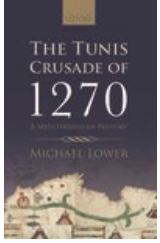

The Tunis Crusade of 1270: A Mediterranean History

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https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780198744320.001.0001

Published: 2018 **Online ISBN:** 9780191805707 **Print ISBN:** 9780198744320

CHAPTER

7 After the Storm: Rupture and Stability in the Medieval Mediterranean

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https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780198744320.003.0008 Pages 174–192

Published: May 2018

Abstract

The Tunis Crusade was a fierce war between Christians and Muslims. It brought devastation, disease, and death to many. It was also a negotiation: over money, certainly, but over identity and belonging, too. Out of this potent mix something unexpected emerged: not chaos, not disorder, but new contacts, new relationships, and new alliances, many of them built on a mutual recognition of difference. This chapter argues that the Tunis Crusade was not an unheralded irruption into a Mediterranean world of religious pluralism, many kinds of diversity, and flexible allegiances. It fitted comfortably into that diverse environment and actually helped to produce some of its characteristic cultural expressions. Religious conflict and cultural unity should not be seen as hallmarks of two irreconcilable visions of the medieval Mediterranean world. Both were present in the age of the last European crusader king, coexisting in a dynamic, historically contingent relationship.

Keywords: Mamluk, Prince Edward of England, Charles of Anjou, Treaty of Caesarea, Sultan Baybars of Egypt, Genoa, Crown of Aragon, Hafsid

Subject: European History, History of Religion, Medieval and Renaissance History (500 to 1500)

Collection: Oxford Scholarship Online

Charles of Anjou did not want to linger in North Africa. Within twenty-four hours of agreeing to the truce with al-Mustansir he was issuing orders for the withdrawal of the crusade. As a matter of the greatest urgency, he needed ships and sailors (500 of them) to come to Tunis to evacuate him and the rest of the army from their disease- and death-ridden camp. Many had come to believe that the camp was cursed, that the drinking water was fouled, and that no healthy person could survive there for long without succumbing to fever. With storm season approaching and a kingdom to run, Charles wanted out of there, now.[1]

Leaving Tunis proved no less complicated than getting there in the first place. While Charles waited for the rescue fleet, more crusaders fell ill, including Thibaut of Navarre. More trouble came on November 10, in the form of Prince Edward of England. Edward had postponed his departure several times over the summer as he waited for his father, King Henry III, to decide whether he would join the campaign. After Henry accepted the advice of his counselors to stay home, Edward left Dover in the company of his brother Edmund on August 20. Once on the continent, Edward traced Louis's steps to Tunis, but at an even slower pace. He reached Aigues-Mortes only in late September, then sailed for Sardinia and stayed there for a month before finally crossing over to Tunis. He was in no rush to join this phase of the campaign.[2]

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About ten days before Edward arrived, Charles had made him a party to the Treaty of Tunis without his consent, thereby committing him to an ↳ agreement that excluded him from a share in the 210,000 gold ounce indemnity. It was a financially prudent move, but one that was bound to make things awkward once Edward arrived. There were longer-standing sources of tension between the two men as well. Charles was an

ally of the Montforts, one of whom, Simon, had nearly overthrown Edward's father. Edward's mother was Eleanor of Provence, who believed that Charles had compromised her rights to Provence when he married her younger sister Beatrice. Edward's wife was Eleanor of Castile, sister not only of King Alfonso but also of Federico, who had been fighting Charles and now faced expulsion from Tunis, and Enrique, who was imprisoned back in the *Regno*. Frustrated as he was by these lingering issues and the unexpected turn the crusade had taken, there was little Edward could do to change the situation. He agreed to join Charles in Sicily to discuss the next steps for the campaign. On November 18, Charles issued him and his men a safe conduct for the duration of their stay on the island.[3]

The withdrawal began that day. Al-Mustansir sent down soldiers—Latin Christian and Muslim—to protect the crusaders while they broke camp. As the boats pushed off, those who looked back would have seen wooden siege engines littering the shore, built for an assault that never took place. Al-Mustansir had promised to preserve these and would prove good to his word. They were still there when Charles sent for them in 1273.[4]

The weather was calm for the crossing to Sicily. The first ships anchored off Trapani on Friday, November 21. Charles was rowed to shore in a galley the next day, followed shortly after by King Philippe III, Queen Isabelle, and their attendants. But on Saturday night strong winds began to pound the Sicilian coast, trapping those who were still on the boats. To some it seemed as if Neptune himself had taken charge of the storm, which intensified over Sunday and continued at peak intensity through Monday night. Anchors snapped, masts came crashing down, and some ships collided while others drifted into the open seas. Some vessels were driven back to Tunis, where al-Mustansir, holding to his agreement with the crusaders, allowed them to land and regroup before they tried again to return home. Eighteen of the larger ships sank, along with many smaller ones, perhaps up to a total of forty. Thousands of crusaders died.[5]

On Tuesday morning, November 25, the leading crusaders met to discuss their next steps. They agreed to
p. 176 return to their homes, raise ↳ more money and recruit more troops, and then meet again in three years to resume their expedition to the Holy Land. Only Edward of England refused to go along with the plan. For the rest, it was a face-saving way of acknowledging the obvious: with the fleet destroyed and many of the footsoldiers drowned, there was no way they could continue. The crusade was over for the Angevins and Capetians.

The death toll continued to rise after the storm. Thibaut of Navarre died in Trapani from his illness. Philippe III carried on to Messina and crossed over to the mainland, heading north through Calabria. Near Cosenza his pregnant wife, Queen Isabelle, fell from her horse. She gave birth prematurely to a son who died shortly after being delivered. A few days later, she herself succumbed to her injuries and unbearable grief. On February 11, 1271, Philippe wrote to the abbot of Saint-Denis requesting prayers for the souls of his father Louis, his brother Jean Tristan, his brother-in-law Thibaut of Navarre, his wife Isabelle, and his baby son.[6]

A Moment of Rupture

The Tunis Crusade nearly broke the Capetian dynasty. Their triumphant breeding record—the long line of kings who produced male heirs to succeed them for generation after generation—looked to be under threat as Philippe III led his funeral train back to Paris. Few at the time recognized the danger to the French monarchy. One of those who did was Ibn Khaldun. When the Franks returned to their lands, he wrote, their power and prestige waned and the vast kingdom of al-Francis (Louis) broke apart as the lords of the various provinces declared their independence. The royal house remained, but their era of domination had ended in failure and weakness. The Capetians would recover, of course, but that seemed a little less clear to a fourteenth-century North African intellectual than it does to us today.[7]

A near catastrophe for the Capetians, the crusade brought misery to many more besides. Thousands of the men and women Louis led overseas never returned to their homes, dying of disease or in battle. For the non-elite crusaders who had to wait for their betters to disembark, the storm off Trapani was more devastating still. Losses were heavy on the Tunisian side as well. The same diseases that devastated the crusader camp
p. 177 struck the ↳ city hard, leading to many deaths among its soldiers and civilians. The Tunis Crusade sowed devastation across all divisions of rank and religion.

For Louis, the Capetians, ordinary French crusaders, and the many Ifriqiyans who died during the campaign, the Tunis Crusade was a tragedy. But that is not the whole story of the crusade. In many ways, and among many people, the Tunis Crusade stabilized interreligious relations in the Mediterranean.

About a week after the storm off Trapani, envoys from Baybars arrived at Charles's makeshift court there. Once again, the *hajib* Badr al-Din b. ʿAziz led the delegation. For the crusaders billeted around the city, it was another sign of how far their expedition had gone astray. Days after postponing the crusade, their leader was welcoming representatives of the sultan they had signed up to fight. In lavish fashion too: Charles assigned the ambassadors 1 gold ounce a day for expenses during their stay. When Baybars dispatched them, he did not know that the storm had already done much of their work for them: no negotiations would be necessary to keep the crusade out of the eastern Mediterranean. Charles, however, was in no hurry to send them back to Cairo. He still wanted a settlement with Mamluk Egypt that would preserve the status quo in the crusader states, protect the interests of Provençal and Sicilian merchants in Alexandria, and free him to intervene more assertively in the Aegean. The envoys would be his guests over the winter. In January 1271, they followed Charles to Messina, where he gave them luxurious gifts: a scarlet tunic lined with squirrel fur (highly prized in continental Europe) for the chief ambassador, and a blue robe lined with the fur of a desert fox (highly prized in the Islamic world) for his son. Bringing together European and Near Eastern fashions, the clothes gestured toward the Angevin–Frankish–Mamluk rapprochement that Charles wanted to achieve.[8]

Sending ambassadors to Charles was one facet of Baybars's evolving response to the crusade. When the sultan learned of Louis's death in September 1270, he had recalled the troops he had sent to help al-Mustansir. He remained concerned, though, that the crusader fleet could redeploy in the eastern
p. 178 Mediterranean. A likely landing spot was Ascalon, which had ↳ parts of its walls and some of the old citadel standing, along with a viable harbor. On September 25, Baybars went up to the settlement and supervised the destruction of its fortifications and the spiking of its harbor with rocks and tree-trunks.

Once it was clear that no crusade was coming east right away and that Charles was intent on negotiating with his envoys, Baybars could resume his offensive against the crusader states. He targeted the great castles of the north—Chastel Blanc (Safita), Crac des Chevaliers (Hisn al-Akrad), and Gibelacar (Hisn ʿAkkar)—that the military orders garrisoned. On January 24, 1271, he set off on the familiar journey north from Cairo. He stopped near Chastel Blanc, the Templar stronghold that protected the eastern approaches to the county of Tripoli. At first the knights thought about resisting the Mamluk siege, but the Templar commander of nearby Tortosa convinced them that it was better to try for a negotiated surrender: given the shortage of fighting men in Frankish Syria, their lives were more valuable to the order than the real estate. The knights of Chastel Blanc accepted this argument and Baybars allowed the 700-strong garrison to withdraw in return for the castle.

From Chastel Blanc, Baybars advanced to Crac des Chevaliers, the seemingly impregnable Hospitaller stronghold that lay on the northeastern frontier of the county of Tripoli and projected Frankish power toward Homs and Hama. The siege began on February 21. By mid-March, the Mamluks had seized the outer ring of defenses. The Hospitaller knights retreated to the keep and prepared to hold out for as long as they could. Recalling the appeal of the Templars of Tortosa to their colleagues at Chastel Blanc, Baybars devised a ruse to speed things along. He forged a letter from the Hospitaller commander in Tripoli ordering the castle's surrender and had it delivered to the keep. On April 8, whether out of respect for this bogus command or mere prudence, the knights withdrew from this most famous of crusader castles and marched to Tripoli. Once there, the Hospitallers sued for peace and were granted it; the Templars of Tortosa did the same.

Three weeks later, on April 29, Baybars invested Gibelacar, which belonged to Bohemond VI of Tripoli (and lately of Antioch). Here, the sultan relied on heavy weaponry rather than subterfuge. To demonstrate his commitment to the cause, he mucked in with his men as they dug out and flattened paths to haul the siege artillery into position. Once the mangonels were in place, they launched a barrage that reduced part of the eastern wall to rubble. The garrison surrendered on May 12 and joined the stream of refugees flowing into Tripoli.[9]

p. 179 Baybars was advancing on the city when news reached him that Edward of England had landed in Acre with a fleet of eight sailing ships and thirty galleys, carrying 300 knights. In fact, he may have had fewer troops at his disposal than the sultan's spies estimated. The Treaty of Tunis had barred Edward from attacking Tunis, but he had reserved the right to fulfill his crusade vow in the Holy Land. By the spring of 1270, as a fresh sailing season opened, Charles of Anjou was no longer as interested in keeping Edward away from Syria. Baybars's victories in the north had reduced Charles's negotiating power; Edward might be able to tilt the balance back in his favor. Baybars's first response to the expedition's arrival suggested that Charles might be on to something. The sultan stopped his army short of Tripoli and sent a peace embassy to Bohemond VI, who accepted a ten-year truce.

In April 1271, the Egyptian envoys left the *Regno*.[10] Joining them were the Angevin envoys Pietro of Beanes and Brother Berenger, the Dominican chaplain who had served the king on previous diplomatic missions to Cairo and Tunis.[11] Their goals were the same ones that Charles had been pursuing in his negotiations with Baybars for the past three years: protection for Angevin merchants trading in Alexandria and a truce for the kingdom of Jerusalem. If Edward's campaign could place some pressure on Baybars, Charles's ambassadors would be on hand to take advantage.[12]

Once the sultan had neutralized Bohemond VI and secured his northern conquests, he turned to confront the new crusade in the south. His approach was typically multifaceted. Since Hugh of Lusignan, king of Cyprus and Jerusalem, had joined up with Edward in Acre, Baybars launched a naval attack on Cyprus in June 1271 to try to draw the king away from the mainland. To deceive the Cypriot Franks, the Mamluk galleys flew flags with crosses and wore black paint like Frankish vessels. The disguise did not get the chance to work, because the galleys lost their way in a storm off Limassol and foundered during the night on the reefs near the coast. About 1,800 Mamluk sailors and soldiers fell into captivity. It was a rare military setback for Baybars.

Back on dry land, it was a more familiar story. In mid-June 1271, Baybars assembled his siege artillery at
p. 180 Safad for an assault on nearby ↳ Montfort (al-Qarn), the main fortress of the Teutonic Knights in the crusader states. It was a linchpin of the Frankish defenses, guarding the northeastern approaches to Acre. Baybars offered money to anyone who was willing to claw out the stones of the lower walls of the fortress by hand. Many soldiers volunteered for the dangerous work and by the end of the month Montfort was his.[13]

Restricted by his small army, Edward did not intervene. He did, however, contact the Ilkhan Abaqa to revive the Mongol alliance that seemed to have collapsed when Louis IX died. In July, perhaps when Baybars had returned to Cairo, Edward launched his first operations. These were small-scale raids on Seisor (al-Shaghur) and Saint George de Lebeyne (al-Biʿna). The mission had to be cut short when many of the English crusaders became sick in the unfamiliar summer heat. Edward led everyone back to Acre to recuperate. He lost another potential ally when Jean of Montfort negotiated a separate peace with Baybars later that summer.[14]

In November, Edward tried again, and this time the prospects seemed brighter. The weather was cooler, his brother Edmund had brought reinforcements, and Mongol forces loyal to Abaqa were ready to advance from the north. Louis's dream of a multipronged invasion of Mamluk Syria was about to come true.

Abaqa's chief commander in eastern Anatolia was Samaghar, *noyan* of the *noyans*. With reinforcements from the Seljuk sultanate, led by the chief minister (*perwaneh*) Muʿin al-Din Sulayman, Samaghar entered the territory around ʿAyn Tab.[15] The combined forces sacked the city and moved south toward Harran.[16] As chance would have it, Baybars was closer to their line of operations than they thought. In late September 1271, he had secretly traveled north from Cairo to confront rebel Bedouin tribes around Hama. After calling for more troops from Cairo, the sultan marched north to Aleppo. As it turned out, his help was hardly needed. Al-Hajj Taybars al-Waziri, the emir dispatched to protect Harran, confronted and scattered the Ilkhanate–Seljuk invaders. When Baybars himself brought his larger force out of Aleppo, they retired back to Anatolia.

As al-Waziri dealt with the Mongols, Edward of England rallied his followers for a raid in the south. The
p. 181 target was Caco (Qaqun), a fortified ↳ town not too far from Caesarea that Baybars had taken from the Franks in an earlier campaign. On November 23, 1271, Edward and his fellow crusaders, joined by Hugh of Cyprus and Jerusalem, set off from Acre. Heading south and slightly inland, they proceeded cautiously, marching mostly at night. When they came upon a Turcoman camp, they attacked it, killing many and taking 500 head of cattle as plunder. Soon after, Mamluk contingents mobilized from ʿAyn Jalut intercepted the crusaders, took back the cattle, and drove them back to Acre.[17]

Without confronting either personally, Baybars had beaten back the Mongols and crusaders in turn. When he returned to Cairo, he set to work replacing the galleys he had lost off Limassol. Charles of Anjou's envoys —Brother Berenger and Pietro of Beanes—met with him down at the shipyards. The sight of Baybars working among the beams and timbers, surrounded by emirs and shipwrights, was meant to project strength and determination, but it also hinted at a certain vulnerability. His precious fleet, built at great effort and expense, was gone, and the European powers retained their naval superiority. Under these circumstances, it made sense to conciliate Charles in order to keep Angevin naval power out of Syrian waters and encourage Marseillais and Sicilian trade in Alexandria. What Charles wanted, as his ambassadors made clear, was a peace treaty for Acre.[18]

Pressure on Baybars to settle with the Franks was coming from other directions as well. Abaqa had not taken part in the recent attack on northern Syria because he had been dealing with the Chaghadayid khan Baraq's incursions across his eastern frontiers. By 1272, that threat appeared to be receding, opening the way for Abaqa to confront the Mamluks more directly. Consequently, Baybars took the news of a fresh Ilkhanate invasion into Upper Mesopotamia seriously when it reached him in the spring of 1272. On March 5, he led his army out of Cairo. When he reached Caesarea and stopped to pasture the horses, he was still uncertain about the scale of the Mongol operation. It was at this opportune moment that an envoy from Hugh of Cyprus and Jerusalem arrived in the Mamluk camp and asked to negotiate a truce.

The Franks asked for Saffran (Shafarʿam), Cabor (Kabul), and Scandelion (Iskandaruna). After several weeks of discussions, Baybars conceded Saffran and agreed to share Cabor and Scandelion. The Frankish peasants who had worked the land around these towns would be allowed to return. The Franks also regained the plain
p. 182 of Acre and control over the pilgrimage ↳ road to Nazareth. On these terms, Hugh and Baybars confirmed a ten-year, ten-month, ten-day, and ten-hour peace on April 21, 1272, which is traditionally known as the Treaty of Caesarea. With some help from the Ilkhanate and Charles of Anjou, the Franks and the Mamluks entered a new era of coexistence.[19]

Edward of England did not sign the Treaty of Caesarea. Like his crusader patron Louis IX, he favored an aggressive approach to the battle for Syria. He refused to make peace with Baybars and talked about staying around to keep up the fight. Baybars had once been as committed to the conflict as Louis and Edward, but the Treaty of Caesarea represented a shift in approach. While most of Baybars's truces with the Franks had been punitive, this one granted them modest concessions. His willingness to settle on these terms was partly a response to Angevin and Ilkhanate pressure, but the degraded Frankish threat was also a factor. Now that he had reduced the Frankish presence to a few vulnerable coastal settlements, he could turn aside from his conflict with them and pivot toward the Ilkhanate, which remained an existential menace to the Mamluk project. If only, that is, he could do something about Edward.

Baybars liked to say that he could use the dagger as well as the sword.[20] In May 1272, he set the governor of Ramla, Ibn Shawar, to work on the English prince. The governor sent an Assassin to Acre, who approached Edward in the guise of an ordinary Muslim soldier seeking baptism. Yet again, the conversion gambit would be tried. It is not clear if Edward knew what had happened to Jean of Brienne at Carthage, or Philippe of Montfort in his chapel. In any case, the "soldier" soon gave Edward another reason—beyond, that is, his sudden passion for Christianity—to keep him around. Posing as a double agent as well as a convert, he fed the crusaders false intelligence about Baybars and his plans. He became familiar enough to Edward's guards that he was able to talk his way past them into Edward's bedroom one night and stab him multiple times. Edward recuperated from his injuries after a couple of weeks, but his days as a crusader were over. He sailed for Italy in September. With a cold act of violence, made possible by a feigned conversion, Baybars had preserved the peace. If a single episode could epitomize the Tunis Crusade, this would be it.[21]

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Old Bonds Renewed and New Ones Formed: The Central Mediterranean

Sometime in late 1271, between seeing off the Anglo-Mongol attacks and signing the Treaty of Caesarea, Baybars received an embassy from al-Mustansir of Tunis. The emir gave the sultan a present: twenty-five horses, two of which were reputed to be the fastest in Tunis. Baybars was not impressed. He gave the horses to his emirs and complained that al-Mustansir had not addressed him by his proper titles. Now that the crisis of the crusade had passed, old tensions were surfacing again. Baybars responded to al-Mustansir's gifts with a nasty critique. The emir was guilty of evil actions. Rather than fighting Franks like he should, he hired them to fight Muslims. During the Tunis Crusade, he had refused to enter the battlefield, remaining hidden away even after Louis had died. He was guilty, in other words, of inverting the norms of Islamic rulership, which called for confronting rather than collaborating with the infidel. "One such as you," the sultan thundered, "was not fit to have charge of the affairs of Muslims."[22]

The contrast Baybars drew between himself and al-Mustansir was overdrawn, but not by much. When necessary, Baybars made peace with the Franks and al-Mustansir waged jihad against them. In general, though, Baybars was right to say that al-Mustansir's approach to the non-Muslim world was more open and accommodating than his. The difference had to do in part with their respective positions in relation to Europeans: Baybars faced a fractured Frankish presence that had grown isolated from its European homeland, while al-Mustansir had to deal with assertive European powers—Angevins, Aragonese, and Italian maritime republics—in their own backyards. Just as important, though, in shaping their approach to interreligious relations were the internal dynamics of Mamluk Egypt and Hafsid Ifriqiya. As a revolutionary interloper, Baybars founded his regime on defending Sunni orthodoxy at home through a campaign of moral regeneration and abroad through relentless holy war. The Franks made a perfect foil for this performance of Mamluk self-legitimation. Al-Mustansir, by contrast, faced centrifugal forces within Ifriqiya so powerful that he had little choice but to look outward for support. Hafsid state-building in his era was externally oriented: foreign mercenary soldiers and foreign trade were indispensable foundations of
p. 184 dynastic consolidation. So while good relations with Baybars were ↳ desirable, they ultimately mattered less than the central Mediterranean networks of exchange into which the Tunis Crusade had interposed itself. While the crusade had brought an unlikely peace to Syria, it remained to be seen what impact it might have on the central Mediterranean.

Al-Mustansir survived, and even thrived, in the wake of the Tunis Crusade. Although Baybars may have disapproved, al-Mustansir expressed no regret about what he had done during the campaign. He breezily informed his counterparts in the central and western Maghreb that he had saved the Muslims by concluding a peace with the crusaders. He collected the indemnity he owed to the crusader kings without a struggle and destroyed what remained of the fortifications at Carthage so no future expedition could use them as a base.[23]

The expedition accelerated rather than halted the political consolidation that was already under way by the time Louis landed on the halq al-Wadi. After crushing the Banu Masʿud in 1268–9, al-Mustansir used the occasion of the crusade to rally other disaffected elements to the regime. This was especially true in the contested lands west of Tunis. Abu Hilal-Iyad, governor of Bijaya, proved his loyalty by bringing troops, as did Abu Zayyan Muhammad b. ʿAbd al-Qawi, leader of the Banu Tujin, the Zenata Berber rivals to the ʿAbd al-Wadids of Tlemcen.

In the mid-1270s, a revolt in Algiers allowed al-Mustansir to go on the offensive again. He assembled a coalition of loyalists, including soldiers from Tunis, a naval squadron, and, in a sign of his newfound influence in the west, troops from Bijaya led by Abu al-ʿAbbas b. Abi al-Aʿlam. Blockaded by land and sea, Algiers fell to the Hafsid assault in 1274–5. The emir's men dealt with the city harshly, killing, raping, pillaging, and conducting the leaders of the rebellion back to Tunis in chains.[24]

This violent assertion of internal control depended on peaceful external relations, which al-Mustansir cultivated with great success after the Tunis Crusade. He paid the tribute he owed to Charles of Anjou regularly, a transaction that was far from straightforward in the thirteenth-century Mediterranean. In the fall of 1271, Charles assigned a traveling party to collect the tribute that included three notables of Messina, one of Palermo, and no less a figure than Philippe of Toucy, admiral of the *Regno*. Accompanying Philippe was a clerk seconded from the master of the mint of Brindisi, whose job was to verify the weight and quality
p. 185 of the currency.[25] Collection procedures were no less elaborate in subsequent ↳ years. In September 1272, Philippe of Toucy sent three galleys, with full Sicilian crews, to collect the tribute. The mission was treated

as a formal diplomatic embassy, with two high-ranking Angevin officials—Adam Morier, vicar-general of Sicily, and Roberto Infante, the justiciar—assigned to lead it.[26] The tribute was not cheap to collect. In 1276, the Angevin treasury estimated the cost of a recent delivery at 1,385 gold ounces.[27] The transactions were generally smooth. The only issue was the emir's tendency to want to pay in silver coinage rather than gold.[28]

In return for the tribute, Charles honored his obligations under the Treaty of Tunis as well. The agreement had banned piracy between Hafsid and Angevin subjects. Charles's officials on Malta apparently did not get the memo. In the summer of 1271, al-Mustansir complained that pirates based on the island were preying on Tunisian shipping. Angevin officials ordered the castellan of Malta to forbid the outlaws from docking in the harbor.[29] Charles was not interested in suppressing piracy altogether, just attacks on Tunis and other allies. In 1275, he made Provençal pirates swear an oath and sign a written instrument to the effect "that they… should not harm that magnificent man the king of Tunis, our tributary and an ally to us, his vassals or other friends of ours."[30] Later that year, the king's men arrested a pirate and compelled him to release the Tunisians he had captured.[31]

In addition to freedom from attacks by sea, Tunisian subjects were also entitled to security for their persons and goods while visiting Angevin lands. In accordance with this provision, the Angevin curia restored personal property to a certain Musa, "a Saracen of Tunis," in 1272.[32]

Musa may have been an Ifriqiyan merchant working in Sicily. A key benefit of the Treaty of Tunis for all parties was the restoration of trade across the Sicilian Straits. Sicilian merchants were active again in Tunisian markets by 1272, and probably had been for some time before that. By 1275, the volume of commercial traffic was high enough to warrant the opening of a Sicilian *funduk* in Tunis.[33] Crucially, wheat
p. 186 was a main driver of this revived exchange. In late December 1275, Charles granted ↳ commercial licenses to export wheat to Tunis and Bijaya, and in the same month we find Sicilian merchants documenting their North African trade in the commodity.[34] The essential mechanism of interaction between Sicily and Ifriqiya —the exchange of wheat for gold—was back in place.

Peace with Angevin Sicily did not curtail al-Mustansir's relations with other Mediterranean powers, even with those Charles called his enemies. In effect, the emir accepted the financial implications of his tributary status, but not the political. After the crusade, al-Mustansir moved to restore his relationships with the Italian maritime republics and the Crown of Aragon.

The crusaders and the Ifriqiyans had hardly laid down their weapons when interreligious commerce resumed. As soon as peace was declared, Tunisians came down to the crusader camp to sell food and gawk at the beautiful horses and fancy armor of the French magnates. More familiar patterns of commercial exchange reestablished themselves as well. The Pisans returned to Bijaya, which they had fled during the summer. The Venetians agreed to a new treaty of peace and commerce with the Hafsids in June 1271. The terms remained largely unchanged from their agreement of twenty years before, except that the length of the truce was now set at a confidence-inducing forty years.[35]

The situation with the Genoese was more complicated. They had not chosen Tunis as the target of the crusade. Back home, the diversion was unpopular. It was widely believed that "nothing good" would come from crusading to Tunis. Even so, Genoese sailors and marines had played an active role in the campaign, sailing the fleet to Cagliari and Tunis, then leading the successful attack on Carthage. On the arrival of the fleet off Tunis, al-Mustansir had taken Genoese merchants working in the city into custody. He seems to have been more interested in protecting them than punishing them—he put them up in the royal palace complex, after all—but the fact remained that he had taken away their freedom for a number of months.[36]

As it turned out, the Hafsids and the Genoese were able to put the crusade behind them with little fuss. Within two months of the Treaty of Tunis, the Genoese were trading in Ifriqiya again. On January 5, 1271, a Genoese crusader stranded in Trapani after the storm contracted two loans with colleagues. Jacobo Cibo
p. 187 borrowed money from Montanino of Camilla and ↳ Venturino of Pavia, which Jacobo promised to pay back within nine days of landing in Tunis.[37] The crusader had become a merchant once again.

The normalization of Hafsid–Genoese relations was marked by a treaty of November 6, 1272. Valid for ten years, the agreement repeated many provisions of the treaty of 1250 between the two maritime powers. There were, however, some subtle changes that could reflect the experience of the crusade. Echoing the currency disputes to which al-Yunini alluded in his account of the expedition, one new clause in the 1272 treaty required the Genoese to bring only legitimate currency to Tunis, in coinage of "good fine silver."

Customs officials would seize any counterfeit money they brought into Hafsid domains. Another provision forbade the Genoese from housing "foreigners" (i.e., non-Genoese) in their *funduk*: perhaps this had been a source of misunderstanding when the Genoese were taken into custody. In return for these security measures, the head of the customs house of Tunis, Abu al-Hasan Yahya b. ʿAbd al-Malik, who was the chief Hafsid negotiator, offered a trade concession: the Genoese would not pay duty on goods sold to other Christians in Tunis. Under the impetus of this agreement, Hafsid–Genoese commerce flourished again. In 1275, as the Angevins established their *funduk* in Tunis, the Genoese opened a second *funduk* of their own to house their growing expatriate community.[38]

The Hafsid–Genoese rapprochement was strong enough to withstand Charles's attempt to derail it in 1273, when he declared war on the Genoese and called on al-Mustansir to honor the "enemies" clause of the Treaty of Tunis by expelling them from Ifriqiyan markets. Relations between the *Regno* and Genoa had been fragile since the Angevin accession in 1266. Charles and the Genoese had agreed to a truce in August 1269, but it did not survive the Tunis Crusade. On October 28, 1270, while Charles and the Genoese crusaders were camping together outside Carthage, the Ghibelline faction in Genoa seized power from their Guelf rivals. Oberto Spinola and Oberto Doria jointly assumed the office of podestà. The danger the crusade seemed to pose to Genoese trade with Tunis and to Genoese nationals in the city may have stoked popular anger that contributed to the Guelf downfall. The storm off Trapani gave Charles an easy way of punishing the city-state for turning against his allies. On December 2, 1270, he asserted an "ancient custom" of the kingdom of Sicily according to which everything recovered from a shipwreck along its shores, which was not claimed by
p. 188 its owners within three ↳ days, belonged to the treasury. Shortly after, he made an exception for the goods of his nephew Philippe III and the other French crusaders, leaving only Genoese property liable to confiscation.[39]

The Genoese protested, but to no effect. Over the next two years, the Tyrrhenian coast of the *Regno* came under heavy attack from Genoese privateers. As Charles assembled a coalition to make war on the republic in spring 1273, he looked to his Hafsid ally for support. He asked al-Mustansir to expel the Genoese from Tunis and provide a base for the Marseillais pirate Raymond of Guben while he harried Genoese shipping in the Sicilian Straits.[40] The requests came at an awkward time for al-Mustansir, who had signed his commercial treaty with the Genoese only the previous December. Once again, he risked being dragged into the Ghibelline–Guelf conflict. His solution on this occasion was elegant. He ignored Charles's political demands and continued to pay him the tribute. With Charles happy to accept this trade-off, al-Mustansir was able to remain neutral in the Angevin–Genoese conflict while profiting from trade with both parties.

Al-Mustansir managed a similar balancing act with another of Charles's Mediterranean rivals: the Crown of Aragon. After returning from his failed attempt to reach the Holy Land, Jaume I of Aragon had watched his former crusade coalition turn against a trade partner. The diplomatic implications of the diversion were not lost on him either. With Charles on one side and Federico of Castile on the other, the conflict had more than a tinge of Angevin–Hohenstaufen rivalry to it. Jaume's loyalties were clear, and they did not lie with his fellow crusaders. When a Catalan mercenary in al-Mustansir's service named Gonzalvo Pérez of Alcoba went home to recruit reinforcements in September 1270, Jaume had the dean of the cathedral of Valencia cover the wages of the twelve knights who returned with Gonzalvo to Tunis to fight the crusaders.[41] Despite this support, Jaume could only look on as al-Mustansir made peace with Charles to end the crusade. For the emir, settling with Charles solved one problem but created another: it might suggest to Jaume that he was going over to the Angevin–Capetian–Guelf axis and leaving his Ghibelline–Hohenstaufen–Aragonese friends behind.

To limit the collateral damage the Treaty of Tunis might do to Hafsid–Aragonese relations, al-Mustansir
p. 189 sent a diplomatic mission to Jaume in late 1270. Working quickly, the emir's envoys negotiated the first ↳ Hafsid–Aragonese treaty of peace and commerce that has come down to us, which was sealed at Valencia on February 14, 1271. Conceived of as a counterstroke to the Treaty of Tunis, the agreement echoed many of its provisions. There are guarantees for the personal security of merchants and other travelers between the two realms, along with prohibitions against piracy and the right of shipwreck. Relations between Jaume and al-Mustansir would not always be smooth in future years. A dispute in 1274, for example, led to Jaume briefly banning Catalan trade with Ifriqiya. But the Treaty of Valencia provided an enduring framework for resolving conflicts. Ambassadors and gifts would be exchanged, and normal commercial relations would resume.[42] Consequently, and unlike most Mediterranean dynasts, al-Mustansir could regard both the houses of Anjou and Aragon as allies in the years following the Tunis Crusade. Thanks to some deft maneuvering, Hafsid Ifriqiya had not fallen into the sphere of influence of any European power as a result of the

expedition. Paradoxically enough, the Sicilian tribute proved crucial to carving out this freedom of action. So long as Charles received his money, al-Mustansir could retain maximum latitude in his dealings with other Mediterranean powers. The dependent status of a tributary bought the emir a broader independence that was precious indeed.

With foreign and domestic stability largely achieved, the last years of al-Mustansir's reign were calm. Ibn Khaldun would describe them with more than a touch of nostalgia as a time of leisure for the emir in his gardens and on the hunt. For the historian, it was a golden age of Hafsid rule. While al-Andalus suffered loss after loss, the Abbasid caliphate was falling to the Mongols, the Almohads were giving way to the Marinids, and "al-Francis's" kingdom was shattering:

> Their [i.e., the Hafsid] *dawla* increased in power, greatness, prosperity, population, solidarity, and military force; the people of the world looked to him.[43]

In the Khaldunian cycle of dynastic rise and decline, such a peak could only mean one thing: a period of decadence beckoned for the ruling cadre. The project of dynastic consolidation and political centralization that al-Mustansir had pursued would in fact experience serious setbacks in the years following his death in 1277. New configurations of politics and power would take shape, posing profound challenges to the model
p. 190 of the ↳ regional emirate that the old emir had championed. Local forces of autonomy, in Bijaya and elsewhere, would emerge and thrive.[44] But all that lay in the future. For the time being, al-Mustansir had brought balance to the external and internal forces that shaped his approach to governance.

Mediterranean Difference and Mediterranean Diversity

The Tunis Crusade strengthened and stabilized Mediterranean networks of interreligious interaction. In the east, Baybars carried out further conquests but also agreed to five treaties with Frankish authorities: King Hugh of Cyprus and Jerusalem, Bohemond VI of Tripoli, Jean of Montfort, the Hospitallers, and the Templars. Peace with the Franks also improved Baybars's relationship with Charles of Anjou, allowing each to pause the battle for Syria and turn to more pressing confrontations with the Ilkhanate and Byzantium respectively. In the central and western Mediterranean, al-Mustansir signed four treaties with northern Mediterranean powers, which reaffirmed old bonds with the *Regno*, Venice, Genoa, and the Crown of Aragon, while creating new ones with the kingdoms of France, Navarre, and England.

These treaties had broad commercial implications. Across the Mediterranean, merchants in Alexandria, Marseille, Palermo, Acre, Tunis, Bijaya, and Barcelona could look forward to a revival of trade. An ironic consequence of the crusade amplified the benefits of these renewed economic ties. On August 22, 1270, in Cremona, the Italian maritime republics settled their long-standing grievances in a comprehensive treaty.[45] Louis IX had been working toward this goal for years and felt, like many other crusade enthusiasts of his era, that it was essential to the survival of the crusader states. After several failed attempts, his mediators had finally brought Venice and Pisa, on one side, and Genoa, on the other, together to resolve their differences, ostensibly for the sake of the crusade. By the time the deal was made, however, Louis was on his sickbed outside Carthage. He was too far from Syria, and too close to death, to gain an advantage in his war against Baybars. Instead, the agreement promoted commercial exchange across the religious barriers that the king had sacrificed his life to reinforce.

The Tunis Crusade brought a certain degree of political and economic order to the Mediterranean world. It
p. 191 did not achieve this by imposing ↳ religious uniformity on the region. Louis did not Christianize North Africa or embrace Islam for France on his deathbed. The region remained religiously plural. Nor did the expedition promote stability by blending religious identities. Christians remained Christians after the crusade, and Muslims remained Muslims. Nor did the crusade foster peaceful relations by enabling secular ambitions to trump religious scruples.

In fact, religion as an organizing principle of personal identity mattered a great deal to many of those involved in the crusade. Religious identification structured post-crusade commercial relations among the combatants in powerful ways. The Hafsid treaties with the *Regno*, Genoa, and the Crown of Aragon delineated the rights of travelers and merchants not only as subjects of a prince or citizens of a republic, but also as Muslims and Christians. The conversion gambit at the heart of the crusade depended on the idea that allegiances of faith were changeable, certainly; but it also hinged on the shared assumption that religious

identification was fundamental to negotiating other kinds of relations—diplomatic, economic, and personal. Otherwise, why bother with it? If al-Mustansir dangled the prospect of conversion before Louis, it was because the emir believed that it would create a strong enough connection between them that the king would intercede with his own brother to stop an attack on Tunis. If Louis took al-Mustansir's proposition seriously, it was because the king deeply desired the salvation of the emir's soul. In the long run, al-Mustansir's conversion might have benefited the crusader states; but even if it did not, it still would have represented a triumph for the king's vision of a more profoundly Christianized world.

The Tunis Crusade witnessed powerful assertions of religious difference. While making the long journey back to France, Philippe III wrote that Louis's aim in North Africa had been to "extirpate from the roots the errors of the infidel Saracens there."[46] This ideology of elimination found a match in Baybars's depictions of Mamluk soldiers breaking crosses, smashing altars, and killing monks during the sack of Antioch.[47] The pair of dynasts more inclined to accommodation could use this kind of language when they needed to as well. Al-Mustansir called for jihad against the Frankish invaders, while Charles spoke of exerting himself for the
p. 192 exaltation of the Christian faith against the Saracens of North Africa.[48] At the same time, ↳ invoking holy war did not prevent pragmatic accommodations across boundaries of faith. Al-Mustansir and Charles both sent soldiers into battle with the rhetoric of religious division ringing in their ears, while negotiating to end the conflict peacefully. This seemingly schizophrenic approach to the war met with predictably mixed responses among those who were compelled or had volunteered to fight it. Many crusaders called for rejecting peace in favor of sacking Tunis, an argument that sought to combine, or even elide, the material and spiritual motivations that underpinned crusading. Similarly, some Tunisians rejected the treaty in favor of continued resistance. Rather than consenting to an agreement that seemed to subordinate the *dar al-Islam* to a Christian power, these few people preferred to resist the invasion at all costs. The contradictions that seem to be in play here—the simultaneous affirmation and transgression of prevailing religious norms—only begin to break down once we recognize the stabilizing role that a mutual acknowledgement of religious differences could play.

The crusade consolidated existing religious allegiances, but with surprising results. Rather than causing chaos and division, the expedition's powerful affirmations of difference animated a complex network of Mediterranean political, economic, and religious interactions that thrived into the late thirteenth century. In the political sphere, the Hafsids, Mamluks, Franks, Angevins, and Aragonese maintained a balance of power through treaties that, by formalizing political relations across religious lines, recognized the distinct ambitions and right to existence of each state. In the economic sphere, commerce continued to depend on strict reciprocity of rights and responsibilities among Muslim, Christian, and Jewish merchants. In the religious sphere, Christians remained valued members of North African society precisely because they were not Muslims (and in fact were not encouraged to become Muslims), which meant that they could serve as intermediaries with the Christian Mediterranean, as ambassadors, translators, traders, and even soldiers. Far from driving a wedge between Christians and Muslims, the Tunis Crusade strengthened the religiously plural character of Hafsid society. The Mediterranean in the age of the last European crusader king was a world of many kinds of diversity. In a strange twist of history, the final war he waged to eliminate Islam helped that diversity to flourish long after he was gone.

Notes

1 *RCA*, vol. 6: p. 14, no. 44 (Lefevre, no. 253); *RCA*, vol. 6: p. 34, nos. 113–14 (Lefevre, nos. 255–6); Pierre of Condé, "Letter to the treasurer of Saint-Frambaud of Senlis, September 4, 1270," in *Spicilegium*, vol. 3: p. 667.

2 Reinhold Röhricht, "La croisade du Prince Édouard d'Angleterre (1270–1274)," *Archives de l'Orient latin* 1 (1881): p. 620.

3 Sternfeld, pp. 279–83; *RCA*, vol. 6: p. 38, no. 128 (Lefevre, no. 266).

4 Pierre of Condé, "Letter to the prior of Argenteuil, January 30, 1271," in *Spicilegium*, vol. 3: pp. 668–9; *RCA*, vol. 10: p. 51, no. 181 (Lefevre, no. 393).

5 Primat, pp. 82–3. Pierre of Condé ("Letter to the prior of Argenteuil, January 30, 1271") estimated the dead at 4,000, which is probably too high; Baybars's spies reported forty ships were sunk: Ibn al-Furat, vol. 1: p. 189, vol. 2: p. 149.

6 Pierre of Condé, "Letter to the prior of Argenteuil, January 30, 1271"; Philippe III, "Letter to the abbot and convent of Saint-Denis, February 11, 1271"; *Spicilegium*, vol. 3: p. 669; Primat, pp. 84–7.

7 Ibn Khaldun, vol. 6: p. 671 (*Histoire des Berbères*, vol. 2: p. 369).

8 Ibn al-Furat, vol. 1: p. 198, vol. 2: p. 157; *RCA*, vol. 6: p. 159, no. 819 (Lefevre, no. 279); Sternfeld, p. 349 (appendix A, no. 34); for the symbolism behind the gifts, see Borghese, p. 172.

9 For Baybars's conquests in the spring of 1271, see Ibn ʿAbd al-Zahir, pp. 371–88; Ibn al-Furat, vol. 1: pp. 180–92; vol. 2: pp. 142–52; and Thorau, pp. 204–6.

10 *RCA*, vol. 6: no. 911.
11 Lefevre, nos. 330–2; Borghese, p. 173.
12 For Edward's arrival in the Holy Land and Charles's embassy to Baybars, see: *RCA*, vol. 6: p. 175, no. 911 (Lefevre, no. 327), *RCA*, vol. 6: p. 128, no. 620 (Lefevre, no. 330), *RCA*, vol. 6: p. 176, no. 913 (Lefevre, no. 331), *RCA*, vol. 6: p. 217, no. 1162 (Lefevre, no. 332); Ibn ʿAbd al-Zahir, p. 389; Ibn al-Furat, vol. 1: pp. 190, 196, vol. 2: pp. 150, 154; Röhricht, "Croisade du Édouard," pp. 622–3; Jean Richard, *The Crusades, c.1071–c.1291*, trans. Jean Birrell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 432–3.
13 For the naval expedition to Cyprus and the conquest of Montfort, see: Ibn ʿAbd al-Zahir, pp. 384–90; Ibn al-Furat, vol. 1: pp. 191–5, vol. 2: pp. 151–4; *Templare di Tiro*, p. 138 (Crawford, p. 67); Thorau, pp. 206–7.
14 Ibn ʿAbd al-Zahir, p. 390; Ibn al-Furat, vol. 1: p. 196, vol. 2: p. 155; Thorau, pp. 207, 222; Röhricht, "Croisade du Édouard," p. 623; Richard, "Croisade de 1270," pp. 520–1; Jackson, *Mongols and the West*, pp. 167–8.
15 Now Gaziantep, Turkey.
16 Near modern-day Altinbaşak, Turkey.
17 Ibn ʿAbd al-Zahir, pp. 396–7; Ibn al-Furat, vol. 1: p. 197, vol. 2: p. 155; *Templare di Tiro*, p. 140 (Crawford, pp. 67–8); Thorau, p. 209; Richard, *Crusades*, p. 433.
18 Ibn al-Furat, vol. 1: p. 198, vol. 2: 156–7.
19 Ibn ʿAbd al-Zahir, p. 398; Ibn al-Furat, vol. 1: pp. 199–200, vol. 2: 157–8; Richard, "Croisade de 1270," pp. 520–1; Thorau, pp. 209–10; Röhricht, "Croisade du Édouard," p. 624.
20 Ibn ʿAbd al-Zahir, p. 395; Thorau, p. 208.
21 Ibn ʿAbd al-Zahir, p. 401; *Templare di Tiro*, p. 140 (Crawford, pp. 68–9).
22 Ibn al-Furat, vol. 1: p. 198, vol. 2: p. 156.
23 Ibn Khaldun, vol. 6: p. 671 (*Histoire des Berbères*, vol. 2: p. 369).
24 Ibn Khaldun, vol. 6: pp. 674–5 (*Histoire des Berbères*, vol. 2: p. 372).
25 *RCA*, vol. 6: p. 240, no. 1284 (Lefevre, no. 345); *RCA*, vol. 6: p. 256, no. 1376 (Lefevre, no. 348); *RCA*, vol. 7: p. 221, no. 57 (Lefevre, no. 353); *RCA*, vol. 7: p. 210, n. 192 (Lefevre, no. 355); *RCA*, vol. 7: p. 185, no. 83 (Lefevre, no. 360).
26 *RCA*, vol. 9: p. 29, no. 39 (Lefevre, no. 377); *RCA*, vol. 10: pp. 213–14, no. 3 (Lefevre, no. 378).
27 *RCA*, vol. 13: p. 131, no. 440 (Lefevre, no. 420).
28 *RCA*, vol. 10: p. 212, no. 1 (Lefevre, no. 380).
29 *RCA*, vol. 7: p. 221, no. 54 (Lefevre, no. 351).
30 Sternfeld, p. 352 (appendix A, no. 38).
31 *RCA*, vol. 13: p. 74, no. 132 (Lefevre, no. 404).
32 *RCA*, vol. 8: p. 79, no. 315 (Lefevre, no. 369).
33 *RCA*, vol. 13: p. 32, no. 139 (Lefevre, no. 412); *RCA*, vol. 13: p. 167, no. 471 (Lefevre, no. 413).
34 *RCA*, vol. 13: p. 91, no. 207 (Lefevre, no. 411); *RCA*, vol. 13: pp. 30–1, no. 137 (Lefevre, no. 409).
35 Primat, p. 82; *Gesta Ludovici*, p. 478; Brunschvig, vol. 1: p. 65; *Traités*, pp. 203–6.
36 *Annali Genovesi*, pp. 131–4.
37 Alberto M. Boldorini, *Da Tunisi a Trapani con i Genovesi alla seconda crociata di Luigi IX (1270–1)* (Siena: Universita degli studi di Siena, 1967), nos. 18–19.
38 *Traités*, pp. 118–25; Brunschvig, vol. 1: p. 66.
39 *RCA*, vol. 10: p. 21, no. 78 (Lefevre, no. 389); *RCA*, vol. 6: pp. 157–8, no. 816 (Lefevre, no. 276); Sternfeld, pp. 293–7; Steven A. Epstein, *Genoa and the Genoese, 958–1528* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), p. 156.
40 Borghese, p. 142.
41 *L'Espagne catalane*, p. 121.
42 *Traités*, pp. 280–4; *L'Espagne catalane*, pp. 123–30. Dufourcq exaggerates Hafsid dependence on the Crown of Aragon in this period.
43 Ibn Khaldun, vol. 6: pp. 674–5 (*Histoire des Berbères*, vol. 2: p. 374).
44 Rouighi, pp. 37–54.
45 Sternfeld, pp. 339–46 (appendix A, no. 27).
46 Philippe III, "Letter to the abbot and convent of Saint-Denis, February 11, 1271," in *Spicilegium*, vol. 3: p. 669.
47 Ibn al-Furat, vol. 1: pp. 157–8, vol. 2: p. 124.
48 Charles of Anjou, "Letter to Pierre of Montbrun, October 4, 1270," in Léopold Delisle, *Instructions adressées par le Comité des travaux historiques et scientifiques aux correspondants du ministère de l'instruction publique et des beaux-arts. Littérature latine et histoire du moyen âge* (Paris: Leroux, 1890), pp. 73–7.