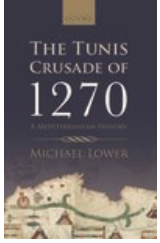

The Tunis Crusade of 1270: A Mediterranean History

Michael Lower

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CHAPTER

3 The Diversion

Michael Lower

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Abstract

In July 1269, King Louis IX of France was planning a campaign in Egypt or the Holy Land. One year later, his fleet landed on Sardinia, and in a war council held on July 13 Louis declared Tunis the target of the crusade. What happened between July 1269 and July 1270 to send the expedition in this unexpected direction is shrouded in secrecy. By expanding the narrative to incorporate Mediterranean-wide networks of interaction, this chapter identifies several key turning points: the visit of the Dominican linguist Ramon Martí to Tunis in 1269; the attendance of Tunisian envoys at the baptismal ceremony of a French Jew at Saint-Denis in October; the arrival of a Mongol embassy in Paris toward the end of the year; and the dispatch of an Angevin envoy to Tunis the following April, a month after Louis had lifted the *oriflamme* at Saint Denis to launch the campaign.

Keywords: King Louis IX of France, Sultan Baybars of Egypt, Charles of Anjou, al-Mustansir, emir of Tunis, Mongol, Genoa, conversion, tribute, King Jaume of Aragon

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

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Confronted by Mongols and Franks, Baybars had struck against the lesser of these threats by capturing the Frankish strongholds of Caesarea, Arsuf, and Safad in 1265–6. In response, Louis IX of France had begun to organize a crusade to save what remained of Frankish Syria. His attempts to enlist his brother Charles of Anjou for the cause and to use Sicily as a staging ground for departure foundered, however, when the Hohenstaufen and al-Mustansir of Tunis launched an insurgency that turned Sicily into a war zone and preoccupied Charles until the late summer of 1269. Up until that point, relations between the four major figures of the Tunis Crusade had followed a set pattern, with Charles's difficulties with al-Mustansir impeding Louis's desire for conflict with Baybars. When Sicily returned to Angevin control, the question was whether that dynamic would shift. It did, and with unexpected results. In 1269, there was a switch of pairings: Baybars and Charles exchanged several embassies, while al-Mustansir sent envoys to Louis. The Tunis Crusade was the unforeseen consequence of the realignment of interests that resulted from this diplomacy.

The reordering of relations among Capetians, Angevins, Mamluks, and Hafsids took place within an expansive diplomatic orbit. The web of alliances around the leading actors in the crusade extended from the British Isles to Inner Asia: England, Castile, Aragon, Venice, Pisa, Genoa, Hungary, Bulgaria, Serbia, Achaia, Epiros, Byzantium, the crusader states of Syria, and the Mongol khanates of the Golden Horde, Persia, and Transoxiana all played a part in the build-up to the crusade. These powers did not seem to acknowledge any geographical limits to the conflicts and collaborations in which they engaged. Carried only on horses and ships, Mongol, Byzantine, and Mamluk ambassadors traveled thousands of miles in months-long journeys to negotiate with monarchies as distant as Aragon, France, and England. The Tunis Crusade was not a world war, but it was pan-Eurasian. These broad horizons were a hallmark of the Mediterranean world after the

Mongol invasions of western Asia and eastern Europe in the mid-thirteenth century. Prior to that time,
p. 72 Tunis had been peripheral to ↳ medieval Middle Eastern conflicts. In this new environment of seemingly limitless possibilities for waging war and making peace, the Ifriqiyan port city took its unfortunate place on the frontline in the battle for far-away Syria.

The Baybars Effect

An act of holy war—brutal and uncompromising—set off the diplomatic maneuverings that eventually diverted the crusade to Tunis. In the early winter of 1268, Baybars learned that the Mongols were planning a raid on Aleppo. He mustered his forces and set off for Gaza on February 16. The Mongol threat, however, was only a pretext for the advance, which he put about to fool the Franks into thinking that they were not the target of the new campaign. In fact, even before he left Cairo, Baybars had dispatched a courier to his military commander in Damascus with orders to mobilize his Mamluks and bring them to Banyas. There, another courier relayed orders to be ready to besiege Beaufort, a Frankish fortress overlooking Beirut and Sidon, but to take no action until the sultan arrived. Baybars then advanced up the coast from Gaza to Jaffa, which Louis IX had refortified in the early 1250s. On March 8, 1268, the sultan's soldiers surrounded the city, forced open the gates, and advanced on the citadel, which surrendered on the same day. Keeping to his policy of eliminating beachheads for future crusades, he had the citadel destroyed. With the loss of Jaffa, the Franks no longer held a major coastal stronghold south of Acre.[1]

On April 4, 1268, Baybars arrived before Beaufort. His Syrian forces had already brought in wood and were building mangonels and other siege artillery. The castle had been modified over the years and now housed two citadels. Deciding it was impossible to defend them both, the garrison abandoned one to the besiegers and regrouped in the other. Baybars had the mangonels brought up and the bombardment began. Many Frankish noncombatants had not been able to escape before the surprise envelopment. Hoping to spare them, Frankish envoys asked Baybars for quarter on condition that he would allow the women and children to go free after the citadel surrendered to him. He agreed, and on April 15 he took possession of Beaufort and
p. 73 its soldiers, while an emir led off the rest ↳ toward Tyre. Along with Safad, taken two years before, Beaufort would form part of the system of Mamluk fortifications in the Syrian interior.[2]

From Beaufort, Baybars led his men on a hard march through the mountains of Lebanon toward Tripoli. They reached the city in early May 1268 and set about destroying crops, fields, and waterworks. The count of Tripoli was Bohemond VI, who was also prince of Antioch. Bohemond soon realized that the raids were only a diversion from the main target of the Mamluk drive north, which was the other city he ruled. In mid-May, the sultan brought his army to Hims, then to Hama, where it divided into three corps. The first made for St Simeon, Antioch's port, to block its access to the sea. The second circled around to the north, to prevent aid arriving from that direction. Baybars himself led the third corps straight to the city walls and had it invested on all sides.

On the approach to Antioch, a Mamluk advance guard encountered a Frankish patrol and in the skirmish that followed captured Simon Mansel, constable of the city. He offered to serve as a go-between, but three days of talks failed to produce results. He returned to the city to prepare for the inevitable assault. It began on May 19, 1268. Mamluk soldiers scaled the walls near Mt Silpius and entered the city. Resistance broke down, and one of the most famous massacres of the crusading era ensued. Baybars set guards at the gates and allowed his soldiers to kill and plunder at will. Ibn al-Furat suggested the scale of the slaughter, if not the exact numbers involved, when he wrote that 100,000 men lost their lives. Only the few Franks who found shelter in the citadel survived to fall into captivity the next day. Antioch itself—one of the great cities of the medieval eastern Mediterranean—would never recover from the destruction.[3]

Bohemond VI had been in Tripoli when the sack of Antioch took place. Baybars wrote to tell him what he had missed:

> You could have seen your horsemen thrown down beneath the legs of horses, your houses in the power of the plunderers, with the spoilers roaming through them, your goods being weighed by the qintar, your ladies being sold in fours and being bought with a dinar of your own money. If you had seen your churches with their crosses broken and rent, the pages of the false Testaments scattered, the graves of the patriarchs rifled, your Muslim enemy trampling down the sanctuary; had you seen the altar on which had been sacrificed the monk, the priest and the deacon, with the

p. 74 patriarchs crushed by disaster and the children of your kingdom enslaved…had you seen these ↳ things, you would have said, 'Would that I were dust. Would that no message had come to give me news of these things.'[4]

While dwelling on Bohemond's failure to protect his people—the basic responsibility of any medieval ruler—the letter also stressed the religious character of the violence done to Antioch. The Egyptian and Syrian soldiers were not just agents of a regional rival; they were the "Muslim enemy." They plundered horses, houses, and women, the usual targets of a sacking; but they also destroyed crosses in the churches (rather than keeping them as booty), ripped up the holy books, desecrated Christian graves, and killed clergy on the altars where they once celebrated the mysteries of their faith. With its rhetoric of interreligious confrontation, the letter was powerfully reductive. It transformed what was actually a multilateral struggle into a dichotomous conflict between two parties defined by allegiance to incompatible faiths. To Bohemond, that was the message Baybars wanted to deliver. The sultan would eliminate him, or die in the attempt. Coexistence was no longer possible.

Baybar's Near Eastern neighbors were quick to put his unwillingness to compromise to the test. They knew as well as he did that setting out an intransigent position was a perfect way to start a new round of negotiations. Baybars has gone down in history as a great conqueror; he was also the master of the punitive truce. The crusader states offered fruitful ground in this respect. By the late 1260s, they were hopelessly atomized, with competing authorities operating as semi-autonomous units within the greater whole. The military orders (Templars, Hospitallers, Teutonic Knights), the Italian maritime republics (Pisa, Genoa, and Venice), and even the lords of individual towns within the kingdom of Jerusalem (the count of Jaffa, the lady of Beirut) were all willing to negotiate with Baybars individually, thereby ceding him enormous leverage. In the spring of 1268, however, hope for a more unified response to the Mamluk threat emerged in the form of Hugh of Lusignan.

Hugh arrived in Acre in late April 1268, between Baybars's conquests of Beaufort and Antioch. He had been crowned king of Cyprus on December 23, 1267. In September 1268, he would become king of Jerusalem as well, uniting the two monarchies of the Latin East for the first time in generations. Anticipating this rare accomplishment, he had come to Acre to make peace with Baybars before the kingdom he hoped to rule disappeared entirely. After accepting an oath of loyalty from the commune of Acre, Hugh sent envoys to
p. 75 Baybars in Damascus. In return for a ten-year truce covering Cyprus and Acre's hinterland, the sultan ↳ extracted significant territorial concessions: the mountain lands above Sidon (with the Franks retaining the lowlands), and revenue-sharing *condominia* in Haifa (Cayphas), Karmal (Carmel), Athlith (Chateau Pèlerin), and al-Qurayn (Montfort). In July, Baybars's representatives brought the agreement to Acre for Hugh to ratify. He proposed two modifications to the draft, asking for Cyprus to be excluded and for the option of setting aside the truce if a crusade arrived under the leadership of a king from overseas. Lacking the authority to sanction these changes, the Egyptian envoys went home empty-handed. Although Baybars had attached harsh conditions to the truce, it still offered the chance for extended peace with Egypt. Given what had just happened at Antioch, this was no small thing. Hugh, however, chose to keep the crusade option open instead. By rejecting the agreement, he would be free to welcome Louis on Cyprus (where the French king had halted in 1248) and to campaign by his side on the mainland. He was gambling his political future on the proposition that Louis's second crusade would be more successful than his first.[5]

The Search for Allies

If he had known how much progress Louis had made on his crusade planning by the summer of 1268, Hugh might have been more cautious. As with the Egyptian Crusade of 1248–52, the preparations were proving challenging. Louis needed soldiers, allies, money, and ships. Despite the qualms of Jean of Joinville and others, some French nobles began to take the cross from the late spring of 1267 onwards. The knighting of Louis's eldest son Philippe on June 5 was an important occasion for new commitments. Alphonse, count of Poitiers, Louis's brother, signed on for the crusade in spring 1267, as did his son-in-law, Thibaut, count of Champagne and king of Navarre.[6]

There were also encouraging developments for the crusade outside France. Recruitment for Louis's first crusade had been largely limited to his own domains on account of the papal–imperial conflict and his own territorial disputes with the Crown of Aragon and England. The fall of the Hohenstaufen and peace treaties
p. 76 with Jaume I of Aragon and Henry III of ↳ England cleared the way for a wider response. Despite his

excommunication for adultery—or perhaps because of it—Jaume took the cross for the Holy Land in late 1266.[7] He was 58 years old and had made his military reputation conquering Valencia and the Balearic islands from the Muslim powers of al-Andalus. Now he wanted to test himself in the Holy Land, the most prestigious crusade venue of them all. Louis's other peace partner, Henry III, did not believe that his domestic circumstances would allow him to go on crusade. England was just returning to a semblance of normalcy after Simon de Montfort's revolt of the mid-1260s. Henry's eldest son, the Lord Edward, saw the situation differently. He pressed his father and Pope Clement IV for permission to join the crusade. After initial hesitation they gave in and Edward took the cross on June 24, 1268.[8]

Louis had eased the way by promising to loan Edward money for his campaign. This unusual arrangement points to the financial burden the crusade placed on the French crown. Rather than funding their own retinues, even wealthy magnates were contracting with Louis to serve on the campaign. To make matters worse, the money he needed to pay them was proving hard to come by. While the Sicilian campaign had been underway, papal funding for the Holy Land expedition had been limited to a five-year hundredth on church revenues. In May 1267, Clement had tried to open the spigot. He granted the king income from vow redemptions and testamentary bequests in the kingdom of France; a three-year tenth of ecclesiastical income within the royal domains; and a three-year twentieth on church revenues in the neighboring provinces of Léon, Metz, Toul, and Verdun.[9] The problem was that, after years of funding expeditions to the Holy Land, Latin Greece, and Sicily, the French churches were tired of paying for crusades. Louis's first crusade alone had cost them 950,000 *livres tournois*. No sooner had Clement announced the new taxes than complaints began to pour into the papal curia from ecclesiastical provinces across northern France.[10]

In the face of clerical resistance, Louis appealed to the pope and turned to expedients. Against precedent, he
p. 77 demanded that "daily distributions"—the ↳ charity that local churches dispensed to their wards and the poor—should also be subject to the tenth. Clement drew the line at this. He urged the king to drop a request that was likely to do long-term damage to his relations with the French church.[11]

Exacerbating the pressure to pay for soldiers was the need for ships to sail them overseas. As of the late 1260s, there was no French Navy. There was a port—Aigues-Mortes, built for the Egyptian Crusade—but no royal ships docking there. Whatever vessels Louis required, he would have to hire or custom order. Given the lack of shipbuilding experience in the royal domains, this meant dealing with a foreign power; and since that foreign power would have its own security needs, political interests, and economic imperatives, the securing of transport for the army was bound to be a delicate proposition.

The Italian maritime republics usually supplied sea transport for Holy Land crusades. Although they were seldom on good terms, relations among Pisa, Genoa, and Venice were particularly poor in the late 1260s. The War of St Sabas, waged between Genoa and Venice in the crusader states since the late 1250s, had spread throughout the Mediterranean. Pisa's support for Conradin's Italian invasion was another sore point. Wary of each other, would any be willing to commit warships to an extended deployment overseas? Louis's own involvement in Italian politics did not help matters either. By allowing his brother to attempt the conquest of the *Regno*, he had committed himself to the Guelf cause. Pisa was unlikely to build him a fleet as a result. These powers also had commercial engagements to consider. All of them traded in Alexandria, a great Mediterranean entrepôt. How willing would they be to risk their futures there by joining the coalition Louis was building against Baybars?

In spring 1268, Louis began negotiating with Venice. Her envoys arrived in Paris and offered three large ships and seven smaller ones at a high price.[12] In the summer, negotiations continued in Venice, but the terms did not improve. By offering to transport Louis's army, Venice was hoping to win favor with Clement IV so that he would authorize a crusade against Emperor Michael VIII Palaiologos of Byzantium, who had stripped Venice of the privileged commercial position it had occupied in the Bosphorus before he took power in 1261. In late July, a diplomatic breakthrough with Michael VIII opened up a more direct route back into the
p. 78 Black Sea. On June 30, the emperor sent ambassadors to Venice to seal ↳ a five-year truce.[13] In mid-September, the Venetians pulled out of the discussions with Louis IX, citing concerns that Baybars would confiscate their goods in Alexandria if they agreed to build ships for the crusade.[14]

Louis now turned to Marseille, which offered transportation at the rate of 800 marks per 1,000 passengers.[15] Louis booked a few ships from the city, but turned to Genoa for a better price. Like Venice, Genoa should also have wanted to avoid offending Baybars, since Genoese merchants profited from the slave trade between the Black Sea and Egypt. On this occasion, however, Genoa was prepared to play a double game, negotiating with Louis while hoping to retain its preponderance on the Black Sea–Alexandria route.

On October 10, 1268, Louis empowered Henri of Champrepus, a cleric, and Guillaume of Mora, the king's sergeant, to negotiate with the Genoese about leasing or constructing ships for his "overseas passage." Over the next several months, Henri and Guillaume would agree to multiple contracts with the commune and private consortiums of Genoese ship owners. In total, they acquired nineteen vessels, seven of which would be newly constructed.[16]

The contracts go into minute detail about building specifications, terms of payment, and the construction process. A sense of the cost and complexity of the process comes through in a contract of November 28 between Louis and the *podestà* of Genoa, Guido of Corrigia. The commune agreed to build two ships for Louis at a cost of 14,000 *l.t.*, provided that the Genoese could import the wood for the masts, lateen yards, and rudders from the royal forest of Angles. The logistical challenges involved in extracting the huge trunks required for the masts in particular, and hauling them from northern France to the Genoese yards, must have been enormous.[17]

While detailed in many respects, the contracts are vague in others. They never mentioned a destination for the expedition, beyond the generic "overseas." They also gave Louis flexibility over how he could deploy the
p. 79 ↳ fleet. He could sail it wherever he wanted and could halt for a time, even over the winter, and then resume the voyage the following spring. Under this scenario, a two-stage campaign was conceivable, with a stop at one location setting the stage for an assault on the Mamluks in Egypt or Syria. The ships were supposed to be ready at Aigues-Mortes by May 10, 1270.

Genoa had joined France, England, and the Crown of Aragon on the crusade. In the meantime, though, Louis lost an ally when Pope Clement IV passed away at the end of November 1268, ushering in a long vacancy in the Apostolic See. Clement's death had consequences for Charles as well, giving him more freedom to manage his foreign policy. Charles, in fact, remained non-committal about the new crusade. He thought Mamluk Egypt was too strong to confront on the battlefield and favored a diplomatic approach to saving the crusader states. His own interests as king of Sicily and count of Provence also encouraged him toward conciliation. Provençal and Sicilian traders were active in Alexandria and Charles did not want to jeopardize their access. Settling with Baybars would also leave Charles free to deal with the Sicilian revolt and continue securing the *Regno*. With the sultan neutralized, Charles could intervene against Michael VIII in Epiros and Achaia.

Charles sent envoys to Cairo in the early summer of 1268, after learning of the sack of Antioch. They asked Baybars to refrain from further attacks on the kingdom of Jerusalem and to give his friendship to Charles. They recalled the Hohenstaufen tradition of peaceful relations with Egypt and asserted that Charles sought the same close relations with Baybars that Emperor Frederick II had enjoyed with the Ayyubid sultans al-Malik al-Kamil and al-Salih Ayyub.

Baybars responded warmly to these overtures. In a letter to Charles, he accepted his offer of friendship and agreed to honor his intercession on behalf of the Syrian Franks. To this offer of peace on two fronts, the sultan attached a thinly veiled threat: he reminded Charles of "the services that he had already done" for him and his brother during their Egyptian campaign. This allusion to Charles's humiliation in the delta served as a warning against the folly of trying another attack. Joining his brother's latest venture against Egypt, Baybars insinuated, would again lead to disaster.[18]

The sultan entrusted the letter to a high-level diplomatic delegation, which included the *hajib* Badr al-Din Muhammad b. ʿAziz. The stakes were high. If Badr al-Din could secure an agreement with Charles, Baybars would remove a powerful member from the coalition that was forming against him. Better still, Charles
p. 80 might be able to deflect Louis away from ↳ the Levant. Rather than proceeding directly to Brindisi, the envoys sailed to Genoa. They arrived there just as Louis's representatives were finalizing the naval contracts. Before meeting with Charles, Badr al-Din was going to find out how advanced Louis's preparations for the crusade were and what role the Genoese planned to play in it.

Badr al-Din's visit to Genoa did prove illuminating. As he was walking with his delegation through Genoa's main piazza one day, he encountered a group of Mongols. Seemingly intent on recreating the battle of ʿAyn Jalut in miniature, the two parties began to fight it out in broad daylight. Eventually, their Genoese escorts managed to separate them before real harm could be done.[19] The Mongols were in Genoa on an embassy from the Ilkhan Abaqa, who had succeeded his father Hülegü in February 1265. This was an alarming development from Badr al-Din's point of view. Because of a shared interest in Black Sea trade, the Genoese usually maintained good relations with the Mongols of the Golden Horde. The presence of the Ilkhan's men

in Genoa—archrivals to the Golden Horde and the Mamluks alike—suggested that the Genoese might be switching sides. Equally disturbing for Badr al-Din was the appearance of a Byzantine embassy in the city. Ambassadors from Michael VIII were accompanying the Mongols on their mission but had missed the fistfight on the piazza. They had stopped in Genoa en route to meet Louis IX in Paris. If it had not dawned on him already, Badr al-Din could now guess that the Genoese, the Byzantines, and the Ilkanate had joined the anti-Mamluk coalition.

The links between the eastern and western wings of the crusade alliance had been growing for some time before the Mamluks figured out what was going on in the streets of Genoa. In early 1267, not long after Baybars's conquest of Safad, Abaqa had dispatched envoys to Clement IV and Jaume I of Aragon. To Clement's surprise, they brought him a letter written in Mongolian—the Ilkhan's Latin secretary was absent when the mission was launched. Despite the language barrier, the envoys conveyed Abaqa's enthusiasm for supporting a crusade against Baybars. Judging by his reply, Clement also came away from his meetings with them convinced that Abaqa had converted to Latin Christianity.[20] This was not the case,
p. 81 but intimating an interior disposition to embrace the faith was a common ↳ feature of Mongol diplomacy with European powers in this era.[21] From the papal curia, the Mongol mission went to Perpignan for discussions with Jaume of Aragon in early spring 1267. These did not progress far, but Jaume was intrigued enough to appoint an ambassador, Jaume Alaric of Perpignan, to accompany the Mongol envoys on their return trip to Abaqa.[22]

It was in the course of Jaume Alaric's embassy to the Ilkhan that Baybars conquered Antioch, which increased the interest of both parties in mounting a joint response. Prince Bohemond had been a client of the Ilkhan since 1260 and a Mongol official had been in Antioch when the Mamluks sacked it.[23] In late spring 1268, Jaume and two Mongol envoys made the long trek back across the Mediterranean. Joining them were representatives of Michael VIII, whose illegitimate daughter Maria had married Abaqa in 1265.[24] The Byzantine presence in the legation would boost Abaqa's Christian bona fides, which would help in negotiations with Jaume of Aragon, Clement IV, and Louis IX, all of whom were on the itinerary. The Byzantines had their own agenda as well. Whereas Abaqa was a natural fit for the anti-Mamluk coalition, Michael VIII was not. Like Baybars, Michael had been the target of papal crusade preaching, and he shared the sultan's interest in keeping commercial traffic flowing between Alexandria and the Bosphorus. But Charles of Anjou's conquest of Sicily and aggressive stance toward Epiros and Achaia changed the calculus for Michael. He would be willing to support the Holy Land crusade if Charles could be kept out of the Greek East. To entice them further, Michael dangled church union with Rome. In his way, he was proposing a conversion as drastic as the one Abaqa was presumed to have undergone. For the past sixty years, the papacy had preached crusades against Orthodox Greek rulers on the basis that they were schismatics who had willfully separated from Latin Christianity. A papal–Capetian alliance with Michael promised to heal the schism and strengthen the forces arrayed against Christendom's greatest enemy.

By the winter of 1268–9, the joint Ilkhanid–Byzantine embassy had reached Genoa, where the unpleasant meeting with the Mamluk envoys took place. From there, the dueling legations went their separate ways:
p. 82 the Mongols and the Byzantines to Clement IV in Viterbo, Louis IX in Paris, ↳ and Jaume of Aragon in Valencia; the Mamluks to Charles of Anjou in his siege camp outside Lucera.[25]

As the Mongol–Byzantine mission made the rounds, various proposals for collaboration were raised. In a letter to the pope, this time composed in Latin, the Ilkhan promised to dispatch soldiers under his brother Ejei to help the crusaders.[26] In their negotiations with Jaume of Aragon, the Mongol envoys were more specific. Jaume would later recall in his memoir that they suggested a rendezvous in Ayas, a port town in Cilician Armenia.[27] The meeting point was advantageous in several respects. The king of Lesser Armenia, Hethum I (1227–70), had been a tributary of the Ilkhanate for decades and shared its anti-Mamluk inclinations. For a time, Hethum had been unable to confront the Mamluks because they had captured his son and heir Leo in battle and held him as their prisoner in Cairo. In the spring of 1268, however, Hethum secured Leo's release from Baybars.[28] With his diplomatic flexibility restored, Hethum could offer to host the crusaders at Ayas. Accessible to the crusader fleet, the town offered a location well to the north of Mamluk holdings, which would allow the expedition to resupply and rearm in safety. Because it was also close to Ilkhanid territory, Ayas would be easy for Abaqa's forces to reach. Through his envoys, Abaqa promised to provide Jaume's army with food and siege engines, which were too bulky to bring over from Iberia economically. Byzantine ships could comfortably reach the port as well: Michael VIII offered to send supplies by sea. By the spring of 1269, Abaqa's diplomacy had produced a crusade plan: after meeting up in Armenia, a Mongol–Aragonese–Armenian expeditionary force would mount a campaign against Baybars.

Many details were left unresolved, but it was enough of an outline to take to Paris, where the joint Ilkanate–Byzantine embassy would meet with Louis IX.

While the embassy made its way north, Charles of Anjou waited for Baybars's ambassadors to arrive in the *Regno*. The brawl in the piazza was not the only problem they had encountered on the way. Charles had sent sailors from Marseille to bring the envoys down to Naples, but the escorts had failed to appear. On February 16, 1269, Charles wrote to his friends in Genoa, the Grimaldi brothers, asking them to make sure that the Mamluk emissaries were being well looked after and to arrange for their transportation. He wanted the
p. 83 brothers to explain to the envoys that ↳ nothing was closer to his heart than their good treatment and that he had thrown the men from Marseille in jail for their incompetence.[29]

Charles's eagerness to negotiate with the Mamluks is understandable. Although revolts against him in Lucera and Sicily were ongoing, in other respects his negotiating position had improved since he had sent his embassy to Cairo in the early summer of 1268. Conradin was dead and Enrique of Castile was imprisoned in an Angevin jail. The situation had stabilized somewhat in the kingdom of Jerusalem. Hugh of Lusignan had been crowned king in fall 1268 and was enjoying a (brief) honeymoon period with the barons of the realm. Moreover, Badr al-Din was now aware of the alliance that was forming against his master. Charles could use the threat of the crusade to his advantage. Under these circumstances, it made sense for the Mamluk delegation to drag out negotiations rather than commit to an unfavorable agreement. The longer they talked, the longer Charles might delay joining his brother's crusade. While a treaty signed on the spot might have been ideal for Charles, keeping Baybars engaged diplomatically, rather than on the battlefield, was a decent alternative. In the end, both parties were probably not too disappointed with the outcome of this round of negotiations: Charles would send a delegation back to Cairo in the company of Badr al-Din and his retinue.

Minutely planned, and assembled over two months, Charles put together a delegation meant to dazzle. There would be no punitive treaty for this group. Charles appointed as its leader Guillaume of Farumville, deacon of Saint-Pierre d'Orleans. Guillaume would sail with a traveling party of forty-six, including two military advisors, two Dominican friars, and two senior Angevin officials. The overall expense was impressive: 50 ounces of gold for new robes for the dignitaries; 6 for weapons on the boats; 101 for the wages of the sailors and the helmsmen; 79 for the expenses of Guillaume's retinue and that of Badr al-Din, which numbered 22 all on its own.[30] Shortly after June 21, 1269, Guillaume set sail from Brindisi on the *Portafore*, laden with supplies, weapons, many diplomats, and a thoughtful Italian gift for the sultan: hundreds of cheeses.[31]

The First Strike

While the search for allies continued, Jaume of Aragon was growing impatient with diplomacy. Although
p. 84 Charles's ambassadors had just arrived in Cairo, and Abaqa and Michael VIII's in Paris, Jaume decided ↳ it was time to go. He liked Abaqa's plan, and wanted to be the first European king to collaborate with the Mongols on a crusade. The alliance also made sense in terms of Catalan–Angevin rivalry. While Charles was pushing for peace with Baybars, Jaume was joining the alliance to fight him. Jaume was not put off by the opinion of his brother-in-law, King Alfonso X of Castile, who told him that the Mongols were a deceitful people and that he would be better off staying home. For Jaume, the unlikely, bordering on the miraculous, appearance of Mongol envoys from thousands of miles away was a sign that God approved of the venture. King Alfonso wished him luck and sent him 100,000 gold *morabetins* and a hundred horses for the expedition.[32]

Contributions to the campaign poured in from other sources as well. The cities of Aragon, Catalonia, and Valencia offered generous financial support, with Barcelona chipping in 80,000 *sous*, and Morella 10,000. Majorca gave Jaume 50,000, which he spent on three ships and beef for the army. By late August 1269, a sizable force had gathered in Barcelona: about 800 knights, a few thousand footsoldiers, a large number of warhorses, and several churchmen, including Bishop Arnau of Barcelona. As befitted a major maritime power, the fleet assembled to carry them east was impressive: some thirty large ships, more than twenty galleys, and many smaller vessels.[33]

On September 4, 1269, the ships set sail. Jaume's vessel made good progress at first, but on the evening of September 6 a storm rolled in from the east, kicking up heavy squalls and turning the waters dark. The

captain, Ramon Marquet, struck the sails to ride out the storm. For five days, they were battered in the Gulf of Lion. Sailors who had made the passage overseas dozens of times swore that they had never seen anything like it. Jaume summoned Ramon and told him that since God had not given them a wind to sail east, it appeared that the voyage did not please Him and should be abandoned. Once the king had interpreted the divine will in this fashion, his counselors pleaded with him to return home. Because of the delay, even if they could make the crossing they would run into the thick fog that (apparently!) enveloped Acre in early winter. On about September 16, Jaume's ship approached Aigues-Mortes, the French port from which Louis planned to launch his expedition the following spring. But another strong wind blew the crusaders toward
p. 85 Agde, where ↳ they were able to put in on the 17th. Jaume's crusade was over, thirteen days after it had begun.[34]

After recovering for a while in Montpellier, and refusing several offers to resume the expedition, Jaume returned by land to Catalonia in October 1269. Some ships, however, made it through the storm and carried on toward the Levant. Under the leadership of Jaume's illegitimate sons, Ferran and Pere, 400 knights risked the fog and landed at Acre at the end of October. At about this time, rumors reached Baybars in Cairo that the Mongols were on the move in northern Syria, raiding Bedouin flocks around al-Sajur, not far from Aleppo. Although a rendezvous with the Mongols in Lesser Armenia was clearly no longer part of the plan, the Mongols and the Catalan–Aragonese crusaders seemed ready to strike together at Baybars's Syrian domains.

Leaving Cairo in late November, Baybars reached Damascus in early December. The Mongols withdrew on news of his arrival. Abaqa was unable to invade northern Syria because the Chaghadayid khan Baraq had attacked the Ilkhanate strongholds of Merv and Nishapur in Transoxiana.[35] Many of the crusaders had gone home by then as well, once they realized that King Jaume was not coming. Having heard that the sultan had brought only a small force from Egypt, the new commander of the French regiment in Acre, Robert of Cresèques, along with Olivier of Termes, an experienced Capetian soldier, led out a raiding party into the area around Montfort. The Aragonese crusaders remained behind in their camp outside Acre. Hoping to take advantage of Robert's inexperience, Baybars assembled troops from Safad and ordered them to attack the Frankish raiders and then retreat southwards while he brought his own men and several Syrian emirs across Vadum Jacob into the vicinity of Toron Saladini. At the first contact with the soldiers from Safad, on December 19, 1269, Olivier of Termes pressed for a retreat to Acre, but Robert was eager to prove his worth in his new position. He pursued the Safad contingent into the vanguard of Baybars's ambush. Robert had been killed, and his fellow Franks defeated, before the sultan could even arrive on the battlefield. The Catalan–Aragonese crusaders went home the following spring, about the same time that Louis IX was setting out for Aigues-Mortes. The first concerted response to Baybars's Syrian conquests had failed.[36]

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Tunisian Envoys Witness a Baptism

While Jaume of Aragon was recovering in Agde from his passage across the Gulf of Lion, his cook came to him with a story. A boat moored next to them in the harbor had two passengers on board who had just arrived from Tunis. One was Francis Cendra, who was the prior of St Catherine's, a prominent Dominican house in Barcelona with close links to the royal family. The other was Ramon Martí, a Dominican friar fluent in Hebrew and Arabic whom Jaume had appointed to censor Jewish religious literature in 1264. When the friars asked the cook about his ship, he told them it belonged to the king, who had returned from his crusade because of bad weather. The friar's response to this information was not what the cook expected. Rather than stopping in for a visit, they continued on their way to Montpellier. Jaume knew both men well and was a little put out by their failure to pay a courtesy call.[37]

After the friars stopped in Montpellier, it is likely that they traveled north, to Paris. It is otherwise hard to understand why they would have sailed directly from Tunis to Agde, a port on the French Mediterranean, rather than home to Barcelona. Moreover, both men had personal connections to Louis IX and shared his interests in crusading and missionary work. It is also true that Louis needed the expertise they could provide at that time. In October 1269, about three weeks after the friars met Jaume's cook in Agde, the French king hosted Tunisian envoys in Paris. Having just come from there, Ramon and Francis could offer their own account of the situation in the city, which could help Louis to contextualize his conversations with the emissaries. In addition, Ramon's knowledge of Arabic would enable him to serve as a translator. Monarchs based in the Mediterranean could use Jews, renegades, and bilingual mercenaries as translators, but Louis

either could not (in the case of mercenaries) or would not (Jews and renegades) employ these familiar sources of multilingual expertise. He preferred Dominicans who knew Arabic and there were very few of these around.[38]

The Tunisian envoys were in Paris as part of a broader Hafsid diplomatic outreach to Angevin Sicily and Capetian France. The timing of the embassies and the interconnected issues they raised suggest that the
p. 87 same envoys carried out both missions, arriving first in Sicily in late August ↳ 1269, meeting with Charles in September, and then making their way to Paris for negotiations with Louis in October. Because of the issues in play, the envoys would have wanted to hear what Charles had to say before talking to Louis.[39]

Charles was concerned about security and money. He needed to stabilize Sicily and protect its southern frontier. By the time talks with the Hafsids got underway in September 1269, the Sicilian revolt was losing momentum but was not completely suppressed. While Federico of Castile had returned to Tunis, Conrad Capece was still on the loose. The revolt made clear that al-Mustansir could destabilize core Angevin holdings if he wished. Charles's plans for expansion elsewhere, particularly in the Greek East, hinged on achieving a modus vivendi with the emir. The tribute that Charles believed Tunis owed to the kingdom of Sicily was also critical. As Charles consolidated his rule, he claimed Hohenstaufen rights to lands and revenues wherever he could. For him, the tribute was part of what he had won at Benevento and Tagliacozzo. Underpinning this attitude were his dire financial circumstances following the conquest.

For al-Mustansir, the questions were whether, and how much, he would have to pay for peace with Charles and access to Sicilian wheat. He did not enjoy the leverage with Charles that he once had. The failure of the Sicilian uprising to restore the Hohenstaufen placed pressure on him to reach an accommodation with the new master of the *Regno*. So too did a return to the food shortages experienced in the late 1230s under Abu Zakariya. Ibn Khaldun talks about famine gripping Tunis in 1269 and 1270.[40] To alleviate the crisis, al-Mustansir needed Sicilian wheat more than ever. Finally, Charles could back up his demands with the threat of his brother's crusade. While news of Louis's expedition was widespread, no one knew where it was going. In the discussions with al-Mustansir's ambassadors, Charles could exploit the mystery to his advantage.

Given the importance of the issues at stake, they were never likely to be resolved in one round of negotiations. Whatever financial demands Charles may have made, the Tunisian envoys did not give in to them. Consequently, they left Apulia without a deal, and the danger of Charles ordering a retaliatory strike against Tunis remained real.

By early October 1269, the Tunisian envoys were with Louis IX in Paris. This was not the first time that al-
p. 88 Mustansir and Louis had been in contact. Geoffrey of Beaulieu, the king's Dominican confessor, reports ↳ that the two had exchanged several embassies before Louis departed on crusade.[41] From Ibn Khaldun and al-Yunini, we can glean that these previous exchanges, like those between the emir and Charles, touched on issues of trade, debt, and money.[42] Subjects of the French crown were becoming more involved in Mediterranean commerce as the monarchy expanded its presence in southern France, a transition symbolized by the construction of Aigues-Mortes for Louis's first crusade. In the absence of a formal treaty between Capetian France and Hafsid Ifriqiya, personal diplomacy may have been required to regulate the disputes that would arise as the first French merchants began to work in Tunis. There may have been a political dimension to the talks as well, since Louis had supported the overthrow of al-Mustansir's Hohenstaufen allies.

On October 9, 1269, the king gathered along with many nobles and churchmen at Saint-Denis to celebrate the feast day of France's patron saint. Geoffrey of Beaulieu says that the king decided to mark the occasion with the baptism of a "certain famous Jew." Louis was helping to lift the convert from the baptismal font when he called for the Tunisian envoys to participate in the ceremony:

> Summoning them, with great emotion the king said, 'Tell your lord the king on my behalf, that I long so earnestly for the salvation of his soul that I would choose to spend all my life in a Saracen dungeon and never see the clear light of the sun, if only your king and his people would become Christian in good faith!'[43]

With Louis's speech to the envoys, we arrive at a central mystery of the Tunis Crusade: how did conversion become part of the diplomatic preliminaries to the campaign? Geoffrey is vague about who gave Louis the idea that al-Mustansir might be open to accepting Christianity, saying only that "trustworthy men" led him to believe it was possible.[44] Geoffrey certainly trusted his fellow Dominicans and there were many friars

close to the king who could have advised him along these lines, including Ramon Martí and Francis Cendra, who had just left Tunis and may have been with Louis in Paris. Another possibility is the Tunisian envoys
p. 89 themselves. Having failed to reach a settlement with Charles of Anjou, they could have ↳ floated the prospect of the emir's conversion to win Louis's sympathy and persuade him to intervene with his brother to bring peace to the central Mediterranean.

Could a man who had once claimed the caliphate have ever made such a proposal, however appealing the consequences? The short answer: yes, he certainly could have, although that does not necessarily mean that he did. Everything we know about the diplomatic environment in which al-Mustansir operated suggests that an offer to convert would have been a sensible, almost predictable element of negotiating with a monarch famously enthusiastic about Christianization. Three months earlier, in July 1269, Louis had hosted the ambassadors from the Mongol Ilkhan Abaqa. Their message to the papacy, Jaume of Aragon, and Louis was consistent: Abaqa had become a Latin Christian and would be a reliable partner in the war against Baybars. Louis would have heard a similar story from the Byzantine envoys traveling with the Mongols: Michael VIII would bring his people into Roman obedience and support the crusade if Louis could keep Charles from invading the Greek East. Christianization—or rather the promise of it—was a binding agent for the anti-Mamluk coalition. The suggestion that al-Mustansir harbored a secret enthusiasm for Christianity and so should not be set upon by the Angevins fits neatly into this context.[45]

Whatever its source, the hint that the emir was ready to convert opened up new strategic possibilities for the crusade. Al-Mustansir would need support to take the plunge. He would fear for his honor, his throne, and his life if he abandoned Islam. But if Louis's army made a show of force before Tunis, he could accept the Christian faith with less fear of reprisals. The same pressure might also compel his people to convert, which would allow him to remain in power.[46] In the naval contracts with Genoa, Louis had allowed for the possibility of a two-stage expedition. A halt in Tunis might gain an improbable but spectacular addition to the anti-Mamluk coalition. With the emir on board, a new front in the war against Baybars could be opened up on his western flank. Even if al-Mustansir got cold feet, the crusaders could sack the city and use the plunder to fund the next stage of the campaign. Beyond these immediate benefits, a Christian presence in Tunis could spark a broader revitalization of the faith in North Africa, which had been a bulwark of the late antique church. In geo-political terms, it would hand control over ports on either side of the Sicilian Straits —the choke point of the Mediterranean—to the Capetians and their clients.

p. 90 By fall 1269, the coalitions assembled by Baybars and Louis to wage the battle for Syria were fraying at the edges. Baybars had already seen off Jaume of Aragon's premature attack. The Ilkhanate had failed to link up with the crusaders from the west. Al-Mustansir and Charles remained unreliable elements in the Mediterranean diplomatic nexus, because they had feet in both camps. Their fear of each other had sparked a diplomatic realignment that was drawing their new negotiating partners away from the struggle for which they had been preparing for so long. Thanks to his negotiations with al-Mustansir, Louis might come in peace to Tunis before confronting Egypt; and thanks to his negotiations with Charles, Baybars might grant a truce to the crusader states instead of destroying them.

From Syracuse to Cagliari

Despite these tensions, Louis's original vision for the crusade remained in place. He would lead a large and united European force against Baybars, supported by the sultan's regional rivals. Collaborating with Charles remained central to the plan. On July 23, 1269, as the Sicilian revolt began to die down, Charles finally announced that he was ready to support the crusade:

> Since King Louis, with one brother, his sons, barons, and a most powerful Christian army, has arranged to come to the port of Syracuse on the next feast of St. John [June 24, 1270], God willing setting out from that place in aid of the Holy Land, we intend to honor and swear in this magnificent passage for God.[47]

Syracuse, on the east coast of Sicily, was an excellent staging ground for an expedition to Egypt or Syria. Charles promised to meet his brother there and have supplies waiting for the crusade army. He ordered all ship captains wanting to sail out of Apulian ports to return by April 1270 so they could be available to transport food and arms from the mainland. He made no commitment to sail east with the crusade; instead, he would provide the departure base and logistical support.

In late November, Louis sent a master carpenter, Honoratus, to the *Regno* to build siege engines and war machines. Charles placed all the wood he needed at his disposal. Assembling the machines in Sicily rather
p. 91 than France would save the cost and trouble of shipping them from ↳ Aigues-Mortes to Syracuse. The construction process was involved. Master Honoratus was still at it in late February 1270, when he asked for ropes and other materials from Charles, along with a *barque* to ship more wood from Manfredonia.[48]

Charles provided everything the carpenter asked for and more. He even began to pay back some of the money Louis had lent him for the conquest of Sicily. On January 28, 1270, Charles surrendered the county of Anjou to Louis to repay a 5,000 *l.t.* loan. On the 31st, Charles allowed money that the countess of Flanders owed him to be transferred to Louis in repayment of other debts.[49]

While cooperating with his older brother, Charles helped the Frankish regimes that the crusade was meant to rescue. Over the winter and early spring of 1270, he authorized shipments of wheat from the kingdom of Sicily to the Holy Land. In January, he allowed the Templar knight Hugh Bertrand to export 500 packloads (*salme*) of wheat from Bari and Brindisi, which was to be shared out among the Templars, Hospitallers, and Teutonic knights of Acre.[50] In February, he gave the master of the Hospitallers an outright gift: 300 packloads of wheat, 200 of barley, and sixteen horses and mules.[51] More aid would flow to "the faithful of Acre" in April, with the proviso that it should not benefit "Greeks, Saracens, Pisans[!], or any other enemies of the Christian faithful."[52] For Charles, there were multiple benefits to this "wheat diplomacy." The Franks of Syria were experiencing food shortages as a result of Baybars's campaigns, which had destroyed crops and deprived them of productive agricultural land. Alleviating the shortfall helped Charles to bolster his image as a crusade enthusiast and papal "athlete of Christ." It also built his influence in the region. He may already have been laying the groundwork for the step he would take in 1277, when he bought Maria of Antioch's claim to the throne of Jerusalem. Just as in the Maghreb, Sicilian wheat was allowing Charles to flex his diplomatic muscles.

Even as he armed his brother's crusade and fed the Franks of Syria, Charles remained deep in negotiations with Baybars. In winter 1269–70, the embassy he had sent to Cairo the previous spring returned to the
p. 92 *Regno*. The Dominican Brother Berenger landed at Brindisi with a new Mamluk ↳ delegation in tow.[53] The apparent double game that Charles was playing—appearing to support the crusade while conciliating its target—was less a betrayal of Louis than a disagreement with him over how to save Frankish Syria. As Charles worked for a diplomatic solution, he was happy to contribute to the military build-up and provide for the crusader states, because these measures increased both his negotiating leverage with Egypt and the chances of military success if discussions failed to produce an accord.

If Charles could negotiate a binding peace with Baybars, which the arrival of a crusade from Europe could not abrogate, he might not have to leave the kingdom of Sicily to go on crusade. This would allow him to deal with what he perceived to be the growing threat that Michael VIII posed to the Adriatic and Ionian buffer zone between Byzantium and the *Regno*. On September 7, 1269, Charles reached out to Venice, a potential partner in the region. He dispatched an envoy to propose an alliance to "make live war in good faith against the schismatic Palaiologos." Charles promised to aid the Venetians and the deposed Latin Emperor Baudouin II to recover their rights within the Byzantine empire, including the "fourth part and a half" that Venice had once claimed.[54] There were two advantages to joining forces with the Venetians in this way. First, it would deprive Michael VIII of an ally, since he had agreed a peace treaty with them the year before. Second, it would bring their maritime power to bear on Charles's behalf. Although the new doge, Lorenzo Tiepolo, was friendly to Charles and eager to regain Venetian preeminence in Byzantine territory, he rejected this overture. The Black Sea market in wheat that the treaty with Michael VIII had opened up was too lucrative to spurn.[55]

Without Venetian ships, Charles would have to fall back on his own naval resources to protect his eastern frontier. These had suffered losses in a defeat to a Pisan squadron in the later stages of the Sicilian insurgency.[56] In November, Charles ordered Angevin arsenals along the Apulian and Sicilian coasts to repair all royal vessels "so they could be ready to take to the sea at an opportune moment." In addition, Angevin officials were to take an inventory of private ships and forbid departures from the *Regno* without royal license, so that these could be leased if required. Finally, Charles had 1,000 packloads of wheat shipped from Marseille to Sicily so that it could be made into ship's biscuit for the sailors.[57]

p. 93 Charles was scrambling to prepare a squadron that would be ready when Prince Guillaume of Achaia's one-year truce with Michael VIII expired at the end of 1269. After Guillaume had fought for Charles at Tagliacozzo against Conradin, it was time to return the favor. It soon became clear, though, that the fleet

would not be ready in time. More orders for urgent repairs went out in early February 1270, accompanied by assurances that the money to pay for them would follow. Charles assigned his trusted fixer Anselm of Toucy to oversee the project.[58] To maximize available force, Charles imposed a remarkable system of control on the kingdom of Sicily. His officials sought to monitor and restrict all maritime traffic in and out of its ports, along with all trade in wheat and other foodstuffs.[59] But these measures were still not enough to get this expedition off the mark. In late March, Charles issued another round of instructions, this time to the protonotaries of Barletta and Monopoli (both on the Apulian coast opposite Epiros) to arm ten galleys and other vessels "quickly" so that they could put to sea before Easter. On March 31, 1270, the first Achaian expedition finally set sail.[60]

While stiffening Achaian defenses against Michael VIII, Charles also tried to isolate him diplomatically by forming alliances with rulers surrounding Byzantium. In September 1269, Charles began negotiating with King Béla IV of Hungary. When the Latin empire had still existed, the papacy had regarded Hungarian support as critical to its survival. As the long-time ruler of a Latin Christian state that lay within striking distance of Constantinople, Béla had been on the receiving end of papal appeals to take up arms against the "schismatic" Greeks since the 1230s. Now that the empire was gone, Charles thought that Béla might still have a role to play as a regional counterweight to Michael VIII. After refusing Charles's own offer of marriage to his youngest daughter, Béla agreed to a double marriage—between the two children of his eldest son Prince István, Lászlo and Maria, and Charles's daughter Isabelle and son and heir Charles. Agreements with other local powers soon followed, including treaties with the tsar of Bulgaria and the king
p. 94 of Serbia.[61] Although Charles's Adriatic policy remained defensive, Michael VIII did not see it that way. The
↳ emperor was convinced that a full-scale Angevin invasion of Byzantium was in the works.

If he had known how stretched Charles's resources were, Michael might have felt more reassured. The twin demands of the Holy Land crusade and the Achaian expedition were pressing the Angevin military machine to the limit. On March 15, 1270, Louis IX led his crusade out of Paris on the journey south to Aigues-Mortes. In a sign that the brothers were coordinating their actions, Charles had instructed an official two days earlier to ship food supplies from the mainland to Sicily "so that they might be abundant there for the journey of Louis IX, [who is] going over with his army to parts beyond the sea against the enemies of the Holy Roman Church and of the Christian faith."[62] The arrangements the brothers had made in July 1269 remained in place: Louis was coming to Sicily and Charles would meet him there with supplies at the ready.

One of the reasons Charles remained reluctant to join the crusade in person is that he had yet to resolve his differences with al-Mustansir of Tunis. In late April 1270, as Louis was approaching Aigues-Mortes, Charles arranged a "special mission" to Tunis. The Dominican Brother Berenger was part of the embassy, "along with other special ambassadors." Berenger had just returned from meeting Baybars in Cairo in January.[63] Our best source for this second round of negotiations between Charles and al-Mustansir is Pierre of Condé, who served as a clerk to Louis IX on the Tunis Crusade and wrote letters to colleagues back home. During the crusade, Pierre apparently spoke several times to a knight who represented Charles in these exchanges. This knight told Pierre that he had asked for a renewal of the commercial access fee at its previous rate, along with payment of arrears "from the time of Manfred and Frederick."[64] The implication here is that al-Mustansir had carried on with Abu Zakariya's payments to Emperor Frederick II but at some point had stopped them, perhaps at Frederick's death in 1250 or during King Manfred's reign (1258–66). In other words, Charles was claiming arrears going back potentially as far as nineteen years (1250–69). Even if we leave aside whether Charles had any right to these back payments, this was quite the request. While firm information is lacking on Hafsid payments to the *Regno* in this period, Charles's claim does not jibe with the
p. 95 report of Saba Malaspina, who was a contemporary and followed Sicilian affairs closely. ↳ Saba says that at the time of Charles's arrival in Tunis (late August 1270), al-Mustansir had withheld money for three years, which corresponds with the arrival of the Hohenstaufen/Hafsid expeditionary force on Sicily in early September 1267, a logical time to renounce any previous arrangements with the *Regno*.[65] According to Pierre of Condé, al-Mustansir's offer was closer to Saba's timeline. The emir was willing to renew payments, but only from Charles's accession in 1266. Negotiations foundered on this point and the Angevin embassy left Tunis without an agreement.

Pierre of Condé offers a limited view of the negotiations, focusing on financial issues to the exclusion of the security concerns that also mattered to both parties. Nonetheless, the monetary dispute alone exposes the shifting balance of power between the Hafsids and the Angevins. The question under discussion was not whether the emir would make payments to Charles, but for how much. With Charles weighed down by debt and campaigning on multiple fronts, his envoys might have been tempted to accept a lesser offer that would

bring in immediate cash. Instead, confident in the strength of their bargaining position, they held out for more.

In early May 1270, while Brother Berenger was holding talks with his Tunisian counterparts, Louis arrived in Aigues-Mortes. The Genoese fleet that was supposed to be waiting for him there was nowhere to be seen. By the May 10 deadline for delivery, only five of the seven new ships Louis had commissioned were finished, while the vessels he had leased had not left Genoa.[66] A long wait for the boats looked unavoidable. It would be difficult to reach Syracuse by June 24 as planned, while the delay would also eat into the precious summer sailing season. If it dragged on long enough, the expedition might have to halt for the winter before carrying on to the Levant.

Charles was dealing with a shipping crisis of his own in May 1270. He had launched the first Achaian expedition in anticipation of Michael VIII attacking Prince Guillaume when the truce between them expired. In late spring 1270, this hypothetical threat became real. The emperor assembled a squadron of Greek, Turkish, and Cuman ships and sent it toward Achaia.[67] Despite Charles's other commitments—to diplomacy with Tunis, the marriage alliance with Hungary, and the Holy Land crusade—his response was immediate. On May 5, he ordered all royal ships in Apulia to be brought to Brindisi and prepared to sail on the arrival of Anselm of Toucy, the commander of the expedition.[68] On May 11, he sketched out a plan for a squadron of
p. 96 twenty-five vessels, including war ↳ galleys and horse transports (*teride*), to be assembled from royal vessels and from those that had just picked up Princess Maria of Hungary from Dalmatia for her marriage to Prince Charles. Though the aim was "to open the hand of our power in aid of the prince of Achaia," this was very much an Angevin expeditionary force. Each war galley was to carry the royal arms on a banner and a flag.[69]

Given how long it had taken to assemble the first Achaian expedition, and how extended the preparations for the Holy Land crusade had been, the departure deadline seems ambitious: June 9, 1270, or about a month after the first announcement of the plan.[70] Charles's orders set off a scramble to find boats, crews, food, and the money to pay for it all. Angevin officials called for another round of the widely loathed *subventio generalis*, a general levy on subjects of the *Regno*. In his desperation to meet Charles's demands, one bureaucrat forced the clergy of Bari to pay it, though they were normally exempt.[71] Rounding up crews also proved a challenge. Time-honored techniques of compulsion—the premodern version of press-ganging—had to be employed.

Part of the problem was that the second Achaian expedition had to be organized just as preparations for Louis's arrival in Sicily were peaking. It must be said that Charles was not afraid of multitasking. Could a new administration, recovering from a revolt, simultaneously arrange: (1) a large-scale amphibious military operation launching from the southeastern coast of mainland Italy; (2) the resupplying and rearming of a crusade sailing into Syracuse from southern France; and (3) the king of Sicily's first visit to the island since the conquest? One way or the other, Charles was determined to find out.

Through May and early June, Charles continued to act on the assumption that he would be meeting the crusade in Sicily. He sent Pierre of Stampis, clerk of the royal kitchen, to the island to determine what the Angevin court would need during its stay.[72] He instructed mainland officials to be ready to send supplies there if necessary.[73] Administrators were also authorized to grant commercial licenses to merchants wanting to trade wheat during the king's visit.[74] Under normal circumstances, shipping the royal party across the Straits of Messina would have been a challenge, but a surmountable one. With everything else
p. 97 that was going on, though, it was looking like they might have to swim for it. On June 16, ↳ Charles had to write to the commune of Zara, the Adriatic port city, with a humbling request:

> Because of the aid [in the form] of ships, which we at present are sending to the prince of Achaia, also because we need to meet our brother Louis by sea in Sicily, and for bringing over our daughter, the future wife of the heir of the king of Hungary, to the *Regno*...we ask that three of your galleys be sent to us, decently armed, into the port of Siponto if it pleases...[75]

Charles ended the letter by promising to lease the ships at a good rate, though it was not clear where he would find the money. Two days earlier, he had had to beg the College of Cardinals for a delay in paying the annual tribute (*censum*) he owed the Apostolic See. He offered to pay half of the 8,000 pounds of gold he owed right away and the rest on All Saints (November 1).[76] It looked as if Charles was going to need some kind of financial windfall before then if he were to cover the costs of his military commitments.

On June 19, 1270, three days after telling the commune of Zara that he would be seeing his brother in Sicily, and five days before the meeting was to take place, Charles issued another order about his visit to the island. The subject was livestock. Pierre of Stampis, the kitchen clerk, had already rounded up 1,500 pigs and 1,500 cows in Calabria and was ready to ship them to Sicily. Charles suggested that he buy more pigs, 500 to be exact, and that he have some of the livestock sent to Messina and the rest to an unnamed other city on the island, where they should be available by July 9.[77]

This letter about cows and pigs is the best evidence we have for dating the diversion to Tunis. That is because it differs in two ways from previous royal instructions about the expedition. First, it says only that Charles was going to Sicily, not that he was meeting his brother there. Second, it gives July 9 as the expected date of Charles's arrival in the unnamed city, rather than the previously agreed June 24 in Syracuse. From June 19 onwards, Angevin documents refer only to Charles's passage to Sicily and do not mention a rendezvous with Louis. The French king would not be coming to Syracuse after all, and Charles knew it.

On July 2, 1270, with the Genoese ships finally available, the *Montjoie* weighed anchor with King Louis IX on board. Three days later, Charles made the crossing from Naples to Messina, on galleys crewed by rowers he
p. 98 had to borrow from Provence.[78] The brothers were still acting in concert, ↳ but were following a new plan. On July 10, the *Montjoie* and much of the crusader fleet landed at Cagliari, on the southern coast of Sardinia. At a war council held there over July 12 and 13, 1270, Louis announced publicly for the first time that Tunis was the target of the crusade. On the 14th, Charles established his court in Palermo. For the moment, he made no move to join the expedition.[79]

Louis's soldiers were shocked when they realized where they were going. Up until then, the king had maintained operational secrecy. Not even Baybars, with his peerless intelligence network, had been able to discover the crusade's destination. His spies heard rumors that a major expedition was in the works from merchants trading between Alexandria and Crete, but these merchants could not specify the target.[80] The Genoese sailors who accompanied the king were surprised to find out they were crusading against a major trading partner. Many of the Genoese were so sure the fleet was sailing to the Levant that they had drawn up bills of exchange to be honored in Syria.[81] The legate, Raoul Grosparmi, cardinal-bishop of Albano, had to reassure the crusaders that they would not be abrogating their vows to aid the Holy Land if they went to Tunis instead.[82]

The diversion was a double shock, provoked by the secrecy surrounding the decision, certainly, but also by the strangeness of the choice. It is easier to explain the secrecy than the strangeness. First, the decision involved only Charles, Louis, and their closest advisors. The brothers coordinated closely during the run-up to the crusade in spring and early summer 1270. The other members of the anti-Mamluk coalition—Aragon, Genoa, Byzantium, and the Ilkhanate—were excluded from this inner circle. The diplomatic realignment initiated by Charles with Baybars and by al-Mustansir with Louis had had its effect. Second, the choice was made late. Charles only changed his planning for the crusade between June 16 and 19, 1270. Allowing enough time for Louis and Charles to communicate between Aigues-Mortes and Naples, we can pinpoint the diversion to mid-May–early June 1270.

Making the decision at the last minute and without external consultation allowed Louis and Charles to maintain the element of surprise. So too did their choice of target: few at the time saw a connection between
p. 99 Tunis and the struggle between Mamluk Egypt and the crusader states. The ↳ events of late spring and early summer 1270—the return of Charles's diplomatic mission from Tunis, the launching of the second Achaian expedition, and the delayed arrival of the Genoese fleet at Aigues-Mortes—provide one essential context in which to place the brothers' decision. The world of expanded diplomatic horizons in which the leading figures of the Tunis Crusade operated offers a second. In this interconnected space of conflict and collaboration, where interests had to be pursued multilaterally if they were to be pursued at all, strange-seeming alliances and antipathies were actually far from unusual. We will return to these contexts that help make sense of the diversion to Tunis—one temporally circumscribed, the other geographically broad—in Chapter 6. Before we do, we must consider a third: the expedition itself, which got under way in mid-March 1270 with a ceremony at Saint-Denis, in the same church where the Tunisian envoys had witnessed Louis stand as godfather to a "certain famous Jew" the previous October.

Notes

1 Ibn al-Furat, vol. 1: pp. 133–6, vol. 2: pp. 105–8; Ibn ʿAbd al-Zahir, pp. 291–4; Thorau, pp. 187–9.
2 Ibn al-Furat, vol. 1: pp. 137–42, vol. 2: pp. 108–12; Ibn ʿAbd al-Zahir, pp. 295–9; Thorau, pp. 188–9.
3 Ibn al-Furat, vol. 1: pp. 143–60, vol. 2: 113–26; Ibn ʿAbd al-Zahir, pp. 307–9; Thorau, pp. 190–2.
4 Ibn al-Furat, vol. 1: pp. 157–8, vol. 2: p. 124.
5 Jesse Izzo, *The Frankish Nobility and the Fall of Acre: Diplomacy, Society, and War in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem, c.1242–1291* (Ph.D. thesis, University of Minnesota, 2016), pp. 86–9; Ibn al-Furat, vol. 1: p. 164, vol. 2: pp. 129–30.
6 Primat, pp. 39–40; *Layettes*, no. 5287 (Thibaut); *Registres de Clément IV*, no. 1210 (Alphonse).
7 *Registres de Clément IV*, no. 1177.
8 *Registres de Clément IV*, no. 1288; Sternfeld, pp. 87–8; Simon Lloyd, "The Lord Edward's Crusade, 1270–2: Its Setting and Significance," in *War and Government in the Middle Ages: Essays in Honour of J. O. Prestwich*, ed. John Gillingham and J. C. Holt (Cambridge: Boydell Press, 1984), pp. 120–4.
9 *Layettes*, no. 5274; *Registres de Clément IV*, no. 466 (vow redemptions); *Layettes*, no. 5276; *Registres de Clément IV*, nos. 463–4 (the tenth in the kingdom of France); *Layettes*, no. 5275; *Registres de Clément IV*, no. 465 (the twentieth in neighboring dioceses).
10 *Registres de Clément IV*, nos. 595, 852, 1249.
11 *Registres de Clément IV*, nos. 627, 1374.
12 Luigi Tommaso Belgrano, *Documenti inediti riguardanti le due crociate di San Ludovico IX, re di Francia* (Genoa, 1858), pp. 378–80.
13 *Urkunden zur älteren Handels-und Staatsgeschichte der Republik Venedig*, ed. Gottlieb Tafel and Georg Thomas, 3 vols (Vienna: Hof- und Staatsdruckerei, 1856–7), vol. 3: 92–100; Borghese, pp. 34–5; Sternfeld, p. 98.
14 *Registres de Clément IV*, no. 1412.
15 Mollat, p. 293; Jean Richard, *Saint Louis* (Paris: Fayard, 1983), p. 543.
16 For Louis's naval contracts with Genoa, see Augustin Jal, "Pacta naulorum," in *Documents historiques inédits tirés des collections manuscrites de la bibliothèque royale et des archives ou des bibliothèques des départements*, ed. Jacques-Joseph Champollion-Figeac (Paris: F. Didot, 1841), vol. 1: pp. 507–615; Belgrano, *Documenti inediti*; Sternfeld, pp. 363–8; Mollat, p. 293; and Richard, *Saint Louis*, p. 543–4. The contracts are also easily consulted in *Layettes*.
17 *Layettes*, no. 5435.
18 Ibn al-Furat, vol. 1: p. 166, vol. 2: p. 131.
19 *Cronica S. Petri Erfordensis moderna*, in *MGH SS*, vol. 30: p. 405.
20 *Registres de Clément IV*, no. 1244; Karl-Ernst Lupprian, *Die Beziehungen der Päpste zu islamischen und mongolischen Herrschern im 13. Jahrhundert anhand ihres Briefwechsels*, Studi e testi, 291 (Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1981), no. 42; Jean Richard, "La croisade de 1270, premier 'passage général'?" *Comptes rendus des séances de l'Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres* 133 (1989): pp. 519–20.
21 Peter Jackson, *The Mongols and the West, 1221–1410* (London: Pearson-Longman, 2005), pp. 173–4.
22 *Llibre dels fets del rei en Jaume*, ed. Jordi Bruguera, 2 vols (Barcelona: Editorial Barcino, 1991), vol. 2: p. 339; *The Book of Deeds of James I of Aragon*, trans. Damian Smith and Helena Buffery (Aldershot, Hampshire: Ashgate, 2003), p. 334.
23 Jackson, *Mongols and the West*, p. 167.
24 Jean Richard, *The Crusades, c.1071–c.1291*, trans. Jean Birrell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 423.
25 *Annali Genovesi*, vol. 4: p. 115; *Cronica S. Petri Erfordensis moderna*, p. 405.
26 Lupprian, *Beziehungen*, no. 43.
27 *Llibre dels fets*, vol. 2: p. 342 (*Book of Deeds*, pp. 337–8).
28 Thorau, pp. 60, 192–3.
29 *RCA*, vol. 2: p. 19, no. 56 (Lefevre, no. 10).
30 *RCA*, vol. 5: pp. 207–8 (Lefevre, no. 21).
31 *RCA*, vol. 2: p. 69, no. 247 (Lefevre, no. 14).
32 *Llibre dels fets*, vol. 2: pp. 339–41 (*Book of Deeds*, pp. 334–5, 337).
33 *Llibre dels fets*, vol. 2: pp. 342–3 (*Book of Deeds*, p. 338); Reinhold Röhricht, "Der Kreuzzug des Königs Jacob I. von Aragonien (1269)," *Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung* 11 (1890): pp. 374–5.
34 *Llibre dels fets*, vol. 2: 343–6 (*Book of Deeds*, pp. 338–42).
35 Richard, "La croisade de 1270," p. 521; Jackson, *Mongols and the West*, p. 179; Bertold Spuler, *Die Mongolen in Iran: Politik, Verwaltung, und Kultur der Ilchanzeit 1220–1350*, 4th ed. (Leiden: Brill, 1985), pp. 62–3.
36 Ibn al-Furat, vol. 1: pp. 172–5, vol. 2: pp. 136–8; Ibn ʿAbd al-Zahir, pp. 361–5; *Templare di Tiro*, pp. 112–16 (Crawford, pp. 53–5); Thorau, pp. 199–201; Röhricht, "Der Kreuzzug des Jacob I.," pp. 378–81.
37 *Llibre dels fets*, vol. 2: p. 346 (*Book of Deeds*, p. 342).
38 Robin Vose, *Dominicans, Muslims and Jews in the Medieval Crown of Aragon* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 230.
39 I follow Sternfeld's (pp. 179–83) argument here.
40 Ibn Khaldun, vol. 6: p. 665 (*Histoire des Berbères*, vol. 2: pp. 360–1).
41 Geoffrey of Beaulieu, p. 21 (*Sanctity of Louis IX*, pp. 116–17). Given the chronology, this is more likely to refer to the period before March 1270, when Louis "took up the cross" to set out on crusade, rather than prior to March 1267, when he formally announced his intent to launch an expedition.
42 Ibn Khaldun, vol. 6: pp. 655–6 (*Histoire des Berbères*, vol. 2: pp. 350–2); al-Yunini, vol. 2: p. 454.
43 Geoffrey of Beaulieu, p. 22 (*Sanctity of Louis IX*, p. 117).
44 Geoffrey of Beaulieu, p. 21 (*Sanctity of Louis IX*, p. 117).
45 *Cronica S. Petri Erfordensis moderna*, p. 405; *Annali Genovesi*, p. 115; Jackson, *Mongols and the West*, pp. 175–8.

46 Geoffrey of Beaulieu, p. 21 (*Sanctity of Louis IX*, p. 117).
47 Lefevre, no. 27.
48 *RCA*, vol. 5: p. 180, no. 137 (Lefevre, no. 40); *RCA*, vol. 5: p. 116, no. 75 (Lefevre, no. 42); *RCA*, vol. 3, p. 105, no. 78 (Lefevre, no. 59); *RCA*, vol. 3: p. 189, no. 476 (Lefevre, no. 60); *RCA*, vol. 3: pp. 106–7, nos. 83–4 (Lefevre, no. 61).
49 *RCA*, vol. 3: p. 219, no. 634 (Lefevre, no. 49); Sternfeld, p. 330 (appendix A, no. 16); *RCA*, vol. 3: p. 244, no. 741 (Lefevre, no. 50).
50 Philip B. Baldwin, *Pope Gregory X and the Crusades* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2014), p. 110.
51 Baldwin, *Gregory X*, pp. 110–11.
52 *RCA*, vol. 5: p. 27, no. 124.
53 *RCA*, vol. 3, p. 182, no. 442 (Lefevre, no. 45).
54 *RCA*, vol. 7: pp. 268–9, no. 2.
55 Borghese, pp. 33–6.
56 *Annali Genovesi*, p. 112; Bartolomeus di Neocastro, *Historia Sicula*, ed. Giuseppe Paladino, in *RIS*, vol. 13, part 3, p. 7; Borghese, p. 20.
57 *RCA*, vol. 5: p. 152, no. 226 (Lefevre, no. 36); *RCA*, vol. 5: pp. 116–18, no. 76 (Lefevre, no. 38); *RCA*, vol. 3: pp. 60–1, no. 371 (Lefevre, no. 39).
58 *RCA*, vol. 3: p. 250, no. 770 (Lefevre, no. 53); *RCA*, vol. 3: p. 113, nos. 108–14 (Lefevre, no. 54); *RCA*, vol. 3: p. 251, no. 776 (Lefevre, no. 56).
59 Borghese, pp. 26–7.
60 *RCA*, vol. 3: pp. 145–6, nos. 233–4 (Lefevre, no. 71); *RCA*, vol. 3: pp. 98–9, no. 47, p. 148, no. 245, p. 275, no. 893.
61 *RCA*, vol. 5: p. 7, no. 17, p. 14, no. 80, pp. 24–5, no. 114, p. 54, no. 237, p. 75, no. 322; Longnon, p. 190; Deno John Geanakoplos, *Emperor Michael Palaeologus and the West, 1258–1282: A Study in Byzantine–Latin Relations* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1959; repr. Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1973), pp. 216–17.
62 Lefevre, no. 65.
63 *RCA*, vol. 4: pp. 73–4, no. 476 (Lefevre, no. 82); *RCA*, vol. 5: p. 43, no. 190 (Lefevre, no. 84).
64 Pierre of Condé, "Letter to Abbot Mathieu November 18, 1270," in *Spicilegium*, vol. 3: pp. 667–8.
65 Saba Malaspina, pp. 228–9.
66 Richard, *Saint Louis*, p. 556.
67 Borghese, p. 51.
68 *RCA*, vol. 5: p. 62, no. 273 (Lefevre, no. 95).
69 *RCA*, vol. 5: p. 67, no. 294 (Lefevre, no. 106).
70 *RCA*, vol. 5: pp. 69–70, no. 303 (Lefevre, no. 113).
71 Borghese, p. 53.
72 *RCA*, vol. 5: p. 39, nos. 173–5 (Lefevre, no. 97).
73 *RCA*, vol. 5: pp. 28–9, nos. 131–2 (Lefevre, no. 105).
74 Lefevre, no. 110.
75 *RCA*, vol. 5: p. 83, no. 353 (Lefevre, no. 132).
76 *RCA*, vol. 5: pp. 80–1, no. 346 (Lefevre, no. 131).
77 *RCA*, vol. 5: p. 81, no. 347 (Lefevre, no. 136).
78 *RCA*, vol. 5: p. 31, no. 142 (Lefevre, no. 156); the last document the Angevin chancery issued from Naples is dated July 5, 1270.
79 Primat, pp. 41–4; *RCA*, vol. 5: p. 45, no. 198 (Lefevre, no. 162).
80 Ibn al-Furat, vol. 1: p. 179, vol. 2: p. 141.
81 Belgrano, *Documenti inediti*, nos. 263–70 (dated April 24–May 3, 1270); Laura Balletto, "Fonti notarili genovesi del secondo duecento per la storia del Regno latino di Gerusalemme," in *I communi italiani nel Regno crociato di Gerusalemme*, ed. Gabriella Airaldi and Benjamin Z. Kedar (Genoa: Università di Genova, 1986), pp. 234–5, fn. 166.
82 Primat, p. 44.