5

THE DEFENCE OF LATIN SYRIA

DURING THE century that elapsed between the conquest of Cyprus in 1191 and the loss of the last strongholds in Latin Syria in 1291 it was common for Cypriot resources to be deployed in the defence of the remaining Christian possessions on the mainland. The kings of Cyprus allowed their island's material wealth and military capacity to be used in efforts to regain the Holy Places and safeguard the territory under Christian rule. It was in their own interest to ward off Muslim encroachments, especially as for long periods they themselves were recognized as having political authority in whatever was left of the kingdom of Jerusalem. Indeed, in the thirteenth century the politics of Cyprus and Jerusalem became so closely intertwined that it is impossible for the historian to treat either kingdom in isolation.

For crusaders, pilgrims or merchants travelling by sea to the Holy Land, Cyprus was a natural stopping place, and the island was soon recognized as a suitable port-of-call for crusaders to take on supplies, regroup, refit and even consult with the leaders of Latin Syria about strategy for their forthcoming campaign. In practice, however, less use was made of Cyprus in the course of the crusading expeditions to the East than might be expected. Pope Honorius III wanted the participants in the Fifth Crusade to assemble there in 1217, and in 1237 a group of prominent people in the East were advising Thibaut of Navarre to go no further than Limassol where they would meet him to discuss plans for the crusade he was leading. But neither proposal was adopted, and on each occasion the crusaders and the Christians settled in the East held their deliberations in Acre.[1] By contrast, in 1227 the leading figures in the East

[1] Mas Latrie, *Histoire*, II, 36: Honorius III, nos. 672–3; 'Eracles', pp. 322–3 (1217). *Thesaurus novus*, ed. Martène and Durand, I, col. 1012; 'Gestes', p. 725; 'Eracles', pp. 413–14 (1237). For the date of the letter to Thibaut, S. Painter, 'The Crusade of Theobald of Champagne and Richard of Cornwall, 1239–1241', *HC*, II, 471. During the Fifth Crusade reinforcements from the West were going to Egypt via Cyprus, and in 1221 the island was a staging post for crusaders evacuated from Damietta. *Lettres de Jacques de Vitry*, ed. R. B. C. Huygens (Leiden, 1960), p. 138 (cf. p. 140 where the island is mentioned as a source of building-stone for construction-work at Damietta); Caesarius of Heisterbach in R. Röhricht (ed.) *Testimonia minora de Quinto Bello Sacro* (Geneva, 1882), p. 344.

assembled at Limassol where they expected to meet the Emperor Frederick II, only to discover that his sailing was delayed until the following year.[2] Other crusaders, for example the Lord Edward and his followers in 1271, certainly stopped in Cyprus,[3] but it was St Louis – Louis IX of France – who during the earlier of his two crusading expeditions took the fullest advantage of the island's strategic potential. By the time the French king arrived in Cyprus in September 1248, his officers had amassed large quantities of supplies in the island. He camped near Limassol, where he remained for over eight months and where he was joined by the stragglers from his own expedition and by a contingent from the Frankish principality of Achaea. King Henry and his leading nobles gave the crusaders a warm welcome. The master of the Templars, the lieutenant master of the Hospitallers and some Latin Syrian knights visited the host, and together they agreed to attack Egypt.[4] During Louis' sojourn in Cyprus Christian hopes were raised by diplomatic contacts with the Mongols,[5] but any beneficial effect this may have had on morale was more than offset by an epidemic which carried off a number of crusaders, some nobles among them, before the army could set sail on its ill-fated expedition to Damietta at the end of May. Memories of this mortality were to lead some later publicists to discourage future crusaders from using Cyprus as a staging post.[6]

On a number of occasions Cypriot knights shared in crusading expeditions. In 1197 King Aimery brought his forces to join the German crusaders in the capture of Beirut; in 1217 Hugh I led a Cypriot contingent to Acre to take part in the initial stage of the Fifth Crusade; later, in 1219, we find Cypriot knights serving although without distinction at the siege of Damietta; in 1228 they seem to have anticipated joining Frederick II's Crusade, although the circumstances under which they eventually accompanied him reflected more the emperor's ability to compel their obedience than any willingness on their part to assist his campaign. In 1239 there were Cypriots on the Crusade of Thibaut of Navarre, and in 1249 King Henry took his men to Egypt with St Louis. On this last occasion the king himself returned to Cyprus soon after the capture of Damietta, leaving 120 knights under his seneschal and constable, the brothers Baldwin and Guy of

[2] 'Eracles', p. 364.

[3] Thomas Wykes, 'Chronicon' in H. R. Luard (ed.), *Annales Monastici* (RS 36, 1864–9), IV, 244–5.

[4] For Louis in Cyprus, Hill, II, 140–5; J. R. Strayer, 'The Crusades of Louis IX', *HC*, II, 493–5. For the location of his camp, J. Richard, *Chypre sous les Lusignans. Documents chypriotes des archives du Vatican (XIVe et XVe siècles* (Paris, 1962), p. 79 note 10. For the consultation, 'Gestes', p. 741.

[5] D. Sinor, 'The Mongols and Western Europe', *HC*, III, 522–3; J. Richard, 'La lettre du Connétable Smbat et les rapports entre Chrétiens et Mongols au milieu de XIIIème siècle' in D. Kouymjian (ed.), *Armenian Studies in memoriam Haïg Berbérian* (Lisbon, 1986), 683–96. Cf. P. Jackson, 'The Crisis in the Holy Land in 1260', *EHR*, XCV (1980), 483–4.

[6] A. S. Atiya, *The Crusade in the Later Middle Ages* (London, 1938), pp. 102, 122; Hill, II, 141 and note 2.

Ibelin.[7] But although Cypriots normally joined in the expeditions when crusaders were in the East, only twice before 1291, before the start of the Fifth Crusade and at the time of the Crusade of Louis IX, are we explicitly told that they themselves took crusading vows and so became crusaders in the strict sense.[8] There can, however, be no doubt that they accepted that they shared in the Christian duty of defending the Holy Land. According to Philip of Novara, in 1228 John of Beirut told Frederick II that the Cypriots would follow him to Syria 'in the service of God', and much later James of Ibelin was to use a similar phrase when recalling their involvement in the Crusade of Thibaut of Navarre as well as in St Louis' Crusade.[9]

There were a number of crusades to the East during the first century of Latin rule in Cyprus, but most of the campaigns were comparatively short and there were sometimes lengthy periods between them. Indeed, after St Louis' departure from the East in 1254, there was only one further crusading expedition in Syria of any moment before the *dénouement* of 1291. There were thus long intervals in which any Cypriot assistance in the defence of the Latin states in Syria had of necessity to take alternative forms. From time to time rulers sent contingents to join in other military campaigns in Syria or Palestine, and, particularly when the Lusignans had control of Acre, they would make available their Cypriot resources as well as their own political influence. In addition, there were many corporations and individuals based in Latin Syria who owned estates in Cyprus and so could use their income to bolster their position on the mainland.

The list of Latin Syrian ecclesiastical institutions which were able to augment their endowments by acquiring property in the island is lengthy. For example, the Augustinian canons of the Templum Domini owned property at Nicosia and at an unnamed rural settlement between 1195 and 1233.[10] In 1197 King Aimery gave one of the several places in Cyprus named Livadi to Archbishop Joscius of Tyre as a personal possession, presumably as a reward for his services in helping arrange his marriage to Queen Isabella of Jerusalem that same year. On Joscius' death the estate was to pass to his nephew and then to the church of Tyre, and

[7] 1197: 'Eracles', p. 224. 1217 and 1219: Oliver of Paderborn, pp. 162, 214; 'Document relatif au service militaire', p. 428 §§11–12; 'Eracles', pp. 322–5, 339–40; Philip of Novara, p. 525. The Cypriots subsequently withdrew from Damietta. *Lettres de Jacques de Vitry*, p. 135. 1228: 'Document relatif', p. 428 §13, p. 432 §9; 'Gestes', pp. 677, 681–2; 'Eracles', p. 369. 1239: 'Document relatif', pp. 428–99 §15, p. 432 §10. 1249: 'Document relatif', p. 429 §16, p. 432 §12; Hill, II, 145. For a Cypriot drowned at Mansourah (1250), Cod. Vat. lat. 4789 fo. 289 col. 2 correcting 'Lignages', p. 464. Matthew Paris (*Chronica Majora*, V, 308) noted that in 1252 Henry assisted Louis with Cypriot forces in the Holy Land.

[8] Mas Latrie, *Histoire*, II, 65 n; *Lettres de Jacques de Vitry*, pp. 89, 94–5. For the paucity of references to Christians settled in the Latin East taking crusading vows, J. Riley-Smith, 'Peace Never Established: The Case of the Kingdom of Jerusalem', *TRHS*, 5th ser., XXVIII (1978), 87–8.

[9] 'Gestes', p. 677; 'Document relatif au service militaire', p. 432 §§10–11, cf. p. 430 §3.

[10] Mas Latrie, *Histoire*, III, 598–9, 636–7.

Aimery further granted that no customs would be levied on produce from it being taken to the mainland. In the event the estate was sold, apparently in 1222, to the archbishop of Nicosia.[11] The Latin patriarch of Jerusalem and the canons of the Holy Sepulchre also had possessions in Cyprus. In 1201 they were granted Pendasino and in 1210 an unidentified place in the diocese of Paphos called *Lacridon*. In 1290 Pope Nicholas IV exempted the Holy Sepulchre from paying tithes on its properties in the island to the local bishops for five years.[12] Rents in Cyprus as well as properties in Paphos and Nicosia were owned by the abbey of St Mary and All Saints at Acre,[13] and St Lazarus of Bethany had a dependent priory in Cyprus by the 1260s.[14]

In the case of the patriarchate of Antioch, the papacy intervened to provide money from Cypriot sources for purposes of defence. In 1254 Pope Innocent IV committed the administration of the archbishopric of Nicosia to the patriarch, Opizo dei Fieschi, so that the revenues could compensate him for the damage done in his patriarchate by the Turcomans. This order apparently remained a dead letter as Archbishop Hugh of Nicosia who had previously abandoned his see had returned in the meantime. A few months later the pope ordered that a tithe of ecclesiastical revenues from Cyprus and Antioch be levied for three years to pay for the fortifications of the patriarch's castle of Qusair near Antioch, and he gave instructions that the patriarch should be given the custody of some other see within his patriarchate or in Cyprus in order to supplement his income still further. In 1256 Pope Alexander IV duly assigned Opizo the administration of the newly vacant diocese of Limassol, whence the patriarch continued to enjoy the revenues until in 1280, long after the fall of Antioch in 1268 and the capture of Qusair in 1275, he was provided with revenues in western Europe.[15]

The other ecclesiastical institutions with assets in Cyprus for use in the defence of the Latin states in Syria were the Military Orders. The Templars and the Hospitallers each owned a fortress, respectively at Gastria to the north of Famagusta and at Kolossi near Limassol. Both had been acquired before 1210,[16] but neither can have been of much military significance, and they should be seen as administrative centres rather than as defensive strongholds. The Hospitallers also had a tower at Limassol, and their house at Nicosia was evidently

[11] *Ibid.*, pp. 606–7, 617. For Joscius, above, p. 33. For the date of the sale, La Monte, 'Register of Nicosia', p. 452 note 4.

[12] *Cartulaire du Saint-Sépulcre*, nos. 174, 178; Nicholas IV, *Registres*, ed. E. Langlois (Paris, 1886–1905), no. 2093. For Pendasino, Richard, *Chypre sous les Lusignans*, pp. 81, 120.

[13] Gregory IX, *Registres*, ed. L. Auvray (Paris, 1890–1910, tables 1955), no. 4013.

[14] Urban IV, *Registres*, ed. L. Dorez and J. Guiraud (Paris, 1892–1929, tables 1958), nos. 210–11; H. E. Mayer, *Bistümer, Klöster und Stifte im Königreich Jerusalem* (Stuttgart, 1977), p. 384.

[15] Hill, III, 1057 note 3; B. Hamilton, *The Latin Church in the Crusader States: The Secular Church* (London, 1980), pp. 232–3, 237, 283–4. There was strong resistance in Cyprus to paying the tithe. In 1267 it was being suggested that the pope should grant tenths from the church in Cyprus for the defence of Acre. G. Servois, 'Emprunts de Saint Louis en Palestine et en Afrique', *BEC*, 4th series, IV (1858), 293.

[16] *Cart. gén. Hospitaliers*, no. 1354, 'Eracles', p. 316.

defensible, while the Templar house at Limassol seems to have been fortified and there were minor fortifications on the Templar estates at Yermasoyia and Khirokitia.[17] After the suppression of the Templars, most of their properties in Cyprus passed to the Hospitallers. But whereas it is likely that a majority of the estates listed by later writers as belonging to the Hospital were acquired by one or other of the two Orders before 1291,[18] it is not always possible to be sure who held what. Of the identifiable localities, the Hospitallers had Plataniskia, Kolossi, Monagroulli, Phinikas, Palekhori, Kellaki and Trakhoni before 1291 as well as property in Nicosia, Limassol and at Mora to the east of Nicosia,[19] while Templar estates included Khirokitia, Yermasoyia, Phasouri, Psimolophou, Gastria and presumably Temblos, as well as houses at Nicosia, Paphos, Famagusta and Limassol.[20] Both lists are far from complete. The surplus income from these estates would have been employed in furthering the Orders' activities in Syria. The only recorded disturbance of this pattern occurred in 1279 when King Hugh III confiscated the Templar properties and destroyed their houses in Limassol and elsewhere in retaliation for the master's support for his rival for the throne of Jerusalem, Charles of Anjou. Allegedly the properties were withheld until 1282. Ill-feeling between the Order and the Lusignan dynasty persisted long afterwards.[21]

Of the other military Orders, the Teutonic Knights never had many possessions in the island, thanks largely it must be assumed to the unpopularity

[17] A. T. Luttrell, 'The Hospitallers in Cyprus after 1291', *Πρακτικὰ τοῦ Πρώτου Διεθνοῦς Κυπρολογικοῦ Συνεδρίου*, II (Nicosia, 1972), 169–70.

[18] Mas Latrie, *Histoire*, III, 502–3; Florio Bustron, 'Chronque de l'île de Chypre', ed. R. de Mas Latrie in *Collection des documents inédits sur l'histoire de France: Mélanges historiques*, V, 170–1, 246–7. Bustron's lists purport to be of Templar properties given to the Hospitallers, but in fact are lists of Hospitaller (and Templar) properties. See Richard, *Chypre sous les Lusignans*, p. 111. For Templar estates not given to the Hospitallers, J. Richard, 'Le casal de Psimolofo et la vie rurale en Chypre au XIVe siècle', *MAHEFR*, LIX (1947), 122–3.

[19] *Cart. gén. Hospitaliers*, nos. 1354, 2174; E. Papadopoulou, *Οι προτες εγκαταστασεις Βενετων στην Κυπρο', Συμμεικτα του Κεντρου Βυζαντινων Ερευνον*, V (1983), 313, 314, cf. pp. 309; Riley-Smith, *Knights of St John*, pp. 505–6; Edbury 'Manosque', pp. 175, 179. The document published by Papadopoulou mentions Balian lord of Beirut (pp. 313, 315) and so is datable to the years 1236–47. 'Rogera' listed by Riley-Smith (p. 505) among the unidentified estates is almost certainly Louvaras (= 'Logara'; Florio Bustron, p. 171).

[20] 'Amadi', pp. 214, 287, 288, 290–1. Temblos, subsequently a Hospitaller possession, evidently derived its name from the Order. T. Papadopoullos, 'Chypre: frontière ethnique et socio-culturelle du monde byzantin', *Rapports et co-rapports du XVe congrès international d'études byzantines*: v. *Chypre dans le monde byzantin*, part V (Athens, 1976), p. 39 note 110. For Psimolophou, Richard, 'Psimolofo', pp. 122–3. For Yermasoiya and Phasouri, Papadopoulou, pp. 313, 314, cf. pp. 309, 312.

[21] *Veterum Scriptorum et Monumentorum . . . Amplissima Collectio*, ed. E. Martène and U. Durand (Paris, 1727–33), II, 1300; Mas Latrie, *Histoire*, II, 108–9, 131; 'Gestes', p. 784; 'Annales', p. 457; Marino Sanudo, 'Liber Secretorum Fidelium Crucis', ed. J. Bongars, *Gesta Dei per Francos* (Hanover, 1611), II, 228; 'Amadi', p. 214.

there of their patron, Frederick II,[22] and the English Order of St Thomas of Canterbury, which had an estate near Limassol and a church dedicated to St Nicholas in Nicosia, was of even less importance. Until 1291 the Order of St Thomas had had an establishment in Acre, and presumably these Cypriot properties would have helped sustain it. In any case the Order's contribution to the defence of the Latin East was slight.[23]

A number of important nobles whose principal interests lay on the mainland held fiefs in Cyprus. The famous jurist, John of Ibelin, who was count of Jaffa from the mid-1240s until his death in 1266, had valuable estates in Cyprus including Peristerona in Morphou and Episkopi.[24] His cousins, Balian of Ibelin lord of Beirut, who died in 1247, and John lord of Caesarea, who died *c.* 1240, also held Cypriot properties.[25] Odo of Montbéliard, constable of Jerusalem and, at the time of his death in 1244, lord of Tiberias, had an estate at *Tarsis* in the diocese of Paphos.[26] In the 1230s King Henry I made generous landed settlements for the husbands of his two sisters, Walter of Brienne, who had custody of Jaffa until his capture in battle with the Muslims in 1244, and Henry of Antioch, the younger brother of Prince Bohemond V of Antioch-Tripoli, who died in 1276.[27] There can be little doubt that all these men would have used at least some of their revenues from Cyprus to maintain their position in Syria, thereby following in the footsteps of John the 'Old Lord' of Beirut, who in 1228 had told Frederick II that he had been using his Cypriot revenues to refortify his mainland lordship.[28] Lesser men too held fiefs in both kingdoms. Geoffrey le Tor, a member of a long-established Jerusalemite knightly family, had been born in Syria but went to live in Cyprus, where he received a large fief from King Henry, presumably as a reward for his part in the civil war of 1229–33.[29] Another knight of Latin Syrian origins, Baldwin Bonvoisin, seems to have acquired his fief at Kellia at about the same time.[30] On the other hand, some of the knights who had opposed the Ibelins in the civil war and who had fiefs on the mainland returned there after their defeat and dispossession in the early 1230s,[31] and in Philip of Novara we

[22] For exhaustive treatment, W. Hubatsch, 'Der Deutsche Orden und die Reichslehnschaft über Cypern', *Nachrichten der Akad. der Wissenschaften in Göttingen, Philol-Hist. Kl.* (1955).

[23] Richard, *Chypre sous les Lusignans*, pp. 69, 84, 102. More generally, A. J. Forey, 'The Military Order of St Thomas of Acre', *EHR*, XCII (1977), 481–503.

[24] Edbury, 'The Ibelin Counts of Jaffa', pp. 605–6.

[25] Balian of Beirut and John of Caesarea inherited their fathers' lands. Both attended the Cypriot High Court. *RRH*, nos. 1054, 1071, 1078, 1092; La Monte, 'Register of Nicosia', nos. 38, 39, 42, 45.

[26] Gregory IX, no. 4551.

[27] 'Gestes', p. 706; 'Eracles', p. 403.

[28] 'Gestes', pp. 678–9.

[29] 'Eracles', p. 406.

[30] *Ibid.*, p. 394; 'Lignages', pp. 451, 470. The family was of Genoese origin and was already in the East in 1187. *Urkunden Venedig*, II, 386, cf. p. 377; *RRH*, no. 665.

[31] Above, p. 66; Rey 'Seigneurs de Giblet', pp. 410–11; Chandon de Briailles, 'Margat', pp. 247–9; H. E. Mayer 'Die Kreuzfahrerherrschaft *'Arrābe*', *ZDPV*, XCIII (1977), 198–212.

have an example of a knight who only received his fief in the kingdom of Jerusalem some time after he had risen to prominence in Cyprus.[32]

The extent to which Latin Syrian barons with fiefs in Cyprus would have been able to employ men and money from the island in the defence of their mainland lordships was small by comparison with the contribution the Lusignan dynasty was able to make in preserving the remaining Christian-held territories in Syria and Palestine. King Aimery's use of his Cypriots to garrison Jaffa in 1197 and to stage a naval raid on Egypt in 1204 has been mentioned earlier.[33] Other examples from the first half of the thirteenth century of kings sending their forces to the mainland include the expeditions of 1214, when Cypriots joined a combined Christian military demonstration towards Hamah and Hims, and of 1235, when a force of a hundred Cypriot knights assisted the Hospitallers in their attack on Bar'in (Montferrand).[34] Most Cypriot assistance for Frankish Syria, however, came in those periods when the then ruler of Cyprus was also ruler of the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem and, in particular, had custody of Acre. King Aimery had been king of both Cyprus and, by right of his wife, of Jerusalem in the years 1197–1205, and in 1269 his descendant, Hugh III, became king of Jerusalem in his own right after the extinction of the Hohenstaufen dynasty the previous year. Henceforth he and his heirs regarded themselves as kings of both kingdoms. Hugh allowed Acre, the only major city remaining to the royal domain, to slip from his grasp in 1276–7, but his son, Henry II, recovered it in 1286 and held it until the Mamlūk conquest in 1291. The years 1276–86 were thus a period of strained relations between the Lusignans and the rulers of the Latin kingdom, just as earlier relations had been poor in the years 1192–7 when Henry of Champagne was at odds with Guy and Aimery of Lusignan and in the years after 1210 when there was tension between Hugh I and John of Brienne.[35] However, in addition to the periods when the king of Cyprus was also king of Jerusalem, members of the Cypriot royal family acted as regents in Acre for the absentee Hohenstaufen kings for much of the time between 1242 and 1269, and so for large parts of the last half century of the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem's existence the Lusignans had a direct role in its government.

In 1233 the Ibelin victory over the imperial forces put an end to Hohenstaufen power in Cyprus but left the situation that had developed on the mainland

[32] 'Gestes', p. 732. For other examples of knights with interests in both kingdoms, Mayer, 'Ibelin *versus* Ibelin', p. 34. [33] Above, pp. 33–4.

[34] Cahen, *Syrie du Nord*, pp. 620–1 (1214); 'Gestes', p. 724; 'Eracles', pp. 403–5; 'Annales', p. 439 (1235). There is some confusion as to the date of the Bar'in expedition. It was evidently before the death of John of Ibelin lord of Beirut (early 1236) and about the time of the departure of Henry of Nazareth and Philip of Troyes as emissaries to the papal court in 1235. 'Eracles', p. 406; Riley-Smith, *Feudal Nobility*, pp. 204–7. [35] Above, pp. 28–9, 32, 46–8.

unchanged.[36] Frederick was still regent for his infant son, Conrad IV, the titular king of Jerusalem, and was attempting to rule through his lieutenant, Richard Filangieri. The Ibelins and their supporters held Acre, Beirut, Sidon, Arsur, Caesarea and Jaffa, while Filangieri had control of little more than Tyre and Jerusalem, but he did enjoy support from the Hospitallers and the Teutonic Knights. There was little change until 1242, when Conrad, who by now was aged fourteen, wrote to the people in the East announcing that he had come of age. He attempted to appoint his own lieutenant, but the Ibelin-dominated regime in Acre refused to accept the appointment of a man who was obviously Frederick's nominee. At the same time a group of inhabitants in Tyre let it be known that they would co-operate in seizing the city by force from its Hohenstaufen garrison. For a number of reasons, not least that Filangieri had come close to taking control of Acre the previous year, the anti-Hohenstaufen barons were only too happy to avail themselves of this opportunity, but, rather than lay themselves open to the accusation that they were acting illegally, they devised arguments to justify their assault on Tyre. Frederick, they asserted, was no longer regent since his son was now of age; the regent for an absentee heir who was of age should be – although in fact there was no precedent – the heir's closest relative present in the East; that person should govern until Conrad himself should come and be accepted as king; in the meantime, if the imperial garrison at Tyre would not acknowledge that person's rule, then force could legitimately be used to bring it to submission. The Ibelins were clearly banking on the assumption that Conrad would never find himself in a position to inflict retribution on them for what in his eyes must have seemed a further act of insubordination and rebellion. As things turned out, they were right; no Hohenstaufen king ever again set foot in Latin Syria.

Conrad's closest heir in the East was his great-aunt, Alice of Champagne, the widow of King Hugh I of Cyprus and the mother of King Henry. She was the eldest surviving half-sister of Maria of Montferrat, Conrad's grandmother, and, as a daughter of Queen Isabella I, could claim descent from the twelfth-century kings of Jerusalem. She was willing to accept the role chosen for her – indeed she had tried to get herself made regent as early as 1229 – and is reported to have given Philip of Novara, who acted as her counsel in the formal hearing of the High Court at which her rights were recognized, a handsome reward. Philip later claimed, probably with some exaggeration, to have conceived the whole scheme. In June 1242, immediately after Alice had been accepted as regent in Acre, the Ibelins, with Venetian and Genoese assistance, duly seized Tyre. But Alice

[36] For what follows, P. Jackson, 'The End of Hohenstaufen Rule in Syria', *BIHR*, LIX (1986), 20–36; D. Jacoby, 'The Kingdom of Jerusalem and the Collapse of Hohenstaufen Power in the Levant', *DOP*, XL (1986), 83–101. Both authors argue persuasively that the Ibelin capture of Tyre occurred in 1242 and not in 1243 as has hitherto generally been believed.

cannot be said to have taken control. Even before Tyre had been captured, she and her husband, Ralph of Coeuvres, a brother of the count of Soissons, had been left in no doubt as to their true position. It had been stipulated in advance that all the fortresses of the kingdom should be held not by the regent but by Balian of Ibelin, lord of Beirut, and his cousin, Philip of Montfort lord of Toron, and at the siege of Tyre, when Ralph of Coeuvres succeeded in capturing Richard Filangieri, he was induced against his will to give up his prisoner to Balian of Ibelin, who used him as a hostage to secure the surrender of the citadel. So Balian and Philip took control of Tyre, and when Ralph and Alice formally requested that they hand it over to them, they refused. Ralph went back to France in digust, leaving Balian of Ibelin with custody of Tyre and Philip of Montfort and a prominent lawyer named Nicholas Antiaume in possession of the royal castle in Acre. Instead of passing to Alice, effective power had gone to the Ibelins and their supporters who had used her in a decidedly cynical fashion to give a specious legality to this latest phase in their struggle against Frederick II and his officers in the East; at the same time they induced her to rescind all Frederick's grants and appointments. As a crowning piece of legalistic hypocrisy they argued that the castles should be held by the liegemen and not by the regent, since there was a danger that a regent might usurp the rights of the heir.[37]

Alice died in 1246. Powerless though she had been in practice, her period in office had established the principle that Conrad's regent should be his closest heir in the East. She was succeeded in the regency by her son, King Henry I. But Henry was not Conrad's nearest relative; his aunt, Melisende of Lusignan, a half-sister of Queen Alice and widow of Prince Bohemond IV of Antioch, was closer, and in fact Melisende made a bid to become regent herself. It is unfortunate that no account of the circumstances of Henry's acquisition of the regency has been preserved. As a crowned king in his own right and as a man in the full vigour of manhood – he would have been aged twenty-nine in 1246 – he must have seemed a very different proposition to the barons of Jerusalem than either his aunt or his mother. What seems to have happened is that perhaps by way of outbidding his aunt, perhaps by way of buying the assent of the barons for his accession to the regency, he made generous grants of land to the leading figures in Syria. Philip of Montfort was given custody of Tyre, Balian of Beirut an estate centred on Casal Imbert and John of Ibelin, the jurist and son of Philip of Ibelin, the county of Jaffa and Ascalon.[38] It may be that the other John of Ibelin, the lord of Arsur who was a younger son of John of Beirut and Balian's brother, was made constable of Jerusalem at the same time.[39] But besides giving

[37] 'Documents relatifs à la successibilité au trône et à la régence', *RHC Lois*, II, 401.

[38] Riley-Smith, *Feudal Nobility*, pp. 212–13, 214–15. Above, p. 72. Jaffa and Ascalon were Henry's own inheritance: Edbury, 'John of Ibelin's Title', pp. 124–5.

[39] The previous constable had died in 1244. John is first found with this office in 1251. *Cart. gén. Hospitaliers*, no. 2576.

away royal lands to this coterie of barons, Henry also delegated his powers as regent to them. In 1246 he appointed Balian of Beirut to be his lieutenant or *bailli*; on Balian's death in 1247 he appointed his brother John to follow him, and then in 1248, at the suggestion of Philip of Montfort, he replaced John with an otherwise unknown knight named John Foignon. The next year Henry reinstated John of Arsur, who then remained in office until after Henry's death in 1253.[40] Taking the period 1242–53 as a whole, the Ibelins in Syria – Balian of Beirut, John of Arsur and their cousins John of Jaffa and Philip of Montfort – had done well by the king and his mother.

Theoretically grants of royal lands by a regent were only valid for the duration of the regency, but in each case the lands given by Henry were retained by their recipients or their heirs after his death. Henceforth the royal domain in Syria was in effect limited to Acre and its immediate environs. It may therefore be wondered what Henry's authority in the kingdom of Jerusalem actually amounted to. He styled himself 'king of Cyprus and lord of Jerusalem' and received recognition of this title from Pope Innocent IV.[41] The pope clearly expected him to take the lead in defending Latin Syria, reforming the Church and so on,[42] but this is evidence more for Innocent's hopes than for Henry's ability. Part of the problem in assessing Henry's position in Syria stems from the fact that his tenure of the regency (1246–53) coincided almost exactly with the Crusade of St Louis and Louis' sojourn in the East (1248–54), and, although the king of France had no constitutional status in Syria, his prestige and wealth meant that Henry was overshadowed. The silence of the sources has led many scholars to believe that Henry spent most of his time in Cyprus and allowed the kingdom of Jerusalem under its baronial oligarchy to go its own way: apart from the alienations at the beginning of his period of office and the changes of his lieutenants, as regent he is known to have concerned himself with the internal affairs of Latin Syria in only two instances and to have come in person with military support for the mainland kingdom only once, in 1252.[43]

Henry, however, did deploy Cypriot military resources in the defence of Latin Syria on several occasions. In 1244 he seems not to have responded to an appeal to send help to the beleaguered city of Jerusalem, although later that same year Cypriot knights fought in the battle of La Forbie.[44] In 1247 he sent a naval force

[40] 'Gestes', p. 741; 'Eracles', pp. 436–7; 'Annales', pp. 442–3; 'Amadi', pp. 198–9.

[41] *RRH*, nos. 1200, 1208; Innocent IV, nos. 3067–8, 5893; 'Abrégé du Livre des Assises de la Cour des Bourgeois', *RHC Lois*, II, 246.

[42] Innocent IV, no. 2531, 3068, 4105.

[43] Mas Latrie, *Histoire*, II, 66–7; *Tabulae ordinis Theutonici*, pp. 84–5; Matthew Paris, *Cronica Majora*, V, 308. But Henry was not without authority in the kingdom of Jerusalem. See Riley-Smith, *Feudal Nobility*, pp. 188–90; Mayer, "*Arrābe*', p. 207; *idem*, 'Ibelin *versus* Ibelin', p. 44 and note 101.

[44] 'Eracles', p. 428; Hill, II, 138. A letter supposedly from the patriarch of Jerusalem put the Cypriot casualties at 300 knights, but this and the other figures it gives would seem to be exaggerated. See Riley-Smith's comments in Ibn al-Furāt, II, 173.

under the command of the seneschal of Cyprus, Baldwin of Ibelin, which, sailing from Famagusta, combined with other shipping at Acre and went to the defence of Ascalon which was then under siege. The fleet managed to bring relief to the defenders, but the Muslims were still able to press their attack to a successful conclusion.[45] Then, as already noted, Cypriot forces were again in action in 1249–50 when a contingent participated in St Louis' expedition to Damietta and in 1252 when Henry brought aid to Louis in Syria. Even so, Henry's contribution to the defence of the Latin East pales when compared with Louis'; in the years 1250–4, the French king strengthened the fortifications at Acre, Caesarea, Jaffa and Sidon, and before he returned to Europe, he established a permanent French garrison in Acre.

It is not hard to see why Alice of Champagne and Henry of Cyprus should have been prepared to involve themselves in the politics of Latin Syria. In the early 1240s, despite the threats posed by the Ayyubids, the Khwarazmians and the more distant Mongols, the fortunes of the kingdom of Jerusalem were as bright as at any period during the thirteenth century. Territorially, thanks to the concessions exacted from the neighbouring Muslim rulers by Frederick II in 1229 and by Thibaut of Navarre and Richard of Cornwall in 1240–1, the kingdom was more extensive than at any time since 1187. It was also extremely wealthy. According to Matthew Paris, the Templars and Hospitallers had told Richard of Cornwall when he was in the East that the royal revenues of Acre were worth 50,000 pounds of silver annually – in other words more than the ordinary revenues of the king of England at that time.[46] The bulk of this income would have come from taxes on commerce. Acre, and to a lesser extent Tyre and the other coastal cities in Christian hands, attracted large numbers of western merchants, mostly Italians, and grew rich as entrepôts on the trade routes linking Europe with the East. But it was precisely in the period 1242–53, when Alice and Henry were regents, that the Christian position in the east began to take a turn for the worse. 1244 witnessed the final loss of Jerusalem by the Christians and a major defeat in battle at La Forbie. In 1247 the Muslims rcovered Tiberias and Ascalon. The previous year the king of Cilician Armenia and the prince of Antioch had acknowledged Mongol suzerainty. In 1250 the military high command in Egypt overthrew the Ayyubid dynasty and inaugrated the regime known to posterity as the Mamlūk sultanate. Although at first the Mamlūk rulers posed less of a threat to the Christians than their Ayyubid predecessors, it was they who in the space of just over forty years were to extinguish the Latin states on the Syrian littoral.

For a few years after the death of Henry I the nobles in the kingdom of Jerusalem were left to their own devices. Henry's lieutenant, John of Arsur,

[45] 'Eracles', pp. 433–4; 'Amadi', p. 198; cf. 'Continuation de Guillaume de Tyr, de 1229 à 1261, dite du manuscrit de Rothelin', *RHC Oc.*, II, 565. [46] Riley-Smith, *Feudal Nobility*, p. 64.

continued to exercise authority until 1254 when he was replaced by his cousin John count of Jaffa. Two years later, in 1256, he returned to office.[47] In Cyprus Henry's heir was his infant son, Hugh II, and in keeping with the precedent of Henry's own minority the regency was exercised by the queen-mother, Plaisance of Antioch.[48] In 1254 Plaisance, who cannot have been aged more than eighteen at the time of Henry's death the previous year,[49] married Balian of Ibelin, the son of the *bailli* of Jerusalem, John of Arsur. Presumably it was envisaged that Balian, himself newly dubbed knight at the hand of Louis IX and so evidently still on the threshold of manhood, would exercise effective control in Cyprus. But by the middle of 1255 the couple had separated. What seems to have happened was that Plaisance's kin objected to the marriage. The chroniclers present the quarrel as being between Balian and Plaisance's brother, Prince Bohemond VI of Antioch, and it was later claimed that Bohemond had explicitly withheld his agreement to the union. Perhaps he wanted power in Cyprus for himself; maybe his uncle, Henry of Antioch, who was married to the then heiress-presumptive to the Cypriot throne and sister of the later king, Isabella of Lusignan, was behind the rupture. The question of an annulment arose. Pope Alexander IV, who appears to have disregarded a dispensation issued by his predecessor, ruled that the marriage was inadmissible on the grounds that Balian was related within the prohibited degrees to Plaisance's previous husband: they were second cousins. Balian contested the case. It was not until 1258 that the marriage was finally declared null and he and Bohemond formally reconciled.[50] In the meantime, in 1256, Plaisance, acting presumably on her brother's advice, had taken the initiative in proposing that she should marry Edmund Crouchback, the younger son of King Henry III of England, and that her son, Hugh II, should marry one of the English king's daughters. Henry III entertained grandiose ambitions to establish Plantagenet power in the Mediterranean and was at this period intending to come to the East on crusade. But nothing came of his schemes, and the proposed marriages did not take place.[51]

In 1256 the war known as the War of St Sabas broke out in Acre between the Italian maritime republics. At first most of the lay baronage in the East, including the *bailli*, John of Arsur, appear to have supported the Genoese who enjoyed some early successes. In 1257, however, the Venetians under Lorenzo

[47] *Ibid.*, p. 215; Mayer, 'Ibelin *versus* Ibelin', pp. 37, 42–4. Above p. 72 note 112.

[48] 'Documents relatifs à la successibilité', p. 420; 'Nouvelles preuves de l'histoire de Chypre sous le règne des princes de la maison de Lusignan', ed. L. de Mas Latrie, *BEC*, XXXIV (1873), 55.

[49] Her parents married in 1234. 'Annales', p. 439.

[50] Alexander IV, *Registres* ed. C. Bourel de la Roncière *et al* (Paris, 1895–1959), nos. 741, 2510; 'Eracles', pp. 441, 443; 'Annales', pp. 445–6, 448.

[51] *Calendar of Close Rolls Preserved in the Public Record Office (1254–6)* (London, 1931), pp. 445–6, cf. p. 354; *Calendar of Liberate Rolls Preserved in the Public Record Office, 1251–60* (London, 1959), p. 319. Cf. S. Lloyd, *English Society and the Crusade, 1216–1307* (Oxford, 1988), pp. 226–30.

Tiepolo inflicted casualties on Genoese shipping and gained the upper hand in the street fighting in Acre.[52] At this juncture, John of Jaffa, the master of the Templars and Prince Bohemond of Antioch, all of whom had their own reasons for favouring the Venetians, attempted to force the various interests in the Latin East to act in concert and support the side that was now winning. Their ploy was to re-activate the regency principles which previously had conferred authority on Alice of Champagne and Henry I but which had been left in abeyance since 1253. The basic idea was simple: install as regent the closest heir in the East of the titular Hohenstaufen king – since Conrad's death in 1254 his infant son, Conrad V – and have the new regent order the community as a whole to help the Venetians. The situation was complicated by the fact that the person regarded as Conrad's closest heir, King Hugh II of Cyprus, was himself a minor. However, in February 1258, at the instance of John of Jaffa and the master of the Templars, Bohemond of Antioch brought his sister Plaisance and his nephew Hugh II to Acre. At a meeting of the High Court Hugh was formally recognized as Conrad's heir in the kingdom of Jerusalem, and it was agreed that his mother should exercise the regency on his behalf. Genoa's allies objected in vain to these developments, and Plaisance duly ordered the people of Acre to throw their support behind the Venetians. She then withdrew, leaving the former *bailli*, the hitherto pro-Genoese John of Arsur, as her lieutenant.[53] The pro-Venetian party among the Latin Syrian nobility had thus effected a change of policy, and this change was fully vindicated when in June 1258 the Venetians routed the Genoese fleet and forced the Genoese to abandon their quarter in Acre. Even so, warfare between the Italian communes continued to dog the Latin East for many years to come.

Plaisance held the regency for her son until her death in September 1261, but after 1258 she herself fades from view. In John of Arsur she had reappointed as her lieutenant the man who was father of her estranged husband, and in 1259, following John's death late in 1258, she installed the seneschal of Jerusalem and commander of the French garrison in Acre, Geoffrey of Sergines, as his successor. Geoffrey was a Frenchman, and his appointment can perhaps be seen as a move away from the pattern of allowing authority to be exercised by members of the Ibelin family or their clients and allies who between them had in effect governed Acre since the 1230s. It is certainly true that in the decades after Geoffrey's appointment the Ibelin family was far less prominent in the political

[52] For a useful account of the war, Richard, *The Latin Kingdom*, pp. 364–71.

[53] Riley-Smith, *Feudal Nobility*, pp. 215–17. Who was Conrad V's heir in 1258 depended on how the principles of inheritance were employed. P. W. Edbury, 'The Disputed Regency of the Kingdom of Jerusalem, 1264/6 and 1268', *Camden Miscellany* XXVII (1979), pp. 17–18. The arguments used in 1258 are not recorded, although, in what is clearly a corrupt passage, one source appears to indicate that Bohemond VI had to argue against the rights of Walter of Brienne's children. 'Rothelin', p. 634.

life of Acre than it had been in the preceding period, but nothing is known of the circumstances under which he acquired his office nor whether it was regarded as a significant departure at the time. Maybe Geoffrey was not so much Plaisance's choice as that of her brother Bohemond who, according to one source, had been responsible for the appointment of John of Arsur in 1258, or of her lover, John count of Jaffa, himself the leading member of the Ibelin family at that time.[54]

Plaisance's tenure of the regency coincided with a sequence of dramatic changes in the political structure of the Muslim world. In the later 1250s the Mongol armies had advanced into the Near East.[55] In 1258 they overran Baghdad and destroyed the Abbasid Caliphate; in 1259–60 they conquered Muslim-held Syria, occupying Aleppo in January 1260 and Damascus the following March before proceeding south as far as Gaza. The Christians in the East imagined that they in their turn would suffer Mongol attack. However, except for an assault on Sidon in late July or early August 1260, the blow never fell. Instead the main armies withdrew eastwards on learning of the Great Khan's death, leaving behind a much smaller force under the command of a leader named Kitbuqa whose primary task was evidently to guard their existing conquests. The Ayyubid regimes in Syria had been crushed, but the Franks had largely escaped. The Mamlūk sultanate, established just ten years earlier in Egypt, then went on to the offensive against Kitbuqa. In August Sultan Qutuz, aided by the benevolent neutrality of the Franks who allowed him to pass through their territory and supplied him with victuals, led his army into Syria. In September he defeated the Mongol commander in battle at 'Ayn Jālūt, and this victory, followed by a further success at Hims three months later, allowed the Mamlūks to take control of the Syrian hinterland and thus surround the Christian possessions. At first the Franks seem to have hoped to be able to profit from these events to make their own gains in Syria; certainly they could not have foreseen that the Mamlūks, whose previous history had been one of *coups d'état* and political instability, would find in their new sultan, Baybars, a capable leader who would remain in power until his death in 1277; nor could they have foreseen that the Mongols, having suffered these reverses at the hands of the Mamlūks, would be unable or unwilling to attempt to exact retribution. What in fact happened was that between 1263 and 1272 Sultan Baybars, fearing a Christian–Mongol alliance and fresh crusades from the West, took pre-emptive action and reduced the Latin states in the East to impotence.

It is perhaps surprising that despite the panic in Acre in 1260 when an imminent Mongol attack was feared, and despite the fact that in the wake of the Mongol defeat later that same year the Christians appealed to the West for

[54] For Geoffrey's appointment, 'Gestes', p. 750; 'Eracles', p. 444; 'Annales', pp. 448–9. For Bohemond's appointment of John of Arsur in 1258, 'Rothelin', p. 634. For John of Jaffa and Plaisance, Mayer, 'Ibelin *versus* Ibelin', pp. 51–5.

[55] For what follows, Jackson, 'Crisis in the Holy Land', *passim*.

military assistance to re-occupy Syrian territory, there is no record of Cypriot forces being sent to the mainland at that time. It is also surprising that after Plaisance's death in 1261 no member of the royal house of Cyprus came forward to claim the regency of Jerusalem on behalf of Hugh II for two whole years.[56] In April 1263 Baybars led his first attack on Acre, thereby bringing to an end the truce that had hitherto existed. A full-scale siege was evidently not envisaged, although the Mamlūks did manage to spread alarm and destruction, and in skirmishes outside the city the Christians were worsted and Geoffrey of Sergines wounded. It was only then that Hugh II's kin asserted their rights in the kingdom of Jerusalem. Hugh II was still under age and still regarded as the rightful regent for Conrad V. Now that his mother was dead, it was accepted in both Cyprus and Jerusalem that his heir should act as regent. His closest relative was his father's surviving sister, Isabella, but in Cyprus she had stood aside and allowed her son Hugh, known to historians as Hugh of Antioch-Lusignan, to take over the government of the island.[57] After Plaisance, the youthful widow whose rule had probably been dominated by her husband Balian of Arsur, her brother Bohemond and her lover John of Jaffa in turn, Cyprus was now being ruled by a man who in the early 1260s would have been in his mid-twenties,[58] and who was to prove to be of considerable ability. In the kingdom of Jerusalem, however, Isabella claimed the right to exercise the regency on behalf of Hugh II for herself. In 1263, after Baybars' attack, she and her husband, Henry of Antioch, came to Acre to assume control. In law her claim was indisputable. She nominated her husband to act as her lieutenant, but Henry, as a member of the princely house of Antioch, may have been regarded as an outsider, and it would appear that his appointment was resented. Seizing on the technicality that Isabella and Henry had not brought the young king of Cyprus with them, the members of the High Court refused them homage and fealty. The next year we find the pope calling on Henry, Geoffrey of Sergines, John of Jaffa and John II of Beirut to put an end to the discord among themselves that was endangering the security of the kingdom.[59] It is unfortunate that the sources give us no further information on the problems facing Henry, nor on his policy. In any case his period of authority was brief; his wife died at some point during 1264, whereupon his lieutenancy lapsed.

Isabella's death opened the way for the celebrated dispute between her son, Hugh of Antioch-Lusignan, and his cousin, Hugh count of Brienne, as to who

[56] Riley-Smith, *Feudal Nobility*, p. 217; Jackson, 'Crisis in the Holy Land', pp. 505–6.

[57] Riley-Smith, *Feudal Nobility*, p. 218; Edbury, 'Disputed Regency', pp. 4, 28, 30–1. Hugh later claimed to have been regent for 5 years 8 months. 'Document relatif au service militaire', p. 429. His regency ended with the death of Hugh II in November or December 1267 and, as Plaisance died in September 1261, there may have been a six-month gap before he took control.

[58] Hugh's parents had married *c.* 1233. 'Gestes', p. 706. The dispensation for his own marriage is dated 1255. Alexander IV, no. 71.

[59] Richard, *The Latin Kingdom*, p. 407; Riley-Smith, *Feudal Nobility*, pp. 217–18, cf. p. 190.

should exercise Hugh II's regency in Jerusalem. A verbatim record of the debate between the two cousins before the High Court of Jerusalem has been preserved, providing details of the arguments employed and also a rare insight into Latin Syrian legal dialectic. Ostensibly what was at stake was the right to exercise the regency of Jerusalem on behalf of Hugh II until the young king should come of age and so be able to take over the government in person. Hugh would have reached his majority round about the beginning of 1268, and so a period in office of no more than three to four years can have been envisaged. But the dispute had wider implications that would have been clearly understood at the time: whoever was declared the rightful ruler of Jerusalem on the young king's behalf would also be declared Hugh's heir-presumptive. As things turned out, Hugh II died late in 1267 without ever having reached his majority, and Hugh of Antioch-Lusignan, the victor in the dispute, duly succeeded him.[60]

In 1263 Baybars had given the Christians a foretaste of what was in store for them. The following year he was preoccupied elsewhere, but then his conquests began in earnest. In 1265 he captured Caesarea and Arsur and destroyed Haifa; in 1266 it was the turn of the important Templar castle of Safed in Galilee and also the fortresses at Toron and Chastel Neuf further to the north. Both years witnessed destructive raids in the vicinity of Acre that had the effect of preventing the Christians from sending out relief columns.[61] For the first time since the 1240s the kingdom of Jerusalem was sustaining serious territorial losses, and Hugh of Antioch-Lusignan reacted by doing what no ruler of Cyprus is known to have done since the early 1250s and deployed Cypriot military resources on the mainland. In 1265 he brought across 130 knights as well as mounted squires, and the next year he was back again accompanied by what was described as 'a very fine company of men at arms, knights and others'. In neither year did the Cypriots arrive in time to join the garrison of the beleaguered towns and castles; Hugh's purpose was probably to reinforce the defence of the all-important city of Acre, although in October 1266 he did participate with the military Orders and Geoffrey of Sergines' French garrison in a raid into Galilee. Whether or not Hugh was already exercising the regency in these years is of secondary importance; what is significant is that he recognised that he had a duty to defend the Latin East, and he used his men accordingly.[62]

Hugh's capacity to bring aid must have weighed heavily in his favour in the dispute with his cousin. Quite apart from the legal merits of his case, Hugh of Antioch-Lusignan had at his disposal the military strength of the kingdom of Cyprus; Hugh of Brienne, who it is true had inherited his ancestral county in

[60] Exactly when the dispute took place is uncertain. This is unfortunate, since it obscures the context in which Hugh of Antioch-Lusignan, already regent in Cyprus, acquired authority in Acre. See Edbury, 'Disputed Regency', pp. 4–6.

[61] J. Prawer, *Histoire du royaume latin du Jérusalem* (Paris, 1969–70), II, 461–75.

[62] 'Gestes', pp. 759, 766; 'Eracles', pp. 450, 455; Ibn al-Furāt, II, 100, cf. p. 217.

France a few years earlier, would not have been able to compete with his cousin in terms of readily available man-power. In addition, Hugh of Brienne was at a disadvantage when it came to family connections in the East. Both men were cousins of the king of Cyprus, but Hugh of Antioch-Lusignan, besides being the cousin on his father's side of the prince of Antioch, had married into the Ibelin family. As for the legal arguments themselves, the transcripts of the pleading reveal elements of muddled thinking on the part of both protagonists. The question turned on rules of descent. Hugh of Brienne, a son of Isabella of Lusignan's long-dead sister Maria, was the representative of the senior branch of the family, but was a younger man, and in the end the High Court of Jerusalem upheld Hugh of Antioch-Lusignan's contention that as the elder of the two cousins in the same degree of relationship to Hugh II he should be entitled to exercise the regency.[63]

King Hugh II died late in 1267. In Cyprus Hugh of Antioch-Lusignan thereupon ascended the throne, and on Christmas Day 1267 he was crowned in Nicosia cathedral. The following May King Hugh III, as he should now be called, crossed to Acre and asserted his claim to succeed Hugh II as regent of the kingdom of Jerusalem for the absentee Conrad of Hohenstaufen. The High Court seems to have been prepared to accept him, but his rights were challenged by his kinswoman, Maria of Antioch, on the grounds that as a nearer relative and hence closer heir of Conrad she had a greater right. Legally her case was sound; against her Hugh III employed arguments that he himself had discredited in his dispute with his cousin, and the members of the High Court, in recognizing Hugh's claims, may have salved their consciences with the technicality that by refusing their summons to come into court to hear them deliver their verdict, Maria had not presented her case properly and so was in default. Maria's problem was that she was over forty and unmarried. Hugh on the other hand already had experience of governing Latin Syria and was eminently suited to take charge. What probably swayed the High Court more than anything was the fact that earlier in 1268 Baybars, who the previous year had contented himself with a couple of military demonstrations before Acre, had captured the town of Jaffa and the Templar castle of Beaufort before going on to take the northern city of Antioch which the Christians had held continuously since 1098. In the face of these renewed losses, Hugh could utilize his Cypriot troops; Maria apparently could offer nothing.[64]

On 29 October 1268 Conrad V, the last legitimate descendant of Frederick II and Queen Isabella of Jerusalem, was executed in Naples. With the extinction of the line of Hohenstaufen kings of Jerusalem, Hugh III, whose recognition as regent in May 1268 had marked him out as heir-presumptive, succeeded to the throne. He was crowned in the cathedral at Tyre in September 1269.

[63] Edbury, 'Disputed Regency', pp. 6–8, 12–15. [64] *Ibid.*, pp. 8–11.

Hugh was now king of both Cyprus and Jerusalem. His accession meant that for the first time since the 1220s and the reign of John of Brienne the kingdom of Jerusalem now had a resident monarch. But his inheritance was difficult, to say the least. The long interregnum had in itself created problems, and the Christians were now reeling under the impact of Baybars' inroads. One result of the lack of strong leadership and the pressures of war was that the barons and military Orders had taken to pursuing their own relations with the Muslims, making and unmaking truces independently of the government in Acre. The kingdom had thus gone a long way towards fragmenting into its component lordships. A further dimension to the disintegration of the fabric of the kingdom was provided by the Italians. Since 1258 the Venetians had excluded their rivals from Acre, and the Genoese theirs from Tyre, and conflict between them frequently disturbed the commercial and political life of the East. Hugh III attempted to revive royal authority. He was certainly an able man, and his rule was not without its successes, but to be king of the whole realm and not simply 'king of Acre' as Muslim writers called him proved impossible.

The corner-stone of Hugh's policy seems to have been based on close relations with the Montfort family in Tyre. Philip of Montfort had received Tyre from Henry I in 1246, but his legal title there was weak. Nevertheless the Montforts were a powerful family, and Tyre was an important city. Hugh was not prepared to relinquish his residual rights as king, although he knew he was not strong enough to expel the Montforts and re-absorb Tyre into the royal domain. Even before he became king it would seem that plans were afoot for Philip's son John of Montfort to marry Hugh's sister Margaret. Soon after Hugh's accession they came to an agreement: Margaret wedded John, and the king gave John Tyre to be held as a fief by him and his descendants by Margaret; for his part Philip handed over control in Tyre to his son.[65] This settlement with the Montfort family was to serve Hugh well in the future. However, it is noteworthy that in 1271 John of Montfort made his own truce with Baybars to cover Tyre,[66] thus anticipating Hugh III's truce of the following year which only covered the area around Acre. Hugh also sought to assert his rule in the other lordships of his kingdom. He regularized the unsanctioned alienations of Arsur to the Hospitallers and of Sidon to the Templars, both of which had taken place before his accession. But when in 1275 he attempted to give effect to his jurisdiction over Beirut he ran into difficulties; Baybars intervened to prevent him, claiming that by the terms of his treaty with the lady of Beirut, the lordship was under his protection.[67]

[65] 'Gestes', pp. 773–4, 775; Riley-Smith, *Feudal Nobility*, p. 224. For an example of Hugh exercising jurisdiction in Tyre, *RRH*, no. 1374b. [66] Ibn al-Furāt, II, 154.

[67] *Ibid.*, p. 164; Riley-Smith, *Feudal Nobility*, pp. 28, 224.

After Baybars' successes in capturing Jaffa, Beaufort and Antioch in 1268, he was prepared to temporize, and the history of the next two years is of raids, counter-raids and negotiations. The sultan was afraid that St Louis' second crusade would come to the East, and that there could be a Franco-Mongol alliance against him. In the event the only crusaders to arrive were a contingent under the bastard sons of King James I of Aragon in 1269 and another under the Lord Edward (soon to be King Edward I of England) in 1271. The Mongols staged an attack on Mamlūk territory to coincide with Edward's presence in the East, but there was no effective co-operation between Mongols and Christians. The deviation of Louis' expedition to Tunis in 1270 left Baybars a free hand to resume his conquests, and he now turned his attention to the county of Tripoli. In 1271, he captured first the Templar castle at Chastel Blanc (Safita), then the famous Hospitaller castle nearby Crac des Chevaliers and finally the count of Tripoli's fortress at Gibelacar. He then moved south and in June 1271 seized the castle of Montfort, the principal possession of the Teutonic Knights in the East, so laying open the north-eastern approaches to Acre. Immediately afterwards, in an attempt to distract Hugh's attention from mainland Syria, he sent a naval expedition against Cyprus. This was Baybars' only attempted raid on the island, and it ended in disaster when most of the Muslim ships were wrecked near Limassol.[68] The Lord Edward had arrived in Acre not long before, and later in 1271 he and Hugh engaged in some raiding, most notably an attack on the castle at Qaqun. Early in 1272 Baybars concluded a truce, and henceforth Acre remained at peace with the Mamlūks until shortly before the final calamity in 1291.

Hugh III had brought Cypriot troops to Acre in 1265 and 1266. Between his accession as king of Cyprus at the end of 1267 and 1271 he did so again on two further occasions, probably in 1268, when he was recognized as regent, and in 1269, when he received the crown of Jerusalem.[69] In 1271 he summoned the Cypriot knights once more, but on this occasion they refused to serve, arguing that the king had no right to compel them to perform military service outside Cyprus itself. The dispute seems to have come to a head in July.[70] The knights were probably alarmed by the abortive seaborne attack a few weeks earlier; clearly they thought that they had been summoned to fight on the mainland rather too frequently in recent years. The whole affair provides an unmistakable indication that however keen Hugh may have been to defend what was left of his mainland kingdom, the Cypriot knights did not share his aspirations. The Lord Edward was called upon to arbitrate, although whether his intervention was intended to be binding for all time or was simply an interim measure for the year in question is not known. The depositions laid before him by Hugh on the one

[68] Hill, II, 167. Cf. Ibn al-Furāt, II, 152–4 and notes (p. 242).

[69] 'Document relatif au service militaire', p. 429 §18; Edbury, 'Feudal Obligations', p. 332.

[70] Walter of Guisborough, p. 208.

hand and by James of Ibelin, the spokesman for the knights, on the other have been preserved. Hugh claimed that theory and precedent were on his side, and he listed the occasions on which the knights had answered summons to serve outside Cyprus in the past. James, a son of the famous lawyer John count of Jaffa, tried to dispute his assertions point by point, although many of his own arguments were thin. One claim is particularly suggestive. According to Hugh, it was James' father and Philip of Montfort who had urged Henry I to use a feudal summons to induce Cypriot knights to participate in St Louis' expedition to Damietta in 1249. As prominent Cypriot vassals with lordships on the mainland, they had had a vested interest in getting the king to lead his army overseas. But by the 1270s many of those lordships had been lost. As Baybars eroded the Christian possessions, so the number of Cypriots who would have wanted to defend what was left grew less. If John of Jaffa had been a leader of the party in Cyprus in the 1240s calling for service abroad, his son, only three years after the fall of Jaffa in 1268, was spokesman for the party opposed to such service.[71] In 1273 a settlement was reached whereby the king of Cyprus could command his vassals to serve outside Cyprus for a maximum of four months in any year, and then only if led by the king in person or by the king's son. Hugh's right to summon his knights abroad had been upheld, but never again did he call on his Cypriot vassals to defend the Latin East against the Muslims.[72]

In 1276 Hugh left Acre for good, enraged and frustrated by the opposition he had encountered. Baybars' intervention in Beirut serves to illustrate the king's failure to weld his kingdom together. The dispute with his own knights was humiliating and must have destroyed the confidence the people of Acre would have had in his ability to bring aid when required. In any case, the king had been unable to wrest the initiative from the Mamlūks or recover any of Baybars' gains. However, at the heart of Hugh's problems was the fact that his right to the throne of Jerusalem was contested. Maria of Antioch, who had unsuccessfully challenged his rights to the regency in May 1268, persisted in her contention that she, and not Hugh, was the righful heir of Conrad V. Whether she made a formal request for the throne in the High Court after Conrad's death is not known, but she did demand to be crowned by the patriarch of Jerusalem, and, when this demand was ignored, she had a clerk and notary interrupt Hugh's coronation ceremony at Tyre. She then appealed to Rome. Litigation was protracted. Her suit was before the curia by 1272, and Hugh was sending procurators to answer her in 1273. She subsequently withdrew her case and at the beginning of 1277, with papal approval, sold her claims to the king of Sicily, Charles of Anjou. Maria would not have been able to contribute anything to the defence of Acre,

[71] 'Document relatif au service militaire', pp. 427–34; Edbury, 'Feudal Obligations', pp. 332–5; H. E. Mayer, *Mélanges sur l'histoire du royaume latin de Jérusalem* (Paris, 1984), pp. 106–13.

[72] 'Eracles', pp. 463–4; Marino Sanudo, p. 225. In an undated letter apparently of 1273 or 1274, the pope congratulated Hugh on the conclusion of the agreement. Gregory X, no. 810.

but Charles was in an altogether different position. A younger brother of St Louis who himself had done so much for the security of the Latin East, Charles had become ruler of Sicily in 1266. He was a man of boundless ambition whose influence was felt throughout the Mediterranean world, and to some sections of opinion he would have seemed to have been able to offer far more in terms of military aid and political and diplomatic influence than Hugh III. It is not known when the idea that Maria would make her claims over to him was first mooted, but it is likely to have been well before 1277. Certainly Charles had already been concerning himself with the East. In 1269 and again in 1271 he had been negotiating with Baybars for a truce in the Latin East, and these activities, together with the statement of a Muslim writer that as early as 1269 Hugh III was frightened of him, might suggest that his ambitions dated from that time.[73]

There were three main groups in the East to whom Charles of Anjou could look for support: the French garrison in Acre, paid for by his nephew, King Philip III of France, the Venetians and the Templars. In fact there is no evidence that the French garrison was opposed to Hugh before 1276, although it proved to be firmly behind Charles' representatives during the following decade. When Hugh first left Acre, a delegation of prominent people including the garrison's commander, William of Roussillon, followed him to Tyre where they begged him to appoint a regent and other officers to take control during his absence. These men obviously still regarded Hugh as the legitimate source of authority. By contrast, at the time when others had been urging Hugh not to leave Acre, the Venetians and the Templars had made out that they did not care whether he stayed or went. Clearly they were hoping he would go.[74] The opposition of the Venetians can probably be attributed to Hugh III's close relationship with the lord of Tyre, John of Montfort. A truce between the Genoese and Venetians had been established in 1270, and the Genoese were re-admitted to Acre. Hugh enforced the restitution of certain of their properties that had been occupied by the Venetians, although the Genoese never recovered their old quarter in its entirety.[75] The Venetians, however, were not re-admitted to Tyre. It was doubtless the result of the favourable treatment of their rivals and the fact that the Montforts had been responsible for their expulsion from Tyre in the first place at the time of the War of St Sabas that turned the Venetians against the king.[76] But the group which more than any other undermined his position in Acre was the Templars. So long as the master, Thomas Berard, was alive they

[73] 'Eracles', p. 461; Ibn al Furāt, II, 130–1, 157. For Maria's claims and Hugh's departure from Acre, Hill, II, 163–5, 172–3; Riley-Smith, *Feudal Nobility*, pp. 222–4, 225–6.

[74] 'Eracles', p. 474. For William, 'Gestes', p. 780.

[75] D. Jacoby, 'L'expansion occidentale dans le Levant: les Vénitiens à Acre dans la seconde moitié du treizième siècle', *Journal of Medieval History*, III (1977), 228 and note 9 (pp. 254–5).

[76] For evidence that Hugh had offered the Venetians franchises in Cyprus but had not fulfilled his promise, 'Nouvelles preuves' (1873), pp. 54–6.

seem to have accepted Hugh's rule,[77] but his successor, William of Beaujeu, who was elected in 1273, was a relative of the French royal family and for a brief period before his election had been Templar commander in Apulia.[78] Not surprisingly he supported Charles of Anjou. The Templars' unsanctioned acquisition of property near Acre, together with disturbances in Acre itself involving the military Orders and their client confraternities, was what finally convinced Hugh that his position was untenable, and, when Charles of Anjou's officers arrived the following year, it was the Templars who eased their take-over of power.[79]

Hugh III left Acre in October 1276. In March 1277 Maria of Antioch completed the sale of her rights to Jerusalem to Charles of Anjou, and within a matter of weeks Charles' representative, Roger of San Severino, arrived in the East.[80] At Acre Roger occupied the royal castle, bullied the liegemen into doing homage to him as Charles' deputy and appointed officials. He then seems to have proposed taking over Tyre but was dissuaded when the Venetians pointed out that this could lead to conflict. As Hugh III's brother-in-law, John of Montfort had good cause to regard the new regime in Acre with anxiety. Accordingly, in July 1277, helped by the mediation of William of Beaujeu, he re-admitted the Venetians to their third share of his lordship of Tyre in return for an explicit recognition of his title. It was a heavy price, but the concession was guaranteed by the Templars as well as by a number of other leading ecclesiastics and laymen. With Roger's principal allies in the East now committed to upholding his rights, John's position was secure.[81] Nevertheless there is no direct evidence that he ever recognized Charles of Anjou as king of Jerusalem or Roger of San Severino as his lieutenant.

Hugh III had abandoned Acre, washing his hands of responsibility for its defence and government, and in 1277 he seems to have made no attempt to stop Roger's assumption of control. But his attitude soon changed. In 1279 he made the first of two attempts to re-occupy the city. He brought a large force of Cypriots to Tyre, evidently hoping that a show of strength coupled with bribery in appropriate quarters would bring about the restoration of his power. William of Beaujeu, however, remained firmly opposed, and it was largely thanks to him that Hugh's efforts were thwarted. At the end of four months, when by the compromise of 1273 Hugh's right to compel his own vassals to serve in Syria expired, his army broke up and the king retired to Cyprus. There, by way of

[77] Edbury, 'Disputed Regency', p. 47; 'Eracles', p. 463.

[78] 'Gestes', pp. 779–80; M. L. Bulst-Thiele, *Sacrae Domus Militiae Templi Hierosolymitani Magistri* (Göttingen, 1974), pp. 259–60, 263–5.

[79] 'Eracles', pp. 474, 478.

[80] 8 May ('Eracles' p. 478 note a) or 7 June (Marino Sanudo, p. 227; 'Amadi', p. 214). September ('Gestes' p. 783) is clearly too late as it post-dates John of Montfort's agreement with the Venetians.

[81] *Urkunden Venedig*, III, 150–9; 'Gestes', p. 784; 'Eracles', p. 478.

reprisal, he seized the Templars' properties and destroyed their fortifications.[82] His second attempt to reassert his authority on the mainland followed in 1283. Encouraged no doubt by the rising the previous year in Sicily against Charles of Anjou – the Sicilian Vespers – and the subsequent recall of Roger of San Severino, he brought a force said to number 250 knights to Syria. His first landfall was at Beirut, and from there he proceeded to Tyre. But again he failed. Odo Poilechien, the new Angevin lieutenant in Acre, had just renewed the truce with the Mamlūks, and it is possible that Hugh may have feared Mamlūk intervention had he sought to displace Odo by force. The Templars seem to have remained staunchly behind the Angevins: Odo's truce covered the Templar lordships of Athlit and Sidon as well as Acre and Haifa, and it was believed that it was they who had instigated a Muslim ambush on that section of Hugh's army which in 1283 had gone from Beirut to Tyre by land. On 24 March 1284, still in Tyre, Hugh died.[83]

Thus it was that the Angevins controlled Acre and were supported by the Templars, whose possession of Athlit and Sidon gave them a major role in the defence of the remaining Christian territories in the Latin kingdom. On the other hand, at Tyre and Beirut Hugh had continued to be recognized as the rightful king of Jerusalem. John of Montfort allowed Hugh to use Tyre as his base in both 1279 and 1283. His younger brother, Humphrey, was married to Eschiva of Ibelin who succeeded to the lordship of Beirut on the death of her sister Isabella in about 1280.[84] But after 1277 Hugh was in no position to do anything constructive in the diplomatic or military sphere to help the Latins in their dealings with the Mamlūks, although there is some evidence to suggest that he intended bringing assistance to the Mongols when they attempted to invade Syria in 1281.[85] So the king, who in the 1260s looked as if he was going to provide the Latin East with positive political leadership backed up by military aid from Cyprus, spent the last eight years of his career unable to govern the one remaining royal city in Syria.

Hugh was succeeded by his eldest surviving son, John, who was crowned king of Cyprus in Nicosia in May 1284. John died almost exactly a year later and was succeeded by his brother, Henry II, who in his turn was crowned in June 1285.[86]

[82] Above p. 78 note 21.

[83] 'Gestes', pp. 789–91; 'Annales', p. 458; Marino Sanudo, p. 229; 'Amadi', pp. 214–16. For the Mamlūk treaty, P. M. Holt, 'Qalāwūn's Treaty with Acre in 1283', *EHR*, XCI (1976), 802–12; D. Barag, 'A New Source Concerning the Ultimate Borders of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem', *Israel Exploration Journal*, XXIX (1979), 197–217.

[84] 'Gestes', p. 790, cf. p. 774. It is not known when Isabella died. Her third husband died in 1277, but she survived to marry a fourth. 'Eracles', p. 479; Rudt de Collenberg, 'Les Ibelin', pp. 136–7.

[85] Hill, II, 175–6.

[86] 'Gestes', pp. 791, 792; Marino Sanudo, p. 229; Leontios Makhairas, §41; 'Amadi', p. 216. The belief that John went to Tyre where he was crowned king of Jerusalem is first found in the sixteenth century. Lusignan, *Description*, f. 137v.

Henry renewed his father's efforts to recover Acre where it would seem the climate of opinion was now much more favourable to the Lusignans than previously. Presumably the continuing problems facing the Angevins in Italy had convinced people that no help was likely from that quarter. Even William of Beaujeu was prepared to change sides, and the groundwork for Henry's recognition in Acre was laid when his ambassador, a knight named Julian Le Jaune, reached an agreement with William. In June 1286 Henry sailed for Syria and made his entry into Acre where he was enthusiastically acclaimed by the population as a whole. Only the Angevin governor, Odo Poilechien, and the French garrison remained opposed to him. As these men occupied the royal castle it was essential for the king to dislodge them. After five days of blockade and negotiations the castle was surrendered on the understanding that no reprisals against the French would be taken and that if their paymaster, the king of France, held that Henry had behaved wrongfully in expelling them from it, he would hand the castle back to them.[87] Henry then travelled to Tyre where he was crowned king of Jerusalem on 15 August. The coronation was followed by lavish celebrations with jousts and other entertainments – 'the best that had been seen for a hundred years'. In November he returned to Cyprus leaving his maternal uncle, Baldwin of Ibelin, as his lieutenant in Acre.[88]

Once again there was a Lusignan reigning in both Cyprus and the kingdom of Jerusalem. The new king of Sicily, Charles II, was unable to respond to Henry's success in regaining Acre, although he and his descendants continued to lay claim to the title of king of Jerusalem. By 1286 the Christians in the Latin kingdom had been living at peace with their Muslim neighbours for fourteen years. The truce of 1272 had held, and in 1283 Odo Poilechien had renewed and extended it. Since 1269 and 1271 respectively the lords of Beirut and Tyre had had their own truces. Further north relations were not so peaceable, and in 1285 the Mamlūks captured the Hospitaller castle of Marqab which hitherto had been the base for raids into Muslim territory and for attempted co-operation with the Mongols.[89] Henry's kingdom consisted of little more than the royal city of Acre, the Templar lordships of Athlit and Sidon and the lordships of Tyre and Beirut. The lady of Beirut was Eschiva of Ibelin, the younger daughter of John II of Beirut. Her husband, Humphrey of Montfort, had died in 1284 and she remained unmarried until after the loss of the lordship in 1291 when she married

[87] Hill, II, 179–81; Richard, *The Latin Kingdom*, pp. 418–19.

[88] 'Gestes', p. 793; Marino Sanudo, p. 229 (wrongly naming the lieutenant as Philip of Ibelin); 'Amadi', p. 217. Henry's coronation is thought to have occasioned an upsurge of patronage of illuminated manuscripts in Acre. H. Buchthal, *Miniature Painting in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem* (Oxford, 1957), pp. 86–7; J. Folda, *Crusader Manuscript Illumination at Saint-Jean d'Acre, 1275–1291* (Princeton, 1976), pp. 26, 77, 102. Baldwin of Ibelin was dead by January 1287 (1286 o.s.). Mas Latrie, *Histoire*, III, 669–70.

[89] Riley-Smith, *Knights of St John*, pp. 137 and note 2, 141, 194–5.

King Henry's brother Guy.[90] John of Montfort lord of Tyre had died childless in 1283. By the terms of Hugh III's enfeoffment, the lordship should have escheated to the crown, but Hugh was unable to find the 150,000 saracen bezants due to John's heir by way of compensation for the expenses incurred by the Montfort family in fortifying their lordship. The king therefore came to an agreement with John's next of kin, Humphrey, the husband of the lady of Beirut, whereby Humphrey should hold Tyre until Hugh paid the compensation; if Hugh had not paid by the end of May 1284, Humphrey was to have the lordship on a permanent footing. In the event both Hugh and Humphrey died before the term expired. Humphrey's heirs, however, acquired no rights in Tyre, and so presumably they were indemnified. In 1285 John of Montfort's widow, Margaret of Lusignan, the sister of Hugh III, concluded a truce with the Mamlūks to cover the lordship, and so at that point she must have been regarded as possessing legitimate authority there. But at some stage in the late 1280s Henry II conferred Tyre on his brother Amaury who remained seised until its fall in 1291.[91]

The restoration of the Lusignan dynasty on the Syrian mainland in 1286 and Henry II's successes in beginning a reconstruction of royal authority ended abruptly in 1291 with the Mamlūk conquest of Acre and the abandonment of the remaining towns and fortresses. It would appear that Henry himself spent most of the intervening years in Cyprus and governed his mainland realm through lieutenants: his uncle Baldwin of Ibelin and then from 1289 his younger brother, Amaury lord of Tyre. So far as is known he only visited Syria twice after 1286: once from April to September 1289 when he came to Acre at the time of the fall of Tripoli, and again in May 1291 when he brought Cypriot reinforcements for the final defence of the town. Nevertheless, Henry was certainly not indifferent to the needs of the Latin kingdom. In 1287 we find his lieutenant acting in concert with the military Orders to put an end to the fighting among the Italians that had done so much to damage the security of the Christian territories.[92] In 1289 Henry sent his brother Amaury to the defence of Tripoli with a force of of knights and men-at-arms then in the aftermath of the loss of Tripoli he himself came to Acre and renewed the truce with the Mamlūks, and at about the same time he sent

[90] 'Gestes', pp. 790–1; Rudt de Collenberg, 'Dispenses matrimoniales', pp. 60–1 (nos. 18a–b).

[91] 'Gestes', pp. 790, 804. For the truce, J. Richard, 'Un partage de seigneurie entre Francs et Mamelouks: les "casaux de Sur"', *Syria*, XXX (1953), 72–82. Amaury is named as lord of Tyre in a description of the events of 1289 ('Gestes', pp. 803–5) and in papal letters of 1290 (Nicholas IV, nos. 4387, 4392, 4400). Margaret's status in 1285 is problematical. Richard's suggestion ('Partage', p. 73 note 2) that Hugh III's enfeoffment was a form of jointure falls on the grounds that there would then have been no need to make a deal with Humphrey, and that Henry would not have had the escheat and so could not confer the title on his brother. Margaret died in 1308. 'Amadi', p. 271.

[92] 'Gestes', p. 799; Prawer, *Histoire*, II, 529–32.

John of Grailly, the commander of the French garrison in Acre, to Europe to seek military aid.[93]

The story of the loss of Acre in May 1291 has been retold often enough. Despite the accusations of cowardice levelled at him, Henry's personal conduct during the siege seems to have been creditable.[94] The basic problem was that the Christians lacked the military might to put up an effective resistance. Various figures are given in the sources, perhaps the most authoritative being those preserved by the so-called 'Templar of Tyre' who stated that at the beginning of the siege the Christians had 6–700 knights and 13,000 footmen including the crusaders from the West. The Cypriot reinforcements brought by Henry after the siege had begun are variously put at 200 knights and 500 footmen or 100 knights and 200 footmen.[95] The fact was that Henry's forces from Cyprus did not significantly add to the number of the defenders, let alone tilt the balance in favour of the Christians. The same explanation – lack of man-power for defence – must have lain behind the surrender of the remaining cities and fortresses along the coast once Acre had fallen. No doubt the fall of Acre was a severe blow to morale, and it has to be assumed that the Christians had put all their efforts into defending it and lacked the resources to offer worthwhile resistance elsewhere.

We do not know what the total military strength at the disposal of the thirteenth-century kings of Cyprus amounted to, but it is likely that the 250 knights brought by Hugh III to Tyre in 1283 or the 200 said to have been brought by Henry II to Acre in 1291 represent the upper limits of the forces that could be spared from garrison duties within the island. In other words, welcome though Cypriot assistance no doubt was, the resources of the Lusignan kings were limited, and their ability to aid Latin Syria was correspondingly circumscribed. It should be added that although there are plenty of instances of Cypriots being deployed in Syria, there is not a single case of their prowess or achievements catching the imagination of the chroniclers, and, as the dispute over services of 1271 makes clear, the commitment of individual knights was not necessarily wholehearted. On the other hand, the political leadership provided by the Lusignans could be energetic and sensible, but there were too many interruptions for lasting achievements to be made. Neither Henry I, Hugh III nor Henry II acquired complete control over the lay baronage, the military Orders or the French garrison in Acre. Indeed, Pope Nicholas IV, pope at the time of the fall of Acre, directed his correspondence not to Henry II as king of Jerusalem, but to a group of notables.[96] At best the Lusignans ruled by consensus and gave

[93] 'Gestes', pp. 803, 804; Marino Sanudo, p. 230; 'Amadi', p. 218; Hill, II, 182–3. For John of Grailly, Nicholas IV, nos. 2252–58.

[94] Hill, II, 184–7; Richard, *The Latin Kingdom*, pp. 425–9; Prawer, *Histoire*, II, 552–7.

[95] 'Gestes', pp. 806–7; Marino Sanudo, pp. 230–1; 'Amadi', pp. 219–20, 221.

[96] Nicholas IV, nos. 4391–4401, cf. no. 4387.

the government in Acre a measure of legal sanction. However, while we should be warned against claiming undue importance for Cyprus in the history of the crusades and the Latin East in the thirteenth century, it nevertheless remains true that Cypriot material aid in terms of economic and military assistance of one sort or another did augment the resources of the Christians on the mainland with a fair degree of reliability, and that, although ultimately they failed, the Lusignan kings of the second half of the century did their best to counter the centrifugal tendencies fostered by the absence of an adequate ruler for long periods and by the disruptive ambitions of the Italian maritime republics and other elements in political society. Hugh III and his son Henry II were the only people in a position even to contemplate such an attempt. But their successes were insufficient to prevent the victory of the aggressive, centralized Mamlūk sultanate with its far superior military might.