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## The inter-relationship between the Orders of St Lazarus and of St John during the 16<sup>th</sup> century

Charles Savona-Ventura<sup>1</sup>

### Introduction

On the 28<sup>th</sup> March 1489, Innocent VIII in no uncertain terms suppressed the Order of St Lazarus and passed on their properties to the Order of St John then stationed in Rhodes, specifically linking these to the French Priory of Aquitaine.<sup>2</sup> The terms of Innocent VIII's bull *Cum sollerti meditatione pensamus* were again reiterated by Julius II on 12<sup>th</sup> July 1505 in the bull *Romani Pontificis benignitas*.<sup>3</sup> While the 1489 Bull was drawn up within the context of the desire of Innocent VIII to have the Sultan's brother Jem, then under the protection of the Order of St John, transferred to Rome<sup>4</sup>; the latter papal bull was drawn up within the context of the Franco-Italian Wars initiated by the French King and opposed by the Holy League re-formed by Julius II to support the claims of King Ferdinand II of Aragon over the Duchy of Milan and the Kingdom of Naples.

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2 Innocent VIII (5.iv.1489). *Cum sollerti meditatione pensamus*. Transcribed in: Haudessens d'Escluseauls, A.F. (1700). *Privilèges des papes, empereurs, rois et princes de la chrétienté accordez à l'ordre Saint-Jean de Hiérusalem avec les arrests notables rendus par les cours souveraines du royaume de France*. Paris: Pierre-Augustin Le Mercier, 109–112. Translated by: Vella (2021). The 1489 Bull Cum Sollerti of Pope Innocent VIII. *Acta Historiae Sancti Lazari Ordinis*, vol. iv, 49–70.

3 Julius II (12.vii.1505). *Romani Pontifici benignitas*. Transcribed in: Haudessens d'Escluseauls 1700, 112–114.

4 Savona-Ventura, C. (2009).

Because of the specific mention of the link to the French Priory of Aquitaine of the Order of St John, it is not completely clear whether the two above papal bulls referred solely to the benefices held by the Order of St Lazarus in France with the mother house in Boigny; or to all the benefices held under the jurisdiction of the Order of St Lazarus throughout Christian Europe. In the previous centuries, by the mid-14<sup>th</sup> century, the Order of St Lazarus had experienced internal discord resulting in managerial fragmentation with major daughter houses managed by Capua and Burton Lazars in England ceding away from the mother house at Boigny.<sup>5</sup> The Order of St John certainly assumed that the papal bulls incorporated all Lazarite holdings in Christian Europe. These two papal bulls were poorly received by the major houses of the Order of St Lazarus especially those in Boigny (France) in Capua (Kingdom of Two Sicilies), and in Burton Lazars (England). Very few properties in the Holy Roman Empire were actually passed on to the Order of St John following this edict. The intransigence of the various regional mother houses received the support of the respective rulers who vied with the Holy See to ensure that Lazarite land holdings in their region were not arbitrarily given to an organization whose only dependence and allegiance was the Holy See.

### Early decades of the 16<sup>th</sup> century

In 1517, at the request of the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V of Spain, Leo X formally restored the holdings in the Kingdom of Two Sicilies re-establishing the rights of the Order of St Lazarus in that region:

*... olim Hospitali S. Lazari, tanquam membra capiti subiecta, Religioni, & Hospitali Capuano S[ancti] Lazari praefati, cum omnibus iuribus, & pertinentiis, ac membris eorundem praefata auctoritate Apostolica sub certis modo, & forma perpetuo restituerat; dictumque Hospitale Capuanum, aduersus suppressiones, & extinctiones, per Innocentium VIII. etiam praedecessorem nostrum factas reposuerat, & reintegrauerat, ac Magistro generali seu Praeceptoris eiusdem Hospitalis, seu Domus S. S[ancti] Lazari Capuani eiusdem Ordinis S[ancti] Aug[ustini] vt Panormitanum, & Messanense Hospitalia praedicta, cum illa legitimo Gubernatore carerent, acceptare, &*

5 Savona-Ventura, C. (2017).

*de illis, personis suae Religionis, provt ante suppressionem, & incorporationem praefatas disponere, & ordinare poterat, ac si illa non emanassent, disponere, providere, & ordinare.*<sup>6</sup>

The 1517 edict thus further formalized the previously existing management separation between Capua and Boigny. The *capitanus generalis magister Hospitalis Sancti Lazari in regno Siciliae*, approved by Frederic I in 1501 and still active in 1517, was Jacobus Antonius de Accia (†1522).<sup>7</sup> Members of the de Accia [or de Azzia] family were since the early 14<sup>th</sup> century the traditionally appointed masters of the Lazarite house in Capua.<sup>8</sup>

Meanwhile, the early 16<sup>th</sup> century's opposition to French interests in Italy by the Holy See gave rise in France to the introduction of doctrines and practices advocating restriction of powers attributed to the Holy See and the need to regulate the relations between the French King and the Holy See. This movement was to lead to the 1516 Concordat of Bologna between Pope Leo X and the French King François I. The Concordat gave the French king the right to choose and present for eventual appointment by the Holy See all the bishops, abbots, and priors of France. This included the royal right to choose and present for appointment the French master general of the Order of St Lazarus of Jerusalem within six months of the post being vacated provided that the proposed individual was a religious of the same Order who has reached the age of twenty-three years at least.

*'Monasteriis vero et prioratibus conventualibus et vere electivis, videlicet in quorum electionibus forma capituli «Quia propter» servari et confirmationes electionum hujusmodi solemniter peti consueverunt, in regno, Delphinatus et comitatu hujusmodi, nunc et pro tempore, etiam per similem cessionem vacantibus, illorum conventus ad electionem seu postulacionem abbatis seu prioris*

6 Leo X (1517). Bull reiterated by Pius IV (4.V.1565). *Inter assidua Dominici*. Section 33. Transcribed in: Cherubini, L. & Cerubino, A.M. (1673). *Magnum Bullarium Romanum, a Pio Quarto usque ad Innocentium X*, Lyon: P. Borde, L. Arnaud & C.I. Rigaud, vol. ii, 136–150.

7 Frederic I (8.iv.1501). *Arch. Stor. Ord. Maur., Fondo San Lazzaro Mazzo* 6, doc. VI. Transcribed in: Hyacinthe, R. (2003). *L'Ordre de Saint-Lazare de Jérusalem au Moyen Age*, Bez-et-Esparon: Études & Communication Édition, doc. xv, 218–219.

8 Russo, L. (2007).

*procedere non possint; sed idem Rex, illorum occurrente hujusmodi vacacione, religiosum ejusdem ordinis, in etate viginti trium annorum ad minus constitutum, infra simile tempus sex mensium a die vacationis monasteriorum et prioratuum hujusmodi computandorum, nobis et successoribus nostris aut Sedi hujusmodi nominare, et de persona per Regem hujusmodi monasterio vacanti nominata per nos et successores nostros seu Sedem hujusmodi provideri; prioratus vero persone, ad illum per eundem Regem nominate, conferri debeat.*<sup>9</sup>

On the 3<sup>rd</sup> June 1519, with the bull *Religionis zelus*, Leo X, at the request of the French King François I, approved the appointment of Claude de Mareuil as *magistro generali Militiae Sancti Lazari Jerosolimitani*.<sup>10</sup> The bull furthermore gave a special dispensation to the appointment since Claude de Mareuil was only aged 15 years and had as yet not reached the required age of 23 years. In the interim minority years, the serving Commander of Boigny was François I Bourbon de St Pol de Estouteville; while his uncle Agnan de Mareuil served as Vicar-General of the Order. The 1519 bull thus also revoked the terms of the earlier 1489 bull *Cum solerti* in the Kingdom of France.

*... quod ad obtinendum magistratum pr<a>edictum defectum <a>etatis pr<a>emisse in illius quinto decimo anno pr<a>edicto vel circa constitutus ut pr<a>efertur pateris nos eum.... dicta apostolica auctoritate tenore pr<a>esentium de specialis dono grati<a>e dispensamus....*<sup>11</sup>

In spite of the terms of the 1516 Concordat of Bologna and the 1517 and 1519 papal bulls, the Order of St John continued to maintain legal pretensions towards the holdings of the Order of St Lazarus in the French territories. These legal pretensions were presented and tested before

9 Leo (1516). *Concordato con La Francia sotto Leone X*. Transcribed in: A. Mercati (editor) (1919). *Raccolta di concordati su materie ecclesiastiche tra la Santa Sede e le autorità civili*, Rome: Tip. Poliglotta Vaticana, 236–237, available at <https://archive.org/details/raccoltadiconcor00cathuoft/page/236/mode/2up>. Translated in Ehler, S.Z. & Morrall (1967) 134–144.

10 Leo X (vi.1519). *Religionis zelus*.... In: *Registro Vaticano 1192* (fols. 196v – 198). Vatican: Archivio Segreto. Transcribed in Hyacinthe 2003, doc. xvi, 219–20.

11 Leo X (vi.1519). *Religionis zelus*. In: Hyacinthe 2003, doc. xvi, 220.

the French Court in 1547. The occasion arose following the death of the appointed commander of the Lazarite holdings at St-Thomas-de-Fonetenay. After deliberation of the evidence presented, the French Court concluded that the 1489 bull *Cum sollerti* had been superseded by subsequent Papal Bulls and French Royal edicts. This legal decision crushed the aspirations of the Order of St John to acquire the Lazarite holdings in France using formal legal arguments based on the 1489 edict.<sup>12</sup>

### **A Machiavellian attempt at taking over the French Lazarite holdings.**

An opportunity to again attempt to acquire the French Lazarite holdings presented itself following the death of the master general Jean de Conti (†1557) who had succeeded Claude de Mareuil (†1554). By this time, the political situation regarding Franco-Vatican relations had changed significantly. In 1555, Paul IV (Giovanni Pietro Carafa) assumed leadership of the Holy See and the Papal States. While serving as papal nuncio in Spain, Paul IV developed an anti-Spanish outlook that later coloured the politics of his papacy. Paul IV further appointed his nephew Cardinal Carlo Carafa, admitted a member of the Order of St John in 1534, as chief political adviser. Having accepted a pension from the French, Cardinal Carafa successfully worked to secure a Franco-Vatican alliance, thus changing the political balance of alliances in Europe. The changing political situation appears to have opened up an opportunity for the Order of St John to again attempt to acquire the French Lazarite holdings, possibly relying on the influence of Cardinal Carafa on the French and Papal courts. Following the death of Jean de Conti in 1557, King Henri II nominated Jean de Lévis, a member of the Order of St John admitted in the Langue d' Auvergne in 1532, to the post of master general of the Order of St Lazarus in France.

The political machinations behind the appointment of Jean de Lévis remain unclear. The appointment was however contested by two members of the Order of St Lazarus – Jean de Bièvre de La Salle and the Commander of Villaray Françoise Odet – on the basis that it was irregular on a number of counts.

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12 De Tillet (1651). *Arrest de la Cour, par lequel une union faite parune bulle du Pape de l'an 1489 est declarée abusive n'ayant esté executée selon le Decret du Concile de Constance ny verifiée en la Cour 1547*. Extracts des Registre de Parlement. In: *Preuves des libertez de l'Eglise Gallicane*, Paris: S. Cramoisy, vol. i, chap. XXXI, 173–174.



1. The appointment was made in conflict with the terms of the 1516 Concordat of Bologna that required vacancies to be filled by a religious of the same Order of the ecclesiastical house – Jean de Lévis was a member of the Order of St John but not a member of the Order of St Lazarus;
2. The appointment to the grand magistracy had traditionally been by election from the members of the community, though the 1516 Concordat had actually repealed this right [*vide supra* <sup>13</sup>]; and
3. The statutes of the Order of St John precluded its members from wearing two uniforms of different Orders:

*... chiunque haverá fatta professione in altro Ordine á modo alcuno non sia mai accettato nel nostro, e sé fará ricevuto, havuto notitia della prima professione, sia privato dell'habito.* <sup>14</sup>

To complicate matters, in conflict with the terms of the 1516 Concordat requiring a nomination by the King before appointment, Odet had been given provisions to Boigny by the Papal Legate in France Cardinal Antonio Trivulzio *iuniore*.<sup>15</sup>

This internal opposition served as a stimulus to refer the issue to the Holy See now led by Pius IV who, with the bull *Circumspecta Romani Pontifici* promulgated on 1<sup>st</sup> July 1560, confirmed the administrative linkage of the French properties of the Order of St Lazarus with the Priory of Aquitaine of the Order of St John now stationed in Malta. The 1560 Papal Bull confirming the administrative link between the Order of St Lazarus and the Priory of Aquitaine of the Order of St John received French Royal approval. The relevant text of the papal bull reads:

*Et Innocentius VIII. ex certis causis tunc expressis inter alia, Sancti Sepulchri Dominici Hierosolymitani Ordinis Sancti Augustini, & Militiae Sancti Lazari in Bethleem & Nazareth, etiam Hierosolymitani Ordines, eorumque prioratus & praeceptorias, necnon domum*

13 Leo (1516). *Concordato*.... In: Mercati 1919, 236–237.

14 OSJ (1674). *Statuti della Sacra Religione di San Giovanni Gerosolomitano con le Ordinationi dell'Ultimo Capitolo Generale*. Rome: Borgo Nuovo, Chapter 2, section 7, 21.

15 de Sibert, P.E. .G. (1772) 284, 292–293.

*de Montemorillon, dicti Ordinis Sancti Augustini. Pictaven[sis] dioecesis nuncupatam, & alia ab eis dependentia membra cum suis pertinentiis, ac eorundem Ordinum & Militiae, archiprioratum, prioratus & magistratus generales, ac in eorundem Ordinum prioratibus, praeceptoriiis, domibus, & membris, illorumque quibus denominabantur nomina, dependentias & pertinentias de fratrum suorum consilio per quasdam suppresserat, & extinxerat, illaque omnia & singula per vniuersum Orbem existentia Hospitali praefato pro illius membris, ac domu[m] praedictam expresse pro membro prioratus Aquitaniae dicti Hospitalis de simili consilio perpetuo vniverat, incorporauerat, concesserat & assignauerat, ac voluerat, quid tam qui in titulum, quam qui in commendam illam tunc obtinerent, ad aliorum Fratrum dicti Hospitalis instar iuxta tunc Magistri, & Conuentus praefatorum, aut ab eis auctoritatem habentium providam moderation[m] pro temporum qualitate de eorundem membrorum quae sic obtinerent prouentibus, communi thesauro dicti Hospitalis suffragia & onera exhiberent annuatim, ac Magistri, & conuentus praedictorum mandatis obtemperarent, nec quouis modo, clam vel palàm illi qui prioratus, beneficia & loca Ordinum suppressorum huiusmodi tenerent, eis cederent, vel renunciarent, aut de eis donationem facerent absque expresso consensu, licentia & auctoritate Magistri, & Conuentus praefatorum, & si secus facerent, irritum & inane, nulliusque roboris esse decreuerat, & nihilominus poenam priuationis beneficiorum, & excommunicationis latae sententiae eo ipsi incurrere censerentur.*<sup>16</sup>

The specific mention of the Priory of Aquitaine of the Order of St John in the *Circumspecta Romani Pontificis* confirms that the holdings being referred to in the Bull were specifically those in France or at least those holdings which were managerially directly answerable to Boigny.<sup>17</sup> The Langue of France of the Order of St John had three Grand Priories: that

16 Pius IV (1.vii.1560). *Circumspecta Romani Pontifici...* Transcribed in: Cherubini & Cerubino 1673, vol. ii, 9–19.

17 By 1560, the Order of St Lazarus had been abolished in England by Henry VIII (1544), while the holdings within the Kingdom of Hungary and in the central European Holy Roman Empire had been lost as a result of Ottoman expansion (1526) and the Protestant movement (1517/27) respectively.

of France including Champagne and Aquitaine, that of Auvergne and that of St Gilles including Toulouse. The holdings of the Order of St John in the Kingdom of Two Sicilies were managed by a different Langue represented by the Grand Priory of Messina.<sup>18</sup> One must therefore conclude that the arrangement envisaged by the 1560 bull *Circumspecta Romani Pontificis* referred solely to the French holdings and excluded holdings outside the French territories. The continuing separate existence of the Capuan fraction was confirmed by a separate papal bull *Confirmatio Privilegiorum* promulgated by Pope Pius IV on 7<sup>th</sup> July 1560<sup>19</sup>, who in a separate bull *Dilecte fili salutem* dated 24<sup>th</sup> September 1561 also confirmed the appointment of Muzzio d'Azzia as *magister generalis* of the Capuan branch.<sup>20</sup>

Since the Order was now formally reconfirmed as linked to the Order of St John, the bull *Circumspecta Romani Pontifici* circumvented the first of the arguments put forward by the contesters, i.e., that de Lévis was not formally a member of the Order of St Lazarus, while the second argument were circumvented by the provisions of the 1516 Concordat. An attempt to circumvent the final argument was made by the introduction of an altered uniform for the Order of St Lazarus. According to the 18<sup>th</sup> century publication *Gallia Christiana*, Jean de Lévis undertook steps to change the insignia of the Order of St Lazarus adopting a green eight-pointed cross insignia instead of previous Latin green cross insignia thus bring the insignia closer to that of the Order of St John:

*Denique verisimile videtur, quam gerunt equites crucem, cujus anno 1314. brachia transversa minora erant, uti observat præceptor N. de Flatte in statutis a se redactis, sub Johanne de Levis mutatam fuisse in crucem octo acuminibus præditam ad exemplum summi hujusce magistri, qui talem qua Melitensis eques gerebat.*<sup>21</sup>

18 Fitzpatrick (2006) 1–6.

19 Pius IV (7.vii.1560). *Confirmatio Privilegiorum Ordinis Sancti Lazari Hierosolymitani...* Transcribed in: Anon. (1562). *Bullae Antiquorum Privilegiorum per Nonnullos Romanos Pontifices – Religioni & Militiae Sancti Lazari Hierosolymitani Conciliorum*, Rome: Antonio Blado, 21–24.

20 Pius IV (24.ix.1561). *Dilecte fili salutem*..... Transcribed in: Anon. 1562, 24–27.

21 Anon. (1744). *Gallia Christiana in Provincias Ecclesiasticas*, Paris: Regia, vol. vii, 1045–63; Anon. (1775). *Essai Critique sur l'Histoire des Ordres Royaux, Hospitaliers et Militaires de Saint Lazare de Jérusalem et de Notre-Dame du Mont-Carmel*, Brussels: J.J. Tutot, 138.

Following the corrective measures taken, the contestation that Françoise Odet [Jean de Bièvre had died in the interim] had brought forward was referred to the Chapter General of the Order of St Lazarus. However, proceedings had to be put on hold because of the death of Jean de Lévis in 1564.

Following the death of Jean de Lévis, Pius IV, at the request of the Charles IX of France and the mother regent Catherine de' Medici, conferred the Comanderie de Boigny to Michel de Seure 'whether it be, now or previously, principal seat of the Chivalry of St Lazarus on both sides of the sea as had been claimed'.<sup>22</sup> This papal brief, as carefully worded, skirts round the legal status of the Order of St Lazarus appointing Michel de Seure as Commander of Boigny irrespective of whether this commandery was or was not legally considered the mother house of the international Order of St Lazarus. Michel de Seure had been received in the Langue de France of the Order of St John in 1539. The Archives of the Order of St John clearly confirm that the *Comanderie de Boigny* was granted to de Seure according to the wishes of the French king and queen. The extract in the Archives reads as follows:

*Intuitu Gallorum Regis et Reginae, Commenda de Bony (sic) Ordinis et Militiae S[ancti] Lazari Hierosolymitani concessa est fr[atru] Michaeli de Sevre atque illi data est Facultas deferendi M[agnam] Crucem.*<sup>23</sup>

The listed Grand Priors of Aquitaine of the Order of St John during the latter part of the 16th century included: Charles Hesselin de Gacourt – appointed 29.iv.1563; Jacques d'Arquembourg de Tourville –30. iv.1576 (previously GP of Champagne – 6.iv.1571); Charles de la Rama Plessis Hnault –18.v.1587 (previously GP of France –4.vii.1586);? Robert de Chaz – ~1594; Georges Regnier de Guerchy –9.viii.1593 (eventually GP of France – 1.xii.1599); and Bertrand Pelloquin de la Plesse – 1.xii.1599 (previously GP of France – 10.v.1591).<sup>24</sup> The *Libri conciliorum* of the Archives of the Order of St John report that Michel de Seure served as Grand Prior of Champagne being appointed to the post in October 1571,

<sup>22</sup> Pius IV (vi.1564). Detailed in: de Sibert 1772, 290–292.

<sup>23</sup> Archives of the Order of Malta. AOM: 91 *Liber Conciliorum* (22.iv.1566), fol 164v. Ms. Malta: National Malta Library.

<sup>24</sup> Fitzpatrick 2006, 1–6.

replacing Jacques d'Arquembourg de Tourville. His successor to the post in 1588 was Jean-Philibert de Foissy de Chamesson.<sup>25</sup>

Françoise Odet was however not easily silenced in his campaign to restore the pre-1516 Concordat *status quo*. In December 1565, he brought the case contesting the appointment of de Lévis and subsequently de Seure to the attention of the King's Grand Council where arguments were heard from the representatives of Odet (Estienne Posson) and Michel de Seure (Marcelin Mercier). After hearing the various depositions, the Grand Council decided in favour of de Seure's appointment to the grand magistracy.<sup>26</sup>

The complex interrelationship in the management of the benefices belonging to the Order of St Lazarus by members of the Order of St John nominated for appointment as *magister generalis* by the king of France became evident in 1571 when Michel de Seure wished to retire his rights to the Commandery of Boigny in favour of François de Salviati, admitted to the Langue de France of the Order of St John in 1544. In April 1571, representations made to Charles IX of France were approved and the necessary recommendation was sent to Rome. The relevant text reads:

*Aujourd'hui neuvième jour d'august 1571 le Roy estant su bois  
Malesherbes a acclordé et a pour agréable la resignation faite par  
frère Michel de Seure, chevalier de l'Ordre de Saint-Jean de Jerusalem,  
chambellan et conseiller dud. Sieur Roy en son conseil privé, entre les  
mains de Sa Majesté du bailliage et commanderie de Bougny, chef  
general et grande maistrise de l'Ordre Saint-Lazare de Hiérusalem,  
ses appurtenances et dépendances, en faveur et au profit de frère  
François Salviati, chevalier et ambassadeur dud. Ordre prés Sadite  
Majesté, pour en jouir par luy tout ainsi que faisoit et pouvoit faire  
le dit Ch.ier de Seure, et de m'a cette Majesté commandé expédier*

25 AOM: 93 *Liber Conciliorum* (9.x.1571), fol 164v; AOM: 97 *Liber Conciliorum* (16.xi.1588), fol 151. Ms. Malta: National Malta Library. De Seure's appointment as Grand Prior of Champagne may have been the reason why he accepted to transfer his rights to the Commandery of Boigny. Potter, D. (editor) (2014). *A Knight of Malta at the Court of Elizabeth I: The correspondence of Michel de Seure, French Ambassador 1560–61*, Cambridge: University press, 179–88

26 *Arrêt du Grand Conseil du Roi* (12.xii.1565). Transcribed in: *La Vie Chevaleresque*, 1938, 21/22, p.102–103.

*les lettres et despesche requise et nécessaires tan ten cour de Rome q'l'ailleurs. Ansi signé fixé avec son contre-seing.*<sup>27</sup>

However, since the two individuals were both members of the Order of St John, the matter was discussed and approved also by the Chapter of the Langue de France of the Order of St John on the 6<sup>th</sup> October 1571 under the chairmanship of the Commander of Bourgameuf. The approval was given with the understanding that Salviati would be obliged to, within two years, work towards legally incorporating the Commandery of Boigny within the French Langue of the Order of St John.

*.... Reverendissimus D. M. Magistri et ven. con cum scrutinio ballotarum decreverut ut bullae atq. Provisiones expediantur praedicto dom f. Francisco Salviatis sub titolo simplicis commendae de Boigny et non baulivatus cintemplatione et intuitu christianissimi francorum regis, ita ...isse de salviatis teneatur vitra biennui curare cum effectu et essicere ut a suprema curia parlamet parisien emologetur, approbetur et confirmetur incorporatio et unio dictae commendae de Boigny ad prioratum franciae ad instar. commendae religionis.*<sup>28</sup>

Clearly, the commandery with its dependent preceptories was, as yet, not legally an integral part of the Order of St John. The attorney representing Michel de Seure made a declaration stating that de Seure was giving up the Bailiwick and Commandery of Boigny according to the powers vested in him 'on the condition that he would have the right to appoint commanders to the first two commanderies of the same bailiwick to become vacant', and that 'Salviati would be responsible for issuing the appropriate Bulls and Appointments'. It thus appears that de Seure was retaining for himself the rights associated with the grand magistracy while delegating the administration of the commandery to Salviati, in effect the latter acting as vicar general. Salviati's attorney then declared that

27 *Letters du roi de France (9 avril 1571)*. Transcribed in: *La Vie Chevaleresque*, 1939, 24/25, p.161.

28 *AOM: 93 Liber Conciliorum (9.x.1571)*, fol 33v; *AOM: 93 Liber Conciliorum (11.x.1571)*, fol 33v; *AOM: 93 Liber Conciliorum (23.x.1571)*, fol 34v; Gatt, R. (2017). Of Papal Bulls and political intrigue: The attempted abolition of an Order. *Acta Historiae Sancti Lazari Ordinis*, vol. ii, 53–74.

his client would accept the renunciation in his favour under the stated terms and asked that the 'bailiwick of Boigny' be accorded to Salviani who promised 'neither to act in any way nor to use the aforementioned bailiwick to prejudice or cause harm to any of his confreres or to use the said privileges to further his advancement in Our Order'.

Following the promulgation of the papal bull *Qua Militia Hospitalis* by Gregory XIII in January 1573 whereby the newly founded Order of Sts Maurice and Lazarus was linked to the House of Savoy, representations were made by Duke Emmanuel Philiberto de Savoy to Charles IX in an attempt to acquire the Lazarite holdings in France. Charles IX acquiesced to this request in a brevet dated 14<sup>th</sup> January 1574.<sup>29</sup> Before the Duke of Savoy could formally acquire the Lazarite holdings in the Kingdom of France, Charles IX died of tuberculosis on the 30<sup>th</sup> May 1574, without legitimate male issue, and was succeeded by his brother Henri III. In November 1574, Henri III reconfirmed the administrative link between the Order of St Lazarus and the Priory of Aquitaine of the Order of St John:

*'Nous de nostre dite Puissance & autorité que dessus, avons validé, & confirmé, validons & confirmons l'union qui a esté faite des Commanderies dudit Ordre Saint Lazare, avec les Commanderies & dignitez dudit Ordre & Religion Saint Jean de Hierusalem, sans qu'elle ne puisse ester séparée & démembrée pour quelque occasion, nouvelle creation ou direction dudit Ordre Saint Lazare, en nostre Royaume, Pays, Terres y seituées, laquelle Election si faire avoit estré.'*

30

On the 1<sup>st</sup> February 1575, the Duke of Savoy commissioned Count Tommeso Isnardi di Sanfré to undertake measures to reconfirm the previous royal brevet awarding ownership of the Lazarite holdings to the Duke of Savoy, and to eventually assume ownership of the Commandery of Boigny and act against any illegal occupants. Henri III confirmed ownership of the

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29 Charles IX (14.i.1574). *Brevet du roi de France Charles IX (14 janvier 1574)*. Transcribed in: Petiet, R. (1914). *Contribution à l'Histoire de l'Ordre de St-Lazare de Jérusalem en France*, Paris: Librairie Ancienne Honoré Champion, 269.

30 Henri III (xi.1574). *Edict of Henry III*. Transcribed in: Haudessens d'Escluseauls 1700, 405–406.

Lazarite benefices by the Duke of Savoy on the 30<sup>th</sup> March 1575.<sup>31</sup> However, the King's Council put forward a number of objections to the transfer of the French Lazarite holdings to a foreign sovereign, especially relating to the multiple hospitals providing a service to various communities. This royal letter patent, like the former one issued by Charles IX, was therefore never registered and confirmed by the French Parliament. Thus, the French Order of St Lazarus was encouraged to ignore the royal letter patents and continued to consider and manage itself distinct from the Savoyan Order thwarting the expansionist designs of the Duke of Savoy.<sup>32</sup>

In May 1578, Salviati convened a Chapter General of the Order of St Lazarus. During that meeting, he was formally elected grand master, having apparently served as vicar general in the interim years. This 'retrospective' election was important to contest the claims being made by the Duke of Savoy following the promulgation of the papal bulls by Gregory XIII in 1572–73. A decision was further made to supplicate the King to confirm the privileges of the Order in the Kingdom.<sup>33</sup> The French knights during the Chapter General convened by Salviati in May 1581 confirmed that the French Order was not an ecclesiastical one and that they held the right to elect a new grand master.<sup>34</sup> That notwithstanding, the Duke of Savoy continued with his efforts of acquiring possession of the French Lazarite holdings attempting to negotiate with Salviati.<sup>35</sup> Following the death of Salviati in 1586, the management of the French Order was assumed by François de Fleury [admitted to the Order of St Lazarus in 1582] as vicar

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31 Henri III (30.iii.1575). *Brevet du roi de France Henri III (30 mars 1575)*. Transcribed in: Petiet 1914, 272–273.

32 Tallone, A. (1898). *Contributi alla storia dell'Ordine Mauriziano*, Pignerol: Tip. Sociale, 78; Tallone, A. (1898–99). L'istituzione dell'Ordine Mauriziano e le sue relazioni con l'Ordine di San Lazzaro di Francia (1572–74). *Bollettino storico-bibliografico subalpino*, II (1898), 425–48; III (1899), 35–121.

33 *Procéss verbal du Chapitre General du 19 et 20 mai 1578*. Transcribed in: *La Vie Chevaleresque*, 1939, 24/25, 30.

34 *Procéss verbal du Chapitre General du 14 mai 1581*. Transcribed in: *La Vie Chevaleresque*, 1940, 26/27, 161–165.

35 Busini, G. (28.i.1584). *Lettre de Giulio Busini à Bellisario Vinta (28 janvier 1584)*. Transcribed in: *La Vie Chevaleresque*, 1940, 26/27, 30–31.



general who was possibly appointed to handle affairs by Michel de Seure who may have reassumed the grand magistracy after Salviati's death.<sup>36</sup>

François de Fleury was not a member of the Order of St John, and his delegation was quite irregular and contrary to the Statutes of the Order of St John regarding the administration of commanderies belonging to the Order which state:

*'We forbid all commanders and administrators of the estates of our order, on pain of being deprived of their commanderies, to entrust them to the management of seculars. We require them to give the administration of them to a brother of the Order, or else a donat, who shall have a brother associated with him, that the commandery may be managed with the greater care.'*<sup>37</sup>

In 1593, while France was still in the turmoil of the Wars of Religion, Henri IV of France appointed Armandus de Clermont de Chattes [admitted to the Order of St John in 1566] to the post of *magnus Magister generalis* of the Order of St Lazarus and *preceptor bajulatus* of the Commandery of Boigny, in effect replacing the previous incumbent Michel de Seure who was still alive (†1595).<sup>38</sup> The replacement of Michel de Seure by Henri IV may have had political overtures. The Boigny commandery, and thus by association Michel de Seure, had given its alliance to the Catholic League opposing Henri IV's claim to the French throne. De Clermont de Chattes, on the other hand, had supported and assisted Henri IV in 1589 at Dieppe and again in 1590 at the Battle of Saint André.<sup>39</sup>

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36 de Sibert (1772) 338.

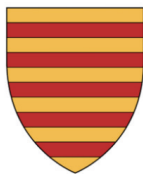
37 *The Old and New Statutes of the Order of St John of Jerusalem*. In: de Vertot, R. (1728) vol. ii, Part 2, 96.

38 de Chattes, A. (18.x.1601). *Acte de la Réception du Chevalier Robert de Bragelongne*. Transcribed in: de Sibert 1772, Pièces Justificatives, doc. 29, p. lxvi.

39 Walker Freer (1860) vol. i, 64, 125.



Agnan de Marueil  
GM 1500–19/VG  
1519–27



Claude de Mareuil  
GM 1519–54  
\*1504 †1554



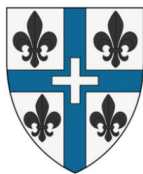
Françoise I Bourbon  
de Adm. ~1519–21  
\*1491 †1545



Jean de Conti  
GM 1554–57  
†1557



Jean de Levis  
Add. ✱ 1532  
GM 1557–64  
†1564



Michel de Seure  
Add. ✱ 1539  
GM 1564–78/?1586–  
93  
†1595



François de Salviati  
Add. ✱ 1544  
VG 1571–78/  
GM 1578–86  
†1586



François de Fleury  
VG 1586–93



Armandus de Clermont de Chattes  
Add. ✱ 1566  
G.M. 1593–1603  
†1603



Jean-Charles de Gayand de Monterolles  
Adm. 1599–1604  
†1640

List of masters managing the Boigny branch of the Order of St Lazarus in 16<sup>th</sup> century

[Add. ✱ = admitted to Order of St John;  
GM = grand master; VG = vicar general; Adm. = administrator]

The appointment of Armandus de Clermont de Chattes, a member of the Order of Saint John, to the post of *magister generalis* of the Order of Saint Lazarus was in keeping with the previously established procedure, though this appointment was unlikely to have received papal approval considering

that Henri IV had been excommunicated by Pope Sixtus V since September 1585. In 1599, Henri IV appointed Aymar de Clermont-Chattes to the post of Lieutenant General of New France requiring his presence in Canada. De Clermont-Chattes thus delegated the management of the Commandery of Boigny to his nephew Jean-Charles de Gayand de Monterolles who resigned the post on the death of his uncle in 1603. These appointments do not appear to have been referred for the approval of the Order of St John. Jean-Charles de Gayand de Monterolles was not a member of the Order of St John and his appointment was therefore again in conflict with the Statutes of the Order of St John [*vide supra*]. The arrangement suggests that, in spite of the political machinations of the latter part of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the Order of St John had as yet not managed to obtain the legal brief to formally amalgamate the holdings of the Order of St Lazarus with the rest of its holdings in France. The Order may in fact have, probably as a result of the 1572 papal bull *Pro Commissa Nobis*, abandoned its legal manoeuvres following the development related to the Lazarite holdings in the Kingdom of Two Sicilies [*vide infra*].

The death of Armandus de Clermont de Chattes in 1603 and the subsequent resignation of de Gayand de Monterolles in 1604 reopened a window of opportunity for the Duke of Savoy to vie the Holy See for support to possess the Lazarite holdings in France instructing his ambassador to reopen the issue. Clement VIII responded favourably with the bull *Decretum Romanorum Pontificum* dated 9<sup>th</sup> September 1603 whereby he confirmed the union of the Order of St Lazarus with that of St Maurice.<sup>40</sup> Henri IV, in the wake of the 1601 Franco-Savoyan War, was not at all willing to concede land holdings in the Kingdom of France to the Duke of Savoy. Henri IV, now converted to Catholicism and reconciled with the Holy See, immediately appointed Philibert de Nèristang to the post of grand master of the Order of St Lazarus, and commissioned him and Charles de Neufville to approach the Holy See for approval to create a new Order of Our Lady of Mount Carmel with the purpose of combating the heretical movements. The new Order was to be financially supported from the resources accruing to the French king. The succeeding pope Paul V promulgated the bulls *Romanus Pontificus* dated 16<sup>th</sup> February 1608 and

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40 Clement VIII (9.ix.1603). *Decretum Romanorum Pontificum*.... Transcribed in: Cherubini, L. & Cherubino, A.M. (1655). *Magnum bullarium romanum, a Clemente VII vsque ad Gregorium XV*, Lyon: P. Borde, L. Arnaud & C.I. Rigaud, vol. iii, 144–147.

*Militantium ordinum* dated 26<sup>th</sup> February 1608 that formally set up the Order of Our Lady of Mount Carmel.<sup>41</sup> Henri IV quickly appointed Philibert de Nèristang to the post of grand master of the new Order and furthermore in 31<sup>st</sup> October 1608 administratively linked the newly created Order with the Order of St Lazarus<sup>42</sup> which had already been laicized in 1568 by the bull of Pius V entitled *Sacrosanctum Ecclesiae Dei*.<sup>43</sup> This amalgamation ensured that the benefices of the Order of St Lazarus within the Kingdom of France remained completely under French control. It appears that the amalgamation had the tacit approval of the Holy See. Reporting in 1638, the ecclesiastical historian and dean of Antwerp cathedral Aubertus Miraeus reported that:

*Quo laudabili in opere cùm defecisset, locum demortui Philippus Nerestanus excepit. Is Romam profectus, fauente Henrico IV. Galliae Rege, à Paulo V. Pontifice obtinuit, vt noua veluti militia, titulo Equitum S[anctae] Mariae de Monte Carmelo et S[ancti] Lazari, in regno Franciae institueretur;....*<sup>44</sup>

## Developments in the Kingdom of Two Sicilies

We have seen earlier how in 1560, Pius IV promulgated two separate bulls pertaining to the Order of St Lazarus – the first *Circumspecta Romani Pontificis* confirming the administrative linkage of the French properties of the Order of St Lazarus with the Priory of Aquitaine of the Order of St John; the second *Confirmatio Privilegiorum* confirming the past privileges given to the *Fratres Domus Leprosoru[m] eiusdem Sancti Lazari extra muros Capuan[enses]* with *Dominio existentia in Sicilia, Calabria, Vallegiatis*,

41 Paul V (16.ii.1608 / 26.ii.1608). *Romanus Pontifex....* & *Militantium ordinum.....* Transcribed in: Cherubini & Cherubino 1655, 288–230.

42 Henri IV (31.x.1608). *Brevet d'Union des Deux Ordres de Notre-Dame du Mont-Carmel et de Saint-Lazare de Jerusalem.....* Transcribed in: Langle, H.M. & Tréourret de Kerstrat, J.L. (1992). *Les Ordres de Saint Lazare de Jerusalem et de Notre Dame du Mont-Carmel aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles*, Paris: Publ. LTK, 83.

43 Pius V (13.ix.1568). *Sacrosanctum Ecclesiae Dei....* Transcribed in: Cherubini & Cerubino 1673, vol. ii, 268–270.

44 Miraeus, A. (1638) chap. XX, 54–55.

*Apulia, & Terralaboris*.<sup>45</sup> A year later on the 24<sup>th</sup> September 1561, Pius IV confirmed the appointment of Muzzio d'Azzia as *magister generalis* of the Capuan fraction.<sup>46</sup> The promulgation of these bulls confirmed the formal legal and managerial separation of the two still existing branches of the Medieval Order of St Lazarus.

Following the death of Muzzio d'Azzia (†1564), Pius IV with his Bull *Interassidua Dominici* dated 4<sup>th</sup> May 1565 appointed his relative Giannotto Castiglione (\*1532 †1571) as *modernum Hospitalis & Militiae praedictum Magnum Magistrum*. The Bull further gave the Capuan fraction of the Order of Saint Lazarus numerous new privileges along with revised statutes and reforms. It ordered the restoration of the properties of the Order situated in southern Italy, Spain and Flanders to the management of the Priory of Capua to support the fight *contra Piratarum et infidelium Christianae Religionis incursionem*.<sup>47</sup> The transfer of the properties in Spain and Flanders was contested by King Philip II of Spain<sup>48</sup>, and the subsequent pope Pius V in the Bull *Sicuti bonus Agricola* of the 7<sup>th</sup> February 1567 revoked the passages in the earlier Bull relating to the properties in Spain and Flanders. Giannotto Castiglione was reconfirmed as master general.<sup>49</sup>

Giannotto Castiglione took very little interest in his acquisition and set out to dispose of his benefices initiating an attempt to sell and pass these on to the Order of St John. The holdings under discussion were totally limited to the Italian peninsula and were estimated to have a total value of 15620 *scudi*. The list did not include any remnant holdings in France, Central Europe or the Iberian Peninsula, clearly reflecting the divisions that had been engendered by the political events of the previous decades. Castiglione furthermore had as yet not managed to possess the holdings in Southern Italy and Sicily. In the negotiations, Castiglione proposed

45 Pius IV (1.vii.1560). *Circumspecta Romani Pontificis*; Pius IV (7.vii.1560). *Confirmatio Privilegiorum Ordinis Sancti Lazari Hierosolymitani*. Vide supra.

46 Pius IV (24.ix.1561). *Dilecte fili salutem*..... Transcribed in: Anon. 1562, 24–27.

47 Pius IV (4.v.1565). *Interassidua Dominici*. Transcribed in: Cherubini & Cherubino 1673, vol. ii, 136–150.

48 Giordano, S. (2006). *Istruzioni di Filippo III ai suoi ambasciatori a Roma 1598–1621: Pubblicazioni degli Archivi di Stato – Fonti XLV*, Rome: Ministero per i beni e la attività culturale, 16, 35, 36, 55, 79, 120.

49 Pius V (7.ii.1567). *Sicuti bonus Agricola*...Transcribed in: Cherubini & Cherubino 1673, vol. ii, 204–212.

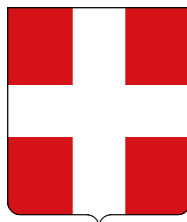
that he would retain the post of grand master of the Order of St Lazarus throughout his life – a status that was to be considered equivalent to the post of lieutenant of the grand master of the Order of St John. Castiglione was to receive an annual pension of 6000 *scudi*, to be allocated two pages, and was to receive, within five years, a Commandery of Grace. Furthermore, the Order of St John had to assume responsibility and pay all the debts and arrears of the Order of St Lazarus. On his part, Castiglione was to work towards legally uniting in perpetuity the two Orders. The offer was discussed by the Council of the Order of St John who decided that the demands made by Castiglione were excessive and unacceptable.<sup>50</sup> On the 13<sup>th</sup> January 1571, Giannotto Castiglione renounced his grand mastership in favour of Duke Emmanuel Philiberto de Savoy.<sup>51</sup> Approached by the entrepreneur Odescalchi family regarding the debts of 15,000 *scudi* in gold accrued by Castiglione, Emmanuel Philiberto declared that he was not at all willing to assume the debts contracted by the Order before he assumed the Grand Magisterium.<sup>52</sup> Castiglione died a few months later on the 5<sup>th</sup> August 1571.<sup>53</sup>



d'Azzia Family  
(14<sup>th</sup> century – 1564)



Giannotto de Castiglione  
(1565–71) †1571



Dukes of Savoy  
(1571 et sec)

List of masters managing the Capuan branch of  
the Order of St Lazarus in 16<sup>th</sup> century

50 Bosio (1594) 809–12; Gatt, R. (2019) 119–134; Savona-Ventura (2018) 77–91.

51 OSMSL (1867). *Regi Magisteriali provvedimenti relativi all' Ordine dei Santi Maurizio e Lazzaro preceduti da breve storia dello stesso Ordine pubblicati in seguito a facoltà ottenutane dal Grand Magistero*, Turin: G. Marzorato, 157.

52 Tallone 1898–99, III, 46–47. The debt had in March 1576 still not been paid off.

53 CASTIGLIONI, Giannotto. In: Borromeo, A. (1979). *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani* (Vol. xxii). Available at: [http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/giannotto-castiglioni\\_\(Dizionario-Biografico\)/](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/giannotto-castiglioni_(Dizionario-Biografico)/).

In the wake of the Battle of Lepanto, Gregory XIII issued three bulls whereby he re-established the Order of Saint Maurice [*Christiani populi corpus* 16.x.1572]<sup>54</sup>; fusing this Order with that the Order of St Lazarus [*Pro Commissa Nobis* 13.xi.1572]<sup>55</sup>; and linking the joint Order of Sts Maurice and Lazarus with the House of Savoy [*Qua Militia Hospitalis* 15.i.1573]. These bulls specifically excluded the holdings within the realm of the Spanish Kingdom that were located in the Iberian Peninsula, Flanders, Southern Italy and Sicily. It appears therefore that it was restricted to Lazarite holdings in France, the Duchy of Savoy, the Papal States, and the Northern Italian duchies or republics. Attempts by the Duke of Savoy to appropriate the holdings of the Order of St Lazarus in France were initially met positively by the French Kings Charles IX [15.i.1574];<sup>56</sup> but were eventually thwarted by the French Parliament by not registering and confirming the royal letters patent.<sup>57</sup> On the 1<sup>st</sup> February 1575, the Duke of Savoy commissioned Count Tommeso Isnardi di Sanfré to assume ownership of the Commandery of Boigny and act against any illegal occupants.<sup>58</sup> This move however does not seem to have been effective even after Henri III re-issued the royal letter patent [30.iii.1575].<sup>59</sup> The French-appointed incumbent thus retained ownership and the only benefices appropriated by the Duke of Savoy were those holdings within the Duchy of Savoy, the Northern Italian duchies or republics, and the Papal States.

## Conclusion

In 1489, Innocent VIII saw fit to suppress the Order of St Lazarus and pass on its properties with those of the Order of St John. This edict was not favourably look upon by the various rulers and petitions were made to reverse the terms of this papal bull. By the end of the second decade of the

54 Gregory XIII (16.x.1572). *Christiani populi corpus*. Transcribed in: Cherubini & Cherubino 1673, vol. ii, 365–366.

55 Gregory XIII (13.xi.1572). *Pro Commissa Nobis*. Transcribed in: Cherubini & Cherubino 1673, vol. ii, pp.366–368.

56 Charles IX (14.i.1574). Transcribed in: Petiet 1914, 269.

57 Tallone 1898–99, III, 35–121.

58 OSMSL 1867, 160.

59 Henri III (30.iii.1575). Transcribed in: Petiet 1914, 272–273.

16<sup>th</sup> century, Leo X had reversed the 1489 terms but in effect re-established two branches of the Order of St Lazarus – one responsible for holdings in the Kingdom of France; the other for holdings in the Kingdom of Two Sicilies. Throughout the 16<sup>th</sup> century, attempts were made by the Order of St John to appropriate the Lazarite holdings in both regions.

In the Kingdom of Two Sicilies, these attempts involved direct negotiations to purchase the Lazarite holdings in this realm, but these negotiations failed and the Italian Lazarite holdings were eventually passed on to the Duke of Savoy and amalgamated with the re-established Order of St Maurice. Because of resistance by the relevant rulers, the Order of Sts Maurice and Lazarus only acquired the Lazarite holdings located in the northern states of the Italian peninsula. Attempts made by the Duke of Savoy to acquire the Lazarite holdings in the Kingdom of Two Sicilies and in the Kingdom of France were unsuccessful.

In the Kingdom of France, after losing a legal battle on the issue, the Order of St John acquired indirect possession by having its members being appointed as master generals of the Order of St Lazarus in a tripartite agreement between the French King, the Holy See, and the Johannite Grand Council. The possession of the French Lazarite benefices was however an indirect one and did not translate into actual legal transfer of the holdings. This arrangement was apparently maintained until the latter part of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The Order of St John appears to have given up its efforts to legally acquire the Lazarite holdings following the 1572 papal bull *Pro Commissa Nobis*. The two remaining branches of the Medieval Order of St Lazarus were to see the dawn of the 17<sup>th</sup> century as separate military orders amalgamated to newly-created orders – the Savoyan Order of Sts Maurice and Lazarus, and the French United Orders of Our Lady of Mount Carmel and St Lazarus of Jerusalem. The legal existence of both Orders was acknowledged by the Order of St John of Jerusalem, Rhodes and Malta as evidenced by the legal negotiations undertaken in the 18<sup>th</sup> century following the suppression of the Order of St Anthony of Vienne when the three Orders acted as equal partners.<sup>60</sup>

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60 Gatt, R. (2016) 57–86.



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