

The role of castles in the political and military
history of the Crusader States and the Levant
1187 to 1380.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis deals with the various functions of Latin and Armenian fortifications in Cilician Armenia, Greece, Cyprus, Syria and Palestine between 1187 and c.1380. Offensively, such structures were needed as starting points for both land based and naval campaigns into enemy territory, and could thereafter be used to colonize and suppress newly acquired land. Defensively, individual strongpoints could also prevent Greek, Bulgar or Muslim attackers from making any permanent conquests, whilst at the same time protecting local farmers and traders against the ravages of war. In addition, they were frequently relied on to maintain internal security and to deter hostile locals from rebelling against their overlords. The security provided by fortifications meant that they also fulfilled a wide variety of non-military functions as prisons, residences, courthouses and administrative centres. Most importantly, however, they enabled heavily outnumbered Latin newcomers to conquer large parts of the eastern Mediterranean without having to match their opponents man for man, or risking a direct confrontation with numerically superior invasion forces. These factors made castles and urban fortifications vital to the entire crusading movement, and they will therefore be discussed in great detail, with reference to a variety of contemporary chronicles and documents. In addition, extensive use will be made of archaeological and architectural evidence, for the design of an individual fortress was clearly determined by the numerous military, economic and political functions which it was expected to fulfil.

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ABBREVIATIONS

- ABSA.....Annual of the British School at Athens.
- BZ.....Byzantinische Zeitschrift.
- CSHB.....Corpus scriptorum historiae Byzantinae, ed. B.G. Niebuhr, I. Bekker et al, (50 vols., Bonn 1828-97).
- EHR.....English Historical Review.
- HC.....A History of the Crusades, general ed. K.M. Setton, (6 vols., Madison 1955-89).
- MGH SS.....Monumenta Germaniae historica: scriptores, ed. G.H. Pertz et al, (34 vols., Hanover 1826-1980).
- PEQ.....Palestine Exploration Quarterly.
- PG.....Patrologiae cursus completus: series graeco-latina, ed. J.P. Migne, (161 vols. in 166 parts, Paris 1857-66).
- PL.....Patrologiae cursus completus: series latina, ed. J.P. Migne, (221 vols., Paris 1844-64).
- QDAP.....Quarterly of the Department of Antiquities in Palestine.
- RHC.....Recueil des historiens des croisades, ed. Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, (Paris 1841-1906).
- RHCArm.....RHC Documents arméniens, (2 vols., Paris 1869-1906).
- RHCLois.....RHC Lois. Les Assises de Jérusalem (2 vols., Paris 1841-43).
- RHCOc.....RHC Historiens occidentaux, (5 vols., Paris 1844-95).
- RHCOri.....RHC Historiens orientaux, (5 vols., Paris 1872-1906).

- RHGF.....Recueil des historiens des Gaules et de la France, ed. M. Bouquet et al, (24 vols., Paris 1737-1904)
- RIS.....Rerum Italicarum scriptores, ed. L.A. Muratori, (25 vols., Milan 1723-51).
- RIS NS.....RIS Nova series, ed. G. Carducci et al, (Bologna, 1900-).
- ROL.....Revue de l'Orient latin.
- RRH.....Regesta regni Hierosolymitana, 1097-1291, ed. R. Röhricht, (Innsbruck 1893).

PREFACE

THE AIMS OF THIS THESIS

Since the middle of the last century, an ever increasing number of books and journals have been produced on the fortifications constructed by the Armenians and the west European settlers of the eastern Mediterranean. These works have greatly enhanced our knowledge of the subject, but many of them are nevertheless constrained by certain limitations which I hope to address in this thesis.

Firstly, there has been a propensity in the past for scholars to concentrate on the archaeological and architectural remains of fortifications rather than their various functions. As a result, highly detailed studies already exist for many of the areas covered in this thesis, including Cyprus ¹, Cilician Armenia ², Frankish Greece ³ and the Holy Land ⁴. These contain the results of surveys and archaeological digs, but often give the history of individual sites in isolation, and do not always attempt to interpret the role of fortifications over a wider area.

¹ C. Enlart, L'art gothique et de la Renaissance en Chypre, (2 vols., Paris 1899).

² R.W. Edwards, 'The Fortifications of Armenian Cilicia', Dumbarton Oaks Studies, XXII (Washington DC, 1987); H. Hellenkemper, Burgen der Kreuzritterzeit in der Grafschaft Edessa und im Königreich Kleinarmenien, (Bonn, 1976).

³ A. Bon, La Morée franque: recherches historiques, topographiques et archéologiques sur la principauté d'Achaïe (1205-1430), (2 vols., (one being a volume of plans and plates) Paris 1969).

⁴ P. Deschamps, Les Châteaux des croisés en Terre-Sainte, I: Le Crac des Chevaliers (Paris 1934); II: La Défense du royaume de Jérusalem (Paris 1939); III: La Défense du comté de Tripoli et de la Principauté d'Antioche (Paris 1973).

Secondly, a disproportionate amount of research has been carried out on fortifications in the Holy Land rather than other areas of the eastern Mediterranean. To some extent, historians have also placed greater emphasis on the twelfth century, and have often looked at the role of crusader castles during the initial Latin conquest, or the reign of Saladin, rather than the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

Finally, both archaeologists and historians have sometimes tended to make sweeping generalizations when discussing crusader fortifications. Hence many older works on the subject, such as T.E. Lawrence's Crusader Castles (ed. D. Pringle, (Oxford 1988)), assume that military architecture developed in clearly defined stages, until the rudimentary towers built by the Franks early in the twelfth century had been completely replaced by advanced concentric fortresses such as Crac des Chevaliers. It has also been argued that strongholds can be placed in categories depending on whether they were constructed by the Hospitallers, Templars or Teutonic Knights, or were influenced by Roman and Byzantine precedents. These theories ignore the fact that the Latins and the Armenians built a bewildering array of both complex and simple fortifications throughout the crusader period.

Similarly, the belief that Frankish towers in Greece were primarily used to safeguard strategic lines of communication continued to dominate for many decades, despite the fact that most of these structures are situated well away from any roads or hill tops. In the Holy Land Rey⁵ and others also argued that fortifications were

⁵ E.G. Rey, Etude sur les monuments de l'architecture militaire des croisés en Syrie et dans l'île de Chypre, (Paris 1871).

primarily designed to prevent hostile forces from crossing Frankish frontiers, even if they were situated on the coastal plain or in other strategically vulnerable areas. Likewise, numerous defences in the Peloponnese have commonly been attributed to the Latins, although they clearly contain extensive remains from the pre-Frankish Byzantine period.

Scholars have either reached these erroneous or oversimplified conclusions because they have failed to study the archaeological and the historical evidence together, or because they have used the information available to them selectively, in order to back up their own theories. Hence Rey's argument regarding the frontier castles of the Holy Land tends to ignore twelfth century accounts of Saladin's campaigns in the area, which clearly indicate that these structures had no hope of halting Muslim invasion forces. In Frankish Greece, on the other hand, misinterpretations have been made because too much attention has been paid to the written sources rather than the archaeological evidence, even at famous medieval sites such as Mistra.

In order to get a more accurate impression of what functions Latin and Armenian fortifications fulfilled, it is therefore important to study a wide variety of sources, ranging from charters and chronicles to archaeological reports and the accounts of medieval travellers. These sources should not be viewed separately, nor should strongpoints be looked at in isolation without reference to surrounding geographical, political, military and economic factors. The first historian to adopt this strategy was Smail, who originally challenged Rey's findings on the Holy Land in the 1950s, and produced numerous examples from the written evidence to illustrate the various military and non-military uses of local

castles.⁶ Smail's research, however, only dealt with the period before 1192, and did not continue into the thirteenth century.

The purpose of this thesis, therefore, is to carry out a similar investigation of castles, urban fortifications and other minor defences, but to concentrate on the period after the battle of Hattin in 1187. This investigation will also be extended beyond the Holy Land to include less famous strongpoints in the kingdom of Cyprus, Frankish Greece and Cilician Armenia, until around 1380. In the Holy Land, this has to some extent already been done by Marshall and Kennedy, both of whom have written about thirteenth century castles and strongpoints in recent years.⁷ In addition, a growing number of scholars working in this area, such as the archaeologist Denys Pringle, have also adopted Smail's research methods. Hence Pringle's book The Red Tower (London 1986) is partly an archaeological report, and partly a general survey of crusader and Mamluk fortifications in southern Galilee, which does not merely describe these structures, but analyses how the Franks used them to cultivate and defend the surrounding area. As a result, my chapter on the kingdom of Jerusalem, the county of Tripoli and the principality of Antioch is a continuation of work carried out by Marshall, Pringle, Kennedy and others.

However, the role of fortifications in Cilician Armenia, Frankish Greece and Cyprus has not previously been studied in any great depth. As has been mentioned, general surveys

⁶ R.C. Smail, Crusading Warfare (1097-1193), (Cambridge 1956); 'Crusaders' Castles of the Twelfth Century', Cambridge Historical Journal, X (1951), 133-149.

⁷ C. Marshall, Warfare in the Latin East, 1192-1291, (Cambridge 1992); H. Kennedy, Crusader Castles, (Cambridge 1994).

have been produced detailing many of the strongpoints in these areas, but these are usually purely descriptive rather than analytical. Hence it is quickly apparent, for example, that in terms of their appearance and defensive strength, castles in Frankish Greece were not as well built as their neighbours in the Holy Land. It is only by studying contemporary sources such as the Chronicle of Morea,⁸ however, that we find the real reasons for this, and what it reveals about the political, economic and military differences between the two regions. Once again, therefore, the functions of individual strongholds, whose strategic importance would otherwise remain obscure, can only be assessed by making a much wider comparative study of fortifications using a variety of sources.

I would not have been able to undertake this thesis, let alone finish it, without the considerable help and support of several people. Firstly, I would like to thank my supervisor, Dr. Graham Loud, whose guidance and expert advice have proved invaluable throughout the last four years. I would also like to express my gratitude to Dr. Peter Lock for his suggestions regarding Frankish Greece. In September 1994 I had the opportunity to visit numerous crusader sites in Israel, and this would not have been possible without the generosity of the Seven Pillars of Wisdom Trust, kindly suggested by Professor Bernard Hamilton, and the travel scholarship provided by the University of Leeds. I am also very grateful to Jim, whose generosity enabled me to keep studying through my third year, and Jason, for all his help with the printing and computing. Finally, I would like to thank Carol for all her love and encouragement, and my parents, who have helped and supported me so much both before and during my time at Leeds.

⁸ The Chronicle of Morea exists in several versions. See bibliography.

CHAPTER ONE

HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION: WARFARE AND FORTIFICATIONS IN
THE LATIN EAST, 1187-c.1380.

More than any other event, the battle of Hattin, fought between Christians and Muslims in July 1187, determined the history of the crusader states during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. This catastrophic defeat precipitated a massive revival in crusading activity, and inspired a whole series of European expeditions intent on recapturing Jerusalem. It also contributed indirectly to the Latin conquest of other territories, most notably Cyprus and the Byzantine empire, as the whole idea of crusading evolved and became tarnished by the purely economic and political concerns of nations such as Genoa and Venice.

In the short term, Saladin's triumph also had a disastrous effect on the Holy Land itself. By the end of 1190, Christian territories here had been reduced to the city of Tyre in the south, and a few isolated outposts, particularly Antioch, Tripoli, Tortosa, Chastel Blanc, Crac des Chevaliers and Chastel Blanc, in the north. The rest of the kingdom of Jerusalem had been lost in its entirety,¹ while most smaller or undermanned castles and

¹ For more details on Saladin's campaign in Palestine, see L'Estoire de Eracles empereur et la conquete de la Terre d'Outremer, RHC Oc. I-II (hereafter Eracles), II, 62-110, 187-88; Les Gestes des Chiprois, RHC Arm. II, 659-661; Itinerarium Peregrinorum et Gesta Regis Ricardi, ed. W. Stubbs, 2 vols., Rolls Series (1864) (hereafter Itinerarium), I, 16-30; Matthew Paris, Chronica Maiora, ed. H.R. Luard, 7 vols., Rolls Series, (1872-83), II, 328-30; Abu Shama, Le Livre des Deux Jardins, RHC Or. IV-V, IV, 260-351, 381-406; Ibn al-Athir, Kamel-Altevarykh, RHC Or. I-II, I, 683-716, 734-44; Baha'-al-Din, Anecdotes et beaux traits de la vie du sultan Youssef, RHC Or. III, 92-106, 118-20, 129-32.

settlements in Syria had also been overrun.² Although this situation was rectified somewhat by the Third Crusade, whose participants captured Acre in July 1191, and thereby enabled Richard I to reconquer coastal areas as far south as Jaffa, the Franks still found themselves in a precarious position by the time Richard left the Holy Land in September 1192.³

The following year, however, the death of Saladin sparked off a lengthy succession dispute between his sons and his brother al-Adil, and meant that the Ayubid rulers of Egypt, Damascus and Aleppo spent much of the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries fighting each other rather than their Frankish enemies.⁴ This in turn enabled the Christians to regain several twelfth century possessions by force or treaty, including Jaffa, Lydda, Ramla and Nazareth, which the Muslims gave up peacefully in 1204.⁵

² For more details on Saladin's campaign in Syria, see Eracles, II, 71-72, 119-20; Abu Shama, Deux Jardins, IV, 349-81; Ibn al-Athir, Kamel Altevarykh, I, 716-34; Baha'-al-Din, Anecdotes, pp.105-18; Deschamps, La Défense du comté de Tripoli, pp.127-33.

³ For the events of the Third Crusade, see Eracles, II, 124-203; Itinerarium, I, 31-138, 205-441; Ambroise, L'Estoire de la Guerre Sainte, ed. G. Paris, (Paris 1897), cols.57-64; Matthew Paris, Chronica Maiora, II, 334-36, 353-92; Abu Shama, Deux Jardins, IV, 406-522, V, 3-81; Ibn al-Athir, Kamel Altevarykh, II, 3-67; Baha'-al-Din, Anecdotes, pp.132-350; Abu'l-Fida, Annales, RHC Or. I, 61-66. By the terms of the treaty which Richard established with Saladin in the summer of 1192, the Franks demolished Ascalon, but kept Jaffa, Arsuf, Caesarea, Haifa, Acre and Tyre. See Itinerarium, I, 428-29; Eracles, II, 198-99; Matthew Paris, Chronica Maiora, II, 391-92; Baha'-al-Din, Anecdotes, pp.342-50; Abu Shama, Deux Jardins, V, 63-80.

⁴ For more details on this dispute, see P. Thorau, The Lion of Egypt: Sultan Baybars I and the Near East in the thirteenth century, trans. P.M. Holt, (London 1992), p.8; P.M. Holt, The Age of the Crusades: The Near East from the eleventh century to 1517, (London 1986), pp.60-62.

⁵ Ibn al-Athir, Kamel Altevarykh, II, 96; Abu'l-Fida, Annales, p.83. In theory the Franks already held Jaffa and half of Ramlah and Lydda, although they may not actually

In 1197 German crusaders also captured Beirut, whilst the Embriaco lords of Gibelet reoccupied their old castle through diplomacy.⁶ At about the same time the Hospitallers consolidated their position in the county of Tripoli by strengthening the castles of Margat and Crac des Chevaliers, and launching punitive raids against the inland Muslim cities of Hama and Homs.⁷

Thus from the mid-1190s onwards, the Franks managed to survive, and gradually even prosper, 'because of the constant discord of the [Muslim] princes of the land, which was highly favourable to the Christians'.⁸ After al-Adil's death in 1218, for example, renewed Muslim fighting between al-Kamil of Egypt and the Ayubids of Syria resulted in further Christian land gains.⁹ In 1229 Frederick II, who claimed the throne of Jerusalem by virtue of his marriage to Isabella of Brienne, negotiated the treaty of Jaffa with al-Kamil, whereby the German emperor received Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Nazareth, the territory of Toron, those parts of the lordship of Sidon previously held by the Muslims, and the site of the Teutonic Knights' new castle at Montfort. In return, al-Kamil could feel secure that Frederick would not attack Egypt, and also created a Christian-held buffer zone

have inhabited them. See Abu'l-Fida, Annales, p.66.

⁶ Beirut: Eracles, II, 227-28; Abu Shama, Deux Jardins, V, 116-17; Ibn al-Athir, Kamel Altevarykh, II, 86-87; Arnold of Lübeck, Chronica Slavorum, MGHSS, XXI, 205-6, and see below, p.112. Gibelet: Eracles, II, 224-26.

⁷ See below, pp.45-46, 116-17, 120-21.

⁸ Oliver of Paderborn, Historia Damiatina, ed. H. Hoogeweg, Bibliothek des Litterarischen Vereins in Stuttgart, CCII, (1894), 245.

⁹ For a brief outline of this conflict, see Holt, The Age of the Crusades, pp.64-65; Thorau, The Lion of Egypt, pp.9-10.

between himself and Syria.¹⁰

This pattern of Muslim in-fighting and Christian expansion repeated itself following the death of al-Kamil in 1238, which precipitated a civil war between al-Salih of Egypt and al-Salih Ismail of Damascus.¹¹ The Franks offered their support for this latter contender in exchange for Toron (Tibnin), Saphet, Cave de Tyron, Beaufort, Châteauneuf (Hunin), Belvoir and Tiberias; an agreement which the Egyptians, fearing a Franco-Syrian invasion, were forced to recognize in 1241.¹² At this time the crusaders were also able to reoccupy Jerusalem, which they had lost briefly during the Ayubid clashes of 1239-40.¹³ These significant gains were achieved by Theobald of Champagne and Richard of Cornwall, who led separate but overlapping crusades to the Holy Land during the early 1240s. These men also managed to rebuild the citadel of Ascalon, which had lain in ruins since 1192, thereby strengthening the kingdom's southern frontier and

¹⁰ Eracles, II, 369-74; Matthew Paris, Chronica Maiora, III, 159-61, 172-77; Abu Shama, Deux Jardins, V, 186; Ibn al-Athir, Kamel Altevarykh, II, 175-76; al-'Ayni, Le Collier de Perles, RHC Or. II, 187-94; Marino Sanudo Torsello, or the Elder, Liber secretorum fidelium crucis, ed. J. Bongars, Gesta Dei per Francos, sive orientalium expeditionum et regni Francorum Hierosolimitani Historia a variis, sed illius aevi scriptoribus litteris commendata, II, (Hannau 1611), 213. For Montfort, see below, pp.58-59.

¹¹ For a brief outline of this dispute, see Thorau, The Lion of Egypt, pp.12, 14-16; Holt, The Age of the Crusades, p.65.

¹² Eracles, II, 416-19; Continuation de Guillaume de Tyr de 1229 à 1261, dite du manuscrit de Rothelin, RHC Oc. II, 554 (hereafter Rothelin); Matthew Paris, Chronica Maiora, IV, 64-65, 140-43; Abu'l-Fida, Annales, pp.120, 122; Abu Shama, Deux Jardins, V, 193 (mentions Beaufort). See also Thorau, The Lion of Egypt, pp.18-19.

¹³ Abu'l-Fida, Annales, pp.117-18; al-'Ayni, Collier de Perles, pp.196-97; Rothelin, pp.529-31.

expanding its borders to their greatest extent since the twelfth century.¹⁴

From the mid-1240s onwards, however, Latin fortunes deteriorated rapidly, as a series of military and political upheavals forced the Franks onto the retreat. The first of these occurred in 1244, when a combined force of Egyptians and Khwarizmians, a violent tribe of nomadic horsemen who had already overrun Jerusalem,¹⁵ routed the Latins and their Damascene allies at the battle of La Forbie. As a result Ascalon, Tiberias and surrounding territories all fell to the Egyptians.¹⁶ From 1260 onwards the Franks were also confronted by Baybars (1260-77), one of the first Mamluk sultans of Egypt after the downfall of

¹⁴ Eracles, II, 413-22; Rothelin, pp.526-56; Gestes, pp.725-26; Annales de Terre Sainte, ed. R. Röhrich and G. Raynaud, Archives de l'Orient Latin, II (1884), 427-61, at 440; Matthew Paris, Chronica Maiora, IV, 25-30, 71, 78-80, 138-45, 166; For more details on these crusades, see P. Jackson, 'The Crusades of 1239-41 and their Aftermath', Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, L (1987), 32-60, and see below, p.53.

¹⁵ Matthew Paris, Chronica Maiora, IV, 299-311, 337-40; Rothelin, pp.561-63; Eracles, II, 427-28; al-'Ayni, Collier de Perles, p.198.

¹⁶ Gestes, p.740; Marino Sanudo, Liber secretorum, pp.217-18; Eracles, II, 429-33, 741; Rothelin, pp.564-65; Matthew Paris, Chronica Maiora, IV, 341-43; Annales de Terre Sainte, pp.441-42; John of Joinville, Histoire de Saint Louis, ed. N. de Wailly, (Paris 1874), pp.288-90; Abu Shama, Deux Jardins, V, 193-94; Abu'l-Fida, Annales, pp.122-25; Ibn al-Furat, Selections from the Tarikh al-Duwad wa'l-Muluk, in Ayyubids, Mameluks and Crusaders, ed. and trans. U. and M.C. Lyons, with notes and an introduction by J.S.C. Riley-Smith, (2 vols., Cambridge 1971), II, 4-8, 10-11, 46. The capture of Tiberias and Ascalon may not have happened immediately after La Forbie, and can only be dated to the period 1244-47 with certainty. However, most sources date these events to 1247.

the Ayubid dynasty.¹⁷ Between 1262 and 1271 Baybars campaigned relentlessly in Syria and Palestine, reducing Christian territories to a narrow coastal strip between Latakia in the north and Pilgrims' Castle in the south.¹⁸ Many of the last remaining outposts in this region were gradually picked off by the Mamluks during the 1280s, until Acre itself was finally lost in 1291.¹⁹

To some extent, Baybars and his successors were only able to make these conquests because of the Mongols. During the first half of the thirteenth century these aggressors had gradually moved west, conquering everything in their sight until in 1260 they invaded Muslim Syria.²⁰ As we shall see, this initially benefitted the Armenians and the Antiochene Franks, but it also meant that when the Mongols were defeated by the Egyptians just a few months later, Ayubid power in Syria had collapsed, enabling Baybars to occupy Damascus and Aleppo with relative ease. As a

¹⁷ For more details on Baybars's early years and rise to power, see Thorau, The Lion of Egypt, pp.27-58, 79-98; R. Irwin, The Middle East in the Middle Ages: The early years of the Mamluk Sultanate, 1250-1382, (London 1986), pp.37-46.

¹⁸ Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 50, 56-59, 66-158, 161-62; al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans Mamlouks de l'Egypte, ed. and trans. M.E. Quatremère, (2 vols. in 4 parts, Paris 1845), I(a), 194-200, 231-40, I(b), 1-89, 127; Thorau, The Lion of Egypt, pp.142-210.

¹⁹ Margat fell in 1285: see below, p.49. Latakia fell in 1287: see Marino Sanudo, Liber secretorum, p.229. Tripoli fell in 1289: see below, p. 64. Acre and other remaining outposts fell in 1291: see Gestes, pp.805-18; Marino Sanudo, Liber secretorum, p.229; Annales de Terre Sainte, pp.460-61; al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, II(a), 120-31; Chronique d'Amadi, Chroniques d'Amadi et de Strambaldi, ed. R. de Mas Latrie, (Paris 1891), pp.219-26; Florio Bustron, Chronique de l'île de Chypre, ed. R. de Mas Latrie, (Paris 1886), pp.119-25.

²⁰ al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, I(a), 76-102; Gestes, pp.750-52; Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 41-42.

result, Egypt and Syria were firmly united under one ruler for the first time since the reign of Saladin,²¹ and subsequent Frankish efforts to join forces with the Mongols failed because successive Mongol invasions were pushed back by the Mamluks. Hence Mamluk sultans rarely had to deal with the kind of internal clashes between Egypt and Syria which had kept their Ayubid predecessors tied up for years at a time.²²

Until the reign of Baybars, however, it is clear that the Franks were able to maintain their position in the Holy Land because their opponents were weak internally. During the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries similar circumstances enabled them to conquer various territories which belonged to, or had recently broken away from, the declining Byzantine empire. Hence when Richard I landed at Limassol in May 1191, Cyprus was ruled by the rebellious Isaac Comnenus, who refused to acknowledge the imperial overlordship of Constantinople, and relied on brutal methods to suppress his own subjects.²³ As a result, 'the

²¹ al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, I(a), 102-13; Gestes, pp.752-55; Rothelin, pp.636-37. For more details on these events, see also P. Jackson, 'The Crisis in the Holy Land in 1260', EHR, XCV (1980), 481-514; Holt, The Age of the Crusades, pp.86-88; Irwin, The Middle East in the Middle Ages, pp.33-34; Thorau, The Lion of Egypt, pp.63-79, and see below, pp.114-15.

²² Hence in 1271 a Christian attack on Qaqun was halted after the Franks' Mongol allies had been forced to retreat by Baybars. See Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 155, and below, p.112. See also Thorau, The Lion of Egypt, pp.223, 235-40; Irwin, The Middle East in the Middle Ages, pp.46, 66-67; Holt, The Age of the Crusades, pp.96-97, 102.

²³ For more details on Isaac Comnenus and the political situation on Cyprus at the time of Richard's invasion, see W.H. Rudt de Collenberg, 'L'empereur Isaac de Chypre et sa fille, 1155-1207', in Familles de l'Orient Latin, XIIe-XIVe siècles, (London 1983), c.1, pp.123-77, particularly at pp.127-46.

natives detested him', and Isaac 'was only tolerated, not beloved' even by his own troops.²⁴ This no doubt explains why Richard, who invaded Cyprus in order to gain booty and rescue some English troops previously captured by Isaac, met with very little determined resistance during his rapid conquest of the island.²⁵

This conquest was carefully described by English chroniclers wishing to enhance Richard's reputation as a warrior, and therefore provides us with much valuable information about the state of Byzantine fortifications in Cyprus at the very beginning of the crusader domination. In particular, it is clear that there already existed castles or towers at Limassol, Nicosia and Famagusta, which were occupied briefly by Isaac Comnenus as he fled further and further away from Richard's invasion forces. All these sites, as well as another stronghold at Paphos, were subsequently overrun by the English, indicating that they were poorly defended, and perhaps even in a state of disrepair.²⁶ However, the castle of Kyrenia, an important

²⁴ Vinsauf, Itinerary of Richard I and others to the Holy Land, cited in Supplementary Excerpts on Cyprus, or further materials for a history of Cyprus, ed. T.A.H. Mogabgab, (Nicosia 1941), pp.11, 14.

²⁵ For a full description of Richard's invasion, see Itinerarium, pp.181-205; Ambroise, L'Estoire de la Guerre Sainte, cols.37-57; Richard of Devizes, Cronicon de Tempore Regis Ricardi Primi, ed. J.T. Appleby, (London 1963), pp.35-38; Gesta Regis Henrici Secundi Abbatis, ed. W. Stubbs, 2 vols., Rolls Series, (1869), II, 162; Roger of Howden, Chronica, ed. W. Stubbs, 4 vols., Rolls Series, (1868-71), III, 105-12; Vinsauf, Itinerary of Richard I, pp.3-15; Chronique d'Amadi, pp.80-82; Florio Bustron, Chronique, pp.46-49; Leontios Makharias, Recital Concerning the Sweet Land of Cyprus entitled 'Chronicle', ed. R.M. Dawkins, (2 vols., Oxford 1932), I, c.10-12, p.11.

²⁶ Limassol: see below, p.175. Nicosia: see below, p.189. Famagusta: see below, p.177 Paphos: see below, p.183.

strongpoint along the north coast of Cyprus, was described as 'very strong' even at this date, while the mountain fortresses of St.Hilarion, Buffavento and Kantara 'could never have been stormed by the machines of any enemy, unless by treachery or famine'. It is likely, therefore, that these four castles were not captured because their fortifications were dilapidated or inadequate, but because their Greek defenders felt very little real loyalty toward Isaac Comnenus.²⁷

After Richard I had conquered Cyprus, he sold it to the Templars, whose brief occupation came to an end after a major Greek rebellion in Nicosia.²⁸ As a result, the island was resold to Guy of Lusignan (ruled 1192-94), whose successors ruled Cyprus firmly and peacefully until the death of Hugh I in 1218.²⁹ However, Hugh's son Henry was only eight months old at this point, and so a power struggle concerning who should act as regent subsequently broke out between the powerful Ibelin family, and those nobles who supported Frederick II, the suzerain of Cyprus.³⁰ When Frederick himself arrived at Limassol in

²⁷ Kyrenia: Roger of Howden, Chronica, III, 111. Mountain fortresses: Vinsauf, Itinerary of Richard I, p.14. See also Itinerarium, pp.203-4; L. de Mas Latrie, Histoire de l'île de Chypre sous le règne des princes de la maison de Lusignan, (3 vols., Paris 1852-61), I, 11-12.

²⁸ Chronique d'Amadi, p.83; Florio Bustron, Chronique, p.49.

²⁹ Itinerarium, p.351; Eracles, II, 191. For more details on the Lusignan settlement of Cyprus, see Eracles, II, 191-92; Leontios Makharias, Recital, c.26-29, pp.25-29; P.W. Edbury, The kingdom of Cyprus and the Crusades, 1191-1374, (Cambridge 1991), pp.13-22.

³⁰ Gestes, pp.668-76; Chronique d'Amadi, pp.117-24; Philip of Novara, The Wars of Frederick II against the Ibelins in Syria and Cyprus, ed. and trans. J.L. LaMonte, (New York 1936), pp.61-73. For the political background to this war, see also Eracles, II, 360-62; Edbury, The Kingdom of Cyprus, pp.48-57; Mas Latrie, Histoire, I, 225-

1228, this struggle spilled over into open war, because John of Ibelin refused to surrender the regency to the emperor and fled to the castle of St.Hilarion.³¹ Here he stayed for a while until Frederick persuaded him to give up, and placed Cyprus under the rule of five imperialist baillis, who were expected to run the island on Frederick's behalf after he returned to the west.³²

However, the baillis' authority was inevitably weakened as soon as the emperor departed. In July 1229 they were defeated outside Nicosia, and lost control over all of Cyprus except for Kantara and St.Hilarion, which were so strong that they held out for almost a year.³³ Once the Ibelins had taken these castles in May 1230, peace was restored for a while, but in 1231 Frederick II sent a new force of Lombard troops east under the imperial marshal Richard Filangeri, who immediately set about besieging John of Ibelin's castle at Beirut.³⁴ This in turn undermined the Ibelin position on Cyprus so much that the imperialists regained power, and laid siege to Ibelin supporters who had fled to St.Hilarion. But meanwhile Richard Filangeri was faring so badly at Beirut that in

38; G. Hill, A History of Cyprus, (4 vols., Cambridge 1940-52), II, 83-94; J.S.C. Riley-Smith, The Feudal Nobility and the Kingdom of Jerusalem, 1174-1277, (London 1973), pp.159-66.

³¹ Gestes, pp.676-82; Philip of Novara, The Wars of Frederick II, pp.74-82; Chronique d'Amadi, pp.124-30; Florio Bustron, Chronique, pp.63-68; Eracles, II, 367-69.

³² Eracles, II, 369, 376; Philip of Novara, The Wars of Frederick II, pp.85, 88-94; Chronique d'Amadi, pp.131-34; Florio Bustron, Chronique, pp.68-73.

³³ Eracles, II, 376-77; Gestes, pp.684-94; Florio Bustron, Chronique, pp.74-79; Chronique d'Amadi, pp.136-46; Philip of Novara, The Wars of Frederick II, pp.97-103.

³⁴ Philip of Novara, The Wars of Frederick II, pp.117-34; Gestes, pp.699-706; Florio Bustron, Chronique, pp.80-88; Chronique d'Amadi, pp.147-58; Eracles, II, 386-93.

April 1232 he retreated to his base at Tyre, enabling John of Ibelin and his Genoese allies to return to Cyprus, defeat the imperialists at the battle of Agridi and relieve their friends at St.Hilarion. These events effectively ended Hohenstaufen rule on Cyprus, although many Lombard troops and supporters of Frederick II continued to hold out at Kyrenia for a further twelve months before hostilities finally came to a close.³⁵

After 1233, open conflict on Cyprus became extremely rare, and was normally limited to palace coups rather than large scale warfare. Hence between 1306 and 1310 Amaury of Tyre deposed his brother king Henry II (1285-1324), and ruled as 'governor' until he was murdered because of his increasingly brutal regime. Initially, however, he had seized power with the consent of most of the nobility, who felt that Henry had not done enough either to protect Cyprus against the Mamluks, or to take the initiative in regaining the Holy Land.³⁶ Ironically, Henry's successor Peter I (1359-69) was subsequently assassinated for doing too much, for he imposed crippling taxes on his subjects in order to pay for ambitious naval campaigns against Asia Minor and Egypt. This policy was so loathed by many Cypriot barons, and in particular Peter's brothers James

³⁵ Eracles, II, 393-403; Gestes, pp.707-24; Florio Bustron, Chronique, pp.87-104; Chronique d'Amadi, pp.158-63; Philip of Novara, The Wars of Frederick II, pp.137-68.

³⁶ Chronique d'Amadi, pp.241-54, 259-69, 271-80, 298-391. See also Gestes, pp.857-62, 865-66; Florio Bustron, Chronique, pp.135-41, 148-62, 176-243; Diomedes Strambaldi, Chronique, in Chroniques d'Armadi et de Strambaldi, ed. R. de Mas Latrie, (Paris 1891), pp.18-25; Leontios Makharias, Recital, c.42-63, pp.43-59; Philip of Mézières, Le Songe du Vieil Pèlerin, extract cited in Mas Latrie, Histoire, III, 115-16; Amaury of Tyre's election charter of 1306, in 'Documents chypriotes du début du XIVE siècle, ed. C. Kohler, ROL, XI, (1905-8), 440-52, at 444-52, and in Mas Latrie, Histoire, II, 101-2. For more details on this dispute, see also Edbury, The Kingdom of Cyprus, pp.109-31; Hill, History of cyprus, II, 219-69.

and John of Lusignan, that they were probably directly involved in the king's murder at Nicosia in 1369.³⁷

From 1291 onwards, Cypriot kings also feared an imminent Mamluk invasion, for they could no longer rely on Christian territories on the mainland to act as a buffer between themselves and the Muslims. In addition, the fall of Acre attracted both the Genoese and the Venetians to Cyprus in far greater numbers than ever before, which was good for the prosperity of Famagusta, but meant that the Lusignans found themselves embroiled in the constant struggles between the two trading nations. During most of this period, the Cypriots tended to favour the Venetians, and felt that Genoa was abusing her trading privileges in order to cover up the corrupt activities of her merchants. This situation deteriorated steadily in the course of the fourteenth century, and led to a Genoese raid on Paphos in 1316, followed by another more serious incursion in 1373,³⁸ which was itself only a preliminary offensive

³⁷ Florio Bustron, Chronique, pp.259-76; Chronique d'Amadi, pp.408-26; Strambaldi, Chronique, pp.35-114; Leontios Makharias, Recital, c.90-281, pp.81-269; William of Machaut, La Prise d'Alexandrie ou chronique du roi Pierre Ier de Lusignan, ed. R. de Mas Latrie, (Geneva 1877), pp.19-265. The above chroniclers, and in particular Leontios Makharias (c.234-81, pp.215-69), generally claim that Peter I was murdered because he became an insane tyrant. However, modern scholars have shown that Peter's high taxes and blatant disregard for local customs had more to do with it. See J. Richard, 'La révolution de 1369 dans le royaume de Chypre', Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes, CX (1952), 108-23; P. Edbury, 'The Murder of King Peter I of Cyprus (1359-1369)', Journal of Medieval History, VI, (1980) 219-33; idem, 'The Crusading Policy of King Peter I of Cyprus, 1359-1369', in The Eastern Mediterranean Lands in the Period of the Crusades, ed. P.M. Holt, (Warminster 1977), pp.90-105; idem, The Kingdom of Cyprus, pp.175-79. for more details of Peter's naval campaigns, see below, pp.221-22.

³⁸ For a brief outline of these disputes up to 1373, see Edbury, The Kingdom of Cyprus, pp.109-11, 132-33, 155-56, 199-204. 1316 and 1373 raids: see below, pp.181-82.

before the invasion of 1374. This last attack resulted in the Genoese conquest of Famagusta, which was not finally recaptured by the Cypriots until 1464.³⁹ It also caused further splits in the Cypriot nobility, for it gave Peter I's widow Eleanor of Aragon a chance to seek revenge against many of her husband's killers by siding with the Genoese.⁴⁰

Returning to the earliest days of crusader rule on Cyprus, it has been suggested that Richard I's initial invasion was made easier by the fact that Byzantine control over the island had crumbled, and had been replaced by Isaac Comnenus's loathed and inefficient administration. Similarly, from the mid-twelfth century onwards the Armenians became virtually independent because Byzantine power on the Cilician plain collapsed.⁴¹ The leading

³⁹ Leontios Makharias, Recital, c.378-531, pp.359-525; Strambaldi, Chronique, pp.155-217; Chronique d'Amadi, pp.444-73; Florio Bustron, Chronique, pp.302-32. See also Edbury, The Kingdom of Cyprus, pp.204-11. For details of the recapture of Famagusta in 1464, see Hill, History of Cyprus, III, pp.589-91.

⁴⁰ Eventually Eleanor broke off her alliance with the Genoese, but still had Peter's brother John of Lusignan (titular prince of Antioch) murdered. See Leontios Makharias, Recital, c.355, p.335, c.423, pp.403-5, c.460, p.445. For more details on Eleanor's career, see Hill History of Cyprus, II, 417-27. Hill follows the traditional line that John of Lusignan had little to do with Peter's murder. This is challenged by Edbury, 'The Murder of King Peter', 223-27.

⁴¹ For more details on Armenian expansion until the accession of Leon II in 1187, see the Constable Sempad, La Chronique attribuée au Connétable Smpat, ed. and trans. G. Dédéyan, (Paris 1980), pp.45-58; idem, Chronique du Royaume de la Petite Arménie, RHC Arm. I, 610-28; Michael the Syrian, Chronique, RHC Arm. I, 324-96; Vahram of Edessa, Chronique Rimée des Rois de la Petite Arménie, RHC Arm. I, 493-510; T.S.R. Boase, 'The History of the Kingdom', in The Cilician Kingdom of Armenia, ed. T.S.R.

figure amongst the Armenians at this time was Leon II, ruler of the powerful Roupenid dynasty. During the 1180s and 90s Leon worked hard to unify his people and to stamp out any resistance to his rule from the other leading families in Cilicia. This process culminated in his coronation as the first king of Armenia in 1198, a title bestowed on him by the German emperor Henry VI.⁴² Leon's decision to become a king rather than a mere warlord also belonged to a wider policy of 'westernization', which included the granting of lands and privileges to the Italian city states and the Military Orders. This policy was intended to strengthen Leon's position internally, whilst at the same time bringing financial and military assistance against the Seljuk Turks of Anatolia. After Leon's death in 1219, similar strategies were adopted by his successors, many of whom also agreed to recognize papal supremacy, or even replace the Armenian Church with Roman Catholicism, in exchange for more western aid against the Muslims.⁴³

However, from the mid-1260s onwards these measures could not halt the relentless Mamluk attacks carried out on Cilicia by Baybars and his successors, who 'made a desert of the land of the Armenians'.⁴⁴ For a while the Armenians could depend on their Mongol allies, who had defeated the Seljuks during the 1240s, to protect them against this threat,⁴⁵ but it gradually became apparent that the

⁴² Constable Sembat, Chronique, ed. Dédéyan, pp.58-81; Boase, 'History of the Kingdom', pp.15-19.

⁴³ See below, pp.260-61, 266-77, 284-90.

⁴⁴ Samuel of Ani, Extrait de la Chronographie de Samuel d'Ani, RHC Arm. I, 468.

⁴⁵ Seljuk defeat: Samuel of Ani, Chronographie, p.461; Boase, 'History of the Kingdom', p.25. The Mongol alliance had been established during the late 1240s and 1250s. See Constable Sempad, Chronique, RHC Arm. I, 646-47, 651;

Mongols were often too far away to send reinforcements to Cilicia every time the Mamluks were about to attack. In addition, the Mongols themselves were unreliable and unpredictable, and in 1307 they even murdered the Armenian king Leon IV. Hence the Armenians could do very little to prevent the Mamluks from organizing ever larger invasions, which eventually culminated in the fall of Sis, the Armenian capital, in 1375.⁴⁶

In some ways, the history of Cilician Armenia was very similar to that of Frankish Greece. Here, the Franks and the Venetians were able to capture Constantinople, and thereafter conquer much of the Byzantine empire, because their Greek opponents remained divided or even leaderless throughout the period of the Fourth Crusade.⁴⁷ Thus from 1204 onwards Boniface of Montferrat, one of the most

idem, Chronique, ed. Dédéyan, pp.98-100; Vahram of Edessa, Chronique Rimée, p.519; Bar Hebraeus, The Chronography of Gregory Abu'l Faraj, the son of Aaron, the Hebrew Physician, commonly known as Bar Hebraeus, trans. E. A. Wallis Budge, (Oxford 1932), p.418; Boase, 'History of the Kingdom', p.25.

⁴⁶ 1307: Samuel of Ani, Chronographie, p.466. For a brief history of Cilician Armenia, 1198-1375, and more details on Mamluk and Mongol attacks, see Boase, 'History of the Kingdom', pp.19-33, and below, pp.245-46.

⁴⁷ For the conquest of Constantinople and the background to the Fourth crusade, see Geoffrey of Villehardouin, La conquête de Constantinople, ed. M.N. de Wailly, (Paris 1882), pp.2-150; Robert of Clari, La conquête de Constantinople, ed. P. Lauer, (Paris 1924), c.1-81, pp.1-81; Libro de los fechos et conquistas del principado de la Morea, ed. A. Morel-Fatio, (Geneva 1885), c.1-52, pp.1-14; Livre de la conquete de la princée de l'Amorée. Chronique de Morée (1204-1305), ed. J. Longnon, (Paris 1911), c.6-56, pp.3-17; Andrea Dandolo, Chronicum Venetum, ed. E. Pastorello, RISNS, XII(a), (1938), 276-79; Aubrey of Trois Fontaines, Chronica, MGHSS, XXIII (1874), 882-84; Nicetas Choniates, Historia, ed. J.P. Migne, PG, CXXXIX (1894), cols.919-66. See also J. Longnon, L'Empire Latin de Constantinople et la Principauté de Morée, (Paris 1949), pp.19-48; J. Godfrey, 1204, The Unholy Crusade, (Oxford 1980), pp.11-133.

important leaders of the crusade, and Baldwin of Flanders, the new Latin emperor, swept through northern Greece, occupying cities and castles whose demoralized garrisons usually surrendered straight away.⁴⁸ Indeed, Boniface of Montferrat did not meet any serious resistance until he reached Corinth and Nauplia, 'two of the strongest cities in the world', which only surrendered in 1210 and 1211-12 respectively.⁴⁹

Following the initial conquests of 1204-05, several new Frankish and Venetian states were set up around the Aegean. The Latin empire itself encompassed Thrace and the northern fringes of Asia Minor,⁵⁰ while Macedonia and northern Thessaly formed the kingdom of Thessalonika,

⁴⁸ Aubrey of Trois Fontaines, Chronica, p.885; Villehardouin, La Conquête, pp.160-78, 190-92; Robert of Clari, La Conquête, c.99-111, pp.96-105; Nicetas Choniates, Historia, cols.983-87, 1023-27; George Acropolites, Annales, ed. J.P. Migne, PG, CXL (1887), cols.999-1002; L. de los f., c.52, p.14; Nicephorus Gregoras, Byzantina historia, ed. L. Schopen and I. Bekker, CHSB, (3 vols, 1839-55), I, 14.

⁴⁹ Quote: Villehardouin, La Conquête, p.192. See also L. de la c., c.99-103, pp.32-33; L. de los f., c.92-93, pp.23-4, c.96-105, pp.24-26; Nicetas Choniates, Historia, cols.991, 998, and see below, pp.305-6.

⁵⁰ The borders of the Latin empire were established at the time of the Fourth Crusade. See G.F.L. Tafel and G.M. Thomas, Urkunden zur älteren Handels- und Staatsgeschichte der Republik Venedig mit besonderer Beziehung auf Byzanz und die Levante, Fontes rerum Austriacarum, (3 vols, Vienna 1856-57), I, 473-79, 491-92, 494-95. See also Nicephorus Gregoras, Byzantina historia, I, 14; Martin da Canal, La Chronique des Veneciens, ed. G. Galvani, Archivio storico italiano, VIII (1845), c.58-61, pp.343-45.

which was established by Boniface of Montferrat.⁵¹ Further south, Boniface granted the duchy of Athens, which covered Boeotia and Attica, to Othon de la Roche, who remained in Greece until the 1220s.⁵² Below Athens, the Franks also overran the Peloponnese, which formed the principality of Achaea and was held by the famous Villehardouin family until the early period of the fourteenth century.⁵³ In addition, the Venetians, who had played such a vital role in the Fourth Crusade itself, established a number of important colonies in the Aegean, particularly at Modon, Coron, Constantinople and Crete.⁵⁴ They also dominated

⁵¹ Villehardouin, La Conquête, pp.154-56; Robert of Clari, La Conquête, c.110, pp.104-5; L. de la c., c.67, pp.20-21; Aubrey of Trois Fontaines, Chronica, p.885.

⁵² for the foundation of the duchy of Athens, see L. de la c., p.61n1; Aubrey of Trois Fontaines, Chronica, p.885; Henry of Valenciennes, Histoire de l'Empereur Henri de Constantinople, ed. J. Longnon, (Paris 1948), c.681, p.115. The duchy later also incorporated the city of Thebes. See L. de los f., c.190, p.44; Innocent III, Innocenti III Romani Pontificus Opera Omnia, ed. J.P. Migne, PL, CCXIV-CCXVII, CCXVI, no.110, col.470. See also Longnon, L'empire latin, pp.75-76, 119, 166; W. Miller, The Latins in the Levant: a History of Frankish Greece (1204-1455), (London 1908), pp.34-35, 66; J. Longnon, 'Problèmes de l'histoire de la principauté de Morée', in Journal des Savants, (1946), 77-92, 147-61, at 88-90.

⁵³ L. de la c., c.104-36, pp.34-49; L. de los f., c.105-45, pp.26-34. For a brief history of Latin states in southern Greece until the death of Isabelle of Villehardouin in 1311, see K.M. Setton, 'The Frankish States in Greece, 1204-1311', in HC, II (1962), 235-74.

⁵⁴ Modon and Coron: Andrea Dandolo, Chronicum Venetum, pp.283, 367; Andrea Navagerio, Storia Venezia, ed. L.A. Muratori, RIS, XXIII (1733), col.986; Martin da Canal, La Chronique des Veneciens, c.67, pp.349, 351; Marino Sanudo (the Younger), Vite de' Duchi di Venezia, ed. L.A. Muratori, RIS, XXII (1733), col.536; Tafel and Thomas, Urkunden, II, 97-100; L. de la c., c.190, p.68. See also Miller, The Latins in the Levant, pp.152-53; K. Andrews, Castles of the Morea, (Princeton 1953), pp.13-15, 58-61. Constantinople: Andrea Dandolo, Chronicum Venetum, p.282; Andrea Navagerio, Storia Venezia, cols.984-86; Robert of Clari, La Conquête, c.107, p.102; Villehardouin, La

numerous islands which lay within the Venetian sphere of influence, or were colonized by individual Venetian citizens. These included Corfu, Cephalonia and Euboea,⁵⁵ as well as the Cyclades, which formed the duchy of the Archipelago under the rule of the Sanudo dukes of Naxos.⁵⁶ Other islands were controlled by rival powers, most notably the Genoese, who held Chios and several neighbouring trading posts for most of the fourteenth,

Conquête, p.136. See also R.L. Wolff, 'The Latin Empire of Constantinople, 1204-1261', in HC, II (1962), 187-233, at 193-95; J.K. Fotheringham, Marco Sanudo, Conqueror of the Archipelago, (Oxford 1915), pp.46-47. The Venetians bought Crete from Boniface of Montferrat in 1204, and colonized it after a brief struggle with Genoese pirates based there. See Andrea Dandolo, Chronicum Venetum, p.280; Marino Sanudo, Vite de' Duchi, cols.533, 536; Tafel and Thomas, Urkunden, I, 512-15; Andrea Navagerio, Storia Venezia, cols.984-85, 987-89; Martin da Canal, La Chronique des Veneciens, c.68, p.351; See also Andrea Dandolo, Chronicum Venetum, pp.283-84, 367; Fotheringham, Marco Sanudo, pp.81-87.

⁵⁵ Corfu: Andrea Dandolo, Chronicum Venetum, p.283; Marino Sanudo, Vite de' Duchi, col.536; Andrea Navagerio, Storia Venezia, cols.986-87; Martin da Canal, La Chronique des Veneciens, c.64, p.347. For the subsequent history of Corfu, see Miler, The Latins in the Levant, pp.512-49. Cephalonia: Andrea Dandolo, Chronicum Venetum, p.284. The rulers of Cephalonia largely remained independent throughout the thirteenth century, and avoided coming under direct Achaean rule until 1324. For these and subsequent events, see P.W. Topping, 'The Morea, 1311-1364', in HC, III, (1975) 104-40, at 121-23; Miller, The Latins in the Levant, pp.260, 292. Euboea: Venice augmented its power over Euboea in 1204 and 1209, and ruled the island directly from 1216 onwards. See Tafel and Thomas, Urkunden, I, 469, II, 90-96, 175-84; Andrea Dandolo, Chronicum Venetum, p.284; Longnon, L'empire latin, pp.119-20; Miller, The Latins in the Levant, pp.76-79.

⁵⁶ Andrea Dandolo, Chronicum Venetum, p.282; Marino Sanudo, Vite de' Duchi, col.545; Andrea Navagerio, Storia Venezia, col.986; R. Sauger, Histoire nouvelle des anciens ducs de l'Archipel, (Paris 1699), extract cited in Fotheringham, Marco Sanudo, pp.113-22, at pp.113, 115-17. See also Fotheringham, Marco Sanudo, pp.40-44, 56-61, 68-80.

fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.⁵⁷

To a large extent, this massive expansion of Latin power was only made possible by further instability and internal fighting amongst the Greeks. In the wake of the Fourth Crusade, the Greeks established three new states on the edges of their former empire, whose capitals lay at Trebizond, Nicaea and Arta in Epirus.⁵⁸ All three of these lordships, and in particular the latter two, saw themselves as the natural heirs to the Byzantine empire. Furthermore, the powerful Bulgars, who were often allied with an equally aggressive tribe of horsemen known as the Cumans, coveted the wealth of Constantinople just as much during the thirteenth century as they had done before 1204. All these rivals posed a major threat to the Franks of central and northern Greece, but because they were so keen to prevent each other from being the first to recapture Constantinople, they tended to fight amongst themselves, instead of presenting a united front against

⁵⁷ Genoese involvement with Chios probably began during the 1260s, when Genoa allied itself with the Greeks against Venice. See M. Balard, La Romanie génoise (XIIe début du XVe siècles), (2 vols., Rome and Genoa 1978), I, 38-55, 119-26; idem, 'The Genoese in the Aegean (1204-1566)', in Latins and Greeks in the Eastern Mediterranean after 1204, ed. B. Arbel, B. Hamilton, D. Jacoby, (London 1989), pp.158-74, at pp.161-71; Longnon, 'Problèmes de l'histoire de la principauté de Morée', 161. For the later history of Chios, see also W. Miller, Essays on the Latin Orient, (Cambridge 1921), pp.298-313.

⁵⁸ Aubrey of Trois Fontaines, Chronica, pp.885-86; Nicephoras Gregoras, Byzantina historia, I, 13; L. de los f., c.53, p.14, c.54, p.15; Villehardouin, La Conquête, pp.178, 186. For a brief outline, see also Wolff, 'The Latin Empire', 200-201; Miller, The Latins in the Levant, pp.41-42; D.M. Nicol, The Despotate of Epirus, (Oxford 1957), pp.11-23.

the Latins.⁵⁹ These rivalries were only resolved after the battle of Pelagonia in 1259, when Michael VIII Palaeologus of Nicaea (1259-82) defeated the combined forces of Achaea and Epirus.⁶⁰ Only then did he feel secure enough to attack Constantinople itself, which the Franks finally lost in 1261.⁶¹

By this point, however, Latin territories all over mainland Greece were already coming under far greater military pressure. Indeed, Thessaloniki had fallen to Theodore Comnenus, the despot of Epirus (1224-30), as early as 1224, despite Honorius III's efforts to organize a crusade for the defence of the city.⁶² At about the same

⁵⁹ For a brief outline of how rivalries between Epirus, Bulgaria and Bicosia, as well as Serbia and Albania, saved Constantinople until 1261, see Wolff, 'The Latin Empire', 187-233, particularly at 210, 220-33.

⁶⁰ George Acropolites, Annales, cols.1195-99; George Pachymeres, De Michaele et Andronico Palaeologus libri XIII, ed. I. Bekker, CHSB, (2 vols, 1835), I, 85-89; Nicephorus Gregoras, Byzantina historia, I, 74-75, 79-80; L. de la c., c.254-329, pp.92-123; L. de los f., c.246-309, pp.55-69 Marino Sanudo (Torsello, or the Elder), Istoria del regno di Romania sive regno di Morea, ed. C. Hopf, in Chroniques gréco-romanes inédites ou peu connues, (Berlin 1873), pp.107-8. For the background to this battle, see also Longnon, L'empire latin, pp.223-25; D.J. Geanakoplos, 'Greco-Latin Relations on the eve of the Byzantine Restoration: The Battle of Pelagonia, 1259', Dumbarton Oaks Papers, VII (1953), 101-41.

⁶¹ George Acropolites, Annales, cols.1207-11; Nicephorus Gregoras, Byzantina historia, I, 85-86; Andrea Dandolo, Chronicum Venetum, pp.311, 369; George Pachymeres, De Michaele, I, 140-48; Andrea Navagerio, Storia Venezia, col.199; Marino Sanudo, Istoria, p.115; L. de los f., c.84-85, p.21, c.241, p.54; L. de la c., c.83-85, pp.26-27.

⁶² Salonika appears to have fallen late in 1224, after a lengthy siege. See Nicephorus Gregoras, Byzantina historia, I, 25-28; George Acropolites, Annales, cols.1035-38; B. Sinogowitz, 'Zur Eroberung Thessalonikes im Herbst 1224', BZ, XLV (1952), 28. Theodore's conquests in northern Greece preceding this siege are badly

time that the Latins were being pushed out of northern Greece, they also lost their coastal outposts in Asia Minor following John Ducas Vatatzes (1222-54) of Nicaea's victory at the battle of Pimanon in 1225.⁶³ In addition, the Franks of Constantinople rarely enjoyed any real authority beyond the walls of their city during the thirteenth century, because Thrace was regularly overrun by Greek and Bulgar invaders, most notably in 1206, 1235 and 1236.⁶⁴

Further west, Michael Palaeologus's triumph at the battle of Pelagonia also resulted in the capture of William II of Villehardouin, prince of Achaea (1246-78), who only managed to secure his release by offering the Greeks Mistra, Old Mania and Monemvasia as a ransom (1262).⁶⁵ These three powerful fortresses were located in the south

recorded, although some information can be gleaned from letters regarding Honorius's crusade. See Regesta Honorii papae III, ed. P. Pressutti, (2 vols., New York 1978), I, no.3478, p.565, II, no.3877, p.56 (showing that by March 1222 Theodore had taken the Macedonian city of Serres), nos. 4059, 4060, p.83, nos. 4353, 4354, 4358, p.134, no.4758, p.207, no.5270, p.298, no.5464, p.333. After the fall of Salonika, Honorius's crusade collapsed. See Benvenuto di San Giorgio, Historia Montisferrati, ed. L.A. Muratori, RIS, XXIII, (1733), cols.381, 382. See also Nicol, The Despotate, pp.47-51, 57-64; Longnon, L'empire latin, pp.162-64.

⁶³ Nicephorus Gregoras, Byzantina historia, I, 25; Aubrey of Trois Fontaines, Chronica, p.911; George Acropolites, Annales, cols.1038-39. Vatatzes's victory eventually also enabled him to dominate wide areas on the European side of the Bosphorus, and forced the Franks to abandon efforts to retake the Macedonian city of Serres from Theodore of Epirus. See Philip Mousket, Chronique Rimée, ed. baron de Reiffenberg, in Collection de Chroniques belges inédites, (2 vols, Brussels 1838), II, 408-9, and below, p.357.

⁶⁴ 1206: see below, p.358. 1235 and 1236: see below, pp.359-60.

⁶⁵ See above, p.29n60.

eastern Peloponnese, and consequently provided the Greeks with a perfect bridgehead from which to reconquer Latin territories to the north and west. This process continued sporadically until the 1420s, when the last Frankish remnants of the principality were swallowed up and incorporated into the Byzantine province of Mistra.⁶⁶

From the mid-thirteenth century onwards, Michael Palaeologus and his son Andronicus II (1282-1328) also launched several attacks against the duchy of Athens and neighbouring Latin areas to the north of Achaëa.⁶⁷ In order to stop these incursions duke Walter I of Athens employed a ferocious band of Catalan mercenaries who had previously fought for Andronicus II against the Turks. However, after an argument broke out between Walter and the Catalans over pay, they turned against their new employer, and in March 1311 they defeated him along with his Achaean allies at the battle of Cephissus.⁶⁸ As a result, the Catalans managed to capture the entire duchy

⁶⁶ Greek attacks from Mistra were most common until the death of Michael Palaeologus in 1282 (see L. de la c., c.330-97, pp.123-54, c.456-70, pp.176-82, c.494-96, pp.193-94; L. de los f., c.310-74, pp.69-83; Marino Sanudo, Istoria, pp.116-18, 120-34; George Pachymeres, De Michaele, I, 204-9, 324-36, 410-13, 508-19; Geanakoplos, 'Greco-Latin Relations', 110n48), during the 1320s (see L. de los f., c.641-54, pp.140-43; L. de la c., pp.404-5; Bon, La Morée franque, pp.202; Miller, The Latins in the Levant, pp.258-59; Longnon, L'empire latin, p.311), and during the 1420s (see ibid, pp.348-52). For the history of Mistra under the Greeks, see S. Runciman, Mistra, (London 1980), pp.36-117.

⁶⁷ Marino Sanudo, Istoria, pp.120-21, 136; George Pachymeres, De Michaele, I, 322-36.

⁶⁸ Nicephorus Gregoras, Byzantina historia, I, 244-54; L. de los f., c.546-51, pp.119-20; L. de la c., p.402; Marino Sanudo, Istoria, p.117; Ramon Muntaner, L'expedició dels Catalans a Orient, ed. L. Nicolau d'Olwer, (Barcelona, 1926), c.240, pp.177-82; K.M. Setton, Catalan Domination of Athens, 1311-1388, (Cambridge MA, 1948), pp.6-13; Longnon, L'empire latin, pp.295-301.

of Athens, which they continued to rule in relative tranquility until the 1380s,⁶⁹ when a rival company of Navarese mercenaries, aided by the lords of Corinth, made inroads into Attica and southern Boeotia.⁷⁰ By this point, however, these clashes were becoming irrelevant, as the Turks began to overrun all of Greece and incorporate it into the Ottoman empire. This process continued during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, when the last Venetian colonies and Latin held islands in the area, including the kingdom of Cyprus, gradually fell under Turkish control.⁷¹

So far, the erosion of Latin territories from the mid-thirteenth century onwards has been discussed almost purely in terms major external invasions by the Greeks of Nicaea, the Ayubids, Mamluks and Ottoman Turks. However, apart from these offensives, there were three other factors which contributed to the fall of Christian states in the east, even if they were not as decisive. Firstly, numerous rebellions organized by native Greeks and Muslims tended to undermine the Latins. It has already been noted, for example, that the Templars left Cyprus in 1192 after a major Greek uprising at Nicosia. Another such incident involved no less than 15,000 Muslim peasants, who ransacked Jerusalem in 1229.⁷²

⁶⁹ Ramon Muntaner, L'expedició, c.240-44, pp.182-95; L. de los f., c.552-55, pp.120-21; Setton, Catalan Domination, pp.13-20. For a history of Catalan Athens until the 1380s, see K.M. Setton, 'The Catalans in Greece, 1311-1380', in HC, III (1975), 167-224.

⁷⁰ Setton, 'The Catalans in Greece', pp.215-24.

⁷¹ For a brief outline of Turkish conquests in the eastern Mediterranean, see H. Inalcik, 'The Ottoman Turks and the Crusades, 1329-1451' and 'The Ottoman Turks and the Crusades, 1451-1522', HC, VI (1989), 222-75, 311-53.

⁷² Nicosia: see below, p.187 Jerusalem: see below, pp.135-36.

Secondly, many islands and coastal areas in the eastern Mediterranean were frequently ravaged by pirates and seaborne attackers. Cyprus, for example, was targeted by Greek raiders in 1192, and other pirates from Rhodes in 1303.⁷³ In 1220 the Muslims also sacked Limassol because the Franks were using it to supply the Fifth Crusade in Egypt, whilst in 1271 Baybars made another failed attack on the town in order to divert the Latins' attention away from his assault on Montfort.⁷⁴ Moreover, during the middle years of the fourteenth century both Hugh IV (1329-59) and Peter I of Cyprus had to deal with large numbers of Turks and marauders 'who went pillaging and murdering, and did great damage'.⁷⁵ Indeed, piracy appears to have been particularly common throughout the Mediterranean at this time, for in 1358 the ruler of Achaea granted the castellany of Corinth to the Florentine lord Niccolo Acciajuoli, whose specific task it was to defend and recolonize surrounding areas devastated by Greek, Turkish and Catalan raiders.⁷⁶

Finally, many Christian states in the east were torn apart by civil wars between political rivals and baronial factions. Such clashes have already been discussed in some detail on Cyprus, because this particular crusader state hardly ever experienced any other form of warfare. However, internal struggles were just as common elsewhere, including Cilician Armenia, where a group of traditionalist nobles and churchmen frequently rebelled against the pro-western reforms introduced by Leon II and

⁷³ See below, pp.175, 191.

⁷⁴ See below, p.175.

⁷⁵ Leontios Makharios, Recital, c.64, p.61.

⁷⁶ See below, p.339.

many of his successors.⁷⁷ Further south, the Cypriot war of the late 1220s and early 1230s also spread to the kingdom of Jerusalem, where the Lombards of Tyre and the Ibelins of Acre remained at loggerheads until Frederick II's troops were finally driven out of Tyre in 1242.⁷⁸ As we shall see, this was only one of many internecine struggles in the Holy Land, which virtually continued right up until the fall of Acre in 1291.⁷⁹ Similarly, the history of Frankish Greece provides us with countless examples of damaging conflicts between fellow Latins. Hence between 1208 and 1209 the Latin emperor Henry (1206-16) had to deal with a rebellion by Lombard barons in Thessaly, who were plotting to overthrow Boniface of Montferrat's infant son and heir Demetrius.⁸⁰ From the early fourteenth century onwards, both the Angevin princes of Achaëa and the Aragonese dukes of Catalan Athens were also increasingly absent in western Europe, and rarely even visited Greece.⁸¹ As a result, central authority in

⁷⁷ See below, pp.265-69, 285-86.

⁷⁸ 1242: Gestes, pp.732-35; Philip of Novara, The Wars of Frederick II, pp.178-84. For an outline of this entire dispute, both in Cyprus and the Holy Land, see ibid, pp.61-184; Edbury, The Kingdom of Cyprus, pp.55-69, 81-82; Riley-Smith, The Feudal Nobility, pp.159-84, 198-212.

⁷⁹ See below, pp.142-50.

⁸⁰ Henry of Valenciennes, Histoire de l'empereur, c.560-687, pp.55-118. See also Longnon, L'empire latin, pp.106-11; Miller, The Latins in the Levant, pp.72-75, and see below, pp.382-83.

⁸¹ The Angevins gained control over Achaëa by virtue of a treaty made between William II of Villehardouin and Charles of Anjou during 1260s, whereby the latter inherited the principality because William died without a male heir. See L. de la c., c.415, p.160, c.441-55, pp.170-76; L. de los f., c.413-14, p.91, c.418, p.92; Longnon, L'empire latin, pp.230-40; Marino Sanudo, Istoria, pp.118-19. The ducal title of Athens passed to the Aragonese royal family soon after the Catalan conquest of 1311. See Ramon Muntaner, L'expedició, c.242, pp.185-86; Setton, 'The Catalans in Greece', pp.172-74.

the region deteriorated rapidly, leaving the Venetians, the Hospitallers, the Navarese, the Catalans, the archbishops of Patras, the Acciajuoli lords of Corinth and the Greeks of Mistra to fight it out amongst themselves, and to cope as well as they could against the Ottoman Turks.⁸²

The history of the Latin east from 1187 onwards was therefore turbulent and at times even anarchic, but amongst all the warfare and bloodshed it is also possible to identify certain distinct political phases. In particular, it is clear that there was a period of western and Armenian expansion during the first half of the thirteenth century, which was facilitated by in-fighting amongst the Greeks and the Muslims. In Greece this was brought to an end by Michael Palaeologus, who dominated his Epirote rivals after the battle of Pelagonia and finally captured Constantinople in 1261. At about the same time a similar process of unification also took place in Egypt and Syria, whose Mamluk rulers rarely had to deal with protracted civil wars after 1260. Thus the Mamluk and Byzantine empires were being strengthened and unified just as many Latin and Armenian territories were experiencing more and more baronial rebellions and internal struggles. During the fourteenth century the divided and leaderless westerners of southern and central Greece eventually found themselves in the same predicament against the even more powerful Ottoman empire. It is possible to conclude, therefore, that their initial successes and subsequent failures had relatively little to do with the Latins themselves, for their fate was largely determined by political events which were beyond their control.

⁸² For a brief outline of events in central and southern Greece and the steady decline in central authority there, c.1307-1460, see Longnon, L'empire latin, pp.292-355, particularly pp.314-16; Bon, La Morée franque, pp.231-32, 261.

The changing fortunes of the Latins can also be used to illustrate their military strengths and weaknesses. On the plus side, it is clear that they usually dominated the sea, especially because of the immense naval power of the Italian city states, whose war fleets initially outclassed and outnumbered anything the Greeks and Muslims could muster. Thus the defenders of Constantinople appear to have been powerless to stop the Venetians from scaling the city's sea walls in 1203 and 1204.⁸³ Similarly, it seems that Isaac Comnenus lacked a fleet with which to prevent the English from landing on Cyprus, whilst the total absence of any sea walls at several crusader sites, including the town of Pilgrims' Castle, suggests that the Muslims were often equally under strength in this respect.⁸⁴ Indeed, the Mamluk raid on Limassol in 1271 is specifically said to have failed because the Muslim sailors leading the attack were inexperienced and incompetent, and therefore steered their ships onto reefs. Although the Ottoman Turks later rectified this problem by building up a large navy of their own, the Latins therefore enjoyed far more control over the Mediterranean than their opponents for much of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.⁸⁵

Their great skill and courage in battle appears to have been another factor which helped the Franks to succeed. The many victories which they scored over numerically superior opponents, such as the defeat allegedly inflicted

⁸³ See below, pp. 297-98.

⁸⁴ Cyprus: see above, pp.16-17. Pilgrims' Castle: C. Johns, 'Excavations at Pilgrims' Castle ('Athlit). The ancient tell and the outer defences' QDAP, III (1933-34), 145-64, at 145.

⁸⁵ See below, p.175. See also Inalcik, 'The Ottoman Turks and the Crusades, 1329-1451', 222-26.

on 33,000 Bulgars by a mere 2,000 Franks in 1208, suggest that in the right conditions heavily armed and well protected knights could still outfight almost any opponent.⁸⁶ This in turn appears to have given the Latins an almost legendary warrior status amongst their enemies, and it has even been suggested that in 1260 the Mongols failed to attack Christian territories in the Holy Land because they feared a confrontation with the supposedly invincible Franks.⁸⁷

As the thirteenth century progressed, however, the inherent weaknesses of the Latins became more and more apparent. Most notably, they very often found themselves massively outnumbered by the land armies of their various opponents. At the battle of La Forbie, for example, the Khwarizmians were said to have numbered 20,000 horsemen, without including their Egyptian allies.⁸⁸ It has also been calculated that the numerous Mamluk invasions of Palestine, Syria and Cilician Armenia undertaken by Baybars and his successors rarely involved fewer than 12,000 troops, and sometimes many more.⁸⁹ Indeed, at the final siege of Tripoli in 1289 the Muslims reputedly deployed 30 archers against each individual arrow slit in the city walls, to prevent the Christian defenders from

⁸⁶ Henry of Valenciennes, Histoire de l'empereur, c.543-44, pp.46-47; letter from the emperor Henry to Innocent III, September 1208, RHGF, XIX (18), 514.

⁸⁷ P. Jackson, 'The Crisis in the Holy Land in 1260', EHR, XCV (1980), 481-514, at 496-99.

⁸⁸ Eracles, II, 428; Marino Sanudo, Liber secretorum, p.217.

⁸⁹ D. Ayalon, 'Studies on the Structure of the Mamluk Army', Bulletin of Oriental and African Studies, XV, (1953), 203-28, 448-76, XVI, (1954), 57-90. See in particular XV, 222 and XVI, 70-71. al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, I(b), 151, says that Baybars used 12,000 troops in his campaign against the Seljuk Turks in 1277.

firing back.⁹⁰ Further afield, contemporaries reported that 14,000 Cumans, as well as countless other troops under the command of the Bulgar leader Ioannitsa, were present when the first Latin emperor Baldwin was defeated and captured outside Adrianople in 1205.⁹¹ In 1374 14,000 troops and sailors also participated in the Genoese invasion of Cyprus; a clear indication why the Lusignans feared Genoa just as much as Mamluk Egypt after the fall of Acre in 1291.⁹²

Latin settlers in the east had little hope of matching these opponents man for man. It is unlikely, for example, that they committed more than 2,000 knights to the battle of La Forbie, whilst it has already been mentioned that a similar force took on sixteen times as many Bulgars in 1208.⁹³ In 1291 the Muslim besiegers of Acre were likewise said to have outnumbered the city's entire population of 40,000 people, and as a result the 200 knights and 500 footsoldiers sent there by king Henry of Cyprus must have seemed like a drop in the ocean!⁹⁴ The Armenians often experienced similar difficulties, for there are several recorded cases of just a few thousand of their men confronting Mamluk armies which may have been ten times

⁹⁰ Gestes, pp.804, 806-7.

⁹¹ Villehardouin, La Conquête, p.208, and see pp.206-14.

⁹² Chronique d'Amadi, p.446; Strambaldi, Chronique, p.155; Florio Bustron, Chronique, p.302; Edbury, The Kingdom of Cyprus, p.204.

⁹³ La Forbie: Riley-Smith in Ibn al-Furat, Selections, p.173n2.

⁹⁴ Gestes, pp.806-7; Marino Sanudo, Liber secretorum, p.231. Contemporary figures for the number of Muslim besiegers at Acre vary considerably. See Marshall, Warfare in the Latin East, p.219.

larger.⁹⁵ Some of these huge differences in troop numbers should no doubt be put down to the imagination of medieval chroniclers, but even allowing for contemporary exaggeration, both the Latins and the Armenians clearly suffered from a desperate shortage of manpower. Inevitably, this problem was most acute in geographically exposed areas, which were far harder to defend than islands or mountainous regions. As a result, vulnerable crusader territories such as the coastal strip of Syria and Palestine, or Thessaly and the Latin empire, tended to lack money and other essential resources just as much as soldiers in the field.

It was hoped that these difficulties could be overcome in two ways. Firstly, regular appeals were made to western Europe for financial aid and for crusaders to come and fight in the east. This tactic did bring some relief, particularly during the Third Crusade and the crusade of St. Louis (1248-54), who refortified many sites in the Holy Land after he had been defeated in Egypt.⁹⁶ Both Louis and the papacy also donated considerable amounts of money toward the upkeep of fortifications at Constantinople, Antioch, Jaffa and elsewhere.⁹⁷ Secondly, the Franks often made alliances with their neighbours in the east, which had the dual advantage of boosting troop numbers and at

⁹⁵ See below, p.247.

⁹⁶ Third Crusade: see below, p.52. Crusade of St. Louis: see below, pp.50, 54.

⁹⁷ Constantinople: Joinville, Histoire de Saint Louis, p.78; Philip Mousket, Chronique Rimée, pp.622-23; Wolff, 'The Latin Empire', pp.226-33. For more evidence on the terrible poverty of Constantinople, see also R.L. Wolff, 'Mortgage and redemption of an Emperor's Son: Castile and the Latin Empire of Constantinople', Speculum, XXIX, (1954), 45-84. Antioch: Joinville, Histoire de Saint Louis, pp.258, 286; Matthew Paris, Chronica Maiora, V, 228. Jaffa: Joinville, Histoire de Saint Louis, p.306; Marshall, Warfare in the Latin East, pp.141-42.

the same time encouraging potential enemies to fight each other. Thus by joining forces with the Bulgar leader Slav, the Latin emperor Henry managed to defeat both the Cumans and Slav's rival Boril, thereby stabilizing his northern frontier and neutralizing the Bulgar threat in general.⁹⁸ Similarly, both the Armenians and the Franks of Antioch made spectacular territorial gains by participating in the Mongol invasion of Syria.⁹⁹

However, by relying on external allies, the Latins were again placing their destiny in the hands of others, for any number of unforeseen factors could change events dramatically. Frederick II, for example, had been unable or unwilling to go on crusade for many years before he finally fulfilled his vow and came east in 1228.¹⁰⁰ Similarly, most crusaders tended to return home when it was convenient for them to do so rather than the Franks in the east. Thus in 1218 Andrew II of Hungary left the Fifth Crusade before it had even reached Egypt, where several further disputes between eastern and European crusaders later contributed to the collapse of the entire expedition.¹⁰¹ Inevitably, such problems were even likelier to arise with Muslim, Greek or Mongol allies, who were often unreliable because of strong cultural and religious differences. Hence Franks who fought at the battle of Pelagonia in 1259 later accused their Epirote

⁹⁸ Henry of Valenciennes, Histoire de l'empereur, c.504-49, pp.28-50, particularly at c.506, p.30, c.546-49, pp.48-50.

⁹⁹ See below, p.115.

¹⁰⁰ For a brief outline of Frederick's crusading plans and problems up to 1228, see T.C. Van Cleve, 'The Crusade of Frederick II', HC, II (1962), 429-62, at 429-51.

¹⁰¹ Oliver of Paderborn, Historia Damiatina, p.168; Eracles, II, . For a full account of the Fifth Crusade, see S. Runciman, A History of the Crusades, (3 vols., Cambridge, 1951-55), III (1955), pp.147-70.

allies of abandoning them on the eve of the conflict, while it has already been mentioned that in 1307 Mongol troops ruthlessly murdered Leon IV.¹⁰²

But even if their participants had the best of intentions, many expeditions designed to help the Latins were too small, temporary or badly organized to be of any real assistance. In 1269, for example, an Aragonese crusade to the Holy land enabled the Franks to launch a raid against Muslim villages near Montfort with an army of 130 knights.¹⁰³ However, this force was far too small to recapture any Christian territories lost to the Mamluks, or indeed risk a direct confrontation with Baybars, who was said to have had such a large field army operating in the area that one contingent alone supposedly numbered 15,000 men. Moreover, during skirmishes just outside Acre some Aragonese leaders of this campaign, declaring that they had come to fight for Christ, were needlessly killed because they simply charged into the enemy ranks, and were immediately cut down by the Muslims. Hence the Aragonese crusade had achieved nothing permanent, had wasted Christian lives, and had provoked Baybars into carrying out a damaging counter-raid against Acre.¹⁰⁴ In addition, it should be noted that many expeditions of this kind, including the lord Edward's crusade to Acre between 1271 and 1272, were badly affected by disease, starvation and

¹⁰² 1259: Geanakoplos, 'Greco-Latin Relations', 132-34. 1307: Samuel of Ani, Chronographie, p.466.

¹⁰³ Gestes, p.767. for a brief outline of the Aragonese crusade, see Thorau, The Lion of Egypt, pp.199-201.

¹⁰⁴ Gestes, pp.767-68; Ibn al-Furat, Selections, pp.137-39; al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, I(b), 77. The figure of 15,000 Muslims was reported by a Frankish knight held prisoner at Saphet, who later escaped to Acre. See Gestes, p.768.

the harsh local weather.¹⁰⁵

While many campaigns undertaken by the Latins did not have the numbers, resources and overall leadership needed to make any real impact, their opponents, and in particular the Muslims, were getting stronger militarily as well as politically. After the battle of Hattin, Saladin failed to capture some Frankish strongpoints, most notably Tyre and the crusader camp outside Acre, because various members of his family and entourage were constantly arguing over strategies and tactics. In addition, he found it very difficult to maintain his field army, which was largely composed of seasonal troops obliged to serve the sultan during the summer in exchange for land or money. These men tended to be badly trained, ill-disciplined and more interested in loot than complex notions of holy war. They were also drawn from all over Saladin's vast dominions, and consequently felt greater loyalty toward their own amirs and fellow countrymen than they did toward the greater good of Islam.¹⁰⁶ By the mid-1260s, however, these problems had largely been eradicated through various reforms and the growing use of Mamluks, professional soldiers who were instilled with a great sense of loyalty toward their sultan from an early age. Hence Baybars's campaigns during the 1260s and 70s were undertaken by a highly skilled force of siege engineers and other troops, none of whom ever questioned the sultan's decisions. Indeed, in 1270 we even find Baybars attacking Margat in the depth of winter, something which would have been

¹⁰⁵ Eracles, II, 461; Ibn al-Furat, Selections, p.155; Annales de Terre Sainte, p.455 (text B). For a brief outline of the lord Edward's crusade, see S. Runciman, 'The Crusader States, 1243-1291', in HC, II, (1962), pp.582-83.

¹⁰⁶ Smail, Crusading Warfare, pp.64-75.

unthinkable during the reign of Saladin.¹⁰⁷

It is possible to conclude, therefore, that the Latin conquests made during the first half of the thirteenth century give a somewhat misleading impression of military strength, for they were generally achieved because of the internal weaknesses of the Greeks and the Muslims. In reality, the Latins, and to some extent also the Armenians, had so few troops at their disposal that they could not rely on sheer weight of numbers to defend themselves against hostile invasion forces, prevent local people from rebelling, keep their own followers in check, or even put an end to piracy and other forms of localized warfare. Alliances with neighbours or help from western Europe could only provide a temporary and somewhat unreliable solution to this problem, which in fact got worse after the battle of Pelagonia and the accession of Baybars. It is against this background that the various functions of crusader fortifications in the eastern Mediterranean should be discussed, for the Latins relied on castles and urban defences more than anything else to make up for their lack of troops, and thereby address the numerous political and military weaknesses which have been mentioned in this chapter.

¹⁰⁷ al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, I(b), 78. For improvements in military discipline and training introduced by Baybars, see Ayalon, 'The Mamluk Army', XVI, 67-70; Thorau, The Lion of Egypt, pp.98-100, 175, 196.

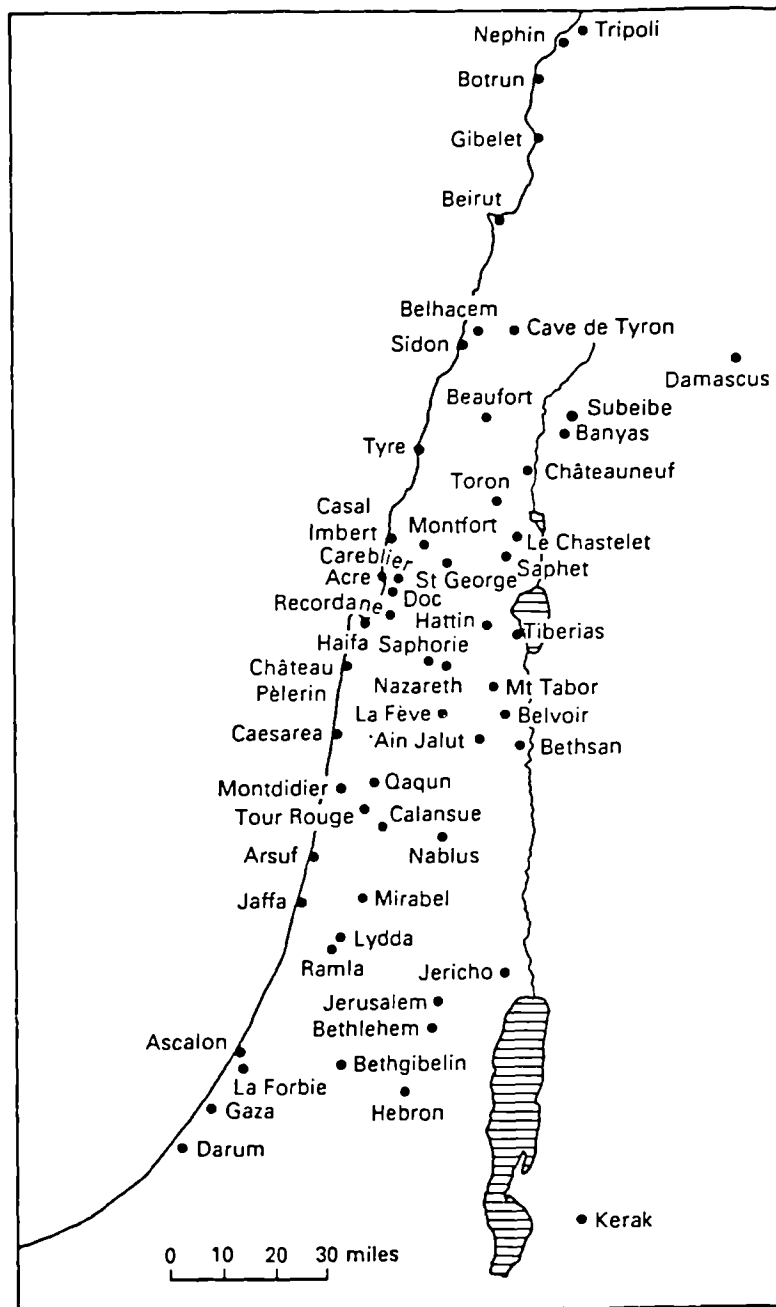


Fig.1. Palestine. From Marshall, Warfare in the Latin East,

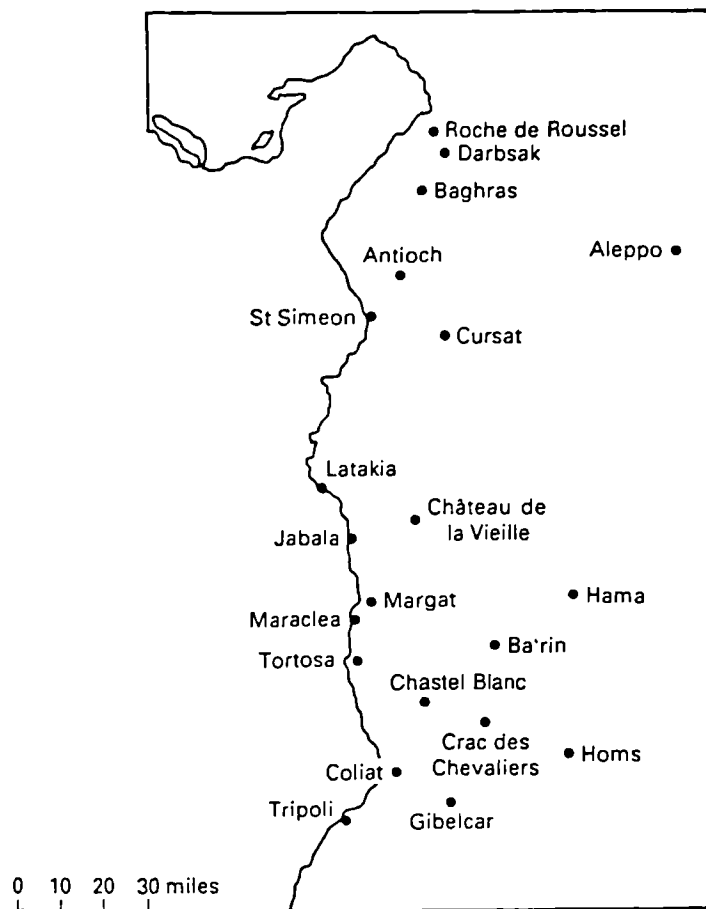


Fig.2. Syria. From Marshall, Warfare in the Latin East.

CHAPTER TWO
THE ROLE OF FORTIFICATIONS IN THE KINGDOM OF
JERUSALEM, THE COUNTY OF TRIPOLI AND THE
PRINCIPALITY OF ANTIOCH, 1187-1291.

It has been argued that the history of the crusader states was to a large extent dictated by events which were beyond the control of Latin settlers in the east. They were successful whenever their opponents were divided, or they received help from external allies such as the Mongols or the Franks of western Europe. On the other hand, they were powerless to prevent crusaders from returning to the west, or to halt the rise of Baybars; important factors which both contributed to the fall of Acre in 1291. Consequently, castles and urban fortifications provided the Frankish inhabitants of Palestine and Syria with the only reliable and permanent means of defending their territories and compensating for their lack of troops. Unlike European expeditions or Muslim power struggles, such structures could last for decades, or even centuries, and remained firmly under the control of local settlers. A closer study of individual strongholds in the area will not only confirm these observations, but will also shed more light on the functions of crusader fortifications in general.

These fortifications can be divided into categories, depending on their size, location and design. In the north, Margat, Chastel Blanc (Safitha) and Tortosa represented some of the largest and most powerful fortresses ever built by the Franks. The outer walls of Margat, for example, enclosed a huge triangular mountain spur which dominated the strategic coastal route between Tripoli and the principality of Antioch. Indeed, Margat covered such a large area that it contained a small town, which was situated to the north of the inner citadel and

separated from it by a rock cut moat. The citadel itself was composed of numerous towers and buildings ranged around an inner courtyard, whose design suggests that they were either constructed in the first half of the twelfth century, or date from the period after 1186, when the Hospitallers bought Margat from its original Frankish owner. Perhaps the most significant structure from this later phase was the keep, a huge, round tower with walls 5.5 metres thick, which stood at the southern tip of the fortress, and was attached to several adjoining fortifications along the east and west curtain walls.¹

The layout of Margat's defences compares very closely with the design of Crac des Chevaliers, which was situated on a hill top overlooking the important land corridor between Tripoli and the Muslim interior. Crac des Chevaliers was another former baronial castle, whose earlier fortifications were considerably improved after the Hospitallers acquired it in 1142.² This was done by adding several flanking towers and an enormous talus to the south and west sides of the inner fortress, and subsequently constructing a whole new curtain wall around the entire site. As a result, Crac des Chevaliers also had two lines of defence, and an inner citadel which surrounded a central courtyard. Even more significantly, the new keep

¹ Cartulaire général de l'ordre des Hospitaliers de St-Jean de Jérusalem (1100-1310), ed. J. Delaville Le Roulx (4 vols., Paris, 1894-1906), I, no.783, 491-496, no.809, 505. Description based on Deschamps, La Défense du comté de Tripoli, pp.272-84; Rey, Etude, pp.19-38; W. Müller-Wiener, Castles of the Crusaders, trans. J.M. Brownjohn, (London 1966), pp.57-58; H. Kennedy, Crusader Castles, (Cambridge 1994), pp.167-79; Lawrence, Crusader Castles, p.88; C. Cahen, La Syrie du Nord à l'époque des croisades et la principauté franque d'Antioche, (Paris 1940), pp.171-72.

² Cartulaire, I, no.144, pp.116-18, no.391, pp.266-68.

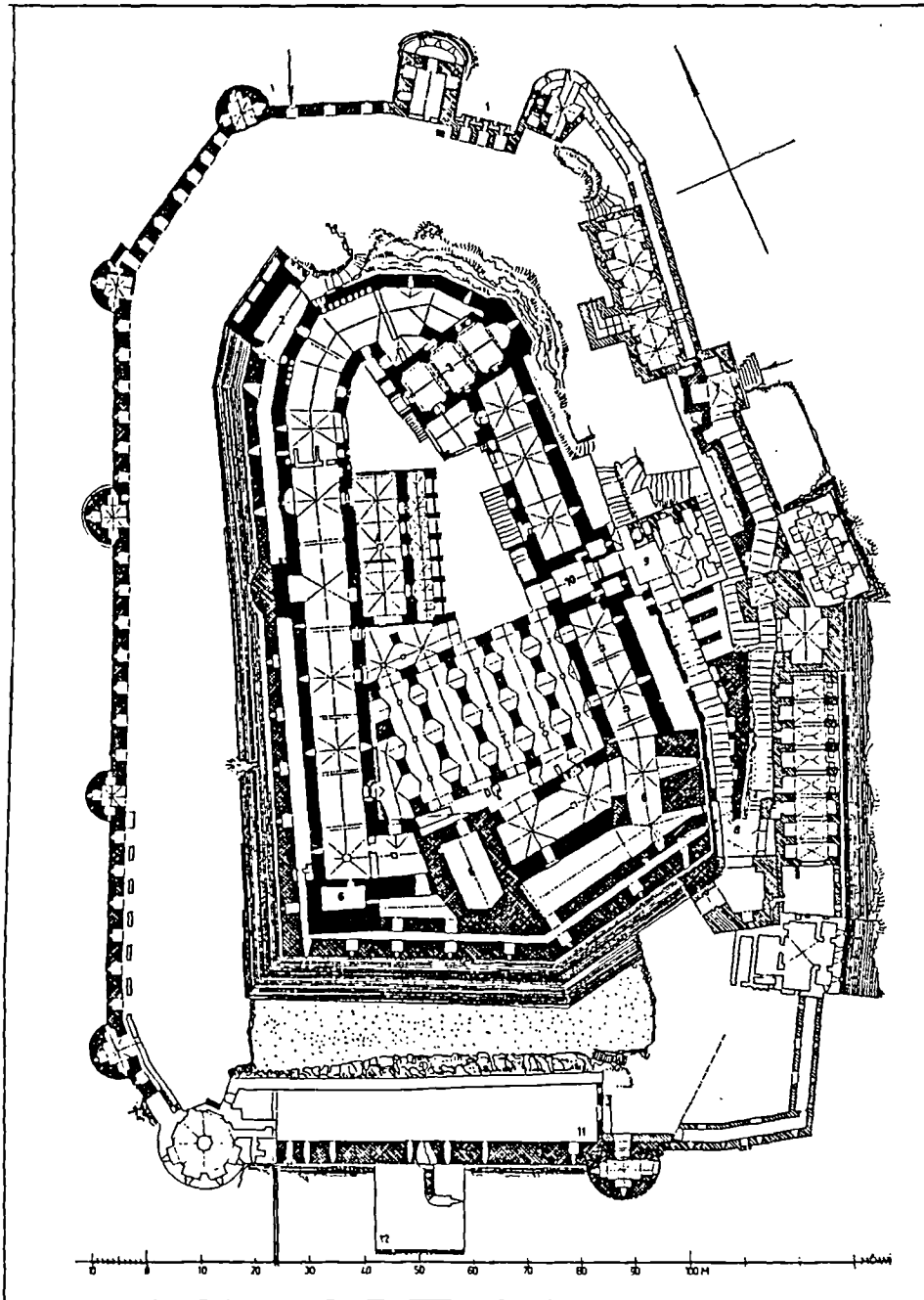


Fig.3. Krak des Chevaliers. From Müller-Wiener, Castles of the Crusaders, p.61.

constructed by the Hospitallers did not stand in isolation, but formed the central flanking towers along the south curtain of the inner bailey.³ Both Crac des Chevaliers and Margat therefore had donjons which were integrated with, rather than separate from, surrounding outer defences. These major alterations appear to have been undertaken after the devastating earthquakes of 1170 and 1202, but architectural evidence such as masonry marks, vaulting and the type of stonework used indicate that they were probably completed by c.1220. Bearing in mind that the Hospitallers did not acquire Margat until 1186, this suggests that the Order carried out its building programme in the thirty years following Saladin's invasion of Syria.⁴

Tortosa, which lay about forty miles up the coast from Tripoli, and Chastel Blanc, situated on a rocky knoll a few miles inland, were also considerably rebuilt during the crusader period. However, this was done at a much earlier stage, involved very different architectural techniques, and was carried out by the Templars rather than the Hospitallers. Indeed, a document dating from 1152 reveals that the Templars had already acquired Chastel Blanc by this stage, and were in the process of constructing new defences at Tortosa.⁵ These were dominated by the vast, rectangular keep, which stood in

³ Description based on Deschamps, Le Crac des Chevaliers, pp.142-305; Rey, Etude, pp.39-67; Müller-Wiener, Castles of the Crusaders, pp.59-62; Lawrence, Crusader Castles, pp.77-88; Kennedy, Crusader Castles, pp.150-63.

⁴ Deschamps, Le Crac des Chevaliers, pp.279-83; idem, La Défense du comté de Tripoli, pp.283-84.

⁵ J.S.C. Riley-Smith, 'The Templars and the Castle of Tortosa in Syria; an unknown document concerning the acquisition of the fortress', EHR, LXXXIV, (1969), 278-88, at 284-86.

the north west corner of the site, and was flanked by two corner towers situated at the water's edge. The land approaches to this structure were guarded by two successive ditches and curtain walls, equipped with several further flanking towers and shooting galleries. Beyond these defences the actual town and cathedral of Tortosa were protected by another rampart, which was not as powerful as those of the citadel, but could still halt minor incursions by rebels and Muslim raiders.⁶

The defensive strategy used at Tortosa also appeared at Chastel Blanc, where the Templars constructed another rectangular keep which could only be entered via a small door situated two metres above ground level. In order to reach this door, an attacker would first have to breach the outer curtain walls, which were built around the lower slopes of the site and had their own elaborate gateways. The design of these fortifications makes it extremely likely that they too were completed in the middle years of the twelfth century, or perhaps after the earthquake of 1170.⁷

Thus the donjons at Margat and Crac des Chevaliers were rounded or even circular in design, and were attached to surrounding structures, whereas those of Chastel Blanc and Tortosa were rectangular and stood in isolation. However, the sheer size of these strongholds, as well as their close proximity to each other, meant that the history of all four sites often overlapped. In 1188, for example, Saladin failed to capture any of them, and only managed to

⁶ Rey, Etude, pp.69-83, 211-14; Deschamps, La Défense du comté de Tripoli, pp.289-91; Kennedy, Crusader Castles, pp.134-44.

⁷ Rey, Etude, pp.85-92; Müller-Wiener, Castles of the Crusaders, pp.51-52; Deschamps, La Défense du comté de Tripoli, pp.252-58; Lawrence, Crusader Castles, pp.55-58; Kennedy, Crusader Castles, pp.138-41.

sack the town of Tortosa before continuing north toward Antioch.⁸ Seventeen years later Aleppine forces attacking Crac des Chevaliers and Margat were equally unsuccessful, although they did take considerable amounts of booty with them from the surrounding countryside.⁹ Another Aleppine army which invaded the area in 1218, thereby hoping to divert Frankish resources away from the crusade in Egypt, appears to have achieved more, for Oliver of Paderborn reported that it attacked Chastel Blanc and 'destroyed its towers'.¹⁰ However, this must either be an exaggeration, or only refer to the outer defences of the fortress, because the architectural evidence proves that Chastel Blanc's keep cannot date from the period after 1218. Consequently this structure may have thwarted the Muslims besieging it in the same way that the citadel of Tortosa proved too strong for Saladin in 1188.¹¹

Further evidence of the virtual impregnability of Tortosa, Chastel Blanc, Margat and Crac des Chevaliers dates from the mid-thirteenth century. All four castles clearly withstood the 10,000 Seljuk Turks sent against Tripoli by the ruler of Aleppo in 1252, as well as the 20,000 Khwarizmians who overran the region in 1244.¹² Admittedly, both these aggressors were probably more interested in

⁸ Baha' al-Din, Anecdotes, pp.106-7; Abu Shama, Deux Jardins, IV, 349-63; Eracles, II, 119-22.

⁹ al-Makrizi, Histoire d'Égypte, trans. E. Blochet, ROL, IX, (1902), 6-163, at 139nl.

¹⁰ Oliver of Paderborn, Historia Damiatina, ed. H. Hoogeweg, Bibliothek des Litterarischen Vereins in Stuttgart, CCXX, (Tübingen 1894), 235. See also Abu Shama, Deux Jardins, V, 166; Kamal-ad-Din, L'Histoire d'Alep, trans. E. Blochet, ROL, V, (1897), 37-107, at 55.

¹¹ Deschamps, La Défense du comté de Tripoli, p.257.

¹² 1252: Cartulaire, II, no.2605, pp.726-28. 1244: Eracles, II, 427-28; Marino Sanudo, Liber secretorum, p.217.

acquiring loot than Frankish castles, and are unlikely even to have contemplated besieging such powerful strongholds. Consequently, they posed less of a threat than Baybars, who spent most of his reign systematically picking off crusader fortifications. In Syria, he began to do so during the mid-1260s, when huge raids were launched against the county of Tripoli, which were intended to undermine the local economy and destroy crops needed to feed Frankish garrisons.¹³ The Mamluks carried out similar attacks in 1270, when they were only prevented from capturing Margat by the appalling weather.¹⁴ However, the following spring Baybars returned, and finally succeeded in taking Crac des Chevaliers, Chastel Blanc and several neighbouring castles, whose demoralized and underfed garrisons surrendered in a matter of weeks.¹⁵ This only left Tortosa, which the Templars evacuated after the loss of Acre,¹⁶ and Margat, whose valiant defenders managed to defeat one Muslim besieging force in 1281, before surrendering to another only four years later.¹⁷

Margat, Tortosa, Chastel Blanc and Crac des Chevaliers also shared several characteristics with larger Frankish strongholds located further south. Sidon, for example, can

¹³ al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, I(b), 27-28, 52; Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 85-86, 87, 116-18.

¹⁴ al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, I(b), 78-79; Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 139-40.

¹⁵ al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, I(b), 84-85; Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 143-49; Gestes, pp.768, 777; Eracles, II, 460; Marino Sanudo, Liber secretorum, p.224; Annales de Terre Sainte, pp.454 (text A), 455 (text B).

¹⁶ Marino Sanudo, Liber secretorum, p.232; al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, II(a), 126.

¹⁷ 1281: Marino Sanudo, Liber secretorum, p.228; Gestes, p.786; Annales de Terre Sainte, p.457 (text A). 1285: al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, II(a), 80; Gestes, p.792; Marino Sanudo, Liber secretorum, p.229.

be compared with Tortosa, for both were coastal settlements which appear to have been completely destroyed in the course of the twelfth century. At Tortosa, this had probably been done by Nur ad-Din during the spring of 1152, while Sidon's defences had been demolished by Saladin at the time of the Third Crusade.¹⁸ As we have seen, the Templars re-established Latin control over the former site by constructing a powerful new citadel, and a similar process subsequently also took place at Sidon.

This process started during the winter of 1227-28, when European crusaders waiting for the arrival of Frederick II built Sidon's sea castle, a compact fort composed of two interconnected towers, which was situated on a small island forty metres off the coast.¹⁹ Until this time the site appears to have been completely uninhabited, but during the next 25 years a new settlement must have sprung up, for in 1253 Louis IX deemed it necessary to provide Sidon with a town wall and another citadel, which stood on a small hill opposite the sea castle.²⁰ Despite a Mongol raid in 1260, these defences subsequently remained under Latin control until 1291, when its garrison tried to make a brief stand in the sea castle, before withdrawing to

¹⁸ Tortosa: Riley-Smith, 'The Templars and the Castle of Tortosa', 278-79, 284-85. Sidon: Abu Shama, Deux Jardins, IV, 462.

¹⁹ Gestes, p.676; Eracles, II, 365; Deschamps, La Défense du royaume de Jérusalem, pp.229-33; Rey, Etude, pp.154-59; Kennedy, Crusader Castles, 122-24; Müller-Wiener, Castles of the Crusaders, p.70.

²⁰ Joinville, Histoire de Saint Louis, pp.302, 336; Deschamps, La Défense du royaume de Jérusalem, pp.227-29; Kennedy, Crusader Castles, p.121; Müller-Wiener, Castles of the Crusaders, p.70. The theory that Sidon remained uninhabited until the late 1220s is based on a comment, made by a passing pilgrim in 1211, that the town lay in ruins. See Willbrand of Oldenburg, Itinerarium Terrae Sanctae, ed. S. de Sandoli, Itinera Hierosolymitana Crucesignatorum, III, (Jerusalem 1983), p.202.

Cyprus in the face of overwhelming Muslim forces.²¹

A similar strategy of concentrating almost all one's efforts on the citadel rather than the outer fortifications of a site was also employed by the Franks elsewhere along the coast. At Beirut, the German pilgrim Willbrand of Oldenburg described the citadel as a large, imposing structure, built on a rocky knoll and defended by a deep ditch, several towers and two successive curtain walls.²² This stronghold had been left intact by Saladin, was strengthened by the German crusaders who recaptured it in 1197, and was later considerably improved by the new Ibelin lords of Beirut early in the thirteenth century.²³ Consequently, it successfully withstood the Lombard siege of 1231-32, despite being mined and bombarded almost constantly for several months. It must therefore have been considerably stronger than the town wall of Beirut, which was demolished by Saladin, and subsequently replaced by a rampart which the Lombards breached in the space of just one night.²⁴

Similar observations can also be made about Caesarea,

²¹ 1260: see below, pp.103-4. 1291: Gestes, p.817; al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, II(a), 130-31.

²² Willbrand of Oldenburg, Itinerarium, p.204. Philip of Novara called the moat at Beirut 'one of the finest in the world'. See The Wars of Frederick II, p.121.

²³ 1197: Arnold of Lübeck, Chronica Slavorum, pp.205-6. Ibelin improvements Gestes, pp.678-79.

²⁴ 1231-32: Philip of Novara, The Wars of Frederick II, pp.120, 120-22, 128-37; Gestes, p.701; Chronique d'Amadi, pp.148-49; Florio Bustron, Chronique, pp.81, 82-88. Saladin captured Beirut in 1187 and demolished its outer walls in 1190. See Eraclès, II, 71, 140. The crusader town wall at Beirut probably resembled its later Ottoman replacement. See R. Du Mesnil du Buisson, 'Les anciennes défenses de Beyrouth', Syria, II, (1921), 235-57, 317-27, at 235, 251, 317-26.

Arsuf, Jaffa and Ascalon, all of which had either been partially or totally destroyed by Saladin.²⁵ Between 1191 and 1192 Richard I reoccupied these sites, and may have carried out repairs at Caesarea and Arsuf. He also built more extensive new fortifications at Ascalon and Jaffa,²⁶ which successfully withstood a Muslim attack shortly afterwards.²⁷ However, the sheer speed with which Richard erected these defences suggests that they only amounted to a limited reconstruction of older structures, particularly at Ascalon, where the inner curtain wall around the town was hastily rebuilt, but many of the powerful outworks protecting the site in the twelfth century must surely have been left in ruins.²⁸ Moreover, even these efforts were shortlived, for Jaffa was sacked and demolished by the Muslims in 1197,²⁹ and Ascalon was destroyed as part of the peace treaty with Saladin.³⁰ In addition, Caesarea

²⁵ For a full list of these and other castles sleighted by Saladin, see Itinerarium, pp.280-82; Ambroise, L'Estoire de la guerre sainte, lines 6,840-69, col.183; Abu Shama, Deux Jardins, IV, 462.

²⁶ Caesarea: Itinerarium, pp.254-56; M. Benveisti, The Crusaders in the Holy Land, (Jerusalem 1970), p.138. Arsuf: Itinerarium, p.282; Matthew Paris, Chronica Maiora, II, 376. Jaffa: Itinerarium, p.284; Eracles, II, 186; Ambroise, L'Estoire de la guerre sainte, lines 6,941-7,053, cols.185-88. Ascalon: ibid, lines 7,778-8,086, cols.208-16; Itinerarium, pp.315-17; D. Pringle, 'King Richard I and the walls of Ascalon', PEQ, CXVI, (1984), 133-47, at 136-42.

²⁷ See below, p.93.

²⁸ Rey, Etude, pp.205-10; Benvenisti, The Crusaders in the Holy Land, pp.121-25; p. Deschamps, 'Les entrées des châteaux des croisés en Syrie et leurs défenses', Syria, XIII (1932), 369-87, at 386.

²⁹ Eracles, II, 218-21; Arnold of Lübeck, Chronica Slavorum, p.204; Abu Shama, Deux Jardins, V, 116, 152; Abu'l-Fida, Annales, p.74; Ibn al-Athir, Kamel Altevarykh, II, 84-86.

³⁰ See above p.11.

was considerably strengthened at the time of the Fifth Crusade (1218), whilst in 1211 Arsuf's population still lived in constant fear of local bandits.³¹ This implies that these sites were lacking adequate urban fortifications, and were only protected by isolated citadels during the two decades following the battle of Hattin.

Subsequent efforts to maintain or reestablish Frankish control over Caesarea, Ascalon, Jaffa and Arsuf were often equally tentative. Ascalon, for example, lay in ruins between 1192 and 1240, when its citadel was rebuilt by Theobald of Champagne's followers.³² This project was completed by Richard of Cornwall in 1241,³³ after which the castle was entrusted to the Hospitallers, who held Ascalon until it was recaptured by the Egyptians a mere six years later.³⁴ Similarly, Jaffa may well have remained

³¹ Caesarea: Oliver of Paderborn, Historia Damiatina, pp.168-70; Eracles, II, 325. Arsuf: Willbrand of Oldenburg, Itinerarium, p.232.

³² Rothelin, pp.531-32, 553; Eracles, II, 413-14; Marino Sanudo, Liber secretorum, p.215. Pringle ('King Richard I and the walls of Ascalon', 143-44) and Benvenisti (The Crusaders in the Holy Land, pp.120, 126) both argue that there were no attempts to rebuild Ascalon's town walls after 1192.

³³ Matthew Paris, Chronica Maiora, IV, 143. See also Rothelin, pp.555-56; Eracles, II, 421. Pringle ('King Richard I and the walls of Ascalon', 144-46) and Benvenisti (The Crusaders in the Holy Land, pp.125-26) disagree on the exact location of this citadel. See also Marshall, Warfare in the Latin East, p.102.

³⁴ Hospitallers: Cartulaire, II, no.2320, p.615. Egyptian attack: Rothelin, p.565; Eracles, II, 741; Matthew Paris, Chronica Maiora, IV, 343; Annales de Terre Sainte, p.442; Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 10-11; Abu Shama, Deux Jardins, V, 194; Abu'l-Fida, Annales, p.125.

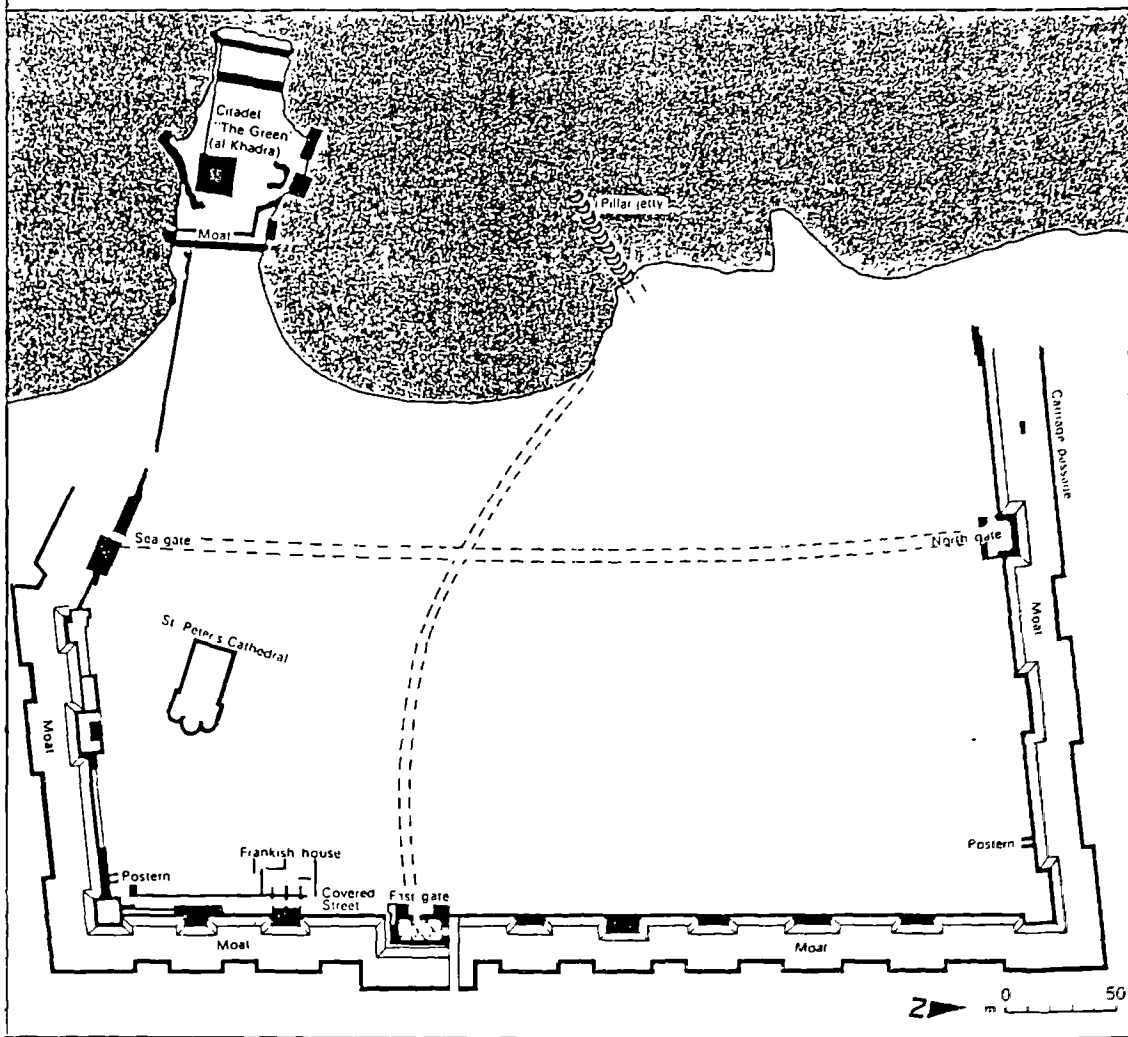


Fig.4. Caesarea: the citadel and Louis IX's town walls. From Benvenisti, The Crusaders in the Holy Land, p.140.

unoccupied from 1197 onwards,³⁵ while the defences erected at Caesarea in 1218 were promptly destroyed by the ruler of Damascus within a few months of their completion.³⁶ It seems that these places were then abandoned until Frederick II provided them with new citadels in the late 1220s,³⁷ and they may not have been properly recolonized until the mid-thirteenth century, when Louis IX finally built new town walls at both sites.³⁸ Although their citadel was strengthened by John of Ibelin in 1240, and later described as 'very strong' by Joinville,³⁹ the inhabitants of Arsuf may also have remained largely unprotected until the 1260s, when the Hospitallers acquired this lordship and extended its urban defences considerably.⁴⁰ By this point, however, Frankish control over the entire coastline was quickly being eroded by Baybars, who captured Arsuf and Caesarea in 1265, and Jaffa in 1268.⁴¹

³⁵ Marshall, Warfare in the Latin East, p.140. For more details on the history of Jaffa, see ibid, pp.139-44.

³⁶ Eracles, II, 334; Oliver of Paderborn, Historia Damiatina, p.244; James of Vitry, Lettres, ed. R.B.C. Huygens, (Leiden 1960), pp.101-2.

³⁷ Chronique d'Ernoult et de Bernard le Trésorier, ed. L. de Mas Latrie, (Paris 1871), pp.458-61; Eracles, II, 373; Matthew Paris, Chronica Maiora, III, 175.

³⁸ Jaffa: Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 107; Joinville, Histoire de Saint Louis, pp.282-84, 306-8. Caesarea: ibid, pp.256, 258, 336; Benvenisti, The Crusaders in the Holy Land, p.141.

³⁹ Gestes, p.728, Annales de Terre Sainte, p.440. Quote: Joinville, Histoire de Saint Louis, p.308.

⁴⁰ Cartulaire, III, no.2972, p.1, no.2985, p.6; RRH, no.1302, p.341, no.1313, p.343; Gestes, pp.758-59; J.S.C. Riley-Smith, The Knights of St.John in Jerusalem and Cyprus, 1050-1310, (London 1967), pp.133-34.

⁴¹ Arsuf and Caesarea: Gestes, p.758; Eracles, II, 450; Marino Sanudo, Liber secretorum, p.222; Annales de Terre Sainte, pp.451-52; al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans,

To the north of these sites, the Franks also held Pilgrims' Castle, one of the largest coastal strongholds in the kingdom of Jerusalem. This fortress had been constructed in 1218 by Templars, Teutonic Knights and members of the Fifth Crusade, and consequently provides us with a rare example of a thirteenth century castle which was built from scratch. It was located on a narrow headland, whose landward side was protected by two successive curtain walls incorporating several flanking towers, elaborate gateways, shooting galleries and murder holes. Particularly impressive were the two rectangular towers of the inner rampart, which were so tall that they enabled the garrison to observe an approaching enemy as far as eight miles away, and therefore formed a kind of inner citadel in the same way that the southern towers at Crac des Chevaliers did.⁴² Pilgrims' Castle can also be compared with Tortosa, for it was held by the Templars, and proved so strong that it never fell to the Muslims, but was simply evacuated by the Order in August 1291.⁴³

I(b), 6-15; Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 70-71, 73-82. Jaffa: Gestes, p.771; Eracles, II, 456; Marino Sanudo, Liber secretorum, p.223; al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, I(b), 51; Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 106-8.

⁴² Oliver of Paderborn, Historia Damiatina, pp.169-71. See also James of Vitry, Lettres, pp.99-100; Matthew Paris, Chronica Maiora, III, 14; Burchard of Mount Sion, Descriptio Terrae Sanctae, ed. J.C.M. Laurent, (Leipzig 1873), p.83; C.N. Johns, 'Excavations at Pilgrims' Castle ('Atlit): The Ancient Tell and the Outer Defences of the Castle', QDAP, III, (1933-34), 145-64, at 152-64; C.N. Johns, Guide to 'Atlit: the Crusader Castle, Town and Surroundings, (Jerusalem 1947), pp.36-67. Briefer descriptions also in Deschamps, La Défense du royaume de Jérusalem, pp.32-33; Rey, Etude, pp.95-100; Benvenisti, The Crusaders in the Holy Land, pp.179-82; Kennedy, Crusader Castles, pp.124-27.

⁴³ Gestes, p.818; Marino Sanudo, Liber secretorum, p.232.

Like Tortosa, Pilgrims' Castle also had a small town attached to it, which was defended by a much lower and weaker rampart.⁴⁴ This settlement was probably overrun in 1220, when al-Muazzam of Damascus tried and failed to capture the newly completed fortress.⁴⁵ In 1265 it suffered a similar fate at the hands of Baybars, who destroyed its buildings and cut down the nearby orchards.⁴⁶ Baybars also ravaged the territories around Pilgrims' Castle in 1264 and 1266, but he never attempted to besiege the actual fortress itself.⁴⁷ Consequently, this stronghold epitomized the defensive strategy adopted by the Franks at all the coastal sites which have been mentioned so far. Frankish efforts to protect these settlements always centred around a compact and heavily fortified citadel. At some sites, most notably Ascalon, the crusaders never got beyond this stage, and there is no evidence that the twelfth century town was properly reinhabited, either in 1192 or between 1240 and 1247. At other places, such as Sidon, Tortosa, Jaffa and Caesarea, the construction of a castle merely provided a first step toward urban regeneration, while at Pilgrims' Castle, a new fortress spawned an entirely new settlement.

Pilgrims' Castle can therefore be placed in the same category as its coastal neighbours further north. Similarly, Chastel Blanc, Margat and Crac des Chevaliers bear a close resemblance to the inland strongholds which

⁴⁴ C.N. Johns, 'Excavations at Pilgrims' Castle ('Atlīt): The Faubourg and its Defences', QDAP, I, (1932), 111-29, at 112-24; Benvenisti, The Crusaders in the Holy Land, pp.178-79; Johns, Guide to 'Atlīt, pp.74-76, 81-85.

⁴⁵ See below, p.85.

⁴⁶ al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, I(b), 8; Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 72.

⁴⁷ al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, I(a), 239, I(b), 28; Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 67, 86-87.

the Franks held in Galilee. This point can be illustrated by looking at the castle of Montfort, which became the headquarters of the Teutonic Knights during the middle third of the thirteenth century, and lay at the heart of an extensive lordship held by the Order a few miles north east of Acre. Montfort was situated on a precipitous spur acquired by the German knights in 1228, and it therefore dates entirely from the thirteenth century.⁴⁸ Its defences were arranged around a large 'D' shaped keep, which stood in isolation at the eastern tip of the spur. Consequently, the extensive outer fortifications and residential buildings to the west of this structure were largely designed to prevent attackers from gaining access to it. Although the site is generally steeper and less accessible, the strong emphasis on an isolated keep is therefore similar to that of Chastel Blanc.⁴⁹

To the east of Montfort and overlooking the river Jordan, the castle of Saphet can be said to represent the Galilean equivalent of Crac des Chevaliers. This is implied in the scant archaeological remains still visible at the site, as well as the famous anonymous description of the fortress known as De constructione castris Saphet. Between them these sources indicate that the Templar castle built from 1240 onwards consisted of an outer wall approximately 22 metres high and 825 metres long, which ran around a second and much higher inner rampart dominated by a large, circular keep. The exact appearance of this keep is difficult to establish, for it was later replaced by a

⁴⁸ See below, pp.151-52.

⁴⁹ D. Pringle, 'A thirteenth century hall at Montfort castle in western Galilee', Antiquaries Journal, LXVI, (1986), 52-82, at 54-56. See also E.W.G. Masterman, 'A Crusaders Fortress in Palestine', PEQ, (1928), 91-97, at 94-97; Benvenisti, The Crusaders in the Holy Land, pp.335-37; Rey, Etude, pp.146-51; Marshall, Warfare in the Latin East, pp.108-11; Kennedy, Crusader Castles, pp.129-31.

similar Mamluk structure, but it may have been one of the seven towers of the inner citadel mentioned in De constructione castri Saphet. This document also indicates that the outer wall was flanked by a further seven towers, and was provided with underground tunnels which led to several casemates guarding the castle's outer moat. Consequently, Saphet's defences were arranged in successive rings, and its keep may have been an unusually large flanking tower rather than an isolated structure.⁵⁰ This concentric design was taken one step further at Belvoir, an almost symmetrical fortress whose defences were composed of two successive walls forming a square within a square. Belvoir was constructed in the twelfth century to guard the Jordan crossings south of Lake Tiberias, and although it was restored to the Franks in 1241, it remains uncertain whether the Hospitallers actually reoccupied it during the brief period before the Egyptian and Khwarizmian conquests of 1244-47.⁵¹

The concentric fortifications built at Crac des Chevaliers, Belvoir and Saphet were intended to defend hill tops whose slopes were relatively accessible. At

⁵⁰ 'Un nouveau traité du texte De constructione castri Saphet', ed. R.B.C. Huygens, Studi Medievali, ser.III, VI, part 1, (1965), 335-87, at lines 160-93, pp.383-84; D. Pringle, 'Review Article: Reconstructing the Castle of Safad', PEQ, CXVII, (1985), 139-49. Another description of Saphet is given by Huygens in his introduction to the medieval text (De constructione castri Saphet, 370-77), although Pringle ('Review Article, 141, 142, 145) criticizes many of his conclusions. See also Deschamps, La Défense du royaume de Jérusalem, pp.140-42; Benvenisti, The Crusaders in the Holy Land, pp.199-201; Kennedy, Crusader Castles, pp.128-29.

⁵¹ 1241: Matthew Paris, Chronica Maiora, IV, 142. For a brief description of Belvoir, see J. Prawer, The Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem, (London 1972), pp.300-7. Marshall (Warfare in the Latin East, pp.20-21) and Riley-Smith (The Knights of St.John, pp.415-16, 436-37) disagree on whether Belvoir was properly regarrisoned after 1241.

Montfort, however, the east side of the castle was far steeper, and therefore less fortified, than the western approaches to the site. Likewise, both Beaufort and Mt Tabor could, to a certain extent, rely on their isolated location to protect them against besiegers. Beaufort, for example, could not be attacked from the east, where an almost sheer cliff dropped away to the Litani river, hundreds of metres below. The outcrop on which this castle stood was also separated from surrounding hills to the north, south and west by deep gorges and ditches excavated during the crusader period. Consequently, the outcrop itself formed an isolated stronghold which required relatively few flanking towers apart from those which guarded the actual gateway. Most of these structures either date from the twelfth century, or the period after 1268, when Baybars captured the fortress. The only significant addition made by the Franks between 1240 and 1268 appears to have been the new citadel constructed by the Templars on the plateau opposite the south side of the castle. This plateau was occupied by a walled town during the thirteenth century, but also represented the most obvious spot for potential attackers to deploy siege engines against Beaufort itself. Consequently, the Templar citadel was probably intended to protect both the town and the strategic ground it stood on.⁵²

Although Beaufort can justifiably be described as a mountain castle, it still therefore had a weak side which could be exploited by the Muslims. This became apparent in 1268, when Baybars did indeed seize the southern plateau,

⁵² Deschamps, La Défense du royaume de Jérusalem, pp.198-208. See also Müller-Wiener, Castles of the Crusaders, pp.62-63; Rey, Etude, pp.127-32.

and then besieged the fortress from there.⁵³ Mt Tabor, however, had such steep slopes, rising 400 metres above the plain of Galilee, that its summit was almost equally inaccessible on all sides. In 1211 al-Adil strengthened this site even further by encircling it with a vast curtain wall, 1,750 metres in length and flanked by ten powerful towers.⁵⁴ Its garrison launched regular attacks against Acre, which were so damaging that they may have acted as a catalyst for the Fifth Crusade. Although this expedition subsequently failed to capture Mt Tabor,⁵⁵ it persuaded the Muslims to demolish their new castle rather than risk losing it to a similar Frankish campaign in the future.⁵⁶ As a result, Mt Tabor remained unfortified between 1218 and 1255, when the Hospitallers acquired it.⁵⁷ This Order held the mountain until it was taken by Baybars in 1263, but the speed with which he did this, combined with the lack of archaeological evidence, suggests that the Hospitallers merely occupied, and perhaps fortified, the small monastery in the south east

⁵³ Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 108-12. See also al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, I(b), 51; Gestes, p.771; Eracles, II, 456.

⁵⁴ Eracles, II, 317; Marino Sanudo, Liber secretorum, p.206; Abu'l-Fida, Annales, pp.86-87; Benvenisti, The Crusaders in the Holy Land, p.360-61.

⁵⁵ Oliver of Paderborn, Historia Damiatina, pp.165-67; Eracles, II, 324; James of Vitry, Lettres, p.98; Abu Shama, Deux Jardins, V, 163-64.

⁵⁶ Oliver of Paderborn, Historia Damiatina, pp.171-72; James of Vitry, Lettres, p.108; Eracles, II, 330-31; Matthew Paris, Chronica Maiora, III, 14; Abu Shama, Deux Jardins, V, 165-66.

⁵⁷ Cartulaire, II, no.2726, p.777, no.2811, pp.815-17; Marino Sanudo, Liber secretorum, p.220; Eracles, II, 442; Riley-Smith, The Knights of St. John, pp.413-17, 427-28. It seems very unlikely that this site was reoccupied following the Christian gains of 1241. See Benvenisti, The Crusaders in the Holy Land, p.360.

corner of al-Adil's ruined stronghold.⁵⁸

The total absence of major Hospitaller defences on Mt Tabor after 1255 can probably be explained in terms of limited financial resources and deteriorating military circumstances. Consequently, even though it was strategically important, it did not put up as much resistance against Baybars as Montfort, Saphet and Beaufort. Saphet, for example, withstood six weeks of almost constant mining and bombardment, and only capitulated after Baybars had managed to sow discord amongst its defenders (1266).⁵⁹ Montfort caused the Mamluks even more problems, and did not finally surrender until 1271, after an earlier failed siege in 1266.⁶⁰ In addition, it has been noted that the Franks lost Beaufort in 1268, making it one of the last inland fortresses captured by Baybars in the kingdom of Jerusalem.⁶¹ This latter castle had also resisted Saladin for over a year between 1189 and 1190, while all three strongholds appear to have withstood the Khwarizmian assault of 1244 with ease.⁶² Moreover, in 1260 the Franks may well have been

⁵⁸ Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 56nl; Benvenisti, The Crusaders in the Holy Land, pp.361-62.

⁵⁹ al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, I(b), 27-31; Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 88-96; Gestes, pp.764-66; Eracles, pp.454-55; Marino Sanudo, Liber secretorum, pp.222-23.

⁶⁰ 1266: Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 87; al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, I(b), 27; Annales de Terre Sainte, p.452 (text B). 1271: ibid, p.455; Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 106-12; al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, I(b), 87; Eracles, II, 460; Gestes, p.778.

⁶¹ See above, pp.59-60.

⁶² 1189-90: Abu Shama, Deux Jardins, IV, 395-400, 441; Ibn al-Athir, Kamel Altevarykh, I, 738-39; Abu'l-Fida, Annales, p.61; Eracles, II, 110-11, 187-88. 1244: the sources only mention Saphet individually during this period, but it is self-evident from later events that

thinking of these sites when they acknowledged that even if the rest of the kingdom were overrun by the Mongols, a few of the most powerful castles would still hold out.⁶³

The compact design and inaccessible location of castles like Beaufort and Montfort forms a sharp contrast with the numerous urban fortifications built or inherited by the Franks. These defences were intended to protect large, sprawling settlements in low lying areas and therefore they could not always depend on physical isolation to enhance their overall strength. This was certainly the case at Acre, where vast fortifications were needed to compensate for the almost completely flat terrain of the surrounding coastal plain. Thus in 1335 a German traveller wrote that 'this famous city situated on the coast is constructed using extraordinarily large blocks of stone, with high and strong towers standing scarcely a stone's throw away from each other. Each gate is flanked by two towers. The walls were, and still are, so thick that two chariots going in opposite directions could easily meet on them. On the landward side they were also extremely powerful, with very deep ditches, further protected by a series of bastions and outworks of various types'.⁶⁴

Similar descriptions recorded by other pilgrims, as well as contemporary maps of the city, enable us to build up a fairly accurate picture of Acre's thirteenth century

Montfort and Beaufort also remained in Frankish hands. See Rothelin, p.562; Matthew Paris, Chronica Maiora, IV, 338.

⁶³ Jackson, 'The Crisis', 492.

⁶⁴ Ludolf of Sudheim, De itinere Terrae Sanctae, ed. F. Deycks, Bibliothek des Litterarischen Vereins in Stuttgart, XXV (Stuttgart 1851), 39-40.

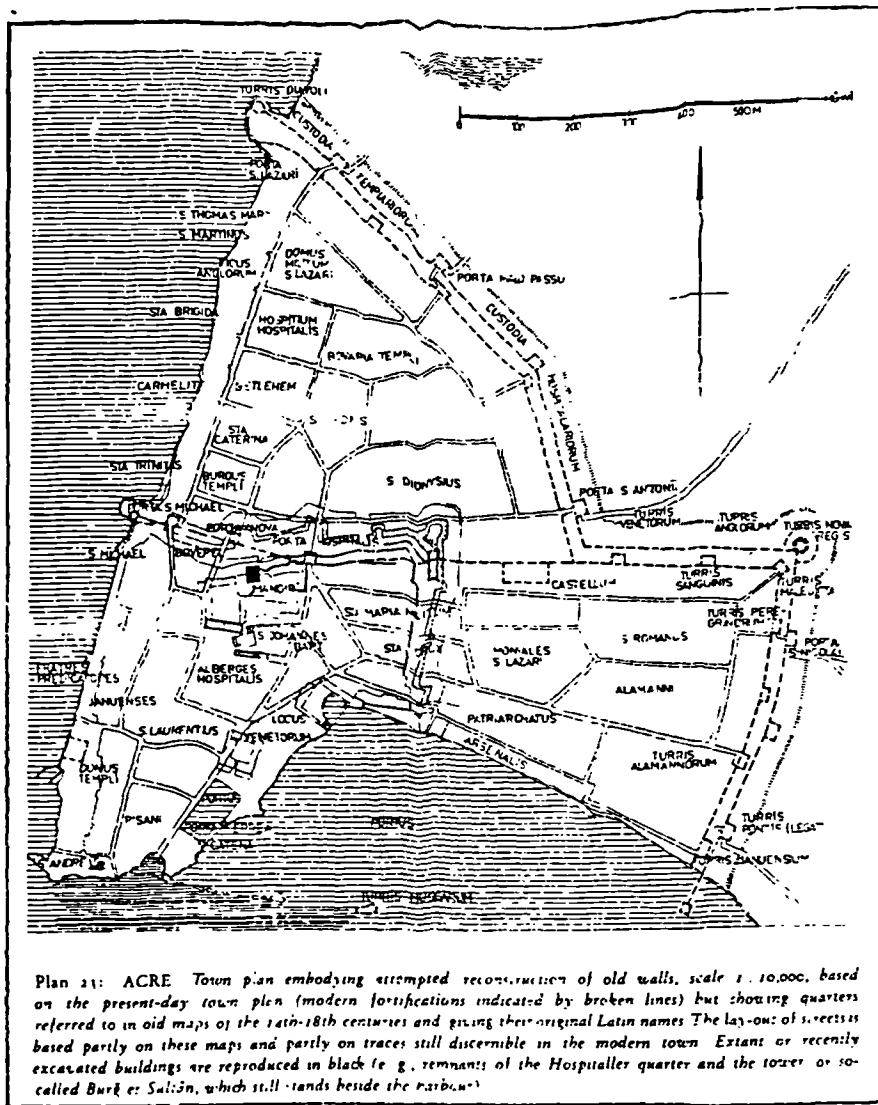


Fig.5. Acre: the double walls and the citadel (castellum).
From Müller-Wiener, Castles of the Crusaders, p.73.

defences.⁶⁵ These were dominated by the double ramparts which ran from the city's outer harbour as far inland as the Accursed Tower and the Tower of King Henry, before continuing north toward the far shoreline beyond the suburb of Montmusard.⁶⁶ This latter section of the walls was strengthened by Louis IX, but accounts of the Third Crusade make it clear that Montmusard was already fortified in some way long before the 1250s.⁶⁷ Acre's ramparts were also flanked by numerous alternating towers and salients, some of which had gates incorporated into their side walls.⁶⁸ In addition, the approaches to the city were guarded by various earthworks and pallisades, particularly around the exposed angle of the Accursed Tower. King Hugh III of Cyprus (1267-84), the lord Edward and the countess of Blois (who came to Acre on crusade in 1287) all built new fortifications in this area during the final years of Frankish rule, and these bore the brunt of

⁶⁵ Willbrand of Oldenburg, Itinerarium, p.200; Burchard of Mount Sion, Descriptio, p.23. The famous fourteenth century Genoese map of Acre is reproduced at the back of Marino Sanudo, Liber secretorum, and also in D. Jacoby, 'Crusader Acre in the thirteenth century: urban layout and topography', in idem, Studies on the Crusader States and on Venetian Expansion, (Northampton 1989), c.5, 1-45, at figs.1-4.

⁶⁶ G. Rey, 'Etude sur la Topographie de la ville d'Acre au XIIIe siècle', Mémoires de la société nationale des antiquaires de France, XXXIX, (Paris 1878), 115-45, at 118-32; Müller-Wiener, Castles of the Crusaders, pp.72-74; Benvenisti, The Crusaders in the Holy Land, pp.93-95.

⁶⁷ Louis IX: Joinville, Histoire de Saint Louis, pp.334, 336; Marino Sanudo, Liber secretorum, p.219. Montmusard during the Third Crusade: Matthew Paris, Chronica Maiora, II, 360. For more evidence on this, see D. Jacoby, 'Montmusard, suburb of crusader Acre: the first stage of its development', in idem, Studies on the Crusader States, c.6, 205-17, especially at 213.

⁶⁸ Towers: Willbrand of Oldenburg, Itinerarium, p.200; Rey, 'Etude sur la Topographie', 124-25, 130, 132. Gates: ibid, 125-26, 131; Benvenisti, The Crusaders in the Holy Land, p.95.

the Muslim attack in 1291.⁶⁹ The extensive defences which protected Acre were probably also very similar to those of Tripoli, another coastal settlement which could easily be approached from inland. Consequently, this side of the city was guarded by a double wall, strong towers and deep, wide ditches. According to Willbrand of Oldenburg, Tripoli's gates were also strengthened by elaborate barbicans and other complex outworks, which ensured that the city remained in Frankish hands until 1289.⁷⁰

The city of Jerusalem, which lies in a valley surrounded by higher ground, was, if anything, even more exposed than both Acre and Tripoli. During the crusader period it was surrounded by a single curtain wall, which was protected by an adjoining rock cut moat in certain areas, and had four principal gateways incorporated into it (St. Stephen's or the Damascus gate to the north, Zion gate to the south, David's gate to the west and the Golden gate to the east). It is relatively easy to establish where this wall stood, for it generally followed the same course as the present Ottoman ramparts.⁷¹

After the Muslims captured Jerusalem in October 1187, they initially repaired and maintained its defences, but these were subsequently slighted by al-Muazzam in 1219, as part of the same scorched earth tactic which had led to the

⁶⁹ Gestes, pp.808-9; Marino Sanudo, Liber secretorum, pp.229, 230; Annales de Terre Sainte, p.459; Rey, 'Etude sur la Topographie', 127-29; Deschamps, 'Les entrées des châteaux', 386-87.

⁷⁰ Willbrand of Oldenburg, Itinerarium, p.210. 1289: Abu'l-Fida, Annales, 162-63; Gestes, pp.802-4; Marino Sanudo, Liber secretorum, pp.229-30; Annales de Terre Sainte, p.460; al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, II(a), 101-3.

⁷¹ Benvenisti, The Crusaders in the Holy Land, pp.49-52.

destruction of Mt Tabor.⁷² Archaeological evidence suggests that ten years later Frederick II tried to rectify this situation by repairing Zion gate and St. Stephen's gate, where remains have been found of flanking towers protecting an 'L' shaped entrance.⁷³ These improvements may have been carried out by the Teutonic Knights, whom Frederick gave several properties in the city and relied on to garrison his new acquisition.⁷⁴ However, the apparent ease with which 15,000 Muslim peasants broke into and looted Jerusalem soon after Frederick's departure, suggests that its walls were never adequately reconstructed after 1219.⁷⁵ Consequently, life must have been difficult for the few Latins who returned to the city between 1229 and 1244, when Jerusalem was finally lost to the Khwarizmians.⁷⁶ Similarly, it seems unlikely that the Franks built new town walls at Tiberias, which they recovered in 1241, but had already lost by 1247. Indeed, although its lord, Odo of Montbéliard, built a new citadel at Tiberias during this period, it cannot be proved that the town itself was ever recolonized by the Latins.⁷⁷ This may also apply to the towns of Ramlah and

⁷² 1187 onwards: Abu Shama, Deux Jardins, V, 49-51. 1219: Eracles, II, 339; Marino Sanudo, Liber secretorum, p.208; Matthew Paris, Chronica Maiora, III, 39; Abu'l-Fida, Annales, p.91; Abu Shama, Deux Jardins, V, 173-75.

⁷³ Benvenisti, The Crusaders in the Holy Land, p.51. See also Matthew Paris, Chronica Maiora, III, 177; Rothelin, p.529.

⁷⁴ Tabulae ordinis Theutonici, ed. E. Strehlke, (Berlin 1869), no.69, p.55; C.N. Johns, 'The Citadel, Jerusalem: a Summary of Work since 1934', QDAP, XIV, (1950), 121-90, at 167; I. Sterns, 'The Teutonic Knights in the Crusader States', in HC, V (1985), 315-78, at 365.

⁷⁵ Eracles, II, 384-85.

⁷⁶ See above, p.14.

⁷⁷ Eracles, II, 432-33; Joinville, Histoire de Saint Louis, pp.288, 290. 1241: Matthew Paris, Chronica Maiora, IV, 142. 1247: see above, p.14.

Lydda, whose twelfth century defences were destroyed by Saladin, and still lay in ruins when Willbrand of Oldenburg passed by in 1211.⁷⁸

The only other fortified cities held by the Franks during the thirteenth century were Tyre and Antioch. Unlike the settlements mentioned so far, both these sites could in fact rely on their location as well as their defences for protection. This was particularly true of Tyre, a fortified island which was only linked to the mainland by a narrow causeway. At least three successive curtain walls and as many as five separate gateways guarded this causeway, which was also severed by a vast moat occasionally filled with sea water. In addition, the rest of Tyre was surrounded by a double wall, so that it was almost equally well defended against seaborne attackers.⁷⁹ As a result, Saladin failed to capture the city in the autumn of 1187, even though he deployed both his fleet and his land forces against it. Saladin's failure may also have deterred his successors, for the Muslims never tried to attack the city again, and in 1291 it was evacuated by its Christian inhabitants.⁸⁰

⁷⁸ Itinerarium, p.280; Ambroise, L'Estoire de la guerre sainte, line 6,855, col.183; Ibn al-Athir, Kamel Altevarykh, II, 52; Baha'-al-Din, Anecdotes, p.268. 1211: Willbrand of Oldenburg, Itinerarium, p.238. See also Benvenisti, The Crusaders in the Holy Land, p.171.

⁷⁹ William of Tyre, Chronique, ed. R.B.C. Huygens, (2 vols, Turnhout 1986), Bk.13, c.5; Willbrand of Oldenburg, Itinerarium, p.202; Burchard of Mount Sion, Descriptio, p.25; Ibn Jubayr, Extrait du voyage d'Ibn Djobeïr, RHC Or. III, 451-52. For further descriptions of Tyre up to the last century, see Deschamps, La Défense du royaume de Jérusalem, pp.135-37.

⁸⁰ 1187: Eracles, II, 105-9; Baha'-al-Din, Anecdotes, pp.98-99, 102-3; Abu Shama, Deux Jardins, IV, 341-45; Ibn al-Athir, Kamel Altevarykh, I, 694-96. 1291: al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, II(a), 126-27; Marino Sanudo, Liber secretorum, p.231; Annales de Terre Sainte, p.460 (text B); Gestes, p.815.

Unlike Tyre, Antioch relied on rugged terrain rather than water to give it added strength, for the city was built on the slopes of Mount Silpius, and its walls formed a triangle whose apex was situated at the summit of the mountain. These fortifications, which were more than 12 kilometres long and were renowned for their size and strength, had in fact been constructed during the reign of Justinian, and therefore probably only incorporated minor Frankish repairs and improvements.⁸¹ Indeed, the Franks were lucky to have inherited such powerful urban defences, for they deterred Saladin from besieging Antioch, and subsequently ensured that the principality survived into the thirteenth century, even though many smaller crusader castles to the north and east had either been destroyed or captured in 1188. Further south, Saladin had also seized Latakia and Saone, thereby virtually severing the city's land links with the county of Tripoli, and turning it into a somewhat isolated Frankish outpost until it was stormed by Baybars in 1268.⁸² This in turn had a severe impact on Antioch's economic welfare, for much of the twelfth century trade which had passed through the city on its way to Aleppo or the port of St.Simeon shifted to the harbours of Latakia, Ayas and Corycos after 1188.⁸³

⁸¹ Rey, Etude, pp.185-204; Cahen, La Syrie du Nord, pp.127-33; Deschamps, La Défense du comté de Tripoli, pp.46-47.

⁸² For details of Saladin's conquests around Antioch, see Baha'-al-Din, Anecdotes, pp.108-18; Abu Shama, Deux Jardins, IV, 364-81; Eracles, II, 122-23; Deschamps, La Défense du comté de Tripoli, 127-33. 1268: Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 121-26; al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, I(b), 52-54; Gestes, pp.771-72; Annales de Terre Sainte, pp.453-54; Marino Sanudo, Liber secretorum, p.223; Eracles, II, 456; Bar Hebraeus, Chronography, p.448.

⁸³ Cahen, La Syrie du Nord, pp.689-91. Baybars deliberately sacked St.Simeon, the port of Antioch, in 1268 (and also six years earlier) to deter the Franks from returning to the area. See Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 50, 121, 124.

Baybars appears to have been the first and last Muslim aggressor to attack Antioch directly during the thirteenth century, but its walls also sheltered the city's inhabitants against numerous other invaders in the years preceding 1268, most notably the Seljuk Turks, who ravaged the surrounding area in 1247 and 1250.⁸⁴ Similarly, Tripoli's walls were so powerful that in 1188 Saladin did not even attempt to breach them,⁸⁵ and in 1244 this city, Acre and Tyre all survived the Khwarizmian invasion intact; a clear indication that they were far better protected than Jerusalem.⁸⁶ During the 1260s, Baybars also carried out several raids in the vicinity of Acre⁸⁷ and Tyre,⁸⁸ and in 1262 he made an earlier failed assault on Antioch.⁸⁹ In addition, Acre successfully withstood earlier Ayubid incursions in 1218 and 1253.⁹⁰

Consequently, these sites were almost entirely dependent upon long, stout circuit walls to defend them, but it is also important to remember that they were additionally protected by individual citadels. At Antioch such a structure had been added to the Justinianic ramparts during the tenth century, and its location at the top of

⁸⁴ Eracles, II, 435; Rothelin, p.624.

⁸⁵ Avoiding Tripoli itself, Saladin merely carried out raids between the city and Crac des Chevaliers, before heading north. Meanwhile, reinforcements sent by the king of Sicily arrived at Tripoli. See Abu Shama, Deux Jardins, IV, 349-51; Eracles, II, 119-21.

⁸⁶ Rothelin, p.565; Eracles, II, 427-28.

⁸⁷ See below, p.103n197.

⁸⁸ See below, p.103n198.

⁸⁹ See below, p.97.

⁹⁰ 1218: Oliver of Paderborn, Historia Damiatina, p.245; James of Vitry, Lettres, pp.101-2. 1253: Eracles, II, 440-41; Matthew Paris, Chronica Maiora, V, 398; Annales de Terre Sainte, p.445 (text B); Marino Sanudo, Liber secretorum, p.220.

Mount Silpius rendered it virtually impregnable.⁹¹ Acre's citadel was far less powerful, however, for it straddled the city's inner wall in the vicinity of Montmusard, and must therefore have lost much of its strategic value when this suburb was fortified and an outer rampart constructed further inland.⁹² Likewise, the citadel of Tyre probably contributed very little to the overall strength of this site, for it was rarely mentioned in contemporary sources and never included in pilgrims' descriptions of the city.⁹³ This also applies to a similar stronghold at Tripoli, which had originally been constructed at the beginning of the twelfth century in order to blockade the city when it was still held by the Muslims. As a result, this structure was not attached to the urban defences, but stood on a rocky knoll some distance inland, and eventually formed the nucleus of an entirely new suburb.⁹⁴ Indeed, apart from the mountain castle at Antioch, the only other major urban citadel held by the Franks which clearly did enhance surrounding fortifications was that of Jerusalem. This compact fortress, which was incorporated into the western wall of the city, was dominated by the Tower of David, a huge Herodian structure whose masonry was so massive that one contemporary said it resembled 'a

⁹¹ Cahen, La Syrie du Nord, p.129; Rey, Etude, p.190.

⁹² Rey, 'Etude sur la Topographie', 131; Benvenisti, The Crusaders in the Holy Land, p.95.

⁹³ Deschamps, La Défense du royaume de Jérusalem, p.137; Marshall, Warfare in the Latin East, p.98. Imperialists took shelter here briefly when Frederick II's enemies captured Tyre in 1242. See above, pp.33-34.

⁹⁴ William of Tyre, Chronique, Bk.10, c.26; Deschamps, La Défense du comté de Tripoli, pp.293-95; Müller-Wiener, Castles of the Crusaders, pp.42-43; Kennedy, Crusader Castles, p.63. The Mamluks rebuilt the citadel early in the fourteenth century. See al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, II(b), 281.

single stone from its base up'.⁹⁵ Between 1229 and 1244 this tower withstood at least two sieges, and its strategic importance will be discussed in more detail below.⁹⁶

In addition to the citadels, town walls and strongholds already mentioned, the Franks also held numerous smaller fortifications dotted across the countryside. Although it would be impossible to name these structures individually, the vast majority of them were either fortified enclosures or individual towers. A good example of the former type was the Castle of Roger the Lombard, situated a few miles south of Caesarea. This small fort, which was probably established by Roger at the very beginning of the twelfth century, consisted of a number of vaulted structures built around a central yard. The outer walls of these structures were roughly 1.6 metres thick and had very few openings in them, so that they created a kind of fortified farm house measuring approximately 33 metres square. Although the Castle of Roger the Lombard presumably continued to be occupied by the Franks until the fall of Caesarea in 1265, its design was not necessarily European, because similar structures had been built in the east for many centuries.⁹⁷

Elsewhere the Franks constructed strongholds which were also square or rectangular, but were larger and more

⁹⁵ The pilgrim abbot Daniel, cited in Johns, 'The Citadel, Jerusalem', 164. See also *ibid*, 140-44, 165, and, for more details on the crusader citadel in relation to the present Ottoman castle, 169-88. See also Benvenisti, The Crusaders in the Holy Land, pp.52-53.

⁹⁶ See below, pp.89-91.

⁹⁷ Pringle, The Red Tower, pp.15, 18-19, 73-75 (and for more examples of similar structures see p.20); S. Tibble, Monarchy and Lordships in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem, 1099-1291, (Oxford 1989), p.139.

complex than the Castle of Roger the Lombard. Thus Coliath, a Hospitaller fortress which lay on the coastal plain about 20 kilometres north of Tripoli, measured 63 metres by 56 metres, had four small corner towers, and was also provided with a fifth salient guarding the actual gateway.⁹⁸ Although it is not recorded in the contemporary sources, it seems unlikely that this structure could have withstood Saladin in 1188. However, it must have been reoccupied by the Hospitallers soon after, for in 1207-08 al-Adil stormed the castle before systematically demolishing most of its defences.⁹⁹ Coliath had still not recovered from this blow when Willbrand of Oldenburg saw it four years later, but the bewildering mixture of masonry types still visible in its present remains confirms that it was rebuilt a second time between 1211 and 1266, when Baybars overran it and again left it in ruins.¹⁰⁰ Architecturally, it is also possible that Coliath represents a copy of earlier Roman and Byzantine structures, and it is therefore sometimes referred to as a castrum fortification. However, comparisons between medieval strongholds, Arabic farmsteads and classical garrison forts should not, perhaps, be taken too far, for a square or rectangular enclosure was such an obvious way of defending a low lying site that this design could equally well have been reinvented by the Franks themselves.¹⁰¹

⁹⁸ Deschamps, La Défense du comté de Tripoli, pp.311-12; Kennedy, Crusader Castles, p.78.

⁹⁹ 1188: Saladin ravaged surrounding areas, and Coliath probably suffered even though sources do not name it individually. See Abu Shama, Deux Jardins, IV, 352-53. 1207-08: Ibn al-Athir, Kamel Altevarykh, II, 106.

¹⁰⁰ 1211: Willbrand of Oldenburg, Itinerarium, p.208. 1266: Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 85-86; al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, I(b), 27. See also Deschamps, La Défense du comté de Tripoli, 312.

¹⁰¹ Marshall, Warfare in the Latin East, p.100.

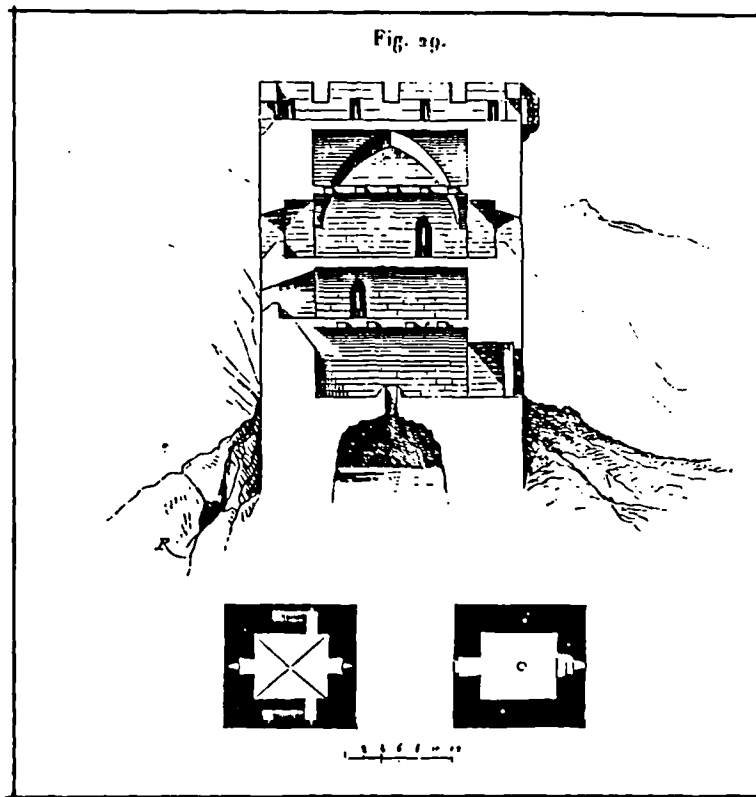
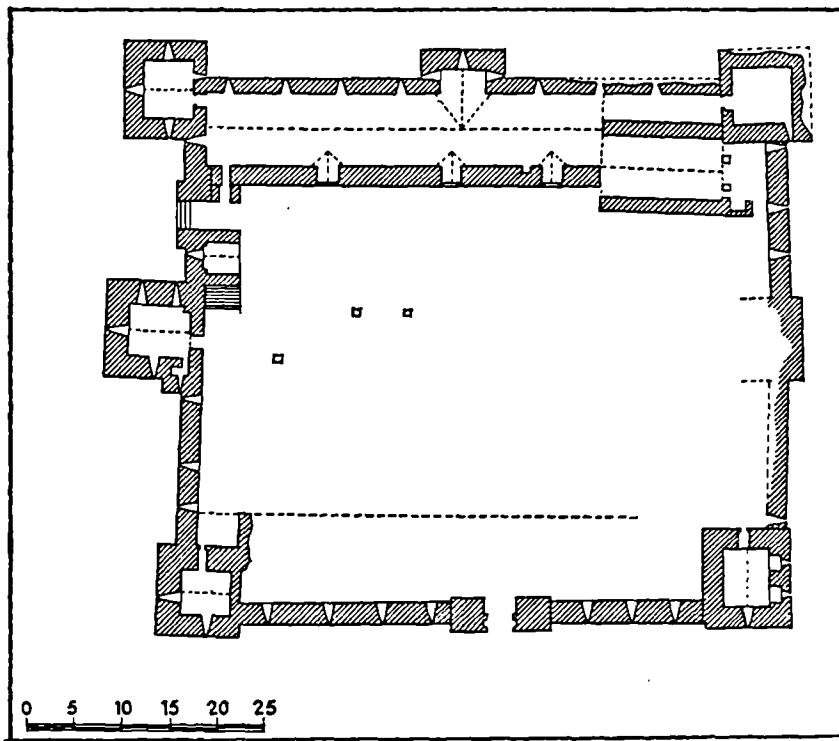


Fig.6. Coliath; a classic castrum. From Deschamps, La Défense du comté de Tripoli, p.311. Tukhlah; a typical Frankish tower similar to Qaqun and the Red Tower. From Rey, Etude, p.101.

The architectural uncertainties surrounding Coliath and the Castle of Roger the Lombard do not apply to Frankish towers built in the Holy Land, which were almost certainly based on similar structures in the west. One such tower which has been investigated by archaeologists in recent years is Qaqun (Caco), located on the Sharon plain about 25 kilometres south east of Caesarea. The remains of this building indicate that it measured 14.53 by 17.65 metres, that its walls were 2.8 metres thick, and that it had two vaulted storeys with a crenellated terrace above. The ground floor had no doors or windows, and must therefore have acted as a storage space reached via an internal ladder. The upper floor, on the other hand, probably had three arrow slits in its east and west walls, and two in its north and south walls. Presumably the main entrance also existed at this level, whilst traces of clay piping indicate that the tower had its own cistern, so that its defenders could even withstand a limited siege. Additional protection against aggressors was provided by a small perimeter wall, which has now virtually disappeared.¹⁰²

These defences were almost identical to those of Chastel Rouge, a Hospitaller stronghold roughly halfway between Chastel Blanc and Tortosa, which consisted of a central tower measuring 14 by 16 metres, surrounded by a rectangular curtain wall and a small outer ditch.¹⁰³ Qaqun and Chastel Rouge also shared certain historical similarities, for both were captured by Saladin, but were subsequently regained by the Franks until the Mamluk

¹⁰² Pringle, The Red Tower, pp.15, 63-68, 70.

¹⁰³ Pringle, The Red Tower, pp.16-18; Deschamps, La Défense du comté de Tripoli, pp.317-19; Kennedy, Crusader Castles, pp.73-75; Müller-Wiener, Castles of the Crusaders, p.52.

conquests of the late thirteenth century.¹⁰⁴ The same fate no doubt befell those Frankish towers of the interior which were not even protected by an outer rampart. Hence the Tower of Tukhlah stood in isolation on a hill top near Chastel Blanc, and must therefore have been lost when Baybars captured this latter fortress in the spring of 1271.¹⁰⁵

Towers and castrum-type strongholds were therefore built according to fairly standardized designs, particularly if they were situated on the coastal plain. Other smaller castles differed considerably according to local circumstances. Cave de Tyron, for example, was literally carved into the side of a mountain hundreds of metres above sea level, opposite the town of Sidon. This cave fortress, which could only be approached along a path barely one metre wide, was perfectly situated for its tiny garrison to keep an eye on the surrounding network of roads between Sidon, Beirut and Damascus.¹⁰⁶ A similar role was no doubt performed by the defenders of Akkar (Gibelcar), a mountain stronghold whose elevated position to the north of Tripoli gave it perfect intervisibility with Crac des Chevaliers, Chastel Blanc and other fortifications in the neighbourhood. Indeed, this castle was so remote that after Baybars captured it in 1271, he boasted of his achievement in a mocking letter to Bohemond

¹⁰⁴ Qaqun would have fallen at about the same time as Caesarea, both in 1187 (Abu Shama, Deux Jardins, IV, 301) and in 1265 (Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 70-71). Chastel Rouge fell in 1188 (Abu Shama, Deux Jardins, IV, 352) and in 1289, along with Tripoli (al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, II(a), 103; Müller-Wiener, Castles of the Crusaders, p.52).

¹⁰⁵ 1271: Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 143; al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, I(b), 84-85. Tukhlah: Rey, Etude, pp.101-2; Kennedy, Crusader Castles, pp.75-77.

¹⁰⁶ Deschamps, La Défense du royaume de Jérusalem, pp.211-13, 217-20.

VI, where the sultan described 'how we transported the mangonels there through mountains where the birds think it too difficult to nest; how patiently we hauled them, troubled by mud and struggling against rain'.¹⁰⁷ Thus Akkar, whose man made defences amounted to little more than a square keep and enclosing curtain wall, caused Baybars just as much trouble as Crac des Chevaliers, because of its isolated and inaccessible location.¹⁰⁸

Whilst Akkar probably represented a scaled down version of Montfort, several minor coastal strongholds were, in a sense, smaller copies of Pilgrims' Castle. The most notable of these was Nephin, a baronial castle which stood on a small promontory just to the south of Tripoli. This promontory had been separated from the mainland by two rock hewn ditches, and in 1283 the pilgrim Burchard of Mount Sion wrote that it was defended by no less than 'twelve good towers'.¹⁰⁹ For most of the twelfth century Nephin was held by the same Frankish family which controlled Maraclea, another coastal settlement located between Tortosa and Margat. This latter site does not seem to have been particularly well fortified, for in 1188 it was evacuated just before the arrival of Saladin, and in 1271 Baybars probably occupied it soon after the fall of Crac des Chevaliers.¹¹⁰ However, at some point after 1277

¹⁰⁷ Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 148. See also ibid, II, 147-49; al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, I(b), 85; Gestes, p.777; Marino Sanudo, Liber secretorum, p.224; Annales de Terre Sainte, p.455 (text B).

¹⁰⁸ Deschamps, La Défense du comté de Triploi, p.309; Kennedy, Crusader Castles, p.68.

¹⁰⁹ Burchard of Mount Sion, Descriptio, p.28, and see pp.27-28; Willbrand of Oldenburg, Itinerarium, p.206; Deschamps, La Défense du comté de Tripoli, pp.300-1.

¹¹⁰ 1188: Ibn al-Athir, Kamel Altevarykh, I, 718. 1271: According to Muslim chroniclers, Baybars held Maraclea by this date. See Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 150, 166; al-

Bartholomew de Ravendel, whose family had acquired Maraclea almost eighty years earlier, returned to the site and built an immensely strong tower on a rock 50 metres off the coast. Although this structure was demolished in 1285 as part of a peace treaty with Kalavun, its design and location can be compared with the Frankish sea castle at Sidon.¹¹¹ Bartholomew never returned to Maraclea after 1285, whilst Nephin was lost along with Tripoli a mere four years later.¹¹²

Further south, other coastal sites were protected by less isolated defences. The citadel of Gibelet, for example, stood at the south east corner of the town walls, and consisted of a large central keep surrounded by a rectangular castrum.¹¹³ This stronghold dates from the early twelfth century, but, apart from a brief period between 1188 and 1197, the Embriaco lords of Gibelet held it throughout the crusader period, and may even have been allowed to cultivate surrounding estates after the fall of Tripoli.¹¹⁴ It is possible that Gibelet's fortifications

Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, I(b), 100. For a general history of Nephin and Maraclea during the crusader period, see Deschamps, La Défense du comté de Tripoli, pp.297-300, 323-26.

¹¹¹ Ibn 'Abd al-Rahim, Vie de Kalavun, extract cited in J.F. Michaud, Bibliothèque des Croisades, IV (Paris 1829), 551-52; Deschamps, La Défense du comté de Tripoli, pp.325-26. The exact history of Maraclea during the 1270s and 80s remains unclear. See R. Irwin, 'The Mamluk Conquest of Tripoli', in Crusade and Settlement, ed. P.W. Edbury, (Cardiff 1984), pp.246-49, at pp.248-49. For Sidon's sea castle, see above, p.50.

¹¹² Marino Sanudo, Liber secretorum, p.230.

¹¹³ Deschamps, La Défense du comté de Tripoli, pp.208-15; Müller-Wiener, Castles of the Crusaders, pp.64-65; Kennedy, Crusader Castles, pp.65-66.

¹¹⁴ 1188-97: Eracles, II, 72, 227, 228, and see above, p. I,6. 1289 onwards: Irwin, 'The Mamluk Conquest of the County of Tripoli', p.249. For a general history of

also resembled those of Haifa, a small port located half way between Acre and Pilgrims' Castle. That this settlement had a citadel and town walls is confirmed by Muslim chroniclers, who noted that these defences were demolished during the Mamluk attack on Haifa in 1265.¹¹⁵ They may well have been constructed between 1211, when Haifa's ramparts were said to have been in ruins, and 1227, when a document referred to a town gate at the site facing north towards Acre.¹¹⁶

This brief outline of crusader fortifications in the Holy Land is by no means exhaustive, but can nevertheless be used to illustrate many aspects of their design and function. Architecturally, it is clear that some strongpoints, and in particular Beaufort, Cave de Tyron, Montfort, Akkar, the citadel of Antioch and the city of Tyre, were fortified in such a way that they merely enhanced the natural strength and remoteness of these sites. Indeed, it has already been shown that the rudimentary defences at Akkar were almost more difficult for Baybars to capture than the complex fortifications at Crac des Chevaliers, simply because the former castle stood on a mountain summit, whereas the latter fortress occupied a spur which was relatively easy to approach, particularly from the south. Likewise, one historian has argued that Montfort 'was hardly as impressive' as

Gibelet, see Deschamps, La Défense du comté de Tripoli, pp.203-8.

¹¹⁵ al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, I(b), 8; Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 72. Haifa was subsequently returned to the Franks in a peace treaty of 1268. See ibid, II, 129-30.

¹¹⁶ 1211: Willbrand of Oldenburg, Itinerarium, p.232. 1227: RRH, no.983, p.259.

Saphet;¹¹⁷ a sentiment echoed by other scholars, who point to Montfort's relatively poor masonry as proof that it was architecturally inferior to the larger concentric castles built by the Franks. This argument can also be backed up by looking at contemporary records, which confirm that the German Order needed considerable financial assistance to complete its castle.¹¹⁸ However, the fact that Baybars needed two attempts to capture it, but only one to take Saphet and Crac des Chevaliers, also suggests that in some ways Montfort was the strongest of the three. In other words, the Teutonic Knights did not need concentric ramparts and massive blocks of masonry to strengthen a site which was already relatively easy to defend, and the absence of such fortifications should not make us think that Montfort was strategically inferior.¹¹⁹

This point also illustrates why it is difficult, and often even misleading, to try to identify general trends and developments within military architecture. It has often been argued, for example, that isolated keep towers, whose garrisons could do little more than wait for their besiegers to run out of food or enthusiasm, were less sophisticated than donjons incorporated into surrounding fortifications, whose defenders could organize a more active resistance against their opponents by means of flanking fire and limited counter-attacks. This theory fits the evidence at Crac des Chevaliers, Margat, Pilgrims' Castle and possibly Saphet, where one or more flanking towers replaced the earlier isolated donjons at

¹¹⁷ A. Forey, The Military Orders from the Twelfth to the Early Fourteenth Centuries, (London 1992), p.63.

¹¹⁸ Tabulae ordinis Theutonici, no.64, p.53, no.66, p.54, no.72, pp.56-57; Praver, The Latin Kingdom, pp.308-9; Pringle, 'A thirteenth century hall', 53; Kennedy, Crusader Castles, pp.129-31.

¹¹⁹ See above, p.61.

Tortosa, Chastel Blanc and Gibelet. It does not, however, explain why the Teutonic Knights constructed an isolated keep at Montfort as much as seventy years after the Hospitallers completed a perfect concentric stronghold at Belvoir. Nor does it take the historical evidence into account, which suggests that Montfort fared better against Baybars than Saphet, and that the supposedly more primitive rectangular donjons of Chastel Blanc and Tortosa both withstood Saladin with relative ease. It would therefore be wrong to assume that the Franks built isolated keep towers early in the crusader period, and that they subsequently rejected this design in favour of more sophisticated concentric fortresses. It is probably more accurate to conclude that the crusaders were *aware of* both types of fortification from the very beginning, and simply adapted and developed them to meet local demands. Thus the exposed situation of Tortosa meant that the Templars required a far larger keep here than the counts of Tripoli did at Akkar, while it has already been noted that concentric defences would simply have been a waste of time and money at more mountainous sites such as Montfort.

Other attempts to categorize fortifications on architectural grounds have also led to misconceptions. The theory that Templar strongholds tend to have square or rectangular towers, whereas those built by the Hospitallers are usually rounded or circular, is largely based on the present remains at Margat, Crac des Chevaliers, Pilgrims' Castle and Chastel Blanc.¹²⁰ This has led to a wider belief that these two Orders used very distinct building techniques throughout the eastern Mediterranean, including Cilician Armenia, where one scholar has written recently that their castles could not 'be more dissimilar in their masonry and architectural

¹²⁰ Lawrence, Crusader Castles, pp.70-88.

features'.¹²¹ Yet a closer look at the evidence, and in particular the round Templar towers at Saphet, indicates that in many cases this is an erroneous oversimplification.¹²² Similarly, it is often true that the Franks in general constructed more rounded salients during the thirteenth century than the twelfth, presumably because these were found to be more effective against earthquakes and siege engines. Once again, however, the square towers of Crac des Chevaliers's north postern and the rectangular salients along Caesarea's town walls, all of which were completed in the mid-thirteenth century, indicate that for every category an exception can be found.¹²³

Sweeping generalizations should therefore be avoided, and comparisons should be restricted to clear cut examples, such as the Hospitaller defences at Crac des Chevaliers and Margat, which are so similar that they may well have been built by the same workmen.¹²⁴ On a smaller scale, however, it is possible to identify certain defensive elements which did indeed reoccur at many different Frankish sites. Hence numerous strongholds were equipped with catapults, or large crossbows, which were designed to destroy siege engines and cut down attackers before they got close enough to inflict any real damage on castle walls. The Templars may have been particularly keen on such weapons, because they installed them at Jaffa after they acquired this lordship in 1266, and employed

¹²¹ Edwards, The Fortifications, p.32.

¹²² Pringle, 'Review Article', 143.

¹²³ Crac des Chevaliers: Deschamps, Le Crac des Chevaliers, pp.147-50. Caesarea: Benevisti, The Crusaders in the Holy Land, pp.140-45; Müller-Wiener, Castles of the Crusaders, p.74; Rey, Etude, pp.221-27.

¹²⁴ Deschamps, La Défense du comté de Tripoli, pp.283-84.

'crossbowmen with large crossbows' to guard the outer moat at Saphet.¹²⁵ In 1220 catapults positioned on the walls of Pilgrims' Castle also inflicted such heavy casualties on al-Muazzam's besieging forces that he was forced to withdraw.¹²⁶

Even if attackers managed to survive this terrifying onslaught, they would still often be confronted by elaborate outer defences similar to those already mentioned at Acre. At Nephin, for example, the double ditches separating the promontory from the mainland were both roughly 80 metres long, 12 to 15 metres wide, 8 to 10 metres deep, and possibly filled with sea water.¹²⁷ A contemporary account of the siege of Acre also describes how one tower along the city walls had wooden hoardings with huge iron spikes attached to its base, suggesting that even if ditches were dry, they often contained obstacles which could prove lethal for infantry and cavalry alike.¹²⁸ In addition, the bridges spanning these ditches were frequently made out of wood, so that they could be raised or destroyed at the approach of a besieging army. Thus in 1291 the Templars defending the sea castle of Sidon appear to have demolished part of the bridge connecting it with the mainland, forcing the Mamluks to build a new causeway. It was only when this causeway was nearing completion that the Templars finally

¹²⁵ Jaffa: Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 90-91; Thorau, The Lion of Egypt, p.169; Marshall, Warfare in the Latin East, p.142. Saphet: De constructione castris Saphet, lines 177-78, p.383.

¹²⁶ Oliver of Paderborn, Historia Damiatina, pp.255-56. In 1188 Saladin may also have been prevented from storming the citadel at Tortosa because of its Templar crossbowmen. See Abu Shama, Deux Jardins, IV, 353-55; Eracles, II, 121-22.

¹²⁷ Deschamps, La Défense du comté de Tripoli, p.300.

¹²⁸ Gestes, p.814.

gave in and fled to Cyprus.¹²⁹

On other occasions, however, the Muslims preferred to bombard and undermine strongholds from a relatively safe distance, in order to avoid the problems encountered by al-Muazzam at Pilgrims' Castle. The Franks dealt with such tactics by building massively thick curtain walls, which often rested on sloping revetments intended to minimize the damage caused by sapping and earthquakes. A good example of such a revetment, or talus, survives along the south and west faces of Crac des Chevaliers's inner ramparts, and similar structures can be seen at Caesarea and Belvoir.¹³⁰ These defences were additionally strengthened by bonding together individual blocks of stone with molten lead or iron clamps; a method used at Beirut, Sidon, Pilgrims' Castle and Maraclea.¹³¹ Many of these sites had also been occupied in classical times, and therefore provided the Franks with a ready supply of vast Herodian masonry. At Pilgrims' Castle, for example, stones quarried or recycled locally were so large that they 'could barely be pulled in a cart by two oxen'.¹³² Roman columns were also incorporated into numerous fortifications including Ascalon and the citadel at Caesarea, where they had been 'placed horizontally in the body of the wall, in such a way that they had nothing to fear from sapping, and could not fall, even if they were

¹²⁹ Deschamps, La Défense du royaume de Jérusalem, pp.229-31. 1291: see above, pp.50-51.

¹³⁰ Crac des Chevaliers: Deschamps, Le Crac des Chevaliers, pp.189-90. Caesarea: see above, note 123. Belvoir: Praver, The Latin Kingdom, p.301.

¹³¹ Beirut: Willbrand of Oldenburg, Itinerarium, p.204. Sidon: Deschamps, La Défense du royaume de Jérusalem, p.232. Pilgrims' Castle: Johns, 'Excavations at Pilgrims' Castle: The faubourg and its defences', 123. Maraclea: Deschamps, La Défense du comté de Tripoli, p.326.

¹³² Oliver of Paderborn, Historia Damiatina, p.170.

undermined'.¹³³

These techniques strengthened ramparts considerably, but other strategies were needed to protect gateways. Thus the tactic of placing entrances in the side walls of flanking towers, which has already been described at Acre, was also adopted at Pilgrims' Castle and Tortosa, and ensured that these weak spots could not be bombarded with catapults or attacked in a direct assault.¹³⁴ Many gatehouses were also equipped with portcullises, arrow slits and murder holes, making it extremely hazardous for attackers to enter castles even after their outer doorways had been breached. In 1276, for example, Templar troops besieging Nephin managed to reach the main gate safely, only to find themselves trapped after their opponents inside the castle lowered the portcullis behind them.¹³⁵ Similarly, the principal route between Crac des Chevaliers's inner and outer baileys consisted of a long, twisting ramp, which the Hospitallers could defend from a bewildering array of posterns, arrow slits and other vantage points.¹³⁶ Limited counter attacks could also be launched from further posterns situated along the castle's outer ramparts, and at the north west corner of the inner ward. As a result, Crac des Chevaliers's garrison could continue the fight and inflict heavy casualties on besieging forces until almost every single building in the fortress had been

¹³³ Ascalon: Matthew Paris, Chronica Maiora, IV, 143. Caesarea: al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, I(b), 7.

¹³⁴ Acre: see above, p.63. Pilgrims' Castle: Johns, 'Excavations at Pilgrims' Castle: The ancient Tell and the Outer Defences', 157. Tortosa: Deschamps, La Défense du comté de Tripoli, pp.289-90; Rey, Etude, pp.72-73.

¹³⁵ Gestes, p.782, and see below, p.146. For more details on defensive features of this kind, see Benvenisti, Crusaders in the Holy Land, pp.286-89.

¹³⁶ Deschamps, Le Crac des Chevaliers, pp.177-82.

captured.¹³⁷

Many Frankish strongholds were consequently built on a vast scale, and incorporated so many ingenious defences that they were virtually impregnable. In addition, the architectural evidence confirms that sites like Crac des Chevaliers and Pilgrims' Castle were built by highly skilled craftsmen, who often used well cut and good quality stone to construct windows, doorways and vaulting according to the latest gothic styles fashionable in Europe at this time.¹³⁸ Vast amounts of money were also spent on such structures, for in 1253 Joinville reported that the papal legate Odo of Châteauroux, who was helping Louis IX refortify the town of Jaffa, spent a staggering 30,000 livres on just one particular gateway and adjoining curtain wall. This implies that Louis himself, who built a further two gates and all the other ramparts, spent at least three times as much money on this particular site.¹³⁹

However, it is equally clear that at other times the Franks were prepared to cut corners, either by occupying much older fortifications, as they did at Antioch, or by constructing relatively simple defences at sites which nature had already rendered inaccessible. Indeed, in a later chapter we shall see that such tactics became commonplace in Frankish Greece, where even the most powerful lords continued to erect very primitive strongholds well into the thirteenth century. Once again,

¹³⁷ Deschamps, Le Crac des Chevaliers, pp.147-50, 155-56, 183, 185-87.

¹³⁸ The gallery of the great hall at Crac des Chevaliers, for example, was built in the same style as mid-thirteenth century ecclesiastical structures in France. See Deschamps, Le Crac des Chevaliers, pp.216-24.

¹³⁹ Joinville, Histoire de Saint Louis, pp.306-8.

therefore, it is dangerous to assume that Frankish military architecture evolved steadily and consistently, rather than sporadically and according to local needs.¹⁴⁰

Having looked at the architectural evidence, it is possible to link this with the historical facts in order to highlight the various military functions of crusader fortifications in more detail. Defensively, for example, the events of 1187 and 1188 made it clear that only the very strongest fortresses were able to hold out against large scale invasion forces. The major building programmes undertaken at Tortosa and Chastel Blanc during the 1150s, 60s and 70s indicate that the Templars had already realized this in the twelfth century, while at Margat and Crac des Chevaliers the Hospitallers may well have constructed their new defences from the late 1180s onwards, in direct response to Saladin's Syrian campaign. Consequently, along with Tripoli itself, these fortresses were quite literally intended to save the county of Tripoli from destruction, and some at least may have been deliberately strengthened in case the disasters of Hattin were ever repeated. Similarly, the massive urban defences of Tyre and Antioch ensured that the kingdom of Jerusalem and the northern principality survived into the thirteenth century, even though most, if not all, surrounding castles had been lost to Saladin.

During the next century the Franks continued to rely on a select group of strongholds to maintain their position in the east. It has been shown, for example, that Antioch, Tripoli and the largest Syrian castles of the Military Orders withstood repeated Seljuk and Aleppine incursions virtually unscathed, and that even Baybars had to content himself with raids rather than direct attacks against some

¹⁴⁰ See below, pp.324-29.

fortresses, especially Pilgrims' Castle. Reference has also been made to the Khwarizmian invasion of 1244, which was supposedly undertaken by 20,000 horsemen. Frankish efforts to halt this offensive in the field ended in disaster at the battle of La Forbie, and the Latins were far too outnumbered to stop the Khwarizmians from occupying all of Palestine briefly, along with countless smaller castles and poorly defended settlements such as Jerusalem. In theory, this could only have been prevented by constructing a continuous barrier like Hadrian's Wall or the Great Wall of China, but even if this had been physically possible, tens of thousands of men would have been needed to garrison such a structure.¹⁴¹

Consequently, the countryside had to be abandoned, so that for much of 1244 'the Christians only held the fortresses'.¹⁴² Inland, these included Saphet, Montfort, Beaufort, Crac des Chevaliers and Chastel Blanc, whilst along the coast the Franks successfully defended all their major strongholds except Ascalon. As a result, the Khwarizmians, who were a nomadic people and lacked their own siege equipment, were able to inflict terrible damage on the rural economy, but could not make any permanent conquests of their own. This enabled the Franks to wait securely inside their castles until lack of food and shelter, combined with a realization that further progress would be almost impossible, forced their opponents to retreat.¹⁴³

These tactics could work equally well against aggressors who were more disciplined and more capable of undertaking a siege than the Khwarizmians. In 1220, for example, al-

¹⁴¹ See above, p.14.

¹⁴² Rothelin, p.565.

¹⁴³ See above, p.14n16.

Muazzam appears to have reached Pilgrims' Castle, which lay at the very heart of the kingdom of Jerusalem, without meeting any resistance. Once he got there, however, al-Muazzam failed to breach the fortress's massive new defences, which were manned by more than 4,000 Christian warriors.¹⁴⁴ Consequently, the Franks had prevented al-Muazzam from conquering areas around Pilgrims' Castle without having to guard lengthy frontiers or blockading important roads and valleys. During the Third Crusade, Saladin used a similar strategy against Richard I, for by ravaging areas east of Jaffa, but at the same time strengthening Jerusalem's defences, he made it impossible for the crusaders to win back their former capital.¹⁴⁵ For his part, Richard knew that it would be suicidal to proceed into a desolate wasteland and besiege a city without adequate food, water or shelter, and so he was obliged to retreat.¹⁴⁶ Thus it was far more important to defend individual strongholds than the countryside which surrounded them, for outlying areas could easily be reoccupied, provided that larger castles and cities successfully withstood a temporary invasion. In a later chapter it will be seen that in Frankish Greece, the Catalans, Latins and Greeks all used exactly the same tactic to withstand hostile incursions.¹⁴⁷

By constructing just a handful of extremely powerful castles, the Franks could also force their opponents to abandon some campaigns before they had even begun. In

¹⁴⁴ Oliver of Paderborn, Historia Damiatina, p.254-56; James of Vitry, Lettres, p.138.

¹⁴⁵ Abu Shama, Deux Jardins, IV, 462, V, 49-51; Itinerarium, pp.280-82; Ambroise, L'Estoire de la guerre sainte, lines 6,840-68, col.185.

¹⁴⁶ Itinerarium, pp.380, 394.

¹⁴⁷ See below, pp.358-62.

1221, a large Muslim army gathered at Homs, in the hope of launching an attack against the county of Tripoli which would direct Christian resources away from the Fifth Crusade. However, eventually it was decided to cancel the offensive and march south to Egypt, because the Muslims 'reflected that the castles of the Hospitallers or the Templars could not easily be captured in a short time'.¹⁴⁸ Similar worries may explain why the Mongols, having conquered all of Muslim Syria and the near east, did not invade the kingdom of Jerusalem in 1260. It has been argued that they did not do so because they hoped to forge an alliance with the Franks against the Egyptians, but this theory has been challenged recently by Peter Jackson, who believes that a fear of Frankish military might caused the Mongols to hesitate. If this is the case, then it suggests that the Mongols, despite numbering as many as 20,000 men, were afraid to enter a region defended by a series of strongholds which would probably have taken them years to capture. To some extent, the reign of Baybars subsequently proved them right, for although this sultan spent most of the 1260s and early 1270s campaigning against the Franks, even he failed to capture all their castles and fortified cities.¹⁴⁹

Hence the Latins managed to retain at least some of their territories beyond the 1270s, because they could rely on their largest strongpoints to compensate for their lack of troops. Indeed, many Frankish castles were deliberately

¹⁴⁸ Oliver of Paderborn, *Historia Damiatina*, p.268.

¹⁴⁹ Jackson, 'The Crisis', 481-514, particularly at 496-99. Baybars failed to capture Frankish strongholds along the coast between Pilgrims' Castle and Latakia. See above, p.I, 18. However, it has also been argued that for economic reasons Baybars deliberately allowed the Franks to retain the coast, and in particular Acre. See Riley-Smith in Ibn al-Furat, *Selections*, II, xi-xii; Thorau, *The Lion of Egypt*, p.148.

constructed in such a way that they could be defended by relatively few men against far larger besieging armies. Thus the Tower of David was so powerful that according to one chronicler it only required a garrison of fifteen to twenty soldiers, while the anonymous author of De constructione castri Saphet noted that far more troops would be needed to attack this fortress than to defend it.¹⁵⁰ This comment appears to have been verified by subsequent events, for Saphet is reported to have had a garrison of 2,200 in times of war, and Baybars may well have needed as many as 12,000 troops to capture it.¹⁵¹ Although it is extremely difficult to calculate exact totals, other Frankish garrisons are likely to have been equally outnumbered, for in 1281 a mere 600 Hospitallers are said to have driven off 6,000 Muslims who were besieging the castle of Margat. These figures indicate why the Franks rarely faced their opponents in open battle, and preferred to concentrate their meagre forces inside strongholds rather than trying to defend their frontiers.¹⁵²

At times, however, the Latins were so outnumbered that they even lacked the troops to defend their own fortifications. Town walls were particularly vulnerable in this respect, as far more men and resources were needed to garrison and maintain such defences than compact strongholds like Beaufort or Chastel Blanc. Hence it has already been noted that Antioch's walls were 12 kilometres

¹⁵⁰ Fulcher of Chartres, Historia Hierosolymitana, ed. H. Hagenmeyer, (Heidelberg 1913), p.285; De constructione castri Saphet, lines 232-39, p.385.

¹⁵¹ De constructione castri Saphet, lines 205-6, p.384, and see above, p.I, 89.

¹⁵² Gestes, p.786. See also Marino Sanudo, Liber secretorum, p.228; Annales de Terre Sainte, p.457 (text A).

long and covered an entire mountain side. These ramparts had originally been designed to protect 300,000 Greeks rather than the 100,000 people who lived there during the crusader period, and as a result the Frankish rulers of Antioch must have had trouble finding enough troops to guard every tower, postern and gateway of their capital.¹⁵³ Similarly, we have seen that Jerusalem's walls may not even have formed a complete circuit during the 1230s and 40s, and even if they did, it seems that there were not enough Christians left in the city to defend and maintain them. Thus in 1239 one western chronicler wrote that Jerusalem 'had not been fortified strongly except the keep...which was called the Tower of David'.¹⁵⁴

The historical evidence confirms that this comment is correct, for during the Muslim rebellion of 1229 15,000 peasants appear to have entered Jerusalem unhindered, but failed to break into the citadel, where the beleaguered Christians took shelter until a relieving force arrived from Acre and drove the Muslims back into the hills.¹⁵⁵ Ten years later this stronghold withstood another attack by al-Salih of Egypt,¹⁵⁶ and although Malik an-Nasir Dawud, ruler of Kerak, finally captured it shortly afterwards, its defenders still managed to hold out for

¹⁵³ See above, pp.67-68. al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, I(b), 53.

¹⁵⁴ Rothelin, p.529. A severe lack of troops had of course also contributed to the fall of Jerusalem in 1187, even though the walls were still intact at this stage. See Eracles, II, 82-98; Abu Shama, Deux Jardins, IV, 317-41.

¹⁵⁵ Eracles, II, 384-85.

¹⁵⁶ Annales prioratus de Dunstaplia, ed. H.R. Luard, in Annales monastici, III, Rolls Series (1866), 150. This siege was recorded in few of the contemporary sources, and remains something of a mystery. See Marshall, Warfare in the Latin East, pp.243-45; Jackson, 'The Crusades of 1239-41 and their Aftermath', 38.

over three weeks, despite lacking adequate supplies.¹⁵⁷ These incidents suggest that the Latin population of Jerusalem, which may have numbered a mere five to ten thousand people, effectively abandoned any hopes of garrisoning the city's ramparts, and concentrated their limited resources on the citadel, and in particular the Tower of David.¹⁵⁸ Consequently, Dawud's campaign of 1239 may have proved decisive, for although the Christians subsequently regained Jerusalem by treaty, the Muslims did not hand the city over until they had sleighted its citadel, and had even managed to shift some of the gigantic Herodian masonry blocks at the base of the Tower of David. It seems unlikely that the Franks had the time or the resources to rebuild this structure properly before 1244, leaving them wholly at the mercy of the dreaded Khwarizmians.¹⁵⁹

In a sense, therefore, the Latins only lost Jerusalem once they had lost its citadel. Likewise, the new strongholds constructed at Ascalon and Tiberias during the early 1240s may have represented other, less successful attempts to defend and even recolonize settlements without having to construct extensive urban fortifications. It is also interesting to note that shortly after Frederick II acquired Jerusalem in 1229, the Templars were thinking of constructing a brand new castle there to boost the city's defences. Presumably they too had realized that a compact and well garrisoned structure of this kind would be much

¹⁵⁷ Rothelin, pp.529-30; Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 62; al-'Ayni, Collier de Perles, pp.196-97; Abu'l-Fida, Annales, pp.117-18.

¹⁵⁸ The population estimate is based on the contemporary assertion that the Khwarizmians killed around 7,000 people at Jerusalem in 1244. See Matthew Paris, Chronica Maiora, IV, 309.

¹⁵⁹ Johns, 'The Citadel, Jerusalem', 169, and see note 157. Khwarizmian attack: see above, p.14.

easier to defend than a long, sprawling circuit wall.¹⁶⁰ This certainly proved to be the case at Antioch almost forty years later, because Baybars managed to storm the city's ramparts in a mere three days, but the citadel atop Mount Silpius only surrendered when the thousands of people who had taken shelter there found that they lacked the supplies to survive a protracted siege.¹⁶¹

However, although this strategy proved more successful at Jerusalem than it did at Antioch, and enabled Christians living in the holy city to survive the rebellion of 1229 and the first Muslim siege of 1239, it was still little more than a stop gap measure. Ultimately the only realistic way to protect cities inhabited by thousands of Christians, or to repopulate former Frankish settlements such as Tiberias, was to build vast urban fortifications which were properly garrisoned and regularly repaired. But the fate of Antioch, which fell 'because there was not in it a force sufficient for its defence',¹⁶² proved that the Franks were incapable of maintaining existing city walls, let alone constructing new ones. This explains why they never returned to Ascalon, Tiberias or Jerusalem after the mid-1240s.

Apart from Ascalon, which probably remained uninhabited anyway, all the citadels discussed so far were attached to cities located inland. The defensive role of these structures differed considerably from their coastal neighbours at Acre, Tyre and Tripoli, whose strategic insignificance has already been referred to. This can probably be explained in terms of the far greater

¹⁶⁰ Matthew Paris, Chronica Maiora, IV, 290.

¹⁶¹ Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 122; al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, I(b), 53, and see below, p. 161.

¹⁶² Bar Hebraeus, Chronography, p.448.

concentration of Latin settlers living in these cities, which ensured that there were not just adequate resources to construct powerful curtain walls, but enough soldiers available to guard them. Consequently, citadels were not needed to compensate for undermanned or incomplete urban fortifications in quite the same way as they were at Jerusalem and Tiberias.¹⁶³

However, most other Frankish sites located along the coast can in fact be compared with Jerusalem, because they were dominated by a strong central fortress, and were surrounded by much weaker outer defences. This point applies to less extensive towns such as Caesarea, as well as the even smaller settlements (or bourgs) which sprung up around strongholds like Pilgrims' Castle. Hence we have seen how this latter community was destroyed by Baybars in 1265, but the sheer strength of Pilgrims' Castle itself ensured that the site as a whole remained in Christian hands until 1291. Similarly, Saladin's attack on the town of Tortosa in 1188 only had a very temporary impact because the Templars successfully defended their inner citadel. It has also been noted that in 1232 the Lombards failed to capture the castle of Beirut, even though they managed to storm the town in the space of a single night.¹⁶⁴

Thus at Acre, Tyre and Tripoli, far greater emphasis was placed on urban fortifications, whereas at most other sites which had some kind of settlement attached to them, castles and citadels were considered more important than town walls. However, it is also important to remember that regardless of whether they had citadels or ramparts to

¹⁶³ See above, p. JT, 92,3,4. Acre was said to have had a population of 40,000 in 1291. See Gestes, p.807.

¹⁶⁴ 1265: see above, p.56. 1188: see above, pp.47-48. 1232: see above, p.51.

protect them, coastal sites in general were better off than strongpoints inland, which could not benefit from the considerable naval superiority of the Latins. This point can be illustrated by returning to the successful defence of Pilgrims' Castle against al-Muazzam in 1220. The core garrison of this fortress was gradually strengthened by the arrival of Frankish contingents from Acre and Cyprus, who 'brought a great supply of soldiers and funds' with them. Indeed, news that more reinforcements were being prepared by the lords of Gibelet and Tripoli contributed to al-Muazzam's decision to call off the siege, suggesting that Pilgrims' Castle would have been blockaded for much longer, and perhaps even forced to surrender, if it had not received a steady flow of seaborne assistance.¹⁶⁵

No doubt Saladin would also have captured the newly rebuilt Frankish citadel of Jaffa, which he besieged in July 1192, if Richard I had not arrived to relieve the garrison of this fortress with a hastily organized fleet from Acre. Like al-Muazzam, Saladin did not have the necessary naval strength to prevent Richard from mounting a rescue operation of this kind, and so he was obliged to retreat.¹⁶⁶ Moreover, even if Saladin had been able to blockade Jaffa by sea as well as by land, he may still have encountered problems, for in 1232 John of Ibelin managed to send reinforcements into the castle of Beirut by ordering his troops to swim past the Lombard ships guarding the harbour under cover of darkness. Eventually, John's son also slipped through the Imperialist blockade aboard a small boat carrying 100 further troops, and soon

¹⁶⁵ Oliver of Paderborn, Historia Dmiatina, p.255.

¹⁶⁶ Itinerarium, pp.396-423; Matthew Paris, Chronica Maiora, II, 387-90; Eracles, II, 196-97; Baha'-al-Din, Anecdotes, pp.323-33; Abu Shama, Deux Jardins, V, 67-71; Ibn al-Athir, Kamel Altevarykh, II, 64-65.

after the Lombards raised the siege and withdrew to Tyre.¹⁶⁷

Help could also be sent to cities or castles which were under threat, even if they were not actually under siege. Hence the arrival of 130 Cypriot knights at Acre in 1265 boosted this city's defences just as Baybars was besieging Caesarea and Arsuf a few miles to the south.¹⁶⁸ Many years earlier Saladin had also been deterred from attacking Tripoli after a contingent of Sicilian knights turned up to help defend the city. Indeed, both Tyre and Tripoli presented Saladin with a terrible dilemma, for the longer he left them in Frankish hands, the more reinforcements he would receive from the west; yet he was reluctant to besiege these strongpoints as long as there were other, less powerful castles still to be taken elsewhere.¹⁶⁹

Their naval power therefore enabled the Latins to protect coastal fortifications which would otherwise have been lost to the Muslims, or in the case of Beirut, a rival western faction. But it should also be noted that even when a city or fortress could no longer be defended against such opponents, lives could still be saved if the Franks had some way of escaping by sea. Thus in 1218 a Genoese fleet sent to relieve Caesarea, which was being besieged by a large Damascene army, could do nothing to save the city, but did at least manage to rescue its defenders and take them to Acre.¹⁷⁰ It has also been

¹⁶⁷ Philip of Novara, The Wars of Frederick II, pp.131-33; Gestes, pp.704-8; Chronique d'Amadi, p.155; Florio Bustron, Chronique, p.86.

¹⁶⁸ Gestes, p.758.

¹⁶⁹ See above, p.68n85.

¹⁷⁰ Eracles, II, 334; Oliver of Paderborn, Historia Damiatina, p.244; James of Vitry, Lettres, pp.101-2, and see above, p.54.

mentioned that in 1291 the garrison of Sidon was able to get away unscathed by initially withdrawing to the sea castle, and then sailing to Cyprus once any further resistance against the Muslims became pointless.¹⁷¹ The significance of the sea as a means of escape can further be illustrated by looking at the contrasting fate of Haifa and Arsuf, both taken by Baybars in 1265. Whereas almost all the inhabitants of Haifa managed to flee in boats just as the Muslims broke into the town, the Hospitallers defending Beirut were prevented from making contact with Frankish ships trying to assist them, and were consequently all killed or captured.¹⁷²

Such incidents confirm that access to the sea became an important element in the defensive strategy of all coastal cities and fortresses. The site of Pilgrims' Castle, for example, was regarded as ideal by contemporaries not only because of its location on a promontory, but because it had 'a naturally good harbour'.¹⁷³ Similarly, one of the principal reasons why Richard of Cornwall decided to refortify Ascalon in the 1240s was that it could be reached by sea if it ever came under attack.¹⁷⁴

Moreover, the archaeological remains of several crusader

¹⁷¹ See above, pp.50-51.

¹⁷² Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 72, 75, 77; al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, I(b), 8, 10; Marino Sanudo, Liber secretorum, p.222; Gestes, p.758; Eracles, II, 450 (mentions only Arsuf).

¹⁷³ Oliver of Paderborn, Historia Damiatina, p.171. See also Matthew Paris, Chronica maiora, III, 14; Johns, Guide to 'Atlit, pp.49-50.

¹⁷⁴ Matthew Paris, Chronica Maiora, IV, 143. Pringle argues that the harbour was not in fact very accessible, and could only be used by very small boats. See Pringle, 'King Richard I and the walls of Ascalon', 144-48.

ports suggests that they were often heavily fortified, and were within easy reach of a castle wherever this was possible. At Sidon a small jetty on the landward side of the sea castle once formed the anchorage which the city's defenders presumably sailed from in 1291.¹⁷⁵ Further south, the citadel of Caesarea acted as the southern breakwater of this harbour, and must have been easy for the Genoese relieving force to reach in 1218.¹⁷⁶ The entrances to many larger crusader ports were also protected by flanking towers, usually with a chain between them, which could be raised during a siege to prevent hostile ships from gaining access. Such structures existed at Beirut, and it is interesting to speculate whether they played any role in the Lombard siege of 1231-32.¹⁷⁷ Similar defences also existed at Tyre and at Acre, where the Venetians and the Genoese periodically fought for control over the fortified reef guarding the harbour entrance.¹⁷⁸

The Latins therefore did everything in their power to defend their harbours and keep the sea routes between their possessions in the east open. This strategy ensured

¹⁷⁵ Deschamps, La Défense du royaume de Jérusalem, pp.229-31; Rey, Etude, p.157.

¹⁷⁶ The northern breakwater of this harbour was built out of Roman columns; another example of crusader recycling. See Rey, Etude, pp.222-23; Benvenisti, The Crusaders in the Holy Land, pp.143-44.

¹⁷⁷ Rey, Etude, pp.173-74; Du Mesnil du Buisson, 'Les anciennes défenses de Beyrouth', 244.

¹⁷⁸ Tyre: In 1242 Ibelin opponents of Frederick II lowered the harbour chain at Tyre in order to let their Venetian allies into the city. See Gestes, pp.732-35; Philip of Novara, The Wars of Frederick II, pp.178-84, and above, p.34. I, 78. See also Deschamps, La Défense du royaume de Jérusalem, p.136; Rey, Etude, pp.167-69. Acre: Gestes, pp.768-69; Jacoby, 'Crusader Acre in the thirteenth century', 8-10.

that many of their coastal strongholds survived until 1291, but it meant very little in the interior, where the Muslims held the initiative, and often outnumbered their Christian opponents by as much as ten to one. These considerable differences in troop numbers prevented the Franks from relieving inland cities and fortresses in the same way that they had done at Pilgrims' Castle in 1220.¹⁷⁹ Admittedly, there were incidents of field armies rather than seaborne forces coming to the rescue of strongholds, such as the Armenian-led troops who prevented Baybars from capturing Antioch in 1262, or the Frankish knights from Acre who drove the Muslims out of Jerusalem in 1229.¹⁸⁰ However, it is significant that this latter example concerned a rebellion rather than an Ayubid army, and that the relief of Antioch involved a large Mongol contingent rather than a purely Christian force. Indeed, there is no evidence that Baybars ever had to abandon a siege because a Christian field army turned up and forced him to retreat. The Franks quite simply lacked the troops and resources to mount such an expedition, particularly inland, where a Latin force of two or three thousand men could easily be ambushed, or even annihilated, by a far larger Muslim army.

Their overwhelming superiority on land therefore enabled the Muslims, and in particular the Mamluk sultans of the later thirteenth century, to besiege Frankish strongpoints of the interior almost at will. Although the presence of 21 Muslim galleys at the siege of Ascalon in 1247 suggests that they did sometimes have enough ships at their disposal to blockade coastal sites, such incidents appear

¹⁷⁹ See above, pp.37, 93.

¹⁸⁰ 1262: Gestes, p.755; Annales de Terre Sainte, p.450 (text B); Marino Sanudo, Liber secretorum, p.221; al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, I(a), 177-78; Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 50. 1229: Eracles, II, 384-85.

to have been rare, but inland there was nothing to stop the Muslims from surrounding individual castles with relative ease.¹⁸¹

By cutting their intended target off from the outside world, the Muslims made it even more difficult for the Franks to send a relieving force, and also prevented the Christians they were besieging from escaping in the way that the remaining occupants of Sidon had done in 1291. As a result, inland sieges often concluded with appalling massacres and devastating looting sprees. Such atrocities occurred at Saphet and at Antioch, where virtually the entire population was either killed or enslaved, and centuries of Byzantine culture were wiped out in a matter of hours.¹⁸²

These factors explain why Frankish control over inland regions crumbled decades earlier, and why the vast majority of fortifications built or repaired during the thirteenth century were located along the coast. In 1253, for example, Louis IX decided to rebuild Sidon's defences rather than construct a new fortress in the interior, because the local barons advised him that such a place would be too exposed to Muslim attacks without any access to the sea.¹⁸³ In 1230 Gregory IX expressed similar concern for the castle of Montfort, because it was located several miles inland, and was consequently proving costly to build and difficult to defend properly.¹⁸⁴

¹⁸¹ Gestes, p.741; Eracles, II, 433, says 22 galleys.

¹⁸² Saphet: Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 93-96; al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, I(b), 30; Gestes, pp.764-66. Antioch: al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, I(b), 52-54; Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 122-26.

¹⁸³ Joinville, Histoire de Saint Louis, p.302.

¹⁸⁴ Tabulae ordinis Theutonici, no.72, pp.56-57.

The history of the crusader states in the Holy Land was therefore dictated by the fact that the Christians usually dominated the sea, whereas the Muslims normally triumphed on land. The Franks tried to compensate for their lack of troops in the field by constructing vast fortifications, so that garrisons of two or three thousand men could withstand invasion forces of anything up to 20,000 mounted troops. This tactic worked successfully against the Seljuks, Khwarizmians and Mongols, as well as numerous Ayubid incursions such as al-Muazzam's attack on Pilgrims' Castle. However, other aggressors who besieged Frankish strongholds more systematically, and in particular Baybars and his Mamluk successors, proved that even the strongest castles were eventually forced to surrender if the Muslims were allowed to blockade and attack them unhindered. Without an adequate field army at their disposal, the Franks could not prevent such sieges, and could not therefore halt the gradual erosion of their territories.

It has been shown that Christian cities were even more vulnerable in this respect, because far more troops and resources were needed to build and defend urban fortifications than individual castles. As we have seen, these problems were more pressing at Antioch and Jerusalem than the much wealthier and more densely populated cities of Acre, Tyre and Tripoli. However, even at these latter sites the task of garrisoning urban defences had to be shared between many different nations and organizations. The Hospitallers, Templars and Teutonic Knights were especially important in this respect, and their contribution to the defence of these cities will be discussed in more detail below.¹⁸⁵ At Acre the much smaller Order of St.Lazarus also guarded the northern tip

¹⁸⁵ See below, pp.160-61.

of Montmusard's fortifications,¹⁸⁶ whilst medieval maps and descriptions of the city indicate that other sections of the ramparts were entrusted to the Italian city states or important figures in the Latin clergy. Thus more soldiers must have been stationed in these cities than any other Frankish strongpoints in the east.¹⁸⁷

So far, we have looked almost exclusively at the role of major fortifications as a means of defending territory, but such structures were also relied on to protect people. As far as large urban sites were concerned, this point is fairly self-explanatory, for city walls were expected to shelter tens of thousands of unarmed civilians. Indeed, it has already been noted that 100,000 people lived at Antioch in the thirteenth century, although the vast majority of them were presumably Greek rather than west European.¹⁸⁸ We have also seen how many smaller towns and urban communities were fortified, including Sidon, Jaffa and Caesarea, which were provided with new town walls by Louis IX, as well as Arsuf, Beirut, Gibelet, Tortosa, Haifa and, for a short time during the Third Crusade, Ascalon. None of these sites appear to have been defended by anything more than a single rampart and outer moat, although these structures may have varied somewhat, for the urban fortifications at Caesarea seem to have been far

¹⁸⁶ Rey, 'Etude sur la Topographie', 132; Marshall, Warfare in the Latin East, p.67.

¹⁸⁷ See above, p.JT65 Leave note in!. Müller-Wiener's plan of Acre, representing a modern interpretation of medieval maps, shows more clearly towers garrisoned or paid for by the Genoese, the Venetians, the English, the papal legate and the Military Orders. See Castles of the Crusaders, p.73.

¹⁸⁸ See above, p.88.

larger than those of Tortosa or Beirut.¹⁸⁹ In addition, other communities which were often known as bourgs sprung up next to large fortresses. Such settlements have been mentioned at Pilgrims' Castle, Beaufort and Margat, and other examples were to be found on the relatively flat ground to the south of Crac des Chevaliers, as well as the slopes below the fortress of Saphet. Again, these bourgs were normally defended by a single curtain wall, although some, and in particular those at Margat, Saphet and Pilgrims' Castle, were so large that they became towns in their own right.¹⁹⁰ Finally, it should be noted that there were many people living in the countryside who were not necessarily protected by fortifications in peace time, but had deliberately settled close to castles so that if necessary they could find shelter relatively quickly and easily. Thus the author of De constructione castri Saphet wrote that once this fortress had been completed, 10,000 Christians living in 260 villages recolonized an area of central Galilee which had previously been considered too dangerous to inhabit.¹⁹¹

By living in or near fortified sites, the civilian population hoped to protect itself against a whole variety of external aggressors. Clearly, the most dangerous of these were those attackers who undertook large scale invasions of Christian territories. Thus in 1188 civilians as well as Templar garrison troops no doubt took shelter

¹⁸⁹ Caesarea: Benvenisti, The Crusaders in the Holy Land, pp.140-45; Rey, Etude, pp.221-27; Müller-Wiener, Castles of the Crusaders, p.74. Tortosa: see above, p.46. Beirut: see above, p.51n24.

¹⁹⁰ Margat: see above, pp.44-45. Saphet: De constructione castri Saphet, line 255, p.386. Pilgrims' Castle: see above, pp.55-56. Beaufort: see above, p.59. Crac des Chevaliers: Rey, Etude, p.40.

¹⁹¹ De constructione castri Saphet, lines 256-58, p.386.

in the citadel at Tortosa, thereby avoiding death or enslavement at the hands of Saladin.¹⁹² Similarly, anyone fortunate enough to reach one of the castles or cities which successfully resisted the Khwarizmians in 1244 escaped being massacred in the same way that 7,000 unfortunate Christians were at Jerusalem.¹⁹³ During the reign of Baybars, Mamluk forces also found hundreds or even thousands of non-combatants sheltering inside many of the strongholds they captured, including Akkar, Beaufort, Saphet, Chastel Blanc¹⁹⁴ and Antioch, where 'eight thousand fighting men, over and above women and children, crowded together in the citadel'.¹⁹⁵

At other times the Muslims launched more localized raids which were only designed to bring them slaves, cattle and booty, and to inflict severe damage on the local economy. Indeed, from the early 1260s onwards, Baybars made such raids part of his overall war strategy, because he knew that by destroying crops and orchards one year, he would leave the Frankish garrisons of neighbouring castles dangerously short of food when he returned to besiege them the following spring. In a later chapter it will be shown that this tactic contributed to the fall of major strongholds like Crac des Chevaliers,¹⁹⁶ but as far as

¹⁹² Abu Shama, Deux Jardins, IV, 353-54; Eracles, II, 120-22.

¹⁹³ Matthew Paris, Chronica Maiora, IV, 309.

¹⁹⁴ Akkar: Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 148-49; al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, I(b), 85. Beaufort: ibid, I(b), 51; Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 112. Saphet: ibid, II, 94-95; al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, I(b), 30. Chastel Blanc: ibid, I(b), 84; Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 143.

¹⁹⁵ Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 122. See also al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, I(b), 53.

¹⁹⁶ See below, pp.415-16.

Christian civilians were concerned, the need to find shelter from these attacks inevitably became a more pressing issue than the long term security of Latin territories. Thus the citizens of Acre and Tyre, as well as people living in the surrounding countryside, survived successive Mamluk incursions carried out during the 1260s. These campaigns devastated neighbouring orchards and farmlands, and led to the destruction of many outlying agricultural buildings, but were not strong enough to challenge the massive defences of Acre¹⁹⁷ and Tyre¹⁹⁸ directly. Likewise, it has already been shown that when he attacked Pilgrims' Castle in 1265, Baybars had to content himself with sacking the outer bourg, whose inhabitants would have retreated inside the fortress itself.¹⁹⁹

This point can also be illustrated by taking a closer look at the history of Sidon during the thirteenth century. After members of Frederick II's crusade had completed Sidon's sea castle, and the town had been at least partially reoccupied, Louis IX sent a contingent of his army to construct a second fortress and new urban fortifications there in the summer of 1253. However, while this work was still going on the Muslims launched a surprise raid on the Franks, which resulted in the death of 2,000 Christians, most of whom were killed because

¹⁹⁷ Raids on Acre occurred in 1263 (Eracles, II, 446-47; Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 57-59; al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, I(a), 199-200), in 1265 (ibid, I(b), 7; Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 71), in 1266 (ibid, II, 87; Eracles, II, 454-55; Gestes, p.764; al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, I(b), 27-28), in 1267 (ibid, I(b), 42; Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 102-3; Gestes, p.766; Eracles, II, 455), and in 1269 (see above, p.41.)

¹⁹⁸ Raids on Tyre occurred in 1266 (see note 197, for 1266), and in 1269 (Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 132-34; al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, I(b), 68-69.

¹⁹⁹ al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, I(b), 8; Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 72.

there was not enough room for them in the sea castle. As a result Louis decided to supervise the rest of the project in person, so that it was completed before he returned to France the following year.²⁰⁰

Six years after Louis IX's departure, Julian, lord of Sidon, made a rash incursion into Mongol held territories to the east of Beaufort, which precipitated a devastating Mongol counter attack against Sidon itself. However, thanks to Louis's new defences, Julian was able to hold the Mongols off at the gate just long enough for the Christian population of the town to escape into the land and sea castles. Consequently, when the Mongols finally broke into the town, all they could do was to carry out widespread looting and dismantle the walls, but they made no attempt to attack either citadel. Louis IX's wish that the massacre of 1253 should not be repeated had therefore been fulfilled, and the presence of strong fortifications had once again ensured that lives were saved even if homes were destroyed.²⁰¹

However, the Franks were not always capable of resisting their opponents as successfully as the inhabitants of Sidon were in 1260. But whenever a Christian stronghold did fall to a besieging army, its civilian population as well as its fighting garrison stood a far greater chance of survival if it could escape by sea. Thus we have already seen how all Christians, regardless of whether they were combattants or non-combattants took to their boats and fled from Haifa in 1265.²⁰² Three years later

²⁰⁰ Joinville, Histoire de Saint Louis, pp.302, 336, and see above, p.50.

²⁰¹ Gestes, p.752; Eracles, II, 444; Jackson, 'The Crisis', 499-500.

²⁰² See above, p.95.

there were no such options for the unfortunate citizens of Antioch, who found themselves trapped by their own ramparts once the Muslims began to swarm into the city, and could not even escape through any of the gates, which Baybars had deliberately sealed off in order to prevent any loot from being carried away.²⁰³

Similar scenes of devastation accompanied the fall of Tripoli in 1289 and Acre in 1291, for although these cities were located on the coast, and a fair percentage of their inhabitants could therefore flee in ships, many others were cut down by the Muslims as they retreated in panic. These events shed further light on the strategic limitations of citadels which were situated inland. Indeed, contemporary sources do not mention anyone seeking shelter in Acre's citadel, which would, in a sense, have become more of a trap than a refuge once the Muslims controlled the streets around it. Instead about 10,000 Christians made their way to the headquarters of the Templars, which stood at the water's edge in the south west corner of the city. This structure had very strong walls and towers, as well as a postern giving access to the sea, and it is clear that the Franks rated their chances of survival more by sheltering here than in a building which offered no obvious means of escape. In theory, the Temple could therefore have been used to organize a seaborne withdrawal, if the Latins had not already been so utterly defeated that its garrison was finally overwhelmed after a blockade lasting a further ten days.²⁰⁴

At Tripoli, a similar set of circumstances also led to a

²⁰³ Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 122.

²⁰⁴ Gestes, pp.814, 816; Annales de Terre Sainte, p.461 (text A); Marino Sanudo, Liber secretorum, pp.231-32, and see above, p.15.

high number of Christian casualties. It has been mentioned that Tripoli's citadel was located on a hill opposite the actual city, making it impossible for anyone to reach it once the Muslims had begun their assault. As a result, the Franks had nowhere to hide after their urban defences had been breached, and hundreds of citizens who sought refuge on a small island in the harbour were ruthlessly massacred. If this island had been fortified, these people could have been evacuated in the same way that the defenders of Sidon were two years later. This suggests that sites which had a powerful inner fortress with direct access to the sea were strategically superior to settlements protected by strong curtain walls and a relatively weak citadel.²⁰⁵

Having looked at the defensive role of castles, citadels and urban fortifications, it is possible to discuss the various attacking functions of such sites in more detail. In doing so, it quickly becomes apparent that whenever they went on the offensive, the Franks again relied on their strongholds to make up for their lack of troops, and to compensate for their inadequate field armies. Indeed, by constructing new fortifications in areas which had been abandoned by the Muslims or acquired by treaty, the Christians could maintain, or even expand, their borders without ever having to face their opponents in open battle.

In the short term, this tactic was relied on to re-establish Latin control over territories which had been lost temporarily. Thus we have seen that Coliath, a small castrum-type fortress in the county of Tripoli, probably fell to Saladin in 1188, was demolished by al-Adil twenty

²⁰⁵ Abu'l-Fida, Annales, pp.162-63; al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, II(a), 102-3; Annales de Terre Sainte, p.460 (text B).

years later, and was again overrun by Baybars during a Mamluk raid carried out in 1266. There is no evidence that the Franks tried to prevent these attacks by confronting the Muslims, and in 1266 at least Coliath's garrison quite simply fled without even attempting to hold such a small and low lying site against a far larger Mamluk army. However, as long as more powerful strongholds like Chastel Blanc, Crac des Chevaliers and Tripoli held out, it became equally pointless for the Muslims to install their own troops at Coliath, for these forces would be terribly exposed to a Christian counter-attack once their colleagues had withdrawn from the area. Consequently, successive Muslim aggressors thought it wiser to demolish Coliath, but none of them could actually prevent the Franks from reoccupying the site, and rebuilding it on at least two occasions. This suggests that Coliath was not in fact lost for good until Baybars conquered the entire plain of Akkar in 1271.²⁰⁶

Further south it has also been noted that the tower of Qaqun remained in Christian hands for as long as the much larger Frankish strongpoint of Caesarea did.²⁰⁷ Parallel observations can be made about the fortified mills of Doc and Recordane, which were situated on the plain of Acre, and were owned by the Templars and the Hospitallers respectively. Both these structures were destroyed during the Muslim raid on the area in 1253, and subsequently suffered further damage in 1263, when Doc was demolished, and again in 1267, when the same fate befell neighbouring Recordane.²⁰⁸ These events, as well as the substantial

²⁰⁶ Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 150, and see above, pp.70-71.

²⁰⁷ See above, p.72.

²⁰⁸ 1253: Eracles, II, 440-41; Matthew Paris, Chronica Maiora, V, 398; Marino Sanudo, Liber secretorum, p.220; Annales de Terre Sainte, p.44 (text B). 1263: ibid, p.450

remains of Recordane which still survive today, suggest that the Military Orders were able to reconstruct both mills again and again during the thirteenth century, because of their close proximity to Acre.²⁰⁹

Thus larger Frankish cities and strongholds were not only capable of withstanding major incursions, but also acted as focal points for Christian reconquests and rebuilding programmes once temporary invasions had come to an end. So far this strategy has been discussed in fairly localized terms, but it was also used to regain territories which lay further afield. Montfort, for example, was established as soon as, if not slightly before, Christian possession of the site had been confirmed in the treaty of Jaffa.²¹⁰ The key strongholds erected or reoccupied in the early 1240s, most notably Beaufort and Saphet, also ensured that many of the inland areas gained at this time remained under Christian rule until the reign of Baybars. It has also been shown that initial efforts to recolonize numerous urban sites lost or destroyed after the battle of Hattin centred around the construction of new castles, especially at Caesarea, Sidon, Ascalon, Tiberias and Jerusalem. Further north, the tower which Bartholomew de Ravandel constructed at Maraclea after 1277 represented another, unusually late, attempt to reestablish a Frankish

(text A); Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 57, 57n4, 59. 1267: ibid, II, 103n2.

²⁰⁹ Recordane was defended by a two storey tower similar to that at Qaqun. See Benvenisti, The Crusaders in the Holy Land, p.251; Deschamps, La Défense du royaume de Jérusalem, p.124; D. Pringle, 'Survey of Castles in the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem, 1989: Preliminary Report', Levant, XXIII, (1991), 87-91, at 89.

²¹⁰ Matthew Paris, Chronica Maiora, III, 175. The site of the castle was acquired in 1228. See Tabulae ordinis Theutonici, no.63, pp.51-53; RRH, no.1002, p.263. This was confirmed by Frederick II in 1229. See Tabulae ordinis Theutonici, no.67, pp.54-55; RRH, no.1011, p.265.

lordship previously overrun by the Muslims.²¹¹ Around 1261 Bohemond VI also 'took Latakia and built a strong new tower', so that the town, which had belonged to the Muslims since 1188, returned to Christian control for the next twenty six years.²¹² Clearly, therefore, the Franks depended on fortifications far more than troops to secure any new territories which they occupied, and it is interesting to note that out of all the sites mentioned above, Latakia appears to have been the only settlement acquired after a direct confrontation with Muslim defenders. This merely confirms that the Latins were normally too outnumbered to make conquests by force, and actually achieved most of their territorial gains through diplomacy.

Once they had been occupied or reconstructed, Latin defences could therefore be used to protect both people and territory, making them an ideal way of safeguarding and repopulating newly secured land. In the short term, however, many such structures had also been built to defend Christian field armies operating against the Muslims. As soon as they had captured Acre, for example, the various contingents of the Third Crusade set about repairing the city's defences in order to protect themselves against Saladin.²¹³ Later on Richard I used Acre as a springboard for his campaign into southern Palestine, but the further he moved away from the city, the more exposed he became to potential Muslim counter-attacks. In a sense, therefore, self-preservation had as much to do with Richard's hasty refortification of Jaffa

²¹¹ See above, pp.74-75.

²¹² 1188: Abu Shama, Deux Jardins, IV, 356, 359-63. c.1261: Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 115.

²¹³ Itinerarium, p.240; Matthew Paris, Chronica Maiora, II, 376.

and Ascalon as the desire to reconquer these cities. Likewise, we have seen that Richard's decision not to attack Jerusalem resulted from a concern about the harshness of the terrain, the inadequacy of the water supply, and the lack of friendly castles along the way where his army could find shelter.²¹⁴ It should be added that a quarter of a century later, members of the Fifth Crusade were motivated by similar worries when they constructed Pilgrims' Castle, for, according to Oliver of Paderborn, 'the primary advantage of this building is that the assembly of Templars...will remain in the garrison of this fort up until the restoration of the walls of Jerusalem'. Hence both Richard I's followers and Oliver of Paderborn's companions hoped to secure the holy city, and indeed the entire route between it and Acre, by building fortifications rather than driving the Muslims back through sheer weight of numbers.²¹⁵

The new citadels which Frederick II's troops constructed at Jaffa, Caesarea and Sidon can be cited as further examples of castles being built to expand Latin power, and at the same time protect crusaders in the field.²¹⁶ In the middle years of the thirteenth century, Joinville also wrote that during construction work at Jaffa, Louis IX's army remained camped right next to Frederick's older fortress, and as close to the shore as possible, so that it would be sheltered while new town walls were being built.²¹⁷ Similarly, the remains of a contemporary hall

²¹⁴ Itinerarium, pp.380, 394, and see above, p.86.

²¹⁵ Quote: Oliver of Paderborn, Historia Damiatina, p.171. The construction of Pilgrims' Castle also enabled the Templars to continue their traditional role as guardians of pilgrims travelling to or from Jerusalem. See below, pp.159-60.

²¹⁶ See above, pp.50, 54.

²¹⁷ Joinville, Histoire de Saint Louis, p.284.

along the north face of Sidon's sea castle suggests that Louis IX used this stronghold as his headquarters until the town's urban defences had been completed.²¹⁸ Thus the policy first adopted by Richard I was later carried forward by both Frederick II and Louis IX, and the latter crusader in particular clearly relied on much older fortifications in order to accomplish his own extensive building programme successfully.

By building or repairing strongholds, these men were again attempting to augment and consolidate Frankish rule without having to expose their soldiers to a potentially disastrous encounter like the battle of Hattin. At other times, however, the Franks were in fact prepared to attack their opponents more directly, and on such occasions the role of castles and cities changed from that of refuge sites to that of starting points for offensive campaigns against Muslim territories.

Attacks of this kind can be divided into two groups depending on what they were intended to achieve. Firstly, the Latins organized several expeditions which were designed to capture Muslim castles or make other permanent territorial gains. Indeed, Acre itself would not have fallen in July 1191 if the massive defences of neighbouring Tyre had not provided a safe landing point for Italian ships bringing essential reinforcements and provisions to the Christians.²¹⁹ In addition, the siege of Acre was conducted from a fortified camp, which was defended by successive lines of wooden pallisades and

²¹⁸ Deschamps, La Défense du royaume de Jérusalem, p.232. This hall may also have been built by the Templars between 1260 and 1291. See Kennedy, Crusader Castles, p.122.

²¹⁹ See, for example, Marino Sanudo, Liber secretorum, p.196; Matthew Paris, Chronica Maiora, II, 366.

ditches, and stood on a hill to the east of the city. By the beginning of 1190, this camp was so large that it had virtually become a walled town in its own right, and contained numerous churches and other residential or functional buildings.²²⁰ Although this camp initially found itself besieged by Saladin's forces stationed further inland, months of fighting and the constant arrival of more crusaders eventually obliged Saladin to retreat, enabling the Franks to encircle Acre and bring about its ultimate downfall.²²¹

Once the crusaders had re-established themselves at Acre, they could use this city to organize campaigns against other Muslim targets which also needed to be taken by force. To some extent Richard I's expedition along the coast can be included in this category, for although Caesarea, Arsuf, Jaffa and Ascalon had all been sleighted and abandoned by the Muslims, and did not therefore need to be besieged before they could be occupied, Richard still had to defeat Saladin at the famous battle of Arsuf before he could establish himself at these sites more securely.²²²

²²⁰ Itinerarium, pp.62, 73; Ambroise, L'Estoire de la guerre sainte, lines 3060-76, cols.82-83; Histoire des patriarches d'Alexandrie, extract cited in J.F. Michaud, Bibliothèque des Croisades, IV (Paris 1829), 257.

²²¹ Itinerarium, pp.61-140, 211-32; Ambroise, L'Estoire de la guerre sainte, lines 4,557-5,224, cols.122-40; Eracles, II, 125-31, 149-51, 155-57, 171-74; Matthew Paris, Chronica Maiora, II, 334-36, 353-61, 369-70, 373-75; Abu Shama, Deux Jardins, IV, 406-522, V, 3-26; Ibn al-Athir, Kamel Altevarykh, II, 3-44; Baha'-al-Din, Anecdotes, pp.132-238.

²²² Battle of Arsuf: Itinerarium, pp.262-80; Ambroise, L'Estoire de la guerre sainte, lines 6,090-6,630, cols.163-77; Abu Shama, Deux Jardins, V, 38-40; Ibn al-Athir, Kamel Altevarykh, II, 49-50; Baha'-al-Din, Anecdotes, 258-61. Richard's conquests: see above, pp.51-52.

Five years later, German troops belonging to Henry VI's crusade also arrived at Acre before marching north and capturing Beirut, whose Muslim garrison fled in panic after attempting to make a stand in front of their castle.²²³ Other, less successful, expeditions launched from Acre included the failed siege of Mt Tabor undertaken by members of the Fifth Crusade in 1217,²²⁴ and the lord Edward's somewhat confused attack on Qaqun in 1271, which may in fact have been an extensive raid rather than an actual siege.²²⁵ Shortly after their triumph at Beirut, the Germans had also organized another campaign from Tyre, which was aimed against the isolated inland stronghold of Toron, but had to be abandoned in the face of a Muslim relieving force.²²⁶

Further north, Frankish efforts to regain Muslim held territories had equally mixed results. In 1191, Bohemond III failed to reconquer Latakia and the neighbouring port of Jabala, in an offensive which was presumably launched from Tripoli itself. Sixteen years later Raymond Roupen, an Armenian claimant to the throne of Antioch, granted Jabala to the Hospitallers in order to gain their support

²²³ Eracles, II, 224-26; Abu Shama, Deux Jardins, V, 116-17; Ibn al-Athir, Kamel Altevarykh, II, 86-87; Arnold of Lübeck, Chronica Slavorum, pp.205-6.

²²⁴ See above, p.60.

²²⁵ Eracles, II, 461; Gestes, pp.778-79; al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, I(b), 101; Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 155; al-'Ayni, Le Collier de Perles, p.246. See also Pringle, The Red Tower, pp.60, 62; Marshall, Warfare in the Latin East, p.206.

²²⁶ Arnold of Lübeck, Chronica Slavorum, pp.207-10; Eracles, II, 227; Abu'l-Fida, Annales, p.74; Ibn al-Athir, Kamel Altevarykh, II, 87-88. For a description of Toron, see Deschamps, La Défense du royaume de Jérusalem, pp.117-18.

against his political opponents.²²⁷ As a result, the Hospitallers eventually occupied half of Jabala, but there is no evidence that they ever recaptured Bikisrail, a mountain fortress to the north east of Margat which Raymond Roupen promised to them in 1210. Although Raymond's strategy therefore only had limited success, it provides us with an interesting example of a Military Order being encouraged to reconquer old Christian territories in exchange for assurances that they could keep any strongholds which they managed to capture.²²⁸

Their great importance in Syria also meant that the Military Orders were at the forefront of many subsequent campaigns against the Muslims, such as the failed siege of Homs which the Hospitallers of Crac des Chevaliers undertook in 1207.²²⁹ To the north of Antioch, the Templars spent much of the thirteenth century trying to reconquer the vast estates which they had held there before 1188, and in particular the strategic fortresses of Baghras and Darbsak. These castles guarded two of the most important mountain passes connecting Antioch with the Cilician plain, but the former was occupied by the Armenians between 1190 and 1216, whilst the latter had been garrisoned by Aleppine forces in the wake of Saladin's invasion. As a result, the Templars only retained the neighbouring stronghold of Hadjar Shoghlan

²²⁷ 1191: Baha'-al-Din, Anecdotes, p.274. 1207: Le Trésor des Chartes d'Arménie ou Cartulaire de la Chancellerie royale des Roupéniens, ed. V. Langlois, (Venice 1863), no.11, pp.130-31; Cartulaire, II, nos.1262, 1263, pp.70-71.

²²⁸ Le Trésor, no.12, pp.132-33; Cartulaire, II, no.1355, pp.122-23. Bikisrail had been lost to the Muslims during the twelfth century. For more details, see Cahen, La Syrie du Nord, pp.515, 612-13, 629-30, and see below, pp.157-58.

²²⁹ Ibn al-Athir, Kamel Altevarykh, II, 105-6.

(Chilvan Kale) during the early years of the thirteenth century, and it was from here that they made an unsuccessful attack on Darbsak in 1237. This offensive, along with the history of other Templar fortifications north of Antioch, will be discussed in more detail below.²³⁰

The last phase of Christian expansion in Syria occurred after the Mongol destruction of Aleppo in 1260, which enabled Bohemond VI to commit 'many acts of aggression against the lands of Islam', so that 'he took a number of villages in Muslim territory', as well as the town of Latakia itself. All these conquests appear to have been made from the city of Tripoli.²³¹ It was also at this time that Bohemond acquired Darkoush, Kafr Dubbin and several other castles situated to the east of Antioch, which had been captured by the Muslims in 1188, but became an easy target for the Franks after the Mongol invasion.²³² Unfortunately for the Templars, a similar set of circumstances apparently enabled the Armenians to occupy the fortress of Darbsak. In 1268, however, all these strongholds were lost to the Mamluks along with

²³⁰ 1237: Matthew Paris, Chronica Maiora, III, 404-6; Abu'l-Fida, Annales, 112-13, and see below, pp.277-84.

²³¹ Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 115. Bohemond VI, or the Templars and the Hospitallers, or indeed all three, probably also captured Jabala at this time. See ibid, II, 128, 128n1. For the Mongol invasion of Syria, see above, pp. 15-16.

²³² 1188: Baha'-al-Din, Anecdotes, pp.112-15; Abu Shama, Deux Jardins, IV, 368-74. 1261: Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 115, 126. See also Jackson, ('The Crisis', 494-96), who argues that Bohemond made these conquests through sheer force rather than the assistance of the Mongols.

Antioch.²³³

These events again illustrate the Franks' chronic lack of manpower, for it is clear that Bohemond's successes during the early 1260s began and ended with the Mongol invasion of eastern Syria. Moreover, many of the attempted sieges which have already been mentioned, including those of Homs, Qaqun and Toron, failed because the Franks were too outnumbered to face the Muslim relieving forces sent to assist these places, and were consequently obliged to retreat. Such setbacks probably explain why sustained, large scale sieges undertaken by the Latins were extremely rare during the thirteenth century, and were often rejected in favour of more manageable raiding expeditions which could be called off as soon as the Muslims tried to retaliate.

Offensives which belonged to this category were consequently much smaller in scope, for they were carried out in order to gain booty rather than permanent territorial conquests. However, many campaigns of this kind still involved relatively large numbers of men, and were therefore launched from castles and fortified cities as well. In 1271, for example, the lord Edward's troops joined forces with Templars, Hospitallers and other soldiers from Acre in a raid against St. George, situated just a few miles inland. The expedition, undertaken by 1,500 horsemen, succeeded in causing widespread destruction of Muslim crops and property, and at the same time bringing its participants substantial booty in the form of grain and cattle.²³⁴ Other raids were also

²³³ Darbsak: Cahen, La Syrie du Nord, p.705. Darbsak is listed as one of the castles Baybars acquired from the Armenians. See Abu'l-Fida, Annales, p.152; Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 166. 1268: ibid, II, 126.

²³⁴ Gestes, p.778; Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 155.

launched from the coast against Sidon, Beaufort and central Galilee during the Fifth Crusade,²³⁵ and in 1253 some of Louis IX's followers carried out an attack on the Muslim town of Banyas while they were based at Sidon.²³⁶ It has already been noted that Julian of Sidon also raided Mongol territories to the east of Beaufort in 1260, and that the arrival of Aragonese crusaders at Acre nine years later enabled the Franks to attack several Muslim villages near Montfort with a force of around 130 knights.²³⁷

In the county of Tripoli, several similar offensives were carried out from Margat and Crac des Chevaliers during the earliest years of the thirteenth century. Thus in 1203 an army of 400 knights, 1,400 footsoldiers, and numerous Turcoples and archers drawn from the garrisons of these strongholds suffered a crushing defeat near Montferrand, only a month after another Hospitaller force had been routed while trying to attack Hama.²³⁸ Nevertheless, the very next year the Order made more successful incursions against both Homs and Hama, and may well have participated in another expedition toward Jabala.²³⁹ In 1265, the Templars and Hospitallers also joined forces with the bellicose Bohemond VI on a raid which was eventually

²³⁵ Sidon and Beaufort: Matthew Paris, Chronica Maiora, III, 11; Eracles, II, 324-25; James of Vitry, Lettres, p.99; Oliver of Paderborn, Historia Damiatina, pp.167-68. Galilee: ibid, pp.164-65; Matthew Paris, Chronica Maiora, III, 10; Eracles, II, 323-24.

²³⁶ Joinville, Histoire de Saint Louis, p310-18.

²³⁷ 1260: see above, p.103-4. 1269: see above, p.41.

²³⁸ al-Makrizi, Histoire d'Égypte, pp.126-28, 126n3,4, 128n1; Abu'l-Fida, Annales, p.81.

²³⁹ Homs and Hama: al-Makrizi, Histoire d'Égypte, p.135; Ibn al-Athir, Kamel Altevarykh, II, 105; Kamal-ad-Din, L'Histoire d'Alep, ed. E. Blochet, ROL, V, (Paris 1897), 44-45. Jabala: al-Makrizi, Histoire d'Égypte, pp.135, 127n1; Eracles, II, 247-48.

repulsed by Muslim troops from Homs. Fourteen years later, the garrison of Margat organized its last expedition against former Hospitaller estates around Crac des Chevaliers and Chastel Blanc, and clearly maintained an aggressive stance toward the Muslims right up until the very end.²⁴⁰

Having looked at both the relatively minor raids and the more ambitious siege campaigns undertaken by the Franks, it is possible to make a few general conclusions about the offensive strategies which they adopted during the thirteenth century. Firstly, it is clear that large fortified sites such as Margat, Crac des Chevaliers, Acre and Tyre were ideal starting points for all Christian expeditions, because they could provide adequate food, water and shelter for substantial numbers of men and horses. As we have seen, Tyre was particularly important in this respect, because if it had fallen to Saladin in 1187, the Franks may not have been able to recapture Acre, or indeed return to the Holy Land ever again.

These events are also a reminder of the immense importance of west European crusaders to the Latins, particularly in the kingdom of Jerusalem, where virtually every Frankish offensive both during and after the Third Crusade was only made possible by the arrival of external reinforcements. This in turn explains why coastal strongholds, and most commonly Acre itself, were normally used as springboards for campaigns into Muslim territory. Thus the walls of Acre, Tyre and neighbouring settlements along the coast

²⁴⁰ 1265: Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 83-84. 1279: Gestes, p.784; Marino Sanudo, Liber secretorum, p.228; Annales de Terre Sainte, p.457 (text A). Hospitallers and Templars from Margat and surrounding strongholds may also have participated in an attack on Homs and Hama, undertaken by Frankish, Armenian, Mongol and Georgian troops in 1282. See Hethoum the Historian, Table Chronologique, p.487.

protected the vital sea links with western Europe, and provided visiting crusaders with safe and reliable anchorages where troops could be mustered and supplies brought ashore. These observations do not, however, apply as much to the Frankish states of northern Syria, partly because these areas were less popular with foreign crusaders, and partly because their borders were more permanently established further inland. Indeed, Crac des Chevaliers's successful resistance against Saladin in 1188 ensured that the county of Tripoli's frontiers during the thirteenth century were not that different from what they had been immediately before the battle of Hattin. As we shall see, this region also relied less on external assistance because of the sheer might of the Military Orders.²⁴¹

Although it is clear that the vast majority of offensive campaigns organized by the Franks during the thirteenth century either failed to make any major territorial gains, or were not in fact designed to do so, the sheer amount of destruction which these expeditions inflicted on exposed towns and villages was such that they could also be used to keep large areas of the countryside in thrall. Indeed, sometimes the mere threat of punitive raids enabled the garrison of a single Latin fortress to extend its authority over many estates and settlements previously held by the Muslims. It has already been mentioned, for example, that the security provided by Saphet encouraged more than 10,000 peasants to recolonize neighbouring territories, while the castle's strategic location above the river Jordan also made it possible for its defenders to launch raids on Muslim lands as far as Damascus. As a

²⁴¹ See below, pp.128-29, 154-55. The county of Tripoli's eastern border had remained relatively stable since the 1140s. See Deschamps, La Défense du comté de Tripoli, pp.21-34, particularly at p.25.

result, the rulers of this city were forced to relinquish many of their properties in this area.²⁴²

Once it had been completed, Pilgrims' Castle served a very similar purpose, for 'between Acre and Jerusalem there is no fortification which the Saracens hold, and therefore the unbelievers are harmed greatly by that new fortress; and with the fear of God pursuing them, they are forced to abandon these cultivated regions'. Moreover, Oliver of Paderborn added that 'the construction of this castle is presumed to have been the cause of the destruction of [Mt Tabor], because in the long wide plain, which lies between the mountainous districts of this camp and of Mt Tabor, no one could safely plough or sow or reap because of fear of those who lived in it'.²⁴³ Thus the crusaders finally got rid of Mt Tabor not by launching a direct military assault, but by building their own stronghold, whose Templar garrison could harass the Muslims and deprive them of their food supplies. Almost half a century later, Baybars was obliged to repair the neighbouring tower of Qaqun, because 'his subjects living in those parts needed a place of protection', suggesting that the Templars were still using their fortress to dominate large parts of central Galilee.²⁴⁴

The Templars and the Hospitallers relied on similar strategies to maintain their power in the county of Tripoli, and to keep their Muslim neighbours in check. One such neighbour was the tribe of the Assassins, schismatic

²⁴² De constructione castri Saphet, line 251, p.385.

²⁴³ Oliver of Paderborn, Historia Damiatina, p.171-72.

²⁴⁴ Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 101. By the 1280s, the situation had reversed, and Qaqun was used by the Muslims to intimidate Pilgrims' Castle; a clear indication of declining Frankish power. See Burchard of Mount Sion, Descriptio, pp.83-84.

Muslims who controlled the extremely mountainous district to the east of Latakia. The rough terrain in this area enabled the Assassins to retain their independence for much of the thirteenth century, but their close proximity to Margat, whose garrison could easily launch a punitive raid against them, forced them to pay the Hospitallers an annual tribute of 1,200 gold pieces and 100 bushels of wheat and barley.

The threat posed by Crac des Chevaliers toward the emir of Hama and the ruler of Bokebais (or Abu Qubais, a Muslim castle between Hama and the territory of the Assassins) meant that they too had to make similar annual payments to the Order worth 4,000 and 800 gold pieces respectively.²⁴⁵ Moreover, if they did not pay, there could be grave consequences, for in 1229 the Hospitallers carried out an extensive raid around Montferrand, a castle they themselves had held during the twelfth century, because the emir of Hama had not paid up. The following year a force of 500 horsemen and 2,700 footsoldiers, composed of both Hospitallers and Templars, launched another attack toward Hama, but this time the expedition ended in defeat at the hands of the emir's army.²⁴⁶

However, the Hospitallers were not deterred, and angered by the emir's persistent refusal to pay, they organized a third offensive in 1233. This expedition was far larger than those of 1229 and 1230, and involved 100 knights, 400 mounted sergeants and 1,500 footsoldiers led by the Hospitaller Grand Master, as well as 25 Templar knights,

²⁴⁵ Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 98; al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, I(b), 32; Willbrand of Oldenburg, Itinerarium, p.210.

²⁴⁶ 1229: Ibn al-Athir, Kamel Altevarykh, II, 180. 1230: al-'Ayni, Le Collier de Perles, p.194; Deschamps, Le Crac des Chevaliers, p.128.

80 knights from the kingdom of Jerusalem, 30 knights led by Bohemond V's brother Henry, and 100 knights from Cyprus. This impressive force marched overnight toward Montferrand, enabling the Franks to make a surprise attack on its bourg the following morning. Having sacked this settlement, they continued to ravage the surrounding countryside, before returning toward the coast, without having encountered any Muslim resistance. Consequently, the sultan of Damascus advised the emir of Hama to pay the money he owed, and peace was reestablished with the Hospitallers.²⁴⁷ Indeed, the Order appears to have collected Muslim tribute for a further thirty years, until Baybars finally obliged it to renounce these payments as part of a peace treaty established in 1266.²⁴⁸

Thus larger castles like Saphet and Crac des Chevaliers allowed the Franks to intimidate, or even control, extensive areas without actually having to occupy them in their entirety. In Syria, this policy also enabled the Military Orders to reap huge financial rewards from their neighbours, and in a later chapter it will be shown that castles in general were likewise used to impose smaller, more regular taxes on Greek and Muslim peasants.²⁴⁹ However, it should again be noted that the raids needed to maintain this military and financial dominance were usually carried out by Christian armies which were heavily outnumbered by their Muslim opponents. Consequently, Frankish strongholds were not just relied on to protect troops during the initial stages of an offensive, but were also required to shelter vulnerable field armies once a campaign got under way. Hence in 1197, German crusaders

²⁴⁷ Eracles, II, 403-5; Abu'l-Fida, Annales, 115.

²⁴⁸ Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 98; al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, I(b), 32.

²⁴⁹ See below, pp.408-9.

marching from Acre to Beirut stopped off at Tyre, so that they could rest and feed, and at the same time minimize the amount of time which they spent in the open, exposed to enemy counter-attacks.²⁵⁰

The need to find shelter became even more urgent if a Latin field army came under direct threat from a Muslim force operating close by. In 1253, for example, French companions of Louis IX who were participating in a raid on Banyas narrowly avoided a potentially disastrous confrontation with the Muslims by withdrawing to Sidon at the first sign of trouble.²⁵¹ It is also interesting to note that the first major raids which the Hospitallers carried out from Crac des Chevaliers and Margat occurred in 1203 and 1204, almost twenty years after the Order had acquired the latter castle. This raises the possibility that the Hospitallers completed their rebuilding programme at about the same time, and deliberately chose not to go on the offensive until both fortresses were strong enough to resist possible counter-attacks.²⁵² Similarly, Templar forces carrying out raids around Mt Tabor and the river Jordan must have had relatively little to fear, because they knew that even if the Muslims attempted to pursue them, they could easily retreat to Saphet or Pilgrims' Castle, both of which were virtually impregnable. In 1271 Baybars is also reported to have besieged Akkar because 'brigands could come down from it and they would fortify themselves there'. According to Ibn al-Furat, these men could attack the surrounding countryside with impunity, for Akkar itself lay 'in difficult hill country, far from supplies of water', and was therefore almost totally

²⁵⁰ Arnold of Lübeck, Chronica Slavorum, p.205.

²⁵¹ See above, p.117.

²⁵² Deschamps, La Défense du comté de Tripoli, pp.283-84.

immune to Muslim counter offensives.²⁵³

However, on other occasions the Franks were persuaded to stop and fight rather than run away, particularly if they were close enough to a castle to disengage from a battle if the need arose. In 1279 200 horsemen from the garrison of Margat used this tactic against the 5,000 Muslims who were trying to prevent them from ravaging the neighbourhood of Crac des Chevaliers. The Hospitallers knew that it could be suicidal for them to confront this force in the open, and they therefore allowed themselves to be chased until they had almost reached Margat itself before turning on the Muslims and routing them with the loss of only one mounted sergeant. As we have seen, the defenders of Margat also thwarted another Muslim attack two years later, when 600 Hospitallers rode out of the castle and drove off 6,000 startled Muslim besiegers.²⁵⁴ Similarly, one contemporary reported that during the siege of Acre in 1291, the Franks deliberately kept their city gates open so that they could launch surprise attacks against their opponents, either by day or by night.²⁵⁵

Clearly, therefore, it was sometimes worth risking a direct encounter with the Muslims, provided that the Franks had some means of protecting themselves should the battle start to turn against them. Hence the Rule of the Templars advised members of this Order that if they were defeated in the field, they had to try to reach the nearest fortress in order to keep their casualties to a

²⁵³ Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 148.

²⁵⁴ 1279: see above, p.118n240. 1281: see above, p.49n17.

²⁵⁵ Bar Hebraeus, Chronography, pp.492-93.

minimum.²⁵⁶ Likewise, the castle of Ascalon, which had been used as a collection point for Frankish troops on the eve of the battle of La Forbie, became a refuge site for those few Christians fortunate enough to escape the subsequent carnage.²⁵⁷

The terrible losses suffered at La Forbie also remind us of what could happen if the Latins did not have the time or the means to find shelter in the wake of a defeat. This point can be illustrated further by returning to the failed Templar attack on Darbsak, which turned out to be one of the worst military disasters in the Order's history, because most of its participants were cut down by an Allepine counter-offensive long before they could reach the safety of Hadjar Shoghlan.²⁵⁸ In 1266, Hospitallers, Templars, Teutonic Knights and other secular troops campaigning near Tiberias also found themselves trapped in a Muslim ambush which resulted in the death of around 500 troops; a total which subsequently appears to have increased because the Franks were then forced to march all the way back to Acre, a journey of approximately 50 kilometres, while being constantly harrassed by local Muslim peasants. This costly and humiliating defeat could surely have been avoided if the Franks had been able to take refuge in a nearby castle.²⁵⁹

However, at other times the Latins did not just rely on their strongholds for protection, but used the garrisons

²⁵⁶ La Règle du Temple, ed. H. de Curzon, (Paris 1886), no.168.

²⁵⁷ Matthew Paris, Chronica Maiora, IV, 342.

²⁵⁸ Matthew Paris, Chronica Maiora, III, 404-6; Abu'l-Fida, Annales, pp.112-13.

²⁵⁹ Eracles, II, 455; Marino Sanudo, Liber secretorum, p.222.

of such sites to raise additional troops for their own field armies. This strategy had backfired disastrously in the months after the battle of Hattin, when Saladin overran several Latin castles which were virtually empty, and the fact that the Franks were prepared to use it again after 1187 is a further indication of their chronic lack of manpower.²⁶⁰ Thus the Templars, Hospitallers and Teutonic Knights, who may have contributed as many as 600 knights to the battle of La Forbie, must have found it difficult to defend their local castles properly after they suffered heavy casualties at the hands of the Egyptians and Khwarizmians. This point probably applies most to the Teutonic Knights, who are reputed to have lost all but three of their contingent at La Forbie, presumably putting severe strain on their garrisons at Montfort, Acre and elsewhere.²⁶¹ Perhaps losses sustained by the Hospitallers also contributed to the fall of Ascalon in 1247.²⁶²

Sixteen years after the battle of La Forbie, a somewhat smaller Christian army suffered another crushing defeat in southern Galilee. This expedition, which was led by the lord of Beirut, was partly made up of Templars sent from Acre, Pilgrims' Castle, Saphet and Beaufort.²⁶³ As a result, all these sites may well have been seriously undermanned after the battle, although it is extremely

²⁶⁰ In 1188, for example, Saladin captured the Syrian castle of Saone in three days, because it was so poorly defended. See below, p.163.

²⁶¹ Matthew Paris, Chronica Maiora, IV, 301; Marshall, Warfare in the Latin East, p.149; Riley-Smith in Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 173n2.

²⁶² See above, p.53.

²⁶³ Eracles, II, 445; Gestes, pp.752-53; Marino Sanudo, Liber secretorum, p.221; Abu Shama, Deux Jardins, V, 204.

difficult to estimate exactly how many troops had been drawn from each individual fortress. However, it has been calculated that Saphet alone had a peace time garrison of 1,650 men, fifty of whom were mounted knights,²⁶⁴ and if similar numbers applied to their other major castles, the Templars could have represented a fairly substantial percentage of the 900 knights and additional Turcoples who are said to have taken part in the battle. Contemporary sources also suggest that the Order had suffered particularly heavy casualties, and had to pay a considerable ransom for the release of their captured commander.²⁶⁵

By contrast, it was probably less risky for the Latins to take troops from strongholds which were not particularly important strategically. It has been noted, for example, that the citadel of Acre contributed very little to the overall strength of this city, and it could probably be left virtually empty provided that surrounding ramparts were still being guarded. From 1254 onwards, this structure was occupied by the French regiment, a standing force which had been established by Louis IX, and normally contained about 100 knights, plus additional crossbowmen and infantry. During the 1250s and 60s, this regiment participated in several large scale raids against the Muslims,²⁶⁶ including a successful expedition against inland territories south of Ascalon, which 200 knights

²⁶⁴ De constructione castri Saphet, lines 204-9, p.384; Marshall, Warfare in the Latin East, pp.118-20.

²⁶⁵ The estimate of 900 knights comes from Abu Shama, Deux Jardins, V, 204. See also Eracles, II, 445; Annales de Terre Sainte, p.449 (text A).

²⁶⁶ Eracles, II, 441; Rothelin, p.629; Marshall, Warfare in the Latin East, pp.77-83.

assembled at Jaffa carried out in 1256.²⁶⁷

However, although the French regiment clearly boosted Latin troop numbers in the east, its contribution was not as significant as that of the Military Orders, who participated in virtually every Christian campaign of the thirteenth century, including the crusades of men like Theobald of Champagne²⁶⁸ and the lord Edward.²⁶⁹ The dominance of these Orders became even more apparent in northern Syria, where the Templars and the Hospitallers were not just contributing to a wider Frankish war effort, but were pursuing their own aggressive policy towards the Assassins and the Muslims of Homs, Hama and Aleppo. As we have seen, this policy was maintained through a series of punitive raids, most of which were launched from the Hospitaller castles of Margat and Crac des Chevaliers. To a large extent, these fortresses were used for such campaigns because of their strength and strategic location, but they may also have been chosen because of their sizeable garrisons. Thus in 1212 Willbrand of Oldenburg wrote that 1,000 men were stationed at Margat, whilst a further 2,000 soldiers defended neighbouring Crac des Chevaliers. These totals would have enabled the Hospitallers to use garrison troops for their expeditions against the Muslims. Moreover, the Templars may well have raised their own contingents from Tortosa and Chastel Blanc, their largest castles in the county of Tripoli, for joint campaigns such as the raid on Montferrand in

²⁶⁷ Rothelin, pp.630-31. Troop figures are based on numbers defending Jaffa after the raiders had retreated there following a Muslim counter-attack. See ibid, p.632.

²⁶⁸ See above, pp.13-14.

²⁶⁹ See above, pp.113, 116.

1233.²⁷⁰ Although Willbrand of Oldenburg does not give any figures for these castles, Baybars is reported to have found 700 men at Chastel Blanc in 1271, and the total for Tortosa must have been at least as high.²⁷¹ In 1266, the castellan of Chastel Blanc also sent 'fifty crossbowmen and arbalasters' to reinforce Crac des Chevaliers against the Mamluks, suggesting that garrison troops could be used to bolster other castles as well as Latin armies in the field.²⁷²

Frankish soldiers were therefore expected to participate in a whole variety of defensive and attacking operations, but trying to establish which troops were used for which campaigns again raises several difficult questions. Firstly, it is far from clear whether all of the 700 men inside Chastel Blanc were members of the fighting garrison, or were just taking shelter there from Baybars. Similarly, Willbrand of Oldenburg's figures for Crac des Chevaliers and Margat sound suspiciously like vague approximations, and do not indicate what percentage of each castle's garrison was made up of infantry, archers, mounted troops and actual brothers of the Hospital. It also seems unlikely that even if Willbrand's totals were accurate in 1212, they still applied during the second half of the thirteenth century, for in 1268 the Master of the Order wrote that there were only 300 knights left to defend all Hospitaller properties in Syria. This suggests that archers had to be sent from Chastel Blanc to Crac des Chevaliers because the latter stronghold was severely

²⁷⁰ Willbrand of Oldenburg, Itinerarium, pp.208-10. 1233: see above, p.121.

²⁷¹ Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 143; al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, I(b), 84.

²⁷² Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 86.

undermanned during the final years of Frankish rule.²⁷³

However, by using more detailed thirteenth century figures given for Saphet's garrison, and relying on a papal, and therefore hopefully accurate, reference to sixty Hospitaller knights being stationed at Crac des Chevaliers, the military historian Christopher Marshall has estimated that Crac had a total mounted force of 160, and that Margat had an equivalent contingent of 80 horsemen.²⁷⁴ If these calculations are correct, the 600 cavalry troops who defeated Muslim besiegers outside Margat in 1282, as well as the 200 horsemen from the same castle who ravaged the plain of Akkar three years earlier, cannot all have come from this castle's garrison. Their numbers must therefore have been boosted by mercenaries or troops collected from other strongholds and properties. However, even though the detailed planning which preceded their campaigns remains uncertain, it is clear that the Templars and the Hospitallers were so powerful in the county of Tripoli, that they remained on the offensive there for many years, even without the assistance of European crusaders. It has been suggested that they frequently relied on troops drawn from their garrisons in order to do so.

For much of the time, Latin strongholds were consequently intended to provide troops, supplies and shelter for Christian field armies, without becoming directly involved in any fighting. But occasionally the Franks also constructed fortifications which were specifically designed to blockade enemy castles. The imperialist siege

²⁷³ Cartulaire, IV, no.3308, pp.291-93; Marshall, Warfare in the latin East, pp.117-18.

²⁷⁴ De constructione castris Saphet, lines 204-9, p.384. Cartulaire, II, no.2727, pp.777-78; Marshall, Warfare in the Latin East, pp.117-20.

of Beirut, for example, was largely conducted from a small fort, which the Lombards erected on a hill opposite the citadel in the autumn of 1231. This fort, which had been built out of 'stones with wood above', was used by Richard Filangeri and his men to bombard the Ibelin castle with catapults.²⁷⁵ As we have seen, the fortified camp established near Acre during the Third Crusade also enabled the Franks to blockade this city, whilst at the same time providing them with a place of shelter from Saladin's counter-attacks. Another interesting aspect of the siege of Acre was Richard I's use of a 'portable' castle during the campaign. This large, wooden structure had initially been erected by Richard in Sicily during his journey to the Holy Land, and was subsequently taken to Acre, where it was used to attack the city walls.²⁷⁶ Moreover, the Franks' lack of troops sometimes enabled Baybars to use similar tactics against Christian strongholds. Hence in 1265, the Latins realized that they could not hold Acre's outer defences against Baybars's army, and so they demolished these fortifications to prevent the Muslims from using them to attack the city itself.²⁷⁷ In the same year Baybars also occupied the cathedral of Caesarea, so that he could use its towers to bombard those Christian forces still holding out in the nearby citadel.²⁷⁸

Finally, it is important to remember that many Frankish strongpoints along the coast were used for naval as well

²⁷⁵ Philip of Novara, The Wars of Frederick II, pp.121, 129; Gestes, pp.701, 704; Chronique d'Amadi, pp.149, 153; Florio Bustron, Chronique, pp.81, 85.

²⁷⁶ Sicily: Itinerarium, p.168. Acre: Richard of Devizes, Cronicon, p.42.

²⁷⁷ Annales de Terre Sainte, p.452 (text B).

²⁷⁸ Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 70; al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, I(b), 7.

as land based offensives. Attacks of this kind were most common during the frequent clashes between the Italian city states, which tried to dominate local trade by deploying enormous war fleets against each other. In 1264, for example, the Venetians attacked the pro-Genoese city of Tyre with no less than fifty galleys, which were equipped with special boarding towers designed to overwhelm defenders positioned along the sea walls.²⁷⁹ This assault proved less successful, however, than an earlier, more discreet raid carried out in 1242, when Venetian galleys were allowed to slip into the harbour after their Ibelin allies had secretly lowered the chain across its entrance.²⁸⁰

Both these offensives were planned and carried out from Acre, but in 1232 Tyre itself became the starting point for another naval raid, this time undertaken by 22 imperialist galleys, which attacked Ibelin forces camped a few miles to the south at *Casal Imbert*.²⁸¹ The previous year Lombard troops had also arrived by sea at Beirut, enabling them to bring with them many of the building materials needed for their fort,²⁸² while in 1278 Bohemond VII sent a fleet of fifteen galleys from Tripoli to attack Sidon. The provocation for this latter incursion had been the Templars' involvement with the lord of Gibelet, who was plotting to seize Tripoli from Bohemond.²⁸³

²⁷⁹ Gestes, pp.756-57.

²⁸⁰ Gestes, pp.732-35; Philip of Novara, The Wars of Frederick II, pp.178-84.

²⁸¹ Philip of Novara, The Wars of Frederick II, p.139; Gestes, pp.708-9; Chronique d'Amadi, p.160; Florio Bustron, Chronique, p.89.

²⁸² Philip of Novara, The Wars of Frederick II, p.121; Gestes, p.701; Florio Bustron, Chronique, p.81; Chronique d'Amadi, p.149.

²⁸³ Gestes, p.784, and see below, p.146.

Numerous seaborne attacks were also organized against the Muslims during the thirteenth century. In the build up to the Fifth Crusade, for example, the Christian fleet gathered in the harbour at Pilgrims' Castle during preparations for the forthcoming expedition to Egypt.²⁸⁴ Although it is not recorded where they set out from, a number of Frankish ships launched another damaging attack on Alexandria in 1270, and made off with two Muslim vessels.²⁸⁵ These incidents, as well as references to Christian naval installations such as a Templar shipyard at Acre, make it clear that coastal fortifications provided secure bases for the maintenance and construction of ships and galleys, which were essential if the Latins were to retain their dominance over the sea.²⁸⁶

It is possible to conclude, therefore, that virtually all military activities which the Franks were involved with, regardless of whether they were defensive or aggressive, land based or carried out at sea, relied on castles and urban fortifications in some way or another. So far these activities have been discussed almost exclusively in terms of larger cities and fortresses, but it should be noted that many smaller strongholds, which were no more powerful than Coliath or Chastel Rouge, also had their part to play.

One of the lesser castles rebuilt by Richard I, for example, was Casal des Plains (Azor), which was situated along the road between Jaffa and Lydda, and had been

²⁸⁴ Oliver of Paderborn, Historia Damiatina, p.176.

²⁸⁵ Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 141.

²⁸⁶ La Règle du Temple, no.119.

demolished by Saladin early in 1191.²⁸⁷ This fort appears to have been similar in design to Qaqun, indicating that it was not intended to withstand major sieges, but rather to provide Richard I's forces with a reasonably safe supply point and watering hole, which they could potentially use during a campaign against Jerusalem.²⁸⁸ Likewise, in 1285 Kalavun insisted on the demolition of Bartholomew's tower at Maraclea, for even though it was relatively small, he may have feared that the Franks would use it to try to recapture the recently fallen castle of Margat.²⁸⁹ Almost a century earlier the lord of Nephin had also carried out a raid against Christian refugees fleeing from Palestine in the wake of Saladin's victory at Hattin; another rather depressing reminder that smaller strongholds could often fulfil the same attacking functions as their larger counterparts.²⁹⁰

Defensively, however, the repeated destruction of sites like Coliath and the bourg of Pilgrims' Castle indicates that these places could not possibly hope to resist Mamluk, Ayubid and Khwarizmian invasions in the same way that Acre, Tortosa or Margat did. The real reasons behind the construction of many smaller castles and urban fortifications must consequently be sought elsewhere, including the Rule of the Templars, in an interesting clause concerning the dangers of travelling unescorted within the kingdom of Jerusalem. It relates how two brothers in the vicinity of Acre 'found Saracens who attacked them and killed one of the brothers and led away

²⁸⁷ Itinerarium, pp.280, 289-90; Ambroise, L'Estoire de la guerre sainte, line 6,854, col.183, lines 7,207-214, col.193.

²⁸⁸ Benvenisti, The Crusaders in the Holy Land, p.313.

²⁸⁹ See above, pp.74-75.

²⁹⁰ Eracles, II, 100-1.

his horse; the other was badly wounded'.²⁹¹ Similarly, when Joinville was given the task of escorting the French queen from Acre to Tyre during Louis IX's crusade, it was considered safer to travel by night in order to avoid such attacks. Joinville observed that this mission was particularly dangerous because they had to stop twice along the way to feed the royal children.²⁹² Numerous other incidents recorded by contemporaries, such as the need for an armed guard to accompany James of Vitry while he was preaching the Fifth Crusade,²⁹³ and the construction of a tower near Pilgrims' Castle 'because of bandits who threatened strangers ascending to Jerusalem', also suggest that even near the coast internal security within Christian territories was very poor.²⁹⁴

Moreover, the Franks were not just concerned about robbers and highwaymen, they also feared the outbreak of more serious and widespread rebellions by the local Muslim population. In the past, this aspect of Frankish rule has been played down by historians anxious to stress that the Latins were generous landlords, who allowed the natives to practise their Muslim faith.²⁹⁵ On the whole this appears to have been true, largely because the Franks were so outnumbered,²⁹⁶ but some evidence can still be produced to

²⁹¹ La Règle du Temple, no.616.

²⁹² Joinville, Histoire de Saint Louis, p.336.

²⁹³ James of Vitry, Lettres, pp.91-92.

²⁹⁴ Oliver of Paderborn, Historia Damiatina, p.169.

²⁹⁵ Deschamps, La Défense du royaume de Jérusalem, p.123. This view is criticised by Smail, Crusading Warfare, pp.62-63, and B.Z. Kedar, 'The Subjected Muslims of the Frankish Levant', in Muslims under Latin Rule, 1100-1300, ed. J.M. Powell, (Princeton 1990), pp.135-174, at p.167.

²⁹⁶ Kedar, 'The Subjected Muslims', pp.160-74.

show that there was deep local resentment toward the Latin presence in the Holy Land. Most notably, the Muslim uprising against the Frankish population of Jerusalem reflected a widespread feeling that this city should not have been handed over to the Christians by al-Kamil.²⁹⁷ At other times local peasants turned against the Franks as soon as they had been defeated in battle or were forced to retreat into their castles. This occurred in 1187 and 1188, after the battle of Hattin,²⁹⁸ and again in 1266, when Latin forces defeated near Tiberias were attacked by Muslim peasants as they retreated back to Acre.²⁹⁹

By studying these incidents of local unrest, it is possible to build up a picture of a Frankish *society* which was more or less 'under siege' all the time. This helps explain why, for example, the citizens of Arsuf lived in constant fear of being robbed or murdered, at a time when their town still had no wall around it.³⁰⁰ It also confirms that the Castle of Roger the Lombard, Qaqun, Coliath and all the other towers and fortified enclosures dotted across the countryside were primarily designed to protect people against the dual threat of Muslim rebels and common criminals. Both these aggressors normally lacked the means and the will to attack Latin fortifications, and were certainly incapable of undertaking protracted sieges involving catapults or other

²⁹⁷ Eracles, II, 384-85, and see above, p.65. On Muslim resentment to the agreement of 1229, see al-'Ayni, Le Collier de Perles, pp.187-94.

²⁹⁸ Abu Shama, Deux Jardins, IV, 301-2; R.C. Smail, 'Crusaders' Castles of the Twelfth Century', Cambridge Historical Journal, X, (1951), 133-49, at 142; Kedar, 'The Subjected Muslims', p.155.

²⁹⁹ See above, p.125.

³⁰⁰ Willbrand of Oldenburg, Itinerarium, p.232.

specialized equipment. As a result, outnumbered Frankish troops and settlers could survive periods of civil unrest by sheltering behind their defences until help arrived, or their rebellious opponents ran out of steam. In 1229 this strategy worked well at Jerusalem, whose inhabitants retreated inside the Tower of David until the 15,000 Muslim peasants ransacking the city had been driven back by knights from Acre.³⁰¹ Moreover, the infrequency of local uprisings in general suggests that the sheer proliferation of crusader fortifications in the east usually deterred the native population from even contemplating an armed insurrection. In a later chapter it will also be shown that apart from people, cattle, produce and precious belongings could equally well be sheltered inside strongholds, which therefore safeguarded the entire economic and political infrastructure of the crusader states in the Holy Land.³⁰²

Another important defensive function fulfilled by smaller Latin defences was their use as look out posts and observation points. Thus the Red Tower, a crusader fort in southern Galilee whose appearance was virtually identical to that of Qaqun, had deliberately been placed on a hill, so that its defenders could immediately spot a hostile force moving across the surrounding low lying plain. This would enable them to warn people living nearby of an imminent attack, giving locals a chance to take shelter inside the tower or make a hasty retreat toward the coast. Indeed, this tower was so useful as a look out post that the Israeli army still used it for this purpose during the late 1940s.³⁰³

³⁰¹ Eracles, II, 384-85.

³⁰² See below, pp.409-14.

³⁰³ Pringle, The Red Tower, p.87. For more details on this tower, see ibid, pp.85-194.

Many other minor fortifications were not only designed to keep an eye on their immediate locality, but also formed part of more extensive intervisible networks incorporating major strongholds and cities. It has already been mentioned, for example, that Cave de Tyron was situated in an elevated position opposite Sidon, so that its defenders could warn Christians living in and around this town of a Muslim incursion from Damascus.³⁰⁴ It should also be noted that the much larger fortress of Beaufort performed a similar role just a few miles to the south, because its garrison could observe Damascene troops moving toward the coast along the Beqa valley. In addition, Beaufort was intervisible with numerous other fortresses in the area, including Subeibe, located 21 kilometres to the south east, Toron (Tibnin), which lay to the west along the main route to Tyre, and Châteauneuf (Hunin), situated 18 kilometres to the south. Toron and Châteauneuf were both in Christian hands at this time, and the former castle could also communicate with the Templar stronghold of Saphet.³⁰⁵ Along with Beaufort and Cave de Tyron, these castles therefore acted as an early warning system for Tyre, Sidon and neighbouring Frankish settlements along the coast. Even more importantly, Beaufort enabled the Franks to keep watch over Subeibe, the Damascene fortress to the kingdom of Jerusalem. This stronghold was regarded as a major threat by the Franks, who may even have tried to recapture the neighbouring town of Banyas during the

³⁰⁴ See above, p.73.

³⁰⁵ Deschamps, La Défense du royaume de Jérusalem, p.178. R. Fedden and J. Thomson, Crusader Castles, (London 1957), p.12 (map showing intervisible castles). For more details on Toron, see Deschamps, La Défense du royaume de Jérusalem, pp.117-18. For Châteauneuf, see Benvenisti, The Crusader in the Holy Land, pp.300, 303. Toron and Châteauneuf were restored to the Franks in 1241 (Matthew Paris, Chronica Maiora, IV, pp.141-42) and lost to Baybars in 1266 (Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 97).

1250s, in an attempt to re-establish their authority east of the river Jordan.³⁰⁶ Hence Beaufort held great strategic importance, and was one of the few castles in the region not demolished by Saladin or Baybars.³⁰⁷

Further north, a similar network covered the plain of Akkar and the principal route connecting Tripoli with Homs. This network incorporated Tortosa, Crac des Chevaliers and Chastel Blanc, as well as many smaller structure such as Akkar, Chastel Rouge and Arima, a fort situated near the coast which appears to have been held by the Templars until the late thirteenth century.³⁰⁸ All these strongholds were intervisible, so that it would have been impossible for a Muslim army to enter the area without being spotted almost immediately. Indeed, some Frankish look out posts may have enjoyed such good visibility that they actually had an aggressive as well as a defensive role to play. The tower of Tukhlah, for example, could warn the Templars of Chastel Blanc of an imminent attack from the north, but was also perfectly located to observe and intimidate its immediate surroundings.³⁰⁹

Other towers and observation posts were situated very close to urban sites along the coast. One such building

³⁰⁶ Joinville, Histoire de Saint Louis, pp.310-18. For more details on Banyas and Subeibe, see A. Graboïs, 'La Cité de Baniyas et le château de Subeibeh pendant les croisades', Cahiers de Civilisation Médiévales, XIII (1970), 43-62.

³⁰⁷ This is confirmed by achaeological evidence at the site, including an inscription from the reign of Baybars. See Deschamps, La Défense du royaume de Jérusalem, p.208.

³⁰⁸ Deschamps, Le Crac des Chevaliers, pp.105-7; Fedden and Thomson, Crusader Castles, p.12. For more details on Arima, see Kennedy, Crusader Castles, pp.68-73.

³⁰⁹ See above, pp.72-73.

known as La Tor de l'Opital stood on the outskirts of Tyre, and may have been the tower captured by Baybars during a Muslim attack on the area in 1266.³¹⁰ Whilst carrying out a similar raid against Tripoli two years later, Baybars also 'took a tower in which a number of Franks had held out against him and these were beheaded'.³¹¹ At Acre there may have been a similar outpost on the small hill opposite the city known as Tel al-Fukhar, which formed the nucleus of the Christian camp during the Third Crusade. This hill was certainly fortified in some way when Baybars attacked it in 1263, before being repelled by Frankish troops who had dug trenches around the summit.³¹²

Thus Acre, Tyre and Tripoli all had towers located relatively close to their walls, which could act as the eyes and ears of these cities even if they themselves ultimately failed to withstand a Muslim invasion force. Early warning could also be provided by many other neighbouring castles within a five or ten miles radius. Hence in 1266 the inhabitants of Tripoli would have found out that Baybars was on his way long before he actually reached the city, for as he advanced from the north the sultan encountered the much smaller strongholds of Coliath, Albe and Archas. These sites were systematically overrun by Baybars and their occupants forced to flee, but they may have held him up long enough for the defenders of Tripoli itself to prepare themselves and evacuate the

³¹⁰ Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 87; Deschamps, La Défense du royaume de Jérusalem, p.119; Riley-Smith, The Knights of St. John, p.135.

³¹¹ Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 116.

³¹² Rey, 'Etude sur la Topographie', 117, and see above, p.111.

surrounding plain.³¹³ Similarly, we have seen that the mills of Doc and Recordane were fortified in their own right, but frequently came under attack whenever the Muslims launched a raid against Acre, so that they too acted as a 'shield' for a much larger and more important Frankish settlement.³¹⁴

South of Acre, the fortifications of Pilgrims' Castle were also strengthened by the presence of two outlying towers. One of these, which lay to the north of the fortress and was known as Destroit, had already existed in the twelfth century, when its principal function had been to prevent local highwaymen from robbing travellers on their way to Jerusalem. However, after the construction of Pilgrims' Castle it was retained by the Templars as an advance look out post, while a similar tower was also built about a kilometre to the south, which boosted the defences of the adjacent town, and could warn the main garrison of an enemy force approaching from Egypt.³¹⁵ Moreover, both these forts were designed in such a way that they could, if necessary, be defended independently.³¹⁶ Early in the thirteenth century Willbrand of Oldenburg also referred to yet another tower built near Tortosa by Philip Augustus during the Third Crusade, and it is interesting to speculate whether this structure resembled the kind of round, isolated towers which Philip erected in France to

³¹³ Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 85-86; al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, I(b), 27.

³¹⁴ See above, p.107.

³¹⁵ Oliver of Paderborn, Historia Damiatina, p.169; Johns, 'Excavations at Pilgrims' Castle: The faubourg and its defences', 112-13.

³¹⁶ Destroit: Johns, Guide to 'Atlit, pp.94-98. Southern tower: Johns, 'Excavations at Pilgrims' Castle: The faubourg and its defences', 116-17.

guard his territories against the English.³¹⁷

Many large fortresses, towns and cities were therefore surrounded by towers and other minor defences which provided an early warning system both for garrison troops and for people living nearby. In order to do this efficiently they had to be able to communicate with each other over long distances, and apart from sending messengers on horseback, this could be done in a variety of ways. The most common methods were to use fire or smoke signals, or to reflect the sun's rays using some kind of shiny surface. Both the Hospitallers and the Templars also kept carrier pigeons at Acre,³¹⁸ and in 1217 the Hospitallers used this form of communication to inform the garrison at Crac des Chevaliers that the preacher James of Vitry wanted to pay a visit. An armed guard could therefore be arranged which escorted this important guest to the fortress from Tripoli.³¹⁹ This example in particular highlights the need for castles to be in close contact with each other at all times, if they were to fulfil their defensive role properly.

However, whilst the enormous number of castles, towers and fortified houses built by the Latins guaranteed a certain level of security against both internal and external warfare, it also diminished the amount of control which Frankish rulers had over their own vassals. Most European monarchs were able to keep localized warfare to a minimum by enforcing a strict royal monopoly on castle building, and maintaining a far larger field army than any of their subjects. But in the Latin east, the unique combination of

³¹⁷ Willbrand of Oldenburg, Itinerarium, p.210.

³¹⁸ La Règle du Temple, no.591; Rey, 'Etude sur la Topographie', 143.

³¹⁹ James of Vitry, Lettres, p.93.

very few troops and extremely powerful castles meant that overlords rarely had enough men at their disposal to besiege fortresses held by disloyal vassals.

In the south, these problems can be illustrated by taking a closer look at Frederick II's largely unsuccessful attempts to impose his authority over the kingdom of Jerusalem during the late 1220s. In 1229 Frederick marched south from Acre to Pilgrims' Castle and ordered the garrison to hand it over, but when the Templars refused, the emperor saw that he did not have enough troops to take it by force, and was obliged to retreat. Later Frederick also tried to capture the Templars' headquarters at Acre, but could not do so, and eventually abandoned the city altogether.²⁰ Hence even the most powerful ruler in Europe could not assert his authority over the whole of Acre, let alone the entire kingdom of Jerusalem. Indeed, Frederick's construction of a new citadel at Jaffa not long afterwards may reflect a realization that he could only secure a strong base in the region by building his own castle, rather than trying to occupy somebody else's.²¹

Another claimant to the throne of Jerusalem whose ambitions were thwarted by the sheer strength of the kingdom's castles was Hugh III of Cyprus. Hugh had in fact been declared king in 1269, but he faced a powerful rival in Charles of Anjou, who had bought his claim to the crown from Maria of Antioch in the early 1270s. In 1276 Hugh III had to admit defeat in this dispute, because the French regiment, which occupied the citadel of Acre, came out in favour of Charles. Hugh had no hope of controlling the

²⁰ Eracles, II, 373-74.

²¹ Eracles, II, 373; Marino Sanudo, Liber secretorum, p.213.

city as long as this Angevin stronghold held out in the heart of his supposed capital, and he therefore withdrew to Cyprus. Moreover, even if Hugh had had the resources to besiege this castle, he was also opposed by the Templars, whose bases at Acre, Sidon and Pilgrims' Castle were extremely well defended. As a result, Lusignan power was not restored in Acre until ten years later, when Hugh III's son Henry arranged a carefully negotiated truce with the French regiment. Only then could he regain control over the citadel and have himself crowned king.³²²

In northern Syria, Bohemond III's successors encountered similar problems trying to impose their rule over both Tripoli and Antioch. After Bohemond's death in 1201, the latter city became the focal point of a lengthy succession dispute between Bohemond IV and Raymond Roupen. Raymond Roupen was the son of Bohemond III's son Raymond and Leon II's niece Alice, but far from encouraging friendly relations between the Franks and the Armenians, he firmly allied himself with Leon II, who ultimately hoped to extend his authority over the entire principality of Antioch. As we have seen, Raymond Roupen also gained the support of the Hospitallers in exchange for territorial grants, whilst Bohemond IV allied himself with the Templars and the sultan of Aleppo; an interesting example of a Franco-Muslim alliance against a fellow Christian. These two factions became embroiled in a long period of sporadic warfare which lasted until 1219, and which was largely centred around the impregnable mountain citadel of

³²² Gestes, pp.783-84, 789-9; Annales de Terre Sainte, p.456. For more details on the background to this dispute, see Edbury, The Kingdom of Cyprus, pp.90-97; Riley-Smith, Feudal Nobility, pp.224-27. For the truce of 1286, see RRH, no.1465, p.382, no.1466, pp.382-83.

Antioch itself.³²³ Thus in 1203 Leon II failed to take the city because this stronghold was garrisoned by supporters of Bohemond IV, while the Templars also defended their own Antiochene headquarters vigorously.³²⁴ Thirteen years later Raymond Roupen did in fact succeed in establishing his control over Antioch, but this was largely achieved with the aid of the Hospitallers, who were given the task of defending its walls and citadel. This enabled Raymond Roupen to suppress any local opposition until 1219, when he was ousted by anti-Armenian elements inside Antioch who had joined forces with Bohemond IV. Bohemond was now reinstated as prince of Antioch, although his position remained insecure for a while, because Raymond Roupen still held out in the citadel briefly before finally escaping back to Cilicia. These events are reminiscent of Hugh III's problems at Acre, because anyone wishing to control Antioch clearly also had to control its citadel.³²⁵

Some years before these events the unfortunate Bohemond IV had to deal with further internal problems involving his vassal Renaud III, lord of Nephin. In 1203 Renaud married the heiress to the lordship of Akkar without Bohemond's permission. Bohemond therefore ordered Renaud to come to Tripoli and explain himself, but when the latter failed to appear Bohemond declared war on him and attacked the

³²³ For more details on this dispute, see Cahen, La Syrie du Nord, pp.596-631. Grants to Hospitallers: see above, pp.113-14, and below, p.276.

³²⁴ Gestes, p.663; Annales de Terre Sainte, p.435 (text B). See also Marino Sanudo, Liber secretorum, p.203; Hethoum the Historian, Table Chronologique, p.480; Eracles, II, 257; Cahen, La Syrie du Nord, p.604.

³²⁵ Eracles, II, 318; Annales de Terre Sainte, pp.436-37; Hethoum the Historian, Table Chronologique, pp.483-84; Gestes, p.664; Constable Sempad, Chronique, ed. Dédéyan, pp.89-90; Cahen, La Syrie du Nord, pp.621-22, 630-31.

castle of Nephin. Renaud responded by launching a raid on Tripoli, but this did not deter Bohemond, who subsequently captured Nephin and Akkar with the help of the Genoese and the lord of Gibelet. As a result, Renaud's insurrection represents one of the few occasions in the later history of the Latin east when a ruler actually managed to confiscate the stronghold of a disloyal vassal.³²⁶

However, during the second half of the thirteenth century the castles of Nephin and Gibelet both became involved in a far more serious baronial rebellion, although this time the lords of Nephin were allied with the counts of Tripoli against the Embriaco rulers of Gibelet. In the course of this conflict, the Embriacos and their Templar allies attacked Tripoli no less than three times (1258, 1276, 1282), and were only kept at bay by the city's massive defences. In 1276 the Templars also made a failed assault against Nephin, and it was not until 1282 that Bohemond VII finally captured Bertrand II of Gibelet, executed him and occupied his castle. Thus the defences at Gibelet, which were still relatively small compared with larger Frankish strongholds such as Tortosa or Pilgrims' Castle, enabled the Embriacos to defy both Bohemond VI and Bohemond VII for a period of almost 25 years.³²⁷

While the rulers of Antioch/Tripoli and the kings of Jerusalem were often powerless to impose their authority over their vassals and rivals, other factions were free to fight it out amongst themselves. Hence the Templars did

³²⁶ Eracles, II, 314-15; Annales de Terre Sainte, p.435 (although text A confuses Gibelcar (ie Akkar) with Gibelet); Marino Sanudo, Liber secretorum, p.205; Cahen, La Syrie du Nord, pp.608-9.

³²⁷ 1258: Gestes, pp.748-50. 1276: ibid, pp.781-83. 1282: ibid, pp.787-88. See also Deschamps, La Défense du comté de Tripoli, pp.206-8, 299-300; Irwin, 'The Mamluk Conquest of the County of Tripoli', p.247.

not necessarily support Bohemond IV against Raymond Roupen out of personal loyalty, but were probably hoping that he could help them regain the fortress of Baghras, which the Armenians had occupied since the 1190s.³²⁸ Similarly, the Hospitallers had no qualms about opposing their fellow Franks if this meant that they could acquire new properties from Raymond Roupen. Meanwhile, the sultan of Aleppo was probably only too happy to ally himself with Bohemond IV in order to halt Armenian expansion and generally fuel arguments between his Christian neighbours. Consequently, just about all the participants in the Antiochene succession dispute were pursuing their own goals, and some may not even have cared who actually won the overall conflict!

Clashes between rival groups were even more common at Acre, where the Military Orders and the Italian city states had all constructed heavily fortified compounds in order to intimidate their enemies and to protect their own supporters. It has already been noted that the Templars' headquarters, an imposing quadrilateral citadel with four corner towers, may have been the strongest such structure,³²⁹ but contemporary sources make it clear that other fortifications within the city were almost as impressive. Both the Hospitallers and the Teutonic Knights, for example, built strongholds which were probably very similar in design to that of the Templars. These would have had very few windows facing the surrounding streets, and would have been defended by the kind of large, isolated towers still visible in some

³²⁸ See below, pp.278-82.

³²⁹ See above, p.105.

Italian towns.³³⁰ Such towers were also erected by the Genoese, the Pisans and the Venetians, whose quarters were all located in the vicinity of the harbour.³³¹

These fortifications divided medieval Acre into numerous walled enclosures and ghetto-like quarters, which did little to create a sense of central authority, and encouraged frequent outbreaks of violence and civil unrest. This type of warfare can best be illustrated by giving a brief description of the war of St.Sabas, fought between the Genoese and the Venetians in the late 1250s. Having begun as an insignificant property dispute involving a small church, this conflict quickly spread to engulf the whole city, leading to widespread street fighting between the Venetians and their Pisan allies, and the Genoese, who were supported by the Hospitallers. The two sides also bombarded each other with enormous crossbows and catapults mounted on top of towers and other tall buildings. Some of these weapons were so large that they could hurl rocks weighing 200 kilos over long distances. In these circumstances, it is hardly surprising that many houses were destroyed and countless lives lost in the space of just a few months. It is equally understandable that the first action taken by the Venetians after they finally emerged victorious was to raze the Genoese quarter to the ground, including its

³³⁰ Gestes, p.815; Benvenisti, The Crusaders in the Holy Land, pp.105-9; Riley-Smith, The Knights of St.John, pp.248-49; Rey, 'Etude sur la Topographie', 135-36, 140.

³³¹ Gestes, p.815. Genoa: Rey, 'Etude sur la Topographie', 137-38; Benvenisti, The Crusaders in the Holy Land, pp.100-2; Jacoby, 'Crusader Acre in the thirteenth century', pp.26-30. Venice: *ibid*, pp.30-36; Benvenisti, The Crusaders in the Holy Land, pp.102-4; Rey, 'Etude sur la Topographie', 137. Pisa: *ibid*, 138-39; Jacoby, 'Crusader Acre in the thirteenth century', pp.19-26; Benvenisti, The Crusaders in the Holy Land, pp.98-100.

powerful citadel.³³²

Like Bohemond IV's struggle with Leon II and Raymond Roupen, the war of St.Sabas also had wider implications which went beyond the city of Acre. Most notably, it is important to remember that the Embriaco lords of Gibelet were Genoese, and that their first attack on Tripoli occurred in 1258, when the fighting at Acre was at its height. These struggles may therefore have represented a much wider campaign to augment Genoa's power in the east, and even turn Tripoli into a fortified trading post controlled solely by the Genoese. They later established such a base at Famagusta, and after the death of Bohemond VII in 1287, they also managed to set up an Embriaco-led commune at Tripoli in the final years before the fall of the city.³³³ They also continued to clash with the Venetians from time to time, particularly during the mid-1260s, by which time they were based at Tyre rather than Acre.³³⁴ Thus the Italian city states, like the Military Orders, were often prepared to pursue their own aggressive policies, even if this meant that large amounts of troops and resources were diverted away from the continuing struggle with the Muslims.

These observations apply equally well to the highly damaging clashes between Frederick II's supporters and their Ibelin rivals during the 1220s, 30s, and 40s. Several incidents during this conflict have already been

³³² Gestes, pp.742-48. See also Eracles, II, 443; Rothelin, pp.633-35; Annales de Terre Sainte, pp.447-48; Marino Sanudo, Liber secretorum, pp.220-21. For the background to this dispute, see also Riley-Smith, Feudal Nobility, pp.215-17.

³³³ 1258: Gestes, pp.742-50. 1287-89: ibid, pp.800-2; Annales de Terre Sainte, pp459-60.

³³⁴ Gestes, pp.756-57, 768-69.

referred to, including Richard Filangeri's failed siege of Beirut and the combined Venetian and Ibelin attack on Tyre in 1242, which in fact ended imperialist control over this city and brought the dispute to a close. Alongside Frederick's unsuccessful attacks on Pilgrims' Castle and the Temple at Acre, these events provide further evidence that above all, it was the strength of the Franks' castles which caused the collapse of Hohenstaufen power in the east.³³⁵

Frederick II's final humiliation also reflects the military and political dilemma confronting all Frankish settlers in the Holy Land. Clearly, strongholds like Gibelet and Pilgrims' Castle undermined royal power and encouraged warfare amongst the nobility, the Military Orders and the Italian city states. There were two obvious solutions to this problem. Firstly, fortifications could be demolished in the same way that the Genoese quarter at Acre had been in the late 1250s, bringing peace to the city for the first time in years. This tactic also worked well on Cyprus, where barons were strictly forbidden from building their own castles, and localized warfare was very unusual.³³⁶ Secondly, the creation of a large, permanent and well disciplined field army which a ruler could call upon at any time would have made it impossible for even the strongest fortress to resist the royal will. However, the constant lack of troops experienced by the Latins made this latter solution unworkable, while the former would have exposed Christian territories to a swift and decisive Muslim invasion. As a result, the Franks had to put up with periods of anarchy rather than risk being wiped out by their common enemy.

³³⁵ See above, pp.34, 51, 143.

³³⁶ See below, pp.214-19.

The famous military historian R.C. Smail has also noted that central authority in the Holy Land 'was progressively weakened...because lands, castles, powers and rights over men had continually to be conceded to Orders, which were not wholly part of the feudal structure',³³⁷. Although this statement was made with reference to the twelfth century, it applies even more to the period after 1187, when constant Muslim incursions and a chronic lack of resources forced many barons to hand their castles over to the Hospitallers, Templars or Teutonic Knights. In 1257, for example, Julian of Sidon sold numerous estates between Sidon and Beirut to the Teutonic Knights for 23,500 Saracen bezants, suggesting that he was in serious financial difficulties and needed to raise some cash fast.³³⁸ In the same year the German Order also purchased Cave de Tyron,³³⁹ and three years later Julian even sold Beaufort and Sidon to the Templars. This last transaction was necessitated by the Mongol incursion of 1260, which appears to have bankrupted Julian and left him unable to pay for the reconstruction of Sidon.³⁴⁰

Similar financial pressures explain why the Military Orders acquired many other territories and fortresses during the thirteenth century. The Teutonic Knights in particular profited from baronial poverty by buying up many estates in the vicinity of Acre. These acquisitions included the site of the Order's headquarters at Montfort,

³³⁷ Smail, 'Crusaders' Castles of the Twelfth Century', 147.

³³⁸ Tabulae ordinis Theutonici, no.109, p.89.

³³⁹ Tabulae ordinis Theutonici, no.110, pp.89-90.

³⁴⁰ Eracles, II, 445; Gestes, p.752; Annales de Terre Sainte, p.449; Marino Sanudo, Liber secretorum, p.221.

purchased in 1228,³⁴¹ as well as other lands nearer the coast which were protected by the smaller castles of Mhalia (Castrum Regis) and Judin (Jiddin).³⁴² This latter stronghold is also architecturally significant, in that it appears to have been constructed by the Teutonic Knights at some point after the mid-1220s, yet its defences incorporated no less than two approximately square donjons; further evidence that such structures were still being constructed well into the thirteenth century, despite their supposed strategic inferiority to purely concentric castles like Belvoir. Indeed, the close parallels between Judin and Montfort, as well as the presence of another square keep at a Teutonic fortress in Cilicia, have even led to the suggestion that these castles were built according to a more general German design, although it has already been noted that architectural distinctions between the various Military Orders should not be taken too far.³⁴³

To the north of Judin, Frederick II also helped the Teutonic Knights to gain control over several manors near Toron,³⁴⁴ whilst Julian of Sidon continued to sell parts of his lordship to the Order until as late as 1261. These included the village of Gezin, located near Cave de Tyron,

³⁴¹ Tabulae ordinis Theutonici, no.63, pp.51-53; RRH, no.1002, p.263.

³⁴² These lands were acquired in 1220: Tabulae ordinis Theutonici, no.53, pp.43-44, no.54, pp.44-45.

³⁴³ D. Pringle, A. Petersen, M. Dow and C. Singer, 'Qal'at Jiddin; a Castle of the Crusader and Ottoman periods in Galilee', Levant, XXVI, (1994), 135-66, particularly at 135-54, 159-62. For Mhalia, see also Pringle, 'Survey of Castles in the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem', 90.

³⁴⁴ Tabulae ordinis Theutonici, no.66, p.54.

which Deschamps believed to have been fortified.³⁴⁵ In 1209 Bohemond IV also entrusted three towers along the curtain walls of Tripoli to the Teutonic Knights, but these appear to have been the only fortifications guarded by the Order in all of northern Syria. This grant is particularly surprising considering Bohemond's appalling relations with Leon II, a staunch ally of both the German emperor and the Teutonic Knights. In general, however, the close links between the Armenians and the Germans probably explain why the Order never expanded any further in the northern crusader states.³⁴⁶

Although the Teutonic Knights rapidly became powerful landholders in the first half of the thirteenth century, their properties did not have the same military importance as those of the Templars. Saphet and Beaufort were particularly significant in this respect, because they guarded the Franks' frontier with Damascus. Both these castles were granted to the Order by individual lords (in 1168 and 1260 respectively³⁴⁷), reflecting the steady erosion of baronial power in the east. The other most important Templar fortresses in the kingdom of Jerusalem were Sidon and Pilgrims' Castle, the latter having been built on a site which already belonged to the Order before 1187.³⁴⁸

³⁴⁵ Tabulae ordinis Theutonici, no.111, pp.90-91, no.114, pp.96-97, no.115, pp.97-98, no.117, pp.103-4, no.118, pp.104-6; Deschamps, La Défense du royaume de Jérusalem, p.223.

³⁴⁶ Tabulae ordinis Theutonici, no.44, pp.35-36; Cahen, La Syrie du Nord, pp.667-68, and see below, pp.269-73.

³⁴⁷ 1168: Pringle, 'Review Article', 145. 1260: see above, p.151n340.

³⁴⁸ The tower of Destroit dated from the twelfth century. See Oliver of Paderborn, Historia Damiatina, p.169; Johns, Guide to 'Atlit, p.94.

In the county of Tripoli, the Templars had also acquired the castles of Tortosa and Chastel Blanc in the middle years of the twelfth century, and had immediately set about rebuilding their defences. Tortosa in particular had probably been handed over by the local bishop because, like Julian of Sidon in 1260, he could not afford to repair the terrible damage inflicted on the site by Nur ad-Din. It seems that many neighbouring estates and properties, including the castle of Arima, were also sold to the Templars at about the same time.³⁴⁹ In addition, the Templars held another large territorial block to the north of Antioch, which may have come into their possession as early as the 1130s.³⁵⁰

As far as the Hospitallers were concerned, the most important fortresses in the kingdom of Jerusalem were Arsuf, Ascalon and Mt. Tabor. Arsuf was rented out to them by Balian of Ibelin in 1261, whilst Ascalon was entrusted to the Order soon after its completion in 1241. Mt. Tabor, on the other hand, was granted to the Hospitallers by Alexander III, acting on behalf of the monks who lived there. This transaction is an interesting example of growing papal involvement in the military affairs of the Latin east, and suggests that the Church as well as the nobility had problems defending its territories.³⁵¹ Further north, however, the key Hospitaller strongholds of Crac des Chevaliers and Margat had both been sold to the Order by laymen rather than the Church. These purchases had occurred in 1144 and 1186 respectively, so that like the Templars, the Hospitallers were already well

³⁴⁹ See above, p.46.

³⁵⁰ See below, pp.277-84.

³⁵¹ Arsuf: Cartulaire, III, no.2972, p.1, no.2985, p.6. Ascalon: ibid, II, no.2320, p.615. Mt Tabor: ibid, II, no.2726, p.777, no.2811, pp.815-17.

established in the county of Tripoli before the battle of Hattin.³⁵²

In addition to these major fortresses, the Hospitallers held countless smaller strongholds whose size and overall design varied considerably. On and around the plain of Akkar they possessed Coliath, Chastel Rouge and numerous other sites which were not permanently lost until 1271.³⁵³ Thus after the fall of Chastel Blanc, Baybars occupied 'its territory, together with the forts and towers in the neighbourhood of Hisn al-Akrad (Crac des Chevaliers)'.³⁵⁴ Once he had conquered this latter castle, the Hospitallers abandoned several further towers, 'burning all their property that they could not remove'.³⁵⁵ Most of these structures had probably been built or acquired in the twelfth century, and many had been sold along with Margat and Crac des Chevaliers. Indeed, when they purchased the former stronghold, the Hospitallers even received the entire town of Banyas (Valania), which lay below the slopes of Margat.³⁵⁶

In the kingdom of Jerusalem, however, it appears that many twelfth century Hospitaller castles were either lost for good after 1187, or were left in ruins even if they had been regained by treaty. Recent excavations at the castle of Belmont, for example, confirm that this site was never

³⁵² Crac des Chevaliers: Cartulaire, I, no.144, pp.116-18, no.391, pp.266-68. Margat: ibid, I, no.783, pp.491-96, no.809, p.505.

³⁵³ Coliath: Cartulaire, I, no.82, pp.76-78. Chastel Rouge: ibid, I, no.519, pp.353-54, no.549, pp.371-72.

³⁵⁴ Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 143.

³⁵⁵ Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 147.

³⁵⁶ Banyas: Cartulaire, I, no.783, pp.491-96, and see Riley-Smith, The Knights of St.John, pp.93-95 for more details on all Hospitaller properties in the area.

rebuilt after Saladin demolished it in 1191, and was subsequently occupied by a Muslim village.³⁵⁷ This suggests that Belveer and Castellum Emmaus, two neighbouring Hospitaller strongholds which also guarded the pilgrim route between Jaffa and Jerusalem, were similarly abandoned in the thirteenth century, and no attempts were made to reoccupy them even after Frederick II negotiated the return of Jerusalem itself.³⁵⁸ In addition, doubts have been cast on the traditional assumption that the Hospitallers regarrisoned Belvoir during the 1240s, and returned to Bethgibelin, an important twelfth century settlement in Judea.³⁵⁹ It is equally unclear whether the Hospitallers ever held the castles of La Fève and Caymont, located in central Galilee, although they certainly laid claim to them.³⁶⁰ However, the Hospitallers clearly did possess a number of smaller forts and towers in the kingdom of Jerusalem, which were similar in design to the tower of Tukhlah and other such structures in the vicinity of Crac des Chevaliers. These included La Tor de l'Opital, Chola and Turris Salinarum, all of which were either designed as look-out posts, or as fortified administrative centres where local inhabitants could be sheltered along with

³⁵⁷ 1191: Ambroise, L'Estoire de la guerre sainte, line 6,859, col.183. R.P. Harper and D. Pringle, 'Belmont Castle: A Historical Notice and Preliminary Report of Excavations in 1986', Levant, XX (1988), 101-18, at 102.

³⁵⁸ Harper and Pringle, 'Belmont Castle', 102.

³⁵⁹ Riley-Smith (The Knights of St. John, pp.415-16, 436-37) believes these sites were reoccupied; Marshall (Warfare in the Latin East, pp20-21) does not. It also seems highly unlikely that the Hospitallers reoccupied Forbelet, a twelfth century castle near Belvoir. See Pringle, 'Survey of Castles in the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem', 90.

³⁶⁰ Cartulaire, III, no.3028, pp.30-31; Riley-Smith, The Knights of St. John, p.136n2.

livestock and farm produce.³⁶¹

Bearing in mind that reconstructing smaller Hospitaller properties can sometimes be difficult, it is hardly surprising that trying to do the same for the Templars, whose records did not survive the dissolution of the Order, becomes virtually impossible. Some information can be gleaned, however, from contemporary descriptions of property disputes between the Templars and the Hospitallers, which appear to have occurred with alarming regularity. It is in this way, for example, that we know the two Orders agreed to divide the town of Jabala between them, after the Templars disputed the way in which it had been granted to the Hospitallers by Raymond Roupen.³⁶² At the time of this agreement, Jabala was still in Muslim hands, but Bohemond VI must later have recaptured it along with Latakia, for in 1266 we find the Templars relinquishing their half of the town to Baybars in exchange for a peace treaty covering Tortosa and Chastel Blanc. Ibn al-Furat's account of this arrangement is also interesting in that it mentions the presence of a tower at Jabala, which could either have been a similar structure to that erected by Bohemond at Latakia, or could have been built by the Templars and the Hospitallers.³⁶³ Alternatively, it may have been Jabala's fortified Roman theatre, which was presumably the 'strong castle' Willbrand of Oldenburg referred to when he passed by more

³⁶¹ La Tor de l'Opital: see above, p.138. Chola: benvenisti, The Crusaders in the Holy Land, pp.221, 228, 276. Turris Salinarum: Tibble, Monarchy and Lordship, p.150.

³⁶² Cartulaire, II, no.1725, p.292, no.1739, p.207, no.2000, pp.427-28, no.2058, pp.455-57; Riley-Smith, The Knights of St.John, pp.445-46, and see above, pp.113-14.

³⁶³ Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 115, 128, and see above, p.115n231.

than half a century earlier.³⁶⁴

In the kingdom of Jerusalem, the fortified mill at Doc represents another site whose Templar ownership can be confirmed by studying Hospitaller documents. Doc was located along the same river as Recordane, and as a result both mills became the object of a fierce argument between the two Orders, when it was proposed to build a new dam across this vital waterway. This dispute lasted for several years until it was finally settled in 1235.³⁶⁵ Hospitaller records also suggest that the Templars occupied the Red Tower for many decades, even though the Abbey of St. Mary of the Latins (the actual owner of the site) had originally rented this small look-out post and agricultural centre to the Hospitallers, in an agreement dating from 1189.³⁶⁶ This situation had probably come about at the time of the Third Crusade, when Templars accompanying Richard I may have garrisoned the tower without even consulting its official tenants. Moreover, subsequent references to this stronghold indicate that it may not have been handed over to the Hospitallers until as late as 1248. Hence without these scraps of evidence we would not have known about a Templar presence on the Sharon plain lasting more than half a century!³⁶⁷

Similar fragments of information make it possible at least

³⁶⁴ Willbrand of Oldenburg, Itinerarium, p.212; Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 128n5; Cahen, La Syrie du Nord, p.171.

³⁶⁵ Cartulaire, II, no.2117, pp.486-87, no.2120, p.189; Riley-Smith, The Knights of St. John, pp.446, 450. The Hospitallers had held Recordane since at least 1154. See Cartulaire, I, no.225, p.173.

³⁶⁶ Cartulaire, I, no.879, p.559; Pringle, The Red Tower, p.59.

³⁶⁷ Cartulaire, II, no.2141, p.501, no.2482, pp.673-75.

to speculate about other Templar castles in the kingdom of Jerusalem. Casal des Plains, for example, was rebuilt by the Templars during Richard I's unsuccessful campaign against Jerusalem, and was presumably therefore garrisoned by them after the Third Crusade came to an end.³⁶⁸ Another stronghold situated between Jaffa and the interior was Latrun (Toron des Chevaliers), a fairly sizeable castle constructed by the Order in the twelfth century. Consequently, the Templars may have returned to the site after it was included in the treaty of Jaffa, although the archaeological evidence suggests that the damage inflicted on it by Saladin in 1191 was never subsequently repaired.³⁶⁹ It is even unlikelier that the Order ever tried to reoccupy Gaza, which had belonged to it before the battle of Hattin, but had also been demolished by Saladin.³⁷⁰ Admittedly, areas near Gaza were granted to the Franks in 1241, but these were quickly lost during the Egyptian and Khwarizmian invasion of 1244,³⁷¹ and eight years later the site was formally recognized as a permanent Muslim possession.³⁷² Finally, it should be noted that the Templars, like the Hospitallers, probably owned numerous forts and towers on their estates and near their larger strongholds. The towers of Tukhlah and Destroit have already been mentioned in this context, whilst the remains of a similar twelfth century structure to the north east of Jerusalem implies that the Order

³⁶⁸ Ambroise, L'Estoire de la guerre sainte, lines 7,207-14, col.193; Itinerarium, p.290.

³⁶⁹ Matthew Paris, Chronica Maiora, III, 174; Pringle, 'Survey of Castles in the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem', 89-90.

³⁷⁰ Ambroise, L'Estoire de la guerre sainte, line 6,843, col.183; Forey, The Military Orders, pp.59, 74-75.

³⁷¹ 1241: Matthew Paris, Chronica Maiora, IV, 141-43. 1244: ibid, IV, 339; Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 3-4.

³⁷² RRH, no.1199, p.315

originally guarded a long chain of towers which could protect pilgrims travelling between the coast and holy sites near the river Jordan. Perhaps some attempts were made to repair this network after 1229, although if this were the case, one would expect to find more evidence of thirteenth century rebuilding work at Latrun.³⁷³

The vast majority of crusader castles were consequently held by the Templars, Hospitallers or Teutonic Knights, but these three Orders also helped to guard other Frankish sites in the Holy Land, including the Christian cities along the coast. At Acre, the Teutonic Knights were expected to maintain and garrison a section of the ramparts near the Accursed Tower, including the gate of St. Nicholas. These defences had been granted to the Order in 1193.³⁷⁴ A very similar arrangement was also made with the Hospitallers soon after the Third Crusade, and in 1291 all three Orders fought valiantly in defence of the city.³⁷⁵

Outside Acre, it has already been noted that the Teutonic Knights also helped garrison Tripoli, whilst another section of this city's ramparts which was badly damaged during the siege of 1289 was held by the Hospitallers.³⁷⁶ Elsewhere along the coast, the Hospitallers shared the burden of defending Sidon long before this lordship had

³⁷³ Pringle, 'Survey of Castles in the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem', 88, 90. Tukhlah: see above, p.73. Destroit: see above, p.141.

³⁷⁴ Tabulae ordinis Theutonici, no.28, pp.24-25, no.29, p.25.

³⁷⁵ Cartulaire, I, no.938, p.594, no.972, pp.616-17. 1291 siege: Gestes, pp.808, 812-13.

³⁷⁶ Tabulae ordinis Theutonici, no.44, pp.35-36. This document also refers to sections of the wall being guarded by the Templars. 1289: Gestes, p.803.

passed out of baronial control, and guarded another tower at Jaffa, which was likewise held by an individual lord.³⁷⁷ In addition, the Teutonic Knights held two towers flanking Caesarea's town wall, and from 1229 onwards Frederick II relied on this Order to contribute to the defence of Jerusalem.³⁷⁸ Similarly, all three Military Orders carried out repairs on Tyre's and Acre's fortifications during the Mongol crisis of 1260, even though these were royal cities.³⁷⁹ Such incidents are a clear indication of the importance of the Military Orders, and the extent to which even the most powerful secular rulers relied on their help.

Unlike most nobles, the Orders also had the resources needed to build and maintain massive fortifications. At Beaufort, for example, the Templars constructed a whole new citadel opposite the older castle in the space of just eight years, and at Arsuf, urban fortifications erected by the Hospitallers soon after they took over the site were said to have enraged Baybars.³⁸⁰ Even after they had completed Saphet, the Templars spent 40,000 bezants each year maintaining this fortress, whilst the vast new defences erected at Tortosa and Chastel Blanc in the mid-twelfth century, and at Margat and Crac des Chevaliers up to c.1204, could hardly have come cheap.³⁸¹ The money

³⁷⁷ Sidon: Cartulaire, II, no.2160, p.310. Jaffa: ibid, I, no.954, p.603.

³⁷⁸ Caesarea: Tabulae ordinis Theutonici, no.40, pp.32-33. Jerusalem: see above, p.65.

³⁷⁹ Rothelin, p.636.

³⁸⁰ Beaufort: Rey, Etude, pp.127-28; Deschamps, La Défense du royaume de Jérusalem, pp.198, 208. Arsuf: Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 54; Benvenisti, The Crusaders in the Holy Land, pp.134-35.

³⁸¹ De constructione castris Saphet, lines 203-4, p.384. Tortosa etc: see above, pp.44-48.

required for such projects was largely drawn from the Orders' extensive estates in Europe and the Holy Land, and clauses in the Rule of the Templars suggest that it was then channelled into vast central funds specifically set aside for castles.³⁸² Many strongholds, including Saphet, were also paid for by pilgrims and crusaders.³⁸³

Although it has been shown that Crac des Chevaliers and other strongholds may have been increasingly undermanned from the 1260s onwards, it is also clear that the Military Orders generally had more troops at their disposal than the nobility, particularly in early thirteenth century Syria. Furthermore, the remains of vast cisterns, undercrofts and storerooms at sites like Crac, as well as Willbrand of Oldenburg's claim that Margat contained enough supplies to withstand a five year blockade, suggest that the Orders had the resources to prepare their castles for almost any emergency that might arise.³⁸⁴ Both the Templars and the Hospitallers also enforced strict rules regarding the use and defence of castle entrances, to prevent spies and traitors from gaining access.³⁸⁵ Such precautions, along with the obstinate and heroic refusal of the Orders to give up the fight even as they were being driven out of Acre, suggest that the Hospitallers, Templars and Teutonic Knights were more disciplined, skilled and better equipped than any other Latin troops in the east.

³⁸² La Règle du Temple, nos.126, 127. For more details on the income of the Military Orders, see Forey, The Military Orders, pp.98-132.

³⁸³ See below, pp.425-26.

³⁸⁴ Willbrand of Oldenburg, Itinerarium, p.210; Deschamps, Le Crac des Chevaliers, pp.203-4.

³⁸⁵ La Règle du Temple, no.228; Cartulaire, III, no.3844, p.453, article 12.

The preparedness and sheer commitment of the Military Orders can be contrasted with the inefficiency and poverty of the nobility. In 1268, for example, troops and citizens from Antioch sheltering in the citadel were quickly forced to surrender to Baybars because unlike Margat, this stronghold was badly stocked with provisions, and 'had neither enough water nor enough mills' to feed everybody.³⁸⁶ Eighty years earlier, Saladin had also been able to capture the fortress of Saone, situated along the land route between Latakia and Antioch, in a matter of three days, even though Margat, Tortosa, Chastel Blanc and Crac des Chevaliers all held out. The principal reason for this was that Saone was owned by an individual lord, so that even though its defences were no less impressive than any of its neighbours, its garrison was far weaker and far more demoralized than those of the Hospitallers and Templars.³⁸⁷ This also explains why these two Orders became so immensely powerful in the county of Tripoli, for their already extensive twelfth century properties were almost the only inland territories which still belonged to the Franks after the battle of Hattin. Indeed, it would not be an exaggeration to say that from 1188 onwards this crusader state owed its very existence to the Templars and the Hospitallers.

In the kingdom of Jerusalem, the situation did not become quite so extreme until the mid-thirteenth century, when entire lordships like Sidon were regularly handed over to the Orders. However, it would be misleading to assume that barons here were in a stronger position than their neighbours further north. The lords of Jaffa, for example,

³⁸⁶ Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 122.

³⁸⁷ Abu Shama, Deux Jardins, IV, 364-67; Ibn al-Athir, Kamel Altevarykh, I, 721-22; Baha'-al-Din, Anecdotes, 111-12. For a brief description and history of Saone, see Kennedy, Crusader Castles, pp.83-96.

were only able to hold on to their castle by making regular appeals to the papacy for more money, and, as we have seen, could never have afforded to refortify their town without the intervention of Louis IX and Odo of Châteauroux during the early 1250s.³⁸⁸ Similarly, it has been argued recently that by the time Caesarea fell to the Muslims in 1265, this barony 'had disintegrated so far that the lord's influence in many parts of his own lordship must have been minimal'. Again, this was because many lands and properties had been sold off to the Military Orders and other institutions, in order to raise revenues and pay off ever increasing bills.³⁸⁹

The pattern of baronial ownership in the east also confirms that the further inland castles lay, the more exposed they became to Muslim incursions. As a result, they were costlier to defend and more likely to get sold off to one of the Military Orders. Thus Jaffa, Beirut and Caesarea were the only major strongholds in the kingdom of Jerusalem which remained in secular hands right to the end. Likewise, Gibelet, Nephin and Maraclea were all baronial castles throughout the thirteenth century, whilst Bohemond VI kept Latakia for himself after he had recaptured it in 1261. On the other hand, the only inland stronghold held by the counts of Tripoli during this period was Akkar.³⁹⁰ It is also important to remember that with the notable exception of Odo of Montbéliard's citadel at Tiberias, any new defences built by individual lords during the thirteenth century were again situated along

³⁸⁸ Joinville, Histoire de Saint Louis, pp.284, 306-8; Marshall, Warfare in the Latin East, pp.141-42.

³⁸⁹ Tibble, Monarchy and Lordships, p.152, and see ibid, pp.99-152, particularly pp.120-52.

³⁹⁰ This is confirmed by the mocking letter Baybars sent to Bohemond VI after Akkar's capture in 1271. See Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 148.

the coast.³⁹¹ These included Bartholomew's tower at Maraclea, and Bohemond VI's towers at Latakia and (possibly) Jabala. Early in the thirteenth century, John of Ibelin had also been granted Beirut, and subsequently carried out extensive improvements there. These probably concentrated on the construction of a new outer wall, for although the castle itself no doubt needed major repairs, there is no evidence that it had been demolished by Saladin in its entirety.³⁹²

As the thirteenth century progressed, the Frankish nobility was therefore pushed further and further toward the coast, whilst the Templars, Hospitallers and Teutonic Knights gradually came to dominate virtually all military activities in Syria and the kingdom of Jerusalem. As a result, any discussion of castles in the area must inevitably include these three powerful organizations. However, the gradual erosion of secular lordships, the rise of the Military Orders, and the constant threat of both internal and external warfare, also made it difficult for the Franks to pursue a common military strategy toward their Muslim enemies. Indeed, the castle of Beirut largely remained in Christian hands for as long as it did because its lords negotiated a series of treaties with the Muslims, irrespective of what their Frankish neighbours were up to.³⁹³ Similarly, the treaty arranged between Baybars and the Templars, whereby the Order gave up half of Jabala to protect Chastel Blanc and Tortosa, was

³⁹¹ Eracles, II, 432-33; Joinville, Histoire de Saint Louis, pp.288, 290, and see above, p.65.

³⁹² Beirut: Gestes, pp.678-79, and see above, p.51.

³⁹³ Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 50, 103, 104-5, 113, 135, 164; al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, I(b), 28, 42, 51, 70. Attempts to maintain this truce even after the fall of Acre failed. See ibid, II(a), 131; Gestes, p.817. See also P. Holt, 'Baybars's treaty with the Lady of Beirut in 667/1269', in Crusade and Settlement, pp.242-48.

bitterly opposed by the Hospitallers, whose troops at Jabala even ended up fighting Muslim forces sent there to act on behalf of the sultan.³⁹⁴

This situation has often been contrasted with that of the twelfth century, when both the monarchy and the nobility were much stronger. Indeed, Deschamps, Rey and others believed that once the First Crusade had come to an end 'the Franks proceeded to organize the various parts of the countryside',³⁹⁵ as though they were all of one accord, and constructed their strongholds as part of a national scheme of defence. In his work on crusader castles, Rey in particular spoke of successive 'lines' of fortifications, starting with coastal sites like Acre and Tripoli, which protected the kingdom from external enemies.³⁹⁶

This theory of a vast network of defences specifically built to block all entry points into the kingdom of Jerusalem, the county of Tripoli and the principality of Antioch was largely demolished by Smail. Smail pointed out that Frankish territories had been conquered in a series of campaigns usually undertaken by individual barons like Tancred, who were largely driven by personal greed. As a result, castles built or captured by the crusaders were intended for local rather than national defence, and had little strategic value beyond their immediate surroundings. Moreover, the regular incursions made by Saladin, Nur ad-Din and others into Christian territories showed that frontier castles stood little chance of preventing Muslim attacks anyway.³⁹⁷

³⁹⁴ Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 128.

³⁹⁵ Rey, Etude, p.2.

³⁹⁶ Rey, Etude, p.4.

³⁹⁷ Smail, Crusading Warfare, pp.204-15; idem, 'Crusaders' Castles of the Twelfth Century', 135-45, 149.

Other scholars have made similar conclusions for the period after 1187. Marshall in particular has written that 'few of the Latin strongpoints were of any genuine strategic value' apart from Margat, Crac des Chevaliers, Saphet and to some extent Pilgrims' Castle.³⁹⁸ Likewise, Praver noted that the fortress of Montfort was basically intended to serve as the Teutonic Knights' headquarters, and had little military importance.³⁹⁹ It has also been shown that many crusader fortifications, such as the Castle of Roger the Lombard and Qaqun, were far too small to withstand Muslim invasion forces, and were primarily designed to improve internal rather than external security. These factors had hardly even been looked at by historians before Smail's time.

However, it would be an oversimplification to say that during the thirteenth century the Franks consistently failed to implement some kind of overall strategy. It would also be rash to dismiss Rey's theory of castle networks entirely, for some strongholds clearly were built and designed to interact with others. Pilgrims' Castle, for example, was referred to as 'the breastwork of the city of Acre' by one contemporary, implying that it had deliberately been constructed to defend Acre from the south.⁴⁰⁰ Likewise, Ascalon became the focus of so much crusader activity because of its proximity to Egypt, rather than a pressing desire to re-establish a former Christian city. By building new defences here Richard I, Theobald of Champagne and Richard of Cornwall all hoped to

³⁹⁸ Marshall, Warfare in the Latin East, p.129, and see ibid, pp.129-31.

³⁹⁹ Praver, The Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem, p.308. See also Pringle, 'A thirteenth century hall', 52.

⁴⁰⁰ Oliver of Paderborn, Historia Damiatina, p.256.

deter the Muslims from attacking Galilee, whilst at the same time creating a potential starting point for Christian incursions toward Gaza and Jerusalem. These factors caused Matthew Paris to describe it as the 'key' to the kingdom of Jerusalem, and help explain why both Saladin and Baybars were so keen to demolish it.⁴⁰¹

As we have seen, several other castles built or extensively repaired during the thirteenth century, including Beaufort, Saphet and Crac des Chevaliers, belonged to intervisible networks specifically designed to guard national frontiers. Furthermore, Margat, Pilgrims' Castle, Crac des Chevaliers and Saphet clearly intimidated the Muslims over a wide area, and consequently extended Frankish authority many miles inland. In the county of Tripoli, Akkar, Chastel Blanc and Tortosa also made a significant contribution to the aggressive policies which the Hospitallers pursued in this area, whilst further south one scholar has suggested that the garrison of Montfort 'represented a continuing threat to Saphet' after 1266.⁴⁰² Bearing in mind that Montfort was probably also included in the select list of fortresses thought strong enough to resist the Mongols, this implies that both the castle's strength and strategic importance have been underestimated in the past. Similarly, Mt Tabor may well have been occupied by the Hospitallers because its summit was difficult to attack, yet afforded extensive views over Muslim territories to the east. It may therefore have been used to attack areas around the river Jordan in the same way that Saphet was, and certainly enabled the

⁴⁰¹ Matthew Paris, Chronica Maiora, IV, 144, and see above, pp.52, 53.

⁴⁰² Thorau, The Lion of Egypt, p.206. Gregory IX also considered Montfort very important because of its proximity to Muslim territories. See Tabulae ordinis Theutonici, no.72, pp.56-57.

Hospitallers to cultivate large parts of central Galilee.⁴⁰³ Thus there may have been more Christian strongholds than Marshall suggests which were intended to provide national, not just local, defence, whilst some of these sites could also be used to make significant territorial gains at the expense of the Muslims.

Yet Rey's argument that virtually all Latin fortifications ever constructed formed part of a huge, carefully planned defensive system should still be rejected, for this would also suggest that the Franks hoped to guard a static frontier which hardly altered from year to year. In reality, however, borders were constantly changing, and individual strongholds were often destroyed or constructed with staggering speed. Pilgrims' Castle, for example, was begun in 1218, but was already strong enough to resist a major siege within two years.⁴⁰⁴ On another occasion, Richard I was in such a hurry to repair the citadel of Jaffa that he did not use any mortar, but simply built dry stone walls which could be strengthened later.⁴⁰⁵ During the spring of 1192 Richard also spent a mere four months rebuilding Ascalon's walls, only for them to be demolished again soon after as part of the peace treaty with Saladin.⁴⁰⁶ Indeed, both Saladin and Baybars systematically dismantled many strongholds to prevent their recapture, and even as late as 1270 the latter sultan flattened the last remaining defences at Ascalon. This was presumably done to deter Louis IX or the lord Edward from devoting their crusades to fortifying these

⁴⁰³ Mt Tabor formed the centre of a vast territorial block belonging to the Hospitallers. See Riley-Smith, The Knights of St. John, pp.413-17.

⁴⁰⁴ See above, p.55-56.

⁴⁰⁵ Itinerarium, p.412.

⁴⁰⁶ See above, pp.51-52.

sites and attacking Jerusalem.⁴⁰⁷

These incidents help to create an image of a region which was almost constantly at war, with border regions changing hands regularly, and castles being seen as far more temporary structures than they are today. The shifting nature of warfare in the Holy Land also makes it doubtful whether natural barriers such as mountain ranges were as important to the defence of Frankish territories as one might think. Such features could be bypassed relatively quickly, and there seems little difference between the ease with which Saladin invaded the coastal plain in the twelfth century, and Baybars overran the same area eighty years later.

This conclusion brings us back to the observations made at the end of the previous chapter. Crusader tactics did not in fact change that much during the two centuries of Latin rule in the Holy Land, for the Franks hardly ever tried to defend their borders by challenging their opponents in a direct confrontation. The battles of Hattin and La Forbie showed that to do so against a numerically superior enemy could be suicidal. Instead, Ayubids, Mamluks and Seljuks were regularly allowed to penetrate Christian territories unhindered, until a lack of food, supplies or morale, combined with a realization that it would take many years to reduce the larger Frankish strongholds, forced them to retreat. This strategy often worked successfully during both the twelfth and the thirteenth centuries, and did not ultimately fail because crusader castles were architecturally inferior, but rather because external political factors changed dramatically from around 1260 onwards. Most notably, Baybars united the Muslim world under a strong Egyptian sultanate, and eventually overcame

⁴⁰⁷ Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 142; al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, I(b), 84.

many of the political and military problems which had prevented Saladin from wiping out the Franks during the late 1180s. This enabled the Muslims to conduct sustained, all year round campaigns with armies numbering tens of thousands of men, at about the same time that west European crusades were getting smaller, and internal disputes between fellow Latins were getting more frequent. As a result, the outnumbered, ill-disciplined and divided Franks were powerless to stop a succession of Mamluk sultans from capturing crusader strongpoints almost at will. However, the ability of the Latins to survive for another thirty years after the accession of Baybars, without ever meeting their opponents in a major pitched battle, can also be seen as a remarkable achievement, which was only made possible by the sheer strength of their greatest castles and urban fortifications.

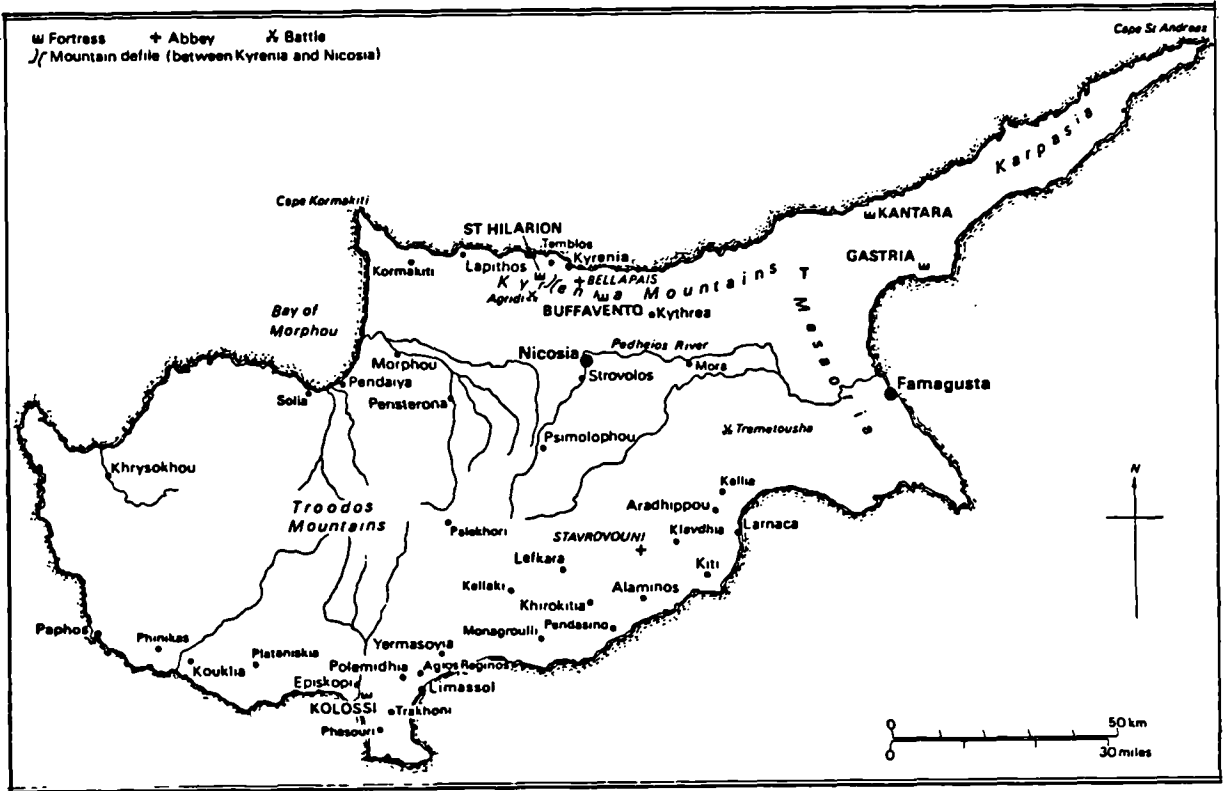


Fig.7. Cyprus. From Edbury, The Kingdom of Cyprus, map 1.

CHAPTER THREE
THE ROLE OF FORTIFICATIONS IN THE KINGDOM
OF CYPRUS, 1191-1374.

Thanks to its isolated location and relatively strong monarchy, the kingdom of Cyprus was by far the most successful Latin state in the eastern Mediterranean during the crusader period. However, despite the island's unusually tranquil history, it has been shown that there were two principal factors which were most likely to threaten or undermine its Lusignan rulers. Firstly, there was always a danger that an internal conflict would break out between the Greeks and their Frankish overlords, which is what happened in 1192, or between rival Latin factions, as was the case in 1228, 1306 and 1369. Secondly, the Lusignans constantly had to be on the lookout for an external attack on Cyprus, either by pirates and Muslim raiders, or much more seriously, by a Genoese or Mamluk invasion force. Consequently, virtually all fortifications constructed there during this period were designed to deal with at least one of these dangers.

However, whereas the threat of internal warfare does not appear to have increased significantly between 1191 and 1373, it is clear that the possibility of an actual invasion grew considerably after 1291. As we shall see, this explains why the Franks did not construct any major new fortifications on Cyprus before the fall of Acre, and continued to rely on the Byzantine defensive strategy of having smaller castles at Famagusta, Limassol, Paphos and Nicosia, and larger strongholds at Kyrenia, St.Hilarion, Buffavento and Kantara. Indeed, the relative tranquility on Cyprus during the thirteenth century shows that this network of defences proved more than adequate in dealing with minor raids and rebellions. It also helped Henry I and the Ibelins defeat Frederick II's supporters during

the war of 1228-33.¹

The relatively small number of troops involved in this conflict provides us with another reason why castles on Cyprus were not dramatically strengthened or enlarged before 1291. At the battle of Agridi, for example, the Ibelins only had 223 mounted troops and the Lombards 2,000,² whilst during the subsequent siege of Kyrenia John of Ibelin bitterly regretted attempting a general assault on the castle, because he had so few men at his disposal.³ From 1291 onwards, however, the Cypriots knew that they were likely to be attacked by a Genoese or Mamluk invasion force numbering at least 12,000 men. In addition, it has been shown that piracy, which could still have a devastating effect on certain areas even if it did not threaten the kingdom as a whole, probably increased dramatically in the course of the fourteenth century.⁴ In these circumstances, it is hardly surprising that the Lusignans erected vast new coastal defences during this period, so that Cyprus increasingly relied on castles and town walls for its survival, in the same way that crusader states on the mainland had done before the fall of Acre. These efforts clearly indicate that as far as the strategic importance of castles on Cyprus was concerned, 1291 was in fact a far more significant date than 1191.

This statement can be backed up by looking at the history and archaeological remains of individual strongpoints on Cyprus. At Limassol, for example, investigations

¹ See above, pp.16-22.

² Florio Bustron, Chronique, p.92; Gestes, p.712; Philip of Novara, The Wars of Frederick II, p.146.

³ Gestes, p.721; Philip of Novara, The Wars of Frederick II, p.156.

⁴ See above, pp.33, 37-38.

undertaken at the turn of the century failed to uncover any medieval walls or urban defences around the city, but did reach some interesting conclusions about the ruined castle located near the harbour. The oldest part of this citadel consisted of a large, square, two storey keep, which originally had a small chapel or hall attached to its east wall. The architectural historian C. Enlart dated this keep to the thirteenth century, suggesting that it was constructed from 1192 onwards, but probably stands on the site of its Byzantine predecessor.⁵

However, Enlart also noted that at some later date the building to the east of the keep had been almost completely demolished, and replaced by a larger structure. In addition, a second tower had been added parallel to the old keep, which was itself extensively altered in its internal layout. The vaulting and masonry used during this second building phase proved that it dated from the fourteenth century.⁶ Finally, it was clear that further improvements had been made during the sixteenth century, when the entire structure was encased with massively thick ramparts, which blocked up many of the original medieval arrow slits. These alterations dated from the Venetian domination of Cyprus between 1489 and the Turkish invasion of 1570, when numerous attempts were made to upgrade older strongholds in order to make them strong enough to resist artillery bombardment.⁷

These three distinct building phases can be compared with

⁵ Enlart, L'art gothique, II, 678-82.

⁶ Enlart, L'art gothique, II, 680-82.

⁷ Enlart, L'art gothique, II, 682-83. See also A.H.S. Megaw, 'The Arts in Cyprus, B: Military Architecture', HC, IV, (1977), pp.198-206, at pp.198-99. For more details of the Venetian domination of Cyprus, 1489-1570, see Hill, History of Cyprus, III, 765-877.

the known history of Limassol castle. This stronghold is said to have been founded by Guy of Lusignan in 1193, although it has already been noted that when Richard I landed here two years previously some sort of Byzantine fortification already existed, which was easily captured by the crusaders.⁸ In 1212 the travelling pilgrim Willbrand of Oldenburg noted that Limassol was 'not a well defended city', although he stressed that it had a good port. Further evidence of the relatively small scale of the defences erected in 1193 dates from 1220, when the Muslims carried out a raid on Limassol in order to stop supplies reaching members of the Fifth Crusade in Egypt. This raid caused major casualties in the city, suggesting that Limassol's castle was far too small to shelter the entire Christian population, but could perhaps at least protect the Frankish minority.⁹

The attack of 1220 is the last recorded raid made on Limassol until 1303, when pirates from Rhodes looted the city.¹⁰ In 1271 Baybars also sent an Egyptian fleet of eleven to fourteen galleys against Limassol, but it was shipwrecked off the coast and some Muslim troops were taken prisoner.¹¹ Over the next few decades, it is clear that the number of piratical incursions made against Cyprus increased steadily, and some of these may have been

⁸ Etienne de Lusignan, Description de toute l'isle de Cypre, (Paris 1580), folio 123; Itinerarium, pp.181-91; Richard of Devizes, Cronicon, pp.35-36; Ambroise, L'estoire de la guerre sainte, pp.38-42; Eracles, II, 161-64; Roger of Howden, Chronica, III, 105-7; Gesta Regis, II, 162-64.

⁹ 1212: Willbrand of Oldenburg, Itinerarium, p.230. 1220: Eracles, II, 345-46.

¹⁰ Chronique d'Amadi, p.239; Florio Bustron, Chronique, p.134.

¹¹ Annales de Terre Sainte, p.455 (text B); Gestes, p.778; Eracles, II, 460; al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, I(b), 87; Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 152-54; Marino Sanudo, Liber secretorum, p.224.

aimed at Limassol. However, the only specific reference to the city being attacked again dates from 1373, when Genoese raiders targeted Limassol because 'the garrison was fewer and weak; and they landed and burned the houses; and the inhabitants took flight; and they did much damage'.¹²

These events tally perfectly with the archaeological evidence at Limassol. Clearly, the original castle begun during the 1190s replaced a Byzantine citadel, which may well have been in a state of disrepair. The modest scale of the new Frankish stronghold suggests that its principal function was to maintain law and order on a local scale and prevent the kind of rebellion which broke out against the Templars at Nicosia in 1192. If such an uprising did occur, the tower could provide shelter for Frankish settlers, who were still massively outnumbered by the native Greek population at this point. This is confirmed by the events of 1220, which, as we have seen, clearly indicate that Limassol's thirteenth century castle was never intended to accommodate local Cypriot people as well. The absence of any town walls at Limassol during this period provides us with further proof that initially the greatest threat to crusader rule was internal rather than external.

The second building phase at Limassol can be explained in terms of the growing threat of seaborne incursions during the fourteenth century. Enlart compared the style of the fourteenth century remains at Limassol to those of Famagusta cathedral, begun in 1311. This suggests that the castle was enlarged before 1350, and perhaps in response

¹² Leontios Makhairas, Recital, c.377, pp.357-58. See also Chronique d'Amadi, p.444; Florio Bustron, Chronique, pp.300-1; Strambaldi, Chronique, p.153.

to the Genoese raid on nearby Paphos in 1316.¹³ However, judging by one contemporary source, it is likelier that the new building works date from the reign of James I (1382-98), who no doubt feared a repeat of the Genoese attack of 1373.¹⁴ Nevertheless, even James I's improvements could not possibly have made the castle strong enough to resist the kind of invasion forces which the Genoese used at Famagusta, or which the Franks feared the Mamluks would send against Cyprus after 1291. Clearly, therefore, Latin defences at Limassol were never intended to withstand anything more than local rebellions or minor seaborne raids.

The early history of Limassol's fortifications is very similar to those of Famagusta, the principal harbour on the east coast of Cyprus. Famagusta's castle was already mentioned during Richard I's conquest, when the emperor Isaac Comnenus fled there briefly in mid-May 1191.¹⁵ Twenty years later Willbrand of Oldenburg wrote that like Limassol it was not particularly well defended,¹⁶ although Frederick II's supporters still deemed it important enough to station imperialist troops there during the spring of 1232.¹⁷ However, events some months later again suggest that it can have been little more than a large tower. In August 1232, the Ibelins sailed towards Cyprus in order to reconquer the island and relieve the besieged castle of St.Hilarion. Under cover of darkness they arrived on a small island just outside Famagusta, and from there managed to sneak into the city itself. Realizing this, the

¹³ Enlart, L'art gothique, II, 681-82, and see below, p.184.

¹⁴ Strambaldi, Chronique, p.277.

¹⁵ Itinerarium, p.199.

¹⁶ Willbrand of Oldenburg, Itinerarium, p.232.

¹⁷ Philip of Novara, The Wars of Frederick II, p.141; Gestes, p.710; Eracles, II, 399.

imperialist troops in the city retreated to Nicosia, leaving only the 'sea tower' still holding out against the Ibelins. The garrison of this tower subsequently surrendered, but only after it had been promised several fiefs by king Henry himself. These statements are interesting because they suggest that Famagusta's castle was intended to guard its harbour, and also confirm that the Ibelin army of 1232 was extremely small.¹⁸

Famagusta probably continued to be protected solely by this sea tower until the reign of Henry II (1285-1324), who began a programme of enlarging the castle itself and adding a town wall around the city.¹⁹ The fact that Famagusta's cathedral and numerous other churches also date from this period indicate that the city was undergoing a period of rapid expansion during the early fourteenth century, which presumably made it even more urgent to defend such an important centre in response to the events of 1291.²⁰

During Amaury of Tyre's brief rule on Cyprus, when his brother the king was exiled in Armenia for a while, the construction programme started by Henry II was hastily continued, no doubt to try to strengthen Amaury's grip on Famagusta as much as to defend it from possible Mamluk invasions. Amaury also had the wooden balconies of houses facing the city streets removed, because they hampered the movement of his cavalry troops, again indicating that he

¹⁸ Chronique d'Amadi, pp.165-66; Gestes, pp.712-13; Florio Bustron, Chronique, p.93; Philip of Novara, The Wars of Frederick II, pp.147-48.

¹⁹ Etienne de Lusignan, Description, folio 143.

²⁰ For more details on Famagusta's churches, see Enlart, L'art gothique, I, 250-394. For the growing wealth of Famagusta, see D. Jacoby, 'The rise of a new emporium in the eastern Mediterranean: Famagusta in the late thirteenth century', in Studies on the Crusader States and on Venetian Expansion, c.8, pp.145-79.

feared an imminent royalist attack on the city. By 1310, when Amaury was murdered and the political situation on Cyprus began to change in favour of the king, these fortifications must have been largely completed, because in that year Famagusta declared itself staunchly on Henry II's side and its citizens walled up the town gates and demolished their drawbridges to prevent Amaury's supporters from regaining control of the city.²¹

However, these defences, which had been constructed in considerable haste by Greek peasants ferried in from the countryside, may still have been considered inadequate against the Mamluks, and it is doubtful whether they could have been as strong as the kind of urban fortifications built by the Franks at Acre and Tyre. It seems likely, therefore, that improvements continued to be made during the fourteenth century, so that by the mid-1340s an anonymous English traveller could write that Famagusta 'is a city strongly built... on the rock. It is surrounded by deep and broad moats cut out of the rock, and has high walls and towers subtly constructed of squared and cut stone'.²²

By the 1360s, however, it must have been apparent to the Cypriots that these defences were likelier to be put to the test by a Genoese rather than a Muslim army. But when the Genoese invasion finally came in 1373, Genoa's admiral Peter of Campofregoso preferred to use stealth rather than brute force to get into Famagusta. Having clashed with Cypriot troops in a number of small encounters outside the

²¹ Florio Bustron, Chronique, p.194; Chronique d'Amadi, p.335.

²² 'Manuscript recording the journey of an anonymous Englishman', in Supplementary excerpts on Cyprus, or further materials for a history of Cyprus, trans. and ed. T.A.H. Mogabgab, (Nicosia 1941), p.58. For Acre and Tyre, see above, pp.62-64, 66.

city, the Genoese suggested that Famagusta's castle should be completely evacuated, and that seventeen men from each side should meet inside to discuss a truce. Peter II and his representatives agreed to this arrangement, but as soon as the Genoese negotiators entered the citadel, they overpowered their Cypriot counterparts, let more Genoese troops inside, and thereby managed to occupy the whole city.²³

The stratagem used by the Genoese to capture Famagusta suggests that by 1373 its defences were extremely strong, but this impression may be misleading. Soon after the city had been taken, the Genoese expressed concern that Peter II's forces would storm the castle walls because they were so low. As a result, Peter of Campofregoso 'gave orders that they should raise the height of the walls wherever they were low, and he tried to bring the sea all around the place (ie the citadel) so as to make it an island'. Another reference to wooden towers being added to Famagusta's sea wall in 1380, during an encounter between Genoa and Venice, also implies that the city's defences were dangerously low.²⁴ It seems, therefore, that after an initial building phase between c.1291 and 1340, Famagusta's defences were either left incomplete or fell into disrepair, because the threat of a Mamluk attack appeared to be fading. Although Famagusta's walls no doubt formed a complete circuit in 1373, this problem had clearly not been rectified in the years preceding the Genoese invasion. From 1373 onwards, therefore, the Genoese must have carried out substantial repairs to the walls, which subsequently withstood several Cypriot

²³ Leontios Makhairas, Recital, c.386-88, p.365-67, c.410-20, pp.389-403; Chronique d'Amadi, pp.446-48, 450-51; Strambaldi, Chronique, pp.156-60, 166-73; Florio Bustron, Chronique, pp.302-11.

²⁴ Leontios Makhairas, Recital, c.450, p.435 (quote), c.586, p.585. See also Strambaldi, Chronique, p.186.

attacks, including one involving cannons in 1402.²⁵

During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, this process was continued by the Venetians, who replaced most of the old walls with ramparts more suited to artillery warfare, and encased the castle itself with thick exterior earth embankments, just as they had done at Limassol.²⁶ Nevertheless, enough thirteenth and fourteenth century remains have survived to confirm that there were two basic phases of construction at Famagusta between 1191 and 1373. Henry's citadel, which, as we have seen, probably dates from the period 1291-1310, is located on a small promontary at the north end of the harbour. It is rectangular in shape, with four square corner towers. At its centre is a small courtyard around which are located the remains of various vaulted buildings. Although they are all now blocked off by later Venetian defences, the remains of numerous arrow slits facing the sea to the north, as well as a postern gate to the west, confirm that this is a classic example of the kind of simple rectangular (or castrum) fortresses erected by the Latins throughout the crusader states in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.²⁷ Extending to the north east of this citadel, the Venetians later added a fortified jetty, from which a chain was connected to a 'chain tower' on the other side of the harbour entrance. This structure may have been built on the site of an earlier fourteenth century tower.

²⁵ 1402: Florio Bustron, Chronique, p.355. Other attacks occurred in 1375, 1380 and 1382 (ibid, pp.342-51), and in 1441 (ibid, p.371). Famagusta finally fell in 1464 (ibid, p.411).

²⁶ Enlart, L'art gothique, II, 618-19; Etienne de Lusignan, Description, folio 24.

²⁷ Other examples of castrum-type castles have survived in the Holy Land. See above, pp.70-71.

Even more significantly, Enlart believed the remains of the thirteenth century citadel's north east corner tower, which was largely demolished by the Venetians when they built the jetty, are those of the original keep or sea tower mentioned in 1191 and 1232.²⁸ This confirms that a tower had existed here since Byzantine times, whose location shows that it was intended to guard the port and perhaps even help approaching ships to find the harbour entrance, although its small scale indicates that it could not have been much of a defence against anything more than small piratical raids. However, the appearance of the actual remains of this tower has led the archaeologist A.H.S. Megaw to conclude that it was probably built by Guy of Lusignan in the 1190s.²⁹ If this is the case, then its primary role may in fact have been to suppress the local population and protect Frankish newcomers. This would make its function almost identical to that of the early thirteenth century castle at Limassol. At both these sites it also appears that any Byzantine fortifications still standing in 1191 were demolished, presumably because they could not be relied on to provide enough shelter either against pirates or Greek rebels.

However, the construction of Famagusta's town walls and the considerable rebuilding of its citadel after 1291 reflect a total shift in policy by Henry II and his successors. These defences were built from scratch and were clearly intended to protect the city from full scale invasion forces rather than mere raids. Almost nothing survives of these fortifications, which were systematically replaced by the Venetians. However, they probably followed the same line as the present town wall,

²⁸ Enlart, *L'art gothique*, II, 615-18; Leontios Makhairas (*Recital*, c.221, p.203) refers to the chain tower as early as 1368.

²⁹ Megaw, 'Military Architecture', p.197.

which forms an approximate rectangle around the city. Only one tower along this wall predates the Venetian period, but even this is probably a Genoese structure built after 1373, rather than a relic from the original Lusignan construction period.³⁰

The wealth of historical and archaeological evidence at both Limassol and Famagusta makes it relatively easy to assess the role of crusader fortifications there, but at Paphos the situation is far more confusing. In 1191 Richard I occupied 'the castle which is called Paphos' once Isaac Comnenus had been defeated, indicating that some sort of fortification already existed there before the crusader period.³¹ However, this is the last specific reference to there being any kind of stronghold at Paphos until 1373. In that year, a small fleet sent against Cyprus ahead of the main Genoese invasion force landed nearby with an army of 2,000 mercenaries, and 'took the castles of Paphos'. Having captured these fortifications, the Genoese 'set to work and heightened them, and cut a trench, so that the sea flowed in and surrounded them with water...' As a result, 'when the Cypriots brought up fighting-towers and soldiers in them, they resisted the attack without anxiety for the result'. It is unclear how long the Genoese subsequently stayed at Paphos, although they probably held it during most, if not all, of the Genoese campaign against Kyrenia, which ended in the spring of 1374.³²

We are therefore left with the problem of trying to work out how and at what stage Paphos progressed from being

³⁰ Enlart, L'art gothique, II 618-19.

³¹ Roger of Howden, Chronica, III, 111.

³² Leontios Makhairas, Recital, c.377, p.359 (quote). See also Chronique d'Amadi, pp.444-45; Florio Bustron, Chronique, pp.301-2; Strambaldi, Chronique, pp.154-55.

defended by a single Byzantine stronghold, which was quickly overrun by Richard I's troops, to two separate castles, which were strong enough to resist a concerted Cypriot attack using siege towers! Moreover, the only recorded attack on Paphos between 1191 and 1373, carried out by Genoese raiders in 1316, makes no reference to any of these fortifications.³³ Over the centuries, historians and archaeologists have interpreted these facts in different ways. In the sixteenth century, Etienne of Lusignan referred to the two towers occupied by the Genoese, stating that 'there were two very strong castles by the shore, whose walls were constantly lapped by the sea, which the kings descended from the Lusignans had equipped with all necessary defences', but he went on to say that they were later destroyed by the Venetians.³⁴ Both the *Chronique d'Amadi* and Florio Bustron went further by claiming that these structures, as well as a nearby 'citadel', had been built by James I in 1391, but this, of course, does not tally with the events of 1373.³⁵

These statements leave us with two possibilities. Firstly, it may be that Florio Bustron and the *Chronique d'Amadi* are quite simply incorrect, and that Paphos's twin castles were built at some point during the early fourteenth century. The second and more likely possibility is that James I was indeed responsible for building work at Paphos, but that this amounted to repairs necessitated by the attack of 1373, rather than the construction of brand

³³ Chronique d'Amadi, p.398; Florio Bustron, Chronique, pp.249-50.

³⁴ Etienne de Lusignan, Description, folio 16.

³⁵ Chronique d'Amadi, p.495; Florio Bustron, Chronique, p.352. All traces of James I's 'citadel' must have disappeared long before Enlart's day, as he makes no reference to it. It may also be that this refers to the two towers, rather than a separate building which has now vanished.

new defences. This would suggest that these castles had originally been built at some point between 1191 and 1373, and possibly in response to the Genoese raid of 1316.

These observations are to some extent confirmed by the archaeological evidence. Around a century ago Enlart saw the remains of two towers guarding the harbour of Paphos, one of which, despite Etienne of Lusignan's statement, showed traces of Venetian occupation, before later being incorporated into a Turkish fort.³⁶ More recently, Sir George Hill also concluded that at least one of these towers had been built on the ruins of the Byzantine castle captured by Richard I, adding that the Venetian and Turkish remains at Paphos incorporated a 'Lusignan tower'. This implies that the site was in fact occupied almost continuously from the Byzantine period onwards, and may even have been refortified soon after Richard I's invasion, in the same way that Limassol and Famagusta were.³⁷

However, the difficulties with Paphos do not end there. In 1957, and after both Hill and Enlart had reached their own conclusions, the archaeologist Megaw discovered the remains of a sizeable castle on a site located slightly inland, which had previously been connected with a classical temple dedicated to Venus.³⁸ It consisted of an almost square inner castle, built around a central courtyard and defended by four corner towers, which were themselves surrounded by an outer curtain wall flanked by a further eight towers. Although this castle was still small compared with many strongholds constructed on the

³⁶ Enlart, L'art gothique, II, 696.

³⁷ Hill, History of Cyprus, II, 18-19.

³⁸ A.H.S. Megaw, 'Supplementary Excavations on a Castle Site at Paphos, Cyprus, 1970-71', Dumbarton Oaks Papers, XXVI, (1972), 322-45.

mainland at this time, it nevertheless contrasted dramatically with the isolated towers already described at Limassol and Famagusta. Not only was it planned as a true concentric fortification with two lines of defence and no obvious central keep, but its inner castle probably also contained substantial residential apartments.³⁹

During a series of excavations between 1957 and 1971, Megaw investigated this site extensively in order to ascertain who had built it and when it had been occupied. This enabled him to draw a number of conclusions about the castle's history. Firstly, it seemed that the original Roman or Byzantine fortifications had been destroyed during a devastating Arab attack in 654 A.D. Secondly, very little evidence of further occupation between 654 and 1191 was unearthed above this layer, whilst no less than 25 coins were found dating from between 1191 and c.1220, as well as numerous other items that could be associated with every day life in the early thirteenth century.⁴⁰

However, despite these finds Megaw believed that a small number of twelfth century Byzantine coins on the site, plus a number of architectural peculiarities and readjustments within the inner castle, proved that it was basically a Byzantine construction later repaired by the Franks, and that it was finally destroyed during the massive earthquake recorded by Oliver of Paderborn in 1222.⁴¹ But by drawing this conclusion Megaw appears to contradict himself, when he first states that the drainage system below the inner bailey must have been constructed at the same time as the castle itself, and then concludes that the upper parts of the castle were a late addition by

³⁹ Megaw, 'Supplementary Excavations', 323-25.

⁴⁰ Megaw, 'Supplementary Excavations', 328-43.

⁴¹ Oliver of Paderborn, Historia Damiatina, p.279; See also Annales de Terre Sainte, p.437 (text B).

the Franks, even though the subterranean drains and the latrines of the upper storey are clearly part of one integral design.⁴² Moreover, it seems odd that if this was the castle occupied by Richard I in 1191, it was not referred to at all by Willbrand of Oldenburg. Willbrand visited Paphos in 1212, and his faithful recording of the state of the defences of numerous other places in Cyprus, as well as his obvious interest in fortifications throughout the Latin East, make it very surprising that he should fail even to mention a castle with double walls and several flanking towers.⁴³

Hence the possibility emerges that this site may have been occupied at least to some degree between the seventh and thirteenth centuries, but that the castle itself was not begun until after 1212, and was basically built from scratch. This may also explain why the rock-cut ditch around the castle was never completed. Megaw believes this ditch was hastily begun against renewed Arab aggression in the 680s, but it could also have been left unfinished because of the earthquake of 1222, after which the castle was definitely never rebuilt.⁴⁴ Moreover, the incomplete state of the castle ditch, which rendered several unfinished postern gates in the outer curtain useless, raises the possibility that the castle was built in an even shorter time span just before 1222, perhaps in response to the Mamluk raid on Limassol in 1220.⁴⁵ If this is so, then this stronghold may represent a brief attempt to defend Cyprus more systematically against an external invasion seventy years before the loss of Acre; an attempt which was abandoned after the earthquake of 1222, and the

⁴² Megaw, 'Supplementary Excavations', 335, 343.

⁴³ Willbrand of Oldenburg, Itinerarium, p.230.

⁴⁴ Megaw, 'Supplementary Excavations', 343.

⁴⁵ See above, p.175.

gradual realization that the raid of 1220 had been an isolated incident.

Thus the picture at Paphos is a little more confused than elsewhere, although the basic functions of all the fortifications constructed there between 1191 and 1373 were roughly the same as those at both Famagusta and Limassol. The castle guarding the city in 1191 must have been too small and dilapidated to have been preserved by the Franks. It could either have been a predecessor to one of the two towers near the shore, or a small fortification cleared away when the Franks built their larger castle at some point between 1212 and 1222. Whether the Franks also built a new tower to protect the harbour after 1191, as they did at Limassol and Famagusta, is uncertain, but the possibility cannot be ruled out, and Hill appears to have thought that they did. However, the role of all these early thirteenth century defences must have been more substantial than the mere suppression of the local population, which seems to have been achieved perfectly adequately by the smaller towers at Limassol and Famagusta. Presumably, therefore, Paphos's closer proximity to Egypt, and the raid of 1220, convinced the Franks that this stretch of coastline was particularly vulnerable to seaborne offensives. However, if this was the case, it seems odd that the inland castle was not rebuilt after 1222. As far as the two towers attacked in 1373 are concerned, it has been suggested that these were constructed after 1316, when it became apparent that the Genoese were prepared to use force against Cyprus. Clearly, both these defences and those later built by James I were erected in response to the ever increasing threat posed by the Genoese, and the possibility that they would try to capture western Cyprus by using Paphos as a bridgehead.

Whereas the history of Paphos is relatively obscure, the situation at Nicosia seems to have been far more straightforward. Nicosia differed from Paphos and the other centres looked at so far, because (like Jerusalem) it owed its importance to its political and religious status, as the capital of Cyprus and the seat of its archbishop, rather than its economic wealth or seaborne trading activities. Consequently it was the only major urban centre on the island which did not lie on the coast, and was therefore not as exposed to potential external aggression as other settlements, even after 1291. Thus when looking at the role of fortifications at Nicosia during this period, it is first of all important to remember its unique geographical location.

As we have already seen, two incidents during the very earliest days of crusader domination on Cyprus suggest that Nicosia was yet another place which had a small castle in Byzantine times. Firstly, Isaac Comnenus found refuge here briefly whilst fleeing from Richard I, before the entire city was subsequently occupied by English troops.⁴⁶ Secondly, after Richard had sold the island to the Templars, they placed a force of Italian mercenaries in the castle of Nicosia, which came under siege during the Cypriot rebellion of 1192. Although it lacked adequate supplies, this garrison, which consisted of 14 knights, 74 footsoldiers and another 29 mounted troops, managed to hold out for a while and subsequently made a successful sortie against the Greeks. However, this incident nevertheless convinced the Templars that they lacked the troops and resources to maintain and garrison the island's castles properly, and they therefore handed it back to

⁴⁶ Itinerarium, pp.194, 200-1; Roger of Howden, Chronica, III, 111; Vinsauf, 'Itinerary of Richard I', p.10.

Richard I.⁴⁷

The siege of 1192 may also have inflicted considerable damage on the castle of Nicosia, which had been described as 'a very strong fort' only a year previously.⁴⁸ It was perhaps for this reason that the crusaders decided to reconstruct it not long afterwards. This is confirmed by Willbrand of Oldenburg's statement that in 1212 he saw a strong citadel at Nicosia which had been completed recently. It seems that this structure was built on the site of the old castle, which had been located 'by the small market', suggesting that it stood right in the middle of the city.⁴⁹

Thus it seems likeliest that the events of 1192 caused Guy of Lusignan, or one of his successors, to demolish the Byzantine castle (or what remained of it) fairly soon after Lusignan control was established on Cyprus, and replace it with a citadel deliberately placed at the centre of Nicosia to act as a symbol of the new regime, and to prevent a recurrence of the kind of rebellion which had ousted the Templars. A pattern is therefore starting to emerge, suggesting that during the 1190s and the very earliest years of the thirteenth century, the Lusignans built a series of small but strong castles at Famagusta, Limassol and Nicosia. (As we have seen, a similar tower may also have been built near the harbour of Paphos, which was later complemented by the larger stronghold built between 1212 and 1222, and eventually replaced by two new

⁴⁷ Eracles, II, 189-91; Chronique d'Amadi, pp.83-85; Florio Bustron, Chronique, pp.50-52; Leontios Makhairas, Recital, c.12, p.11.

⁴⁸ Vinsauf, 'Itinerary of Richard I', p.10.

⁴⁹ Willbrand of Oldenburg, Itinerarium, p.228; Etienne de Lusignan, Description, folio 30-31.

towers in the fourteenth century.)

These early Frankish castles were little more than large, square towers, whose principal functions were to suppress the Greeks and strengthen the crusaders' grip on Cyprus, and their role can be compared with that of the Norman castles built in England after 1066, as well as the numerous isolated towers built by the Latins in Greece from 1204 onwards.⁵⁰ Their small size, as well as incidents such as the devastating Muslim raid on Limassol in 1220, show that they could not hope to prevent larger external attacks, let alone full scale invasions. However, they were no doubt intended to discourage smaller raids, and an attack against Cyprus by Greek pirates in 1192 may be significant in this respect. The construction of towers at Limassol and Famagusta suggests that the Lusignans feared similar incursions in the future, and were particularly concerned about Greek aggressors, who could potentially seek both political and military aid from Constantinople.⁵¹

Returning to Nicosia itself, it appears that the tower erected before 1212 continued to act as the only defence for the city until the fourteenth century, and may even have been allowed to fall into a state of disrepair. The kings of Cyprus themselves did not live in this castle, but resided in the royal palace nearby, which was probably slightly fortified in its own right. This is implied by the fact that in 1307, when Henry II managed to slip away from his brother Amaury's guards, he took refuge in the palace and defended it successfully against Amaury's troops for four days, before eventually having to

⁵⁰ See below, pp.319-21.

⁵¹ Eracles, II, 205-6.

surrender.⁵²

As far as urban defences were concerned, it seems that none were constructed at Nicosia until the second half of the fourteenth century, presumably because of the city's inland location. Nicosia's original Byzantine town walls had probably disappeared completely by the time Richard I occupied the city in 1191, although when they were eventually reconstructed, the remains of 'ancient walls which had been built by the first rulers at the time of Constantine the Great' were unearthed.⁵³ It seems unlikely that "the castle of Lefkosia", which Henry II began to construct in the late thirteenth century, amounted to a complete circuit around the city.⁵⁴ Henry probably thought that his resources were best spent fortifying more exposed coastal settlements such as Famagusta first. But if the kings of Cyprus felt that the defence of Nicosia was not particularly urgent after the fall of Acre, the subsequent threat of a Genoese invasion seems to have changed their minds.

It was not until the reign of Peter I (1359-69), therefore, that new town walls were erected. Peter may not only have been motivated by a fear of the Genoese; his aggressive policies towards the Muslims had already led to a number of retaliatory raids on Cyprus by the Turks, whilst his attack on Alexandria in 1365 must have renewed fear of a Mamluk invasion.⁵⁵ Some indication of what these fortifications looked like and how far they had progressed

⁵² Florio Bustron, Chronique, pp.148-49; Chronique d'Amadi, p.259. For more details on the royal palace, see Enlart, L'art gothique, pp.525-38.

⁵³ Etienne de Lusignan, Description, folio 30.

⁵⁴ Leontios Makhairas, Recital, c.41, p.43.

⁵⁵ Florio Bustron, Chronique, p.26. Turkish raids: Leontios Makhairas, Recital, c.139, p.121, c.151, p.133. Attack on Alexandria: see below, p.221.

before Peter I's death can be gauged from events during the reign of his son, Peter II. In October 1373, Peter II made an inspection of the walls, because he feared that Nicosia would soon be attacked by the Genoese, who were busy preparing to besiege Famagusta. The king found that 'the walls were very strong; but they were low, and he sent word to the country round, and men came together and built them up with earth and stones; and they dug out the ditch and constructed one hundred and thirty three platforms to fight from in addition to the towers'.⁵⁶

Peter II had been right to fear for the safety of his capital. Toward the end of November 1373, the Genoese, who had by now occupied Famagusta and captured king Peter himself, marched against Nicosia. Peter's uncle James of Lusignan, the constable of Cyprus, had already left the city in order to guard Kyrenia to the north, perhaps implying that despite recent improvements, Nicosia's walls were deemed too weak to bother defending. At any rate, the departure of James, (whom the inhabitants of Nicosia had tried to prevent from leaving because of their fear of the Genoese), as well as the apparent inadequacy of the city's fortifications, enabled the enemy to enter the city virtually unchallenged.

Once they had arrived at Nicosia, The Genoese troops quickly realized that there were not enough of them to occupy the entire city and its walls. They therefore restricted themselves to garrisoning a section of the ramparts 'from the Market Gate to the Tower of St. Andrew, and they made the walls higher and held the place in great force. And the tower which stands near the Market Gate they filled with earth and stones and made it like a

⁵⁶ Leontios Makhairas, Recital, c.384, p.363. See also Strambaldi, Chronique, p.156; Chronique d'Amadi, pp.439-40; Florio Bustron, Chronique, p.294.

castle'.⁵⁷ These fortifications ensured that the Genoese could keep an eye on the entire city and intimidate its population into submission. They also protected the Genoese against James of Lusignan, who subsequently arrived from Kyrenia and tried to recapture Nicosia.⁵⁸

Despite being massively outnumbered, the Genoese were now so well entrenched at Nicosia that they managed to hold on to the capital until a peace treaty was agreed in April 1374. During this time Nicosia's inhabitants, who had been abandoned and left leaderless, indulged in widespread looting and street fighting, both against the Genoese and each other. To some extent, the Genoese actually encouraged such violence, because it helped them track down their own enemies and systematically sack the entire city.⁵⁹ Their defences also enabled the Genoese to beat off another Cypriot attack from Kyrenia in March 1374. The tower near the Market Gate may have been particularly significant in this respect, because by filling it in with earth the Genoese had created their own 'citadel' capable of withstanding catapult bombardment.⁶⁰

The events of 1373-74 had shown that Nicosia was almost

⁵⁷ Leontios Makhairas, Recital, c.424, p.405. See also Florio Bustron, Chronique, p.312; Chronique d'Amadi, p.454; Strambaldi, Chronique, p.173. James's departure to Kyrenia: ibid, pp.159-66.

⁵⁸ Leontios Makhairas, Recital, c.434-35, pp.417-21; Chronique d'Amadi, p.456; Strambaldi, Chronique, pp.179-80; Florio Bustron, Chronique, p.314.

⁵⁹ Florio Bustron, Chronique, pp.312-16; Chronique d'Amadi, pp.455-57, 458; Strambaldi, Chronique, pp.178-83, 186-87; Leontios Makhairas, Recital, c.433, p.417, c.436-43, pp.421-29, c.453-54, pp.437-39.

⁶⁰ Leontios Makhairas, Recital, c.510, pp.499-501; Strambaldi, Chronique, pp.211-12; Chronique d'Amadi, pp.468-69; Florio Bustron, Chronique, pp.326-27. For more details on the fall of Nicosia, see Hill, History of Cyprus, II, 393-402, 406-10.

worse off with weak defences than no defences at all. By being able to occupy the city's walls so easily, and thereafter fortifying one particular section of their circuit, the Genoese used Nicosia's fortifications against its own inhabitants, and prevented the Cypriots from liberating the city. Consequently, the city walls were considerably improved and repaired during the next two decades, to deter the Genoese at Famagusta from making a new attack. James I in particular carried out much of this work during the 1390s.⁶¹

So far we have mainly looked at the town walls of Nicosia, but its citadel also underwent many changes from the mid-fourteenth century onwards. During this period the sources make no reference to the original castle built between 1192 and 1212, which, if it still existed, must have been considered totally inadequate for the defence of the city. During the reign of Peter I, therefore, a new citadel was constructed on a hill on the outskirts of Nicosia. This site dominated the entire city, and was used by the Turks to bombard the capital in 1570; an indication of the strategic value of this hill, as well as the problems the Cypriots later had in defending such a low lying city against artillery attack.⁶² The castle itself basically consisted of a 'strong and impressive' tower, whose different floors, including a dungeon in the cellar, were connected by ladders. This tower was also surrounded by a large moat, which had been excavated by slaves who 'dug the earth all day, and carried it out on their backs'.⁶³

⁶¹ Florio Bustron, Chronique, pp.26, 352; Chronique d'Amadi, p.495.

⁶² Enlart, L'art gothique, II, 523.

⁶³ William of Machaut, La prise, pp.258-59. See also Chronique d'Amadi, p.422; Florio Bustron, Chronique, p.271; Strambaldi, Chronique, p.102; Leontios Makhairas, Recital, c.260, p.241, c.265, p.247; Enlart, L'art gothique, II, 520-21.

Although it had not been completed by the time Peter I was murdered in 1369, the Margarita Tower, as this stronghold was known, clearly had more to do with defending Nicosia from external aggressors than the original thirteenth century castle. Whereas the old citadel stood at the heart of the city, so that it would intimidate the Greeks, the Margarita Tower had deliberately been placed in a spot which could otherwise have been used by anyone besieging Nicosia. Moreover, its construction coincided with the first attempts by the Cypriots to provide the city with proper town walls. The Margarita Tower had therefore been built to protect Nicosia against the Genoese and the Muslims, but as we shall see it was later used more as a prison, and eventually became a hated symbol of Peter I's regime.⁶⁴

From 1373 onwards, however, even the Margarita Tower was not thought to suffice against the Genoese threat. In 1376 Peter II ordered that it should be demolished, along with numerous other buildings which were in the way, and a new, stronger castle was begun. This fortress lay near the Paphos gate, in the west of the city, and must have been far larger than the Margarita Tower, because it even incorporated royal apartments. It was built by Genoese prisoners of war in the space of just ten months, using recycled masonry from the Margarita Tower and 'walls in the town which were of no use'. Its defences were subsequently strengthened by both James I and Janus (1398-1432), who 'made it a famous work'.⁶⁵

It is clear that the extensive fortifications built at

⁶⁴ See below, pp.405-6.

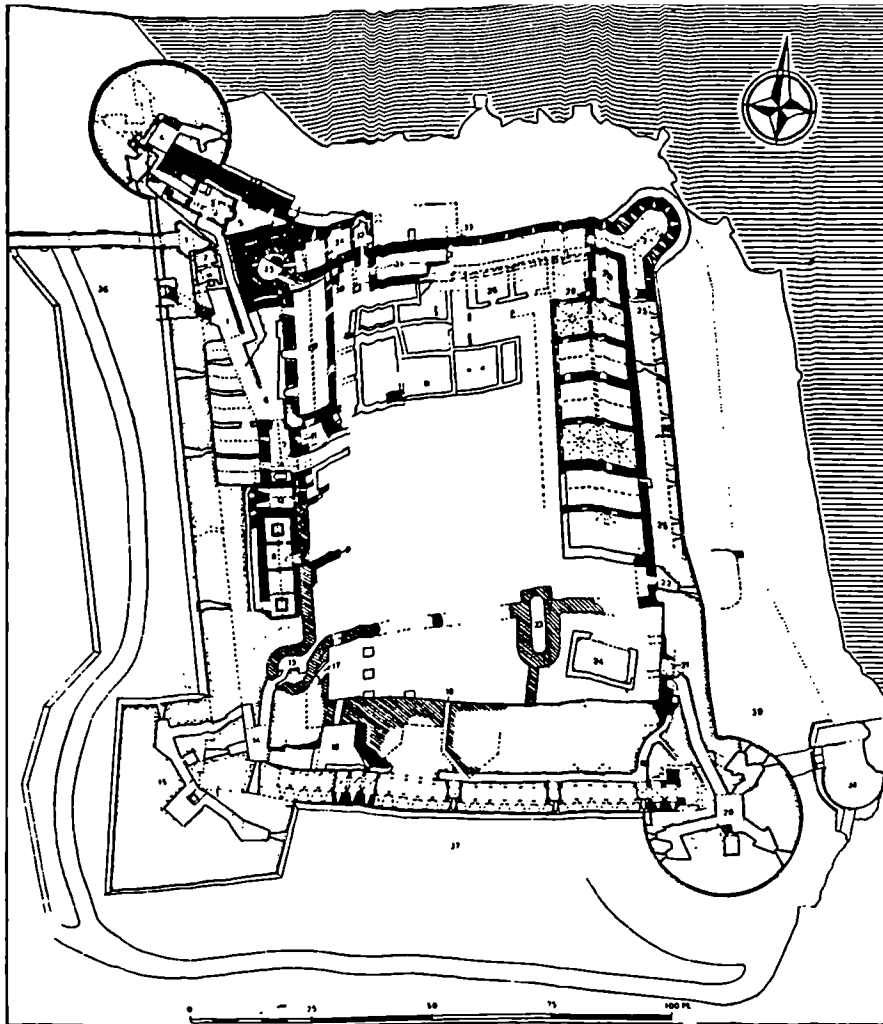
⁶⁵ Leontios Makhairas, Recital, c.594-97, pp.591-93 (quotes: c.594, p.591, c.597, p.593). See also Chronique d'Amadi, p.490; Strambaldi, Chronique, pp.250-51; Florio Bustron, Chronique, p.349; Enlart, L'art gothique, II, 519-20.

Nicosia between the 1360s and the beginning of the fifteenth century were intended to protect the city against the Genoese. These defences can therefore be compared with the late fourteenth century improvements made at Limassol and Paphos, which, as we have seen, served a very similar purpose. However, Nicosia is unusual in that it was the only major settlement on Cyprus whose defences were not upgraded immediately after 1291. The same could not be said for Kyrenia, Nicosia's principal port to the north, and one of the most important coastal settlements in Cyprus after Famagusta.

Kyrenia's role as the main lifeline between Nicosia and the outside world gave it great strategic importance, and it was defended by a 'very strong castle' even in Byzantine times. In 1191 this fortress was occupied by Guy of Lusignan, who assisted Richard I in the conquest of Cyprus, and its loss was such a blow to Isaac Comnenus that he surrendered to Richard soon afterwards.⁶⁶ During the next four centuries Kyrenia continued to be modified and strengthened by successive rulers of Cyprus, making it so strong that, 'despite having been attacked in so many wars, it was never breached or taken by storm'.⁶⁷ The castle, which is approximately rectangular in shape, stands on a large promontary, so that its four corner towers dominate the harbour and town to the west, another large bay to the east, the shore line to the north, and the coastal plain to the south. Beneath or inside the

⁶⁶ Itinerarium, pp.202-3; Roger of Howden, Chronica, III, 111; Ambroise, L'estoire de la guerre sainte, p.53; Gesta Regis, p.167. Guy of Lusignan allied himself with Richard I (overlord of the Lusignans in France) and took part in the conquest of Cyprus in order to strengthen his position against Conrad of Montferrat, his rival in the Holy Land. This explains why Richard later allowed Guy to buy Cyprus from the Templars. See Itinerarium, pp.195, 235-36, 317-51.

⁶⁷ Etienne de Lusignan, Description, folio 27.



10. Plan of Kyrenia castle

- | | |
|---|---|
| Hatched walls = Byzantine castle | 17— To South-West Bastion (lower level) |
| Black walls = Frankish reconstructions and additions | 18— To South Fighting Gallery. |
| Dotted walls = Venetian reconstructions and additions | 19— Venetian Gallery. |
| | 20— South-East Tower. |
| | 21— Gate to East Outwork. |
| | 22— Gun-Chamber (site of Frankish tower). |
| 1— Entrance passage. | 23— Horseshoe Tower. |
| 2— Guardroom. | 24— Water Tank. |
| 3— Byzantine Chapel. | 25— East Fighting Gallery. |
| 4— North-West Tower. | 26— North Range (foundations). |
| 5— West Ward (north end). | 27— North-East Tower. |
| 6— West Ward (centre). | 28— North-East Staircase. |
| 7— Gate-House (chapel over). | 29— Chamber with reconstructed floor. |
| 8— Undercroft with oubliettes. | 30— North-West Staircase. |
| 9— To West Range (upper storeys). | 31— Undercroft. |
| 10— Early Frankish Undercroft. | 32— Postern Gate. |
| 11— To Gate-House (middle storey). | 33— Site of Frankish Postern. |
| 12— Vaulted cell. | 34— Forebuilding. |
| 13— South-West Tower (Byzantine). | 35— Inner North-West Tower. |
| 14— West Ward, South End (Venetian gun-chamber). | 36— West Ditch. |
| 15— South-West Bastion. | 37— South Ditch. |
| 16— South Ward. | 38— Base of Tower. |
| | 39— Site of East Outwork. |

Fig.8. Kyrenia castle. From Megaw, 'Military Architecture' HC, IV, 198.

later medieval and Venetian defences are preserved the remains of the original Byzantine castle first occupied by Guy of Lusignan. This fortress seems to have had four relatively small, round and hollow corner towers attached to the main curtain walls, with an additional horse shoe tower half-way along the south curtain wall. Beyond this latter rampart, there stood another massively thick wall flanked by several pentagonal towers, which defended the castle's weak southern side.⁶⁸

This was probably the fortress Willbrand of Oldenburg saw in 1212, when he described Kyrenia as small but well fortified with a strong castle, and having a good harbour.⁶⁹ The archaeological evidence suggests that some crusader modifications may already have been carried out on the castle by this date, although as at Famagusta, the most important period of reconstruction and enlargement dates from the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. During this period the original Byzantine north and east curtain walls were replaced by new defences built with ashlar masonry similar to that used in thirteenth century Syria. These structures incorporated two floors of shooting galleries, with a rampart above, whose crenellated parapet was still perfectly preserved when Enlart saw it around a century ago.⁷⁰ To the south, the Franks retained some of the Byzantine fortifications, but encased them with a further curtain wall and shooting gallery now destroyed by later Venetian constructions. There are further traces of Frankish structures along the west curtain of the castle, including the original 'L' shaped gateway, which was built using massive blocks of masonry and was shielded by the castle's enormous north

⁶⁸ Megaw, 'Military Architecture', pp.199-203.

⁶⁹ Willbrand of Oldenburg, Itinerarium, p.228.

⁷⁰ Megaw, 'Military Architecture', pp.200-203; Enlart, L'art gothique, II, 573, and fig.357.

west corner tower. This tower also had a postern gate facing the sea, and originally had a barbican attached to it which defended the main gate against potential attacks from the town.⁷¹

These alterations represent the last major building phase at Kyrenia before the sixteenth century, although minor repairs were no doubt carried out from time to time, especially around the time of the Genoese invasion in 1373. However, during the Venetian domination of Cyprus, Kyrenia's defences were altered and brought up to date. As a result, most of the Frankish structures along the castle's south and west sides were destroyed, and new ramparts were added, including a vast bastion at the south west corner of the site.⁷²

This brief description of the castle's defences makes it clear that Kyrenia differed from the other strongholds mentioned so far, in that it was exceptionally strong even at the beginning of the crusader period. Consequently, it could resist major invasion forces as well as smaller piratical raids. This strength was first highlighted during the civil war between Frederick II and the Ibelins. In 1229, the Ibelin faction managed to defeat the emperor's five baillis near Nicosia and then besieged the imperialists at Kantara, St.Hilarion and Kyrenia. However, rather than trying to storm Kyrenia, John of Ibelin asked Philip of Novara to negotiate a deal whereby the Lombard garrison would surrender if they had not been relieved by a specified date. This was in fact what happened, illustrating that sieges could sometimes be terminated

⁷¹ Enlart, L'art gothique, II, 573-75; Megaw, 'Military Architecture', pp.202-3.

⁷² Megaw, 'Military Architecture', p.202; Enlart, L'art gothique, II, 574-75, 577.

through negotiations rather than warfare.⁷³

Almost three years later, however, when John of Ibelin's preoccupation with the siege of Beirut enabled the Lombards to regain control on Cyprus, Kyrenia was again garrisoned by imperialist troops.⁷⁴ Consequently, after the Lombard defeat at the battle of Agridi, those imperialists not already killed or captured sought their way to Kyrenia, and although they only numbered fifty knights and 1,000 other troops, they managed to hold out there for an entire year. During this period the Ibelins and their Genoese allies blockaded Kyrenia by land and sea, and attacked it with numerous catapults and siege engines, many of which were set alight in the bitter hand to hand fighting.⁷⁵

The siege of 1232-33 was the last major attack on Kyrenia before the Genoese invasion of Cyprus. As we have seen, the constable of the kingdom, James of Lusignan, had gone to Kyrenia shortly before the fall of Nicosia in November 1373. Thereafter James's troops, who were mainly composed of Bulgarian mercenaries, managed to prevent their enemies from advancing north until January 1374, when the Genoese finally broke through the mountain passes connecting Nicosia with the coast. As a result, Kyrenia itself came under siege, and its 'bridges were raised and the gates

⁷³ Florio Bustron, Chronique, p.78; Chronique d'Amadi, p.143; Gestes, p.690; Philip of Novara, The Wars of Frederick II, p.103.

⁷⁴ Philip of Novara, The Wars of Frederick II, pp.136, 141; Gestes, p.707; Chronique d'Amadi, p.158; Eracles, II, 399; Florio Bustron, Chronique, p.91.

⁷⁵ Florio Bustron, Chronique, pp.98-105; Chronique d'Amadi, pp.173-82; Philip of Novara, The Wars of Frederick II, pp.156-68; Gestes, pp.718-24. See also Eracles, II, 401-2.

nailed up'.⁷⁶

There now followed several weeks of intense fighting, which, on the whole, proved more costly for the Genoese. This was because the constable's men were able to bombard or set fire to the attackers' catapults and siege engines, in the same way that the Lombards had done in 1232. At one point they also let down one of the drawbridges, which was counterpoised in such a way that when it was released anyone standing on it would fall into the castle ditch. This fooled several Genoese soldiers, who ended up in the moat and were killed.⁷⁷

These setbacks forced the Genoese to call off the attack, but subsequent negotiations led to nothing, and the siege was soon resumed. However, once again the defenders were able to repel even the most elaborate Genoese siege engines, including a vast wooden platform lashed between two galleys, which was so tall that it could be used to fire into the castle from off shore. As a result, most of the Genoese withdrew to Nicosia, and the two sides agreed to a ceasefire which effectively ended the siege in mid-March.⁷⁸

Hence Kyrenia was extremely important in terms of national as well as local defence, and there can be little doubt that their failure to capture it in 1374 prevented the

⁷⁶ Leontios Makhairas, Recital, c.464-70, pp.449-55 (quote: c.470, p.453); Florio Bustron, Chronique, p.317; Chronique d'Amadi, p.460; Strambaldi, Chronique, pp.192-94.

⁷⁷ Leontios Makhairas, Recital, c.470-81, pp.453-65; Strambaldi, Chronique, pp.194-99; Chronique d'Amadi, pp.460-62; Florio Bustron, Chronique, pp.317-19.

⁷⁸ Florio Bustron, Chronique, pp.317-25; Leontios Makhairas, Recital, c.481-503, pp.465-91; Chronique d'Amadi, pp.462-67; Strambaldi, Chronique, pp.199-209, 217.

Genoese from conquering all of Cyprus. Moreover, Kyrenia differed from neighbouring castles in that the town and harbour next to it may already have been fortified as early as 1212. Enlart agreed with this theory, quoting Willbrand of Oldenburg's statement that Kyrenia was a 'small but fortified town' as proof that its walls were built between 1192 and 1212.⁷⁹ However, Hill rejected this, and believed that these defences were erected from the early fourteenth century onwards, even though his conclusion ignores Willbrand of Oldenburg's description, as well as further evidence that during the siege of 1232 John of Ibelin's men had to storm the town, and encountered a lot of resistance there.⁸⁰

The archaeological evidence at Kyrenia is slim, because much of the town wall was later rebuilt by the Venetians, but two towers in particular may contain some fourteenth or even thirteenth century masonry. One placed roughly half way along the town's west curtain is similar in style to Hospitaller fortifications on Rhodes (constructed from 1309 onwards), whilst the other, located where the south and west curtains meet, may originally have been built in the thirteenth century.⁸¹ It is therefore possible to conclude that both Hill and Enlart were correct, for the Byzantine town walls at Kyrenia may have been well preserved enough to make it worth the Franks' while to repair and maintain them from an early date, whereas the events of 1291 inspired a brand new construction phase continuing into the fourteenth century. Beyond defending the town of Kyrenia, the events of 1232 also imply that such fortifications acted as an outer line of defence for

⁷⁹ Willbrand of Oldenburg, Itinerarium, p.228; Enlart, L'art gothique, II, p.559.

⁸⁰ Florio Bustron, Chronique, p.101; Hill, History of Cyprus, II, 20.

⁸¹ Enlart, L'art gothique, II, 571-72.

the castle itself. This is confirmed by references to an attack on the harbour chain during the spring of 1374, which suggests that the Genoese failed to capture the town during their siege of Kyrenia.⁸²

At any rate, it is clear that Kyrenia's importance throughout this period meant that it was fortified in a manner more akin to castles on the mainland than the rest of Cyprus. It is therefore perhaps more logical to place Kyrenia in the same category as Buffavento, St.Hilarion and Kantara, for although it was not a mountain castle, its strength and strategic value meant that the Lusignan kings relied on it to protect the entire kingdom of Cyprus. St.Hilarion in particular played a very similar role to that of Kyrenia, because anyone hoping to control Cyprus permanently needed to control this extremely strong fortress as well.

St.Hilarion derived almost all its strength from its location. It is situated on a mountain peak isolated from the rest of the Kyrenia mountain range by deep valleys, one of which carries the road between Kyrenia and Nicosia. The strategic value of the castle therefore lay in the ability of its garrison to observe any enemy ships at sea, or hostile forces moving south from the coastal plain around Kyrenia towards Nicosia inland. Its defences were divided into three baileys along the east slope of the site, while the north, west and south sides were all so steep that they required very few man made fortifications. The lower and middle baileys contained various service buildings and residential quarters, most of which in fact date from the Byzantine period. Beyond these structures a steep path gave access to the upper bailey, which housed further royal apartments, including a thirteenth century

⁸² Strambaldi, Chronique, p.205; Leontios Makhairas, Recital, c.495, p.483.

hall whose appearance and function will be discussed in more detail below.⁸³ To the east of and even higher than the upper bailey, two towers also occupied the actual ridge of the mountain top itself, and one of these in particular probably acted as a final refuge for the castle garrison.⁸⁴

This brief description of St.Hilarion's location and defences show that like Kyrenia, it was intended to be strong enough to withstand even the most determined attackers. Both the archaeological and historical evidence suggests that this was already the case in Byzantine times. The curtain wall of the lower bailey, the gateway to the middle ward and numerous other structures in the castle are all Byzantine, or at least have Byzantine foundations, proving that from 1191 onwards the Franks only modified and repaired an already very old fortress. (Etienne de Lusignan says it was built at the time of 'the gods and the pagans',⁸⁵).

This is also confirmed by the events of 1191, during Richard I's conquest of Cyprus. As the emperor Isaac Comnenus fled in the face of Richard's army, the latter besieged St.Hilarion for several days, bombarding the castle with rocks until its garrison surrendered. Soon after he also occupied the nearby castle of Buffavento, and the loss of these two strongholds contributed to Isaac's subsequent surrender. It is, however, significant that Richard did not actually capture St.Hilarion by storm, and that its defenders probably gave up because

⁸³ See below, pp.403-4.

⁸⁴ Florio Bustron, Chronique, p.24; Enlart, L'art gothique, II, 583-95; Megaw, 'Military Architecture', p.204; Rey, Etude, pp.239-48.

⁸⁵ Etienne de Lusignan, Description, folio 36; Megaw, 'Military Architecture', p.204.

their loyalty to the emperor was suspect in the first place.⁸⁶

St.Hilarion is next mentioned by the historical sources in 1228, when, as we have seen, John of Ibelin fled to the castle and had it well stocked with supplies in expectation of an imminent attack by Frederick II. However, the emperor's conciliatory stance during this crisis, which persuaded John to abandon St.Hilarion, may imply that Frederick was reluctant to commit himself to a lengthy siege of such a powerful castle.⁸⁷ The kind of siege which Frederick II had feared actually occurred in 1229, although this time his supporters were inside, not outside, St.Hilarion, following their defeat near Nicosia. Three of Frederick's five baillis (Aimery Barlais, Amaury de Bethsan and Hugh de Gibelet) retreated to the castle, where they subsequently held out for about ten months. During most of that time John of Ibelin personally took charge of the siege, launched several unsuccessful attacks against the castle gates, and suffered heavy casualties in the process. But despite these setbacks, the Ibelins were still able to prevent any supplies from reaching the besieged garrison, whose lack of food got so bad that in the spring of 1229 they even had to eat a donkey for their Easter feast! Later this problem was temporarily solved by a surprise raid on the Ibelins' camp and food supplies, although this attack also had the effect of strengthening the Ibelins' resolve to capture the castle and to improve their blockade around it, eventually causing the garrison

⁸⁶ Itinerarium, p.202; Ambroise, L'estoire de la guerre sainte, pp.54-55; Vinsauf, 'Itinerary of Richard I', p.14, and see above, pp.16-18.

⁸⁷ Gestes, pp.682-83; Chronique d'Amadi, pp.131-32; Florio Bustron, Chronique, pp.68-70; Philip of Novara, The Wars of Frederick II, pp.82-85.

to surrender.⁸⁸

Two years later, when the Lombards had managed to regain control over Cyprus, St.Hilarion was again besieged, although this time it provided shelter for a small number of Ibelin supporters, including king Henry's sisters. But luckily for the garrison, which was short of troops and provisions, the castle was relieved relatively quickly this time, following the Lombard defeat at Agridi on the fifteenth of June, 1232.⁸⁹

The final siege of 1232 also turned out to be the last attack on St.Hilarion before it was demolished by the Venetians early in the sixteenth century.⁹⁰ During the Genoese invasion, the fortress was held by Peter II's uncle, John of Antioch. John's garrison, composed primarily of Bulgarian mercenaries, probably shared the responsibility of guarding the pass of St.Hilarion with other Bulgarian troops from Kyrenia. This is implied by the fact that when the Genoese eventually broke through the pass in January 1374, many of the defeated Bulgarians retreated back to St.Hilarion.⁹¹ The fact that the previous autumn James of Lusignan had provided supplies for both Kyrenia and St.Hilarion also suggests that these two fortresses were putting up a co-ordinated defence against the Genoese.⁹²

⁸⁸ Philip of Novara, The Wars of Frederick II, pp.102-10; Gestes, pp.684-94; Chronique d'Amadi, pp.143-46; Florio Bustron, Chronique, pp.78-79.

⁸⁹ Florio Bustron, Chronique, p.91; Philip of Novara, The Wars of Frederick II, p.142.

⁹⁰ Etienne de Lusignan, Description, folio 36.

⁹¹ Leontios Makhairas, Recital, c.469, p.453; Strambaldi, Chronique, p.193.

⁹² Strambaldi, Chronique, p.184. See also Leontios Makhairas, Recital, c.447, p.431.

However, the Genoese never actually made a direct assault on St.Hilarion, and like Frederick II before them, they were probably reluctant to do so because of the castle's strength and inaccessible location. Indeed, the last mention of St.Hilarion during this period records a rather curious incident. In the spring of 1374, John of Antioch became convinced that his Bulgarian mercenaries were plotting to kill him, because they had been instructed to do so by queen Eleanor, Peter I's widow, who suspected that John had been responsible for her husband's murder. As a result, John had the Bulgarians thrown from the highest point of the castle, and only one of them is said to have survived this vicious punishment. This macabre incident may well be fictitious, but it does at least illustrate the sheer height and inaccessibility of St.Hilarion!⁹³

St.Hilarion differed from Kyrenia in that it underwent relatively few alterations during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and its defences were merely repaired from time to time. This suggests that the Byzantine castle was still in good shape in 1191, and that the fortifications erected by the Greeks were more than adequate for the Franks, even after the events of 1291 and 1373-4. But in terms of function Kyrenia and St.Hilarion were almost the same, because both these strongholds were intended to stop invaders as well as mere raiders. Indeed, St.Hilarion's isolated location, high up on a mountain summit and far from any centres of population, clearly illustrates that this fortress had little to do with the defence of its immediate locality, in the way that the castles of Paphos and Limassol did.

⁹³ Leontios Makhairas, Recital, c.552, pp.547-49; Chronique d'Amadi, pp.477-78; Strambaldi, Chronique, pp.232-33; Florio Bustron, Chronique, p.338, and see above, pp.20-22.

Much the same can be said about the castles of Kantara and Buffavento. Buffavento is situated to the east of St.Hilarion, on the other side of the mountain pass linking Kyrenia and Nicosia, and its defensive strength again lay in its location on a mountain top. Indeed, some of this mountain's slopes were so steep that it did not even have complete curtain walls around its summit. The castle consisted of a lower and an upper bailey, which were originally linked by a narrow staircase later destroyed by the Venetians when they dismantled Buffavento in the sixteenth century. The lower bailey was composed of a series of buildings constructed on a long, narrow plateau overlooking the interior of the island to the south. These structures were probably originally used as store rooms and living quarters for the castle's garrison. They were dominated by the walls of the upper bailey, located roughly 25 metres higher up on the mountain summit itself. The buildings of the upper bailey, like those at St.Hilarion, provided a final refuge for the castle garrison in case of trouble, although in peace time they probably served as royal apartments. To the west of these buildings a tower also stood on a remote outcrop, which was separated from the rest of the site by a deep cleft in the rock, and could only be reached via a wooden drawbridge. This tower must have acted as a keep, and would have been a good spot from which to observe the surrounding countryside.⁹⁴ Despite later repairs during the crusader period, all these structures were probably Byzantine.⁹⁵

⁹⁴ Etienne de Lusignan, Description, folio 36; Florio Bustron, Chronique, pp.23-24; Enlart, L'art gothique, II, 600-5; Megaw, 'Military Architecture', pp.205-6; Rey, Etude, p.249.

⁹⁵ Rey, Etude, p.250.

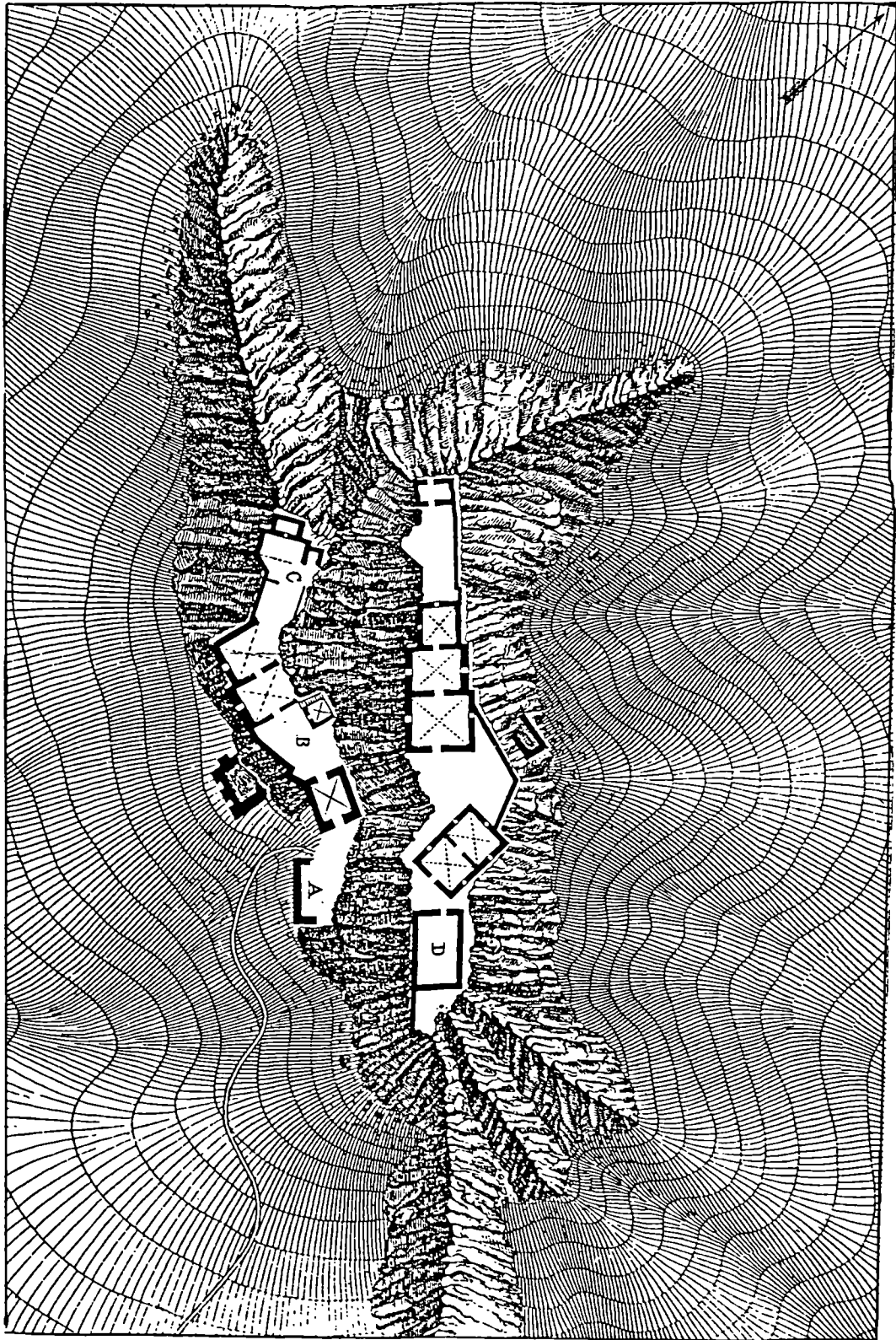


Fig.9. The castle of Buffavento, showing the inaccessibility of the site. From Rey, *Etude*, plate 24.

The history of Buffavento is also similar to that of St.Hilarion. In 1191 it was surrendered to Richard I, and during the spring of 1232 it was besieged by Lombard troops until the battle of Agridi. During this siege it was commanded by Eschive de Montbéliard, wife of John of Ibelin's son Balian, who had fled to the castle from Nicosia disguised as a minor brother of the Hospitaller Order.⁹⁶ Like St.Hilarion, Buffavento also escaped the worst of the fighting during the Genoese invasion. However, as soon as a truce had been established in the spring of 1374, its castellan immediately asked the king for assistance, suggesting that although Buffavento had not been attacked directly, its defenders had still *been* afraid to leave their stronghold and were consequently running short of food.⁹⁷

Kantara, the third of the great mountain fortresses, lies considerably to the east of St.Hilarion and Buffavento. It is also located on a less inaccessible site, and consequently relied more on man made defences than either of its neighbours. The castle was composed of a large, irregularly shaped bailey, whose curtain wall followed the edge of the summit. Some fortifications overlooked the steep cliffs to the north and west, but the main defences were located to the south and south-east, where it was relatively easy to approach the castle. The main entrance was also situated on this side, and consisted of two successive gateways, each flanked by a pair of horse shoe towers. Numerous buildings constructed against the inner

⁹⁶ 1191: Itinerarium, p.202; Richard of Devizes, Cronicon, p.38. Vinsauf; 'Itinerary of Richard I', p.14; Ambroise, L'estoire de la guerre sainte, col.54-55. 1232: Philip of Novara, The Wars of Frederick II, p.142; Florio Bustron, Chronique, p.91; Chronique d'Amadi, pp.162-63; Gestes, p.710.

⁹⁷ Strambaldi, Chronique, p.217; Leontios Makhairas, Recital, c.521, p.511.

face of the castle's curtain wall, as well as the two towers of the inner gateway, were all provided with arrow slits, so that the entire south side of the castle could be protected by flanking fire. Inside Kantara's ramparts there also stood a small, rectangular tower equipped with its own arrowslits and drawbridge. This building can be compared with the towers already mentioned at St.Hilarion and Buffavento, both of which acted as lookout posts and refuge sites.⁹⁸

Although Kantara was not as inaccessible as St.Hilarion or Buffavento, it too could hold out for months if necessary. This was not the case in 1191, when Isaac Comnenus surrendered the castle to Richard I as soon as St.Hilarion and Buffavento had given up.⁹⁹ But between 1229 and 1230 the castle held out for about ten months against a force commanded by the pro-Ibelin knight, Anceau de Brie. During this siege, Anceau de Brie constructed a large trebuchet, which was used to bombard the Lombard garrison and presumably stood on the more accessible south side of the castle. According to Philip of Novara, however, it 'battered down nearly all the walls, but the rock was so strong that it could not be scaled'. This clearly indicates that even on its supposedly weak side, Kantara's combined natural and man made defences made it virtually impregnable. Consequently, starvation and the realization that Frederick II would not send any reinforcements, rather than Ibelin bombardment, finally caused Kantara to surrender in the spring of 1230.¹⁰⁰ Three years later, the

⁹⁸ Etienne de Lusignan, Description, folio 35; Florio Bustron, Chronique, p.23; Enlart, L'art gothique, II, 650-54; Megaw, 'Military Architecture', p.205.

⁹⁹ Itinerarium, p.262; Richard of Devizes, Cronicon, p.38; Roger of Howden, Chronica, III, 111.

¹⁰⁰ Florio Bustron, Chronique, p.79; Gestes, pp.690-95; Chronique d'Amadi, pp.143-45; Philip of Novara, The Wars of Frederick II, pp.103-5, 107-10.

Lombard garrison at Kantara surrendered to Henry II without a fight, and the castle witnessed no further warfare during the rest of the crusader period.¹⁰¹

Like the other mountain strongholds, Kantara played a relatively small role during the Genoese attempt to conquer Cyprus. John of Antioch sheltered here briefly in 1373, after he had managed to escape from Famagusta, where Peter II and several nobles were already being held captive by the Genoese. As we have seen, John subsequently moved to St.Hilarion, but Kantara still remained under Cypriot control throughout the Genoese campaign.¹⁰² Moreover, during the ensuing decades, Kantara's eastern location gave it great strategic importance, because its garrison could observe the Genoese at Famagusta, and would have early warning of any hostile forces moving inland across the coastal plain towards Nicosia. As a result, James I repaired and strengthened Kantara's walls during the 1380s and 90s, so that the present remains of the castle contain far more fourteenth century structures than either Buffavento or St.Hilarion. Etienne of Lusignan proudly observed that these improvements ensured that the Genoese never captured Kantara, perhaps implying that they at least considered attacking the fortress between 1373 and 1464.¹⁰³

It has already been mentioned that James I was also responsible for other repairs and alterations at Limassol, Paphos and Nicosia. In addition, he constructed the castle

¹⁰¹ Philip of Novara, The Wars of Frederick II, p.148; Chronique d'Amadi, p.166; Gestes, p.713; Florio Bustron, Chronique, p.93.

¹⁰² Florio Bustron, Chronique, pp.310-11; Chronique d'Amadi, p.453; Strambaldi, Chronique, p.171; Leontios Makhairas, Recital, c.419, pp.399-401, c.425, p.405.

¹⁰³ Etienne de Lusignan, Description, folio 35; Enlart, L'art gothique, II, 649.

of Sigouri, on the coastal plain near Famagusta. Sigouri was a classic example of a castrum, and consisted of an almost square enclosure defended by a curtain wall and four small corner towers. A deep, water filled moat surrounded the whole structure, which could only be reached via a drawbridge.¹⁰⁴ Further west, he also rebuilt La Cava, a royal residence close to Nicosia, which overlooked the main route to Larnaca, and thence to Famagusta. All that remains of La Cava are the ruins of two massive towers linked by a curtain wall; an arrangement which is strongly reminiscent of the thirteenth century sea castle at Sidon.¹⁰⁵ Clearly, the principal function of both this stronghold and Sigouri was to contain the Genoese at Famagusta, and deter them from making a new attempt to conquer all of Cyprus. Moreover, even if the Genoese did make an attack inland, Sigouri in particular could shelter people living nearby, thereby saving lives and protecting the local economy. Offensively, these castles also provided good bases from which to attack Famagusta, in the same way that Latin troops blocked the citadel of Corinth off with temporary forts during the Frankish conquest of Greece.¹⁰⁶ Between them, Kantara, Sigouri, La Cava and Nicosia therefore formed a defensive barrier which protected the interior and minimized the threat posed by Famagusta. Limassol and Paphos, as well as Kyrenia to the north, to some extent acted as a continuation of this barrier around the coast, and by improving their defences James I ensured that these places were also protected against future Genoese

¹⁰⁴ Etienne de Lusignan, Description, folio 35; Chronique d'Amadi, p.495; Florio Bustron, Chronique, pp.24, 352.

¹⁰⁵ Florio Bustron, Chronique, p.352; Etienne de Lusignan, Description, folio 36; Chronique d'Amadi, p.495; Megaw, 'Military Architecture', p.204. For Sidon's sea castle, see above, p.50.

¹⁰⁶ Corinth: see below, p.354.

incursions.

Having described the principal strongpoints on Cyprus individually, it is now possible to make a few overall conclusions about their design and function. As we have seen, almost all castles on Cyprus either date from the Byzantine era, the beginnings of the Lusignan dynasty, the two decades following the fall of Acre, or the period of growing Genoese hostility during the fourteenth century. Architecturally, these four distinct phases are reflected in the changing appearance of Cypriot fortifications. Hence the remote Byzantine castles of St.Hilarion, Buffavento and Kantara can be compared with similar structures inherited by the Franks and Armenians in Greece and Cilicia, including Arcadia and Servantikar.¹⁰⁷ The isolated towers subsequently constructed at Limassol, Famagusta, Nicosia and (perhaps) Paphos are also very similar to those built around the Aegean after the Fourth Crusade, which provided shelter for the outnumbered Latin conquerors of the Byzantine empire.¹⁰⁸ Finally, the extensive new defences erected after 1291, particularly at Famagusta, Kyrenia and Nicosia, are more comparable with the far larger castles and city walls built in the Holy Land before the fall of Acre.¹⁰⁹ However, the relatively simple design of Sigouri, which was virtually identical to some twelfth century crusader strongholds even though it was completed after 1374, again confirms that Frankish military architecture rarely rejected older designs as soon as new innovations had been discovered. Sigouri also disproves Marshall's statement that 'the castrum form of

¹⁰⁷ Arcadia: see below, pp.304-5. Servantikar: see below, pp.234-36.

¹⁰⁸ See below, pp.319-22.

¹⁰⁹ See above, pp.62-64.

the castle was exclusive to the twelfth century.¹¹⁰

Militarily, the defensive functions of Cypriot fortifications also changed relatively little between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries, particularly with regard to internal security. The need to keep the Greek population in check, for example, does not appear to have declined after the initial rebellion of 1192. In 1359, the papal legate Peter Thomas attempted to convert Orthodox Greeks at Nicosia to catholicism, but the meeting ended in a riot, with many locals shouting 'death to the legate!' In the end, Peter Thomas's life was only saved by the swift intervention of John of Antioch and his troops.¹¹¹ At about the same time the Venetians also warned Peter I that Greeks rebelling on Crete could try to contact their co-religionists and supporters on Cyprus.¹¹² Although it falls outside the time limits of this chapter, reference should also be made to a popular uprising which occurred in the wake of the Egyptian invasion of Cyprus in 1426. Once the Egyptians had gone back to the mainland, taking king Janus with them and leaving Cyprus in a state of anarchy, 'many of the poor folk in their dwellings rose in rebellion and pillaged the Christians, and also killed many of them...and at Lefkosia (Nicosia) they set up king Alexis, and all the peasants submitted to his rule'.¹¹³

¹¹⁰ Marshall, Warfare in the Latin East, p.100, and see above, pp.70-71.

¹¹¹ Philip of Mézières, The Life of St. Peter Thomas, pp.92-93. See also Chronique d'Amadi, pp.409-10; Strambaldi, Chronique, p.39; Florio Bustron, Chronique, p.258; Leontios Makhairas, Recital, c.101, pp.89-91. For more details on the underlying tensions between the Greek and Latin Churches, see J. Gill, 'The Tribulation of the Greek Church in Cyprus, 1196-c.1280', BZ, V (1977), 73-93.

¹¹² Mas Latrie, Histoire, III, 742.

¹¹³ Leontios Makhairas, Recital, c.696-97, pp.673-75 (quote: c.696, p.673). See also Florio Bustron, Chronique, p.369; Strambaldi, Chronique, pp.284-85; Chronique d'Amadi, p.513.

These events bear a remarkable resemblance to an incident which occurred a few months before the Nicosian uprising against the Templars, when one of Isaac Comnenus's relatives had been declared emperor by a Greek mob, and had eventually been hanged by Richard I's representatives on Cyprus.¹¹⁴ They also show that the Franks still needed castles to suppress the Greeks and protect themselves against them, even 230 years after Richard I's invasion.

The role of castles during the various disputes between fellow westerners also changed remarkably little. Both Richard I and the Templars had relied on Cyprus's castles to maintain control over the Greeks in the 1190s. In 1228 Frederick II used the same method to suppress the Ibelins. As we have seen, before leaving the east in 1229 he also made sure that all the strongholds on Cyprus were garrisoned by his own troops and supporters, and were well provided with supplies.¹¹⁵ In 1306, Amaury of Tyre also 'sent castellans and bailies to all the towns and castles of the kingdom of Cyprus' to prevent any of them falling into the hands of Henry II's followers.¹¹⁶

The subsequent downfall of Amaury's supporters further illustrates how important it was for anyone wishing to control Cyprus to hold its fortresses. Almost as soon as Amaury had been murdered in 1310, the people of Paphos and Limassol declared their support for Henry II. This may not have been a disastrous blow for Amaury's camp, because neither of these places was particularly well fortified.

¹¹⁴ Gesta Regis, pp.172-73; Roger of Howden, Chronica, III, 116.

¹¹⁵ Eracles, II, 369, 376; Philip of Novara, The Wars of Frederick II, pp.85, 88-94; Chronique d'Amadi, pp.131-34; Florio Bustron, Chronique, pp.68-73.

¹¹⁶ Chronique d'Amadi, p.250. See also Leontios Makharias, Recital, c.54, p.53; Florio Bustron, Chronique, p.139.

However, at about the same time the garrisons of both Kyrenia and Famagusta came out in favour of the king. At Famagusta the recently constructed town walls were manned by royalists, and all the city gates were walled up. As we have seen, the Franks had recently also constructed massive new defences at Kyrenia, and so Amaury's supporters suddenly found themselves isolated at Nicosia, with little chance of retaking either of these extremely well defended strongholds. Consequently Henry II and many of his followers, who had been exiled to Armenia by Amaury, were able to return to Famagusta unhindered, and the usurpers were forced to surrender soon afterwards.¹¹⁷

Similar circumstances brought about the downfall of Frederick II's supporters almost a century earlier. The Lombards had initially lost control over Cyprus in the spring of 1230, not so much because they were defeated in battle, but because they were forced to surrender both Kantara and St.Hilarion to the Ibelins after lengthy sieges.¹¹⁸ Two years later, they were able to regain a toe-hold on Cyprus by occupying Kyrenia and Kantara, but the Lombards' position remained weak as long as they could not secure Buffavento and St.Hilarion. To make matters worse, by the time the Ibelins landed at Famagusta in the spring of 1232, many Lombard troops were tied down at the siege of St.Hilarion. Consequently, the Lombards were already under strength when they faced the Ibelins at the battle of Agridi. In the wake of the battle, the imperialists had no choice but to retreat to Kyrenia, leaving their garrison at Kantara completely cut off and unable to do anything but surrender. Once it became apparent that the Lombards at Kyrenia were not going to

¹¹⁷ Florio Bustron, Chronique, pp.199-201, 207; Chronique d'Amadi, pp.335-36, 343-44. Famagusta: see above, p.179. Kyrenia: see above, pp.198-99.

¹¹⁸ See above, pp.205-6, 210.

receive any more help from Frederick II, they were forced to do the same.¹¹⁹

Hence the Lombards' defeat resulted from their inability to hold on to all the most powerful strongholds on Cyprus. Had they defended the mountain castles successfully in 1230, or been able to reoccupy St.Hilarion and Buffavento in 1232, their troops would not have been so overstretched, nor would they have had to fight the Ibelins on several fronts. Moreover, the Ibelins themselves would have been confronted with the daunting task of dislodging the Lombards from several strongholds, and not just Kyrenia. It should also be remembered that their recapture of Kyrenia in 1233 was particularly important to the Ibelins, because of its coastal location. Unlike the mountain castles, Kyrenia could be reinforced by sea, and could therefore act as a potential bridgehead for anyone wishing to invade Cyprus. Hence it was particularly important that this fortress remained in royal hands.

This last point can also be illustrated by looking at the events of 1373 and 1374. Once the Genoese had established themselves at Famagusta, they occupied Nicosia relatively easily. But Nicosia had very little strategic value, because it was poorly defended and lay in a valley surrounded by higher ground. Moreover, the Genoese knew that 'if they did not have the castle of Kyrenia, they would not be able to hold Nicosia, or the rest of the island', and so they concentrated all their efforts on trying to take this fortress during the spring of 1374.¹²⁰ Had the Genoese captured Kyrenia, they would have had a

¹¹⁹ See above, pp.19-20, 200, 210.

¹²⁰ Chronique d'Amadi, p.454. See also Florio Bustron, Chronique, p.312; Leontios Makhairas, Recital, c.425, p.405.

perfect new coastal base, which could be supplied by sea and could be used to make further conquests inland. In short, Kyrenia would have become a second Famagusta, which, as we have seen, was so well defended that the Cypriots spent almost a century trying to get it back. (It is also interesting to note that by preventing the Genoese from taking Kyrenia, James and John of Lusignan, who acted as castellans of Kyrenia and St.Hilarion respectively, thwarted the ambitions of their great rival Eleanor of Aragon. Thus the events of 1373-74 provide us with further evidence of the ways in which these castles could prevent internal conflicts as well as external invasions.¹²¹)

Kyrenia's location in relation to the three mountain castles also gave it great strategic importance. Kyrenia, St.Hilarion, Buffavento and Kantara were all intervisible, whilst Kantara could communicate with Famagusta, and St.Hilarion with Nicosia. Buffavento lay at the heart of this network, and here 'they kept a look out every night, and as soon as they spotted ships at sea, they would signal with fire or torches to the town of Nicosia and the castle of Kyrenia'.¹²² After 1291, this system could warn the inhabitants of Cyprus against an approaching Muslim fleet. From 1373 onwards, it was also used to keep an eye on the Genoese at Famagusta. It could equally well be used to warn people in the countryside and along the coast about imminent pirate attacks. As we have seen, the intervisibility between Kyrenia and St.Hilarion also enabled their garrisons to organize a co-ordinated defence against the Genoese in 1374.¹²³

The three mountain castles, Kyrenia, and, once it had been

¹²¹ See above, pp.20-22.

¹²² Etienne de Lusignan, Description, folio 35.

¹²³ See above, p.206.

fortified, Famagusta, were therefore the most important strongholds in Cyprus. Although they could not prevent rebels or invaders from holding the countryside, these places enabled the Lusignan kings to survive the conflicts of 1228-33 and 1306-10, as well as the Genoese invasion of 1373-74. Consequently, they formed the corner stone of Lusignan power, and it is hardly surprising that successive rulers of Cyprus were so keen to keep them under royal control. These strongholds must also have acted as a further deterrent against any uprisings by the Greeks, although the isolated location of the mountain castles in particular shows that they had far more to do with national than local defence.

As has been mentioned, the final defensive role of castles on Cyprus was to protect the island's inhabitants against pirates and other seaborne raiders. Many references have already been made to attacks of this kind, but one last example can be given to illustrate the ways in which coastal fortifications contributed to the overall security of the island: in 1368, two pirate galleys from Morocco were spotted approaching Famagusta. The garrison of the chain tower was therefore informed, and the chain raised across the harbour to stop the galleys from gaining access. The garrison then told the admiral, who prepared two ships for a counter-attack. These measures were observed by the pirates, who quickly lost courage and withdrew.¹²⁴

Offensively, it should also be noted that Cypriot fortifications contributed toward the war against the Muslims. Before Famagusta became the most important harbour on Cyprus, Limassol twice served as a temporary base for western crusaders. In 1228 Frederick II landed

¹²⁴ Leontios Makhairas, Recital, c.221, p.203.

here, and probably resided in the castle for a while before sailing to Acre.¹²⁵ Two decades later Louis IX also stayed at Limassol during the winter of 1248-49, and used the town as a supply depot for his invasion of Egypt. Indeed, Joinville was greatly impressed by the vast storerooms, granaries and wine cellars which the king relied on to feed his troops and their horses.¹²⁶ As we have seen, Limassol also acted as a stopping off point for merchants bringing supplies to Franks in Egypt during the Fifth Crusade, and the Muslims tried to halt this process by sacking the town. It may be that Baybars's failed attack on Limassol in 1271 represented a similar attempt to prevent troops and provisions from reaching the Lord Edward's crusade at Acre. These incidents suggest that the coastal strongholds built at Limassol, Famagusta and Paphos during the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries were also designed to act as safe bases for crusaders on their way to the Holy Land or Egypt.¹²⁷

However, from 1291 onwards Cyprus became the final destination, rather than a mere stopping off point, for crusaders from the west. At this time Famagusta also rapidly superseded Limassol as the largest naval and trading centre on Cyprus, and it therefore became the starting point for numerous seaborne raids against the mainland during the fourteenth century.¹²⁸ In 1300, for example, the Hospitallers, Templars and Cypriots set off from Famagusta on an expedition against Alexandria. They subsequently sailed northwards along the Syrian coastline

¹²⁵ Philip of Novara, The Wars of Frederick II, p.73; Florio Bustron, Chronique, pp.63-64; Gestes, p.676.

¹²⁶ Joinville, Histoire de Saint Louis, pp.72-74.

¹²⁷ See above, p.175.

¹²⁸ For more details on the rise of Famagusta and the decline of Limassol, see Jacoby, 'The rise of a new emporium in the eastern Mediterranean', pp.147-54.

until they reached Maraclea, which they sacked before heading back to Cyprus. Until 1302 the Templars also garrisoned a small castle on the island of Rouad, just opposite Tortosa, and this stronghold must have relied on Cyprus almost entirely for its food supply. In 1300 troops from Cyprus and the Military Orders landed here and even went ashore at Tortosa for a while, in a failed attempt to meet up with Mongol forces attacking Syria from the east.¹²⁹

Reference has also been made to the period of renewed aggression against the Muslims during the reign of Peter I (1359-69). Peter launched several naval offensives against the mainland, the most famous being his attack on Alexandria in 1365. This expedition succeeded in capturing the city, but the crusaders were too outnumbered to hold Alexandria and had to retreat with their booty relatively quickly. Indeed, one source even noted that for every ten Christians there were 100 Muslims defending the place.¹³⁰ These figures, as well as European apathy towards new crusades and the reluctance of the Italians to break off their lucrative trade with the east, explain why Cyprus never became the focus of any major new campaigns after 1291.¹³¹ Nevertheless, undeterred Peter I continued with

¹²⁹ For more details on this and other attempts to link up with the Mongols and Armenians after 1291, see Gestes, pp.848-50, 852-53; Florio Bustron, Chronique, pp.129-33; Chronique d'Amadi, pp.234-38; Marino Sanudo, Liber secretorum, p.242; A. Luttrell, 'The Hospitallers' Interventions in Cilician Armenia: 1291-1375', in The Cilician Kingdom of Armenia, ed. T.S.R. Boase, (Edinburgh 1978), pp.118-44, at pp.118-24.

¹³⁰ William of Machaut, La Prise, pp.68-69. See also Philip of Mézières, The Life of St.Peter Thomas, pp.125-35; Florio Bustron, Chronique, pp.262-63; Chronique d'Amadi, pp.413-15; Strambaldi, Chronique, pp.63-69; Leontios Makhairas, Recital, c.159-73, pp.143-55.

¹³¹ European apathy: William of Machaut, La Prise, pp.58-59; Edbury, The Kingdom of Cyprus, pp.168, 177-79.

his crusading activities against the Muslims, which had begun in 1360 with the Cypriot occupation of Corycos, situated along the coast of Cilician Armenia.¹³² In 1361 Peter also captured neighbouring Satalia (Adalia), and he subsequently carried out several naval attacks against adjoining Turkish settlements such as Anamur, forcing local rulers to pay him tribute.¹³³ These aggressive strategies would not have been possible if Cyprus itself, and in particular Famagusta, had not been so well defended against potential Muslim counter-attacks.

However, whilst Peter I probably saw himself as a crusading hero in the mould of Louis IX or Baldwin of Flanders, most fourteenth century rulers of Cyprus were happy to be at peace with the Muslims, rather than provoking them into invading the island. As a result, castles on Cyprus were always more important in terms of defence than attack. In addition, the Lusignan kings' tight grip on all major Cypriot strongholds meant that the monarchy had far more to do with national security than in other crusader states. This situation contrasted dramatically with Frankish territories on the mainland, where the Templars, Hospitallers and Teutonic Knights were increasingly relied on to protect Latin states during the thirteenth century.

In Syria, the Military Orders' defensive strategy was

¹³² William of Machaut, La Prise, p.20; Florio Bustron, Chronique, p.259; Strambaldi, Chronique, pp.42-44; Chronique d'Amadi, pp.410-41; Leontios Makhairas, Recital, c.112-14, pp.99-101, and see below, p.288.

¹³³ William of Machaut, La Prise, pp.20, 121-22; Florio Bustron, Chronique, pp.259-60, 263; Leontios Makhairas, Recital, c.116-28, pp.103-13, c.132-33, pp.117-19, c.143, p.125, c.150, pp.131-33; Chronique d'Amadi, pp.411, 415; Strambaldi, Chronique, pp.46-47, 71; Philip of Mézières, The Life of St.Peter Thomas, pp.96-97. On the payment of tribute to Peter, see ibid, p.127; Leontios Makhairas, Recital, c.124, p.109.

based around the construction of massive castles such as Saphet, Crac des Chevaliers and Montfort, but the nature of warfare on Cyprus meant that similar fortifications were not necessary there.¹³⁴ Moreover, the Lusignan kings probably actively discouraged such castles, because they would only have undermined royal authority on the island by weakening the strategic value of Kyrenia and the mountain fortresses. This fear is most apparent during the reign of Henry II. After the loss of Acre, the king at times seems to have been almost as scared of the Templars and Hospitallers as the Mamluks, and did his best to tax both Orders and prevent them from gaining more estates on Cyprus. The tension which this policy must have caused was not eased until 1307-8, when the Templars were dissolved and the Hospitallers began to concentrate their efforts on the conquest of Rhodes.¹³⁵

The Teutonic Knights, however, never appear to have had many properties on Cyprus beyond a couple of houses at Nicosia, and a few estates in the vicinity of Limassol. These had been granted to the Order either during the reign of king Aimery (1196-1205), or during the late 1220s, when German influence in Cyprus was at its greatest. Although the Teutonic Knights held on to these properties even after the defeat of the Lombards in 1233, their strong imperialist links, as well as their later involvement in the Baltic, meant that they never had much

¹³⁴ See above, pp.84-86.

¹³⁵ Henry II's attempts to stop the Orders from gaining new estates even led to protests from the pope. See Boniface VIII, Registres, ed. G. Digard et al, (4 vols., Paris 1884-1939), II, nos.3060, 3061, 3062, p.411. See also Hill, History of Cyprus, II, 198-99; Mas Latrie, Histoire, I, 189. For more details on the dissolution of the Templars in Cyprus, see Chronique d'Amadi, pp.280-91; Florio Bustron, Chronique, pp.163-71. For more details on the Hospitaller conquest of Rhodes, see Luttrell, 'The Hospitallers at Rhodes', pp.283-86.

influence in Cyprus, even after 1291. Moreover, there seems to be no evidence in the contemporary sources to confirm Professor Richard's claim that the Order held a castle at St. George (near Limassol), and it is unlikely that it possessed any fortifications on the island at all.¹³⁶

Consequently, the military and political climate on thirteenth century Cyprus meant that the Orders played a relatively insignificant role there, and it was only the Templars and Hospitallers who constructed a few small strongholds intended purely for local defence and administration. The Templars' occupation of Cyprus between 1191 and 1192 was probably too brief for them to have completed any new fortifications on the island, although Guy of Lusignan was later buried in a church established by them at Nicosia.¹³⁷ In 1198, however, both the Templars and the Hospitallers were asked by Innocent III to help defend Cyprus against any possible attacks, and in 1210 the principal Templar castle at Gastia was already mentioned by one of the sources, suggesting that the Order was quick to re-establish itself on the island during the 1190s.¹³⁸

¹³⁶ For a detailed discussion of the Teutonic Knights' properties in Cyprus, see W. Hubatsch, 'Der Deutsche Orden und die Reichslehnschaft über Cypern', Nachrichten der Akademie der Wissenschaft im Göttingen. Philologisch-Historische Klasse, (1955), 245-306. The main grants to the Order were made in 1197 and 1229. See Tabulae ordinis Theutonici, no.34, pp.27-28, no.71, p.56. For Richard's claim that the Order held a castle on Cyprus, see Chypre sous les Lusignans: documents chypriotes des archives du Vatican (XIVe et XVe siècles), (Paris 1962), p.120.

¹³⁷ Etienne de Lusignan, Description, folio 123.

¹³⁸ 1198: Innocent III, Die Register Innocenz III, ed. O. Hagender and A. Haidacher, (2 vols. so far, Graz\Cologne 1964-), I, no.438, pp.661-62. 1210: Eracles, II, 315-16.

However, one sixteenth century source claims that Gastria was built by the Egyptian invasion force of 1426, and this statement reflects the general confusion about Templar estates and fortifications on Cyprus between 1191 and 1307.¹³⁹ This was perhaps to some extent caused by the confiscation and destruction of Templar property by Hugh III in 1279, because of the Order's support for Charles of Anjou, Hugh's rival for the throne of Jerusalem.¹⁴⁰ However, it was mainly due to the Templars' dissolution in 1307, when almost all of their properties were granted to the Hospitallers. Consequently, archaeological remains of original Templar fortifications are very rare on Cyprus, whilst the records of which Order held which estates prior to 1307 had already become blurred by the sixteenth century. Hence, Florio Bustron's list of Templar estates gained by the Hospitallers contains numerous properties that probably already belonged to them before 1307.¹⁴¹

Nevertheless, enough archaeological and historical evidence does exist to draw some conclusions about the functions of Templar fortifications on Cyprus. The site of the castle of Gastria, for example, still shows some traces of a medieval castle. It was situated on a small promontory at the northern end of the Bay of Famagusta, so that to the east it was protected by the sea. On the landward side it was defended by a rock cut ditch c.8 metres wide, originally crossed by a wooden bridge or drawbridge, while to the north a small inlet probably

¹³⁹ Etienne de Lusignan, Description, folio 36.

¹⁴⁰ Hugh III held these properties until 1282. See Annales de Terre Sainte, p.457 (text A); Gestes, p.784; Chronique d'Amadi, p.214; Florio Bustron, Chronique, p.116. For more details on this dispute, see Edbury, The Kingdom of Cyprus, pp.93-96; Hill, History of Cyprus, II, 170-74, and see above, pp.143-44.

¹⁴¹ Florio Bustron, Chronique, pp.246-47; Etienne de Lusignan, description, folio 36.

served as a harbour for the castle.¹⁴²

These meagre remains are enough to conclude that Gastria was a surprisingly small castle, considering that it was the main Templar stronghold on Cyprus, and that it could only have been suitable for local defence. But the closest it ever got to being involved in any warfare was in 1232 following the battle of Agridi, when a small number of Lombard troops fled to the castle and tried to gain entry to it. But the Templars, whose Temple at Acre had been besieged by Frederick II three years previously, did not let them in, and they were left sheltering in the castle ditch, where they were soon rounded up by the Ibelins and brought to Nicosia to join the other Lombard prisoners.¹⁴³

The Templars also seem to have had minor fortifications at Khirokitia and Yermasoia, two of their estates near Limassol. At Khirokitia, below the fifteenth century ruins of a Hospitaller building, the remains of what appears to have been an older tower were still visible in Enlart's day, and this may have been the Templar tower which the Marshal of the Order was imprisoned in, in 1307. There are no such remains at nearby Yermasoia, although Florio Bustron describes how the Templar Commander was also imprisoned here in 1307, presumably in another small tower or fortified building.¹⁴⁴ Descriptions of Hugh III's destruction and confiscation of Templar property in 1279 also suggest that the Order had towers or houses at Paphos and Limassol. These must have acted as administrative centres and safe places to store the Order's financial

¹⁴² Enlart, L'art gothique, II, 656.

¹⁴³ Philip of Novara, The Wars of Frederick II, pp.91, 155; Chronique d'Amadi, p.173; Gestes, pp.718-19; Florio Bustron, Chronique, p.98. For Frederick II's attack on the Temple at Acre, see above, p.143.

¹⁴⁴ Florio Bustron, Chronique, pp.161-71; Enlart, L'art gothique, II, 671-73.

assets, in the same way that they did in Acre and elsewhere on the mainland. Moreover, it was probably a similar Templar building which the Lombards occupied in Nicosia in the spring of 1232.¹⁴⁵ A document dating from 1264 records that the Order subsequently sold this place to two secular knights for 2,000 bezants blanc.¹⁴⁶

In 1307 the Hospitallers were granted many of these Templar properties, particularly their rural estates. These included the castle of Gastria, as well as Yermasoia and Khirokitia, where a fifteenth century Hospitaller tower replaced the earlier Templar one.¹⁴⁷ The Hospitallers also had their own towers at Limassol and Nicosia, which played a small role in the war between the Lombards and Ibelins. In 1228 Frederick II had John of Ibelin's sons imprisoned in the Hospitallers' tower at Limassol, because it 'was strong and nearer his ships', implying that it may have been larger and more reliable as a prison than the royal castle itself.¹⁴⁸ The following year Philip of Novara described how he managed to avoid being captured by the five baillis and slipped away to the Hospital at Nicosia along with 150 troops, and numerous women and children of the Ibelin faction. However, this building cannot have been very strong, because Philip hastily had to equip it with a cistern and a wooden

¹⁴⁵ Florio Bustron, Chronique, p.116; Gestes, p.784; Chronique d'Amadi, p.214; Philip of Novara, The Wars of Frederick II, p.143; Annales de Terre Sainte, p.457 (text A).

¹⁴⁶ 'A Register of the cartulary of the vathedral of Santa Sophia of Nicosia', ed. J. L. LaMonte, Byzantion, V, (1930), 439-522, no.99, 476-77.

¹⁴⁷ Florio Bustron, Chronique, pp.170-71. The fifteenth century tower at Khirokitia is referred to by Etienne de Lusignan, Description, folio 35. See also Hill, History of Cyprus, II, 23; Enlart, L'art gothique, II, 671-73.

¹⁴⁸ Philip of Novara, The Wars of Frederick II, p.82. See also Gestes, p.680.

pallisade, and make sure it was well stocked with biscuits and other food which would be suitable for a long siege. In the end this did not happen, however, because John of Ibelin arrived from Syria soon after and defeated the Lombards, at which point Philip was able to make a sortie from the Hospital and help drive the enemy out of Nicosia. These events imply that although the tower at Limassol may have been strong enough to provide shelter against local uprisings or small raids, the Hospital at Nicosia can have been little more than a large, residential building, which Philip of Novara was presumably forced to shelter in because the city's royal castle was still in Lombard hands.¹⁴⁹

However, the principal Hospitaller castle on Cyprus was located at Kolossi, to the west of Limassol. This estate had been granted to the Hospitallers by Hugh I in 1210, and subsequently became the Order's Grand Commandery and headquarters on Cyprus, but the impressive tower which stands there now was constructed in the mid-fifteenth century, although it was probably built on the site of a similar older structure. Moreover, Florio Bustron's claim that a Templar tower at Kolossi was also granted to the Hospitallers in 1307 suggests that there may have been another castle nearby which has now completely vanished, although Enlart believed that this statement was incorrect in the first place.¹⁵⁰

Finally, Etienne of Lusignan described how an estate at Episkopi, just to the west of Kolossi, 'was given by the king of Lusignan (Hugh I, 1205-18) to the Knights of

¹⁴⁹ Gestes, pp.686-89; Chronique d'Amadi, pp.139-40; Philip of Novara, The Wars of Frederick II, pp.96-100, 103.

¹⁵⁰ Cartulaire, II, no.1354, pp.121-22; Florio Bustron, Chronique, p.171; Enlart, L'art gothique, II, 683-94.

St. John of Jerusalem, who built and fortified the castle, before the island fell into the hands of the Turks...', indicating that here too there was some sort of fortification which has now vanished. Reference should also be made to a proposal that Buffavento be held by the Hospitallers during peace talks between the Genoese and the Cypriots in 1374. This suggestion was probably never carried out, although it does at least shed further light on the strategic importance of Buffavento, which the Genoese presumably hoped would be removed from royal control.¹⁵¹

Therefore the limited and often confused historical and archaeological evidence does at least prove that both Templar and Hospitaller fortifications on Cyprus were extremely small. Gastria, for example, can have been little more than a walled enclosure, whilst most of the other so-called castles we have looked at were probably only towers or fortified houses. Hence these structures must have been of limited military value, and could only have been intended to withstand minor attacks by rebels, raiders or pirates. Instead, they were normally used for purely agricultural and administrative activities. Kolossi, for example, lay at the heart of a large agricultural complex and sugar plantation belonging to the Hospitallers, and had a fortified barn and several other farm buildings situated close to it. No doubt the towers at Khirokitia and Yermasoia fulfilled a similar role in the rich sugar and cotton producing area around Limassol.¹⁵²

¹⁵¹ Etienne de Lusignan, Description, folio 18. Buffavento: Edbury, The Kingdom of Cyprus, p.208n39. For details of Hospitaller properties around Limassol, see also Richard, Documents chypriotes, pp.111-20.

¹⁵² Enlart, L'art gothique, II, 684, 694-95. For more details on the sugar industry, see M-L. von Wattburg, 'The medieval cane sugar industry in Cyprus: the results of recent excavations', Antiquaries Journal, (1983), 298-314.

A late fourteenth century reference to salt still being kept in 'the warehouses of the Templars' suggests that this Order had also relied on small fortified structures to protect its agricultural produce before 1307.¹⁵³

The insignificance of Cypriot fortifications belonging to the Military Orders also reflects the internal stability achieved by the Lusignan kings, and their ability to prevent the Templars, Hospitallers and Teutonic Knights, as well as the Latin nobility in general, from undermining central authority. Returning to the observations made at the beginning of this chapter, it has also been argued that strongpoints on the island were additionally expected to deal with three other dangers, namely potential rebellions by the Greeks, minor raids by Turks and pirates, and full scale invasions by the Mamluks or the Genoese. It is clear that on the whole Cypriot castles were extremely successful in dealing with all four of these. Between 1192 and 1373 the Lusignan dynasty survived several outbreaks of violence involving both internal and external aggressors. In 1373 the impregnability of Kyrenia and the mountain castles also ensured that the Genoese were prevented from making any conquests beyond Famagusta, which itself only fell because of their treachery. Moreover, once the mainland had been lost to the Mamluks, heavily fortified coastal settlements such as Kyrenia and Famagusta ensured that Cyprus prospered economically, and could even be used for new seaborne attacks against the Muslims. Hence the island's fortifications, as well as its location, ensured that Cyprus outlived all neighbouring Frankish territories, and became one of the most tranquil and prosperous Latin states in the eastern Mediterranean.

¹⁵³ Leontios Makhairas, Recital, c.618, p.609. For more details on the agricultural and administrative uses of structures like Kolossi, see below, pp.408-14.

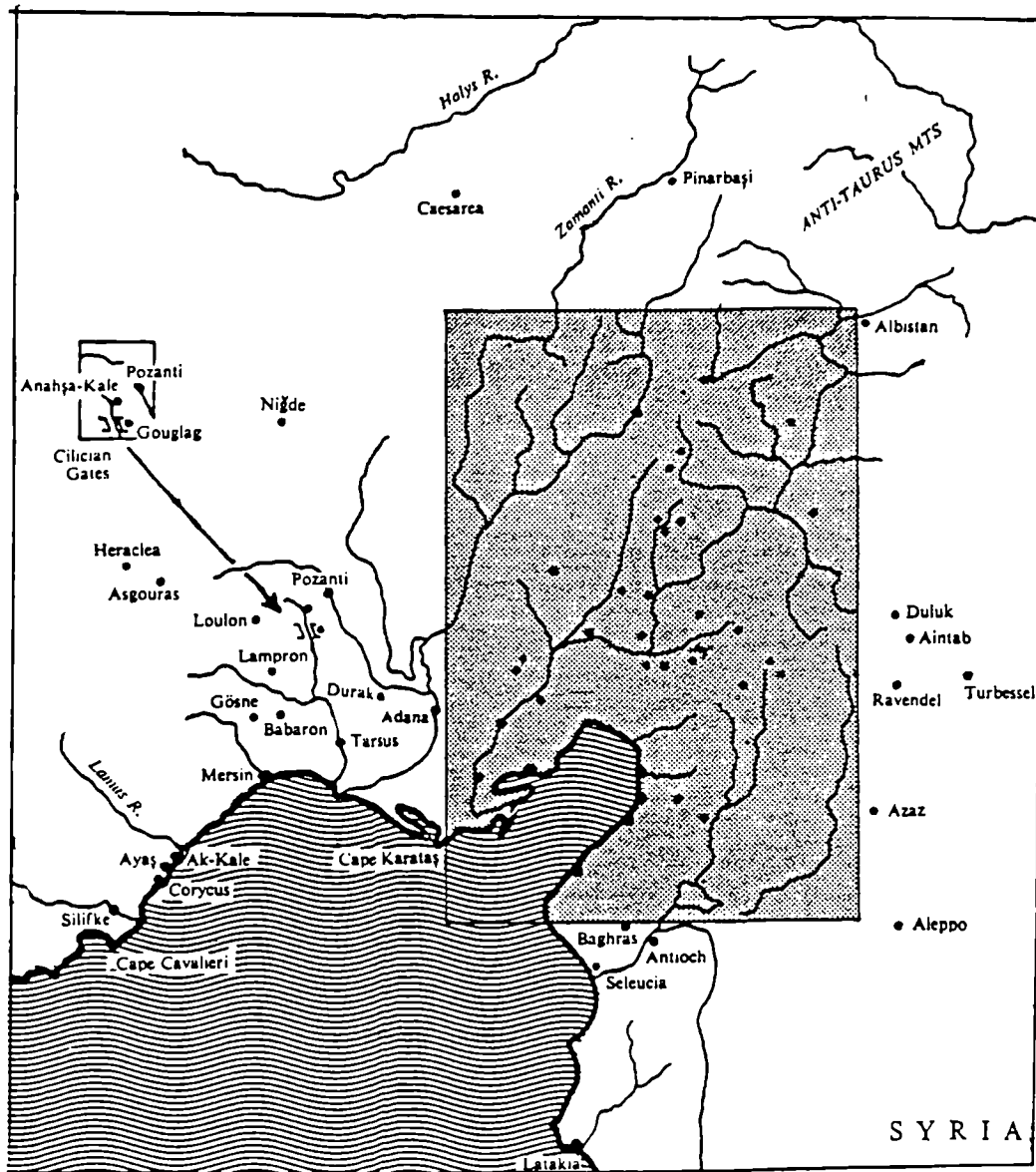


Fig.10. Cilician Armenia. From Boase, ed., The Cilician Kingdom of Armenia. (For shaded area, see over)

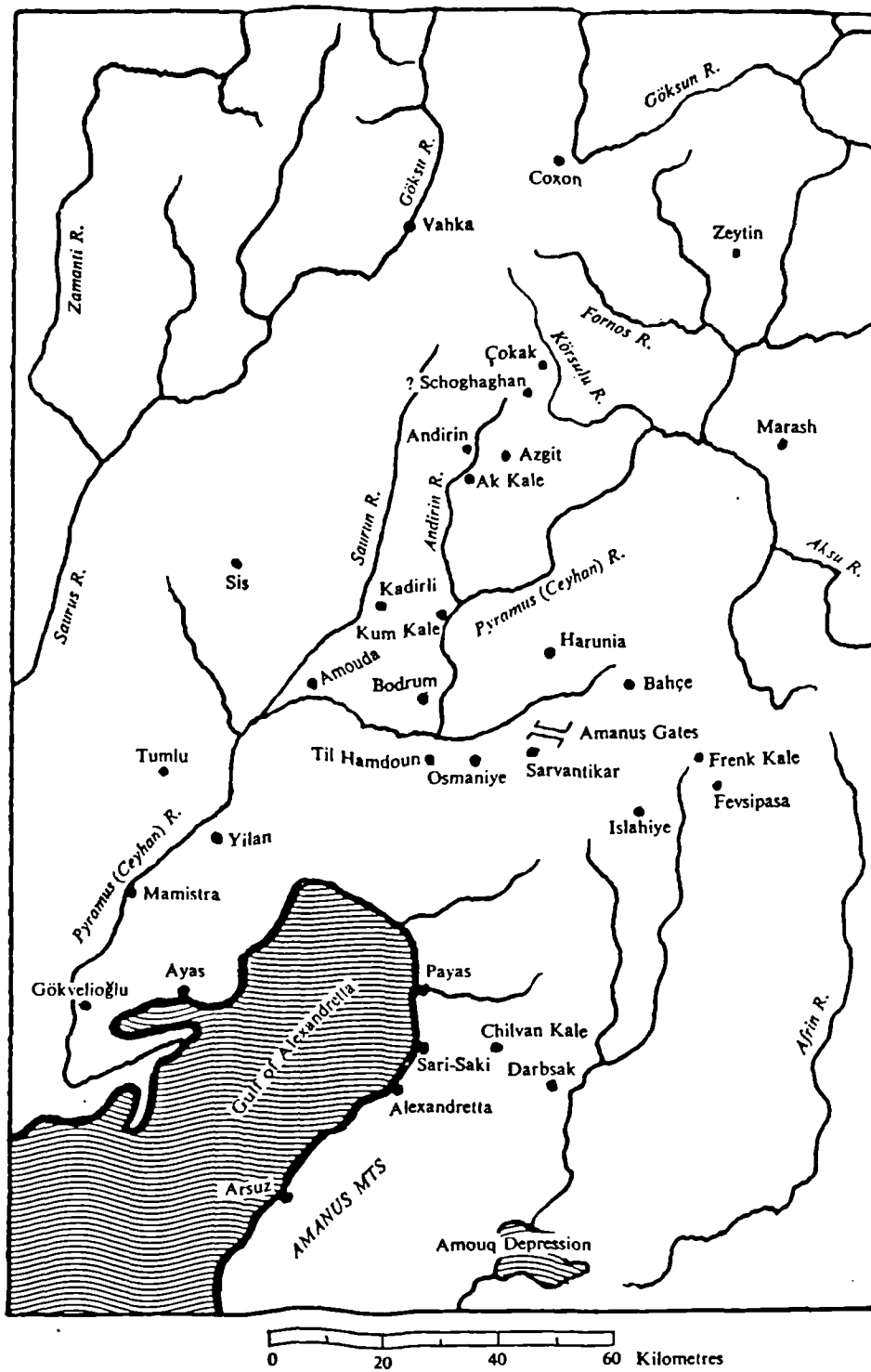


Fig.11. The Cilician plain. From Boase, ed., The Cilician Kingdom of Armenia,

CHAPTER FOUR
THE ROLE OF FORTIFICATIONS IN CILICIAN ARMENIA,
c.1187-1375.

Cilician Armenia differed from the other Christian states of the eastern Mediterranean in several important ways. Unlike the Latins, who were foreign colonizers trying to impose their will on a far larger Muslim population, the Armenians had made Cilicia their homeland; a place where all members of society shared certain cultural, political and religious characteristics. From the second half of the twelfth century onwards, these characteristics were gradually changing, as Byzantine power in southern Asia Minor collapsed, and Leon II (ruled as king, 1198-1219) and his successors created an independent Armenian kingdom loosely based on the Latin monarchies of western Europe.¹ This process was fiercely opposed by some members of the local nobility, who resented giving up freely held land in exchange for fiefs, and did not want the Armenian Church to accept the supremacy of the papacy. In addition, Cilicia itself formed a sharp contrast with the relatively exposed coastal regions occupied by the Franks, for its lush central plain was surrounded by high mountain ranges, which could only be penetrated through a relatively small number of valleys and defiles. Thus the Armenians were both culturally and geographically removed from their Latin neighbours, and these factors meant that their castles often performed very different functions from those which have been discussed far.

Armenian fortifications also present the historian with many different problems of dating, attribution and interpretation, for the history of Cilicia, particularly during the fourteenth century, is extremely badly recorded

¹ See above, pp.22-24.

in the contemporary sources. Indeed, it is not even possible to establish when most Armenian strongholds were lost to the Muslims, let alone try to construct the kind of accurate chronological descriptions already given for larger Frankish castles like Sidon or Crac des Chevaliers. As a result, the following outline of fortifications in Cilician Armenia only includes those sites where there is enough historical and archaeological evidence left to make some definite conclusions about design, age and function.

These structures can be divided into two categories, depending on whether they were located on the Cilician plain, or along one of the mountain passes giving access to it. One of the most important castles belonging to this latter group was Baghras (Gaston), which guarded the Belem Pass. This was the quickest and easiest route across the Amanus mountain range, and connected Antioch with several minor ports and settlements along the southern coast of the Gulf of Alexandretta, including La Portelle, Bayas, Canamella and the toll station known as the 'Pillar of Jonah'. However, travellers journeying between Cilicia, Aleppo or Edessa, who did not need to pass Antioch, were likelier to take another route just to the north of the Belem Pass, which bisected the Amanus mountains between the castles of Darbsak (Trapesac) to the east and Hadjar Shoghlan (Calan) to the west. Baghras, Darbsak and Hadjar Shoghlan had all belonged to the Templars before 1188, although it remains uncertain whether the latter castle should be identified with Roche de Roussel or Roche Guillaume, two fortresses which the Latin sources tell us the Order held in the region. This problem will be discussed in more detail below, as will the architectural remains of these strongholds, which were inevitably far more Frankish in design than their Armenian neighbours

further north.²

The next major route into Cilicia ran through the Amanus Gates, which lay about 100 kilometres to the north of Antioch. This pass was guarded by the tower of Hasanbeyli in the east and the castle of Servantikar in the west, and was frequently used by invading Muslim armies during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.³ It also formed the last major point of entry into Cilicia before the Amanus range gradually gives way to the Anti-Taurus and Taurus mountains, which protected the Cilician plain from the north and west. The few routes an invasion force could realistically have used to penetrate these mountains were also overlooked by strategic fortresses, most notably Vagha, which guarded an important road heading due north from Sis across the Anti-Taurus mountains, and Lampron, one of the strongest castles in the vicinity of the Cilician Gates. The Cilician Gates were by far the most important route between Lesser Armenia, Constantinople and western Asia Minor, although another coastal road also existed further south, where the Taurus mountains met the Mediterranean sea. Here the Armenians held the town and castle of Silifke, which Leon II granted to the Hospitallers during the early years of the thirteenth century. Beyond Silifke, Armenian control gradually gave way to that of the Seljuk Turks.⁴

Apart from Silifke, all the castles which have just been mentioned were typical Armenian mountain strongholds.

² Cahen, La Syrie du Nord, pp.139-45, 148-50; Edwards, The Fortifications, pp.39-40, and see below, pp.CA 111-133

³ Cahen, La Syrie du Nord, pp.145-48; Edwards, The Fortifications, pp.39-40.

⁴ Cahen, La Syrie du Nord, p.152; Edwards, The Fortifications, p.40; Boase, 'The History of the Kingdom', p.2.

Servantikar, for example, was built on a roughly triangular plateau approximately 500 metres above sea level. Today it is extremely ruined, but the description of one contemporary makes it clear that even during the medieval period its natural strength was such that it needed few man made defences: '[Servantikar] is a strong citadel on an outcrop in a valley. Several of its sides do not have walls, as they are naturally defended by the cliff's edge...it commands the route through the defile of Mari' (ie the Amanus Gates).⁵

These steep cliffs meant that man made fortifications were only really necessary along the castle's gently sloping east side, which was defended by a long, sinuous curtain wall flanked by numerous round or horse shoe towers. The only entrance to the castle lay in the north-east corner of the site, and was composed of an arched gatehouse flanked by two solid round towers. Moreover, this entrance could only be approached along a path exposed to fire from the east curtain. The actual gatehouse was therefore extremely difficult to reach, let alone attack, but even if an enemy should breach the outer gate itself, he then had to turn through ninety degrees whilst under fire through machicolation in the ceiling, before entering the lower bailey.

However, even having got this far, a potential attacker then had to try to penetrate the upper bailey, built on the highest southern point of the site. This bailey was again defended by a curtain wall with flanking towers and an 'L' shaped gateway (F on plan), and contained numerous residential buildings including four immensely powerful

⁵ Abu'l-Fida, cited in P. Deschamps, 'Le Château de Servantikar en Cilicie, le défile de Marris et la frontière du comté d'Édesse', *Syria*, XVIII (1937), 379-88, at 382.

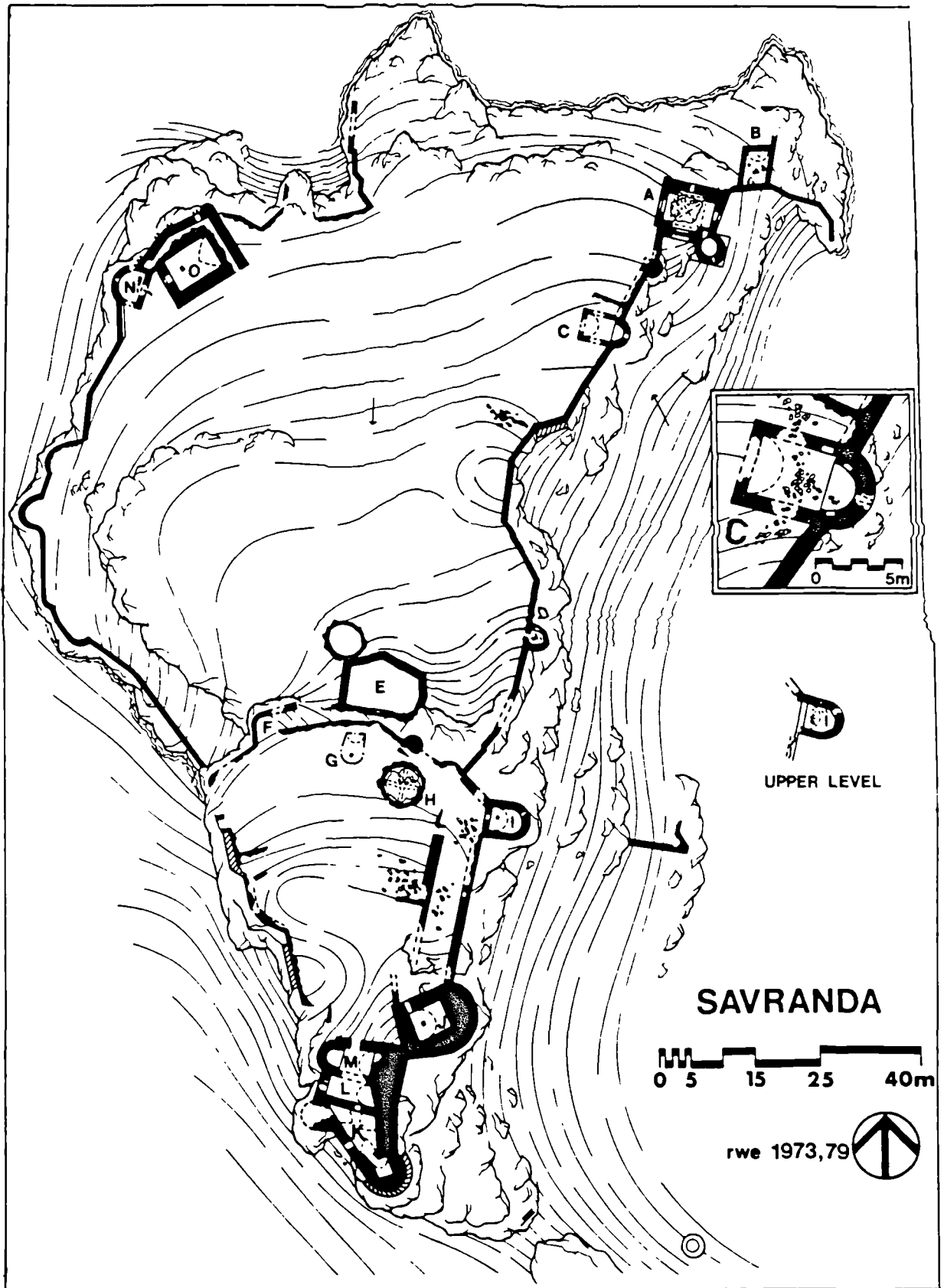


Fig.12. Servantikar; a typical Armenian mountain castle. From Edwards, *Fortifications*, p.215.

towers at its southern end. These towers contributed to the general defensive scheme of the curtain wall, but could also act as a kind of keep or final refuge. In addition to these defences, the castle was equipped with several cisterns, as well as an Armenian chapel incorporated into tower C.

Although this castle was probably originally Byzantine, and also shows some crusader influence from the twelfth century (particularly the talus which tower K rests on at the southern tip of the upper bailey), it is primarily an Armenian construction. As such it shares a number of characteristic features with other fortifications of this type. Firstly, the castle's strength is basically derived from its location on a plateau almost completely surrounded by steep cliffs. Hence, curtain walls were not always deemed necessary, and where they were built they consistently follow the cliff's edge, so that they enhanced the natural strength of the site. The shape of the castle is therefore entirely dictated by that of the plateau, but the Armenian builders turned this to their advantage by creating angles to provide flanking fire almost everywhere along the curtain wall, so that relatively few real towers were actually needed. Moreover, wherever these were added, particularly on the more exposed east side of the fortress, they were invariably round or horse shoe shaped, because the Armenians believed that this made them better able to withstand battering rams and earthquakes. Consequently, it is very unusual to see sharp corners or right angles in Armenian fortifications.

Other features at Servantikar are also typically Armenian. The masonry used on the exterior of the fortress is largely composed of small, square blocks of bossed stone, which were also considered to be more resilient against

battering rams. The walls were only really constructed with care where this was necessary, and rely on their thickness for strength, rather than revetments or deep foundations. There is only one gateway, which is difficult to reach, is flanked by two towers, and is placed at a right angle to the curtain wall, so that it cannot be attacked head on. It is also defended from above by slot machicolation, enabling troops in the upper chamber of the gatehouse to shoot down on attackers through holes carefully incorporated into the vaulting.

Like many other Armenian castles, Servantikar also has two baileys providing successive lines of defence, and has few free standing buildings within its walls. Consequently, residential quarters and other service buildings have mostly been positioned along the inside of the curtain wall or incorporated into the towers. The chapel, for example, doubles as a salient defending the entrance, whilst the strongest point of the castle is defended by a series of rounded towers (J,K,L,M) attached to the curtain wall, rather than an isolated keep.⁶

The general layout of both Lampron and Vagha is virtually identical to that of Servantikar. Both these strongholds are situated on remote mountain spurs hundreds of metres above sea level, and were defended by successive baileys rising toward impregnable inner citadels. Indeed, the upper parts of Lampron could only be reached via a circuitous ramp, which had been cut out of the solid rock and was barely two metres wide, making it impossible for

⁶ Deschamps, 'Le Château de Servantikar', 381-84; Edwards, The Fortifications, pp.217-20; Cahen, La Syrie du Nord, pp.145-46; Hellenkemper, Burgen, pp.111-15.

more than one attacker to use it at a time.⁷ The lower approaches to Vagha were almost as inaccessible, and were additionally protected by several gateways, at least one of which incorporated the same kind of Armenian slot machicolation already mentioned at Servantikar.⁸ It is hardly any wonder, therefore, that in 1275 the Catholicos, or head of the Armenian Church, sought shelter there from the Mamluks, and that for much of the medieval period the Armenians deemed Vagha the safest place in Cilicia to store their most precious icons and religious artefacts.⁹

The second group of castles held by the Armenians, which were situated on or near the edges of the Cilician plain, were far more complex architecturally, and often incorporated many different Roman, Byzantine, Frankish, Muslim and Armenian features. This point can be illustrated by looking at Toprak (Til Hamdoun), the first major stronghold to the west of Servantikar and the Amanus Gates. Toprak is set on a large and partially man made hill measuring approximately 100 metres by 70 metres, and is defended by a double curtain to the east and south, and a huge talus topped by a powerful wall to the west and north. The presence of this talus, the type of masonry used, and the very ordered arrangement of the walls and towers, all suggest that the castle is mostly a Mamluk construction dating from the fourteenth century, with only certain parts attributable to the Armenians, or earlier

⁷ F.C.R. Robinson and P.C. Hughes, 'Lampron, Castle of Armenian Cilicia', Anatolian Studies, XIX (1969), 183-207, particularly at 194-95. See also Edwards, The Fortifications, pp.176-83.

⁸ J.G. Dunbar and W.W.M. Boal, 'The Castle of Vagha', Anatolian Studies, XIV (1964), 175-84 (machicolation at 178); Edwards, The Fortifications, pp.259-65.

⁹ Bar Hebraeus, Chronography, p.453; L.M. Alishan, Sissouan ou l'Arméno-Cilicie, (Venice 1899), pp.172-73.

twelfth century Byzantine and crusader occupants.¹⁰ Consequently, Toprak was probably largely rebuilt after 1337, when, according to the Armenian chronicler Nerses Balientz, the Muslims acquired much of eastern Cilicia by treaty.¹¹ This in turn suggests that the site had been severely damaged during previous Mamluk attacks on the area, particularly those of 1266 and 1298.¹² However, Willbrand of Oldenburg's description of Toprak in 1212 as a 'good strong castle held by a nobleman' proves that it must have been a well fortified and important stronghold even before the Mamluk period.¹³

To the north and east of Toprak, numerous outcrops rising up above the Cilician plain were occupied by other castles whose architectural heritage varied considerably. Between Toprak and Sis, for example, the Armenians garrisoned and repaired the classical acropolis of Anavarza (Anazarbus), a Roman settlement which also showed traces of early

¹⁰ Edwards, Fortifications, pp.244-50; Hellenkemper, Burgen, pp.140-53; Cahen, La Syrie du Nord, p.147; Müller-Wiener, Castles of the Crusaders, pp.75-77; J. Gottwald, 'Die Burg Til im Südöstlichen Kilikien', BZ, XL, (1940), 82-103.

¹¹ Nerses Balientz, extract reproduced in Alishan, Sissouan, p.469.

¹² 1266: Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 99; al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, I(b), 31, 33-34. Hethoum the Historian, Table Chronologique, p.487; Bar Hebraeus, Chronography, p.446; Constable Sempad, Chronique, ed. Dédéyan, pp.117-18, Vahram of Edessa, Chronique Rimée, pp.521-22; Marino Sanudo, Liber secretorum, p.223; Samuel of Ani, Chronographie, p.261. 1298: al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, II(b), 60-65; Samuel of Ani, Chronographie, p.463; Gestes, pp.839-40; Marino Sanudo, Liber secretorum, pp.233-34. The sources for 1298 mention Toprak specifically, those for 1266 do not. See also T.S.R. Boase, 'Gazetteer', in The Cilician Kingdom of Armenia, pp.145-85, at pp.183-84.

¹³ Willbrand of Oldenburg, Itinerarium, p.226.

twelfth century Frankish occupation.¹⁴ Other Roman or Byzantine acropolis sites reoccupied by the Armenians included Bodrum,¹⁵ which lay a few miles to the north of Toprak, and Sis, the capital of the Armenian kingdom.¹⁶ In addition, several hilltops were given entirely new fortifications, which invariably incorporated all the various defensive techniques adopted at Vagha, Lampron and Servantikar. The best preserved such sites are Gökvelioglu,¹⁷ Tumlu¹⁸ and Yilan, all of which lay to the east and south east of Toprak. The most famous of these was probably Yilan (Ilan Kale/The Castle of the Snakes), whose complex inner gateway and stout horse shoe towers represent some of the most impressive Armenian structures of the period.¹⁹

¹⁴ 'Anazarbus (Anavarza)', M. Gough, Anatolian Studies, II (1952), 85-150, particularly at 91, 119-25; Edwards, Fortifications, pp.65-70; Hellenkemper, Burgen, pp.191-201; Cahen, La Syrie du Nord, p.152; Boase, 'Gazetteer', p.153, and see below, pp.255-56.

¹⁵ F. Frech, 'Die armenischen Burgen', Zeitschrift der Gesellschaft für Erdkunde zu Berlin, IX (1915), 576-80, at 578; Hellenkemper, Burgen, pp.137-39; Alishan, Sissouan, pp.229-31; Boase, 'Gazetteer', p.157; Edwards, Fortifications, p.92.

¹⁶ Hellenkemper, Burgen, pp.202-13; Edwards, Fortifications, pp.233-36; Alishan, Sissouan, pp.241-48; Fedden and Thomson, Crusader Castles, pp.97-100; Müller-Wiener, Castles of the Crusaders, p.77.

¹⁷ G.R. Youngs, 'Three Cilician Castles', Anatolian Studies, XV (1965), 113-34, at 118-25; Edwards, Fortifications, pp.133-35; Hellenkemper, Burgen, pp.165-68; Boase, 'Gazetteer', p.165.

¹⁸ Youngs, 'Three Cilician Castles', 113-18; Edwards, Fortifications, pp.255-59; Hellenkemper, Burgen, pp.188-91; Boase, 'Gazetteer', p.184.

¹⁹ Youngs, 'Three Cilician Castles', 125-33, particularly at 128-30; Edwards, Fortifications, pp.269-75; Hellenkemper, Burgen, pp.169-87; Fedden and Thomson, Crusader Castles, pp.100-3; Müller-Wiener, Castles of the Crusaders, pp.77-79; Boase, 'Gazetteer', p.185.

Thus the Armenians either improved or repaired much older sites, or erected new defences according to their own distinct building style. This style was largely imported from Armenia proper, but may also have been influenced by Byzantine military architecture. Hence Servantikar can be compared with Kantara, St.Hilarion and Buffavento, the three great mountain fortresses built by the Greeks on Cyprus, which were defended by a similar combination of sheer cliffs and successive curtain walls.²⁰ It is also interesting to speculate whether the 20 metre wide moat dividing the castle of Lampron from neighbouring mountains to the north was either copied from the Greeks, or perhaps even excavated by them, for it bears a close resemblance to the famous rock hewn ditch at Saone, which most archaeologists now agree is originally Byzantine.²¹ Indeed, Lampron was probably only one of many Armenian fortresses built directly on top of older Byzantine structures dating back many centuries. The difficulties in trying to distinguish between the two is clearly apparent at Azgit, a remote mountain castle between Servantikar and Vagha, which different scholars have attributed to both the Greeks and the Armenians.²²

Certain Armenian defensive strategies were also very similar to those adopted by the Franks. In terms of location at least, Montfort, Akkar and Beaufort belong to the same group as Yilan and Vagha, for they all relied on their remoteness and inaccessibility to protect them. The

²⁰ See above, pp.203-4, 208-10.

²¹ Lampron: 'Lampron, Castle of Armenian Cilicia', 191. Saone: Pringle in Lawrence, Crusader Castles, pp.xxix-xxx.

²² J.G. Dunbar and W.W.M. Boal, 'The Castle of Azgit', in Boase, The Cilician Kingdom of Armenia, pp.85-91, at p.91; Fedden and Thomson, Crusader Castles, pp.46-47.

'semi-concentric' layout of Montfort also appeared at many Armenian strongholds, which, as we have seen, were provided with two or three lines of defence in exposed areas, but none at all in those parts which nature had already rendered impregnable.²³ In addition, by reoccupying Byzantine or classical fortifications, the Armenians were merely continuing a policy already used by the crusaders when they first reached Cilicia and Antioch. Later, it will also be shown that from 1204 onwards the Latin conquerors of the Byzantine empire either took over former Greek strongholds, or built their own castles on isolated hilltops which required relatively few major defences.²⁴

It also seems likely that some architectural features which gradually appeared in Frankish castles were in fact copied from the Armenians. The Hospitaller castles of Crac des Chevaliers, Margat and Silifke may be particularly significant in this respect, for all three incorporated the kind of complex gateways and horse shoe towers built by the Armenians at Yilan and elsewhere. Silifke was granted to the Hospitallers in 1210, and subsequently remained under their control for the next sixteen years, suggesting that the castle was being reconstructed at almost exactly the same time that the Order was carrying out its improvements at Crac and Margat.²⁵ This link appears to have been limited to these three castles, however, for in general horse shoe towers were not at all

²³ Marshall, Warfare in the Latin East, p.111; Edwards, Fortifications, pp.13-14. For Montfort, Akkar and Beaufort, see above, pp.57, 59, 74.

²⁴ See below, pp.296-312.

²⁵ Cartulaire, II, no.1351, p.119; Langlois, Le Trésor, no.3, pp.112-14; Edwards, Fortifications, pp.221-28, particularly at 228, and see below, p.273. For Margat and Crac des Chevaliers, see above, pp.44-46.

popular with the Franks. Nevertheless, this need not rule out a wider Armenian influence, as 'L' shaped entrances were used at many crusader sites, and a more concentric layout, where several flanking towers rather than a central keep acted as the inner citadel, was adopted at Crac, Margat, Pilgrims' Castle, Belvoir and possibly Saphet.²⁶ The architectural historian R.W. Edwards has also noted that slot machicolation, a defensive element incorporated into the inner gate at Crac des Chevaliers, 'appears to be an Armenian invention',²⁷ whilst other scholars have pointed out that during the twelfth century at least, the crusaders sometimes relied on Armenian engineers to help them capture Muslim strongholds. If the Armenians were experts on siege engines, it therefore follows that they must have known how to build fortifications which were most capable of withstanding such weapons.²⁸

However, in other cases the Franks rejected Armenian precedents in favour of their own designs. Hence most castles built by the crusaders tended to be less irregular and rely more on square or rectangular towers, incorporating several gateways and posterns. Moreover, many Frankish strongholds were centred around a large, free standing keep, which derived its strength from extremely thick walls rather than more sophisticated concepts of interconnecting flanking fire. During the thirteenth century the Latins also tended to use smooth rather than bossed masonry, and often built their walls on

²⁶ See above, pp.77-80.

²⁷ Edwards, Fortifications, p.15; Deschamps, Le Crac des Chevaliers, p.182.

²⁸ Fedden and Thomson, Crusader Castles, pp.55-56; Edwards, Fortifications, p.11.

large revetments to give them extra strength.²⁹ These differences between Armenian and Frankish military architecture can partly be explained in terms of local terrain. The somewhat less rocky and mountainous landscape of coastal Syria and Palestine meant that man made features such as revetments were needed to compensate for the absence of sheer cliff faces and deep ravines. However, castles like Servantikar also reveal a difference in mentality between the Armenians, who had been a mountain people long before they migrated to Cilicia, and the Franks, who always needed to have access to the sea in order to maintain their links with western Europe. In addition, it should be noted that many of the defensive elements adopted by the Latins, and in particular 'L' shaped gateways, could equally well have been inspired by Muslim or Byzantine precedents, or could quite simply have been reinvented by the crusaders themselves.

The links which have been made between Armenian and Latin fortifications should therefore be regarded as suggestions rather than statements of fact. So far, these links have been analysed in purely architectural terms, but they can also be used to illustrate the various military functions of Armenian strongholds. Most notably, it is clear that the Armenians tended to reoccupy or fortify sites which were located along routes leading onto and across the Cilician plain. Hence anyone entering Cilicia via the Amanus Gates would first pass Hasanbeyli, a watch tower which probably belonged to the Teutonic Knights,³⁰ and then reach Servantikar, situated near the eastern mouth of the valley. From here the traveller could continue to the west, past Toprak and Yilan toward the classical cities of

²⁹ See above, pp.77-80. For more details on the difference between Armenian and crusader masonry, see Edwards, Fortifications, pp.20-24.

³⁰ See below, p.271.

Misis (Mamistra), Adana and Tarsus, all of which were inhabited during the thirteenth century. At Tarsus, the road linking these places carried on along the coast toward Silifke, whilst at Adana and Misis other routes led north to Lampron and the Cilician Gates, or south, past Gökveliöglu toward the famous port of Ayas (Lajazzo). Alternatively, it was possible to travel in a north easterly direction from Servantikar, via Bodrum and Amuda (another castle held by the German Order) to Sis, or to turn south at Toprak, along a road which led to Baghras, Hadjar Choghlan and Antioch. Another important route crossed the Cilician plain from north to south, so that anyone travelling across the Anti-Taurus mountains toward Ayas would pass Vagha, Sis, Tumlu, Yilan and Misis.³¹

These routes reveal the extent to which the Armenians planned the design and location of their fortifications, for many of them formed part of a wider intervisible network. Hence Gökveliöglu could communicate with Yilan via Misis, whilst to the north Yilan itself could send smoke or fire signals to Tumlu, Anavarza and Amouda. In addition, Anavarza was intervisible with Ak Kale, another castle situated to the north east of Sis, whose inhabitants were themselves able to see Tumlu. Further south, the garrison of Toprak could also observe Amouda, Anavarza and Tumlu, even though this latter castle lay over 40 kilometres to the west. Consequently, all the major strongholds and settlements of the Cilician plain could communicate with each other either directly or via other castles. This in turn suggests that the Armenians did not just fortify remote and elevated sites because of their obvious defensive potential, but also because such places enjoyed good all round visibility. Clearly, this must have been a primary concern at Tumlu, whose strategic

³¹ Cahen, *La Syrie du Nord*, pp.145-48, 150-52; Boase, 'The History of the Kingdom', p.2.

location enabled the rulers of Sis to keep in touch with the furthest corners of their kingdom.³² Similarly, it will later be shown that the Armenians primarily reoccupied the acropolis of Anavarza because of its high altitude rather than a desire to recolonize an old Roman city.³³ Furthermore, other mountain fortresses such as Servantikar, whose visibility was usually limited to the valley they occupied, no doubt communicated with their neighbours by means of messengers on horseback, or perhaps even carrier pigeons, so that they too could be incorporated into a network which effectively covered much of Cilician Armenia.³⁴

The principal function of this network was to warn both civilians and troops of an imminent hostile invasion. In the north and west such an attack was most likely to be launched by the Seljuk Turks of Anatolia, whilst in the east and south the Mamluk sultans of Egypt posed the greatest threat. Consequently the castles of Silifke, Lampron and Vagha came under less pressure after the 1240s, when the Seljuks were subjugated by the Mongols, whereas Servantikar and the area to the south of Toprak gradually witnessed more and more fighting after the accession of Baybars in 1260.³⁵ Hence Baybars sent a raiding expedition onto the Cilician plain in 1266, and subsequent large scale Mamluk incursions occurred in

³² Hellenkemper, Burgen, pp.262-63; Edwards, Fortifications, pp.41-42.

³³ Hellenkemper, Burgen, p.262, and see below, p.256.

³⁴ Carrier pigeons were also used between castles in the Holy Land. See above, p.142.

³⁵ See above, p.23.

1275, 1298, 1322, 1337 and 1375.³⁶ Although they were supposedly allied with the Armenians, the Mongols also invaded Cilicia from time to time, particularly in 1266, 1307 and 1320.³⁷

Whenever attacks of this kind were looming, the Armenians relied on their furthest castles to warn them in plenty of time. Thus in 1266 Baybars's troops used the Amanus Gates to enter Cilicia, only to find their path blocked by an Armenian army led by Hethoum I (1226-69), who was waiting near Servantikar in the forest of Mani. Hence the garrisons of Servantikar and Hasanbeyli must have told Hethoum in advance that the Muslims had decided to take this route, enabling the Armenian king to raise an army, prepare his men, and march across Cilicia from his capital at Sis. Just under a decade later the Armenians presumably used the same tactics, for in 1275 we again find them confronting the Egyptians very close to Servantikar. On this occasion, however, the famous chronicler Sempad died in the ensuing struggle,³⁸ whilst in 1266 Hethoum I was also badly defeated by Baybars's men, who managed to kill

³⁶ 1266: See above, p.238n12. 1275: al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, I(b), 123-25; Hethoum the Historian, Table Chronologique, p.487; Bar Hebraeus, Chronography, pp.452-54; Constable Sempad, Chronique, RHCarm I., 653; Gestes, p.780; Marino Sanudo, Liber secretorum, p.226. 1298: see above, p.238n12. 1322: Samuel of Ani, Chronographie, p.467. 1337: ibid, p.468; Nerses Balientz, extract in Alishan, Sissouan, p.469. 1375: Jean Dardel, Chronique, pp.70-84.

³⁷ 1266: Bar Hebraeus, Chronography, pp.445-46. 1307: Samuel of Ani, Chronographie, p.466; Hethoum the Historian, Table Chronologique, p.490; Jean Dardel, Chronique, pp.17-18. 1320: Constable Sempad, Chronique, RHCarm I, 667-68.

³⁸ Constable Sempad, Chronique, RHCarm I., 653; Hethoum the Historian, Table Chronologique, p.487; Bar Hebraeus, Chronography, pp.452-54.

one of his sons and capture the other.³⁹ Indeed, in 1298 yet another Muslim army passing through the Amanus Gates even managed to sack Servantikar itself, and in 1337 the Armenians found themselves under so much pressure that Leon V (1320-41) probably surrendered the castle to the Egyptians permanently.⁴⁰ These terrible setbacks were primarily caused by the Armenians' inadequate troop numbers, as is indicated by the Mamluk invasion of 1275, when a royal force of 5,000 horsemen actually managed to defeat the first wave of Egyptians, before being swept aside by another section of the Muslim army which alone numbered eight thousand men.⁴¹ In 1298 the Mamluks are also said to have attacked the area with a staggering 20,000 troops drawn from Egypt, Aleppo and other parts of Syria.⁴²

Nevertheless, despite these problems, the history of the Amanus Gates during the thirteenth century can still be used to highlight the defensive strategies which the Armenians hoped would keep their opponents at bay. Clearly, Hethoum I and his successors realized that it would be suicidal to meet numerically superior invasion forces in the open, and so they tried to even the odds by confronting their enemies in narrow and wooded mountain passes, where a surprise ambush could potentially prevent attackers from reaching the Cilician plain. For this

³⁹ Vahram of Edessa, Chronique Rimée, p.522; Constable Sempad, Chronique, ed. Dédéyan, pp.117-18; Hethoum the Historian, Table Chronologique, p.487; Samuel of Ani, Chronographie, p.461; Bar Hebraeus, Chronography, p.446.

⁴⁰ 1298: Gestes, pp.839-40. 1337: Nerses Balientz, extract in Alishan, Sissouan, p.469. See also Deschamps, 'Le Château de Servantikar', 387.

⁴¹ Bar Hebraeus, Chronography, pp.452-53.

⁴² al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, II(b), 60-61. For more details on troop numbers, see above, pp.37-38.

tactic to work, the Armenians needed to gather their troops and deploy them quickly, which again made it imperative for castle garrisons to be on the alert constantly, and send warning signals as soon as they spotted an approaching enemy. No doubt these concerns account for al-Makrizi's claim that Hethoum I built numerous towers to guard the mountains around Cilicia, as well as Constable Sempad's report that Leon III (1270-89) 'ordered the construction of a strong castle at the foot of Mount Taurus...to defend this district and the famous route of Xoz Jor'.⁴³ This route penetrated the Anti-Taurus mountains a few miles to the west of Vagha. The need for a quick response at the first sign of trouble may also explain why many other intervisible strongholds were situated on or near important roads, for these routes could be used by troops who were normally stationed in castles, but were expected to reach frontier areas at very short notice. Servantikar must have been particularly important in this respect, and may well have been used as an assembly point for contingents hoping to stop the Muslims, as well as a refuge for those who escaped the disastrous encounters of 1266 and 1275. In 1265 Hethoum I is also said to have deterred Baybars from attacking Lesser Armenia by gathering his troops together in the Belem pass as quickly as he could. Many of these forces had clearly been brought from various baronial castles all over Cilicia.⁴⁴

In the long run, however, it is clear that the Armenians were quite simply too outnumbered for all these elaborate precautions to make any difference. But even though they proved incapable of halting repeated enemy incursions,

⁴³ al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, I(b), 33; Constable Sempad, Chronique, ed. Dédéyan, p.125.

⁴⁴ Constable Sempad, Chronique, ed. Dédéyan, p.115.

they still managed to survive such attacks by sheltering inside their most powerful castles. In 1266, for example, Baybars's forces ravaged the Cilician countryside unhindered, 'but in front of the fortresses which they attacked, they failed miserably'.⁴⁵ Similarly, when the Muslims returned some years later, Leon III found himself so outnumbered that he did not even attempt to confront them, and consequently 'only those who occupied the fortified places, or had retreated to the fortresses, escaped the carnage'.⁴⁶

Moreover, whenever they did manage to capture any Armenian castles, Mamluk besiegers frequently discovered large numbers of civilians sheltering inside them. Hence in 1298 one stronghold taken in the vicinity of Toprak was found to contain 'a large throng, composed of peasants, farmers' wives and children'. After this site had surrendered, al-Makrizi wrote that a further 'eleven places in the territory of the Armenians similarly fell under the control of the victors'. Although these sites were later reoccupied with the help of the Mongols, this disaster must have inflicted untold suffering on the local population.⁴⁷ It should also be noted that according to the Muslim sources, not all Armenian castles escaped the Mamluk raid of 1266 unscathed, for the Teutonic Knights defending Amuda were obliged to surrender, along with 'two thousand two hundred people, both fighting men and others, of whom the men were killed and the captives distributed amongst the troops'.⁴⁸ Willbrand of Oldenburg's remarks that Amuda provided a place of shelter for local people,

⁴⁵ Vahram of Edessa, Chronique Rimée, p.522.

⁴⁶ Vahram of Edessa, Chronique Rimée, p.528.

⁴⁷ al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, II(b), 64-65.

⁴⁸ Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 99; al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, I(b), 34.

and that the nearby river yielded good fish supplies, give further weight to the impression that the castle acted as a refuge point for many neighbouring communities.⁴⁹

Thus the Armenians depended on their strongest fortifications to protect them in much the same way that the Franks relied Pilgrims' Castle or Saphet to see them through crises such as the Khwarizmian invasion of 1244.⁵⁰ As a result, if any castles failed to withstand an enemy attack, their surrender invariably led to the death or enslavement of large numbers of unarmed civilians. Hence the fate of Amuda's occupants can be compared with that of the 5,000 Christians slaughtered by the Khwarizmiens at Jerusalem, whose defences were too dilapidated and poorly garrisoned to provide adequate protection.⁵¹

However, once they had retreated inside their castles, the majority of Armenians could at least feel confident that their lives would be saved, for most external invaders seem to have been more concerned with gathering booty than making permanent territorial conquests. In 1266, for example, Baybars's troops devastated much of the Cilician plain, prompting the Armenians to ask the Mongols for assistance. By the time they had arrived, however, the Muslims had already taken their loot and gone home, and so the Mongols themselves turned to ravaging the area!⁵² In 1298 the Mamluks conducted their campaign in an equally opportunist manner, for they do not appear to have pressed home their siege of Sis, which had been their original

⁴⁹ Willbrand of Oldenburg, Itinerarium, p.224. For more details on this castle, see below, pp.269-70.

⁵⁰ See above, p.85. See also Hellenkemper, Burgen, p.264.

⁵¹ See above, p.102.

⁵² Bar Hebraeus, Chronography, pp.445-46.

target, because some sections of the Muslim army found it more profitable to go on an extensive looting spree instead. This spree undoubtedly inflicted considerable damage on the surrounding countryside, but its impact was still far more temporary than a systematic destruction of the citadel at Sis would have been.⁵³

The nature of Muslim and Mongol attacks on Cilician Armenia did not just enable most of its inhabitants to emerge unscathed, but also gave its rulers the chance to recoup their losses at the end of each incursion. Hence we have seen that in 1298 no less than eleven Armenian sites were overrun, whilst in 1266 both Toprak and Amouda were probably captured, but none of these places were subsequently held by the Muslims, who either abandoned them deliberately, or gave them up in the face of Mongol pressure. A peace treaty between Leon III and Kalavun dating from 1285 also indicates that for much of this period the sultans of Egypt merely used the threat of punitive raids in order to extract large amounts of tribute from the Armenians.⁵⁴ Indeed, the Mamluks do not seem to have started capturing castles for the sake of territorial gain rather than short term booty until the fourteenth century, when more systematic attempts were made to occupy the Cilician plain. It is clear that 1337 was a turning point in this respect, for in that year 'the troops of the sultan of Egypt, and the tyrant emir called Melik-Omar, entered Cilicia with 60,000 cavalry troops and besieged Ayas...they would not leave until the town had been delivered to them, along with all the land between the Ceyhan river and the territory of the Arabs, land where there lay forty castles and fortresses, each with its own lord. These were abandoned to the Arabs

⁵³ al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, II(b), 60-61.

⁵⁴ al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, II(a), 203-12.

voluntarily and by treaty'.⁵⁵ The Ceyhan river ran through the heart of Cilicia, from the mountainous interior around Marash to the Mediterranean coast near Ayas, and consequently, if this treaty was carried out to the letter, it would mean that the Armenians lost Servantikar, Toprak, Yilan, Misis and Gökvelioglu at this time.

However, until the 1330s at least, Armenian kings still had the option of waiting until their opponents had taken all the loot they wanted, and then emerging from their castles and reoccupying the Cilician plain with relative ease. Consequently, the strength of their fortresses, combined with the very temporary nature of most enemy offensives, ensured that the Armenians maintained their borders for much of the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. It has been noted that this was largely achieved without confronting numerically superior enemies in the open, and that on some occasions the Armenians even survived large scale invasions despite being heavily defeated.

At times, however, the Armenians clearly were prepared to risk a pitched battle in the hope of minimizing the amount of damage which raiders inflicted on their land. In 1307 Oschin, brother of Leon IV (1301-7), adopted this tactic against the Mongol general Poularghou, soon after the latter had murdered Leon and several leading Armenian barons at a supposedly friendly meeting below the castle of Anavarza. As soon as Oschin realized that his brother had been betrayed in this way, he fled to the citadel at Sis, and used this stronghold as a collection point for a new army with which he chased the Mongols out of Cilicia. These events provide us with a rare example of a castle being used in an attacking rather than a defensive role,

⁵⁵ Nerses Balientz, extract in Alishan, Sissouan, p.469.

and give further credence to the suggestion made earlier that Armenian troops were either stationed permanently inside fortresses, or were gathered together inside such structures at the first sign of trouble.⁵⁶

The remarkable resilience of the Armenians in the face of ever larger incursions also reflects the immense importance of the remote and rugged terrain of northern Cilicia, and the virtually impregnable mountain fortresses which were constructed there. Vagha, for example, continued to act as the residence of the catholicos well into the fifteenth century,⁵⁷ whilst the lords of Gaban, an unidentified castle situated somewhere near Sis, seem to have retained a certain amount of independence until the same period.⁵⁸ Indeed, Sis itself was not permanently conquered by the Mamluks until 1375, when the citadel was captured and the surrounding city destroyed.⁵⁹ Hence the isolated Armenian strongholds along the northern fringes of the Cilician plain were the backbone of the kingdom, and it must have been from here that Hethoum I and his successors swept down to reoccupy any sites which had been destroyed each time the Mamluks or the Mongols departed.

The fate of Sis and Vagha can be contrasted with that of Toprak, which, as we have seen, probably failed to resist the Mamluk raid of 1266, was sacked in 1298, and was finally handed over to the Muslims almost forty years later. Indeed, the fact that the present remains of the castle date almost exclusively from the fourteenth century suggests that Toprak lay in ruins between 1298 and 1337,

⁵⁶ Samuel of Ani, Chronographie, p.466.

⁵⁷ Alishan, Sissouan, pp.172-73.

⁵⁸ Boase, 'Gazetteer', pp.163-64.

⁵⁹ Jean Dardel, Chronique, pp.70-84; Fedden and Thomson, Crusader Castles, pp.99-100.

and was then rebuilt once the Mamluks had decided to incorporate Cilicia into their empire permanently. These events also imply that although its defences were hardly weak, Toprak lacked the strength of its neighbours further north, for it was situated on an artificial hill rather than a mountain, and lay directly in the path of anyone attacking the area via the Belem pass or the Amanus Gates. Furthermore, if the Armenians did indeed abandon Toprak as early as 1298, and therefore lost this link in their network of intervisible castles, it merely confirms that the mountain fortresses to the north and east were so strong that they could survive independently, and could withstand besieging armies even without any prior warning.⁶⁰

Similar circumstances may also explain why the Armenians lost control over strongholds which lay beyond the Taurus, Anti-Taurus and Amanus ranges relatively quickly. Darbsak, which had been regained after 1260 courtesy of the Mongols, fell to Baybars in 1268, because it simply became too exposed to Mamluk aggression after the fall of Antioch.⁶¹ Indeed, according to Ibn al-Furat, Baybars also captured several castles to the east of Antioch from Hethoum I, implying that these had been garrisoned by Armenian rather than Frankish troops after 1260. This suggests that Hethoum took advantage of Bohemond VI's almost permanent absence in Tripoli to exert considerable influence over Antioch itself.⁶² Many years earlier, Byzantine weakness had also enabled the Armenians to expand to the west of Silifke, but many of the fortresses

⁶⁰ See above, p.238.

⁶¹ al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, I(b), 54-55; Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 166.

⁶² Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 166; Boase, 'The History of the Kingdom', pp.25-26. The castles to the east of Antioch had been taken by Bohemond VI around 1261. See Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 115, 124, 126.

they held here were coastal sites, which were gradually picked off by the Seljuks during the reign of Leon II. Once again, therefore, the Armenians were far more successful at holding on to those castles which were remote and were situated in the mountains.⁶³

The design, history and location of sites like Vagha therefore reflects the Armenians' preference for mountain castles, but it also illustrates their total lack of interest in urban fortifications. This is *probably most* evident on the Cilician plain, where they recolonized a number of sites which had been important urban centres under the Byzantine Greeks and Romans. When Willbrand of Oldenburg travelled across Cilicia in 1212, he wrote that some of these places, most notably Alexandretta, Misis and Tarsus, still had the remains of ancient walls around them, but that these had since fallen into decay, and it seems that only Adana had any real urban defences left at all. On the other hand, Tarsus apparently did have a strong citadel, suggesting that the Armenians had maintained this structure at the expense of any other surrounding fortifications. Clearly, therefore, the inhabitants of Tarsus relied on a compact castle rather than sprawling curtain walls to protect them.⁶⁴

Further north, the same defensive strategy was adopted at Anavarza, a Greek and Roman city later held by the crusaders and the Armenians. This site is dominated by a large rocky plateau which gradually thins out into a

⁶³ Constable Sempad, Chronique, RHCArm I., 644-46; Boase, 'The History of the Kingdom', pp.23-25; Cahen, La Syrie du Nord, p.632.

⁶⁴ Willbrand of Oldenburg, Itinerarium, pp.218-20. See also Edwards, Fortifications, pp.37-50, particularly, pp.43-46.

narrow spur to the north, whose steep sides and easily defended access point made it ideal for fortification. However, whereas the Greeks and Romans used this spur as a means of refuge in case of trouble, and built their city in the valley below, the Armenians concentrated all their building efforts on the plateau itself. Consequently, while leaving the town walls in the valley to decay, the archaeological evidence shows that they carried out major repairs and modifications to the walls of the southern plateau and the defences of the northern spur. The thin neck of land connecting these two elements was also defended by a huge square keep which stands isolated between two deep ditches to the north and south. This keep has an inscription on it dated 1188, commemorating the Armenian repairs carried out on the castle by Leon II, which the archaeologist Michael Gough has taken to mean that the keep itself is also Armenian. However, this has been challenged recently by R.W. Edwards, who has shown that the masonry and design of the keep is typical of the kind of towers erected by the Franks throughout the crusader period, and in particular during the early years of the twelfth century. The history of Anavarza therefore illustrates some very interesting aspects of Armenian military architecture: whilst the urban fortifications of the site were abandoned and the city itself appears to have gone into decline, the Armenians concentrated on the citadel, and only incorporated older structures where this fitted their needs. Hence the crusader keep was not only retained because of its strength, but also because its height gave it intervisibility with Yilan, Tumlu and other fortresses.⁶⁵

⁶⁵ Gough, 'Anazarbus', 119-25 (keep: 122-23); R.W. Edwards, 'The Crusader Donjon at Anavarza in Cilicia', Abstracts of the Tenth Annual Byzantine Studies Conference, (Cincinnati 1984), 53-55. See also Hellenkemper, Burgen, pp.191-201; Edwards, Fortifications, pp.65-70; Boase, 'Gazetteer', p.153; Cahen, La Syrie du

A similar disregard for urban defences is also evident at Sis, which stood on the lower slopes of a precipitous ridge above the Cilician plain. The importance of Sis as the residence of the Armenian kings, and very often also the catholicos, meant that it appears to have been one of the few relatively large urban centres in the region, but Willbrand of Oldenburg still reported that it had no town walls whatsoever, only a strong citadel at its summit.⁶⁶ Although the present remains of the site indicate that more outer defences must have been added after Willbrand's visit, the historical evidence confirms that the inhabitants of Sis primarily relied on this powerful stronghold, which was essentially yet another mountain fortress, to protect them against external aggressors. In 1275, for example, the Muslims 'made their way as far as Sis, but they found no man therein, for they had all sought protection for themselves in the citadel, and piece by piece [the Muslims] burnt [the city]'.⁶⁷ A century later, during the final siege of Sis, numerous early Muslim attacks on the citadel also failed 'because the castle was very strong, and well manned, and well equipped with stones and trebuchets on the walls, which the king (Leon VI, 1374-75) had placed there, and so there was nowhere the castle could be attacked except in front of the gate'.⁶⁸ In addition, Sis withstood another less sustained siege in 1298, whilst it has already been noted ~~that in 1307 Leon IV's brother sheltered there from the~~

Nord, p.152.

⁶⁶ Willbrand of Oldenburg, Itinerarium, p.222.

⁶⁷ Bar Hebraeus, Chronography, p.453. For descriptions of Sis, see Hellenkemper, Burgen, pp.202-13; Edwards, Fortifications, pp.233-36; Fedden and Thomson, Crusader Castles, pp.97-99; Alishan, Sissouan, pp.241-48; Müller-Wiener, Castles of the Crusaders, p.77.

⁶⁸ Jean Dardel, Chronique, p.73.

that in 1307 Leon IV's brother sheltered there from the Mongols.⁶⁹

It is clear, therefore, that the Armenians only regarded strongholds like the citadel at Sis as safe havens during an emergency, and did not live permanently inside fortresses or behind town walls in the way that the vast majority of the Franks did during the thirteenth century. Indeed, few people in Cilicia probably lived in urban settlements at all, but inhabited much smaller farms and villages scattered across the plains and the valleys of the interior. In a sense, this also applied to the higher levels of society, for at Sis both the cathedral and the residence of the catholicos, as well as the royal palace itself, were all located outside the citadel. This is a far cry from Frankish royal residences such as Kyrenia, Chlemoutsi and St.Hilarion, all of which were incorporated into immensely powerful castles.⁷⁰

These profound differences between the Armenians and the Franks also meant that the two peoples were affected by enemy attacks in sharply contrasting ways. Whereas the economy of the Latin states was based more on mercantile trade, that of Cilician Armenia was largely agricultural, and hence Armenian castles were not so closely linked with the economic welfare of the region. This meant that the Armenians did not need to compromise between building fortifications in strong defensive positions, and at the same time making them accessible enough for traders and merchants to use. Cilician castles did not necessarily have a walled town, or bourg, attached to them in the same way that Frankish strongholds usually did, and so they could happily be built on the most inaccessible outcrop

⁶⁹ 1298: al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, II(b), 61. 1307: Samuel of Ani, Chronographie, p.466.

⁷⁰ Alishan, Sissouan, pp.246-47. For Kyrenia, Chlemoutsi and St.Hilarion, see below, pp.401-2.

available. Consequently, such castles could be positioned and designed with little regard to where the civilian population actually lived, whereas Latin fortifications often had to be adapted to suit the needs of an already existing Christian settlement, even if this meant that they were not located in very good defensive positions. Hence Armenian castles were usually much stronger than Frankish ones, but at the same time less significant to the overall survival of the kingdom. Thus the capture of a place like Tripoli, whose walls and citadel guarded a large urban settlement and safeguarded an important centre of trade, had a far more damaging impact on Syria than the loss of a single castle like Yilan or even Sis could ever have on Lesser Armenia.

These observations are perhaps most applicable to areas near the Mediterranean coast. Whereas the Latins relied on the sea as a vital economic, political and military lifeline to the west, the only major coastal centres consistently occupied by the Armenians were Ayas (Lajazzo) and Corycos (although the inland ports of Tarsus and Misis were also connected with the sea via rivers). Both these ports rose greatly in influence during the thirteenth century, and became very popular with Latin traders after the fall of Acre. Hence the Armenians retained and even augmented many of the ancient defences guarding these two sites, which had originally been constructed by the Romans, Greeks and Arabs. At Corycos these defences consisted of two fortresses, one situated on a headland just to the east of the harbour, and the other on a small island a couple of hundred metres off shore. The design and layout of both these castles owe far more to Roman military architecture than Armenian defensive strategy. The land castle, for example, is approximately square in plan and defended by two concentric curtain walls. These walls are flanked by numerous square and polygonal towers,

and include various elements from classical times, including a Roman triumphal arch incorporated into the inner rampart. A similar description can be applied to Corycos's sea castle, as well as the fortifications at Ayas; pre-Armenian structures which were also situated on land and an island in the mouth of the harbour. In addition, both Ayas and Corycos were surrounded by ancient urban defences, which, like the walls of Tarsus and Anavarza, were probably abandoned during the thirteenth century.⁷¹

However, the decision to maintain the castles of Ayas and Corycos appears to have been taken by Leon II, who recognized that closer links with Italian merchants could bring greater financial prosperity to his kingdom. Hence Leon granted trading privileges to the Genoese in 1201, 1215 and 1216, the Venetians in 1201, and also the Pisans in 1216. Leon's successors confirmed and augmented these grants,⁷² and made others to the merchants of Sicily (1331), Montpellier (1314, 1321), and Catalonia (1293), as well as the Florentine banking company, the Bardi (1335).⁷³ These privileges allowed western merchants to trade along the coast of Cilicia, in return for paying certain tolls and taxes which were collected by royal officials. Consequently, the defences of Ayas and Corycos were expected to protect a lucrative source of income for

⁷¹ Corycos: Alishan, Sissouan, pp.397-402; Müller-Wiener, Castles of the Crusaders, pp.79-80; Edwards, Fortifications, pp.161-66. Ayas: ibid, pp.77-81; Alishan, Sissouan, pp.432-34.

⁷² Genoa: Langlois, Le Trésor, no.1, pp.105-8, no.10, pp.126-28, no.15, pp.136-37, no.26, pp.154-61, no.27, p.162. Venice: ibid, no.2, pp.109-12, no.19, pp.143-45, no.25, pp.151-54, no.31, pp.166-68, no.36, pp.182-85, no.40, pp.193-94. Pisa: ibid, no.16, pp.138-39.

⁷³ Sicily: Langlois, Le Trésor, no.38, pp.186-89. Montpellier: ibid, no.34, p.178, no.37, p.185. Catalonia: ibid, no.28, p.163. Florence: ibid, no.41, p.195.

the rulers of Cilician Armenia.⁷⁴

On numerous occasions the fortifications of these sites, and in particular their sea castles, also sheltered local people during Muslim incursions. In 1275, for example, 8,000 Egyptians entered Ayas 'and they killed those whom they found inside', but did not attack those citizens who had fled to the sea castle. As a result, these people narrowly escaped certain death, although they were subsequently set upon by pirates, who 'even carried off their cloaks'.⁷⁵ Nevertheless, this incident is a clear indication that the Armenians used the same tactics to defend Ayas and Corycos as they did at Sis and Anavarza, for both harbours were protected by citadels rather than ramparts, so that their inhabitants could take shelter temporarily, and then repair any damage inflicted by the Muslims once they had departed. Indeed, the fact that some of the trading privileges which have just been mentioned date from the period after 1275 suggests that Ayas recovered relatively quickly from this particular incursion.

However, even if this was not in fact the case, it may be that the destruction of Ayas and Corycos had a far smaller impact on the Armenians than the loss of Acre or Tripoli did on the Franks. Hence Ayas suffered terrible damage in 1322, when the Muslims flattened the city and even managed to capture the sea castle, whilst in 1337 it was handed over as part of a wider peace treaty which covered most of eastern Cilicia.⁷⁶ After these terrible setbacks, both

⁷⁴ For more details on West European traders in Cilicia, see Langlois, Le Trésor, pp.35-40; Cahen, La Syrie du Nord, pp.689-90.

⁷⁵ Bar Hebraeus, Chronography, p.453.

⁷⁶ 1322: Constable Sempad, Chronique, RHCArm I., 667-68. 1337: Nerses Balientz, extract in Alishan, Sissouan, p.469.

Ayas and Corycos, along with the entire Cilician coastline, were frequently in Muslim hands, but although this meant that the Armenians were largely cut off from the west, they still held out against their enemies for another forty years. This situation was only made possible by the harshness of the Cilician interior, and the strength of the Armenians' mountain fortresses, and would have been unthinkable in Palestine or Syria during the thirteenth century. The close economic and military ties between the Franks and western Europe would have made it impossible for crusader strongholds like Antioch or Crac des Chevaliers to have survived inland without the existence of coastal centres such as Tripoli or Antioch's port at St.Simeon.⁷⁷

To some extent, the Armenians may also have fared better against the Muslims because they were united under one monarch, who could organize a more disciplined defence than the weak and politically divided rulers of the Latin states to the south. This unity had largely been achieved during the middle years of the twelfth century, when Armenian leaders had captured many Cilician sites from the Turks, the Franks and the Greeks. As a result, from the reign of Leon II onwards, the kings of Armenia probably possessed most of the castles and settlements which have already been discussed, including Adana, Anavarza, Yilan, Vagha, Ayas, Sis, Tumlu, Tarsus and Misis.⁷⁸

Such extensive royal ownership probably also explains how the Armenians were able to create the kind of intervisible

⁷⁷ See above, pp.92-98.

⁷⁸ The extent of the royal domain can be calculated by studying Leon II's coronation list, in 1198. See below, pp.264-65. See also Hellenkemper, Burgen, p.258, and above, pp.22-23.

network of castles which protected the entrances to and routes across the Cilician plain. The existence of this network clearly reflects the presence of a strong central authority, and this has led many historians to argue that it was primarily the work of Leon II himself. This theory can be backed up by looking at the historical evidence, which shows Leon to have been a vigorous ruler whose reign, along with that of his son-in-law Hethoum I (1226-70), marked the zenith of Armenian power. Not only did Leon pursue an aggressive policy toward the Seljuks and have ambitious plans of incorporating Antioch into his kingdom, but numerous sources also mention his castle building activities. Michael the Syrian, for example, stated that 'the valorous Leon extended his domination over 72 fortresses', and Vahram of Edessa wrote that 'he built a number of castles and fortresses, with which he surrounded Cilicia'.⁷⁹

This is to some extent confirmed by the archaeological evidence. As we have seen, the crusader keep at Anavarza has an inscription on it commemorating Leon's repair work there, whilst at Yilan a carved relief above the inner gateway is often thought to represent Leon seated on his throne, dating it to the period after 1198. A similar inscription to that at Anavarza has also been found on the walls of the sea castle at Corycos, and dates from 1206. In addition, the close similarities in masonry, vaulting and building techniques between Yilan and several other mountain castles implies that many of these structures were erected by Leon II.⁸⁰

⁷⁹ Michael the Syrian, Chronique, p.405; Vahram of Edessa, Chronique Rimée, p.511. See also Hellenkemper, Burgen, p.262.

⁸⁰ Anavarza: see above, p.256. Yilan: Youngs, 'Three Cilician Castles', 130. Corycos: Alishan, Sissouan, p.400.

However, R.W. Edwards has sounded a note of caution about dating so many castles to such a brief period of time. He has pointed out that the inscription at Anavarza dates from 1188, ten years before Leon became king, and that both this inscription and that at Corycos only commemorate repair work rather than new foundations. Similarly, there is no irrefutable proof that the relief at Yilan actually represents Leon, whilst the building style used in this and other castles is fairly common to all Armenian military architecture between the tenth and fourteenth centuries.⁸¹ Therefore, it may be an oversimplification to credit so many Cilician fortresses to Leon, although it nevertheless seems a fair assumption that such a large and complex system of castles could only have been created in the period between c.1190 and c.1260, after the Armenians had broken away from the Byzantine empire, but before the Mongols and the Muslims began to tear the kingdom apart.

These time limits also seem logical when one considers the internal history of Cilician Armenia, for the fourteenth century in particular witnessed a series of palace coups and baronial rebellions which severely weakened the monarchy, and must surely have ruled out extensive and centrally organized building projects. During most of the thirteenth century, such clashes were kept to a minimum, simply because the Armenian kings were by far the most powerful landholders in Cilicia, and held so many impregnable fortresses that the nobility lacked the resources to seize them by force. Indeed, most Armenian barons probably only held one major castle each, which would have been traditional hereditary possessions passed on from generation to generation. By far the most useful, and in many cases the only way of establishing which castle belonged to which lord is to consult Leon II's

⁸¹ Edwards, Fortifications, pp.33-37.

coronation list of 1198. This vital document records the forty five barons who were present that day along with each family seat, and therefore confirms that Servantikar, Corycos, Toprak, Silifke, Amouda and Lampron were all owned by individual nobles at this stage. Of the remaining thirty nine place names, ten are a complete mystery, whilst the rest cannot all be identified with any exact location. It is also by noting significant omissions from this list, such as Sis, that we can estimate the extent of the royal domain, although this rather unsatisfactory method makes it perfectly possible that omitted places like Tumlu were in fact baronial strongholds which had not yet been built. This problem casts further doubt on the theory that Leon II alone constructed most of the Armenian strongholds in Cilicia.⁸²

However, although it will probably never be possible to link every medieval ruin in the area with one particular king or lord, the reign of Leon II still reveals some interesting information about the methods Armenian rulers used to keep their followers in check. As we have seen, this was partly done by ensuring that the royal domain was far greater than that of any one baron, but it was also achieved by confiscating the property of those nobles who were regarded as a risk. Perhaps the best example of this aggressive policy is provided by the castle of Lampron, whose impressive defences and strategic location near the Cilician Gates have already been referred to. Lampron was also the seat of the Hethoumids, who were involved in several damaging internal disputes with their arch-rivals, Leon II's own Roupenid dynasty. During the twelfth century, the Hethoumids had frequently allied themselves with Constantinople against the Roupenids, and over the next two hundred years they often appear to have exploited

⁸² Constable Sempad, *Chronique*, ed. Dédéyan, pp.73-81; Boase, 'Gazetteer', pp.146-48.

baronial discontent toward pro-western rulers very effectively. However, the principal reason for their success lay in the sheer strength of Lampron itself, which was so powerful that 'all the lords of this castle rebelled because they knew it was impregnable'.⁸³

Many of Leon II's predecessors had tried and failed to bring this disloyalty to an end by organizing futile sieges of Lampron. In 1201 Leon therefore came up with a more subtle plan to gain possession of the castle. 'With this aim in mind, he sent to Hethoum, son of Oschin, a message to trick him: "I want to establish a bond of friendship with you", he told him, "and give Philippa, daughter of my brother Roupen, in marriage to your oldest son Oschin". Hethoum accepted this suggestion. The celebrations for the marriage were to take place at Tarsus. When the Hethoumids had arrived in this city with all their relatives and children, the king Leon seized them and occupied Lampron without any bloodshed. After having imprisoned Hethoum for a while, he released him, gave him a number of villages, and treated him with good will from then on. As for Hethoum, he showed himself to be a loyal vassal'.⁸⁴ Although Lampron eventually returned to Hethoumid power later in the thirteenth century, these events illustrate how the seizure of just one fortress could dramatically enhance the strength of an Armenian king. It is interesting to speculate whether Frederick II had been as successful in the Holy Land if he had managed to acquire Beirut and the castles of the Templars in the same way.⁸⁵

⁸³ Leon the Great of Cilician Armenia, cited in Robinson and Hughes, 'Lampron, Castle of Armenian Cilicia', 183. For a brief history of Lampron and its bellicose owners, see *ibid*, 183-88.

⁸⁴ Constable Sempad, *Chronique*, ed. Dédéyan, pp.81-82.

⁸⁵ See above, pp.51, 143.

Leon's treatment of Hethoum after Lampron had been taken is also extremely significant, for it reflects a conscious policy to break away from the more traditional Armenian custom of outright hereditary ownership, and move toward a more feudal system of fiefs granted by the king in return for loyalty and military service. Although it still remains unclear what these services were, and how, for example, royal castles were garrisoned, other evidence can still be produced to show that Leon was indeed trying to 'westernize' the nature of castle ownership. Hence in 1198 the constable Sempad recorded that the 45 barons who came to Leon's coronation were encouraged to attend because the new king 'attracted them with his promises, and made them his men with his grants'. Clearly, Leon wanted these lords to realize that they did not just hold their castles by conquest or birthright, but because he allowed them to do so.⁸⁶ Similarly, when Vasil of Vaner, one of the nobles included in the 1198 list, died heirless in 1214, Leon took possession of his properties rather than allowing them to remain under the control of Vasil's extended family. Hence we find Leon acquiring and handing out fiefs in the manner of a west European king.⁸⁷

Thus the rulers of Cilician Armenia relied on a combination of force and generosity to maintain their grip on power; a combination which Leon II and his successors

⁸⁶ Constable Sempad, Chronique, ed. Dédéyan, p.73. See also Edwards, Fortifications, pp.46-47.

⁸⁷ Constable Sempad, Chronique, ed. Dédéyan, p.77. The land was subsequently transferred to the Hospitallers. See Langlois, Le Trésor, no.8, pp.122-23; Cartulaire, II, no.1426, pp.464-65, and below, pp. CA103. Vaner has been identified with the castle of Gökvelioglu, although this cannot be verified, and Leon II's grant to the Hospitallers mentions no fortifications at all. See Hellenkemper, Burgen, pp.165-68; Boase, 'Gazetteer', p.165; Youngs, 'Three Cilician Castles', 118, 125.

later used to transform their status from that of mere warlords to that of kings with certain inalienable rights. This process was not as smooth as one might expect, however, because it was not always possible to predict rebellions in advance, or to seize castles pre-emptively in the way that Leon had done at Lampron. Indeed, it has already been shown that Leon's successful occupation of this stronghold was the exception rather than the norm, and was achieved through stealth rather than military strength. In a sense, therefore, the Armenians were victims of their own success, for their mountain castles were so strong that they encouraged nobles to rebel, and therefore contributed to the erosion of royal authority. Hence in 1271 a baronial insurrection sparked off by the death of Hethoum I was only put down once Leon III managed to capture the rebels' castles, and their ring leader had been killed in 'the fortress of the city of Anavarza'.⁸⁸ Similarly, in 1221 Raymond Roupen used the fortress of Corycos as his headquarters during a failed attempt to seize the Armenian throne, in the anarchic period following the death of Leon II. This crisis came to an end when Raymond Roupen was defeated and killed by Constantine of Lampron whilst trying to capture Tarsus.⁸⁹

In order to understand the underlying causes of these and many other internal conflicts, it is also important to take a closer look at the dramatic changes which Leon II and his successors introduced in the course of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Some aspects of these changes, such as the granting of privileges to the Italian

⁸⁸ Bar Hebraeus, Chronography, p.449, and see pp.449-50; Vahram of Edessa, Chronique Rimée, p.527; Constable Sempad, Chronique, ed. Dédéyan, p.125.

⁸⁹ Bar Hebraeus, Chronography, pp.379-80; Hethoum the Historian, Table Chronologique, p.485; Vahram of Edessa, Chronique Rimée, p.514; Boase, 'The History of the Kingdom', pp.22-23; Cahen, La Syrie du Nord, pp.631-32.

city states and the introduction of fiefs, have already been discussed. Other reforms, most notably the transfer of numerous castles and estates to the Military Orders and the forging of closer links with the papacy, were also intended to strengthen the monarchy, and to bring much needed financial and military assistance against the Seljuks, Mongols and Mamluks. However, these policies were bitterly resented by traditionalists amongst the nobility, who did not wish to change the Armenian church, give up free land in exchange for fiefs, or indeed make way for alien Frankish newcomers.

Perhaps the most important such newcomers were the Teutonic Knights. They were often favoured by Armenian rulers because of their close links with the German emperors, who had supported the idea of an Armenian kingdom since Frederick Barbarossa's crusade in 1190. This support ultimately helped bring about Leon II's coronation, which was attended by the papal legate Conrad of Mainz and the imperial chancellor Conrad of Hildesheim, the latter having brought with him a crown from the emperor Henry VI.⁹⁰ Consequently, Leon owed much of his status to the Holy Roman Empire, and was keen to strengthen this link by endowing the Teutonic Knights with various Cilician properties. One of the most significant of these was the fortress of Amuda (Adamodana), which lay on the Cilician plain and was granted to the Order in 1212.⁹¹ In the same year Willbrand of Oldenburg saw it and

⁹⁰ Constable Sempad, Chronique, ed. Dédéyan, p.73; Arnold of Lübeck, Chronica Slavorum, p.210; Cahen, La Syrie du Nord, pp.588-90; Forstreuter, Der Deutsche Orden, p.59; Boase, 'The History of the Kingdom', p.19; J.S.C. Riley-Smith, 'The Templars and the Teutonic Knights in Cilician Armenia', in The Cilician Kingdom of Armenia, pp.92-117, at p.111.

⁹¹ Langlois, Le Trésor, no.6, pp.117-20; Tabulae ordinis Theutonici, no.46, pp.37-39; Riley-Smith, 'The Templars and the Teutonic Knights', p.113.

remarked on its strength, whilst in 1266 the Muslims captured it and killed or enslaved the 2,200 people sheltering there.⁹² After this, Amuda's history is somewhat obscure, and it may in fact have been abandoned, for in 1298 the Mamluks used it as a meeting point during their invasion campaign.⁹³

These few recorded events nevertheless give us some ideas about the functions which Amuda was expected to fulfil. Further clues are also provided by the archaeological evidence: Amuda was built on an outcrop approximately 80 metres above the Cilician plain, at a point where an important trade route between the Amanus Gates and Sis crossed the Ceyhan river. The castle's position on high ground made it intervisible with Yilan, Anavarza, Tumlu and Toprak, and also gave it great defensive strength, for steep cliffs rendered it totally inaccessible from the east, north and west. Consequently much of the site was defended by a simple curtain wall, which only had one entrance in the south west corner, and appears to have been repaired and altered by successive Byzantine, Armenian and Frankish owners. The most interesting feature of the castle, however, was the large, square keep, a three storey structure with immensely thick walls and a solitary doorway several metres above ground level. This structure was erected by the Teutonic Knights with little regard to local building techniques, and its isolated location at the highest and strongest point of the castle

⁹² Willbrand of Oldenburg, Itinerarium, p.224; Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 99; al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, I(b), 34.

⁹³ al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, II(b), 61; Riley-Smith, 'The Templars and the Teutonic Knights', p.115.

can be compared with the central keep at Montfort.⁹⁴ Its size and strength also suggests that the Order invested a lot of time and money in Amuda, which was clearly intended to act as its headquarters in Cilicia. In addition, the fortress formed an important link in the network of intervisible strongholds guarding the Cilician plain and its inhabitants, and its location near the Amanus Gates meant that it often bore the brunt of Muslim attackers using this particular route. Amuda's close proximity to a popular river crossing also raises the possibility that it was used to collect tolls from merchants and travellers, and if this is the case, it can be compared with Hasanbeyli, a tower and observation post near the eastern approaches to the Amanus Gates. A document dating from 1271 implies that this structure was the Black Tower, a toll station which the Teutonic Knights held in the vicinity of Servantikar.⁹⁵

To the north of this strategic valley, the Teutonic Knights also possessed Haruniye (Haroun), which had belonged to an individual baron in 1198, but was given to the Order by Hethoum I and queen Isabella in 1236.⁹⁶ Like Amuda, Haruniye is situated on high ground, and overlooks the road between Servantikar and the northern fringes of the Cilician plain. Its design owes little to Armenian military architecture and reflects the varied building

⁹⁴ Edwards, Fortifications, pp.59-61; Hellenkemper, Burgen, pp.123-31; Forstreuter, Der Deutsche Orden, p.61. Montfort: see above, pp.57, 152.

⁹⁵ Document translated and reproduced in Alishan, Sissouan, p.239. See also Edwards, Fortifications, pp.147-49; Forstreuter, Der Deutsche Orden, p.65, and see below, p.421.

⁹⁶ Constable Sempad, Chronique, ed. Dédéyan, p.76; Langlois, Le Trésor, no.18, pp.141-43; Tabulae ordinis Theutonici, no.83, pp.65-66; Riley-Smith, 'The Templars and the Teutonic Knights', pp.113-14.

work carried out on it over the centuries by Greeks, crusaders and Muslims. Hence Haruniye has fewer distinct remains dating from the Teutonic Knights' occupation than Amuda. The fortress itself was so compact that it amounted to little more than an elongated keep, with a small central courtyard, two floors of shooting galleries and a large rounded tower in the north-west corner. This tower is significant in that the masonry used in its construction suggests that it may have been extensively repaired by the Teutonic Knights, and was possibly even used by the Order as a chapel.⁹⁷

Furthermore, Amuda and Haruniye were only the most important centres at the heart of an extensive territorial block belonging to the Teutonic Knights between the Amanus mountains and the Ceyhan river. This region appears to have been well populated with many villages, as well as several smaller towers or fortified houses held by the Order, such as Cumbethefort, which probably lay half way between Amuda and Haruniye and was visited by Willbrand of Oldenburg in 1212. These places presumably fulfilled a similar role to that of Hasanbeyli, in that they controlled trade in the region and generally helped the Teutonic Knights to administer their properties.⁹⁸ It is also extremely significant that the Order had been given so many lands and castles both to the east and to the west of the Amanus Gates, for this suggests that Leon II, Hethoum I and their successors hoped that the German knights would help them to defend a vulnerable frontier region against external aggressors, in much the same way that the Templars and Hospitallers protected the county of

⁹⁷ Edwards, Fortifications, pp.143-46; Hellenkemper, Burgen, pp.116-19.

⁹⁸ Willbrand of Oldenburg, Itinerarium, p.220; Langlois, Le Trésor, no.6, p.119; Hellenkemper, Burgen, p.263.

Tripoli from the Muslims of Homs and Hama.⁹⁹ Initially this was done to guard the Amanus Gates against the Seljuk Turks, who had indeed been defeated in a pitched battle near Servantikar in 1187, but from the 1260s onwards the Mamluks clearly posed the greatest threat to the Teutonic Knights, and must ultimately have been responsible for the destruction of the Order's properties in Cilicia.¹⁰⁰

Although they did not share the same significance in terms of nationality as the Teutonic Knights, the Templars and the Hospitallers also held castles and estates in Cilicia during the thirteenth century, but these two Orders were often treated in very different ways. During his dispute with the Templars over the castle of Baghras, and his attempts to exert more influence over Antioch itself, Leon II confiscated many Templar properties in or on the fringes of Cilicia, and at the same time tried to secure support elsewhere by being very generous to the Hospitallers. One of the most important grants that Leon subsequently made to this Order was the castle of Silifke (Seleucia), which lay near Ayas on the coastal route leading westwards out of Cilicia.¹⁰¹ This stronghold was composed of an inner curtain wall flanked by several horse shoe towers, and a wide outer moat whose inner revetment was so large that it effectively formed a second rampart. There was no central keep, and all the service buildings and residential quarters of the castle were therefore incorporated into several undercrofts and other structures

⁹⁹ Riley-Smith, 'The Templars and the Teutonic Knights', p.114, and see above, pp.44-49.

¹⁰⁰ Constable Sempad, Chronique, ed. Dédéyan, pp.63-64. The document of 1271 shows that Haruniye and Hasanbeyli were still occupied at this time. See Alishan, Sissouan, p.239; Riley-Smith, 'The Templars and the Teutonic Knights', pp.114-17.

¹⁰¹ Langlois, Le Trésor, no.3, pp.112-14; Cartulaire, II, no.1351, p.119.

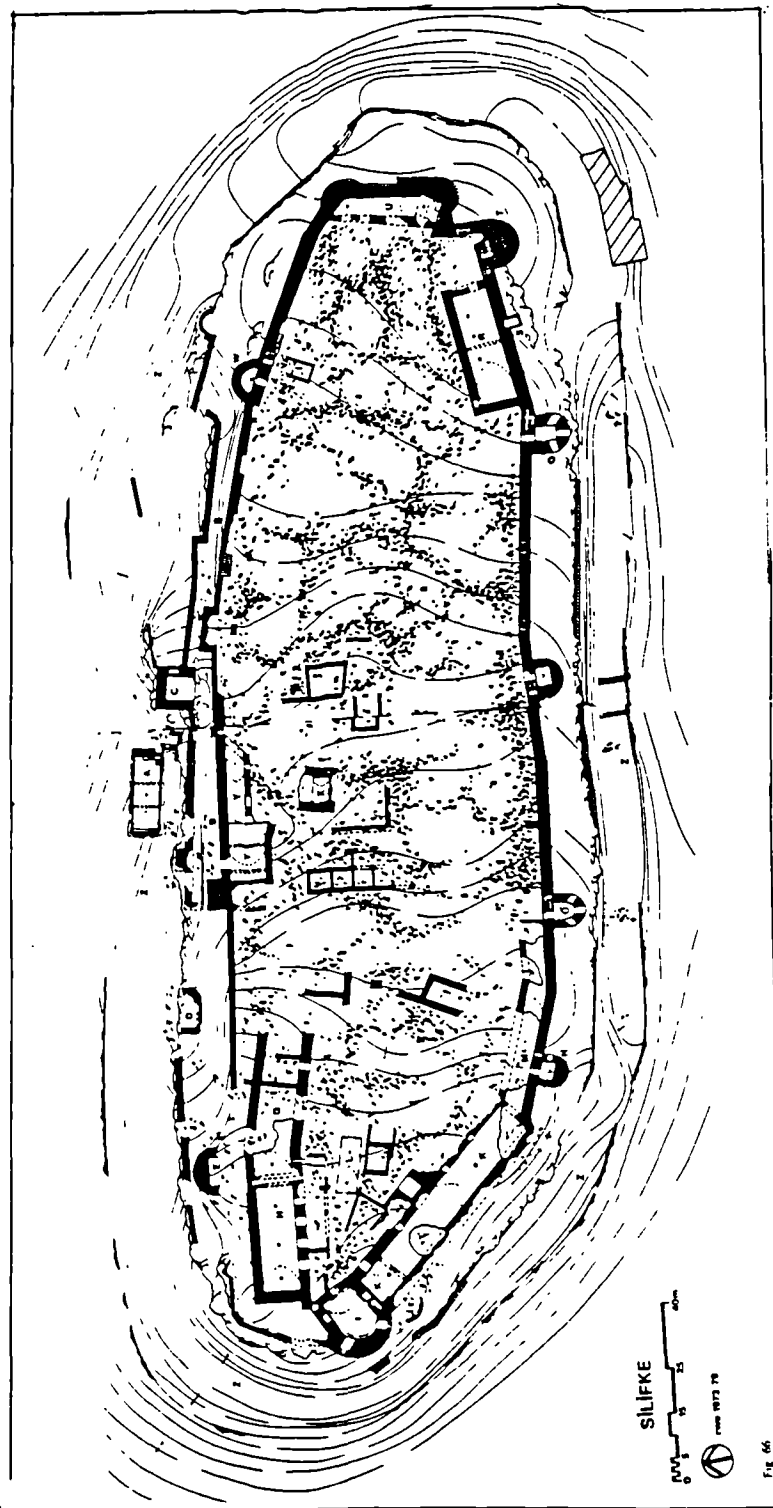


Fig.13. Silifke; a concentric castle similar to Crac des Chevaliers.
From Edwards, Fortifications, p.221.

built along the inner faces of the central bailey. As we have seen, these defences are architecturally significant, for although the masonry and building techniques used in their construction are unmistakably Frankish, their overall design is strongly reminiscent of many Armenian fortresses. Consequently, Silifke may represent a direct architectural link between sites like Servantikar and the castles of Margat and Crac des Chevaliers.¹⁰²

The way in which Leon II transferred Silifke to the Hospitallers is also interesting. In the early years of the thirteenth century a nobleman called Henry and his three sons, Constantine, Joscelin and Baldwin held Silifke along with numerous smaller castles, including Goumardias (Camardias) and Norpert (Castellum Novum). Henry was also married to the sister of the Armenian catholicos John, with whom Leon had numerous disputes during this period, which were probably caused by resentment toward the latter's pro-Frankish policies. In addition, it has already been noted that Armenian control to the west of Silifke gradually receded at this time in the face of Seljuk expansion. Hence Leon may have killed two birds with one stone by first having Henry and his sons arrested for conspiring against him in 1207, and then granting Silifke and its adjoining territories to the Hospitallers, so that they could guard this frontier against the Seljuk Turks.¹⁰³ This policy came to fruition ten years later, when the Hospitallers and the Armenians together defended

¹⁰² Edwards, Fortifications, pp.221-27; Hellenkemper, Burgen, pp.249-54; Fedden and Thomson, Crusader Castles, pp.103-5; Müller-Wiener, Castles of the Crusaders, pp.80-81.

¹⁰³ Constable Sempad, Chronique, ed. Dédéyan, p.85; Hethoum the Historian, Table Chronologique, p.481; Boase, 'The History of the Kingdom', pp.21, 23-25, and see above, pp.254-55.

Silifke successfully against the Seljuks.¹⁰⁴ In addition, Leon's policy toward the Armenian lord of Silifke can be compared with his treatment of Hethoum of Lampron in 1201, and his transfer of Amuda to the Teutonic Knights in 1212. Perhaps similar circumstances explain why Haruniye was held by an individual lord in 1198, but belonged to a Military Order from 1236 onwards. It should also be noted that the lands which Leon occupied following the death of Vasil of Vaner in 1218 were subsequently granted to the Hospitallers. Hence Leon's policy of rewarding the Military Orders, but at the same time confiscating the castles of potential troublemakers, often overlapped, and formed part of a wider campaign to strengthen Cilicia against both external and internal aggression.¹⁰⁵

These observations also seem to be confirmed by what happened after Leon's death in 1219. It was Leon's intention that he should be succeeded by his daughter Isabelle and her husband Philip, who, being the son of Bohemond III, would hopefully fulfil the old king's dream of uniting Antioch and Cilician Armenia. However, the Frankish and catholic Philip was quickly murdered in a baronial coup led by Constantine of Lampron, who then installed his own son Hethoum I as king, and forced the unfortunate Isabelle to marry him. But before she did so, Isabelle sought shelter briefly at Silifke until the Hospitallers, under immense political and military pressure from Constantine, were eventually forced to hand both their guest and their castle over to the Armenians in 1226. Thus once the powerful figure of Leon had been removed, there was a Hethoumid-led backlash against anything Frankish, which resulted in the death of Philip

¹⁰⁴ Constable Sempad, Chronique, RHCArm I., 645.

¹⁰⁵ Lampron: see above, p.266. Haruniye: see above, p.271. Vaner: see above, p.267.

and the return of Silifke.¹⁰⁶

Ironically enough, however, the Hethoumids must ultimately have understood the wisdom of gaining the support of the powerful Military Orders, for as early as 1233 we find the lord of Lampron giving new land to the Hospitallers from his private domain.¹⁰⁷ Similarly, many of the properties which the Order acquired during the reign of Leon II were not just intended to prevent rebellions or halt the Seljuks, but were also granted in exchange for troops and money to pay for the war with Bohemond IV and the Templars, who stood in the way of Leon's ambitious plans to rule Antioch. Hence the Hospitallers only held Silifke as long as they made an annual contribution of 400 horsemen to the royal army,¹⁰⁸ whilst Vasil of Vaner's old estates were sold to the Order for a sizeable amount of cash.¹⁰⁹ In 1214 the Hospitallers also provided the king with 20,000 Saracen bezants in return for several other large estates, including the castle of Canamella, which lay along the coast between Alexandretta and Misis. These estates were to be handed back to Leon provided he could repay his loan within two years, otherwise the Order could keep them.¹¹⁰ During this period Raymond Roupén, Bohemond IV's rival for the throne of Antioch, also issued a spate of charters granting or confirming numerous privileges and properties to the Hospitallers in order to secure their

¹⁰⁶ Constable Sempad, Chronique, ed. Dédéyan, pp.93-94, 95-96; idem, Chronique, RHCarm I., 647-48; Hethoum the Historian, Table Chronologique, p.485; Samuel of Ani, Chronographie, p.460; Boase, 'The History of the Kingdom', pp.23-25.

¹⁰⁷ Langlois, Le Trésor, no.17, p.140.

¹⁰⁸ Constable Sempad, Chronique, RHCarm I., 646.

¹⁰⁹ Langlois, Le Trésor, no.8, p.122.

¹¹⁰ Cartulaire, II, no.1427, pp.165-66; Langlois, Le Trésor, no.9, pp.124-25.

assistance.¹¹¹

Hence the primary functions of Hospitaller castles in Cilicia were to defend its western frontier, enhance royal authority internally and bolster Armenian influence in the principality of Antioch. As far as the Hospitallers themselves were concerned, these strongholds must also have been used to protect and administer the extensive territories which they gained under Leon II, particularly Silifke, which became the residence of the Order's preceptor in the area.¹¹² However, the close ties which Leon established with the Hospitallers were largely forged at the expense of the Templars, whom the Armenians clashed with regularly during the early years of the thirteenth century. These clashes, combined with the incomplete nature of Templar records, makes it difficult to work out the extent of the Order's properties in Cilician Armenia, although contemporary sources do confirm that it had held considerable territories in the vicinity of the Belem pass since the twelfth century, and possibly as early as the 1130s.¹¹³ As we have seen, the key fortresses in this area were Baghras, Hadjar Choghlan and Darbsak, which had therefore originally been entrusted to the Templars to defend Antioch against Byzantine or Muslim incursions from the north. However, with the decline of both Frankish and Byzantine control over the Cilician plain, the Armenians increasingly regarded these castles as a threat to their independence, and a hindrance to their hopes of controlling Antioch. These factors explain the intense

¹¹¹ See above, pp.113-14.

¹¹² Willbrand of Oldenburg, Itinerarium, p.224; Riley-Smith, The Knights of St.John, p.157.

¹¹³ A.W. Lawrence, 'The Castle of Baghras', in The Cilician Kingdom of Armenia, pp.34-84, at pp.41-43; Riley-Smith, 'The Templars and the Teutonic Knights', pp.92-97; Forey, The Military Orders, p.61.

hostility between Leon II and the Templars.

Much of this hostility centred around the castle of Baghras, which had been abandoned by its original Templar garrison at the approach of Saladin, and was subsequently occupied by the Armenians.¹¹⁴ Architecturally, this site is extremely complex, partly because of its location on a steep and inaccessible outcrop, and partly because of the immense difficulties involved in trying to disentangle the Byzantine, Frankish, Muslim and Armenian elements within it.¹¹⁵ Hence the lower bailey which guarded the eastern approaches to the fortress, as well as the huge revetment supporting the shooting galleries of the south-west corner, have all been attributed to the Armenians by the archaeologist A.W. Lawrence, who dates them to the period between 1191 and c.1200.¹¹⁶ Edwards, on the other hand, has pointed out that the Armenians rarely, if ever, constructed revetments, and has also drawn comparisons between the masonry of the lower bailey and numerous other Templar sites, including Darbsak. Similarly, the various residential and defensive structures of the upper bailey are arranged in a compact, typically Armenian fashion, but a more detailed study of individual architectural elements within these buildings reveal certain similarities with the Templar citadel at Tortosa.¹¹⁷ It would be wrong, therefore, to argue that Baghras is largely Armenian

¹¹⁴ Ibn al-Athir, Kamel Altevarykh, I, 731-32; Abu Shama, Deux Jardins, IV, 378-79; Eracles, II, 136; Lawrence, 'Baghras', pp.44, 45; Riley-Smith, 'The Templars and the Teutonic Knights', pp.97-98.

¹¹⁵ For a full description of the site, see R.W. Edwards, 'Bagras and Armenian Cilicia: A Reassessment', Revue des Etudes Arméniennes, XVII, (1983), 415-55, at 419-32; Lawrence, 'Baghras', pp.49-83.

¹¹⁶ Lawrence, 'Baghras', pp.55-56, 62-63.

¹¹⁷ Edwards, 'Bagras and Armenian Cilicia', 420-23, 426, 429.

simply because it is a mountain castle situated in a remote area. Indeed, Edwards has reached the conclusion that 'the Armenian presence here is no more than a flirtation', and that Lawrence has generally overestimated the importance of the site to Leon II.¹¹⁸

Consequently, the strategic role of Baghras, just like its architectural and political history, remains unclear and surrounded by doubt. Whereas Edwards's archaeological survey appears to have been carried out with greater knowledge of Armenian fortifications in general, Lawrence's conclusions seem to concur more with the historical evidence. The Arab historian Ibn al-Athir, for example, wrote that 'the son of Leon, prince of the Armenians, marched on this place which was near his territory. He rebuilt Baghras carefully and stationed a garrison there to carry out raids on the surroundings', whilst Willbrand of Oldenburg stated that Baghras was 'a very powerful castle, with three strong walls and towers around it, situated in the last mountains of Armenia. It carefully guards the entrances to that land, whose ruler, the king of Armenia, holds it'. These descriptions suggest that Leon's presence at Baghras was more than a mere 'flirtation', and that contemporaries considered the castle to be strategically very important.¹¹⁹

This is confirmed by Leon's own attempts to hold on to Baghras for as long as possible, and not return it to its original Templar owners. In 1199 Leon wrote to Innocent III, claiming that the castle was his by right of

¹¹⁸ Edwards, 'Baghras and Armenian Cilicia', 431-432.

¹¹⁹ Ibn al-Athir, Kamel Altevarykh, I, 732; Willbrand of Oldenburg, Itinerarium, p.216.

conquest, but the pope quickly rejected this argument,¹²⁰ and during the ensuing years his representatives were kept almost constantly busy trying to solve the problem of Baghras, as well as the Antiochene succession dispute between Raymond Roupen and Bohemond IV. Moreover, in 1203 the situation worsened when Leon seized Roche de Roussel and Roche Guillaume from the Templars, justifying his actions by portraying the Order's efforts to retrieve Baghras as unprovoked aggression against the Armenians.¹²¹ Two years later, Leon also made a vigorous attempt to recapture the former Templar castle of Darbsak from the Muslims.¹²² Needless to say, such tactics did not please the Templars very much, and in 1211 another period of failed negotiations and sporadic warfare culminated in a major Templar attack on the area, including perhaps Baghras itself.¹²³ However, by this point the immense pressure placed on Leon by the papacy, the Templars and Bohemond IV, combined with the Seljuk threat in the west, all conspired to bring about a change in Armenian policy. In 1212 Leon agreed to restore all Templar properties, and in 1213 the excommunication imposed on him by Innocent III was lifted, although even then he managed to stall things for a further three years before finally handing back Baghras, twenty eight years after Saladin's invasion.¹²⁴

¹²⁰ Innocent III, PL, CCXIV, Lib.II, no.259, cols.819-20.

¹²¹ Innocent III, PL, CCXV, Lib.VII, no.189, col.504, Lib.VIII, no.119, cols.689-90.

¹²² Ibn al-Athir, Kamel Altevarykh, II, 317-18.

¹²³ Eracles, II, 317-18; Innocent III, PL, CCXVI, Lib.XIV, no.64, cols.430-32.

¹²⁴ Innocent III, PL, CCXVI, Lib.XVI, no.7, cols.792-93; Riley-Smith, 'The Templars and the Teutonic Knights', p.107. For more details on this conflict, as well as the parallel Antiochene succession dispute between Raymond Roupen and Bohemond IV, see *ibid*, pp.98-107; Cahen, La Syrie du Nord, pp.596-623.

Clearly, therefore, Baghras meant so much to Leon that he was prepared to use any means to hold on to it. This determination reveals much about the dual role of the castle, for whilst Baghras guarded a key route into Cilician Armenia, Willbrand of Oldenburg also noted that 'it overlooks Antioch directly', and could therefore be used to intimidate or even attack the city.¹²⁵ Indeed, it seems plausible that Leon utilized Baghras for this very purpose during his failed assault on Antioch in 1203.¹²⁶ On the other hand, in 1226 and 1237 the reinstalled Templar garrison of the castle successfully withstood Aleppine besieging forces attacking from the east, confirming that Leon had been correct in thinking that Baghras would help him defend the Cilician plain.¹²⁷ Consequently, Baghras was vital to the security of both Antioch and Cilicia, and it seems reasonable to conclude that whilst Lawrence may have overestimated the extent of its Armenian structural remains, Edwards has underestimated its strategic importance.

Leon's actions also help us to understand the extent and military role of other Templar fortifications near Baghras. In the same way that Baghras guarded the Belem pass, so the Templar castle of Darbsak had controlled the entrance to another more northerly defile through the Amanus mountains during the twelfth century, but it was never recaptured by the Order after 1188.¹²⁸ Nevertheless,

¹²⁵ Willbrand of Oldenburg, Itinerarium, p.216.

¹²⁶ See above, p.145.

¹²⁷ 1226: Ibn al-Athir, Kamel Altevarykh, II, 168-70; Constable Sempad, Chronique, RHCarm, I., 648. 1237: Abu'l-Fida, Annales, p.112.

¹²⁸ Abu Shama, Deux Jardins, IV, 376-77; Ibn al-Athir, Kamel Altevarykh, I, 730-31; Cahen, La Syrie du Nord, pp.144-45.

Leon's attempt to retake the fortress in 1205, as well as another failed crusader attack in 1237, both indicate that Darbsak had once been a key Templar stronghold, whose loss clearly undermined both Frankish and Armenian security in the region. This also helps explain why Hethoum I reoccupied it after the Mongol invasion of 1260.¹²⁹

On the Cilician side of the valley guarded by Darbsak the Templars also held the castle of Hadjar Shoghlan, which the Franks either called Roche de Roussel or Roche Guillaume. Again, this castle was located on a high, steep sided summit which required few man made defences, although some of the remains there, most notably a square keep and a chapel, could date from the Templar occupation.¹³⁰ It was from this castle that the Templars launched their failed expedition against Darbsak in 1237, illustrating that its role had changed dramatically since 1188. Before this date Darbsak and Hadjar Shoghlan had worked together with Baghras to create a defensive network protecting Antioch from the north, whilst in the thirteenth century Hadjar Choghlan found itself defending the Cilician plain against Muslim attacks from the east.

Returning to the problem of Hadjar Shoghlan's Frankish name, some information can be gleaned from contemporary descriptions of military campaigns in the area, most notably the Mamluk attack on Antioch in 1268.¹³¹ But whereas Cahen used this evidence to show that Hadjar Shoghlan should be identified with Roche de Roussel, Deschamps tried to prove that it is in fact Roche

¹²⁹ 1237 and 1260: see above, pp.115-16.

¹³⁰ Cahen, La Syrie du Nord, pp.142-43.

¹³¹ Gestes, p.772.

Guillaume, and that the rival candidate is located on the coast, to the south of Alexandretta. This latter theory appears to be less plausible, however, for both castles were clearly so closely linked with Darbsak and Baghras that it seems odd for Roche de Roussel to be situated so far to the west, along the Mediterranean sea. Thus Hadjar Shoghlan is most likely to have been known as Roche de Roussel, although this conclusion means that the exact location of Roche Guillaume remains a mystery.¹³²

Beyond the Amanus mountain range, the Templars also held Port Bonnel, which has generally been identified with the small harbour of Arsouz, to the west of the Belem pass. This site would have given the Order's surrounding castles and territories direct access to the sea; an important facility once Saladin had captured Saone and Latakia, thereby making the land route to the south hazardous and difficult to use. Port Bonnel remained under Templar control until Baybars destroyed the principality of Antioch in 1268.¹³³ Moving further north, it seems unlikely that the Order could have owned any properties on the Cilician plain itself during the reign of Leon II, or indeed his heir Hethoum I, who became embroiled in further clashes with the Templars during the 1230s.¹³⁴ However, some historians have argued that they did hold extensive lands here during the thirteenth century, basing their theory on Ibn al-Furat's claim that during the Mamluk raid on Cilicia of 1266, 'a Templar fortress known as al-Tina, or according to another version, al-Tinat (Canamella), was

¹³² Deschamps, La Défense du comté de Tripoli, pp.363-65; Cahen, La Syrie du Nord, pp.143-45.

¹³³ Gestes, p.766. See also Boase, 'Gazetteer', p.177; Cahen, La Syrie du Nord, p.141. Saone and Latakia: see above, p. JT82.

¹³⁴ Eracles, II, 405-6; Cahen, La Syrie du Nord, pp.651-52.

destroyed, and a large number of fortresses and towns of theirs were burned and destroyed'. But this source should not be accepted at face value, for Canamella belonged to the Hospitallers, whilst Amuda, which it also attributed to the Templars, belonged to the Teutonic Knights. Thus Ibn al-Furat appears to have confused the three Orders, and there is no reliable evidence that the Templars possessed any castles to the north of Roche de Roussel.¹³⁵

Therefore the role of Templar fortifications in this area differed dramatically from that of the castles belonging to the Hospitallers and the Teutonic Knights. Whereas the latter two Orders became close allies of Leon II, the Templars found themselves trying to defend the remnants of their twelfth century properties against an expansionist Armenian monarchy. These properties, and in particular Baghras, Darbsak and Roche de Roussel, remained strategically important throughout the crusader period, because they were located half way between Cilicia and Antioch, and could therefore be used to defend or attack either region, depending on who happened to control them at the time.

The changing fortunes of all three Military Orders in Cilicia, including the virtual expulsion of the Hospitallers from Silifke in 1226, also remind us of the dramatic impact the reign of Leon II had on the area in general, and the divisions which his reforms caused within Armenian society. So far these divisions have generally been looked at in political terms, but many of the internal clashes which broke out during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries also had a strong religious element to them. Indeed, it has already been shown that Silifke's

¹³⁵ Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 99. See also al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, I(b), 34. Canamella: see above, p.276. Amuda: see above, p.269.

original Armenian owners had strong links with the catholicos John, who probably resented Leon II's attempts to be on good terms with the papacy, and seek its approval regarding the problem of Baghras.¹³⁶ Similarly, the rebellion of 1271 against Leon III appears to have been led by a faction of Greek Orthodox nobles, whose patriarch at Antioch was forced to flee once the uprising had failed.¹³⁷ In 1307/08 the catholicos Constantine of Caesarea and the Grand Baron Hethoum also headed a council at Sis where it was finally decided to accept Roman Catholicism and recognize papal supremacy in exchange for more western aid. However, this decision sparked off a virtual riot in the city, and many citizens and members of the Armenian Church had to be imprisoned, exiled or even executed so that order could be restored. This incident is particularly significant in that it illustrates the feelings of the common people rather than the aristocracy, and suggests that even though Armenian kings did not need to suppress a totally alien Muslim or Greek population, their castles may still have helped them to maintain internal security whenever highly unpopular political or religious changes were introduced.¹³⁸

However, despite the risk of rebellions, Armenian rulers often continued to seek assistance from the west in return for religious reform. This policy became most apparent following Leon V's (1320-41) marriage to Constance, widow of Henry II of Cyprus, which meant that when Leon died in 1341 without an heir, the Armenian throne passed to Henry

¹³⁶ Constable Sempad, Chronique, ed. Dédéyan, pp.85, 88.

¹³⁷ Bar Hebraeus, Chronography, pp.449-50. See also Vahram of Edessa, Chronique Rimée, p.527; Constable Sempad, Chronique, ed. Dédéyan, p.125, and see above, p.268.

¹³⁸ Samuel of Ani, Chronographie, pp.465-67.

II's nephews, John and Guy of Lusignan. John ('Constantine III') and Guy ('Constantine IV') ruled from 1341 until 1342 and from 1342 until 1344 respectively, but this attempt to establish an alliance with Cyprus also failed because of resistance to it from within Cilicia. Indeed, both men were murdered, and 'had an ephemeral reign, because the troops rebelled against them'.¹³⁹ Although both Benedict XII and Clement VI continued to plan a new expedition to Cilicia at this time, these events must also have undermined their efforts, and may help explain why the crusade of 1344 attacked Smyrna rather than the Muslims threatening Sis.¹⁴⁰

Earlier in the fourteenth century, further in-fighting between Hethoum II (1289-1307) and his three brothers,¹⁴¹ as well as the arrest and execution of the lord of Corycos in 1329, suggest that struggles between pro- and anti-western factions became almost commonplace during this period, and that virtually anyone bearing a grudge or hoping to seize the throne would join one or the other party.¹⁴² The Armenian throne hardly seems to have been worth having, however, for its occupants continued to make desperate appeals to Rome until as late as 1372, when Constantine IV's widow Mary asked for military aid and a

¹³⁹ Mardiros of Crimea, Liste Rimée des Souverains de la Petite Arménie, RHCarm I., lines 56-57, p.685; Jean Dardel, Chronique, pp.20-28, 21n5. John of Lusignan may not have been crowned king, and may have died of natural causes. See also Boase, 'The History of the Kingdom', pp.30-31.

¹⁴⁰ C. Kohler, Lettres pontificales concernant l'histoire de la Petite Arménie au XIVe siècle, (Paris 1909), nos.6-8, pp.320-21; Luttrell, 'The Hospitallers Interventions', pp.128-29. Smyrna: see below, pp.341-42.

¹⁴¹ Samuel of Ani, Chronographie, pp.464-65; Hethoum the Historian, Table Chronologique, pp.489-90; Boase, 'The History of the Kingdom', p.29.

¹⁴² Constable Sempad, Chronique, RHCarm, I., 670-71.

powerful new husband who could help her country.¹⁴³ Another letter sent to the Armenian catholicos by John XXII granting marriage dispensations to certain nobles, despite their having too close links of consanguinity with their intended brides, suggests that by this date successive Muslim invasions were actually killing off the Armenian aristocracy.¹⁴⁴

The fourteenth century correspondence between Rome and the kingdom of Armenia also reveals some interesting details about the fate of individual castles during the bleak and badly documented final decades of Armenian independence. In 1323, for example, John XXII wrote to Leon V confirming the king's donation of Paperon, a fortress near Lampron in the Taurus mountains, to Oschin, lord of Corycos. The fact that Leon felt the need to seek papal approval in this way shows how much more closely Rome had become involved with the internal affairs of the Armenians; a far cry from the days of Leon II, when the pope was only consulted on such matters if the king thought that it could strengthen his own hand.¹⁴⁵

Whilst the gradual disappearance of various baronial names from royal witness lists suggests that other fortresses were irretrievably lost to the Muslims during this period, papal records also give some clues about the later history

¹⁴³ Kohler, Lettres pontificales, nos.15-17, pp.324-26, no.18, pp.326-27.

¹⁴⁴ Kohler, Lettres pontificales, no.2, pp.315-16. For more details on fourteenth century plans to send a crusade to Cilicia, see Boase, 'The History of the Kingdom', pp.29-33; Luttrell, 'The Hospitallers' Interventions', pp.123-31.

¹⁴⁵ Kohler, Lettres pontificales, no.4, pp.318-19. For more details on Paperon, see J. Gottwald, 'Die Kirche und das Schloss Paperan in Kilikisch-Armenien', BZ, XXXVI, (1936), 86-100; Hellenkemper, Burgen, 237-40; Boase, 'Gazetteer', pp.155-56; Edwards, Fortifications, pp.102-9.

of castles belonging to the Military Orders in Lesser Armenia. The Teutonic Knights, for example, must have lost their possessions on the exposed Cilician plain by 1375 at the very latest, and may never in fact have returned to Amuda after 1266.¹⁴⁶ In 1299 the Templars probably lost their last major castle on the mainland when Roche Guillaume fell, and it is not even certain if any of their remaining Cilician properties were taken over by the Hospitallers following their dissolution in the early fourteenth century.¹⁴⁷ Moreover, the Hospitallers themselves held no major castles there following the loss of Silifke in 1226, even though they frequently participated in expeditions to the area after 1291. Indeed, when John XXII asked them to garrison two castles along the Cilician coast in 1332 (Antiochetta and Sigurium), the Order apparently refused, primarily because of the expense involved, but perhaps also because the Armenians were considered untrustworthy.¹⁴⁸ However, this notwithstanding, the Hospitallers were involved in the Cypriot occupation of Corycos and Adalia during the early 1360s, and helped Peter I recapture Ayas briefly in 1367.¹⁴⁹ These campaigns indicate that some westerners, and especially the papacy, still hoped that European crusaders would be able to reconquer the Cilician coastline, and thereafter perhaps the Holy Land itself.

However, the death of Peter I in 1369, combined with greater Hospitaller involvement in the Aegean rather than the eastern Mediterranean, effectively brought an end to west

¹⁴⁶ See above, p.270.

¹⁴⁷ Gestes, p.839; Riley-Smith, 'The Templars and the Teutonic Knights', p.125.

¹⁴⁸ RHCarm I., p.xxxiv; Luttrell, 'The Hospitallers' Interventions', pp.128-29.

¹⁴⁹ See above, pp.221-22.

west European efforts to reconquer the Cilician coastline. But it is doubtful whether such expeditions contributed significantly to the Armenians' ability to hold out against the Muslims anyway. The answer to this problem lay not on the coast, but in the mountains and on the northern fringes of the Cilician plain. The fortresses which were situated in this area had deliberately been constructed on the most remote and inaccessible outcrops available, with little regard to social, economic or political factors. This enabled their occupants to retain their independence well into, and sometimes even beyond, the late fourteenth century. Further south, however, the many non-military uses which Frankish castles were put to meant that isolated mountain strongholds were relatively rare, and most fortified sites were located in very vulnerable low lying areas along or near the coast. The few Latin sites which truly were mountain castles, most notably Akkar and Montfort, appear to have fared much better against the Mamluks, suggesting that the defensive strategy adopted by the Armenians was ultimately superior to that of the crusaders, whose reliance on the sea prevented them from straying too far inland.

But whilst the sheer impregnability of Cilician castles enabled the Armenian kingdom to outlive its Frankish neighbours, such structures also tended to undermine royal power, and became safe havens for those nobles and churchmen who rebelled against the many reforms introduced by Leon II and his successors. This in turn weakened the region's chances of withstanding external attackers, and even as early as the 1220s we learn that because of the internal disputes between queen Isabelle and Constantine of Lampron, 'sultan Ala ad-Din, lord of Beth Rhomaye (leader of the Seljuk Turks), was master of many of the

fortresses of Cilicia'.¹⁵⁰ Hence we are left with the irony that the very same castles which had protected the Armenians for so long also contributed to the disintegration of royal authority, and the final destruction of Sis in 1375.

¹⁵⁰ Bar Hebraeus, Chronography, p.389.



Fig.14. The Aegean. From Joinville and Villehardouin: Chronicles of the Crusades, trans. M.R.B. Shaw, (London 1963).

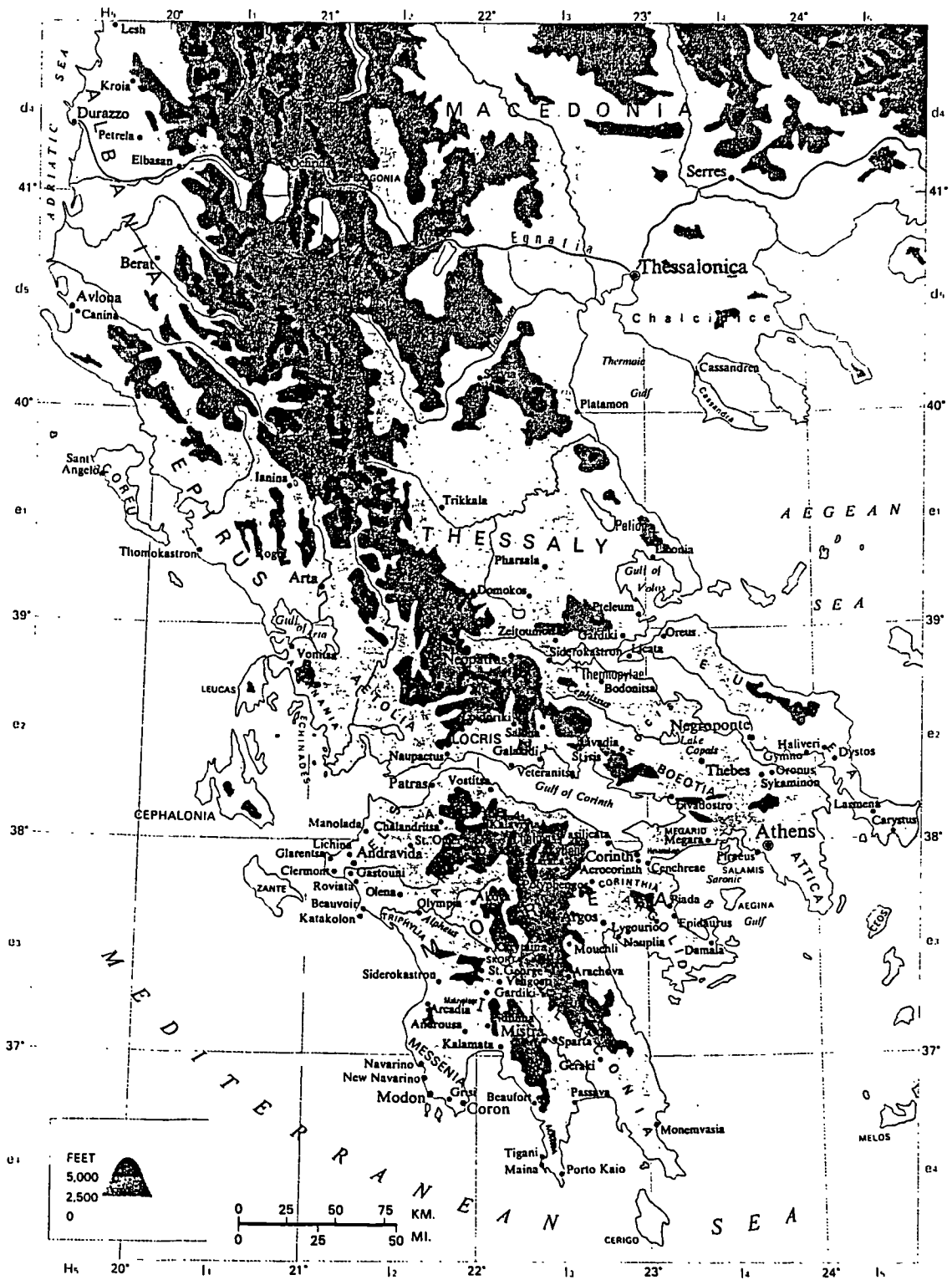


Fig.15. Southern and Central Greece. From HC, III (1975), p.122.

CHAPTER FIVE
THE ROLE OF FORTIFICATIONS IN FRANKISH GREECE
AND THE AEGEAN, 1204-c.1380.

The sheer extent of the territories involved, combined with the overwhelming numerical superiority of the Greeks, Cumans, Bulgars and Turks, made the Latin conquest and colonization of the former Byzantine empire the most ambitious project undertaken by the crusaders. Indeed, it has already been mentioned that even allowing for the exaggeration of medieval chroniclers, some Frankish rulers may have found themselves outnumbered by at least ten to one in their struggles with the Bulgars and the Greeks of Nicaea. During the Fourth Crusade itself, Villehardouin also noted that for every crusader besieging Constantinople, there were 200 citizens defending it.¹ When one considers that the vast majority of the crusaders subsequently returned home, it quickly becomes apparent that the Latins were just as outnumbered by the local population as they were by their external enemies. As a result, the Latins turned to castles as a means of compensating for their lack of troops, in the same way that they had done in the Holy Land since the very beginning of the crusader period.

The sheer quantity of medieval ruins still standing in Greece and Turkey bears witness to this, particularly in the Peloponnese, where virtually every hill top seems to have been fortified at some time or another. However, although one would think that this should make the task of identifying and describing crusader fortifications relatively simple, this is not the case. Indeed, there are a number of problems which make the study of Frankish castles around the Aegean fraught with difficulties, not

¹ Villehardouin, La Conquête, p.92.

least the lack of historical sources. Bearing in mind that there are certain periods, particularly in the fourteenth century, when 'we cannot reconstruct completely'² the history of southern and central Greece in general, it is hardly surprising that the fate of individual castles in this area frequently remains obscure for decades at a time.

To make matters worse, the Latin overlords of Greece and north-west Asia Minor adopted the same tactic of recycling older masonry as their Byzantine predecessors, when they constructed their castles and urban fortifications. As a result, it is often impossible to tell whether a wall composed of classical masonry blocks robbed from a much earlier building is the work of Greeks or Latins. Trying to establish if a strongpoint is Frankish, Catalan, Navarrese or attributable to another western dynasty such as the Acciajuoli lords of Corinth is even harder.

Inevitably, these problems have led to arguments about dating and origin amongst the few archaeologists and historians who have studied the subject. Such arguments can perhaps best be summed up by looking at the castle of Androusa, located in the south western Peloponnese, the heart of the principality of Achaëa. The present remains of Androusa include sections of a single curtain wall, flanked by several rounded, square and polygonal salients, as well as a large tower, whose design and unusually thick walls suggest that it acted as a keep. The castle's masonry is typical for medieval Greece: a mixture of small, uncut stones quarried locally, shards of pottery and other fragments found at the site, and larger, presumably classical, masonry blocks used to strengthen

² Bon, La Morée franque, p.267.

corners, doorways and other weak spots.³

In his monumental work on castles of Morea, Antoine Bon dates this stronghold to the mid-thirteenth century, with possible additions in the fourteenth century. The Aragonese version of the Chronicle of Morea appears to confirm this when it states that Androusa was built by William de Villehardouin, who reigned from 1245 until 1278.⁴ But there are problems with this conclusion. A number of features at Androusa, and in particular the use of decorative brickwork and the presence of a pentagonal open gorge tower along the north curtain, are typically Byzantine, but extremely rare in Frankish military architecture.⁵ Bon accounts for these anomalies by suggesting that the crusaders used local craftsmen, which may well be true, but he never seems to consider the possibility that some of the defences at Androusa were constructed either before 1205, or during the brief period of Greek domination in the area between the 1420s and 1450s.⁶ Likewise, when discussing the date of the oldest fortifications at Mistra, Bon again lets the historical evidence take precedence, basing his conclusion that the castle must have been constructed 'in its entirety' by William II on a statement to that effect in the Chronicle of Morea.⁷ In a clear reference to Bon's work, the

³ Bon, La Morée franque, pp.637-39.

⁴ Bon, La Morée franque, pp.638-39; L. de los f., c.216, p.49.

⁵ Bon, La Morée franque, pp.637, 638; C. Foss and D. Winfield, Byzantine Fortifications: An Introduction, (Pretoria 1986), pp.30-31, 162-64.

⁶ Bon, La Morée franque, p.645. For the later history of Androusa, see ibid, pp.411-12; Miller, The Latins in the Levant, pp.391-92, 448-49.

⁷ Bon, La Morée franque, p.639. The following scholars all agree with Bon: Andrews, Castles, pp.161, 173; Runciman, Mistra, pp.29-30, 95; W. Müller-Wiener, Castles of the Crusaders, trans. J.M. Brownjohn, (London 1966), pp.84-85. For a description and history of Mistra see Andrews, Castles, pp.161-82, and, in far greater detail, Runciman, Mistra, pp.9-146. See also L. de la c., c.205D,

Byzantine scholar David Winfield challenges these findings on archaeological and architectural grounds, asserting that at Mistra 'there is nothing in the hill top citadel and not very much on the site as a whole to indicate that Villehardouin did more than reoccupy a typical Byzantine hill town'. Winfield then goes on to claim that in Greece 'a number of fortifications that are probably Byzantine have been assigned without question to the Franks'.⁸

In making these claims both scholars take somewhat extreme views. Bon prefers to believe the Chronicle of Morea even when this clearly contradicts the archaeological evidence, whereas Winfield's more Byzantine stance immediately assumes that the written sources are wrong. Moreover, attempts by other historians to reconcile apparently contradictory sources of evidence have led to some very odd conclusions indeed, such as Robert Traquair's argument that the fortress of Chlemoutsi (Clermont), the famous royal stronghold in western Achaea, dates from the 1430s, even though the most cursory inspection of the castle's remains suffices to show that it must have been built before the introduction of gunpowder.⁹

The lack of historical evidence, and the use of classical masonry or other stone bearing few distinguishing features such as masons' marks, have therefore prevented archaeologists and historians working in this field from carrying out the kind of systematic excavation and research being conducted in the former crusader states of

pp.73-74, translated from To Chronikon tou Moreos: the Chronicle of Morea, ed. J. Schmitt, (London 1904), p.200; L. de los f., c.215, p.49.

⁸ Foss and Winfield, Byzantine Fortifications, pp.30, 34.

⁹ R. Traquair, 'Mediaeval Fortresses of the North-Western Peloponnesus', ABSA, XIII, (1906-7), 268-81, at 277-79.

the Holy Land. This in turn has led to the kind of doubts, arguments and misinterpretations outlined above. As if this were not enough, however, many of the most important medieval sites in Greece were also repaired or even totally rebuilt by the Venetians, who took over several coastal strongholds from their original owners during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. These include Corinth, Nauplia, Monemvasia and Patras. Between 1685 and 1715 all these places (as well as the much older Venetian colonies at Modon and Coron) were recaptured from the Turks, and their original medieval defences were hidden under even more elaborate ramparts and artillery bastions.¹⁰ It should also be noted that from around 1500 onwards the Turks themselves either demolished older crusader fortifications, as appears to have been the case at Boudonitza in the former duchy of Athens,¹¹ or carried out their own alterations and improvements, as can be seen at Modon.¹²

These myriad difficulties make it pointless, and in most cases virtually impossible, to try to describe the appearance and history of individual strongholds in Frankish Greece. It is more useful and realistic to give a few examples of medieval fortifications, in order to address some of the problems already discussed, and ultimately shed more light on the various functions of crusader castles in the area. In doing so, however, it must be remembered that we are usually dealing with trends and probabilities rather than exact dates and facts, and

¹⁰ For more details, see Andrews, Castles, pp.135, 137-38, 143-45 (Corinth); pp.90, 91-92, 94-105 (Nauplia); pp.192-96, 198-99, 209-10 (Monemvasia); pp.116, 117-19, 129 (Patras).

¹¹ A. Bon, 'Forteresses Medievales de la Grèce centrale', Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique, LXI, (1937), 136-208, at 163.

¹² Andrews, Castles, pp.74-78, 81.

that many questions will remain unanswered until more sites are excavated in detail.

All crusader fortifications in Greece can be placed in three general categories: those which the Latins built from scratch, on sites showing very little, if any, evidence of previous occupation; those which were constructed incorporating older Byzantine or classical structures; and finally those which were already in good condition at the time of the Fourth Crusade, and were simply reoccupied by the Franks. In Thrace, Macedonia, Asia Minor and eastern Thessaly most strongholds fall into this latter category, mainly because the crusaders were too poor or in control too briefly to carry out their own repairs and building programmes. Thus Appolonia, located on the furthest outskirts of Frankish territory facing Nicaea, was referred to as 'one of the strongest and most imposing castles to be found' as early as 1204, and clearly needed few improvements before the crusaders could garrison it with their own troops.¹³ North of Apollonia, a series of equally well defended coastal strongholds formed the backbone of Frankish power in Asia Minor. Perhaps the most important of these was Spiga (Pigae), one of the last Latin outposts to fall to the Nicaean Greeks in 1225. Located on a promontory forming a good natural harbour, Spiga was protected by a powerful Byzantine rampart flanked by a series of closely set pentagonal towers, which must have been maintained by the Franks and are still largely preserved to this day.¹⁴

On the European side of the Bosphorus, the crusaders inherited some even more spectacular Byzantine fortifications, particularly at Constantinople itself.

¹³ Villehardouin, La Conquête, p.190.

¹⁴ Foss and Winfield, Byzantine Fortifications, pp.154-55. Fall of Spiga: see above, p.30.

This city's landward side was protected by the famous double walls of Theodosius II (408-50), as well as a number of later structures, including the rampart of Manuel Comnenus (1143-80), which was located near the Blachernae palace and bore the brunt of the Frankish land offensive in 1203.¹⁵ That these defences had been kept in good condition is attested to by the events of the Fourth Crusade, when the Latins failed to take Constantinople from the west, and were forced to concede that 'never was a city so well fortified'.¹⁶ Interestingly, the Venetians had far more success when they launched a naval attack on the seaward defences, and managed to capture twenty five towers along the Golden Horn by lowering wooden platforms from their ships onto the ramparts.¹⁷ In preparation for the second Frankish siege of Constantinople in April 1204, the Greeks were forced to heighten these towers 'with two or three wooden storeys', but were still unable to prevent the Venetians from gaining access to the city in almost exactly the same spot. This suggests that the single sea wall may have been lower, weaker and possibly in a far worse state of repair than the land defences. It also illustrates the huge advantage which Venetian naval power gave the crusaders over their Greek opponents.¹⁸

¹⁵ Foss and Winfield, Byzantine Fortifications, pp.41-70; A. van Millingen, Byzantine Constantinople: the walls of the city and adjoining sites, (London 1899), pp.51-58, 122-27, 164-74.

¹⁶ Villehardouin, La Conquête, p.134, and see ibid, pp.90-102; Robert of Clari, La Conquête, c.44-49, pp.44-51; Nicetas Choniates, Historia, cols.923-27.

¹⁷ Ibid, col.926; Villehardouin, La Conquête, pp.96-100; Robert of Clari, La Conquête, c.44, p.45, c.46, p.47, c.49, p.51.

¹⁸ Quote: Villehardouin, La Conquête, p.134. See also ibid, pp.138-42; Robert of Clari, La Conquête, c.63, p.62, c.70-77, pp.69-77; Nicetas Choniates, Historia, cols.947, 951-54. For a description of Constantinople's sea walls, see van Millingen, Byzantine Constantinople, pp.178-267; Foss and Winfield, Byzantine Fortifications, pp.70-73.

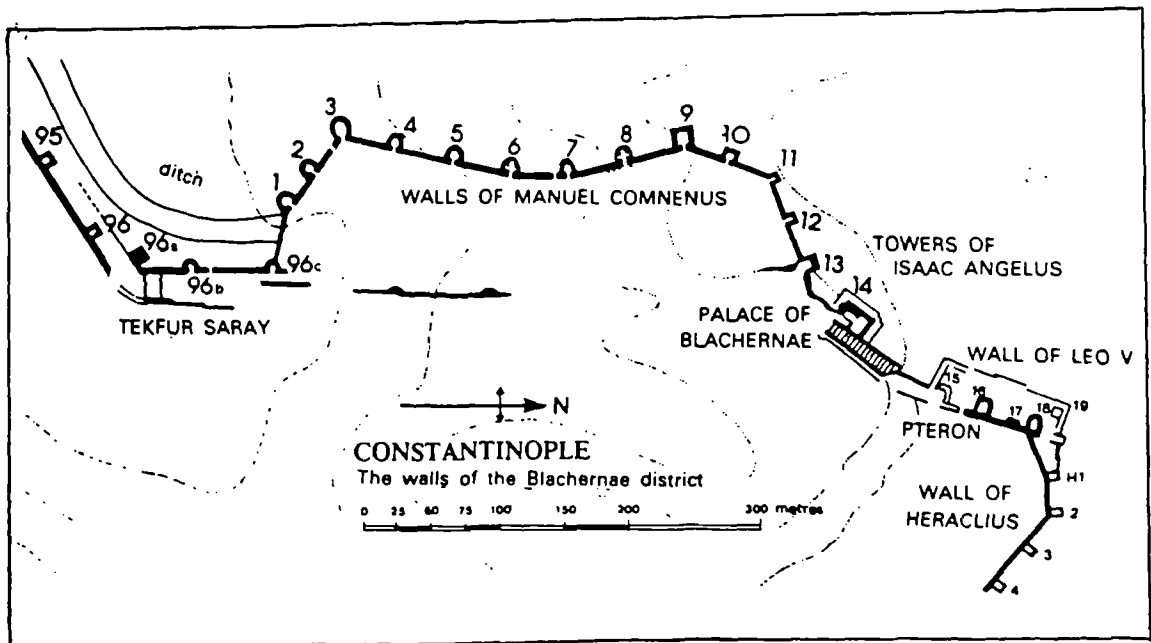
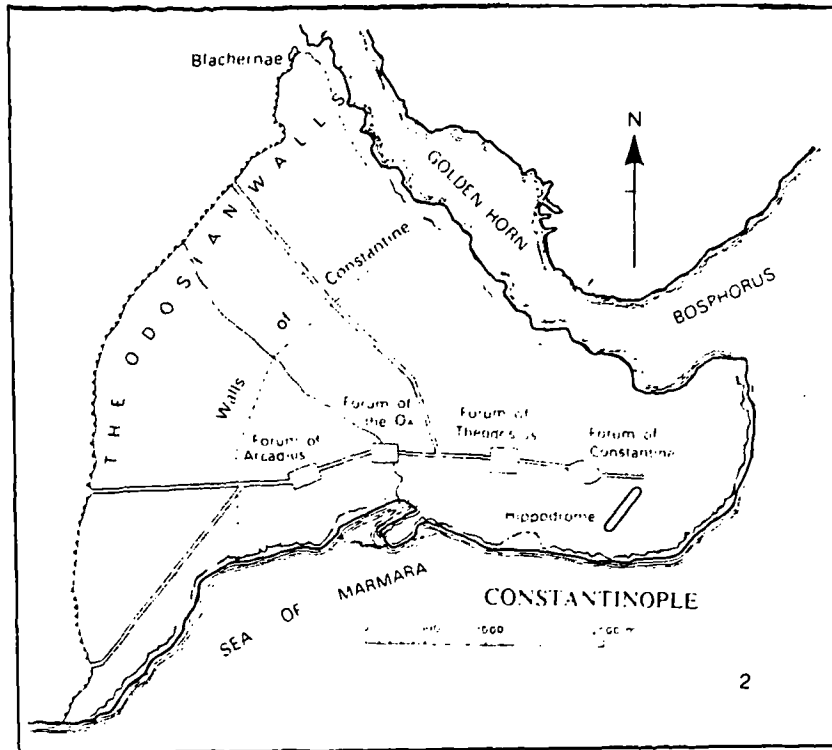


Fig.16. The walls of Constantinople, showing the section which bore the brunt of the Frankish land attack during the Fourth Crusade. From Foss and Winfield, Byzantine Fortifications, p.247.

If the thirteenth century sea defences of Constantinople were not in a particularly good state, the Franks were fortunate that the Venetians could patrol the Bosphorus for them, and that most of their opponents attacked the city by land. Baldwin of Flanders and his successors were all so lacking in troops and resources that 'no repairs are attested for the period of the Latin Empire', and it seems that the sheer size of the Theodosian walls alone saved the city from imminent capture when it was besieged by a combined force of Bulgars and Nicaean Greeks in 1235 and 1236.¹⁹ These observations are confirmed by the fact that Michael VIII Palaeologus carried out extensive repairs on the capital's ramparts during the 1260s, 70s and 80s.²⁰

Contemporary accounts of the Frankish conquest of territories to the west of Constantinople suggest that many Byzantine settlements in Thrace, Macedonia and Thessaly were similarly well protected at the beginning of the thirteenth century. Demotika, for example, was described as 'a very fine, strong and wealthy castle' at this time, while the fortress of Christopoli (Kavala) was, according to Villehardouin, 'one of the strongest in the world'.²¹ Descriptions of the Thracian rebellion of 1205 and Ioannitsa's subsequent campaigns in the area also reveal that Arcadiopolis, Stenimaka, Philippopolis, Rousion and Rodosto all had urban fortifications of some kind, while Adrianople was so well defended that initial Frankish attempts to capture the city failed despite a

¹⁹ Foss and Winfield, Byzantine Fortifications, p.42, and see below, p.358.

²⁰ George Pachymeres, De Michaele, I, 186, 187. The Blachernae palace also had to be restored at this time, because it had been left in such a bad state by the last Latin emperor, Baldwin II. See ibid, I, 144, 161.

²¹ Villehardouin, La Conquête, p.166.

sustained siege involving ladders, catapults and sapping.²²

Special reference should also be made to Thessaloniki, whose vast defences, begun in the fourth and fifth centuries, formed a triangle around the city, with an impregnable hill top citadel at its apex.²³ The history of these defences, which most closely resembled the Justinianic ramparts at Antioch, is somewhat obscure during the crusader period.²⁴ It would seem, however, that they kept Theodore Angelus, despot of Epirus, at bay for several months when he besieged the city in 1224, whilst in 1209 they proved an insurmountable obstacle for the emperor Henry, who had to use cunning rather than force to overpower Thessaloniki's rebellious Lombard garrison.²⁵ Accounts of the Norman attack on Thessaloniki in 1185 also suggest that even the sea wall had been kept in good condition by the Greeks.²⁶

Beyond Thessaloniki, it is likely that the citadel of Larissa represented another stronghold which was perfectly intact at the time of the Fourth Crusade. This is implied by the events of 1209, when the emperor Henry arrived in the city and was obliged to besiege its Lombard defenders,

²² Villehardouin, La Conquête, pp.200, 204-6 (Arcadiopolis, Stenimaka, Philipoppolis); pp.240-44 (Rousion); pp.246-48 (Rodosto); pp.206-16, 234-36 (Adrianople). For Adrianople, see also Nicetas Choniates, Historia, col.1002; Robert of Clari, La Conquête, c.112, pp.105-6.

²³ Miller, Essays on the Latin Orient, p.279; Foss and Winfield, Byzantine Fortifications, pp.5, 8; M. Vickers, 'The Byzantine Sea Walls of Thessaloniki', Balkan Studies, II (1970), 261-78.

²⁴ For Antioch, see above, p.67.

²⁵ 1224: see above, p.29. 1209: see above, p.34.

²⁶ Nicetas Choniates, Historia, cols.651-54; Miller, Essays on the Latin Orient, pp.275-76; Vickers, 'The Byzantine Sea Walls of Thessaloniki', 272-74.

who only withdrew from the citadel as a result of protracted negotiations rather than a successful assault by the Franks. It is interesting to speculate whether Boniface of Montferrat's campaign of 1204, and indeed the entire Frankish invasion of northern Greece, had succeeded if the Greeks had put up as much resistance as the Lombards later did. After the fall of Constantinople, virtually all the strongholds between the capital and Larissa simply surrendered to the Franks without a struggle. Those places which did try to defend themselves, most notably Adrianople, caused the *Latins considerable* trouble. Hence the crusaders were lucky, firstly in that they were spared a series of lengthy sieges as they moved west through Thrace and Thessaly, and secondly in that they were able to reoccupy a large number of strongholds which were already well fortified. It is extremely doubtful whether the Franks, with their limited numbers and resources, had ever succeeded if the circumstances had not been so accommodating.²⁷

Consequently, the brevity of Frankish rule, the poverty of the Latin empire and the good state of older Byzantine fortifications either made it unnecessary or impossible for the crusaders to improve the Greek strongholds they occupied, or to erect new defences of their own. Presumably vast structures such as the ramparts at Thessaloniki needed minor repairs during the crusader period, but the total lack of archaeological evidence for this, even at Constantinople, merely reinforces the impression that the Franks relied almost entirely on the works of their Greek predecessors. In central and southern Greece, where Latin rule was stronger and more permanent, the only comparable site was Monemvasia, located on the

²⁷ Henry of Valenciennes, Histoire de l'empereur, c.647-61, pp.97-104. For the initial invasion of northern Greece, see above, pp.24-25.

east coast of the Laconia peninsula. Its situation on a vast, sheer sided rock separated from the mainland by a narrow stretch of water, made it so impregnable that it was not captured by the Franks until 1249, following a bitter three year siege. By 1262, however, the castle had already been handed back to the Greeks as part of William II's ransom following the battle of Pelagonia.²⁸ As a result, the Franks barely had time to integrate Monemvasia into the principality of Achaea, and it is extremely unlikely that they ever built any new fortifications there. This is confirmed by the archaeological evidence, which suggests that the Byzantine citadel is the only pre-Venetian structure on the site.²⁹

The second category of castles and fortifications mentioned earlier covers the vast number of strongpoints which incorporated a combination of both Frankish and older Byzantine or classical defences. Structures of this type varied enormously. As one would expect, they occurred most commonly in Achaea and the duchy of Athens, but there were also a few such fortifications further east. At Nicomedia, for example, the Franks fortified a large Byzantine church and surrounded it with outer defences, in a simple but effective arrangement which withstood at least one Nicaean siege.³⁰ In 1206 the crusaders also reached Cyzicus, a narrow headland not far from Spiga, and found that 'there had been in ancient times a fortress with walls, towers and ditches; and they were nearly in ruins. And the army of the Franks entered it, and Peter of

²⁸ 1249: L. de la c., c.189-90, pp.67-68, c.202-6, pp.72-74; L. de los f., c.210-14, pp.48-49. 1259-62: see above, pp.29-30.

²⁹ Andrews, Castles, pp.206-7, 209-10. For a description and history of the whole site, see ibid, pp.192-210.

³⁰ Villehardouin, La Conquête, pp.272, 288. See also George Acropolites, Annales, col.995.

Bracieux, to whom the land had been assigned, began to rebuild it, and to construct two castles and two entrances'.³¹ Other castles in Asia Minor which were built or repaired using similar methods included Charax, Civetot and Panormos, all of which lay along the coast.³²

Within the European half of the Latin empire, the chronicler Henry of Valenciennes also wrote that in 1208 the emperor Henry decided to reconstruct the ruined castle of Pamphilon in Thrace. Having defeated a vast Bulgar and Cuman invasion force, Henry therefore went to this spot, where he and his marshal swore not to leave 'until the walls had been rebuilt and repaired'. Local labourers were subsequently recruited and the work was completed with such speed and determination that a new Frankish garrison had been installed before the onset of winter. Although this castle must have been situated somewhere along the main road between Constantinople and Philippopoli, its exact location has unfortunately never been established.³³

When reading about the construction of such places, one is immediately struck by the impression of great haste, and the lack of money, troops and resources. Clearly, the ephemeral nature of Frankish rule within the Latin empire itself meant that it was not only convenient, but essential, to reoccupy older Byzantine or Hellenistic ruins, where the immediate supply of ready cut stone facilitated the construction of new defences in a matter of weeks. Similarly, it seems that Boniface of Montferrat's refortification of Serres, carried out in

³¹ Villehardouin, La Conquête, p.272. The Catalans reoccupied the same site over a century later, when Andronicus II employed them to fight the Turks in Asia Minor. See Ramon Muntaner, L'expedició, c.203, pp.47-48; George Pachymeres, De Michaele, II, 398-99.

³² Villehardouin, La Conquête, pp.188, 274-76.

³³ Henry of Valenciennes, Histoire de l'empereur, c.550, 551, pp.50-51, c.554, p.52.

1206-07 in response to Ioannitsa's attack on the town the previous year, amounted to hasty repair work rather than a brand new building programme.³⁴ To some extent the apparent ease with which Theodore Angelus overran this area in 1221 may confirm this.³⁵ At any rate, it is certainly true that Frankish domination over Serres, located on the northern outskirts of the kingdom of Thessaly, was just as precarious as that over the coastal regions of Asia Minor.

In central Greece and the Peloponnese, however, greater political stability ensured that former Byzantine and classical sites were repaired, improved and even rebuilt on a far larger scale. But this did not necessarily mean that crusader fortifications were constructed to a higher standard. At Patras, for example, William Aleman, the first Frankish lord of the city, considerably improved the defences of the lower bailey of the Byzantine citadel, but this was done using masonry robbed from the neighbouring archbishop's residence! Admittedly William may have been motivated by a desire to reduce the power of the local clergy, but his ruthless and desperate actions also reflect the poverty of most of the Frankish adventurers who came to Greece, and their urgent need to maintain their fortifications at a time when much of the countryside still remained virtually unconquered.³⁶

³⁴ Villehardouin, La Conquête, pp.232-34; Nicetas Choniates, Historia, col.1006.

³⁵ 1221 siege: Regesta Honorii papae III, II, no.3877, p.56, and see above, pp.29-30, 29n62.

³⁶ Innocent III, PL, CCXVI, no.164, col.340; Miller, The Latins in the Levant, p.64; E. Gerland, Neue Quellen zur Geschichte des lateinischen Erzbistums Patras, (Leipzig 1903), p.14. Rivalry between the barons and archbishops of Patras came to an end when William Aleman's successor sold the lordship to the Church and returned to western Europe; L. de los f., c.398, p.88. During the fourteenth century the city was allied to, and eventually came under the protection of, Venice; F. Thiriet, Régestes

At other sites, the amount of alteration undertaken by the crusaders varied considerably, depending on whether these places were in ruins or were still occupied at the time of the Frankish invasion. A good example of the latter type of fortification is Kalamata, located on the coastal plain of south-western Morea. In 1205, William of Champlitte only obtained its surrender by promising the defenders that he would respect their land and property.³⁷ This suggests that the stout double baileys of the fortress, which protected its more vulnerable eastern side, pre-date the thirteenth century. Indeed, it seems that the only structure at Kalamata built by the crusaders was the keep, a huge, slightly rectangular building located at the highest point of the inner bailey, and constructed using the same combination of classical ashlar blocks and small, uncut stones as that already described at Androusa³⁸

Another stronghold which was probably occupied almost continuously from classical times up to the thirteenth century and beyond was Arcadia, situated near the Ionian coast on the other side of the Messenian peninsula from Kalamata. Like its neighbour, Arcadia also relied on its isolated position at the top of a steep, narrow hill for much of its defensive strength. This meant that the design

des délibérations du sénat de Venise concernant la Roumanie, (3 vols., Paris 1958-61), I, no.520, p.130. During the early fifteenth century Venice rented the entire city from the Church for a while, until the Greeks of Mistra captured it in 1430; Marino Sanudo, Vite de' Duchi, cols.839, 917. See also Miller, The Latins in the Levant, pp.363-64; Gerland, Neue Quellen, pp.55-67, 149-73; Andrews, Castles, pp.116-19; Traquair, 'Mediaeval Fortresses', 279-80, and see below, pp.334-35.

³⁷ L. de la c., c.112-13, pp.37-38. See also L. de los f., c.113, p.28.

³⁸ Andrews, Castles, p.34, and see pp.30-35; Bon, La Morée franque, pp.606-68; Traquair, 'Mediaeval Fortresses', 271-72.

of the castle was almost totally dictated by the shape of the summit. It enabled the original builders to leave particularly inaccessible areas, such as the sheer north side of the hill, virtually devoid of man made defences, and to concentrate their efforts on the weaker southern and eastern approaches. Here two successive baileys and curtain walls, flanked by numerous towers and salients, defended the main access route to the summit itself.³⁹

Small sections of classical masonry, some of it still in situ, suggest that this defensive arrangement is extremely old, and was merely improved upon by the Byzantines. When the crusaders first arrived in 1205 they were immediately impressed by the sheer strength of Arcadia's fortifications, and in particular the large tower at the summit of the castle, which they believed had been built by 'giants'; a clear reference to the vast, antique blocks used in its construction. Indeed, Arcadia did not finally surrender to the Franks until they began to bombard this tower with several catapults.⁴⁰ Many of the upper levels of Arcadia's walls, however, were built using far smaller, uncut stones, whose appearance is so generic that it is very difficult to date them accurately. It does nevertheless seem that the large, round tower at the eastern corner of the site was constructed by the Franks, just like the keep at Kalamata.⁴¹

Numerous other fortifications in southern and central Greece can be placed in the same group as Arcadia and

³⁹ Bon, La Morée franque, pp.669-70; Andrews, Castles, pp.85-89. Arcadia can be compared with the mountain fortresses on Cyprus. See above, p.213.

⁴⁰ L. de la c., c.115, p.39. See also L. de los f., c.114, p.28

⁴¹ Andrews, Castles, p.89; T.S.R. Boase, 'The Arts in Frankish Greece and Rhodes', in HC, IV (1977), pp.208-28, at p.219.

Kalamata. These include Coron, Patras, Athens and Thebes, taken by the crusaders in 1205,⁴² and Nauplia, Corinth and Argos, captured in 1211-12, 1210 and 1212 respectively.⁴³ At about the same time the crusaders also occupied Neopatras, which they held until its recapture by Theodore Angelus in 1219.⁴⁴ Almost all these places had to be taken by force, a clear indication that they were fully functioning military strongholds at the time of the Fourth

⁴² Coron: Villehardouin, La Conquête, p.196; L. de la c., c.111, p.37. Patras: ibid, c.91, p.30. Athens and Thebes: Nicetas Choniates, Historia, col.995.

⁴³ The exact date of the fall of Corinth, Argos and Nauplia remains unclear. They were initially besieged by Boniface of Montferrat in late 1204: Villehardouin, La Conquête, p.196; Nicetas Choniates, Historia, cols.991, 998. According to the Chronicle of Morea, Corinth and Nauplia were not captured until the 1240s: L. de la c., c.190-200, pp.68-71; L. de los f., c.211-12, p.48; To Chronikon tou Moreos, pp.188-97. However, papal documents from the reign of Innocent III alluding to the fall of Corinth (PL, CCXVI, no.6, cols.201-2) and Argos (PL, CCXVI, no.77, col.598) suggest that the much earlier dates given above are correct. For Argos, see also To Chronikon tou Moreos, p.104; L. de los f., c.93, 95, p.24. L. de los f., correctly attributes the capture of Corinth to Geoffrey I of Villehardouin (c.188, p.43), but subsequently appears to make the same mistake as the L. de la c. by implying that Corinth fell much later in the thirteenth century (c.212, p.48). See also Longnon, 'Problèmes de l'histoire de la principauté de Morée', 156-57; Bon, La Morée franque, p.68.

⁴⁴ Neopatras and surrounding territories had been granted to Boniface of Montferrat's followers in the partition treaty of 1204; Tafel and Thomas, Urkunden, I, 486-88. It presumably fell to the crusaders during Boniface's campaign in the area; Villehardouin, La Conquête, p.178; Nicetas Choniates, Historia, cols. 986, 990-91; Nicol, The Despotate, pp.35-36, 57-58. In 1319 the Catalans captured Neopatras, and it became an important duchy under their rule until the Turkish invasion of 1390. See Marino Sanudo, Epistulae, ed. J. Bongars, in Gesta Dei per Francos, sive orientaliū expeditionum et regni Francorum Hierosolimitani historia a variis, sed illius aevi scriptoribus litteris commendata, (2 vols., Hannau 1611), II, Ep.III (1325), 291; A. Rubió y Lluch, 'Els Castells catalans de la Grecia continental', Annuari de l'Institut d'estudis catalans, II (1908), 364-425, at 399-413.

Crusade. In terms of design and location they also shared a number of important characteristics. Like Arcadia, Corinth, Argos, Neopatras and Thebes were all mountain castles, and were defended by successive baileys and outworks arranged around an ancient acropolis. All four sites had either been occupied continuously since classical times, or had been refortified in the eighth and ninth centuries, when the political stability of the early Byzantine period was fast disappearing.⁴⁵ Although Patras, Nauplia and Coron were located in less precipitous coastal areas, they too were built on hilltops or promontories which had already acted as refuge sites for many centuries.⁴⁶

As at Arcadia, the oldest parts of these places were also represented by the kind of Cyclopean masonry which characterized the fortifications of the classical world.⁴⁷ Above these remains, the later Byzantine defences were built using a combination of small, poor quality stones quarried locally, recycled antique masonry and any other materials (such as broken pottery, bricks or tiles) which could be found nearby. This latter type of construction is perhaps best preserved along the north wall of the outer bailey at Patras, which probably already existed by the ninth century, and incorporated a bewildering array of ashlar blocks, column drums and marble slabs robbed from

⁴⁵ For general descriptions of these sites, see, Corinth: Andrews, Castles, pp.138-45. Argos: Bon, La Morée franque, pp.674-76; Andrews, Castles, pp.107-15. Neopatras: Rubió y Lluch, 'Els Castells', 399-400. Thebes: Bon, 'Forteresses medievales', 189-91.

⁴⁶ For general descriptions of these sites, see, Patras: Bon, La Morée franque, pp.670-73; Andrews, Castles, pp.119-29. Nauplia: ibid, pp.92-105. Coron: ibid, pp.15-23.

⁴⁷ Good examples of such masonry can still be seen at Argos. See Andrews, Castles, p.113, and figs.125-27, pp.112-13.

much older structures.⁴⁸

From the early years of the thirteenth century onwards, the Latins carried out their own repairs and improvements on these castles. It is remarkable how often these alterations involved the addition of a strong, central tower or keep. Such structures have already been mentioned at Kalamata and Arcadia, and good examples have also survived at Corinth and Neopatras.⁴⁹ Reference should also be made to the famous medieval tower at Athens, probably built by the Acciajuoli in the fourteenth century, but unfortunately demolished in 1874. It was situated on the ancient acropolis, which was itself well fortified enough to resist a major attack by Leon Sgouros, the Greek ruler of Corinth, during the brief period of anarchy on the eve of the Frankish invasion (1205).⁵⁰ From photographs it seems that this tower was extremely sturdy, having been constructed almost entirely from smooth marble slabs, without the usual filling of smaller stones or rubble mortar. Standing to a height of at least 85 feet, it must have been one of the most impressive medieval structures built from recycled masonry anywhere in Greece.⁵¹

⁴⁸ Andrews, Castles, p.126, and see fig.144, p.126; Bon, La Morée franque, p.673.

⁴⁹ Kalamata: Andrews, Castles, pp.34-35. Arcadia: ibid, p.89; Boase, 'The Arts in Frankish Greece', p.219. Neopatras: Rubió y Lluch, 'Els Castells', 400. Corinth: Bon, La Morée franque, p.674; Andrews, Castles, p.140. Perhaps the Aragonese version of the Chronicle of Morea was referring to this keep when it reported that William II of Villehardouin repaired 'the castle of Corinth'. See L. fe los f., c.216, p.49.

⁵⁰ Nicetas Choniates, Historia, col.991; Miller, The Latins in the Levant, pp.31-32. On the great strength of the acropolis in general, see Setton, Catalan Domination, pp.188-89.

⁵¹ Miller, The Latins in the Levant, pp.401-2; P. Lock, 'The Frankish Tower on the Acropolis, Athens. The Photographs of William J. Stillman', ABSA, LXXXII, (1987), 131-33; P. Lock, 'The Frankish Towers of Central Greece',

Other improvements carried out by the Latins normally amounted to the restoration, or even rebuilding, of outer defences and curtain walls. It has already been mentioned that such work was carried out by William Aleman at Patras, whilst at Corinth it is possible that the Acciajuoli strengthened the ancient ramparts in the fourteenth century.⁵² The poor quality of the masonry at Argos makes it impossible to draw similar conclusions for this site,⁵³ while at Coron and Nauplia it is the proliferation of later Venetian artillery fortifications which makes the task of identifying medieval alterations difficult. The historical sources nevertheless tell us that by the late thirteenth century the Venetians had already expanded the Byzantine castle at Coron so much that it was deemed impregnable.⁵⁴ The Chronicle of Morea also records that there were in fact two fortresses at Nauplia in the thirteenth century, implying that the lower slopes of the promontory as well as its summit were fortified in some way.⁵⁵ It is possible that a small section of wall, a triangular bastion and two rounded towers visible beneath a collapsed fifteenth century talus represents a small section of these defences. Certainly a postern gate incorporated into the wall and built using recycled classical stone resembles later fourteenth century Catalan work at Boudonitza and Salona (Amphissa), where doorways were framed with vast, antique masonry

ABSA, LXXXI, (1986), 101-23, at 107, 111-12.

⁵² Patras: see above, p.303. Corinth: Andrews, Castles, pp.140-41.

⁵³ ibid, p.108.

⁵⁴ Marino Sanudo, Istoria, p.106.

⁵⁵ L. de la c., c.199, p.71.

slabs.⁵⁶

The scarcity of medieval remains at Nauplia is also comparable to Thebes, where a solitary tower, again built using much older masonry, is all that survives from the palatial castle constructed there by Nicholas II of Saint Omer in the mid- to late thirteenth century.⁵⁷ However, the fact that Thebes withstood a major siege in 1209, when the emperor Henry attacked the rebellious Lombard garrison using an array of mines, catapults and battering rams, proves that this was yet another site where the Latins were merely repairing and extending fortifications rather than building new ones.⁵⁸

Many of these observations also apply to the numerous ruined sites and acropolises in southern and central Greece which the crusaders reoccupied. Unlike Arcadia, Corinth and the other strongholds just mentioned, these places had not been maintained and refortified during the Byzantine period, although some may still have been inhabited as open settlements. Their natural strength and ready supply of high quality masonry made these sites extremely attractive to the Latins, who exploited them in the same way that the Frankish invaders of Asia Minor had done at Cyzicus in 1207.⁵⁹

Inevitably, fortresses which belong to this group contain

⁵⁶ Nauplia: Bon, La Morée franque, p.677; Andrews, Castles, pp.93-94. Boudonitza: Bon, 'Forteresses Medievales', 161. Salona: *ibid*, 177.

⁵⁷ This was destroyed by the Catalans to prevent its recapture by the Franks. However, the Catalans probably retained some urban defences at Thebes. See L. de la c., c.554, pp.220-21; To Chronikon tou Moreos, p.524; Bon, 'Forteresses Medievales', 187-91.

⁵⁸ Henry of Valenciennes, Histoire de l'empereur, c.672-78, pp.111-13.

⁵⁹ See above, pp.301-2.

far more structures dating from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, although they were often just as likely to incorporate the same kind of defences as more Byzantine sites such as Arcadia. Hence at Boudonitza, an important castle on the northern frontiers of the Athenian duchy, we find the familiar arrangement of successive baileys dominated by a hill top citadel, even though this stronghold was probably built almost exclusively by the Franks and the Catalans. The masonry at Boudonitza also confirms that like their Byzantine predecessors, the Latins tended to rely on uncut stones quarried locally, if it was found that there were not sufficient classical remains left which could be recycled.⁶⁰ Other interesting examples of this type of fortification include Salona and Zeitoun (Lamia) in central Greece, and Modon and Akova in the principality of Achaëa.⁶¹ Thus at Modon the crusaders came across an open settlement 'which had been without walls for a long time', even though this 'city' was clearly still inhabited by a fairly large Greek population living inside the ruins of much older urban defences. It seems that these remains were subsequently used by the Latins when they refortified the site in 1205.⁶²

Although later Venetian structures have long since

⁶⁰ Bon, 'Forteresses Medievales', 148-63; Boase, 'The Arts in Frankish Greece', pp.214-15.

⁶¹ For general descriptions of these sites, see, Modon: Andrews, Castles, pp.61-83. Salona (Amphissa): Bon, 'Forteresses Medievales', 164-86; Rubió y Lluch, 'Els Castells', 413-25; Boase, 'The Arts in Frankish Greece', p.215. Akova: Bon, La Morée franque, pp.634-35. Zeitoun (Lamia): Rubió y Lluch, 'Els Castells', 393-98; Boase, 'The Arts in Frankish Greece', p.216.

⁶² Villehardouin, La Conquête, p.194. It seems that these hastily built defences were demolished by the Venetians when they subsequently occupied Modon. See Martin da Canal, La Chronique des Veneciens, c.67, p.349, and below, p.334.

obscured these defences, the implication of Villehardouin's statement is that the crusaders provided Modon with some kind of urban fortifications. At many other sites whose ancient ramparts had been abandoned by 1205, the Franks appear to have begun the process of restoration by constructing large, isolated towers out of the surrounding ruins. This was certainly the case at Akova, situated in the mountainous interior of the Peloponnese. Here it seems that a fairly robust rectangular keep once dominated the castle, which otherwise relied on a combination of sheer cliffs and thin, poorly constructed curtain walls for its defence.⁶³ Similarly, the central donjon at Boudonitza had walls two metres thick and an entrance positioned 2.2 metres above the ground, while the outer ramparts of the fortress were often twice as thin and had flanking towers situated as much as 80 metres apart.⁶⁴ At Salona, another medieval stronghold built on an ancient acropolis, a large round tower located at the summit of the inner ward may belong to the same category, although the fact that this structure is round, an almost unique feature in central Greece, makes it unclear whether it is in fact Frankish, Catalan or Turkish.⁶⁵ What is clear, however, is that castles like Salona were generally dominated by central towers which were far stronger than any surrounding fortifications. They therefore compare well with intact strongholds such as Kalamata, whose defences were of course also strengthened by the addition of donjons during the Frankish period.

Having looked at castles which were either intact in 1204,

⁶³ Bon, La Morée franque, pp.634-35.

⁶⁴ Bon, 'Forteresses Medievales', 152-61, particularly at 161.

⁶⁵ Bon, 'Forteresses Medievales', 179-83; Rubió y Lluç, 'Els Castells', 415-17.

or were constructed on the ruins of far older fortifications, it is now time to discuss those strongholds which the Latins built from scratch on previously unoccupied sites. Such castles are extremely rare, and it seems that none were ever erected outside southern and central Greece. Within this area, one of the most important fortifications of this kind was Glarentza (Clarence), located on a headland toward the north-eastern tip of the Peloponnese. Glarentza was built on a rocky plateau overlooking a small harbour, which was once protected by a number of reefs and jetties. The town itself was defended by a single curtain wall roughly two metres thick and built from irregular, uncut stones, which were only replaced by proper courses of masonry along the parapet and in other more exposed areas. Along the length of the wall there were at least two gates, which gave direct access to the town, and were not protected by any additional measures such as machicolation or 'L' shaped passageways. However, they were originally separated from the surrounding plain by a 20 metre wide moat running the length of the landward rampart, while a small rectangular citadel located halfway along the west curtain also acted as a final refuge for the town's population.⁶⁶

Little is known about the history of these fortifications, or the exact date of their construction, although the architectural evidence suggests that they were built at some point in the thirteenth century on a previously unused site.⁶⁷ Similar conclusions can probably be made about Karytaina, located in the mountainous interior of the Peloponnese. Built on a rocky outcrop far above the

⁶⁶ Bon, La Morée franque, pp.602-7. See also Traquair, 'Mediaeval Fortresses', 272, 275-79, although this description is less reliable, and the attached history of the site appears to confuse it with Chlemoutsi.

⁶⁷ Bon, La Morée franque, pp.324, 607.

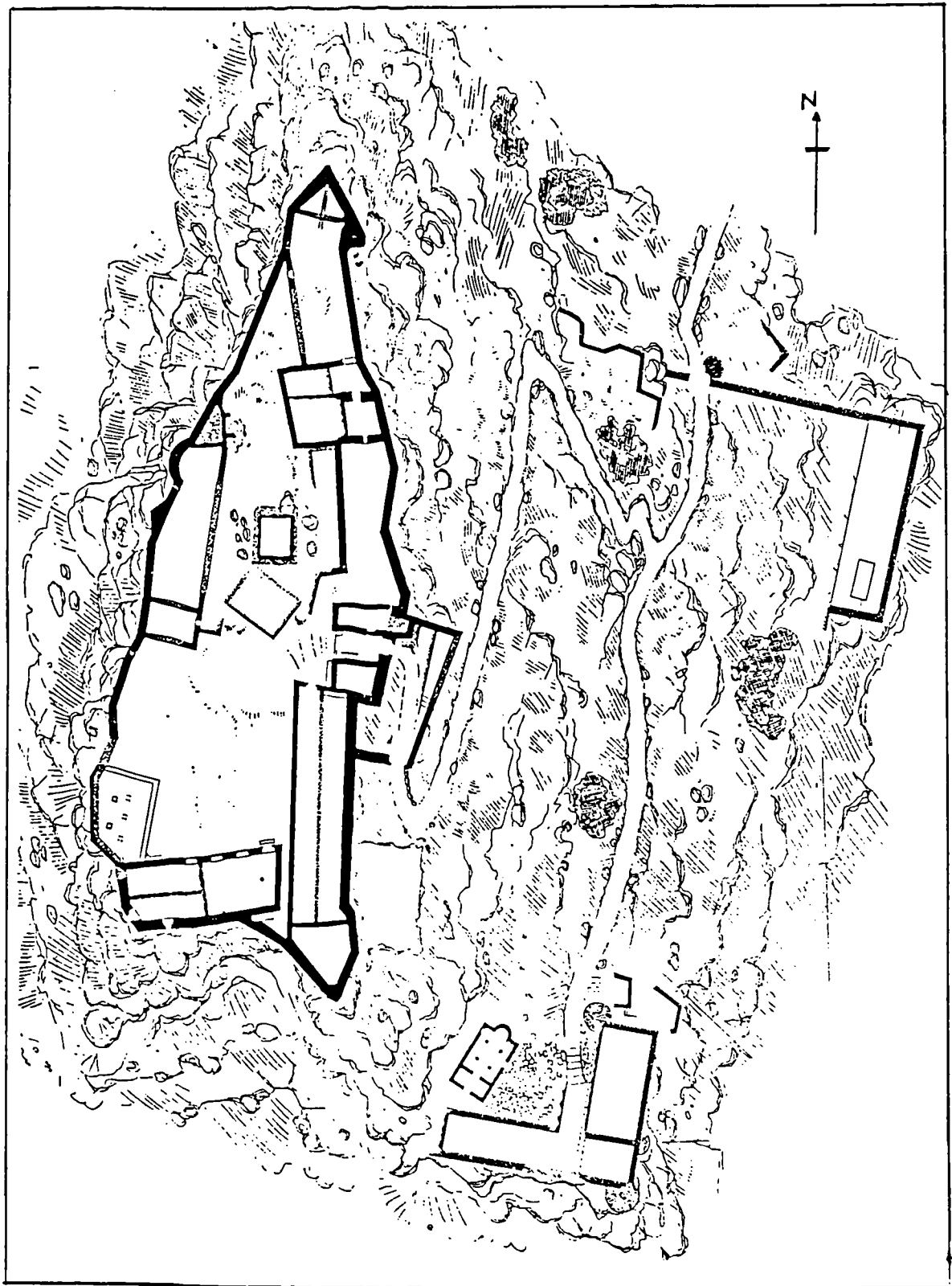


Fig.17. The castle of Karytaina is very similar to many other mountain fortresses built or occupied by the Franks, including Mistra and Arcadia. Note also the possible remains of an isolated square keep in the upper courtyard. From Bon, La Moree franque, plate 66.

surrounding valleys, Karytaina's north, south and west sides are so steep that they required few defences and were not even protected by complete circuit walls. On the relatively gentle eastern slope, however, a large outer bailey and a fairly elaborate barbican guarded the main approach to the castle from the village below.⁶⁸ Within the inner fortress itself, there were a number of buildings ranged around a lower and an upper courtyard, and two of these are worth mentioning individually. Firstly, there was a great hall situated along the south curtain, whose doorway, windows and fireplace are unmistakably French in style. Secondly, there appears to have been a tower, or keep, which stood in isolation between the two courtyards. The presence of these buildings, as well as a number of other features such as the inferiority of the masonry, the low quantity of flanking towers and the weakness of the walls (only 90 centimetres thick in the barbican), all point toward a Frankish construction of the thirteenth century.⁶⁹ This is apparently confirmed by the *Chronicle of Morea*, which states that the castle was built by Geoffrey of Briel, nephew of the first lord of Karytaina, at about the same time as the fall of Monemvasia (1249).⁷⁰

Many of the defences described at Karytaina - an upper citadel dominated by a central keep, a combination of sheer cliffs and successive baileys to block access to the summit, a poorly constructed but elaborate barbican - are also present at the mountain fortress of Livadia in southern Thessaly, largely attributed to the Catalans, with some possible Frankish and Turkish elements. Moreover, the only classical masonry to be found at

⁶⁸ Bon, La Morée franque, pp.629-30, 631.

⁶⁹ Bon, La Morée franque, pp.630-33.

⁷⁰ L. de la c., c.219, p.79. See also L. de los f., c.118, p.29.

Livadia was taken from an ancient temple some distance away, and there is nothing to indicate that this is anything but a purely western construction, built on a virgin site.⁷¹

By identifying features such as reused or low quality masonry, inaccessible location, and the presence of keep towers, Bon has placed a number of other medieval fortifications in the same category, including Géraki and Kalavryta.⁷² Relying on statements to that effect in the Chronicle of Morea, he has also concluded that Androusa, Old Navarino, Mistra, Beaufort (Leutron) and Old Mania, all of them in the Peloponnese, were founded by the Franks in the course of the thirteenth century.⁷³ But in the case of Androusa, it has already been pointed out that a number of architectural discrepancies make it possible that this castle existed in some form before 1204. Doubt has also been cast on Bon's assertion regarding Mistra. The upper castle of this site is dominated by a large, rectangular keep, which, as we have seen, is an extremely common feature in Frankish military architecture in Greece. Many of the surrounding ramparts and gateways, however, show

⁷¹ Bon, 'Forteresses Medievales', 194-206; Rubió y Lluch, 'Els Castells', 383-87.

⁷² Kalavryta: Bon, La Morée franque, pp.633-34. Géraki: ibid, pp.642-45.

⁷³ Androusa: L. de los f., c.216, p.49; Bon, La Morée franque, pp.637-39. Old Navarino (Port de Jonc): L. de la c., c.554, p.221; L. de los f., c.471, p.103; Bon, La Morée franque, pp.668-69. For a detailed description, see also Andrews, Castles, pp.42-48. Mistra: L. de los f., c.215, p.49; L. de la c., c.205D, p.73, translated from To Chronikon tou Moreos, p.200; Bon, La Morée franque, pp.639-42, and see also Andrews, Castles, pp.168-74; Runciman, Mistra, pp.29-30. Beaufort (Leutron): L. de los f., c.216, p.49; L. de la c., c.205E, p.74, translated from To Chronikon tou Moreos, p.202; Bon, La Morée franque, p.504. Old Mania: L. de la c., c.207, pp.74-75; L. de los f., c.215, p.49; Bon, La Morée franque, pp.503-4; R. Traquair, 'Laconia: I, Mediaeval Fortresses', ABSA, XII (1905-6), 259-76, at 275-76.

strong Byzantine influences, which explains why Winfield has rejected Bon's claims.⁷⁴ Moreover, the archaeological remains at Glarentza, Livadia and Karytaina, three sites which it has been suggested really are purely Latin constructions, all contain many of the same features as Byzantine castles such as Arcadia, Corinth and Patras. Thus we have come full circle, and have returned to the architectural and historical dilemmas outlined earlier, for many medieval remains in Greece are so similar that they can be attributed to the Greeks, as Winfield has done, or to the Franks, as Bon preferred, with almost equal validity.

But if we accept one of these interpretations wholeheartedly, we dismiss the other completely. Instead, it could be argued that the Chronicle of Morea is merely referring to a major rebuilding programme rather than the construction of entirely new fortresses, when it states that Androusa, Mistra and several other castles were erected by the Franks. More specifically, it could signify the addition of new keep towers. Such structures could be built quickly and relatively cheaply, and were the obvious choice, for they could be garrisoned by a small number of soldiers even if far older and more extensive outer defences were left in ruins, or had to be abandoned in the face of a numerically superior enemy. Again and again we have seen how towers of this kind were hastily added to existing fortifications, be they intact, as was the case at Kalamata and Corinth, or ruined, as occurred at Akova and Boudonitza. Moreover, Frankish Greece was not the only area where such tactics were adopted, for in Cyprus a series of large towers were constructed on the ruins of earlier Byzantine fortifications between 1191 and c.1210,

⁷⁴ Androusa: see above, pp.292-93. Mistra: see above, pp.293-94, and Andrews, Castles, pp.168-74, who agrees with Bon.

at a time when crusader rule was still weak and the local population remained actively hostile.⁷⁵ If this was also the case in central and southern Greece, then Bon may have interpreted the Chronicle of Morea's statements too widely, and wrongly assumed that the written evidence precluded the existence of any pre-thirteenth century defences whatsoever at sites such as Mistra. But he was also correct in the sense that the Franks did indeed build a number of imposing new towers, which could protect the outnumbered newcomers and keep the local Greeks in check.

The controversy surrounding Mistra merely confirms that there are indeed very few strongholds (and perhaps fewer than Bon would claim) which can be attributed to the Franks, Catalans or other westerners in their entirety. Their lack of classical remains implies that Glarentza, Livadia and Karytaina are three such sites. Chlemoutsi (Clermont), situated on a gently sloping hill roughly half-way between Glarentza and Andreville, was another. This can be proved beyond doubt, for the circumstances surrounding Chlemoutsi's construction are well documented. During the first two decades of crusader rule in Achaea, relations between the Latin Church and the Frankish nobility deteriorated steadily, partly because of the scandalous behaviour of men like William Aleman, and partly because the Church refused to provide military or financial help for the defence and conquest of Morea. These problems came to a head in the period between 1220 and 1223, when Geoffrey I of Villehardouin confiscated all church land in Achaea, which amounted to a third of the entire Peloponnese, and used the revenues from these estates to build Chlemoutsi. These events are clearly recorded in the Chronicle of Morea and the correspondence

⁷⁵ Cyprus: see above, pp.190-91.

of Honorius III,⁷⁶ and are borne out by the total absence of pre-thirteenth century remains at the castle itself.

The considerable amounts of money which Geoffrey I raised from the Church during the 1220s enabled him to build an exceptionally strong fortress, which would be suitable as a royal residence and have the defensive strength to compensate for its relatively exposed situation. The dominant feature of this stronghold was the inner citadel itself, a hexagonal structure which was superior to all other crusader fortifications in Achaëa in terms of its strength, size and the quality of its masonry. Similarly, both the residential buildings inside the citadel and the defences of the large outer bailey were unusual because of the high standard of vaulting and stone work employed in their construction. Other features of the castle, such as the styling of the fireplaces, also confirm that Chlemoutsi does indeed date from the first half of the thirteenth century.⁷⁷

Chlemoutsi is therefore unique, both in terms of its appearance and the circumstances surrounding its original construction. No other stronghold in the area can be dated so accurately, whilst many, such as the tower on the acropolis in Athens, have been attributed to Franks, Catalans or other westerners over a period lasting almost

⁷⁶ To Chronikon tou Moreos, pp.176-82; L. de los f., c.217, p.49, which incorrectly dates these events to c.1256 and the reign of William II; Regesta Honorii papae III, II, nos.3162, 3163, pp.516-17, no.4480, p.159. (Full text of no.4480 also in Innocent III, PL, CCXVI, cols.968-72). See also Bon, La Morée franque, pp.94-97; R.L. Wolff, 'Politics in the Latin Patriarchate of Constantinople', Dumbarton Oaks Papers, VIII, (1954), 225-303, at 274.

⁷⁷ Bon, La Morée franque, pp.608-29, (fireplaces, pp.621-22); Andrews, Castles, pp.149-58; Traquair, 'Mediaeval Fortresses', 272-79, which should be used with caution; see above, p.294. Traquair is also used by Boase, 'The Arts in Frankish Greece', pp.217-18.

two centuries.⁷⁸ The contrast is even greater when one compares Chlemoutsi with the countless smaller medieval fortifications in Greece, whose entire history usually remains a complete mystery. Again, it would be futile to try to list such structures individually, but as with the larger castles already mentioned, a few examples can be cited to give some idea of their general appearance and design.

Virtually all fortifications of this type were towers, either standing in isolation or surrounded by one or more curtain walls. More than twenty towers of the isolated variety have been identified in mainland Greece, and particularly in the former duchy of Athens. Most of these structures are extremely ruinous and are fast disappearing, but the tower of Markopoulo, located about 25 kilometres south east of Athens, still stands to its original crenellated height of 18-20 metres.⁷⁹ This tower's external measurements (5.4m by 8.2m) are slightly smaller than those of three similar buildings at Moulki (Haliartos), Dadi (Amphikleia) and Thurion, along the main route between Athens and Lamia, although all four structures were built using the familiar combination of recycled masonry and smaller, uncut stones.⁸⁰ At Moulki in particular it is still possible to see four arrow slits in each wall of the tower, divided equally between the first

⁷⁸ Lock, 'The Frankish Tower on the Acropolis, Athens', 133; Longnon, 'Problèmes de l'histoire', 89-90; Lock, 'The Frankish Towers of Central Greece', 112.

⁷⁹ Lock, 'The Frankish Towers of Central Greece', 102; P. Lock, 'The Medieval Towers in Greece: A Problem in Chronology and Function', in Latins and Greeks in the Eastern Mediterranean after 1204, ed. B. Arbel, B. Hamilton, D. Jacoby, (London 1989), pp.129-45, at pp.132-33.

⁸⁰ Lock, 'The Medieval Towers of Greece', p.133; Bon, 'Forteresses Medievales', 146-48; Lock, 'The Frankish Towers of Central Greece', 113, 114-15, 121, 122.

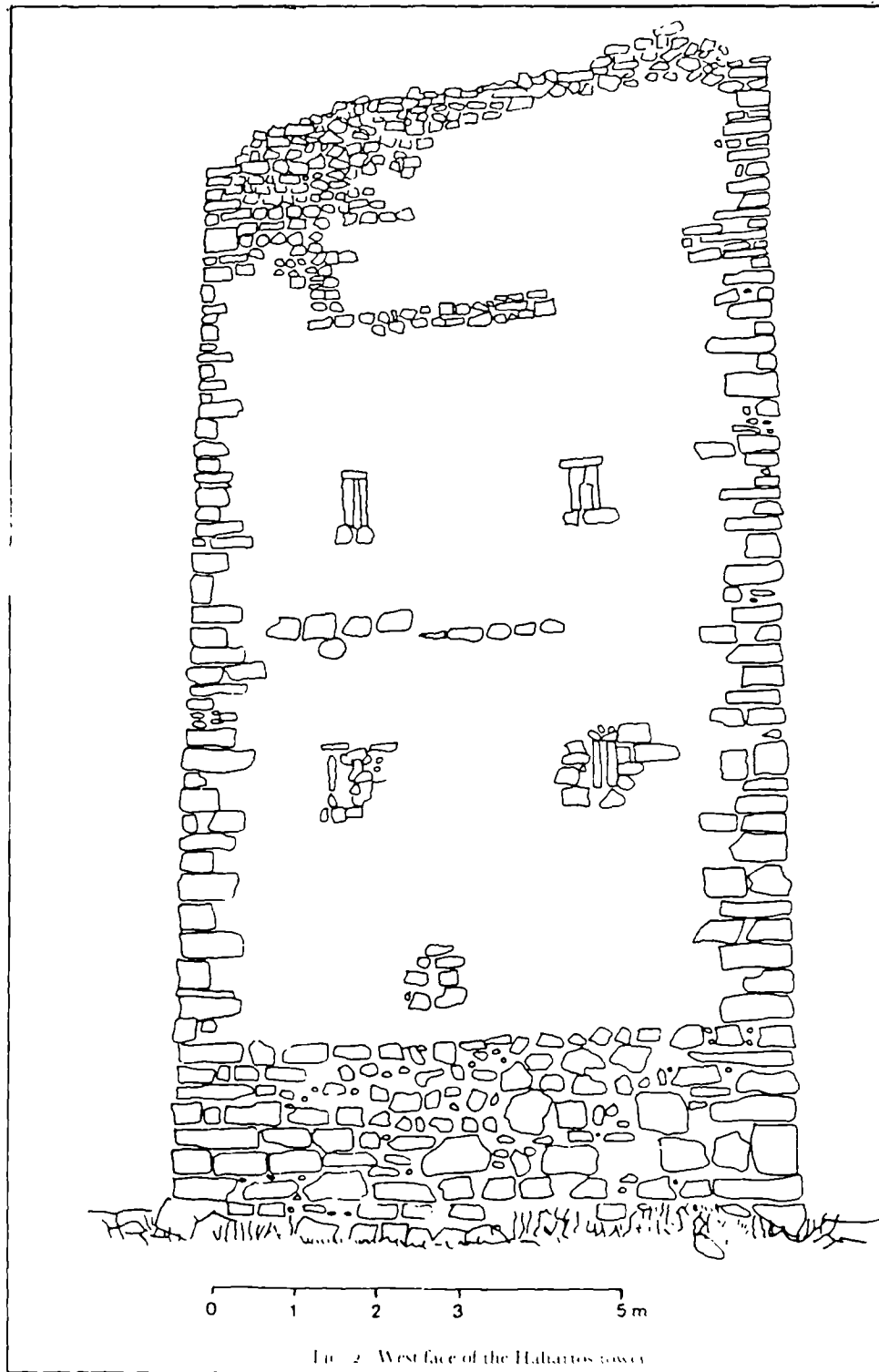


Fig. 2 West face of the Haliartos tower

Fig.18. Haliartos (Moulki) tower; a typical Latin tower of the Eastern Mediterranean. From Lock, 'The Frankish Towers of Central Greece', 114.

and second floors.⁸¹ The original entrance was also located well above ground level; an arrangement which was copied at Thurion and Dadi, but not at Markopoulo, where there was direct access to the ground floor.⁸²

Most of the towers in central Greece, including those mentioned above, were situated in low lying areas. Others which were located on more isolated outcrops or hilltops occasionally had curtain walls around them, making them less accessible to the enemy. At Aetos in Messenia, for example, there are traces of a square keep at the summit, surrounded by an outer curtain wall enclosing an area measuring c.45 metres by 90 metres. To the north and east in particular, a further wall also protected the main approaches to the keep, but all these outer defences were weak and very badly constructed.⁸³ A more robust example of such a fortification is the acropolis at Athens. Although this stronghold has already been discussed in the context of far larger and more important castles, it is nevertheless worth mentioning here because its medieval tower shared certain similarities with Markopoulo, including some kind of ground floor entrance. This raises the possibility that the towers at Athens and Markopoulo provided a precedent for many other such structures in central Greece.⁸⁴

Moreover, if we assume that these two strongpoints were

⁸¹ Lock, 'The Frankish Towers of Central Greece', 113, 114; Bon, 'Forteresses Medievales', 146.

⁸² Bon, 'Forteresses Medievales', 147-48; Lock, 'The Medieval Towers of Greece', pp.132-33; Lock, 'The Frankish Towers of Central Greece', 113, 121, 122.

⁸³ Bon, La Morée franque, p.650.

⁸⁴ Lock, 'The Frankish Tower on the Acropolis, Athens', 133; Lock, 'The Medieval Towers of Greece', pp.132-33; Lock, 'The Frankish Towers of Central Greece', 111-12, and see above, p.308.

built by the same lord, it may help us to date the medieval towers of Greece, for it is most commonly claimed that the tower at Athens was erected by the Acciajuoli during the late fourteenth or early fifteenth centuries.⁸⁵ However, this may be a dangerous generalization, because the first floor entrances at Moulki, Thurion and Dadi can be compared with a similar doorway in the central keep at Boudonitza, which appears to be a Catalan rather than an Acciajuoli construction.⁸⁶ To complicate matters further, the tower at Athens had a first floor entrance as well as a ground floor one, and it was framed with reused classical blocks, just like the inner gate at Boudonitza.⁸⁷ It has also been noted that a similar technique was used in the construction of a postern at Nauplia, normally attributed to the Franks.⁸⁸ These problems illustrate the many difficulties involved in trying to date the smaller fortifications of medieval Greece. Indeed, the constant recycling of masonry and building techniques has meant that even the Macedonian tower of Mara Brankowicz, the only such site to be properly excavated, cannot be dated more precisely than the medieval period in general.⁸⁹

Similar conclusions can also be made about the medieval fortifications on the various Greek islands occupied by the crusaders. The majority of such structures were also isolated towers, most notably on Euboea, where they were presumably constructed by the Venetians. On Chios the

⁸⁵ Lock, 'The Medieval Towers of Greece', pp.132-33, but this is by no means certain; see above, pp.318-19.

⁸⁶ Bon, 'Forteresses Medievales', 147-48, 161.

⁸⁷ Lock, 'The Frankish Tower on the Acropolis, Athens', 131; Bon, 'Forteresses Medievales', 161.

⁸⁸ See above, pp.309-10.

⁸⁹ Lock, 'The Medieval Towers of Greece', p.136; Lock, 'The Frankish Towers of Central Greece', 106-8.

Genoese also built towers well into the sixteenth century, some of which were of a more sophisticated round design and strengthened by a talus.⁹⁰ During the earliest years of the thirteenth century they relied on similar defences on Crete in an attempt to hold the island against the Venetians. Many of these fortifications were erected by the Genoese, but it seems that others were merely repaired, suggesting that older sites were often reoccupied on islands in the same way that they were on the mainland.⁹¹

Another example of such a tactic dates from the invasion of Naxos by Marco Sanudo in 1207. In order to subjugate this island Sanudo first had to capture the remote stronghold of Apalire, situated on a steep inland mountain whose slopes were defended by two, and in places even three, successive curtain walls dating from antiquity. Moreover, the fact that it took the Venetians more than five weeks to take the castle suggests that Apalire was an ancient acropolis whose fortifications had been maintained and improved by the islanders over the centuries. After Sanudo had conquered the rest of Naxos, he quickly made sure that this important stronghold was repaired and garrisoned by his own men.⁹² It is also interesting to

⁹⁰ Lock, 'The Frankish Towers of Central Greece', 102, 104; Lock, 'The Medieval Towers of Greece', pp.137, 139-41; Balard, La Romanie génoise, I, 445-46.

⁹¹ Marino Sanudo, Vite de' Duchi, cols.543-45. See also Andrea Navagerio, Storia Venezia, col.987; Nicetas Choniates, Historia, col.1030; Andrea Dandolo, Chronicum Venetum, pp.283-84; Fotheringham, Marco Sanudo, pp.51, 82-83.

⁹² Daniele Barbaro, Cronica del Trivisano della Citta di Venezia, extract cited in Fotheringham, Marco Sanudo, p.106; Cronica Antica di Venetia, extract cited in Fotheringham, Marco Sanudo, p.110; Sauger, Histoire nouvelle, extract cited in Fotheringham, Marco Sanudo, p.115; Boase, 'The Arts in Frankish Greece', p.222; Fotheringham, Marco Sanudo, pp.41-44.

note that the only new fortification constructed by Sanudo appears to have been yet another tower, situated in the coastal town of Naxos and surrounded by its own curtain wall. Although the exact appearance of this structure remains unclear, it may well have resembled the kind of towers already referred to at Markopoulo and Moulki, as well as those erected by Sanudo's fellow countrymen on Euboea.⁹³

Marco Sanudo's castle at Naxos therefore represents yet another Latin fortification in Greece which raises more questions than it answers. To some extent a more systematic archaeological investigation of medieval sites would overcome these difficulties, but the excavation of Mara Brankowicz has shown that this is not always the case. Although they must consequently be regarded as suggestions rather than statements of fact, one can nevertheless draw a number of conclusions about the design and architectural characteristics of the numerous castles which we have looked at so far. Firstly, it is clear that apart from Chlemoutsi, and perhaps also the great hall at Karytaina, Latin fortifications in Greece were constructed by relatively unskilled local builders, rather than well trained west European masons and craftsmen. This explains why the same type of stone work appears again and again in strongholds built for different overlords several decades, or even centuries, apart.

However, it has also been suggested that at sites where there is an overwhelming number of typically Byzantine features, such as decorative brickwork and pentagonal or other polygonal towers, this may indicate the presence of Greek employers as well as employees. If this is the case,

⁹³ Sauger, Histoire nouvelle, in Fotheringham, Marco Sanudo, p.115; Boase, 'The Arts in Frankish Greece', p.222; Fotheringham, Marco Sanudo, pp.70-71.

then castles such as Androusa may contain far more structures from the pre-crusader period, or indeed the early fifteenth century, than has previously been recognized. Moreover, the presence of typically Frankish donjons at Kalamata and elsewhere confirms that local Greeks were fully capable of building more 'western' structures when asked to do so, and would not therefore have erected polygonal towers when working under the supervision of a west European lord.⁹⁴ As we have seen, this raises the possibility that Bon, along with other scholars such as Kevin Andrews, have interpreted too literally the Chronicle of Morea, written over a century after the Fourth Crusade, when it states that many castles in Greece were built by the Franks, apparently from scratch, in the first half of the thirteenth century.⁹⁵

At present, this conclusion cannot be confirmed or denied, but if we accept that the Latins at least repaired many castles in Greece, and frequently added central towers to them, then these sites can tell us a lot about the nature of west European settlement around the Aegean sea. Akova, Géraki, Karytaina, Patras and Kalavryta, for example, were some of the most important lordships in Achaea, containing as many as 24 fiefs (Patras and Akova⁹⁶), and in certain cases possessing special rights of jurisdiction.⁹⁷ Most of

⁹⁴ Androusa: see above, pp.292-93. Kalamata: see above, p304. Unlike castles, it seems that Frankish churches in Greece were built by west European craftsmen. See Lock, 'The Frankish Towers of Central Greece', 104.

⁹⁵ See above, p.672-74. For the probable dates of the various versions of the Chronicle of Morea, see Longnon's introduction to the L. de la c., pp.lxxviii-lxxxiv.

⁹⁶ L. de la c., c.128, p.43-44; L. de los f., c.117, p.28.

⁹⁷ The lords of Patras, Karytaina and Kalavryta could exercise high justice, or cases involving crimes punishable by loss of life or limb. See P. Topping, Feudal Institutions as revealed in the 'Assizes of Romania'; the Law Code of Frankish Greece, in Studies on Latin Greece,

these castles were held by the same Frankish families until the late thirteenth or early fourteenth centuries, when they were either lost to the Greeks, or returned to the royal domain once the original settlers of the Morea began to die out.⁹⁸ Others, such as the archbishopric of Patras, were sold to or sought protection from Venice, which increasingly became the only western power strong enough to defend Latin territories against the Greeks and the Turks.⁹⁹ Yet even before this decline in Latin power, which did not set in properly until the last third of the thirteenth century, it is remarkable how poorly constructed and unsophisticated these castles were. Hence we have seen how at Karytaina, the third largest barony in the whole principality, some of the curtain walls were less than one metre thick and so badly constructed that they have long since collapsed, even though they apparently date from the 1240s, when Frankish power in the area was at its greatest.¹⁰⁰

(London 1977), (henceforth Assizes), articles 43, 94.

⁹⁸ The history of Karytaina can be used to illustrate these problems. In 1275 Geoffrey de Briel, only the third lord of the dynasty, died childless, and his lordship was divided between the prince of Achaea and Geoffrey's widow. Karytaina was subsequently granted to a succession of different vassals before being lost to the Greeks of Mistra early in the fourteenth century. See L. de la c., c.496, pp.194-95, and p.405; L. de los f., c.642, p.141; Bon, La Morée franque, pp.366-69. Emigration back to Europe, the harsh living conditions, and in particular military setbacks such as the battle of Cephissus accounted for the disappearance of many Frankish families early in the fourteenth century. See Bon, La Morée franque, pp.195-97; Miller, The Latins in the Levant, pp.146-48; Topping, 'The Morea, 1311-1364', pp.120-21; Longnon, L'empire latin, pp.314-16.

⁹⁹ See above, p.303n36.

¹⁰⁰ See above, pp.313-14. Karytaina owed twenty two knights' fees, and was therefore only smaller than Patras and Akova (twenty four fees each). See L. de la c., c.128, pp.43-44; L. de los f., c.117-18, pp.28-29.

The same contradictions can also be found in central and northern Greece. For many years during both the Frankish and the Catalan periods, the castle of Boudonitza retained its virtual independence as a frontier lordship on the northern outskirts of the duchy of Athens. It appears to have successfully withstood the Epirote conquerors of Thessaly in the 1220s,¹⁰¹ resisted the aggressive Catalan conquerors of Athens,¹⁰² and even held up the Turks for a while in the fifteenth century, yet its defences were relatively simple in design, and so little money seems to have been spent on them that good, or even mediocre, masonry was only used in the most vulnerable parts of the castle.¹⁰³

These observations also apply to other baronial castles in central Greece, such as Salona, which became an important Frankish lordship between 1205 and 1311.¹⁰⁴ Even more surprising, however, is the fact that many royal strongholds were just as badly constructed. Androusa, for example, belonged to the princes of Achaea throughout the medieval period, until it was finally lost to the Greeks

¹⁰¹ Honorius III appealed for help in defending Boudonitza and neighbouring Salona against the Greeks in the 1220s. See Regesta Honorii papae III, II, no.4758, p.207, no.5464, p.333; Miller, The Latins in the Levant, pp.84-85; Nicol, The Despotate, pp.62-64.

¹⁰² The Pallavicini lord of Boudonitza was killed at the battle of Cephissus (1311), but his widow married a Venetian called Andrea Cornaro. Thereafter Boudonitza increasingly came under the control of Venice, whose military and political power safeguarded its virtual independence from the Catalans. See Marino Sanudo, Istoria, p.125; L. de los f., c.551, p.120; Setton, Catalan Domination, pp.33, 105-6; Miller, The Latins in the Levant, p.248.

¹⁰³ Miller, The Latins in the Levant, pp.373-75. For a general history of the site, see Bon, 'Forteresses Medievales', 148-51. For variations in masonry, see *ibid*, 160-61.

¹⁰⁴ Bon, 'Forteresses Medievales', 164-86; Rubió y Lluch, 'Els Castells', 413-25.

in the 1420s, yet we have already seen how its walls were built using a slapdash mixture of broken pottery, bricks and uncut stones.¹⁰⁵ Likewise, the castle of Livadia in the duchy of Athens first belonged to the de la Roche family in the thirteenth century, and then rose further in importance under the Catalans, who made it the chief residence and administrative headquarters of the vicar-general, the official representative of the Aragonese dukes. As a result Livadia outshone Thebes, and often rivalled both Athens and Neopatras, but one would hardly think so by looking at the actual remains of the fortress.¹⁰⁶ The most striking example of this irony, however, must surely be that of Constantinople itself, whose rulers bore the imperial title yet lacked the money to repair the walls of their own capital.¹⁰⁷

Needless to say there were some exceptions, most notably the luxurious thirteenth century castle of Saint Omer at Thebes, and Chlemoutsi, which had been constructed with the help of a fortuitous windfall.¹⁰⁸ But on the whole, it is clear that many of the medieval castles of Frankish Greece owed their appearance to the relative lack of money and resources of their owners. In the case of Baldwin of Flanders and his successors, this can be explained in terms of the sheer number of castles and amount of

¹⁰⁵ See above, pp.292-93.

¹⁰⁶ Othon de la Roche's ownership of Livadia is confirmed by documents dating from 1214, issued during his dispute with the papacy. See L.A. Muratori, ed., *Antiquitates Italicae Medii aevi*, (6 vols., Rome 1738-42), V, cols.833-36; Miller, *The Latins in the Levant*, pp.69-70. Othon's arguments with the Church were similar to, and linked with, those of Geoffrey of Villehardouin; see above, pp.317-18. For the subsequent history of Livadia, see Bon, 'Forteresses Medievales', 191-206; Rubió y Lluch, 'Els Castells', 374-87.

¹⁰⁷ See above, pp.297-98.

¹⁰⁸ Thebes: see above, p.310. Chlemoutsi: see above, pp.317-18.

territory they were expected to govern. As far as the nobility was concerned, it reflected the relative poverty of the settlers who came to Greece in the first place. Hence it has already been suggested that William Aleman demolished Church properties at Patras in order to repair his castle out of necessity as much as ruthlessness, even though 'on paper' the lordship of Patras was one of the most important in Greece, owing the service of 24 knights. Even more significantly, William's ancestry in Europe remains a mystery, and it seems that he was only one of many crusaders who came to the east with little to lose and much to gain.¹⁰⁹

This situation can be contrasted with that of the other crusader states, and in particular the Holy Land itself. In a previous chapter it has already been shown that here the majority of castles, and certainly those which were in royal hands or were held by the greatest landholders, were constructed on a far grander scale, by skilled craftsmen who usually employed well dressed stone and highly sophisticated building techniques. This difference in quality reflected the contrast in wealth between men like William Aleman, and powerful European crusaders such as Louis IX, who rebuilt the town walls of Caesarea, Jaffa and Sidon. Most of the other great thirteenth century fortifications in the Holy Land, such as Crac des Chevaliers and Pilgrims' Castle, were built by the Hospitallers and the Templars, who could also rely on almost limitless resources from the west.¹¹⁰

Economic limitations therefore had much to do with the

¹⁰⁹ See above, p.303. Gerland, Neue Quellen, p.14; Bon, La Morée franque, p.106n3.

¹¹⁰ Caesarea, Jaffa, Sidon: see above, pp.50, 54. Crac des Chevaliers: see above, pp.45-46. Pilgrims' Castle: see above, p.55.

design of Frankish castles in Greece. Added to this, geographical factors such as the sheer inaccessibility of many sites reduced the need for elaborate man made defences considerably. As a result, strongholds such as Karytaina had more in common with the remote Byzantine defences of St.Hilarion and Buffavento, or the isolated Armenian mountain castles of Servantikar and Lampron, than they did with crusader castles in the Holy Land, which were usually situated in coastal areas where huge ramparts were needed to compensate for the openness of the terrain.¹¹¹

To some extent, therefore, the geography of southern and central Greece made it logical for Latin settlers there to adopt a more 'Armenian' or 'Byzantine' approach to military architecture. But in other ways, the conquerors of the Fourth Crusade relied on exactly the same tactics as their twelfth century predecessors in Syria and Palestine, and this is reflected in the design and location of their castles. It is interesting to note, for example, that initially at least the crusaders were most anxious to occupy or construct strongholds which were near the coast. This is an important reminder of the crusaders' almost total reliance on the west for military assistance, particularly during the very earliest years of the conquest, when any lost troops, horses or equipment had to be replaced from Europe.¹¹² These concerns explain why Cyzicus, Nicomedia and other places on or near the coast were the first sites to be conquered by the crusaders in

¹¹¹ St.Hilarion and Buffavento: see above, pp.203-4, 208. Servantikar and Lampron: see above, pp.234-37.

¹¹² Hence, for example, the loss of over 200 war horses during fighting in 1203 and the departure of 7,000 Latins in 1205 was seen as threatening the very existence of the Latin empire, for such losses could only be replaced from the west over a period of many months. See Villehardouin, La Conquête, pp.100, 222.

Asia Minor. Similarly, it has already been noted that the Franks hastily fortified Modon in 1205, so that they could leave 'their baggage and their servants there', and could, if necessary, receive supplies and reinforcements from Constantinople or the west quickly and in relative safety.¹¹³

Once bridgeheads of this kind had been established, they could act as starting points for further raids or conquests inland. Again, reference can be made to Modon in this context, as the safety provided by its new defences enabled the Frankish knights to leave behind the slow and unarmed sections of their army and push on into the interior unhindered. In Asia Minor, the Franks used the fortified peninsula of Cyzicus in the same way, 'and from there they began to ravage the lands of Lascaris, and took much booty and many head of cattle, and took the booty and the cattle to their island' (ie Cyzicus).¹¹⁴ Similarly, during the autumn of 1205 the emperor Henry was able to launch a campaign against Ioannitsa in the vicinity of Demotika because he was receiving a constant supply of food and reinforcements from the port of Rodosto.¹¹⁵ Three years later Henry had to march west along the Thracian coast in order to deal with the Lombard rebellion in Thessaly, and again relied on a fleet sailing parallel to him to feed his army during the bitterly cold winter. Indeed, it seems that a surprise attack on his fleet by pirates, combined with the fact that the Lombards still held Christopoli (the most important harbour along the route), explain why this expedition ran into so much trouble and almost had to be abandoned through starvation

¹¹³ Villehardouin, La Conquête, p.194.

¹¹⁴ Ibid, p.272.

¹¹⁵ Ibid, p.236.

outside the walls of Thessaloniki.¹¹⁶

Well defended harbours and anchorages were therefore essential to any aggressive campaigns conducted by the Franks, and particularly during the first five years of Latin rule. Once the crusader states around the Aegean had been established, however, such places still acted as important supply points whenever the newcomers were threatened in any way. Hence after the loss of Constantinople in 1261, which led to Charles of Anjou replacing the Latin emperor as suzerain of Achaëa, Glarentza became the obvious destination for ships sailing from Brindisi. In 1270, for example, Charles sent a fleet to Achaëa to counter the growing threat posed by Michael VIII Palaeologus, and during the next twenty years countless troops and supplies from Italy flowed through Glarentza in response to the increasingly pugnacious activities of the Greeks at Mistra.¹¹⁷ According to the Chronicle of Morea, it was also during this period that Nicholas II, co-ruler of Thebes, built the castle of Old Navarino (Port de Jonc) just north of Modon.¹¹⁸ Even though this area of Morea had been in Frankish hands for many decades, Nicholas chose to construct his fortress on an inaccessible outcrop overlooking a large, natural

¹¹⁶ Henry of Valenciennes, Histoire de l'empereur, c.568-70, pp.59-61, c.662-65, pp.104-6, and see p.34.

¹¹⁷ J.A.C. Buchon, Nouvelles recherches historiques sur la principauté française de Morée et ses hautes baronies à la suite de la Quatrième Croisade, (2 vols., Paris 1843)II, no.19, pp.326-27, and see no.24, pp.330-31, no.25, p.331, no.27, pp.332-33. See also L. de la c., c.461, p.178, c.492, pp.192-93. For details on Charles of Anjou's new status as suzerain, see above p.34n81.

¹¹⁸ L. de la c., c.554, p.221; L. de los f., c.471, p.103. Judging by the absence of recycled masonry on the site, this may have been another of the few castles built by the Franks from scratch. See Bon, La Morée franque, pp.668-69; Andrews, Castles, pp.40-49.

harbour. Presumably this was done so that Old Navarino could be reinforced by sea quickly and conveniently, particularly if it ever came under attack from the Greeks, or indeed became the starting point for an incursion against Mistra.

The castle of Old Navarino can also be compared with that of Naxos, which, as we have seen, Marco Sanudo is said to have built on a hill top situated very near the coast. Here Sanudo could easily receive help from other Venetian states and colonies, or indeed Venice itself, making it an ideal centre from which to rule both Naxos and the entire Archipelago. Likewise, the Greeks were only able to establish, and eventually expand, the despotate of Mistra because of the invincibility of Monemvasia, whose natural strength made it almost impossible to capture, but relatively easy to reinforce by sea.¹¹⁹

Coastal strongholds were therefore needed to establish, and subsequently maintain, Latin rule over the interior. But if and when the political situation deteriorated for the Franks, access to the sea was just as essential, either to get help or to escape. Thus the Latin empire narrowly avoided almost certain destruction in 1236, because a Venetian fleet was able to break through the Greek and Bulgar blockade which had been established around Constantinople.¹²⁰ Similarly, when the Frankish garrison of Cyzicus came under siege in 1207, the emperor Henry organized a relieving fleet which sailed across the Sea of Marmara, forcing Theodore Lascaris's ships and land forces to retreat. If Cyzicus had been located inland, it is extremely unlikely that Henry would have reached it in time, or had enough troops at his disposal to face

¹¹⁹ Naxos: see above, p.323. Monemvasia: see above, pp.300-1.

¹²⁰ See below, p.358.

Lascarlis in a pitched battle.¹²¹ These factors explain why heavily fortified coastal strongholds, such as Spiga in Asia Minor, or Modon and Coron in the Peloponnese, were invariably the last western outposts to fall, sometimes outliving neighbouring inland castles by many decades.¹²²

However, when it was no longer possible to defend even the most powerful fortifications, Latin garrisons could still escape by sea in the same way that the defenders of Sidon did after the fall of Acre. Thus many westerners, including the Latin emperor Baldwin II, were able to flee from Constantinople in 1261,¹²³ whilst several decades earlier Frankish troops had also managed to make an orderly retreat from Kibotos in the vicinity of Nicomedia, by sailing away across the Sea of Marmara to Constantinople (1207). Interestingly, this latter castle had in fact already withstood a Nicaean attack successfully, but it was still decided to abandon it because the Franks knew its garrison was too weak to hold out for much longer. Hence it was a lack of troops and resources rather than military skill which again prevented the Latins from holding on to their territories.¹²⁴

The fate of Kibotos merely confirms that the Latins could only hope to sustain their fragile position in the former Byzantine empire by protecting their seaborne links with each other and the west. In practice this meant that they were heavily dependent upon the Venetians. It was Venice which saved Constantinople in 1236, and it was their

¹²¹ Villehardouin, La Conquête, pp.284-88; George Acropolites, Annales, col.1042.

¹²² Spiga: see above, p.614. Modon and Coron did not fall until 1500; see Miller, The Latins in the Levant, pp.495-98; Andrews, Castles, pp.15, 60.

¹²³ Constantinople: see above, p.29. Sidon: see above, pp.50-51.

¹²⁴ Villehardouin, La Conquête, pp.278-82.

desperate need for Venetian assistance that forced the Franks to give up their claims to Modon and Coron in 1209, even though these cities had originally been captured by French rather than Italian crusaders.¹²⁵ Moreover, other coastal fortresses would never have surrendered in the first place if it had not been for the Venetians. Both Nauplia and Monemvasia, for example, were finally captured because Venetian ships enabled the Latins to blockade these strongholds by sea as well as by land. In order to obtain Venetian support for his campaign against Monemvasia and Nauplia, William II of Villehardouin also confirmed the republic's possession of Coron and granted it certain privileges. In return, Venice provided the Franks with four galleys for the campaign, and undertook to maintain a further two galleys for the permanent defence of Achaea¹²⁶. This agreement again illustrates how Venice dominated all naval activities in Frankish Greece, in the same way that she had dominated the Fourth Crusade itself. This situation can be contrasted with that of Cyprus and the Holy Land, where the crusading movement remained more international in character, and the naval strength of Venice, Genoa and Pisa was more equally divided.

To some extent Venetian naval power also contributed to the rapid fragmentation of crusader states in Greece during the fourteenth century. Patras, for example, managed to retain its status as an independent lordship and archbishopric answerable only to the pope by allying itself to the Venetians. Thus in 1366 it was a Venetian commander who led the defence of Patras against the forces

¹²⁵ 1236: see below, p.358. 1209: Andrea Dandolo, Chronicum Venetum, pp.283-84; Tafel and Thomas, Urkunden, II, 97-100.

¹²⁶ L. de la c., c.190, p.68. See also L. de los f., c.211, p.48.

of Hugh of Lusignan, a claimant to the principality by virtue of his mother's marriage to Robert of Taranto (ruled 1346 to 1364).¹²⁷ Hugh of Lusignan's failure to take Patras effectively ended his hopes of controlling the Morea, but Venice still continued to send reinforcements to the city during the 1370s, to prevent Hugh's rival and successor, Philip II of Taranto, from launching a similar attack to that of 1366. Thus the Venetians were able to assist Patras in the same way that they had once assisted Constantinople, only now they were fighting fellow west Europeans rather than the Greeks.¹²⁸

Like the Frankish troops at Cyzicus in the early thirteenth century, rival claimants and pretenders to the principality of Achaëa also used coastal strongpoints as bases from which to make territorial conquests. Perhaps the best example of such a campaign dates from 1315. In that year, Ferdinand of Majorca, who was married to the granddaughter of William II of Villehardouin, invaded the Morea. Ferdinand's claim was not as strong as that of his Angevin rivals, because his mother-in-law had been the second rather than the first daughter of Prince William, but he was nevertheless prepared to use force to establish his control over Achaëa. He therefore landed near Glarentza, occupied the city, and used it as a bridgehead for further conquests inland. The following year Catalan reinforcements also arrived at the northern port of Vostitza, presumably hoping to march south so that all of Achaëa and Elis would eventually be overrun. By this point, however, Ferdinand had already been killed in a

¹²⁷ Iacobo Zeno, Vita Caroli Zeni, ed. G. Zonta, RISNS, XIX, part 6, (Bologna 1931-41), 10-11.

¹²⁸ In 1373 Venice sent 2 galleys to Patras. See Thiriet, Regestes, I, nos.520, 522, p.130. For more details on the background to these events, see Bon, La Morée franque, pp.247-51; Miller, The Latins in the Levant, pp.287-90; Gerland, Neue Quellen, pp.39-42.

pitched battle with the Angevins, but his failed expedition nevertheless illustrates the vital role played by fortified harbours in all invasion attempts, regardless of whether they were undertaken by crusaders or rebellious usurpers.¹²⁹ Returning to the earliest days of Frankish rule in the Peloponnese, one last example can be cited to sum up this point. During the campaign of 1204-05, the crusaders advised their commander, William of Champlitte, that 'you should try to take the fortresses which are by the sea; for, if you have the ports and the entry points into the country, then you can get reinforcements of troops and supplies when you need them'. In this way, they argued, 'you can easily have the rest of the countryside'.¹³⁰

By the fourteenth century, however, coastal strongholds were not just expected to maintain seaborne links with the west, thereby underpinning Latin rule in the east. After a period of greater stability following Venetian expansion in the Aegean, piracy was making a comeback, particularly at the instigation of the Turks and the Catalans. Reference has already been made to the kind of wholesale devastation which these men inflicted on the Aegean, causing entire islands and coastal districts to be abandoned for years at a time.¹³¹ The fact that the Palaeologi emperors of Constantinople periodically both employed and clashed with thousands of pirates manning entire war fleets also gives some idea of the scale of the

¹²⁹ L. de los f., c.555-69, pp.121-24, c.582-623, pp.127-37; Ramon Muntaner, The Chronicle of Muntaner, trans. and ed. A. Goodenough, (London, 1920-21), II, c.267, pp.640-41, c.270, pp.648-50. For more details on the background to this dispute, see Miller, The Latins in the Levant, pp.252-57.

¹³⁰ L. de la c., c.108, pp.35-36.

¹³¹ See above, p.33.

problem.¹³² At the time of the Fourth Crusade, therefore, it seems that most islanders who had remained in the eastern Mediterranean had retreated inland, to places such as the fortress of Apalire on Naxos, captured by Marco Sanudo in 1207.¹³³

To a large extent the Latins continued to rely on this tactic as a means of defence against piracy. As late as the 1390s, the travelling pilgrim Niccolo da Martoni described how the population of Thermia (Fermia) in the Cyclades lived in an isolated settlement in the mountains, which he himself had to flee to for a few days because of the threat of pirates.¹³⁴ According to one historian, the Sanudo dukes of the Archipelago also built the castle of Apano-Castro, located in the interior of Naxos, in direct response to the Turkish fleet operating in the Aegean in 1390. This stronghold enabled both Greeks and Latins living on Naxos to abandon the coast temporarily when the Turkish threat was at its greatest.¹³⁵

However, the Latins, and in particular the Venetians, relied on the sea far too much simply to turn their backs on it. Whereas the native inhabitants of most islands only regarded the Aegean as a source of food, and could therefore afford to resettle permanently in the interior,

¹³² Marino Sanudo, *Istoria*, pp.132, 146. The fact that Michael Palaeologus employed a former pirate as his admiral (*ibid*, p.132n4) suggests that the Byzantine navy was in decline and that its role was increasingly being performed by paid mercenaries. To some extent this also explains why the Venetians were so dominant in the Aegean.

¹³³ See above, p.322.

¹³⁴ Relation du Pelegrinage à Jerusalem de Nicolas de Martoni, notaire italien, (1394-1395), ed. L. LeGrand, *ROL*, III, (1895), 566-669, at 646-48; A. Luttrell, 'The Latins and Life on the Smaller Aegean Islands: 1204-1453', in Latins and Greeks in the Eastern Mediterranean, pp.146-57, at p.151.

¹³⁵ Fotheringham, Marco Sanudo, p.78.

the Latins needed fortified bases on the coast in order to maintain their military and political power, and to protect their lucrative international trade routes. One such settlement has already been referred to at Naxos, where it seems that the Sanudo dukes built a new harbour as well as a castle.¹³⁶ Another stronghold which appears to have been situated nearer the coast was that of Siros, a small island to the north-west of Naxos. In 1286 its lord, William Sanudo, purchased a branded ass stolen by pirates during a raid on neighbouring Tinos and Mikonos. As a result, Bartolomeo Ghisi, ruler of these latter islands, attacked William and besieged him in the castle of Siros using trebuchets and other siege engines. This assault lasted for some time until William was finally relieved by a fleet sent by duke Marco II of the Archipelago and the admiral of Charles of Anjou, forcing Bartolomeo Ghisi to withdraw and come to terms.¹³⁷ Although this particular incident only involved pirates indirectly, it nevertheless illustrates the way in which castles nearer the sea could protect islanders from external aggressors and give them time to appeal for help from elsewhere.

These observations also apply to many castles located on the mainland, which were often just as exposed to piratical attacks as those on islands. At Monemvasia, for example, the harbour was situated on a vulnerable strip of land facing the sea, but was protected by the impregnable citadel above it. Thus a devastating Catalan raid during the 1290s resulted in the destruction of the town, but its inhabitants escaped, 'for they climbed up to the castle, on the great rock which stands there'. In this way an

¹³⁶ See above, p.323. Sauger, Histoire nouvelle, extract cited in Fotheringham, Marco Sanudo, p.115; Fotheringham, Marco Sanudo, p.71.

¹³⁷ Marino Sanudo, Istoria, pp.113-14.

important anchorage and its civilian population had been prevented from falling into the hands of the dreaded Catalans.¹³⁸

Another mainland settlement which was often targeted by pirates was Corinth. Indeed, from 1311 onwards this city and its immediate surroundings must have been particularly exposed to raids, for both the Catalans of Athens and the Greeks of Mistra could easily reach it by land as well as by sea. As a result living conditions in this area got so bad that by the middle of the fourteenth century large parts of the countryside had been completely abandoned. The Angevin rulers of Achaëa responded to this crisis by granting the castellany of Corinth to Niccolo Acciajuoli, a powerful Florentine lord who immediately set about repairing the citadel's defences, and was granted special privileges to help him meet the huge cost of maintaining several smaller castles in the neighbourhood (1358). These included that of St. George, situated near the frontier with Mistra and 'valiantly' defended by its Latin garrison during the 1350s.¹³⁹ Several years earlier Acciajuoli had also been granted lands in Messenia, in the southern Peloponnese, which were equally devastated by years of Greek, Turkish and Catalan pillaging. In order to halt this process, Acciajuoli had used the same tactic as at Corinth, and erected a new castle in the vicinity of Kalamata which could protect the area against external

¹³⁸ L. de la c., c.761, pp.301-2. See also Ramon Muntaner, The Chronicle of Muntaner, trans. Goodenough, II, c.117, p.292. The town of Monemvasia was eventually fortified, either by the Venetians or the Turks, as further protection against such raids. See Bon, La Morée franque, p.492; Andrews, Castles, pp.202-3.

¹³⁹ Buchon, Nouvelles recherches, II, no.25, pp.143-55 (Saint George, p.146), no.26, pp.153-55, no.27, pp.155-56, no.28, pp.157-58, no.33, pp.204-7 (particularly at p.204)

raiders.¹⁴⁰

Even further inland, castles could thwart more ambitious piratical attacks, which sometimes amounted to virtual invasions rather than mere raids. In 1292, for example, Genoese troops fighting alongside Andronicus II's forces landed on the east coast of Epirus, intending to attack Arta, even though it was situated several miles inland. Once they realized that their Byzantine allies had withdrawn, however, the Genoese abandoned all hope of taking Arta's powerful citadel, which was garrisoned by Achaean Franks and Epirote Greeks. While retreating back to their galleys, the Genoese were also badly mauled by the pursuing Franks and Greeks, indicating why most pirates preferred targets nearer the coast.¹⁴¹

Castles, therefore, were an ideal way of protecting important harbours or settlements against pirates, who usually lacked the time, equipment or inclination to get involved in lengthy sieges. But coastal strongholds such as Naxos were also used as fortified bases from which to launch naval counter-attacks against these aggressors. Indeed, Naxos may well have been a port of call for the large Angevin fleet sent into the Aegean by Charles of Anjou during the 1280s, in order to curb the activities of Roger de Luria, Peter III of Aragon's infamous Catalan admiral. Roger in fact defeated this fleet,¹⁴² although part of it did at least come to the rescue of William

¹⁴⁰ Buchon, Nouvelles recherches, II, no.15, pp.109-14, and see no.29, pp.158-60.

¹⁴¹ L. de la c., c.636-43, pp.253-56; L. de los f., c.456-463, pp.100-2. For the background to this conflict, see also L. de la c., c.606-52, pp.243-6; Miller, The Latins in the Levant, pp.178-80.

¹⁴² Ramon Muntaner, The Chronicle of Muntaner, tr. Goodenough, c.105, p.252, and see Lady Goodenough's introduction, pp.xl-li. Roger de Luria had also been responsible for the raid on Monemvasia. See above, p.338.

Sanudo, lord of Siros, in 1286. On this latter occasion Charles's fleet had been anchored off Melos, another island in the vicinity of Naxos, suggesting that naval expeditions of this kind would spend many months patrolling the waters around and beyond the Cyclades. The fact that the harbour of Naxos also had an arsenal may have made it particularly suitable for the maintenance and safe provisioning of just such a force.¹⁴³

Countless other naval expeditions were organized either against pirates operating individually, or more powerful figures such as Roger de Lluria, who were at least in theory answerable to their lords and employers back home. By the mid-fourteenth century the most formidable opponents of this latter kind were the Turks, who were ultimately hoping to conquer islands and convert them to Islam, not just raid them for short term gain. In order to deal with this threat the papacy, the Venetians, the Cypriots and the Hospitallers of Rhodes formed a powerful naval alliance known as the Holy League, which was not only regarded as a military force, but a continuation of the crusading movement once land based offensives against Jerusalem itself had become unrealistic.¹⁴⁴

The League's first and greatest victory was the capture of Smyrna, on the coast of Asia Minor, in October 1344. This was achieved by a fleet of Cypriot vessels sent from the fortified harbour of Famagusta, Hospitaller galleys stationed at the Order's heavily defended base on Rhodes, and a large contingent from the formidable Venetian navy. These forces all gathered at the Venetian port of

¹⁴³Sanudo, *Istoria*, p.113.

¹⁴⁴ For more details on the Holy League, see J. Gay, *Le Pape Clément VI et les affaires d'Orient, 1342-1352*, (Paris 1904); Topping, 'The Morea, 1311-1364', p.133.

Negroponte on Euboea before attacking Smyrna itself.¹⁴⁵ Although they have long since disappeared, Negroponte's medieval defences at this time were extensive, and included a fortified bridge connecting Euboea with the mainland. This structure was divided by a drawbridge 'no larger than to let a galley pass through', so that Venetian ships anchored opposite the city would be protected from Turkish, Genoese or Catalan raiders.¹⁴⁶ Thus the security provided by sites like Negroponte, Rhodes and Famagusta enabled the Holy League to launch its successful offensive on Smyrna, and to maintain pressure on the Turks throughout the eastern Mediterranean.¹⁴⁷

It is also interesting to note that Smyrna, along with other Christian outposts in Asia Minor such as Corycos and Bodrum,¹⁴⁸ were themselves further examples of the kind of coastal strongholds already mentioned at Cyzicus, Naxos and Monemvasia, which owed their very existence to a combination of good sea links and powerful fortifications. Between them, all these places created a network of safe anchorages, which were not only used by major expeditions such as Charles of Anjou's campaign against the Catalans or the crusade against Smyrna, but could also protect much

¹⁴⁵ Nicephorus Gregoras, Byzantina historia, II, 689; Clement VI, Lettres closes, patentes et curiales, (3 vols, Paris 1958-59), I, no.1350, p.335; Marino Sanudo, Vite de' Duchi, col.610; Johannis Villani, Florentini Historia Universalis, ed. L.A. Muratori, RIS, XIII (1728), c.38, col.917; Gay, Le Pape Clément, pp.32-43.

¹⁴⁶ G. Wheeler, Journey into Greece, (London 1682), cited in Andrews, Castles, p.187. See also ibid, pp.187-91.

¹⁴⁷ Famagusta: see above, pp.177-83. For a description of the defences at Rhodes, see Ludolph of Sudheim, De itinere Terrae Sanctae, p.27; Boase, 'The Arts in Frankish Greece', pp.231-40.

¹⁴⁸ Corycos: see above, pp.259-60. For a description of Bodrum, see Boase, 'The Arts in Frankish Greece', pp.240-44.

smaller naval forces. During the latter half of the thirteenth century, for example, the Venetians constantly patrolled the waters around the Peloponnese with two of their own galleys in order to reduce piracy in general, rather than to deal with a specific threat. These vessels no doubt operated between Venetian bases at Modon, Coron, Negroponte and in the Cyclades, so that they never strayed too far from a friendly port.¹⁴⁹

Finally, it should be remembered that pirates themselves normally used coastal strongholds as bases from which to launch their devastating raids. One group which relied on this tactic were the Catalans. After clashing with their former Byzantine employers, but before establishing themselves at Athens, these men withdrew to Gallipoli for a few years at the very beginning of the fourteenth century. They refortified this site by digging huge ditches and erecting new wooden stockades, making it a perfect headquarters from which to carry out naval attacks on neighbouring harbours such as Panidos and Rodosto. Indeed, on one occasion so many Catalans left Gallipoli on a seaborne raiding party that the Greeks came close to recapturing the town, which was almost empty.¹⁵⁰ But the Catalans survived this crisis, and Muntaner wrote that in the following months 'except the cities of Constantinople and Adrianople and Christopoli and Salonica, there was not a town or city that was not pillaged and burnt by us, nor any place, unless it was a castle in the mountains'.¹⁵¹ Clearly, this programme of systematic looting and devastation was only made possible by the strength of the Catalan defences at Gallipoli itself. In addition, this statement to some extent confirms the conclusions reached

¹⁴⁹ L. de la c., c.190, p.68, and see above, p.334.

¹⁵⁰ Ramon Muntaner, L'expedició, c.208-22, pp.69-105. See also c.223-27, pp.106-28.

¹⁵¹ Ramon Muntaner, L'expedició, c.228, p.129.

earlier that the Byzantine fortifications of the four cities mentioned by Muntaner were particularly well preserved during the crusader period. Muntaner's reference to the impregnability of mountain castles also illustrates why most people sought shelter at sites such as Monemvasia and Apano-Castro whenever a pirate attack seemed imminent.¹⁵²

Many other pirates were also based on islands, which were even less exposed to external attacks than headlands such as Gallipoli. Corfu, for example, had to be cleared of Genoese pirates before the Venetians could take control of the island in the wake of the Fourth Crusade.¹⁵³ Elsewhere, other Genoese forces acting in closer cooperation with their native city used similar tactics against their Venetian rivals. Hence during the 1340s and 50s Genoa tried to use her new colony on Chios as a springboard for further expansion in the eastern Mediterranean, including the conquest of Euboea from Venice. This project came to an abrupt end, however, after the Genoese failed to capture the port of Oreus along the north coast of the island in 1351.¹⁵⁴ Almost 150 years earlier, the Genoese were equally unsuccessful in their efforts to subjugate Crete, and to defend it against the Venetians, who had bought the island from Boniface of Montferrat in 1207. However, it was only by capturing the heavily fortified castle and harbour of Palaeocastro, situated on the north coast of Crete, that Venice finally ousted the Genoese and prevented them from establishing a base which could have posed a serious threat to Venetian

¹⁵² Monemvasia: see above, p.338. Apano-Castro: see above, p.337.

¹⁵³ Andrea Dandolo, Chronicum Venetum, pp.283, 367; Andrea Navagerio, Storia Venezia, cols.986-87.

¹⁵⁴ Nicephorus Gregoras, Byzantina historia, III, 46-51.

power in the Cyclades.¹⁵⁵ Although they fall outside the time limits of this chapter, reference can also be made to Genoese efforts to undermine Venetian rule in the Messenian peninsula during the fifteenth century. Once again this involved the construction of a fortified tower at Old Navarino, which could be used to make both land and sea raids against Modon and Coron to the south.¹⁵⁶

The Genoese, therefore, were very similar to their Venetian, Frankish and Catalan rivals, in that their military activities in the Mediterranean were almost entirely centred around the construction, capture or defence of castles. Indeed, such structures were often the only means by which the various Latin powers operating in the eastern Mediterranean could hope to establish and maintain their control over the islands and coastal regions of the former Byzantine empire. Offensively, castles were an ideal way of creating bridgeheads which could be reinforced by sea and used to make further conquests inland. In addition, they protected important harbours which were needed for naval campaigns such as the crusade against Smyrna. Defensively, they also provided shelter against a whole variety of potential aggressors, ranging from the invasion forces of Michael VIII and Ioannitsa, to more localized pirates such as those based at Corfu. Powerful strongholds like Monemvasia also prevented strategic anchorages from falling into the hands of pirates, who could use such sites to wreak havoc over vast areas, in the way that the Catalans had done at Gallipoli. This last point also highlights the immense importance of coastal fortifications as a means of

¹⁵⁵ Marino Sanudo, Vite de' Duchi, cols.536, 543-45. Also, see above, p.322, and Fotheringham, Marco Sanudo, pp.81-87.

¹⁵⁶ Thiriet, Régestes, II, no.1624, pp.145-46; Bon, La Morée franque, p.285.

protecting the sea routes between east and west, for well defended settlements such as Glarentza were needed to maintain the steady flow of arms, troops and supplies upon which Frankish Greece depended. These factors explain why coastal strongpoints were invariably the first to be captured by the Latins, and also the last to fall, not only in the Aegean but throughout the crusader states.

While they still controlled large parts of the interior, however, the Latins also relied on countless inland castles to perform many of the same military functions as their neighbours nearer the sea. Hence crusader fortifications were often used as starting points for land based as well as seaborne incursions into enemy territory. This was particularly true during the earliest years of the conquest, when the expansion of Frankish power in the interior often overlapped with the process of establishing coastal bridgeheads. Thus the fall of Constantinople in 1204 provided the crusaders with an important and heavily fortified harbour, but it also enabled them to regroup and start conquering inland territories to the north and west. In the summer of 1204, therefore, Boniface of Montferrat left the new Latin capital, gradually seizing or occupying castles as he marched through Thrace. This in turn enabled him to obtain the surrender of Adrianople and Demotika, two of the most important strongholds to the west of Constantinople, opening up the route toward Christopoli, Salonika and the whole of Thessaly.¹⁵⁷ After the Greek uprisings and Bulgar invasions of 1205-06, when virtually all of Thrace was lost, this process had to be repeated by the emperor Henry. On this latter occasion the fortified city of Tchorlu, located relatively near Constantinople,

¹⁵⁷ Villehardouin, *La Conquête*, pp.154-66; Robert of Clari, *La Conquête*, c.99-111, pp.96-105; Aubrey of Trois Fontaines, *Chronica*, p.885; Nicetas Choniates, *Historia*, cols.983-87; Nicephorus Gregoras, *Byzantina historia*, I, 14.

also acted as an assembly point for Frankish troops hastily collected from both sides of the Bosphorus.¹⁵⁸

Another example of the way in which Latin control over one castle often led to the capture of others dates from the period of Catalan rule at Gallipoli. Once they had established themselves here, the Catalans were not only able to launch naval attacks against neighbouring coastal settlements, but also expanded inland until they dominated the entire surrounding peninsula. This involved capturing the Byzantine fortress of Maditos, situated to the south of Gallipoli. This castle only fell after an eight month siege, when the Catalans managed to climb the walls during the garrison's afternoon siesta! Such a prolonged campaign would not have been possible without the use of Gallipoli as a base from which to bring up food, supplies and troop reinforcements.¹⁵⁹

During the great resurgence of Byzantine power in the second half of the thirteenth century, the Greeks had also used similar tactics against their Frankish enemies in Morea. In 1271, for example, Michael VIII sent 'a great company of men-at-arms from the Levant, Turks, Cumans and Greeks' to Monemvasia in order to invade the principality of Achaëa.¹⁶⁰ Although this particular campaign was eventually cancelled because of a Latin counter-attack, many similar expeditions were indeed launched from this area, using Byzantine troops first brought to Monemvasia and then assembled further inland at Mistra. In the 1320s these attacks culminated in the fall of several Frankish strongholds to the north of Mistra, including Karytaina, Akova (Mathegriffon) and Saint George. According to the

¹⁵⁸ Villehardouin, La Conquête, pp.198-200, 202-22.

¹⁵⁹ Ramon Muntaner, L'expedició, c.223, pp.106-9.

¹⁶⁰ L. de la c., c.456, pp.176-77, and see c.456-67, pp.176-81.

Chronicle of Morea, these places were captured through bribery as well as warfare, suggesting that by this period both the morale and the fighting strength of the Franks was beginning to wane.¹⁶¹

Thus the history of Monemvasia and Mistra provides us with yet another example of the way in which strong coastal bridgeheads could lead to the acquisition of more castles inland, which in turn facilitated the capture of yet more territory. In the case of Mistra, this domino effect ultimately resulted in the Greek reconquest of the entire Peloponnese. But on many other occasions, strongholds such as Mistra were also used for less ambitious campaigns, which were not necessarily intended to make any permanent conquests. As part of the emperor Henry's efforts to re-establish Frankish control in Thrace, for example, no less than 120 western knights were stationed in the walled town of Rousion, to the south of Demotika. During the winter of 1205-06, these troops carried out a huge raid against hostile Greeks in neighbouring territories, killing many and capturing 40 horses. The purpose of this attack was not to retake lost fortresses or land, but rather to intimidate the local population and force it to accept Frankish rule.¹⁶² The following summer Henry used Adrianople for a similar incursion into Ioannitsa's territories to the north, even though the Franks clearly lacked the numbers to occupy such a vast area permanently. Instead, Henry simply hoped to gain some booty, inflict economic damage on the region, and thereby deter his powerful opponent from attacking the Latin empire again.

¹⁶¹ L. de la c., pp.404-5; L. de los f., c.641-54, pp.140-43. Saint George later returned to Frankish control. See above, p.339.

¹⁶² Villehardouin, La Conquête, pp.240-42; Nicetas Choniates, Historia, col.1018; Letter from the emperor Henry to the west, September 1206, in RHGF, XVIII (1879), 527-28.

These tactics are virtually identical to those used by the Hospitallers of Crac des Chevaliers and the Templars of Saphet to keep their Muslim neighbours in the Holy Land at bay.¹⁶³

Another example of this strategy has already been referred to indirectly: as we have seen, in 1271 Michael VIII Palaeologus hoped to launch a major attack on the Morea using troops he had assembled at Monemvasia. On hearing this news, William II of Villehardouin immediately prepared for a pre-emptive strike against the area to the north of Mistra, which was dominated by Byzantine troops and rebellious local Greeks. William's forces therefore marched to Glarentza, where they were joined by other troops sent by Charles of Anjou, before moving east to Karytaina. Along the way, other barons met them with further contingents and supplies for two months, and at Karytaina itself the lords of both this castle and nearby Akova also joined the expedition. Once everybody had arrived, William called a meeting to discuss tactics, before setting off on a raid which not only halted Michael VIII's own advance, but also brought the Franks much booty and cattle. During the preliminary meeting William remained camped along the river below the castle of Karytaina, so that his army had a ready supply of food and water, but could still find shelter quickly in case of a Greek counter-attack. Hence the success of the entire campaign relied upon the food, supplies and protection provided by Glarentza and Karytaina.¹⁶⁴

In describing William's preparations for this expedition,

¹⁶³ Letter from the emperor Henry to the west, *RHGF*, XVIII, 528-29; Villehardouin, *La Conquête*, p.270; Nicetas Choniates, *Historia*, col.1031.

¹⁶⁴ *L. de la c.*, c.461-65, pp.178-80, and see also c.466-70, pp.180-82; *L. de los f.*, c.382-83, p.84.

the Chronicle of Morea also implies that those barons who joined the prince brought troop contingents drawn from their own castle garrisons. The same source provides us with more evidence that this was a common tactic used by Greeks and Franks alike. Thus in 1259 the Franks decided to confront their Nicaean opponents in open battle, thereby hoping to destroy the Greek field army in one blow. 'Those who were most experienced in warfare' argued that this would leave the Greek castles in Thrace and Macedonia completely unprotected, and that their outnumbered defenders would be forced either to flee or surrender. Similar circumstances had of course enabled Saladin to overrun the kingdom of Jerusalem in 1187, but unfortunately the crushing defeat at the battle of Pelagonia ended any Frankish hopes of emulating this success in Greece.¹⁶⁵ Nor do the westerners seem to have learnt from this lesson, for in 1311 they lost so many troops at the battle of Cephissus that the Catalans were able to do precisely what the Franks had planned to do against the Nicaeans. At Livadia, for example, there were not enough Latins left to prevent the local Greeks from rebelling and opening the gates to the Catalans. Elsewhere the invaders simply occupied former Frankish castles without a struggle, and some even married the widows of those barons who had fallen only a few weeks earlier.¹⁶⁶

The lack of westerners in general therefore made it risky to commit too many garrison troops to major Frankish field

¹⁶⁵ L. de la c., c.275, p.99. It seems William II of Villehardouin was particularly keen to recapture Salonika for the Franks. See L. de los f., c.250, pp.55-56. Saladin: see above, p.126.

¹⁶⁶ The Franks certainly lost many men, but the figure of 700 knights given by Muntaner is surely an exaggeration. See Ramon Muntaner, L'expedició, c.240, pp.180-81. For Livadia, see A. Rubió y Lluch, Diplomatari de l'Orient català, (Barcelona 1947), no.186, pp.227-28, no.268, pp.352-53; idem, 'Els Castells', 375.

armies. If such forces were defeated, reinforcements were hard to come by and strongholds were extremely vulnerable to enemy counter-attacks. In 1187 and 1311 these factors led to the destruction of entire crusader states. Consequently, it was often more prudent to avoid pitched battles altogether, and to rely on castles themselves as a means of acquiring new territory. In Morea, William II of Villehardouin used this strategy against the Melings, a slavic tribe whose homeland in the Mani peninsula was so mountainous and inhospitable that they still refused to acknowledge Frankish overlordship as late as the 1240s. William realized that it would be useless to send a force of knights into such an area, and so he constructed (or, as has been suggested, reoccupied) the castles of Mistra and Old Mania at the northern and southern ends of the peninsula. From here his troops could observe the Melings and, if necessary, launch punitive raids against them, without having to carry out a systematic conquest of the entire region. For their part, the Melings realized that 'pressured between these two castles, it was impossible for them to resist the prince', and so they made peace with him.¹⁶⁷ Subsequently William also built a third castle to the east called Beaufort (Leutron), 'all the better to contain [the Melings] and place them under his rule'.¹⁶⁸

By constructing castles, therefore, William was able to make up for the fact that he lacked the troops to suppress the Melings through sheer weight of numbers. At other times, however, the Franks did manage to defeat their opponents in open battle, but still remained so

¹⁶⁷ L. de la c., c.205-6, pp.73-74, quote from c.205F, p.74, translated from To Chronikon tou Moreos, p.202; L. de los f., c.215, p.49.

¹⁶⁸ L. de la c., c.207, pp.74-75. See also L. de los f., c.216, p.49; To Chronikon tou Moreos, p.202.

outnumbered that they could not follow up their victories. This problem most affected the Latin empire, where just a few hundred westerners were regularly expected to guard frontiers stretching for hundreds of miles, and the emperor Henry found himself having to keep campaigning almost continuously, because 'he could not raise enough troops to defend his territories'. As a result, the Franks were again obliged to rely on castles rather than soldiers to maintain their borders.¹⁶⁹ After his spectacular victory over 33,000 Cumans in 1208, for example, the emperor Henry immediately occupied the castle of Crucemont, about 30 kilometres west of Philippopoli. He then rode south to Pamphilon, where he constructed a new castle as quickly as possible before the onset of winter. In so doing, Henry hoped to take full advantage of his victory, secure his northern border, and prevent the Cumans and Bulgars from simply reoccupying the region as soon as he had withdrawn to Constantinople.¹⁷⁰ Similarly, during the 1260s Michael VIII Palaeologus *enjoyed so much success against the Latins because once he had harried Frankish Greece with his land and sea forces, he systematically 'occupied many places and built powerful castles on mountains and in very strong passes'*. Consequently, the Franks *would have to undertake several lengthy sieges if they ever wanted to regain this territory, and Michael knew that they lacked the resources to do so.*¹⁷¹

Half a century earlier, however, the situation had been very different, and the victorious members of the Fourth Crusade had had few qualms about besieging the last remaining Byzantine outposts in Greece. On such occasions,

¹⁶⁹ Villehardouin La Conquête, p.250.

¹⁷⁰ Henry of Valenciennes, Histoire de l'empereur, c.539-45, pp.44-48, c.550, p.50, c.554, p.52.

¹⁷¹ Marino Sanudo, Istoria, p.116.

the Franks often built their own temporary castles close to the strongpoints which they were attacking. At Corinth, two structures of this kind were erected on the eastern and south-western sides of the citadel. Some traces have survived of the south-western fort, known as Pendeskouphi, showing that it amounted to little more than an isolated keep of traditional Frankish design. It clearly dates from the time of the Latin siege between 1205 and 1210.¹⁷² An equally small fortification, built out of bricks, or possibly even just earth embankments, was used by the crusaders during the campaign against Patras in 1205,¹⁷³ whilst at Constantinople, the land forces of the Fourth Crusade established their camp around 'the castle of Bohemond, which was an abbey surrounded by walls'.¹⁷⁴

Clearly, these 'castles' were extremely temporary structures which were probably abandoned at the end of a siege. During a campaign, however, they fulfilled several important military functions. At Corinth, for example, early Frankish hopes of seizing the citadel were dashed when its Greek defenders made a daring night time raid against the crusaders stationed in the town below. This sortie inflicted 'great damage' on the Franks, and persuaded William of Champlitte to scale down his activities here and concentrate on the conquest of the Morea instead.¹⁷⁵ Likewise, during the first Latin siege of Constantinople in 1203, the crusaders to the west of the city were prevented from gathering enough supplies, let alone attacking the ramparts, because of a series of

¹⁷² L. de la c., c.191-94, pp.68-69; L. de los f., c.101, p.25, c.106, p.26; Nicetas Choniates, Historia, col.998; Andrews, Castles, pp.136, 140, 224; Boase, 'The Arts in Frankish Greece', p.217.

¹⁷³ L. de la c., c.91, p.30.

¹⁷⁴ Villehardouin, La Conquête, p.92.

¹⁷⁵ L. de la c., c.101, p.33; L. de los f., c.94, p.24.

Byzantine sorties launched from within the capital.¹⁷⁶ Hence one of the primary functions of fortifications like the castle of Bohemond was to protect the besiegers against the besieged, and provide them with a base where food, water and other supplies could be stored in safety. The crusaders' fort at Patras may be particularly significant as far as this last point is concerned, because it was located right at the water's edge, suggesting that it was being reinforced by sea.¹⁷⁷

Offensively, these forts were also used to blockade besieged garrisons and prevent them from gathering supplies, or worse still, contacting relieving forces in other areas. The two strongholds erected by the Franks at Corinth were specifically intended to ensure that the besieged 'could not rush out from the walls to collect water or any other supplies to sustain them'. If they attempted to do so, the Franks could easily launch a counter-raid from either of their forts in order to force the Greeks back inside the citadel.¹⁷⁸ Likewise, at Constantinople Villehardouin wrote that 'never had so many been besieged by so few in any city', and this explains why the crusaders established their fortified camp opposite one particular stretch of the defences, rather than trying to spread out around the whole city.¹⁷⁹ It would have been impossible for the Latins to surround vast sites such as Corinth or Constantinople entirely, but by gathering all their forces together inside one or more fortified camps, they made the most of the few troops available to them, and could still blockade far larger castles for months, if not years. Once again, therefore,

¹⁷⁶ Villehardouin, La Conquête, pp.92-94.

¹⁷⁷ L. de la c., c.91, p.30.

¹⁷⁸ L. de la c., c.193, p.69, and see L. de los f., c.106, p.26.

¹⁷⁹ Villehardouin, La Conquête, p.92.

castles took the place of troops in the field. These factors also explain why it took the crusaders five years to capture Corinth; with so few soldiers available, an all out assault on the walls was usually out of the question, and if they could not bombard a fortress into submission, the Franks simply had to wait until hunger or low morale persuaded its garrison to surrender.¹⁸⁰

The tactics employed by the crusaders at the siege of Corinth also reflects their military fragility in general. Every Latin soldier, and in particular every knight, was a precious asset for the Franks, who had enough trouble raising adequate forces for their campaigns even at the best of times. Hence one of the primary functions of all castles in Frankish Greece was to protect the Latin field army, especially during a military crisis. In the spring of 1205, for example, the first Latin emperor of Constantinople, Baldwin of Flanders, was captured outside Adrianople, while his army suffered a heavy defeat at the hands of the Greeks and the Bulgars. This disaster forced the crusaders to flee south, past Pamphilon and toward the coast. Indeed, it was not until they reached the fortified city of Rodosto, situated along the Sea of Marmara, that they finally found refuge from the pursuing forces of Ioannitsa. Hence the walls of Rodosto had at least saved the Frankish and Venetian army from total annihilation.¹⁸¹

This incident may also explain why the emperor Henry chose to fortify Pamphilon three years later. By this date, Adrianople had returned to Frankish control, and Pamphilon must have acted as a useful stopping off point for Latin

¹⁸⁰ For the date of the fall of Corinth, see above, p.306n43.

¹⁸¹ Villehardouin, *La Conquête*, pp.212-22; letter from the emperor Henry to Innocent III, June 1205, *RHGF*, XVIII, 527, and see above, p.38.

troops travelling from Rodosto or Constantinople toward the northern frontier of the empire. Alternatively, Henry knew that if Adrianople were ever recaptured by his opponents, the new defences at Pamphilon could protect westerners retreating south, who would otherwise have to march all the way to Rodosto without any hope of shelter along the route.¹⁸²

We have also seen how William II of Villehardouin's campaign against the Greeks, undertaken in 1271, was organized around the strongholds of Glarentza and Karytaina. This latter castle was chosen as the starting point for the raid on Mistra itself because it lay along the main route between the west coast and the mountainous interior. To the south-east, the narrow valley below Karytaina also continued toward Mistra, Monemvasia and the east coast. Hence Karytaina, situated roughly halfway between Glarentza and Monemvasia, guarded this strategic line of communication through the heart of the Peloponnese, and could protect any Frankish soldiers operating in the area. This was particularly important in a region where the terrain made it easy for Byzantine troops or rebellious Greeks to ambush heavily armed western knights.¹⁸³

Whenever it was possible, therefore, Latin field armies tried to stay within easy reach of friendly castles. The further they strayed into enemy territory, the greater the risk of heavy losses, particularly if an opponent defeated them in open battle. These factors explain why the

¹⁸² See above, pp.302, 352.

¹⁸³ See above, p.349. The valley below Karytaina was also used by Greek rebels attacking Achaëa in 1302, because this route was 'easier and safer than all the others'. See L. de la c., c.927, p.365.

Frankish campaign against the Bulgars and Cumans undertaken by the emperor Henry in 1208 was so fraught with danger. On the eve of his famous victory, Henry advised his knights to put their faith in their horses, shields, lances and above all God, for 'you are assembled here in alien territory, and do not have a castle or refuge where you can hope to find shelter'.¹⁸⁴ In these circumstances, Henry knew that there would be no escape for his followers if they were defeated, and he would surely have suffered the same fate as his brother Baldwin, or indeed the Latin force sent to recapture Serres during the early 1220s. This latter expedition sustained heavy losses as it hastily retreated all the way back to Constantinople following the Greek victory at Pimaninon in Asia Minor.¹⁸⁵

Thus inland castles were needed to protect troops in the field, and the roads they travelled on, in the same way that fortified harbours sheltered Latin warships and kept important sea routes open. Similarly, the use of fortifications rather than men to blockade enemy strongholds and suppress newly conquered territories minimized the threat posed to Latin troops, and enabled the Franks to go on the offensive despite being so outnumbered. But in the long run, even these tactics could not compensate for the westerners' chronic lack of manpower, and therefore Latin strongholds were normally called upon to fulfil a defensive role rather than an attacking one.

Various aspects of this role have already been mentioned

¹⁸⁴ Henry of Valenciennes, L'Estoire de l'empereur, c.523, pp.37-38, and see above, pp.36-37.

¹⁸⁵ See above, pp.30, 30n63.

in passing, including the use of heavily defended strongpoints to stop invasion forces from making permanent conquests. Thus in 1235 the Bulgar leader John Asen (1218-41) overran all of Thrace, allied himself with John Ducas Vatatzes of Nicaea (1225-54), and attacked Constantinople itself with a huge besieging army. But the city's vast ramparts held up the assault long enough for 160 Frankish knights to organize a sortie, which scored an almost miraculous victory against the Greeks and Bulgars. At the same time the Greek fleet blockading Constantinople from the east was decisively defeated by the Venetians,¹⁸⁶ who returned to save the capital during a second siege the following year, when the Latins were also assisted by 120 warships sent from Achaea.¹⁸⁷ During the next 25 years the Franks rarely enjoyed any authority beyond the immediate vicinity of Constantinople, *but as long as they were protected by its walls, the Greeks proved incapable of wiping out the Latin empire completely.*

Beyond Constantinople, the Franks quickly realized that it would be useless for them to try to defend their entire northern border, and so in 1205 the emperor Henry decided to gather the majority of his knights in a few carefully selected fortified settlements. These included Bizöe and Rousion, garrisoned by 120 and 140 knights respectively, as well as Selymbria, a port along the Sea of Marmara which was defended by a further 50 knights. In addition, the Venetians held Arcadiopolis, situated roughly halfway between Rousion and Bizöe, so that these three sites

¹⁸⁶ Philip Mousket, Chronique Rimée, II, 614-16; Andrea Dandolo, Chronicum Venetum, p.295; Martin da Canal, La Chronique des Veneciens, Andrea Navagerio, Storia Venezia, col.992; George Acropolites, Annales, cols.1058-59.

¹⁸⁷ Aubrey of Trois Fontaines, Chronica, pp.938-39; Philip Mousket, Chronique Rimée, II, 620.

formed a kind of arc along the northern fringes of the empire. By concentrating his forces in this way, Henry knew that they would stand a better chance of survival, and also of being able to defend their respective strongholds, than if they had been spread out in a ratio of five or ten knights per city.¹⁸⁸

However, when the Bulgar invasion which Henry had been expecting came only a few months later, Ioannitsa's army was so vast that both Rousion and Arcadiopolis had to be abandoned disappointingly quickly. Indeed, as Ioannitsa swept south toward Constantinople, destroying everything in his path, things began to look ominous for the Franks. But despite the appalling damage which the invaders were inflicting on the countryside, the Frankish defenders of Selymbria, Bizöe and Constantinople stayed put, refusing either to retreat or face Ioannitsa in the field. Meanwhile, the Bulgars and Cumans were causing so much destruction that cracks began to appear in Ioannitsa's alliance with the Greeks, who suddenly refused to let his troops inside Adrianople. This in turn gave Henry the chance he had been waiting for, and he quickly mustered a new army of 400 knights in Constantinople, and marched north toward Bizöe. This latter stronghold now became the starting point for a Frankish revival, and as the Bulgar advance faltered before Adrianople, Henry gradually reoccupied Thrace and forced Ioannitsa to retreat. Thus Ioannitsa's invasion collapsed because he had failed to capture Selymbria, Bizöe or Constantinople. By withdrawing into these three strongholds, the Franks avoided a pitched battle which they would almost certainly have lost. They also knew that they had time on their side, for Ioannitsa's vast army was deadly in the short term, but politically unwieldy and difficult to keep together over

¹⁸⁸ Villehardouin, La Conquête, pp.240, 244-46.

a longer period. Relations between Ioannitsa's Greek and Cuman troops must have been particularly strained, because the former hoped to reconquer Thrace intact, whilst the latter were nomadic horsemen only interested in short term pillaging.¹⁸⁹

On other occasions, similar circumstances prevented the Franks themselves from conquering new territories. In 1304, for example, the county of Cephalonia and the principality of Achaea became involved in a dispute between Charles II of Anjou and Anna Palaeologus, ruler of Epirus, over who should inherit Anna's despotate after her death. As a result, Charles sent a combined Italian and Moreot army into Epirus to besiege Arta and settle the crisis by force. But when they arrived, Charles's men found that Arta had been abandoned, and that its defenders had retreated into the citadel, taking as many arms and supplies with them as possible. They had even demolished all the houses which lay close to the citadel 'to have space to fight' and prevent the Franks from using these structures for shelter.¹⁹⁰ Consequently the Latins withdrew and made a brief attempt to capture another castle in the vicinity of Arta, but it was situated on a steep hill surrounded by water, and proved impossible even to approach, let alone besiege properly. Meanwhile the army was running out of food, but wherever they went the Franks found that 'the people from the villages had escaped to the mountains and the fortresses with all their supplies, so that our people could not find anything to eat'. Those who tried to follow the locals were simply

¹⁸⁹ Villehardouin, La Conquête, pp.240-62; Nicetas Choniates, Historia, cols.1015-23, 1031-34; letter from the emperor Henry to the west, September 1206, RHGF, XVIII, 528-29.

¹⁹⁰ The tactic of demolishing buildings and outer defences which could be used by the enemy was also adopted in the Holy Land. See above, p.131.

attacked by Epirote troops hiding in the forests and valleys of the interior. Consequently, as autumn set in and the threat of starvation began to loom over them, Charles's forces had no choice but to retreat. In this way the most powerful warriors of the Morea and Cephalonia were defeated not by a rival army, but by the strength of the despotate's castles.¹⁹¹

Almost twenty years later the Catalans used the same strategy to thwart an attempt by Walter II of Brienne to recapture his father's old duchy. In 1331 Walter sailed from Brindisi with an army of 800 French knights which he had gathered together at great cost. During the ensuing weeks Walter led this force into Attica and waited for the Catalans to meet him in battle, confident that they would be wiped out by his Frankish warriors. But the Catalans 'did not want to come out and fight', and simply waited inside their castles until Walter, who had not come prepared for siege warfare, ran out of money.¹⁹²

Thus the Catalans emerged victorious, because they understood that it would be more difficult for Walter to hold his army together in the field than it would be for them to wait inside their strongholds. Similarly, the invasions of 1205 and 1304 collapsed through a combination of political and logistical problems long before any real fighting had taken place. But there were also other advantages with this 'wait and see' strategy, for it meant

¹⁹¹ L.de la c., c.973-94, pp.380-89 (quote: c.991, p.387). For the background to this dispute, see Longnon, L'empire latin, pp.285-86.

¹⁹² Johannis Villani, Florentini Historia Universalis, c.190, col.717. The pope even treated this expedition as a crusade, granting indulgences to those who went. See John XXII, Lettres Communes, ed. G. Mollat, (16 vols., Paris 1904-47), IX, no.49924, p.345. See also Buchon, Nouvelles recherches, I, 30-33; Setton, Catalan Domination, pp.38-41.

that a region could be defended effectively without the use of thousands of troops stationed along its frontiers. Hence in 1304 the Franks failed to conquer Epirus even though they had been allowed to swarm across its borders and reach Arta totally unhindered. As we have seen, similar tactics were used against the Khwarizmians in the Holy Land, showing that political boundaries in the modern sense were to some extent meaningless during the crusader period.¹⁹³ But the sheer amount of damage which invading armies could inflict on an area still made it desirable to stop such forces as quickly as possible, and this was the primary function of frontier castles.

One of the most important such strongholds was Corinth, which acted as a kind of buffer against any invasion forces from the north, because of its location at the entrance to the Peloponnese. In 1205, for example, it brought Boniface of Montferrat's advance to a halt. Although the subsequent campaign in Morea by William of Champlitte and Geoffrey of Villehardouin showed that this castle could be circumvented, the crusaders knew that it was dangerous to leave such a powerful citadel in the hands of the enemy. For as long as it remained uncaptured, its garrison could cut off the Franks' retreat and leave them stranded in the Peloponnese. These factors also explain why Corinth retained its strategic importance after the Catalans settled at Athens, and again during the period of Turkish expansion, when the Acciajuoli spent vast sums on maintaining its defences. Indeed, Corinth did not finally fall to the Turks until 1458, by which time it had been retaken by the Greeks.¹⁹⁴

¹⁹³ See above, p.85.

¹⁹⁴ L. de la c., c.99-105, pp.32-4; L. de los f., c.92-106, pp.23-26; Nicetas Choniates, Historia, cols.991, 998, and see above, p.652. For the history of Corinth in the fifteenth century, see Andrews, Castles, p.137.

Far to the north of Corinth, other Frankish castles also guarded the equally strategic mountain passes which connected northern Greece with the duchy of Athens. Perhaps the most famous of these was Boudonitza, near Thermopylae, where Leon Sgouros had tried to prevent Boniface of Montferrat from entering Boetia in 1205. As we have seen, Boudonitza's oldest medieval fortifications may well date from this period, as well as the 1220s, when Honorius III demanded that the castle should be strengthened in response to Theodore Comnenus's invasion of Thessaly. Like Corinth, however, Boudonitza could not in itself prevent a hostile force from moving south, but anyone wishing to control the area permanently would sooner or later have to return and capture the castle, or risk being cut off.¹⁹⁵

The importance of frontier castles as a means of delaying invaders and preventing them from making permanent conquests also gave these fortifications a special standing in the feudal structure of the principality of Achaea. This is made clear in the Assizes of Romania, the law code of Frankish Greece, which stated that any such strongholds held by the prince could not be destroyed or handed over to the enemy without the consent of the most powerful vassals in Morea. This rule was strictly adhered to in 1262, when the wives and widows of nobles captured or killed at the battle of Pelagonia held lengthy debates on whether to hand over Monemvasia, Mistra and Old Mania as a ransom for prince William. In the end they agreed to do so, although those who had argued that this would enable the Greeks to 'throw us out of the country' were

¹⁹⁵ Nicetas Choniates, Historia, col.991, and see above, pp.325-26.

ultimately proved right.¹⁹⁶

Thus the history of individual strongholds could sometimes determine the fate of entire crusader states. But for much of the time, castles were likelier to come under attack from aggressors whose intentions were less clear cut. Most notably, it has been shown that the Catalans were involved in all types of warfare, ranging from the kind of systematic conquests which they undertook in Gallipoli and Attica, to less ambitious raids whose primary purpose was to acquire booty. Similarly, during the fourteenth century the Catalans, Greeks and Turks launched so many attacks against Messenia, Arcadia and Corinthia that it is not always easy to distinguish between individual pirate raids and more extensive incursions carried out as part of an overall war strategy. Consequently, the activities of pirates, raiders and invaders often overlapped, and the approach of Cuman horsemen or Catalan warships must have been viewed with equal dread by the local Greeks and Latins who lived in the countryside. For them, the question of finding shelter was more important than the exact intentions of their attackers, and so strongpoints were often called upon to protect people as well as territory.

In many cases, this meant that communities sprung up within easy reach of castles. At Monemvasia, for example, we have already seen how people living in the town managed to survive a Catalan raid by climbing up to the citadel above.¹⁹⁷ Likewise, in 1262-63 a large Greek force from Mistra entered the principality of Achaea along the same route which William II later used in 1271, past the castle

¹⁹⁶ Assizes, article 19; L. de la c., c.323-28, pp.120-23 (quote: c.325, p.121); L. de los f., c.291-95, pp.65-66, c.299-304, pp.67-68.

¹⁹⁷ See above, pp.338-39.

of Karytaina and towards the city of Andreville. Along the way they also stopped at the fortress of Veligosti, where 'they destroyed the market and left the castle intact'. This implies that there was a settlement here, whose inhabitants were saved because they could take refuge in the fortress.¹⁹⁸

To the south of Veligosti, the new Messenian stronghold constructed by Niccolo Acciajuoli during the fourteenth century fulfilled a similar function, for it was designed to 'provide safety for the province of Kalamata', suggesting that it acted as a refuge site during emergencies, but only housed a core garrison in peace time.¹⁹⁹ Their lack of heating, light or water storage facilities also makes it likely that most isolated towers, such as those mentioned in central Greece and on Chios, were only occupied during military crises. In 1307, for example, Russian monks on Mount Athos saved themselves from a Catalan raid by seeking refuge in a tower normally used for storing wine.²⁰⁰

However, many other fortifications were not just relied upon to provide shelter temporarily. The city walls of sites such as Glarentza, Modon and Coron protected communities numbering several thousand, whilst most larger castles incorporated entire villages situated within their outer defences. In 1391, for example, a survey of Latin settlements in the Peloponnese found that the north Achaean castle of Saint Omer had the greatest population in Morea with 500 hearths. It has been suggested that this

¹⁹⁸ L. de la c., c.338A, p.128, translated from To Chronikon tou Moreos, p.308.

¹⁹⁹ See above, pp.339-40.

²⁰⁰ Lock, 'The Medieval Towers of Greece', pp.136-37; account of the Serbian chronicler Daniel, in A. Soloviev, 'Histoire du Monastère Russe au Mont-Athos', Byzantion, VIII, (1933), 213-38, at 223-24.

figure reflected the inaccessibility of the site, which would have offered far more protection against the Greeks and the Turks than low lying areas nearer the coast. Today, it is still possible to see the remains of this village, which was located to the north of the fortified summit and surrounded by a long curtain wall.²⁰¹ The outer walls of Boudonitza and Salona in central Greece probably defended similar communities in the fourteenth century.²⁰²

The actual inhabitants of these fortified enclosures (or bourgs) must have been a mixture of Franks, Greeks and Italians. In some cases, however, the conquered were segregated from the conquerors. At Nauplia, the Chronicle of Morea recorded that there were two castles, one of which was granted to the Greeks by the crusaders. This suggests that the Franks occupied the upper citadel, but allowed the locals to live within the lower defences, for if they had expelled them they would have been left with a ghost town.²⁰³ Similar concerns explain why the Sanudo dukes of the Archipelago apparently encouraged the Greeks to live within the lower bourg at Naxos, whose outer curtain wall could still be seen early this century. The dukes themselves, along with their Venetian followers, probably lived at a higher level inside the actual castle.²⁰⁴ In this way the Sanudos were able to protect both their Greek and their Latin subjects, minimize the threat of violence between the two peoples, and also perhaps

²⁰¹ Survey of royal rights and properties in the Morea, carried out for Amadeo of Savoy in 1391, reproduced in Bon, La Morée franque, pp.691-92, at p.692. See also ibid, pp.279, 646-48.

²⁰² Bon, 'Forteresses medievales', 162, 184.

²⁰³ L. de la c., c.199, p.71,

²⁰⁴ Sauger, Histoire nouvelle, extract in Fotheringham, Marco Sanudo, p.115; Fotheringham, Marco Sanudo, p.71. Generally, the inhabitants of Chios were segregated in the same way, with the Genoese living in the actual citadel and the Greeks inhabiting the surrounding bourg. See Balard, La Romanie génoise, I, 226.

stress the symbolic overlordship of the Venetians over the locals.

In the long run, however, it was security against external aggressors, rather than either of these latter concerns, which really attracted people to bourgs. The fact that these settlements were protected by an outer wall as well as an adjacent citadel made them far safer than towns or villages which merely lay close to, but not inside, castle fortifications. In short, these places had two lines of defence, the first acting as a deterrent against pirates and minor raiders, and the second halting the progress of more determined invaders. Thus when Ioannitsa attacked the Macedonian stronghold of Serres in 1205, the defenders eventually had to abandon the outer town, but could still retreat into the castle, 'which was very strong',²⁰⁵.

In the end, however, the citadel of Serres could not hold out against Ioannitsa indefinitely, and its garrison suffered the same fate as hundreds of other Macedonians who were killed by the Cumans and Bulgars, or led away in chains.²⁰⁶ Similarly, during the Frankish conquest of Achaëa the spirit of the local Greeks was finally broken because they ran out of castles in which to take shelter. Like the defenders of Serres, they also realized that further resistance was useless once 'they could not get help from anywhere else'. Thus the fate of these people illustrates the importance of strongholds as refuge sites in times of war. Without such places, the inhabitants of bourgs, towns and villages had little chance of escaping enslavement, pillaging and even death.²⁰⁷ Again, this situation can also be compared with that of the Holy Land,

²⁰⁵ Villehardouin, La Conquête, p.232.

²⁰⁶ Villehardouin, La Conquête, p.250; Nicetas Choniates, Historia, col.1006.

²⁰⁷ L. de la c., c.133, p.48.

where it has been shown that most of the Latin population lived inside fortified houses, towers, castles or walled cities, in order to protect itself against anything ranging from vast Mamluk invasions right down to common theft and burglary.²⁰⁸

But these incidents can also be used to show that castles could not always be expected to withstand enemy attacks in isolation. No fortress was powerful enough to resist a determined besieging army indefinitely. Hence it was just a matter of time before Serres had to capitulate, once it became clear that there were no Frankish troops on their way to relieve the castle. This realization must have had a negative effect on the morale of the garrison, thereby bringing the fall of the citadel even closer. No doubt the same fate would have befallen the castle of Janina, about thirty miles north of Arta, if it had not been rescued by a combined force of Achaean, Epirote and Cephalonian troops in the summer of 1292. By this point Janina had been besieged for some time by a Byzantine army hoping to conquer the despotate of Epirus. However, when they heard that Florent of Hainault, ruler of Achaea, count Richard of Cephalonia and Thomas the despot were all marching toward them, the Byzantine Greeks decided to raise the siege, rather than 'wait for battle and be defeated and flee dishonourably'. In this way Janina, and ultimately perhaps the entire despotate, were saved from a Byzantine invasion.²⁰⁹

In certain circumstances, therefore, castles relied on field armies just as much as field armies relied on

²⁰⁸ See above, pp.134-37.

²⁰⁹ L. de la c., c.607-32, pp.243-52 (quote: c.630, p.251); L. de los f., c.456-60, pp.100-101. Once the Byzantine Greeks withdrew, their Genoese allies were also forced to retreat. See above, p.340.

castles. Neither could survive indefinitely without the protection of the other. However, this interdependence between troops and fortifications could only be maintained if there were enough soldiers available to raise new armies quickly whenever castles came under threat. In order to do so, besieged lords were even allowed to call upon the assistance of their vassals without issuing the customary fifteen day warning.²¹⁰ But in the case of Serres, such precautions were useless, because the Franks still lacked the men and resources to confront Ioannitsa in the open and force him to retreat. Similar factors explain why the rest of Macedonia, Thessaly and indeed much of the Latin empire were almost powerless to resist the relentless invasions of the Bulgars and the Greeks. From the early 1260s onwards the same fate befell the hopelessly outnumbered Franks of Syria and Palestine, who could only watch and wait as successive Mamluk sultans picked off one Latin castle or city after another.²¹¹

In central and southern Greece, however, the ruggedness of the terrain made it far easier for the Latins to defend their territories without having to match their opponents man for man. Indeed, geography probably had more to do with the survival of crusader states in this area than political considerations. As far as castles were concerned, it is also obvious that mountain strongholds were more difficult to capture than fortifications situated in the open. But inaccessible sites such as Karytaina were also better suited to defensive warfare because they had good visibility. This was particularly important for elevated frontier castles like Corinth, whose defenders could spot an invasion force crossing the nearby isthmus when it was still several miles away.

²¹⁰ Assizes, article 26.

²¹¹ See above, pp.97-98.

Similarly, the citadel of Monemvasia enjoyed such extensive views over the surrounding coastline that a surprise attack on the site must have been out of the question. This no doubt explains why the inhabitants of the town below had plenty of time to escape the Catalans in 1292. Further north, both Thebes and Salona were also built on outcrops which dominated roads linking Boetia, Thessaly and the Gulf of Corinth. Troops stationed in these fortresses could therefore warn people living nearby about imminent incursions or pirate raids, giving them time to reach the nearest castle or tower.²¹²

At other sites garrisons were able to send messages to each other, not just neighbouring settlements. During the 1330s, for example, the German pilgrim Ludolf of Sudheim referred to a network of fire signals between the Hospitaller islands of Rhodes, Cos and Castellorizzo, which would have acted as an early warning system against Turks and pirates, and can therefore be compared with a similar Cypriot system centred around the fortress of Buffavento. Ludolf wrote that it was manned by brothers of the Order, who used 'smoke by day and torches by night'.²¹³ It is also possible that the citadel of Corinth and the Frankish tower on the Athenian acropolis could communicate with each other, in much the same way that elevated castles such as Akkar, Crac des Chevaliers, Tumluk and Anavarza could further east.²¹⁴ Indeed, the small projecting turret visible in nineteenth century photographs of the tower at Athens may have been

²¹² Corinth: Bon, La Morée franque, p.473; Andrews, Castles, pp.136-37. Monemvasia: the defenders of this castle could even see Crete; see ibid, p.207. Thebes and Salona: Bon, 'Forteresses medievales', 164, 187.

²¹³ Ludolf of Sudheim, De itinere Terrae Sanctae, p.28. Cyprus: see above, p.218.

²¹⁴ See above, pp.139, 244-45.

specifically designed for the sending of fire signals.²¹⁵ Other towers nearer the sea, such as those located around the coastline of Euboea, could have served a similar purpose. The fact that many Euboean towers had stone vaulted, and therefore fire proof, roofs seems to confirm this. However, these fortifications were not always intervisible, or even placed particularly strategically. Consequently, it is safer to assume that many were used to guard individual settlements and farmsteads rather than specified stretches of coastline.²¹⁶

Nevertheless, although the exact function of many smaller castles and towers continues to elude historians, it is clear that keeping a lookout for the enemy remained one of the most important day to day tasks of most garrisons. This is also stressed in the Assizes of Romania, which stated that liegemen who performed annual service to their lord should spend at least four months a year guarding castles. Clearly, the purpose of this assize was to make sure that strongholds were always ready to repel invaders in an area that eventually suffered from almost constant warfare.²¹⁷

As if this were not enough, however, garrisons also had to be prepared for rebellions and other acts of violence committed by local Greeks. To some extent, the Franks reduced the threat of such incidents by adopting a more tolerant attitude toward the Greeks, and simply continuing

²¹⁵ Lock, 'The Frankish Tower on the Acropolis, Athens', 133; Lock, 'The Frankish Towers of Central Greece', 112.

²¹⁶ The towers on Euboea were once thought to be almost purely strategic in design (Lock, 'The Frankish Towers of Central Greece', 102), but this theory has since been rejected as an oversimplification of the evidence (Lock, 'The Medieval Towers of Greece, pp.139-40).

²¹⁷ Assizes, article 70; L.de la c., c.130, p.47; L. de los f., c.138, p.32.

the administrative practices of the former Byzantine empire. In Achaea, for example, 'the Greek noblemen who held fiefs and estates and the villages of the land' were often allowed to keep enough earnings and produce to maintain their social status, provided that they gave a certain proportion to the Franks. It was also agreed that 'the people should pay and serve in the same way that they had done during the overlordship of the emperor of Constantinople.'²¹⁸ Thus rather than expelling or even killing local people, which would have brought the rural economy to a standstill, the Franks allowed the Greeks to hold land and property in exchange for their taxes, obedience and military service. Indeed, this latter obligation was sometimes offered willingly, for the Greeks feared certain aggressors, such as pirates, just as much as the Latins.²¹⁹

Fortunately, therefore, the Latin conquest of Greece did not bring with it any of the horrors associated with the fall of Jerusalem and the early years of crusader rule in the Holy Land. This can be explained in terms of political, military and economic necessities, and perhaps also a limited amount of understanding between the catholic and orthodox churches. But this did not alter the fact that the Latins were unwelcome invaders, who consequently had to use force as well as tolerance to impose their rule over the area. The easiest way to do this was to capture, repair or construct castles. Indeed, it has already been suggested that the majority of Latin fortifications in Frankish Greece were hastily erected donjons or towers, because such structures could be built

²¹⁸ L. de la c., c.106, pp.34-35. See also L. de los f., c.138, p.31.

²¹⁹ That Greeks in Achaea performed military service is implied in Assizes, article 71. The Greeks of Naxos are said to have helped their Venetian conquerors combat pirates. See Andrea Dandolo, Chronicum Venetum, p.282; Fotheringham, Marco Sanudo, p.57.

quickly and garrisoned by very few men. By relying on these strongholds as their bases, and only venturing into the countryside to collect taxes, or, if necessary, carry out punitive raids, the Franks could suppress relatively large areas without actually having to occupy them in their entirety.²²⁰

These observations are confirmed by the historical sources. In Messenia, for example, the Frankish invaders had terrible problems imposing their authority over the local Greeks, but once they captured the strategic fortress of Kalamata this situation changed dramatically. 'Afterwards', wrote Villehardouin, 'more Greeks from the country submitted to them than ever before'.²²¹ Eventually, Kalamata also became one of the many Byzantine castles strengthened by new Latin fortifications, and a similar process was going on all over the Morea during the early years of the thirteenth century. The men responsible for these changes were figures like William Aleman, newly created barons who began 'to change their surnames and take the names of the fortresses they were building'.²²² In so doing, they were actively encouraged by the rulers of Achaea, who specifically stated in the Assizes of Romania that the twelve most powerful vassals of the principality could build their own castles unhindered. This policy ensured that the countryside was subjugated as quickly as possible. It may also have been intended to encourage Frankish nobles to stay in Greece and consolidate their new baronies, thereby stabilizing the political situation between fellow newcomers, not just Greeks and Franks.²²³

²²⁰ See above, pp.316-17.

²²¹ Villehardouin, *La Conquête*, p.196.

²²² *L. de la c.*, c.218, p.79, and see above, p.304.

²²³ *Assizes*, article 94.

The need to create strong and viable new lordships as quickly as possible meant that other westerners relied on the same tactics as those used by the Achaean Franks. At Coron, the ever expanding thirteenth century fortifications of the citadel enabled the Venetians to dominate much of the surrounding countryside, not just the city itself.²²⁴ During the first three decades of Venetian rule on Crete, castles and towers were also used to protect Italian settlers against the locals, who resented having to share their land with the newcomers.²²⁵ The mountainous areas of western Crete proved particularly troublesome in this respect, and so the Venetians eventually built the fortress of Suda on the north-west coast of the island to try to bring order to this region. Gradually, this wore down the resistance of the Greeks, but it is interesting to note that by placing Suda by the sea, the Venetians still created an escape route for themselves in case it ever became necessary to withdraw from the area completely. Suda's location also suggests that the Venetians were happy to contain rather than conquer western Crete, in the same way that William II of Villehardouin preferred to surround the Melings with a ring of frontier castles.²²⁶

Hence, castles enabled the Latin conquerors of the former Byzantine empire to impose their will on a far larger native population. However, even though they normally

²²⁴ Marino Sanudo, Istoria, p.106.

²²⁵ Andrea Dandolo, Chronicum Venetum, pp.284-85, 288, 292 (see also p.304); Andrea Navagerio, Storia Venezia, cols.987-92; Marino Sanudo, Vite de' Duchi, cols.545, 547, 549 (see also col.557); Fotheringham, Marco Sanudo, pp.87-103.

²²⁶ Andrea Navagerio, Storia Venezia, col.991; Marino Sanudo, Vite de' Duchi, col.549; Fotheringham, Marco Sanudo, p.101.

lacked the skill, discipline and equipment needed to besiege castles, the Greeks still rebelled against their new overlords with alarming frequency. Such uprisings could be sparked off by the most trivial matters, suggesting that relations between the two peoples were often as bad as those between Christians and Muslims in the Holy Land. In 1296, for example, an obscure argument between a Greek lord and a Frankish knight led to a massive insurrection in northern Laconia. This in turn resulted in the fall of Saint George, an important Latin frontier castle, after a traitor within the ramparts lowered a ladder to Greek rebels waiting below. In response, Florent of Hainault organized a lengthy campaign against Saint George, which incidentally involved the use of small forts similar to those built by the Franks at Corinth between 1205 and 1210.²²⁷ This must have been successful, for Saint George belonged to the Latins again about ten years later, but the whole episode nevertheless reflects the fragility of Frankish rule in Greece.²²⁸

Most other rebellions mentioned by contemporary sources were caused by more specific grievances. Heavy taxation, combined with a general feeling that the Latins were not maintaining established Byzantine customs, seem to have sparked off a second uprising around Saint George in 1302.²²⁹ Similar complaints probably led to numerous disturbances on Crete,²³⁰ whilst on Chios heavy handed tactics by the Genoese led to so much local resentment that between 1329 and 1346 they were forced to abandon the

²²⁷ L. de la c., c.801-27, pp.318-27.

²²⁸ This is made clear by the fact that a Latin garrison defended Saint George during another Greek rebellion in 1302. See L. de la c., c.932, p.367, and below, p.377.

²²⁹ L. de la c., c.920-26, pp.362-65, c.950, p.373.

²³⁰ See above, p.374, and Fotheringham, Marco Sanudo, pp.89-92.

island altogether. No doubt the Genoese were encouraged to do so because of the strong political support, and perhaps even direct military assistance, given to the inhabitants of Chios by Andronicus II. External help of this kind also explains why there were so many rebellions against Frankish rule in the border region between Achaea and Mistra, which, as we have seen, could easily receive Byzantine troops and supplies through the port of Monemvasia.²³¹

Like the Muslim peasants who rebelled after the battle of Hattin, the Greeks also took their chances whenever the Latins had been defeated by an external foe, and were in serious military trouble.²³² Hence the Thracian rebellion of 1205 was clearly timed to coincide with Ioannitsa's invasion of the area, whilst in 1207 the Greek capture of the local Frankish lord precipitated a more spontaneous uprising near Nicomedia.²³³ Similar insurrections also broke out in the wake of both Cephissus and Pelagonia, devastating encounters which inflicted such heavy losses on the Franks that it proved impossible for them to maintain law and order.²³⁴

However, even if castles sometimes failed to prevent rebellions, such structures could still minimize their impact. This point is perhaps best illustrated by returning to the uprising of 1302, which was caused by the heavy taxes imposed on the Greeks by the Achaean prince Philip of Savoy. This rebellion started well for the

²³¹ John VI Cantacuzenus, Historiarum libri IV, ed. L. Schopen, CHSB, (3 vols, Bonn 1828-32), I, 370-79; Balard, 'The Genoese in the Aegean', pp.162-63; Balard, La Romanie génoise, I, 121-23. Mistra: see above, pp.347-48.

²³² See above, p.136.

²³³ Villehardouin, La Conquête, pp.288-92.

²³⁴ Cephissus: see above, p.6166. Pelagonia: Marino Sanudo, Istoria, p.350.

Greeks, who captured and destroyed the castles of Sainte Hélène and Crevecoeur located near Karytaina, before the Franks even had time to react. Interestingly, these successes were achieved with the aid of troops sent from Mistra. But by the time the rebels reached Beaufort (another fortress near Karytaina, which should not be confused with its namesake in the Mani peninsula²³⁵), they had already lost the element of surprise, and realized that it would be impossible to storm the castle without suffering heavy losses at the hands of the Frankish crossbowmen stationed along the ramparts. They therefore changed their minds and marched to Saint George, only to find that they lacked the equipment to besiege it. In order to solve the problem, they asked for a trebuchet to be brought from Monemvasia, but by now they had lost so much time that the initial impetus of the rebellion was slipping away. Meanwhile, Philip of Savoy and his barons were able to raise an army and march south toward Saint George, forcing the rebels to retreat into the mountains or back to Mistra. As a result, all resistance crumbled, and Philip was able to rebuild or strengthen those castles which had been attacked, collect any outstanding taxes, and deal with the leaders of the uprising.²³⁶

Consequently, despite managing to destroy two entire castles, the Greek rebels failed because they lacked the resources to undertake a more extensive campaign involving lengthy sieges. They needed the element of surprise to succeed, and once this had been taken away from them, they did not have any strongholds of their own in which to regroup or take shelter. The Frankish defenders of Saint George and Beaufort, on the other hand, knew that they had time on their side, and were happy to adopt the same

²³⁵ Bon, La Morée franque, pp.386-89, 504, 650-52.

²³⁶ L. de la c., c.927-53, pp.365-74.

tactic of wait and see as that used by the Catalans against Walter II of Brienne in 1331. In doing so they prevented the rebellion from spreading any further, and ultimately caused it to collapse entirely.

By retreating inside their castles rather than trying to confront rebels in the field, the Franks were of course also able to keep their casualties to a minimum. In 1302 this was only a temporary measure until Philip of Savoy turned up, but on other occasions it was less clear if and when a relieving army would arrive. This was certainly the case for the unfortunate Renier of Trit, lord of Philippopolis and Stenimaka, a town and castle situated on the northern fringes of the Latin empire. When Ioannitsa invaded this area and the local Greeks rose up in arms against the Latins, Renier found himself cut off at Philippopolis with 120 knights. During the ensuing weeks, small groups of these knights tried to leave the city and make the dangerous nine day journey to Constantinople, despite Renier's efforts to persuade them to stay. Most of them probably suffered the same fate as Renier's son and brother, who were captured and beheaded along with at least thirty other knights soon after departing from Philippopolis. As if this were not bad enough, however, Renier also began to hear rumours that the inhabitants of Philippopolis were planning to rebel and deliver the city to Ioannitsa. He therefore hastily retreated to the castle of Stenimaka with his fifteen remaining knights, and stayed there, cut off from the outside world, until a relieving force from Constantinople finally reached him in June 1206. By this point Renier had been stranded for thirteen months, but by refusing to leave his stronghold he had avoided the fate of most of his companions, and had survived one of the worst rebellions of the entire

crusader period.²³⁷

Similar, if somewhat less spectacular tactics also enabled the Genoese to withstand an uprising on Chios in 1347. This rebellion had been organized by a local nobleman, who had gathered together a force of Greeks and mercenaries which may well have outnumbered the westerners on the island. Rather than trying to confront these people, however, the Genoese responded by withdrawing to the powerful citadel of Chios. Here they were besieged for a while, until the arrival of reinforcements caused the entire insurrection to fizzle out. Once again, therefore, fortifications rather than superior troop numbers had saved both the lives and the territorial claims of the Latin newcomers, and had enabled them to wait in safety until further assistance arrived from elsewhere.²³⁸

As far as the rulers of new crusader states were concerned, however, the situation was not necessarily so straightforward. For them, there was always the added threat that their Latin as well as their Greek vassals would rebel. The obvious way to prevent this was to make sure that the most powerful castles in any given area belonged to the local ruler rather than his barons. Thus in the Catalan duchy of Athens, Thebes, Livadia, Siderokastron, Neopatras and Athens all belonged to the royal domain of the Aragonese dukes.²³⁹ As we have seen, these sites were powerful mountain castles whose strength

²³⁷ Villehardouin, La Conquête, pp.204, 236-38, 260-62; letter from the emperor Henry to the west, September 1206, RHGF, XVIII, 528-29. See also Nicetas Choniates, Historia, cols.1015, 1031.

²³⁸ John Cantacuzenus, Historiarum libri IV, III, 83-85; Balard, 'The Genoese in the Aegean', pp.164-65; Balard, La Romanie génoise, I, 124-25.

²³⁹ Setton, Catalan Domination, pp.83-85; Rubió y Lluch, 'Els Castells', 381-82, 389-90; Setton, 'The Catalans in Greece, 1311-1380', pp.206-7.

was such that Neopatras alone had withstood a Byzantine besieging force of 30,000 men in 1275.²⁴⁰ Similarly, in Achaea the strategic fortresses of Corinth, Kalamata and Androusa, as well as Chlemoutsi and Glarentza, were all held by the rulers of the principality. Between 1249 and 1262 these were joined briefly by Mistra and Monemvasia.²⁴¹ Further east, the fortified cities of Constantinople and Thessaloniki were of course also royal properties, although Constantinople in particular contained a very large *Venetian quarter*.²⁴²

Having gained possession over important strongholds like these, it was essential for individual rulers to maintain their defences. Thus Ioannitsa's destruction of Serres, which was a royal city, had not only led to the death or captivity of its inhabitants, but had also undermined Boniface of Montferrat's dominance over the entire surrounding region. Consequently, Boniface refortified the site as soon as he could, thereby re-establishing his own authority over the local Greeks and Franks, and at the

²⁴⁰ Marino Sanudo, *Istoria*, p.121; George Pachymeres, *De Michaele*, I, 342-48; Rubió y Lluch, 'Els Castells', 399; Miller, *The Latins in the Levant*, pp.131-35.

²⁴¹ Geoffrey I kept Corinth after it finally surrendered in 1210; *L. de la c.*, c.194-95, p.69. Kalamata was granted to Geoffrey I by William Champlitte in c.1205-9; *L. de la c.*, c.124-25, p.42; *L. de los f.*, c.136, pp.31-32. Androusa was built, or, as has been suggested, reoccupied and repaired by William II; see above, pp.292-94. Chlemoutsi was built from scratch by Geoffrey I; see above, pp.317-18. Glarentza's walls seem to have been built from scratch in the thirteenth century; *L. de los f.*, c.217, p.49, and see above, p.313. Monemvasia was garrisoned by William II's troops after it surrendered; *L. de la c.*, c.265C, p.73, translated from *To Chronikon tou Moreos*, p.198. Mistra was built or repaired by William II; *L. de los f.*, c.215, p.49, and see above, p.315.

²⁴² Salonika: This city was occupied by Boniface of Montferrat after he had come to terms with Baldwin of Flanders. See Villehardouin *La Conquête*, pp.176-80; Robert of Clari, *La Conquête*, c.110, pp.104-5. Constantinople: this city was included in the arrangements regarding the establishment of the Latin empire. See above, p.25.

same time protecting these people against future Bulgar invasions.²⁴³

But in order to maintain their status, rulers also had to be certain that their followers were as reliable as the ramparts of their castles. As a result, garrisons were often changed on the accession of new sovereigns. Thus in 1301 Philip of Savoy, ruler of Achaëa by virtue of his marriage with Isabelle of Villehardouin, '*had the castellans and constables and some of the sergeants changed in all the castles of his principality of Morea, and placed in them some of the people he had brought from Piedmont and Savoy*'.²⁴⁴ The purpose of this policy was to avoid treachery and foster loyalty toward individual rulers, but it did not always work. The traitor who let Greek rebels inside Saint George in 1296, for example, had the suspiciously Latin sounding name of Boniface.²⁴⁵ Likewise, we have seen that individual Franks at Karytaina and Akova (Mathegriffon) were prepared to hand these castles over to the Greeks in return for financial gain.²⁴⁶

These incidents show that even the strongest fortifications were vulnerable if the men who guarded them could not be trusted. But in general, rebellions and internal struggles involving fellow westerners were caused by far wider political disagreements. Thus during the earliest days of Latin rule at Constantinople arguments arose between Boniface of Montferrat and his overlord, Baldwin of Flanders, regarding the kingdom of Thessaly. Salonika in particular became a sore point between the two

²⁴³ Villehardouin, La Conquête, pp.232-34, 272.

²⁴⁴ L. de la c., c.854, p.338.

²⁴⁵ L. de la c., c.806-7, p.321.

²⁴⁶ See above, pp.347-48.

men, because Boniface hoped to make it his new capital, whereas Baldwin was well aware of the city's traditional imperial status.²⁴⁷ Matters deteriorated even further in the autumn of 1204, when Baldwin managed to seize Salonika before Boniface could get to it. As a result, the latter decided to rebel openly against his lord, and hastily laid siege to Adrianople, which had also recently been captured by Baldwin. The emperor's followers inside Adrianople therefore appealed to Constantinople for help, and a relieving army was despatched from the capital which forced Boniface to raise his siege and come to terms. Boniface was subsequently allowed to keep Salonika in exchange for recognizing the emperor's overlordship and territorial claims in Thrace.²⁴⁸ Thus Boniface had been prevented from conquering Thrace, and perhaps even overthrowing Baldwin, because he had failed to capture Adrianople, whose role in the affair can be compared with that of Beaufort or Saint George during the Greek rebellion of 1302.²⁴⁹

Sometimes, however, the inherent weakness of Frankish rulers in Greece meant that fortifications tended to erode rather than consolidate central authority. This is hardly surprising when one considers that many Latin nobles had inherited immensely powerful Byzantine strongholds, which had originally been designed to withstand far larger besieging armies than anything the Franks could muster. If vassals who held such castles were able to resist external invasion forces numbering thousands of men, it must have been tempting at times to defy a royal army composed of

²⁴⁷ Villehardouin, La Conquête, pp.164-66; Robert of Clari, La Conquête, c.99, pp.97-98.

²⁴⁸ Villehardouin, La Conquête, pp.166-78; Robert of Clari, La Conquête, c.99-105, pp.97-100, c.110, pp.104-5; Longnon, L'empire latin, pp.55-61.

²⁴⁹ See above, p.377.

just a few hundred knights. This certainly seems to have occurred to the Lombard rebels of Thessaly, who, as has been mentioned, almost destroyed the emperor Henry's army by refusing to allow it inside the walls of Christopoli or Salonika. As a result, Henry's troops may have been unable to collect supplies from the fleet sailing alongside them, or indeed find adequate shelter from the terrible winter weather. The Lombards must also have known that in these circumstances Henry had no chance of storming Salonika's vast ramparts, which explains why he had to use guile to gain entry to the city.²⁵⁰ Even then, however, Lombard troops continued to defy Henry at Serres and Christopoli, and later also Larissa and Thebes. In the end, Henry failed to capture any of these strongholds by storm, and had to fall back on a combination of threats, diplomacy and victories in the field to obtain their surrender.²⁵¹

When one considers the problems Henry had in dealing with the Lombards, it is easy to understand why the Aragonese dukes of Athens, who did not even reside in Greece, found it increasingly difficult to impose their rule over their Catalan vassals. Indeed, by the early 1360s it appears that vicars-general sent to Athens by king Frederick III, who also held the ducal title, were no more than pawns in the political power games of local Catalan barons. One of the most important such figures was Roger de Lloria, who apparently seized and ruled Thebes between 1362 and 1366. Lacking the means to remove Roger from this impregnable citadel, Frederick III eventually had no alternative but to acknowledge his status as the 'de facto' vicar-general,

²⁵⁰ See above, pp.330-31.

²⁵¹ Henry of Valenciennes, L'Estoire de l'empereur, c.605-87, pp.79-118.

and he continued to rule until his death in c.1370.²⁵²

During the long and violent history of Frankish Greece there were many similar instances of baronial disloyalty involving castles. Indeed, during the mid-1250s Thebes had been at the centre of another internal conflict, when its lord Guy de la Roche, aided by his Venetian allies, clashed with his overlord William II of Villehardouin in a dispute over land on Euboea. William must have thought that he had brought this struggle to an end when he finally defeated Guy in 1258, but the latter managed to escape and seek refuge at Thebes, which proved too strong for William's besieging forces. As a result, Guy only surrendered after Achaean troops systematically began to ravage his lands and thereby threaten him with financial ruin.²⁵³

We have also already seen how the powerful defences at Patras put an end to Hugh of Lusignan's hopes of controlling Achaea in 1366. Hugh's greatest rival in this dispute was Philip of Taranto, younger brother of Robert, who had ruled the principality between 1346 and 1364. Shortly before the siege of Patras Philip had himself launched a major attack on Hugh's headquarters at Old Navarino, but he too had failed to make any progress. Thus for a while Hugh and Philip were deadlocked, because neither claimant succeeded in taking the other man's

²⁵² Frederick III had recognized that Roger as vicar-general by August 1366. See Rubió y Lluch, Diplomatari de l'Orient català, no.271, p.355. The pope also complained about Roger's actions, and his use of Turkish mercenaries. See Lettres secrètes et curiales se rapportant à la France, ed. G. Mollat, (Paris 1955), nos.1047, 1050, p.163; Setton, 'The Catalans in Greece, 1311-1380', pp.198-99, 202-4.

²⁵³ L. de la c., c.234-35, p.85; L. de los f., c.224-25, pp.50-51; Marino Sanudo, Istoria, p.105.

castles. Consequently Philip only emerged victorious after Hugh was persuaded to leave Greece in return for a substantial pay-off.²⁵⁴

Incidents like these illustrate how castles could prevent lords from imposing their will on troublesome vassals or rival claimants. But the chronology and frequency of rebellions can also be used to shed more light on the decline of central authority in general. It is interesting to note, for example, that many of the rebellions mentioned so far occurred in the latter half of the fourteenth century, when the rulers of Latin states in Greece were increasingly absent in western Europe. By contrast, the fact that there were so few disturbances in Achaëa before the loss of Mistra, Monemvasia and Old Mania in 1262, suggests that the principality enjoyed good internal security during this period. To some extent, this is confirmed by contemporary descriptions of Andravida (Andreville), the thirteenth century capital of Achaëa, which was situated in the middle of an open plain, 'without any walls or a citadel'. Instead of trying to rectify this situation, the earliest rulers of Achaëa preferred to reside at Chlemoutsi, which provided them with shelter but still lay conveniently close to their centre of government.²⁵⁵

This situation would have been unthinkable in most other crusader states. If Constantinople, Salonika, Acre, Antioch or Tripoli had not been protected by vast urban fortifications, these cities, along with all the territories around them, would have been overrun in a

²⁵⁴ L. de los f., c.690-702, pp.152-55, and see above, pp.334-35.

²⁵⁵ L. de la c., c.92, p.30. See also Bon, La Morée franque, pp.318-20.

matter of weeks. Indeed, the only Frankish settlement in the entire eastern Mediterranean which was comparable with Andravida was Nicosia, the capital of Cyprus. Cyprus itself was also similar to the principality of Achaea, in that both were geographically isolated and therefore less exposed to external invaders than Christian territories which shared long borders with hostile Greek, Bulgar or Muslim states. As a result Cyprus and Achaea enjoyed far more peace and internal stability than their neighbours. These factors explain why the Franks did not make any efforts to fortify Andravida until the Greeks had taken over Mistra, and were beginning to attack the principality regularly. As we have seen, these attacks also encouraged local people to rebel, thereby increasing the need for urban defences even further.²⁵⁶ A similar process took place on Cyprus, whose capital only had walls built around it once the Genoese occupied Famagusta in the 1370s.²⁵⁷

Consequently, the more exposed a Christian lordship became to hostile attacks from beyond its borders, the likelier its native inhabitants were to rebel. As far as Frankish Greece was concerned, this may also have had some effect on military architecture in the region. So far, it has been suggested that a combination of poverty, local building traditions and the inherent natural strength of sites such as Karytaina accounts for the rather poor quality of medieval castles in Greece. But it is also possible that the political situation during the first fifty years of Frankish rule, when most Latin fortifications were built, had something to do with it. In other words, the newcomers realized that there was no need to construct massive defences against a native population

²⁵⁶ L. de la c., c.355, p.137.

²⁵⁷ See above, pp.192-95.

which lacked the resources to put up any organized resistance. In these circumstances, isolated towers, weak curtain walls and uncut masonry were found to be more than adequate. However, this theory does not account for the fact that castles constructed long after uprisings and invasions had become commonplace, such as the Catalan defences in Boeotia, still relied on the same careless building techniques. Consequently, it would be dangerous to claim that this argument applies to all Latin fortifications in Greece.²⁵⁸

What is clear, however, is that castles in general were the most effective way of maintaining both internal and external security, and that the crusaders would not have been able to conquer the Byzantine empire without them. Indeed, these structures were so good at defending and suppressing newly captured territories that sometimes it was considered safer to get rid of them altogether. In 1207, for example, the emperor Henry agreed to demolish both Cyzicus and the fortified church at Nicomedia in his peace treaty with Theodore Lascaris of Nicaea. By insisting on the destruction of these two castles, Theodore hoped to prevent the Franks from continuing to use them as bases for raids on the surrounding countryside.²⁵⁹ Similarly, as soon as they heard about Walter II of Brienne's invasion plans, the Catalans demolished the fortress of Saint Omer at Thebes 'to make sure that the duke of Athens would not take it in any way and recover the duchy by using this castle'.²⁶⁰ The

²⁵⁸ A similar theory has been put forward to explain the rather primitive design of Frankish towers in Greece. See Lock, 'The Frankish Towers of Central Greece', 109.

²⁵⁹ Villehardouin, La Conquête, p.292.

²⁶⁰ L. de la c., c.554, pp.220-21; To Chronikon tou Moreos, p.524.

systematic destruction of fortified sites in Thrace by Ioannitsa seems to have been a similar attempt to prevent the Franks and Venetians from reoccupying the area, and to create a kind of no-man's-land between Constantinople and the Bulgars. By adopting this policy Ioannitsa must have realized that he had far less to lose than the Latins, for he relied on weight of numbers rather than castles to maintain his authority over the countryside.²⁶¹

Beyond Frankish Greece, Ioannitsa's actions can also be compared with the scorched earth tactics which Saladin and Baybars employed in the Holy Land.²⁶² But whereas both these sultans failed to wipe out Christian territories entirely, Latin control over Thrace and Macedonia had basically disappeared by the late 1220s. One reason for this was that the crusader states of Syria and Palestine received considerable assistance from the Hospitallers, Templars and Teutonic Knights, whose vast military and economic resources enabled them to construct and garrison powerful frontier castles such as Saphet and Crac des Chevaliers. In Greece, on the other hand, the Military Orders kept such a low profile that the contemporary sources rarely even mention them. According to the Chronicle of Morea, for example, the three Orders each owed the prince of Achaea four knights service annually; a tiny amount when one considers that in Galilee the castle of Saphet alone had a peace time garrison of 1,700 troops, including 50 Templar knights.²⁶³

²⁶¹ Villehardouin, La Conquête, pp.246-50; Nicetas Choniates, Historia, cols.118-19.

²⁶² See above, pp.169-70.

²⁶³ L. de los f., c.131, pp.30-31; De constructione castris Saphet, lines 204-10, p.384.

The relative insignificance of the Military Orders in Frankish Greece also makes it difficult to establish precisely which castles and estates they held there. The headquarters of the Teutonic knights, for example, appear to have been situated at Mostenitsa, which, according to a papal letter of Gregory IX, lay somewhere in the diocese of Coron.²⁶⁴ As a result, attempts by some historians to link Mostenitsa with a ruined Frankish tower in southern Elis have been rejected by those scholars who argue that this site lies too far north of the Venetian colony. But whether one believes that Mostenitsa was an isolated tower in Elis, or indeed a totally different fortification which has long since disappeared, both theories can be used to show that this castle must have been remarkably small considering its administrative status.²⁶⁵

The only other castle in Greece which can be attributed to the German Order with any kind of certainty is Châteauneuf, which was built by Isabelle of Villehardouin toward the very end of the thirteenth century, in order to protect the border region between Messenia and Arcadia from Greek raiders.²⁶⁶ In the Aragonese version of the Chronicle of Morea, written about a hundred years later, it was specifically stated that this stronghold had since been granted to the Teutonic Knights.²⁶⁷ Once again, however, there is little at the supposed site of

²⁶⁴ Gregory IX: letter of 19th May, 1241, reproduced in Forstreuter, Der Deutsche Orden, pp.237-38, at p.237; Assizes, article 48.

²⁶⁵ Forstreuter, Der Deutsche Orden, pp.73-74; Bon, La Morée franque, pp.343-44, 429.

²⁶⁶ L. de la c., c.830, pp.328-29.

²⁶⁷ L. de los f., c.471, p.103.

Châteauneuf, a simple rectangular enclosure flanked by three square towers, to suggest that it once belonged to a wealthy and powerful international Order.²⁶⁸ Moreover, if the Teutonic Knights held any strongholds in the Latin empire before 1261, or in the duchy of Athens until 1311, all historical and archaeological evidence of their existence has long since disappeared.²⁶⁹ The German traveller Ludolf of Sudheim's claim that 'in Achaea, or Morea, there are brothers of the Teutonic house guarding very strong castles [and] constantly fighting against the dukes of Athens (ie the Catalans) and the Greeks' also seems to exaggerate the Knights' role in the political struggles of the 1330s, although it does at least confirm that the Order was still very active in Greece during this period.²⁷⁰ Indeed, the last known references to Mostenitsa date from as late as the early fifteenth century, by which time most of Messenia belonged to the Greeks of Mistra.²⁷¹

The evidence concerning the Templars and the Hospitallers is, if anything, even sketchier. Occasional references to these Orders, such as their contribution to William II of Villehardouin's campaign against Guy de la Roche in 1258, show that they were involved in the military activities of the principality, but it is doubtful if they owned many castles in the region.²⁷² Papal documents from the reign of Innocent III reveal that the Templars held Lamia

²⁶⁸ Bon, La Morée franque, pp.656-58.

²⁶⁹ Forstreuter, Der Deutsche Orden, pp.71-72.

²⁷⁰ Ludolf of Sudheim, De itinere Terrae Sanctae, p.23.

²⁷¹ Forstreuter, Der Deutsche Orden, pp.80-81.

²⁷² L. de la c., c.225n3, p.82, translated from To Chronikon tou Moreos, p.214.

(Zeitoun) at the beginning of the thirteenth century, and they were perhaps largely responsible for its construction. This was yet another mountain castle built around an ancient acropolis, whose location on the borders of Boeotia and Thessaly gave it great strategic importance under both the Franks and the Catalans.²⁷³ In 1209, however, Lombard rebels fleeing from the emperor Henry probably took shelter there, and by the end of Innocent III's life the entire area was already being swallowed up by the despotate of Epirus. Consequently, it is difficult to ascertain how and when the Templars left Lamia, although it does seem clear that their occupation of the castle was short lived and ineffectual.²⁷⁴

These observations probably also apply to Gardiki, a Hospitaller lordship to the east of Lamia which the Order seized from the local bishop despite the protestations of Innocent III.²⁷⁵ Gardiki subsequently fell to the Greeks of Epirus, only to return to Frankish control in the 1270s, when William de la Roche married the daughter of the Greek ruler of Neopatras and received both Gardiki and neighbouring Lamia as her dowry.²⁷⁶ Almost half a century later these strongholds were also captured by the Catalans, ruling out any possibility that the Military

²⁷³ Innocent III, PL, CCXVI, Lib.XIII, no.136, col.323; Rubió y Lluch, 'Els Castells', 393-98, and see above, p.311.

²⁷⁴ Henry of Valenciennes, L'Estoire de l'empereur, c.671, p.110, 110n4, and see above, p.311.

²⁷⁵ Innocent III, PL, CCXVI, Lib.XIII, no.120, cols.30⁷-8, Lib.XV, no.69, cols.591-94.

²⁷⁶ Marino Sanudo, Istoria, p.130; L. de la c., c.546, pp.216-17; Miller, The Latins in the Levant, pp.133-35.

Orders ever returned to them.²⁷⁷

Further south, the Hospitallers appear to have become increasingly involved in the defence of Christian territories against the Turks and other aggressors arriving from the north. In 1395, for example, the pilgrim Niccolo da Martoni described his harrowing journey between the east coast of Attica, where he had arrived by ship from Euboea, to the Hospitaller castle of Sykaminon, situated three miles inland. The entire region around this castle was permanently threatened by the Turks, as well as a group of Albanian robbers based at another stronghold nearby. As a result Niccolo was greatly relieved both to reach and to get away from Sykaminon without being attacked. From these events it is clear that by the late fourteenth century the castle acted as an isolated refuge in a sea of lawlessness and virtual anarchy.²⁷⁸

The growing involvement of the Hospitallers in Greece also reflected the diminishing power of the Templars, who were dissolved early in the fourteenth century, and the Teutonic Knights, who gradually transferred most of their activities to Prussia after the fall of Acre. This process can be illustrated by looking at the history of Palaiopolis, a small village situated in central Elis. In 1210 this and two other settlements were granted to the Templars by leading members of the Frankish invasion force, including William of Champlitte.²⁷⁹ After the trial

²⁷⁷ Marino Sanudo, Epistulae, in Gesta Dei per Francos, II, Ep. III, 293.

²⁷⁸ Niccolo da Martoni, Relation du pèlerinage, pp. 655-56.

²⁷⁹ Innocent III, PL, CCXVI, Lib. XIII, no. 149, col. 329.

of the Templars, however, the site was taken over by the Hospitallers, who either inherited or constructed the medieval tower situated on a hill near the village. The present remains of this structure indicate that it was rectangular, incorporated reused classical masonry, and had been equipped with a large vaulted cellar or cistern. In short, this was a typical Frankish tower of the kind erected all over Greece, although the presence of a cistern suggests that it was slightly more substantial than the majority of such fortifications.²⁸⁰ Further afield, Palaiopolis can also be compared with the Red Tower, a similar structure in Galilee which both the Templars and the Hospitallers occupied during the thirteenth century.²⁸¹

Sixty years after the dissolution of the Templars, 'the castle of Palaiopolis' still belonged to the Hospitallers.²⁸² At this time the Order also held a castle, or, more likely, a fortified tower, at Laffustan (Phostena) in northern Achaea, another site originally granted to the Templars. Presumably, therefore, Laffustan evolved from a Templar village into a Hospitaller stronghold in the same way that Palaiopolis did.²⁸³ As the fourteenth century progressed, however, the Hospitallers were also called upon to garrison many other castles, not just their older possessions in the Peloponnese and at

²⁸⁰ L. de los f., c.588, p.129; Bon, La Morée franque, p.338n7.

²⁸¹ See above, p.158.

²⁸² Survey of royal properties in the Morea, carried out for Marie de Bourbon, 1371, reproduced in Bon, La Morée franque, p.690.

²⁸³ Survey of royal properties in Morea, 1371, in Bon, La Morée franque, p.690; Innocent III, PL, CCXVI, Lib.XIII, no.150, col.330.

Sykaminon. Indeed, by 1356 the military situation in southern Greece had deteriorated so much that Innocent VI seems to have considered handing all of Achaëa over to the Order, or at the very least giving it a far greater role in the defence of the principality.²⁸⁴ Although little came of this suggestion at the time, Innocent's plan was finally carried out twenty years later, when queen Joanna of Naples granted the Morea to the Hospitallers for an annual rent of 4,000 ducats over a five year period. By the end of the five years, however, the Order had suffered so many financial, military and political setbacks both in Greece and on Rhodes that it did not attempt to renew the contract.²⁸⁵ But despite these problems, the Hospitallers continued to show an interest in Greece, and were prominent in efforts to defend Corinth and fortify the nearby isthmus at the very beginning of the fifteenth century. These projects, and indeed the history of Rhodes in general, fall outside the limits of this chapter, but they are nevertheless worth mentioning as further examples of fortifications being used to protect territories against numerically superior invasion forces.²⁸⁶ It has also been shown that during the fourteenth century the Hospitallers turned Rhodes itself into a heavily fortified

²⁸⁴ Innocent VI, Lettres secrètes et curiales, ed. P. Gasnault, M.H. Laurent and N. Gotteri, (4 vols., Paris and Rome 1959-76), IV, no.2133, pp.75-76, no.2134, p.76; Luttrell, 'The Hospitallers of Rhodes', pp.296-97.

²⁸⁵ L. de los f., c.724-26, pp.159-60; Luttrell, 'The Hospitallers of Rhodes', pp.301-3; Bon, La Morée franque, pp.253-54; A. Luttrell, 'Intrigue, Schism and Violence among the Hospitallers of Rhodes, 1377-1384', Speculum, XLI, (1966), 30-48.

²⁸⁶ Luttrell, 'The Hospitallers of Rhodes', pp.307-8; A. Luttrell, 'The Hospitallers of Rhodes: Prospectives, Problems, Possibilities', in idem, Latin Greece, the Hospitallers and the Crusades, 1291-1440, (London 1992), c.1, pp.243-66, at pp.254-55.

naval base, whose military role was similar to that of Modon or Negroponte, and which made a significant contribution to the successful crusade against Smyrna in 1344.²⁸⁷

Returning to the older and less extensive fortifications which the Hospitallers and the other Orders had held in Greece since the thirteenth century, the problem of function still needs to be addressed. The scarcity of evidence makes this a difficult task, but two roles, one military and the other administrative, can at least be suggested for these castles. Firstly, strongholds such as Lamia and Châteauneuf may have been granted to the Military Orders in order to prevent their capture and to make sure that areas around them were properly defended against hostile neighbours. Châteauneuf in particular evidently became a relatively important frontier castle in the fourteenth century, and Ludolf of Sudheim's statement regarding the Teutonic Knights suggests that its garrison saw some heavy fighting during this period. Sykaminon clearly performed a similar role by the time Niccolo da Martoni visited it, even if this had not been the castle's original function during the more peaceful years of Frankish and Catalan rule.²⁸⁸ The strategic location of Lamia and Gardiki implies that they too were occupied by

²⁸⁷ See above, pp.341-42.

²⁸⁸ The presence of other Hospitaller estates between Sykaminon and Athens suggests that this castle had in fact originally been intended as an administrative centre, just like Mostenitsa and Palaiopolis, discussed below. Niccolo da Martoni's account also refers to the 'port of Sykaminon', (Relation du Pèlerinage, p.655), showing that it had direct sea links with Rhodes for trade and administration. See also A. Luttrell, 'La Corona de Aragon y la Grecia catalana: 1379-1394', in idem, Latin Greece, the Hospitallers and the Crusades, 1291-1440, c.11, pp.219-52, at pp.241, 247-48.

the Military Orders 'to defend the land' and secure Latin frontiers.²⁸⁹ If this is the case, then westerners in Greece were pursuing the same strategy as the Armenians and the counts of Tripoli, who endowed these Orders with many former baronial castles situated in exposed border areas.²⁹⁰

However, the comparative insignificance of Greek strongholds belonging to the Military Orders may also suggest that their *primary role was administrative rather than strategic*. This certainly seems to have been the case at Mostenitsa and Palaiopolis, mere towers which were not located anywhere near *important frontiers before the loss of Mistra in 1262*. However, Mostenitsa did lie extremely close to other German estates in Messenia, which became the object of a land dispute with nearby Modon during the early fifteenth century. Indeed, *the fact that they were later granted the royal castle of Châteauneuf, and had also acquired a house inside the walls of Chlemoutsi in 1237, implies that the Teutonic Knights gradually became relatively powerful landowners in the area, and were clearly on good terms with the rulers of Achaëa, their principal patrons*. When one views all this evidence together, it seems that Mostenitsa must have acted as the focal point of a large agricultural domain, and that it was primarily designed to protect produce, cattle and farm revenues rather than any major settlements or strategic roadways. In these circumstances, the castle's fortifications only needed to be strong enough to deter local criminals and troublemakers.²⁹¹ Again, this

²⁸⁹ Innocent III, PL, CCXVI, Lib.XIII, no.136, col.323.

²⁹⁰ See above, pp.269-77, 45-47, 163.

²⁹¹ Tabulae ordinis Theutonici, no.133, p.134; Forstreuter, Der Deutsche Orden, pp.75, 77-78, 78n16; Bon, La Morée franque, p.429.

arrangement had its parallels further east, and particularly on Cyprus, where it has been shown that the Hospitaller tower at Kolossi was used to house the regional commander and safeguard local sugar plantations. Similarly, the close architectural links between Palaiopolis in Elis and the Red Tower in Galilee implies that both were used to farm and administer neighbouring estates.²⁹²

The changing role of the Military Orders in Frankish Greece, and in particular the Hospitallers, who started off as fairly minor landowners in the years immediately after the Fourth Crusade, but eventually controlled all of Achaëa between 1376 and 1381, also reflects the wider political history of the region. Hence the relative insignificance of the Orders early on confirms that the crusader states of central and southern Greece did indeed enjoy good internal stability at this time, for no ruler would actively encourage the Hospitallers, Templars and Teutonic Knights to build up vast castellanies and estates unless it was absolutely necessary. This, of course, had been the case in Palestine and Syria, where the three Orders held virtually independent lordships whose presence safeguarded Christian territories but eroded central authority.

The startling success of the principality of Achaëa and the duchy of Athens during the first half of the thirteenth century, and the ability of their rulers to keep the Military Orders in check, can largely be explained in terms of the ruggedness of the local terrain, the lack of any organized resistance either internally or

²⁹² Kolossi: see above, p.229. The Red Tower: see above, p.158.

externally, and the apparently greater concentration of Frankish settlers here than anywhere else in mainland Greece.²⁹³ This in turn may account for the poor design and weak construction of many Latin fortifications, and the total absence of any defences whatsoever at Andreville during this period. A similar combination of remoteness and lack of resistance also illustrates why many islands remained in Latin hands for so long, and their history can be compared with that of Cyprus, the most successful crusader state further east. It can be contrasted with that of Thessaly and the Latin empire, however, where the openness of the countryside, the sheer length of the borders which the Franks were expected to defend, and the overwhelming numbers which opposed them on both sides of the Bosphorus meant that castles probably compensated for troops in the field more than anywhere else in the eastern Mediterranean.

Such problems did not affect Attica and the Peloponnese until the loss of Constantinople in 1261, and Mistra the following year. The Greek reoccupation of this latter stronghold in particular meant that for the first time southern Greece could be attacked with relative ease in a direct land based assault, and had effectively lost its physical isolation. As a result, Frankish rulers in the region gradually found themselves in the same predicament as their beleaguered Latin neighbours at Acre and Tripoli, for they now had to shelter inside their castles just to survive, were obliged to ask the Hospitallers and others for more and more external assistance, and proved incapable of preventing rebellions and the decay of royal authority. As if this were not enough, the next hundred years also witnessed a massive escalation in piracy, the

²⁹³ As many as five to six hundred knights may have settled in the principality of Achaëa. See Longnon, L'empire latin, pp.203-4.

rise of Ottoman Turkey and the arrival of new aggressors such as the Catalans and the Navarese. But like the defenders of Acre, the original Frankish and Venetian invaders of Greece still held on by relying on their fortifications to protect them. Such structures had made the initial conquest of the Byzantine empire possible, and from the mid-thirteenth century onwards they ensured that many Latin outposts survived long after any realistic chances of political unity or military counter-offensives had disappeared.

CHAPTER SIX

THE NON-MILITARY FUNCTIONS OF FORTIFICATIONS

Wherever they settled in the eastern Mediterranean, the Latins (and to some extent the Armenians) tended to be heavily outnumbered by their Greek and Muslim opponents, and so they often lived in or near fortifications. As a result, such structures fulfilled a whole variety of other functions in addition to their more important military and strategic uses, and it is these which will be discussed in this chapter.

Firstly, it is clear that many Christian strongholds acted as the permanent homes of local lords, some of whom lived in far more luxury than their contemporaries in western Europe. In 1211, for example, Willbrand of Oldenburg wrote that the citadel of Beirut had mosaic floors designed to look like gently lapping waves, and one room even contained a marble fountain carved in the shape of a dragon.¹ Other castles famous for their magnificent appearance included the acropolis at Athens, whose classical ruins were converted into a palace by the Frankish, Catalan and Florentine lords of the city,² and Thebes, whose walls were covered with murals depicting the Latin conquest of Syria.³ These murals have long since disappeared, but traces of contemporary frescoes which have been discovered at Margat and Crac des Chevaliers suggest that most of the religious or communal rooms of larger crusader fortifications were in fact decorated in this way.⁴ Additional features intended to make daily life

¹ Willbrand of Oldenburg, Itinerarium, pp.204-6.

² Niccolo da Martoni, Relation du Pèlerinage, pp.647-53, 656; Setton, Catalan Domination, pp.227-32.

³ L. de la c., c.554, pp.220-21; To Chronikon tou Moreos, p.524.

⁴ J. Folda, 'Crusader Frescoes at Crac des Chevaliers and Marqab Castle', Dumbarton Oaks Papers, XXXVI (1982), 177-210.

as comfortable and pleasant as possible included Turkish baths, remains of which have been found at Paphos, Belvoir and Pilgrims' Castle,⁵ and gardens, which may have existed at Athens, Montfort and the Hospitallers' headquarters at Acre. These were no doubt used for recreation and relaxation just as much as the cultivation of herbs and vegetables.⁶

Thus the most powerful members of society enjoyed a relatively high standard of living, and it would be wrong to assume that the fortresses they inhabited were inhospitable places lacking creature comforts. Inevitably, this point is most applicable to the actual rulers of latin states in the east, such as the princes of Achaea, whose residence at Chlemoutsi contained an unusually large amount of fireplaces, latrines and cisterns, and was built on a far grander scale than any other Frankish castles in Greece. This must have been a very pleasant place to live during the reign of its builder, Geoffrey II of Villehardouin, who is said to have 'constantly maintained eighty knights with golden spurs' at his court, 'whom he gave all that they required besides their pay'.⁷ Similarly, the kings of Cyprus had palatial accomodation at both Kyrenia and Nicosia, whilst in the summer they probably retreated to the much cooler and healthier mountain fortress of St.Hilarion, whose upper baileys housed extensive royal apartments.⁸ However, the fact that

⁵ Megaw, 'Supplementary Excavations', 324-25; Benvenisti, The Crusaders in the Holy Land, pp.374-76.

⁶ Athens: Lock, 'The Frankish Tower on the Acropolis, Athens', 133. Acre: Philip of Novara, The Wars of Frederick II, p.171. Montfort: Masterman, 'A Crusaders' Fortress in Palestine', 96.

⁷ Marino Sanudo, Istoria, p.101; Bon, La Morée franque, pp.608-22; Andrews, Castles, pp.154-58, and see above, p.318.

⁸ K; Megaw, 'Military Architecture', pp.203, 204-5; Enlart, L'art gothique, II, 525-38, 575-77, 590-95.

the royal family chose to shelter at Kyrenia during the Egyptian invasion of 1426 suggests that this was in fact considered to be the safest residence of all three.⁹

Further down the social scale, even some smaller castles and isolated towers were clearly regarded as permanent homes. At the Red Tower, for example, traces of mosaics and red plaster have been found in the upper parts of the structure.¹⁰ Similar features are virtually unheard of in the towers of Frankish Greece, many of which may well have stood empty during peace time. However, at least one such building is known to have contained numerous residential rooms arranged over several floors, and to have had an oven and a wine press attached to it. Clearly, this was a fortified farm house rather than a mere refuge site, and it has justifiably been compared with the Hospitaller complex at Kolossi.¹¹ The fact that this and many other Greek towers were built in open, fertile countryside also implies that they belonged to, and sometimes acted as the day to day residences of, poorer Latin settlers, and were therefore situated near rural estates rather than strategic hill tops or roadways. In addition, it is possible that these towers were status symbols, and that their height reflected the wealth of the men who built them. If this was the case, they can perhaps be compared with similar structures in many medieval cities, including Acre, where individual Orders and trading nations were constantly trying to build towers which were slightly

⁹ Strambaldi, Chronique, p.282.

¹⁰ Pringle, The Red Tower, p.15.

¹¹ Documents sur le régime des terres dans la principauté de Morée au XIVe siècle, ed. J. Longnon and P. Topping, (Paris 1969), pp.70-71; Lock, 'The Frankish Towers of Central Greece', 110. Kolossi: see above, p.229.

taller than those of their rivals.¹²

The various facilities and decorative features mentioned so far were primarily intended to make life as enjoyable and convenient as possible for those who lived in the east permanently, but they were also used to impress and accomodate important guests and crusaders. During Louis IX's crusade to Egypt, for example, his wife queen Margaret spent much of her time at Pilgrims' Castle, which, according to Oliver of Paderborn, contained an entire 'palace' within its inner bailey.¹³ About forty years earlier Andrew II of Hungary had also visited Margat and Crac des Chevaliers, and was so impressed by these two castles that he gave the Hospitallers certain estates in his homeland to express his gratitude for their generosity.¹⁴

The arrival of important visitors, or other special occasions such as weddings and coronation ceremonies, were also accompanied by much feasting and celebrating, and the halls of castles provided a fitting backdrop for these events. Many such rooms were probably very similar to the well preserved domestic hall situated in the valley below the castle of Montfort, which was built by the Teutonic Knights between 1229 and 1260. This structure measures approximately 40 metres by 10 metres, and its vaulting, windows and doorways are clearly the work of highly skilled craftsmen following a typically gothic style.¹⁵ The remains of similar halls have been preserved at

¹² Lock, 'The Frankish Towers of Central Greece', 111; Lock, 'The Medieval Towers of Greece', p.138; REy, 'Etude sur la Topographie', 137, and see above, pp.147-48.

¹³ Oliver of Paderborn, Historia Damiatina, p.171; Gestes, p.741; Joinville, Histoire de Saint Louis, p.282.

¹⁴ Cartulaire, II, nos.1602, 1603, pp.238-40; Deschamps, Le Crac des Chevaliers, pp.126-27.

¹⁵ Pringle, 'A thirteenth century hall', 60-75.

Beaufort, Karytaina, Chlemoutsi, Sidon, Crac des Chevaliers and St.Hilarion, most of which probably date from the middle years of the thirteenth century.¹⁶ Reference should also be made to the 'auberge', a huge banqueting hall which the Hospitallers owned in Acre's suburb of Montmusard. This building witnessed fifteen days of continuous feasting to celebrate the coronation of Henry II as king of Jerusalem in 1286.¹⁷ Twenty years later the castle of Corinth also played host to a famous tournament organized by Philip of Savoy, prince of Achaea. It was attended by virtually all the lords and knights of Frankish Greece, and lasted for about three weeks.¹⁸

The security provided by fortifications meant that they could also be used to incarcerate prisoners. Pilgrims' Castle, for example, appears to have been the main prison in the east for the entire Templar Order, and the Rule of the Templars records several cases of violent or dishonest brothers being locked up there.¹⁹ Willbrand of Oldenburg also wrote that at Beirut troublesome citizens were placed in the castle moat, suggesting that there were cells here similar to that located in the famous rock cut ditch at Saone.²⁰

At other times, those kept in castles were political

¹⁶ Beaufort and Sidon: Deschamps, La Défense du royaume de Jérusalem, pp.206-8, 232. Karytaina and Chlemoutsi: Bon, La Morée franque, pp.614, 632. St.Hilarion: Enlart, L'art gothique, II, 591-94. Crac des Chevaliers: Deschamps, Le Crac des Chevaliers, pp.213-24.

¹⁷ Gestes, p.793.

¹⁸ L. de la c., c.1016-24, pp.397-99.

¹⁹ La Règle du Temple, nos.554, 573, 592, 593, 603. The Hospitallers also had their own prison at Acre. See Gestes, p.805.

²⁰ Willbrand of Oldenburg, p.204; Deschamps, La Défense du comté de Tripoli, p.231; Kennedy, Crusader Castles, p.96.

prisoners rather than common criminals. In 1307 or 1308 'monks and religious men, priests and deacons, as well as doctors and bishops and many people, both men and women' who rebelled against the Armenian catholicos Constantine's decision to recognize papal overlordship, were either exiled or imprisoned in the citadel at Sis.²¹ Indeed, some of these people were subsequently executed, although even this treatment seems mild compared with the punishment meted out to Amaury of Tyre's supporters after his brother Henry had been restored to the throne of Cyprus. Many of Amaury's followers were held at Kyrenia, where they were only fed a small amount of bread and water each day, and were forced to share two metre square cells, until they eventually starved to death!²²

This episode may have been unusually grim, but the fact that both Hugh IV and Peter I also imprisoned their enemies at Kyrenia suggests that this fortress was in fact the principal jail on Cyprus during the crusader period.²³ At other times, Buffavento was also used to house political opponents, including those followers of Amaury of Tyre who had been lucky enough not to get sent to Kyrenia.²⁴ During the 1380s a knight imprisoned here by king James I even managed to escape by resorting to the classic trick of using a sheet as a makeshift rope.²⁵ Some years earlier, it seems that Peter I had also intended the newly constructed Margarita Tower to replace Kyrenia as

²¹ Samuel of Ani, Chronographie, pp.465-67, and see above, p.285.

²² Florio Bustron, Chronique, pp.143-45; Chronique d'Amadi, pp.386, 388, 390.

²³ Leontios Makhairas, Recital, c.85, p.77, c.257, pp.237-39; Chronique d'Amadi, p.408; Florio Bustron, Chronique, p.257; Strambaldi, Chronique, pp.34-35, 101.

²⁴ Chronique d'Amadi, p.393; Florio Bustron, Chronique, p.245.

²⁵ Leontios Makhairas, Recital, c.610-11, pp.601-3; Strambaldi, Chronique, pp.255-56.

the most important royal prison in the kingdom. Toward the end of his reign, Peter even forced one of his disobedient nobles to work alongside the slaves excavating the moat of the tower, but this so enraged his other barons that it may well have contributed to the king's subsequent murder. At any rate, it seems that the Margarita Tower soon came to symbolize Peter's oppressive rule, implying that he had built it to intimidate his Nicosian vassals as much as to defend his capital against the Genoese.²⁶

Apart from criminals and political opponents, prisoners of war were frequently held in castles, and during the reign of Baybars, Ibn al-Furat reported that some Muslims were imprisoned in the citadel at Acre.²⁷ In 1262, William II of Villehardouin also inflicted such a heavy defeat on Greeks attacking central Achaea that they later had to be distributed to several different *neighbouring* strongholds.²⁸ Captives of this kind were subsequently often reduced to the status of slaves, and were obliged to work in order to survive. Hence Muslim prisoners of war helped reconstruct the castle of Saphet during the 1240s, whilst in 1265 the Frankish defenders of Arsuf were forced to demolish their own citadel after it had been surrendered to Baybars.²⁹ Even though they were fellow Christians, the Cypriots were also happy to employ Genoese prisoners during the fortification of Nicosia in the late fourteenth century.³⁰

However, prisoners of noble birth were usually treated

²⁶ William of Machaut, La Prise, pp.258-59, 265, and see above, pp.195-96.

²⁷ Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 160.

²⁸ L. de la c., c.385, p.149.

²⁹ Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 78, 88-89; De constructione castris Saphet, lines 115-24, pp.381-82.

³⁰ Leontios Makhairas, Recital, c.594-97, pp.591-93.

with far more respect. Isaac Comnenus, the deposed Greek emperor of Cyprus, ended up at Margat after 1191, where he may have spent his time in one of the residential rooms overlooking the Mediterranean.³¹ Other important captives were also considered an asset because they could be released in exchange for Latin prisoners or large amounts of money. Thus the Byzantine commander defeated by William of Villehardouin in 1262 did not join his troops in some gloomy dungeon, but was sent to Chlemoutsi, where he stayed for a while before being swapped for a Frankish knight captured by the Greeks.³² Some years later Thomas, heir to the despotate of Epirus, was also held hostage at this castle to ensure that his father would honour his alliance with the Franks. Once again, however, the Chronicle of Morea makes it clear that Thomas was regarded more as a guest than as a prisoner, *and no doubt made use of some of the extensive residential quarters already mentioned at Chlemoutsi.*³³

The fact that many castles were either used as prisons, residences or both meant that they often became centres of justice and venues for local courts. In Achaea, article 43 of the Assizes of Romania suggests that lesser barons all had such courts to deal with day to day cases of fighting and stealing. Within the royal domain minor offences of this kind were normally sorted out at Glarentza or Androusa, 'where the lord has a captain to dispense justice'.³⁴ However, more serious cases were brought before one of a select group of the most powerful barons in Frankish Greece, for only they had the right to exercise 'blood justice', or justice over life and limb. These men

³¹ Matthew Paris, Chronica Maiora, II, 371; Deschamps, La Défense du comté de Tripoli, 279-80.

³² George Pachymeres, De Michaelae, I, 209.

³³ L. de la c., c.613, p.245, c.615, p.246, c.621, p.247, c.652, p.260.

³⁴ Assizes, articles 43, 177, and see article 9.

also formed the nucleus of the High Court, although this institution probably met at Glarentza or the unfortified city of Andravida, rather than a specific castle.³⁵ On Cyprus, however, it is clear that the royal castellan of Kyrenia presided over the local court of burgesses, which served the town below the fortress.³⁶ A similar court was also run by the Templars at Pilgrims' Castle, and another may have been revived by the Hospitallers of Belvoir during the early 1240s.³⁷

By establishing courts in or near castles, the Franks could store fines collected from criminals securely. Similarly, taxes imposed on Greeks, Muslims or western settlers were normally brought to the nearest Latin stronghold. Indeed, tax collecting appears to have been the primary role of *Messenian Châteauneuf* before it was handed over to the Teutonic Knights. The *Chronicle of Morea* recorded that this stronghold's estates included 'all the villages as far as Arcadia and Old Navarino, which were accustomed to paying taxes to the Greeks of Mistra and Gardiki, for the Greeks did not hold any other castles in this area at the time. And after Châteauneuf had been completed, it was agreed by general consent of the barons and nobles and fiefholders who held land in this castellany and had paid taxes to the Greeks, that all the taxes which the Greeks had collected should be given and paid to Châteauneuf for seven years'. Consequently, Châteauneuf's military and administrative functions

³⁵ *Assizes*, article 94. In 1275, for example, the High Court gathered at Andravida to hear an important land dispute involving the barony of Akova. See *L. de la c.*, c.502-31, pp.197-211; *L. de los f.*, c.384-96, pp.84-87.

³⁶ 'Nouvelles preuves de l'histoire de Chypre sous le règne des princes de la maison de Lusignan', ed. L. de Mas Latrie, *Bibliothèque de l'École des chartes*, XXXV (1874), 120-21; Edbury, *The Kingdom of Cyprus*, p.194.

³⁷ *Livre de Jean d'Ibelin*, *RHC Lois*, I, 420; Riley-Smith, *The Knights of St. John*, pp.415-16, 436-37.

overlapped, for it enabled the rulers of Achaëa to reestablish control over an exposed frontier region, bring local people whose loyalty had been wavering back into line, and also regain a vital source of income which had been lost to the Greeks.³⁸

In the Holy Land, similar links between castles, internal stability and taxation are revealed in a Hospitaller document dating from 1263, which stated that a Muslim settlement in lower Galilee was refusing to pay its taxes to the Order, because of waning Frankish control in the area. This example could be used to illustrate the fragility of a system which relied on isolated strongpoints rather than superior numbers to suppress a hostile population. However, it also implies that until the reign of Baybars, local people had been paying up on time for decades, without ever voicing any complaints.³⁹

Apart from fines and taxes, farm revenues and important administrative documents were also kept inside castles. At Saphet, for example, the seven towers of the inner bailey housed 'numerous offices for all necessary requirements' and it was presumably from here that the Templars administered neighbouring estates and organized the daily running of their castle.⁴⁰ Beyond major strongholds such as Saphet, the cultivation of farmland would also have been centred around smaller towers and fortified structures. Hence during the twelfth century, and possibly again after 1192, the tower of Qaqun was 'used to enforce the lord of Caesarea's authority over his seignury', even

³⁸ L. de la c., c.830, pp.328-29.

³⁹ Cartulaire, III, no.3051, p.64. See also Kedar, 'The Subjected Muslims of the Frankish Levant', pp.160-74.

⁴⁰ De constructione castri Saphet, line 182, p.384.

though he himself probably rarely visited this site.⁴¹ As has been mentioned, numerous smaller fortifications held by the Military Orders, including Kolossi on Cyprus and Mostenitsa and Palaiopolis in the Peloponnese, fulfilled the same function.⁴²

On a far larger scale, the administrative institutions of entire crusader states could also be protected by fortifications. Hence the principal mint of Achaea was situated inside the walls of Glarentza, close to the Villehardouin centres of government at Chlemoutsi and Andravida.⁴³ On Cyprus, the secrète, which was basically an archive recording royal debts, privileges, rents and other earnings, had also been incorporated into the partially fortified palace of the kings. During the 1390s this important office was moved into the new castle built by James I, making it far more secure against potential Genoese or Mamluk incursions. Consequently, James's citadel protected the infrastructure of his kingdom as well as the inhabitants of his capital.⁴⁴ During the thirteenth century, strongholds in the east belonging to the Military Orders performed the same function, for they were used to administer vast estates both in Europe and the Holy Land. Thus between 1204 and 1206 Margat played host to a General Chapter of the *entire Hospitaller Order*.⁴⁵

As with taxation, the administrative and agricultural

⁴¹ Pringle, The Red Tower, p.13, and see p.60. Tibble, (Monarchy and Lordships, p.142) disagrees, and believes Qaqun was held by the Templars until 1265.

⁴² See above, pp.229, 396-97.

⁴³ Bon, La Morée franque, p.612.

⁴⁴ Edbury, The Kingdom of Cyprus, pp.191-92; J. Richard, 'The Institutions of the Kingdom of Cyprus', in HC, VI (1989), 150-74, at 162-63.

⁴⁵ Cartulaire, II, no.1193, pp.31-40.

functions of castles also had much to do with their wider military role, for the protection afforded by such structures encouraged people to live and work close to them, and to cultivate land nearby. Hence we have seen that the rebuilding of Saphet enabled 10,000 peasants to repopulate 260 villages which had previously been uninhabited or dominated by the Muslims, and that farmland close to Mont Tabor was no longer exposed to enemy raids once the Templars were installed at Pilgrims' Castle. Indeed, Mont Tabor itself eventually acted as the focal point of Hospitaller estates stretching as far east as the river Jordan, after the Order acquired it in the mid 1250s.⁴⁶ Travelling pilgrims such as *Burchard of Mount Sion* and *Willbrand of Oldenburg* frequently noted how lush and fertile the areas around such castles were, and how intensively they were farmed by local peasants. This applied most to regions nearest the coast, many of which were famous for their wines, and were partially irrigated by old Roman and Byzantine aqueducts.⁴⁷ Both Saphet and Pilgrims' Castle also lay in areas abundant with woods, fruit trees, rivers and streams, all of which could be exploited and cultivated in safety. Consequently, the construction of a single fortress could revitalize the rural economy of an entire region.⁴⁸

Moreover, fortified sites tended to encourage agricultural activities because they could protect crops and produce just as much as farmers and peasants. Thus a document dating from 1257 reveals that the Teutonic Knights used Mhalia as a collection point for surrounding estates,

⁴⁶ See above, pp.119-20, 168-69.

⁴⁷ Willbrand of Oldenburg, *Itinerarium*, pp.202, 206, 208, 210; Burchard of Mount Sion, *Descriptio*, pp.23, 29, 33-34.

⁴⁸ *De constructione castris Saphet*, lines 215-25, pp.384-85; Oliver of Paderborn, *Historia Damiatina*, p.171; Matthew Paris, *Chronica Maiora*, III, 14.

whilst on Cyprus the Hospitallers may have stored sugar cane in a fortified building next to the tower of Kolossi.⁴⁹ Another important industry which was often organized around fortifications was the extraction of salt. Salt mined near Pilgrims' Castle, for example, was probably brought inside the walls of this fortress for storage, export or consumption.⁵⁰ Similarly, fourteenth century salt works owned by the Venetians on Corfu and the Hospitallers on Castellorizzo were supervised from nearby towers, where both the salt and the men who extracted it could be sheltered from the ravages of Turks and pirates.⁵¹ This arrangement can also be compared with the Hospitaller mill at Recordane, whose two storey tower may have helped defend the southern approaches to Acre, as well as the important mill complex itself.⁵²

It is also important to remember that some fortifications were not just safeguarding certain industries or agricultural activities, but actually became integrated with them. Hence the remains of a feeding trough in the moat surrounding the bourg of Pilgrims' Castle confirms that this ditch was used as a corral for cattle during peace time.⁵³ This example, combined with an earlier reference to prisoners being held in the moat at Beirut, indicates that castle ditches in general were seen as useful places to keep animals or people who needed to be contained. This did not of course apply to water filled

⁴⁹ Tabulae ordinis Theutonici, no.112, pp.91-94; Enlart, L'art gothique, II, 694.

⁵⁰ Oliver of Paderborn, Historia Damiatina, p.171; Johns, Guide to 'Atlit, p72.

⁵¹ Corfu: Thiriet, Régestes, I, no.850, p.202. Castellorizzo: Le saint voyage de Jhérusalem du seigneur d'Anglure, ed. F. Bonnardot and A. Longnon, (Paris 1878), pp.89-91.

⁵² See above, pp.107-8.

⁵³ Johns, 'Excavations at Pilgrims Castle: the Faubourg and its Defences', 120.

ditches, but such defences could also be adapted for various non-military functions, and were often used as open cisterns. A cistern of this kind existed between the inner and outer ramparts along the south face of Crac des Chevaliers, and would have provided the Hospitaller garrison with plenty of water for washing, cooking and (perhaps) drinking.⁵⁴ Furthermore, the elevated position of one of Crac des Chevaliers's outer towers made it an ideal location for the castle's windmill, whilst many of the vast undercrofts at the site served as storerooms, bakeries, kitchens and workshops.⁵⁵ For most of their existence, therefore, fortified structures were actually used for storage and other mundane domestic activities rather than the waging of war.

Whenever a conflict did erupt, however, Latin strongpoints were also expected to shelter valuable belongings which would normally have remained in the countryside. During one of the many clashes between the Greeks of Mistra and the Franks of central Achaëa, for example, local peasants took their cattle, produce and anything else they could carry with them inside the nearest stronghold.⁵⁶ This also illustrates why frontier castles and strategic lookout posts were so important, for if farmers did not receive adequate warning of an imminent attack, they were forced to leave many of their possessions behind. Hence the Cumans and Bulgars had such a terrible impact on Thrace in 1205 because they did not simply overrun the area, but 'took the cattle in the countryside' with them when they left.⁵⁷ Likewise, in January 1374 Genoese invasion forces on Cyprus reached Kyrenia so quickly that they managed to

⁵⁴ Kennedy, Crusader Castles, 99-100; Deschamps, Le Crac des Chevaliers, p.189.

⁵⁵ Deschamps, Le Crac des Chevaliers, pp.152, 203-4.

⁵⁶ L. de la c., c.685, p.273.

⁵⁷ Villehardouin, La Conquête, p.250.

capture the cattle grazing in nearby fields before it could be brought inside the fortress.⁵⁸ Consequently, if peasants were not alerted early enough, or were subsequently unable to find shelter for their livestock, the impact on the local economy could be disastrous, and the fact that farmers had escaped death or enslavement became immaterial if their only source of food and income had been destroyed.

Castle garrisons were also keen to protect and participate in agricultural activities because they relied on food produced locally just as much as farmers and peasants did. The Hospitallers of Margat, for example, collected more than 500 wagon loads of crops annually from the fertile slopes below the castle, and at Saphet fresh fish was delivered daily from the river Jordan and the Sea of Galilee.⁵⁹ Other food which was not needed immediately could be stored for use during the winter or a protracted siege. Indeed, Margat was supposedly capable of withstanding a five year blockade, during which time its defenders would presumably have relied on supplies stored in the kind of vast grain silos discovered by Deschamps at Cave de Tyron.⁶⁰ Moreover, surplus crops which could not be kept in this way could still be sold off at market. This strategy provided the castle of Arcas near Tripoli with 'considerable revenues, the annual income of its lands coming from imposts, cane and cultivated fields, and amounting to a large sum'.⁶¹

Other essential items supplied to strongholds from

⁵⁸ Leontios Makhairas, Recital, c.470, p.453; Strambaldi, Chronique, p.194.

⁵⁹ Willbrand of Oldenburg, Itinerarium, p.210; De constructione castris Saphet, lines 229-33, p.385.

⁶⁰ Willbrand of Oldenburg, Itinerarium, p.210; Deschamps, La Défense du royaume de Jérusalem, pp.219-20.

⁶¹ Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 85.

surrounding territories included iron, steel and leather, which were used to make clothing and armour, and fodder, which was needed to feed warhorses and livestock.⁶² In the Assizes of Romania, one particular clause also stipulated that certain forests were set aside 'to supply the castles', so that their garrisons never ran short of timber or firewood.⁶³ Indeed, the remains of aqueducts at some sites, most notably Crac des Chevaliers and Baghras, indicate that even water had to be channelled into castles from nearby streams and springs.⁶⁴

Clearly, therefore, crusader strongpoints relied on neighbouring farms and estates for food and supplies, but these goods could only be provided if peasants in the countryside felt safe enough to go about their work. This interdependence between peasants and garrisons was extremely important to the Latins, and if it broke down, their control over any given region could collapse remarkably quickly. Hence during Baybars's raid on the county of Tripoli in 1270, his soldiers' horses 'grazed on the meadows and crops of Hisn al-Akrad (Crac des Chevaliers), and this was one of the reasons why it was captured, since its only provision came from its crops and these were all used for pasture by the Muslim troops at this time'. This implies that Crac des Chevaliers's storerooms were virtually empty when Baybars returned the following year, and took the fortress in a mere three

⁶² La Règle du Temple, no.126. In the 1930s a large stables was discovered at Pilgrims' Castle. See C. Johns, 'Excavations at Pilgrims' Castle ('Atlit): Stables at the south-west of the suburbs', QDAP, V (1935-36), 31-60.

⁶³ Assizes, article 159.

⁶⁴ Deschamps, Le Crac des Chevaliers, p.155; Lawrence, 'The castle of Baghras', pp.58-59; Kennedy, Crusader Castles, p.100.

weeks.⁶⁵ Similar circumstances led to the fall of Montfort, whose territories were so eroded by enemy incursions that by 1268 all but ten of its surrounding villages had been lost to the Muslims. As a result, in 1270 Montfort's defenders made a temporary arrangement with the Hospitallers, whereby they would be allowed to grow crops for the coming year on land belonging to this latter Order. Before the year was through, however, Montfort fell to Baybars, who had effectively starved its garrison into submission without even needing to undertake a lengthy siege.⁶⁶

These events also provide us with another reason why Latin fortifications located inland were captured long before their neighbours nearer the sea. The purely agricultural sources of income which both Montfort and Crac des Chevaliers relied on were far more exposed to land based Mamluk offensives than the seaborne trading activities conducted at Acre and Tripoli. Consequently, the primary role of many coastal defences was to safeguard trade routes rather than the rural economy. This point can be illustrated by looking at the growth of Famagusta, which quickly replaced Acre as the most important Latin port in the eastern Mediterranean from 1291 onwards. As we have seen, Famagusta acquired its first real urban defences during this period, and according to Etienne of Lusignan, Henry II deliberately constructed these fortifications in order to attract more tradesmen to the city. This view has been criticised by David Jacoby, who argues that Henry was simply responding to the new Mamluk threat, and was not consciously trying to create a fortified replacement for

⁶⁵ Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 139, and see above, p.49.

⁶⁶ Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 130; al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, I(b), 56; Cartulaire, III, no.3400, p.231, and see above, p.61.

Acre. There seems to be no reason, however, why Henry did not have both these concerns in mind, for Famagusta's walls prevented the city from being captured until 1374, and simultaneously protected a booming economic centre where the lucrative trade between east and west could be continued unhindered.⁶⁷

Several other examples can be cited to show that in order to be prosperous, coastal settlements needed to be fortified. In particular, the walls of Acre and Tyre clearly safeguarded the trading activities as well as the inhabitants of these cities against the many Ayubid, Khwarizmian and Mamluk incursions which have already been referred to.⁶⁸ Further afield, the Achaean city of Glarentza, whose defences protected the principal sea route between Greece and Brindisi, became another boom town from the mid-thirteenth century onwards. Indeed, a document dating from 1350 records that it even had its own set of weights and measures, suggesting that its status as an international trading centre was growing, even though the political situation in the Peloponnese was deteriorating rapidly at this time.⁶⁹ This point also applies to the heavily fortified Venetian colonies of Modon and Coron, which were still thriving, wealthy cities on the very eve of their capture in 1500, long after the rest of the Morea had been overrun by the Turks.⁷⁰ Such prosperity was only made possible by the presence of massive urban defences, for settlements which were not defended by walls or castles did not do as well. Thus

⁶⁷ Etienne de Lusignan, Description, folio 24-25; Jacoby, 'The rise of a new emporium', pp.149-50.

⁶⁸ See above, pp.62-64, 66.

⁶⁹ Buchon, Nouvelles recherches, II, no.9, pp.98-103; Bon, La Morée franque, pp.320-22.

⁷⁰ Miller, The Latins in the Levant, pp.495, 498; Andrews, Castles, pp.14, 59.

Limassol was never fortified during the crusader period, making it less popular with the Italians, and causing it to go into a steady economic decline after the fall of Acre.⁷¹

Apart from their far larger urban defences, many coastal centres contained numerous smaller fortifications which protected the maritime trade of individual nations. The most famous such structures were built at Acre, where it has been shown that the fortified quarters of the Genoese, Pisans and Venetians effectively became independent enclaves pursuing their own economic, military and political goals. It is worth mentioning that at the beginning of 1373 the Genoese were demanding a similar base on Cyprus as a condition for not invading the island. This implies that the Lusignan kings, having seen how compounds of this kind had eroded central authority in Acre before 1291, had prohibited their construction at Famagusta. If this is the case, it provides us with yet another example of the strict royal monopoly which the rulers of Cyprus were able to maintain on castle building.⁷²

In general, however, the Italian city states were allowed to construct far smaller towers and fortified houses which were used to store goods, revenues and administrative records. During the fourteenth century, the Venetians probably held many such towers around the Aegean,⁷³ whilst in 1294 Venice attacked a similar building belonging to

⁷¹ Jacoby, 'The rise of a new emporium', pp.147-54; Enlart, *L'art gothique*, II, 673-83.

⁷² Leontios Makhairas, *Recital*, c.372, p.353. Acre: see above, p.148.

⁷³ See, for example, Thiriet, *Régestes*, I, no.371, p.97, and see Lock, 'The Medieval Towers of Greece', p.139; Lock, 'The Frankish Towers of Central Greece', 108-9.

the Genoese at Limassol. This latter example also confirms that although Limassol was not a major economic centre, this city, along with many other smaller coastal settlements, still played host to a certain amount of seaborne trade.⁷⁴ In Cilician Armenia, it has also been shown that this kind of trade was almost totally limited to Corycos and Ayas, whose economic importance rose dramatically after the decline of Antioch and the events of 1291. The numerous customs dues and tolls imposed on Italian merchants using Ayas were collected by a Captain of Customs, whose administration may well have been located in the land castle of the city. The fact that this stronghold was pillaged by Venetian sailors in 1307 also suggests that tolls were stored in it, and that it played a major role in the running of the port.⁷⁵

At some sites, fortifications were also designed in such a way that they controlled the arrival and departure of individual merchants and vessels. Thus during the 1260s Venice and Genoa fought over the Tower of the Flies, because it dominated the 85 metre wide entrance to the port of Acre, and whoever occupied it could therefore control much of the economic life of the city.⁷⁶ Similarly, the fortified bridge connecting Euboea with the Greek mainland was divided by a drawbridge, which the Venetians of Negroponte no doubt used to impose tolls on certain vessels, whilst at the same time preventing Genoese or Turkish ships from getting through.⁷⁷

These observations also apply to land based trade, for tolls could easily be collected from merchants as they

⁷⁴ Gestes, p.829.

⁷⁵ Langlois, Le Trésor, no. 23, pp.170-75, and see pp.35-38, 49-50.

⁷⁶ Gestes, pp.768-69, and see above, p.96.

⁷⁷ See above, p.342.

passed through city gates. In 1266, for example, John of Ibelin decided to give the Order of St.Lazarus ten bezants a year from the customs dues which he imposed on tradesmen entering or leaving Beirut.⁷⁸ In a document intended to clarify the various privileges of the bishop of Acre and the Teutonic Knights, it is also stated that this Order had the right to collect gate tolls at Acre, but was exempt from paying any itself. Clearly, privileges of this kind were highly profitable and well worth hanging on to.⁷⁹

Once merchants had left the safety of the fortified cities and were travelling across the countryside, smaller Frankish strongholds offered them protection against bandits and highwaymen. It has already been noted how Destroit in the vicinity of Pilgrims' Castle, did just that. This tower had been built at a point where the rocky terrain forced the main coastal path into a narrow defile, which could easily be used to ambush travellers. Moreover, the restricted nature of the site also made it an ideal place for levying tolls from tradesmen, and the Templars may well have done so in the same way that the Hospitallers did near Margat.⁸⁰ Here, a wall had been constructed running from the fortress itself down to the water's edge, so that people travelling between the county of Tripoli and the principality of Antioch were obliged to pass through a small gate and pay a fee before they could continue their journey. This operation was supervised from a tower near the gate, whose occupants therefore carried out the dual task of protecting travellers against robbers, and at the same time raising revenues for the

⁷⁸ RRH, no.977, p.257.

⁷⁹ Tabulae ordinis Theutonici, no.112, pp.91-94.

⁸⁰ Johns, Guide to 'Atlit, pp.94-98, and see above, pp.135, 141.

Hospitallers.⁸¹ It is possible that Hasanbeyli, the lookout post at the entrance to the Amanus Gates, performed a similar function, for an Armenian document dating from 1271 implies that this structure was the Black Tower, a toll station which the Teutonic Knights held in the vicinity of Servantikar.⁸²

Like merchants, pilgrims were another group of vulnerable travellers who needed to be protected, but could also be exploited financially. Once again, reference can be made to Destroit in this respect, because of its strategic location along the main road between Acre and Jerusalem. Indeed, once it had been completed, Pilgrims' Castle itself probably became a popular spot for visitors to spend the night, so that its garrison could continue the traditional Templar occupation of looking after Christians travelling to the holy city.⁸³ The author of De constructione castri Saphet also noted that this fortress enabled pilgrims to visit a number of holy sites near Lake Tiberias, including the spot where the feeding of the 5,000 took place. This area had obviously been too dangerous to travel in before Saphet was reconstructed.⁸⁴

Strongholds belonging to the Military Orders in particular also provided medical care for pilgrims and foreign visitors who fell ill in the harsh local conditions. The Hospitallers, whose original purpose had been to carry out such work, were probably most famous for their infirmaries, which incorporated many of the most up to

⁸¹ Deschamps, La Défense du comté de Tripoli, pp.284-85. The Templars were exempt from paying when using this gate. See Cartulaire, II, no.2058, pp.455-57.

⁸² See above, p.271.

⁸³ See above, p.135.

⁸⁴ De constructione castri Saphet, lines 268-90, pp.386-87.

date medical discoveries from the Muslim world. Both the Teutonic Knights and the Templars ran many similar hospitals for sick and needy travellers, whilst all three Orders were expected to feed and clothe local paupers as often as they could. Hence castles became the focal points of much charitable work involving both native and visiting Christians.⁸⁵

Urban fortifications and individual strongholds could also safeguard the buildings, assets and infrastructure of the local Church. Hence after the destruction of Banyas (Valania) in 1188, what remained of the town was so exposed to further Muslim incursions that its bishop transferred his see to the neighbouring castle of Margat. The chapel of this fortress subsequently became the bishop's new cathedral, serving both the surrounding diocese and the inhabitants of the outer bourg.⁸⁶ Other interesting examples of important church properties being protected by crusader fortifications include the cathedral of Caesarea, which was situated behind the town walls erected by Louis IX, and the catholic church incorporated into the Parthenon at Athens.⁸⁷ In Syria, the Latin patriarchs of Antioch also managed to outlive the Mamluk invasion of 1268 by taking shelter inside the fortress of Cursat, which was situated in the rugged interior of the principality, and was not finally lost to Baybars until

⁸⁵ La Règle du Temple, no.188, mentions paupers being fed at castles. For more details on infirmaries, see Sterns, 'The Teutonic Knights in the Crusader States', pp.341-48.

⁸⁶ Willbrand of Oldenburg, Itinerarium, p.212; Burchard of Mount Sion, Descriptio, pp.30-31; B. Hamilton, The Latin Church in the Crusader States: the Secular Church, (London 1980), p.215.

⁸⁷ Caesarea: Benvenisti, The Crusaders in the Holy Land, pp.144-45. The church in the Parthenon was visited by the Latin emperor Henry in 1209. See Henry of Valenciennes, L'estoire de l'empereur, c.681, p.115.

1275.⁸⁸ This castle had presumably been chosen as the principal residence of the patriarchs, and the depository of their treasure, because of its strength and inaccessible location, in much the same way that the Armenians later decided to make the impregnable mountain stronghold of Vagha the home of their most important relics.⁸⁹ By taking such precautions, both the Franks and the Armenians hoped that their holiest possessions would not share the same fate as the undefended church of Nazareth, which was demolished by Baybars in 1263 in an effort to undermine Christian morale.⁹⁰

Moreover, several Frankish castles in the Holy Land were themselves thought to be extremely important in the fight against Islam. Thus by garrisoning Mont Tabor, the Hospitallers were not just taking over a strategic vantage point in central Galilee, but were also defending the supposed scene of Christ's Transfiguration.⁹¹ At Saphet it was likewise considered highly symbolic that the new Templar castle stood on the ruins of a mosque and a synagogue.⁹² Similarly, Gregory IX was referring to the religious as well as the military importance of Montfort, when he spoke of its proximity to the Muslims and its vital contribution to the defence of the Holy Land. Hence crusader fortifications could take on great spiritual significance as the furthest outposts of Christendom, particularly when they were guarded by one of the three Military Orders.⁹³

⁸⁸ Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 126, 161-62, 165; al-Makrizi, Histoire des Sultans, I(b), 127; Cahen, La Syrie du Nord, pp.697-98, 717.

⁸⁹ See above, p.237.

⁹⁰ Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 56-57.

⁹¹ Benvenisti, The Crusaders in the Holy Land, pp.358-59.

⁹² De constructione castris Saphet, lines 124-128, p.382.

⁹³ Tabulae ordinis Theutonici, no.72, pp.56-57.

This last point also serves as a reminder that the Templars, Hospitallers and Teutonic Knights were all monks as well as warriors. As a result, their fortresses were monasteries, not just places of war, and were normally provided with beautiful chapels which the brethren could use for their daily services. Well preserved examples of such buildings can be found at Margat, Crac des Chevaliers and Chastel Blanc, where the 30 metre long chapel of the Templars formed the lower floor of the keep itself.⁹⁴ At Pilgrims' Castle, and possibly Saphet, there were also round churches of the type normally associated with the Templars, although the theory that these structures were copied from the Temple of the Lord in Jerusalem has been questioned in recent years.⁹⁵ What seems less doubtful, however, is that the intricate gothic arcade added to Crac des Chevaliers's central hall in the mid-thirteenth century was deliberately designed to look like a monastic cloister. Indeed, it has even been suggested that by designing several of their earlier castles, including Belmont and Belvoir, around a cloister-type central courtyard, the Hospitallers contributed to the development of concentric fortifications almost by accident, for an isolated central keep clearly obstructed the traditional monastic layout which this Order hoped to achieve.⁹⁶

By building their own chapels within their strongholds, the Military Orders also excluded themselves from the

⁹⁴ Deschamps, Le Crac des Chevaliers, pp.197-201; idem, La Défense du comté de Tripoli, pp.254, 277-78; Rey, Etude, pp.26-28, 48-49, 88-89.

⁹⁵ Johns, Guide to 'Atlit, pp.52-58; Pringle, 'Reconstructing the castle of Safad', 147-48; E. Lambert, L'architecture des Templiers, (Paris 1978), pp.5-19, 30-31, 92-93.

⁹⁶ Deschamps, Le Crac des Chevaliers, pp.216-24; Harper and Pringle, 'Belmont Castle', 104, 116.

authority of the local clergy. The papacy encouraged this process by granting them a series of privileges, including the right to appoint chaplain brothers, whose powers were effectively greater than local archbishops. As a result, their castles gave the Hospitallers, Templars and Teutonic Knights ecclesiastical as well as military independence, and made them answerable only to the pope. In these circumstances, it is hardly surprising that Latin churchmen in the east resented the Orders, and were most vocal in calling for their privileges to be withdrawn. This must have been a complex issue, however, for it has already been shown that some members of the clergy, such as the bishops of Tortosa, relied on fortifications garrisoned by one of the Orders to protect them against the Muslims.⁹⁷

Moreover, this dilemma probably reflected public opinion in general, for although the Hospitallers, Templars and Teutonic Knights were envied for their wealth and power, it was clear that their castles were needed to defend Christian territories. Indeed, such structures were so important that it became popular for crusaders who lacked the troops and resources to attack the Muslims to spend their time in the east constructing and financing new Latin fortifications. Hence Sidon's sea castle was built by German crusaders waiting for Frederick II to arrive from the west, and Pilgrims' Castle was so called because European members of the Fifth Crusade largely paid for its construction.⁹⁸ Both Louis IX and Richard I also took part in castle building, because it was another way of expressing their piety once further campaigns against the Muslims had become impracticable. Indeed, Louis IX

⁹⁷ For more details on these issues, see Riley-Smith, The Knights of St. John, pp.375-420.

⁹⁸ Sidon: see above, p.JT19. Pilgrims' Castle: Oliver of Paderborn, Historia Damiatina, pp.168, 207.

specifically helped his men to construct Jaffa's citadel 'to earn his indulgence', confirming that this activity was officially recognized as a means of fulfilling one's crusading vows.⁹⁹

Ultimately, therefore, Latin fortifications became linked with the religious ideas which underpinned the entire crusading movement, for contemporaries did not distinguish between the more down-to-earth military functions of such buildings, and their highly symbolic role as fortified monasteries and outposts of Christianity. In addition, it has been shown in this chapter that their lack of troops forced the Latins to organize many administrative activities, such as tax gathering and law enforcement, around their strongholds. The security provided by these structures also meant that they were commonly used as residences and prisons, and could encourage merchants and farmers to open up new trade routes or cultivate previously unavailable stretches of land. Finally, it is important to remember that all these activities were inter-connected both with each other and the military uses of fortifications, for taxes could not be collected unless the native population had been suppressed, and crops could not be harvested until external enemies had been driven out of the countryside. Only then could Christian pilgrims, merchants, farmers and craftsmen go about their daily business in safety.

⁹⁹ Joinville, Histoire de Sait Louis, p.284. Richard I: Itinerarium, p.317.

CONCLUSION

In general, Latin and Armenian fortifications fulfilled the same military functions throughout the eastern Mediterranean. Offensively, they were used to establish coastal bridgeheads, to conquer and suppress new territory further inland, and to provide shelter, troops and supplies for both naval and land based attacks against various opponents. Defensively, they could also prevent external invaders from making any permanent conquests, whilst at the same time protecting local people, along with their cattle, produce and personal belongings, from the ravages of war. In addition, fortifications were vital to the political, economic and social infrastructure of all Christian states, for they maintained internal security and minimized the damage caused by local insurrections, whilst at the same time performing a whole variety of non-military tasks as prisons, residences, courtrooms and administrative centres.

Within these general categories, however, there were certain important differences between the various territories covered in this thesis. Cyprus and southern Greece, for example, were physically isolated, and were therefore less likely to be attacked by major invasion forces. As a result, fortifications were not as important in these areas until the political upheavals of the late thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, when massive new defences were needed to halt the Muslims, the Greeks and the Genoese. On the other hand, northern Greece, the Latin empire and the Frankish states of the Holy Land shared long and vulnerable borders with numerically superior enemies throughout this period, and therefore relied on castles and town walls to protect them from the very beginning.

Geography also had a lot to do with the internal security of Christian territories. Hence the native peoples of exposed frontier regions, and in particular the Greeks of Thrace and Macedonia, found it easier to seek external assistance, and were therefore likelier to rebel against their Latin overlords. Likewise, it is clear that the massive incursions made into the Holy Land by Saladin and Baybars contributed to the breakdown of law and order, so that the Franks were in a sense besieged inside their castles all the time. This problem did not arise in the Peloponnese until the Franks lost Mistra in 1262, whilst in Cyprus Greek rebellions only occurred during the shaky period shortly after 1191, and again following the Egyptian invasion of 1426.

These factors also affected the links between castles and the internal politics of individual Latin states. In those areas where the chances of an external invasion were remote, rulers invariably enjoyed far more control over their vassals, who did not need to build extensive fortifications for their own protection. This situation was most prevalent on Cyprus, where the Lusignan kings enforced an almost total monopoly on castle building, and therefore survived the crises of 1228-33 and 1306-10. Further north, the Villehardouin rulers of Achaëa also faced very few challenges to their authority before the loss of Mistra, and did not even deem it necessary to fortify Andravida at this time.

In the Holy Land, however, Latin rulers found it increasingly difficult to assert their authority over vassals whose castles had been built to withstand Muslim armies far larger than anything the Christians could muster. It has been shown that during the fourteenth century a similar process also took place in Frankish Greece, whilst in Cilicia the Armenians' preference for isolated mountain fortresses enabled nobles like the lords

of Lampron to become virtually independent. Similarly, the internal stability of any given region can often be gauged by how many castles the Military Orders held there, for no ruler would willingly give up vast castellanies and estates unless it was absolutely necessary. This problem was most apparent in fourteenth century Achaea, and also in the Holy Land, where all three main Orders held vast lordships whose presence safeguarded Christian frontiers but eroded central authority.

Changing political circumstances also account for the appearance and design of many Latin fortifications built at this time. Hence a combination of poverty and physical isolation help explain why the Latins in Greece were either unwilling or unable to build strong and sophisticated fortifications. In the Holy Land, on the other hand, the sheer power of the Muslims and the far greater resources of men like Louis IX ensured that strongpoints tended to be larger and more complex. Both these areas can be contrasted with Cilicia, however, for the Armenians did not need to maintain direct sea links with the west in order to survive, and therefore constructed mountain castles which were far more effective against the vast land armies of the Mamluks. These observations also confirm that military architecture did not evolve in distinct chronological stages, and cannot, therefore, be studied in isolation, without regard for various political, geographical and economic factors.

Finally, it should be remembered that regardless of their design and location, virtually all the fortifications which have been mentioned in this thesis were expected to make up for inadequate troop numbers. Both the Armenians and the Latins found themselves massively outnumbered by their Muslim, Greek and Bulgar opponents, while the latter group also had to deal with the problem of suppressing a hostile native population. Realizing that they lacked the

resources to overcome these difficulties through sheer weight of numbers, they therefore built fortifications in huge numbers, and on an unprecedented scale. To some extent this tactic worked, and there can be little doubt that sites such as Pilgrims' Castle enabled the Franks to retain territory without needing to match their opponents man for man. In the long run, however, this problem could only have been solved by encouraging far greater numbers to settle in the east permanently, for, as Baybars observed, 'towns are not guarded by walls, nor are citizens protected by trenches, but by swords together with resolution'.¹

¹ Ibn al-Furat, Selections, II, 54.

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