

*Fortress-Churches of Languedoc* traces the changing relationship between military and religious realms as expressed in the architecture of medieval Europe. The scholarship of medieval architecture has traditionally imposed a division between military and ecclesiastical structures. Often, however, medieval churches were provided with fortified enclosures, crenellations, iron-barred doors, and other elements of defense. In her study of fortress-churches, Sheila Bonde focuses on three twelfth-century monuments located in southern France—Maguelone, Agde, and Saint-Pons-de-Thomière, which are among the earliest examples of the type. She provides new surveyed plans of these structures, as well as a reexamination of their documentation, which is here presented both in the original Latin and in new English translations. *Fortress-Churches of Languedoc* also explores the larger context of fortification and authority in twelfth-century Languedoc and examines the dynamics of architectural exchange and innovation in the Mediterranean at a moment of critical historical importance.

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Sheila Bonde

Frontmatter

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Brown University



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*For my family*

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This book developed out of my curiosity about the apparent paradox of fortified churches. I first became aware of these buildings during work on my doctoral dissertation, which treated architecture at the time of the Norman Conquest. Following the model of the good historian of medieval architecture that I aspired to become, I began by amassing information exclusively on church buildings. I kept bumping into castles, however, seemingly at every turn. These castles were too big to be ignored and (I noticed with increasing annoyance) were too integrally connected with the construction histories of “my” churches to allow me to omit them from my analysis. When my attention had finally been diverted to their study, I began to see not only common patrons and design elements linking the building of castles and churches but also a number of frankly military aspects in many Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman church towers. I was especially struck by the anomalous west façade of Lincoln Cathedral with its mural passages and machicolated arches. With the help of Peter Kidson and Richard Gem, I identified parallels for the Lincoln machicolations in the fortified churches of Languedoc. Thus began my decade-long fascination with the combination of military and religious elements that characterizes these buildings.

I was surprised to discover that these intriguing fortress-churches had attracted only a modest bibliography. Only three main sources exist: a chapter on fortified churches in the *Zodiaque* volume, *Languedoc Roman* (1985); survey articles in the 1950 *Congrès archéologique*; and Raymond Rey’s *Les Vieilles Eglises Fortifiées du Midi de la France*, published in 1925, which provides an initial cataloguing of the monuments. Despite inevitable changes in scholarship since its publication over fifty years ago, Rey’s book

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remains the standard in the field, and I am greatly indebted to it. The present study focuses on the three earliest machicolated fortress-churches and attempts to provide a wider architectural and historical context for them.

Throughout the past ten years of research I have incurred a number of debts that it is my pleasure to acknowledge here. My dissertation advisers, James Ackerman and Oleg Grabar, supported and encouraged my early interest in this not-very-mainstream material. I presented a short paper on the relationships between castle and church building in Anglo-Norman England (originally a chapter of my dissertation) at the University of Minnesota and published a version of those results in the *Minnesota Medieval Series* in 1986. Kay Reyerson, an editor of that volume, and the late Stephen Gardner, a participant in my session, both contributed to the development of my ideas on the subject of religious fortification.

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All of the plans, sections, and elevations for Maguelone, Agde, and Saint-Pons were measured and drawn by me in the the autumn of 1987, the summer of 1988, and the year of 1989–90. Many of the other plans in the book are also my own. Several Brown University students helped at various times, among whom I must mention Arabella Berkenbilt, Elizabeth Baer, and Mark Wilson. The translations found in the Appendixes are also my own, but here I am happy to acknowledge the very substantial help rendered by Michael Gleason.

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