

Analyze a book

Government, Military



Name: Lecturer: Course: Date: Analyze a book Lepanto, an island off the Greek coast, provided battleground for one of the most historic wars of the sixteenth century on October 7, 1571. It was fought by the naval forces of the Ottoman Empire against that of the holy league. Historically it has been christened as a war between Christians and Muslims. The holy league was an alliance of the Papal States, Genoa, Savoy, Malta and Venice, Spain, which was under the leadership of Don John of Austria.

Details of the battle reveal that the main reason for the defeat of the ottomans was the killing and beheading of their leader Ali Pasha. The sight of the fallen leader's head displayed on the Turkish flagship led to decrease in morale and withdrawal of the ottoman troops. There are various cited reasons for this battle, one of them being a retaliation of the Turkish massacre of Christians and the invasion of European coastlines by ottoman raiders.

The main aim was to rid the Mediterranean coast of the Turkish menace. The unity of the holy league was well timed, as they did not wish to miss the opportunity of finally defeating the Turks and instead resorting to each Christian state having to fight for itself. The event happened at a time when the ottomans were at the verge of consolidating their power both at home and abroad.

Therefore, the battle was an attempt by the ottomans to acquire more territory, the Venetian island of Cyprus to be specific. Tact refers to finesse or the art of dealing with others appropriately. The tactical conduct of the battle indicates a high level of organization on both fronts. Both forces made

accurate plans such as getting to know the topography of the area the battle was to take place. The holy league almost suffered a crack in its alliance due to the different objectives of the individual states. The holy league had a shortage of combat power as compare their counterparts. One impressive tactful decision was that of Don John to spread out his contingents. Great attention was paid to how the galleys to be used were made.

All the above factors were put into consideration when preparing for the battle. I think Hanson's contention that the capitalist system of Venice provided substantial advantage to the holy league is true. The fact that the holy league almost collapsed because of varying objectives asserts this fact. Venice had a thriving economy, which depended mainly on commercial activities. Venice wanted to employ its tact based on economic objectives. Therefore, they strived to build galleys fitted with innovations little known to the ottomans in a bid to outsmart them. As earlier mentioned, considerable attention was paid to the design of the galleys to be used for the battle.

The Venetian and Spanish sides were better armed than the Ottomans who looked up to the Venetians when it came to designing galleys. European soldiers invested in breastplates that shielded them against the ottoman's arrows. They also had firearms, which prove more superior to the Turkish deadly bows, and arrows, which required skillfulness and long months of training. More time was devoted to training the European soldiers in modern military technology, a factor that propelled them to having enormous advantage over the ottoman Turks. This brings out the theme of modernity where we read of modern technology being infused into warfare to the

advantage of the Christian force. It reflects the holy league's desire to emerge victorious in the battle.

Unfortunately, the Ottomans overlooked the essential details that formed the strengths in tactical conduct of the holy league (Hanson, 196). They assumed that by having bigger ships, which could manoeuvre effortlessly on the Mediterranean waters, and a larger fleet would automatically secure them a win over the Christian force. It is hence evident that economic empowerment of Venetian forces helped put the holy league an inch ahead of their agitators. This is because the modern military technology could only be conceived in the heart of capitalist economies. Hanson's argument provides a credible explanation of the victory of the holy league. He uses the theme of ideas of the west to explain the results of the battle at Lepanto.

He attributes growing westernization to the holy league having an edge over the Muslim ottomans. The theme suggests a dominance or utmost superiority in western military practice. It is worth noting that their military tactics were emulated by other countries, such as Japan. Although some critics have risen against the idea of western hegemony and downplayed it to a matter of easy transference of technological skills. To them, military tactics could easily be transferred to another person through training. Capitalism had emerged by the time of the battle at Lepanto. From then to date, it has been a contributing factor to how different countries relate with one another.

These relations vary from cordial ones to those dominated by aggression such as wars. The modern times have experienced its fair share of wars,

which have proven the truth of this fact. Capitalist countries often control the modern battlegrounds as a continuation of what they started years ago, a state of military superiority. In this book, the author has clearly illustrated this fact as shown in the battle of Lepanto.