

= War of the Antiochene Succession =

The War of the Antiochene Succession , also known as the Antiochene War of Succession , comprised a series of armed conflicts in Northern Syria between 1201 and 1219 , connected to the disputed succession of Bohemond III of Antioch . The Principality of Antioch was the leading Christian power in the region during the last decades of the 12th century , but Armenian Cilicia challenged its supremacy . The capture of an important fortress , Bagras , in Syria by Leo II of Cilicia gave rise to a prolonged conflict already in the early 1190s . Leo tried to capture Antioch , but the Greek and Latin burghers formed a commune and prevented the Armenian soldiers from occupying the town . Bohemond III 's eldest son , Raymond , died in 1197 , leaving an infant son , Raymond @-@ Roupen . The boy 's mother , Alice of Armenia , was Leo I 's niece and heir presumptive . Bohemond III and the Antiochene noblemen confirmed Raymond @-@ Roupen 's right to succeed his grandfather in Antioch , but the commune preferred Bohemond III 's younger son (Raymond @-@ Roupen 's uncle) , Bohemond , Count of Tripoli .

Bohemond of Tripoli seized Antioch without resistance after his father died in April 1201 , but many noblemen left the principality to seek refuge in Cilicia . Leo invaded the Principality of Antioch in almost every year between 1201 and 1208 , but he had to return to his kingdom on each occasion because Az @-@ Zahir Ghazi , the Ayyubid emir of Aleppo , or Kaykaus I , the Seljuq sultan of Rum stormed into Cilicia in his absence . Pope Innocent III initially supported Leo . However , the conflict between Leo and the Knights Templar over Bagras led to Leo 's excommunication in 1208 . During the following years , Leo captured new fortresses in Syria , abandoning them in 1213 as part of an effort to improve his relationship with the Holy See . Taking advantage of Bohemond IV 's isolation , Leo entered Antioch , helping Raymond @-@ Roupen seize the principality in 1216 . Before long , Leo abandoned Bagras and lost the Armenian fortresses to the north of the Taurus Mountains to the Seljuqs . Raymond @-@ Roupen increased taxes , which made him unpopular in Antioch . His relationship with Leo also became tense , enabling Bohemond IV to regain Antioch in 1219 . The war contributed to the weakening of the Christian states in Northern Syria .

= = Background = =

After Saladin , the Ayyubid sultan of Syria and Egypt , destroyed the Kingdom of Jerusalem in the late 1180s , the Principality of Antioch became the leading Christian power of Northern Syria . By 1186 Leo II , Lord of Armenian Cilicia , had already acknowledged the suzerainty of Bohemond III of Antioch , but their relationship became tense after Bohemond borrowed money from Leo but failed to repay it .

In 1191 Leo captured and rebuilt Bagras , a strategically important fortress that Saladin had seized from the Knights Templar and then destroyed before abandoning it . Bohemond ordered Leo to return it to the Templars , but Leo refused , stating that his right of recent conquest was stronger than the claim of the Templars who had lost their property . After Bohemond failed include Cilicia in his truce with Saladin in 1192 , Leo invited him to Bagras to start negotiations . Bohemond accepted the offer , but Leo had him captured , forcing him to surrender Antioch . Although the noblemen (who were closely related to Armenian nobles) were willing to accept Leo 's rule , the mainly Greek and Latin townspeople formed a commune and prevented the Armenian soldiers from occupying Antioch .

Peace was restored with the mediation of Henry I of Jerusalem , who persuaded both Leo and Bohemond to renounce their claims to suzerainty over each other . Leo 's occupation of Bagras was confirmed . Bohemond 's eldest son , Raymond , married Leo 's niece and heir presumptive , Alice . Raymond died in early 1197 , but his widow gave birth to a posthumous son , Raymond @-@ Roupen . The almost sixty @-@ year @-@ old Bohemond III sent Alice and her son to Armenia , showing that he did not want to acknowledge his infant grandson 's right to succeed him in Antioch .

Leo had meanwhile united the Armenian Church in Cilicia with Rome and acknowledged the suzerainty of the Holy Roman Emperor , Henry VI . The emperor 's envoy , Conrad of Wittelsbach , Archbishop of Mainz , was present when Leo was crowned the first king of Armenian Cilicia on 6

January 1198 . Before long , Conrad went to Antioch and persuaded Bohemond and his barons to swear an oath to accept Raymund @-@ Roupen 's right to inherit Antioch .

Bohemond III 's younger son (Raymund @-@ Roupen 's uncle) , Bohemond , Count of Tripoli , disputed the validity of their oath . He expelled his father from Antioch with the support of the Templars , the Hospitallers and the commune of the burghers in late 1198 . Three months later Leo invaded the Principality of Antioch , forcing the younger Bohemond to allow his father to return to Antioch . Pope Innocent III also supported the restoration of Bohemond III in Antioch , but , responding to the Templars ' demand , he also began urging Leo to restore Bagras to them .

= = War = =

= = = First phase = = =

When Bohemond III died in April , Bohemond of Tripoli hurried to Antioch , where , because he was the late duke 's closest living relative , he was recognized by the commune of the townspeople as his father 's rightful heir . The nobles who had regarded Raymond @-@ Roupen (the only son of Bohemond III 's eldest son) the lawful prince , fled to the Kingdom of Cilicia . Bohemond repaid a loan that Raymond III of Tripoli had long before borrowed from the Knights Hospitaller , thus winning them over to his side .

Leo continued to support Raymond @-@ Roupen , which sparked an enduring conflict , with many theatres of war . During the war , neither Leo nor Bohemond IV was able to control his own territory (Cilicia and Tripoli , respectively) and Antioch at the same time , due to insufficient forces . Az @-@ Zahir Ghazi , the Ayyubid emir of Aleppo , and the Seljuq rulers of Anatolia were always ready to invade Cilicia , while the Ayyubid rulers of Hama and Homs controlled the territory between Antioch and Tripoli , hindering the movements of Bohemond 's troops between the two crusader states .

Shortly after Bohemond seized Antioch , Leo laid siege to it to press Raymond @-@ Roupen 's cause , but Bohemond 's allies , Az @-@ Zahir Ghazi and Suleiman II , Seljuq Sultan of Rum , stormed into Cilicia , forcing Leo to withdraw in July 1201 . He soon sent letters to Pope Innocent , informing him of Bohemond 's cooperation with the Muslim rulers . Leo again invaded Antioch in 1202 , but Aimery , King of Jerusalem and Cyprus , and the papal legate , Cardinal Soffredo , mediated a truce . After Bohemond IV refused to acknowledge the right of the Holy See to pass judgement in the case of the succession of Antioch , Leo renewed the war . Taking advantage of Bohemond 's absence , Leo entered Antioch on 11 November 1203 , but he was not able to seize the citadel , which was defended by the Templars and the troops of the commune . Before long , Az @-@ Zahir Ghazi again invaded Cilicia , forcing Leo to return to his kingdom .

Renoart of Nephin , who had married an heiress in the County of Tripoli without Bohemond 's consent , rose up against Bohemond in late 1204 . He routed Bohemond at the gates of Tripoli . Leo seized the Antiochene fortresses in the Amanus Mountains , which controlled the road towards Antioch . He laid siege to the fortress at Trapessac on 25 December 1205 , but Az @-@ Zahir Ghazi 's troops routed his army . After crushing Renoart of Nephin 's revolt , Bohemond returned to Antioch , forcing Leo to sign a truce for eight years in summer 1206 .

= = = Conflicts with the Church = = =

A conflict between the new papal legate , Peter of Capua , and the Latin Patriarch of Antioch , Peter of Angoulême , who had become Raymond @-@ Roupen 's supporter , ended with the excommunication of the patriarch . Exploiting the situation to get rid of his opponent , Bohemond replaced Peter of Angoulême with the Greek Orthodox Patriarch of Antioch , Symeon II with the support of the commune in early 1207 . Peter of Angoulême was reconciled with the legate , excommunicated Bohemond and the commune , and then persuaded some nobles to rise up against Bohemond , forcing him to take refuge in the citadel . Leo entered Antioch , but Bohemond collected his forces and defeated the Armenians . Peter of Angoulême was captured and died of

drink deprivation in his prison .

The Ayyubid sultan , Al @-@ Adil I , stormed into the County of Tripoli , creating an opportunity for Leo to plunder the land around Antioch in 1208 . Bohemond persuaded Kaykaus I , Sultan of Rum , to invade Cilicia , forcing Leo to withdraw from Antioch . Pope Innocent tasked Albert Avogadro , Patriarch of Jerusalem , to mediate a peace . Avogadro , who was an ally of the Knights Templar , urged Leo to return Bagras to them . In an attempt to renew the truce , Leo obeyed the legate 's demand , promising to withdraw from Bagras .

Before long , Leo broke his promise and refused to return Bagras to the Templars . He also decided to terminate the union of the Armenian Church with Rome . On the other hand , he granted fortresses to the Teutonic Knights in Cilicia . He also arranged the marriage of Raymond @-@ Roupen with Helvis , sister of Hugh I of Cyprus . Leo ambushed a caravan which had been transporting provisions to the Templars in 1211 . In the skirmish , Guillaume de Chartres , Grand Master of the Knights Templar , was badly injured . News of Leo 's action shocked Pope Innocent , who forbade all Christian rulers to assist Leo and urged John of Brienne , King of Jerusalem , to intervene on the Templars ' behalf . John sent fifty knights to Northern Syria to fight against Leo . Leo expelled the Latin priests from Cilicia and gave shelter to the Orthodox Patriarch , Symeon , who had been driven out of Antioch . He dispatched Raymond @-@ Roupen to plunder the region of Antioch in 1212 .

Pope Innocent , who had proclaimed a new crusade in 1213 , wanted to persuade Leo to assist the crusaders . In that year , Leo renounced all lands that he had seized from the Templars , but retained Bagras . John of Brienne married Leo 's daughter , Stephanie , in 1214 . During the same period , Bohemond 's position weakened . His attempt to take vengeance on the Assassins for the murder of his eldest son , Raymond , brought him into conflict with his old ally , Az @-@ Zahir Ghazi of Aleppo .

= = = Raymond @-@ Roupen in Antioch = = =

With Leo 's support , Raymond @-@ Roupen began to find new allies , promising land grants to the Hospitallers and Antiochene noblemen , including Acharie of Sermin , the head of the commune of the burghers . Taking advantage of the absence of Bohemond IV , Leo and his army entered Antioch during the night of 14 February 1216 . A few days later , the Templars , who had held the citadel , also surrendered without a struggle . The Latin Patriarch of Antioch , Peter of Ivrea , consecrated Raymond @-@ Roupen prince . After his protégé seized the Principality of Antioch , Leo restored Bagras to the Knights Templar . During Leo 's absence , Kaykaus I captured the Armenian forts to the north of the Taurus Mountains .

After finding an empty treasure in Antioch , Raymond @-@ Roupen increased taxation , which made him unpopular among his subjects . He also refused to assist Leo against the Seljuqs . In 1217 , Raymond @-@ Roupen tried to capture Leo , but the Templars assisted Leo to flee to Cilicia . Bohemond visited John , King of Jerusalem , in Acre in autumn 1217 . John recognized Bohemond as the lawful prince of Antioch early the next year , but did not provide him with military assistance .

The burghers and noblemen of Antioch rose up against Raymond @-@ Roupen . Their leader , William Farabel , persuaded Bohemond to come back to the town . After Bohemond 's arrival , Raymond @-@ Roupen at first sought refuge in the citadel but soon fled to Cilicia , granting the citadel to the Hospitallers . Raymond @-@ Roupen could never regain Antioch , thus the war " came to a rather unspectacular end " .

= = Aftermath = =

Leo was dying when Raymond @-@ Roupen came to Cilicia . Leo did not forgive his great @-@ nephew and willed Cilicia to his five @-@ year @-@ old daughter , Isabella , in May 1219 . Both Raymond @-@ Roupen (the grandson of Leo 's elder brother , Rupen) and John , King of Jerusalem (the husband of Leo 's eldest daughter , Stephanie) refused to accept Leo 's last will , claiming Cilicia for themselves . The new conflict lasted for decades , further weakening the

Christian states of Northern Syria .