

## V

# THE MOREA, 1364—1460

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**R**obert of Taranto, prince of Achaëa and titular emperor of Constantinople, died at Naples in September 1364. A year later Nicholas Acciajuoli, for thirty years the counsellor, confidant, and main support of the prince, was also dead. A new phase in the history of the principality now began, even though the immediate connection of the small state with the Angevin dynasty of Naples continued until 1383.

From 1365 the principality steadily declined, until its last remnant was absorbed in 1432 by the expanding Greek despotate of the Morea, with its capital at Mistra. Throughout this period it was generally on the defensive in its relations with the despotate. Among the Latin states of Greece it was put in the shade by the brilliant duchy of the Florentine Acciajuoli in Athens and by the remarkable state created by Charles Tocco in the Ionian islands and Epirus. It was almost a satellite of Venice, and from the 1390's on it was tributary to the Ottoman Turks. Yet until nearly the end of its existence it was a factor in the politics of the Levant and in the waning crusading movement. Repeatedly popes and grand masters sought to establish the great military-religious organization of the Knights of St. John (Hospitaliers) in the strategic peninsula of the Morea. The title prince of Achaëa was hardly less coveted than that of emperor of Constantinople or king of Jerusalem. Paradoxically, in the second half of the fourteenth century the claimants to the principality founded by the Villehardouins multiplied in proportion as its territorial extent and authority over its vassal states diminished.

The death of Robert of Taranto led to a serious conflict over the succession to his Greek dominions. His surviving brother Philip II, the youngest of the sons of Philip I of Taranto, claimed Corfu and Achaëa, together with the title emperor of Constantinople. However, he faced a determined counter-claimant in the person of his brother's stepson Hugh de Lusignan, titular prince of Galilee, who had the

For bibliography see preceding chapter.

support of his energetic mother, Marie of Bourbon. Hugh had been cheated of the throne of Cyprus, to which he was rightfully entitled by the custom of primogeniture, by his uncle, the crusading Peter I (1359–1369).<sup>1</sup> Marie and her son now sought compensation for this loss in the principality of Achaëa. To take effective possession of the land they sent mercenary forces to the peninsula sometime in the first half of 1366.<sup>2</sup> In the meantime, according to the Aragonese version of the *Chronicle of the Morea*, the feudality of Achaëa, including archbishop Angelo of Patras, had declared itself for Philip of Taranto. However, a certain William of Talay, captain of Port-de-Jonc (Navarino), one of the castles in Marie's Peloponnesian dower, refused to surrender this strategic place to Philip's bailie, Simon del Poggio of Perugia, and in fact imprisoned the latter when he came to treat with him. He also appealed for aid to the despot, Manuel Cantacuzenus, and Guy of Enghien, baron of Argos and Nauplia.<sup>3</sup> Cantacuzenus and Guy sent troops to the plain of Elis, where they did considerable damage.

At this juncture, with the loyalist forces under archbishop Angelo besieging Port-de-Jonc, there appeared a *deus ex machina* in the person of Amadeo VI of Savoy. The "Green Count" was on his way to Constantinople to rescue his cousin, emperor John V, from Bulgarian harassment. He landed at Modon on July 17, 1366, and two days later at Coron.<sup>4</sup> His mediation, promptly offered and accepted, brought the civil war to an end, at least temporarily. Angelo raised the siege of Port-de-Jonc, and William of Talay released Simon del Poggio. But the Bourbon-Lusignan forces remained in the southwestern Morea. At the beginning of 1369 the Venetian government wrote to Hugh to urge the dismissal of the faithless Talay, who

1. See below, pp. 351–352.

2. No doubt the payments which Peter I de Lusignan made to Marie on her dower and to Hugh in satisfaction of his claims to Cyprus were largely used up to finance the campaign in the Morea. Cf. Louis de Mas Latrie, *Histoire de l'île de Chypre*, II, 253, and Leontius Machaeras's *Chronicle* (ed. and trans. R. M. Dawkins [2 vols., Oxford, 1932]), pars. 105–108. In 1365 Marie and Hugh sent their seneschal Gurello Caracciolo to Frederick III of Sicily to seek aid (Hopf, in Ersch and Gruber, LXXXVI [1868; repr. 1960, II], 5, and note 47, citing the Palermitan archives).

3. The despoina, Isabel (or "Maria"), was a Lusignan, second cousin of Marie of Bourbon's first husband (Hugh's father), Guy of Galilee; see S. Binon, "Guy d'Arménie et Guy de Chypre: Isabelle de Lusignan à la cour de Mistra," *Mélanges Emile Boisacq* (Brussels, 1937–1938), pp. 124–142.

4. The dates appear in the records of disbursements by Amadeo while on the crusade, published by F. Bollati di Saint-Pierre, *Illustrazioni della spedizione in Oriente di Amedeo VI (Il Conte Verde)* (Biblioteca storica italiana . . . della R. Deputazione di storia patria, V [i.e. VI]; Turin, 1900), p. 43, nos. 105, 106, and cf. p. 44, no. 115, for payment to "Guillelmo de Taley, capitaneo castri de Jout . . ." (obviously William of Talay at Port-de-Jonc). On Amadeo's crusade see above, pp. 18–19, 74–77.

had been plotting the capture of Modon.<sup>5</sup> In the next year the unlucky prince of Galilee gave up completely the struggle to establish himself in the Morea. At Naples on March 4, 1370, he and his mother reached an agreement with Philip of Taranto whereby they renounced their claim to Achaea in return for a yearly pension of 6,000 florins. Marie's dower in the castellany of Kalamata was excepted from the agreement, and she also continued to use the title empress of Constantinople.<sup>6</sup>

Like his brother Robert, Philip II of Taranto was too deeply involved in Neapolitan affairs to give much attention to the principality of Achaea. Of mediocre ability, insubordinate to popes Urban V and Gregory XI as well as to queen Joanna, feuding frequently with his sister Margaret's husband, Francis of Les Baux, he was as little constructive in Italy as in Greece. He unjustly withheld properties in Italy from Marie of Bourbon, who, apparently impoverished by her Achaean venture, obtained the intervention of Urban V against her brother-in-law.<sup>7</sup> The practice of frequent appointments of bailies in Achaea, some of whom were not native barons, contributed nothing to the stability of the principality. According to the Aragonese Chronicle (pars. 690–704) Philip sent or appointed one special emissary and seven bailies (including Centurione I Zaccaria twice) in the Morea between 1364 and 1373. One of these, Louis of Enghien, count of Conversano, apparently used his position mainly in order to aid his brothers—John, count of Lecce, and Guy, lord of Argos and Nauplia—in an abortive attempt in 1371 to overthrow the Catalan duchy of Athens.

Philip's last bailie but one was a Genoese knight, Balthasar de Sorba. It is likely that Philip made his acquaintance during his long visit (1369–1371) at the court of Louis I the Great of Hungary, who had appointed Balthasar admiral of Dalmatia.<sup>8</sup> The new bailie's

5. Hopf, in Ersch and Gruber, LXXXVI (repr., II), 9, and notes 66–72, all citing the *Misti del Senato*.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 9, and note 74, citing the Angevin archives. Cf. E. Gerland, "Bericht über Carl Hopfs litterarischen Nachlass," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, VIII (1899), 350, note 1.

Miller and Longnon give more elaborate accounts of the conflict between Philip of Taranto and Hugh of Galilee for mastery of Achaea, using the *Vita Caroli Zeni* by Jacopo Zeno (in Muratori, *RIS*, vol. XIX, part VI [Bologna, 1940–1941]) to supplement the Aragonese Chronicle (pars. 689–702). Although the Chronicle is obviously wrong at several points, it is closer to the events it describes. Romanin, Heyd, and Hodgson have pointed out the fictionalized character of the *Vita*. There is no question, however, of Zeno's early connection with Patras as a cathedral canon; cf. *Lettres communes du Pape Urbain V 1362–1370*, ed. M. H. Laurent (vol. I, fasc. 2, Paris, 1955), no. 2207.

7. Urban wrote to Philip July 7, 1367, and November 4, 1369: *Lettres secrètes et curiales d'Urbain V* (fasc. 3, Paris, 1954), nos. 2476, 2997.

8. On Balthasar de Sorba's Hungarian service, cf. Hopf, in Ersch and Gruber, LXXXVI

arbitrary and violent acts in the Morea at the expense of Venetian citizens led to strong representations by the senate to Philip and his bailie. John Piacentini, the archbishop of Patras (1371–1375), was so harassed that he went to Venice in 1373 in order to place himself and his see under the protection of the republic. The senate seemed ready to accept the offer and also considered transferring Venetian trade from Glarentsa to Patras, when Philip's death later in the same year (November 25) removed the cause of the conflict. Patras was not to become Venetian until 1408.

As already noted, the remarkable career of Nicholas Acciajuoli came to an end with his death in November 1365. In his princely testament of September 1359 he had provided handsomely for his three surviving sons, for his two adopted sons, and for various spiritual bequests. He was buried in the Certosa near Florence, in the imposing mausoleum which he had built for himself with much care and lavish expense.

Nicholas's eldest son, Angelo, received the greater part of his vast possessions in Italy and Greece, as well as the dignities of count of Melfi and grand seneschal of the Regno. But the true successor to Nicholas Acciajuoli was the masterful diplomat Nicholas Spinelli of Giovinazzo, chancellor of the kingdom. Angelo even had difficulty keeping his titles and lands in Italy in 1366–1367.<sup>9</sup> Being weak in Italy he could never be influential in Greece. Although Robert of Taranto had conferred the castellany of Corinth upon Nicholas as a hereditary fief, Philip granted it to Angelo only for the latter's lifetime (November 7, 1366). Later, to be sure, while in Buda (February 26, 1371), Philip regranted Corinth to Angelo as a hereditary fief along with the title of palatine; the prince thus rewarded Angelo for his trouble and expense in accompanying him to Hungary. However, it would appear that effective possession of the strategic castellany had already passed to Angelo's cousin Nerio. From the terms of the testaments of the adoptive brothers it is clear that Angelo had long since pawned the castellany to Nerio. Neither Angelo nor his three sons ever redeemed it. Pope Gregory XI evidently regarded Nerio as an independent lord when he addressed him as *dominus civitatis Corinthiensis* in November 1372. The Corinthian barony added to that of Vostitsa made Nerio master of the north-eastern Morea. In 1374 he seized Megara from the declining Catalan duchy. By 1388 he was complete master of Attica, including the Athenian Acropolis.

(repr., II), 9; on Philip in Hungary, cf. Léonard, *Angevins de Naples*, p. 430, and Buchon, *Nouvelles recherches*, I, 118.

9. Léonard, *Angevins de Naples*, p. 416.

Gregory XI's letter to Nerio was one of the invitations which the pope sent to the Latin lords in the Levant, to the Byzantine emperor, to the doges of Venice and Genoa, and to the kings of Hungary and Aragonese Sicily to attend a congress at Thebes in October 1373. There Gregory hoped to form a grand alliance against the Ottoman Turks, whose crushing victory over the Serbs at Chernomen on the Maritsa (September 26, 1371) imperiled the entire Christian position in southeastern Europe. But the project of a crusading congress was most impractical in a year, 1373, which saw Genoa attack Cyprus and Louis of Hungary declare war on Venice. Indeed, the pope himself seems tacitly to have abandoned the utopian scheme only a few months after its conception. Instead he tried to raise a small fleet of twelve ships to be stationed permanently in the Aegean Sea and the Straits in order to impede Turkish communications between Asia Minor and Thrace. Gregory asked queen Joanna and Philip of Taranto, among other rulers, to contribute galleys to the allied fleet,<sup>10</sup> but even this modest objective could not be realized. The pope nevertheless persisted in his efforts to persuade the monarchs of the house of Anjou—Louis of Hungary and Joanna of “Sicily” (Naples)—to contribute to the defense of the Greek empire. He emphasized that the fall of Constantinople would lead to the Turkish conquest of the entire Balkan peninsula, including Achaëa and the Aegean islands, following which Hungary and Italy would be directly menaced. There could be no hope of a *passagium generale* to recover the Holy Land unless Byzantium were first saved.<sup>11</sup>

Like so many similar papal appeals in the fourteenth century, this was in vain. The crusading zeal of Gregory XI was an anachronism in the 1370's. He had no more loyal adherent and vassal than the much maligned queen of Naples, who was, indeed, soon to lose crown and life for supporting the French line of popes in the first years of the Great Schism. But Joanna was both unwilling and unable to give more than lip-service to the ideal of the crusade, although it was in theory the *raison d'être* of the Angevin kingdom of Naples.

On the death in 1373 of Philip II of Taranto without heirs, Joanna decided to exercise direct rule over his Greek possessions, of which she had long been suzerain. But Philip left a sister, Margaret, whose

10. Probably in June, if not in March, 1373: O. Halecki, *Un Empereur de Byzance à Rome* (Warsaw, 1930), p. 277, note 3; Philip seems to have promised two vessels (*ibid.*, p. 300). Halecki rightly questions whether the congress of Thebes actually met; most historians of Latin Greece assume that it did (cf. *ibid.*, chapters X–XI). Cf. also Rubió i Lluch, *Diplomatari de l'Orient català*, p. 423, note 1.

11. Letters of Gregory XI to Louis and Joanna, October 27, 1375, analyzed in Halecki, *Empereur de Byzance*, pp. 314–315.

second husband was Francis of Les Baux, duke of Andria and lord of extensive estates in Provence and southern Italy. The half-royal Les Baux were one of the greatest families of the Regno. Margaret and her husband claimed the principality of Taranto and Philip II's Greek lands and titles for themselves and their son James, the last male descendant of Philip I of Taranto. But Joanna acted decisively to put down the open rebellion of the family and deprived Francis, for the crime of *lèse-majesté*, of all of his titles and possessions (April 1374).<sup>12</sup>

The civil war between Joanna and the Les Baux is echoed in the Aragonese version of the *Chronicle of the Morea*. Soon after Philip II of Taranto's death the barons of the Morea sent an important embassy to Naples to examine the rights of the two sides respecting the principality of Achaea. Its members were Erard III le Maure, the lord of Messenian Arcadia, Centurione I Zaccaria, lord of Chalandritsa, John II Misito, baron of Molines, and Leonard I Tocco, one of the peers of the principality, who had been created count of Cephalonia and Zante in 1357 by Robert of Taranto and was married to a niece of Nicholas Acciajuoli. The embassy decided in favor of the queen and did homage to her as their princess after she had sworn to respect the usages and customs of the principality.

Joanna then sent Francis of San Severino, a member of the highest Neapolitan aristocracy, as her bailie in the Morea. He broke the peace of long standing between the principality and the despotate of Mistra by attacking the castle of Gardiki, which commanded the pass of Makryplagi in the border country of Messenia and Arcadia. Although he defeated a relieving force led by the despot Manuel Cantacuzenus, the fortress held out and he had to retire to Glarentsa. Venetian sources report the harassment of the republic's merchants by Francis in Achaea and by the queen's governor in Corfu. Francis also encroached on the territory of Modon and Coron. In answer to the republic's protests Joanna sent strict orders to her officials to uphold all Venetian franchises and privileges. A mixed commission was agreed on to define the boundaries between Achaea and the Venetian colony.

On March 25, 1376, Joanna of Naples married her fourth husband, Otto of Brunswick-Grubenhagen. She bestowed upon him the principality of Taranto, which she had lately confiscated from the Les

12. Pope Gregory XI supported Margaret's claims: cf. G. Mollat, ed., *Lettres secrètes et curiales du pape Grégoire XI (1370-1378)*, fasc. 4 (Paris, 1955), col. 1063, no. 3302; col. 1080, no. 3371; col. 1081, no. 3374. Gregory addresses James of Les Baux as *despotus Romaniae* in a letter of June 30, 1371 (*ibid.*, col. 769, no. 2251); it is possible that Philip had granted the title to his nephew.

Baux. She did not, however, as so often stated, grant him the principality of Achaea.<sup>13</sup> Rather, later in the year 1376 (perhaps in August) she leased the entire principality to the Knights Hospitaller for five years at an annual rent of 4,000 ducats. Thus was realized the project, which pope Innocent VI had promoted in 1356, of bringing the principality of Achaea under the control of the Order of St. John.<sup>14</sup> According to the Aragonese version of the *Chronicle of the Morea* queen Joanna sent the Hospitaller Daniel del Carretto, who held the commanderies of Cyprus and Genoa, to the Morea as her bailie to take possession of the principality in the name of the order.

On September 24, 1377, the famous Juan Fernández de Heredia was appointed grand master of the Hospitallers and at the end of the year himself embarked at Naples for northwest Greece.<sup>15</sup> It is possible that the Hospital's intervention in this region was part of a larger plan, to which the leasing of Achaea was related, to defend Greece against the Turks. The order's acquisition of the port of Vonitsa in Epirus in 1377 from Maddalena de' Buondelmonti, regent of the duchy of Leucadia, was also, apparently, related to the larger scheme. In late April 1378 Heredia was in Vonitsa. He was now near Arta, the capital of the newly constituted Albanian seignury of Aetolia and Acarnania. In a rash attempt to take this city, however, Heredia was captured by its lord, Ghin Boua Spata, who soon sold him to the Turks. The order ransomed the grand master without great delay, for by May 20, 1379, he was in Glarentsa.<sup>16</sup>

It was about the time of Heredia's capture—in the spring or early summer of 1378—that his commandant in the Morea, Gaucher of La

13. Hence Otto must not be reckoned among the princes of Achaea. For this, and several other important corrections in the older accounts of the period 1376–1383, see R. J. Loenertz, "Hospitaliers et Navarrais en Grèce 1376–1383: Regestes et documents," *Orientalia Christiana periodica*, XXII (1956), 319–360.

14. Cf. p. 134, above. Loenertz deduces the date August 1376 from the document of August 24, 1381, which mentions the retrocession of the principality to the queen's officials; he assumes that if the lease had not run its course of five years this fact would have been mentioned (*loc. cit.*, pp. 329, 351). Anthony Luttrell, however, prefers the year 1377 ("The Principality of Achaea in 1377," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, LVII [1964], 341–342), and below, p. 302.

15. The Aragonese *Chronicle of the Morea*, compiled at Heredia's command shortly before 1393, ends with Daniel del Carretto's passage to Greece, omitting any description of the grand master's inglorious campaign in Epirus. On the date of the compilation of the Aragonese Chronicle see Jacoby, "Quelques considérations sur les versions de la 'Chronique de Morée'," *Journal des savants*, July–Sept. 1968, pp. 177–179.

16. Loenertz, *loc. cit.*, p. 331. There is no warrant for Loenertz's statement that Heredia captured Naupactus (Lepanto) and Vonitsa before marching on Arta. See Luttrell, "Aldobrandino Baroncelli in Greece: 1378–1382," *Orientalia Christiana periodica*, XXXVI (1970), 280, 289. Lepanto, acquired by the Angevins in 1294, was a dependency of the principality of Achaea. The Hospitallers made payments for its defense during the time they were in the Morea (Loenertz, p. 335).

Bastide, prior of Toulouse, hired two small companies of Navarrese and Gascons to serve the order for eight months. The captains of the two companies were Mahiot of Coquerel and John de Urtubia. Two years earlier these redoubtable mercenaries had captured Durazzo, then in Albanian hands, for their employer, Louis of Évreux, brother of king Charles II of Navarre. Durazzo and the *regnum Albaniae* were the dower of Louis's consort Joanna, a granddaughter of John of Gravina and daughter of the late Marie of Anjou, sister of queen Joanna. Louis of Évreux died in 1376, following his success at Durazzo. We do not know by what route the Navarrese and Gascons reached the Morea, nor can we infer much about their activities there during the remainder of the Hospital's lease.<sup>17</sup>

Sometime during the first half of 1379 John de Urtubia left the Morea and the service of the Hospital and with the connivance of Nerio Acciajuoli effected the violent conquest of Thebes, the capital of the Catalan duchy of Athens. It does not appear that the knights abetted this attack, but it is significant that they did not prevent or discourage it. Following Urtubia's departure the Navarrese and Gascons remaining in Achaea were reformed into a single company under three chiefs: Mahiot of Coquerel, Peter Bordo de Saint Superan, and Berard de Varvassa. Saint Superan and Varvassa had been members of Urtubia's force. It is this new organization which we may call, conveniently if not with entire accuracy, the Navarrese Company of Achaea. It is a mistake to infer from the conquest of Boeotia by Navarrese and Gascon mercenaries that the Company of their compatriots in the Morea similarly invaded and overthrew the Angevin principality of Achaea. We know that high officials of the Order of St. John made a large payment to the company for additional, but unspecified, services, which must have been rendered in 1380 or 1381. In the spring or summer of 1381 Dominic de Alamania, lately the order's bailie in Achaea, went from Italy to the Morea in order to hand over the administration of the principality to the officials of queen Joanna.<sup>18</sup>

17. The payments for their service to the order are recorded in the document of August 24, 1381, by which Heredia and the convent of Rhodes approved of the accounting for the years 1378–1381 which was presented by Dominic de Alamania. Loenertz has published this document from the Malta archives, *loc. cit.*, pp. 350–355. Alamania was the bailie of the principality during much of the Hospital's stay there (Longnon and Topping, *Documents sur le régime des terres dans la principauté de Morée au XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle*, p. 196 and note 5).

18. Four letters by Aldobrando Baroncelli written in 1381–1382 shed additional light on the activities and behavior of the Navarrese mercenaries during their first years in the Morea. The Hospital's officials could not restrain their aggressions, which included the seizure and plundering of estates of the Acciajuoli. See Luttrell, "Aldobrando Baroncelli in Greece," *loc. cit.*, *passim*.



The withdrawal of the Hospital from its costly venture in the Morea barely preceded the queen's capture on September 2, 1381, by her second cousin and the pretender to her throne, Charles of Durazzo. Charles was a grandson of John of Gravina and was married to his cousin Margaret, one of the daughters of Joanna's sister Marie of Anjou. Joanna had infuriated the Italian Urban VI by her vigorous support of the French cardinals who elected Clement VII. In retaliation Urban first offered her throne to Charles (1379) and later formally invested him with the Regno as Charles III (June 1, 1381). The queen had thus been forced to adopt duke Louis of Anjou, the brother of Charles V of France, as her son and heir (June 29, 1380). But Louis's delayed invasion of Italy in 1382 came too late to save Joanna. The luckless queen—who once wrote that her only regret was that the Creator had not made her a man—was assassinated at Muro on July 22, 1382.

These events profoundly affected the Greek possessions of the Angevin dynasty. Among the immediate beneficiaries of the triumph of Charles III was the pretender to the principality of Achaea, James of Les Baux. On September 7, 1381, his banner was raised over the castle of Taranto. On January 18, 1382, the Navarrese Company concluded a treaty with the chancellor of Modon and Coron in the latter city, settling disputes over the borders of the colony and the principality in southern Messenia. Those who swore to uphold the agreement in the name of the Company were Mahiot of Coquerel, as "imperial" bailie of Achaea, and Peter Bordo de Saint Superan and Berard de Varvassa, as "imperial" captains in the principality. It is evident that James of Les Baux had conferred these titles and appointments on the chiefs of the Company in the last months of 1381 in return for their acknowledgment of him as lawful prince of Achaea and titular emperor of Constantinople. James was also acknowledged as lord in Corfu. Two acts of his of December 26, 1381, regarding fiefs of Corfiote nobles are preserved.

On March 2, 1382, James married—by proxy at Naples—Agnes of Anjou-Durazzo, another daughter of Joanna's sister Marie of Anjou. The match at first estranged the king of Naples and the prince of Taranto, now his wife's brother-in-law, but on September 16, 1382, Charles III granted the island of Corfu in perpetuity to James of Les Baux as the marriage portion of Agnes. However, the princess was already dead by February 10, 1383, and a few months later, in July, her husband James, the last titular emperor of Constantinople, followed her to the grave.

With the death of James of Les Baux the Angevin principality of Achaea was virtually at an end. Such authority as Charles III of

Naples (1381–1386) and his son Ladislas (1386–1414) enjoyed in the Morea was too shadowy to allow us to speak of a regular connection between the Greek province and the Neapolitan court. The long succession of Angevin bailies sent out from Naples now ceased. The Navarrese Company remained the only organized power in the principality of Achaea, except the archbishopric of Patras. The new arrivals did not displace certain older families, such as the Zaccarias of Chalandritsa, the Le Maures of St.-Sauveur and Messenian Arcadia, and the Misitos of Moline. But the extensive estates of the heirs of Nicholas Acciajuoli in Elis, westernmost Skorta, and Messenia passed into Navarrese hands. Their most important possessions of course were the estates and castles of the princely domain, including the coastal fortresses of Kalamata and Port-de-Jonc (Navarino) in Messenia, close to the Venetian colony of Modon and Coron. The town of Androusa, near the classical Ithome, overlooking the rich plain of Kalamata, served as their headquarters and capital. The imposing remains of its castle and aqueduct testify to its importance under Frankish and Turkish rule.

Although the Navarrese Company was the effective power in Achaea with which all interested parties had to deal, it was not so independent as to be able to scorn all claimants to the principality. It was certainly not nearly so numerous or so powerful as the Catalan Company had been immediately after its conquest of the Burgundian duchy of Athens, and even the Catalans had felt it necessary to seek the protection of the Aragonese house of Sicily and to accept their dukes therefrom.

James of Les Baux had bequeathed his rights to Achaea and to the Latin empire of Constantinople to his cousin Louis I of Anjou, the adopted son of the late queen Joanna. Louis died in September of 1384, having failed to wrest the kingdom of Naples from Charles III, but his widow, called Marie of Brittany, claimed Achaea for her seven-year-old son, Louis II. This enterprising lady thought of selling her son's rights to the Order of St. John, whose grand master never gave up the scheme of establishing the Hospitallers on the Greek mainland. Heredia promptly made contact with the Navarrese to learn on what terms they would give up the princely castles and domains to his order. A memorandum in the archives of Malta which records these conditions shows how wary and demanding the real masters of the principality were.<sup>19</sup> They required proof that James of Les Baux had designated Louis I and his son as his heirs along

19. Text in Delaville Le Roulx, *Hospitaliers à Rhodes*, p. 380; 1385 is the probable date of the document.

with certification by the pope (Clement VII) and his cardinals that Louis II was king of "Sicily." For their services to James and for protecting the principality after his death, they asked 70,000 ducats. Besides keeping the lands they already held outside the domain, they wanted a castle within it for their captain, Mahiot of Coquerel. Finally, they asked that the pope, the king of France, and Louis II of Naples should ratify any agreement adopted.

No treaty resulted from these negotiations. The money demands of the Navarrese were obviously exorbitant. In any case it would have been difficult to provide them with the proofs and ratification they demanded at a time when the power of Charles III was preponderant in Italy and the church was hopelessly divided in its allegiance to two popes. Ignoring the Navarrese Company, Marie of Brittany and Heredia concluded a contract of sale on January 24, 1387, whereby the Hospital bought her son's rights to Achaea for 20,000 gold florins. Clement VII approved the transaction.

In the meantime Mahiot of Coquerel had died (1386) and Peter Bordo de Saint Superan had assumed command of the Company. Saint Superan continued the negotiations begun under his predecessor to settle the differences between the Company and the Venetian republic. By the treaty concluded July 26, 1387, the Venetians were promised compensation for damages suffered on the entry of the Navarrese into Achaea and were assured the right of preëmption to Port-de-Jonc whenever the Company should decide to dispose of it. The Genoese had lately shown a lively interest in the strategic harbor; its acquisition by Venice's arch-enemy would have neutralized the value of her way-stations at Modon and Coron. Saint Superan's concession to Venice in this matter helped to assure him the support of the republic, which was to be demonstrated on more than one critical occasion. The treaty of 1387 undoubtedly enhanced the prestige of the Navarrese leader. It is significant that he was empowered to negotiate it by all the important men of the principality—twenty-eight religious and secular lords—including the Venetian archbishop Paul Foscari of Patras, who conscientiously looked after the interests of his mother country in the Morea.

It was also in 1387 that the crusading Louis II of Clermont, duke of Bourbon, showed an interest in the principality of Achaea. His aunt, Marie of Bourbon, appointed him her universal heir in her testament drawn up in Naples early in 1387. Although this document makes no mention of the principality—to which Marie and her son Hugh of Galilee had given up all claim in 1370—the duke's faithful servitor, John of Châteaumorand, twice visited the Morea and

brought back the report that the Achaean lieges were only awaiting Louis's arrival to acknowledge him as their seigneur. Doubtless, in the fluid situation existing in Achaea in the 1380's, the actual arrival of an enterprising western prince with a plausible claim and some troops would have resulted in the quick submission of the country to him. Louis had the advantage of Venetian favor, the senate warmly commending him to Saint Superan and Nerio Acciajuoli. However, he was soon involved in preparations for the great Genoese-French expedition against the Barbary pirates in 1390, and he never set foot in Greece.

The most remarkable of the several claims to Achaea asserted at this time was that of pope Urban VI. On September 6, 1387, at Lucca he appointed archbishop Paul Foscari of Patras vicar-general and regent of the principality. The land was his to dispose of, Urban declared, inasmuch as it had devolved to Charles III on the death of James of Les Baux and had then entered the immediate possession of the holy see when the pope declared his vassal Charles forfeit in 1385. The problem of the Navarrese Company was to be neatly solved by Paul's using Saint Superan and his men to recover the parts of the principality which were in the hands of the "schismatic" Greeks of Mistra; the Navarrese would hold the new lands as fiefs of the church. There is no evidence that the archbishop of Patras tried to take the place of Saint Superan, whom he had very recently supported as chief negotiator of the treaty of July 26, 1387, with Venice. The Navarrese in any case did not need papal encouragement to attack the Greek despotate. They had a permanent invitation from the landowning caste (*archontes*) of the Byzantine province to support their rebellions against the despot, Theodore Palaeologus. The Navarrese at times hired Turkish pirates to raid the despot's lands. They were likewise at odds with Theodore's father-in-law, Nerio Acciajuoli, whose barony of Vostitsa they had seized.

Yet another claimant to the coveted principality of Achaea in the 1380's—and this the most zealous of all—was Amadeo of Savoy, lord of Pinerolo. His tenuous claim derived from his grandfather Philip, who had ruled Achaea briefly at the beginning of the century.<sup>20</sup> Like the other claimants he was acting to fill the vacuum left by the virtual abandonment of Achaea by the Neapolitan Angevins. His Achaean venture had the blessing of the Avignonese pope Clement VII and indirectly of the dynasty of France. This was consistent with

20. Cf. Longnon, *L'Empire latin de Constantinople*, pp. 289–291, 327, 340, and above, chapter IV, p. 107.

his position as a satellite of the French crown in the politics of northern Italy. He was also acting in full accord with his cousin, Amadeo VII of Savoy, the “Red Count,” who pledged material aid and diplomatic support.

For five years (1386–1391) Amadeo conducted complex diplomatic negotiations in the west and in Greece in order to secure effective recognition as prince of Achaea and to prepare an expedition to the Morea. His protest to Heredia against Marie of Brittany’s sale of her son’s rights to the principality resulted in a bull by Clement VII (April 11, 1387) which in effect revoked his approval of the transaction. In his early negotiations at Venice and Avignon Amadeo employed as his unofficial agent John Lascaris Calopherus, one of the most important Byzantine converts to the Latin church and for decades a favorite of the French popes. As the son-in-law of Erard III le Maure, a leading baron of Achaea, Calopherus had a personal stake in the success of Amadeo’s Greek venture. The prince showed his appreciation of his services by investing him with extensive estates in Messenia, as well as with the county of Cephalonia (July 19, 1387), where at the time Maddalena de’ Buondelmonti was regent for her son Charles Tocco.<sup>21</sup>

Amadeo’s task was greatly complicated in 1389–1391 by the seizure of Argos and its Larissa by Theodore Palaeologus. The Venetian government had purchased Nauplia and Argos—strategic places from which all the Morea could be acquired, as a senate document noted—on December 12, 1388, from the young widow Marie of Enghien, who was unable to defend them. However, the despot seized both places before the Venetians could take possession.<sup>22</sup> The high commissioner sent out from Venice early in 1389 succeeded in taking over Nauplia, but his demand for the surrender of Argos was met by Theodore’s determined refusal. The question of the recovery of Argos made allies of Venice and the Navarrese Company, in opposition to Theodore and his father-in-law, Nerio. The republic looked upon Acciajuoli as mainly responsible for the despot’s *coup de main*. Being both unable and unwilling to engage in a costly war with Theodore—who was supported in the Argos affair by his suzer-

21. This was the second time that title to this island realm was conferred on Calopherus. A Barcelonese document of 1383 (text in Rubió i Lluch, *Diplomatari de l’Orient català*, doc. DXLI, p. 590) referring to him as count of Zante and Cephalonia is cited by Loenertz (“Hospitaliers et Navarrais en Grèce 1376–1383,” p. 347), who comments that the title could have been conferred on Calopherus only by James of Les Baux as prince of Achaea, perhaps to reward him for persuading the barons of Achaea to acknowledge James as prince. Cf. also David Jacoby, “Jean Lascaris Calophéros, Chypre et la Morée,” *Revue des études byzantines*, XXVI (1968), 216–218.

22. Zakythinos, *Le Despotat grec du Morée*, I, 133, note 4.

ain, the sultan Bayazid—Venice hoped to use the Navarrese as troops against him. As for Amadeo, it was obviously necessary for him to be on good terms with both sides in the conflict. He not only desired Venetian transports for his expedition to the Morea but also needed the favor of Theodore and Nerio, who were powerful neighbors of the principality. On September 26, 1390, Venice agreed to transport Amadeo or his brother Louis by sea to Greece with three hundred mounted men and six hundred crossbowmen or foot-soldiers. In return Amadeo promised his support in the recovery of Argos. He made his pledge more specific in a renewal of this agreement (May 30, 1391), when he promised to take Argos by siege and to deliver it into Venetian hands.

In the meantime the Navarrese were proving their worth as allies to Venice by capturing Nerio Acciajuoli at Vostitsa on September 10, 1389, whither the ruler of Athens had gone, unsuspectingly, to discuss the question of Argos with Saint Superan. The Venetians consented (on May 22, 1390) to have Nerio freed only after he promised to obtain the surrender of Argos; among other pledges for his good faith he delivered Megara to them and his own favorite daughter Frances, the wife of Charles Tocco, as a hostage in Euboea. As matters turned out it was only in 1394 that the stubborn despot yielded the town and citadel of Argos to the Venetians, and then as a result of internal revolt in the despotate and fear of the Turks, rather than because of any pressure exerted upon him by Amadeo or Nerio. The Savoyard prince, indeed, secretly intrigued with Theodore despite his agreement with Venice, and annoyed the senate by engaging in direct negotiations with the Navarrese. His need for Venetian transports was not urgent enough to make him serve the republic's interests in respect to Argos. The negotiations with the Company resulted in the treaty of June 5, 1391, concluded at Venice. The Navarrese acknowledged Amadeo as prince and received confirmation of all the lands they held outside the domain. Amadeo agreed to pay the Company 20,000 gold ducats and to appear in the Morea in person by March of 1392. He spent the months of July and August in recruiting troops for his expedition and negotiating for aid from the Red Count.

The failure of Venice's diplomacy in Greece is evident in the cordial relations which now obtained between Amadeo and Theodore and even more in the treaty which the envoys of the prince of Achaea concluded with the lord of Athens in the palace chapel on the Acropolis on December 29, 1391. Nerio recognized Amadeo as prince of Achaea and suzerain of Athens and promised to help him

*totis viribus* to conquer the principality and expel the Navarrese. He promised even to obtain the aid of the despot for the enterprise. His obligation to Venice to help her recover Argos was, however, expressly restated. Nerio's reward was to be the restitution to him of the Acciajuoli lands seized by the Navarrese, especially his own barony of Vostitsa.

The tortuous and contradictory diplomacy which Amadeo was pursuing in Greece was never put to the test. His envoys in Athens were negotiating in ignorance of the sudden accidental death of his cousin Amadeo VII on November 1, 1391. Not only was Amadeo of Achaea deprived of the material aid promised by the Red Count, but the upsetting of the political balance in northern Italy made it imperative for him to remain in his principality. Thus, although Amadeo (d. 1402) and after him his brother Louis (d. 1418) continued to use the title "prince of Achaea," neither ever went to Greece or had a lasting influence on the course of events there.

It is to Amadeo's interest in Achaea that we owe an important document prepared for him by the Navarrese in 1391. It is a list of princely and baronial fiefs held by the members of the Company, with the addition of four fiefs held by the Zaccaria family. It is somewhat less comprehensive than the feudal roll prepared for queen Joanna in 1377,<sup>23</sup> since it does not include the castles of the archdiocese of Patras nor those of the castellany of Corinth. It shows that the Navarrese were in firm control of the western Morea—the areas of Elis, Triphylia, and Messenia—and in addition held the strategic castle of Vostitsa on the Corinthian Gulf. The barony of Vostitsa was assigned to the vicar-general Saint Superan, who also had immediate possession of five rich fiefs on the princely domain—Glarentsa, Beauvoir (Belvedere), St. Omer, Androusa, and Kalamata. In addition, nine more baronial fiefs were held by him personally or by leading men of the Company in his name. Three of these had belonged to the late John II Misito. The list of 1391 is further valuable for the prosopography of the Company. Jacob of Cyprus and William de la Forest, who negotiated the treaty of 1387 with Venice, each held a fief. Still another fief once belonging to Misito was now held by Bertranet Mota de Salahia, a Gascon adventurer who briefly held the castle of Livadia and thus came into possession of its most precious relic, the head

23. Rather than for Marie of Bourbon in 1364, as Hopf and others have thought; on this correction see the articles by Luttrell in the *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, LI (1958), 355–356, and LVII (1964), 340–345, with a revised text in the latter. Hopf first published the two lists in *Chroniques gréco-romanes*, pp. 227–230.

of St. George, sought by several kings of Aragon.<sup>24</sup> He was one of the many Gascons in the Navarrese Company, which included a number of Catalans and Sicilians as well. Among other fief-holders in 1391, Nicholas of Taranto and Le Moyne de Pollay are likewise found in contemporary documents.

No doubt the roll of 1391 accurately records the fiefs of the Navarrese, and these they expected to retain when Amadeo took over the principality, except for the estates of the domain. But the list of the higher vassals or peers of the prince which is appended to the roll of 1391 is largely theoretical. It parallels the list of peers given in article 43 of the *Assizes of Romania* in respect to the dukes of Athens and the Archipelago, the triarchs of Euboea, the marquis of Bodonitsa, the count of Cephalonia, and the ecclesiastical lord of Patras. The peers of the Assizes had also included the lords of Karytaina, Matagrifon (Akova), and Kalavryta—all three of which fiefs were long since in Greek hands—and the marshal, whose office apparently did not now exist. In their place the roll of 1391 puts the duke of Leucadia (Leucas), the countess of Salona, and the lords of Chalandritsa and Messenian Arcadia. Charles Tocco was of course ruler of both Cephalonia and Leucas, but the “count of Cephalonia” meant in a document specially intended for Amadeo could only have been his favorite, John Lascaris Calopherus, with Tocco being confined to Leucas. Since Chalandritsa and Arcadia were now held by one baron, Andronicus Asen Zaccaria, only he and the archbishop of Patras would have been peers of Amadeo within the Morea, whereas in the list of the Assizes five peers were Moreote lords. In any case, the vicar-general of the Navarrese Company was ignored by the outside peers as in any true sense a suzerain of theirs, and it is impossible to say to what extent Amadeo would have made the list of peers less theoretical if he had established himself in Achaea. As for the first lord on this list, the duke of Athens, when Ladislav of Naples formally bestowed this title on Nerio Acciajuoli in January 1394, he made him his direct and immediate vassal, thus eliminating the suzerainty which the lords of Athens traditionally owed to the princes of Achaea.<sup>25</sup> Ladislav had earlier (1391) conferred the office of vicar-general of Achaea and of Lepanto on Nerio, a paper appointment which he now (1394) transferred to Nerio’s brother, the cardinal Angelo.

24. He was otherwise prominent in Latin Greece in the 1390’s; cf. Rubió i Lluch’s note, *Diplomatari de l’Orient català*, p. 666, and K. M. Setton, “Saint George’s Head,” *Speculum*, XLVIII (1973), 1–12.

25. See below, pp. 254–255.



The failure of Amadeo to appear in Greece left the Morea divided among the Navarrese, the Byzantines, the Venetians, and the Florentine Nerio Acciajuoli. But there was no security anywhere in the land with the ever-present menace of Turkish invasion and the incessant raids of Turkish and Catalan pirates. After their momentous victory at Kossovo (1389) it was apparently simply a question of time until the Ottoman armies would overrun the entire Balkan and Greek peninsulas. The conquest of Thessaly and of the Catalan principalities of Neopatras and Salona in 1393–1394 established the invaders on the Gulf of Corinth. The duchy of Athens, the Venetian colony of Negroponte, and all the Morea were in immediate peril.

Following the settlement of the conflict over Argos, Venice made a serious effort to pacify the Morea through a union of its four Christian powers.<sup>26</sup> The Venetians saw clearly that only military coöperation among the four states and the construction of a wall across the isthmus of Corinth—the Hexamilion—could save their own Peloponnesian colonies. Yet the ever-cautious statesmen of the lagoons were not quite serious enough. They hesitated to enter into a binding alliance that might involve them in actual conflict with the sultan. In any case common action by the Christian states of the Levant, even in the face of imminent destruction by the enemy of the faith, was always difficult to achieve. Nerio Acciajuoli became tributary to the sultan in 1393. In 1387 the despot Theodore had become the willing vassal of Murad I in order to crush his own rebellious *archontes* and gain the advantage over his Christian adversaries in the Morea. This relationship was broken early in 1394 only because Bayazid made impossible demands on his vassal—especially the surrender of Argos—thus causing Theodore's flight from his camp. And it was also in the early months of 1394 that the vicar-general of Achaëa visited Bayazid to incite him against the despot and Nerio.<sup>27</sup>

The response to Saint Superan's invitation came the next winter. The redoubtable general Evrenos Beg, who in 1387 had raided the Morea as far as Modon and Coron, crossed the isthmus again, at the end of 1394 or the beginning of 1395. After spending a fortnight in Laconia he met the Navarrese forces at Leondari and together with them captured the fortress of Akova from the Byzantines on Cheese

26. Max Silberschmidt, *Das orientalische Problem zur Zeit der Entstehung des türkischen Reiches nach venezianischen Quellen (1381–1400)* (Leipzig and Berlin, 1923), pp. 89–96.

27. Silberschmidt, *op. cit.*, p. 90 and note 2. Even Venice for a moment in 1390 thought of inducing Turkish intervention against Theodore over the Argos imbroglio (Hopf, in Ersch and Gruber, LXXXVI [repr., II], 54 and note 7, citing the Misti).

Sunday (February 28, 1395). Evrenos then chose to withdraw to his Thessalian fief, while the war between the Navarrese and the Greeks continued. On June 4, 1395, Saint Superan was defeated by the Byzantine forces and taken prisoner, together with his brother-in-law, the grand constable Andronicus Asen Zaccaria. In order to restore the balance in the Morea Venice intervened to persuade Theodore to release his high-ranking prisoners (December 1395). The republic paid the despot the sum of 50,000 hyperpers as ransom, against Port-de-Jonc and Vostitsa as sureties.

It is obvious that if Nerio Acciajuoli had been living at the time of Saint Superan's capture he would have urged his son-in-law Theodore to resist the Venetian pressure to release their hated rival, who had treacherously imprisoned the ruler of Athens in 1389. But the extraordinary career of Nerio had ended on September 25, 1394, when he died at Corinth. By his eccentric will he bequeathed Athens to the church of St. Mary (the Christianized Parthenon), Boeotia to his bastard Antonio, and Megara, Basilicata (Sicyon), and his valuable Corinthian barony to his daughter Frances, the wife of Charles Tocco. To complicate matters further he commended all his lands and possessions to the protection of the Venetian signoria.

The disinherited despot of Mistra regarded Corinth as rightfully his and fought a brief war with Charles Tocco—who was supported by large Turkish forces—over its possession. Charles eventually (in 1395 or 1396) yielded Acrocorinth to his wife's brother-in-law. The great stronghold now included the impoverished town of Corinth within its extensive ramparts. But the strategic importance of the citadel was undiminished, and the Greeks rightly regarded Theodore's recovery of it as a national triumph.

It is possible that Saint Superan, during his submission to Bayazid, sought to constitute himself prince of Achaea under the sultan's suzerainty. As it turned out he did not need to apply outside Christendom to achieve his ambition. King Ladislas of Naples readily consented to make him hereditary prince of Achaea early in 1396 for the price of 3,000 ducats. The new prince, however, proved unable or unwilling to pay even this modest sum for his illustrious title. In 1404 the king of Naples was still trying to collect the amount from his successor, prince Centurione (II) Zaccaria. By bestowing the title of prince on Saint Superan, Ladislas naturally implied confirmation of his vassal and the other Navarrese in the possession of their lands, which included the estates of the Acciajuoli family. Perhaps the ruler of Naples had this situation in mind when, in an act of July 17, 1399, he confessed that he had "inadvertently" made concessions

prejudicial to the grand seneschal of his realm, Robert Acciajuoli, the grandson of Nicholas.<sup>28</sup>

The project of fortifying the Hexamilion was revived in February of 1396 when the Venetian signoria promised to support it and also to induce the "lord vicar or prince" to coöperate. Whether owing to Venetian prompting or not Saint Superan sent envoys to Venice to offer to contribute to the undertaking. His envoys were also to submit to arbitration the perennial disputes with the colony of Modon and Coron over boundaries and refugee serfs. These differences were soon settled, and on July 10, 1396, the agreements of 1382 and 1387 between the republic and the Navarrese Company were renewed.

The Morea was spared a Turkish invasion in 1396, probably because of Bayazid's preparations to meet the Christian host advancing to Nicopolis. His crushing victory there (September 25, 1396) laid all the unconquered portions of the Balkan peninsula at his mercy. In fact 1397 was the most catastrophic year of the fourteenth century for the Latin part of the Morea. Large Turkish forces led by Timurtash Beg and Ya'qūb Pasha devastated the peninsula, climaxing their invasion with the capture and sack of Argos on June 3, 1397. The surviving population of the city was enslaved and deported to Asia Minor.<sup>29</sup>

In anticipation, apparently, of this great invasion, the despot Theodore had offered Corinth to the Venetian republic in return for military aid, only to have his proposal rejected by the senate (April 29, 1397). When the Turks laid siege to the citadel in the summer of 1397 Theodore in terror and desperation offered Corinth to the Order of St. John. The knights accepted, and it is probable that they took possession of Corinth before the end of 1397. In 1399–1400 the sale of the entire despotate to the order was negotiated. The grand master Philibert of Naillac hoped to acquire the entire peninsula of the Morea and to replace the half-anarchic and mutually hostile states of Achaea and Mistra with a well-organized state capable of withstanding the Turkish assaults and of serving as a base for united action of the Christian states against the common enemy. In July 1399, at the same time that the grand master accredited Eli

28. By this act Ladislas confirmed and reestablished Robert in the lands which he had held in Naples and the Morea and had lost while remaining a faithful vassal to Ladislas during the vicissitudes of the 1380's and 1390's in the Regno. It is most unlikely that the regrating of his estates in 1399 was of any practical benefit to Robert in Achaea. (Text in Buchon, *Nouvelles recherches*, II, 214–218.)

29. On Timurtash rather than Evrenos as one of the Turkish commanders in 1397 see Loenertz, "Pour l'histoire du Péloponèse au XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle," p. 155.

of Fossat, the castellan of Corinth, to Theodore, he sent Gerard of Le Puy to the prince of Achaea.<sup>30</sup>

Saint Superan at first promised to lend his military strength to the order and to help complete and defend the Hexamilion (November 23, 1399). It must have been about this time, too, that he defeated a Turkish invading corps and earned the congratulations of the Roman pope Boniface IX, who conferred on him (February 15, 1400) the title "vicar and gonfalonier" of the holy see in Achaea. But no titles conferred by king or pope could turn Saint Superan into a champion of the faith. Early in 1401 we find him raiding Modon and Coron in the company of the Turks.<sup>31</sup> Whether this alliance was also directed against the Hospitallers is not clear. We know that the prince was on good terms with the order in the summer of 1401.<sup>32</sup> In the end, however, the Hospital's new venture in the Morea was no more successful than that of Heredia two decades earlier. The removal of the immediate Turkish menace to Greece as a result of Bayazid's defeat and capture by Timur at Ankara (July 28, 1402) only reinforced Theodore in the intention he had already formed of exercising his right to buy back the despotate from the order (1402-1404).<sup>33</sup>

In the meantime the prince and Venice had composed their differences once more. Feeling his end approaching, the aging Saint Superan asked the signoria to become the guardian of his small sons after his death. He had cause to be concerned about his family's future. In 1401 the grand constable, Andronicus Asen Zaccaria, had died, leaving four sons: Centurione, who became baron of Arcadia, Erard, Benedict, and Stephen, later the archbishop of Patras (1404-1424). In November of 1402 the prince of Achaea followed his brother-in-law to the grave. His widow, Maria Zaccaria, succeeded him as princess of Achaea and assumed the regency for their oldest son. Whether out of sentiment or necessity she appointed her nephew Centurione her vice-regent. As the head of the oldest and wealthiest baronial family left in the land Centurione thought he better deserved to rule Achaea than did the sons of his aunt's parvenu husband Saint Superan. Early in 1404 he secretly proposed to king Ladislas of Naples that he be invested with Achaea as a hereditary

30. Delaville Le Roulx, *Hospitaliers à Rhodes*, p. 277; cf. Loenertz, "Pour l'histoire du Péloponèse au XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle," p. 188.

31. Documents from the Misti of April 22 (24?) and May 6, 1401, in Sathas, *Documents inédits relatifs à l'histoire de la Grèce au moyen âge*, II, 25-26, 30.

32. Delaville Le Roulx, *Hospitaliers à Rhodes*, p. 280, note 5.

33. See below, pp. 307-309. Cf. Loenertz, "Pour l'histoire du Péloponèse au XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle," pp. 186-194.

principality in return for prompt payment of the 3,000 ducats owed by Saint Superan's heirs for the title conferred on the late prince in 1396. On April 20, 1404, the always impecunious Ladislas accepted the proposal and declared the sons of Saint Superan forfeit of the principality because they had failed to take the oath of fealty to him; simultaneously he conferred their patrimony upon Centurione and directed him to take the oath of homage in the hands of his brother Erard. Thus did Centurione II Zaccaria, through a shabby transaction, become the last prince of Frankish Achaea in succession to the Villehardouins, the Angevins of Naples, and a mercenary captain from Gascony. Of the last reigning princess of Achaea and her children, nothing is known after their dispossession.

Thanks to his own resourcefulness and to timely Venetian intervention on several occasions, Centurione prolonged the existence of the principality of Achaea for an entire generation (1404-1432). The implacable foe of the Navarrese and the Zaccarias, despot Theodore I, made a last effort to conquer the principality in 1406. Despite his alliance with Charles Tocco and Centurione's brother Stephen, he once more was cheated of his objective. His death in 1407 and the minority of his nephew and successor, Theodore II Palaeologus, the second son of emperor Manuel II, freed Centurione from any threat from Mistra for several years. But his coreligionists, the vigorous Tocco brothers of Cephalonia, Charles and Leonard, remained a grave menace to the security of Achaea throughout his reign. Leonard, who held the island of Zante from Charles as an appanage, had been enfeoffed with estates in the Morea by Saint Superan. Centurione had seized these lands early in 1404 and had been ordered by king Ladislas to surrender them to Leonard. It is not likely that the prince paid any attention to the distant monarch's injunction. Toward the end of 1407, however, Leonard seized Glarentsa, the most important city in Centurione's control.<sup>34</sup> The prince begged for Venetian aid to recover the port. The republic offered to intervene in return for the cession of Port-de-Jonc. Nothing came of these negotiations; however, in 1408 the youngest of the Zaccaria brothers, archbishop Stephen, harassed by Turkish attacks and financial difficulties, decided to lease Patras to Venice for five years at an annual

34. The capture is mentioned in a Venetian document of February 6, 1408 (Sathas, *Documents inédits*, II, 193, where 1407 should be 1408). The unpublished Greek verse "Chronicle of the Tocchi" describes the successful expedition of the Greek and Albanian forces raised by the Tocchi. It adds that Charles set out for the Morea, intending to reduce Centurione to impotence, but did not reach Glarentsa. See G. Schirò, "Struttura e contenuto della Cronaca dei Tocco," *Byzantion*, XXXII (1962), 214-215. Perhaps Leonard's occupation of Glarentsa was of brief duration.

rental of 1,000 ducats. Stephen retained his spiritual jurisdiction while the Venetian governor conducted the secular administration in the archbishop's name.

Having acquired Naupactus (Lepanto) in June 1407, Venice now controlled the two keys to the Gulf of Corinth and could protect her important commercial interests at Patras against the Turks or any Christian competitor. The republic appeased Suleiman, the ruler of European Turkey, by paying tribute for both places. The payment for Patras was made through prince Centurione, himself tributary to the Turk. The prince at first protested the Venetian lease of Patras, but his position was so precarious that he seriously considered offering his own land to the republic. Yet when his conflict with the Tocchi was renewed Centurione was so successful on land and sea that the brothers appealed to Venice to accept them as vassals. Instead the republic mediated a three-year armistice in 1414 whereby the prince of Achaea retained Glarentsa.

It was about this time that Centurione, along with other Christian princes of the Balkans, sent felicitations to Mehmed I, "the Gentleman," now the sole ruler (1413–1421) of the reunited Ottoman empire.<sup>35</sup> The cordial relations which emperor Manuel II enjoyed with the sultan enabled him to spend a year in the Morea (1415–1416). During this memorable visit the basileus pacified the despotate internally and erected the Hexamilion. He also—according to the historian Ducas—imposed his authority on prince Centurione and the Navarrese feudatories, so that on departing for the capital "he left behind his son Theodore as despot of all Peloponnesus."<sup>36</sup> The claim is exaggerated, but it almost became a reality as a result of the war between the Byzantines and Centurione in 1417–1418. In 1417 John (VIII) Palaeologus, the emperor's eldest son, captured Androusa, "the key and entrance" to the rich province of Messenia, as a Venetian chronicle describes it. The same source remarks that Centurione was always concerned to amass money and to keep only enough troops to guard his places, instead of maintaining men in the field.<sup>37</sup> The Byzantine forces overran Messenia and pressed

35. Ducas, XX (*CSHB*, pp. 97–98). Hopf probably reads too much into this passage when he states that Theodore II Palaeologus and Centurione did homage to Mehmed (in Ersch and Gruber, LXXXVI [repr., II], 76A).

36. Ducas, XX (*CSHB*, p. 102). The "Chronicle of the Tocchi" may now be adduced as evidence that Centurione and the Achaean nobles recognized Manuel as suzerain, at least for the moment. See the extract published by Schirò in *Byzantion*, XXIX–XXX (1959–1960), 228–230, especially lines 1976, 1984–1986.

37. *Cronaca dolfina*, MS. in the Museo Correr, Venice, cited by N. Iorga, *Notes et extraits pour servir à l'histoire des croisades*, I, 267, note 3.

Centurione hard in Elis, forcing him to take refuge in Glarentsa.<sup>38</sup>

The Greeks' brilliant successes and the devastation of Modon and Coron by Albanian forces with the despot's connivance, coupled with the fact that Centurione had earlier been negotiating with his ancestral city of Genoa over the cession of Achaea, led the Venetians to take the preventive action of occupying Port-de-Jonc. At the same time archbishop Stephen invited a Venetian garrison from Euboea to Patras to prevent the city from falling to the Greeks. Had the Venetians been allowed to remain in Patras they might have prevented the Greek reconquest. But the papacy insisted on the inalienability of church property and required the republic to withdraw in 1419. This shortsightedness resulted in the loss of the first city of the Morea to the Greeks a decade later.

In the meantime a former captain of the despot named Oliver Franco (or Francone) seized Glarentsa early in 1418, taking one of Centurione's brothers captive. To save appearances the prince gave one of his daughters to the adventurer, with Glarentsa as her dower. But neither the hand of the princess nor her rich dower could hold Franco in Greece; in 1421 he accepted Charles Tocco's offer to buy Glarentsa and left the country. In the same year the war between the despot and the prince was renewed.<sup>39</sup> In their extremity Centurione and Stephen sought to interest the Knights of Rhodes once more in the Morea. Perhaps Stephen hoped that the papacy would allow him to alienate his ecclesiastical barony to the great military-religious organization. Or perhaps an anti-Moslem coalition of the states of the Morea with the Hospitallers was in question, since Theodore II of Mistra was in correspondence with the order at the same time as the Zaccarias. But the reply of the Hospitallers to all three rulers (May 10, 1422) was a rather curt refusal to become involved in the affairs of the Morea at a time when they were deeply engaged against the Turkish states of Asia Minor.<sup>40</sup>

The anarchy now prevailing in the Morea made the government of

38. Cf. the anonymous panegyrist on Manuel II and John VIII Palaeologus, published in Sp. P. Lampros, *Palaiológeia kai peloponnesiáká*, III (Athens, 1926), 174-175, and the introduction to that volume by K. Voyatzidis, pp. xv-xvi.

39. The "Chronicle of the Tocchi" has a somewhat different account of these events. Centurione had brought Oliver over from Apulia with a hundred men in order to defend Glarentsa. Oliver, however, betrayed the prince by seizing the fortified port and holding the princess and Centurione's brother Benedict to ransom. Centurione, who had been absent from Glarentsa, entered into an alliance with the Byzantines of Mistra, but failed to retake the city. Finally Tocco bought it in order to rid himself of a dangerous neighbor. The Byzantines then launched their own campaign to capture Glarentsa. (See Schirò's summary of this part of the chronicle in *Byzantion*, XXXII [1962], 246-250.)

40. See below, pp. 312-313.

Venice decide to acquire the entire peninsula as the only effective way of protecting its subjects and trade and of building a strong dam against the Turkish assaults that were certain to come. But nothing came of the negotiations in Venice during the winter of 1422–1423 between the signoria and envoys representing emperor Manuel, Theodore II, Centurione, Stephen, and Charles Tocco. The Venetians mediated a one-year peace and admonished the contestants to unite against the Turks. They themselves undertook to protect the land against Catalan pirates, who are mentioned in Venetian documents of the time only less frequently than Turkish raiders. Although the republic failed to annex the Morea, it strengthened and enlarged its valuable Messenian colony in 1422–1423 by acquiring the castle of Grisi midway between Modon and Coron and by purchasing Port-de-Jonc.

Murad II now ruled over the reunited Ottoman state. The expected Turkish storm burst upon the Morea in the spring of 1423 when a great host under Turakhan Beg quickly scaled the Hexamilion and proceeded to devastate the peninsula, sparing only Charles Tocco's possessions in Elis. The republic was now alarmed, and tried once again to bring together the warring dynasts of the Morea. Venice warned Tocco not to feud with Theodore or call on the Ottomans for assistance. Momentarily Centurione and the despot ceased their fighting. But in the next round of their bitter conflict Theodore succeeded in making the prince his prisoner, in June of 1424. A few months earlier, in January, archbishop Stephen had died. The power of the Zaccaria family in the Morea was virtually at an end.

The papacy again lost an opportunity to allow Venetian influence to predominate in Patras by insisting on the appointment of Pandolfo Malatesta of Pesaro as Stephen's successor, instead of a Venetian cleric. Pope Martin V thus hoped to dispose Theodore favorably to the holy see, since the despot was the husband of Pandolfo's sister Cleopa. But Theodore and his numerous brothers were only awaiting an opportunity to conquer the ecclesiastical state. First, however, Charles Tocco had to be expelled from the Morea, where he had replaced the prince of Achaea as the chief foe of the Byzantine despotate. This task was executed with dispatch in a campaign against Tocco (1427–1428) on land and sea led by emperor John VIII and Constantine (XI), the ablest of the sons of Manuel II. John VIII gained the last naval victory of Byzantium in the battle of the Echinades islands off the Acarnanian coast, in which he destroyed the superior forces of the duke of Leucadia. Charles not only surrendered his possessions in Elis, including Glarentsa, to Constan-



tine but also gave him the hand of his niece Maddalena, the elder daughter of the late Leonard II. The turn of Patras came in 1429-1430, when town and citadel yielded successively to the Palaeologus destined to be the last emperor of Byzantium; Constantine had defied a warning from Murad II not to take the city, which paid tribute to the Turks.

It fell to Thomas Palaeologus to put an end to the principality of Achaea, now reduced to little more than the baronies of Chalandritsa and Messenian Arcadia. He besieged Centurione Zaccaria, who had been released from his imprisonment, in the castle of Chalandritsa, and forced the prince to give him his older daughter Catherine in marriage, along with all his possessions—except Arcadia—as her dowry (September 1429). The marriage was celebrated at Mistra in January 1430. John Asen, Centurione's natural son, was ignored in these transactions. Centurione, it seems, continued to bear the title "prince of Achaea" until his death in 1432. Then Thomas Palaeologus not only deprived his mother-in-law of the barony of Arcadia but also confined the unfortunate woman in prison for the rest of her life.

Thus after 227 years the Morea was once more entirely under Byzantine control, except for the Venetian establishments in Messenia and the Argolid. But although there was no longer any organized Frankish power in the peninsula there must have been a number of Franks remaining in the land who were willing to join a restoration movement. It is probable that John Asen Zaccaria took refuge in Venetian territory after 1432. During sultan Murad's great invasion of the Morea in 1446 a Greek magnate in rebellion against the despots Thomas and Constantine proclaimed John Asen prince of Achaea. But the rising failed, and Thomas imprisoned the "prince" and his son in the fortress of Clermont. However, during the formidable revolt of the Albanians of the Morea, with the support of Greek rebels, against the despots Thomas and Demetrius Palaeologus in 1453-1454, John Asen Zaccaria escaped and again became a serious menace to the regime. The Venetian doge, Francis Foscari, and king Alfonso V of Naples sent congratulations to him as "prince Centurione." But as usual the fate of the Morea was decided by the sultan. Mehmed II preferred two puppet Byzantine governments in the peninsula to a Graeco-Albanian state in which the Franks might make a comeback with Venetian or Neapolitan support. Accordingly he sent the veteran Turakhan Beg to the Morea to help the despots put down the revolt. John Asen Zaccaria "Centurione" fled to Modon, whence he reached Italy, and was successively pensioned by

Alfonso, by Venice, and by pope Paul II. He was to die in Rome in 1469.

If after 1454 the revival of the Frankish principality in the Morea gave Mehmed II no concern, it was otherwise with the Greek client states there. The two despots, far from being peaceful tributaries, resumed their unseemly feuding. There was danger to Mehmed in the fact that each sought aid in the west against the other. For the remainder of the decade of the 1450's the sultan had good reason to fear a Venetian or Neapolitan attempt, with papal encouragement and material aid, to occupy the Morea. Turkish control of the strategic peninsula was necessary for Mehmed's own project of attacking Italy in due time. Therefore, the great sultan personally led campaigns in 1458 and again in 1460 that extinguished the last remnants of Byzantine sovereignty in the Morea. The definitive annexation of the peninsula by Turkey deprived the Christian west of its most valuable base for any anti-Turkish crusade.

Ironically, the Morea's importance to the crusading movement was never more succinctly expressed than on the eve of the Ottoman conquest. In a letter addressed to the citizens of Nuremberg on the opening day of one of the most futile of crusading congresses, the Assembly of Mantua (June 1, 1459), pope Pius II wrote: "The country of Peloponnesus has such advantages for the conduct of operations by land and by sea that no other eastern region offers comparable opportunities for protecting our interests and wearing down the power of the Turks."<sup>41</sup>

41. Iorga, *Notes et extraits*, IV, 169.