

***Beneath the Holiness: Ideological and Political
Motivations behind the Rise of Pauline Cult in
17th Century Europe***

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Abstract

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<p>For over ten centuries, St. Paul has been the patron saint of Malta. The earliest documented reference to the cult dates back to the late thirteenth century. With the arrival of the Order of St. John and the influence brought by Counter-Reformation, the Pauline cult in Malta started to spread among Europe and reached its peak in the seventeenth century. Its success can be attributed to the following aspects; the international influence of the Order and the Counter-Reformation, travelogues translated into various languages, and the grand tours practiced by nobles.</p> <p>This research aims to discuss the ideological and political motivations behind the rise of the Pauline cult, and why it accomplished great success in seventeenth century Europe. This research is document-based. References include published books, articles, and journals written or edited by influential scholars, such as John Azzopardi, Thomas Freller, etc.</p>	
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**Declaration of
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Declaration:

I hereby declare that this research study is based on the outcome of my own research. I, as the author, declare that this research study is my own composition which has not been previously produced for any other qualification.

The research study was conducted under the supervision of Vincent Zammit

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1. Introduction

The veneration of St. Paul the Apostle has been rooted in the Maltese culture since medieval times (Freller, 2006, p. 193). From a more spiritual aspect, the cult of the saint can be traced back to the 1st century when the apostle landed on the island by a shipwreck. It is said that St. Paul converted the Maltese islands to Christianity during his three months stay in Malta. The Grotto in Rabat is believed to be the place where the apostle was kept imprisoned (Freller, 1996, p. 156).

From the second half of the sixteenth century onwards, the Pauline cult in Malta grew to become one of the most influential veneration in Latin Christianity, both locally and internationally (Freller, 1996, p. 15). When discussing the flourishing of the Pauline cult in the seventeenth century, one cannot isolate the accomplishment from two important gameplayers; the Order and the Roman Catholic Church, and the series of historical events associated with them.

The settlement of the Order had drawn outsiders' attention to Malta (Freller, 2006, p. 203). The heroic victory the Order achieved in the Great Siege in 1565 brought a win-win situation; the Order received tremendous fame, and the popularity of immigration to Malta was boosted after the victory (Cassar & Zammit, 1990, p. 75; Freller, 2006, p. 206).

Meanwhile, in response to Martin Luther's Protestant Reformation, the Catholic Church started the Counter-Reformation. As part of the propaganda strategy, St. Paul was identified as a symbol of the Church, representing individuals who amended their mistakes before God's grace, or furthermore, the Counter-Reformation movement itself (Blondy, 2006, p. 85).

As a loyal supporter of the Church and a religious military organization whose fame was at its peak during the Counter-Reformation, the Order soon realised the ideological and political potential behind the Pauline cult in Malta (Freller, 2006, p. 206). From the first half of the seventeenth

century onwards, the Order fostered the Pauline cult until its political end in Malta (Freller, 1996, p. 101).

Hence, the rise of the Pauline cult in seventeenth century Europe is no coincidence. With the support from the Church, the Pauline cult promoted by the Order soon had a great implication in Europe. The Grotto in Rabat, which is said to be the place where the apostle was imprisoned, became the centre of the cult (Freller, 2006, p. 191). At present, St. Paul's Grotto is still a popular attraction to tourists and a living pilgrimage site for faithful believers. Represented by the Grotto and the parish church upon it, the Pauline cult shapes Malta's national identity (Azzopardi & Pace, 2010, p. 3). It is impossible for one to fully understand Malta without knowing the Pauline tradition on the islands, and how it transformed from a local dominant cult to one of the most influential cults of Latin Christianity (Freller, 1996, p. 15).

This research aims to discuss the ideological and political motivations behind the rise of the Pauline cult in seventeenth century Europe, and why it reached a great success under certain contexts. The objectives shall be analysed from the following aspects; the cult's potential to the Order and the Roman Catholic Church during the Counter-Reformation, the key elements which attracted visitors to the Grotto, and various influential ways of promoting the cult and site.

2. Literature Review

This research is document-based. Started as a local veneration in Malta, the Pauline cult became renowned in seventeenth century Europe. Various scholars, such as John Azzopardi, Mario Buhagiar, Thomas Freller and others, analysed the success the cult achieved and why in articles and books. This literature review summarizes the above-mentioned authors' writings, and divides them into three sub-chapters; the potential of the cult, reasons why the visitors came to St. Paul's Grotto in Rabat, and the advertising of the cult in the seventeenth century.

2.1 The Potential of the Pauline Cult during the Counter-Reformation

St. Paul holds an important position in Christ's Church. He and St. Peter formed the two pillars of the Church. Alain Blondy in his 2006 article *The Pauline Cult and the Counter-Reformation* discussed Paul's role in the Church; St. Paul was appointed by the Council of Trent as a symbol of the Church, and also a symbol of free will for the Church to answer the Protestants and Jansenists. The Pauline cult was mainly a creation of the Jesuits to fight against the above-mentioned adversaries, and also has been an aspect of the administration of the Church since the Counter-Reformation. (Blondy, 2006, pp. 85-86; Meinardus, 2006, p. 67)

The potential of the Pauline cult was also detected by the Order after the Great Siege. Thomas Freller, in his 2006 article *St Paul's Grotto, Malta, and its Antidotic Earth in the Awareness of Early Modern Europe*, examined the similarity between the Pauline cult in Malta and the cult of St. James the Greater in Spain. Malta's geographic location placed it on the frontier between Christianity and Islam. The Order sensed the similar spiritual and philosophical background between Malta and Reconquista Spain, and the considerable implications the local cult of St. Paul could bring. (Freller, 2006, p. 206) As Gerard Buhagiar stated in his article *The Grotto Motif in Pauline Poetry* in 1990, the Order deliberately associated their role with St. Paul and his shipwreck to strengthen their reign over Maltese inhabitants. (Bugeja, 1990, p. 217) Later, in 2006, Blondy pointed

out the cult's potential from a more political perspective in his article *The Pauline Cult and the Counter-Reformation*; promoting the cult could gain the Order an opportunity to have the archbishopric or bishopric bound directly with the Holy See (Blondy, 2006, pp. 87-88).

2.2 Reasons for Visitors to Visit St. Paul's Grotto in Rabat, Malta

Thomas Freller discussed the visits of St. Paul's Grotto between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries in *St Paul's Grotto, Malta, and its Antidotic Earth in the Awareness of Early Modern Europe* in 2006. As Freller stated in his article, St. Paul's Grotto in Rabat became the most important cult centre in Malta in the early modern times. (Freller, 2006, p. 191) The Counter-Reformation brought a flourishing revival of pilgrimage in the seventeenth century. As a religious cult fostered by Juan Venegas and the Order, St. Paul's Grotto in Rabat solidly benefited from the revival. (Freller, 2006, p. 205)

Freller also pointed out that the revival of pilgrimage, which represented the propagandistic programme of the Church, was not the only reason that drove visitors to the Grotto in Rabat. From the mid-sixteenth century onwards, the arrival of the Order in Malta attracted various types of visitors to the Grotto, including Protestants, among whom were Calvinists and Lutherans. (Freller, 2006, pp. 202-206)

While non-Catholic travellers visited St. Paul's Grotto in Rabat to experience the cult with their own senses instead of reading through old manuscripts, Catholic pilgrims were here seeking spiritual or physical supports (Freller, 2006, p. 203; Freller, 1996, p. 14). As Freller stated in his 1996 book *St Paul's Grotto and its Visitors*, the places where Christian saints lived and died would be venerated after their deaths. Death didn't cut off the power of saints to intercede. In the case of St. Paul's Grotto, the divine intervention pilgrims were seeking was the antidotic earth from the Grotto. (Freller, 1996, p. 14) The legend of the earth from the Grotto was also mentioned in Mario Buhagiar's *The St Paul's Cave Complex at Rabat, Malta, and its Archaeological Significance*, an article published in 1990. It

was believed that the stone chip or earth from the Grotto was an effective medicine against all sorts of diseases. To use it as a treatment, one should powder the stone chip from the Grotto and drink it with water. (Buhagiar, 1990, p. 51) George Zammit Maempel analysed the origin of the tradition in his article *Rock from St Paul's Grotto (Malta) in Medicine and Folklore* in 1990. The healing power of the stone derived from unknown local antiquity of St. Paul. As a gratitude for the islanders' kindness after the shipwreck, St. Paul rendered all local venomous animals innocuous and blessed rocks to have the power against poisoning. (Maempel, 1990, pp. 169-172)

2.3 Advertising of the Pauline Cult in Seventeenth Century Europe

The Spanish hermit Juan Venegas and the Order of St. John together converted St. Paul's Grotto to a Christian shrine (Buhagiar, 1990, p. 53). The Grotto and church in Rabat are the centre of the Pauline tradition (Freller, 1996, p. 15). In an era with no internet, people got to know foreign countries by travelling or reading. In the case of the Pauline cult and its shrine, the major ways of advertising the cult and the Grotto were guided tours, the publishing of travelogues, and antique maps. (Freller, 1996, pp. 160-162) In *St Paul's Grotto and its Visitors*, Thomas Freller discussed Grand Tours in the seventeenth century and their implication on the visit of St. Paul's Grotto. Destinations of a Grand Tour usually included England, France, Italy, and the Netherlands. Thanks to the renowned reputation the Order had gained, Malta was also one of the destinations. (Freller, 1996, p. 129)

Travelogues in the seventeenth century prove people's acknowledgement of the Pauline cult and the Grotto. Freller dedicated an entire chapter in *St Paul's Grotto and its Visitors* to discuss documented references of people's visiting. By studying those travelogues, Freller pointed out that the knights of the Order would provide customised guided tours to distinguished visitors. From the late sixteenth century onwards, St. Paul's Grotto had become a major stop of the guided tours. (Freller, 1996, pp. 129-158) More details were presented in the same author's article

published in 2006, *St Paul's Grotto, Malta, and its Antidotic Earth in the Awareness of Early Modern Europe*. According to notes written by various noblemen who visited Malta in the seventeenth century, apart from visiting the Grotto in Rabat, many visitors who had the guided tours were also taken to St. Paul's Bay, the supposed site of the shipwreck in the Bible. As a result, the majority of travellers from Christian countries were aware of the local cult and its shrine in Malta. (Freller, 2006, p. 209)

In Freller's opinion, best-selling travelogues translated in various languages also contributed greatly to the international propaganda of the cult. Travellers' writings provided readers with a picture of foreign countries. Publications of renowned travellers, such as Jean de Thevenot and George Sandys, had huge implications among French, German, and English readers. Like advertising in modern days, travelogues and journals in the seventeenth century formed an important ingredient of the international propaganda of the Pauline cult in Malta. (Freller, 2006, pp. 161-162)

Apart from descriptive contents, visual impressions also drew people's attention to places they hadn't been to. Followed by the discussion of travelogues in *St Paul's Grotto and its Visitors*, Freller briefly stated the importance of maps between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries. As a graphic scientific document, a map depicts places together with geographical information for the benefit of its viewer. Maps in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries were used to highlight significant and specific places. One could spot St. Paul's Grotto on maps produced between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries. On one hand, they played the role of advertising in a certain period, on the other hand, they also reflect the importance and esteem the Grotto gained during the same period of time. (Freller, 1996, p. 162)

3. Methodology

The methodology employed in this research is qualitative content analysis. Given that the central research question is "why the Order of St. John's promotion of the Pauline cult succeeded in seventeenth-century Europe", this document-based research relies exclusively on literature reviews. Analysis and conclusions regarding this research question will be drawn from published research papers authored or edited by eminent scholars in related fields, such as John Azzopardi and Thomas Freller.

3.1 Itinerary Outline

The itinerary of the half-day tour will base on attractions and landmarks associate with St. Paul and his legends in Malta. The tour will start from St. Paul's Bay, the supposed shipwreck location, then move to Mdina to visit the Metropolitan Cathedral dedicated to St. Paul, and end in Wignacourt Museum in Rabat with the visit of St. Paul's Grotto and upper floor's collection.

3.2 Limitation of the Research

Using the qualitative content analysis method entails relying solely on secondary resources for this research. The reliability of the analysis and conclusions is contingent upon the accuracy and credibility of the secondary resources cited in this work.

3.3 Ethical considerations

This document-based research, devoid of participant involvement, will not include individuals in the research process. Given the research's focus on religious topics, the analysis and argumentation will maintain an academic tone. To ensure cultural and religious sensitivity, the final work will be reviewed by the supervisor and individuals with Catholic faith, aiming to prevent inadvertent offense.

4. Results, Analysis and Discussion

The Pauline cult in Malta before the end of the reign of the Order in 1798 can be divided into two phases; the pre-Knights period and the Knights period. The flourishing of the cult in the Knights period associated closely with the Counter-Reformation. (Blondy, 2006, p. 87) The popularity the cult achieved in seventeenth century Europe cannot be isolated from the contributions made by the two important gameplayers; the Order of St. John and the Roman Catholic Church.

4.1 Analysis and Discussion

St. Paul and St. Peter are the two pillars of the Church. St. Paul safeguarded the institution of the Eucharist in his time (Guillaumier, 2006, p. 13-14). As time went by, the saint played a further significant role in the Church from the sixteenth century onwards. Chosen by the Church in the Council of Trent, St. Paul became the symbol of the Church's new orientation (Blondy, 2006, p. 85). The corruption of the Medieval Church led to Martin Luther's Protestant Reformation in the early sixteenth century. The implication of Luther's revolution was so widespread that the Church had no choice but to respond with another movement. Convened by Pope Paul III in the mid-sixteenth century, the Council of Trent marked the beginning of the Church's Counter-Reformation.

However, Luther's Reformation was not the only crisis the Church would be facing in the following centuries. In the early seventeenth century, Cornelius Jansen, the bishop of Ypres, started Jansenism. Differ from the Church's believe in the combination of men's faith and works and God's grace to receive the salvation, Protestants and Jansenists denied the existence of men's free will before God's grace, especially the latter, who opposed the Church's defence of the free will based on St. Augustine's teaching. St. Paul's conversion made him a symbol of free will to the Church; an individual who amended their mistake before God's grace. Hence, the saint was chosen by the Church as an answer to Protestants and Jansenists. (Blondy, 2006, p. 85)

The origin of the Pauline cult on the Maltese islands is different from the Church. In tradition, Maltese people believe that St. Paul converted the islands of Malta to Christianity in 60 AD, when he was shipwrecked and stayed three months on the island (Freller, 1996, p. 55). Various documented references, including the writing of the Order's chaplain Jean Quintin D'Autun in the early sixteenth century, suggest that the cult of St. Paul in Malta has existed since the Middle Ages (Ganado, 1990, p. 229).

It didn't take long for the Order in the sixteenth century to sense the potential of the local cult in Malta. After they gained the tremendous fame from the victory of the Great Siege in 1565, the Order decided to use the Pauline cult to further expand their prestige in Europe, both ideologically and politically.

The cult of St. James the Greater in Spain certainly provided a good example to the Order. The cult in Spain reached its peak in the high Middle Ages. In the early ninth century, the tomb of St. James was rediscovered in Compostela. The miraculous discovery took place during the Reconquista, a period which consists of centuries of religious battles between Christians and Muslims from 718 to 1492. Various myths regarding St. James' intervention were told in battles, describing how the saint's presence granted the victory of Christians. (Buttigieg & Davies, 2021, p. 361; Freller, 2006, p. 206)

Malta's geographical location put it on the frontier between Christianity and Islam in history. The local tradition believes that St. Paul showed up during the Moorish invasion in 1429, and dispersed the invaders (Cassar & Mercieca, 2015, p. 69). The conflict between the above-mentioned Abrahamic religions helped to strengthen the implication of the Pauline cult among locals. Centuries later, the heroic defence the Order performed in the battles against the Ottomans, plus the Order's identity as a Catholic religious military organization, connected the Order with St. Paul. The Order deliberately associated themselves with the saint; playing a similar missionary role and having had a "shipwreck" that brought them to the

islands. This move strengthened the reign of the Order among locals. (Bugeja, 1990, p. 217)

Gaining control of the Pauline cult in Malta reflected another purpose of the Order; the religious independence. Between 1156 and 1684, Malta was a suffragan diocese of the Metropolitan Archdiocese of Palermo. The Order was tired with the influence of the Eastern Orthodox Church from the archdiocese, and sought a direct connection with the Holy See, so the Bishop of Malta could answer to the Pope directly. (Blondy, 2006, pp. 87-88; Said, 2017)

To preserve the existing advantage, installing a dominating Christian shrine for the Pauline cult was undoubtedly necessary. It was no coincidence that in the early 1600s Grand Master Aloff de Wignacourt permitted Juan Venegas, the Spanish hermit who contributed greatly to the development of the Pauline cult centred around the Grotto in Rabat between the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, to visit Compostela and other locations to observe the installation of a cult. (Freller, 1996, p. 97; Freller, 2006, p. 206)

Apart from the need of the Order, promoting the Pauline cult and sealing St. Paul's legend with Malta also satisfied the Church's interest. The intercessory power of saints always binds with the places where they lived and died (Freller, 1996, p. 14). Pilgrims went to those places to dedicate their devotion to God, and pray for divine interventions on disease or illness. Due to the implication of the Reformation, the number of pilgrims to regular devotion places experienced a severe decline in the sixteenth century. However, the tendency in Malta was the opposite. The presence of the Order attracted rather more visitors to come to visit the Grotto in Rabat. (Freller, 2006, pp. 202-203)

In the seventeenth century, the Counter-Reformation brought the revival of pilgrimage, which was a carefully planned propagandistic strategy of the Church. One should keep in mind that the Pauline cult in the Church was not the only creation rooted in the Counter-Reformation. The movement of

the Church also started a new era in the seventeenth century, known as the Baroque period. The Baroque period is an era full of the visual. The Church craved to strengthen the devotional power of religious images to people, and to present the triumph of Christianity over the heresy through the lavish decoration of churches. (Ripollés, 2022) Baroque Christianity encouraged believers to find the presence of God's Kingdom in the secular world. Along with the destined flourishing revival, erecting or renovating Christian shrines in Baroque style became popular. This trend led to the renovation and reconstruction of St. Paul's Grotto and St. Paul's Church in Rabat in the seventeenth century. (Freller, 1996, pp. 91-92)

The desire to find the presence of Heaven also led to the devotion of holy relics. Relics became the medium between believers and the spiritual power of the saints. (Freller, 1996, p. 92) In the case of the Pauline cult centred in Rabat, there are two names that cannot be avoided; Juan Venegas and Grand Master Aloy de Wignacourt. They contributed greatly to the promotion of the Pauline cult in the seventeenth century. Venegas started fostering the Grotto in 1607 with Pope Paul V's permission. The jurisdiction of the Grotto was given to Venegas by two papal briefs issued in the early 1610s. After Venegas resigned his rights over the Grotto in 1617, the Grotto's jurisdiction was moved to the Order, in other words, it came under the control of the reigning Grand Master Wignacourt. Following Grand Master Wignacourt's instruction, a college resided by the Order's chaplains was soon erected across the road to foster the Grotto. (Freller, 1996, p. 99; Zammit, 2006, p. 219)

Numbers of reliquaries were donated to Venegas to enrich the decoration of the Grotto, including the golden arm reliquary of St. Paul, which was donated by Duke Ferdinand of Mantua, and two crosses decorated with holy relics, which were donated by Pope Paul V (Azzopardi, 2006, pp. 7-11). After his resignation from the Grotto's jurisdiction, Venegas was later nominated by Grand Master Wignacourt as the first rector of the college in Rabat (Zammit, 2006, p. 219).

With the efforts of Venegas and Grand Master Wignacourt, the Grotto and the parish church became the centre of the Pauline cult in the seventeenth century (Freller, 1996, p. 15). The renowned souvenir which travellers would always take when they visited was the antidotic stone from the Grotto. The tradition of the stone's healing power appeared no later than the fifteenth century. However, it was not renowned among travellers until the presence of the Order in Malta. (Freller, 2006, p. 200)

The stone's power against poisoning associates with the local legend of St. Paul. It is believed that the saint rendered all local venomous species innocuous, and blessed the earth and rocks on the islands to have the healing power against poisoning. (Maempel, 1990, pp. 169-172) Stones from the Grotto were never sold directly by the authority of the site. However, the stone chips which were powdered or made into tablets were available at the Order's hospitals with an official price list. The supply and distribution of the antidotic stone had been converted into a business in the seventeenth century, both locally and internationally. (Maempel, 1990, p. 199; Freller, 1996, p. 105) The stones were also used to make dishes and vases, which were carried abroad as gifts or for missionary purpose (Freller, 1996, pp. 105, 120).

The commercial activities regarding the stone formed an important part of the international promotion of the Pauline cult. The large number of demands of the antidotic stones created a counterfeiting industry. The amount of the fake products was so massive that the reigning Grand Master was advised to seal the prepared stones in order to prove their origin. The proposal suggested that the stones should be sealed with the figure of St. Paul and the coat of arms of the reigning Grand Master, which would help further expanding the Order's prestige. (Freller, 1996, p. 121) This suggestion proved to be valuable to the Order. Based on the existing Maltese earth medals, the above-mentioned stamps can be easily spotted (Figure 1 and 2).

Visitors to the Grotto vary in types in the seventeenth century. Apart from faithful pilgrims, people who didn't come only for devotional purpose such

as artists, scholars, and travellers also paid their visits. Among travellers' levels, there was one certain social class that should be highlighted here; the nobility. Somewhere between the early sixteenth and mid-seventeenth centuries, the concept of the "Grand Tour" developed. One thing that is certain is that in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, aristocratic and wealthy young men from Northern Europe would travel the circuit of Western Europe for cultural, educational, and entertainment purposes. The circuit was called the "Grand Tour". (Towner, 1985, p. 298)

With the esteem the Order managed to gain, Malta became one of the commonly visited destinations in the circuit (Freller, 1996, p. 129). The distinguished visitors would receive the VIP service offered by the Order; a tour guided by a member of the Order to show them around. A vast majority of the notes taken by the noblemen who received the service proves that St. Paul's Grotto was one of the destinations to which they would be guided. Most of the guests were also taken to St. Paul's Bay, the supposed site of the saint's shipwreck and his coming to shore. The guides held back nothing about the legend of the saint and the local cult. Hence, travellers with a Christian background who made a stop in Malta were mostly aware of and more receptive to the Pauline cult in Malta. (Freller, 1996, p. 155; Freller, 2006, p. 209)

Written records from the period of Knights, including notes and travelogues, are not only benefiting studies on the Pauline cult for modern scholars, but also played a significant role of advertising in an era with no internet. One cannot underestimate the implication travelogues and antique maps had in the seventeenth century.

Malta was an important stop on the common travel route from Northern Europe to Constantinople, Palestine, and Egypt in the seventeenth century. Apart from the guided tours offered to distinguished guests, random travellers had a different sightseeing route; a combination of St. Paul's Grotto, Boschetto, and the Verdala Palace. (Freller, 1996, pp. 160-161) As previously mentioned in this chapter, travellers would usually

request a stone chip from the Grotto as their souvenir. Their visiting at the Grotto would also be documented in their travelogues.

Travelogues published by renowned travellers, such as Jean de Thevenot and George Sandy, would be translated in multiple languages, mostly French, German, and English. The publication and translation of the best-selling travelogues created huge impacts among readers with different nationalities. (Freller, 1996, p. 161) In an era with no internet and flight to travel overseas, travelogues provided readers the picture of foreign countries, people, and local cultures.

Antique maps produced between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries played a similar role as travelogues. As a graphic scientific document, a map provides geographical information regarding the place it depicts. On antique maps produced in the seventeenth century, St. Paul's Grotto can be spotted (Figure 3 and 4). The selection of marked locations indicates the importance of the Grotto and the esteem the Pauline cult achieved. Consciously or not, antique maps, together with travelogues in the seventeenth century, contributed greatly to the promotion of the Pauline cult in Europe. (Freller, 1996, p. 162)

5. Final Arguments

5.1 Conclusions

The prominence which the Pauline cult achieved in seventeenth century Europe is no coincidence. Its success cannot be isolated from certain historical and political contexts in its era.

As one of the Church's pillars, St. Paul and his writing played an important role not only in the Roman Catholic Church, but also among Protestants and Jansenists in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. From Paul's Epistle to the Romans, Martin Luther received his revelation of the nature of God. The phrase "the just man lived by faith" from Romans 1:17 laid the foundation stone of Luther's theology. Cornelius Jansen, the bishop of Ypres and the founder of Jansenism, opposed St. Paul to St. Augustine. Whilst Protestants and Jansenists denied the existence of men's free will, St. Paul was chosen by the Church to be the symbol of free will.

Luther's Protestant Reformation forced the Church to start the Counter-Reformation in the sixteenth century. Jansen's Jansenism continued the crisis of the Church. These two crises further strengthened Paul's implication in the Church, and also triggered the Church's propagandistic demand.

The Counter-Reformation led to the start of the Baroque period, and the destined flourishing revival of pilgrimage in the seventeenth century. The Order of St. John, whose fame reached a peak in the era, took the opportunity to further expand their prestige in Europe. Promoting the Pauline cult of Malta in Europe was a win-win situation for both parties.

Hence, the answer to the research question "why did the Order of St. John's promotion on the Pauline cult succeed in seventeenth century Europe" is that the move took place at the right time in the correct era. The great success of the cult's promotion resulted from the fact that it suited

the Church's and the Order's interests in an era when people were encouraged and craved to witness the presence of God's Kingdom in the secular world.

5.2 Recommendations

The regular tours regarding the Pauline cult in Malta are mainly focusing on devotional clients. As the centre of the Pauline cult, St. Paul's Grotto in Rabat performs not only as an active pilgrimage site, but also a regular attraction to tourists who would like to know the folklore of Malta. The interior of the Grotto is a result of Baroque Christianity, which creates a connection with the Baroque flavour in Valletta, the city built by the Knights. A recreation of the sightseeing tour during the period of Knights with costumed guides can be entertaining to tourists who are not specifically devotional, but are interested to explore more about Malta's cultural identity.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Illustrations



45. Maltese earth as depicted by Ludwig, 1749 Table VI, nos. 10-15;
Table XI, nos. 29-32.

Figure 1



46. Maltese earth as depicted by Ludwig, 1749 Table VII, nos. 1-6, 8-9, 12-17.

Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4

Appendix 2: HND TG Long Essay Tour Itinerary

1 Overview

The half-day tour aims to recreate the scenes of St. Paul's legend in Malta. The itinerary will follow a narrative order of the apostle's steps on the island in 60 AD. The tour will start from the Għajn Rażul Fountain in St. Paul's Bay, and end in the Wignacourt Museum in Rabat.

2 Itinerary

Stop 1- Għajn Rażul Fountain, St. Paul's Bay

The 18th century fountain bears the coat of arms of Grand Master António Manoel de Vilhena. It associates with the legend of St. Paul. In tradition, after the shipwreck, the islanders brought St. Paul and his companions food, clothes, and water. However, there was not enough water for everyone. So St. Paul took his staff, and hit the ground three times. Just like the miracle Moses performed before his people, a spring came out from the ground, offering water to the thirsty survivors.

Stop 2- The Chapel of the Miracle of the Viper (San Pawl tal-Ħuġġieġa), St. Paul's Bay

The Maltese name "San Pawl tal-Ħuġġieġa" means "St. Paul of the blazing fire". The origin of the chapel dates to the fourteenth century. The old structure was demolished in the early seventeenth century by the Order and was replaced with a watchtower. During the reign of Grand Master Alof de Wignacourt, a new chapel was erected in the first half of the seventeenth century close to the original location. The chapel stands close to the supposed shipwreck location. It also associates with the story of the viper and bonfire in Acts.

Stop 3- San Pawl Milqi, St. Paul's Bay

The small chapel on top of Gebel Ghawzara hill is popular known as San Pawl Milqi, meaning “St. Paul welcomed”. It is not far from the supposed location of the apostle’s shipwreck. There is a Roman villa locates halfway up the hill. In tradition, the country villa of Publius, the Roman governor and the first Bishop of Malta, stood here. Publius greeted and hosted St. Paul and his companions in his villa for three days.

Stop 4- The Metropolitan Cathedral, Mdina

Documented references indicate that the original structure of the church was erected no later than the late thirteenth century by the Normans. Prior to the old Norman church, archaeological evidence shows that a mosque stood at the same location during the reign of the Arabs. In tradition, the site which is at present occupied by the Cathedral was once Publius’ palace. He converted to Christianity after St. Paul cured his father, and became the first Bishop of Malta. The old thirteenth century Norman church was severely damaged during the earthquake in 1693. Granted by the Pope, the cathedral was soon re-erected in Baroques style in the same year. It bore its “Metropolitan Cathedral” title in 1944.

Stop 5- St. Paul’s Monument, Saqqajja Square, Rabat

The eighteenth century niche carries a statue of St. Paul.

Stop 6- The Collegiate Church of St. Paul’s Shipwreck, Rabat

The origin of the parish church in Rabat dates to the early fifteenth century. It underwent several modifications in centuries. The present look of the church is the result of the renovation sponsored by a local female patron, whose name was Cosmana Navarra. Adjoint with the parish church on the right flank, is the Sanctuary of St. Publius, which was erected by Juan Venegas in the early seventeenth century.

Stop 7- St. Paul’s Grotto, Rabat

In tradition, the Grotto was where St. Paul was held in custody during his three months stay in Malta. It became an important site of the Pauline cult before the arrival of the Order. From the seventeenth century onwards, the Grotto has always been the centre of the Pauline cult. The white earth from the Grotto is believed to have power against poisoning, which recalls the ancient legend that St. Paul, in gratitude for the islanders' kindness, blessed the earth and rocks on the Maltese islands to have miraculous power of healing. The Grotto has been visited by nobilities and Popes in centuries, and it is still an active pilgrimage site in modern days.

Stop 8- The Wignacourt Museum, Rabat

The Wignacourt Museum originally served as a college of the chaplains of the Order. It was erected in the first half of the seventeenth century, during the reign of Grand Master Aloff de Wignacourt. After Juan Venegas resigned from his duty of fostering the Grotto in 1617, the Order took over the authority. The reigning Grand Master de Wignacourt ordered to erect a college for chaplains who were responsible to look after the Grotto. The museum has a massive collection on the first floor regarding the Pauline cult and the Order.