# COMMANDING THE SEA: THE SPANISH NAVAL HIGH COMMAND IN THE EARLY MODERN MEDITERRANEAN

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## Özet

Osmanlı ve İspanyol İmparatorlukları birer denizgücü olarak 16. Yüzyıl Akdeniz'inde karşı karşıya gelmişlerdi. İber Yarımadası'nda Reconquista'nın tamamlanması ile siyasi birliğini sağlayan İspanyol Monarşisi hâkimiyet sahasını Kuzey Afrika'ya taşımış ve kaçınılmaz olarak Osmanlılarla karşı karşıya gelmişti. İspanyol donanma teşkilatının bu dönemde gösterdiği gelişmeyi Osmanlı-İspanyol rekabeti içinde değerlendirmek gerekir. 1564 yılında İspanyol kadırga filosunun komutanlığına atanan D. García de Toledo donanma teşkilatında ve kadırga filosunda ciddi reformlar gerçekleştirmiş ve İnebahtı'ya giden yolda İspanya'nın Akdeniz'de önemli bir denizgücü haline gelmesinde önemli rol oynamıştı.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Osmanlı, İspanya, Akdeniz, denizgücü, donanma teşkilatı, García de Toledo

## Denize Hükmetmek: Erken Modern Dönem Akdeniz'inde İspanyol Donanma Komutanlığı

### Abstract

The Ottoman and Spanish empires confronted each other in the Mediterranean of the 16th century as formidable sea-powers. The Spanish Monarchy completed the political union in the Iberian Peninsula with the end of Reconquista and moved its forces to the North Africa and thus eventually faced the Ottomans in the region. We should evaluate the rise of the Spanish naval organization in the context of Ottoman-Spanish rivalry. D. García de Toledo who became the Captain-general of the Sea in 1564, realized significant reforms in the Spanish naval organization and the galley fleet, thus he played an important role in the rise of the Spanish sea-power in the way to Lepanto.

**Keywords:** Ottoman, Spain, Mediterranean, sea-power, naval organization, García de Toledo

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In the 16th century the Spanish Monarchy was the principal rival of the Ottoman Empire in the Mediterranean. Especially, in the second half of the century, when Felipe II became the King of Spain, the naval struggle between two sea-powers intensified. In the 15th and 16th centuries the Spanish strategy for the Mediterranean was shaped by two important factors: The first one was the spirit of Holy War and *Reconquista*. Reconquista of the Iberian Peninsula was completed in 1492 and the fight with Islam was carried to the North Africa according to the will of Queen Isabel I. The second important factor was the raids of Turkish and Barbary corsairs to the Spanish coasts and commercial shipping. In its Mediterranean strategy the Spanish Monarchy tried to establish control by capturing and fortifying important ports (*presidios*) in the North Africa which may be used by the corsairs for raiding. On the other hand, the Spanish grip in the North Africa was limited to the coastline and the Spanish garrisons needed the assistance from local powers.[1] In addition, the Italian possessions of the Spanish Monarchy was also important for the Spanish strategy. Spain, in the 16th century, had direct or indirect control over the Italian Peninsula except for Venice and the Papacy. In addition to the naval contribution of Genova and Andrea Doria, the majority of the Spanish naval and professional land forces were deployed in the Italian ports and cities in order to send them to the zones of conflict both in Europe and the Mediterranean easily.[2] The key element that completes the Mediterranean strategy of Spain was the Spanish galley fleet (*la armada de las galeras de España*) because the Spanish galleys were crucial for carrying troops and resources between Spain, Italy and the North Africa and for also defending the communication lines of the Spanish Monarchy.[3]

From the beginning the main aim of the Mediterranean policy of the Ottomans was to secure the Eastern Mediterranean and in order to achieve this goal Mehmed II ordered immense naval preparations in newly established Imperial Shipyard in İstanbul (Tersâne-i Âmire). The first challenges that the Ottoman sea-power faced were realized by the Venetian navy and the galleys of the Order of St. John in the Aegean Sea. During the reign of Selim I Syria and Egypt were

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[1] Andrew Hess, *Unutulmuş Sınırlar: 16. Yy. Akdeniz'inde Osmanlı-İspanyol Mücadelesi*, trans. Özgür Kolçak, İstanbul, Küre Yayınları, 2010, p. 24-25, 42, 59-60, Beatriz Alonso Acero, *Cisneros y la conquista española del norte de África: cruzada, política y arte de la guerra*, Madrid, Ministerio de Defensa, 2006, p. 100-118, 158-194 and 225-239.

[2] For example, in 1567 thousands of experienced Spanish soldiers who were stationed in Sicily, Naples and Milan were sent to Flanders. In 1568, the same soldiers were sent to Spain to suppress the Morisco revolt. These professional soliders were called to arms when all forces were mobilized against the Ottoman fleet in 1571. See Geoffrey Parker, *The Grand Strategy of Philip II*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2000, p. 84.

[3] I.A.A. Thompson, "Las Galeras en la Política Militar Española en el Mediterráneo durante el siglo XVI", *Manuscrits*, 24, 2006, s. 100-101, 104 and, Juan Laborda Barceló, "Las campañas africanas de la Monarquía Hispánica en la primera mitad del siglo XVI. Vélez de Gomera: Un nuevo tipo de guerra", *Guerra y Sociedad en la Monarquía Hispánica: Política, Estrategia y Cultura en la Europa Moderna, (1500-1700)*, Vol. I, Madrid, 2006, p. 107-108.

conquered and thus the Ottomans became new rulers of the Eastern Mediterranean. Mehmed II tried to conquer the island of Rhodes where the Knights of St. John established their headquarters and used it as a raiding base against the Ottoman coasts and shipping, but he failed. Selim I ordered the naval preparations for a campaign against Rhodes but he died in 1520. Although Mehmed II and Selim I could not achieve this purpose, the island of Rhodes was finally conquered by Süleyman I in 1522, this event shows us that there was a continuity in the Ottoman strategy towards the Mediterranean.[4] However, we should remember that the Ottoman strategy was not independent from personalities. For example, Grand Vizier Ibrahim Pasha and Kapudan Barbaros Hayreddin Pasha were quite influential on the naval politics in the Sublime Porte in the first half of the 16th century.

The Western Mediterranean was the principal battleground for the Ottoman-Spanish struggle. The Ottoman policy for the Western Mediterranean was based on the voluntary Turkish corsairs in the North Africa and the service of the most famous corsair, Barbaros in the Ottoman service. When Barbaros became the Kapudan Pasha, the Ottoman Empire revised its politics towards the Western Mediterranean and started to follow a more aggressive naval strategy.[5] When Spain encountered the Ottomans in the North Africa they realized that it was a different threat than the one of the local tribes because the Ottomans had both professional land forces equipped with modern firearms and an effective galley fleet. For that reason, the emperor Carlos V commanded himself the campaigns of Tunisia (1535) and Algeria (1541).[6]

When Felipe II became the king of Spain in 1556, he realized that the Spanish galley fleet was not strong enough to confront the Ottoman naval forces because the Spanish navy was mostly composed of armed merchant ships and galleys owned by the private contractors.[7] During the early decades of the second half of the 16th century, the most of the Spanish possessions in the North Africa

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[4]   İdris Bostan, "Kanuni ve Akdeniz Siyaseti 1530-1550", *Muhteşem Süleyman*, ed. Özlem Kumrular, İstanbul, Kitap Yayınevi, 2007, p. 26, Şerafettin Turan, "Rodos'un Zaptından Malta Muhasarasına", *Kanuni Armağanı*, Ankara, Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 2001, p. 47-50 and Emrah Safa Gürkan, "Osmanlı-Habsburg Rekâbeti Çerçevesinde Osmanlılar'ın XVI. Yüzyıldaki Akdeniz Siyaseti", *Osmanlı Dönemi Akdeniz Dünyası*, ed. H. Çoruh, M. Y. Ertaş, M. Ziya Köse, İstanbul, Yeditepe Yayınları, 2011, p. 11-12.

[5]   İdris Bostan, "Cezâyir-i Bahr-i Sefîd Eyaletinin Kuruluşu, 1534", *Beylikten İmparatorluğa Osmanlı Denizciliği*, İstanbul, Kitap Yayınevi, 2006.

[6]   Miguel A. de Bunes Ibarra, "XVI. Yüzyılda Osmanlı İmparatorluğu ve İspanyol Monarşisi: Akdeniz'in Öteki Ucunun İspanya'dan Görünümü", *OTAM*, Sayı: 5, 1994, İdris Bostan, "Preveze Deniz Zaferi ve Sonrasında Akdeniz Dünyası", *Türk Denizcilik Tarihi*, I, ed. İdris Bostan, Salih Özbaran, İstanbul, 2009, James D. Tracy, *Emperor Charles V, Impresario of War*, Cambridge University Press, 2002, p. 146-149, Özlem Kumrular, "İspanyol Kaynakları Işığında V. Karl'ın 1535 Tunus Seferi", *Yeni Belgeler Işığında Osmanlı-Habsburg Düellosu*, İstanbul, Kitap Yayınevi, 2011, p. 203-209.

[7]   Ricardo Cerezo Martínez, *Las Armadas de Felipe II*, Lisbon, 1989, p. 100.

was lost and the Ottoman sea-power began to show its strength in the Western Mediterranean. The Spanish defensive strategy was completely changed as a result of the decisive Ottoman victory in the naval battle of Djerba in 1560. In this battle the majority of the Spanish fleet was either destroyed or captured, the Spanish commanders were taken prisoner and taken to Istanbul. Felipe II, as a result of naval defeats, understood that Spain was in need of a mighty galley fleet (*muy gruesa y poderosa armada de galeras*) in order to be a sea-power that could challenge the Ottoman naval forces and thus he diverted significant resources from land forces to navy and his galley construction program.[8]

The new strategy which was adopted after the defeat of Djerba in 1560 had two important consequences. Firstly, the method of private contracts (*asientos*) in the management of galleys was reduced and thus the royal control and supervision over the galley fleets was increased considerably. Although the direct royal control of galleys was much more expensive than the method of private contracts, the Spanish statesmen thought that it was necessary to prevent the corruption and abuses of the contactors and to increase the quality of navy. The second important result of the new strategy was the start of a galley construction program in the Mediterranean shipyards of the Spanish Monarchy. Felipe II expressed his views openly in 1561: "*Spain needs a very strong fleet not only defend itself, but also strike her enemies in their own lands.*"[9]

### The Spanish Naval Organization in the 16th Century

The Spanish fleets were organized in two different geographical regions: The Mediterranean and Atlantic. Although the kings of Castile and Aragon had shipyards and fleets[10], modern naval organization was created in the early 16th century to prevent the corsair attacks to the Spanish coasts and commercial shipping, and later to stand against the Ottoman sea-power. The Atlantic branch of the Spanish naval organization was created in 1580 when the threats against the Spanish colonies and trade with the New World became prominent.[11] In the Spanish Monarchy, the king played very significant role in the decision-making process in the naval strategy towards the Mediterranean. Although Felipe II was actively involved in the naval policies as all the other branches of politics, he respected the views of senior advisers and naval commanders. The King evaluated

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[8]   Thompson, "Las Galeras en la Política Militar Española…", p. 101-103.

[9]   *Actas de las Cortes de Castilla*, publicadas por acuerdo del congreso de los diputados, vol. I, Madrid, 1861, p. 26-27, Cesáreo Fernández Duro, *Armada Española*, II, Madrid, Museo Naval, 1972, p. 49 and "From Paulo Tiepolo to the Senate and the Doge", July 21, 1561, Madrid, *C.S.P. Venetian*, VII, no. 267.

[10]  In the 13th century, Alfonso, the King of Castile, had a navy composed of 18 galleys. The Kingdom of Aragon was an important naval power with 80 galleys in the 13th and 14th centuries. See Thompson, "Las Galeras en la Política Militar Española…", p. 96-97.

[11]  Martínez, *Las Armadas de Felipe II*, p. 156 -158.

the financial resources and military assets of the Spanish monarchy in a global aspect and determined the priorities. For example, after the defeat at Djerba in 1560, Felipe II gave priority to the Ottoman threat in the Mediterranean and devoted significant resources and manpower to the Mediterranean front of the Spanish Monarchy.[12]

The Councils of State, War and Treasure helped the king in the decision-making process by advising and preparing detailed reports of the threats that the Spanish Monarchy faced. The Council of State (*Consejo de Estado*) was responsible of the general political-military strategy of Spain and the Council of War (*Consejo de Guerra*) was in charge of the successful execution of this strategy. The Council of Treasure (*Consejo de Hacienda*) was responsible for financing military enterprises and the supervision of royal funds. The committee of galleys (*junta de galeras*) was operating under the Council of War and it was in charge of management of galley fleets. The committee dealt with the contracts of the private entrepreneurs, finance and maintenance of galleys and supervision of the accounts of the galleys. The Papacy gave important financial concessions to the Spanish Monarchy to build and arm galleys against the Ottoman threat and that was why this committee of galleys was headed by the papal representative: "*Comisario Apostólico General de la Santa Cruzada y de las demás gracias*".[13]

### The Captain-General of the Sea

The Spanish galley force in the Mediterranean was composed of different fleets. The first one, of course, was the Spanish fleet, the second was the fleet of Doria or Genova[14], the third was the fleet of Naples and the last one was the fleet of Sicily. In addition to these fleets, galleys of the Knights of St. John of Malta and the Knights of St. Stephen of Florence supported the Spanish operations by corsair activities against the Ottomans.[15] Although all these fleets were responsible

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[12]  David Goodman, *Spanish Naval Power, 1589-1665: Reconstruction and Defeat*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2002, p. 2.

[13]  Goodman, *Spanish Naval Power*, p. 35 and José Manuel Marchena Giménez, *La Vida y los Hombres de Las Galeras de España (Siglos XVI-XVII)*, Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Unpublished Phd. Thesis, 2010, p. 37-39.

[14]  Andrea Doria was the famous Genoese admiral and naval *condottiero* who served as the Captain-general of the Sea in the Spanish Monarchy for many years. Doria family provided galleys and commanded fleets through a contractual relationship with the Spanish crown. See Thomas Kirk, "Giovanni Andrea Doria: Citizen of Genoa, Prince of Melfi, Agent of King Philip II of Spain", *Double Agents: Cultural and Political Brokerage in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Marika Keblusek and Badeloch Vera Noldus, Leiden, Boston, Brill, 2011, p. 59-70. The control of the galley fleet of Genoa and their service for the Spanish Monarchy as admirals provided Doria family a great influence in the Genoese political arena. See Thomas Kirk, "The Apogee of the Hispano-Genoese Bond, 1576-1627", *Hispania*, vol. LXV/1, no. 219, 2005, p. 48 and 53.

[15]  Mikail Acıpınar, "Anti-Ottoman Activities of the Order of the Knights of St. Stephen during the Second Half of the Sixteenth Century", in *Seapower, Technology and Trade: Studies in Turkish Maritime History*, ed. Dejanirah Couto, Feza Gunergun and Maria Pia Pedani, İstanbul, 2014, p. 165.

of different regions of the Spanish Monarchy, when a naval campaign was decided, the fleets came together and formed the Spanish galley fleet (*La Armada de las galeras de España*).[16] There was a Captain-general of the Sea (*Capitán general de la Mar*) in charge of the Spanish galley fleet since 1517. He was responsible of the conduct of the Mediterranean strategy of the Spanish Monarchy and execution of all major naval operations. The Captain-generals of the Sea were Hugo de Moncada (1517-1524), Andrea Doria (1528-1560), García de Toledo (1564-1568), Juan de Austria (1568-1576), Gian Andrea Doria (1583-1606) and lastly Filiberto de Saboya. The authority of the Captain-general of the Sea could only be limited by the orders of king and the Council of War.[17]

The authority of the Captain-general of the Sea over the logistical needs of the armada, shipyards, galley construction, cannon foundries and gunpowder production were limited to the administrative supervision because these were under the responsibility of fleet commanders and royal officials. The Captain-general could inspect the battle-readiness of the fleets and galleys and check the accounts of galleys and payment of salaries with the royal inspectors.[18] The Captain-general could relieve the fleet commanders from their duty and appoint others if he came to the conclusion of that they were unfit for the command. Only the intervention of the king could change these decisions.[19]

The office of the Captain-general was sometimes defined as "*Capitán general de la Mar Mediterraneo y Adriático*" in the Spanish archive documents. This expression shows us the geographical area of responsibility of the Captain-general of the Sea because there was a different captain-general for the Atlantic fleet of the Spanish Monarchy. The Captain-general and fleet commanders had jurisdiction over civil and criminal cases over the naval personnel under their command both in sea and land. This judicial power was exercised with "*auditor*", a judge appointed by the commander, and other royal officials.[20] Felipe II in his instructions to D. Juan de Austria expressed that Austria would have the legal authority over his personnel in galleys both in civil and criminal cases and power to give final rule in

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[16] Miguel Ángel de Bunes Ibarra, "La defensa de la cristiandad: las armadas en el mediterráneo en la edad moderna", *Cuadernos de Historia Moderna*, V, Anejos, 2006, p. 82, Esteban Mira Caballos, "El Sistema Naval Español en el Siglo XVI: Las Armadas del Imperio", *Revista de Historia Naval*, Núm. 74. 2001, p. 43-44, Martínez, *Las Armadas de Felipe II*, p. 159-160 and I. A. A. Thompson, *War and Government in Habsburg Spain, 1560-1620*, London, University of London, The Athlone Press, 1976, p. 164.

[17] Francisco-Felipe Olesa Muñido, *La Organizacion Naval de Los Estados Mediterraneos y en Especial de España durante Los Siglos XVI y XVII*, vol. I, Madrid, Editorial Naval, 1968, p. 541 and Martínez, *Las Armadas de Felipe II*, p. 160.

[18] "The Captain-general of the Sea, Don Juan de Austria", January 15, 1568, *CODOIN*, III, p. 308.

[19] Muñido, *La Organizacion Naval*, I, p. 545.

[20] Martínez, *Las Armadas de Felipe II*, p. 153-154 and Muñido, *La Organizacion Naval*, I, p. 635-636.

these cases. On the other hand, Felipe reminded that Austria should have used this legal power only after consulting to professional jurists.[21]

The Captain-general of the Sea was representing the king of Spain and could give orders in the name of the king. This power helped the Captain-general in his command over the different regional fleets and multinational naval personnel of the Spanish Monarchy. In his instructions to D. García de Toledo, Felipe II wrote that all commanders would obey and respect all orders of Toledo as if the king himself ordered.[22] Felipe repeated this issue to his half-brother D. Juan de Austria when he was appointed as the Captain-general in 1568: Austria would represent the king himself (*representando nuestra Persona*) and in order to provide the necessities for the galley fleet, he could give orders to everyone in the Spanish Monarchy.[23]

Apparently, the Spanish Captain-general of the Sea was a very high-ranking office and enjoyed the authority to represent and act like the king himself in the sea. Furthermore, he had equal powers to the governor generals of the Spanish Monarchy. Although there were conflicts over the authority between the governor generals of Naples and Sicily and the Captain-general of the Sea, the office of Captain-general had more authority in reality. For example, in order to prevent the problems with the governor generals, Felipe II, in his instructions to Austria, in addition to all naval commanders and officials, expressed that the governor generals (*visoreyes*) of Castile, Aragon, Naples and Sicily (*de las Dos Sicilias*) would obey and respect all orders of D. Juan de Austria as if the king himself ordered.[24] In addition to the royal decrees, the order of commission of personalities who became the Captain-general gives us a clear picture about the ranks. D. Hugo de Moncada was the governor general of Sicily and D. García de Toledo was the governor general of Catalonia, both of them were promoted to the office of the Captain-general of the Sea. D. Juan de Austria and Filiberto de Saboya were from the royal blood and the family of Doria which was very famous in the service of the Spanish galley fleet when they became the Captain-generals.[25]

### The Deputy-General of the Sea

In the Spanish naval organization, there was a Deputy-general of the Sea (*Lugarteniente general de la Mar*) next to the Captain-general of the Sea. In 1564 Felipe II ordered D. García de Toledo to leave a deputy in his place if there was a need in the case of disease or absence (*en caso de enfermedad o ausencia*). There were different methods to determine who would become the deputy-general. The Captain-general

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[21] "The Captain-general of the Sea, Don Juan de Austria", January 15, 1568, *CODOIN*, III, p. 306.

[22] Muñido, *La Organizacion Naval*, I, p. 542-543.

[23] "The Captain-general of the Sea, Don Juan de Austria", January 15, 1568, *CODOIN*, III, p. 304-309.

[24] "The Captain-general of the Sea, Don Juan de Austria", January 15, 1568, *CODOIN*, III, p. 307.

[25] Martínez, *Las Armadas de Felipe II*, s. 159 and Muñido, *La Organizacion Naval*, I, p. 543.

could make a list from favorable candidates and then submit to the king, or the king could appoint a deputy-general for the fleet directly.[26] For instance, when Felipe II appointed D. Juan de Austria to the command of the Spanish galley fleet, he also appointed D. Luis de Requesens as the Deputy-general of the Sea. In his orders to Requesens, Felipe wrote that he would be the second in the command of the Spanish galley fleet and as a man of experience, he should have helped D. Juan de Austria in the administration of galleys and the command of the fleet. In the absence of Austria, Requesens would have the complete authority over the fleet and could give orders like the Captain-general himself. It is possible to think that Felipe II tried to compensate the lack of experience of D. Juan de Austria in the naval matters by appointing the D. Luis de Requesens.[27]

### Captain-generals of the regional fleets

The regional fleets of Spain, Genova, Naples and Sicily were commanded by their own captain-generals. Although all commanders served as equals in their area of operations, the captain-general of the Spanish fleet was considered top-ranked. These commanders could be appointed by the king by the method of direct royal

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[26]  Muñido, *La Organizacion Naval*, I, p. 551.

[27]  *Archivo del Museo Naval (Madrid)*, 0452/Ms. 1238/006: "Titulo de lugarteniente general de las galeras a Luis de Requesens. 1568 Marzo 22, Madrid", "The Deputy-general of the Sea, D. Luis de Requesens", March 22, 1568, *CODOIN*, III, p. 309-311 and Muñido, *La Organizacion Naval*, I, p. 551.

control (*administracion*) or they could be selected among the private contractors by the method of contract (*asiento*).[28] The most famous one of these private contractors was of course Andrea Doria. The captain-generals of the regional fleets had authority in their respective area of operations and they were responsible of the battle-readiness of their galleys. The captain-generals of Naples and Sicily followed the orders of their own governor-generals for the protection of Italian coastline and communication routes. When a naval campaign was decided all regional fleets and captain-generals came together and formed the Spanish galley fleet under the command of the Captain-general of the Sea.[29]

In order to understand how the Spanish galley fleet operated in the context of the Ottoman-Spanish rivalry in the Mediterranean we should have a closer look to D. García de Toledo who played an important role in the rise of the Spanish sea power as the Captain-general of the Sea between 1564 and 1568. In 1560, Andrea Doria who commanded the Spanish fleet for long years died and nobody was appointed to the high command officially. In this period, Felipe II declared his new naval strategy and ordered the construction of new galleys in order to became a significant sea-power. The only remaining problem for the Spanish galley fleet was the lack of talented commander and that problem was solved when D. García de Toledo was appointed as the Captain-general of the Sea in 1564.

### D. García de Toledo, 1564-1568

When D. García de Toledo became the Captain-general of the Sea in February 1564, he was a fifty years old man who was suffering from gout and rheumatism. On the other hand, his experience in the naval affairs was undisputable.[30] D. García de Toledo, also marquis de Villafranca was the son of D. Pedro de Toledo, viceroy of Naples. Toledo began his naval career in the galleys under the command of Andrea Doria in 1539 and appointed to the command of the fleet of Naples in the age of 21. Toledo was retired due to his health problems and became viceroy and the captain-general of Catalonia. During his assignment in Barcelona he had the opportunity to supervise the construction and armament of new galleys in the shipyard of Barcelona, and also to oversee all other naval preparations. This assignment helped him to gain invaluable experience in the organization of shipbuilding and naval logistics.[31]

Felipe II declared the appointment of D. García de Toledo in February 10, 1564 and informed his viceroys and commanders on the authority of the new

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[28] *Archivo General de Simancas*, Estado/Armada y Galeras, Legajo 445: "Relación sobre administracion de galeras."

[29] Esteban Mira Caballos, *Las Armadas Imperiales: La Guerra en el Mar en Tiempos de Carlos V y Felipe II*, Madrid, 2005 and Martínez, *Las Armadas de Felipe II*, p. 159.

[30] Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, vol. II, trans. Sian Reynolds. Fontana/Collins, 1976, p. 1012 and Martínez, *Las Armadas de Felipe II*, p. 202.

[31] Duro, *Armada Española*, II, p. 61-63 and Braudel, *The Mediterranean World*, II, p. 1012-1013.

captain-general of the sea.[32] The King gave very detailed instructions to D. García de Toledo about the methods to organize the Spanish naval organization according to the Mediterranean strategy of the Spanish Monarchy in October 30, 1564. For example, after the loss of Tripoli and Bugia, the protection of La Goleta had the outmost importance according to Felipe and that was why he ordered to take every precaution to hold the *presido* of La Goleta.[33] D. García de Toledo faced a quite pessimistic picture when he assumed the command of the Spanish galley fleet in 1564. The battle-readiness of the Spanish galley fleet was quite insufficient because of the scarcity of munitions and other war materials and the lack of discipline among naval personnel. The Ottoman sea-power was commanded by Kapudan Piyale Pasha in Istanbul, famous corsair Turgut (Dragut) Pasha in Tripoli and Hasan Pasha in Algeria. According to Toledo all these forces threatened the coasts, ports and seas of Christendom and that was why the Spanish naval forces should have been ready to face these threats. In 1564, Toledo assessed the risks and concluded that La Goleta in Tunisia, Malta or Oran were the mostly likely targets of the Ottoman fleet in the coming spring.[34]

The first assignment of D. García de Toledo was to capture Peñón de Vélez, an important corsair base in the coast of Morocco. 90-100 galleys and 16.000 soldiers were prepared for the campaign and the whole operation was executed with great care and caution by Toledo himself.[35] According to Toledo in order to increase efficiency in the naval matters there should be a connection between the Spanish galley fleet and the economic sources that feed these forces. Toledo's suggestion was the integration of the offices of the Captain-general of the Sea and the viceroyalty of Sicily. Toledo argued that this novelty in the naval organization would bring great speed and efficiency in all matters related to the Mediterranean fleet. Toledo aimed to make Sicily a naval construction and logistic center with foundries, armories and biscuit ovens in the war against the Ottoman sea-power. Felipe II approved this request and the viceroyalty of Sicily was given

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[32] *Archivo General de Simancas*, Varios/Galeras, Legajo 1, 33-35.

[33] *Archivo del Museo Naval (Madrid)*, 1281/009 a 013/fond. Jose Felix de Vicente Rodriguez/Doc. 4-5: "Instrucción original que el S.or. Rey D. Felipe II dio al S.or. D. García de Toledo, Capitan General de la Mar – 30 de Octubre 1564."

[34] *Archivo del Museo Naval (Madrid)*, Colección Navarrete, vol. XII, Fol, 295, Dto. 79: "Parecer que dio D. García de Toledo de lo que se devia proveer contra la armada del Turco el qual papel se presento en el Consejo de Galeras en Madrid – Octubre 1564", "From García de Toledo to Francisco de Eraso", August 17 1564. *CODOIN*, XXVII, p. 451-452 and "From García de Toledo to Francisco de Eraso", August 22, 1564. *CODOIN*, XXVII, p. 455-456. The assestments of D. García de Toledo did not change in 1568, the Ottoman naval forces were still threatening same targets in the Mediterranean. See *Archivo del Museo Naval (Madrid)*, 1280/014**:** "Discurso de García de Toledo al Consejo de Galeras, sobre lo que le parece que podría hacer la armada del turco al verano que viene y lo que al presente le ocurre decir sobre ello y lo que ha de hacer la de S.M. Minuta de época – 1568 Noviembre 6, Madrid.".

[35] Braudel, *The Mediterranean World*, II, p. 999-1001.

to Toledo in October 7 1564 after his victory in Peñón de Vélez.[36] On the other hand, we should understand that this was an exceptional practice in the person of D. García de Toledo and it did not become institutional in the Spanish naval organization. According to John F. Guilmartin, the practice of integration of naval high command and economic sources and naval infrastructure was surprisingly similar to the office of the Ottoman Kapudan Pasha. As it is known the Ottoman Kapudan Pasha was high commander of the Ottoman fleet and also governor-general of the province of *Cezayir-i Bahr-i Sefid* to support the Ottoman navy in terms of manpower, material and economic sources.[37]

The second successful operation of the Spanish galley fleet under the command of D. García de Toledo was the evasion from the Ottoman naval forces and the transport of relief forces to Malta during the Ottoman siege in 1565. When the Ottoman forces landed on the island of Malta, the Spanish forces had two options: fighting the Ottoman fleet with the existing galleys in a naval battle or sending relief forces to the island and forcing the Ottomans retreat. Felipe II ordered D. García de Toledo not to risk the Spanish galley fleet under no circumstance since the protection of the fleet was the primary objective. Malta, if lost, could be recovered later, but if the Spanish fleet was lost, not only Spain, all Christendom would be in danger.[38] As a result, the Spanish commanders agreed to send a relief force to Malta. In September 7, 1565, this force composed of 9600 soldiers was landed to the island of Malta in an operation commanded by Toledo. According to him, although the number of the galleys participating in the operation was more than 50, the whole operation was executed so silently and carefully and not even an oar was lost during the landing (*sin perder un remo*).[39]

In conclusion, in the period of 1560-1564, the Spanish galley fleet recovered its losses in the naval defeat of Djerba and the shipwreck in "*La Herradura*" in terms of the number of the galleys and manpower. However, the actual recovery of the Spanish sea-power became possible only after D. García de Toledo was appointed as the Captain-general of the Sea. Toledo, during his command, managed to make the Spanish galley fleet an efficient and powerful weapon in the Mediterranean. As soon as he assumed the command, Toledo reorganized the Spanish naval organization and we can argue that the reforms of Toledo made the Spanish victory of Lepanto possible in 1571. Although there was no major

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[36] *Archivo del Museo Naval (Madrid)*, Colección Navarrete, vol. XII, Fol, 289. Dto. 78: "Discurso que hizo D. García de Toledo para representar a S.M. sobre las ventajas que resultarían a su Real Servicio de juntarse el cargo del Reyno de Sicilia con el de la Mar, 1564" and Duro, *Armada Española*, II, p. 63.

[37] John F. Guilmartin, *Gunpowder and Galleys: Changing Technology and Mediterranean Warfare at Sea in the 16th Century*, Conway Maritime Press, 2003, p. 124 and Braudel, *The Mediterranean World*, II, p. 1013 and İdris Bostan, "Kapudan Paşa", *DİA*, vol. 24, 2001, p. 354-355.

[38] Duro, *Armada Española*, II, p. 80-81.

[39] "From García de Toledo to Francisco de Eraso", September 7, 1565. *CODOIN*, XXIX, p. 482-484.

confrontation with the Ottoman fleet, in the successful operations of the Spanish galley fleet between 1564-1568, the commanders and naval personnel who would participate the naval battle of Lepanto worked together and gained experience.

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