



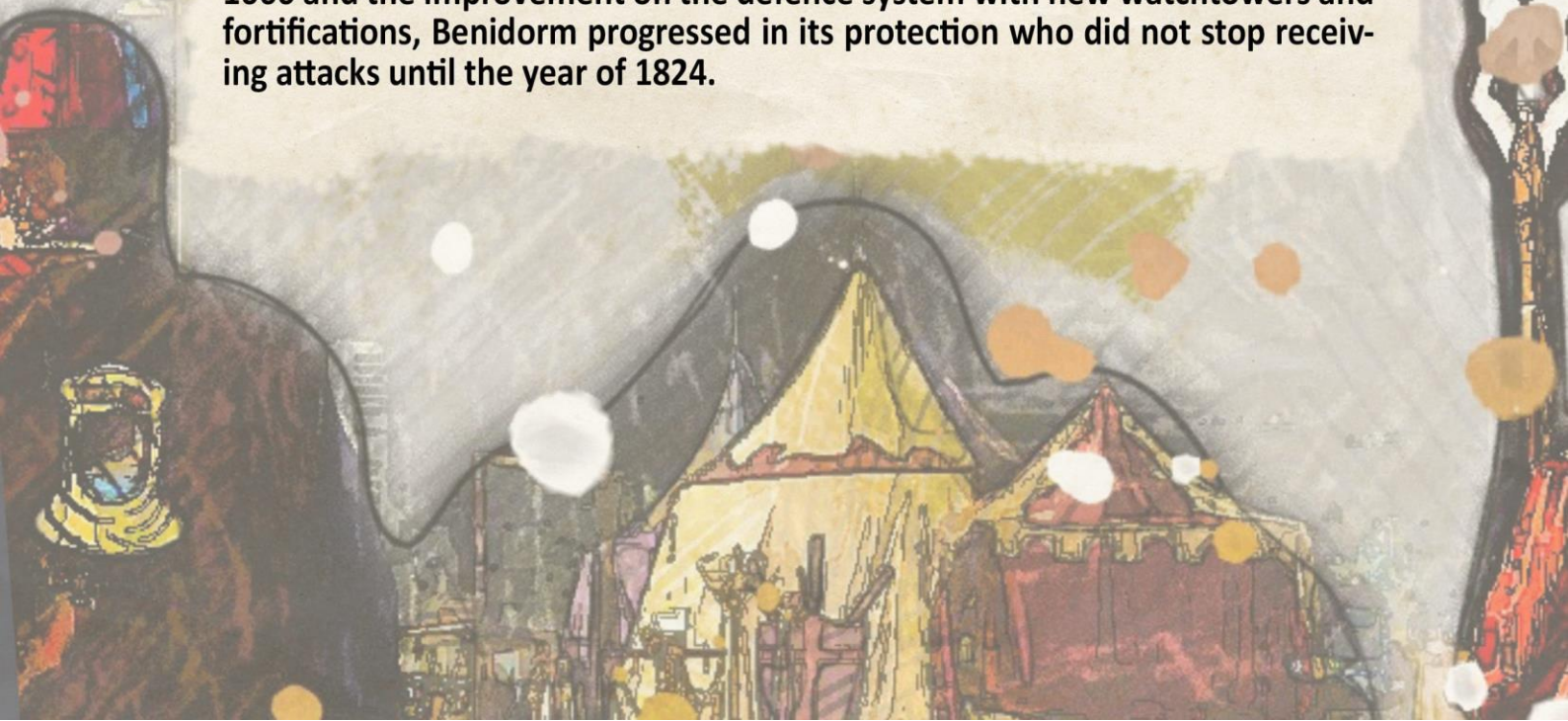
# Pirate Attack on Benidorm (1543)

From the XIVth century, the coastline of Alicante, specially at the cliffs and coves along La Marina region, has been a main target for the Turkish pirates and North African plunder. Dénia, Xàbia, Moraira, Calp, Altea, Benidorm and La Vila Joiosa, as well as inland villages like Benissa, Polop or Callosa d'en Sarrià, were cruelly attacked. Hundreds of people were kidnapped in order to demand booty in ransom along the XIV, XV and XVI centuries.

In October of the year 1543, a brigantine came from Ibiza island warning about Berber and Ottoman sackings. Rumours alerted the population that Benidorm site could be the next. The Viceroy of Valencia ordered the defence to the Captain of Benidorm fortress. 25 turkish rowing ships, commanded by Salah Raïs and Sané Harabi (Jeireddin Barbarossa's nephew) had been terrifying the Mediterranean coastline from the South of France (Tolón) till the South of Spain (Guardamar) on its way back to Argel.

In October 31st, 21 galleys arrived to Benidorm. Gaspar Sanç, the Captain, was ready to refuse the attack. This time the end was successful but in former attacks (1388, 1400, 1410, 1442, 1447, 1448, 1450 or 1503), Benidorm left uninhabited because of kidnapping. Regarding this drama, Mercedarians and Trinitarians were in charge of the repayment for their deliverance in Oran, Argel or Bugia.

Thanks to the repopulation started up by Beatriu Fajardo de Mendoza in 1666 and the improvement on the defence system with new watchtowers and fortifications, Benidorm progressed in its protection who did not stop receiving attacks until the year of 1824.





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