

The Island of Rhodes and the Hospitallers of Catalunya in the fourteenth century

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The Aragonese crown had commercial interests in the Eastern Mediterranean but it lacked the economic and demographic resources, and therefore the naval strength, which would permit it to operate effectively in the Levant. The so-called Catalan companies conquered Athens and Thebes in 1311 but they brought little strategic or commercial advantage to Catalunya. Not even King Pere III's collaboration with the powerful Venetian fleet allowed him to establish his subjects in the Eastern Mediterranean, as was demonstrated by the defeat of the joint Venetian-Catalan force by the Genoese in the Bosphoros in 1352; and though Alfons the Magnanimous controlled Sicily and Naples in the fifteenth century, he too was unable to achieve any real domination in the Levant. Late in the fourteenth century King Joan's policy towards the Catalan Duchy of Athens was above all a rhetorical, classicizing concern backed by only minimal military support. As a result of the crown's weakness, it had no colony or base in the East and so it repeatedly sought indirect solutions there. Jaume II's Cypriot marriage brought little profit, but Catalan pirates used Cypriot ports while the crown sought to assist the Franciscans in Syria and to conclude commercial treaties with the rulers of Byzantium and Egypt.¹

Among other marginal possibilities for the establishment of a Catalan-Aragonese presence in the Levant were the island of Rhodes and the Hospitallers, two elements which came together after the Hospital began its conquest of Rhodes in 1306.² The Aragonese crown was accustomed to think of the Order of the Hospital predominantly as a force in the peninsula, as

1. Jocelyn HILLGARTH, *The Problem of a Catalan Mediterranean Empire: 1229-1327* = *English Historical Review Supplement* 8, London, 1975.

2. Joaquim MIRET Y SANS, *Les Cases de Templers y Hospitalers en Catalunya*, Barcelona, 1910, contains much material while aspects of this subject are studied, with considerable detail and bibliography, in articles reprinted in Anthony LUTTRELL, *The Hospitallers in Cyprus, Rhodes, Greece and the West: 1291-1440*, London, 1978; *Latin Greece, the Hospitallers and the Crusades: 1291-1440*, London, 1982; *The Hospitallers of Rhodes and their Mediterranean World*, Aldershot, 1992; *The Hospitaller State on Rhodes and its Western Provinces: 1306-1462*, Aldershot, 1999. See also Prim BERTRAN I ROIGÉ, "El Priorat de Catalunya de l'Ordre de l'Hospital a principis del segle xv: Alguns aspectes", in *Profesor Nazario González, Una historia abierta*, Barcelona, 2000. Though it studies the Aragonese rather than the

an element in the *reconquista* which was important for its occupation of lands and castles or as part of local society in which the Order held and governed wide estates. The contribution of the Aragonese Hospital to the defence of the East had always been limited.³ From 1291 to 1306 the Hospitallers were based on Cyprus where there was a minor presence of Catalan brethren. In 1301 the noble Bernat Guillem de Entença entered the Hospital on Cyprus while there as a pilgrim,⁴ and in 1302 King Jaume II announced that he was sending Fr. Ramon de Ampurias to the Master in Cyprus.⁵ In about 1306 Fr. Lop de Liurans was in prison in Cairo after being captured at Tripoli while on a diplomatic mission.⁶ For several years from 1299 Fr. Joan de Laodicea was Prior of the Convent and later he became Commander of Cyprus,⁷ while in 1303 Fr. Ramon de Ribells was Grand Commander of the Order.⁸ In 1306 Fr. Sancho de Aragón, then Admiral of the Hospital, and Fr. Guillem de Badalona, presumably a Catalan, were both on Cyprus⁹ and Fr. Ramon de Ampurias participated in the conquest of Rhodes between 1306 and 1309.¹⁰

Following its establishment on Rhodes, the Hospital sought to attract the sympathies of the Aragonese king, Jaume II. The Order ignored papal instructions of 1312 that it should assist Philippe of Anjou, Prince of Taranto, against the Catalan conquerors of Athens, and in 1314 it took no action when the pope ordered it to prepare three or four galleys and some troops with which it should, if so requested, defend certain Angevin places in Greece, probably in the Argolid, against attack from the Catalans of Athens.¹¹ The Hospital also worked to arrange Jaume II's marriage to the Cypriot princess Maria de Lusignan, probably in the hope both of securing the king's goodwill at a time when the fate of the Templars' lands was in dispute and

Catalan Hospital, Maria BONET DONATO, *La Orden del Hospital en la Corona de Aragón: Poder y gobierno en la Castellania de Amposta (ss. XII-XV)*, Madrid, 1994, is important, in particular for its use of those materials from the Hospital's Rhodian archive which are now on Malta. The information here presented is extremely incomplete; much further material is contained in the forthcoming study of the Catalan priory in the fifteenth century by Pierre Bonneaud who most kindly gave much advice on the subject.

3. Santos GARCÍA LARRAGUETA, "Relaciones comerciales entre Aragón y el Hospital de Acre", in *VII Congreso de Historia de la Corona de Aragón*, vol. II, Barcelona, 1962.

4. Heinrich FINKE, *Papsttum und Untergang des Templerordens*, vol. II, Münster, 1907, p. 4-5; *Cartulaire général de l'Ordre des Hospitaliers de St. Jean de Jérusalem: 1100-1310*, 4 vols., ed. Joseph DELAVILLE LE ROULX, Paris, 1894-1906, no. 4780; Pierre-Vincent CLAVERIE, "La Cristiandat en Mayor Peril ou la perception de la question d'Orient dans la Catalogne de la fin du XIII^e siècle", in Robert VINAS *et al.*, *Les Templiers en Pays Catalan*, Canet, 1998, p. 107-108.

5. *Cartulaire*, no. 4573.

6. Girolamo GOLUBOVICH, *Biblioteca Bio-bibliografica della Terra Santa e dell'Oriente francescano*, vol. III, Quaracchi, 1919, p. 75-76, 82, 85.

7. A. LUTTRELL (1992), IX, p. 176-177. 1992.

8. A. LUTTRELL (1978), XI, p. 11, but rectify the assertion that Fr. Bonifazio de Calamandrecen was Aragonese.

9. Text in A. LUTTRELL, "To Byzantio kai oi Joannites Hippotes tes Rodou: 1306-1409", *Symmeikta*, vol. 11, 1997, p. 210-213.

10. A. LUTTRELL (1992), XV, p. 112.

11. Antoni RUBIÓ I LLUCH, *Diplomatari de l'Orient Català: 1301-1409*, Barcelona, 1947, nos. 56, 65.

also of implicating Catalan strength on a nearby island to the Order's advantage. The Catalan Commander of Cyprus, Fr. Joan de Laodicea, played a leading role in the negotiations and the Hospital guaranteed the dowry with its Aragonese possessions. Jaume II's envoy to Rhodes charged with arranging this affair was Fr. Joan's brother, Fr. Matteo de Laodicea who was the Commander of Barcelona, and the king subsequently sent first Fr. Sancho de Aragón and then Fr. Martín Pérez de Oros, who was the Castellan of Amposta, as the Prior of the Aragonese Hospital was entitled; the latter acted as the king's proxy at the marriage celebrated at Nicosia on Cyprus in 1315.¹² In Greece the confrontation between the French and the Catalans led, at some point before 1330, to the division of the Hospital's holdings on mainland Greece, which had previously been administered as a single unit, into a Commandery of the Duchy of Athens to the north of the Gulf of Corinth and a Commandery of the Principality of the Morea in the Peloponnese.¹³

Behind almost every issue which arose between Rhodes and Catalunya were considerations of men and money. The crown sought to control a powerful ecclesiastical institution with lands, privileges, exemptions and jurisdictions within the royal domains. The Order needed to send men, horses, supplies and, above all, money from Catalunya to Rhodes. The Hospitallers normally enjoyed the support of the papacy and, in a general way, of a public opinion which was conscious of the need to maintain Rhodes as an important point of resistance to the infidel. The attack launched against another major international military order, that of the Temple, by the King of France in 1307 led to renewed debate on the disputed question of the role of the military orders, and in 1312 to the suppression of the Templars and the transfer of their goods to the Hospitallers, whose landed wealth was approximately doubled as a result. Jaume II opposed the passage of the Templars' lands to the Hospital and, after lengthy negotiations with the pope, it was agreed in 1317 that the goods of both Temple and Hospital in the Kingdom of Valencia should be used to found a new national military order, that of Montesa, while the Hospital would receive the Templars' estates in Aragon and Catalunya. The pope had, however, to accept the condition that thenceforth officials of the Aragonese Hospital should swear an oath of fidelity to the king before entering into possession of their priory or commandery, thus permitting the crown to delay or disrupt nominations to those offices. The agreement of 1317 necessitated the division in 1319 of the Castellany as it then existed into a new Castellany of Amposta limited to the Kingdom of Aragon together with the four Commanderies of Miravet, Horta, Ascó and Uldecona in Southern Catalunya, and a separate Priory of Catalunya which included the commanderies in Roussillon and Mallorca.¹⁴

12. A. LUTTRELL (1978), XI, *passim*; (1992), IX, p. 157-158.

13. J. DELAVILLE LE ROULX, *Les Hospitaliers à Rhodes jusqu'à la mort de Philibert de Naillac, 1310-1421*, Paris, 1913, p. 200-201.

14. A. LUTTRELL (1978), XI, p. 5-7; Carlos BARQUERO GOÑI, "La Orden del Hospital y la Recepción de los Bienes templarios en la Península Ibérica", *Hispania Sacra*, vol. 51 (1999), p. 535-546.

In this situation there were always elements of ambiguity. The king could prohibit the export of money and the departure of men for Rhodes, and he could threaten to sequester the Order's goods, but the crown relied on the Hospital for the administration of large areas within the Catalan principality and it was to some extent restricted by strong papal support for the Hospital's interests. Repeated conflicts often ended in some sort of compromise, favourable sometimes to the crown and sometimes to Rhodes. The king did not always secure the appointment from Rhodes of his candidate as Prior of Catalunya, but he normally succeeded in controlling the Castellany of Amposta. When the king failed to impose his own man as Prior of Catalunya he sometimes managed to secure one or more rich commanderies for his candidate. In the years after 1319 the Master attempted to avoid repeated royal interference. For example he proposed that the monies due to Rhodes from Mallorca, at that point a separate kingdom, be paid directly to the Conventual treasury in such a way that they did not pass through the hands of the prior and were therefore beyond royal control. He also named magistral lieutenants in the castellany and in the priory, claiming that as lieutenants they did not have to swear fidelity to the king.¹⁵

Catalan Hospitallers at Rhodes in the first part of the fourteenth century were few in number; some were stationed in service there and a few others arrived carrying legal appeals to the Master or as royal envoys.¹⁶ In addition, various Catalan merchants visited the island. At one point the most important Catalan on Rhodes was Fr. Pere Arnau Perestortes who was there at least from 1337 to 1340. He came from Roussillon in the Kingdom of Mallorca and in 1344 he fortified his commandery at Mas Deu near Perpignan against the army of Pere III of Aragon. Following the defeat of the King of Mallorca, he returned to Rhodes where in 1347 he was admiral of the Hospitaller galleys serving against the Turks of Smyrna and where he was appointed Prior of Catalunya; the king initially resisted this nomination but had in the end to accept it.¹⁷ In 1347 the new prior bequeathed two adjacent *hospicia* at Rhodes to form a single decent house for the use, after his death, of a Hospitaller who was his kinsman or, if there were none, of brethren from the Priory of Catalunya so that they should have a place *ubi reponant eorum capita*. The prior remarked that when he reached Rhodes he had been forced to beg for lodgings; evidently there was at that time no living place there for the use of Spanish brethren.¹⁸

Between 1343 and 1346 the three great Florentine banks of the Bardi, the Peruzzi and the Acciaiuoli went bankrupt with the serious loss to the Order of over 360,000 florins then on deposit.¹⁹ This disaster created an opportunity for a group of merchants from other centres,

15. A. LUTTRELL (1978), XI-XII; M. BONET, p. 31-80.

16. A. LUTTRELL (1978), XI, p. 11, 17; (1982), XV, p. 113, the lack of documents before about 1347 prevents any clear assessment of the numbers.

17. A. LUTTRELL (1978), XI, p. 15-16.

18. Valletta, National Library of Malta, Archives of the Order of St. John, cod. 317, f. 88v.

19. A. LUTTRELL, "The Hospitallers and their Florentine Bankers: 1306-1346", in *Karissime Gotifride: Historical Essays presented to Professor Godfrey Wettinger*, ed. Paul XUEREB, Malta, 1999, p. 21.

such as Pistoia and Narbonne for example, to handle the Hospital's monies. Among them was a leading Catalan merchant, Joan Lombarda of Barcelona. On 12 May 1348 Lombarda and his partners agreed to transfer from Barcelona to Famagusta in Cyprus the *responsiones*, that is the monies due to the Convent, from all five Hispanic priories; these sums were to be paid out in Famagusta or at Rhodes, and if Lombarda and his partners wished to pay them on Rhodes in silver rather than gold, the exchange rate would be at ten silver *gigliati* to one gold florin. It was not always a case of transferring monies in coin. Thus on 12 October 1351 Joan Lombarda was to repay to a factor of Arnau Serra of Barcelona the sum of 800 florins which had been lent to the Order at Rhodes by a certain Philipus Galeas; the repayment was to be made in Barcelona using the *responsiones* of the Catalan priory which were evidently in Lombarda's control.²⁰

In 1348 the great plague reached Catalunya, provoking a major crisis for the priory's peasant subjects and a fall in the Hospitallers' incomes; they had to lower the rents they received in order to avoid the complete abandonment of their fields, which would probably have been irreversible. This disaster resulted in a serious reduction in the number of brethren while a fall in young recruits led to a rise in the average age of the survivors. Hard times also resulted in the progressive farming out to laymen of commanderies on the part of commanders, and in the consequent decadence or even disappearance of any common life and liturgical practice in the commanderies; in the Priory of Catalunya the Order's activities were increasingly concerned with the acquisition of cash.²¹ In 1347 there had been a great political upheaval with the revolt against the crown of the *uniones* of Aragon and Valencia. These events gave power to the newly-appointed Castellan of Amposta, the Aragonese Fr. Juan Fernández de Heredia, a close friend of Pere III who strongly supported the king and in return secured many advantages for the Aragonese Hospital.²²

The new Castellan of Amposta was also a favourite of successive popes at Avignon who provided him, in disregard of the Hospital's statutes, to the Priors of Castile in 1355 and of Provence in 1356 and, in 1372, to the Priory of Catalunya; finally in 1377 Pope Gregory XI provided him to the Mastership of the Order. As Master he conducted a *passagium* or expedition of Hospitaller brethren to Epirus in North-Western Greece where he was defeated and made prisoner by the Albanian ruler Ghin Boua Spata. During 1377 the Hospital had leased, for five years, the Principality of the Morea in the western part of the Peloponnese, and the defeat of the *passagium* compelled the Order to engage the so-called Navarrese companies to defend its new acquisition in the Morea against the threat of an Albanian invasion. King Pere and his son Joan had expressed their support for the Hospitallers' invasion of Epirus and Joan's standard bearer Luis Cornel took part in the *passagium* but while the Master was in captivity in Epirus

20. A. LUTTRELL (1992), IX, p. 167-169; cf. Damien COULON, "Ascensión, apogeo y caída de Joan Lombarda, mercader-armador de Barcelona, comprometido en el comercio con el Mediterráneo oriental (segundo tercio del s. XIV)", in Maria Teresa FERRER I MALLOL - Damien COULON, *L'expansió catalana a la Mediterrània a la baixa mitjana*, Barcelona, 1999.

21. A. LUTTRELL (1978), XIV; (1999), XV, p. 7; cf. M. BONET, p. 213-223.

22. A. LUTTRELL (1978), XII, p. 13-19.

certain French Hospitallers were involved in attacks on the Catalans of Athens. King Pere of Aragon, who formally became Duke of Athens in 1379, protested to Fernández de Heredia, but it seems clear that he was not personally responsible for any Hospitaller aggression against the Catalans of Greece. The Hospital's lease of the Morea had been ended in 1381, and in the following years the Master repeatedly sought to find some new way of acquiring the principality for the Hospital. For their part Pere and, after his death in 1387, his son Joan were concerned, though only in an ineffective and largely rhetorical way, to protect the enfeebled Catalan duchy. From 1384 onwards there were some inconclusive contacts between the Master and the Aragonese crown concerning Greek affairs but the Order did not succeed in re-occupying the Morea, and the Catalan Duchy of Athens had collapsed by about 1394.²³

The last Catalans in Greece belonged to the family of Caupena. The Sicilian Catalan Joan Fadrique de Aragón seems to have been lord of the island of Aegina from 1382 to perhaps 1394; it is possible that an unknown daughter of his inherited the island from him and that she married Antonello Caupena, a Catalan noble whose father Alioto I Caupena was still alive in 1409. Antonello, who apparently acquired the lordship in 1394 and who died in 1418, had a son, Alioto II, who was lord of Aegina from 1418 until 1440.²⁴ In 1403 the Master's register at Rhodes noted the enfeoffment of an Alioto Caupena with two castles on the latter island:

Anno cccc.^{mo} tertio et die xx. septembris dominus magister contulit in feudum nobilem et infeudavit nobili viro Alyoto de Caupene pro se et heredibus suis sexus utriusque natis et nascituris ex legitima coniuge per imperpetuum castra et loca de Damarla²⁵ et de Fanat²⁶ cum omnibus etc. sub tenore et forma subscriptis in folio inmediate precedenti quibus ipse dominus magister in feudum dedit nobili viro Dragono Clauelli casale de Lardo pro iure competendo eidem.²⁷

These Greek affairs had a cultural aspect. There is no indication that the Hospitallers' sustained interest in acquiring a foothold in the Morea, a preoccupation which began in about 1355 long before Fernández de Heredia became Master and which continued well after his death in 1396, was in any way the result of his interests. Fernández de Heredia was responsible for the continuation of the Chronicle of the Morea, which contained the history of the Latins in Greece after 1204, and for its translation into Aragonese. He was determined to create a continuous

23. A. LUTTRELL (1978), XIX, p. 295, 297; (1982), XI, p. 237-252, XV, p. 401-414; (1992), VIII, p. 117-119; "El final de la dominació catalana d'Atenes: La companyia navarresa i els hospitalers", *L'Avenc*, no. 213 (1997).

24. Kenneth SETTON, *Catalan Domination of Athens: 1311-1388*, Cambridge, Mass., 1948, p. 108-110, 211-212, amended in K. SETTON, *Los catalanes en Grecia*, Barcelona, 1975, p. 174-175, 192. The marriage with a daughter of Joan Fadrique remains a conjecture: A. LUTTRELL (1982), XI, p. 251.

25. Sic for Damatria.

26. Fanat, probably Fanes: cf. A. LUTTRELL (1978), VIII, p. 325.

27. Malta, cod. 332, f. 146 (recently torn and partly illegible); the document concerning Dragonetto Clavelli, dated 28 August 1402, is at f. 165-166v.

and complete history of Greece from ancient times down to the late-fourteenth century, a project which derived from his historical interests and not from any proto-humanistic or classicizing concern for ancient history or for the Greek language. It was King Pere and, above all, his son Joan whose policies towards Catalan Greece were influenced by their classical interests and by the glamour of ancient Athens. The Master's numerous historical translations, nearly all made into Aragonese, certainly contributed to the development of humanism in Catalunya, but that was not part of Fernández de Heredia's intentions. It was very possibly on Rhodes that he acquired the Plutarch in the original Greek which he ordered to be translated on Rhodes, first into demotic Greek and then by a Dominican bishop named Nicholas, probably into Aragonese or Catalan. That was the first translation of Plutarch's *Lives* into a Western language.²⁸

In the second half of the fourteenth century the number of Catalan Hospitallers in the Convent at Rhodes apparently increased.²⁹ Thus in June 1358 Fr. Rigot de Nicosia was the *magister scutifer* of the Master's *hospicium* at Rhodes.³⁰ In July 1362 Fr. Pere de Castellsent was given the Commandery of Gardeny in place of the Commandery of the Duchy of Athens which he then held, and in February 1366 he was granted the Commandery of Mallorca and was licensed to leave the East and return to his commandery.³¹ In March 1363 Fr. Pere Toló was due to travel to Rhodes on the business of the priory,³² and in October 1365, when he was described as a priest, he received a licence to leave Rhodes for Catalunya.³³ In January 1366 Fr. Rigot de Nicosia, by then Commander of Gardeny, was also licensed to leave the island.³⁴ In 1380 Fr. Jofre de Canadal, who was a Catalan though he was then Commander of Ulldecona in the Castellany of Amposta, reached Catalunya from Rhodes,³⁵ and in 1381 Fr. Berenguer Batlle was sent to govern the Commandery of Athens as its lieutenant.³⁶ In June 1381 Fr. Francesc Xammar, Commander of Puigreig and Cervera, was licensed to sell houses and land at Rhodes, and in that October he was sent on a mission to Catalunya.³⁷ In the same year Fr. Pere de Castellsent was

28. A. LUTTRELL (1978), XX; (1997), p. 30-34; (1999), XV; see also *Juan Fernández de Heredia y su época: IV Curso sobre lengua y literatura de Aragón*, ed. Aurora EGIDO-José Ma. ENGUITA, Zaragoza, 1996; and Juan Manuel CACHO BLECUA, *El Gran Maestre Juan Fernández de Heredia*, Zaragoza, 1997. *Juan Fernández de Heredia: Jornada conmemorativa del VI centenario*, Munébrega, 1996, ed. Esteban SARASA SÁNCHEZ *et al.*, Zaragoza, 1999, contains various inaccuracies.

29. The magistral registers now in Malta contain licences for Hospitallers to travel to Rhodes which are not reported here since they give no proof that brethren actually went there.

30. Malta, cod. 316, f. 298v.

31. Malta, cod. 319, f. 132v, 143.

32. Barcelona, Arxiu de la Corona d'Aragó, *Cancelleria*, reg. 1184, f. 11v-12v.

33. Malta, cod. 319, f. 123v.

34. Malta, cod. 319, f. 131v; the text gave Nicosia as Commander of Gardeny and *Ribaforada*, possibly Rivaforada in Navarre.

35. Barcelona, reg. 1659, f. 125.

36. Malta, cod. 321, f. 212v-213.

37. Malta, cod. 321, f. 108v-111.

imprisoned at Feraklos on Rhodes.³⁸ In October 1381 Fr. Pere Toló was summoned from Catalunya to Rhodes to inform the Master about affairs in Aragon.³⁹ In 1382 Fr. Ramon de Mallorca was named Commander of Athens and the Nigroponte, a position he held until 1401,⁴⁰ while from 1382 to 1385 Fr. Guillem de Galliners, Commander of Mallorca, was Bailiff of the island of Rhodes.⁴¹

Catalan Hospitallers continued to serve in the East. In 1389 Fr. Garsia de Maissens, Commander of Vilafranca de Penedès, was elected to act as lieutenant of the Drappier in the manner established by the statutes, as he was the oldest and most senior member of the *lingua* of Spain in the Convent.⁴² The Drappier was the senior Conventual officer representing the Spanish *langue*, and by this time the Spanish brethren had their own *auberge* since in 1393 the Master gave Fr. Pere de Vilafranca, who had become Drappier in 1379,⁴³ the sum of 100 florins *pro edificatione et reparatione hospicioꝝ lingue ispanie* or *pro hospitiiis albergie*,⁴⁴ these were possibly the properties bequeathed in 1347 by Fr. Pere Arnau Perestortes. In 1392 a Rhodian vineyard fell vacant through the death of Fr. Guillem de Moncada,⁴⁵ and in 1394 a vineyard, a house and a mill on Rhodes became vacant through the death of Fr. Ramon de Rajadell, Commander of Granyena, who had been Castellán of Rhodes.⁴⁶

Gradually a change, inspired perhaps by some spirit of reform, took place in the Convent. It consisted in particular in the stricter application of the rules concerning *ancianitas* or seniority in the attribution of benefices. That encouraged brethren ambitious for promotion to reside on Rhodes, and it meant that commanders and priors in the West were more likely to have had experience in the East. In about 1390 the famous crusading propagandist Philippe de Mézières, who knew Rhodes well and who propounded an ideal military order, wrote that it was *une moquerie ou grant derision* that the brethren spent four or five years at Rhodes and then returned to a rich commandery in the West.⁴⁷ From an idealistic point of view there was some justice in this but in the early fifteenth century, for Catalan brethren at least, the time spent on Rhodes awaiting a commandery was on average eleven years, with one exceptional case of thirty-eight years.⁴⁸ In reality the system meant that, theoretically at least, a Hospitaller had to

38. Barcelona, reg. 1271, f. 72; Malta, cod. 321, f. 218.

39. Malta, cod. 321, f. 3v.

40. Malta, cod. 321, f. 217v-218; cod. 331, f. 159, 164-164v.

41. Malta, cod. 321, f. 219; cod. 322, f. 283v; cod. 323, f. 203.

42. A. LUTTRELL (1978), XXIII, p. 38, n. 38.

43. Malta, cod. 324, f. 10v.

44. Malta, cod. 326, f. 149.

45. Malta, cod. 326, f. 135-135v.

46. Malta, cod. 328, f. 161-161v, 179.

47. A. LUTTRELL (1999), VII, p. 238-240; this apparent reform is discussed at length by Pierre Bonneaud but awaits full explanation.

48. Figures kindly communicated by Pierre Bonneaud.

go to Rhodes with horse and arms, pay his *passagium* or entry fee on arrival, and serve in the Convent, performing his *caravana*, that is a period of months spent at sea or on one of the lesser islands; all of that was necessary in order to achieve the degree of *ancianitas* needed either to obtain a commandery or to secure a richer one. These arrangements were fundamental to the Order's survival on Rhodes, for they were the means by which the Hospital could attract and maintain a corps of *milites* on the island. In 1413, when it was discovered that Pope John XXIII had interfered with the system by selling the expectation to the rich Commandery of Cyprus, the brethren on Rhodes threatened to abandon the island altogether. In about 1410 when the news arrived that the Prior of Catalunya, Fr. Pere de Pomers, was dead, the lieutenant of the Master on Rhodes and his council named as prior the Drappier, Fr. Garsia de Maissens, since he was the *antiquior* or senior member of his *langue* present on Rhodes; this was done at the request of all the brethren of the *langue* of Catalunya in the Convent.⁴⁹

Given the need for such a system, some brethren were unavoidably absent from their commanderies. The gradual conversion of the commandery into an economic unit was to some extent inevitable, though it could be rented to another Hospitaller, who might also act as the commander's lieutenant in the commandery, rather than to a layman. Naturally the individual commander in the West had to rent his commandery in order to be able to go to Rhodes and to maintain himself there. Some houses were vacant for other reasons, perhaps because their commander was active in royal service or simply preferred town life to the administration of a rural community. A commandery with no resident brethren incurred reduced expenses and could therefore be leased more profitably to a layman. There were a number of houses with no commander or lieutenant, which implied a decline of communal Hospitaller life or liturgical activity, or sometimes even their complete disappearance. By contrast the number of Catalan brethren at Rhodes continued to increase, as shown in a note of 1403 written, somewhat exceptionally for the magistral registers, in Catalan:

de mandato domini magistri sequentia scripta sunt.

A xxij jorns del mes de octubre de lany de nostre Segnore, Mil .iiij.ij passa per tots frares dela lenga dEspanya que al presente dia se trouare a Rodes primo fra Martin Deynar pillier et fra Johan de Meds et fra Johan de Redia et fra Dalmau de Xaymare frares dela Castellania, et de priorat, fra Pons de Castellauil, et fra Gerou de Satalhada et fra Philip de Guabes et fra Pere Mege e tots del bon acord volgeren que fra Loys de Cabanylls fos receput et tengut per frare del priorat de Cathelonia, et fra Bertrams de Clascarin tremes a dir per letras sua, con ello era de acort et de voluntat quel dit frar Loys fosse frare del priorat de Catholonia et jo fra Johan de Mur que per voluntat de sopra dits frares fiu la present scricta.⁵⁰

49. A. LUTTRELL (1999), VII, p. 239-240. Although *ancianitas* was, technically, calculated within the whole Spanish *langue*, the reference here was to a Catalan *langue*; a number of Catalans belonged to the Castellany and some held Aragonese commanderies.

50. Malta, cod. 333, f. 56.

This document gave a total of eleven Aragonese and Catalan *fratres* at Rhodes, including one who gave his assent in writing and also the new entrant; there may have been others, possibly at sea or on the other islands. Four of the brethren belonged to the Castellany of Amposta, which included four commanderies in Southern Catalunya, while the other seven belonged to the priory. One of the four members of the Castellany, Fr. Dalmau de Xammar, was a Catalan, as was the scribe Fr. Joan de Mur. There was no mention of the Drappier,⁵¹ and the Pillier, or chief of the *langue*, was an Aragonese Fr. Martín Deynar. No Castilian or Portuguese member of the *langue* was present. There was no hint that there was any type of procedure to prove the candidate's status as a noble or knight; in fact, the document did not even state whether Fr. Lluís de Cabanilles was a *miles*, though probably he was.

More important to Rhodes than men, who were expensive and could be substituted by mercenaries, was the money essential for the maintenance of the fortifications of the town and island, for hiring a few galleys in case of war and for the great Conventual hospital. The basic contribution from the priories came in the form of *responsiones* though there were other payments, varying from year to year, such as extra impositions often called *tallyes* and the *spolia* of deceased brethren. For example, when Fr. Juan Fernández de Heredia was preparing his Greek expedition in 1377, his lieutenant in the Priory of Catalunya had to assemble a chapter to collect monies for it from the commanderies.⁵² Each commandery had to make a small annual payment known as the *pitancia* which went to maintain the brethren of the *langue* in their *auberge* on Rhodes.⁵³ Collecting such sums was difficult. In October 1365 the prior, Fr. Vidal Alquer, was charged with a lengthy set of crimes, embezzlements and repeated failures to pay the *responsiones* he owed; by January 1366 he was in prison on Rhodes in the castle of Lindos.⁵⁴ In 1347 the Catalan priory was supposed to provide *responsiones* of 5000 florins a year, but the amount paid was usually rather less; for the two years from 1370 to 1372 the amount received was only 2742 florins. In the financial year 1373-1374 the total paid was 5403 florins, of which 2742 were *responsiones*, 1711 were *talla* and 950 were arrears; for the following financial year the total was 4669 florins, 2900 of *responsiones* and 1769 of *talla*. In those two financial years the Priory of Catalunya paid some 11 percent of the total sum received from the Western priories. Furthermore, the four commanderies of Southern Catalunya provided one fourth of the *responsiones* of the Castellany of Amposta. In 1386-1387 the priory paid 7738 florins. The prioral chapter protested in 1398 that, owing to the schism in the papacy and the Order, only nine of the Western priories were sending *responsiones* to Rhodes; that meant that the priory had

51. The Drappier, Fr. Pere des Pomers, may have been away from Rhodes in October 1403, since in February 1402 there was a lieutenant Drappier, the Aragonese Fr. Iñigo de Alfaro, who was also Captain of Smyrna: Malta, cod. 331, f. 167.

52. Barcelona, Arxiu de la Corona d'Aragó, Gran Priorado de Catalunya, 537, f. 1-1v, 41-42.

53. A. LUTTRELL (1999), XIX, p. 211-214.

54. Malta, cod. 319, f. 125-126, 131.

to pay to 3600 florins every year plus very large special subsidies amounting, according to the chapter, to a third of the incomes of each commandery. The Catalan contribution was not negligible.⁵⁵

At Rhodes the principle of *ancianitas* presumably helped Fr. Antoni Fluvià, who was confirmed as Drappier in 1411 and became lieutenant of the Master on Rhodes in 1419, to secure his election to the Mastership of the Order in 1421. Fluvià seems never to have held a commandery in his home priory and his career was apparently spent entirely in the Convent. His period as lieutenant on Rhodes in 1419 and 1420 may have impressed the electors who chose him, and they may also have wanted a Master with a Conventual background to replace the deceased Fr. Philibert de Naillac who had been continuously in the West from 1409 to 1420. During his Mastership Fluvià showed considerable firmness in resisting the pressures of the Aragonese king, Alfons the Magnanimous, especially in disputes over the appointment of a Prior of Catalunya.⁵⁶ A leading Catalan at Rhodes was Fr. Ramon Roger d'Erill who became Drappier and died on Rhodes in 1431 or 1432; he lived mainly in the Convent there following a scandal involving his Hospitaller cousin Sor Margarida d'Erill in the female house at Alguayre in 1417.⁵⁷ Catalan culture was on occasion exported to Rhodes, as for example in 1432 when a painting left Barcelona for the chapel of Saint John in Rhodes,⁵⁸ and when Fluvià died 1437 he left 10,000 florins for the construction of what would eventually become a grandiose new Conventual hospital in the town of Rhodes.⁵⁹ Some Western knowledge of Rhodes was reflected in Catalunya and Valencia in the historical romance *Tirant lo Blanch* and in other literary works.⁶⁰ After 1421 under a Catalan Master, Rhodes became increasingly a Catalan city, especially in its architecture, as well as an important centre of Catalan commerce and piracy.⁶¹

55. A. LUTTRELL (1999), XV, p. 9. Pierre Bonneaud has shown that the amount due as *responsiones* for 1389, 1392 and 1415 was 3600 florins of Aragon.

56. Pierre BONNEAUD, "Diferencias y conflictos entre Alfonso el Magnánimo, el Maestre de Rodas y los hospitalarios catalanes: 1426-1436", in *Las órdenes militares en la Península Ibérica*, ed. Ricardo IZQUIERDO BENITO-Francisco RUIZ GÓMEZ, vol. I, Cuenca, 2000.

57. A. LUTTRELL, "Margarida d'Erill Hospitaller of Alguayre: 1415-1456", *Anuario de Estudios Medievales*, vol. 26 (1998). On 15 June 1395 the Master licensed the Prior of Catalunya to receive Fr. Ramon Roger d'Erill *ob reuerenciam serenissimi principis Regis Aragonie*: Malta, cod. 329, f. 10v.

58. A. LUTTRELL (1978), XIII, p. 389.

59. Albert GABRIEL, *La Cité de Rhodes: 1310-1522*, vol. II, Paris, 1923, p. 24; Fotini KARASSAVA-TSILINGIRI, "The Fifteenth-Century Hospital of Rhodes: Tradition and Innovation", in *The Military Orders: Fighting for the Faith and Caring for the Sick*, ed. Malcom BARBER, Aldershot, 1994.

60. A. LUTTRELL (1978), XIII p. 389-390; Albert HAUF, "Història versus ficció: Rodes, Grècia i l'Orient en els textos catalans medievals" (in this volume).

61. A. LUTTRELL (1978), XIII, p. 386-390; Constantin MARINESCU, *La Politique Orientale d'Alphonse d'Aragon, Roi de Naples: 1416-1458*, Barcelona, 1994, p.45-70, 115-132, María Teresa FERRER I MALLOL, *Corsarios Castellanos y Vascos en el Mediterráneo Medieval*, Barcelona, 2000, p. 140, 260, 276, 296, 290-291, 326-331.