believed that with French help he could have one state of his own without leaving the Spanish Peninsula. Godoy had set his sights in the third part of Portugal after the French invasion⁹⁶. Furthermore, the role of consul Felipe Amat⁹⁷, representative of Charles IV, in the capitulation of Malta, was a key element in the conspiracy to surrender the isle to France.

⁹² Roberto Fernández, *op. cit.*, p. 165.

⁹³ Tres mapas sobre el Gran Priorato donde se ve el desarrollo de aquel proyecto están en AGP. Planos 3.189, 3.190 y 3.812 (c1786).

⁹⁴ Santiago Rubio Liniers, *La Arquitectura de Juan de Villanueva en La Mancha*, Edición del autor, Madrid, 1999, pp. 131-175.

⁹⁵ Teófanos Egido, *Carlos IV*, Arlanza ediciones, Madrid, 2001, p. 77.

⁹⁶ Juan de Á. Gijón Granados, *op. cit.*, 2011, p. 277

⁹⁷ Jorge Sánchez Fernández, “La diplomacia española y la rendición de Malta (1798)”, *Investigaciones históricas: Época moderna y contemporánea*, nº 19, 1999, pp. 39-52.

When the French invaded the isle of Malta the territories of the Order of Saint John in Spain lost all their properties and jewellery that rightly belonged to them⁹⁸. In addition to their welfare activities, the Order generated an important patrimony and part of it ended up at the bottom of the sea in the dispute between the French and the British to capture the treasure of Malta in the early 19th century. The great wealth of the Order of Saint John in Europe was going to run the same luck that the Order of the Temple had at the beginning of the 14th century. Their revenues and properties were the aim of the temporary government of the European kings who took advantage of the invasion of Malta, which was the Grand Master's Headquarters, by Napoleon's armies. The treasure of the Order which was kept in Malta would end up as landscape at the bottom of the Mediterranean Sea in the struggle among European powers for hegemony in international politics.

The events at the end of the 18th century transformed the structure of the international Order of Malta, where key roles were played by Napoleon and the Czar of Russia. At the end of 1797 a delegation of Maltese Knights thanked Paul I for his generosity proclaiming him "*Protector of the Order of Saint John*", presenting him with the Cross that had belonged to the Grand Master Jean de la Valette, hero in the siege of Malta against the Turks. In 1798 Napoleon invaded Malta and some fugitive French Knights did not hesitate to appoint Czar Paul I "Grand Master of the Sovereign Order of Saint John of Jerusalem", in a ceremony that was held in Saint Petersburg. On November 24 the Czar accepted it and five days later the investiture ceremony took place. After the Czar was murdered (1801) his successor Alexander I signed a document renewing his protectorate over the Order⁹⁹.

So strange events are explained as follows. In 1798 the French arrived at Malta on their way from Egypt. Baron Hompesch, Grand Master of the Order of Saint John, handed over the isle to Bonaparte, by virtue of a capitulation, in exchange for 300.000 Francs per year in indemnification, although two years later the isle was occupied by the British. For this reason, Czar of Russia Paul I considered the surrender of the isle as treason and took the Order under his protection appointing himself Grand Master in his territories. After the Czar's death, despite the idea of continuity of his son Alexander I,

⁹⁸ Resumen del valor de los bienes y alhajas que había en Malta cuando entraron los franceses, pertenecientes a las Lenguas de Cataluña, Navarra y Castellania de Amposta de la Orden de San Juan de Jerusalén. 1799. AHN. OOMM., 8.075, EXP. 48.

⁹⁹ Alexis, Principe de Anjou de Borbón-Condé, *La verdadera historia de los caballeros de San Juan*, Biblioteca Universitaria, Madrid, 1990, pp. 75 y 104.

Knight Commander Juan de Tomasi became Grand Master with the Papal Blessing and when he died, (1805) he was succeeded by Knight Commander Juan Centelles.¹⁰⁰ Juan de Tomasi moved his headquarters to Sicily, then it was moved to Ferrara and finally to Rome (1834)¹⁰¹ where it is still today.

In the French expedition to Egypt Napoleon's army took Malta in 1798 and the treasure of the Knights of Malta for an estimated value of 7.000.000 gold francs was loaded up onto the flagship *L'Orient*. In 48 hours the French finished with the resistance of Malta and on June 16, 1798 they left a garrison in the isle and set off with the rest of the troops for Egypt. Nelson and the British navy clashed with the French ships in the Battle of Aboukir (Battle of the Nile) and destroyed the flagship. Witnesses claim that after the explosion the remains of the ship and the sailors, together with the gemstones and the gold of the Knights of Malta stored in the ship's hold¹⁰², could be seen mingled in the sea. The isle of Malta fell into English hands and the confiscated riches of the Order ended up in the depths of the sea. A part of that booty came from the revenues generated in the Spanish territories of the Order of Malta in the 18th century. The power of Order sank thus in the middle of an unprecedented crisis. About the crisis of the territories of the Order of Malta in Europe, we know that their revenues of 1.632.000 escudos in 1788 were reduced to roughly 400.000 escudos in 1798¹⁰³. Other figures speak about a reduction from 136.000 pounds to 36.000 pounds between 1788 and 1798¹⁰⁴.

From Spain there was a strong religious component tied to the ideal of a medieval crusade to defend the autonomy of the sentinel island in the Mediterranean. In 1790 a Spanish Franciscan declared that ... *"The holy places of Jerusalem that are the apple of Spain's eyes in which large quantities are consumed for preserving the sacred monuments in the life and passion of our Redeemer Jesus, these holy places would remain in the most serious ruin were they left to the unbelievers without the protection from the isle of Malta. The annual consignments leaving Spain either with remittances*

¹⁰⁰ M. G. (traducido por Francisco Pérez de Anaya), *Bellezas de las Historia de las Cruzadas y de las diferentes órdenes religiosas y militares que de ellas han nacido desde su origen hasta su extinción*, Imprenta de D. Tomás Jordan, Madrid, 1833, p. 305.

¹⁰¹ Antonio de la Vega y Armijo, "Mémoires numismatiques de l'Ordre souverain de St. Jean de Jérusalem, por el Barón E. H. Furse", *Boletín de la Real Academia de la Historia*, nº 26, C. I-III, 1895, pp. 29-46.

¹⁰² José Cayuela Fernández-Ángel Pozuelo Reina, *Trafalgar. Hombres y naves entre dos épocas*, Ariel, Barcelona, 2004, pp. 81-84.

¹⁰³ Rafael Pérez Peña, *op. cit.*, pp. 528-529.

¹⁰⁴ Desmond Gregory, *Malta, Britain, and the European powers, 1793-1815*, 1996, AUP., USA., p. 35.

or with priests to inhabit and to preserve those holy places are protected by this isle and also by the galleys of Malta against the pirates, thus it follows that in the absence of this Order those holy places would be in great danger”¹⁰⁵.

In Spain at the turn of the 19th century a key event in the expropriation of the Spanish territories of the Order of Malta took place. On January 20, 1802 the properties of the Order of Malta, those of the Priors and the Assembly of Spain were joined to the masterships of the Spanish Military Orders and the official explanation that was offered was that the measure intended to prevent revenues from leaving Spain and to use them for military schools, hospitals, hospices, homes for foundlings and other charitable homes. Charles IV declared himself “a Grand Master” to watch over the good functioning of his government and administration, leaving everything concerning the spiritual and religious matters to the authority of the Church and the Pope¹⁰⁶. Charles IV took over properties and revenues of the Order without interfering in spiritual matters. The Royal Decree of 1802¹⁰⁷ thanked the Order of Malta for their ongoing work in the Holy Places from medieval times, and also for the control they exerted over pirates and Turks in the Mediterranean, but it suggested that the money was better invested in Spain for charitable homes and social matters. Charles IV declared himself a Grand Master in Spain and left the spiritual and religious matters to the authority of the Church¹⁰⁸. The measure prevented that the revenues went to Malta and intended that they were invested within the royal territories of the Monarchy.

Desmond Seward points out that in 1802 Charles IV unified the Spanish “Lenguas” or Priors of the Order of Saint John with the masterships of four Spanish Military Orders¹⁰⁹. Thus, amidst the crisis that the Order faced in Europe¹¹⁰, he gained

¹⁰⁵ Nota del traductor de un texto francés en 1790. *Reflexiones sumarias e imparciales sobre la utilidad de la Orden de San Juan y sobre los peligros de la supresión en Francia. Por el Bailío de Flachslanden Gran Turcopiller del Orden de Malta, Diputado de Alsacia. Traducidas del francés a nuestro idioma por Fr. Joaquín Sánchez del Orden de N. P. San Francisco en este de N. S. de Jesús de Zaragoza.* AHN. Códices L671, fol. 7r°.

¹⁰⁶ AHN. OOMM. Leg. 8.038, nº 20.

¹⁰⁷ *Aranjuez. 17 de abril de 1802. Real Decreto y Cédula del Consejo incorporando a la Corona el Gran Maestrazgo de la Orden, las Lenguas y Asambleas de España y dejando lo concerniente al régimen espiritual a la autoridad eclesiástica correspondiente.*

¹⁰⁸ Pedro Guerrero Ventas, *op. cit.*, pp. 383-385.

¹⁰⁹ Desmond Seward, *Los monjes de la guerra. Historia de las Órdenes Militares*, Edhasa, Barcelona, 2004, p. 472.

¹¹⁰ Los grandes prioratos de España fueron confiscados en 1802, Alemania, Venecia y Lombardía en 1806, Roma, Capua y Barletta en 1808, y los de Rusia en 1810. Desmond Seward, *op. cit.*, p. 398. Sobre el Gran Priorato de la Orden en Rusia, *Convención solemnelle entre sa Majesté Imperiale L'Empereur de toutes les Rusiens, et L'Ordre Souverain de Malte, por l'establissement d'un Grand Prieur de cet Ordre dans L'Empire de Russie, approuvée, sanctionnée et ratifiée par les deux hautes parties contractantes.*

revenues and properties coming from the Spanish medieval repopulation and that had survived adapting themselves to the times as dominions of Military Orders linked to the international religious military Order named Saint John of Jerusalem or Malta. This usurpation of the Order's property¹¹¹ is comparable to the event that led to the extinction of the Order of the Temple in the early 14th century and, in another level, caused the liquidation of the Military Orders of Saint James, Calatrava and Alcántara carried out by the Catholic Monarchs followed by the Montesa affair during the reign of Philip II and the reforms carried out in the 18th century. Blondy points out the reflection of a Maltese Knight who in 1786 claimed that "*Nous avons la morgue des anciens Templiers, avec une avidité qui nous nuira, à la fin, comme eux*"¹¹². ["*We feel the arrogance of the ancient Templars so strongly, that it will kill us in the end, as it happened to them*"].

In 1809 with the suppression of the Military Orders in Spain the revenues of the Grand Priory of Castile and León were managed by Leandro Díaz Monasterio who was the administrator of the Royal Order of Spain in Consuegra. This personality conducted the administration of Bastimentos (Supplies) of Castile (Dos Barrios, Puebla de Almuradiel), "*in the service of the King [Joseph I] and the State*". Documents show some news on that ephemeral administration. For example, in 1809, the commissioner Raimundo Quirós was in the town of Alcázar de San Juan "*for collecting documents and tithes of La Mancha*".¹¹³

The king of Spain Joseph I revolutionised the situation of the Military Orders after the nationalist rebellion by suppressing them and creating the Royal Order of Spain. Nevertheless, the tradition of the Royal Family of linking the Infant Princes of Spain to the Grand Priory of Castile and León of the Order of Malta perpetuated it providing their younger daughter with these properties. A letter confirms this tradition:

"...les biens appartenants au prince des Asturias, et aux infants, seront administrés par le directeur de biens sequestrés. [...] ...le grand priorat de Castille et de Leon du ordre de saint Jean de Jerusalén possédé par l'infant don Pierre...le grand priorat est un majorat comme tous les autres de l'Espagne, appartiennent a l'infantisse

1798. En esta publicación hay interesantes grabados alegóricos de la Orden y existe un ejemplar en AHN. OOMM. Leg. 8.040, nº 7-9.

¹¹¹ Un listado de valores líquidos de las encomiendas sanjuanistas en España se reproduce en el trabajo de Pedro García Martín, "La incorporación a la Corona del patrimonio hispano de la Orden de Malta", Javier M. Donézar-Manuel Pérez Ledesma (eds.) *Antiguo Régimen y liberalismo. Homenaje a Miguel Artola. 2. Economía y Sociedad*, Alianza Editorial, Madrid, 1995, pp. 169-184.

¹¹² Se trata de Sébastien de Choiseul, el 6 de julio de 1786. Alain Blondy, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

¹¹³ AGP. IDG. Secretaría. Leg. 741.

Charlotte, fille seconde de V. M.”¹¹⁴ [“...property belonging to the prince of Asturias, and to the Infant Princes, will be managed by the director of the confiscated property. [...] ...the Grand Priory of Castile and Leon of the Order of Saint John of Jerusalem belongs to the Infant Prince Pierre... the Grand Priory is a mastership like other masterships in Spain, which belongs to Infant Princess Charlotte, second daughter of His Majesty”].

Zenaida Bonaparte, the first-born daughter of the King, was supposedly the “Princess of Asturias”, and therefore, she was the Queen-to-be who would have succeeded Joseph I, and the second daughter, Charlotte Bonaparte, Infant Princess of Spain, would have received properties from the Military Orders for the maintenance of her expenses as a second-born daughter in the succession to the throne. The dynasty changed but some court traditions were not lost whereas the power of the Order of Malta sank in the middle of a convulsed Europe.

¹¹⁴ Carta de Jean Antoine Llorente [el afrancesado Juan Antonio Llorente, 1756-1823], 6 mayo 1809. AGP. Reinados. Gobierno José I. Caja 26/16.