



11. Frankish Greece (Map by the University of Wisconsin Cartographic Laboratory)

VII

THE FRANKISH STATES IN GREECE, 1204-1311

By the partition treaty of October 1204 the western part of the Byzantine empire was to be divided among the conquerors of Constantinople, as we have already seen in the preceding chapter. Venice was assigned Albania, Epirus, Acarnania, and Aetolia, as well as the Ionian islands, the Morea (except for the Argolid and Corinthia), the northern part of Euboea with Oreus and the

The present chapter is based upon a wide range of sources. In addition to the correspondence of pope Innocent III and his successors; the works of Geoffrey of Villehardouin (ed. Edm. Faral, *Les Classiques de l'histoire de France au moyen-âge*, 2 vols., Paris, 1938-1939), Robert of Clari (ed. P. Lauer, *ibid.*, Paris, 1924), and the later French chroniclers; the German and Italian chroniclers of cities and larger regions; Nicetas Choniates, George Acropolites, George Pachymeres, and Nicephorus Gregoras (all in the *CSHB*, with a later edition of Acropolites by Aug. Heisenberg, 2 vols., Leipzig, 1903), the following are among the more important primary and secondary sources: Henry of Valenciennes, *Histoire de l'empereur Henri de Constantinople* (ed. Jean Longnon in *Documents relatifs à l'histoire des croisades*, II, Paris, 1948); Aubrey of Trois-Fontaines, *Chronica* (*MGH, SS.*, XXIII), pp. 631-950; Richard of San Germano, *Chronica* [of Sicily] (ed. C. A. Garufi, *RISS*, VII, part 2, 1937); Andrea Dandolo, *Chronicon Venetum* (*RISS*, XII), cols. 13-524; *Chronique rimée de Philippe Mouskes* (ed. Baron Reiffenberg, Commission royale d'histoire [of Belgium], 2 vols., Brussels, 1836-1838); J. A. C. Buchon, *Recherches historiques sur la principauté française de Morée et ses hautes baronnies* (2 vols., Paris, 1845), containing the French and Greek versions of the *Chronicle of the Morea*, now better studied in: *Livre de la conquête de la principauté de l'Amorée: Chronique de Morée (1204-1305)* (ed. Jean Longnon, Société de l'histoire de France, Paris, 1911), and *Τὸ Χρονικὸν τοῦ Μορέως* (*Chronicle of the Morea*, ed. John Schmitt, London, 1904, and also ed. P. P. Kalonaros, Athens, 1940). The Aragonese version of the *Chronicle of the Morea* is called the *Libro de los fechos et conquistas del principado de la Morea* (ed. Alfred Morel-Fatio, Société de l'Orient latin, sér. hist., IV, Geneva, 1885); *Τὸ Χρονικὸν τοῦ Γαλαξειδίου* (*Chronicle of Galaxidi*, dating from the year 1703, ed. K. N. Sathas, Athens, 1865, repr. 1914, and also ed. G. Valetas, Athens, 1944). Important information relating to the years before and after 1200 may be found in Michael Choniates, *Μικὰ Ἀκομνάτου τοῦ Χωνιάτου τὰ Σωζόμενα*, ed. Spyridon P. Lampros (2 vols., Athens, 1879-1880). See also Chas. Hopf, *Chroniques gréco-romanes inédites ou peu connues* (Berlin, 1873), which contains various sources; G. L. Fr. Tafel and G. M. Thomas, *Urkunden zur älteren Handels- und Staatsgeschichte der Republik Venedig* (3 vols., in *Fontes Rerum Austriacarum [Diplomataria et Acta]*, vols. XII, XIII, XIV, Vienna, 1856-1857); G. M. Thomas (and R. Predelli), *Diplomatarium Veneto-Levantinum*, Monumenti storici pubblicati dalla R. Deputazione Veneta di Storia Patria, ser. prima, Documenti, vols. V, IX, (Venice, 1880-1899); Georges Recoura, ed., *Les Assises de Romanie*, Bibliothèque de l'École des hautes études, fasc. 258 (Paris, 1930), and an English translation of the Assizes is provided by Peter W. Topping, *Feudal Institutions as Revealed in the Assizes of Romania*, University of Pennsylvania Translations and Reprints, 3rd series, Philadelphia, 1949; also Paul Riant, *Exuviae sacrae Constantinopolitanae* (2 vols., Geneva, 1877-1878); Franz Miklosich and Joseph Müller, *Acta et*

southern part with Carystus, together with the island of Andros. In 1204, however, Michael Ducas Angelus Comnenus took over the entire area from Albania to the Gulf of Patras. The treaty assigned to the crusaders western Macedonia, Thessaly, Attica, and Megara. The emperor obtained the islands of Tenos and Scyros. Though the treaty made no mention of it, Boniface of Montferrat, already king of Thessalonica and master of the regions of western Thrace and Macedonia, may also tacitly have been allotted the Argolid, Corinthia, Boeotia, and the central portion of Euboea. In October and November 1204, marching by way of the Vale of Tempe, Boniface occupied the plain of Thessaly and, after

diplomata graeca mediæ aevi sacra et profana (6 vols., Vienna, 1860–1890); J. A. C. Buchon, *Recherches et matériaux pour servir à une histoire de la domination française dans les provinces démembrées de l'empire grec* (2 vols., Paris, 1840); *idem*, *Chroniques étrangères relatives aux expéditions françaises pendant le XIII^{me} siècle* (Paris, 1841); *idem*, *Nouvelles recherches historiques sur la principauté française de Morée et ses hautes baronnies* (2 vols., Paris, 1845). Frequent use should be made of Gustave Schlumberger, *Numismatique de l'Orient latin* (Paris, 1878), and G. Schlumberger, Ferdinand Chalandon, and Adrien Blanchet, *Sigillographie de l'Orient latin* (Paris, 1943).

Karl Hopf, *Geschichte Griechenlands vom Beginn des Mittelalters bis auf unsere Zeit*, in J. S. Ersch and J. G. Gruber, eds., *Allgemeine Encyclopädie der Wissenschaften und Künste* (167 vols., Leipzig, 1818–1889), vols. LXXXV–LXXXVI, 1867–1868, is old but still very valuable. William Miller, *The Latins in the Levant* (London, 1908), excellent in its day but also rather antiquated now; *idem*, *Essays on the Latin Orient* (Cambridge, 1921); Sir Rennell Rodd, *The Princes of Achaia and the Chronicles of Morea* (2 vols., London, 1907), rather superficial but interesting to read; René Grousset, *L'Empire du Levant* (Paris, 1946); Jean Longnon, *L'Empire latin de Constantinople et la principauté de Morée* (Paris, 1949); Donald M. Nicol, *The Despotate of Epiros* (Oxford, 1957); Ernst Meyer, *Peloponnesische Wanderungen* (Zurich and Leipzig, 1939); Antoine Bon, in *Corinth*, vol. III, part 2: *The Defenses of Acrocorinth and the Louver Town*, American School of Classical Studies at Athens (Cambridge, Mass., 1936); Ferd. Gregorovius, *Geschichte der Stadt Athen im Mittelalter* (2 vols., Stuttgart, 1889), and modern Greek trans. by Sp. P. Lampros (2 vols., Athens, 1904), with a third volume of documents (Athens, 1906, repr. 1917); Kenneth M. Setton, *Catalan Domination of Athens, 1311–1388*, Mediaeval Academy of America (Cambridge, Mass., 1948), which contains also a complete bibliography and critical discussion of the works of the great Catalan historian Antoni Rubió i Lluch, esp. pp. 286–291.

W. Heyd, *Histoire du commerce du Levant au moyen-âge* (trans. Furcy Raynaud, 2 vols. Leipzig, 1885, repr. 1923, 1936), is still the best work on the subject. Note should also be made of: W. Norden, *Das Papsttum und Byzanz* (Berlin, 1903); *idem*, *Der Vierte Kreuzzug* (Berlin, 1898); John K. Fotheringham, *Marco Sanudo, Conqueror of the Archipelago* (Oxford, 1915); Jean Longnon, *Recherches sur la vie de Geoffroy de Villehardouin* (Paris, 1939); *idem*, "La Reprise de Salonique par les Grecs en 1224," *Actes du VI^e Congrès International d'Études Byzantines*, I (Paris, 1950), 141–146; Conrad Chapman, *Michel Paléologue, restaurateur de l'empire byzantin (1261–1282)* (Paris, 1926); Deno J. Geanakoplos, "Greco-Latin Relations on the Eve of the Byzantine Restoration: the Battle of Pelagonia — 1259," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, VII (1953), 99–141; Francesco Cerone, "La sovranità napoletana sulla Morea," *Archivio storico per le province napoletane*, new series, II (vol. XLI of the entire collection, Naples, 1916), 5–64, 193–266, and III (1917), 5–67; Jean Longnon, "Le Rattachement de la principauté de Morée au royaume de Sicile en 1267," *Journal des savants* (1942), pp. 134–143; *idem*, "Problèmes de l'histoire de la principauté de Morée," *ibid.* (1946), pp. 77–93, 147–161; Ernst Gerland, *Neue Quellen zur Geschichte des lateinischen Erzbistums Patras* (Leipzig, 1903); Heinrich Kretschmayr, *Geschichte von Venedig* (2 vols., Gotha, 1905–1920); and Georg Caro, *Genua und die Mächte am Mittelmeer, 1257–1311* (2 vols., Halle a.S., 1895–1899).

forcing the pass of Thermopylae, took possession of Thebes and Athens. Then, overcoming the opposition of the Greek tyrant, Leo Sgourus, at the isthmus of Corinth, he pushed on into the Morea and laid siege to Nauplia.

Towards the end of November 1204, however, Geoffrey of Villehardouin, nephew of the historian, having gone first to Syria, was on his way to rejoin the crusaders in Constantinople when he was cast ashore by a storm at the port of Modon in the southern Morea. A Greek noble of the region offered to make an alliance with him for the purpose of conquering the country, a task which they speedily accomplished. When the Greek died soon thereafter, his son betrayed Geoffrey, who then set off for Nauplia to join Boniface. There he encountered an old friend and compatriot in the person of William of Champlitte, grandson of count Hugh of Champagne, with whom he offered to share the conquest of the Morea. With one hundred knights and four hundred mounted sergeants, Geoffrey and William advanced along the northern and western coast of the Morea; they took Patras and Pondikos by assault, and Andravida opened its gates. The people of the countryside came to make their submission and were confirmed in their property and local customs. Only the town of Arcadia (Cyparissia) put up a prolonged resistance (until about February 1205).

Michael of Epirus, established on the other side of the Gulf of Patras, coveted the Morea, for many quite obvious reasons. Wishing to expel William of Champlitte and his companions, he advanced into the peninsula with five thousand men, but the little Latin army defeated him. Then the Latins completed the conquest of Messenia and advanced into the interior of the country, occupying the entire Morea with the exception of Arcadia and Laconia.

William of Champlitte thus became master of the Morea with the title prince of Achaea, which pope Innocent III conferred on him in November 1205. This designation remained the official title, especially in Latin, of his successors; in French they were more often called "princes de la Morée". William divided the unoccupied lands — the imperial demesne and the estates of the great landholders who had fled — among his companions, giving fiefs not only to knights but even to sergeants, as well as to prelates and to the military orders — Templars, Hospitallers, and Teutonic Knights. Even the Greek magnates who had made their submission — the *archontes*, as they were called — received a place in the feudal organization and kept their lands, for which they had the same

rights and duties as the French knights. Furthermore, the conquerors left the people of the towns and of the countryside in their former condition, and treated them with such moderation and tolerance as to retain their goodwill.

Meanwhile Boniface of Montferrat, master of all the territory from Thessalonica to the Gulf of Argolis, had distributed the conquered lands to his companions. The Burgundian Othon de la Roche received the lordship of Athens; the Italians Albertino and Rolandino of Canossa, that of Thebes; and the doughty James of Avesnes, that of Negroponte,¹ where he was soon succeeded by the Veronese Ravano dalle Carceri; Guy Pallavicini became marquis of Bodonitsa near Thermopylae, and a knight from the district of Laon, Thomas of Autremencourt (called by his contemporaries "de Stromoncourt"), received Salona, the ancient Amphissa, not far from the ruins of Delphi. In Thessaly and Macedonia, Domokos, Veleshtinon, Larissa, Platamon, Citrum, and other strongholds became the portions of other crusaders, German, Italian, Burgundian, or Provençal — count Berthold of Katzenellenbogen, Wierich of Daun, Amédée Pofey,² Orlando Pescia, Hugh of Coligny, and others — while Boniface reserved for himself, as royal castellanies, a certain number of towns in Macedonia such as Christopolis and Serres. His kingdom of Thessalonica thus extended from the Rhodope mountains to the Morea, where he exercised vague rights of suzerainty over the principality of Achaëa.

Venice, traditionally uninterested in the hinterland, proceeded to make good her claims to the important way-stations — already guaranteed her by treaty — along the sea route to Constantinople. In 1206, the Venetians armed a fleet which took Corfu, then seized Modon and Coron in the southwestern part of the Morea, and thence sailed for Crete, purchased from Boniface in 1204, where it embarked upon a long struggle against the Genoese and the Greeks. Elsewhere in the Aegean a rich Venetian, Marco Sanudo, armed a flotilla at his own expense and in 1207, with the aid of several of his compatriots, took possession of Naxos and the principal islands of the Cyclades. His cousin Marino Dandolo became lord of Andros, while Andrew and Jeremiah Ghisi obtained Tenos, Myconos, and the northern Sporades; John Querini received Astypalaea (Stampalia); Jacob Barozzi, Thera (Santorin); and

¹ Euboea: the name "Negroponte" was applied indiscriminately to the island, to the lordship, to the Venetian "bailiwick", and to the capital city (ancient Chalcis).

² He is called Buffois, Boffa, Buffedus in texts relating to the Latin empire: see Louis Blondel, "Amédée Pofey, de Cologny, grand connétable de Romanie," *Bulletin de la Société d'Histoire et d'Archéologie de Genève*, IX (1950), 177-200.

Leonard Foscolo, Anaphe. All became vassals of Marco Sanudo, who kept for himself Naxos, Paros, Melos, Siphnos, Cythnos (Thermia), and Syros, to be held by him, with the title duke of the Archipelago, directly from emperor Henry of Constantinople.

By his shrewdness and tolerance, Marco Sanudo was also able to gain the goodwill of his Greek subjects. Finally Marco Venier and Jacob Viaro conquered, respectively, Cerigo and Cerigotto (Cythera and Anticythera) and became vassals of Venice. In Cephalonia, Ithaca, and Zante (Zacynthus), an Italian from Apulia, Maio Orsini, had established himself some time before the capture of Constantinople. He tried to escape the tutelage of Venice by putting himself under the protection of the papacy in 1207, but two years later had to acknowledge himself the vassal of Venice.

By 1209, during the sojourn of the emperor Henry in Greece at the time of his conflict with the Lombard barons of Thessalonica,³ the prince of Achaea, William of Champlitte, having departed once again for France in 1208, had died, as had his nephew, Hugh of Champlitte, whom he had left as his representative. William's companion, Geoffrey of Villehardouin, either appointed by William or chosen by the barons, had then assumed power. In May 1209 Geoffrey, together with Othon de la Roche, went to Henry's parliament of Ravennika to assure the emperor of his loyalty. Henry confirmed Geoffrey as prince of Achaea and made him his immediate vassal. In June, on the island of Sapientsa off the southwestern coast of the Morea, Geoffrey made a pact with the Venetians; he acknowledged that he had received in fee from the doge of Venice all the lands extending from Corinth to the roadstead of Navarino, being the whole peninsula except the territory of Modon and Coron, which remained in the possession of the Signoria. Geoffrey of Villehardouin thus became the vassal of Venice, saving always the fealty owed to the emperor, his liege lord. But this tie of vassalage was purely theoretical and, in effect, became simply an alliance with Venice, which obtained commercial privileges throughout the whole principality.

A similar settlement was made at about the same period (March 1209–February 1210) for Euboea, which gave Venice still greater influence there than in the Morea. Ravano dalle Carceri, "lord of Negroponte", had soon extended his authority to the whole island, but, since the north with Oreus and the south with Carystus figured among the territories assigned to Venice in 1204, he acknowledged himself the vassal of the Signoria. Like Villehardouin,

³ See above, chapter VI, pp. 206–208.

he also was in the position of having two lords: the king of Thessalonica, who had granted him the lordship of Negroponte, and the Signoria of Venice, which was later to exercise powerful influence through its representatives, the bailies of Negroponte.

Finally, in June 1210, taking advantage of the fact that Michael of Epirus had made overtures to the Latin empire, they concluded a treaty by which he acknowledged that he held his lands in fee from the doge of Venice, and granted to the Venetians commercial privileges. But this treaty soon became a dead letter. Michael not only remained completely independent, but shortly thereafter even went so far as to take Corfu and Durazzo from the Venetians.

Thus were constituted, each with its particular status, the various major Frankish states of Greece, which were to maintain themselves for a century and longer: the principality of the Morea and the duchy of the Archipelago, dependent directly on the emperor, but with strong links to Venice; the lordship of Athens, held in vassalage to the king of Thessalonica; Euboea, dependent on both Thessalonica and Venice; and the county of Cephalonia, in theory a satellite of Venice, but always seeking to maintain its autonomy.

Geoffrey I of Villehardouin, recognized by the emperor and by Venice as the master of the Morea, assumed the title prince of Achaëa toward the end of the year 1209. He then sent to France for his wife Elizabeth and son Geoffrey. Soon a second son, William, was born to him in the castle of Kalamata in Messenia. He devoted himself to enlarging his possessions. With the aid of Othon de la Roche he seized the fortresses of Acrocorinth (1209), Argos, and Nauplia (1210-1211), where first Leo Sgourus, and then Theodore Angelus Comnenus, brother of Michael of Epirus, had long resisted the attacks of the Latins. He then advanced towards Arcadia and Laconia and made himself master of Sparta (Lacedaemon). The port of Monemvasia and the mountain peoples of Taygetus and Parnon alone succeeded in escaping his domination. He sent to France, mainly to Champagne, for young knights to occupy the newly conquered lands and the fiefs of those who had returned to the west. Women also came out to settle in the Morea, where they founded French families. And gradually there grew up in Greece a chivalric society renowned for its nobility and its refinement.

The lord of Athens, Othon de la Roche, worked hand in hand with Geoffrey of Villehardouin. Since he had helped to reduce

Acrocorinth, Argos, and Nauplia, he received a share of the Argolid with the lordships of Argos and Damala. Furthermore, since Albertino and Rolandino had left Greece, the lordship of Thebes was divided equally between Geoffrey and Othon. As the latter already possessed Lebadëa in Boeotia, his holdings were thus almost as extensive as those of the prince of Achaea. Othon made the Acropolis his castle although Thebes was the capital city of his lordship, and it was probably he who erected above the southern wing of the Propylaea the square tower which still stood as late as 1874. The Parthenon became the Latin cathedral, dedicated to Our Lady; and in the monastery of Daphne, on the Sacred Way to Eleusis, Othon established Cistercians from the abbey of Bellevaux. He also sent for relatives and friends from Burgundy, who acquired fiefs and honors in Greece, while his nephew Guy de la Roche became the vassal of Geoffrey for half the lordship of Thebes.

The closing years of the rule of Geoffrey and Othon were marked by two serious developments: a conflict with the church and the downfall of the kingdom of Thessalonica. At the time of the conquest much ecclesiastical property had been secularized and, despite the demands of the clergy, this had not been returned to the churches. Furthermore, the prince of Achaea and the lord of Athens were accused of treating the Greek priests as serfs. Their numbers had considerably increased, since the Greek prelates showed no hesitation in conferring orders on peasants, the *paroikoi*, to permit them to escape the burdens of serfdom and oppressive *corvées*. Finally, the *Chronicle of the Morea* reports that, since the churches had refused to provide their fair share of military aid, Geoffrey had seized their property and devoted the income from it to the construction of the powerful castle of Clermont (Khloumoutsì).

The conflict lasted some five years, from 1218 to 1223. Geoffrey of Villehardouin, whom pope Honorius III had formerly praised for the fervor of his devotion, was now declared by the same pontiff to be an enemy of God "more inhuman than Pharaoh". He was excommunicated and his lands placed under interdict. Finally the prince decided to negotiate and sent one of his knights to Rome. On September 4, 1223, Honorius III confirmed an accord drawn up between the prince and the church of the Morea: Geoffrey restored the church lands and kept the treasures and furnishings of the churches in exchange for an annual indemnity; the number of Greek priests enjoying liberty and immunity was limited in proportion to the size of the community. A similar arrangement was made

with Othon de la Roche.⁴ In some respects this settlement paralleled that of 1219 in the Latin empire.

Agreements had certainly been expedited by the threat which then hung over the Frankish possessions. Theodore of Epirus, who had succeeded his brother Michael in 1214, had attacked the kingdom of Thessalonica, invaded Thessaly and Macedonia, and taken possession of Serres toward the beginning of 1222. He then laid siege to Thessalonica, which put up a long resistance, but finally surrendered near the end of 1224. All Macedonia and Thessaly fell into his hands. He advanced to the Spercheus river and to central Greece, where marquis Guy Pallavicini was able to hold him, thanks to his strong castle of Bodonitsa. Theodore's southward advance was thus checked, but the danger had been serious, and Honorius III had of necessity been prodigal of encouragement and consolation to Othon and Geoffrey during the years 1224 and 1225.

Soon after, Othon de la Roche returned with his wife Isabel to Burgundy, where he lived a few years longer. He left his extensive holdings to his nephew Guy de la Roche, already lord of half Thebes. Geoffrey I did not long survive the departure of his old friend, with whom he had always acted in perfect accord; he died some time between 1228 and 1230 at the age of about sixty. At approximately the same time another conqueror of Greek lands, Marco I Sanudo, duke of the Archipelago, departed this life after further adventures; he was succeeded by his son Angelo. In Euboea Ravano dalle Carceri had died in 1216 and the island had been partitioned, through the efforts of the Venetian bailie Peter Barbo, among six heirs.

Geoffrey II, elder son of Geoffrey I, succeeded his father at the age of about thirty-five. He had married in 1217 the daughter of emperor Peter of Constantinople, Agnes of Courtenay, and had thus become the brother-in-law of the emperors Robert and Baldwin II. He lived in noble style, keeping always at his court eighty knights with golden spurs, supported on his bounty; many

⁴ Othon de la Roche had been present at the second parliament of Ravennika (May 2, 1210), at which most of the important barons of continental Greece had ratified a pact regulating relations between church and state. Prince Geoffrey of Villehardouin had not been, however, a party to the agreement, which thus did not apply to the principality of Achaia. In any event Othon was not himself scrupulous in observing the agreement, and so he and his lands were placed under the same bonds of excommunication and interdict as Honorius levied upon Villehardouin and Achaia. The pertinent documents will be found in the correspondence of Innocent III and Honorius III, a number of them being convenient of access in Sp. P. Lampros, *Ἐγγραφα ἀναφερόμενα εἰς τὴν μεσαιωνικὴν ἱστορίαν τῶν Ἀθηνῶν* (vol. III of Lampros's Greek translation of Ferd. Gregorovius, *Stadt Athen im Mittelalter*), Athens, 1906, reprinted 1917.

came from France to learn the profession of arms or to seek their fortune. He was a humane prince, benevolent and just, solicitous for the condition of the common people. He sent investigators to the courts of the barons to inform him of their way of life and of the manner in which they treated their vassals.

Living on good terms with his Greek neighbors, Geoffrey II assured the peace and prosperity of his principality. His resources permitted him to send financial aid to his liege lord the emperor, John of Brienne. In 1236 he intervened in person to succor Constantinople, besieged by the forces of the Nicaean emperor, John Ducas Vatatzes; with a fleet manned by 100 knights, 300 crossbowmen, and 500 archers, he forced the blockade and then, in conjunction with the Venetians, Pisans, and Genoese, repulsed the Greek fleet and delivered the capital. Two years later, uniting his ships with those of Venice, he again came to the rescue of Constantinople, once more besieged by John Vatatzes. In 1239 he wished to take part in the crusade of his overlord of France, count Theobald of Champagne, but pope Gregory IX ordered him to turn his forces against the Greek emperor in order to ensure the safety of Constantinople. Again in 1243, upon the false rumor of the death of emperor Baldwin II, he returned to the capital of the empire in order to secure the regency during the minority of his wife's nephew, Philip of Courtenay.

Geoffrey II thus emerged as the most powerful vassal of the Latin empire, the person around whom the Frankish states of Greece gradually regrouped themselves. Count Maio Orsini, who had successively acknowledged himself the vassal of the holy see, of Venice, and of Theodore of Epirus, in 1236 placed himself under Geoffrey's suzerainty. Moreover, Baldwin II granted to Geoffrey, as the reward of his services to the empire, suzerainty over the island of Euboea and possibly over the islands of the Archipelago as well, though it was more probably bestowed later on his brother William.

What remained of the old kingdom of Thessalonica, the lordships of Athens and Bodonitsa, had naturally drawn closer to Achaea, yet seemingly with no more formal tie of vassalage than the homage which Guy de la Roche owed to the prince for the lordships of Argos and Thebes. The lordship (commonly called the duchy) of Athens enjoyed the same peace and prosperity as did the Morea. Its chief source of wealth was the flourishing silk industry at Thebes, which turned that city into a commercial center frequented by many foreigners, especially Venetians and Genoese.

In 1240 Guy de la Roche gave the lordship of half Thebes to Bela of St. Omer, a member of the illustrious family of Fauquembergue, castellans of St. Omer in France. Bela had married Guy's sister, Bonne de la Roche. Another of Guy's vassals was the lord of Salona, Thomas II of Autremencourt.

It was reserved for William II of Villehardouin to bring about the unity of Frankish Greece. Geoffrey II died in 1246, leaving no children by his wife Agnes of Courtenay. His brother William was then about thirty-five years old. He had received as appanage the barony of Kalamata, which had been the original fief of his father, and he had been initiated into the government during the lifetime of his brother, who had entrusted the regency to him when he was obliged to go to the rescue of Constantinople. William was more enterprising than Geoffrey II. He resolved first to bring into subjection the peoples of the Morea who were still independent. In the southeast of the peninsula Monemvasia, a nest of corsairs isolated on a rock, still held out against Frankish domination and continued relations with the Nicaean empire. William blockaded it for three years, until famine finally forced the inhabitants to capitulate, yet upon honorable terms, keeping their property, their liberty, and their privileges (1248). Following this surrender, the mountaineers of Parnon made their submission. Then the prince went into winter quarters at Lacedaemon and built nearby, on the edge of the Taygetus chain, the powerful fortress of Mistra (Myzithra). At the other end of this chain, near Cape Matapan, he erected the castle of Maina (Grand Magne). The Slavs of Taygetus, hemmed in by the construction of these two fortresses, came to terms in their turn with the prince, who accorded them privileges. Thenceforth the Frankish domination covered the whole Morea.

During this fortunate winter, prince William of Villehardouin entertained as guests duke Hugh of Burgundy and numerous knights of France who, having taken the cross with king Louis IX, were on their way to meet him in Cyprus. Like his brother Geoffrey II, William wished to join the French crusaders. By marriage he was connected with the royal house of France. His wife, the daughter of Narjot of Toucy, who had served as bailie of the Latin empire of Constantinople, was the granddaughter of Agnes of France and thus the second cousin of Louis IX. William, therefore, armed a squadron of 24 ships, assembled 400 mounted men, and, embarking in the spring with the duke of Burgundy, joined the French royal fleet toward the end of May 1249, just as it was leaving

Cyprus for Damietta. William participated in the whole Egyptian campaign, and stayed with Louis until early May 1250, when the king departed for Acre.⁵ At that time William obtained from Louis the right to coin money like that minted in France.

Upon his return to the Morea, William of Villehardouin experienced a few years of tranquillity, during which he and his court led a life of great magnificence. A move of the Greeks against Bodonitsa caused scarcely a ripple, for the prince marched with 800 horsemen to the threatened frontier and easily put the Greeks to rout. The years from 1250 to 1255 mark the zenith of the principality of Achaea: the prince, master of the whole Morea, overlord of the Archipelago, as well as of Euboea and of the county of Cephalonia, and even of Guy de la Roche for Argos and Thebes, dominated all the Frankish states of Greece and was able to make himself respected by the Greeks; because of his gallantry, his *courtoisie*, the brilliance of his court, his alliance with the royal house of France, and his part in the crusade, his renown spread far and wide.

This period of peace ended in 1255 over an incident in the feudal succession which degenerated into a conflict gradually involving all elements of Frankish Greece. Euboea had two overlords, the prince of Achaea and the Signoria of Venice, whose representative, the bailie at Negroponte, had arranged in 1216 the succession to Ravano dalle Carceri by dividing each of the three baronies into two parts and providing that in the event of the death of the possessor of one part the possessor of the other should succeed him. By 1254 William of Verona and Narzotto dalle Carceri each held an entire barony, while the third (Oreus) was divided between Grapella of Verona, nephew of William, and Carintana dalle Carceri. After the death of his first wife, the daughter of Narjot of Toucy, prince William had married Carintana, who died without issue in 1255, making him the heir of her sixth of the island. In accordance with the 1216 agreement, however, William of Verona and Narzotto dalle Carceri gave Carintana's share to Grapella, who thus tried to take over the whole barony of Oreus. Irritated by this decision made for a fief which had belonged to his wife and of which he was the overlord, the prince had William and Narzotto arrested. Their families then asked the aid of the Venetian bailie, Paul Gradenigo, who made himself master of the city of Negroponte. But the prince sent his nephew Geoffrey of Karytaina with a strong force. Geoffrey reoccupied Negroponte, and drove the bailie and the Venetians out.

⁵ On the crusade to Damietta, see below, chapter XIV, pp. 494-504.

Thus began the conflict between the two overlords of the island, Venice and William of Villehardouin. Each thenceforward tried to find allies in the country. William de la Roche, brother of the lord of Athens and baron of Veligosti and Damala in the Morea, and then Guy de la Roche himself, supported the Venetians, while William of Villehardouin secured the aid of Othon de Cicon, lord of Carystus, and even of the Genoese, four of whose armed galleys he stationed at Monemvasia. From Euboea the war spread into Attica, Corinthia, and Messenia, to the limits of the Venetian possessions, and onto the sea, with varying results in the years 1256 and 1257. In the spring of 1258, prince William resolved to put an end to it. Although his nephew, Geoffrey of Karytaina, went over to Guy de la Roche, whose daughter Isabel he had married, William crossed the isthmus of Corinth with a large force and advanced along the route to Thebes. He met the army of Guy at the foot of Mt. Caryae and, after a severe struggle, William of Villehardouin gained a decisive victory.

Besieged in Thebes and seeing his land devastated, Guy had to make his submission. He went to Nikli in the Morea to do homage to prince William and to submit himself to the judgment of the barons. Since they were not Guy's peers, the barons decided that they could not judge him and referred his case to the court of France. Guy left for the west in the spring of 1259. The court of France decided that, since he had not done liege homage to the prince, he could not be deprived of his fief, and that the fatigue of his journey was punishment enough. After this judgment and a courteous reception by king Louis,⁶ Guy set out once more for Greece in the spring of 1260, hastening his return upon receipt of news of a disaster which had just befallen the Latins there.

William of Villehardouin had made a third marriage with Anna Angelina Comnena, daughter of the despot Michael II of Epirus, which union had brought on a disastrous war. Strengthened by his alliance with William and his other son-in-law, king Manfred of Sicily, Michael II wished to profit by the death of the Nicaean emperor Theodore II Lascaris to occupy all Macedonia and to take over Thrace. But Michael Palaeologus had assumed the regency of Nicaea, and had then usurped the imperial crown. After having tried vainly to ward off the danger by negotiations with the three allies — Michael II, William, and Manfred — Michael VIII

⁶ The assertion, in *The Chronicle of the Morea*, that Louis made Athens a duchy at this interview (it had always been called a duchy in common parlance) seems to be refuted by the numismatic evidence that this title was not officially used before 1280.

Palaeologus had dispatched a powerful army to Macedonia under the command of his brother, the sebastocrator John. Prince William had, however, assembled his troops early in the spring of 1259 and then, having crossed the Gulf of Corinth, had joined forces with the despot Michael II. In addition to his own troops and those of Thessaly, commanded by his bastard son John, Michael II had 400 knights sent by Manfred from the kingdom of Sicily.

The allied army was concentrated in the western part of Macedonia near Castoria, and soon advanced to meet John Palaeologus, who had pushed into the region of Lakes Prespa and Ochrida. But John avoided battle and confined himself to harassing the allied force with his Turkish and Kuman auxiliaries. At the same time he succeeded in sowing the seeds of disunion among his adversaries by sending emissaries to Michael II. Michael, in the decisive battle which took place some time in the summer of 1259 in the plain of Pelagonia,⁷ did abandon his allies; his troops dispersed; and his son John, who had quarreled with the Latins, went over to the enemy. William of Villehardouin, left alone with his vassals and the Sicilian knights, and taken in the rear by the forces of Thessaly, joined battle and tried to pierce the enemy line, but the Franks succumbed to superior force. After escaping from the field of battle and reaching Castoria, William was discovered by the Greeks, taken prisoner, and, with the greater part of the French knights, led before Michael Palaeologus, early in October 1259.

The sebastocrator John was then free to advance across Thessaly to Frankish Greece, where he plundered Thebes, but with the onset of winter the imperial army returned to the headquarters of Michael VIII in Asia Minor. Guy de la Roche, arriving from France the following spring, went to the aid of William's princess, Anna, who was acting as regent, in organizing the resistance of the Frankish states. But Michael, rid of his enemies in the west by the victory of Pelagonia, had by then turned his efforts in the direction of Constantinople. When his troops succeeded in taking it by surprise, on July 25, 1261, he resolved to treat with prince William, who was still a prisoner. For two years the prince had refused to yield to Michael's demands for the surrender of the Morea in exchange for an indemnity, and had offered only a ransom. The fall of Constantinople, which showed him the imminent danger threatening Frankish Greece, reduced him to a somewhat more

⁷ For the date of the battle of Pelagonia, see D. M. Nicol, in *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, XLIX (1956), 68-71, and cf. *idem*, *Despotate of Epiros*, pp. 169 ff.

accommodating frame of mind. He finally agreed to cede the three important strongholds of Monemvasia, Mistra, and Maina; and even consented to hold his principality from Michael, as he had held it formerly from Baldwin II. This accord, concluded towards the end of 1261, was ratified by the parliament of Achaea, composed largely of Frankish ladies acting in the absence of their prisoner husbands. After representatives of the emperor arrived to take possession of the three strongholds and to receive hostages, William of Villehardouin and the knights imprisoned with him were set at liberty.

Thus the first period of the history of Frankish Greece drew to a close: a brilliant period of conquest and of organization, rudely terminated by disaster.⁸ Thanks to its restricted and easily defensible frontiers, to its solid military structure, and to the political ability of its leaders, it had for fifty years enjoyed almost complete peace, which had assured the prosperity of the country and had allowed the princes to render aid to Constantinople or to take part in crusades. At its greatest extent — peninsular, continental, and insular — Frankish Greece had comprised as many as a thousand fiefs, whose holders, descendants of the conquerors or newcomers, held more or less directly from the prince of Achaea. Under his overlordship the prince held, in a sort of confederation, the secondary states: the lordship (or "duchy") of Athens, the lordships of Negroponte, the duchy of the Archipelago, and the county of Cephalonia. In his own *seigneurie*, the principality of Achaea, which finally included the whole Morea, he had as immediate or mesne vassals hundreds of feudatories: possibly 500 or 600 knights, as well as esquires and sergeants and Greek *archontes*, these last scattered chiefly in the mountain districts of Arcadia, Triphylia, and Messenia. Many of these feudal lords had erected their own castles like those of the prince, either to speed their conquest or to reinforce weak points: Geoffrey I had built a keep on one of the peaks of Acrocorinth, while Othon de la Roche fortified the Acropolis of Athens. Geoffrey I had also built the powerful castle of Clermont in Elis, and William of Villehardouin that of Mistra on the edge of Mt. Taygetus. These castles of the prince and of the barons often rose upon the foundations of earlier structures — ancient or Byzantine — but at times, as in the case of the two last-named, they

⁸ On the social and cultural life of Frankish Greece, note J. Longnon, *L'Empire latin de Constantinople*, pp. 187-216, and cf. K. M. Setton, *The Byzantine Background to the Italian Renaissance* (*Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, vol. 100), Philadelphia, 1956, pp. 31-40.

were erected on strategic new sites. They served at once as watch-towers from which to keep the countryside under surveillance, as refuges in case of invasion or revolt, and as points of support to hold important passes.

Thus organized, the principality of Achaea constituted a most unusual sort of feudal state, in which the hierarchy was composed of a series of grades ranging from the prince to the non-noble vassals: high barons, lieges, men of simple homage, *archontes*, and enfeoffed sergeants. The prince himself might disregard his feudal obligations to Venice, as he did in the war of the Euboeote succession, but he always remained the faithful vassal of his liege lord, the Latin emperor of Constantinople, rendering aids in men and money. But the remoteness and weakness of the emperors on the one hand and the strong personalities and initiative of the Villehardouin princes on the other made them in reality quasi-independent.

The power of the prince in respect to his vassals was also limited in theory by the customs of the principality. The prince was the first of the knights of the Morea, presiding over the court of the barons and over the court of the lieges, commanding the army and giving political leadership with the counsel of the lieges. He could not condemn a vassal without the judgment of the lieges or impose the *taille* or *collecte* without their consent. But here again his personal qualities and the prestige of his house assured his moral authority and precluded all conflict with his vassals, except in badly defined cases such as the affair of Euboea. The prince customarily resided at Andravida, an open town, but near his chief fortress, Clermont, and his chief port, Glarentsa (Cyllene). The princely court, which had further increased in magnificence under William of Villehardouin, was famous throughout all Christendom as a school of chivalry. The prince had a constable, who was the most important of the great officials, a marshal, who was second in command of the troops, a chancellor or logothete, a chamberlain or *provestiarios*, who had charge of the management of the fiefs and of the sale of the products of the demesne, and a treasurer, who looked after receipts and expenditures. His personal domain, which constituted perhaps a quarter of the territory of the principality, comprised several castellanies, the importance of each of which equalled that of a great barony, with its head at one of his principal castles: Corinth, Clermont, Beauvoir (at Pondikos), and Kalamata. These were administered by captains, chosen from among the most distinguished knights, who had powers analogous to those of a baron over his own fief, and who exercised military, judicial, and

administrative functions corresponding to those of the *baillis* in northern France. The guard of each castle was entrusted to a castellan, assisted by a constable and sergeants. In addition, Geoffrey II, as we have seen, had instituted *enquêteurs*, whose duty it was to inspect the government of the barons in their fiefs and to make reports to the prince.

The great barons or *bers de terre* were the peers of the prince. They possessed some of his sovereign prerogatives; they shared high justice with him and had the right to construct castles freely. They could be judged only by the court of the barons, consisting of themselves under the presidency of the prince. There were about a dozen high baronies: Patras, Vostitsa (Aegium), Chalandritsa, and Kalavryta in Achaea; Matagrifon (Akova), Karytaina, Veligosti, and Nikli in Arcadia; Gritsenia and, in the early years, Kalamata in Messenia; and finally Geraki and Passavant in Laconia. They were of unequal size: Matagrifon, Karytaina, and probably Patras comprised 22 or 24 knights' fees; Kalavryta, twelve; Vostitsa, eight; the others, only four or six. About a third of each of these baronies was subinfeudated to other knights, while the remainder constituted the personal demesne of the baron, who owed service with a number of knights or sergeants in proportion to the importance of his barony.

The lieges formed the most important and possibly the most numerous category of vassals. They had more restricted duties and wider privileges than the men of simple homage. In theory, they owed military service all year round: four months in the field, four months garrison duty, and four months in their own castle or wherever they chose. In addition they owed court and counsel service. Finally, they could be required to serve as hostages or sureties. They were members of the court of the lieges, and each had a court of his own where he judged his own vassals and villeins except for *affaires de sang*. The lieges were not subject to the tax called the *collecte*, and could arrange their daughters' marriages as they chose. The men of simple homage had no court and judged only the civil cases of their villeins; they took no part in counseling their lord and were subject to the *collecte*, which was levied when the prince wished to pay a ransom or marry off his daughter; their women could not marry without the consent of the lord. But they were liable for military service only for the period fixed by their charters of enfeoffment.

The position of the *archontes* and the sergeants is one of the peculiarities of feudalism in the Morea. The *archontes* or *gentils*

hommes grecs were the old landed proprietors, incorporated into the feudal organization; they were especially numerous in Arcadia. They had the status of men of simple homage, and, like them, owed the service specified in their charters of enfeoffment; but certain peculiarities, notably in matters of succession, probably carried over from Byzantine law, distinguished them from the men of simple homage. The sergeancies were fiefs worth half a knight's fee and held by esquires or sergeants. Created to reward the mounted sergeants who had taken part in the conquest, they gave to these non-nobles an aristocratic rank in the principality. Their holders did simple homage.

The Latin archbishops and bishops likewise had their place in the feudal organization: they had received fiefs for which they owed *chevauchée* but not garrison duty; they also shared in counsel and in justice. The same was true of the military orders — Templars, Hospitallers, and Teutonic Knights.

Outside the feudal structure Frankish Greece included various categories of privileged persons: the foreign merchants, Venetian, Genoese, and others, gathered together in colonies; the townsmen in the commercial centers, notably Glarentsa, which had been enriched by the growth of trade; the inhabitants of the chief towns, which had preserved their privileges from the Byzantine period; and free peasants or *francs hommes* who could not be taxed without their own consent.

Below them came the great mass of the inhabitants of the countryside, the old *paroikoi*, to whom the Franks gave the name of villein. They had kept their holding, the *stasis*, to which they were attached from father to son and for which they made a fixed payment in proportion to its size; they also owed personal service, cultivating the lord's land, as well as the *corvées* necessary for the construction and upkeep of castles, mills, wine presses, and the like. The villein in the Morea was subject to more or less the same obligations as in France, being unable to quit his land or to contract a marriage or marry off his daughter without authorization; but his *stasis* could not be taken away from him nor could the pair of oxen or the donkey necessary for his work be sold. He could be freed by his lord and even receive land in fee.⁹

Almost all the bishoprics, abandoned by their Greek titularies, had been occupied by the Latins. Yet there remained at Negroponte the Greek bishop, Theodore, who had made his submission to

⁹ Cf. in general Peter Topping, "Le Régime agraire dans le Péloponnèse latin au XIV^e siècle," *L'Hellénisme contemporain*, ser. 2, X (1956), 255-295.

Rome, while in curious fashion still keeping up close relations with the former Greek metropolitan of Athens, Michael Choniates, who had taken refuge on the island of Ceos. Outside the kingdom of Thessalonica, and Thessaly, there were four ecclesiastical provinces in Frankish Greece: two in the Morea, Patras and Corinth, and two in central Greece, Athens and Thebes. The archbishop of Patras was the primate of the Morea; he had as suffragans, from 1223, the bishop of Olena, whose see was at Andravida, and the bishops of Coron, Modon, and Cephalonia. Dependent upon the archbishopric of Corinth were the bishoprics of Argos and Lacedaemon, as well as that of Monemvasia after its conquest. The archbishopric of Athens included the bishopric of Thermopylae (with the see at Bodonitsa) and the bishoprics of Salona, Daulia, Negroponte, Aegina, and Andros. The archbishop of Thebes had only two suffragans: the bishop of Castoria and the bishop of Zaratovo.

The members of the Greek clergy, regular and secular, who had not fled during the conquest, had been left in their positions. The conquerors, at the time of the submission of the inhabitants, had promised not to force them to change their religion and had manifested much tolerance; nevertheless, as a result of abuses, the concordat of 1223 had limited the number of *papates*, enjoying with their families ecclesiastical exemption. The Greek monks, left undisturbed, were allowed to keep up and even occasionally to expand their monasteries; and the exiled Greek metropolitan of Athens, Michael Choniates, found devious ways to elect new abbots. Only the monasteries abandoned by the Greeks had been occupied by Latin monks. The Cistercians were favored in Greece, as at Constantinople: they took over the abbey of Daphne near Athens and that of Zaraca on the shore of Lake Stymphalus. The Augustinians were established at St. Sauveur in Messenia, the Premonstratensians at Kalavryta, the canons regular of St. Ruf in the cathedral chapter of Patras, the Carmelites at Andravida, and the Temple of the Lord in the chapter of Athens.

Gradually a perceptible rapprochement developed between the various classes of Greeks and the French knights. First the *archontes* achieved a definite status in the feudal order, and Greek officials participated in the administration. Then followed unions between the two races: besides prince William of Achaea, we find duke William of Athens marrying a Greek princess. From illegitimate unions with the women of the land came a race of half-breeds, the *gasmouloi*, who, as the Byzantine historian George Pachymeres remarks, "had the discretion and the cautious spirit of the Greeks,

the ardor and pride of the Franks."¹⁰ It is worthy of note that this clever and courageous stock was to play an active part in the struggle of the Byzantines against the Latins in the Morea.

Despite the solemnity of the oaths exchanged by emperor Michael VIII Palaeologus and prince William of Achaea, the peace concluded at the beginning of the year 1262 could scarcely be expected to last. The cession of the three strongholds of Mistra, Monemvasia, and Maina was a direct menace to the whole province of Laconia, where the Franks still held the city of Sparta, dear to the heart of prince William, as well as the great baronies of Passavant and Geraki. It was no longer a question, as it had been at the time of William's succession, of the resistance of a few mountain or maritime people who had succeeded in maintaining their independence; now Michael VIII, who since his recapture of Constantinople was free to intervene in the western part of the old empire, had solid bases from which to attempt the recovery of the rest of Greece, threatening the country simultaneously from the north and from the sea. Here lay the germs of a long struggle which was to embroil the Latins and the Byzantines for many generations.

Prince William was clearly aware of the situation. Freed by pope Urban IV from his promises to Michael VIII, made under duress while in prison, he hastened to make peace with Venice, on May 16, 1262, by a treaty which reestablished the *status quo ante* in Euboea. While preparing the defenses of the Latin holdings, William visited the region of Lacedaemon, frightened the Greeks, and precipitated events. Michael Cantacuzenus, whom the emperor had chosen as his representative in Monemvasia, alerted his master, who, early in 1263, dispatched an army of Greek soldiers and Turkish mercenaries under the command of his brother, the sebastocrator Constantine. At the same time a fleet, manned largely by *gasmouloi* and Tzacones,¹¹ proceeded to ravage Euboea and the Archipelago and to take over the coast of Laconia.

Constantine began by occupying and fortifying those of William's lands that lay near his bases. Then he moved up the valley of the Eurotas, gained the valley of the Alpheus, and marched towards Elis. William had gone to Corinth to assemble the forces of Frankish Greece, leaving the defense of the passes of the Alpheus to a knight named John de Catavas, with three hundred knights. John

¹⁰ *De Michaelae Palaeologo*, III, 9 (CSHB), I, 188.

¹¹ According to some of the Greek historians (such as Pachymeres, IV, 26, CSHB, I, 309), the Tzacones are simply the ancient Lacones or Spartans, a derivation of the name which, despite controversy, a number of modern historians have accepted.

attacked the Byzantine troops at Prinitsa, not far from the ruins of Olympia, and, after a hard struggle, succeeded in forcing them to retreat. Surprised by this attack, the sebastocrator took flight on a swift horse, while his army scattered. In the spring of 1264 Constantine resolved to have his revenge and, following the same invasion route, reached the borders of the plain of Elis at Sergiana, where William took up a position facing him. Michael Cantacuzenus, who commanded the Byzantine vanguard, rode forth to make a demonstration before the front line of the French; his horse stumbled and he was killed before help could reach him. Stunned by this death, Constantine retreated and went to lay siege to Nikli.

There he ran into a new disappointment: the Turkish mercenaries, numbering more than a thousand mounted men, demanded their arrears in pay, and, when Constantine refused, they left him and proceeded to offer their services to the prince of Achaea. Discouraged by all these contretemps, Constantine returned to Constantinople, leaving the command to the grand domestic, Alexius Philes, who marched toward the fertile province of Messenia and occupied the pass of Makryplagi, which controlled its approach. The prince, reinforced by the Turkish mercenaries, had himself reached Messenia, which he was determined to defend. His troops attacked the Greeks in their strong positions and succeeded in dislodging and in putting them to flight. The rout was complete: the grand domestic and numerous other Byzantine dignitaries and officers were taken prisoner. William of Villehardouin advanced to Mistra, and fortified and repopulated Sparta, which had been deserted by its inhabitants; then he withdrew to winter quarters in Elis.

On the sea also, the emperor Michael suffered reverses: the Graeco-Genoese fleet, encountering the Venetian galleys near the island of Hydra, sustained a serious defeat which caused it to lose control of the Aegean. With the failure of all his plans, the emperor came around to the idea of a truce. William of Villehardouin, having seen his knights decimated and a part of his principality devastated by two years of war, was favorably disposed. Pope Urban IV, to whom Michael was now offering a union of the churches, insisted on the ending of hostilities against Frankish Morea as one of the conditions. For its part Venice had already concluded a treaty with the emperor which restored her privileges at Constantinople (1265). As part of this general relaxing of tension between east and west, a reconciliation was brought about between Michael VIII and prince William. To cement the accord, Michael proposed the

marriage of his son Andronicus with William's daughter and heir, Isabel. But the barons of Achaea, fearing the seizure of the Morea by the Byzantines, refused to ratify this project.

The truce was, however, bound to be only temporary, and the prince, perforce, had to seek outside aid, which was difficult to find under such circumstances. Since 1262 pope Urban IV had been asking aid for him from France, with little success. The Venetians, who had recovered their privileges in the Byzantine empire, did not wish to compromise their position. King Manfred of Sicily, brother-in-law and former ally of William, was favorably disposed towards the Franks in Greece, but, since the pope had preached a crusade against him, his one thought was to defend himself. The outcome of that crusade eventually solved William's problem.

Charles of Anjou, having become master of the kingdom of Sicily in 1266 by the victory of Benevento, in which Manfred was killed, was naturally inclined to take over Manfred's oriental policy along with the rest of his inheritance, and to cast ambitious glances across the strait of Otranto. Prince William had met Charles of Anjou on the Egyptian crusade, and his first wife, granddaughter of Agnes of France, had been Charles's cousin. Isolated in Greece, William looked with favor on the establishment of a powerful French force on the other side of the Ionian Sea; he resolved, by flattering the ambition of Charles of Anjou, to make certain of his support. Early in 1267, less than a year after the battle of Benevento, he crossed to Italy, got in touch with Charles, and went on to see pope Clement IV at Viterbo.

After long negotiations a treaty was solemnly concluded between Charles of Anjou and William of Villehardouin on May 24, 1267, at Viterbo, at a consistory held in the chamber of the pope in the presence of fourteen cardinals. The clauses of this treaty are rather singular. In exchange for a promise of aid from Charles, William ceded to him Achaea and its dependencies, but he was to retain the usufruct, and his daughter Isabel was to marry one of Charles's sons, who would succeed William in Achaea. If this son should die without children before William, Achaea would revert to Charles himself or to his heir to the kingdom. Three days later, a second treaty between the former Latin emperor of Constantinople, Baldwin II, and Charles of Anjou added the finishing touches to the earlier treaty. In return for a force of two thousand mounted men to help in recovering the empire, Baldwin II ceded to Charles suzerainty over the principality of Achaea, as well as over the

islands of the Archipelago and Corfu, and over the Latin possessions in Epirus. All the Greek lands still in the power of the Latins thus passed under the domination of the new king of Sicily.

Frankish Greece had now become a dependency of the kingdom of Sicily. These conditions were hard on William of Villehardouin, who not only lost the quasi-independence which he had enjoyed in relation to his former suzerain Baldwin II, but further sacrificed the rights of the house of Villehardouin to the profit of the house of Anjou. Nevertheless he faithfully fulfilled the conditions, and was himself the first to render aid to his new suzerain the very next year when Conradin came down into Italy. He assumed command of the Angevin forces in Apulia and took part in the battle of Tagliacozzo, where the intervention of a reserve corps, half of it consisting of knights from the Morea, brought victory to Charles (August 23, 1268). Furthermore, in January 1269 William secured by negotiation the surrender of Avlona, thenceforth the advance bridgehead of Charles of Anjou in Albania. William also busied himself with the execution of the clauses of the treaty of Viterbo. In June 1270 a mission arrived in the Morea to receive on behalf of Charles the stipulated oaths and ratifications, and in the spring of the following year William sent to Italy his twelve-year-old daughter Isabel, to wed Philip of Anjou, who was fifteen; the marriage was celebrated with great splendor at Trani on May 28, 1271; thereafter the young Isabel went to live with the royal family at Naples in the Castel dell' Ovo.

Although Charles of Anjou had managed ever since 1269 to send to Achaea some subsidies, provisions, and horses, the expedition of Conradin and the repression of the revolt in Sicily, followed by the Tunisian crusade in 1270,¹² had prevented him in these early years from giving any really extensive aid to the principality. But in 1271 he named as captain-general in the Morea the marshal of Sicily, Dreux of Beaumont, and sent him with troops to Greece. Emperor Michael VIII had given up his attacks in the Morea, and had turned his efforts to Euboea, where he took advantage of a favorable turn of events. A petty knight from Vicenza, Licario by name, fleeing from the resentment of one of the "triarchs" of the island, William II of Verona, and of the latter's brother Gilbert, whose sister Felicia he had secretly married, had offered his services to Michael. With the aid of Byzantine ships, Licario had ravaged the coast of Euboea, taken several castles, and pushed into the interior. Dreux of Beaumont and William of Villehardouin resolved

¹² For the crusade to Tunis, see below, chapter XIV, pp. 508-518.

to take action. Dreux advanced towards Oreus, Licario's naval base, but suffered a severe defeat. William was more fortunate, however, and succeeded in recapturing the castle of La Cuppa near Aulonarion.

In the spring of 1275, the emperor Michael directed his attack against Thessaly, where there ruled the bastard son of Michael II of Epirus, John, duke of Neopatras. Michael VIII sent a fleet into the Gulf of Volos, and a powerful force by land to Thessaly, to blockade John in Neopatras. John managed to escape and went to ask help of the duke of Athens, John de la Roche, who had succeeded at the death of his father Guy in 1263. The latter assembled three hundred experienced knights, joined forces with the troops which John had been able to get together, and, vigorously attacking the Byzantine army, succeeded in putting it to flight. The Byzantines withdrew to Demetrias near their fleet, which the Venetians and Lombards of Negroponte hoped in their turn to destroy. They succeeded in breaking its line and in driving it back on the coast, but John Palaeologus, who commanded the Byzantine army, put his best soldiers on board and, taking the offensive, regained the upper hand, recovering the greater part of the ships. William of Verona was killed, and numerous Latin lords were made prisoner.

The next year Michael VIII, renewing the attack, again sent an army into Thessaly, while a fleet under the command of Licario sailed to Euboea. With the troops which the fleet had transported, Licario ranged over the island up to the very outskirts of the city of Negroponte. Gilbert of Verona, accompanied by John de la Roche, the duke of Athens, marched against him. The engagement took place at Vatonda, about six miles north of Negroponte. In the thick of the fight, John de la Roche was thrown from his horse and made prisoner, together with Gilbert and numerous knights. Meanwhile the Byzantine army had suffered a new disaster in Thessaly, which at first prevented Licario from following up his success, and then allowed the Latins to succor Negroponte. Licario now turned to the southern part of the island, took the castles of La Clisura and Larmena, and occupied Seriphos, Siphnos, and other islands of the Archipelago and spread terror throughout the Aegean.

On the other side of Greece also, in Epirus and Albania, the Latins had found themselves exposed to the attacks of the Byzantines. Already master of Avlona, Charles of Anjou had been busy taking possession of the towns which Manfred had held as the dowry of his wife Helena, daughter of Michael II of Epirus, and

of the lands which Baldwin II had ceded to him by the treaty of Viterbo. In 1271 the Albanians had recognized Charles as their king, and Durazzo, Berat, Canina, Butrinto (Buthrotum), and Syvota had fallen into his hands. But three years later Michael VIII had sent an army which had taken Berat and laid siege to Avlona and Durazzo. Thus the Byzantine emperor had succeeded in almost completely encircling the Latin possessions from Albania and Epirus to Thessaly, Euboea, the Archipelago, and Laconia. In the Morea itself, the Byzantines not only held Laconia, but had also infiltrated into Arcadia, where Kalavryta had fallen into their hands by 1277. Nevertheless, William of Villehardouin continued to maintain himself in what constituted the heart of the principality in the Morea: Achaea, Elis, the valley of the Alpheus, and Messenia, to say nothing of the plain of Nikli, the Argolid, and Corinthia. Thanks to aid obtained from Charles of Anjou, William had witnessed no renewal of the terrible invasions of 1263-1264 and the country enjoyed relative quiet.

The last years of the reign of prince William were darkened by bereavements. First he lost two of his chief vassals and faithful companions in arms: Walter of Rosières, baron of Matagrifon, and Geoffrey of Briel, baron of Karytaina, his own nephew, reputed to be the best knight of the Morea. They had no heirs as *bers de terre*, and so the number of great baronies, already diminished by the loss of Passavant and Geraki in Laconia, as well as of Kalavryta, was still further reduced. But worse still, William of Villehardouin lost his son-in-law and heir presumptive, Philip of Anjou, whose death in February 1277 at the age of twenty-one was to have weighty consequences.

A year later, prince William fell ill and, anticipating the approach of death, made his last will; he chose as regent or bailie his nephew the grand constable John Chauderon, provided for legacies to the churches, and selected as his last resting place the church of St. James at Andravida, where his father and brother had already been interred. On May 1, 1278, he died at the castle of Kalamata, where he had been born; he was about sixty-seven years old and had reigned thirty-two years. He had been a brilliant prince, renowned for his magnificence, gallantry, and *courtoisie*. An indefatigable fighter, he had won distinction not only in Greece but also at Damietta and in Italy. On the verge of losing his principality, he had known how to retrieve the situation and to maintain Frankish Morea. But to attain this, he had been forced to sacrifice

part of his independence and the interests of his house. According to the provisions of the treaty of Viterbo, the death of Philip of Anjou dispossessed Isabel of Villehardouin, and the principality of Achaea now passed directly to Charles of Anjou, the king of Sicily.

When Charles of Anjou was notified of the death of William of Villehardouin, he added the title prince of Achaea to those he already bore — “king of Jerusalem, of Sicily, of the duchy of Apulia, and of the principality of Capua, count of Anjou, of Provence, of Forcalquier, and of Tonnerre” — and sent the seneschal of Sicily, Galeran of Ivry, to represent him as bailie in the Morea, where he himself was destined never to set foot. Notice of this nomination was sent to the chief barons — the lords of Athens and of Lebadea, the count of Cephalonia, the three lords of Euboea, the lady of Bodonitsa, the constable and marshal of Achaea, the barons of Chalandritsa, Kalavryta, Vostitsa, and Veligosti — as well as to all the cities, lands, castles, towns, and localities of the principality.

The regency of Galeran of Ivry was not a success. Agent of a centralized monarchical regime, he ran afoul of the feudal practices of the Morea; the barons complained to the court of Naples, and Charles ordered Galeran to respect the usages and customs of the principality. However, the Angevin troops in service in the Morea received their pay at irregular intervals and lived off the country. The castles lacked munitions and provisions. In August 1280 Galeran of Ivry was replaced by Philip of Lagonesse, marshal of Sicily, who undertook to remedy the evils of the previous administration by indemnifying the barons, provisioning the castles, and paying the arrears of the castellans and soldiers from the mint of Glarentsa, which Charles of Anjou had had reorganized.

While Philip of Lagonesse was busy improving conditions in the Morea, the Latins of central Greece and Euboea were trying to retrieve their position, undermined by the successes of Michael VIII Palaeologus. William de la Roche, who in 1280 had succeeded his brother John in the duchy of Athens, and who was extending his authority over the whole country from Zeitounion (Lamia) and Gardiki to Argos and Nauplia, lent military support to his father-in-law, the bastard John Angelus Comnenus, duke of Neopatras. And the Venetian bailie of Negroponte, Nicholas Falier, succeeded by secret understandings in recovering some of the castles of Euboea occupied by Licario.

But the struggle between Latins and Byzantines continued,

especially in Albania. Among the problems which engrossed the attention of Charles of Anjou, the Morea ranked well behind the kingdom of Sicily and even Albania, which was nearer home: he not only wished to repair the losses he had suffered in Albania in 1274, but also planned to make it his base of operations for the campaign against the Byzantine empire, envisioned in the treaty he had made at Viterbo with Baldwin II.¹³ With a view to recovering the empire of Constantinople, he assured himself of the coöperation of the new despot of Epirus, Nicephorus, the legitimate son of Michael II, he established relations with king Stephen Uroš II of Serbia and tsar George I of Bulgaria, and undertook negotiations with Venice which were to culminate in July 1281 in the treaty of Orvieto.

In 1279 he sent to Durazzo, Avlona, Butrinto, Syvota, and Corfu, as captain and vicar-general in Albania, the energetic Hugh of Sully, with strong reinforcements of troops, materials for war, and provisions. The first objective was Berat, to which Hugh laid siege in 1280. The emperor Michael VIII sent against him an army under the command of the grand domestic, Michael Tarchaniotes, with instructions to wage a campaign of harassment and ambushes, of the sort which had so often proved fatal to the Franks. These tactics succeeded once again: Hugh of Sully, victim of his own impetuosity, fell into a trap and was made prisoner; his disheartened troops fled in disorder and took refuge in their bases of Avlona and Canina (April 1281).

Charles of Anjou did not abandon the struggle. He now regrouped his forces in Albania, assembled new troops, and armed a fleet, while the Venetians mobilized their own. The new expedition against the Byzantine empire had been fixed for April 1, 1283. But Michael VIII lost no time: he got into communication with some malcontents in Sicily, made one of them, John of Procida, his secret agent, and, through him, entered into contact with king Peter III of Aragon, to whom he furnished subsidies. And on Easter Monday 1282, just a year before the date fixed for the expedition against Michael Palaeologus, there took place that spectacular massacre of the French in the island of Sicily known as the Sicilian Vespers.

Thenceforth Charles of Anjou was obliged to abandon any action in the east in order to turn all his efforts against the rebellious Sicilians and the Catalan-Aragonese invaders. Philip of Lagonesse, marshal of the so-called kingdom of Sicily, was recalled from Achaea, and the chief barons of the Morea participated in the war

¹³ For the plans of Charles of Anjou, see below, chapter X, pp. 367-370.

in Sicily. The principality was to a certain extent left to itself: king Charles appointed as bailie the baron of Chalandritsa, Guy of Dramelay. Fortunately for the Latins in Greece, Michael VIII died shortly after this last political success. His son, Andronicus II, did not possess his great ability, and was kept busy with his struggle against the Serbs and against the Angeli of Thessaly and Epirus. As a result, the principality of Achaea, as well as Angevin Albania, knew a period of some tranquillity, while the bailie Guy of Dramelay, continuing the tradition of the princes, was conspicuous for his *courtoisie* and munificence.

Charles of Anjou died on January 7, 1285, two years after Michael VIII. His eldest son, Charles II "the Lame", inherited both the kingdom of "Sicily" (Naples) and the principality of Achaea, in conformity with the treaty of Viterbo. But he was hardly prince of Achaea even in name, for, a prisoner of the Catalans since June 1284, he had scarcely been liberated and returned to Italy (in 1289) when one of the first acts of his reign was to restore the principality to its natural heir, Isabel of Villehardouin.

During Charles II's captivity the regent of the kingdom, Robert of Artois, had named as bailie and vicar-general in Achaea the duke of Athens, William de la Roche, now the most powerful personage in Frankish Greece. William profited by the relative quiet which the Morea was enjoying, to protect Messenia against the incursions of the Byzantines of Mistra by constructing the castle of Dimatra. After two years of rule he died, leaving the duchy of Athens to a minor son, Guy II de la Roche; and Nicholas (II) of St. Omer, lord of one half Thebes, was appointed to replace him as bailie of Achaea. Nicholas was, after the duke of Athens, the richest and most powerful of the barons; he had married, successively, Mary, a daughter of Bohemond VI, prince of Antioch and count of Tripoli, and Anna Angelina Comnena, a daughter of Michael II of Epirus and the widow of prince William of Villehardouin. Nicholas continued the program of fortification begun by William of Athens, constructing the castle at Navarino called by the French Port-de-Jonc. "He governed with nobility and wisdom," says the chronicler of the Morea, "and kept the country at peace." In 1289 he was succeeded as bailie by Guy de Charpigny of Lille, baron of Vostitsa, who was to hold office for only a few months.

Charles II of Anjou was not as grasping as his father. He had an amiable disposition and a kind heart. He took a friendly interest in his brother's widow, Isabel of Villehardouin, who had passed twelve sad years at the court of Naples. Immediately upon his

return to Italy he gave her, in July 1289, the barony of Karytaina; and two months later, upon the occasion of her second marriage, to Florent of Hainault, he granted her "by pure liberality and special grace" the principality of Achaea, for herself and her direct and legitimate descendants. By this concession Charles II probably wished to compensate for the harshness with which his father had applied the clauses of the treaty of Viterbo upon the death of William of Villehardouin. In fact, Charles II describes his act as one of "restitution and concessions". Its principal conditions were that Florent and Isabel were to hold the principality from Charles II as a fief, and that, if Florent died, Isabel could not remarry without his consent, nor could any daughter who might be heir to the principality marry without his approval under penalty of losing her rights.

Florent of Hainault was the younger brother of the count of Hainault, John of Avesnes; he was also the great-grandson of emperor Baldwin I of Constantinople, the great-nephew of the first lord of Negroponte, James of Avesnes, and a relative of king Charles II. He had abandoned his small inheritance to seek fame and fortune in the Sicilian war. His marriage, it seems, was arranged at the suggestion of the regent, Robert of Artois, who maintained close relations with the house of Hainault, and also with the approval of the barons of the Morea, who wished to have a prince residing in the country who would preserve the rights of the natural heiress. The marriage was blessed by the archbishop of Naples on September 16, 1289; the king invested Isabel with the principality of Achaea and conferred on Florent the office of constable of the kingdom. The new prince was not quite forty years old, the princess hardly thirty.

Florent of Hainault proved to be a wise and prudent prince, as well as a brave and brilliant knight worthy of taking his place in the family of the Villehardouins, into which he had married. Seeing the country ruined by war, pillaged by Angevin as well as Byzantine troops, and ground down by the royal officials, he devoted himself first of all to reestablishing peace and to securing an accounting from the officials. He made contact with the Byzantine captain of Mistra and, through him, with the emperor Andronicus II, who concluded a firm and lasting accord with Achaea. With peace assured for a long time, prosperity returned to the country, which became "fat and plenteous in all things".

Freed from anxiety as to his own principality, Florent was in a

position to aid the despot of Epirus, his wife's uncle Nicephorus, who was exposed to the attacks of the Byzantines and their Genoese allies. With five hundred knights, Florent went to Epirus, raised the siege of Janina, and pursued the Byzantine troops back into imperial territory. But meanwhile Genoese ships ravaged the Gulf of Arta. While the campaign may have been a success for prince Florent, it left the heart of the Epirote despotate in ruins.

Florent also took part in the negotiations for the marriage of Charles II's favorite son, prince Philip of Taranto, with Thamar, daughter of the despot Nicephorus. Thamar received as dowry the chief places of Acarnania. Charles II assigned to Philip all his rights over the eastern dependencies of the kingdom — Albania, Corfu, the principality of Achaea, the duchy of Athens, and the duchy of the Archipelago. Philip of Taranto thus became immediate overlord of all Frankish Greece, as a fief held in chief of the king of Sicily (1294).

Prince Florent's principal difficulty during the course of his government was a long feudal conflict with the duchy of Athens which lasted during his entire reign. Originally independent of the principality of Achaea, and later vassals of the princes only for the lordships of Argos and of Nauplia, the dukes of Athens had always been restive under the pretensions of the Villehardouins to hegemony over all Frankish Greece. When, by the treaty of Viterbo, the principality of the Morea with its dependencies passed under the domination of Charles of Anjou, the duchy of Athens, like Euboea and the county of Cephalonia, was comprised in these dependencies. Likewise, when Charles II returned the principality to Isabel of Villehardouin, he intended to include these same territories. But the old spirit of independence was reincarnated in two persons who then ruled the duchy: the dowager duchess of Athens, Helena Angelina Comnena, resourceful widow of William de la Roche, and her second husband, Hugh of Brienne, a member of the adventurous Brienne family, which had won fame in the east and which, by its pride and intransigence, was destined to bring misfortune on the duchy.

In December 1289, when prince Florent had sent his proxy to receive the homages of the lords of central Greece, Helena, regent for her son Guy II, had refused to do homage. Charles II had intervened to force her submission. In 1291, however, Helena had married Hugh of Brienne, who now became bailie of the Athenian duchy, and forthwith insisted that he had the right to do homage directly to the king. The claim impressed Charles, whose numerous

later interventions, marked by uncertainty, if not by actual contradiction, always reflected the latest influence at work on him, whether that of Hugh, or of Florent, or of Philip of Taranto. In the end, Florent of Hainault won; Philip of Taranto renounced his claim to direct homage from the Athenian duchy on condition of receiving that of the prince of Achaea; and Guy II, having reached his majority, received the command to do homage and render service for his duchy to princess Isabel and prince Florent (1296).

Meanwhile peace prevailed in the Morea. In 1292 the privateering of Roger "de Lluria" (of Loria), admiral of James II of Aragon, in the eastern Mediterranean, had spread alarm and provoked an incident where Roger competed first in valor with one of the barons of the Morea, and then in generosity with the princess herself; all ended on the most courteous note in the world. Peace with the Byzantines of Mistra, several times threatened by other incidents, had been maintained through the wisdom and skill of prince Florent. In 1292 or 1293 two rich Slavs of Gianitsa in the Taygetus, aided by about fifty men, had taken the castle of Kalamata by surprise and had there acclaimed emperor Andronicus. It was a grave loss in one of the richest regions of the principality. But Florent of Hainault had sent a mission to the emperor and had succeeded, through the complaisance of an *archon* of Laconia, Sgouromallis by name, in having the castle surrendered to him.

Then, towards 1295, Florent had given up demanding vengeance for the murder of the good baron of Vostitsa and former bailie of Achaea, Guy de Charpigny, by a rich Greek of Kalavryta called Photius, because he had recognized that the murder was the result of an error, and that the primary responsibility for all the trouble rested on the excesses of one of his own relatives, Walter of Liedekerke, captain of the castellany of Corinth: Photius had mistaken Guy de Charpigny for Walter! But in the summer of 1296, Florent could not avoid the grievous consequences of a violent quarrel at the fair of Vervaena between a French knight named Gerard of Remy and a Greek merchant named Corcondylus. The merchant, whom Gerard struck in the course of the quarrel, swore vengeance. With the aid of his son-in-law, cellarer of the castle of St. George, near the valley of the Alpheus, he got possession of the fortress and turned it over to the Byzantine troops of Mistra. Thus war was resumed between the French and the Greeks in the Morea. Prince Florent laid siege to St. George, but despite the siege works which he undertook before the fortress and the assaults made by his troops he could not take it. At the approach of winter he was forced

to retire to Andravida. There he fell gravely ill and died, probably on January 23, 1297, leaving, by his union with Isabel, a three-year-old daughter, Mahaut.

Princess Isabel chose as bailie of the principality count Richard of Cephalonia and Zante, son of Maio Orsini. He was a man of experience, who had been ruling his county for forty years, and who was father-in-law of three of the chief barons of the Morea. Isabel retired first to Nisi and then to Kalamata, and busied herself with improving still further the system of defense of Messenia, already reinforced by William de la Roche and Nicholas II of St. Omer. The war with the Byzantines of Mistra, provoked by the taking of St. George, was, moreover, comparatively quiescent. The emperor Andronicus, seeking an accord, entered into conversations for the marriage of his son John to the princess Isabel, but the barons of the Morea gave this project no encouragement. King Charles II also began negotiations for peace with Andronicus, which at the beginning of 1300 were disclosed to the princess Isabel, and which led to a truce that applied to all the Frankish states of Greece and even to Epirus and Thessaly.

Meanwhile, on the advice of Nicholas III of St. Omer, lord of Thebes and marshal of the principality, princess Isabel was planning for her daughter Mahaut a marriage which promised only the happiest results for Frankish Greece. In 1299 the young duke of Athens, Guy II de la Roche, who was a brilliant knight, was solemnly affianced to little Mahaut of Hainault. This union, negotiated without the prior consent of the king of Sicily, aroused Charles II to protest and was for a time endangered, but, upon the intervention of pope Boniface VIII, Charles finally consented. The conflict between the Morea and the Athenian duchy was thus to be allayed, and strong ties were to be formed between the two states.

Isabel also had thoughts of marrying again. Since 1298 Philip of Savoy, count of Piedmont and nephew of count Amadeo V of Savoy, had been engaged in negotiations and had interested the court of Rome in the prospect. In 1300 the princess went to Rome to take part, like many other pilgrims, in the great jubilee, and also to meet Philip of Savoy. The marriage was concluded at the beginning of 1301. The princess was over forty years old, Philip only twenty-two. He was a proud and ambitious young man, tempted by the title of prince and by the Morea's reputation for brilliance. Once again, however, Isabel had neglected to ask the approval of Charles II, and the king, whose interests in Piedmont ran counter to those of Philip, forbade the marriage. Since the

princess was already betrothed, however, Charles by a decision of February 6, 1301, declared that she had *ipso facto* forfeited the principality, which he granted to his son Philip of Taranto. But pope Boniface VIII, and probably also Peter Flotte, councillor of king Philip IV of France, intervened; Charles had to yield; and the wedding ceremonies were then celebrated at Rome on February 12. On February 23 in the Lateran king Charles II invested Philip of Savoy with the principality of Achaëa.

The new prince had not the qualities of prudence and moderation of Florent of Hainault. He was brave, proud, and obstinate; but his enemies accused him of being fickle, covetous, and double-faced. Moreover, he was of a haughty and autocratic disposition, accustomed to the methods of government of the Italian captains and podestàs. After having gone with Isabel to Piedmont, where he assembled his troops, he crossed over to the Morea, and almost immediately clashed with the feudal traditions of the principality. He demanded the accounts of the chief officials and ordered the arrest of the chancellor, Benjamin of Kalamata, who had been *protovestiarios*. This arbitrary action, contrary to custom, provoked protests from the marshal of the Morea, Nicholas III of St. Omer, who, at the head of his vassals, presented himself in arms before the palace of the prince at Glarentsa. It required the intervention of the princess Isabel and of Philip's wisest councillors to still the conflict.

Soon after, duke Guy II of Athens, who had come to do homage to Philip of Savoy, had to go to Thessaly to defend the lands of his cousin and ward John II Angelus Comnenus against the troops of the *despoina* of Epirus, Anna, widow of the despot Nicephorus. Nicholas of St. Omer, who was a vassal of Guy II for the lordship of Thebes, came to join him with his men. Under his command, the forces of the Athenian duchy and Thessaly pushed the troops of Epirus back into their own country, and then retired after having obtained an indemnity from the *despoina*. They later made an incursion into the territory of the Byzantine empire, as far as the borders of Thessalonica. Then, upon the courteous demand of the empress, Yolanda of Montferrat, who resided in that city, they returned to Thessaly.

During this time, a revolt had broken out among the *archontes* of the mountainous region of Skorta (Gortys), lying on both sides of the Alpheus. Philip of Savoy, greedy for money, had tried to levy an extraordinary tax upon them. Discontented, the *archontes* had waited until the departure of the marshal of the Morea for

Thessaly and had then sent emissaries to the Byzantine captain of Mistra. With the aid of his troops they had gained possession of the castles of St. Helena and Crèvecoeur and had burned them, but had failed before Beaufort, which the captain of Mistra undertook to besiege. Prince Philip assembled the troops of Elis and Achaea and advanced to surprise the Greeks, but, warned by their spies, they decamped, leaving arms and baggage, without waiting for him (1302).

The next year prince Philip campaigned in Epirus. For more than twenty years the despotate of Epirus had been vassal to the Angevins of Naples. The marriage of Philip of Taranto to Thamar, daughter of the despot Nicephorus, and the grant by Charles II to Philip of suzerainty over Epirus had strengthened this tie. In 1302 Charles demanded that the youthful Thomas, son of the late Nicephorus, do homage to the prince of Taranto. But the mother of Thomas, the *despoina* Anna, who was a Palaeologina, in an effort to secure her independence of the Angevins made overtures to the Byzantines, and replied that her son did not need to do homage to Philip of Taranto for lands which he held from the Byzantine emperor. Thereupon Charles II, determined to force her hand, sent troops into Acarnania and asked the aid of the prince of Achaea, who joined these troops with 300 men-at-arms. But the campaign was futile. The Frankish troops besieged Arta, the capital of the despotate, in vain. They lost about a hundred men in a minor action. And with autumn coming on, prince Philip of Savoy returned to the Morea.

This repulse did not discourage Charles II, who planned a new expedition for the following spring. But the *despoina* of Epirus, informed of his intentions, tried to turn aside the threat by the same means she had employed to stop the invasion of Epirus by duke Guy II of Athens: she sent an emissary to Philip of Savoy to offer him a sum of money if he succeeded in avoiding a new campaign. On the advice of the marshal, Nicholas of St. Omer, Philip of Savoy summoned a parliament in the spring of 1304 at Corinth, in order to have an excuse for not going to Epirus. All the chief lords assembled at Corinth: the duke of Athens, the count of Cephalonia, the barons of the Morea. The parliament was the occasion for brilliant festivities, with jousts which lasted for twenty days in which pilgrims passing through participated. It was the last ray of splendor of the court of Isabel, who had maintained the traditions of the Villehardouin princes. It was also the last important act of the reign of Philip of Savoy.

Like Florent of Hainault, Philip had been in no hurry to do homage, as was his duty, to his immediate overlord, prince Philip of Taranto; he meant to lay down his own conditions, especially as in Piedmont Angevin interests ran counter to his own. The reluctance of Philip of Savoy to continue the struggle in Epirus probably decided Charles II to intervene against him. On October 9, 1304, the king revived the act of February 6, 1301, which declared that Isabel had forfeited the principality. Philip of Savoy appointed Nicholas of St. Omer his bailie in Achaea, and went to Italy, possibly to negotiate with Charles II, but also to take action in Piedmont; in December 1304 he arrived in Asti, where the populace named him captain of the commune. The next year, his affairs seemed to take a turn for the better and a temporary accord was made with the Angevins; on November 17, 1305, his proxy was allowed to do homage for him to the prince of Taranto. But in Piedmont, as earlier in the Morea, he continued to combat Angevin policy. A new disagreement arose; and on June 5, 1306, Charles II pronounced the deposition of Philip of Savoy for violation of his feudal oath. In vain Philip sent Isabel and some of his councillors to persuade Charles once more to reverse his decision. Finally he was forced to accept a compromise and to exchange the principality of the Morea for the county of Alba.

Princess Isabel did not resign herself to the loss of the principality, which was her own domain, her patrimony, and her native land. In July 1307 at Poitiers she tried to make a public protest, which the representative of Charles II refused to accept. Her last known act, dated at Valenciennes, April 29, 1311, was to affirm her rights and those of Mahaut, her daughter by Florent, to the principality of Achaea. She died soon after at the age of about fifty-two. Philip of Savoy remarried in 1312, but continued to use the title prince of Achaea, probably because the Angevins did not fulfill their side of the compromise of May 1307. Similarly for the next hundred years his successors, though descended from his second wife, would continue to use the title and some of them would even try to get physical possession of the principality.

After the deposition of Philip of Savoy on June 5, 1306, the principality naturally reverted to its immediate overlord, prince Philip of Taranto, as had in fact been stipulated in the act of February 6, 1301. Philip now ruled directly or indirectly over all Greece from Durazzo and Corfu to the Cyclades. His father, Charles II, gave him the title "despot of Romania". Philip was

ambitious and exacting, and the measures taken against Isabel and Philip of Savoy in 1301, 1304, and 1306 must be attributed to his influence. Not content with his somewhat illusory "despotate of Romania", he wished to take effective control of the principality of Achaea. Immediately after the decisions of June 5, 1306, which released the barons of the Morea from the oath of fidelity which they had taken to Philip of Savoy, he went to the Morea to have himself recognized by them as their lord. An army of 10,000 men accompanied him, transported by a considerable fleet. With these troops and those of the principality, he undertook military action in the Morea: the castle of Tripotamos in the valley of the Erymanthus was captured and numerous strongholds surrendered. He left garrisons in the castles and troops to continue the struggle, and went on to Epirus, where he had no success; his army was decimated by disease, and he had to retire to Italy.

The compromise of May 2, 1307, between Charles II and Philip of Savoy made Philip of Taranto definitively prince of Achaea; it is from that year that he began to date his reign. He chose as bailie duke Guy II of Athens, perhaps to satisfy the demands which Guy and his wife Mahaut of Hainault, the natural heirs of Isabel of Villehardouin, are said to have made. The duke, famous for his chivalry and his *courtoisie*, governed the Morea very well, but not for long. He died on October 5, 1308, at the age of only twenty-eight and was interred "in the tomb of his ancestors" in the Cistercian abbey of Daphne near Athens. With him ended the line of the De la Roche dukes, who had for a century raised the duchy of Athens to a high degree of brilliance and prosperity.

Within a year two claimants to the duchy presented themselves before the court of peers of the Morea. Both were cousins of Guy II and, like him, grandchildren of Guy I de la Roche, but in the female line: one was count Walter of Brienne, count also of Lecce in the kingdom of Naples, son of Isabel de la Roche and Hugh of Brienne, who had been bailie of the duchy; the other, Eschiva of Ibelin, lady of Lapithos in Cyprus, was the daughter of Alice de la Roche and John II of Ibelin, lord of Beirut. The court designated Walter of Brienne as heir. Eschiva considered that she had been denied justice; actually, the custom of the Morea required that, between two relatives equal in degree, the male be preferred to the female. As for Guy II's fifteen-year-old widow, Mahaut of Hainault, who might be expected to renew her pretensions to the principality of the Morea, the court of Naples hastened to make certain of her

by affiancing her to Charles of Taranto, eldest son of Philip and of Thamar, then twelve years old (1309).¹⁴

Prince Philip of Taranto was never to return to the Morea. He made plans for a new campaign to continue the reconquest, but, detained in Italy, he sent to the Morea in May 1309, to replace Bertino Visconti as bailie, the marshal of the kingdom of Naples, Thomas of Marzano, with a considerable body of troops. Thomas began the struggle against the Greeks of Mistra. But emperor Andronicus II had sent to the Morea a young captain, active and courageous, of the Cantacuzenus family, possibly the grandson of the member of the family who had been killed at Sergiana in 1264, and the father of the future emperor John VI. Cantacuzenus marched resolutely against Thomas of Marzano and inflicted on him a bloody defeat at the pass of Makryplagi. Continuing his campaign with no respite, he succeeded in retaking the places which Philip of Taranto had captured, and finally forced Thomas to make a truce with him.

At about the same time, Thessaly was invaded by the Catalan Grand Company, which had been spreading terror far and wide in the Byzantine empire. Composed not only of Catalans but also of natives of Aragon, Majorca, and Navarre, the Company was the remnant of the old Catalan bands which had fought for about twenty years against the Angevin troops in Sicily and southern Italy. Finding itself without employ after the peace of Caltabellotta, the Company had hired out its services to the emperor Andronicus to fight against the Ottoman Turks, and its victorious first appearance in the east had taken on the aspect of a crusade. But these adventurers, undisciplined and predatory, were as dangerous to their allies as to their enemies. They had speedily come to blows with the Byzantines: established at Gallipoli, they had pillaged first Thrace and then Macedonia, and had installed themselves at Cassandra in Chalcidice, whence they threatened Thessalonica. At this point a brother of king Philip IV of France, count Charles of Valois, who, having married Catherine of Courtenay, granddaughter of emperor Baldwin II of Constantinople, wished to establish his claim to the empire, took the Catalan Company into his service and appointed a Picard knight, Theobald of "Cépoix" (Chepoix), to direct it. But Theobald was lost in the midst of that horde of lawless adventurers, and, when they invaded Thessaly in 1309, he left in discouragement and returned to France.

¹⁴ Mahaut's betrothal was dissolved in 1313. She married Louis of Burgundy in November of that year.

The master of Thessaly was then John II Angelus Comnenus, the former ward of Guy II of Athens; he had deserted the Latins in order to enter into relations with the Byzantines. His councillors, seeing the countryside laid waste, tried to get rid of the Company by directing it toward Frankish Greece. The new duke of Athens, Walter of Brienne, wished to avert the danger by making use of the Catalans, in his turn, for his ambitious projects: he planned to reestablish the protectorate of the Athenian duchy over Thessaly and even, according to the Byzantine historians, to push on toward Thessalonica and Constantinople. He hired the Company and, in the spring of 1310, started on a campaign with them into Thessaly; in six months more than thirty places, including Zeitounion, Domokos, Halmyros, and Demetrias, fell into their hands.

The Catalans hoped to obtain lands in this region of southern Thessaly, which they had helped to conquer. But Walter of Brienne, who was proud and presumptuous, refused not only to give them any land but even to pay the arrears due them, and answered them with threats, thus turning them into mortal enemies. Aware of the danger which they presented, he summoned his vassals and friends from Greece and Italy, assembling a powerful army of seven hundred knights, several thousand other horsemen, and a great number of foot-soldiers.

At the beginning of March 1311 he marched against the Catalan Company, which had succeeded in infiltrating into Boeotia and was entrenched near Skripou (Orchomenus), on the banks of the Cephissus and of Lake Copais, where, as Raymond Muntaner relates, they made use of the swampy land as a "shield". The Company consisted of six to eight thousand men. The army of the duke of Athens was twice as numerous and included in its ranks the most famous barons of the duchy and of the neighboring countries. The encounter took place on March 15, 1311. The duke of Athens dashed forward at the head of his knights into the plain, which looked like a green meadow; but soon the knights slipped, were thrown headlong, and sank in the mud of the swamp, while the Catalans riddled the dismounted knights with arrows and advanced to slaughter them. Almost all the knights were killed, including the lords of Bodonitsa, Salona, Damala, and Tenos. Walter of Brienne had his head cut off. A few just managed to escape from the disaster. Among these were Nicholas Sanudo, eldest son of the duke of Naxos, who was wounded, and Boniface of Verona, lord of Gardiki, Carystus, and Aegina. The Catalans

then made themselves masters of Thebes and of the whole duchy.¹⁵ No resistance was offered except at Athens, where the duchess had taken refuge with her children on the Acropolis. But realizing that she could get no help, she soon embarked for the west.

Thus occurred the catastrophe which put an end to the French duchy of Athens, undermined Frankish Greece by its tremendous casualties, and caused a sensation even in the west. And thus ended another period of the history of Frankish Greece. Central Greece, with a territory almost equal to the Frankish possessions in the Morea, was entirely lost to the French forever; the knighthood of the Morea was depleted by perhaps one third of its members, a loss from which it would never recover.

In the Morea, the Byzantines at Mistra had, in the course of these fifty years, gradually gained ground in the southeast of the peninsula: Laconia and the region of Kalavryta had been occupied ever since the reign of William of Villehardouin, and the region of Nikli probably since near the end of the reign of Florent of Hainault. The revolts of the Greeks in 1286 and 1302 had even shaken the chief defense of the Franks in this region of the upper basin and gorges of the Alpheus, called Skorta: the castle of St. George had been taken, those of St. Helena and of Crèvecoeur had been destroyed. But the more important fortresses of Beaufort and Karytaina still held the pass toward Triphylia and Elis; and Messenia, which the Byzantines had not been able to enter, had been reinforced by the construction of new castles.¹⁶

In the islands, the Latins had reestablished their position, compromised by the incursions of Licario. In Euboea, some of the castles had been recovered by the Venetian bailie of Negroponte during the principate of Charles I of Anjou; the castles of Carystus and Larmena in the south of the island, by Boniface of Verona in 1296. The duke of the Archipelago, Marco II Sanudo, son of duke Angelo and grandson of the conqueror of Naxos, had seen, toward the beginning of his reign (1262-1303), certain of his islands fall into the power of Licario and the Byzantines, who kept them for twenty years; but just before his death he had been able to recover them, and his son William I inherited the duchy virtually intact. In the Ionian islands, the county of Cephalonia and Zante, situated on the route between southern Italy and the Morea, had

¹⁵ The Catalan duchy of Athens after 1311 will be treated in a chapter of volume III, in preparation.

¹⁶ The Morea after 1311 will be treated in a chapter of volume III.

been drawn increasingly into the life of the principality; and Corfu, which was an Angevin possession, without being directly attached to the Morea, gravitated somewhat into the orbit of Frankish Greece.

In the "despotate of Romania", which Charles II had set up for Philip of Taranto with the idea that it would include all the lands under Angevin influence from Durazzo to Naupactus (Lepanto), there remained under Philip's domination only the territories that formed the Angevin kingdom of Albania, together with the places in Acarnania and Aetolia which had constituted the dowry of his wife Thamar. Between the two, Epirus, which Charles II had succeeded in making a vassal state in 1279, had in 1302 broken away from the overlordship of Philip. Similarly Thessaly, which had been under Angevin influence and under the protection of the dukes of Athens, turned towards the Byzantines at the time of the arrival of the Catalans. Here again the opening of the fourteenth century marked the decline of Frankish power; and the defeat of the eastern policy of Charles of Anjou was consummated under his successor.

Frankish Greece had maintained until the sudden catastrophe of 1311 that state of knightly civilization which had made its reputation in the middle of the thirteenth century. The magnificent appearance of the official charters which had been preserved, as well as the accounts of the chroniclers — Villani, Muntaner, the author of the *Chronicle of the Morea* — all bear witness to its splendor. The court of Isabel of Villehardouin under the reign of Florent of Hainault or that of Philip of Savoy continued the brilliant traditions of the court of prince William, as is shown by Isabel's reception of the Aragonese admiral Roger de Lluria in 1292 and by the parliament of Corinth in 1304; and the splendid festivities during which Guy II de la Roche was knighted at Thebes in 1294 testify to the fact that the court of the dukes of Athens was a close rival to that of the Morea. As soon as peace was reestablished, prosperity revived; thus the reign of prince Florent was a period of steady recovery. The port of Glarentsa, founded by the Villehardouin princes, had been enriched by commercial traffic between the east and Italy; foreign merchants, Florentine or Sienese bankers, had established themselves there, and the town had become one of the chief commercial centers of the eastern Mediterranean; an admiral was stationed there and the rich bourgeois acted as bankers to the princes.

The Angevin domination had modified the political status of the

Morea. In theory, it remained feudal. Charles of Anjou had charged his bailie Galeran of Ivry to respect the customs of the country, and towards 1320 these were to be codified in the *Assises de Romanie*. But actually at the death of William of Villehardouin the Morea had ceased to be a feudal state grouped around a head who was the peer of his barons, and had become instead a dependency of a highly centralized bureaucratic monarchy. A semblance of autonomy was restored with Florent of Hainault, but the successive interventions of Charles II clearly revealed the Angevin predominance. Increasingly the Morea took on the character of a distant colony, sometimes subject to the excesses of Angevin power, sometimes left to itself when the Neapolitan court had more pressing problems. For the defense of the land against the Byzantines, the feudal army no longer sufficed; the Angevins had been compelled to send mercenaries, and badly paid mercenaries at that; and the Morea had then had a taste of the excesses of the soldiery. By first taking the Catalan Company into his pay and then infuriating them, Walter of Brienne brought on the needless disaster of Lake Copais, which marks the twilight of Frankish chivalry in Greece.

