

The Military Orders and the Principality of Antioch: A Help or a Hindrance?

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Abbreviations used:

<i>CH</i>	<i>Cartulaire général de l'Ordre des Hospitaliers de Saint-Jean de Jerusalem, 1100–1310</i> , ed. J. Delaville le Roulx, 4 vols (Paris, 1894–1906)
<i>CT</i>	<i>Cartulaire général de l'Ordre du Temple 1119?–1150. Recueil des chartes et des bulles relatives à l'ordre du Temple</i> , ed. Marquis d'Albon (Paris, 1913)
<i>RHC Or</i>	<i>Recueil des Historiens des Croisades: Historiens orientaux</i>
<i>RHGF</i>	<i>Recueil des Historiens des Gaules et de la France</i>
<i>ROL</i>	<i>Revue de l'Orient Latin</i>
<i>WT</i>	Guillaume de Tyr, <i>Chronique</i> , ed. R.B.C. Huygens, Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis, 63, 63A (Turnhout, 1986)

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On 26 September 1188, the Ayyubid Sultan Saladin (d.1193), having already swept through the southern and central regions of the Latin principality of Antioch, now raised his banner over the Templar-held fortress of Baghras, just twenty-five kilometres north of Antioch itself.¹ Overlooking a major route into Cilicia through the Amanus Mountains, the loss of Baghras was a major blow to the principality, while the speed with which Muslim forces convinced the Templar garrison to surrender is somewhat surprising given the order's famed martial abilities. It was especially problematic given that this, and the rapidity of the principality's broader capitulation in summer 1188, came despite the Templars and Hospitallers having successively increased their Antiochene holdings during the twelfth century, coming to govern many of its key frontiers in the hope of staving off military disaster. The aim of this chapter, therefore, is to explore the processes by which the Templars and Hospitallers came to hold such influence in the principality, as well as to determine whether and how their integration into Antioch's existing structures of power might have contributed to the disasters of 1188.

[INSERT MAP HERE]

The Entrance and Growth of the Military Orders in the Principality

The first order to seemingly secure a presence in the principality was the Hospitallers, for although they did not adopt military responsibilities until some years after the founding of the Templars, their charitable and medical functions attracted early patronage. At some point between 1100 and 1135, Bernard of Valence (d.c.1135), patriarch of Antioch, gave them

¹ Baha al-Din Ibn Shaddad, *The Rare and Excellent History of Saladin*, trans. D. S. Richards (Aldershot, 2002), p. 87; Imad al-Din al-Isfahani, *Conquête de la Syrie et de la Palestine par Saladin*, trans. H. Massé (Paris, 1972), pp. 141–3.

space inside Antioch to build a stable, while in 1127 Prince Bohemond II (r. 1126–1130) confirmed a series of possessions, including donations made by his forebears, Princes Bohemond I (r. 1098–1105) and Tancred (r. 1105–1112), and the Antiochene nobility.² Significantly, this document revealed that these grants were not limited to the capital, with the order also establishing an emerging presence in both Cilicia (particularly around the city of Mamistra), and on the eastern frontier with Aleppo, near to the castles of Harim and Kafartab.³ As the twelfth century progressed, the Hospitallers also increased their urban holdings and rights within Antioch, and inside the coastal cities of Latakia, Jabala, and Valania.⁴ It is thus evident that the Hospitallers secured an early and important position within Antiochene territory, which only continued to grow. Yet, while a number of these possessions were situated on the peripheries of the principality, there is no evidence that they

² CH, 1, no. 5; R. Hiestand, 'Ein unbekanntes Privileg Fürst Bohemunds II. von Antiochia für das Hospital vom März 1127 und die Frühgeschichte der antiochenischen Fürstenkanzlei', *Archiv für Diplomatik Schriftgeschichte Siegel- und Wappenkunde*, 43 (1997), 27–46.

³ CH, 1, no. 80. See also J. Burgtorf, 'The Military Orders in the Crusader Principality of Antioch', in *East and West in the Medieval Eastern Mediterranean I: Antioch from the Byzantine Reconquest until the End of the Crusader Principality*, eds. K. Ciggaar, and M. Metcalf (Leuven, 2006), pp. 221–2; M.-A. Chevalier, *Les ordres religieux-militaires en Arménie cilicienne: Templiers, hospitaliers, teutoniques & Arméniens à l'époque des croisades* (Paris, 2010), pp. 68–84.

⁴ CH, 1, nos. 108, 109, 126, 127, 129, 133, 163, 170, 183, 189, 198, 222, 231, 280, 311, 313, 390; H. E. Mayer, *Varia Antiochena: Studien zum Kreuzfahrerfürstentum Antiochia im 12. und frühen 13. Jahrhundert* (Hannover, 1993), pp. 110–12; J. Delaville le Roulx, *Les archives la bibliothèque et le trésor de l'Ordre de Saint-Jean de Jérusalem a Malte* (Paris, 1883), pp. 97–9. See also C. Cahen, *La Syrie du nord a l'époque des croisades et la principauté franque d'Antioche* (Paris, 1940), pp. 515–17;

initially had a military function; rather, their positioning reflected the difficulties experienced by Latin rulers when seeking to cultivate and settle lands on the fringes of their authority.⁵

For the Templars, the situation was rather different and continues to draw academic debate. What is not disputed, however, is that the earliest identifiable Templar possession in the principality was Baghras, which came to form part of a northern march which controlled the passages through the Amanus Mountains that linked northern Syria and Cilicia. Alongside Baghras, this included Port Bonnel and the castles of Darbsak, La Roche Guillaume, and La Roche de Roissel; although exactly when these latter fortresses passed into Templar hands is unknown, as only their losses in 1188 appear in the historical record.⁶ Consequently, Baghras has received the most scholarly attention, as while the castle's early history is fairly vague, its aforementioned proximity to Antioch had long made it vital to the city's security.⁷ Jonathan Riley-Smith posited that it entered into Templar possession by 1137, prompted by the early death of Bohemond II in 1130 and a succession crisis which had allowed the Armenian Christian warlord, Leon, to destabilize Latin power in Cilicia. Accordingly, it is argued, when the Western nobleman, Raymond of Poitiers (r. 1136–1149), came to northern Syria to take up the position of prince in 1136, he quickly re-established control over the region and surrendered Baghras to the Templars to shore up a troublesome

⁵ On the prevalence of this within Hospitaller documents, see J. Riley-Smith, *The Knights of St. John in Jerusalem and Cyprus, c.1050–1310* (London, 1967), p. 434.

⁶ The appearance of Leonard of Roissel in an Antiochene charter of 1183 (*CH*, 2, no. 23) implies La Roche de Roissel would have been surrendered after this date, but no certainty can be offered. On these castles and their losses, see note 1 and Cahen, pp. 140–8

⁷ C. Holmes, 'Byzantium's Eastern Frontier in the Tenth and Eleventh Centuries', in *Medieval Frontiers: Concepts and Practices*, eds. D. Abulafia and N. Berend (Aldershot, 2002), p. 97.

frontier.⁸ The arrival of the Byzantine emperor, John Komnenos (d.1143), in 1137 seemingly put a quick end to this, for he captured Baghras and established a base there (an act he repeated on his return to the principality in 1142).⁹ Nevertheless, according to this model, the Antiochenes had turned to the Templars for help protecting key frontiers fairly early on. However, several other scholars—most recently Marie-Anna Chevalier—have dated the castle’s transferral to the 1150s, with Chevalier (somewhat ironically) crediting Leon’s son, Thoros, with responsibility for this. Despite accepting the need for caution, Chevalier cited the evidence of the Armenian translation of Michael the Syrian’s chronicle to argue that the Templars entered Cilicia c.1154–1156 as part of a campaign launched by the Antiochene prince, Renaud of Châtillon (r.1153–1161). Even though the Latin ruler was defeated, Thoros reportedly acted on his close personal ties to the order by handing a series of castles to them.¹⁰

⁸ J. Riley-Smith, ‘The Templars and the Teutonic Knights in Cilician Armenia’, in *The Cilician Kingdom of Armenia*, ed. T. S. R. Boase, (London, 1978), pp. 92–117. This is supported by M. Barber, *The New Knighthood: A History of the Order of the Temple* (Cambridge, 1994), p. 35; D. Metcalf, ‘Monetary Questions Arising out of the Role of the Templars as Guardians of the Northern Marches of the Principality of Antioch’, *The Crusades and the Military Orders: Expanding the Frontiers of Medieval Latin Christianity*, eds. Z. Hunyadi and J. Laszlovsy (Budapest, 2001), p. 80; Burgdorf, ‘The Military Orders in the Crusader Principality’, p. 223; On the period between Bohemond II’s death and Raymond of Poitiers’ accession, see A. D. Buck, *The Principality of Antioch and its Frontiers in the Twelfth Century* (Woodbridge, 2017), pp. 22–31.

⁹ Kemal al-Din, ‘La chronique d’Alep’, *RHC Or* 3, 674; Michael Italikos, *Lettres et discours*, ed. and trans. P. Gautier (Paris, 1972), p. 241; WT, p. 701. On John Komnenos and the principality, see Buck, *Principality of Antioch*, pp. 190–9.

¹⁰ Chevalier, pp. 56–68. For others who date their entrance to the 1150s, albeit not at Thoros’ behest, see Cahen, p. 512; P.-V. Claverie, ‘Les débuts de l’ordre du Temple en Orient’, *Le Moyen Age, revue d’histoire et philologie*, 111:3–4 (2005), 558–9.

Precision is difficult without a donation charter detailing the exact moment Baghras was given to the order, but some further comment is possible.¹¹ Firstly, Riley-Smith's assertion is seemingly supported by the Greek chronicler, John Kinnamos, who commented that the 'Frères' (*Φρέριοι*)—which is interpreted as a clear reference to the military orders—aided the Antiochenes in their discussions with John Komnenos in 1137.¹² Moreover, that the Templars had begun to secure some prominence within the principality is demonstrated not only by an 1134 charter of Count Alphonse of Toulouse, which detailed that the order's rights in his domains were identical to those in Antiochene lands; but also by an 1137 letter sent from Abbot Bernard of Clairvaux, the order's great patron in the West, to Antioch's patriarch, Ralph of Domfront, requesting that he bestow favour upon them, perhaps having been prompted to do so by King Baldwin II of Jerusalem (r.1118–1132); as well as the appearance of the Templars in two documents issued by Raymond of Poitiers in 1140.¹³ However, while these suggest a growing profile similar to that of the Hospitallers, which also appears to have included urban possessions and economic rights in the principality's coastal cities, they do not confirm a military function or the possession of castles.¹⁴ On the other hand, the silence on the Templars in a letter sent by Pope Innocent II (d.1143) to John

¹¹ As the Templar central archive is lost, much of what is known of their holdings in the Latin East comes from narratives or indirect documentary sources. See R. Hiestand, 'Zum Problem des Templerzentralarchiv', *Archivalische Zeitschrift*, 76 (1980), 17–37.

¹² John Kinnamos, *Epitome: Rerum ab Ioanne et Alexio Comnenis Gestarum*, ed. A. Meineke (Bonn, 1836), p. 19 (trans. C. Brand, *Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus* (New York, 1976), p. 24).

¹³ *CT*, nos. 1, 87; Bernard of Clairvaux, 'Epistolae', in *Sancti Bernardi Opera*, ed. J. Leclercq, H.-M. Rochais and C. H. Talbot, 8 vols (Rome, 1957–1977), 8, p. 363; *Le Cartulaire du chapitre du Saint-Sépulchre de Jérusalem*, ed. G. Bresc-Bautier (Paris, 1984), nos. 76–7.

¹⁴ *Documenti sulle Relazione delle città Toscane: Coll' Oriente Cristiano e coi Turchi fino all'anno MDXXI*, ed. G. Müller (Rome, 1966), no. 4; *CH*, 1, no. 390.

Kommenos to censure the emperor for his actions in either 1137 or 1142, lends weight to Chevalier's hypothesis, for the pope was the order's protector and any contravention of their independence is unlikely to have gone unremarked.¹⁵ Finally, after Baldwin III of Jerusalem (r.1142–1163) came north with the Templars in 1149 to provide aid to Antioch after the defeat and death of Raymond of Poitiers at the battle of Inab, the order sent calls for support to the West which do not indicate that they already had an established military presence in northern Syria.¹⁶ Therefore, despite the insecurity afforded by the *inter-regnum* of the 1130s, it seems unlikely that the crucial sites of the Amanus Mountains were surrendered quite so early, especially given Cilicia's central importance. Although it is perhaps too much of a stretch to accept that Thoros instigated the implementation of the Templars, Renaud's Cilician campaign—which most sources agree he won—does offer the most probable date, with corroboration provided by certain Eastern Christian texts and Gregory the Priest's account of an Armenian-Templar alliance against an invading Seljuk Turk force travelling through the mountain passes in 1157.¹⁷ While it could be suggested that the Templars had been restored, as opposed to installed, the latter remains the most plausible.¹⁸ Indeed, with Armenian power properly harnessed, the Templars' stable and successful integration into the existing political climate, and thus the effective creation of a military order buffer zone, was

¹⁵ R. Hiestand, *Papsturkunden für kirchen im Heiligen Lande* (Göttingen, 1985), pp. 168–9.

¹⁶ 'Epistolae A. Dapiferi Militiae Templi', *RHGF* 15, 540–1. See also Buck, *Principality of Antioch*, pp. 38–9.

¹⁷ Buck, *Principality of Antioch*, pp. 43–4; 'Gregory the Priest: Continuation of Matthew of Edessa', trans. A. E. Dostourian, *Armenia and the Crusades: Tenth to Twelfth Centuries* (New York, 1993), p. 283; Michael the Syrian, *Chronique de Michel le Syrien, patriarche jacobite d'Antioche (1166–1199)*, ed. and trans. J.-B. Chabot, 4 vols (Paris, 1916–1920), 3, 314. Corroboration for the Seljuk attack, albeit not the Templars' role, is found in Ibn al-Qalanisi, *The Damascus Chronicle of the Crusades*, trans. H. A. R. Gibb (London, 1932), p. 339; Abu Shama, 'Le livre des deux jardins', *RHC Or* 4, 92.

¹⁸ For the historiography on this, see Buck, *Principality of Antioch*, pp. 43–4, 201–2.

certainly far more likely in the 1150s than it was in the 1130s. Moreover, with the principality's primary military focus being the Zengids and the vital battle for the eastern frontier, the surrender of Baghras, perhaps along with at least some of the other mountain castles, to a third party—one whose military power was now well-established—allowed Antioch's ruling elites to prioritize their resources on the war with Aleppo.¹⁹

What is clear, therefore, is that the Antiochenes began to cultivate ties to the military orders fairly early on in their history, although it appears that they did not rely on their military functions until somewhat later than the other states of the Latin East. Though the counts of Tripoli surrendered the imposing fortress of Krak des Chevaliers and other nearby castles to the Hospitallers in 1142, and at around the same time the Templars and Hospitallers were entrusted with Jerusalemite fortifications, like Bethgibelin and Gaza, built to pressure Fatimid Ascalon, it was not until the 1150s that we find a verifiable martial role for the military orders in Antiochene lands.²⁰ From this point onwards, however, they became far more prominent. In 1164, when the Zengid ruler of Aleppo and Damascus, Nur al-Din (d.1174), invaded the principality and met its prince, Bohemond III (r.1163–1201), in battle at Artah, the Templars and Hospitallers formed part of an allied force which also included the count of Tripoli, as well as Byzantine and Armenian soldiers.²¹ While, or more likely because, this encounter ended in a disastrous defeat for the Christians, the loss of the vital frontier fortress of Harim, and the complete surrender of Antioch's eastern frontier across the River Orontes, the Hospitallers were then entrusted with sizeable grants of lands in 1168 and

¹⁹ Buck, *Principality of Antioch*, pp. 33–44. On the growth of the Templars, see Barber, pp. 64–114.

²⁰ *CH*, 1, no. 144; Barber, pp. 72–3. Cahen (p. 317) posited that Krak des Chevaliers' surrender convinced Antioch's princes to afford the military orders a greater role in the principality.

²¹ Louis VII, 'Epistolae', *RHGF*, 16, 38–9; *CH*, 1, no. 404; Michael the Syrian, 3, 324–5.

1175.²² These included key installations along the Orontes valley, such as Arzghan and Darkush, as well as important sites across the river, like Apamea and Rugia.²³ Given that these were in Muslim hands, it is evident that the Hospitallers had been asked to recover and guard the Aleppan frontier.²⁴ This also appears to have been the case with the castle of Shaizar, which had been the subject of much military attention throughout the twelfth century, despite never being in Latin hands.²⁵ When Bohemond III passed theoretical control of it to both orders in 1179, perhaps in conjunction with a joint raiding venture against the castle, he most likely hoped that they would precipitate its fall together, and that the orders would govern it.²⁶ That this agreement came at a similar time to princely gifts of estates in the nearby Ansariyah Mountains and lands in the Masoir lordship of Margat, suggests the region was of particular concern.²⁷ This also partly helps to explain Bohemond III's attempt to cultivate the growth of the Spanish military Order of Santiago di Compostella in 1180, to whom he granted the castles of Bikisrail and Bokebais (along with other lands), which

²² It is not immediately apparent why Bohemond III turned to the Hospitallers at this point, as opposed to the Templars. It may reflect the lack of surviving Templar charter materials; a desire to not overly rely on the former, who already controlled the fragile Amanus region; or even the expansionist plans of the order's grandmaster, Gilbert D'Assailly, who may have wished to unite these lands to the extensive (and nearly contiguous) holdings in the north-east of the county of Tripoli. See Riley-Smith, *Knights of St John*, pp. 55–6, 66–74.

²³ *CH*, 1, nos. 391, 475. See also Buck, *Principality of Antioch*, pp. 45–6.

²⁴ Riley-Smith, *The Knights of St. John*, p. 66.

²⁵ T. Asbridge, *The Creation of the Principality of Antioch 1098–1130* (Woodbridge, 2000), pp. 48–9, 60–2, 69, 71–2, 79, 85–7, 89–91; Buck, *Principality of Antioch*, pp. 30, 34, 43, 52–3.

²⁶ *CH*, 1, no. 559; Ibn al-Athir, *The Chronicle of Ibn al-Athir for the Crusading Period from al-Kamil fi'l-Ta'rikh*, ed. and trans. D. S. Richards, 3 vols (Aldershot, 2005–2008), 2, p. 262; Abu Shama, *RHC Or* 4, 198.

²⁷ Mayer, pp. 114–15; Delaville le Roulx, *Archives*, pp. 134–5.

guarded the passes through these mountains.²⁸ Indeed, these gifts, as well as the fact that the Antiochene prince set a timescale of a year for the Spanish order to take up their new lands, at which point the offer was revoked, implies that this was a pressing matter, and may relate to the increasing antagonism of the Ismailis who also populated the area.²⁹

Importantly, significant donations were also made by the nobles of the principality. As already noted, the Antiochene aristocracy had granted small gifts to the Hospitallers during the early decades of Latin rule, but the second half of the twelfth century saw a sizeable shift. In particular, Renaud II Masoir (d.c.1185), lord of Margat, a powerful castle at the southernmost edge of the principality, began to transfer substantial amounts of land to the Hospitallers and, to a lesser extent, the Templars.³⁰ This culminated in 1187 with Bertrand Masoir's sale of the entire lordship, including Margat itself and other key military installations, such as Bokebais and Maniqah.³¹ As will be discussed below, some scholars believe that this reflected an attempt, perhaps instigated by Bohemond III, to implement another military order buffer zone and oust the troublesome Masoirs, but it is important to stress here that this represented the most sizeable single alienation of Antiochene land yet made to a third party, and considerably altered the region's political make-up.³² On the eve of

²⁸ Mayer, pp. 114–15.

²⁹ Buck, *Principality of Antioch*, pp. 52–3; Cahen, p. 515. As will be noted below, it may also relate to tensions regarding the relationship between the Hospitallers and the Masoir lords of Margat.

³⁰ *CH*, 1, nos. 341, 457, 546, 613, 623, 763; 4, no. 595; *Codice diplomatico del Sacro Militare Ordine Gerosolimitano oggi di Malta*, 2 vols, ed. S. Paoli (Lucca, 1733–1737), 1, nos. 163, 209; Delaville le Roulx, *Archives*, pp. 134–5; J. Delaville le Roulx, 'Inventaire de pièces de Terre Sainte de l'Ordre de l'Hopital', *ROL* 3 (1885), 33.

³¹ *CH*, 1, no. 783. This demonstrates that the Order of Santiago had not taken up the offer made to them.

³² Mayer, pp. 162–83; T. Riis, 'Die Übernahme Marqabs durch die Johanniter (1186)', in *Werkstatt des Historikers der mittelalterlichen Ritterorden. Quellenkundliche, Probleme und Forschungsmethoden*, ed. Z.

Saladin's invasion in 1188, therefore, the mainstay of the principality's northern, eastern, and southern areas were in military order hands.

The Military Orders and the Principality's Internal Structures

Yet, the transfer of key Antiochene lands to the military orders was not without significant ramifications. As independent orders, the Templars and Hospitallers could—and did—pursue their own political policies. This not only stemmed from papal protections afforded to them in their foundation documents, but it was even written into the donation charters issued in their favour, including those of the princes of Antioch. In a charter confirming the surrender of lands to the Hospitallers in 1168, Bohemond III agreed not to make any truces with Muslims 'without counsel from the brothers of the Hospital'.³³ The documents confirming the sale of Margat reveal that, by 1187, this had been extended further, as it was noted that:

if, God forbid, we should make a treaty with the Saracens without consulting them [the Hospitallers], they can hold to the treaty if they should wish, or they can make war with them. If, however, they should make a treaty with the enemies of the cross of Christ who are in the

Nowak (Toruń, 1987), pp. 151–6. See also Cahen, p. 515–16; Riley-Smith, *Knights of St. John*, pp. 68–9; J. Burgtorf, 'The Hospitaller Lordship of Margat', in *East and West in the Medieval Eastern Mediterranean II: Antioch from the Byzantine Reconquest Until the End of the Crusader Principality*, eds. K. Ciggaar and V. van Aalst (Leuven, 2013), pp. 11–50; Buck, *Principality of Antioch*, p. 54.

³³ *CH*, 1, no. 391: 'sine consilio fratrum ... Hospitalis'.

fief of Bokebais and also at Jabala in the past, they shall notify us, and we shall hold to it, and we shall cause our men to hold to it as well.³⁴

This created the scenario whereby the Hospitallers could pursue their own policy towards the principality's Islamic neighbours and disregard the actions of the Antiochenes.³⁵

Additionally, the military orders at times battled the Latin Church hierarchy for ecclesiastical independence, as shown by the disputes between the Templars and the bishop of Valania in the 1160s, and the Hospitallers with the archbishop of Apamea in the 1170s.³⁶ It is also true that the military orders were by no means a sure-fire way to secure a frontier, as demonstrated by the ousting of the Templars from the Amanus Mountains by the Armenian Mleh in the late 1160s, which was only rectified when Bohemond III and King Amalric of

³⁴ *CH*, 1, no. 783: 'Si vero, quod absit, eis inconsultis treviam faciemus cum Saracenis, treviam tenebunt si voluerint, vel guerram facient cum eis. Si vero ipsi facient treviam cum inimicis crucis Christi, qui sunt in fedo Bokebeis et a Gabulo in antea, treviam nobis notificabunt, et nos eam tenebimus, et homines nostros tenere faciemus'.

³⁵ It would be misleading, however, to argue that this was a particularly noticeable issue in the twelfth century, for although independence was enshrined in the orders' foundational documents by the papacy, they did, more often than not, look to work closely with the Latin East's secular lords (especially in Jerusalem). Nevertheless, it did become a prominent problem in the thirteenth century, particularly for Antioch. See Cahen, 582–643; Riley-Smith, *Knights of St. John*, pp. 89–91, 100–3, 119–97; N. Morton, *The Medieval Military Orders, 1120–1314* (Harlow, 2013), pp. 10–35, 54–71, 90–112; J. Burgtorf, 'The Antiochene War of Succession', in *The Crusader World*, ed. A. Boas (Abingdon, 2016), 196–211.

³⁶ *Codice Diplomatico*, 1, pp. 40–1; *CH*, 1, no. 474. See also Cahen, pp. 518–20; Riley-Smith, *Knights of St. John*, pp. 410–11.

Jerusalem (r.1163–1174) intervened, and by the fact that most of the lands given over to the orders in the hopes of their recovery were never returned to Latin control.³⁷

Perhaps more problematic is that continued donations or sales served to break up the internal fabric of the principality: creating, for all intents and purposes, independent enclaves free from Antiochene influence. At this point we must return to the Masoirs and the lordship of Margat. As already noted, the second half of the twelfth century saw the progressive diminishment of the Masoir holdings in favour of the Hospitallers, which accelerated in the 1180s. For some historians, particularly Hans Eberhard Mayer, this resulted from Bohemond III's desire to create a southern buffer zone similar to those on the northern and eastern frontiers.³⁸ The context for this, so Mayer argued, was a noble rebellion which disrupted the principality between late 1180 and early 1182, when Renaud II Masoir led an aristocratic faction angered by the prince's decision to take a new bride, Sybil, at the expense of his Byzantine wife, Theodora Komnena.³⁹ Responding to this revolt, Bohemond III is said to have spent the years following gradually pressurising the Masoirs to give up their lordship, which was finally agreed to and ratified in early 1187—a process which is said to explain the prince's confirmation of Bertrand Masoir's charter detailing the surrender of Margat and his exaction of a sizeable financial pay-out in the process.⁴⁰ Yet, as I have argued elsewhere, it is

³⁷ WT, pp. 948–50; Ibn al-Athir, 2, 210; Kemal al-Din, 'L'histoire d'Alep', trans. E. Blochet, *ROL* 3, 553–4; John Kinnamos, trans., pp. 214–17; Michael the Syrian, 3, 331; Sempad the Constable, *La chronique attribuée au connétable Smbat*, trans. G. Dédéyan (Paris, 1980), pp. 52–4. See also Chevalier, pp. 91–111; Buck, *Principality of Antioch*, pp. 48–50.

³⁸ See footnote 31.

³⁹ Mayer, pp. 162–83. C.f. A. D. Buck, 'The Noble Rebellion at Antioch, 1180–82: A Case Study in Medieval Frontier Politics', *Nottingham Medieval Studies*, 60 (2016), 93–121.

⁴⁰ *CH*, 1, no. 783.

unlikely that Bohemond III had any choice in the matter, for he would have been unable to take responsibility for Margat's defence, as Antioch's princes had earlier done in relation to other lordships facing crisis.⁴¹ Meanwhile, the growing strength of the Hospitallers in the southern areas of the principality, with the Order having already gained theoretical control over the eastern frontier, might even have served as a matter for concern. This perhaps contributed to the somewhat surprising attempt to install the smaller, and perhaps more politically pliable, Order of Santiago, who received no such invitations from anywhere else in the Latin East, as well as a series of princely confirmations of Masoir donations to the Hospitallers, made during the noble rebellion. Whereas Mayer considered these documents a sign of the cessation of hostilities, it seems instead that they reflected an attempt to ensure the order's neutrality; a reality made all the more important by their involvement in efforts to create a peaceful resolution to the rebellion and the fact that any hopes of dealing with the rebels at Margat necessitated entering lands now in Hospitaller possession.⁴² Tellingly, the eventual settlement saw Bohemond forced to give up his new bride, albeit only temporarily, and to expel some of his closest advisers to Cilicia.⁴³ Rather than providing security, therefore, the Hospitallers' growing power in the south, and their relationship with the Masoires, actually provided difficulties for Antioch's prince. Bohemond III may thus have made the best of the situation in 1187, but that does not mean he instigated it.

Moreover, the sale of Margat represented the only occasion (save, perhaps, for Baghras) when a major Latin castle, still in Antiochene possession, was given over to the military orders. It also meant that the entire southern half of the principality had passed out of Antioch's control and into the hands of an independent third party. The consequences of this

⁴¹ Buck, *Principality of Antioch*, pp. 54, 140–7.

⁴² C.f. Mayer, p. 168; Buck, 'Noble Rebellion', pp. 102–8.

⁴³ Buck, 'Noble Rebellion', pp. 102–16.

should not, and indeed cannot, be overlooked, for it had a dramatic impact on the principality's political and military cohesion. While it would be misleading to suggest that the princes and nobles of Antioch were always on the same page when it came to military matters during the twelfth century, there are still signs that, when real crisis hit, unity was forthcoming.⁴⁴ For example, when rebellions broke out at Balatanos and Bikisrail in the 1130s, the lords of Margat and Saone intervened to bring these to heel, thus ensuring the frontier was not left dangerously exposed.⁴⁵ Yet, when Saladin invaded the principality in 1188, there is no sign of a united response, or even others coming to the aid of endangered fortresses. Instead, while the castles and cities held by the Antiochenes fell in dramatically quick fashion, the Hospitallers remained inside Margat and the Templars either surrendered, as was the case with Baghras, or were swiftly defeated.⁴⁶ Though it would be unfair to blame the military orders for Saladin's victories, for it could be argued that there was little that could have been done to actually stop him, questions are nevertheless raised regarding whether the surrender of Antiochene territory to the Templars and Hospitallers acted as a help, or whether it served to undermine cohesion and thus hindered any response to a major invasion.

Conclusion

⁴⁴ Buck, *Principality of Antioch*, 110–22.

⁴⁵ F. Monot, 'La chronique abrégée d'al-Azimi années 518–538/1124–1144', *Revue des études Islamique*, 59 (1991), 127; Ibn al-Furat, *Ayyubids, Mamlukes and Crusaders*, trans. U. Lyons, M. Lyons, and J. Riley-Smith, 2 vols (Cambridge, 1987), 2, 134–5.

⁴⁶ Baha al-Din, pp. 83–7; Imad al-Din al-Isfahani, pp. 122–43; Ibn al-Athir, II, 345–53; Kemal al-Din, *ROL*, 4, 186–90; Abu Shama, *RHC Or* 4, 355–79.

This paper has drawn attention to the complex realities emerging from the growth of the military orders in twelfth-century northern Syria. From their inception, the Templars and Hospitallers attracted pious donations from the Antiochenes, particularly when it came to populating and cultivating areas of frontier settlement, but also in relation to the economic life of Latin-held cities. Yet, as the initial wave of expansion gave way to a more varied and problematic political climate, the princes and nobles of the principality turned to the military orders to shore up, or—at least in theory—recover, unstable border zones. However, while it made sense to surrender lost castles to a power who *might* be able to recapture them (and, in the process, make some money), this does not mean that there were not negative consequences, or that the princes always *wanted* their domains passing to a third-party entirely free from external influence. Indeed, even if there is little sense that the military orders at this stage actively sought to politically undermine the principality, their contribution to the fragmentation of Antioch's internal landholding structures, especially to the south, nevertheless served to impede the prince's ability to handle political crises, and even precluded a united and effective response to Saladin's invasion in 1188. Although it was not until the thirteenth century that military order independence really impacted upon the principality's politics through the intervention of the Templars and Hospitallers—on different sides—in the Antiochene War of Succession (1201–1221), there is reason to believe that the groundwork for this was laid much earlier.⁴⁷

⁴⁷ See footnote 35.