REFLECTIONS ON THE HISTORIOGRAPHY OF THE ART OF THE CRUSADERS IN THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY

The beginnings of the modern European, and especially French, rediscovery of Syria-Palestine can be conveniently dated to Napoleon’s campaigns in the Near East from May 1798 to August 1799. Shortly thereafter, J. F. Michaud began publication of his *Histoire des Crusades*, starting in 1811, drawing attention to the history of the Crusaders in the Levant.¹ This was followed by the great project sponsored by the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres to publish the major medieval texts dealing with the Crusades, starting in 1841.² Study of the material culture of the Crusaders was begun in terms of coinage and the first attempt at a comprehensive study appeared in 1847 by Louis Felicien de Saulcy.³ Interest in the Crusaders was indirectly intensified in France during the Crimean War (1853–6), in which one of the major issues was French protection of Christian pilgrims to Jerusalem and Catholic rights and privileges at the holy sites under the Capitulations of 1749.⁴ Four years after the war ended, in 1860, the count Charles-Jean-Melchior de Vogüé, eventually the Marquis de Vogüé (1828–1916), published a pioneering study titled *Les Eglises de la Terre Sainte*. This book marked the beginning of modern research into the art and architecture of the Crusaders in the Holy Land.

Historiographically, therefore, the origins of the study of Crusader architecture and art can clearly be located in the context of French scholarship of the nineteenth century. The issue relevant to our current inquiry is, to what extent did these early scholars recognize both Crusader architecture and Crusader artistic work of the thirteenth century and how did they differentiate this work from that of the twelfth? What criteria did they use to identify the work? How did they date it? In view of the fact that the holy sites of Jerusalem, Bethlehem, and Nazareth, even when accessible, were largely out of Crusader control in the period between 1187 to 1291 and that these sites had been major centers for the production of the art of the Crusaders in the twelfth century, how did scholars characterize the nature and development of Crusader art in the thirteenth century?

¹ De Vogüé’s father was a friend of Alexis de Tocqueville, the French minister of foreign affairs, and through this connection he was able to launch his son on a diplomatic career. It was while he was posted in St. Petersburg in 1850 that the young de Vogüé discovered his interest in archaeology. He first went to the Levant in 1853–4, just at the time of the Crimean War in which France was a major protagonist against Russia. One of the issues in dispute, of course, concerned privileges at the holy sites in Palestine. On 19 November 1853, Melchior saw the Holy City for the first time. It made a tremendous impression on him, as he records in a letter to his father:

> J’ai aperçu pour la première fois… la ville sainte… et je n’ai pu contenir mon émotion à la vue de ses murs vénérés. Depuis le matin j’avais comme une fièvre qui me poussait en avant, à la grande stupéfaction de ma monture dérangée dans ses allures pacifiques: et sîto que j’ai vu poindre au loin et briller au soleil les dômes de Sion, l’émotion à éclaté & je me suis jeté en bas de mon cheval pour remercier le Seigneur de m’avoir amené jusqu’ici.⁷

² Thereafter he returned frequently to Jerusalem up to his last visit in 1911, only a few years before he died.⁶ I have already discussed the context for and the argument in de Vogüé’s book elsewhere, as well as his methodological approach.⁷ The view he took of the Crusader experience is summed up as follows:

> Les Croisés avaient transporté en Palestine la société du moyen âge tout d’une pièce, avec ses hiérarchies militaires et ecclésiastiques, ses coutumes féodales, et jusqu’à ses dénominations. Les constructeurs venus à leur suite ou pris dans leurs rangs firent de même; ils transplantèrent au milieu des édifices byzantins et arabes les églises françaises de la mère patrie, avec leur nefs hautes et allongées, leur bas cotés, leur systèmes de voûtes, enfin tous leurs éléments essentiels.⁸

But what is especially relevant to examine here is his perception of thirteenth-century architecture, its nature, and its development, in contrast to that of the twelfth century, in the Crusader States. De Vogüé approached the study of Crusader churches as the work of French architects who produced buildings in three phases: phase 1, from 1099 to 1187; phase 2, from 1187 to 1291; and phase 3, on Cyprus from the thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries. Essentially he argues for the importation of Romanesque architecture from western Europe as the basis
of Crusader architecture, and he sees the development of Crusader art as controlled by French artistic ideals. Although he championed the view that the Crusaders brought Romanesque architecture with them he was, however, well aware of two aspects that influenced it in its new setting. He noted that the local climate, materials, and local masons were different from those of France; he also recognized that local Christians had their own architectural traditions that were quite distinct from those of the Crusaders. One, of course, was the tradition of Byzantine architecture with domed centralized churches, at that point little studied, and the other derived from the Early Christians with longitudinal, basilican-plan churches. Nonetheless, he observed the differences in materials or details of Crusader architecture were altered by local conditions, the basic character of the Romanesque was not.

De Vogüé identifies the great period of church building in the Latin Kingdom as the years between 1140 and 1180. The bulk of his large and impressive book deals with that phase. By contrast, on the basis of pilgrim’s accounts, chronicles, and letters, he says that little was built between 1187 and 1229. He points out that it was only in 1192, at the intervention of the bishop of Salisbury with Saladin, that permission was given for two Latin priests and their deacons to return to the towns of Jerusalem, Bethlehem, and Nazareth, who served in these locations along with a small number of indigenous clergy. In 1211, he notes that four Syrian priests alone said their office in the church of the Holy Sepulchre according to Wilbrand von Oldenburg, and in 1217, Thietmar found Jerusalem closed to Christian access.

De Vogüé also cites a collective letter written C.1220 to King Philippe II Augustus from the refugee bishops and abbots of the Latin Kingdom living in Acre. They said the Holy Land was deserted and destroyed, reduced to a poverty that could not be expressed in words. The Crusaders, they said, only possessed two cities, Tyre and Acre, and what few resources they had were being diverted to Damietta.

In 1229, with the treaty arranged by Frederick II, Christians were once again granted open access to Jerusalem. De Vogüé interprets certain sources as indicating that Frederick made successful efforts to erase the effects of the earlier destruction. Despite what sources favorable to the emperor may say, however, de Vogüé thinks that all he could have done was to have rebuilt some chapels. Pointing to the ongoing conflict between Frederick and the pope, the interdict placed on the city of Jerusalem, and the absence of resident Crusader clergy in the Holy City, de Vogüé doubts that much Crusader construction could have occurred there between 1229 and 1244.

From 1244 to 1291, Jerusalem was again lost to the Crusaders, and Christian access was difficult. De Vogüé therefore characterizes architectural activity as “quelques constructions se fent” in the cities along the coast, but most of it was military fortification in nature. “Les sources de l’art étaient taries, … et, malgré le dévouement de saint Louis, malgré les efforts des ordres militaires, elles ne devaient plus se ruerir.” After 1291 until the nineteenth century, he says that nothing was built at the holy places by European hands except some Franciscan convents, “massive constructions dans lesquelles l’art n’a rien à voir, et dont par conséquent nous n’avons pas à nous occuper.”

As to the nature of Crusader architecture in the thirteenth century (and later on Cyprus), he says the following:

Les édifices du second et surtout du troisième groupe ont un caractère tout différent; ils offrent un imitation parfaite, comme construction et comme ornementation, des églises élevées en France à la même époque, avec cette seule différence que les toits pointus sont remplacés par des terrasses horizontales.

De Vogüé is important because he gives us our first historical perspective on the developments in Crusader architecture in the period from 1187 to 1291, remembering always that church architecture was his focus. It is evident that in doing this he depends heavily on the written sources, not archaeologica1 examination for these buildings, but he is mindful of the need to study the standing monuments when possible. He focuses methodologically on the churches in terms of architecture and interior decoration, and he also sees his basic approach to be one of comparing churches in the East with those in the West as a source of dating and development. Nonetheless, he finds little important Crusader church architecture in this period and asserts that fortifications constituted most of what was being built by the Crusaders. Unfortunately he does not seriously discuss the major, mostly thirteenth-century church still largely intact at Tartus, and apparently he was unable to investigate in any detail the old city of Acre with its numerous thirteenth-century buildings, including some churches. He apparently assumed that the churches were destroyed by the Muslims. His focus is maintained on the holy places in the thirteenth century, as it was in the twelfth, and he finds nothing new in these locations.

On the issue of thirteenth-century Crusader architectural style and design for churches, de Vogüé deals with the problem of the ogival arch and French Gothic style with a perceptive argument. He proposes that the ogival arch originally developed in France independent of Eastern influence but that it also was found in early Arab architecture in the East. He asserts that the Gothic architecture found in the Levant was primarily that which is found today on Cyprus and was derived from French Gothic sources. He maintains that what the Crusaders found in Syria-Palestine was basically Byzantino-Arab in terms of basilicas, rotundas and cupolas, centralized Byzantine churches, and the ogival arch in the Arab school of Cairo.

J. Wigley had argued that it was the encounter of Crusader Romanesque architecture with the ogival arch in the context of Arab architecture in the Holy Land that engendered the new Gothic architecture. In his counterarguments, de Vogüé focused on Wigley’s issues of the ornament and the pointed arch. He observed that arabesque ornamentation does exist in Crusader architecture, but he argued that the basic architectural vocabulary of cornices, capitals, moldings, and so forth came from the West, deriving either from classical Roman sources or from French Romanesque. The arabesques were applied to this system as details, and in any case Gothic ornamentation was largely based on natural forms, not Arab models. For the pointed arch, de Vogüé maintains first that it was developed in western Europe long before the Crusades, for structural reasons but that it also existed in the Levant in Arab architecture, mainly for general usage. De Vogüé proposes, therefore, that the ogival arch the Crusaders found in the Holy Land and employed, for example, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in the mid-twelfth century, reinforced their interest in the new Gothic style developing in France. Succinctly put, he says: “L’ogive
n’est pas née des croisades, mais les croisades ont pu hâter le jour où elle a été employée exclusivement en Occident.” The important issue for de Vogüé was to understand that the ogival arch was not the cause of Gothic architecture; it was a means. In accepting the idea that “l’architecture gothique dérive naturellement de l’architecture romane par une transformation lente dans la science de bâtir,” de Vogüé understood that Gothic was a system of architecture. Nothing of the Gothic system of architecture, he asserted, was borrowed from the Near East. 15

Thus, de Vogüé stoutly denies what he calls “l’origine orientale de notre architecture.” 16 According to him, Gothic architecture was born in France; neighboring countries, including even the Crusader States, were prepared to receive this movement. To some extent de Vogüé sees the Gothic churches in the Near East to have been built by French hands, especially those in Cyprus. Thus he concludes that “dans le domaine des idées, l’influence des Croisades avait été considerable, dans le domaine matériel des bâtiments archéologiques, elle avait été presque nulle.” 17 De Vogüé nonetheless sees Crusader architecture as a distinctive phenomenon. To this end he expresses himself in quite emotional terms at the end of his study. Even though in his view the Crusader churches may not change our understanding of the development of Gothic architecture, he sees the Crusader buildings as unique from the point of view of a pilgrim, in their own right.

De Vogüé thereby opened the discussion of thirteenth-century Crusader architecture in the Holy Land, focusing on ecclesiastical architecture. Emmanuel Rey followed shortly thereafter with the first extended discussion of Crusader castles and fortifications. 18 Thus here in this first serious survey, we can identify the first two types, with emphasis on the second, and which retain the Western donjon in the castle. Rey calls these the feudal type and identifies a series of major examples, including Saone, Giblet, Beaufort, Shaubak, Kerak, and others. 19 Finally he also studies the fortified walls of major cities including Antioch, Tyre, Caesarea, and Ascalon, as well as fortified ports, as the final section of his book on the mainland monuments.

II

Baron Emmanuel Guillaume Rey (1837–1916) was another prominent French aristocrat who took a passionate interest in the Crusaders. He made three visits to Syria, in 1877–8 in the Hauran, in 1899 at Crac, and in 1864 at Margat, examining most of the major Crusader fortifications in the course of these travels. On the basis of this fieldwork he published a series of studies on the Frankish East between 1860 and 1901. In 1871 his important book on Crusader military architecture appeared. 18 This was the first study that attempted to survey the Crusader fortifications systematically, and it was followed in 1879 by a study of the topography of St. Jean d’Acre, which also broke new ground. 20 Rey, unlike de Vogüé, did not hold a government position but seems to have been a gentleman of means who pursued his Crusader interests vigorously as a member of the Société Nationale des Antiquaires de France. 21

Rey began his 1871 study by surveying the Crusader States geographically with reference to the main Crusader fortifications. He then introduces the main characteristics of the castles, differentiated as he interprets the origins of their design into two schools. These two schools or types appeared and developed more or less simultaneously according to Rey; they form the subject of the first two parts of his book.

The first school included the castles of the Hospitallers and had for its prototype fortifications constructed in France in the eleventh and twelfth centuries along the western coast and along the banks of the Loire and the Seine. These castles were built on steep, isolated hills to facilitate defense. Their plan corresponded to the shape of the site and featured walls with round towers; inside the western donjon is replaced with heavily fortified entrances through the outer walls into the inner courtyards. From Eastern sources, these Crusader architects borrowed the Byzantine double surrounding wall where the second line of walls commands the first. They developed the stone watchtower, which only appeared in the West at the end of the thirteenth century. They also constructed enormous taluses or glacis in masonry, which as much as tripled the thickness of the base of these walls and formed an effective deterrent to mining and reinforcement against the frequent earthquakes. 22

The second school was that of the Templars. Here the plan of the surrounding walls mostly followed that of the large Arab fortresses constructed after a design that seems to have been inspired by Byzantine fortifications. In these castles the towers are generally rectangular and advance very little in front of the walls. Thus these defensive constructions depend more on the deep fosses or steep escarpments and the high, thick walls rather than on the protrusion of the towers to deter attackers. These walls are typically built with extremely large blocks of rusticated stone and shallow loopholes comparable to Arab fortresses. Despite the parallels with Eastern fortifications, however, the Latin masons’ marks clearly identify these works as Crusader construction. 23

Rey goes on to identify a third type of castle, which combines the first two types, with emphasis on the second, and which retains the Western donjon in the castle. Rey calls these the feudal type and identifies a series of major examples, including Saone, Giblet, Beaufort, Shaubak, Kerak, and others. 21 Finally he also studies the fortified walls of major cities including Antioch, Tyre, Caesarea, and Ascalon, as well as fortified ports, as the final section of his book on the mainland monuments.

Thus here in this first serious survey, we can identify the source of one of the most long-lived interpretations pertaining to Crusader castles, namely, that of separate Hospitaller and Templar schools of Crusader architecture, which he extends into the thirteenth century. Although modern archaeological investigations have invalidated many of the perceived distinctions that Rey advanced, in particular the contrast of rounded versus rectangular towers, showing instead that many round towers were rectangular towers with rounded exteriors added later, as at Crac des Chevaliers, Rey nonetheless made several important contributions through his analyses. First, he introduced a framework of discussion based on analysis of the standing monuments and raised the issue of Eastern and Western origins for various design features. Second, he produced important measured drawings including plans, elevations, and sections and produced some isometric views of the castles; there are also twenty-four engraved plates that collectively provided the first set of research documentation to be published for these castles. 24 Third, Rey provides the most comprehensive archaeological study of these castles that had been carried out to that point. In his archaeological approach, however, he omits the discussion of architectural sculpture and other decoration that de Vogüé had included for the churches. And although he focuses on the northern part of the Crusader States and conspicuously omits any serious discussion of Jerusalem, his emphasis is understandable because the great majority of major Crusader castles, if not fortifications, are located in the north,
not in the Latin Kingdom. Finally, Rey’s archaeological approach is rooted in the same notion of Christian archaeology that we find earlier in de Vogüé and later in Enlart, but it is tightly controlled, intensively descriptive, and linked with historical research to provide some bases for dating major parts of these complex buildings. The picture that results in terms of the history of architectural development for these major Crusader fortifications is important. Even though it contains certain historical errors and differs in certain specifics from the picture we have today, in its day it broke new ground as a paradigm for this kind of study.

To return to the specifics of his survey briefly, following his introductory remarks, Rey proceeds to discuss a series of major castles and fortifications, in the following order:

Margat (Margab) is the Hospitaller castle on the coast two hours south of Lattakieh. The triangular plan of the huge castle is determined largely by its site. Rey describes the main standing features of the castle, commenting occasionally on their dating and parallels with fortifications in France. The important chapel inside (23.64 × 9.9 meters with two bays) he dates as contemporary to the churches at Tortosa, El-Bira, Jubail, and Lydda. He describes it as faithful to the construction system and the plan of French churches along the Loire and in Burgundy during the eleventh century.

Crac des Chevaliers (Kalaat-el-Hasn) was the Hospitaler castle that guarded the passage from the interior to the cities of Tripoli and Tortosa on the coast, forming one of the main bastions in the system of defense for the County of Tripoli. Like Margat it was a major defensive castle, not a feudal habitation to secure the lands of surrounding fiets. Crac had two surrounding wall systems, with a fosse between partly filled with water. There was one easily defended entry; the towers and loopholes were organized in a manner in advance of what was found in France. Rey described the castle in some detail starting with the large square south tower, the complex bent entrance, and the wall systems with their massive taluses and loopholes organized in a manner in advance of what was found in France. Rey described the castle in some detail starting with the large square south tower, the complex bent entrance, and the wall systems with their massive taluses and loopholes organized in a manner in advance of what was found in France.

Tortosa (Tartus) was a Templar stronghold, a fortified town important of the extant examples associated with the Hospitallers and the Templars that he could have known. Through his digging he has recovered the text of Jacques de Vitry, which describes how these fortifications came into being. The city walls are anent the Near East. This was the main meeting place in the Crusades that guarded the passage from the interior to the cities of Tripoli and Tortosa on the coast, forming one of the main bastions in the system of defense for the County of Tripoli.

Finally Crac was captured in 1271 by the strategem of a forged letter that ordered the garrison to surrender. Tortosa (Tartus) was a Templar stronghold, a fortified town on the coast, south of Margat and almost due west of Crac. As their principal military base in the north, the Templars fortified the castle heavily with a double enceinte in the form of a quarter circle strengthened by fosses, and a colossal donjon.

Inside the city walls is found the venerable twelfth-century cathedral, a major place of pilgrimage, which even Jean, sire de Joinville, visited. The castle is found at the northwest corner of the city walls; the latter followed a more or less rectangular plan. Rey follows this introduction with a more detailed description of the identifiable remains of the main fortifications including the grande salle, characterized as a European impor-
the Hospitallers and the Templars, respectively. For all of the works, the dates are attributed largely on the basis of what Rey perceives as the relationship between the remains of the standing monument and the information provided by the relevant historical texts. One must also be cautious in using Rey’s dates because his information is “littered with historical errors,” to quote one prominent modern scholar.

What follows in his book thereafter is a series of much briefer presentations on a variety of types of fortifications. Rey presents the isolated fortified tower, an important component of Crusader defenses mostly ignored until very recently. After this we find the enigmatic castle of Saone, which Rey sees—along with Kerak—as the quintessential feudal type of fortification that never belonged to one of the orders. He calls it one of the oldest specimens of Frankish architecture, but one the Crusaders only held to 1187. Following Saone, he offers a series of examples that exemplify in his mind the diversity of castle designs executed by the Crusaders based on Byzantine models, work not done for either of the two major orders. It is an interesting series including Gibelet (1107–97), Blanche-Garde (c.1140–87), Beaufort (1139–1268), Kerak (1120–88), Le Toron (1120–87/1219, 1229–91), Montfort (1229–71), Sajette (Sidon, 1227/8–91), and Maracle (1260–85). Then come defensive systems for ports (Tyre, Acre, Beirut, Gibelet, Laodicca). Rey places these maritime cities in the hands of Italian and southern French merchants and sees the fortifications often to have been erected on ancient Phoenician foundations. For each port city he comments on a notable feature, for example, at Tyre, the chain across the port entrance, at Acre, the Tour des Mouches, and at Lattakia, there was a light tower. Rey has little to say, however, about the city fortifications of Acre or Tyre in general and hardly anything specific about their central importance in the thirteenth century. Finally this we find the enigmatic castle of Saone, which Rey sees—as with the Arabs. Again the major sources are the seals. He expands on the architecture by mentioning the urban architecture of private townhouses and palaces, comparing Wilbrand von Oldenburg’s 1212 account of the Ibelin palace in Beirut with the Mediterranean inspired Arab-Norman buildings in Palermo and mentioning the grand salle of the episcopal palace in Tripoli. In the palace in Beirut there was fresco painting on the walls, mosaics on the floors, and a marble fountain in the courtyard, and in this connection Wilbrand praises the excellence of the Syrians, the Greeks, and the “Sarraceni” as artists. Even more remarkable is his claim that Arab carpenters decorated important rooms in castles with paneling and wainscoting, fine woodwork similar in its high quality to what we find on the minibars of major mosques in the Muslim world of the Near East. Furthermore, the interiors of the living quarters of noble Franks would have had hangings of Eastern silks. There would have been painted pottery, quite possibly even some porcelains from China, and also painted glass. Finally one would find metalwork in copper, and even silver and gold. Rey cites the important inventory of the Count de Nevers from Acre in 1266 with its quantity of notable objects, secular and sacred, including metalwork in precious gold and silver and more utilitarian substances. Clearly much of this material he thought to be the work of Near Eastern artists, not necessarily Crusaders.

Rey cites as an equivalent ecclesiastical inventory of a church treasury the 1209 document from Antioch which lists gold and silver liturgical vessels decorated with precious and semi-precious stones as well as liturgical vestments. Parallel to this inventory Rey also cites the existence of the “évangeliare [sic] de la reine Melisende.” Its binding, “formée de deux magnifiques plaques d’ivoire sculptées et garnies en argent [?], est du plus beau style byzantin [sic]; le dos du livre est fait d’une splendide étoffe de soie brochée de croix d’or [?].” He also mentions a large patriarchal cross of cedar covered with its quantity of notable objects, secular and sacred, including metalwork in precious gold and silver and more utilitarian substances. Clearly much of this material he thought to be the work of Near Eastern artists, not necessarily Crusaders.

Rey cites in fact produced a number of publications on the Crusader Levant, including also a study on the topography of Acre and a book titled Les Colonies Franques de Syrie au XIIe et XIII siècles, both published some years after his study on the military architecture. The book clearly presents the Crusaders in the Holy Land as a colonial experience in a multicultural setting, and, as far as the military architecture is concerned, Rey makes no major new contributions to his earlier survey. However, he does provide a comprehensive historical geography that comments on all the major known Crusader sites. Even more importantly for our current concerns, he expands the picture of Crusader artistic interests in the Levant significantly, based especially on written sources, particularly the Assises de Jerusalem and the diplomatic documents of the chanceries of Jerusalem, Tripoli, Antioch, and Sid, joined by a selection of the Arab chroniclers. Furthermore, he has interesting and comparatively extensive comments on thirteenth-century Crusader art. Which references to artistic production does he cite? He expands on the military art in terms of arms and armor, citing changes in the armament of the Crusaders as found especially in images on the seals of the knights, as, for example, the seal of Jean d’Ibelin in 1261. There is also the question of heraldry, which he finds in the Levant as much with the Franks as with the Arabs. Again the major sources are the seals. He expands on the architecture by mentioning the urban architecture of private townhouses and palaces, comparing Wilbrand von Oldenburg’s 1212 account of the Ibelin palace in Beirut with the Mediterranean inspired Arab-Norman buildings in Palermo and mentioning the grand salle of the episcopal palace in Tripoli. In the palace in Beirut there was fresco painting on the walls, mosaics on the floors, and a marble fountain in the courtyard, and in this connection Wilbrand praises the excellence of the Syrians, the Greeks, and the “Sarraceni” as artists. Even more remarkable is his claim that Arab carpenters decorated important rooms in castles with paneling and wainscoting, fine woodwork similar in its high quality to what we find on the minibars of major mosques in the Muslim world of the Near East. Furthermore, the interiors of the living quarters of noble Franks would have had hangings of Eastern silks. There would have been painted pottery, quite possibly even some porcelains from China, and also painted glass. Finally one would find metalwork in copper, and even silver and gold. Rey cites the important inventory of the Count de Nevers from Acre in 1266 with its quantity of notable objects, secular and sacred, including metalwork in precious gold and silver and more utilitarian substances. Clearly much of this material he thought to be the work of Near Eastern artists, not necessarily Crusaders.
members of the military orders, and it is very interesting that Rey cites numerous of confraternities, half religious and half military organizations known especially in Italy, but also found in the Crusader East, such as the Societas Vermigiliorum, the Pisan association at Tyre. 38 Rey also surveys the great variety of Eastern Christians who interacted with the Latin clergy in the Crusader States.

The issue of manuscript books raised by the existence of the Melisende psalter, and referred to in the 1266 inventory in terms of secular “romanç” and “chantonniers” codices, stimulates Rey to consider what the Crusader men of letters read and wrote. Rey points out, “ce fut surtout pour l’étude du droit et des coutumes féodales que se partagent les sarrasins d’outre-mer que pour la transmission de textes sacrés, de chansons de chevaliers d’outre-mérite.” He says further, “le goût des lettres semblait héréditaire dans la maison des seigneurs de Sagette [Sidon] . . . Renaud de Sagette était un des hommes les plus instruits dans sciences et les lettres orientales.” Even more surprisingly, he asserts, “la plupart des seigneurs francs cultivait l’étude de la langue arabe.” 39 Other fields of lively interest to the Crusaders were medicine, philosophy, mathematics, geography, and astronomy. In medicine, Rey even cites Antioch, Tripoli, and Jerusalem as centers, referring to Theodore of Antioch, Basil of Aleppo at Tripoli, and Abu Mansour in Jerusalem. 40 As evidence for his points, Rey frequently cites Arab medieval writers and in regard to the matter of geography, he even cites specific manuscripts in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris and in the Vatican Library in Rome which contain maps that precede the well-known works of Marino Sanudo in representing the Frankish East in detail, even including distances between specific sites in the Holy Land. 41

What is interesting and relevant from this remarkable assemblage of material that Rey presents in his groundbreaking work is that, with the exception of the Psalter of Queen Melisende, everything cited here is either to be dated to the thirteenth century or is directly relevant to or derived from the Crusader States in the thirteenth century. Thus in effect, Rey makes a strong case for investigating further the art of the Crusaders as well as the architecture. This art is basically defined as commissioned or acquired by them from Near Eastern artists – he never really entertains the idea of “Crusader” artists – or as imported by them from the West. 42 What is also evident is that Rey is looking at the Crusaders and their art largely along class lines. Not surprisingly, to some extent he seems to be seeing the Crusader aristocracy the way the nineteenth-century French upper class wished to see them. For example, he says: “Nous devons, d’ailleurs, reconnaitre que la noblesse franque de tout le moins, que ces princes d’Antioche, les Boemond, les Tancrède, si vaillants et si avisés tout ensemble, si bons chrétiens, et qui demeurèrent en Palestine, la plupart étaient des Francs.” 43 Rey also identifies some important examples in the figural arts, either existing works or textual evidence about such works. Together they set out the agenda for future scholars.

Meanwhile, interest in the Crusades continued to grow. In 1877 a new edition of Michaud’s Histoire des Croisades appeared, illustrated with a large set of engravings by Gustave Doré. This publication marked “a high point in the religious and nationalistic enthusiasm for the crusades in France.” 44 In fact, work on the history of the Crusades, the culture of the Crusaders, and Crusader art and architecture during the last five years of the nineteenth century by English and German as well as French scholars. With a few exceptions, however, comparatively little attention was directed specifically at Crusader monuments or works of Crusader art understood to be from the thirteenth century. One of the most important publications was a new and remarkably comprehensive study of Crusader coins by Gustave Léon Schlumberger. Published in 1878 with a supplement in 1882, this work remained a standard text into the latter part of this century and can still be consulted with profit. 45 Many of the other publications we have are found in the form of archaeological reports, for example, the Survey of Western Palestine. 46 By this means the repertoires of sites published is enlarged somewhat, but the focus of the survey was on antiquity, biblical and classical, and there are relatively few Crusader monuments. Also, Hans Prutz published a work of cultural history hard on the heels of Rey’s later (1883) work, but he is not as interested in the artistic material and contributes more to the study of the military orders in the Crusader States, especially the Teutonic Order. 47

Not surprisingly, it would continue to be French archaeologists who most intensively addressed the Crusader monuments in the early twentieth century. It was they, and especially Camille Enlart, who introduced important new distinctions between the twelfth- and the thirteenth-century art and architecture in the Crusader States. In 1896, however, there was Charles Diehl, a scholar of quite a different background, an orientalist who studied Byzantium and Byzantine art and addressed “Les Monuments de l’Orient Latin.” He summarized and epitomized the French view of the Crusaders at the fin de siècle. Just as de Vogüé and especially Rey had done before him, Diehl sketched works of art and architecture associated with the Crusaders. He refers to churches and castles, monumental art such as mosaics, frescoes, and sculpture, and small-scale art such as Crusade media are omitted. But in particular he again appropriated the Crusaders as medieval Frenchmen, even more emphatically than Rey if that be possible. The specificity of his language is unmistakable:

Civilisation féodale, civilisation française aussi. Parmi les chevaliers qui prirent part à la croisade, parmi ceux-là surtout qui demeurèrent en Palestine, la plupart étaient des Français. C’étaient des Normands, et qui gardèrent en Syrie toutes les qualités de la race, que ces princes d’Antioche, les Boemond, les Tancrède, si vaillants et si avisés tout ensemble, si bons chevaliers et si fins diplomates; c’étaient des Provençaux que ces comtes de Tripoli, Raymond de Saint-Gilles et ses successeurs; et sur le trône même de Jérusalem quelle succession de princes français, Angevins comme le roi Foulques,
REFLECTIONS ON THE HISTORIOGRAPHY OF THE ART OF THE CRUSADERS IN THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY

Poitevins comme les Lusignan, Champenois comme cet héroïque Jean de Brienne,….Parcourez la liste des grands barons du royaume; tous ou presque tous sont français, Ilbîn, La Roche, Dampierre, Montbéliard et bien d’autres; parcourez la liste des frères de l’Hôpital et du Temple; les grands ordres militaires sont presque exclusivement des ordres français; et dans ce morceau d’Europe féodale, transporté sous le ciel bleu de la Terre-Sainte, bien vite le français devint la langue officielle de l’administration et le langage courant des relations sociales.76

What is striking about this view of the Crusader East is that France and the Frankish Levant are linked so closely. The Crusader States are conceptualized as almost more than a French colony; it is as if they are a massive projection of medieval French civilization directly into the Near East. Yet Diehl characterizes Crusader society as “composée et curieuse,” and he perceptively understands that “dans cette société si complexe l’art prit le même caractère.” He gives the following interpretation in rather poetic language:

surtout dans ces petites églises de la Ville Sainte, à Sainte-Anne, au tombeau de la Vierge, nous comprendrons comment l’art latin s’est combiné avec l’art oriental, et quelle fleur architecturale, au parfum légèrement exotique, les architectes de France, durant des deux siècles de domination latine, ont fait naître sous le ciel brulant de la Syrie.77

What is also striking from this point of view is that, for Diehl, effectively the “Crusader artist” or the “Crusader architect” was French. Furthermore, there is no essential distinction drawn between the Crusader society, the Crusader experience, or certainly Crusader art in the twelfth century and in the thirteenth century. It is as if they formed a continuum, unbroken, unchanged from 1099 to 1291.78 To some extent Camille Enlart would eventually challenge that position, while maintaining and explicating the idea of the Crusader artist as a French artist.

French archaeologists worked intensively in the Holy Land in the first third of the twentieth century. Of particular interest for Crusader monuments was the work of Fathers Hugues Vincent and F.-M. Abel in Jerusalem,79 and that of Father Prosper Viaud in Nazareth.80 Vincent and Abel devoted a substantial part of their investigations to the Crusader monuments and, in particular, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, for which they provided the first comprehensive study with detailed plans and measured drawings. In Nazareth, Viaud produced a similar study of the foundations of the Crusader Church of the Annunciation and combined that with the dramatic discovery of the famous Nazareth Capitals. It was on the solid foundations of these and earlier works81 that Camille Enlart (1862–1927) arrived in the Holy Land, in the period of the French and British Mandates, to pursue his investigations. His research, carried out between 1921 and 1927, resulted in the publication of Les Monuments des Croisés dans le Royaume de Jérusalem, the first comprehensive study of the art and architecture of the Crusaders in the Holy Land.82

Camille Enlart was an archaeologist and an art historian who had studied at both the Ecole des Beaux-Arts and the Ecole des Chartes in Paris; he was also a member of the Ecole Française in Rome. From 1903 he was the director of the Musée des Monuments Français at the Trocadéro in Paris, known then as the Musée de Sculpture Comparée. Thus by training and by career profession, Enlart was different from de Vogüé and Rey. In addition, Enlart’s approach to the study of the Crusader monuments was distinct from that of his distinguished predecessors in three important ways. First, Enlart came to the study of Crusader art and architecture as a mature scholar at the height of his powers toward the end of his career, someone who had extensive experience working in Europe and the Near East.83 Second, Enlart was commissioned to study the Crusader monuments by the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres. Thus he was able to proceed with the full support and cooperation of the Mandate authorities. Third, Enlart defines his agenda at the start of Chapter 1:

En écrivant ce livre, j’ai voulu étudier dans le royaume de Jérusalem, comme autrefois dans celui de Chypre, l’influence de l’Occident en Orient, et ceci est un dernier chapitre de la vaste enquête que j’ai commencée il y a trente ans sur l’expansion de l’art français du Moyen-Age à l’étranger.84

With this introduction, Enlart makes clear that he is pursuing his historical inquiry more or less backward in chronological time. Having started with the Frankish art, culture, and history of Lusignan Cyprus (1191–1474), to which he had devoted a major study published in 1899,85 he was now addressing the Frankish art, culture, and history of the Crusader States on mainland Syria-Palestine, 1098–1291. By taking this approach, certain questions immediately arise. What relationships will Enlart see between the art of the Crusaders on the mainland and that on Cyprus? What distinctions will Enlart discern between the later art of Lusignan Cyprus and that of the Crusaders which preceded it? How will Enlart characterize the thirteenth-century art of the Crusaders in the Latin Kingdom and distinguish that from the art of thirteenth-century Cyprus? How will he distinguish between Crusader art and the art of the Eastern Christians in the Latin Kingdom?

One important aspect of Enlart’s approach was that, in the context of the early years of the twentieth century, he was arguing against the idea that artistic creativity and its influence basically flowed East to West.86 Furthermore, though he was intensely Franco-centric in his outlook, he nonetheless saw and understood some of the complexities and independent characteristics of the art of the Crusaders on the mainland. These components in his discussion can be seen vividly in the following comments. On the importance of France in the Middle Ages, East and West:

L’art, néanmoins, comme le langage, le droit public et privé furent français chez les Croisés, parce que la France, depuis la fin du Xe siècle jusqu’au XVe, fut le centre et la tête de la civilisation occidentale.87

On the character of art in the Crusader East:

Comme leur civilisation en général, l’art des Croisés est, de toutes pièces, importé d’Europe mais parfaitement acclimaté.88

Basically, Enlart saw the architecture of the Crusaders as Romanesque French in origin, but he recognized the Eastern character of much that he found in French Romanesque and was willing to say:
As a context for this architecture, it is evident that Enlart clearly understands the Crusader States to be essentially French colonies and that the basic development of the political, ecclesiastical, commercial, economic, and military institutions took place in the twelfth century before 1187. He also sees Cyprus and the Crusader States as fundamentally and closely interconnected after 1291. The one essential difference between the Frankish population of the Latin Kingdom and Lusignan Cyprus in the thirteenth century is the fact that in this specific East the Franks were mostly transient, temporary; they were pilgrims and merchants. But on Cyprus the Lusignans consciously sought to build a resident population both numerous and permanent. Their Frankish settlers, Enlart says, came partly from the West, but they also came in important numbers from the Crusader States and even from Armenia.

Enlart identifies the years of greatest prosperity for the Latin Kingdom as between 1131 and 1174. Soon after that, in 1187, the disasters start, and he finds little in the thirteenth century, after the Third Crusade in 1192, that is positive or notable. Only Frederick II, who reopened the holy sites to Christians between 1229 and 1244, and Louis IX, who rebuilt fortifications and churches while in residence in 1250-4, are identified as bright spots in the deepening gloom. Between 1265 and 1291, he sees the history of the Crusader States as an unbroken stream of losses and defeats at the hands of a series of powerful Mamluk sultans, chief among them, Baybars and Kalavun.

Despite this bleak picture, however, Enlart recognizes the existence of significant Crusader artistic work in the thirteenth century, churches and fortifications, some executed by specific artists and architects. He is the first to think in terms of Crusader art in the Holy Land as between 1131 and 1174. Soon after that, in 1187, the disasters start, and he finds little in the thirteenth century, after the Third Crusade in 1192, that is positive or notable. Only Frederick II, who reopened the holy sites to Christians between 1229 and 1244, and Louis IX, who rebuilt fortifications and churches while in residence in 1250-4, are identified as bright spots in the deepening gloom. Between 1265 and 1291, he sees the history of the Crusader States as an unbroken stream of losses and defeats at the hands of a series of powerful Mamluk sultans, chief among them, Baybars and Kalavun.

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certain regional characteristics with Gothic in France. For example, he refers to the Provencal bell tower and the Burgundian façade and portals at Belmont, or the Burgundian character of the Cathedral of Notre Dame at Tortosa (started 1140s, completed after interruptions in the 1250s). The northern Gothic vaults in the Cenaculum in Jerusalem he thought to be dated c.1240, but we now know they date from the 1180s.96 On the other hand, some Gothic churches in the Latin Kingdom (e.g., St. André in Acre, 1240s), were modified “pour s’adapter aux conditions et aux goûts du pays” – Enlart sees this as characteristic of the way Gothic was also adapted in western Europe.97

A basic assumption of Enlart’s is that the development of Gothic architecture on the Crusader mainland followed the same evolution that we find in France. Indeed, Enlart’s basic methodology in Les Monuments des Croisés is exactly the same as he employed in his monumental Manuel d’Archéologie Française, volume one of which deals with “architecture religieuse.”98 Early Gothic is found in terms of “la croisée d’ogives” at the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, at Nazareth, and at Sebasté, where it is combined with a décor purely Romanesque just as we see at Sens, or at Saint Denis. At Tortosa we then find the structure to be Romanesque with the best Gothic-style sculpture, just as we find in the Midi of France (e.g., in the Auvergne). Enlart admits that the Cathedral of Nicosa (started in 1209) inaugurates “le style français inté- gral,” in structure and in ornamentation, what we might call “high Gothic.” St. André in Acre was also an example, and it constituted the model for the Greek Cathedral of Sts. Peter and Paul in Famagusta.99

At this point, Enlart turns to detailed analysis of architectural parts and components and to what extent they may change in thirteenth-century buildings.100 What is truly fascinating is that he finds minimal alteration in certain basic aspects of the ar- chitecture. The “apparel” and the plans effectively change not at all. Bell towers are more numerous in the thirteenth cen- tury than in the twelfth, but are found in both. Six-part vaults are believed to have appeared at the Church of St. John at Sebasté and at the Well of Jacob Church. After the Church of the Holy Sepulcher (1149), four-part vaults with ribs of var- ious forms are proposed for St. André at Acre (1240s), the Hospitaller grande salle at Acre (thirteenth century), at Chastel Pelerin (1217), and in the grande salle at Crac des Chevaliers (thirteenth century). Enlart says, “tous les arcs sont en tiers- point,” but we may wonder if perhaps the form of the arches is not more variable and somewhat distinct from the pointed arches developed and used in France in the course of the thirteenth century. Projecting wall buttressing is continued from the twelfth century in some churches, and flying arches are rare, but Enlart claims that the latter surely existed in the churches of St. John and of St. André, both in Acre. Gothic corbels in- troduce new sculptural decoration in the form of human heads (Chastel Pelerin or Tortosa) or naturalistic foliage (Crac or Bel- mont). Windows change into lancets, some with limited trac- ery. Oddly enough, whereas three examples of smallish rose windows are found in the twelfth century, Enlart says none is found in the thirteenth among mainland Crusader buildings. Nonetheless the seventeenth-century engraving of St. André by C. de Bruyn shows three small rosettes above the lancets over the main entrance.101 Church façades, however, typically have only grouped lancet windows, as seen in this example below the roses. The portals have pointed arches and vertical pro- portions like the lancet windows, but curiously there seem to be no tympana with sculpture, in contrast to certain twelfth- century churches (e.g., the west façade of the Church of the Annunciation at Nazareth). Finally, the moldings and deco- rative sculpture on these Gothic buildings seem to be either a continuation of Romanesque types or lovely naturalistic foliage and even animal- and human-headed decorations. The capitals exhibit similar decoration but their shapes sometimes change into complex forms, like certain polygonal examples at Sidon and Acre.

In the final section of his discussion on Crusader architecture, Enlart comments that a Crusader style followed an evolu- tion that we find in France. Indeed, Enlart’s basic approach helped us to understand that Crusader art is remarkably French, indeed French Gothic in style in the thirteenth century, but our problem will be how to recognize and evaluate important and numerous works of Crusader art that are done in other styles as well.

In surveying the ecclesiastical accessories for these churches, Enlart considers altars, baptismal fonts, episcopal thrones, sanctuary enclosures, and tombs. Again his findings are of great interest. Few altar tables survive, but the examples he cites were preserved in Muslim hands; two are now in Damascus, one in Vienne, on the Rhône River.102 It remains to be seen if any extant example belongs to the thirteenth century. For both the baptismal font and the episcopal throne, the ques- tion is the same: are any of the few examples cited relevant to developments in the thirteenth century? The notion of the decorated sanctuary enclosure is one of the most remarkable of Enlart’s ideas. There can be no doubt about the extraordin- ary wrought-iron enclosure produced for the Temple de Domi in the mid-twelfth century in Jerusalem, which partly survives today.103 Enlart also claims there were also similar wrought-iron works for the sanctuaries at Tabor and at Sebasté. These examples constitute one type of enclosure, which is strongly linked to Western church decoration in central France. Much more interesting is the idea of a different sanctuary enclosure for a regular church, which Enlart proposes for the cathedral at Tripoli in the thirteenth century. This type is made of gold and silver, includes figural imagery, and “se rapporter à une clo- sure de sanctuaire analogue à celles qui restent en usage dans l’Eglise orthodoxe.”104 Although his source is arcane, to say the least – a sixteenth-century poem by a Syriac bishop on Cyprus about the cathedral church in Tripoli at the time of its cap- ture by the Mamluks in 1289 – this is an important idea worth further investigation.105 Enlart, of course, knew nothing of the
existence of icon painting done for the Crusaders at the time, which strengthens the importance of this idea.

Finally, we have the Crusader tombs among which Enlart proposes five types: a sarcophagus on colonnettes, a sarcophagus at floor level, a vertical cross monument, an epitaph set in the wall, or an inscription with or without image on a plaque set in the floor. The first three types are particularly well represented among twelfth-century monuments. Enlart cites numerous examples of type four, which seem to be found in both the twelfth and the thirteenth centuries. Clearly, however, the fifth type is the type of choice in the thirteenth century as found in the mainland Crusader States and on Cyprus.¹⁰³

In the last edition the author still includes furniture and minor arts. This is a very important discussion because here he defines the possible origins for such work: either imported from Europe or made in the Crusader States by local artisans or by those who have come from Europe and established themselves in the Holy Land. These possibilities result in three categories and two styles; Enlart does not, however, consider the idea of a style made by a resident Frank in the Levant who combines Western and Eastern aspects. The material he discusses is as follows: costume and luxury fabrics, domestic furnishings, iron work, copper and bronze metalwork, bells, the Bethlehem wash basins, silversmith work and enamels, a reliquary found in St. John’s in Jerusalem, a procession cross from Belmont, ivory carvings, ebony carvings, and works in “mortier de marbre.”

The sources for knowledge of secular costume according to Enlart are the images on gravestones and on seals or clothing referred to in the texts. In the category of liturgical costume he mentions the miter of Jacques de Vitry now preserved in the treasury at Oignies. Enlart decides this miter is made in western Europe, without saying where, and he does not think that it was taken with Jacques de Vitry when he went to the Latin Kingdom between 1216 and 1228.¹⁰⁴ Other interpretations must be considered.

For domestic furniture such as beds and similar objects, Enlart imagines that such carpentry in the East conformed to items familiar to him in the West. However, his example is to compare the bed carved on the St. Peter capital from Nazareth (1170s) to works known to him from Chartres and Moissac. By addressing only Western-style objects, he predictably comes to such conclusions. Here, as in other cases, original objects are necessary to assess the impact of the Levantine context on the Crusaders.¹⁰⁵

Enlart assumes the ferronerie is imported from France – objects such as sanctuary screens, candelabra, and chandeliers. There is no evidence for this in the twelfth century. For thirteenth-century work, Enlart cites documentary evidence suggesting that it was imported from the West. But even if some specific objects were imported as resources changed, there is no reason to assume that everything not accounted for otherwise must have come from the West. On the contrary, it is more likely, based on current knowledge, that either the artisans came East to do their work or that the work was done in the East by Crusader artisans, that is, fully trained resident Franks.¹⁰⁶

The metalwork overall is an extremely important category because it includes such diverse material: not only plaques, decorated armor, and enamels, but also reliquaries, seal matrices, bulles of lead, episcopal croziers, and the famous bells of Bethlehem.¹⁰⁷ In these cases, clearly some of this work was imported from the West – there is every indication that more portable art objects were imported in the thirteenth century than in the twelfth – but not necessarily all of it. The Bethlehem bells are a controversial case in point; where were they cast? From our current perspective, the challenge will be to differentiate the imported work from objects done in the East by Western-trained artisans, and other work done in the East by resident Crusader or Eastern Christian artisans. Distinctions of this kind are now possible in terms of painting, which, of course, Enlart did not know and could not consider. Our formidable task will be to attempt this kind of distinction in the metalwork, as well as in other artistic production.

Among the sculptured objects, the ivory covers from the Melisende Psalter are clearly Crusader work of the twelfth century.¹⁰⁸ Despite Cahier’s interpretation that they were done in Jerusalem, however, Enlart resists the idea, and he doubts that there were good Western ivory carvers established in the Latin Kingdom. On the other hand, for reasons that are unclear except that he finds the style “attard´e, un peu bizarre,” Enlart suggests that the ivory crozier of Jacques de Vitry now in the treasury of Oignies is more likely to have been done in the Latin Kingdom.¹⁰⁹ The other special sculptural work Enlart mentions – encriers in ebony and capitals made of “mortier de marbre” – is clearly specialized work that is found mostly in the East. The various sections of Enlart’s introduction to the art of the Crusaders are rooted firmly in research that he published many years earlier while writing his Manuel d’Arch´eologie Franc ¸aise. Methodologically and in terms of individual analyses and interpretations, therefore, there is clearly much in Enlart’s overall characterization to value, but there is also much to challenge. We have already found that when Crusader art and architecture of the twelfth century is looked at today on its own terms, we see it as an independent not a colonial development, it cannot be studied only or even primarily in terms of architecture, it is usually not linked directly to Western developments, its chronology rarely parallels Western chronology, and its multicultural features demonstrate that it is not fundamentally French. Although it is strongly influenced by French developments, there are also strong influences from Italy and Byzantium not to mention the artistic traditions of the indigenous Christians. In fact, it is not French art in the East; it is Crusader art. We must apply the same criteria to thirteenth-century Crusader art and see what we find; and we must look at all of the art: everything that Enlart included, as well as the manuscript illumination, panel painting, and monumental painting that he could not or did not consider.

Whatever our reinterpretation of the nature of thirteenth-century Crusader art may be, however it may differ from his work, Enlart’s important achievements in the 1920s cannot be overstated. He surveyed the major architectural material – seventy sites in all – in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem and the County of Tripoli – Margat to Gaza and the Dead Sea.¹¹⁰ He is able to give full attention to the important sites of Jerusalem and Acre with their myriad structures. He introduces certain other major sites and monuments into the discussion, mostly in Syria and Lebanon, hardly mentioned by his predecessors, such as the cathedral at Tortosa, and major churches in Tripoli, Gibelet, Beirut, and Tyre. He is the first to address seriously

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