

Worksheet S6.2.3

Let us look at the main events and protagonists of the Great Siege.

WHAT HAPPENED DURING THE SIEGE? MAIN EVENTS

(material collected by George Calleja)

1. The Turkish fleet arrived on 18th May 1565 and was left at Marsaxlokk's harbour.
2. The Turks began their attack on Saint Elmo to be able to bring their fleet in Marsamxett's harbour.
3. The Turks won Saint Elmo on 23rd June.
4. Then they attacked Vittoriosa, Senglea and the Forts of Saint Angelo and Saint Michael but they could not win them no matter how hard they tried.
5. On 7th September, after the news that Malta had received help (from outside), the Turks got discouraged, went to their galleys and returned to their countries.

WHO WERE THE PROTAGONISTS?

1. Jean de Valette was the Grand Master of the Knights and leader of the Maltese. With his strong will he encouraged both the Knights and the Maltese to not give up.
2. The Maltese contributed with great bravery during the Siege; Toni Bajada risked his life countless times to deliver messages between Saint Angelo and Saint Elmo by swimming.
3. Don Garcia de Toledo was the Viceroy of Sicily who brought help for Malta on 7th September. His help ended the Great Siege.
4. King Suleiman was the Turkish King who sent his army to attack Malta because he wanted to destroy the Knights.
5. Mustafâ Piali was the captain of the Turkish fleet.
6. Mustafâ Paxà was the general of the Turkish soldiers.



7. Dragut was the Turkish pirate who came to Malta after the start of the Siege to take total control in his hands. With his help, the Turks were able to win Saint Elmo although he died in the same attack.

DID YOU KNOW . . .

- Before the Siege, the water wells in Marsa were poisoned with medicinal herbs. Consequently, the Turks could not take water for their soldiers and greatly suffered the summer heat.
- The Grand Master also released a lot of prisoners in order to assist the Knights during the Siege.
- Fort Saint Elmo provided the first signal of the arrival of the Turkish fleet. Then it was Mdina and the Citadel that provided these signals. On the day the Turkish fleet was seen, the Sacrament was exposed in all the churches of the island and they said special prayers for God’s help.
- The Turks put their camps in Marsa.
- During the attack on Saint Elmo around one thousand five hundred Christians and eight thousand Turks died. With all the deaths they suffered, the Turks’ morale decreased.
- The cavalry held in Mdina, confused the Turks several times since it was attacking their camps in Marsa.
- After the Siege, Birgu became known as Vittoriosa, the winning city, while Senglea became known as Invicta, this means a city that was not won.

A: Write the numbers 1 to 8 to show the order in which these events occurred.

	When news arrived that Malta had just received a lot of assistance from Don Garcia de Toledo, the Turks went back to their country.
	Despite the harsh attacks of the Turks, they could not win Cospicua and Senglea.
	The first attack on Fort Saint Elmo.
	In 1565 the Turks attacked Malta.
	After some time the pirate Dragut arrived in Malta, he helped a lot in this attack.
	This victory meant a lot for Malta since through this it was seen as the shield of Christianity.
	The Turkish fleet arrived in May and many ships anchored in Marsaxlokk’s harbour.
	The Turks managed to win Saint Elmo on 23 rd June, however Dragut died.

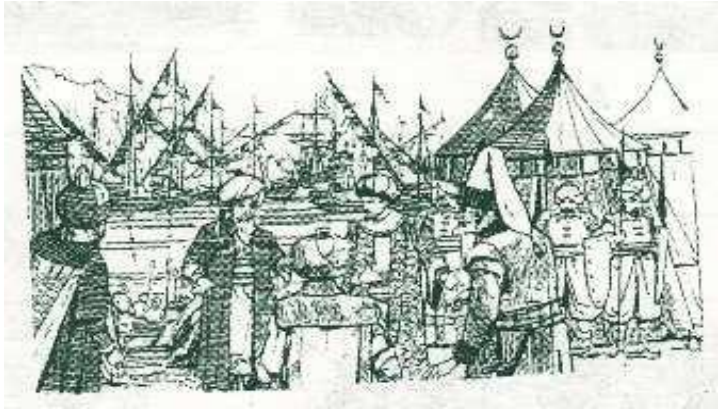
B: Write the names of these protagonists in the Great Siege in the correct column depending on whether they were allies or enemies of the Maltese.

Suleiman, Piali, De Valette, Dragut, Mustafà, Toni Bajada, Don Garcia

Allies of the Maltese	Enemies of the Maltese

C: Answer with the help of the pictures.

1. Who do you think are the persons in the picture? What do you think they are doing?



2. Where did the Turks take shelter when they were not fighting?

3. Why do you think the Turks attached the symbol of the half-moon to their tents?

4. Who do you think the people in the picture are? What are they doing?



5. Why did the Turks attack Saint Elmo first?

6. The picture shows the fall of Saint Elmo into the hands of the Turks. Describe briefly your impression of this scene.

7. Imagine you were a Maltese living in Vittoriosa during the Siege. Write a few sentences to show how you felt after the fall of Saint Elmo into the hands of Turks.
