



The Royal House of Aragon, Majorca and Sicily

Militare Ordine del Collare

Introduction
History-1213
Archive
Legal
Genealogy
MOC
FAQ
Bibliography
Arms
Articles
Video
Sitemap

The Order of the Collar and the other institutions belonging to the Royal House of Aragon, Majorca and Sicily

The Royal House of Aragon, Majorca and Sicily has a number of orders in its patrimony. The most important of these is the Military Order of the Collar of Saint Agatha of Paternò. The other orders are largely honorific. There is also a college of arms and the Royal Majorcan Academy.

Militare Ordine del Collare di Sant'Agata dei Paternò

The Military Order of the Collar (MOC) was founded by King Alfonso III of Aragon on the 23rd January 1289 as a knightly institution with the purpose of defending Minorca. The member knights were obliged to live in the Fortress of Saint Agatha, situated in the region of Saint Agatha, and so became known as "the knights from Saint Agatha". They were each allocated a plot of land sufficient to maintain them in arms with a horse ("cavalleria"). The cavallerias were still active in the year 1600 and some are claimed to have survived into the 19th century. When don Ignazio, Prince of Biscari, travelled to the Balearics in the mid 18th century the remaining descendants told him of this ancient chivalric institution known as "the knights from Saint Agatha". His notes were found by the seventh Duke of Caracci who published them in his book in 1849. Much of the historic research has been made possible by the findings of Professor Elena Lourie in her article "La colonización cristiana de Menorca durante el Reinado de Alfonso III 'El Liberal' , rey de Aragón" in "Crusade and Colonisation" (ISBN 0-86078-266-2).

The Balearics (Majorca, Minorca and Ibiza) was an independent kingdom 1276 - 1349 and, according to international law, the consequent dynastic rights, including those related to chivalric orders and knightly associations, continue through the hereditary office of the Head of the House even if no conferments in this regard are made for a period of time. It seems that over the centuries only sporadic conferments were made, until in the 18th century the association appears as the MOC and is more and more a dynastic Order, receiving formal Statutes in the middle of the 19th century, thereafter a hierarchical organisation with formal recognition from the reigning monarchs in the kingdom of the Two Sicilies.

The Military Order of the Collar is today a dynastic Order, that is to say that its office of Grand Master attaches to the sovereign prince who is the Head of the Royal House and is inherited by his successors. In addition to any charitable or spiritual aims, members of such Orders are bound by an oath of loyalty to the Grand Master of the Order.

The main historical source for the history of the Order is the book "L'Ordine del Collare, Patrimonio della Ser.Ma Real Casa Paternò", published in 1851 by the seventh Duke of Caracci. When reorganising



the family archives this distinguished historian had come across a manuscript diary of his ancestor Don Ignazio II Paternò Prince of Biscari, who had visited the Balearic Islands in the mid 18th century. While there he discovered an original document concerning the Order in the library of the Convent at Fornells, as well as a contemporary painting showing the badge and the dress of the knights. Fortunately Don Ignazio recorded these details and two centuries later his notes were discovered by the Duke, who set about the revival of the Order in 1851 after the publication of his book.



Don Ignazio II Paternò

7th Duke of Carcaci

As early as 18th May 1851 the Order's legitimacy was recognised by the Bourbon King of the Two Sicilies, whose officials were required to record its conferrals in the Registry Office of the Kingdom. On 30th March 1853 the Governor of the Province of Catania, in the name of the King, allowed only three exceptions to the Royal prohibition on the wearing of orders other than Royal Sicilian Orders, these being Papal Orders, the Order of Malta and the Military Order of the Collar. In 1859 the Royal Commission on Titles of Nobility examined the claims of the House of Paternò to confer titles and bestow Orders and it advised the King that such acts, titles and Orders were legitimate. In 1860 the reigning Head of State, H.M. King Francesco II, approved this decision by Royal Decree and ordered its execution throughout the Kingdom. The King also recognised Don Mario as hereditary Grand Master of the Order and made various provisions to ensure the succession to the Grand Magistracy. For many years the Order remained almost a Family Order, largely restricted in its membership to relatives and close associates. The documents quoted are available here.

The Order was reconstituted in 1961 and new Statutes have been issued and revised on a number of occasions. Since his accession HRH Don Francesco has laid great stress on the works of charity supported by the members of the Order. Some recent projects can be reviewed at <http://www.mocfoundation.org/projects.html>. The Grand Priory of Terra Nordica supports Stiftelsen MOC Hjälpverksamhet, further information is available at <http://www.stiftelsenmoc.org>. Over the years members of the Order have raised considerable sums for charity and have performed countless charitable acts for the relief of suffering, in keeping with the highest aims of the Order.

The legitimacy of the Order as an official dynastic Order has been established several times by Italian courts of law, most recently 8th January 2003 by the International Court of Arbitration in Ragusa. An article with source documents regarding the status of the Order according to civil and constitutional law may be found here, and an archive with complete historical and legal documentation may be

found [here](#).

Today the Order is organised in four Grand Priorities in Europe, of which the Grand Priory of Terra Nordica encompasses the Nordic countries and the Baltic states. Individual knights and dames live in many more countries, such as USA and Australia. The different jurisdictions arrange various activities for the knights and dames in the countries where they operate.

The ranks of the MOC are:

- knight/dame
- knight/dame with Grand Cross
- knight/dame with Grand Cross with Collar
- knight/dame with Grand Cross with Grand Collar



Other institutions

The Royal Majorcan Academy (RAM) was founded in 1276 by H.M. James I King of Majorca with the approval of H.H. Pope John XXII and reconstituted by H.R.H. Don Francesco Mario in 1967. It is an institution for higher studies which aims to bring together the various disciplines of Aragonese History and the Historical Studies related to it. Some of the annual Bulletins published by RAM are available at <http://realaula.homestead.com/index.html>.



The Royal Aragonese College of Arms is a corporation of Kings of Arms and Chroniclers, Heralds and Pursuivants under the jurisdiction of H. R. H. the Prince of Emmanuel. The Royal College registers and records the Arms and Genealogies of Noble, Titled and Armigerous Families conceded, recognized and confirmed by the Chief of Name and Arms of the Royal House of Aragon, and formulates on the request of H. R. H. Regulations, Ceremonials, Precedents and Forms of Protocol for the use of the Court and the Aragonese Institutions. The College maintains its own web-site at <http://royalaragonesa.homestead.com/>.



[INTRODUCTION](#) [HISTORY](#) [ARCHIVE](#) [LEGAL](#) [ORDER OF THE COLLAR](#) [FAQ](#) [SITEMAP](#)

